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Order, cleanliness and security in Kalisz in the light of the documents of the Good Order Commission and the town authorities (1778–1788)*

Abstract: The aim of the paper is to show the endeavours of the Good Order Commission in Kalisz, which was active from 1780 to 1788. I present the regulations and ordinances issued to achieve its goals by both the Commission itself and the municipal authorities in juxtaposition to the practice of their implementation and the impact that they had on everyday lives of Kalisz inhabitants. It provides an opportunity to discuss the Commission's efficacy and to evaluate if and in what measure its original goals were achieved. Such assessment is, however, difficult and imprecise due to destruction of the town in great fire of 1792 and the Partition of Poland (1793).

Abstrakt: Celem artykułu jest ukazanie działań kaliskiej Komisji *Boni Ordinis* w czasie jej istnienia w latach 1780–1788. Z jednej strony przedstawiono rozporządzenia Komisji i władz miasta mające urzeczywistniać idee przyświecające powołaniu tego ciała, z drugiej praktykę ich realizacji oraz wpływ na codzienne życie kaliszian. Daje to okazję do zastanowienia się nad skutecznością działań Komisji w Kaliszu, odpowiedzi na pytanie, czy i w jakim stopniu postawione przed nią cele zostały zrealizowane. Precyzyjną ocenę skuteczności reform utrudniają jednak zniszczenie miasta w wielkim pożarze w 1792 r., oraz zmiany, które przyniósł rozbiór Polski.

Key words: Kalisz, *Boni Ordinis* Commission, security, order, early modern period

Słowa kluczowe: Kalisz, Komisja *Boni Ordinis*, bezpieczeństwo, porządek, nowożytność

The aim of the paper is to show the endeavours of the Good Order Commission in Kalisz, which was active from 1780 to 1788. I present the regulations and ordinances issued to achieve its goals by both the Commission itself and the municipal authorities in juxtaposition to the practice of their execution and the impact that they had on everyday lives of Kalisz inhabitants. It provides an opportunity to discuss the Commission's efficacy and to evaluate if and in what measure its original goals were achieved. Considering that the idea of commissions of good order developed among the nobility, a question arises to what extent they were to serve and actually served interests of the nobles and to what extent those of the burghers.

Kalisz is one of the oldest towns in the Polish lands. At its peak, it owed its importance to a favourable location making it one of the key junctions in long-distance transport and trade routes. The granting of town rights took place in 1264, and this is when the period of Kalisz's development as a weaving centre began. This positively influenced the economic condition of the town and strengthened its position.¹ The slow decline of Kalisz's importance started at the

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¹ Sowina U. et al. 2021, pp. 9–10.

beginning of the 17th c. The devastating invasion of The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth by the Swedes in the 1650s, the Great Northern War at the beginning of the 18th c., subsequent epidemics and fires, and inept management contributed to its significant degradation.²

Polish historiography is unanimous in its opinion about the bad situation of Polish towns and townsmen in the first half of the 18th c.³ The need for urban reforms began to be recognised during the reign of August III. A manifestation of this trend was the establishment in 1743 of the Cobblestone Commission, headed by Marshal Franciszek Bieliński, whose task was to supervise the construction and regulation of streets in Warsaw. However, the issue of living conditions in towns was dealt with in a more comprehensive way during the Convocation Sejm of 1764. It was then that a constitution was enacted to put the matter of the *jurydyki* (a privately owned plots of land within a larger municipality) in royal towns in order, giving urban authorities the ability to recover abandoned properties, while starosts were given fiscal control over magistrates. The resolution also ordered nobles and clergy with properties in the town to pay appropriate taxes.⁴ The aftermath of the 1764 Sejm was the establishment of the Commission of Good Order for Warsaw by the Assessor's Court the following year. The Commission's task was to revitalise the municipal economy of the capital.⁵

The 1767–68 Delegation Sejm (so-called Repnin Sejm) decided that the Warsaw Commission was to be a model for planned similar institutions in other royal towns.⁶ Several such bodies were established at that time, but the struggles of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in following years during the Bar Confederation were not conducive to their activities.⁷ The Partition Sejm (1773–1775) proved to be a breakthrough, when the Permanent Council, the highest collegiate body of state administration, was established (1775). The Council's work was carried out in five departments, one of which, the Police or Good Order, supervised the royal towns.⁸ In the following years, more commissions were appointed, based on royal rescripts.⁹

Greater Poland, in which Kalisz is situated, was at the time divided into three voivodeships: the Poznań voivodeship (*poznańskie*), the Kalisz voivodeship (*kaliskie*) and the Gniezno voivodeship (*gnieźnieńskie*). The Poznań Good Order Commission, established by the rescript granted on 23 November 1778,¹⁰ was active for two years, promptly accomplishing its goals (in comparison with other towns for which such bodies were appointed). The report of its actions and achievements was presented to the King, and by his order published in print to serve as an ex-

² Sowina U. et al. 2021, p. 113.

³ This is noted, for example, in the introduction to the collection of laws of the Kalisz good order by Adam Chodyński as early as 1875 (Ustawy. 1875, p. I). This opinion is still expressed by historians today (e.g. Deresiewicz J. 1966, p. 163; Bogucka M., Samsonowicz H. 1986, pp. 345–346; Augustyniak U. 2008, p. 240; Jędrzejewski P. 2017, pp. 239–240).

⁴ Jędrzejewski P. 2017, p. 240; see Volumina. 1860, pp. 43–44.

⁵ Jędrzejewski P. 2017, pp. 240–241.

⁶ Baranowski I. 1907, pp. 6–7.

⁷ Tadeusz Srogosz believes that the commissions of good order set up in the first years of Stanisław August's reign had their genesis in the traditions of the nobility's self-government of the Saxon period (*boni ordinis* assemblies — *sejms* and their executive bodies). Nevertheless, he considers the Warsaw Commission to be the first, and until the Partition Sejm, the only *boni ordinis* commission. This is because the Royal Cobblestone Commission in Lviv, established in the same year (1765), had limited powers and a different character compared to the Warsaw Commission (Srogosz T. 1995, pp. 154–158).

⁸ Bogucka M., Samsonowicz H. 1986, p. 577.

⁹ Jędrzejewski P. 2017, p. 241. *Boni Ordinis Commissions* were appointed predominantly in royal towns, but not exclusively. There are records of such bodies established in private (and to be more precise in episcopal) centres: Łowicz (APWOŁ, AmŁ, ref. 1) and Włocławek (Rozporządzenie. 1913). These were, however, exceptions.

¹⁰ Deresiewicz J. 1966, p. 165.

emplar for other commissioners.¹¹ This *Boni Ordinis* Commission took also actions (with varying intensity) in several other urban centres of the Poznań voivodeship: Kościan, Śrem, Babimost, Brójce and most notably in Wschowa.¹² The Gniezno Commission was not very effective, with some outcomes of its efforts visible only in the voivodeship's capital.¹³

The Commission for the Kalisz voivodeship was established on 23 November 1778,¹⁴ and was actually active in Konin and Środa as well as in Kalisz itself¹⁵. It was composed of eighteen people,¹⁶ and headed by Prince August Sułkowski, the voivode (governor) of the Kalisz voivodeship,¹⁷ who was an advocate of the Enlightenment ideas. Enlightenment beliefs were shared by many *boni ordinis* commissioners, often representatives of the state administration.¹⁸ All commissions were initially to operate in a voivodeship's capital, then in its other royal towns.¹⁹ Almost two years passed between the appointment and the start of the actual operation of the Kalisz *Boni Ordinis* Commission. It began its work on 14 February 1780,²⁰ and ended on 29 February 1788.²¹ Its mission was taken up by the Civil and Military Order Commission of the Kalisz Voivodeship, established on 15 December 1789.²²

The Commission's endeavours to bring order to the town were not a complete novelty for its inhabitants. Considering only evidence from the early modern period, Kalisz's municipal authorities had taken actions similar to those of the commissioners since the beginning of the 16th c. Ordinances issued by the town council concerned matters of security and order on the streets of Kalisz (e.g. establishment of an urban *hutman/hetman* — an official responsible for keeping order in a town, 1597;²³ ban on playing music during nighttime, 1756²⁴), social affairs (e.g. sanctions on journeymen and apprentices absent from work on Mondays, 1542²⁵), state of municipal treasury (e.g. ban on unauthorised felling in municipal forests, 1557²⁶), fulfilling of duties by urban officials (e.g. penalties and fines for not attending council and court sessions, 1630;²⁷ holding obligatory surgeries in the town hall, 1683²⁸). Long before the appointment of the *Boni Ordinis* Commission, a number of fire safety regulations were introduced (1632,²⁹ 1762,³⁰ 1771,³¹ 1773³²) and a night watch was established (imposition of taxes for its

¹¹ Deresiewicz J. 1966, p. 167.

¹² Deresiewicz J. 1966, pp. 169–172.

¹³ Deresiewicz J. 1966, pp. 175–177.

¹⁴ Deresiewicz J. 1966, p. 173.

¹⁵ Deresiewicz J. 1966, pp. 173–175.

¹⁶ Ustawy. 1875, pp. I–II.

¹⁷ Topolska M.B. 1981.

¹⁸ Jędrzejewski P. 2017, p. 242; cf. Deresiewicz J. 1966, p. 157.

¹⁹ Srogosz T. 1995, p. 159.

²⁰ Ustawy. 1875, p. II.

²¹ Ustawy. 1875, p. V. Władysław Rusiński states imprecisely that the Commission was to disband “around 1789” (Rusiński W. 1968, p. 374).

²² Sobolowa B. 1969, p. 69.

²³ Statuty. 1972, pp. 222–223.

²⁴ Statuty. 1972, pp. 252–253.

²⁵ Statuty. 1972, p. 211.

²⁶ Statuty. 1972, pp. 216–217.

²⁷ Statuty. 1972, pp. 228–229.

²⁸ Statuty. 1972, p. 236.

²⁹ Statuty. 1972, pp. 230–231.

³⁰ Statuty. 1972, p. 247.

³¹ Statuty. 1972, pp. 259–260.

³² Statuty. 1972, pp. 261–262.

keep in 1697³³ and 1759;³⁴ the 1758 ordinance regulating watchmen's responsibilities³⁵). The councillors wanted to protect Kalisz from various dangers coming from outside by placing sentinels at town gates (the 1697 ordinance stating their organisation and responsibilities³⁶). They were also concerned with maintaining cleanliness and upkeep of the urban space (e.g. general rules proclaimed in 1760³⁷ and 1771;³⁸ ban on pigs roaming in the market square, 1765,³⁹ repeated 1767⁴⁰). However, the frequency with which such statutes were issued in the times of the Good Order Commission was many times greater than before.

Commissions usually began their activities in a given centre by collecting all documents defining the prevailing legal order in a given town, such as royal privileges, universal acts (*uniwersały*) or resolutions of the Permanent Council. In Kalisz, all this work was done by the townspeople. On 11 December 1779, Józef Zalewski, an alderman, Stanisław Borucki, *wójt*,⁴¹ Władysław Walderiwicz, Michał Łączkiewicz and Mateusz Czemplewicz, Kalisz burghers, in connection with the upcoming convention of the *Boni Ordinis* Commission, were to: "from next Tuesday, go to the town hall [...], and there, in the morning from eight to eleven o'clock, and in the afternoon from one o'clock until four o'clock every day, search and arrange acts, or documents, until this work is completed".⁴² The queries in the town archive were to include "documents of any kind relating to the welfare of the town". Burghers who were not members of the magistrate were paid three ducats.⁴³

The next step was to create a catalogue of all real estate and land. In the case of Kalisz, it is interesting to note that such a review of the town was created even before the formal establishment of the Commission of Good Order for the Kalisz voivodeship. As early as August 1778, two noblemen, "professional" inspectors from the starost court chancellery (*kancelaria grodzka*) drew up a document entitled "The inspection of His Majesty's Town of Kalisz in the year of our Lord 1778, *die 17 Augusti*, by two noblemen and a court representative, made on the requisition of the noble Council" ("Wizyta miasta Jego Królewskiej Mości Kalisza w roku Pańskim 1778, *die 17 Augusti* przez dwóch ichmościów ślachtę i woźnego na rekwizycyją ślachtetnego Magistratu uczynionej").⁴⁴

In order to measure the municipal area, the commissioners began drawing up town plans. These were often the first cartographic materials in the history of a given locality depicting it.⁴⁵

³³ Statuty. 1972, p. 240.

³⁴ Statuty. 1972, p. 244.

³⁵ Statuty. 1972, pp. 243–244.

³⁶ Statuty. 1972, pp. 239–240.

³⁷ Statuty. 1972, pp. 245–246.

³⁸ Statuty. 1972, pp. 259–260.

³⁹ Statuty. 1972, pp. 252–253.

⁴⁰ Statuty. 1972, pp. 257–258.

⁴¹ *Wójt* (German: *Vogt*, Latin: *advocatus*). Hereditary vogtships were created during the process of establishing or re-establishing towns on the German law (Latin: *ius teutonicum*), which, in Greater Poland, started in the 13th c. Initially, *vogts* were reeves (representatives) of a town's owner (a monarch, an ecclesiastical institution or a private individual), holding both administrative and judicial powers. In time, however, especially in towns of the royal domain, they became lesser municipal officials subordinate to urban councils. More on the subject, e.g. Niwiński M. 1938; Szymańska M. 1953; see also: Gawlas S. 2005; Gawlas S. 2015. In Kalisz, the hereditary vogtship was bought out by the town council in 1360 (Szymańska M. 1953, p. 174).

⁴² [...] *od następującego dnia wtorkowego schodzić się na ratusz mają, i tam z rana od godziny ósmej aż do jedenastej, po południu zaś od pierwszej aż do czwartej codziennie kwerendą i układaniem aktów, czyli dokumentów, mają się zajmować, dopóki tej roboty nie dokończą*; APP, AmK, ref. I/183, pp. 40–41.

⁴³ [...] *dokumentów różnych dobra miasta tyjących się* [...]; APP, AmK, ref. I/183, p. 41.

⁴⁴ Rusiński W. 1976.

⁴⁵ Baranowski I. 1907, pp. 16–20.

Also Kalisz, as a result of the activities of the Good Order Commission, gained its first plan. It was made by surveyor Andrzej Politalski, who completed his work in 1785.⁴⁶ A census was also taken at the Commission's behest, which included information on the livelihood and education level of Kalisz residents.⁴⁷ At the time, Kalisz had a population of four to five thousand.⁴⁸

The competencies of all *boni ordinis* commissions were defined in the 1768 Sejm Act entitled "Regulation for Our Royal Towns in the Crown and Grand Duchy of Lithuania" ("Warunek miast i miasteczek naszych królewskich w Koronie i W. X. Litewskim"), and later in royal rescripts establishing commissions for particular towns. The model rescript took its final form in 1778.⁴⁹ On this basis, the commissions controlled the level of spending of the urban authorities and carried out a number of other measures to improve the condition of the municipal coffers. These included both combating dishonesty on the part of urban officials,⁵⁰ as well as abuses on the part of starosts.⁵¹ They also attempted to put in order the affairs of individual town institutions, such as guilds⁵² or hospitals.⁵³ The Commission was also tasked with investigating the relationship between the Jewish and Christian populations in a given town.⁵⁴ The commissioners had the authority to "change the old town laws", and thus had legislative capacity rising above the authority of the town magistrate. They also ruled on boundary matters, on town property, in disputes between townsmen and the magistrate and with other townsmen. Appeals against their verdicts were only possible in the assessor's courts.⁵⁵

Tasks of a "policing" nature, that is, to ensure order in towns in the broadest sense, were considered very important. Thus, efforts were made to improve towns' aesthetics through measures such as removing debris from a market and streets, reconstructing tenements and houses, repairing cobblestones, sewers and a water supply system.⁵⁶ Endeavours were also taken to bring omnipresent mud, faeces and garbage under control. On the other hand, the aim of the committee's activities was also to improve urban security. Most attention was paid to fire prevention, but the protection of health and property was also regarded as important.

The changes also affected the administration and town authorities. In the reformed Kalisz municipal government, councillors remained in office for life; previously, elections were held annually.⁵⁷ The Kalisz council consisted of six people, from among whom the chairman of this

⁴⁶ Sowina U., Związek T., Panecki T. 2017, p. 314.

⁴⁷ Kowalski G.M. 2010, p. 440.

⁴⁸ Rusiński estimated the number of inhabitants of Kalisz in 1789 at 4265 people (Rusiński W. 1961, p. 148). Tadeusz Korzon gives the number of five thousand (Korzon T. 1897, pp. 286–288). For more on the town's history see: Osiemnaście wieków. 1960–1962; Dzieje. 1977; Rusiński W. 1983; Rusiński W. 1988; [Splitt J.A.] 1997; Sowina U. et al. 2021.

⁴⁹ Kowalski G.M. 2010, p. 439.

⁵⁰ Baranowski I. 1907, pp. 20–22; Jędrzejewski P. 2017, p. 242.

⁵¹ Baranowski I. 1907, pp. 23–24. Katarzyna Milik, however, believes that the Commissions were not effective in combating the abuses of starosts (Milik K. 2013, p. 344).

⁵² Baranowski I. 1907, pp. 29–31.

⁵³ Srogosz T. 1995, p. 158.

⁵⁴ Kowalski G.M. 2010, p. 440.

⁵⁵ Baranowski I. 1907, p. 11.

⁵⁶ Jędrzejewski P. 2017, p. 242.

⁵⁷ It seems that, at least initially, the method of electing new officials was not very clear to the Kalisz burghers. After reading the resolution of the Commission of Good Order of 24 July 1780, they stated that "[...] the Commission did not present the obvious rules according to which the said election of candidates for the new town office as well as for other offices is to be held [...]" ([...] *Komisja nie przepisała oczywistych reguł, podług których rzeczona elekcja kandydatów na nowy urząd miasta mających być wybranych, jako też na innych oficyalistów odprawiać się ma [...]*). Therefore, it was decided to refer here to the "Provisions of the Decree of the Grand Commission in 1724" (*przepisu dekretu Prześwietnej Komisji Wielkiej w roku tysięcznym siedemsetnym dwudziestym czwartym*); APP, AmK, ref. I/183, pp. 120–121.

body — the president — and the *wójt* (who performed judicial functions) were elected each year. The head of police was additionally elected from among the burghers, and served as the seventh councillor. An important figure, in the context of security and order, was the town instigator. Appointed for three years by the council, he served as a public prosecutor. His duties included “[...] reporting and suing for violations of public safety and for all riots, for filth in front of houses, for not cleaning and repairing chimneys [...]”, but also for “[...] immoral lives of citizens”.⁵⁸

Some changes occurred in the way the town bench (*ława miejska*) functioned. The Law of the *Boni Ordinis* Commission stipulated that jurors were elected for life, rather than for a one-year term as before. Also innovative was the method of supplementing the bench from among the Seven Men, elected in turn from among the burghers. The institution of the Seven Men, previously non-existent, conducted public deliberations on municipal affairs.⁵⁹

Although the commissions’ tasks were limited to cleaning up the existing state of affairs and those bodies did not introduce deep reforms, it was the most serious attempt in the history of pre-partition Poland until the Four-Year Sejm (Great Sejm), to improve the condition of towns. Without diminishing the importance of these changes, however, one must agree with Jan Ptaśnik that “the good-natured nobles who were part of these commissions were not so much concerned with raising the [level of life] of burghers, but rather with raising the town itself from ruin”.⁶⁰ Hence, the committees’ emphasis on bringing cleanliness and safety to the streets of urban centres as well as rebuilding the urban architecture. On the other hand, the Sejm and the king were keen to improve the economy of towns and raise the wealth of their residents. This served not only themselves, but could increase revenue to the treasury of The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Janusz Deresiewicz also saw the positive role of the commissions in acquiring a sense of dignity among the burghers and increasing awareness of their own situation and the role they played in the state.⁶¹

The laws passed by the Kalisz Commission of Good Order were written down in a manuscript entitled “The Work of the laws of the Commission of Good Order [...] in His Royal Majesty’s Town of Kalisz” (“Dzieło Ustaw Komisji Dobrego Porządku [...] w Mieście J. K. M. Kaliszu odbyte i skończone”).⁶² This manuscript has not survived to our times, probably burned down in 1914,⁶³ but fortunately in 1875 Chodyński published it in print. The historian collected all the laws on administration passed by the *Boni Ordinis* Commission and published them in one volume. This edition has a number of flaws. The resolutions are not printed chronologically, but divided thematically at the publisher’s discretion. Chodyński also did not mark the dates of their enactment and made abbreviations and omissions.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, it is an important source, the analysis of which sheds much light on the issues addressed in this article.

⁵⁸ [...] *donoszenie i pozywanie o zgwałcenie publicznego bezpieczeństwa i wszelkie tumulty, o nieochędostwo przed domami, o niewycieranie i naprawę kominów [...]; [...] o nieprzystojne obywatelów życie [...]*, Ustawy. 1875, p. 23.

⁵⁹ Deresiewicz J. 1966, pp. 199–200. In this article, I am not analysing all the new offices or changes in the powers of the existing ones, as this is beyond its subject matter. However, it should be mentioned that the Kalisz Commission appointed, apart from those already mentioned, the following *officiaries*: a tribune and a supervisor in the composition of the Seven Men (Ustawy. 1875, p. 12), a cashier with two supervisors to assist (Ustawy. 1875, pp. 13–15), a quartermaster (Ustawy. 1875, p. 16), a town supervisor (Ustawy. 1875, p. 25) and an administrator (Ustawy. 1875, pp. 25–27). At the same time, all offices not mentioned in “The Work of the Laws...” were abolished (Ustawy. 1875, p. 27).

⁶⁰ [...] *Pocziwej szlachcie, która wchodziła w skład tych komisji, nietylko chodziło o podniesienie mieszczanina, ile raczej o podniesienie z ruiny samego miasta*; Ptaśnik J. 1934, p. 413.

⁶¹ Deresiewicz J. 1966, p. 157.

⁶² Ustawy. 1875, p. V.

⁶³ Deresiewicz J. 1966, p. 174.

⁶⁴ Ustawy. 1875.

The Kalisz council was very active under the influence of the Commission, and a lot of interesting materials concerning its works have been left behind. Valuable information is provided especially by the “*Protocollon*. Book of laws passed as a result of the activities of the Good Order Commission” (“*Protocollon*. Księga rezolucji uchwalonych w wyniku działalności Komisji Dobrego Porządku”) covering the years 1780–1787,⁶⁵ and the “Book of contracts written as a result of the activities of the Good Order Commission and the Municipal Government of Kalisz” (1783–1794, “Księga kontraktów spisanych w wyniku działalności Komisji Dobrego Porządku i władz miejskich Kalisza”)⁶⁶ as well as other registers created in the course of the urban authorities’ activities in cooperation with the Commission.⁶⁷ In addition, throughout the period of the Commission’s operation, records of institutions such as the municipal tribunal⁶⁸ were created, on which the decisions of the commissioners did not leave much of a mark, but the information contained in them illustrates well the reality of Kalisz citizens. Also relevant are the legal norms regulating the life of the urban community: ordinances (*wilkierze*) passed by the municipal authorities.⁶⁹

As a result of the reforms of the 1760s and 1770s, the wide-ranging disciplinary authority over towns was exercised, in particular, by their vice-mayors, less frequently, by the heads of police.⁷⁰ The latter situation could be observed in Kalisz. The police head was the second most important person of the Kalisz urban officials, after the president (the third in the hierarchy was the *wójt*). He was elected for a three-year term. The town’s first head of police was Kazimierz Gibasiewicz (from 1783),⁷¹ a local merchant.⁷² He was succeeded by Stanisław Borucki (from 1786),⁷³ and later by Kazimierz Chylewski (from 1789).⁷⁴

The duties of the head of police, as defined in the “The Work of the laws of the Good Order Commission”, fell into several categories. Some stemmed from him being a member of the town council and actually serving as the town’s vice-mayor. Others, of more interest to the subject, included taking care of cleanliness (cleaning and taking garbage and mud out of the town), keeping town pavements, buildings and equipment (bridges, mills, gates, waterworks, gutters, wells, fire equipment, *etc.*) in good condition, removing beggars from the streets, taking decisions in the case of residents of the suburbs (especially the so-called “loose people” — people wandering around The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, undertaking various, not always legal, jobs), or keeping an eye on the integrity of butchers and bakers. Costs related to the performance of duties were paid from the municipal treasury. Once a year, the head was obliged to account for all money spent.⁷⁵

Such numerous and varied tasks could not, of course, be performed by the police head alone. To this end, he employed a number of people.⁷⁶ A sizable number of them helped carry out the tasks of ensuring public safety and order in the town. Some of these professions were completely

⁶⁵ APP, AmK, ref. I/239.

⁶⁶ APP, AmK, ref. I/240.

⁶⁷ Especially APP, AmK, ref. I/183.

⁶⁸ E.g. APP, AmK, ref. I/151; APP, AmK, ref. I/152; APP, AmK, ref. I/155.

⁶⁹ Statuty. 1972.

⁷⁰ Milik K. 2013, p. 342.

⁷¹ APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 11.

⁷² APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 126.

⁷³ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 30.

⁷⁴ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 86. Earlier, probably in 1780–1783, Chylewski held the office of cashier (Ustawy. 1875, p. 14).

⁷⁵ Ustawy. 1875, pp. 8–11.

⁷⁶ Maintaining so many employees required a lot of money, so new taxes were announced (1780); APP, AmK, ref. I/183, p. 98.

new. In 1776, oil lanterns were erected at each corner of the Kalisz market square and at the guard posts, improving security in the area.⁷⁷ The lanterns required servicing, daily lighting and extinguishing, as well as maintenance. In 1783, a contract was signed with Franciszek Trwalecki to perform these activities, but also to guard the guardhouse and lazaret around the clock.⁷⁸

Well known to the Kalisz townsmen were the town guards. There were four of them in addition to their commander — *hutman*.⁷⁹ Wincent Wesołowski's 1784 contract shows that not only did he receive a salary from his employer, but also clothing and footwear (split-sleeve overcoat, belt, boots, cap, shirt, a *katanka* jacket, etc.).⁸⁰ In the town accounts, we read about "caps for town guards matching the rest of the livery", and below that is the item "making a livery for two guards".⁸¹ Thus, the guardsmen wore uniformed clothes distinguishing them from other citizens and signalling their function. The guards could rely on their employer for assistance in times of hardship. In the book of income and expenses under the year 1782, there is the following entry: "I have given sick Franciszek, a town guard 4 [zlotys] to go to a barber surgeon"⁸² and "I have given sick Franciszek, a guard 13 [zlotys] 15 [groszys] for food".⁸³

With the advent of the cashier's office came the need for a guard to support this new official. The new employee had the same tasks as the town's guards, but primarily assisted the cashier in collecting taxes (he was to "collect taxes by his [cashier Czemplewicz's] order").⁸⁴ The expansion and specialisation of municipal institutions and offices resulted in parallel practice in employment of lower-level officials and functionaries.

The content of the oath that the town guards took upon being hired is known. They pledged obedience and loyalty to the town council as well as diligence and sobriety.⁸⁵ According to the oath, their job was to guard the town hall. However, we know from other records that they also performed such tasks as removing beggars from the streets. Upon capture, the beggars were placed in jail for a month,⁸⁶ and used as free labour to clean mud and muck from the streets. After serving their sentences, their heads were shaved and they were driven out of the town.⁸⁷ Not everyone was treated equally. Some of the beggars were considered effectively incapable of any work. If they had a certificate from a local doctor confirming that they were "rotten cripples", they were not imprisoned or expelled. Moreover, they were legally allowed to ask the Kalisz residents for alms. The harshest treatment was given to begging Jews. According to law, they were not to be allowed inside the town walls at all, on suspicion of carrying diseases and stealing.⁸⁸

Included among those threatening order in the town, listed in the "Works of Laws of the Good Order Commission", were vagabonds.⁸⁹ The regulations concerning them clearly served

⁷⁷ Rusiński W. 1988, p. 29.

⁷⁸ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 11.

⁷⁹ Ustawy. 1875, p. 29.

⁸⁰ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 17.

⁸¹ [...] *czapki dla pachółków miejskich przy barwie; Od roboty barwy na dwóch pachółków*; APP, AmK, ref. I/225, p. 8 (December 1782).

⁸² *Franciszkwowi pachółkowi miejskiemu na cyrulika 4 [złote]*; APP, AmK, ref. I/225, p. 6 (June 1782).

⁸³ *Franciszkwowi pachółkowi w chorobie strawnego dalem — 13 [złoty] 15 [groszy]*; APP, AmK, ref. I/225, p. 8 (December 1782).

⁸⁴ [...] *po podatkach z rozkazu jego [kasjera Czemplewicza] chodzić*; APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 44.

⁸⁵ Ustawy. 1875, p. 27.

⁸⁶ Prison cells were located in the basement and in the tower of the town hall (Rusiński W. 1976, pp. 221–222). The 1784 resolution, issued under the influence of royal decrees, ordered prisoners to be sent to the fortress in Kamieniec Podolski (APP, AmK, ref. I/239, pp. 38–39).

⁸⁷ Ustawy. 1875, p. 97.

⁸⁸ Ustawy. 1875, p. 97.

⁸⁹ Here I am using categories taken from the analysed sources, but it is worth remembering that they were indeed fluid and ambiguous, and people living outside the urban community undertook any activity, legal or illegal, that could provide them with a livelihood.

the interests of the nobility. Fugitive serf peasants (serfs) often tried to find a hiding place in towns, so the *boni ordinis* commissions, made up exclusively of noblemen, wanted to combat this practice. Any “fugitive, wandering, suspicious people”⁹⁰ were to be seized by the urban authorities that were obliged to notify their noble lords. For taking in a fugitive into one’s home or service, the townspeople faced a penalty equal to 50 marks (*grzywny*) and additional compensation paid to the lord of the peasant.⁹¹ Newcomers from closer or farther afield caused unease among the townsmen. The so-called vagabonds (*ludzie luźni, wałęsowie*) were suspected, often justifiably, of committing theft, fraud⁹² and assaults on the Kalisz residents. For this reason, the magistrate wanted to keep this potentially turbulent element under control and ordered that the head of police be notified of every newcomer admitted under one’s roof.⁹³

Not only strangers caused concern among the wealthiest burghers and commissioners. Local craftsmen, especially journeymen and apprentices, were considered a troublesome social group. The law of the Kalisz *Boni Ordinis* Commission strictly forbade “drunkenness and idleness on Mondays” for both journeymen and master craftsmen.⁹⁴ There are all too many examples of brawls among craftsmen and journeymen in the Kalisz court books.⁹⁵ A detail analysis of them is beyond the subject of this article, but I describe one case as an illustration of the problem. In 1783, some journeymen in the goldsmith’s craft were spending a quiet time in the company of a certain student named Judzewicz⁹⁶ in one of the numerous home taverns in Kalisz. In the same house, but in a different room, journeymen bakers were drinking alcohol. The bakers were looking for a fight: “several times, they opened and closed the door of that room with the journeymen goldsmiths and the student, looking for a quarrel with the journeymen goldsmiths”. Finally, the bakers, despite the lack of reaction from the goldsmiths and the student, impetuously entered the room, began to threaten and insult those present (among other things, by singing “scurrilous songs” (*szpetne piosnki*) that the witnesses of the incident found offensive). The attacked wanted to avoid a fight and left the inn, but this did not save them. Already in front of the building the bakers threw stones at them and continued insults (“You rascals, villains” — *wy chyćle [s], szelmy dwunastej próby*). Incidentally, they also threw stones at the surrounding windows that would surely have been smashed had it not been for the shutters protecting them. Then the baker’s journeymen “till midnight made noises, shouted, screamed”.⁹⁷ No one came to the aid of the terrorised goldsmiths and street residents. The few town guards probably would not have been able to control the situation. Therefore, it is not surprising that, from the Commission’s point of view, such incidents were disturbing, and journeymen were seen as a threatening element to public order.

Excessive alcohol consumption was seen as source of many policing problems. Municipal authorities tried to prevent situations similar to the one described above by forbidding the sale of

⁹⁰ [...] *ludzi zbiegłych, tułaczów, podejrzaných*; Ustawy. 1875, p. 98.

⁹¹ Ustawy. 1875, pp. 98–99.

⁹² The commissioners paid special attention to “jugglers” (*kuglarze*) extorting money in some kind of a gambling game — a lottery (Ustawy. 1875, p. 98).

⁹³ APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 44.

⁹⁴ *pijaństwa i próżnowania w poniedziałki*; Ustawy. 1875, p. 40.

⁹⁵ E.g. “Resolution on disturbances among the saddler’s apprentices” (1785; APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 124); “Resolution on quarrels in the shoemakers’ inn” (1785; APP, AmK, ref. I/239, pp. 141–142); “Decree of the shoemakers’ apprentices and their masters” (1786; APP, AmK, ref. I/239, pp. 205–206).

⁹⁶ Perhaps Judzewicz was a student at the school run by the National Education Commission at the former Jesuit college or at any of the parish schools.

⁹⁷ [...] *po kilka razy do drzwi tego alkiejza, w którym się złotnicka czeladź z studentem bawili, przychodząc, otwierali i zamykali drzwi szukając jakowej klótni z czeladzią złotniczą [...]; [...] do samej wpólnocy po ulicy halasy, krzyki, wrzaski wyrabiali [...]*; APP, AmK, ref. I/151, pp. 111–113.

alcoholic beverages “without ready money” (*bez pieniędzy gotowych*), i.e. on credit, to journeymen and in general to any “lightsome [reckless] people” (1783, *ludzi lekkich*).⁹⁸ A declaration of sobriety was required in the oath of the town’s guards, but also of other employees hired by the police head. Alcohol consumption must, therefore, have been a big problem among town personnel.⁹⁹ Wincent Wesołowski’s contract (1784) spelled out the exact penalty for any violation of this part of the pledge: “if he should ever get drunk, then he is to lose a whole month’s wage”.¹⁰⁰

Guards could be perceived as the workers associated with the town’s justice system. There were more such professions. For example, *woźny* (beadle, bailiff), the court representative acting as an intermediary between the court and the parties and between the parties themselves, whose main task was to “distribute lawsuits”.¹⁰¹ A similar role was played by the *wójt*’s guard (a court servant), delivering lawsuits in minor cases.¹⁰² The executor of the town court’s sentences in criminal cases was, naturally, the executioner. In 1784, the head of police signed a contract with the “master of justice” (*mistrz sprawiedliwości*) Jan Wojciech Kraysel. The contract detailed the types of punishments Kraysel was to administer: beheading with a sword, hanging and flogging. In addition to the salary, the Kalisz master of justice was guaranteed a roof over his head by the town — a house just outside a Piskorzew gate (“right next to the town wall”).¹⁰³

Some of the punishments, those that were dishonourable in nature, were carried out on a gallows, or near it. According to an early nineteenth-century plan, it was located on the road to Kokanin, not far behind the Toruńskie Suburb.¹⁰⁴ This location of the gallows is also confirmed by a reference from 1784: “a square in the vicinity of the town brick gallows, standing by the road to Stawiszyn”.¹⁰⁵

The complexity of the work demanded by the police head, or the municipal government, varied greatly. A town servant was supposed to undertake “whatever service the noble council, or any of the noble councillors, orders”.¹⁰⁶ Also skilled professionals of various occupations were needed and employed.

Special qualifications were required for the person looking after the town hall clock. The Kalisz town hall, although in poor condition in the discussed period,¹⁰⁷ boasted a ten-story tower that housed a bell¹⁰⁸ and a clock.¹⁰⁹ Town accounts show that from time to time the town

⁹⁸ 1783, APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 33. The resolution refers to “rioting or rebellious journeymen”, clearly indicating that this group of usually young men was seen as potentially dangerous, capable of threatening the social order. See Schindler N. 2002, pp. 381–410, chapter *Nocne życie codzienne w kulturze ludowej: awanturnicza młodzież, głośnie libacje i ciemne sprawy*.

⁹⁹ Ustawy. 1875, p. 27.

¹⁰⁰ [...] *gdyby się kiedykolwiek miał napić, tedy [ma] całomiesięczne strawne utracić*; APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 17.

¹⁰¹ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 18.

¹⁰² APP, AmK, ref. I/183, p. 62.

¹⁰³ [...] *zaraz przy murze miasta* [...]; APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 14.

¹⁰⁴ Kalisz. 1802.

¹⁰⁵ [...] *plac też pod szubienicami miejskimi murowanemi, ku Stawiszyna leżącemi* [...]; APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 15.

¹⁰⁶ [...] *wszelkiej posługi, co mu tylko szlachetny magistrat, lub też z szlachetnych radców który, co rozkaże* [...]; APP, AmK, ref. I/240, pp. 16–17.

¹⁰⁷ A description of the interior of the town hall, which also presents the other functions of its rooms, is included in the 1872 articles *Dawny ratusz w Kaliszu* (Chodyński A. 1872a; Chodyński A. 1872b; Chodyński A. 1872c; Chodyński A. 1872d). The building has not survived to our times, having burned down during the great fire of 1792.

¹⁰⁸ 20 June 1786; APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 186.

¹⁰⁹ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 30.

council paid for repairing and looking after the clock.¹¹⁰ In 1788, a Kalisz burgher Jan Koncza, a locksmith, was hired to perform these tasks. The contract obligated Koncza to, among other things, “buy oil for the maintenance of the clock with his own money”, and stipulated other upkeep procedures.¹¹¹ Not all of Koncza’s work could be done by himself. In 1786, a carpenter by the name of Karpiński was commissioned to make “a covering over the clock on the town hall tower”. This was justified by the fact that “in the town clock on the town hall tower, mounted with great effort and money, the parts, gears and springs break down due to frequent rains, frosts”.¹¹² Koncza’s work for the town was not limited to caring for the clock. He was also tasked with looking after the firefighters’ water pumps.¹¹³

Fire-safety was among the greatest concerns of the municipal authorities, and their major task, as designated by the Good Order Commission¹¹⁴. Fear of fire is understandable. In the 18th c. alone, there were five fires affecting much of the town (1706, 1765, 1770, 1784, 1792).¹¹⁵ The last of these was particularly devastating. It completely destroyed such prominent buildings as the town hall and the castle.¹¹⁶ The latter was in considerable ruins as early as 1627, but was partially rebuilt between 1726 and 1730.¹¹⁷ Later, again neglected, it was subject to slow devastation, but a review conducted on 1 November 1778 still mentions a castle (starost court) chancellery and an archive operating there.¹¹⁸

Already before the appointment of the Commission, efforts were made to take care of fire protection. For example, the ordinance of 16 January 1773, *i.e.* six years ahead of the establishment of the *Boni Ordinis* Commission for Kalisz, ordered the guild masters of all guilds “to appoint two young craftsmen from each guild to defend, God forbid, against fire [...] so that they go out to the fire without delay, under penalty on the disobedient”.¹¹⁹ The change which came with the establishment of the Commission was mostly limited to the appointment of a single person responsible for fire protection (the head of police). This seems to have resulted in gradually more detailed fire safety regulations.¹²⁰ Their frequent repetition, however, indicates the strong resistance of the Kalisz inhabitants to follow the instructions of the police head.¹²¹

Very detailed fire regulations were enacted by the Good Order Commission already in the first year of its actual operation (1780).¹²² First, it ordered the urban authorities to purchase

¹¹⁰ “To the clockmaker for repairing the town hall clock, in total, except for the iron, 170 [zlotys] 20 [groszys]” (June 1782, *Zegarmistrzowi od wyporządkowania zegara ratusznego, ogółem oprócz żelaza 170 [złoty] 20 [groszy]*; APP, AmK, ref. I/225, p. 5).

¹¹¹ [...] *oliwę do smarowania zegara swym kosztemłożyć* [...]; APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 70.

¹¹² [...] *pokrycia nad zegar na wierzy [s] ratusznej* [...]; [...] *zegar miasta na wieży ratusznej, wielkim nakładem i kosztem osadzony, przez częste deszcze, słoty [...] podpada w sztukach swych, kołach i sprężynach* [...]; APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 27.

¹¹³ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 6 (1783 contract); APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 30 (1786).

¹¹⁴ More on the fire threat in Kalisz in the end of the 18th c.: Szymański A. 2015.

¹¹⁵ Sowina U. et al. 2021, p. 123.

¹¹⁶ Sowina U. et al. 2021, pp. 138–140.

¹¹⁷ “The register of expenses associated with the Kalisz castle from 1726” (APP, AmK, ref. I/231, pp. 1–44).

¹¹⁸ Rusiński W. 1976, p. 226.

¹¹⁹ [...] *aby z każdego cechu po dwóch młodszych do bronienia, uchowaj Boże, ognia naznaczyli* [...], *żeby zaraz wychodzili, pod karą na nieposłusznych* [...]; Statuty. 1972, pp. 260–261.

¹²⁰ *E.g.* the recommendation to renovate a “desolate house” (*domek spustoszały*) for fear of the fire starting in it (1783; APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 22) or the threat of confiscation of goods such as sulfur, vodka, gunpowder “in the stores of the Jews” — *w sklepach u Żydów* — (1783; APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 22). In 1784, there was a reminder that “any guilds or persons” (*wszelkie cechy i osoby*) were obliged to rush to extinguish a fire (APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 46).

¹²¹ Statuty. 1972, p. 284.

¹²² Ustawy. 1875, p. 77–82.

within six months an additional “hose fire extinguisher” (*wężowej sikawki*) — a pump with a hose on a horse-drawn cart — since one was definitely not enough for such a large town. Moreover, the same equipment was also to be purchased by the Jewish community by 1 February 1781. The Commission recognised that the almost exclusively wooden buildings of the Jewish quarter were particularly vulnerable to fires.¹²³ However, as late as 10 June 1781, the council was still reminding the Jews of Kalisz to finally buy the firefighting equipment.¹²⁴ The urban authorities had apparently succeeded in completing the purchase of theirs by 1783, as we know that the aforementioned locksmith Jan Koncza had the care of the fire extinguishers in his duties.¹²⁵ So there must have been at least two pumps in Kalisz at the time. This did not mean the end of problems and expenses in that matter. In a note from 1784, the urban government orders that a “fire extinguisher repairman” (*magistra sikawki*) be brought from Leszno to fix one of them.¹²⁶

The causes of fires were usually inattention and negligence. Intentional arson occurred occasionally, as in 1706 as a result of warfare.¹²⁷ Efforts were made to ensure that chimneys were kept in good condition, as failure to remove soot could end in tragedy. In 1780, it was ordered that a chimney sweep be kept in the Jewish quarter,¹²⁸ but this concern applied to the entire town. Prior to the establishment of the Good Order Commission, regardless of whether in a Jewish or Christian home, if there were indications that someone was not complying with the rules, lay judges were sent there to conduct searches.¹²⁹ The head of police, on the other hand, was required to conduct such revisions regularly, once every six months.¹³⁰

Neglected chimneys may have been a cause of tragedy, but the list of dangers was much longer. In addition to those known for hundreds of years, such as carrying an exposed fire, in the 18th c. new emerged, such as smoking tobacco. A town ordinance of 3 June 1780 warns: “taking into consideration that carrying fire carelessly on pipes or [on] lids and smoking may lead to a spark unexpectedly falling somewhere, and then igniting the town, turning it into ruin, therefore to prevent such a misfortune to all citizens, we announce with a signal played on a trumpet on the four corners of the town, that no one should walk around with an exposed fire and smoking pipes”¹³¹ It was also dangerous to store flammable materials in improper conditions. In 1783, the magistrate ordered the confiscation of sulfur, vodka and gunpowder from those stores belonging to Jews that were uncapped or wooden.¹³² In 1786, a resolution was passed forbidding walking at night with a torch.¹³³ Such bans were repeated, indicating their low effectiveness.

Night was recognised as a particularly dangerous time when it comes to fire threat. Immersed in sleep, residents became aware of the spread of fire too late to be able to prevent it. The Commission, therefore, ordered the town to hire three night watchmen (two kept by the

¹²³ Ustawy. 1875, p. 78.

¹²⁴ APP, AmK, ref. I/183, p. 146.

¹²⁵ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 6.

¹²⁶ APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 43.

¹²⁷ Nowak A., Rusiński W. 1977, p. 139.

¹²⁸ Statuty. 1972, p. 272 (“Rules of Order of 5 April 1780”).

¹²⁹ Statuty. 1972, p. 261.

¹³⁰ Ustawy. 1875, p. 10.

¹³¹ [...] *zważając, iż przenoszenie nieostrożnie ognia na fajerkach lub [na] pokrywkach noszenie oraz i lulek palenie, skra się gdzie nadspodziewanie wpadłszy, przez zapal swój miastu ruinę przynieść by mogła, zapobiegając więc takowej nieszczęśliwości wszystkim ichnościom obywatelom, przez obwołanie na czterech rogach miasta i trąbą ogłoszenie, aby nikt nie ważył się tak pokrywkami, jako też fajerkami, ognia nosić i lulek palić [...]*; Statuty. 1972, p. 275.

¹³² APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 22.

¹³³ Only the title of this resolution is preserved in the town’s ledger; its full contents are missing (APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 226).

town, and the third by the local synagogue). Their duty was to patrol the streets of the town and suburbs every night looking out for a fire. If they discovered it, they were to warn the townsmen by ringing the bell on the town hall. At the agreed times, as announced by the clock on the town hall tower, they also gave the signal to extinguish all fires (“by singing or piping” — *przez śpiewanie lub piszczałkę*).¹³⁴

One of the Commission’s orders was to place four jugs always filled with water at the wells located in the town square.¹³⁵ However, early modern Kalisz, at least since 1540, was also supplied with water by means of a water supply system.¹³⁶ After the appointment of the office of the head of police, the duty of ensuring its efficiency rested on his shoulders. Therefore, in 1783, Gibasiewicz signed a one-year contract with the water-pipe-master Ignacy Kaczmarek of Ogrody, who was to “keep a good eye on it so that [...] water is never in short supply in the town”.¹³⁷ Both in summer (when the pipes can break) and in winter (when water can freeze). The pipes were made of wood and were wearing out, so they were replaced with new, freshly hollowed out ones.¹³⁸ The pipe-master had work tools provided by the town: an auger, a saw, an axe, two clamps, a shovel and chains.

Keeping Kalisz clean was one of the main goals set for the committees of good order. The great problem of early modern towns was mud, muck and excrement, both human and animal. The Kalisz Commission enacted a law ordering, under penalty of 50 marks, the regular emptying of outhouses “from which fumes are harmful to human health”. The excrement was to be collected in locked boxes kept on one’s property and taken away once a month, at night, by “goldsmiths” or, as we would say today, septic tank servicers.¹³⁹ In popular culture, the waste and excreta are symbolically associated with gold or money, hence the surprising name of this profession.¹⁴⁰

Another law of the *Boni Ordinis* Commission ordered all property owners in Kalisz to lay cobblestones, at their own expense, in the street in front of their property, or to repair and clean the existing ones. To keep them neat, the owner was required to clean them twice a week, on Tuesdays and Saturdays. To this end, it was also forbidden to let pigs and cows out on the town streets, as well as to “pour excrement out of the windows or doors of the houses or into the gutters, and to throw manure into the streets, even at the back [of the houses]”.¹⁴¹ Town accounts from the 1780s show that municipal authorities paid (irregularly, usually no more than once a month) to clean mud from the streets.¹⁴² Sometimes the pretext for this was celebrations taking place in the streets, such as a procession.¹⁴³ Salaried workers, but also prisoners, were employed for cleaning.¹⁴⁴ Gutters helped to keep the streets tidy. Two of each were laid out, near the

¹³⁴ Ustawy. 1875, p. 96.

¹³⁵ Ustawy. 1875, p. 78.

¹³⁶ Sowina U. 2013, p. 220. In 1601, a second water supply was built for the Jesuit college (Nowak A., Rusiński W. 1977, p. 150).

¹³⁷ [...] *dobrze pilnować, aby [...] wody nigdy w mieście nie brakowało*; APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 5. Subsequent contracts with pipe-masters are found on pp. 23 (1786), 31 (1786), 77 (1788) and 96 (1791).

¹³⁸ “To the pipe-master, for hollowing out 26 trees, and setting up the pieces — 45 [złoty] 18 [groszy]” (*Rurmistrzowi od wywiercenia drzewa sztuk 26 i onegoż wprawienia — 45 [złoty] 18 [groszy]*); APP, AmK, ref. I/225, p. 6.

¹³⁹ [...] *z których szkodliwe zdrowiu ludzkiemu z fetorów wynikają skutki* [...]; Ustawy. 1875, p. 75.

¹⁴⁰ Wasilewski J. 2010, pp. 312–313.

¹⁴¹ [...] *wylewania fecessów oknami albo drzwiami z domów lub na rynny, i wyrzucania gnoju na ulice, nawet zatyłne* [...]; Ustawy. 1875, p. 76.

¹⁴² APP, AmK, ref. I/225, pp. 5–10.

¹⁴³ APP, AmK, ref. I/225, p. 5.

¹⁴⁴ “To two Jewish prisoners and a man cleaning the town with them — 2 [złoty] 10 [groszy]” (*Żydom więźniom dwóm i człowiekowi z nimi chędożącemu miasto — 2 [złoty] 10 [groszy]*), November 1782; APP, AmK, ref. I/225, p. 8.

edges, on the main streets (Wrocławska, Toruńska, Panny Marii, perhaps on St. Stanisław).¹⁴⁵ Other streets had one gutter running down in the middle.¹⁴⁶

In 1779, the town council ordered the relocation of pigsties from the vicinity of the town hall and prohibited the presence of non-horn cattle there.¹⁴⁷ The changing sensitivity toward animal filth issues can also be seen in the 1786 law. Among other aesthetic considerations, the municipal authorities ordered that the hog market be moved outside the town from under the town walls ("by the road to Tyniec" — *przy gościńcu miejskim od Tyńca*). The new location of the market was marked with an inscribed pole. The decision was motivated, on the one hand, by the disorder and dirt left in the square after each pork market, and, on the other hand, by concern for the ancient town walls, which the pigs were undermining.¹⁴⁸

The Kalisz residents viewed Żydowska Street as particularly messy. Already a description from 1637 shows it as very neglected: "which to this day infects the whole town with its great filth and fumes".¹⁴⁹ An equally unfavourable picture emerges from the 1778 "The inspection of His Majesty's Town": "This Żydowska Street is swamped with dung, needs a new pavement and cleaning".¹⁵⁰ The following year, the magistrate ordered the Kalisz Jews to immediately remove the mud from Żydowska Street and to clean it regularly.¹⁵¹ It seems that assuming that the main tract running through the Jewish quarter of Kalisz was exceptionally dirty derived from a stereotype.¹⁵² The rest of the town didn't look much better, as evidenced by the town records.¹⁵³

The aforementioned law ordering townspeople to pave the area in front of their properties¹⁵⁴ probably had no effect. So the magistrate took matters into its own hands. It raised money for this purpose from the sale of town-owned plots of land.¹⁵⁵ In 1784, the head of police signed a contract with paving contractor Kazimierz Dobrowniewski to pave Panny Marii (St Mary's) Street. The street was to have a slope allowing water to flow down through gutters.¹⁵⁶ The contract contains very precise instructions for the work: "In this paving, benches of large stones are to be densely laid, between these benches smaller stones are to be laid, and the digging should be more vertical [deeper] than horizontal".¹⁵⁷ Later on, the municipal authorities ordered the paving of more streets: Piskorzewska,¹⁵⁸ an unnamed street "[going] towards the Horse Market" (*ku końskiemu targowisku*),¹⁵⁹ Toruńska Street (as early as 1790)¹⁶⁰, and even in the Toruńskie Suburb (1791).¹⁶¹ Some of the smaller streets were impassable, as they were fenced or blocked.

¹⁴⁵ Rusiński W. 1988, p. 29.

¹⁴⁶ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 24.

¹⁴⁷ Statuty. 1972, p. 270.

¹⁴⁸ APP, AmK, ref. I/239, pp. 165–166.

¹⁴⁹ [...] *która po te czasy wielkim plugastwem i fetorami wszystko miasto szpecila i zarażała* [...]; APP, AmK ref. I/81, p. 240.

¹⁵⁰ Rusiński W. 1976, p. 224.

¹⁵¹ APP, AmK, ref. I/183, p. 35.

¹⁵² Tokarska-Bakir J. 2008, p. 368.

¹⁵³ Rusiński W. 1988, pp. 22–23. It is not uncommon to find complaints of this type in town books from the early modern period, e.g. against a neighbor who stores pig faeces under his windows, making a stench in the house that one can't stand (APP, AmK, ref. I/69, p. 620).

¹⁵⁴ Ustawy. 1875, p. 76.

¹⁵⁵ For example, in 1784, the sale of an empty square was to finance the paving of Panny Marii (St Mary's) Street (APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 50).

¹⁵⁶ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 19.

¹⁵⁷ [...] *w tym bruku ławy z wielkich kamieni gęsto układać, pomiędzy temiż ławami kamienie pomniejsze, jako w samych ławach na sztorc a nie na płask wkopywać*; APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 19.

¹⁵⁸ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 24.

¹⁵⁹ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 63.

¹⁶⁰ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 67.

¹⁶¹ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, p. 91.

It was only at the behest of the Good Order Commission that some of them were opened, such as the passage between St. Nicholas and Piskorzewska Streets or the passage between Piekarska and Skocka Streets.¹⁶²

The cleanup work carried out under the influence of the *Boni Ordinis* Commission also included repairs of town buildings and structures. A great deal of effort and expense was made to keep the town hall in usable condition. In 1784, the ceiling in the main hall of the Kalisz government headquarters was in danger of collapsing, so the town council ordered that it be “quickly saved” (*gwałtownie zratowane*).¹⁶³ In the same year, new windows were inserted in the upper hall of the Kalisz authorities’ headquarters, and repairs were ordered to the places in the town hall that needed it more.¹⁶⁴ Bridges¹⁶⁵ and armories (*cekhauz*)¹⁶⁶ were also restored. Numerous repair works of various scales were undertaken by Kalisz during the period of the Good Order Commission.

It is a very difficult task to assess the effects of the activities of the Kalisz *Boni Ordinis* Commission. It is evident from the town records that on more than one occasion, the municipal authorities carried out numerous works and reforms on the direct orders of the commissioners. Many of the Commission’s recommendations introduced changes that were not just superficial, improving the town’s aesthetics, but potentially improving the quality of life of its residents and the effectiveness of town politics. The councillors of Kalisz wanted the town’s condition to better, which is reflected in a resolution to apply for a change in the town’s tax classification to the higher, first.¹⁶⁷ This entailed a greater financial burden due to the king,¹⁶⁸ but undoubtedly increased the prestige of the old urban centre and showed its ambition.


Eight years of the Commission’s actual activity is too short a period to determine whether the changes it introduced had a positive impact on the economic condition of the town and the lives of its residents. It is also impossible to assess their far-reaching effects; the partitions of Poland meant that all the Commission’s reforms were overturned and the invaders introduced new orders. Even more significant was the great fire of the town in 1792. If by then the situation of Kalisz had been indeed improving, the catastrophe not only nullified all the progress but even made the living conditions much worse. One can view this dramatic event as an exam that the town and the *Boni Ordinis* Commission failed to pass. Despite devoting a lot of resources and time to protecting Kalisz from the fire, they failed to secure the town from this disaster.

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¹⁶² Rusiński W. 1986, p. 19.

¹⁶³ APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 50.

¹⁶⁴ APP, AmK, ref. I/239, pp. 92–93.

¹⁶⁵ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, pp. 64, 92; APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 63 (“Repair of bridges ruined by water and wells this year”, 1785).

¹⁶⁶ APP, AmK, ref. I/240, pp. 45–46.

¹⁶⁷ APP, AmK, ref. I/239, p. 247.

¹⁶⁸ Deresiewicz J. 1966, p. 182.

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