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Sixteenth-Century Rare Books on and by English Recusant in the Libraries of Kraków

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SIXTEENTH CENTURY RARE BOOKS ON AND BY ENGLISH RECUSANTS IN THE LIBRARIES OF KRAKÓW

Abstract

In the years 1581 – 1603, the Elizabethan government imposed strict rules of printing censorship by controlling the printing industry and circulation of books written by English Recusants, hence not in consonance with the political views of the government in power. Printing and circulation of these books was made possible in other countries and still available in libraries in Kraków, thanks to eighteenth and nineteenth century Polish bibliophiles. This article attempts at providing a survey of the rare books available in Kraków by describing the provenance of selected sixteenth century books. Thanks to the presence of these books in Kraków's libraries we are able therefore to reconstruct and complete this missing chapter in the history of sixteenth century Elizabethan book publication and circulation.

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Keywords:

English recusants, rare books, history of censorship, Elizabethan England

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If, as Ludwig Wittgenstein writes in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, the limits of one's language is the limit of one's world, one could venture to suppose that in limiting the means by which language is transmitted – be it in the spoken or written form would naturally entail the limiting of one's world. The conscious and well-orchestrated attempt at delimiting one's world is best exemplified by various attempts of censorship that human history has known. For censoring the language, written or spoken, is in a certain respect a means to de-

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limit the world conveyed by a given language and consequently the message or truth transmitted through it. The Elizabethan government and its press censorship most strictly enforced in the years 1581 – 1603, can be interpreted as a means to consciously create a certain desired English world by the conscious control and suppression of what could be publicly said or printed. Yet, ironically what in England was subject to censorship and control was not necessarily so elsewhere. Hence despite the attempt of creating a monolithic image of England through press control, could easily be questioned and even debunked in places where no such control existed. An attempt therefore to reconstruct a different Elizabethan England by means of exploring the relics of the period in the form of works printed abroad may help in creating another picture of England of the time. And surprisingly enough, it is in a country such as Poland, through the presence of printed works of almost forgotten Elizabethans that we are able to – at least partially – construct a different Tudor England.

Polish interest in the plight of English Recusants even today is perhaps one of the relics of the Anglo-Polish religious relations that dates to the times of the Reformation. In an article entitled “Recusants and Jacobites” published in the Autumn 2007 issue of “Christianitas,” politician and presidential candidate in the previous elections Marek Jurek writes that “thanks to the fact that neither Poland nor England, never experienced the Enlightened absolutism of France and Italy, Catholics in these countries have always fostered a [...] deep respect for the freedom of conscience which is best exemplified in the determination to counterattack the two largest barbarities of our times, Communism and Nazism” (Jurek 102). And indeed, it is perhaps that love for liberty incarnated in the presence of resistance to any form of absolute power shared by these two countries which in different times inspired the need for the freedom of speech, especially in times of censored publication.

My personal journey into the Polish interest in English recusancy first began by the accidental discovery of a curious book, “Okrucienstwo Karcyskie.” A copy of this book is found in Ossolineum Library in Wrocław belongs to the original library of Jozef Ossolinski which used to be in Lwów, as the call number written in blue pencil is in the hand of Samuel Linde, Ossoliński’s librarian. Its provenance betrays an earlier owner, a certain, Marcus Remiligijs as the seventeenth century hand that informs us at the back cover of the book. The book speaks of the story, among other things, of the late persecution of certain English Catholics such as Alexander Bryant and Edmund Campion, which took place only a year earlier than the printing of the book in

December 1581. And as the title informs, the book has been translated into Polish from the text of “one of the English nation.”

A rough survey of the largest libraries in Kraków does demonstrate the longstanding Polish interest in the plight of Catholics in the British Isles. This paper aims to provide a survey of some sixteenth century rare books that in one way or another pertain to English Recusants that form part of the holdings of the some of libraries in Kraków. This list, as I am aware, is not at all exhaustive. In fact two of the largest libraries have been surveyed, the Jagiellonian Library and the Czartoryski Library. The story of recusant bibliophile is very much intertwined with the history of the Jesuits in Poland. Although some of the books were donated through by various theologians, priests and academics of the time, most of the books currently owned by the Jagiellonian University Library were acquired after the suppression of the Society of Jesus in Poland in 1773. Parts of the former Jesuit holdings though were later acquired by the Czartoryski Library, as Adam Czartoryski, the founder of this library was not only a member of a Special Commission of the Board of Education that was to administer the goods of the Jesuits after the suppression, he was likewise one of the patrons of the former Jesuit University established in 1579, the Academy of Vilnius.

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Interest in the plight Elizabethan recusants was first fostered by Cardinal Stanislaus Hosius, the Polish legate to the Council of Trent. While in Rome and in Padua, Hosius befriended the English Jesuits, such as the apologist Nicholas Sanders and poet and philosopher, Alan Cope. In his letters, Hosius' secretary at one point, writes of “Sanders and Cope coming to see the Cardinal,” and how “Cardinal was greatly saddened by the stories told of how the Catholics in England had suffered” (*Z dworu*: 1992 140) The spread of the Protestant doctrine especially amongst the nobility in Poland was something that disturbed the Cardinal and he sought ways to counteract its increasing influence. Though the exact date is yet to be established, it is certain that Sanders came to Poland to witness the beginnings of the Counterreformation movement. In his book, “*De Visibili Monarchia Ecclesiae*” a theological treatise of eight books, Sanders not only dedicates the book to the Cardinal but in his preface likewise thanks Poles for their hospitality. Three beautifully leather bounded editions of this enormous book can be currently found in the Jagiellonian Library, the 1571 Louvain edition, the 1578 Antwerp Edition and finally the 1592 Wurzburg Edition. The owners of these books can provide a clue to this book's readers. The Louvain edition, as the provenance informs us first belonged to Collegium Maius Library, the oldest existing

college of the Jagiellonian University. The Antwerp edition was donated in 1591 to the university by the renaissance philosopher and doctor of the Academy of Kraków, Erasmus Marcinkowski of Tarnów. Whilst the Wurzburg edition of 1592 exists in three copies at the Jagiellonian Library. One copy was not acquired by the university until 1953. It first belonged to the collection of Hieronim Powodowski of Łódź, who was at one point Canon of Poznan and later Kraków and served as secretary and royal preacher to the court of the Polish King, Stephan Bathory. This same edition came into the possession of Joannus Fraczkowic, the parish priest of St Leonard's Church (which no longer exists) before forming part of the collection of the Convent of Augustine Fathers, Church of St Catherine of Alexandria in Kraków's Jewish town, Kazimierz. Another of Sanders's books that can be found in the Jagiellonian Library is "De Iustificacione Contra Colloquium Altenburgense" published in 1585 and owned by a certain Piotr Kopeć, who had likewise made other significant contributions to the library. Another book by Sanders can be found in the Czartoryski's Library. This book entitled "De Origine Ac Progressu Schismatis Anglicani" first printed in Cologne in 1585 and later in Olica (in today's Lithuania) and published in 1690 was translated into Polish by a Polish Jesuit and published in Sandomierz in 1755.

Another interesting book that once belonged to the Jesuit professors' library of the Church of St. Barbara is William Allen's books entitled "Regii Sacrae Theologia Professoris in Academia Duacenci Libri Tres" published in Antwerp in the Office of John Fowler in 1576. The Church of St Barbara was entrusted by King Stephan Bathory in 1583 to the Jesuits, though it originally belonged to the jurisdiction of the Academy of Kraków today's Jagiellonian University and has for centuries attended to the German speaking population of the city. The Jesuit house that used to be found next to the Church and contained the Jesuit professors' library, was built under the initiative of the Polish Jesuit Piotr Skarga, who along with Scottish Jesuit, Robert Abercrombie started the novitiate in Kraków.

Yet, by far the most influential of the English Jesuits who came to Poland is Arthur Lawrence Faunt son of William Faunt of Foston, Leicestershire. Faunt attended Merton College and was committed under the tutorship of John Potts. Under the Potts influence, Faunt is sent to Louvain and having acquired his Bachelor of Arts, moves to Munich to obtain the Master of Arts. Later he departs for Rome in 1575 and is nominated Reader of Divinity. In 1581, he is sent to Poznan to the newly opened Jesuit College. The Stanisław Estreicher Bibliography Polonica of 1898, enlists up to 10 publications written by Faunt

and all still to be found in Poland. His first work entitled "Assertiones rhetoricae ac philosophicae" was a published version of the inaugural lecture which Faunt delivered at the beginning of the academic year in Poznan. Other works were works in Dogmatic Theology, and of particular interest are the polemical theological works address to Calvinist and Lutheran theologians such as Antonij Sadeelis and Daniel Tossano. Of these works though, one is worth mentioning, "De Controversiis inter ordinem ecclesiasticum et saecularem in Polonia" as it was reprinted twice following its first publication in 1587, in 1592 and 1632. In the all three editions Faunt's text is preceded by the preface by the papal nuncio, Andrea Bolognetti and Laurentius Grimalus Gosclisius, Dean of the Cathedral of Płock and secretary to the King. Among the issues that Faunt writes in this work is his defense of the Society against the attacks of certain clergy and professors of the academy who strongly opposed the royal decree of granting some Jesuits theologians the professorship in the Academy of Kraków. The later editions perhaps prove the interest in the subject while the included texts by Bolognetti and Gosclisius perhaps demonstrate the need to somehow support the text.

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Another Elizabethan recusant whose works can be found in the Jagiellonian and the Czartoryski Libraries is that of Edmund Campion. The Jagiellonian includes as part of its holdings up to eleven editions of Campion's "Rationem Decem, quibus fretus certamen adversiis Causa Fidei" addressed to the Academics of Oxford and Cambridge. A 1584 edition, printed in Ingolstadt in the office of David Sartorus belonged to Jacobus Dabrowski, the Vicar of the Cathedral in Kamieniec Podolski and later professor of the Academy of Kraków. A later edition, printed in Vilnius in the office of Nicholas Krzysztof Radziwiłł in the years between 1583 - 1585 originally belonged to the House of Jesuit Professors, and the whilst another edition, includes printed in Prague 1592. Other editions include the Kraków edition of 1604, one which formerly belonged to the library of the Camaldolese Monks of Bielany in Kraków and the other belonged to the Professors' library of the Academy of Vilnius. The Czartoryski Library holds other works by Campion, "Opera Omnia" printed in Paris, in 1648. Aside from that, two Polish translations of Campion's "Rationes Decem" both published in 1584 by the office of Nicholas Christopher Radziwiłł. One published in Vilnius in 1584 by Nicholaus Radziwiłł was translated by Piotr Skarga includes a short biography of the life of Campion as well. A later translation by a convert from Arianism, Gaspar Wilkowski expanded the publication with a testimony of the translator's conversion was also published in 1584. One is tempted to as the question

how did the 'Rationes Decem' come to be translated into Polish so quickly? We do know, from letter that the Papal Nuncio Calighari who had sent the King of Poland, Stephan Bathory, a text written with "utmost faith and piety" by an English Jesuit, which the King had recommended to be translated as it would do much good to the heretics of this realm (*Monumenta Vaticana* 1915, 619 – 621). Judging from the date of the correspondences, April 21 and April 29, 1581 that is before the actual printing of the *Rationes Decem* in May 1581, the text referred to might in all probability be Edmund Campion's 'Brag' or 'Challenge' which circulated only in manuscript form and was never meant to be published.¹

Yet, another book, this time a beautifully copper plate replica of Niccolo Circigniani's frescoes of the English College can be found in the Czartoryski Library. This book, the *Ecclesiae Anglicanae Trophae* printed in Rome in 1584 is still bound in an original sixteenth century vellum belonged, again as the provenance and library notes inform us, to Thomas Treter himself, who served as canon at the Santa Maria in Trastevere and is to whom the book is dedicated to. Even, the scanty notes at the verte of the cover written by Adam Czartoryski's librarian Karol Sienkiewicz, confirm this as it informs us that this book "pertained to Thomas Treter." Thomas Treter, once secretary to the King, queen, Anna Jagiellonczyk was well-versed in Latin, Greek and Hebrew and was also a skilled emblem artist, and his rendition of the Polish Eagle, the symbol of Polish Sovereignty is still popularly known as "Treter's Eagle." As a young man, he had attended the Jesuit in Braniewo and must have had as his professors the first generation of Jesuits, Robert Abercombie, James Bosgrave and John Hay.

As this brief survey has demonstrated, the presence of these books in libraries in Kraków are living testimonies to the lively and strong influence that English recusants played in various intellectual debates of the period. Even more interesting are the potential questions that can be raised such as those relating to the readership and ownership profile of these books. Possible research interests worth exploring further include not only the profound influence of these English recusants such as William Allen, Nicholas Sanders, Edmund Campion and Arthur Lawrence Faunt, who as prominent apologists of their times

¹ I am most grateful to Gerard Kilroy for this observation, as both Urszula Szumska (1938) and much later Henryk Zins (2002) argue that the text in question was actually the 'Rationes Decem.' However, as Dr Kilroy has pointed out, judging from the dates of the correspondences, this is obviously another text as it *Rationes* was not yet in print. All scholars however, as certain that the text referred to here is Edmund Campion's.

certainly were read and influenced not only within the Jesuit but also academic circles as well. Sander's works would likewise be worth further investigating as perhaps more evidence of his stay in Poland may be found. One particularly interesting topic is of course, Campion's "Rationes Decem," a work directly clearly popular during its day. Why was it translated into Polish by two different translators? How did it influence the theological debate that went on at that time? How did so many editions come to the possession of so many eminent Cracovians? These are just some of the research questions that need to be answered in the further investigation of such works.

This article has been an attempt at providing a description of some of the rare books found in two of Kraków libraries – the University Library of the Jagiellonian University and the Czartoryski Library. It is hoped that with such studies as these, one may contribute to a greater appreciation not only of the rare books found in the city of Krakow but more importantly contribute to the a deeper understanding of sixteenth century Cultural history – particularly in the understanding of the mechanisms of press censorship. It is indeed ironic, that in the years of 1581 – 1603 the times of most rigid censorship England has ever known, did Englishmen find allies in their co-religionists elsewhere, some thousand kilometers away, in the Commonwealth of the Two Nations of Poland and the Great Duchy of Lithuania.

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Clarinda Calma obecnie pracuje jako adiunkt w Wyższej Szkole Europejskiej im. ks. J. Tischnera. Opublikowała artykuły z zakresu poezji i prozy metafizycz-

nych pisarzy, takich jak Robert Southwell oraz John Donne. Obecnie prowadzi badanie nt wydawnictwa drugiego obiegu w szesnastowiecznej Anglii i Polsce.

Streszczenie

Granice słowa drukowanego: Szesnastowieczne starodruki Angielskich Reku-
zantów w Krakowskich Bibliotekach

W latach 1581 – 1603, rząd Królowej Elżbiety I wprowadził surową cenzurę nad działalnością drukarską, kontrolując nie tylko całe przedsiębiorstwo drukarskie, ale również obieg druków, ograniczając w ten sposób druki niezgodne z panującą polityką rządzącego. Natomiast druk i obieg książek zakazanych w Anglii był możliwy w innych państwach, jak i w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, a wymownym dowodem na to jest fakt, że książki do dziś są dostępne w bibliotekach krakowskich, dzięki osiemnastowiecznym i dziewiętnastowiecznym bibliofilom. Artykuł ten próbuje opisać starodruki angielskich rekuzantów znajdujących się w różnych krakowskich bibliotekach poprzez opisywanie proveniencji wybranych starodruków. Dzięki istnieniu tych książek, można dzisiaj zrekonstruować oraz uzupełnić ten brakujący rozdział w historii drukarstwa i obiegu książek w szesnastowiecznej Anglii.

Słowa kluczowe:

rekuzanci angielscy, starodruki, historia cenzury, elżbietańska Anglia