

**Students from Košice at Foreign Universities before and
during the Reformation Period in Town.**

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INTRODUCTION

This study provides a quantitative and descriptive analysis of the students from Košice, a town in present day Eastern Slovakia, formerly in the Northern part of the Hungarian Kingdom, who attended universities from the end of the fourteenth until the sixth decade of the seventeenth century. The totality of individuals studied will be referred to as “group” throughout the text of this work, based on the two common factors that each of them shared, namely origin from or other kind of affiliation with the town of Košice during the research time period and documented attendance at one or more universities of the time. My research proposes to fulfill two major goals: the first is to present this group of students with empirical data and the second is to delineate a number of its characteristics, with special attention paid to aspects related to academic peregrination and the relationship between the town and its studious inhabitants, either during or after their university studies.

Located at the periphery of Western Christianity and relatively far away from the most important centers of learning, Košice was, at the same time, one of the most important merchant towns in Northern Hungary. It was a significant component of the trade network in East Central Europe at the time and a regional center of importance. The town presents interesting patterns of political, economic, and religious development, in particular from the fifteenth to the first half of the seventeenth century. This pivotal role that it played within the region provided an incentive for researching both the development of education in the town and the university attendance of its inhabitants or other type of protégées. Another motivating factor for this study was the considerable amount of unedited and only partially examined archival material preserved in the local municipal archives. The information provided by these documents in addition to the data offered by a variety of other sources reveals a number of unknown facts about the university attendance of Košice inhabitants, which previously had been difficult to assess.

The introductory part of this work establishes the importance of research on students from Košice during the selected period, presents a number of questions to be answered in the main body of the work, analyzes the relevant scholarship and the primary sources used and discusses the methodology applied together with a number of limitations considered in the process of this research. The

main body begins by setting the local context: presenting political, economic, and religious aspects of the development of the town of Košice during the period of research. The next chapter maps out the academic peregrination of the students from Košice throughout the entire research period and analyzes the main factors that influenced the numerical evolvement and the institutional choices at different stages. At the same time, a short description of each of the universities attended by Košice students, together with an analysis of the matriculation numbers and their fluctuation is provided. Traditional aspects considered in scholarship dedicated to academic peregrination such as field of study, length of study, graduation, social status, travel in groups and inter-university mobility are presented and commented upon when available data permits. The fourth chapter focuses on the attitude of the town towards university education and the manner in which the urban administration and other local institutions were involved in the educational careers of its citizens. The main emphasis is set upon the financial assistance from the town council and the conditions within which it occurred. The last chapter of the work addresses the postgraduate careers of the former students and attempts to assess the impact that university studies had upon individuals and the town or region as a whole.

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The research is based upon a prosopographical catalogue which comprises all students from Košice who went abroad to study at universities until the year 1660, identified in the available sources. This catalogue includes academic information about each of the students supplied with further data about his family background, social status, postgraduate career, etc. depending on the information that could be gathered. Whenever possible, some indication is given on the contribution, if any, to the cultural development of the town and the region. The quantitative and qualitative analysis of this catalogue allows some conclusions to be drawn concerning the general characteristics of the student population coming from Košice and the meaning and the impact of university attendance within the framework of a specific town.

I hope to have completed a fairly detailed picture of the academic peregrination of Košice students, this study being among the first to document the attendance of students from one single town in Eastern Slovakia (Upper Hungary at that time) at various universities. This approach reaches further than the analysis of the student body at one specific university, as was more common in the local scholarship. While the general tendency was, and still is,

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·16· to study the famous thinkers and persons who occupy an important role in the history of ideas and knowledge, the multitude of young unknown intellectuals who faced many difficulties in their quest for knowledge and culture was fairly neglected. Although most of these otherwise anonymous students did not play a significant role in their social and cultural environment, the group of students from Košice proved to be relatively numerous and each of the included individuals has brought his own contribution to the intellectual development and functioning of this group. My purpose is to describe this group in detail, to create a comprehensive collective biography of the student population from the town of Košice until the middle of the seventeenth century and, in the process, to contribute to broadening our knowledge about intellectuals and their impact within the larger European context of the time.

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 FOCUS AND JUSTIFICATION OF RESEARCH

The period selected for this research is important for the history of universities in general, and for the history of the academic peregrination of students from the eastern European areas in particular for several reasons. First, it was in the late fourteenth through the fifteenth century when a number of important institutions of learning were created in Europe, and particularly in the territory of the Holy Roman Empire. This led to considerable reorganization of academic peregrination as a whole, since, due to the relative proximity of the new universities, and directly related to this, significant decrease in study costs, these universities started to play an important role in the recruitment of students from the eastern regions of Europe, including the Hungarian Kingdom. In addition, it was a time of important change in the structure and content of study itself, firstly under the influence of humanist ideas, which emerged in Italy to spread throughout all of Europe, and secondly under the impact of the Reformation, which introduced the first separation of universities based on confession. In the sixteenth century, Hungary was easily and almost thoroughly permeated by Reformation ideas, a fact that further determined the itineraries of the students emerging from its provinces. In addition, the fifteenth and especially the sixteenth century marked an important turning point in the political history of the region. It was the ever-increasing Ottoman threat from the end of the fifteenth century up to the catastrophe of Mohács in 1526, which literally divided the country into three separate parts and strongly influenced their further political and social development.

For the town of Košice itself, this time period saw several fluctuations in its economic development, related to involvement in a series of political events at the time. The geographical position of Košice permitted intensive commercial activity but also meant it was a focal point for a number of conflicts that ravaged this territory during the fifteenth, sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century. Košice was an important town in medieval and early modern Hungary, but while its economic and political role during the centuries was referred to often, less reference has been made to the education possibilities

open to its citizens, in particular to their education abroad. To date, although their presence at some educational institutions has been partially documented, the reasons for their choices, the conditions related to their studies, as well as the impact of university attendance upon their personal careers and local or regional development have not yet been commented upon. There are a number of questions that can and should be addressed to draw a comprehensive picture of the academic peregrination of Košice students: How did the university attendance numbers fluctuate during the research time period? Which universities did Košice students attend and what were the reasons for their choices? What were the specific characteristics of this group of students from Košice and how did these change over the research period? What were the conditions of their university studies and what kind of financial support did students from Košice have at their disposal? How did their post university careers develop and what was the impact of university studies upon the social advancement of the former students?

I am aware of the fact that it will not be possible to provide an absolutely accurate answer for this series of questions, partly because the same type of information does not exist for each university in each period, and the state and amount of sources differs very much from institution to institution. Similarly, although the town archives in Košice are fairly well preserved, the documents related to the academic peregrination do not allow for as thorough an analysis, as one might wish. While records of various types have been preserved carefully, the university peregrination of Košice inhabitants was not documented extensively. It was often necessary to examine a large number of municipal documentation in order to identify information directly related to or indirectly targeting the university education of the town citizens. But by means of a careful search through a significant number of primary sources and the analysis of new or little used evidence, a description of the students' group from Košice from the research time period could be carried out. Different aspects of it, such as university attendance frequency and patterns, financial support and postgraduate careers received an important share of attention within the framework of this study.

Two other domains could benefit considerably from this research on the body of Košice's students. Its results contribute to defining the place and importance of the town of Košice in the context of urban development of the

time, a development also determined, along with several factors of economic and political character, by its cultural and educational evolution, including the attitude of the town and its inhabitants towards university studies. The number of students at universities abroad is an indicator of the interest that town inhabitants displayed towards knowledge and educational development, of the prestige related to it, but also of the financial possibilities of the students and their families or of the town in general. On the other side, the results of this study will hopefully provide material for possible comparative analyses with students' groups from other towns in the Northern Hungary or abroad, research on which is already completed or is to be completed in the future.

1.2 OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT SCHOLARSHIP

The need for a comprehensive and analytical treatment of students from Košice as a social group¹ can be justified by its novelty in the local academic context. The existing scholarly studies directly targeting this field were, for the most part, dedicated to Hungarian students in general and did not concentrate on students coming from one particular town. In addition to that, the majority of these studies were written either at the end of the nineteenth or the beginning of the twentieth century, when some of the documentation on universities had not yet appeared in modern editions and the later databases on university students developed at a number of universities had not yet been compiled. The modern conditions for research on university history allows for a far more accurate presentation of students on the one hand, while the latest implications of the social and urban history offers new important insights on this issue on the other hand.

From the end of the nineteenth century, when matriculation lists and other university administration related documents began to be made accessible, a large number of studies on different aspects of university history have been produced. Initially, it was the functioning of the university and the students' recruitment (*Frequenz*) that attracted the interest of scholars, afterwards universities began to be studied in connection with cultural history, i.e. their effect upon the development and expansion of thoughts and ideas together with the

¹ As already mentioned, the word "group" is used throughout the text of this work as a common term to denote the totality of individuals that I have studied, and not in a sociological sense, where "social group" also involves cohesion and social interaction.

investigation of academic careers of influential personalities. From around the 70s of the twentieth century, students started to be studied from the point of view of social history: as a group of individuals representing a specific social category and behaving according to certain criteria in particular historical and social contexts. Building upon older studies that focused for the most part on individual universities, intellectuals, and traditions, recently scholars have been intrigued by the function and impact of the universities within society as a whole.²

Entries in the matriculation lists have been extensively used by researchers working on different aspects of university history. The question of the local

² Among the first significant contributions to the modern social-historical approach to university history is the book edited by LAWRENCE STONE, ed., *The University in Society* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974). Further works in this field include, among others, the following: R. CHARTIER and J. REVEL, "Université et société dans l'Europe moderne: position des problèmes," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* 25 (1978): 353–357; JULIA DOMINIQUE, JACQUES REVEL, and ROGER CHARTIER, eds. *Les Universités européennes du XVIIe au XVIIIe siècle: Histoire sociale des populations étudiantes*, 2 vols (Paris: École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1986 and 1989); WALTER RÜEGG, gen. ed., HILDE DE RIDDER-SYMOENS, ed., *A History of the University in Europe*, vol.1, *Universities in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: University Press, 1992) and idem, *A History of the University in Europe*, vol. 2, *Universities in Early Modern Europe (1500–1800)* (Cambridge: University Press, 1996). An important contribution to the social history of university students in the Middle Ages is provided by RAINER CHRISTOPH SCHWINGES and his disciples. See, for example, RAINER CHRISTOPH SCHWINGES, *Deutsche Universitätsbesucher im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert: Studien zur Sozialgeschichte des Alten Reiches* (Stuttgart: Steiner-Verlag, 1986), where the author, based on a statistical analysis of matriculation lists, presents the attendance of German universities with a detailed examination of the University of Cologne and argues for direct interdependences between students and different aspects of the development of medieval German society. Further important articles are included into the following publications: *Gelehrte im Reich: zur Sozial- und Wirkungsgeschichte akademischer Eliten des 14. bis 16. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1996) and *Artisten und Philosophen. Wissenschafts- und Wirkungsgeschichte einer Fakultät vom 13. bis zum 19. Jahrhundert* (Basle: Schwabe & Co AG Verlag, 1999), both edited by R. CH. SCHWINGES. A number of other recent works in the field tend to connect the history of universities with the history of academic mobility and migration, as, for a more recent example, BEAT IMMENHAUSER in his book *Bildungswege–Lebenswege. Universitätsbesucher aus dem Bistum Konstanz im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert* (Basle: Schwabe Verlag, 2007). For more comments on the scholarly tendencies in the field after the 1970s see also the two articles by NOTKER HAMMERSTEIN, "Neue Wege der Universitätsgeschichtsschreibung," *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 5 (1978): 449–463 and "Nochmals Universitätsgeschichtsschreibung," *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 7 (1980): 321–336. For additional titles, see Bibliography.

background of those who matriculated at a university has been brought up repeatedly within the framework of research in this field. Usually, the attendees of one particular university would be analyzed from different points of view, such as place of origin, social status, professional occupation, field of study, duration of study, graduation, etc. However, many of these aspects had to be left unanswered or treated incompletely because of the scarceness of the sources. At the same time, the number of works addressing students from one region, town or community at one or more universities increased significantly, although this reverse way of presenting data proved to be much more challenging.³ The main questions to answer from this perspective, in addition to the ones named above, are what were the universities attended by students from one particular location and what sorts of economic, political and cultural circumstances impacted on their choice of university. Furthermore, the examination of university attendance from the perspective of one specific community makes the relationship between education and society more visible with the facts of students' pre- or post-university fates having a special importance in this context.

Research on the geographical origins of students and the impact of university attendance upon regional development could be further expanded due to the investigation and edition of local archival sources. The reorientation of

³ Studies of this type have been occasionally produced throughout the last century. Among them are the following (in chronological order): H. MEIER, "Braunschweiger Bürgersöhne auf deutschen Universitäten vor Errichtung der Julius-Universität zu Helmstedt," *Jahrbuch des Geschichtsvereins für das Herzogtum Braunschweig* 7 (1908): 80–142; ALFRED SCHMIDTMAYER, "Bremische Studenten an Universitäten des Mittelalters," *Bremisches Jahrbuch* 35 (1935): 39–91; E. ENNEN, "Bonner als Studenten an fremden Universitäten vor 1800," *Bonner Geschichtsblätter* 12 (1958): 122–142; KARL-HEINZ GOLDMANN, "Nürnberger Studenten an deutschen und ausländischen Universitäten von 1300–1600," *Mitteilungen aus der Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg* 12:1 (1963): 1–10; GERHARD JARITZ, "Kleinstadt und Universitätsstudium. Untersuchungen am Beispiel Krems an der Donau (von den Anfängen bis in das 17. Jahrhundert)," *Mitteilungen des Kremser Stadtarchivs* 17/18 (1978): 105–161, 19 (1979): 1–26 and 23/24/25 (1986): 153–178; HELMUT SCHLERETH, "Studenten aus Mellrichstadt an europäischen Universitäten bis zur Gründung der Universität Würzburg (1582)," *Würzburger Diözesangeschichtsblätter* 44 (1982): 31–94; ELISABETH SCHWARZGRUBER, "Studierende aus der Stadt Salzburg an der Universität Wien im Spätmittelalter – Studium als Baustein für eine städtische Elite," *Salzburg-Archiv* 6 (1988): 32–72; ROLF HÄFELE, *Die Studenten der Städte Nördlingen, Kitzingen, Mindelheim und Wunsiedel bis 1580. Studium, Berufe und soziale Herkunft*, 2 volumes (Trier: Verlag Trierer Historische Forschungen, 1988). See also the respective chapter in DAVID L. SHEFFLER, *Schools and Schooling in Late Medieval Germany: Regensburg, 1250–1500* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008).

university history since the 1970s and 1980s has encouraged the continuation of studies into social background and career, now enlarged by extensive studies on the relationship between the urban context and university studies, including the role and impact of them upon urban development. By using a prosopographical approach,⁴ the development of new educational staff and ruling elites in towns or regions began to gain scholarly interest, with particular attention dedicated to those groups for whom university study, and even more so, university graduation was an indicator of social change. One of the most challenging tasks for researchers in this field was and still remains the investigation of the postgraduate careers of the students examined. Several studies that deal with various spheres of urban life and the involvement of former students in its different domains, mainly church and education or urban administration, have been produced in the last decades by a number of researchers, in particular representatives of German language scholarship.⁵ A number of scholars have

⁴ For more information on prosopography as a method used in history and its results see JÜRGEN PETERSOHN, "Personenforschung im Spätmittelalter. Zur Forschungsgeschichte und Methode," *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 2 (1975): 1–5; GERHARD JARITZ and ALBERT MÜLLER, "Medieval Prosopography in Austrian Historical Research. Religious and Urban Communities," *Medieval Prosopography* 7 (1986): 57–86. Also see a number of contributions in NEITHARD BULST and JEAN-PHILIPPE GENET, eds., *Medieval Lives and the Historian* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1986); PETER CSENDES and JOHANNES SEIDL, eds., *Stadt und Prosopographie: Zur quellenmäßigen Erforschung von Personen und sozialen Gruppen in der Stadt des Spätmittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit* (Linz: Trauner-Druck, 2002).

⁵ See KLAUS WRIEDT, "Das gelehrte Personal in der Verwaltung und Diplomatie der Hansestädte," *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* 96 (1978): 15–37; IDEM, "Stadttrat–Bürgertum–Universität am Beispiel norddeutscher Hansestädte," in *Studien zum Städtischen Bildungswesen des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. BERND MOELLER and others (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 499–523; IDEM, "Bürgertum und Studium in Norddeutschland während des Spätmittelalters," in *Schulen und Studium im sozialen Wandel des hohen und späten Mittelalters*, ed. JOHANNES FRIED (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1986), 487–525; IDEM, "Amtsträger in norddeutschen Städten des Spätmittelalters," in *Medieval Lives and the Historian: Studies in Medieval Prosopography*, ed. NEITHARD BULST and JEAN-PHILIPPE GENET (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1986), 227–234; IDEM, "Universitätsbesucher und graduierte Amtsträger zwischen Nord- und Süddeutschland," in *Nord und Süd in der deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters*, ed. WERNER PARAVICINI (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1990), 193–201; URS MARTIN ZAHND, *Die Bildungsverhältnisse in den bernischen Ratsgeschlechtern im ausgehenden Mittelalter. Verbreitung, Charakter und Funktion der Bildung in der politischen Führungsschicht einer spätmittelalterlichen Stadt* (Bern: Stämpfli, 1979); IDEM, "Lateinschule–Universität–Prophezei: Zu den Wandlungen im Schulwesen eidgenössischer Städte in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahr-

compiled comprehensive lists of students according to certain geographical criteria and included into their prosopographies, in addition to other data, information on individual postgraduate careers where this was possible to assess. An example is the work by ROLF HÄFELE, who researched in detail the academic peregrination of students from a number of selected towns from the late medieval period until the year 1580.⁶ The author identifies information about more than one thousand students, for about half of whom he was able

hundert," in *Bildungs- und schulgeschichtliche Studien zu Spätmittelalter, Reformation und konfessionellem Zeitalter*, ed. HARALD DICKERHOF (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1994), 91–115; IDEM, "Studium und Kanzlei. Der Bildungsweg von Stadt- und Ratschreibern in eidgenössischen Städten des ausgehenden Mittelalters," in *Gelehrte im Reich. Zur Sozial- und Wirkungsgeschichte akademischer Eliten des 14. Bis 16. Jahrhunderts*, ed. RAINER CH. SCHWINGES (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1996), 453–476; MARTIN KINTZINGER, "Consules contra consuetudinem. Kirchliches Schulwesen und bildungsgeschichtliche Tendenzen als Grundlagen städtischer Schulpolitik im spätmittelalterlichen Braunschweig," in *Rat und Verfassung im mittelalterlichen Braunschweig. Festschrift zum 600jährigen Bestehen der Ratsverfassung 1386–1986*, ed. MANFRED R. W. GARZMANN (Braunschweig: Waisenhaus-Druckerei, 1986), 187–233; IDEM, "Heimat auf Zeit. Medizinisches Fachpersonal in mittelalterlichen Städten," in *Historische Wanderungsbewegungen. Migration in der Antike, Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, ed. A. GESTRICH, H. KLEINSCHMIDT, and H. SONNABEND (Münster and Hamburg: Lit.-Verl., 1991), 79–99; IDEM, "Scholaster und Schulmaster. Funktionsfelder der Wissensvermittlung im späten Mittelalter," in SCHWINGES, *Gelehrte im Reich*, 349–374; IDEM, "Studens artium, Rector parochiae und Magister scholarum im Reich des 15. Jahrhunderts. Studium und Versorgungschancen der Artisten zwischen Kirche und Gesellschaft," *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 26 (1999): 1–41; IDEM, "A Profession but not a Career? Schoolmasters and the Artes in Late Medieval Europe," in *Universities and Schooling in Medieval Society*, ed. WILLIAM J. COURTENAY and JÜRGEN MIETHKE (Leiden, Boston, Cologne: Brill, 2000), 167–181. Other contributions to this topic include the following: GERHART BURGER, *Die südwestdeutschen Stadtschreiber im Mittelalter* (Böblingen: Schlecht, 1960); FOLKMAR THIELE, *Der Freiburger Stadtschreiber im Mittelalter* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Wagner, 1973); HEINRICH KRAMM, *Studien über die Oberschichten der mittel-deutschen Städte im 16. Jahrhundert* (Cologne and Vienna: Böhlau, 1981); WOLFGANG HERBORN, "Der graduierte Ratsherr. Zur Entwicklung einer neuen Elite im Kölner Rat der frühen Neuzeit," in *Bürgerliche Eliten in den Niederlanden und in Nordwestdeutschland*, ed. HEINZ SCHILLING and HERMAN DIEDERIKS (Cologne and Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1985), 337–400. See also HERMANN KELLENBENZ, "Die Gesellschaft in der mitteleuropäischen Stadt im 16. Jahrhundert. Tendenzen der Differenzierung," in *Die Stadt an der Schwelle zur Neuzeit*, ed. WILHELM RAUSCH (Linz: Österreichischer Arbeitskreis für Stadtgeschichtsforschung, 1980), 1–20, who systematizes social developments in German towns and delineates a line of conflict between the older and the newer, learned urban elite.

⁶ HÄFELE, *Die Studenten*, as note 3.