



Formation and Dynamics of an Intellectual Community of the Late Middle Ages: Polish Conciliarists, Kraków University, and Catalan Theologian Marcus Bonifili¹

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Abstract: This article aims to reconstruct the rules that facilitated the emergence and sustenance of an intellectual community composed of a group of Polish conciliarists centered around Kraków University and the Catalan theologian, Professor Marcus Bonifili (d. 1453), who served as a delegate at the Council of Basel. The Council of Basel, spanning 1431-1449, provided a space for mutual interactions, not only geographically but also within a shared mental space, where ideas, hopes, and interests converged. Within this space, specific individuals came together, creating a community founded on political alliances, mutual respect, shared antipathies, rational considerations, and emotional experiences. By analyzing certain Basel, Catalan, Polish, and Czech sources, this article examines the elements and conditions contributing to forming such a community, including common ideas, authority, financial support, favors, political ties, and networks of cultural exchange and dissemination. This investigation enables the characterization of the community's nature and foundations, emphasizing strong emotional bonds and a broader network of personal, institutional, and political relations. The findings shed light on the intricate dynamics of intellectual communities during the Council of Basel, highlighting the multifaceted interactions that shaped their identity and longevity.

Keywords: Council of Basel; conciliarism; medieval intellectual community; personal relations; Marcus Bonifili; intellectual exchange

ES Formación y dinámicas de una comunidad intelectual de finales de la Edad Media: los conciliaristas polacos, la Universidad de Cracovia y el teólogo catalán Marcus Bonifili

Resumen: Este artículo tiene como objetivo reconstruir las reglas que facilitaron la aparición y el mantenimiento de una comunidad intelectual compuesta por un grupo de conciliaristas polacos centrados en la Universidad de Cracovia y el teólogo catalán, el profesor Marcus Bonifili (f. 1453), quien actuó como delegado en el Concilio de Basilea. El Concilio de Basilea, que se desarrolló entre 1431 y 1449, proporcionó un espacio para interacciones mutuas, no solo en términos geográficos, sino también dentro de un espacio mental compartido, donde convergían ideas, esperanzas e intereses. En este espacio, determinados individuos se reunieron,

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creando una comunidad basada en alianzas políticas, respeto mutuo, antipatías compartidas, consideraciones racionales y experiencias emocionales. A partir del análisis de diversas fuentes de Basilea, catalanas, polacas y checas, este artículo examina los elementos y condiciones que contribuyeron a la formación de dicha comunidad, entre ellos las ideas comunes, la autoridad, el apoyo financiero, los favores, los vínculos políticos y las redes de intercambio y difusión cultural. Esta investigación permite caracterizar la naturaleza y los fundamentos de la comunidad, destacando la existencia de fuertes lazos emocionales y de una red más amplia de relaciones personales, institucionales y políticas. Los resultados arrojan luz sobre las complejas dinámicas de las comunidades intelectuales durante el Concilio de Basilea, subrayando las interacciones multifacéticas que configuraron su identidad y su perdurabilidad.

Palabras clave: Concilio de Basilea; conciliarismo; comunidad intelectual medieval; relaciones personales; Marcus Bonifili; intercambio intelectual

Sumario: 1. Introduction; 2. In and out of Basel; 3. Fundamentals of Community Building; 3.1. Common ideas; 3.2. Respect and authority; 3.3. Transfer of ideas and knowledge; 3.4. Time together - travel - trust; 3.5. Favours and financial support; 4. Summary: A network of connections and dissemination; 5. Bibliography.

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1. Introduction²

In the late spring of 1444, Alexander, duke of Mazovia, Baselian pseudocardinal and bishop of Trent, was dying of a serious illness in Vienna. The details of his agony were reported in three letters to Juan of Segovia and Giovanni Peregallo by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, a close collaborator of the duke, with whom he shared conciliar views – at least up to a certain point³. These letters from Aeneas⁴ are a rich source of information about who accompanied Alexander in his last days and what the situation looked like after the death of the Tridentine bishop. Besides Aeneas himself, the unnamed Poles, the Catalan theologian Marcus Bonifili, and the archdeacon of Ascoli Piceno Lorenzo da Rotella attended Alexander's deathbed. When the bishop passed away, a conflict arose among those present during his last moments. According to Aeneas' report, Bonifili initiated Lorenzo's arrest over money the Italian conciliarist had received from Alexander, which the Poles demanded to be returned. Moreover, before his death, Alexander had appointed Marcus as envoy, which could not be legally done, since Alexander himself was serving as an envoy *de latere*⁵.

In a letter to a prominent member of the Council of Basel, Juan of Segovia, Aeneas negatively assessed the behavior of the Poles and Marcus Bonifili. He was deeply moved by

² Used abbreviations: BP = Bullarium Poloniae; CB = Concilium Basiliense, CE = Codex epistolaris, BJ = Biblioteka Jagiellońska (Jagiellonian Library, Kraków), ACA = Acta Camerae Apostolicae, BC = Biblioteca de Catalunya (Barcelona), EID = Epistulae a Ioanne Dlugossio.

³ *Der Briefwechsel*, vol. I, pp. 332-337.

⁴ The letters should be read in the broader perspective of the so-called semantics of the turn (a term proposed by Johannes Helmrath), related to the change of sympathies from pro-conciliarist to pro-papal, which occurred in the life of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini in the years 1442-1445. *Vid.* Helmrath, "Die zweite Dekade", pp. 343-345; O'Brien, "Letters of Alliance", pp. 73-103; Grzybowska, "Trzy listy Eneasza", pp. 217-249.

⁵ More information on Alexander of Mazovia: Bąkowski, "Książę Aleksander", pp. 1-34 and 129-163; Piotrowicz, "Aleksander", pp. 64-65; Strnad, "Alessandro di Masovia", pp. 3-45; Woś, *Alessandro di Masovia*; Woś, "Aleksander Mazowiecki", pp. 17-31.

Lorenzo's fate, which he interpreted as the handiwork of Fortune⁶. The goddess's executioners were referred to as the *familiares* of the deceased pseudocardinal. Piccolomini endeavored to liberate his compatriot and friend. This influenced his attitude toward other companions of duke Alexander's last days. In the passages of the letter, Aeneas revealed a situation involving Marcus Bonifili, who gained fame among conciliarists due to his successful legation to Poland in 1440⁷. Bonifili acquired significant power from Alexander, who essentially granted him the same authority as the pseudocardinal, creating a situation in which a legate appointed another legate. Piccolomini, a jurist, expressed concern over this situation, emphasizing that a legate *de latere* should not delegate his special powers to another person. Despite objections, it appeared – as Aeneas reported desperately – that Bonifili may intend to use these powers, possibly in Poland. Piccolomini warned Segovia of Marcus's cunning nature, noting his involvement in the captivity of Lorenzo da Rotella. He concluded his letter with a precautionary appeal to ensure that Bonifili's talkativeness and greed do not tarnish the Council's favor among the Poles, highlighting the potential risks posed by a deceitful ally and the importance of safeguarding the Council's reputation⁸.

Who, then, was this Marcus Bonifili, about whom the future pope spoke so negatively, calling him a greedy and garrulous fool, and a two-faced enemy? Aeneas' letter already revealed that Marcus was a member of the Council of Basel, who became famous for his effective diplomatic mission to Poland and enjoyed great respect and authority among Poles. Marcus' dishonorable behavior, in Piccolomini's opinion, could overshadow his contributions to the Council. Aeneas emphasized that Lorenzo da Rotella, now betrayed by a Catalan envoy, was Bonifili's benefactor and granted him many favors, including covering his expenses. Piccolomini pointed out that Marcus was willing to act in violation of the law, was ungrateful for Lorenzo's help, and even called him a villain.

However, the conflict between Piccolomini and Bonifili in Vienna in the early spring of 1444 was not the first time their paths crossed. Having served the same cause – at least up to a point – namely the conciliarist idea, they probably encountered each other frequently. Piccolomini, in his first version of the history of the Council of Basel, written in the middle of 1440, mentioned Bonifili's sermon, delivered six days before the election of the pseudopope Felix V (30 October 1439), on the day the conclave began⁹. Here, Aeneas described Marcus as a theologian of happy memory (*insignis memoriae theologus*)¹⁰ and summarized the idea of the Bonifili's sermon, which contrasted Gabriel Condulmaro (i.e., Eugene IV, deposed by the Council) with the predicted ideal pope the Council hoped to elect¹¹. Throughout the entire work of *De gestis*, the future pope was rather critical of the delegation from Catalonia and Aragon, drawing attention to the loudness and obstinacy of the envoys.

Therefore, what connects the above-mentioned persons – pseudocardinal Alexander, Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, Marcus Bonifili, Giovanni Peregallo, Juan of Segovia, and Lorenzo da Rotella – is the Council of Basel. Aeneas' letters from early June 1444 testify to the close relationship between Bonifili, duke Alexander, and the Poles from Alexander's court. Strong bonds often attach a wide network of personal, institutional, financial, and political relations. The Council of Basel lasted far longer than earlier councils, allowing for closer ties. Its long duration helped to develop initiatives of cultural diffusion and extraordinary growth in the

⁶ *Der Briefwechsel*, vol. I, p. 339.

⁷ Fijałek, *Mistrz Jakób z Paradyża i Uniwersytet Krakowski*; Grzybowska, „Kataloński teolog”, pp. 65–69.

⁸ *Der Briefwechsel*, vol. I, pp. 336–337.

⁹ Piccolomini, *De gestis concilii*, p. 224.

¹⁰ It was in the Middle Ages one of the most important, desirable features of creating the portrait of a scholar. *Vid.* Carruthers, “Introduction”, pp. 1–7.

¹¹ Bonifili preached a passionate sermon enumerating the faults, sins, and omissions of pope Eugene IV. He presented an ideal model of the pope, based primarily on the Song of Songs and the work *De Consideratione* of Bernard of Clairvaux, with indirect allusions to Amadeus VIII, the duke of Savoy, as a potential candidate. Two known copies: Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, Akc. 1948/788, ff. 128r–133r and Augsburg, Archiv des Bistums, MS 41, ff. 111r–125r.

production of books, treatises, letters, decrees, etc. These personal relationships were built within networks that facilitated the exchange of ideas and the dissemination of knowledge and culture. These relationships, admittedly very elusive and fleeting, are not always perceptible, but they exerted a real influence on political decisions. As a result of meeting specific individuals in this space, a community can be born based on the foundations of political alliances and personal friendships, respect, and emotions. The emergence and persistence of a community, built of two foundational elements: the assembly of Polish intellectuals – mostly conciliarists – centered around the University of Kraków and Marcus Bonifili, a theology professor from Catalonia and member of the Basel Council, will be expounded upon herein. It is essential to acknowledge the inherent incompleteness of this reconstruction, discernible solely through conventionalized sources and admittedly possessing an intermittent and precarious nature. The formation of such a community rests upon several elements, forming the groundwork for analyzing the dynamics between Marcus Bonifili and the Polish intellectual elite. These elements encompass networks of mutual dependencies, bonds of friendship, respect, shared interests, common ideas and beliefs, support structures, and shared emotions.

This article attempts to trace the birth and development of the relationship between Marcus Bonifili and the Polish intellectual elite and to define its foundations. Undoubtedly, the basic field, without the context of which it is difficult to analyze the birth and forms of community existence, is the Council of Basel and its internal dynamics. Therefore, the article comprises two parts. The initial section provides an overview of Bonifili's role as an envoy and ambassador of the Council in Poland, highlighting his participation in Polish intellectuals' schismatic actions and decisions. The subsequent section explores the multifaceted relationships between the Polish intellectual elite and Marcus Bonifili. This analysis is built upon letters, sermons, instructions, registers, and other documents that constitute the foundational elements of the emerging community. These include common ideas, mutual respect, authority, financial support, knowledge transfer, reliance, favors, and political interests.

A detailed analysis of these issues has not yet been undertaken. Although works have been published since the end of the nineteenth century on the relations of Polish intellectuals and diplomats with the Council of Basel and the Basel schism (Fijałek, Grosse, Ożóg, Graff)¹², and even on the role played by Marcus Bonifili in the process of strengthening pro-conciliarist sympathies among Polish professors and part of the clergy (Fijałek, Grosse)¹³, the nature of these relations has been the subject of only one preliminary study so far. The study provides a starting point for further research without in-depth interpretations of the nature of these relationships (Grzybowska)¹⁴.

2. In and out of Basel

The history of the Council of Basel is complex and multifaceted. While it focuses on the most important topics and problems faced by Europe during those times, it is also a precursor of inevitable changes, both in the religious sphere and in the balance of secular power in Europe. Basel was not only a space in the geographical sense but also a realm of mutual interaction, a mental place where ideas, hopes, and interests met. The Council united people from diverse European backgrounds. Intense communication between theologians, diplomats, representatives of local and central authorities, and professors, among others, resulted in numerous documents created to influence opinions and decisions at the gathering, both within and outside Basel¹⁵. Therefore, when examining the issues related to the Council of Basel, it is worth taking into account not only religious and legal questions, but also the meetings between different

¹² Fijałek, *Mistrz Jakób z Paradyża*; Wunsch, *Konziliarismus und Polen*, pp. 72-122; Graff, „Biskup krakowski”, pp. 195-204; Graff, „Katolicki episkopat”, pp. 55-129; Graff, *Episkopat monarchii*; Ożóg, „Pierwsi Jagiellonowie”, pp. 328-329.

¹³ Fijałek, *Mistrz Jakób z Paradyża*; Grosse, *Stosunki Polski*.

¹⁴ Grzybowska, „Kataloński teolog”, pp. 55-89.

¹⁵ *A Companion to the Council of Basel*, ed. M. Decaluwé and others, p. 3.

people, their conversations, sharing of ideas, building of community, and the foundations of friendship.

Basel, like Constance before, became a center of intellectual exchange and a point where various cultural trends and tendencies met. When analyzing cultural relations and intellectual inspirations in the 1430s and 1440s in Europe, the circumstances and opportunities created by the Council cannot be overestimated. This is also visible in Poland¹⁶, where one of the significant cultural factors, apart from the travels and contacts in Basel, is the relations and ties with the envoy of the Council, Marcus Bonifili, who lived in Poland for a few years. Therefore, it is necessary to present Marcus' relations with the Poles as a member of the Council in matters closely related to the conciliar delegation. This will illuminate why Bonifili became integrated into the community of Kraków academics. Had it not been for the Basel, such a fruitful meeting would not have been possible.

The Council of Basel was convened based on the arrangements coming from the Council of Constance (especially the *Frequens* decree) and the decisions of pope Martin V and the Council of Pavia/Sienna (1424), which set the date and place of the new council. According to these decisions, a new council was to begin in Basel in 1431 to reform the Church *in capite* and *in membris*. The Council began in February 1431, but in the same month, Martin V died, and the newly elected to the See of Peter Gabriel Condulmaro, who took the name of Eugene IV, was in favor of consolidating papal power and strengthening papal authority.

The first conflict between conciliarists and the pope arose at the very beginning of the Council. Through papal bulls issued on 12 November 1431 and 18 December 1431, Eugene IV tried to dissolve the council and relocate it to Bologna. During the third session, which took place on April 19, 1432, relations between the Council and the pope were considered and the inadmissibility of dissolving a legally convened Council was emphasized¹⁷. In 1437, the pope, contrary to the earlier decisions of the Council, relocated it to Ferrara, and those who opposed the move and stayed in Basel were excommunicated. On 10 January 1439, the pope moved the Council to Florence, and there, on 6 July 1439, the bull of union with the Greeks, *Laetentur coeli*, was announced. The unions (also with the Copts and the Armenians) were a significant, although short-lived, success for Eugene IV, who aimed to use it for propaganda purposes in the fight against the Baselians¹⁸. On 25 June 1439, Eugene IV was deposed by the Baselian fathers. The sessions in Basel lasted *de facto* until 1443 (16 May 1443), although Felix V had already moved to Lausanne in 1442.

The beginning of the Council met with great interest in Poland, stemming from the conciliarist sympathies that had been present at Kraków University since the Council of Constance¹⁹. Most Polish intellectuals favored or viewed the issues of conciliarism with kindness²⁰. Numerous representatives of the Polish elite came to Basel, in various roles and for various religious and political purposes.

Delegates from the king of Aragon also arrived in Basel in quite large numbers²¹. The envoys from the Iberian Peninsula, or those subject to Alfonso V, were primarily pro-conciliar, though not all of them shared this stance²². Anti- and pro-conciliar sympathies were often associated with the preferences of individual rulers. Ultimately, secular rulers had decided the fate of the

¹⁶ Cf. Nothaft, „Thomas Strzemiński”, pp. 171-182; Włodarski, *Dwa wieki*, pp. 65-66.

¹⁷ *Dokumenty soborów powszechnych*, pp. 284-291.

¹⁸ Decaluwé, *A Successful Defeat*.

¹⁹ Markowski, „Doktrynalne podstawy”, pp. 77-89; Włodek, „Eklezjologia krakowska”, pp. 383-418; Swieżawski, *Eklezjologia późnośredniowieczna*; Wunsch, *Konziliarismus und Polen*.

²⁰ Wunsch, *Konziliarismus und Polen*, pp. 73-75; Graff, *Episkopat monarchii jagiellońskiej*; Grzybowska, „Was Mikołaj”, pp. 1-24.

²¹ Goñi Gaztambide, „Concilio de Basilea y España”, pp. 180-208; Grohe, „Spanien und die großen Konzilien”, p. 493-509; Goñi Gaztambide, „Presencia de España”, pp. 25-114; Suárez Fernández, *Castilla, el cisma*.

²² Beltrán de Heredia, „La embajada de Castilla”, pp. 1-27; Álvarez Palenzuela, „La situación europea”, pp. 9-292; Prügl, „Die Predigten am Fest”, pp. 145-199; Horst, *Die Lehrautorität des Papstes*; Izbicki, *Protector of the faith*; Meuthen, „Juan González”, pp. 250-293; Nörr, *Kirche und Konzil*.

Council, and their delegates represented the views of their principals²³. In the case of Alfonso, the relationship was more complicated and more dependent on the political situation in Rome, whereby in 1443, the king of Aragon reconciled with Eugene IV²⁴.

Marcus Bonifili came to Basel in 1438 as an envoy of Alfonso V. Little is known about his life prior to his involvement in the Council²⁵. He came from Castello d'Empuries, was a professor of theology, and a cantor in Barcelona²⁶. In the second half of the 1420s, he was a canon and administrator of the chapter of the church of Saint John in Perpignan, and at the request of Joan de Casanovas, he organized the *Lectoria* in Perpignan²⁷. He held a benefice in the chapel of Notre Dame in Perpignan²⁸ and lectured at the university there²⁹. In the years 1433-1435, he preached in the local Carmelite church³⁰. He served as the procurator of the bishop of Terralba in Sardinia and as the administrator of the parish church of St. Lawrence in Valencia³¹. During the Council of Basel, in the years 1438-1439, Bonifili preached sermons on various occasions³². After the schism of 1439, he stayed in Basel where he became involved with the deputation for the reform of the Church (*deputatio reformatorii*) and worked as a collector of emoluments³³.

On 21 September 1440, Bonifili was delegated as an envoy to Poland and Bohemia³⁴. Together with Stanisław Sobniowski³⁵, Dzierław of Borzymów,³⁶ and the knight Guillome de Balmy, he arrived in Poznań on 22 October 1440, where he met with the bishop of Poznań, Andrzej of Brnin³⁷.

²³ Watanabe, "Authority and Consent", p. 226.

²⁴ Kùchler, "Alfons V. von Aragon", pp. 131-146; Kern, "Beyond Borders", p. 24; Álvarez Palenzuela, "Alfonso V, rey de Nápoles", pp. 509-522; Álvarez Palenzuela, "Relaciones entre Aragón y Castilla", pp. 21-44; Canabal Rodríguez, "Notas sobre la política religiosa", pp. 111-120; Cañizares Gómez, "Papado, monarquía y ciudad", pp. 97-119.

²⁵ Grzybowska, „Kataloński teolog”, pp. 58-62.

²⁶ *Metryka*, p. 210.

²⁷ Ponsich, *Le mystère*, p. 18. According to the regulations of the Fourth Lateran Council, cathedral or collegiate chapters designated a benefice for a theologian who, as a theology lector, taught the local clergy, lectured on theology and preached sermons. This, it seems, defines the nature of the function performed by Bonifili in the chapter of the church of Saint John in Perpignan. Cf. Bracha, "Teolog", p. 139.

²⁸ *Inventaire sommaire*, p. 435.

²⁹ *Les statuts et privilèges*, pp. 703-705.

³⁰ BC, 478, ff. 65r-70r.

³¹ CB VI 590; CB VI 455.

³² First is a sermon for Trinity Sunday (May 27, 1438), Erlangen-Nürnberg, Universitätsbibliothek, MS 534, ff. 136v-139v. Another sermon is for the St. Jacob the Elder day (25 July 1438), preserved in two copies: in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Laud Misc 96, ff. 5v-10v and in Brunswick, Stadtbibliothek Braunschweig, MS 80, ff.108v-115v. The third sermon was pronounced on the first Sunday of Lent in 1439 on a Council of Basel – BC, 478, ff. 94r-94v. Bonifili also delivered the above-mentioned sermon at the mass inaugurating the conclave on October 30, 1439.

³³ CB VII, 446.

³⁴ CB VII, 250. Apart from Bonifili, the spokesman for the Council in Bohemia was Jerome Vogelsang, provost of the cathedral in Olomouc, who, according to pseudocardinal Louis Aleman's letter to *Oldřich II* of Rosenberg in 1441, was involved with Bonifili in the conciliar affairs in Bohemia. *Listář a listinář*, p. 163; Schwarz, *Kurienuniversität*, pp. 401-402.

³⁵ Stanisław of Sobniów (d. 1454) was a provost of Trent, a member of the Council of Basel to Poland, and an apostolic pronotary. In 1423, he became the chancellor of the Duchy of Trent, where he went with the duke of Masovia, Alexander, who took over the Trent bishopric. After the Basel schism, as a declared conciliarist, he sided with the Council and Felix V. From the end of 1440, he stayed in Kraków, serving as a member of the Council of Basel, and lecturing at the University of Kraków. Wolski, "Stanisław Sobniowski", pp. 537-540.

³⁶ Dzierław of Borzymów (d. 1452), a doctor of canon law at Kraków University. In 1433, he was appointed a royal envoy to Basel, and in 1439 – appointed as a representative of the bishop of Kraków, Zbigniew Oleśnicki. He participated in the deposition of Eugene IV and the election of Felix V. He was a Baselian delegate to France and Poland, and from 1441 an envoy to Felix V. Glemma, "Borzynowski Dersław", p. 370; Zdanek, "Dzierław z Borzymowa", pp. 49-50.

³⁷ *Acta capitulorum*, 519. Andrzej of Brnin's steadfast rejection was rooted in his personal animosity towards his rival, Mikołaj Lasocki, a prominent conciliarist, for the bishopric of Poznań, and his conflict with bishop Oleśnicki.

Then, the envoys arrived in Gniezno on 12 November 1440, where they met with Primate Wincenty Kot. They presented him with the papal bull granting numerous privileges, and demonstrated the importance of the conciliarist cause³⁸. The delegates then went to Kraków at the end of December 1440, where they were greeted enthusiastically by the university community³⁹. The next stop, Wrocław, turned out to be inhospitable because bishop Konrad IV the Elder refused to allow the envoys to enter the diocese. In a letter dated 5 March 1441, Bonifili even asked the bishop of Wrocław to deny the rumors that he was not in favor of the Council⁴⁰. However, on 8 April, he received a sternly negative response⁴¹.

In May 1441, the synod in Łęczycza, following the example of the German states, declared neutrality in the schism. This was, among many other reasons, due to the negative position of the Council of Basel on the succession of the Hungarian crown to the Polish ruler, king Ladislaus III⁴². Moreover, there was a conflict present between the king and the chapter, as the members of the chapter were also university professors⁴³. Therefore, Marcus Bonifili, as the Council envoy, had to maneuver between the interests of the Poles and the Council, which did not always align⁴⁴.

Bonifili returned to Basel in the summer of 1441⁴⁵ with a conciliar treatise, *Determinatio Basiliensis*, as the official statement of the University of Kraków⁴⁶. The text profoundly impacted the Council Fathers and significantly enhanced Marcus' reputation due to his credited role in the successful delegation. Bonifili confirmed that he had received the treatise from six university doctors on behalf of the entire University⁴⁷. In November 1441, he returned to Bohemia⁴⁸ and Poland to continue his efforts to support the Council's ideas. He brought cardinal hats to primate Kot and bishop Oleśnicki⁴⁹. On 8 November 1441, antipope Felix V, in a letter to the professors of the University of Kraków, praised the perseverance of the university in defending the authority of the Council and recommended his legate, Marcus Bonifili⁵⁰. In 1442, the Catalan theologian arrived in

³⁸ BP, vol. V, No. 1319 from 17 December 1440; CE, vol. III, p. 570, No. 65.

³⁹ Kraków, BJ, 126, ff. 64r-65r, *Oratio invitatoria ad Concilii Basiliensis legatos, Marcum Bonphilum et Stanislaum Sobniowski Cracoviam venientes a. 1440*. Edition: Fijałek, *Mistrz Jakób z Paradyża*, vol. I, p. 240-249; *Catalogus codicum*, vol. I, p. 111.

⁴⁰ *Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae*, vol. XV, pp. 83-84, No. 85.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 85-86, No. 86.

⁴² The king was reluctant to support conciliarism, although in March 1441 he made some arrangements with Bonifili (*vid.* BP, vol. V, No. 1575). The turning point for the king's decision on which side to take was cardinal Cesarini's mission on the anti-Turkish crusade, which the Polish ruler carried out. Furthermore, the Hungarian elites unequivocally supported Eugene IV, leaving no choice for king Ladislaus, who sought recognition of claims to the Hungarian crown. Since the king opted for obedience to the pope Eugene, and the University of Kraków supported the Council, a conflict between the university and the king emerged. Ożóg, 'Ne contrarii haberemur', p. 1191.

⁴³ Finally, Ladislaus III, absent from the country for several years, in the second half of 1444 ordered that the chapter should break off relations with the Council of Basel. *Zbiór dokumentów Katedry*, pp. 458-459. Following the fall of 1444, the Polish monarch died in the Battle of Varna, leading to three years of interregnum and a diminished influence from the sovereign on the University.

⁴⁴ Instruction – *vid.* Grosse, *Stosunki Polski*, pp. 93-94 and appendix No. 3; BP vol. V, No. 1587; CE, vol. I, No. 114 – letter from the Aragonese delegate to the University of Paris. The instruction presented Bonifili's tasks: collecting Peter's Pence for Basel, obtaining money for Felix V, dispelling false rumors about the Council, and devising ways to persuade the king and others to make an official statement of obedience. One of the most important issues carried out in the interest of Poland, which Bonifili was supposed to settle in Basel, was recognizing Ladislaus III as king of Hungary, which in turn was not in the interest of the Basilians, who favored queen consort Elizabeth and her son, Ladislaus the Posthumous.

⁴⁵ BP, vol. V, No. 1580.

⁴⁶ *Polskie traktaty*, ed. Bucichowski.

⁴⁷ CB VII 391.

⁴⁸ A letter from Zikmund, Abbot of Vyšebrod to Oldřich II of Rosenberg, December 17th 1441, in: *Listář a listinář*, pp. 132-133.

⁴⁹ Graff, *Katolicki episkopat*, pp. 80-81; Graff, „Wokół sprawy kardynałatu”, pp. 19-50; Graff, „Biskup krakowski”, pp. 195-204; BP, vol. V, No. 1587.

⁵⁰ *Codex diplomaticus*, No. 8.

Basel with Jakub of Szadek⁵¹, Jan Pniowski⁵², and Jan Elgot⁵³. The latter took Oleśnicki's note of obedience to the Council and delivered two fervent speeches⁵⁴.

In April 1443, Bonifili was in Lausanne⁵⁵, where Felix V, already in conflict with the Council, had officially moved⁵⁶. Then, in June and July 1443, Bonifili remained in Basel. In Vienna in May and June 1444, he watched over the dying duke Alexander, and after the death of the duke, Bonifili became involved in a conflict with Piccolomini and Lorenzo da Rotella⁵⁷. In September 1444, he appeared in Olomouc, where tensions related to the "illegal" succession of legate powers and the crisis surrounding the Council⁵⁸ resulted in a dramatic situation in which Jerome Vogelsang attacked Bonifili, insulting and scolding him⁵⁹. After Alexander's death, Marcus undertook the task entrusted to him by the dying pseudocardinal, and decided to go to Poland, where he had previously received a friendly welcome. Just as Alexander remained in Vienna as legate *de latere* due to the support he received from his nephew, king Frederick III, Bonifili selected Poland as the center of his activities as legate *de latere* and ambassador due to the favorable conditions that allowed him to act in favor of the council. There, he performed jurisdictional functions on behalf of the Council. In 1445, he received an order from the Basel cardinal Bernard de La Planche to settle the case of the cleric Stanisław of Trzemeszno, who was sentenced to death⁶⁰. He was also involved in the case of Stanisław Lange, a Kraków burgher⁶¹.

In the summer of 1447, Bonifili was the Basel envoy for the final time. The occasion was the accession of Casimir IV Jagiellon to the throne after three years of interregnum. The new king decided to pledge obedience to Nicholas V⁶². This diplomatic action did not bring success, and Casimir, along with the most important representatives of the clergy in Poland, headed by bishop Oleśnicki, sided with the new pope.

⁵¹ Jakub of Szadek (ca. 1412-1487) studied at the *Facultas Artium* of the Kraków University together with Jan Długosz; in 1460 he became a doctor of decrees. King Casimir IV Jagiellon entrusted him with various diplomatic missions, especially with the Teutonic Order. Kiryk, „Jakub z Szadka”, pp. 367-368; Marszał, „Jakub z Szadka”, pp. 5-29.

⁵² Jan Pniowski (d. 1476), came from a knightly family, studied liberal arts at the University of Kraków, and law in Bologna, where he obtained the degree of doctor of decrees in 1448. Three-time rector of the Kraków University; in 1447 he unsuccessfully appealed to Nicholas V for the cardinal's hat for Oleśnicki. He was the administrator of the Kraków diocese and vicar general *in spiritualibus*. Kowalczyk, „Pniowski”, pp. 1-2; Zdanek, „Jan Pniowski”, pp. 121-123.

⁵³ Jan of Lgota, called Elgot (d. 1452), came from a knightly family, was the uncle of Jan Długosz, both of whom belonged to the Wieniawa coat of arms. In 1420, he obtained a master's degree in liberal arts at the University of Kraków, where he successfully continued his education, with the degree of doctor of decrees in 1427. He was an outstanding canonist, and his students included Mikołaj Spycymir and Tomasz Strzępiński. A close associate and advisor to cardinal Oleśnicki, author of a treatise on the superiority of the Council over the pope. He was the author of numerous sermons and speeches, and confessor of Queen Sophia. Niemczycka, „Jan Elgot”, pp. 9-42; Zdanek, „Jan z Lgoty”, pp. 139-141.

⁵⁴ Graff, *Katolicki episkopat*, p. 84; Joannes de Segovia, *Historia gestorum*, 970. Elgot preached twice, because the first time he talked excessively much about the power of the pope, which confused the Council Fathers. Similarly, Panormitanus was dismayed by the laudation in honor of Felix V, which Juan of Segovia criticized. *Vid.* Goñi Gaztambide, „En conciliarismo”, pp. 893-928; CE, vol. II, pp. 428-431, No. 282-283.

⁵⁵ On April 19, he preached a sermon before the antipope, BC, 478, ff. 130r-135r.

⁵⁶ Giessmann, *Der letzte Gegenpapst*, p. 311.

⁵⁷ Grzybowska, „Trzy listy Eneasza”, pp. 231-232.

⁵⁸ In 1443-1444, the Council was torn by numerous internal conflicts, operated under financial strain, and became the object of ridicule among propapists. *Vid.* letter from Kaspar Schlick to Giuliano Cesarini from 31 August 1443, in which the chancellor wrote about Baselian matters as „materia joci” (*Der Briefweschel*, vol. II, p. 74).

⁵⁹ The intervention of the dean and two canons was unsuccessful, therefore Vogelsang was ultimately locked in the sacristy, as reported by him in a letter. Cf. Sbirka listin č.433/507, 1444, září 16, Olomouc, *vid.*: Žila, *Společenské*, p. 164.

⁶⁰ *Kodeks dyplomatyczny*, vol. I, pp. 206-207. *Vid.* Graff, „Wpływ kryzysu”, p. 229.

⁶¹ Kraków, BJ, Rkp. Dypł. 604.

⁶² Ožóg, „Ne contrarii”, p. 1192.

Bonifili stayed in Poland from the fall of 1444 until the winter of 1450. During his stay, he enrolled in the Kraków University (1446), received numerous benefices, preached in Kraków's churches, advocated for the Council's cause, and was involved in local affairs. For several years of intensive contact with the Polish intellectual community and the higher clergy in Poland, as well as through joint travels and undoubtedly shared discussions and ideas, a special bond was forged, which became the basis of a community.

3. Fundamentals of Community Building

As Constant J. Mews and John N. Crossley observe, groups and communities define themselves through various factors, including religious, educational, or political dimensions⁶³. In the case under analysis, these three elements intersect. Members of the reconstructed community share political interests (conciliarism), are united by a common educational orientation (university), and are bound by shared religious beliefs (ecclesiological teachings and Marian piety). The university, in this context, serves not only as a center for research and education but also as a hub for community formation. Moreover, since universities were products of urban environments, the broader urban space must also be recognized as a crucial factor enabling the emergence and development of such communities⁶⁴. Reconstructing the foundations of this community requires acknowledging the diverse and intertwined bases on which it was built. These include political and diplomatic interests, material needs, shared beliefs, and intellectual endeavors. It is only by considering these elements collectively that the broader picture of the community's formation and identity can be fully understood.

3.1. Common ideas

Undoubtedly, the primary foundation of shared understanding between Bonifili and the Polish intellectual elite was rooted in the concept of conciliarism. Universities were the last bastions of conciliarism. Conciliarism was – up to some degree – influenced by nominalism⁶⁵, which was a very popular philosophical notion in many universities. Significantly, as observed by Anthony Black, Kraków became the site of an exceptionally comprehensive, and undeniably concise, defense of Basel conciliarism – one that arguably rivalled those generated within Basel itself⁶⁶. In the critical year of 1439, the participants of the Council of Basel ardently embraced their mission statement, perceiving it through a strictly theological lens.

In this context, the ostentatious enrollment of Bonifili at the University of Kraków in the summer semester of 1446 at the Faculty of liberal arts holds particular significance. By the year 1446, the issue of the Council of Basel had already been settled – after a prolonged struggle – and the decisions of secular rulers allowed for the introduction of new orders. In such circumstances, the Catalan theologian made a symbolic entry to the University of Kraków, with a message about the unity and support of the conciliar milieu. In the entry, the then-rector Stanisław of Sobniów was referred to as the 'orator sacri Basiliensis concilii', and not, as usual, with a university title or his function as a Tridentine provost. The details of the entry that appeared here, particularly those related to Marcus, were also significant:

Magister Marcus Bonifily precentor Barsolensis Sacre theologie professor, de Cathalonia domini regis Aragonum de villa Castillionis dioc. Gerundensis⁶⁷.

In addition to Bonifili's comprehensive entry in the university records, replete with biographical details, additional information on interconnections and support among Basilians can also be found⁶⁸.

⁶³ Mews, Crossley, "Introduction", pp. 1-2.

⁶⁴ Mazel, *L'évêque et le territoire*.

⁶⁵ Włodek, „Eklezjologia”, pp. 383-418; Swieżawski, *Kłęska koncyliaryzmu*; Swieżawski, *Eklezjologia późnośredniowieczna*; Markowski, „Doktrynalne podstawy”, pp. 77-89.

⁶⁶ Black, *Council and Commune*, p. 112.

⁶⁷ *Metryka*, p. 210.

⁶⁸ Bonifili's entry was followed by Jan of Inowrocław, a parish priest in Krobia, and above all, a writer of the penitentiary tribunal of the Council of Basel and antipope Felix V, *vid. Metryka*, p. 210. Jan had a university

The meaning of this enrollment is multi-faceted. On the one hand, it is a declaration of coalescence of the conciliarists. It is a gesture of honor, indicating where Kraków University sympathies are located. The beginning of the second half of the 1440s is a period during which schismatics witness the gradual decline of the Council. It is a moment of crisis, and the mental space of the University becomes an enclave for Bonifili. Moreover, Kraków University's masters will most persistently stick to the conciliarist idea in all of Europe, refusing to recognize Nicholas V as the rightful successor to the see of Peter – they did so only in 1449. Bonifili's enrollment, therefore, was the result and also a manifesto of his close relations with the circle of intellectuals in Kraków, who share specific views on the issues of power in the Church. This is significant because the Basel community was torn by various conflicts and divided into groups pursuing different, sometimes contradictory, interests. The flashpoint was often financial issues but also encompassed the scope of powers and authority. Therefore, Bonifili found a haven in the Kraków University environment among people who supported him and held similar views. On the other hand, enrollment at the university allowed Bonifili to deliver lectures and teach students.

In 1448, the papal legate, Battista Enrici, bishop of Camerino, came to Kraków⁶⁹ and demanded repression against the recalcitrant masters of the University of Kraków⁷⁰. As the annalist Jan Długosz wrote, the papal legate was greeted with honors by cardinal Zbigniew Oleśnicki, the townspeople, and the clergy, but the university masters disregarded his arrival⁷¹. The lack of respect for the nuncio was scandalous, yet Oleśnicki's intercession saved them from serious consequences. Such a permanent conciliar standpoint of the Kraków University can be explained in many ways. The treatises *Determinationes Basiliensis* written by prominent professors (Jan Elgot, Wawrzyniec Racibórz, Benedykt Hesse) indicated the reasons for the university's adherence to the conciliarist idea – it was a matter of salvation⁷². As Anthony Black argued, conciliarism 'owed much to university men and the university environment; and during the [Council of] Basel [sic], universities played an increasingly important role, both through their delegates and through their independent action in support of the Council'⁷³.

The university environment in Kraków undoubtedly served as the heart of the community I aim to reconstruct here. Strongly pro-conciliar and steadfast in defending a lost cause, it provided an ideal setting for Bonifili to forge closer connections. At the center of these relationships stood Zbigniew Oleśnicki, who also held the role of University chancellor. The university masters were the bishop's staff support and were members of the cathedral chapter. After completing his activity as legate *de latere*, Bonifili was primarily part of Oleśnicki's entourage and, as we will see below, he placed his diplomatic skills at his service.

3.2. Respect and authority

Bonifili's stay in Poland, initially as a legate *de latere*, lasted over five years and was marked by various activities undertaken by the Catalan professor, both in the field of Council matters, as well as diplomatic, Church, and University issues. The strong bond linked Bonifili and cardinal Oleśnicki⁷⁴, whom he

education, possibly from the University of Basel (*magister artium*). In the spring of 1444, he appeared in Poland, bringing to the University a letter of appreciation and encouragement from the Council, some Baselian works, and the Basel treaty *Quanquam* (ms BJ 418). Barycz, "Jan z Inowrocławia", pp. 453-454.

⁶⁹ Kowalski, "Baptysty Enriciego", pp. 573-585.

⁷⁰ Until July 1449, the University stubbornly persisted as the last bulwark in Europe on the conciliar doctrine, they submitted their obedience on July 3, 1449, *vid. Codex diplomaticus*, vol. II, p. 118, No. 160.

⁷¹ Długosz, *Roczniki*, vol. XII, p. 75. The details of the conflict are written by Ożóg, "Ne contrarii", p. 1199.

⁷² *Ibidem*, p. 1197.

⁷³ Black, *Monarchy and Community*, p. 24.

⁷⁴ Zbigniew Oleśnicki (1389-1455), bishop of Kraków (from 1423), first Polish cardinal (1449), diplomat, orator, one of the most important Polish politicians in Poland in the 15th century, creator of the state's internal and foreign policy. Advisor to kings Władysław Jagiełło and Władysław Warneńczyk (during the latter's minority he had a decisive influence on the state's policy), lost his political significance after Casimir IV Jagiellon took the throne (1447). The literature concerning this figure is vast, see bibliographical notes in: Koczerska, *Zbigniew Oleśnicki*; Kiryk, Noga (eds) *Zbigniew Oleśnicki – książe Kościoła*.

accompanied, together with professor Jan of Dąbrówka⁷⁵, on his travels⁷⁶. He was also, among others, a witness on a document for Kraków official Rafał of Skawina⁷⁷ and was actively involved in current affairs, providing assistance and performing the tasks entrusted to him.

Bonifili's close relationship with Oleśnicki was known among Poles. The Lublin castellan, Krzesław of Kurozwęki, complained to him about Oleśnicki regarding the appointment of the bishopric of Włocławek, hoping that the Catalan theologian would be able to persuade king to support Jan Gruszczyński⁷⁸. According to Długosz, the Catalan theologian denied that the cardinal had forbidden him to act on behalf of the king in this matter, and claimed that he did not want to take on such a responsibility. This answer can be interpreted as an expression of Bonifili's loyalty and obedience to the cardinal.

The tasks assigned to Bonifili by Oleśnicki were somewhat demanding and posed significant challenges. This is exemplified by the difficulties surrounding the appointment to the university canonry in the cathedral chapter. Since 1422, two canons in the cathedral chapter belonged to professors of law and theology. The rector and deans selected candidates, and the bishop had to approve the choice⁷⁹. Thus, the staffing of university chairs in the cathedral chapter was often a source of conflict and also the subject of negotiations and diplomatic efforts. After the death of Jakub of Zaborów (21 February 1449), the question of filling his canonry arose. Three letters from Jan Elgot inform us about the course of these events, the last of which is the most interesting because it introduces Bonifili to the scene. Initially, the cathedral canonry was granted to Jakub Parkosz of Żórawice, but, as Elgot reported, the epistle sent as Oleśnicki's response to his first letter shows that Oleśnicki wanted Jan of Dąbrówka to receive the canonry. The cardinal, therefore, sent Marcus to present his official position. Bonifili, acting on behalf of the cardinal, demanded that Elgot persuade Parkosz to resign from the granted canonry. The details of the conversations are known from the third letter to Oleśnicki from 1449⁸⁰. In the correspondence, Elgot requested the cardinal to authenticate the instruction presented by Bonifili. The tide elicited consternation among the University masters, prompting Elgot to seek the cardinal's confirmation. The situation revealed a palpable skepticism regarding Bonifili's attainments, concurrently accompanied by admiration for his oratory prowess and profound comprehension of matters on the dynamics of personnel policy at the University of Kraków. Commending Bonifili with such a delicate mission, requiring a broader understanding of University issues, is proof of Oleśnicki's trust and appreciation of his diplomatic skills. The letter also served as a testimony to the strained relations within the University and the principle of limited confidence in handling challenging issues, such as changing decisions related to staffing positions.

In October 1449, Oleśnicki's secretary, Jan Długosz⁸¹, brought him the long-awaited cardinal's hat⁸². The bishop of Kraków intervened in the papal curia three times in this matter, sending envoys and demanding the insignia. In a letter to Oleśnicki, written between 1447 and 1449, some unidentified adviser proposed Bonifili as an envoy to Rome:

⁷⁵ Jan of Dąbrówka (d. 1472) was a philosopher and theologian, in 1440 he obtained a doctorate in canon law, and in 1449 – a doctorate in theology. He had a great influence on the reform of teaching liberal arts at the University of Kraków in 1449. As the provost of the Major College, he passed a resolution on the establishment of the Minor College and influenced its scientific program. *Vid.* Barycz, „Jan z Dąbrówki”, pp. 26–28; Szelińska, *Biblioteki profesorów; Komentarz Jana*, ed. Dąbrówka and others; Zdanek, „Jan z Dąbrówki”, p. 135.

⁷⁶ On May 8, 1448, in Radłów, Oleśnicki erected a St. Spirit hospital outside the walls of Tarnów in the presence of Marcus Bonifili, Jan of Dąbrówka, and his valet Wenceslaus. Koczerska, *Zbigniew Oleśnicki*, p. 391.

⁷⁷ On 2 April 1449, „Marcus Bonifilii, s. theologiae professor de Italia” [sic!], *Zbiór dokumentów*, p. 575.

⁷⁸ EID, No. 9, p. 96. *Vid.* Koczerska, „List Jana Długosza”, p. 603.

⁷⁹ Kozłowska-Budkowa, „Odnowienie jagiellońskie”, p. 74.

⁸⁰ Ed. Fijałek, *Mistrz Jakób z Paradyża*, vol. II, p. 377. Cf. Rabiej, „Zbigniew Oleśnicki”, pp. 682–683.

⁸¹ Jan Długosz (1415–1480), chancellor and secretary of bishop Oleśnicki, his close and trusted collaborator, diplomat, tutor of the sons of king Casimir IV Jagiellon, historian, author of the *Annales seu cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae* written for 25 years. Cf. Bobrzyński, Smolka, *Jan Długosz; Długossiana*; Grzybowski, *Jan Długosz*.

⁸² Graff, „Wokół sprawy kardynalatu”, pp. 19–50.

But if we ask about the individual, I admit that several doctors may be sufficiently suitable for this task, Father, but according to my consideration, Master M. presents himself singularly as a distinguished man of counsel, and as active as he is, and powerful in speech, and he knows how to deal with words, which may be of use to You. Although he is not the son of this Kingdom, this fact especially advocates for his being sent, which is agreed upon by the whole Roman Curia, that he supported the Council with great courage, but now that he had changed his mind, it will be ascribed to the praise and zeal of you. It will be seen like Paul is made from Saul, which is done by you⁸³.

Bonifili was portrayed as an outstanding rhetorician, offering prudent advice and being an extremely effective, persuasive, and efficient diplomat. Although the author of the letter emphasized that the Catalan professor had a conciliar past and was not from Poland, his qualities predestined him best for this task, even more so than other University doctors. The letter suggested that sending Bonifili to Rome would also be beneficial to Oleśnicki, indicating that the Polish cardinal participated in persuading “magister Marcus” to align with Rome. Finally, Oleśnicki entrusted this task to his secretary, Jan Długosz, whose mission was successful. This letter is therefore proof of the recognition that the Catalan theologian enjoyed among Polish scholars, especially regarding his diplomatic skills and the gift of persuasion. Oleśnicki’s decision to disregard his advisor’s counsel does not automatically suggest any doubts regarding Bonifili’s abilities. This task was rather a test for the cardinal’s closest collaborator, i.e., Długosz, who, after returning from Rome, thanks to his diplomatic success, strengthened his position at Oleśnicki’s court. In the subsequent years, Oleśnicki entrusted Bonifili with other duties in Rome. Marcus’s reputation in the Roman Curia as a staunch advocate of conciliarism posed a potential risk to the success of the mission to secure the cardinal’s hat. Consequently, the argument that Oleśnicki’s influence could guide Bonifili toward aligning with the papal position failed to convince the cardinal, who could not afford to risk to fail this mission for a third time.

It seems, however, that this letter and the recommendation of Bonifili for the envoy in the matter of the cardinal’s hat could have had a “second meaning” – namely, that Marcus’s presence in Kraków after his mission as legate *de latere* had ended could have been a burden and a challenge for the Kraków environment, and especially for the clergy. It is possible that, apart from the hope that Bonifili’s excellent persuasive skills would allow for a positive resolution of Oleśnicki’s case in the Roman Curia, it was a chance for Bonifili to function outside Poland and Kraków.

3.3. Transfer of ideas and knowledge

One of the conditions for the existence of a community is intellectual exchange, constant stimulation, space for discussion, mutual inspiration, and the sharing of cultural resources. During his stay within the Kraków community for several years, Bonifili immersed himself among intellectuals, absorbing knowledge while also contributing his theological expertise and rhetorical proficiency. He preached at least a few sermons in Kraków⁸⁴. Three of Bonifili’s sermons, presumably copied by Kraków University alumnus Wenceslaus of Brodnia (Budapest, Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem,

⁸³ CE, vol. I (II), p. 54, No. 48 (“Si vero de individuo quaeritur, fateor quidem, quod complures doctores p.v. habeat, huic negotio satis accomodos, sed consideratione mea mihi se singulariter offert Magister M. insignis vir consilii et quantum vafer et verbo potens superfluum et verbis agere, cum illa aprime Vestrae Paternitati innotescant. Et quamvis non sit Regni huius filius, hoc tamen singulariter monet, ut mittatur, quod constat toti Curiae Romanae, quod ipse actenus fuit partes Concilii fortiter fovens nunc autem dum accesserit – ascribetur ad laudem et zelum p.v., quod opera vestra factus videbitur de Saulo Paulus”).

⁸⁴ All sermons delivered by Bonifili in Kraków are related to Marian feasts: *De conceptione* (copies: Budapest, Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, Cod. Lat. 64, ff. 213v-220v, BC 478, ff. 70r-76v and Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, I F 277, ff. ff. 305r-323r), *De annuntiatione* (copies: Budapest, Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, Cod. Lat. 64, ff. 225r-235v and Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, I F 277, ff. 293r-305r), *De nativitate* (Olomouc, Vědecká knihovna, M I 156, ff. 439b-450b), *De assumptione* (copy: Budapest, Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, Cod. Lat. 64, ff. 221r-225r), *Infra octavas assumptionis* (copies: Olomouc, Vědecká knihovna, M I 156, ff. 451a-462b, 438a-439b, BC 478, ff. 78r-80v).

Cod. Lat. 64, ff. 213v-235v) contain information about the places where they were delivered⁸⁵. The codex was written in the years 1440-1447 and contains, among others, *Questio de conceptione benedictae virginis Marie edita et disputata per magistrum Paulum Piczkowski professorem sacre theologie. Cracovie. 1447*⁸⁶, a treatise by Paweł of Pyskowice's and *Sequentia de Immaculata Conceptione* were also attributed to Paweł. Another two sermons by Bonifili, delivered in Kraków, were probably copied by Maciej of Dynów, also a Kraków University alumnus (Olomouc, Vědecká knihovna, M I 156⁸⁷). Marcus' sermons were not only addressed to the Kraków audience (University masters, Kraków Dominicans, townpeople, etc.) but also copied by University students (Wacław of Brodnia and Maciej of Dynów). All these sermons are related to the cult of Mary. They adopted the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Poland⁸⁸, and contain short poems explaining, among others, the *Ave Maria* prayer in the context of the teaching on the Immaculate Conception⁸⁹. This is a flagship theme for theologians of the Basel orientation⁹⁰. Bonifili took part in the session of 17 September 1439, during which this article of faith was accepted⁹¹. While the doctrine of Immaculate Conception was discussed in Poland⁹², it was a topic of fundamental importance on the Iberian Peninsula⁹³. In the 1440s in Kraków, the significance

⁸⁵ *Vid.* "collectus et peroratus Cracouie per magistrum Marcum Bonifili" (*Sermo de assumptione*, ff. 221r-225r; "per magistrum Marcum Bonifilij collectus et peroratus Cracovie" (*Sermo de annunciacione*, ff. 225r-235v). *Vid.* Toth, *Catalogus*, pp. 85-86. The first sermon (*Sermo de conceptione*, ff. 213v-220v, given on 8 December 1444, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception) from this codex is the same text as BC 478, ff. 70r-76v and Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, I F 277, ff. 305r-323r.

⁸⁶ This text can also be found in the codex of the Biblioteka Narodowa (Warszawa), reference number Rps BOZ 60, created in the years 1448-1449; The codex also includes Jan of Dąbrowka's commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. Klimecka, „Rękopisy”. <https://jbc.bj.uj.edu.pl/dlibra/publication/899497?language=en> [20.04.2024]

⁸⁷ The first, found on pages 439b-450b, for the day of the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was delivered in 1447, as the annotation says: 'in ecclesia beate Virginis in die Nativitatis Marie per dominum Marcum Bonifilij, magistrum in theologia'. The second, written down on pages 451a-462b, 438a-439b, was delivered by Marcus on August 22, 1447, in the Dominican church in Kraków (and is also found in the manuscript from Barcelona MS 478, ff. 78r-80v). Boháček, Čáda, *Beschreibung*, p. 65. The Spanish Dominicans were involved as maculinists, therefore Bonifili's preaching of the Marian sermon at the Dominican church in Kraków is significant. The accounts of Jan Długosz and Juan of Segovia detail an incident involving the Kraków Dominican Paul, who, while addressing the congregation, expressed skepticism regarding the Immaculate Conception of Mary, resulting in immediate punishment in the form of apoplexy. Bonifili's delivery of immaculist sermons in the Kraków Dominican church held a distinctive and symbolic meaning. Fijałek, „Nasza nauka”, pp. 440-443.

⁸⁸ Fijałek, „Nasza nauka”, pp. 474-479.

⁸⁹ As Leslie Twomey pointed out, Marian poetry was at the center of literary life in the Kingdom of Aragon in the fifteenth century, where poetry competitions were held to mark important feast days, like the Annunciation, 25 March. Bonifili's sermon in which this poem appears is just prepared for the feast of the Annunciation. It is therefore possible that he transferred and adapted the poetic tradition from Catalonia to the sermons delivered in Poland. *Vid.* Twomey, *The Serpent and the Rose*.

⁹⁰ Before the Council broke ties with pope Eugene in 1436, the Immaculate Conception was a topic of debate and argumentation. Giovanni di Montenero, a Dominican theologian, opposed the doctrine, while Juan of Segovia defended it.

⁹¹ Bazylea, *Sessio* 36, in: *Dokumenty soborów powszechnych*, pp. 422-425.

⁹² In Poland, this topic is also known and discussed. Even before the Council in Basel, we have examples, i.e. Jan Radlica, a student in Paris, later the bishop of Kraków, was a worshiper of the Immaculate Conception. Before the synodal statute of bishop Piotr Wysz, the feast of December 8 was introduced in the diocese of Kraków. The statute of the Synod of Kalisz from 1420 approved the celebration of this feast. The University masters promoted the cult of Mary Immaculately Conceived. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was also taught by preachers, e.g. Mateusz of Kraków, Mikołaj Wigand and Mikołaj of Błonie. Fijałek, „Nasza nauka”, pp. 427-443.

⁹³ The earliest recorded Hispanic decree requiring observance of the Conception feast of 8 December appears in a statute by the archbishop of Santiago, Rudericus, written in 1309. The diocese of Gerona has greater proof with the feast dating from 1339 (*Breviarium gerundense*). The Kingdom of Aragon declared its support for it. It was a subject of discussion between Franciscans and Dominicans. In 1362, two Dominican friars, Jean l'Escacier and Jacques de Bosco, preached that the Immaculate Conception was false and heretical. In 1376, Juan de Montesono or Monzón, a Catalan Dominican, scandalized the University of Paris with his *Vesperis*, an inaugural lecture presented on the eve of graduation, wanting to prove a masculinist

of this topic grew, prompting involvement from Kraków professors. The increased interest in this topic could, to some extent, be related to the presence of Bonifili as one of the authors of the Basel dogma. Through his sermons on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, he popularized the topic and inspired the intellectual community in Kraków to reflect on it. The discussions that were held around this issue at the University of Kraków, which resulted in the treatise of Paweł of Pyskowice, as well as the “Polish” copies of the treatise of Juan of Segovia on the Immaculate Conception, were undoubtedly related to the presence of the Catalan theologian in the Polish academic community. It should be assumed that the list of codices mentioned above, which contain copies of Marian sermons delivered in Kraków by the Catalan theologian, is not exhaustive. Nevertheless, the existing number of copies demonstrates that Bonifili was regarded as an authority on the subject, a propagandist for a key conciliarist agenda, and, most importantly, that these texts were both recognized and widely appreciated.

During Bonifili’s stay in Poland, a copy of a sermon delivered by a preacher in Basel before the conclave that elected Felix V was also written (see note 10), probably around 1440-1444. The codex containing this sermon was kept in the *Passionis Christi* Charterhouse near Legnica, and then in the library of the church of Peter and Paul in Legnica (currently included in the resources of the Biblioteka Uniwersytecka in Wrocław, Akc. 1948/788, ff. 128r-133r). Marcus’s text was written among other texts related to the conciliarist party, including: *Invectiva Gabrielis olim Eugenii pape IIII ti contra sacrum concillium Basiliensis* (ff. 162r-166v) or *Responsio Concilii super bulla invictiva ipsius Gabrielis* (ff. 168r-177r)⁹⁴. Another codex (The Lat.Q.ch.I.92 from 1459, previously in the Biblioteka Narodowa in Warsaw; did not survive World War II) containing texts by individuals with conciliarist sympathies or those known for their activities at the Council, was copied by Stanisław, a Cistercian organist from Koprzywnica. The codex included texts of sermons by prominent conciliarists from the times of the Council of Constance and Basel (Marcus Bonifili, Stanisław of Skarbimierz, and Jakub of Paradyż), who were associated with Poland⁹⁵. Since the codex has been destroyed, it is impossible to determine which sermons it contained; however, the selection of authors was undoubtedly guided by a conciliar perspective.

Another aspect of Bonifili’s cultural influence, though speculative, is the question of the exchange of codices. The oldest existing copy of the treatise *Ars praedicandi populo*, written by famous Catalan theologian Francesc Eiximenis, probably found its way to conciliarist and Kraków professor Mikołaj Spycimir’s⁹⁶ library from Marcus Bonifili. The Spycimir copy was written in 1445, when Bonifili stayed in Kraków. There is no doubt that the Catalan theologian brought his volumes with him and likely shared them with his friends. It is more likely that one of these codices contained a preaching treatise by Eiximenis⁹⁷, especially because Eiximenis died in Perpignan (1409), where Bonifili worked as a preacher and priest twenty years later. The Hungarian copy of this treatise was derived from the Spycimir version. If Bonifili indeed facilitated the text’s availability in Kraków, he can be seen as a key transmitter of Catalan teachings on the art of preaching, eloquence, and memory in Poland and Central Europe. At the same time, he played a crucial role in preserving Eiximenis’ work from obscurity.

point of view. Prominent immaculists from the Iberian Peninsula were, i.e., Ramon Llull (*Disputatio Eremitae et Raymundi: super aliquibus dubiis quaestionibus sententiarum magistri Petri Lombardi*), Pedro Pascual, Bernard de Deo, Pere Tomàs (*Liber de originali innocentia Virginis Mariae*), Francesc Eiximenis, Juan of Segovia. On the opposing side were Nicolau Eimeric, and Juan of Torquemada. Twomey, *The Serpent and the Rose*; Frias, “Antigüedad”, pp. 27-88; Gazulla, “Los Reyes de Aragón”, pp. 1-18; Guix, “La inmaculada”, pp. 193-326.

⁹⁴ Gemoll, *Die Handschriften*, p. 10.

⁹⁵ Kaliszuk, *Codices deperditi*, vol. II, pp. 813-814.

⁹⁶ Mikołaj Spycimir was a supporter of the Council, and as a collector, he shelled out money for the Council that king Ladislaus III had forbade him to spend. He gave it to Bonifili. Marian Zwiercan pointed out that Mikołaj spent this money under the threat of excommunication, and the royal ban was related to collecting funds for the preparation of an expedition against the Turks. Zwiercan, “Spycimir”, pp. 85-87.

⁹⁷ This issue is discussed in more detail in: Grzybowska, “Skąd wziął się w Krakowie”, pp. 12-31.

3.4. Time together - travel - trust

Travels greatly influenced the formation of personal relationships between Bonifili and the Polish intellectual elite. He traveled with Stanisław Sobniowski and Dzierśław of Borzymów (1440, 1447), Jan Elgot, Jan Pniewski, and Jakub of Szadek (1442), with Poles of the court of Alexander of Mazovia (1444), with Zbigniew Oleśnicki and Jan of Dąbrówka (1448). Particular attention should be paid to a journey initiated by private motives, although with political aspirations and realizations; namely, a trip to Jerusalem (1450).

The undertaking was complex. Długosz had been planning this journey since the autumn of 1449, following his return from Rome with a cardinal's hat for Oleśnicki⁹⁸, and Elgot even suggested that preparations spanned three years⁹⁹. From the outset, as Elgot notes, Bonifili intended to accompany the expedition. This letter provides evidence either of direct correspondence between Długosz and Bonifili or, at the very least, that some organizational responsibilities for the journey were delegated to Marcus.

A significant milestone on the pilgrimage was Rome, which the group aimed to visit during the jubilee year. In this context, Bonifili urged Elgot to prepare a speech of gratitude to the pope for the honors conferred upon Oleśnicki. However, the Polish jurist resisted, citing two main reasons: first, he had received no such directive from either the cardinal or Długosz, and second, his poor health and lack of confidence in his oratory skills made him unwilling to perform any public duties in Rome¹⁰⁰.

In a letter to Długosz from 4 January 1450, Jan Elgot suggested Bonifili as the cardinal's permanent representative in Rome, framing the proposal somewhat ambiguously as a strategic opportunity to appoint him to what could be described as Oleśnicki's 'permanent ambassador'. The letter contains a short laudation in honor of the Catalan preacher, with a typical praise *topoi*. Marcus' qualities, listed here, are primarily his deep, lively faith, virtue, honesty, moral impeccability, and, above all, his vast knowledge¹⁰¹. Elgot drew the portrait of a model theologian, diplomat and scholar. Using laudatory poetics, the Polish conciliarist shed light on his relationship with Bonifili, with whom he had been close for almost ten years, including their journey to Basel in 1442. Moreover, on such a long and difficult expedition as the planned trip to Jerusalem, only someone he trusted could be taken.

However, this raises the question: was this truly an honor or a subtle attempt to remove Bonifili from Kraków? We have already seen above that in 1447 or 1448, a certain advisor had advocated for Bonifili's dispatch to Rome to handle the matter of Oleśnicki's cardinal's hat. Is it possible that since the schism officially ended, the presence of its prominent representative and former legate *de latere* may have become more burdensome than prestigious? Elgot himself appears to be convinced that Bonifili would be more beneficial to Oleśnicki in Rome than in Kraków. This tension is reflected in the earlier proposal to send Bonifili to Rome, which might have been motivated not solely by respect for his persuasive talents but also by a desire to distance him from local affairs. Moreover, after Nicholas V was recognized as pope by the Polish king and the bishop of Kraków, Bonifili's presence may have grown increasingly problematic, especially in light of the stubborn persistence of Kraków academics in the Basel schism. This could suggest that while Bonifili retained some influence and recognition, his value in Kraków may have been eclipsed by the political and theological sensitivities surrounding his past.

The journey took place later in the same month. During their trip to the Holy Land, the travelers stayed in Wiener Neustadt in the court of Emperor Frederick III. There, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini encountered the pilgrims and, in a letter to Oleśnicki dated 23 February 1450, acknowledged the presence of Długosz, Elgot, and Bonifili, referring to them with the courteous

⁹⁸ EID, No. 4, p. 34, No. 6, p. 54.

⁹⁹ EID, No. 8, p. 66.

¹⁰⁰ EID, No. 8, p. 74.

¹⁰¹ "Virtutes ipsius, fidem, integritatem et excellenciam scienciarum pernovit Caritas Vestra; non est opus de hiis coram vobis laudes et verba facere" EID, No. 8, p. 74.

expression “humanissimi viri” (“most cultured men”)¹⁰². From a letter written by Długosz to Jan Tęczyński in May 1450, it becomes evident that Bonifili played a pivotal role in arranging a meeting between the Polish visitors and the emperor¹⁰³, and exaggerated Długosz’s diplomatic contributions, perhaps to enhance the group’s prestige in imperial circles or to flatter Długosz’s perceived standing as a diplomat.

They went to Rome shortly afterward and arrived there around Easter or maybe earlier, because by the fourth Sunday of Lent in 1450, i.e., in the second half of March, Bonifili preached before pope Nicholas V¹⁰⁴. Bonifili spent the last three years of his life in the City of Seven Hills, where he settled in as a member of the family of cardinal Antoni Cerdà y Lloscos, preached before the pope and the highest dignitaries in Rome¹⁰⁵, and was involved in settling Polish affairs.

How can we interpret the dynamics of this expedition? By undertaking a joint pilgrimage, participants share certain religious and travel experiences¹⁰⁶. All three were experienced travelers, and at the same time, their motives were diverse. For Długosz and Elgot, this was primarily a religious expedition, although at various stages of the journey, they also fulfill tasks entrusted to them by, among others, Oleśnicki. It also seems that Bonifili had a different goal, because although he participated in the joint journey, he also left Poland as the cardinal’s envoy. Therefore, Bonifili most likely did not reach the Holy Land, but stayed in Rome, which may have been the original intention of the joint expedition.

3.5. Favors and financial support

The relationship between Bonifili and the Polish intellectual elite highlights the mutual favors they exchanged. When Catalan envoy wanted to prompt Konrad the Elder in 1441 to the conciliarist side, he was helped by Jan Elgot¹⁰⁷, who, through the mediation of Konrad’s brother, Konrad the White, tried to dissuade the bishop of Wrocław from obedience to Eugene IV. Giving Bonifili prebends and benefices, as well as involving him in the life of the University and activities of the higher clergy were also a form of favors done for him. These reflected not only financial support, but also appreciation of his merits.

Initially, Bonifili served as a delegate at the Council of Basel on behalf of Alfonso of Aragon, who achieved reconciliation with the papacy in 1443. Subsequently, Bonifili ceased to be under the patronage of the king of Aragon, suggesting a termination of financial support associated with the official legation to the Council. During 1442-1443, the Council experienced a cessation of its financial backing. Notably, Bonifili’s interactions with duke Alexander of Mazovia and well-to-do Stanisław of Sobniów gain significance in this context. The conflict with Lorenzo da Rotella – and probably with Jerome Vogelsang – also had financial implications.

In the second half of the 1440s, Bonifili received several benefits and prebends in Poland, which provided him with a constant influx of money and guaranteed financial stability. He had accumulated many of these benefices throughout 1447-1448. These dates are related to the acceptance of the benefices by Nicholas V. Therefore, Bonifili was an altarist of St. Margaret in the Wawel Cathedral in the years 1448-1453¹⁰⁸, canon of Kraków (1447-1451¹⁰⁹), and canon of Wrocław (1449-1453¹¹⁰). Additionally, he held benefices and prebends in Opatów (St. Martin’s Church¹¹¹), in

¹⁰² *Der Briefwechsel*, vol. II, p. 160.

¹⁰³ EID, No. 10, p. 110.

¹⁰⁴ BC 478, ff. 86r-91r.

¹⁰⁵ Sermon preached by Bonifili, February 4 and 23, 1452, on Ash Wednesday in a leap year, BC 478, ff. 106r-109v.

¹⁰⁶ Manikowska, Zaremska (eds.), *Peregrinationes*; Manikowska, *Jerozolima*; Wyrozumska, „Z dziejów”, pp. 79-88; Majsiak, “Pielgrzymka”, pp. 33-48; Osiński, „Kilka uwag”, pp. 23-35.

¹⁰⁷ Letter of Jan Elgot - *Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae*, vol. XV, pp. 86-87, No 87.

¹⁰⁸ *Akta grodzkie*, vol. IV, p. 159; Koczerska, *Zbigniew Oleśnicki*, p. 391; ACA vol. IV, No. 518; BP vol. VI, No. 744.

¹⁰⁹ BP vol. VI No. 556; ACA vol. IV, No. 517.

¹¹⁰ BP vol. VI No. 31, ACA, vol. IV, No. 521.

¹¹¹ BP vol. VI, No. 559, BP Vol. VI No. 736.

Kraków (custody¹¹²), and Wrocław¹¹³. Bonifili held these benefices in Poland until his death. The financial support was clear information, indicating not only loyalty, belonging, and cooperation, but also that Marcus, who was 'not from the Kingdom of Poland', was a part of the Polish ecclesiastical scene¹¹⁴. Bonifili never reached great church positions, and even in the 1450s, he sought opportunities to obtain various benefices, with varying results¹¹⁵. The highest degree he reached was as *familiaris* and *comensalis* of cardinal Cerda, although the money he received from benefices in Poland granted him financial security.

When Bonifili left Kraków for good, he did not lose touch with the Polish elites. He was involved in Polish matters, helping Poles manage with their businesses. In Rome, Bonifili granted favors not only for Oleśnicki but also for other prominent representatives of the Polish higher clergy and the cardinal's relatives. He was a prosecutor for Grzegorz of Sanok, the elect for the archbishopric of Lviv, on 31 March 1451, ensuring the payment of the required promotion fee¹¹⁶. He also handled matters in the papal Rota for Mikołaj of Sienno, the scholaster of Wiślica and the nephew of Oleśnicki¹¹⁷.

However, the main task in Rome that awaited Bonifili initially was to settle matters on behalf of the Polish cardinal. In a letter to Nicholas V, dated 15 June 1451¹¹⁸, Oleśnicki wrote about the conflict between the bishop of Vilnius, Maciej, and the metropolitan of Kyiv, Isidore, which had been ongoing for almost ten years¹¹⁹. Cardinal Oleśnicki pointed to Marcus Bonifili as the person who would advocate this case on the spot, in Rome, and who had been thoroughly instructed on the matter and, therefore, could act on behalf of the cardinal to further press the case. This indicates that Bonifili continued in Rome to cooperate with Oleśnicki and worked for the cardinal's interests as a man of his close circle.

Another document proving that Bonifili was perceived as a representative of broadly understood Polish interests is a letter from Queen Sophia, mindful of Marcus' mutual relations with Poles, dated 15 October 1453, from Kozienice¹²⁰ asking him for an intervention with the pope regarding the relics promised two years earlier. Bonifili could not receive this letter nor render the favor he had been asked for. He died in the first half of October 1453 in Rome.

Doing favors and reciprocating them functioned as meaningful acts of service, and in certain cases, could serve as the foundation for friendship. Jean Leclercq summarized that in medieval society, a friend was someone from whom assistance could be sought. Friendship granted the privilege to make requests and imposed a mutual obligation of service among peers¹²¹. Such favors, however, did not necessarily reflect a close bond but rather the functioning norms of the community, such as the practices of medieval universities or the policies of granting benefices. The benefits that Bonifili received in Poland can also be interpreted as a form of his salary for services rendered to Oleśnicki.

¹¹² BP vol. VI No. 733.

¹¹³ ACA, vol. IV, No. 521.

¹¹⁴ The issue of the close relations of the Polish elite with Bonifili is interesting because the university (and not only the university, but also Polish church structures) generally did not favor the appointment of foreigners. This was the case with the appointment of university positions and related prebends in 1450 (CE, vol. III, Nos. 42–44), when Oleśnicki tried to appoint a Hungarian and a German, and the university emphasized its autonomy. A similar attitude can be observed in the Wrocław diocese.

¹¹⁵ Cassanyes Roig, "La provisión", p. 231.

¹¹⁶ Abraham, *Sprawozdanie*, p. 157.

¹¹⁷ *Repertorium Germanicum*, vol. VI, No 4422; Zapala, *Kontakty*, p. 238.

¹¹⁸ CE, vol. I (II), pp. 121–123, No. 113.

¹¹⁹ Isidore went to Moscow, where he was imprisoned and sentenced to death. He escaped and, traveling through Lithuania, reached Rome. After a few years, Isidore initiated a lawsuit in the curia against Maciej, blaming him for the failure of the Union with the Greeks in Lithuania. In the aforementioned letter, Oleśnicki interceded for the bishop of Vilnius, pointing out that the defeat of the Union of Florence in Lithuania was not his fault but rather the result of actions by the Ruthenian princes. *Vid.* Graff, "Rożterki religijne", p. 146.

¹²⁰ *Epistolarum diversarum et epitaphiorum liber*, Kraków, BJ, 42, ff. 83v–84r, *Zophia [alia manu:] mater Chazimiri etc. Magistro Marco Bonfilii*. CE, vol. I (II), pp. 138–139, No. 129. In the same codex there is a letter from Queen Sophia to Bernard Eruli, in which she mentioned Marcus (Kraków, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, 42, f. 170v, *Catalogus codicum*, vol. I, p. 76).

¹²¹ Leclercq, "L'Amitié", p. 404.

4. Summary: A network of connections and dissemination

What connects Bonifili with the Polish intellectual elite and higher clergy is a network of dependencies, the foundation of which is not always friendship; sometimes it is just a community of interests. It is a network of personal and professional relationships that are conditional and intertwined. Part of the relationship between Bonifili and Polish intellectuals was undoubtedly based on strong emotional bonds. The Polish university community favored conciliarism, and was involved in conciliar initiatives and the ideological foundation of these actions. In the relations between Bonifili and Poles, one can see elements such as common interests, ideas, common sensitivity and needs, joint travels, the transfer of ideas, talks, discussions, debates, financial support, etc. These are all connected with the entire sphere of emotions, admiration, trust, understanding, fear concerning an unknown future, and common doubts. However, the sphere of emotions is difficult to reconstruct, and conventional sources report on it less or obscure its image, although it is possible that in this case, we could speak of the formation of a community also based on emotions, in the understanding given to this concept by Barbara Rosenwein:

“I postulate the existence of ‘emotional communities’: groups in which people adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value-or devalue-the same or related emotions. More than one emotional community may exist – indeed normally does exist – contemporaneously, and these communities may change over time.”¹²²

Recognizing these emotions – partly expressed directly, partly reconstructed – is difficult in this case, because we do not have Bonifili’s letters to representatives of the Polish elite, so the emotional dictionary of this relationship is mediated by letters written only by one side and other documents. From the analysis of these incomplete and not entirely satisfactory research sources, one can draw cautious conclusions about the existence of this emotional community, the foundations of which would be emotions ranging from hope, trust, and determination (at the beginning of the schism), to doubt and frustration. All of this, of course, takes place within the framework of a broader social order, and thus something that Rosenwein calls, following Hochschild, “feeling rules”¹²³.

To sum up, the community described here was born in Basel, and its foundation was conciliarism, in which both the University of Kraków and Bonifili were very much involved. The Basel schism, sealed by the election of the antipope Felix V, strengthened these bonds and consolidated efforts for the offensive course. The following years were a time of travels between Kraków and Basel, discussions and political persuasions, and diplomatic actions, driven by the financial tension within which the Council operated. In the years 1443-1444, external factors such as the conflict of the Council with the antipope, Alfonso V’s support for Eugene IV, the strengthening of the position of secular rulers to decide the fate of the schism (led by the diet of Frankfurt), the defeat at Varna (1444), and the death of Alexander Mazowiecki (1444) meant that the chances of the conciliarists gaining wider support and acceptance for its cause dropped to almost zero. In 1444, Bonifili moved to Kraków as legate *de latere*, where he found friendly conditions. The years 1444-1447 were a time of his preaching about the Immaculate Conception, agitating for the Council, strengthening cooperation with Kraków theologians, and impatiently waiting – together with other members of the university community – for the election of a new Polish king. The most serious change took place in 1447 and resulted from a combination of several events – the election of Casimir IV Jagiellon and the death of Eugene IV, as well as the election of Tommaso Parentucelli as Nicholas V. As a result, in Poland, both the secular authorities (king Casimir) and the ecclesiastical authorities (primarily cardinal Oleśnicki) finally sided with the newly elected pope, which almost destroyed the conciliarists’ hopes of gaining any position for negotiations. Thus, Bonifili’s official activity as legate *de latere* loses its *raison d’être*. The last three years of his stay in Kraków (1447-1450) are on different terms. During this time, his main protector, trusting and understanding his

¹²² Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, p. 2.

¹²³ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

unused potential, becomes cardinal Oleśnicki. In the years 1447-1449, he obtained confirmation of benefices by Nicholas V. However, at the same time – as it seems – his paths with the university conciliarists somewhat diverge. The letters written in the years 1447-1450 analyzed here show that Bonifili still enjoyed the recognition and trust of at least a segment of the university environment (Elgot, Jan of Dąbrówka) or Oleśnicki's entourage (the cardinal himself, Jan Długosz). However, we see the growing efforts to facilitate his departure from Kraków and relocation to Rome, which finally happened in 1450. While in Rome, he maintained contact with the Polish higher clergy, serving as an “ambassador” for Polish affairs in the Roman Curia.

Marcus Bonifili stayed in Poland for several years. His last stay is the most interesting because during this time, Bonifili, as the official legate of the Council in Poland, lived in Kraków and became deeply embedded in the local intellectual and spiritual environment. At the same time, it was a mutual, reciprocal relationship, in which Bonifili contributed as much as he gained. The sense of community was certainly apparent, based not only on friendship but also on common interests, shared beliefs, and values. Polish intellectuals and Bonifili spoke the same language – concerning terms and concepts – and shared common views. This was the time of the greatest splendor of Kraków University, which was an inspiring place, creating a community of intellectuals around it. Bonifili undoubtedly became a part of this, and one could even risk saying that he managed to create a separate community with Polish professors based on their shared ideas, views, and destinies. Bonifili's relationship with the Polish intellectual elite did not always remain static. In addition, not each relationship with every University master or representative of the high clergy was identical, as the Polish intellectual elite was made up of diverse individuals with different temperaments, needs, and aspirations.

Thus, Basel became a place where people from two corners of Europe met and were united by a special bond, strengthened by the fight for a common cause. The elements indicated above, such as mutual care, granting favors, looking out for the well-being of others, and supporting each other in difficult situations, helped build a community that served as a haven of solidarity. In this respect, the Council of Basel was an imaginary place where people whose fates had been linked for years met and began to create a new story together. The Council is not one story, but many stories and narratives, including one about human relationships and emotions. By reconstructing the conditions that are necessary for the birth and survival of a specific community – in this case, a group of Polish conciliarists gathered around the University of Kraków and Marcus Bonifili – is essential for understanding, despite the fragmentary and conventionalized sources, the flickering and incomplete narrative surrounding people involved with epochal changes.

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