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Sources on the History of Jesuit Schooling in Kražiai

Źródła do dziejów jezuickiego
szkolnictwa w Krożach

*Fontes Collegii Crosnensis qui in Archivo Romano Societatis
Iesu asservantur, 1608–1700* [*Kražių kolegijos Šaltiniai,
saugomi Jėzaus Draugijos Archyve Romoje. I dalis:
1608–1700*], vols. 1–2, eds. Ž. Nedzinskaitė, D. Antanavičius,
Vilnius: Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos institutas, 2019



For a long time, researchers dealing with the history of education and culture have been interested in the influence of Jesuit schooling on educational spaces of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which has resulted in interesting monographs, articles and collections of materials related both to vast areas and particular institutions. One such institution is the college in Kražiai, which has recently been the subject of new publications, such as an edited book on the organ tablature (*Liber Organistarum Collegii Crosnensis Societatis Jesu*, eds. L. Budzinauskienė, R. Murauskaitė, Warszawa 2017) and a two-volume library catalogue (*Buvusios Kražių kolegijos 1803 metų knygy sąrašas*, ed. D. Antanavičius, Vilnius 2017–2018).

We are even happier to welcome another editorial initiative of the Lithuanian scientific environment in the form of a new publishing series entitled *Monumenta Historiam et Acta Collegii*

Recenzje

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Reviews

Crosensis spectantia (*Historical Monuments and Documents of Kražiai College*). The Jesuits started working in Kražiai (Samogitia) at the beginning of the 17th century, opening a missionary station (1608–1615), then a residence (1615–1618), and finally a large college with schools (1616–1773) from the foundation of bishop Melkeris Giedraitis and bishop Nicolas Pac, as well as prince Mikołaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł and hetman Jan Karol Chodkiewicz. The schools opened in 1616 first included grammar classes, but they were gradually extended and, finally, classes of rhetoric were opened in about 1640. In certain periods of time, a seminary for teachers, philosophical studies and studies in moral theology were carried out there. At the moment of the suppression of the Jesuits, in 1773, Kražiai College managed full secondary schools and a course of philosophy.

The aim of the first volume in this new series is, at the same time, that of the first part of the book, the objective of which is to give researchers access to the source materials—mainly manuscripts—of Jesuit writings concerning Kražiai College, preserved and stored mainly in the ARSI, or the central Roman Archive of the Society of Jesus. The first part of the book only includes documents issued before 1700. The publication of the second part, which includes the documents from 1701–1773, is planned for release in the next year. The source materials are published in the original language, i.e. mainly in Latin, so the editors included a preface and introduction in Latin and Lithuanian in their book.

The main part of the collection of the sources of 1608–1700 is preceded by two separate chapters that include, respectively, excerpts related to the mission in Samogitia (*Žemaitija*) in annuals of other Jesuit colleges prepared before 1608, and excerpts from the history of the college, as well as from documents kept in the “*Fondo Gesuitico*” section of the Roman Archive of the Society of Jesus, the dates of which remain uncertain. In the main collection, the chronological layout is maintained. For each year, the available types and kinds of documents were assigned: *Annuae litterae*, i.e. hand-written annuals that contain information, the main objectives of which are to instruct and inspire the reader, to promote model attitudes, and to refer to pastoral issues; *Historiae Collegi*, i.e. factographic documents that include details from the life of the college, church, school, boarding school and music school; and *Catalogi breves* (annual personal

catalogues) with the surnames of, inter alia, teachers of public schools, lecturers of courses for the Jesuits (in moral theology), managers and participants (students) of teacher seminars, and supervisors of the Sodality of Our Lady (student congregations). Also, the existing three-year catalogues (*Catalogi triennales*) were signalled by giving the first names and surnames of the Jesuits working in the college and the schools in a given year, as well as their nationality—more precisely, their place of birth. However, the editors did not include their brief CVs, attached to the catalogues, in which their origin, education, the course of their teaching career, and their employment history were mentioned. Such a principle was probably adopted due to the amount of necessary text, which would force the publishers to issue more volumes, not to mention the fact that those catalogues repeat (and often complement) the same information. Nevertheless, full versions of the third-year catalogues (*Catalogus tertius*) were published. They describe the material situation of the place in quite a detailed manner (revenues and expenses, including library expenses).

Apart from the most important sources maintained in the “*Lituania*” section, the publication also includes materials included in other sections of the ARSI: some obituaries of deceased Jesuits, foundation documents of the college, financial documents, and important letters. From the point of view of the history of education, important items include the surnames of students derived from panegyric prints, as well as rare mentions of the number of students. Sometimes, the materials coming from the ARSI were complemented by fragments published in other source texts (e.g. *Rejestrzy podymnego Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego. Księstwo Żmudzkie 1690 r.*, ed. G. Błaszczuk, Warszawa 2009).

The published sources are complemented with a reliable critical apparatus in the footnotes. Also, the publishers prepared extensive Appendices, including chronological lists of the Order’s supervisors, priests making their monastic vows (ARSI section “*Germania*”), deceased Jesuits, or those who were removed from the Order. Moreover, on the basis of the annual catalogues, the authors made a list of all the Kražiai College monks in chronological-alphabetical order, complemented with their years of birth, as well as of joining the order or leaving the order. The publishers decided not to unify different forms of a surname in the list, leaving it in the same form as in the source.

Also, they included the information in a table, making it possible to identify the original versions of the published source materials.

Since all the materials are published in their original languages (Latin and Polish), the volume was completed with summaries of the contents of the annuals (*Annuae* and *Historiae*) in Lithuanian, prepared by L. Jovaiš, I. Katilienė and Ž. Nedzinskaitė. The edition also includes a lexicon of specialist Latin terms occurring in the documents that are explained in Lithuanian. At the end of the volume, there are indexes of people, places and terms, as well as a selection of illustrations presenting the original appearances of the different types of source documents included in the book.

In general, we not only hope that this monumental book shall facilitate further research into the history of Kražiai College and its schools, but that it will also make such research easier and more pleasant.

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