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## THE RHYMED OFFICE OF BLESSED CZESŁAW

### INTRODUCTION

Liturgical prayer was accompanied by Gregorian chant—one of the oldest and traditional chants of the Roman-Catholic Church. As related to and dependent on Latin text, it took various forms. One of them is the so-called rhymed office which appeared in the thirteenth century (Wiśniewski 2010, 193). This new form, based on a rhymed text, was defined in the terms as follows: *responsoria cum antiphonis... dulcissime modulationis, cantilena responsorium, historia* with the supplement *rhythmata, rimata, rihmata, ritmitica*. These categories corresponded with the content of the words which were included in the then Liturgy of the Hours of the Church. Their content was a poetic and concise description of the life and death or martyrdom of a particular saint (Wiśniewski 2006, 78; Wiśniewski 2019, 172).

In medieval Poland, this type of compositions was also created, associated with the veneration of local patron saints, e.g. St. Adalbert [Wojciech] (see Pikulik 1973; Morawski 1997), St. Stanislaus (Szymonik), St. Hedwig [Jadwiga] of Silesia (Zdanowicz 1953; Morawski 1978; Jasiewicz 2007). Researchers of liturgical texts and choral musical compositions pointed out the difficulties in determining the existence and time of creation of the office of the Dominican, Blessed Czesław, the Patron Saint of Wrocław. A musicologist, Rev. Hieronim Feicht, mentions that such a composition in honour of certain Polish blessed might have existed, e.g., Jolanta, Salomea or Czesław (Feicht 1975, 62; Wiśniewski 2006, 27–28). As a result of the inquiry, former

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liturgical texts of the office connected with the veneration of this blessed Dominican were found (on the history of Blessed Czesław's life and veneration, see Smolarek 2023). No musical notation of the melodies of the breviary antiphons, long responsories, hymns or parts of the Mass was found. However, liturgical texts have always been related to the chant. In every culture, music has traditionally carried a ritual element, and especially sacred music which was performed in the church (Grimalt 2020, 121). Therefore, despite the lack of musical notation, it is worth analysing the breviary texts about Blessed Czesław and indicating their connection with the genres of Gregorian chant and liturgy.

#### THE SOURCES OF THE LITURGICAL TEXTS

The source of the texts of the office of Blessed Czesław is a reprint entitled *Officium B. Ceslai Confessoris* (*Officium* 1703, 35–50), edited in Wrocław in 1703. It was attached to the hagiographical text of the Blessed whose author was a Dominican, Abraham Bzowski (Duchniewski 1985, coll. 1261–62).<sup>1</sup> During his stay in Wrocław in the early 17th century, he encountered plural documents on which the hagiography *Tutelarıs Silesiæ* was based (*Tutelarıs* 1608).

The breviary office found by Bzowski was one the most significant testimonies of Czesław's veneration. According to some researchers, it was composed in 1494 and edited in print in 1602 as one the most important source materials on Czesław (Kucharski 2012, 119–24), which was exploited by Bzowski to write Czesław's biography, later embodied in the history of the Polish Dominican province (Bzowski 1606; Kucharski 2012, 217). The author referred to this source several times: *Ex officio B. Ceslai antiquo Vratislavia recusso an. 1602* (p. 33). The autograph and first edition of the office have not been found. In 1862, also in Wrocław, another similar reprint of *Tutelarıs Silesiæ*, along with *Officium B. Ceslai Confessoris*, was published (*Tutelarıs* 1862).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stanisław Bzowski, whose order name was Abraham, was born in 1576 w Proszowice near Kraków. He was a preacher, Mariologist, hagiographer, Church historian. He died on 31 January 1637 in Rome.

<sup>2</sup> In the article on the rhymed office, as inessential, a Mass form and a part of the *Tutelarıs Silesiæ* were omitted.

The *Officium B. Ceslai Confessoris* begins with a title page (identical for both prints)<sup>3</sup> containing the following information translated like this: “Office of Blessed Czesław, the Confessor, of the Dominican Order, printed in Wrocław Anno Domini 1602. It was subsequently printed from this copy and preserved in the Library of Insignia of the Cathedral Church in Wrocław. Reprinted in the same Wrocław in the Publishing House of Andreas Franz Pega<sup>4</sup>, court printer of the Most Distinguished and Most Reverend Prince and Bishop. Anno Domini 1703” (*Officium* 1703). The *Officium B. Ceslai Confessoris* consists of a proper breviary office and a Mass form.

#### THE TEXTS OF THE BREVIARY OFFICE

*Officium Divinum*, i.e. the so-called Canonical Hours, is one of the liturgical forms of Christian worship, i.e. a prayer expressed by chant. The timetable and structure of these services was adopted by the Latin Western Church in the Middle Ages. The inner structure was varied depending on a liturgical tradition (monastic or diocesan) or a local rite, as well as a day of the liturgical year. Each of these hours had its own order and parts containing different genres of Gregorian chant: psalms and antiphons, verses and responses, responsories, canticles, hymns. There were also readings (*lectio*), prayers and blessings (Harper 1997, 29, 93–105).

The celebrated office was extended throughout the day and night, and it was one of the essential elements of daily liturgy. Outside Mass, the daily prayer consisted of the following canonical hours: Vespers in the late afternoon, Compline in the evening, Matins past midnight. This could be followed directly by Lauds (Morning Office or Office of Aurora). A workday was determined by successive services, the so-called minor hours: Prime, Terce, Sext, None (Harper 1997, 94–95). Rhymed offices referred to the First and Second Vespers, Matins, Lauds and Second Vespers (Wiśniewski 2006, 109ff.<sup>5</sup>). The structure and verbal layer of *Officium de B. Ceslai* are presented in table 1 below.

<sup>3</sup> The total content of the office, including the title page, fits page 16 in *Tutelar* (1703) or 14 in *Tutelar* (1862).

<sup>4</sup> Andreas Franz Pega was a printer who was active in 1682–1713 in Kłodzko (Glatz) and Wrocław (Paszkowska 2009, 306).

<sup>5</sup> The author presents differences and similarities between the regular breviary office and the rhymed office.

Dominicans as worshippers of their Wrocław Patron Saint, Blessed Czesław, followed choral practices adopted from Cistercian customs. However, they celebrated the office in accordance with the Roman cursus (secular), non-monastic (Hiley 2019, 668; Czerwik and Danielski 1985, 99–101). This habit can be noticed by the arrangement of *Officium de B. Ceslai Conf.[essore] O.P. Duplex* (see Harper 1997, 175–79; Danielski and Wąsowicz 1989, 150–51; Małaczyński 1960, 504–637),<sup>6</sup> and especially in the structure of Matins. Despite the lack of a notice in *Officium B. Ceslai*, we can attribute particular Lauds and Vespers psalms which come from the commons *Officium de Confessore* (Hiley 2019, 39–44; Harper 1997, 106–9, 112–13, 115–20).

The beginnings of the office of Blessed Czesław originate probably from the end of the 15th century. In the Middle Ages, starting in the 9th century until the Council of Trent (1545–1563), the creation was flourishing in the form of a “cycle of lyrical pieces, intended for singing during rites outside Mass, contemporarily referred to in scientific literature as rhymed office” (Wiśniewski 2006, 78–95). This genre of poetry (chants) was very popular at that time, and was written in honour of a particular patron or saint (Wiśniewski 2006, 80–81).<sup>7</sup>

In order to visualize the structure of the office of Blessed Czesław, the successive parts and their textual layer are presented. To examine whether a poetical arrangement named a *rhymed history* or a *rhymed office* (81–82)<sup>8</sup> is incorporated into the liturgical creation of the Middle Ages, particular proper verses of the antiphons, responsories and hymns are wholly displayed. The texts are arranged in the order of their appearance in specific breviary hours. Commons of confessors are omitted (*Proprium Commune Confessoris non Pontificicis*) and readings of the second and third nocturn in which Czesław’s life and activity, as well as his posthumous cult in Wrocław, are described (the readings of the First Nocturn come from Philippians 3:1–21).

<sup>6</sup> Feast *Duplex* is a feast of the doubled rite of the second class

<sup>7</sup> “One should state that the office was not a presentation of a verse replica of the saint’s life. Authors of rhymed histories, when referring to selected hagiographical motives, noticed their essence in lyrical comments on events of a saint’s life.”

<sup>8</sup> The concept *rhymed office* originates from the fact that versified hagiographical stories in the form of antiphons and responsories (Vespers, Matins, Lauds) were rhythimized or initially rhymed with assonance, and subsequently with two- or three-syllable rhymes. Their content is a brief biography of a saint. The concepts *rhymed history* and *rhymed office* were used interchangeably. However, the older term *historia* does not always mean a *rhymed office*, although every such office means *historiae*.

The first column contains the name of the part of the office (breviary hour), the second column shows the liturgical form (choral chant genre), and the third column presents the text attributed. The words which mention the name of Czesław (Ceslaus), St. Dominic (Sancto Dominico), the name of the city of Wrocław (Vratislavia) and the region of Śląsk (Silesia) are marked in bold.

Table 1. Structure and verbal layer of the office *In Festo Beati Ceslai*

Part of the Office	Chant Genre	Text
<i>Ad I Vesperas</i>	Antiphon (Ps 113)	<i>Laetare felix <b>Silesia</b>, laeta agens solennia; <b>Ceslai</b> praeclara extolle merita, qui tua exstat laus et Gloria!</i>
	Hymnus	1. <i><b>Exultans hodie cantet gens credula.</b></i> (12) <i>Carmen laetitiae pangat mens Sedula</i> (12) <i>Sonore Lyricus neumata concinat</i> (12) <i>Depromens nova gaudia.</i> (8) 2. <i>Patre Angelico <b>Sancto Dominico</b> <b>Ceslaus</b> inclitus, quondam Canonicus Romae cum gaudio, fratrum Collegio. Junctus est praedicantium.</i> 3. <i>Christum qui colere, peccata fugere, Perorans docuit, elisit haereses. Salutem praedicans, animas aggregans Plures Deo viriliter.</i> 4. <i>Hostium agmina, a <b>Vratislavia</b> <b>Ceslai</b> precibus fugata penitus; Nam globus igneus, exterrens perfidos, Super eum emicuit.</i> 5. <i>Nuncis praecantibus, obtineat Suis Pacis praesidium, veniam criminum Caelica gaudia, nobis perennia Einito mundi tramite.</i> 6. <i>Praestet Omnipotens, Ingenitus Pater, Et Patris Genitus, Filius Unicus, Procedens pariter, Flamen ab utroque In sempiterna saecula. Arnen.</i>
	Ant. ad Magnificat	<i>Adest Festum novae laudis et gloriae <b>Divi Ceslai</b>, qui lumen est Ecclesiae; laetare nunc itaque o <b>Vratislavia</b>, sed et omnis celebris facta <b>Silesia</b>, tanti patris sublimata virtutibus, qui jam beatus gaudet cum caeli civibus.</i>

Part of the Office	Chant Genre	Text
<b>Matutinum</b>	Antiphon of Invitatory (Ps 95)	<i>Pervigiles in laudibus Deo jubilemus: Qui <b>Ceslaus</b> junxit turmis Beatum Caelestibus.</i>
	Hymnus	<p>1. <b>Exultet Laudibus Sacrata concio</b> (12)  <i>Coeli agminibus, juncta tripudio</i> (12)  <i>Patris solenniis, <b>Ceslai</b> Ordinis</i> (12)  <i>Qui laus est praedicantium.</i> (8)</p> <p>2. <i>Hic Dei Famulus, <b>Ceslaus</b> inclytus</i>  <i>Aeterna sevit, mundana respuit</i>  <i>Sese subjiciens, habitum assumens,</i>  <i>Religionis inclitae.</i></p> <p>3. <i>Potens in opere, confines <b>Sijlesiae,</b></i>  <i>Urbis edocuit, signis emicuit</i>  <i>Morbos eliminans, mortuos suscitans,</i>  <i>Patrem sequens Dominicum.</i></p> <p>4. <i>Oramus meritis Pater egregie</i>  <i>Devotos famulos, respice protege</i>  <i>Ne nos livor edax daemonis obruat</i>  <i>Demergat vel in inferos.</i></p> <p>5. <i>Praesta hoc Genitor Optime Maxime</i>  <i>Tu hoc nate Dei et bone Spiritus,</i>  <i>Regnans perpetuo fulgida Trinitas,</i>  <i>Per cuncta pie saecula. Amen.</i></p>
<b>In 1. Nocturno</b>	Antiphons (Ps 1) (Ps 2)  (Ps 3)	<p>1. <b>Ceslaus</b> Dei gratia salutis preco nobilis:  <i>emicuit in <b>Silesia</b> multis clarens miraculis.</i></p> <p>2. <i>Praedicatorum inclytam Religionem,</i>  <i>subiit in qua et Apostolicam coronam, faelix meruit.</i></p> <p>3. <i>Hic Pater egregius dulcem et <b>amabilem</b></i>  <i>se exhibebat omnibus et pium et <b>affabilem.</b></i></p>
	1. Responsory   2. Responsory	<p><i>Christus sol justiae, thesaurus suae gratiae,</i>  <i>transfudit, pari foedere dum novum vatem, saeculo</i>  <b>Ceslaus</b> mittit sedulo: salutem volens hominum.  [Vers.] <i>Ut sapiant cuncti quae Dei sunt et intelligant: et novissima provideant: Salutem volens hominum.</i></p> <p><i>Clarior ortus natalibus Pater hic sincerus, religiosus</i>  <i>actibus gratia preventus, ornare Suae studuit</i>  <i>nobilitatis lineam.</i>  [Vers.] <i>A Patre Dominico religionis habitu <b>Ceslaus</b></i>  <i>induitur.</i>  <i>Ornare Suae studuit nobilitatis lineam.</i></p>

Part of the Office	Chant Genre	Text
	3. Responsory	<i>Vita Pater graciosus verbum vitae praedicat, qui virtute vigorosus, errores exterminat; Et in cunctis fructuosus, Christum sic denuntiat.</i> [Vers.] <i>In Salvatoris Nomine, aquas cappa supposita, sicco transit pede, Et in cunctis fructuosus, Christum sic denuntiat.</i> <i>Gloria Patri...</i> <i>Et in cunctis fructuosus, Christum sic denuntiat.</i>
<b>In 2. Nocturno</b>	Antiphons (Ps 4) (Ps 5)	1. <i>Corpus per Jejunia crebra macerabat:</i> <i>et pro mundi miseria Deum exorabat.</i> 2. <i>Post Lachrimarum flumina sancta meditabatur:</i> <i>hic mundanorum crimina foeda detestabatur.</i> 3. <i>Circuit intrepidus, vitae praedicator,</i> <i>errores exterminat fidei Zelator,</i>
	(Ps 8)	<i>Dum Tartorum agmina devastarent Silesiam, Cēsłau Deifamulus precando pro fidelibus: dispersit hostes fidei, pacem reformans Patriae.</i> [Vers.] <i>Nam super eum igneus e caelo globus micuit, quo stupefacti perfidi, fugati sunt de finibus. Dispersit hostes fidei, pacem reformans Patriae.</i>
	1. Responsory	<i>Stupet gens incredula ad tam grande Spectaculum, quod de Coelo flammeus globus mire effulserit: Deum cernentes talia, dicunt esse fidelium.</i> [Vers.] <i>Ab errore revocantur quidam, alii fugantur a Christianorum finibus.</i> <i>Deum cernentes talia, dicunt esse fidelium.</i>
	2. Responsory	<i>O mira Cēsłai potentia, qui prece infantem lucis revocavit ad auram: Quem aquarum undae, octo tenuerunt mortuum diebus.</i> [Vers.] <i>In cuncti potentis nomine qui deducit ad inferos atque reducit.</i> <i>Quem aquarum undae, octo tenuerunt mortuum diebus.</i> <i>Gloria Patri...</i> <i>Octo tenuerunt mortuum diebus.</i>
	3. Responsory	<i>O mira Cēsłai potentia, qui prece infantem lucis revocavit ad auram: Quem aquarum undae, octo tenuerunt mortuum diebus.</i> [Vers.] <i>In cuncti potentis nomine qui deducit ad inferos atque reducit.</i> <i>Quem aquarum undae, octo tenuerunt mortuum diebus.</i> <i>Gloria Patri...</i> <i>Octo tenuerunt mortuum diebus.</i>
<b>In 3. Nocturno</b>	Antiphons (Ps 14) (PS 20)	1. <i>Spiritu Prophetico Vir Sanctus florebat,</i> <i>qui Verbo veredico multa praedicabat.</i> 2. <i>Paterno fulgens sydere, Urbem lustrat occiduam:</i> <i>et Sanctitatis munere, nomen defert perpetuum.</i> 3. <i>Doctorum hic laurea, aetherea ad Regna levatus;</i> <i>Apostolico choro splendescit associatus.</i>
	(Ps 23)	

Part of the Office	Chant Genre	Text
	1. Responsory	<p><i>Faelix cum in aethere jam Christo correignaret, de Sanctitatis culmine Soror dubitabat ejusque de prodigiis parum quid credebat: Huic esse panditur, verum quod latebat, Ceslai per eloquium qui ei apparebat.</i></p> <p>[Vers.] <i>En et Apostolico Throno associatus; inquit: ac feliciter sum glorificatus.</i></p> <p><i>Huic esse panditur, verum quod latebat, Ceslai per eloquium qui ei apparebat.</i></p>
	2. Responsory	<p><i>Ceslai praeclara merita, nunc ostenduntur populis, dum virtute, quae tumulo prodit, fiunt miracula: ad vitam namque mortui resurgunt ejus meritis: Infirmus quique fuerit Salvus abiit per omnia.</i></p> <p>[Vers.] <i>Nobilis jam Vratislavia ejus Sacri corporis gaudet praesentia, atque clara prodigia depromit cum Gloria.</i></p> <p><i>Infirmus quique fuerit Salvus abiit per omnia.</i></p>
	3. Responsory	<p><i>Quasi stella matutina Ceslaus emicuit, Patriam ac coeli viam cunctis monstrans, populis, cujus clare late patent mil an da prodigia. Nos post finem hujus vitae perducatur ad coelestia.</i></p> <p>[Vers.] <i>Obtineat precibus Ceslaus, vir Beatus; ne sine fine lacus nos miseros ingurgitet opacus.</i></p> <p><i>Nos post finem hujus vitae perducatur ad coelestia.</i></p> <p><i>Gloria Patri...</i></p> <p><i>Perducatur ad coelestia.</i></p>
<i>Ad Laudes</i>	Antiphons	<p>1. <i>Adest dies spectabilis, Festum dulcis memoriae: quo Ceslaus laudabilis, junctus est coeli civibus.</i></p> <p>2. <i>Coronatur in gloria laudibus atque honore; qui hujus mundi gaudia tempserit pro Dei amore.</i></p> <p>3. <i>Catervatim populi ad Sancti praesidia currunt: prece supplici, Christo dantes gloriam.</i></p> <p>4. <i>Sancti signis ingentibus, (a)</i>  <i>mira virtus ostenditur (b)</i>  <i>cum sanitas languentibus, (a)</i>  <i>defunctis vita redditur. (b)</i></p> <p>5. <i>Gaudet in caelestibus servus hic fidelis: laudet Omnis Spiritus Dominum de caelis. Alleluja.</i></p>
	Hymnus	<p>1. <i>Dies nunc celebris, mirifici Patris</i> (12)  <i>Incitat animos, promere modulus, (12)</i>  <i>Cum Deo animam carnisque trabeam</i> (12)  <i>Terris dedit feliciter. (8)</i></p>



Part of the Office	Chant Genre	Text
		<p>2. <i>Cujus vita sacris claruit actibus Morsque preciosa fulsit miraculis; Hic permagnifica Doctorum laurea In coelis est perfulgidus.</i></p> <p>3. <i>Pro nobis omnibus, oret hic quaesumus, Ad Regem omnium, rerum principium Qui est in causula, nunc et per saecula. Virtutum pius opifex,</i></p> <p>4. <i>Ut post exilium hoc et interitum Expulsis vitiis atque suppliciis Nos coeli civibus jungatque caetibus Viventium perpetuo.</i></p> <p>5. <i>Praesta hoc Trinitas veraque Unitas, Pater et Filius, Sanctusque Spiritus Simplex Essentia, Virtus intermina Cui sit perpetuum decus. Arnen.</i></p>
	Antiphon ad Benedictus	<i>Hic, almae in apice stans religionis exemplum piae praebuit conversationis: jam de vitae poculis, gustat in solatio, claris Deum oculis videns cum tripudio.</i>
<i>Ad II Vesperas</i>	Antiphon	<i>Adest dies spectabilis, Festum dulcis memoriae: quo <b>Ceslaus</b> laudabilis, junctus est coeli civibus.</i>
	Antiphon ad Magnificat	<i>O Lux Vratislaviae, laus Praedicatorum, gloria Silesiae, concivis coelorum; post finem miseriae: mortis et laborum te colentes hodie ad Regna duc Polo[no]rum. Alleluja, Alleluja.</i>
<i>Per Octavam memoratio</i>	Antiphon ad Benedictus	<i>Praedicator o Ceslae, Sacri Evangelii, ut in vita regulari proficiamus tribue.</i>
	Antiphon ad Magnificat	<i>O Ceslae inclite, Praedicatorum gloria, finito mundi tramite, nos transfer ad caelestia.</i>

When attempting to define the type of this liturgical poetry, we can notice that the chants' cycle of the above breviary office consists of the following elements:

- First Vespers: psalm antiphon, hymn, Magnificat antiphon;

- Matins: invitatory verse, hymn, 9 psalm antiphons, 9 responsories—3 per each nocturn (night office) (Hiley 2019, 318, 668);<sup>9</sup>
- Lauds: 5 psalm antiphons, hymn, Benedictus antiphon;
- Second Vespers: Lauds antiphon repeated, other antiphons probably taken from the Lauds (Wiśniewski 2006, 122),<sup>10</sup> Magnificat antiphon;
- Memorial in octave: Benedictus and Magnificat antiphons.

#### THE RHYMED OFFICE OF BLESSED CZESŁAW

The presented breviary office consists of 33 elements: 21 antiphons, 9 responsories and 3 hymns, and fulfils the criteria of a complete rhymed office (Wiśniewski 2006, 81, 108; Pawlak 2012, 120–21).<sup>11</sup> This can be justified not only by the quantity of exchangeable parts, however, also by the structure of individual verses which are rhymed and rhythmized. Such features are primarily represented by the antiphons. Several of them are indicated in the table above in the versified form with the final syllables rhymed and rhythmized (bold and underlined letters). They are as follows:

- Nocturn 1, antiphon 3 (*Hic Pater egregious*);
- Nocturn 2, three antiphons (*Corpus per Jejunia*; *Post Lachrimarum flumina*; *Circuit intrepidus*);
- Lauds, developed psalm antiphon 4 (*Sancti signis*) and Magnificat (*O Lux Vratislaviae*) antiphon.

These two antiphons also exemplify rhythmized versification: *Sancti signis* is a four-line octosyllable, and *O Lux Vratislaviae* is a four-line dodecasyllable with a caesura after the sixth syllable on which an assonance rhythm occurs (Sławiński 1988, 448). A similar rhythm may be noticed e.g. in the psalm antiphon of the First Vespers (*Laetare felix Silesia*).

The structure of the Matins responsories is more complicated (Wiśniewski 2010, 193–222). As an example, see Responsory 1 of Nocturn 3.

Despite the lack of musical notation, a presumption can be made that the chants of this office had a certain musical structure. At that time, there was a practice of adapting and adjusting existing melodies to verses of a new

<sup>9</sup> A typical arrangement of the Roman (secular) cursus used by Dominicans.

<sup>10</sup> Similar to the *Rhymed Office of St. Sigismund*.

<sup>11</sup> Rhymed offices are built of antiphons and responsories; hymns are also included in this catalogue by certain scholars.

rhymed office (Wiśniewski 2006, 90–91, 185–200; Pikulik 1973, 288).<sup>12</sup> In this case, a supposition can be made that they were motives taken from the aforementioned rhymed offices of St. Hedwig of Silesia (*Fulget in orbe dies*, *Laetare Germania*, *Mundo festus instat dies*), who was especially revered in the city of Wrocław, as well as in the local Dominican monastery (Zdanowicz 1953, 103–4). Could the author(s) of the office of Blessed Czesław have applied already known choral melodies? Even the first antiphon, which encourages the “Jubilant Silesia” to praise and glorify Czesław’s merits, begins similarly to *Laetare Germania*. Furthermore, the structure of this office of St. Hedwig (Jasiewicz 2007),<sup>13</sup> which was sung by the diocesan clergy of Silesia, has elements similar to those dedicated to Blessed Czesław. Dominicans followed the secular cursus in the *Officium Divinum*. Therefore, it may be hypothetically presumed that—according to the then custom—certain melodies could have been taken from the office of St. Hedwig and adapted to *Laetare felix Silesia*.

Research on rhymed offices makes it possible to approximately define the character of the chants of the breviary prayers of Blessed Czesław. Each of these genres had an established style. On the basis of this fact, it may be assumed that the melodies of the described office have similar properties. The architectonics of the antiphons, which are a short refrain beginning and ending a psalm, is dependent on the text structure. They are most often two- or three-part, and consist of brief melodic phrases which musically have their modality, architectonics and determined style, principally syllabic-neumatic (Wiśniewski 2006, 149ff.). Magnificat and Benedictus antiphons are more ornamental, as they are expressed in the neumatic style. From the musical perspective, their task was to provide the psalmodic tone (Schenk and Ścibor 1985, 710–11). Whereas melodies used in psalms and canticles in syllabic (psalmodic) style were founded on eight psalmodic tones applied to the antiphons’ modes. In a particular ecclesiastical centre, they could differ on the initium (beginning) and differences (endings) of the psalm sung.

Long responsories (prolixium) were principally performed in an elaborate melismatic-neumatic style, as well as neumatic-melismatic. While the verses

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<sup>12</sup> In the 14th and 15th centuries an existing liturgical text was adapted by paraphrasing it according to certain principles of liturgical poetry. The practice of adapting one melodic scheme to various texts was common. A number of typic melodies was created. Depending on the needs and the text it was possible to omit or add some fragments. However, a new melody had its individual character.

<sup>13</sup> This rhymed office was created around 1350. Diocesan clergy previously prayed with the words of the office *Mundo festus instat dies*.

which followed them had “defined schemes for eight tones posing the so-called responsorial psalmody” (Wiśniewski 2010, 234–39). Matins responsorial chants and antiphons were arranged according to church modes (tones) from I to VIII (Hiley 2019, 319–20; Szymonik 1996, 86–88).

Except for the aforementioned genres, there are three more hymns in the *Officium de B. Czesłai*:

– for the First and Second Vespers (*Ad Vesperas*) *Exultans hodie cantet gens credula*,

– for the Matins *Exultet Laudibus Sacrata concio*,

– for the Lauds (*Ad Laudes*) *Dies nunc celebris, mirifici Patris*.

In spite of an inquiry (Morawski 1991, *Musica*),<sup>14</sup> I did not manage to find these works in other liturgical-musical sources. Nevertheless, it can be presumed that the melodies of hymns of Blessed Czesław may have been taken from the office of St. Hedwig of Silesia. Such a conclusion is confirmed by the following information.

None of the hymns is a rhymed work, however, they possess identical structure in which four successive verses of each stanza consist of the following number of syllables: 12-12-12-8. It is the so-called rhythmized pseudo-asclepiadic stanza in which the first three lines have a caesura after the sixth stressed syllable (Kowalewicz 1991, 21). The same structure occurs in two hymns dedicated to St. Hedwig of Silesia. They are found in the Wrocław Dominican breviaries from the end of the 15th century.

The first of the hymns in honour of St. Hedwig *Exultent hodie iugiter omnium* (figure 1) was created in the 13th century and entered liturgical codices in all Polish dioceses. The text of the Cistercian provenance, which was modelled after the then known hymn *Festum nunc celebre magnaue gaudia* by Hrabanus Marusus from the first half of the 9th century (In Ascensione Domini/On the Ascension of the Lord), became very popular in a short time in Europe and Poland. Numerous records also come from Wrocław, for example, in the aforementioned Dominican breviaries from the end of the 15th the century (Kowalewicz and Morawski 1991, 53–55, 58).

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<sup>14</sup> International online databases of Latin church chants: Cantus Index Catalogue of Chant Texts and Melodies, <https://cantusindex.org> (accessed December 8, 2023).

## 12. De S. Hedwigi

1. Ex-ul-tent ho-di-e iu-gi-ter om-ni-um  
 men-tes al-ti-so-ne car-mi-na cor-di-um,  
 cum Chris-tus fa-mu-lam ve-xit ad e-the-ra  
 Hed-wi-gim sanc-tam, in-cli-tam.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>2. Verus sol Slezie splenduit in nube<br/>         donans terrigenis munera plurima;<br/>         signis mirifice fulgida sedulis<br/>         hec sancta suis meritis.</p>        | <p>4. Huius nos colere festa fac hodie<br/>         condigne domine, rex bone glorie,<br/>         ut cum celicolis laudibus hymnidicis<br/>         fruamur semper in celis.</p> |
| <p>3. Oret hec, domine, sancta sua prece<br/>         pro nobis, famulis humilibus tuis,<br/>         ne nos fraus demonis artet in inferis<br/>         vel pungat suis iaculis.</p> | <p>5. Presta hoc, genitor optime, maxime,<br/>         hoc tu, nate Dei et bone spiritus,<br/>         regnans perpetuo fulgida trinitas,<br/>         per cuncta pie secula.</p> |

Figure 1. Hymn in honour of St. Hedwig of Silesia

*Exultent hodie iugiter omnium*

(Kowalewicz and Morawski 1991, 53)

The second breviary hymn of St. Hedwig of Silesia *Hymnum [novum] leticie promamus iugiter*, which has a similar structure, belongs to the 14th-century Dominican creation. It is found in three manuscripts from the monastery of St. Adalbert in Wrocław. As a Lauds hymn it has the same metrical scheme as *Exultent hodie* previously presented, and was presumably sung with an identical melody in the eighth church mode. Expressional borrowings of the pattern are

noticeable in the work, and in terms of poetry, it belongs to valuable pieces of the indigenous creation (Kowalewicz and Morawski 1991, 71–72).<sup>15</sup>

The Matins hymn *Exultet Laudibus Sacrata concio* from the *Officium B. Ceslai* has not only the same structure as the work of St. Hedwig of Silesia *Exultent hodie iugiter omnium*, but also the identical last (fifth) stanza. We can notice that two first verses of the hymn in honour of Blessed Czesław are identical to the words of the *Completorium* hymn on the Feast of the Transfiguration of Jesus (*Transfiguratio Domini*), which also consists of five stanzas (*Münster Antiphoner*). *Exultent hodie iugiter iugiter omnium* has been preserved with musical notation, therefore *Exultet Laudibus Sacrata concio* may be performed with the same melody. It was probably also used with the five-stanza hymn of St. Hedwig of Silesia *Hymnum [novum] leticie*. At the same time, this choral composition matches other hymns of the *Officium B. Ceslai*: the six-stanza *Exultans hodie cantet gens credula* from the First and Second Vespers and the five-stanza *Dies nunc celebris, mirifici Patris* from the Lauds.

The above description allows us to draw a cautious conclusion. If the two presented hymns in honour of St. Hedwig of Silesia were found in the liturgical codices of the convent in Wrocław, and one of them was created by Dominicans, the author(s) of the hymns of Blessed Czesław worshipped in Wrocław might be those monks (see Szymonik 1996).<sup>16</sup>

The content of this office also indicates an author who thoroughly knew the history of Czesław's life and activity, as well as his grassroots veneration. It is sufficient to have a cursory look at the words in which his name, occurring frequently (21 times), was variously declined (*Ceslao*, *Ceslaus*, *Ceslaum*) in the context of his activity in Wrocław (*Vratislavia* mentioned four times), which brings glory to the region of Silesia (mentioned five times).

## CONCLUSION

In the article I attempted to present the forgotten office of Blessed Czesław, one the first Polish Dominicans, the Patron Saint of Wrocław and Silesia, recorded in prints from 1703 and 1862 (previously in a lost one from 1602).

<sup>15</sup> It may be presumed that this work of the Dominican provenance was created after the pattern of the hymn of St. Dominic, which begins with the same words of the first verse *Hymnum nove leticie*, popular at that time.

<sup>16</sup> Dominicans were authors of hymns, e.g. of St. Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr, *Gaude Mater Polonia*, probably by Wincenty of Kielcza OP.

The quoted texts of the breviary office relate to the medieval tradition of composing the so-called *histories* or *rhymed offices*. They were created before the beatification of the Wrocław Dominican, which testifies to his grassroots veneration.

The history of Blessed Czesław represents a metrical and partially rhymed structure. Certain antiphons and responsories reveal a metrical-rhythmical structure or a rhythmized prose, therefore this office may be counted to the so-called *rhymed histories* with elements of a *rhymed office*. Whereas the three hymns do not include rhymes, but possess a regular metrical structure. Although this office was not found in the catalogues of choral chants, however, their classical arrangement relates to the then liturgical forms. Neither did I manage to find the musical notation of the antiphons, responsories, hymns discussed earlier. Nevertheless, certain texts suggest the use of melodies already known (e.g., hymns).

This publication highlights only selected, most significant elements and characteristics of the early breviary office in honour of Blessed Czesław. The present article may become a starting point or a contribution to further research on the genesis and more detailed analysis of the text, as well as its other transmissions. It can be assumed that an inquiry into liturgical musical sources will conduct to the discovery of musical notation, which will contribute to a more abundant study of the today forgotten office in honour of Blessed Czesław, the Patron Saint of Wrocław, Silesia, as well as Poland.

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## THE RHYMED OFFICE OF BLESSED CZESŁAW

## Summary

The liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church in Europe and Poland was enriched by the veneration of the saint and blessed who are commemorated during the liturgical year. These events were associated with new liturgical texts and chants. They were included in the forms of the Holy Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours. This practice can be observed on the example of Polish saints: Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr, Wojciech (Adalbert), Hedwig of Silesia. Along with their veneration and canonization, Mass prayers and breviary offices (often so-called "rhymed") were created.

The same was true of the little-known, now blessed, first Polish Dominican, Czesław (Ceslaus) Odrowąż (b. 1186/87, d. 15 July 1242). He founded monasteries in Prague and Wrocław. An interesting publication about him was published in Wrocław in 2012, *Beatus Ceslaus Natione Polonus. The History of the Cult of Blessed Czesław* by Wojciech Kucharski. It inspired me to get acquainted with the texts and liturgical chants concerning this Blessed, who is the Patron Saint of Silesia and Wrocław (Vratislavia).

**Keywords:** Blessed Czesław (Ceslaus); Dominicans; rhymed office; liturgy; history of the liturgy in 15th and 18th centuries