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AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM. A CONTRIBUTION TO EDUCATION AND FORMATION BY THE JESUIT COLLEGE IN PŁOCK IN THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES

***Ad majorem Dei gloriam. Przyczynek do edukacji i formacji
w kolegium jezuickim w Płocku w XVII i XVIII wieku***

Abstract

Bishop Marcin Szyszkowski of Płock (1607-1616) founded the Jesuit College in his diocesan capital in 1611, later approved by the Sejm of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1616. The founder granted the Jesuits the house previously occupied by the collegiate school of St. Michael's. The arrival of the Jesuits and the establishment of the school were met with great approval from the local nobility. The activities of the College in the years 1611-1773 contributed significantly to the elevation of education in Mazovia, particularly in Płock, during the early modern period as well as the improvement of life, especially in terms of religion and culture. Thanks to those who taught rhetoric "for the greater glory of God," who died in the service to the infected, who wrote theatrical plays, preached fervent sermons, and led the Sodality, a solid foundation was laid for the construction of a society conscious of its roots and responsible for the welfare of the Commonwealth.

Keywords: Plock, college, Jesuits, theatre, Marian Sodality

Abstrakt

Biskup Płocki Marcin Szyszkowski (1607-1616) ufundował w 1611 r. w stolicy swojej diecezji kolegium jezuitów, zatwierdzone przez sejm Rzeczypospolitej w 1616 r. Fundator oddał jezuitom do dyspozycji dom, w którym dotychczas mieściła się szkoła kolegiaty św. Michała. Przybycie jezuitów i założenie szkoły spotkało się z wielką przychylnością okolicznej szlachty. Działalność kolegium w latach 1611-1773 przyczyniła się do znaczącego podniesienia poziomu wykształcenia na Mazowszu płockim w okresie nowożytnym, a także ożywienia życia zwłaszcza w Płocku, tak pod względem religijnym, jak i kulturowym. Dzięki tym, którzy nauczali retoryki „na większą chwałę Bożą”, umierali, służąc zarazonym, pisali sztuki teatralne, głosili płomienne kazania i prowadzili Sodalicję, kładziony był solidny fundament pod budowę społeczeństwa świadomego swoich korzeni i odpowiedzialnego za dobro Rzeczypospolitej.

Słowa kluczowe: Płock, kolegium, jezuita, teatr, Sodalicja Mariańska

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In 1611, in the annual reports compiled by the Jesuits, we encounter “*Missio Plocensis*” for the first time. More than a century and a half later (in 1773), however, the Jesuit institution in Płock,² which was deeply integrated into the city’s life, was liquidated coinciding with the decision to dissolve the Society. The 15th and 16th centuries, preceding the arrival of the Jesuits, had been a period of splendour for the city. Płock served as a wide gateway through which the fruits of abundance from the vast Mazovia region passed and sailed out into the world by galleys. At that time, the city was flourishing. Following the economic boom, culture thrived. Many residents of Płock, to deepen their knowledge, pursued studies in Krakow or other European cities. At the beginning of the 17th century, Wawrzyniec of Wszerecz described Płock as a city full of prosperity and thriving trade.³ With the Swedish wars, however, Płock, along with the entire Commonwealth, entered an era of stagnation and decline. Fires, epidemics, extremely burdensome military campaigns, and quarters for the city’s inhabitants devastated the city.⁴

Although the plans to establish the Jesuits in Płock undertaken already in the 1560s by Bishop Andrzej Noskowski did not come to fruition, his intention did materialize thanks to another bishop of Płock, Marcin Szyszkowski (1607-1616).⁵ Bishop Marcin Szyszkowski of the Ostoja coat of arms was known as one of the most fervent protectors of the Society of Jesus in the 17th century. Franciszek Rzepnicki called him *the most ardent defender of the Society*.⁶ Szyszkowski’s good relationship with the Jesuits dated back to the period when he studied at the Roman College of the Society under, among others, Robert Bellarmine. As Bishop of Łuck from 1604, he founded a Jesuit institution at the cathedral which, in 1606, was elevated to the rank of a college (*collegium*) consisting of two-level schools

² *Annuae litterae 1611*, Archiwum Romanum Societatis Iesu (hereafter: ARSI), ref. no. ARSI, Lith. 6, f. 17.

³ S.M. Szacherska, *Złoty wiek miasta. Lata 1495-1580*, in: *Dzieje Płocka*, eds. J. Chojnacki, A. Gieysztor, Płock 1973, p. 153. Wawrzyniec of Wszerecz was born around 1538 in the village of Wszerecz, belonging to the parish of St. Adalbert in Szczepankowo, and he died on May 5, 1614. He was interested in the history of Mazovia, as evidenced by his work *Notitiae Masoviae*, which was kept in manuscript in the Archives of the Płock Diocese until World War II. In 1941 the Germans transported the contents of the archives and the library (especially the 15th-18th century prints) to Königsberg, where all traces of the manuscript by Fr. Wawrzyniec of Wszerecz have disappeared. Thus, we lost a very interesting manuscript from the early 17th century, the fruit of many years of research by a passionate historian of Mazovia and the Church. We only partially know what it contained from those who used it in fragments, such as Hipolit Gawarecki or Archbishop Antoni Julian Nowowiejski, author of the *Monografia Płocka*. H.E. Wyczawski, *Wawrzyniec z Wszerecza (Laurentius Wszerecz, Wszerecz)*, in: *Słownik Polskich Teologów Katolickich*, vol. 4, ed. H.E. Wyczawski, Warszawa 1983, p. 398.

⁴ W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, Warszawa 2002, p. 37, 64. For example, during the Swedish invasion, the Jesuit College in Płock was turned into quarters for the Swedish military commissioner, Baldwin. “Baldwin, komisarz wojsk szwedzkich, wyznaczył sobie siedzibę w kolegium, z wielką dla naszych niewygodą i krzywdą, albowiem jako pierwszy wprowadził do Kolegium kobiety i złupił najlepsze księgi wybrane z katalogu.” *Historia 1656*, ARSI Lith. 40, f. 39v.

⁵ Bishop Marcin Szyszkowski was born in 1554 in Skarszew near Kalisz. He studied at the Jesuit College in Pułtusk and then at the Cracow Academy and in Rome. In 1604-1607, he served as the bishop of the Łuck diocese. As the bishop of Łuck, he founded the Bernardine monastery in Brześć Litewski (1605) and the Conventual Franciscans in Krzemieniec (1607). In 1607, he was transferred to the Płock bishopric, and in 1616 to the Krakow bishopric. He passed away on April 30, 1630. Cf. M.M. Grzybowski, L. Zygnier, *Marcin Szyszkowski h. Ostoja (1607-1616)*, in: *Episkopat płocki w latach 1075-2022*, Płock 2023, p. 142-144; E. Ozorowski, *Szyszkowski Marcin h. Ostoja (1554-1630)*, in: *Słownik Polskich Teologów Katolickich*, vol. 4, ed. H.E. Wyczawski, Warszawa 1983, p. 296-298; P. Nitecki, *Biskupi Kościoła w Polsce. Słownik biograficzny*, Warszawa 1992, p. 203.

⁶ “*Societatis Jesu erat defensor acerrimus.*” F. Rzepnicki, *Vitae praesulum Poloniae, Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae res praecipue illorum temporibus gestae ad annum MDCCLX*, vol. 1, Posnaniae 1761, p. 346-347; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 39.

and a theology course. When Marcin Szyszkowski took over the episcopal see of Płock in 1607, he made strenuous efforts to settle the Jesuits in the diocesan capital. The *Inventory of the Assets of the Plock College (Lustracja dóbr Kolegium Płockiego)* compiled in 1773 mentions a document issued by Bishop Szyszkowski as early as 1610. In this document, the bishop donated to the institution a garden behind the town gate, a farmstead behind the Dobrzyń gate, and a plot of land for the future college.⁷ However, it was not until 1611 that Bishop Szyszkowski formally requested the establishment of a college in Płock from the Lithuanian provincial, Paweł Boksza. The school was intended to be in a tenement house near St. Michael's Collegiate Church. The *Informatio de fundatione, fundatore et benefactores Collegii Plocensis Societatis Jesu* states that with the cathedral chapter's consent, the bishop allocated the village of Lutobork along with tithes for the maintenance of the Jesuit foundation.⁸ Shortly before Bishop Szyszkowski's promotion to the episcopal see in Krakow, in 1616, the Płock Jesuit foundation received approval from the Sejm of the Commonwealth.⁹ It quickly became evident that establishing a school in Płock was very necessary, and the presence of the Jesuits was extremely well received by the Mazovian nobility.¹⁰ However, in order to conduct teaching, it was essential to ensure a well-prepared teaching staff and specially prepared premises. For this purpose, Bishop Szyszkowski allotted to the Jesuits a building that had previously housed St. Michael's Collegiate school.¹¹ At the same time, preparations began for the construction of a new school. In August 1616, new wooden school buildings equipped with teaching aids, were completed.¹² However, the new school year did not commence in the new premises. A week before the inauguration of classes, a fire broke out in Płock, and engulfed a large part of the city, including the Jesuit school.¹³ In this situation, the bishop again designated a temporary building. This time, it was the residence

⁷ Library of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Polish Academy of Sciences in Cracow, *Lustracja dóbr; wsiów, dziesięcin, summ i wszystkich in genere quocumque titulo funduszów przedtym do Kolegium Płockiego XX Jezuitów a teraz do Rzeczypospolitej należących*, ref. no. 1156; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 40.

⁸ "[Episcopus] assignavit villam Lutoborae, a mensa Episcopalis, decimasque eisdem villae de Capitaneatus Lomzensis, cum consensu Venerabilis Capituli Plocensis." ARSI, *Informatio de fundatione, fundatore et benefactores Collegii Plocensis Societatis Jesu, Historiae Fundationes Lithuanicae*, ref. no. ARSI, Pol. 75.

⁹ "Iz Wielebny Marcin Szyszkowski, Biskup Płocki, fundował Ojców Jezuitów w mieście naszym Płocku, kamienice, domy i place im zakupił, za prośbą tedy posłów województwa płockiego i za zgodą wszech stanów Koronnych, kamienice te, domy i place, wolne od podatków wszelakich i ciężarów miejskich, wiecznymi czasy wolnymi czynimy atque immunitibus et libertatibus Ecclesiasticis perpetuo adscribimus, autoritate praesentis Conventus," *Volumina Legum*, przedruk Zbioru Praw staraniem xx. Pijarów w Warszawie od roku 1732 do roku 1782, Petersburg 1859, no. 106, p. 147; *Volumina Constitutionum*, vol. 3: 1611-1640, vol. 1: 1611-1626, preparation for print: S. Grodziski, A. Karabowicz, M. Kwiecień, Warszawa 2010.

¹⁰ "Plerique filios addiscebant, existimantes Nostros eorundem institutionem statim inchoavimus." ARSI, *Historia Residentiae Plocensis ab Anno 1611 ad Annum 1617*, ref. no. ARSI Lith. 38, f. 152a. On the principles and structure of the functioning of the Płock college cf. J. Kwiatkowski, *Struktura i zasady funkcjonowania Kolegium Towarzystwa Jezusowego w Płocku*, „Notatki Płockie”, 1/2017, p. 3-7; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 44.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² "Respondebant pro eius [Episcopi] desiderio iam quatuor loco satis commodo, et ad habitatione nostra non remoto aedificatae." *Annuae litterae 1616*, ARSI Lith. 38, f. 152c-152cv.

¹³ "Scholae novae ex ligno non parvo hoc loco sumptu extractae et omnibus ad scholasticorum usum requisitis instructae in communi ista calamitate consumptae sunt plane una hebdomada ante studiorum inchoationem, quae primum hoc anno instaurari a nostris debuerunt." *Annuae litterae 1616*, ARSI Lith. 38, f. 120v-121.

of the prepositus of St. Michael's Collegiate Church.¹⁴ Thus, on October 30, 1616, teaching began in the temporary location.¹⁵

The first group of Jesuits to arrive from the Pułtusk residence in the new headquarters in Płock were: Mikołaj Miszczyc, Sebastian Roman, Stanisław Knapiusz, and Kacper Maciejewicz.¹⁶ Gradually, the Jesuit numbers in the Płock residence rose. In 1616, there were six of them, including five fathers and one coadjutor;¹⁷ in 1619, there were ten, including five fathers, three seminarian – teachers, and two coadjutors;¹⁸ and by 1623, there were 18 Jesuits working in Płock, including 13 fathers, one teacher – seminarian, and four coadjutors.¹⁹

In total, the Płock College was directed by 42 rectors²⁰ during its nearly 150-year history. Many of them became renowned for their extensive knowledge and diligent work in various Jesuit institutions. For example: Szymon Sokolnicki, rector of the Płock College from 1647 to 1650, after which, for 22 years, he held the office of minister and procurator of the estates of the Vilnius Academy;²¹ Franciszek Truchonowicz, rector from 1742 to 1745, became the Lithuanian provincial in 1745. He is remembered in the province's history as a guardian of education. He published brochures about the *Collegium Nobilium* in Vilnius. He organized the archives of the province and instructed the preparation of a manuscript inventory. He was known as an outstanding preacher;²² Zygmunt Lauksmin, rector from 1644 to 1647, later a professor of rhetoric and theology at the University of Vilnius.²³ While serving as the rector of the Płock College, he prepared the work *Demonstatio Catholicae Ecclesiae*. It was created with the intention of the upcoming *Colloquium charitativum* in Toruń, in which Rector Lauksmin participated as a theologian of the Płock diocese;²⁴ Łukasz Paprocki, rector from 1653 to 1656, was the author of a book about the Marian sanctuary in Sierpc titled *Łaski cudowne przy kościele sierpskim Wniebowzięcia pełnej łaski Bogarodzice Panny w województwie płockim*, published in Warsaw in 1652, as well as *O łaskach i cudach, które się działy w kościele Najświętszej Panny Maryi Czerwieńskiej*, published in Warsaw in

¹⁴ Ibidem. "Ipse Illustrissimus supervenisset, negotium moram haberet, qui in vicina domo Praepositurae S. Michaelis, ad quam residemus, aptari locum mandavit ad tempus."

¹⁵ "Ibique [in domo Praepositurae S. Michaelis] 30 octobris scholas aperimus magno cum Nobilitatis vicinae gaudio et Laetitia." *Annuae litterae 1616*, ARSI Lith. 38, f. 120v-121; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 44.

¹⁶ *Catalogus personarum 1620*, ARSI Lith. 6, f. 17; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 83.

¹⁷ *Catalogus personarum 1620*, ARSI Lith. 6, f. 101.

¹⁸ Ibidem, f. 126.

¹⁹ Ibidem, f. 222.

²⁰ W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 100-101.

²¹ *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy 1564-1995*, ed. L. Grzebień, Kraków 1996, p. 631.

²² Ibidem, p. 701.

²³ L. Piechnik, *Lauksmin Zygmunt h. Dąbrowa (1597-1670)*, in: *Słownik Polskich Teologów Katolickich*, vol. 2, ed. H.E. Wyczawski, Warszawa 1982, p. 498-500.

²⁴ Ibidem. S. Kostanecki, characterising Lauksmin's activities, writes: "Był wytrawnym pedagogiem, a przede wszystkim lingwistą i kaznodzieją. Ten znakomity hellenista pisywał po grecku wiersze i jako pierwszy w Polsce napisał i wydał gramatykę grecką. Był także autorem praktycznego podręcznika muzyki dla użytku młodzieży uczącej się w szkołach jezuickich [...]. W 1648 r. ogłosił drukiem swoje najbardziej popularne dzieło pt. *Praecepta artis rhetorices et praxis oratoria*. Był to podręcznik wymowy, używany następnie w szkołach jezuickich w Polsce, Czechach, Austrii i Niemczech, i dlatego wielokrotnie przedrukowywany m. in. w Pradze i Wiedniu, w Monachium, Kolonii i Frankfurcie nad Menem." S. Kostanecki, *Nauczyciele i wychowankowie szkoły płockiej obecnie imienia Stanisława Małachowskiego (XIII-XX w.)*, „Notatki Płockie”, 8/1958, p. 13.

1650. He prepared for publication an expanded and corrected edition of his uncle's heraldry – Bartosz Paprocki's *Herby rycerstwa polskiego*. Unfortunately, he did not manage to publish it; after his death, the manuscript was lost during the Swedish wars.²⁵ An extremely esteemed representative of 17th-century scholastic thought was Adam Kwiryn Krasnodębski, rector of Płock from 1689 to 1692, author of *Philosophie Aristotelis explicata*, published in Warsaw in 1678.²⁶

Teachers of specific subjects were responsible for the intellectual formation in the College in Płock. Over almost 150 years, there were several hundred of them. Some teachers were replaced almost every year, because: “[...] each seminarian, after completing pedagogical and philosophical studies, was obliged to teach in lower classes for at least two years. Only in exceptional cases did he lead his class from infima to syntax in the same college. Typically, after just a year in one school, he was transferred to another college to teach the next class. Barely having gained teaching experience, he started theological studies, only to teach rhetoric for a few years followed by conducting one or two philosophy courses and culminating his career as a professor of theology.”²⁷ One of them was Wojciech Tylkowski from Mazovia, who was a professor of moral theology and mathematics in the Płock College in the years 1683-1685. He was the author of *Philosophia curiosa* (Kraków 1669)²⁸ and *Meteorologia curiosa* (Kraków 1669). Another was Jan Albertrandi. He arrived in Płock in 1753 and began teaching French in the infima class.²⁹ He was proficient in Latin, Greek, and languages such as Hebrew, French, Italian, English, and German. His life's work involved compiling a multi-volume copy of documents relating to Poland, held in the libraries of the Vatican, Stockholm, and Uppsala.³⁰

Due to the lack of censuses, it is difficult to determine the number of students in the college at the time in question. However, based on the *Numerus studiosorum qui in scholis Societatis Jesu Provinciae Lituanae studiis dant operam* of 1618, it is known that there were 103 pupils studying in the Płock College at that time, with 80 in the syntax and poetry classes, and 23 in the grammar and infima classes.³¹ In the annual report on the activities of the college for 1616, the number of students 150 pupils was given.³² Therefore, it can be presumed that the number of students in the college during the discussed period ranged from 100 to 150.

In Jesuit colleges, great importance was attached to patriotic formation. Analyzing changes in Jesuit education in the 18th century, Ludwik Piechnik emphasized that Jesuit

²⁵ *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy 1564-1995*, p. 491; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 86.

²⁶ *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy 1564-1995*, p. 327.

²⁷ B. Natoński, *Szkolnictwo jezuickie w Polsce w dobie kontrreformacji*, in: *Z dziejów szkolnictwa jezuickiego w Polsce. Wybór artykułów*, Kraków 1994, p. 46.

²⁸ L. Piechnik, *Tylkowski Wojciech (1625-1695)*, in: *Słownik Polskich Teologów Katolickich*, vol. 4, ed. H.E. Wyczawski, Warszawa 1983, p. 358-362.

²⁹ *Catalogus personarum 1753 r.*, ARSI Lith. 58.

³⁰ *Catalogus personarum 1753 r.*, ARSI Lith. 58.

³¹ *Numerus studiosorum qui in scholis Societatis Jesu Provinciae Lituanae studiis dant operam z 1618 r.*, ref. no. ARSI Lith. 6 f. 117; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 89.

³² “[Nobiles] ex aliis locis remotioribus acceptos filios frequentes nobis offerunt erudiendos; iamque ultra 150 numeramus.” *Annuae litterae 1616*, ARSI Lith. 38, f. 120v-121; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 88.

schools instilled in their students a sense of responsibility for the Republic of Poland.³³ One form of this education was school theatre.³⁴ According to I. Kadulska, through theatrical performances, anniversaries of victories were celebrated, kings and ecclesiastical dignitaries were welcomed, plays were staged on noble gatherings, weddings, ordinations, funerals, etc.³⁵ For patriotic education, historical dramas and moral plays held the greatest significance. In these performances, civic virtues were portrayed and praised, while national flaws, foolishness, and human perversity were ridiculed.³⁶

In Płock, the Jesuits developed this form of education from the very beginning of their establishment. As early as 1612, students from the Jesuit school staged a *Dialogue* that astonished and delighted the audience. Many even claimed they had never seen anything like it before.³⁷ In 1614, the *Dialogue* was performed on the occasion of Corpus Christi celebrations.³⁸ The year 1616 proved to be exceptionally rich in theatrical events. Dialogues were staged four times that year.³⁹ The chronicles of the Płock College recorded several public theatrical productions in the 17th century. These included unspecified public performances in the years 1666-1667; congratulations in the market square as well as dialogues and panegyrics in the church for the installation of Bishop of Płock, Bonawentura Madaliński, on January 27, 1674; declamations and public performances in 1685; a carnival drama in the schoolyard on February 27, 1686; a drama at the end of the school year on July 31, 1686; a drama on the feast of St. Ignatius Loyola on July 31, 1687; a drama on the feast of St. Stanislaus Kostka on November 13, 1687, and a public act for the installation of Bishop of Płock, Jędrzej Chryzostom Załuski.⁴⁰ The last theatrical performance in the 17th century was the play *Fortuna Palladi foederata* staged in 1678 – an allegorical analysis of the situation in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.⁴¹ In the 18th century, after the end of the wars,

³³ L. Piechnik, *Przemiany w szkolnictwie jezuickim w Polsce XVIII wieku*, „Roczniki Humanistyczne,” 25/1977, no. 2, p. 53.

³⁴ Stabilność sceny jezuickiej, jej zakotwiczenie w systemie edukacyjnym kolegiów, a przez to jej powszechność, dawały temu teatrowi możliwość (do tej pory niespotykaną) wpływania na publiczność i kształtowania jej postaw, oddziaływania propagandowego w najrozmaitszych płaszczyznach – dydaktycznej, wyznaniowej i politycznej. K. Kotońska, *Uwagi o stylu polskiej tragedii jezuickiej XVI i początku XVII wieku*, in: *Jezuici a kultura polska. Materiały sympozjum z okazji Jubileuszu 500-lecia urodzin Ignacego Loyoli (1491-1991) i 450-lecia powstania Towarzystwa Jezusowego (1540-1990)*, eds. L. Grzebień, S. Obirek, Kraków 1993, p. 143.

³⁵ I. Kadulska, *Długie trwanie baroku w polskim teatrze jezuickim XVIII wieku*, in: *Jezuicka ars educandi. Prace ofiarowane Księdzu Profesorowi Ludwikowi Piechnikowi SJ*, Kraków 1995, p. 129.

³⁶ W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 80-81. On religious and cultural activities cf. W. Graczyk, *Okoliczności powstania oraz przejawy działalności religijnej i kulturowej jezuitów w Płocku w XVII i XVIII wieku*, „Biuletyn Historii Wychowania,” 31/2014, p. 51-60.

³⁷ *Auxit solemnitate altero vis exhibitus Dialogus a pueris Scholae Ecclesiae nostrae, qui ita rem experimente actionem recrearunt et ad pietatem excitarunt, ut plerique se nihil simile vidisse affirmarent*. ARSI, *Annuae litterae 1612*, sygn. ARSI Lith. 38, f. 152a-152 v.

³⁸ *Pro festo etiam Corporis Christi Dialogus exhibitus solemnitate promovit*. ARSI, *Annuae litterae 1614*, sygn. ARSI Lith. 38, f. 152 bv.

³⁹ *Dialogi etiam quater facti admirationem plebis et nobilium in tradenda nostrae institutioni sua iuventuti erga nos affectum conciliarunt*. ARSI, *Annuae litterae 1616*, sygn. ARSI Lith. 38, f. 152c-152cv.

⁴⁰ Compilation based on the work of J. Okoń, *Dramat i teatr szkolny. Sceny jezuickie XVII wieku*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1970.

⁴¹ The play recounts the fate of the Chinese emperor Xunchius, who began to entrust the highest offices in the state only to people who were properly prepared and educated. This policy caused discontent among the mandarins, who were fond of swagger and extravagance. One of the dignitaries, the Lama, leads a revolt of the mandarins, which

the Płock College resumed its theatrical activity.⁴² In addition to panegyrics in honour of the bishops of Płock and Mazovian dignitaries, the repertoire included a play performed in 1720 about three Japanese Jesuit martyrs and a historical drama featuring the Mazovian prince Ziemowit as its protagonist.⁴³

Theatrical productions required appropriate facilities. For example, staging *Fortuna Palladi foederata* necessitated the construction of a stage allowing for the successive change of five different sets.⁴⁴ Records from 1697 indicate that Stefan Laskowski, the then-rector, erected a two-storey building to provide a more spacious stage, with a brightly lit room on the first floor for theatrical performances.⁴⁵ The devastations at the beginning of the 18th century prevented further investments and expansion of the Płock theatre stage. However, the awareness of the stage's great significance remained, especially since Jesuit theatre became a valuable tool for fostering piety and shaping patriotic attitudes.⁴⁶ Rhetoric academies became a school of civic education, in addition to plays, particularly those related to the historical events of the Republic of Poland. Their aim was to prepare the students at Jesuit schools for public service, i.e., as future local council speakers. Topics for oratory speeches were provided by current social and political issues.⁴⁷

The Jesuit teacher, apart from instilling civic attitudes in his students, aimed at cultivating virtues such as piety, obedience, diligence, modesty, and proper conduct, all of which belonged to the realm of religious formation. To stimulate the development of religious life, the college placed great emphasis on fulfilling religious practices. This purpose was served by student fraternities and religious associations, with the most numerous and significant being the Sodality of Our Lady.

According to S. Załęski, the Sodality was both a religious and social institution regulated by statutes.⁴⁸ It served to stimulate social and apostolic activity. Sodalists learned self-government and rational management of common funds. They helped less capable classmates

ends with the imprisonment of the wise emperor. See J. Okoń, *Dramat i teatr szkolny. Sceny jezuickie XVII wieku*, p. 124-125; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 81-83.

⁴² Płock panegyrics were often published in print. From the 18th century comes the one published in Warsaw in 1737: *Corona Patriae a Primo ex Polona Patria Nobilitate coronarii nominis Plocensi Antistitae, sexagesimus Praesul, patrium suum montem coronans Infulis, Antonius Sebastianus a Dembowa – góra Dembowski, Eppus Plocensis LXVII*. Cf. J. Brown, *Biblioteka pisarzy Asystencji Polskiej Towarzystwa Jezusowego*, Poznań 1862, p. 50.

⁴³ *Magnus Congregatorum Joannis Petri et Andreae Ad Martyrii Lauream extensa. A Perillustri, Illustri ac Magnifica Collegii Karnkoviiani Plocensis Societatis Jesu in tragicam scenam data anno 1720. [...] Veritas in fundo per Ziemovitum Plocensium ducem veneno potum, Infortunatum esse computationum eventum agnoscere reperta. Antecinerali Dramate a Perillustri, Illustri ac Magnifica Iuventute Rhetorica Collegii Karnkoviiani Plocensis Societatis Jesu promulgata Anno 1720, 10 Februarii*. C. Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jesus*, vol. 6, Bruxelles-Paris 1895, col. 900-901.

⁴⁴ J. Okoń, *Dramat i teatr szkolny. Sceny jezuickie XVII wieku*, p. 249.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ J. Okoń, *Teatr jezuicki w Polsce: pomiędzy swojskością a cudzoziemszczyzną*, in: *Jezuici a kultura polska. Materiały sympozjum z okazji Jubileuszu 500-lecia urodzin Ignacego Loyoli (1491-1991) i 450-lecia powstania Towarzystwa Jezusowego (1540-1990)*, eds. L. Grzebień, S. Obirek, Kraków 1993, p. 227-241; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 82-83.

⁴⁷ S. Bednarski, *Upadek i odrodzenie szkół jezuickich w Polsce. Studium z dziejów kultury i szkolnictwa polskiego*, Kraków 1933, p. 405-406.

⁴⁸ S. Załęski, *Jezuici w Polsce*, vol. 1, Lwów 1900, p. 125.

in their studies and cared for the poor and sick in hospitals and shelters.⁴⁹ Sodality members were students distinguished by their piety and academic achievements. The board consisted of the Sodality prefect, two assistants, four advisers, a secretary, and a treasurer. The entire board was elected at a meeting of all members, and one of the designated fathers served as the moderator of the congregation.⁵⁰

In reports from the Płock College, there are references to the activities of the Sodality. It was established shortly after the arrival of the Jesuits in Płock. We learn for the first time about the function of the Sodality's guardian from the *Catalogues* of the Płock house of 1620. At that time, it was Father Jakub Orandowicz, the prefect of the schools and professor of moral theology.⁵¹ Over 40 years later, in 1667, the chronicler of the college, writing about the school's development, also noted the growth of this student congregation.⁵² Then, the Płock Sodality was particularly influenced by the confessor of the Norbertine Sisters in Płock, Fr. Stanisław Mikulski, who was favourable to the Jesuits. According to the account of 1679, Fr. Mikulski performed a solemn act of dedication of the Płock College Sodality to the Mother of God⁵³ at the altar of Our Lady of Mazovia. Perhaps it was then that the Sodality's new members, as was the commonly accepted custom, received their diplomas signed by the moderator, prefect, and secretary as well as a silver medal of the Our Lady, which they were to wear as *Order of Mary*.⁵⁴

In the same year, the college chronicler noted that: "The Sodality dedicated to the Virgin of the Angels practiced so fervently that it became necessary to designate an oratory for the second branch of devotion."⁵⁵ It is not unlikely that this increase in the membership of the association led to the division into the so-called Minor Sodality, consisting of students from the grammar classes, and the Middle Sodality, comprising students from the poetics and rhetoric classes.⁵⁶ Apart from the Marian Sodality, there were other organized or informal devotional fraternities in the Płock College which aimed to revive the cult of various saints, especially within the Jesuit sphere, such as Saint Stanislaus Kostka⁵⁷ or Saint Francis Xavier.⁵⁸

⁴⁹ *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy 1564-1995*, p. 629.

⁵⁰ S. Załęski, *Jezuici w Polsce*, p. 125-126; J. Sprutta, *Początki Sodalicii Marianańskich w jezuickich kolegiach dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*, "Studia Bydgoskie", 2016, p. 296-305.

⁵¹ O. Jakub Orandowicz Pr[efectus] Congreg[ationis]B[eatae] V[irginiae]. ARSI, *Catalogus personarum 1620*, ref. no. ARSI Lith. 6.

⁵² *Szkoły kwitną publicznymi akademiami i innymi ćwiczeniami, zwłaszcza zaznaczył się postęp w świętej Kongregacji*. ARSI, *Annuae litterae 1667*, ref. no. ARSI Lith. 41, f. 38v.

⁵³ *Auxit non modicum fervorem Sodalitii illustri exemplo et constanti pietate R.P. Stanislaus Mikulski e Divi Norberti familia confessarius Parthenonis eodem instituto viventis, ordini nostro perquam addictus. Diuturnis ille precibus efflagitabit in Album Deiparae seniorum referri, et tandem voti compos factus publicamin coetu Sodalium Professionem fidei edidit, ac Magnae Matri, servitii perpetui sacramentum dixit*. ARSI, *Annuae litterae 1679*, ref. no. ARSI Lith. 42, f. 75v.

⁵⁴ S. Załęski, *Jezuici w Polsce*, p. 126.

⁵⁵ "Sodalicja poświęcona Dziewicy Anielskiej tak gorliwie ćwiczyła, że koniecznym stało się przeznaczenie oratorium dla drugiej gałęzi pobożności." ARSI, *Annuae litterae 1679*, sygn. ARSI Lith. 42, f. 75v.

⁵⁶ *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy 1564-1995*, p. 629; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 76-77; W. Graczyk, *Okoliczności powstania oraz przejawy działalności religijnej i kulturowej jezuitów w Płocku*, p. 55-58.

⁵⁷ *Wielu chorych uczniów wzywających pomocy Błogosławionego, otrzymało zdrowie*. ARSI, *Annuae litterae 1648*, ref. no. ARSI Lith. 39, f. 233-233v.

⁵⁸ ARSI, *Annuae litterae 1684*, ref. no. ARSI Lith. 42, f. 136v; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 77.

The professors and educators of the Jesuit College in Płock actively participated in the pastoral life of the city. The Jesuits preached sermons on holidays or jubilee years, offered their assistance by hearing confessions, and engaged in pastoral care for the sick and prisoners. According to records of the years 1754-1757, the Płock Jesuits heard a total of 42,779 confessions, administered the First Communion to 121 children, and prepared 39 individuals for death. Additionally, they provided sacramental service to 133 the sick and to imprisoned people, delivered 21 exhortations, and conducted 4 missions and retreats. Pastoral work resulted in the conversion to Catholicism of three followers of Judaism and three of Eastern Orthodoxy.⁵⁹ No doubt, this engagement stemmed, on the one hand, from the religious needs of the inhabitants, and on the other hand, from the Jesuits' commitment to fulfilling the charism of the Society's founder. Many Jesuits sealed this service, full of dedication and sacrifice, with the offering of their lives. Providing religious assistance during the epidemic in 1657, the following passed away: Fr. Wojciech Kaczyński and Fr. Wojciech Popławski; and in 1708: Br. Wawrzyniec Gniewkowski, Br. Urban Markowski – infirmarian, Fr. Adam Lipowski – professor of moral theology, and Fr. Kazimierz Szczytt – preacher, prefect of schools and library.⁶⁰

During its existence from 1611 to 1773, the Płock College left a significant mark on many aspects of the life of the city and on Mazovia. The high-level education provided in the modern spirit gave the graduates of the Jesuit school an in-depth general knowledge in the broadly understood humanities, but also in arithmetic, classical and modern foreign languages (German, French), geography, history and even law. No wonder that the interest in this school among the local Mazovian nobility was enormous, as evidenced by the number of noble youths educated there. The history of the Jesuit College in Płock is an important part of the modern history of the city. Not only education but also pastoral care, especially preaching, would have been at a significantly lower level in the city without the Jesuits, and the Jesuit theatre built social sensitivity in terms of culture and art.

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⁵⁹ Data prepared on the basis of tables included in the work of J. Flaga, *Działalność duszpasterska zakonów w drugiej połowie XVIII w. 1767-1772*, Lublin 1986; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 78-79. For example, the future Saint Andrzej Bobola, who stayed in Płock in the years 1633-1638, preached many sermons in Płock churches. ARSI, *Catalogus personarum 1634*, ref. no. ARSI Lith. 6, f. 302b.

⁶⁰ *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy 1564-1995*, p. 148; W. Graczyk, J. Kwiatkowski, *Jezuici w Płocku (1611-1773)*, p. 79.

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