

The Jesuit College from Kamianets-Podilskyi and Its First Attempt to Organize a Jesuit Mission in Moldavia (1610) According to New Evidence Found in the *Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu*

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Abstract: Shortly after the foundation of the Jesuit College from Kamianets-Podilskyi in Southern Poland at the beginning of the 17th century, the Polish Jesuits tried to establish a permanent mission in Moldavia, too. Analysing new evidence discovered in the Jesuits archives in Rome, the present paper tries to reconstruct the circumstances of the Jesuits’ arrival in Iași in 1610, their meetings with the Prince Constantine Mohyla (1607-1611), the voivode of Moldavia, with his mother, Lady Elisabeth Mohyla, and with the Court, the missionary expeditions undertaken in the surroundings of the capital, as well as the events that followed the dethronement of the ruler and the installation of Stephen II Tomşa (1611-1615) on the throne by the Turks, including the attempts of the Mohyla family – now refugees in Poland – to seize the power again in Moldavia.

Keywords: Jesuit missions, Kamianets-Podilskyi Jesuit College, Moldavia, the Mohyla family

Rezumat: Imediat după fondarea Colegiului iezuit din Camenița, iezuiții polonezi de la nou-înființata instituție au încercat să pună bazele unei misiuni stabile și în Moldova. Pe baza unor documente inedite descoperite în arhivele generale ale iezuiților de la Roma (*Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu*), articolul de față reconstruiește împrejurările sosirii iezuiților la Iași în 1610, întrevederile acestora cu domnitorul Constantin Movilă (1607-1611), cu doamna Elizabeta Movilă și cu Curtea, expedițiile misionare întreprinse în împrejurimile capitalei, precum și

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evenimentele care au urmat detronării domnitorului și instalării lui Ștefan Tomșa al II-lea (1611-1615), inclusiv tentativele Movileștilor, refugiați în Polonia, de a prelua din nou puterea în Moldova.

Cuvinte-cheie: misiuni iezuite, colegiul iezuit din Camenița, Moldova, familia Movilă

The idea of founding a Jesuit College to Kamianets-Podilskyi, in the most southern part of Poland, had already appeared at the end of the 16th century: in 1590, during the 5th provincial congregation of the Jesuits from Poland, the idea of founding a new college had been particularly discussed and the results of the debate were sent to Rome the Superior General of the order. According to the acts of that congregation, the reasons why the Polish Jesuits were considering the small city of Kamianets as a possible location for their College were practical and strategical: it was a commercial city in Podolia, it was situated at the crossroad of some important commercial roads, it was a city inundated often by Wallachians,¹ Armenians, Turks and other nations which could benefit from the work of the missionaries, and last but not least it was a place which raised hopes of founding in the future another college; however, given the fact that there was not yet been sent a mission in order to explore the place and the possibilities and to negotiate the founding of a new college, it was advisable that some experienced Jesuit went to Kamianets and made the inquiry.²

It took almost two decades from the discussion of this idea in the congregation to the actual founding of the new college. On the 4th of May 1608 the very same Iustus Raab who had been dispatched as a missionary in Moldavia in 1588³ came to Kamianets with some other companions (*socii*).

¹ When using the word Wallachians (*Valachi*) in their accounts, the Jesuits did not mean the inhabitants of Wallachia, the historical Romanian province in the South of nowadays Romania (capital: Bucharest), but the inhabitants of the North-Eastern province, Moldavia, i.e. the Moldavians.

² Archivum Romanum Societatis Jesu (hereafter: ARSI), *Congregationes*, v. 44: *Congregationes Provinciae (1587-1591)*, f. 102rv.

³ For further information regarding the the first Jesuit mission in Moldavia in 1588-1594 see Diana Marinescu, "La prima missione dei gesuiti in Moldavia (1588-1592) secondo alcuni documenti dell'Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu," *Ephemeris Dacoromana*, vol. XXII (2020): 69-94.

They were received by the chapter held in the front of the cathedral; the bishop admitted them “ad munus concionandi, catechisandi, exhortandi, confessiones audiendi ac alia munia Societatis obeunda;” so the Jesuits began their activity in the city under favorable circumstances, converting not only Catholics, but also Ruthenians, Armenians or Wallachians.⁴ Next year, the College received a place, a stone building and more wooden facilities worth 4000 florins, as well as books and supplies; in 1610, since the number of the Jesuits present at the College had increased, they received an episcopal *sacellum* and the church of the cathedral in order to fulfill the ministries of the Society.⁵

The new Jesuit College was officially founded in Kamianets on November 17th, the feast day of St. Gregory the Wonderworker (the first Sunday after this feast would remain in the memory of the Jesuits as the founding date of the College).⁶ The history of the College kept in the Roman archives of the Society of Jesus expose briefly the motives of the founding of the College: firstly, Kamianets was a commercial city which enjoyed a great ethnical and religious diversity. Then, not all its inhabitants were Catholic, so the non-Catholic could benefit from the pastoral work of the Jesuits. The Calvin ruler of Kamianets favored the Calvins, who had already established a Calvin school, thus the Catholics who did not wish to send their children to the that Calvin school were asking insistently the founding of a Catholic school as a counterweight, a Jesuit College capable of opposing the Calvin propaganda. Another reason which highly impacted the decision of founding this College was the fact that Kamianets, a city in the very Southern part of Poland, was extremely close to two regions which had a very important missionary prospective: Moldavia (*Valachia* in the manuscript) in the South, which was only two leagues far away from Kamianets, and Russia in the East, which could be another place for dispatching a mission.⁷

⁴ ARSI, *Fondo Gesuitico* (hereafter: *F. G.*), *Collegia 1452, busta no. 83, no. 10, Collegia. Kaminiac Podolski*, year 1608. As the pages were not numbered in the original document, the reference to this volume will include only the year as noted down by the Jesuits.

⁵ *Ibid.*, years 1609-1610.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.* Regarding the inauguration of the missions in Moldavia and Southern Poland see also ARSI, *Historia Societatis*, vol. 89, 1591-1616, ff. 385v-386v.

Shortly after the foundation of the new College the Jesuits inaugurated the mission from Moldavia, too. The occasion appeared in 1610 when an official delegation was sent to Moldavia by the city of Kamianets in order to solve some administrative issues: “instituta est missio in Valachiam occasione nuntiorum qui ex Palatinatu Podolien<sis> ratione administrationis iusitiae ac praedonibus mittebantur.”⁸ The Polish delegation was formed by seven people (both horsemen and pedestrians)⁹: officials of Kamianets and Jesuit Fathers. It is not excluded that Iustus Rabb, the Jesuit who had inaugurated the Kamianets mission two years before, was part of this expedition; moreover, it is not excluded that the idea of re-founding a mission in Moldavia belonged to him given the fact that he was an active part during the first Jesuit mission sent to Moldavia in 1588 and, as such, he was familiarized with the context, the possibilities and the missionary prospectives presented by Moldavia.¹⁰ The delegation made a good impression on the ruler of Moldavia and on the Court, that is why by Christmas the Jesuits came again to Iași to offer their spiritual aid to the Catholics in Moldavia. On this occasion they received rich fabrics for the liturgical vestments, a silver chalice and a paten as a gift from Lady Elisabeth Mohyla, the mother of the Prince of Moldavia, as well as several vessels of wine for the professors who taught at the College in Kamianets.¹¹

These two expeditions are narrated in detail in several *litterae annuae* sent by the Jesuits to the Superior General in Rome. Before relating the meeting with the Prince, we should expose the reasons why the Jesuits had chosen to dispatch a mission to Moldavia as they result from these documents. The pages which open the narration of this mission have an extensive description of the country, of its inhabitants, of their customs and practices, of the natural resources, of the languages as well as other practical details which did not escape to a Jesuit eye trained to register every single detail regarding the place of a possible mission. Thus, we learn that the main reason for which the Jesuits

⁸ ARSI, *F. G., Collegia 1452, busta no. 83, no. 10, Collegia. Kaminiac Podolski*, year 1610.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Unfortunately, all we know about the final years of this Jesuit is that he took part at the 13th Provincial Congregation of the Jesuits in Poland which took place between the 1st and the 3rd of August 1611 (ARSI, *Congregationes*, v. 53, f. 235v), and that he died in 1612 in Kraków: Ladislaus Lukács, *Catalogi personarum et officiorum Provinciae Austriae S. I.*, vol. I (Roma: Institutum Historicum S. I., 1978), 760.

¹¹ ARSI, *F. G., Collegia 1452, busta no. 83, no. 10, Collegia. Kaminiac Podolski*, year 1610.

from Kamianets reached Moldavia is not only the geographical proximity – the Moldavian border was only *duobus milliaribus Germanicis* far away from Kamianets –, but also the language, the surroundings and the customs of the country.¹²

The first aspect presented by the Jesuits in their accounts was the natural richness of Moldavia: the country had very fertile land which produced lots of grains, its inhabitants were producing plenty of wine and honey, there were so many sheep and cattle that every single day thousands of animals were directed towards Poland and from there to Germany and to various other places in Europe;¹³ as such, for the Jesuits this place was the perfect spot for the foundation of a permanent mission. Furthermore, a mission in a country whose inhabitants were speaking a kind of *valde corrupta* Latin was for sure easy to conduct. Yes – the Jesuits wrote – it was true that the language spoken by the commoners was mixed with words originating in the languages of the neighboring countries, especially Greek and Slavic, but it was equally true that for an Italian familiarized with Latin, who additionally knew a little bit of Greek, the language was easy to learn.¹⁴ On the other hand, one must observe that the Jesuits sent to Moldavia were Polish, not Italians. However, given their vocation and formation, they mastered Latin, so they could learn easily the Wallachian language. Regarding the people's skills in letters, we are told that amongst the population only the merchants and some *primores* knew how to read and write while no one was trained or skilled in the other sciences and doctrines, not even the clergymen who used to learn the alphabet only to be able to officiate the religious services and to administer the sacraments. Even though there was plenty of monasteries belonging to the order of Saint Basil and even if they had a lot of monks – three hundred and even five hundred each – the monks used to deal rather with trade than with the things pertaining to the monastic rule and to religious life.¹⁵ In conclusion, given the illiteracy and the lack of catechisation, a mission in those places was a must.

¹² ARSI, *Polonia* (hereafter: *Pol.*), vol. 51(1), f. 225v.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

On the other hand, according to the Jesuits the political situation was instable: the province was ruled by a voivode elected by the people,¹⁶ at least in theory, but in practice he was imposed to the population by the Polish, Hungarians or Turks.¹⁷ There was not such a thing as the first born succeeding to his father to the throne, and the country “*ferè semper illa fuit quasi pradae exposita,*”¹⁸ being often invaded by the neighbouring nations: Wallachians, Cossacks, Hungarians, Polish or Turks. But, as the *Hospodar*¹⁹ was vassal (*feudatarius*,²⁰ *cliens Polonorum*²¹) of the King of Poland and because he kept always around him several hundred Polish soldiers, in the first phase the mission would deal with these Polish and afterwards it could be extended amongst the *schismatic* Moldavians: for the Jesuits this was the perfect occasion to correct the errors of those Moldavians who were very set up against de Roman Church:

(...) tum si quid in ipsimet incolis Deus effici voluerit ad veram in illis fidem et morum honestatem propagandam ex occasione oblata indicabitur et tentabitur. Nam certe vix aliqua spes in iuvandi istos homines diuturno schismate graeco graviter contra Ecclesiam Romanam obfirmatos nisi hac occasione per Polonos Catholicos qui cum illis habitare incipiunt.²²

The circumstances of their first expedition in Moldavia, the warm welcoming made by the *Hospodar*, the second expedition in December, the mission made amongst the Catholics in Moldavia are narrated by this *litterae annuae* in the smallest details. The occasion for the mission appeared in fall, when the noblemen from Podolia decided to send to Moldavia, in the name of the entire region, a delegation made up from three noblemen to negotiate

¹⁶ This piece of information is very interesting given the fact that historically in Moldavia it was not the people who traditionally chose the rulers. Since the Jesuit testimony was a direct one, it is to be discussed why this piece of information appears in their accounts (maybe an echo from an ancient tradition originating in the 15th century, maybe take from some older Polish chronicles?)

¹⁷ ARSI, *Historia Societatis* (hereafter: *Hist. Soc.*), vol. 89, 1591-1616, f. 386v.

¹⁸ ARSI, *Pol.* 51(1), f. 225v.

¹⁹ The term used in the original document to designate the ruler of Moldavia, the voivode.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ ARSI, *Hist. Soc.*, vol. 89, 1591-1616, f. 386v.

²² ARSI, *Pol.* 51(1), f. 225v.

some political and administrative issues. Between the multiples points of the delegation two were particularly important: firstly, an issue regarding the judicial matters (they were asking the chastisement of the pillagers who used to attack Podolia from the borders of Moldavia), which was the main reason of setting up the embassy, and secondly the promotion of the new-founded Jesuit College in Kamianets. The members of the embassy were charged in the name of the whole aristocracy from Podolia to inform the *Hospodar* and all the Moldavians about the establishment of this College and to invite the Moldavian youth to enroll to its courses, so that

(...) melius cum litteris mores honestos omnemque civilitatem et cum Polonis maiorem animorum coniunctionem conciperent altiusque ab ipsa exteneris educatione combiberent, et firmius retinerent.²³

The issue had been discussed entirely in Kamianets in September, the messenger convincing the Rector of the College, Father Stanislaus Radizmski, to join the expedition which in the end comprised seven people.²⁴

The envois left Kamianets on the 10th of October and reached Iași four days later, spending the night at the house of the captain of the Polish soldiers in service to the *Hospodar*. The next day the carriage of Constantine Mohyla, the voivode of Moldavia, carried them to the Court where they had a short private meeting with him: the messengers greeted him, they were answered in Wallachian, then they were invited to sit near to the ruler who addressed them several official questions directly in Polish.²⁵

They revealed their missive only the day after, at the official meeting held in the presence of the voivode, the whole Court and the guards. After exposing the administrative issue which was the main cause of the expedition in Moldavia, one of the three Polish noblemen attacked the second point: the Jesuit issue. The discourse of the messenger had two aims: firstly, the recruitment of new students for the new Jesuit College in Kamianets, secondly the fund-raising for this College.

The messenger began by making a general overview on the Jesuit order, pointing to its role in the entire Christendom in the promotion of the

²³ ARSI, *Pol.* 66, f. 51r, *Pol.* 51(1), f. 226r.

²⁴ ARSI, *F. G.*, *Collegia 1452*, busta no. 83, no. 10, *Collegia. Kaminiac Podolski*, year 1610.

²⁵ ARSI, *Pol.* 66, f. 51r.

Christian faith in churches as well as in the promotion of a good education amongst the commoners (of course, it was impossible for the messenger to know that probably it was not the first time that the young Prince Constantine Mohyla meet the Jesuits: indeed, six months before, in April 1610, two Jesuits from Cluj took refuge in Moldavia, one of the missionaries establishing afterwards to Bacău.)²⁶ Then the Polish messenger exposed the circumstances which led to the establishment of the Jesuits to Kamianets through the efforts of the bishop of the city, Stanislaus Procknicki, the one who assiduously recommended the Jesuits to the Moldavians; afterwards he introduced to the audience the Rector of the College, Fr. Stanislaus Radzimski, and concluded by exhorting the audience “ut ex uno Sanctam hanc Religionem agnoscant omnes et amare incipient suosque illi filios ad erudiendum tradant quod iam nos Poloni omnes facimus perlibenter.”²⁷ At the very end of his discourse, the messenger exhorted the Moldavians *ad pietatem et liberalitatem* following the example of the noblemen in Podolia, asking them to help the Jesuit fathers *in fundatione ac fabrica* of the College. Subsequently, the discourse was noted down (the Jesuit was the one who dictated it), the messengers requesting that the particulars of their missive be written in the chart of the mission and translated into Wallachian: “puncta proponerent in linguam valachicam vertenda.”²⁸

It seems like the discourse of the messengers had a great impact on the Moldavian boyars: besides their benevolent attitude and some question they asked in the end regarding the Society of Jesus, they made some donations too: 400 florins were assigned to the College as alms (*nomine eleemosine*), the Rector of the College received a wine barrel in the name of the mother of the Prince while some boyars who intended to send their sons to study at the new College in Kamianets offered other four vessels of wine and several vessels of honey.²⁹

It seems that the official meeting at the Court was followed, in the very same day or afterwards, by a private meeting³⁰ with Lady Elisabeth Mohyla

²⁶ ARSI, *Hist. Soc.*, vol. 89, 1591-1616, f. 386r-388r.

²⁷ ARSI, *Pol.* 66, f. 51v.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ The document from *Pol.* 66 does not mention this meeting. Instead, it is mentioned in vol. *Pol.* 51(1). In order to rebuild the chronology of the expedition I used both sources.

who, according to the accounts of the Jesuits, used to help his young son in governing the province.³¹ Just as in the case of the meeting at the Court, the messengers exposed their missive and recommended the new College to the Princess. Following the discussion with the Rector of the College, the Princess committed to entrust two of her sons, the voivode's brothers, to the Jesuits to be educated in the College from Kamianets: "duos filios principis fratres in scholis Societatis erudiendos daturam se pollicita est,"³² and she gifted the Jesuit present with a chalice and a paten.³³ Furthermore, according to the testimony of the captain of the Polish guard at the Court, it seems that the Princess treated with the Prince and the Divan so that they grant the Society of Jesus a regular income in Moldavia which could be received annually: "Retulit nobis postea D. Capitaneus Polonicus ipsam Domnam ferventer cum filio et Senatu egisse ut Societati certi redditus assignentur in Valachia singulis annis recipiendi."³⁴

According to the Jesuit accounts, this first mission of the Kamianets College in Moldavia had a very positive impact on both sides. Not only the noblemen, the commoners or de Polish from Moldavia received the Jesuits with great enthusiasm, but the Jesuits themselves, realizing what potential had the country and particularly the capital for their missionary activities,³⁵ could foresee that this mission was opening a path. The following eight days after the meeting at the Court, the Rector of the College devoted himself to the mission both in the capital and in the countryside, reporting his activities to Rome: the administration of the sacraments amongst the Catholic faithful (especially confession and Eucharist) and the conversion of those who were conducting a sinful life (the letters present the case of a certain chief over the soldiers who was cohabitating with a *nobilem domnam*: the Jesuit convinced him to give up this sinful relation and to partake again in the sacraments of the Church.)³⁶

At the fervent request of the Polish soldiers, the Rector of the College made a second missionary travel in Moldavia near Christmas, remaining in

³¹ ARSI, *Pol.* 51(1), f. 226r.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ ARSI, *F. G., Collegia 1452, busta no. 83, no. 10, Collegia. Kaminiac Podolski, year 1610.*

³⁴ ARSI, *Pol.* 66, f. 51v.

³⁵ ARSI, *Pol.* 51(1), f. 226r.

³⁶ ARSI, *Pol.* 66, f. 51v.

the country until the first days of 1612.³⁷ On Christmas Day the Catholic church from Iași was full again – the Catholics could not miss the opportunity to listen the preach of the Jesuit, to confess their sins and to receive the Holy Communion. Moreover, the Jesuit prepared for baptism an Arab who had fled the Ottoman Empire,³⁸ re-converted to the Christian faith a Moldavian who had converted to Islam twelve years before and convinced several prostitutes to give up their shameful life and get married;³⁹ on this occasion, the missionary realized once again the extent of the missionary potential amongst so many nations if the Jesuits would succeed in establishing a permanent residence in the capital of Moldavia.⁴⁰ Likewise, he informed about the state of the other Catholics in the country and realized that there is a huge need of priests even though far away in the mountains towards Transylvania there were plenty of Catholic villages "quibus nulla infectio haeresis aut schismatis hactenus potuit nocere nam permanserunt catholici."⁴¹

The Jesuit was received on this occasion too by the Prince and by his mother, even though in a more intimate and less informal ambience: he spoke directly to the Prince, without any interpreters or intermediaries, "quod non nisi amicis insignibus conceditur."⁴² Following the discussion with the Prince and the Moldavians, the Jesuit was convinced that the basis for the promotion of the Catholic faith was already set since they believed that the Roman faith is as true as the Greek one, expressing openly their desire that the two faiths be again one:

Illud non leve ex conversatione cum Valachis ad promovendam <reli>gionem Catholicam iactum est fundamentum quod ipsemet Princeps et fere omnes proceres fateantur solam <fi>dem Romanam et Graecam esse veram, reliquas haereticorum sectas nomine christiano indignas, et quod aliqua <...> fuit ut Romana et Graeca fides agnosceretur una, hoc dicebant, nunc etiam se cupere et aliquando futur<a>m <...>batur.⁴³

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ ARSI, *Pol.* 51(1), f. 226r.

³⁹ ARSI, *Pol.* 66, f. 52r.

⁴⁰ ARSI, *Pol.* 51(1), f. 226r.

⁴¹ Ibid., f. 226v.

⁴² Ibid., f. 226r.

⁴³ Ibid.

Nonetheless, the missionary managed on this occasion too to gather rich donations for the College in Kamianets: a wealthy and notable Moldavian (*insignis dominus*) from the household of the Prince, who previously had lived in Poland, had converted to Catholicism and was very fond of the Jesuit order, donated to the College an excellent vessel of wine, another Moldavian bought for the altar a silk fabric worth 100 florins, and another one donated silk for a priest's garment and bought a silver chalice for the College.⁴⁴

Given the success of the two missionary expeditions from 1610 and the enthusiasm which transpires from the *litterae annuae*, from the Jesuits' perspective the mission in Moldavia was a fact, a reality. During the first half of the next year, even if they could not conduct a new missionary expedition in Moldavia because of the raids of the Tartars and of the Cossacks (*Schytyas*), the Jesuits were very confident regarding its aftermaths and future:

(...) nihilominus pacatis rebus erit continuanda; imo et de Residentia Societatis cogitandum, ad quam sola regionis illius tranquillitas desideratur; nam incolarum animi sunt admodum propensi in Societatem, locus quoque ac redditus designati, nec tamen omnino illis desumus.⁴⁵

As one can see, we can discuss about a Jesuit residence to which the Moldavians already destined a place and permanent income, that is why we can consider that the mission was fixed once for all: only the political hardships could prevent it. Unfortunately, these political troubles were not to cease too soon, that is why the following years the mission was rather intermittent and instable. However, the interest of the Jesuits regarding the mission in Moldavia did not cease: they always kept an eye on the political changes in the neighbor country as we can see from the recordings present in the *litterae annuae* from the Kamianets College.

During the following years, several missionaries were designated for the mission in Moldavia. A short mention from 1611 informs us about a new Jesuit charged with the Moldavian mission; unfortunately, because of the political troubles in Moldavia he did not succeed in reaching the place of the mission: "Franciscus Zgoda desigantus missionis Valachicae ad milites presidarios, sed Valachicae Moldavicae perturbat<iones> expeditionem

⁴⁴ ARSI, *Pol.* 66, f. 52r.

⁴⁵ ARSI, *Pol.* 51(1), f. 244r.

impedierunt.”⁴⁶ Zgoda was to reach Moldavia only in 1612 together with another *socius*.

At the end of 1611, the voivode Constantine Mohyla was deposed by the Turks and replaced with Stephen II Tomşa (1611-1615, 1621-1623). Being unable for the moment to flee in Poland, where a lot of noble families to whom he was related could help him, the Prince withdrew in the fortress of Khotyn together with his mother, Lady Elisabeth Mohyla, and a part of the filo-Polish Moldavian aristocracy which supported the Mohyla family.

The situation at the border was not favourable: because of the raids of the Moldavians who supported Tomşa and of the Tartars, the city was being plundered, the buildings set on fire, many people had already been taken into captivity, and the peasants who had escaped, after gathering the few things they had, abandoned their villages and fled with their families in the neighborhoods of Kamianets.⁴⁷ This was the context when the Jesuits from Kamianets decided to send two missionaries to Khotyn to grant spiritual assistance to the Polish soldiers established there with the Mohyla family: since it was a very cold winter and the political situation was one of the worst, those Catholics were dying without sacraments.⁴⁸ Despite their insistence to be sheltered inside the fortress, the captain of Khotyn, fearing a new raid of the Moldavians, refused their request, justifying that the place was not safe. Eventually, the missionaries were hosted by a local landlady in her house; from there, they were to enter daily the fortress to celebrate Mass.⁴⁹ The fears of the Jesuits became true: in the same very night, the Moldavians disguised in Tartars (*Scythas*) rushed in the city, setting the fair on fire and robbing anyone found in their route. The episode is described in detail in *litterae annuae*: the Jesuits tried to run towards the fortress, one of them managed to hide, but the other one was caught by the invaders who undressed him and stole his old and worn clothing, his hat, his shabby furry coat which protected him of the cruel coldness... and even his tattered underwear.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ ARSI, *F. G., Collegia 1452, busta no. 83, no. 10, Collegia. Kaminiac Podolski*, year 1611.

⁴⁷ ARSI, *Pol.* 66, f. 54r.

⁴⁸ ARSI, *Pol.* 51(1), f. 249r.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 249v. The event is also briefly narrated in ARSI, *F. G., Collegia 1452, busta no. 83, no. 10, Collegia. Kaminiac Podolski*, year 1612: *incursio haec nostros parum cautos Hocimi in missione (arx est Valachica) vexavit et unum vestimentis spoliavit.*

The efforts made by Stephen Potocki to put again his brother-in-law on the throne were vain. In the summer of 1612, the army commended by Potocki was defeated in the battle at Cornul lui Sas, near the Prut river: the army was dispersed, many soldiers were brought in captivity by the Turks, others were thrown in the Prut river and either drowned or were pierced with arrows while they were trying to swim in order to put themselves to safety.⁵¹ According to the account, Stephen Potocki became a prisoner and Constantine Mohyla was caught by the Tartars and drowned in the waters of the Dnieper river.⁵²

These events affected the Jesuits, too. In 1612 there were two missionaries in Moldavia: fr. Franciscus Zgoda and Martinus Miruszowicz, *coadiutor*. It is likely that they had accompanied the army of Stephen Potocki in his attempt to regain the throne on behalf of his brother-in-law; indeed, a short note in the acts of the College shows that the two missionaries were caught in Wallachia *cum exercitu polono* and taken into slavery in the parts of the Tartars.⁵³ Martinus Miruszowicz was set free after twenty-four weeks by the magnificent Stanislaus Zolkiewsky in exchange of a ransom worth 400 *aureis*; afterwards he returned to the College⁵⁴ and from there he went to mission in the area of Bessarabia: a note from 1620 informs us about his death in Bessarabia.⁵⁵ As far as Father Franciscus Zgoda is concerned, he was sold to a Christian Tartar and transported to Caffa and Kherson where he was redeemed by the same Stanislaus Zolkiewsky for the same ransom of 400 *aureis*.⁵⁶

Since the same year, 1612, the Jesuits received from Moldavia 100 florins *in pecunia* and fabrics for the liturgical vestments estimated at 100 florins,⁵⁷ one can presume that despite all these hardships, the mission did not cease its existence. In the acts of the College the Jesuit noted a donation made by a woman from the city,⁵⁸ the widow of *Ioannes Apothecarius*, who offered

⁵¹ ARSI, *Pol.* 66, f. 54rv.

⁵² *Ibid.*, f. 62r.

⁵³ ARSI, *F. G.*, *Collegia 1452, busta no. 83, no. 10, Collegia. Kaminiac Podolski*, year 1612.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, year 1620.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, year 1612.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ The name of the city is not specified, that is why we cannot know if the note speaks about a widow from Kamianets or a widow from Iași; the information appears right away after the information regarding the donation of the Moldavian Prince; in the documents of the

“calicem argenteum cum patena ac apparatus pro sacerdote sacrum facturo pro anima mariti.”⁵⁹

Even though in all those years the mission had rather an intermittent character, the impression that visit from 1610 and discourse of the Superior of the College remained alive in the hearts of the Moldavian boyars who had fled with Lady Elisabeth Mohyla and who had sought shelter in Podolia after Constantine Mohyla’s dethronement. The written accounts of the Jesuits inform that the Moldavian boyars used to come in secret to ask for advice from the Superior of the College and that they had entrusted their sons to the Jesuits to be educated:

(...) primarii Proceres Moldaviae (qui post pulsum Constantini Hospodarum in Podoliam secesserit) ad Superiori Collegii in suis secretis consiliis venire et de gravissimis negociis cum illo conferre soliti erant: qui ite ob magnam opinionem quae de Soceitate conceperant filios suos instituendos commiserunt.⁶⁰

Kamianets had become the shelter of these wandering boyars and the place where they conspired with the Polish, Lady Elisabeth Mohyla and her sons the dethronement of the tyrant Stephen Tomşa and the restauration of the Mohyla family. After acceding to the throne, Tomşa had begun to oppress the country and kill the boyars accusing them of treason. *Litterae annuae* narrate a very suggestive episode: on the 5th of October⁶¹ (year not specified), learning about a plot which aimed to kill him, the voivode ordered that all the plotter boyars be impaled together with their wives and children (he did not spare his own innocent brother) then ordered that they were decapitated, stuffed and hanged on the wall in the throne room:

Stephanus Tomsza (sic mentito nomine appellatus) per fraudem Princeps Moldaviae a Turca creatus, ob multas caedes et tyrannidem quae his temporibus in Proceres Valachiae bonis eorum inhians exercebat exosus omnibus factus suis subditis quos eo perduxit ut coniu<ati>o<n>e facta certis e medio sui

Kamianets College, the information related to Moldavia are not always written separately from the ones related to Kamianets.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ ARSI, *Pol.* 66, f. 61v.

⁶¹ In original: *dies tertia nonas Octobris.*

ad necem illi inferendam destinavit. Instat dies tertia nonas Octobri facinori perficien<di> destinatus proditur interea coniuratio Tyranno, nominatur authores quo ipse aliud cogitantes omnes fere comprehendi iubet et crudeliddimae palis una cum uxoribus et liberis (execrandum facinus) infigi iubet, etiam fratri proprio impius Tyrannus quod huius coniurationis esset non partens quem una cum liberis et coniuge eodem supplicio affici curavit. Et ne quid crudelitati deesset cadaveribus in stipite relictis capita amputari, pellibusque detractis ac faeno palcisque repletis in sua sala ad parietem ordine suspendi curavit.⁶²

It seems that the incident terrified the boyars from the Court. A part of them, fearing the suspicions of the voivode, fled to Poland, seeking protection from Lady Elisabeth Mohyla; in the next period the runaways, Elisabeth Mohyla and her two sons plotted to dethrone and chase away Stephen Tomşa to save the country from oppression and to revenge Constantine Mohyla's death.⁶³ Lady Elisabeth sent a messenger to her sons-in-law, Michael Wisniewicki and Samuel Korecki, proposing them to help Alexander Mohyla to gain the throne of Moldavia by providing him military aid. Her plan was simple: since the Polish laws forbade them to bring paid soldiers outside the realm, her sons-in-laws should secure some troops made of the many Cossacks who were living on the two noblemen's properties from Ukraine and Zaporizhzhia, as well as of the veteran soldiers who were living freely and who did not care the laws; the troupes were to be led personally by her sons-in-law while her Ladyship engaged in financing the expedition to which she assigned the hereditary assets of her sons.⁶⁴ The plan was carried accordingly: the two noblemen announced the Cossacks to gather, luring them with the prospective of the plunder they could commit during the expedition (which did happen – in the letters they wrote, the Jesuits complained the fate of all Podolia and of the College which had been plundered by the flood of Cossacks in their way towards Moldavia).

The expedition was a success: the army of Tomşa was scattered, the ruler was chased on the other side of the Danube river, Alexander Mohyla was enthroned, but only for a short time. According to the Jesuits, the people

⁶² ARSI, *Pol.* 66, f. 61v.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, f. 62r.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

did not want to recognize him as their ruler without the confirmation and the flag sent by the Sultan; while the boyars were negotiating in Constantinople the acceptance of the new voivode, Michael Wisnowiecki died – it seems that he was poisoned by his enemies – and his death changed the whole story. Shortly after, a break between the soldiers and Korecki led the soldiers to make a different camp. The Turks and the Tartars took advantage from these discords amongst the Poles, invading and dispersing the troupes. Eventually, in August 1616 they captured Elisabeth Mohyla, Prince Alexander Mohyla and Samuel Korecki somewhere between Hârlău and Botoșani, bringing them in captivity to Constantinople⁶⁵ with many other Polish soldiers. Thus, Alexander Mohyla's short reign (November 1615-August 1616) came to an end. Alexander Mohyla would die in Constantinople after being forced to embrace Islam while his mother died in the Sultan's harem.

The coming years were not favourable for sending new missions because of the endless troubles at the borders of Moldavia. For the year 1620, the Jesuit accounts record a raid of the Tartars in a camp of soldiers situated at the Moldavian border (“castra in loco Cicora in Valachia ad fluvium Pruth Poloni militis turbata et post a Tartaris discerpta”⁶⁶); the raid and *hac perfidia Valachorum* caused the death of a couple of Jesuits and of several benefactor of the Kamianets College: the magnificent Stanislaus Zolkiewsky, promoter of the College, and the magnificent Valentinus Alexander Kalinowsky, the captain of Kamianets and general of Podolia. Two Jesuits died, being killed by the Tartars and Moldavians: Ioannes Turowsky and Bartholomeus Wolborius, buried *in parte Valachiae quae Bessarabia dicitur*;⁶⁷ also, in Besserabia died the Jesuit missionary Martin Miruszowich whom we mentioned earlier.

The end of the Mohylas meant the end of this first attempt of the Jesuits from the Kamianets College to organize a permanent mission in Moldavia. Toward the middle of the 17th century, after a short period when the mission was organized and conducted by Hungarian Jesuits from Cluj-Mănăștur, the Polish Jesuits from Kamianets would come again in Moldavia beginning with 1650. A new period was to begin in the history of the Jesuit mission in Moldavia.

⁶⁵ Ibid., f. 62v; *Pol.* 51(1), f. 289rv.

⁶⁶ ARSI, *F. G.*, *Collegia 1452, busta no. 83, no. 10, Collegia. Kaminiac Podolski*, year 1620.

⁶⁷ Ibid.