

Testaments are unique resource in the search for an understanding of the everyday lives of the residents of medieval towns. Through this medium it is possible to investigate religiosity, to analyse the social stratification of the population, and to map property relationships, family life or the relationship of individuals to death. In this country they have survived in a number of towns, including Český Brod, Plzeň (Pilsen), Kutná Hora, Litomyšl, Soběslav and Kadaň. The greatest number of testaments are found in Prague, where collections survive in the municipal rolls, along with inventories of effects in later periods, for almost the entire period from the 15th through to the 19th centuries. The oldest Czech testaments are in the memorial books of the Prague Old Town (MS 986, *Liber vetustissimus*) and date to the period beginning 1360 and ending 1419. A collection of some 80 testaments from the years 1428–1441 is to be found in a memorial tome (MS 992) of the Prague Old Town, while testaments from the Lesser Town (Malá Strana) survive in the council manual. An ever more designated agenda required the separation of books intended for the administration of effects from memorial or markets books.

The New Town's Prague testaments are the most complete collection of Late Medieval testaments found within the Czech Republic. They are to be found in three manuscripts in the Prague City Archive, and cover the years beginning 1421 and ending in 1533. My proposal is to make use of three manuscripts from the Prague City Archive in this this: the earliest (MS 2096), covering the years 1421 (1434)–1455, to which MS 2094, covering the years beginning 1455 and ending in 1495 is connected, and finally the third, latest manuscript, MS 2095, which covers the years 1495–1533. The parallel testaments from the Prague Old Town are no longer available, as the Old Town Testament Books were destroyed by the fire of 1945.