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FOREIGNERS AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF FOREIGN
LANGUAGES AMONG THE JESUITS
IN THE POLISH-LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH UNTIL
THE END OF 16TH CENTURY

A b s t r a c t. The objective of the paper is to revise and complete the current state of research into general characteristics of the first generation of the Polish Jesuits. The first part characterizes the 16th century Poland as a country. Then the influence of linguistic and regional relations in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth is depicted and the degree of language knowledge among the Polish Jesuits is presented. The term “Polish Jesuits” applies here both to the members of the Society born in the Commonwealth as well as those coming from abroad to perform their duties there. In the 16th century these Jesuits formed a group which was fascinating in terms of origin and their knowledge of languages. Situation of the Jesuit Society in the period discussed in the present paper was incomparable to that in other European countries and the knowledge of multiple languages among the priests and brothers attests to this fact.

Keywords: Jesuits; Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; 16th c.; foreign languages.

The objective of the following paper is to revise and complete the current state of research into general characteristics of the first generation of the Polish Jesuits. The study has been elaborated on the basis of source materials and archives, some of which have been published by the Author¹ or re-

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¹ Justyna Łukaszevska-Haberkowa, *Examina novitiorum (Egzaminy nowicjusów) z Braniewa z lat 1569–1574* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Ignatianum, 2012).

mained in manuscript.² This work is based on period documents which include person characteristics³, and is an attempt at making a synthesis which is not possible in a full form due to the lack of appropriate sources.

In the 16th century, Poland was a country which varied considerably in terms of ethnicity and religion.⁴ Foreigners arriving in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, frequently for religious reasons, tried to assimilate with the local community as quickly as possible. Those living among the nobility — who were more xenophobic — encountered greater difficulties; town inhabitants were faced with virtually no problems. People, even those from the outside, from the neighbouring countries, were considered to be the members of one community and environment, although they spoke foreign languages and belonged to different social groups.

The first Jesuits who arrived in Braniewo in Warmia at the end of 1564 were initially under the power of the Austrian province. The Polish province emerged in 1575, but already six years later, nearly two hundred religious worked in six colleges. Within the next few years, intensive development of the order took place: from 1564 to 1575 twelve establishments were created and the number of religious nearly doubled. The structure of the order grew quickly: the first college was established in Braniewo in Warmia in 1564, the second — a year later in Pułtusk, the third — in Vilnius in 1570, the fourth — in Poznań in 1571, etc. Those establishments were initially short-staffed, with dominating foreign religious, but they worked hard ploughing and so-

² See Jan Poplatek, *Znajomość języków u jezuitów polskich w XVI stuleciu*. I completed and revised this manuscript. Jan Poplatek SJ (29.07.1903 — 11.10.1955) was an outstanding historian of the Society of Jesus in Poland. Apart from philosophy and theology, he studied history and geography at the Vilnius University. He worked mainly as a gymnasium professor, during the Second World War he was also the Jesuits' vice-provincial. From 1945 he worked academically in Krakow as the province archive Head. He was an author of valuable historical monographs on the Polish Jesuits, many of which are still in manuscripts. See Ludwik Grzebień, "Jan Poplatek" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy, 1564–1995*, red. Ludwik Grzebień et al. (Kraków, 1996), 530. Also Bronisław Natoński, "Ks. Jan Poplatek TJ," *Nasza Przyszłość* 5(1957): 238–270 and Bronisław Natoński "Jan Poplatek," in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, red. Henryk Markiewicz et al., vol. 27 (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk–Łódź, 1983), 592–593.

³ Justyna Łukaszewska-Haberkowa, *Pierwsze pokolenie polskich jezuitów w świetle biografii i egzaminów* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Ignatianum, 2012), 69–71.

⁴ See Janusz Tazbir, *Kultura szlachecka w Polsce. Rozkwit — upadek — relikt* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Nauka i Innowacje, 1998), 89–90.

wing, and their crop was bountiful as the number of Jesuits increased. By the end of the century, there were as many as 340 Jesuits in Poland.⁵

The above presentation shows clearly that the end of the 16th c. is the end of some stage of the Jesuit order formation. It is a period when the order was putting down roots into the Polish soil, forming a greatly varied social group.

As I mentioned above, the first Jesuits in Poland, especially in the initial period of the Society of Jesus' activity, were foreigners. Both the Jesuit priests (the professed members) and the brothers were most frequently sent by their superiors to undertake particular duties.⁶ Usually, the duties they needed to fulfil were beyond their capabilities: one person performed several independent functions.

Gradually, Polish Jesuits took the place of foreigners; however, in order to do so, they needed to complete appropriate studies. Bronisław Natoński⁷ estimated that in the 16th c. 181 Polish Jesuits, including priests, clerics and brothers, worked in the Polish Province of the Society of Jesus.

From the 17th century onwards, a gradual change in the composition of the Polish Province and the Lithuanian Province, established in 1608, took place. In connection with the natural generational change — some of the foreigners went abroad, others died — the majority of the Jesuits on the territories of the Commonwealth consisted of Poles. At that time, the Polish province also changed its social character. The following dataset⁸ presents the numbers of friars in subsequent years:

Year	Priests	Clerics	Brothers	Total
January 1567	9	10	4	23
November 1567	16	16	10	42
1570	11	25	12	48
1590	129	117	92	338
1599	148	140	126	414

⁵ See "Wstęp" in *Z dziejów szkolnictwa jezuickiego w Polsce. Wybór artykułów*, red. Jerzy Paszenda (Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM, 1994), 6–7.

⁶ See the entry *koadiutor* in: Ludwik Grzebień, red., *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy, 1564–1995* (Kraków, 1996), 286–287, and the entry "Profesi" in *ibidem*, 539, and the entry "Profes" and "Brat" in Jakub Kołacz, *Słownik języka i kultury jezuitów polskich* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM, 2006), 213 and 65–66.

⁷ See Bronisław Natoński, "Szkolnictwo jezuickie w Polsce w dobie kontrreformacji" in *Wiek XVII — barok — kontrreformacja. Prace z historii kultury*, red. J. Pelc (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich), 309–337, the same in Paszenda, red., *Z dziejów szkolnictwa jezuickiego w Polsce*, 29–58.

⁸ See Jan Poplatek, *Znajomość języków u jezuitów polskich w XVI stuleciu*, typescript No. 1149 XXIII, Archives of the Society of Jesus Southern Province.

and a detailed dataset of their nationalities

	1590	1599
from other countries in total	64	47
England, Scotland	5	4
Belgium, Flanders	8	5
Slovakia, Czechia, Moravia	3	2
Denmark	2	—
Spain	6	3
Germany	12	10
Silesia	—	13
Sweden	3	4
Hungary	16	—
Italy	9	6

In the first years, most novices joined the order outside Poland: frequently in Vienna, Rome, Olomouc, or Prague. Only when the college and the novitiate were opened in Braniewo, could the inhabitants of the Commonwealth join the Society of Jesus in Poland. Even greater opportunities arose when new houses of the novitiate were opened. However, irrespective of those circumstances, some Poles joined the order on their own: in Vienna, Prague, and Rome, depending on the places of their studies, undertaken work, or other life circumstances.

The best of candidates — the most promising ones — went to pursue their studies in Rome. Some others, like Stanislaus Kostka, came there on their own, etc. Others received their education at home, in Poland: at the beginning only in the novitiate in Braniewo, later in Vilnius, Riga, and finally in Krakow.

Foreigners arrived in Poland by the decision of their superiors — rarely did they ask to be sent on missions to Poland; however, irrespective of the reasons for their arrival, they played an important role, especially at the time when the generation of the first Jesuits from Poland only started their education and formation. Practically, all the foreigners who arrived, both fathers and brothers, greatly contributed to the Society, although some of those religious remain less known.⁹ Only at the end of the century, fathers and brothers from the Commonwealth were predominant, yet there were still many

⁹ Bronisław Natoński, “Początki i rozwój Towarzystwa Jezusowego w Polsce (1564–1580),” in *Powstanie i rozwój Towarzystwa Jezusowego*, vol. 1. *Początki Towarzystwa Jezusowego*, ed. J. Brodrick SJ (Kraków, 1969), 414–476. Natoński’s work was published as the last, sixteenth chapter appended to the monograph on the history of the Jesuits in the world.

foreigners. It is worth mentioning here that even those Jesuits who were born in the Commonwealth and joined the order there identified themselves with the region they came from. And although they were not considered to be foreigners, they emphasised their individuality as Prussians, Lithuanians or Russians. This became important at the end of the 16th century, when the Society of Jesus began its efforts to establish the Lithuanian province, initially creating the Lithuanian Region within the Polish Province.¹⁰

Year	Total number of Jesuits	Poles		Foreigners	
1564	13	0		13	
1570	79	42		37	
1584	302	248		54	
(the first 6 months)		Greater Poles	52	Hungarians ¹¹	14
		Masovians	50	Germans	13
		Warmiaks	38	Italians	11
		Lithuanians	36	Dutch	6
		Lesser Poles	21	English	3
		Red Russians	18	Spanish	3
		Silesians	5	Scott	1
		others	28	Swede	1
				Portuguese	1
				Slovak	1
1584	433	398		35	
(the rest of the year)		Greater Poles	95	Germans	10
		Masovians	72	Dutch	5
		Lithuanians	69	Italians	5
		Warmiaks	47	English	4
		Lesser Poles	40	Swedes	4
		Red Russians	26	Spanish	3
		Silesians	3	Slovaks	2
		others	46	Estonian	1
				Tatar	1

In time, in connection with the novitiate development, there were more Poles who gradually substituted foreigners. Most Jesuits simultaneously served several

¹⁰ The origin of the Jesuits, table devised by B. Natoński (See Natoński, "Szkolnictwo jezuitów," 37).

¹¹ They worked in Transylvania on strong request of Stephen Báthory, the king of Poland. There were mostly from Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but some of them came from other provinces and were of another origin. None from Jesuit from Poland spoke Hungarian and none Hungarian spoke Polish.

functions: they fulfilled the duties connected with the organisation of the province, but at the same time they taught at schools and went on missions to the people. Until the end of the 16th century, nearly two hundred foreigners worked in the Polish Province,¹² including 50 Germans and Austrians, 24 Italians, 22 Dutchmen, 12 Spaniards, 9 Englishmen, and 4 Scots.¹³ Quite numerous were also Silesians who underlined their separateness, but they were considered to be Polish (similarly to Prussians, Lithuanians, etc.).

Jesuits coming mostly from Germany and the Netherlands taught at schools, whereas Spanish and English held the positions of professors at the Vilnius Academy and in philosophy and theology courses in Poznań and Braniewo. Among the religious who arrived from abroad, seven were Doctors of Theology, three — Bachelors of Theology, twenty three — Masters of Theology, and four — Bachelors of Arts. Majority of them received their titles after they graduated from studies completed outside Poland: some in the Roman College, but also in Cologne and in Louvain. All the foreigners working on the territories of the Commonwealth were members of the bourgeoisie.¹⁴

It seems justified to state that multinationality of the first generation of the Polish Jesuits positively influenced the form of the Society of Jesus, while when foreigners stopped working in the Commonwealth, the Polish and the Lithuanian province (established in 1608) ceased to develop so intensively.

The best educators and organisers were chosen particularly in the first decade of the Jesuit activity in Poland.¹⁵ By the end of the century, Austrians, Bavarians, Spanish, Germans, and individual representatives of other nations played an especially important role. However, in the first years, the situation was somewhat different from what was to come in the following decades of the Jesuit activity.

Cardinal Stanislaus Hosius knew the needs of the people inhabiting Warmia and therefore he asked that the first Jesuits arriving in Braniewo should speak German in the Dutch or Saxon dialect.¹⁶ At first, Germans and Dutchmen, e.g. Philip Widmanstadt, John Jakobi (von Asten, Astensis) and Peter Fahe (Phae¹⁷) taught in the Braniewo College. Among the first Jesuits active in Poland were also John Aschermann (senior), John Winzerer, Baltazar

¹² See the entry “Cudzoziemcy” in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 103–104, it gives the number 181 of foreigners.

¹³ See the entry “Anglia” in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 11–12.

¹⁴ See Natoński, “Szkolnictwo jezuickie w Polsce w dobie kontrreformacji”, *passim*.

¹⁵ See Ludwik Piechnik, *Seminaria diecezjalne w Polsce prowadzone przez jezuitów od XVI do XVIII wieku* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM, 2001), 41–42.

¹⁶ See Natoński, “Początki i rozwój Towarzystwa Jezusowego,” 415.

¹⁷ Deceased already in 1572 (See Piotr Fahe reference in the appendix in: *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 849).

Hostounský, John Matthiae or Christopher of Borderline — who could also speak German. The last one mentioned was Melanchton's outstanding disciple and Bishop Hosius' secretary at the Council of Trent¹⁸. The first foreigners were rather young people, graduates of good universities, e.g. Philip Widmanstadt studied in Augsburg, Dillingen, Munich, Vienna and Rome; he studied *humaniora*, philosophy and theology, in later years he also received the title of Doctor of Theology.¹⁹ Those Jesuits had to perform several functions at the same time, including delivering lectures. Various duties required those religious to constantly change places. Such were the cases of John Aschermann²⁰ and John Jacobi (von Asten). John Aschermann worked mainly as a professor of rhetoric and the Holy Scripture in Braniewo (he was also the prefect of the local school), and John Astensis²¹ organised the first novitiate there. Both of them frequently travelled to Elbląg where they carried out apostolic activity in the German language. Working at the missionary station at Saint Nicholas' church there (operating in the years 1567–1573) required bravery and perseverance, as Protestants incessantly fought the Jesuits, having finally succeeded in banning them from the town.²² The above-mentioned Philip Widmanstadt was an exceptionally distinguished person in the Society of Jesus in Poland: he held the office of the dean of the Braniewo College whose matters he set in order; later he emerged as an excellent organiser and chancellor of the Vilnius Academy.²³

Many of the foreigners arriving in Poland undertook further missions on which they were sent on the basis of, e.g. their knowledge of languages (mainly German) or practical skills. Such was the case of John Winzerer, who taught at schools in Pułtusk and in Braniewo from 1566, using mainly German, and later he left for Riga where he organised a college²⁴ together with John König (better known as Schonchovianus). The latter held the position of the prefect of the diocesan seminary in Braniewo, and later left on a mission to Moldova.²⁵

¹⁸ See Łukaszewska-Haberkowa, *Pierwsze pokolenie polskich jezuitów w świetle biografii i egzaminów*, 69–71, and Konrad Piwarski, "Sobór trydencki i jezuita" in *Szkice z dziejów państwa* (2nd ed.), red. Kazimierz Piwarski (Warszawa, 1961), 53–107.

¹⁹ See the entry "Filip Widmanstadt" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 732.

²⁰ See the entry "Jan Aschermann (senior)" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 19.

²¹ See the entry "Jan Jacobi" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 234.

²² See the entry "Elbląg" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 146.

²³ Piechnik, *Seminaria diecezjalne w Polsce prowadzone przez jezuitów od XVI do XVII wieku*, 31–32; also Natoński, "Początki i rozwój Towarzystwa Jezusowego," 434–435; Ludwik Piechnik, *Dzieje Akademii Wileńskiej*, vol. 1. *Początki Akademii Wileńskiej 1570–1599* (Rome: Apud Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 1984), 76–77.

²⁴ See the entry "Jan Winzerer" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 748.

²⁵ See the entry "Jan Schonchovianus" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 605–606.

It might be said that certain nationalities took on specific and characteristic duties in the order in Poland. For instance, Italians taught at schools only in exceptional cases, but in the years 1580–1608 almost exclusively governed the province: three provincials in the 16th century were of the Italian origin.²⁶ On the other hand, mostly Germans and Dutchmen taught in colleges, and after the Vilnius Academy was established, Spanish and English religious chaired the departments of philosophy and theology. They also taught those subjects at the schools in Poznań and Braniewo.

Englishmen and Scotsmen, whose arrival in Europe resulted from religious persecution, constituted a specific group among the Jesuits. Before 1580, most Jesuit novices from England first studied then worked in the northern and eastern part of Europe. In the 1550s and 1560s, a majority of them were sent to Germany (the Rhineland region) and to Austria. This was presumably done because the colleges and foundations emerging in that area needed religious for work.²⁷ Almost none of the Englishmen who went to work in Europe returned home, although several ones working in Poland risked their lives leaving for home countries.²⁸ Similar religious restrictions concerned also some individuals arriving from German countries, however there were incomparably fewer of them. It is estimated that in the 16th c. at least 14 Jesuits from the Isles (including 8 Englishmen: 6 priests, 1 cleric, and 1 brother) worked in Poland.²⁹ Those Jesuits had a good command of foreign languages and thanks to their hard work they increased the level of studies in Poland, especially in the area of the Greek and Hebrew languages, philosophy, mathematics, and theology. Some of the English remained in Poland, as e.g. Jacob Bosgrave, others went back to their homeland, where from 1578 a mission was conducted. Those running away from religious persecutions enjoyed special rights and were treated in an exceptional way. Yet, the ones trying the escape death were spied by English secret agents even in Poland.

Robert Abercrombie and Jacob Bosgrave were among those who performed the most meritorious service to the Commonwealth. Abercrombie spent most of his religious life in Braniewo, where he received his priestly ordination and for many years worked in the college (as a professor of grammar, a vice-dean, and a master of novices), he interrupted his stay in Poland for twenty

²⁶ See the entry “Prowincja” and “Prowincjałowie” in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 540–544 and 544–545. They were: F. Sunyer (Spaniard who joined the order in Italy), L. Maggio, G.P. Campana, L. Maselli, B. Confalonieri, G. Alabiano and H. Dandini.

²⁷ Thomas M. McCoog, “Goodly Confessor of Christ: The Mystery of James Bosgrave,” in *Jezuicka ars historica*, red. M. Inglot, S. Obirek (Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM, 2001), 355.

²⁸ See the entry “Angielscy męczennicy” in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 11.

²⁹ See Poplatek, *Znajomość języków u jezuitów polskich w XVI stuleciu*. They were: R. Abercrombie, J. Batye, J. Bosgrave, A. Brock, A. Faunteus, G. Floidus, W. Good, J. Hart, J. Houletus, R. Illyel, W. Lambertus, W. Ogilvie, R. Singleton and J. Wick.

years in order to go back to and be active in Scotland which he had to leave nonetheless.³⁰ Jacob Bosgrave, on the other hand, was the founder of the department of mathematics at the Vilnius Academy where he also delivered lectures.³¹ Like Abercrombie, he went back to his home country, but he was imprisoned in England and sentenced to death. He returned to Poland after King Stephen Báthory's intervention and resumed teaching mathematics and foreign languages.³²

Adam Brocus was an Englishman who never left the Commonwealth. He was one of the first foreigners in Poland, where he arrived in 1567. He performed various and responsible religious duties and should actually be considered to be an important education organisator.³³ From 1580, he also delivered lectures in moral and polemic theology at the Vilnius Academy, where he was also the dean.

Englishmen and Scotsmen active on the territories of the Commonwealth also contributed to fighting dissidents. It is worth mentioning here John Hay³⁴ and Lawrence Faunteus³⁵ who, apart from teaching at schools (Hay lectured on rhetoric and philosophy, Faunteus — on dogmatic theology), held public disputes with infidels.

A particularly important role in the order's development in Poland was played by brother Wilhelm Lambert,³⁶ who arrived as early as 1565 as a simple uneducated coadjutor in worldly matters. In time, he learnt the skills and made his name as a physician, he was also marked by excellent intuition. He worked mainly in Braniewo, but he was also Cardinal Andrzej Báthory's doctor. In 1591 he worked in Krakow where he attended to the ill during the outbreak of the plague and he administered pills of his own concoction, which were even called Jesuit pills.³⁷ The same brother Lambert worked as a person delivering post and transporting people between colleges from 1578. At that time, a specific means of transport was organised (a little house with wheels devised by Francis Sunyer) enabling friars to travel. It was especially

³⁰ See the entry "Robert Abercrombie" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 1.

³¹ See the entry "Jakub Bosgrave" in Bogdan Lisiak, *Jezuici polscy a nauki ścisłe od XVI do XIX wieku. Słownik bio-bibliograficzny* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Ignatianum, 2000), 8.

³² See the entry "Jakub Bosgrave" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 60.

³³ See the entry "Adam Brocus" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 68.

³⁴ See the entry "Jan Hay" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 211.

³⁵ See the entry "Wawrzyniec Faunteus" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 152.

³⁶ See the entry "Wilhelm Lambertus" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 253 and Natoński, *Początki i rozwój Towarzystwa Jezusowego*, 449 and 475.

³⁷ See the entry "Medycyna" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 414, and Philippus Alegambe, *Heroes et victimae charitatis Societatis Jesu* (Roma, 1658) and the entry "Wilhelm Lambertus." in Poplatek, *Słownik jezuitów w XVI wieku*.

important due to frequent personnel changes.³⁸ Wilhelm Lambert, together with an Italian brother Massimo Milanesi, who worked also as an architect,³⁹ educated a new generation of Polish apothecaries and infirmarians.

At the time when the Society of Jesus began its activity on the territories of the Commonwealth, foreign contacts and travels were undertaken regularly. This had particularly adverse influence on the youth who yielded to foreign ideas, especially concerning the Protestant thought.⁴⁰ The arrival of the religious who were excellently educated and came from abroad could have influenced the reception of the Jesuits in the society. Moreover, the religious were active among all classes and wanted to influence the German-speaking part of the society. In order to achieve this, as I have already mentioned, German-speaking fathers and brothers who knew the German language reality and culture were brought from other countries.⁴¹ Initially, those Jesuits were active in the north of the country and they carried out their ministry of preaching and the German language apostolate. They remained in Poland for the rest of their lives. Their work continues to be one of the invaluable elements of culture and the monasterial activity.

According to the rules of the Society of Jesus, all foreigners, irrespective of the country of origin and the office held, were to assimilate as quickly as possible. This was to be done, above all, in the language area, but if a Jesuit's native language happened to be more useful in the place he stayed, such a priest or brother did not have to learn another language, although that certainly facilitated everyday life. In the 16th c. not all foreigners spoke Polish due to the reasons given above. However, in the 16th c., and especially in the initial period of the order existence, the Latin language was commonly used, both in speaking and writing. This allowed the friars to find solutions and reach agreements in difficult situations. Few priests who did not have a sufficient command of Polish were employed as professors of philosophy and theology, and also as language teachers (e.g. of German and French). Such people worked particularly on the territories of Warmia, Gdansk, and Livonia.

³⁸ See Natoński, "Początki i rozwój Towarzystwa Jezusowego", 475.

³⁹ See the entry "Massimo Milanesi" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 424; Łukaszewska-Haberkowa, *Pierwsze pokolenie polskich jezuitów*, 74, 93–94, and 107; Jerzy Paszenda, "Pierwszy architekt jezuitski Massimo Milanesi," *Kwartalnik Architektury i Urbanistyki* 15 (1970): 231–238; Ludwik Grzebień, "Jezuici polscy wobec epidemii," in *Charitas. Miłosierdzie i opieka społeczna w ideologii, normach postępowania i praktyce społeczności wyznaniowych w Rzeczypospolitej XVI-XVIII wieku*, red. U. Augustyniak, A. Karpiński, (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, 1999), 248.

⁴⁰ See e.g. Waclaw Urban, *Epizod reformacyjny* (Kraków: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza RSW "Prasa-Książka-Ruch," 1988).

⁴¹ See Jan Stanisław Bystroń, *Dzieje obyczajów w dawnej Polsce: Wiek XVI–XVIII* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1994), 125.

Moreover, religious from Spain were of prime importance to the development of the Polish province. This was mainly due to the fact that St. Ignatius himself came from that country, but also because in the 16th c. the state fostered the development of the Society of Jesus. In the 16th c., 12 Spaniards worked in Poland. Francis Sunyer deserves a special mention as he practically organised the province and became its first superior cooperating with King Stephen Báthory.⁴² Other fathers from Spain,⁴³ e.g. Anthony Arias,⁴⁴ Garcia Alabiano,⁴⁵ Peter Viana⁴⁶ or Jacob Ortiz⁴⁷ and Michael Ortiz,⁴⁸ worked as professors. The last two worked and died in Poland because, together with other brothers, they were banned from Transylvania, where a Jesuit college existed for a short time. The Spaniards' industriousness is testified by a description of Anthony Arias' death; he died as a victim of the plague. On his death bed, he confessed to his brothers how much he regretted not having been able to learn Polish or Lithuanian, as he could have served the order more effectively.⁴⁹

On account of the religious' places of origin, the characteristic of the first generation of Jesuits working and living in Poland is rather specific. To a great extent, this multinationality and diversity contributed to the emergence of a generation of Jesuits able to meet requirements and adapt to challenges.

In a still unpublished manuscript, Jan Poplatek⁵⁰ suggested that the knowledge of languages is one way of testing the level of culture achieved by a given state, nation or individual. A very good command of any language facilitates communication, broadens the mind, opens access to other nations' cultural resources and allows to soak in them to the fullest; or, if one has to do with a culturally less-developed nation, enables cultural influence on foreigners. The evidence of this is the history of the Polish thought during Humanism, the Reformation, and Enlightenment. As far as representatives of

⁴² See the entry "Franciszek Sunyer" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 653; also Piechnik, *Dzieje Akademii Wileńskiej*, vol. 1. *Początki Akademii Wileńskiej 1570–1599*, 43–45.

⁴³ See the entry "Hiszpania" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 217–218.

⁴⁴ See the entry "Antoni Arias" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 19; and Stanisław Obirek, *Jezuici na dworach Batoiego i Wazów 1580–1668. Wpływ kapelanów dworskich i wychowawców książąt na postawy panujących i politykę państwa* (Kraków: Wydział Filozoficzny Towarzystwa Jezusowego, 1996), 12; Piechnik, *Seminaria diecezjalne*, 31–32; Łukaszewska-Haberkowa, *Pierwsze pokolenie*, 71–72.

⁴⁵ See the entry "Garcia Alabiano" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 5.

⁴⁶ See the entry "Piotr Viana" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 713; Darowski, "Piotr Viana SJ i jego działalność filozoficzna w Polsce," *Odrodzenie i Reformacja* 23(1978): 35–53, also other publications of this Author concerning the history of the Jesuit philosophy in Poland in the 16th century.

⁴⁷ See the entry "Jakub Ortiz" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 479.

⁴⁸ See the entry "Michał Ortiz" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 479.

⁴⁹ See Łukaszewska-Haberkowa, *Pierwsze pokolenie*, 72–73, 260.

⁵⁰ The main source of the presented data are the so-called three-year catalogues.

the Society of Jesus are concerned, we do not have appropriate sources which would explicitly and directly deliver the necessary information. Nonetheless, the knowledge of foreign languages among the priests and brothers in the 16th c. can be presented to some extent.

As I have mentioned above, that was the time of the order's greatest vibrancy and dynamics on the territory of the Commonwealth, and also in the life of the Polish nation. The origin of Jesuits-foreigners in the Commonwealth in the 16th c. is presented in the table below:

Table. Place/Country of origin of Jesuits working in Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1590 and 1599 years

Year	1590	1599
Place of origin	64	37
Belgium, Flanders	8	5
Czechia, Moravia, Slovakia	3	2
Denmark	2	—
England, Scotland	5	4
France	—	—
Germany	12	10
Hungary	16	—
Italy	9	6
Silesia	—	9
Spain	6	3
Sweden	3	4
Switzerland	—	—

It is natural that the origins of religious reflected the knowledge of languages in the Society of Jesus. A characteristic of the knowledge of the most important languages is shown below in the alphabetical order.

1. The Arabic language

In the entire discussed period only one priest knew the language, although insufficiently. It was Andrzej Wargocki of Przemyśl.⁵¹

2. The Belarusian language

The ease of communication with Belarussian people was probably the reason why the Polish Jesuits were not really interested in learning this language.

⁵¹ See the entry "Andrzej Wargocki" in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 719.

Among the few Jesuits who knew the language well, the leading ones were those from the area of Belarus and Lithuania, which is self-explanatory. It was spoken by 11 brothers coming from the peasant class, where the language was the most widespread. Apparently, Polish was sufficient for numerous missions to the people, organised by the Jesuits, as they did not try to learn Belarussian.

3. The Chaldean language

In the discussed period only 3 priests knew the language. In 1590, Andrzej Wargocki had some command of it, see: the Arabic language.

4. The Czech language

The knowledge of the language among the Jesuits was poor. It is rather striking that even the Jesuits who joined the Polish province and who came from Czechia or Moravia did not know the language well enough. At the same time, nearly all the friars from Czechia and Moravia spoke German.

5. The English language

In the 16th c., English was only known to Englishmen and Scotsmen who, unable to work in their home country due to the persecution of Catholics there, were sent to work in Poland by the general of the order.

6. The Estonian language

This language enjoyed the interest of the Polish Jesuits only in the 16th c. Among the 21 Jesuits who knew it, there were 12 brothers from Livonia, Courland, Lithuania, Prussia, Russia, Denmark, and Germany. Only 3 clerics — one from Lesser Poland, one from Denmark, and one from Sweden — spoke the language. On account of the brothers' and clerics' countries of origin, it must be assumed that a vast majority of them brought the knowledge of Estonian with them to the order. One brother and 6 priests, *inter alia*, from Germany, learnt the language as instructed by the Jesuits' provincial. This was meant to prompt the apostolic activity in Livonia. While the college in Dorpat (Tartu) was being established, the priests and clerics assigned there were told to learn Estonian so they could use it fluently in catechesis and preaching work in the town much neglected in terms of ministry, because for 30 years there had been no catholic priest either in Dorpat or in its vicinity. Working in the language began already in 1585.⁵²

⁵² Jan Wielewicki, *Dziennik spraw domu zakonnego OO jezuitów u św. Barbary w Krakowie*, series: *Scriptores rerum Polonicarum* (Kraków: Akademia Umiejętności, 1881), 81.

7. The Flemish language

It was an ephemeral phenomenon among the Polish Jesuits. It appeared in Poland together with immigrants from the Netherlands, who initially sought refuge in Germany and Italy, joined the order there and were sent to Poland. The knowledge of the Flemish language in the Polish province vanishes as they retire and die.

8. The German language

It was quite widespread among the Polish Jesuits. Many more Polish Jesuits, mainly brothers, spoke the language before they joined the order, be this because of their origins or the skill they learnt at home. In the areas outside Poland, after Germany, it was the most widespread among Jesuits joining the order in Poland but coming from Czechia, Moravia, and Silesia.

9. The Greek language

In the 16th c., under the influence of Humanism, the Polish Jesuits paid special attention to the knowledge of Greek. Many among them, thanks to foreign university education, even Protestant ones, and at the Krakow Academy, knew Greek perfectly. It was taught in all colleges for educating clerics, e.g. in Pułtusk, Branień, Vilnius, Poznań, Jarosław, etc. Later, there came a period of neglect and fall of the Greek language knowledge among the Polish Jesuits. In the 16th c., it was common for all priests and clerics to know basic Greek, yet it was not noted in catalogues unless the level of the language was more advanced.

10. The Hebrew language

It shared the fate of Greek. In the 16th c., Jesuits educated abroad, especially at Protestant universities, spoke Hebrew fluently. Later, the knowledge of the language vanished.

11. The Hungarian language

Apart from 2 cases, it was known among the Polish Jesuits only to those who came from Hungary and Transylvania. Among Poles, it was only known to 1 brother from Warmia in 1590. Otherwise, in 1590, it was spoken by 1 priest and 15 clerics from Transylvania, who were sent to make the novitiate and to complete their studies in Poland, but were assigned to work in Transylvania.

12. The Latin language

As the language of instruction at schools for Jesuit clerics and the language of all legal acts and official correspondence, Latin was known to all Jesuit priests and clerics in Poland. This fact does not have to be supported with numbers. A more interesting phenomenon is the knowledge of Latin among Jesuit

brothers (i.e. non-priests), especially those from the territory of the Commonwealth. The numbers in the following table refer to this phenomenon.

The total number of friars who knew Latin

In the year	1590	1599
From the Commonwealth	16	13
From abroad	5	3
Total	21	16
% of the total number of brothers	22,50	12,60

From this it becomes clear that, in the Commonwealth, the knowledge of Latin was common even among less educated individuals, as the proportion of brothers who joined the order with a good command of the language was so large.

13. The Latvian language

The Polish Jesuits often learnt this language for ministerial purposes, however, in most cases, those who joined the order already knew Latvian. The language was chiefly spoken by priests.

14. The Lithuanian language

It was not a subject taught in the order, although, especially in the early days of the Jesuits in Poland, some priests learnt it voluntarily for ministerial purposes. However, it was not necessary as many candidates who joined the order knew the language.

15. The Polish language

As a rule, all members of the order were obliged to learn the language of the country they resided in, provided that their own native language did not happen to be more useful.⁵³ Therefore, the zeal to acquire the Polish language can be observed among the Jesuits-foreigners active on the territory of the Commonwealth. The regulation was necessary not only for foreigners, as a certain number of those joining the order from the territory of the Commonwealth did not know the Polish language. The priests who did not speak it constituted a minority among professors in philosophy and theology departments. Sometimes, they were

⁵³ 'Ad majorem unionem forum, qui in Societate vivunt, maiusque auxilium forum apud quo habitant, singuli addiscant eius regionis linguam in qua resident, nisi forte illorum nativa illic esset utilior; salva tamen latini sermonis lege in iis, qui studiis dant operam', Regulae communes Societatis Jesu; No. 10.

employed as foreign language teachers (in the 16th c., as teachers of German), but mainly they worked in Warmia, Gdańsk, and Livonia.

16. The Romanian language

In the 16th c., only 3 clerics from Transylvania knew the language.

17. The Russian language

Only few Polish Jesuits knew it. The knowledge of the language was brought by Jesuits joining the order and it was mostly known to priests.

18. The Slovak language

The Slovak language did not enjoy great popularity in the order. It was known to those who learnt it before they joined the order.

19. The Spanish language

It was a rare phenomenon without much importance among the Polish Jesuits. Only foreigners born in Spain spoke the language.

20. The Swedish language

In 1590, 2 clerics from Sweden spoke the language, in 1599 — 3 clerics and 1 brother, also Swedes. Apart from those cases, the language does not appear in the catalogues, although it may be assumed that the Polish priests who went on the Swedish mission in the 16th c. had to learn it, even if it was less than perfectly.

21. The Syriac language

In the 16th c., Rev. Andrzej Wargocki knew it imperfectly. In 1599, it was also known to the Italian Hieronymus Dandinus, who was an inspector and a provincial in Poland, and for some time, also a missionary among the Maronites in Lebanon.⁵⁴

22. The Turkish language In 1590 and 1599, it was known to Andrzej Wargocki and Caspar Nahaj, a priest of the Tatar origin.⁵⁵

23. The Italian language

It was known to both foreign Jesuits and those from the territory of the Commonwealth.

⁵⁴ See Gabriel Lebon, *Missionaires Jesuites du Levant dans l'Ancienne Compagnie 1523–1820* (Beyrouth: Université St Joseph, 1935), 20–21.

⁵⁵ See the entry “Kasper Nahajus” in *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 449.

It was chiefly priests who spoke Italian, and they learnt it mainly during their studies or while serving as penitentiaries in Rome or Loreta. Brothers knew the language before joining the order. The distribution of the language knowledge by the place of origin was as follows:

A table presenting the knowledge of languages among the Polish Jesuits

Year	1590				1599			
	priests	clerics	brothers	total	priests	clerics	brothers	total
Total number	129	117	92	338	148	146	126	420
Among them those who knew the languages								
Belarussian	—	—	1	1	—	—	3	3
Chaldean	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Czech	4	—	—	4	1	—	—	1
English	3	1	1	5	3	—	1	4
Estonian	3	2	5	10	3	1	6	10
Flemish	5	2	1	8	3	—	2	5
French	3	—	—	3	2	—	—	2
German	38	14	25	77	37	20	17	74
Greek	45	17	—	62	44	45	—	89
Hebrew	12	—	—	12	9	—	—	9
Hungarian	1	15	1	17	—	—	—	—
Italian	38	1	4	53	30	1	9	40
Latin	129	117	21	267	148	146	16	310
Latvian	—	—	1	1	2	—	3	5
Lithuanian	3	2	7	12	4	—	1	5
Polish	117	101	90	308	143	139	125	407
Romanian	—	3	—	3	—	—	—	—
Russian	3	—	2	5	2	1	2	5
Slovak	3	—	—	3	2	—	—	2
Spanish	5	1	—	6	3	—	—	3
Swedish	—	2	—	2	—	3	1	4
Syriac	1	—	—	1	1	—	—	1
Turkish	2	—	—	2	1	—	—	1

Having discussed individual languages and their dissemination among the Jesuits active on the territory of the Commonwealth, in order to have a com-

plete picture we need to reconstruct their quantitative knowledge, that is, to examine how many languages were spoken by individual members of the order in Poland. This is virtually impossible to assess, apart from some findings specific to every province: each Jesuit priest, besides his mother tongue, knew Latin; if someone did not know Latin, they could not complete their studies and the order did not guarantee education. In the 16th c., the majority of priests knew Greek to some extent.

Some principle corresponding with the then-current needs can be observed in the Jesuit order in Poland in the 16th c. Purely scientific motivation acted in promoting the knowledge of Latin, which was obligatory and common among priests and clerics, and widely spread among friars, although the latter was not a credit to the order but it stemmed from other reasons. The same fact can be seen in educating the Polish Jesuits in Greek, Hebrew, German, and Italian. In the 16th c., the knowledge of Greek and Hebrew was relatively widespread, which was reflected in the order.

Immediate apostolic goals were visible in the extent to which languages such as Estonian, Latvian, Russian, and Romanian were known. The number of individuals who knew those languages increased or decreased as appropriate, however, with no significant percentage in our country.

Finally, the influence of linguistic and regional relations within the territory of the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania is clearly visible in the degree of language knowledge among the Polish Jesuits presented above. The Polish state before the partitions as a whole united within its boundaries different territories inhabited by ethnicities speaking, apart from Polish, their own mother tongues (*Lingua patria*). A tolerant domestic policy of the Polish government was far from repressing minorities' own languages and imposing on them the singleness of Polish as the official language. The language relations among the Polish Jesuits discussed above are compelling evidence of that. A great number of Jesuits from Samogitia and Lithuania bring into the order the knowledge of Lithuanian, just as nearly all Warmiaks and the majority of Prussians speak German. And finally, a prevalent language in Poland, apart from Polish, was Latin. Perhaps, their fluency in European languages proven above is also a function of their dissemination in society from which they came. One thing is certain: they did not learn these languages, with few exceptions, in the convent.

In conclusion, some general remarks can be added. In the 16th c., the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania formed a microcosm of its kind. The Jesuits who arrived in the country — later also Polish Jesuits — were not indicative of an approximate picture of language relations in Poland, yet themselves formed a community which was very interesting in terms of origin and knowledge of languages. This community presents an intriguing picture of the community the friars built.

Translated by Ilona Kaliszuk-Rogala

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CUDZOZIEMCY I ZNAJOMOŚĆ JĘZYKÓW OBCYCH WŚRÓD JEZUITÓW RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ OBOJGA NARODÓW DO KOŃCA XVI WIEKU

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Celem niniejszego opracowania jest pewna korekta i uzupełnienie dotychczasowego stanu badań na temat ogólnej charakterystyki pierwszego pokolenia polskich jezuitów. Opracowanie powstało na podstawie materiałów źródłowych i archiwalnych, z których niektóre zostały wcześniej opublikowane przez autorkę lub pozostały w rękopisie. Praca opiera się na dokumentach z epoki, które zawierają charakterystykę osób i stanowi próbę syntezy, która w postaci pełnej nie jest możliwa z powodu braku odpowiednich źródeł.

Polska w XVI wieku należała do państw bardzo zróżnicowanych pod względem etnicznym i wyznaniowym. Do Rzeczypospolitej przybywali cudzoziemcy, często ze względów religijnych, którzy starali się możliwie szybko zasymilować ze środowiskiem lokalnym. Większe trudności odczuwali ci, którzy żyli wśród szlachty – bardziej ksenofobicznej, mieszkający w miastach nie napotykali prawie żadnych problemów. Ludzi, nawet pochodzących z zewnątrz, z krajów ościennych, postrzegano jako członków jednej wspólnoty i środowiska, choć mówili obcym językiem i należeli do innej grupy społecznej.

Słowa kluczowe: jezuita; Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów; XVI w.; języki obce.