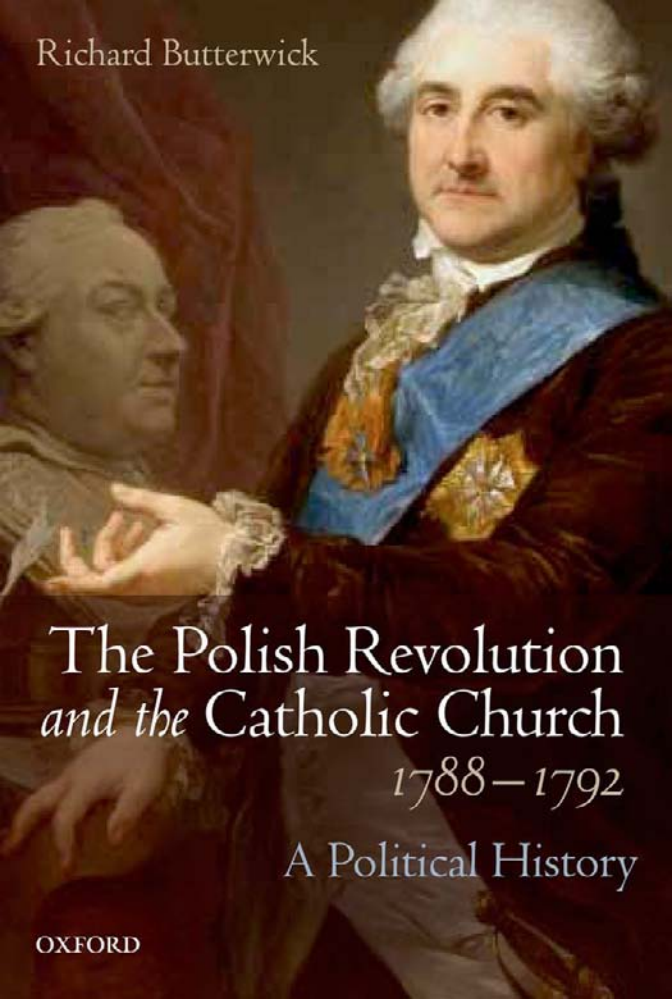




Richard Butterwick

The Polish Revolution  
*and the Catholic Church*

1788–1792

A Political History

OXFORD

THE POLISH REVOLUTION AND THE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH, 1788–1792

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*A Political History*

RICHARD BUTTERWICK

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*For my parents*

## Preface

This book aims to explain why certain decisions were taken by a parliamentary assembly in a republican political system, and why others, which at the time seemed equally plausible, were not. The assembly was the penultimate parliament of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The decisions concerned the Catholic Church. They were taken at a time when many of the reforms of Joseph II in the Habsburg Monarchy were unravelling, and the French Revolution was embarking on its path to dechristianization and terror.

The Polish Revolution of 1788–92 looms large in Polish national myth. I hope to show its pivotal role in the long relationship between Roman Catholicism and the Polish nation. However, this work is primarily intended for those who are not specialists in Polish or Polish-Lithuanian history. Rather, it seeks to place that history in wider contexts. For diplomatic historians, there is an episcopal dimension to the strained relationship between Russia and Prussia at the turn of the 1780s. Ecclesiastical historians may be interested to discover just how close the papacy and the Commonwealth came to schism, shortly before the Catholic Church experienced far greater trials. Social historians of religion will find late eighteenth-century expectations of the clergy; there is evidence, too, of how reforms in the Habsburg Monarchy and Revolutionary France, and the wider question of the ‘enlightened eighteenth century’ were discussed in a part of Europe that remains underexplored by Anglophone historians. Above all, this is a political history that probes both ‘high politics’ and a political culture. The introduction proposes a method for the analysis of political decisions in republican and parliamentary polities.

Those able to read Polish may wish to consult the Polish edition, *Polska rewolucja a Kościół katolicki, 1788–1792* (Cracow: Arcana, 2011), which contains more material on the condition of the Catholic clergy, religious culture, other Christian confessions, Jews, education, and the Enlightenment and its critics. I have published in English on some of these subjects elsewhere. The priority here has been to explain policies towards the Catholic Church, and in the process to reintegrate religious factors into the story of the Polish Revolution.

I began the research that led to this book while a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow in the University of Oxford. Most of the book was researched and written during seven years at The Queen’s University of Belfast, while its completion and reduction to a more reasonable size has taken place since my move to the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at University College London. I am grateful to my colleagues for their encouragement, and for enabling me to take sabbatical leave in 2002/3 and 2010/11. Generous support from the British Academy, the

Polish Academy of Sciences, the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, the Royal Irish Academy, the Arts and Humanities Research Board, Wolfson College, Oxford, The Queen's University of Belfast, the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London, and the University of London enabled me to spend the necessary time in archives and libraries overseas.

For access to documents, and permission to quote them, I am grateful to His Holiness the Blessed John Paul II and to all the archives and libraries listed in the bibliography. I thank the archivists and librarians who have, kindly and patiently, provided me with much assistance over the years.

Ruth Parr had the courage to commission this book for Oxford University Press, and Stephanie Ireland has seen it through to publication. To them, all the commissioning editors in between, who showed much forbearance, my copy-editor, Joe Soave, my proof-reader, Ela Kotkowska, and my production editor, Emma Barber, warm thanks. I have profited from the feedback I have received in presenting my ideas at many seminars and conferences. I have incurred too many individual debts of gratitude to name them all, but some must be singled out.

Since enjoying the benefits of his supervision, I have been encouraged and inspired, especially in questions of confession, nation, and language in Central Europe, by Robert Evans. I owe much of my interest in the Enlightenment, Catholicism, and Joseph II to Derek Beales, who commented on an earlier draft of the introduction, to its advantage. Conversations with David Hayton, Séan Connolly, and especially the late Peter Jupp helped me to work out the methodology for political history. Isabel de Madariaga and Simon Dixon have unstintingly shared their knowledge of Catherine the Great and her empire. Jerzy Lukowski, who has generously encouraged and advised me for over two decades, heroically read the original typescript, and made many invaluable observations and suggestions as to how it might be improved and shortened. Thanks, too, to other members of the confraternity of historians of Poland-Lithuania in Great Britain—especially Karin Friedrich, Robert Frost, Natalia Nowakowska, and Hubert Zawadzki—for thought-provoking discussions. I have also benefited from the insights of many of my students.

My debts to scholars in the lands of the former Commonwealth are still more numerous. I particularly wish to thank Urszula Augustyniak, Almut Bues, Jarosław Czubaty, Martyna Deszczyńska, Dorota Dukwicz, Barbara Grochulska, Robertas Jurgaitis, the late Łukasz Kądziera, Zigmantas Kiaupa, Jūratė Kiaupienė, Teresa Kostkiewiczowa, Wojciech Kriegseisen, Stanisława and Krzysztof Link-Lenczowsky, the late Stanisław Litak, Mariusz Markiewicz, the late Jerzy Michalski, Kamil Paździor, Przemysław Romaniuk, Magdalena Ślusarska, Ramunė Šmigelskytė-Stukienė, Angela Softys, Piotr Ugniewski, Andrzej B. Zakrzewski, and Ewa Zielińska. I am especially grateful to Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz and Zofia Zielińska. I could not have completed this book without their encouragement, knowledge, notes, inspiration, and comments, or without the challenge of the



highest standards of scholarship, which they maintain and expect. While all the aforementioned scholars, and many others, have greatly contributed to whatever may be of value in this work, I am solely responsible for its remaining faults.

Finally, I have the pleasure of thanking those who have helped me most personally. Lynda and Ian have been the best of friends through times rough and smooth. Wioletta has made me happier than I could possibly imagine. I offer this book to my parents, without whose unfailing love and support I could not have enjoyed the privilege of researching and writing history.

Poznań, 11 June 2011.

# *Contents*

|                                           |       |
|-------------------------------------------|-------|
| <i>List of tables</i>                     | xii   |
| <i>Abbreviations</i>                      | xiii  |
| <i>Pronunciation guide</i>                | xv    |
| <i>A note on terminology and measures</i> | xvi   |
| <i>Maps</i>                               | xviii |
| <i>Genealogical table</i>                 | xxii  |

|                                                                  |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Introduction</b>                                              | 1  |
| 1 The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth                             | 2  |
| 2 The Polish Revolution, the Catholic Church, and the historians | 6  |
| 3 Decision-making in a republican polity                         | 14 |

## PART I PLUNDER

|                                                                             |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>1. The Commonwealth and the Catholic Church in 1788</b>                  | 27 |
| 1 The bishop and bishopric of Cracow                                        | 27 |
| 2 The sejmiiks of August 1788                                               | 35 |
| 3 The instructions of 1788                                                  | 41 |
| 4 A comparison with the cahiers de doléances                                | 46 |
| 5 ‘An ill humour against the clergy’                                        | 49 |
| <b>2. The republican revolution</b>                                         | 52 |
| 1 The inauguration and confederation of the sejm                            | 52 |
| 2 The army and the Military Department: 13 October–3 November 1788          | 53 |
| 3 The ‘public’ in revolutionary Warsaw                                      | 57 |
| 4 Casting off the Russian guarantee: 5 November 1788–19 January 1789        | 60 |
| 5 The implications for the Catholic Church                                  | 63 |
| <b>3. The first wave of ecclesiastical polemics (to the summer of 1789)</b> | 65 |
| 1 Staszic, Nax, Kołłataj                                                    | 65 |
| 2 Ecclesiastical temporalities and public utility                           | 70 |
| 3 The patriotic paradigm                                                    | 77 |
| <b>4. Tax or offering?</b>                                                  | 79 |
| 1 The episcopal response to the threat                                      | 79 |
| 2 ‘Who is poorer than the Fatherland?’ 12–16 March 1789                     | 82 |
| 3 Disputes over tax reductions and exemptions: 17–20 March 1789             | 90 |
| 4 Baiting the primate: 19, 23, and 24 March 1789                            | 92 |

|                                                                        |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 5 Catharsis and controversy: the 'Perpetual Offering' and the peasants | 96  |
| 6 Implementation                                                       | 99  |
| <b>5. The secularization of the bishopric of Cracow</b>                | 102 |
| 1 Patrimonium Reipublicae?                                             | 102 |
| 2 The king's predicament: between Lucchesini and Stackelberg           | 104 |
| 3 Trading the bishopric of Cracow                                      | 111 |
| 4 The dénouement: 17 July 1789                                         | 113 |
| 5 Equalizing the bishoprics: 20–24 July 1789                           | 118 |
| 6 A political turning point                                            | 125 |

## PART II COMPROMISE

|                                                                                  |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>6. Pamphleteers, journalists, and the Church: summer 1789–spring 1791</b>     | 133 |
| 1 Pawlikowski, Kołłątaj, Staszic                                                 | 133 |
| 2 The discourse of scandal: anti-clerical pamphlets                              | 139 |
| 3 Defences of the clergy: Canons Skarszewski and Jezierski                       | 142 |
| 4 In the columns of the press: France and the Habsburg Monarchy in turmoil       | 145 |
| 5 Providentialism and covenantalism in pastoral letters and sermons              | 147 |
| <b>7. On the brink of schism: August 1789–May 1790</b>                           | 151 |
| 1 'The temporality of the Church of Cracow'                                      | 152 |
| 2 The 'clerical deputation', the episcopate, and the nuncio: preparations        | 157 |
| 3 Recruitment, local government reform, and the Educational Commission           | 160 |
| 4 Religious dimensions of the urban and constitutional questions                 | 162 |
| 5 The negotiation of a compromise: October 1789–May 1790                         | 168 |
| 6 Deus ex machina                                                                | 176 |
| <b>8. A limited ecclesiastical reform</b>                                        | 179 |
| 1 'When war is a hair's breadth away from us . . .'                              | 179 |
| 2 Episcopal salaries or estates? 25–26 May 1790                                  | 180 |
| 3 National sovereignty and noble equality: the Duchy of Siewierz, 27–29 May 1790 | 183 |
| 4 A measure of episcopal reform: 29 May–1 June 1790                              | 187 |
| 5 Among 'lesser matters': the Ruthenian rite                                     | 190 |
| 6 High noon for abbots, and the limits of reform                                 | 194 |
| 7 Implementation                                                                 | 199 |
| <b>9. 'Une renaissance de barbarie'? The autumn of 1790</b>                      | 206 |
| 1 The Project for the Form of Government                                         | 207 |
| 2 The dominant faith and tolerated faiths                                        | 212 |
| 3 Controversies in advance of the sejmiks                                        | 216 |
| 4 'So much fury against education' and the call to restore the Jesuits           | 218 |

|                                                       |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 5 Anti-clericalism and local ecclesiastical interests | 229 |
| 6 Social, political, cultural, and fiscal questions   | 232 |
| 7 An inexperienced but enlightened new cohort?        | 234 |

### PART III PROVIDENCE

|                                                                        |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>10. The Law on Royal Towns and the Constitution of 3 May 1791</b>   | 239 |
| 1 The preoccupations of the sejm: December 1790–March 1791             | 239 |
| 2 The Law on Royal Towns: citizenship, toleration, and religion        | 241 |
| 3 The Revolution of 3 May                                              | 248 |
| 4 The Revolutionary leadership                                         | 252 |
| <b>11. Propagating and sacralizing the Providential Revolution</b>     | 256 |
| 1 A ‘miracle of the Divine hand, delivering us from ultimate calamity’ | 256 |
| 2 Referendum: the sejmiks of February 1792                             | 259 |
| 3 Apotheosis: 3 May 1792                                               | 266 |
| <b>12. Antichrist comes from France</b>                                | 273 |
| 1 A whip, an aspergillum, a stove lid, and a file                      | 273 |
| 2 ‘The French contagion’                                               | 277 |
| 3 The return of the primate                                            | 281 |
| <b>13. Caesar’s moral realm</b>                                        | 284 |
| 1 Rome and the Code of Stanisław August                                | 284 |
| 2 Plans for ‘uniform and public education’                             | 289 |
| 3 The question of the ex-Jesuits at the sejm                           | 290 |
| 4 The Police Commission and the Catholic Church                        | 294 |
| 5 The battle for ecclesiastical censorship                             | 296 |
| <b>14. Ecclesiastical reform—for the Orthodox</b>                      | 300 |
| 1 Raison d’état versus raison d’Église                                 | 300 |
| 2 ‘So that no clergyman would be useless in his condition’             | 303 |
| 3 Autocephality for the Orthodox                                       | 307 |
| 4 The final effort to reform the Catholic clergy                       | 311 |
| 5 A Ukrainian coda                                                     | 314 |
| <b>Conclusion</b>                                                      | 316 |
| 1 Epilogues                                                            | 316 |
| 2 Explanations                                                         | 320 |
| 3 Legacies                                                             | 329 |
| <i>Select bibliography</i>                                             | 332 |
| <i>Glossary</i>                                                        | 344 |
| <i>Index</i>                                                           | 349 |

## *List of tables*

|                                                                                            |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. The Latin-rite episcopate's proposed <i>Taxa jurium stolae</i>                          | 159 |
| 2. The sejmik instructions of November 1790: the province of Little Poland                 | 220 |
| 3. The sejmik instructions of November 1790: the province of Great Poland                  | 221 |
| 4. The sejmik instructions of November 1790: the Grand Duchy of<br>Lithuania, with Livonia | 222 |
| 5. The sejmik instructions of November 1790: summary                                       | 223 |
| 6. The February 1792 sejmiks and the Constitution of 3 May 1791                            | 261 |

## *Abbreviations*

|                      |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AAG                  | Archiwum Archidiecezjalne, Gniezno                                                                                                                                                   |
| ACap                 | Archivum Capituli, AAG                                                                                                                                                               |
| AGAD                 | Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, Warsaw                                                                                                                                                  |
| AGhig                | Archiwum ks. Kajetana Ghigiottiego, AGAD                                                                                                                                             |
| <i>AHR</i>           | <i>American Historical Review</i>                                                                                                                                                    |
| AKKK                 | Archiwum Krakowskiej Kapituły Katedralnej, Cracow                                                                                                                                    |
| AMAE CP              | Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Correspondance Politique, Paris                                                                                                       |
| AMS                  | Archiwum XX. Misjonarzy na Stradomiu, Cracow                                                                                                                                         |
| ANV                  | Archivio della Nunziatura Apostolica a Varsavia, ASV                                                                                                                                 |
| <i>APH</i>           | <i>Acta Poloniae Historica</i>                                                                                                                                                       |
| APK                  | Archiwum Państwowe w Krakowie, Cracow                                                                                                                                                |
| APodh.               | Archiwum Podhoreckie, APK                                                                                                                                                            |
| APP                  | Archiwum Publiczne Potockich, AGAD                                                                                                                                                   |
| APPoz.               | Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu, Poznań                                                                                                                                                |
| ARoskie              | Archiwum Roskie, AGAD                                                                                                                                                                |
| ASC                  | Archiwum Sejmu Czteroletniego, AGAD                                                                                                                                                  |
| ASV                  | Archivio Segreto Vaticano                                                                                                                                                            |
| AVPRI                | Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Imperii, Moscow                                                                                                                                  |
| BCz.                 | Biblioteka XX. Czartoryskich, Cracow                                                                                                                                                 |
| BJ                   | Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Cracow                                                                                                                                                      |
| BK                   | Biblioteka Kórnicka Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Kórnik                                                                                                                                   |
| BN                   | Biblioteka Narodowa, Warsaw                                                                                                                                                          |
| BPAU                 | Biblioteka Naukowa Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności i Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Cracow                                                                                                   |
| <i>CPH</i>           | <i>Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne</i>                                                                                                                                                 |
| <i>Dyaryusz 1788</i> | <i>Dyaryusz seymu ordynaryjnego pod zwiazkiem Konfederacyi Generalney Oboygá Narodów w Warszawie rozpoczętego roku pańskiego 1788, 2 vols. (Warsaw, 1790)</i>                        |
| <i>Dyaryusz 1790</i> | <i>Dyaryusz seymu ordynaryjnego pod zwiazkiem Konfederacyi Generalney Oboygá Narodów w podwoynym składzie zgromadzonego w Warszawie od dnia 16 grudnia roku 1790, (Warsaw, 1791)</i> |
| <i>EHR</i>           | <i>English Historical Review</i>                                                                                                                                                     |
| <i>GNiO</i>          | <i>Gazeta Narodowa i Obca</i> , ed. Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz <i>et al.</i> (1791–2)                                                                                                   |
| GStAPK               | Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin                                                                                                                              |

|                           |                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>GW</i>                 | <i>Gazeta Warszawska</i> , ed. Stefan Łuski (1789–92)                                                                                                                    |
| HHStA                     | Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv, Österreichs Staatsarchiv, Vienna                                                                                                          |
| <i>HJ</i>                 | <i>Historical Journal</i>                                                                                                                                                |
| <i>KH</i>                 | <i>Kwartalnik Historyczny</i>                                                                                                                                            |
| LMAVB                     | Lietuvos Mokslų Akademijos Vrublevskių Biblioteka, Vilnius                                                                                                               |
| LVIA                      | Lietuvos Valstybės Istorijos Archyvas, Vilnius                                                                                                                           |
| <i>MDSC</i>               | <i>Materiały do dziejów Sejmu Czteroletniego</i> , ed. Janusz Woliński, Jerzy Michalski, Emanuel Rostworowski, and (vol. vi) Artur Eisenbach, 6 vols. (Wrocław, 1955–69) |
| MJP                       | Michał Jerzy Poniatowski                                                                                                                                                 |
| NA FO                     | National Archives, Foreign Office, Kew, London                                                                                                                           |
| Ossol.                    | Biblioteka Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław                                                                                                                  |
| <i>PH</i>                 | <i>Przegląd Historyczny</i>                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>PHPE</i>               | <i>Pamiętnik Historyczno-Polityczno-Ekonomiczny</i> , ed. Piotr Świątkowski (1789–91)                                                                                    |
| <i>PSB</i>                | <i>Polski Słownik Biograficzny</i>                                                                                                                                       |
| SA                        | Stanisław August                                                                                                                                                         |
| <i>SEER</i>               | <i>Slavonic and East European Review</i>                                                                                                                                 |
| SHStA                     | Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Dresden                                                                                                                                   |
| <i>SVEC</i>               | <i>Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century</i>                                                                                                                    |
| <i>VL</i>                 | <i>Volumina Legum</i> , iv, vii–viii (St Petersburg, 1860), ix (Cracow, 1889)                                                                                            |
| VUB                       | Vilniaus Universiteto Biblioteka, Vilnius                                                                                                                                |
| <i>Wiersze polityczne</i> | Edmund Rabowicz and Krystyna Maksimowicz (eds.), <i>Wiersze polityczne Sejmu Czteroletniego</i> , 2 vols. (Warsaw, 1998–2000)                                            |
| <i>WO</i>                 | <i>Wiek Oświecenia</i>                                                                                                                                                   |
| <i>Zagadki</i>            | Edmund Rabowicz, Bernard Krakowski, and Jerzy Koweci (eds.), <i>Zagadki Sejmu Czteroletniego</i> (Warsaw, 1996)                                                          |
| ZP                        | Zbiór Popielów, AGAD                                                                                                                                                     |

## *Pronunciation guide*

Polish pronunciation is not quite as difficult as it looks. Every sound is pronounced, vowels are of uniform length, and stress falls almost invariably on the penultimate syllable in each word. Philologists should avert their eyes, but the basics may be rendered as follows:

|         |                                                                  |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| a       | as in 'has'                                                      |
| aj      | as in 'aye' or 'tie'                                             |
| au      | as in 'cow'                                                      |
| ą       | nasal sound, approximating to 'om' or 'on'                       |
| c       | 'ts', as in 'lots'                                               |
| ch      | as in the Scottish pronunciation of 'loch'. Often reduced to 'h' |
| cz      | hard 'ch', as in 'chalk'                                         |
| ć, ci   | soft 'ch', as in 'cheese'                                        |
| e       | as in 'yes'                                                      |
| ej      | as in 'grey'                                                     |
| ę       | nasal sound, approximating to 'em' or 'en'                       |
| i       | like the 'ee' in 'teeth'. Softens a preceding consonant          |
| j       | 'y' as in 'yes'                                                  |
| ł       | 'w', as in 'wood'                                                |
| ń, ni   | soft 'n' as in 'news'                                            |
| o       | as in 'dot'                                                      |
| ó       | as in 'cook'                                                     |
| r       | rolled                                                           |
| rz      | hard 'zh' as in 'measure'                                        |
| sz      | hard 'sh' as in 'shot'                                           |
| szcz    | a tough one, this. Try 'rash-choice'.                            |
| ś, si   | soft 'sh' as in 'sheep'                                          |
| ść, ści | like 'szcz' but softer                                           |
| u       | identical to 'ó'                                                 |
| w       | 'v', as in 'virago'                                              |
| y       | like the 'i' in 'grim'                                           |
| ź, zi   | soft 'zh' as in the French 'gite'                                |
| ż       | identical to 'rz'                                                |

Other consonants are pronounced as in English.



## *A note on terminology and measures*

For place names, the principle adopted here is to use the language of the dominant culture at the time, unless there is an acceptable English version, such as Warsaw or Cracow. The familiar Russian forms Kiev, Minsk, and Smolensk are treated as English. I have Anglicized the names of regions wherever possible. For example, we have Great Poland rather than Wielkopolska, and Samogitia rather than Żmudź or Žemaitija. By the eighteenth century, the preferred language of the Commonwealth's élites was Polish everywhere except among the Germanophone urban patriciates of Royal Prussia. The bishoprics of these parts became part of the Kingdom of Prussia after 1772. However, the flocks were overwhelmingly Polish-speaking, so these dioceses are called Warmia and Chełmno rather than Ermeland and Kulm. No more territorial revisionism is implied by the use of Polish names in the Commonwealth's eastern territories, than by the use of German names for the cities of Royal Prussia (which after 1772 and 1793 metamorphosed into *Westpreussen*). Nor is the choice of Polish forms intended to obliterate the fact that about half the population spoke various forms of Belarusian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, and Yiddish. Because the hierarchs of the Uniate Church were culturally Polish by this period, the seats of their bishoprics are given in Polish rather than Ukrainian or Belarusian. A particular problem is presented by the bishoprics and palatinates whose titular capital lay across the border in Russia, as a result of the annexations of 1667/86 and 1772. Because these titles were embedded in Polish culture, I have used the Polish forms Czernihów and Połock, rather than the Ukrainian Chernihiv and the Belarusian Polatsk, but where the context is clearly Russian, I have written Polotsk and Mogilev. I refer to the Union of Brest, but the palatinate of Brześć Litewski. Alternative place names are provided in the index.

Personal names are given in the most appropriate original language except in the case of monarchs, popes, and saints, who are transmuted into English. However, because neither the Latin Stanislaus nor the French Stanislas are English names, the king remains Stanisław August and his patron—St Stanisław.

In order to avoid a consonant-clustered rash of italic text, offices and institutions are Anglicized wherever possible. However, 'starost' (starosta) and 'starosty' (*starostwo*) are no more intelligible than their originals, so the latter remain. Likewise, 'sejm' and 'sejmik' should not tax the reader unduly, while 'grand hetman' and 'field hetman' will probably provoke less head-scratching than 'grand general' and the derisory 'little general'. I have taken the liberty of giving starostas, hetmans, sejms, and sejmiks English plural forms. Nor have I italicized szlachta (nobility). The name of the Polish-Lithuanian polity, the *Rzeczpospolita* (*Respublica*), could be rendered either as Republic or Commonwealth in this period, but I have followed my Anglophone colleagues and used the latter. The words for Commonwealth, Fatherland, and Poland are feminine in Polish, so I have preferred 'she' to the unemotional 'it'.

The very name of ‘Poland’ may raise some eyebrows, given the stress that most historians now place on the continuing constitutional importance of the division between the Polish Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and the confessional and linguistic diversity within the ‘Commonwealth of the Two Nations, Polish and Lithuanian’. However, contemporaries routinely referred to the Commonwealth as ‘Poland’ and even the staunchest defenders of Lithuanian prerogatives and identity called themselves ‘Poles’. It would be anachronistic not to follow that practice. Nobody at the time talked of ‘the Polish-Lithuanian revolution’. However, the ‘Poland’ and ‘Poles’ referred to in this book were not the Polish-speaking and overwhelmingly Roman Catholic nation-state advocated by the National Democrats and achieved by Soviet and Polish Communists in the twentieth century. Nor should the ‘Lithuanians’ of these pages be identified with today’s ethnic Lithuanian nation (or with modern Belarusians). To reinforce this point, the twenty-first-century terms ‘Poland-Lithuania’ and ‘Polish-Lithuanian’ will be used interchangeably with the eighteenth-century ones ‘Poland’ and ‘Polish’. ‘Ruthenia’ has had many meanings over the ages, but here refers to the East Slavonic lands that were part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth before 1772. It was in this sense that contemporaries referred to *Ruś*. ‘The Ukraine’ refers to the lands on both banks of the river Dnepr (Dnipro), a much smaller area than today’s state—Ukraine.

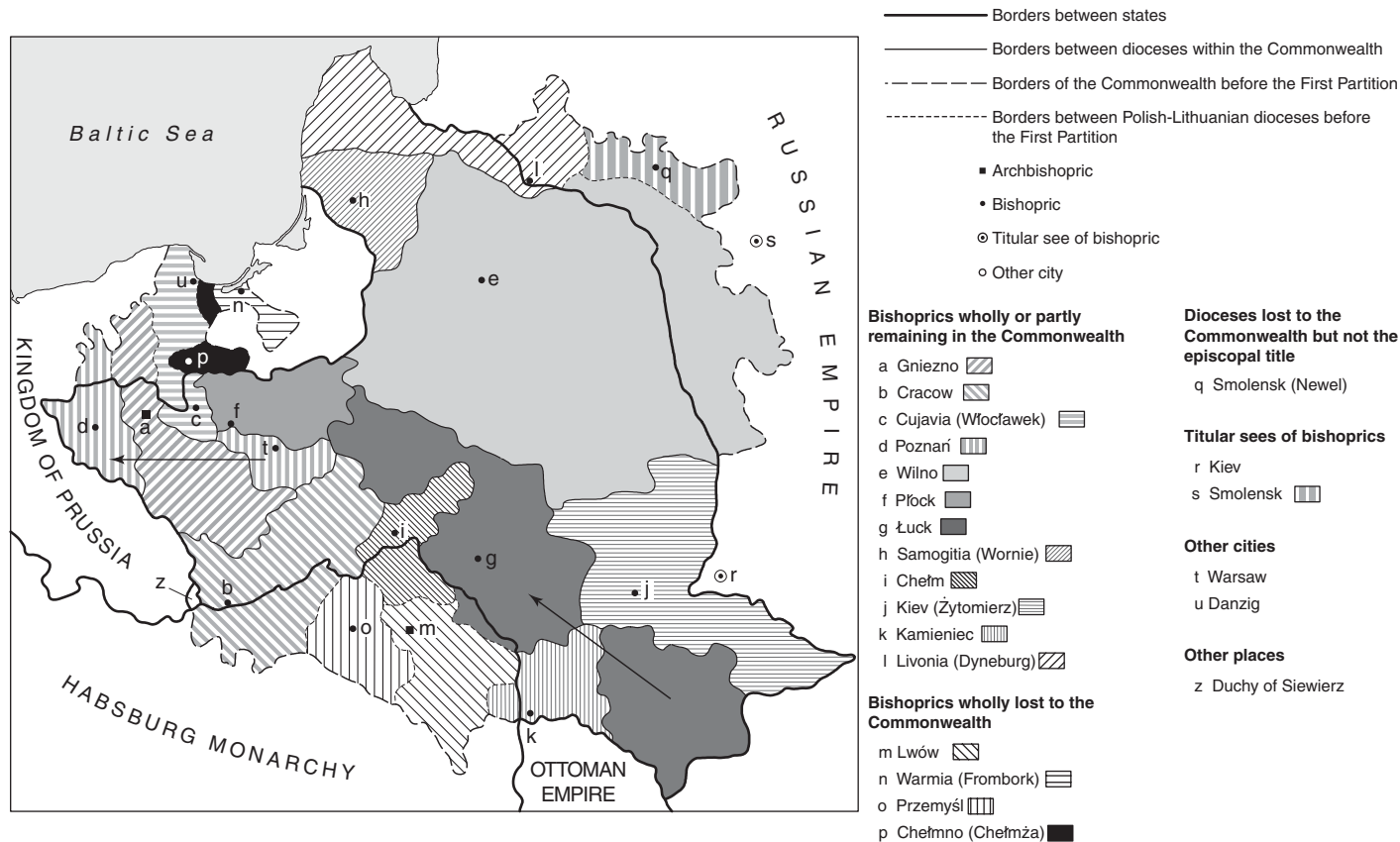
I prefer ‘Rome’ to ‘the Vatican’ as a shorthand for the Holy Apostolic See. For all the importance to the eighteenth-century papacy of St Peter’s Basilica and the adjoining palace on the Vatican Hill, the whole of Rome was papal until 1870.

Ecclesiastical terminology contains some pitfalls. The functional Anglican equivalents of *pleban* and *wikariusz* are—confusingly—vicar and curate respectively. Their exact equivalents in French were *curé* and *vicaire*, in Italian *parroco* and *vicario*, while in Austria they were *Pfarrer* and *Kooperator*. None of these will do. So I have kept the relatively approachable terms *pleban*, used interchangeably with ‘parish priest’ and *wikariusz*.

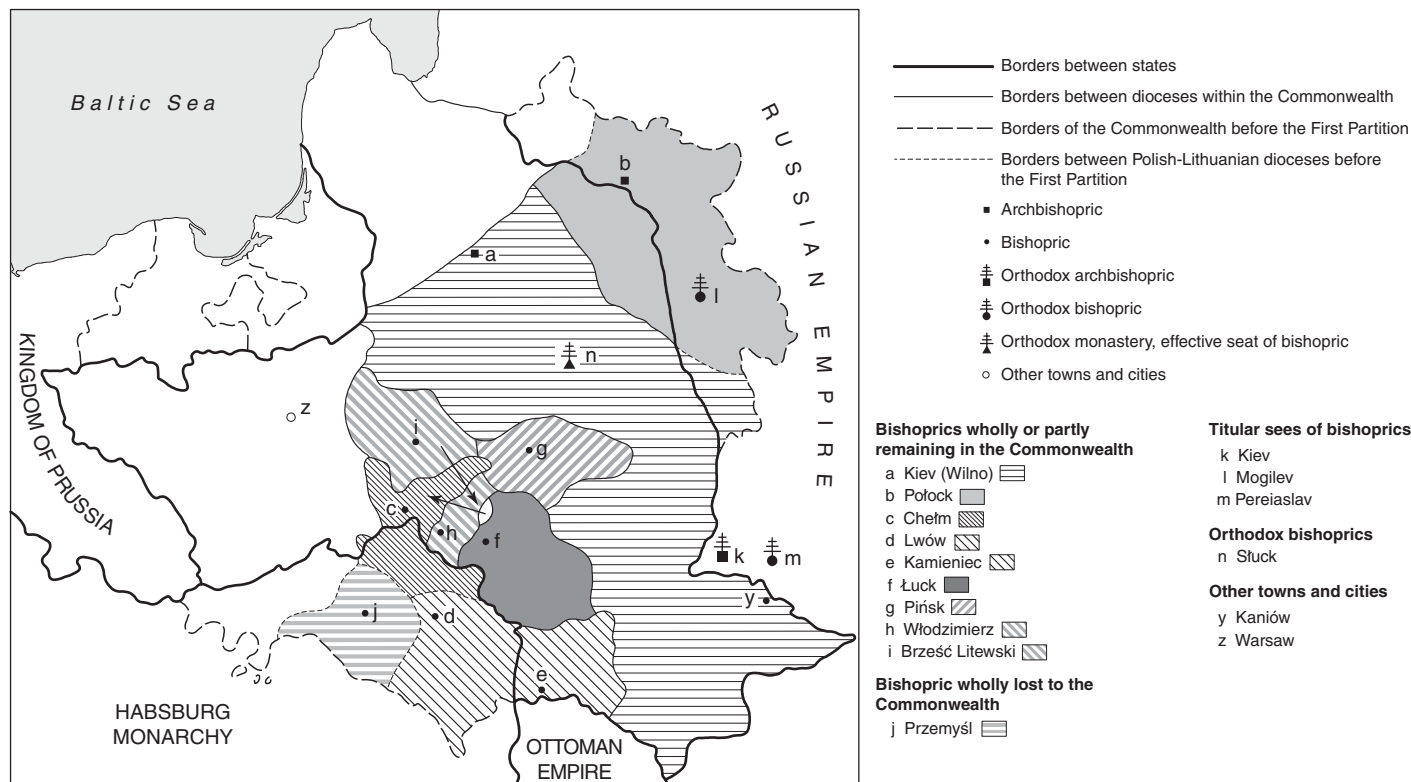
I have translated quotations into English, but here and there I have left particularly expressive phrases in the original languages. Quotations from French sources are left untranslated in the footnotes. The spelling, grammar, and capitalization of foreign language terms have not been modernized in direct quotations from unmodernized sources. The titles of cited publications retain their original spelling, except when already altered in later editions, but it has been necessary to modernize their capitalization, given the mixture of upper- and lower-case letters that adorn eighteenth-century title-pages.

A Polish mile was about 4 British miles or 7 kilometres. After the reform of 1764 a *łan* or *włoka* was the equivalent of 17.7 hectares. One *łan* was divided into 30 *morgi* (0.59 hectares).

The Polish *złoty* (florin, guilder) was subdivided into 40 *groszy* and the *grosz* was composed of 18 *denary*. After the reform of 1787 there were 18 Polish *złoty*s to the ducat. The ducat was worth 10 French *livres* and 10 British *shillings*, so one *livre* was worth 1.8 *złoty*s, and one pound 36 *złoty*s. There were 4 *złoty*s to the Austrian florin, 6 *złoty*s to the Prussian *thaler*, and about 6 *złoty*s to the Russian *ruble*.



Map 1 The dioceses of the Latin rite after the First Partition



Map 2 The dioceses of the Ruthenian rite after the First Partition



• Location of sejmik

#### I Province of Little Poland

1. Proszowice (palatinate of Cracow)
2. Opatów (palatinate of Sandomierz)
3. Lublin
4. Brańsk (county of Bielsk Podlaski)
5. Drohiczyn
6. Mielnik
7. Chełm
8. Łuck (palatinate of Volhynia)
9. Kamieniec (palatinate of Podolia)
10. Winnica (palatinate of Braclaw)
11. Żytomierz (palatinate of Kiev)
12. Włodzimierz (palatinate of Czernihów)

#### II Province of Great Poland

13. Środa (palatinates of Poznań, Kalisz, and Gniezno, i.e. Great Poland *sensu stricto*)
14. Sieradz
15. Wieluń
16. Łęczyca
17. Radziejów (palatinates of Inowrocław and Brześć Kujawski: Cujavia)
18. Lipno (county of Dobrzyń)
19. Raciąż (palatinate of Plock)
20. Rawa
21. Sochaczew
22. Gostynin
23. Warsaw
24. Ciechanów
25. Czersk
26. Zakroczym

27. Liw
28. Różan
29. Wyszogród
30. Łomża
31. Wizna
32. Nur

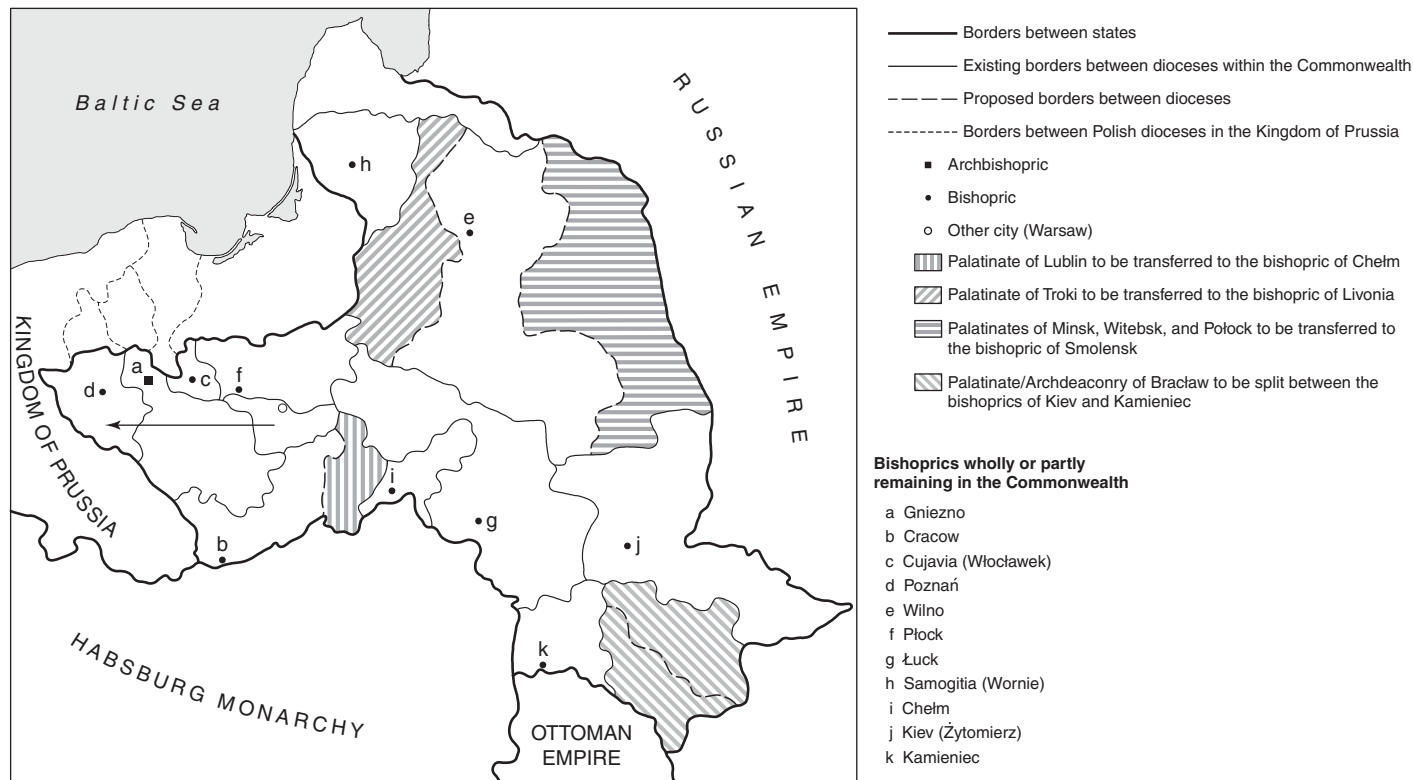
#### III Grand Duchy of Lithuania

33. Wilno
34. Oszmiana
35. Braślaw
36. Wilkomierz
37. Lida
38. Troki
39. Grodno
40. Kowno
41. Poniewież (district of Upita)
42. Rosienie (Duchy of Samogitia)
43. Brześć Litewski
44. Pińsk
45. Nowogródek
46. Stonim
47. Wołkowysk
48. Minsk
49. Bobrujsk (district of Rzeczyca)
50. Mozyrz
51. Żyżmory (district of Starodub)
52. Chołopenicze (district of Orsza)
53. Uszacz (palatinate of Połock)
54. Olita (palatinate of Smolensk)

#### Palatinate of Livonia

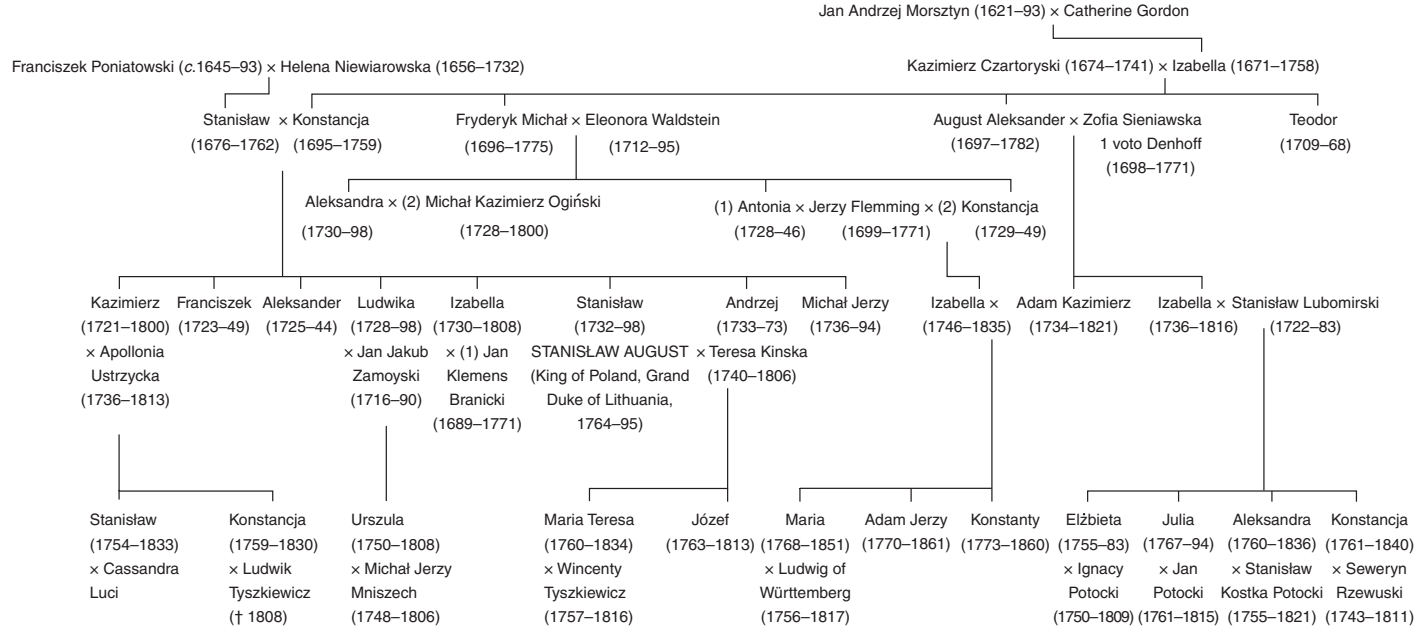
55. Dyneburg

Map 3 Locations of sejmiks in 1788 and 1790



Map 4 The 'clerical deputation's' proposals to redivide the Latin-rite dioceses

# Genealogical table



# Introduction

As the eighteenth century closed, devout Catholics must have wondered whether the apocalyptic time of trial had begun, and whether they would survive it. Rome was occupied by the forces of the French Republic. Pius VI died in French captivity on 29 August 1799. The Church in France remained rent by schism. For all the signs of a popular religious revival, especially among women, non-juring priests were proscribed, juring priests had been compromised, and countless communities were deprived of religious ministry. The secular Revolutionary calendar was still in force. ‘Liberation’ had been meted out to the monks and nuns of France, and to most of those encountered by French soldiers elsewhere.

The calamity of dechristianization in 1793–4 had sobered up almost all advocates of a more ‘philosophical’, ‘reasonable’, or ‘enlightened’ Catholic religion. The allegations of a philosophic and masonic plot to destroy throne and altar, made by Augustin Barruel, Edmund Burke, and others, now seemed more plausible than at the beginning of the Revolution, or before its outbreak. The campaigns against the Jesuits in the Iberian monarchies and France, the upheavals inflicted upon the Church in the Habsburg lands by Joseph II, and the experiments of his brother Leopold in Tuscany were all tarred with the diabolical spirit of the eighteenth century. To travesty Lenin’s phrase, to be an enlightened Catholic on the vigil of the nineteenth century was to appear to be either a fellow-traveller or a useful idiot.<sup>1</sup>

While Catholic monarchs could not be relied upon to defend the Church (even the martyred Louis XVI had wavered), the heterodox powers of the North—Britain, Prussia, and Russia—had gained in strength. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, once Europe’s largest Catholic state, had been partitioned among Orthodox Russia, Protestant Prussia, and Josephist Austria. Most at risk were about four million Uniate souls, whom Catherine II had begun to wrench from their obedience to Rome and drive into the Russian Orthodox fold. From the perspective of Rome, the demise of Poland was a lamentable blow to the faith, but attempts to resurrect her by revolutionary means would be worse. With the papacy assailed by modernity, so it would remain throughout the nineteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> See O. Chadwick, *The Popes and European Revolution* (Oxford, 1981), chs. 5–7; N. Aston, *Religion and Revolution in France, 1789–1804* (London, 2000), part IV; id., *Christianity and Revolutionary Europe c. 1750–1830* (Cambridge, 2002), 211–59; D. Beales, *Prosperity and Plunder: European Catholic Monasteries in the Age of Revolution, 1650–1815* (Cambridge, 2003), part III; D. M. McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity* (New York, 2001), chs. 1–3.



Although, from the papal point of view, the rot had set in well before the French Revolution, in practice a chasm separated the states of the 1780s from those of the 1820s. Early modern polities, with few exceptions, were dominated by the monarchy, the Church, and the nobility. These three principal components of Europe's *Ancien Régime* were bonded into a mutually supportive embrace, although everywhere they grappled for position. Even Joseph II had no intention either of abolishing nobility or of undermining religion. Until Joseph's sole reign at least, in Catholic Europe the Church's role was significantly more autonomous than in Protestant states or in Orthodox Russia. The position of most monarchs with regard to their nobilities strengthened between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, although historians have long since contrasted the practical limitations of royal 'absolutism' with its ideological pretensions. Although administration grew more bureaucratic, royal courts remained key theatres for the interplay between monarchy, Church, and nobility (retaining part of that role even in Josephist Austria and Frederician Prussia). The character of these links changed during the eighteenth century, but they remained vital until the French Revolution.<sup>2</sup> Then, during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, many Catholic monarchs and nobles sacrificed the Church, especially the regular clergy, usually in order to engorge themselves. Despite the partial restorations and expiations of 1815, the relationship was never quite the same again. Many nineteenth-century clergymen would have echoed the bitter reproach of Father Pirrone to Prince Salina: 'you nobles will come to an agreement with the Liberals, and yes, even with the Masons, at our expense, at the expense of the Church.'<sup>3</sup>

In the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, this triangular relationship was more heavily weighted towards the nobility than elsewhere. This book seeks to explain the policies adopted by Poland's noble citizens towards the Catholic Church in 1788–92, shortly before their Commonwealth was destroyed. In doing so, it shows how the balance between nobility, Church, and monarchy tilted first one way, and then another. Perhaps surprisingly, both throne and altar were strengthened by the challenge of noble republicanism, and some of the consequences of those shifts still affect Poland today.

## 1. THE POLISH-LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH

The Commonwealth of the Two Nations, Polish and Lithuanian, dismembered in 1772, 1793, and 1795, differed greatly from the Polish and Lithuanian states reborn in 1918, and still more so from those that reclaimed their sovereignty in 1990/91. At Lublin in 1569, after nearly two centuries of uneasy dynastic union,

<sup>2</sup> See J. Adamson (ed.), *The Princely Courts of Europe: Ritual, Politics and Culture under the Ancien Régime 1500–1750* (London, 1999); M. Schaich (ed.), *Monarchy and Religion: The Transformation of Royal Culture in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford, 2007). A classic study of a relationship between the monarchy, the Church, and the nobility is R. J. W. Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy, 1550–1700: An Interpretation*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1984).

<sup>3</sup> G. Tomasi di Lampedusa, *The Leopard* [1958], trans. A. Colquhoun (London, 1998), 30.

the Kingdom or Crown of Poland (*Corona Regni Poloniae*) and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were joined into a federal polity. They shared an elective monarch and a parliament, or sejm. Laws, armies, ministries, and other offices remained separate. The political system was based on consensus.<sup>4</sup>

The Commonwealth was essentially her numerous nobility, the szlachta.<sup>5</sup> After the extinction of the principal branch of the native Piast dynasty in 1370, Angevin and Jagiellon kings of Poland procured the succession of their heirs with concessions to the nobility. By the early sixteenth century the szlachta had gained the rights to consent to new taxes and new laws, and freedom from imprisonment without trial. By the middle of the century, they had won religious liberty as well. By degrees, these liberties became the share of Lithuanian and Ruthenian boyars. A self-confident political culture emerged, steeped in the ancient Roman republic, while claiming descent from the valiant Sarmatians who had defied the Romans. Nobles were *ipso facto* citizens; other pretensions to citizenship were rejected. Clergymen were citizens of the Commonwealth only if they were noble-born.

The monarch, the senate, and the chamber of envoys together constituted the Estates of the sejm, in a self-consciously Aristotelian *forma mixta*. The 'aristocratic' element was the senate, which had emerged from the late medieval royal and grand ducal councils. Senators were appointed by the king for life. The element of *politeia*, sometimes impolitely called democracy, was provided by the 'knightly Estate' or non-senatorial nobility. Its envoys (*posłowie*) were elected by local assemblies, or sejmiki. Although other 'estates' were often spoken of, they had no acknowledged political status. The Polish clergy were not the First Estate; they were represented in the Estates solely by their bishops, who ranked first in the senate, but were a small minority within it. The introduction of a fully elective throne following the death in 1572 of the last Jagiellon, Sigismund Augustus, weakened the monarchy further. His successors could not declare war, raise taxes, despatch diplomatic missions, or even marry without their leading subjects' consent. Yet the monarch retained prerogatives such as the right to command the armies in wartime, summon the sejm, preside in the senate, nominate senators, ministers, and many other officials and dignitaries, and distribute thousands of Crown estates (*królewszczyny*, appertaining to the office of starosta), to the 'deserving'. The targeted use of these powers kept the richest citizens—the magnates—from becoming overmighty. Until the 1640s a precarious constitutional balance was maintained, the Commonwealth prospered, and fought off her enemies.

Thereafter, weakened by decades of warfare on her own soil, the Commonwealth sickened.<sup>6</sup> Magnates grew in importance at the expense of the monarchy and middling szlachta alike—although the political outcome was debilitating

<sup>4</sup> An accessible introduction is D. Stone, *The Polish-Lithuanian State, 1386–1795* (Seattle, WA, 2001).

<sup>5</sup> See R. I. Frost, 'The Nobility of Poland-Lithuania, 1569–1795', in H. M. Scott (ed.), *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ii, *Northern, Central and Eastern Europe* (London, 1995), 183–222.

<sup>6</sup> For a cogent thesis of the Commonwealth's military decline see R. I. Frost, *The Northern Wars 1558–1721: War, State and Society in Northeastern Europe* (Harlow, 2000).

rivalry rather than stable oligarchy. The inquisitive, enterprising, optimistic, often fractious, but generally open-minded culture of the Renaissance gradually gave way to an exuberant, but also conformist, xenophobic, and increasingly morbid Baroque. The principle of consensus at the sejm hardened into the *liberum veto*, which allowed a single envoy to curtail the proceedings, and nullify all legislation agreed until that point. The chief justification of the *veto* was that it prevented the king from introducing *absolutum dominium* by corrupting a majority of the sejm. But if it stopped any change at all, so much the better. Change, as a law of 1669 stated, was perilous. The only way of circumventing the *veto* was to hold the sejm under the aegis of a confederacy. Confederacies, armed leagues of the nobility, could decide by majority vote. They could be formed ‘around’ the king as well as against him. But their avowed purpose was first to save the Commonwealth from danger, and then to restore her pristine state. Certainly not to introduce novelties.

During the reign of Augustus III (1733–63) only one sejm passed any laws at all. Many sejmiks were also broken up, especially those which elected judges, called deputies (*deputaci*), to the Crown and Lithuanian Tribunals—the supreme courts of appeal for the szlachta. Politics became a contest between magnate cōteries for the fruits of royal patronage and control of the law courts, thinly veiled by ‘republican’ rhetoric. Hopes that the house of Saxony might restore the Commonwealth’s standing were dashed during the Great Northern War (1700–21). Henceforth, St Petersburg kept Poland in anarchic impotence. Peace brought economic recovery, and the dykes of cultural insularity, never watertight, began to crumble away, but the more the keenest minds lamented the state of the Commonwealth and put forward ideas for her ‘repair’ (*naprawa*), the more sterile her politics became.

Catherine II ended the impasse. During the interregnum of 1763–4 she handed a decisive victory to one of the magnate factions, and had her former lover elected king. To her chagrin, Stanisław August Poniatowski (1764–95) turned out to be a reformer. The resulting convulsions led in 1772 to the First Partition, by which Russia, Prussia, and Austria seized about a third of the Commonwealth’s lands and population. Poland’s subsequent efforts to recover her strength and independence precipitated her dismemberment. The Four Years’ Sejm or ‘Polish Revolution’ of 1788–92 began to reinvigorate the Commonwealth. Having been diverted by war with the Ottoman Empire, Catherine invaded Poland-Lithuania in 1792, and divided up more than half of the Commonwealth’s remaining lands with Prussia in the Second Partition of 1793. An insurrection broke out in 1794. Its suppression was followed by the Third Partition (this time, as in 1772, with Austria as the third beneficiary) and dissolution of the rump of the Commonwealth in 1795.<sup>7</sup>

This book seeks to explain the Polish Revolution’s policies towards the Catholic Church. But this is not solely a Polish story—certainly not in the modern sense of

<sup>7</sup> See J. Lukowski, *The Partitions of Poland: 1772, 1793, 1795* (Harlow, 1999); M. G. Müller, *Die Teilungen Polens: 1772–1793–1795* (Berlin, 1984); P. W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Oxford, 1994), 11–19, 74–150; R. H. Lord, *The Second Partition of Poland* (Cambridge, MA, 1915); id., ‘The Third Partition of Poland’, *SEER*, 3 (1924/5), 481–98.

'Polish'. The borders of 1772–93 differed more radically from those of today's Poland than any before or since. Only about half of Poland's present territory was then part of the Commonwealth, of which roughly three quarters now lie in Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, and Latvia. On the eve of the Second Partition the Commonwealth was inhabited by about ten million people, almost two-thirds of them in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the five Ruthenian palatinates of the Polish Crown.<sup>8</sup> Up to three quarters of a million were nobles, of whom all but a few thousand were Catholics of the Latin rite. Roughly as numerous as the szlachta were Yiddish-speaking Jews, while up to half a million were Orthodox Ruthenians. The picture was completed by smaller numbers of mostly German-speaking Lutherans, mostly Polish-speaking Calvinists, Muslim Tatars, Karaites, and others. About half the overall population habitually spoke a form of Polish; slightly more than half adhered to the Latin rite of the Catholic Church, and about a third to its Ruthenian rite—also known as the Uniate Church. That was after two centuries of post-Tridentine Catholic recovery and renewal, and the loss of many Orthodox and Protestant inhabitants along with the partitioned territories.<sup>9</sup>

By the early eighteenth century, if not earlier, the Commonwealth was referred to ubiquitously as 'Poland'. The Lithuanian nobility had long since adopted the Polish language; Lithuanian had essentially become the tongue of the peasants of the north-west of the Grand Duchy (although it was known to some of the clergymen who ministered to them). But Lithuania was always more than just one of the three provinces of the Commonwealth, alongside Little Poland and Great Poland. The sense of 'Two Nations' persisted. A few of the descendants of the Grand Duchy's Polonophone nobles have even maintained this dual identity into the twenty-first century.<sup>10</sup>

The Commonwealth's Ruthenian territories had once been the heartland of Kievan Rus'. They were ravaged by the Mongols in the thirteenth century, then conquered by the Lithuanians and Poles, before the southern reaches of the Grand Duchy were transferred to the Polish Crown in 1569. Although Chancery Ruthenian was used for legal purposes in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Volhynia, and the Ukraine until 1697, Ruthenia was inadequately represented in

<sup>8</sup> E. Rostworowski, 'Miasta i mieszczanie w ustroju Trzeciego Maja', in J. Kowecki (ed.), *Sejm Czteroletni i jego tradycje* (Warsaw, 1991), 138–51, at 138 and 144. The five palatinates of Crown Ruthenia were Kiev, Braclaw (together referred to as the 'Polish Ukraine'), Volhynia, Podolia, and Chełm.

<sup>9</sup> See, *inter alia*, E. Rostworowski, 'Ilu było w Rzeczypospolitej obywateli szlachty?', *KH*, 94/3 (1987), 3–40; C. Kuklo, *Demografia Rzeczypospolitej przedrozbiorowej*, (Warsaw, 2009), 222–4; J. A. Gierowski, 'Przestrzeń etnograficzno-geograficzna Rzeczypospolitej Polsko-Litewskiej', in id., *Na szlakach Rzeczypospolitej w nowożytnej Europie* (Cracow, 2008), 557–72; G. Hundert, *Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century: A Genealogy of Modernity* (Berkeley, CA, and Los Angeles, CA, 2004); A. Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, 1350–1881* (Oxford, 2010), chs. 1–6; W. Kriegseisen, 'Between Intolerance and Persecution. Polish and Lithuanian Protestants in the 18th Century', *APH*, 73 (1996), 13–27.

<sup>10</sup> See M. Niendorf, *Das Großfürstentum Litauen. Studien zur Nationsbildung in der Frühen Neuzeit (1569–1795)* (Wiesbaden, 2006); R. I. Frost, 'Ordering the Kaleidoscope: The Construction of Identities in the Lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth since 1569', in L. Scales and O. Zimmer (eds.), *Power and the Nation in European History*, (Cambridge, 2005), 212–31.

the Commonwealth's structures. It was no accident that the Union of Brest of 1595/6, which sought to unite the Orthodox Church in the Commonwealth to Rome, put down deeper roots in the northern—Lithuanian—part of Ruthenia than in the Ukraine, where it provoked bitter divisions. The Ukraine's social, political, and confessional grievances erupted in the Cossack revolt of 1648, from which the Commonwealth never entirely recovered. Vast tracts, including the cities of Kiev and Smolensk, were ceded to Muscovy in 1667/86. After peace was restored *circa* 1720 the Commonwealth's remaining Ruthenian lands remained volatile, despite their growing prosperity. The confessional frontier between Uniate Catholicism and Orthodoxy approached the new border with the Russian Empire, leading to a battle for souls between the hosts of St Petersburg and Rome in the second half of the eighteenth century. When Ruthenian peasants referred to the *szlachta* as 'Poles' (*Lachy*) they conveyed more than the political sense of Polishness—they expressed a social and cultural chasm.<sup>11</sup>

The implications of the Polish Revolution for Ruthenia might have been profound, had it not been for the Russian invasion of 1792 and the Second and Third Partitions. In some ways the reforms designed for the Catholic clergy of the Latin rite incidentally affected those of the Ruthenian rite. However, the raising of the status of the Uniate clergy and the establishment of an autonomous, or 'autocephalous' Orthodox hierarchy were also intended to promote loyalty to the Commonwealth among Ruthenian peasants.<sup>12</sup> This book will address the problems of the Commonwealth's confessional frontier with Russian Orthodoxy. But its principal purpose is to explain the decisions made by noble politicians regarding the Catholic Church in the Commonwealth they called 'Poland', at a time when the wider Catholic Church began to experience its 'time of trial'.

## 2. THE POLISH REVOLUTION, THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, AND THE HISTORIANS

Polish nobles traditionally prided themselves on the fervour of their Catholic faith. The great majority of the sons and grandsons of those who had embraced the Reformed creeds converted to Catholicism in the decades after the Union of Lublin. Yet their descendants also contributed to the trials of the Church. Between 1788 and 1792, an assembly composed almost entirely of Catholic nobles decided to tax the clergy at more than double the rate of the lay nobility, to secularize the estates of the richest bishopric, that of Cracow, in order to help pay for the army, and to rearrange dioceses so that equal episcopal salaries would be paid for equal episcopal work. These reforms have not much troubled posterity. French

<sup>11</sup> See, *inter alia*, A. Brüning, *Unio non est unitas. Polen-Litauens Weg im konfessionellen Zeitalter. (1569–1648)* (Wiesbaden, 2008); B. Skinner, *The Western Front of the Eastern Church: Uniate and Orthodox Conflict in 18th-Century Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia* (DeKalb, IL, 2009).

<sup>12</sup> I address these questions in 'Deconfessionalization? The Policy of the Polish Revolution towards Ruthenia, 1788–1792', *Central Europe*, 6 (2008), 91–121.

dechristianization soon eclipsed them, while in Poland-Lithuania they were overtaken by the partitions. But in these respects at least, even Joseph II had not gone as far.

Why were these decisions made, and not others? Why, compared to the Habsburg Monarchy, were monasteries spared closure? To what extent can the republican character of the Polish-Lithuanian polity explain the different outcomes? What can the discussions about the state of the Church and the needs of the country reveal about expectations of religion towards the end of the eighteenth century? Can the policies of the Polish Revolution towards the Church shed any light on why the French Revolution was so much more destructive?<sup>13</sup> These are some of the questions this book seeks to answer.

I have called the Four Years' Sejm 'the Polish Revolution'. For contemporaries, 1788 saw a 'revolution' in the system of foreign and domestic politics imposed by Russia after the First Partition. Poland left the Russian system and aspired to join the one revolving around Prussia and Britain.<sup>14</sup> This revolution might be compared with Gustav III's coup in August 1772. In both cases, Russia was distracted by a war with the Ottoman Empire. But whereas the Swedish revolution strengthened the monarch, the Polish Revolution initially reduced Stanisław August to a cipher. 3 May 1791 brought a revolution in the system of government. This time too it was broadly comparable with the Swedish Revolutions of August 1772 and February 1789. Contemporaries made just such comparisons.<sup>15</sup>

The *Law on Government* was acclaimed on 3 May 1791 in circumstances resembling a coup. It was denounced by its opponents as a betrayal of Polish liberty, for it made the monarchy hereditary and in some respects stronger, while sweeping away confederacies and the *liberum veto*. As an outline of a new system of government, the Constitution of 3 May was comparable to the American federal constitution, ratified in 1789, and the French constitution accepted by Louis XVI on 13 September 1791. After 3 May 1791, many contemporaries, including Burke, contrasted the 'peaceful' Polish Revolution with the violent one in France. To others, both Poles and Frenchmen were on the side of liberty.<sup>16</sup>

Hostile foreign diplomats avidly reported an offshoot of the 'democratic' and 'Jacobin' French triffid growing in Poland. Catherine II contributed to the international crusade against 'Jacobinism' by invading and partitioning the

<sup>13</sup> Cf. D. Beales, 'The French Church and the Revolution', *HJ*, 46 (2003), 211–18, inspired chiefly by J. McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1999).

<sup>14</sup> See R. Butterwick, 'Political Discourses of the Polish Revolution, 1788–1792', *EHR*, 120 (2005), 695–731, at 696; Lord, *Second Partition*, 101, 105.

<sup>15</sup> See below, 95, 163; G. Majewska, 'Sweden's Form of Government during the Reign of Gustavus III—in the Eyes of the Journals of the Polish Enlightenment', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 22/4 (1997), 291–304, at 292 and 294; Butterwick, 'Political Discourses', 725; M.-C. Skuncke, 'Stanisław August i Gustaw III', in *Orzeł i trzy korony. Sąsiedztwo polsko-szwedzkie nad Bałtykiem w epoce nowożytnej (XVI–XVIII w.)* (Warsaw, 2002), 75–87; M. Roberts, '19 August 1772: An Ambivalent Revolution', in R. Ajello et al. (eds.), *L'Età dei lumi. Studi storici sul settecento europeo in onore di Franco Venturi*, i (Naples, 1985), 532–68.

<sup>16</sup> Z. Libiszowska, 'Odgłosy Konstytucji 3 Maja na Zachodzie', in A. Barszczewska-Krupa (ed.), *Konstytucja 3 Maja w tradycji i kulturze polskiej*, 2 vols. (Łódź, 1991) i. 70–81.

Commonwealth. The charge was better founded in 1794 than in 1792. The *levée-en-masse*, the insurrectionary dictatorship, and the summary trials and executions of 'traitors' provoked somewhat exaggerated analogies with the French Terror of Year II. The leader of the Insurrection, Tadeusz Kościuszko, proclaimed, albeit ineffectively, the emancipation of Poland's serfs.<sup>17</sup> In many respects, 1794 looks more revolutionary than 1788–92.

Various chapters in Poland's thousand-year history saw a 'sundering of sovereignty and hegemony through a period of struggle to reestablishment of sovereignty and hegemony under new management'—Charles Tilly's undemanding definition of a revolution. A case can be made for a 'transfer of power over a state' in the autumn of 1788, a sudden solidifying of that power on 3 May 1791, and a counter-revolution in the summer of 1792.<sup>18</sup> But I would argue that a revolution is any change which is both substantial and swift. As a corpus of legislative changes, rather than as insurrectionary violence, conditions of multiple sovereignty, social meltdown, a state of mind, or a set of aspirations, the Polish Revolution has most coherence when defined as the work of the Four Years' Sejm. With the signal exception of 1980–1, the other candidates were primarily uprisings that attempted to re-establish an independent Polish state.<sup>19</sup>

The Four Years' Sejm passed roughly a tenth of all the legislation of Poland and Poland-Lithuania before the partitions.<sup>20</sup> It gave the Commonwealth a new system of alliances, a larger army, new systems of recruitment and taxation, speedier parliamentary procedures, and new institutions of central and local government. The law of 18 April 1791 granted limited political rights to burghers and tore down many barriers preventing their advance in the Church, army, and state. The Constitution of 3 May included a vague phrase taking the peasantry under the protection of the law.<sup>21</sup> Had the sejm lasted longer, it would have passed an enlightened law code, and probably reformed the status of Jews. There were

<sup>17</sup> See B. Leśnodorski, *Polscy jakobini. Karta z dziejów insurekcji 1794 r.* (Warsaw, 1960, shortened French edn: *Les Jacobins polonais*, Paris, 1965). J. Kowecki, *Uniwersał polaniecki i sprawa jego realizacji* (Warsaw, 1957).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. C. Tilly, *Popular Contention in Great Britain, 1758–1834* (Cambridge, MA, 1995), 237. See also C. Tilly, *European Revolutions, 1492–1992* (Oxford, 1993).

<sup>19</sup> T. Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity*, 3rd edn (Harmondsworth, 1999). Other candidates might include the events of 1768–72, 1806–13, 1830–1, 1846, 1863–4, 1905, 1918–20, 1944, and perhaps 1956.

<sup>20</sup> *Volumina Legum*. Vols. i–viii, covering the years 1347–1780, were originally published in Warsaw in 1732–82, and republished in St Petersburg, 1859–60. The legislation of the Four Years' Sejm occupies pp. 46–471 (nine-tenths) of vol. ix, first published in Cracow in 1889. The legislation of the final sejm, held in 1793, constitutes vol. x (Poznań, 1952). The Four Years' Sejm's legislation is most fully discussed by B. Leśnodorski, *Dzieło Sejmu Czteroletniego (1788–1792). Studium historyczno-prawne* (Wrocław, 1951).

<sup>21</sup> *Konstytucja 3 Maja*, ed. J. Kowecki (Warsaw, 1981), art. IV, pp. 84–5. I have often followed the eloquent translation by Franciszek Bukaty, the Polish minister in London, *New Constitution of the Government of Poland* (London, 1791), reprinted in the *Annual Register* for 1791, but it has significant omissions. Cf. Jerzy Lukowski's version in his *Disorderly Liberty: The Political Culture of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 2010), 261–71.

ambitious plans for ‘economic’ and ‘moral’ constitutions.<sup>22</sup> All this indicated, as a French agent put it, ‘the revolution which had taken place in their ideas’.<sup>23</sup>

Relatively little has been written on the Polish Revolution’s ecclesiastical reforms. The main reasons for this are to be found, I suggest, in the part played by the Four Years’ Sejm in Polish historical consciousness. From the outset the merits of the sejm’s legislation were considered secondary to the recovery of the Commonwealth’s independence and self-respect after decades of humiliating dependency upon Russia. For Poles drinking deeply of the cup of national sovereignty, what mattered was not so much the content of laws as the right to make them. For almost four years, Poles made laws which were not dictated by Russia or any other power. Although not all of the changes could be undone by Catherine II’s counter-revolutionary henchmen, the Constitution of 3 May and the Four Years’ Sejm were already symbols of national independence. Whether or not nineteenth-century patriots wished to reimplement the Constitution once statehood was regained, they cherished its memory. In emigration, and from 1919 to 1939 and since 1990 in Poland, the Third of May has been celebrated as a national holiday. The ‘Great Sejm’ has been immortalized.<sup>24</sup>

The ideal of national sovereignty has tended to merge with that of national unanimity. After 3 May 1791 the ‘patriotic’ party, based on the coalition of royalists and ‘enlightened’ republicans which had passed the Constitution, sought to win over doubters, stigmatized overt opposition as treason, condemned much of the past as ‘anarchy’, and spread the message that, somehow, national unity in support of the Revolution would save the Commonwealth from destruction.<sup>25</sup> Counter-revolution was characterized as the work of a traitorous minority of ‘aristocrats’. The overwhelming majority of nobles and burghers, it was—and is—claimed, supported the Constitution. The participation of some peasants (and a few Jews) in Kościuszko’s army in 1794 was sufficient to create the illusion of an entire nation united in its revolutionary will, and duly cast into slavery by its vengeful enemies. Indeed, in February 1792 nearly three-quarters of the sejmiks expressed clear support for the Constitution, and none openly opposed it. On the other hand, some historians have questioned the willingness of all sectors of the population to make sacrifices for the Revolution and Insurrection.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> See M. Pasztor, *Hugo Kollątaj na Sejmie Wielkim w latach 1791–1792* (Warsaw, 1991), chs. 6 and 8.

<sup>23</sup> Jean Alexandre Bonneau to Armand de Montmorin, 13 April 1791, AMAE, CP Pologne 318, f. 215.

<sup>24</sup> Ample evidence is provided by the flood of bicentennial conference proceedings, the best of which are J. Kowecki (ed.), *Sejm Czteroletni i jego tradycje* (Warsaw, 1991); and S. Fiszman (ed.), *Constitution and Reform in Eighteenth-Century Poland: The Constitution of 3 May 1791* (Bloomington, IN, 1997).

<sup>25</sup> J. Michalski, “‘Wszystko pójdzie w śmienie’” (o politycznym optymizmie po 3 maja), in id., *Studia historyczne z XVIII i XIX wieku*, 2 vols. (Warsaw, 2007), i. 323–34.

<sup>26</sup> W. Szczygielski, *Referendum trzciomajowe. Sejmiki lutowe 1792 roku* (Łódź, 1994). Cf. D. Rolnik, ‘Szlachta koronna Rzeczypospolitej wobec wojny polsko-rosyjskiej 1792 roku—o osobistym i ekonomicznym zaangażowaniu obywateli w obronę Konstytucji 3 Maja’, *Studia Historyczne*, 43 (2000), 215–33; J. Kowecki, *Pospolite ruszenie w insurekcji 1794 roku* (Warsaw, 1963).



Part of the myth of unanimity is the union between Church and nation, which means the Roman Catholic Church (of the Latin rite) and the Polish nation. Theologically, the Church has come to mean the mystical body of Christ, composed of all (true) believers, worshipping through the sacraments, proclaiming and practising the Word of God. In practice, it has usually meant the (Catholic) hierarchy and clergy.<sup>27</sup> Naturally, in writing of the Church, historians cannot negate eighteenth-century perceptions of its clerical and institutional nature, but neither should they ignore reminders that the Church was and remains a community of all of Christ's followers.<sup>28</sup> Such assertions indicate tension, but the tune of unity, whether of Church and nation, or of clergy and laity within both Church and nation, was trumpeted after 3 May 1791. It would seem as though for one *annus mirabilis*, until the Russian armies invaded in May 1792, the entire country echoed to the ringing of bells, the murmuring of prayers, and the intoning of *Te Deum laudamus*. Even in 1794, when two bishops were hanged, another was reprieved at the last minute, and the primate was (falsely) rumoured to have taken poison rather than face the gallows, most historians insist that the Church was with the nation, and the nation was with the Church.<sup>29</sup>

It is doubtless uncomfortable for Catholic Polish historians to dwell upon discord over ecclesiastical matters at such a glorious national moment. Yet the clergy were at times bitterly at odds with a significant section, probably a majority, of the political nation. Tens of thousands of nobles attended sejmiiks in 1788 and 1790 and acclaimed instructions for their envoys which made unpleasant reading for priests. Some clergymen felt themselves under siege. The strikingly similar Catholic mentalities of the post-1989 era—the anxieties about secular and 'liberal' post-modernity that succeeded the struggle against atheist Communism—have not made much impact upon the evaluation of 1788–92.

Walerian Kalinka's monumental history of the Four Years' Sejm, first published in the 1880s, remains the sole reasonably detailed account of the debates, legislation, and intrigues concerning the Catholic Church (of both rites). It only reaches 3 May 1791. Kalinka based his work on previously unconsulted archival material. His rare ability to master sources enabled him to write a narrative that has worn the test of time. It was, however, written from a particular perspective. After repenting his involvement in the 1846 Galician rising, Kalinka became a foe of

<sup>27</sup> H. Seweryniak, *Święty Kościół powszedni* (Warsaw, 1999), 7–59. Cf. A. E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Oxford, 1994), 405–26.

<sup>28</sup> See below, 73, 119.

<sup>29</sup> J. Ziółek, *Konstytucja 3 Maja. Kościelno-narodowe tradycje święta* (Lublin, 1991). T. Chachulski, 'Konstytucja 3 Maja w modlitewnikach końca XVIII wieku (zarys problemów badawczych)'; M. Ślusarska, 'Konstytucja 3 Maja w kaznodziejstwie okolicznościowym lat 1791–1792'; F. Sawicka, 'Uroczystości dla uczczenia pierwszej rocznicy Konstytucji 3 Maja', all in T. Kostkiewiczowa (ed.), *Rok Monarchii Konstytucyjnej. Piśmiennictwo polskie lat 1791–1792 wobec Konstytucji 3 Maja* (Warsaw, 1992), 113–22, 153–75, 177–94. A. Woltanowski, 'Czarna legenda o śmierci prymasa Poniatowskiego. Źródła i historiografia', *KH*, 94/4 (1987), 25–62. A. Woltanowski (ed.), *Kościół katolicki a powstanie kościuszkowskie. Zapomniana karta z dziejów insurekcji 1794 r. Wybór źródeł* (Warsaw, 1995). M. Ślusarska, 'Między *sacrum* a *profanum*. O obrzędowości powstania kościuszkowskiego', *WO*, 12 (1996), 107–33.

all revolutionary movements. Late in life he took religious orders. He believed that the szlachta had squandered its liberty; he had scant sympathy for the Polish republican tradition, preferring instead the alliance of throne and altar. Kalinka also denounced the religious scepticism and dissolute morals of the eighteenth century. This qualified his endorsement of the policies pursued by Stanisław August and his brother, the primate of Poland and archbishop of Gniezno, Michał Jerzy Poniatowski. Kalinka's indignation at the sejm's ecclesiastical measures was great. However, he reserved his strongest condemnation for the influence exerted on the sejm by aristocratic women.<sup>30</sup>

The last year of the sejm was narrated by Władysław Smoleński in a monograph published in 1897. He had not the same command of the diplomatic sources as his predecessor. Smoleński was born into the traditionally Catholic, impoverished nobility of Mazovia, but his outlook was formed in the 1870s at the height of the scientific 'positivist' reaction against the Romantic invocation of the spirit. His most frequently read work depicted an 'intellectual revolution' in later eighteenth-century Poland against a 'Catholic reaction'.<sup>31</sup> Both Kalinka and Smoleński tended to see the ecclesiastical disputes of the Four Years' Sejm as a clash between light and darkness, although they disagreed as to which was which.

As a priest writing political history with the religion left in, Kalinka was an epigone, as well as an innovator in his profound respect for sources. Since then, ecclesiastical and political historians in Poland have mostly ploughed their own furrows. The question of the Catholic Church at the Four Years' Sejm has rarely been disturbed, and never uprooted and replanted. The Polish Revolution's pamphlets regarding the clergy and taxation were first described systematically in the later nineteenth century,<sup>32</sup> and then analysed in the middle of the twentieth by Władysław Konopczyński, in a volume that remains unpublished.<sup>33</sup> Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz has transformed our understanding of the forms, functions, and arguments of political literature published during the sejm, but she passes lightly over fiscal and ecclesiastical questions.<sup>34</sup> A few of the polemics concerning religion have been analysed by Jan Kracik and Agnieszka Kwiatkowska.<sup>35</sup> Ewa Ziółek has looked at bishops' public pronouncements.<sup>36</sup> Papal-Polish relations in the later eighteenth century were studied in depth by Maciej Loret, but he published just

<sup>30</sup> W. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni* [1880–6], 4th [sic—5th] edn, 2 vols. (Warsaw, 1991). See Zofia Zielińska's foreword and J. Michalski, 'Na marginesie reedycji *Sejmu Czteroletniego* Waleriana Kalinki', in id., *Studia historyczne*, ii, 509–23.

<sup>31</sup> W. Smoleński, *Ostatni rok Sejmu Wielkiego*, 2nd edn (Cracow, 1897). Id., *Przewrót umysłowy w Polsce wieku XVIII. Studia historyczne*, [1891] 4th edn (Warsaw, 1979).

<sup>32</sup> R. Pilat, *O literaturze politycznej Sejmu Czteroletniego (1788–1792)* (Cracow, 1872), 80–121.

<sup>33</sup> W. Konopczyński, 'Polscy pisarze polityczni', ii, 'Sejm Czteroletni', typescript, in BJ Akc. 52/61, ch. 22.

<sup>34</sup> A. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu czy o rząd dusz? Publicystyka polityczna Sejmu Czteroletniego* (Warsaw, 2000).

<sup>35</sup> J. Kracik, 'Klerykalizm i antyklerykalizm doby Sejmu Czteroletniego. Spór kasztelana Jacka Jezierskiego z kanonikiem Wojciechem Skarszewskim', *Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej*, 49 (1999), 187–96. A. Kwiatkowska, *Piórowe wojny. Polemiki literackie polskiego Oświecenia* (Poznań, 2001).

<sup>36</sup> E. M. Ziółek, *Biskupi-Senatorowie wobec reform Sejmu Czteroletniego* (Lublin, 2002).

one article on the subject.<sup>37</sup> Larry Wolff's monograph on the Warsaw nunciature contains a sketchy chapter on 1788–94.<sup>38</sup> Henryk Karbownik's synthesis of clerical taxation pays some attention to the polemics and debates of the Four Years' Sejm.<sup>39</sup> But Magdalena Ślusarska has subjected sermons on political and social questions published during Stanisław August's reign to searching analysis. She and others have examined the role of religious media in propagating the Revolution of 3 May.<sup>40</sup>

Research on the Polish Revolution has concentrated on the Commonwealth's international position, the questions of the burghers, the Jews, the succession, the Constitution of 3 May, 'police', local government, education, and finance. All these questions bear on the Catholic Church of the Latin rite, but it is usually treated marginally, if at all. Eastern Christian confessions have fared better. The situation of the Orthodox Church was discussed at length in the 1930s.<sup>41</sup> Kamil Paździor has written a judicious thesis on the policies of the Four Years' Sejm towards the Orthodox and Uniate Churches,<sup>42</sup> while Barbara Skinner has reinterpreted confessional conflict in eighteenth-century Ruthenia.<sup>43</sup> Finally, let us hope that Wojciech Kriegseisen's exemplary monograph on the Commonwealth's Protestants during the Saxon period will be followed by a second volume covering the reign of Stanisław August.<sup>44</sup>

Ecclesiastical historians, mostly working at the Catholic University of Lublin, have painstakingly researched the structures of the pre-partition Church.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>37</sup> M. Loret, 'Watykan a Polska w dobie rozbiorów 1772–1795', *Przegląd Współczesny*, 49 (1934), 337–60.

<sup>38</sup> L. Wolff, *The Vatican and Poland in the Age of the Partitions: Diplomatic and Cultural Encounters at the Warsaw Nunciature* (New York, 1988).

<sup>39</sup> H. Karbownik, *Obciążenia stanu duchownego w Polsce na rzecz państwa od połowy XVII w. do 1795 r.* (Lublin, 1984). He has also written a useful account of stole fees: *Ofiary iura stolae na ziemiach polskich w latach 1285–1918. Studium historycznoprawne* (Lublin, 1995).

<sup>40</sup> M. Ślusarska, 'Problematyka polityczno-społeczna w polskim kaznodziejstwie okolicznościowym w latach 1775–1795', doctoral thesis (University of Warsaw, 1992). Ead., 'Sejm Czteroletni w okolicznościowym kaznodziejstwie lat 1788–90', in P. Żbikowski (ed.), *Ku reformie państwa i odrodzeniu moralnemu człowieka. Zbiór artykułów i rozpraw poświęconych rocznicy ustanowienia Konstytucji 3 Maja 1791 roku* (Rzeszów, 1992), 65–80. See also above, n. 29.

<sup>41</sup> E. Sakowicz, *Kościół prawosławny w Polsce w epoce Sejmu Wielkiego 1788–1792* (Warsaw, 1935), reviewed by A. Deruga, in *Ateneum Wileńskie*, 11 (1936), 530–60. A. Deruga, 'Kościół prawosławny a sprawa "buntu" w 1789 roku we wschodnich województwach Rzeczypospolitej', *Ateneum Wileńskie*, 13/2 (1938), 175–269.

<sup>42</sup> K. Paździor, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego wobec kościołów wschodnich', doctoral thesis (University of Silesia, Katowice, 2000). Id., 'Dopuszczenie metropolity unickiego do senatu w 1790 r. Studium z polityki wyznaniowej Sejmu Czteroletniego', *Nasza Przyszłość*, 91 (1999), 241–67.

<sup>43</sup> Skinner, *The Western Front*.

<sup>44</sup> W. Kriegseisen, *Ewangelicy polscy i litewscy w epoce saskiej (1696–1763). Sytuacja prawna, organizacja i stosunki międzywyznaniowe* (Warsaw, 1996). Id., 'Between Intolerance and Persecution' (n. 9 above). Cf. two partisan articles by E. Szulc: 'Sprawa obywatelskich uprawnień protestanckich mieszczan jako temat dyskusji na forum Sejmu Czteroletniego'; id. 'Sejm Czteroletni jako rozejmca sporu między protestanckim mieszczaństwem a członkami stanu szlacheckiego tegoż wyznania', *Rocznik Teologiczny*, 32/1 (1990), 5–33, 35–73.

<sup>45</sup> This research is regularly summed up in multi-authored syntheses such as J. Kłoczowski (ed.), *Kościół w Polsce*, ii. *Wiek XVI–XVIII* (Cracow, 1969). The first fruit of a new multi-volume synthesis is S. Litak, *Parafie w Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVIII wieku. Struktura, funkcje społeczno-religijne i edukacyjne* (Lublin, 2004).

Especially noteworthy is the magnificent atlas produced by Stanisław Litak.<sup>46</sup> We have ecclesiastical biographies of a number of eighteenth-century bishops, including two of those in office during 1788–92.<sup>47</sup> The obvious gap is Michał Poniatowski, but his earlier administration of the diocese of Płock is the subject of a thorough monograph.<sup>48</sup> Biographers of bishops have tended to defend their subjects, who often receive damning verdicts in the syntheses written to edify trainee priests.

Although some of these syntheses continue to treat the period in terms reminiscent of the ‘time of trial’ evoked earlier,<sup>49</sup> Polish interest in a ‘Catholic Enlightenment’ (or less problematically, ‘enlightened Catholicism’), has grown since the Second Vatican Council, albeit to a lesser degree than in Germany or Austria.<sup>50</sup> Research continues, in both Poland and Lithuania, dovetailing with what has long been known of the educational reforms launched by the Piarists and Jesuits in the mid-eighteenth century. The reputed ‘secularization of schools’ by the Commission for National Education (established after the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773) has been reassessed. This more nuanced approach to religion and ideas in the eighteenth century leaves exposed the dichotomies exemplified by Kalinka and Smoleński regarding the ecclesiastical reforms of the Four Years’ Sejm.<sup>51</sup>

If eighteenth-century Catholicism appeared in several hues, then ‘Enlightenment’ was a true chameleon. It has often been repeated that the anti-Christian vitriol of certain French *philosophes* found few takers elsewhere in Europe. Of course, if ‘The Enlightenment’ was essentially a philosophical movement, then it came early, spread from the Netherlands, and was unremittingly hostile to Christian orthodoxy. It was the Enlightenment of Spinoza and Diderot. But if ‘Enlightenment’ (or even ‘enlightenment’) was a more general set of cultural trends and media, then its chronological and geographical scope are extended. In its own context, such Enlightenment was not inimical to religion. It allowed humane and philanthropic representatives of the clergy and laity alike to reconcile scientific curiosity with belief in a Christian God and efforts to lead a Christian life. Then

<sup>46</sup> S. Litak, *Atlas Kościoła łacińskiego w Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów w XVIII wieku* (Lublin, 2006).

<sup>47</sup> J. Wysocki, *Józef Ignacy Rybiński biskup włocławski i pomorski 1777–1806. Zarys biograficzny na tle rządów diecezji* (Rome, 1967). T. Kasabuła, *Ignacy Massalski, biskup wileński* (Lublin, 1998). Some of the more recent entries in the *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* (hereafter: *PSB*) are highly detailed.

<sup>48</sup> M. Grzybowski, ‘Kościelna działalność Michała Jerzego Poniatowskiego biskupa płockiego’, *Studia z Historii Kościoła w Polsce*, 7 (1983), 5–225. See also A. Sołtys, *Opat z San Michele. Grand Tour prymasa Poniatowskiego i jego kolekcje* (Warsaw, 2008).

<sup>49</sup> E.g. B. Kumor, *Historia Kościoła*, vi (Lublin, 1985), 7.

<sup>50</sup> See the collections edited by E. Kovács, *Katholische Aufklärung und Josephinismus* (Vienna, 1979), esp. the essay by B. Plongeron, ‘Was ist katholische Aufklärung?’, 11–61; by H. Klüeting, *Katholische Aufklärung—Aufklärung im katholischen Deutschland*, 2 vols. (Hamburg, 1993); and by U. L. Lehner and M. Printy, *A Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment in Europe* (Leiden and Boston, MA, 2010). See also D. Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment: Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton, NJ, 2008).

<sup>51</sup> For an overview, see R. Butterwick, ‘Catholicism and Enlightenment in Poland-Lithuania’, in Lehner and Printy (eds.), *A Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment*, 297–358. The key theoretical contribution is S. Janeczek, *Oświecenie chrześcijańskie. Z dziejów polskiej kultury filozoficznej* (Lublin, 1994).

came dechristianization, and all changed. The doomsayers seemed to have been right after all.<sup>52</sup>

Across the Euro-Atlantic world, local circumstances generated coalitions of interests and ideologies. Poland-Lithuania was no exception. The Josephist agenda of discipline, rationality, and utility within the Catholic Church was taken up north of the Vistula (where the frontier ran after the loss of Galicia to Austria in 1772)<sup>53</sup> by a number of bishops, notably Michał Poniatowski. The bishops, as senators, were servants of the Commonwealth as well as the Church. We shall find some fastidiously enlightened aristocrats and Freemasons taking the side of the clergy, while raucously Catholic provincial squires led the raids on the pious bequests of their forefathers. The decisions of the sejm should be evaluated in local context as well as that of trends such as Voltaireanism, Rousseauism, Josephism, Febronianism, Gallicanism, Richerism, and such like. While some polemicists did lump these and other 'isms' into a universal struggle between light and darkness, they also tailored their arguments to their audiences.

### 3. DECISION-MAKING IN A REPUBLICAN POLITY

The political decisions of the Polish Revolution were made by a parliamentary assembly, whose moods were notoriously difficult to predict, and which often defied attempts to manage it. The members of the sejm inherited a set of values, assumptions, conventions, ideas, and usages of language—or discourses—concerning the polity, which together constitute a political culture.<sup>54</sup> That political

<sup>52</sup> See J. Sheehan, 'Enlightenment, Religion, and the Enigma of Secularization: A Review Essay', and D. K. Van Kley, 'Christianity as Casualty and Chrysalis of Modernity: The Problem of Dechristianization in the French Revolution', both in *AHR*, 108 (2003), 1061–80 and 1081–104; D. Beales, 'Religion and Culture', in T. C. W. Blanning (ed.), *The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2000), 131–77, at 133. Cf. J. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750* (Oxford, 2001); id., *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity and the Emancipation of Man, 1670–1752* (Oxford, 2006); and less extremely, J. Robertson, 'The Enlightenment above National Context: Political Economy in Eighteenth-Century Scotland and Naples', *HJ*, 40 (1997), 667–97. I expand these points in 'Peripheries of the Enlightenment: An Introduction', in R. Butterwick, S. Davies, and G. Sánchez-Espinosa (eds.), *Peripheries of the Enlightenment*, *SVEC*, 2008:1, 1–16.

<sup>53</sup> See D. Beales, *Joseph II*, i (Cambridge, 1987), ch. 14, ii (Cambridge, 2009) chs. 2, 6, 8, 9; id., *Enlightenment and Reform in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (London and New York, 2005), 287–308; T. C. W. Blanning, *Joseph II* (Harlow, 1994), 32–101, 161–71; P. G. M. Dickson, 'Joseph II's reshaping of the Austrian Church', *HJ*, 36 (1993), 89–114; E. Kovács, 'Katholische Aufklärung und Josephinismus: neue Forschungen und Fragestellungen', in Kluefing (ed.), *Katholische Aufklärung* (n. 50 above), 246–59. The classic work on Galicia is W. Chotkowski, *Historia polityczna Kościoła w Galicji za rządów Marii Teresy. Kościół w Galicji 1772–1780*, 2 vols. (Cracow, 1909). In the same anti-Josephist tradition is J. Krętosz, *Archidiecezja lwowska obrządku łacińskiego w okresie józefinizmu (1772–1815)* (Katowice, 1996). Cf. H. Glassl, *Das österreichische Enrichtungswerk in Galizien (1772–1790)* (Wiesbaden, 1975).

<sup>54</sup> A substantial literature is cited by E. Opaliński, *Kultura polityczna szlachty polskiej w latach 1587–1652. System parlamentarny a społeczeństwo obywatelskie* (Warsaw, 1995), 5–25, who eventually opts for 'the sphere of attitudes regarding public life, the norms regulating it, and finally society's imagination of its own role in this system'. Values, tradition, political consciousness, and political realities shape such attitudes, while behaviour expresses them (p. 15). This is a modified version of

culture was ‘republican’ (*republikański*)—one of the most frequently encountered words in the political lexicon. It was taken for granted that the ‘nation’ (*naród*), and not the king, was sovereign (several expressions conveyed *suprema potestas*). The vast majority of Polish nobles believed that they alone constituted the nation—and hence the Commonwealth. They continued to justify their privileges by the blood shed by their ancestors for the Fatherland (*Ojczyzna*), and their own alleged readiness to do likewise. Even when reformers edged towards a wider discourse of the nation, nobody doubted which estate would continue to dominate it. Nobles were convinced that their liberties (*swobody*, *wolności*) depended upon the ‘liberty’ (*wolność*) of the nation, and sometimes conflated the concepts. Although by the 1780s nobles were becoming accustomed to the sejm legislating, and to the activity between sejms of a modest central government, they remained convinced that liberty could only be safeguarded from monarchical absolutism (*absolutyzm*) if noble citizens shared in power, and corrected its abuses, via the sejm.<sup>55</sup>

In order to explain the sejm’s decisions, we must enter the political culture from whence they sprang, a task complicated by its rapid transformation. First, the language of politics changed. Most ideas could be expressed in traditional republican rhetoric, which owed much to the way in which Latin had been taught in Poland for two centuries; for other proposals a new type of discourse was necessary—some sought it in reports from Revolutionary France.<sup>56</sup> Inveterate defenders of noble privilege appealed to the anti-monarchical example of egalitarian America.<sup>57</sup> Some speakers and writers developed new blends of discourse. The connotations of key phrases altered. Words such as ‘reason’ and ‘enlightenment’ could be subverted.<sup>58</sup> But new meanings coexisted with old ones, even in the usage of the same author or orator.<sup>59</sup>

Political behaviour also changed. Faced with new situations, the sejm had to develop faster procedures. By 1791–2, it was unrecognizable from the verbose and turbulent spectacle of 1788–9. In three and a half years of sovereignty and responsibility—an unprecedented phenomenon in eighteenth-century

G. A. Almond and S. Verba’s concept in *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton, NJ, 1963). I have been influenced by L. Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley, CA, and Los Angeles, CA, 1984), 10–11 and *passim*, who places more emphasis on language.

<sup>55</sup> See Lukowski, *Disorderly Liberty*. Cf. A. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *Regina libertas. Wolność w polskiej myśli politycznej XVIII wieku* (Gdańsk, 2006); W. Konopczyński, *Polscy pisarze polityczni XVIII wieku*, i (Warsaw, 1966).

<sup>56</sup> See below, 163.

<sup>57</sup> Z. Libiszowska, ‘The Impact of the American Constitution on Polish Political Opinion in the Late Eighteenth Century’, in Fiszman (ed.), *Constitution and Reform*, 233–50, at 235–6.

<sup>58</sup> Research on the Commonwealth’s political language is still in adolescence, but among statistically based analyses are: E. Bem-Wisniewska, *Funkcjonowanie nazwy ‘Polska’ w języku czasów nowożytnych (1530–1795)* (Warsaw, 1998); U. Augustyniak, ‘Polska i łacińska terminologia ustrojowa w publicystyce politycznej epoki Wzów’, in J. Axer (ed.), *Łacina jako język elit* (Warsaw, 2004), 33–71. R. Butterwick, ‘What is Enlightenment (*oświecenie*)? Some Polish Answers, 1765–1820’, *Central Europe*, 3 (2005), 19–37, is an essay in reconnaissance.

<sup>59</sup> Maciej Janowski, ‘Rozpacz oświeconych? Przemiana polskiego języka politycznego a reakcje na upadek Rzeczypospolitej’, *WO*, 25 (2009), 29–60, examples at 40, 44.

Poland—political culture evolved in ‘greenhouse’ conditions.<sup>60</sup> Adapting William Doyle’s verdict on France, in many respects the Polish Revolution ‘became thinkable only when events made it possible’.<sup>61</sup>

The political culture of the Polish Revolution can be entered via published and unpublished treatises, pamphlets, poems, riddles, periodicals, and sermons, all of which survive in considerable quantities and have received much scholarly attention.<sup>62</sup> An ideology may be distinguished from a political culture, as a more unified body of ideas, whether it is created to justify a particular set of political actions, or whether it constitutes a programme or set of convictions which politicians subsequently try to find the means of implementing, or some combination of the two. A political culture may contain several ideologies and more than one discourse. The ideologies of the Polish Revolution were not especially coherent or self-conscious. Nevertheless, to deny the existence of ideology before the French Revolution is unwarranted.<sup>63</sup>

The Polish Revolution spawned a few substantial political treatises, but pamphlets, six or seven hundred of which were published, were a far more popular medium.<sup>64</sup> Perhaps the most important distinction to be made is between works addressed to the entire public,<sup>65</sup> and those intended chiefly to persuade the members of the sejm. Although the distinction could be blurred, parliamentary speeches were intended to persuade parliamentary decision-makers more directly than written works addressed to the public at large. A speaker has a more immediate opportunity to gauge and react to his audience’s response than a writer.<sup>66</sup> Whereas orators can persuade decision-makers directly, deploying the weapons of voice and gesture (which are particularly important where, as in the senate chamber of the Royal Castle in Warsaw, acoustics are less than ideal), writers can only do so at one remove.<sup>67</sup> Although an invaluable book has been written on the oratory of the Four

<sup>60</sup> J. Lukowski, ‘Political Ideas among the Polish Nobility in the Eighteenth Century (to 1788)’, *SEER*, 82/1 (2004), 1–26, at 25.

<sup>61</sup> W. Doyle, *Origins of the French Revolution*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1999), 38.

<sup>62</sup> See, *inter alia*, Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*; ead. (ed.), *Za czy przeciw Ustawie Rządowej. Walka publicystyczna o Konstytucję 3 Maja. Antologia* (Warsaw, 1992); Ł. Kądziała (ed.), *Kółkątaj i inni. Z publicystyki doby Sejmu Czteroletniego* (Warsaw, 1991); M. Ślusarska, *opera cit.*; K. Maksimowicz, *Poezja polityczna a Sejm Czteroletni* (Gdańsk, 2000); E. Rabowicz and K. Maksimowicz (eds.), *Wiersze polityczne Sejmu Czteroletniego*, 2 vols. (Warsaw, 1998–2000), hereafter: *Wiersze polityczne*; E. Rabowicz, B. Krakowski and J. Kowecki (eds.), *Zagadki Sejmu Czteroletniego* (Warsaw, 1996), hereafter: *Zagadki*.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Lynn Hunt’s insistence that French ‘revolutionary politics brought ideology into being’: *Politics, Culture and Class* (n. 54 above), 13. Ideologies may be rooted in tradition, but articulated anew and developed creatively.

<sup>64</sup> Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 41. To put the numbers into perspective, while just over 400 pamphlets ‘relating to the Anglo-American struggle’ were published in the colonies to 1776, at least 1172 pamphlets were published during Vienna’s *Broschürenflut* between April 1781 and September 1782. B. Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA, 1967), p. v. Blanning, *Joseph II*, 163.

<sup>65</sup> The meanings of ‘public’ will be discussed below, ch. 2.3.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. P. Ricoeur, ‘What is a Text? Explanation and Understanding’, in id., *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics* (London, 1991), ii. 105–24, at 106. I owe this reference to Dr Fiona Clark.

<sup>67</sup> B. Krakowski, *Oratorstwo polityczne na forum Sejmu Czteroletniego. Rekonesans* (Gdańsk, 1968), 28–34, 51–66. It was accepted that some speeches had more effect on their readers than their listeners:

Years' Sejm,<sup>68</sup> speeches have not made their due impact on studies of eighteenth-century Polish political thought and culture. Although several works quote speeches, they lack cogent analysis of the persuasive power of the spoken word.<sup>69</sup>

These considerations entail close attention to the debates of the Four Years' Sejm. Which discourses were most effective in precipitating or delaying decisions? What do these discursive strategies reveal about the changing acceptability of ideas in this theatre? The debates were recorded by two conscientious secretaries. The official diary of the sejm was published only for a few months of the deliberations. Had it been completed in the same format, approximately 13,500 folio pages in forty volumes would have been required.<sup>70</sup> Fortunately the great majority of the handwritten record has survived.<sup>71</sup> Admittedly, the most faithful transcripts can convey neither voices, nor gesticulations, nor facial expressions. But sometimes correspondence or memoirs testify to orators' talents, or to the impressions made on audiences.<sup>72</sup> For all its limitations the manuscript diary approaches a stenograph in places. It was not available to Kalinka, who had to rely on the sometimes misleading summaries published during the Polish Revolution. As about 1,300 speeches were printed,<sup>73</sup> and some of these were also recorded by the secretaries, it is occasionally possible to compare what was said in the sejm with the version edited for the persuasion of a wider public.

The sejm's decisions were both applauded and influenced by Warsaw's 'public'. However, the envoys were elected by the provincial szlachta, and many of them brought a provincial mindset to the capital. The sejmiks issued their envoys with instructions, which (before 3 May 1791) were supposed to be mandatory. In the absence of any legal sanction to enforce compliance, envoys often ignored their instructions, some of which were patently unrealistic. Decisions of the sejm, once reached, were entered into the law books and could not be rejected by the sejmiks.

'Reverend Kołłątaj, the vice-chancellor, made a very long speech, perhaps rather fatiguing to the ear, but which, because of its true erudition, will be very useful to read, when it goes to press.' SA to Deboli, 12 November 1791, ZP 413, f. 234.

<sup>68</sup> Krakowski, *Oratorstwo*.

<sup>69</sup> E.g. A. Czaja, *Miedzy tronem, bulawą a dworem petersburskim. Z dziejów Rady Nieustającej 1786–1789* (Warsaw, 1988), chs. 10–11. A. Stroynowski, *Opozycja sejmowa w dobie rządów Rady Nieustającej. Studium z dziejów kultury politycznej* (Łódź, 2005), considers the role of oratory, but fails to do so critically, and despite the title, neither defines nor discusses political culture.

<sup>70</sup> Krakowski, *Oratorstwo*, 24–5. The first instalment of the diary, *Dyaryusz Seymu Ordynaryjnego pod zwiazkiem Konfederacy Generalney Obojga Narodów w Warszawie rozpoczętego roku pańskiego 1788*, 2 vols. (Warsaw, 1790), covers 6 October 1788–6 March 1789 and the second, *Dyaryusz seymu ordynaryjnego pod zwiazkiem Konfederacy Generalney Obojga Narodów w podwoynym składzie zgromadzonego w Warszawie od dnia 16 grudnia roku 1790* (Warsaw, 1791), covers 16 December 1790–7 February 1791. Cited henceforth as *Dyaryusz 1788* and *Dyaryusz 1790*.

<sup>71</sup> The MS diary, along with many projects and speeches, some division lists, and other materials, was hidden in 1792 by one of the secretaries, Jan Łuszczewski. In 1808 he deposited the collection with the Warsaw Society of the Friends of Science (*Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk*), whence it was taken to Russia after the suppression of the 1830–1 rising. It was rediscovered in the Russian State Archive of Old Records (*Rossiskii Gosudarstvennii Arkhiv Drevnikh Aktov*) in Moscow in 1960, and returned to Warsaw in 1964.

<sup>72</sup> Krakowski, *Oratorstwo*, 28.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.



That said, sejmik instructions carried considerable moral force. Envoys could fortify their positions by appealing to their instructions.<sup>74</sup> Even when 'Warsaw' overrode the provinces, as it did regarding the succession to the throne, it had to take account of provincial sensibilities and to speak and act accordingly.<sup>75</sup>

One difference between metropolitan and provincial political culture seems to have been in the relative impacts of pamphlets and sermons. When in 1790 Michał Karpowicz published in Wilno a sermon he had preached the previous year, he began his dedication thus:

Among so many writings which have been scattered—about the clergy, against the clergy, and for the clergy—it also fell to me to present the teaching [of the Church] on this subject, for the enlightenment of the faithful, who for the most part probably do not read, and have not read those writings, while even the speeches on behalf of the clergy at this memorable sejm by the most virtuous and enlightened patriots, beginning with the throne, so zealously standing by the house of God and the altar, are probably known to and read by few in the provinces.

He recognized that provincial citizens were more likely to hear sermons, or even to read them, than to read the latest pamphlets and orations.<sup>76</sup> Sermons occupied an especially important place in the ceremonies of thanksgiving ordained by the sejm, particularly after 3 May 1791. These events adapted noble and ecclesiastical traditions to establish new norms of political behaviour in the localities.

Provincial political culture was not immutable. It seems to have become less 'parochial' and more 'participatory' during the Polish Revolution. The creation of effective organs of local government, Civil-Military Commissions of Good Order, gave many landowners an unprecedented opportunity to exercise responsibility and implement the resolutions of the sejm. But provincial political culture became more 'subject' to the centre after 3 May 1791.<sup>77</sup>

Neither ideology nor political culture can wholly explain why some of the proposed measures were adopted, rather than others. We do well to bear in mind Stanisław August's comment to his agent in Paris, Filippo Mazzei: 'whoever wishes to write the history of a national assembly in a free country must always add to the journal of what is said in public the secret anecdote that was the true motivation'.<sup>78</sup> 'Secret anecdotes' can best be found in correspondence; less reliably in newsletters and memoirs. At times the course of events appears to be determined by a set of intrigues driven by personal ambition. 'Intrigues' are defined here as political manoeuvres that took place beyond the public eye, and which would be difficult to justify to the public. In the light of the king's letters, the decision to institute a

<sup>74</sup> See A. Lityński, *Sejmiki ziemskie 1764–1793. Dzieje reform* (Katowice, 1988), 140–70.

<sup>75</sup> Z. Zielińska, 'O sukcesji tronu w Polsce' 1787–1790 (Warsaw, 1991), 247.

<sup>76</sup> M. F. Karpowicz, *Kazanie o władzy Kościoła, jak jest narodom zbawienna, i o majątkach Kościołów, jak narodom są użyteczne w dzień ŚŚ. Apostołów Piotra y Pawła w Wilnie na Antokolu... miane 1789...* (Wilno, 1790).

<sup>77</sup> For the latter argument, see Butterwick, 'Political Discourses'; for the terminology, Almond and Verba, *The Civic Culture* (n. 54 above), 17–20. On the Civil-Military Commissions, see Ł. Kądziela, 'Local Government Reform during the Four-Year Diet', in Fiszman (ed.), *Constitution and Reform*, 379–96.

<sup>78</sup> SA to Filippo Mazzei, 10 April 1790, BN Akc. 11,356, vol. i, pp. 253–4.

root-and-branch reform of the episcopate almost seems an unexpected by-product of the manoeuvrings to win the prize see of Cracow. So we must also study the shifting political alignments of the Four Years' Sejm.<sup>79</sup>

One problem is that because of the presence in Warsaw of most of the leading politicians, they neither wrote to each other, nor employed Warsaw correspondents as frequently as they would otherwise have done. Particularly frustrating is the lack of extant correspondence between members of the faction led by the grand hetman of the Polish Crown, Ksawery Branicki, which vociferously demanded the sacrifice of the Church's wealth. Because these politicians have generally been cast among the Revolution's villains, there is a danger of accepting their opponents' view of them uncritically. Yet a rare surviving letter written at Branicki's instigation is of exceptional significance for our story. Nevertheless, the available correspondence (special mention must be made of the king's letters and the nuncio's despatches) permits a many-sided representation of the political machinations that were linked to the sejm's ecclesiastical reforms.

How can this material be confronted with that intended for public consumption? Even this demarcation is not a clear one, as some correspondence was intended for selective circulation. If a politician declares in the sejm that he acted from the purest motives, while one of his enemies accuses him of sordid ones in a letter, whom should we believe? The cynically inclined might favour Sir Lewis Namier's view—that ideological justifications tend to be 'flapdoodle' and that politicians' real motivations are to be found either in material interests or else buried deep in their sub-conscious, which he considered inaccessible. The key task of the political historian is therefore to explore the web of private interests and connections.<sup>80</sup>

The case has also been made, by Maurice Cowling and his followers, that in a variety of régimes—including parliamentary ones—the crucial decisions are taken by a constricted circle of politicians away from the public gaze. Their personal interests are intimately connected with advocating particular policies, for their careers depend on backing *both* the successful measure *and* the successful man. The correspondence of that circle is therefore the most significant source for political history. Although this tiny élite is subject to situational pressures, sometimes including public opinion, the backbenchers to whom Namier devoted so much attention are not considered independent players.<sup>81</sup> This assumption is

<sup>79</sup> An equivalent to the *History of Parliament* remains a pipedream. Some of the problems of such research are discussed by J. Koweci, 'Posłowie debiutanci na Sejmie Czteroletnim', in A. Zahorski (ed.), *Wiek XVIII. Polska i świat. Księga poświęcona Bogusławowi Leśnodorskiemu* (Warsaw, 1974), 195–210. There is useful material in J. Duzinkiewicz, *Fateful Transformations: The Four Years' Parliament and the Constitution of 3 May 1791* (New York, 1993), but see the review by J. Lukowski in *SEER*, 76 (1996), 311–12.

<sup>80</sup> See L. B. Namier, 'Human Nature in Politics', in id., *Personalities and Powers* (London, 1955), 1–7; id., *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III*, 2nd edn (London, 1957), preface and ch. 1.

<sup>81</sup> See M. C. Cowling, *The Impact of Labour, 1920–1924* (Cambridge, 1971), 3–12. The high-political approach has been applied by J. C. D. Clark, *The Dynamics of Change: The Crisis of the 1750s and English Party Systems* (Cambridge, 1982), and with more attention to foreign policy, by B. Simms,

unjustified as regards the Polish Revolution, as that very correspondence will show. A more balanced approach is called for, one that takes into account the reciprocal influences exerted by and on those at the summit, slopes, and base of the political process.<sup>82</sup> Yet the question remains of what, rather than who, decides political outcomes. One of the most fruitful approaches lies in the insight that 'what it is possible to do in politics is generally limited by what it is possible to legitimise'.<sup>83</sup>

The methodology developed by Quentin Skinner in an early modern English and Italian context may be applied wherever decisions are made by assemblies that deliberate in public.<sup>84</sup> As one writer put it in 1789, 'in a free republican government, we should think, act, and write not in secret, but obviously'.<sup>85</sup> This was an aspiration, not reality, but it was a widely shared aspiration that imposed limits on political action. Whatever political leaders had earlier resolved upon privately, they could never assume that the assembly would follow their wishes. Skinner has proposed a distinction between a politician's *motivation*, which may (or may not) be entirely selfish, and his more knowable *intention*. Intentions must stand a certain chance of success. Where political disagreement is vigorous, we cannot assume that the parliamentary assembly is a rubber stamp. Nothing that cannot be publicly legitimized can pass this barrier. The range of possible choices is therefore narrowed, and what politicians say bears some causal relation to what they do. Skinner assumes that politicians act in furtherance of their own rationally calculated interests.<sup>86</sup> Namier in fact rejected the assumption that politicians tend to act rationally,<sup>87</sup> while a full explanation of political behaviour must allow for the possibility that some politicians sincerely espouse the ideals they proclaim. At least sometimes.<sup>88</sup>

Neither of these caveats weakens the case that the legitimization of political choices takes place within their overall discursive context, in a political culture. Politicians may behave, and justify their behaviour, according to the habits and

*The Impact of Napoleon: Prussian High Politics, Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Executive, 1797–1806* (Cambridge, 1997), and J. Hardman, *French Politics 1774–1789: From the Accession of Louis XVI to the Fall of the Bastille* (London, 1995). Similar assumptions underpin most of the political and diplomatic history written in Poland, although they are rarely made explicit. E.g. Zielińska, 'O Sukcesji tronu', 12.

<sup>82</sup> Such as P. Jupp, *British Politics on the Eve of Reform: The Duke of Wellington's Administration, 1828–1830* (London, 1998).

<sup>83</sup> Q. Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism* (Cambridge, 1998), 105.

<sup>84</sup> E.g. A. Grzeskowiak-Krwawicz, 'Anti-Monarchism in Polish Republicanism in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', in M. van Gelderen and Q. Skinner (eds.), *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, i. *Republicanism and Constitutionalism in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2002), i. 43–59.

<sup>85</sup> I. Łoborzewski, quoted after Grzeskowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 18.

<sup>86</sup> Skinner's approach was first set out in 'Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas', *History and Theory*, 8 (1969), 3–53, and 'Motives, Intentions and the Interpretation of texts', *New Literary History*, 3 (1972), 393–408. See J. Tully (ed.), *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics* (Princeton, NJ, 1988). Case studies are scarce, but see Skinner's own 'The Principles and Practices of Opposition: The Case of Bolingbroke versus Walpole', in N. McKendrick (ed.), *Historical Perspectives: Studies in English Thought and Society* (London, 1974), 93–128.

<sup>87</sup> Namier, 'Human Nature in Politics' (n. 80 above), 5.

<sup>88</sup> H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London, 1977), 1–7.

commonplaces of the time, without necessarily reflecting logically or rationally on either their actions or their words. Consciously or unconsciously, the range of available ideas, and the language available for their formulation, set certain limits to political actions. The boundaries of what was politically possible can therefore be found in public discourse. It must be borne in mind, however, that these boundaries could shift—and sometimes did so dramatically.

During the Four Years' Sejm, certain words were regarded as unacceptable. For example, the political career of the king's nephew, Prince Stanisław Poniatowski, ended after he insulted the szlachta in the sejm as a 'rabble' (*zgraja*).<sup>89</sup> In a political culture which applied pressure on individuals to conform to the public good, whatever that might be, and given the enthusiastic moods characteristic of the Four Years' Sejm, the manipulation of the sejm into making decisions suiting the personal interests of key players was a difficult and unpredictable enterprise.

The public nature of the Commonwealth's politics meant that success depended upon more than skills and resources in negotiation, management, and patronage. Success also required more than an aptitude for rhetoric, either on the part of the leader or his lieutenants. Political life in Warsaw may have seemed rarefied to many provincial nobles, but it was not sealed off from the interests which competed within the Commonwealth. Successful politicians' rhetoric bore at least some relation to those collective interests, although it often presented the interest of some as the good of all for 'strategic' reasons.<sup>90</sup> Yet, as one envoy complained, networking skills remained vital:

it often happens in our sejm, that a measure introduced into this chamber which is important, public, just, and necessary to the country, is not accepted without difficulty, because it is promoted by a person who either does not act adeptly, or who has unfortunately not been able to find many friends to support him.<sup>91</sup>

Those qualifying for the epithet of 'statesman' displayed a grasp of the problems facing the Commonwealth and an ability to propose persuasive solutions. They might give a sense of coherence to diverse measures by their public utterances. The acme of political achievement was not merely to articulate the national mood, but, by persuasive speech and conduct, to change it.<sup>92</sup> Nobody was more successful in this respect than Stanisław August. Derided and neutered for the first year of the sejm, after 3 May 1791 he became probably the most lauded and trusted monarch in the Commonwealth's history. Polish political culture shifted, in the direction of parliamentary monarchy.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>89</sup> E. Rostworowski, *Ostatni król Rzeczypospolitej. Geneza i upadek Konstytucji 3 maja* (Warsaw, 1966), 163–4.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. H. Chisick, 'Public Opinion and Political Culture in France during the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century', *EHR*, 117 (2002), 49–77, at 68–9.

<sup>91</sup> *Głos... Butrymowicza posła pińskiego... 20. januarii 1792...*

<sup>92</sup> Cf. P. Williamson, *Stanley Baldwin: Conservative Leadership and National Values* (Cambridge, 1999), 12–18.

<sup>93</sup> Rostworowski, *Ostatni król*, 144–257. Butterwick, 'Political Discourses', *passim*.

A balance should be struck between personal, ideological, and structural factors. The ecclesiastical solutions finally arrived at were partly the result of the Church's own needs, both as a hierarchical organization and as a community of believers. The Church had—and has—objectives extending beyond social utility, notably the saving of souls. The Church's needs were perforce considered by the deputation established by the sejm to negotiate with the episcopal college and the nuncio, in order to transform the decision in principle to equalize bishops' salaries and duties into a practical reform. But ecclesiastical interests were themselves splintered. In Poland-Lithuania, as elsewhere, the jurisdictional and fiscal interests of Rome often conflicted sharply with those of the episcopate and the primate. Secular clergy were often at odds with the regulars. We must also keep in view the pressing need of the Commonwealth to fund a larger army, and the collective interest of the szlachta in shouldering as little of the burden as possible. Nobles also had an interest in filling both the army and the Church with their younger sons, and nunneries with their surplus daughters. Decisions concerning the Orthodox and Uniate Churches were influenced by political calculations about Russian interests. The king had a constitutional interest in defending his prerogative of nomination, which should be distinguished from his political and personal interests in promoting his friends. All these interests had an existence that cannot simply be dissolved into the ideological and linguistic forms in which they were discussed. The sources we have hitherto treated as 'ideological' (speeches, pamphlets, and such like) may also be mined—carefully—for evidence of the actual state of the Church and the Commonwealth.

Church and state were impossible to disentangle in the eighteenth-century Commonwealth, although there were orators and writers who tried, and who often scratched themselves in the thicket. In contrast to 'secularity'—the mindset of the here and now, which neglects transcendental planes—to speak of 'secularization' in the sense of the exclusion of Churches from the public realm is grossly to misunderstand the eighteenth century. The boundary between the dominions of God and Caesar was, as in other polities, including Revolutionary France, not only a contested but also a porous *limes*. Military and fiscal questions had ecclesiastical consequences; the intrigues of clergymen and their patrons had constitutional ramifications; within the Commonwealth the clergy had both privileges and responsibilities; in short, the sacred was profaned and the profane was made sacred.

To sum up, the premises of this book's analysis of political decisions are:

1. Decisions were made by a national parliamentary assembly (the sejm), which possessed a considerable sense of its own autonomy both from individual political patrons and from the local and elective assemblies (the sejmiks). The sejm nevertheless sought the ultimate approval of the nobility at the sejmiks.
2. The private and public strategies employed to *persuade* the sejm and the nobility are crucial to an understanding of their decisions.
3. The boundaries of what was politically acceptable may be found in public discourse.

4. These boundaries were challenged, and shifted, often very rapidly, to some extent through the actions and discourse of individuals.
5. Within these boundaries, the 'off-stage' activity of a small number of individuals (within and outwith the country) largely determined which questions were presented for decision, and when.
6. Collective and institutional interests had a substantial influence on, but did not wholly determine, the attitudes and conduct both of leading individuals and of collective decision-makers.

The structure of the book is mainly narrative and chronological. Due weight can thus be given to the contingency of events, although we shall sometimes pause to consider the shifting discursive boundaries within which questions affecting the Church were decided. Part One follows the tide of noble republicanism that threatened to submerge altar and throne alike, culminating in the secularization of the estates of the bishopric of Cracow in July 1789. Part Two focuses on the avoidance of schism between the Commonwealth and the Holy See, by the negotiation of a limited ecclesiastical reform. This was linked to a high-political and discursive shift that allowed the monarch to recover much of his authority. Part Three considers the place of the Church in the 'new order' that took shape after 3 May 1791. In cheerleading for the Polish Revolution, the clergy contributed to the Revolution's Providential stamp, which was especially marked on the eve of its overthrow. However, controversies between the hosts of God and Caesar continued even during this euphoric period.

The conclusion seeks to clarify the relationship between intrigues, ideologies, and interests in bringing about the measures adopted by the sejm, and compare these measures with the ecclesiastical changes wrought by Joseph II and the French Revolution. This provides a case study for the interface between the histories of high politics, ideas, and religion. The final question addressed by the book is the legacy of the Polish Revolution to the relationship between Catholicism and the Polish nation.

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# PART I

## PLUNDER

The clergy, as they have been enriched *ex Patrimonio* by the Commonwealth, should in proportion to their revenues contribute to the augmentation of the army.

The sejmik of Zakroczym, August 1788.



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# The Commonwealth and the Catholic Church in 1788

## 1. THE BISHOP AND BISHOPRIC OF CRACOW

During the night of 29/30 July 1788, the bishop of Cracow died. The career and reputation of Kajetan Ignacy Sołtyk (1715–88) were so closely linked to the fortunes of the Commonwealth and the Catholic Church in the eighteenth century that they may serve us as a point of entry.<sup>1</sup>

The Sołtyk family ascended from provincial respectability to senatorial rank at the side of one of Poland's most prominent magnate clans—the Potockis. It was through Primate Teodor Potocki that the teenage Kajetan Sołtyk first tasted the good things the Church had to offer—becoming canon of the collegiate church of Łowicz, scholar of the collegiate church of Łęczycza, provost of the collegiate church of Kalisz, and canon of Gniezno cathedral, before receiving a second canonry of Łowicz. All were held concurrently. After obtaining his doctorate in canon and civil law at La Sapienza, and completing his ordination in Rome, he returned to the Commonwealth and attached himself to a new patron, Cardinal Jan Lipski, bishop of Cracow, a leading supporter of the Saxon dynasty. Sołtyk, having added a well-endowed canonry of Cracow to his collection, represented his two cathedral churches as a deputy to the Tribunal (supreme appeal court) of the Crown, and in the anterooms of the sejm. By the time he resigned his canonries of Łowicz in 1747, he was already coadjutor to the cathedral provost of Gniezno, with the right of succession.

The following year, Sołtyk acquired a further coadjutorship with right of succession—that of the Latin-rite bishopric of Kiev. Prestige accrued as he was consecrated as titular bishop of Emaus. Sołtyk was a relatively active coadjutor of Kiev, before becoming bishop-ordinary in 1756. He shook up the cathedral chapter, to the annoyance of local nobles who treated its stalls as sinecures for their families, visited the far flung parishes, and consecrated the new cathedral in Żytomierz—the city of Kiev having been ceded to Muscovy in 1667/86. This

<sup>1</sup> The following is drawn mainly from M. Czeppe, 'Sołtyk, Kajetan Ignacy', *PSB*, xl (Warsaw and Cracow, 2001), 386–404, and K. Rudnicki, *Biskup Kajetan Sołtyk 1715–1788* (Cracow and Warsaw, 1906). For the background, see J. Lukowski, *Liberty's Folly: The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1991); J. A. Gierowski, *The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the XVIIIth Century: From Anarchy to Well-Organised State* (Cracow, 1996).

poorly endowed diocese was slowly being reconstructed. By the middle of the eighteenth century three decades of peace had brought prosperity to the nobles who were recolonizing these fertile lands, but their calm was periodically disturbed by brigands. Sołtyk could see for himself the beginnings of an Orthodox revival, and the volatility of confessional allegiance in the region. Crowning a wonder-working picture of the Madonna at Berdyczów in 1756, he warned the crowds not to make pilgrimages to the Monastery of the Caves in Kiev, as their faith might become polluted by 'schism'. This indicates that most of those present were nominally Uniates. In 1768 the Cossack and peasant revolt known as the *koliśshychyna* would again plunge the Polish Ukraine into a bloodbath—the rebels' fury was directed at Catholics of both rites and Jews.<sup>2</sup>

Jews were settling the region in growing numbers during these decades, especially in the burgeoning private towns and latifundia of the magnates. Sołtyk acquired notoriety by bringing accusations of the ritual murder of Christian children against thirty-three Jews in the consistory court at Żytomierz in 1753. After torture had induced confessions, thirteen Jews were found guilty and sentenced to gruesome executions. Two who promptly abjured their faith were spared, five who did so at the last moment were beheaded, and then ceremoniously buried in the Catholic cemetery by Sołtyk himself, who publicized the affair. He was subsequently accused of threatening similar proceedings to extort money from Jews. This was one of the last episodes of its kind in the Commonwealth; episcopal attitudes to Jews would soon become milder.<sup>3</sup>

Sołtyk's growing influence at the court of Augustus III, who after the Prussian occupation of Saxony in 1756 resided in Warsaw, brought him the richest ecclesiastical prize in the land. Within three months in 1758–9 the king nominated, the chapter elected, and the pope confirmed Sołtyk as bishop of Cracow, who thereby also became duke of Siewierz. This duchy lay beyond the Commonwealth's border with Silesia; it had been bought in the early fifteenth century by Cardinal Zbigniew Oleśnicki, who had left it to his episcopal successors. The diocese stretched over 54,000 square kilometres, approximating to the palatinates of Cracow, Sandomierz, and Lublin, and contained almost 900 parishes, with a flock of over a million souls. By Polish-Lithuanian standards, this was a dense and mature parish network. In contrast to the diocese of Kiev, the populace was overwhelmingly Polish-speaking and baptized into the Latin rite of the Catholic Church. The episcopal and ducal revenues were reckoned at about a million złoty a year, over twice those of the archbishopric of Gniezno.

The seventeen bishoprics of the Latin rite were as unequal in size and pastoral responsibilities as they were in revenues. Similar disparities applied to the Commonwealth's 8,000 or so secular clergy (in the 1760s), who were distributed across just under 4,000 parishes, and outnumbered by about 17,000 religious clergy

<sup>2</sup> See B. Skinner, 'Borderlands of Faith: Reconsidering the Origins of a Ukrainian Tragedy', *Slavic Review*, 64/1 (2005), 88–116.

<sup>3</sup> See Z. Guldon and J. Wijaczka, 'The Accusation of Ritual Murder in Poland 1600–1800', *Polin*, 10 (1997), 99–140.

(about 14,000 of them male) in about 1,100 houses. The Polish clergy as a whole was neither wealthy nor numerous by European standards, but the bishop of Cracow had the wherewithal to live in the front rank of the Commonwealth's magnates.<sup>4</sup> Sołtyk did just that. As Poland's politics plumbed depths of factionalism and cynicism, so the new prince of the Church gloried in his status.

The bishop of Cracow supported the losing, Saxon cause during the interregnum of 1763–4, but soon made his peace with the elected king and took a prominent part in his coronation. Stanisław August Poniatowski's refusal to wear Polish costume for the occasion announced his intention to transform his nation. The more absurd aspects of noble beliefs and behaviour were caricatured by royalist literati as *Sarmatyzm*—a reference to the widespread identification of Poland with 'Sarmatia' and the theory that Polish nobles descended from the ancient Sarmatians.<sup>5</sup> The king also favoured extending the civil toleration allowed to non-Catholic dissidents, in order to encourage immigration from Protestant countries. All this may have grated on the bishop of Cracow, but Sołtyk broke with Stanisław August only in 1766.

Catherine II, needing to demonstrate her support for Orthodoxy to her subjects, wishing to impress enlightened opinion abroad, and desiring a party of her own in the Commonwealth, demanded the restoration of equal political rights for Protestant and Orthodox nobles. She had been angered when the coronation sejm of 1764 refused her request and reaffirmed the exclusively Catholic membership of the legislature (established *de facto* in 1718 and *de jure* in 1733). The extent of the practical toleration enjoyed by non-Catholics was not the point at issue. Equal rights, Sołtyk told the sejm of 1766, were offensive to God and injurious to the Commonwealth. The rights claimed by the dissidents had been extracted by threats when the Commonwealth had been in peril, and were not guaranteed by treaty. Older laws laid down the severest penalties for heresy. He thus discounted the mutual promise, made by Catholic and non-Catholic members of the Confederacy of Warsaw during the first interregnum in 1572–3, not to persecute each other on account of differences in religion. The bishop also declared that he had to protect his flock from heretical teachings and so would permit no increase in the dissidents' existing freedoms.<sup>6</sup> Sołtyk's bark was worse than his bite. At his

<sup>4</sup> See Litak, *Atlas Kościoła łacińskiego*; id., 'Le Clergé polonais au siècle des lumières', in *Les Contacts religieux franco-polonais du moyen âge à nos jours* (Paris, 1985), 181–98.

<sup>5</sup> A. Zamoyski, *The Last King of Poland* (London, 1992), 98–102. See T. Ulewicz, *Sarmacja. Studium z problematyki słowiańskiej. Zagadnienie sarmatyzmu w kulturze i literaturze polskiej (problematyka ogólna i zarys historyczny)*, 2nd edn (Cracow, 2006); J. Michalski, 'Sarmatyzm a europeizacja Polski w XVIII wieku', in id., *Studia historyczne*, ii, 7–36.

<sup>6</sup> On the 'dissident question', see J. T. Lukowski, 'The Papacy, Poland, Russia and Religious Reform, 1764–8', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 39 (1988), 66–94; M. G. Müller, 'Toleration in Eastern Europe: The Dissident Question in Eighteenth-Century Poland-Lithuania', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *Toleration in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 1999), 212–29; B. Skinner, 'Khmelnitsky's Shadow: The Confessional Legacy', in K. Friedrich and B. M. Pendzich (eds.), *Confession and Identity in a Multinational Commonwealth: Poland-Lithuania in Context, 1550–1772* (Leiden and Boston, MA, 2009), 149–69, at 159–69; I. de Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great* (New Haven, CT, 1981), 196–202; S. Dixon, *Catherine the Great* (London, 2009), 1–144, *passim*; B. V. Nosov, *Russkaia politika v dissidentskom voprose v Pol'she 1762–1766*, in B. V. Nosov et al. (eds.), *Pol'sha i Evropa v*

instigation the sejm accepted a code of practice which permitted the dissidents discreet worship and ministry, while reinforcing the authority of Catholic bishops. The confederacy through which the king and his Czartoryski uncles had governed the Commonwealth since 1764 was dissolved. The *liberum veto* was set in tablets of stone. Sołtyk triumphed—for the moment.

Such defiance was not to be suffered by the tsaritsa. Her ambassador, Nikolai Repnin, organized confederacies for the Protestant szlachta and the tiny number of Orthodox nobles, who obediently demanded their rights. Catholic confederacies were also formed, comprising diverse ‘republicans’ or ‘patriots’ (and their retainers) who hoped that Russia would permit them to unthroned the parvenu ‘King Poniatowski’ and reverse his reforms. On 5 October 1767 the sejm opened under the aegis of the united confederacies.<sup>7</sup>

By this time, it was clear that Russia insisted not only on equality for the dissidents, but also on keeping the king. The protests led by Sołtyk led Repnin to have him, his successor as bishop of Kiev, Józef Załuski, as well the Crown field hetman, Wacław Rzewuski, and his son Seweryn, arrested during the night of 13/14 October and packed off to Russia. This flagrant breach of the Commonwealth’s sovereignty deterred rather than provoked the other ‘patriots’. A delegation was picked from within the sejm and authorized to pass the necessary legislation. This was then guaranteed by treaty with Russia on 24 February 1768, and the sejm concluded the empress’s business on 5 March.<sup>8</sup>

The outcomes of the sejm ignited the anti-Poniatovian, anti-dissident, and anti-Russian Confederacy of Bar—formed in the Podolian town of that name. Russian attempts to suppress the insurgency provoked the Ottoman Empire to declare war on Russia. Thus preoccupied, Russia was unable to pacify the Commonwealth for four years. In the meantime Sołtyk and the others were held captive in Kaluga. After they were released at the beginning of 1773, Sołtyk made a triumphant entry into Warsaw. But he returned to a partitioned Commonwealth. About half his diocese was now in Maria Theresa’s ‘Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria’.

The confederated sejm that met in April 1773 lasted two years. It ratified the treaties of partition and established a new form of government for the truncated Commonwealth. A Permanent Council, comprising eighteen senators (including three bishops) and eighteen representatives of the ‘knightly Estate’, organized in five departments and a plenum, took over much of the royal prerogative. The council’s powers were controversially extended by a further confederated sejm in 1776. The sejm of 1776 also brought Michał Poniatowski, the bishop of Płock, to the helm of the Commission for National Education, established after the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773. His predecessor as chairman, Ignacy Massalski, bishop of Wilno, was an enthusiastic propagator of enlightened

XVIII veke. *Mezhdunarodne i vnutrenne faktory razdelov Rechi Pospolitoi* (Moscow, 1999), 66–73; M. C. Łubieńska, *Sprawa dysydencka 1764–1766* (Cracow and Warsaw, 1911).

<sup>7</sup> G. [vel J.] T. Lukowski, *The Szlachta and the Confederacy of Radom 1766–1767/68: A Study of the Polish Nobility* (Rome, 1977), 64–198.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 199–228.

education for all, but had been unable to protect the post-Jesuit educational fund from being plundered by the Crown treasurer, Antoni Poniński, and his cronies. They had been hired by St Petersburg to procure the ratification of the Partition. After these ructions, Catherine II sought to keep the Commonwealth quiescent. She generally managed Polish affairs via her ambassador, Otto Magnus von Stackelberg, and the king, but sometimes she checked the latter by encouraging the opposition magnates. Old animosities were set aside as Seweryn Rzewuski, the youngest of those imprisoned in Kaluga, and three young Potockis (Ignacy, Stanisław, and Jan) married the four beautiful daughters of Stanisław Lubomirski and Izabella, née Czartoryska. The tsaritsa's second channel of command was via the grand hetman of the Crown, Ksawery Branicki, who had fallen out with Stanisław August over the hetmans' prerogatives in 1775, and was close to Izabella, née Flemming, the politically and culturally ambitious wife of Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski. In 1781 Branicki married Aleksandra Engelhardt, the favourite niece of Grigorii Potemkin. Potemkin acquired Polish nobility in 1776 and began to purchase land in the Polish Ukraine.<sup>9</sup>

These events passed Sołtyk by. He first displayed violent mood swings, hosting extravagant entertainments and publicly abusing those who displeased him. In 1774 he fell into a profound depression, and shut himself up in his palace in Cracow. However, his mind was still sufficiently clear to conduct some episcopal business. His decision in 1775 to invite Michał Poniatowski to become his coadjutor may have resulted from a wish to gain the support of the king in his dealings with Vienna.<sup>10</sup>

As chancellor of Cracow University, Sołtyk opposed its reform, conducted on behalf of the Educational Commission by Reverend Hugo Kołłątaj, whom he excommunicated and deprived of his benefices for having the temerity to appeal to the commission. As the bishop's behaviour became ever more unpredictable, on 8 February 1782 the cathedral chapter asked him to acknowledge his illness and submit to treatment. Sołtyk's furious reaction led the chapter to annul his most recent decisions. The bishop responded with dismissals. The prelates and canons took Sołtyk captive, with the assistance of troops, on 23 February 1782, and Poniatowski took over the administration of the diocese. Much of public opinion was outraged at the violation of the bishop's liberty, and some attributed base motives to the monarch and his brother.<sup>11</sup>

The king appointed a commission to investigate the affair. This commission confirmed Sołtyk's incapacity, but an ecclesiastical court presided over by the bishop of Chełm, Maciej Garnysz, sentenced the prelates and canons to fines and a month's retreat in a monastery for unbecoming treatment of their bishop—a sop to public opinion. The Permanent Council nominated curators for the bishop and

<sup>9</sup> See Lukowski, *Partitions*, 82–122; D. Stone, *Polish Politics and National Reform, 1775–1788* (New York, 1976).

<sup>10</sup> W. Chotkowski, *Historia polityczna Kościoła w Galicji za rządów Marii Teresy. Kościół w Galicji 1772–1780* (Cracow, 1909), ii, 31–2.

<sup>11</sup> M. Pęcowski, *Józef Olechowski, archidiakon i sufragan krakowski 1735–1806* (Cracow, 1926), 70–3, 193–200.

his property, and in May 1782 Sołtyk was escorted to his palace at Kielce. For the remainder of his life his chief pleasure came from sixteen musicians, who played all day.

Although some opposition magnates privately acknowledged that Sołtyk's wits were addled, his incarceration gave them a pretext to criticize the Permanent Council for breaching the fifteenth-century noble privilege of *neminem captivabimus nisi iure victum*—equivalent to the English Habeas Corpus act. At the sejm held in the autumn of 1782, the opposition failed to get Sołtyk released or the Permanent Council censured, but in secret ballots the king's majority fell. Legislatively, the sejm of 1782 was barren.<sup>12</sup>

Joseph II took advantage of the furore to end the bishop's jurisdiction and confiscate his revenues in Galicia.<sup>13</sup> Sołtyk had earlier agreed to establish a consistory court for the 'Cisvistulanian' part of his diocese in 1777. In September 1783 the emperor created a new bishopric of Tarnów. Pope Pius VI made his sanction dependent on the consent of the rightful bishop, or in this case the administrator. Poniatowski resisted for almost two years, but finally, pressed by Rome and the Cracow chapter, which had lost much of its income, he struck a bargain with Vienna in July 1785. In return for consenting to the loss of properties in Galicia belonging to clergy remaining in the Commonwealth, the diocese acquired the properties of the Galician clergy in Poland. Because this was an unequal exchange, the Austrian side also paid a one-off sum of 400,000 złoty (100,000 florins). Pius VI canonically erected the bishopric of Tarnów in March 1786, and confirmed the emperor's nominee in office.<sup>14</sup>

Poniatowski, who had ascended to the primacy in 1784/5 but retained the administration of the bishopric of Cracow, asked the Estates to endorse the agreement he had concluded with Vienna. But the sejm of 1786 was exceptionally stormy. Stanisław August noted how his own supporters were carried away by xenophobic enthusiasm when the sejm excluded foreigners from military commissions.<sup>15</sup> On 3 November Jan Suchorzewski, the most ardent of the opposition envoys, spoke eight times against the accord with Vienna. Only on the ninth occasion did he acquiesce in the declared wish of the entire chamber. The primate was conditionally permitted to administer the sums and revenues returned by

<sup>12</sup> Stone, *Polish Politics* (n. 9 above), 50–4. Sołtyk's confinement dominated debates between 21 October and 2 November 1782: *Dziennik seymu wolnego ordynaryjnego warszawskiego sześciomiesięcznego roku pańskiego MDCCCLXXXII* (Warsaw, no date of publication), 148–393.

<sup>13</sup> E. Zielińska, 'Rzeczpospolita wobec zbliżenia rosyjsko-austriackiego na początku lat osiemdziesiątych XVIII w. Sprawy Barona Karla Juliusa i Biskupa Kajetana Sołtyka', doctoral thesis, History Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Warsaw, 2004), 321–2, 330, 344, 353.

<sup>14</sup> U. dell'Orto, *La nunziatura a Vienna di Giuseppe Garampi 1776–1785* (Vatican City, 1995), 395–413, 427–9. Pęcowski, *Józef Olechowski* (n. 11 above), 127–31. B. Kumor, *Dzieje diecezji krakowskiej*, i (Cracow, 1998), 152–67, 256–7. T. Czacki, 'Opis ciągu wszystkich okoliczności względem Konwencji z Dworem Wiedeńskim a Dycezyją Krakowską...', BCz. 1178, pp. 33–6.

<sup>15</sup> E. Rostworowski, *Sprawa aukcji wojska na tle sytuacji politycznej przed Sejmem Czteroletnim* (Warsaw, 1957), 222–3.

the Vienna Convention for the public good. A papal *beneplicitum* was sought for the redistribution.<sup>16</sup>

Although only about half as lucrative as Cracow, the primacy was too great a prize for Poniatowski to pass over. But he was loath to give up the ecclesiastical and political influence he enjoyed as head of Poland's most populous diocese. Might he not hold both the great dioceses of the Crown? The opposition had suspected as much for at least three years.<sup>17</sup> The simultaneous tenure of Cracow and Gniezno was contrary to canon law, but the pope could grant a dispensation. The Commonwealth's laws forbade it, but there were sixteenth-century precedents, and a compliant sejm could pass the necessary statute. Less problematically, Poniatowski might have his administration of the diocese extended for his own lifetime. That bridge could also be crossed when Sołtyk died. The Polish Court made low-key efforts in St Petersburg and Vienna to gain assent to a union of the two sees.<sup>18</sup>

Neither the new nuncio, Ferdinando Maria Saluzzo, nor the new secretary of state, Cardinal Ignazio Boncompagni, were enthusiastic about aggrandizing the influence of an already powerful figure, who was no friend of the contemplative orders.<sup>19</sup> Saluzzo soon came to the conclusion, however, that despite the political and canonical obstacles, any opposition Rome might make was unlikely to succeed, given the primate's preponderance. The nuncio advised informing the primate that the pope was inclined to assist him 'in all that could be useful to the public good, and to religion'. This priority even meant accommodating his wishes to suppress or merge some religious houses.<sup>20</sup>

In the short term, Poniatowski's elevation to the primacy tilted the scales in the ambassadorial-royal duopoly towards the monarch—hence Stackelberg's insinuations that the primate's star outshone the king's.<sup>21</sup> Michał Poniatowski's sarcasm, pride, and taciturnity made him less likeable than his brother, but immunized him against Stackelberg's *humeurs* and threats. The ambassador, despite his jealousy, never had cause to doubt the primate's conviction that the Commonwealth should remain at Russia's side. The new archbishop, now officially the second person in the Commonwealth, brought his considerable administrative and managerial talents to the direction of the court party in many localities.<sup>22</sup> The alliance between throne and altar was now a reality, perhaps more so than at any time since another

<sup>16</sup> *Przymówienia się... Jana Suchorzewskiego... posła gnieźnieńskiego... 3. listopada roku 1786*, copy in AMS Poniatowski, A I 17. Z. Zielińska, 'Suchorzewski, Jan', *PSB*, xlv (Warsaw and Cracow, 2008), 315–24, at 315. Ferdinando Maria Saluzzo to Ignazio Boncompagni, 8 November 1786, ASV ANV 66, k. 116–18.

<sup>17</sup> E. Zielińska, 'Rzeczpospolita wobec zbliżenia rosyjsko-austriackiego' (n. 13 above), 301–2.

<sup>18</sup> Z. Zielińska, 'Poniatowski, Michał Jerzy', *PSB*, xxvii (Wrocław, 1983), 455–71, at 457. Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 16 November 1785, ASV ANV 66, f. 51.

<sup>19</sup> Boncompagni to Saluzzo, 17 December 1785, ASV ANV 50, f. 276–7.

<sup>20</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 11 January, 31 May, 2 August, 22 November 1786, 10 January 1787, ASV ANV 66, ff. 63, 83, 97–8, 121 (quotation), 131–2. Boncompagni to Saluzzo, 4 February 1786, ASV ANV 50, ff. 302–3. Cf. Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 191.

<sup>21</sup> *Pamiętniki Józefa Kossakowskiego, biskupa inflanckiego, 1738–1788*, ed. A. Darowski (Warsaw, 1891), 193.

<sup>22</sup> Zielińska, 'Poniatowski, Michał Jerzy', *PSB*, xxvii. 457.



royal brother, Cardinal Frederick Jagiellon, had held the sees of Cracow and Gniezno in tandem at the turn of the fifteenth century.<sup>23</sup>

The king left his younger brother at the helm in the spring of 1787. On board the tsaritsa's barge, moored off Kaniów on the Dnepr, Stanisław August tried to convince Catherine II of the benefits of a Russo-Polish alliance against the Ottoman Empire, involving an increase in the Commonwealth's army from about 18,000 to 45,000 and various improvements to its institutions. The sejm would need to be confederated for the first time since 1776 in order to pass these measures.<sup>24</sup> The primate nevertheless defied the ambassador in refusing to cede his interest in the bishopric of Cracow to Stackelberg's favourite, Józef Kossakowski, the bishop of Livonia.<sup>25</sup> Ignacy Massalski also desired the see, and Kossakowski could expect to succeed him in Wilno. Poniatowski seems to have been biding his time. It was not the wealth, but the power and influence which he desired. He was quite prepared to share the revenues.<sup>26</sup> Although a rumour at the beginning of 1787 that the pope had already agreed to the primate's administration of Cracow for life proved groundless, Boncompagni informed Saluzzo that the pontiff's attitude to the question remained unchanged.<sup>27</sup> And so matters stood when Sołtyk died on 29/30 July 1788.

On hearing the news, the bishops of Wilno, Płock, and Łuck each wrote to the king, setting out their claims to preference. The monarch replied non-committally. Stackelberg promised Kossakowski that he would try to delay the nomination of the new bishop.<sup>28</sup> The primate issued an instruction for prayers to be said for Sołtyk's soul.<sup>29</sup> He also had a summary compiled of the bishopric's estates. The properties

<sup>23</sup> See N. Nowakowska, *Church, State and Dynasty in Renaissance Poland: The Career of Cardinal Fryderyk Jagiellon (1468–1503)* (Aldershot and Burlington, VT, 2007).

<sup>24</sup> See Z. Zielińska, 'Stanisław August i Otto Stackelberg u progu wojny rosyjsko-tureckiej (marzec–październik 1787)', *KH*, 107/4 (2000), 3–20; ead., 'Listy Stanisława Augusta z podróży do Kaniowa (1787)', *KH*, 110/4 (2003), 71–124; Stone, *Polish Politics* (n. 9 above), 68–71; Zamoyski, *Last King*, 296–8; S. S. Montefiore, *Prince of Princes: The Life of Potemkin* (London, 2000), 364–7.

<sup>25</sup> Otto Magnus von Stackelberg to Józef Kazimierz Kossakowski, Kiev, 9 April, 30 April 1787, BJ 4436, vol. i, ff. 63, 64.

<sup>26</sup> Massalski attached a 'Plan Interessow w Generalnosci in Ordine przeyscia na Biskupstwo Krakowskie', which set out his debts and the costs of completing the rebuilding of Wilno cathedral against the sums expected from the sale of properties, to a letter dated Cudnów, 11 February 1786, LVIA, F1135-20-427/4, ff. 7–7a. According to Kossakowski (*Pamiętniki*, 182–5, 195–7, 206–8), Stackelberg first proposed to make Massalski bishop of Cracow and Kossakowski bishop of Wilno on 27 June 1785. Kossakowski further alleges that both he and Krzysztof Hilary Szembek, bishop of Płock, were ready to offer the primate part of the income of the bishopric of Cracow; and that instead the primate offered Kossakowski 200,000 zlotys from the revenues. However, in a note about a (lost) letter from the primate to Stackelberg on 17 April 1787 (BJ 4436, vol. i, f. 60) there is merely a reference to some reward for Kossakowski.

<sup>27</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 3 January 1787, ASV ANV 66, f. 130. Boncompagni to Saluzzo, 10 February 1787, ASV ANV 51, f. 20.

<sup>28</sup> Massalski to SA, Werki, 11 August 1788, BCz. 723, p. 121. SA to Massalski, 20 August 1788, BCz. 723, s. 123. SA to Krzysztof Hilary Szembek, 13 August 1788, BCz. 723, p. 987. Szembek to SA, Pułtusk, 31 August 1788, BCz. 723, pp. 985–6. Feliks Paweł Turski to SA, 5 August 1788; SA to Turski, 13 August 1788, BCz. 723, pp. 1047, 1049. Stackelberg to Kossakowski, 2 August 1788, BJ 4436, vol. i, f. 65.

<sup>29</sup> M. J. Poniatowski, *Zalecenie modlitw za duszę ś. p. Xcia Jmci Kaietana Ignacego Sołtyka biskupa krakowskiego* (Skierniewice, 1 August 1788).

yielded an income of 439,100 zlotys—far less than before the partition, but still impressive.<sup>30</sup> The chapter extended Poniatowski's administration until the pope decided otherwise.<sup>31</sup> Saluzzo was convinced that it would be useless, 'and above all dangerous to indispose the head of the Polish hierarchy'. Boncompagni foresaw no difficulties, because the administration was not confined to Sołtyk's lifetime. And if the primate were 'disposed to retain both bishoprics himself there shall be no opposition made from our side'.<sup>32</sup> The soundings made by the Commonwealth's minister to the Holy See, Tommaso Antici, gave Poniatowski grounds for optimism.<sup>33</sup>

However, Sołtyk's death could hardly have come at a worse moment for Poniatowski. The sejmiiks that elected envoys to the sejm were now just a fortnight away. That gave sufficient time for the news to reach all but the furthest sejmiiks, but not enough for interest to flag. Rumour was busy. It was said that Massalski had offered Stackelberg 50,000 ducats (900,000 zlotys) for the bishopric, or that new bishoprics of Sandomierz and Lublin would be created to feed 'the hungry', such as Garnysz, Kossakowski, Adam Naruszewicz, and the late bishop's nephew Kajetan Sołtyk, with the remainder attached to the primacy.<sup>34</sup>

'Sołtyk's ashes' soon spoke. The titular metaphor served an anonymous pamphleteer to call for unity, self-sacrifice in order to expand the army, and for Poles to remain calm while neighbours fought.<sup>35</sup> Now that he was dead, rather than merely incapacitated, Bishop Kajetan Sołtyk was an even more potent symbol of patriotic resistance to Russia, of violated noble liberties, and by implication, of the alleged cowardice and greed of the brothers Poniatowski.

## 2. THE SEJMIKS OF AUGUST 1788

The moment was critical. The Ottoman Empire had declared war on Russia on 16 August 1787, and St Petersburg had as yet made no clear response to Stanisław August's proposals for an alliance.<sup>36</sup> Stanisław August was asked to send detailed proposals in September 1787; only a year later did Catherine accept some of them. As late as November 1787 the king believed that he had the 'prevalent strength of the nation in the attachment of the middling and wealthy szlachta', and could lead

<sup>30</sup> 'Status bonorum Ecclesiae et Episcopatus Cracoviensis', in Kumor, *Dzieje diecezji krakowskiej*, i, 249.

<sup>31</sup> AKKK, Prothocollum actorum 19a, ff. 63–4. J. Olechowski to the chapter of Cracow, 1 August 1788, AKKK, Libri Archivi 10, f. 371. MJP to the chapter of Cracow, 13 August 1788, AKKK, Libri Archivi 30, f. 206. Pęcowski, *Józef Olechowski* (n. 11 above), 135.

<sup>32</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 2 August, 16 August 1788, ASV ANV 66, ff. 215–17. Boncompagni to Saluzzo, 6 September 1788, ASV ANV 51, f. 426.

<sup>33</sup> Tommaso Antici to Gaetano Ghigiotti, 6 September, 24/25 October 1788, AGHig. 25a, vol. v, ff. 93–5, 113–18. Antici to MJP, 10 September, 13 September, 14 September 1788, AMS Poniatowski, A I 23, ff. 248–54.

<sup>34</sup> Wincenty Gurski to Leonard Świejkowski, 19 August 1788, Ossol. 6353, p. 252.

<sup>35</sup> *Odezwa popiołów ś. p. Jaśnie Oświeconego Xiążęcia Biskupa Krakowskiego* [1788].

<sup>36</sup> Zielińska, 'Stanisław August i Otto Stackelberg', 13–15.

it into an alliance with Russia 'against these great names of the opposition' if only the empress would concede some clear benefits to Poland.<sup>37</sup> Perhaps he underestimated Polish resentment of Russia, and overestimated the desire for war against the Turks. But his diagnosis was shared by Stackelberg, who, as on previous occasions, tried to convince Catherine of the utility of a Russo-Polish alliance. Between the spring of 1787 and the summer of 1788 the Commonwealth underwent political 'fermentation', as the king put it, and the call to expand the army became overwhelmingly popular with the nobility.<sup>38</sup>

Since the 1720s, the szlachta had been growing faster than the population as a whole. The number of nobles with little or no land seems to have increased fastest. This may have been the result of marginally better living conditions and incomparably lighter burdens than those endured by peasants. In the past, many poor nobles would have served in magnates' militias and courts, but these opportunities had been cut back since the 1760s. A clerical career required a sufficient education, and the number of benefices was finite. The number of places in the Commonwealth's administrative and fiscal institutions was growing, but was still small. The law could absorb many in a country of proverbial litigiousness, but the supply of lawyers and legal clerks outran demand, and a similar need for education applied.

So many poor nobles were anxious for military employment. They had little taste for the 'foreign regulation' of infantry, dragoons, and artillery, recruited from peasants on Crown and ecclesiastical estates, and reformed on Prussian lines. On the other hand, the 'national cavalry', dominated by noble 'companions' (*towarzysze*), larded with sinecures, and characterized by lax discipline and Polish costume, appealed to them immensely. Ksawery Branicki found much support here for his campaign to restore the hetmans' powers, successively curtailed in 1764, 1775, and 1776. It was not that the szlachta had ceased to fear unpaid soldiers devastating their properties. Nor had middling nobles become indifferent to the potential for *absolutum dominium* that could result from consigning a substantial force to a single command. However, these fears could no longer prevail over the reasons to increase the army. These included security: nobles could never ignore the danger of peasant revolt, especially in the south-east. In border regions some feared a new partition. Perhaps strongest of all was the desire to restore the Commonwealth's standing after decades of humiliation. However, the incompatibility of the king's and the hetman's programmes ensured that the question divided, rather than united the noble 'nation'. Perhaps that was as well for ecclesiastical property. One envoy had spoken 'regarding the equalization of bishoprics and the expansion of the army' at the sejm of 1784, but without result.<sup>39</sup>

The sejms of August 1788 served notice that the approaching sejm would be still more turbulent than its predecessor. The opposition was led by Branicki and Adam Czartoryski, seconded by his wife, Izabella, and his nephews-in-law, Ignacy

<sup>37</sup> SA to Deboli, 7 November 1787, quoted after Rostworowski, *Sprawa aukcji wojska*, 223–4.

<sup>38</sup> See Rostworowski, *Sprawa aukcji wojska*.

<sup>39</sup> Boniecki (Chełm): *Dziennik seymu wolnego ordynaryjnego grodzieńskiego sześciomiesięcznego roku pańskiego MDCCCLXXIV dnia 4 miesiąca października odprawiającego się* (Warsaw, 1785), 360–1.

and Stanisław Potocki. In the spring of 1787, the opposition had tried and failed to outbid the king for the empress's favour. Catherine and Potemkin had treated Ignacy Potocki with particular disdain, prompting him to seek an alternative patron in the king of Prussia. As yet, however, most of Potocki's kin and colleagues were reluctant to follow his example. Although the Czartoryskis and young Potockis (often referred to collectively as Puławy, after the Czartoryskis' country seat) exploited Russophobia, St Petersburg did not try to drive a wedge between them and Branicki. As Stanisław August and Stackelberg later complained, Potemkin encouraged the hetman. Catherine wished to keep the Commonwealth calm without handing a clear victory to either side. The outcome was that the king felt obliged to make concessions, thereby whetting the opposition's appetite.<sup>40</sup>

Although the system of sejmiks applied from one end of the Commonwealth to the other, their territorial organization varied until the reform of 1791. The administrative divisions of the Polish Crown derived from the division and partial recoalescence of the medieval kingdom, and its subsequent eastward expansion. Some palatinates had a single sejmik that elected four, six, seven, or eight envoys. Other palatinates divided into counties (*ziemie*), whose sejmiks usually elected two envoys each. Three palatinates in Great Poland came together in a single sejmik. Sejmiks that elected envoys were not always held in the same place and for the same areas as those that elected deputies to the tribunals, or dealt with local business. In the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, whose structure had been reformed in the 1560s, virtually all its palatinates were divided up into districts (*powiaty*), each of which elected two envoys, although the number of districts varied according to the size of the palatinate. Three sejmiks gathered descendants of nobles from territories lost to Muscovy in 1667/86: Smolensk, Starodub, and Czernihów. They met in localities where some of these exiles had received estates in compensation for their losses: the first two in the palatinate of Wilno, the third in Volhynia. With the exception of Livonia, no such sejmiks were permitted by the partitioning monarchies for the lands annexed in 1772. In total, 55 sejmiks elected 177 envoys.

In the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the king and primate, assisted by the vice-chancellor, Joachim Chreptowicz, sought to ensure the election of well-disposed envoys by negotiation with Karol Radziwiłł, Lithuania's foremost magnate. Radziwiłł had been a fierce opponent of the king in the 1760s, but had generally been pliable since returning from exile in 1776. He now started to manoeuvre between the court and the opposition. His hold over his numerous clients was however weakened by his appalling financial straits.<sup>41</sup> The primate, who needed allies in order to keep the bishopric of Cracow, also endeavoured to agree some candidates

<sup>40</sup> J. Michalski, 'Sejmiki poselskie 1788 roku', in id., *Studia historyczne*, i. 217–84, at 219, 227–37. Id., 'Zmierch prokonsulatu Stackelberga', in id., *Studia historyczne*, i. 449–99, at 458–62. Z. Zielińska, 'Geneza upadku orientacji rosyjskiej u progu Sejmu Czteroletniego w opinii ambasadora Stackelberga', *WO*, 15 (1999), 57–93, at 76–7. Ead., 'Listy Stanisława Augusta', 80–9, 97.

<sup>41</sup> J. Michalski, 'Radziwiłł, Karol Stanisław', *PSB*, xxx (Wrocław, 1987), 248–62, at 259. K. Tracki, *Ostatni kanclerz litewski. Joachim Litawor Chreptowicz w okresie Sejmu Czteroletniego 1788–1792* (Vilnius, 2007), 81–5.

with the bishop of Wilno, Ignacy Massalski.<sup>42</sup> Many Lithuanian envoys would be silent at the sejm. But the Grand Duchy also elected some of the sejm's key players, not least in ecclesiastical affairs.<sup>43</sup>

The opposition won at Brześć Litewski, where Branicki's nephew Kazimierz Sapieha topped the poll. Michał Zaleski, elected for Troki, was a legalist who would prove awkward at crucial moments. The envoys chosen by the Smolensk 'sejmik in exile' included the royalist Antoni Suchodolski, a man with unenlightened attitudes towards non-Catholics. Another significant supporter of the monarch was Tadeusz Kościalkowski, elected at Wilkomierz. The district of Pińsk chose the royalist Mateusz Butrymowicz, a fine speaker with a bent for Enlightenment rhetoric, who took a keen interest in confessional questions. Michał Bernowicz, envoy for Nowogródek, was regarded as an expert on Orthodoxy, while the sejm's sole Protestant, Paweł Grabowski, was elected for Wołkowysk.

The Livonian sejmik encapsulates the king's difficulties. Although Russia had annexed the Lithuano-Polish condominium of Livonia in 1772, a meadow in the river Dvina gave a pretext to reactivate the sejmik in 1778. Traditionally the king's nominees for all six mandates were confirmed by the fifty or so nobles who turned up. Nearly all the electors were *sujets mixtes*, giving St Petersburg an influence which recompensed the sejmik's implicit challenge to the partition. Sometimes the electors even left open 'windows' in the act of election for the king to fill in the names. Livonia was the Commonwealth's nearest equivalent to an English 'rotten borough', and was candidly compared by Stanisław August to Old Sarum.<sup>44</sup>

In 1788, the situation was complicated by the rivalry between the king's main fixer, Konstanty Plater, the starosta of Livonia, and the Zyberk (vel Sieberg) family, who owned the meadow and had links with Ignacy Potocki. Well-founded rumours that the king and Stackelberg had been talking of abolishing the sejmik enraged the Livonian szlachta. Unusually, the opposition candidates appeared in person.<sup>45</sup> The Russian governor of Polotsk sent a letter to the sejmik, conveying a recommendation from Potemkin for the opposition candidates, including Branicki's ally, Michał Zabiełło, and Czartoryski's young courtiers Stanisław Kublicki, Józef Weyssenhoff, and Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz. The latter would recall that 'the name of Potemkin, like the head of Medusa, petrified everybody', and the opposition candidates were duly elected.<sup>46</sup>

The province of Great Poland saw high turnouts and keenly contested elections. The sejmik at Środa elected envoys for the palatinates of Poznań, Kalisz, and Gniezno. Among the envoys chosen was Jan Suchorzewski, who had caused the primate so much trouble in 1786, and made a well-publicized offering for the army in the spring of 1788. At this stage he was nobody's client. The royalists included

<sup>42</sup> MJP to I. Massalski, 13 August 1788, LVIA F1135-20-426/1, ff. 15–15a.

<sup>43</sup> The most detailed account of the Lithuanian elections is A. Šapoka, *Lietuva reformų seimo metu. Iki 1791 m. gegužės 3 d. konstitucijos*, (Vilnius, 2008), 207–28.

<sup>44</sup> SA to Mazzei, 19 January 1791, BN, Akc.11,356, vol. i, f. 457.

<sup>45</sup> Jan Zyberk to SA, 22 August 1788, BCz. 723, p. 1255. Cf. a letter of an unidentified correspondent to Konstanty Plater from the turn of September 1788, LVIA F1276-2-182, f. 119.

<sup>46</sup> J. U. Niemcewicz, *Pamiętniki czasów moich*, ed. Jan Dihm, 2 vols. (Warsaw, 1957), i. 261–2.

Ignacy Wyssogota Zakrzewski, who would take up the cause of the burghers and make far-reaching proposals for ecclesiastical reforms.<sup>47</sup>

The Duchy of Mazovia, fully incorporated into the Polish Crown only in 1529, and dominated by a numerous, poor, and intensely Catholic szlachta, elected twenty envoys at ten sejmiks. In 1788 the Mazovians generally upheld their royalist reputation. Among the successful candidates at Liw was the head of the royal cabinet, Pius Kiciński, who was to prove the most talented orator in the king's party.

The province of Little Poland was traditionally more susceptible to magnate influence than Great Poland. The leading figures in the palatinate of Sandomierz were the brothers Małachowski. Jacek, the Crown grand chancellor, was more loyal to Stackelberg than to the king, but Stanisław, who held the lesser office of Crown referendary, was respected for his honesty. He was expected to become the sejm's marshal.<sup>48</sup> Stanisław Małachowski and his nephew Jan were elected unanimously; secret voting was needed to choose the remaining five envoys. The sejmik almost descended into drunken chaos. On the first day, there was

a great tumult in the church, damage in the breaking of sabres, caps, the loss of pocket watches, the spoiling of altars, but on the other hand, no one was injured. The palatine [Maciej Sołtyk] calmed the storm on Monday; he ordered that candidates for envoys should not provide vodka or wine at breakfast, and so the deliberations concluded calmly. The deliberations were extended until Thursday; the envoys were elected *per Vota Secreta* by two thousand citizens.<sup>49</sup>

The sejmik of Chełm elected Wojciech Suchodolski, a captain (*rotmistrz*) in the national cavalry and a client of Branicki. The hetman's supporters brought in many poor nobles to the Volhynian sejmik at Łuck; at least a dozen were said to have been wounded, and two killed. There were six mandates at stake, but only one royalist was elected—Walerian Stroynowski. With its extensive magnate properties, Volhynia would become a byword for hostility to reform. Much of the palatinate of Braclaw belonged to Szczesny Potocki, the richest of the Potocki clan. He had won popularity by resigning as palatine of Ruthenia in order to rejoin the knightly Estate. He had also purchased the post of general of the Crown artillery, thereby claiming command of the Ukrainian and Podolian units of the Crown army, and provoking Branicki's animosity.<sup>50</sup> However, as a Russophile by interest and conviction, he feared the national mood. Reluctantly, he agreed to be elected envoy for Braclaw. The other five mandates were divided between his supporters and the court.

The opposition mounted a concerted campaign in Podolia. Petty nobles were carted in from the Czartoryski estates. A harmonious outcome was bought by a court capitulation—no royalist was elected to any of the six mandates. The Puławy

<sup>47</sup> See A. Zahorski, *Ignacy Wyssogota Zakrzewski. Prezydent Warszawy* (Warsaw, 1963).

<sup>48</sup> See E. Machalski, *Stanisław Małachowski – marszałek Sejmu Czteroletniego* (Poznań, 1936), 9–30.

<sup>49</sup> Letter to K. Żórawski, Opatów, 22 August 1788, AMS Poniatowski A I 18, f. 59.

<sup>50</sup> Rostworowski, *Sprawa aukcji wojska*, 198–9.

interest got all six of its candidates elected at Lublin, led by Adam Czartoryski himself and Stanisław Potocki. But the limits of patronage are apparent from the king's later comment that one of the envoys, Ignacy Wybranowski, 'is often the *turbator chori*, particularly when, as now, Prince Adam is absent'.<sup>51</sup> An eye-witness wrote of the sejmik: 'one could not go about for twenty-four hours, because two thousand drunken szlachta made such a mad figure, as if someone had carted in and unloaded lunatics.'<sup>52</sup> Stanisław Potocki's aristocratic *hauteur* is revealed by his admission to his wife that the success 'has cost me two days of *ennuye* [*sic*] and 500 ducats'—not counting what Czartoryski had spent—and his reference to Wybranowski as '*une Moustache*'.<sup>53</sup> As in Podolia, Izabella Czartoryska's efforts were recognized to have contributed to the victory.

The king was initially satisfied with the results, which seemed to show a royalist majority. He realized, however, that the opposition would be stronger than at any time since the partition, and that the 'nation' was at best sceptically disposed towards an alliance with Russia against the Ottoman Empire. As expected, Little Poland yielded the most envoys associated with the opposition, and Mazovia the most royalists. The monarch hoped that most of the Lithuanian envoys would listen to good counsel and lose their homespun prejudices once they reached Warsaw.<sup>54</sup> Had this sentiment been made public, it would have confirmed the worst provincial fears. The anonymous Lithuanian author of an open letter to the king wrote: 'know thou, that neither Warsaw, nor thy courtiers (*dworaki*) are the nation, but the country (*kraj*), and we citizens, living in many homes in the countryside'. A better example of the discourse of 'country versus court' would be hard to find.<sup>55</sup> The opposition leaders hoped 'that we shall do something good at this sejm', but they too expected that the king would have a majority.<sup>56</sup>

As the sejm approached, Stanisław August became less sure of his own support and sought compromise with the opposition. So did Stackelberg, who accepted the candidacies of Stanisław Małachowski and Kazimierz Sapieha for marshals of the Crown and Lithuanian confederacies, and began to retreat from the idea of pushing through the alliance.<sup>57</sup> In mid-September the king confided in Deboli: 'In a word I keep my spirits up. But I make myself ready for this, that strange and unpleasant scenes await me at this sejm; but I trust in God, and have some intuition that, as usual, in the end good will come out of it for us.'<sup>58</sup>

We have focused on men who would become the sejm's leading personalities. But most envoys would speak rarely, or not at all. Many were leading figures in their districts or palatinates—men who were sensitive to the opinions of their

<sup>51</sup> SA to Deboli, 5 January 1791, quoted after Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii, 433.

<sup>52</sup> F. S. Jezierski, 25 August 1788, quoted after Michalski, 'Sejmiki poselskie', 238.

<sup>53</sup> S. K. Potocki to Aleksandra Potocka, Puławy, 20 August 1788, APP 262, vol. i, pp. 863–4.

<sup>54</sup> SA to J. Chreptowicz, 23 August 1788, quoted in Michalski, 'Sejmiki poselskie', 271.

<sup>55</sup> 'List pewnego obywatela Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego do Stanisława Augusta króla', quoted after J. Michalski, '"Warszawa" czyli o antystoletcznych nastrojach w czasach Stanisława Augusta', in id., *Studia historyczne*, ii, 37–96, at 56. The form *dworaki* is insulting.

<sup>56</sup> S. K. Potocki to A. Potocka, Olesin, 2 September 1788, APP 262, vol i, p. 878.

<sup>57</sup> Michalski, 'Zmierczch prokonsulatu', 464–73. Zielińska, 'Geneza upadku', 77–88.

<sup>58</sup> SA to Deboli, 13 September 1788, quoted after Michalski, 'Sejmiki poselskie', 273.

neighbours, and who valued their reputations. They were the audience harangued by the demagogues. They had little idea of the workings of international politics, but felt the Commonwealth's abasement. Between 1776 and 1786, they usually deferred to the king's majesty, but Stanisław August had seen them carried away by emotions: in 1780, when the former Crown grand chancellor Andrzej Zamoyski's projected codification of the laws was rejected,<sup>59</sup> in 1782 over the Sołtyk affair, and in 1786, when foreigners had been excluded from army commissions. The nuncio also had reason to be nervous. Although these envoys prided themselves on their Catholicism, they also inherited the szlachta's anti-clericalism, which was pungently expressed in the instructions. Long-standing frictions between the szlachta and the clergy included mortmain, the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts, tithes, taxation, fees sent to Rome, and noble claims to a monopoly of bishoprics, prelatures, canonries, and the more lucrative parishes. But by the later eighteenth century, noble complaints were beginning to take on an 'enlightened' tinge, especially regarding the regular clergy.<sup>60</sup>

### 3. THE INSTRUCTIONS OF 1788

The ordinary szlachta traditionally had a greater input into the sejmik instructions than into the choice of envoys, although the actual drafting was usually carried out by a few activists after most nobles had gone home. The trade-off could be seen, for example, at the sejmiks of Łęczyca, Ciechanów, and Smolensk, where the court's candidates were elected, but the instructions were among the most 'Sarmatian'. On the other hand, the court candidates lost in Podolia, but the local royalists ensured 'that no points were put into the instruction, which could displease Your Majesty'.<sup>61</sup> By 1790, the content and tone of the instructions had become almost entirely emancipated from control 'from above', but those of 1788 to a substantial degree also reflected szlachta opinion.<sup>62</sup> 40 out of 55 instructions have been examined, mainly with regard to religion and taxation. They amount to 9 out of 12 for Little Poland,<sup>63</sup> 16 out of 20 for Great Poland,<sup>64</sup> 14 out of 22 for

<sup>59</sup> On the 'Zamoyski Code' and its fate, see E. Borkowska-Bagieńska, *Zbiór Praw Sądowych Andrzeja Zamoyskiego* (Poznań, 1986); M. Tarnawski, *Kodeks Zamoyskiego na tle stosunków kościelno-państwowych za czasów Stanisława Augusta* (Lwów, 1916); Lukowski, *Disorderly Liberty*, 109–20.

<sup>60</sup> Butterwick, 'Catholicism and Enlightenment in Poland-Lithuania', in Lehner and Printy (eds.), *A Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment*, 300–2, 312–13, 335.

<sup>61</sup> Aleksander Rożniecki to SA, 22 August 1788, quoted after Michalski, 'Sejmiki poselskie', 280 n. 299.

<sup>62</sup> Rostworowski, *Sprawa aukcji wojska*, s. 228.

<sup>63</sup> Braclaw (at Winnica): ZP 130, pp. 307–12; Kraków (at Proszowice): BPAU 8615, ff. 630–7; Czernihów (at Włodzimierz): Ossol. 6848, pp. 6–15; Kiev (at Żytomierz): ZP 130, pp. 331–3; Lublin: BPAU 8326, ff. 461–7; Mielnik: ZP 130, pp. 347–52; Podolia (at Kamieniec): ZP 130, pp. 317–23; Sandomierz (at Opatów): BPAU 8341, ff. 1161–80; Volhynia (at Łuck): ZP 130, ff. 384–405.

<sup>64</sup> Cujavia (at Radziejów): Adolf Pawiński, *Dzieje ziemi kujawskiej*, v (Warsaw, 1888), pp. 355–8; Ciechanów: BPAU 8318, ff. 359–60; Czersk: BPAU 8320, ff. 482–5; Dobrzyń (at Lipno): *Acta historica*, x (Cracow, 1887), pp. 394–6; Great Poland (at Środa): ZP 130, k. 358–65; Łęczyca: BPAU 8330, ff. 749–57; Nur: Ossol. 6848, pp. 1–2; Płock (at Raciąż): BPAU 953, ff. 1894–1900



Lithuania,<sup>65</sup> and the instruction for Livonia.<sup>66</sup> The findings of Adolfas Šapoka and Jerzy Michalski raise the grand total to 47 instructions.<sup>67</sup>

Many, although by no means all, of the instructions contained the usual formulae of gratitude to and trust in the king 'for his labours and toils undertaken for the public good'. The sejmik of Dobrzyń, quoted here, avowed its respect for 'the throne and the sceptre, the vicarious earthly powers of God over an orthodox people'. Its envoys were not to permit 'malicious and harmful' voices to be raised against the king.

However, the sejms at which the opposition was strongest demanded that the Commonwealth remain neutral in the Russo-Turkish war. Worse still from the king's point of view was the desire expressed by some Crown sejms—Lublin, Ciechanów, and Sieradz—to abolish the Permanent Council, and the wish of still more to replace the council's Military Department with a military commission dependent only on the sejm. Several instructions proposed extending the term of the sejm, and two even wanted the sejm to be *ustawiczny* or *niewstający*—permanently in session, or at least reconvenable. The monarch was less troubled by the Lithuanian instructions. These tended not to challenge his foreign and domestic policy, while voting thanks for his efforts and expressing trust in his leadership. They also included a number of specifically Lithuanian demands, such as two simultaneously sitting Lithuanian tribunals, and the return of other courts and archives to the Grand Duchy.

An increase in the army was approved by all known instructions. The Łęczyca instruction reveals the economic interest behind the demand: 'the country is plentiful and yet there is no room for educated szlachta; some go abroad, others are miserably degraded at home.' Many instructions also wanted to renew annual musters (*popisy*) of able-bodied noblemen in the localities. Although long neglected, they remained part of the szlachta's self-justification: their alleged willingness to shed their blood for the Fatherland.<sup>68</sup> Some old phobias remained. The Samogitian sejmik wanted 'a security in law that the armed forces to be recruited from us and maintained by us could not be [...] used for the grinding down of our liberties and freedoms or the oppression of any citizen of the Commonwealth'.

(Sierakowski faction, 17 August 1788) and BPAU 8336, ff. 253–4 (Zieliński faction, 20 August 1788); Rawa: Ossol. 6848, pp. 25–31; Rózan: BPAU 8337, ff. 630–1; Sieradz: Ossol. 6848, pp. 42–6; Sochaczew: BPAU 8347, ff. 472–6; Wieluń: Ossol. 6848, pp. 42–5; Włocławek: BPAU 8351, ff. 396–8; Wyszogród: BPAU 8352, ff. 318–19; Zakroczym: ZP 130, ff. 414–25.

<sup>65</sup> Brześć Litewski: *Akty wydawane przez Komisję do zbierania i wydawnictwa Arkheograficznego*, ii (Vil'na, 1867), pp. 189–92, Grodno: LMAVB F233–125, ff. 16–24; Kowno: LVIA SA 13,805, ff. 1105–7; Lida: LMAVB F233–125, ff. 30–2; Minsk: ZP 130, ff. 354–6; Mozyrz: LMAVB F233–125, ff. 45–8; Rzeczyca (at Bobrujsk): LMAVB F233–125, ff. 24–8; Samogitia (at Rosienie): LVIA SA 14,570, ff. 196–9; Smolensk (at Olita): ZP 130, ff. 376–82; Starodub (at Żyżmory): LVIA SA 13,723, ff. 447–52; Troki: LVIA SA 5919, ff. 897–902; Upita (at Poniewież): LVIA SA 15,281, f. 448 Wilkomierz: LMAVB F233–125, ff. 1–3; Wilno: LVIA SA 4803, pp. 1008–13.

<sup>66</sup> ARoskie, CCXIX/13/104.

<sup>67</sup> Regarding the Chelm instruction, I have followed Michalski, 'Sejmiki poselskie', 273–82. Šapoka, *Lietuva reformų seimo metu*, 157–71, summarized the instructions of Nowogródek, Orsza (at Cholopienicze), Pińsk, Połock (at Uszcz), Słonim and Włokowysk. This leaves the instructions of Bielsk (at Brański), Drohiczyn, Gostynin, Liw, Łomża, Warsaw, Brasław and Oszmiana.

<sup>68</sup> Rostworowski, *Sprawa aukcji wojska*, 229–32.

Here and there nobles indicated a willingness to tax themselves. The Podolian sejmik proposed a general land tax of 10 per cent, the szlachta of Cujavia called for a proportional tax on all royal, clerical, and noble estates, and the Livonian instruction nodded to physiocratic doctrine: 'general practice in Europe has already convinced all politicians and legislators, that there is no more just imposition than that which derives from the land'. It duly called for a land survey. The Braclaw sejmik suggested working out a 10 per cent tax on landed property and capital from the records of transactions. Not coincidentally, this would reduce the south-east's share of taxation. Several sejmiks grudgingly consented to the least burdensome taxes possible. The Wilkomierz szlachta, although they 'gladly' agreed to a 'public offering', instructed their envoys 'that this offering be proportionate, so as not to result in the destruction of our properties'. Some sejmiks called for the exemption of poor szlachta and several suggested increasing the hearth tax, which was paid by nobles, clergy, burghers, and peasants, but not the Jews, who paid a poll tax. The height of optimism was the desire of the nobles of Upita and Starodub that their envoys should not only refuse consent to any new taxes on noble lands, but should seek reductions in the existing ones.

Starostas were often identified as a source of additional revenue. The tax they paid, the *kwarta*, fell well short of the theoretical quarter of their net revenues from the Crown estates that came with their office. Jews were also targeted, especially in Lithuania. The Smolensk sejmik even proposed a tax on Jewish weddings 'in the manner practised in Austria'. But the overwhelming call was to tax the Catholic clergy. Saluzzo reported that the instructions he had received so far all contained demands to increase the army and 'as is customary', to cast most of the burden onto the clergy.<sup>69</sup>

Almost every known instruction from the Polish Crown proposed taxing the clergy in one way or another; very few did not single them out for special treatment. The Zakroczym szlachta challenged the basis of ecclesiastical property by asserting that 'the clergy, as they have been enriched *ex Patrimonio* by the Commonwealth, should in proportion to their revenues contribute to the augmentation of the army'. The only tax proposed by the Lublin sejmik was a 6 per cent tax on clerical property, exempting those with an income of less than 2,000 zlotys a year, as it was claimed that poorer priests paid most of the annual *subsidiū charitativum* (which had been set at 700,000 zlotys in 1775, supposedly a tenth of the Church's annual revenues). The Sochaczew szlachta accused some bishops of keeping a residue of the sum collected. The Sieradz instruction was sardonic. The bishops

have already given an example of their piety, in accepting the *subsidiū charitativum*, but what of it? This *subsidiū* they have, *in maiori quantitate*, transferred to the parish priests subject to their jurisdiction. From their own manifold revenues they do not pay these taxes which are increased almost every year. The honourable envoys will warm their holiness (*zagrzeią ich świętobliwość*), so that from these revenues, with which they have been replenished by previous monarchs and the Commonwealth, they would

<sup>69</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 27 August 1788, ASV ANV 66, f. 218.

offer a contribution to the augmentation of the army, not passing it on to other persons.

The neighbouring Wieluń szlachta called for 'ecclesiastical estates and foundations, as they flow from the innards of the Commonwealth for the education of national youth, to contribute *in quadruplo* to the tax for the Commonwealth'. The Łęczyca instruction specified that the clergy, excepting priests with less than 1,500 złotych a year, were to be taxed first, because the army 'will defend faith, freedom, and the integrity of the country, hazarding its own life'. The Volhynian instruction called on all abbots and Uniate bishops to hand over half of their net revenues to the treasury. The szlachta of Dobrzyń, Rawa, and Sandomierz wanted all bishops, prelates, canons, abbots, and monasteries to pay half of their income. At the latter sejmik, 'they shouted at wealthy monks, and canonized parish priests (*plebani*)'.<sup>70</sup>

The district of Lida proposed a tax of three *kwarty* on clerical properties, after the fashion of Crown estates, which in practice would have meant rather less than three-quarters. It excepted the primate, 'whose status requires substantial expense'. The citizens of Słonim asked the monasteries to give a quarter of their revenues to the army. They also wished to forbid the Uniate bishops from levying the tribute called the *cathedraticum* on their diocesan clergy. Most Lithuanian sejms, however, did not make specific demands for clerical taxes. Nor did Livonia.

The citizens of the Mazovian county of Ciechanów wanted to take all clerical estates for the treasury and pay clergymen salaries.

Traditional sources of noble anti-clericalism found outlets. The Great Poland sejmik, despite its insistence that the envoys should 'not permit the smallest detriment to the Dominant Holy Catholic Faith', wanted to exclude priests from all management of laymen's property, and reminded them not to lease land to non-nobles. The Dobrzyń szlachta wanted a new law on clergymen's legacies in favour of laymen. The Wilno instruction called for female convents to stop requiring a dowry, and wanted the rights of nuns' lay heirs secured. On the other hand, nobles promoted the interests of their own local churches and monasteries. For example, the Zakroczym sejmik pleaded the cause of the Benedictines of Pułtusk, the Mielnik instruction asked the sejm to ratify the foundation of an altar in the parish church of Niemojki for the confraternity of the Most Holy Trinity, while the Great Poland szlachta requested the conclusion of the canonization of the Blessed Bogumil (archbishop of Gniezno, *circa* 1135–*circa* 1204). The 'exiled' szlachta of Czernihów commended Julian Antonowicz, the head of the highly regarded school run by the Uniate Basilian monks at Włodzimierz—the location of their sejmik.<sup>71</sup>

The Cracow szlachta had other priorities: their palatinate contained numerous monasteries, whose considerable revenues could reduce the burden on noble citizens. They also demanded that only nobles of the palatinate—not including clergymen—be allowed to lease estates returned under the Vienna Convention of

<sup>70</sup> Letter to K. Żórawski, Opatów, 22 August 1789, AMS Poniatowski, A I 18, f. 59.

<sup>71</sup> Antonowicz published the first English grammar in Polish. R. Butterwick, *Poland's Last King and English Culture: Stanisław August Poniatowski 1732–1798* (Oxford, 1998), 175.

1785. However, the Cracow instruction paid the same fulsome tribute to Poniatowski as in 1786, following his elevation to the primacy. He must have been cheered by the Nur instruction: 'Knowing the slender revenues, insufficient to meet the manifold primatial expenses', it asked for the revenues of the bishopric of Cracow to be joined to the primacy. Otherwise, Poniatowski fared less well than in 1786. The sejmik of Lublin called for a ban on holding ecclesiastical dignities 'which would unite either two substantial incomes or two chairs in the senate'. This would have scuppered the primate's plans to become bishop of Cracow.

The nobles of Czersk and Rawa called for the revenues of the vacant bishopric of Cracow to be used for the army.

The primate's work in education seems to have impressed the szlachta less in an atmosphere of increasingly vocal discontent at the 'novelties' introduced in some of the Educational Commission's schools.<sup>72</sup> The sejmik of Great Poland wanted the restoration of the Lateran Canons' abbey of Trzemeszno's right to run a school, and the 'most exact means to be devised in the current education of our youth for their practice in the Latin language'. The county of Wieluń desired that mendicant orders be permitted to provide 'education according to the old customs in Latin, history, and geography, and in that which regards the order of religion'.

Several sejms wanted the Commission for National Education to have a purely supervisory role, freeing the former Jesuit revenues for the army. According to the szlachta of Zakroczym, 'the revenues from the post-Jesuit funds could be applied to the expansion of the army, and education could be supplied by clergymen, especially monasteries'. The idea was shared by the nobles of Cujavia, Lida, Mozyrz, Połock, Rzeczyca, Sieradz, Słonim, Smolensk, Starodub, Troki, Wilno, and Wołkowysk.

This fiscal interest coincided with the opinion that the regular clergy should make themselves useful. The Smolensk instruction postulated the abolition of all religious houses, except those of the male teaching orders. Their revenues could be applied to the army, after making provision for the sustenance of the monks and nuns. Nuns' funds were 'wholly useless to the Commonwealth, and indeed in many political respects harmful'. The brethren of Rzeczyca echoed the sentiment, but were kinder to their own sex, expressing their confidence that monks, 'some occupied by the teaching of noble youth, others in ministering Christian compassion, will become useful to civil society'. The conviction that monks and friars should make themselves useful to society, and that contemplative orders of both sexes were worse than useless, was near universal.

Abbots were in the front line. They came in two kinds at each of the thirteen abbeys at which the king's rights as patron were recognized by the 1737 concordat between the Commonwealth and the Holy See. The claustral abbot was elected by the monks and governed the abbey. Some claustral abbots were not of noble birth. The commendatory abbot was responsible for the abbey's property and enjoyed two thirds of the revenue. The king nominated the latter, and usually chose

<sup>72</sup> See W. Smoleński, 'Żywioły zachowawcze i Komisya Edukacyjna', in id., *Pisma Historyczne*, ii (Cracow, 1901), 95–206.

under-endowed bishops or talented prelates in royal or primatial service. However, the prizes were relatively modest. Before becoming bishop of Płock, Michał Poniatowski had been commendator of the Lateran canons' abbey of Czerwińsk—which gave him just under 11,000 złotys a year.<sup>73</sup> The nobles of Sochaczew claimed that both claustral and commendatory abbots had long neglected their duties, and called for their funds to be turned over to the army. However, other szlachta interests were in evidence at the sejmiks of Sandomierz, which insisted that claustral abbots be of noble blood, and Grodno, which took up the cause of noble-born monks allegedly oppressed by superiors of '*plebei condicionis*'. The instructions of Lublin and Cujavia called for the funds of the Knights of Malta to be used for the army. The citizens of Rzeszyca szlachta were more aware than most (finding themselves on the new border with Russia) that whereas estates 'beyond the cordon' had been taken from the clergy remaining in the Commonwealth, 'foreign priests and monks [. . .] strip the country bare'. They proposed to seize such funds and apply them to the army.

Xenophobia found expression in many instructions from the Polish Crown. Several inveighed against voyages abroad and their harmful consequences for religion, morals, and the economy. Some sejmiks insisted on Polish costume for the army, for all officials, or even, in the case of Lublin, all citizens. Lithuanian and Ukrainian sejmiks were less exercised by such matters, presumably because the local szlachta was less exposed to frock coats and French governesses.

The sejmiks of Cracow and Livonia echoed the royal proposition of a commission to prepare a new codification of the laws. The Połock, Nowogródek, and Troki instructions highlighted the economic advantages of bringing the holy-days of the Ruthenian rite into line with the Latin feasts. The Wilno szlachta voiced its concern at the rising number of vagrants in the city and wanted a hospital commission, empowered 'to inspect all funds of this kind'. But while economic and 'police' matters concerned some sejmiks, the instructions contain no hint that the szlachta saw any need for reforming the condition of the peasants, burghers, or Jews.

#### 4. A COMPARISON WITH THE CAHIERS DE DOLÉANCES

A few months later, before the first meeting of the Estates-General since 1614, the French nation drew up its *cahiers de doléances*. Polish nobles were given regular and frequent opportunities to elect and instruct their delegates. The process of election and consultation undertaken in France was unprecedented. It was on a much greater scale than in Poland—about five hundred general *cahiers* were drawn up. The French *noblesse* did not, unlike its Polish counterpart, enjoy a monopoly on expressing its *desiderata* and *gravamina*. The First Estate, a title which the szlachta would not countenance for the Polish clergy, and the Third Estate, whose legal

<sup>73</sup> Soltys, *Opat z San Michele*, 27.

existence in France was itself a scarecrow for the szlachta, both drew up *cahiers* of their own.<sup>74</sup>

The *cahiers* of the Third Estate underwent the greatest changes between their first smelting at up to 40,000 village assemblies and the polished alloy approved at the final electoral assemblies. The plaintive croak of the peasantry was harmonized by lawyers and sometimes also by parish priests. One scholar has even discerned in the *doléances* of the Orléans countryside a parish-centred programme of reform. For they contain frequent requests to use the wealth of rich abbeys and non-resident prelates to raise the income of parish priests (*curés*), alongside declarations of fidelity to the Catholic religion and hostility to the heterodox.<sup>75</sup> Other historians have not pushed their conclusions as far. They emphasize, however, that the opposition to the clergy's and nobility's fiscal privileges was choral. Injustices associated with tithes and stole fees also provoked some complaint. Many grievances were local.<sup>76</sup> None could have been expressed in such a way in the Commonwealth—where a supplication or petition from individual communities still stood at the limit of the thinkable.

The closest comparison is between the Polish instructions and the *cahiers* of the Second Estate. A study of 134 noble *cahiers* (about thirty more were originally compiled) reveals that the *noblesse* showed themselves surprisingly ready to concede their tax privileges, and often favoured measures of economic liberalization and the provision of schooling for all. Above all, French nobles demanded the very personal liberties, such as no imprisonment without trial and freedom of speech and the press, in which Polish nobles had rejoiced for centuries. Half the noble *cahiers* demanded a constitution, or a charter of the nation's rights. Taxation must henceforth be based on the consent of a regularly convoked Estates-General, to which ministers should be answerable. All these points illustrate the gulf between the Commonwealth and France.

The clauses relating to the clergy (6 per cent of all the demands) were closer to the Polish instructions. No demand featured in more than 40 per cent of noble *cahiers*, but the most popular ones called on incumbents to reside in their benefices or dioceses, denounced pluralism, and desired an increase in the stipends of *curés*, an end to expeditions to Rome, and permission for bishops to issue dispensations. 17 *cahiers* called for the abolition of 'useless' and/or mendicant orders. Just 12 *cahiers* called for the confirmation of Catholicism's status as the dominant religion, although none challenged it. While 20 expressed discontent over tithes, only one noble *cahier* (compared to 21 of the Third Estate) called for their abolition.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>74</sup> G. Shapiro, J. Markoff, T. Tackett, and P. Dawson, *Revolutionary Demands: A Content Analysis of the Cahiers de Doléances of 1789* (Stanford, CA, 1998), 108–17.

<sup>75</sup> G. Rideau, 'De l'impôt à la sécularisation: reconstruire l'Église. Les Doléances religieuses dans les cahiers de doléances du bailliage d'Orléans (1789)', *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, 2006:3, 3–29.

<sup>76</sup> Beales, *Prosperity and Plunder*, 240–2. Shapiro et al., *Revolutionary Demands*, 380–1, 400–2.

<sup>77</sup> G. Chaussinand-Nogaret, *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1985), 146–65. Cf. Aston, *Religion and Revolution*, 115, 371 n. 45.

The 118 surviving clerical *cabiers* articulated some of the pent-up anger of the parish clergy at the disproportions of work, income, and status. But they also reflected concerns to maintain the dominant status of Catholicism, enforce the sanctity of the Sabbath, and curtail the sale of 'bad books'. The regular clergy should be reformed, with some of its surplus wealth going to the parish clergy, but not abolished. Almost a third demanded promotion by merit alone—implying an end to the *de facto* noble monopoly of bishoprics. Pluralists were widely criticized. Some *cabiers* called for diocesan synods, but more called on bishops to reside in their dioceses. Nearly all wanted the *portion congrue* (the minimum salary due to a *cure*) increased, but most demands for redistribution were couched moderately. There was some recognition that the clergy's privileges in taxation would have to be sacrificed.<sup>78</sup>

Nowhere in the *cabiers* of any Estate is there a hint of the forthcoming transformation. Although many pamphlets were less reticent than the *cabiers*, dechristianization was unimaginable. The *cabiers* of all three orders contributed to the politicization of French society and both expressed and formed public opinion. But it would be in vain to seek many Revolutionary policies in them.

The separate election process and the drawing up of the *cabiers* for the First Estate enabled *la révolte des curés* to take place, once the Estates-General met at Versailles. Over two-thirds of the deputies of the First Estate were parish priests. While forty-nine diocesan bishops were elected, often by acclamation, absentees foolhardy enough to stand were usually humiliated. Canons and monastic superiors fared poorly. The regular clergy were marginalized by the allocation to each religious house of the same single vote enjoyed by an individual *curé*, while cathedral clergy had only one vote for ten persons. France's prelates were shocked by this 'monstrous anarchy'.<sup>79</sup>

Nothing comparable to *la révolte des curés* could occur in the Commonwealth, despite discontent over the allocation of the *subsidium charitativum* in some dioceses, and greater inequalities in wealth. In the middle of the eighteenth century the average income of the 130 French bishops was 37,000 livres, but the average episcopal revenue in the Commonwealth was the equivalent of about 100,000 livres.<sup>80</sup> On the other hand, the parish clergy in Poland-Lithuania was generally poorer than in France. The *portion congrue* rose in 1768 from 300 to 500 livres, and to 700 in 1786. 1,000 zlotys, from which many *plebani* had to sustain themselves, was the equivalent of 556 livres. Some had much less. It is significant that 2,000–3,000 zlotys, widely considered adequate to support decent priestly ministry but rarely enjoyed, approximated to the 1,500 livres demanded in 1789 by many clerical *cabiers*. It seems that many more French benefices produced a comfortable income of a few thousand livres in tithes and rents than in the Commonwealth. In

<sup>78</sup> McManners, *Church and Society*, ii, 711–16, 729–32. Aston, *Religion and Revolution*, 117–19.

<sup>79</sup> McManners, *Church and Society*, ii, 727–8, 732–44. Aston, *Religion and Revolution*, 110–17.

<sup>80</sup> Aston, *Religion and Revolution*, s. 15–16. T. Długosz, 'Biskupi polscy XVII i XVIII wieku, obsada, dyspensy, taksy', *Roczniki Teologiczne-Kanoniczne*, 5/2 (1958), 73–98. Official rates of exchange are not an ideal means of comparison, as purchasing power differed, and the value of labour services is difficult to calculate.

the west of France most *curés* could employ one or more *vicaires* to assist them.<sup>81</sup> And the 300 livres, which a *vicair*e could expect, was much more than the 150–300 zlotys typically received by the Polish *wikariusz* towards the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>82</sup>

The Commonwealth's regular and parish clergy were denied any formal voice in public affairs, and relied on lobbying. Consequently, it was left to the bishops, the king, and well-disposed noblemen to plead the cause of the Church at the sejm. Given the paucity of ecclesiastical representation, the absence of any equivalent to the French Church's 'Gallican liberties', and the traditional weight given to the pronouncements of foreign diplomats, the nuncio was more important in Poland-Lithuania than in France.

## 5. 'AN ILL HUMOUR AGAINST THE CLERGY'

Before any comparison between *cabiers* and instructions could have been made, the French agent Joseph Aubert commented witheringly: 'Nothing is more extraordinary, or more extravagant, than the instructions given to these envoys.' Noting that 'no gentleman would ever want to pay' the costs of the increased army, he went on: 'some say that they must take this money from the property of the clergy, and notably from the bishopric of Cracow. Others so destine the commanderies of Malta; thus do they exalt patriotism here.'<sup>83</sup> Saluzzo confirmed that the instructions unanimously burdened the clergy. Some had even called for the use of the revenues of the vacant bishopric of Cracow to pay the troops. The king had so far declined to nominate a new bishop; the nuncio believed that the court was waiting for a favourable moment to modify the law which forbade the joining of the see of Cracow to the primacy.<sup>84</sup>

Michał Poniatowski was also alarmed by the tenor of the instructions, which was echoed in some pamphlets published in the lead-up to the sejm. Early in September, he asked his auditor, Krzysztof Żórawski, to consider ways of defending the Church. Żórawski recommended that the primate discreetly consult the bishops and trusted prelates such as Wojciech Skarszewski; that each bishop lobby influential politicians well disposed to the Church; that pamphlets and arguments to be used in speeches by friendly envoys and senators should be prepared; that the points of the sejmik instructions regarding the Church should be collated; and that instead of awaiting an imposition, the clergy should volunteer an offering that would spare the *plebani* as far as possible. The last point was justified because, 'as it is not possible everywhere to have capable priests for the lack of honest sustenance, the

<sup>81</sup> Shapiro et al., *Revolutionary Demands*, 328–33.

<sup>82</sup> Aston, *Religion and Revolution*, 26–8. McManners, *Church and Society*, i. 330–46. D. Głowska, *Majątek osobisty duchowieństwa katolickiego w Koronie w XVII i XVIII wieku* (Warsaw, 2004), 23–4. In the generally well endowed parishes of western Lithuania, *wikariusze* were paid 200–400 zlotys. Litak, *Parafie*, 143 n. 111.

<sup>83</sup> Joseph Aubert to Montmorin, 30 August 1788, AMAE CP Pologne 315, despatch 28, ff. 261–2.

<sup>84</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 10 September 1788, ASV ANV 66, ff. 220–1.



populace must remain without enlightenment in many places. An army is good and necessary, for defence, but so, indeed most necessary of all in times of peace and war, is the general enlightenment of the people.' Poniatowski approved the plan, but commented in the margin: 'a very good and just thought about the *plebani*, but not about all of them—those that do not reside [in their parishes] and grab large revenues, but keep the cheapest and therefore the worst *wikariusze*, always *mercenarios* and most of them stupid regulars'.<sup>85</sup> Several pamphlets were written or dusted down, especially by Skarszewski, while Żórawski compiled arguments on taxation, the bishopric of Cracow, tithes, and the punctual payment of *wyderkafy*—the interest payments on legacies in capital sums left to the Church, usually located on noble estates. The primate ran his eye over Żórawski's notes, and suggested a few amendments before publication.<sup>86</sup>

At a meeting with Saluzzo on 16 September 1788 Poniatowski revealed 'his agitation on seeing that all the instructions given by the palatinates tend to burden only the clergy with the increase in the number of troops, which is believed here to be an absolute necessity, and which will be impossible to impede'. The primate assured the nuncio, however, that every thought would be turned to 'diverting the blow, or at least to making it less sensible', and proposed having recourse to those of the opposition with whom the nuncio—unlike himself—was on good terms. In return Saluzzo asked Poniatowski to avoid any suppressions of monasteries, and to prevent the adoption of maxims, reigning elsewhere, 'of the uselessness of the religious orders.' The nuncio accepted that the clergy would have to contribute to the army, but asked for the pope's consent to be sought. Because it would be unjust for the clergy to pay more than the laity, the *subsidiū charitativum* should be taken into the reckoning.<sup>87</sup>

With days to go until the sejm, Saluzzo was '*in grand agitazione*'. It was widely supposed that the pope would agree to Poniatowski's 'perpetual administration' of the see of Cracow, giving rise to murmuring that Rome wished to interfere in the Commonwealth's affairs. On all sides he detected 'an ill humour against the clergy, and especially against the bishops, who are said to be too rich. The projects are most extravagant'.<sup>88</sup> In this atmosphere, any attempt to force through the kind of arrangement which Kazimierz Sapieha attributed to the court might well inflame the public, and trigger the presentation and decision of such anti-clerical projects. According to Sapieha, the bishopric of Cracow would remain with the primate, but

<sup>85</sup> 'Myśli względem Obrony Duchowienstwa, w okolicznościach, które się zdają im się mocno grozić na następującym Seymie', AMS Poniatowski, A I 18, ff. 29–31. Kalinka quoted Poniatowski's marginalia with significant inexactitude: 'only not those, that grab greater revenues, yet do not themselves reside in their parishes, but send *wikariuszowie*, always *mercenarios*, usually without education', *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 386. Żórawski to MJP, 9 September 1788, with the primate's undated response, AMS Poniatowski, A I 18, ff. 2, 18.

<sup>86</sup> K. Żórawski, 'Myśli względem niektórych odmian lub przydatków w księdze ktorey tytuł Stan prawdziwy Duchowienstwa w Polsce'; Żórawski do MJP, 25 September 1788, with MJP's annotations, AMS Poniatowski, A I 18, k. 4–13, 25–6. Arguments: loc. cit., ff. 37–9, 46–9, with MJP's annotations, f. 62. Excerpts from sejmik instructions: loc. cit., ff. 45–103, *passim*.

<sup>87</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 17 September 1788, ASV ANV 66, f. 222.

<sup>88</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 1 October 1788, ASV ANV 66, f. 225.

parts of its revenues would go to Bishops Naruszewicz, Kossakowski, and Garnysz. Branicki would be bought off with a minor increase in his prerogatives, Czartoryski by *starostwa* for his sons, and Ignacy Potocki by promotion from the court marshalcy to the grand marshalcy of Lithuania. The king would gain four more *starostwa* to distribute on an hereditary basis. Independent envoys would not be impressed by such a package at a sejm at which 'there will be no particular interests' and where 'by patriotism they want to unite and by politeness to sooth everyone'.<sup>89</sup>

The rumours were not wholly without foundation. On 27 September 1788 Poniatowski justified his ambitions in a note, ostensibly addressed to Reverend Gaetano Ghigiotti (who had for two decades handled the king's Italian and ecclesiastical correspondence, and milked supplicants for royal patronage). The primate recalled that for years he had refused bishoprics, before he had been 'forced, as it were, to accept the coadjutorship of Płock and then that of Cracow'. He feared for the future of Cracow University if he could no longer act as chancellor. As to the diocese, some of the aspirants to the bishopric of Cracow could spoil all that had been achieved 'by the order introduced and maintained by its worthy suffragan Mgr Olechowski'. Moreover, Poniatowski stood to gain nothing financially. Ghigiotti knew how much Płock, Cracow, and Gniezno had cost him, and he would have to pay another substantial sum for the papal bull to retain Cracow, from whose revenues 'it would be necessary to take a couple of hundred thousand złotych for other ill-provided bishops and prelates'. Poniatowski asked for the letter to be sent on to Antici, who could make appropriate use of it.<sup>90</sup>

Others had different ideas. A few days before the sejm opened, it was reported that some envoys were determined to put the future bishop of Cracow on a salary, and turn the rest of the revenues over to the army.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>89</sup> Kazimierz Nestor Sapieha to Ignacy Potocki, Warsaw, 20 September 1788, APP 279b, vol. iv, pp. 916–18.

<sup>90</sup> MJP to Gaetano Ghigiotti, 27 September 1788, AGhig. 515a, vol. ii, ff. 53–5.

<sup>91</sup> Gurski to Świejkowski, 3 October 1788, Ossol. 6353, f. 275.

## 2

# The republican revolution

### 1. THE INAUGURATION AND CONFEDERATION OF THE SEJM

The first days of the sejm were, as always, full of ceremonies, courtesies, and rhetoric about the 'public good', all of which masked political manoeuvring, yet defined its limits. The sejm was inaugurated on Monday, 6 October 1788 by a Mass to the Holy Spirit, celebrated by the bishop of Płock, Krzysztof Szembek, in the collegiate church of St John the Baptist.<sup>1</sup> The sermon was preached by Franciszek Salezy Jezierski. It was customary on such occasions to demonstrate the Divine origin of Poland's liberty, and so to remind the parliamentarians of what they owed to God. Jezierski duly ended his oration with a warning to those in power that although they were 'elected by people in order to make people happy', they would account to God for their deeds. But he also asserted that false religion came from human hearts and needs, which spread superstitions. The only hope was that promised by revelation. True religion came from Christ, who was at once God and man, legislator and saviour. These were mysteries inaccessible to reason.<sup>2</sup> Over the next two and a half years, Canon Jezierski would become one of the foremost writers of the Polish Revolution. He would mock time-hallowed noble prejudices, but not compromise his theological orthodoxy.<sup>3</sup>

The envoys moved to their chamber in the adjacent Royal Castle, in order to verify those elected, after which they unanimously elected Stanisław Małachowski as their marshal. The following day, deputies to draft the laws ('constitutions') and to examine government commissions and departments were chosen. The joining of the two houses followed in the senate chamber.<sup>4</sup> The senators and envoys kissed the king's hand in order of precedence. Then Stanisław August, invoking Divine Providence, tried to ride a wave of national pride in his opening speech: 'it seems

<sup>1</sup> *Dziaryusz 1788*, i:1. 1.

<sup>2</sup> F. S. Jezierski, *Kazanie przed stanami Rzeczypospolitej na sejmie w roku 1788 w kolegiacie warszawskiej powiedziane*, in id., *Wybór pism*, ed. Z. Skwarczyński and J. Ziomek (Warsaw, 1952), 53–64.

<sup>3</sup> See T. Kostkiewiczowa, *Oświecenie. Próg naszej współczesności* (Warsaw, 1994), 220–35; B. Treger, 'Kaznodzieja i przedśmiewca. Uwagi o niektórych zagadnieniach twórczości i życia Franciszka Salezego Jezierskiego', *Napis*, 5 (1999), 95–119; W. Smoleński, *Kuźnica Kołłątajowska. Studium historyczne*, 2nd edn, (Warsaw, 1949) 17–106. Lukowski, *Disorderly Liberty*, 184–5, 190, 217.

<sup>4</sup> *Dziaryusz 1788*, i:1. 2–21.

as though this omnipotent hand of the Most High has brought us to this point in time, where our Fatherland, after so many years of obstacles, finds her only chance of rescue, and to restore the power and glory of the Poles of old.' He appealed for unity and trust, before asking for the act of confederation to be read out. With one amendment, the act of confederation was then acclaimed.<sup>5</sup>

Despite appearances, unity and trust were in short supply. The act of confederation was only the first object of contention between the king and the opposition. The king had already made concessions over its wording. He had agreed, for example, that all 'private matters' be excluded until the end of the sejm. These might include an enabling act for Michał Poniatowski to unite the bishopric of Cracow with the primacy. Confederated sejms could decide by majority vote; crucially, the monarch accepted that secret votes could follow open votes on all matters except taxation, if even a single envoy demanded it. He announced this immediately after the act of confederation was read out, and only then could the sejm confederate itself.<sup>6</sup>

As the confederacy 'of the Two Nations' needed a Lithuanian marshal as well as one from the Polish Crown, Kazimierz Sapieha was chosen by the sejm at the request of his province.<sup>7</sup> As of 8 October, the confederated sejm met in the senate chamber as a unicameral assembly. Saluzzo informed Rome that the chief object of the confederacy was the augmentation of the army. The bishops were the principal targets, but they knew how to defend themselves. He feared for the monastic orders.<sup>8</sup>

## 2. THE ARMY AND THE MILITARY DEPARTMENT: 13 OCTOBER–3 NOVEMBER 1788

The following Monday, 13 October 1788, Małachowski had a declaration read out from the king of Prussia. Frederick William II advised against an alliance with Russia, offered his own alliance in non-binding terms, and invited 'all true patriots, and good citizens of Poland, to join with him' to avert the present dangers. He offered 'help, in order to maintain the independence, liberty, and security of Poland'.<sup>9</sup> The Commonwealth's élite was unaccustomed to being addressed in such a respectful, even friendly manner. To many listeners, an escape from odious dependence on Russia suddenly seemed possible.<sup>10</sup>

It was in this exalted atmosphere that the propositions from the throne were read out. They were linked by the general aim of giving the Commonwealth the respect proper to an independent state. The first proposition was to find sources from which to augment public revenues, the second was to raise as many additional

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., i:1. 21–3.

<sup>6</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 127–8.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., i. 128–30. *Dziaryusz 1788*, i:1. 23–5. Małachowski remained the sole marshal of the sejm.

<sup>8</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 8 October 1788, ASV ANV 66, ff. 227–8.

<sup>9</sup> *Dziaryusz 1788*, i:1. 33–5.

<sup>10</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 142–5.

soldiers as those increased revenues would support, the third was for a vague 'correction' of the judicial system, and the fourth simply asked for other projects to be put forward and discussed at provincial sessions. To aid reflection on the programme, and to give time for an answer to the Prussian declaration to be prepared, sessions were adjourned until Thursday, 16 October.<sup>11</sup>

Frederick William II accepted the request of his newly nominated envoy to Russia, Girolamo Lucchesini, that en route to St Petersburg he tarry in Warsaw. The existing resident, Ludwig von Buchholtz, was ordered to defer to him. Thirty-six years old, Lucchesini had risen swiftly ever since he had told Frederick the Great, who had asked him how long Italian marquises would be so base as to sell themselves to German monarchs, that they would do so as long as German monarchs were stupid enough to buy them. To procure the election of a coadjutor to the archbishop of Mainz, he had even dressed up as a jeweller in order to gain access to the cathedral chapter. He soon realized the need to keep feeding the Polish opposition carrots in order to maintain the political advantage conferred by the declaration. Lucchesini charmed much of the Warsaw élite, who confided their hopes and fears to him. He despised them. But his wife had a passionate love affair with Julian Niemcewicz.<sup>12</sup>

The Prussian note transformed the political scene. 'There is an unbelievable fermentation in all minds and enthusiasm for the King of Prussia', reported the Saxon resident.<sup>13</sup> Saluzzo wrote to Rome to advise against extending the primate's administration of Cracow, or of giving any pretext for a 'war against the clergy, and the Church of Cracow in particular'. Cardinal Boncompagni still believed that the greatest obstacles to the union of Cracow and Gniezno lay in Polish laws, or a possible objection from Russia.<sup>14</sup>

On Thursday and Friday the first proper debates undammed a torrent of oratory on the need for an army, and the need for offerings to pay for it. At the same time objections were raised to placing such an army under the control of the Military Department of the Permanent Council. On Monday, 20 October the reply to the king of Prussia, which thanked him for his 'magnificent way of thinking', was read out and approved. Next, Michał Walewski, the palatine of Sieradz, asked for his 'first clause of the law on the army' to be put to the sejm, and a roar of approval was heard. The proposal to increase the army to 100,000 men, renamed *Military Matters*, was acclaimed law 'with a full cry of sweet contentment'—as the official diary recorded. The spectators in the public galleries were ecstatic. The king made a lachrymose speech of thanks to 'the God of Hosts' for 'such a spirit of zeal and

<sup>11</sup> *Dziaryusz 1788*, i.1. 35–6.

<sup>12</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 154–8. J. Dihm, *Niemcewicz jako polityk i publicysta w czasie Sejmu Czteroletniego* (Cracow, 1928), 62–3, 120–1.

<sup>13</sup> Franz August Essen to Heinrich Gottlob Stutterheim, 15 October 1788, SHStA loc. 3570, vol. XXVb, despatch 41, f. 160.

<sup>14</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 15 October 1788, ASV ANV 66, f. 230. Boncompagni to Saluzzo, 25 October 1788, ASV ANV 51, f. 464. Even on 8 November 1789, when Boncompagni received Saluzzo's despatch of 15 October and replied that no decision had yet been taken, he seems not to have comprehended the situation. ASV ANV 51, ff. 473–4.

unanimity', proclaimed his love for the nation, and appealed for the necessary funds to be raised without delay. Senators and envoys kissed the royal hand, and the session was adjourned until the following day.<sup>15</sup>

Foreign diplomats assessed the chances of effecting the resolution sceptically. The king was worried by the recklessness of the step.<sup>16</sup> The resolution prompted some ladies to donate their jewels. Others sought funds elsewhere. At a provincial session of the envoys and senators of Great Poland, it was proposed that that primate pay 100,000 złotys, and other bishops and abbots in proportion to their income.<sup>17</sup> It soon became clear that the opposition had no intention of raising the requisite taxes, until it had resolved the question of control to its own satisfaction. On 21 October Stanisław Potocki submitted a project to replace the Military Department with a military commission, subordinated only to the sejm.<sup>18</sup>

The parliamentary battle over the Military Department began on 24 October, and after four sessions was resolved decisively on 3 November.<sup>19</sup> Royalists warned that the hetmans might become tyrants, and even invoked the threat of 'loathsome oligarchy'.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, the opposition demanded the return of power over the army 'to the nation', and denounced the 'violence' of the sejms of 1773–5 and 1776. Michał Poniatowski tactlessly questioned the nation's ability to fund an army of 100,000. The primate urged the sejm to draw back from the abyss (of a breach with Russia), 'from whose dangerous precipice we should retreat with the greatest caution, so that we should then stand together on safer ground, and gradually learn to walk'. Acting thus, God might restore 'wisdom and unity' to their counsels.<sup>21</sup> As a speech it failed. Bishop Szembek caught the public mood, evoking the favour of Divine Providence, and speaking against the department. The king made a last-ditch attempt to save the department by proposing to rename it as a commission, subordinated directly to a reconvenable sejm. Some among the opposition began to consider a new confederacy with Prussian protection if the king won. Berlin stationed 10,000 soldiers on the frontier.<sup>22</sup>

The question for voting was soon established on 3 November: *affirmative* for the department, *negative* for a military commission. But with more than eighty speeches made during the vote, the session lasted sixteen hours. Most senators supported the department, but as the night wore on, its opponents made many passionate and persuasive speeches. Open voting resulted in a victory for the

<sup>15</sup> *Dziennik 1788*, i:1. 36–88. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 145–50.

<sup>16</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 150–2.

<sup>17</sup> Newsletter, 25 October 1788, BK 1325, ff. 82–3. Gurski to Świejkowski, 11 November 1788, Ossol. 6353, p. 307.

<sup>18</sup> *Dziennik 1788*, i:1. 88–93.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, i:1. 93–323. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 158–81.

<sup>20</sup> Józef Ankiewicz, 27 October 1788, *Dziennik 1788*, i:1. 149–51.

<sup>21</sup> 27 October. *Ibid.*, i:1. 139–42. Cf. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, 164–6.

<sup>22</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 168–70. J. Michalski, 'Opozycja magnacka i jej cele w początkach Sejmu Czteroletniego', in *id.*, *Studia historyczne*, i. 285–304, at 296–7.

department of 149 to 118. A secret vote produced the result of 129 for, 140 against. The public galleries erupted with joy.<sup>23</sup>

Kalinka was unable to see any sense in the opposition's arguments. Other historians have tried to explain them.<sup>24</sup> Royalists had melted away partly because Russian hegemony no longer seemed immutable. Bugged down against the Ottoman Empire, and attacked by Sweden, Russia's ability to threaten truculent Poles was limited. Prussian pressure, on the other hand, was increasing. But this explanation fails to explain the difference between open and secret votes. Clearly, many sympathizers with the opposition still preferred not to antagonize the king and ambassador.<sup>25</sup>

The constitutional case made against the department (and the Permanent Council as a whole) by orators and pamphleteers was essentially that the powers of supervision and execution were combined in one magistrature, which was therefore a rival to the sejm (whose composition, in three Estates, it replicated). Stanisław Potocki and others insisted that a republican form of government should divide power among magistratures.<sup>26</sup> One envoy asserted: 'The sejm is our sovereign (*jedynowładztwo*), that is, the highest power of the nation.'<sup>27</sup> Few were persuaded by the advantages of cohesion in government,<sup>28</sup> or a balanced constitution that secured the liberty of all and prevented '*absolutyzm*'.<sup>29</sup>

Other royalists contrasted the king's wise 'government' (*rząd*) with the 'anarchy' of the past.<sup>30</sup> But this discursive strategy was resisted by the opposition's chief demagogue, Wojciech Suchodolski:

Each of us is for government, because government defends general security, but for no other than a republican [government], because only that establishes the happiness of each Polish citizen. I never follow government in the stricter, closed, central sphere (as has been said here), because under this expression, albeit hidden in a subtle word, I detect monarchy. And I am from birth an enemy of such a government, and so in deed and voice do I pursue liberty.<sup>31</sup>

The court party was vulnerable to this discourse, which expressed the assumptions of ordinary noblemen, brought up to distrust royal power and central 'government'.

<sup>23</sup> *Dziennik 1788*, i:1. 210–323. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 176–8.

<sup>24</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 170, 178. Cf. Czaja, *Między tronem*, 323–59; J. Lukowski, 'Recasting Utopia: Montesquieu, Rousseau and the Polish Constitution of 3 May 1791', *HJ*, 37 (1994), 65–87, at 76–7. Michalski, 'Opozycja magnacka', magisterially gives both the high political and the ideological perspectives.

<sup>25</sup> Michalski, 'Zmierzch prokonsulatu', 476–80.

<sup>26</sup> 24 October 1788. *Dziennik 1788*, i:1. 107.

<sup>27</sup> Michał Brzostowski (Troki), 3 November 1788. *Ibid.*, i:1. 263.

<sup>28</sup> Prince Stanisław Poniatowski, treasurer of Lithuania, 24 October 1788. *Ibid.*, i:1. 111–14.

<sup>29</sup> Maciej Garnys, bishop of Chełm and vice-chancellor of the Crown, 3 November 1788. *Ibid.*, i:1, 243.

<sup>30</sup> E.g. Chryzanty Opacki, castellan of Wizna, 24 October 1788. *Ibid.*, i:1. 122.

<sup>31</sup> 3 November 1788. *Ibid.*, i:1. 269–74.

## 3. THE 'PUBLIC' IN REVOLUTIONARY WARSAW

The ebbing of royal support was also due to what Kalinka called 'the tyranny of opinion in the sejm and in the street'.<sup>32</sup> Politics was played out at least three interacting levels—in negotiations between the key players, in the sejm, whose members had the formal legislative authority, and among the wider 'public'. On all three planes, the king's position was weakening.

As in north-western Europe in the eighteenth century, so the Polish 'public', consisting of individuals, came to be invested with an authority to judge in matters of culture and politics. The idea of a literary 'public' was current by the 1770s.<sup>33</sup> By the time of the Revolution, *publiczność* was becoming a more common form than *publicum*, but both conveyed the idea of a tribunal of opinion. Piotr Potocki, envoy for Bielsk, warned on 17 October 1788 that 'the public (*publiczność*), an enlightened and severe judge, knows how to distinguish appearances from reality', serving notice that the sejm could not deliberate without reference to public opinion.<sup>34</sup> This was a usage close to the concept articulated by Jürgen Habermas.<sup>35</sup>

That said, the Polish concept of the 'public' was embedded in the very name of the state—*Rzeczpospolita*, *Respublica*. In contrast to eighteenth-century Russia, 'public' was not a recent loan-word.<sup>36</sup> As in ancient Rome, the *publicum/publiczność* was inherently political. It referred to the public good, but also to actual people, generally noblemen, although in some circumstances noblewomen and educated burghers might claim entrance. The Polish public sphere was not 'bourgeois'—but it was *bürgerlich* in the sense of 'civic'.<sup>37</sup> The adjective 'public' (*publiczny*) referred to public or state affairs. Often, as in the case of the 'public good', 'public' was interchangeable with 'common' (*pospolity*) or 'general' ( *powszechny*). One local manifesto lauded 'Szembek, the bishop of Płock, who breathes the sentiments of zeal for the public good (*dobro publiczne*), placing the public [good] (*publiczność*) over his private interests (*prywatna*), and moved to tears by religion and citizenship (*obywatelstwo*)'.<sup>38</sup> In a self-consciously 'republican' system, it is questionable whether the separation of the public and private spheres postulated by Habermas is applicable to judgements made by 'public opinion' in political, that is, public matters. The idea of the 'public' as a sphere mediating

<sup>32</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 198–202.

<sup>33</sup> J. IJ van der Meer, *Literary Activities and Attitudes in the Stanisławian Age in Poland (1764–1795): A Social System?* (Amsterdam and New York, 2002), 54.

<sup>34</sup> *Dziennik 1788*, i:1. 59.

<sup>35</sup> J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* [1962] (Cambridge, MA, 1989). See J. Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2001). T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660–1789* (Oxford, 2002), esp. 5–14, shows how Habermas's theories can be applied from an ideologically opposite standpoint.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. P. R. Keenan, 'Creating a "Public" in St Petersburg, 1703–1761', Ph.D thesis (University of London, 2005), 21–5.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, translator's note, p. xv.

<sup>38</sup> Manifesto of the Wizna szlachta, 4 September 1788, BPAU 8351, ff. 400–3.



between private individuals and the state makes little sense in a country where hundreds of thousands of citizens *were* the state, and where it was impossible to draw a line between political and apolitical sociability.

Stanisław August's court could not compete with social attractions of the city. Warsaw was packed. Courtiers and lackeys waited on their aristocratic patrons. Inhabitants profited from the demand for accommodation, victuals, luxuries, and entertainment, and the opportunities for employment, theft, and begging. A population of about 90,000 in 1788 may have reached 120,000 by the spring of 1792. The garden of the Saxon Palace was Warsaw's most plausible 'public sphere', where men and women of diverse classes mingled. Like the duke of Orléans' Palais Royal in Paris, the Saxon Garden was notorious for its peddlars, pickpockets, and prostitutes. In the autumn of 1788, it also became known as the 'lower chamber', where the latest riddles and verses were repeated, and sometimes created. Royalists and Russophiles sometimes fled under a barrage of choice insults. However, the much greater proportion of nobles in Warsaw than in Paris probably helped to prevent the Saxon Garden from becoming the site of physical violence.<sup>39</sup> The pleasure gardens, such as 'Foxhal' (named after Vauxhall), also thronged with crowds. Blades swaggered and sang—and often staggered; they danced, drank, declaimed, and occasionally duelled. Hot air balloons were among the attractions. One rhymester invited the balloonist to take the primate and the Russian ambassador with him into the clouds.<sup>40</sup> 'Muscovite' (*Moskal*) became the worst of all insults. Almost as bad was *pieczeniarsz*—one who ate the roast meat (*pieczeń*) served at the royal table. It was implied that such men sold their opinions in order to satisfy their greed.<sup>41</sup> Both 'Muscovite' and '*pieczeniarsz*' were liberally applied to the bedrock of the king's support in the senate—the castellans. The very dignity of 'castellan' became an insult.<sup>42</sup>

The influence of spectators on the sejm was noted by virtually all observers. The gallery was full, sometimes hours before the start of sessions. Spectators also sat among the envoys and senators. Spectators applauded the 'patriots', and mocked the royalists. One castellan defended his independent opinion to 'that prejudiced public, which dares, with an insult to the throne, and our Estates, to clap and laugh in the course of our deliberations'.<sup>43</sup> But how many more royalists remained silent, or switched sides, rather than expose themselves to such derision?

<sup>39</sup> Cf. S. Schama, *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (London, 1989), 134–6, 378–83. According to F. Schulz, *Podróże infantczyka z Rygi do Warszawy i po Polsce w latach 1791–1793*, trans. J. I. Kraszewski, ed. W. Zawadzki (Warsaw, 1956), 202–3: 'Sometimes minor speeches were made here, reminiscent of those which occurred immediately after the outbreak of the French Revolution in the Palais Royal in Paris, with only this difference, that here the little kings of this country with stars and orders spoke and shouted about freedom, whereas there it was the poor people without shirts and caps. That here and there flirtatious girls amused the patriots, is self-evident.'

<sup>40</sup> *Do Blancharda balonisty*, in *Wiersze polityczne*, i. 202–3.

<sup>41</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 201–2.

<sup>42</sup> Szczesny Potocki was satirized thus: 'Za pomocą moskiewską chce być w Polsce panem,/ Złożywszy województwo, został kasztelanem' [With Muscovy's help he wants to rule in Poland,/having given up his rank of palatine, he has become a castellan]. *Do Jmci Pana Potockiego, generała artylerii koronnej*, in *Wiersze polityczne*, i. 184–5.

<sup>43</sup> C. Opacki, 24 October 1788. *Dziennik 1788*, i:1. 122. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 163.

Ladies were prominent among this clapping and laughing public, and not only in the chamber. They garlanded 'patriot' orators in Warsaw's ballrooms. This socio-political interaction was at least as important as it was in England.<sup>44</sup> The handsome, eloquent Stanisław Potocki adorned endless balls and banquets held that memorable autumn and winter. Many sighed after the virile Niemcewicz. How many provincial royalists of modest means, whom the king's table helped to meet the cost of subsisting in Warsaw, longed to be fêted by the elegant, perfumed, *decolleté* ladies of the first families, rather than ridiculed by them as *pieczeniarze*?

Many of these ladies were devotees of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. They considered themselves incubators of patriotism and manliness in their sons. Rousseau, in his *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, had apotheosized national costume.<sup>45</sup> A growing number of politicians attired themselves as 'Sarmatians' in the first months of the sejm. In December Izabella Czartoryska ceremonially cut off Sapieha's powdered locks. Some of his fellow-aristocrats imitated him. The king did not.<sup>46</sup> But the 'Sarmatian' revival was a two-edged sabre. Pius Kiciński, head of the royal cabinet, demanded, according to the instruction given him by the sejmik of Liw, mandatory Polish costume and restrictions on foreign travel and imported luxuries. He questioned the manhood of aristocratic dandies, who wasted the morning in arranging and powdering their hair, and lamented the fatal consequences of the 'taste for useless trinkets' for 'the national spirit'.<sup>47</sup> This was nostalgic, patriotic, rustic, masculine discourse, but its anti-aristocratic edge could well discomfort the Puławy set.

Such tactics were not to the king's liking, and two days later Kiciński sent him a letter of explanation. He regretted displeasing him, pledged himself to defend the royal prerogative, but he could override neither his own convictions nor his instruction. He would rather lose his position, and be unwelcome at court, than act against his conscience.<sup>48</sup> If the king's servants were proving harder to control, so were the clients of the magnates. Adam Czartoryski was unable to call his 'barking pups', Niemcewicz and Stanisław Kublicki, to heel. The Radziwiłł interest was even weaker. Popularity eclipsed patronage as the chief motivation for many envoys.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> See E. Chalus, 'Elite Women, Social Politics, and the Political World of Late Eighteenth-Century England', *HJ*, 43 (2000), 669–97.

<sup>45</sup> J.-J. Rousseau, *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne et sur sa réformation projetée*, ed. J. Fabre, in Rousseau, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. B. Gagnebin and M. Raymond, iii (Paris, 1964), 951–1041, at 962.

<sup>46</sup> Kalinka was provoked to the sternest admonitions. *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 202–7.

<sup>47</sup> *Dziennik 1788*, ii:1. 290–3.

<sup>48</sup> Kiciński to SA, 28 January 1789, BCz. 924, pp. 605–7. R. Butterwick, 'Faworyt—demagog. Pius Kiciński na Sejmie Czteroletnim', in M. Markiewicz and R. Skowron (eds.), *Faworyci i opozycjoniści. Król a elity polityczne w Rzeczypospolitej XV–XVIII wieku* (Cracow, 2006), 485–93, at 487–8.

<sup>49</sup> See Rostworowski, *Sprawa aukcji wojska*, 226–7.

#### 4. CASTING OFF THE RUSSIAN GUARANTEE: 5 NOVEMBER 1788–19 JANUARY 1789

The abolition of the Military Department was understood by contemporaries as the overthrow of Russian hegemony in the Commonwealth. During the next session, on 5 November, an envoy sacralized the event:

And now reflect, O famous nation, on the chains of violence which you have thrown off, which you attribute to your firmness, and praise the Highest Providence, which evidently does not cease to protect us. I say boldly, that with our deed, we have broken the power of the guarantee, the overthrow of which should be the maxim of a free nation.<sup>50</sup>

That evening, Stackelberg demanded that the king, primate, and their leading associates withdraw from the confederacy and leave Warsaw. They refused, whereupon the ambassador wrote an official note to the sejm, which was read out the next day.<sup>51</sup>

Had the king attempted to break up the sejm at this juncture, he would have provoked at least some of the opposition leaders to ask for the assistance of the Prussian army. Frederick William hoped for such a breach. Prussia would have occupied the territories she eventually took in 1793. But it is not clear if Stackelberg expected the king to take the step he demanded, or if he was merely seeking the means of blaming the king for the collapse of Russian hegemony. Stanisław August placed national unity first. He would do so again when Stackelberg repeated the demand in late December. Some in the opposition had no such scruples.<sup>52</sup>

Stackelberg's note to the Estates, read out on 6 November 1788, warned that the empress would view any change in the form of government established in 1775 as a violation of the treaty. The king pre-empted envoys who were clamouring to speak. It was his duty, he said, to warn of the consequences of breaking treaties. The army they had acclaimed was not yet a reality, and Russia was the power 'whose interest least conflicted with ours'. He would not speak and act to please 'the public', but for what 'I understand to be the the essential good of the country, or at least the lesser evil for it'. So that emotions could subside, he adjourned proceedings for four days.<sup>53</sup> To many present it seemed that Stanisław August spoke and acted from 'a habit of timid subordination'.<sup>54</sup>

The answer to the ambassador's note, drafted by Ignacy Potocki, denied that the guarantee had been violated, while asserting the Commonwealth's right to alter her government as she saw fit. It was agreed on 15 November, on the same day as a note requesting the empress to withdraw her forces from Polish territory (that is, to cease using the Polish Ukraine as a transit route to the Black Sea). The political landscape

<sup>50</sup> Krzysztof Karwicki (Volhynia). *Dziaryusz 1788*, i:2, 5–6.

<sup>51</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i, 182–7. Michalski, 'Zmierzch prokonsulatu', 479.

<sup>52</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i, 223. Michalski, 'Zmierzch prokonsulatu', 481–4.

<sup>53</sup> *Dziaryusz 1788*, i:2, 13–16. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i, 187–9. This speech initially satisfied the empress. Ivan Ostermann to Stackelberg, 23 November 1788, AVPRI F79-6-195, ff. 23–4.

<sup>54</sup> Niemcewicz, *Pamiętniki czasów moich*, i, 270.

was then shaken by another Prussian note, read out on 20 December. Frederick William II not only declared that his role as guarantor was limited to the defence of the Commonwealth's independence, and that the Commonwealth had every right to legislate for herself, but also informed the Estates that he had asked the empress to evacuate her troops from Poland. Russophobia now knew no bounds. Waverers began to believe in Prussian protection. According to the French agent, forty envoys and senators abandoned the king within two days of the note.<sup>55</sup>

Frederick William was being drawn by the logic of events into ever more explicit support of Polish independence. The subsequent Polish soundings on an alliance were unwelcome in Berlin, but could not openly be rejected. The empress feigned indifference to the Polish form of government, although she remained concerned about her armies' supply lines, and the possibility of a Prusso-Polish alliance. Stackelberg's answer to the request for evacuation was non-committal.<sup>56</sup>

Following the abolition of the Military Department, on 10 November the sejm extended its duration to 15 December (on 4 December it was prolonged indefinitely). In supporting the prolongation, Stanisław August launched the slogan 'the king with the nation, the nation with the king'. This partially appeased public opinion, and ladies hastened to buy ribbons with the slogan, which almost immediately appeared in Warsaw shops. But the 'nation' was not yet inclined to follow the king.<sup>57</sup>

The sejm then began to deal with the project for the Military Commission. It contained thirty-one clauses, and twenty-nine sessions elapsed before the law was passed on 20 December. The garrulousness which had hitherto been bestowed on questions of principle was now indulged on minor details. Małachowski's reluctance to bring discipline to the proceedings ensured that debates went off at tangents. As Christmas approached, many envoys and senators, having spent their money, quietly returned home. The draughtiness of the senate chamber gave little incentive to remain over the cold winter. The king could count on ever fewer supporters.<sup>58</sup> Nevertheless, the hetmans' powers were not restored, despite the efforts of Branicki and his clients. The hetmans were simply to preside over the commission, rotating every three months. Phobias of military oppression led the sejm to put twelve civilians into the commission alongside six soldiers. The commissioners were to swear obedience to the king and Commonwealth 'and nobody else'. The commission lacked cohesion and expertise.<sup>59</sup>

The debates on the Military Commission were interrupted by assaults on the royal prerogatives of commissioning and promoting officers<sup>60</sup> and the nominations of diplomats. The modest but professional diplomatic service built up by the king over the previous two decades could not satisfy the ambitions of politicians who

<sup>55</sup> Aubert to Montmorin, 22 November 1788, AMAE CP Pologne 315, despatch 39, f. 413.

<sup>56</sup> Notes in *Dziaryusz 1788*, i:2. 101, 114–16, 139–40. Lord, *Second Partition*, 100–11. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 207–14, 221–2, 230–2, 235. Michalski, 'Zmierzch prokonsulatu', 484–92.

<sup>57</sup> Rostworowski, *Ostatni król*, 152.

<sup>58</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 215–17, 224–30, 239–42.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 255–9.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 225–30.

revelled in their sovereign authority. Many suspected any diplomat associated with the king, especially those from humble or foreign backgrounds. Stanisław August agreed to a list including several magnates. But when on 9 December 1788 he had the nominations read out, instead of applause and consent, he heard demands for the Estates to choose the envoys. Such was the fervour of the opposition, that the monarch, fearing an official protest and a Prussian invasion, conceded the formula: 'We the king, with the agreement of the Estates, send *N. N.*' In doing so he further disheartened his own supporters.<sup>61</sup>

The next stage was for the sejm to seize control over foreign affairs, formally from the Permanent Council, in practice from the king's cabinet. The Deputation for Foreign Affairs was established to draw up the instructions for the new diplomats. Ignacy Potocki topped the poll, and became the leading figure in the deputation, alongside the Prussian *sujet mixte* and bishop of Cujavia, Józef Rybiński. Some of the nominated ministers never undertook their missions. As a result, Augustyn Deboli, an alumnus of the royal cadet school, remained in St Petersburg, and continued to write confidentially to the king. Nobody proposed to replace Tommaso Antici in Rome. Overall, although the Commonwealth's restored independence raised her international standing, her diplomacy functioned less efficiently.<sup>62</sup>

It was clear by the end of 1788 that the Permanent Council, stripped of foreign and military affairs, was doomed. Stanisław August, having consulted Stackelberg, attempted to salvage some form of central government by drafting a project for a 'National Custodial Council' (*Straż Narodowa*). This would have lacked many of the Permanent Council's powers, but, with an eye on Russia, the *Straż* was presented a change of name and correction of the Permanent Council, not as its replacement. Stanisław Potocki responded with a counter-project, entirely abolishing the Permanent Council, on 13 January 1789. His brother Ignacy summed up the opposition case: 'There is no safer government than under the eye of the legislature itself.'<sup>63</sup> The Puławy set wanted a public triumph over the king, not the appearance of a compromise. If the king proposed a custodial council, they proposed to deal with taxes. If the king wanted to proceed with taxes, they would propose their version of the *Straż*. The break-up of the confederacy again seemed likely, but on 16 January the king told the sejm that he wished to be 'inseparable from the nation'.<sup>64</sup>

On 19 January Bishop Szembek attacked the Permanent Council, arguing that no guarantee could bind the nation to any form of government. Sapieha claimed that only fear held them back. This was one of the most effective means of persuasion. He also employed an anti-metropolitan discourse, speaking of 'the nation in the provinces, and not in Warsaw'.<sup>65</sup> The final defence of the Permanent

<sup>61</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 230–5. VL, ix. 57

<sup>62</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 236–9, 247. VL, ix. 60. J. Michalski, 'Dyplomacja polska w latach 1764–1795', in *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, ii, ed. Z. Wójcik (Warsaw, 1982), 633, 638, 654–83.

<sup>63</sup> *Dziaryusz 1788*, ii:1, 113.

<sup>64</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 281–4. Michalski, 'Opozycja magnacka', 299–304. Id., 'Zmierzch prokonsulatu', 495–7.

<sup>65</sup> *Dziaryusz 1788*, ii:1. 184–205, quotation at 203.

Council was weak. The primate set an example by refusing to vote. The Permanent Council fell by 120 votes to 11, with 62 abstentions. Nobody demanded a secret ballot.<sup>66</sup>

What Kalinka dubbed the 'ruling sejm' had now reached virility.<sup>67</sup> As the proposer of the motion put it, 'we have the government in ourselves, we have the government in sejms'.<sup>68</sup> On these grounds, the opposition had rejected the royalist warnings of 'anarchy' (*anarchia, nierząd*) should the council be abolished; on the contrary, the council was the 'anti-government' (*nierząd*).<sup>69</sup> Moreover, the word *nierząd* also connoted (and still connotes) prostitution. Now that the council had been abolished, the way was open for the two pejorative discourses of 'anarchy' to merge.<sup>70</sup>

## 5. THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

During the autumn of 1788, the episcopate was politically divided. Ignacy Massalski and Józef Kossakowski were reviled as 'Muscovites'. In mid-November it was rumoured, probably in order to inflame Russophobia among the public, that Massalski was to be translated from Wilno to Cracow, and Kossakowski from Livonia to Wilno.<sup>71</sup> Michał Poniatowski was just as unpopular. On 9 December 1788, Stanisław Kublicki, an envoy for Livonia who specialized in baiting the primate,<sup>72</sup> suggested that the costs of diplomatic missions could be met from the sums returned to Poland by the Vienna Convention, and from the revenues of the vacant bishopric of Cracow, 'which should now emerge from administration'.<sup>73</sup> The next day Saluzzo wished for the timely settlement of 'the church of Cracow, for whose revenues new projects are formed every day', and attributed them to personal animosity. On 19 November, he had noted that the primate could not retain two bishoprics 'stably' without a new law, which could not be passed as things stood. It was said that the king would be asked to nominate somebody else to Cracow, and that it was planned to divide the diocese into three. From the primate's circle came suggestions of conceding the revenues to the army for several years, in order to retain the administration. The nuncio did not have to spell out the implications. On 13 December, Boncompagni finally acknowledged the 'insuperable obstacles' to Poniatowski's ambitions,<sup>74</sup> while Antici warned the

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., ii:1. 205–66. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 284–90.

<sup>67</sup> The third book of *Sejm Czteroletni* is titled '*Sejm rządzący*'.

<sup>68</sup> Michał Zaleski (Troki), *Dziennik 1788*, ii:1. 197.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Tadeusz Kościelkowski (Wilkomierz), 8 January 1789, with Tadeusz Matuszewicz (Brześć Litewski), 15 January 1789, and Stanisław Potocki (Lublin), 19 January 1789, *Dziennik 1788*, ii:1, 19, 150–1, 209–16.

<sup>70</sup> Butterwick, 'Political Discourses', 713.

<sup>71</sup> Newsletter, 22 November 1788, BK 1325, f. 91.

<sup>72</sup> *Zagadki*, 158–9.

<sup>73</sup> *Dziennik 1788*, i:2. 363. Gurski to Świejkowski, 12 December 1788, Ossol. 6353, p. 334.

<sup>74</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 19 November, 10 December 1788, ASV ANV 66, ff. 235, 239. Boncompagni to Saluzzo, 13 December 1788, ASV ANV 51, f. 502.

Polish court against pursuing the idea.<sup>75</sup> But the primate was not yet ready to abandon the attempt.

Among the other bishops, Maciej Garnysz, bishop of Chełm, was loyal to the king. Although he was a respected vice-chancellor of the Crown, he was not a key political player. Nor was the king's court historian and poet, Adam Naruszewicz, who in December succeeded to the bishopric of Smolensk. Antoni Okęcki of Poznań and Kacper Cieciszowski of Kiev stayed above the fray. So did Stefan Giedroyc, bishop of Samogitia, but few took him seriously, because of his reputation for corruption without cleverness. By the end of 1788, the opposition had Bishops Szembek of Płock and Rybiński of Cujavia working actively in its cause, a sympathizer in Feliks Turski, bishop of Łuck, while in faraway Kamieniec Podolski, the former leader of the Bar confederacy, Adam Krasiński, symbolized resistance to Russia. While virtually all clergymen opposed proposals to despoil their estate or tax it disproportionately, they were divided at all levels by the battle between the court and the opposition. Political convictions, family ties, and hopes of preferment could all affect their stances.

Having reduced the monarch to a virtual cipher and destroyed Russian influence, the opposition leaders could no longer avoid the responsibility of funding the increased army. From the beginning of 1789 the unwelcome attention to the clergy, which had hitherto been largely confined to pamphlets, manifested itself at the sejm. The nuncio had anticipated the blow: 'In a sejm, in which the sovereign has little influence, and the greatest prelates have lost all credit, because they do not think it necessary to follow the party of the multitude, little hope remains to me of avoiding the tempest which is being prepared.'<sup>76</sup> The revolution of 1788 removed the influence of the throne and the credit of the leading bishops, which might otherwise have shielded the Church from the 'tempest' of public opinion.

<sup>75</sup> Antici to Ghigiotti, 13 December 1788, AGhig. 25a, vol. v, f. 150.

<sup>76</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 3 December 1788, ASV ANV 66, f. 238.

### 3

## The first wave of ecclesiastical polemics (to the summer of 1789)

From the early summer of 1788 onwards, pamphleteers debated what was to be done at the sejm. All concurred on the need to augment the army and find the necessary funds.<sup>1</sup> The implications for the clergy were obvious. From this it was a short step to a more fundamental question: what was the purpose of the clergy?<sup>2</sup> This chapter first considers three exceptional works, before exploring some furious polemics. These yielded a 'patriotic' paradigm that brooked no contradiction.

### 1. STASZIC, NAX, KOŁŁATAJ

Stanisław Staszic was an outsider and a burgher. His career as a statesman came in the nineteenth century. He published *Considerations on the Life of Jan Zamoyski* in March 1787, but only on the eve of the sejm did it spark much discussion. Staszic did not expect that his programme would be implemented in the near future; instead, he wished to prick noble consciences and spur them into decisive action. Despite extended theoretical passages, the challenge he threw down was clear. Unless the szlachta established what he considered a workable republican system (including an hereditary throne, a permanent sejm, and emancipation of the serfs), the only means of keeping the country in existence would, regrettably, be 'enlightened despotism' (*oświecony despotyzm*).<sup>3</sup>

Amidst the torrents of invocations and exclamations were proposals unwelcome to the episcopate. As—in his opinion—the parish clergy alone paid the *subsidium charitativum*, the bishops should bring the total to a round million. But this was modest in comparison with the 24,750,000 złotys he expected from a 15 per cent tax on noble land.<sup>4</sup> Although bishoprics could not be abolished, the equalization of their revenues would diminish the unedifying quarrels produced by ambition.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 78.

<sup>2</sup> Konopczyński, 'Polscy pisarze polityczni', ii, 219.

<sup>3</sup> Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 71–8. [S. Staszic], *Uwagi nad życiem Jana Zamoyskiego...*, in S. Staszic, *Pisma filozoficzne i społeczne*, ed. B. Suchodolski, i (Warsaw, 1954), 7–172, at 42–3, 48, 54.

<sup>4</sup> [Staszic], *Uwagi*, 144–6.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 68–9.



Staszic praised Joseph II for guaranteeing freedom and security to all [*sic*] religions, dissolving monasteries, encouraging immigration, giving equal justice to all and reducing particular privileges—all in order to increase the tax yield and the army.<sup>6</sup>

Taking as his text, as it were, from the Renaissance statesman Jan Zamoyski's dictum that 'republics will always be such as they educate their youth', Staszic criticized the Commonwealth's universities: stifled by the primacy of theology and the 'spirit of systems'. Theology, as an anti-empirical discipline, should be confined to seminaries. He would replace Marian sodalities with public assemblies to honour heroes and virtues. The proper aims of education in a republic were to make the citizen useful, dutiful, and happy. Staszic still based society on the 'universal principle' of 'do unto others as you would have others do unto you'. Fearing the malign influence of French governors and governesses, he wanted the Educational Commission to supervise the instruction given to children at home. 'Civic education', in civil or military service, should follow schooling, and travel abroad should be restricted. This was visionary stuff, influenced by Rousseau, rather than a political programme, but it conditioned the atmosphere in which education was debated during the Polish Revolution.<sup>7</sup>

The first work written in response to Staszic's *Considerations* was a 485-page treatise, *Considerations on the Considerations*, composed in 1787/8, but only published early in 1789. Its author, Jan Ferdynand Nax, an ennobled engineer from Danzig, was also at the political margin. Nax praised Staszic's patriotism, but pronounced his remedies unrealistic. He insisted, after Montesquieu, that powers must balance and restrain each other, if liberty was to survive. Echoing the mid-eighteenth-century Piarist, Reverend Stanisław Konarski, he argued that the form of government, not the faults of human nature, was the source of the Commonwealth's ills. Nax emphasized freedom of speech and conscience. During the era of wars of religion, he claimed, 'Poland had the most enlightenment in all of Europe'.<sup>8</sup>

Nax thought Staszic's army of pedagogues superfluous. Instead he trusted in the 'great philosophical wits [...] with which Providence from time to time eradicates prejudices, enlightens minds, and extends the boundaries of sciences and knowledge'.<sup>9</sup> A priest should be educated as a citizen 'under the supervision of the educational magistrature', not in the seminary, 'where fanatical teachers could inculcate in him those ultramontane (*transalpowe*) sentiments and maxims, which so often conflict with civic duties in nations'. The improvement of morals in a 'corrupted century' should begin with the 'teaching estate'. And he doubted whether abbeyes and monasteries could contribute to the kind of schooling desired

<sup>6</sup> [Staszic], *Uwagi*, 80–1. A respondent spelt out the consequence of Austrian rule in Galicia: an increase in taxes from 3 million to 40 million zlotys a year. *Myśl z okazji uwag nad życiem Zamoyskiego do przyjaciela* [1788], 25.

<sup>7</sup> [Staszic], *Uwagi*, 11–33. Cf. Rousseau, *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne*, 955–9, 966–70, 1020–4.

<sup>8</sup> [J. F. Nax], *Uwagi nad uwagami, czyli obserwacye nad książką, która w roku 1785 wyszła pod tytułem Uwagi nad życiem Jana Zamoyskiego kanclerza i hetmana w. kor.* (Warsaw, 1789), quotation at 364–5. Grzeszkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 115–17. Lukowski, *Liberty's Folly*, 231–5.

<sup>9</sup> [Nax], *Uwagi nad uwagami*, 24–5.

by Staszic. A ban on foreign travel would turn the entire country into a monastery. Besides, 'the world owes to this intercourse its enlightenment, gentler mores, sciences, arts and crafts, progress and improvement; without this contact Poland, like some isolated barbarian nations, would surely remain in primeval Sarmatism'. The eradication of the vices of the form of government required 'unprejudiced enlightenment from abroad'.<sup>10</sup> There was little doubt where Nax stood regarding the 'Sarmatian' revival.

Nax sympathized with the subjects of Joseph II, who 'pray fervently, that the Highest Providence would choose to grant calm to that unceasing, sleepless mind, in order that they might rest a little, and acquaint themselves with the laws of their monarch, of which every year he issues more than the Creator could make throughout all ages, either by natural or revealed law'. But Nax had no time for idlers. He praised the primate's ordinances restricting alms to the pauper's parish.<sup>11</sup> Nax anticipated many tenets of nineteenth-century liberalism. Perhaps for that reason, his book made relatively little impact.

Alongside Staszic's *Considerations*, the most famous political work of the Polish Revolution is Hugo Kołłątaj's *Letters of an Anonymous Correspondent to Stanisław Małachowski*. Whereas Staszic cast thunderbolts from an Olympian perch, Kołłątaj adapted his message to the circumstances and audience of the moment, and subordinated form and content to political objectives. Those objectives, however, went beyond the achievement of high office. He defies the sceptical premises on which Quentin Skinner analysed Bolingbroke. Kołłątaj would not have risked the unpopularity he attracted, had he not been convinced of the need to implement his programme of renewal. To do that, he had to persuade the public. Kołłątaj sought to shift the discursive boundaries of political action, rather than simply to operate within them. He effortlessly switched between advice, explanation, familiar examples, insinuation, rhetorical questions, and emotionally overwhelming invocation. He addressed individuals, groups, and the nation as a whole, using the gamut of first, second, and third persons, singular and plural, to suit his purposes. His discourse contrasted the 'manly' or 'brave' with the 'effeminate', 'fearful', or 'soft'. He claimed both the 'heart' and the 'mind'. As Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz has put it, he did not so much refute his antagonists, as rout them.<sup>12</sup>

Kołłątaj wrote the first part of the *Letters* in August 1788. He made precise proposals, addressed to the sejm's marshal, so that they could be passed and implemented without delay. This sejm, he asserted, was the last chance offered by Providence for a 'mild revolution'.<sup>13</sup> 'Everything calls out to us, that we stand on the edge of an abyss', he declared, before telling Małachowski: 'Providence destined you, Sir, to such difficult services to the Fatherland.'<sup>14</sup> The Providential leitmotiv

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 46–54, 380.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 151–2, 181–5.

<sup>12</sup> Kostkiewiczowa, *Oświecenie*, 207–19. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 130–3.

<sup>13</sup> Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 79–80. *Do Stanisława Małachowskiego referendarza koronnego o przyszłym sejmie anonimów listów kilka* [1788–9], in H. Kołłątaj, *Listy anonima i Prawo polityczne narodu polskiego*, ed. B. Leśnodorski and H. Wereszycka, 2 vols. (Warsaw, 1954), i. 167.

<sup>14</sup> [Kołłątaj], *Listy anonima*, i. 168.

resonated through the opening paragraphs and was frequently reprised, not only in the *Letters*, but in the discourse of the entire Polish Revolution. Kołłątaj also repeated the theme of 'offering', which led to the subject of taxation.<sup>15</sup>

Kołłątaj was initially preoccupied by the army. Only in subsequent parts of the *Letters* did he advocate a sejm that was constantly active, although constrained by the sejms' instructions; only later did he denounce the oppression of the serfs, and demand political rights for burghers. He proposed an army of 60,000, so as not to threaten the Commonwealth's neighbours, or to place a ruinous burden on the country. Sundry clerical properties might also be sold off, but such an 'important object' should be achieved by the clergy itself. Here Kołłątaj differed fundamentally from Staszic.

The *Anonymous Correspondent* also appealed to fairness. Many wished 'to despoil the Polish clergy of its income', but 'it is not decent to oppress the citizens of one class more than another'. The clergy already paid a double contribution. The *subsidium charitativum* should however be reallocated in order to relieve the parish clergy and those benefices which supported education.<sup>16</sup>

The roles of priests included the guidance of millions of consciences, 'the enlightenment of the neglected and abandoned common folk', whom they consoled and calmed, thus lessening the danger of rebellion. He then conjured up a vision of his own, reminiscent of Rousseau's *vicaire savoyard*: 'Let everyone think of a virtuous priest, surrounded by the misery of his fellow-men, most aware of their oppression and their need, living among the villagers, sharing his property and his compassion with the unfortunate.' The abuses of a few could not justify the oppression of an entire estate. Priests were 'our brothers, whose incomes often shore up noble fortunes, and raise up names in decline'. Noble property had been secured from mortmain, clerical legacies to nobles assured, and the more lucrative benefices reserved for the szlachta.<sup>17</sup>

The first letter of the second part of the work was dated 7 October 1788, the day after the sejm opened. It included the dictum that 'a republican form of government does not depend on depriving the king of his prerogatives, but on the ceaseless activity of persons representing the nation and executing its will'.<sup>18</sup> The implications were far-reaching: republicanism could change the status quo.<sup>19</sup> This could endanger the very ecclesiastical property, which, in general terms, Kołłątaj wished to defend.

The *Anonymous Correspondent* made a powerful case for 'restoring' personal freedom to serfs. He warned biblically that the 'groan of the oppressed' could bring 'dreadful blows on our nation from on high'. He distinguished the peasants' personal freedom, which had been sacrilegiously torn from them, from the lords' ownership of the land, which entitled the latter to political rights.<sup>20</sup> By the same

<sup>15</sup> Kostkiewiczowa, *Oświecenie*, 214–15.

<sup>16</sup> [Kołłątaj], *Listy anonima*, i. 226–7.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 228–31. <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 265.

<sup>19</sup> Lukowski, 'Political Ideas among the Polish Nobility in the Eighteenth Century (to 1788)', *SEER*, 82/1 (2004), 1–26, at 25.

<sup>20</sup> [Kołłątaj], *Listy anonima*, i. 279–81.

token, political rights should be given to property-owning burghers, and taken from landless nobles. The petty szlachta was too easily manipulated by magnates to be capable of independent participation in public life.<sup>21</sup> The same principles justified the political integration of propertied clergymen; otherwise they would have to be given separate representation. In passing he blamed 'the spirit of irreligion' and 'false philosophy' for attacks on clerical property.<sup>22</sup> He also made the staple claim that ecclesiastical estates were in better condition than Crown estates, because they were not over-exploited for short-term gain.<sup>23</sup>

In November and December 1788, Kołłątaj wrote the third part of his *Letters*, although it was not published until the following spring.<sup>24</sup> After the fall of the Military Department, his attacks on the Permanent Council became bolder.<sup>25</sup> 'The sejm', he wrote provocatively, 'will be for me the monarch; it will make laws, it will command all magistratures and citizens, and it will enforce its own commands.'<sup>26</sup> And some, on reading these words, were sore afraid.

Among those magistratures was the Commission for National Education, to which Kołłątaj devoted several paragraphs. He listed the services of various commissioners, including Michał Poniatowski, and extolled their all too rare unity of purpose. He hailed the commission for having 'prescribed a uniform education for the entire nation, so that through one way of thinking, acquired through education, unity would be restored to public deliberations and government magistratures'. Kołłątaj was convinced that all ought to think alike, and to think as he did.<sup>27</sup>

The Educational Commission should control all education in the country—including that of the secular and regular clergy of all confessions. Kołłątaj did not call for a secularized system, but for 'a close understanding of the Educational Commission with the clergy'. The priestly vocation was essentially a teaching one:

The aim of the clergy is to enlighten people on how they should base their moral conduct on revealed religion; its aim is the practice of morals. The aim of the Educational Commission [...] is to enlighten a man, so that he would be a good citizen. He who is not a good citizen, is no pupil of the school of Christ; he who has smothered the voice of conscience, and does not respect the holy precepts of religion, is not a good citizen. For this reason the Educational Commission should use as many clerical persons as possible for public education, but it should not use them indiscriminately.

The regular clergy's subordination to foreign generals contravened the national interest, and until they were put under episcopal jurisdiction, they should not be employed in public education. Kołłątaj thought that some monastic funds could be applied to seminaries, although only in consultation with the ecclesiastical

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., i. 292–9. See Lukowski, *Disorderly Liberty*, 189–90.

<sup>22</sup> [Kołłątaj], *Listy anonima*, i. 302–3.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., i. 310–11.

<sup>24</sup> See Grzeszkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 123–7.

<sup>25</sup> [Kołłątaj], *Listy anonima*, ii. 14–17.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., ii. 97.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., ii. 84–8.

hierarchy. Good seminaries required good universities, and two further universities, in Great Poland and the Ukraine, should be established on clerical funds.<sup>28</sup>

Kołątaj then remarked that the education of 'half of human society' was forgotten. Provincial girls' morals were endangered by being educated in Warsaw. With more than a nod to Rousseau, he argued that no thought was given to female education serving 'the strengthening of our courage and helping good government', although 'men become what women want them to be'. Without 'thoroughly enlightened' and patriotic women of 'pure morals', a free state would never have the sons it wanted. He suggested distributing canonesses across the Commonwealth to provide suitable education. (These elegant ladies did not take irrevocable vows, and might be safer from corruption outside Warsaw.)<sup>29</sup>

In an extended endnote, Kołątaj put forward an ambitious plan for the tithes paid to the clergy to become a universal tax of a tenth, whose administration would be devolved to the parishes. Parochial confraternities of charity could store monies and produce, to be distributed in times of dearth among the needy, rather like a friendly society. (He had organized such a confraternity in his parish of Krzyżanowice.) The clergy could be compensated with Crown estates.<sup>30</sup>

Kołątaj left most of his proposals concerning the clergy to the project of laws which he intended to publish later. Nevertheless, the *Letters of an Anonymous Correspondent* announced the clergy's central place in Kołątaj's vision for Poland. Although he struck out in directions which alarmed the regular clergy and Rome, he was also determined to protect clerical property as a whole from noble predators. Despite the unorthodoxy of his theology, his language was suffused in biblical figures.<sup>31</sup> Kołątaj was not the Voltairean Antichrist of counter-revolutionary and Marxist legend.

## 2. ECCLESIASTICAL TEMPORALITIES AND PUBLIC UTILITY

Some of the early defences of the clergy and its property can be linked to the primate's response to the sejmiks. Poniatowski's right-hand man, Krzysztof Żórawski, published *Warnings about the Circumstances Regarding Taxation*.<sup>32</sup> Wojciech Skarszewski dusted off his 1776 pamphlet, *The True State of the Clergy in Poland*, and wrote *Letter of a Parish Priest to a Warsaw Correspondent*.<sup>33</sup> It is harder to decide whether other pamphlets were written by sympathetic laymen or clergymen.

<sup>28</sup> [Kołątaj], *Listy anonima*, ii. 88–93.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 93–4. Cf. J.-J. Rousseau, *Discours sur les sciences et les arts*, ed. F. Bouchardy, in Rousseau, *Oeuvres complètes*, iii. 1–30, at 21.

<sup>30</sup> [Kołątaj], *Listy anonima*, ii. 140–5. E. Rostworowski, 'Książd pleban Kołątaj', in B. Grochulska et al. (eds.), *Wiek XIX. Prace ofiarowane Stefanowi Kieniewiczowi* (Warsaw, 1967), 49–63.

<sup>31</sup> Kostkiewiczowa, *Oświecenie*, 215–16.

<sup>32</sup> [K. Żórawski], *Przestrogi względem okoliczności dotyczących się podatku* (Warsaw, 1788).

<sup>33</sup> [W. Skarszewski], *Mysli wyjęte z dzieła dawniej drukowanego pod tytułem, prawdziwy stan duchowieństwa w Polsce* (1788). [Id.], *List plebana do korespondenta warszawskiego* [1788]. AMS Poniatowski, A I 18 contains correspondence about these pamphlets between Żórawski and Skarszewski.

The most memorable exchanges were initiated by Jacek Jezierski, the castellan of Łuków.<sup>34</sup> He began his *Agreement and Disagreement with the Author of Considerations on the Life of Jan Zamoyski*, published in late August 1788, by excusing himself that he had only 'the heart of a Pole, not the pen of Voltaire'. He wrote 'not [as] a [religious] dissident from hatred, but [as] a Catholic for religion and general freedom'. But he gave the Polish clergy as much discomfort as the patriarch of Ferney.<sup>35</sup> Jezierski promptly published a project for a law abolishing tithes, confiscating half of the lands belonging to chapters and monasteries, and reducing the numbers of places for new monks by half. The orders of both sexes would be obliged to teach. Parish priests were to receive equal incomes, but they would have to teach the village children.<sup>36</sup>

The responses included *To the Author of Agreement and Disagreement with the Author of Considerations on the Life of Zamoyski*, which refuted him from a traditional Catholic position, and *Good and Bad*, which tended to agree with him.<sup>37</sup> Skarszewski's *Letter of a Parish Priest* asked if the author of *Agreement and Disagreement* was: 'a reasonable, unprejudiced, and also a just man?'<sup>38</sup> However, Skarszewski's parochial persona backfired as Jezierski exposed him as a canon: 'You sit here, Sir, in Warsaw, they send you the revenues, and your lonely *wikariusz* tolls the bell for prayers and mass; sometimes you hire a monk to preach, because you yourself write better satires than sermons.' He called on the clergy to save the Commonwealth with their prayers for a Jericho-like miracle, for then they would save themselves from taxation. Clearly, the prayers of one who did not mind his own parish had failed to prevent the partition.<sup>39</sup>

*Support of the Considerations on the Life of Jan Zamoyski*, written by Jan Baudouin de Courtenay, a literary hack of French descent, complimented the author of *Agreement and Disagreement* for his proposals to tax the clergy and redistribute clerical income. Poor *plebani* would bless him, while fat prelates would call him an apostate, a deist, or even an atheist, as in the supposed letter of a parish priest. The *Response* had exposed the latter 'to the laughter of the public'. Baudouin's own reply was a rare projectile launched from the positions and cast in the rhetoric of the radical Enlightenment. He claimed that 'in order to yoke the unenlightened (*nie oświeceni*) under their power', the clergy sought 'to keep them in darkness or the labyrinth of unfathomable mysteries, or to debase them with ingenious terrors, or

<sup>34</sup> See Konopczyński, 'Polscy pisarze polityczni', ii. 226–37; Smoleński, *Przewrót umysłowy*, 321–6; K. Zienkowska, *Jacek Jezierski kasztelan łukowski 1722–1805. Z dziejów szlachty polskiej XVIII wieku* (Warsaw, 1963), 156–61; J. Kracik, 'Klerykalizm i antyklerykalizm doby Sejmu Czteroletniego. Spór kasztelana Jacka Jezierskiego z kanonikiem Wojciechem Skarszewskim', *Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej*, 49 (1999), 187–96.

<sup>35</sup> [J. Jezierski], *Zgoda i niezgoda z autorem Uwag nad życiem Jana Zamoyskiego* (Warsaw, 1788).

<sup>36</sup> *Projekt sejmowy z autora Zgoda i niezgoda wynikający* [1788].

<sup>37</sup> *Do autora Zgody i niezgody z autorem Uwag nad życiem Zamoyskiego* (Warsaw, 1788). *Źle i dobrze. Pismo stosujące się do pisma pod tytułem Zgoda i niezgoda z autorem uwag nad życiem Jana Zamoyskiego roku 1788. dnia 20 września* [1788].

<sup>38</sup> [Skarszewski], *List plebana*, 23.

<sup>39</sup> [J. Jezierski], *Respons na list plebana pod płaszczykiem kanonika* [1788], 4–5. The title should logically have been *Respons na list kanonika pod płaszczykiem plebana*.

to deceive them with superstitious rites.<sup>40</sup> Skarszewski fought back in *The Parish Priest's Answer to New Accusations Against the Polish Clergy*.<sup>41</sup> Baudouin received a still longer and more vituperative response in *Letters to a Friend*, probably also by Skarszewski.<sup>42</sup>

All acknowledged the need for an augmented army. But controversy raged over a fair distribution of the burden. Defenders of the clergy argued that all citizens, whether lay or clerical, should support the endangered Fatherland according to their means, but objected to the disproportionate taxing of the clerical estate, already subjected to the *subsidiūm charitativum*. One author asked: 'in what country does the clergy [...] pay higher taxes than the laity?'<sup>43</sup> 'Let us bear this offering for the Commonwealth together: lord, priest, nobleman, burgher, peasant, and Jew', urged Skarszewski.<sup>44</sup>

The counter-argument was that all should contribute according to their needs and abilities, and priests had fewer needs. A noble, having taken a wife according to 'the commands of the law of nature', and being blessed with numerous children, would be left with far less than a priest with the same income, if they were taxed at the same rate.<sup>45</sup> Because the clergy's vocation forbade them to defend the Commonwealth in person, it was right that they should give more in tax than the laity.<sup>46</sup> The greatest burden among the clergy should be borne by prelates, rather than *plebani*. As in some sejmik instructions, bishops were accused of distributing the *subsidiūm charitativum* unfairly, and even retaining a surplus.<sup>47</sup>

Some denied that the clergy had much to give: 'in many places they can only with the greatest difficulty and economy extract three or four hundred złotys from their allocations'.<sup>48</sup> Skarszewski tried to have it both ways—even if it were true that the clergy were very rich (and he insisted that they were not), their ability to aid those poorer than themselves would be welcome. If some clerical properties now flourished, they had been brought to that state by good and humane management.<sup>49</sup> Authors warned of the social consequences of reducing the clergy to poverty. That 'a poor *pleban* cannot be enlightened (*oświecony*)' was almost axiomatic. Skarszewski asked: 'Without the necessary enlightenment (*światło*) can he be a good guardian of eternal truths? And can he also enlighten the simple folk in their darkness and be useful to the country and human society?'<sup>50</sup>

<sup>40</sup> [J. Baudouin de Courtenay], *Poparcie Uwag nad życiem Jana Zamoyskiego z roztrząsaniem pism, które się z ich powodu zjawiły* (1788), 10, 49–69, 88–106.

<sup>41</sup> [W. Skarszewski], *Odpowiedź plebana na nowe zarzuty przeciwko duchowieństwu polskiemu* (1789).

<sup>42</sup> [W. Skarszewski?], *Listy do przyjaciela* (1789).

<sup>43</sup> *Obywatel białoruski do stanów Rzeczypospolitej albo supplement odezwuy względem podatków* (1788), 17.

<sup>44</sup> [Skarszewski], *List plebana*, 10.

<sup>45</sup> *Uwagi z powodu różnych pism na stronę duchowieństwa w materii podatkowania* (1789), 3–15.

<sup>46</sup> *Listy do J.O. Xiążęcia Sapiehy od anonima 1789 pod czas seymu napisane* [1789], 3–4, 10–11.

<sup>47</sup> *Żle i dobrze*, 10–12.

<sup>48</sup> [Żórawski], *Przestrogi*, 17.

<sup>49</sup> [Skarszewski?], *Listy do przyjaciela*, 135–41.

<sup>50</sup> [Skarszewski], *List plebana*, 35.

Ecclesiastical temporalities were challenged more profoundly by calls for the Commonwealth to take over Church property and pay the clergy 'prudently moderate' salaries—like other civil servants and soldiers. Such salaries could be justified ecclesiologically: 'The Church does not need estates, because it is not a live structure, and is improperly called the Church, because Christ the Lord called a gathering of the faithful the Church; this comprises legislators, soldiers, and all citizens, this should and can manage estates.'<sup>51</sup> The legitimate government had the right to restore property granted for the public good to its original use, or another, more suitable to the country's needs.<sup>52</sup> According to Baudouin, because the clergy, 'as paid servants of the Commonwealth', fulfilled their duty 'to enlighten the common folk' badly, they should lose their property. His rhetoric was exceptionally radical: 'what dark centuries, inclined by fanaticism and superstition, carelessly gave to the clergy, the eighteenth century, enlightened by the light of true philosophy, should take back from them'. He also cited the example of Joseph II.<sup>53</sup>

One objection to salaries was that their regular payment was uncertain. Funds for Divine worship should be secure from the 'revolutions' of humanity.<sup>54</sup> Churchmen argued that ecclesiastical lands were unlike Crown estates. The early rulers of Poland and Lithuania had made similar grants of land to nobility and clergy. The clergy's estates were founded on the obligation to give spiritual service, just as the szlachta's were granted in exchange for the duty to defend the country. Should all clergymen be punished for the omissions of a few, or a few dozen? Did every layman fulfil his duties?<sup>55</sup> As one clerical author put it, 'If we are merely idle eaters of the morsels of the altar, as you say, then perhaps some future revolution will speak likewise of you.'<sup>56</sup>

Natural law, insisted Skarszewski, held all property sacred under any form of government. It could not be taken away from some 'without violating the original contract' that secured the property of all.<sup>57</sup> He asked: 'Is there another good more public than the keeping and respecting of the law of nature?'<sup>58</sup> According to another author, the 'public echo, founded on mere prejudice', was encouraging the sejm to violate the inheritance of the clergy. The right of property was uncertain only under despots, such as Peter the Great—who paid his clergy salaries.<sup>59</sup> It was clear, claimed Skarszewski, how God had blessed Joseph II's expropriations—the emperor had to contract immense debts for the war with Turks (like Kołłątaj, he seems not to have noticed either the purposes or actual expenditure of the *Religionskasse*).<sup>60</sup>

<sup>51</sup> *Listy do . . . Sapiiehy*, 14–17. *Uwagi z powodu różnych pism*, 33–57.

<sup>52</sup> *Uwagi z powodu różnych pism*, 16–29.

<sup>53</sup> [Baudouin], *Poparcie Uwag*, 93–106.

<sup>54</sup> [Skarszewski], *Odpowiedź plebana*, 88.

<sup>55</sup> [Skarszewski?], *Listy do przyjaciela*, 106–22.

<sup>56</sup> *Głos Duchowieństwa roku 1788* (1788), 4.

<sup>57</sup> [Skarszewski], *List plebana*, 20–5, quotation at 24.

<sup>58</sup> [Skarszewski], *Odpowiedź plebana*, 15–16.

<sup>59</sup> *Przymówienie się do głosu duchowieństwa* (Warsaw, [1788/9]), not paginated.

<sup>60</sup> [Skarszewski], *Odpowiedź plebana*, 53–4. Cf. [Kołłątaj], *Listy anonima*, i. 229–31.



Several writers demanded that residence should be enforced and pluralism ended. Teenage friends or cousins of bishops should no longer receive plum benefices and sit in cathedral stalls. Promotions should reflect merit and seniority.<sup>61</sup> Whatever the motivations of those who made it, the case for rationalizing clerical incomes and duties was strong. Jezierski compared the *pleban* of a 'meagre parish', with 500 or 1,000 złotych, who tolled the bells himself, with priests on 20,000 złotych, 'who neither minded nor served their church'. He asked: 'Does justice demand it so? Does God want it so? Let everyone judge for himself.' Every parish priest should have an annual income of 1,000 złotych and a *włoka* of land for himself, and the assistance of a *wikariusz* on 600 złotych and an organist on 400 złotych. The latter would teach the parish children. The *pleban* would answer to the Educational Commission for the teaching.<sup>62</sup> Jezierski was proposing to take 90 per cent and divide the remaining 10 per cent equally, claimed Skarszewski. Any emulation of the 'geometry' introduced in other countries would be a task for the clergy itself.<sup>63</sup>

One traditional clerical strategy was to warn that oppressing the Church would provoke Divine anger. In pamphlets (as opposed to sermons and pastoral letters) it was rarely employed. It was easy to ripost that the clergy's prayers had prevented neither plagues nor partition. Indeed, perhaps ecclesiastical abuses provoked God's wrath.<sup>64</sup> Other arguments appealed to the *szlachta*'s economic interests. Clerical estates were taxed. Their revenues circulated among the nobility, as priests often rescued their families from poverty. A clergyman's relatives inherited three quarters of his personal property. Yet a clergyman gave up his own inheritance to his siblings on taking orders.<sup>65</sup> Noblemen got the more lucrative benefices. Commendatory abbacies sustained poorer bishops, enabling them to aid their families, and perform public functions.<sup>66</sup>

Foremost among the clergy's public contribution, it was claimed, was 'the enlightening of nation's youth'.<sup>67</sup> But clerical education had its critics. The female sex brought up the next generation, but according to Baudouin, education by quarrelsome, credulous, and superstitious nuns yielded contradictions of modesty and immodesty. Unhappy and shackled in marriage, how could women make their country happier? Titillated, he appealed to the fair sex:

Discover the value of reason, discover the power of virtue, give your enchanting voice to these dear attributes of the soul, so that they would captivate and entice our sex [...] Improve, O alluring little women, your penetrating reason and lively imagination, make yourselves respectable through civic virtues and pure morals.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>61</sup> E.g. *Myśli patryotyczno-polityczne do Stanów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, na sejm 1788. roku zgromadzonych, przez obywatela o wolność i samowładztwo Rzeczypospolitej swojej gorliwego, spisane* (1788), 67–8.

<sup>62</sup> [J. Jezierski], *Zgoda i niezgoda*, 16–20.

<sup>63</sup> [Skarszewski], *List plebana*, 36.

<sup>64</sup> [J. Jezierski], *Respons na list plebana*, 5.

<sup>65</sup> [Skarszewski?], *Listy do przyjaciela*, 123–41.

<sup>66</sup> [Skarszewski], *Myśli wyjęte z dzieła ... prawdziwy stan duchowieństwa*, 44, 65.

<sup>67</sup> [Skarszewski], *Odpowiedź plebana*, 19–21.

<sup>68</sup> [Baudouin], *Poparcie uwag*, 24–31, quotation at 30–1.

Baudouin's respondent claimed that girls were more vulnerable to temptation than boys, and should therefore receive more exercises in piety. They did not need 'higher learning', for their role was to inculcate morality and virtue in their children. As to the charge that delusions and strange habits were all that were taught in religious houses, did the Poles of old not find pleasant companions in their convent-educated wives? Were there then as many divorces disrupting families and occupying the courts, as there were now, under the influence of education by governesses and *madames*?<sup>69</sup>

More ink was expended on schooling for boys. Baudouin may have believed that consigning education to laymen was a precondition of the nation's 'enlightenment', but most critics of the clergy disagreed. The lay teachers employed by the Commission for National Education, alleged one writer, were weak in their own faith, and so failed to indoctrinate their pupils. Indeed, 'it often happens, that their pupils are their companions in debauchery'. It was not 'fanaticism' to propose obliging regulars to teach the country's youth, and to fortify the young in faith, under the commission's supervision.<sup>70</sup>

At least one clerical author would have happily accepted the responsibility (and the possibility was discussed by the *collegium episcoporum*).<sup>71</sup> Had not education by clergymen given Poland many virtuous senators, envoys, and educational commissioners? If the Commonwealth wished to extract a million zlotys from the clergy in addition to the *subsidiium charitativum*, it could do so by turning the educational fund over to the army, and making the regular clergy responsible for education, under the supervision of cathedral chapters.<sup>72</sup> Religious orders that provided schooling, such as the Basilians and Piarists, who 'enlighten us in the duties we owe to God, ourselves, the Fatherland, etc.' were evidently useful. But some others, such as the Camaldolese, who had rich funds, yet neither heard confessions, nor taught, nor even wrote books, were not. The proper vocation of the clergy was work, not contemplation.<sup>73</sup> The same author also lauded the Lazarists' missionary work and the care of the sick by the Sisters of Charity. His silence on other female orders invited an obvious conclusion. Citing the Viennese press, he claimed that 972 new parishes (a gross exaggeration) had been founded in Bohemia. The Commonwealth should imitate Joseph II's religious fund and dispense surplus monastic wealth to hospitals—which were struggling to cope with the multitude of beggars.<sup>74</sup>

The regulars were generally defended—if at all—on utilitarian grounds. Parents placed their daughters in nunneries, explained Skarszewski, in order to reduce the burden of providing for numerous families (on which point he cited David Hume), but he hastened to add that the girls should take the veil voluntarily. 'And if six Camaldolese and Carthusian monasteries have devoted themselves to deep and

<sup>69</sup> [Skarszewski?], *Listy do przyjaciela*, 40–4, 52.

<sup>70</sup> *Żle i dobrze*, 12–19, 21–2, 24–9.

<sup>71</sup> See below, 81.

<sup>72</sup> [Skarszewski?], *Listy do przyjaciela*, 45–58.

<sup>73</sup> *Mysli patriotyczne-polityczne*, 72.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 73 (quotation), 78–81. See below, 324.

solitary isolation, and occupy themselves only with the breviary and pious thoughts, why should they be condemned?' Did all soldiers fight? Did all doctors treat patients? At least the monks prayed for the Fatherland.<sup>75</sup> This approached part of Edmund Burke's defence of monasticism: 'The monks are lazy. Be it so. Suppose them no otherwise employed than by singing in the choir. They are as usefully employed as those who neither sing nor say.'<sup>76</sup>

Some of Skarszewski's rhetoric was already reminiscent of the most vehement critics of the French Revolution:

An unhappy age has come upon us, in which the wisecracks of the present, having adorned their wisdom with the name of serious philosophy, wish to pass for the teachers of the human race. Under the appearance of enlightenment (*oświecenie*), these alleged philosophers sow opinions infected with bile, which loose all the passions, undermine the foundations of virtue, and break the chains of human society, incite the most appalling crimes, and bring fear and despair to honest souls. But wishing with one hand to overthrow the altars, and with the other to shake the thrones, and all governmental authority, they first attack religion, as the first guardian of the duties of human society.

And so they proposed to ruin the clergy, 'and on those ruins to establish another religion, which would flatter the passions, and erect altars to vices'. But the voice of conscience would not be stifled and was acknowledged by such 'philosophers' on their deathbeds, who then wished to die in the bosom of religion. The infection had spread across Europe, and now Poland 'had such enlightened apostles'.<sup>77</sup>

All the discursive stratagems of French *anti-philosophie* were present: the ironic denial of the claim to 'enlightenment' and 'philosophy', the prophecy that having desecrated the altar, the 'philosophers' would turn on the throne, and the claim that while pride, fashion, and the desires of the flesh motivated them to replace the true religion with another while they were in health, they repented or despaired at death's door. The local ingredient in the pot was the blaming of 'foreign books'.<sup>78</sup>

But there was another way. Skarszewski torched the Enlightenment with its own flames. 'To judge things, as they are, impartially and without prejudice' was 'the torch which enlightens the darkest corners and reveals virtue and vice'. The clergy, not wanting to repel those 'thinking philosophically', had to defend itself with arguments from secular reason and experience. Accordingly, Skarszewski cited Voltaire's *Traité de la tolérance*, Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity*, Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois*, Hume's *Political Discourses*, and Rousseau's *Émile*, not to mention Grotius, Bacon, Newton, Addison, and 'enlightened pagans' such as Seneca and Cicero, in order to demonstrate both the need for religion in society

<sup>75</sup> [Skarszewski] *Myśli wyjęte z dzieła... prawdziwy stan duchowieństwa*, 46–50.

<sup>76</sup> E. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), quoted after D. Beales, *Prosperity and Plunder*, 313–14.

<sup>77</sup> [Skarszewski], *Odpowiedź plebana*, 3–6.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment*, chs. 1–2; Didier Masseau, *Les ennemis des philosophes. L'Antiphilosophie au siècle des lumières* (Paris, 2000), part III.

and the consistency of the morality revealed by Christ with the proofs of reason and the senses.<sup>79</sup>

Skarszewski denied that the Church encouraged superstition; on the contrary, it sought to eradicate it among the populace. Nor did the Church preach hatred towards those of a different faith. It was the duty of a Christian to love those who remained in error. Poland, at least, had not been stained by a St Bartholomew's night; tumults were the acts of private individuals.<sup>80</sup>

Revealing the ultimate contradiction in his position, Skarszewski declared that of course a man should think freely, 'as long as he thought well'. Government should enforce prior censorship by the bishops.<sup>81</sup> Otherwise, the 'coarsest errors regarding religion, morals, government, and even matters subject to the senses' would spread. Freedom of thought was especially dangerous in a country whose prosperity depended upon 'salutary unanimity'. That unanimity must be inculcated from childhood. Republican government thus depended upon unchallenged indoctrination in Catholic Truth.<sup>82</sup> Here we have what we might call confessional republicanism.

Nevertheless, an unintended consequence of Skarszewski's endeavours to fight the foe on the foe's territory may have been that utilitarian preoccupations infiltrated his own theology. He wrote of a Christ who 'came to enlighten the human race and make it better'. Christian redemption and grace were glossed over as 'mysteries'. God rewarded virtue and punished vice in the next life, in order to encourage the one and discourage the other in this life, while the Messiah's main purpose seems to have been to re-establish natural law on Earth. We might call this an enlightened Christology.<sup>83</sup> In fighting the Enlightenment, Skarszewski was also part of it.

### 3. THE PATRIOTIC PARADIGM

The early polemics were echoed in published sermons that took up the cause of religion and clerical property while lauding sacrificial, patriotic virtue.<sup>84</sup> But the argument that trumped all others was the clergy's own interest in preventing the Commonwealth's conquest by her neighbours. Jacek Jezierski asked:

What harm is done to the clergy for them to relinquish half of those estates, which they neither bought, nor inherited from their parents, in order to save the other half? After

<sup>79</sup> [Skarszewski], *Myśli wyjęte z dzieła... prawdziwy stan duchowieństwa...*, 3–4. [Skarszewski?], *Listy do przyjaciela*, 108–10, 123–5, 144–62. [Skarszewski], *Odpowiedź plebana*, 113–17.

<sup>80</sup> [Skarszewski], *Odpowiedź plebana*, 118–20.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 125–35.

<sup>82</sup> [Skarszewski?], *Listy do przyjaciela*, 75–85.

<sup>83</sup> [Skarszewski], *Odpowiedź plebana*, 65–7. Butterwick, 'What is Enlightenment (*oświecenie*)?', 29–30.

<sup>84</sup> See Ślusarska, 'Sejm Czteroletni', 69–76; R. Butterwick, 'Between Anti-Enlightenment and Enlightened Catholicism: Provincial Preachers in Late Eighteenth-Century Poland-Lithuania', in *Peripheries of the Enlightenment*, 201–28, at 216–18.

all, faith will not fall, the praise of God will not cease, even without a single canon or abbot, and Poland cannot remain free without an army of 100,000.

So he proposed halving the number of canons and taking half the monasteries' income.<sup>85</sup> The author of *Patriotic Political Thoughts* posed the question starkly: 'Is the dominant religion safer with ample clerical revenues and ecclesiastical riches, but in an impotent country—or, with proportionate revenues, and no riches, in a strong country?' He increased the pressure by a direct appeal to the clergy:

no minor place in religion and almost the first place in morality should be given to love of the Fatherland.—Give us examples of this virtue in yourselves. Relinquish your rich funds for the Commonwealth, and content yourselves for now with the moderate salaries, which the poor Commonwealth, in her direst hour of need, can apportion to you. [...] For if foreigners divide up our country, because of our impotence, you have fresh experience of what would happen to you. And so, while there is still time, save the nation, yourselves, and us all.<sup>86</sup>

Given the paradigmatic nature of the call to augment the army, the best answer was that the spoliation of the clergy would yield so little, that the moral damage would outweigh the fiscal benefit. According to the *Supplement to the Voice of the Clergy*, Poland's bishops, abbots, and prelates could not possibly raise the 50 million zlotys needed for the army. Should half of 5 million zlotys be taken by force? The requisite tax on the nobility might at most be reduced from 20 per cent to 18 per cent. Would such a reduction be worth 'giving an example to posterity, that there is nothing sacred in our statutes, which the sovereign power could not ruin?'<sup>87</sup>

Against the background of the polemics outlined in this chapter, between January and July 1789 the sejm tapped clerical revenues and seized ecclesiastical property. But the arguments made by the defenders of the Church did not fall entirely on deaf ears, as the subsequent course of the Polish Revolution would reveal.

<sup>85</sup> [J. Jezierski], *Zgoda i niezgoda*, 26–8.

<sup>86</sup> *Mysli patryotyczno-polityczne*, 33–4.

<sup>87</sup> *Przymówienie się do głosu duchowieństwa*, not paginated.

## Tax or offering?

Some of the hardest fought debates of the Four Years' Sejm concerned the taxation of the clergy. After a period of preparation for battle, three sessions between 12 and 16 March 1789 were needed to establish that the clergy would pay 20 per cent of their income, in addition to their existing commitments. The details of the clerical contribution took up five more sessions, before the sejm euphorically acclaimed an 'offering' of 10 per cent from noble lands on 26 March. These debates reveal rhetorical and procedural strategies used to induce or delay decisions, and a rich seam of noble expectations of the clergy.

### 1. THE EPISCOPAL RESPONSE TO THE THREAT

Following the abolition of the Permanent Council on 19 January 1789, questions of revenue moved centre stage. In the course of a week, the sejm agreed a double hearth tax for the Crown, and an additional instalment of several taxes, including the clergy's *subsidiū charitativū*, for the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In addition, Stanisław Małachowski was authorized to raise 13 million złotys in loans abroad.<sup>1</sup> Backstage, the bishopric of Cracow and its revenues attracted aspirants and their backers.

It was open season for ecclesiastical wealth, despite the pope's *brevi* and the nuncio's note, finally read out on 21 January. Pius VI expressed confidence in the Estates' unswerving attachment to religion, the Church, and the Holy See.<sup>2</sup> He would receive an assurance of their piety and filial love, but the *brevi* were met with 'inauspicious muttering'. Marcin Ledóchowski, envoy for Wizna, immediately demanded the renewal of his project for an additional tax of a *kwarta* and a half on the clergy (theoretically, 37.5 per cent), a reduction of episcopal revenues to

<sup>1</sup> VL, ix, 64–5. T. Korzon, *Wewnątrz dzieje Polski za Stanisława Augusta (1764–1794). Badania historyczne ze stanowiska ekonomicznego i administracyjnego*, 6 vols., 2nd edn (Cracow and Warsaw, 1897–8), iii, 228–9.

<sup>2</sup> Pius VI, *Dilectis Filiis Ordinij Equestri Regni Poloniae, & Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae.../ Ukochanym synom...* (Rome, 16 August 1788). Id., *Dilectis Filiis Nobilibus Viris Ordini Senatorio Regni Poloniae, & Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae.../ Ukochanym Synom...* (Rome, 19 August 1788), ASC 18, ff. 56–7. Saluzzo to the Estates, 19 January 1789, ASC 18, ff. 52–3 (French), ff. 54–5 (Polish). Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 21 January 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 245–6.

100,000 zlotys each, and the delegating of papal jurisdiction to the primate and episcopate. Saluzzo was horrified.<sup>3</sup>

The episcopal college met on 22 January to consider its response. It was clear that a greater contribution would be demanded from the clergy than from the nobility. Józef Kossakowski made a politically astute proposal—to sacrifice tithes to the Commonwealth (thereby sparing the clergy the unpopularity of collecting them) and raise one million zlotys for a religious fund to compensate the poorest parishes. Other bishops replied that tithes were worth at least one and a half million zlotys in the Crown alone. The college agreed to await the outcome of provincial sessions.<sup>4</sup>

On 26 and again on 28 January, the chamber heard calls to tap the former Jesuit properties, religious orders, the Knights of Malta, the bishopric of Cracow, monies paid to the clergy beyond the Russian 'cordon', the 'Galician sums' returned to the primate in 1785, ecclesiastical silver, gold, and even bells, as well as for a fairer allocation of the *subsidium charitativum*.<sup>5</sup> On 29 January Tomasz Wawrzecki, envoy for Braśław, suggested that if the clergy took responsibility for education, the educational fund could be used for the army. In return, ecclesiastical estates would be taxed equally with noble ones. The alternative was starkly posed by Józef Bońkowski, envoy for Płock, who believed that the laity should respect and love the clergy, 'but with a moderated love, for in luxury even virtues cease to be respectable'. 'Evangelical poverty' justified taxation at at least twice the noble rate.<sup>6</sup>

At this point Małachowski introduced Jan Krasiński's project for a stamp tax for the Crown. It provided for a scale of charges on nomination to national and local dignities. Archbishops of both rites would pay 1,000 ducats (18,000 zlotys), bishops 600, as well as 5 per cent of the first four years' revenue, palatines and ministers 200 ducats, front-row castellans 100, and back-bench castellans 50. Dignities ranged from the grand secretary at 150 ducats down to the custodian at 25. Local dignities started at 2 ducats, rising to 10 for a chamberlain and 20 for a starosta. The order of the White Eagle would cost 100 ducats and that of St Stanisław 50 (thereby weakening the king's ability to reward supporters). Suffragan bishops would pay 25 ducats, claustral abbots 50, prelates and canons in cathedrals 20 and 12, in collegiate churches 12 and 6 respectively, all of whom would be charged 5 per cent of their first four years' revenue. Captains would pay 12 ducats, colonels 30. Admission to the Polish nobility would cost a foreigner 1,000 ducats.

Kossakowski computed that if someone were to progress through all the dignities, he would pay 120,000 ducats, to which Krasiński riposted that the same omnipotent author of such an extraordinary progression would also find the means to pay for it. A plea on behalf of the poorer bishops made by Kacper Cieciszowski, bishop of Kiev, resulted in the concession that bishops (of both rites) with less than

<sup>3</sup> Estates to Pius VI, ASC 18, ff. 72–3 (Latin), ff. 75–6 (Polish). Małachowski and Sapieha to Saluzzo, ASC 18, f. 78. Saluzzo to Małachowski and Sapieha, 23 February 1789, ASC 18, f. 74. *Dyaryusz 1788*, ii:1. 268. Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 28 January 1789, ASV ANV 66, f. 247.

<sup>4</sup> Protocol of the 3rd session: AAG ACap. B84, ff. 163–5.

<sup>5</sup> Michał Radziszewski (Starodub), and Franciszek Mikorski (Kalisz), 26 January 1789: *Dyaryusz 1788*, ii:1. 295–8; Stanisław Kublicki (Livonia), 28 January 1789: *ibid.*, ii:1. 315–17.

<sup>6</sup> *Dyaryusz 1788*, ii:1. 337–43.

30,000 zlotys in income would be exempted from the requirement to pay 5 per cent of their first four years' revenues.<sup>7</sup> An analogous Lithuanian stamp tax, taking account of the differences in local hierarchies, was agreed a few days later. The payments for the bishops of Smolensk and Livonia were reduced to 200 ducats.<sup>8</sup>

Saluzzo lamented the inequity of the measure and 'this spirit of novelty and reform'. Moreover, he warned that the clergy had fewer supporters than the starostas.<sup>9</sup> One factor that may have helped to overcome the bishops' resistance was the impression made by Jan Suchorzewski's speech and accompanying project on 29 January. He demanded that the clergy should pay tax at three times the rate of the szlachta, on the grounds that nobles had families to support. The argument would be repeated by other orators and pamphleteers.<sup>10</sup>

The stamp tax disabused the bishops of their earlier optimism. On 31 January, the primate asked his colleagues to consider accepting responsibility for education. Despite scepticism over the costs, voiced by Bishops Okęcki of Poznań and Garnysz of Chełm, the idea was supported by Massalski of Wilno, Giedroyć of Samogitia, Cieciszowski of Kiev, and Kossakowski of Livonia. Poniatowski agreed to have the figures computed.<sup>11</sup> However, at the college's next meeting on 2 February, Rybiński of Cujavia, Szembek of Płock, and Turski of Łuck argued that the burden would be too great, and they were backed by Okęcki and Garnysz. After the punitive stamp tax, Cieciszowski no longer believed that the sejm would be satisfied even by such an undertaking. Although Massalski, Giedroyć, and Kossakowski still favoured taking up the challenge, no calculation of the costs was made. The episcopate merely resolved to argue the ecclesiastical case when a project to tax the clergy was brought forward. After some hesitation, the bishops agreed to defend the starostas.<sup>12</sup> Massalski had long been interested in education, but the fact that the bishops most in favour of taking on education were Lithuanians may have reflected the prominent role of ex-Jesuits in the Grand Duchy's schools.<sup>13</sup> Those most opposed were the *soi-disant* patriots, who may have sounded out Ignacy Potocki—who as a long-standing educational commissioner was committed to laymen teaching alongside clergymen.

Military matters took up much time in the first half of February, and the king fell ill, which led to the loss of several sessions. Talk continued of further sources of revenue, including abbeys.<sup>14</sup> Only towards the end of February did Stanisław

<sup>7</sup> *Dziaryusz* 1788, ii:1. 346–74. VL, ix. 66.

<sup>8</sup> *Dziaryusz* 1788, ii:1. 393. VL, ix. 68.

<sup>9</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 4 February, 11 February 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 248–9.

<sup>10</sup> M. Drozdowski, *Podstawy finansowe działalności państwowej w Polsce 1764–1795* (Warsaw and Poznań, 1975), 139–40.

<sup>11</sup> Protocol of the 5th session: AAG ACap. B84, ff. 166–71.

<sup>12</sup> Protocol of the 6th session: AAG ACap. B84, ff. 175–9.

<sup>13</sup> See I. Szybiak, *Szkolnictwo Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim* (Wrocław, 1973), 240–1.

<sup>14</sup> 'The list of abbeys is thrown before the public (*in publico rozrzucona*). There is an idea of applying the revenues of these ecclesiastical estates to the national education fund, and turning the post-Jesuit fund over to the army.' Józef Rozan to Szczepny Potocki, Warsaw, 17 February 1789, BCz. 3471, pp. 207–8.



Małachowski manage to get permanent taxes back onto the sejm's agenda. Opening the session of 26 February, he declared that religion itself required the sejm to proceed to permanent taxes. His nephew Jan Małachowski submitted a project, *Perpetual Tax* (*Podatek wieczysty*), to tax income from clerical property at 20 per cent and from noble property at 10 per cent, with the levy of a double *kwarta* (supposedly 50 per cent) on starostas. Starosta of Opoczno himself, Jan Małachowski stressed that the Commonwealth should keep faith with the holders of Crown estates. A two-day debate ensued. Some envoys called for all Crown estates to be handed over to the treasury, but, defended by Adam Czartoryski and Stanisław Potocki, the starostas escaped with a double *kwarta*, based on a new survey, by the margin of 116 votes to 86.<sup>15</sup>

The clergy was next in line. On 2 March Poniatowski told his colleagues that they would have to propose an amendment to the project *Perpetual Tax*. After considering three drafts, the bishops agreed on a text: in place of the *subsidiium charitativum*, but in addition to the taxes already levied upon it, the clergy would offer to pay twice as much from its own revenues as the noble estate chose to levy upon itself, subject to papal consent (*salvo beneplacito apostolico*). The Estates would guarantee the clergy's prerogatives, and in the event of a subsequent increase in taxation, the clergy would not pay more than the nobility. Benefices not exceeding 2,000 złotys, religious houses dependent solely on alms, hospitals, the Bonifratensians, and the Sisters of Charity would be exempted from taxation altogether. Poniatowski would move the amendment himself.<sup>16</sup>

## 2. 'WHO IS POORER THAN THE FATHERLAND?'

12–16 MARCH 1789

On Thursday, 12 March 1789, the sejm's secretary read out the section of the project *Perpetual Tax* entitled 'clerical properties'. Poniatowski then presented the clergy's offering. His speech included most of the arguments made by clerical pamphleteers. Having thanked all who had spoken up in defence of the clergy, the Church, and religion, he reminded the Estates that the szlachta and the clergy had taken their privileges and property from the same royal hands; the one for military services, the other 'for the serving of the altar, for the enlightenment (*oświecenie*) of the nation, for the polishing of manners, for their being accustomed to citizenship, and love of the Fatherland'. He asked if donning clerical garb involved the loss of citizenship, and cited historical examples of the clergy contributing voluntarily to the needs of the Commonwealth. Ecclesiastical property, in succouring successive incumbents' families, benefited the entire noble estate. The clergy had already agreed 'in silence' to the stamp tax and the percentage of the first four years' revenues on bishoprics. Taking this into account, as well as the

<sup>15</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 381–5. *Dziaryusz 1788*, ii:2. 161–70.

<sup>16</sup> Protocol of the 7th session: AAG ACap. B84, ff. 180–2. Draft amendments in AAG ACap. B84, ff. 147–8.

diminution of the interest due to clergymen on sums secured on noble lands (*wyderkafy*), the alcohol excise (*czopowe*), hearth taxes, and the offer to pay a double land tax, he expected the sejm to favour the episcopal amendment.<sup>17</sup>

This offering failed to satisfy Jacek Jezierski. He highlighted benefices funded by *wyderkafy*, the properties left by dissolved orders such as the Jesuits, clerical estates and sums in the partitioned territories, and the vacant bishopric of Cracow, whose annual revenues he reckoned at 800,000 złotys. He suggested taxing the estates of the hardworking clergy equally with those of the *szlachta*—provided that the superfluous incomes of prelates were applied to the army.<sup>18</sup>

The debate that day was dominated by well prepared speeches, most of which defended the clergy.<sup>19</sup> Among the advocates of higher clerical taxation was Mateusz Butrymowicz, envoy for Pińsk, who also demanded that the Uniate diocesan clergy should be freed from the *cathedraticum*, the unpopular and sometimes ruinous imposition demanded by their bishops. This demand met with such applause, wrote the nuncio, that ‘the question was decided incidentally and tumultuously’.<sup>20</sup> The decisive intervention came at the close of the day, from Aleksander Zieliński, envoy for Nur:

Hearing more than once in a sermon, that the world is rotten (*świat zepsuty*), that the spirit of the Catholic religion has completely burnt out, in sadness I contemplated this lamentable situation, but in this moment my convictions are altered, when I have heard many zealous voices for the maintenance of ministers of religion: as a zealous Catholic, I hold it my duty to follow them. I have heard a warning, that we proceed as cautiously as possible with the bread of the clergy, in order not commit sacrilege; but I turn to the canon laws [...] Every possessor of even the least income should divide his revenue into three classes; the first part for the needs of a moderate lifestyle, the second for the maintenance of the church, and the third for the succour of the poor. At this time, I ask, who is poorer than the Fatherland and our Commonwealth?<sup>21</sup>

The primate’s amendment had not yet been accepted, and Zieliński’s speech, appealing to the patriotic paradigm while remaining impeccably Catholic, made a great impression on the public.<sup>22</sup> As the following day proceeded, it became clearer that the clergy’s offering would not appease the majority of envoys. The first speeches, however, were mostly supportive.

Then Jacek Jezierski rose. When ‘hereditary fortunes’ were insufficient to fund the army, he said, ‘clerical properties must contribute to it, and most of all those, which are useless to the Church’. He told the bishops to bring order to the Church, ‘establish parish schools for the industrious but unhappy simple folk’, and ‘hand over abbeys, useless to the Fatherland and the Church, for the use of the country’. He optimistically estimated that the estates of the bishopric of Cracow would yield

<sup>17</sup> *Mowa... Prymasa... 12 marca roku 1789...* Amendment: ASC 1, f. 90. Printed version: ASC 16, f. 260.

<sup>18</sup> *Mowa... Jezierskiego kasztelana łukowskiego... 12 marca 1789...*

<sup>19</sup> As noted by Kamieniecki to Szczesny Potocki, 13 March 1789, BCz. 3471, pp. 433–4.

<sup>20</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 25 March 1789, ASV ANV 66, f. 255.

<sup>21</sup> ASC 1, f. 95.

<sup>22</sup> Franciszek Szopowicz to Jan Jaskiewicz, 14 March 1789, BJ 3729, vol. i, f. 66.

a million zlotys, that handing over education to 'idle monasteries' would save 4 million, and that other sources could bring in another 3 million.<sup>23</sup>

He then submitted his project, 'Clerical Government'.<sup>24</sup> The clergy was to be reordered by a commission composed of the bishops with dioceses (thereby excluding Kossakowski and Naruszewicz), two lay senators, and six members of the knightly Estate. All religious houses and churches of both rites would present an account of their silver, revenue, expenses, and persons. From the total the commission would assign a proportionate sum to each person 'useful to the Church', redistribute revenue to poor parishes, establish parish schools, fix numbers in cathedral and collegiate chapters, as well as among the regular clergy, and abolish superfluous establishments and benefices, *salvis modernis possessoribus*. Education was to be assigned to monasteries, under the supervision of the Educational Commission, but the educational fund would go to the army. The religious orders of both sexes were to be subjected to the bishops.

Wojciech Suchodolski proclaimed his wish to conclude a matter that had already wasted two days, but then stirred the pot in a long speech asserting the absolute sovereignty of the Commonwealth, constituted in the sejm. He opposed most of the proposed exemptions and reductions.<sup>25</sup> Kossakowski took on the pamphleteers (he may have been looking at Jezierski):

In numerous writings, which the prolific wits put to the public at this time, they remind the clerical estate of the counsel of poverty from the Gospels and the Holy Fathers; however, this holy virtue depends not on compulsion, but on free will; it is not the amount of wealth, but its misuse that calls for a reprimand.<sup>26</sup>

But the 'Muscovite' Kossakowski was not the man to persuade waverers.

Stanisław Potocki pointed out that in 1784 the *subsidium charitativum* had been assigned to the repayment of the king's debts over a period of ten years. Aiming to embarrass the king, Potocki suggested that the clergy continue for a further six years to pay off the royal debts.<sup>27</sup> Stanisław August, obliged, as he said, by his *pacta conventa* (the conditions imposed on every newly elected king) to defend the prerogatives of the clergy, claimed that the clergy would be overburdened if subjected to the *subsidium charitativum* for a further six years, in addition to a tax of 20 per cent and the stamp tax. He therefore asked that an equivalent part of the revenues from the clerical offering repay his debts for six years; subsequently, the entire proceeds would go to the army. He also expected the Estates to request the *beneplacitum apostolicum*.<sup>28</sup> The monarch's intervention earned the nuncio's gratitude,<sup>29</sup> but did not carry the day. Calls were heard to accept the clergy's

<sup>23</sup> *Mowa... Jezierskiego, kasztelana łukowskiego... 13 marca 1789...*

<sup>24</sup> *Rząd duchowny*, ASC 16, f. 262.

<sup>25</sup> *Głos... Wojciecha Suchodolskiego... 13 marca 1789...*

<sup>26</sup> *Głos... Kossakowskiego biskupa inflantskiego... 13 marca 1789...*

<sup>27</sup> ASC 1, f. 128. On the arrangement for the king's debts, see VL, ix, 14.

<sup>28</sup> ASC 1, ff. 100–3.

<sup>29</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 18 March 1789, ASV ANV 66, f. 254. The king told Deboli on 13 March 1789 that he had tried to defend the clergy from the effective rate of 35 per cent demanded by

offering, but when Małachowski asked for agreement, 'many envoys voiced their opposition', and the bishops did not press for a vote. The session was adjourned until Monday, 16 March.<sup>30</sup>

On Saturday, 14 March, the bishops met at the primate's palace. They endorsed potential changes to their amendment, providing for the *subsidiūm charitativum* to be abolished altogether after six years, inserting an assurance of the equal treatment of clerical and noble property in the billeting of troops, and adding seminaries and religious houses maintaining public schools to the classes of clergy taxed at the noble rate.<sup>31</sup>

The session of 16 March proved still more disputatious. Jezierski turned his sarcasm on the monarch. Perhaps the king prognosed peace in Europe, removing the need for an army, and for that reason sought to reduce the tax on the clergy. For his part Jezierski believed what he saw, felt what pained him, and judged what he heard. He challenged the king to stand by the lay estate, and keep his promise: 'the king with the nation, the nation with the king'.<sup>32</sup>

An amendment moved by the castellan of Czersk, Tomasz Ostrowski, providing for the clergy to contribute 1 million złotys plus 10 per cent, was read out. Arguments erupted over the exemptions and reductions; others demanded that their projects be read out, or that votes be held on their preferred questions.<sup>33</sup> Stanisław Małachowski, having calculated the effective rate of clerical taxation as 36.5 per cent, 'which seems to be too great a burden', nevertheless asked the clergy to increase its offering. Before the episcopate could respond, Aleksander Zieliński proposed to decide the primate's amendment clause by clause (*categoratim*), starting with the *subsidiūm charitativum*. Małachowski spotted the danger, and answered that several projects had already been put forward. He proposed a vote: 20 per cent plus the king's debts, or 1 million złotys plus 10 per cent? Zieliński and Suchodolski would have none of it.<sup>34</sup>

Kazimierz Sapieha made up for his silence in a long, probably improvised oration. The sejm had wasted more than twelve days since the decision on *starostwa*. He would not speak now, were he not bound by his palatinate's instruction that 'the clergy would contribute without exception to the burden of taxes in a greater part than other estates'. In order to save time, he proposed deciding the rate of tax to be paid by the clergy, leaving the details and exemptions until later. He trusted that the clergy would solve the problem by increasing its offering.<sup>35</sup>

'the hardest zealots against the priests', and to keep '*cum beneplacito apostolico*', which 'some of the fervent patriots' had wanted to strike out from the project. ZP 414, ff. 130–1.

<sup>30</sup> ASC 1, ff. 132–3.

<sup>31</sup> Protocol of the 8th session: AAG ACap. B84, f. 184. Karbownik, *Obciążenia stanu duchownego*, 251.

<sup>32</sup> *Mowa... Jezierskiego, kasztelana łukowskiego... 16 marca 1789...*

<sup>33</sup> ASC 1, ff. 163–7.

<sup>34</sup> ASC 1, ff. 167–9.

<sup>35</sup> ASC 1, ff. 170–2.

That moment had not yet come. The bishops sat tight, hoping not to have to retreat to their fallback position. Several envoys either requested or demanded more.<sup>36</sup> The marshal asked in vain for agreement to the *subsidiium charitativum* plus the tax at 15 per cent. Turski declared that although the marshal's proposal amounted to nearly 40 per cent, the bishops agreed to it gladly. Małachowski again tried to put 15 per cent to the vote. But Suchodolski and Zieliński insisted on a choice between 20 per cent and 30 per cent. With matters going from bad to worse for the clergy, Suchorzewski offered them terms of surrender, saying that he would cast his vote for 20 per cent.<sup>37</sup>

Cieciszowski made a last stand, defending the role of the clergy in general and in the diocese of Kiev in particular, but could not sway the chamber.<sup>38</sup> When Stanisław Kublicki, not for the first time that day, objected to the phrase '*salvo beneplacito apostolico*', the bishops capitulated. Małachowski announced that he was filled with joy, because the bishops, moved by love of the Fatherland, would offer as much as was demanded of them—that is, 20 per cent, as well as the *subsidiium charitativum*. Suchodolski served notice that his agreement did not cover the *beneplacitum*, and—crucially—asked for the addition of 'from clerical estates and all income' to the project. At last the marshal thrice asked for, and thrice received assent.<sup>39</sup> Working out the details was to prove as acrimonious, and still more time-consuming, than the decision in principle.

Saluzzo was appalled. He thought that the primate's offer might have been accepted, had the bishops insisted that it be decided on the first day. On the following days, the opposing party, 'composed of the petty nobility (*picciola nobiltà*) and the friends and dependents of Grand Hetman Branicki, directed by his nephew, Prince Sapieha', had prevailed. The clergy could still have won a vote, he believed, but the bishops feared a forced tribute and had given way. As the account of the debate has shown, the bishops had indeed capitulated in the face of an explicit threat to the *beneplacitum apostolicum*. The declamations against this formula were attributed by the nuncio partly to 'the spirit of independence, which reigns here', and partly to a suspicion that the clergy might seek to avoid the tax. Saluzzo flattered himself that he had secured the insertion of '*secundum consuetudines et Leges Ecclesia*'. All the law in fact contained was 'without prejudicing the customs and ancient rites of our Church'. The pope's consent was assumed. After praising those who had spoken on behalf of the clergy—including the '*Primaria Nobiltà*' and 'above all the optimal sovereign' (whose 'eloquent and religious speech' he enclosed), the nuncio was less complimentary in the more secret part of his despatch. The king's debts had prejudiced the chance of the episcopal offer being accepted on the first day. He also thought that the hetman's party wanted revenge on the bishops for not having supported the starostas strongly enough.

<sup>36</sup> ASC 1, ff. 172–3.

<sup>37</sup> ASC 1, ff. 173–7

<sup>38</sup> *Mowa... Cieciszowskiego biskupa kijowskiego... 16 marca 1789...*

<sup>39</sup> ASC 1, ff. 177–8. ASC 13, f. 367.

He suspected that despite 'the air of mystery and accident' everything had been arranged in advance.<sup>40</sup>

Stackelberg believed he had the explanation. Having observed that 'beautiful zeal and patriotic disinterestedness are only executed with regard to the classes of starostas and priests', he forecast 'great discontent with this sejm, and the impossibility of raising the funds necessary for half the army which they have claimed to establish'. In consequence, '20,000 unpaid national cavalymen will execute payment from landowners'. Branicki would have a means of seizing power. But the clergy could only be the 'prey of the patriots', as the ambassador put it,<sup>41</sup> if the majority of the sejm and public opinion were hostile to their cause. Saluzzo himself highlighted the part played by the 'lesser nobility' in the decision. High politics alone cannot explain it. We should dwell further on the arguments and language employed by both sides.

The chief legal argument deployed by supporters of a higher tax on the clergy was that clerical estates were akin to *starostwa*, whereas the bishops and their allies likened them to noble estates. The question had been thrashed out by the pamphleteers, and only the primate and Naruszewicz ventured into it at length.<sup>42</sup> But several speakers warned that if the status of ecclesiastical estates were questioned, noble property would also be threatened.<sup>43</sup> Appeals were also made to noble self-interest: ecclesiastical property often propped up indigent families.<sup>44</sup> Clerical estates were a '*refugium nobilitatis*'.<sup>45</sup>

Sovereignty was invoked to affirm the right of the sejm to impose whatever taxation it saw fit upon the clergy, without reference to Rome. According to Suchodolski,

The Commonwealth was and is incontrovertibly a sovereign mistress (*iedynowładną Panią*), so writing laws today, it cannot cast into doubt its own omnipotence (*wszechwładztwo*). In what concerns religion, I shall stand as a good Catholic by the rights of Rome, just as here I stand by the sovereignty (*iedynowładność*) of the deliberating Estates of the Commonwealth, not permitting any detriment to their dignity, through the expression *salvo bene placito Apostolico*.<sup>46</sup>

Others felt this to be a dangerous doctrine. Jan Krasieński, envoy for Podolia, cautioned: 'Although the Commonwealth is sovereign (*samowładna*), she should not however be a despot, in burdening the clergy with a greater tax than they could give.' His language must have stung Zieliński, who responded 'that it is not the

<sup>40</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 18 March 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 253–4. VL, ix. 73–4. Benedikt de Caché rendered the formula as '*observando observanda*' to Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz, 28 March 1789, HHStA Polen II 50, despatch 526, ff. 277–8.

<sup>41</sup> Stackelberg to Ostermann, 18 March 1789, AVPRI, F79-6-1257, despatch 18.

<sup>42</sup> *Głos Adama Naruszewicza, biskupa smoleńskiego*... 16 marca 1789...

<sup>43</sup> E.g. *Głos... Małachowskiego wojewody krakowskiego*... 12 marca 1789...; *Przymówienie się... Antoniego Czetwertyńskiego... posła braclawskiego*... 12 marca 1789...; *Głos... Jordana posła... krakowskiego*... 12 marca 1789...

<sup>44</sup> *Głos... Kościatkowskiego... posła... wilkomierskiego*... 12 marca 1789...

<sup>45</sup> *Przymówienie się... Garnysza biskupa hełmskiego podkanclerzego koronnego*... 16 marca 1789...

<sup>46</sup> *Głos... Wojciecha Suchodolskiego*... 13 marca 1789...

levying of taxes, but the imposing on the Estates of a proposition which they do not desire, that is the intention of a despot'.<sup>47</sup>

Divine wrath was rarely invoked; Cieciszowski admitted that it was 'a weak weapon in this century', though 'all the more terrible through its weakness'.<sup>48</sup> 'You have the example abroad, of how God blesses those who assail and break up ecclesiastical funds', alluded Bishop Turski to the Habsburg ogre, before adding: 'you see in Poland too that those who took silver from the former Jesuit churches have little or nothing, all that remains to them is a gnawing conscience'. He foresaw a shortage of priests, which would provoke 'the scourging hand of God'.<sup>49</sup>

Cieciszowski led those who invoked ancestral piety and valour:

There was a time, O nation of Poles, when your fathers, winning this Commonwealth by bravery and service, and tracing her boundaries between two seas, did not secure her entirety by an offering taken from the altar; instead, adorning the churches of the God of Hosts with spoils from conquered territories and nations, they won His power and protection over them. There was a time, when to grab the property devoted to the Church was a crime whose mention caused shudders.<sup>50</sup>

Some defenders of the clergy sought to exploit confessional hostility to 'sectaries' and 'heresy',<sup>51</sup> but the weapon proved two-edged. Suchorzewski countered: 'The more so because I am a good Catholic, and want to see religion well founded, I am convinced of the need for an army, from which derives the need for taxes, so that [we] should not fall into the hands of heretics'.<sup>52</sup> This was one of the hardest arguments to refute. Ludwik Zieliński, castellan of Rypin, evoked the fate of Bishops Sołtyk and Załuski in 1767, 'imprisoned as slaves in dark dungeons by the enemies of our religion'.<sup>53</sup>

A few orators denounced abuses in the Church, sometimes in discourse that engaged with the 'enlightened age'. None was more sardonic than Jezierski:

With regret we must admit, that our zeal has ceased, that among the common people it is fading, that we must fear the utter downfall of religion, because in an enlightened age, sermons rouse religion less than examples; miracles have ceased, and rarely is there anybody to imitate. Whence were so many orders established in Europe, if not from the examples of the first, adorned by holy virtues? Of their successors who enter monasteries in such numbers, few do so for piety, more do so that their habit might cover their addictions and idleness, to the detriment of the country. Correct yourselves, and you will bring us once more to our original love for you, so that we shall pay you, and not you us, for the spreading of the glory of God, but before that happens, I cannot but be convinced by the need for our defence.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>47</sup> 16 March. ASC 1, ff. 175, 177.

<sup>48</sup> *Mowa... Cieciszowskiego... 16 marca 1789...*

<sup>49</sup> *Głos... Turskiego biskupa łuckiego... 12 marca 1789...* Cf. GW, 14 March 1789.

<sup>50</sup> *Mowa... Cieciszowskiego... 16 marca 1789...*

<sup>51</sup> E.g. *Głos... Antoniego Rożnowskiego... pośła gnieźnieńskiego... 13 marca 1789...*; Franciszek Jerzmanowski (Łęczycza), *Mowa tegoż pośła... 13 marca 1789...*

<sup>52</sup> 13 March. ASC 1, f. 128.

<sup>53</sup> *Głos... Zielińskiego kasztellana rypińskiego... 16 marca 1789...*

<sup>54</sup> *Mowa... Jezierskiego, kasztellana łukowskiego... 16 marca 1789...*

Butrymowicz alleged that haggling parish priests even refused to bury the dead before receiving payment, often driving peasants into selling their last ox.<sup>55</sup>

Garnysz was angry that 'priests of the lower rank have been counted in the class of extortioners', despite the existence in every diocese of 'strong regulations, not pricing the sacraments, as stated here, but allowing alms for those *plebani* who are inadequately provided for'. The nuncio would not have approved of either the vice-chancellor's remedy for abuses, or the title accorded to the primate:

Let there be an ordering of the entire clergy, that is the common demand; under [...] the head of the Polish Church this may best be brought to pass; he gave proofs in the parts he administered, he could order the whole of it exactly; let him only have the details of citizens' wishes, he will fulfil them with the assistance of local bishops.<sup>56</sup>

The bishop of Kiev pleaded the poverty of his diocese, with only forty churches. In places services were held under canvas. The total income of the Latin clergy could not exceed 100,000 zlotys, of which about half went to the bishop, who had to maintain the cathedral, two parish churches, schools, hospitals and much else.<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, others argued that laymen's expenses justified a higher levy on the clergy. Suchodolski asked: 'so he who has a wife, children, public functions, and sejmiks, will not find any favour with us, and will be more heavily burdened than him, who, in addition to graciously conferred temporal property, has a calm life?'<sup>58</sup>

The chief rhetorical battlefield was utility. For Butrymowicz, it was obvious that the clergy should pay higher taxes than the laity. The only matter to be resolved was the distribution of the tax 'between the useful and the useless clergy'.<sup>59</sup> There was little disagreement over who were most useful: *plebani* and the teaching orders, or most useless: contemplative monks. Only the relief they should be granted was at issue. Cieciszowski maintained that the religious clergy was needed, 'because our country has few secular priests'. The orders maintained schools, hospitals, fed the poor, ransomed slaves, organized missions, and supported needy noble families. There was no place here for contemplative monasticism. The regulars, as mere auxiliaries, were implicitly dispensable if the number of secular clergy could be increased.<sup>60</sup>

Naruszewicz's poetic message to the monks was ominous, coming from a bishop:

As for those idle monasteries, the object of your offence, why are they idle? If you ask from the Gospel *Quid hic stans otiosus?* they will answer from it, *quia nemo nos vocavit*. It is the fault of the government that it does not call them to public service and allows them to decay, often in bloated dozing. Crafts and works, which are honest and not

<sup>55</sup> *Głos... Mateusza Butrymowicza... 12 marca 1789...*

<sup>56</sup> *Przymówienie się... Garnysza... 16 marca 1789...*

<sup>57</sup> *Mowa... Cieciszowskiego... 16 marca 1789...* S. Litak, *Kościół łaciński w Rzeczypospolitej około 1772 roku* (Lublin, 1996), 45, 371–2, lists the cathedral, 30 parish churches and 5 filial churches, based on a survey of 1782. The mean area of a parish was 2,039 km<sup>2</sup> compared to 60 km<sup>2</sup> in the archdiocese of Gniezno. Tax returns from 1789 show the bishop had an income of 115,000 zlotys, but only 61,051 zlotys was taxable after the deduction of expenses. Rudnicki, *Biskup Kajetan Sołtyk 1715–1788* (Cracow and Warsaw, 1906), 247.

<sup>58</sup> *Głos... Wojciecha Suchodolskiego... 13 marca 1789...*

<sup>59</sup> *Głos... Mateusza Butrymowicza... 12 marca 1789...*

<sup>60</sup> *Mowa... Cieciszowskiego biskupa kijowskiego... 16 marca 1789...*



degrading to their estate, would revive these dead deserts of the Anchorites; having become accustomed amidst the gloomy plantations of the forest satyrs to the pure daughters of memory, the liberal arts and sciences would cleanse them from the frequently severe effects of their melancholy.<sup>61</sup>

Only Kossakowski challenged the criterion of utility, and not on behalf of monastic ideals. He opposed differential taxation of supposedly useless and useful priests—would the Estates do likewise with more and less active citizens? ‘Taxes should not touch industry and work, but land and income’, he insisted, echoing Physiocratic doctrine.<sup>62</sup>

A similar incomprehension of contemplation and monastic scholarship would characterize the debates of the National Assembly in Paris in 1789–90; there, however, hostility to even the voluntary surrender of natural liberty in monastic vows, and the idea of a general confiscation of ecclesiastical property and the payment of clerical salaries gained the support of a majority of deputies.<sup>63</sup> In Warsaw, Jezierski’s project *Clerical Government* merely served to beat the clergy into accepting higher taxation.

As most of these examples demonstrate, critics of the clergy’s offer were obliged to stress their Catholicism. Enlightenment anti-clericalism could operate only indirectly, through the criterion of public utility. Most provincial envoys were easily persuaded that the clergy could pay more, should pay more, and could be compelled to pay more. But such men might be alienated by any suggestion of irreligion. In order to convince the bishops that the clerical cause would probably be lost should matters come to a vote, Suchodolski, Jezierski, Suchorzewski, and their allies had at least to hold their own in debate. The clinching argument was, as Stanisław Potocki put it, that the Estates should tax the clergy not on the basis of what the clergy could afford, but on the basis of what the Commonwealth needed.<sup>64</sup> *Salus reipublicae suprema lex esto.*

### 3. DISPUTES OVER TAX REDUCTIONS AND EXEMPTIONS: 17–20 MARCH 1789

The decision of 16 March left most details of the clergy’s contribution undecided. The debates during the following three sessions chiefly concerned the taxing of interest payments to the clergy on capital located on noble estates (*wyderkafy*); the rate of tax applicable to poorer priests, hospitals, and religious orders maintaining schools; and the redistribution of the *subsidium charitativum*. These themes became entwined, as a concession in one regard could be set against the refusal of one elsewhere. Exemptions and reductions in the ‘offering’ agreed on 16 March would reduce the yield to the treasury; freeing poorer clergy from the *subsidium charitativum* would not.

<sup>61</sup> *Głos Adama Naruszewicza . . . 16 marca 1789 . . .*

<sup>62</sup> *Głos . . . Kossakowskiego . . . 13 marca 1789 . . .*

<sup>63</sup> Beales, *Prosperity and Plunder*, 249–57.

<sup>64</sup> 16 March. ASC 1, f. 174.

The first question on 17 March was the taxing of *wyderkafy*. Cieciszowski explained that the word 'all' in the wording 'from clerical estates and all income' implied a fear that the clergy might conceal their revenues. In fact they wished only to secure them. He recalled that the provincial sessions had agreed that nobles, in paying the tax on these sums, were to deduct that amount from the total they paid to the clergy. He asked that these sums might be taxed at the same rate as the lands on which they were located, namely 10 per cent.

Wojciech Suchodolski, who had inserted the wording the previous evening, refused consent to the bishop's amendment, because the law could not now be changed. Although the Commonwealth had accepted the clergy's offering, she had 'not ceased to be an absolute mistress'. Interest from capital was clearly income, and that was subject to the law. On this occasion, however, Michał Walewski and Sapieha opposed their ally Suchodolski in the name of poorer clergymen. Unless the entire performance was choreographed, it seems that the pressures of time, practical implications, and ideological principles (in Suchodolski's case, sovereignty) rather than a high-political agenda formed in closed caucus sometimes determined politicians' public stances. Piotr Ożarowski, the castellan of Wojnicz, objected to any taxation of interest payments, because that would impede the performance of clerical duties, and so violate founders' intentions. Perhaps, as one of Stackelberg's protégés, he sought to delay a decision. Suchodolski then agreed to the taxing of *wyderkafy* at 10 per cent, in order to save time.<sup>65</sup> Yet this concession did not settle the matter.

The bishop of Wilno torpedoed agreement, refusing to accept the word 'all' unless forced by a majority vote. Massalski exclaimed: 'We are all inhabitants of one Fatherland, we are sons of the same mother, we should receive the same favours and bear the same burdens. And what will happen, when a ruined part of the clergy raises its tears to God, to a just God, and the avenger of the wrongs of the oppressed?' Suchorzewski would not permit the word 'all' to be erased. Kossakowski would not permit it to be included. Tax should be levied on properties, not persons. The word 'all' would even include alms. The marshal then suggested 'all permanent and sure income', which was agreed.<sup>66</sup>

The session of 17 March ended with no decision having been reached on the rate of tax to be paid on *wyderkafy*. The sejm did not return to the question, leaving an ambiguous law to be implemented inconsistently across the Commonwealth. Massalski, Kossakowski, and Ożarowski were responsible for the loss of Cieciszowski's amendment, which would have reduced the taxation of such payments to the noble rate, and ensured that clergymen were not taxed on income which they had not in fact received. As Stackelberg's favourites, this trio had a high-political interest in fomenting clerical discontent. But Massalski may have genuinely seen the question as a matter of principle and lost his temper, and Kossakowski may have prized Physiocratic doctrine above all else.

<sup>65</sup> ASC 1, ff. 196–9.

<sup>66</sup> ASC 1, ff. 201–7.

The main point to be decided on Thursday 19 March was whether poorer *plebani* should be exempted from the tax or pay at the noble rate. At one extreme, Symeon Szydłowski, the castellan of Żarnów, suggested exempting parish priests with less than 3,000 złotys from the new tax. At the other, Suchodolski protested that poor nobles with families on 500 złotys a year would also find defenders. Stanisław Potocki couched the case for the complete exemption of poorer priests with a net revenue of less than 1,000 złotys, or with a gross income of 2,000 złotys in terms of social utility. Unlike poor noblemen, *plebani* were responsible to their fellow citizens.

By this burdening of the poor clergy, we would wrong not only *plebani*, but the entire populace, because a *pleban*, who has not enough to meet his needs, must have recourse to means unbecoming to his estate, and defiling his priestly character, and thereby becomes less respected by the people consigned to him. I see with my own eyes the example of the Ruthenian *popi*, who, farming the land with their own hands, scarcely differ from peasants, and receive little respect or obedience from them.<sup>67</sup>

Małachowski had the project amended again, so that parish priests with less than 2,000 złotys should pay at the noble rate, but an argument erupted over whether they should pay the *subsidiium charitativum* at all. Sapieha appealed for pity on the Fatherland. Let the taxes be agreed now, he urged, and the grievance of the *subsidiium charitativum* could be redressed later. *Plebani* with less than 2,000 złotys could pay at the noble rate. The secretary again read the point and it was agreed.<sup>68</sup> But only after extended disputes and a further harangue from Sapieha, late on 20 March, did the sejm agree to exempt clergy with *cura animarum* but less than 500 złotys, as well as diocesan seminaries and hospitals, from the tax, and to free *plebani* of the Latin rite with less than 1,000 złotys from the *subsidiium charitativum*.<sup>69</sup>

The next question, raised on 19 March, was whether religious houses that ran schools should pay tax at the noble rate or be exempt. Envoys argued over which orders should benefit.<sup>70</sup> Julian Niemcewicz twice broke the deadlock with wisecracks. Late on 19 March he proposed that 'monasteries which open schools should especially instill in their pupils that time is the most valuable of things, particularly in public deliberations'. The clause reducing the rate for all houses that taught was then accepted.<sup>71</sup> The following day, when some objected to the proposal to tax all religious houses with less than 2,000 złotys a year at the noble rate, he quipped: 'it seems that we are gathered here not to hold council (*radzić*), but to hold it up (*wadzić*)'. Małachowski again asked for agreement, and no dissenting voice was heard.<sup>72</sup>

#### 4. BAITING THE PRIMATE: 19, 23, AND 24 MARCH 1789

On Monday 23 March Małachowski reported on the conference between the marshals, the constitutional deputation, and the bishops on the so-called Galician sums. These had been returned to Poland by the Austrian court in return for

<sup>67</sup> ASC 1, ff. 215–20.

<sup>70</sup> ASC 1, ff. 222–8.

<sup>68</sup> ASC 1, ff. 220–1.

<sup>71</sup> ASC 1, ff. 228–30.

<sup>69</sup> ASC 1, ff. 232–40.

<sup>72</sup> ASC 1, ff. 233–5.

recognition of the division of the diocese of Cracow.<sup>73</sup> The previous Thursday the primate had given account of the Vienna Convention of 1785, whereupon Ku-blicki had again called for an investigation of the fate of the Commonwealth's property, and Józef Mierzejewski, envoy for Podolia, had submitted a project for the Commonwealth to take over all the properties of the Galician clergy.<sup>74</sup>

The primate's speech had probably been drafted well in advance.<sup>75</sup> Poniatowski stated that he had consented to the division of the diocese only when the pope could no longer resist the emperor's pressure. He had, however, secured concessions: no more income was to go to the Galician clergy from Poland. Because this income was less than the Galician revenues lost by the Polish clergy following the partition, the Austrian side would also pay a one-off sum of 400,000 zlotys. He had consigned the administration of the recovered properties to reliable persons, and instigated searches for information about the other sums and properties involved. The bishops of Łuck and Kamieniec were his witnesses. (Both Turski and Krasieński were popular 'patriots'.) The primate stated that he had distributed funds '*pro bono publico*'—such as 400,000 zlotys for Cracow University and an endowment for the hospital of St Lazarus. He estimated the remaining funds returned via the Vienna Convention at almost 2 million zlotys; the Commonwealth was welcome to use them for needs such as the fortress of Kamieniec (thereby breaching the principle that ecclesiastical property served ecclesiastical ends). He invited the sejm to elect commissioners to confer with the bishops and report back on the funds involved.<sup>76</sup>

On 23 March Małachowski endorsed the primate's account, and confirmed that the remaining sums were at the disposition of the Estates. Various bishops of both rites had pleaded the needs of their dioceses. The marshal asked the sejm to allow the Church a portion of the recovered property, and to act in consultation with the clergy, rather than arbitrarily; 'otherwise, leaving its ministers in a miserable state, we should receive not Divine blessing, but vengeance from the heavens. I do not say this in the spirit of bigotry, for I have none in me, but I speak on the strength of meeting the duties of religion and citizenship.'<sup>77</sup> But this plea and warning failed to avert a well-prepared 'din' over the primate's arrangements.<sup>78</sup> The likes of Jezierski and Suchodolski seized the opportunity to drag Poniatowski through the mire.<sup>79</sup> For two days they kept up the attack. Suchodolski spoke ten times on 23 March alone.

Jezierski began ironically: 'this patriot, worthy of imitation, wants to root out the coarse relics of the primeval Sarmatians through the enlightenment of the country'. The primate, he said, wanted to raise Cracow Academy to the level of the Sorbonne, while his charitable heart wanted to enrich the Cracow hospital. His

<sup>73</sup> See above, 32–33.

<sup>74</sup> ASC 1, f. 215.

<sup>75</sup> *Mowa . . . Prymasa . . . 19. marca roku 1789 . . .* Two drafts, showing stylistic variations from the published speech, are in AAG ACap. B84, ff. 322–9 and 332–3.

<sup>76</sup> ASC 1, f. 215.

<sup>77</sup> ASC 1, ff. 250–1.

<sup>78</sup> Benedykt Hulewicz to Szczęśny Potocki, 22 March 1789, BCz. 3471, p. 475.

<sup>79</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 25 March 1789, ASV ANV 66, f. 256.

diocese was so well governed that 'every *pleban* does what he ought to do'. The primate now had the opportunity to show similar charity to the Commonwealth. The castellan of Łuków claimed to be in favour of hospitals and 'modest education, but my convictions battle with high learning, when I see, that it [...] wrote a different religion for the dissidents, and multiplied atheists'. He followed this display, real or feigned, of anti-intellectual prejudice by stating that hospitals and learning could wait for their funds until two abbeys fell vacant.<sup>80</sup>

Then it was Suchodolski's turn. The Commonwealth should exhaust all other sources, before burdening its citizens with the expense of the army. Yet funds had been hidden, he alleged. Were the post-Jesuit sums and estates not sufficient for education? All would be lost if the country was not secure. Education would only increase Poland's suffering if a monarchical government used it to bend the young to obedience. The primate had desired the public good, but the needs of the army were overwhelming. The envoy for Chełm asked for a vote on the fate of all the sums 'from beyond the cordon'.<sup>81</sup>

The arguments were mainly couched in terms of the *bonum publicum*. When Suchodolski declaimed on the superiority of the public interest (the army) to particular interests (of the clergy), others protested against calling education a particular, rather than a public interest, and defended the public utility of the arrangements. For example Walerian Stroynowski, envoy for Volhynia, pointed out the usefulness of the training and practice provided by the hospital to army surgeons. Suchodolski also disputed the claim that the former property of the Galician clergy was clerical property—it should not be 'offered' to the Commonwealth, but returned to her as the rightful owner.<sup>82</sup>

Kossakowski, as so often, was the most outspoken: 'whosoever assails the right of property, simply because he can, [...] must be called a tyrant'.<sup>83</sup> Stanisław Potocki found himself obliged to support the bishop of Livonia's contention that the property did not belong to the Commonwealth. 'Because the clergy has lost three quarters, should the fourth quarter be taken from it by violence?' he asked. In applying 400,000 zlotys to the academy the primate had not foreseen the change in the Commonwealth's needs, but would that sum furnish an army? Would its loss not destroy the academy? Potocki also used the argument of urgency: winter was passing, and with it their hopes, as the onset of spring found them naked.<sup>84</sup>

Battle lines were also drawn over whether Galician capital for parish churches in Poland should be taken by the treasury. One envoy wanted to secure those parish churches, prebends, and altars in the Commonwealth which formerly depended on priests and funds from Galician monasteries. This provoked a demand that all such funds be specified.<sup>85</sup> By 24 March Sapieha could scarcely disguise his frustration

<sup>80</sup> *Mowa... Jezierskiego, kasztelana łukowskiego... 24 [sic—23] marca 1789....*

<sup>81</sup> *Mowa... Woyciecha Suchodolskiego... pośta chełmskiego... 23. marca 1789....*

<sup>82</sup> 23 March. ASC 1, ff. 254–61.

<sup>83</sup> *Głos... Kossakowskiego biskupa inflanckiego... 23... marca 1789....*

<sup>84</sup> 23 March. ASC 1, ff. 262–3.

<sup>85</sup> *Przymówienie się... Rożnowskiego... pośta... gnieźnińskiego... 24... marca r. 1789. ASC 1, ff. 288–91.*

with Małachowski, whose 'delicacy' and 'complaisance' permitted endless procedural disputes, especially over what could or could not form a voting proposition. Suchorzewski pointed to a terrible example (in Sweden) of the punishment by slavery of a time-wasting 'knightly Estate'. He agreed that conditions could be decided later, only to insist on his own being inserted first.<sup>86</sup> At last the secretary read the entire project taking the Galician sums recovered by the Vienna Convention for the treasury, except for 'the funds of parish churches, altars, and prebends in Poland, secured by foundations and old laws'. A weary cry of '*zgoda*' ('agreed') was heard three times.<sup>87</sup>

As diplomatic observers noted, Suchodolski and Jezierski failed to divert the primate's endowments to the army. They principally sought to humiliate Poniatowski, because the actual sums granted to Cracow University and the hospital of St Lazarus were not in themselves significant when estimates of the total wealth released by the Vienna Convention varied between 2 and 6 million zlotys.<sup>88</sup> Parishes were safeguarded, but no provision was made for the Latin dioceses of Chełm, Kiev, and Kamieniec, or the Uniate bishoprics of Chełm and Kamieniec. With the bishopric of Cracow the object of manoeuvring behind the scenes, this was always unlikely.

The clergy's 'offering' was now complete. They would pay 20 per cent on all income from lands, capital, and tithes, in addition to the *subsidiium charitativum*. Parish priests with less than 2,000 zlotys a year, and monasteries maintaining schools approved by the Educational Commission would pay at the noble rate—expected to be 10 per cent. The poorest clergy with cures of souls, as well as hospitals and seminaries, were freed from tax altogether. The clergy was to reallocate the *subsidiium charitativum* proportionately. Only *plebani* of the Latin rite with less than 1,000 zlotys were exempted from the *subsidiium charitativum*, but the Uniate bishops were forbidden to collect the *cathedraticum*.<sup>89</sup> The way was clear to proceed with the tax on noble lands.

Saluzzo drew Boncompagni's attention to the concessions made to the poorer clergy, and pronounced himself 'fairly content that poor Latin parish priests would be freed from the *subsidiium charitativum*'. He also thought that a new survey would prevent the regular clergy from being treated unfairly. 'However, the good idea they had of greatly raising up the Ruthenian parish priests, who are truly in the greatest misery, has occasioned a new injury to the rights of the Church'—the abolition of the *cathedraticum*. The nuncio was 'infinitely displeased' that bishops who contravened this law would be called before secular courts. He could not feel secure while the sejm lasted.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>86</sup> ASC 1, ff. 291–6.

<sup>87</sup> ASC 1, ff. 296–301. ASC 13, f. 369.

<sup>88</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 28 March 1789, HHStA Polen II 50, despatch 526, f. 278. Bonneau to Montmorin, 28 March 1789, AMAE CP Pologne 316, despatch 16, f. 161.

<sup>89</sup> VL, ix. 73–4.

<sup>90</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 25 March 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 254–7.

## 5. CATHARSIS AND CONTROVERSY: THE 'PERPETUAL OFFERING' AND THE PEASANTS

By the session of 26 March the moral pressure to vote taxation on behalf of the nobility was overwhelming. Tadeusz Matuszewicz, envoy for Brześć Litewski, justified his amendment to the proposed 10 per cent tax on noble lands in rhetoric which epitomized the republican cult of sovereignty:

This day, which would be recalled with a lament by a slave living under a despot, this day will remain a joyful one in our memories, because it will raise us up out of slavery and give us back to ourselves. Where the property of the citizen is the property of the monarch, there, I say, it is disagreeable to bear the burden of a tax. But with us, where we are ourselves, and what we possess is ours, giving a part of our property for the Fatherland becomes pleasant, because it maintains our happiness, because we give it as free men without coercion [...] I have altered neither the intention nor the content of the project, in this amendment which I shall read, only words proper to an absolute government, and in their place I have put expressions signifying the liberty of the nation and love of the Fatherland; and so I read my amendment to the project: *Offering of the Knightly Estate*.

As with many other laws of the Revolution, this text sought to persuade provincial opinion:

So many kinds of disasters and losses, which our Fatherland has suffered, suffice to make us aware that in economizing on the general defence of the country, we endanger ourselves and all that is ours, and stirred by the example of our ancestors, placing love of the Fatherland over love of ourselves, we unanimously resolve that all hereditary landed estates will pay a tenth part of their revenues to the public treasury, to support the defence of the country.

The chamber accepted the amendment with 'a great cry'. Many envoys and senators pressed their own amendments, but for once Małachowski acted decisively and had the project read out with only one further change: the insertion of 'permanent and sure' before 'revenues', to match the condition in the clergy's offering. The diary records that 'all anticipated the marshal's question with a joyful shout of agreement, which, thrice repeated, filled the numerous spectators, sharing the zeal and enthusiasm of the sejm, with the sweetest feelings, and this sight of universal joy became for the envoys and senators their approbatory reward'.

Małachowski congratulated the king, and the marshals and senators lined up to kiss the royal hand.<sup>91</sup> Stanisław August found the tears for the occasion. He told his 'beloved Estates': 'first to God I give thanks, that He chose to move our minds to such a glorious deed, that He ordained favourable circumstances, which so conveniently permit our wishes to be realized, and their beneficial effects to be felt. [...] Let this moment be the beginning of unity, love, and mutual trust.' The hope was premature, but the catharsis, if temporary, was also genuine. Tears flowed all

<sup>91</sup> ASC 1, ff. 307–17. VL, ix. 73–4.

round.<sup>92</sup> After a speech from Sapieha, the envoys also kissed the king's hand, and the session was adjourned.<sup>93</sup>

As the king noted, the 'shaming of those at home and abroad who insultingly alleged that the Poles would never agree to an hereditary offering' was an express motive of the unanimous decision.<sup>94</sup> Franz August Essen believed that 'Poland should retake its place in the senate of peoples.' It was reported that only now were people in Vienna starting to believe the army would be augmented. Stackelberg heaped irony on the emotional scenes in the chamber in order to hide his discomfort. But the diplomatic corps was in agreement that everything depended on how the decision was implemented.<sup>95</sup> Saluzzo, predictably, was less impressed.<sup>96</sup>

The following morning, 27 March, Małachowski invoked the 'unlimited goodness' of the 'God of Hosts' in order to underline both the scale of the achievement and the need to implement it effectively. He was also counting on a contribution from the throne.<sup>97</sup> Jezierski inimitably told the king: 'Abandon for a few days your usual pity on some people in your cabinet, and stand up here manfully in the country's hour of need.' He also called on the clergy to 'give up incomes that are unnecessary and useless to the glory of God, give up excessive silver and bells, and you can then expect love and gratitude from the nation, and tranquillity for yourselves'. The castellan of Łuków also wanted to put the regulars under episcopal authority, and for no monies to go abroad. Again, he asked for his project, *Clerical Government*, to be read out.<sup>98</sup> But he misjudged the mood of the chamber.

Suchorzewski, himself prone to notice both motes and beams in clerical eyes, reproved the castellan for showing disrespect for religion.<sup>99</sup> Saluzzo was able to reassure Boncompagni that Jezierski was 'known to all as an extravagant man' and that nobody listened to him.<sup>100</sup> Antoni Rożnowski, envoy for Gniezno, introduced another theme: referring to disquiets in the Ukraine, he urged that as Providence alone had distinguished nobles from peasants, the latter should not be overburdened with taxes and driven to desperation. He wanted to specify punishments for lords who transferred taxes to their peasants, and his call was endorsed by two other envoys.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>92</sup> ASC 1, f. 302. Ignacy Potocki to Elie Aloy, 28 March 1789, APP 277, ff. 10–11. Aubert to Montmorin, 28 March 1789, CP Pologne 316, despatch 13, f. 157. Bonneau to Montmorin, 28 March 1789, CP Pologne 316, despatch 17, ff. 164–5.

<sup>93</sup> ASC 1, ff. 317–18. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 389.

<sup>94</sup> SA to Deboli, 28 March 1789, ZP 414, f. 150.

<sup>95</sup> Essen to Stutterheim, 28 March 1789, SHStA loc. 3570, vol. XXVIa, despatch 14, ff. 175–6. Franciszek Woyna to the Deputation for Foreign Affairs, Vienna, 8 April 1789, ZP 406, part XIV, f. 1. Stackelberg to Ostermann, 28 March 1789, AVPRI F79-6-1257. Daniel Hailes to the marquis of Camarthen, 27 March, 8 April 1789, NA FO 62/2, ff. 409, 421. Aubert to Montmorin, 28 March 1789, CP Pologne 316, despatch 13, ff. 157–8.

<sup>96</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 28 March 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 50–1.

<sup>97</sup> ASC 1, f. 359.

<sup>98</sup> *Mowa... Jezierskiego, kasztelana łukowskiego... 27 marca 1789...*

<sup>99</sup> ASC 1, f. 339.

<sup>100</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 1 April 1789, ASV ANV 66, f. 258.

<sup>101</sup> *Głos... Rożnowskiego... posła gnieźnieńskiego... 27. marca...* Michał Czacki (Czernihów) and Adam Czartoryski (Lublin), 27 March 1789: ASC 1, ff. 339–40.



The king thanked 'patriotic hearts' for the previous day's offering and sacrificed the alcohol excise revenue from his Lithuanian domain lands. This was less than some had demanded, but it was nevertheless accepted with a threefold cry of thanks, and the senate, ministry and envoys came forward to kiss the royal hand. The king responded: 'and I ask on behalf of the peasants'.<sup>102</sup>

The ensuing debate, continuing on 30 March, reveals how arguments both for and against Rożnowski's proposal were couched in Enlightenment discourse.<sup>103</sup> The sharpest division was between those who warned that the innocent might be slandered, and even that the 'unenlightened' peasants could be exploited to introduce absolutism,<sup>104</sup> and those who demanded justice before enlightenment:

So we think that our serfs are not yet sufficiently enlightened to live under the law, but is there a good reason for only the enlightened man to have protection and justice, and to refuse them to the simple man? Who does not know that this darkness is not from nature, but is mostly rather from the slavery in which we wish to keep our serfs? [...] We revel in a republican government, but we try to keep the peasants under our despotism; defending our own prerogatives, we refuse them justice.

But the orator was Kossakowski. Perhaps he could be so outspoken, precisely because he was beyond the political pale. The bishop of Livonia probably outraged 'old' republicans, while embarrassing the enlightened Prussophiles. It is difficult to judge whether he sought to delay decisions. But he consistently denounced the oppression of the peasants.<sup>105</sup>

Niemcewicz wanted a law providing for denunciations of lords 'throwing' taxes onto the peasants to be read out from pulpits and nailed to church doors. But he had to defend himself from accusations that, 'full of foreign maxims', he wished to free the serfs. He did indeed wish for their freedom, but he knew that the 'dark populace' needed time to become accustomed to the light. This proposal was not to emancipate the serfs, but to shield them.<sup>106</sup> Stanisław August urged that the proposed law be delayed no longer, for the happiness of the country depended on the happiness of 'the most numerous part of the nation'.<sup>107</sup> Implicitly, the king lent support to a redefinition of the nation.

Nevertheless, Adam Czartoryski conceded the contest, counselling that such an important law should not be made in haste, and agreeing that 'the peasant must first be enlightened, before he is made free, so that he would not abuse that privilege'. It was agreed that the marshals would issue a proclamation, without specifying penalties for those who transferred the tax, or rewards for informers.<sup>108</sup> Encumbered by no such nastiness, the law *Perpetual Offering of the Provinces of the*

<sup>102</sup> ASC 1, ff. 322–3, 341–3. VL, ix. 72.

<sup>103</sup> ASC 1, ff. 343–58. SA to Deboli, 28 March 1789, ZP 414, ff. 150–1.

<sup>104</sup> *Głos... Michała Zaleskiego posła... trockiego... 30. marca r. 1789...; Głos... Weyssenhoffa posła inflantskiego... 30. marca r. 1789...; Mowa... Woyciecha Suchodolskiego... 30. marca 1789...*

<sup>105</sup> *Głos... Kossakowskiego biskupa inflantskiego... 30 mca marca...*

<sup>106</sup> *Mowa... Juliana Ursyna Niemcewicza posła inflantskiego... 30. marca 1789...*

<sup>107</sup> ASC 1, ff. 360–1.

<sup>108</sup> ASC 1, ff. 380–3.

*Two Nations, for the Increase in Country's Forces*, was entered in the records of the Warsaw chancery on 6 April 1789.<sup>109</sup>

## 6. IMPLEMENTATION

The sejm now considered the apportioning of the *Perpetual Offering*. These frequently ill-tempered debates lasted until 25 May 1789. They were often interrupted by rumours that a peasant rebellion, incited by Potemkin's 'emissaries', was about to engulf the Ukraine, Volhynia, Podolia, and parts of Lithuania. The expected massacre did not come to pass. But the panic highlighted the unstable confessional situation in the Ruthenian lands as nothing else could have done. The prospect of a revolt also brought to the fore the role expected of clergymen (of all rites and Churches) in maintaining social stability. Indeed, the clergy's role as 'enlighteners' of the peasants often came down to spelling out the eternal, infernal consequences of rebellion. The discovery of the shocking 'unenlightenment' of both pastors and flocks in Ruthenia led to a wide-ranging public discussion, and ultimately to efforts to raise standards, especially among the Uniate parish clergy. The taxation of Protestant and Orthodox clergymen and the equalization of the Uniate bishoprics were discussed in this charged atmosphere in June and July 1789. By the time that a wider reform of the Uniate clergy was attempted in July 1790, a somewhat greater awareness of Ruthenia's problems was apparent among Latin-rite nobles.<sup>110</sup>

Let us return to the *Perpetual Offering*. The law appointed fifteen lay commissioners, with an additional clergyman, designated by the local bishop, in each of 120 palatinates, districts, and counties, to fix the value of produce and serf labour. It instructed all landowners to present a table of their revenue to the commissioners under oath. Tithes as well as *wyderkafy* were to be deducted from nobles' taxable income, and counted as part of the clergy's revenue.<sup>111</sup> The commissioners would meet on 1 July 1789, establish a tariff by the end of September, and collect the first instalment by the end of October. They were to establish a rota, so that six would attend each session, including the clergyman, but the quorum was five, and the laymen could proceed if the clergyman did not attend. A layman would always preside. The law named 1,800 commissioners, a significant proportion of the Commonwealth's chamberlains, judges, scribes, and such like, as well as many sons of senators. Pillars of communities became responsible for funding the Commonwealth's defence.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>109</sup> VL, ix. 73–4.

<sup>110</sup> See R. Butterwick, 'Deconfessionalization? The Policy of the Polish Revolution towards Ruthenia, 1788–1792', *Central Europe*, 6 (2008), 91–121, with references to the literature and sources.

<sup>111</sup> This meant that it would be necessary for the nobleman to know the clergyman's income, so that he knew whether to deduct 10 or 20 per cent in tax, as Revd Grzegorz Piramowicz observed to Kołłataj on 28 May 1789, BJ 5524, vol. i, fasc. 1, f. 72.

<sup>112</sup> VL, ix. 77–94. Karbownik, *Obciążenia stanu duchownego*, 253.

Although the ‘offering’ was, in most respects, a tax, the name was partly borne out by the reliance on consciences. Perhaps this was why the ‘offering’ of a tenth and a fifth produced less revenue than expected. The first payments, reported to the sejm in September 1789, reached 6.3 million złotys in the Crown and 1.2 million in Lithuania. Kalinka, following Staszic, accused the szlachta of perjuring themselves. Tadeusz Korzon argued that uncertainty over what to count as taxable income in many parts of the Commonwealth accounted for almost the entire shortfall.<sup>113</sup> Both historians had a point. Not every noble was a paragon of honesty; nor indeed was every clergyman. The difficulties in the assessment emerge when we focus on the clergy.

On 15 June 1789 Michał Poniatowski nominated senior clergymen to the sixteen commissions that covered the archdiocese of Gniezno. Other bishops followed suit, and on 1 July the commissioners met across the Commonwealth. Landholders came to the chief towns of each district or county to declare on oath their income for the previous three years. The sources counted varied, as did the reckonings of their value. They generally included sales of produce, tithes, rents, and serf labour services. In some places at least, the specificity of ecclesiastical property was acknowledged. In the Kalisz district, a lower price of grain was applied to parish priests, because they had to use hired hands, rather than serf labour, to harvest it.<sup>114</sup>

Stole fees were not ‘permanent and sure’, and so were not taxable. Payments to *wikariusze* and organists, as well as other ‘ecclesiastical expenses’ were generally set against income. But the Crown Treasury Commission ruled that the *subsidiium charitativum* was paid by the population of ecclesiastical estates, and could not be deducted from income. Monastic parishes which were individually worth less than 1,000 złotys annually were generally taxed at 20 per cent, as the income of the monastery as a whole was counted. Not all commissions exempted clergymen with *cura animarum* but less than 500 złotys per annum. In response to various complaints, the marshals issued a proclamation that clerical fellow citizens were to be treated equally with the szlachta in everything except for the rate of tax itself.<sup>115</sup>

Having decided how the *Perpetual Offering* would be apportioned, the sejm sought further sources of revenue—from the former Jesuit properties, the Knights of Malta, the monastery and fortress of Częstochowa, and from Protestant and Orthodox clergy. The Estates rejected the suggestion that ‘disloyal’ Orthodox clergymen should pay at a higher rate than Catholics or Protestants, and so all were taxed at 20 per cent.<sup>116</sup> On 20 June the sejm was adjourned until 13 July,

<sup>113</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 432–5. Staszic, *Przestrogi dla Polski*, in id., *Pisma społeczne i filozoficzne*, i. 325–8. Korzon, *Wewnętrzne dzieje* (n. 1 above), iii. 236–45.

<sup>114</sup> See Karbownik, *Obciążenia stanu duchownego*, 253–63, for this and the next paragraph.

<sup>115</sup> S. Małachowski and K. N. Sapieha, *Uniwersał do Prześw. Kommissyów wojewodztw, ziem i powiatow Obojga Narodow z rekwiizycją przesłania cen pańszczyzny, zboża, innych danin oraz przełożeniem skarg w niektórych punktach przeznaczonego duchowieństwa* (Warsaw, 25 July 1789).

<sup>116</sup> Possessors of ex-Jesuit estates were ordered to pay the *superata*—the difference between their actual and the nominal value—and the offering of 10 per cent. VL, ix. 95. Maltese commanderies were

amidst controversy over the king's right to adjourn sessions without the express agreement of the Estates. As usual, the king gave way. One reason for the break was to allow envoys to return home to conclude the contracts traditionally exchanged at midsummer, another was to allow the king to recover his health. For some time the chamber had been emptying, as the expense of Warsaw took its toll.<sup>117</sup> During the recess, the long-running intrigues concerning the bishopric of Cracow reached their *dénouement*.

to pay 20 per cent of their income, except for those deriving from the former Ostróg entail, which were to pay 30 per cent. VL, ix. 96. See R. Butterwick, 'Sprawa Zakonu Maltańskiego w początkach Sejmu Czteroletniego', *Przegląd Nauk Historycznych*, 5/1 (2006), 277–90. The question of two *starostwa* in the possession of the Paulines of Częstochowa was referred to the Crown Treasury and Military Commissions. VL, ix. 101. Protestant and Orthodox clergy: VL, ix. 99.

<sup>117</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 399–400.

## The secularization of the bishopric of Cracow

During the first nine months of the sejm, a web of ‘intrigues and simonies’ was spun around the bishopric of Cracow.<sup>1</sup> Michał Poniatowski wished to retain at least the administration of the bishopric, while the opposition was determined to deny it to him. The see became an object of rivalry between Russian and Prussian diplomats, and the web was tangled by the aspirants for promotion. The *dénouement* came on 17 July 1789, when the sejm took the estates of the bishopric for the treasury, and reduced the annual income of the future bishop to 100,000 złotych. A week later the sejm agreed a law, titled *Fund for the Army*, which extended the principle to the other bishoprics of both Catholic rites, as they became vacant. A redrawing of diocesan boundaries would enable equal episcopal salaries to be paid for equal episcopal work. As with the question of taxation, so the debates over *Fund for the Army* reveal contemporary expectations of the clergy and the role of noble republican rhetoric in effecting decisions. At one point the king wrote of ‘how intrigue and enthusiasm really govern everything’, or in academic parlance, how high politics and the emotive effects of public discourse combine to produce political outcomes.<sup>2</sup> The secularization of the bishopric of Cracow not only threatened a schism between the Commonwealth and the Holy See, it also contributed to the political realignment that ended the first phase of the Polish Revolution.

### 1. PATRIMONIUM REIPUBLICAE?

Although the idea of using the revenues of the bishopric of Cracow for the army had been endorsed by at least two sejms in August 1788, the question remained confined to rumours, provincial sessions, and pamphlets until 4 December, when Jacek Jezierski opined that 100,000 złotych a year would suffice for the next bishop of Cracow. However, nobody seems to have reacted to this point, probably because it came in the course of a speech inviting the king to indulge in ‘pastimes pleasant to him’ while the sejm deliberated without him. This would have ended the king’s

<sup>1</sup> The phrase is Saluzzo’s. See below, n. 107. For a more detailed account, see R. Butterwick, “Intrighi e simonie” wokół biskupstwa krakowskiego w 1789 roku’, *KH*, 111/3 (2004), 103–26.

<sup>2</sup> See below, n. 163.

status as a constituent Estate of the sejm.<sup>3</sup> When Stanisław Kublicki suggested taking the revenues on 9 December, the idea gained momentum. Saluzzo blamed the projects both on animosity against the primate and on 'the fanaticism for having an army'.<sup>4</sup> In the first week of 1789, the seizure of the bishopric's revenues was being discussed at 'private conferences', and the nuncio considered it the principal threat to the Church 'in the present enthusiasm of wanting to reform everything'.<sup>5</sup>

On 8 January 1789 Wojciech Suchodolski submitted a project entitled *Fund for the Army*, which a little later was read out. He made no explicit mention of the bishopric in his speech, but he did say that while he was 'not among those prejudiced Poles of old, who [believed] that a nobleman should not pay tax', he was obliged by his instruction to seek 'such funds, which could, even in part, spare the noble estate, and instead place the burden where nobody will be injured, and which will bring every one of us discernible relief'.<sup>6</sup> His project described the bishopric of Cracow as the '*Patrimonium Reipublicae*'. The Crown Treasury Commission would auction leases on the properties, and after paying the future bishop an annual salary of 100,000 zlotys, would apply the remainder of the revenue to the army.<sup>7</sup>

The nuncio asked the primate to abandon his pursuit of the bishopric of Cracow. 'Conferring the bishopric on a worthy person, but one accepted by the predominant party' was, Saluzzo believed, the only way of saving it. Fortunately, Suchodolski's project had gone *ad deliberandum* (that is, submitted to the consideration of envoys and senators, before being decided) and had not aroused any immediate reaction. The following day Stanisław August had defended the Church's rights and properties, prompting the bishops to kiss his hand. The king counted on winning nuncial and papal gratitude, which he achieved.<sup>8</sup>

On 9 January, all but one of the bishops present in Warsaw assembled at the primate's palace. In addition to asking his colleagues for ideas on how to moderate the taxes to be levied on the clergy, Poniatowski also requested their thoughts on Suchodolski's project. Józef Rybiński of Cujavia unhelpfully (but not unjustly) remarked that if the bishopric had 'been given to someone before the sejm, there would be no reason now for casting an eye on it, or for whetting the appetite to destroy it'. No constructive contributions were forthcoming until Ignacy Massalski of Wilno suggested that each bishop prepare arguments in defence of the rights of the clergy. Poniatowski agreed, and asked everyone to use

<sup>3</sup> *Dziaryusz 1788*, ii.2. 171–2.

<sup>4</sup> *Dziaryusz 1788*, ii.2. 363. Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 10 December 1788, ASV ANV 66, f. 239.

<sup>5</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 7 January 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 242–3.

<sup>6</sup> *Dziaryusz 1788*, ii.1. 21–2, 32. The king saw this in the context of previous calls for the 'impoverishment of the entire clergy'. SA to Deboli, 10 January 1789, ZP 414, ff. 18–19.

<sup>7</sup> *Fundusz dla wojska*, in *Dziaryusz Seymu 1788*, ii.1. 22.

<sup>8</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 11 January 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 243–4. *Dziaryusz 1788*, ii.1. 37–40. SA to Ghigiotti, 9 January 1789, AGHig. 514a, vol. ii, f. 235. Saluzzo to Ghigiotti, 9 January 1789 and 9 January 1789 (evening), AGHig. 646a, ff. 12, 14–5. Boncompagni to Saluzzo, 31 January 1789, ASV ANV 52, ff. 13–14.

their credit and influence. No doubt he realised how little credit and influence of his own remained.<sup>9</sup>

The arguments formulated to defend the bishopric of Cracow include some preserved in the same set of documents. Bishoprics could only be created or divided with the prior agreement of the pope. Transferring the revenues and the administration of the estates to a lay magistrature would also violate the rights of the Holy See, the privileges of the Church, and the right of property, assured by the act of confederation.<sup>10</sup>

During the next few sessions of the sejm, the bishops of Livonia and Płock defended ecclesiastical property in general terms. Even Jezierski, who in his speech of 13 January called for the abolition of chapters and abbeys, laid no claim to the bishops' revenues beyond what they should pay in tax.<sup>11</sup> However, Marcin Ledóchowski, envoy for Wizna, cited his instruction in demanding that additional revenue first be sought from the clergy. Surely, he exclaimed, an income of 100,000 złotys sufficed to maintain episcopal dignity. The nuncio was still more alarmed by the project which Ledóchowski submitted for transferring to the jurisdiction of the primate or bishops those cases which were heard (and paid for) in Rome.<sup>12</sup> On 21 January Jan Szymanowski, envoy for Czersk, asked that the treasury administer the revenues of the bishopric of Cracow for as long as was necessary.<sup>13</sup> Six days later Kublicki, listing potential sources of revenue, mentioned the bishopric of Cracow, with its mineral deposits (*fossilia*).<sup>14</sup> For the moment, however, attention focused on the Permanent Council.

## 2. THE KING'S PREDICAMENT: BETWEEN LUCCHESINI AND STACKELBERG

The Permanent Council had presented the king with three candidates for each vacancy in the senate. Stanisław August maintained that its abolition on 19 January 1789 returned the right of nominating senators to the king alone. He was aware that some of his opponents contested the claim and were waiting to spring a trap. 'From the day of the council's abolition, energetic attempts have begun from all sides to obtain the vacancies, of which the bishopric of Cracow is the most important,' he wrote to Deboli, adding that he was in no hurry to distribute them. If he did so too hastily, Stackelberg might question the sincerity of his defence of the council. If he agreed to the opposition's demands, 'my friends,

<sup>9</sup> AAG ACap. B84, ff. 157–62.

<sup>10</sup> 'Uwagi na Projekt do Konstytucji względem rozrządzenia Intratami na Woysko Biskupstwa Krakowskiego', AAG ACap. B84, f. 339.

<sup>11</sup> J. K. Kossakowski, 13 January 1789; K. H. Szembek, 16 January 1789; J. Jezierski, 13 January 1789, *Dyaryusz Seymu 1788*, ii:1. 93–100, 175–7. Cf. Karbownik, *Obciążenia stanu duchownego*, 246.

<sup>12</sup> *Dyaryusz*, ii:1. 163–5. Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 21 January, 28 January 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 245–7.

<sup>13</sup> *Dyaryusz 1788*, ii:1. 273.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, ii:1. 315–16.

disgusted by my apparent ingratitude, might withdraw their support. If on the other hand I give everything to my own men, the opposition party will again become fierce', and would further limit his prerogative of distribution.<sup>15</sup>

On 30 January 1789 Ksawery Branicki spoke to the king, asking for the see of Cracow to be given to Krzysztof Szembek, hinting that delay might cause the opposition to apply the revenues of the bishopric to the army. The monarch declined to answer.<sup>16</sup> Stanisław August had no great wish to promote Szembek. Admittedly, the bishop of Płock had previously contributed to the royal cause of legal reform, and had been a supportive coadjutor to Michał Poniatowski before the latter's elevation to the primacy. But since then Szembek had quietly linked himself with the opposition. He was a cousin of Michał Walewski, one of Branicki's chief allies. An observer noted that people said Szembek was 'acting the patriot (*patriotyzmuje*) now because he expects that bishopric from the nation'.<sup>17</sup>

Kajetan Sołtyk's death had announced a game of episcopal chairs, in which more lowly aspirants hoped to occupy the places vacated by the bishops translated to higher sees.<sup>18</sup> Even Adam Naruszewicz's coadjutorship of Smolensk was coveted.<sup>19</sup> And of course not all the players could obtain a seat. Naruszewicz immediately reminded the monarch of his long-standing claims to promotion.<sup>20</sup> He succeeded Gabriel Wodziński as bishop-ordinary of Smolensk on 28 November 1788, but because the see yielded no revenues, his relentless supplication of choicer ecclesiastical morsels continued. The king tried to reassure him that he would not be forgotten.<sup>21</sup>

Not the least of Naruszewicz's misfortunes was that his literary and ecclesiastical senior, the prince-bishop of Warmia, also held expectations of Stanisław August. Ignacy Krasicki had been interested in quitting Warmia ever since his income had been reduced after the First Partition. Much of his correspondence was a trawl for lucrative benefices, such as the abbey of Oliwa. Frederick II gave that to his own cousin, Karl von Hohenzollern-Hechingen, the coadjutor, and later the bishop of Chełmno.<sup>22</sup> Hohenzollern would have preferred Warmia, despite the reduced revenues. But the vacating of Warmia depended on Krasicki receiving a better offer.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>15</sup> SA to Deboli, 24 January 1789, ZP 414, ff. 46–7.

<sup>16</sup> SA to Deboli, 31 January 1789, ZP 414, ff. 56–7.

<sup>17</sup> Szopowicz to Jaśkiewicz, Warsaw, 30 January 1789, quoted in *Zagadki*, 30.

<sup>18</sup> The popular riddles circulating early in 1789 identified four bishops by their aspiration for promotion: Szembek, Krasicki, Naruszewicz, and Massalski. *Zagadki*, 30–1, 36–7, 190–1.

<sup>19</sup> Michał Sierakowski to I. Potocki, 16 August 1788, APP 279b, vol. iv, p. 779; Eleonora Czartoryska to I. Potocki, 4 April 1789, APP 279b, vol. v, p. 233.

<sup>20</sup> Adam Naruszewicz to SA, 1 August 1788, *Korespondencja Adama Naruszewicza 1762–1796*, ed. J. Platt and T. Mikulski (Wrocław, 1959), 304–6.

<sup>21</sup> Naruszewicz to SA, 2 December 1788, 28 March 1789, SA to Naruszewicz, 28 March 1789, *Korespondencja Adama Naruszewicza*, 323–34, 330–2. See J. Platt, 'Naruszewicz, Adam Tadeusz Stanisław', *PSB*, xxii (Wrocław, 1977), 554–61.

<sup>22</sup> Ignacy Krasicki to Frederick II, 21 April 1782, *Korespondencja Ignacego Krasickiego*, ed. T. Mikulski et al., ii (Wrocław, 1958), 127–8.

<sup>23</sup> Z. Goliński, *Ignacy Krasicki* (Warsaw, 1979), 361–4.



In November 1788, Krasicki was not expecting the nomination to Cracow. He told his brother to execute the plan that they had once discussed 'at the fireside':

They tell me that the bishop of Wilno hopes for Cracow, so we shall try for Wilno; if Wilno doesn't come off, then we shall try for the coadjutorship of Cracow with a good pension or a portion of the estates bringing in a few tens of thousands; if Cracow doesn't come off, then we'll try for the coadjutorship of Wilno; all means must be used without niceties. Ask the primate, fatigue the king, wake the general of artillery [Szcześny Potocki].<sup>24</sup>

The 'Muscovite' Massalski was already out of contention. Krasicki decided to take soundings in Berlin.<sup>25</sup>

On 3 February 1789, Ewald von Hertzberg, 'tormented' by Hohenzollern, wrote to Lucchesini about making Krasicki bishop of Cracow.<sup>26</sup> The marquis acted immediately, but with a twist. On 7 February Lucchesini communicated to Stanisław August the proposal that if Szembek went to Cracow, and made Krasicki his coadjutor, then Płock could then go to one of the senior bishops (whom the king understood to mean Feliks Turski of Łuck), and the resulting vacancy could be filled by Naruszewicz. But if the distribution were to be delayed, the sejm would leave the future bishop only 100,000 złotys, and take the rest for the treasury.<sup>27</sup>

Stanisław August informed Stackelberg of Lucchesini's *démarche*. The ambassador proposed a complicated bargain. Stanisław August saw in Stackelberg's plan an opportunity to satisfy his brother's wish to retain control of the bishopric of Cracow—if not as bishop, then as administrator. The two monarchs could assist each other's relatives. The king of Poland would gladly free the bishopric of Warmia, if arrangements could be made enabling Krasicki to become either the coadjutor or the 'expectant' of Cracow, with at least as much revenue as he currently enjoyed from Warmia. A law would also be passed, perpetually designating 50,000 złotys of revenue from Cracow for the bishopric of Livonia (currently held by Kossakowski), and another 50,000 for Smolensk (currently held by Naruszewicz). In return, the king of Prussia would be asked to use his influence to help get the package through the sejm.<sup>28</sup> Stackelberg did not reveal all to St Petersburg. He simply wrote that Lucchesini had asked for Cracow for Szembek and Płock for Krasicki, and that the king had promised to consult him, the ambassador, on the distribution of the vacancies.<sup>29</sup>

On 15 February Stanisław August's answer, agreed with Stackelberg, was communicated to Lucchesini. The slippery marquis appeared 'highly content', and promised to write to his master. However he said he would keep the matter from his Polish partisans so as not to shock them. He did not engage himself to help at

<sup>24</sup> Krasicki to Antoni Krasicki, 13 November 1788, *Korespondencja Ignacego Krasickiego*, ii. 403–05. Goliński, *Ignacy Krasicki*, 366.

<sup>25</sup> Krasicki to Ernst von Lehndorff, 19 December 1788, *Korespondencja Ignacego Krasickiego*, ii. 407–10. Goliński, *Ignacy Krasicki*, 366.

<sup>26</sup> Ewald von Hertzberg to Girolamo Lucchesini, 3 February 1789, GStAPK VI HA NI Hertzberg 13, f. 49.

<sup>27</sup> SA to Deboli, 11 February 1789, ZP 414, ff. 78–81.

<sup>28</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>29</sup> Stackelberg to Ostermann, 14 February 1789, AVPRI F79-6-1256, despatch 9.

the sejm. On 18 February, the king put his resident in Berlin, Bernard Zabłocki, in the picture, with what was largely a French translation of his despatch to Deboli, written the same day. Tellingly, he omitted Stackelberg's role, and made the closing reflection explicit: 'if the Prussian party is not strongly engaged by the king of Prussia in favour of my brother, then I can hardly flatter myself of a successful outcome'.<sup>30</sup>

On 16 February Hertzberg sent Lucchesini a firmer instruction to try to get Krasicki either Cracow or Płock.<sup>31</sup> The arrival in Berlin on the following day of Józef Czartoryski, who had been nominated as the Commonwealth's envoy on 9 December 1788, opened a second front. Czartoryski reported to the sejm's Deputation for Foreign Affairs in his second despatch (of 28 February) that the king of Prussia had asked the king of Poland to confer Cracow on Szembek and Płock on Krasicki.<sup>32</sup> In the middle of February, Saluzzo shared the general expectation that Szembek would soon be nominated to Cracow.<sup>33</sup> He had finally convinced Boncompagni not to support the primate's wish to keep the see.<sup>34</sup>

There is a gap in Lucchesini's extant correspondence with Frederick William II, but a postscript to Lucchesini's despatch of 7 March indicates that Frederick William had second thoughts about the king of Poland's proposition. On 27 February the king of Prussia asked the marquis instead to ask Stanisław August to confer Cracow on Szembek and Płock on Krasicki. Lucchesini undertook to do everything possible, but referred Frederick William to a previous warning of the difficulties involved.<sup>35</sup>

In fact Lucchesini was unimpressed by the idea of translating Krasicki. When the matter had first been broached he had tartly told Hertzberg that Count Hohenzollern's interests did not seem to him very compatible with those of the Prussian court.<sup>36</sup> Lucchesini had set out his own vision of how to manage Polish politics in his despatch of 26 January. After the abolition of the Permanent Council, he shared the widespread assumption that the prerogative of distribution had returned to the king. He had recommended to Frederick William that the Prussian minister 'should from time to time ask the king of Poland in Your Majesty's name, some grace for one of those Poles, who have title to the protection of the court of Berlin, and do so in a firm and decided manner, to impose upon this weak and pusillanimous prince, and to inspire the Prussian party with confidence'. He deemed Ignacy Potocki and the bishops of Cujavia, Płock, and Poznań worthy of directing the

<sup>30</sup> SA to Deboli, 18 February 1789, ZP 414, f. 89. SA to Bernard Zabłocki, 18 February 1789, ZP 423, ff. 530–3.

<sup>31</sup> Hertzberg to Lucchesini, 16 February 1789, GStAPK VI HA NI Lucchesini 32, vol. ii, f. 34.

<sup>32</sup> Józef Czartoryski to the Deputation for Foreign Affairs, 28 February 1789, ZP 406, f. 3. M. Kucharski, *Działalność dyplomacji polskiej w Berlinie w latach 1788–1792* (Katowice, 2000), 63.

<sup>33</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 18 February 1789, ASV ANV 66, f. 249. Cf. Gurski to Świejkowski, 10 February 1789, Oss. 6353, p. 390.

<sup>34</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 11 January 1789, ASV ANV 66, f. 244. Boncompagni to Saluzzo, 7 February, 14 March 1789, ASC ANV 52, ff. 21, 40.

<sup>35</sup> Lucchesini to Frederick William II, 7 March 1789, GStAPK I. HA Rep. 9 Polen 27–235, ff. 106–7.

<sup>36</sup> Lucchesini to Hertzberg, 18 February 1789, GStAPK VI HA NI Lucchesini 32, vol. ii, ff. 42–3.

affairs of Poland under Prussian tutelage.<sup>37</sup> Lucchesini believed that Krasicki's translation would give Stanisław August a docile senator. Worse still would be provision for Naruszewicz and Kossakowski, which would undermine Prussian credit.

At the beginning of March, Lucchesini was discomfited by a rumour (corresponding exactly to Stanisław August's proposal) that the king of Prussia had approved the retention of the administration of Cracow by the primate on condition that Krasicki was made coadjutor, thus vacating Warmia. Lucchesini quickly distanced himself, pointed out to Frederick William the unpopularity of such a step, and reminded him of how contrary to Prussian interests the primate's conduct had been.<sup>38</sup> Prompted by Hertzberg, the king of Prussia denied the rumour, but reiterated that he would be pleased if Cracow went to Szembek and Płock to Krasicki.<sup>39</sup> This ended any chance of the primate retaining the administration of the bishopric of Cracow, but it was not the end of his role in the affair. Hertzberg also wrote to Józef Czartoryski, denying not only the rumour, but any desire on Frederick William's part to interfere in Polish episcopal appointments. He added nonetheless that the king 'would be grateful' if Szembek received Cracow and Krasicki Płock. The Deputation for Foreign Affairs interpreted this as a renewal of Prussian pressure and ordered Czartoryski to make a polite but equivocal reply.<sup>40</sup>

On 18 March, the day after Czartoryski's despatch, relating the king of Prussia's request for Szembek and Krasicki, had been read out to the sejm,<sup>41</sup> Lucchesini asked Stanisław August to give Cracow to Szembek, and Płock to Krasicki. If Krasicki was made coadjutor of Cracow, he recommended Turski for Płock and Naruszewicz for Łuck. Stanisław August was irritated by the imperative tone and asked Zabłocki to communicate his displeasure to Frederick William. Stackelberg continued to pile the pressure on the Polish monarch on behalf of his protégé, Kossakowski.<sup>42</sup>

At this point Stanisław August took his first steps towards emancipation from the ambassador. This process took several months and had a number of causes. Among them were Stackelberg's threats over the bishoprics.<sup>43</sup> Deboli did his best to undermine the ambassador's hold over the king. Although he was from a poor family and entirely dependent on the monarch, his despatches contained advice of

<sup>37</sup> Lucchesini to Frederick William II, 26 January 1789, GStAPK I. HA Rep. 9 Polen 27–235, ff. 57–62.

<sup>38</sup> Lucchesini to Frederick William II, 4 March 1789, GStAPK I. HA Rep. 9 Polen 27–235, ff. 97–8.

<sup>39</sup> Karl Wilhelm Finckenstein and Hertzberg to Frederick William II, 11 March 1789, Frederick William II to Lucchesini, 12 March 1789, GStAPK I. HA Rep. 9 Polen 27–235, ff. 120–3.

<sup>40</sup> Kucharski, *Działalność dyplomacji polskiej* (n. 32 above), 64, citing Hertzberg to Czartoryski, 13 March 1789. Czartoryski to the Deputation for Foreign Affairs, 14 March 1789, ZP 406, f. 4, the deputation to Czartoryski, 25 March 1789, ZP 406, f. 6. SA to Deboli, 11 March 1789, ZP 414, f. 123. Hertzberg to Lucchesini, 14 March 1789, GStAPK VI HA NI Lucchesini 32, vol. ii, f. 65. Protocol of the deputation, 24 March, 26 March 1789, BCz. 887, pp. 66–7.

<sup>41</sup> ASC 1, f. 208.

<sup>42</sup> SA to Zabłocki, 21 March 1789, ZP 423, ff. 554–6.

<sup>43</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 453–9, attaches more weight to the question of the bishoprics than Z. Zielińska, *Studia z dziejów stosunków polsko-rosyjskich w XVIII wieku* (Warsaw, 2001), 211–20.

rare candour.<sup>44</sup> Deboli repeatedly assured the king that it was Stackelberg, not the Russian court, who was backing Kossakowski, and that the bishopric of Cracow was not the foundation of the Russian system. He doubted whether the empress had even heard of Kossakowski.<sup>45</sup> Deboli also warned Stanisław August that Stackelberg's apparent support of the primate's interest in Cracow was a provocation.<sup>46</sup>

After Lucchesini's second, more imperative request of 18 March, the king changed his tone concerning Stackelberg. On 21 March he told Deboli to try and draw out of Vice-Chancellor Ivan Ostermann the extent of the empress's interest in the promotion. Stackelberg, wrote the king, spoke as though Stanisław August's accommodation of Frederick William's wishes regarding the bishoprics would weigh as heavily with her as would an alliance with Prussia. The ambassador paraded his zeal on behalf of the primate to the king, but Stanisław August suspected that his priority was to promote Kossakowski. The king also thought that the ambassador was also irritated by the king's desire to elevate Naruszewicz, whom Stackelberg disliked (the feeling was mutual) because that bishop was attached to the king rather than himself, and because he had been distinguished by Catherine and Potemkin (during their progress down the Dnepr in 1787). Stackelberg took each Prussian offer to do something for Naruszewicz as evidence of a secret understanding between the Polish monarch and Berlin. Stanisław August intended to procrastinate, but only if there were no renewal of pressure to take the Cracow estates for the army. He also told Deboli that he was now thinking of making Krasicki bishop of Cracow, on condition that some of the revenues went to poorer bishops.<sup>47</sup>

Stackelberg, in reporting Lucchesini's change of tactics, noted that the marquis had proposed some 'declared enemies of Russia' for the vacancies and asked that Catherine 'energetically recommend' that Stanisław August consult the nominations with the ambassador.<sup>48</sup> He was told that the empress had raised the matter with Deboli, who had promised that the king would do what he could.<sup>49</sup> Deboli had already reported that the news of the Prussian request (for the nomination of Szembek to Cracow with Krasicki as his coadjutor) was talked of in St Petersburg with indifference. The king would gain no merit with Catherine by bowing to Stackelberg's 'tyranny'. The prevention of a Prussian alliance and the Russian army

<sup>44</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 459–68.

<sup>45</sup> Deboli to SA, 10 February, 24 February, 27 February 1789, ZP 419, ff. 38–9, 48, 52.

<sup>46</sup> Deboli to SA, 2 March 1789, ZP 419, f. 60.

<sup>47</sup> SA to Deboli, 21 March 1789, ZP 414, ff. 140–1. Cf. Stackelberg to J. K. Kossakowski, Kiev, 9 April 1787, BJ 4436, vol. i, f. 63: 'Le Prince Potemkin a causé avec lui, toute la nuit à Chwastów sur la géographie ancienne et les Auteurs Grecs.' Catherine had given Naruszewicz a jewelled cross, a ring, and a pension of 1500 rubles. SA to P. Kiciński, Kaniów, 5 April, 15 April 1787, in W. Kalinka, *Ostatnie lata panowania Stanisława Augusta*, 2nd edn (Cracow, 1891), ii. 23, 25, 27. Catherine II to Stackelberg, 3 April 1787, AVPRI F80-1-1331.

<sup>48</sup> Stackelberg to Ostermann, 21 March 1789, AVPRI F79-6-1257.

<sup>49</sup> Ostermann to Stackelberg, 10 April 1789, AVPRI F80-1-1267.

in the Commonwealth were of consequence to the empress; Szembek and Naruszewicz were not.<sup>50</sup>

Deboli raised the bishoprics with Ostermann on 4 April, and again four days later. All Ostermann said was that Stackelberg had not mentioned any names, but had asked that His Polish Majesty consult with him regarding the bishoprics. The vice-chancellor endorsed the request. Deboli answered that the king would certainly try to arrange things as well as possible. The Polish minister guessed correctly that Stackelberg had deliberately chosen a general form of words with which to cover himself, and incorrectly that Stackelberg had only recently done so. Deboli proceeded to lecture his master. In giving Cracow to Szembek and Płock to Turski, the king would be acting in accordance with the wishes of the 'nation'. Kossakowski could only be preferred at the expense of Turski or Naruszewicz. Naruszewicz had the empress's favour, and she had herself recommended Szembek for Cracow two years earlier. Deboli reminded the king of Stackelberg's bullying, and advised him to 'stroke' the ambassador and let him say what he liked, but to act in the Polish interest: 'to keep in step with the king of Prussia and augment the army'.<sup>51</sup> Deboli returned to the theme in his next despatch, telling Stanisław August that an alliance with Prussia and the bishoprics were as heaven and earth, and kept up the pressure into May.<sup>52</sup>

By this time matters had stalled, alarming Saluzzo and Boncompagni.<sup>53</sup> Lucchesini demanded an answer to the Prussian request around 20 April.<sup>54</sup> He did not receive one, as he later complained.<sup>55</sup> Both the king and his opponents were biding their time. For the moment the Polish public focused on taxation, the reports of rebellion in Ruthenia, and on the campaign against the disgraced treasurer of the Crown, Adam Poniński. The *Warsaw Gazette* informed its readers of the resistance to Joseph II's general seminary at Louvain and of the consternation of the higher clergy in France at the election of so many parish priests to the Estates-General.<sup>56</sup>

In these intrigues more was at stake than Poland's richest bishopric, or even the relationship between Warsaw and Rome. The promotions would proclaim whose influence was paramount in the Commonwealth. The Prussian and Russian diplomats were more alert to the implications than their courts. The former was more adept than the latter, but he was swimming with the political tide, rather than against it. In pressing their candidates, Lucchesini and Branicki wielded the potent, but unpredictable, threat to unleash public opinion. In pursuing their own divergent plans, both the king and the ambassador risked the spilling over into 'high politics' of the politics of the sejmiks, pamphlets, and the sejm.

<sup>50</sup> Deboli to SA, 3 April 1789, ZP 419, f. 98.

<sup>51</sup> Deboli to SA, 7 April, 10 April 1789, ZP 419, ff. 102–5, 107.

<sup>52</sup> Deboli to SA, 14 April 1789, ZP 419, ff. 115–17. Cf. Deboli to SA, 1 May, 18 May, 19 May 1789, ZP 414, ff. 145, 175–6, 181.

<sup>53</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 8 April, 27 April 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 258, 265. Boncompagni to Saluzzo, 2 May 1789, ASV ANV 52, f. 74. Carlo Federici to Saluzzo, 20 June 1789, ASV ANV 52, f. 104.

<sup>54</sup> SA to Zabłocki, 22 April 1789, ZP 423, f. 587.

<sup>55</sup> SA to Deboli, 15 July, 15 August 1789, ZP 414, f. 353, 410–11.

<sup>56</sup> GW, 15 April, 22 April, 9 May, 13 May 1789.

### 3. TRADING THE BISHOPRIC OF CRACOW

By the middle of May 1789 Krasicki was expecting to leave for Warsaw at the end of June. He told a friend that he had been 'called by the king', but added that nothing had yet been settled, while in a letter written the same day to Gaetano Ghigiotti, he wrote that he only awaited the king's orders, and he would pay his court. Evidently the king's call, whatever form it had taken, had not specified a date. At the end of May Krasicki wrote to the primate regarding to his visit to Warsaw.<sup>57</sup> Three weeks later, his voyage still depended 'on circumstances',<sup>58</sup> and then on 27 June, an express arrived ordering him to be in Warsaw within four days.<sup>59</sup>

Stackelberg's anxiety for his favourites, Józef Kossakowski and Piotr Ożarowski (who aspired to the vacant court treasurership of the Crown), was aggravated by Krasicki's arrival in Warsaw. On 5 July 1789 the ambassador wrote an extraordinary letter to the king, reminiscent of a jilted lover. If the concert between them were broken over 'the nomination to the principal places', he threatened, 'all is finished between you and my sovereign'. Stanisław August's reply, written that same day, was measured. Krasicki had dined with him, but they had not talked a word of business. The monarch reiterated his desire 'to conserve and merit' the empress's friendship, and finished with an assurance that 'Russia and you have never had a better friend than myself'. He did not offer to comply with Stackelberg's wishes.<sup>60</sup>

Although Stanisław August was willing to do something for Stackelberg's protégés, he would not risk losing his right of nomination on their behalf. Nor did he believe that the empress, who wished to 'manage' the king of Prussia, would be offended if he deferred to pressure from the 'other side'. Besides, the ambassador's favourites had a history of opposition to Russia. The king forestalled Stackelberg by authorizing Deboli to use both letters and the arguments set out in the despatch 'for freeing me from these pressures and threats from the ambassador'.<sup>61</sup>

Krasicki's indiscreet talk of his recommendation by the king of Prussia gave Kossakowski the pretext to write a begging letter on 9 July.<sup>62</sup> By 14 July Krasicki was widely expected to become bishop of Cracow.<sup>63</sup> On 15 July a verse appeared,

<sup>57</sup> Krasicki to Lehndorff, 17 May 1789, *Korespondencja Ignacego Krasickiego*, ii. 418. Krasicki to Ghigiotti, 17 May, 30 May 1789; *ibid.*, ii. 416–17, 420–1. Goliński, *Ignacy Krasicki*, 368.

<sup>58</sup> Krasicki to Ghigiotti, 21 June 1789, *Korespondencja Ignacego Krasickiego*, ii. 421–2.

<sup>59</sup> Krasicki to Lehndorff, 27 June 1789, *Korespondencja Ignacego Krasickiego*, ii. 422–3. Goliński, *Ignacy Krasicki*, 374.

<sup>60</sup> Both letters are included in SA to Deboli, 8 July 1789, ZP 414, ff. 343–50. A scribbled note to Ghigiotti on 5 July confirms that the king invited Krasicki to dine with him that day. He added: 'Je serai charmé de le revoir', indicating that it was their first meeting. AGHig. 514a, vol. ii, f. 250.

<sup>61</sup> SA to Deboli, 8 July 1789, ZP 414, f. 345. Cf. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 455–7.

<sup>62</sup> J. K. Kossakowski to SA, 9 July 1789, BCz. 922, pp. 745–7. Cf. Gurski to Izabella Świejkowska, Ossol. 6353, 9 August 1789, p. 526.

<sup>63</sup> Letter of an unidentified correspondent to Szczęśny Potocki, 14 July 1789, BCz. 3471, p. 722.

satirizing his ambitions.<sup>64</sup> Lucchesini soon got wind of what was going on, and did not like it at all. He set out his objections in a despatch to Frederick William II. Krasicki had been 'called by the prince primate, who proposes to play and compromise him with the patriots, or to sell him on inadmissible conditions the debris of the bishopric of Cracow'. The bishop of Warmia was 'suspected of mocking' the sejm 'in order to make himself agreeable to the king and the royal family'. Among the conditions was a pension of 4,000 ducats for Kossakowski, 'the damned soul of the Russian ambassador'. Lucchesini warned Frederick William that his 'protection, far from being useful to those who are devoted to our party, indirectly favours the avidity of our enemies', and would undermine Prussian credit. Krasicki saw 'nothing in front of him except the bishopric of Cracow, and on his imagination of Your Majesty's express will to get it for him, places on my representations a price proportionate to the light-headedness of his character'.<sup>65</sup> Lucchesini convinced his masters, although events moved too fast for their approval to have any effect.<sup>66</sup>

Stanisław August was trying to juggle too many mitres. He wanted to provide for Krasicki and Naruszewicz, he was under pressure from Stackelberg to promote Kossakowski, and from Lucchesini and the opposition to promote Szembek and Turski. The king probably thought that the Hohenzollern interest in Warmia would allow him to ignore Szembek and Turski and reconcile the other aspirants. On 15 July he wrote to Deboli that Krasicki would do something for Kossakowski. But he also noted that while Krasicki was blithely confident of Berlin's support, Lucchesini was alleging that the king had summoned Krasicki in order to catch the Prussian envoy between the instruction to get Hohenzollern Warmia and the need to make Szembek bishop of Cracow; otherwise Branicki, Sapieha, Walewski and their supporters would no longer support Prussia.<sup>67</sup>

Although the nuncio reminded the king during the recess of the 'absolute necessity' of nominating a new bishop of Cracow, Saluzzo seems to have been unaware of the significance of Krasicki's visit until after the storm had broken. He then wrote that the negotiations had stumbled over the question of pensions for 'persons not accepted by the sejm' and a larger sum for Cracow University.<sup>68</sup> According to Stackelberg, Krasicki had 'haughtily rejected' the arrangements for Kossakowski and Naruszewicz. He omitted the bishop's change of heart.<sup>69</sup> Lucchesini informed his master that Krasicki had been obliged to accept 'considerable pensions for two other bishops, one devoted to the king, and the other pensioned by the Russian ambassador, and to a former mistress of His Polish Majesty'.

<sup>64</sup> Goliński, *Ignacy Krasicki*, 372.

<sup>65</sup> Lucchesini to Frederick William II, 8 July 1789, GStAPK I. HA Rep. 9 Polen 27–235, ff. 378–80.

<sup>66</sup> Hertzberg to Lucchesini, 15 July 1789. GStAPK VI NI Lucchesini 32, vol. ii, ff. 161–2.

<sup>67</sup> SA to Deboli, 15 July 1789, ZP 414, f. 353.

<sup>68</sup> Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 18 July 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 271–2. Cf. the despatches of 1, 8 and 15 July 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 269–71.

<sup>69</sup> Stackelberg to Ostermann, 18 July 1789, AVPRI F79-6-1261, despatch 55.

He reported a rumour that the Duchy of Siewierz would be ceded to the king's nephew, Prince Józef Poniatowski.<sup>70</sup>

Michał Poniatowski's role in these negotiations remains veiled. Lucchesini's testimony is partial but his statement that the primate called Krasicki to Warsaw is consistent with Krasicki's correspondence. Stanisław August claimed that he had not summoned the prince-bishop of Warmia.<sup>71</sup> Although Krasicki seems to have taken most people by surprise—Lucchesini called his journey '*aussi intempestive, qu'inattendue*'<sup>72</sup>—it verges on the unthinkable that the king was surprised by an initiative taken by the primate. Krasicki's best biographer had no doubt that the king called him to Warsaw.<sup>73</sup> The primate probably took an active part in the discussions with the bishop of Warmia. The University of Cracow was his particular interest. He was in Warsaw at this time, not at Jabłonna, a few miles away.<sup>74</sup> Perhaps Kalinka, to whom most of Krasicki's correspondence was unavailable, was so disgusted by the falsehoods in Lucchesini's relation that he neither considered the primate's role nor questioned the king's account. On balance, it seems that the primate and the king were responsible for summoning Krasicki to Warsaw.

#### 4. THE DÉNOUEMENT: 17 JULY 1789

Kalinka's explanation of what happened on 17 July 1789, grounded in political and diplomatic correspondence, focuses on personal rivalry: Lucchesini unleashed Branicki's clique, which avenged the expected passing over of Szembek. Kalinka also blamed the conduct of the primate, king, and bishops.<sup>75</sup> However, the idea of seizing most of the vacant bishopric's revenue for the army had been in the public domain for almost a year. The endorsement of this call in 1788–9 by sejmi and pamphleteers did not determine the decisions of 17–24 July, but it made them possible. Although these questions were only raised in the sejm following 'high political' intrigues, the Estates had to be persuaded by compelling oratory, appealing to familiar republican values.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Lucchesini to Frederick William II, 19 July 1789, GStAPK I. HA Rep. 9 Polen 27–235, f. 397. Prince Józef (1763–1813), like his father Andrzej (1733–73), served in the Austrian army. His mother, Teresa, née Kinska, came from the Bohemian aristocracy. On 24 August 1789 Kublicki showed a letter purporting to show that Joseph II had agreed to the king's plan to make Prince Józef duke of Siewierz. SA to Deboli, 26 August 1789, ZP 414, f. 430.

<sup>71</sup> 'C'est un coup de sa tête, qui a précipité et gaté tout à l'égard de cet Eveché.' SA to Deboli, 22 July 1789. Ditto, 15 August 1789 (reporting a conversation with Lucchesini), ZP 414, ff. 361, 363 (*en clair*), 413, and SA to Stackelberg, 21 July 1789, copy attached in ZP 414, f. 367.

<sup>72</sup> Lucchesini to Frederick William II, 19 July 1789, GStAPK I. HA Rep. 9 Polen 27–235, f. 397.

<sup>73</sup> Goliński, *Ignacy Krasicki*, 374.

<sup>74</sup> Aubert to Montmorin, 3 August 1789, AMAE CP Pologne 316, despatch 30, f. 394.

<sup>75</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 410–13.

<sup>76</sup> For more details see R. Butterwick, "Lepiej jest mieć pewne 100 m. w republikańskim rządzie, niżli krocze za kordonem". Sprawa biskupstwa krakowskiego na sesji sejmowej 17 lipca 1789 roku—przykład perswazji oratorskiej, in T. Chachulski and A. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz (eds.), *Literatura—historia—dziedzictwo. Prace ofiarowane Profesor Teresie Kostkiewiczowej* (Warsaw, 2007), 448–57.



On 17 July the chamber was only about a third full. Garnysz, Kossakowski, and Giedroyc were the only bishops present. Kublicki asked for his project incorporating the Duchy of Siewierz to be read out,<sup>77</sup> prompting Suchodolski to ask for his own project, *Fund for the Army*, to be read out again. Małachowski attempted to introduce other business. However, as discussion soon petered out, he had to agree to the reading of Kublicki's and Suchodolski's projects.<sup>78</sup>

The theoretical foundations of Suchodolski's speech reveal his republican assumptions. First, he distinguished public property from private property. The former was founded on the need of every nation to defend itself, and had a claim either to citizens' persons or their property. The latter was guaranteed by law, which was the 'citizen's first freedom', protected for all in a 'republican government, having representatives from every palatinate, who were thus natural guardians of their own and the country's property'. On this basis he rejected the argument that if the Commonwealth touched the *starostwa* or the clergy, then no nobleman could be sure of his inheritance. The nobility should give, but only when all other sources had been tapped. In contrast, he argued, the property of starostas, bishoprics, abbeys, and so forth returned after the holder's death to its source. The Commonwealth had sovereignty (*jedynowładność*) equal to any absolute ruler.

Suchodolski now got to the point: to leave the bishop of Cracow with 100,000 złotys per annum would agree with the original laws of the Church, allocating excess wealth to the poor, and would protect religion 'in the safe seat of republicans'. Public revenue would rise by 600,000 złotys a year. 'Who will not seize such a source, which will lead us to the possibility of having an army of 100,000, and harms nobody?' he asked. He advised doing likewise with each next vacant bishopric, not only taking away excessive revenue, but adding to it, where it was inadequate. He finished by insinuating greed to any aspirant who disagreed: 'he who will not be happy with 100,000 in annual revenue, cannot call himself happy with a million.'<sup>79</sup>

Kublicki and Suchodolski agreed to merge their projects. Małachowski tried to retrieve the situation by asking Suchodolski to allow time for deliberation, but the envoy for Chełm answered that the project had been printed and distributed two months since. Suchodolski pressed for a vote on whether or not the future bishops of Cracow should content themselves with 100,000 złotys per annum. Others tried to kick the ball into touch, suggesting an equalization of all the bishoprics, and first consulting the episcopate and the Holy See.<sup>80</sup>

Garnysz countered Suchodolski's reasoning on property. The clergy were part of the noble estate. Church property was not the *patrimonium Reipublicae* but the *commune refugium nobilitatis inalienabile*, which the king had sworn to defend in his *pacta conventa*. It was not only a reward for services but provision for the rites of

<sup>77</sup> *Przymówienie się... Kublickiego... 17 lipca 1789...*

<sup>78</sup> ASC 2, ff. 597–8. *Fundusz dla Wojska*, ASC 15, f. 739.

<sup>79</sup> The published speech, *Mowa... Suchodolskiego... 17 lipca 1789...*, is much longer than the version recorded in ASC 2, ff. 598–9. The latter was probably abbreviated, but the former may have been edited later.

<sup>80</sup> ASC 2, f. 599.

religion. 'If an example scandalizing all Christendom' (Austria) had prompted this move, then that example should be closely scrutinized. There, ecclesiastical income went into a religious fund. At the very least, he appealed for a pause until the next session.<sup>81</sup> Spectators applauded. Saluzzo reported that when Garnysz finished speaking, some of the project's supporters ran up to the vice-chancellor, offering to withdraw the demand if he became bishop of Cracow. He apparently replied that 'he spoke not through his interest, but his duty as a bishop and chancellor'.<sup>82</sup>

Suchodolski then told the king that his first duty in the *pacta conventa* was to defend the country. He had the right to say to the clergy: 'I shall defend you, but make a contribution to your defence; it is certainly better to have 100,000 in a republican government than vast wealth beyond the cordon, where one person takes all and does not say what he takes it for.' This was the argument which the clergy found most difficult to refute. He taunted the clergy with the bishopric's loss of 400,000 beyond the 'imperial cordon': why did it not stand by its property then?<sup>83</sup>

The king, put on the spot, spoke on behalf of the poorer bishops and Cracow University. He skirted around questions of principle, although he warned against giving 'someone' (the king of Prussia) a pretext to claim the Duchy of Siewierz. Stanisław August later wrote that he had warned that such a confiscation would only be legal with the consent of Rome. This warning does not feature in the manuscript of his speech, but he may have made it when speaking.<sup>84</sup> His plea for the university fell on deaf ears.<sup>85</sup>

Kossakowski defended the inviolability of ecclesiastical property, and proposed a vote on 'whether or not the bishopric of Cracow should be turned to the augmentation of the revenues of other bishoprics'.<sup>86</sup> Suchodolski played the man and not the ball, answering that his own project was not in a private interest, but for the public good, and so the two could not be paired.<sup>87</sup>

On 'an extremely hot day, so that we nearly fainted',<sup>88</sup> there was overwhelming pressure for a vote. When Giedroyc and Kossakowski refused to withdraw their opposition, Małachowski announced a vote on the question: 'Whether the bishops of Cracow and dukes of Siewierz are to collect 100,000 annual revenue, or are to continue with their old revenue?' Kossakowski refused to participate, and the result of open voting was 62 in favour, 20 against. The senators and ministers voted 11:6 against.<sup>89</sup> Ignacy Potocki 'was of the opinion that *it would be better to regulate* [clerical properties], *to employ them for the needs of religion and charity*, than to seize

<sup>81</sup> ASC 11, ff. 14–7. The MS diary contains a shorter version: ASC 2, ff. 599–600.

<sup>82</sup> Saluzzo to Federici, 18 July 1789, ASV ANV 66, f. 272. Cf. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 413.

<sup>83</sup> ASC 2, f. 600. In the published version, *Odpowiedź tegoż na teży samey sessyi*, printed with his earlier speech, these barbed references to Joseph II were prudently omitted.

<sup>84</sup> SA to Deboli, 18 July 1789, ZP 414, ff. 357–8, ASC 2, ff. 608–9 and ff. 610–12.

<sup>85</sup> Saluzzo to Federici, 18 July 1789, ASV ANV 66, f. 272.

<sup>86</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 411, gives more detail than in ASC 2, ff. 601–2.

<sup>87</sup> ASC 2, f. 602.

<sup>88</sup> SA to Deboli, 18 July 1789, ZP 414, f. 358.

<sup>89</sup> ASC 2, f. 610. SA to Deboli, 18 July 1789, ZP 414, f. 359. Saluzzo to Federici, 18 July 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 271–2.

them *despotically, the Commonwealth protectress of all properties*, can well intervene in the administration of those, whose nature is of general utility, but has *no right to change their nature*.<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless, the envoys voted 56:9 for the project. Giedroyc asked for a secret vote. Sapieha objected, on the grounds that this was a tax matter. 'After long disputes and various voices *pro et contra*, secret voting followed at last, which produced 56 affirmative votes, 23 negative.' After seven hours the session was adjourned to the following Monday.<sup>91</sup>

Compared to their well-planned defensive action on taxes, the bishops were caught napping. The king failed to come to their aid. Few envoys had supported them, and some of those who might have spoken persuasively on their behalf, such as Stanisław Potocki and Adam Czartoryski, were absent. The support for Sucho-dolski in the chamber had been such that Małachowski felt obliged to concede the demand for a vote. The result of the secret vote was marginally better for the episcopate than the open vote, indicating not only that the proposal was genuinely popular, but also that 'patriotic' pressure acted to the Church's disadvantage in a public forum. We have no division list, which would permit an analysis based on 'party'. In any case, Branicki's adherents amounted to only a handful of envoys and senators, while Ignacy Potocki was unable to control the clients of Puławy—Julian Niemcewicz had asked Giedroyc and Kossakowski to withdraw their opposition. Most envoys voted independently.

After the session, Kossakowski angrily told the king that Krasicki's expected nomination had provoked Szembek's supporters to wreak their revenge.<sup>92</sup> The king explained to Deboli that Branicki, his sister Elżbieta Sapieżyna, Sapieha, and Walewski had wanted Szembek to have Cracow intact so that he could help them at the sejmiks held in the diocese. After Krasicki's sudden arrival, Lucchesini feared that Stanisław August had laid a trap for him. Either his master's cousin would not become bishop of Warmia, or his master would lose support in the sejm. Prompted by Lucchesini, Szembek's backers had decided to make the prize much less valuable to one of the king's friends.<sup>93</sup>

Ignacy Potocki also blamed 'the vengeance of palatine of Sieradz who saw his cousin the bishop of Płock frustrated in his hopes'. However, he was aware that envoys had to be persuaded. He pointed to the illusions that taxes might be reduced and that the estates might be distributed among the nobles of the diocese as the reasons which convinced the backwoodsmen. The argument used to salve their consciences was that '*there is no Church property at all*'—an indication of how Sucho-dolski may have been understood. It did not convince Potocki: '*This manner of annulling clerical properties is very dangerous*'. He sententiously highlighted a '*moral phenomenon*: not all the honest men were for religious property, but all the

<sup>90</sup> I. Potocki to E. Aloy, 18 July 1789, APP 277, ff. 59–60. Potocki's speech, which Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 412, was unable to find, was probably his senatorial *votum*. It is not recorded in the MS diary.

<sup>91</sup> ASC 2, f. 603.

<sup>92</sup> SA to Deboli, 18 July 1789, ZP 414, ff. 358–9.

<sup>93</sup> SA to Deboli, 22 July 1789, ZP 414, ff. 361–77.

rogues were against'.<sup>94</sup> For the Austrian chargé d'affaires, the sejm's decision was simply 'fanatical'.<sup>95</sup> A French agent added that the primate's ambition of retaining the lucrative administration of Cracow had also prompted the sejm's 'extraordinary decision'.<sup>96</sup>

Stanisław Potocki evidently believed other rumours, concerning two of Stanisław August's mistresses, when he arrived in Warsaw and discovered that the bishopric had been sequestered. He told his wife that Krasicki 'had felt sure of it, ever since we ruined the idea for the primate. But when the noise of some nasty petty arrangements, in which Gra[bowska] and Lullier were involved, reached the public, it was felt better to have the bishopric for the profit of the public, rather than those ladies'.<sup>97</sup>

A satire on Branicki attributed the spoliation to his greed and jealousy.<sup>98</sup> The primate later recalled that Potemkin was supposed to have asked Branicki why the Polish bishops were so rich—100,000 złotys each should be enough.<sup>99</sup> But on hearing the news Poniatowski blamed Ignacy Potocki and Małachowski for having allowed 'the rabid friends of that rogue Sapieha' to dominate the proceedings, and criticized Lucchesini's apparent insouciance.<sup>100</sup>

Lucchesini could not but regard the outcome as justifying his original advice, although he succeeded in giving the impression in Warsaw that he regretted the sejm's decision.<sup>101</sup> He consoled Frederick William that Krasicki would have 'often yielded to pressure from the court, constantly opposed to the views of Your Majesty'.<sup>102</sup> And he smugly told Hertzberg: 'I am sorry to have been a prophet, but henceforth those who ask for the king's protection in Poland will pay more heed to what I tell them for their own good'.<sup>103</sup> Lucchesini presented the outcome to his master as a moral fable. Hohenzollern and Krasicki had sought to rise through the offices of the King of Poland, threatening the proper way of doing things, that is by reconciling their advantage 'with the desires of the patriots and our interests in this country'.<sup>104</sup> The king of Prussia duly replied that it was Krasicki's own fault, and there was nothing more to be said, other than that in reducing the bishopric the Polish government had gained a great resource.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>94</sup> I. Potocki to Aloy, 18 July 1789, APP 277, ff. 59–60.

<sup>95</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 22 July 1789, HHStA Polen II 51, despatch 561, ff. 40–1.

<sup>96</sup> Aubert to Montmorin, 22 July 1789, AMAE CP Pologne 316, despatch 28, ff. 377–8.

<sup>97</sup> S. K. Potocki to A. Potocka, 22 July 1789, APP 262, vol. i, p. 1198. The ladies were Elżbieta Grabowska and Sophie L'Hullier.

<sup>98</sup> 'Zapytanie do stanów Sejmujących uczynione od pewnego arbitra w tych słowach', in J. Nowak-Dłużewski (ed.), *Poezja Sejmu Czteroletniego. Nowe pozycje literackie* (Wrocław, 1950), 4–7.

<sup>99</sup> MJP to Ghigiotti, 6 September 1789, AGHig. 515a, vol. ii, f. 83.

<sup>100</sup> MJP to Ghigiotti, 19 July 1789, AGHig. 515a, vol. ii, f. 78.

<sup>101</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 22 July 1789, HHStA Polen II 51, despatch 561, f. 41.

<sup>102</sup> Lucchesini to Frederick William II, 19 July 1789, GStAPK I. HA Rep. 9 Polen 27–235, f. 398.

<sup>103</sup> Lucchesini to Hertzberg, 19 July 1789, GStAPK VI NI Hertzberg 13, ff. 130–1.

<sup>104</sup> Lucchesini to Frederick William II, 19 July 1789, GStAPK I. HA Rep. 9 Polen 27–235, f. 398.

<sup>105</sup> Frederick William II to Lucchesini, 31 July 1789, GStAPK I. HA Rep. 9 Polen 27–235, f. 410. Hertzberg, writing to Lucchesini on 28 July 1789, agreed that the bishops could only blame themselves, but added, typically, that Frederick William could claim Siewierz as duke of Silesia. GStAPK VI NI Lucchesini 32, vol. ii, ff. 174–5.

Saluzzo blamed the resolution on 'private interest, intrigue, and bad conduct'. He warned Rome that if the revenues of the bishopric were indeed taken for the army, then it would be almost impossible to reverse the decision, for the repeal of a law once passed required unanimity.<sup>106</sup> He also wanted to have the bishops collect their revenue from landed estates, rather than be paid salaries by the treasury. Beyond the earshot of the Poles, however, he could not help opining that 'excessively rich bishoprics' had occasioned 'intrigues, and simonies', scandalizing laymen.<sup>107</sup>

The nuncio worked on a note, joining to his reasoning 'the loftiest expressions to sweeten and win over minds'.<sup>108</sup> He could not conceal his 'surprise' and 'sadness' at the decision. Given the longstanding piety of the Polish nation, the Holy Father would be afflicted by this unprecedented step. He asked why only the clerical estate was excluded 'from sharing in public felicity' and the security of property promised in the act of confederation. 100,000 zlotys per annum was insufficient for an extensive diocese with many churches and poor priests. 'Let the spirit of wisdom and justice which characterizes the national sejm inspire the reconsideration of the sejm's last decision; let this same spirit suggest to them [the Estates] the most proper means to conciliate their love of the Fatherland with the respect due to all that concerns religion.'<sup>109</sup> Benedikt de Caché thought Saluzzo's flatteries 'quite extravagant' and his style 'almost grovelling'.<sup>110</sup> The nuncio admitted that 'the Russian party found too much adulation in my note. But I have no other weapons for combat, and the Poles behave differently with those who do not have the force to intimidate them.' Otherwise, Saluzzo was reduced to silence and dissimulation, fearing that the sejm would move on from the bishoprics to chapters, abbeys, and convents.<sup>111</sup>

## 5. EQUALIZING THE BISHOPRICS: 20–24 JULY 1789

Four further sessions were needed to convert the resolution into a law encompassing all the bishoprics. 20 July saw the reading out of the nuncio's note, followed by attacks on clerical abuses and assertions of the Commonwealth's sovereignty. Suchodolski pressed his project.<sup>112</sup> 21 July featured clashes between the bishops and their critics.<sup>113</sup> On 23 July Stanisław August walked into a trap by attempting to nominate the new bishops, and a deputation was named to confer with the

<sup>106</sup> Saluzzo to Federici, 18 July 1789, ASV ANV 66, f. 272.

<sup>107</sup> Saluzzo to Federici, 22 July 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 272–3.

<sup>108</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>109</sup> Saluzzo to the Estates, 19 July 1789, ASC 18, ff. 117–18 (French), f. 116 (Polish). *GW*, 29 July 1789.

<sup>110</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 22 July 1789, HHStA Polen II 51, despatch 561, f. 40.

<sup>111</sup> Saluzzo to Federici, 22 July 1789, ASV ANV 52, ff. 272–4.

<sup>112</sup> ASC 2, ff. 618–31.

<sup>113</sup> ASC 2, ff. 637–54.

episcopate and the nuncio on the proposed equalization of the bishoprics.<sup>114</sup> Finally, on Friday 24 July the law *Fund for the Army* was passed unanimously.<sup>115</sup>

Despite Saluzzo's note to the Estates, fulsomely commended by Małachowski,<sup>116</sup> anti-clerical invective was plentiful between 20 and 24 July. However, clerical abuses were denounced from Catholic positions. Jan Suchorzewski averred:

I have always tried to guide my steps, so that I would be taken for a Catholic [...] Thus living according to the rules given to me by God's Church, I have not looked without being scandalized at the luxuries of our clergy, which derive from the possession of great estates and which have led them to forget what they owe to the Fatherland: virtue, their example, and their vocation.<sup>117</sup>

Jacek Jezierski offered homespun theology and quotations from the Vulgate. Bishops' wealth and pomp contravened their vocation and the will of Christ. The Church was anywhere the faithful gathered in Christ's name, so an army of 100,000 faithful soldiers was a Church that defended faith and liberty.<sup>118</sup> Some envoys alleged that the sacraments were traded. In a deft thrust, Kublicki cited a passage from Kossakowski's novel, *The Parish Priest* (*Xiędz Pleban*, 1786), condemning the practice.<sup>119</sup>

Bishops Garnysz and Turski denied any systematic abuses of the sacraments or injustice in the allocation of the *subsidiium charitativum*.<sup>120</sup> But the abuses were political as well as pastoral. Suchorzewski denounced Kossakowski through the thinnest of veils as a traitor, 'who wanted to sell himself to a foreign power' in order to get 'this lucrative bishopric' (a charge that might also have been levelled against Szembek and Krasicki).<sup>121</sup> Sapieha also declared that he would demand exemplary punishment for anyone supported by a foreign minister.<sup>122</sup>

One of the most frequently repeated arguments was, as Suchodolski put it, that the clergy 'should bless the moment they were born in a free Commonwealth, that they are not under the rule of any despot, because they can look at neighbouring powers to see what happens there to the clergy'. The pope should be told 'that the Commonwealth has no intention of overthrowing religion, but has the intention to protect herself from foreign violence, so that foreign violence would seize and imprison no more bishops'.<sup>123</sup>

Foreign examples served Jezierski and other critics: 'all Catholic states reform bishoprics, suppress orders, such as the Jesuits recently, for the good of the Church, because it is for the nation'. Under 'the most perfect and rational Prussian rule', he claimed, dissident and Catholic bishops alike were paid salaries, religion and its buildings were in order, while in licentious and weak Poland, innumerable churches crumbled.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>114</sup> ASC 2, ff. 662–78. <sup>115</sup> ASC 2, ff. 694–704.

<sup>116</sup> ASC 2, f. 636. <sup>117</sup> 20 July. ASC 2, ff. 618–9.

<sup>118</sup> *Mowa... Jezierskiego kasztelana łukowskiego... 21 [sic] lipca 1789...* This speech best fits the record for 20 July, ASC 2, f. 624.

<sup>119</sup> 21 July. ASC 2, ff. 649–51. <sup>120</sup> 20 July. ASC 2, f. 627.

<sup>121</sup> 20 July. ASC 2, ff. 618–19. Similarly on 21 July, ASC 2, ff. 648–9.

<sup>122</sup> 20 July. ASC 2, ff. 625–6. <sup>123</sup> 20 July. ASC 2, ff. 621–4.

<sup>124</sup> 20 July. *Mowa... Jezierskiego kasztelana łukowskiego... 21 [sic] lipca 1789...*

The better a bishop was provided for, argued Cieciszowski, the better the state of his diocese, and the better he could succour the needy. 'In the end, who does not see that the government of a diocese is not only for the good of the Church, but also for the good of the Fatherland?'<sup>125</sup> Suchodolski riposted that a thousand families would see a bishopric with 100,000 zlotys as a grace.<sup>126</sup>

Sovereignty was invoked by the opponents of the *beneficium apostolicum*. Kublicki claimed he knew the respect due from an orthodox nation to the Holy See, but episcopal revenues were a domestic matter. No notice should be taken of the nuncio's note.<sup>127</sup> Others, including Suchodolski, were anxious to reply politely. The king, flattering 'an enlightened nation', proposed a conference with the nuncio. This would not infringe Polish sovereignty, he argued, but would allow time for the details of the measure to be considered.<sup>128</sup> Sovereignty also served to defend the irrevocability of the sejm's decision. 'The verdicts of the Commonwealth, once they are made, are not subject to any interpretation, because the Commonwealth is a sovereign (*samowładna*) mistress, and when she says something, she must be obeyed', insisted Suchodolski.<sup>129</sup> The bishop of Livonia answered that to reject the pleas of the nuncio and bishops for moderation was 'to want to establish and use sovereign power without listening and without explaining.'<sup>130</sup> But nobody was more vulnerable to arguments *ad personam* than Kossakowski.

Once the decision had been made, further moral pressure could be applied to the bishops and their allies. According to Sapieha, who often discoursed at length on the value of time, 'infamy would stain those, who would defend excess, and regarding the needs of the Commonwealth with indifference, would agree with the opinion of the clergy and, following the clergy's sin, waste time'.<sup>131</sup>

During the day's break between sessions, Stanisław August wrote a long and important despatch to Deboli, which contributed to the breakdown of his relationship with Stackelberg.<sup>132</sup> He sent his version of the events regarding the bishopric of Cracow in French and *en clair*. Just before the session of 20 July Stackelberg had sent him a note: 'One means of regaining the empress is the nominations. I recommend to you, Sire, the bishop of Livonia and Ożarowski to this end. I ask this of you from your heart.' Stanisław August had replied the following morning, spelling out the risks of the ambassador's protégés being denounced and the royal prerogative further reduced. He promised consolation for Kossakowski, but not for Ożarowski. Surely the empress would understand that he could not restore good relations between Poland and Russia while embroiled with his nation. He reminded Stackelberg that he had followed his advice when the first Prussian

<sup>125</sup> 21 July. ASC 11, ff. 28–9, ASC 2, ff. 637–9.

<sup>126</sup> 21 July. ASC 2, ff. 640–3.

<sup>127</sup> 20 July. ASC 2, ff. 619–20.

<sup>128</sup> 20 July. ASC 2, f. 633.

<sup>129</sup> 21 July. ASC 2, ff. 640–3.

<sup>130</sup> ASC 2, f. 647–8. *Głos... Kossakowskiego biskupa inflantskiego... 21 miesiąca lipca 1789...*

<sup>131</sup> 21 July. ASC 2, ff. 643–5.

<sup>132</sup> SA to Deboli, 22 July 1789, ZP 414, ff. 361–77. See Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 457–8; Zielińska, *Studia z dziejów stosunków polsko-rosyjskich*, 214–15.

requests had been made on behalf of Krasicki, and had stuck to it. The real cause of the trouble, he argued, lay in Russia's inadequate support for him in the summer of 1788.

Just after the despatch had been sent, Stanisław August had another conversation with Stackelberg, following which he sent a postscript to catch the departing post. This time Stackelberg had begun 'in the sweetest tone', reassuring him that his sovereign had no intention of separating His Majesty from the nation. However, the ambassador failed to extract from the king either an undertaking to delay the nomination or the identity of the favoured candidate for Cracow. Stanisław August stressed the futility of resisting the tide—citing the 'flagellation' of Kossakowski, and Małachowski's impotent dismay.

The remaining, ciphered, part of the despatch explains why the king was so guarded in his replies to the ambassador. After authorizing Deboli to talk about the despatch's contents if he thought allowing the St Petersburg post office to copy out the non-ciphered portion insufficient, Stanisław August gave vent to years of resentment at Stackelberg's 'tyranny [...] in which by his arbitrariness he wished to establish this maxim, that it was wrong to try to obtain my graces without him, and equally wrong to doubt the goodness of his advice in anything'. Stackelberg had forced incompetent and corrupt creatures on the king, harming Russia's own interests. 'To that could be added a thick register of his rudeness, churlishness, lies, and various chicaneries.' Nevertheless, on several occasions he had helped the king, and if he were recalled, somebody worse—a client of Potemkin's—would probably take his place.

There remained the question of the new bishop of Cracow. Krasicki and Szembek no longer wanted the see. On 21 July the monarch asked Turski if he would accept Cracow. Turski prevaricated, as Cracow would give him no more income than at present, while he would incur heavy expenses. But he was tempted when informed by the king that Walewski had spoken of another 50,000 zlotys in revenue '*variis titulis*'. The king wanted the palatinate of Lublin and part of the revenues to be separated from the diocese of Cracow and attached to that of Chełm, which would provide for Garnysz. He also asked for something for Kossakowski and the future bishop of Smolensk, when the equalization of episcopal incomes took place.

On 23 July, hearing calls for the king to nominate the new bishops, Małachowski stated his view that as the sejm had abolished the Permanent Council, and not yet established another magistrature in its place, the distribution remained in the hands of His Majesty.<sup>133</sup> However, Suchodolski insisted that this prerogative had returned to the 'living nation' following the death of the Permanent Council. He wanted the palatinates to elect senators. For the moment, he called on the marshals to present the king with candidates for the bishoprics.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>133</sup> ASC 2, ff. 665–6. Cf. SA to Deboli, 25 July 1789, ZP 414, f. 379: 'the marshal answered clearly that he thought that after the abolition, it [the distribution] returns entirely to the king. Then Marshal Potocki said as if to his neighbours: Oh, not entirely.'

<sup>134</sup> ASC 2, ff. 666–7.



The king made his customary genuflection to liberty, before advising that the nuncio's note should be answered, politely and respectfully. He was 'in too enlightened (*światły*) a gathering' to have to spell out the damaging consequences of proceeding in such a matter without the agreement of Rome. He reiterated that his right of distribution, guaranteed by the *pacta conventa*, had returned to him on the abolition of the Permanent Council. He understood that nobody would think his prerogative misused in inviting Turski to become bishop of Cracow, and Naruszewicz to take the see of Łuck.<sup>135</sup>

The monarch had walked straight into a long-sprung trap. Sapieha had even warned him that an attack was planned, 'as if he wanted to assist me a little', but the king thought he could forestall it.<sup>136</sup> Stackelberg wrote that Stanisław August had ignored advice to await the return of more supporters. 'The king believed [...] that he would execute a political masterstroke.' With Lucchesini in mind, he commented: 'Never has anything more horrifying come out of a Sarmatico-Italian political crucible.'<sup>137</sup>

Suchodolski pounced: 'the nation [...] does not want to know the bishops of Cracow and Łuck, until it puts forward the candidates'.<sup>138</sup> That morning Turski had accepted the nomination to Cracow, but had asked the king if he might keep it 'in his pocket', in order to negotiate a better deal with the opposition.<sup>139</sup> The bishop of Łuck now thanked the king for the honour. He asked if the salary would meet the needs of the diocese. But crucially, he left the Estates to decide whether or not he deserved the elevation. Arguments ensued over the 'succession' to the Permanent Council with regard to the prerogative of nomination—had it reverted to the king or to the 'nation'?<sup>140</sup>

Sapieha declared that he would besmirch himself if he spoke against Turski, whose income should not suffer from his promotion. He proposed therefore that the king's nomination should be confirmed by the Estates, and a law on the prerogative made later. He hit Stanisław August's rhetorical weak spot: 'Your Majesty's complaisance and accession to the requests of the nation forecasts happiness for the whole country.' Stanisław August attempted to seize the opportunity which he thought Sapieha's proposal had given him: 'I have taken for my slogan the king with the nation, the nation with the king. This slogan will accompany me even to my grave, my steps will always accord with it.' He would be 'infinitely pleased' by an acclamation in favour of Turski and Naruszewicz, and would make no further nominations until the doubts on the procedure had been resolved. He also supported increasing Garnysz's income, ensuring that Turski was not impoverished, and funding the bishoprics of Livonia and Smolensk. He asked for approval of his choices.<sup>141</sup>

<sup>135</sup> ASC 2, ff. 668, 679–80. Copy in SA to Deboli, 25 July 1789, ZP 414, ff. 383–4.

<sup>136</sup> SA to Deboli, 25 July 1789, ZP 414, f. 379.

<sup>137</sup> Stackelberg to Ostermann, 25 July 1789, AVPRI F79-6-1261, despatch 57.

<sup>138</sup> ASC 2, f. 668.

<sup>139</sup> SA to Deboli, 25 July 1789, ZP 414, f. 379.

<sup>140</sup> ASC 2, ff. 668–75.

<sup>141</sup> ASC 2, ff. 669–72, 675, 683.

What the floundering monarch thought was a liferaft turned into a straw. He again discovered 'that my goodwill only encourages opponents to do me ever more damage'.<sup>142</sup> The mortifying silence which ensued was broken by Piotr Potocki, envoy for Bielsk, who put forward a project nominating Turski for Cracow, and refused to withdraw it when asked to do so by a royalist. Three envoys recommended Naruszewicz for Łuck.<sup>143</sup> Stackelberg pitied Stanisław August:

His Majesty cedes, humiliates himself, conjures, implores, and only asks consent for this sole nomination which in fact should not have been so dear to his heart, as it favours an enemy, in order to give the prince's own friend a place. Oh! Mr Chancellor, what falsehood has not characterized the subterfuge of the envoys and leaders of the opposition, who in order to change our system in Poland and prepare this revolution, would have this poor king feared as a dangerous and despotic prince, similar to the king of Sweden. It is enough to see him at the sejm to judge the temerity of the assertion. His throne resembles a descent from the cross.<sup>144</sup>

On Wednesday, 22 July, Stanisław Potocki informed his wife that he was working on a project for a 'useful ecclesiastical correction'. The equalization of the bishoprics at 100,000 złotys each, as soon as the current possessors died, would, he wrote, 'cut short all cabals and make them [the bishops] perfectly honest'.<sup>145</sup>

The following day Mateusz Butrymowicz presented the political and fiscal advantages of equalizing the bishoprics. He flattered the king, but his principal discursive strategy was to arouse anti-aristocratic sentiments in his audience:

The closer a republican government approaches equality, the better it is; the more wealth in the hands of some, the more intrigue and ambition fasten themselves in place. Your Majesty knew the need of this *equality* when from your happy accession to the throne you tried to introduce it; despite the complaints of the foremost families you admitted the noble estate to the senate and the ministry, you ended the violence of the powerful; the noble estate owes it to you that the poor walk alongside the rich.

In the printed version, Butrymowicz added that even if the treasury gained nothing, equalization would still benefit the country by preventing intrigue.<sup>146</sup> He handed in a project, which was in fact the 'useful ecclesiastical correction' drafted by Stanisław Potocki, who preferred to place himself 'beyond all reproach' rather than introduce it himself.<sup>147</sup> No evidence survives that money changed hands. But Butrymowicz found Warsaw ruinously expensive, and needy envoys were sometimes paid for introducing projects.<sup>148</sup> However, Małachowski believed that

<sup>142</sup> SA to Deboli, 25 July 1789, ZP 414, ff. 379–80.

<sup>143</sup> ASC 2, ff. 675, ff. 686–7.

<sup>144</sup> Stackelberg to Ostermann, 25 July 1789, AVPRI F79-6-1261, despatch 57. Quoted by Zielińska, *Studia z dziejów polsko-rosyjskich*, 215–16. Stackelberg's sidekick employed similar language: Aubert to Montmorin, 29 July 1789, AMAE, CP Pologne 316, despatch 29, ff. 390–1.

<sup>145</sup> S. K. Potocki to A. Potocka, 22 July 1789, APP 262, vol. i, p. 1199.

<sup>146</sup> Quotations from ASC 2, ff. 664–5. As the secretary recorded his speech normally, the longer printed version was probably produced later. *Głos... Butrymowicza... 23. Julii 1789...*

<sup>147</sup> The project is in ASC 12, f. 248. S. K. Potocki to A. Potocka, 24 July 1789, APP 262, vol. i, pp. 1206–7.

<sup>148</sup> See below, 204. Cf. Schulz, *Podróż inflanctczyka*, 235–6.

it was not in the Estates' power to equalize the dioceses, and called for a deputation to confer with the bishops and nuncio.<sup>149</sup>

Later that day, Stanisław Potocki voiced regret at the decision to seize part of the bishopric of Cracow's revenue. Nevertheless, he supported Butrymowicz's project for equalization (which was really his own), as it would enable intrigues and jealousies to be avoided (the sole motive he had revealed to his wife). Although he did not think that foreign powers should 'obstruct our decision', ecclesiastical funds, secured by many promises, should not be disposed of without the participation of the Apostolic See.<sup>150</sup> This speech was no doubt calculated to be irrefragable from all sides.

The project submitted by Butrymowicz was merged with another, 'preventing the numerous indecencies arising from the inequality of episcopal incomes'. The episcopal college would be required to consult the Holy See and submit a plan for more equal dioceses to the Estates within a year.<sup>151</sup> Nobody now objected to a deputation to consult the episcopate and the nuncio, so Garnysz named three senators chosen by the king, Małachowski nominated two envoys from the Crown, and Sapieha one from Lithuania. The session was then adjourned.<sup>152</sup>

Opening the session of 24 July, Małachowski called on the Estates to seek agreement with the clergy in order that the Fatherland be 'well governed (*rządna*) and happy'. He then had the merged project read out again.<sup>153</sup> After a short discussion, including a vigorous protest from Bishop Okęcki, '*zgoda*' was heard three times.<sup>154</sup>

As if its title left any doubt, the first sentence of the law *Fund for the Army* declared: 'Desiring increased public revenues and a certain fund for the army, we henceforth destine the vacant bishopric of Cracow and duchy of Siewierz, that is the estates thereof, for the payment of the army.' The Crown Treasury Commission was instructed to survey the estates and lease them out for six years to lay nobles by public auction. From the income, the commission would pay the bishop 100,000 zlotys per annum, unless the bishop preferred estates to the same value. In that case he would be admitted to the auction, on condition that the properties did not include those containing mineral deposits, precious stones, or manufactories. In an expression of distrust in Poniatowski's administration since 1782, the income was to be calculated on the basis of their condition during Bishop Sołtyk's health, without regard for contracts entered into 'by anybody' since that time. The text continued:

also desiring through the equalization of the income of all the bishops in our territories to provide for the requirements proper to their estate, we assign to the most and right

<sup>149</sup> ASC 2, ff. 665–6.

<sup>150</sup> ASC 2, ff. 672–3.

<sup>151</sup> ASC 12, f. 253. It was submitted by Onufry Morski (Podolia).

<sup>152</sup> ASC 2, ff. 675–8. The deputies were Józef Ankowicz, castellan of Sącz, Michał Walewski, palatine of Sieradz, Jan Zyberk, palatine of Brześć Litewski, Józef Ossoliński (Bielsk), Ksawery Działyński (Poznań), and Julian Niemcewicz (Livonia).

<sup>153</sup> ASC 2, f. 709.

<sup>154</sup> ASC 2, ff. 697–702.

reverend highness the prince primate and archbishop of Gniezno twice 100,000 złotys a year, to each of the other right reverend bishops having chairs in the senate 100,000 złotys each, to the most and right reverend metropolitan *ritus graeci uniti* 100,000, and to each of the right reverend bishops of that rite 50,000 złotys a year.

Current bishops were to be left in possession of their estates, but after their deaths or translations the Crown and Lithuanian treasury commissions were to survey the properties and lease them to the *szlachta* in the same way as for the bishopric of Cracow, leaving the future bishops their palaces in their cathedral cities, and in the primate's case his Warsaw palace as well. 'Ancient laws' permitting the elevation to bishoprics (in both rites) only of nobly born *szlachta* (not freshly ennobled persons) were renewed. However, the tax of 20 per cent was not to be deducted from the bishops' salaries, and they were free, if they wished, to lease lands up to the value of their salaries. 'As the equalizing of incomes between the bishops gives a motive to equalize their duties', and as 'in all our aims we wish for the blessing and help of the Holy Apostolic See, as the head of the Church', a deputation was named to confer with the bishops and the nuncio about the extent of dioceses and other matters requiring resolution between the the clerical and lay estates. It was to make a proposal within three months. 'And to this deputation, every one, lay and clerical, will be free to send their thoughts and projects.'<sup>155</sup>

The same day, the prince-bishop of Warmia left Warsaw and returned to the consolations of his vegetable garden.<sup>156</sup> Krasicki's political role was over, but the consequences of his arrival in Warsaw were far-reaching.

## 6. A POLITICAL TURNING POINT

De Caché penned a devastating sketch in the aftermath of the sejm's decisions. Neither the king, nor the bishops, nor even the Potockis were able 'to resist the dictatorial will of the knightly Estate, or rather that of a few rapacious members; so that the sejm's sessions increasingly appear as perpetual chaos, or rather, as a tumultuous noble democracy (*einer tumultarischen adelichen Demokratie*), in which the king is forced, as it were, into passivity; while the senate with the ministry and the bishops seem to take only a small part.' 'The king's constant indulgence and almost boundless forbearance' served only to diminish his authority and prerogatives. He had not 'dared to oppose the straw trumpets (*dem brausenden Strohen*) of the so-called shouting patriots (*schreijenden Patrioten*)', and had fallen into despondency.<sup>157</sup>

Franz August Essen, who had been taken by surprise, on the one hand pointed to the 'unapostolic conduct' of some of the clergy and in particular the primate's

<sup>155</sup> VL, ix, 103–5.

<sup>156</sup> I. Krasicki to A. Krasicki, 10 August 1789, *Korespondencja Ignacego Krasickiego*, ii, 425–7. Goliński, *Ignacy Krasicki*, 375.

<sup>157</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 25 July 1789, HHStA, Polen II 51, despatch 562, ff. 63–4. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i, 417.

ambition to join the sees of Cracow and Gniezno. Had the king nominated a new bishop immediately, the clergy would not have suffered this mortification. On the other hand, he blamed a 'faction' of fifteen to twenty 'young men, pretended zealots, deranged in their business, and other turbulent persons', who 'had got it into their heads that they must at any price have an army of 100,000', for a tumultuous and ill-considered example of 'a lack of respect for the most sacred transactions' and 'gross machiavellianism' that could well damage Poland's credibility as a potential ally with Prussia.<sup>158</sup> Lucchesini also noted that the value of the Polish throne had fallen: 'the sejm, in restricting the king's authority ever further, in despoiling him of his privileges and all the means of attaching the nation to him, also makes the kingship less attractive.'<sup>159</sup> For Daniel Hailes, 'all these retrenchments prove, in the strongest manner, the eagerness with which the Poles look forward to the permanent establishment of their Army'. He missed the significance of the royal prerogative.<sup>160</sup>

Hailes's very long-sightedness allowed him to discern the collective interests at stake. However strongly personal factors weighed with Suchodolski and his allies, the undoubted and pressing need to raise funds for the army was, as the law's name indicates, the unassailably patriotic argument used to persuade the sejm. As Essen put it, they 'could carry along all the rest for the reason, that an army of 100,000 men is, in this effervescence, the rattle (*hochet*) of the nation'.<sup>161</sup> Although the law on the bishoprics might have been avoided, had the principals chosen to play differently, the law undoubtedly reflected the collective interest of the szlachta. The circumstances in which it was passed show the power of anti-clerical and patriotic discourses.

According to the king, Małachowski was 'almost in tears lamenting the breaking of the right of property'.<sup>162</sup> The marshal 'has been so worried these past few days, seeing how intrigue and enthusiasm (*zapal*) really govern everything, and particularly how it has manifested itself against the clergy and myself, without any regard for the marshal of the sejm, so that he thought of resigning his staff, until the castellan of Czersk and his own wife persuaded him not to'.<sup>163</sup>

The episcopal nominations and with them, the royal prerogative, remained in abeyance. Turski had not dared to thank the king formally as a senator. The monarch thought that Turski might yet refuse the promotion if he faced a cut in income.<sup>164</sup> The king took no step towards nominating a new bishop of Smolensk, but some thought it a prize worth pursuing.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>158</sup> Essen to Stutterheim, 25 July, 1 August 1789, SHStA Loc. 3570, vol. XXVib, ff. 52–3, 60–2.

<sup>159</sup> Lucchesini to Frederick William II, 29 July 89, GStAPK I. HA Rep. 9 Polen 27–235, despatch 81, f. 3.

<sup>160</sup> Hailes to the duke of Leeds, 25 July 1789, NA, FO 62/2, f. 497.

<sup>161</sup> Essen to Stutterheim, 1 August 1789, SHStA Loc. 3570, vol. XXVib, f. 62.

<sup>162</sup> SA to Deboli, 22 July 1789, ZP 414, f. 376.

<sup>163</sup> SA to Deboli, 25 July 1789, ZP 414, ff. 379–82. Cf. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 417.

<sup>164</sup> SA to Deboli, 25 July 1789, ZP 414, ff. 379–82.

<sup>165</sup> Revd Kajetan Sołtyk, secretary of the Crown, wrote to Ghigiotti on 28 July 1789, AGHig. 686a, f. 5. The next day Ghigiotti conveyed the king's recognition of K. Sołtyk's claims, which he could not

Branicki's party had not yet completely abandoned its aspirations for Szembek. At the end of July the palatine of Sieradz suggested to the castellan of Czersk that the king might console the bishop of Płock with a coadjutorship for his nephew, Onufry Szembek. Ostrowski answered Walewski: 'You spoilt the episcopal business yourselves. Reducing Cracow to 100,000 when Szembek has twice that from Płock ensured he would not go to Cracow. And as, apart from that, you again obstructed the distribution, how can the king now think of making a coadjutor?'<sup>166</sup> The bait was the royal prerogative.<sup>167</sup>

On 27 July the king had a difficult conversation with Ignacy Potocki, who suggested that the sejmiks elect palatines and the king choose ministers. He was not yet sure about the bishops or castellans. The king stood by his prerogative of nomination as promised by the *pacta conventa*.<sup>168</sup> Nevertheless, the dispute had for the first time publicly pitched the king together with Ignacy and Stanisław Potocki, as well as Małachowski, against Branicki and his allies. After Stanisław Potocki had called on 28 July for the appointment of hetmans for life to cease, he lamented the outcome of the the episcopal question to the king (despite his covert role in the solution). He proposed that they cooperate to prevent such things recurring.<sup>169</sup> Soon afterwards the king warned the Potockis that 'these few gentleman-orators, who, it can be said, have governed the entire sejm for some time, will drive us to ever worse things, unless we take them in hand'.<sup>170</sup> Deboli encouraged both sides to work together.<sup>171</sup> Stanisław August and Ignacy Potocki would long regard each other with suspicion, but with hindsight these weeks may be identified as an early stage in the realignment of the sejm from a basic polarity between the victorious republican opposition and a royalist rump to one between enlightened 'patriots' and 'old republicans'.<sup>172</sup> Of course, the Potockis cared far less about clerical property than they did about an alliance with Prussia.

In some respects, the affair of the bishopric of Cracow may have damaged the prospects of a Prusso-Polish alliance. A year later, in a memorial intended for Frederick William II, Kołłątaj complained that in the first year of the sejm Lucchesini had been swayed by the flatteries of the 'Sapieha party' and so given them excessive credit. 'They seemed to govern the whole sejm in his name.' Many 'virtuous citizens' became disillusioned with Prussia, and only in Lucchesini's

satisfy in 'les circonstances présentes', having to 'faire un choix selon le goût de la Nation'. AGHig. 686b, f. 25.

<sup>166</sup> SA to Deboli, 1 August 1789, ZP 414, f. 391.

<sup>167</sup> SA to Deboli, 29 July 1789, ZP 419, f. 389.

<sup>168</sup> SA to Deboli, 29 July, 1 August 1789, ZP 414, ff. 387–9, 391.

<sup>169</sup> SA to Deboli, 29 July, 1 August 1789, ZP 414, ff. 389, 391. Cf. S. K. Potocki to A. Potocka, 31 July 1789, APP 262, vol. i, p. 1211, and I. Potocki to Aloy, 29 July 1789, APP 277, ff. 65–6.

<sup>170</sup> SA to Deboli, 12 August 1789, ZP 414, f. 398.

<sup>171</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 467–8.

<sup>172</sup> Stackelberg wrote to Ostermann on 22 August 1789 that 'le schisme entre les Potockys et le parti Sapieha va en augmentant.' AVPRI F79-6-1262, despatch 65. E. Rostworowski, *Legends i fakty XVIII w.* (Warsaw, 1963), 289–90, dates the beginning of this process from the agreement reached on 24 September 1789 between the king and Małachowski and S. K. Potocki to cooperate against the supporters of the hetman.

absence was it possible to overcome the 'Sapieha party', and take steps towards concluding the alliance (in March 1790). Kołłątaj identified a vital reason for the so-called Sapieha party's strength during the debates over the bishoprics: the impression that they had Prussian support.<sup>173</sup>

On the other hand, the affair had helped to clear an obstacle to the alliance by inflicting a grievous blow to the king's relationship with Stackelberg. In the immediate aftermath of the *débauche*, Stackelberg pitied Stanisław August. The ambassador evidently did not realize the extent to which the king felt their relationship had cooled.<sup>174</sup> The bishopric of Cracow provided Deboli with arguments, as he pleaded with the king to emancipate himself from Stackelberg.<sup>175</sup> The ambassador, claimed Deboli, had no instructions to support Kossakowski; nor was he authorized to support the primate's ambitions.<sup>176</sup> Deboli even suggested that Stackelberg had put forward the idea of partitioning the bishopric, in order to trip up Krasicki.<sup>177</sup>

Deboli showed both rounds of the correspondence between Stanisław August and Stackelberg to Ostermann. Catherine herself drafted the reprimand sent to Stackelberg on 9 August. She was resolved at this juncture not to do anything which could look like interference in Poland's internal affairs, so Stackelberg should not alienate those who might yet assist in combating Prussian influence, 'when the delirium of liberty and independence, which agitates the Polish nation, threatens to sweep along even those who still appear to hold out for us'. The rescript expressed Catherine's confidence that the king's choices would not contradict Russian interests, and added: 'the empress, in procuring places and other advantages to the pretended friends of Russia, has often been repaid only with ingratitude'. Stackelberg was told to regain the lost ground with only those means suggested by his 'prudence and dexterity'.<sup>178</sup>

Before receiving this rescript, Stackelberg decided for the first time to complain about Stanisław August in a despatch. He probably took this step when he guessed that the king had complained about him. The king's 'weakness' (contrasted with the primate's 'firmness') meant that he could not be counted on. Stackelberg was stung by the reprimand, and answered it at length. He justified 'the invincible reasons which led me to write to the king of Poland, so that he would the substitute the nomination of persons who had braved the fury of the day in order to show their attachment to the empress, for Prussian creatures and even subjects, such as the bishop of Warmia'.<sup>179</sup>

<sup>173</sup> BPAU 186, pp. 154–8.

<sup>174</sup> SA to Deboli, 29 July 1789, ZP 414, f. 387.

<sup>175</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 459–68.

<sup>176</sup> Deboli to SA, 21 July, 24 July, 4 August, 18 August, 25 August, 28 August 1789, ZP 419, ff. 244–5, 242–50, 260–1, 272–3, 276–7, 279–81.

<sup>177</sup> Deboli to SA, 14 August 1789, ZP 419, ff. 270–1.

<sup>178</sup> Zielińska, *Studia z dziejów polsko-rosyjskich*, 216–17. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 457. Deboli to SA, 31 July, 14 August 1789, ZP 419, ff. 254–6, 270–1. Ostermann to Stackelberg, 9 August 1789, AVPRI F79-6-196, ff. 45–50.

<sup>179</sup> Zielińska, *Studia z dziejów polsko-rosyjskich*, 216–19. Stackelberg to Ostermann, 16 August, 22 August 1789, AVPRI, F79-6-1262.

From this point onwards, although Stackelberg behaved courteously to the king, he sought to undermine him in his despatches. However, the ambassador failed to rebuild his own credit in St Petersburg, before the signing of the Prusso-Polish alliance sealed his dismissal early in April 1790.<sup>180</sup> Despite Stanisław August's growing freedom from Stackelberg, he paid Kossakowski 2,000 ducats (36,000 złotys) out of his own purse as compensation for Cracow. Without Deboli's encouragement, the king might yet have slipped back into the shadow of the ambassador.<sup>181</sup>

Saluzzo was said to be 'plunged into the greatest sadness'. Ghigiotti warned Michał Poniatowski on 25 July that some '*soi disants patriotes*' were already insinuating to the nuncio that the king and primate were not wholly unhappy with the outcome. It was just as well, he continued, that Saluzzo was proposing to visit the primate the following day, when they could console themselves with *cioccolato*.<sup>182</sup>

The affair of the bishoprics left Michał Poniatowski badly bruised. He retired to his estate at Jabłonna outside Warsaw.<sup>183</sup> He could see no way of stopping 'this madness (*démence*), which has taken hold of all heads', and was so desperate that he twice asked Aubert to request 'some good counsel' from Louis XVI.<sup>184</sup> Announcing his intention to go abroad, he explained to Stanisław Małachowski that 'after the paroxysm of a dull fever, weakened eyes and legs and negligible sleep make me entirely unfit for work and ceremonies in town'.<sup>185</sup> He was reported in Warsaw to be 'truly weak, unable to sleep, and imagining some *phantasmata*'.<sup>186</sup> After he had left, he admitted to Ghigiotti that the 'unhappy affair' of the bishoprics had worsened his health.<sup>187</sup>

Nearly two years later, Stanisław August represented the primate's departure as 'absolutely necessary'. His presence would have delayed and perhaps prevented the revolution of 3 May 1791.<sup>188</sup> It is generally accepted that the king asked his brother to go, or at least participated in the decision.<sup>189</sup> However, one contemporary reported that the king tried to persuade the primate to stay,<sup>190</sup> and we can only speculate as to whether or not the primate believed that the general '*démence*' had affected his brother. It seems more likely that the primate saw as little point in the kind of counter-attack suggested by Stackelberg as the king. Three and a half years later, he simply stated that he had to leave, whereas the king had to stay and

<sup>180</sup> Zielińska, *Studia z dziejów polsko-rosyjskich*, 219–47.

<sup>181</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 459, 463 n. 12. SA to Deboli, 12 August 1789, ZP 414, f. 402.

<sup>182</sup> Ghigiotti to MJP, 25 July 1789, AGHig. 515b, ff. 31–2, with a draft of a note to Saluzzo on the reverse. Saluzzo to Ghigiotti, 25 July 1789, AGHig. 646a, ff. 19–20.

<sup>183</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 25 July 1789, HHStA, Polen II 51, despatch 562, f. 64.

<sup>184</sup> Aubert to Montmorin, 3 August, 2 September 1789, AMAE, CP Pologne 316, despatches 30, 33, ff. 394–6, 440–1.

<sup>185</sup> MJP to S. Małachowski, Jabłonna, 2 August 1789, AMS Poniatowski A I 27, p. 641.

<sup>186</sup> Gurski to Świejkowski, 2 September 1789, Ossol. 6353, p. 533.

<sup>187</sup> MJP to Ghigiotti, 6 September 1789, AGHig. 515a, vol. ii, f. 83.

<sup>188</sup> SA to Maurice Glayre, 25 June 1791, in Stanisław August and M. Glayre, *Correspondance relative aux partages de la Pologne*, ed. E. Mottaz (Paris, 1897), 266. E. Rostworowski corrected the date (given as 21 June) after inspecting the original.

<sup>189</sup> J. Michalski, *Stanisław August Poniatowski* (Warsaw, 2009), 54.

<sup>190</sup> Gurski to Świejkowski, 2 September 1789, Ossol. 6353, p. 533.



yield.<sup>191</sup> At the time Stanisław August told Deboli that the primate, 'gnawed by all the vexations, which the present sejm has given me, him, and the clergy in general, has suffered significantly in health' and would seek medical treatment in Breslau. He was worried that the primate's departure might 'cause more talk, and even malicious designs; for among the light heads, of whom there are plenty in Poland at present, there is forming an idea of emulating in Poland what happened in France from 14 to 16 July. God grant that they would rather emulate the French in what they did at their sejm on 4 August.'<sup>192</sup> Ever conscious of the parallels between himself and Louis XVI, perhaps he saw his brother in the role of the count of Artois.

Michał Poniatowski left Warsaw on 31 August.<sup>193</sup> He travelled via Gniezno, where on 9 September he made a belated ingress to his cathedral, assisted by the nobles of the local tax commission. He made a short speech on respect for religion and the clergy, gave a dinner and 'good wine' for fifty provincial worthies, stayed the night, and never worshipped at the shrine of St Adalbert again. After arriving in Breslau he announced his intention to go to Italy, and made formal arrangements for the administration of the archdiocese in his absence.<sup>194</sup> Despite their political differences, he also asked Ignacy Potocki to look after the Commission for National Education.<sup>195</sup>

The primate's departure removed an obstacle to a rapprochement between the king and the Puławy set. But more than a year of fencing between Stanisław August and Ignacy Potocki followed, before this realignment could be accomplished.<sup>196</sup> The challenge of avoiding a schism with Rome provided one area of cooperation.

<sup>191</sup> MJP to Massalski, Warsaw, 16 January 1793, in Ł. Kądziera, 'Prymas Michał Poniatowski wobec Targowicy', *PH*, 85 (1994), 433–42, at 437.

<sup>192</sup> SA to Deboli, 26 August 1789, ZP 414, ff. 431–2.

<sup>193</sup> Józef Konstanty Bogusławski to Marcin Poczobut, [Warsaw, after 16 September 1789], VUB F2 DC 38, f. 31.

<sup>194</sup> Sołtys, *Opat z San Michele*, 60. Acta Capituli Gnesnensis, AAG ACap. B39, ff. 186–95. *Mowa j. o. xcia jmcı prymasa przy pierwszym jego wstępie do archikatedry gnieźnieńskiej dnia 9 września roku 1789 miana* (Warsaw, [1789?]). J. Kitowicz, *Pamiętniki czyli historia polska*, ed. P. Matuszewska and Z. Lewinówna (Warsaw, 1971), 421–2 (quotation). MJP to S. Małachowski, Breslau, 14 September 1789, AMS Poniatowski, A I 27, pp. 644–5.

<sup>195</sup> MJP to I. Potocki, Breslau, 16 September 1789, AMS Poniatowski, A I 27, pp. 646–8.

<sup>196</sup> See Rostworowski, *Legends i fakty*, 288–354.

# PART II

## COMPROMISE

We do not treat you in the French manner.

Jacek Jezierski to the bishops, 29 May 1790

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## 6

### Pamphleteers, journalists, and the Church: summer 1789–spring 1791

Following the abolition of the Permanent Council on 19 January 1789, the discussions between pamphleteers over the form of government subsided, before re-erupting early in 1790 regarding the succession to the throne. This left time for several ‘great treatises’ to be written.<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiastical polemics had a different trajectory. The exchanges continued furiously until the secularization of the estates of the bishopric of Cracow. They would re-ignite in the middle of 1791, and continue to the end of 1792. The intervening two years, although lacking sustained polemics, nevertheless witnessed some of the most radical attacks on the clergy, and some of the most effective defences. Meanwhile, periodicals drew contrasting conclusions from events in France and the Habsburg lands. Negotiations between the sejm’s ‘clerical deputation’, the episcopal college, and the nuncio took place in an atmosphere affected by works touching on the clergy. Among the latter were three of the aforementioned ‘great treatises’.

#### 1. PAWLIKOWSKI, KOŁŁATAJ, STASZIC

The sejm’s seizure of episcopal property was condemned in *Political Thoughts for Poland*, which appeared in August 1789. The author, Józef Pawlikowski, came from a former noble family that had derogated into petty burghers. He later became Kościuszko’s secretary, and one of the Polish ‘Jacobins’. In 1788–9 he was merely a student or recent graduate of Cracow University. His ‘different experience’ led him to the most monarchist views expressed by any writer during the Polish Revolution.<sup>2</sup> For the oppressed, the nobility’s freedom to participate in lawmaking was meaningless—the only liberty was freedom from fear and violence. Prussia did not have a free government, but Frederick the Great had given the peasants freedom and security. The king was the best guarantor of the security of all from the threat of ‘republican despotism’. In short, Pawlikowski prized negative over positive liberty.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, ch. 3.

<sup>2</sup> [J. Pawlikowski], *Mysli polityczne dla Polski* (Warsaw, 1789). Pawlikowski to SA, 2 August 1788, quoted after Rostworowski, *Legends i fakty*, 212.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. I. Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford, 1969), 129–31. Pawlikowski nevertheless believed that civil liberty was best secured in a free state, and would retain the legislative and scrutinizing

His earlier pamphlet, *On the Polish Serfs* (1788), was the best informed work on the peasants produced during the Polish Revolution. Nobody else wrote with such understanding about mass alcoholism. He believed that both 'enlightenment' and personal freedom were preconditions of the 'happiness' that was the right of every human being, as well as of flourishing agriculture. Such 'enlightenment', to be spread by the clergy, included a Providential religion that promised eschatological justice for all. *On the Polish Serfs* was admired by those who wrote on the peasants, but it was not in the mainstream of the debate on the clergy.<sup>4</sup>

Pawlikowski was complimentary about the primate—he had begun to write *Political Thoughts*, in part, with a view to help secure him the bishopric of Cracow. Besides the 'violation' of episcopal property, he criticized the higher taxing of the clergy compared to the nobility. Both acts, he contended, were among the rash steps taken by the sejm: in raising taxes and the size of the army beyond the ability of the country to support them, and in breaking with Russia.<sup>5</sup> Clergymen, he insisted, had equal rights and duties to other citizens. Therefore the lower clergy should have its own representatives in the sejm (because 'one estate will not prescribe a tax to another properly without its participation'), and priests should be eligible for all civil offices. Moreover, 'we want to have enlightened priests, so why do we strip them of their property?'<sup>6</sup> Any reform of the clergy required their participation and consent. That applied to the regulars too, and he warned against arbitrary closures of the type imposed by Joseph II. He repeated his call in *On the Polish Serfs* for the regular clergy to 'enlighten' the rural population, but added that the regulars themselves should first be 'enlightened' and 'patented' in the academies.<sup>7</sup> Seizing the educational fund would harm the cause of 'enlightenment', without which 'the nation cannot have good citizens and well trained defenders'.<sup>8</sup>

The tone throughout his two works is that of a passionate, but practical campaigner against injustice. Peasant, burgher, Jew, and clergyman—all were vulnerable to the licence of the szlachta. Pawlikowski's radical strain of Enlightenment in social questions led him, for the moment, to espouse the alliance between throne and altar. Although *Political Thoughts* seems to have circulated widely, it provoked no polemics.<sup>9</sup>

Hugo Kołłątaj's *Political Law of the Polish Nation* appeared in December 1789. It had been planned as the fourth part of the *Letters of an Anonymous Correspondent*, but the political temperature had dropped, reducing the need for overwhelming rhetoric.<sup>10</sup> *Political Law* was written as a legislative project. But it still was a

functions of the sejm. Rostworowski, *Legends i fakty*, 247–59. See also Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 134–9; ead., *Regina libertas*, 37, 45, 140.

<sup>4</sup> [J. Pawlikowski], *O poddanych polskich*, in *MDSC*, i. 11–68. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 183–4.

<sup>5</sup> Rostworowski, *Legends i fakty*, 212, 229, 232–3.

<sup>6</sup> [Pawlikowski], *Mysli polityczne*, 125.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 50 n. 27, 116–27. [Id.], *O poddanych polskich*, in *MDSC*, i. 63. Rostworowski, *Legends i fakty*, 240, 245–7.

<sup>8</sup> [Pawlikowski], *Mysli polityczne*, 236.

<sup>9</sup> Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 139.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 131–2.

didactic, persuasive work. The foreword appealed to the verdict of implacable 'Truth', using quasi-religious imagery to reinforce the message that the nation's fate lay in the balance.<sup>11</sup> Poland's liberty could be preserved on the basis of three 'principles'—enlightenment, religion, and common defence. These principles implied three 'serving' estates—the teaching, clerical, and military estates, without separate legislative status, but whose individual members enjoyed the rights of either the landed or urban estates. Kołłątaj wished to extend civil liberty to all inhabitants of the Commonwealth, but to vest political rights only in landed and urban property-owners<sup>12</sup>

The introduction hinted at Kołłątaj's personal theology. Instead of invoking God in the Holy Trinity, he began: 'In the name of God the Creator and Ruler of the entire world'.<sup>13</sup> Among the cardinal laws deriving from the law of nature he included 'do unto others as you would have others do unto you'. Only in the third chapter, dealing with political laws applying to one country, did he deal in outline with the status of the dominant Catholic faith.

The articles on the 'serving estates' consisted chiefly of extended notes, which carried the task of persuading the readers. Members of the teaching, clerical, and military estates brought benefit to society as a whole—summed up as enlightenment, guardianship of morals, and security—and so deserved esteem. Kołłątaj suggested that bishops should sit in the senate, that noble-born clergymen should be elected to the upper chamber, and that *plebani* from other backgrounds should be similarly elected to the lower, or urban, chamber. If clergymen sat as members of the estates into which they were born, they could not be deprived of their birth-rights. These proposals would have considerably increased the clerical representation in the sejm.<sup>14</sup>

Kołłątaj provided a politically grounded, yet lyrical justification of the need for religion in society. Human laws should not attempt to enter a man's house, disturb the tranquillity of his family, or penetrate the recesses of his heart, for it was only there that religion began its work: 'so sweetly, that even the willing fulfillment of human laws is for the most part the effect of religion on hearts convinced of its holiness'.<sup>15</sup> In a long footnote Kołłątaj distinguished between religion and faith. Faith was the work of reason, which was inclined to trust in authority—as opposed to the 'experience' that followed the senses. Religion meant a strict obligation to somebody, and was the work of the heart. Natural religion expressed gratitude to the Creator. Revealed religion could bind the heart, when the authority of the revealer inclined reason to faith, and faith inclined the heart to religion. Kołłątaj downgraded the mysterious: the faith was 'not a set of mere unfathomable mysteries, these mysteries are only like a seal which gives authority to the entire law of the Gospel'. The Gospel inclined people to obey the law of nature, and so was the most reliable guardian of consciences. So government should protect and spread

<sup>11</sup> [H. Kołłątaj], *Prawo polityczne narodu polskiego* . . . in Kołłątaj, *Listy anonima i Prawo polityczne*, ii. 199–203.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 206–7.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 212. He did include the Holy Trinity in the formula of the royal oath. *Ibid.* ii. 231.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 286–9, 291–3, 314–15. <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 292–3.

that faith. Non-Catholic confessions—‘heretics’ and ‘schismatics’—could be tolerated for reasons of public tranquillity. Kołłątaj’s ecclesiology showed that he saw religious diversity as an unwelcome problem, to be dealt with by political means. For it was also in the interests of government that teachers of the true faith should be both enlightened by learning and pure in morals. ‘Unenlightenment’ made a ‘disuniate’ as fanatical, vengeful, and bloodthirsty as a Muslim. In France, depravity arising from the weakening of religion was now having the same effect as fanaticism during the wars of religion. Providing materially for an educated and virtuous clergy was therefore a public necessity in every country and every religion.<sup>16</sup>

A further long footnote justified Kołłątaj’s opposition to the application of ecclesiastical property to any other aim than faith and religion. This was proved from first principles—all property derived from a man’s ownership of his own strengths and talents. Work gave title to the land, implying that millions of people who worked the land might violently demand its return. This was not a path Kołłątaj wished to tread. But he used the threat to warn against depriving the clergy of its property. The clergy had been given land in return for the performance of duties. If ecclesiastical property were to be seized in order to lighten the burden of taxes on the szlachta, there would be no defence against the just demands of those who laboured on the land. The nobility had also received its estates in return for services rendered. The example of France, as well as lessons from antiquity, proved that the threat to property was real. Whether the clergy were wealthy or poor was largely indifferent to the preaching of the Gospel, but justice and the secure right of property were essential to societies. Moreover, it was necessary to honour the founders’ intentions by maintaining the essential purposes of their bequests. Government was the supervisor, not the owner of ecclesiastical property. In a more sophisticated fashion than his clerical contemporaries, Kołłątaj repeated their argument to nobles: take our property, and yours will be next.<sup>17</sup>

Government’s power of supervision extended, in Kołłątaj’s view, to obliging the episcopate of both rites to convene a national synod. This was his key proposal concerning the Catholic Church. The synod would reform the hierarchy and ecclesiastical courts, and establish an ecclesiastical tribunal, under the presidency of the nuncio. It should codify Polish ecclesiastical laws, redistribute funds, rearrange dioceses and parishes, and unify worship and teaching, even between rites. And this collection of laws and regulations should be protected by the state and bind the entire clergy of the Commonwealth. A delegation appointed by the sejm would ensure that everything decided by the synod harmonized with the projected constitution. If such an instruction sounded Erastian, he demanded that the sejm send the entire matter of the diocese of Cracow to this synod, without enforcing the law passed on 24 July 1789.<sup>18</sup>

Kołłątaj would also require the consent of the civil authorities before the publication of any papal bulls or *brevi*. However, annates and the payments

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., ii. 294–300.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., ii. 301–10.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., ii. 312.

made to Rome by newly nominated bishops should be left to a concordat, and dispensations currently reserved to the pope should be left to him. Government should protect all that it accepted from the synod and from Rome, but it should never interfere in matters of faith, or of discipline that derived from faith. The power of ecclesiastical courts in matters of faith and religion, including divorces, extended to all those who professed the dominant Catholic faith. Appeals would stop with the national ecclesiastical tribunal. The form of government would include an ecclesiastical commission, presided over by one of the bishops, alongside those for the treasury, military, foreign affairs, police, and education. Much here sounds Josephist, especially the provision to unify worship and teaching, but the Church would retain more autonomy, and Rome more prerogatives, than in the Habsburg Monarchy.<sup>19</sup>

Kołątaj did not consider any notes necessary to explain his proposals for non-Catholics and non-Christians. All persons were entitled to the security of their persons and property, and to worship publicly as long as their faith did not contradict the law of nature or prevent obedience to government and the laws. This was a much more general principle than the short list of 'tolerated faiths' accepted by the Catholic hierarchy. The heterodox would be subject to the same courts as other citizens, and their hierarchies would not be able to direct any material interests, even in questions of charity. In a provision aimed at the Orthodox Church, all hierarchies would have to be independent of any foreign powers, on pain of treatment as rebels. All non-Catholic and non-Christian schools and seminaries would be subject to the Commission for National Education. Kołątaj declined to specify the offices that might be opened to non-Catholic Christians, but he highlighted the urgency of the need to resolve this question in the towns. Mixed commissions could resolve disputes between faiths. It would be forbidden to convert to another faith from Catholicism, and the king and queen would have to be Catholics. Kołątaj's toleration was thus unlimited by theological considerations, but was subordinated to those of *raison d'état*.<sup>20</sup>

A single civic education would contribute to the moral unity of the nation—something religion, divided along confessional lines, could not. Kołątaj recognized that many nations had voluntarily joined themselves to the Polish Crown and constituted the Commonwealth, but as a single language signified the unity of the nation, Polish should be the only language of schools, except in ecclesiastical learning, where the language should be appropriate to the rite.<sup>21</sup> Kołątaj did his best to raise the status of education. The educational fund could not be used for any other purpose. Members of the teaching estate would be guaranteed the rights either of nobles, if they were noble-born, or of burghers, if they were not (even if they came from the peasantry). Moreover, without prejudicing those individual

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., ii. 311–15, 228–9, 263–4. Cf. M. Skrzypek, 'Józefinizm w polskim Oświeceniu', *Przegląd Humanistyczny*, 38/2 (1994), 41–56, at 51–2.

<sup>20</sup> [Kołątaj], *Prawo polityczne*, ii. 315–18, 228–9.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., ii. 245–7.



rights, the universities of Cracow and Wilno would each be entitled to elect from among their academics two envoys to the sejm.<sup>22</sup>

Kołątaj's prescriptions for religious and educational matters were an integral part of his vision of the nation as whole. But he was troubled by an ultimately insoluble republican dilemma. Perhaps as a result of the sejm's arbitrary decisions on ecclesiastical property, perhaps also because of events in France, he now feared that an absolute Commonwealth could imperil liberty. If 'the legislative power has no limits', despotism could afflict republics. Indeed, he continued, 'a bad government is that, which allows no other laws than the will of the people, which is always changeable and fickle; in a bad government, even under a republic, it is possible to be a slave, and in a good government, even under a monarch, it is possible to be free.'<sup>23</sup> This was a more cautious message, more akin to Montesquieu, than in the *Letters of an Anonymous Correspondent*. Although the position of the king would remain constricted, Kołątaj had taken a step towards cooperation with Stanisław August. Kołątaj sought the answer to his dilemma in immutable cardinal laws. His constitutional machinery would have been cumbersome, as it was based on the premise that a society, once ordered, would not require significant changes in its government. This reflected a static, universalist view of human nature. In this sense at least, he can be called a Utopian.<sup>24</sup>

As Kołątaj's *Political Law* developed *Letters of an Anonymous Correspondent*, so Stanisław Staszic's *Warnings for Poland* took up where *Considerations on the Life of Jan Zamoyski* left off. Staszic demanded political rights for the burghers, emancipation of the peasants, and an hereditary throne. He couched his arguments in the hard-nosed interests of the szlachta, and cast the magnates as arch-villains responsible for Poland's predicament.<sup>25</sup> As in his previous work, he mixed invective and theory. Like Rousseau, he ruthlessly subordinated individuals and minorities to the collective good of all. Staszic denounced as a 'violation' all wielding of power which contravened the interests of the nation, whether by a despotic ruler or by a despotic minority of the nation.<sup>26</sup> He warned of the anger of Providence towards Polish nobles for the cruel slavery they inflicted on the peasants, who should form the nation with them.<sup>27</sup>

According to Staszic, 'apart from a *pleban* and a bishop, every other clergyman is unnecessary'. A parish priest was a useful official of the state, and so deserved respect, but all 'useless' monasteries, prebends, collegiate churches, and such like should be abolished. After the income of *plebani* had been improved and made proportionate, the surplus funds should go to the army. He approved of the

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., ii. 289–91.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., ii. 250–1. Cf. C.-L. de Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois*, book 12, ch. 1, in id., *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris, 1964), 598.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. J. Łukowski, 'Od Konarskiego do Kołątaja, czyli od realizmu do utopii', in Ł. Kądziała et al. (eds.), *Trudne stulecie. Studia z dziejów XVII i XVIII wieku* (Warsaw, 1994), 184–94.

<sup>25</sup> [S. Staszic], *Przestrogi dla Polski*, in Staszic, *Pisma filozoficzne i społeczne*, i. 173–343, at 175–6, 225. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 145–50.

<sup>26</sup> [Staszic], *Przestrogi*, 191–207. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *Regina libertas*, 104.

<sup>27</sup> [Staszic], *Przestrogi*, 289–91.

decision to equalize the incomes of bishops, which would turn servile courtiers into 'friends and defenders of the country'.<sup>28</sup> *Warnings for Poland* was among the most radical prescriptions for the clergy published during the Revolution. But although mostly written in 1789, it was only published in May 1790, by which time the public was absorbed by the polemics over the succession to the throne.<sup>29</sup>

It is instructive to compare the three authors' proposals concerning Jews. All would ban them from producing and selling alcohol, at least temporarily, and all expected schooling in the Polish language to make 'Poles' of them. But they desired different degrees of pressure to achieve their 'civilizing' (*ucywilizowanie*)—as Pawlikowski put it. Staszic, who compared Jews to a plague of locusts, was the harshest. Pawlikowski recoiled from coercion, and insisted on respect not only for Jews' faith, but also for the culinary and sumptuary requirements of their religion. Kołłątaj, on the other hand, drew up a timetable for cultural assimilation, subordinating Jewish communal life to the local and urban authorities and even his proposed ecclesiastical commission.<sup>30</sup>

These emphases reflect their understandings of liberty. For Pawlikowski, liberty was essentially every individual's freedom from oppression; for Staszic, individual and minority rights were utterly subordinate to the common good. Kołłątaj attempted a synthesis of the two, but despite growing doubts still leaned towards republicanism. And these priorities were also reflected in their stances towards the clergy. Pawlikowski respected ecclesiastical autonomy; Staszic would abolish all except bishops and *plebani*, and take surplus wealth for the army. Kołłątaj defended ecclesiastical property but envisaged far-reaching reforms supervised by the temporal power. All agreed on the clergy's true vocation: to enlighten the populace. And this in turn reflected the fact that all three were champions of the peasants.

## 2. THE DISCOURSE OF SCANDAL: ANTI-CLERICAL PAMPHLETS

Those writers who called for the seizure of ecclesiastical property in the middle period of the Polish Revolution tended to employ a discourse of scandal, rather than develop new arguments. A few authors continued the rationalist line of Jan Baudouin de Courtenay. In one 'dialogue of the dead' (a perennially popular form of political literature) the 'angry young man' among Polish poets, Kajetan Węgieński (1756–87), proclaims, in the name of reason, a rebellion against 'superstition, that black tribe'. His Elysian partner, the early thirteenth-century Duke Władysław Spindleshanks, recalls that in his day the clergy had been able to

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 255, 263–7, quotations at 265, 263.

<sup>29</sup> Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 150.

<sup>30</sup> Pawlikowski, *Mysli polityczne*, 116–27, 106–15. [Kołłątaj], *Prawo polityczne*, ii. 328–33. [Staszic], *Przestrogi*, 298–303. A. Eisenbach, *Emancypacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich 1785–1870 na tle europejskim* (Warsaw, 1988), 82–4, 88–9, 106–10.

persuade people that religion would suffer from the loss of any clerical property, and reflects that it is hard to return that which had been possessed illegally. A fresh proof of this observation, according to the footnote, was the reaction to 'the return to the national treasury of the revenues from the estates once appropriated by the bishopric of Cracow'.<sup>31</sup>

Still more robust views were expressed in *Project for an Eternal Interregnum*, published at the end of 1790. Kings were a 'league of ruling arses' (*dup panujących liga*), supporters of hereditary succession the 'hired halberdiers of despotism', Kołłątaj was 'the Polish Machiavelli', and the primate 'the Polish mufti'. But Rousseau was 'the republican of the world, the wise man of our century'. The author dwelt on clerical immorality—from papal bastards downwards—and denied the property rights of the clergy. He questioned their right to govern souls, and even called two sayings of Christ 'contrary to common sense': 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. v. 3), which, he argued, closed heaven to the wise, and 'I have come to call not the righteous, but sinners' (Matt. viii. 13)—which, he believed, elevated sinners. One reply suggested burning this work, and perhaps its author as well, as a blasphemer. But the author also assumed the tone of a prophet, and quoted Scripture selectively to expose clerical hypocrisy.<sup>32</sup>

Others dissociated themselves from libertinism. The author of *A New Discussion of Old Prejudices, Serving the Reform of the Country* wrote: 'Let neither an old-fashioned fanatic, nor a person occupied only by piety, read this slim work, because he will in vain be angry, and call the author of truth a deist, or a libertine; I write for the citizen who loves the nation and desires its prosperity.' He avowed that he had 'sucked in pure religion from the breast of his true Polish mother'.<sup>33</sup> Patriotism, combining national independence and the broadly conceived public good, was the discursive paradigm, not anti-clericalism. Even *Władysław Spindleshanks* was preceded by a foreword that declared religion to be the foundation of republics. But 'fanaticism' remained a potent term of abuse.

*The Bell of Old Polish Manufacture* placed the effects of 'fanaticism', 'superstition', and 'ignorance' alongside those of 'foreign violence', and cast the 'idle priest' among the oppressors of the people. *The Bell* tolled the ignominy of clergymen who refused the sacraments to those unable to pay for them. It lamented the dogs and feral pigs gnawing bones in the neglected cemetery of a parish in Praga (across the Vistula from Warsaw), worth umpteen thousand złotys annually, but tended by two Bernardine friars paid just 150 złotys each. The only remedy was an immediate

<sup>31</sup> Władysław Łaskonogi. *Rok 1206 dzieiow narodu polskiego ułomek historyczny* (Warsaw, 1790), 5–10, 24, 34. See Smoleński, *Przewrót umysłowy*, 334; Grzeszkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 55, 67 n. 90, 255–6.

<sup>32</sup> *Projekt bezkrólewia wiecznego* (Warsaw, 1790), 56, 111, 23, 75, 35, 32–3. Cf. *Na projekt bezkrólewia wiecznego pisany przez pewnego odpowiedź* [1791?], 16. Grzeszkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 253–5, 273 n. 247.

<sup>33</sup> *Starych uprzedzeń nowe roztrząśnienie, do reformy rządu krajowego służącego* (Warsaw, 1790), 4, 36.

ban on plural benefice-holding, without the habitual clause *salvis modernis possessoribus*.<sup>34</sup>

Similar tales could be found in the ironically titled *And Me Too*.<sup>35</sup> Its author claimed to have read a work summarizing all the good that the clergy had done, and then, having fled the cankered paupers on the frozen streets, had found a well-fed prelate's dog lying on a mattress in a warm and expensively adorned room. Evidently today's priests were not those written about. 'There is nothing easier, than meta-physically to assume avarice and greed into the word property, and create a delusion', he pronounced. Until the clergy showed themselves exemplary in religion, charity, and utility, their property should not be increased, but diminished.<sup>36</sup>

The author of *A New Discussion of Old Prejudices*, probably a burgher, alleged that the ruin of towns was accomplished not only by arbitrary starostas and 'loathsome Jewry' but also by the clergy. In towns dominated by monasteries, only hostleries for pilgrims drawn by miraculous pictures and 'Roman indulgences' prospered, while parasitical monks had 'turned the rites of pure religion into many superstitions'. The comments on nuns were intended to titillate as well as scandalize. Had female congregations

not buried in the shadows of their walls many well-grown young ladies, with substantial dowries, having first taken much of their property, injuring their siblings and family? Have they not sent many young nuns from this world into eternity, mortified by disciplines and other harsh penances, often for mere girlish gossip or intrigues? That many of these young virgins dedicated to God have been lost, having fallen ill either from excessive abstinence, or on the contrary from alluring licence, will easily be understood by those who know jealousy in old matrons, and the natural excitement of youth.

He held out more hope for the secular clergy, which should 'enlighten darkness, inculcate youth with salutary principles, and for this should receive a salary from the public treasury appropriate to its vocation and labours'. But too often their vocations were insincere, and they extorted money from their parishioners. He also condemned bishops and prelates for placing the burden of the *subsidiium charitativum* on *plebani*, who within a few years would be too poor to contribute anything to the army. The clergy were told that had 'the nation, enlightened by the rays of Heaven, still permitted you *Pia Legata*', half the country would have been taken by them by now, and as they could not fight, they would soon lose it all.<sup>37</sup> A religious use of 'to enlighten' was thus turned against the clergy.

Within a Providentialist discourse of national emancipation, *The Voice of Population and Humanity to the Nation* argued that priests should marry, in order to populate the country, and to set an example. Ending celibacy would also avoid the

<sup>34</sup> *Dzwon staropolskiej fabryki z wielu nowymi dodatkami y addymentem o szulerach i lichwiarzach* (Warsaw, 1791), 1–2, 15–22. Smoleński, *Przewrót umysłowy*, 334–6.

<sup>35</sup> *I ja też* [1790?], 1, began with a shaft at a childish age in which 'all write, even those who were not written to at all'. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rzędu*, 53.

<sup>36</sup> *I ja też*, 3.

<sup>37</sup> *Starych uprzedzeń*, 34–41, 49, 60–1, 43. Smoleński, *Przewrót umysłowy*, 332–4.

recourse to alcohol, which the effort of 'extinguishing' the 'natural passion' often required. No such commandment could be found in the Gospels, nor was it applied to the Uniates.<sup>38</sup> Another writer tried to have it both ways. On the one hand, celibacy was a 'violation of nature' while on the other, the luridly evoked flouting of the rule set an example of insubordination.<sup>39</sup>

### 3. DEFENCES OF THE CLERGY: CANONS SKARSZEWSKI AND JEZIERSKI

Wojciech Skarszewski's *Calculation of the Advantages to the Commonwealth from the Fund of the Bishopric of Cracow* did not only denounce the injustice of the secularization of the estates. He computed that after all the bishoprics had been provided for, and when the taxes that would have been paid and the costs of administration had been taken into account, the treasury would gain next to nothing. But to arrive at this conclusion, he made the questionable assumption that the Commonwealth would create four new bishoprics, so that the central Polish dioceses had about two hundred parishes each. He ignored the Uniate bishops.<sup>40</sup>

Skarszewski's *Calculation* was cited later in 1789 in *To the Illustrious Deputation Appointed by the Sejm for the Interests of the Polish Clergy. A Project of an Appeal from that Clergy*. The author may again have been the trusty Skarszewski. The language and content are safe from any hint of theology. For example, without security of property for every inhabitant, the fame of the nation was something 'fallacious and metaphysical'. The clergy trusted in the 'enlightenment and moral conduct' of the deputation. To deprive a part of society of its property, argued this author, was the act of 'a despot and tyrant'.<sup>41</sup> He also appealed to temporal utility. Discriminatory treatment of ecclesiastical property and income ultimately harmed the national interest, because less was available for parishes, hospitals, and elementary schools.

The same author stated that before the full implications of the French National Assembly's law on Church property could be grasped, the following points should be made 'against prejudices'. First, the law had not changed the dedication of ecclesiastical property 'to God, for the service of the faith and altars, for the enlightenment of the people, for the succour of the poor'. Second, the assembly and the king had been constrained by the 'disturbances and threats of the plebeians' and afflicted by 'enthusiasm'. Third, it was not yet known if the nature of donations to the French Church differed from those in Poland. Fourth, 'the Polish nation has

<sup>38</sup> *Głos miłośnika ludności i człowieczeństwa do narodu* (Warsaw, [1790]), 3.

<sup>39</sup> Władysław Laskonogi, 31–3.

<sup>40</sup> [W. Skarszewski], *Kalkulacja pożytków Rzeczypospolitej z odebranego na skarb funduszu biskupstwa krakowskiego* [1789], served Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 422, to dismiss the secularization as worth only 40,000 zł. annually. T. Korzon, *Wewnętrzne dzieje Polski za Stanisława Augusta (1764–1794)*, 6 vols., 2nd edn (Cracow and Warsaw, 1897–8), iii. 262–3, used treasury reports to argue that the net revenue was at ten times as much.

<sup>41</sup> *Do prześwietnej deputacji od seymu do interesów duchowieństwa polskiego wyznaczoney. Projekt odezwy od rządu duchowieństwa* [1789], 3–5, 19.

always abhorred and reproved' seizures of ecclesiastical property. Finally, in France the clergy could make such an offering in the name of equality, because there both the noble and clerical estates had been abolished—a hint to the szlachta that their fate was linked to that of the clergy.<sup>42</sup>

For the supposedly grizzled author of *A Letter of a Father to his Son* the 'despotism of the Commonwealth' was exemplified by the 'confiscation' of ecclesiastical property. The precedent endangered noble inheritances. Even Joseph II, 'who is generally more rebuked than praised, established a religious fund, and did not apply clerical funds to the army'. The Commonwealth could no more take the lands of a bishopric than a patron could take the property of a parish. Elected kings and officials were signs of freedom, but real liberty was the secure possession of property. A republican government, with sovereignty (*samowładność*) in the hands of many, could be as unjust and as burdensome as that of a single sovereign (*samowładca*). If the Commonwealth's sovereignty meant she was above all laws, that would be 'loathsome despotism'. These twelve pages made a powerful case for the concept of negative liberty.<sup>43</sup>

Skarszewski published the *Appeal of a Galician to the Poles* in the late summer of 1790. Adopting the persona of one who remained a Pole in heart and spirit, the *Galician* wrote that the Poles of old had been sincere, virtuous, and patriotic, and lamented that the spread of sciences and foreign travel had polished minds but spoilt hearts. Skarszewski's Galician persona allowed him to warn against listening to the Febroniuses and Richers, and those who had advised

Joseph II, who from a protector became the lord of religion, and who in religion wanted only a political tool, who prescribed the liturgy, teaching, and discipline, established seminaries according to his own ideas, and overthrew the ecclesiastical hierarchy, opening the gates to scandalous teachings, freedom of conscience, and bad examples.

He rejoiced in Leopold II's restoration of authority to the bishops. Polish bishops, he had heard, issued excellent ordinances for their dioceses and seminaries. The Educational Commission had too much on its hands already to take on the responsibility for training clergymen; it was enough that it supplied episcopal seminaries with suitable candidates.<sup>44</sup> The large number of surviving copies in Polish and Lithuanian libraries indicates that Skarszewski's *Appeal of a Galician* was widely read.<sup>45</sup>

Another priestly defender of ecclesiastical property was Franciszek Salezy Jezierski. *Somebody Writing from Warsaw* was dated 11 February 1790. Jezierski

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 21–2.

<sup>43</sup> *List oycy do syna względem odjęcia wolności xciu Ponińskiemu podskar. wielkiemu koron. i skonfiskowania dóbr biskupstwa krakowskiego d. 18 lipca, w Stężycy pisany* [1789], quotations at 1–2, 9–11.

<sup>44</sup> [W. Skarszewski], *Odezwa Gallicyanina do Polaków* (1790), 31–41. Skarszewski also advised caution regarding the Prussian alliance, while calling for an hereditary throne, a stronger executive, and the abolition of mandatory sejmik instructions—the king's programme. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 242–3.

<sup>45</sup> It was considered suitable material for Konstanty Plater's young sons, as Ludwik Plater informed his father that he had read it twice, 5 September 1790, LVIA F1276–2–188, f. 18.

deplored the tendency of the 'enlightened age' to abase rulers and religion in the name of destroying despotism and fanaticism.

Religion, this holy precept, which is assigned from the particular gift of the Creator for the hiddenmost guarding of hearts, for the hope of real consolation amidst sadness, which was to link people with people in societies with the closest love of their neighbours, this holy religion, so absolutely necessary in the present century, has been at the same time insulted and despised, when the alleged devotee of truth rises up against superstitions and outlandish inventions, these weaknesses and malice of the human heart, which, in truth, reach all the way to the Lord's temple, and when he calls all this fanaticism, he overthrows all religion, just like the guard of a palace, who charged with tidying the rooms, in clearing dust and cobwebs broke the mirrors and porcelain through his assiduous orderliness.

Jeziński made one of the earlier Polish attacks on the French Revolution: 'The acquisition of a free government for France can help as much as the healing of someone with sick legs by bringing the gout from the legs to the heart.' And the true face of 'our enlightened century' was revealed by the seizure of others' property. But he also treated the persecution of the heterodox in the name of the Catholic religion which commanded love of one's neighbour as an irrational absurdity.<sup>46</sup>

Many of these themes were developed in Jeziński's last work, posthumously published by Kołłątaj. *Some Expressions Collected in Alphabetical Order* adapted the form of the pocket dictionary. While the wit directed at noble prejudices was worthy of Voltaire, Jeziński's attitude to the age that prided itself on its 'enlightenment' (*oświecenie*) continued extremely sceptical.<sup>47</sup> Elsewhere, 'earthquake' served to highlight the frequent changes on the surface of the earth in Poland—including the dissolution of the Jesuits and the seizure of the property of the bishopric of Cracow. Under 'novelty' he mentioned the partition of the country, the multiplication of divorces and bankruptcies, and foreign guarantees on the one hand, but on the other 'the rising up of the Polish nation, at a time when Poland remained without government, without frontiers, without defence, and without sovereignty'.

Joseph II featured under 'cruelty'—the emperor could not understand the suffering of an old nun expelled from her convent; he had given her freedom, but to end her tranquil slavery was cruelty. Religious orders (*zakony*) had brought learning to Poland and performed important tasks in former centuries. Jeziński questioned whether they should have foreign superiors and send money abroad, and admitted that they were too numerous in small towns, but they should only be diminished by the proper spiritual authority. If these people were idlers, it was because they had not been given suitable jobs. He also repeated a classic defence of abbatial property: it benefited noble families. It was strange to criticize celibacy, he

<sup>46</sup> [F. S. Jeziński], *Ktoś piszący z Warszawy dnia 11 lutego 1790 r.*, in id., *Wybór pism*, 119–30, at 122, 124, 125.

<sup>47</sup> F. S. Jeziński, *Niektóre wyrazy porządkiem abecadła zebrane i stosownymi do rzeczy uwagami objaśnione* [Warsaw, 1791], in id., *Wybór pism*, 131–318, at 233, 278–9, 225. Cf. T. Kostkiewiczowa, *Polski wiek świateł. Obszary swoistości* (Wrocław, 2002), 410–13; Butterwick, 'What is Enlightenment (*oświecenie*)?', 31–2.

argued, when debauchery made many laymen infertile. In short, 'speaking against religious orders is not patriotism, or a love of truth, it is merely an addiction, of repeating that, which it is fashionable to say'.<sup>48</sup>

In the light of the above, Jezierski's attacks on noble prejudices towards townsmen, and noble oppression of the peasants seems best explained in terms of his belief that the Gospels should be practised as well as preached. In contrast to his friend Kołłątaj, Jezierski generally stood above the political fray. He preferred to prick his readers' consciences by amusing and surprising them.<sup>49</sup> His death on 14 February 1791<sup>50</sup> deprived the clergy of one of its most persuasive defenders.

#### 4. IN THE COLUMNS OF THE PRESS: FRANCE AND THE HABSBURG MONARCHY IN TURMOIL

Neither Stefan Łuski's twice-weekly *Warsaw Gazette* nor Piotr Świątkowski's monthly *Historical, Political, and Economic Recorder* commented on the seizure of the Cracow estates, confining themselves to brief reports of the decisions.<sup>51</sup> But neither hesitated to evaluate events in France and the Habsburg territories. Reverend Świątkowski generally cheered on both the National Assembly and the Belgian rebels, although he cited Rousseau's warning that liberty was hard for all stomachs to digest. The parading of the heads of the Bastille's defenders on pikes was 'savage barbarity'. He applauded the limitations on the pope, the abolition of monastic vows, and the proportionate incomes given to the clergy by the Civil Constitution of June 1790—which he swiftly printed in translation. But he reported the refusal to Catholicism of the status of dominant religion without comment.<sup>52</sup>

Reverend Łuski's hostility to the French Revolution began to manifest itself after the pillaging of monasteries prior to the storming of the Bastille. He was especially critical of the freedom of the press promised by the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen.<sup>53</sup> Freedom of conscience, the refusal to acknowledge Catholicism as the dominant religion, attacks on monasticism, the confiscation of Church property, and the seizure of Avignon from the pope provoked laments. Łuski avidly reported scandals, such as a priest agreeing to attach a revolutionary cocarde to the Blessed Sacrament during a procession.<sup>54</sup> As 1791 began, virtually

<sup>48</sup> Jezierski, *Niektóre wyrazy*, 232, 308–12.

<sup>49</sup> Kostkiewiczowa, *Oświecenie*, 233–5. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 49.

<sup>50</sup> Pasztor, *Hugo Kołłątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 18.

<sup>51</sup> GW, 22 July–1 August 1789. *PHPE*, August 1789, 741–3. I. Homola Dzikowska, *Pamiętnik Historyczno-Polityczny Piotra Świątkowskiego 1782–1792* (Cracow, 1960), 188.

<sup>52</sup> *PHPE*, January 1790, 49–89, February 1790, 97–109, March 1790, 245–55, April 1790, 340–56, May 1790, 449–58, June 1790, 520–33, 553–67, July 1790, 599–621. Homola Dzikowska, *Pamiętnik Historyczno-Polityczny*, 220–5. Smoleński, *Przewrót umysłowy*, 336–7.

<sup>53</sup> GW, 5 August, 8 August, 15 August, 2 September, 19 September, 23 September, 21 October, 24 October, 3 November 1789.

<sup>54</sup> GW, supplement to 23 January, 6 March, 17 March, supplement to 14 April, 28 April, 5 May, 8 May, 22 May, 5 June, 30 June and supplement, 7 July, supplement to 10 July, supplement to 18 July, 15 September, supplement to 22 September, supplement to 29 September, 4 December, supplements to 22 and 25 December 1790.



every issue reported the 'ferment' over the civic oath required of the clergy. He redoubled his warnings to prevent the spread of French writings to Poland.<sup>55</sup>

Łuskiński took pleasure, however, from the turn of events in the Habsburg Monarchy. In September 1789, he announced Joseph II's edict reopening diocesan seminaries in Belgium. The religious ceremonies accompanying the rebels' triumph in December 1789 received detailed coverage, and Łuskiński reprinted a letter to the *Gazette de Leyde*, which included the claim that 'our people laugh in a *Christian* way at today's less rational *philosophical* enthusiasm'.<sup>56</sup> In the course of 1790 he became more concerned about the danger of democratic revolution in the Austrian Netherlands, but was consoled that Leopold II was reported to have told Cardinal-Archbishop Migazzi that he did not want to govern the Church internally, or to decide on theological orthodoxy, as his brother had done. The *Warsaw Gazette* reported the return of the Austrian clergy to censorship, the restoration of the full Maundy Thursday ceremonies and other traditional forms of worship, the abolition of the ecclesiastical commission, rumours of permission for noviciates and the imminent abolition of the general seminaries, the restitution of some ecclesiastical property, the return to the Catholic Church of many 'apostates' in Bohemia, and permission for the Prussian bishop of Breslau to draw revenues from his properties in Austrian Silesia.<sup>57</sup>

Łuskiński's much criticized monopoly, dating from 1773, was ended at the beginning of 1791 by the *National and Foreign Gazette*. It remains unclear if the editors (Julian Niemcewicz, Józef Weyssenhoff, and Tadeusz Mostowski, the castellan of Raciąż), were given permission by the sejm, or whether they decided to call Łuskiński's bluff. Łuskiński fulminated against 'contraband', but did not bring charges. Printed twice weekly in quarto, the *National and Foreign Gazette* offered fuller and faster coverage of domestic and foreign politics, with fewer accounts of religious ceremonies than in the *Warsaw Gazette* (which was printed in octavo). In the first issue, in the course of a review of the political state of Europe, the editors explained the violent actions of the French people, provoked by tyranny to smash their fetters.<sup>58</sup>

The *National and Foreign Gazette* reported dissension over the ecclesiastical oath in France with regret, voluntary oath-taking and episcopal elections with hope.<sup>59</sup> Mirabeau's instruction to the departments of 14 January 1791, explaining the reasons for the Civil Constitution, was printed in translation.<sup>60</sup> Leopold II's ambition was limited, it was claimed, to 'the complete overcoming of superstition, and the sowing of pure and true religion'; he was expected 'to raise up the

<sup>55</sup> GW, 8 January–20 April 1791, *passim*.

<sup>56</sup> GW, 5 September 1789, 9 January, 20 January, 27 January, 30 January, supplement to 3 February 1790 (quotation).

<sup>57</sup> GW, 21 April, 24 April, 8 May, 12 May, 22 May, 3 July, 24 July, 28 July, 11 August, 24 November, 27 November 1790.

<sup>58</sup> GNiO, 1 January 1791. See Dihm, *Niemcewicz*, 98–106.

<sup>59</sup> GNiO, 26 January, 29 January, 2 February, 12 February, 23 February, 9 March, 12 March, 16 April, 20 April 1791.

<sup>60</sup> GNiO, 19 February, 26 February 1791.

Brabanters from the yoke of fanaticism'.<sup>61</sup> Benjamin Franklin's death prompted the reflection that 'the press and philosophy, supporting each other mutually, have served the human race more than all other arts put together. *The citizen became free only after he could speak, write, and read freely.*'<sup>62</sup> Łuski spluttered helplessly. Within ten weeks of its first issue, the *National and Foreign Gazette* could afford to ignore him. Its heyday came after 3 May 1791, but it was also in the last year of the Polish Revolution that Anti-Enlightenment reached its apogee.<sup>63</sup>

## 5. PROVIDENTIALISM AND COVENANTALISM IN PASTORAL LETTERS AND SERMONS

Pamphlets and the *Warsaw Gazette* were not the only media available to the Church. The clergy could address 'the faithful'—whose literate élite largely constituted 'the public'—via pastoral letters and sermons. On 29 December 1789, following the approval of the *Principles for the Correction of the Form of Government* six days earlier, the sejm instructed its marshals to issue a proclamation informing the nation about its work, and the bishops to order thanksgivings and prayers.<sup>64</sup> In most dioceses, pastoral letters accompanied the marshals' proclamation. Saluzzo commented: 'May God will that the manner with which the bishops have adhered to this request may earn them some regard when ecclesiastical materials are dealt with.'<sup>65</sup> At this time, the episcopal college and nuncio were working on their reply to the 'clerical deputation's' project.

The bishops endorsed the Polish Revolution selectively. The bishop of Cujavia proclaimed that God, having flagellated the Polish nation for its sins, had looked on 'this orthodox kingdom with a more gracious eye'. Providence had brought together the Estates and the king to rescue the Fatherland, restoring life to her political body, filling her treasury, and increasing her armed forces 'as a shield against foreign violence'. Were not such fruits 'obvious proof of that omnipotent right hand, which overthrows and raises up great nations, which brings everything out of nothing, and returns everything to nothing?'<sup>66</sup>

This Providential narrative was generally, if less optimistically, followed by Rybiński's colleagues. The bishop of Poznań told his flock, which included the sophisticates of Warsaw, that an 'excellent and just government is the greatest gift which God can send nations', for it assured tranquillity and security to all. In praying for the public good, each perforce prayed for himself. He asked priests, 'mediators between the people and the altar', to pray for an outcome which would

<sup>61</sup> *GNiO*, 16 March 1791.

<sup>62</sup> *GNiO*, 8 January 1791.

<sup>63</sup> See Smoleński, *Przewrót umysłowy*, 364–7, and Dihm, *Niemcewicz*, 107–12.

<sup>64</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 498.

<sup>65</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 6 January 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 4. Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 205.

<sup>66</sup> J. Rybiński, *List pasterski do dyecezyi kuuawskiej zalecający podziękowanie Panu Bogu za dowody Opatrzności jego nad krajem polskim pod czas terażniejszego seymu, oraz zagrzewający do modlitw o dalszą pomoc Boską dla Ojczyzny naszej* (Warsaw, 26 December 1789).

give no class of people grounds for complaint. Okęcki warned, however, of 'depravity of morals extending to all estates and flowing in a great torrent into towns and villages', and appealed for a return to old-Polish virtues. The Lord might then remember the covenant He had made with their forefathers.<sup>67</sup>

The covenantal motif also emerges from the pastoral letter for the diocese of Chełm, drafted on behalf of Garnysz by Jan Paweł Woronicz. The language of this letter was emotional, with an emphasis on the 'tears of feeling' and 'humble heart' which might incline God to remember His covenant with the Poles' ancestors.<sup>68</sup> Perhaps Woronicz also had a hand in Kacper Cieciszowski's letter. According to this missive, Divine displeasure was expressed in the withdrawing of heavenly light, leaving nations 'in blindness, delusion, and error'. The neglect of laws and learning, corrupted morals, the violence of the strong against the weak, intrigues, and ambition had all resulted in the Polish nation's slide towards downfall. Only God's pity on an orthodox nation that was essentially of good character had thus far held off catastrophe. The faithful should ensure that Divine worship, the integrity of religion, and the authority of the Church suffered no damage. Pious lives would lead God to grant that peace and prosperity, which according to Jeremiah flowed from justice.<sup>69</sup>

Woronicz continued to draft pastoral letters. He wrote his most striking one in August 1790, on the theme of 'blessed is the people, that faithfully keeps its covenant with its God'. Such had been their 'pious and zealous forbears'. He appealed to the 'living generations':

Do not allow yourselves to be deceived by those unhappy disturbers of the human tribe, who under the appearance of freeing light from the chains of slavery and superstition, trumpet to reason complete freedom of belief, and to the will the freedom of doing what it pleases. That is a bitter, and lamentable liberty, which they erroneously show you in the giddiness of riotous passions. Nations that allowed themselves to be envenomed by this doleful poison have already fallen into the quarters of eternal oblivion.

And Woronicz warned his compatriots not to anger God, whose right hand held them above the chasm, and to humble their hearts. This indictment of the Enlightenment had no 'enlightened' sheen.<sup>70</sup>

Following the example of the sejm, the sejmiks, and the tribunals, the newly established Civil-Military Commissions of Good Order (discussed in the following chapter) liked to inaugurate their activity with religious worship and a sermon. One such was preached to the commission of Szydłów by a Cistercian monk. Tomasz

<sup>67</sup> A. Okęcki, *Wszystkiemu duchowieństwu świeckiemu i zakonnemu, tudzież wszystkim wiernym Chrystusowym dyccezyi naszej*... (Warsaw, 4 January 1790).

<sup>68</sup> M. G. Garnysz, *Wszystkiemu duchowieństwu świeckiemu i zakonnemu tudzież wiernym Chrystusowym dyccezyi naszej*... (Warsaw, 30 December 1789), draft by J. P. Woronicz in Ossol. 14,189, pp. 35–8.

<sup>69</sup> K. K. Cieciszowski, *Wszystkiemu duchowieństwu świeckiemu i zakonnemu, tudzież wiernym Chrystusowym dyccezyi naszej*... (Warsaw, 27 December 1789).

<sup>70</sup> M. G. Garnysz, *Wszystkim duchownym świeckim, i zakonnym, tudzież wiernym Chrystusowym całej dyccezyi naszej lubelskiej, chełmskiej*... (Warsaw, 30 August 1790), draft by Woronicz in Ossol. 14,189, pp. 43–50.

Chrzanowski began by evoking the goodness of Divine Providence, which had now raised up Poland, before concentrating on the religion which he hoped would inspire the commissioners to carry out their duties. But, he cautioned, 'A certain kind of madness has infected those who dare to prattle that religion is merely a policy, which can be entirely dispensed with. Fools! They speak in the name of philosophy, but they themselves breed only monstrosities.'<sup>71</sup>

Most of the published sermons preached on public occasions in this period expressed general support for the work of the sejm, but also defended the clergy's rights and property, and emphasized the importance of revealed religion.<sup>72</sup> Ignacy Witoszyński, preaching in Warsaw on St Stanisław's Day in 1790, warned that the '*right of man*', when interpreted impulsively, could become a source of appalling bloodshed. There were those who called natural religion sufficient, and pronounced 'the holy, revealed religion of Christ a superstition, a delusion, and even maliciously call it a fable'. '*CHRYSTE JEZU!*' he exclaimed, before asking: 'Does the world still have too few proofs of your true *divinity*, in your birth, and life, and teaching, and miracles, and in your death itself?' Reason, unaided by Christ's teaching, 'could become most dangerous to virtue, and the cause of a universal loosening and corruption of morals'.<sup>73</sup>

A dominant and orthodox religion, continued Witoszyński, was 'holy, uncorrupted, and faithfully respected in its *ministers*, and in its *revenues*, dedicated to its maintenance. We must regard any insult or injury to all of this as odious *sacrilege*.' This language evidently angered influential members of the congregation, because in the published version Witoszyński added a long note explaining that the term 'sacrilege' could not be applied to the law applying the revenues of the bishopric of Cracow to the army. He knew the envoys' 'religion and virtue' too well to make such an accusation. He recalled the 'casting off of the shameful yoke of slavery', the exceptional circumstances, in which 'everything can be sacrificed for the needs of the Fatherland—property, health, blood, life, and all that is most sacred'. Thus bowed the preacher to the patriotic paradigm. All he could do was appeal for concessions, 'as a proof of gratitude to the Highest One', because the Estates' resolution, 'moved by zeal (perhaps driven somewhat too far)', was no longer necessary. The 'Apostolic See, that authoritative vicarious power of Christ', could then give a 'paternal blessing', and the clerical estate would be consoled, 'when in complete equality with you it will begin to enjoy the country's freedoms, and remain secure in the possession of its property under the protection of the same laws'.<sup>74</sup> As Witoszyński hastily added these words, the moment approached for the decision of the 'clerical deputation's project. This, as we shall see in the next chapter, went some way to meeting the Church's objections to *Fund for the Army*.

<sup>71</sup> T. Chrzanowski, *Kazanie na zaczęciu jurysdykcji Komisji Cywilno-Woyskowej w Szydłowie w Kościele Parochialnym*... (Cracow, 1790), not paginated. Ślusarska, 'Sejm Czteroletni', 76–7.

<sup>72</sup> Ślusarska, 'Sejm Czteroletni', 73–4; Butterwick, 'Between Anti-Enlightenment and Enlightened Catholicism', 217–18.

<sup>73</sup> I. Witoszyński, *Kazanie na uroczystość S. Stanisława biskupa krakowskiego i męczennika wczásie ciągu obrad sejmowych*... 8. maja R.P. 1790... (Warsaw, 1790), 26, 16–17.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 18–22.

We can surmise that Witoszyński was advised by a bishop to adopt gentler means of persuasion than hurling accusations of 'sacrilege' at the sejm.

Most pamphlets during these two years were anti-clerical, sometimes virulently so. Churchmen often felt besieged. Saluzzo wrote to his predecessor-but-one, Cardinal Garampi, of 'the philosophical poison which has insinuated itself greatly since Your Eminence's departure'.<sup>75</sup> Among the pamphlets, defences of the clergy's reputation and temporalities were sporadic, albeit, in the cases of Pawlikowski and Canon Jezierski, cogent. In the course of 1789, Reverend Kołłątaj developed an all-embracing vision for the nation, in which a leading role was envisaged for the Catholic clergy. By the spring of 1791, he had achieved both a position of political power and a divisive reputation. Later that same year, Reverend Karol Surowiecki began his splenetic counter-attack on the eighteenth century. We shall examine that final phase of polemics later.

<sup>75</sup> Saluzzo to Giuseppe Garampi, within Saluzzo to Zelada, 5 January 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 66. Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 203.

## On the brink of schism: August 1789–May 1790

Following the law *Fund for the Army*, Rome bought time with an exquisitely calibrated reaction, before negotiations began between the sejm's 'clerical deputation', the nuncio, and the episcopal college. Schism—a rupturing of unity—between the Holy See and the Commonwealth seemed a real possibility.<sup>1</sup> According to his own despatches, Ferdinando Saluzzo found the necessary figleaf for the dignity of the Mother Church and steered the Polish élite towards accepting it in May 1790.<sup>2</sup> A broader source base reveals the points of contention and agreement in shaping this compromise. The projects submitted by the deputation to the episcopate, the episcopal and nuncial responses and requests, and the deputation's answers, have been preserved in the Gniezno Chapter Archive. These and other sources allow us to reconstruct a fairly good-tempered encounter between nuncial, episcopal, and lay perceptions of the role of the Church in the Commonwealth. But the prospects for getting the compromise through the sejm remained dim until a discreet intervention from an unexpected quarter.

From time to time, ecclesiastical problems surfaced in the sejm, in the course of other business—military recruitment, the local Civil-Military Commissions, the urban question, and the first steps towards a new form of government. Political alignments shifted. The opposition to Stanisław August split, and in March 1790 the leaders of the Prussophile party achieved their desired alliance with Berlin. By this point, the king's popularity had begun to recover. But mutual mistrust as well as differences over the future form of government continued to divide him from Ignacy Potocki.<sup>3</sup> With the sejm bogged down in the minutiae of recruiting, paying, and equipping the army,<sup>4</sup> the provinces began to grumble. The view from the parish of Preny could be heard across the Commonwealth: 'In Warsaw I see that nothing important is happening, while in the meantime we here are paying taxes.'<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See R. Butterwick, 'Jak nie doszło do schizmy. Rzeczpospolita a Stolica Apostolska w czasie Sejmu Czteroletniego', *KH*, 116/3 (2009), 73–90, at 74–6.

<sup>2</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 418–21, ii. 260–4, relied on Saluzzo's despatches and the official notes. Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 192–6, ignores the deputation and the episcopate.

<sup>3</sup> Rostworowski, *Ostatni król*, 172–3.

<sup>4</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 423–5.

<sup>5</sup> Michał Karpowicz to Marcin Poczubut, Preny, 22 September 1789, VUB F2 DC 42, f. 19.

1. 'THE TEMPORALITY OF THE CHURCH OF CRACOW'<sup>6</sup>

Rome's reaction to the sejm's 'outlandish resolution' on the bishoprics was calibrated by Saluzzo. In his first despatch after 24 July 1789, the nuncio asked for instructions on how to proceed.<sup>7</sup> In his next, he suggested their content, as well as the line to be taken with Cardinal Antici. He cautioned that the Russian party would not be unhappy with a strong papal response, which could discredit the sejm. The respectful tenor of the reply to his note and the brief given to the sejm's 'clerical deputation' allowed him some hope of modifying the law. Saluzzo claimed that the changes which saved some of the '*decoro*' of the Holy See 'are an effect of my repeated instances among the wisest and most moderate persons, who attempt to palliate the raptures of the multitude'. But he warned that this sejm could only revoke its earlier decision unanimously; that nobody would want to revisit the matter at a future sejm; that the conferences with the deputation would be limited to the redivision of the dioceses; that the Poles were seeking any means to raise as many troops as possible; 'that there reigns an incredible hatred and scorn of the clergy, caused in part by their own irregular conduct'; that 'all the systems adopted elsewhere in ecclesiastical matters' might still be applied in Poland; and that hopes of a remedy might turn out to be 'blandishments'. The Church would have to act circumspectly, in order not to risk still greater injuries. The nuncio suggested agreeing to a redivision of the dioceses, provided the estates of the bishopric of Cracow were included. However, he would insist 'that stable funds be assigned to the bishoprics, and not salaries, which in a republican country would always be uncertain and exposed to a thousand perils and diminutions'.<sup>8</sup>

Stanisław Małachowski had personally visited the nuncio to present him with the Estates' reply to his note of 19 July and an official notification of the law *Fund for the Army*. The reply explained that the Poles, having recovered 'their political existence', now needed to secure it by increasing their army, whose previous weakness had exposed senior clergymen 'to the most unpleasant persecutions'. This justified the decision to take the greater part of the revenues of the vacant bishopric. Rome was reminded that 'the inheritance of the clergy has shared a common fate with other properties subjected to foreign rule'. Nevertheless, some bishoprics still had considerable revenues, while the dioceses varied greatly in extent. Although the Estates were convinced that the new arrangements were 'completely in harmony with the interest of religion, as they aim at the perfection of *la police spirituelle*', nevertheless, they wished to implement these reforms with the participation of Holy See. The sejm's deputation would confer with the nuncio, so that they might 'determine together the most proper means of achieving the intended aim'.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Federici to Saluzzo, 8 August 1789, ASV ANV 52, f. 142.

<sup>7</sup> Saluzzo to Federici, 29 July 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 274–5.

<sup>8</sup> Saluzzo to Federici, 1 August 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 275–6.

<sup>9</sup> ASC 18, ff. 119–20 (Polish), 121–2 (French).

The nuncio was invited to discuss means, not ends. The letter conceded none of the Commonwealth's authority over ecclesiastical temporalities. The reference to 'spiritual police' reveals the wide-reaching scope of the concept of 'police' and its potential to expand the activity of the state, even in a republican polity. The *collegium episcoporum* would act with the deputation on behalf of the Commonwealth. In reply Saluzzo told Małachowski of the 'grave difficulties in Rome' involved in such an alienation of Church property. The marshal replied that he could see no remedy at the present sejm and that excessive resistance could provoke dreadful consequences. Whatever his personal feelings, Małachowski scrupulously carried out the will of the Estates.

In the same despatch, the nuncio outlined a policy. The application of 'the exuberant revenues of the Church of Cracow' to 'poorer churches, or to other pious purposes, from which the laity would feel some advantage', would not, he believed, 'be repugnant to the laws of the Church, and could contribute strongly to the circumstances of Poland'. Saluzzo asked for the papal *breve* (which should laud the Estates' deference while stressing the impossibility of alienating ecclesiastical property) to have its date left blank, so that he could use it at the most advantageous moment. He also enquired if it was true that the pope had consented to the foundation of the Galician bishopric of Tarnów on a salary.<sup>10</sup>

The Curia was still reeling from 'the resonant blow'. The papal response, when the full news of the 'dismemberment' had sunk in, was to temporize. The pope would not yet confirm the nominated bishops, for that would legitimize a secularization of ecclesiastical property which was unthinkable in peacetime. Confiscations in Germany and Italy had gone towards a religious fund. Although the Holy Father 'would prefer the ways of sweetness', he would use all the means available to him to have the resolution repealed or amended.<sup>11</sup> At this crucial juncture, Saluzzo's presence of mind averted a rupture between Rome and Warsaw.

Tommaso Antici initially had no more idea of how to react to 'unhappy catastrophe of the bishopric of Cracow' than Archbishop Carlo Federici, who as keeper of the seal, had taken over Boncompagni's duties. After the arrival in Rome on 20 August of the Estates' official reply to the nuncio, Antici confessed he did not know how to calm or conciliate the pope, who had summoned him for an audience on 22 August.<sup>12</sup>

Antici's anxiety must have abated, because his despatch to the Deputation for Foreign Affairs, written on 5 September and received on 25 September, reveals a well-choreographed audience—or at least it does so in the Polish translation that has survived. Antici first recorded the Holy Father's sadness and astonishment that the Polish nation 'should ever take such an unheard-of and extraordinary step in the Catholic Church', then his own reply, which pointed out the fatal consequences for the clergy of a lack of military strength, and alleged the improbability of further

<sup>10</sup> Saluzzo to Federici, 5 August 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 277–8.

<sup>11</sup> Federici to Saluzzo, 8 August, 15 August 1789, ASV ANV 52, ff. 142, 150–1.

<sup>12</sup> Antici to Ghigiotti, 12 August, 22 August 1789, AGhig. 25a, vol. vi, ff. 103–4, 105–6.



burdening the laity. Clearly well briefed, Pius VI answered that the horrid violence against the late bishop of Cracow was also perpetrated against lay senators, but no layman's property was being infringed. The security of property was the principle of every society, especially of republics, and in this case it was assured by the act of confederation. Only at this point did the pope employ a religious argument: 'Can it be expected, that Heaven would bestow its favour on that army, albeit defending its Fatherland, which is supported and fed by bread taken from the Church, which was founded by Jesus Christ . . . ?'

Antici then drew attention to two other objectives which equality of episcopal duties and income would achieve: better government of the dioceses and better government of the Commonwealth. The pope asked rhetorically why the Polish nation did not introduce equality of property among lay citizens. Antici asked for wide powers to be given to the nuncio to negotiate with the deputation. Pius replied that he had instructed the nuncio to help the deputation redivide the dioceses. He agreed to a redistribution of income to provide adequately for the poorer bishoprics. If anything was left over, he would establish new bishoprics; after that, richer bishops could contribute to a religious fund.

After all, even other European courts, having taken the property of monastic congregations and secular priests, never applied that fund to the maintenance of the army, but established a religious fund for the support of churches, parishes, and the poor, which is all the object of public needs and in agreement with the duties of the clerical estate.

Under such conditions, he would authorize the nuncio to consult with the sejm's deputation. But he could not accept any spoliation of ecclesiastical property for the army.<sup>13</sup>

Pius VI decided to await the outcome of Antici's despatch,<sup>14</sup> and his own *breve* (to which Saluzzo affixed the same date of 5 September). The tone and message of the *breve* largely followed Antici's despatch. The pope praised the intention to provide for the poorer bishoprics, and stated his willingness to redraw diocesan boundaries. But he expressed his horror that an 'orthodox nation' could make such a law, which was unprecedented 'among Catholic princes'. Why, he asked, were bishops excluded from the inviolability of property? He assured the Estates that the clergy would contribute to the salvation of the kingdom. The corollary was that ecclesiastical property should remain intact.<sup>15</sup>

The aim of the *breve* was not to cause 'conflict and irritation', but to suggest 'rectifications and modifications'. The bottom line was that the Commonwealth could go as far as Joseph II. Federici admitted that the emperor had founded the new bishopric of Tarnów on an annual payment from the treasury, and that the grand duke of Tuscany had done likewise at Pontremoli. However, these

<sup>13</sup> ASC 18, ff. 123–34. Antici's original despatches are lost.

<sup>14</sup> Federici to Saluzzo, 22 August 1789, ASV ANV 52, f. 155.

<sup>15</sup> Pius VI, *Delectis Filiis, Nobilibus Viris, Stanislaw Natęcz Małachowski Supremo Comitiorum Regni Poloniae Mareschallo, & Casimiro Principi Sapieha Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae Supremo Mareschallo . . . / Ukochanym Synom, Przewacnym Mężom . . .* (Rome, 5 September 1789). Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 419–21.

cases were not analogous, he claimed, because they concerned new dioceses, not existing ones.<sup>16</sup>

Saluzzo obtained the instructions he had suggested. It would be 'equitable' to make better provision for the poorer bishoprics, but a uniformity of funds and jurisdiction would violate legitimate foundations. The pope was prepared to accept either the transfer of properties to under-endowed bishoprics, or payments to those bishops in cash, as long as they came from the Cracow estates. He would not refuse to increase the number of bishoprics or parishes. Surplus funds might be allocated via the treasury to hospitals (including military hospitals), schools, and 'other pious foundations'.<sup>17</sup>

Saluzzo had the *breve* translated into Polish, printed, and distributed in the provinces, hoping that Catholic nobles would impress their feelings upon the envoys. He reported that Antici's despatch had 'made a great sensation' upon the Deputation for Foreign Affairs.<sup>18</sup> The *breve* was read out to the sejm on 19 October. Małachowski highlighted the Holy Father's blessing, and the trust he placed in the Polish nation,<sup>19</sup> and the bishop of Cujavia responded with such a convincing speech, according to Saluzzo, that initially nobody responded. 'So sweet and happy a revolution', said Józef Rybiński, gave every Pole satisfaction, except the clerical estate, which was deprived of its rights and privileges. Yet it obeyed the law and contributed patriotically. The clergy could not depart from the position taken by the pope; it was for this reason, he claimed, that a deputation had been appointed to negotiate with the episcopate and nuncio.<sup>20</sup>

Małachowski asked the spectators to leave the chamber, before an extract from Antici's despatch was read out. Saluzzo reported that both the *breve* and despatch had made a strong impression. On behalf of the 'clerical deputation', Michał Walewski explained that the delay in implementing the law was because the nuncio had only recently received plenipotentiary powers for the redivision of the dioceses, while the Uniate metropolitan had only just arrived in Warsaw. The sejm agreed to an extension of two months for the negotiations, on condition that the deputation propose no changes to the existing law. Wojciech Suchodolski warned, presciently, that an intrigue might be hatched when many envoys were absent.<sup>21</sup>

Pius VI also sent a letter to the Polish bishops. They had 'seemed to be somewhat dilatory and indifferent' regarding the bishopric of Cracow, and the pope urged them to coordinate their efforts to undo the damage.<sup>22</sup> The episcopate had in fact met regularly and attempted to ward off disproportionate taxation, but to little

<sup>16</sup> Federici to Saluzzo, 29 August 1789, ASV ANV 52, ff. 156–7.

<sup>17</sup> Federici to Saluzzo, 5 September 1789, ASV ANV 52, ff. 159–61. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 420–1. Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 194.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 282–4. Protocol of the Deputation of Foreign Affairs, 25 September 89, BCz. 887, ff. 180–1.

<sup>19</sup> ASC 4, f. 722.

<sup>20</sup> *Mowa... Rybińskiego, biskupa kujawskiego... 19. października 1789... Saluzzo to Francesco Zelada*, 28 October 1789, ASV ANV 66, f. 290.

<sup>21</sup> ASC 4, ff. 710–21. Saluzzo to Federici, 21 October 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 288–9. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 421, ii. 261.

<sup>22</sup> Pius VI, *Venerabilibus fratribus archi-episcopo et episcopis Regni Poloniae/Wielebnym braciom...* (Rome, 5 September 1789).

effect. The weaker defence of the bishopric of Cracow may have derived partly from pessimism, and partly from being taken by surprise. But the crucial factor was probably the antagonism between the aspirants to the vacant see.

It seems that the episcopal college did not meet formally between 14 March 1789 and 24 February 1790.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, the negotiations with the sejm's deputation reveal that the episcopate continued to function collectively. The bishops seem to have taken their unpreparedness on 17 July 1789 to heart, for among the papers of the episcopal college is a 'project for a law, also *titulo Beneficiorum* prepared by the college *ad omnem casum*, if at some time this were to be put to a decision suddenly and violently'. It aimed to convert hostility towards pluralists into new foundations at parish level. The bishops would ban the holding of 'two benefices *cum cura animarum, salvis modernis possessoribus*', according to canon law. But the Commonwealth would 'not only permit, but indeed encourage all citizens, for the love of religion and the Fatherland, to endow such poor parishes with adequate funds.' New parishes could be founded wherever the nearest parish church was at least a mile distant. This ambition would bear some legislative fruit in 1792.<sup>24</sup>

Papal procrastination merely postponed the danger of schism. The Crown Treasury Commission appointed surveyors of the estates of the bishopric of Cracow. Among their concerns were exact boundaries, the danger of fraudulent returns, and opportunities to establish manufactories, drain bogs, improve the navigability of rivers, and introduce steel scythes. They also attended to questions of public health and the 'enlightenment of the people', wishing to assign a little land in each village to an elementary schoolmaster. In short, the commissioners saw the episcopal estates as an opportunity to apply the precepts of the 'well-ordered police state'.<sup>25</sup>

The surveyors completed their work during the autumn, and on 11 February 1790 the commission issued a proclamation giving details of an auction. Six-year leases were offered on properties yielding between 890 and 35,551 złotys per annum, a total of 410,556 złotys. The new bishop of Cracow would have first pick of the estates, within a maximum revenue of 100,000 złotys per year. The auction was to be held in Warsaw on 20 April, and the leases would commence on 24 June 1790. The title of the proclamation referred to properties 'formerly belonging to the bishopric of Cracow and the Duchy of Siewierz'.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> On the latter occasion, with Rybiński in the chair, it discussed the allocation of the *subsidium charitativum* (AAG ACap. B84, f. 122). The bishops met the sejm's 'clerical deputation' on the same day.

<sup>24</sup> 'Projekt do Konstytucji także titulo Beneficiorum od Collegium ułożony ad omnem casum, gdyby czasem miało to kiedy w Stanach raptem i gwałtem przychodzić do Decyzji.' AAG ACap. B84, ff. 188–9.

<sup>25</sup> 'Przedział trzeci o urządzeniu Dobr dawniey do Biskupstwa Krakowskiego należących a na skarb Prawem Seymu terazniejszego przeznaczonych': BCz. 1187, pp. 243–64. List of the properties: BCz. 1187, p. 523. Cf. M. Raeff, *The Well-Ordered Police State: Social and Institutional Change through Law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600–1800* (New Haven, CT, 1983).

<sup>26</sup> Kommissya Rzeczypospolitey Skarbu Koronnego, *Uniwersał względem licytacji dóbr dawniey do Biskupstwa Krakowskiego i Xięstwa Siewierskiego należących*, Warsaw, 11 February 1790, ASC 12, ff. 258–61.

Although Feliks Turski did not yet feel authorized to accept the king's nomination, he wasted no time in investigating his future properties. On 9 August 1789, the chancellor of the Cracow chapter sent him a detailed breakdown of the estates, recommending four populous and fertile properties, conveniently located on the Vistula. He also advised Turski that he might use his credit and reputation to convince the sejm that the Duchy of Siewierz had never belonged to Poland.<sup>27</sup>

The nobles of the duchy were not content to await their fate passively. On 12 August 1789 they met in the church at Siewierz, and resolved to accept incorporation. They requested equal rights and duties with the Polish szlachta, a castellan and envoy of their own, the retention of their starosta, and the reservation of offices in the duchy for local citizens. They elected two delegates, who soon afterwards met with Józef Ankiewicz, the castellan of Sącz. Five days later other *siewierzanie* protested against 'illegal' ennoblements.<sup>28</sup> Only thirteen privileges of nobility had been issued by the dukes of Siewierz until 1782, but in the space of seven years to 1789, Poniatowski ennobled a further ten. It was an easy way to reward good servants and supporters from outside the Polish szlachta.<sup>29</sup> A further protest, in defence of ducal rights, provoked a counter-protest in support of incorporation. Some of the latter group of Siewierz nobles, fearing exclusion from the Polish szlachta, resolved to press their case with Stanisław Kublicki, who would not compromise on sovereignty.<sup>30</sup>

## 2. THE 'CLERICAL DEPUTATION', THE EPISCOPATE, AND THE NUNCIO: PREPARATIONS

The carefully titled 'Deputation from the Estates of the Commonwealth for the Affairs of the Clergy *cum Collegio Episcoporum*' was soon unofficially referred to as the 'clerical deputation'. Its chairman, Ankiewicz, was dubbed a 'living ghost' for his pale visage, acquired during many a night at the card table. He agreed to show the deputation's projects to the king, before presenting them to the bishops and the nuncio. In December 1789 he begged the monarch to pay his expenses of 112 ducats (2016 złotych) per month. A few days earlier, he had been reported as selling his oratorical talent to the Russian ambassador for 300 ducats.<sup>31</sup> Julian Niemcewicz was appointed secretary. He represented a Prussophile and 'enlightened' line, as did Ksawery Działyński, envoy for Poznań. Michał Walewski had been deeply involved in *Fund for the Army*. If the palatine of Sieradz could be won over, there was some

<sup>27</sup> Augustyn Lipiński to Turski, BCz. 3295, pp. 52–4.

<sup>28</sup> Instruction: 12 August 1789, BCz. 722, pp. 69–74. Protest: 17 August 1789, BCz. 722, pp. 77–9. Józef Ankiewicz to SA, 10 September 1789, BCz. 722, pp. 65–6.

<sup>29</sup> H. Polackówna, *Szlachta na Siewierzu biskupim w latach 1442–1790* (Lwów, 1913), 3–4, 12.

<sup>30</sup> Protest and counter-protest: BPAU 8356, ff. 368–72, 373–4. Ankiewicz to SA, 20 September 1789, BCz. 722, pp. 83–6.

<sup>31</sup> W. Kalwat, 'Finansowe perypetie Józefa Ankiewicza. Przyczynek do obyczajowości epoki stanisławowskiej', *Studia Historyczne*, 44 (2001), 39–62, at 50–4. *Zagadki*, 83–4. Ankiewicz to SA, 5 December 1789, BCz. 722, pp. 99–100.

hope that Wojciech Suchodolski might be dissuaded from vetoing changes. Neither Józef Ossoliński, envoy for Bielsk, nor Jan Zyberk, the palatine of Brześć Litewski, were strongly attached to any 'party'.

The first meeting of the deputation and the bishops, on 12 August 1789, passed off largely in ceremonies, although the bishops did protest against the injustices committed against the clergy. The deputies asked for a uniform tariff of stole fees and a reform of the Greek calendar. Laymen and clergymen were invited to send in projects.<sup>32</sup>

Many of these projects have vanished, but the most comprehensive of the survivors postulated a 'congress of the clergy for a general ordering of its funds'.<sup>33</sup> It filled out the proposals for a 'national synod' in Hugo Kołłątaj's *Political Law of the Polish Nation*. It even shared some language, so if not written by Kołłątaj himself, it was the work of a close associate.<sup>34</sup> This project began (and ended) with a guarantee of all Church funds, 'for the most essential aim of the supreme power in the country should be the security of the property of all individual citizens'. Because, however, foundations had been established for the public good, the government should reorder the clergy and 'the entire ecclesiastical fund'. Plural individual foundations were transformed into a collective singular. To this end, the episcopate of both rites was to call a congress of the clergy in Warsaw. The nuncio might preside if he wished. The congress would include two deputies from each of the more important chapters, two doctors from each of the two universities, as well as forty-eight *plebani* from the Latin dioceses and twelve from the 'Greek' ones. Every order endowed with funds would send a deputy, with some sending two.

This congress would redivide the dioceses of both rites, provide proportionately for each bishop in landed properties, found seminaries, and fix the locations, funds, and membership of chapters. Prelates and canons should be chosen from priests with *cura animarum*, capable of performing public services. The Uniate metropolitan would enter the senate, while secular clergymen as well as Basilian monks could become bishops in the Ruthenian rite. The congress would also reorganize monasteries of both sexes and 'moderate' their number, with a view to increasing the number of Latin-rite parishes from the monastic 'superfluity'. Smaller Uniate parishes should be merged. None of the above was to '*praejudicare modernis Possessoribus*'.

The congress would consult with the Educational Commission to increase the number of parish schools, and fund the education of noble girls—by canonesses, not bound by lifetime vows. Smaller hospitals would be merged into larger ones. Additional foundations for new or existing parishes should reach 2,000 zlotys for the *pleban*, 500 for the *wikariusz*, and at least 300 zlotys for the needs of the church. All new foundations for prebends, seminaries, schools, and hospitals should be accepted, as they would release funds for parishes. All central and local

<sup>32</sup> Saluzzo to Federici, 19 August 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 278–9.

<sup>33</sup> 'Kongres Duchowieństwa do generalnego urzędzenia Funduszów', BCz. 1178, pp. 155–9.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. [Kołłątaj], *Prawo polityczne*, ii. 312–13.

**Table 1.** The Latin-rite episcopate's proposed *Taxa jurium stolae*<sup>1</sup>

|                                                                                                                                                                     |           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Funerals with a procession from the town or village where the church is, with singing to accompany the cortege, a vigil, one nocturn, Holy Mass, and burial.</b> |           |
| From considerable persons of the noble estate, with several villages                                                                                                | 20 zł     |
| From those who have about ten serfs                                                                                                                                 | 15 zł     |
| From those without other [landed] possessions                                                                                                                       | 10 zł     |
| From burghers and other persons wishing to be buried with the same services                                                                                         | 10 zł     |
| Church candles, each                                                                                                                                                | 15 gr     |
| Yellow wax candles, each                                                                                                                                            | 8 gr      |
| Tallow lamp                                                                                                                                                         | 4 gr      |
| Procession from the home of the deceased, in the same town or village as the church                                                                                 | 20 gr     |
| Burial in the cemetery                                                                                                                                              | 2 zł      |
| Exhortation or sermon                                                                                                                                               | 3 zł      |
| Separate sung Mass                                                                                                                                                  | 3 zł      |
| Said Mass                                                                                                                                                           | 1 zł 8 gr |
| Sung vigil, per priest                                                                                                                                              | 2 zł      |
| Ordinary catafalque                                                                                                                                                 | 15 gr     |
| To the bellringer, per ring, per bell                                                                                                                               | 10 gr     |
| With a marriage, candles as above                                                                                                                                   |           |
| To the organist and verger by separate agreement                                                                                                                    |           |
| At a baptism, candles as above, likewise at a churching                                                                                                             |           |
| Excerpt from the registers of baptisms, marriages, and funerals                                                                                                     | 1 zł 6 gr |
| For the truly poor, all these services should be performed in modest proportion to their estate, without gratification.                                             |           |

<sup>1</sup> *Taxa jurium stolae*, [1790]. MS version in ASC 16, f. 358.

government magistracies were instructed to assist the congress 'through respect for the dominant Holy Catholic Faith and love of the public good'. But deputies from the sejm would watch over the congress, and could suspend it if it disobeyed the law.

The estates of the bishopric of Cracow were to be reassigned by the congress, with the bishop being given a share of them, but the remaining revenues were to be offered to the Commonwealth for six years—a compromise. However, the Duchy of Siewierz was to remain in the possession of the Church of Cracow, unless a future bishop gave it to the Commonwealth. In the meantime, the clergy would make an extraordinary offering from their silver, and give six million zlotys from 'the less necessary monasteries' to a fund for military invalids. The pope was to be informed of the arrangements, but not asked to approve them. The bishops obtained a manuscript copy of this project.<sup>35</sup>

The deputation accepted the episcopate's project for a general tariff of stole fees, which was largely copied from that set for the diocese of Płock in 1774 by Michał Poniatowski. It suggests that many burghers and perhaps some richer peasants aspired to the kind of funeral given to nobles. For most peasant families, even a few zlotys constituted a substantial expense, although the traditional wake for the entire village might well have cost more. The tariff began with a declaration that the

<sup>35</sup> AAG ACap B84, ff. 23–7.

sacraments were administered to all without charge, but rewards for the services provided by a *pleban*, who incurred costs, were to be as set out in Table 1.

The deputation, episcopate, and nuncio negotiated in an atmosphere conditioned by continuing polemics over clerical taxation and property. The dividing line between pamphlets and submissions was blurred when the submission was published. *To the Illustrious Deputation* began: 'This may [or may not] become a project for the deputation, but it will always be an appeal to the public.'<sup>36</sup> The negotiators read of the measures taken regarding the French clergy, and of the Belgian clergy's involvement in the revolt against Joseph II. They knew that whatever they agreed between themselves would need the sejm's approval, and that any amendment to *Fund for the Army* would have to be passed unanimously.<sup>37</sup> In the meantime, the Estates had other preoccupations.

### 3. RECRUITMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM, AND THE EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION

Between 17 and 23 November 1789, a bad-tempered debate took place in the sejm, which led to a law setting out the liability of various types of property to provide recruits for the army.<sup>38</sup> Pleas for equity made no impression on the conviction that the clergy had a particular responsibility to supply recruits, because of nobles' readiness to shed their blood for the Fatherland. Analogously to the principle applied in taxation, ecclesiastical and Crown estates were to provide one recruit from every fifty hearths, noble estates one from every hundred. Moreover, additional recruitment from among 'free people' was to take place in royal and ecclesiastical towns, but not in noble towns, and was banned on market days, but not on feasts of the Church.<sup>39</sup>

Even before this law was passed, military recruitment was causing tensions between civilians and soldiers. It was proposed to establish a magistracy in each locality to handle disputes. The hetman's party was unenthusiastic, but Lithuanian envoys agreed a project for the Grand Duchy, forcing Sapieha to accept it, before it was carried unanimously in the sejm on 17 November 1789. A similar project for the Crown was passed on 24 November. The Civil-Military Commissions of Good Order (*Komisje Porządkowe Cywilno-Wojskowe*) were also expected to supervise tax collection, report on population, measures, manufactories, and crafts, supervise elementary schools and hospitals, and watch over public safety. They would inform the citizenry of the activities of the sejm, and implement its directives.<sup>40</sup>

The commissions began work following the election of commissioners by the sejmiks in February 1790. Lithuanian commissions each had fifteen members.

<sup>36</sup> *Do prześwietney deputacyi*, 2. See above, 142, n. 41.

<sup>37</sup> Saluzzo to Federici, 19 August 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 278–9.

<sup>38</sup> ASC 4, ff. 250–310.

<sup>39</sup> VL, ix, 143–5.

<sup>40</sup> VL, ix, 136–42, 146–56.

Clergymen were not specifically excluded from election, but nor were they declared eligible. This ambiguity may have reflected the uneven parish network in the Grand Duchy. In the Crown, commissions comprised sixteen laymen and three noble-born Catholic clergymen. Over a thousand nobles could now participate actively in the Revolution and exercise civic responsibility. The measure helped transform provincial political culture—vivifying local politics, while strengthening links with the centre. Local men, elected by their fellow citizens, inspired far more trust than the Warsaw élite.<sup>41</sup>

The legislation might have exacerbated tensions between the clergy and the lay nobility. The Troki commission complained to the administrators of the diocese of Wilno that in some well-endowed parishes the intentions of founders were not fulfilled.<sup>42</sup> The paragraph on education in the law for the Crown expressed the tendency of the metropolitan élite to see country parishes as the means to enlighten both the petty nobility and the non-noble populace:

The enlightenment of citizens and the inhabitants of the country, as it is useful to the country, so therefore the commissions of good order are strenuously to endeavour that in every parish of the Latin rite, especially in those that pay taxes at the noble, rather than the clerical rate, that these *plebani* should maintain a schoolmaster for the enlightenment of the poorer szlachta and the ignorant simple folk (*ciemna prostota*), to give at least basic tuition to the children in reading and writing, and arithmetic.

Parish priests would be obliged to report to the commission on the number of children, with fines of 50 złotys for non-compliance. The teaching of religion was evidently taken for granted. The Lithuanian law was similar, but it said nothing about the education of peasants alongside nobles, omitted arithmetic, and placed the responsibility for ensuring that each village maintained a schoolmaster on the noble landowner rather than the *pleban*, in parishes where the latter had less than 2,000 złotys annually. Lithuanian *plebani* were charged with supervising the schoolmasters. This reflected the enormous size of Latin-rite parishes in much of the Grand Duchy. The Lithuanian law contained a weak provision for Civil-Military Commissions to report to the Educational Commission; the law for the Crown contained none at all.<sup>43</sup>

The provision to fine clergymen in the Crown law must have rung alarm bells, particularly among elderly incumbents of vast parishes in the Ukraine. However, most commissions preferred to ask consistory courts to put pressure on negligent or recalcitrant clergymen, and if necessary to send them on retreats, rather than impose fines.<sup>44</sup> Because of the many clerical commissioners in the Crown, the

<sup>41</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 440–3. T. Korzon, *Wewnętrzne dzieje, Polski za Stanisława Augusta (1764–1794)*, 6 vols., 2nd edn (Cracow and Warsaw, 1897–8), v. 196–203. Kądziała, 'Local Government Reform'. Jerzy Gordziejew, *Komisje Porządkowe Cywilno-Wojskowe w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w okresie Sejmu Czteroletniego (1788–1792)* (Cracow, 2010).

<sup>42</sup> Letter of 17 September 1790, LMAVB F43-1091.

<sup>43</sup> VL, ix. 156. Cf. the Lithuanian law (VL, ix. 142). Both are quoted by T. Mizia, 'Komisje Cywilno-Wojskowe a szkolnictwo parafialne w okresie Sejmu Czteroletniego', *Rozprawy z dziejów oświaty*, 6 (1963), 40–92, at 41, 44–8. However, his opinion that the teaching of religion was not the most important question from the point of view of the state (p. 48) is questionable.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Mizia, 'Komisje Cywilno-Wojskowe', 52–6.



reform probably tended to consolidate the civic activity of clergymen, in partnership with lay nobles, rather than subordinate the former to the latter. One of the priests could even be a regular clergyman, although not an abbot. Nor could any clergyman act as chairman. Despite the caveats, the clergy now had a means of redress against the 'violence' of army units.<sup>45</sup>

The role envisaged for Civil-Military Commissions in expanding elementary education was a reflection of the Educational Commission's failures at parish level. But it also testified to questioning among the szlachta, not only of the expenditure of the educational fund, but also of the very purpose of the Commission for National Education. The argument that the critical situation of the Commonwealth required the immediate seizure of the former Jesuit funds would find much support if a project were suddenly introduced or reintroduced in the sejm. So the universities of Cracow and Wilno jointly lobbied their cause in Warsaw.<sup>46</sup>

The reformers did not lose heart. The Educational Commission approved updated statutes for all levels of schooling on 2 February 1790. The changes included more precise regulation of permissions for regular clergymen to teach, a degree of autonomy for Piarist schools within the system, a reduction in the age of candidates for teaching from 18 to 17, a relaxation in the dress code, and the abolition of the six-year requirement for admission to the 'academic estate'. Although these reforms indicate a recognition of the growing role played by laymen, the statutes maintained the chapter on religion unaltered. 'Religion and true piety', it began, 'being the basis of a Christian life, and the sanctification of all virtues, is thereby the most essential part of education'. The school day began with Mass at seven o'clock. Confession was ordained monthly, and before important feasts.<sup>47</sup>

#### 4. RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF THE URBAN AND CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS

The urban question provoked much debate in 1789. The municipality of old Warsaw,<sup>48</sup> under its energetic and enlightened president, Jan Dekert, led a campaign to 'restore' the towns' supposed rights in former centuries. On 23 and 24

<sup>45</sup> As Saluzzo noted to Zelada, 9 December 1789, ASV ANV 67, f. 297–8.

<sup>46</sup> Bogusławski to Poczubut, Warsaw, 15 July, undated (mid-late September), 16 September 1789, VUB F2 DC 38, ff. 38, 31, 41. Poczubut to Chreptowicz, Wilno, 19 October 1789, BJ 3119, f. 197. M. Chamcówna, *Uniwersytet Jagielloński w dobie Komisji Edukacji Narodowej*, ii (Wrocław, 1959), 174. J. Kamińska, *Universitas Vilnensis. Akademia Wileńska i Szkoła Główna Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego 1773–1792* (Pułtusk and Warsaw, 2004), 80.

<sup>47</sup> 'Ustawy Komisji Edukacji Narodowej dla stanu akademickiego i na szkoły w krajach Rzeczypospolitej przepisane', 2 February 1790, in J. Lewicki (ed.), *Ustawodawstwo szkolne za czasów Komisji Edukacji Narodowej. Rozporządzenia, ustawy pedagogiczne i organizacyjne (1773–1793)* (Cracow, 1925), 209–330, quotation at 272.

<sup>48</sup> The 'old town' of Warsaw was founded in the thirteenth century, and the adjoining 'new town' in the fourteenth. They remained administratively separate until the end of the Commonwealth.

November 1789 the delegates of royal towns (except Cracow) met in Warsaw and agreed a memorial, drafted by Kołłątaj. The silver jubilee of the king's coronation on 25 November provided an opportunity to stage-manage public festivities. Prayers were said in churches for the urban estate, as well as the king. An 'Act of Union of the Towns' was signed on 27 November.<sup>49</sup>

Stanisław August was concerned by rumours that he 'wanted through the burghers to make a rebellion against the szlachta on the day of his coronation, and in the Parisian manner to cut off undesired heads, and especially Hetman Branicki's.' He wanted the toning down of 'some writings which Dekert already wanted to distribute, in which the essence of the matter is good, but with which he mixed prefaces and eloquences evidently borrowed from current French writings'.<sup>50</sup> The effects of royal pressure were apparent in the successive drafts of the 'memorial of the towns'. What has not been highlighted until now is the religious dimension of the memorial.

The burghers demanded the right to buy landed estates, the noble privilege of *neminem captivabimus nisi iure victum*, self-government, and most controversially, participation in the legislature. Their memorial cast the Commonwealth's Providential conjuncture in almost millennarian terms. 'When the eighteenth century seems to be preparing a transformation of the entire Earth, spreading the rule of truth and restoring the rights of men to their true bounds', the senate and knighthood set a worthy example to other nations. It made an appeal to the clergy, employing a politically charged Christology:

And you, clerical estate, interpreter of God's laws, of holy truth, this is the most desirable occasion for you to show yourself that which the Gospel, that holy and pure teaching of the Saviour of the world, wished you be. You, teachers of the people, you, whose duty it is to lead it out from the slavery of darkness, now give proof, that you are the defenders of people's freedom, for which the universal legislator and Saviour did not find it unpleasant [!] to spill his blood and offer up his life. The Gospel, that most fundamental guardian of our conscience, gives us the right to appeal to you. Be guardians of the rights of men equal in Christ, equal in the eyes of the Creator, before whom all greatnesses of the world vanish, only truth remains. And if the people [...] is to be accustomed to venerate and respect your holy vocation, speak up for it, and become defenders of the rights of men, the entirety of the country, and the freedoms of an abased estate.

Although the language of natural rights was toned down, the theme of equality before God accentuated, and the grammar spoilt, these passages still conveyed a double-edged threat. It was ostensibly directed at the embattled clergy, but it also hinted at the kind of alliance between the clergy and the burghers (and peasants) with which Gustav III had tamed the Swedish nobility.<sup>51</sup> Much of the memorial

<sup>49</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 444–8. K. Zienkowska, *Ślawetni i urodzeni. Ruch polityczny mieszczaństwa w dobie Sejmu Czteroletniego* (Warsaw, 1976), 33–73, 98–102. Ead., 'Reforms Relating to the Third Estate', in Fiszman (ed.), *Constitution and Reform*, 329–55.

<sup>50</sup> SA to Deboli, 28 November 1789, in *MDSC*, ii. 321–2.

<sup>51</sup> Fears of a 'coalition with the clergy' and a 'Swedish revolution' were reported by I. Potocki to Aloy, 25 November 1789, quoted by Zienkowska, *Ślawetni i urodzeni*, 59.

flattered the szlachta as defenders of liberty and lovers of the Fatherland, and appealed to their generosity. Nevertheless, the contrast drawn between 'foreign disturbances', where 'the slave violently breaks his chains', and the calm loyalty of the Polish burghers was interpreted as a threat. The demands included the removal of barriers to promotion in the army, civil magistracies, and the Church. The latter included canonries and all other benefices 'without exception', so that only bishoprics (whose holders sat in the senate) were implicitly left to the nobility.<sup>52</sup>

The king had not wanted to receive the original memorial of 25 November, reacted nervously to the cavalcade of carriages of black-clad burghers which had delivered it to the Royal Castle, and was reluctant to introduce even an amended version to the sejm. It was eventually agreed that Jacek Małachowski would read out a summary of the towns' requests. The grand chancellor of the Crown distorted the memorial, introducing divisions between greater and lesser towns. A separate deputation was appointed to consider the urban question, chaired by the bishop of Poznań.<sup>53</sup>

In the sejm on 15 December, Jacek Jezierski insulted the burghers. 'There are no towns in Poland', he claimed, 'only their name'. Those who claimed the name of burghers were 'useless [...] hucksters'. They had not met the economic obligations which accompanied their original privileges—an analogous argument to the one he used against the clergy. He dismissed the request that burghers be eligible for canonries, sneering: 'they need education before they need honour'. Jezierski exemplified the tendency for the szlachta to enrich itself from urban economic activity, and had much to lose from unfettered competition.<sup>54</sup>

Speeches rarely provoked direct replies from pamphleteers. But the castellan of Łuków drew a stinging riposte from Jan Baudouin de Courtenay, titled *Impartial Considerations*, but almost certainly commissioned by the municipality of Old Warsaw. As with his attacks on clerical property, his denunciations of noble privileges carried him to the radical margin of the Polish Enlightenment.<sup>55</sup> Baudouin began by expressing consternation that, having displayed a 'more enlightened patriotism' over taxing the clergy, the castellan now seemed to have 'sacrificed truth to prejudice'. It was not so much the content (a point-by-point defence of the memorial) as the rhetoric of the pamphlet which outraged Jezierski. Baudouin patronized him—'No, my Lord Castellan, that is not how we should reason in the eighteenth century'—as if he were lecturing a slow-witted student.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>52</sup> 'Memorial miast', in *MDSC*, ii. 339–57, quotations at 345, 343, 349. Earlier versions ('Memoryjał miast', in Kołtataj, *Listy anonima*, ii. 367–74, at 371–2, and 'Memoriał miast', in *MDSC*, ii. 259–68, at 265) threw down a more contractual challenge to the clergy: 'and if you wish, that we should should faithfully venerate your vocation and defend your rights, be in return defenders'.

<sup>53</sup> ASC 5, ff. 178–84. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i. 448–52. Zienkowska, *Sławetni i urodzeni*, 73–5, 104–11.

<sup>54</sup> *Mowa... Jezierskiego, kasztelana łukowskiego... 15. grudnia 1789...* Zienkowska, *Jacek Jezierski*, 237–41.

<sup>55</sup> [Jan Baudouin de Courtenay], *Bezstronne uwagi nad mową JW Jezierskiego kasztelana łukowskiego, mianą na seymie dnia 15. grudnia 1789. przeciwko mieszczanom* [Warsaw, 1789], in *MDSC*, ii. 428–49. See Grzeszkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 168–71.

<sup>56</sup> [Baudouin], *Bezstronne uwagi*, 434, 447.

Baudouin picked up the threat of a potential coalition between the king, clergy, and burghers against the szlachta, if the latter did not prudently concede the towns' demands. He reprised an earlier allegation:

In every country the clergy has been more inclined to facilitate the whims of rulers, than to defend the liberty of the people. It has always had a joint interest with the despot in keeping the people in darkness, so that both might more easily plunder them. That is why both fear freedom of thought, which introduces the mild rule of reason and justice.

Replying to the sneer that the burghers were in more need of education than honour, Baudouin wrote that in towns there was far more enlightenment than among the provincial szlachta. Burghers had more than enough education to become not only canons, but bishops as well. Besides, he claimed, the evangelical offices of pastors, guardians, supervisors, and guides had later been 'transubstantiated' into archbishops, patriarchs, archdeacons, canons, and bishop-senators. Baudouin was not averse to selective citation of the Gospel, and asked by what law 'this aristocratic hierarchy' had excluded burghers from the highest positions: 'The first founder of religion chose persons not from among the szlachta, but from among the rabble of the people (*łuszcza ludu*) for apostles.' Why should not a burgher or even a peasant tend the flock of Jesus?<sup>57</sup>

Franciszek Salezy Jezierski made a more general attack on opponents of the burghers' demands in *Considerations on the Non-Noble Estate in Poland*, supposedly written by *Jarosław Kutasiński, noble of Łuków*. That was enough to make his namesake the chief target. The titular hero voiced the prejudices of the petty szlachta of the region. Canon Jezierski certainly intended to convince the reader that noble attitudes to the burghers were founded on 'prejudices, superstitions, and ignorance'.<sup>58</sup> But he also distanced himself from anti-clerical 'enlightenment'. He began by expressing his conviction that reason, a gift of the Creator, was eclipsed by men's 'ignorance, superstition, and prejudice'. Reverend Jezierski criticized the author of *Impartial Considerations* for his insulting 'libel' on the clergy. He wrote ironically about 'our century', in which 'the violence of neighbouring tyranny is called *legislation*, betraying the Fatherland is *intrigue*', 'mockery of religion is *philosophy*, unbelief in eternal life is a *strong mind*, and all those, who do these things perfectly, are called for this *honest men*'.<sup>59</sup>

Religious discourse provided the form of Canon Jezierski's satirical *Catechism of the Mysteries of the Government of Poland*, supposedly written by Lawrence Sterne. The idea of three noble Estates in one was a 'mystery never to be fathomed', while a burgher was an intermediate being between a 'noble-human' and a 'peasant-non-human'; he was, 'in the language of theology, *substantia incompleta*'. He did not

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 439, 441–9.

<sup>58</sup> [F. S. Jezierski], *Jarosław Kutasińskiego, herbu Dęboróg, szlachcica łukowskiego uwagi nad stanem nieszlacheckim w Polsce*, in F. S. Jezierski, *Wybór Pism*, 79–106. See Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 174–5; Kostkiewiczowa, *Oświecenie*, 226–9. *Kutas* is a vulgar term for penis, while the name of the fictional heraldic fraternity *Dęboróg* implies that the 'horn' is made of oak.

<sup>59</sup> [F. S. Jezierski], *Jarosław Kutasińskiego uwagi*, 84, 102.

differ from the noble in 'property, lifestyle, or education', but only in his lack of an order and coat of arms. And the noble bowed to him if he wished to borrow money. But the burgher was unable, for example, to become an abbot or a bishop. The noble estate decided on taxes, but peasants, burghers, Jews, and priests paid them. The *Catechism* concluded with a *Credo* to anarchy, oppression, aristocracy, persecution, corruption, and violence.<sup>60</sup>

The delegates of the towns chose seven plenipotentiaries, led by Dekert, to negotiate with the sejm's Deputation for Urban Affairs. This deputation rejected as too radical a project drawn up by the vice-chancellor of Lithuania, Joachim Chreptowicz, which envisaged forty-four urban envoys to the sejm, who would be able to vote on urban matters. From May 1790 the question stalled.<sup>61</sup>

The burghers' cause was not helped by its relationship to the still more intractable Jewish question.<sup>62</sup> From the beginning of the sejm, Jewish and burgher lobbyists had been rivals, and mutual hostility was exploited by members of the sejm who were ill-disposed to the burghers. The Warsaw populace was increasingly unhappy at the prolonged suspension of the city's privilege *de non tolerandis Judaeis* because of the extended deliberations of the sejm. A (non-fatal) tumult against Warsaw's Jews on 16 May 1790, based on a (false) rumour that the Jews had killed a Christian tailor, outraged many nobles, who saw the violence as a threat to themselves. The following day in the sejm, Jacek Jezierski led demands for exemplary punishment of the Warsaw burghers as a whole.<sup>63</sup> For a while, the Jewish question received more attention than the urban one. By August 1790, not only had a deputation been appointed, but it had prepared a project, assimilationist in spirit, and loosely based on that submitted by Mateusz Butrymowicz, envoy for Pińsk, on 30 November 1789. But the sejm considered neither project. Indeed, not all members of the deputation for the Jews even read their own project.<sup>64</sup> The question returned to the political agenda only in August 1791, and in the end nothing was done.

Little interest was aroused by the religious side of the Jewish question. Bishop Garnysz was terminally ill by the summer of 1790. His chairmanship of the deputation seems to have been largely nominal, although he did sign the final project. Within their dioceses, the bishops had generally resolved questions of Catholic-Jewish relations to their own satisfaction. None were enthusiasts for

<sup>60</sup> [F. S. Jezierski], *Katechizm o tajemnicach rządu polskiego*, in id., *Wybór Pism*, 65–78.

<sup>61</sup> Zienkowska, *Ślawetni i urodzeni*, 112–14, 152–4.

<sup>62</sup> See Eisenbach, *Emancypacja*, 70–113; J. Goldberg, 'Pierwszy ruch polityczny wśród Żydów polskich. Plenipotenci żydowscy w dobie Sejmu Czteroletniego', in J. Michalski (ed.), *Lud żydowski w narodzie polskim* (Warsaw, 1994), 45–63; K. Zienkowska, 'Obywatele czy mieszkańcy? Nieudana próba reformy statusu Żydów polskich w czasie Sejmu Czteroletniego', in Kowecki, *Sejm Czteroletni i jego tradycje*, 152–66; Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia* (Oxford, 2010), i. 210–19.

<sup>63</sup> K. Zienkowska, '"The Jews have Killed a Tailor": The Socio-Political Background of a Pogrom in Warsaw in 1790', *Polin*, 5 (1988), 78–101.

<sup>64</sup> See J. Michalski, 'Sejmowe projekty reformy położenia ludności żydowskiej w Polsce w latach 1789–1792', in id., *Studia historyczne*, i. 305–22; Lukowski, *Disorderly Liberty*, ch. 10. Cf. M. Wodziński, '"Civil Christians": Debates on the Reform of the Jews in Poland, 1789–1830', in B. Nathans and G. Safran (eds.), *Culture Front: Representing Jews in Eastern Europe* (Philadelphia, PA, 2008), 46–76, at 50–1.

conversion. Pamphleteers and politicians overwhelmingly regarded the Jewish question not as a religious, but as a social problem, with fiscal ramifications.<sup>65</sup>

Overlapping with the urban question, in December 1789 the Estates approved the bones of a new constitutional settlement. The sejm had established a Deputation for the Form of Government on 7 September 1789, with Adam Krasiński as chairman, shortly after the bishop's Nestorian speech of 28 August, in which he rebuked the Estates for not learning the lessons of decades of anarchy. The deputation also included Wojciech Suchodolski, but its real leader was Ignacy Potocki. For three months work proceeded slowly, with Krasiński proving pedantic, and Suchodolski obstructive.<sup>66</sup>

One of the Prussian conditions for an alliance, an outline of the future Polish constitution, spurred Ignacy Potocki into completing the deputation's *Principles for the Correction of the Form of Government*. It was presented to the sejm on 17 December 1789, before entering 'deliberation' for a few days.<sup>67</sup> The *Principles* subordinated the executive to the sejm, and the sejm to the sejmiks, and made almost all offices elective. The king failed to secure any assurances from Ignacy Potocki regarding the royal prerogative of nominating senators—including bishops.<sup>68</sup>

Although the *Principles* contained nothing directly concerning religion or the clergy, when the sejm debated them two such questions arose. Franciszek Szymanski, envoy for Sochaczew, inserted a requirement that the elected king be a Catholic. Kublicki argued for an elected senate—including bishops. However, pressure from royalists ensured that the number of elective offices was left open.<sup>69</sup>

Both the composition of the 'nation' and the rights to be enjoyed by different sections of the population were vigorously contested. Bishop Krasiński warned that unless active participation in sejmiks was restricted to nobles in possession of landed property in the locality, the nation would sink back into anarchy.<sup>70</sup> The hostile reaction of the public galleries to speeches on behalf of landless nobles by Suchodolski, Sapieha, and Branicki signalled a change in the wind. On the other hand, Ignacy Potocki had hoped to slip through a 'syllogism' about the rights of the undefined 'nation', to open the door to a future extension of noble rights to other parts of the population. The sejm would have none of it. Ankiewicz suggested the final formula: while equality was guaranteed among the noble estate, the protection of government and the right to property were assured to all 'inhabitants' of the Commonwealth.<sup>71</sup> Both these points had the potential to shore up the clergy's civil and political rights.

<sup>65</sup> This conclusion emerges from the documents in *MDSC*, vi, as well as the historiography.

<sup>66</sup> Rostworowski, *Legends i fakty*, 289–92.

<sup>67</sup> *ASC* 5, ff. 210–19.

<sup>68</sup> Rostworowski, *Legends i fakty*, 289–93.

<sup>69</sup> *ASC* 5, ff. 295–317 (21 December 1789), 348–88 (22 December 1789), 430–42 (23 December 1789).

<sup>70</sup> *Mowa... Adama Krasińskiego biskupa kamienieckiego... 21. grudnia roku 1789...*

<sup>71</sup> Successive drafts are in *APP* 98, ff. 159–71. The final text: *VL*, ix, 157–9. See Rostworowski, *Legends i fakty*, 293–9; Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, i, 494–8.

## 5. THE NEGOTIATION OF A COMPROMISE: OCTOBER 1789–MAY 1790

Following his first meeting with the deputation at the beginning of October 1789, Saluzzo emphasized the need to combine firmness with 'the sweetest expressions and the smoothest manners'.<sup>72</sup> No joint conference was held for more than two months. The nuncio's mood darkened as he reflected on the double burden of military recruitment imposed on the clergy. Worse still was the vivid impression made in Warsaw by the news that the French had confiscated ecclesiastical property and forbidden religious vows.<sup>73</sup> Early in December, as the survey of the Cracow estates began, he reported that the deputation was working on plans for the bishoprics. Although the deputation was not considering a national tribunal or a synod, 'as long as this sejm lasts we must always remain in fear'.<sup>74</sup>

Before the deputation met the nuncio and episcopate, Ankiewicz sought (and presumably obtained) royal approval for his speech.<sup>75</sup> The king, although he disliked anything that smelt of 'fanaticism', felt that papal authority had fallen far enough. In September he had confided in Filippo Mazzei:

Concerning the priests, as in several other things, there are similarities between the proceedings of our sejm and those of yours. It has already been said in France, about several acts of the National Assembly, that it could hardly do good worse. This phrase is often applicable to us. Assuredly, I do not adopt at all what have been called ultramontane maxims; I am very far from that, but nevertheless I would not like to see the Church of St Peter fall, either physically or morally. And yet, if one traversed Europe from one end to the other, that is what one would see. *Sed non prevalebunt, portae inferni.*

Perhaps the king saw the Holy See as a diplomatic ally; perhaps he feared that the social edifice of religion would crumble without the cement of Rome; perhaps he found in Roman Catholicism a familiar setting in which to seek solace in Divine Providence.<sup>76</sup>

Ankiewicz began his speech on 10 December by stating that the deputation's brief encompassed 'all that concerns ecclesiastical affairs', founded on the Estates' conviction that 'the interests of the Holy Church and the interests of our country are today under the same shield of Providence'. He then cut to the chase. Nuncial

<sup>72</sup> Saluzzo to Federici, 3 October 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 284–5.

<sup>73</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 28 October, 18 November, 25 November 1789, ASV ANV 66, ff. 290, 292–6. Zelada to Saluzzo, 28 November, 12 December 1789, ASV ANV 52, ff. 217, 229.

<sup>74</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 2 December 1789, ASV ANV 66, f. 297. Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 186.

<sup>75</sup> Ankiewicz to SA, 5 December 1789, BCz. 722, p. 99. 'Discours de Joseph Comte Ankiewicz Castellan de Sandecz tenue [*sic*] le 10 Xbre 1789 au Nonce Apostolique', BCz. 722, pp. 95–8.

<sup>76</sup> SA to Mazzei, 12 September 1789, BN Akc. 11,356, vol. i, ff. 127–8. Cf. SA to Deboli, 22 July, ZP 414, f. 374: 'And for the rest my situation is so strange and slippery, that I have ever less trust in human help and support. But I turn more and more to Divine Providence alone, which has, it is true, entangled all my life with great pains, but which has also almost miraculously rescued me from several dangers. And as in addition I am already advanced in years, daily my attachment to temporal things diminishes. So I shall virtuously and bravely meet my fate, be it as it will.'

and episcopal eyebrows must have shot heavenwards at the claim that no ecclesiastical property had been appropriated. Ankiewicz explained that the treasury would have gained nothing after provision had been made for all the bishoprics. The deputation thus indirectly conceded one of the two fundamental papal objections, while striving not to contradict the law passed on 24 July 1789. The castellan of Sącz also tried to lubricate the other sticking point. To doubt the certainty of salaries was to put national credit in question. But he claimed that the law stated that the episcopal estates were the security for those salaries, and that it did not specify that the treasury should manage them directly, merely that it should ensure that the bishops were paid. This was no different to a religious fund. The law already allowed (via the leasing arrangements) a bishop to hold estates to the value of 100,000 złotys per annum for twelve years; 'the rest could be gained in due course'. This was as much of a hint as the deputation was prepared to give that the law might be amended. Ankiewicz invited the nuncio and the bishops to contribute their '*lumières*' to the project.<sup>77</sup>

Despite various proposals inimical to the clergy and the Holy See, the nuncio believed that matters were not desperate.<sup>78</sup> The new secretary of state, Francesco Zelada, could admit the proposed redivisions of the dioceses but the rest he pronounced 'exorbitant pretensions and intolerable extravagances'.<sup>79</sup> The bishops met at the nunciature on 10 February 1790 to agree the final text of their answer, which they gave to the deputation at a meeting on 24 February.<sup>80</sup> The episcopate also submitted some *desiderata*.<sup>81</sup> The deputation replied to the long episcopal answer and *desiderata* in mid-March.<sup>82</sup> Saluzzo found these replies 'more moderate'.<sup>83</sup>

The bishops' second answer expressed gratitude for the concessions made to date. It was probably presented at a meeting with the deputation on 9 April, when the bishops also asked for a prompt agreement with the nuncio concerning the auction of the Cracow estates.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Ankiewicz, 'Discours', BCz. 722, pp. 95–8.

<sup>78</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 16 December, 23 December 1789, ASV ANV 67, ff. 2–3. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 262–3. I have taken 'Duchowieństwo wszelkiego Obrządku w Koronie i W.X. Litt.', AAG ACap. B84, ff. 57–64, to be the deputation's initial project. It accords with Saluzzo's summary—with one exception, discussed below.

<sup>79</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 9 January 1790, ASV ANV 52, ff. 249–50.

<sup>80</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 10 February, 24 February 1790, ASV ANV 67, ff. 8–9. 'Odpowiedź a Collegio Episcoporum na podane Punkta w sposobie Projektu od Przeświatt: Deputacyi wyznaczoney przez Nayiasn: Stany do umowienia się z nim w niektórych materyach Duchownych', AAG ACap. B84, ff. 87–90, 99–121.

<sup>81</sup> 'Przełożenia Collegii Episcoporum Prześwietney Deputacyi, do traktowania z niemi w Interessach Duchownych wyznaczoney podane', AAG ACap. B84, ff. 91–7.

<sup>82</sup> 'Opinia Deputacyi', AAG ACap. B84, ff. 9–13. 'Odpowiedź na Pismo pod Tytułem = Żądanie Collegii Episcoporum', AAG ACap. B84, ff. 13–14.

<sup>83</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 24 March, 7 April 1790, ASV ANV 67, ff. 14, 16–7.

<sup>84</sup> 'Odpowiedź krotka na Opinią Przesw: Deputacyi podana na Pismie Collegio Episcoporum z powodu pierwszy jego odpowiedzi', AAG ACap. B84, ff. 291–4. Ankiewicz to Saluzzo, 11 April 1790, AAG ACap. B84, f. 32.



Ankwicz then exchanged letters with Saluzzo.<sup>85</sup> The nuncio asked for, and got, a postponement in the auction of the Cracow estates from 20 April until 20 May. However, Wojciech Suchodolski permitted the delay only so that the new bishop, who had not yet been formally nominated, could have first choice of the properties for lease, up to the value of 100,000 złotys per annum.<sup>86</sup> As the new deadline for the auction approached, Saluzzo continued to press his case.<sup>87</sup>

The deputation had agreed its revised project by the middle of May 1790, amending it after final consultations with the episcopate and nuncio. A comparison of this text with the deputation's initial project of December 1789 reveals that several concessions were made to the Church in the course of the negotiations.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, the deputation's and episcopate's responses allow us to follow the reasoning that prevailed in each case. The bishops mixed defences of the clergy's fiscal interests and judicial autonomy with a generalized reaction to the eighteenth century from post-Tridentine redoubts. They were anxious, however, to demonstrate the Church's usefulness to the Commonwealth. Once the deputation was better informed of the Church's needs and practices, it was often willing to make concessions. In examining the points of agreement and disagreement, I shall refer to the deputation's initial project of December 1789, the bishops' first answer and desiderata of February 1790, the deputation's answer of March 1790, the bishop's second answer of April 1790, the deputation's revised project of May 1790, and the nuncio's various interventions.

The first problem was the redivision of the dioceses. Following the meeting on 10 December 1789, Saluzzo was surprised to discover that the deputation merely proposed to separate the palatinate of Lublin from the diocese of Cracow, and attach it to the diocese of Chełm, and in due course, to divide the diocese of Wilno by reassigning some of its territories to the bishops of Livonia and Smolensk. The other bishoprics, it was claimed, were already roughly equal. Evidently his representations had an effect, for the deputation's initial project was corrected to include the transfer of the palatinate (approximating to the archdeaconry) of Braclaw to the diocese of Kamieniec.<sup>89</sup>

The bishops' first answer stated that the deputation's project would not make the dioceses an equal and manageable size. The transfer of 102 churches to the bishop of Chełm would still leave 417 churches in the diocese of Cracow. If the palatinate of Braclaw were added to the diocese of Kamieniec, this would create too large a diocese, while still leaving an unwieldy diocese of Łuck. Besides, political boundaries could not simply be superimposed on ecclesiastical ones. More information

<sup>85</sup> Ankwicz to Saluzzo, 11 April 1790, AAG ACap. B84, ff. 32–3. Saluzzo to the 'clerical deputation', 17 April 1790, AAG ACap. B84, f. 34.

<sup>86</sup> Saluzzo to the 'clerical deputation', 10 April 1790, ASC 18, f. 147. Saluzzo to Zelada, 10 April 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 18. ASC 6, f. 568. Instruction to the Crown Treasury Commission: ASC 12, f. 286.

<sup>87</sup> Saluzzo to the 'clerical deputation', 13 May 1790, Polish translations in ASC 18, ff. 137–8, AAG ACap. B84, ff. 45–6.

<sup>88</sup> Revised version: 'Projekt Deputacyi Duchowney', ASC 16, ff. 352–67, copy in AAG ACap. B84, ff. 69–78.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Saluzzo to Zelada, 16 December 1789, ASV ANV 67, f. 2.

about parishes and population would be required. Moreover, at least four new bishoprics were needed, because 'in no Catholic country are there so few'. Since only the Holy See had the authority to establish bishoprics and alter their boundaries, it would have to establish a commission. By this answer, the bishops were probably trying to kick the question into the long grass.<sup>90</sup>

The deputation answered that the proposed redivision had followed the bishops' wishes. They did not have a commission from the Estates to establish new dioceses, but they had noted the reasons for doing so in their protocol. The bishops replied that until new bishoprics were forthcoming, they agreed only to the transfer of part of the diocese of Cracow to the diocese of Chełm, and the division of the diocese of Wilno into three. The nuncio also wanted new dioceses, but modified his original idea for the diocese of Łuck, asking for the division of the palatinate of Braclaw between the dioceses of Kamieniec and Kiev.<sup>91</sup> This postulate was included in the deputation's revised project (Map 4).

The deputation's initial project urged bishops to found or expand seminaries. However, the deputation's proposal for the Educational Commission to provide support for seminaries was dropped from the revised project after the episcopate had pointed out the need to pay pensions to retired professors. This left only a vague declaration that the Estates would help the bishops to found and maintain seminaries in future.

Residence and pluralism provoked some discussion. The deputation wished to require bishops and canons to reside by their cathedrals, and *plebani* in their parishes, unless engaged in public service. Henceforth no-one should hold two *beneficia curata*, except for those currently in possession and their coadjutors. In its first reply, the episcopate pointed out that the Council of Trent had already laid down rules concerning residence and absence—it could be permitted for ecclesiastical and public service. If a canon also possessed a benefice with cure of souls, and resided by his cathedral or collegiate church, he had to maintain a deputy in the parish. If he resided in his parish, he lost the income from his prebend. Bishops would ensure that such clergymen resided where they were most needed. Plural benefices, explained the bishops, had spread in Poland from necessity. Few funds could adequately support a clergyman who held public office. The dispensing power of the Holy See was but rarely used to permit the holding of two *beneficia curata*, chiefly by suffragan bishops. The *collegium episcoporum* undertook to correct abuses, particularly that of procuring dispensations in Rome for benefices in different dioceses. It asked the deputation to put the case for better provision for parishes, which, they argued, was the best way to end pluralism. New parishes were especially necessary in the Ukraine, where a *pleban* might need a week to travel to a sick person and return. The bishops returned to the theme in their second answer, stating that any law should take the form of a request to the bishops to enforce existing prohibitions against pluralism, *salvis modernis possessoribus*.

<sup>90</sup> The case for four new bishoprics was made by Skarszewski, *Kalkulacya*, 27–9.

<sup>91</sup> Saluzzo to the 'clerical deputation', 17 April 1790, AAG ACap. B84, f. 34. Ditto, 13 May 1790, ASC 18, ff. 137–8.

The deputation's revised project omitted the proposed prohibition on plural *beneficia curata*. It even contained an additional clause stating that the number of prelatures and canonries in each cathedral was not to be reduced, and that the funds maintaining them were not to be suppressed. But prelates and canons were to perform public as well as ecclesiastical duties. The revised project also left out a provision for clergymen with benefices both in the Commonwealth and in a neighbouring state to choose between them within twelve months, or else lose their cures in the Commonwealth. Presumably, the deputation was convinced that such a measure would cause all manner of legal complications.

Stole fees were a longstanding bone of contention between the laity and clergy. The deputation enjoined the bishops to renew their prohibitions on 'charging for the sacraments', especially 'the custom of paying for confession cards, which shames religion'. They approved the episcopal tariff for stole fees, but expected the bishops to forbid priests the acceptance of gifts during pastoral visits at Christmastide (*kolęda, columbatio*). The episcopate replied that a law on stole fees was unnecessary. *Iura stolae* applied to services which demanded some expense from the priest, and rewarded the poorer clergy. Diocesan tariffs were already published on sacristy doors.<sup>92</sup> Payments for Easter confession tickets had long been abolished. The *kolęda* was a custom of the early Church, and *plebani* should be allowed to accept voluntary offerings. Pastoral visits led to reconciliation among families and neighbours, as well as the teaching of the faith, and many other benefits to the country. Moreover, priests were obliged to record the population of their parishes, which, 'through thick forests and inaccessible remote places' was an onerous duty. Pressed to execute the law, the episcopate promised that a priest who extorted more money than set out in the tariff would have to return the sum to the parishioner, and face punishment by his bishop.

The questions of the relative competencies of civil and ecclesiastical courts in disputes between clergymen and laymen, and of legacies to the Church, were resolved without much ado in favour of the status quo. The bishops persuaded the deputation to withdraw its proposal that the Church would no longer be able to refuse requests to commute tithes in kind into cash. The fiscal argument was probably conclusive. Tithes presently counted as secure and permanent income, taxable at 20 per cent. The noble lands which in the long run would benefit from commutation were taxed at 10 per cent. The bishops also argued that the cost of employing *wikariusze* should not be counted as part of parish priests' taxable income, and that *plebani* who after deducting this amount had less than 1,000 zlotys per annum should be exempted from all contributions. The deputation agreed in principle, and invited the college to put forward a suitable project.

The deputation's initial project contained a provision that for a period of ten years all clerical payments to Rome should be paid into the Crown and Lithuanian treasuries and applied to the army. Prompted by the nuncio,<sup>93</sup> the bishops refuted

<sup>92</sup> At this point only the dioceses of Cracow, Cujavia, Gniezno, Łuck, Płock, and Poznań definitely had such tariffs. That of Kiev may not have been implemented. Karbownik, *Ofiary iura stolae*, 58–109.

<sup>93</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 27 January 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 6.

the 'false supposition', generated by the word 'annates', that the Polish clergy annually sent a part of its income to Rome, as well as a sum equal to the annual revenue upon entry to a benefice. They claimed that not more than 80,000 zlotys a year was sent to Rome under various titles. This was less than the costs incurred by the pope for the benefit of the Commonwealth, including two seminaries and the nunciature. In any case, annates proper were regulated by concordats. The deputation dropped the clause on annates, although the nuncio would be asked to ensure that they were reduced in line with episcopal revenues.

Monastic vocations proved more controversial. The deputation's initial project specified punishments of up to six weeks' imprisonment for parents and guardians whose children or wards entered a religious order below the ages of 24 for young men and 18 for girls, and fines of 1,000 zlotys and dismissal for the superiors who accepted them. Younger men would be permitted to enter the Basilian and Piarist orders, although they could not make binding vows. Civil-Military Commissions would check that those entering religious orders did so of their own free will. If they had been coerced, they would be protected by the government. These measures would 'increase the number of true servants of God' by vocations that were 'the work of particular grace'. For this reason too, all female houses were henceforth to accept novices without requiring dowries. Each bishop was to fix the number of nuns in each convent in proportion to its revenues.

In their first reply, the bishops made an extended case for monastic vows at 16 years of age, probably drawing on Wojciech Skarszewski's arguments, first deployed against the Zamoyski Code in 1778.<sup>94</sup> The deputation's proposals were 'clearly opposed to ecclesiastical discipline, the good of religion, the general good of the Fatherland, natural and civil liberty'. What other purpose had a minimum age of 24 years, they asked, than 'to close monasteries by political means?' After having drunk of the world's evil, who would choose a monk's habit? Such candidates would most often be drawn to monasteries by 'hidden circumstances'. The orders needed 'good preachers, good confessors, good theologians' and the requisite qualities were best inculcated in younger men, who could more easily accept a lifelong 'yoke'. If novices were allowed to enter the Piarist and Basilian orders earlier, but not to take their vows until 24, many would take advantage of the education, and then choose a more comfortable life, leaving the Educational Commission without enough teachers.

The bishops also pointed to the support the orders provided to many families, and the shortage of secular parish priests. As an example they gave Warsaw, with a hundred thousand inhabitants, but only four parishes. Why, when minors entered into control of their property at 18, and marriage, which also involved a lifetime vow, was possible at 14, should not monastic vows not be possible at 16? Coercion was already forbidden by canon law and dealt with by ecclesiastical courts. Examination of candidates belonged to the spiritual power, and so a letter from the bishop or his official, shown to the local Civil-Military Commission, should suffice, before

<sup>94</sup> Cf. [W. Skarszewski], *Uwagi polityczne imieniem stanu duchownego do zbioru praw polskich podane* (Kalisz, 1778).

monasteries accepted candidates. Finally, the bishops wanted the sum of a nun's dowry left to the convent and the parents, as was the custom, so they claimed, in other countries.

The deputation curtly replied that men could take clerical garb at 20, and women at 18, but the age of monastic vows could not be altered. The bishops insisted that the question belonged to the spiritual, and not the temporal power. The deputation did not concede the principle, but in its revised project it lowered the minimum male age of profession to 20, applying to all orders.

Regarding the Ruthenian rite, the deputation first proposed that a new diocese of Minsk and Połock be created. Until such time as an equalization of revenues took place, the estates whose revenues had formerly gone to the archbishop of Połock, but which remained 'on this side' after the partition, would be assigned to the new bishop. The diocese of Chełm was to receive some part of that of Włodzimierz; Włodzimierz would get some part of Łuck. A new bishop of Kamieniec would be nominated, thereby separating the diocese from the see of Lwów (in Galicia). As no revenues pertained to this diocese except the defunct *cathedraticum*, 12,000 złotys per annum would provisionally be assigned to the bishopric from the Crown Treasury. The bishops agreed that a new bishopric could be founded on the estates remaining from the archbishopric of Połock, but warned that this would require the agreement both of the present archbishop and of the Holy See. Similar agreement would be needed for the 'dismemberment' of the diocese of Kamieniec and Lwów.

The deputation also wished to oblige Uniate bishops to found and help maintain seminaries as soon as they began to receive their 50,000 złotys per annum. Candidates were to be taught 'not only in moral theology, and in [personal] morality, but also in the sentiments of fidelity and the desire to serve the country', so that they 'could inculcate a similar fidelity and desire in the populace consigned to them'. The parish network needed rationalization, while the Uniate bishops should secure permission from Rome for moving holy-days to Sundays, and explain to the populace the benefits of work and sobriety. They should also consider how best to harmonize the 'Greek' calendar with the 'Latin' one. Moreover, there was to be a mission in each parish at least once every three years. 'Priests conducting these missions will implant in their listeners sentiments of tolerance, love of the Fatherland and of their neighbour'. The lesson that a poor, 'unenlightened' clergy would not prevent peasant rebellion had been well learned.

Poverty made it difficult for the Uniate bishops to maintain seminaries, answered the episcopal college. The bishops of the Ruthenian rite did however promise that their clergy would publish tariffs for stole fees on sacristy doors, and that priests who extorted more would be punished. The episcopate and the nuncio also explained to the deputation that it was not possible to reduce the number of Uniate feasts or introduce the Gregorian calendar unless analogous changes were made by the non-Uniates. Caution was advisable, given the populace's attachment to its old customs.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Saluzzo to the 'clerical deputation', 17 April 1790, AAG ACap. B84, f. 34.

The Catholic bishops of both rites vehemently opposed the establishment of an Orthodox bishopric in the Commonwealth. If, instead, the education, status, and provision of the Uniate clergy were improved, the entire Ruthenian populace would in time be 'in union with us in religion and in sentiments'. The deputation replied that on no account could the Commonwealth compromise on a non-Uniate bishop (although they spoke of one bishop, rather than a complete hierarchy). To this the episcopate reiterated its opposition.

First among the episcopal *desiderata* was the renewal and execution of the laws against apostates, explicitly including both Catholic rites. To the deputation's statement that existing laws against apostasy did not need repeating, because 'apostasies almost never take place', the bishops answered that entire villages apostasized from the Union in the Ukraine. However, the episcopate was at a loss to suggest an alternative to banishment, which could depopulate the country and ruin landowners.

The second of the bishops' *desiderata* was confirmation of their rights, under both canon law and sixteenth-century statutes, to supervise printers and book-sellers. The deputation gave them a carefully worded assurance that when the form of government was established, it would be forbidden to publish anything 'against the holy mysteries of the Catholic religion'. The episcopal college agreed that bishops had a duty to prevent publications against the mysteries of the faith, but it also demanded 'that the temporal power put a stop to the spread of vice', when 'examples of the best Christian virtues are mocked by today's insolent philosophy, which has infected even the lower orders with bad sentiments'. It added that 'a republican government, whose most fundamental principle is grounded in the morals of the people, should not treat this matter lightly'. In a backhanded acknowledgement of the limitations of the Church's teaching on sex, the bishops employed the discourse of manliness to warn of the consequences of rampant venereal disease:

If it were possible for a moment to forget the commandments of religion regarding a chaste life, the general good would still require stopping the corruption of morals from spreading too far. Will the country not lose many citizens in the flower of youth, and of those who remain, will they not be infirm for years? Their weakened physicality (*osłabiona ich fizyczność*) does not allow them to serve the nation usefully, and either they leave no issue, or, if they do beget some such, these are only proof of the debauched life of their parents and a burden to themselves and to society. The austere morals of the Poles of old made them manly and brave, and the Commonwealth needed such citizens, and needs them still; but an ever softer lifestyle will yield Poles who will be of no use to the Fatherland, and indeed will harm her.<sup>96</sup>

The deputation pointedly responded: 'all the regulations of education aim to inculcate the fear of God and good morals in youth, and these precepts are fortified in the further course of their lives by the example and teaching of the illustrious clergy itself'.

<sup>96</sup> AAG ACap. B84, f. 92.

The next episcopal *desideratum* concerned religious observance. Because the number of holy-days had been reduced, the remaining ones should be more respectfully observed. Markets and fairs should be moved to the following working days—a condition of the papal bull reducing the number of feasts. Christians should not serve Jews on Sundays and holy-days. Military recruitment on Sundays and holy-days (and inside cemeteries and churches on all days), should cease, so as not to deter villagers from worship.

The deputation agreed only to reiterate existing bans on fairs starting before services had finished. Regarding recruitment, it stated that the law forbade all violence, and any violation of consecrated ground would be severely punished. Following an intervention in the name of tradition by Bishop Krasieński, the episcopate withdrew its request that sejmiks no longer be held inside churches. In due course, this would make it easier for religion to be harnessed to the service of the Polish Revolution.<sup>97</sup>

Only in May 1790, following renewed pressure from the nuncio, did the deputation propose in its revised project that in future bishoprics of the both rites should be endowed with landed estates (to the annual value of 200,000, 100,000, or 50,000 złotys), and, moreover, that this income should not be taxable. Perhaps it would have conceded this vital point earlier, but did not want to risk alerting Suchodolski. The outstanding problems were new bishoprics, censorship, the use of the temporal power for ‘social disciplining’, and the proposed Orthodox bishop or hierarchy.

## 6. DEUS EX MACHINA

At the end of the sejm’s session of 17 May 1790, Ankwicz reminded the Estates that the auction of the Cracow estates was due to take place on 20 May, and announced that the deputation’s report on their negotiations with the episcopate and the nuncio, and their project, would be presented on the morrow.<sup>98</sup> On 18 May Ankwicz was called first. He acknowledged that the clergy had sacrificed a fifth of its revenues for the army, and had accepted the Commonwealth’s decision to equalize episcopal incomes. The Apostolic See had accepted the laws, as far as the ‘cardinal laws’ of the Church allowed, and the ‘Father of all Christianity’ offered his prayers for the Poles.<sup>99</sup>

Niemcewicz then explained that the Holy See had made three conditions: first, that bishops draw their revenues from landed estates; second, that the Duchy of Siewierz be a separate possession of the bishops of Cracow; and third, that after allocating estates worth 100,000 złotys per annum to the bishop of Cracow, the remainder should maintain consistories, seminaries, hospitals, and the fabric of

<sup>97</sup> This emerges from the summary, AAG ACap. B84, ff. 285–6, and the mistitled ‘Odpowiedź na Pismo pod Tytułem = Żądanie Collegii Episcoporum’, AAG ACap. B84, f. 13–14.

<sup>98</sup> ASC 7, f. 250.

<sup>99</sup> *Głos... Józefa Hrabiego Ankwicza kasztelana sandeckiego... 18. maja 1790...*

the cathedral, and supplement the income of the bishops of Kiev and Kamieniec. The deputation recommended the transfer of part of the diocese of Cracow to the bishopric of Chełm, and part of the diocese of Łuck to the bishoprics of Kiev and Kamieniec, and the division of the diocese of Wilno into three when it fell vacant.<sup>100</sup>

The protocol of the deputation's negotiations with the nuncio was read out, followed by the deputation's revised project, *The Clergy of Both Rites in the Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania*. The second part of the project included matters such as testaments, the age of profession, nuns' dowries, seminaries, particular foundations, and a non-Uniate bishopric.<sup>101</sup> Suchodolski, having earlier failed to prevent the reading out of the protocol, and noting that the projects were to go *ad deliberandum*, warned he would not permit the overthrow of a law that had already been passed.<sup>102</sup>

The bishop of Kiev submitted the episcopate's own project.<sup>103</sup> Like the protocol, it seems not to have survived, but judging from the tone of the negotiations, the nuncio's despatch, and the subsequent debates, we may conclude that apart from ensuring that bishops received their revenues from landed estates, it provided for surplus revenues to be applied to exclusively ecclesiastical ends, and for censorship of books against religion and morality. It probably also envisaged a lower age of monastic profession. All these projects went *ad deliberandum*. After some debate it was agreed unanimously to postpone the auction until 31 May.<sup>104</sup>

Continuing the ecclesiastical business, Małachowski had a project read out which confirmed the primate's reassignment of tithes belonging to churches 'beyond the cordon' (that is, in Galicia) to poorer *plebani* in the Commonwealth. The relevant bishops would apply the remainder of such tithes to other poorer parishes. Suchodolski objected that only the sums for the Cracow Academy and the Sisters of Charity had been legally approved. Following further arguments, Małachowski had a table of the tithes in question read out, before this project also went *ad deliberandum*.<sup>105</sup>

Ankiewicz sent the deputation's revised project to Stanisław August on 19 May, with requests for it to be printed, along with the tariff of stole fees, and for the excision of a phrase invoking government protection of unwilling novices 'from the tyrannical power of such inhuman parents, or unmerciful guardians'. The printed project simply stated the Estates' intentions of 'leading parents to mild treatment of their children' and 'inspiring children to due respect for their parents'.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>100</sup> *Dziennik czynności seymu*, 18 May 1790, at ASC 7, f. 258.

<sup>101</sup> ASC 7, ff. 251–2. *Dziennik czynności seymu*, at ASC 7, ff. 260–2. Saluzzo to Zelada, 19 May 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 23.

<sup>102</sup> ASC 7, f. 251–2. Saluzzo to Zelada, 19 May 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 23. A printed copy of the second part of the project is in ASC 15, ff. 503–8.

<sup>103</sup> ASC 7, f. 252.

<sup>104</sup> ASC 7, ff. 252–4. *Dziennik czynności seymu*, at ASC 7, f. 264, gives an indefinite postponement. It is resolved as 31 May by Saluzzo's despatch of 19 May, ASV ANV 67, f. 23.

<sup>105</sup> ASC 7, ff. 254–5.

<sup>106</sup> Ankiewicz to SA, 19 May 1790, ASC 16, f. 359. 'Projekt Deputacji Duchowney', ASC 16, ff. 352–67. Cf. AAG ACap. B84, ff. 58–9 and ASC 16, ff. 353–4, with AAG ACap. B84, f. 73, and with *Duchowieństwo obojga obrządków w Koronie y Wielkim Xięstwie Litewskim*, ASC 15, f. 504.



It was well understood that the key issue for Rome was that bishops should draw revenues from estates, not in salaries.<sup>107</sup> But Suchodolski was resolute, and Saluzzo could see no way forward if persuasion failed.<sup>108</sup> This unpromising situation was suddenly transformed by Suchodolski's departure. A hitherto overlooked letter from Szembek to Turski reveals that Branicki sent Suchodolski away from Warsaw. It continues:

The hetman also wishes that you should try to have the clerical project taken in hand straight away on Tuesday, especially regarding the bishopric of Cracow, and he hopes for a successful outcome. But he asks particularly that you keep the information of his work regarding Mr Suchodolski strictly to yourself, and that you should say nothing of this to anyone, because if Suchodolski discovered this accidentally by information being passed on by word of mouth, he would become a still more violent enemy of the measure. If you see the hetman, thank him for his friendly efforts. As a friend I am pleased by whatever can appear to favour you. Please do not tell anybody about Suchodolski's departure.<sup>109</sup>

Turski did as he was asked. Branicki's role as *deus ex machina* remained hidden for more than two centuries. The hetman probably wished to please Szembek, whom he had earlier touted for bishop of Cracow. Walewski, a member of the deputation and Szembek's cousin, may have persuaded Branicki that Suchodolski's obstinacy no longer served a political purpose. Turski was not tainted by association with the court, and a favour to him could help Branicki mend fences with the 'patriot' leadership. The fact that hetman visited Szembek to convey the news indicates that Branicki was a willing partner in the scheme.

The letter is also an insight into a relationship between a patron and a client. The patron sends the client away on business, so that the client cannot spoil the patron's plan, but the patron so fears the client's reaction that he keeps his scheme secret from him. It proves that Branicki could no more command Suchodolski, than Czartoryski could dictate to Kublicki, or the king could control Pius Kiciński. With Suchodolski otherwise engaged, the scene was set for the debates that concluded the affair of the bishoprics and averted schism between the Commonwealth and the Holy See.

<sup>107</sup> Bonneau to Montmorin, 22 May 1790, AMAE CP Pologne 317, despatch 23, f. 210. De

Caché to Kaunitz, 22 May 1790, HHStA Polen II 52, despatch 662, f. 84.

<sup>108</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 264–5. Saluzzo to Zelada, 19 May 1790, ASV ANV 67, ff. 22–3.

<sup>109</sup> Szembek to Turski, undated, BCz. 3295, p. 68, published in Butterwick, 'Jak nie doszło do schizmy', 87.

## A limited ecclesiastical reform

### 1. 'WHEN WAR IS A HAIR'S BREADTH AWAY FROM US ...'

On hearing that Wojciech Suchodolski had left Warsaw, Stanisław August chose not to attend the sejm on 25 May 1790. He was suffering from a fever, but he would have dragged himself along the corridor from the royal apartments, if he had not been confident that the essentials of the compromise worked out by the deputation, the episcopate, and the nuncio would be accepted.<sup>1</sup> The king would only attend one of the seven sessions, between 25 May and 1 June, which the sejm devoted to the deputation's project. Matters moved relatively quickly on the first two days, before Suchodolski returned. Progress then stalled over the Duchy of Siewierz, and two days were needed to decide the redivision of the Latin-rite dioceses. The discussion of the Ruthenian clergy had barely begun when ecclesiastical questions were put aside for several weeks. The sejm returned to them on 22 July, but after five sessions it moved on, without completing the task.

The Catholic Church was not at the forefront of most politicians' minds in the summer of 1790. Ignacy Potocki and Stanisław August were fencing over the future form of government.<sup>2</sup> The most urgent question was the prolongation of the sejm. Although the sejm's duration had been extended indefinitely in December 1788, sejmiiks were due to meet and elect envoys on 16 August 1790. To disband the confederacy and dissolve the sejm would leave the country without a government. The commissions and deputations, which had assumed some of the powers of the king and the Permanent Council, would cease to function along with the sejm. Provincial nobles could be expected to voice their dissatisfaction at the slow progress towards an expanded army. The alliance with Prussia and calls by pamphleteers for hereditary succession to the throne had enraged Russophiles and many 'old republicans'. They would use a power vacuum to try to reverse the direction of the Revolution. Almost two weeks of debates in early June finally produced decisions to extend the sejm and postpone the election of new envoys until November. Numbers plummeted as the midsummer contracts drew many envoys back home.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> SA to Antici, 26 May 1790, AGhig. 803b, f. 51.

<sup>2</sup> See below, 207–8.

<sup>3</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 289–98. Šapoka, *Lietuva reformų seimo metu*, 215.

It was understood by the Polish élite, although not by the wider public, that the fate of Central Europe hung in the balance. Adam Naruszewicz asked Feliks Turski to come to Warsaw because 'when war is a hair's breadth away from us, at such a time we need men of counsel, and men of strength, such as yourself'.<sup>4</sup> Frederick William II was initially set on war with Austria. The Polish army prepared for an offensive to recover Galicia. Berlin had not yet abandoned hope of persuading the sejm to cede Danzig and other territories in return. However, in February 1790 Leopold II had ascended the Habsburg thrones, determined to recover Belgium, calm Hungary, and make peace with the Ottoman Empire. But by the time Austro-Prussian negotiations began at Reichenbach in late June 1790, Frederick William's martial ardour had wilted along with his military and diplomatic advantage. When Leopold offered to make peace with Istanbul on the basis of the *status quo ante bellum*, Frederick William blinked. The Convention of Reichenbach was signed on 27 July. An Austro-Prussian war was averted.<sup>5</sup>

Although the news of Reichenbach apparently 'produced no very extraordinary sensation' in Warsaw,<sup>6</sup> the implications for the Commonwealth were profound. The Prusso-Polish alliance might have been cemented by a joint attack on Austria and a subsequent exchange of territory. On the other hand, Potemkin had Catherine's approval to invade the Polish Ukraine in the event of a Polish move into Galicia. The enthusiasm for war with Austria and Russia among the szlachta may be doubted. The future of the Prusso-Polish alliance now depended on continuing hostility between London and Berlin on the one hand, and St Petersburg on the other.

Reichenbach was not the only blow to the Poles' hopes. The news of the Swedish victory over the Russian fleet off Svenskasund prompted celebrations in Warsaw, including the *Te Deum*,<sup>7</sup> but the consequent peace of Värälä on 14 August 1790 dampened Polish spirits. Although Catherine's prestige suffered, with the Turkish war going well, she was now better placed to intervene in the Commonwealth. This added urgency to the sejm's consideration of the form of government.

## 2. EPISCOPAL SALARIES OR ESTATES? 25–26 MAY 1790

Stanisław Małachowski introduced the ecclesiastical business on 25 May with a reminder that clerical revenues were dedicated to the glory of God. To enable the hierarchy to fulfil the rites of religion was both a pious and a civic act.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the marshal had to overcome several procedural objections, before the sejm

<sup>4</sup> Naruszewicz to Turski, 29 June 1790, *Korespondencja Naruszewicza*, 361–2.

<sup>5</sup> For this and the next two paragraphs see Lord, *Second Partition*, 128–63; Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 68–144; P. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Oxford, 1994), 64–7; M. Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence 1683–1797* (Harlow, 2003), 390–5.

<sup>6</sup> Hailes to Leeds, 4 August 1790, NA FO 62/3, despatch 15, f. 139.

<sup>7</sup> Bulikowicz to K. K. Plater, 18 August 1790, LVIA, F1276-2-189, f. 90.

<sup>8</sup> ASC 7, f. 335.

secretary could read out the project *The Clergy of Both Rites in the Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania*.<sup>9</sup>

After Małachowski asked for agreement to the first clause, on the redivision of the dioceses, Ignacy Wybranowski, the 'moustache' of Lublin, recalled that on 24 July 1789 he had insisted on referring the question to his electors. Their clear will was to remain in the flock of the pastor of Cracow. He presented a project for a permanent suffragany of Lublin, funded by the current suffragan's provision.<sup>10</sup> Stanisław Kublicki objected to plural benefices, while Józef Ankiewicz added that combining prelatures would diminish opportunities for the szlachta. Wybranowski's project went *ad deliberandum*.<sup>11</sup>

Łukasz Bniński, envoy for Poznań, then advised against changing the law that specified the payment of salaries. He cited Christ's commands of poverty and humility, Origen's strictures against worldliness, and even Satanic temptations to justify the seizure of ecclesiastical property. But he stopped short of refusing to permit any change to *Fund for the Army*.<sup>12</sup>

Józef Mikorski, envoy for Gostynin, read out a well-prepared speech on the need to change the law. Undoubtedly the élite, having made the deal, preferred to use an ordinary Mazovian as a front man. This was evident from Mikorski's praise of Adam Czartoryski, 'profound in politics, wise in counsel, zealous in prudent patriotism', who had explained 'this truth', that in a free nation the legislative power could not proceed arbitrarily, without regard to laws and privileges, for then there could be no civil liberty or property. Mikorski claimed that clerical properties constituted a '*patrimonium successivum nobilitatis spiritualis*' equal to the '*patrimonium successivum sangvinis nobilitatis*', and not to Crown estates, which were '*directum dominium et patrimonium Reipublicae*'. The szlachta's original duty was military service, whereas the clergy's duties were the rites of religion, the maintenance of churches, the succour of the poor (including noble families fallen on hard times), and the inculcation of religion, virtues, and good morals, which were the 'foundation of good government'. When the clergy were venerated, blessings had flowed down from heaven, and 'the foe trembled before the victorious arm of the Pole'. Having sounded this nostalgic note, Mikorski stated that the deputation had given convincing reasons why the bishops should be endowed with landed estates. The need for bishops was certain, therefore their funds should be certain. The legislative power not only could, but should correct its own laws.<sup>13</sup>

Ankiewicz distinguished between the power of the Commonwealth over episcopal incomes, and the power of the Apostolic See to redive the dioceses, which had been recognized by the sejm in appointing the deputation. If the Holy See expressed trust in the Estates' intentions to equalize the bishoprics, but desired

<sup>9</sup> ASC 7, f. 323–8. *Duchowieństwo obojga obrządków w Koronie y Wielkim Xięstwie Litewskim* [1790], in ASC 12, ff. 249–50.

<sup>10</sup> ASC 7, f. 336. Handwritten project: ASC 16, f. 371, printed project: ASC 15, f. 514.

<sup>11</sup> ASC 7, f. 329.

<sup>12</sup> ASC 7, ff. 337–8.

<sup>13</sup> *Głos... Mikorskiego... posła gostyńskiego... 25 maja r. 1790...*

the certainty of landed property, it was appropriate to repay that trust by acceding to its wishes.<sup>14</sup>

Antoni Rożnowski, envoy for Gniezno, recalled that he had predicted that the treasury would lose, rather than gain, from the equalization of episcopal revenues. He appealed for the sejm to respect ecclesiastical property, and earn the pope's blessing.<sup>15</sup> Jan Jordan, envoy for Cracow, warned: 'the country's authority should not be a despotic mistress, but instead its strongest protector'.<sup>16</sup> Kublicki, doubtless sensing the mood of the chamber, permitted the bishops to be endowed with landed estates, although not those containing manufactories or '*fossilia*' (mineral deposits), but refused his consent to the 80,000 złotys allocated to chapters. Ignacy Zakrzewski, envoy for Poznań, demanded an auction, whereupon Małachowski answered that the deputation had agreed with the nuncio, that the estates should be allocated to the bishops following surveys, and not auctions, otherwise the Holy See would not confirm the arrangements.<sup>17</sup>

With two alterations—excepting lands containing '*fossilia*', and inserting '*salvis modernis possessoribus*'—the clause allowing bishops to receive their income from landed estates was approved unanimously. Wanting to make progress in Suchodolski's absence, Małachowski announced that he was asking for an adjournment of the session until the next day, Wednesday, rather than until Thursday as planned. This provoked some controversy, and so the marshal initiated the discussion of whether the bishops should pay tax at 20 per cent out of their incomes of 100,000 złotys. The lateness of the hour overcame opposition to the additional Wednesday session.<sup>18</sup>

Saluzzo was not too modest to tell Rome that the unanimous acceptance of the most important point 'of our project' justified his conduct during the negotiations. It might now be easier, he suggested, for the pope to condescend on other questions. He also praised Małachowski's deft handling of the situation.<sup>19</sup> Ignacy Potocki informed his correspondent that 'at yesterday's session the sejm partially repaired the usurpation of ecclesiastical lands.'<sup>20</sup>

Małachowski began Wednesday's session by inviting the chamber to continue the previous day's good work.<sup>21</sup> The court treasurer of the Crown, Roch Kosowski, presented a table of the Cracow revenues. The total income, after deductions for the hearth tax and *subsidiū charitativum*, was 574,861 złotys.<sup>22</sup> The principal question that day was over the second clause of the project, exempting the 100,000 złotys due annually to each bishop from the 20 per cent 'offering'.

Tadeusz Lipski, envoy for Poznań, was first to object. Good management of estates would enable the bishops to pay a 20 per cent tax. Why, he asked, should some land not be subject to a law that applied to all? Like Bniński the previous day, he was keen to stress his devotion to the Catholic faith; the danger it faced justified

<sup>14</sup> ASC 7, ff. 329–30.

<sup>15</sup> ASC 7, ff. 343–7.

<sup>16</sup> *Głos ... Jordana posła ... krakowskiego ... 25. maja roku 1790 ...*

<sup>17</sup> ASC 7, ff. 330–1.

<sup>18</sup> ASC 13, f. 161, signed S. Małachowski. ASC 7, ff. 331–2.

<sup>19</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 26 May 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 24.

<sup>20</sup> I. Potocki to Aloy, 26 May 1790, APP 277, f. 247.

<sup>21</sup> ASC 7, f. 377.

<sup>22</sup> ASC 7, ff. 365–6.

the contributions. Julian Niemcewicz answered that to require an additional 20 per cent from the reduced incomes would contradict the law passed the previous year. But Franciszek Mikorski, envoy for Kalisz, argued that exempting the bishops 'would surprise the entire country', when parish priests with 1,000 zlotys and nobles with 100 zlotys were taxed.<sup>23</sup>

Such disputes continued all day. The most persuasive speech was made by Ignacy Potocki. Certainly, the clergy should pay taxes on their properties, but the properties in question had been appropriated by the Commonwealth, and would now be returned to the clergy only in part. The clergy had lost much more than the value of the tax, while those properties not being returned to them would be liable to tax. The equal division of the dioceses benefited souls, and was also 'wonderfully convenient to equality in the senate and political order'. Along with his brother Stanisław, who called for the agreement reached with Rome to be honoured, Ignacy Potocki put his authority on the line.<sup>24</sup>

Despite endorsement from Małachowski and others, Potocki's arguments were not accepted without demur. Jan Szymanowski, envoy for Czersk, pointed out that while the treasury would benefit from the surplus revenues of the bishopric of Cracow, it would lose from raising the revenues of poorer bishoprics. Kazimierz Rzewuski, envoy for Podolia, thought the Commonwealth too generous. He cited the *Gazette de Leyde*: French bishops were to be paid 10,000 livres, the equivalent of 1,000 ducats (18,000 zlotys).<sup>25</sup> But instead of following either Joseph II or the French revolutionaries, the Volhynian envoy Walerian Stroynowski proposed that the Estates look to their ancestors: 'they left us a better example'. In forbidding further bequests to the Church in 1635, the Poles had simultaneously respected the wishes of earlier donors.<sup>26</sup> Not only was the principle of not taxing income that had already been reduced at stake, the mathematics involved also induced some head-scratching. The chamber then stalled over whether or not funds would be diverted from Cracow to other dioceses. Finally, the clause exempting episcopal revenues of 100,000 zlotys from taxation was agreed.<sup>27</sup>

### 3. NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND NOBLE EQUALITY: THE DUCHY OF SIEWIERZ, 27–29 MAY 1790

At the start of the session of Thursday 27 May 1790 Kublicki submitted an amendment which recognized the bishop of Cracow as lord of Siewierz, but subjected his estates there to a 10 per cent tax, along with those of the Siewierz szlachta. The estates of the Cracow chapter would pay 20 per cent. Although this sounded a retreat from the secularization of all episcopal lands, Kublicki had not abandoned the Commonwealth's sovereignty over the duchy. He threatened to stand immovably by the existing law after Michał Strasz, envoy for Sandomierz,

<sup>23</sup> ASC 7, f. 366, 378–80.

<sup>24</sup> ASC 7, ff. 368–71.

<sup>25</sup> ASC 7, ff. 369–70.

<sup>26</sup> *Głos... Stroynowskiego... 26. maja 1790...*

<sup>27</sup> ASC 7, ff. 371–6.

opined that the annexation of Siewierz would violate the law of nature, the law of the country, the act of confederation, and the law of nations, angering God.<sup>28</sup>

Following an explanation from Naruszewicz on the duration of Polish sovereignty over Siewierz in the middle ages,<sup>29</sup> the atmosphere must have crackled as Wojciech Suchodolski rose with a prepared speech. He accused the deputation of exceeding its brief and subverting the law, criticized the decision to start the project from its middle and not its beginning, and to give it priority over other business. However, as the law had been changed in his absence regarding episcopal salaries, he would not again open his lips on the subject. Perhaps Branicki had persuaded him the cause was hopeless; perhaps he did not need to be convinced. But he was incensed. He was also astonished that a parish priest with 2,000 zlotys or a citizen with 1,000 zlotys a year would have to pay tax, but that a bishop with 100,000 zlotys would not. The nation would surely impose an equal burden at the next sejm.

Suchodolski had 'shuddered' on hearing that Siewierz had never been part of the Commonwealth; although that had been corrected, the project still maintained that the duchy '*remained under the separate government of the bishop and chapter*'. He proclaimed that 'the Commonwealth shares her authority (*władztwo*) with nobody; we, sent from the palatinates, do not sit here in order to deny the supreme *dominium* of the Commonwealth, but in every circumstance to defend it'. The duchy was attached to the episcopal office, and that office was in the gift of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth could even abolish that office, and dispose of its estates, if she so chose. Having asserted national sovereignty, Suchodolski appealed to history. The sword had lost the Commonwealth Siewierz, and the sword had regained it for her. The demagogue of Chełm roused 'valiant Poles' from their 'sepulchral shadows' to say: 'You value little the spilling of our blood, when what we in the blows of war restored to Poland, you voluntarily tear away from Poland, declaring now, that it does not belong to her!' If anyone said that the bishops of Cracow had enjoyed revenues from the duchy for centuries, his answer was that they could still hold estates to the annual value of 100,000 zlotys there. He finished by extolling the patriotism of the szlachta of Siewierz, who had declared their wish to contribute to the general burdens of taxation as citizens. The Commonwealth was bound to welcome them, and he would not for cease to stand by the law, '*circa latam legem*'.<sup>30</sup>

By this point, the essential historical and legal arguments had been restated. But the 'small Silesian duchy' occupied the best part of three sessions.<sup>31</sup> It appears that Ankiewicz and his allies sought to delay the decision. The castellan of Sącz denied that the deputation had sought 'the subversion of the law'; it had instead fulfilled the will of the Estates to negotiate with the Apostolic See. They had done so over the point of whether income should be paid from landed estates in the bishops'

<sup>28</sup> ASC 7, f. 392. *Głos Michała Odrowąża Strasza* ... 27. maja roku 1790 ...

<sup>29</sup> *Dziennik czynności seymu*, 27 May 1790, at ASC 7, f. 416.

<sup>30</sup> *Mowa* ... *Wojciecha Suchodolskiego* ... 27. mca maia roku 1790 ...

<sup>31</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 29 May 1790, HHStA Polen II 52, despatch 665, f. 95.

possession, and on this point their proposal had been approved unanimously. The Holy See had insisted that the Duchy of Siewierz remain with the bishop of Cracow, and it was for the Estates to accept or reject its demand. The deputation had not said that the duchy did not belong to the Commonwealth; merely that the revenues should belong to the bishop. He wanted the supreme authority over the duchy to belong to the Commonwealth. But, he hedged, they should seek the consent of the new bishop.<sup>32</sup>

The question of Siewierz was also clouded by calls to reward Feliks Turski for his 'patriotic virtue', as the king put it,<sup>33</sup> and by fiscal calculations. Michał Zaleski, envoy for Troki, wisely cautioned against seeking the status of the Duchy of Siewierz in history, because the more knowledge anyone had of history, the more doubts he entertained. The Estates might choose to give Siewierz to the 'exemplary citizen and pastor', Turski, but they should not give it to him 'as a sovereign' (*iak udzielnemu*).<sup>34</sup> Even those who denied the Commonwealth's sovereignty over the duchy wished for its voluntary incorporation by the next bishop.<sup>35</sup>

Ignacy Potocki, who privately acknowledged that the duchy had never been incorporated into the Commonwealth,<sup>36</sup> tried to break the deadlock on Friday afternoon, with an argument reminiscent of the French absorption of the papal enclave of Avignon earlier in the year. He declared that it was time to place the Commonwealth's claim to Siewierz on a solid foundation: the freely expressed will of its citizens. A deputation would not remove the duchy from the sovereignty of the Commonwealth, but rather secure the rights of the Commonwealth in international law. Suchodolski agreed, with the proviso that the law should not question the Commonwealth's right to the duchy. Małachowski invited him to prepare a suitable proposal.<sup>37</sup>

On Saturday 29 May Suchodolski presented his amendment, admitting the Siewierz nobles to 'equality'.<sup>38</sup> This time the *siewierzanie* were themselves the subject of controversy. Strasz asked how he could merit his electors' trust, if without due deliberation, he admitted the szlachta of Siewierz to the 'illustrious jewel' of Polish nobility. Enough butlers, valets, millers, barbers, and butchers had already been ennobled in 1775. But other speakers pointed to the increase in the number of taxpayers.<sup>39</sup>

Suchodolski asked if the Commonwealth should reject citizens who were ready to pay tens of thousands of złotys in taxes in return for their recognition as compatriots. He believed that the opposition sought to gain time for the new bishop of Cracow to take up his see, and begin the battle anew. It had been asserted that if the nobles of Siewierz were admitted to equal rights, then this would cheapen the 'most noble jewel, which our ancestors had only bought with their blood and lives'. Not only the Siewierz szlachta gave cause for lament, however. He accepted

<sup>32</sup> ASC 7, ff. 393–5.

<sup>33</sup> ASC 7, f. 422.

<sup>34</sup> ASC 7, ff. 396–9.

<sup>35</sup> *Głos Michała Odrowąża Strasza ... 27. maja roku 1790 ... Głos ... Jordana 26. [sic—27] maja roku 1790 ...*

<sup>36</sup> I. Potocki to Aloy, 26 May 1790, APP 277, f. 247.

<sup>37</sup> ASC 7, ff. 435–6.

<sup>38</sup> ASC 7, f. 468, 456.

<sup>39</sup> ASC 7, ff. 456–8.



the formula '*salvo Scartabellatu*', meaning that newly ennobled families would be barred from office until the third generation. He would permit no further clauses to be decided, until the question of Siewierz was resolved.<sup>40</sup>

Now it was Ankiewicz who resorted to demagoguery. He proposed deleting several lines from Suchodolski's amendment:

if we are convinced that the Commonwealth should have such extensive *supremum dominium* over Siewierz, she should not negotiate with such persons, who, as I say, can be called a mob chosen from liveried servants (*motłoch z liberyi dobrany*), for, despite the fact that in the Duchy of Siewierz there are many resident nobles from the palatinate of Cracow, barely five houses of the Siewierz szlachta can be counted; the rest, as I say, is selected from liveried servants, to whose admission I cannot, either in my own name or that of the Cracow envoys, ever agree.<sup>41</sup>

Ankiewicz's objection, couched in language beyond the pale of political discourse, threatened to delay the sejm's decision further.

Suchodolski refused the bait. If the bishops had the right to ennoble, it was not for the sejm to question their choices. If they did not, there was no szlachta of Siewierz, and the question did not arise. It was unbecoming to call those who were lawfully ennobled a mob. The established Siewierz szlachta should be admitted without any distinction, as they were offering to share the burdens of defending the Commonwealth.<sup>42</sup>

Arguments broke out over whether the bishop could keep his woods. Envoys even disputed whose project contained the clearest wording. The exhausted secretary began to be less scrupulous in transcribing the interventions. At last Kublicki's amendment on taxation was merged with Suchodolski's, and unanimity was achieved.<sup>43</sup>

The law now counted the ducal estates in Siewierz as part of the bishop of Cracow's revenues of 100,000 złotys, excluding those properties which contained '*fossilia*'. The Cracow cathedral chapter was to pay tax at 20 per cent on its estates in the duchy. The Duchy of Siewierz was declared to be part 'of the political body of the Commonwealth, in which the szlachta and the inhabitants, as sons of one Fatherland, under the one and particular government and sovereignty (*udzielność*), [...] are to be subject to the same taxes, and to be honoured with the same benefits of the law'. A seven-man commission was appointed. On 15 June, the szlachta was to assemble in Siewierz, present their documents of nobility to this commission, establish the location of courts and sejmiks, and verify local offices. The commission would also investigate whether ducal estates had been alienated, as well as receive the privileges of the towns, and send them to the sejm's Deputation for Urban Affairs. The commissioners were to complete their work in six weeks, and send an account to the king and Estates for decision.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> ASC 7, ff. 459–60.

<sup>43</sup> ASC 7, ff. 463–6.

<sup>41</sup> ASC 7, ff. 461–2.

<sup>44</sup> VZ, ix. 174–5.

<sup>42</sup> ASC 7, ff. 462–3.

#### 4. A MEASURE OF EPISCOPAL REFORM: 29 MAY–1 JUNE 1790

On 29 May, following the agreement of the commission for Siewierz, Ankwicz submitted an amendment assigning the bishop of Chełm part of the revenues of the bishopric of Cracow. Jacek Jezierski would allow no diminution of funds for the army. There was not a shilling in the treasury, he claimed, to pay the bishop of Chełm. The surplus from Cracow was already destined by law for the army. The castellan told the bishops: 'We do not treat you in the French manner, we have offered you not 10,000 livres, but 100,000 złotys in revenue, though from future, and not present vacancies.' Without an army, foreign slavery awaited them all, and God forbid that the bishops should prefer the grace of an absolute master to the generosity of the nation. 'Call a synod,' he continued, 'bring order to the Church, which has lacked it for several hundred years.' Then they could have greater incomes. The sejm should first provide for the lower clergy of both rites. He handed in a project on their behalf, which was read out and went *ad deliberandum*.<sup>45</sup>

Two further days of debates on the deputation's project followed. Jezierski tried to press his own project, but Ankwicz responded that it could wait until consideration of the deputation's second project, titled *Testaments*. Jezierski feared that once the bishops had been dealt with, the *plebani* would be forgotten, but a cry went up against further interruptions of the deputation's project.<sup>46</sup> The sejm returned to the proposal to divide the diocese of Cracow and increase the revenues of the bishop of Chełm. Ignacy Wybranowski and Sebastian Dłuski cited their electors' opposition to the separation of the palatinate of Lublin from the bishopric of Cracow. They resisted entreaties to give way, insisting that they would yield only to a majority vote. Mateusz Butrymowicz proposed naming the diocese 'Chełm and Lublin', and Ankwicz expressed his confidence that the envoys for Lublin had fulfilled their duty to their fellow-citizens. At this point Dłuski and Wybranowski acceded to the will of the Estates on condition that the bishop of Chełm would also bear the title of bishop of Lublin. After they had been thanked, the new title was inserted into the project, and the sejm could move on.<sup>47</sup>

This is a good example of consensual parliamentary culture. The envoys of one palatinate, having opposed a project as instructed by their electors, submit to the majority, after listening to persuasive arguments, after winning a concession, and with the observance of great courtesy towards them. The fact that this was a confederated sejm changed the rules somewhat. Instead of vetoing a proposal outright, as they might have done at a 'free' sejm, the envoys wished to submit only to a binding majority vote. But the case of the bishopric of Cracow had shown that a confederated sejm could not undo its own laws by a majority vote. The reluctance to depart from unanimity was articulated by Małachowski

<sup>45</sup> ASC 7, ff. 466–7. *Mowa... Jezierskiego kasztelana łukowskiego dnia 29. maja 1790...*

<sup>46</sup> ASC 7, ff. 492–3.

<sup>47</sup> ASC 7, ff. 493–5. Handwritten project, with emendations, ASC 12, f. 251.

on 1 June: 'we have means reserved in our union, but they are not pleasant, because their property is to make some assent, and others oppose'.<sup>48</sup>

The principal question on 31 May was over when and how the poorer bishops would have their revenues made up to 100,000 złotys. It was decided that, exceptionally, revenues would be transferred to the existing bishop, Garnysz, as soon as the bishopric of Łuck fell vacant and its estates could be surveyed.<sup>49</sup> On 1 June agreement was reached that bishoprics of Kamieniec and Kiev would be provided for only when the richer ones fell vacant and yielded surplus revenues. These two bishops would take on such parts of neighbouring dioceses as the episcopal college, with the agreement of the Apostolic See, considered appropriate. The diocese of Wilno and its revenues would be divided into three, but again, only when it fell vacant. The surplus funds of the bishopric of Samogitia would also be reassigned at the next vacancy, while maintaining that diocese's boundaries.<sup>50</sup>

These debates contain clues as to why reform did not proceed further. Ignacy Zakrzewski, envoy for Poznań, noted that several bishops had an abbacy here, a parish there, and that these revenues were not counted as episcopal income.<sup>51</sup> A Lithuanian envoy highlighted Garnysz's commendatory abbacy of Łąd,<sup>52</sup> while an envoy from the Crown proposed to assign the bishops of Smolensk and Livonia the first available prelatures.<sup>53</sup>

The case for an immediate division of the diocese of Wilno (if not the episcopal revenues) was put by Michał Bernowicz, envoy for Nowogródek. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania had two bishops with dioceses, and two without work in the Lord's vineyard. In huge parishes lonely *wikariusze* deputized for prelates who did not know their own churches. How, in such circumstances, could faithful souls not be lost? Only closer episcopal supervision could remedy these 'terrible improprieties'. He hoped that the two bishops admitted to pastoral work would content themselves with lesser rewards for the time being, considering the state of the treasury. If nothing could be spared from the army, he proposed assigning the bishops of Livonia and Smolensk 50,000 złotys each from the educational fund, while releasing the Lithuanian treasury from its obligation to pay the bishop of Smolensk 20,000 złotys per annum.<sup>54</sup>

Zakrzewski contended that by dividing both the diocese and estates of the bishopric of Wilno, the bishop's expenses would be reduced. Because, he claimed, the bishop would suffer no reduction in his net income, the law of the previous year guaranteeing the income of existing bishops would not be violated. But the diocese remained intact for the moment. Not only was the principle *salvis modernis*

<sup>48</sup> ASC 7, f. 521.

<sup>49</sup> ASC ff. 497–8. ASC 13, f. 172, signed S. Małachowski. Earlier draft in ASC 12, f. 251.

<sup>50</sup> ASC 7, ff. 515–16. ASC 13, f. 173, f. 174, both signed S. Małachowski. The law (VL, ix. 175) left the details of the division vague, unlike the project in ASC 13, ff. 162–3, following the division by palatinate in the project in AAG ACap. B84, f. 57.

<sup>51</sup> ASC 7, ff. 496–7.

<sup>52</sup> Józef Kocięł (Oszmiana), 31 May 1790, ASC 7, f. 495–6.

<sup>53</sup> Franciszek Szymanowski (Sochaczew), 1 June 1790, ASC 7, f. 515.

<sup>54</sup> ASC 7, ff. 513–15.

*possessoribus* cited in response, but Adam Czartoryski declared that he would never agree to a reduction in the educational fund.<sup>55</sup>

Jeziarski demanded a wider reform. He stood by the law: having assigned the bishop of Cracow revenues of 100,000 złotys from landed estates, the remainder had been destined for the army. He also stood by his demand to provide for the 'poor, hungry clergy—the infantry', before the bishops. If the bishop of Chełm was to have his revenues supplemented by the treasury for his extra work, that income 'would have to be paid from the taxes on the bloody toil of poor people'. Why, he asked, could not ecclesiastical bread feed him, 'when abbeys are given to foreign Italians' (a reference to Ghigiotti and Antici). One canon of Cracow was also dean of Warsaw, canon of Warmia, scholar of the collegiate church of Łęczyca, priest of the parishes of Łomża and Kielce, commendator of the abbey of Wągrowiec, and an auditor, giving a combined income of 60,000 złotys.<sup>56</sup> He spoke of 'shadows', which he expected such an 'enlightened' (*światły*) sejm to recognize. It was a shadow, he said, that the palatinate of Lublin should be looked after by the bishop of Chełm, when he was absorbed by his role as vice-chancellor, and when that part of the diocese had an exemplary suffragan, Jan Lenczewski, who did not hold out his hands for gratification. With his abbey and his vice-chancellorship Garnysz had 50,000 złotys, whereas Antonin Malinowski, the suffragan of Warsaw, was the poorest bishop in Europe. He voiced resentments undoubtedly felt by more than one provincial envoy contracting debts and struggling to support himself in Warsaw. But his speech failed to sway the chamber, and may have been aimed more at the wider public.<sup>57</sup>

On 1 June, after the decisions regarding the bishoprics of the Latin rite, the clauses concerning the Ruthenian clergy ran into trouble when Butrymowicz denounced Piotr Bielański, bishop of Lwów (in Galicia) and Kamieniec (in the Commonwealth), for laying extortionate burdens on his parish clergy. His authority in the Commonwealth should be ended.<sup>58</sup> High-born local envoys acknowledged the political case to curtail the rule of a foreign bishop, but defended Bielański's 'character and virtues'. Kacper Cieciszowski pointed out that the Holy See would only approve a new bishopric if the bishop in possession had given his consent.<sup>59</sup>

With no end in sight to the controversies, Małachowski asked the deputation to prepare a solution for the next session, and moved on to military and diplomatic business. The proposed proclamation on the prorogation of the sejm was read out and went *ad deliberandum*. The session was then adjourned to Friday (Thursday

<sup>55</sup> ASC 7, f. 515.

<sup>56</sup> The clergyman in question was Krzysztof Żórawski.

<sup>57</sup> *Mowa tegoż dnia 31. maja 1790...* (published together with his previous speech). N.b. a clerical chancellor or vice-chancellor did not draw a salary.

<sup>58</sup> ASC 7, ff. 516–17.

<sup>59</sup> Kazimierz Rzewuski (Podolia) and Seweryn Potocki (Białystok). ASC 7, f. 517–18. Bielański had long courted the leading families of the region.

being the feast of Corpus Christi, and there not being 'anything so urgent' to justify a Wednesday session).<sup>60</sup>

Ecclesiastical affairs were now suspended, to allow the introduction, as Saluzzo put it with muted disapproval, 'of other matters which, they say, are of greater import'. After examining the law as it now stood, he noted the fact that not only Uniate affairs, but also the destination of the Cracow revenues were yet to be decided. 'It is not our interest to solicit a decision', he wrote, 'because nothing good is to be hoped for from this sejm.' He feared the reopening of old disputes over tithes, the subjection of the regular clergy to the bishops, and the jurisdiction of the Holy See. There was now no hope of the sejm's end until 1792. The best that could be hoped for had already been achieved—the substitution for salaries of stable funds as the basis for episcopal incomes. The worst did not bear thinking about, he implied.<sup>61</sup> It is easy to be wise with hindsight, but the first comment of this despatch is a clue that Saluzzo may have exaggerated the danger.

## 5. AMONG 'LESSER MATTERS': THE RUTHENIAN RITE

According to Kamil Paździor, the debates between 22 and 29 July 1790 'depict the attitude of Polish élites to the Union, its position, tasks, and destiny'. They were dominated by envoys and senators from the Ruthenian territories.<sup>62</sup> But for Małachowski and many others, the needs of Uniate Church were among the 'lesser matters', which the Estates had the opportunity to finish off, before giving their attention to the form of government.<sup>63</sup>

Towards the end of the session on Thursday 22 July, the marshal reintroduced the project *The Clergy of Both Rites*, which had been interrupted on 1 June. The secretary read out the parts admitting the metropolitan of Ruthenia to the senate, redividing the Uniate dioceses, establishing a new bishopric of Minsk, and splitting the bishopric of Kamieniec and Lwów. It was objected that certain matters regarding the Latin clergy remained to be decided, such as cathedral chapters. But Niemcewicz and others, perhaps prompted by the nuncio, insisted that the Latin rite had now been dealt with. Małachowski asked the bishops to finalize the text of the continuation of the project, with the help of co-opted laymen, and to present it the following day.<sup>64</sup>

In the morning, the marshal expounded a vision, perhaps penned by Kołłątaj, of the role of the clergy in the polity:

As the composition of the political body is formed from the [various] parts of government, so it becomes stronger, and easier to maintain, the more closely they

<sup>60</sup> ASC 7, ff. 518–20.

<sup>61</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 9 June 1790, ASV ANV 67, ff. 26–7.

<sup>62</sup> Paździor, 'Dopuszczenie metropolity', 254–60, quotation at 255. See also id., 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 240–9, 277–82, 299–301; Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 267–8, 276–80, 286–8.

<sup>63</sup> ASC 8, f. 187.

<sup>64</sup> ASC 8, ff. 184–6. See Paździor, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 239–40, 276–7.

are united. The clerical estate, as it inculcates the teaching of morality on which civil laws are founded, in giving the lay estate the first precepts of religion, so in every government does it not only receive its due respect, but also has no small influence on the turning of the governmental machine; so therefore the clerical estate becomes a powerful spring of every government.<sup>65</sup>

The historical and theological arguments for admitting the metropolitan to the senate were set out most fully by the Volhynian Benedykt Hulewicz, a client of Szczęsny Potocki. He told the chamber that Ruthenia had freely united herself with the Polish Crown, and that her bishops had brought her back into union with the true Church; however, the grandees had abandoned their rite from prejudice, leaving it almost entirely to the common folk, and begetting a fateful conflict over religion. The exclusion of the metropolitan from the senate had contributed to the rebellion of the 'unenlightened'. However, the king's presence at Uniate services in the Ukraine in 1787 had 'stamped on prejudice, and shown that the Ruthene and the Latin (*Łacinnik*), not differing in the important articles of faith, are sons of the true Church.'<sup>66</sup>

Nobody opposed the metropolitan's elevation on principle, but some argued that other matters were more pressing. Suchodolski, for example, asserted that their brethren had not sent them hither to erect bishoprics, but to build a fortress for the Commonwealth. In reply Niemcewicz and Stanisław Potocki emphasized the political benefits of the measure. The Russophile court treasurer of Lithuania, Antoni Dziekoński, demanded the excision of the title 'most and right reverend' (*nayprzewielebniejszy*), as that, he claimed, belonged only to the primate. This was ultimately agreed, but Dziekoński was persuaded to abandon his other condition, that the Uniate episcopate be obliged to unite the Ruthenian calendar with the Latin one. While the king argued strongly for reform of the calendar, several envoys urged caution, given the 'superstition' of the populace and the danger of facilitating agitation from the 'dis-uniates'. Finally the admission of the metropolitan was thrice acclaimed law.<sup>67</sup>

26 July 1790 saw unedifying disputes over where the metropolitan should sit in the senate: below all the Latin bishops, or immediately below the archbishop of Gniezno? Many supported the latter, but Naruszewicz led the resistance, claiming with less than his usual exactitude that by precedent newly created senators sat below their senior brethren.<sup>68</sup> Finally, with the deletion of the words 'for ever' from the amended clause, it was unanimously agreed that the metropolitan should sit after all the Latin bishops.<sup>69</sup> The episode brought no credit to the episcopal senators. Cieciszowski of Kiev and Kossakowski of Livonia spoke later that day, and presumably indicated their support for the position defended by Naruszewicz,

<sup>65</sup> ASC 8, f. 212.

<sup>66</sup> *Głos... Benedykta Hulewicza... posła wołyńskiego... 23. lipca roku 1790...*, identical with the MS version: ASC 8, ff. 202–4.

<sup>67</sup> ASC 8, ff. 200–2, 207–11, 213. ASC 13, f. 160, signed S. Małachowski.

<sup>68</sup> ASC 8, ff. 203, 232. *Dziennik czynności...* at ASC 8, ff. 248–50. At the time of the Union of Lublin Lithuanian bishops were allocated seats among the Crown bishops, not after them.

<sup>69</sup> ASC 8, f. 234. *Dziennik czynności...*, at ASC 8, ff. 252–3. ASC 13, f. 164, signed S. Małachowski.

but there seems to be no evidence that any other, more senior, colleagues were even present.<sup>70</sup>

The question of the Uniate dioceses was raised in the sejm on 23 July, but took priority only after the metropolitan had been allocated his junior chair in the senate. The sejm failed to agree to separate the sees of Lwów and Kamieniec. The king did not regard this as a priority, not least because of the diplomatic difficulties involved.<sup>71</sup> Despite opposition from Butrymowicz, the sejm approved Bielański's endowment of the Church of St John in Kamieniec Podolski and granted him permission to buy lands worth 200,000 złotys to support the papal seminary for Uniate clerics, which was moving from Lwów to Kamieniec.<sup>72</sup> Bielański kept his entire see for the moment. Even if he had lost half, the sejm might not have supported a new bishopric. Michał Czacki, envoy for Czernihów, argued that the bishop of Łuck could take over the responsibilities.<sup>73</sup>

The case for creating a new bishopric out of the remainder of the archbishopric of Połock in the Commonwealth was both pastoral and political. According to Hulewicz, 'This bit of land, giving sustenance to a bishop, will bring more benefit in religion from the light of his teaching to the populace than from maintaining soldiers to repress the unenlightened dark masses.'<sup>74</sup> Butrymowicz, Naruszewicz, and Cieciszowski argued that a new bishopric would curtail Russian influence. The bishop of Kiev also reminded the sejm that only the pope had the authority to establish new dioceses or divide existing ones.<sup>75</sup>

Kazimierz Sapieha confirmed that a Lithuanian provincial session had agreed to the new bishopric, founded on the estates of the archbishopric of Połock, worth about 30,000 złotys per annum. However, other Lithuanians, led by Józef Kocięł, envoy for Oszmiana, called for all funds belonging to clergy 'beyond the Russian cordon' to be taken by the treasury, and applied to the army. A new bishopric could be funded from an equalization of revenues. The Volhynian Wojciech Świętośławski proposed to divide the remainder of the archdiocese of Połock between the existing Uniate bishops. He was confident that funds could be raised from Basilian abbeys. Shortly afterwards, this solution was unanimously approved.<sup>76</sup> Late on 27 July, it was also agreed that the Uniate bishops should first garner information, and then gather in Warsaw to present a project for redividing the dioceses to the sejm and the nuncio.<sup>77</sup>

Thus did fiscal-military urgency overcome long-term pastoral and political advantages. However, Kocięł's project for selling off ecclesiastical estates, read out at the end of the session on 26 July,<sup>78</sup> ran into practical difficulties the

<sup>70</sup> See Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 279–80; Paździór, 'Dopuszczenie metropolity', 259–60.

<sup>71</sup> SA to MJP, 24 July 1790, AGHig. 801b, vol. i, ff. 29–30.

<sup>72</sup> ASC 8, ff. 201–2, 238–40. Signed project for the papal seminary: ASC 13, f. 198. VL, ix. 180–1.

<sup>73</sup> ASC 8, f. 207.

<sup>74</sup> *Głos... Hulewicza... 23. lipca roku 1790.*

<sup>75</sup> ASC 8, ff. 204–6, 241. *Dziennik czynności...*, at ASC 8, f. 223.

<sup>76</sup> ASC 8, ff. 234–43. Project: ASC 13, f. 165, and ASC 12, f. 298 (with corrections). Paździór, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 279.

<sup>77</sup> ASC 8, ff. 280–1. <sup>78</sup> ASC 8, f. 245.

following day. Some estates were subject to litigation, while others straddled the frontier. Kociell admitted that he had not foreseen the complications.<sup>79</sup> A further Lithuanian provincial session on 28 July failed to iron out the problems, so on Thursday 29 July the question was referred to the Lithuanian Treasury Commission. Jezierski then stated that the Estates would also have to wait for information from the Ruthenian bishops. And there matters rested.<sup>80</sup>

Late on 26 July 1790, Małachowski announced, prematurely, that one matter remained to be decided—the destination of the surplus funds, after the Ruthenian and Latin bishops had all received their incomes of 50,000, 100,000, or 200,000 zlotys. The secretary read out the part of the deputation's project allocating the remainder to hospitals for military invalids.<sup>81</sup> Kublicki responded that, as far as the Latin bishops were concerned, by his reckoning more than 500,000 zlotys annually would be left over. He was not so 'inhuman' as to disregard hospitals, but he could not approve assigning the entire surplus to them.<sup>82</sup>

Naruszewicz and Cieciszowski argued that some of the money could go to fund seminaries for the Uniate clergy, who could then 'enlighten the dark populace'. Jezierski refused to permit surplus episcopal revenues being diverted from the army to fund '*pia opera*'. Sapieha proposed that the treasury should fund hospitals and seminaries as far as their needs required, and that any remaining surplus should be applied to the army. Presumably the bishops were assured that seminaries would be dealt with shortly, for the amended proposal, which was passed unanimously, spoke of the cadet school and the invalids, with the surplus to go to the treasuries of the Two Nations.<sup>83</sup>

On 27 July the battle for seminaries began in earnest. As with new bishoprics, seminaries were justified by the argument that an 'enlightened' Uniate clergy was the best defence against the Russian Orthodox threat to the Commonwealth's security. Antoni Suchodolski, envoy for Smolensk, proposed assigning the Ruthenian bishops 75,000 zlotys annually for seminaries. With Uniate parishes in the hands of ignorant priests, the people had no chance of 'enlightenment', and so were easy prey for itinerant Orthodox clergy. With the spread of 'schism', the country would be exposed to rebellion and slaughter.<sup>84</sup> But although nobody challenged the axiom that clerical 'enlightenment' was a remedy for peasant rebellion, the cause of seminaries faltered. Some questioned the sums. Others insisted that the law stated that surplus episcopal revenues were to go to the army. In the end it was agreed that both the Uniate bishops and the Civil-Military Commissions should report on existing provision, and indicate where more was needed.<sup>85</sup> The marshals issued a suitable proclamation a few days later. *Plebani* of both rites were instructed to read

<sup>79</sup> ASC 8, ff. 266–9.

<sup>80</sup> ASC 8, ff. 302–3.

<sup>81</sup> ASC 16, f. 367.

<sup>82</sup> ASC 8, ff. 243–4.

<sup>83</sup> ASC 8, ff. 244–5. ASC 13, f. 166, signed S. Małachowski.

<sup>84</sup> *Dziennik Czynności* . . . , at ASC 8, ff. 283–4. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 287.

<sup>85</sup> ASC 8, f. 266–79.



it out from their pulpits. No promise was made that seminaries would be funded from the ecclesiastical revenues appropriated by the Commonwealth.<sup>86</sup>

## 6. HIGH NOON FOR ABBOTS, AND THE LIMITS OF REFORM

On 27 July 1790 Jacek Jezierski's project on abbacies was reintroduced. The castellan of Łuków reiterated his wish 'to drive out idleness from the whole of Poland'. In its original form it had destined all the revenues of commendatory abbots, and all surplus revenues of claustral abbots, for the army.<sup>87</sup> But in cooperation with Seweryn Potocki, envoy for Braclaw, he moderated his aims.

According to the published summary of the session, Bishop Kossakowski argued that abbacies had been founded by pious forefathers as the bread of deserving clergymen. Their distribution was a royal prerogative, which could not be touched without his agreement.<sup>88</sup> As if prompted, Stanisław August spoke. His duties included the protection of the clerical estate. Abbacies were the only reward for meritorious clergymen left to him as king. According to the summary, he said:

I have heard here some voices, aiming at the removal of funds from the Educational Commission, in order to use monks, even the most ignorant among them, for education, but who would teach without payment. I do not need to explain this at length. I warn you, Most Illustrious Estates, that if education is given back to ignorant guides, barbarism will return, and this chamber will not have such enlightened and zealous legislators and envoys as it does today.

This anticipates the king's private reaction to the sejmik instructions of November 1790, but it is probable that he used less inflammatory language in public, and that his words were later edited. Stanisław August wrote to his brother that he had been obliged to oppose anything that might break the union between Poland and the Holy See, and this point is not in the summary. Saluzzo, who was dependent on the reports provided by others, noted the king's defence of his own prerogatives in opposing the suppression of abbacies, in what the nuncio described as 'an eloquent speech full of piety and religion'.<sup>89</sup>

Stanisław August probably made some reference to the regular clergy, because Jezierski then told him: 'Your Majesty does not have enemies here, except perhaps those monks who do not ask God enough for the happiness of Your Majesty's reign.' He was not proposing to impinge on the royal prerogative, but 'why should

<sup>86</sup> S. Małachowski and K. N. Sapieha, *Rozporządzenie w sprawie składania sprawozdań z dochodów szpitali i seminariów w celu zabezpieczenia ich działalności* (Warsaw, 2 August 1790).

<sup>87</sup> ASC 8, ff. 277–8. [J. Jezierski,] *Opactwa* [1789].

<sup>88</sup> *Dziennik czynności* . . . , at ASC 8, ff. 292–3.

<sup>89</sup> *Dziennik czynności* . . . , at ASC 8, ff. 293–4. ASC 8, f. 278 shows that the king spoke at this point. Cf. SA to MJP, 28 July 1790, AGHig. 801b, vol. i, f. 32; Saluzzo to Zelada, 28 July 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 38.

Your Majesty give to idler-abbots and to us, idler-senators? Better give to soldiers, who will defend the Fatherland.<sup>90</sup>

High noon had arrived for the Commonwealth's abbots. Seweryn Potocki declared:

Born in the Catholic religion, it is my constant endeavour to remain in it until death; it has never been my intention to offend religion, I have not proposed to take abbatial revenues for the army, but I wanted, and want (which I do not understand to be a sin) that revenues which until now have been applied to inactive clergymen should now be applied to active clergymen.

He also wished to see the revenues used for the care of invalids, seminaries, better prisons, and for the sustenance of *plebani*, who, on as little as 400 zlotys a year, were forced either to beg or extort from their parishioners, 'with the greatest injury to religion'. Thus abbots' revenues would meet the needs of humanity. Striving not to sin, he had asked Jezierski to add *salvo beneplacito apostolico* to the project. He was confident that the king would diminish his prerogative for the good of the Fatherland. When the bishops were to enjoy revenues of 100,000 zlotys, when canons and *plebani* were to be provided for, why should abbacies be necessary? He would not abandon Jezierski's project without a vote.<sup>91</sup>

The published summary of Seweryn Potocki's speech provides the clearest example of how a more enlightened tinge could give a very different impression, and affect the judgements of historians. 'Christian' was substituted for 'Catholic'. All reference to 'sin' was removed, as was the express denial that the revenues were intended for the army. Above all, Potocki was reported as saying: 'the French have already enlightened us, as to who in the clergy is necessary, and without whom we cannot manage. Soon, other nations will give us a similar example. We only need bishops and parish priests.' Moreover, Jezierski confirmed that the 'holiness' (*świętobliwość*) of the envoy for Braclaw had indeed modified and corrected his project. But the summary made no reference to 'holiness'. Kalinka and Helena Rzadkowska quoted Potocki's reported words, the latter to illustrate the substantial influence exercised by revolutionary France on the sejm. The manuscript diary removes an important piece of evidence for that thesis. However, the probability that the words were subsequently inserted shows that the editors, at least, looked to revolutionary France for inspiration. Potocki may even have agreed to the manipulation, if he wished to persuade the Warsaw public rather than his fellow envoys.<sup>92</sup>

After the session, the king asked Seweryn Potocki to consult Małachowski as to how best to proceed with the project on abbacies. In a letter to the primate, the king ascribed the caveat of the papal *beneplacitum* in this project to his own intervention.<sup>93</sup> No doubt he was happy for Saluzzo to credit him with saving the abbacies.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>90</sup> ASC 8, f. 278.

<sup>91</sup> ASC 8, ff. 278–9.

<sup>92</sup> *Dziennik czynności...*, at ASC 8, ff. 295–6. ASC 8, f. 279. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 287. H. Rzadkowska, *Stosunek polskiej opinii publicznej do Rewolucji Francuskiej* (Warsaw, 1948), 49.

<sup>93</sup> SA to MJP, 28 July 1790, AGHig. 801b, vol. i, f. 32.

<sup>94</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 4 August 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 41.

The nuncio reported that the original intention had been to reassign abbots' revenues to the army, but the authors had been persuaded to propose that they be applied to seminaries and the poorest parishes. He was now working to 'divert the project', basing his defence on the concordat of 1737. Although the project was now suspended, he feared that it could be raised again on the following day. So he had asked Małachowski to bring forward other matters.<sup>95</sup>

As we have seen, it was Jezierski, of all people, who curtailed the ecclesiastical debates on 29 July. The law as it stood was inscribed on the same day.<sup>96</sup> An inspection of the law revealed to Saluzzo that after surplus revenues from the bishoprics had been assigned to military invalids and the cadet school, the remainder was to go to the treasury. He told Małachowski of his unhappiness with this 'irregularity'. But he consoled the secretary of state with a rough calculation that the net benefit to the treasury would not be more than the bishoprics would have had to pay in tax, had they been left untouched. Evidently the risk of further trouble outweighed the principle. The nuncio also claimed that he had successfully insisted that the approval of the Holy See be sought for any partition of dioceses. He was pleased, moreover, that a despatch from Antici on the circumstances in France had impressed the limits of Rome's acquiescence on the Deputation for Foreign Affairs. No doubt Saluzzo sighed with relief when ecclesiastical matters were kicked into the long grass.<sup>97</sup>

It was clear that most envoys and senators present in Warsaw had become either bored or vexed by ecclesiastical business. If they regarded the affairs of the Latin rite as of minor importance, those of the Ruthenian rite were still less pressing. The decisions drew back from some of the implications of *Fund for the Army*. The first and most important concession, allowing bishops to draw their incomes from landed estates in their possession, was presented to the sejm as a necessary condition for papal consent to the changes proposed to diocesan boundaries—a prerogative which nobody challenged, at least as far as the Latin rite was concerned. The 'clerical deputation' had prepared its allies well. The modification was all the more acceptable given that the pope was willing to be flexible elsewhere, and that the fiscal implications were more or less neutral. Nevertheless, the decision could not have been taken had Suchodolski been present. His pride was at stake. He did not want a word of 'his' law repealed. His usual allies, Jezierski and Kublicki, were essentially indifferent to whether bishops drew their incomes from lands or in cash. Jezierski propagated a much more radical transformation of ecclesiastical income. Kublicki was more interested in the Duchy of Siewierz. Here, the crucial principle of the Polish Revolution was at stake: sovereignty.<sup>98</sup> This principle and the fiscal interest overrode the aspersions cast on the Siewierz szlachta. It seems that

<sup>95</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 28 July 1790, ASV ANV 67, ff. 38–9.

<sup>96</sup> ASC 8, ff. 299–312, especially at 302–3. VL, ix. 175–6.

<sup>97</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 4 August 1790, ASV ANV 67, ff. 40–1.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. de Caché to Kaunitz, 29 May 1790, HHStA Polen II 52, despatch 665, f. 95.

sympathizers with the episcopal claim to sovereignty attempted to avoid a binding decision.<sup>99</sup> They were ground down over the course of three days.

The only fiscal concession to the episcopate was the decision that future episcopal incomes would not be subjected to taxation at 20 per cent. Here, Ignacy Potocki's logic and authority seem to have been important. The supporters of taxing the bishops were hampered by the carelessly drafted text of *Fund for the Army*. For the poorer bishops, this decision promised a substantial bounty. However, it was not one that they could enjoy immediately. Prompted by Jezierski, the sejm refused to allocate any of the surplus income from Cracow to other bishops.

The castellan of Łuków called for a far-reaching reform of the clergy, but the debates show that the generally accepted principles that pluralism should be ended and residence enforced were undermined by the temptation to remedy pressing problems by existing means. It seemed less costly and problematic to allocate abbacies and other benefices to the poorer bishops.<sup>100</sup>

Only a political intrigue could have led to the abolition or major reform of the Latin-rite abbacies. Six weeks later Naruszewicz informed Stanisław August that Kossakowski had asked for help in getting the commendatory abbacy of Lubiń (it transpired that the news of a vacancy was premature). After pointing out that another abbacy might soon fall vacant as Garnysz neared his end, Naruszewicz warned the king that a grant to Kossakowski could provoke '*clamores*' in this sejm, and somebody might propose the abolition or diminution of abbacies.<sup>101</sup> As the primate and Krasicki had provoked the secularization of the bishopric of Cracow, so the even more unpopular Kossakowski might have detonated an avalanche on the abbots.

Such an assault could have been amply justified by the discourses of religion and patriotism. Many smiled when Jezierski mocked the idleness of abbots, monks, and prelates, but only a few were committed to a thorough reform of the clergy. If such a reform involved expenditure, opposition to it was more than sufficient. As long as abbacies and prebends were seen to go to those considered 'deserving', they fulfilled the szlachta's expectations, and saved taxpayers' money. Małachowski kept the project 'in deliberation', and Jezierski and Seweryn Potocki lacked the political muscle to insist on its decision. They did not have the kind of backing available to Wojciech Suchodolski a year earlier. The army and independence from Russia remained the sejm's priorities.

There was less chance of a fundamental reform of monasticism than there was of abolishing claustral and commendatory abbots. Despite the attacks on contemplative orders at the sejms and in pamphlets, very few calls to dissolve their houses were heard in the sejm. On the contrary, the Estates later confirmed several monastic foundations—of both rites and both sexes. But in every case they had

<sup>99</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 266.

<sup>100</sup> An argument made by Tomasz Dłuski to I. Potocki, Gułtanów, 11 January 1790, APP 279b, vol. v, pp. 462–4.

<sup>101</sup> Naruszewicz to SA, 8 September 1790, *Korespondencja Naruszewicza*, 370–1.

to be justified in terms of the parochial, nursing, or pedagogical services they provided.<sup>102</sup>

That said, the reforms of 1790 envisaged radical changes to the bishoprics. The principle of *Fund for the Army* was maintained, that equal episcopal labours should be rewarded equally. Although the principle of *salvis modernis possessoribus* protected Massalski from the partition of his diocese and income, Lithuania could look forward to a rational division of labour among four bishops. Responsibilities in the Ukraine would also be redistributed.<sup>103</sup> In theory, this was no different to the revolutionary reorganization of the French episcopate.

In contrast, Joseph II left most episcopal property intact, but he sought to exclude all foreign episcopal jurisdiction. To this end he created four new bishoprics (Budweis/Budvar, Linz, Leoben, and Tarnów), and remodelled others. The bishop of Passau and the administrator of Cracow yielded. However, the archbishop of Salzburg kept some of his metropolitan rights, and four other bishops retained their jurisdictions (although not their revenues) on Habsburg territory. The new bishops, together with their chapters, were each to receive an income from the Religious Fund of 40,000 florins (the equivalent of 160,000 złotys). The limited outcome arose in part from the entrenched position of the prince-bishops of the Holy Roman Empire, of which the Austro-Bohemian lands were part, but also from Joseph's personal negotiations with Pius VI. The emperor sought and obtained papal approval for these changes, whereas the Poles assumed papal consent.<sup>104</sup>

The position of the Uniates was strong in discursive terms. The need for the clergy to 'enlighten' the populace in the Christian duty of obedience had become an obligatory component of discourse on religion. New bishoprics and seminaries for the Ruthenian rite were promoted as panacea for 'disunion' and rebellion. Those who wished to object had to start from these premises, and could only override them in other uncontested discourses—such as the urgent need for an expanded army, and the sanctity of existing privileges and laws. It was also possible to highlight Basilian abbeys as an alternative source of funding for seminaries, or to hand the responsibility back to the bishops. Personal testimonials protected Piotr Bielański from the partition of his diocese. But for politicians who did not hail from Ruthenia, the Uniate cause lacked emotional immediacy.

<sup>102</sup> In December 1790 the sejm approved foundations for the Basilians and Sisters of Charity in the district of Brasław, the Sisters of Charity in Pułtusk, the Basilians in Bobownia, and the Carmelites in Bielsk; in June 1791 it approved the establishment of a parish and school by the Lateran Canons Regular at Ożierany; in January 1792 it authorized a purchase of land by the Basilians of Włodzimierz and permitted the Regular Canons of the Holy Sepulchre to exchange property to maintain a school at Rawa; and in March 1792 it assured the Benedictine school at Pułtusk, and permitted the nuns of the Visitation in Cracow to buy two villages. VL, ix. 196–7, 199–200, 290–1, 380–1, 414–15. The sejm also confirmed several older foundations, some dating back to 1654, and collectively described in the law as 'praiseworthy and useful to the Church, the Fatherland, and humanity', VL, ix. 400–1.

<sup>103</sup> VL, ix. 174–5.

<sup>104</sup> Beales, *Joseph II*, ii. 231, 237, 294, 353–5, 412–15. U. dell'Orto, *La Nunziatura a Vienna di Giuseppe Garampi 1776–1785* (Vatican City, 1995), 395–434.

## 7. IMPLEMENTATION

Delays in confirming the new bishops of the Latin rite and the incongruities of the financial arrangements almost provoked another assault on ecclesiastical temporalities. On 29 May 1790, after the clause on the Duchy of Siewierz had passed, the sejm asked the king to issue privileges for Bishops Turski and Naruszewicz.<sup>105</sup> Four days later Stanisław August nominated Turski bishop of Cracow and Naruszewicz bishop of Łuck.<sup>106</sup> The king ignored Naruszewicz's plea for Kołłątaj,<sup>107</sup> nominating Tymoteusz Gorzeński as bishop of Smolensk, and Michał Sołtyk to succeed Gorzeński as referendary of the Crown.<sup>108</sup> Sołtyk, the dean of Cracow, had long been favoured by the nuncio.<sup>109</sup> When a rumour spread that his less reputable cousin had died, Naruszewicz asked the king to give Kajetan Sołtyk's secretaryship of the Crown to Skarszewski, his canonry of Cracow to Franciszek Salezy Jezierski, and his parish of St Michael in Cracow to Kołłątaj. Kossakowski was even quicker off the mark. He wanted this lucrative parish, which was 'without any spiritual duties', for himself. But the rumour was premature.<sup>110</sup>

Nomination did not end Naruszewicz's financial worries. The Crown Treasury Commission had already granted Turski a share of the Cracow estates, while he continued to receive his revenues from Łuck. Naruszewicz had already paid about 30,000 złotys in stamp duty and other fees, and 5 per cent of his first four years' revenue, and stood to pay another 20,000 to the nunciature and Rome. As he waited for papal confirmation, he was reduced to borrowing at high interest. He vented his feelings to the king:

It is a beautiful thing for the nominated prince to hold two bishoprics, but it is a scandal *in publico*, a wrong to his fellow bishop and colleague, when according to Holy Scripture, *unus esurit, alius autem ebrius est*.<sup>111</sup> This temporization of Rome may irritate the sejm, and [incline it to] renew French examples; following on from the clerical project it may abolish abbacies and fat prebends, because they are already making strong threats.<sup>112</sup>

Saluzzo had initially felt that the 'dismemberment' of the bishopric of Cracow called for the pope to refrain from implying approval by confirming the nominations. However, realizing the impossibility of reversing the decision, and fearing that the impatience of the interested parties might provoke the renewal of

<sup>105</sup> ASC 7, ff. 466–7.

<sup>106</sup> SA to Cracow chapter, 2 June 1790, AKKK, Libri Archivi 30, f. 215.

<sup>107</sup> Naruszewicz to SA, 30 May, 1 June 1790, SA to Naruszewicz, 31 May 1790, *Korespondencja Naruszewicza*, 357–60. Cf. M. Pasztor, 'Wokół nominacji Hugona Kołłątaja na podkanclerstwo koronne', *PH*, 82 (1991), 301–7, at 303.

<sup>108</sup> SA to Pius VI, SA to Giovanni Albani, 10 June 1790, copies in BJ 2987, ff. 229, 230. J. Śmiałowski, 'Sołtyk, Michał', *PSB*, xl (Warsaw and Cracow, 2001), 414–18, at 416.

<sup>109</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 9 December 1789, 2 June 1790, ASV ANV 67, ff. 1, 26.

<sup>110</sup> Naruszewicz to SA, 25 June 1790, *Korespondencja Naruszewicza*, 360–1. J. K. Kossakowski to SA, 23 June 1790, BCz. 728, p. 229. Sołtyk died in 1804. M. Czeppe and J. Śmiałowski, 'Sołtyk, Maciej Kajetan', *PSB*, xl (Warsaw and Cracow, 2001), 404–6.

<sup>111</sup> 'One goes hungry and another becomes drunk.' 1 Cor. xi. 21.

<sup>112</sup> Naruszewicz to SA, 14 July 1790, *Korespondencja Naruszewicza*, 365–7.

ecclesiastical business, he soon changed tack.<sup>113</sup> Naruszewicz's warnings were well founded.

On 19 July, during a debate on treasury business, Kublicki complained that the Crown Treasury Commission had allocated Turski estates worth not 13,000 złotys a year, as the sejm had instructed before the recess, but 30,000. Moreover, they included '*fossilia*'. Wojciech Suchodolski demanded that the instruction to give Turski estates worth only 13,000 złotys be obeyed forthwith.<sup>114</sup> Turski faced repeated calls either to relinquish the revenues of Łuck to his nominated successor, or else lose his income from Cracow. He protested that he had always placed the public good above his own interest, and that the Crown Treasury Commission (of which he was a member) had given him the property in question because of a lack of suitable alternatives.<sup>115</sup> If Naruszewicz shared the income of Łuck, it would infringe the rights of Turski's heirs and violate the sanctity of property. The sejm should not interfere in a matter of ecclesiastical jurisdiction.<sup>116</sup>

Butrymowicz distinguished between *spiritualia* and *temporalia*: senatorial chairs and episcopal properties did 'not belong to Rome', so the Commonwealth need not wait for the pope. The king should issue a privilege for Naruszewicz to enter into his estates and senatorial chair. The bishop of Kiev answered that if a royal privilege were to suffice, a person rejected as unworthy by the Holy See might benefit from ecclesiastical property.<sup>117</sup>

Suchodolski suggested that the question could be settled if Turski would agree to share the Łuck revenues with Naruszewicz. A chorus of approval again brought Turski to his feet. He made no concession, other than assuring his episcopal successor of his esteem, and affirming that the laws of God and nature permitted no-one to be wronged. Naruszewicz stated simply: 'I accept that.' Suchodolski returned to the essential point: was Turski to continue to enjoy the Cracow revenues or not? If he was, then why should not Naruszewicz likewise take possession? He proposed reclaiming *all* the revenues for the treasury. The national cavalryman must have been enjoying the moment. The irony was that he was resurrecting *Fund for the Army* in the name of justice for the king's favourite.<sup>118</sup>

The following morning, Naruszewicz felt himself obliged to state that the nominated bishop of Cracow was still the canonical bishop of Łuck, and so entitled to the rewards for his work. Moreover, the Deputation for Foreign Affairs had written to Cardinal Antici, asking for the acceleration of proceedings. Naruszewicz also urged the sejm to wait for the survey of the estates of Łuck and Chełm, which would affect the revenues left to the former bishopric. But in case of a delay in

<sup>113</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 9 June, 16 June, 23 June, 14 July 1790, ASV ANV 67, ff. 27, 28, 30–1, 35.

<sup>114</sup> ASC 8, ff. 116–19.

<sup>115</sup> An order of the Crown Treasury Commission dated 9 June 1790 shows that Turski had refused the three villages originally specified because they were in Prussia. ASC 17, f. 360.

<sup>116</sup> ASC 8, ff. 118–20.

<sup>117</sup> ASC 8, ff. 120–2, 125–6.

<sup>118</sup> ASC 8, ff. 127–9.

Rome, he hoped Turski would act.<sup>119</sup> Naruszewicz's intervention ended the debate for the moment, especially as Turski declared—in general terms—his willingness to sort things out.<sup>120</sup> But Turski's obduracy had provided anti-clericals with inviting targets. The king, who privately believed that Turski should hand over the Łuck revenues immediately, told the primate that he had maintained the authority of the Holy See. The *quid pro quo* was that the pope should act promptly.<sup>121</sup>

Before news of these controversies could reach Rome, the consistorial congregation began proceedings on 24 July 1790, albeit with a caveat over the use of the Cracow income.<sup>122</sup> Antici explained to Ghigiotti that the Holy Father was not opposed to the equalization of episcopal revenues, but he did object to their being profaned, and desired the establishment of a religious fund.<sup>123</sup> However, the sejm had already destined the surplus revenues in the first place for the care of military invalids and the cadet school, and afterwards for the treasury, providing only a partial figleaf for Rome.

Pius VI also approved the transfer of part of the diocese of Cracow to the diocese of Chełm on 20 July 1790. His agreement to the title of 'bishop of Chełm and Lublin' was conveyed by the secretary of state.<sup>124</sup> A few weeks later the ailing Garnysz announced his assumption of responsibility to his flock.<sup>125</sup> He died on 2 October 1790. His funeral, at the Capuchin church in Warsaw, was a 'magnificent' occasion. Saluzzo sang High Mass, assisted by four bishops, in the presence of the king.<sup>126</sup>

A dual vacancy opened. Naruszewicz advised the king to give the bishopric to Wojciech Skarszewski and the vice-chancellorship to Kołłątaj.<sup>127</sup> Stanisław Małachowski and the Puławy set supported Kołłątaj for the latter, but Grand Chancellor Jacek Małachowski threatened to resign, rather than work alongside such a colleague. Stanisław August delayed nominating a new vice-chancellor until the sejm had decided which of the ministries were to be abolished. He nominated Skarszewski bishop of Chełm and Lublin on 11 October, following a petition from citizens of the palatinate of Lublin, and pressure from the nuncio, who had long since approved of his 'optimal maxims'. The king promptly asked Skarszewski to cede various benefices to other royal and primatial protégés.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>119</sup> *Głos Adama Naruszewicza biskupa smoleńskiego nominata łuckiego i brzeskiego* ... 20. lipca ... He sent a copy to the nuncio. Naruszewicz to SA, 24 July 1790, *Korespondencja Naruszewicza*, 367–8.

<sup>120</sup> ASC 8, f. 129.

<sup>121</sup> SA to MJP, 21 July 1790, AGHig. 801 b., vol. i, ff. 27–8.

<sup>122</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 24 July 1790, ASV ANV 52, ff. 396–404. Kumor, *Dzieje diecezji krakowskiej*, i. 169.

<sup>123</sup> Antici to Ghigiotti, 4 August 1790, AGHig. 25a, vol. vi, f. 162.

<sup>124</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 24 July 1790, ASV ANV 52, ff. 403–4.

<sup>125</sup> Kumor, *Dzieje diecezji krakowskiej*, i. 169–70. Table of 117 parishes, *ibid.*, i. 171–7. Garnysz, *Wszystkim duchownym* ... (Warsaw, 30 August 1790).

<sup>126</sup> GW, 9 October 1790.

<sup>127</sup> Naruszewicz to SA, 2 October 1790, *Korespondencja Naruszewicza*, 373–4.

<sup>128</sup> Kołłątaj to SA, not dated, BPAU 204, pp. 6–7. Saluzzo to Boncompagni, 12 April 1786, ASV ANV 66, f. 77 (quotation). Saluzzo to Zelada, 6 October, 13 October 1790, ASV ANV 67, ff. 52–3. SA to MJP, 6 October, 13 October 1790, AGHig. 801b, vol. i, ff. 80, 84–5. SA to Deboli, 13 October,



After much grumbling over delays and haggling over fees, Turski, Naruszewicz, Gorzeński, and Skarszewski were confirmed as bishops of Cracow, Łuck, Smolensk, and Chełm and Lublin, respectively, by Pius VI on 29 November 1790.<sup>129</sup> Meanwhile the Crown Treasury Commission surveyed the estates of the bishoprics of Chełm and Łuck in order that some of the latter revenues could augment the former. Łuck proved less lucrative than expected, and only estates worth 24,000 złotys a year could be found above those yielding 100,000 złotys which were reserved for Naruszewicz. Unable directly to transfer estates from Cracow, the treasury commission had to make up the shortfall of 52,000 złotys.<sup>130</sup>

Skarszewski was consecrated in Warsaw on 6 February 1791. Jan Paweł Woronicz became Skarszewski's auditor two days later, and he was soon busy arranging the move to Lublin.<sup>131</sup> He worked closely with the new bishop on a plan of action for the new diocese. The points included retreats, seminaries, and characteristically, that the consistory courts should ensure that books against religion and morals were not printed or sold.<sup>132</sup> A *Pastoral Instruction*, intended to prepare the diocese for a general visitation, was issued on 16 July 1792. This was an updated version of the instruction that Skarszewski had drafted for Rybiński back in 1777. Many of the provisions, such as the tariff of stole fees, met the wishes of the deputation.<sup>133</sup>

Naruszewicz, on claiming the prize he had so long desired, chose to call himself bishop of Łuck and Brześć, in order to reinforce his association with the Lithuanian part of his diocese.<sup>134</sup> He threw himself into his new work, telling one of his canons: 'I want to be an active and vigilant pastor in my diocese, and I shall not let pass any offences or inconveniences, still less disobedience.' He planned a printed letter to his deans, concerning the keeping of fasts and the paying of taxes.<sup>135</sup> But even now, Naruszewicz could not enjoy his good fortune. On 20 April 1791, he complained that soldiers had executed the collection of 20 per cent of his annual revenues in tax, despite the provision in the law to the contrary.<sup>136</sup> It is not clear if other bishops experienced similar problems.

Turski made a brief speech of thanks to the king on 3 January 1791,<sup>137</sup> and issued a pastoral letter on 22 February. He enjoined his new flock to keep holy-days

6 November, 13 November 1790, ZP 420, ff. 1029, 1068–9, 1075–6. Pasztor, 'Wokół nominacji Hugona Kołłątaja' (n. 107 above), 301–4. GW, 9 January 1791.

<sup>129</sup> Kumor, *Dzieje diecezji krakowskiej*, i. 534. T. Długosz, *Dzieje diecezji smoleńskiej* (Lwów, 1937), 72. M. Deszczyńska and E. Zielińska, 'Skarszewski, Wojciech', *PSB*, xxxviii (Warsaw and Cracow, 1997), 50–61, at 52.

<sup>130</sup> Deszczyńska and Zielińska, 'Skarszewski', *PSB*, xxxviii. 53. Naruszewicz to SA, 26 April 1791, *Korespondencja Naruszewicza*, 394–5.

<sup>131</sup> Deszczyńska and Zielińska, 'Skarszewski', *PSB*, xxxviii. 52. 'Dyplom na audytora chełmsko-lubelskiego', Ossol. 14,187, pp. 41–6. Drafts of Jan Paweł Woronicz to Józef Olechowski, 9 April 1791, and to N. Wybranowski, 4 June and 23 June 1791, Ossol. 14,188, pp. 89–91.

<sup>132</sup> Conspectus by Woronicz in Ossol. 14,189, pp. 59–61.

<sup>133</sup> W. Skarszewski, *Rozporządzenie pasterskie na diecezję bełską i lubelską roku 1792* (Warsaw, 1792).

<sup>134</sup> *Głos Adama Naruszewicza, biskupa łuckiego i brzeskiego... r. 1791. dnia 3. stycznia.*

<sup>135</sup> Letter dated Warsaw, 23 February 1791, *Korespondencja Naruszewicza*, 389–91.

<sup>136</sup> Naruszewicz to SA, Janów Podlaski, 26 April 1791, *Korespondencja Naruszewicza*, 394–5.

<sup>137</sup> *Dziennik 1790*, i:1. 224–5.

free from trade, and on Sundays and holy-days to worship in parish churches and not in private chapels. These were typical post-Tridentine themes. Reflecting his stance towards the 'present, supposedly enlightened century' was a lament at the number of 'divorces' (annulments) and an order to the clergy to give proper instruction on matrimony.<sup>138</sup> He made his ingress to Cracow Cathedral on 2 June 1791.<sup>139</sup>

Turski was also the last duke of Siewierz. On 4 July 1790 the sejm's commissioners met the assembled szlachta of Siewierz.<sup>140</sup> The question seems then to have been forgotten in Warsaw—except by Wojciech Suchodolski.<sup>141</sup> Finally, on 28 November 1791, Ignacy Zakrzewski reminded the Estates that the status of the Siewierz nobles had not yet been resolved. He handed in a project, declaring their complete equality in rights and responsibilities with the szlachta as a whole, and instructing the Cracow Civil-Military Commission to begin surveying the duchy for the purposes of taxation and conscription. Konstanty Jelski, envoy for Starodub, asked for time to consider the project, so it went *ad deliberandum*. The following day, Stanisław Małachowski called on Butrymowicz to introduce an analogous project, freeing the szlachta of the Duchy of Sieluń in Mazovia, amounting to twenty-two villages, from five and a half centuries of subjection to the cathedral provost of Płock, and making them equal citizens of the Commonwealth. The project *Justice for the Szlachta of Sieluń* was read out and approved by acclamation. Jelski declared his doubts assuaged, and asked for the project for Siewierz to be reintroduced. It too was agreed unanimously.<sup>142</sup> National sovereignty and noble privileges proved compatible; princes of the Church yielded their prerogatives, but kept their titles.

The local szlachta gathered in Siewierz on 1 February 1792 to celebrate their 'unification with the citizens of the state of the Polish Commonwealth'. They gladly swore an oath to the Constitution of 3 May and then banqueted. A fortnight later they attended their first sejmik in February 1792, where, on their best behaviour, they swore another oath to the constitution, alongside the Cracovians.<sup>143</sup>

Because Ignacy Massalski was still alive, no steps were taken to divide the bishopric of Wilno. Gorzeński remained in Warsaw. Józef Kossakowski was satisfied neither with his future pastoral responsibilities, nor with his compensation for

<sup>138</sup> F. P. Turski, *Wszystkim wiernym Chrystusowym diecezji naszej krakowskiej...* (Warsaw, 22 February 1791).

<sup>139</sup> M. Pęcowski, *Józef Olechowski, archidiacon i sufragan krakowski 1735–1806* (Cracow, 1926), 144–5.

<sup>140</sup> *Powitanie...kommissarzow od Najjaśniejszego Pana i Prześwietnych Stanow...do Xięstwa Siewierskiego Obywateli wyznaczonych miane przez JX. Wojciecha Sokołowskiego, plebana chruszczobrodzkiego, dnia 4. lipca roku P. 1790.*

<sup>141</sup> On his return to Warsaw he reportedly said that he would raise his 'patriotic voice' in only two eventualities—the partition of the country, or if there was an attempt to attach the Duchy of Siewierz to the bishopric of Cracow. Newsletter, 8 October 1791, BN Akc. 9830, k. 8.

<sup>142</sup> ASC 23, ff. 229, 238–40, 245. *Warunek dla szlachty siewierskiej, Sprawiedliwość dla szlachty sieluńskiej*, VL, ix. 345–6. SA to Deboli, 30 November 1791, ZP 413, f. 247. See W. Smoleński, 'Szlachta mazowiecka w poddaństwie proboszczów płockich', in id., *Pisma Historyczne*, i. 111–72, 163–72.

<sup>143</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 173, 178. S. Minorski to Kołłątaj, Cracow, 18 February 1792, BPAU 197, f. 87.

Cracow. The bishop of Livonia begged the monarch to stave off his creditors on 27 July 1790.<sup>144</sup> Stanisław August did not abandon him. Pressured by the king, Massalski finally agreed to make Kossakowski his coadjutor at the end of 1790. The king nominated Kossakowski on 19 April 1791, and the papal bull confirming him was dated 19 December 1791.<sup>145</sup> He still pestered Stanisław August for benefices, prompting the reply: 'I had reason to suppose, that when you already have the coadjutorship of the bishopric of Wilno, you would be less concerned about smaller things.'<sup>146</sup> As plans for the Russian intervention advanced, Kossakowski also had his eye on greater things.

Worst affected by the various reforms bearing on episcopal revenues was Porfiry Ważyński, who as Uniate bishop of Chełm since January 1790 received, it was alleged, a mere twenty-six złotys a year. No surplus was yet available from richer dioceses. In March 1791 Rostocki named Ważyński administrator of the remaining territories of the archbishopric of Połock. Ważyński called a diocesan synod and began to reorganize the parish network. But the matter became entangled with Mateusz Butrymowicz's attempts to get a suffragany of Połock for his brother Adrian. On 13 January 1792 the sejm began to consider the metropolitan's project approving the suffragany. The question became absorbed into a wider discussion on ecclesiastical reform, which we shall consider later. Suffice it to say that nothing was decided.<sup>147</sup>

The Uniates nevertheless had cause for satisfaction when Teodozy Rostocki took his seat in the senate on 9 September 1790. The metropolitan's speech of thanks was mostly an historical resumé, dwelling on the misfortunes of his rite. He stressed the loyalty of the Uniate clergy, and their Latinizing reforms. But at last the Providential day had come.<sup>148</sup> The pope and the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith sent the king thanks. The metropolitan rarely spoke in the sejm, and was enmeshed in property disputes. The king was not impressed by Rostocki personally,<sup>149</sup> but the monarch did try to raise the prestige of the Uniate episcopate. He gave the order of St Stanisław to twelve Uniate bishops during his reign, and the higher order of the White Eagle to three (including Rostocki in 1790).<sup>150</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Kossakowski to SA, 27 July 1790, BCz. 728, pp. 223–4.

<sup>145</sup> T. Kasabuła, *Ignacy Massalski, biskup wileński* (Lublin, 1998), 170–3. A. Zahorski, 'Kossakowski, Józef Kazimierz', *PSB*, xiv (Wrocław, 1968–9), 269–72, at 270–1. 'Prezenta Króla Stanisława Poniatowskiego JX. Bis: Infant: Jozefowi Kossakowskiemu na Koadjutorio Bis: Wileńskiego', LMAVB F43-1125.

<sup>146</sup> SA to Kossakowski, 8 September 1791, BCz. 728, p. 241.

<sup>147</sup> Paździor, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 185–7, 286–90. The correspondence between the king and M. Butrymowicz in 1791–2, in BCz. 722 and BJ 5993, fasc. XVI, reveals how much the king valued his political support, and how the envoy impressed on the monarch the material needs of his family. On 25 April 1791 and 13 March 1792 the king assured Butrymowicz that he had not forgotten about the latter's brother. BJ 5993, fasc. XVI. See also SA to Naruszewicz, 19 November 1791, *Korespondencja Naruszewicza*, 404–5, and Stefan Lewiński to Ghigiotti, Rożyszcze, 19 April 1791, AGHig. 385, f. 126.

<sup>148</sup> ASC 9, ff. 169–70. *Podziękowanie Nayaśnieszemu Panu y Nayaśnieszym Seymuiącym Stanom przy pozwoleniu na zawsze zasiadania w senacie przez... Teodozjusza Rostockiego, Arcybiskupa Kijowskiego Metropolite Caley Rusi, kawalera orderu Świętego Stanisława, dnia 10 [sic—9] września 1790, roku uczynione*. Paździor, 'Dopuszczenie metropolity', 242–3, 262–3.

<sup>149</sup> SA to MJP, 24 July 1790, AGHig. 801b, vol. i, f. 29.

<sup>150</sup> Paździor, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 208–11, 238, 249–52.

The Uniate hierarchy tried to meet their obligation to work on a redivision of the dioceses. Having gleaned what information they could, the bishops met in Warsaw in September 1790, and agreed the outlines of a fairly radical plan, based on those put to the sejm's 'clerical deputation' a few months earlier. There would be two new dioceses, one in the remaining part of the archdiocese of Połock, on the basis of the fund established by the king for the suffragany in 1785, and the other, on a new fund to be found by the sejm, in the palatinate of Bracław, under the bishop of Kamieniec (without Lwów). This would diminish the area of the metropolitan archdiocese, as would the redistribution of responsibilities between the bishops of Pińsk, Chełm, Włodzimierz, and Łuck. More time would be needed to establish the details at parish level. And until vacancies occurred, most bishops remained poor and the metropolitan rich.<sup>151</sup>

With the information provided by his colleagues, Rostocki drew up a report on seminaries. It revealed a low level of provision. The papal foundation in Wilno educated sixteen clerics. The only substantial seminary was the metropolitan's own at Radomyśl, which provided a hundred places. Some Latin seminaries also taught Uniate candidates. The question came up when the sejm discussed the suffragany of Połock. Again, in the end nothing was done.<sup>152</sup>

The Uniate bishops also worked out a tariff of stole fees, but it was not applied to the diocese of Chełm, whose clergy pleaded their poverty. The tariff was comparable to that of the Latin rite in the scale of charges, but it differentiated carefully between different types of peasant. The Latin-rite tariff concentrated on different types of noble, as well as on burghers, revealing the two rites' contrasting social bases. But both tariffs stressed the need to free the poorest parishioners from all payments.<sup>153</sup> The Uniate episcopate also agreed to reduce the number of holy-days. Twenty-six were to be kept and fifteen moved to Sundays, subject to Rome's approval. In the end nothing was done about the calendar either.<sup>154</sup> The only measure to pass that did benefit the Ruthenian rite was the repeal on 9 January 1792 of the law of 1764 enserfing priests' sons who neither took holy orders, nor learned a trade. But this concession was also extended to the sons of the Orthodox clergy. Ultimately, the Commonwealth's security was at stake.<sup>155</sup>

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Further attempts to reform the Catholic clergy of both rites failed in January and May 1792. The episcopal reorganization had barely begun by the time the sejm ended. The outcome was a striking contrast with the unprecedented steps of 1789, when double taxes were imposed on the clergy, and the estates of the bishopric of Cracow seized for the army. It is tempting to quote Aesop, as a pamphleteer did in another context: 'The mountain roared, and a ridiculous mouse was born.'<sup>156</sup> But to do so, one needs the benefit of hindsight.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 283–5.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 286, 446–52. T. Rostocki, 'Stan terażniejszy seminaryów wszystkich diecezjów obrządku ruskiego', BCz. 916, ff. 275–82.

<sup>153</sup> Paździór, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 202–4. <sup>154</sup> BCz. 916, pp. 281–2.

<sup>155</sup> ASC 23, k. 291. VL, ix. 380. <sup>156</sup> See below, 276.

# 9

## ‘*Une renaissance de barbarie*’?

### The autumn of 1790

In September 1790 the sejm passed ‘Cardinal Laws’ regarding the status of the dominant Catholic faith and other, ‘tolerated’ faiths. The king, for one, was surprised that these questions provoked controversies.<sup>1</sup> These debates and laws have been neglected by historians, probably because they took place amidst clashes in which the ‘enlightened republican’ programme of an hereditary throne, a broadening of the ‘nation’, and the Prussian alliance encountered vehement opposition from ‘old republicans’ and Russophiles. The king took advantage of these battles to strengthen his political and constitutional position. The seam of anti-aristocratic resentments, which royalist orators exploited, contributed to a new discursive paradigm of ‘ordered freedom’, which dominated the last year and a half of the Polish Revolution. Monarchist interpretations of civil liberty helped to contest the republican insistence that the ‘nation’ (whether constituted in the sejm or the sejmiks) should govern as well as legislate. They also offered some shelter for the Church.

The Church’s need of such shelter was demonstrated by the sejmiks that elected a second cohort of envoys in November 1790. The instructions, more than any others in the eighteenth century, expressed the sentiments of the provincial nobility.<sup>2</sup> They were forthright regarding the clergy and education. Most endorsed the call to restore the Jesuit order and turn the educational fund over to the army. Most sejmiks also rejected an hereditary throne, and expressed views on social and cultural questions which horrified Ignacy Potocki. Moreover, the envoys elected included many royalists. Having reached this dead end, Potocki shelved his vision of leading the ‘nation’ to an enlightened republican future, and sought a compromise with Stanisław August.<sup>3</sup> The final phase of the Polish Revolution could then begin.

<sup>1</sup> SA to Deboli, 4 September 1790, ZP 420, f. 958. SA to MJP, 4 September 1790, AGHig. 801b, vol. i, f. 58.

<sup>2</sup> Rostworowski, *Sprawa aukcji wojska*, 228.

<sup>3</sup> Id., *Legendy i fakty*, 344.

## 1. THE PROJECT FOR THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT

It was for an alliance with Prussia that Ignacy Potocki had drawn up the *Principles for the Correction of the Form of Government* late in 1789, and it was for an alliance with Prussia that he had then neglected the Deputation for the Form of Government. But following the signing of the alliance at the end of March 1790, foreign policy was forced to share its primacy, when an impatient sejm ordered an acceleration of work on the proposed form of government. Potocki's drafts were considered and amended by the Deputation for the Form of Government in June and July 1790.<sup>4</sup>

The king was kept informed of progress by Scipione Piattoli, a Florentine abbé in his employ from November 1789. Piattoli soon won Stanisław August's confidence, while retaining that of his former patron, Ignacy Potocki. He would play a crucial role in the formation of the united 'patriotic party' that drove through the revolution of 3 May 1791.<sup>5</sup> For the moment, Potocki accepted very few of Stanisław August's suggestions. With the king stripped of his most important prerogatives, and cordons of republican security put in place, Potocki felt able to propose hereditary succession to the throne. The king and sejm would be subordinated to the national will, expressed by the sejmiks. Stanisław August foresaw the consequences: 'a multitude of dark, ignorant, and often drunk persons would decide the fate of the Commonwealth'. And on another occasion: 'noble democracy (which is only an aristocracy in respect to burghers and peasants) will prevail at the sejmiks not only over the king, but over the entire sejm. And if it is to be so, may God have mercy on Poland.'<sup>6</sup>

Potocki's project featured a purely supervisory 'Custodial Council' (*Straż Praw*), the abolition of many dignities at local level, and elective offices, except for bishops, who would be nominated by the king. Potocki's declared motive for this concession was to include 'a pleasant surprise' for Stanisław August, who could 'have a party entirely to himself'.<sup>7</sup> A dozen senators was not much of a party. But perhaps Potocki had another perspective here. The Civil Constitution of the Clergy had not yet been passed (it was approved on 25 July 1790), but he would have known that episcopal elections were being discussed in France. This would have caused canonical problems and ruined Potocki's excellent relations with Saluzzo.

The *Project for the Form of Government* was presented in the sejm on 5 August 1790 by Bishop Krasiński. Weighing in at 658 articles (printed in folio), it took five, frequently interrupted sessions to read out. Sittings were then suspended to allow the project to be discussed and criticized at conferences at Stanisław

<sup>4</sup> This and the following paragraphs are chiefly based on Rostworowski, *Ostatni król*, 178–88, and id., *Legenda i fakty*, 306–33.

<sup>5</sup> See also E. Rostworowski, 'Piattoli, Scipione', *PSB*, xxv (Wrocław, 1980), 818–28; F. Venturi, *The End of the Old Regime in Europe 1776–1789* (Princeton, NJ, 1991), ii. 941–7.

<sup>6</sup> SA to Deboli, 17 November 1790, quoted in Rostworowski, *Legenda i fakty*, 343–4; and 22 January 1791, quoted in Rostworowski, *Ostatni król*, 184.

<sup>7</sup> Rostworowski, *Legenda i fakty*, 315. *Projekt do formy rządu* (Warsaw, 1790): 'Stopnie i warunki urzędów w Rzeczypospolitey', § LX, LXXII.

Małachowski's house. The renaming of hereditary succession as 'a throne elective in families' fooled no one; many feared an irreversible step towards despotism.<sup>8</sup> Potocki privately compared the project to the constitution 'that reason should erect'. It was like setting St Peter's beside the Church of St Genevieve. Presumably he preferred the classical perfection of the church in Paris, which subsequently became the Pantheon, to the vast and magnificent, but now old-fashioned basilica on the Vatican hill. As early as 20 August 1790 he feared that Poland could not become a genuine republic. '*Une monarchie limitée*' would be preferable to anarchy.<sup>9</sup> His coded language in these letters was full of religious metaphors, including '*schismatiques*' and '*apostats*' to describe those who had abandoned him.<sup>10</sup>

Potocki and his allies suffered setbacks in both foreign and domestic policy. They were unable to resist pressure to declare the inviolability of the Commonwealth's territory a Cardinal Law—as if neighbouring powers would be prevented thereby from helping themselves. The king supported Potocki, arguing that religion rather than territory was the proper subject of an immutable law. But no arguments could prevent the passing, on 6 September, of a law that was worse than useless.<sup>11</sup> Daniel Hailes, who had engaged in a campaign of lobbying and even pamphleteering, blamed the resolution on 'those who stile themselves the Gentlemen of the middle Rank—not composing any Party—nor having any Views but for the Good of the Country at large' and 'an Explosion of the Humours of the Public at large' against the 'Grandeess'.<sup>12</sup>

The sejm began its consideration of the *Project for the Form of Government* from the Cardinal Laws.<sup>13</sup> However, on 2 September Mateusz Butrymowicz submitted an amendment confirming the royal prerogatives as set out in the *pacta conventa*. Seweryn Potocki asserted that with the abolition of the Permanent Council the prerogative of nomination had returned not to the king, but to the nation. He followed through with an attack on royal corruption.<sup>14</sup> That provoked replies from Tadeusz Kościłkowski, envoy for Wiłkomierz, who exulted in the order, equality, and humanity that had characterized the reign of the philosopher on the throne.<sup>15</sup> In a rare speech Stefan Giedroyc, the bishop of Samogitia, denounced any restriction of the prerogatives as sacrilege, claiming that without the power to nominate to office, the king would be a slave to 'dictators to the throne and nation'.<sup>16</sup> Adam Naruszewicz ransacked the annals to show that the monarch had always nominated senators. Ignacy Zakrzewski wanted to abolish prerogatives which maintained 'aristocratic anarchy'.

<sup>8</sup> Zielińska, 'O sukcesji tronu w Polsce', 153–7.

<sup>9</sup> I. Potocki to Aloy, 14 September, 20 September 1790, quoted after Rostworowski, *Legendy i fakty*, 323.

<sup>10</sup> I. Potocki to Aloy, 11 September 1790, APP 277, ff. 319–20.

<sup>11</sup> SA to Deboli, 4 September 1790, ZP 420, ff. 959–60. SA to MJP, 4 September 1790, AGHig. 801b, vol. i, f. 59.

<sup>12</sup> Hailes to Leeds, 8 September, 15 September 1790, NA FRO 62/3, f. 228.

<sup>13</sup> ASC 8, ff. 605–22.

<sup>14</sup> ASC 9, ff. 3–7. *Przymówienie się... Seweryna Potockiego... 2 września 1790...*

<sup>15</sup> *Głos... Tadeusza... Kościłkowskiego... 2. września 1790...*

<sup>16</sup> *Głos... Giedroycia Biskupa Żmudzkiego... 2. wrzesnia roku 1790...*

Kazimierz Sapieha called for the retention of rewards for the deserving, as magnates struggled in the anti-aristocratic swell.<sup>17</sup>

That swell almost drowned them on 10 and 13 September, when the long-anticipated showdown over the royal prerogative was won by the monarch.<sup>18</sup> After another imprudent attack on the king by Seweryn Potocki, Pius Kiciński, the head of the monarch's cabinet, tore into what the Austrian resident termed '*dictatorische Aristocratie*'.<sup>19</sup> Kiciński warned that, having bought the support of the burghers, the magnates 'would take the entire country under their absolute rule, and gather the szlachta their brothers into a legal subordination'.<sup>20</sup> The force of the royalist assault was such that even Sapieha felt obliged to protest that no threat was intended to the present king's prerogatives. The sejm agreed unanimously to restore Stanisław August's powers of nomination.<sup>21</sup>

Ignacy Potocki made a dismissive but revealing distinction between Kiciński's and others' private service of the king as '*cortegiani*', and their public stance, which was sometimes in opposition to the monarch. In a republican political culture, and a sovereign Commonwealth, every politician had to justify his stance in terms of the public good. Inside the chamber, Kiciński ceased to be the king's servant, and became his supporter.<sup>22</sup>

It was now once more acceptable to voice opinions that had earlier been hooted down. Seweryn Potocki discovered that the discursive boundaries had shifted. His ally Jacek Jezierski, who had earlier tormented the king with his sarcasms, was henceforth far less active. The tone was set by an anti-aristocratic discourse of ordered freedom, under the guidance of a wise monarch and the favour of Divine Providence.

When on 16 September the debate moved to the Commonwealth's power to establish or abolish offices, Wojciech Świątosławski, envoy for Volhynia, raised the kingship. Battle lines were drawn. On one side stood the 'patriots', including Bishop Krasiński, Ignacy Potocki, Hugo Kołłątaj, and their supporters, who wanted to introduce an hereditary throne. On the other were the determined opponents of hereditary succession: Branicki's followers, arch-republicans such as Seweryn Rzewuski and Jan Suchorzewski, and overt Russophiles led by Bishop Kossakowski and Szczęśny Potocki.<sup>23</sup> Many envoys and senators, suspicious of hereditary succession, but anxious to prove their patriotic credentials, were undecided. Much depended on the attitude taken by those considered royalists. But not all would follow the king.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>17</sup> ASC 9, ff. 9–12.

<sup>18</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii, 378–83. Butterwick, 'Political Discourses', 718–22.

<sup>19</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 15 September 1790, HHStA, Polen II 52, despatch 699, f. 98.

<sup>20</sup> *Głos... Piusa Kicińskiego posła ziemi liwskiej... 13 września 1790...* Krakowski, *Oratorstwo*, pp. 160–76. Butterwick, 'Faworyt—demagog', 489–90.

<sup>21</sup> ASC 9, ff. 228–33. SA to Deboli, 15 September 1790, ZP 420, ff. 974–8. SA to MJP, 15 September 1790, AGHig. 801b, vol. i, f. 66.

<sup>22</sup> I. Potocki to Aloy, 15 September 1790, APP 277, ff. 321–2. Butterwick, 'Faworyt—demagog', 491–2.

<sup>23</sup> See Zielińska, '*O sukcesji tronu*', 162–201.

<sup>24</sup> SA to Deboli, 18 September 1790, ZP 420, f. 983.



On 17 September the cause of hereditary succession seemed lost, following a speech from Kossakowski, who coolly quoted the laws securing free royal elections. The king turned the tide, with a dramatic warning of civil war during the next interregnum. On 20 September, the monarch assented to Sapieha's proposal simply to ask the nation if it wished to elect a successor in the king's lifetime. The Estates lined up to kiss his hand in gratitude—for everyone knew that 'the rising sun' would in time outshine 'the setting sun'. However, debates over the text of the proclamation lasted until 30 September.<sup>25</sup>

Over the next few weeks, fiscal and military questions overlapped with the ennoblement of 422 persons: soldiers, bankers, merchants, manufacturers, surgeons, teachers, and engineers. At 500 ducats each, this brought a welcome injection of revenue. Although some critics thought that the ennoblements would weaken the urban cause by depriving the towns of their natural leaders, it was now clear that talent and property as well as birth could make a citizen. At the same time the sejm abolished all remaining derogation for nobles engaged in trade, craft, and municipal office.

The ennoblements had been preceded by the death of the president of Warsaw, Jan Dekert, on 4 October 1790. The previous day he had written to Stanisław Małachowski. The respect in which Dekert was held and the letter's wide distribution helped to revive interest in the urban question. The king 'corrected' this letter before its publication on 8 October, but the language remained strong.<sup>26</sup> The deathbed prompted a religious vocabulary. God first blinded those whom he wished to punish, and those nobles who opposed the burghers' demands were blind to their own best interests. The threat was couched biblically:

God grant that I should be a false prophet, and that desperation should not at some time drive the burghers much further than that, for which they now humbly only ask! [...] God grant, that through despair you should not encounter what the French nobility encountered from the outbursts of the oppressed populace, and that these words of God should not be fulfilled: 'whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased'.<sup>27</sup>

Such discourse, as the king feared, could provoke outrage at the sejms. The szlachta would show still more indignation over education.

The *Project for the Form of Government* contained a substantial chapter on the Commission for National Education. It declared that the commission's purpose was 'to fashion civic youth through uniform education and instruction into citizens loving the freedoms of the nation'.<sup>28</sup> The project left the commission in control of

<sup>25</sup> S. Małachowski and K. N. Sapieha, *Wszem w obec y każdemu z osobna, komu o tym wiedzieć będzie należało*... (Warsaw, 25 October 1790), in *Dziennik 1790*, i:1. iii–iv.

<sup>26</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 405–13. Zienkowska, *Sławetni i urodzeni*, 134–47. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 176–7.

<sup>27</sup> *List Jana Dekerta... do JW. Stanisława Małachowskiego... die 3 Octobris 1790. w wiliu śmierci tegoż Dekerta pisany* (Warsaw, 1790), in *MDSC*, iii. 391–4. Cf. Luke xiv.11.

<sup>28</sup> *Projekt do formy rządów: 'Kommissya Edukacji Narodowej'*. Cf. A. Jobert, *La Commission d'Éducation Nationale en Pologne (1773–1794). Son oeuvre d'instruction civique* (Paris, 1941), 385–6; J. Ender, 'Sprawy oświatowe w okresie Sejmu Czteroletniego', *Rozprawy z Dziejów Oświaty*, 4 (1961), 35–86, at 50–3.

its funds and subjected schools of all confessions to its jurisdiction.<sup>29</sup> The commission would be able to oblige the regular orders to maintain parish schools, in which instruction would be provided according to the commission’s directives. Similar requirements were to be imposed upon noviciates and seminaries. The bishops would ensure the same theology was taught everywhere.<sup>30</sup>

In schools belonging to other confessions, the commission’s visitors would check that the same instruction was given as in other schools, ‘so that the tolerated difference of opinion should in no way spoil the uniformity of civic spirit, and attachment to the constitution’. To this end the commission was to draw up a ‘constitutional catechism’, which was to be taught in all schools and churches of all confessions. Although matters of faith or rites were explicitly excluded, these provisions alarmed the Protestant and Orthodox delegations that met in December 1790.<sup>31</sup>

The chapter on ‘ranks and conditions of offices in the Commonwealth’ required future bishops to have a doctorate from one of the Commonwealth’s universities. Applicants for positions in commissions and chancelleries should show a certificate of the requisite learning from one of the principal schools. Professors and teachers would be equal in status to district-level officials, and after ten years’ service in a secondary school (or six at a university) to palatinate-level officials. Rectors of school districts and universities would rank equal to officials of the Commonwealth.<sup>32</sup>

These chapters worried the nuncio. Although the commission’s supervision only extended to ‘profane sciences and *belles-lettres*’, he feared that ‘one day this inspection would exceed its limits’, and infringe the orders’ legal jurisdiction—or else subject them to the bishops. The requirement that ‘tolerated religions’ submit their ordinances to a state *exequantur*, while it seemed to favour the dominant faith, could provoke ‘clamours to extend such a method to bulls as well’.<sup>33</sup> Saluzzo would have been still more alarmed had proposals to pay the clergy salaries and raise the age of admission to seminaries to 24, which were considered by Potocki, made the final draft.<sup>34</sup>

The sejm did not get round to discussing these chapters. But 3,000 copies of the *Projekt* were printed, and the marshals ordered at least a thousand to be sent out to the provinces.<sup>35</sup> The gulf between the ambitions of the reformers and the expectations of the szlachta would be exposed at the sejms of November 1790. But provincial nobles would not find much cause for complaint in the Cardinal Laws on religion.

<sup>29</sup> *Projekt do formy rządów*: ‘Kommissya Edukacji Narodowej’, § I.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, § XXVI–XXVIII.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, § XXIX–XXX. Paździor, ‘Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego’, 348. Bogusław Szretter to Michał Zaleski, Rokliszki, 5 December 1790, BJ 955, f. 343.

<sup>32</sup> *Projekt do formy rządów*: ‘Stopnie i warunki urzędów w Rzeczypospolitey’, § XXXVI, XXXVII, LX, LXXVI.

<sup>33</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 1 September 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 46.

<sup>34</sup> ‘Projekt do formy rządu narodu polskiego’, APP 98, pp. 205–18, at 217.

<sup>35</sup> K. K. Plater to an unidentified correspondent, Warsaw, 11 August 1790, LVIA, F1276-2-189, ff. 64–5.

## 2. THE DOMINANT FAITH AND TOLERATED FAITHS

The projected first Cardinal Law was read out on 2 September 1790. It stated that the Roman Catholic faith, with all its privileges, would forever be the dominant faith, and that it was to be referred to as such in all public acts. Although this was the first time in the Commonwealth's history that the Catholic faith had been described in law as 'dominant' (*panująca*), the wording should not have been controversial. Catholicism's dominant status had been axiomatic for over a century. However, when Paweł Skórzewski, envoy for Kalisz, proposed to replace the pronoun 'its' with 'belonging to the Catholic Church', Aleksander Zeliński and Stanisław Kublicki objected that the Catholic Church, as opposed to the 'faith', meant Rome. Świątosławski answered that the faith could not exist without the Church,<sup>36</sup> while Kacper Cieciszowski explained that without faith, neither eternal happiness, nor virtuous morals were possible. There could be no faith without the Church, and the bishops, as successors of the apostles, were the depositaries of the faith. So the Poles, who wanted a dominant faith, should defend the rights of its ministers, as of old.<sup>37</sup>

The secretary had made various corrections, including the addition of '*in spiritualibus*' (demanded by Kublicki). Kossakowski then argued that in the Duchy of Courland the Catholic faith was legally dominant, despite the opinion of its Calvinist duke (a vassal of the Commonwealth), and so '*et annexis Provinciis*' should be added as well. Ignacy Potocki praised the bishop's zeal—perhaps ironically—but advised against provoking a dispute. Kossakowski answered that the Protestant Courlanders should be content with toleration. The king pointedly agreed with the bishop, as did many others—a minor humiliation for Potocki. With the addition of 'and also in the provinces belonging to them [the Two Nations]', the first Cardinal Law was agreed unanimously.<sup>38</sup>

The following day, the secretary read out the proposed second Cardinal Law, which declared apostasy from the dominant Catholic faith to be a criminal offence. Antoni Suchodolski, envoy for Smolensk, objected on the grounds that the Catholicity of the king should precede it. The question was swiftly resolved when the law declaring that the king should be a Roman Catholic 'either from birth or calling', and that the queen, if not a Catholic, could not be crowned, was approved unanimously.<sup>39</sup>

The sejm returned to the law on apostasy. Butrymowicz wanted to add 'of both rites' and specify that apostasy would remain a criminal offence. Ignacy Zakrzewski argued that if the 1768 law prescribing banishment as the punishment for apostasy were upheld in this way, 'Muscovy' would gladly settle its own steppes with those expelled for embracing 'disunion'. He suggested leaving punishments to 'the

<sup>36</sup> ASC 9, ff. 13–16.

<sup>37</sup> *Głos... Cieciszowskiego Biskupa Kijowskiego... 2. września 1790.*

<sup>38</sup> ASC 9, ff. 16–18.

<sup>39</sup> ASC 9, ff. 51–2. Cf. *Projekt do formy rządu*, art. VI, VII.

prudence of the courts'. Antoni Suchodolski agreed that banishment would be unjust for 'the dark populace'. On the other hand, he thought a more effective means of preventing apostasy would be to punish it with death. More realistically, he handed in an amendment for the expulsion of 'disuniate' priests who built chapels next to Uniate churches and delivered the populace into the arms of 'Muscovy'.<sup>40</sup>

Cieciszowski told the chamber that their 'most ancient forefathers were watchful that nobody, having discovered the teaching of Jesus Christ, should dare to go over to another confession'. He conceded, however, that in these times zeal should be politic. Apostates would simply leave the country. The Church would make every effort to win back those in error, but she could not expect to convince 'the dark common folk', so the government should use 'the mildest means, which would both halt the evil and prevent the depopulation of the country'. The criminal code would prescribe penalties in due course.

The secretary repeated the proposed law, whereupon Antoni Suchodolski offered to withdraw his amendment, if it was first decided that foreign *popi* (a disdainful name for Orthodox and Uniate clergymen) would be expelled. Świętosławski claimed that seminaries for the Uniate clergy would do more to prevent apostasy than the harshest punishments. Adam Czartoryski agreed. But he also believed (contrary to received wisdom) that the best way to blunt popular hostility to the 'Latins' was to allow the Uniate clergy to return to 'its old forms, rites, and ceremonies'. Cieciszowski was happy to support the article, and for the government to expel foreign *popi*, but he also asked the marshals to instruct the Civil-Military Commissions 'to free Uniate churches from these chapels'.<sup>41</sup>

The king agreed that banishing apostates harmed the country. But a return to the death penalty would be 'much too harsh', considering that Ruthenian peasantry was 'almost completely unable to detect the error, into which it is led'. Milder means would be more effective. He disagreed with Czartoryski. It was, he believed, the external differences between the Ruthenian and Latin clergy which had, 'for the most part, been the cause of the errors, and damaging political consequences in our Fatherland. Let us therefore allow time for the branches of one tree to grow together.' Agreeing with the bishop of Kiev, he asked for the law to be accepted unaltered.<sup>42</sup> Czartoryski still opposed an instruction to dismantle non-Uniate chapels, but the law was agreed unanimously, and no punishment for apostasy was specified.<sup>43</sup>

The next Cardinal Law promised all inhabitants of the Commonwealth 'peace in confession and rites, guaranteeing that no clerical or lay authority shall be able to persecute anybody for reasons of confession or rites'. This provision implicitly constricted the ability of Orthodox, Protestant, and Jewish clerics to discipline their own faithful, as well as protecting non-Catholics from Catholics. However, Tadeusz Lipski, the castellan of Łęczycza, wanted the tolerated confessions to be specified, and 'the rest of the sects anathematized by the Roman Church to be

<sup>40</sup> ASC 9, ff. 52–3.

<sup>41</sup> ASC 9, ff. 53–4.

<sup>42</sup> ASC 9, f. 69.

<sup>43</sup> ASC 9, ff. 54–5.

subject to criminal penalties, and uprooted by the country's jurisdictions'. Świętosławski, in a less inflammatory manner, suggested assuring peace to those confessions which had heretofore been tolerated.<sup>44</sup>

Stanisław August warned that such a formula would open 'the way almost to the Inquisition, terrible in its very name'. Prejudiced or malevolent persons might denounce their neighbours for their way of thinking. The project essentially granted toleration to none but those specified in the amendment, but

should some new errors regarding religion be dreamed up by some supposed clairvoyant, or as I say a freakish hypochondriac, let us be sorry for him, but let us not peer too closely into the depths of human thoughts, let us not expose them too much, and particularly so that they would not infect other minds.<sup>45</sup>

The king's language concerning the Inquisition hints at the depth of his belief in the right to freedom of thought and conscience, insofar as its expression did not disturb public tranquillity. He was probably also aware that neither he himself, nor most of the Commonwealth's élite, held convictions on mysteries such as the Trinity which could withstand a searching theological examination. He may have also reflected that ignorance ensured that theological heterodoxy was equally likely further down the social scale.

However, Bishop Krasieński demanded an explicit statement that laws expelling the Arians remained in force. Nobody seems to have reacted directly. The secretary again read out the amended law, restricting toleration to those confessions tolerated heretofore, which was then agreed unanimously.<sup>46</sup> Saluzzo, who had worried that the project 'conceded too much to the general mania of the century, that is to the toleration of any religion', now had 'the satisfaction to see that toleration was restricted' to those 'religions' which already enjoyed it. The nuncio was also pleased that apostasy would remain a crime.<sup>47</sup> However, Cardinal Zelada grumbled that apostasy had formerly been punishable by death.<sup>48</sup>

On 9 October 1790, the sejm issued a proclamation to the Protestants and Orthodox in the Commonwealth. They were instructed to send delegations of 'enlightened' and loyal clergymen and laymen to Warsaw by 1 December, in order to present their ideas on reform to the Estates. Finding suitable Orthodox delegates proved problematic. They finally comprised three monks, two secular priests, three burghers, and just one nobleman. They met at the monastery of Słuck, whereas the Protestants gathered in an interdenominational synod in Warsaw. The sejm's sole Protestant envoy, Paweł Grabowski, coordinated the effort. He probably wrote a memorandum, full of the rhetoric of tolerance, mutual forgiveness, and noble equality, which referred to 'misunderstandings' that had been exploited by foreign

<sup>44</sup> ASC 9, f. 55.

<sup>45</sup> ASC 9, f. 66. Cf. *Dziennik czynności*, at ASC 9, f. 77, where the king is reported to have said that such a person 'would not find many imitators in the present age, and we should not fear him'.

<sup>46</sup> ASC 9, f. 55. VL, ix. 203. Cf. VL, iv. 238 (1658), 323 (1661).

<sup>47</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 1 September, 8 September 1790, ASV ANV 67, ff. 46–8.

<sup>48</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 2 October 1790, ASV ANV 52, f. 445.

powers. Recognizing the Providential restoration of the Commonwealth's sovereignty, the dissidents would give up all foreign guarantees of their prerogatives.<sup>49</sup>

On 10 December Grabowski reminded the sejm that a hearing for the dissidents was overdue. Małachowski had a project establishing a Deputation to the Heterodox read out. During the ensuing discussion, some counselled caution, while others suggested alternative deputations. Butrymowicz reminded the chamber that the proclamation of 9 October had instructed their brethren, 'and I say our brethren because they are citizens equal to us, only differing in religion', to present themselves on 1 December. They had obeyed the summons, and the need to cut off foreign influence was urgent. Grabowski claimed that 'dissidents never contributed to internal disturbances in the country, did not seek the protection of any foreign power'. Historical accuracy aside, the key point, noted by the king, was that the dissidents did not claim privileges under a foreign guarantee, but asked them from the sovereign Commonwealth.<sup>50</sup> Towards the end of the next session, on 13 December, at Grabowski's request, the project was again read out, and this time it was agreed.<sup>51</sup>

The king tried to procure a formal written renunciation of any foreign guarantees from the delegates, but they evaded the question. He noted the contrast with Grabowski's speech.<sup>52</sup> Their evident uncertainty may have reflected anxiety about the attitude that might be taken by the newly elected envoys. One leading Protestant noble feared that the Commonwealth might return 'to that unhappy epoch, that the philosophical spirit should die', when the dissidents would be expected 'not only to suffer, but calmly to offer up their necks under the sword of fanaticism'.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless the aim of detaching the heterodox from foreign influence was clear to observers.<sup>54</sup>

'The perversity of the times' led Saluzzo to fear that the aim was not merely 'to secure the peace and tranquillity of a not indifferent number of citizens', but to level non-Catholics with Catholics. The nuncio was scandalized by the exclusion of a bishop from the Deputation to the Heterodox.<sup>55</sup> Via Cardinal Antici, Zelada expressed the pope's confidence in the king's religion and piety, and exhorting him not to permit any extension of the dissidents' privileges.<sup>56</sup>

Saluzzo had also been alarmed by the proposed Cardinal Law declaring 'the freedom not only of writing, but also of printing'.<sup>57</sup> During the debate on

<sup>49</sup> Paździor, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 347–51. Lists: BCz. 1178, pp. 187–8. Memo: ASC 20, ff. 323–4.

<sup>50</sup> ASC 10, ff. 275–7. SA to Deboli, 11 December 1790, ZP 420, f. 1121.

<sup>51</sup> ASC 10, ff. 293–4. The deputation included Michał Kochanowski (Sandomierz), an expert on Orthodoxy, Adam Czartoryski (Lublin), and Ignacy Zakrzewski (Poznań).

<sup>52</sup> SA to Deboli, 15 December 1790, ZP 420, f. 1123.

<sup>53</sup> Szretter to Zaleski, 5 December 1790, BJ 955, f. 343.

<sup>54</sup> Bonneau to Montmorin, 18 December 1790, AMAE CP Pologne 317, despatch 52, f. 505. De Caché to Kaunitz, 5 March 1791, HHStA Polen II 53, despatch 752, f. 191.

<sup>55</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 15 December 1790, ASV ANV 67, ff. 62–3.

<sup>56</sup> Antici to Ghigiotti, 15 January 1791, AGHig. 25a, vol. vii, f. 11. Zelada to Saluzzo, 8 January 1791, ASV ANV 53, f. 3.

<sup>57</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 13 October 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 53.

5 October, the question of slander and libel provoked more attention than the extent of the protection to be accorded religion and morals.<sup>58</sup> The eleventh Cardinal Law reads:

The free voice is most solemnly assured to every nobleman at sejmiiks and at sessions of the sejm, and is not subject to the judgement of a court under any pretext whatsoever. The free voice is also secured to every citizen, not only at a public assembly, including the expression of his thoughts or opinion, in writing, or in print, with the signature of his forename, without the need for permission or approval, that is, without any form of surname, subject, however, to responsibility before a court, if somebody in writing, or in print, directly incited rebellion, or if he should injure the reputation of another. In matters of religion however, and in works aiming to corrupt [morals], they are subject to clerical censorship and the approval of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the dominant faith.

This formula reflected the long-standing Polish tendency to treat freedom of speech and the press as a political, rather than as a natural right, and the consequently greater willingness to allow censorship in matters of religion and morals than in politics.

Nothing in the Cardinal Law went beyond a declaration of intent. It did, however, provide the episcopate with a legal basis to demand the introduction of preventative censorship. Saluzzo was satisfied with it, while Pius VI, on hearing the news, was reportedly moved to 'encomiums on the religion and piety of that nation'. We should also note that a 'citizen' might not necessarily be a nobleman, but only a noble could have full political rights. The reference to rebellion indicated the beginnings of reflection upon the boundary between legitimate criticism of a law and incitement to overthrow it. This question would plague the defenders of the Constitution of 3 May 1791.<sup>59</sup>

### 3. CONTROVERSIES IN ADVANCE OF THE SEJMIKS

The principal question in the autumn of 1790, both in the sejm and in the country at large, was the succession to the throne. The enthusiasts for hereditary succession took insufficient account of the hostility of Prussia, Russia, and Austria to the idea, for without the acquiescence of those courts the elector of Saxony would not accept the crown.<sup>60</sup> An awareness that little had been achieved, and that the international situation was worsening, gnawed at Ignacy Potocki and other enlightened Prussophiles. At home the king was recovering his authority, and the noble nation had

<sup>58</sup> ASC 21, ff. 205–10. See J. Szczepaniec, 'Sejm Wielki wobec zagadnień cenzury i wolności słowa', in *Antynomie Oświecenia. Acta Universitatis Vratislaviensis*, 868, *Prace Literackie*, 31 (1991), 174–81, at 177.

<sup>59</sup> VL, ix. 204. Saluzzo to Zelada, 13 October 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 53. Zelada to Saluzzo, 30 October 1790, ASV ANV 52, f. 456. Cf. A. Grzeskowiak-Krwawicz, 'Dyskusje o wolności słowa w czasach stanisławowskich', *KH*, 102/1 (1995), 53–65. See below, 250.

<sup>60</sup> Zielińska, 'O sukcesji tronu', 201–6.

been aroused by pamphlets, verses, and the news relayed at markets, social events, churches, and sejmiks.

Country gentlemen were growing impatient with the loquacious politicians in Warsaw. Anti-aristocratic discourse and experience in local government combined to make middling noblemen disinclined to defer to magnates. The patience of the provinces was further tested by the decision, taken by the sejm on 12 October 1790, to elect new envoys alongside, rather than in place of the existing ones.<sup>61</sup> The sejmik of Mozyrz would complain about this ‘derogation of the nation’, while the szlachta of Nowogródek feared the usurpation of the legislative power by ‘absolute dictators, harmful and dreadful to national liberty’. Should there be any further attempt to extend envoys’ mandates, they should be recalled immediately.<sup>62</sup>

The greatest risk lay in asking the ‘nation’ if it wished the elector of Saxony to succeed Stanisław August. The proclamation of 30 September refuelled the conflagration over the question of succession or election. Although the proclamation did not, in so many words, ask the sejmiks to approve hereditary succession, the arguments it contained implied that they should do so, and the ‘patriot’ leaders prepared their supporters to put case for hereditary succession at the sejmiks.<sup>63</sup>

Hugo Kołłątaj penned several pamphlets.<sup>64</sup> One was a reply to Kossakowski’s attack on hereditary succession in the sejm on 17 September. Kołłątaj accused the bishop of aiming to put Potemkin on the Polish throne.<sup>65</sup> Kossakowski riposted by depicting Kołłątaj as an intriguer with no aims but his own career.<sup>66</sup> Kołłątaj’s *What is also Happening to Our Unhappy Fatherland?* presented both king and nation as the victims of Muscovite violence and aristocratic ambition. He claimed that only when ‘Muscovy’ refused the ‘malcontents’ permission to unthroned the king in 1767 did they protest against the concessions to the dissidents. Had the king resisted, he might have been deported to Kaluga instead of Bishop Sołtyk and the other senators, and the ‘aristocrats’ would have approved.<sup>67</sup>

In response the dean of Cracow, Michał Sołtyk, testified that the late bishop of Cracow had only joined the confederacy of Radom when solemnly promised that Muscovy would abandon the dissidents. When this treachery was unmasked, he had declared his willingness to die, rather than approve such a fatal blow to the Fatherland.<sup>68</sup> Not coincidentally, Michał Sołtyk was one of Kołłątaj’s competitors for the vice-chancellorship of the Crown. The dean had a huge monument to his uncle erected in Cracow Cathedral at the turn of 1790 and 1791. The bas-relief in

<sup>61</sup> Rostworowski, *Ostatni król*, 189. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii, 407–8.

<sup>62</sup> Mozyrz: LMAVB F233-126, f. 100. Nowogródek: LMAVB F233-126, f. 111.

<sup>63</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii, 383–97. Zielińska, *O sukcesji tronu*, 162–201. Grzeszkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 217–61.

<sup>64</sup> See Grzeszkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 285–90.

<sup>65</sup> [H. Kołłątaj], *Ostatnia przestroga dla Polski* [Warsaw, 1790], in Kądziela (ed.), *Kołłątaj i inni*, 107–31.

<sup>66</sup> [J. K. Kossakowski], *Rozmowa Solona z Kadydym* [Warsaw, 1790].

<sup>67</sup> *Co się też dzieje z nieszczęśliwą ojczyzną naszą?* [Warsaw, 1790], in Kądziela (ed.), *Kołłątaj i inni*, 131–50, at 132–3.

<sup>68</sup> [M. Sołtyk], *Ocalenie prawdy poświęconey przyszłości* [1790], in Kądziela (ed.), *Kołłątaj i inni*, 163–6.



the middle depicted Russian soldiers escorting the bishop's carriage. The figures on either side have been identified as *Historia* and *Veritas*—tallying with the dean's pamphlet.<sup>69</sup> The late bishop's stand against Russia made him a useful martyr. His faults were generally overlooked.

On 10 November an offer, made on behalf of a group of ex-Jesuits by Stefan Łuski, was printed in the *Warsaw Gazette*: 'Do the country and palatinates not wish that the Commonwealth should approach Rome for the return of the Jesuit Order, which is so necessary to education, especially in this ever more rotten century of ours?' Although some former Jesuits had died or chosen a new estate since the suppression in 1773, others would gladly teach in schools without any restitution of their order's property, depending only on the generosity of their fellow-citizens and on Divine Providence.<sup>70</sup>

This offer could have reached only the nearer sejmiks in time. However, in Lithuania, the campaign was coordinated by Marcin Poczeb. The rector of Wilno University wanted the article to be inserted into instructions to be 'the most modest, including nothing that could cause *invidiosum* to anybody, whether regarding education, or regarding estates and funds'.<sup>72</sup> In many places it proved otherwise.

#### 4. 'SO MUCH FURY AGAINST EDUCATION' AND THE CALL TO RESTORE THE JESUITS

As a result of fears expressed by Wojciech Suchodolski that instructions would be altered after the crowds had dispersed, the sejm had agreed on 18 October that the instructions were to be drawn up before the election of envoys, and not, as was usual, afterwards. The king commented privately that the procedure would have been good, if the sejmiks gathered 'enlightened, wise, sober, and virtuous people'.<sup>73</sup> The atmosphere in which some of the instructions were drawn up emerges from a report of the Great Poland sejmik:

It is vain even to stay here, when no end is in sight; stubbornness and garrulousness have come from the sejm. In fact every reasonable person retreats from the din, when common sense finds no place [...] They are writing a statute (*konstytucja*), not an instruction, there is an entire day of arguments over one word.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>69</sup> See J. Daranowska-Łukaszewska, 'Kto jest autorem nagrobka biskupa Kajetana Sołtyka w katedrze na Wawelu?', *Studia Waweliana*, 1 (1992), 85–96.

<sup>70</sup> *Ofiara ex-Jezuitów z własnych swych osób dla Rzeczypospolitej uczyniona roku 1790*, added gratis to GW, 10 November 1790.

<sup>71</sup> J. Poplatek, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej. Udział byłych Jezuitów w pracach Komisji Edukacji Narodowej* (Cracow, 1974), 407–12.

<sup>72</sup> Draft of a letter to an unidentified correspondent, VUB F16-2, f. 32.

<sup>73</sup> SA to MJP, 17 November 1790, AGhig. 801b, vol. i, ff. 104–5.

<sup>74</sup> August Gorzeński to SA, Środa, 19 November 1790, BCz. 726, pp. 229–31.

Tumults and doubled elections took place at the sejmiks of Dobrzyń, Połock, and Minsk.<sup>75</sup> Nevertheless, reported violence should be set against unreported calm.

Despite the importance of these sejmiks, no historian has attempted an overall analysis of both elections and instructions.<sup>76</sup> It has generally been accepted that most sejmiks called for the return of the Jesuits and that this reflected the unpopularity of the Educational Commission among the szlachta.<sup>77</sup> The following analysis, concentrating on religious and educational matters, is based on 44 out of 55 instructions: 9 out of 12 from Little Poland,<sup>78</sup> 16 out of 20 from Great Poland,<sup>79</sup> 18 out of 22 from Lithuania,<sup>80</sup> and the instruction for Livonia.<sup>81</sup> Their responses on religious and educational questions and the succession are summarized in Tables 2 to 5. Assuming that the instructions analysed are representative,<sup>82</sup> about two thirds of the Lithuanian sejmiks (including Livonia) endorsed the call to restore the Jesuits, whereas about a half of their counterparts in the Polish Crown did so. Taken together,

<sup>75</sup> *Dziennik 1790*, i:1. 4–43.

<sup>76</sup> See, however, Zielińska, 'O sukcesji tronu', 207–21; Šapoka, *Lietuva reformų seimo metu*, 319–77; Lukowski, *Disorderly Liberty*, 195–203, 218–19, 236–7.

<sup>77</sup> E.g. S. Załęski, *Historia zniesienia zakonu jezuitów i jego zachowanie na Białej Rusi*, ii (Lwów, 1875), 1–106; Smoleński, 'Żywioły zachowawcze', 184–9; Szybiak, *Szkolnictwo*, 17, 117–47, 240–1; Popłatek, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej*, 388–412; K. Mrozowska, *Funkcjonowanie systemu szkolnego Komisji Edukacji Narodowej na terenie Korony w latach 1783–1793* (Wrocław, 1985), 82–4, 145–86, 216–35, 292–5. Nb. Jobert, *La Commission d'Éducation Nationale*, 408–12, argued on the basis of twenty instructions that contemporaries exaggerated the szlachta's hostility to the commission.

<sup>78</sup> Braclaw: APK Podh. X 6/11; Chełm: APK Podh. X 4/13; Cracow: APK, Acta Castrensia Cracoviensia, Relationes (inducta) 221, pp. 2015–28; Czernihów: APK Podh. X 4/12; Kiev: APK Podh. X 4/17; Lublin: BPAU 8326, f. 491; Podolia: APK Podh. X 2/24; Sandomierz: BPAU 8441, pp. 1229–72; Volhynia: C. Nanke, *Szlachta wołyńska wobec Konstytucji Trzeciego Maja* (Lwów, 1907), 82–9. I did not find the instructions of the three Podlasian sejmiks of Bielsk, Drohiczyn, and Mielnik.

<sup>79</sup> Brześć Kujawski and Inowrocław: Pawiński, *Dzieje ziemi kujawskiej*, v. 373–83; Ciechanów: BPAU 8318, ff. 363–73; Czersk: BPAU 8320, f. 492–503; Dobrzyń: *Acta historica*, x. 398–401; Gostynin: BPAU 8346, ff. 38–42; Liw: BPAU 8322, f. 610–13; Łęczyca: BPAU 8330, ff. 785–804; Płock: BPAU 953, ff. 1931–41; Różan: BPAU 8337, ff. 635–42; Sieradz: ARoskie, publica XCV/4/5, ff. 1–2; Sochaczew: BPAU 8347, ff. 484–5; Warsaw: APK Podh. X/4/12; Wizna: BPAU 8351, ff. 414–20; Wyszogród: BPAU 8352; ff. 373–80; Zakroczym: BPAU 8354, ff. 333–41. While copies of the official record (*laudum*) of the Great Poland sejmik (at Środa) are in APPoz. Kalisz Gr. 481, pp. 782–3 and elsewhere, the only copy of the instruction I could find is incomplete: APPoz., Poznań Gr. Relationes 1196, ff. 665–9a. This leaves the instructions of Łomża, Nur, Rawa, and Wieluń.

<sup>80</sup> Brześć Litewski: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 1–13; Grodno: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 23–34; Kowno: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 52–6; Lida: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 67–9; Minsk: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 81–9; Mozyrz: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 99–102; Nowogródek: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 110–16; Orsza: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 124–30; Pińsk: LMAVB 233–126, ff. 137–42; Połock: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 159–68; Rzeczyca: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 183–91; Samogitia: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 169–73; Slonim: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 200–3; Smolensk: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 204–8; Uputa: ARoskie, publica XCV/4/5, ff. 6–8; Wilkomierz: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 209–15; Wilno: LMAVB, F233–126, ff. 225–8; Wołkowysk: LMAVB F233–126, ff. 240–50. I did not find the Brasław, Oszmiana, Starodub, and Troki instructions. However, Michał Zaleski's papers contain an 'explanation' of the Troki instruction, sent by the sejmik on 8 February 1791 to its envoys (BJ 956, pp. 330–8). On 13 May 1791 his colleague Dominik Gieysztor presented a project, 'Urządzenie Edukacyi', to remove judicial functions and the management of the Educational Fund from the Commission for National Education. No mention is made of the Jesuits (ASC 19, f. 187, ASC 15, ff. 60–1). I. Siwicki, another Troki envoy, did call for the restoration of the Jesuits on 9 May, but he referred to all instructions, not specifically to his own (*Głos*...). It seems more likely that Troki did *not* call for the Jesuits' return.

<sup>81</sup> LMAVB F233–126, ff. 77–80.

<sup>82</sup> All the instructions of Crown Ruthenia are known, but none of the Podlasian ones.

**Table 2.** The sejmik instructions of November 1790: the province of Little Poland

| Sejmik (location, if different) | Restoration of the Jesuit Order | Orders to run schools | Abolition of the Commission for National Education | Application of the educational fund to the treasury | Exclusively supervisory role for the Commission for National Education | Supervision of schools or their funds by Civil-Military Commissions | General reform of the clergy | Ban on plural benefice-holding | Confiscation of (some) monastic property | Limitations on travel abroad | Reform of the Jews | Hereditary succession to the throne <sup>1</sup> |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Cracow (Proszowice)             | No <sup>2</sup>                 | Yes                   | No                                                 | Partly                                              | No                                                                     | Yes                                                                 | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Yes                                              |
| Sandomierz (Opatów)             | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | Yes                            | Yes                                      | Yes                          | No                 | Against                                          |
| Lublin                          | Yes                             | Yes                   | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Against                                          |
| Bielsk (Brańsk)                 | ?                               | ?                     | ?                                                  | ?                                                   | ?                                                                      | ?                                                                   | ?                            | ?                              | ?                                        | ?                            | ?                  | Against                                          |
| Drohiczyn                       | ?                               | ?                     | ?                                                  | ?                                                   | ?                                                                      | ?                                                                   | ?                            | ?                              | ?                                        | ?                            | ?                  | Against                                          |
| Mielnik                         | ?                               | ?                     | ?                                                  | ?                                                   | ?                                                                      | ?                                                                   | ?                            | ?                              | ?                                        | ?                            | ?                  | Against                                          |
| Chelm                           | Yes                             | Yes                   | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | Yes                                                                    | No                                                                  | Yes                          | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Against                                          |
| Volhynia (Łuck)                 | No                              | Yes                   | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | Yes                                                                    | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | Yes                          | No                 | Against                                          |
| Podolia (Kamieniec)             | No                              | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | Yes                                                                 | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Referral                                         |
| Braclaw (Winnica)               | No                              | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | Yes                                                                    | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Against                                          |
| Kiev (Żytomierz)                | No                              | Yes                   | Yes                                                | Yes                                                 | Yes                                                                    | Yes                                                                 | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Yes                                              |
| Czernihów (Włodzimierz)         | No                              | Yes                   | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Against                                          |

<sup>1</sup> Based on Z. Zielińska, *O sukcesji tronu*, 207–21.

<sup>2</sup> Silence is indicated by 'No'. Express opposition is indicated by 'Against'.

**Table 3.** The sejmik instructions of November 1790: the province of Great Poland

| Sejmik (location, if different) | Restoration of the Jesuit Order | Orders to run schools | Abolition of the Commission for National Education | Application of the educational fund to the treasury | Exclusively supervisory role for the Commission for National Education | Supervision of schools or their funds by Civil-Military Commissions | General reform of the clergy | Ban on plural benefice-monastic holding property | Confiscation of (some) property | Limitations on travel abroad | Reform of the Jews | Hereditary succession to the throne <sup>1</sup> |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Great Poland (Środa)            | ?                               | ?                     | ?                                                  | ?                                                   | ?                                                                      | ?                                                                   | ?                            | ?                                                | Yes                             | ?                            | ?                  | Viv. rege <sup>2</sup>                           |
| Sieradz                         | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                                               | No                              | No                           | No                 | Against                                          |
| Wieluń                          | ?                               | ?                     | ?                                                  | ?                                                   | ?                                                                      | ?                                                                   | ?                            | ?                                                | ?                               | ?                            | ?                  | Against                                          |
| Łęczyca                         | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | Yes                          | No                                               | No                              | Yes                          | No                 | No                                               |
| Cujavia                         | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | Yes                                                                    | No                                                                  | Yes                          | Yes                                              | Yes                             | Yes                          | No                 | Against                                          |
| Dobrzyń (Lipno)                 | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                                               | No                              | Yes                          | No                 | No                                               |
| Płock (Raciąż)                  | No                              | Yes                   | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                                               | Yes                             | No                           | No                 | Almost yes                                       |
| Rawa                            | ?                               | ?                     | ?                                                  | ?                                                   | ?                                                                      | ?                                                                   | ?                            | ?                                                | ?                               | ?                            | ?                  | Against                                          |
| Sochaczew                       | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                                               | No                              | No                           | No                 | Against                                          |
| Gostynin                        | No                              | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                                               | No                              | Yes                          | No                 | Against                                          |
| Warsaw                          | Yes                             | Yes                   | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | Yes                                                                    | No                                                                  | No                           | No                                               | Yes                             | Yes                          | No                 | No                                               |
| Ciechanów                       | No                              | Yes                   | Yes                                                | Yes                                                 | No                                                                     | Yes                                                                 | Yes                          | No                                               | Yes                             | No                           | Yes                | Viv. rege                                        |
| Czersk                          | No                              | Yes                   | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | Yes                          | Yes                                              | No                              | No                           | Yes                | Against                                          |
| Zakroczym                       | Yes                             | Yes                   | Yes                                                | Yes                                                 | No                                                                     | Yes                                                                 | No                           | Yes                                              | Yes                             | Yes                          | No                 | No                                               |
| Liw                             | Yes                             | Yes                   | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                                               | No                              | Yes                          | No                 | No                                               |
| Różan                           | No                              | No                    | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | Yes                                              | No                              | Yes                          | Yes                | No                                               |
| Wyszogród                       | No                              | Yes                   | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | Yes                                                                    | No                                                                  | Yes                          | Yes                                              | Yes                             | Yes                          | Yes                | Against                                          |
| Łomża                           | ?                               | ?                     | ?                                                  | ?                                                   | ?                                                                      | ?                                                                   | ?                            | ?                                                | ?                               | ?                            | ?                  | Against                                          |
| Wizna                           | No                              | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                                               | No                              | No                           | No                 | Against                                          |
| Nur                             | ?                               | ?                     | ?                                                  | ?                                                   | ?                                                                      | ?                                                                   | ?                            | ?                                                | ?                               | ?                            | ?                  | Against                                          |

<sup>1</sup> Based on Z. Zielińska, 'O sukcesji tronu', 207–21 and my own research on the sejmik at Środa.

<sup>2</sup> *Vivente rege*—an election of a successor during the current king's lifetime.

**Table 4.** The sejmik instructions of November 1790: the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, with Livonia

| Sejmik (location, if different) | Restoration of the Jesuit Order | Orders to run schools | Abolition of the Commission for National Education | Application of the educational fund to the treasury | Exclusively supervisory role for the Commission for National Education | Supervision of schools or their funds by Civil-Military Commissions | General reform of the clergy | Ban on plural benefice-holding | Confiscation of (some) monastic property | Limitations on travel abroad | Reform of the Jews | Hereditary succession to the throne <sup>1</sup> |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Wilno                           | No                              | Yes                   | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | Yes                                                                    | No                                                                  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                                      | No                           | Yes                | Against                                          |
| Oszmiana                        | ?                               | ?                     | ?                                                  | ?                                                   | ?                                                                      | ?                                                                   | ?                            | ?                              | ?                                        | ?                            | ?                  | Against                                          |
| Brasław                         | ?                               | ?                     | ?                                                  | ?                                                   | ?                                                                      | ?                                                                   | ?                            | ?                              | ?                                        | ?                            | ?                  | Yes                                              |
| Wilkomierz                      | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Against                                          |
| Lida                            | No                              | No                    | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | Yes                                                                    | Yes                                                                 | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Against                                          |
| Troki                           | No?                             | ?                     | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | Yes                                                                    | ?                                                                   | ?                            | ?                              | ?                                        | ?                            | ?                  | No?                                              |
| Grodno                          | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | C-MC <sup>2</sup>                                   | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | Yes                | Against                                          |
| Kowno                           | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | Yes                                                                    | No                                                                  | Yes                          | Yes                            | No                                       | No                           | Yes                | Yes                                              |
| Upita                           | No                              | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | Yes                                                                    | No                                                                  | Yes                          | No                             | No                                       | No                           | Yes                | Yes                                              |
| (Poniewież)                     |                                 |                       |                                                    |                                                     |                                                                        |                                                                     |                              |                                |                                          |                              |                    |                                                  |
| Samogitia                       | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Yes                                              |
| (Rosienie)                      |                                 |                       |                                                    |                                                     |                                                                        |                                                                     |                              |                                |                                          |                              |                    |                                                  |
| Brześć Litewski                 | Yes                             | Yes                   | No                                                 | C-MC                                                | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | Yes<br>(chapters)            | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Against                                          |
| Pińsk                           | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | Yes                                                                    | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | Yes                | No                                               |
| Nowogródek                      | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | C-MC                                                | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Against                                          |
| Stonim                          | No                              | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | Yes                          | No                 | Against                                          |
| Wołkowysk                       | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | Yes (auction)                                       | Yes                                                                    | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | Yes                | Viv. rege                                        |
| Minsk                           | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | Yes                                                 | Yes                                                                    | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Viv. rege                                        |
| Rzeczycza                       | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | Yes                          | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Viv. rege                                        |
| (Bobrujsk)                      |                                 |                       |                                                    |                                                     |                                                                        |                                                                     |                              |                                |                                          |                              |                    |                                                  |
| Mozyrz                          | Yes, conditionally              | Yes, conditionally    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Against                                          |
| Starodub                        | ?                               | ?                     | ?                                                  | ?                                                   | ?                                                                      | ?                                                                   | ?                            | ?                              | ?                                        |                              |                    | Against                                          |
| (Żyżmory)                       |                                 |                       |                                                    |                                                     |                                                                        |                                                                     |                              |                                |                                          |                              |                    |                                                  |
| Orsza (Chołopienicze)           | No                              | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | Yes                | Yes                                              |
| Połock (Uszcz)                  | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | Military<br>Commission                              | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Viv. rege                                        |
| Smolensk                        | No                              | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | No                           | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | No                                               |
| (Olita)                         |                                 |                       |                                                    |                                                     |                                                                        |                                                                     |                              |                                |                                          |                              |                    |                                                  |
| Livonia                         | Yes                             | No                    | No                                                 | No                                                  | No                                                                     | No                                                                  | Yes                          | No                             | No                                       | No                           | No                 | Almost yes                                       |
| (Dyneburg)                      |                                 |                       |                                                    |                                                     |                                                                        |                                                                     |                              |                                |                                          |                              |                    |                                                  |

<sup>1</sup> Based on Z. Zielińska, 'O sukcesji tronu', 207–21; Šapoka, *Lietuva reformų seimo metu*, 319–77; and my own research.<sup>2</sup> Civil-Military Commissions.

**Table 5.** The sejmik instructions of November 1790: summary

|                                              | Restoration<br>of the Jesuit<br>Order | Orders<br>to run<br>schools | Abolition of<br>Commission<br>for National<br>Education | Application<br>of the<br>educational<br>fund to the<br>treasury | Exclusively<br>supervisory<br>role for the<br>Commission<br>for National<br>Education | Supervision<br>of schools or<br>their funds<br>by Civil-<br>Military<br>Commissions | General<br>reform<br>of the<br>clergy | Ban on<br>plural<br>benefice-<br>holding | Confiscation<br>of (some)<br>monastic<br>property | Limitations<br>on travel<br>abroad | Reform<br>of the<br>Jews | Hereditary<br>succession<br>to the<br>throne |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Province of<br>Little Poland                 | 4/9                                   | 6/9                         | 1/9                                                     | 6/9                                                             | 4/9                                                                                   | 3/9                                                                                 | 1/9                                   | 1/9                                      | 1/9                                               | 2/9                                | 0/9                      | 2/12                                         |
| Province of<br>Great Poland                  | 8/15                                  | 7/15                        | 2/15                                                    | 5/15                                                            | 3/15                                                                                  | 2/15                                                                                | 5/15                                  | 5/15                                     | 7/16                                              | 8/15                               | 4/15                     | 1/20                                         |
| <b>Polish Crown</b>                          | 12/24                                 | 13/24                       | 3/24                                                    | 11/24                                                           | 7/24                                                                                  | 5/24                                                                                | 6/24                                  | 6/24                                     | 8/25                                              | 10/24                              | 4/24                     | 3/32                                         |
| Grand Duchy of<br>Lithuania,<br>with Livonia | 13/20                                 | 3/19                        | 0/20                                                    | 8/20                                                            | 8/20                                                                                  | 1/19                                                                                | 6/19                                  | 2/19                                     | 0/19                                              | 1/19                               | 7/19                     | 6/23                                         |
| <b>Commonwealth</b>                          | 25/44                                 | 16/43                       | 3/44                                                    | 19/44                                                           | 15/44                                                                                 | 6/43                                                                                | 12/43                                 | 8/43                                     | 8/44                                              | 11/43                              | 11/43                    | 9/55                                         |

this bears out contemporary impressions that a majority of sejmiks backed the ex-Jesuits.<sup>83</sup> At the same time, while a clear majority of instructions in all three provinces supported the maintenance of an elective monarchy, support for or acquiescence in hereditary succession to the throne was significantly higher in Lithuania than it was in the Crown.<sup>84</sup>

The Ruthenian palatinates of the Crown, the scene of some hard-fought battles over the succession, generally failed to support the Jesuit cause. This in no way reflected 'enlightenment' in the region, as other clauses of the instructions made clear. It may have been because Łuskina's offer would not have reached most of these sejmiks in time (the nearest Ruthenian sejmik to Warsaw, Chełm, did demand the return of the Jesuits), but it may also reflect the fact that the Jesuits had put down shallower roots there, and were less well organized than in Lithuania. At the same time, the Educational Commission was less fundamentally challenged in Lithuania than in many parts of the Crown, perhaps because of the generally better relationships with ex-Jesuits in the Grand Duchy.<sup>85</sup> Several Mazovian sejmiks declined to endorse Łuskina's appeal. Although the correlation between sejmiks is imperfect, Mazovia and the surrounding palatinates also yielded the instructions most critical of monks, prelates, and bishops. Anti-clerical discourse was somewhat less strident in most Lithuanian instructions.

Sejmiks justified their call for the return of the Jesuits in various ways. According to the Samogitian sejmik, 'the education of youth, the maintenance of the dominant religion of the country, and the correction of morals are the three essential needs in the nation which require the return of the Jesuits to Poland'. The formula was suggested by the head of the Kroże school, Reverend Mikołaj Wieliczko, who did not receive Poczobut's proposed text in time. The supplement to the *Warsaw Gazette* was however received and read out.<sup>86</sup> The envoys of Brześć Kujawski and Inowrocław were to press 'for the Commonwealth to approach Rome for the return of the Jesuit Order, which is so necessary to education, especially in this ever more rotten century of ours'. Here the language was Łuskina's.

The Minsk sejmik denounced the spirit of the eighteenth century:

From the occasion of spreading irreligion and moral laxity, which rapidly move towards the corrupting of the nation, which has always been renowned for its orthodoxy and for fearing God, we remind ourselves of the apostolic law of the Jesuit order, famous for its zeal for the holy faith and pure morals, for founding schools and spreading learning in the country. The greater part of the nation, having received from it a Godfearing education, cannot yet forget either their exemplary masters, their guidance towards virtue, or their salutary teachings in churches and schools; therefore

<sup>83</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 24 November 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 59. Aubert to Montmorin, 27 November 1790, AMAE CP Pologne 317, despatch 58, ff. 476–7. De Caché to Kaunitz, 24 November 1790, HHStA Polen II 52, despatch 721, f. 136.

<sup>84</sup> Zielińska, 'O sukcesji tronu', 219.

<sup>85</sup> Szybiak, *Szkołnictwo*, 240–1. B. Natoński, 'Jezuici a Komisja Edukacji Narodowej', in J. Paszenda (ed.), *Z dziejów szkolnictwa jezuickiego w Polsce. Wybór artykułów* (Cracow, 1994), 210–40, at 237.

<sup>86</sup> Poplatek, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej*, 407.

we most strictly oblige our honourable envoys that they should try to present to our Most Serene Lord and the deliberating Estates the need and usefulness of the restoration in Poland of the Jesuit order, without any claim of its return to its properties and funds, and that they should ask for an approach to the Apostolic See in this matter.

The nobles of Minsk were susceptible to the suggestion that ‘the Holy Father has his hand ready to bless this project, and only waits for our appeal to him’. However, they did not criticize the commission explicitly. Clauses in the instructions of Grodno, Połock, Wołkowysk, and Rzeczyca were almost identical, testifying to a coordinated campaign.

The Livonian instruction justified the return of the Jesuits on pedagogical grounds. They had given ‘service for almost three centuries, not only in Poland, but across the whole world, and not only in exemplary apostleship for the faith, but also in all sciences, and most valiantly contributed to the enlightenment of all countries’. Here, Poczubut’s name helped the Jesuit cause. ‘It was enough to mention [your] letter’, reported his correspondent, ‘and the matter was duly effected in the instruction.’<sup>87</sup>

The Łęczycza szlachta, having thanked the king for his efforts ‘to make the nation enlightened (*świathy*)’, seeing ‘how old prejudices have been swept away, hearing no more of the breaking up of sejms, and seeing hearts open to the saving of the Fatherland, which is all the result of education and the exquisite writings published during his reign’, then desired ‘that the Jesuit order, being useful for education, be restored, and that a delegation to the Holy Father in this respect be appointed’. Presumably the preamble was inserted by local royalists, for it did not reflect the tenor of the instruction as a whole.

The sejmik of Zakroczym obliged envoys, besides striving for the return of the Jesuits, ‘that they should undertake efforts for the complete abolition of the Educational Commission, and for the consignment of national education to monasteries’. Similar demands came from the sejmiks of Ciechanów and Kiev, but Adam Czartoryski apparently prevented such a clause at Lublin.<sup>88</sup>

None of the known Lithuanian instructions contains such a far-reaching postulate, but there was no shortage of complaints in the Grand Duchy. The district of Wołkowysk demanded that the Educational Commission supervised ‘the most exact teaching of Latin according to the old forms’, and that it should not forbid the orders to run schools, whereby large sums of money could be saved for the army. The head of the Pińsk school, ex-Jesuit Józef Wiszniewski, told Poczubut that ‘here the envoys were told in the instruction to make a lot of noise (*mocno hałasować*) against the Educational Commission, to take its fund and hand it over it to the Treasury Commission, indeed, if at all possible, to destroy its existence’. When he threatened to resign, he was fobbed off with assurances that only parish schools were intended to be run by other orders, but he could effect no change in

<sup>87</sup> Revd Dominik Massulewicz to Poczubut, Szterberk, 18 November 1790, VUB F2 DC 44, f. 86.

<sup>88</sup> Revd W. Treffler to Kołłataj, Lublin, 21 November 1790, BPAU 196, pp. 39–42. Stanisław Jezierski to Kołłataj, Stężyca, 23 November 1790, BPAU 196, pp. 43–4.



the instruction.<sup>89</sup> In it we also find demands that 'the sejm should arrange expenditure on education as economically as possible; that the residue in every province should go towards the relief of citizens' taxes'; that 'the curriculum be most closely adapted to a republican form of government; that the Latin language should not be neglected; and that the surveyors and supervisors of schools be the Civil-Military Commissions of Good Order'.

Other sejmiks also wished to clip the commission's wings. Several wanted its accounts inspected. The Volhynian szlachta wanted to exclude seminaries and all monastic learning from its remit. Almost half of the instructions examined wanted the educational fund administered by the Treasury Commission. At least three Lithuanian sejmiks wanted Civil-Military Commissions to handle the income from former Jesuit estates. On the other hand, a few sejmiks made the return of the Jesuits conditional on their supervision by the Educational Commission.

Unfortunately the sole known copy of the instruction of the Great Poland sejmik at Środa breaks off at the eighteenth clause, before matters educational and ecclesiastical are broached. Nor have I discovered from other sources whether or not the assembled szlachta desired the return of the Jesuits. We read earlier of the atmosphere at this sejmik. It seems likely that one of the local envoys, Łukasz Bniński, found a receptive audience, if not when he wished for the emancipation of the serfs, then at least when he demanded the abolition of the Educational Commission. He blamed lay teachers, 'even including married men' for the steep fall in the numbers attending 'national' schools in the Great Polish palatinates. Bniński even thanked his parents for having spared him an education 'in supposedly enlightening sciences'. He opposed an hereditary throne 'with a simple but sincere heart, caring for nothing except the good of the Fatherland'.<sup>90</sup> So it is unlikely that his praise of good schooling derived from a conviction of its intellectual superiority. However, he said nothing about restoring the Jesuits, so it is difficult to judge whether or not the sejmik called for their return. Nor do we know if the instruction demanded the abolition of the Commission for National Education.

According to Benedikt de Caché, the szlachta was most interested in using the educational fund for the army.<sup>91</sup> He was borne out by several sejmiks, including Wojciech Suchodolski's Chełm, which demanded that the income from post-Jesuit estates should be applied to the army, and education be provided by the clergy 'on its ancient funds, and no less by the honourable ex-Jesuit priests, willingly offering themselves to the country for educating youth'. Most sejmiks calling for the restoration of the Jesuit order explicitly stated that the Jesuits had no claim on their former properties. But the Kowno szlachta wanted a Jesuit noviciate funded.

<sup>89</sup> Józef Wiszniewski to Poczobut, Pińsk, 20 November 1790, quoted after Poplatek, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej*, 410–11.

<sup>90</sup> Ł. Bniński, *Uwagi... na sejmik średzki poselski, d. 16 listopada r. 1790... obywatelom województw wielkopolskich do roztrząsania podane* [1790]. Smoleński, 'Żywioty zachowawcze', 173.

<sup>91</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 20 November 1790, HHStA, Polen II 52, despatch 720, ff. 132–3.

Ignacy Potocki (a former pupil of the Piarists) had strong views on the ex-Jesuit offer. He was partly consoled that at some sejmiks their cause had been frustrated:

The former Jesuits have taken advantage of the present moment for the restoration of their order, and without especially advancing their own cause, they have undermined the establishment of the Commission of National Education. They have presented the present teaching as suspect, and the establishments of the commission as very onerous for public property. This was to speak to faith, ignorance, and greed. Nevertheless, *les Russomanes* have been preaching for the return of that society, whose body exists today only in Russia. This consideration struck the more enlightened persons especially in Wilno, where the re-establishment of the Jesuits has been rejected.<sup>92</sup>

A report sent to Potocki illuminates the means used by the ex-Jesuits’ opponents.<sup>93</sup>

The ‘patriot’ party prepared carefully for the Wilno sejmik, distributing pamphlets, including some by Kołłątaj. On 16 November, following the inauguration of the sejmik, the reading of the proposed instruction commenced. It had already been drafted by local dignitaries. The first clause demanded ‘that the Jesuits, who without payment, and without any salary from the Commonwealth, offer themselves to teach in schools, be restored to Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania’. Significantly, controversies broke out over other points of the instruction, but not over this one.<sup>94</sup> After the reading out of the instruction was finally completed, the sejmik adjourned. Then,

the more prudent citizens made the following arguments to their colleagues and compatriots concerning the restoration of the Jesuits. When the Jesuits, demanding the return of their order do Poland, and teaching in schools without any salary, make such a noble personal offering, they must by the same token already have been assured a Muscovite salary, while the court of St Petersburg, unable to effect a violent revolution in Poland through the schismatics, now uses the Jesuits, so that they, being admitted to public education, would slowly, through the inculcation of their maxims via education, prepare the nation for the future revolution, which, although it would not take place soon, would suit the intentions of the court of St Petersburg. They also argued that it is not indifferent to the nation that in Lithuania ex-Jesuits are in charge of education, and occupy almost all the schools; that school visitors in Lithuania are always chosen from ex-Jesuits, because the Wilno Academy, being composed for the most part of ex-Jesuits, chooses visitors from that profession; that ex-Jesuits, being at the head of the academy, travel almost every year to Polotsk, where they contract some agreements with the Jesuits from behind the Russian cordon, who are protected by the court of St Petersburg, and that they maintain a secret correspondence with them; that it seems that these ex-Jesuits are strongly protected by the Lithuanian minister<sup>95</sup> because he has a large part of his estates beyond the Russian cordon. Such considerations by prudent citizens succeeded in having the point on the restoration of the Jesuits struck out from the instruction.

<sup>92</sup> I. Potocki to Aloy, 24 November 1790, APP 277, ff. 363–4.

<sup>93</sup> ‘Relacya o sejmikach poselskich województwa wileńskiego roku 1790’, APP 96, pp. 285–90.

<sup>94</sup> All but the first of these points are to be found in the copy made by Šapoka (LMAVB F233-126, ff. 225–8), but not the point, noted in the ‘relacya’, ‘that the post-Jesuit monastery of St Casimir in Wilno become a barracks and magazine’. APP 96, p. 287.

<sup>95</sup> Probably Aleksander Sapieha, Grand Chancellor of Lithuania.

The election of envoys ensued.

Russophobia was exploited in Wilno in order to discredit the ex-Jesuits. Perhaps Russophobic insinuations were also employed at the 'sejmiks-in-exile', Smolensk and Czernihów, at Słonim, and possibly also the sejmiks of Kiev, Bracław, Volhynia, and Podolia, all of which were silent on the Jesuit question. The Ruthenian szlachta felt threatened during the rebellion scare of 1789. On the other hand, the nobles of Pińsk, who were also exposed to a possible massacre by Orthodox peasants, desired the return of the order. Here the local envoy Butrymowicz played an important part.<sup>96</sup>

Stanisław August commented to Deboli:

Regarding education, there is so far not a single good article anywhere. It must be admitted, that Łuski, for all his fine mind, has done much harm, by printing an additional page with his gazettes, in which, in the name of the remaining ex-Jesuits, he offers that they will teach in schools without payment, trusting in God and benefactors. That has turned heads. Whereas in fact I would wager that ten Jesuits could not be found in Poland, who would truly put such an offer into effect. But other monks, fearing that the current French spirit would spread here, have inspired many citizens with this apparently attractive offer, that they would maintain and teach in schools without the current expenditure on professors. If our youth were then to be put in the hands of Bernardines and Franciscans, we would return to dark barbarity. As long as I have strength and capability, I shall use them to prevent this evil.<sup>97</sup>

He wrote to the primate in similar terms, referring to '*une renaissance de barbarie*'.<sup>98</sup> We note that the king opposed not so much the return of the learned Jesuits, which he considered unrealistic, as the education of youth by the unenlightened 'monks' of the Franciscan family. He also noticed Polish regulars' fears of the spread of French ideas.

In his next letter to Deboli, Stanisław August explained that 'the reason for so much fury against education is apparently because the project of the form of government mentioned the recommendation of competence for office by professors. Truly, whoever wrote that showed himself on this occasion to be a clumsy politician.'<sup>99</sup> He was referring to the clause which limited eligibility for public functions to citizens with a certificate of learning from Cracow or Wilno University.<sup>100</sup> The Cracow szlachta did not want the commission to judge 'civic services and the usefulness of citizens'. Nor did the nobles of Pińsk or Ciechanów. The szlachta of Lida even feared that, 'in time the rectors of academies, having become omnipotent lords and having promoted citizens by their influence, would effectively take over the right of *maiestas* in the distribution of offices'. The Lida instruction was silent regarding the Society of Jesus. It seems likely that in this case

<sup>96</sup> On Pińsk, see Poplatek, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej*, 408–11.

<sup>97</sup> SA to Deboli, 21 November 1790, ZP 420, ff. 1092–3.

<sup>98</sup> SA to MJP, 20 November 1790, AGhig. 801b, vol. i, f. 106.

<sup>99</sup> SA to Deboli, 24 November 1790, ZP 420, f. 1096. Smoleński, 'Żywioły zachowawcze', 188; Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 425–6.

<sup>100</sup> *Projekt do formy rządu*: 'Stopnie i warunki urzędów w Rzeczypospolitey', § XXXVI.

the University of Wilno had been discredited, in order to prevent a call for the return of the Jesuits. Poczobut was not universally esteemed.

The idea that salaried members of the 'academic estate' should be part of the hierarchy of local office-holders provoked anger and derision. The szlachta of Rzeczyca declared that this would injure 'the knightly Estate, which without receiving any payment, devotes its services to the Fatherland'. Even Reverend Wieliczko thought it comical that heads of schools should sit at sejmiks as dignitaries of the palatinate.<sup>101</sup>

## 5. ANTI-CLERICALISM AND LOCAL ECCLESIASTICAL INTERESTS

Many sejmiks voiced grievances against the clergy. A traditional one was aired in Lublin, where it was demanded that the land courts judge cases relating to the *ius patronatus*, and that the *pleban*, not the patron (who presented him to his parish), be responsible for repairing the church. The Zakroczym instruction called for tithes in kind to be commuted into cash.

A more general reform of ecclesiastical temporalities, with at least senior clergymen being paid proportionate salaries, and an end to pluralism, was desired by several sejmiks. Some cited the example of the episcopal reform. The szlachta of Brześć Litewski proposed to take the estates of cathedral and collegiate chapters for the treasury, paying salaries only to those without other benefices. At least eight sejmiks, four of them in Mazovia, demanded a ban on pluralism. The Zakroczym sejmik wanted nobles to be given priority in presentations to parishes, while the Ciechanów szlachta wanted *only* nobles to be presented. The Wyszogród and Zakroczym sejmiks demanded that clergymen (and other office-holders) who went abroad should forfeit their income to the treasury. This may have been aimed at the primate and Massalski. The Rzeczyca instruction praised a project to require bishops first to serve six years as parish priests, and desired a similar obligation for canons. The brethren of Ciechanów again went further: no clergyman should be promoted without having had a cure of souls for at least ten years, to the satisfaction of the parishioners, who should certify his lifestyle, morals, and capacity to the local Civil-Military Commission.

The sejmiks of Czersk, Płock, Różan, Sandomierz, Warsaw, and Zakroczym called for abbatial funds to be applied to the army. The Ciechanów szlachta demanded an examination of the funds and treasures, not only of abbeys, but of nunneries as well, and the 'return' of any superfluity to the Commonwealth. The monks and nuns would get pensions. Moreover, all orders were to elect their generals within the Commonwealth, and no monies could be sent abroad. The Wyszogród szlachta wanted to turn the estates of the female orders over to

<sup>101</sup> Poplatek, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej*, 411.

hospitals. The sejmiks of Wilno and Brześć Litewski called for the confiscation of the estates of the Knights of Malta.

The palatinate of Sandomierz grumbled about the wasting of 75,000 złotys on surveyors for the estates of the bishopric of Cracow. The sejmiks of Ciechanów and Chełm demanded that bishops be paid salaries in cash, and not given estates yielding the same income. The latter sejmik added that bishops of both rites should pay tax at at least 10 per cent. The Gostynin szlachta would tax episcopal salaries at 20 per cent.

The palatinate of Łęczyca proposed a form of episcopal election. The relevant chapter would put forward three candidates, who had to present evidence of *cura animarum* for six years and public service for twelve. A majority of sejmik instructions would 'recommend' to the king the person whom he should nominate as bishop. The Chełm instruction wanted bishops to be elected jointly by the clergy and by citizens, as they were both pastors and senators. The Wilno sejmik explicitly included bishops in its demand that all offices be elective for five years.

One of the most far-reaching proposals came from Livonia, whose instruction called for a negotiation with the Holy See for 'a clerical or synodal commission' with 'the highest primacy over all religions and faiths'. It was 'all the more necessary so that assemblies of various confessions have no foreign dependency'. The nuncial tribunal was explicitly encompassed in its competence, although the nuncio could preside over the new commission. Such a commission would help Livonian citizens, most of whom lived under the 'illegal predominance' of Lutheran clergymen in Courland, despite Catholicism's co-dominant status there. The Pińsk sejmik also wanted to abolish the nuncial tribunal.

The Grodno instruction demanded the abolition of stole fees, in both rites. The Braclaw nobility asked merely for a tariff, again for both rites. The sejmiks of Wilno and Łęczyca reminded their envoys of the law passed in 1789 ordaining a new, proportionate tariff for the *subsidium charitativum*, for both rites. The Wyszogród instruction proposed a tariff of payments to Rome for dispensations.

The Basilian order mounted a successful campaign in defence of its privileges. The district of Słonim asked for bishops to be chosen only from among the Basilian Fathers, and added: 'this order, being the only one in the Ruthenian rite, is not only usefully used to enlighten the populace, ignorant in religion, but also to give useful public teaching'. The envoys were to recommend

that persons of sixteen years should be allowed to enter and make their profession in that order according to the old custom praised by the Holy Church; that persons of that order should moreover be subject to no other ecclesiastical power, but only to their own [...]; and that abbeys should not be transformed for other needs, despite the importance of their funds.

The Basilians were also defended in broadly similar terms by the sejmiks of Czernihów, Minsk, Pińsk, Połock, Rzeczyca, and Wołkowysk. The Piarists were lauded by the nobles of Chełm, Sieradz, Sochaczew, Upita, and Wizna. The instructions of Brześć Litewski, Lublin, and Volhynia commended both these

teaching orders. But the szlachta of Czersk preferred the stick to the carrot: orders which did not teach should be denied noviciates.

The nobles of some localities sought to safeguard their own ecclesiastical interests. Reluctantly accepting their separation from the diocese of Cracow, the Lubliners insisted that all capitular estates and tithes located in the new diocese be reallocated to their chapter. They also wanted the cathedral to be in Lublin. But the Chełm sejmik wanted the Chełm chapter to be funded from abbeys and the tithes of the Cracow chapter in the diocese. It also pleaded for the newly nominated Uniate bishop of Chełm to be given the income envisaged for him by law, as he could not afford to pay 600 ducats in stamp tax or repair his cathedral. The Połock szlachta wanted a suffragan Uniate bishop, as without a bishop of their own, the local parish priests lacked both religion and morals. The palatinate of Sandomierz wanted the approval of a fund for the local suffragan bishop of the Latin rite, yielding 20,000 złotys per annum from the former estates of the bishopric of Cracow.

Several sejmiks put forward requests for local ecclesiastical foundations, such as the Lateran Canons' churches at Ozierany in the district of Rzeczyca (linked with the duty to teach), and the schools run by the Basilians of Kaniów and the Benedictines of Pułtusk. The szlachta of Pińsk even asked for the town's impoverished 'disuniate' monastery to be exempted from paying tax. Some instructions recommended individual clergymen.<sup>102</sup>

Kołątaj was recommended for the vice-chancellorship of the Crown only by the sejmik of Wołkowysk. As he had feared, his enemies were able to insert clauses against him into many instructions (Saluzzo later claimed twenty-five).<sup>103</sup> At the Volhynian sejmik, 'the szlachta made the most insulting shouts against Reverend Kołątaj, and demanded the insertion of those expressions in the instruction'. He was alleged to have said publicly that before he died he would see 'peasant knives or sickles on noble necks'.<sup>104</sup> At Lublin, following a call to burn the works of the 'anonymous correspondent', 'the simple szlachta shouted that he who had written them should be burnt too, clearly mentioning his name'. Adam Czartoryski ended the 'madness' after an hour, and the sejmik merely recommended Michał Sołtyk for the vice-chancellorship.<sup>105</sup>

At least five sejmiks called for the Ruthenian calendar to be united with the Latin one, so that agriculture experienced less disruption from holy-days. Moreover, as property titles depended on deteriorating records in provincial archives, and as those records that had survived conflagrations were written in Cyrillic script, which was already difficult to read and which would soon be indecipherable, the Minsk sejmik resolved to have old documents translated (into Polish) and copied.

<sup>102</sup> They included Bishops Kacper Cieciszowski and Tymoteusz Gorzeński, Kajetan Sołtyk, the Crown secretary, and Michał Sołtyk, the dean of Cracow.

<sup>103</sup> Kołątaj to SA, October/November 1790, BPAU 204, ff. 6–7. Saluzzo to Zelada, 18 May 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 87.

<sup>104</sup> Letter to Kołątaj, Łuck, 19 November 1790, BPAU 203, p. 54. Paweł Beyzym to Kołątaj, Krzemieniec, 20 November 1790, BPAU 196, p. 33.

<sup>105</sup> Treffler to Kołątaj, Lublin, 21 November 1790, BPAU 196, pp. 40–2.

The rebellion scare of 1789 had reopened the wounds of the *koliishchyna* in the palatinate of Kiev. The instruction called for the destruction of the Orthodox monastery of Motrenin, as a punishment for its role in inciting the 1768 massacre,<sup>106</sup> while churches which had been violently taken by the Orthodox since then should be 'restored to holy unity'. Non-Uniate religions should pray for the Polish king, and their liturgical books should be printed in Poland. However, the sejmiks of Upita and Grodno called for a non-Uniate hierarchy independent of Russia.

In general, there was little sign of confessional hostility in the instructions, although several sejmiks stressed that the dominant Catholic religion was to be maintained intact. The district of Rzeszyca insisted that only Catholics could be members of the future custodial council, while the nobles of Łęczyca wanted to punish apostasy by death. The Volhynian instruction ruled out any concessions to dissidents beyond the toleration they currently enjoyed, so that 'the dominant Roman Catholic faith [...] would remain dominant, not in words alone [...] but in fact, as it was formerly'.

## 6. SOCIAL, POLITICAL, CULTURAL, AND FISCAL QUESTIONS

At least eleven sejmiks favoured some kind of reform of the Commonwealth's Jews. None of these instructions, however, shared the relatively humanitarian tone of Mateusz Butrymowicz's project. Most Lithuanian instructions were laconic on the question, but the Wołkowysk szlachta pronounced the 'Jewish nation' to be 'a people engaged in fraud and living off the work of industrious peasants, [...] the evident cause of the impoverishment of the country'. Similar language can be found in some Mazovian instructions. The Czersk instruction was more specific. Jewish children should be taught the Polish alphabet, kahals should record religious decisions in Polish, and rabbis should no longer judge civil cases between Jews.

The generally self-interested character of the instructions is revealed by a glance at their demands on other social issues. At least seven instructions explicitly forbade any emancipation of the serfs. At least five more would brook no interference with lords' jurisdiction and dominion. The Rzeszyca sejmik explained that the tying of the peasants to the soil was the basis of the country's economy. The most that any sejmik would grant the enserfed peasants was an assurance of the security of their lives and property. Some instructions complained that ennoblements were too numerous, while others insisted that new nobles should buy land or else lose their status. Most of the instructions forbidding any diminution of the nobles' authority over the serfs were from Lithuania, demands for Jewish reform came from Lithuania and Mazovia, but hostility to admitting the burghers to the legislature was found across the Commonwealth.

<sup>106</sup> See B. Skinner, 'Borderlands of Faith: Reconsidering the Origins of a Ukrainian Tragedy', *Slavic Review*, 64/1 (2005), 88–116.

The instructions of 1790 offer historians an exceptional insight into the political culture of the *szlachta*. Continuity outweighed change. There was some awareness that the form of government needed correction, but in the event of such a correction, the envoys of Wołkowysk were to 'reject everything from the projects of the form of government that is opposed to the liberty and sovereignty (*samo-władność*) of the nation and civic freedoms, and add whatever can be a foundation of the dominant Roman Catholic faith and a safe refuge of a free and noble Commonwealth'. The Połock instruction referred to 'a nation long weakened by anarchy, oppressed by foreign violence, and disturbed by internal discord', hailed Stanisław August as 'father of the Fatherland', yet listed twelve restrictions on the prerogative of his successor. Even where the *szlachta* voted overwhelmingly for hereditary succession to the throne, as in the palatinate of Kiev, they voiced fears of '*absolutyzm*' and insisted that the 'nation' retain power over the army, treasury, diplomacy, and 'police'. The hostility to officialdom apparent in some instructions went beyond fiscal self-interest. Citizens ought to serve the public from patriotic duty, rather than for pecuniary gain. The Civil-Military Commissions, which depended on voluntary service, seem to have won universal acceptance.

Many instructions bear out the claim that noble republicanism aimed ultimately at assuring individual, negative liberty.<sup>107</sup> At Łęczycza, the instruction declared that 'liberty should be founded on this: that no citizen, even the poorest, should suffer violence from a rich person, indeed, from anybody, even from the king, but in every injury protected by law'. Several instructions, generally from the Crown, reveal the depth of anti-magnate feeling. Volhynia, regarded in Warsaw as Branicki's stronghold, expressed itself succinctly: 'That the country's aristocracy (*możnowładztwo krajowe*) which is so harmful both in general and in particular, should have no influence by any means on either jurisdiction or deliberations.'<sup>108</sup>

As in 1788, xenophobia was most apparent in the western and central palatinates. Restrictions on travel abroad were usually justified by the need to keep money in the country. Several sejmiks demanded the wearing of national costume. Provincial interests were often articulated, almost invariably in the name of equality. The point was made that Little Poland had a larger population and paid more taxes than the other provinces, yet it elected fewer envoys and issued them with fewer instructions. The Lithuanian district of Lida demanded equality between the three provinces in the number of senators, academies, schools, sejmiks, and instructions. However, in most, although not all, respects Lithuanian sejmiks claimed that the Grand Duchy was equal with the Polish Crown as a whole, rather than with the provinces of Little Poland and Great Poland. Several issued reminders that the next sejm was due to be held in Lithuania, while others pressed for the return of Lithuanian records. On the other hand, the *szlachta* of Nowogródek called for an end to the customs barrier between the Crown and the Grand Duchy. The Lithuano-Polish condominium of Livonia wanted a joint treasury.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *Regina libertas*, 21–5.

<sup>108</sup> Denisko explained to Kołłątaj that the prevalent party was composed both of Branicki's friends and 'those who, without having a deep knowledge of European affairs, know that they are for free election'. Letter dated Krzemieniec, 20 November 1790, BPAU 196, p. 12. This helps to explain the sejmik's anti-magnate stance.



Alongside the succession, revenue was the bottom line for most sejmiiks. It was mainly for fiscal reasons that nobles targeted educational, monastic, and episcopal wealth. At Brześć Litewski, they recognized the army's need of funds, but declared that the szlachta had given enough, and highlighted various ecclesiastical sources. A few sejmiiks flatly refused to permit any further burdening of landed estates. The szlachta of Ciechanów roused the spectres of their glorious ancestors in order to justify their refusal to pay any more taxes. But most sejmiiks were less intransigent.

## 7. AN INEXPERIENCED BUT ENLIGHTENED NEW COHORT?

Stanisław August was generally optimistic, 'for in the elected envoys I see receptive minds and a wish to act well, despite an unfortunate instruction'.<sup>109</sup> He wrote these words to the palatine of Kiev, but the pattern seems to have been repeated at many other sejmiiks.<sup>110</sup> The Prussian chargé d'affaires, August Friedrich von Goltz, estimated that about two thirds of the new cohort were connected with the royal court, as opposed to one third in the first. He did so before receiving news of distant sejmiiks, but his analysis was prescient: 'The patriots will not be able to do anything against the king's will from now on, but when, on the other hand, they join with the court, they will be able to guide matters faster and better.'<sup>111</sup>

Even Ignacy Potocki admitted that the sejmiiks had chosen envoys '*pas absolument mal*'.<sup>112</sup> The preparations for the sejmiiks had seen cooperation between the king and the leaders of the 'patriots'—a cause to which Kołłątaj contributed. Up to sixteen new envoys have been counted as allies of Kołłątaj, in addition to about six in the first cohort, and three castellans.<sup>113</sup> However, not all of these men were close to Kołłątaj in November 1790, or shared his views on matters ecclesiastical. Aleksander Ziełliński, for instance, held markedly different views on Church property.

Less is known about the elections of 1790 than of the instructions. 182 men were elected, five of them to replace envoys who had died, or been promoted to the senate. These men have traditionally been depicted as inexperienced but enlightened reformers.<sup>114</sup> Daniel Hailes was less flattering. Many 'have been taken from a life of Rural occupation, and brought into a Scene of Politics, where every thing appears perplexed and embarrassed.' However, he wrote this in the context of the Poles' infuriating refusal to cede Danzig to Prussia.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>109</sup> SA to Józef Stempkowski, [December 1790], BCz. 730, p. 623.

<sup>110</sup> SA to Deboli, 21 November 1790, ZP 420, f. 1092.

<sup>111</sup> August Friedrich von Goltz to Frederick William II, 20 November 1790, quoted after Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 427.

<sup>112</sup> I. Potocki to Aloy, 24 November 1790, APP 277, f. 363. Rostworowski, 'Marzenie dobrego obywatela', in id., *Legenda i fakty*, 344.

<sup>113</sup> Pasztor, *Hugo Kołłątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 20–44, 99.

<sup>114</sup> Kowecki, 'Posłowie debiutanci', 197–9.

<sup>115</sup> Hailes to Leeds, 8 January 1791, NA FO 62/4, f. 4.

Most envoys of the second cohort were less experienced than those of the first. Whereas under two fifths of the first cohort had been elected for the first time, more than three fifths of the second were parliamentary virgins. But that still left many who had been envoys before, up to seven times, and incomplete comparisons indicate only a modest fall in the mean age from 42 to 40. The new envoys, like the old, were mostly educated in reformed Jesuit and Piarist colleges. The proportion of declared supporters of the Constitution of 3 May 1791 appears to be only slightly higher among the second than the first cohort, which may simply reflect their greater activity, because the proportion of evident opponents was also slightly higher.<sup>116</sup> Newly elected envoys took diverse positions on religion, education, and the rights of non-nobles—the litmus tests of Enlightenment.

The election of two Protestants displeased Saluzzo. But, he added, ‘there is less to fear from those of a different religion than from those who, drunk on the maxims of modern philosophy, make a point of following the spirit of novelty and reform in everything’.<sup>117</sup> Although Antici reported ‘the quite vivid sensation, which was made on the court of Rome by the nomination [!] of any non-Catholic envoy to the sejm’, Zelada was persuaded ‘that the dissident envoys, considering their low number, and their indolence, will not wage a great war on us, being usually inclined to improve the condition of their own sect than to undermine the rights and prerogatives of the dominant religion’. He agreed that a greater threat was presented by ‘modern philosophy’.<sup>118</sup>

The nuncio was more perturbed by the instructions than the elections. Saluzzo and Zelada were especially worried by calls to suppress abbacies. Saluzzo also feared that it ‘would not be easy to prevent the presentation of a request’ to the pope to resurrect the Jesuits, although he was confident that other Catholic courts would refuse assent to such a restoration.<sup>119</sup> Indeed, a despatch from the new Spanish envoy to the Commonwealth, Pedro Normande, prompted an immediate intervention from Madrid in Rome against restoring the order.<sup>120</sup> Zelada had no doubt ‘that His Majesty and the most enlightened persons would recognize [...] the impossibility’ of restoring the Jesuits.<sup>121</sup> In the meantime, Saluzzo recovered his spirits, and by mid-January 1791 he believed that the idea would be opposed by ‘all those who are interested in maintaining the Educational Commission, and the funds assigned to it, and also very many others, who already fear to see Poland inundated by subjects from Mogilev and Polotsk, and that Russia could by this means reacquire her former influence’.<sup>122</sup> He may been talking to Ignacy Potocki. And for several months, the matter was not raised at the sejm.

<sup>116</sup> Kowecki, ‘Posłowie debiutanci’, 202, 209. J. Duzinkiewicz, *Fateful Transformations: The Four Years’ Parliament and the Constitution of 3 May 1791* (New York, 1993), 165–7.

<sup>117</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 1 December 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 60. The envoys were Zygmunt Grabowski (Wołkowysk) and Adam Bronikowski (Gniezno). The latter was linked to Kołłątaj. Pasztor, *Hugo Kołłątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 30–1.

<sup>118</sup> Antici to Ghigiotti, 15 January 1791, AGHig. 25a, vol. vii, f. 11. Zelada to Saluzzo, 8 January 1791, ASV ANV 53, f. 3.

<sup>119</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 24 November 1790, ASV ANV 67, f. 59. Zelada to Saluzzo, 18 December 1790, ASV ANV 52, ff. 497–8. Załęski, *Historia zniesienia*, ii. 88–9.

<sup>120</sup> Antici to SA, 22 December 1790, AGHig. 803a, ff. 8–9.

<sup>121</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 18 December 1790, ASV ANV 52, ff. 497–8.

<sup>122</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 15 December 1790, 12 January 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 61–3, 67–9.

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# PART III

## PROVIDENCE

A miracle of Divine Providence manifests itself for the raising up of our Father-land from ruin.

Stanisław August, 6 February 1792

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# 10

## The Law on Royal Towns and the Constitution of 3 May 1791

‘Essentially the time has come for the Sarmatian hubbub (*la bruhala sarmatte*) to make way for a happy regeneration’.<sup>1</sup> Following the sejmiks of November 1790 a disillusioned Ignacy Potocki handed the initiative over the new form of government to Stanisław August. Between December 1790 and April 1791, the king and Potocki negotiated the bones of the new Constitution, with Scipione Piattoli acting as go-between. They were joined by Stanisław Małachowski, Hugo Kołłątaj, who composed a compromise draft, and a group of trusted envoys and senators, who agreed the final amendments to the text.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, the last chance to prolong the Commonwealth’s independence was slipping away. William Pitt the Younger tried to take Great Britain to war with Russia, in order to limit Russian gains from the Ottoman Empire. Prussia would have been dragged in, and Catherine made plans to fight the Prussians and their Polish allies. But political and mercantile opposition forced Pitt to abandon his plans on 10 April 1791. Frederick William II now had no interest in honouring his alliance with the Commonwealth.<sup>3</sup>

### 1. THE PREOCCUPATIONS OF THE SEJM: DECEMBER 1790–MARCH 1791

The determination of the king and Ignacy Potocki to agree the form of government between themselves necessitated the preoccupation of the newly expanded sejm with other matters. If the discussion of the Cardinal Laws were resumed, then the unpredictable assembly could upset their intentions. The arrival of new envoys, who needed to have their elections verified, and then to join the confederacy, and the speeches of thanks from newly created senators, exacerbated the usual disorder. This at least served to justify the introduction of a measure to expedite the sejm’s work.

This provisional regulation on procedure, itself only passed after several days of debates, forbade interventions from anybody who had not been invited to speak by

<sup>1</sup> I. Potocki to Aloy, 1 December 1790, quoted after Rostworowski, *Legends i fakty*, 346.

<sup>2</sup> Rostworowski, *Legends i fakty*, 344–464. Id., *Ostatni król*, 204–32.

<sup>3</sup> Lord, *Second Partition*, 153–91.

the marshal. Nobody was allowed to speak more than once during the discussion of a subject, and once during open voting. The marshal would ensure that amendments were relevant, and no project would be able to interrupt one whose discussion had already commenced.<sup>4</sup>

A tactical decision was made to move on to the law on sejmiks, rather than to continue with the Cardinal Laws. It was tactical, rather than principled, for the king did not share the view that the sejmiks were the source of legislation, and on that basis should precede other matters.<sup>5</sup> But it took two sessions, lasting sixteen and thirteen hours respectively, in the teeth of opposition led by Kazimierz Sapieha and Józef Kossakowski, before the point was carried. Four other bishops voted in favour, but Ignacy Wybranowski, envoy for Lublin, detected an attempt to overthrow the Cardinal Laws on the 'dominant religion', adding an '*anathema fit*' for those who thought otherwise.<sup>6</sup> Małachowski was obliged to have the Cardinal Laws that had already been passed officially inscribed; these included the maintenance of apostasy as a crime.<sup>7</sup>

The debates on the sejmiks were both lengthy and heated, with the magnates coming under sustained attack.<sup>8</sup> In the end it was agreed that nobles who were not landowners in the locality were excluded from active participation (the rights to speak and vote) in sejmiks, except those who held land in collateral, and paid at least 100 złotys a year in tax. On 1 February a lively discussion arose on whether clergymen possessing landed estates should be allowed actively to participate.<sup>9</sup> Kołłątaj prepared a speech for Aleksander Batowski, one of the new Livonian envoys. Its arguments ranged from natural justice to enlightened self-interest:

Let us extirpate the abuse of such holy duties, let us curtail insolence, if that ever puffs up the teachers of religion, let us extirpate fanaticism, but let us respect the holy vocation of clergymen, let us not deprive them of the rights of citizenship, because we would not only lose their thorough enlightenment, and deter persons of the noble estate from the clerical estate, but in addition we would lose thereby the link between government and the populace, without which our work would be illusory and in vain.<sup>10</sup>

Jan Suchorzewski and Kossakowski denied any such declaration was necessary. Stanisław Kublicki claimed that clergymen had been excluded from Lithuanian Civil-Military Commissions, while Tadeusz Matuszewic, envoy for Brześć Litewski, warned of priests' ability to 'impress human minds' and dependence on 'a foreign authority'. To that Benedykt Hulewicz replied: 'only *in Spiritualibus*'.<sup>11</sup>

Further banquets of oratory prompted a further reform of procedure. Pius Kiciński made the crucial intervention on 21 February 1791. He proposed an

<sup>4</sup> *Dyaryusz 1790*, i:1. 160–234.

<sup>5</sup> 4 January 1791, *ibid.*, i:1. 282.

<sup>6</sup> 4 January 1791, *ibid.*, i:1. 300, 319.

<sup>7</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 431–4. *Dyaryusz 1790*, i:1. 238–391.

<sup>8</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 439–45.

<sup>9</sup> *Dyaryusz 1790*, i:2. 301–17.

<sup>10</sup> *Dyaryusz 1790*, i:2. 308. Draft in Ossol. 1778, ff. 101–11, at ff. 109–10.

<sup>11</sup> *Dyaryusz 1790*, i:2. 312–13. See above, 161.

amendment to the project submitted by the newly elected envoy for Cracow, Stanisław Sołtyk, titled *Saving Parliamentary Time*.<sup>12</sup> The sejm would henceforth be able either to accept or reject the relevant deputation's proposals in their entirety, or send them back for correction, but it could no longer decide projects *categoratim*, clause by clause.<sup>13</sup> Kiciński exploited both Russophobia and religion in an extraordinary speech, reportedly made without notes. He even assumed the tone of a prophet: 'Almighty God, who today wished to have me as his instrument, that I should put before you these truths with the boldness befitting a Pole, befitting an envoy, will surely inspire all members of the sejm with this same spirit, that you should cast off utterly the remnants of this Russian yoke, which has until now kept you in inactivity.' Kiciński resorted to an especially demagogic threat in telling the public to watch carefully those who opposed the project, and those who wished to amend it further, 'so that you would know whom to blame for the future calamities of the Commonwealth, which I here, early, clearly, and boldly, do foretell'.<sup>14</sup> The oration stunned opponents of the proposal into silence. Małachowski asked for, and received a threefold cry of '*zgoda*'.

The discussion of the project on sejmiks was interrupted in the first week of each month by the examination of commissions and other 'dicasters'. It was not until 24 March that the law *Sejmiks* was accepted. Clergymen were neither listed among those excluded from active participation, nor explicitly included. Their political rights remained vulnerable.<sup>15</sup>

For all the frustrations, it was during these months that the more enlightened republicans and royalists learned to work together. Those supporters of Ksawery Branicki and Szczęsny Potocki who remained in Warsaw found themselves isolated. Some convinced republicans looked to the example of Michał Zaleski, envoy for Troki, who departed in April 1790, and remained quietly on his estates, despite the efforts of the king and others to persuade him to return.<sup>16</sup>

## 2. THE LAW ON ROYAL TOWNS: CITIZENSHIP, TOLERATION, AND RELIGION

After the law *Sejmiks* had been passed, the urban question was resumed. Stanisław August, Ignacy Potocki, and Kołłątaj agreed on a project granting the burghers forty-eight envoys to the sejm, and the abolition of starostas' jurisdiction. Other projects were more modest. But all such proposals served to undam a torrent of

<sup>12</sup> 'Ochrona Czasu Sejmowego', ASC 20, ff. 53–4.

<sup>13</sup> ASC 20, f. 54.

<sup>14</sup> *Głos... Piusa Kicińskiego... 21. dnia lutego 1791...* On witnessing this performance Sebastian Dłuski, envoy for Lublin, imagined how Mahomet must have handed down the Koran. Krakowski, *Oratorstwo*, 165.

<sup>15</sup> VL, ix. 233–41, at 234.

<sup>16</sup> *Pamiętniki Michała Zaleskiego wojskiego Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego, posła na Sejmie Czteroletnim*, ed. B. Zaleski (Poznań, 1879), 172–6.



oratory in defence of the noble monopoly of lawmaking.<sup>17</sup> Ignacy Siwicki idealized a polity where every '*klasa*' was satisfied with its place. He prophesied that neither the dominant religion nor liberty could survive an influx of foreigners who either prized profit above religion or who were 'impassioned in a faith separated from the Roman Church'.<sup>18</sup> Tomasz Dłuski, a newly elected, but elderly envoy for Lublin, also warned of the threat to the dominant religion, and even of '*absolutyzm*', if the burghers were admitted to the legislature.<sup>19</sup> He submitted a project that excluded them from the sejm and prohibited them from buying landed estates, but admitted them to military ranks up to that of colonel, excluding the national cavalry, and to canonries and benefices in the Church, except those reserved by their founders for nobles.<sup>20</sup> All that was agreed was that the Constitutional Deputation, chaired by Bishop Kossakowski, should compile a new project.<sup>21</sup>

The king and others tried to convince opponents to accept a less radical reform. They were helped by the fact that the Constitutional Deputation's existing project offered the towns more government interference and fewer prerogatives than even Dłuski was prepared to concede. The burghers would be excluded from the legislature, and granted participation only in the police and treasury commissions. But the deputation's project excluded no Christians from municipal office or citizenship on confessional grounds. The status of Jews was reserved to a separate law.<sup>22</sup>

On 14 April, several envoys criticized the deputation's project.<sup>23</sup> Jan Zieliński, newly elected for Płock, claimed he could not abide injustice. But he insisted that he should not be 'counted among the new philosophers [...] lauding the rights of man in the view of the new and godless philosophy', and objected to the tone adopted by the Warsaw 'municipality':

Considering the present French Revolution, who will not admit that it erupted from the municipality of Paris, which abolished the privileges of the nobility, seized the estates and prerogatives of churches, attacked the ruling holy Catholic faith, keeps its king in slavery, and, falsely interpreting the rights of man, breaks all Divine and human laws, tears up and abolishes the bonds of society, and under freedom of conscience, gives the opportunity for limitless offences. God grant! that these and similar rights of man should not attract our towns, incited by rebellious writings, and should not begin from [Warsaw].<sup>24</sup>

Others wanted 'to give a Fatherland to those without a Fatherland, to attach a greater number of souls to liberty', and thereby secure the country from the threat of revolution.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Zienkowska, *Sławetni i urodzeni*, 147–57. Rostworowski, *Legendy i fakty*, 414–19.

<sup>18</sup> *Głos... Ignacego Siwickiego, posła... trockiego... dnia 5 apryla 1791...*

<sup>19</sup> *Mowa... Tomasza Dłuskiego... posła... lubelskiego... 6 kwietnia roku 1791...*

<sup>20</sup> 'Projekt obok projektu od deputacyi prawa miejskie rozważającej podanego', *MDSC*, iv. 67–8.

<sup>21</sup> Zienkowska, *Sławetni i urodzeni*, 157–61. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 448–9.

<sup>22</sup> Zienkowska, *Sławetni i urodzeni*, 161–2. 'Miasta', *MDSC*, iv. 75–88.

<sup>23</sup> *ASC* 17, ff. 228–66. Zienkowska, *Sławetni i urodzeni*, 162–5, Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 449–50.

<sup>24</sup> *Głos... Jana Zielińskiego... posła płockiego... 14. kwietnia 1791...*

<sup>25</sup> *Głos... Alexandra Linowskiego... 14. mca kwietnia roku 1791...*

After an appeal from Stanisław August for the burghers to be allowed to serve their country,<sup>26</sup> Jan Suchorzewski stated that he would not agree to their having a 'decisive vote' in the legislature. He handed in a project of his own which envisaged twenty-one 'urban plenipotentiaries' with an advisory role in matters concerning the towns. According to the king, this so delighted the opponents of the burghers, that they failed to notice that the project contained virtually all the civil (as opposed to political) rights originally proposed by the enlightened reformers. Stanisław August commended Suchorzewski's project to the sejm, adding: 'I thank Providence, when I see minds close to unanimity.' After some resistance from a few supporters of the burghers' full participation in the legislature, the measure was unanimously agreed in principle. The king told Deboli: 'I take it as a visible work of God, that it was through the lips of that crank (*cudak*) that good counsel spoke.'<sup>27</sup>

Suchorzewski's project was tidied up by Kołłątaj and others before being reintroduced on 18 April. Małachowski opening that session, expected this humane law would overthrow foreigners' prejudices about Poland, and he contrasted it with the French Revolution, which exalted some by abasing others.<sup>28</sup> However that day, the spectre of confessional antagonism was roused, and almost ruined everything. Some envoys objected to the clause which made all those registered as citizens of the given town eligible for municipal office. This long debate saw the Polish Revolution's fullest discussion of the limits of religious toleration.

Józef Radzicki, envoy for Zakroczym, expected that if the law worked as intended, 'people of various religions and sects will come'. He wanted to 'ensure that in towns, domiciled citizens of the dominant religion should have priority for mayoralties and municipal offices over immigrants of other callings', and pointed to the discrimination suffered by 'our Catholics' in non-Catholic states. His proposed amendment was supported by Józef Radziwiński, the newly created palatine of Gniezno.<sup>29</sup>

Celestyn Sokolnicki, envoy for Poznań, responded that the towns of Great Poland, some of which had not a single Catholic church, would face ruin. As 'an orthodox Catholic', he added: 'I remind you that the law assured toleration to dissidents, and I say to you, that the condition of preference for Catholics will revolt foreigners, and destroy the entire aim of this law'. He founded religion on virtue, which would not be served by 'the violation of the rights of man'. And he refused to permit any such amendment, as contrary to 'toleration'.<sup>30</sup>

Kacper Cieciszowski could not let this pass unchallenged. He said that the words 'of any religion' might just as well be 'without religion'. To guard against sects, he wanted to specify 'tolerated' Christians. And while he would permit all to be elected to office, he asked if preference for Catholics was not proper. He gave a brief homily:

Virtue without religion is nothing, because virtue is not religion. Religion is founded on the holy mysteries, the teaching, and the Gospel of Christ; religion teaches us to

<sup>26</sup> ASC 17, ff. 260–5.

<sup>27</sup> ASC 17, ff. 248–9. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 450, quoting SA to Deboli, 16 April 1791.

<sup>28</sup> ASC 17, f. 268.

<sup>29</sup> ASC 17, ff. 270–5.

<sup>30</sup> ASC 17, ff. 275–6.

love our neighbour, I declare that I love all inhabitants of Polish territory, and from the duty of loving my neighbour, with my service, and even my property, I am ready to serve everyone, but it is one thing to love our neighbour, and another to speak, so that error would spread across the country.<sup>31</sup>

Sapieha saw no need to diminish the toleration prescribed by a foreign hand in 1775. Having abolished the foreign guarantee of dissidents' rights, the Commonwealth should grant them no less. Having done as they were asked, the dissidents deserved good faith. He could accept the insertion of 'tolerated', as 'the exemplary pastor' of Kiev wished, but the law could not impose a preference for Catholics. He was confident that where Catholics were settled in larger numbers, they would be elected.<sup>32</sup>

The king concurred. He, too, praised Cieciszowski's 'exemplary zeal', and expected that 'tolerated' would meet with no objection. He hoped for unanimous agreement to the 'principles' accepted on 14 April, 'so that afterwards we would only give thanks to God, and prepare ourselves for those sacred duties, which this week reminds us of'. This was a way of opposing priority for Catholics without appearing to be religiously indifferent. It was the Monday of Holy Week.<sup>33</sup>

The word 'tolerated' was inserted, but Dłuski still wanted Catholics to have preference in towns where they formed the majority. Tomasz Wawrzecki, envoy for Brasław, explained that diverse local arrangements, assured by privileges, in some cases provided for alternation, and in others for equality. Ludwik Gutakowski, envoy for Orsza, thought it sufficient to insert 'tolerated', and stated that their forbears had never been happier than under the slogan '*Pax inter Dissidentes*'. Disasters had followed when this maxim had been forgotten.<sup>34</sup>

Antoni Ledóchowski, newly elected for Czernihów, argued that 'toleration cannot extend so far that it would be impossible to make reservations for Catholics'. The dissidents were only allowed one envoy to the sejm from each province, so why should a similar principle not apply in the towns? He evoked a conspiracy of philosophy and Protestantism:

Who here will assure us, that the dissidents, having occupied the first dignities in the towns, will not exercise great influence through their plenipotentiaries, being of the same confession, in order to extend their rights, and, with the help of the eager lovers of novelty, to assail and destroy the dominant religion?

He proposed an amendment assuring Catholics either preference, or at least half the number of those elected to municipal office. And he appealed to the bishops to defend the Catholic religion.<sup>35</sup>

Adam Czartoryski made a strongly-worded speech:

I am not of the rank of thoughtless freethinkers, who look upon religion with an indifferent eye. I pride myself, that I am not only a Christian, but a Catholic, but I

<sup>31</sup> ASC 17, ff. 276–7.

<sup>33</sup> ASC 17, f. 282.

<sup>35</sup> *Głos... Antoniego Leduchowskiego... 18. kwietnia 1791...*

<sup>32</sup> *Głos... Sapiehy... 18. kwietnia 1791...*

<sup>34</sup> ASC 17, ff. 282–4.

respect the true religion too much, that I should not know its attitude. Intolerance is against religion itself, just as it is a political sin.

Preference for Catholics would vitiate the aim of attracting foreign settlers. Employing confessional discourse, he sought to counter appeals to the bishops: 'We have, thank God, zealous pastors, who, as bishops, would be able to stop the spread of heretical dogmas.' He then resumed his theme: 'The spirit of our former intolerance lost us the Ukraine, the spirit of fresh intolerance brought a foreign guarantee upon us.' And he counselled leaving the amendment at 'tolerated', giving nobody any reason to seek a foreign guarantee in future.<sup>36</sup>

Benedykt Hulewicz goaded the bishops. The assault on the prerogatives of religion made this a '*dies irae, calamitatis et miseriae*'. '*Pax inter Dissidentes*' had been forced upon a vulnerable Commonwealth. Until the mid-sixteenth century the motto had been '*Unus Pastor et unum ovile*'. Why were the bishops silent? If they could explain why admitting dissidents to municipal office was not contrary to the dominant religion, he would not demand preference for Catholics.<sup>37</sup>

Kossakowski rose to the challenge. He stated that he and the bishop of Poznań had favoured preference when the question had been discussed by the deputation, but that the majority had decided otherwise. He was confident that the new freedom would not be abused, and that Catholics would be elected first, wherever they were settled in sufficient numbers. All he asked was that the new law should not affect existing privileges for Catholics. Okęcki thanked Kossakowski for testifying to his opposition, but refused to go along with 'his zeal to finish the matter'. Political and religious considerations, he said, convinced him that enshrining priority in law was necessary to prevent a grievous blow to religion.<sup>38</sup>

A proposal for a vote either to accept the law or send it back to the Constitutional Deputation for amendment provoked protests from those who wanted an immediate decision. Suchorzewski intervened, proposing to leave all matters concerning religion to the Deputation for the Heterodox. Antoni Suchodolski, now castellan of Smolensk, objected that this might prevent any future advantage for Catholics. The matter concerned religion, and should be decided now. Wawrzecki responded that it was about the eligibility of dissidents for urban office, and not religion—on which no vote was possible.<sup>39</sup>

Stanisław August then made an important speech. He too, felt obliged to boast: 'You have no better Catholic in this chamber.' But instead of considering the boundaries of toleration, he asked where the boundaries of 'zeal [...] to secure priority for the dominant religion' should be drawn. Had he been in the deputation, he would have left in the words 'without distinction of calling and religion', as nothing should obstruct the strengthening of the country. Sufficient safeguards were contained in the Cardinal Laws. Moreover, experience showed that Catholics would be elected by almost a hundred to one. He then suggested: 'in all marriages between a Catholic, and a non-Catholic, the children must always be Catholics'.

<sup>36</sup> ASC 17, ff. 284, 287.

<sup>38</sup> ASC 17, ff. 288–9.

<sup>37</sup> ASC 17, ff. 287–8.

<sup>39</sup> ASC 17, ff. 289–92.

He expected that this would make the country almost entirely Catholic within thirty years, 'and yet foreigners of the dissident or disuniate confessions will not be deterred from settling here, nor will this law seem onerous to them'. Such a 'sweet method' would be particularly effective in bringing 'many thousands of disuniate peasants' into the Union, 'giving a much greater strength to the country. This is, I dare to say, a truly Catholic idea.'<sup>40</sup>

Although Stanisław August may have won over some of the doubters, his preferred solution was not adopted. Instead, after another intervention from Sapieha, the sejm agreed unanimously to strike out the reference to religion. After a clarification regarding the judicial arrangements, the project was thrice acclaimed law. The usual handkissing followed. The sejm was then prorogued for Easter until Monday 2 May.<sup>41</sup>

This debate shows how supporters of opening municipal office to dissidents without restriction felt obliged to stress their Catholic credentials, and distance themselves from 'freethinkers'. On the other hand, those who declaimed in defence of the dominant religion were by no means exemplary Catholics. When it was Hulewicz's turn to kiss the king's hand, the monarch rebuked him: 'You old rake, you're still chasing after girls all the time, you eat meat in Holy Week, you mock everything, and you wanted to embarrass the bishops only for fun. If you had resisted longer, I would have told you so publicly.'<sup>42</sup> That night the monarch reflected: 'today there were two fanaticisms to combat at once. God gave us the victory. It will not be me who will gather the fruit, but the eyes that see Poland today, and will see her in thirty years time, will not recognize her.'<sup>43</sup> And so all municipal offices were opened to all urban citizens, and urban citizenship was opened to all Christians, except serfs.<sup>44</sup>

The law was generous with ennoblements. Each sejm was to ennoble thirty burghers. However, commissions in the national cavalry remained the preserve of the szlachta, as did those benefices and prebends whose founders had specified noble incumbents. In preferring to grant civil rather than political rights, and to ennoble potential rivals for the szlachta, Suchorzewski's stance was compatible with noble republicanism. The suggestion that the king did a deal with some members of the 'old republican' opposition, and in doing so strengthened his own position, cannot be dismissed.<sup>45</sup>

The failure to achieve a full legislative role for the burghers was a setback to Kołłątaj's cause of a Commonwealth based on property, rather than birth. The legislation applied neither to private, nor ecclesiastical towns, nor even to those towns formerly belonging to the bishopric of Cracow. But for the burghers of royal

<sup>40</sup> ASC 17, ff. 293–4. Quoted by Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 451–2, after SA to Deboli, 20 April 1791.

<sup>41</sup> ASC 17, f. 295–6, 299.

<sup>42</sup> SA to Deboli, 20 April 1791, ZP 413, f. 74. Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 452.

<sup>43</sup> SA to Ghigiotti, 18 April 1791, AGHig. 514a, vol. iii, f. 37.

<sup>44</sup> *Miasta nasze królewskie wolne w państwach Rzeczypospolitej*, in *Konstytucja 3 Maja*, 111–23, at 113.

<sup>45</sup> Zienkowska, *Sławetni i urodzeni*, 165–74.

towns, civil rights, self-government, and the perspective of individual advance more than recompensed the retention (*de jure*) of an exclusively noble legislature. Observers noted a '*Revolution in der Denkensart*' of the nobility.<sup>46</sup> August von Goltz tried to reassure Frederick William II that with so little security in Poland, he had no cause for concern,<sup>47</sup> but in both Berlin and Vienna it was feared that many subjects would emigrate to take advantage of Polish liberties—one of the strongest arguments for not imposing restrictions on the heterodox.<sup>48</sup> The legend of 18 April soon suffused the limited letter of the law in an aura of 'citizenship', and the urban cause gained momentum as the law was implemented.

Townsmen with even the smallest property (such as a cobbler's workshop) were given the limited but symbolically important political rights of urban citizens, and even those without immovable property were given civil rights, notably *neminem captivabimus nisi iure victum*, formerly reserved for the szlachta. The elections of plenipotentiaries would accelerate the political maturation of the urban estate. Burghers served on central government commissions. The preservation of an exclusively noble legislature began to appear a theoretical nicety.<sup>49</sup>

Religion was the midwife at the birth of this legend. 'Across the entire country, the burghers ordered services of thanksgiving, just as they had done when, a year and a half earlier, they had begun the campaign.'<sup>50</sup> On 19 April, the *Te Deum* was sung in the Church of St John the Baptist, in the presence of the king, senators, envoys, and the Warsaw municipality.<sup>51</sup> Other cities followed, preparing ceremonies and sending delegations for the feast of St Stanisław on 8 May.<sup>52</sup> In Cracow on 28 April, the Carmelite prior spoke to the assembled councillors, merchants, and plebeians of the 'glorious eighteenth century, whose memory shall never be erased', in which God had brought them justice and happiness, the restoration and confirmation of their old privileges, as well as new ones. And they had obtained them without paying the bloody cost borne by the Americans and the Dutch, and without the savage licence that stained the French nation, which had once respected its king and clergy. He lauded the love of the Fatherland shown by the king and Estates, and pointed to the new opportunities for burghers to display their patriotism.<sup>53</sup>

Stanisław Małachowski signed up for municipal citizenship and undertook to obey urban law in a joyous ceremony at Old Warsaw's city hall on 29 April. He thanked 'the God of Hosts' for the 'closer uniting of the noble and the urban

<sup>46</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 27 April 1791, HHStA, Polen II 53, despatch 769, f. 79. Similarly, Jean Alexandre Bonneau to Armand de Montmorin, 13 April 1791, AMAE, CP Pologne 318, f. 215.

<sup>47</sup> Goltz to Frederick William II, 16 April 1791, GStAPK I. HA Rep. 9 Polen 27–251, despatch 271, f. 237.

<sup>48</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 458.

<sup>49</sup> Zienkowska, *Sławetni i urodzeni*, 184–8, 198–200.

<sup>50</sup> Kalinka, *Sejm Czteroletni*, ii. 452.

<sup>51</sup> Bonneau to Montmorin, 20 April 1791, AMAE CP Pologne 318, despatch 16, f. 224.

<sup>52</sup> A. Geppert to the Cracow magistrature, 20 April 1791, and 'Ogłoszenie magistratu Warszawy w sprawie iluminacji w dniu 8 maja 1791 r.' 28 April 1791, in *MDSC*, iv. 104–5.

<sup>53</sup> Agnell Nowicki, *Kazanie w dzień 28 kwietnia, w którym stołeczne miasto Kraków... składało dzięk...* in *MSDC*, iv. 111–23.

estates'.<sup>54</sup> Małachowski's example was followed that day by several dozen envoys and senators. Two weeks after 18 April, the sanctified *coup d'état* of 3 May 1791 gave new opportunities to demonstrate the fraternity of the urban and noble estates.

### 3. THE REVOLUTION OF 3 MAY

By late April 1791, the 'Law on Government' was ready. Eighty-three envoys and senators signed up on the evening of 2 May. Word spread that something was afoot, and the vicinity of the Royal Castle was packed the following morning.<sup>55</sup> Several doctored despatches were read out, creating the impression of a dreadful threat to the nation's independence, before Małachowski announced that a project which would save the Commonwealth was to hand. Contrary to normal procedure, it was read out almost immediately, and many called for its acclamation there and then. Enough protests were heard, however, for the sejm to deliberate for most of the day, until, towards evening, the cries for the king to swear an oath to the proposed Constitution reached a crescendo. According to the diary, the cries were repeated by 'the massed people, gathered in the courtyard of the Castle and on the surrounding streets'. The king, surrounded by envoys and senators, stood on a chair and summoned the bishop of Cracow to read out his oath. 'The obedient prelate dictated willingly', related an opponent.<sup>56</sup> Stanisław August repeated the words, with one hand on the Gospels, held by the bishop of Smolensk, the other raised high. At the king's exhortation, almost the entire chamber then followed his example in the adjacent Church of St John the Baptist. Bishop Gorzeński and several thousand people sang the *Te Deum*.

The rhetoric employed on behalf of the Constitution that day stressed the danger from foreign powers, the need for order in the Commonwealth, the paternal goodness and wisdom of the king, and above all the miraculous hand of Providence. Stanisław Potocki plucked all of these strings, and turned his rhetoric on his fellow-aristocrats:

The pitying Providence of the heavens gives us its hand, the king [...], the image of the Divinity, warns us of the need to save ourselves, wishes to join with us, indicates the means, and we say that foreign violence imposes them! [...] O King and Father! The nation is bound by the violence and treacheries of its neighbours, by the violence of former errors; do not allow it to remain any longer in these bonds. Rescue its entirety and our liberty, not the illusory liberty that despises government and laws, not the lawless liberty of aristocrats alone, above equality, but the liberty of everyone, who is counted simply as an inhabitant of the country.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>54</sup> S. Małachowski, *Głos... przed przyjęciem prawa miejskiego*, in *MDSC*, iv. 126–8.

<sup>55</sup> There are many accounts of 3 May. What follows is drawn from the manuscript diary, ASC 19, ff. 23–40, which was the basis for F. Siarczyński, *Dzień Trzeci Maja* (Warsaw, 1791). Quotation at ASC 19, f. 38. More details in Butterwick, 'Political Discourses', 724–6.

<sup>56</sup> Letter to Szczesny Potocki, 4 May 1791, BCz. 3473, p. 325.

<sup>57</sup> ASC 19, ff. 30–3.

The resistance was led by Suchorzewski, who declared his all-consuming love for liberty, about to be overthrown by an hereditary throne. He spoke of how Herod had used others to do his will. Later, in an extraordinary scene, Suchorzewski 'led out his little son to the middle of the chamber, saying: "I shall kill my own child, so that he should not live to experience the slavery which this project prepares," but his colleagues led him back to his place.'<sup>58</sup> An innocent escaped slaughter.

One of the decisive moments in the debate came when Sapieha, who had not been let into the secret, was won over. He could not determine whether an elective or a successive throne was best, he declared, 'but where the fate of the Fatherland is concerned, my voice should yield to the voice of the nation'. He then used an emotional motif popular with the traditionalists: 'I can err from limited enlightenment (*światło*), but not from a bad heart. Judge, O public, my opinion; judge, Most Serene Lord!'<sup>59</sup> That choice of words indicates why Sapieha's conversion lent credibility to the Constitution.

Doubts about the legality of the 'revolution' (Małachowski used the term on 3 May)<sup>60</sup> were intended to be answered by the session of 5 May. Kossakowski, as chairman of the Constitutional Deputation, was invited to sign the *Law on Government*. He expressed the deputation's fear that vital matters were expressed in the Constitution with such brevity that they might be misinterpreted. Moreover, the Constitution had been 'passed by the voice of the public', without the usual formalities, which the deputation had sworn to observe. He asked for advice on how to sign the act without breaking that oath.

Aleksander Linowski, one of the new envoys for Cracow, responded with an impassioned speech, congratulating his compatriots on their 'salutary revolution'; they had truly become a 'nation' by emerging from 'utter anarchy'. Kossakowski, 'this worthy senator', 'was present in the church when we swore our oath before God, and he raised his consecrated hand, because he felt that God had looked upon an unhappy nation'. Sapieha admitted his anxieties about the Constitution, but the greater danger would be to divide the nation, and he therefore suggested a unanimous acclamation to enable the deputation to sign the law. After this was done, Kossakowski even suggested that the *Law on Government* should be celebrated annually on 8 May, the feast of St Stanisław. And the chamber echoed the request. Several who had opposed the Constitution on 3 May now declared their unity with the king and the nation, before the senators and envoys kissed the king's hand.<sup>61</sup>

The *Declaration of the Assembled Estates*, which had probably been read out along with the *Law on Government* on 3 May, was also entered into the acts of the

<sup>58</sup> ASC 19, ff. 24, 27.

<sup>59</sup> ASC 19, ff. 36–7.

<sup>60</sup> ASC 19, f. 35.

<sup>61</sup> ASC 19, ff. 75–89. It may have been pertinent that two weeks earlier the king had nominated Kossakowski coadjutor of Wilno. See above, 204. However, on 17 May 1791 Kossakowski reassured Szczęśny Potocki that he had not altered his attitude towards him, and admired his 'patriotism'. BCz. 3473, pp. 399–400.



Warsaw castle chancery on 5 May.<sup>62</sup> This declaration explicitly repealed all laws contrary to the Constitution, in which would be comprehended the detailed laws filling out the provisions of the *Law on Government*. It reaffirmed the sejm's oath 'to God and the Fatherland' to obey the Constitution and defend it, and ordered a similar oath to be taken by the army. Church services were ordained on 8 May across the country

for giving thanks to God for the opportune moment for rescuing Poland from foreign violence and domestic disorder, for the restoration of government, which can most effectively secure our true liberty and the entirety of Poland, for the placing thereby of our Fatherland on a level able to win true respect (*konsyderacyja*) in the eyes of Europe; we instruct the right reverend bishops, in designating the day of St Stanisław, bishop and martyr, patron of the Polish Crown, as solemn, which we and our descendants shall keep as a day dedicated to the Highest Providence, after which the Fatherland can boldly and safely draw breath after so many calamities. We also desire that both the secular and regular clergy, in their Christian teaching, which they owe to an orthodox people, should not cease to encourage all to give thanks in like manner to God. And so that future centuries could feel all the more strongly that in bringing this most desirable work to completion, despite the greatest difficulties and obstacles, with the help of the ruler of the fates of nations, we did not waste this happy moment for the saving of the nation, we resolve that in commemoration a votive church of all estates be erected and dedicated to the Highest Providence.

The role assigned to the clergy in propagating the Polish Revolution could hardly have been greater. More controversial was the threat that 'whosoever should dare to be opposed to this Constitution', whether by 'perfidious explanation' or rebellion, be punished as a traitor by the sejm court. This, it seemed to many, criminalized all critics of the Revolution. Those critics would soon claim that freedom of speech had been infringed.<sup>63</sup>

The contents of the *Law on Government* have been much discussed by historians, even in English.<sup>64</sup> Suffice it to say that the Constitution flattered the szlachta and confirmed its privileges, incorporated the *Law on Royal Towns*, vaguely took the peasants, 'as the most numerous population in the nation', under the protection of the law and government, allowed lords to make binding contracts with their serfs, and freed all immigrants from personal bondage. It combined a Rousseauvian sovereignty of the nation with a Montesquieuvian trinity of powers, declared the chamber of envoys 'the temple of legislation' and limited the senate to a suspensive veto, ended mandatory instructions by declaring envoys '*representatives of the entire nation*', abolished the *liberum veto* and confederacies, and provided for a revision of

<sup>62</sup> Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, 'Deklaracja Stanów Zjednoczonych z 5 czy 3 maja 1791 roku', *KH*, 89/1 (1992), 105–11.

<sup>63</sup> *Deklaracja Stanów Zgromadzonych*, in *Konstytucja 3 Maja*, 105–7.

<sup>64</sup> E.g. Lukowski, 'Recasting Utopia: Montesquieu, Rousseau and the Polish Constitution of 3 May 1791', *HJ*, 37 (1994), 65–87; id., *Disorderly Liberty*, 223–31; Gierowski, *The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth*, 255–9; J. Michalski, 'The Meaning of the Constitution of 3 May', and Z. Szcząska, 'The Fundamental Principles Concerning the Political System of the 3 May 1791 Government Statute', both in Fiszman (ed.), *Constitution and Reform*, 251–86, 287–308; Butterwick, *Poland's Last King*, 289–303.

the Constitution every twenty-five years. The elector of Saxony was named heir, followed by his daughter, if he begat no son.

Executive power was vested in a Custodial Council (*Straż Praw*) comprising the king, the primate 'as the head of the Polish clergy and as the chairman of the Educational Commission', the marshal of the sejm, and five royal nominees from among the ministers, but only the heads of foreign affairs and education would chair their respective magistratures. The king's will was to 'prevail' but he needed the counter-signature of one of the members of the *Straż* (not the primate), who were answerable to the sejm both judicially and politically. Judges of the courts of the first instance were to be elected at the sejmiks, 'free' peasants were guaranteed access to separate referendaries' courts, and a new codification of civil and criminal laws was ordained. Powers of regency were to be decided by the sejm, which was also to supervise the education of royal children, via the Educational Commission. Finally the article on the national armed forces declared: 'all citizens are defenders of the entirety and the freedoms of the nation'.<sup>65</sup> The absence of the name of the Commonwealth of the Two Nations probably reflected the wishes of the king and Kołłątaj for a unitary polity, but the Constitution by no means merged the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with the Crown.<sup>66</sup>

The article on religion took first place in the *Law on Government*. Stanisław August preferred to omit any prohibition on apostasy, and instead proposed—as he did in the sejm—to require that all children born to mixed marriages be brought up as Catholics. However, the point was questioned by Ignacy Potocki. Kołłątaj's draft made no mention of apostasy, so the decision to reinsert the ban on conversion to another faith must have been taken at the final stage, with a view to minimizing opposition, and securing the blessing of the Church.<sup>67</sup> The final text was as follows:

The dominant religion of the nation is and shall be the holy Roman Catholic faith with all its rights. Conversion from the dominant faith to any [other] confession whatsoever is forbidden under the penalties for apostasy. Given, however, that the same holy faith commands us to love our neighbours, therefore we owe peace in faith, and the protection of the government to all people, of whatever confession, and so we guarantee the freedom of all rites and religions in the Polish territories, according to the laws of the country.

And the whole began: 'In the name of God in the One Holy Trinity'.<sup>68</sup>

The provisions were both more enlightened than the toleration granted by Joseph II, because they did not specify the confessions to be tolerated, or restrict public worship, and less enlightened, because Catholics in the Habsburg territories were allowed to convert to Protestantism under certain conditions.<sup>69</sup> Although the phrase 'according to the laws of the country' might imply that old restrictions were still in force, the Constitution superseded any old laws contrary to it. It could thus

<sup>65</sup> *Konstytucja 3 Maja*, quotations at 89, 93, 99.

<sup>66</sup> See below, 260–1.

<sup>67</sup> Ossol. 1778, f. 210.

<sup>68</sup> *Konstytucja 3 Maja*, quotations at 82, 81.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Blanning, *Joseph II*, 72–6; Beales, *Joseph II*, vol. ii, ch. 5.

be argued that freedom of religion was subject to no limits other than the prohibition of apostasy.

Whereas controversies raged over the succession to the throne and the powers granted to the king and the executive, it seems as though the only person to fret over the first article was Saluzzo. At first he repeated the assurances given to him that the Constitution secured religion.<sup>70</sup> He was discomforted when the king asked him to write to the pope to bless the Constitution, because he still did not know its exact contents. When he obtained a rough translation he noted that it was not specified that the king should always be a Catholic. The Cardinal Laws were not revoked, but would they be executed? He was also concerned about the designation of the primate as 'head of the Polish clergy', the danger that the Educational Commission might extend its jurisdiction over the regulars, and the provision for legal codification, which might revivify the Zamoyski Code.<sup>71</sup> A more exact translation—into Latin—gave him the satisfaction of discovering that the property of everyone, therefore including the clergy, was guaranteed. He had been assured that not only the king, but also the ministers, must be Catholics. However, he was not satisfied by the guarantees of the dominant religion, and feared that the dissidents would be able to 'profit from the generality of privileges accorded to nobles and burghers'.<sup>72</sup>

The wording of the papal congratulations would require some delicacy. But Warsaw urgently sought the pope's blessing for 'the first revolution which has occurred without the least spilling of blood and without any prejudice to our holy apostolic Roman Catholic religion'.<sup>73</sup> It was to be part of a campaign launched by the Revolutionary leadership to propagate the Constitution as a Providential delivery of the Polish nation from 'anarchy' and 'foreign violence'.

#### 4. THE REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP

The Revolution of 3 May mapped out a legislative programme for the sejm. It also created a new political reality, in which key decisions were made by a few politicians who had been bound together by the new Constitution. Thus the approach of the 'high political school' gains in importance, even as the politicized 'public' expanded. Formerly, political groupings competed, to a great extent, in a parliamentary forum. The leadership now enjoyed a relatively disciplined majority in the sejm, the 'patriotic party', which was well organized through the caucus of the 'Society of the Friends of the Constitution *Fiat Lux*', founded in the days after 3 May 1791.<sup>74</sup>

The leadership nevertheless had to take account of the wishes of its supporters, and was well aware of the need to win over the provincial noble public. Discursive

<sup>70</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 4 May 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 82.

<sup>71</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 7 May 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 82–4. Cf. M. Loret, 'Watykan a Polska w dobie rozbiorów 1772–1795', *Przegląd Współczesny*, 49 (1934), 342–3.

<sup>72</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 18 May 1791, ASV ANV 91, ff. 85–6.

<sup>73</sup> Ghigiotti to Antici, 11 May 1791, AGHig. 25b, vol. xi, ff. 69–70.

<sup>74</sup> See below, 277–8.

boundaries constricted the room for manoeuvre, not least over religion. Stanisław August in particular wanted Pius VI to bless the Constitution. This gave Rome a lever. Saluzzo noted immediately that the monarch now stood at the head of the government, and the Holy See henceforth treated the king as its principal partner.<sup>75</sup>

Formally, the Commonwealth's leadership was vested in the king in the Custodial Council, whose role was set out in detail by the law passed on 1 June 1791.<sup>76</sup> The status accorded to the primate in the Constitution of 3 May caused some disquiet. The nuncio and some of the bishops feared that the phrase 'head of the Polish clergy' might imply an extension of primatial jurisdiction at papal, monastic, and episcopal expense. When the question was put to the sejm on 31 May 1791, Skarszewski, Cieciszowski and others objected to any interference of the temporal power in the hierarchy and discipline of the clergy. Some envoys were equally keen to prevent any suggestion that the clergy was a '*status in statu*'.<sup>77</sup>

The following day an amended project was read out, with the wording suggested by Kossakowski: 'head of the Polish clergy, that is, the first in rank of the hierarchy of the clergy of the Polish Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania'. This was accepted unanimously. The primate's chairing of the Educational Commission was not at issue.<sup>78</sup> Stanisław August stated only the resolution of the question in his next letter to his brother, and no evidence (other than Saluzzo's earlier suspicions) has survived that either of them entertained plans for a national Church under a strengthened primacy.<sup>79</sup> However, after the Constitution had been passed, the king did want the primate to resume a leading political role.<sup>80</sup> Michał Poniatowski would have liked to have stayed longer in England, but agreed to come home.<sup>81</sup> He indicated to the king that he would support the Constitution.<sup>82</sup> Pending the primate's return, his place in the Custodial Council was taken by Feliks Turski.

The council's composition, altered late in the negotiations, reflected the necessity of a 'broad-bottomed ministry', as the English would have put it. It seemed essential to neutralize domestic opposition by including its potential leaders in the government. Jacek Małachowski, the conservative and Russophile grand chancellor of the Crown, reluctantly agreed to serve as 'minister of the seal'.<sup>83</sup> Ksawery Branicki became minister of war. At first he made a show of loyalty. But by July 1791 the king was describing the hetman as a 'wolf in a cave'.<sup>84</sup> Branicki seems to

<sup>75</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 4 May, 7, 18 May 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 81–4, 87 (quotation). Zelada to Saluzzo, 28 May 1791, ASV ANV 53, ff. 103–4, reporting Antici's request for a *breve* of benediction. Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 209–14.

<sup>76</sup> VL, ix, 266–70.

<sup>77</sup> ASC 19, ff. 384–8. These envoys included Kazimierz Rzewuski (Podolia) and Albin Skórkowski (Sandomierz). The nuncio was appalled by the 'French maxims' expressed by 'every second' speaker. Saluzzo to Zelada, 1 June 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 88–9.

<sup>78</sup> ASC 14, f. 28. VL, ix, 266.

<sup>79</sup> SA to MJP, 4 June 1791, AGhig, 801b, vol. i, f. 181.

<sup>80</sup> SA to MJP, 25 May 1791, AGhig, 801b, vol. i, f. 177.

<sup>81</sup> SA to MJP, 8 June 1791, AGhig, 801b, vol. i, ff. 183–4.

<sup>82</sup> SA to Deboli, 3 August 1791, ZP 413, f. 157.

<sup>83</sup> Smoleński, *Ostatni rok*, 38–40.

<sup>84</sup> SA to Marcin Badeni, 27 July 1791, quoted in Smoleński, *Ostatni rok*, 55.

have offered Turski the restoration of the Duchy of Siewierz in a vain attempt to persuade the bishop of Cracow to 'stand at the head of our party'. Finally, following Potemkin's death on 16 October 1791, Branicki gained permission to go to his wife in St Petersburg.<sup>85</sup>

Ignacy Potocki chose to be minister of police, leaving the royalist Joachim Chreptowicz the ministry of foreign affairs (the law would allocate the portfolio of foreign affairs to one of the chancellors, and that of police to one of the marshals). Tomasz Ostrowski, nominated court treasurer of the Crown on 17 May 1791, became minister of the treasury. An enlightened reformer, he was trusted by both Potocki and the king. Stanisław Małachowski and Kazimierz Sapieha sat in the council, both to aid communication with the sejm and to quell republican anxieties. Sapieha had now completely thrown his lot in with the Revolution.<sup>86</sup>

The core of the leadership comprised those who had negotiated the constitution: Stanisław August, Ignacy Potocki, and Stanisław Małachowski, in that order. None of them had been able to resist the anti-clerical tide in the spring of 1789, all favoured the more moderate measures of 1790, none sought further reform of the Catholic Church for the moment, and all were determined to defend the Educational Commission. Stanisław August and Potocki were critical of the contemplative and mendicant orders. All were attached to Enlightenment ideals of toleration, and all in their own ways believed in Divine Providence. When the primate returned, he would have the opportunity to create a new role for himself, as *de facto* minister for the clergy and education. But he would have to reckon with someone who held strong views on these matters.

Hugo Kołłątaj had long exercised an influence behind the scenes, especially on Stanisław Małachowski. His writings and his following in the clubs and the streets made him an important political player in his own right. They also made him a liability in many palatinates. Kołłątaj's role was now to be more overt. In the teeth of opposition from the nuncio and most of the bishops, after some hesitation on the part of the monarch, but with strong support from Małachowski, Kołłątaj became vice-chancellor of the Crown on 17 May 1791.<sup>87</sup> Saluzzo lamented that the new vice-chancellor was 'much taken by modern philosophy, for the novelties which have occurred elsewhere, and for the dissidents.' He feared Kołłątaj would get a bishopric next.<sup>88</sup>

On 20 May Kołłątaj made his maiden speech. He compared himself to Aristides, Phocion, Socrates, and St Paul in his willingness to sacrifice himself for the truth, before concluding with an appeal to the king to complete 'the general happiness of the nation, the task placed in your hands by merciful Providence'.<sup>89</sup> Despite such hubris, the king was impressed by Kołłątaj's energy and efficiency, and began to trust him. Contemporaries recalled Kołłątaj as a man who might have become

<sup>85</sup> SA to Deboli, 20 July (quotation), 30 July, 26 October 1791, ZP 413, ff. 146, 156, 218.

<sup>86</sup> See Józef Wojakowski, *Straż Praw* (Warsaw, 1982).

<sup>87</sup> Pasztor, 'Wokół nominacji Kołłątaja'.

<sup>88</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 18 May 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 87. Pasztor, *Hugo Kołłątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 66, 206.

<sup>89</sup> ASC 19, f. 276. *Głos... Hugona Kołłątaja podkanclerzego koronnego... 20. maja 1791.*

another Richelieu. He excelled in managing patronage, and before long many benefices and orders were being conferred on his advice—as his burgeoning correspondence shows. But he also wished to direct the ‘mild revolution’ in its widest sense.<sup>90</sup>

Saluzzo and Zelada considered Kołłątaj noxious, and the nuncio sought to limit his influence on the monarch. Stanisław August urged the vice-chancellor to mend his fences with both Rome and the Polish hierarchy.<sup>91</sup> Kołłątaj remained critical of Saluzzo. He told the king that he was not bothered by ‘the diverse chimeras, thus far, of the reverend nuncio, who knows only how to be angry, and to prejudge matters falsely, but does not know how to act effectively in ecclesiastical affairs’.<sup>92</sup> Saluzzo and Kołłątaj had different views of the Church’s best interests.

Having failed to become bishop of Chełm, Kołłątaj pursued the coadjutorship of Cracow. Turcki, his resolve stiffened by the nuncio, initially refused his consent, but ultimately yielded to the king’s entreaties. Stanisław August nominated Kołłątaj on 5 February 1792.<sup>93</sup> Zelada had instructed Saluzzo to prevent Kołłątaj getting a bishopric, and felt the blow keenly.<sup>94</sup> For the moment, however, the vice-chancellor tried to secure a commendatory abbacy to supplement his revenues.<sup>95</sup> Perhaps in the long term, he was thinking of the primacy, with the headship of the clergy, the direction of education, and a permanent seat in the Custodial Council.

<sup>90</sup> See Rostworowski, *Ostatni król*, 239–41; Pasztor, *Hugo Kołłątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 215–17.

<sup>91</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 11 June, 25 June, 8 October 1791, ASV ANV 53, ff. 110, 118, 183; Saluzzo to Zelada, 20 July 1791, 14 March 1792, ASV ANV 67, ff. 97, 139–40. SA to Deboli, 4 June 1791, ZP 413, f. 116. Pasztor, *Hugo Kołłątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 206–7.

<sup>92</sup> Kołłątaj to SA, 2 March 1792, BCz. 922, pp. 541–3.

<sup>93</sup> Pasztor, *Hugo Kołłątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 208 n. 16.

<sup>94</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 25 June 1791, 30 June 1792, ASV ANV 53, ff. 118, 372–3.

<sup>95</sup> Kołłątaj to SA, undated, BCz. 922, ff. 377–8. In this letter he also expressed his ‘hope in God’ that the Duchy of Siewierz, ‘although greatly cut up’, was not yet entirely lost. Pasztor, *Hugo Kołłątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 199, 202.

## Propagating and sacralizing the Providential Revolution

Propaganda for the Revolution of 3 May began with the texts of the *Law on Government* and the *Declaration of the Assembled Estates*. The clergy was expected to rouse support for the Revolution. Alongside a discourse contrasting ‘government’ with ‘aristocratic anarchy’, one of the key arguments was that this ‘mild revolution’ was the work of Divine Providence. The leadership’s efforts to make the Constitution the holiest of national holidays culminated on its first anniversary, but from the outset public events encouraged the ‘nation’ to celebrate the miraculous salvation of its very existence. These ceremonies also conveyed the message that the ‘nation’ was no longer exclusively noble, but that it encompassed the burghers, and more vaguely, all inhabitants of the Commonwealth. The key test of noble support for the new order came at the sejmiks held in February 1792.

### 1. A ‘MIRACLE OF THE DIVINE HAND, DELIVERING US FROM ULTIMATE CALAMITY’

The proclamation issued on 7 May 1791 by Marshals Małachowski and Sapieha reads less like an announcement than a hymn. The essential point was made in the first paragraph:

Our Fatherland is now saved, our freedoms secured, we are henceforth a free and independent nation, the fetters of slavery and anarchy have fallen, the omnipotent hand of the God of Hosts has broken them and, for the salvation of the Fatherland, has averted the thunderbolt and tempest prepared for her ultimate destruction.

The message was repeated as the marshals alternately addressed God and the nation. Poland had been rescued from the abyss by the Providential unity miraculously wrought by God among the nation’s leaders. There was an element of menace: ‘Permit not, O God, who takes pity on the fate of the Fatherland! that there should be among us such a citizen, who would tear the bond of unity with a sacrilegious hand.’ It was also an exercise in political education. ‘Government’ increased ‘the general strength’, secured the rights of all, opened opportunities to talent, overthrew ‘the despotism of the powerful’, and broke ‘the fetters imposed on

equals'. The proclamation was to be read out from pulpits on three successive occasions.<sup>1</sup>

Several bishops issued pastoral letters in support of the Constitution.<sup>2</sup> They repeated the message that God, in His mercy, had rescued the Commonwealth from the abyss. Rybiński thanked God that 'we have a calm, sweet revolution, which changes the antiquated errors of the Polish government more by good judgement than by zeal'.<sup>3</sup> But most also declared that neither liberty nor government could subsist without religion. 'It is impossible to please God without faith', wrote Cieciszowski, and 'faith is proved not by indifferent profession, but by deeds'. He applauded the prohibition of open apostasy, but warned against the wolves in sheep's clothing foretold by Christ, who claimed to be new 'enlighteners' of the world.<sup>4</sup> Okęcki hoped officials would 'curtail lawlessness, correct misgovernance, maintain the decency of morals, abash luxury and depravity, which are more harmful to states than wars and other disasters, and restore honour and respect for the faith of our fathers!'<sup>5</sup> Naruszewicz justified the toleration accorded to 'sects' by the wish not to provoke heterodox powers to harrass their Catholics. Christ had left the gathering of all sheep into one flock until the appointed time.<sup>6</sup>

On the same day as the proclamation, the *Warsaw Gazette* published a laudatory report. Even if written reluctantly, it shows how the Revolution could be sacralized in Christian discourse:

That which so many kings sought in vain, the Highest Divine Providence has permitted the presently reigning *Stanisław August* happily to find, and this on the very day of the *Finding of the Holy Cross*; it has bounteously sweetened so many bitter crosses borne in the reign of this monarch [...] On this day, worthy of eternal memory, a *Revolution* took place among the *Deliberating Estates*, not on the model of today's rebellions and bloody foreign ones, but calmly united by love of the common good, a new *Form of the Entire Government* was accepted.<sup>7</sup>

Reverend Łuski would later switch his emphasis from Polish moderation to French violence.

On 8 May 1791 the feast of St Stanisław was celebrated in Warsaw 'with extraordinary pomp and display'.<sup>8</sup> In the Church of the Holy Cross, Ignacy

<sup>1</sup> S. Małachowski, K. N. Sapieha, *Wszem wobec, i każdemu z osobna komu o tym wiedzieć należy*. . . (Warsaw, 7 May 1791), in Grześkowiak-Krwawicz (ed.), *Za czy przeciw Ustawie Rządowej*, 24–9.

<sup>2</sup> Cieciszowski, Krasieński, Naruszewicz, Okęcki, Rybiński, Szembek, and Turski. J. Ziolk, *Konstytucja 3 Maja*, 24–6.

<sup>3</sup> J. Rybiński, *List pasterski do dyecezyi kujawskiej zalecający dziękczynnie Panu BOGU, za dowody Opatrzności Jego nad Ojczyznę Naszą, z okoliczności nowej Konstytucji, na Dniu 3. Maja przyjętej całosci i szczęście Kraiu Polskiego zabezpieczającej* (Warsaw, 14 May 1791).

<sup>4</sup> K. Cieciszowski, *Całemu duchowieństwu świeckiemu i zakonnemu, tudzież wszystkim wiernym Chrystusowym dyecezyi naszej kłuskiej zdrowie y pasterskie błogosławieństwo* (Warsaw, 10 May 1791).

<sup>5</sup> A. Okęcki, *List pasterski zalecający dziękczynienie Bogu z okoliczności [sic] Konstytucji na dniu 3 Maja* . . . (Warsaw, 25 May 1791).

<sup>6</sup> A. Naruszewicz, *Wszystkiemu duchowieństwu świeckiemu i zakonnemu, oraz wiernym Chrystusowym dyecezyi naszej łuskiej i brzeskiej* . . . (Warsaw, 20 May 1791).

<sup>7</sup> GW, 7 May 1791.

<sup>8</sup> Saluzzo to Żelada, 11 May 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 85.



Witoszyński preached a breathless sermon on the trusty theme of the good shepherd. He too declared that 'our *Revolution* differs from other countries' *revolutions*, and God will take it as his own work, take it under His care and defence, and will bless us'. Having meekly submitted to Divine scourging for their sins, Poles had trusted in Divine mercy and begged forgiveness.<sup>9</sup> A similar message was preached that day to the Lithuanian Tribunal in Grodno. Michał Karpowicz had to improvise his sermon, after the news of the 'revolution' arrived the previous day.<sup>10</sup> In Wilno, Marcin Poczubut hailed a 'miracle of the Divine hand, delivering us from ultimate calamity'.<sup>11</sup> As the news spread across the Commonwealth (reaching Mozyrz on 21 May with the *National and Foreign Gazette*), the pattern of salutes, banquets with patriotic toasts, illuminations, votive Masses, sermons, and the *Te Deum* was repeated.<sup>12</sup>

The repertoire was reprised throughout the following year. For example on 27 June 1791, sixty nobles gathered in the collegiate church in Wieluń for Mass, a sermon, and an oath, followed by a banquet (also attended by the municipality) given by the chairman of the local Civil-Military Commission, Kazimierz Myszkowski. Toasts were accompanied by cannon salutes.<sup>13</sup> The festivities were too similar not to have been organized and reported according to a centrally approved model, but the genuine enthusiasm was confirmed, with distaste, by Szczesny Potocki's correspondents. In many places, nobles fraternized with burghers and took up urban citizenship. Noblewomen broke the ice at a ball in Minsk, crossing the floor and conversing with the wives of the burghers. From that point onwards, distinctions of estate were ignored at their 'assemblies'. Inevitably, social prejudices softened. At the same time, the roles were demarcated—the noble was the gracious elder brother or sister; the burgher the grateful younger half-sibling.<sup>14</sup> At Łomża on 17 January 1792 (the king's sixtieth birthday), an oath was sworn by nobles, clergy, and burghers alike. This followed a sermon by the Piarist Patrycy Przeczytański, which presented the Constitution as the fruits of the patient efforts of a wise king. The local Civil-Military Commission instructed all parish priests to organize similar oaths in their parishes. Reverend M. Stawiski duly assembled over a thousand nobles at his parish of Puchal for the oath, and sent the king a letter signed by more than half of them. But the reception was more uneven than a glance through the press would suggest; only a minority of Civil-Military Commissions volunteered to swear an oath to maintain the Constitution.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>9</sup> GW, 11 May, supplement to 11 June 1791. I. Witoszyński, *Kazanie o środkach, i sposobach, zachęcających do Cnoty, i zrażających występki, w celu, i widokach, duchownych razem, i politycznych, uważonych, w dzień uroczystości S. Stanisława... do Najjaśniejszych Rzeczypospolitej Stanów... dnia 8. maja R. P. 1791. mówione* (Warsaw, 1791).

<sup>10</sup> For the sermons preached by Karpowicz and Jan Nepomucen Kossakowski in 1791–2 see Butterwick, 'Between Anti-Enlightenment and Enlightened Catholicism', 219–28.

<sup>11</sup> Poczubut to Jan Śniadecki, 12 May 1791, quoted after Smoleński, *Ostatni rok*, 10–11.

<sup>12</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 339, 306–7.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 131 and *passim*.

<sup>14</sup> Zienkowska, *Sławetny i urodzeni*, 205–12.

<sup>15</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 144–5. P. Przeczytański, *Kazanie przy... zaprzysiężeniu ustawy 3 maja r. 1791 zapadły miane dnia 17. stycznia r. 1792 w kościele farnym łomżyńskim* [1792]. M. Ślusarska,

Such oaths highlight the military strand in pro-Constitutional discourse. In September 1791, the Commonwealth's armed forces held manoeuvres. Besides the urgent need for training, the marches and camps were intended to overcome citizens' fears of undisciplined soldiers and inspire pride in Polish martial prowess. Izabella Czartoryska choreographed the ceremonies accompanying the manoeuvres of the Little Poland division. Grzegorz Piramowicz preached at the blessing of the standards, following an open air Mass on 15 September. According to the *National and Foreign Gazette*, 'he gave lessons for the military estate, founded on the holiness of religion and an oath. He spoke of its respectable calling, of its duties regarding justice, love of the Fatherland, bravery, practice in military craft, and obedience.' The report sought to replicate the emotional impact of the spectacle:

The magnificent view of several thousand of the nation's soldiers, fully armed and equipped, the echo during the celebration of Mass of cannons, drums, trumpets, and the rustle of swords drawn during the Gospel and Consecration, aroused strong and joyful feelings at the growing significance of our country among the citizens of every estate and sex who were present.<sup>16</sup>

## 2. REFERENDUM: THE SEJMIKS OF FEBRUARY 1792

Although the legality of the Revolution 'of 3 and 5 May' was maintained by its supporters, an endorsement from the 'nation' was politically imperative. The next sejmiiks (to elect deputies to the tribunals) were scheduled for 15 July 1791 in the Crown, but not until 14 February 1792 in Lithuania. Denying opponents the chance of a swift counter-attack, on 26 May 1791 the sejm decided to hold all the forthcoming sejmiiks the following February.<sup>17</sup>

The February 1792 sejmiiks were the nearest thing to a referendum in the Commonwealth's history. If this sounds anachronistic, then the idea of 'referring' a question to the 'nation' was rooted in Polish republican culture. Wojciech Szczygielski's monograph not only convincingly establishes the terms and 'result' of the 'referendum', but is also a mine of information that permits conclusions on shifts in provincial political culture, and on the place of religion and the clergy therein.

To secure a favourable outcome, the pro-Constitutional camp employed every persuasive means at its disposal. Pamphleteers denounced 'foreign violence' and 'aristocratic anarchy' and sought to allay fears about the *Law on Government*.<sup>18</sup> The

<sup>16</sup> 'Zagadnienia polityczne i społeczne w kazaniach OO. Pijarów w Polsce wieku Oświecenia', in I. Stasiewicz-Jasiukowa (ed.), *Wkład Pijarów do nauki i kultury Polsce XVII-XIX w.* (Warsaw and Cracow, 1993), 153–69, at 159–60.

<sup>17</sup> Rostworowski, *Ostatni król*, 245. *GNiO*, 14 September, 28 September 1791.

<sup>18</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 17–20.

<sup>19</sup> Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu*, 314–37.

leadership mobilized and motivated supporters in the provinces. However, talk of widespread corruption was exaggerated. The basic form of persuasion was the letter, intended to be read out in the localities. Such letters sought to calm fears of foreign intervention, and often assured activists of the elector of Saxony's favourable dispositions.<sup>19</sup> The king typically portrayed the Constitution as a 'work in which a miracle of Divine Providence manifests itself for the raising up of our Fatherland from ruin'.<sup>20</sup>

The strongest expression of support for the Constitution would be an oath to defend it. However, the king's priority was to avoid any divided sejmiks or official protests. A less binding form of approval or recognition could be negotiated, should there be any significant opposition to an oath. Preferably this would take the form of a solemn pledge or 'assurance' (*zaręczenie*); if not, then a vote of thanks to the king and Estates, conveyed either by a delegation or the envoys. In the last resort, if the mood of the sejmik was hostile, silence was better than any criticism of the *Law on Government*. Szczygielski plausibly interprets these outcomes as overwhelming support, decisive support, lukewarm support with significant opposition present, and thinly veiled disapproval.<sup>21</sup>

A law passed on 2 November 1791 was intended to equalize the number of sejmiks in each province. In practice, not every district or county wished to organize its own sejmik, especially in Little Poland.<sup>22</sup> The 'result' is shown in Table 6. Applying Szczygielski's criteria, 90 per cent of the sejmiks approved the Constitution, and 73 per cent of them did so decisively.<sup>23</sup> If we were to weigh equally the results from Little Poland, Great Poland, and Lithuania, the percentages in the last column would be 43.3, 28.8, 15.6, and 12.3. The difference is not great.

Whereas the lack of enthusiasm for the Constitution in Mazovia and Podlasia, with their numerous petty szlachta, is readily explicable, the extent of Lithuanian support is harder to explain. Suggestions include the prominence of Lithuanian envoys in promoting the cause of 'independence' from Russia, a less instinctive hostility in Lithuanian political culture to 'monarchy', and the continuing legacy of 'discipline' at Lithuanian sejmiks.<sup>24</sup> It is likely that had Lithuanian anxieties over the dualist nature of the Commonwealth not been assuaged by the law entitled the *Mutual Assurance of the Two Nations* in October 1791, the results in the Grand Duchy would not have been as favourable. In exchange for consenting to common Treasury and Military Commissions, Sapieha secured agreement to half of these commissioners being Lithuanians, and to the maintenance of separate hierarchies of

<sup>19</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 23–42.

<sup>20</sup> SA to Krzysztof Cieszkowski, 6 February 1792, BCz. 920, pp. 511–12.

<sup>21</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 51–68.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 43–50. *VL*, ix. 326–38.

<sup>23</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 169–70, 292–3, 359–61, 394–6.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 380–2. *Cf.* above, 42.

**Table 6.** The February 1792 sejmiks and the Constitution of 3 May 1791

|           | Little Poland          | Great Poland            | Polish Crown | Grand Duchy of Lithuania, with Livonia | Commonwealth |
|-----------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------|--------------|
| Oath      | 6 (33.3%) <sup>a</sup> | 4 (14.8%) <sup>b</sup>  | 10 (22.2%)   | 27 (81.8%) <sup>c</sup>                | 37 (47.4%)   |
| Assurance | 7 (38.9%) <sup>d</sup> | 12 (44.5%) <sup>e</sup> | 19 (42.2%)   | 1 (3.0%) <sup>f</sup>                  | 20 (25.6%)   |
| Thanks    | 1 (5.6%) <sup>g</sup>  | 7 (25.9%) <sup>h</sup>  | 8 (17.8%)    | 5 (15.2%) <sup>i</sup>                 | 13 (16.7%)   |
| Silence   | 4 (22.2%) <sup>j</sup> | 4 (14.8%) <sup>k</sup>  | 8 (17.8%)    | 0 (0%)                                 | 8 (10.3%)    |
| Totals    | 18 (100%)              | 27 (100%)               | 45 (100%)    | 33 (100%)                              | 78 (100%)    |

a. Chełm, Cracow, Latyczów, Łuków, Opatów, Winnica.

b. Lipno, Rawa, Sieradz, Wizna.

c. Bobrujsk, Braśław, Brześć Litewski, Kobryń, Chołopienice, Grodno, Kowno, Lida, Merecz, Minsk, Mozyrz, Nowogródek, Olita, Osmiana, Pińsk, Płotnica, Poniewież, Preny, Rosienie, Słonim, Shuck, Szawle, Telsze, Wilkomierz, Wilno, Wołkowysk, Żyrmory.

d. Częstochowa, Drohiczyń, Dubienka, Dunajówce, Krzemieniec, Stężyca, Żytomierz.

e. Gąbin, Góra, Liw, Łomża, Piotrków, Poznań, Pyzdry, Raciąż, Sienica, Sochaczew, Warsaw, Wieluń.

f. Postawy.

g. Łuck.

h. Brześć Kujawski, Gniezno, Kalisz, Kościan, Łęczyca, Ostrów, Wyszogród.

i. Czaszniki, Czereja, Ejszyski, Iłkuksza, Troki.

j. Brańsk, Lublin, Mielnik, Włodzimierz.

k. Ciechanów, Mława, Różan, Zakroczym.

ministers and dignitaries in the ‘Two Nations’.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps resentment was felt in the Crown at the change to the traditional date of the sejmiks. The decision of less than a quarter of the Crown sejmiks to swear an oath hints at some unease among the szlachta. But contemporaries expressed no such doubts.

As news of the sejmiks began to reach Warsaw, the king’s joy was matched by Lucchesini’s consternation.<sup>26</sup> The French minister Marie-Louis Descorches (who had observed the Warsaw sejmik in the Bernardine Church from the pulpit) portrayed the results, in line with pro-Constitutional discourse, as a triumph of ‘order, tranquillity, and liberty’ over the former ‘disorder’ and ‘anarchy’. But he noted that the king and his allies had taken great pains to obtain them.<sup>27</sup> Essen and Hailes attributed the success chiefly to rumours of the acceptance of the succession by the elector of Saxony.<sup>28</sup> Opponents were reported either to have stayed away, or left sejmiks early, where an oath was sworn. No sejmik passed a resolution critical of the *Law on Government*. De Caché pronounced that this near-unanimity gave the

<sup>25</sup> See Śapoka, *Lietuva reformų seimo metu*, 444–6; J. Michalski, ‘Zagadnienie unii polsko-litewskiej w czasach panowania Stanisława Augusta’, in id., *Studia historyczne*, i. 44–73, at 62–6; J. Bardach, ‘The Constitution of 3 May and the Mutual Guarantee of the Two Nations’, in Fiszman (ed.), *Constitution and Reform*, 357–78.

<sup>26</sup> ‘Dziennik Bułhakowa’, in Kalinka, *Ostatnie lata*, ii. 305–6.

<sup>27</sup> Descorches to Antoine de Lessart, despatch 39, 29 February 1792, AMAE CP Pologne 319, f. 76–7. SA to Bukaty, 15 February 1792, in Kalinka, *Ostatnie lata*, ii. 212.

<sup>28</sup> Essen to Loss, 18 February 1792, SHStA, Loc. 3571, vol. XXIX, f. 80. Hailes to Baron Grenville, 25 February, 11 March 1792, NA FO 62/5, despatches 35 and 36.

'great revolutionary work of 3 May [...] not only the appearances, but the qualities of full legality'.<sup>29</sup>

Much of the language employed at and by the sejmiks reproduced the discourse employed by the Revolutionary leadership and echoed in pamphlets.<sup>30</sup> Many resolutions condemned 'anarchy' and 'aristocracy'. Even the sejmik of Mława, which remained silent on the Constitution, called for unanimity around the form of government 'securing the freedom of the nation and every individual, and overthrowing aristocracy (*możnowładztwo*) and former anarchy'.<sup>31</sup> Just as in the text of the *Law on Government* itself, much was made of the catastrophe averted in the nick of time by the Constitution. The Poznań sejmik declared 'that only one step remained from complete downfall, and probably even to the loss of the name of a Pole'.<sup>32</sup> Fewer Lithuanian resolutions seem to have contained lengthy justifications. Perhaps they were less necessary given the widespread support for an oath, the texts of which often featured a grim determination to sacrifice blood and property.<sup>33</sup> Lithuanian sejmiks referred more frequently to the liberty, independence, and reputation of the nation as a whole, than to the threat of aristocracy or anarchy within.<sup>34</sup>

Providential discourse was present in many resolutions. The Livonians instructed their envoys to convey their thanks, joy, and 'astonishment at such a great and visible work of Divine Providence' to the king, marshals, and legislators, adding prudently: 'but without offending any neighbouring power'.<sup>35</sup> At Liw in Mazovia, the szlachta gave their

unending thanks to the God of Hosts, that with the powerful right hand of His holy omnipotence, He has raised up our Fatherland, bent low from so many disasters, and given us a king on the throne, who having endured storms for all of his reign, has saved the Fatherland with his virtue, wisdom, and courage, and under whose effective helmsmanship the Estates of the Sejm, having broken the Commonwealth's dependency, have confirmed her permanence, government, and strength with laws.<sup>36</sup>

Wizna was the only Mazovian sejmik to swear an oath, thanks to the efforts of its castellan, Chryzanty Opacki, who brought a letter from the king. The resolution is redolent of his speech to the sejm in October 1788. Providence 'has led our country to that internal happiness, by which a citizen may not only breath the spirit of liberty, but also rest securely on the protection of government'. Following the oath, the *Te Deum* was sung by the priest whom Opacki had kept in readiness.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>29</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 3 March 1792, HHStA, II Polen 54, despatch 862,864, ff. 87–8.

<sup>30</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 26–7, 177, 274. Butterwick, 'Political Discourses', 727–8.

<sup>31</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 110.

<sup>32</sup> APPoz. Księgi Sejmiu Średzkiego, S.1, f. 108.

<sup>33</sup> E.g. the oath at Olita (for the Smolensk sejmik-in-exile), LMAVB F233-126, f. 207.

<sup>34</sup> See Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 294–361, *passim*.

<sup>35</sup> 'Kopia listu do JW Posłów Inf. od Obywatelów inf. pisany', LVIA, F1276-2-194, f. 56. No oath was sworn because the 'exiles' had property on both sides of the border. Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 325–31. J. Zyberk to SA, Iłkuksza, 18 February 1792, LVIA, F1276-2-194, ff. 64–6.

<sup>36</sup> BPAU 8322, f. 614.

<sup>37</sup> BPAU 8351, f. 429. See Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 150–2, and above, 56.

At Telsze, after the oath, 'the public zealously demanded that the *Te Deum laudamus* be sung'. Cannons were fired while it was intoned by Tadeusz Józef Bukaty, the suffragan bishop of Samogitia, 'proclaiming the public contentment with the salutary Constitution'.<sup>38</sup> Similar scenes were witnessed at Mozyrz, where professors, pupils, and monks all swore the oath.<sup>39</sup>

Despite the religious rituals and language, Essen detected a correlation between sejmiks' refusal of an oath to the Constitution and clerical influence. He ascribed reports of the clergy's discontent to the incentives to perjury given by the pressure to take an oath, but in the same sentence he also wrote of the bishops' campaign against the 'scandalous books arrived here from France'.<sup>40</sup> Although Skarszewski, Massalski, and Kossakowski were indeed hostile to the Constitution, it would be unfair to bracket Poniatowski with them. For the moment we shall confine ourselves to the sejmiks.<sup>41</sup>

The primate did not take an oath to the Constitution personally. But his five-point model instruction suggests his support for it. The first point emphasized the harmfulness of interregna and the need to correct the faults of the system of government, or rather to restore that which once made Poles respected in Europe. The envoys were therefore to thank the king and the Estates for the *Law on Government*, and for granting the succession to the elector of Saxony. The next point criticized the sale of Crown estates, as likely to cause a fall in the price of land, multiply entails antithetical to a 'republican country', increase the burden of taxation, and induce 'confusion' among the 'still unenlightened common folk' by introducing appeals to the referendaries' courts. The third suggested fifty-year leases as an alternative, and the fourth opposed the introduction of paper money. The last point called for the prevention of 'the sale of writings and books injuring the holy faith, morals, and honesty'.<sup>42</sup> A similar picture emerges from extant fragments of Poniatowski's correspondence. At at least two sejmiks, he asked for an oath to uphold the Constitution, in addition to the other points.<sup>43</sup>

Of the eight sejmiks that are known to have demanded censorship of works against religion and morals, Różan and Zakroczym remained silent on the Constitution. Łęczyca voted thanks (in expressive terms), whereas Pyzdry, Liw, and Kiev 'assured' the Constitution, and Sieradz and Pińsk swore oaths. Were the nobles of these localities renowned for their hostility to freethinking and heresy? In the case of the Mazovian counties of Różan, Zakroczym, and Liw, the answer seems to be 'yes'. Confessional factors may also have played a part in the district of Pińsk and the palatinate of Kiev, which had substantial Orthodox populations, while many Lutherans were settled in the palatinate of Sieradz. But other Mazovian sejmiks made no such demand, while the prosperous district of Pyzdry in Great Poland was

<sup>38</sup> A. Gielgud to I. Potocki, Poniewież, 8 March 1792, APP 279b, vol. vii, p. 240. Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 324.

<sup>39</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 341.

<sup>40</sup> Essen to Loss, 25 February 1792, SHStA, Loc. 3571, vol. XXIX, despatch 10, ff. 87–8.

<sup>41</sup> The primate's stance is also discussed below, chs. 12.3 and 13.5.

<sup>42</sup> 'Zalecenie Posłom Naszym...', AAG ACap. B84, ff. 277–8.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 29–30.

by no means 'backward'. At Pyzdry, the key role on behalf of the primate was played by Józef Radziwiński, palatine of Gniezno, who had demanded priority for Catholics in municipal office during the debate on the *Law on Royal Towns*. Mateusz Butrymowicz had a hand in the resolution at Pińsk, which also commended the Basilians. A similar part was played at Łęczyca by the royalist envoy Franciszek Jerzmanowski. In addition to endorsing all but one of Poniatowski's desiderata (in the case of censorship, word for word), the Łęczyca nobles also expressed their joy at his 'happy return from abroad'.<sup>44</sup>

The nobles of Liw also repeated the primate's phrasing, desiring that

the combined spiritual and temporal powers would prevent the spreading, under the pretext of misinterpreted freedom of the press, of the sale of writings and books injuring the holy faith, morals, and honesty, with irreparable damage to our fellow men and the Fatherland.

They also promised to defend the 'holy Roman Catholic religion, today and forever dominant, even risking [their] life and property'.<sup>45</sup>

The Różan and Zakroczym sejmiks, which voted no thanks for the Constitution, went *beyond* the primate's suggestions on censorship. The Różan resolution denounced books 'full of lasciviousness and false maxims against religion', and demanded banishment for those who sold them. Moreover, it condemned 'meetings of people of diverse estates and religions, called *klopy*, or by another name, [which] bring about coolness in religion, debauched thoughts, contempt for seniority'.<sup>46</sup> The brethren of Zakroczym made a similar denunciation of clubs, and added: 'so that we should not experience unhappy consequences like those in France'. They demanded 'that anonymous books, scandalizing readers, against religion, spoiling government and morals, be neither published, nor imported from abroad, nor translated', and 'that the ecclesiastical and police authorities would supervise this closely' according to the Cardinal Laws. The resolution also expressed concern at the prerogatives granted to the burghers, fearing a bad example for the peasants, and insisted that these prerogatives should not be extended to ecclesiastical towns. Józef Radzicki, envoy for Zakroczym, had opposed equal access for non-Catholics to municipal office in April 1791.<sup>47</sup> The wording of the resolutions suggests that the primate's influence was considerably *less* important at Różan and Zakroczym than at Łęczyca and Liw.

At Wilno several hundred swore an oath, although only after long disputes.<sup>48</sup> The text of the oath states that the citizens swore it 'with the zealous commendation and blessing of his highness Prince Pastor Massalski, bishop of Wilno'.<sup>49</sup> The king

<sup>44</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 92–5, 116–22, 154–7, 161–3, 260–6, 357–8. Łęczyca: BPAU 8330, f. 825. Pińsk: AMS, Poniatowski A I 19, ff. 105–8 (laudum), 123–4 (diary).

<sup>45</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 116–22. BPAU 8322, ff. 614–20.

<sup>46</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 161–2.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 154–7. BPAU 8354, ff. 344–53.

<sup>48</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 301.

<sup>49</sup> 'Akt przysięgi...', LVIA SA 4236, p. 563. Dr Robertas Jurgaitis kindly provided me with a photograph of this document.

was grateful. But Massalski kept his real views to himself.<sup>50</sup> Kossakowski did not—he tried and failed to prevent an oath at Kowno.<sup>51</sup>

The Cracow sejmik was notable in several regards. All opposition to an oath was overwhelmed on the first day. Dean Michał Sołtyk dictated it in St Mary's Church, to the accompaniment of cannon fire. Professors of the academy and its secondary school added their signatures, and the city's president greeted the szlachta in the name of the burghers. Perhaps nowhere else was anti-aristocratic rhetoric as fierce.<sup>52</sup> But for all the euphoria, tensions between clergy and laity emerged. Clergymen who held land in their own right as noblemen were initially prevented from voting. Reverend Stanisław Minocki asked whether dissident clergymen who were also noble landowners would be allowed to vote, and did not receive an answer. On the second day, 'on reflection', it was acknowledged that clergymen were not excluded from the rights of citizens by the law. However, such was the feeling against clerical participation, that the envoys were instructed to seek a resolution from the sejm 'negative for the clergy' in this regard. Dean Sołtyk appealed to Stanisław Małachowski to ensure 'that clergymen be not injured', and Minocki added his own plea that Kołłątaj work on the Cracow envoys.<sup>53</sup>

The clearest example of how the clergy could incline the szlachta to swear an oath to the Constitution is Michał Karpowicz's sermon to the inaugural sejmik of the district of Preny. The themes of the nation's newly acquired reputation in Europe (he cited 'that zealous republican, Mr *Burke*'), and the need to execute enlightened legislation resonated throughout. He emphasized Providence, especially when evoking the overthrow of the Russian yoke. The rhetoric was also anti-aristocratic and anti-anarchic. Karpowicz attacked 'political errors canonized by antiquity', in a secular application of religious language. The freedom to speak and write guaranteed, in his view, by the Constitution, was explicitly contrasted with the accompanying prohibition of incitement to rebellion. He acknowledged the attractiveness 'to the honest szlachta' of 'malcontent' propaganda by confronting it. The celebrated preacher told his congregation that 'no *political, statistical, civil, or economic* matter is not considered in the clearest, and most thorough manner, for the enlightenment of the nation, in the speeches of the patriot legislators'. This top-down discourse carried the message: trust me, and trust them.<sup>54</sup>

The sejmik duly agreed an oath to defend the Constitution, in which the discourse of 'ordered freedom' was enclosed within traditional Catholic formulae. After the szlachta had sworn their oath, they were followed by the local burghers. The proceedings were presented in the *National and Foreign Gazette* as model

<sup>50</sup> SA to Deboli, 19 February, 28 February 1792, ZP 413, f. 313, 340. Massalski to SA, Wilno, 1 March 1792, BCz. 734, p. 305.

<sup>51</sup> Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 313.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 125, 171–9.

<sup>53</sup> S. Minocki to Kołłątaj, Cracow, 7 March 1792, BPAU 197, ff. 197–8.

<sup>54</sup> *Kazanie X. Karpowicza . . . na pierwszym ufundowaniu powiatu preńskiego i rozpoczęciu pierwszych sejmików w kościele parafialnym preńskim 14 lutego, 1792. roku* (Wilno, 1792).



sejmik.<sup>55</sup> Of course, few clergymen were as persuasive as Karpowicz, preaching in his own pulpit.

The tranquillity and decorum of the sejms were widely noted. New patterns of political behaviour were in evidence—one factor may have been the fact that many sejms were meeting for the first time, or in new locations. The tone in some places seems to have been raised by women spectators—their attendance was thought noteworthy by contemporaries. Orderly banquets with patriotic toasts, accompanied by balls and illuminations, took the place (not least in ‘patriot’ propaganda) of the riotous inebriation of multitudinous petty nobles by agents of the magnates.<sup>56</sup> The exclusion of landless szlachta has been suggestively presented as an expression of the self-interest of wealthier nobles against their poorer brethren.<sup>57</sup> But not all those affixing their name to an oath or assurance could sign their names—many were the traditional signs of the Cross. Evidently those poorer nobles who were present behaved themselves.

And what of religion? At a few sejms the szlachta echoed the primate’s demands for ecclesiastical censorship and his criticism of the decision to sell off Crown estates. Elsewhere, his attempt failed. But this was a side-show, and no firm correlation between hostility to irreligion and hostility to the Constitution can be established. If, as in Cracow, tension between clergy and laity was a factor to be reckoned with, in other places the clergy, including the regulars, were involved in the displays of fraternity. In general the clergy seem to have been no less supportive of the Revolution than the nobility. Everywhere, the forms in which the Constitution was celebrated were religious. One ‘malcontent’ had predicted this, writing that the szlachta was expected to swear to uphold ‘the Alkoran of 3 May’.<sup>58</sup> In most localities, religion and revolution were in harmony.

### 3. APOTHEOSIS: 3 MAY 1792

Even before the results of all the sejms were known, the leadership was considering how to exploit its success. The imminent arrival in Warsaw of dozens of delegations prompted Kołłątaj to propose a public audience.<sup>59</sup> Stanisław August was keen to hold the event on the first anniversary of the Constitution, when he could lay the foundation stone of the Church of Divine Providence. He also asked the pope to translate the feast of St Stanisław from 8 May to 3 May. Saluzzo employed cipher to warn Zelada that the request contained ‘more politics than religion’. Neither the elector of Saxony nor the neighbouring powers had accepted the Constitution, and it contained ‘bad, or at least equivocal things’, such as the designation of the primate as head of the clergy and an extension of toleration.

<sup>55</sup> *GNiO*, 3 March 1792, quoted by Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 314.

<sup>56</sup> A. Lityński, *Sejmiki ziemskie 1764–1793. Dzieje reform* (Katowice, 1988), 140–70. Szczygielski, *Referendum*, 23–4, 368–73.

<sup>57</sup> D. Beauvois, *Pouvoir russe et noblesse polonaise en Ukraine 1793–1830* (Paris, 2003), 40–9.

<sup>58</sup> Hulewicz to Szczęśny Potocki, 8 February 1792, BCz. 3474, p. 119.

<sup>59</sup> Kołłątaj to SA, 22 February 1792, BCz. 922, p. 531. Smoleński, *Ostatni rok*, 358.

He advised against moving the feast of St Stanisław, on the grounds that the feast of the finding of the Holy Cross fell on 3 May. However, he recommended an indulgence for those taking part in the ceremony to celebrate the feast of St Stanisław at the same time.<sup>60</sup>

On 15 March 1792 the sejm resumed after the break for the sejmiks. Stanisław Potocki responded to Stanisław Małachowski's invitation to discuss the reception of the delegates with a glorious exercise in Providential rhetoric:

What rhetoric, what lips, what voice, would be needed to laud your deeds, Most Serene Lord, and [those of] the Nation? I feel that my own incapacity cannot achieve it, that this voice must probably be inspired by a heavenly spirit, which united the hearts of the nation; this voice shall give to posterity a monument of your reign and deeds. When I cast my eye over the elapsed ages of the history of the world, I can see nothing more splendid, nothing more worthy of human memory, than the unity of the Polish nation, which shall serve free nations as an example; in vain did the voice of jealousy, the voice of slander accuse the Poles of disunity, it [unity] was with the salvation of the Fatherland; our quarrels were the result of misunderstanding, but in a single moment Poland changed her form, and showed herself in harmony. This I judge to be the greatest miracle of Providence, the most splendid monument of Your Majesty's reign.

His project, for ceremonies of thanksgiving during an extraordinary session of the sejm, and the laying of the foundation stone of the votive church, was agreed unanimously.<sup>61</sup>

Saluzzo backtracked. It was essential that the pope 'use all possible means to please the nation, which is in a state of enthusiasm; and especially to oblige His Majesty greatly, and win his affection, of which we have great need'. But he added that although the pope should lavish graces and praises 'on the Polish nation and the optimal sovereign', he should still refrain from any 'expressions, which would praise, and still less, approve the new Constitution'. If the king pressed for such approval, he could be told that it had been conferred the previous year. The granting of the request for the translation should take the form of recognizing the nation's 'devotion to the Holy See', and honouring the king.<sup>62</sup> Zelada duly sent Saluzzo a personal note to Stanisław August, and the *breve* translating the feast of St Stanisław to 3 May. The monarch was suitably appreciative.<sup>63</sup>

Work began on the foundations of the Church of Divine Providence. At the king's insistence it was located at the approach to his palace and park at Łazienki.<sup>64</sup> For almost two decades the king had wished to build a church on the site. The church was planned as an octagonal structure with four hexastyle Corinthian porticos and a shallow dome. The final design, by Jakub Kubicki, was less austere antique in style than some of the other projects submitted. We can be sure that

<sup>60</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 14 March 1792, ASV ANV 67, f. 138–40.

<sup>61</sup> ASC 24, ff. 188–92.

<sup>62</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 14 March, 16 March 1792, ASV ANV 67, ff. 138–42. Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 214–15.

<sup>63</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 4 April 1792, ASV ANV 53, f. 310. Saluzzo to Zelada, 18 April, 25 April 1792, ASV ANV 67, ff. 144, 146.

<sup>64</sup> Newsletter, 21 March 1792, BN Akc. 9830, f. 35.

Stanisław August would have lavished attention on the iconography of the interior, and the discourse of Providential monarchy would have found a worthy visual expression.<sup>65</sup>

The political temperature was raised by rumours that the king, Kołłątaj, and Ignacy Potocki were planning an 'administration' or 'dictatorship', which would temporarily assume the powers of the sejm. It was alleged that the celebrations would provide a cover for a coup to complete the dastardly work begun a year earlier.<sup>66</sup> A few days before the anniversary, the king received threatening letters, warning that he would not survive 3 May 1792. He wrote a kind of testament to Małachowski. The monarch called on God to witness that he had 'always wanted to do only that which was useful to my nation, and that [he] should thereby deserve its gratitude', and requested that the bishops ordain masses and prayers for his soul. Should he die at the hands of assassins, he forgave them.<sup>67</sup> He also ordered a doubling of the guard during the celebrations. The murder of Gustav III played on his nerves.<sup>68</sup>

On the morning of Thursday, 3 May, Stanisław August left the Royal Castle at half past eight, followed by the primate, and then the nuncio.<sup>69</sup> The guilds were ranged under their banners. Bells rang, and the crowds shouted 'long live the king and the nation!' as the procession moved down the wide throughfare to the Church of the Holy Cross. Many ladies patriotically wore white dresses with red sashes. As the king entered the church, Bishop Okęcki doused him with holy water and led him to the throne. Marshals Małachowski, Mniszech, and Sapieha all made speeches, followed by the king. Senators, envoys, and plenipotentiaries kissed his hand, before delegates of the three provinces gave thanks for the Constitution. Pontifical Mass was sung by Okęcki, echoed by the orchestra. Antonin Malinowski preached the sermon on the text of one shepherd and one flock. A storm passed over, supplying an expressive simile, which the king later employed in an audience. 222 musicians and singers performed Reverend Giovanni Paisiello's opulent *Te Deum*.<sup>70</sup> It was answered by a hundred-gun salute from across the Vistula.

<sup>65</sup> Z. Batowski, *Świątynia Opatrzności z r. 1791* (Warsaw, 1930). M. Kwiatkowski, *Stanisław August. Król-architekt* (Warsaw, 1983), 152, 224–30.

<sup>66</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 7 March, 14 March, 24 March 1792, HHStA Polen II 54, despatches 865, 867, 870, ff. 90–1, 96, 116. Hailes to Grenville, 7 April, 14 April, 25 April 1792, PRO FO 62/5, despatches 38, 39, 42. The fears were aired on 1 May in the sejm: *Głos... Siwickiego posła trockiego... 1. maja 1792...*, whereupon the session of 3 May was declared purely ceremonial. De Caché to Kaunitz, 2 May 1792, HHStA Polen II 54, despatch 881, f. 57.

<sup>67</sup> E. Rostworowski, *Maj 1791–maj 1792. Rok monarchii konstytucyjnej* (Warsaw, 1985), 15–16. SA to S. Małachowski, 2 May 1792, in *MDSC*, vi, 335.

<sup>68</sup> 'Dziennik Bułhakowa', 3 April 1792, in Kalinka, *Ostatnie lata*, ii, 333–4. Descorches to Charles Dumouriez, 25 April 1792, supplement to despatch 45, AMAE, CP Pologne 319, f. 212. Gustav III was stabbed at a masked ball on 16 March, and died on 9 April 1792.

<sup>69</sup> Accounts in Smoleński, *Ostatni rok*, 361–6, Sawicka, 'Uroczystości', 179–83.

<sup>70</sup> Several of Giovanni Paisiello's (1740–1816) operas and oratorios had already been performed in Warsaw. He offered the king his *Te Deum* via Ghigiotti. See Alina Żórawska-Witkowska, *Muzyka na dworze i w teatrze Stanisława Augusta* (Warsaw, 1995), 103–7, and the recording of Paisiello's *Te Deum laudamus* by the Warsaw Chamber Opera and the Warsaw Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Zbigniew Graca, issued by Fundacja Pro Musica Camerata in 2004.

The main procession began. The guilds and regular clergy, coming out of the Dominican church, were joined by the secular clergy from the Church of the Holy Cross. Next came the municipality, the Warsaw Civil-Military Commission, the urban plenipotentiaries, delegates, envoys, senators, ministers, the chapter of Warsaw, and the primate, who walked with a pontifical. Małachowski and Sapieha preceded the king, who was surrounded by the cadet corps. The dignitaries of the Crown and Lithuania followed, and after them came the government commissions, and judges. Bells rang from the churches. Three choirs sang gradual psalms and patriotic songs. Thousands watched from open windows, despite the order to keep them shut. Friedrich Schulz noted that young bucks sat in the apartments rented by courtesans, openly canoodling with them, as the dignitaries, sometimes including their own fathers, passed by.<sup>71</sup>

Having reached the site of the Church of Divine Providence, the dignitaries were able to use brick and stone paths, and wooden platforms, in case the solemnity of the occasion was spoilt by their slipping over in the mud. The primate blessed the foundation stone, then gave his brother the trowel, engraved with the royal monogram, S. A. R. (Stanislaus Augustus Rex), and the date. After the king had set the foundation stone in place, the trowel was given in turn to the bishops, ministers, the marshals of the confederacy, and an envoy for Kiev, as that palatinate had been the first (and so far only) one to vote money for the church.<sup>72</sup> Cannon salutes and gunfire echoed. The primate again sprinkled consecrated water, then Naruszewicz made a speech. Michał Poniatowski intoned *Veni, Creator Spiritus* and blessed all those present. At half past four, the king went to Łazienki to recuperate, while the senators, envoys, delegates, diplomats, and plenipotentiaries went to a series of dinners. In Catholic and Protestant churches and in synagogues, congregations prayed and listened to patriotic sermons and addresses. The evening saw Warsaw brilliantly illuminated. Further galas and audiences followed over the next few days.

This outline of the ceremonies should explain why Saluzzo appreciated the 'admirable order and decorum', with 'all the decency and respect' due to religion,<sup>73</sup> whereas Descorches scorned 'a bizarre mixture of credulity, devotion, and immorality'. He deplored 'a surfeit of religious practices very unsuitable for the growth of true liberal sentiments'. Few in Poland would have shared his distaste for the religious rituals. But the envoy then pointed out the distance the Poles had come, and explained the need '*d'aggrandir le Roi pour rappetisser les grands*'.<sup>74</sup>

The theme of Divine Providence was omnipresent in the speeches made on 3 May 1792. Most evoked a former condition of anarchy, impotence, and unenlightenment, which had been ended by a wise king, with whom the nation had been Providentially united. In his sermon Malinowski hailed 'a miraculous work of

<sup>71</sup> Schulz, *Podróże infantczyka*, 197–8.

<sup>72</sup> Resolution in BJ 3729, vol. i, ff. 123–4.

<sup>73</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 9 May 1792, ASV ANV 67, f. 149.

<sup>74</sup> Descorches to Dumouriez, 9 May 1792, supplement to despatch 47, AMAE CP Pologne 319, ff. 256–8.

Divine Providence', which 'secured anew the religion of Jesus Christ and morality' in place of 'libertinism, luxuries, discords, disputes, and private interests, and ever increasing irreligion'. He struck a slightly jarring note by stating that although the king had intended to 'enlighten the country' and 'cleanse the simple folk from barbarity and superstition', many had ceased to fear God. Providence—gracious today, but possibly terrible tomorrow—had rescued the nation from the precipice. The preacher lauded the orthodoxy of the king and the wisdom of the Estates, who had provided for censorship in the Cardinal Laws, and maintained punishment for apostasy in the Constitution. He also gave a summary and defence of the main points of the *Law on Government*.<sup>75</sup>

Stanisław August, speaking in the Church and on the feast of the Holy Cross, made an explicit comparison with Constantine:

*Help us, O God!* And we may expect that we shall experience such obvious proofs of heavenly protection, as did that emperor, who, when he, as the first, was about to introduce the true faith to the throne of the world, could hear a voice from the clouds: *In hoc signo vinces*, with this sign shall you conquer.

Providence had united hearts and minds, Providence had attached the burghers to the nation, Providence had given the knightly Estate a helmsman in Małachowski with his companion Sapieha, ministers devoted to the public good, and a senate able to inspire and counsel. He finished with the words of the hymn '*In Te Domine speravi, non confundar in aeternum*'. In Thee I have placed my Trust, Lord: I shall never be confounded.<sup>76</sup>

Naruszewicz expounded the Providentialist topos of the enlightened Stanisławian monarchy. At the site of the votive church, he evoked nearly two centuries of anarchy, in which Poles dozed, while the clash of arms echoed abroad. The prophetic warnings of partition, made by King John Casimir in 1661, had been taken 'as the voice of a planned despotism'. Why had their forefathers not listened? Because Providence had not yet ordained it. It had fallen to the present king to prepare the recovery:

You yourself, my Lord, from the beginnings of your accession to the throne, first prepared the outline of its [the nation's] future happiness: you threw into that ungoverned abyss and dead form the sparks of light and further germs of life. The treasury, the army, civil order, unbroken sejms, the revival of learning, the improvement of towns, the encouragement of agriculture and crafts, these were the fruits of your labours, and preceding, as it were, signs of the rousing of your Fatherland from lethargy. You, O nation, you prepared yourself, accepting the counsel and enlightenment (*swiatho*) of your king and father; in increasing and consolidating your trust in him, in recognizing your former errors, in enabling your children to set aside former prejudices and accept more salutary ideas.

'What human power', asked Naruszewicz, could have united the hearts of king and nation, and overcome so many prejudices? Let no insolent sceptic deny a

<sup>75</sup> A. Malinowski, *Kazanie w dzień 3 maja rocznicą nowej formy rządu y uroczystością Świętego Stanisława . . . w kościele S. Krzyża . . .* (Warsaw, 1792), quotations at 6, 11–13.

<sup>76</sup> *Mowa Jego Królewskiej Mci dnia 3go miesiąca maja roku 1792. w kościele Świętego Krzyża miana.*

Providential God! He recalled the consecration of Solomon's Temple, but the Christian religion demanded a different sacrifice: their private interests. And he anticipated the time when the body of Stanisław August would rest under stone in the church, but his heavenly soul would hear blessings and songs of thanksgiving for his work to make the Fatherland happy.<sup>77</sup>

The anniversary inspired many poems and hymns.<sup>78</sup> One was written by Franciszek Karpiński. Unfathomable Divine grace had brought the country out of its former ungoverned state:

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| Zdziwiło to ziemię całą,<br>Jak się kraj nasz chwały dobił;<br>Bo nie wiedzą, jak to się stało,<br>Że Bóg sam wszystko to robił.<br>Boże! widzieliśmy sami,<br>Że Ty byłeś między nami! | It astonished the entire earth,<br>That our country achieved glory;<br>For they know not, how it came to pass,<br>That God alone did it all.<br>God! We ourselves saw,<br>That You were among us! <sup>79</sup> |
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The last line echoed the refrain of Karpiński's *On the Lord's Nativity*, published at the same time, which remains one of Poland's most popular carols:

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bóg się rodzi, moc truchleje,<br>Pan niebiosów obnażony;<br>Ogień krzepnie, blask ciemnieje;<br>Ma granice—nieskończony.<br>Wzgardzony—okryty chwałą,<br>Śmiertelny—król nad wiekami!<br>I słowo ciałem się stało<br>I mieszkało między nami. | God is born, the powers tremble,<br>The Lord of Heaven is naked.<br>Fire freezes and light grows dark,<br>The infinite has limits.<br>Despised but covered with glory,<br>A mortal, but king for ever!<br>And behold the Word was made flesh,<br>And dwelt here below among us. |
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Both hymns expressed a baroque sense of wonder. In this way, the Constitution was associated with the least rational of all Christian mysteries, the Incarnation.<sup>80</sup>

The festivities in Warsaw were echoed across the Commonwealth. Typically the events featured a cannon salute, Mass and the *Te Deum* in the principal church with the king's portrait placed on the throne, a banquet with patriotic toasts, and illuminations.<sup>81</sup> In Wilno, Jan Kossakowski told the congregation that 'Our holiest

<sup>77</sup> *Głos Adama Naruszewicza, biskupa łuckiego i brzeskiego przy założeniu pierwszego kamienia na Kościół Opatrzności Boskiej r. 1792 dnia 3 maja na placu Ujazdowskim...*

<sup>78</sup> K. Maksimowicz, *Poezja polityczna a Sejm Czteroletni* (Gdańsk, 2000), 228–41.

<sup>79</sup> F. Karpiński, *Poezje wybrane*, ed. T. Chachulski (Wrocław, 1997), 142–3. T. Kostkiewiczowa, 'Sławni poeci polscy XVIII wieku wobec Konstytucji 3 Maja', in ead. (ed.), *Rok Monarchii Konstytucyjnej*, 29–51, at 37–45.

<sup>80</sup> F. Karpiński, *O narodzeniu pańskim*, in id., *Poezje wybrane*, 136–7, and B. Carpenter (ed. and trans.), *Monumenta Polonica: The First Four Centuries of Polish Poetry* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1989), 518–19.

<sup>81</sup> See *GNiO*, 9 May (supplement), 12 May, 16 May (and supplement), 19 May (and supplement), 23 May (and supplement), 26 May (and supplement), 30 May 1792; *GW*, 12 May 1792.

legislator, Christ, who for the enlightenment of people, and to make them happy, came down to Earth from Heaven, commands us nothing more clearly and strongly than to maintain mutual love and harmony.' Enlightened Christology apart, Kossakowski expressed the conviction at the heart of the celebrations, that 'unity and harmony alone could keep and save the Fatherland'.<sup>82</sup> A grateful Stanisław August told him that he could not have 'undertaken anything more proper' to his vocation 'than to proclaim those strongest pillars of every government: unity and harmony'.<sup>83</sup>

In St Petersburg on 3 May 1792, Jan Suchorzewski hosted a parody of a celebratory banquet.<sup>84</sup> The king knew that the festivities would be mocked abroad. But he chose to believe that 'such a spirit of unity and determination showed itself', that no 'malcontent' would expect the succour of 'Muscovite violence'.<sup>85</sup> For a year he had postponed the task of opening negotiations with St Petersburg, preferring to believe that, as long as no pretext was given, no armed intervention was likely.<sup>86</sup> The primate probably entertained no such illusions. Nevertheless, he had taken a prominent part in the celebrations.

Clergymen helped to suffuse the Constitution in a Providential aura. Across the Commonwealth, votive Mass and the *Te Deum* were an essential part of the celebrations. Protestants and Jews also gave thanks, but the official ceremonies were neither ecumenical nor interconfessional. Although some might discern masonic symbolism (for example in the comparison to the Temple of Solomon or the use of a trowel), nothing openly questioned Catholic orthodoxy. Not only on 3 May 1792, but throughout the preceding *annus mirabilis*, the Catholic clergy propagated and sacralized the Revolution, and in doing so confirmed the dominant status of Catholicism. They called for moral reform and respect for religion and its ministers, so that the Divine favour which had so suddenly been bestowed on Poles might not as swiftly be withdrawn.

<sup>82</sup> J. N. Kossakowski, *Kazanie o Jedności, Zgodzie i Pokoju...*, in id., *Kazania* (Wilno, 1793), 169–94, at 178, 172.

<sup>83</sup> J. N. Kossakowski to SA, 7 May 1792; SA to J. N. Kossakowski, 23 May 1792, BCz. 922, pp. 792–805.

<sup>84</sup> Sawicka, 'Uroczystości', 190.

<sup>85</sup> SA to Deboli, 5 May 1792, ZP 413, f. 377.

<sup>86</sup> Michalski, 'Dyplomacja polska', 646–7, 670.

## Antichrist comes from France

The polemics for and against the clergy published in the last year of the sejm were the most acrimonious yet. With Wojciech Skarszewski occupied by new duties, the principal ecclesiastical pen was wielded by a Reformed Franciscan friar. Karol Surowiecki had already scourged the eighteenth century from the pulpit and in translating refutations of Voltaire. He saw the Antichrist working through Revolutionary France, and like Barruel, he blamed the *philosophes*.<sup>1</sup> Although no millenarian, Michał Poniatowski came to a similar conclusion on the origins of France's woes following a short stay in Paris. The first section of this chapter analyses Surowiecki's polemics, while the second questions the actual sway of the 'French contagion' in the later stages of the Polish Revolution. The third focuses on the primate, who returned to Warsaw in the late summer of 1791 and fought the infection with all his might.

### 1. A WHIP, AN ASPERGILLUM, A STOVE LID, AND A FILE

Surowiecki was provoked to take up his pen by the singularly titled pamphlet, *A Virtuous Gipsy Flogging Disorder with the Whip of Truth*. Its author hailed the sejm's reforms as Providential, but pronounced that there was still much to do in the Church. Employing the discourse of scandal we examined earlier, he evoked the canon who 'stays in town, keeps an open table, brings in musicians, hosts assemblies, *soirées*, sumptuous dinners, little balls for his friends, does not pick up his breviary, never says Mass [ . . . ], does not visit his parish, or hear confessions'. Others worked for a pittance, only to face ruin when their strength gave out. The equalization of episcopal revenues should be extended to the parish clergy. From 3,000 złotys per annum, a *pleban* could maintain an organist, schoolmaster, and sacristan, and keep the church in good repair, but not live in town or buy Parisian fabrics.<sup>2</sup>

The key argument was utility: 'A priest, as everyone knows', was 'a drone for the public good'. The 'whip of truth' should be applied to disorder, injustice, and stupidity within cloistered walls. Scandals resulted from insincere or premature vocations. The government should inquire into monastic funds and reallocate them to charitable causes, as in 'the well-governed Bohemian state'. But the *Gipsy* did not

<sup>1</sup> A. J. Szeinke, 'Surowiecki, Karol', *PSB*, xlv (Warsaw and Cracow, 2009), 9–12.

<sup>2</sup> *Cygan cnotliwy gandzarak prawdy nieład chłuszczący* [1791], 22, 34–8.



assail religion as such, and appealed to the example of Christ, 'the first to perform the office of priest'.<sup>3</sup> Although old age was a popular literary device to inspire the reader's trust, the persona of a gipsy proved vulnerable to counter-attack.

Surowiecki titled his first riposte *The Priest with an Aspergillum for the Gipsy with a Whip*. He linked the *Gipsy* with the 'philosophical brotherhood' and France, and hinted at his own geopolitical stance: 'From Muscovite lashes we at least profited enough to learn some sense, but the Franco-Gipsy whips deprive us of our reason, and with our reason—everything.' Our asperging *Priest* admitted that 'the public sees the corruption of the clergy (just like the unleashed debauchery of all estates in this libertine century of ours)', but pronounced ecclesiastical immunity 'a law of nature'. He defended the submission inherent in monastic life. If it was a crime to force regulars to follow their rule, and to flog those who broke it, then 'a husband will become a criminal, when he takes a fallen wife firmly in hand'. At one point Surowiecki seems to have lost sight of the need to persuade his readers:

You counsel dissolving convents to fund the Polish army: Let us propose instead the dissolution of that army, and to a Christian mind you will commit a lesser sin. The Christian religion managed for quite a long time without an army, but never without virgins dedicated to God.<sup>4</sup>

He would pay dearly for contravening the patriotic paradigm.

For *The Whip of Truth Flogging the Unvirtuous Gipsy* Surowiecki adopted the persona of a layman. This pamphlet was similar in arguments, but even more insulting in tone than *The Priest with an Aspergillum*. Surowiecki conceded abuses among the clergy. But he also evoked priests renouncing worldly comforts, rising at night and braving the elements to bring the sacraments to dying peasants. Were such men parasitical idlers? In seizing their property as he would steal a horse, the *Gipsy* undermined all property rights, and thus the very foundation of society. Even if 3,000 złotys per parish could be afforded, which Surowiecki doubted, a redistribution would abrogate property rights. As long as duties were carried out, pluralism was no concern of the laity. The plunder of the properties of the Jesuits and the bishopric of Cracow revealed the real aims of such projects.<sup>5</sup>

*The Unarmed Second on the Field between the Gipsy with a Whip and the Priest with an Aspergillum, with Friendly Persuasion* pronounced the *Gipsy* mistaken and malicious about the clergy, but the *Priest* had misused his aspergillum in his rebuttal, especially as the *Gipsy* had not attacked religion itself. Higher standards should be expected of an 'enlightened' priest than of an unpolished gipsy. The

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 17, 44–68, 73, 33. See Konopczyński, 'Polscy pisarze polityczni', ii. 246–7.

<sup>4</sup> [K. Surowiecki], *Xiądz z kropidłem na cygana z gandzara* (Warsaw, [1792]), 4, 10, 17–39, 74, 82, 85–6. An aspergillum is used to sprinkle holy water.

<sup>5</sup> [K. Surowiecki], *Gandzara prawdy niecnotliwego cygana chłuszcząca, czyli na paszkwil pod tytułem cygan cnotliwy gandzara prawdy nieład chłuszczący odpowiedź, dedykowana temuż cyganowi przez autora U.N.P.P.S.* (Warsaw, 1792), 68, 76–7, 86–94, 109–12. Konopczyński, 'Polscy pisarze polityczni', ii. 247–9.

*Unarmed Second* hit the easiest of targets in telling the *Priest* that religion needed defenders, and that to abolish the army would end Poland's existence.<sup>6</sup>

A project for a 'Congress of the Clergy' was appended to the pamphlet. A quarter of the congress's members would be laymen. It would reduce the 'less necessary' clergy, fill out the parish network, temporarily close noviciates, apply monastic funds of both sexes to education, confiscate superfluous silver, consign the administration of Church estates to the Educational Commission, and curtail appeals to Rome. These proposals suggest that the author came from Kołłątaj's circle.<sup>7</sup>

The *Unarmed Second's* project was endorsed by *The Stove Lid Full of Love of the Fatherland for the Drying of the Wet Aspergillum*, which continued the inventive titular metaphors, in which each attribute was a rhetorical weapon. The anonymous author sided with the *Gipsy's* call for a reform of the clergy. All 'useless' orders should be dissolved, and the entire clergy paid proportionate salaries. Moreover, he argued, in calling for the dissolution of the army, the *Priest* had shown himself a traitor, who would bring down religion in ruins along with the defenceless Fatherland, and who deserved to be expelled along with the *Gipsy*.<sup>8</sup> Patriotism was the strongest persuasive emotion. In suggesting that the army could sooner be abolished than the orders, Surowiecki had placed himself beyond the discursive pale.

With the *File for the Smoothing Down of the Rough Stove Lid* the Piarist Konstanty Wolski attempted to end the exchange, this time in verse. He accused the *Stove Lid* of pointing out motes in others' eyes, rather than beams in his own. Bewailing the attack on the altars, the *File* compared the expression 'our enlightened age' to a devil in the guise of an angel.<sup>9</sup>

The polemic begun by the *Gipsy* became intertwined with a more general one. Surowiecki informed his readers that he decided to write *Python, a Leipzig-Warsaw Devil. A Counter-Tragedy to the Tragedy Saul*, when he noted a comment praising *Saul* in a copy of the *Whip of Truth*. Voltaire's play, based loosely on the first book of Samuel, cast *Saul* as a humane ruler, who was overthrown by the cruel *David* at the instigation of the fanatical *Samuel*. It also ridiculed the numbers quoted in the biblical accounts. A Polish translation was published in 1789, supposedly in Leipzig.<sup>10</sup> Surowiecki first called *Saul* a blasphemous mockery in a footnote of the *Priest*.<sup>11</sup> He published *Python* at some time in the summer of 1792, but wrote it before the overthrow of the Polish Revolution.<sup>12</sup>

The first act takes place in Heaven, where God and Saints Michael, Peter, and Paul are anticipating the Apocalypse. The celestial company condemn the French

<sup>6</sup> *Sekundant bezbronny między cyganem z gandzarą i хиędзем z kropidłem na placu z perswazyą przyjacielską* (Warsaw, 1792).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 39–46.

<sup>8</sup> *Faierka pełna ognia miłości ku oyczynie na osuszenie zbyt mokrego kropidła* (Warsaw, 1792), 44.

<sup>9</sup> [K. Wolski], *Pilnik na oglądzenie chropowatej faierki przez K. W. sporządzony y mosiężnikowi ofiarowany* (Warsaw, 1792).

<sup>10</sup> Smoleński, *Przewrót umysłowy*, 368–70.

<sup>11</sup> Surowiecki, *Xiędz z kropidłem*, 80–1 n. f.

<sup>12</sup> K. Surowiecki, *Python lipsko-warszawski diabeł. Kontr-tragedya na tragedya Saul wyjęta z Pisma Świętego, grana przez aktorów tamtego świata w roku 1789; a w roku 1792. światu ziemskiemu obawiona* (1792). Kwiatkowska, *Piórowe wojny*, 78.

Revolution for denying revelation, the Gospel, priesthood, celibacy, and God Himself. God despatches Michael on a mission to Hell. Having arrived there for the second act, he meets Lucifer riding a horse—Voltaire. Voltaire's tail contains glistening nits—his pupils, including the *Gipsy* and the *Stove Lid*, who is upbraided for having failed to read properly what the *Priest* had said about the army. Beelzebub rides 'Rousseau', who bites and kicks at 'Voltaire'. Lesser devils ride 'Montesquieu' and 'Mirabeau'. Lucifer explains that the devils are on vacation, because the inhabitants of Earth laugh at devils, just as they laugh at angels. One devil delivers a report from Paris, where priests are being compelled to marry, and another reports from Warsaw. Although the king and the leaders of the sejm 'still keep with Rome', the devil has

plenty of newly educated youngsters, who think in the French way and they have already done enough: they have founded Freemasonic clubs, they have opened print-houses for propagandists: fight and kill clergymen [, they cry]<sup>13</sup>; there is a heightened appetite for ecclesiastical lands. They sing that the monasteries should be dissolved; they even whisper in Warsaw about priests' wives and citizenship for Jews. And what else is needed? Are these not French steps?

When asked if priests do not preach against all this, the devil answers that they cannot even denounce ordinary sins, let alone Freemasonry. Without Łuskinia, who braves being called a 'fanatic', there was no knowing what might happen in Poland.<sup>14</sup>

Michael returns to Heaven for the third act. He admits that 'the libertines of the eighteenth century have changed themselves into devils'—and that the prophets and apostles of Antichrist are called philosophers.<sup>15</sup> Another report from Warsaw tells of *Python*—the Epicurean Freemason who published *Saul*. Moses and Paul are sent to judge him, and the bishops are instructed to warn King Stanisław that his country is following the path trodden by France. The fourth act, set in Palestine, restates the literal truth of biblical numbers. The fifth act contains *Python's* trial, liberally interspersed with thrashings—which suggest that the author was obsessed by the discipline, for which the Reformed Franciscans were noted. At the end *Python* is sentenced to be a nit under Voltaire's tail.

Surowiecki's play initiated further polemics, culminating at the end of 1792 with *The Mountain in Labour, a Fable Tested in the Eighteenth Century, and Explained towards its End*. In this Surowiecki compared the eighteenth century to Aesop's mountain, which roars and smokes, before giving birth to a contemptible mouse. He depicted an alternative, masonic religion, in which bricks from the Bastille take the place of Catholic relics. Instead of crosses and rosaries, there are trowels and hammers. Our fulminating friar also evoked French children killing their aristocratic contemporaries, and playing with their heads, while their parents applaud them as 'patriots'. The rot had set in with the dissolution of the Jesuits, contended

<sup>13</sup> '*Biy zabi*': an old-Polish battlecry.

<sup>14</sup> Surowiecki, *Python*, 104–5.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 124.

Surowiecki, who eulogized the regular clergy as 'the bulwarks of the true Church, the picket fences of the vineyard'. As the religious orders declined, so the diabolical confraternity of Freemasons rose. They were the masters of the guild of philosophers, intent on unthroning God and turning men into beasts. Even the military defeat of the French Revolution would count for nothing, if the 'French philosophy' that had led to it was not rooted out. It was clear that the time of Antichrist had come, and it had been calculated that Christ would be recognized in 1800.<sup>16</sup>

By this time, with the Targowica confederates in power, nobody would have dared to emulate the act of Kołłątaj's secretary. Kazimierz Konopka heckled Surowiecki in the church of the Reformed Franciscans on 23 March 1792, when the latter read out from the pulpit a letter of a French bishop. Okęcki felt obliged to intervene, and Konopka lost his job.<sup>17</sup> But the bishop of Poznań also forbade Surowiecki preaching in Warsaw churches.<sup>18</sup> Surowiecki has been accused of taking polemical devices 'to the boundaries of the absurd'.<sup>19</sup> But his confrontation of the French Revolution was essentially 'modern'. His discourse engaged with 'enlightenment', 'philosophy', and the 'public'. While his coarse style may have expressed personal obsessions, it may also have derived from the conviction that only shock tactics would make an impression on the public, especially in the provinces.<sup>20</sup> Was he right to see heads of the French Hydra sprouting in Warsaw?

## 2. 'THE FRENCH CONTAGION'

One aspect of the trajectory of the Polish Revolution is expressed by the frontispieces of the four volumes of the sejm diary of 1788–9 and the two of 1790–1. The former feature the combined arms of the Commonwealth and the king. The latter show a victorious figure of Liberty with a Phrygian cap atop her pike. To what extent did this iconographic transformation reflect a more general shift of hearts and minds towards the French Revolution? Neither the Poles nor the French stood still. Virtually all sides in Poland could applaud the demise of monarchical 'absolutism' in France in 1789, but by the middle of 1791 the social and religious policies of the French Revolution had polarized Polish opinion. It suited the Polish Revolution's opponents to make the most of its alleged 'Jacobins'—especially Kołłątaj, Scipione Piattoli, and Filippo Mazzei. The 'progressive' tendencies of the period were also played up by some postwar historians.<sup>21</sup>

The focus of Szczęsny Potocki's correspondents was the 'Society of the Friends of the Constitution *Fiat Lux*', founded in the days after 3 May 1791, which met in the Radziwiłł palace. This '*klopp*' was, they believed, modelled on the '*Club des Jacobins*

<sup>16</sup> [K. Surowiecki], *Góra rodząca, bajka sprawdzona w osiemnastym wieku na schyłku onegoż wyjaśniona* (1792), 7, 53–61, 81–2, 103–9, 110–41.

<sup>17</sup> Pasztor, *Hugo Kołłątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 19–20, 53, n. 51.

<sup>18</sup> Smoleński, *Przewrót umysłowy*, 373.

<sup>19</sup> Kwiatkowska, *Piórowe wojny*, 18.

<sup>20</sup> Martyna Deszczyńska argues for the latter. Cf. MacMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment*, ch. 3.

<sup>21</sup> Notably H. Rządkowska, *Stosunek polskiej opinii publicznej do Rewolucji Francuskiej* (Warsaw, 1948).

à Paris'. Of the Society's 213 members, 139 were envoys or senators. They were obliged by the statute to support the Society's aims and decisions, reached by majority vote. Projects were discussed and approved, and tactics decided, often on the eve of debates. The members included republicans and royalists, nobles and burghers, soldiers and priests, Poles and foreigners. The *spiritus movens* was Kollataj.<sup>22</sup>

The nuncio also pointed to a group of 'young envoys', given to '*filosofia alla moda*' and organized in the Society of the Friends of the Constitution.<sup>23</sup> The representatives of Austria, Prussia, and Russia reported the infection with hostile intent and a hint of alarm. As war loomed between France and the German powers, the French minister in Warsaw noted the signs of 'disquiet on the progress made in this country by what those courts call the French contagion'.<sup>24</sup>

The Polish monarch, despite reservations about the pace of change, had been broadly sympathetic to the French Revolution until early 1791.<sup>25</sup> By the end of that year he was convinced that it would run aground over the clerical oath and its increasing reliance on paper money.<sup>26</sup> He knew that the neighbouring courts were receptive to the allegation that Poland was a hotbed of Jacobinism. For this reason, as well as the need to reassure the szlachta, he wanted the pope to bless the Constitution, and lapped up contrasts between the peaceful Polish Revolution and the violent French Revolution.<sup>27</sup>

Marie-Louis Descorches, the former Marquis de Saint-Croix, inevitably became a focus for Polish Francophiles after his arrival in Warsaw in July 1791. At first the new French minister acted cautiously, making public moves only in acceptable contexts such as the feast of St Louis on 25 August, celebrated in his parish church by Bishop Malinowski. After Louis XVI had accepted the new Constitution on 13 September Descorches had the *Te Deum* sung in his parish church and illuminated his house.<sup>28</sup> Foremost among the young men who thought 'philosophically' were the editors of the *National and Foreign Gazette*.<sup>29</sup> Both the *National and Foreign Gazette* and Piotr Świtekowski's *Historical and Political Recorder* took a generally positive line on the French Revolution in 1791–2, although they criticized mob violence and excessive severity towards non-juring priests.<sup>30</sup>

The French-language journal of the sejm occasionally printed misleading translations for a French Revolutionary audience. It implied, for example, that the Church

<sup>22</sup> See J. Kowecki, 'Klub Radziwiłłowski w Warszawie w 1791 roku', *WO*, 6 (1989), 87–123.

<sup>23</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 22 June 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 91–2.

<sup>24</sup> Descorches to Dumouriez, 11 April 1792, AMAE CP Pologne 319, despatch 42, f. 167.

<sup>25</sup> See J. Michalski, 'La Révolution Française aux yeux d'un roi', *APH*, 66 (1992), 75–91.

<sup>26</sup> SA to Deboli, 3 December, 28 December 1791, ZP 413, ff. 249, 270.

<sup>27</sup> He also looked on the bright side: so great was the neighbouring courts' fear of a 'democratic spirit spreading in Poland' that they might prefer 'the strongest king' to that 'infectious political disease'. SA to Deboli, 1 February 1792, ZP 413, f. 287.

<sup>28</sup> Descorches to Montmorin, 31 August, 3 October 1791, AMAE CP Pologne 318, despatches 10 and 15, ff. 438, 475. *GNiO*, 3 September, 5 October 1791.

<sup>29</sup> Descorches to Montmorin, 20 August 1791, AMAE CP Pologne 318, despatch 8, ff. 422–3.

<sup>30</sup> Rządowska, *Stosunek polskiej opinii publicznej* (n. 21 above), 46–50, 55–9. Dihm, *Niemcewicz*, ch. 5. Homola Dzikowska, *Pamiętnik Historyczno-Polityczny*, ch. 9.

of Divine Providence would be for Catholics and non-Catholics alike. The Argus-eyed nuncio contrasted the accurate Latin translation, '*ex voto omnium ordinum*', with that used by the '*giornalista*': '*toutes les communions*'. Saluzzo noted the 'great influence' over the *Journal Hebdomadaire de la Diète* exercised by Piattoli, 'whom to my displeasure I see ever more embedded in the confidence of the sovereign'.<sup>31</sup>

Piattoli was the subject of an extraordinary diplomatic exchange between Warsaw and Rome. It began in August 1790, when Cardinal Antici alerted Stanisław August that Piattoli was known in Rome as a dangerous democrat. The king asked Gaetano Ghigiotti to reassure Antici that although Piattoli had indeed been intimate in Paris with Lafayette and others, he had swiftly realized that in Poland 'democratic ideas are not in season'.<sup>32</sup> A few weeks later, the king told Saluzzo that he had heard of 'most injurious' allegations against Piattoli. He admitted that Piattoli had sometimes shown himself too 'partial to the French Revolution', but he had helped to moderate the Polish burghers' demands. Saluzzo, who knew the king found Piattoli indispensable, promised to write to Cardinal Zelada.<sup>33</sup> But Zelada informed Saluzzo that Piattoli was noted as a revolutionary by all Italian governments.<sup>34</sup>

The matter rested for a year, until Piattoli discovered that precautions had been taken against any attempt by him to enter the papal states. Again the king tried to clear Piattoli's name. Ghigiotti even assured Antici that Piattoli kept 'the dogmas and discipline of the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church' and had always shown 'zeal and respect for the prerogatives of the court of Rome'.<sup>35</sup> Stanisław August asked Saluzzo to convey a similar message to Zelada.<sup>36</sup> Antici undertook to try to whitewash Piattoli.<sup>37</sup> Zelada then tactfully supposed a case of mistaken identity. Saluzzo duly gave a copy of Zelada's despatch to Stanisław August.<sup>38</sup> Antici wrote confidentially to the king:

The Abbé Piattoli in Warsaw is the same man who was denounced in Rome and various Italian courts as tied to Paris by friendship and sentiments with the former matadors of the Constituent Assembly, and as himself infected with the dangerous maxims and pernicious systems of the Assembly of France. *N'importe*. The same principles, modified and purified, have rendered important services to Your Majesty, and to Poland. [...] He will not dare to preach systems which could ever harm your interests, Sire, or those of the state, still less the interests of the Catholic religion and the Church in Poland.<sup>39</sup>

Although officially cleared, Piattoli felt obliged to deny 'the odious imputation' to Antici. He insisted that his Parisian connections had not had the least influence on

<sup>31</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 29 June 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 93.

<sup>32</sup> SA to Ghigiotti, 4 September 1790, AGHig. 514a, vol. iii, f. 34.

<sup>33</sup> M. Loret, 'Watykan a Polska w dobie rozbiorów 1772–1795', *Przegląd Współczesny*, 49 (1934),

348. Saluzzo to Zelada, 13 October 1790, ASV ANV 67, ff. 53–4.

<sup>34</sup> Loret, 'Watykan a Polska', 348–9. Zelada to Saluzzo, 13 November 1790, ASV ANV 52, f. 465.

<sup>35</sup> Ghigiotti to Antici, 15 October, 26 October 1791, AGHig. 25b, vol. xi, ff. 87–8, 91–4.

<sup>36</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 26 October 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 116.

<sup>37</sup> Two letters, one intended for the king's eyes, of Antici to Ghigiotti, both dated 16 November 1791, AGHig. 25a, vol. vii, ff. 60–4.

<sup>38</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 14 January 1792, AGHig. 646c, ff. 68–9. Loret, 'Watykan a Polska', 349.

<sup>39</sup> Two letters of Antici to SA, 14 January 1792, AGHig. 803a, ff. 12–13, APP 97, ff. 8–9.

his principles. Antici, in accepting Piattoli's fresh testimonials, also took the opportunity to praise the measures taken by Italian princes 'to preserve their own states' from the 'fatal inundation of the principles that reign in France'.<sup>40</sup> He would be less fastidious when French troops entered Rome in 1799.<sup>41</sup>

Saluzzo observed tartly that Piattoli tempered his language in the presence of the monarch, whom he had captivated. And the nuncio warned of a still worse arrival from Paris. Filippo Mazzei had been the king's agent in Paris since 1789. He had 'written on the revolution of the English colonies in America, and passes for one of the most fanatical democrats'.<sup>42</sup> Stanisław August prudently informed Deboli in April 1792 not only that Mazzei had kept moderate company in Paris, but that he called the Jacobins criminals, even in Descorches's presence.<sup>43</sup> Descorches never mentioned Mazzei in his despatches.

The French minister began to shed his initial caution towards the end of 1791.<sup>44</sup> In a long memorial composed early the following year, he attributed criticism of the French Revolution in Poland to the influence of the clergy:

The Pole, tolerant by character, because he is naturally sweet (*doux*), is nevertheless very superstitious. The clergy, with little wealth but very ignorant, is deprived of the means to make itself dangerous, but it still influences the disposition of minds strongly. The pope exercises a contentious jurisdiction via his nuncio. Each bishop has officials who know all ecclesiastical and religious affairs. No civil tribunal can judge a priest. It is easy to conclude from this that everything which is done in France regarding our [clergy] has not been favourably judged here. The agents of the Roman Curia principally charged with disparaging us never refer to us other than as atheists, godless, schismatics, and often as villains. Their numerous echoes have perforce repeated these charitable epithets.<sup>45</sup>

Effectively, Descorches admitted that attacks on the impiety of the French Revolution were a significant part of political discourse in Poland. That said, he believed that 'the dominant opinion now appears to be in our favour', and 'even many of those who reproach our Constitution for being too metaphysical and our principles for being taken to extremes, feel the intimate connections between the success of our Revolution and theirs, and sincerely wish us well'. Although he considered the king timid, he placed great hopes in Ignacy Potocki and Stanisław Małachowski.<sup>46</sup> Kołłątaj was an

<sup>40</sup> Piattoli to Antici, 11 February 1792, Antici to Piattoli, 10 March 1792, APP 97, ff. 11–15.

<sup>41</sup> Antici resigned his cardinal's hat, and then found himself excluded from the Venetian conclave of 1799–1800. He died in obscurity in 1814. M. Loret, *Życie polskie w Rzymie w XVIII w.* (Rome, 1930), 38, 107–12.

<sup>42</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 14 February 1792, ASV ANV 67, ff. 132–4. On Mazzei see Venturi, *End of the Old Regime 1776–1789*, i. 82–143.

<sup>43</sup> SA to Deboli, 18 April 1792, ZP 413, ff. 356–7.

<sup>44</sup> SA to Deboli, 14 December 1791, ZP 413, f. 258.

<sup>45</sup> M.-L. Descorches, 'Mémoire sur les événements arrivés en Pologne depuis le 1-er juillet jusqu'à la fin de l'année 1791', 6 January 1792, AMAE CP Pologne 319, ff. 6–33, at 26–7.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, ff. 27–32. Cf. Descorches to de Lessart, 7 January 1792, AMAE CP Pologne 319, despatch 31, ff. 34–5.

‘excellent man’, ‘*sincèrement philosophe de coeur, très français de système*’.<sup>47</sup> Descorches’s bugbear was Kołłątaj’s sometime patron, Michał Poniatowski.

### 3. THE RETURN OF THE PRIMATE

Michał Poniatowski arrived back in Warsaw around 20 August 1791 and spent several days with the king.<sup>48</sup> The next few weeks bade well for the primate’s relationship with the Polish Revolution. Descorches reported that although many had expected otherwise, ‘all the public utterances of *M. le Primat*, I am assured, have been favourable to the new order of things’.<sup>49</sup> On 15 September, the sejm resumed its sittings. Poniatowski declared his support for the Constitution, having been struck by the favourable reaction to it in England: ‘I was proud to show myself as a Pole, hearing the praise and universal respect for the Polish name.’ Pronouncing the discourse of ‘ordered freedom’ with an ecclesiastical accent, he contrasted the ‘violence, arbitrariness, devastation of the country, and shameful submission’ of the time before the Constitution with the equality, security of property, and respected government, which Poland now enjoyed:

Such liberty is a gift of heaven. I acknowledge this gift as the benevolent Divine hand above our Commonwealth; a sign that the Polish nation still pleased God; a nation always orthodox, but not disposed to persecution; a nation, which has yielded so many men distinguished in virtue, religion, citizenship, and the defence of the Fatherland. If in recent times a series of calamities, having surrounded the Fatherland, brought her towards her downfall, then God, testing the virtue of some, punishing the offences of others, wished for the nation in time to rise up again more splendidly. Already the clergy has performed its duties in ordaining prayers of thanksgiving in the churches; this clergy, which has never failed the Fatherland, the king, and the Commonwealth in fidelity, zeal, and attachment; which is composed of your brothers, respectable knightly Estate, has more than once shared the sad fate of the Fatherland with you.

He saw there was work to do, and he was willing to help.<sup>50</sup>

The honeymoon did not last long. During the autumn of 1791 the primate repeatedly attacked the proposed sale of Crown estates. This project, introduced into the sejm on 10 October 1791, envisaged a sale over five years, and provided for the treasury to issue up to three million zlotys annually as notes (*bilety*).<sup>51</sup> In three speeches Poniatowski argued that agreements with current possessors should be honoured, and warned of the fiscal and economic consequences. A paper currency,

<sup>47</sup> Descorches to Dumouriez, supplement to despatch 42, 11 April 1792, AMAE CP Pologne 319, ff. 173–4.

<sup>48</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 24 August 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 101–2.

<sup>49</sup> Descorches to Montmorin, 7 September 1791, AMAE CP Pologne 318, despatch 11, f. 447.

<sup>50</sup> *Głos... Prymasa na sessyi seymowej dnia 15. września, roku 1791...*

<sup>51</sup> Smoleński, *Ostatni rok*, 131–3. A. Strojnowski, ‘Reforma królewstyczyn na Sejmie Czteroletnim’, *Acta Universitatis Lodzensis*, seria 1, 69 (1979), is marred by factual inaccuracies and a schematic classification of all supporters of the measure as ‘progressive’. See also Pasztor, *Hugo Kołłątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 173–83.



based on the sale of Crown estates, might share the fate of Necker's *assignat*, based on the sale of Church lands. He made his fiercest attack on the project on 5 December, expressing his

infinite terror that we should not through incautiousness slip under the appalling light of the street lanterns, with which the French try to extinguish the rays of religion, honour, and common sense in the chimerical interpretation of the rights of man and complete equality, placing a Jew, an executioner, a peasant, a Muslim (*Bisurman*), a noble, a burgher, and a priest together, only that so far excluded from government protection are they, that every day we read of priests, and nuns wounded and abused with impunity, although they have devoted all their lives to aiding the miserable among that insolent people.<sup>52</sup>

This speech, which subverted the metaphor of *lumières*, was also published in French. In addition to winning the nuncio's support, Poniatowski sent copies directly to Rome.<sup>53</sup>

In vain. On 19 December the sejm voted narrowly for an immediate sale of the Crown estates, with compensation paid to the starostas. All the bishops present voted against.<sup>54</sup> Although the supporters of the measure included Ignacy Potocki and Kołłątaj, the sejm passed a law only on 26 April 1792, leaving insufficient time for it to take effect.<sup>55</sup> The king was generally believed to favour the sale; there was talk of a rift between the two brothers, and even an attempt by the primate to stand at the head of a '*Mittel=Partey*'.<sup>56</sup> But Stanisław August did not adopt a clear position. He let most believe that he supported the measure, while hinting at his reservations to others. Back in June 1791 he told his brother of an attack in the sejm on the starostas, which had led him to point out the misfortunes which had resulted from such maxims in France.<sup>57</sup> During the debates in mid-November the king opposed the sale of the royal domain estates in addition to the Crown estates, explaining that he did not wish to give the elector of Saxony a reason to reject the Polish throne.<sup>58</sup> Stanisław August was believed to fear that selling off the Crown estates would increase the number of 'malcontents'. On the day of the vote, he was absent.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>52</sup> *Głos... Prymasa... 28. października, 1791...; Głos... prymasa... 5. grudnia, 1791...* (quotation); *Głos... prymasa... 19. grudnia, 1791...*

<sup>53</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 14 December 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 123–4. MJP to Ghigiotti, 14 December, 17 December 1791, AGHig. 515a, vol. ii, ff. 97, 98.

<sup>54</sup> ASC 9, ff. 791, 739. The bishops were Poniatowski, Szembek, Naruszewicz, Giedroyć, Skarszewski, Cieciszowski, Kossakowski, and Rostocki.

<sup>55</sup> Pasztor, *Hugo Kołłątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 181–3. R. Rybarski, *Skarbowość Polski w dobie rozbiorów* (Cracow, 1937), 345–54, 456–8.

<sup>56</sup> James Durno to Grenville, 30 October 1791, NA FO 62/4, f. 301. De Caché to Kaunitz, 29 October 1791, HHStA Polen II 53, despatch 827, ff. 204–5 (quotation). Descorches to de Lessart, 31 December 1791, AMAE CP Pologne 318, despatch 30, ff. 633–5.

<sup>57</sup> The attack was led by I. Zakrzewski (Poznań). SA to MJP, 11 June 1791, AGHig. 801b, vol. i, f. 185.

<sup>58</sup> SA to Deboli, 12 November 1791, ZP 413, ff. 234–5.

<sup>59</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 21 December 1791, HHStA Polen II 54, despatch 842, f. 100.

Despite the primate's defeat (Saluzzo found him 'much afflicted and discouraged')<sup>60</sup> and the evident tension with the king, Michał Poniatowski did not give up on the *starostwa*. As we have seen, he took his campaign to the sejms of February 1792. His opposition to the sale was founded in his refusal to acquiesce in confiscations of property, his hostility to the French Revolution, and his assessment of the economic consequences.<sup>61</sup> The primate exhibited similar determination in his battle for ecclesiastical censorship.

Descorches attributed most of Poniatowski's criticism of the French Revolution to a dispute over etiquette,<sup>62</sup> but the reverse seems more likely. It probably suited Poniatowski to have a pretext to avoid Descorches, and thus not to imply approval of events in France. Not only had he seen the French Revolution for himself in the autumn of 1790, he had noted how émigré French bishops were accorded every courtesy in Protestant England.<sup>63</sup> He envied the Anglican clergy their substantial and punctually paid tithes, 'although they do not have to overcome frosts and bad roads at night to visit the sick, or to ruin their health in cold confessionals'.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, Poniatowski contrasted 'English liberty founded on good laws, balanced by different powers' to the '*liberté tirannique*' of the French. Like his brother, he believed that the English were 'more assured of their properties and freedom than in any other country of Europe'. He met Edmund Burke in England and admired his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.<sup>65</sup> And like Burke, he lamented the 'follies and misfortunes to which the *philosophes* have reduced the whole of France'.<sup>66</sup>

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The currents in the Seine created waves in the Vistula. Diplomats of all hues noted 'French' influence on younger envoys. On the other hand, the neighbouring courts' fears of the 'French contagion' made the king keener than ever to assert the contrast between the French and Polish Revolutions. Even apocalyptic discourses against Antichrist and his acolytes may have played a part in putting supporters of the French Revolution on the defensive by 1792, as Descorches half-conceded. Before 1794, 'Polish Jacobins' are elusive. In these circumstances, the increasingly drastic French policies towards the clergy were unlikely to be copied in the Commonwealth, even had the king not been beholden by gratitude to the pope, and subject to the renewed influence of the primate.

<sup>60</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 21 December 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 125.

<sup>61</sup> MJP to Ghigiotti, 30 September 1791, AGHig. 515a, vol. ii, f. 91. Fiscal historians have assessed the likely effects of the measure critically: Rybarski, *Skarbowość*, 352–4; Drozdowski, *Podstawy finansowe*, 139, 163–4. So did Hailes (to Grenville, 24 December 1791, NA FO 62/4, despatch 29, ff. 321–2).

<sup>62</sup> Descorches to de Lessart, 21 December, 31 December 1791, AMAE CP Pologne 318, despatches 28, 30, ff. 618, 633. The dispute concerned the primate's failure to return the envoy's visit, and the envoy's addressing the primate as *Votre Altesse* rather than *Votre Excellence*—a point of contention that went back decades. Zielińska, 'Poniatowski, Michał Jerzy', *PSB*, xxvii. 465.

<sup>63</sup> MJP to M. T. Tyszkiewiczowa, London, 12/13 January 1791, AJP 1066, p. 53. On his travels to France and England see Soltys, *Opat z San Michele*, 114–81.

<sup>64</sup> 'Excerpt z listu Xcia Jmci Prymasa pisanego z Londynu do X. Żórawskiego de 1<sup>ma</sup> Martii 1791.', AMS, Poniatowski A I 24, f. 154.

<sup>65</sup> MJP to M. T. Tyszkiewiczowa, London, 15 February 1791, AJP 1066, p. 128–31. Cf. SA to Mazzei, 25 May 1790, quoted in Butterwick, *Poland's Last King*, 272–3.

<sup>66</sup> MJP to M. T. Tyszkiewiczowa, London, 17 December 1790, AJP 1066, p. 100.

# 13

## Caesar's moral realm

Addressing the sejm on 28 June 1791, Hugo Kołłątaj envisaged a 'moral constitution' to accompany the 'political' and projected 'economic' constitutions. The 'moral constitution' would draw on 'the purest source of our religion, Christ's Divine rules', and apply the resources of the state and the clergy (of all confessions) to the promotion of enlightenment and virtue. No such blueprint has been found, but much of the vice-chancellor's activity in 1791–2 falls into these categories.<sup>1</sup> Kołłątaj was neither a secularizer nor a theocrat, but he exemplifies the incursion of Caesar's agents—lay and clerical alike—into the moral realm. The servants of Caesar, accustomed to the activity of government, convinced of the power of good laws and patriotic education to inculcate virtue, and buoyed up by optimism, staked their claim to cure the Commonwealth's moral ills. Most churchmen seem to have accepted these intrusions, but tensions were inevitable. The hierarchs attempted a counter-attack over censorship. The Holy See saw the worst threat in the planned codification of the Commonwealth's laws. The king needed the pope's endorsement of the Constitution, so one of his responses was to help to deflect calls to restore the Jesuits.<sup>2</sup> Also at issue between Rome and Warsaw was the proposed Orthodox hierarchy in the Commonwealth. This question, which will be considered in the following chapter, led to an open confrontation between political and confessional priorities. But it did so only after the king had conceded to the Holy See over codification, and gained papal approval for the Constitution.

### 1. ROME AND THE CODE OF STANISŁAW AUGUST

On 28 June 1791, following Kołłątaj's speech, the sejm appointed two deputations, for the Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, to work on a new codification of the laws. The resolution contained no Enlightenment rhetoric, and instructed both deputations first to consult the Third Lithuanian Statute of 1588. But most of the deputies were men of the Enlightenment. The Lithuanian deputation contained

<sup>1</sup> Quoted after Pasztor, *Hugo Kołłątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 193. See E. Rostworowski, 'Książd Kołłątaj i trzy konstytucje: polityczna, ekonomiczna, moralna', in id., *Popioły i korzenie. Szkice historyczne i rodzinne* (Cracow, 1985), 138–50.

<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed account see R. Butterwick, 'Sprawa wskrzeszenia zakonu jezuickiego w dobie Sejmu Czteroletniego', in I. Stasiewicz-Jasiukowa (ed.), *Wkład Jezuitów do nauki i kultury w Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów oraz pod zaborami* (Cracow and Warsaw, 2004), 89–114.

Józef Weyssenhoff, a keen reader of Montesquieu and Beccaria, and Reverend Professor Hieronim Stroynowski, a devotee both of Montesquieu and the physocrats. Kollątaj had three Cracovian academics included in the Crown deputation: Józef Januszewicz as secretary, Bonifacy Garycki, and Reverend Walerian Bogdanowicz. The latter wrote most of the proposals concerning education and the Church. Among those co-opted were Scipione Piattoli, the ex-Jesuit pedagogue Grzegorz Piramowicz, and the Piarist Teodor Ostrowski (who had translated part of William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* into Polish). The radical Piarist Franciszek Dmochowski also helped out.<sup>3</sup>

The inclusion in the Crown deputation of Józef Wybicki led Rome to fear the worst. Wybicki had helped to draft the abortive Zamoyski Code of 1778, which had proposed a far-reaching restriction of papal jurisdiction and monastic autonomy in the Commonwealth.<sup>4</sup> Even before the deputation was nominated, Saluzzo saw no more efficacious way to protect ecclesiastical jurisdiction and property than to 'win over' the monarch.<sup>5</sup> The king desired papal benediction for the Constitution; the papacy would not countenance restrictions on its rights and jurisdiction in the Commonwealth. In the same despatch in which he warned of the possible revival of the Zamoyski Code, Saluzzo advised making the *breve* of congratulation as personal to the king as possible. This would avoid implying that the pope approved the imprecise provisions for religious toleration.<sup>6</sup> Zelada agreed. In presenting the *breve*, the nuncio was to emphasize the king's authorship of the Constitution, and 'the complete faith which the Holy Father places in the devotion and piety of the king, regarding Catholicism, ecclesiastical immunity, and the constant exercise of the rights of the Holy See.'<sup>7</sup> Having heard Pius VI's initial congratulations contained in Zelada's despatch of 28 May 1791, Stanisław August assured Saluzzo of his 'devotion and attachment' to the Holy See and the Holy Father.<sup>8</sup>

When, at the beginning of July 1791, the nuncio presented the king with the first papal *breve* at a private audience, he made a point of thanking 'His Majesty for the promises given to us, that he would prevent everything that might be proposed contrary to the laws of the Church and the rights of the Holy See'. Should the same things as in the Zamoyski Code be repeated in the new one, 'the Holy Father would be mortified, after having praised and approved the Revolution'. The king hit the ball back into the nuncio's court by asking for a list of all that was 'bad' in the Zamoyski Code. Saluzzo answered that nothing that concerned the clergy and

<sup>3</sup> VL, ix, 289–90. See A. Lityński, 'The Reform of Criminal Law during the Four-Year Diet', in Fizsman (ed.), *Constitution and Reform*, 397–421, at 408–11; W. Szafranski, *Kodeks Stanisława Augusta* (Poznań, 2007), 42–108; Pasztor, *Hugo Kollątaj na Sejmie Wielkim*, 44–7; Z. Zdrójkowski, 'Nieznane litewskie projekty karne Józefa Weyssenhoffa z 1792 roku (Nowo odnalezione materiały do Kodeksu Stanisława Augusta)', *CPH*, 10/1 (1958), 91–123.

<sup>4</sup> See above, 41, n. 59.

<sup>5</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 15 June 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 90.

<sup>6</sup> Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 210–11. Saluzzo to Zelada, 7 May 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 84.

<sup>7</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 8 June 1791, ASV ANV 53, f. 108.

<sup>8</sup> M. Lorent, 'Watykan a Polska w dobie rozbiorów 1772–1795', *Przegląd Współczesny*, 49 (1934), 351. Saluzzo to Zelada, 22 June 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 92.

*spiritualia* should be included in such a code. But Stanisław August again asked for a list.<sup>9</sup>

The king had the *breve* printed and distributed, and Saluzzo reported that it had made a favourable impression in the provinces. Zelada believed that Stanisław August owed the pope a favour, and that favour was to 'to suppress and cancel' everything in the code regarding the clergy and ecclesiastical discipline.<sup>10</sup> The nuncio also suggested a private letter from Pius VI to Stanisław August, to urge the king to protect the Church. Saluzzo agreed with Zelada that it was 'difficult to persuade with doctrine and with the dispositions of the holy canons', and so he would appeal to the king's interests.<sup>11</sup> The nuncio also worked on the monarch via Gaetano Ghigiotti.<sup>12</sup>

Stanisław August instructed Cardinal Antici to assure the pope of his 'most tender and truly filial sentiment'.<sup>13</sup> The pope summoned Antici, and told him that while he wished the Polish reforms well, he feared that the Zamoyski Code might be revived. In particular, he feared a royal *exequatur* on the publication of papal bulls, the placing of the regulars under episcopal jurisdiction, and a national ecclesiastical tribunal. Both via Antici and in a second *breve* he asked the king not to permit any novelties regarding the Church.<sup>14</sup>

On 14 September Saluzzo handed the king the pope's second *breve*. Again he stressed the 'mortification and sorrow' which the Holy Father would suffer if he had in future to protest against the Constitution on which he had now publicly conferred his approval. The nuncio also argued that if the regular clergy were subordinated to the bishops then they would follow them politically, while any *exequatur* on papal bulls would in practice be wielded by subalterns; the king could expect more from Rome. He offered a more explicit papal approval of the Constitution—if the king would issue a declaration excluding any innovation in Church discipline. The king answered, according to Saluzzo, that he would always conduct himself so that the pope 'will never have to regret having given his blessing to the new Constitution'. He also said that he thought things had been exaggerated to the pope. He had already persuaded Stanisław Małachowski to abandon the *exequatur*, and he would work with the bishops against a national tribunal and removing the regulars from direct dependence on Rome. Saluzzo replied that the king's answer was consoling, but he felt obliged to defend himself from the suspicion of exaggeration. He had indeed warned the pope against the possibility of the renewal of the Zamoyski Code, and of the nomination of 'Wibinski [*sic*] among the compilers, who had been the principal author of the bad dispositions in that code'.

<sup>9</sup> Loret, 'Watykan a Polska' (n. 8 above), 351. Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 212. Saluzzo to Zelada, 6 July 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 94–5.

<sup>10</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 20 July 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 97. Zelada to Saluzzo, 30 July (quotation), 6 August 1791, ASV ANV 53, ff. 138, 144–5. Pius VI's *breve* to SA of 8 June 1791 is quoted by Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 212.

<sup>11</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 31 August 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 103. Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 213.

<sup>12</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 7 September 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 104.

<sup>13</sup> SA to Antici, 30 July 1791, AGHig. 803b, f. 61.

<sup>14</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 6 August, 13 August 1791. Loret, 'Watykan a Polska', 352.

Soon afterwards the king conversed with Małachowski, Sapieha, and Kołłątaj. They agreed to drop the three points identified by the pope. As far as the code was concerned, the nuncio was justified in feeling 'fairly content' with the audience. The Polish leadership preferred the pope's approval of the Constitution to restricting his jurisdiction in the Commonwealth. Stanisław August explained to Deboli that the bishops would not press for jurisdiction over the religious orders or a national tribunal, because they feared they would have to sacrifice more property, and he himself did not want the inconveniences accompanying the *exequatur* on papal bulls.<sup>15</sup> Yet Saluzzo had only scotched the snake of 'novelty'.

The conspectus, drawn up by Dmochowski, perhaps with the help of Piramowicz, declared that the codifiers had no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of the clergy, or of introducing any reforms that properly belonged to political laws, but wished only to elucidate everything that linked the clergy with the laity (such as patronage, tithes, inheritance, and nobility) or related to the protection extended by government over those citizens entering and belonging to the clerical estate. This meant ensuring that nobody took a lifetime vow through levity, ignorance, or coercion. The authors also made it clear that the clergy were subject to taxation, and to the same penalties for transgressing the law as the laity. Following Kołłątaj's concept, they classified the clergy as a 'service estate', along with teachers and soldiers.<sup>16</sup>

It was not Wybicki, but Bogdanowicz who drew out the implications of these principles for the Church in three projects, written at the beginning of 1792.<sup>17</sup> The first envisaged that both clergy and laity were to be subjected to secular jurisdiction *in temporalibus*, and ecclesiastical jurisdiction *in spiritualibus*. Any inhabitant of the country—presumably including peasants—would be free to prepare to enter the clerical estate, but episcopal seminaries (for both Catholic rites in each Latin diocese) were to offer a uniform four-year programme of 'arithmetic, mathematics, physics in all its extent with chemistry, mineralogy, and botany, pure morality drawn from the properties and duties of man, theology, the law of nature, politics, economics, nations, the country, and the Church, liturgy'. Seminarians were to provide testimony that they were of good morals and legitimate birth, native Poles, knew Latin, either some French or German, and had passed examinations in arithmetics, mathematics, physics, the law of nature, and the law of the land. They should be no less than 18 and no more than 20 years old. At the same time, the lower limit for entry to the religious orders was set at 20 for men and 17 for women, with profession at no more than 30 or 24 respectively. Despite the declared right of every inhabitant to prepare for the clerical estate, these provisions would have eliminated vocations by persons of mature years. All persons in orders were to

<sup>15</sup> SA to Deboli, 17 September 1791, ZP 413, ff. 188–90. Saluzzo to Zelada, 7 September, 14 September, 17 September 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 104, 106–10. Zelada to Saluzzo, 8 October 1791, ASV 53, f. 183. Loret, 'Watykan a Polska' (n. 8 above), 353.

<sup>16</sup> G. Piramowicz and F. K. Dmochowski, 'Prospekt podług którego ma być zebrany i napisany Kodeks Stanisława Augusta' in S. Borowski (ed.), *Kodeks Stanisława Augusta. Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw, 1938), 75–87. On the authorship, see W. Szafrński, *Kodeks Stanisława Augusta* (Poznań, 2007), 162–3.

<sup>17</sup> Szafrński, *Kodeks*, 217–28, discusses the first two.

be free to observe the monastic rule without making lifetime vows. Any such vows would require the presence of an episcopal commissioner.

All foreign superiors were to be abolished for houses and orders within the Commonwealth, and bishops were to exercise general authority over all the regulars of both sexes in their dioceses. Monks could appeal to their bishop against their provincial, while provincials were to submit annual reports to the relevant bishops. All papal dispensations would be transferred to the bishops, who were not to charge any fee. All papal bulls and other communications would require an *exequatur* from the king in the Custodial Council before publication. Kołłątaj had already conveyed to the nuncio the king's abandonment of these points, but their inclusion at this stage is evidence of the pressure for them within the vice-chancellor's circle.

The same project also envisaged the rationalization of the size and income of parishes, annual reports on population, obligatory parish schools, and the keeping of the episcopal tariff for stole fees, which should go to the *wikariusz*, if the parish priest did not himself provide the services. Churchwardens would be expected to maintain contact with both the episcopal chancellery and the local Civil-Military Commission. Besides the cathedral, in each diocese there would be only one collegiate church, with a provost and six canons. Cathedral churches were to have four prelates and a regulated number of canons. Bishops would be empowered to call diocesan synods, and the primate—national ones. Future foundations were to be strictly limited, except for poorly endowed and new parishes. Other provisions would not have worried Rome much. Private chapels were discouraged. Asylum was abolished, but harsher punishments were envisaged for sacrilege and violence on consecrated ground, and for the kidnapping of nuns. Simony was to be forbidden according to canon law. Fairs and alcohol sales would be prohibited on Sundays and holy-days, but only before noon. Cemeteries were to be moved beyond town limits.<sup>18</sup>

Bogdanowicz's next project, read to the deputation on 1 February 1792, dealt with matrimony. The regulations were mostly based on canon law, but given the status of secular law. For example, marriage was forbidden during Advent and Lent. Parental permission would be required for men under 24 and women under 18, a soldier would need permission from a superior officer to marry, and vagrants would not be allowed to marry at all. Marriage between Christians and non-Christians would be forbidden, but where the spouses were of different Christian confessions, the sons would be brought up in the religion of the father and the daughters in that of the mother (contrary to the king's suggestion). The only divorce recognized was ecclesiastical annulment, whose conditions, including coercion and impotence (but not sterility), were set out. Adultery was not grounds for 'divorce'. The first draft included a sentence allowing separation in cases of the husband beating the wife 'frequently and without her fault', but this was omitted from the version considered by the deputation. However, cruel husbands would have suffered some restraints on their tyranny. Both miserliness and 'severe treatment in expressions that are

<sup>18</sup> W. Bogdanowicz, 'Myśli do prospektu rozdziału o własności i należytości osób duchownych', in Borowski (ed.), *Kodeks*, 118–31.

always hurtful to her, unbearable for her, and leading her to illness' would have been grounds for separation.<sup>19</sup>

The third project provided for land courts composed of equal numbers of lay and clerical judges to try civil cases between laymen and clergymen. Although spiritual punishments were left to ecclesiastical courts, mixed courts would handle excommunications, because of their civil consequences. All jurisdictions would be kept within the country, for even in the case of an appeal against the primate or the metropolitan, the Apostolic See would appoint three Polish bishops to give a final verdict.<sup>20</sup>

It is not clear if the Lithuanian deputation intended to adopt similarly far-reaching provisions. Undoubtedly, had Bogdanowicz's proposals ever found their way into a final project, many would have provoked strong opposition from the clergy and the nuncio. We do not know whether the Polish leadership would have returned to the proposals from which it resigned in September 1791. The Russian invasion of May 1792 made both deputations redundant.

## 2. PLANS FOR 'UNIFORM AND PUBLIC EDUCATION'

The conspectus for the Code of Stanisław August declared 'uniform and public education' the only sure way to prevent the twin dangers of 'anarchy and despotism': 'whosoever resists the enlightenment of the nation is an enemy of its freedoms. Whereas he who resists uniform and general education is a friend of anarchy'—as of old. But thanks to Providence the Educational Commission had spread 'the light of truth across the country in one way'.<sup>21</sup> The Constitution of 3 May subjected the Commission for National Education to the Custodial Council. Previously, the commission answered only to the sejm and the king. Because of the ban on members of the *Straż Praw* sitting in government commissions (with the single exception of the primate), Ignacy Potocki and Joachim Chreptowicz resigned from the commission on 17 May 1791. After Michał Poniatowski reached Warsaw in August, he resumed his chairmanship, and was able to scrutinize the project for the commission before it was published.<sup>22</sup> The sejm never found time to consider it. Nevertheless, it indicates ambitions which might have been pursued, had the Polish Revolution not been overthrown.<sup>23</sup>

This project did not repeat the mistake of the *Project for the Form of Government* in raising the status of the 'academic estate' higher than noble opinion would

<sup>19</sup> Id., 'Myśli do prospektu rozdziału II-go księgi I-szej o małżeństwie', in Borowski (ed.), *Kodeks*, 132–8.

<sup>20</sup> Id., 'Prospekt do prawa o sądownictwie, dotyczącym spraw i osób duchownych rzymskokatolickich', in Borowski (ed.), *Kodeks*, 296–310.

<sup>21</sup> Piramowicz and Dmochowski, 'Prospekt', in Borowski (ed.), *Kodeks*, 84–5.

<sup>22</sup> Antoni Lanckoroński, Ludwik Gutakowski, and Julian Niemcewicz were elected to the commission later in the year. See Jobert, *La Commission d'Éducation Nationale*, 404–5, 413–15, 439; Ender, 'Sprawy oświatowe', 62–9.

<sup>23</sup> *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej*, in Lewicki (ed.), *Ustawodawstwo szkolne*, 392–413.



accept. The requirement for candidates for public office to certify their learning became less specific. It was also stated that the commission's authority did not extend to education at home. However, the commission's verdicts would be enforceable by the military.

As in the *Project for the Form of Government*, schools of all confessions would be subjected to the commission. While its inspectors were not to enter into any dispute on religious doctrine, they were to supervise moral teaching, in the name of 'uniformity of civic spirit, and attachment to the Constitution'.<sup>24</sup> In conjunction with the Catholic bishops of both rites and in consultation with the monastic authorities, the commission was to establish a uniform curriculum in seminaries. The religious orders were reminded that their 'professors' should study for at least three years in the universities, and pass all the examinations set for aspiring teachers.<sup>25</sup>

Instruction began with religion. In parish schools and the first classes of secondary schools the basis of religious teaching would be the episcopally approved catechism. Morality followed:

Next to Christian teaching supported by revelation, comes moral teaching supported by reason, driven by true religion, showing that the particular happiness of a man and the general happiness of the country depend upon civic virtues accompanying private and public life, especially on obedience to the law and superiors, on honesty in contracts, on peace, harmony, and mutual complaisance, in a word on the the performance of the duties of each estate and age.

Such morality was to be fortified by quotations from Cicero and Seneca, learnt by heart.<sup>26</sup>

The desire of a few doctrinaire reformers for a centralized, uniform system of education to mould enlightened patriots, inspired by 'one spirit', was at odds with the preferences of much of the szlachta. Although the reformers dropped two unpopular proposals, they were determined not to bow to the clear wish of most sejmiks to base schooling on the religious orders, and to take steps to restore the Jesuits.

### 3. THE QUESTION OF THE EX-JESUITS AT THE SEJM

Provincial noblemen had expressed their views on education in general and the Jesuits in particular at the November 1790 sejmiks. Yet envoys were in no hurry to carry out their instructions. Only on 9 May 1791 did Ignacy Siwicki call for the restoration of the Society of Jesus. Rather than erect a votive church, the envoy for

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. Cf. *Plan instrukcji i edukacji przepisany od komisji dla szkół głównych i innych w krajach Rzeczypospolitej* [1791/2], in Lewicki (ed.), *Ustawodawstwo szkolne*, 335–62, at 335.

<sup>25</sup> *Plan instrukcji i edukacji*, 361.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 336–7.

Troki believed it would be better to improve morals, which had deteriorated since the fall of the Jesuits. The instructions expressed 'the will of the nation', which

desires and requires the return of that holy, famous order, useful to both religion and the Commonwealth. Without taking its old funds, which have been applied to the treasury of the Commonwealth, many citizens will be found who will offer new funds to provide for this order.<sup>27</sup>

But that day nobody reacted to this part of Siwicki's speech. Instead, he provoked fury by wishing the nation 'aristocrats' (*możnowładzcy*), who might counterbalance the monarchical power augmented by the Constitution of 3 May.<sup>28</sup> Łuskina's *Warsaw Gazette* included Siwicki's call to restore the Jesuits in its report of 11 May, following the reticent phrase 'after making various comments and proposals regarding the new form of government'. The nuncio did not report the speech at all.<sup>29</sup>

The question was next raised in the sejm on 16 June 1791. Tadeusz Lipski, the castellan of Łęczyca, did not criticize the Constitution. Instead he combined the monarch's slogan—'*the king with the nation, the nation with the king*'—with the still more resonant '*God with the nation, the nation with God*'. In order to consolidate the new form of government, morality and virtue, 'according to the precepts of our holy religion', must reign in the Commonwealth. Asking the king and Estates to send a 'legation' to the Holy See, Lipski appealed to the express will of the nation. He told the monarch that with the return of the Society of Jesus, the nation would be 'ever more moral and virtuous, and by the same more favourable to its king'. In contrast, the French had 'cooled in *religion* and *Christian* virtues' and held their king 'as their slave'. He handed in a project 'for the consolidation of the dominant Catholic religion in the territories of the Commonwealth, and for the enhancement of morals and learning', by steps towards the restoration of the Jesuits.<sup>30</sup>

Stanisław August took up the slogan of '*the Nation with God, God with the Nation*', reversing the order.<sup>31</sup> He assured the sejm that nobody regretted the loss of the Jesuits more than himself. But an appeal to Rome for their restoration would contradict the Estates' 'wish of unbroken unity with and filial obedience to the Holy Father'. Two years earlier, he revealed, the Spanish court had reacted to such talk in Warsaw by intervening in Rome. The king asked: 'For what reason should we, loving the faith and venerating the head of the Church, burden him with new

<sup>27</sup> *Głos... Ignacego Siwickiego... 9. maja roku 1791...* Smoleński, *Przewrót umysłowy*, 407.

<sup>28</sup> ASC 19, ff. 65–74.

<sup>29</sup> GW, 11 May 1791, supplement. Cf. Saluzzo to Zelada, 11 May and 18 May 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 84–7. The short account of the session in *GNiO*, 11 May 1791, omitted Siwicki.

<sup>30</sup> *Głos... Tadeusza Lipskiego kasztelana łęczyckiego... 16. miesiąca czerwca 1791...* Attached to GW, 25 June 1791. 'Zaniesienie proźby do Stolicy Apostolskiej za powróceniem do Polski Zakonu Jezuitów', ASC 15, f. 231. Attached to GW, 25 June 1791. As Deboli pointed out to the king on 12 July 1791 (ZP 421, f. 108), Lipski's sister was a patron of the Jesuits of Połock, and his son had died there as a novice in 1787. See Załęski, *Historja zniesienia*, ii. 92–4; Smoleński, 'Żywioły zachowawcze', 191–2.

<sup>31</sup> ASC 14, ff. 151–2. *GNiO*, 18 June 1791, quoted the king's speech in its entirety, but Lipski's only briefly.

cares, especially at this time, when the Holy Father has cause to groan from the projectiles, which (God lament!) he must suffer from other countries.' So the monarch also used a negative image of the French Revolution as a persuasive strategy. He explained that it was now too late to resurrect the Jesuit order. The famous 'unity, spreading from the Vatican Hill around the world [...] no longer has a place'. The Jesuits' fame, however, was a 'spur to virtuous emulation for other orders', who had offered their services in education (the king concealed his contempt for 'other monks'). The time would come for the sejm to consider education, but he advised the Estates to move on to other business.

The diary records that 'when the castellan of Łęczycza again called for the reading out of his project, Mr Zakrzewski of Poznań first wished to have the bull abolishing the Jesuit order read out. Mr Weyssenhoff of Livonia wanted to make his views known. Mr Secretary read out the castellan's project, whereupon some members of the sejm declared that it could not go into deliberation.' At that point, an envoy from Samogitia called for the Courlanders' affairs to be settled. The sejm then heard a project on the Duchy of Courland read out, and unanimously approved it.<sup>32</sup> It spent the rest of the day on the project for the Police Commission of the Two Nations. Lipski's project, having been read out, was not brought before the sejm again for decision.

Some observers attributed the deflecting of Lipski's project solely to the king's intervention.<sup>33</sup> Stanisław August would obtain a diplomatic advantage from his speech, but the sejm diary reveals that the king exaggerated his services. Besides the monarch, the chamber contained several vocal opponents of the project.

Stanisław August also cared for his image in France. He wrote to Mazzei: 'some fanatical friends of the Jesuits proposed making a request to the pope for their resurrection at the sejm'. The king's arguments, that it did not behove zealous Catholics to embarrass the pope, and that friendship with the king of Spain should not be put at risk, 'caused the defeat of the proposal'.<sup>34</sup> Nor did he hesitate to use such language to Cardinal Antici: although his speech had blocked the proposal 'for the time being', 'Łuskina and the other fanatical Jesuit priests and laymen still continue to work for this re-establishment'. Moreover, the expected arrival in Warsaw of a larger number of envoys for the renewal of the sejm on 15 September required, claimed the king, that the public be convinced of the pope's gratitude at being saved such embarrassment. Otherwise he might not be able 'to prevent the effects of Jesuitical fanaticism'.<sup>35</sup>

At the same time, the king considered the restoration of the Jesuits an 'absurdity'.<sup>36</sup> His reaction to the November 1790 sejmiks also indicates that one of the most important reasons for his public opposition to Lipski's project was his determination to defend the Educational Commission and prevent the return

<sup>32</sup> ASC 14, f. 147.

<sup>33</sup> De Caché to Kaunitz, 18 June 1791, HHStA, Polen II 53, despatch 786, f. 237. Bonneau to Montmorin, 18 June 1791, AMAE, CP 318, despatch 27, f. 313.

<sup>34</sup> SA to Mazzei, 25 June 1791, BN 11,356, vol. i, ff. 535–6.

<sup>35</sup> SA to Antici, 13 June 1791, AGHig. 803b., ff. 67–8.

<sup>36</sup> SA to Deboli, 20 July 1791, ZP 413, ff. 149–50.

of education to the 'dark' orders. Having done so, the monarch resolved to maximize the credit, which he had thereby acquired in Madrid and Rome.<sup>37</sup> The king wanted Pius VI to bless the Constitution of 3 May, and knew that Rome might raise difficulties over legal codification and an Orthodox hierarchy. One card he had to play was his proposal on mixed marriages. Another was in opposing any attempt to restore the Jesuits.

In his first despatch after the session of 16 June, Saluzzo emphasized the religious element in Lipski's speech, as well as the considerable support for the castellan in the chamber. He then faithfully related the content of the king's speech. He believed that it was now possible to feel safer, although the project had not been entirely rejected. The nuncio tried to oblige the king to further services to the Church through the form in which he expressed his gratitude, thanking the king 'not only for saving the Holy Father from a request, which would have caused him anguish, but also for having declared so solemnly his attachment to the decisions of the Church and its visible head'.<sup>38</sup>

During his next conversation with the king, the nuncio communicated the pope's congratulations on the Constitution, to Stanisław August's evident satisfaction. Along with his despatch Saluzzo sent Zelada a translation of the king's speech. Although the king's influence had put off the danger of certain 'novelties', the nuncio warned that 'most of the young envoys think according to fashionable philosophy'.<sup>39</sup> Stanisław August obtained the gratitude of Rome. Zelada agreed that the castellan's proposal 'could have kept us in great anguish if His Majesty's convincing speech, and the constant friendship, which he professes for the Holy Father, religiously and conveniently had not averted the project'. Sending thanks to the king, he assured Saluzzo that 'His Holiness is extremely penetrated by and sensible of this new manifestation of religious sentiments and concerns by His Majesty.' These encomiums were intended for the ears and perhaps the eyes of Stanisław August. On 30 July Zelada sent the nuncio a handwritten letter of thanks to the king. This time he instructed Saluzzo to lean on the king regarding codification.<sup>40</sup>

Probably to increase the pressure on Rome, Stanisław August told both Antici and Saluzzo that the sejmiks of February 1792 might pass resolutions demanding the return of the Jesuits.<sup>41</sup> The nuncio suggested inserting a fragment of a despatch in the newspapers, in order to explain to the nation that it would be impossible for the pope to comply with such a request. Via Antici the king pressed for an official ministerial note, but, following Saluzzo's advice, Pius VI sent Stanisław August a second *breve*, expressing his trust in the king's continued protection of the Church.

<sup>37</sup> SA to MJP, 29 June 1791, AGhig. 801b, vol. i, ff. 189–90.

<sup>38</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 18 June 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 90–1. Załęski, *Historia zniesienia*, ii. 95–6.

<sup>39</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 22 June 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 92.

<sup>40</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 9 July, 16 July, 30 July 1791, ASV ANV 53, ff. 126, 128, 141–2.

<sup>41</sup> SA to Ghigiotti, 18 August 1791, AGhig. 514a, vol. iii, f. 47 (copy, original sent 20 August 1791 to Antici).

Saluzzo gave it to the king on 14 September 1791.<sup>42</sup> The king's anxieties (genuine or not) proved unfounded. In the sejm on 16 December Siwicki asked for the consignment of schooling to the religious orders, and the application of the ex-Jesuit estates to the army. Nobody reacted.<sup>43</sup> And in February 1792 no sejmik called for the restoration of the Jesuits.

The opposition of the Iberian courts made the resurrection of the Society of Jesus a non-starter. The resolutions of the sejmiks in November 1790 on the Jesuits' behalf yielded relatively weak attempts in the sejm to effect that demand. Nevertheless, the question had an afterlife in the diplomacy between Warsaw and Rome.

#### 4. THE POLICE COMMISSION AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Police Commission envisaged by the *Law on Government* was approved by the sejm on 17 June 1791. This followed extended debates, during which Siwicki led demands for a separate Lithuanian commission. It was however agreed to name the new body the Police Commission of the Two Nations, a nomenclature omitted on 3 May 1791. This commission included three marshals of the Crown and Lithuania—the fourth, Ignacy Potocki, sat in the *Straż* as minister of police. There were nine other noble commissioners, and six commissioners representing the burghers. The latter were all noblemen (although some were recently ennobled). The most prominent of them was Wybicki.<sup>44</sup>

The Police Commission was more generously funded than previous discasters of the kind. It employed 80 officials in Warsaw and 24 *intendenci* in the provinces. Their very name must have irked republicans.<sup>45</sup> Nor were they welcomed by the regular clergy. The Basilians were blamed for assaults on officials in the palatinate of Połock. At Rosienie in Samogitia, the inhabitants of the Dominicans' *jurydyka* (a property not subject to municipal jurisdiction) appealed to the commission to protect them from forced labour on pain of flogging.<sup>46</sup> Besides ecclesiastical *jurydyki*, in at least three other areas Caesar's commissioners encroached into the realm traditionally left unto the servants of God—in providing for those unable or unwilling to work, moving cemeteries beyond city limits, and defining and enforcing the limits of free speech. On the first question, the commission's activities followed on directly from the reforms of May and July 1790, and ultimately from the doctrine of sovereignty *in temporalibus* promulgated in the law *Fund for the Army*.

<sup>42</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 24 August, 31 August, 7 September, 14 September, 17 September 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 101–10.

<sup>43</sup> Ender, 'Sprawy oświatowe', 62.

<sup>44</sup> A. Zahorski, *Centralne instytucje policyjne w Polsce w dobie rozbiorów* (Warsaw, 1959), 66–118. VL, ix, 277–87.

<sup>45</sup> Zahorski, *Centralne instytucje policyjne*, 121–33.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 150–1.

The implementation of the reforms led to an investigation into the funds and condition of seminaries and hospitals. December 1790 had seen a clash of principle in the sejm over whether the Commonwealth had the right to amalgamate and regulate ecclesiastical hospitals. The outcome was that, with the merest of figleaves for the dignity of the Church, state control of all hospitals was asserted. One of the complaints made in an unpublished 'Letter of a Citizen to the Bishops' concerned the stated intention of closing village hospitals to concentrate inmates in larger ones. This, argued the author, contravened the wills of the founders and inconvenienced the poor and dying. The Police Commission established a deputation for hospitals on 4 November 1791, which was divided into three provincial deputations on 3 February 1792.<sup>47</sup>

The deputies reported on hospitals in Lithuania, Little Poland, and Great Poland, as well as Warsaw. Most regular orders tried to ignore the Police Commission's instruction to inform Civil-Military Commissions about hospital and seminary funds. The administrator of Wilno's 'Emeritorium' for superannuated priests also refused to cooperate. The Police Commission asked the bishops to use their authority.<sup>48</sup> The three deputations managed to discover 497 hospitals, with 5,621 inmates, and a total income of 566,035 złotys, not including Warsaw, with 11 hospitals, 3,460 inmates, and a total income of over 400,000 złotys. The hospital of the Infant Jesus contributed half the income for Warsaw, but it housed 2,660 inmates, mostly foundlings, and had debts of 62,788 złotys. The number of aged and infirm paupers was rising, which was partly due to the commission's energy in tackling vagrancy.<sup>49</sup>

In Warsaw, the state and ecclesiastical authorities worked together against the beggars. A great round-up took place on 2 November 1791, All Souls' Day, when alms were traditionally distributed at cemeteries. Bishop Okęcki gave permission to seize beggars inside churches. Soldiers arrested 502 of them. Eighty-six sick or infirm persons were either sent back to their parishes, or found places in Warsaw's religious houses. Sixteen Jews were freed after the kahal vouched that they would no longer beg. The able-bodied were set to work in manufactories. Fines of 500 złotys were announced for those caught sheltering beggars. Round-ups continued until the end of May 1792. Similar methods were used in Wilno, where a workhouse was established.<sup>50</sup> Bishop Massalski's chancellery responded to a request from the Police Commission on 25 February 1792 by issuing a pastoral letter which ordained almsgiving 'prudently and providently' by the placing of a 'charity box' in each parish church for the exclusive succour of the parish's own paupers. The good Samaritan, it was explained, had taken the victim to the nearest 'hospital'.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 186–7. 'List obywatela do biskupów', APP 197, pp. 289–99, at 297.

<sup>48</sup> Zahorski, *Centralne instytucje policyjne*, 187–202. M. Mycielski, *Marcin Badeni [1751–1824]. Kariera kontuszowego ministra* (Warsaw, 1994), 33–7. P. Staniszewski, *Szpitalnictwo kościelne w archidiecezji łódzkiej i łódzkim do 1795 roku* (Warsaw, 2004), 67–9.

<sup>49</sup> Zahorski, *Centralne instytucje policyjne*, 189–91.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 181–5, 194, 197. Staniszewski, *Szpitalnictwo*, 67.

<sup>51</sup> I. Massalski, *Calemu duchowieństwo tak świeckiemu, jako też zakonnemu y wszystkim wiernym Chrystusowym zdrowie i błogosławieństwo* (Wilno, 15 March 1792). Staniszewski, *Szpitalnictwo*, 48–9.

The Police Commission's attempts to move cemeteries outside city walls had little success. Even Joseph II's analogous order of 1783 had not been immediately implemented in Galicia.<sup>52</sup> The commission's first proclamation, on 18 February 1792, merely ordered municipalities to consult with the ecclesiastical authorities on moving them. Faced with inaction, on 1 May the commission ordered towns to ensure that cemeteries were located outside town limits, and to forbid all new burials within the boundaries or in church vaults. The clergy's general failure to cooperate appears to have derived from fears of the expense of new cemeteries. The commission's response to such procrastination was a circular in mid-June to the bishops of both rites: if the clergy would not help, then towns could found cemeteries and receive the income for burials in them. This had no effect, given the wartime emergency. The health arguments were not all on one side. One respondent argued that extra-mural cemeteries encouraged wolves and spread pestilence. It was better to bury the dead within the walls, but deep.<sup>53</sup>

The idea did come to fruition in Warsaw. A new cemetery serving three parishes, located west of the city at Powązki, was consecrated by Okęcki on 20 May 1792 in the presence of the king. It was financed by the clergy—the primate contributed 9,000 złotys. The foundation stone was laid of a church dedicated to the model bishop, St Charles Borromeo.<sup>54</sup>

## 5. THE BATTLE FOR ECCLESIASTICAL CENSORSHIP

The law establishing the Police Commission laid down its duty to ensure 'that, according to the regulations and conditions of the law, freedom of writing and of the press is sure and not infringed'. It said nothing specific about works contrary to religion or morality. The ecclesiastical hierarchy wanted the government to contradict the impression that all restrictions on writers and printers had thereby been abolished. The primate called a meeting of the episcopal college on 17 January 1792, having had excerpts from the relevant laws prepared in advance. The first was the eleventh Cardinal Law, subjecting writings on religion or corrupting morals to ecclesiastical censorship. Then followed the first article of the *Law on Government*. After the law on the Police Commission, quoted above, came the law establishing the Custodial Council, according to which: 'every decision in the *Straż* which infringes the Constitution of the Commonwealth's Government, and liberty of the person, freedom of speech, writing, and of the press, as well as freedom of property, shall be held contrary to the law.'<sup>55</sup>

The bishops present (Rybiński, Okęcki, Giedroyc, Skarszewski, Cieciszowski, Krasieński, Kossakowski, and Rostocki) signed a memorial to the king in the

<sup>52</sup> J. Krętosz, *Archidiecezja lwowska obrządku łacińskiego w okresie józefinizmu (1772–1815)* (Katowice, 1996), 204.

<sup>53</sup> Zahorski, *Centralne instytucje policyjne*, 166–7.

<sup>54</sup> GW, 26 May 1792 (supplement).

<sup>55</sup> AAG ACap. B84, f. 301.

Custodial Council. They could not, they declared, separate their civic and pastoral duties. The king would require no convincing that 'pure and true religion is the foundation stone of the lasting existence of states and nations'. But neither his zeal, nor the laws, nor their own assiduity would suffice to prevent the 'dreadful effects' of unlimited freedom of the press. They cited the eleventh Cardinal Law to show that the Police Commission's duty to maintain freedom of the press could not extend either to works written anonymously, or to translations or imports of foreign works, which 'insult the holiness and teachings of religion, instead planting the most harmful poison to morality and mores, and whose universal outpouring threatens the entire public with corruption'. Alas, booksellers sold many such works. 'Blasphemies against God, the Holy Trinity, angels, the Saviour and His Mother, combined with repulsive harlotry, are the greatest attraction of such writings, at which the mind of true-believing Poles shudders.' The Catholic religion could not remain dominant, if it could be insulted with impunity. The king was implored to ensure that no printing house published works on religion or morals, and that no bookseller imported or sold such works, without ecclesiastical approval. The episcopate asked for the temporal power to support the spiritual in enforcing obedience.<sup>56</sup> The kind of writing they particularly wished to prevent emerges from a list preserved in the same papers. The mainly French works included the *Traité des trois imposteurs*, *La Bible enfin expliquée par Voltaire*, and *La Pucelle d'Orléans*, also by Voltaire.<sup>57</sup>

A case in support was drawn up. The first argument was when the Constitution of 3 May had guaranteed the rights of the dominant religion, it could not have been intended for that religion's 'faith, its principles, its teaching, to be the object of derision, mockery, assault, and contempt'. The second was that the 'conditions' in the law establishing the Police Commission were those in the eleventh Cardinal Law, providing for ecclesiastical censorship in matters of religion and morality, which were thereby exempted from the 'free voice' guaranteed at public gatherings and the freedom to publish works with the author's name. The *Law on Government* did not even mention freedom of the press. Every civil freedom had its boundaries, prescribed by law. In this case, the law was clear, and the Police Commission should enforce it.<sup>58</sup> A further set of comments called for 'national jurisdictions' to assist 'the ecclesiastical power, whenever its warnings, and spiritual means were inefficacious'.<sup>59</sup> These materials could serve pamphleteers, the first of whom was Reverend Jan Albertrandi.

Albertrandi's *Considerations on the Freedom to Print Books and Sell Them Publicly* were attached to the *Warsaw Gazette* on 21 January 1792.<sup>60</sup> The king's archivist and librarian actually began by explaining the benefits of freedom of the press:

<sup>56</sup> Printed as appendix 2 to J. Szczepaniec, 'Z zagadnień cenzury w Polsce po 3 maja 1791 roku', in J. Pelc and M. Prejs (eds.), *Autor, tekst, cenzura. Prace na kongres slawistów w Krakowie w roku 1998* (Warsaw, 1998), 203–32, at 228–30. Draft in AAG ACap. B84, ff. 255–60.

<sup>57</sup> AAG ACap. B84, f. 299.

<sup>58</sup> 'Wywód z Praw Krajowych należący do Memoryału [...] Biskupów z 17. Stycznia 1792 Królowi w Straży podanego', AAG ACap. B84, ff. 255–6.

<sup>59</sup> AAG ACap. B84, f. 254.

<sup>60</sup> J. Albertrandi, *Uwagi nad wolnością drukowania y sprzedaży ksiąg publiczney* [1792]. Szczepaniec, 'Z zagadnień cenzury', 217–19.



There are prejudiced opinions, genuinely harmful and leading nowhere, and which are all the more dangerous to tackle, in that their antiquity and ubiquity have brought them a kind of respect; their tyrannical rule would never end, if the praiseworthy courage to write had not seized the usurped sceptre from their hands.

But after this enlightened salvo, Albertrandi cautioned that no freedom, if it was not to become 'deranged', could be left to the arbitrary understanding of those who used it. Freedom of the press could not extend to mockery of 'the Christian religion in general'. Nor could such freedom apply to works which denied the Catholic religion its dominant status. Such were works treating all tolerated 'sects' on an equal basis to the Catholic faith. 'Sects, permitted by the indulgence of the law', might print works for their own use, as long as they did not seek 'less careful readers among the less enlightened common folk professing the dominant religion', confined the content to their own precepts and doctrines, and did not attack those of the Catholic Church.

Albertrandi then changed tone and asked rhetorically:

Is it not a disgrace to a polished and well-governed state, to see in booksellers' catalogues, and in printers' presses, and in the hands of the youth of both sexes, which is corrupt enough already, books of which even the most debauched pagan would be ashamed, which expose to public view the hidden ignominy of places polluted by the ugliest debauchery; which can have no other aim than inspiring the spirit of harlotry in some, and maintaining or reactivating it in others.

Reascending to a theoretical plane, he argued that the freedom to print and sell books was not greater than civil freedom, which after Montesquieu he defined as the freedom to do that which the law does not forbid. Inconsequentially, he then declared that until law stated that it was permitted not to be a Christian, and to insult the Christian religion, and that good mores and virtue were merely private opinions, to contend otherwise was to 'cloud a polished and enlightened century with savage barbarism'. He concluded that the hierarchs could not abdicate their duty to supervise all that related to religion, and that they should have the help of the civil power, not least because government also depended on morals.

The day after Albertrandi's pamphlet was published, the primate presented the episcopal memorial to the Custodial Council. The king praised the bishops' concern for 'the purity of the dominant religion and good mores', and passed the buck to Ignacy Potocki. Potocki replied, two weeks later, that he was not empowered to advise or sign any decision because of the law that guaranteed freedom of press, but he saw the need for a law establishing means for lay jurisdictions to assist the Church, whenever spiritual means proved inadequate. In this way, given the amount of business in the sejm, the question was postponed indefinitely.<sup>61</sup> The primate took his campaign to the sejmiks, with modest results, as we have seen.

The last public call for ecclesiastical censorship during the Revolution came on 21 May 1792 from the indefatigable Skarszewski. His principal target was the

<sup>61</sup> Zahorski, *Centralne instytucje policyjne*, 203. J. Wojakowski, *Straż Praw* (Warsaw, 1982), 194–5.

proposal for an Orthodox hierarchy, but he also repeated Albertrandi's point that the dissidents' religious books should be kept out of public bookshops. He denounced freedom of the press as 'a smithy, in which pride, puffed up by reason, forges its sacrilegious weapons against God and the eternal truths revealed by Him'.<sup>62</sup> His pleas fell on deaf ears, at least until the confederacy of Targowica had assumed power.

Had the Code of Stanisław August been completed, it would have contained some provision for freedom of the press, and its limits. Weyssenhoff wanted to make authors and publishers legally responsible for their works *after* publication. He also wished to enable the Educational Commission and the universities, as well as the episcopate, to approve works touching on religion or morals, if requested by a writer. Thus an author who had persuaded an authorized pedagogue to approve his work could not subsequently be prosecuted. Moreover, because seeking such approval would be voluntary, prior ecclesiastical censorship could be circumvented.<sup>63</sup>

Potocki and Weyssenhoff were typical of those 'patriots' who reacted nervously to the idea of effective ecclesiastical censorship. They did not support open attacks on Christian belief, but probably feared that the clergy would ban all criticism of itself, given the chance. In practice, the 'free voice' in political matters also extended to questions of religion, the clergy, and morality. In other respects, it was the activity rather than the inactivity of the Police Commission which provoked clerical ire. Skarszewski would later charge it with wanting 'to rule the altar under the appearance of counsel and enlightenment, and prescribe to citizens what they are to eat and drink'. But this outburst came after a counter-revolutionary régime had been installed.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>62</sup> *Głos... Woyciecha Skarszewskiego biskupa chełmskiego y lubelskiego... 21 maia roku 1792...* Szczepaniec, 'Z zagadnień cenzury' (n. 56 above), 220–1.

<sup>63</sup> Printed as appendix 1 to Szczepaniec, 'Z zagadnień cenzury', 227–8.

<sup>64</sup> Zahorski, *Centralne instytucje policyjne*, 219.

## Ecclesiastical reform—for the Orthodox

On 21 May 1792 the sejm approved an Orthodox hierarchy despite the opposition of the nuncio and some of the Catholic bishops. The following day, the last project for a comprehensive reform of the Catholic Church of both rites was consigned to indeterminate ‘deliberation’. Although both reforms were recommended to the sejm by allies of Hugo Kołłątaj, the geopolitical priorities of the Polish Revolution led to the belated approval of the one, and the diversion of the other.

### 1. RAISON D’ÉTAT VERSUS RAISON D’ÉGLISE

The decision taken by the sejm to establish an ‘autocephalous’ or autonomous hierarchy for the Orthodox Church in the Commonwealth marks a symbolic retreat from the outposts of the confessional state.<sup>1</sup> To understand how this came about, and why it took so long, we must go back to 1 March 1791, when the sejm heard a report from the deputation charged with investigating the ‘rebellions’ of 1789. This deputation argued that the Orthodox could be returned ‘to the bosom of our Fatherland from foreign despotism’ if they were permitted a hierarchy of their own.<sup>2</sup> The Estates agreed to summon plenipotentiaries of the non-Uniates to Pińsk, where they would draw up suitable proposals, together with commissioners appointed by the Commonwealth.<sup>3</sup>

On 17 March 1791, Marshals Małachowski and Sapieha issued a circular to the ‘Clergy and Lay Citizens of the Oriental Greek Confession’. The tone, down to the reference to ‘the correct calendar’ was that of a command from the dominant to a ‘tolerated’ religion. Two monks from each monastery, two secular priests, and two laymen (nobles or burghers) from each deanery (*protopopia*) were to be elected by assemblies and confraternities from among ‘enlightened and moral persons born or long settled in Poland, and impeccable in their loyalty’. They were to establish a

<sup>1</sup> For more detailed treatments, see Butterwick, ‘Deconfessionalization?’; id., ‘How Catholic was the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Later Eighteenth Century?’, *Central Europe*, 8 (2010), 123–45.

<sup>2</sup> *Głos... Bernowicza... pośła... nowogrodzkiego... 1. marca roku 1791...*

<sup>3</sup> Paździór, ‘Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego’, 354–5. ASC 17, ff. 390–1.

consistory from among persons born in Poland and unbound by oaths to a foreign government.<sup>4</sup>

On 19 May the commissioners were nominated. All took an interest in Ruthenia.<sup>5</sup> The congregation assembled on 15 June, but Michał Kochanowski was the only commissioner present. Sessions were adjourned to 29 June. During this time the preparatory work was done, so that the actual proceedings, observed by members of the local Civil-Military Commission, approved the project in a harmonious atmosphere.<sup>6</sup> Kochanowski's inaugural speech was followed on 1 and 2 July by multilingual thanksgivings. The benefits of toleration were lauded, and an oath of loyalty to the king, the Commonwealth, and the Constitution of 3 May was taken. The representatives renounced all foreign links except spiritual communion with Constantinople. The project was read out, and Kochanowski announced that it would be confirmed by the sejm. A consistory was elected, before further thanksgivings closed the congregation.<sup>7</sup>

The resulting project, *The Greek-Oriental Non-Uniate Church in the Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania*, provided for a synod of an archbishop, three bishops, abbots, assessors, and delegates. The synod was to elect the archbishop, bishops, and abbots. Executive authority was vested in a general consistory, elected for four years and composed of three monks, three secular priests, three nobles, and three burghers, with an expectation that provincial consistories would take on local administration and share the supervision of the monasteries with the bishops. All business (as opposed to worship) was to be conducted in the Polish language.<sup>8</sup> The patriarch of Constantinople's jurisdiction in all but doctrinal matters was made provisional pending the establishment of an autocephalous hierarchy in the Commonwealth.<sup>9</sup>

The king welcomed the outcome.<sup>10</sup> The Orthodox consistory got to work, and issued a proclamation on 21 September 1791. It ordered deans to ensure that priests taught the Ten Commandments and other basic tenets of the faith, root out anti-Catholic expressions, spread the Polish language, establish schools, and discourage youth from going abroad (that is, making pilgrimages to the Russian Empire).<sup>11</sup> But the Pińsk arrangements waited for confirmation until May 1792. This may have been due in part to the need for the deputation charged with

<sup>4</sup> S. Małachowski and K. Sapięha, *List okólny do duchowieństwa i obywateli świeckich grecko-orientalnego wyznania, dozwalający tegoż wyznania osobom zięchać się na kongregację generalną do miasta Pińska dla postanowienia konsystorza generalnego* (Warsaw, 17 March 1791).

<sup>5</sup> ASC 17, ff. 458–61. ASC 19, ff. 249–53. ASC 20, f. 72. Paździór, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 356–7. The commissioners were Michał Bernowicz (envoy for Nowogródek), Mateusz Butrymowicz (Pińsk), Adam Czartoryski (Lublin), Michał Kochanowski (Sandomierz), and Michał Zaleski (Troki).

<sup>6</sup> Sakowicz, *Kościół prawosławny*, 187–9, 210.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 189–95, 255–64.

<sup>8</sup> *Cerkiew Grecko-Orientalna Nieunicka w Koronie i w Wielkim Xięstwie Litewskim* [1791]. Sakowicz, *Kościół prawosławny*, 197–209. Paździór, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 358, 360–4. Deruga, review, 556.

<sup>9</sup> Paździór, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 345–6.

<sup>10</sup> SA to Deboli, 20 July 1791, ZP 413, f. 151.

<sup>11</sup> A. Deruga, 'Kościół prawosławny a sprawa "buntu" w 1789 roku we wschodnich województwach Rzeczypospolitej', *Ateneum Wileńskie*, 13/2 (1938), 558–9.

investigating the 'rebellions' to finish its work.<sup>12</sup> But the principal reason for the delay may be sought in the relations between Rome and Warsaw.

When Saluzzo presented Pius VI's second congratulatory *breve* on the new Constitution to Stanisław August on 14 September 1791, he also expressed the pope's concern that a 'schismatic' hierarchy would weaken the attraction of the Union. The nuncio suggested that a 'Greek' bishop might sometimes be brought in from Hungary or Venice to ordain priests. According to his own account, the king answered that the pope should recognize the advantages to the Commonwealth 'from the authentic resignation by the disuniates from all dependency on Muscovy'. Instead of having periodic recourse to a foreign bishop, he continued, 'it seems better for us to have a Polish disuniate bishop, and perhaps one archbishop with three bishops'. The Uniates would still be distinguished, for example by the metropolitan's chair in the senate. The king did not identify himself unequivocally with the proposed Orthodox hierarchy, referring instead to '*nasi*'—our politicians.<sup>13</sup>

The nuncio's account tallies with the king's, but also gives Saluzzo's answers. He warned against trusting 'the Greeks'. Their bishop in Poland could be a Russian agent, fomenting rebellion, while the patriarch of Constantinople was pensioned by Russia. Saluzzo told Zelada that as far as 'the affair of the schismatics' was concerned, and 'knowing the maxims, which reign at present, we could not procure for ourselves a better support, than in the wisdom, the religion, and the protection of His Majesty'. He was also 'informed that Marshal Małachowski thinks well on the question of the Greeks'.<sup>14</sup>

However, the king then met with Kołłątaj, Sapieha, and Małachowski, and it was resolved that 'regarding the Pińsk hierarchy the vice-chancellor would tell the nuncio that the question was still in doubt, but nevertheless more *pro affirmativa* for Polish disuniate bishops'.<sup>15</sup> The king was doubtless happy for the nuncio to believe that the pressure for a hierarchy was coming from Kołłątaj, rather than himself. Saluzzo was disappointed a few days later when the king told him that he had begun to work 'in our favour', but that he had been given good reasons for 'the hierarchy for the Greeks'—namely the need to prevent any appeals from episcopal decrees going abroad. Saluzzo replied that this was merely a pretext, as appeals could be heard by 'the new congress'. Moreover, he claimed, the 'Greeks' would still depend in matters of discipline as well as dogma upon the patriarch of Constantinople. The king reportedly answered that 'he would seek to make me content in this as well'. But Saluzzo admitted to Zelada that 'the free manner, in which they think of religion and toleration, keeps me always afraid'.<sup>16</sup> Zelada, who had responded optimistically to Saluzzo's account of his audience with the king on 14 September, now berated the 'sophisms touching the Greek schismatic

<sup>12</sup> Sakowicz, *Kościół prawosławny*, 219–20.

<sup>13</sup> SA to Deboli, 17 September 1791, ZP 413, f. 189.

<sup>14</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 17 September 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 106–10.

<sup>15</sup> SA to Deboli, 17 September 1791, ZP 413, ff. 189–90.

<sup>16</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 21 September 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 110–11.

hierarchy'. The essential point for the Poles should be the supremacy over the Russian Greek Church of '*la sovrana*', who could use this pretext to interfere in the Commonwealth's affairs. Either the cardinal had either not understood the argument or chose not to do so.<sup>17</sup>

The question was suspended. Until the provincial szlachta's support for the Revolution was assured, the king and his advisers wished to avoid a public dispute with Rome and the Catholic hierarchy, and not without reason. In December 1791, Catherine II identified the pope's opposition to an Orthodox hierarchy as a potential source of discontent in Volhynia and Podolia.<sup>18</sup> The Polish leadership was reluctant to clash with the Holy See, but it would not back down. While Rome was keener to prevent the resuscitation of the ecclesiastical provisions of the Zamoyski Code than Warsaw was to enact them, while Stanisław August gladly helped to scotch a request to restore the Jesuits, and while Pius VI was prepared to bless the Constitution of 3 May, on this question *raison d'état* proved irreconcilable with *raison d'Église*.

Both sides refined their arguments. At the end of a meeting of the episcopal college on 3 December 1791, the Uniate metropolitan warned against a 'disuniate' hierarchy, and the Latin bishops promised him their support.<sup>19</sup> Rostocki then called a meeting of senior Uniate clergy. Their arguments, set out in two memoranda, included the lack of any treaty obligations for a hierarchy, the disproportionate number of bishops for the population, the diminution of the relative status of the Union, the insincerity of all Orthodox promises, and the canonical dependency of any bishops on either a metropolitan or a patriarch abroad. They proposed keeping the status quo, only bringing in a foreign bishop when strictly necessary. However, one of the memoranda (evidently a fall-back position) accepted a consistory, and proposed leaving the question of one bishop (not a hierarchy) to the next sejm.<sup>20</sup> The Uniate bishops submitted a shorter memorandum to the king in March 1792, in which they contrasted their own loyalty with the disloyalty of the non-Uniates, and expressed their anxiety that a hierarchy would lead to persecutions of 'Catholic Ruthenia'.<sup>21</sup> Shortly they would have to put the case for their own Church to the sejm.

## 2. 'SO THAT NO CLERGYMAN WOULD BE USELESS IN HIS CONDITION'

Further reforms to the Catholic Church seemed possible during the year that followed 3 May 1791. Saluzzo's anxieties regarding legal codification, the

<sup>17</sup> Zelada to Saluzzo, 8 October, 15 October 1791, ASV ANV 53, ff. 183, 191.

<sup>18</sup> Rostworowski, *Ostatni król*, 264–5.

<sup>19</sup> Protocol: AAG ACap. B84, ff. 242–5, 277–8. Paździór, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 365–6.

<sup>20</sup> Sakowicz, *Kościół prawosławny*, 214–19, fortuitously summarized the memoranda. They are now lost.

<sup>21</sup> The Uniate bishops to SA, Brześć Litewski, 20 March 1792, BCz. 929, pp. 1091–3. Paździór, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 366–7.

prerogatives of non-Catholic confessions, and 'French maxims' came together in his fear of a comprehensive reform of the Church. Perhaps thinking of France, he worried such a plan might be popular among the lower clergy.<sup>22</sup> The king, who wanted the pope to bless the Constitution, tried to persuade some would-be reformers to hold their fire.<sup>23</sup> The nuncio also counted on Stanisław Małachowski, and thought it worthwhile to lobby the elector of Saxony. Frederick Augustus, whose Catholic piety was exemplary, seems to have told two Polish diplomats in Dresden that he wished for no change in ecclesiastical affairs.<sup>24</sup>

The nuncio considered the regular clergy especially vulnerable, so much so that he asked that the Camaldolesian general abandon a planned visitation in Poland-Lithuania. Saluzzo feared that drawing attention to the order might lead to calls 'not only for the suppression of houses believed to be wealthy, and less useful for the state, but also to have them generally submitted to episcopal jurisdiction, removing them from their obedience to their external superiors and their immediate dependency on the Holy See'.<sup>25</sup>

Saluzzo knew from experience that a project, once read out and taken *ad deliberandum*, might suddenly be repressed. He sent a copy of one, featuring a mixed '*magistratura*' of clergymen and laymen, to Rome in October 1791. Zelada pronounced that this project contained 'all the novelties introduced by the late emperor in his hereditary lands' and 'the exorbitances which constitute the current organization of the clergy in France'. The provisions for the presence of the nuncio in the '*magistratura*' and for the Polish clergy's continued dependence on the Holy See only slightly sweetened the 'invasions of property, suppressions of monasteries and pious foundations, dismemberment of dioceses, and derogations from foundations'. The cardinal found the involvement of priests in drafting the project especially scandalous.<sup>26</sup>

At the head of these priests was Kołłątaj, who had laid out most of the project's contents in his *Political Law of the Polish Nation*. In January 1792 Ignacy Zakrzewski, envoy for Poznań, attempted to introduce such a project (perhaps the very one sent to Rome by the nuncio). A few months later, Kołłątaj considered trying to win over the elector of Saxony to a modified version of it, and a final effort was made on 21 and 22 May 1792.

The threat to the Church's temporalities made the introduction of almost any ecclesiastical material in the sejm perilous. On 16 January 1792, Michał Jasieński, envoy for Sandomierz, requested approval of the fund for the Latin-rite suffragany of Sandomierz, within the bishopric of Cracow.<sup>27</sup> Ignacy Krzucki then renewed an

<sup>22</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 1 June 1791–20 June 1792, ASV ANV 67, ff. 89–160, *passim*, esp. 17 September 1791, f. 107, and 14 January 1792, f. 127.

<sup>23</sup> SA to Deboli, 18 April 1792, ZP 413, f. 358.

<sup>24</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 17 September, 5 October, 19 November, 14 December 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 110, 112, 119–20, 124. *Dziennik Bułhakowa*, 8 January 1792, in Kalinka, *Ostatnie lata*, ii. 303.

<sup>25</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 10 August 1791, ASV ANV 67, f. 99.

<sup>26</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 19 October 1791, ASV ANV 67, ff. 115–16. Zelada to Saluzzo, 19 November 1791, ASV ANV 53, f. 214.

<sup>27</sup> Project in ASC 15, f. 254.

amended version of a project submitted by his fellow Volhynian, Wojciech Świątosławski, in July 1790. This proposal was based on a plan worked out back in 1788 by Metropolitan Jason Smogorzewski, and was also related to two projects drawn up by Kołłątaj.<sup>28</sup> The Volhynian envoys' project envisaged six prelatures attached to each Uniate cathedral. The prelatures were to be reserved for celibate, noble-born priests, doctors of theology or law. Once founded by benefactors, they would each be worth 5,000 zlotys per annum.<sup>29</sup> Rostocki's speech has not survived, but he evidently voiced doubts, because Krzucki answered that the project met the wishes of the previous metropolitan. Zakrzewski then called for a more general reform of the Uniate clergy.<sup>30</sup>

At the next session, on 20 January, Michał Kochanowski asked for the decision of the project approving the Uniate suffragany of Połock, which Rostocki had submitted on 13 January.<sup>31</sup> He thought that the funds (of 36,000 zlotys per annum) would also suffice for a seminary, and argued that 'unenlightenment' had eased the task of 'Russian missionaries' in making converts, even among the Uniate clergy.<sup>32</sup> But Zakrzewski wanted nothing less than the reform of the Catholic clergy of both rites, and the non-Uniates as well. He called for a synod of clergymen and laymen under the presidency of the nuncio, 'so that no clergyman would be useless in his condition'. He was supported by Jacek Jezierski.<sup>33</sup> However, Stanisław August warned against 'the excessive desire to arrange and correct everything', which might afflict Poland with similar ills to France. The projects for synods should not be undertaken lightly, but the suffragany of Połock was 'obviously necessary to the people there' and should be decided forthwith.<sup>34</sup>

At a poorly attended session on 23 January, Małachowski asked the Estates if they had forgotten what they owed religion. As the project for the suffragany of Połock had not met with unanimous approval, he called on the secretary to read out a project drawn up by the Constitutional Deputation. This project envisaged a fully-fledged bishopric of Minsk. When it was opposed on grounds of cost, Małachowski replied, contentiously, that the sejm had decided that Church property could only be used for the Church. Zakrzewski reiterated that a complete reorganization of the clergy of both rites, as well as the non-Uniates, was needed. Disputes over the value of the Połock estates and how the revenues should be spent led Małachowski to suspend the session.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Undated draft of a letter to a 'particular guardian and protector' of the secular Ruthenian clergy, and 'Reforma Duchowieństwa Obrządku Greckiego', in BJ 5524, vol. ii, part 3, ff. 82, 84–5. 'Projekt. Porównanie Duchowieństwa Obrządku Grek: Unitów z Duchowieństwem Obrządku Rzymskiego, Fundowanie Prelatur przy Cerkwiach Katedralnych y Seminariów w Każdej Dyecezyi', BPAU 186, pp. 27–30.

<sup>29</sup> Świątosławski's *Wzgląd na Duchowieństwo Świeckie ritus Graeco Uniti*, ASC 15, f. 609. Handwritten version in ASC 16, f. 171. Krzucki's amended version in ASC 15, f. 227. Paździór, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 411–14.

<sup>30</sup> ASC 23, ff. 307–8.

<sup>31</sup> Paździór, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 313.

<sup>32</sup> ASC 23, ff. 345–7.

<sup>33</sup> ASC 23, ff. 347–50, 362, corrected version of Zakrzewski's speech at f. 363.

<sup>34</sup> ASC 23, ff. 361–2. Saluzzo to Zelada, 25 January 1792, ASV ANV 67, f. 130.

<sup>35</sup> ASC 23, ff. 364–72.



The question returned the following day, despite the marshal's efforts to keep it off the agenda. Małachowski admitted that he was lost among the various projects which had been submitted, and did not know how to proceed.<sup>36</sup> Zakrzewski made a third attempt to gain agreement for a fundamental reform. He did not wish to infringe the rights and teaching of the dominant religion (in the corrected version, doubtless intended for publication, he declared 'Let that Catholic be anathema, who would impinge on and destroy the purity of the Roman religion, who would enter in *misteria Christi*'). But the Estates should distinguish between ecclesiastical *temporalia* and *spiritualia*. As to the first, the government had the unquestioned rights of supervision. The boundaries of the second must be sacrosanct. He would always defend property, including ecclesiastical property, but it was essential to ensure that the clergy were neither overburdened nor idle, neither in luxury nor in misery. And so he demanded a deputation composed of both clergy and laity.<sup>37</sup> The king again warned against following the French example. Given the diminishing number of envoys, he asked for less difficult matters to be decided.<sup>38</sup> And so the question of the suffragany of Połock or bishopric of Minsk was shelved.

The episode shows how even an apparently straightforward and necessary measure could give proponents of radical reform an opportunity for 'a fierce assault'. Saluzzo forecast that 'similar projects' would return to the sejm.<sup>39</sup> In these circumstances, it is not surprising that the Catholic hierarchs did not show more energy in pursuing ecclesiastical goals.

As the sejm drew to its close, Kołłątaj and his supporters made a final effort to gain the sejm's approval for a comprehensive reform. Kołłątaj's papers contain his 'Thoughts on the Subject of Religion and the Clergy Submitted to the Most Serene Elector of Saxony in 1792'. It is not clear, however, if the elector actually received the paper (if so, he would have been sent a French translation). But it reveals Kołłątaj's goals at this juncture. The vice-chancellor wanted to fulfil founders' intentions and leave 'legitimate' ecclesiastical authority inviolate. He highlighted inequalities in revenues and duties at all levels, widespread absence from benefices, and the shortage of seminaries. He also attacked the young age at which the regular clergy took lifelong vows, and the 'inactive sloth' of some orders. So a papal legate should preside over a national synod, comprising bishops and delegates of the secular clergy, which would reorganize the Church's structures and funds.<sup>40</sup>

By the beginning of May 1792, it had also become clear that the question of the Orthodox hierarchy could be put off no longer. In translating the feast of St Stanisław to 3 May Pius VI had played his last effective card. Kacper Cieciszowski informed Kołłątaj of the nuncio's determination to prevent a hierarchy, and that he himself would make a speech against it. On 10 May Kołłątaj replied with a long letter, in which he sought to win over the bishop of Kiev to a reform of the

<sup>36</sup> ASC 23, ff. 373–4.

<sup>37</sup> ASC 23, ff. 375–6, 383–4.

<sup>38</sup> ASC 23, ff. 376–7.

<sup>39</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 25 January 1792, ASV ANV 67, f. 130.

<sup>40</sup> 'Ks. Hugona Kołłątaja Myśli w przedmiocie Religii i Duchowieństwa Najjasniejszemu Elektorowi Saskiemu w r. 1792 podane', BPAU 198, ff. 65–8.

Catholic clergy, and also to explain the necessity of a generous measure of toleration for the 'disuniates', including a hierarchy.<sup>41</sup> He attached a copy of his proposed letter to the elector.<sup>42</sup>

The vice-chancellor first put the case for the reform of the Catholic Church. It was essential that 'civil society was guided and governed by precepts leading people to their temporal and eternal happiness'. Both secular and spiritual authority came from God. All those professing the dominant religion were subject to its spiritual authority but the secular government should ensure that everybody, including the clergy, performed their duties. While the sejm's first actions had 'filled the Polish clergy with rancour and fear', the 'prejudices of the lay estate diminish ever further'. He counselled meeting severity with the mildness and humility of the Gospel.

Kołątaj then appealed to Cieciszowski not to oppose a non-Uniate hierarchy. He first tried to convince the bishop of his own theological orthodoxy: 'Our faith is a gift of God, and the light by which an enlightened man strongly believes and holds to everything which is revealed to him by Jesus Christ and given to him by the Holy Church. Such a great gift, and such a great light, is the result of Divine grace', he stated impeccably. Government should ensure that true teaching reached as many people as possible. The Fatherland must be 'a good mother to all'; in this way the non-Uniates would be converted more swiftly, while becoming 'true Poles, loving their Fatherland'. How could a man be free, he asked, if 'oppressed in his faith'? And so it was the Divinely ordained duty of the secular power to secure the peace. An historical exposition of the consequences of broken promises to Ruthenia was followed by canonical arguments for the necessity of a hierarchy. Nor did Kołątaj hesitate to evoke worst-case scenarios: all Ukraine could be lost, and if 'untempered zeal' endangered Poland, no state would be left 'in the North' in which the Catholic religion was dominant. Finally, Kołątaj appealed for Cieciszowski to preserve his high reputation by allowing another bishop, such as Skarszewski, to make the speech desired by the nuncio. This was an attempt by Kołątaj to trip up his bitterest rival; he may have also feared that Cieciszowski's moral authority might sway a debate. But he may also have felt affection and gratitude to one of the few bishops well disposed towards him.

### 3. AUTOCEPHALITY FOR THE ORTHODOX

On the same day as Kołątaj wrote to Cieciszowski, Marcin Leżeński, envoy for Braclaw, made a passionate plea in the sejm to establish an Orthodox hierarchy. Coercion was useless; only 'a spiritual spring', tended by a hierarchy, could attach the populace to the Fatherland. The fact that Leżeński's speech was published by the printshop attached to the *National and Foreign Gazette* may indicate that this

<sup>41</sup> Kołątaj to Cieciszowski, 10 May 1792, BPAU 199, pp. 1–27.

<sup>42</sup> BPAU 199, pp. 29–35, printed as 'W materyi religii i duchowieństwa' in H. Kołątaj, *Stan oświecenia w Polsce w ostatnich latach panowania Augusta III (1750–64)*, ed. J. Hulewicz [1953] (new edn, Wrocław, 2003), 295–9.

circle was determined to act, before it was too late.<sup>43</sup> Stanisław Sołtyk, envoy for Cracow, and one of Kołłątaj's allies, again demanded a hierarchy on 15 May. At that, Małachowski called on the sejm's Deputation for the Heterodox to present its project. This it did the following day. The project, *Effecting the Demands of Greek-Oriental and Dissident Polish Citizens*, was accompanied by a non-negotiable 'arrangement for a permanent Church hierarchy'.<sup>44</sup>

The discussion was accelerated by the Russian declaration of armed intervention, dated 18 May, which was read out to the sejm on 21 May. Two Russian corps, totalling 98,000 men, had marched into the Commonwealth on 14 May.<sup>45</sup> It was in the highly charged atmosphere after the king's response, and the kissing of the royal hand by envoys and senators, with minds finally concentrated by the Russian threat,<sup>46</sup> that Sołtyk made a powerful speech. First he demanded that promises be kept. Then he stated that 'toleration implies permitting everything, on which a tolerated confession is based'.<sup>47</sup> Non-Uniates founded their confession on episcopal authority and jurisdiction; removing their bishops would overthrow their precepts, destroy toleration, and 'worst of all, remove that salutary aim, for which our government accepted toleration, which is the consolidation of public tranquillity and the attachment of citizens to the government'. Only a full hierarchy could remove a million-strong populace<sup>48</sup> from foreign dependency.

Let God look after human consciences, argued Sołtyk, 'but let us, in the spirit of Christian mildness, persecute no opinion, but with justice, exemplary lives, the virtues proper to our holy ruling faith, draw them towards the sweet relations of unity'. When the non-Uniates saw that they were treated equally, when they tasted 'ordered freedom' (*rzędna wolność*), no 'foreign despot' would be able to win them over:

Most Serene Estates! Liberty is our greatest secret against any foreign usurpation, it is the strongest defensive wall against neighbours' invasions, let people speak in different languages, let there be differences between them as regards religion; freedom, when well understood, justice, given strictly to everyone, will unite them most swiftly, and will teach one sentiment, the same expressions of their own liberties, and so I ask that as soon as possible, the resolutions of the Congress of Pińsk, which took place by the will of the Estates, be confirmed, that the non-Uniates have their hierarchy.

He reassured the sejm that he wanted the dominant faith to suffer no damage; nor did he wish to see its clergy saddened by violation of its privileges and property—'shocking plunder' which had not enriched the treasury. What they had taken would not suffice for one regiment. But why, he asked, when the Catholic Hungary and Venice had 'Greek Oriental' hierarchies, should the Polish Catholic clergy be

<sup>43</sup> *Głos Marcina Leżeńskiego, posła braclawskiego* ... 10. maja 1792...

<sup>44</sup> The MS diary is missing for 15 and 16 May, so the best record is in *GNiO*, 19 May 1792. 'Załatwienie żądań obywatelów polskich greko-orientalnych i dyssydentów', dated 16 May 1792, ASC 24, f. 98.

<sup>45</sup> ASC 24, ff. 70–3. Paździor, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 373–80.

<sup>46</sup> As Saluzzo explained to Zelada, 23 May 1792, ASV ANV 67, f. 154.

<sup>47</sup> This point was also made by Kołłątaj to Cieciszowski, 10 May 1792, BPAU 199, p. 24.

<sup>48</sup> Even allowing for rapid growth on Potemkin's estates, this figure seems a great exaggeration.

unhappy with a similar hierarchy? The proposal derived not from ‘coolness in the ruling religion’, but from ‘the true love of our liberties, a responsible care for our frontiers and our independence’.

Sołtyk desired a reform of the Catholic clergy, ‘so that one should not live in excess, and another should not starve’, but it should be accomplished while respecting Church property, and by the clergy themselves. This was Kołłątaj’s vision, and as we shall see, on the same day Kołłątaj’s allies made a final attempt to get such a reform passed. Sołtyk concluded with an appeal for the king to be a father to the non-Uniates: ‘they are Poles, they are our brethren, they shall defend the Fatherland together with us, they shall be your shield as well’.<sup>49</sup> This expressed a purely civic sense of Polishness.

Cieciszowski responded, despite Kołłątaj’s attempts to dissuade him. He began in conciliatory mode, acknowledging ‘the precepts of thorough and enlightened politics’ and abhorring any persecution of those who remained in error. But he questioned whether the non-Uniates’ demands were proportionate to their needs, and whether they did not cross the boundary of toleration, to the detriment of the dominant religion. And so he advised the Estates to reject the proposal.<sup>50</sup>

For all the respect that Cieciszowski commanded, several envoys emphasized the overriding and urgent necessity of cutting off the ‘disuniates’ from Russian influence by establishing a hierarchy.<sup>51</sup> Skarszewski sought to stem the tide. He accused the deputation of exceeding its brief by creating bodies endowed with ‘political power and authority for the effective support of the interests of disunion in an orthodox (*prawowierne*) kingdom’. How would the dominant religion be distinguished from a tolerated religion, when both had the same privileges? He expounded a restrictive interpretation of ‘toleration’:

Toleration, that great word, which we hear repeated so often here, and to which the disuniates, and other heterodox, have recourse, does not in fact encompass another aim, than that persons should not be persecuted in the country because of differences in religion, and that peace be maintained between citizens. This probably agrees with the spirit of our dominant faith, which never breaks the bond of Christian love, and unites all people with itself. It even agrees with the ancient laws of the Commonwealth. We suffer the heterodox in the country, and at the same time we love them as neighbours and compatriots. But we do not suffer the spreading of their opinions, contrary to the holy Catholic faith. This is the true spirit of civil toleration in every state, to which the dominant religion is not indifferent. Without that characteristic, all religions would be dominant.

The Estates should not set altar against altar, allow the spread of harmful opinions, or obstruct ecclesiastical unity. Moreover, he did not believe that ‘disuniate’ hierarchs would lead their unenlightened flocks to love the Fatherland, given their record.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *Głos Stanisława Sołtyka* ... 21. maja 1792 ...

<sup>50</sup> *Mowa* ... Cieciszowskiego biskupa kirowskiego ... 21. maja 1792.

<sup>51</sup> ASC 24, ff. 71–2.

<sup>52</sup> *Głos* ... Woyciecha Skarszewskiego ... 21 maja roku 1792 ...

Given the impossibility of consensus, Małachowski announced a vote.<sup>53</sup> The king seems to have spoken in favour of the project.<sup>54</sup> 123 voted in favour, 13 against. 16 senators were in favour and 5 against. The envoys divided 107 to 8. A surviving division list for the envoys (not the senators) reveals that the eight envoys who opposed the measure tended to be either 'old republicans' or known supporters of the Uniates. We know that Skarszewski and Rostocki, and can assume that Cieciszowski voted against the project. Evidently most of the episcopate thought it wiser not to appear in the sejm.<sup>55</sup>

Marie-Louis Descorches celebrated the 'immense majority' as a proof of '*les progrès que fait la raison*'.<sup>56</sup> Saluzzo was correspondingly despondent: 'the sejm has inflicted a fatal blow to religion in Poland'. He blamed 'an immoderate spirit of toleration', as well as the effect of the Russian declaration. After the hierarchy had been presented as the only means of separating the 'schismatics' from Russia, it was accepted 'with such great enthusiasm that it was not possible to resist it'. He feared that the consistory, composed of both clergymen and laymen, would be a 'bad example' for the Catholics. The weakness of Rome's position is apparent from the nuncio's advice against an official protest, but to communicate 'the surprise and affliction of the Holy Father' via Antici.<sup>57</sup>

Before the news of the decision had even reached Rome, Antici had received a warning from Ghigiotti that the king would not be able to hold off the 'storm' much longer. Antici was 'in any case' letting it be known that the king and the primate 'have always opposed the establishment of this heterodox hierarchy'.<sup>58</sup> Once Saluzzo had read a translation of the king's speech, he was convinced that the monarch had earlier been dissimulating. Nevertheless, given the Russian invasion, the nuncio considered '*querelè*' to be 'inopportune'. Zelada could only lament 'the prudence of the century, which is always an enemy to God'.<sup>59</sup>

The law approved the Pińsk arrangements, but the rights of the dominant faith were declared unharmed, and the state of possession of churches and funds between Uniates and Orthodox was 'fixed'. In spiritual matters the Orthodox could appeal to the patriarch of Constantinople, but also to the general council of Eastern patriarchs. Orthodox schools were subjected to the Educational Commission, hospitals to the Police Commission. The government was to approve any extraordinary meetings of the national synod, at which a commissioner of the Commonwealth must be present. The king personally was to nominate bishops from among four candidates presented by the general congregation.<sup>60</sup> The Custodial Council

<sup>53</sup> ASC 15, ff. 91–2.

<sup>54</sup> SA to Deboli, 23 May 1792, ASC 413, f. 383. Saluzzo to Zelada, 30 May 1792, ASV ANV 67, ff. 156–7.

<sup>55</sup> Paździor, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 377–81. Saluzzo to Zelada, 23 May 1792, ASV ANV 67, ff. 154–5.

<sup>56</sup> Descorches to Dumouriez, 26 May 1792, AMAE CP Pologne 319, despatch 52, ff. 335–6.

<sup>57</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 23 May 1792, ASV ANV 67, ff. 152–5.

<sup>58</sup> Antici to Ghigiotti, 9 June 1792, AGHig. 25a, vol. vii, ff. 109–10.

<sup>59</sup> Saluzzo to Zelada, 30 May 1792, ASV ANV 67, ff. 156–7. Zelada to Saluzzo, 16 June 1792, ASV ANV 53, f. 357.

<sup>60</sup> VL, ix. 447.

had no time to effect the new organization, but on 1 June 1792 the Orthodox Consistory ordered thanksgiving and prayers for the embattled Commonwealth.<sup>61</sup>

#### 4. THE FINAL EFFORT TO REFORM THE CATHOLIC CLERGY

Immediately after the decision to establish an Orthodox hierarchy on 21 May 1792, Adam Czartoryski desired 'to make the clerical estate of our Latin rite and also of the Uniate rite secure in its properties and rights'. He submitted a project, *The Clergy of Both Rites of the Dominant Holy Roman Catholic Faith*, which was duly read out. It declared that ecclesiastical property was inviolate and could be used for no purposes other than religion. After 'present interests' had been satisfied, the entire fund of the bishopric of Cracow would return to the Church, and a 'just arrangement' would be made regarding the Duchy of Siewierz. But there was a sting in the tail. The episcopal college, having consulted with Rome, would call 'enlightened and virtuous persons' from the clergy of each diocese, and make the necessary corrections in funds and duties,

*in Cura Animarum*, for the provision of parish churches, the enlightenment of the people, the founding of the best seminaries, the multiplication of charitable deeds, so that henceforth the highest national authority would have no need to require any more from the clergy, and that the entire lay estate should with inspiration respect its guides in faith and true enlightenment.

The clergy was also enjoined to present a convenient project for commuting tithes to the current sejm.<sup>62</sup> Ignacy Zakrzewski stated his desire to add his own proposals to Czartoryski's project, so 'that those clergymen who labour the most in the Lord's vineyard should not experience oppression and misery'. At that the session was adjourned until the following day.<sup>63</sup>

Unfortunately, the manuscript diary for the session of 22 May has not survived. According to the *National and Foreign Gazette*, Czartoryski tried to obtain a decision on his project 'for securing the property of the clergy', and in this was supported by the king. At that point Zakrzewski presented his own project, but did not insist on an immediate decision.<sup>64</sup> It is probable that at the end of the session his project, *The Clerical Estate of the Dominant Holy Catholic Faith*, was read out, but and went *ad deliberandum* without further discussion. The existence of a more radical alternative may have prevented a decision on Czartoryski's project. It is difficult to judge whether the king genuinely supported a moderate reform of the Catholic clergy, or whether he saw in this vaguely worded measure a means of postponing a decision. Perhaps his priority was to please his influential cousin.

<sup>61</sup> Sakowicz, *Kościół prawosławny*, 225–6.

<sup>62</sup> ASC 24, f. 73. 'Duchowieństwo Obojga Obrządkow Wiary S<sup>y</sup> panującej Katolickiej Rzymskiej', ASC 15, f. 24.

<sup>63</sup> ASC 24, ff. 73–4.

<sup>64</sup> GNiO, 23 May 1792.

Zakrzewski's project, a distillation of the thinking of Kołłątaj's circle, began with a declaration that 'faith, in leading us to eternal happiness, even in this life brings the greatest benefits to human society'. It then restored to the clergy all the property currently administered by the Treasury Commission, and promised to respect the inviolability of ecclesiastical property in future. However, 'the right of care over this estate' authorized the calling of a national synod under a papal legate, including all the bishops, two prelates or canons from each chapter, and one *pleban* from each deanery. Its aim would be to restore the primeval discipline of the Church and its 'police', 'so that the service of God could be performed most exactly', 'without burdening the populace'. That necessitated changes in the government of the Church as well as a redistribution of duties and funds.

All current possessors would be guaranteed lifetime possession, ensuring that the reform would be introduced gradually. The clergy was in future to consist 'particularly' of bishops, cathedral chapters, *plebani*, and *wikariusze*. The regular clergy should aim at 'public utility' through schools or hospitals, thereby effectively liquidating contemplative monasticism. Moreover, they were not to take binding vows, at least not before they were 36 years old. In future, all pluralism would be forbidden, and clergymen were to reside in their benefices, unless engaged in public service or suffering from 'a genuine illness'. Bishops were to visit all the churches in their dioceses at least once every three years. Dioceses were not to be excessively large, and no parishioner should be further than half a mile (three and a half kilometres) from the parish church, or be cut off from it by an unfordable river. One priest should serve up to 500 parishioners. Parishes that were too small or inadequately funded were to be merged, notwithstanding the rights of patrons.

All clerical revenue was to come from landed property, interest on capital, or commuted tithes. Tithes in kind were to be abolished within three years. Civil-Military Commissions would survey or inspect the documents of all clerical properties, and on that basis the synod would reallocate the income. Copies would be sent to the Police Commission. Civil-Military Commissions would also monitor the exchange of clerical and lay properties for reasons of convenience. But most of the land was to be leased out, leaving *plebani* with the direct management of at most three *włóki*, and bishops with fifty. The intention was probably to ensure that the clergy did not become preoccupied with the farming of their estates. Ecclesiastical treasures, save those necessary for the liturgy, were to be sold off, and the proceeds used to build and maintain parish churches, seminaries, and hospices.

Future primates were to receive 200,000 zlotys a year, bishops 100,000, and any newly founded ones 50,000. All were to pay tax at 20 per cent—thus altering the law of June 1790. Chapters were to comprise twelve persons, or in the case of newly erected bishoprics, eight. In the former cases, three were to be in residence at the cathedral, four would form the consistory, one would serve at the tribunal, and the other four would help the bishop run the diocese, or else be absent in the interests of the diocese, their families, or their own affairs. The first prelate would receive a net income after tax of 9,000 zlotys, the other prelates and canons 6,000. Parish priests would receive 4,000, 3,000, and 2,000 zlotys per annum net in larger towns,

small towns, and villages respectively, and *wikariusze* 2,000 zlotys in larger towns, or 1,000 zlotys elsewhere. Monastic houses in charge of parishes would have similar incomes. If ecclesiastical funds did not suffice for the redistribution, an additional contribution of 1 per cent would be levied on clerical incomes, but if a surplus was yielded, it would be turned over to charitable institutions. No stole fees would be payable, unless, for example, a parishioner offered to pay the costs of an exceptionally grand funeral.

Parish priests were to be at least 30 years old, and bishops 45, having first served as *plebani* for ten years. Canons and prelates were to be recruited from promising *plebani*, and were to have completed a full course of studies. They were expected to be knowledgeable not only in 'ecclesiastical learning', but also in law, history, and 'other sciences useful to the public good'. Coadjutorships with a right of succession were to be abolished forthwith. Hospices were to be provided for aged and infirm priests. Seminaries would feature a uniform programme of spiritual and temporal learning, drawn up by the bishops in consultation with the Educational Commission. There would also be three 'great seminaries', one in each province, located by its academy. The idea is reminiscent of Joseph II's general seminaries, but these 'great seminaries' were to supplement, not replace, diocesan seminaries. The Church would maintain chaplains in the army, and clerical surgeons. The Custodial Council would be charged with ensuring that the synod met its obligations. The pope would be asked for his approval, 'so that in this way he would remove the occasion in our nation for such reforms, which have lately occurred unhappily in other kingdoms, with damage to the faith and the clerical estate'. The request implied the threat of French-style coercion, if it were refused.<sup>65</sup>

Presumably Małachowski was determined to block discussion of a potentially divisive project. At the start of a military campaign against Russia, other matters were more urgent. Even Kołłątaj, in his paper for the elector, anticipated that the synod would take place in calmer times.<sup>66</sup> Kołłątaj and Zakrzewski sought to avoid any suggestion of arbitrariness, and to guarantee ecclesiastical property, but at the same time their plan would have necessitated an upheaval in income and duties. Almost certainly, existing funds would not have sufficed. The clergy would be expected to inculcate a uniform civic patriotism across the Commonwealth. The project is evidence that the debate had shifted away from the fiscal interests that predominated at the start of the Polish Revolution. The chief criterion was now temporal utility. Most of the regular clergy failed to meet it. However, Kołłątaj's earlier desire to remove the regulars from education gave way to a postulate more likely to win the approval of the provincial nobility.

The reform proposed by Kołłątaj and Zakrzewski was not so much defeated as diverted. Much in the final project would have met the expectations of noble opinion, and it made strategic concessions, but as on previous occasions, the

<sup>65</sup> *Stan Duchowny Panujący Wiary Świętej Katolickiej. Projekt na sessji seymowej do łaski podany, przez Ignacego Zakrzewskiego chorążego i posła poznańskiego dnia 22 maja 1792 r.*, in ASC 15, ff. 48–9. Zahorski, *Ignacy Wyssogota Zakrzewski*, 74–8.

<sup>66</sup> BPAU 198, f. 68.



political impetus behind it was insufficient. A fundamental reform of the Orthodox Church was passed only in the face of a Russian invasion. The geopolitical threat to the Commonwealth's independence made one reform an urgent necessity, while making the other a dispensable luxury.

## 5. A UKRAINIAN CODA

The Four Years' Sejm passed one last measure concerning the Latin rite, which met some of the expectations of ecclesiastical reformers. But it was on a small scale, in the most confessionally volatile and militarily exposed corner of the Commonwealth. Although this reform was agreed more than a month before the sejm ended, it ties together the themes of this chapter, and makes an expressive coda to the Polish Revolution's policy towards the Catholic Church.

During the the last debates on the sale of Crown estates on 23 April 1792, the question arose of allocating some of that land to Uniate parishes, so that each had a minimum of three *włóki*. Ludwik Gutakowski, envoy for Orsza, argued that the Commonwealth's interest required that the Ruthenian populace should be 'enlightened' by its priests. Appealing to the slogan that the Commonwealth was a mother to all her subjects, he asked for the provision to be extended to the non-Uniates.

Cieciszowski rose. He first put the case for aiding the Latin rite in the diocese of Kiev. Even in some towns, the nearest Latin-rite church was as much as fifteen miles (ninety kilometres) away. 'More than once I have wept tears at the altar for this reason', he said, pleading for the foundation of more parishes. The bishop then observed that the 'disuniates' were favoured by not having to pay the *subsidium charitativum*. Nevertheless, as they were a tolerated religion, their parishes should also have the means of decent sustenance. The project was duly corrected to provide for both 'Uniate and non-Uniate' parishes in the far south-east. Cieciszowski's concession to the Orthodox undoubtedly helped his plea for the Latin rite. He was invited to submit a suitable project.<sup>67</sup>

The bishop of Kiev prepared a project for the session of 26 April. He envisaged the founding of twenty-four new parishes of the Latin rite, in consultation with himself and the local Civil-Military Commissions. Surveyors would find suitable places in the former Crown estates for churches, cemeteries, parish schools, and other necessary buildings, and allocate three *włóki* of land for gardens, meadows, and fields. No tithes would be payable. The diocese would use the income over six years to build the churches, before suitable candidates would be proposed for the king to present to parishes. Małachowski opened the session by praising a 'bishop holy in his calling, an authoritative senator, and an enlightened statesman'. He set out the benefits: 'we complain of the coarseness and darkness of the simple people

<sup>67</sup> ASC 24, ff. 315–17. Paździór, 'Polityka Sejmu Czteroletniego', 370–1. Saluzzo kept his disapproval to his despatch to Zelada of 2 May 1792, ASV ANV 67, f. 148.

of those parts; who will cast off that darkness from their souls, who will lead them to the true light, if not ministers of religion in the parishes?’<sup>68</sup>

The king asked for a unanimous acclamation, but objections were raised. One envoy did not want the foundation of churches to serve as a cover for turning villages into ‘free towns’, not directly subject to the treasury. Another insisted that the new parishes could not be combined with any other benefice. A third demanded that the *plebani* pay tax at 20 per cent.<sup>69</sup> A Protestant ended the carping. Adam Bronikowski, envoy for Gniezno, told the Estates that they should not begrudge the annual expense of 72,000 złotys ‘for the erection of churches in places where it is most necessary to enlighten the people remaining in error and encourage them to worship. This is the simplest method of attaching them more strongly to our country’. At that the law, *Latin Parish Churches in the Diocese of Kiev*, was passed unanimously, with the king resigning his rights as patron to the bishop, and the income set at 3,000 złotys per annum, taxable at 20 per cent. An encomium of Cieciszowski was inserted into the law at the instigation of Stanisław Kublicki.<sup>70</sup> The bishop of Kiev thanked the Estates, adding that he had found only one *pleban* in his diocese with two benefices and had immediately persuaded him to give one up.<sup>71</sup>

Effectively these twenty-four foundations were to be the model parishes demanded by more or less ‘enlightened’ Catholics. Properly provisioned, their resident priests would enlighten the people, not extort from them. Some of the thinking behind the decision emerges from a paper by Kołłątaj about equalizing the number of sejmiks between the Commonwealth’s provinces. In it he criticized the failure to provide the Ukraine with an adequate network of Latin-rite parishes, in which migrants from other parts of Poland could worship. Up to twenty miles distant from a Latin church, was it surprising that a ‘simple man’ adopted the Ruthenian rite? ‘It was the interest of Poland, that the wild plains of the Ukraine were settled by people of the Latin rite’. But he claimed that ‘the indifference of our fathers’ allowed these settlers to become as hostile towards their lords as ‘genuine Ruthenes’.<sup>72</sup> Kołłątaj was exceptionally determined to make ‘Poles’ out of Ruthenes and Jews, Lithuanians and Germans, using the Polish language, and preaching the same civic and moral virtues regardless of confession. But he shared the assumption that the Ukraine would be safer for the szlachta if it contained more Catholics of the Latin rite. The news of this law scarcely had time to reach the far south-east, before the area was invaded by the Russian army on 14 May. The confederates of Targowica arrived in the Russian baggage train.

<sup>68</sup> ASC 24, f. 337.

<sup>69</sup> These envoys were Michał Czacki (Czernihów), Ignacy Krzucki (Volhynia), and Albin Skórkowski (Sandomierz). ASC 24, f. 338.

<sup>70</sup> ASC 24, f. 339–40. VL, ix. 438.

<sup>71</sup> ASC 24, f. 340.

<sup>72</sup> ‘Projekt o Rozkładzie Reprezentantów na Województwa Seymików w Województwach, na Ziemię lub Powiaty, o naznaczeniu Miasta na Mieysca każdemu Seymikowi 1791 r.’, BPAU 186, pp. 125–32, at 130.

# Conclusion

## 1. EPILOGUES

The Polish Revolution was overthrown as Catherine the Great's armies entered the Commonwealth on 14 May 1792 and marched westwards. In their wake a counter-revolutionary régime was installed: the confederacy of Targowica in the Crown, led by Szczęśny Potocki, Ksawery Branicki, and Seweryn Rzewuski, and the Lithuanian general confederacy, led by Bishop Józef Kossakowski and his brother Szymon, a lieutenant-general in Russian service. The two confederacies were subsequently united. Although the king submitted to Catherine's ultimatum to join the confederacy of Targowica on 24 July, he was unable to regain control of the country. The counter-revolution also failed to deliver the tranquil subjection desired by the tsaritsa. She agreed to a second partition of the Commonwealth, mainly in order to keep Prussia at war with revolutionary France. The final sejm in the Commonwealth's history was summoned to Grodno in June 1793 in order to ratify the treaties. It also established a form of government for the rump of Poland-Lithuania, which was, more explicitly than ever, dependent on Russia.<sup>1</sup>

The counter-revolutionary régime employed republican and Catholic discourse against the 'revolutionary Warsaw sejm'. Some bishops took the opportunity to crack down on booksellers. Wojciech Skarszewski replaced Hugo Kołłątaj as vice-chancellor of the Crown, while Józef Kossakowski administered the estates of the bishopric of Cracow for a few months. Despite their familiar slogans, the confederates had to resort to intimidation and sequestration to gain the acquiescence of most of the szlachta and clergy.<sup>2</sup> The primate kept his distance, only entering the fray to criticize an ill-considered plan to redraw the bishoprics, which was shortly overtaken by the Second Partition. He presided, however, at the requiem Mass for Louis XVI, when he preached a sermon against the French Revolution, and delusions of 'enlightenment' and the 'rights of man'.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Lord, *Second Partition*, 283–483; P. W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Oxford, 1994) 86–93; Lukowski, *Partitions*, 148–58; Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine*, 421–36.

<sup>2</sup> W. Smoleński, *Konfederacja targowicka* (Cracow, 1903), 74–82, 272–5, 335–7, 355–6. R. Šmigelskytė-Stukienė, *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės konfederacijos susidarymas ir veikla 1792–1793* (Vilnius, 2003), 80–5, 185–8, 265–9. D. Rolnik, *Szlachta koronna wobec konfederacji targowickiej (maj 1792–styczeń 1793)* (Katowice, 2000).

<sup>3</sup> Kądziała, 'Prymas Michał Poniatowski'. Zielińska, 'Poniatowski, Michał Jerzy', *PSB*, xxvii. 466.

The Kościuszko Insurrection brought death, ignominy, glory, despair, and ruin. Warsaw rose against its occupiers on 17–18 April 1794. The leading confederates present in the city were incarcerated, among them Bishops Massalski, Kossakowski, and Skarszewski. On 9 May a crowd broke into the city hall and demanded the summary trial and execution of traitors. Within four hours, four dead bodies, including Ankiewicz and Kossakowski, swung before thousands of jeering Varsovians. Ankiewicz behaved like a gambler who knows he has played his last card—he put the noose around his own neck. Led to the scaffold, Kossakowski allegedly cried out that they should hang the king instead. After Nuncio Lorenzo Litta refused to unfrock the bishop of Livonia, Antonin Malinowski did the honours. On 28 June, as the Prussians were moving towards Warsaw, crowds again broke into the prisons and dragged further confederates, including the bishop of Wilno, to the gallows.<sup>4</sup>

Such events have been presented by some historians in terms of anti-clerical ‘Jacobinism’, and even ‘jacobin-priests’.<sup>5</sup> This is a distortion. The rites of the Church were pressed into the service of the Insurrection, and on the whole their profanation was avoided. The failure to unfrock Massalski before his execution was widely considered scandalous. Pastoral letters and instructions ordering prayers for the success of the rising were written by most bishops. Clergymen served on the restored Civil-Military Commissions.<sup>6</sup> In general, the events of 1794 in Poland have little in common with the anti-Christian fury of Year II in France. Regarding religion, they continued the tendencies of the Polish Revolution.

Michał Poniatowski cooperated with the Insurrection, although he did not believe it could succeed. The estates in the Warsaw archdeaconry of the vacant diocese of Poznań, administered by the primate since Antoni Okęcki’s death the previous year, were handed over to the insurrectionary dictatorship in an echo of *Fund for the Army*. Nevertheless, Poniatowski was openly threatened by crowds in Warsaw. When he died suddenly on 12 August 1794, probably as the result of a stroke, some of his enemies spread a long-lived slander that he had taken poison, sent to him by the king after he had allegedly sent the Prussians information on Warsaw’s defences. This charge has no basis in fact. The primate was buried with full honours in Warsaw’s new cemetery at Powązki. His farsightedness was no more appreciated during his lifetime than was Cassandra’s.<sup>7</sup>

Having discovered that his bridges with Targowica were burnt, Hugo Kołłątaj (1750–1812) fled the country and rewrote the history of the Polish Revolution,

<sup>4</sup> B. Leśnodorski, *Polscy jacobini. Karta z dziejów insurekcji 1794 r.* (Warsaw, 1960) 393–404. Z. Góralski, *Stanisław August w insurekcji kościuszkowskiej* (Warsaw, 1988), 58–65, 102, 148–53.

<sup>5</sup> Notably Leśnodorski, *Polscy jacobini*, but also J. Ziółek, ‘Księża w szeregach jacobinów polskich’, in H. Kocój (ed.), *Zwycięstwo czy klęska? W 190 rocznicę powstania kościuszkowskiego* (Katowice, 1984), 76–90.

<sup>6</sup> Woltanowski (ed.), *Kościół katolicki a Powstanie Kościuszkowskie*. M. Ślusarska, ‘Między sacrum a profanum. O obrzędowości powstania kościuszkowskiego’, *WO*, 12(1996), 107–33.

<sup>7</sup> Zielińska, ‘Poniatowski, Michał Jerzy’, *PSB*, xxvii. 467–8. A. Woltanowski, ‘Czarna legenda o śmierci prymasa Poniatowskiego’, *KH* 94/4 (1987), 25–62. Id., (ed.), *Kościół katolicki a Powstanie Kościuszkowskie*, 81–8, 97–101. Góralski, *Stanisław August*, 86–8, 102–3, 189–92. Sołtys, *Opat z San Michele*, 47–50.

scapegoating the king. Kołłątaj's reputation as a 'Polish Robespierre' has been exaggerated, but during the Insurrection he sought to settle old scores. He was imprisoned by the Austrians until 1802, and never recovered his former political influence.<sup>8</sup> Stanisław Małachowski (1736–1809), who had often listened to Kołłątaj during the Four Years' Sejm, cut himself off from any hint of 'Jacobinism' after the execution of Louis XVI, refusing to participate in the Insurrection. Having accepted, in the name of the Polish nation, the modest gift of the Duchy of Warsaw from Napoleon in 1807, he remained faithful to the Constitution of 3 May 1791. He felt ill at ease in the bureaucratic Napoleonic statelet, and opposed the *Code Napoléon*.<sup>9</sup>

Małachowski's stance would have pleased Ferdinando Saluzzo. The Neapolitan was released from his tribulations in the North early in 1794, and became president of Urbino in the papal states. Three years later French troops occupied the city. Raised to the cardinalate in 1801, Saluzzo was later deported to France along with Pius VII. Having refused to attend the marriage of Napoleon to Marie-Louise, he returned to Rome as prefect of the congregation of *Buon Governo* in 1814. He died there two years later.<sup>10</sup>

Perhaps the only man in Warsaw who surpassed Saluzzo in the diplomatic arts was Girolamo Lucchesini. Following the fall of the Commonwealth in 1795, he sought to keep Prussia allied to France. Pensioned off in 1807, he spent his remaining eighteen years in Tuscany, writing histories of Frederick the Great and the Confederacy of the Rhine. Had he chosen instead to give his version of the Polish Revolution, it would have probably been as seductive and persuasive as his conversation and despatches.<sup>11</sup> The marquis's defeated foe, Otto Magnus von Stackelberg, was sent to Stockholm after his dismissal from the Warsaw embassy. He died in 1800.<sup>12</sup>

Stackelberg's other nemesis, Ksawery Branicki, exchanged his hetmanship for a Russian generalcy in 1793. He lived on until 1819. While playing up to his image of a relic of old Sarmatia, he seems occasionally to have regretted his part in the demise of the Commonwealth.<sup>13</sup> Branicki's nephew, Kazimierz Sapieha, returned to the Commonwealth in April 1794, roused the szlachta of Lublin and Brześć Litewski for the Insurrection, and helped to defend Wilno. But after returning to exile in Vienna, he fell into a crapulous lifestyle that accelerated his death, aged 41, in 1798.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>8</sup> B. Leśnodorski, 'Kołłątaj, Hugo', *PSB*, xiii (Wrocław, 1967–8), 335–46.

<sup>9</sup> A. Zahorski, 'Małachowski, Stanisław', *PSB*, xix (Wrocław, 1974), 415–20.

<sup>10</sup> P. Boutry, *Souverain et pontife. Recherches prosopographiques sur la Curie romaine à l'âge de la Restauration (1814–1846)* (Rome, 2002), 463–4. Wolff, *Vatican and Poland*, 4–5, 223–4.

<sup>11</sup> P. Bailieu, 'Lucchesini, Girolamo', *Allgemeine Deutsche Biografie*, xix (Leipzig, 1884) 345–51. T. Stamm, 'Lucchesini, Girolamo', *Neue Deutsche Biografie*, xv (Berlin, 1986) 274–5.

<sup>12</sup> *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar*, xxxix (St Petersburg, 1903), 866.

<sup>13</sup> J. Czuby, *Zasada 'dwóch sumień'. Normy postępowania i granice kompromisu politycznego Polaków w sytuacjach wyboru (1795–1815)* (Warsaw, 2005), 95–6. W. Konopczyński, 'Branicki, Franciszek Ksawery', *PSB*, ii (Cracow, 1936), 398–401.

<sup>14</sup> Ł. Kądziała, 'Sapieha, Kazimierz Nestor', *PSB*, xxxv (Warsaw and Cracow, 1994), 52–67, at 63–5.

Wojciech Suchodolski followed Branicki into the confederacy of Targowica, but henceforth remained in the background. He died in 1826. For a while he may have taken in Jan Suchorzewski. It appears that Suchorzewski spent his last years (he probably died in 1804) looking for shelter with Branicki, Seweryn Rzewuski, and Szczęsy Potocki, but he quarrelled with them all.<sup>15</sup>

Jacek Jezierski, '*uomo stravagante*', scourge of priests and burghers, became a loyal subject of the king of Prussia. He left a substantial fortune and the title of count to his heirs in 1805.<sup>16</sup> Ignacy Zakrzewski, who also proposed comprehensive reforms of the Church, became president of Warsaw during the Insurrection of 1794. He tried to keep extremists from still bloodier reprisals. Having returned home from gaol in St Petersburg in 1797, his remaining five years passed chiefly in attempts to pay off his creditors.<sup>17</sup>

The doughtiest defender of ecclesiastical temporalities, Wojciech Skarszewski, was sentenced to death for treason on 11 September 1794. He was reprieved at the last moment by Kościuszko, probably as a result of a plea by the nuncio. Skarszewski, always an energetic diocesan bishop, became a leading political figure in the tsarist Kingdom of Poland after 1815. He reprised his attacks on 'supposed enlightenment'—still citing Montesquieu. Having become archbishop of Warsaw, in 1826 he forbade his clergy to take part in the funeral of Stanisław Staszic, who had refused the sacraments on his deathbed. The archbishop could not prevent the funeral becoming a patriotic demonstration. After Skarszewski died the following year, someone placed a noose on his coffin.<sup>18</sup>

Skarszewski was succeeded in Warsaw by his former auditor, the bishop of Cracow. Jan Paweł Woronicz died in 1829, venerated as a national prophet and poet. He proclaimed Poland a chosen nation, whose sins had brought her downfall. Only by renewing her covenant with God would she redeem herself.<sup>19</sup> This idea, already present in the pastoral letters he had drafted for Maciej Garnysz, grew into the messianic representation by Adam Mickiewicz and Juliusz Słowacki of Poland as the Christ of Nations, destined to suffer, die, and rise on the Third Day, redeeming all humanity from oppression.

Karol Surowiecki (1750/54–1824) continued to denounce 'philosophers', and to anticipate the Apocalypse. His wrath was sorely aroused by the tsarist kingdom's 'minister of religious confessions and public enlightenment', Stanisław Kostka Potocki (1755–1821).<sup>20</sup> Potocki, by now Poland's leading Freemason, had maintained a conciliatory stance during the Four Years' Sejm, but now engaged in bruising battles with the Catholic hierarchy. The episcopate finally got their man

<sup>15</sup> M. Podgórzak, 'Suchodolski, Wojciech', *PSB*, xlv (Warsaw and Cracow, 2008), 303–11. Zielińska, 'Suchorzewski, Jan', *PSB*, xlv. 315–24.

<sup>16</sup> Zienkowska, *Jacek Jezierski*, 274–86.

<sup>17</sup> Zahorski, *Ignacy Wyssogota Zakrzewski*, 119–381.

<sup>18</sup> Deszczyńska and E. Zielińska, 'Skarszewski', *PSB*, xxxviii. 54–60.

<sup>19</sup> Z. Rejman, 'Tematyka religijna w twórczości Jana Pawła Woronicza', in T. Kostkiewiczowa (ed.), *Motywy religijne w twórczości pisarzy polskiego Oświecenia* (Lublin, 1995), 215–40.

<sup>20</sup> Szejnke, 'Surowiecki', *PSB*, xlv. 10–12.

after Potocki published an anti-clerical novel, *Podróż do Ciemnogrodu* (*Journey to the Citadel of Ignorance*). Alexander I dismissed him in 1820.<sup>21</sup>

Ignacy Potocki (1750–1809) was one of the more moderate leaders of the 1794 Insurrection. After his release from prison by Paul I, he was more active scientifically than politically.<sup>22</sup> Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz (1757–1841) was released along with Potocki. He travelled far and wrote at length. The Four Years Sejm's most lapidary orator left in his memoirs one of the most suggestive accounts of the Polish Revolution. His verdict on the king was milder than most.<sup>23</sup>

For all his political wisdom, deeply felt patriotism, and exceptional services to Polish culture, Stanisław August's reputation has never really recovered from his accession to the confederacy of Targowica. Isolated and insulted during the Insurrection, he was seen by many Poles as their only hope of salvation once the Russians had crushed the rising. Faced with the Third Partition and mountainous debts, Stanisław August abdicated on 25 November 1795. The ex-king died in St Petersburg on 12 February 1798.<sup>24</sup>

Almost two centuries and three funerals later, the symbolic remains of 'Stanisław August Poniatowski, King of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania, Ruthenia, Prussia, Mazovia, Samogitia, Kiev, Volhynia, Podolia, Podlasia, Livonia, Smolensk, Seversk, and Czernihów', were interred in the crypt of the cathedral of St John the Baptist in Warsaw.<sup>25</sup> The anachronistic royal titlature, taken from the preamble of the Constitution of 3 May, had been considered so potentially offensive to the Kremlin, that the leadership of 'People's Poland' had only sanctioned the first postwar edition of the Constitution at the height of another 'Polish Revolution' in 1981. This scholarly edition, which had been ready a decade earlier, came off the presses at the 'October Revolution Printing House'.<sup>26</sup> Since 1990, 3 May has again been a national holiday, but that of 1 May has been retained. In consequence, more Poles are interested in taking several days off work for the so-called *majówka* than in 'thanking God for granting a favourable moment for the rescue of Poland from foreign violence and domestic disorder'.<sup>27</sup>

## 2. EXPLANATIONS

Much changed in Polish-Lithuanian political culture between 1788 and 1792. Words such as 'enlightenment' and 'government' served to justify the stride

<sup>21</sup> M. Deszczyńska, 'Biskup Wojciech Skarszewski a dymisja Stanisława Kostki Potockiego', *KH*, 106/1 (1999), 45–56. B. Grochulska, 'Potocki, Stanisław Kostka', *PSB*, xxviii (Wrocław, 1984–5), 158–70.

<sup>22</sup> Z. Zielińska, 'Potocki, Ignacy', *PSB*, xxviii (Wrocław, 1984–5), 1–17.

<sup>23</sup> Niemcewicz, *Pamiętniki czasów moich*, at i. 270. W. Bolecki, 'Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz', in T. Kostkiewiczowa and Z. Goliński (eds.), *Pisarze polskiego oświecenia*, ii (Warsaw, 1994) 387–423.

<sup>24</sup> See Michalski, *Stanisław August Poniatowski*, 73–83, 102; Zamoyski, *Last King*, chs. 25–6; A. Zahorski, *Spór o Stanisława Augusta* (Warsaw, 1988).

<sup>25</sup> See Butterwick, *Poland's Last King*, 1–2.

<sup>26</sup> *Konstytucja 3 Maja*, ed. J. Kowecki (Warsaw, 1981).

<sup>27</sup> *Deklaracja Stanów Zgromadzonych*, in *Konstytucja 3 Maja*, 105.

towards parliamentary monarchy taken on 3 May 1791. Classical republican virtues of self-sacrifice, equality, and frugality continued to be self-evidently positive. But it was in terms of liberty that the Commonwealth's citizens still defined themselves and their Fatherland. 'Ordered freedom' was counterpointed to 'aristocratic anarchy' by reformers, with a Montesquieuvian emphasis on security of person and property. Some of their opponents preferred a more traditional idea of liberty (in which the emasculation of 'monarchy' guaranteed the corpus of noble liberties) to the Fatherland's very existence. Without such freedom, Poland had no purpose.<sup>28</sup>

Traditional republicans found it easier to limit the privileges of the Catholic Church vis-à-vis the dissidents than to suffer any erosion of their own liberties. Enlightened reformers saw in civil and political liberty the Commonwealth's greatest political asset. Hugo Kołłątaj, trying fruitlessly to win over Bishop Cieciszowski to an Orthodox hierarchy, made a revealing comparison:

As today I do not fear that an enlightened and free dissident would enter into a link with foreign states against his own liberty, so I shall not fear a disuniate, when I shall draw him towards myself by mildness, when I shall not vex him in his confession, and also, when I shall allow him to taste the sweet fruits of liberty.<sup>29</sup>

The Protestant question had effectively been solved. The reformers believed they need only apply the same solution to the Orthodox. Of course, the economic, social, and cultural condition of Protestant burghers and Orthodox peasants could hardly have been more different, and to be fair to Kołłątaj, few were more aware of the need to alleviate the situation of the serfs.

Whereas the burghers, among whom were many Protestants and some Orthodox, could be admitted to a wide range of civil and a much narrower range of political rights, the peasants would have to be content with greater personal freedom and more security for their personal property. The principle, however, was clear. Liberty, to a greater degree than Catholicism, defined a Pole. And that liberty should be extended beyond the overwhelmingly Catholic szlachta. Berlin certainly feared the attractions of such a policy for Lutheran burghers in the Prussian lands. It might even have aggravated peasant flight from the Russian Empire into the Commonwealth.

Michał Zaleski appealed to a non-confessional sense of nationhood: 'Until now a Pole has differed from a Pole because he differed in religion. Foreign violence separated Uniates from non-Uniates, and even in the one Catholic religion a Catholic Pole speaking Latin differed from a Catholic Pole speaking Ruthenian.'<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, other confessions were generally expected to conduct their non-liturgical affairs in the Polish language. There was not a trace of modern ethnic nationalism here, but nor was there in the misconceived efforts of Joseph II to impose German on his territories.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *Regina libertas*, 327.

<sup>29</sup> Kołłątaj to Cieciszowski, 10 May 1792, BPAU 199, p. 23.

<sup>30</sup> 29 March 1790, ASC 6, f. 447.

<sup>31</sup> See R. J. W. Evans, *Austria, Hungary, and the Habsburgs: Essays on Central Europe, c. 1683–1867*, (Oxford, 2006), 134–69; Beales, *Joseph II*, ii, 366–370.



All would worship freely in their own way. But a common morality would be taught by all religions. According to Ambroise Jobert,

The attack on the luxury of the prelates prepared the way for the confiscation of part of the Church's estates for the profit of the treasury. The struggle against fanaticism prepared a milder fate for the dissidents. In expurgating at last as a bloody chimera the old dream of unity in faith, the enlightened Poles tended, more or less consciously, towards a state deism.<sup>32</sup>

The formula '*déisme d'État*' is an exaggeration, even for Kołłątaj. Almost nobody was prepared to celebrate religious diversity for its own sake, or to declare himself a deist. Religious unity was still seen as a pillar of states. A common civic morality, with diverse religious rites, was second best. However, religious unity was almost never seen as a good worth the disturbance of 'public tranquillity'. We may discern a measure of 'deconfessionalization', especially with regard to the Orthodox, who were permitted an autocephalous hierarchy. Here *raison d'état* was explicitly preferred to *raison d'Église*. The aims were to cut off Russian influence and prevent peasant rebellion in Ruthenia. Similar considerations raised the Uniate metropolitan to the senate, and precipitated much talk on how to 'enlighten' the Uniate parish clergy. But here the political imperative had to battle with social prejudice, and less was accomplished.

Catholicism remained the unquestioned dominant religion, even if the likes of Skarszewski argued that without privileges for Catholic clergy and laity, denied to the heterodox, 'all tolerated religions would be dominant'. No genuinely ecumenical state ceremonies were held. The adjectives 'Catholic' and 'orthodox' (*prawowierny*) legitimized political stances across the spectrum. Religion was not only considered socially useful. The Catholic faith was held true, and while efforts to establish clerical censorship were obstructed, few disputed in principle the need for action against writings attacking religion or morals.

While 'Catholic' legitimized politicians, so did 'enlightened'. Admittedly, the 'enlightened age' could be subverted—less effectively, perhaps, by clerical moralists than by old republicans proclaiming their faith in simple manners and ancestral virtue. Nevertheless, *oświecony* and *światy* implied learning, wisdom, and rational thinking. The epithet *fanatyk* was incontestably pejorative—and to be denied absolutely by those accused. Likewise, ignorance, superstition, and prejudice (*ciemnota*, *zabobon*, *przesąd*, and *uprzedzenie*) belonged to the standard repertoire of denigration, whether in a sacred or profane context. Although critics considered *tolerancja* an overused slogan, and proposed to limit it to the 'suffering' (*cierpienie*) of designated confessions within strictly defined limits, almost everybody rejected 'persecution' (*prześladowanie*). The advocates of a less grudging toleration won every battle during the Polish Revolution, except the retention of apostasy as a crime. The 'enlightened age' was condemned about as often as it was applauded, but so pervasive was the discourse of 'enlightenment', that it affected the theological priorities of even such forthright critics of the times as Skarszewski. If the

<sup>32</sup> Jobert, *La Commission d'Éducation Nationale*, 332.

complexities and ambiguities of 'the Enlightenment' (*Oświecenie*) defy historians, contemporaries knew what they meant by *oświecenie*. Without taking account of it, the Stanisławian Church and Commonwealth cannot be comprehended.

The impossibility of delineating the boundary between the dominions of God and Caesar encouraged disputes between their respective hosts. Truces were facilitated by ambiguous expressions such as '*quo ad spiritualia*'. Early in the Polish Revolution, Wojciech Suchodolski, Stanisław Kublicki, and others asserted that the Commonwealth was an 'absolute mistress', with the sovereign authority to reorder all ecclesiastical temporalities, leaving only doctrine in the spiritual sphere, and severing all effective papal authority. Later, as the renewed polity took shape after 3 May 1791, conflicts erupted or loomed on a wide front—including legal codification and education. Skarszewski's report for the confederacy of Targowica charged the Police Commission with intending to interfere with 'the teaching of the faith, the order of worship, and other things belonging to the clerical power and calling'.<sup>33</sup> Such fears were already familiar in the Habsburg Monarchy.

Despite Caesar's intrusions into spheres hitherto left unto God, the Polish Revolution saw no 'secularization' of public life. Clergymen served as civil-military commissioners, educational commissioners, deputies to the tribunals, senators, and ministers. Noble-born clergy were also citizens—one of their strongest discursive strategies in claiming equitable treatment. Fears of clerical influence (expressed, for example, at the Cracow sejmik of 1792) speak of a sometimes strained relationship between clergy and laity within the Commonwealth (and even the Church), rather than a clash between Church and state. The republican nature of the polity made a separation harder to achieve than in the bureaucratic and monarchic régimes of the early nineteenth century, but it also permitted the delegates of the szlachta to impose discriminatory taxation on the clergy, and secularize ecclesiastical property, when persuaded to do so.

In the introduction, the question was posed of why, compared to the Austrian Monarchy, the Polish Revolution proceeded more boldly concerning the bishoprics, and much less so regarding the regular clergy. Joseph II's priority was to exclude foreign episcopal jurisdiction rather than to equalize revenues and responsibilities. The former goal could only be achieved by negotiation with the Holy See (as even Catherine II was forced to acknowledge with regard to the territories she annexed from the Commonwealth in 1772).<sup>34</sup> The reform of the Polish episcopate envisaged a far-reaching equality in income and duties, although not much of this reform could be implemented. The sejm was not overly concerned to match diocesan boundaries to the external frontiers of the state. They had corresponded quite closely before the First Partition, and as far as the Latin rite was concerned, such changes would benefit neighbouring powers more than the Commonwealth.

Initially, Joseph II wished to take control of all ecclesiastical property and put the entire clergy on fixed salaries—a solution comparable to the more radical reforms

<sup>33</sup> Zahorski, *Centralne instytucje policyjne*, 217.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. M. Loret, *Kościół katolicki a Katarzyna II, 1772–1784* (Cracow and Warsaw, 1910).

proposed, but not adopted in Poland. Having considered the difficulties, Joseph decided instead to remodel religious foundations and parishes on a case by case basis, with the surplus revenues going to parishes, dioceses, seminaries, schools, hospitals, and such like.<sup>35</sup> In practice, the emperor's *Religionskasse* was barely solvent. Even by 1790, it administered less than a fifth of net ecclesiastical revenue (excluding Lombardy and the Austrian Netherlands). It was encumbered by pensions for former regulars, especially nuns, few of whom could find alternative ways of life.<sup>36</sup>

The statistics are problematic, but the most authoritative figures give a total Catholic clerical population (of all rites) before the reforms in the central lands of the Habsburg Monarchy of about 47,000, of which 22,000 were secular and 25,000 regular. By 1790 the official figures were approximately 38,000, 27,000, and 11,000 respectively. Approximately 700 monastic houses were closed—about a third of the total.<sup>37</sup> The monasteries that survived the Josephine dissolutions were engaged even more heavily in parish work than before. The changes were especially marked in Hungary, where—as in the Eastern reaches of the Commonwealth—in many places the Catholic Church of both rites was still a missionary Church.<sup>38</sup> While only 7 new parish priests were appointed in Galicia, compared to 286 in Hungary, the impact on the Galician monasteries was dramatic. By 1788, 62 out of 87 male monasteries in the archdiocese of Lwów had been dissolved. 9 out of 13 female houses were suppressed, although the 'useful' Sisters of Charity were allowed three further convents.<sup>39</sup>

The Polish-Lithuanian clergy experienced no such transformation. The main reason seems to be that despite the rhetorical cult of the industrious *pleban*, the parish clergy mattered less to the Polish political élite than they did to Joseph. The salaries paid to the new parish priests in the Habsburg lands were modest, but, as the equivalent of 2,400 zlotys, compared favourably with most benefices in the Commonwealth. The equivalent of 1,000 zlotys for *Kooperatoren* dwarfed the pitiful stipends of Polish *wikariusze*. Nor did the szlachta (or their envoys) share the emperor's zeal to reduce the monastic population. On the one hand, the monasteries presented a less tempting prize than in the Habsburg lands. On the other hand, the factor that helped to save about half the Austrian and Hungarian houses, namely the engagement of the orders in parish work, also applied in the Commonwealth.<sup>40</sup> The need for the regular clergy to provide parish ministry was often cited in their defence, and was reflected in several of the sejm's laws confirming religious foundations.

<sup>35</sup> Beales, *Joseph II*, ii. 79–81, 329–31.

<sup>36</sup> Dickson, 'Joseph II's Remodelling of the Austrian Church', 97–9, 106–12.

<sup>37</sup> Of the 5000 'new' secular clergymen, 2100 were seminarians, and 2100 helpers or chaplains. Only 628 new parish priests were appointed. Many 'new' clergymen had transferred from the religious orders, while many of those still listed as regulars were in fact engaged in parish work, blurring the distinctions. *Ibid.*, 95–7, 100–5.

<sup>38</sup> Beales, *Joseph II*, ii. 293–4, 298.

<sup>39</sup> J. Krętosz, *Archidiecezja lwowska obrządku tacińskiego w okresie józefinizmu (1772–1815)* (Katowice, 1996), 291–5.

<sup>40</sup> Beales, *Joseph II*, ii. 284–9, 294–7, 305. Cf. W. Chotkowski, *Historia polityczna kościoła w Galicji za rządów Marii Teresy. Kościół w Galicji 1772–1780* (Cracow, 1909), i. 71.

Little else in public discourse can explain why the regulars should have escaped so lightly in Poland-Lithuania. The principal criterion of the debate was temporal utility—not the ideal ground on which to defend monasticism. The answer seems to lie in the forms of government and the personality of the ruler. Ultimately, with the important exception of Belgium, Joseph had the authority, will, and energy to drive a substantial proportion of his plans through inertia, muddle, and sabotage to their imperfect but tangible execution. He could act according to the criteria of the general good as he saw it, subject to practical constraints. Until 1789, he did not have to heed public opinion. Rather, he could manipulate it.<sup>41</sup> Polish public opinion was probably no more favourable to the orders than it was in the Austrian Monarchy. The partitioning powers encountered little opposition from the laity when they dissolved monasteries in the Polish-Lithuanian lands.<sup>42</sup>

It was more difficult to arrive at a decision when sovereignty was exercised collectively by a parliamentary body which continued to prize unanimity, and which had more pressing priorities than the state of the Church. A minority of envoys and senators called for a root-and-branch reform of the clergy, with drastic implications for the orders. Others spoke up for local houses, or the Piarists or Basilians who had schooled them, or campaigned for the restoration of the Jesuits. Most, however, remained silent, if they were present at all, when the regulars were discussed. It was this indifference, rather than any deep attachment, that saved the orders from significant reform or spoliation.

Support for a seizure of episcopal property was mobilized only as the *dénouement* of 'intrigues and simonies'. The opposition ruined the plans of the primate and the king, and the Prussian envoy triumphed over his Russian adversary. Once that step was taken, the necessity of reform was recognized. Point by point, the bishops and the nuncio explained the needs and *modus operandi* of religious ministry to six laymen deputed by the sejm. Compromise was possible, because the need for a dominant religion in society was considered unchallengeable. In Polish-Lithuanian conditions the dominant religion could only be Catholicism.

The compromise of 1790 was ideological, in that it sought to square the Polish Revolutionary paradigm of national sovereignty *in temporalibus* with the Church's insistence that what had been dedicated to God could not be handed over to Caesar, and that all alterations to ecclesiastical structures were *salve beneplacito apostolico*. It was also a compromise between interests—the szlachta's interest in maximizing the clergy's fiscal burden and minimizing its own, and the Church's interest in the adequate resourcing of its spiritual mission. Change was made more palatable to individuals by the phrase *salvis modernis possessoribus*. But even this widely acceptable conclusion was reached only by an 'intrigue': Branicki sent the obstinate Suchodolski away from Warsaw, and he kept his part in the resolution of the problem quiet.

<sup>41</sup> Blanning, *Joseph II*, 161–71.

<sup>42</sup> See E. Jabłońska-Deptuła, *Przystosowanie i opór. Zakony męskie w Królestwie Kongresowym* (Warsaw, 1983).

Pamphleteers and some politicians continued to denounce clerical abuses; they called for further reforms, especially of the regular clergy, but without a high-political imperative, the danger of schism receded. The emphasis on Providential sanction for the Revolution, present from the start of the sejm, increased exponentially after 3 May 1791. Preachers hailed the new Constitution, and the pope all but blessed it, but on terms that stressed that Providential favour was conditional on respect for religion and its ministers. This was a strategy that failed in France.<sup>43</sup>

The material and official status of the French clergy was transformed by the effective abandonment of stole fees and tithes on the night of 4 August 1789. Alternative means of support were now necessary. It followed that priests would be paid salaries by the state, which could take over ecclesiastical property and reappropriate the income from it. The resulting sale of Church land dwarfed the auction of the estates of the bishopric of Cracow. The Civil Constitution of the Clergy, passed after several weeks of debate on 12 July 1790, was intended by its framers to restore evangelical purity to the faith. That intention, along with the rationalization of ecclesiastical structures to match the new administrative boundaries of France, might have been acceptable. *Curés*, who had given their hierarchs so much trouble in 1789, were attracted by promotion by seniority and merit, democratic diocesan assemblies, and a redistribution of income that left the great majority of them (and many bishops) better off. Basic salary would be 1,200 livres, as opposed to the typical 700 of a *portion congrue*. Bishops would receive 10,000. Such measures drew on the Richerist tradition. The 2,000 zlotys regarded by Polish reformers as a reasonable income for a *pleban* worked out at a comparable 1111 livres, whereas the Polish bishops of the Latin rite would receive the equivalent of 55,556 livres. These figures tell their own story. Moreover, the incomes of the Commonwealth's parish clergy were reduced by taxation, rather than raised by redistribution. However, the French Revolutionary principle that 'the Church is part of the State. The State is not part of the Church',<sup>44</sup> reflected in the provision for elected parish priests and bishops by members of all confessions and none, proved intolerable to virtually all bishops and about half the parish clergy.

Could the Commonwealth have followed this example? Some sejmiiks and reformers called for new bishops and canons to have served their time as *plebani*. The call for senators to be elected by sejmiiks was a popular one, and often specifically included bishops. The Permanent Council had previously presented the king with three candidates for each vacant bishopric. Because election would have been justified by the bishops' role as senators, the small number of Protestant and the tiny number of Orthodox nobles would probably not have been excluded formally—although doubtless they would have been expected by their neighbours not to challenge the Catholic nobles' choice. Calls were made too, for the sejm to elect the primate. However, nobody seems to have demanded the election of parish priests. Here the rights of noble patrons were probably paramount—nobles

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Aston, *Religion and Revolution*, 126–46; J. McManners, *The French Revolution and the Church* (London, 1969), 24–46; Beales, *Prosperity and Plunder*, 244–61.

<sup>44</sup> Quoted after Aston, *Religion and Revolution*, 144.

presented to more than half the parishes in the Commonwealth.<sup>45</sup> Such elections could only have been conceivable when the parish contained many petty szlachta, and their voice was rarely heard and still more rarely heeded during the Polish Revolution. In France, former nobles were outnumbered by bourgeois both among electors and the new bishops—a fundamental difference.<sup>46</sup>

The French Church was unable to veto any reform that the lay majority chose to impose. Although clergymen initially constituted a quarter of the National Constituent Assembly, the clergy were no longer a corporation or Estate within the realm, but individual citizens of the French nation. In Poland-Lithuania, despite the low level of clerical representation in the sejm, and the declamations of some envoys against any *status in statu*, in practice the clergy was considered an estate of the Commonwealth. The face-saving formulae of an 'offering' and *salve beneplacito apostolico* were (just about) maintained. The formation of a sejm deputation to negotiate with the episcopal college and the nuncio *ipso facto* conceded a degree of ecclesiastical autonomy. In France a national synod of the clergy, charged with its reform, was rejected as an infringement of national sovereignty; in Poland, such calls were diverted by the ecclesiastical hierarchy and its supporters. The Commonwealth confirmed Roman Catholicism as its dominant religion, a designation refused in France.

The French assault on monasticism was without parallel in Poland-Lithuania. In February 1790 the National Constituent Assembly abolished religious vows and dissolved all religious houses except those providing schooling or charitable care. The view expressed by Antoine-Pierre Barnave that 'the religious orders are incompatible with the rights of man' was confined to a few envoys and pamphleteers in Poland; in the French Assembly (although not in most of the country) it was in the mainstream.<sup>47</sup>

There was one fundamental similarity between the French and Polish measures. The principle that the 'nation' could take ecclesiastical property and apply it to other purposes, within and outwith the Church, as it saw fit, was identical, even if the Poles applied it on an infinitesimally smaller scale. This principle threatened to provoke Pius VI to condemn the sejm, which could have precipitated further confiscations, leading to a schism between the Commonwealth and the Holy See. However, like the Habsburg Monarchy, but unlike France, Poland avoided a rupture with the papacy. According to Derek Beales, the French revolutionaries failed to see 'that the emperor's policies and theirs were entirely different'.<sup>48</sup> The question of property was crucial: 'The emperor had learned from the pope that there was a line that must not be crossed—that Rome could not acquiesce in a state taking over all Church property or appropriating it to non-charitable purposes.'<sup>49</sup> The Poles had the sense (or the indifference) to concede that most

<sup>45</sup> Litak, *Kościół łaciński*, 78–82.

<sup>46</sup> M. Crook, 'Citizen Bishops: Episcopal Elections in the French Revolution', *HJ*, 43 (2000), 955–76.

<sup>47</sup> Quoted after Aston, *Religion and Revolution*, 135.

<sup>48</sup> Beales, *Prosperity and Plunder*, 228.

<sup>49</sup> Id., *Joseph II*, ii. 237–8.

ecclesiastical property would remain in clerical hands, and in the end applied very little of it to profane ends. Although something of the arbitrariness of *Fund for the Army* survived the arrangements of the following year, Rome thought it wiser not to provoke a worse outcome.

As the Poles applied a dose of parliamentary monarchy to their republican form of government, the French moved from a monarchy towards a republic. Neither shift need have weakened the Catholic religion. In France, as in Poland-Lithuania, the clergy were closely involved in the work of national renewal, and led local expressions of patriotic zeal via time-hallowed rites of prayer, blessing, Mass, and the *Te Deum*. Symmetrically, religious festivals were imbued with patriotic content. In both countries the argument was heard that republican politics were more dependent upon religion than monarchies, where constraint helped to preserve morals.<sup>50</sup> The French revolutionaries, Robespierre above all, had read their Rousseau too well not to understand the importance of a single civic religion in cementing a republic. But in weakening and then overthrowing the throne, they also irreparably vandalized the Catholic altar which had been organically linked to it. After the failure of the attempt to replace the Gallican Church with a national Constitutional Church, and in conditions of a wartime emergency, the revolutionaries turned on Christianity itself—for the sake of a bastardized confessional nation-state.<sup>51</sup> The Polish revolutionaries already had a civic, republican religion. For all the strains and alarms, a strategy of adaptation worked in the conditions of 1788–92; civic religion did not have to be invented.

The Polish Revolution bonded throne and altar more tightly together. In 1788–9, a storm tide of noble republicanism reduced the monarch almost to a cipher. Inundating the temporalities of the Church, this tide threatened to provoke a schism between Warsaw and Rome. Most clerical and lay defenders of the property and status of the Church reached for the arguments and discourse of limited monarchism. They warned that an ‘absolute’ Commonwealth might act despotically. It was no coincidence that the first feelers between Stanisław August and Stanisław and Ignacy Potocki followed the seizure of the estates of the bishopric of Cracow. After their rapprochement, the prevalent discourse of the last year and a half of the sejm joined the slogans of external independence and ‘consideration’ with ‘ordered freedom’ at home. Respect for the dominant Catholic faith was the principal adhesive in this discourse, for its reward would be the bounteous grace of Divine Providence. The triangular relationship between the monarchy, the Church, and the nobility took on a new shape. The burghers were admitted as the junior half-siblings of the nobles. This outcome could have become the basis for an evolutionary transformation of state and society in the nineteenth century, but the renewed links between throne, altar, and citizens were soon torn apart. They were sundered not by revolution, but by counter-revolution and partition.

<sup>50</sup> See Emanuel Rostworowski’s comments in *Les Contacts religieux franco-polonais du moyen âge à nos jours* (Paris, 1985), 268.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Van Kley, ‘Christianity as Casualty and Chrysalis’, 1098–9; M. Vovelle, *The Revolution Against the Church: From Reason to the Supreme Being* (Cambridge, 1991).

## 3. LEGACIES

The throne fell first, making way (definitively after 1830–1) for an insurrectionary and Romantic republicanism. Nonetheless, the Stanisławian rhetorical onslaught against ‘aristocratic anarchy’ contributed to the rooting in Polish historical consciousness of the conviction that the *szlachta*’s selfish resistance to ‘government’ and paranoid suspicion of its kings had led to the decline and fall of the Commonwealth. This interpretation was conveyed to a stateless nation by the survivors of the Four Years’ Sejm, robed in academic state by the ‘Cracow school’ of the later nineteenth century, and popularized by the novelist Henryk Sienkiewicz. Even the pronounced ‘optimist turn’ among historians of the Commonwealth since the 1960s has not overcome the tendency in public and private discourse to cast ‘anarchy’ as the ineradicable national vice. This is the lasting, and not always welcome legacy of the ‘throne’. Since the mid-nineteenth century, the altar has fared better than either the throne or the nobility.

Although schism was averted, the stress was severe. The Polish Revolution, as much as the partitions, was pivotal to the mutual relations of both Catholicism and the Polish nation, and Catholicism and Enlightenment in Poland. For the first time in generations, influential laymen took an active interest in the comprehensive reform of the Catholic Church. The ideas put forward went far beyond the imperative of raising money for the army, and although most proposals were not enacted, the discussions in the sejm and in pamphlets reveal much about contemporary expectations of the clergy. Catholic priests were to bring solace and ‘enlightenment’ to their flocks and the wider public. This involved living respectably but not luxuriously, performing public service, telling the peasants to obey their lords, and cheerleading for the Revolution. They should live on polite terms with the heterodox. But they were also to maintain religious worship and preach the Gospel faithfully, setting a moral example in their own lives. The Polish Revolution thus saw both the zenith and the crisis of ‘enlightened Catholicism’, a crisis obscured in the eyes of posterity by the embrace of the Church and the political nation in the *annus mirabilis* that followed 3 May 1791. Herein may lie part of the answer to the question posed by Barbara Grochulska: ‘What happened between the alliance in the eighteenth century and the rupture in the first half of the nineteenth century?’<sup>52</sup>

The stresses between clergy and laity soon returned. Both the Napoleonic Duchy of Warsaw and the tsarist Kingdom of Poland witnessed clashes between clergymen and interventionist ministers and bureaucrats. Several of the protagonists of 1788–92 were involved in the later battles. Some proposals that the Polish Revolution had found too radical, such as a reduction in the monasteries, were implemented in this period. Prussian rule had already brought a salaried clergy.<sup>53</sup> The parting of the ways

<sup>52</sup> *Les Contacts religieux franco-polonais* (n. 50 above), 262–3: ‘N’y avait-il signes de rupture sous Stanislas-Auguste...?’

<sup>53</sup> See T. Walachowicz, *Kościół katolicki w prawodawstwie Księstwa Warszawskiego* (Lublin, 1984); M. Deszczyńska, ‘“As Poor as Church Mice”: Bishops, Finances, Posts, and Civil Duties in the Duchy of Warsaw, 1807–1813’, *Central Europe*, 9 (2011), 17–30; A. Barańska, *Miedzy Warszawą,*



between Catholicism and Enlightenment in Poland, signalled during the Revolution, was accomplished. The gulf that was apparent by 1820, between the heirs of the Enlightenment: the liberal, increasingly urban intelligentsia, and the conservative, ultramontane, and increasingly rural clergy, would only be bridged, and then only partially, in the extraordinary circumstances of the 1970s and 1980s. It widened again after 1990. Of course, the Church has never lacked educated and eloquent defenders, and the political 'left' has no monopoly on *inteligencja*, but this antagonism, epitomized in the interwar period by Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński's Voltairean attacks on the 'black occupation', has been a recurrent theme of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>54</sup> The fashion for seeking the roots of godless modernity in the frequently denounced but rarely analysed Enlightenment is as old as the Enlightenment itself.

Clergymen suffered the trials of invasion and partition along with laymen. Bishop Kajetan Sołtyk became a symbol of martyrdom for faith and liberty. During the Polish Revolution this factor served anti-clericals: to avoid a similar fate, ecclesiastical temporalities should be sacrificed. When the clerical estate complained of the violation of its property and autonomy, the response was to highlight 'foreign violence': the violation both of the properties of all and of national independence. But once the dismemberment of the Commonwealth was complete, and ecclesiastical temporalities and jurisdictions had been greatly reduced by the partitioning monarchies, a sense of solidarity could grow, despite the accommodating stances towards the new régimes of the papacy and many hierarchs.<sup>55</sup>

The nineteenth-century clergy could also build on the case made for the peasantry by Stanislavian preachers. Although this theme was marginal to the Polish Revolution, except regarding Ruthenia, it equipped the Church discursively to respond to the nineteenth-century challenges of literacy and emancipation in the ethnically Polish lands. Outside Galicia, policies of 'Germanization' and 'Russification' did the rest, this time owing much to modern concepts of ethnic nationalism. By the time that Poland regained her independence in 1918, the Church had gained the allegiance of the great majority of the Polish-speaking peasantry. What the partitioning monarchies had left of the social and cultural hegemony of the landowning szlachta was destroyed by the Nazis and Communists, although relics survive in Polish manners, and reminders abound in the much-filmed literary canon. While the Catholic intelligentsia enjoyed a prestige unmatched elsewhere in the Soviet bloc, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński wisely put his trust in the Marian piety of the rural and semi-rural masses.<sup>56</sup>

*Petersburgiem a Rzymem. Kościół a państwo w dobie Królestwa Polskiego (1815–1830)* (Lublin, 2008); Jabłońska-Deptuła, *Przystosowanie i opór* (n. 42 above), and n. 21 above.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. A. Michnik, *The Church and the Left* [1977] (Chicago, 1993); A. Michnik, J. Tischner, and J. Żakowski, *Miedzy panem a plebanem* (Cracow, 1995); J. Gowin, *Kościół w czasach wolności 1989–1999*, 2nd edn (Cracow, 1999); Zygmunt Zieliński, *Kościół w Polsce 1944–2007* (Poznań, 2009).

<sup>55</sup> See H. Dylągowa, *Duchowieństwo katolickie wobec sprawy narodowej (1764–1864)*, (Lublin 1981), *passim*.

<sup>56</sup> See, *inter alia*, D. Olszewski, *Polska kultura religijna na przełomie XIX i XX wieku* (Warsaw, 1996); J. Lewandowski, *Naród w nauczaniu kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, 2nd edn (Warsaw, 1989).

What could be more baroque than mass pilgrimages on foot to the shrine of the Madonna of Częstochowa, symbol of resistance against the Protestant Swede in the 1650s? Yet the Madonna who processed from parish to parish in the millennial novenna of 1957–66 was venerated by an ethnically and culturally homogenized Polish nation, reformed in the crucibles of war, mass murder, deportation, repression, and breakneck industrialization, and cooled in the dull ubiquity of ‘real socialism’. The Poles of the later twentieth century were far removed from the Poles—middling nobles and magnates, cosmopolitans and Sarmatians, Lithuanians and Ruthenians, Great Polanders and Little Polanders, Volhynians and Mazovians, Podolians and Samogitians—who during the Four Years’ Sejm had deliberated and legislated on the Catholic Church (*utriusque ritūs*). The men of the Polish Revolution, some of them priests, talked and wrote much of rebuilding the clerical establishment. They got round to dispersing some of the cobwebs, and in doing so broke some windows and furnishings. But they left entire chambers undisturbed.<sup>57</sup> More importantly, the Revolution left intact just enough of the Church’s dignity for the myth of unity between Church and nation to put down, in the rich soil of Providentialist euphoria, the roots of its future luxuriant growth. The fruit, gathered in during the pontificate of John Paul II, was no myth. It was abundant and real.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. [F. S. Jezierski], *Ktoś piszący z Warszawy dnia 11 lutego 1790 r.*, in id., *Wybór pism*, 119–30, quoted above, p. 144.

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## Glossary

*ad deliberandum*

After a project had been read out to the sejm, it was usually taken 'into deliberation', so that envoys and senators could read and consider it before its decision.

auditor

Assistant to a bishop, usually a canon or other senior clergymen.

*categoratim*

The practice of deciding a bill clause by clause, abolished in 1791.

Civil-Military Commissions of Good Order (*Komisje Porządkowe Cywilno-Wojskowe*)

Elected commissions established in 1789/90 in each locality, charged with civil-military relations and various functions of local government.

claustral abbot (*opat klaustralny*)

In each of the thirteen abbeys specified by the Concordat of 1737 a claustral abbot ran the internal affairs of the abbey and drew one third of its revenues. He was usually elected by the monks.

coadjutor

A clergyman chosen by an incumbent bishop, prelate, or canon to assist him in his duties. Coadjutorships usually carried the right of succession. A coadjutor to a bishop was ordained as a titular bishop with a see lost to the Roman Catholic Church.

*collegium episcoporum*

The episcopal college comprised the Latin-rite bishop-senators and the Uniate metropolitan archbishop. It discussed political tactics and negotiated with the sejm's 'clerical deputation'.

commendatory abbot, commendator (*opat komendatoryjny, komendator*)

Each of the thirteen abbeys specified in the Concordat of 1737 had a commendatory abbot who drew two-thirds of the revenues and was responsible for the abbey's external affairs. Commendators were nominated by the king who usually chose less well endowed bishops and other senior clergymen in public service.

Commonwealth (*Rzeczpospolita, Respublica*)

The Commonwealth of the Two Nations, Polish and Lithuanian, comprised the Polish Crown (*Korona, Corona Regni Poloniae*), composed of the provinces of Great Poland (*Wielkopolska*) and Little Poland (*Malopolska*); the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; the Lithuano-Polish condominium of Livonia; and the vassal Duchy of Courland.

concordat

A treaty between the Holy See and a Catholic power, usually defining papal and royal jurisdictions and prerogatives.

|                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| confederacy                                                   | A league of nobles, supposedly formed to preserve the Commonwealth. Headed by an elected marshal. A sejm held under the aegis of a confederacy could decide by majority vote.                                                                                                                                                       |
| consistory                                                    | A diocesan ecclesiastical court.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Crown estates ( <i>królewszczyzny</i> )                       | Former royal lands appertaining to <i>starostwa</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <i>cura animarum</i>                                          | A 'cure' of souls, usually meaning responsibility for a parish.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Custodial Council ( <i>Straż Praw</i> )                       | Literally, 'Guard of the Laws'. Established as a supervisory and executive body in 1791.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| dean ( <i>dziekan</i> )                                       | Either a senior prelate of a cathedral or collegiate chapter, or the chief parish priest in a sub-division of a diocese, equivalent to an Anglican rural dean.                                                                                                                                                                      |
| deputy ( <i>deputat</i> )                                     | Judge of the Crown or Lithuanian tribunal, either a layman elected by a sejmik or a clergyman chosen by a chapter.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| dissidents ( <i>dysydenci</i> )                               | Initially meant all Christians who dissented in religion, but by the eighteenth century restricted to non-Catholics, especially Protestants.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 'disuniates', 'disunion' ( <i>dyzunici</i> , <i>dyzunia</i> ) | Pejorative terms for the Orthodox and Orthodoxy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| envoy ( <i>poseł</i> )                                        | Member of the lower chamber of the sejm, elected and instructed by a sejmik. Also refers to diplomats.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Estates ( <i>Stany</i> )                                      | Three Estates constituted the sejm: the king, the senate, and the knightly Estate, or non-senatorial nobility, whose envoys constituted the lower chamber. In contemporary parlance the noble, clerical, lay, military, civilian, urban, and occasionally even peasant estates were categories indicating social rank and function. |
| hetman                                                        | Military commanders. The Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania each had a grand hetman and a field hetman. Their formerly extensive powers were curtailed in 1764, 1775, and 1776.                                                                                                                                                 |
| <i>kwarta</i> , pl. <i>kwarty</i>                             | The tax paid by starostas, supposedly a quarter of the net revenues from Crown estates.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <i>liberum veto</i>                                           | The right of a single member of the sejm to veto any proposed law or even the sejm's continuation. Last used in 1762, abolished in 1791.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| magnates                                                      | Members of the richest and most influential noble families. The <i>magnateria</i> was not legally distinguished from the <i>szlachta</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| ministers, ministry                                           | Besides the hetmans, the Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania each had a grand marshal, a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |



|                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                         | grand chancellor, a vice-chancellor, a treasurer, a marshal of the court, and a court treasurer. The king lost his right to nominate ministers in 1775, but recovered it in 1790.                                                                                      |
| nuncio                                  | Papal ambassador to Catholic courts. Exercised delegated papal jurisdiction.                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <i>pacta conventa</i>                   | The contract between a newly elected monarch and the (noble) 'nation'.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| palatinate ( <i>województwo</i> )       | Division of the Commonwealth, sometimes further sub-divided into districts ( <i>powiaty</i> ) or counties ( <i>ziemie</i> ).                                                                                                                                           |
| Permanent Council                       | Supervisory and executive council of eighteen senators, eighteen envoys, and the king, elected biennially by the sejm with departments for treasury, military, justice, police, and foreign affairs. Established in 1775, strengthened in 1776, and abolished in 1789. |
| <i>pleban</i> , pl. <i>plebani</i>      | Parish priest.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| prebend                                 | The office and appertaining income of a prelate or canon.                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>salve beneplacito apostolico</i>     | Formula that supposedly made a law conditional on the pope's consent.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <i>salvis modernibus possessoribus</i>  | Formula excepting the rights of incumbents from a legal change.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| sejm                                    | The Commonwealth's parliament (diet). It comprised the senate, presided over by the king, and the chamber of envoys, headed by a marshal (or speaker). A confederated sejm deliberated unicamerally.                                                                   |
| sejmik                                  | An assembly (dietine) of the nobility of a palatinate, district or county. Some sejmiks elected envoys to the sejm or deputies to the tribunals, others transacted local business.                                                                                     |
| senate                                  | The upper house of the sejm, comprising bishops, palatines ( <i>wojewodowie</i> ), castellans ( <i>kasztelanowie</i> ), the starosta of Samogitia, and ministers. The king lost his right to appoint senators for life in 1775, but recovered it in 1790.              |
| starosta                                | Originally a royal representative. Judicial starostas retained judicial responsibilities in royal towns. Non-judicial starostas did not, and their <i>starostwa</i> were usually more lucrative. Appointed by the king for life until 1775.                            |
| <i>starostwo</i> , pl. <i>starostwa</i> | The office and Crown estates of a starosta. Most were auctioned off on long leases in 1775, leaving only                                                                                                                                                               |

|                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                          | four for the king to distribute, supposedly to meritorious nobles.                                                                                                                     |
| <i>subsidium charitativum</i>            | A supposedly voluntary annual offering from the Catholic clergy to the Commonwealth.                                                                                                   |
| suffragan                                | Assistant bishop, responsible for pastoral work in part of a diocese.                                                                                                                  |
| szlachta                                 | The Polish-Lithuanian nobility.                                                                                                                                                        |
| Uniates                                  | Christians of the Eastern tradition in union with Rome, worshiping in the Ruthenian or Slavonic rite, as opposed to the Latin rite. Known in the Habsburg Monarchy as Greek Catholics. |
| tribunals                                | Supreme courts of appeal for the nobility of the Crown and Lithuania.                                                                                                                  |
| <i>vivente rege</i>                      | (The election of a successor) during the lifetime of the present king.                                                                                                                 |
| <i>wikariusz</i> , pl. <i>wikariusze</i> | Assistant or deputy priest to a <i>pleban</i> .                                                                                                                                        |
| <i>wyderkafy</i>                         | Interest due to the clergy from capital located on noble lands.                                                                                                                        |

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# Index

The functions and titles are those current during the Polish Revolution (if the person was then still alive), or the highest ranking if already deceased or not yet active in public life. Envoys elected in November 1790 are indicated (II), otherwise they were elected in August 1788. Persons in the genealogical table are asterisked. Ecclesiastical references are to the Roman Catholic Church of the Latin rite in the Commonwealth, unless stated otherwise. Bold type denotes an entry in the glossary. Alternative (mostly present-day) place names: B. Belarusian, Cz. Czech, G. German, Lat. Latvian, L. Lithuanian, P. Polish, R. Russian, U. Ukrainian.

- abbeys, **abbots**:
  - in political literature 74, 144
  - in sejmik instructions 44, 45–6, 229, 235
  - in speeches 83, 104, 189
  - survival 194–7, 199
- absolutism, *see* political discourses
- Adalbert (Wojciech, P.), St 130
- Addison, Joseph 76
- Aesop 205, 276
- Albertrandi, Revd Jan 297–8
- Alexander I, emperor of Russia and king of Poland 320
- All Souls' Day 295
- America 15, 16 n. 64, 247, 280
- angels 275–6, 297
- Angevin dynasty 3
- Anglicans 283
- Ankwicz, Józef, castellan of Sącz 55 n. 20, 167, 317
  - as chairman of the 'clerical' deputation 125 n. 152, 168–70, 176–7, 181–2, 187
  - and the nobles of Siewierz 157, 184–6
- annulment ('divorce') 75, 203, 288
- Antici, Cardinal Tommaso, Polish envoy to the Holy See 62, 189, 215, 235, 286, 292–3, 310
  - and the bishopric of Cracow 35, 51, 63–4, 152–5, 200–1
  - and the French Revolution 196, 279–80
- Antichrist 70, 273, 275–7, 283
- anti-clericalism 68, 71–8, 80, 83–4, 140–2, 273–5, 325
  - traditional 41, 44–5, 119, 224, 229–30
- Enlightenment 73, 88–90, 139–40, 152, 164–5, 276–7
- Anti-Enlightenment 76–7, 144–50, 165, 224–5, 273–7
- Antonowicz, Revd Julian 44
- apocalypse 1, 275, 277, 283, 319
- 'apostasy':
  - question of 137, 175, 212–13, 232
  - retained as a crime 214, 240, 251–2, 257, 270, 322
- apostles 165, 212
- Apostolic See, *see* Holy See
- Arians (Antitrinitarians) 214
- Aristides 254
- aristocracy, aristocrats, *see* nobility; political discourses
- Aristotle 3
- army 36, 197, 242, 251;
  - calls to augment 36, 42–6, 49–50, 53–4
  - in political literature 65, 67, 72, 78, 138–9
  - decision to augment 54–5, 60
  - funding of 62, 64–5, 79, 96, 103, 192, 226, 229, 234, 274–6, 294
  - military invalids 193, 196
  - national cavalry 36, 39, 87, 200, 242, 246
  - recruitment 151, 160, 176
  - training 259
  - see also* hetmans; Military Commission; taxation
- Artois, Charles, count of 130
- asylum 288, 295
- Aubert, Joseph, French agent in the Commonwealth 49, 117 n. 96, 129
- Augustus III, king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania, elector of Saxony 4, 28
- Austria, Republic of 13; *see also* Habsburg Monarchy
- Austrian Netherlands, *see* Belgium
- Avignon 145, 185
- Bacon, Francis 76
- Barnave, Antoine-Pierre 323
- Barruel, abbé Augustin 1, 273
- Baroque 4, 271
- Basilians (Uniate) 173, 192, 198, 264, 294
  - monopoly of episcopate 158, 230
  - schools 44, 75, 231, 325
- Batowski, Aleksander, envoy for Livonia (II) 240
- Baudouin de Courtenay, Jan 71–5, 139, 164–5
- Beales, Derek 327
- Beccaria, Cesare, marquis 285
- Beelzebub 276
- Belarus xvi, 5; *see also* Ruthenia
- Belgium 145–7, 160, 180, 324–5
- Benedictines 44, 231
- beneplacitum apostolicum* 33, 82, 84, 86, 87, 120, 195, 327; *see also* Holy See

- Berdyczów (Berdychiv, U.) 28  
 Berlin 106, 107, 247; *see also* Prussia  
 Bernardines 140, 228  
 Bernowicz, Michał, envoy for Nowogródek 38,  
 188, 300 n. 2, 301 n. 5  
 Bible, *see* Scripture  
 Bielański, Piotr, Uniate bishop of Lwów and  
 Kamieniec 189, 192, 198  
 Bielsk Podlaski 198  
 sejmik (at Brańsk) 42 n. 67, 219 n. 78,  
*Table 2*  
 bishops  
*collegium episcoporum* 80–2, 85, 103–4, 153,  
 155–60, 168–77, 188, 296–8,  
 325, 327  
 criticism of 43–4, 50, 118, 155  
 incomes 28, 48, 118, 125, 176, 182–3,  
 197, 326  
 and Jews 28, 166–7, 176  
 question of election 167, 207, 230, 325  
 proposals to reform 36, 65, 79–80, 104, 114,  
 123–5, 142, 211, 312–13  
 reform of 124–5, 152–5, 179–90, 198,  
 273, 323  
 role of 3, 49, 120, 212, 296–7  
*see also* Catholic Church; clergy  
 Black Sea 60  
 Blackstone, Sir William 285  
 Blanchard, Jean, balloonist 58 n. 40  
 Bniński, Łukasz, envoy for Poznań 181, 226  
 Bobownia (Babovna, B.) 198 n. 102  
 Bobrujsk (Babruisk, B.), sejmik (1792)  
*Table 6; see also* Rzeczycza, sejmik  
 Bogdanowicz, Revd Walerian 285, 287–9  
 Bogumil, Blessed, archbishop of Gniezno 44  
 Bohemia, Kingdom of 75, 146, 273; *see also*  
 Habsburg Monarchy  
 Bolingbroke, Henry St John, 1st viscount 67  
 Boncompagni, Cardinal Ignazio, secretary of  
 state 33–35, 54, 63, 107, 110, 153  
 Boniecki, envoy for Chełm (1784) 36 n. 39  
 Bonifratensians 82  
 Bońkowski, Józef, envoy for Płock 80  
 Bonneau, Jean Alexandre, French agent in the  
 Commonwealth 8  
 Boy-Żeleński, Tadeusz 330  
 Braclaw (Bratslav, U.), palatinate *Map 4*, 5 n. 8,  
 39, 170–1  
 proposed Uniate bishopric 205  
 sejmik (at Winnica) *Map 3*, 39, 41 n. 63, 43,  
 219 n. 78, *Table 2*, 228, 230  
 Branicka, Aleksandra, née Engelhardt 31, 254  
 Branicki, Franciszek Ksawery, grand hetman of  
 the Crown 19, 31–7, 163, 318  
 and the bishopric of Cracow 105, 110, 112,  
 113, 117, 127  
 and counter-revolution 253–4, 316  
 and the episcopal reform 178, 325  
 supporters 38–9, 61, 86–7, 116, 160, 167,  
 178, 184, 209, 233, 241, 319  
 Brańsk, sejmik (1792) *Table 6; see also* Bielsk  
 Podlaski, sejmik  
 Braślau (Braslaŭ, B.):  
 district 198  
 sejmik *Map 3*, 42 n. 67, 219 n. 80, *Table 4*,  
*Table 6*  
 Breslau (Wrocław, P.) 130  
 bishopric 146  
 Bronikowski, Adam, envoy for Gniezno  
 (II) 235 n. 117, 315  
 Brześć Kujawski, sejmik (1792) *Table 6; see also*  
 Cujavia  
 Brześć Litewski (Brest, B.):  
 bishopric of Łuck and (Latin rite) 202; *see also*  
 Łuck  
 bishopric (Ruthenian rite); *see* Włodzimierz  
 palatinate 318  
 sejmik *Map 3*  
 (1788) 38, 42 n. 65, 85  
 (1790) 219 n. 80, *Table 4*, 229, 230, 234  
 (1792) *Table 6*  
 Brzostowski, Michał, envoy for Troki 56 n. 27  
 Buchholtz, Ludwig von, Prussian resident in the  
 Commonwealth 54  
 Budweis (G.)/Budvar (Cz.), bishopric 198  
 Bukaty, Franciszek, Polish envoy to Great  
 Britain  
 bureaucracy 294, 318, 323  
 burghers 46, 57, 159, 162–6, 209–10, 241–8,  
 264, 294, 321, 328  
 Burke, Edmund 1, 7, 76, 265, 283  
 Butrymowicz, Revd Adrian 205  
 Butrymowicz, Mateusz, envoy for Pińsk 21 n.  
 91, 38  
 and the Catholic Church 89, 123, 187, 200,  
 203, 228  
 and the dissidents 215  
 and the Eastern Churches 83, 189, 192, 204,  
 212, 264, 301 n. 5  
 and the Jews 166, 232  
 and the monarchy 208  
 Caché, Benedikt de, Austrian chargé d'affaires in  
 the Commonwealth 117 n. 95, 118,  
 125, 184, 209, 226, 247 n. 46,  
 261–2, 282  
 Calvinism, Calvinists 5, 212; *see also*  
 Protestantism  
 Camaldolese 75–6, 304  
 Cardinal Laws 206, 208–9, 212–16, 239–40,  
 245, 252, 264, 296–7  
 Carmelites 198 n. 102  
 Carthusians 75–6  
 Catherine II the Great, empress of Russia:  
 and the Four Years' Sejm 109–10, 111,  
 120–1, 128, 180, 239

- and Orthodoxy 1, 29, 303  
 and the partitions of the Commonwealth 4, 7–8, 316, 323  
 subjugation of the Commonwealth 4, 29–31, 34–37, 315
- Catholic Church 1, 7, 10, 22  
 canon law 33, 83, 156, 173, 175, 288  
 courts 41, 161, 172, 289, 312  
 ecclesiology 10, 73, 119, 135–6, 212  
*jurydyki* 294  
 and peasants 68, 100, 161, 330  
 property 68–70, 72–4, 77–8, 82–4, 87, 94, 114–117, 136, 152–6, 181, 252, 308–9, 311–12, 325–8  
 redivision of dioceses *Map 4*, 124–5, 152, 154–5, 158, 169–71, 177, 181, 187–9, 312  
 relations with the secular power 3, 22, 99–100, 161–2, 190–1, 200, 265–6, 284–90, 294–9, 323  
*see also* abbeys; bishops; chapters; clergy; primacy; regular clergy; secular clergy
- Catholicism  
 as dominant religion/faith 29–30, 211–16, 235, 272, 297–8, 300, 322, 325, 327, 328  
 in law 212, 216, 251–2, 310  
 in political literature 78, 135–7  
 in projects 159, 211, 291, 298, 306, 307, 311  
 in sejmik instructions 44, 224, 230, 232, 233, 264  
 in sermons 149  
 in speeches 212, 240, 242–6, 306, 308–9  
 conversions from, *see* ‘apostasy’  
 conversions to 6  
 and the Enlightenment 1, 13–14, 76–7, 315, 329–30  
 observance 48, 176, 246, 288  
 post-Tridentine renewal 5, 170, 203  
*see also* Christ; God; Providence; theology
- Cassandra, prophetess 317
- celibacy 141–2, 144–5, 276
- cemeteries 295–6
- censorship 48, 77, 175, 216, 263–4, 270, 296–9, 316, 322
- chapters:  
 admission of burghers to 164–5, 242, 246  
 criticism of 71–2, 74, 104, 140–1, 188, 273  
 prelates and canons 44, 171–2, 229, 288, 312–13
- Charles Borromeo, St 296
- Chelm (Kholm, U.):  
 bishopric (Latin rite) *Maps 1 and 4*, 95, 121, 148, 170–1, 177, 187–8, 201–2, 231  
 bishopric (Ruthenian rite) *Map 2*, 95, 174, 204, 205, 231  
 sejmik *Map 3*  
 (1788) 39, 42 n. 67  
 (1790) 219 n. 78, *Table 2*, 224, 226, 230, 231, *Table 6*
- Chelmno (Kulm, G.), bishopric (Latin rite) *Map 1*, xvi
- Chołopienicze (Khalopenichi, B.), sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- Chreptowicz, Joachim, vice-chancellor of Lithuania 37, 166, 289
- Christ 10, 73, 119, 154, 164, 257, 274, 306  
 divinity 149, 271  
 legislator and teacher 69, 77, 140, 163, 181, 213, 270, 272, 307  
 as saviour 52, 163, 297  
 second coming 277  
*see also* apocalypse; theology
- Christianity, Christians 13, 244, 246, 298; *see also* Catholic Church; Catholicism; Gospel(s); Orthodox; Protestantism; Uniates
- Chrzanowski, Revd Tomasz 148
- Church of England, *see* Anglicans
- Cicero 76, 290
- Ciechanów, sejmik *Map 3*  
 (1788) 41, 42, 44  
 (1790) 219 n. 79, *Table 3*, 225, 228, 229, 230, 234  
 (1792) *Table 6*
- Cieciszowski, Kacper, bishop of Kiev 64, 81, 177, 231 n. 102, 282 n. 54, 296  
 and Kołtataj 306–7, 321  
 pastoral letters 148, 257  
 speeches 88, 91, 200, 212, 243–4, 253  
 on his diocese 80, 86, 89, 120, 314–15  
 on the Holy See 189, 192  
 on Uniates and Orthodox 191, 192, 193, 213, 309–10, 314
- Cistercians 148
- citizenship 3, 57–8, 82, 210, 216, 247, 251, 276
- Civil-Military Commissions of Good Order** 18, 160–2, 203, 295  
 and education 160–2, *Tables 2–5*, 226, 229  
 endorsement of the Constitution of 3 May by 258, 269  
 and the Catholic Church 148, 161–2, 193, 240, 295, 314, 317, 323  
 and the Orthodox Church 213, 301  
 in projects for ecclesiastical reform 173, 288, 312
- clergy 2, 10, 18, 65, 190–1, 326  
 as ‘enlighteners’ 50, 68–9, 72, 82, 99, 134–6, 161, 329  
 projects for reform of 71, 84, 136–9, 158–9, 187, 189, 197, *Tables 2–5*, 229–30, 275, 303–7, 309, 311–14, 323–4  
 question of religious fund and salaries 73, 75, 80, 136, 152–5, 169, 211, 229, 230, 275  
 question of responsibility for education 44–5, 69, 75, 80–1, 84  
*see also* anticlericalism; bishops; chapters; France; French Revolution; Habsburg Monarchy; Holy See; hospitals; regular clergy; secular clergy; Uniates; taxation

- clubs 252, 264, 277–8  
*coadjutors* 27, 312  
 codification 46, 251, 294–9; *see also* Zamoyski Code  
**Commonwealth, Polish-Lithuanian**  
   (*Rzeczpospolita*) xvi–xvii, 2–6, 57, 251  
   diplomatic service 61–2  
   economy 232  
   judicial system 35; *see also* tribunals  
   *Mutual Assurance of the Two Nations* (1791) 260–1  
   partitions of 1, 4, 30–31, 316, 320, 328  
   population 5  
   subject to Russia 4, 30, 36, 41, 53, 316  
   territory and frontiers 5, 14, 46, 208  
   vassals, *see* Courland  
 Communism, Communists xvii, 10, 320, 330–1  
 Concordat of Wschowa (1737) 45, 196  
**confederacies** 4, 7, 250  
   Warsaw (1573) 29, 245  
   (1764–6) 30  
   Radom, Skuck, Thorn, and Wilno (1767–8) 30, 217  
   Bar (1768–72) 30, 63  
   (1773–5) 30  
   (1776) 30  
   (1788–92), *see* Four Years' Sejm  
   Targowica and Wilno (1792–3) 9, 277, 299, 316–17, 319–20, 323  
 Confederacy of the Rhine 318  
 confraternities 44, 70  
 Constantine the Great, Roman emperor 270  
 Constantinople, patriarch(ate) 301, 302, 310  
 Constitution of 3 May 1791 7–9, 239, 248–52, 296–7, 318, 320  
   anniversary of 266–72  
   criticism of 250, 265  
   *Declaration of the Assembled Estates* 249–50  
   propagation and endorsement 203, 235, 249–50, 256–66, 281, 301  
 Cossack revolt (1648) 6  
 covenantalism 148, 319; *see also* Providence  
 counter-revolution, *see* confederacies of Targowica and Wilno  
 Courland, Duchy of 212, 230, 292  
 Cowling, Maurice 19  
 Cracow (Kraków, P.) 163, 198 n. 102, 247  
   Civil-Military Commission 203  
   hospital of St Lazarus 93–5  
   St Mary's Church 265  
   parish of St Michael 199  
   palatinate 28, 44, 186  
   sejmik (at Proszowice, 1788, 1790) *Map* 3, 41 n. 63, 43–4, 46, 219 n. 78, *Table* 2, 228  
   sejmik (1792) 203, *Table* 6, 265, 266, 323  
   University 31, 51, 93, 112, 113, 162, 177, 228, 265  
 Cracow, bishopric *Maps* 1 and 4, 28–32, 49, 93, 304  
   intrigues concerning 34–5, 50–1, 104–13  
   calls to use revenues for army 45, 51, 79–80, 83–4, 102–4, 113  
   destination of revenues 176–7, 182, 187, 190, 193, 196, 197, 199–200, 311, 316  
   secularization 113–16, 121, 124, 246, 325, 328  
   reaction to secularization 116–18, 125–9, 133, 136, 139–45 *passim*, 149, 153–5, 274, 308, 311–12  
   surveys and auction of estates 34–5, 124, 156–7, 168–70 *passim*, 176–7, 182, 230, 320  
   reduction 170–1, 177, 187, 201  
   *see also* Poniatowski, Prince Michał; Siewierz, Duchy of; Vienna Convention  
 Cracow cathedral 176–7, 203, 217–18  
   chapter 27, 31, 32, 183–4, 186, 231  
   ‘Cracow school’ 329  
 Crown, Polish 3, 233, 251  
   sejmiks:  
     (1788) 42–6  
     (1790) 219, *Tables* 2–3, 5, 224  
     (1792) *Table* 6, 261  
   taxation of 79, 80  
   local government in 160–2  
**Crown estates** 3, 69, 70, 73, 181  
   proposed sale 263, 282–3, 314  
   *see also* *starostwa*  
 Cujavia (palatinates of Brześć Kujawski and Inowrocław, Kujawy, P.):  
   bishopric *Maps* 1 and 4  
   sejmik  
     (at Radziejów) *Map* 3  
     (1788) 41 n. 64, 43, 45, 46  
     (1790) 219 n. 79, *Table* 3  
**Custodial Council (Straż Praw)** 251, 253–4, 289, 294, 296, 298, 313  
   proposals for 62, 207, 232  
 Czacki, Michał, envoy for Czernihów 97 n. 101, 192  
 Czartoryska, Princess Izabella, née Flemming\* 31, 36, 40, 59, 259  
 Czartoryski, Prince Adam Kazimierz, envoy for Lublin\* 31  
   and the Catholic Church 116, 181, 311  
   defence of starostas 82  
   and education 189, 225  
   in opposition 36, 40, 51  
   as patron 38, 40, 59, 178, 231  
   and peasants 97–8  
   and Ruthenia 213, 215 n. 51, 301 n. 5  
   and toleration 244–5  
 Czartoryski, Prince August Aleksander\* 30  
 Czartoryski, Prince Józef, envoy for Volhynia, Polish envoy to Prussia 107, 108  
 Czartoryski, Prince Michał Fryderyk\* 30  
 Czaszniki (Chashniki, B.), sejmik (1792) *Table* 6  
 Czereja (Chareia, B.), sejmik (1792) *Table* 6

- Czernihów (Chernihiv, U.), sejmik in exile (at Włodzimierz) xvi, *Map 3*  
 (1788) 37, 41 n. 63, 44,  
 (1790) 219 n. 78, *Table 2*, 228, 230  
 (1792) *Table 6*
- Czersk, sejmik *Map 3*  
 (1788) 41 n. 64, 45  
 (1790) 219 n. 79, *Table 3*, 229, 231, 232
- Czerwińsk, abbey 46
- Częstochowa 100, 331  
 sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- Czetwertyński, Antoni, envoy for Braclaw 87 n. 43
- Danzig (Gdańsk, P.) 66, 180, 234
- David, king of Israel 275
- Deboli, Augustyn, Polish envoy to Russia 40,  
 62, 108–11, 120–1, 127–9
- dechristianization, *see* French Revolution
- 'deconfessionalization' 322
- deism 71, 140, 322
- Dekert, Jan, president of Old Warsaw 162–3,  
 166, 210
- democracy, democrats 3, 7, 146, 279–80, 326;  
*see also* 'noble democracy'
- Descorches, Marie-Louis, French minister to the  
 Commonwealth 261, 269, 278, 280–1,  
 283, 310
- devils 275–6
- Diderot, Denis 13
- dissidents, *see* Protestantism
- dissident question 29–30
- Disuniates, Disunion**, *see* Orthodoxy
- divorce, *see* annulment
- Dłuski, Sebastian, envoy for Lublin 187, 241 n. 14
- Dłuski, Tomasz, envoy for Lublin (II) 242, 244
- Dmochowski, Revd Franciszek Ksawery 285,  
 287, 289 n. 21
- Dnepr (Dnipro U., Dniapr B., Dniepr P.)  
 river 34, 109
- Dobrzyń, sejmik (at Lipno) *Map 3*, 41 n. 64, 42,  
 44, 219, *Table 3*
- Dominicans 294
- Doyle, William 16
- Drohiczyn Podlaski, sejmik *Map 3*, 42 n. 67,  
 219 n. 78, *Table 2*, *Table 6*
- Dubienka, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- Dunajowce (Dunaivtsi, U.), sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- Dutch, *see* the Netherlands
- Dvina (Daugava, Lat.), river 38
- Dyneburg (Daugavpils, Lat.), *see* Livonia
- Działyński, Ksawery, envoy for Poznań 125 n.  
 152, 157
- Dziekoński, Antoni, court treasurer of  
 Lithuania 191
- education:  
 academic/teaching estate 135, 137, 162, 211,  
 229, 289
- elementary schools 71, 74, 83–4, 156, 160–2,  
 211, 225, 290
- for girls 70, 74–5
- secondary schools 162, 211, 226, 290
- uniformity 69, 77, 137, 210–11, 289–90
- universities 66, 69, 138, 158, 211, 228, 290,  
 299; *see also* Cracow, Wilno
- see also* Basilians, Catholic Church, Piarists
- Education, Commission for National 13, 30,  
 31, 251, 254
- criticism of 45, 75, 162, 219, *Tables 2–5*, 224–9
- and non-Catholic schools 137, 211, 290, 310
- proposed reforms of 66, 69, 84, 137–8,  
 210–11, *Tables 2–5*, 275, 289, 299
- educational fund 31, 94
- calls to assign to army/treasury 45, 75, 80, 81  
 n. 14, 84, 162, 207, *Tables 2–5*, 225–6
- defences of 134, 137, 188–9
- taxation of leased properties 100
- Ejszyski (Eišiškes, L.), sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- England, Kingdom of 38, 59, 283; *see also* Great  
 Britain
- Enlightenment, the 13–14, 66–7, 71, 76–7,  
 134, 164–5, 323, 330; *see also*  
 Anti-Enlightenment, Catholicism,  
 political discourses
- episcopate, *see* bishops
- Essen, Franz August, Saxon resident in the  
 Commonwealth 54, 97, 125–6, 261, 263
- Estates, *see* Four Years' Sejm; sejm
- Estates-General 46–9
- Febronius (Nikolaus von Hontheim, suffragan  
 bishop of Trier), Febronianism 14, 143
- Federici, Archbishop Carlo, keeper of the  
 seals 153, 154
- Four Years' Sejm 6–10
- adjournments 54, 60, 100, 207, 246
- alignments 19, 61, 63–4, 125–30, 151, 206,  
 209, 240, 252
- two cohorts of envoys 234–5, 239
- confederacy 53, 60, 62, 104, 239
- deputations:  
 'clerical' 22, 124–5, 133, 149, 151–60,  
 167–77, 184–5, 187, 189, 325, 327
- for Codification 284–9
- Constitutional 52, 242, 245, 249, 305
- for Foreign Affairs 62, 107, 108, 153,  
 155, 200
- for the Form of Government 167, 207
- for the Heterodox 215, 245, 309
- for the Investigation of Those Accused of  
 Rebellion 300
- for Jewish Affairs 166
- for Urban Affairs 164, 166
- diary 17, 54, 96, 195, 248, 277
- historiography 10–12
- inauguration 52–3



- Four Years' Sejm (*cont.*)  
 procedure 15, 85, 95, 239–41, 249  
 requirement of unanimity 155, 160, 187–8, 249  
 votes 56, 63, 82, 115–16, 282, 310  
 prolongations 61, 179, 217  
 provincial sessions 54, 55, 80, 192–3  
 revolutionary character 7–9, 67, 249,  
 255–8, 315  
 spectators 54, 58–9, 96, 248–9  
*see also* oratory
- France, Kingdom of 46–9, 66, 110; *see also*  
 French Revolution
- Franciscans:  
 Conventual 228  
 Reformed 272, 276, 277  
*see also* Bernardines (Observant Franciscans)
- Franklin, Benjamin 147
- Frederick II the Great, king of Prussia 54, 105,  
 133, 318
- Frederick Augustus III, elector of Saxony 216–17,  
 261, 266, 282, 304, 306–7
- Frederick William II, king of Prussia 37, 53–4,  
 60–1, 180, 239, 247  
 and the bishopric of Cracow 106–12, 117, 127
- freedom:  
 of conscience 66, 143, 148, 214, 242  
 of the press 47, 145, 147, 215–16, 296–9  
 of religion 251–2  
 of speech 47, 66, 147, 216, 250, 265, 296–7  
 of thought 77, 165, 214  
*see also* liberty
- Freemasonry, (Free)masons 2, 14, 272,  
 276–7, 319
- French language 287
- French Revolution 1–2, 7–8, 16, 48, 318  
 storming of the Bastille 130, 145, 276  
 National Constituent Assembly 18, 130, 142,  
 145, 279, 327  
 policy towards Catholic Church 1, 7, 22, 90,  
 183, 185, 187, 198, 207, 326–8  
 Civil Constitution of the Clergy 145, 146,  
 207, 304, 326  
 influence in the Commonwealth 15, 145–6,  
 160, 195, 273, 277–81, 317  
 fear of 130, 136, 163, 168, 199, 228,  
 242, 278  
 Polish criticism of 76, 142–6, 243, 247, 257–8,  
 264, 275–8, 280, 282–3, 291–2
- funerals 159–60
- Gabin, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- Galicia 10, 14, 30, 143, 180, 296, 324, 330  
 'Galician sums'; *see* Vienna Convention
- Gallicanism 14, 49
- Garampi, Cardinal Giuseppe 150
- Garnysz, Maciej Grzegorz, bishop of Chełm and  
 vice-chancellor of the Crown 31, 51, 64,  
 81, 166, 188–9  
 efforts to provide for 35, 51, 121, 122
- illness and death 166, 197, 201
- pastoral letters 148, 319
- speeches 56 n. 29, 89, 114–15, 119
- Garycki, Bonifacy 285
- German language xvi, 5, 287, 321, 330
- Germany, Federal Republic of 13; *see also* Holy  
 Roman Empire
- Ghigiotti, Revd Gaetano 51, 129, 189, 252 n.  
 73, 279, 286, 310
- Giedroyc, Stefan, bishop of Samogitia 64, 81,  
 114, 115, 116, 208, 296
- Gieysztor, Dominik, envoy for Troki (II) 219 n. 80
- Gipsy 273–6
- Gniezno 130  
 archbishopric 28, 34, 100  
 cathedral chapter 27  
 palatinate 38  
 sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- God:  
 the Creator 135  
 in the Holy Trinity 135 n. 13, 251  
 'of Hosts' 54, 88, 97, 247, 256, 262  
 in letters 307, 310  
 in pastoral letters 147–8, 257  
 in political literature 73–5, 78, 141, 142,  
 210, 275–7  
 in projects 173, 175  
 in sejmik instructions 42, 224  
 in sermons 52, 258  
 in speeches 54, 55, 88, 91, 96, 97, 180, 184,  
 194, 241, 242, 244, 249, 281, 291,  
 299, 308  
*see also* Christ; Holy Spirit; Providence;  
 Stanisław August; theology
- Goliński, Zbigniew 113 n. 73
- Goltz, August Friedrich von, Prussian chargé  
 d'affaires in the Commonwealth 234, 247
- Góra, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- Gorzeński, Tymoteusz, bishop of Smolensk 199,  
 202, 203, 231 n. 102, 248
- Gospel(s) 84, 89, 135–6, 145, 163, 165, 243,  
 307, 329; *see also* Scripture
- Gostynin, sejmik 42 n. 67, 219 n. 79,  
*Table 3*, 230
- Grabowska, Elżbieta 117
- Grabowski, Paweł, envoy for Wołkowysk 38,  
 214–15
- Grabowski, Zygmunt, envoy for Wołkowysk (II)
- Great Britain, Kingdom of 180, 239
- Great Poland (Wielkopolska, P.) 5, 243  
 representation at Four Years' Sejm  
 (province) 55  
 sejmik  
 (at Środa) *Map 3*  
 (1788) 37, 38–39, 41 n. 64, 44, 45  
 (1790) 218, 219 n. 79, *Table 3*, 226  
 sejmiks of province *Map 3*, 41, 219, *Table 3*,  
 260, *Table 6*
- Grochulska, Barbara 329

- Grodno (Hrodna, B.) 258  
 sejmik *Map 3*, 46, 219 n. 80, *Table 4*, 225,  
 230, 232, *Table 6*  
*see also* sejm (1793)
- Grotius, Hugo 76
- Grzeszkowiak-Krwawicz, Anna 11, 67
- Gustav III, king of Sweden 7, 123, 163, 268
- Gutakowski, Ludwik, envoy for Orsza 244,  
 289 n. 22, 314
- Habermas, Jürgen 57–8
- Habsburg (Austrian) Monarchy 43, 115, 146,  
 180, 198, 216, 251, 323–5, 327; *see also*  
 Belgium; Bohemia; Hungary; Joseph II;  
 Vienna
- Hailes, Daniel, British envoy to the  
 Commonwealth 126, 208, 234, 261
- Heaven 271, 275–6
- Hell 99, 276
- Hertzberg, Ewald von, Prussian minister 106,  
 107, 108, 112 n. 66, 117 n. 105
- Herod, king of Judaea 249
- hetmans 36, 55, 61, 127
- Hohenzollern-Hechingen, Count Karl von, bishop  
 of Chełmno 105–7, 112, 116, 117
- Holy Cross, feast 257, 267, 270
- Holy Roman Empire 153, 198
- Holy See 1, 11–12  
 and the bishopric of Cracow 33, 149, 176–7  
 danger of schism with the  
 Commonwealth 151–3, 156, 178, 194,  
 196, 199–200, 327  
 and the Commonwealth after 3 May  
 1791 266–7, 284–8, 291–4, 302–3
- Congregation for the Propagation of the  
 Faith 204
- and the episcopal reform 181–2, 188–9,  
 192, 196
- and the French Revolution 327
- and Joseph II 323, 327
- payments to 41, 47, 136–7, 172–3, 199, 230
- rights and jurisdiction 50, 80, 87, 104, 114,  
 136–7, 171, 275, 279, 285–8, 313  
*see also* Pius VI; Boncompagni; Federici;  
 Zelada; nunciature; ultramontanism
- Holy Spirit 52, 269
- hospitals 46, 75, 82, 92–5, 193, 196, 230,  
 295, 310
- Hulewicz, Benedykt, envoy for Volhynia 191,  
 192, 240, 245, 246
- Hume, David 75, 76
- Hungary, Kingdom of 180, 302, 308, 324
- Ilłuksza (Ilükste, Lat.), sejmik (1792) *Table 6*;  
*see also* Livonia, sejmik
- Insurrection (1794) 8, 9–10, 317–20
- intelligentsia 330
- interregna 29; *see also* monarchy
- Inquisition 214
- Islam 5
- Italy 153, 279–80  
*iura stolae*, *see* stole fees  
*ius patronatus* 229, 287, 315, 325–6
- Jacobinism; *see* French Revolution
- Jabłonna 113, 129
- Jagiellon dynasty 3
- Jagiellon, Cardinal Prince Frederick, primate 34
- Januszewicz, Józef 285
- Jasieński, Michał, envoy for Sandomierz (II) 304
- Jelski, Konstanty, envoy for Starodub (II) 203
- Jeremiah, prophet 148
- Jerzmanowski, Franciszek, envoy for Łeczyca 88 n.  
 51, 264
- Jesuits 1, 13, 81, 235  
 suppression 30, 119, 144, 276  
 calls to restore 218–19, *Tables 2–5*, 224–9,  
 235, 284, 290–4, 303, 325  
 former property, *see* education
- Jesus, *see* Christ
- Jews 5, 9, 28, 269, 276, 295  
 bishops and 28, 166–7, 176  
 question at Four Years' Sejm 8, 139, 166–7,  
 213, 242  
 question in sejmik instructions 43, 46, *Tables*  
*2–5*, 232
- Jezierski, Franciszek Salezy, canon of Kalisz 52,  
 143–5, 165–6, 199, 331 n. 57
- Jezierski, Jacek, castellan of Łuków:  
 pamphlets 71, 74, 78  
 projects 71, 84, 90, 187, 194–5  
 speeches 83–4, 85, 88, 93–4, 97, 102–3, 104,  
 119, 187, 189, 193–7, 209, 305  
 regarding burghers and Jews 164–6  
 last years 319
- Jobert, Ambroise 322
- John II Casimir, king of Poland and grand duke  
 of Lithuania 270
- John Paul II, Blessed, pope 331
- Jordan, Jan, envoy for Cracow 182
- Joseph II, Holy Roman Emperor:  
 and the Catholic Church 1, 2, 7, 32, 93, 296,  
 304, 323–5, 327  
 new bishoprics 32, 153, 154, 198  
 general seminaries 110, 146, 313  
 closure of monasteries 324  
 toleration 251  
 efforts to impose German 321  
 in Polish opinions 66, 67, 73, 115, 143, 144,  
 146, 183
- Josephism 14, 137
- Kalinka, Revd Walerian 10–11, 13, 17, 56, 63,  
 100, 113, 195
- Kalisz:  
 district 100  
 palatinate 38  
 sejmik (1792) *Table 6*

- Kaluga 30, 31, 217
- Kamieniec Podolski (Kamianets' Podil's'kyi, U.):  
   bishopric (Latin rite) *Maps 1 and 4*, 64, 95,  
     170–1, 177, 188  
   bishopric (Ruthenian rite) *Map 2* 95, 174,  
     190, 192, 198, 205  
   fortress 93  
   *see also* Podolia, sejmik
- Kaniów (Kaniv, U.) 34, 231
- Karaites 5
- Karbownik, Revd Henryk 12
- Karpiński, Franciszek 271
- Karpowicz, Michał Franciszek, archdeacon of  
   Smolensk 18, 151 n. 5, 258, 265–6
- Karwicki, Krzysztof, envoy for Volhynia 60 n. 50
- Kiciński, Pius, envoy for Liw, later castellan of  
   Połaniec 39, 59, 178, 209, 240–1
- Kielce 32
- Kiev (Kyiv, U.) 6, 27–28  
   archbishopric (Ruthenian rite), *Map 2*, 205;  
     *see also* Uniates  
   bishopric (Latin-rite) *Maps 1, 4*, 27–28, 89,  
     95, 171, 177, 187, 314–15  
   palatinate 5 n. 8, 232, 269; *see also* Ukraine  
   sejmik (at Żytomierz) *Map 3*  
     (1788) 41 n. 63  
     (1790) 219 n. 78, *Table 2*, 225, 228, 232,  
       233, 234  
     (1792) *Table 6*, 263
- Kobryń (Kobryn, B.), sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- Kochanowski, Michał, envoy for  
   Sandomierz 215 n. 51, 301, 305
- Kocięł, Józef, envoy for Oszmiany 188 n. 53,  
   192–3
- koliishchyna* (*koliszczyzna*, P.) 28, 232
- Kołątaj, Revd Hugo, referendary, later  
   vice-chancellor of the Crown 31, 217,  
   255, 316, 317–18  
   allies 144–5, 190, 199, 201, 209, 234,  
     254–5, 265, 277, 300, 306–9, 312–13  
   concept of the Polish nation 68–9, 135,  
     137–8, 150, 246, 287  
   and the Constitution of 3 May 239, 251  
   *Listy anonima* (*Letters of an Anonymous*  
     *Correspondent*) 67–70, 73, 134, 231  
   *Prawo polityczne narodu polskiego* (*Political Law*  
     *of the Polish Nation*) 134–9, 158, 304  
   and the Prussian alliance 127–8  
   reputation 140, 231, 254–5, 277, 280–1  
   and Ruthenia 137, 302, 305, 306–8, 315, 321  
   speeches 16–17 n. 67, 254, 284  
   theology 135–6, 307, 322  
   and the urban cause 69, 163, 241, 243  
   as vice-chancellor 254–5, 266, 278, 282–8  
     *passim*
- Konarski, Revd Stanisław 66
- Konopczyński, Władysław 10
- Konopka, Kazimierz 277
- Koran ('Alkoran') 241, 266
- Korzon, Tadeusz 100
- Kościąkowski, Tadeusz, envoy for  
   Wilkomierz 38, 208
- Kościan, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- Kościusko, Tadeusz 8, 133, 319; *see also*  
   Insurrection (1794)
- Kossakowski, Jan Nepomucen, canon of  
   Wilno 271–2
- Kossakowski, Józef Kazimierz, bishop of Livonia  
   appetite for benefices 197, 199, 203–4  
   and the bishopric of Cracow 34–35, 51,  
     106–12 *passim*, 115–16, 120–1,  
     128–9, 316  
   and the bishopric of Wilno 63, 204  
   and censorship 296  
   chairman of Constitutional Deputation 242,  
     245, 249  
   and other confessions 212, 245  
   and the Constitution of 3 May 249, 265  
   and counter-revolution 316  
   defence of ecclesiastical property 80, 81, 84,  
     94, 104, 194  
   opposition to hereditary succession 209–10, 217  
   and the peasants 98  
   and the primacy 253  
   physiocratic views 90, 91  
   and the sejms 240  
   execution 317
- Kossakowski, General Szymon 316
- Kossowski, Roch, court treasurer, later treasurer  
   of the Crown 182
- Kowno (Kaunas, L.), sejmik *Map 3*, 42 n. 65,  
   219 n. 80, *Table 4*, 226, *Table 6*, 265
- Kracik, Revd Jan 11
- Krasicki, Ignacy, prince-bishop of Warmia 105–13  
   *passim* 116–17, 121, 125, 129
- Krasiński, Adam Stanisław, bishop of  
   Kamieniec 64, 93, 176, 207,  
   209, 296  
   speeches 167, 214
- Krasiński, Jan, envoy for Podolia 80
- Kriegseisen, Wojciech 12
- Kroże (Kraźiai, L.) 224
- Krzemieniec (Kremenets', U.) sejmik (1792)  
   *Table 6*
- Krzucki, Ignacy, envoy for Volhynia 304–5
- Krzyżanowice 70
- Kubicki, Jakub 267
- Kublicki, Stanisław, envoy for Livonia 38, 59,  
   93, 167, 178, 181, 240, 315  
   anti-papal stance 86, 120, 212, 323  
   and the bishopric of Cracow 63, 103, 104,  
     119, 182, 193  
   and the Duchy of Siewierz 114, 157, 183,  
     186, 196
- Kwiatkowska, Agnieszka 11
- Łąd, abbey 188
- ladies:

- political role 11, 55, 57, 59, 61, 258–9, 266, 268  
 male expectations of 70, 74–5, 141  
 Lafayette, Marie-Joseph, marquis de 279  
 Lanckoroński, Antoni 289 n. 22  
 Lateran Canons Regular 45, 46, 198 n. 102  
 Latin language 15, 45, 225, 226, 252, 287  
 Latvia 5  
 Łatyczów (Letychiv, U.), sejmik (1792) *Table 6*  
 Lazarists (Priests of the Mission) 75  
 Łęczycza, sejmik *Map 3*  
     (1788) 41, 42, 44  
     (1790) 219 n. 79 *Table 3*, 225, 230, 232, 233  
     (1792) *Table 6*, 263–4  
 Ledóchowski, Antoni, envoy for Czernihów (II) 244  
 Ledóchowski, Marcin, envoy for Wizna 79–80, 104  
 Leipzig 275  
 Lenczewski, Jan, suffragan bishop of Lublin 189  
 Lenin 1  
 Leoben, bishopric 198  
 Leopold II, Holy Roman Emperor, previously grand duke of Tuscany 1, 143, 146, 154, 180  
 Leżeński, Marcin, envoy for Braclaw (II) 307–8  
 L'Hullier, Sophie 117  
 liberalism, liberals 2, 67  
 libertinism 140, 148, 270, 276  
*liberum veto* 4, 7, 30, 250  
 liberty 15, 52, 56, 66, 233, 242, 248–50, 283, 321  
     means of attaching non-Catholics 308–9, 321  
     pictorial representation 277  
     positive and negative 133, 138–9, 143, 233, 262  
     *see also* freedom  
 Lida, sejmik *Map 3*  
     (1788) 42 n. 65, 44, 45  
     (1790) 219 n. 80, *Table 4*, 228–9, 233  
     (1792) *Table 6*  
 Linowski, Aleksander, envoy for Cracow (II) 242 n. 25  
 Linz, bishopric 198  
 Lipiński, Augustyn, chancellor of Cracow cathedral chapter 157 n. 27  
 Lipno, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*; *see also* Dobrzyn, sejmik  
 Lipski, Cardinal Jan, bishop of Cracow 27  
 Lipski, Tadeusz, envoy for Poznań, later castellan of Łęczycza 182–3, 213–14, 291–3  
 Litak, Stanisław 13  
 Lithuania:  
     Grand Duchy of xvii, 3, 5, 99, 188, 198, 251  
     education in 81, 161, 218, 224  
     laws 3, 284–5  
     sejmiks *Map 3*  
     (1788) 37–8, 42–6  
     (1790) 219, *Tables 4–5*, 224–6, 232–3  
     (1792) 260–1, *Table 6*  
     Lithuanian 'province' at Four Years' Sejm 40, 53, 160, 192–3  
     taxation 79, 81  
     Republic of 2, 5, 13  
 Lithuanian nation xvii, 5  
 Litta, Lorenzo, papal nuncio to the Commonwealth (1794–6) 317, 319  
 Little Poland (Małopolska, P.) 5, 259  
     sejmiks *Map 3*, 39–40, 41, 219, *Table 2*, 233, 260, *Table 6*  
 Livonia (Inflantija, Lat., Inflanty, P., Livland, G.),  
     bishopric *Maps 1 and 4*, 81, 106, 170, 188  
     sejmik:  
       (at Dyneburg, 1788) *Map 3*, 37, 38, 42, 43, 44, 46  
       (1790) 219, *Table 4*, 225  
       (at Iłkuksza, 1792), *Table 6*  
 Liw, sejmik *Map 3*  
     (1788) 39, 42 n. 67, 59  
     (1790) 219 n. 67, *Table 3*  
     (1792) *Table 6*, 263–4  
 Łobarzewski, Ignacy 20 n. 85  
 lobbying 21, 49  
 Locke, John 76  
 Lombardy 324  
 Łomża 258  
     sejmik *Map 3*, 42 n. 67, 219 n. 79, *Table 3*, *Table 6*  
 London; *see* Great Britain  
 Loret, Maciej 11–12  
 Louis, St, feast of 278  
 Louis XVI, king of France 1, 7, 129–30, 278, 316, 318  
 Louvain 110  
 Lubiń, abbey 197  
 Lublin:  
     Catholic University of 12  
     palatinate 28, 121, 170, 181, 187, 189, 201, 318  
     sejmik *Map 3*  
     (1788) 40, 41 n. 63, 42, 43, 45, 46  
     (1790) 219 n. 78, *Table 2*, 225, 229–231  
     (1792) *Table 6*  
     suffragany 181, 189  
 Lubomirska, Izabella, née Czartorska\* 31  
 Lubomirski, Stanisław, grand marshal of the Crown\* 31  
 Lucchesini, Girolamo, Prussian envoy to the Commonwealth 54, 261, 318  
     and the bishopric of Cracow 106–10, 112–13, 116–17, 122, 126, 127–8  
 Lucifer 276; *see also* Satan  
 Łuck (Lutsk, U.):  
     bishopric (Latin rite) 108, 122, 170–1, 177, 199–202  
     bishopric (Ruthenian rite) 174, 192, 205

- Łuck (Lutsk, U.) (*cont.*)  
sejmik (1792) *Table 6*  
*see also* Volhynia
- Łuków, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- Łuskina, Revd Stefan 145–7, 218, 224, 228, 257, 276, 291, 292
- Łuszczewski, Jan, sejm secretary 17 n. 71
- Lutheranism, Lutherans 5, 230, 263, 321; *see also* Protestantism
- Lwów (L'viv, U., Lemberg, G.):  
archbishopric (Latin rite) *Map 1*, 324  
bishopric (Ruthenian rite) *Map 2*; *see* Kamieniec Podolski
- Machiavelli, Niccolò, machiavellianism 126, 140
- Madrid, *see* Spain
- Mahomet 241 n. 14
- Mainz, prince-archbishopric 54
- Małachowska, Konstancja, née Czapska 126
- Małachowski, Jacek, grand chancellor of the Crown 39, 164, 201, 253
- Małachowski, Jan, envoy for Sandomierz 39, 82
- Małachowski, Piotr, palatine of Cracow 87 n. 43
- Małachowski, Stanisław, marshal of the sejm 39, 40, 318  
and the bishopric of Cracow 114–17 *passim*, 119, 121–7 *passim*, 152–3  
'called by Providence' 67, 270  
and the Cardinal Laws 208, 240  
considers resignation 126  
and the Constitution of 3 May 239, 248, 249  
decisive interventions in debates 96, 182, 241, 310, 313  
during the first months of the sejm 52, 53, 61, 67, 79  
during the last year of the Four Years' Sejm 203, 254, 265, 268, 280, 305–6, 314–15  
and the episcopal reform 155, 177, 180–3, 185, 187–90, 193, 195–6  
and the Holy See 286, 304  
and Kołłątaj and his allies 67, 190, 201, 210, 254  
and the Law on Royal Towns 243, 247–8  
and the Orthodox hierarchy 302, 308, 310  
reluctance to discipline proceedings 61, 95  
and taxation 80, 82, 85–6, 96–7  
and the Vienna Convention 92–3
- Malinowski, Antonin, suffragan bishop of Warsaw 189, 268–70, 278, 317
- Malta, Knights of 46, 80, 100, 230
- Maria Theresa, queen of Hungary and Bohemia, empress 30
- Marie-Louise, archduchess and empress 318
- marriage 74–5, *Table 1*, 173, 245–6, 251, 274, 288–9, 293
- Mary, Blessed Virgin 297, 330–1
- Massalski, Ignacy, bishop of Wilno:  
ambitions 34–35, 38, 63, 106  
and the Constitution of 3 May 263, 264–5  
defends ecclesiastical property 91, 103  
and education 30–1, 81  
goes abroad 229  
keeps entire income and diocese 198, 203  
makes Kossakowski his coadjutor 204  
execution 317
- Matuszewicz, Tadeusz, envoy for Brześć Litewski 96, 240
- Mazovia, Duchy of (Mazowsze, P.) 39, 40, 224, 229, 232, 262, 263
- Mazzei, Filippo 18, 168, 277, 280, 292
- Merecz (Merkinė, L.), sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- messianism 319
- Michael, Archangel 275–6
- Michalski, Jerzy 42
- Mickiewicz, Adam 319
- Mielnik Podlaski, sejmik *Map 3*, 41 n. 63, 44, 219 n. 78, *Table 2*, *Table 6*
- Mierzejewski, Józef, envoy for Podolia 93
- Migazzi, Cardinal Christoph Anton, archbishop of Vienna 146
- Mikorski, Franciszek, envoy for Kalisz 183
- Mikorski, Józef, envoy for Gostynin 181
- Military Commission 42, 55, 61, 260
- Minorski, Revd Stanisław 265
- Minsk (Mensk, B., Mińsk, P.) 258  
proposed bishopric (Ruthenian rite) 174, 190, 305–6; *see also* Połock  
sejmik *Map 3*, 42 n. 65, 219, *Table 4*, 224–5, 230, 231, *Table 6*
- Mirabeau, Honoré-Gabriel 146, 276
- Mława, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*, 262
- Mniszech, Michał Jerzy, grand marshal of the Crown\* 268
- Mogilev (R.), (Mahilou, B., Mohylew, P.) 235
- monarchy 3–4, 251–2  
and the Catholic Church 2, 33–34, 45, 134, 328  
elective or hereditary 7, 65, 138, 206–7, 209–10, 216–17, *Tables 2–5*, 224, 233–4, 249, 251  
*pacta conventa* 84, 114–15, 122, 127, 208  
monarchism 133, 206, 328
- Mongols 5
- monks, *see* regular clergy
- Montesquieu, Charles-Louis, Baron de Secondat et de 138, 250, 285, 321  
in Polish political literature 66, 76, 276, 298, 319
- morality 70, 148, 175, 224, 264, 270, 290–1, 296–9, 322
- Morski, Onufry, envoy for Podolia 124 n. 151
- Moses 276
- Mostowski, Tadeusz, castellan of Raciąż 146
- Motrenin, Orthodox monastery 232
- Mozyrz (Mazyr, B.) 258  
sejmik *Map 3*  
(1788) 42 n. 65, 45

- (1790) 217, 219 n. 80, *Table 4*  
 (1792) *Table 6*, 263  
 Muscovy (Moskwa, P.) 6, 27, 37  
   in Polish discourse 58 n. 42, 212–13, 217,  
   227, 274, 302  
 Muslims, *see* Islam  
 Myszkowski, Kazimierz 258
- Namier, Sir Lewis Bernstein 19, 20  
 Napoleon I, emperor of the French 318  
 Naruszewicz, Adam Stanisław, bishop of  
   Smolensk, later of Łuck 35, 51, 64, 197,  
   282 n. 54  
   speeches 87, 89–90, 184, 191, 192, 193, 208,  
   269–71  
   pastoral letter 257  
   hopes for promotion 105–112 *passim*  
   translation to Łuck 122–3, 199–202
- National Democrats xvii  
 nationalism, ethnic 330–1  
 Nax, Jan Ferdynand 66–67  
 Nazis 330  
*neminem captivabimus nisi iure victum* 32,  
   163, 247
- Netherlands, the 13, 247  
 newsletters 18  
 Newton, Sir Isaac 76  
 Niemcewicz, Julian Ursyn, envoy for  
   Livonia 38, 54, 59, 116, 289 n. 22, 320  
   as editor of the *National and Foreign*  
   *Gazette* 146  
   oratory 92, 98  
   as secretary of the ‘clerical deputation’ 125 n.  
   152, 157, 176–7, 183, 190, 191
- Niemojki 44  
 nobility, nobles (*szlachta*) 2–3  
   ennoblements 185–6, 210, 232, 246  
   *ius indigenatus* 80  
   fraternization with burghers 247–8, 258,  
   265, 269, 328  
   **magnates** 3, 28, 35, 69, 86, 208, 217, 240, 266  
   middling nobles 35–36, 208, 217  
   musters 42  
   privileges and rights 3, 15, 42, 82, 167,  
   216, 250  
   poor nobles 36, 39–40, 69, 92, 240, 266, 327  
   and the towns 163–6, 210, 232, 242  
   *see also* anticlericalism; France; political  
   discourses; sejmiks  
   ‘noble democracy’ 125, 207
- Normande, Pedro, Spanish envoy to the  
   Commonwealth 235
- Nowicki, Prior Agnell 247 n. 53  
 Nowogródek (Navahrudak, B.), sejmik *Map 3*  
   (1788) 38, 42 n. 67, 46  
   (1790) 219 n. 80, *Table 4*, 233  
   (1792) *Table 6*
- nunciature 49, 169, 173, 199  
 nuncial tribunal 230; *see also* Holy See
- nuns, *see* regular clergy, female orders  
 Nur, sejmik *Map 3*, 41 n. 64, 45, 219 n. 79,  
   *Table 3*
- oaths 99–100, 135 n. 13, 203, 248–50,  
   258–65, 301  
   in revolutionary France 146, 278
- Okęcki, Antoni Onufry, bishop of Poznań 64,  
   81, 107, 164, 268, 277, 295–6, 317  
   pastoral letters 147–8, 257  
   speeches 124, 245
- Old Sarum 38
- Olechowski, Józef, suffragan bishop of  
   Cracow 51
- Oleśnicki, Cardinal Zbigniew, bishop of  
   Cracow 28
- Olita (Alytus, L.) sejmik (1792) *Table 6*; *see also*  
   Smolensk, sejmik
- Oliwa (Oliva, G.), abbey 105
- Opacki, Chryzanty, castellan of Wizna 56 n. 29,  
   58 n. 43, 262
- Opatów, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*; *see also*  
   Sandomierz, sejmik
- oratory 16–17, 18, 113, 206, 240–2
- orders (of the White Eagle and St Stanisław)  
   80, 204
- Origen 181
- Orléans 47
- Orléans, Philippe, duke of 58
- Orsza (Orsha, B.), sejmik in exile (at  
   Chołopienicze) 42 n. 67, 219 n. 80,  
   *Table 4*
- Orthodox, Orthodoxy 5–6, 12, 38, 211, 231,  
   232, 263, 314  
   autocephalous hierarchy 175, 232, 299–303,  
   306–11, 321–2  
   and Muscovy/the Russian Empire 28, 29,  
   137, 193, 212–14, 227, 314
- Ossoliński, Józef, envoy for Bielsk Podlaski 125 n.  
   152, 158
- Ostermann, Ivan, Russian vice-chancellor  
   109–10, 128
- Ostróg entail 101 n. 116
- Ostrów, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- Ostrowski, Revd Teodor 285
- Ostrowski, Tomasz, castellan of Czersk, later court  
   treasurer of the Crown 85, 126, 127
- Ozmiana (Ashmiany, B.), sejmik 42 n. 67,  
   219 n. 80, *Table 4*, *Table 6*
- Ottoman Empire:  
   war with Habsburg Monarchy (1788–90)  
   73, 180  
   wars with Russian Empire:  
   (1768–74) 30  
   (1787–91) 7, 35, 40, 42, 56, 180, 239
- Ożarowski, Piotr, castellan of Wojnicz 91, 120
- Ozierany (Aziarany, B.) 198 n. 102, 231
- Paisiello, Revd Giovanni 268

- Palestine 276  
 papacy, *see* Holy See  
 Papal States 318  
 paper money 263, 278  
 Paris 242, 273, 276, 279–80  
     Church of St Genevieve 208  
     Jacobin Club 277–8  
     Palais Royal 58  
 parishes 28, 94, 161, 172, 188  
     and Galician funds 94–5  
     proposals to increase 155, 156, 158, 171, 288, 311–15  
     *see also* regular clergy  
 Passau, prince-bishopric 198  
 pastoral letters 147–8, 201, 202–3, 257, 317  
 ‘patriotic party’ 207, 242, 252, 277–8  
 patron-client relations 27, 36, 59, 178, 255  
 Paul, St 254, 275–6  
 Paul I, emperor of Russia 320  
 Paulines 101 n. 116  
 Pawlikowski, Józef 133–4, 139  
 Paździór, Kamil 12, 190  
 peasants 8, 159, 321, 330, 329  
     in the Constitution of 3 May 8, 250–1  
     in political literature 68–9, 133–4, 136, 138–9  
     in sejmik instructions 46, 232, 263–4  
     in speeches 97–8  
     *see also* France, Ruthenia  
 periodicals 16  
     *Gazeta Narodowa i Obca* (*National and Foreign Gazette*) 146–7, 258, 259, 265–6, 278, 291 n. 29 and 31, 307, 308 n. 44, 311  
     *Gazeta Warszawska* (*Warsaw Gazette*) 110, 145–7, 218, 224, 257, 291, 297  
     *Gazette de Leyde* 146, 183  
     *Journal Hebdomadaire de la Diète* 278–9  
     *Pamiętnik Historyczno-Polityczno-Ekonomiczny* (*Historical, Political, and Economic Recorder*) 145, 278  
 Permanent Council 30, 31–32, 42, 56, 69, 325  
     abolition 62–3, 104, 107, 121–2, 208  
     Military Department 42, 54–6, 60–1, 69  
 Peter, St 275  
 Peter I the Great, emperor of Russia 73  
 Peter Leopold, grand duke of Tuscany; *see* Leopold II  
 Phocion 254  
 physiocracy, physiocrats 43, 90, 91, 285  
 Piarists 13, 75, 162, 173, 227, 230–1, 235, 275, 325  
 Piattoli, abbé Scipione 207, 239, 277, 279–80, 285  
 Pińsk (Pinsk, B.):  
     bishopric (Ruthenian rite) *Map* 2, 205  
     congregation of (1791) 300–1, 310  
     sejmik *Map* 3  
         (1788) 38, 42 n. 67  
         (1790) 219 n. 80, *Table* 4, 225–6, 228, 230, 231  
         (1792) *Table* 6, 263–4  
 Piotrków, sejmik (1792) *Table* 6  
 Piramowicz, Revd Grzegorz 99 n. 111, 259, 285, 287, 289 n. 21  
 Pitt the Younger, William, British prime minister 239  
 Pius VI, pope 1, 32, 79, 204, 216, 225, 291–2, 310  
     and the episcopal reform 153–5, 198, 201–2, 327  
     and the Constitution of 3 May 252–3, 266–7, 285–7, 293–4, 302–3, 307  
 Pius VII, pope 318  
 Plater, Kazimierz Konstanty, starosta of Livonia 38, 143 n. 45  
 Płock:  
     bishopric 106–10 *passim*  
     sejmik (at Raciąż) *Map* 3, 41 n. 64, 219 n. 79, *Table* 4, 229  
 Płotnica (Plotnitsa, B.), sejmik (1792) *Table* 6  
 pluralism 156, 171–2, 181, 197, 312, 315  
     in political literature 74, 141, 274  
     in sejmik instructions *Tables* 2–5, 229  
 Poczubot, Revd Marcin, rector of Wilno University 218, 224–5, 229, 258  
 Podolia (Podillia, U., Podole, P.) 5 n. 8, 99, 303  
     sejmik (at Kamieniec Podolski) *Map* 3, 39–40, 41, 43, 219 n. 78, *Table* 2, 228  
 Podlasia (Podlasie, P.), palatinate 219 n. 82, 261  
 Poland xvii, 5–10; *see also* Commonwealth, Crown  
     since 1795 8–10, 318–20, 328–31  
     Poland-Lithuania, *see* Commonwealth  
     ‘police’ 46, 152–3, 156, 311  
     Police Commission of the Two Nations 292, 294–9, 310, 312  
     Polish language 5, 28, 137, 231, 232, 301, 315, 321  
     Polish nation xvii, 5–6, 10, 15, 206, 249, 259, 309, 315, 321, 329–31  
     composition 98, 167, 250, 256  
     ‘orthodoxy’ and ‘piety’ 118, 153–4, 216, 224, 250  
     Polish Revolution, *see* Four Years’ Sejm  
     political culture 14–21, 209, 320–1  
     consensual 3–4, 187–8  
     provincial 17–18, 40, 161, 211, 216–17, 233, 266, 277  
     political discourses 14, 22, 67, 102, 163, 210, 252–3, 280  
     ‘absolutyzm’/‘absolutum dominium’ 4, 15, 36, 56, 96, 98, 233, 242, 277  
     ‘abyss’/‘calamity’ 55, 67, 241, 245, 250, 256–8, 262, 270, 281  
     *ad personam* 115, 119, 120

- 'anarchy' 9, 56, 63, 167, 208, 233, 249, 252,  
 256, 259, 261–2, 265, 269–70, 289,  
 321, 329  
 ancestral virtues 15, 75, 88, 148, 175, 181,  
 183–5, 212–13, 234  
 (ancient) laws and privileges 125, 198, 309  
 anti-aristocratic/magnate 9, 59, 123, 138,  
 166, 208–9, 217, 233, 248, 256, 259,  
 262, 265, 291, 321  
 'barbarity' 228, 270, 298  
 biblical/liturgical 70, 165–6, 208, 210, 265,  
 270, 311  
 Catholic orthodoxy 71, 83, 87, 90, 119, 182,  
 195, 243–6, 308–9, 322  
 '*circa latam legem*' 177, 181, 184, 189  
 confessional 88, 94, 232, 242–5, 309  
 country/provincial 40, 62  
 'despotism' 87–8, 96, 116, 123, 140, 142,  
 182, 256, 270, 289  
 'enlightened despotism' 70  
 'foreign despotism' 73, 119, 300, 308  
 'republican despotism' 98, 133, 138, 143, 328  
 'dictatorship' 125, 208, 209, 217, 268  
 Divine wrath 73–4, 88, 91, 93, 138, 184,  
 210, 270  
 '(un)enlightenment' 1, 15, 18, 50, 57, 66–77,  
 82, 88, 120, 122, 134–5, 141–3, 156,  
 161, 164–5, 189, 194, 195, 214, 218,  
 225, 227, 230, 235, 240, 249, 263,  
 265, 269, 270, 272, 274, 277, 284, 289,  
 298, 300, 307, 309, 311, 319, 320–1,  
 322–3, 329  
 in Ruthenia 98–9, 136, 174, 191–3, 198,  
 305, 314–15  
 'false enlightenment' 76, 144, 149, 203,  
 226, 257, 275, 282, 299, 316, 319, 322  
 equality 123–5, 149, 154, 163, 208, 214,  
 233, 248, 321  
 'fanaticism' 66, 73, 75, 140, 144, 215, 240,  
 246, 275, 276, 280, 292, 322  
 'foreign violence' 77–8, 88, 115, 119, 140,  
 147, 152, 154, 187, 214–15, 217, 233,  
 248, 250, 252  
 'government' 56, 63, 147, 248, 250, 256–7,  
 262, 281–2, 322, 329  
 happiness 53, 56, 66, 96, 98, 122, 124,  
 134, 194, 247, 254, 262, 270–1, 272,  
 290, 307  
 eternal happiness 212, 307, 312  
 'idleness' 76, 89–90, 194–5, 197, 274, 306  
 ignorance/darkness 71–3, 98, 140, 161, 165,  
 192–4, 207, 213, 227, 228, 230, 280,  
 293, 314–15, 320, 322  
 interest of nobles 42–6, 103, 114, 138,  
 229, 234  
 clerical appeals to 68, 74, 82, 87, 114, 144  
 'irreligion' 69, 90, 224, 266, 270  
 Judaophobia 232  
 justice 68, 72, 91, 98, 118, 134, 136, 142,  
 200, 247, 308  
 manliness 59, 67, 175, 259  
 martial virtues 259  
 national 'consideration'/pride 52–3, 97, 250,  
 259, 262, 328  
 national unity 9, 61–2, 85, 96, 122, 249,  
 256, 267, 272, 291, 331  
 natural law 73, 77, 184, 200  
 natural rights 163–4  
 'ordered freedom' 206, 209, 265, 308,  
 321, 328  
 patriotism 15, 51, 77–8, 83, 96, 105, 116,  
 126, 140, 149, 164, 233, 247, 259,  
 265, 275  
 'philosophy' 1, 66, 73, 147, 208, 215, 277,  
 278, 281  
 'false philosophy' 1, 69, 76, 146, 149, 150,  
 166, 176, 235, 242, 244, 254, 274, 276–7,  
 283, 293, 319  
 '*pieczeniarsze*' 58  
 'prejudice' 40, 58, 66–7, 71, 73, 76, 103,  
 140–1, 142, 164–5, 191, 225, 270, 298,  
 307, 322  
 property 73, 78, 82, 94, 114–18, 134, 136,  
 142–4, 149, 181–3, 200, 274, 308  
 prudence 55, 60, 134, 227  
 public good 21, 52, 57, 93–4, 115, 200,  
 208–9, 257, 270, 274, 313  
 'rights of man' 242, 243, 282, 316, 327  
 'rotten century' 218, 224  
 Russophobia 58, 61, 63, 227–8, 241  
 sacrificial virtue 42, 77, 96, 149, 229, 262, 321  
 sacrilege 149–50, 208, 256, 299  
 scandal 74–5, 88–9, 119, 139–42, 273  
*spiritualia and temporalia* 174, 200, 212, 240,  
 264, 286, 287, 294, 306, 323, 326  
 'superstition' 71–2, 139–41, 146, 165, 270,  
 280, 322  
 '(in)tolerance' 144, 174, 214, 243–5, 280,  
 308–10, 322  
 treason 119, 275  
 urgency 91–2, 94–5, 120, 198, 241  
 utility 75, 77, 89–90, 92, 142, 144, 161, 198,  
 225, 273–5, 305–6, 312–13, 325  
 xenophobia 46, 59, 189, 233, 242  
 see also God; Providence; republicanism;  
 sovereignty  
 political history 14–23, 67, 102, 110, 252–3,  
 325–6  
 political ideology 16  
 political literature 11, 16, 65, 133, 150  
 pamphlets 18, 70–8, 84, 133, 139–45, 160,  
 164–6, 217–18, 273–7  
 riddles 58, 105 n. 18  
 treatises 65–70, 133–9  
 see also pastoral letters; periodicals;  
 proclamations; sermons



- Połock (P.), Polotsk (R.) (Polatsk, B.) xvi, 38  
 archbishopric (Ruthenian rite) 174, 192, 204–5  
 Jesuit college 227, 235, 291 n. 30  
 palatinate 294  
 proposed suffragany (Ruthenian rite) 204, 231, 305–6  
 sejmik (at Uszacz) 42 n. 67, 45, 46, 219, *Table 4*, 225, 231, 233
- Poniatowska, Princess Teresa, née Kinska\* 113 n. 70
- Poniatowski, Prince Andrzej\* 113 n. 70
- Poniatowski, Prince Józef\* 113
- Poniatowski, Prince Michał Jerzy, primate\* 11, 14  
 career until 1787 13, 30–5, 46  
 and censorship 263–4, 296–8  
 as chairman of the Commission for National Education 30, 69, 130, 289  
 and the Constitution of 3 May 253, 263–4, 268–9, 272, 281  
 and counter–revolution 316  
 death 10, 317  
 episcopal ordinances 67, 89, 159  
 efforts to retain the bishopric of Cracow 32–35, 45, 50–1, 53, 63–4, 103, 106–8, 134  
 and England 253, 283  
 ennoblements in Duchy of Siewierz 157  
 failure to keep the bishopric of Cracow 112–13, 117, 124–6, 128–30  
 at Four Years' Sejm (1788–9) 55, 58, 60, 63  
 and the French Revolution 282–3  
 goes abroad (1789–91) 129–30, 229  
 opposes sale of Crown estates 296, 281–3  
 and Powązki 296, 317  
 and sejmiks of 1788 37–8, 45, 49–50, 70  
 and taxation 81–3, 85, 100  
 and the Vienna Convention 32, 93–5
- Poniatowski, Prince Stanisław, treasurer of Lithuania\* 21, 56 n. 28
- Poniewież (Panevėžys, L.), sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- Poniński, Adam, treasurer of the Crown 110
- Pontremoli, bishopric 154
- Portugal, Kingdom of 1, 294
- positivism 11
- Postawy (Pastavy, B.), sejmik (1792) *Table 6*
- Potemkin, Prince Grigorii 31, 37, 38, 109, 117, 121, 180, 254
- Potocka, Aleksandra, née Lubomirska\* 31, 40, 117, 123–4
- Potocka, Elżbieta, née Lubomirska\* 31
- Potocka, Julia, née Lubomirska\* 31
- Potocki, Ignacy, court marshal, later grand marshal of Lithuania\* 31, 320  
 and the Catholic Church 115–17, 183, 185, 197, 251, 254, 328  
 and education 81, 227, 235, 289  
 and foreign affairs 60, 62, 107, 207, 208, 216  
 and the form of government 167, 207–8, 239, 241  
 as minister of police 254, 280, 282, 298–9  
 in opposition 36–7, 51, 60, 62  
 and Stanisław August 121 n. 133, 127, 130, 151, 206, 208–9, 234, 239, 328
- Potocki, Jan, envoy for Poznań\* 31
- Potocki, Piotr, envoy for Bielsk Podlaski 57, 123
- Potocki, Seweryn, envoy for Braclaw 189 n. 59, 194–7, 208–9
- Potocki, Stanisław Kostka, envoy for Lublin\*:  
 and the Catholic Church 90, 92, 94, 116, 123–4, 183, 191, 328  
 defence of starostas 82  
 last years 319–20  
 in opposition 31, 36–37, 40, 55, 56, 62, 117  
 and Stanisław August 84, 127, 248, 267, 328
- Potocki, Stanisław Szczęśny, envoy for Braclaw 39, 106, 316, 319  
 clients and correspondents 191, 241, 249 n. 61, 258, 277
- Potocki, Teodor, primate 27
- Poznań:  
 palatinate 38  
 sejmik (1792) *Table 6*, 262
- Preny (Priemai, L.) 151  
 sejmik (1792) *Table 6*, 265–6
- Priests of the Mission; *see* Lazarists
- primacy 33, 44–5, 125, 191, 251–5; *see also* Poniatowski, Prince Michał Jerzy
- Principles for the Correction of the Form of Government* (1789) 147, 167, 207
- proclamations 98, 100, 147, 156, 193–4, 214, 256–7, 300–1
- Project for the Form of Government* (1790) 207–16, 228–9
- Proszowice, *see* Cracow, sejmik
- Protestantism, Protestants 12, 29–30, 244, 251, 269, 272, 315, 321, 326  
 elections of to sejm 38, 235  
 question at Four Years' Sejm 211–15, 244–6, 321  
*see also* Anglicans; Calvinism; Lutheranism; taxation
- Providence (Divine), Providentialism 209, 252, 254, 328, 331  
 in memoranda, periodicals and projects 163, 214–15, 218, 252, 257, 260, 289  
 in pamphlets and treatises 67–8, 141, 273  
 in pastoral letters 147–8, 257  
 in proclamations 250, 256  
 in sejmik instructions 262  
 in sermons 149, 265, 270, 326  
 in speeches 55, 60, 204, 209, 243, 248–9, 267, 269–71  
 Church of Divine Providence 250, 266–8, 269, 278–9, 290  
*see also* God; Stanisław August
- provinces, *see* Great Poland; Lithuania; Little Poland; political culture

- Prussia, kingdom of 119, 133, 329  
 policy towards the Commonwealth  
 (1788–9) 53–6, 60–2, 107–8, 112, 117  
 prospective alliance with the  
 Commonwealth 61, 109–10, 127–8  
 alliance with the Commonwealth 129,  
 179–80, 206–7, 239  
 and reform in the Commonwealth 216,  
 247, 321  
 and the second and third partitions 316–17  
*see also* Frederick William II; Lucchesini
- Prussia, Royal xvi
- Przeczyński, Revd Patrycy 258
- Przemysł (Peremyshl, U.):  
 bishopric (Latin rite) *Map 1*  
 bishopric (Ruthenian rite) *Map 2*  
 'public', the 16–18, 57–60, 117, 160, 189, 195,  
 208, 241, 249, 252, 263, 274, 277, 292,  
 297, 329
- public opinion 19, 31, 48, 57, 61, 64, 87,  
 110, 325
- Puchal 258
- Puławy 37, 39–40, 59, 62, 116, 130, 201
- Pułtusk 44, 198 n. 102, 231
- Pyzdry, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*, 263–4
- Raciąż, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*; *see also* Płock,  
 sejmik
- Radomyśl (Radomys'ł, U.) 205
- Radzicki, Józef, envoy for Zakroczym (II) 243, 264
- Radziejów, *see* Cujavia, sejmik
- Radziwiński, Józef, palatine of Gniezno 243, 264
- Radziszewski, Michał, envoy for Starodub  
 80 n. 5
- Radziwiłł, Prince Karol Stanisław, palatine of  
 Wilno 37, 59
- Rawa 198 n. 102  
 sejmik 44, 45, 219 n. 79, *Table 3*, *Table 6*
- Regular Canons of the Holy Sepulchre 198 n. 102
- regular clergy:  
 calls for them to run schools 45, 75, 194, 211,  
*Tables 2–5*, 225, 228, 292–4, 312  
 contemplative monasticism 33, 45, 89, 197,  
 254, 312  
 criticism of 41, 44–5, 47, 50, 69, 74–5, 84,  
 88–90, 138, 141, 194, 228  
 defences of 44, 75–6, 89–90, 144–5, 277  
 discipline 173, 274, 276  
 female orders 44, 45, 70, 74–5, 141, 173–4,  
 229–30, 288  
 foundations confirmed by sejm 197–8, 324  
 and hospitals 75, 82, 89, 230, 295, 312  
 incomes 100  
 indifference towards 325  
 jurisdiction over 33, 84, 190, 226, 229, 230,  
 252, 285–8, 304  
 legacies 44, 74  
 mendicants 47, 254  
 numbers 28–9  
 parish work 100, 173, 313, 327  
 property 44–6, 68–71, 75, *Tables 2–5*, 273  
 schools 44, 69, 74, 162, 312  
 social background 45–6  
 taxation of 92, 95  
 vocations 75, 173–4, 177, 273, 287–8, 306  
*see also particular orders*
- Reich*, *see* Holy Roman Empire,  
 Reichenbach (Dzierżonów, P.) 180
- religious unity 245–6, 257, 308–9, 322
- Renaissance 4, 66
- Repnin, Prince Nikolai, Russian ambassador to  
 the Commonwealth 30
- republicanism, republicans 96, 233, 259  
 confessional republicanism 77, 175, 328  
 'enlightened' republicans 9, 65, 139, 206, 241  
 insurrectionary republicanism 329  
 'old' republicans 30, 98, 127, 179, 206, 246,  
 310, 322  
 republican polity 7, 14–15, 20, 56, 68,  
 114–15, 123, 152–3, 209, 226, 263,  
 323, 328  
*see also* political discourses
- residence 47–48, 50, 71, 171, 197, 273, 307, 312
- Richelieu, Cardinal Armand Jean du Plessis  
 de 255
- Richer, Revd Edmond, Richerism 14, 143
- Robespierre, Maximilien 318, 328
- Romanticism 11, 329
- Roma, *see* Gipsy
- Rome, ancient 3, 57
- Rome, city of xvi, 27, 62, 280, 318; *see also*  
 Holy See
- Rosienie (Raseiniai, L.) 294  
 sejmik (1792) *Table 6*; *see also* Samogitia,  
 sejmik
- Rostocki, Teodozy, Uniate metropolitan 155,  
 204–5, 296, 303, 305, 310
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, Rousseauism 14, 68,  
 138, 250  
 on education 66, 70  
 reputation in Poland 59, 76, 140, 145, 276
- royalism, royalists 29, 41, 123, 127, 167,  
 225, 264  
 in coalition 241, 254, 278  
 election of 38–40  
 recovery 206, 208–9  
 retreat 55–62, 104–5
- Różań, sejmik *Map 3*, 42 n. 64, 219 n. 79, *Table*  
*4*, 229, *Table 6*, 263–4
- Rożnowski, Antoni, envoy for Gniezno 88 n.  
 51, 94 n. 85, 97–8, 182
- Rus', *see* Ruthenia
- Russian Empire 2, 80  
 policy towards Commonwealth to 1788 30,  
 34–6, 38, 217–18  
 Commonwealth's breach with 53, 55–6,  
 60–4, 197, 265  
 and reform in the Commonwealth 216, 321

- Russian Empire (*cont.*)  
 invasion of the Commonwealth (1792) 308,  
 310, 313–16 *passim*  
*see also* Catherine II; Muscovy; Orthodox;  
 St Petersburg; Stackelberg
- Ruthenia xvii, 5–6, 12, 99, 190–1, 303, 315  
 fear of rebellion in 97, 99, 193, 198, 228,  
 232, 322  
 sejmiiks 43, 219 n. 82, 224, 230, 231
- Ruthenian rite, *see* Uniates
- Rybiński, Józef Ignacy, bishop of Cujavia 62,  
 63, 81, 103, 107, 202, 296  
 pastoral letters 147, 257
- Rzadkowska, Helena 195
- Rzeczyca (Rechytza, B.), sejmik (at  
 Bobrujsk) *Map* 3  
 (1788) 42 n. 65, 45, 46  
 (1790) 219 n. 80, *Table* 4, 225, 229, 230,  
 231, 232
- Rzewuska, Konstancja, née Lubomirska\* 31
- Rzewuski, Kazimierz, envoy for Podolia 183,  
 189 n. 59, 253 n. 77
- Rzewuski, Seweryn, field hetman of the  
 Crown\* 30, 31, 209, 315, 319
- Rzewuski, Wacław, grand hetman of the  
 Crown 30
- St Bartholomew's night (1572) 77
- St Petersburg 33, 62, 109–10, 121, 129, 272,  
 319, 320
- Saluzzo, Ferdinando Maria, papal nuncio to the  
 Commonwealth:  
 and the bishopric of Cracow 33–35, 54, 63,  
 103, 107, 110, 112, 129  
 and censorship 215–16  
 and codification 252, 285–7  
 and the Constitution of 3 May 252–3,  
 266–7, 285–6, 293, 302  
 efforts to avoid schism 118, 147, 151–5,  
 168–73, 178, 182, 190, 196, 325  
 fears French influence 254–5, 278–80, 282–3  
 and the ex-Jesuits 235, 291, 293  
 last years 318  
 notes 79, 118, 119  
 and the Orthodox hierarchy 302–3, 307, 310  
 participates in religious events 201, 268–9  
 and 'philosophy' 150, 235, 254, 278  
 recommends clergymen 199, 201  
 and the regular clergy 53, 194–6, 211  
 on the sejmiiks of 1788 43, 49–50  
 and taxation of the clergy 53, 64, 79–87  
*passim*, 95, 97  
 and toleration 214–15, 235, 266, 302, 314
- Salzburg, prince-archbishopric 198
- Samogitia (Žemaitija, L., Żmudź, P.), Duchy of:  
 bishopric 188  
 sejmik (at Rosienie) 42, 219 n. 80, *Table* 4, 224
- Samuel, prophet 275
- Sandomierz:  
 palatinate 28, 39  
 sejmik (at Opatów) *Map* 3  
 (1788) 39, 41 n. 63, 44, 46  
 (1790) 219 n. 78, *Table* 4, 230, 231  
 suffragany 231, 304
- Sapieha, Prince Aleksander, Grand Chancellor of  
 Lithuania 227 n. 95
- Sapieha, Prince Kazimierz Nestor, marshal of the  
 Lithuanian confederacy:  
 and the bishopric of Cracow 112, 116–120  
*passim*, 124  
 candidacy and election as marshal 40, 50–1, 53  
 and the Cardinal Laws 240  
 and the Constitution of 3 May 249, 268, 270  
 and the episcopal reform 192  
 haircut 59  
 and the Holy See 287, 302  
 last years 318  
 and Lithuanian prerogatives 260  
 in opposition 38, 62, 86, 127–8, 167  
 and the royal prerogative 122, 209  
 and taxation 85, 91, 94–5, 97  
 and the succession to the throne 210
- Sapieżyna, Princess Elżbieta, née Branicka 116
- Šapoka, Adolfas 42
- Sarmatia, Sarmatians, Sarmatism (*sarmatyzm*) 3,  
 29, 59, 67, 239, 318
- Satan 181
- Saul, king of Israel 275
- Saxony, electorate of 28  
 house of 27  
*see also* Frederick Augustus III
- schools, *see* education
- Schulz, Friedrich 269
- Scripture 140, 199, 210, 275–6
- secular clergy:  
 incomes 48–9, 72, 74, 100, 273, 312–13, 326  
 legacies 74  
 numbers 28  
*plebani* 48–50, 72, 89, 92, 161, 171–2, 187,  
 195, 229, 273, 312–13, 324  
 seminaries 66, 70, 85, 92, 171, 211, 226,  
 287, 290, 313  
*wikariusze* 49, 50, 71, 188, 288, 312–13,  
 324
- sejm 3, 15, 17, 22  
 (1764 coronation) 29  
 (1766) 29–30  
 (1767–8) 30  
 (1773–5) 30, 55  
 (1776) 30, 55  
 (1780) 41  
 (1782) 32, 41  
 (1784) 36, 84  
 (1786) 32–3, 41  
 (1788–92), *see* Four Years' Sejm  
 (1793) 316  
 reconvenable 42  
 'ruling' 63, 68–9

- reform of (1791) 250  
**sejmiks** 17–18, 22, 176, 207  
 (1788) 10, 35–50  
 (1790) 10, 179, 206, 217–35, *Tables 2–5*, 294  
 (1792) 9, 203, 259–66, *Table 6*, 293–4  
 locations *Map 3*, 37, 260, *Table 6*  
 participation in 167, 240, 241, 265  
 reform of (1791) 239–41, 250  
 Seneca 76, 290  
 serfs, *see* peasants  
 sermons 12, 16, 18, 52, 74, 77, 88, 147–50, 277, 316  
     in support of the Constitution of 3 May 258, 265–6, 268–72  
 Sieluń, Duchy of 203  
 Sienica, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*  
 Sienkiewicz, Henryk 329  
 Sieradz, sejmik *Map 3*, 42, 43–4, 45, 219 n. 79, *Table 4*, 230, *Table 6*, 263  
 Siewierz, Duchy of 28, 113  
     contested status 114–15, 117 n. 105, 157, 159, 176, 196–7  
     episcopal estates in 124, 156  
     incorporation into the Commonwealth 183–7, 196–7, 203  
     nobility of 157, 185–6, 196, 203  
     possible restoration to bishops 254, 255, 311  
 Silesia 28, 146  
 Sisters of Charity 75, 82, 177, 198 n. 102, 324  
 Siwicki, Ignacy, envoy for Troki (II) 219 n. 80, 242, 268 n. 66, 290–1, 294  
 Skarszewski, Wojciech, bishop of Chełm and Lublin:  
     as bishop 201–2, 263, 273, 282, 296, 307  
     and counter-revolution 316–17, 319, 323  
     pamphlets 49–50, 70–7, 142–3, 173, 322  
     speeches 253, 298–9, 309–10, 322  
 Skinner, Barbara 12  
 Skinner, Quentin 20, 67  
 Skórkowski, Kazimierz Albin, envoy for Sandomierz 253 n. 77  
 Skórzewski, Paweł, envoy for Kalisz 212  
 Slonim (Slonim, B.), sejmik *Map 3*  
 (1788) 42 n. 67, 44, 45  
 (1790) 219 n. 80, *Table 4*, 228, 230  
 (1792) *Table 6*  
 Słowacki, Juliusz 319  
 Stuck (Slutsk, B.), sejmik (1792) *Table 6*  
 Ślusarska, Magdalena 12  
 Smogorzewski, Jason, Uniate metropolitan 305  
 Smolensk 6  
     bishopric 81, 105, 106, 121, 122, 126, 170, 188  
     sejmik in exile (at Olita) *Map 3*  
     (1788) 37, 38, 41, 42 n. 65, 45  
     (1790) 219 n. 80, *Table 4*, 228  
     (1792) *Table 6*  
 Smoleński, Władysław 11, 13  
 Sochaczew, sejmik *Map 3*  
 (1788) 42 n. 64, 43, 46  
 (1790) 219 n. 79, *Table 3*, 230  
 (1792) *Table 6*  
 ‘social disciplining’ 175–6  
 Society of the Friends of the Constitution *Fiat Lux* 252, 277–8  
 Sokolnicki, Celestyn, envoy for Poznań (II) 243  
 Socrates 254  
 Solomon, king of Israel 271  
 Sołtyk, Maciej, palatine of Sandomierz 39  
 Sołtyk, Michał, dean of Cracow and referendary of the Crown 199, 217–18, 231, 265  
 Sołtyk, Kajetan, canon of Cracow and secretary of the Crown 35, 126 n. 165, 199, 231 n. 102  
 Sołtyk, Kajetan Ignacy, bishop of Cracow 27–35, 88, 124, 217–18, 330  
 Sołtyk, Stanisław, envoy for Cracow (II) 241, 308–9  
 Sorbonne 93  
 sovereignty 9, 15, 196–7, 233, 325  
     assertions of 56, 80, 87, 91, 114, 120, 184–6, 250, 323  
     warnings against its abuse 78, 87–8, 120, 143  
 Spain, Kingdom of 1, 235, 291–4 *passim*  
 speeches, *see* oratory  
 Spinoza, Baruch 13  
 Środa, *see* Great Poland, sejmik  
 Stackelberg, Otto Magnus von, Russian ambassador to the Commonwealth and the bishopric of Cracow 34–35, 104, 106–12, 120–3  
     during the first months of Four Years’ Sejm 56, 58, 60–1, 87, 91, 97  
     end of mission 128–9  
     last years 318  
     ‘proconsulate’ 31, 33, 36–40 *passim*  
 Stanisław of Szczepanów, St, feast of 149, 247, 249–50, 257–8, 266–72, 306  
 Stanisław August, king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania\* 4, 11, 18, 21, 29–34, 320  
     apotheosis 248, 257, 262, 267, 269–72  
     and the bishopric of Cracow 34, 51, 104–13, 115–17  
     breach with Stackelberg 108–11, 120–1, 128–9  
     and the ‘clerical’ deputation 157, 168, 177, 179  
     and the Constitution of 3 May 248–9, 251–2  
     debts 84, 86  
     during first months of the Four Years’ Sejm 7, 52–64, 85, 96–8, 102–3  
     during the last year of the Four Years’ Sejm 204, 253–5, 258, 260–2, 266–72, 276, 282, 298  
     and the French Revolution 278–80, 282, 292, 305–6, 310

- Stanisław August, king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania\* (*cont.*)  
 and God/Providence 40, 54, 96, 168, 207, 242, 246, 260, 268, 270  
 and the Holy See 84, 103, 168, 201, 266–7, 284–7, 291–4, 301–3  
 and the ex-Jesuits 228, 291–4, 303  
 nominates new bishops 121–3, 126, 185, 199–202, 204  
 and other confessions 29, 214–15, 245–6, 251, 301–3  
 and projects for ecclesiastical reform 194–5, 311  
 recovery of authority 127, 130, 138, 151, 206–10, 217–18, 233, 234, 328  
 and the regular clergy 194–5, 197, 228, 254, 292  
 revenues 98, 282  
 and the royal prerogative 30, 62, 101, 104–5, 121–3, 125–7, 167, 194–5, 207–9  
 and the Russian invasion 308, 316  
 and the sejmiks of 1788 35–42  
 tears 54, 96  
 and the towns 163–4, 207, 241–7  
 and the Uniates 191, 213, 245, 303, 305  
 Starodub, sejmik in exile (at Żyżmory) *Map 3* (1788) 37, 42 n. 65, 43, 45  
 (1790) 219 n. 80, *Table 4*  
 (1792) *Table 6*  
*starostwa, starostas* 43, 51, 82, 87, 241; *see also* Crown estates  
 Staszic, Stanisław 65–7, 100, 138–9, 319  
 Stawiski, Revd M. 258  
 Stempkowski, Józef, palatine of Kiev 234 n. 109  
 Sterne, Revd Lawrence 165  
 Stężyca, sejmik (1792) *Table 6*  
 Stockholm 318  
 stole fees 12 n. 39, 89, 119, 141, 172, 177  
   proposals to abolish 230, 313  
   criticism 89, 119, 140  
   non-taxable 100  
   tariffs 158–60, *Table 1*, 172, 177, 202, 288  
   tariffs (Uniate) 174, 205  
   in France 47, 326  
 Strasz, Michał, envoy for Sandomierz 183–4, 185  
*Straż Praw*, *see* **Custodial Council**  
 Stroynowski, Hieronim, canon of Kiev 285  
 Stroynowski, Walerian, envoy for Volhynia 39, 94, 183  
*subsidium charitativum* 48, 50, 79, 82, 84–86, 100  
   exemption of poorest *plebani* 90, 92, 95  
   question of (mis)allocation 43, 65, 68, 72, 80, 119, 141, 230  
 Suchodolski, Antoni, envoy for Smolensk, later castellan of Smolensk 38, 193, 212–13, 245  
 Suchodolski, Wojciech, envoy for Chełm, later castellan of Radom 39, 56, 167, 218, 226, 319  
   asserts the Commonwealth's sovereignty 84, 87, 91, 114, 120, 184, 323  
   and the bishopric of Cracow 103, 114–16, 118–22, 126, 203  
   and the episcopal reform 155, 157, 177–9, 182, 184–6, 191, 196, 200, 325  
   and taxation 84–92 *passim*, 184  
   and the Vienna Convention 93–5  
 Suchozewski, Jan, envoy for Kalisz 32, 38, 209, 319  
   as a Catholic 88, 97, 119, 240  
   and the Constitution of 3 May 1791 249, 272  
   and the Law on Royal Towns 243, 245, 246  
   and taxation 81, 86, 88, 90, 91, 95  
 Surowiecki, Revd Karol 150, 273–7, 319  
 Svenskasund 180  
 Sweden, Kingdom of:  
   invasion of the Commonwealth (1655–6) 331  
   revolutions (1771, 1789) 7, 95, 163 n. 51  
   war with Russia (1788–90) 56, 180  
 Świętosławski, Wojciech, envoy for Volhynia 192, 209, 212, 213–14, 305  
 Świtkowski, Revd Piotr 145, 278  
 Szawle (Śiauliai, L.), sejmik (1792) *Table 6*  
 Szczygielski, Wojciech 259, 260  
 Szembek, Krzysztof Hilary, bishop of Płock 52, 57, 64, 81  
   and the bishopric of Cracow 34, 105–8, 110, 112, 113, 116, 178  
   speeches 55, 62, 104  
 Szembek, Revd Onufry, cantor of Cracow 127  
*szlachta*, *see* nobility  
 Szretter, Bogusław 211 n. 31, 215 n. 53  
 Szydłów 148  
 Szydłowski, Symeon, castellan of Żarnów 92  
 Szymanowski, Franciszek, envoy for Sochaczew 167, 188 n. 53  
 Szymanowski, Jan, envoy for Czersk 104, 183  
 Targowica, *see* confederacies  
 Tarnów, bishopric of 32, 153, 154, 198  
 Tatars 5  
 taxation:  
   alcohol excise (*czopowe*) 83  
   hearth tax 43, 79  
   of non-Catholic clergy 99, 100, 231  
   *Perpetual Offering*:  
   of Catholic clergy 10, 82–92, 95, 182–4, 197, 230, 312  
   of nobility 96–9  
   of starostas 82  
   collection 99–100, 202  
   question at the beginning of the sejm 55, 62, 68, 71–2, 79–82

- in sejmik instructions 43–4  
stamp tax 80–1, 199  
*see also* Jews; *subsidiium charitativum*  
*Te Deum* 10, 180, 247, 248, 258, 262–3, 268,  
271–2, 278, 328  
Telsze (Telsiai, L.), sejmik (1792) *Table* 6, 263  
theology 66, 142, 165  
Grace 271  
incarnation 271  
revelation 52, 77, 135, 149, 276, 290, 299, 307  
Trinity 214, 297  
throne and altar, *see* monarchy  
Tilly, Charles 8  
tithes 41, 48, 50, 177, 283, 314  
proposals to abolish, commute or reform 70,  
71, 80, 229, 312  
taxable 99–100, 172  
toleration 29–30, 254, 257, 310, 314, 321–2  
in law 212–14, 251–2, 285  
in pastoral letters 257  
in political literature 136–7, 298  
in proclamations 214, 300–1  
in projects 211, 301–2, 307  
in sejmik instructions 232  
in speeches 212–15, 243–5, 308–9, 314  
towns:  
ecclesiastical towns 160, 246, 264  
Law on Royal Towns (18 April 1791) 8,  
241–8, 250  
noble (private) towns 28, 160, 246  
royal towns, later ‘free towns’ 160, 162–6,  
210, 315  
*see also* burghers  
*Traité des trois imposteurs* 297  
treasury, Treasury Commissions:  
calls to assign educational fund to *Tables* 2–5,  
225  
Crown Treasury Commission 100, 103,  
124–5, 156, 174, 199–200, 202  
Lithuanian Treasury Commission 125,  
188, 193  
Treasury Commission of the Two  
Nations 233, 260  
Trent, Council of 171  
**tribunals** 4, 42, 258, 259, 312  
Troki (Trakai, L.):  
Civil-Military Commission 161  
sejmik *Map* 3, 38, 42 n. 55, 45, 46, 219 n. 80,  
*Table* 4, *Table* 6  
Trzemeszno, abbey 45  
tumults 77, 166  
Turski, Feliks Paweł, bishop of Łuck, later of  
Cracow 34, 63, 81, 88, 93, 106, 248,  
253–4, 255  
nomination as bishop of Cracow 121–3, 126  
translation to Cracow 157, 178, 185, 199–203  
Ukraine 5–6, 28, 31, 46, 60, 70, 180, 245  
confessional situation 5, 28, 161, 175,  
191, 307  
Catholic Church (Latin rite) in 171, 198,  
314–15  
*see also* Ruthenia  
ultramontanism 66  
**Uniates** 1, 5–6, 12, 191  
bishops 44, 125, 174, 189, 193, 204–5  
calendar and feasts 46, 158, 174–5, 191,  
205, 231  
*cathedraticum* 44, 83, 95, 174  
dioceses 174, 190, 192, 204–5, 305–6  
Latinization 204, 213  
metropolitan 125, 58, 190–2, 204–5; *see also*  
Rostocki, Teodozy  
parish clergy 92, 99, 142, 158, 174, 189, 205,  
231, 314  
projected chapters 305  
relations with the Orthodox 28, 174, 191,  
193, 213, 305, 310, 321; *see also*  
Orthodox  
seminaries 174, 192, 193–4, 204, 213, 305  
*see also* Basilians  
Upita (Upytë, L.), sejmik (at Poniewież) *Map* 3  
(1788) 42 n. 65, 43;  
(1790) 219 n. 80, *Table* 4, 230, 232  
Urbino 318  
Uszacz (Ushachi, B.), *see* Połock, sejmik  
Utopianism 138  
vagrancy, vagrants 46, 75, 288, 295  
Vārāla, peace of 180  
Vatican xvi, 208, 292  
Second Vatican Council 13  
*see also* Holy See, Rome  
venereal disease 175  
Venice, republic of 302, 308  
Venice, conclave (1799–1800) 280  
Versailles 48  
Vienna 16 n. 64, 33, 75, 97, 247, 318; *see also*  
Habsburg Monarchy  
Vienna Convention (1785) 32, 44–45, 63, 80,  
92–5, 177, 198  
Visitation, nuns of the (Visitandines) 198 n. 102  
Vistula, river 14, 140, 157, 268  
Volhynia (Volyn’, U., Wołyń, P.), palatinate 5,  
37, 99, 303  
sejmik (at Łuck) *Map* 3  
(1788) 39, 41 n. 63, 44  
(1788) 219 n. 78, *Table* 2, 228, 230, 231,  
232, 233  
Voltaire, François-Marie Arouet de 71, 76, 144,  
273, 275–6, 297  
Voltaireanism 14, 70, 330  
Walewski, Michał, palatine of Sieradz 54, 91  
and the bishopric of Cracow 105, 112, 116,  
121, 127

- Walewski, Michał, palatine of Sieradz (*cont.*)  
in the 'clerical' deputation 125 n. 152, 155,  
157–8, 178
- Warmia (Ermeland, G.), prince-bishopric xvi,  
105–6, 108, 112
- Warsaw 28, 58–9, 173, 276  
archdeaconry 147, 317  
Bernardine church 261  
burghers of 163, 166  
Capuchin church 201  
chapter 269  
Church of the Holy Cross 257–8, 268–70  
collegiate Church of St John the Baptist 52,  
247, 248, 316  
cost of living in 59, 101, 123, 189  
Dominican church 269  
hospitals 295  
Jews 166  
Łazienki 267, 269  
municipality (of Old Warsaw) 162, 164,  
242, 247  
Powązki, cemetery 296  
Praga 140  
provincial suspicion of 40, 62, 70, 151, 161  
Reformed Franciscan church 277  
Royal Castle 16, 52–3, 61, 179, 248  
rising (1794) 317, 319  
sejmik *Map 3*, 42 n. 67, 219 n. 79, *Table 3*,  
229, *Table 6*, 261  
Society of the Friends of Science (*Towarzystwo  
Przyjaciół Nauk*) 17 n. 64  
*see also* vagrancy
- Warsaw, Duchy of 318, 329
- Wawrzecki, Tomasz, envoy for Braşlaw 80, 244
- Ważynski, Porfiry, Uniate bishop of Chełm 204
- Węgierski, Kajetan 139
- Wettins, *see* Saxony, house of
- Weyssenhoff, Józef, envoy for Livonia 38, 98 n.  
104, 146, 285, 299
- Wieliczko, Revd Mikołaj 224, 229
- Wieluń 258  
sejmik *Map 3*  
(1788) 42 n. 64, 44, 45  
(1790) 219 n. 79, *Table 3*  
(1790) *Table 6*
- Wiłkomierz (Ukmergė, L.), sejmik *Map 3*  
(1788) 38, 42 n. 65, 43  
(1790) 219 n. 80, *Table 4*  
(1792) *Table 6*
- Wilno (Vilnius, L.) 18, 258, 271–2, 295, 318  
palatinate 37  
sejmik *Map 3*  
(1788) 42 n. 65, 44, 45, 46  
(1790) 219 n. 80, *Table 4*, 227–8, 230  
(1792) *Table 6*, 264  
University 162, 227–9
- Wilno, bishopric *Map 1*, 63, 106, 198, 203–4  
administrators 161, 295  
plans to divide *Map 4*, 170–1, 177, 188–9, 198
- Winnica (Vinnytsia, U.) sejmik (1792) *Table 6*;  
*see also* Braclaw, sejmik
- Wiszniewski, Revd Józef 225
- Witoszyński, Ignacy, canon of Kamieniec  
149–50, 257–8
- Wizna, sejmik *Map 3*  
(1788) 42 n. 64, 104  
(1790) 219 n. 79, *Table 3*, 230  
(1792) *Table 6*, 262
- Władysław Spindleshanks (Laskonogi, P.), duke  
of Great Poland 139–40
- Włodzimierz (Volodymyr Volynskyi, U.)  
44, 198  
bishopric (Ruthenian rite) *Map 2* 174, 205  
sejmik (1792) *Table 6*; *see also* Czernihów,  
sejmik
- Wodziński, Gabriel, bishop of Smolensk 105
- Wolff, Larry 12
- Wołkowysk (Vaukavysk, B.), sejmik *Map 3*  
(1788) 38, 42 n. 67, 45  
(1790) 219 n. 80, *Table 4*, 225, 230, 231,  
232, 233  
(1792) *Table 6*
- Wolski, Revd Konstanty 275
- women, *see* ladies
- Woronicz, Jan Paweł, canon of Kiev 148,  
202, 319
- Wybicki, Józef 285–7, 294
- Wybranowski, Ignacy, envoy for Lublin 40,  
181, 187, 240
- wyderkafy* 50, 83, 90–1, 99, 312
- Wyszogród, sejmik *Map 3*, 42 n. 64, 219 n. 79,  
*Table 3*, 229, *Table 6*
- Wyszyński, Cardinal Stefan 330
- Yiddish language xvi, 5
- Zabiello, Michał, envoy for Livonia 38
- Zabłocki, Bernard, Polish resident in  
Prussia 107, 108
- Zakrocym, sejmik *Map 3*  
(1788) 42 n. 64, 43, 44, 45  
(1790) 219 n. 79, *Table 3*, 225, 229  
(1792) *Table 6*, 263–4
- Zakrzewski, Ignacy Wyssogota, envoy for  
Poznań 39, 203, 208, 282 n. 57,  
292, 319  
and episcopal revenues 182, 188–9  
and non-Catholics 212–13, 215 n. 51  
projects for ecclesiastical reform 304–6,  
312–13
- Zaleski, Michał, envoy for Troki 38, 63 n. 68,  
98 n. 104, 185, 219 n. 80, 241,  
301 n. 5, 321
- Żałuski, Józef Andrzej, bishop of Kiev 30, 88
- Zamoyski, Andrzej 41  
Zamoyski Code 41, 173, 252, 285–6, 303
- Zamoyski, Jan, grand chancellor of the Crown 66
- Zelada, Cardinal Francesco, secretary of state:

- and the Constitution of 3 May 267, 285–6
- and the dissidents 214, 215, 235
- regarding plans for ecclesiastical reform 169, 235, 304
- and the ex-Jesuits 235, 293
- and Kołłątaj 255
- and Piattoli 279
- and the Orthodox hierarchy 302–3, 310
- Zieliński, Aleksander, envoy for Nur 83, 85, 86, 212, 234
- Zieliński, Jan, envoy for Płock (II) 242
- Zieliński, Ludwik, castellan of Rypin 88
- Ziółek, Ewa M. 11
- Żórawski, Krzysztof, dean of Warsaw 49–50, 70, 72 n. 48, 189 n. 56
- Zyberk, Jan, palatine of Brześć Litewski 38 n. 45, 125 n. 152, 158
- Żytomierz (Zhitomir, U.) 27, 28
- sejmik (1792) *Table 6*; *see also* Kiev, sejmik
- Żyźmory (Žiežmariai, L.) sejmik (1792) *Table 6*; *see also* Starodub, sejmik