## Reg. No: 2015/18/M/HS3/00091; Principal Investigator: dr hab. Paweł Jacek Kras

This project will publish all the letters exchanged between St John of Capestrano, charismatic preacher, papal legate and inquisitor, and leader of the Franciscan Observant reform, with various recipients in Silesia and the Polish Kingdom during the years 1451-1456. At the request of Pope Nicholas V, in 1451 John of Capestrano set off across the Alps for a preaching mission in Central Europe, visiting Austria, Bohemia, Poland, Hungary and Germany. His mission was primarily intended to confront the Bohemian Hussites and to bring them back to the bosom of the Roman Church. Capestrano believed that his intense preaching in Bohemia would encourage some Hussites to reject their errors, and that his open debate with John Rokycana, the leader of the Utraquists, would demonstrate the superiority of the Catholic doctrine. At the same time his grand tour served to promote the Observant Reform within the Franciscan Order, which aimed at restoring original ideals of St Francis' Rule. As early as August 1451 Bishop Zbigniew Ole nicki of Cracow sent his first letter to John of Capestrano, who at that time was staying in Olomouc, congratulating him on his successful preaching in Austria and inviting him to Poland. Two months later King Casimir the Jagiellon also extended an invitation to Poland. Capeistrano responded to these invitations, starting an intensive exchange of letters with Poles which lasted until his death in 1456. On 28 August 1453, following the repeated invitations from Cardinal Zbigniew Ole nicki, John of Capestrano came to Cracow and stayed there 8 months until May 1454. During this time he was busy preaching in Cracow, supervising the establishments of the first convents of Franciscan Observants in Cracow and Warsaw, and attending various public ceremonies, such as the marriage of King Casimir the Jagiellon with Elizabeth Habsburg. All together thirty five letters related to Capestrano's stays in Silesia and the Polish Kingdom have survived constituting an integral part of the epistolary from his grand preaching mission in Central Europe. Twenty four of them were published in various edition: four of them appeared in the third volume of Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti, Jan Długosz inserted one into his Annales inclyti Regni Poloniae, and Luca Wadding printed the rest in the Annales Minorum. It is worth stressing that eleven letters have been never published; these remain in manuscript in the Library of the Observant Franciscan Friary in Capestrano. These unedited letters are of particular significance, as they include letters sent to Capestrano by city authorities of Wrocław and Cracow, newly established Franciscan Observant friaries, as well as by some individuals, including Jan Długosza, long-term secretary to Cardinal Zbigniew Ole nicki. They all provide previously unknown information on the relations between Poles and John of Capestrano, revealing how important spiritual figure Capestrano was for a number of ecclesiastical and secular communities in Poland and Silesia. A critical Latin-English edition of all thirty five letters, which have been recorded in the available catalogues of Capestrano's correspondence, will be supplied with due editorial apparatus, offering a modern tool for further studies on the religious and political activities of Capestrano. At the same time the edition will offer an important contribution to the international project of publishing Capestrano's epistolary from 1451-1456, coordinated by Prof. Letizia Pellegrini of Universita degli studia di Macerata.