













Sebastian Jan Filus

# The Rural Community in the Estates of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Miechów in the XII–XVIII Centuries – Introductory Remarks

*Spółeczność chłopska na ziemiach Zakonu Grobu Bożego w Miechowie  
w XII–XVIII w. – uwagi wstępne*

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to analyze the position of the peasant population in the estates of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher until the collapse of the Polish state in 1795. The development of the order and its territory was possible thanks to numerous endowments, the location of villages under German law and the purchase of villages around Miechów thanks to which the Miechów key, consisting of twenty-six villages, was formed by the 16th century. Its area was dominated by the peasant population, divided into categories ranging from peasants to tenants, with different social and property statuses. Peasants, as subjects of the order and renters of the feudal lord's land, were obliged to pay rents in the form of natural products, victuals and money and from the end of the 14th century serfdom began to be introduced which developed here. Some of the peasantry unable to find their way in the realities of backbreaking labor

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fled the monastic estates or tried to make their way into other social states (including the noble state) through promotions or marital colligations. The nupturiens most often came from the territory of the land key of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher, but there were cases of marriages with people from outside this area.

**Key words:** Miechów key, Order of the Holy Sepulcher, peasantry, fugitive peasants, serfdom, corvee, labor, marriage

#### STRESZCZENIE

Celem artykułu jest analiza położenia ludności chłopskiej w dobrach zakonu bożogrobców do upadku państwa polskiego w 1795 r. Rozwój zakonu i jego terytorium był możliwy dzięki licznym nadaniom, lokacji wsi na prawie niemieckim oraz zakupowi wsi wokół Miechowa dzięki czemu do XVI w. został ukształtowany klucz miechowski składający się z dwudziestu sześciu miejscowości. Na jego obszarze dominowała ludność chłopska podzielona na kategorie od kmieci po komorników, posiadająca różny status społeczny i majątkowy. Chłopi jako poddani zakonu i dzierżawiący grunty pana feudalnego byli zobowiązani do płacenia czynszów w postaci produktów naturalnych, wiktuałów oraz pieniędzy, a od końca XIV w. zaczęto wprowadzać pańszczyznę, która się tu rozwijała. Część chłopstwa nieumiejąca się odnaleźć w realiach pracy odrobkowej zbiegała z dóbr klasztornych lub starała się przedostać do innych stanów społecznych (łącznie ze stanem szlacheckim) poprzez awanse lub koligacje małżeńskie. Nupturieni najczęściej pochodzili z terenu klucza ziemskiego bożogrobców, ale zdarzały się przypadki małżeństw z osobami spoza obszaru.

**Słowa kluczowe:** klucz miechowski, bożogrobcy, chłopstwo, zbiegostwo chłopów, poddaństwo, pańszczyzna, praca, małżeństwo

#### RESEARCH STATUS AND SOURCE BASE

The peasant state is the most numerous social group in historical times, and yet it is still the least noticed and appreciated. The plethora of material that deals with this stratum still requires reliable analysis and its clarified results. In their research to date, historians have focused primarily on issues related to the migration of peasants, their family life, the changes taking place in labor issues or their relations with other states and strata of pre-modern society. Among them, we should mention Markus Cerman, who took up the study of serfdom and servitude in Central and Eastern Europe, and whose work is still relevant, and Josef Grulich, who analyzed the migration of the peasant population in the micro-region of České Budějovice<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Cerman, *Villagers and Lords in Eastern Europe, 1300–1800*, New York 2012; J. Grulich, *Die demographische Entwicklung und der Lebenszyklus der Dorfbewohner (Südböhmen*,

Polish historiography has a considerable body of researchers dealing with rural population. This includes representatives of the Białystok center for socio-economic history and historical demography Andrzej Wyczański, who studies the history of the Old Polish countryside and society of the period, and Piotr Guzowski, who discusses the role of money in the life of the peasant and the functioning of the peasant family<sup>2</sup>. It is also worth referring to the Lublin region, where we can mention Grzegorz Jawor focusing on the peasantry of the Lublin land of the late medieval period, Janusz Łosowski who analyzed documentation in the lives of peasants, and Małgorzata Kołacz-Chmiel studying the role of women in late medieval Poland<sup>3</sup>. It is also necessary to point out Jasmina Korczak-Siedlecka who took on peasant honor and dealt with the peasants-Gburz in Pomerania, Tomasz Wiślicz who researched peasant piety, attitudes to marriage or compiled a catalog of rural court records for Małopolska, while the migration of the rural population and their subjectivity was addressed by Mateusz Wyżga<sup>4</sup>.

16.–18. Jahrhundert), České Budějovice 2008; idem, *The Migration of an Urban and Rural Population. The Parish of České Budějovice, 1750–1824*, České Budějovice 2013.

<sup>2</sup> A. Wyczański, *Studia nad folwarkiem szlacheckim w latach 1500–1580*, Warszawa 1960; idem, *Wieś polskiego odrodzenia*, Warszawa 1969; idem, *Czy chłopu było źle w Polsce XVI w.?*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny" 1978, 85, 3, pp. 627–641; P. Guzowski, *Kalendarz gospodarczy i finansowy knieci polskich na przełomie średniowiecza i czasów wczesnonowożytnych*, in: *Człowiek wobec miar i czasu w przeszłości*, eds. P. Guzowski, M. Liedke, Kraków 2007, pp. 36–49; idem, *Demographic determinants of peasant family functioning at the turn of the Middle Ages and modernity*, in: *Family, household and kinship in the Polish lands in historical perspective – continuity or change*, ed. C. Kuklo, Warszawa 2012, pp. 79–98.

<sup>3</sup> G. Jawor, *Ludność chłopska i społeczności wiejskie w województwie lubelskim w późnym średniowieczu (schyłek XIV–początek XVI wieku)*, Lublin 1991; idem, *Obraz rodziny chłopskiej w Polsce XV wieku w świetle księgi oficjała lubelskiego*, "Annales UMCS. Sectio F" 1986–1987, 41–42, pp. 81–91; idem, *Stużba najemna w gospodarstwach chłopskich w Polsce w późnym średniowieczu (na przykładzie ziemi lubelskiej)*, "Annales Academiae Paedagogicae Cracoviensis," 2004, 21, pp. 493–500; J. Łosowski, *Dokumentacja w życiu chłopów w okresie staropolski. Studium z dziejów kultury*, Lublin 2013; *Testamenty chłopów polskich od II połowy XVI do XVIII wieku*, comp., and ed. J. Łosowski, Lublin 2015; M. Kołacz-Chmiel, *Spółeczności chłopskie ziemi chełmskiej w późnym średniowieczu*, Lublin 2009; eadem, *Mulier honesta et laboriosa. Kobieta w rodzinie chłopskiej późnośredniowiecznej Małopolski*, Lublin 2018.

<sup>4</sup> J. Korczak-Siedlecka, *Czy chłop miał honor? Zastosowanie kategorii honoru w badaniach nad społeczeństwem nowożytnym*, "Kwartalnik historyczny" 2018, 125, 3, 2018, pp. 633–655; T. Wiślicz, *Upodobanie. Matężństwo i związki nieformalne na wsi polskiej XVII–XVIII wieku. Wyobrażenia społeczne i jednostkowe doświadczenia*, Wrocław 2012; idem, *Katalog małopolskich ksiąg sądowych wiejskich XV–XVIII w.*, Warszawa 2007; M. Wyżga, *Parafia Raciborowice od XVI do końca XVIII wieku. Studium o społeczności lokalnej*, Kraków 2011; idem, *W okresie staropolskim*, in: *Pod Krakowem. Monografia historyczna gminy Michałowice*, vol. 1, *Do schyłku*

In research on church administration, more attention was paid to bishop's estates, parson's estates (Dariusz Głowka studied the issue of parson's estates, Zdzisław Noga dealt with the functioning of the estate of the bishops of Cracow in the Duchy of Siewierz, Bogumił Szady analyzed the bishop's estates in the Chełm region, Radosław Lolo and Leonid Żytkowicz focused on the economy of church estates in the 16th century<sup>5</sup>. The functioning of monastic estates in the Polish lands and the peasantry settled there is still less known. Among the researchers dealing with this topic so far we can mention Marek Derwich who specializes in the study of the Benedictine estates, Agnieszka Fluda-Krokos who has made a source edition of the documents of the Augustinian-eremites in *Książ Wielki*, or Maciej Zdanek who deals with monastic issues (mainly Cistercians)<sup>6</sup>.

Researchers have not yet focused on analyzing the economy of the Miechów monastery and the peasant class living on its property. So far, this subject has been dealt with by Zbigniew Pęckowski, who compiled a monograph of Miechów and a historical outline of the Miechów land, Jerzy Rajman narrowly focused on the economy of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher in the late Middle Ages, Leszek Wojciechowski examined the functioning of the Miechów parish until 1795, Andrzej Wędzki who gave a cursory look at the history of the monastic property

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XVIII w., ed. M. Wyżga, Kraków 2014, pp. 89–293; idem, *Homo movens. Mobilność chłopów w mikroregionie krakowskim w XVI–XVIII wieku*, Kraków 2019.

<sup>5</sup> D. Głowka, *Gospodarka w dobrach plebańskich na Mazowszu w XVI–XVIII wieku*, Warszawa 1991; Z. Noga, *Osadnictwo i stosunki własnościowe w księstwie siewierskim do 1790 roku*, in: *Siewierz, Czeladź, Koziegłowy, Studia i materiały z dziejów Siewierza i Księstwa Siewierskiego*, ed. F. Kiryk, Katowice 1994, pp. 165–257; idem, *Sołtysi w księstwie siewierskim w dobie nowożytniej*, in: *Miscelanea Historico-Iuridica Białostocensia*, eds. P. Fiedorczyk, A. Nowakowski, Białystok 1995, pp. 87–104; B. Szady, *System beneficjalny w diecezji chełmskiej w latach 1600–1621*, "Roczniki Humanistyczne" 1997, 45, 2, pp. 39–68; R. Lolo, *Chłopi w dobrach kościelnych w XVI–XVIII wieku. Zarys problematyki*, in: *Chłopi polscy na przestrzeni wieków*, eds. M. Wyżga, J. Załęczny, Warszawa 2023, pp. 55–70; L. Żytkowicz, *Studia nad gospodarstwem wiejskim w dobrach kościelnych*, Warszawa 1962.

<sup>6</sup> M. Derwich, *Benedyktynski klasztor św. Krzyża na Łysej Górze w średniowieczu*, Warszawa 1992; idem, *Klasztor a miasto w średniowieczu w historiografii europejskiej*, in: *Klasztor w mieście średniowiecznym i nowożytnym*, eds. M. Derwich, A. Pobóg-Lenartowicz, Wrocław–Opole 2000, pp. 21–50; A. Fluda-Krokos, *Dziedzictwo klasztoru Augustianów-eremitów z Książa Wielkiego. Dokumenty z lat 1783–1900*, Kraków 2019; M. Zdanek, *Dochodowość majątku klasztoru cystersów w Mogile w połowie XVI w. na podstawie inventarza dóbr z lat 1560–1566*, in: *Klasztor w gospodarstwie średniowiecznym i nowożytnym*, ed. M. Derwich, Kraków 2013, p. 257–273; idem, *Dochody dominikanów krakowskich w I połowie XVI w.*, in: *Inter oeconomiam coelesteme terrenam. Mendykanci a zgromadzenia ekonomiczne*, eds. W. Długoręcki et al., Kraków 2011, pp. 259–278; idem, *Folwarki cystersów małopolskich w średniowieczu*, "Studia i Materiały do Dziejów Żupów Solnych w Polsce" 2005, 24, pp. 263–279.

and the consequences of the location of Miechów under German law in the medieval period, or Ryszard Skrzyniarz in his research dealt with the activities of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher, their spirituality and to a narrow extent the economy in the medieval period. We can also mention Tadeusz Trajdos, who researched the history of the Holy Sepulcher's outposts in Przeworsk, Spisz and Orawa<sup>7</sup>.

The data presented here are the fruit of preliminary research and focus on the characteristics of peasant society and their work in the clerical estates on the example of the Miechów key. The purpose of the research project is to determine the functioning of the peasant population during the period of the existence of the Holy Sepulchers in Miechów (1163–1819), to study interstate relations and the issue of social and spatial mobility of peasants. A distinctive feature of the project is the observation of the rural population in the 'long duration' of seven centuries.

This article will show the current state of research on the issue undertaken, as well as a historical-geographical outline of the area under study, including the state of population and the various levels of peasant society over the centuries. In addition, the issues of the mobility of peasantry of Miechów will be presented, as well as the problems of labor and burdens (including serfdom) until the collapse of the Polish state.

The basis of the research is primarily court records, among which the leading place is occupied by town and land records dating as early as the end of the 14th century<sup>8</sup>, and two books of the jury court of the city

<sup>7</sup> Z. Pęcowski, *Miechów, studia z dziejów miasta i ziemi miechowskiej do roku 1914*, Kraków 1967; idem, *Ziemia Miechowska, zarys dziejów osadnictwa do końca XVIII wieku*, Kraków 1992; J. Rajman, *Gospodarka w dobrach klasztoru bożogrobców miechowskich w XV–XVI w.*, in: *Klasztor w gospodarce średniowiecznej i nowożytnej*, ed. M. Derwich, Wrocław 2013, pp. 413–431; L. Wojciechowski, *Parafia w Miechowie w okresie przedrozbiorowym*, in: *Bożogrobcy w Polsce*, ed. M. Affek et al., Warszawa–Miechów 1999, pp. 57–78; A. Wędzki, *Miechów w średniowieczu. Studia z dziejów miasta i klasztoru. Zagadka Jaksy*, Warszawa 2014; R. Skrzyniarz, *Kanonicy Grobu Bożego i ich religijny, społeczny, edukacyjny i kulturowy wkład w rozwój mieszkańców ziem polskich w średniowieczu*, Lublin 2015; T. Trajdos, *Bożogrobcy w Lendaku, "Śpisko Sygnorka. Biuletyn Związku Polskiego Spisza"* 1993, 3, pp. 33–48; idem, *Bożogrobcy przeworscy za panowania Władysława II Jagiełły*, in: *Bożogrobcy przeworscy. Studia z dziejów Bazyliki Kolegiackiej pw. Duch Świętego i klasztoru Kanoników Regularnych Grobu Bożego w Przeworsku*, eds. Ł. Mróz, S. Wilk, Przeworsk 2023, pp. 43–76.

<sup>8</sup> Most of the entries from these books were recorded in the *Słownik historyczno-geograficzny województwa krakowskiego w średniowieczu* [hereinafter: SHGWK] in the entries concerning Miechów estates, see W. Bukowski, *Miechów-miasto*, in: SHGWK, part 4, issue 2, *Medzdzienicze – Miescki Staw*, prep. W. Bukowski, S. Kołodziejski, T. Jurek, ed. T. Jurek, Kraków 2009, pp. 313–340 and J. Laberschek, *Miechów-klasztor*, in: *ibidem*, pp. 340–421. For the 15th–18th centuries, we can find information on individual cases in the so-called,

of Miechów<sup>9</sup>. The first of them concerned civil cases from the years 1558–1565, while the second one recorded hanging matters, which were written down in the years 1571–1747. Metric books, mainly from the parish of Miechów, but also from Uniejów, Chodów, Sławice, Czaple Wielkie and Prandocin, provide us with enormous value for the study of demographic issues, social relations and peasant movements<sup>10</sup>, to which the monastic peasants belonged. In addition, the census conducted by the Civil and Military Order Commissions in 1790–1792<sup>11</sup> and the inventory of the Miechów key from 1731<sup>12</sup>. In addition, the supplement is a record of the granting of property and other legal acts or events placed in the diplomas<sup>13</sup> or economic descriptions of villages and towns made by J. Długosz<sup>14</sup>.

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‘village records’ compiled in the 1950s, see W. Maciejewska, *Inwentaryzacja materiałów do dziejów wsi w latach 1951–1953 i jej wyniki*, “Archeion” 2005, 24, pp. 59–73. M. Wyżga wrote about the importance of grodzki and land registers in the study of Old Polish villages and peasant population, see M. Wyżga, *Wieś staropolska w źródłach archiwalnych*, in: *Chłopi*, p. 18.

<sup>9</sup> *Regestrum – Księga Sądu Ławniczego z lat 1558–1565*, Own collection from PTTK, Muzeum Ziemi Miechowskiej, ref. no. MZM/P/12; Biblioteka Jagiellońska, ref. no. rkps 86.

<sup>10</sup> Metric books for most of the parishes in the period under study (up to 1795) can be found in the Archiwum Diecezjalne w Kielcach [hereinafter: ADK], Miechów – ref. no. 1–4, 40–41; Chodów – ref. no. 1; Czaple Wielkie – ref. no. Magna Czaple 1751–1774; Sławice – ref. no. 1–2, 21; Prandocin – ref. no. 1, 26. In the Archiwum Parafii w Miechowie [hereinafter: AP Miechów] there are two books of the married from 1676–1765 (one was divided into two parts) – ref. no. 4215–4217, and in the Archiwum Parafii w Uniejowie [hereinafter: AP Uniejów] a book containing records of the baptized, married and buried from 1753–1783 no signature.

<sup>11</sup> Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie [hereinafter: ANK], Akta Komisji Porządkowej Cywilno-Wojskowej Województwa Krakowskiego [hereinafter: AKPCWWK], ref. no. 3/44–3/46, 3/51.

<sup>12</sup> Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych [hereinafter: AGAD], Archiwum Skarbu Koronnego [hereinafter: ASK], ref. no. 11/179; M. Makowski, *Inwentarz klucza miechowskiego z 1731*, “Res Gestae. Czasopismo historyczne” 2016, 3, pp. 19–68.

<sup>13</sup> *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Małopolski* [hereinafter: KDM], vol. 2, 1153–1333, ed. F. Piekosiński, Kraków 1886; KDM, vol. 3, 1333–1386, ed. F. Piekosiński, Kraków 1887; *Zbiór dokumentów małopolskich* [hereinafter: ZDM], part 1, *Dokumenty z lat 1257–1420*, ed. S. Kuraś, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1962; ZDM, part 3, *Dokumenty z lat 1442–1450*, ed. S. Kuraś, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1969. A large collection of documents can be found in the Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych (fond no. 1 – Zbiór dokumentów pergaminowych and fond no. 2 – Zbiór dokumentów papierowych) and the National Archives in Kraków (group 683 – Rusiecki collection).

<sup>14</sup> Joannis Długosz, *Liber beneficiorum dioecesis Cracoviensis*, vol. 2, *Ecclesiae parochiales*, ed. A. Przeździecki, Cracoviae 1864, pp. 50; idem, *Liber beneficiorum dioecesis Cracoviensis*,



## OUTLINE OF THE MIECHÓW KEY AREA AND ITS SPECIFICS

In 1163 Jaksa Gryfita brought the Order of the Holy Sepulcher to Miechów, giving them ownership of three villages: Miechów, Zagorzyce and Komorów, which were the original property of the monks. Over time, their property began to grow<sup>15</sup>. The Miechowski key in question covered an area of about 250 square kilometers, expanding from northwest to southeast over an area of about 20 square kilometers<sup>16</sup>. The area was shaped over the centuries and took its final shape in the 16th century and functioned until the 1780s<sup>17</sup>. It consisted of twenty-four villages and the city of Miechów<sup>18</sup>, and one of them, Brzuchania, was half-clerical and half-noble property<sup>19</sup>. Some of the villages were donated to the Order of Canons Regular of the Guardians of the Holy Sepulcher of Christ for ownership (e.g. Uniejów, Szczepanowice, Jaksice), founded by the congregation (e.g. Bukowska Wola, Podmiejska Wola, Siedliska), as well as bought by the Miechowites (e.g. Kalina Mała, Chodów, Pstroszyce)<sup>20</sup>.

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vol. 3, *Monasteria*, ed. A. Przeździecki, Cracoviae 1864, pp. 1–25 (in addition to the villages of the Miechów key, the author described there other good ones belonging to the Order of the Holy Sepulchre such as Chełm on the Raba river, Wrocieryż, Wolica (today Wola Ołudзка), Wola Twarogowa, Stawiany, etc.).

<sup>15</sup> The Monachus document of 1198 lists 35 landed estates, while in the 1570s the Miechów monastery was the owner of two towns and forty eight villages, not including the emoluments of individual monastic establishments and villages that were temporarily owned by the Miechów convent (there were nineteen such settlements).

<sup>16</sup> A. Wędzki, *op. cit.*, pp. 11–12.

<sup>17</sup> At the beginning of the 18th century, the village of Zagrody was established on the outskirts of Miechów, while in 1785, by a decision of the Commission of National Education, the villages of Szczepanowice, Parkoszowice, Smroków and Orłów (the so-called Szczepanowski key), owned by the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Miechów, were transferred to the endowment of the Cracow Academy.

<sup>18</sup> The localities are Miechów, Brzuchania, Chodów, Falniów, Jaksice, Kalina Mała (Duchowna), Kamieńczyce, Komorów, Orłów, Parkoszowice, Przesławice, Pstroszyce, Rozpierzchów, Siedliska, Smroków, Strzeżów, Szczepanowice, Bukowska Wola (Skwolna), Wola Kalinska, Podleśna Wola, Podmiejska Wola, Wola Chodowska, Uniejów, Poradów, Zagorzyce (italics indicate villages that later disappeared or were incorporated into other settlements).

<sup>19</sup> Brzuchania was a noble property of the Brzuchański family, who at the turn of the 16th/17th century left the village and moved to Miechów and other settlements. In the 18th century, the noble part was owned by Jan Śladowski and Krzysztof Rogowski, *Brzuchania*, in: SHGWK, part 1, issue 2, Borek – Ciecien, prep. Z. Leszczyńska-Skrętowa et al., Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk–Łódź 1985, pp. 270–272; Z. Pęckowski, *Ziemia*, p. 87.

<sup>20</sup> Z. Pęckowski, *Miechów*, p. 382.

The order in its heyday in the 15th–16th centuries was the third most prosperous order in Poland after the Benedictines in Tyniec and the Poor Clares in Stary Sącz<sup>21</sup>. Surrounding the Miechów convent key were villages almost entirely subordinate to the nobility, two of which were owned by the primate and the other by the nobility and clergy<sup>22</sup>.

The most important source of income and wealth for the convent (in addition to the offerings of pilgrims and donated lands by the magnates) was the work of the peasant population living in the vicinity of Miechów. Situated in the Miechów Highlands, the convent's main estate was part of the Książ district's and one village was located in the Proszowice district. The area is extremely fertile due to its brown soils and rendzinas or chernozem, making the crops very abundant, as J. Długosz already wrote in the *Liber beneficiorum*<sup>23</sup>, and the quality of these lands has not changed to this day. The Cicha, Miechówka rivers flow through the area of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher, which, after merging, flow into the Szreniawa river. Above them, the Order built mills or commissioned this task to village heads during the period of colonization under German law, as did in the case of inns<sup>24</sup>. Some of the villages also had manors, thanks to which the monastery had additional revenue<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 373. According to Jerzy Rajman, around 1325, the Miechów monastery overtook the Benedictine monastery in Tyniec with its revenues, which amounted to 222, 5 fines, and the profits of the Holy Sepulchre monks were estimated at 300 fines a year, see J. Rajman, *Gospodarka*, p. 417.

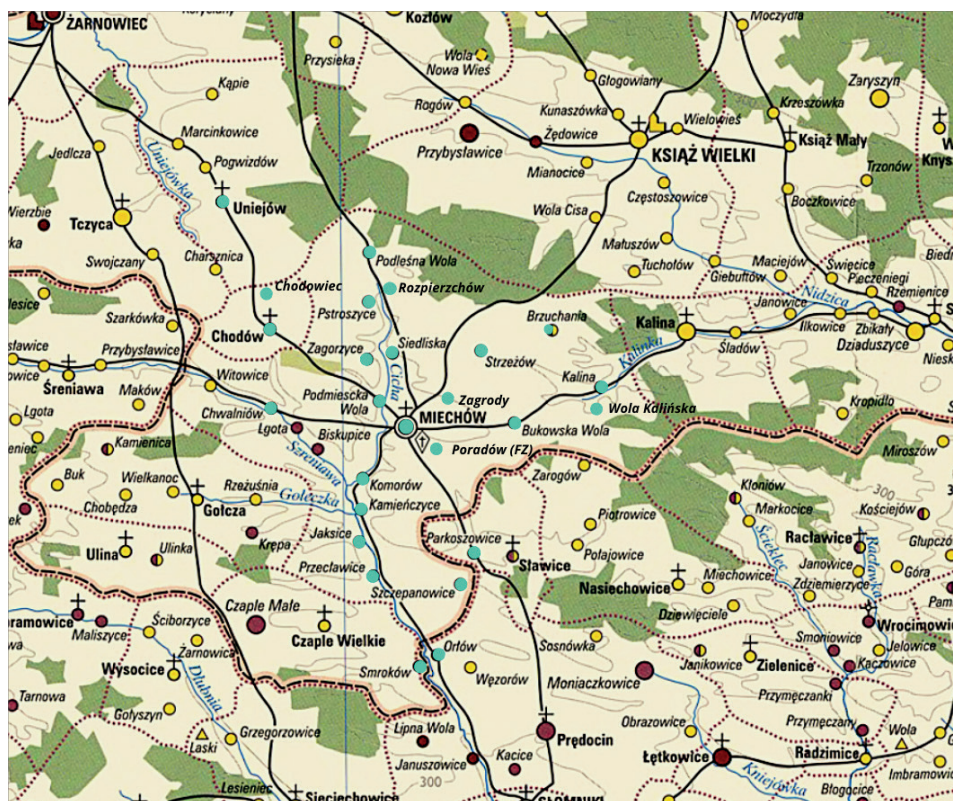
<sup>22</sup> These villages were Biskupice and Witowice. Both were part of the Miechów parish (Witowice part of the village belonged to the parish of Szreniawa, and in Długosz's time to the parish of Chodów and gave tithes to the Miechów monastery).

<sup>23</sup> See Joannis Długosz, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 5.

<sup>24</sup> J. Długosz lists in *LB* the mills in: Szczepanowice (2 mills), Pstroszyce, Zagorzyce, Kalina Mała, Falniów, Jaksice, Podmiejska Wola (2 mills), Komorów, Podleśna Wola, Parkoszwice and inns in: Szczepanowice, Pstroszyce, Zagorzyce, Kalina Mała, Falniów, Rozpierzchów, Jaksice, Kamieńczyce, Podleśna Wola, Przesławice, Uniejów, Chodów, Orłów, Smroków, Parkoszwice. At the end of the 18th century. they continued to function in Jaksice (2 mills), Pstroszyce, Siedliska, Kalina Mała, Podleśna Wola, Komorów (2 mills), Falniów, Przesławice, Kamieńczyce – mills, and in Kalina Mała, Chodów, Uniejów, Podleśna Wola, and Zagrody (it was included in *Materiały do słownika historyczno-geograficznego województwa krakowskiego w dobie Sejmu Czteroletniego (1788–1792)*, ed. W. Semkowicz, prep. K. Buczek et al., Warszawa–Wrocław–Kraków 1960, pp. 346). The Szczepanowice key had a mill and inn in Smroków, and a brewery in Szczepanowice, which were managed by Jews.

<sup>25</sup> In the 15th century, the Miechowites possessed manors divided into categories: very large ones in Miechów and Jaksice, large ones in Brzuchania, Pstroszyce, Uniejów, Strzeżów, Parkoszwice, and smaller ones in Zagorzyce, Chodów, Siedliska, Smroków, Falniów, Kalina Mała, Szczepanowice, Orłów, Komorów and Zasławicki manor. In the 18th century,





**Miechów** – villages belonging to the Order of the Holy Sepulcher (Miechów key)

**Brzuchania** – a village that belonged half to the Order of the Holy Sepulcher, half to the nobility

**Kalina** – a village belonging to the nobility

**Imbramowice** – other clerical property

**Żędowice** – royal villages

**FZ** – Zasławicki Manor (original name Poradów)

Map of estates in the land of Miechów in the 16th–18th centuries. (A fragment of a map of the Cracow province in the 2nd half of the 16th century).

Source: *Atlas historyczny Polski, series A: Mapy szczegółowe XVI wieku, pt. 1: Województwo krakowskie w drugiej połowie XVI wieku*, comp. K. Chłapowski et al., ed. H. Rutkowski, Warszawa 2008.

there were folwarks in Pstroszyce, Strzeżów, Kalina Mała, Bukowska Wola, Przesławice, Szczepanowice, Parkoszwice, Smroków, Uniejów, Chodów, Siedliska, Jaksice, Falniów, Poradów, Komorów and the Wielki Folwark called Zagórski or Zagorzycki. The villages that did not have manors were, with their laborers, assigned to other estates (so-called wage villages). Zagorzyce, Podmiejska Wola and Zagrody were assigned to the Wielki Folwark, Kamieńczyce belonged to the Komorów folwark, Podleśna Wola belonged to Pstroszyce, in a later period (the turn of the 18th–19th centuries to the Wielki Folwark), Brzuchania to the Strzeżów folwark, and Orlów to Szczepanowice.

The center of the key was the city of Miechów (since 1290, a village before that), which was the headquarters of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher in Poland<sup>26</sup>. Here there were markets where peasants sold their agricultural products, there were guilds such as butchers, bakers, shoemakers and blacksmiths where rural artisans acquired their trade. Miechów was an agricultural and artisan center<sup>27</sup>. Cases that could not be decided by the village bench were presented to the city bench court or the higher court of German law of the Miechów monastery. By virtue of royal privileges, the townspeople could only be accountable to the alderman, the peasants to the village headman, while the aldermen and village heads were accountable to the monastery provost or its commissioner. If the case could not be resolved by the local court, then the matter went before the royal court<sup>28</sup>. This applied to all villages in the Miechów key, as each of them was located under German law of the Środa variety.

#### POPULATION STATUS AND SOCIAL CLASSES OF THE VILLAGE

Villages inhabited by peasant populations were located around the city. Around 1340, the Miechów parish had an estimated population of slightly more than 2000 people, which is a presumptive number, as this is the time of colonization under German law. In addition, new settlements were established in the estates of the Holy Sepulchers on the so-called raw root (Bukowska Wola, Podmiejska Wola, Podleśna Wola<sup>29</sup>) and several of the existing villages are incorporated into them (Chodów, Pstroszyce, Brzuchania). It is also important to remember the villages that are not part of the Miechów parish, but belong to the monastic key (Smroków, Uniejów)<sup>30</sup>. Therefore, it should be assumed that the study area was inhabited by about 2600 people in the 14th century. In the 16th–17th centuries, the population increases and in 1629 it is about 4460 people, while

<sup>26</sup> From 1374, the Miechowit general provost was also the head of the order's outposts in Central and Eastern Europe, and from 1411 he had the privilege of wearing the insignia of episcopal authority (mitre, ring and pastoral), assuming the dignity of *infulatio*.

<sup>27</sup> Z. Pęckowski wrote more extensively about urban agriculture and Miechów guilds, *Miechów*, pp. 106–141.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 72–84. Marian Mikołajczyk wrote about crimes in the Miechów land based on the book of criminals (BJ 86), see M. Mikołajczyk, *Przestępstwo i kara w prawie miast Polski południowej XVI–XVIII wieku*, Katowice 1998.

<sup>29</sup> In addition to them, Kamieńczyce and Siedliska were also established during the period of colonization.

<sup>30</sup> Smroków was (and still is) part of the parish of Czaple Wielkie, while Uniejów was an independent parish.

at the time of the census in 1790–1791 the population of the Miechów key was 4691 people (including the population of the town of Miechów)<sup>31</sup>.

The peasant families living on the estates of the Holy Sepulcher were divided into the categories to which they belonged, i.e., the peasants, half-fiefs, homesteaders, cottagers and tenants. The first information about the basic peasant stratum appears in documents from the 14th century, during the period of colonization of estates under the Środa law<sup>32</sup>, however, details of their number in individual villages are only provided to us by J. Długosz's *Liber beneficiorum*<sup>33</sup>. The largest number of farmers was said to reside in Szczepanowice, where there were nineteen peasant patches – about 4.6 square kilometers, and in Pstroszyce and Zagorzyce, where there were eighteen peasant patches, while the smallest number was found in Kamieńczyce – seven patches, or about 1.7 square kilometers.

The chronicler is also the first to mention the homesteading stratum. The most numerous group of them lived in Siedliska – nine, while the least in Podleśna Wola – only one. From this brief analysis it follows that the number of peasant patches, and thus the peasants themselves, in the late medieval period was far greater than the number of homesteaders.

Tenants, on the other hand, appear only in the conscription registers of the second half of the 16th century. Based on the conscription register of 1563, the largest number of tenants lived in Chodów and Szczepanowice, where they paid 6 zlotys each<sup>34</sup>. In relation to the amount paid by the crofters in these villages (6 zlotys and 8 ¾ zlotys), which was among the highest in the Miechów key, this indicates that a large number of people living here were landless and probably employed themselves with local or nearby peasants to earn a living for themselves and their families<sup>35</sup>. It can also be assumed that in Chodów the number of farmers and tenants were close to each other judging by the size of the collection given away from this village. On the other hand, in four villages, i.e. Brzuchania, Jaksice, Parkoszwice and Siedliska, this class gave away 1 zloty each, which may indicate their small number there. The last two layers of peasants, i.e. half-farmers, and cottagers are mentioned in the inventory

<sup>31</sup> The Szczepanowice key, which had existed since 1785, had a population of 642 people (including 14 Jews) in the early 1790s. If one were to add this number to the population of the Miechów key, there were then 5333 people living in the monastic estate.

<sup>32</sup> ZDM, part 1, pp. 30–31; KDM, vol. 3, p. 15.

<sup>33</sup> Joannis Długosz, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, pp. 1–25.

<sup>34</sup> See M. Lubczyński, *Szlachta powiatu księskiego za ostatnich Jagiellonów. Struktura majątkowa*, Warszawa 2014, pp. 137–138.

<sup>35</sup> At the time of Jan Długosz, there were 10 peasant lans in Chodów.

of 1731<sup>36</sup>. The first ones were in Podmiejska Wola – 3, Zagorzyce – 7, Strzeżów – 6, Przesławice – 8 and Szczepanowice – 7<sup>37</sup>. Cottagers, on the other hand, lived in Podmiejska Wola – 9, Zagorzyce – 3, Pstroszyce – 9, Podleśna Wola – 10, Brzuchania – unknown number, Bukowska Wola – 6, Kalina (Mała) – 13, Przesławice – 9, Szczepanowice – 3, Orłów – 1, Parkoszowice – 7, and Smroków – 1<sup>38</sup>. In addition to the number of peasants of each category living in the villages of Miechów, the inventory lists twelve homesteaders described as ‘podzameczcy’, most likely living below the castle (house) of the general of the order in the city, and tenants settled in Zagrody (a village on the outskirts of Miechów).

The actual picture of the various layers of Miechów’s peasantry is reflected in the 1790–1792 census conducted by the civil-military order commissions of the Cracow province<sup>39</sup>. On its basis it is known that the Miechów key was then inhabited by 90 farmer families, 63 half-farmers, 83 homesteaders, 120 cotters, 33 tenants, 4 families of the head in Przesławice, 1 quartering family, 1 three-quartering family and 5 families whose category was not specified by the census authors<sup>40</sup>. In addition, it is important to remember the granges (manors) – 13, mills – 10 and inns – 4, which were also inhabited. The size of the houses and their populations varied enormously, which can be seen especially in the farmer and semi farmer families, where often up to fifteen people lived in one house. This was related to the hired labor usually undertaken by tenants (who usually did not have their own farm) to earn their own living and that of their families. Their duties included working at home and in the fields of the farmer as well as, performing serf duties on behalf of the employer. It also happened that multi-generational families (grandparents, parents and children) lived in the house, especially when

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<sup>36</sup> This inventory lists only the villages that were part of the emoluments of the commandery provost, which functioned at the Miechów monastery from 1567 to 1732 and was imposed on the monastery by the ruler. More extensively about it, see Z. Pęckowski, *Miechów*, pp. 322–339.

<sup>37</sup> In Brzuchani, Sebastian Pietraszek was recorded as a farmer in the village, but the serf duties are those that should be performed by half-laners.

<sup>38</sup> AGAD, ASK, ref. no. 11/179, p. 48; M. Makowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 37–68.

<sup>39</sup> Przemysław Jędrzejewski wrote more extensively about the commission’s activities itself, its tasks, see P. Jędrzejewski, *Komisje porządkowe cywilno-wojskowe województwa krakowskiego w dobie Sejmu Wielkiego (1790–1792)*, Kraków 2024.

<sup>40</sup> In Szczepanowice there were 12 farmers, 5 half-farmers, 5 homesteaders, 11 cotters, 2 tenants, 1 family not specified by category, a manor house and a brewery; Parkoszowice was inhabited by 6 farmers, 4 homesteaders and 8 cotters and had a manor house. In Smroków and Orłów, the peasant strata were not specified. In Smroków there was a manor house, a mill and an inn.



the eldest male member of the household died and the woman alone was left, along with the son, who may have been married and had his own family and domestic servants. Often children (usually tenants) aged about 10 were also hired to work, and they usually acted as servants in the home of their hosts<sup>41</sup>.

Population status in the villages was regulated by labor market regularities associated with population movements such as marriages, the aforementioned mercenary activities, runaways and crimes committed by peasants. Issues related to the size of households were dealt with by Peter Laslett, whose research was extended to the Polish lands by Michał Kopczyński, Cezary Kukło and Mikolaj Szoltysek, while a broader look at the image of the family in the Miechów estates still requires extended research that will be covered in future publications, and is still an open issue<sup>42</sup>.

#### PEASANT MOVEMENTS LEGAL (MARRIAGES, SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT) AND ILLEGAL (ABSCONDING, ABDUCTION)

Marriages were usually concluded in the bride's parish. The selection of a spouse in many cases was determined by the criterion of wealth and the position of the family, as can be seen by the example of Anna, who was the daughter of an innkeeper from Witowice in the parish of Miechów (but not part of the benefice of the Holy Sepulchers), who married Paweł – the miller from the vicinity of Kraków<sup>43</sup>. However, we have no data from the late medieval period for Miechów key area concerning marriages between peasants. The first information on marriages comes from the metric books of marriages performed in the local parishes. In the area of interest to us there were three parishes subordinate to the monastery (Miechów, Uniejów, Chodów) and three bordering with

<sup>41</sup> See C. Kukło, *Demografia Rzeczypospolitej przedrozbiorowej*, Warszawa 2009, pp. 359–362; M. Kopczyński, *Studia nad rodziną chłopską w Koronie w XVII–XVIII wieku*, Warszawa 1998.

<sup>42</sup> P. Laslett, *Mean Household Size in England since the Sixteenth Century*, in: *Household and Family in Past Time*, eds. P. Laslett, R. Wall, Cambridge 1972; M. Kopczyński, *op. cit.*; C. Kukło, *Demografia*; idem, *Single woman in urban society at the end of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: a demographic and social study*, Białystok 1998; M. Szoltysek, *Rethinking East-Central Europe: family systems and co-residence in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth*, vols 1–2, Bern 2015.

<sup>43</sup> M. Kołacz-Chmiel, *Mulier*, p. 81.

the Miechów estate: in Sławice, Czaple Wielkie and Prandocin, to which the monastery's subjects belonged.

Table 1. Farmer's homestead in Strzeżów in 1790

No.	Name	Surname	Position	Marital status	Age	Function
1.	Jakub	Warchała	yeoman	married	43	
2.	Helena	Drozdowna	wife	married	36	
3.	Mateusz		son of theirs	bachelor	16	
4.	Łukasz		son 2.		10	
5.	Krzysztof		son 3.		6	
6.	Tomasz		son 4.		3	
7.	Katarzyna		daughter		8	
8.	Józef	Drozd		married	20	servant
9.	Regina	Łosiowa		married	40	tenant
10.	Zofia		daughter of theirs		8	
11.	Regina	Drozdowa		maid	20	tenant
12.	Piotr	Idziak		married	68	
13.	Katarzyna		wife of his	married	45	tenant
14.	Paweł		son of theirs	bachelor	11	
15.	Krzysztof		son of theirs		6	
16.	Zofia		daughter of theirs	maid	15	
17.	Franciszka		daughter		5	

Source: ANK, AKPCWWK, ref. no. 3/45, p. 77 (own study).

In the oldest surviving marriage register for the Chodów parish area under study, in the years 1601–1687, marriages were mostly between local parishioners, but there were also marriages to people from outside the parish coming from Zagorzyce, Pstroszyce, and other monastic villages, but also Jeżówka, Poręba Górna or Dębno (probably near Brzesko)<sup>44</sup>. At this initial stage of the research conducted, the metrics of the Miechów and Uniejów parishes were used. The scope of the research is not complete because it covered only a period of twelve years and only in two parishes. In addition, only nine villages of the Miechów key were included (eight in the Miechów parish and the village of Uniejów)<sup>45</sup>. These localities were selected because of well-preserved source material and their 'even' keeping

<sup>44</sup> ADK, Chodów – ref. no. 1, p. 24.

<sup>45</sup> AP Miechów, ref. no. 4216, pp. 657–790; AP Uniejów, Book of baptized, married and buried 1753–1783, no pagination.



by the monks. Unfortunately, it has not yet been possible to examine the books of other parishes outside the monastic estate for marriages performed there.

Table 2. Percentage of endogamous and exogamous marriages over the study period 1753–1765

Parish	Marriages				
	Endogamous	In %	Exogamous	In %	In % total
Miechów	97	50	48	24.74	74.74
Uniejów	37	19.07	12	6.19	25.26
TOTAL	134	69.07	60	30.93	100

Source: (own study).

On the basis of the research conducted so far, it has been established that in the years 1753–1765 (in Miechów and the villages of the Miechów parish), as well as in Uniejów itself (4 other villages outside the key belonged to the parish), marriages were most often contracted in the autumn and winter months: I, II, XI and spring-summer: V–VI (see Table 2–3). In the first case, this was in line with the realities of the time, when there was no field work one could focus on wedding ceremonies, which we can compare with the parish of Raciborowice near Kraków where over the same period the number of marriages was 44<sup>46</sup>. During the spring months, weddings in the villages were less numerous due to the field work that began then. During the periods marked by the Church, i.e. Advent and Lent, marriages were not performed in both parishes. Often, unfortunately, peasants were forced into hasty marriages due to the death of a spouse, especially during the harvest and gathering season when every pair of hands is needed for work, so despite the mourning, more unions were entered into. An example of this is the family of a miller from Zagorzyce. Marcin Pietras married Elżbieta Małpa in 1775, with whom he had five children (2 of whom died), and in July 1784 Elżbieta died and Marcin was forced to marry so that he would have someone to take care of the children while he was fulfilling his serf duties to the manor in nearby Siedliska. Two weeks later, on August 1, he married Miss Regina Wolańska of unknown origin<sup>47</sup>.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. M. Wyżga, *Parafia*, pp. 153–154; C. Kukło, *Demografia*, pp. 298–303.

<sup>47</sup> S. Filus, *Zagorzyce – wieczysta jałmużna klasztoru bożogrobców w Miechowie. Studium z dziejów społecznych wsi i jej relacji z klasztorem (1163–1819)*, Kraków 2025, p. 110.

Table 3. Weddings in Miechów parish in 1753–1765 by month

Years	Months of weddings in Miechów parish												Annual number of marriages
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	
1753	2	2	–	–	–	1	2	–	–	–	2	–	9
1754	–	5	1	–	1	2	3	1	1	1	–	–	15
1755	–	3	–	–	1	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	8
1756	3	2	–	–	1	–	1	–	1	1	1	–	10
1757	2	2	–	–	–	2	–	–	1	1	3	–	11
1758	2	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3
1759	4	5	–	–	1	1	1	–	1	–	1	–	14
1760	–	1	–	–	1	2	3	1	–	1	2	–	11
1761	2	1	–	–	2	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	7
1762	5	1	–	–	6	3	1	–	–	–	–	–	16
1763	2	2	–	–	2	1	2	1	2	–	–	–	12
1764	1	2	–	1	3	–	2	2	1	3	2	–	15
1765	3	1	–	1	2	3	–	–	–	–	1	–	11
TOTAL	26	27	1	2	21	20	17	5	7	7	12	0	145

Source: AP Miechów, ref. no. 4216, pp. 657–790 (own study).

A total of 196 marriages have been recorded in the eight villages surveyed so far, with two of them undetermined due to illegibility of the metric (a problem with determining the bride's origin) – a total of 145 marriages were recorded in Miechów and 49 in Uniejów, which accounted for 69.7% of all weddings. Marriages were most often performed within the Miechów key, and very often in a single village<sup>48</sup>. There were a total of 134 endogamous marriages in the period under study (1753–1765), while in the Miechów parish alone their number was 97, and in Uniejów 37, with the highest number found in Pstroszyce – 30 and Strzeżów – 21, which in terms of population was one of the most populous in the estate of the Holy Sepulcher monks. Conclusion of such weddings between nupturients was a common process in Podlasie, Malopolska or Greater Poland, however, it involved the risk of kinship ties of narrow local communities<sup>49</sup>. The remaining 60 marriages were to people living in different parts of the study area or from outside it. Exogamy in Miechów parish amounted to 48 mixed marriages in which one of the nupturients came

<sup>48</sup> Mateusz Wyżga wrote more extensively about peasant marriages and marital exogamy, cf. M. Wyżga, *Homo*, pp. 119–165.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 120.

from different localities closer or further apart, while in Uniejów the number was 12 marriages. Among them, we can note that men moved more often for matrimonial purposes than women (32 men and 25 women). Getting to know the future nupturients could take place at the place of work (not only on the manor, but also during seasonal work while employed by a craftsman in the city or countryside), during fairs or markets, or in an inn<sup>50</sup>. Often there could be a distance of even tens of kilometers between the brides. The longest distance separating newlyweds in the key of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher was 35 km (Wola Lubecka–Uniejów) and 17 km (Janowice–Pstroszyce and Trzebienice–Podleśna Wola).

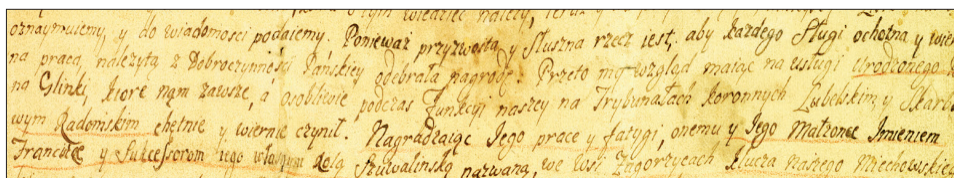
Table 4. Weddings in Uniejów parish in 1753–1765 by month

Years	Months of weddings in Uniejów parish												Annual number of marriages
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	
1753	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	1	–	2
1754	2	1	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	6
1755	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	4
1756	–	1	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	1	–	–	3
1757	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
1758	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	2
1759	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	4	–	6
1760	2	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	5
1761	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	3
1762	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1
1763	1	–	–	–	1	–	2	–	–	–	2	–	6
1764	2	1	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	6
1765	1	2	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	4
TOTAL	9	6	0	1	9	1	5	0	1	3	14	0	49

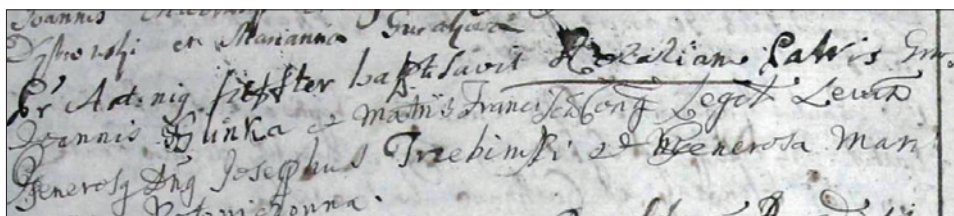
Source: AP Uniejów, Book of the baptized, married and buried 1753–1783, no pagination, (own study).

Matrimonial issues still require in-depth research, which will be carried out further, but the marriage exogamy proves that the Miechów peasants were not a community confined to the 'borders' of the land key of the Holy Sepulcher but established and maintained contacts with other representatives of their class, but also of higher ranks such as the bourgeoisie, nobility and clergy. As in the case of migration, these relations

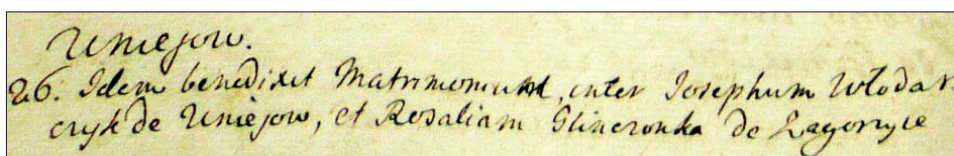
<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 122–125.



Krzysztof Jan Szembek grants to the born Mr. Glinka a land called Suwalińska in the village of Zagorzyce, AGAD, Zbiór dokumentów papierowych, ref. no. 2/2439.



Birth certificate of Rozalia Glinka, AD Kielce, Liber Baptisatorum ab anno dni 1676–1730 par. Miechów, vol. 1, p. 158.



Marriage certificate of Józef Włodarczyk and Rozalia Glinka, AP Uniejów, Book of the baptized, married and buried 1753–1783, no pagination.

were not limited to the land of Miechów, but went beyond its borders. This can be seen in the contacts with the rural population of Chorzów and Dęb in Silesia, which were about 90 km from Miechów and were subject to the Miechów prebend<sup>51</sup>. Miechów peasants also became citizens of the capital city of Kraków by paying appropriate fees and staying there for a certain amount of time per year<sup>52</sup>.

It also happened that peasants were promoted to higher positions in monastic estates for their 'good' behavior. A man named Falkowski was a servant to the king's nephew, the provost Andrzej Batory, in 1588, for which he received a lease on a farm near Miechów, and then married

<sup>51</sup> *Księgi sądowe wiejskie Chorzowa o Dębu z lat 1534–1804*, comp. Z. Jedynak with the collaboration of A. Sośnierz, Chorzów 20115; J. Rajman, *Spółeczność wiejska Chorzowa i Dębu od XIV do połowy XVIII wieku*, Chorzow 2019.

<sup>52</sup> *Księgi przyjęć do prawa miejskiego w Krakowie 1392–1506*, ed. K. Kaczmarczyk, Kraków 1913.

a woman named Przyłęcka<sup>53</sup>. Another representative of the peasant community-Korzeniowski, who came from the town of Biała, in 1629 was most likely the starost of Miechów on the initiative of the provost Achacy Grochowski<sup>54</sup>. An interesting case is the marriage of a noblewoman to a peasant. In 1720, the unknown by name 'born Mr. Glinka' who served the Miechów provost Krzysztof Szembek for his services was given a plot of land (the Suwałki land) in Zagorzyce by him and his family (his wife's name was Franciszka, which we know from the grant deed). In the same year his daughter Rozalia was born, in whose birth certificate it is recorded that she is a noblewoman – generosis (from it we also know that the nobleman in the document was named Jan). In 1754 Rozalia Glinka of Zagorzyce married Józef Włodarczyk of Uniejów. Despite the lack of a predicate, on the basis of the document granting property to the bride's father and her birth certificate it was possible to establish her ancestry. This may indicate the advancement that peasants were making in the clerical estates (Figs. 1., 2., 3.).

In recent years, the enslaved nature of the serf peasants' labor has been brought to attention. Meanwhile, there are also arguments for the subjectivity and thriftiness of the peasantry<sup>55</sup>. This is supported by the legal ability of peasants to set up court cases, to operate in markets, to be able to conduct commercial transactions, or to manage their own property and handle money skillfully<sup>56</sup>. From the legal point of view, peasants were allowed to leave the village where they worked if they settled their obligations to the manor. A peasant who did not settle his obligations and left the village was considered a fugitive, and the situation was similar in the monastic estates of the Holy Sepulcher monks.

Between 1385 and 1610, peasants fled the monastic village nineteen times, but there must have been many more. Most often they went to villages in close proximity, and in the late 16th/early 17th century, peasants traveled longer distances. We find more cases of illegal migration among peasants arriving in the Miechów key than fleeing from there. There were only 8 cases of peasants fleeing from the monastic estate (mainly

<sup>53</sup> W. Nekanda Trepka, *Liber generationis plebeanorum („Liber chamorum“)*, comp. R. Leszczyński, Wrocław 1995, pp. 131–132.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 212–213.

<sup>55</sup> A. Leszczyński, *Ludowa historia Polski*, Warszawa 2022; M. Rauszer, *Siła podporządkowanych*, Warszawa 2021.

<sup>56</sup> M. Wyżga, *Podmiotowość chłopstwa staropolskiego*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny" 2023, 130, 4, pp. 782–783; P. Guzowski, *Chłopi i pieniądze na przełomie średniowiecza i czasów nowożytnych*, Kraków 2008. Janusz Łosowski has written more extensively about the legal subjectivity of peasants and the role of documents in their lives, see J. Łosowski, *op. cit.*

Table 5. Fugitive peasants in the Miechów estate in the years 1385–1610

Year	Origin	Ownership	Destination	Ownership	Distance (km)
1385	Miechów estate	Sepulchers	Ślawice	Noobility-clergy	?
1426	Uniejów	Sepulchers	Pogwizdów	Nobility	1.5
1456	Chodów	Sepulchers	Chobędza	Nobility	11
1492	Pojałowice	szlachecka	Szczepanowice	Sepulchers	5.6
1499	Miechówestate	Sepulchers	Pojałowice	Nobility	?
1499	Ślawice	Nobility-clergy	Marchocice	Nobility	11
1503	Czaple Wielkie	szlachecka	Smroków	Sepulchers	4.2
1511	Bukowska Wola	Sepulchers	Wysocice	Nobility	18
1538	Uniejów	Sepulchers	Pogwizdów	Nobility	1.5
1592	Miechów	Sepulchers	Mianocice	Nobility	14
1594	Charsznica	Nobility	Uniejów	Sepulchers	4
1595	Żerechowa, Sieradzkie	Nobility	Miechów	Sepulchers	116
1596	Brończycze	Nobility-clergy	Orłów	Sepulchers	10
1598	Charsznica	Nobility	Miechów	Sepulchers	12
1602	Trzebieńce	Nobility	Parkoszowice	Sepulchers	18
1604	Jelcza	Nobility	Miechów	Sepulchers	15
1608	Lgota Błotna	Nobility	Przesławice	Sepulchers	60
1608	Szczodrkowice	Nobility	Brzuchania	Nobility-clergy	36
1610	Rzęplin	Nobility	Uniejów	Sepulchers	30

Source: AN Kraków, Księgi grodzkie krakowskie, ref. no. 29/5/0/1/32, pp. 459, 500; SHGWK, part 4, issue 2, pp. 372–373; A. Kielbicka, *Zbiegostwo chłopów w województwie krakowskim na przełomie XVI i XVII wieku*, Toruń 1989, (Own study).



from Uniejów – 3 times, Chodów or Miechów), while the remaining 13 cases were peasant arrivals in the Miechów key. The longest journey was that of Maciej Trasek (or Opalek) from Żerechów near Sieradz – 116 km, or Wojciech Grządziel from Lgota Błotna near Lelów – 60 km. Most often the peasants moved with their families and their belongings. In eleven cases, peasants who came here settled in monastic villages or the town of Miechów itself. Settlement in the Miechów estate (up to the 14th) may have been very favorable for the newcomers because the monastery had a princely immunity, under which the monastery's subjects were exempt from service to the princely and royal court. We can assume that the peasants who came here were eager to settle because of the good quality of the soil, from which a high yield could be obtained if the newcomer managed to 'buy into the favor' of the provost and the monastery, in return for which he could receive a plot of land on lease. Of course, he also had to perform the serfdom assigned to him according to his social category in the countryside. An attraction for the farmers arriving here may have been the close proximity of the capital and royal city of Kraków (Kleparz and Jewish Kazimierz) and other royal towns (Słomnik, Proszowice, Wolbrom, Żarnowiec) where fairs were held similarly to Miechów where it was possible to trade cattle, agricultural products including mainly grain<sup>57</sup>. Peasants settling in could join guilds and learn crafts which added value to them.

There were also cases that peasants were abducted from their master's estates. An interesting event took place in 1503 in the monastery village of Smroków, to which the peasant Stanisław Kuchna and his son Mikołaj fled from Czaple Wielkie and took refuge in the local manor. He was soon followed by janitor Maciej Łabuś from Imbramowice, representing noble Błażej Błahut, but the nobleman's representative was not allowed into the manor by the factor. As a result, noble Błahut took the case to the municipal court, suing the Miechów preceptor for misappropriation of his employees, and demanded 10 fines and as much compensation for damages. Eventually the case was discontinued because the prepositor paid 15 fines for the peasant, and Błahut handed over his peasant to the superior of the Miechowites<sup>58</sup>.

According to Adam Leszczyński, the flight of peasants from the lord's estates was a last resort and a form of resistance<sup>59</sup>. Meanwhile, it can be pointed out that a peasant was a serf of his master due to the use of his land. The lord leased land to the peasants, in return for which

<sup>57</sup> Z. Pęckowski, *Ziemia*, p. 110.

<sup>58</sup> AN Kraków, Księgi grodzkie krakowskie, sygn. 29/5/0/1/29, pp. 1177–1178.

<sup>59</sup> A. Leszczyński, *op. cit.*, Warszawa 2022, p. 136.

the peasant had to give him rent in the form of crops or money, and from the 15th–16th centuries, in the form of labor on the, ‘lord’s land’ in order to increase the profitability of the owner of the estate<sup>60</sup>.

#### LABOR AND TRIBUTES IN THE ESTATES OF THE ORDER OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER

The issue of labor and the duties of the serf population in the Miechów estate was regulated primarily by monarchical law (princely, royal and episcopal). Shortly after the arrival of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher to Miechów, it received an immunity from Prince Bolesław Kędzierzawy, by virtue of which the monastic villages were exempted from the burdens of ducal law, i.e. the construction of castles, poradlny, guards, participation in war expeditions, carriages, and horse supply, which were later confirmed by his successors<sup>61</sup>. Until the 14th century, we only have information about tithes (which were often sold) and small services that Miechów suburban peasants performed. In addition, they had to provide feudal annuities in the form of crops or money<sup>62</sup>. Casimir the Great in 1354 in his document in addition to confirming earlier privileges for monastic property. Exemptions from burdens on the sovereign ended with the death of the last of the Piasts. King Louis of Hungary in 1381 imposed an obligation on Miechów monastic peasants to pay 4 groszy of tax per field, to give sep (a quarter of rye and two quarters of oats) and to work 2 days a year at the nearest royal farm, which can be considered the beginning of the kind work the peasants were expected to do. In addition, the ministries included ‘subsidiūm charitativum’ (a voluntary allowance paid by the clergy instead of the tax-collection enacted by the diet) of 1 grosz per village for war expeditions and the coronation of royal children<sup>63</sup>.

In the 16th century, monastic villages performed services for the court in Słomniki. Not all villages worked for the royal manor, only selected ones. Among them were Smroków, Falniów, Chodów, Pstroszyce, Podleśna Wola, Bukowska Wola, Kalina Mała, Parkoszowice, Szczepanowice and Orłów. The duties of peasants from these villages included cutting meadows, hauling brushwood or building a new brogue or repairing

<sup>60</sup> B. Zientara, *Poddaństwo*, in: *Encyklopedia historii gospodarczej Polski do 1945 roku*, vol. 2, O-Ż, Warszawa 1981, pp. 89–90; J. Szpak, *Polska prowincja paulinów od XVII do 1864 roku*, Katowice 2020, pp. 114–115.

<sup>61</sup> Z. Piłat, *Fundator i fundacja klasztoru bożogrobców w Miechowie*, in: *Bożogrobcy*, pp. 33–34.

<sup>62</sup> J. Rajman, *Gospodarka*, p. 420; Z. Pęcowski, *Miechów*, pp. 390–394.

<sup>63</sup> Z. Pęcowski, *Miechów*, p. 403.

an old one. In addition, in some cases peasants, instead of labor, were allowed to pay from 6 grosz to 16 groszin duties to the royal estates<sup>64</sup>.

For the first time we learn about tributes and obligations to the Order from the location documents of the village of Bukowska Wola in 1335, from which it is clear that the peasants had twenty years of freedom from one field, but after the expiration of this period the peasants had to pay 10 skojce, give a tithe of smallholders of 4 measures of rye, wheat and oats each, as well as one measure of rye and oats for the mess. It was the duty of the village headman to support a war expedition when necessary<sup>65</sup>.

After 1365, when the monastery began a campaign to buy villages out of the hands of village leaders, the process of establishing manorial farms in the Miechowszczyzna region also began at that time, which can be considered the slow development of serfdom in the monastic estate. Corvee was not an invention of the Polish elite, but a common obligation of European peasants and in other parts of the world<sup>66</sup>. The first information about the amount of corvee in the Miechowites estate was provided to us by J. Długosz. In most villages, peasants were expected to work 1–2 days on the lord's field and to render services in the form of powwows or morrows. In addition, in 17 villages they were supposed to give 30 eggs, 4 cocks and 2 cheeses, (in Parkoszowice 4 capons instead of cocks) and in Rozpierzchów 2 capons each<sup>67</sup>.

In 1598, the division of monastic property between the preceptor and the convent took place. Due to the lack of sources about the amount of serfdom and peasants' payments to the monastery and its superior, it is not possible to reconstruct the labor relations that occurred here in the 16th and 17th centuries.

We learn about the serfdom burdens borne by local peasants from the 1731 inventory, which was most likely compiled on the occasion of the second division of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher estate in 1727<sup>68</sup>. It contains data on villages belonging to the provost general, which included thirteen settlements, so we do not have a comprehensive picture of the studied area as far as corvee obligations are concerned. In addition,

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<sup>64</sup> *Lustracja województwa krakowskiego 1564*, part 1, ed. J. Małecki, Warszawa 1962, pp. 114–115.

<sup>65</sup> KDM, vol. 3, pp. 14–15.

<sup>66</sup> J. Lucassen, *Historia pracy. Nowe Dzieje ludzkości*, transl. T.S. Markiewka, Kraków 2023, pp. 223–229, 376–383.

<sup>67</sup> Joannis Długosz, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, pp. 1–25.

<sup>68</sup> In 1756, the third and final division of the estate was carried out in order to set aside from the estate of the provost a portion of the property which was used to rebuild the parish and monastery church in Miechów after the great fire of 1745.

Table 6. The number of days of serfdom in the villages of the Miechów key in 1731

Village	Weekly serfdom from: (in days)				
	Serfs	Half-serfs	Crofters	Cotters	Tenants
Brzuchania	4 (one working 2)		2 on foot	1 on foot	Other services
Kalina Mała	From St. John's 4 cattle, plus 2 on foot; from St. Michael's 4 cattle		2	1 on foot	Other services
Orłów	From St. John's to St. Michael's 4 cattle, plus 2 on foot;				Work only in summer
Parkoszowice	From St. John's to St. Michael's 4 cattle, plus 2 on foot;		2 on foot	1	
Przesławice	1 serf, 3 cattle, 1, 5 on foot from St. John to St. Michael, from St. Michael 3 cattle	2, Those with $\frac{1}{4}$ lan work from 1–1.5 with cattle, 1 on foot		1 on foot	–
Pstroszyce	From St. Michael's 3 cattle, from John's 3 cattle, 2 on foot		2 on foot (2 of them by 1)	1 on foot	Other duties
Smroków	3 serfshave 2 cattle 1		2		
Strzeżów	From St. Michael's 4 cattle, 1 on foot, from St. John's cattle 4, on foot 2	From St. John's 2 cattle, 1 on foot, from St. Michael's 2 cattle	2 on foot		
Szczepanowice	From St. John's to St. Michael's 4 cattle, plus 2 on foot;	2	2 on foot	1 on foot	Only in summer with cotters
Bukowska Wola	4		2 on foot	1	Other services
Podleśna Wola	From St. John's to St. Michael's 3 cattle, an additional 2 on foot; Those with 2 labors have an additional 1 on foot			1 on foot	Other services
Podmiejska Wola	–	From St. Michael 2 cattle, from St. John 2 cattle, 1 on foot	–	2 on foot	1 on foot
Zagorzyce		From St. Michael 2 cattle, from St. John 2 cattle, 1 on foot		1 on foot	1 on foot (?)
Miechów	–	–	2 on foot	–	1

Source: own study based on AGAD, ASK, ref. no. 11/179, pp. 42–48; M. Makowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–67.

the inventory includes descriptions of manor buildings and takes into account the obligations of Miechów peasants-farmers<sup>69</sup>.

Assuming that we are dealing with the estates of a single owner and that his estates were adjacent to one another, it should be concluded that in all villages of the Miechów key and other monastic estates the serfdom burden, the amount of rents paid or food given away was similar. The days of serfs' labor ranged from 1 to 4 days a week by cattle and 1–2 days on foot, in addition to which they paid rents ranging from 6 grosz to 2 zlotys 20 gr.

We learn about the serfdom burdens borne by local peasants from the 1731 inventory, which was most likely compiled on the occasion of the second division of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher estate in 1727<sup>70</sup>. It contains data on villages belonging to the provost general, which included thirteen settlements, so we do not have a comprehensive picture of the studied area as far as serfdom obligations are concerned. In addition the inventory includes descriptions of manor buildings and takes into account the obligations of Miechów peasants-farmers<sup>71</sup>.

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The peasants also gave victuals in the form of eggs, hens, cocks or capons. In addition to serfdom and rents, the local peasants rendered a variety of services, such as ties, which mainly consisted of spinning fiber, carriages or carriages, usually two of them, one to work with vegetables and the other with winter crops or hauling hay. Homesteaders and tenants, with the exception of other obligations related to their labor, had special tasks to perform. The homesteader stratagem, fish, spread manure, help in the brewery, fetch the horseshoes, wipe soot in the castle (house)

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<sup>69</sup> AGAD, ASK, ref. no. 11/179, pp. 42–48; M. Makowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–67. In the source edition of the *Inwentarz*, M. Makowski did not include the village of Smroków, which was part of the Miechów key.

<sup>70</sup> In 1756, the third and final division of the estate was carried out in order to set aside from the estate of the provost a portion of the property which was used to rebuild the parish and monastery church in Miechów after the great fire of 1745.

<sup>71</sup> AGAD, ASK, ref. no. 11/179, pp. 42–48; M. Makowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–67. In the source edition of the *Inwentarz*, M. Makowski did not include the village of Smroków, which was part of the Miechów key.

of the general of the order, and shovel snow from the gutters. The tasks of the tenants in the homesteads (but also of other representatives from this group) included breaking molehills in the meadows, planting cabbages, hoeing hemp or spinning binding<sup>72</sup>.

Comparing data from the *Liber beneficiorum* and the inventory, it can be seen that the number of serf days for peasants increased from 1–2 days to as many as 6 days in Kalina, Orłów, Parkoszowice or Szczepanowice. In some villages where there were no days of homesteading for peasants, they appeared (in Bukowska Wola, Przesławice, Smroków), while in others they disappeared as in Zagorzyce, which also indicates a decline in the population of this layer in the key. As for the homesteaders who were present here in the 15th, the number of labor days increased from one to two days in Parkoszowice, Smroków and Strzeżów, while there were no homesteaders in Podleśna Wola.

Analyzing the Miechów estate and other types of land ownership in terms of serfdom in the 16th century, in the estate of the Cistercians of Mogilno it amounted to 2 days of fraught and 6 days on foot, while at the Pauline monks of Jasna Góra it averaged 1–4 days (this value remained in the 18th century). One can note the existing similarity in the number of days of dashing labor of the Old Polish period in the monastic estates. Considering the noble estates around Miechów (Przybysławice, Śladów, Szreniwa or Sławice), the number was 2–5 days per week. In the royal estates (Rzędowice, Wierzbie), serfdom in the 18th century also ranged from 2–5 days a week, which may indicate that its size in the Miechów area did not differ between the different types of property<sup>73</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

The presented threads are only a preliminary characterization of the pre-industrial society in the estates of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Miechów. Knowledge of the peasant population living in the estates belonging to the monasteries is scarce, so the research conducted here is an attempt to reconstruct the relations occurring between the various layers of society, taking into account the monks as land lords and the peasants as their subjects and the bourgeoisie along with the nobility as residents of the estates. The size of the peasant family depended on the village class as well as the additional labor employed by the householder to ensure household productivity.

<sup>72</sup> M. Makowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 36–37.

<sup>73</sup> J. Szpak, *op. cit.*, p. 124; Z. Pęcowski, *Ziemia*, pp. 110–116.



In the research presented, it can be seen that the Miechów peasants were an open community and did not limit their migrations to the borders of the key, but infiltrated other landed estates, often also social strata (including the nobility). This can also be seen in distant marriages, as well as illegal absconding. Further research will make it possible to establish the course of serfdom burdens in the 'long duration', and to confront the slave labor and incapacitation of Polish peasants of the medieval and Old Polish periods.

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