
Peregrination (or study tours) of Hungarian students has long been a subject of interest for scholars dealing with Hungarian history and literature. Though the important series in which the present volume was published was launched nearly two decades ago, medievalists and early modernists have been waiting for new volumes, their appetites endlessly whetted by the research produced by László Szögi and his colleagues, which has, so far, produced twenty-four rich volumes about Hungarian students who traveled to destinations abroad (between 1526 and 1919), including the lands of the Habsburg Empire, (and for instance cities like Vienna), Switzerland, the Netherlands, Germany, the Baltic region, England, Scotland, Italy, Kraków, Prague, and, in the most recent and final volume, France, Belgium, Romania, Serbia, and Russia.

The two new volumes about Hungarian students in Prague and Kraków step back in time, since they are part of the subseries on peregrination in the medieval period. The first volume of this section dealt with the University of Vienna between 1365 and 1526 (Anna Tüskés, Magyarországi diákok a Bécsi Egyetemen, 1365–1526 [2008]), and this is now complemented by examinations of the lives and scholarly endeavors of Hungarian students at two other universities important in Hungarian cultural history. The earlier publication on Kraków dealing with the modern period has now been supplemented with student data from 1401 onwards, while the list on students from Prague ranges from ca. 1365 to 1526. The two volumes are not divided by university; the first volume contains introductions and essays in Hungarian and shortened versions in English about the two universities. The second presents the data regarding the students.

The first volume (published in 2016) begins with introductions to both Prague and Kraków. Péter Haraszti Szabó provides a detailed summary of the secondary literature on the former, and Borbála Kelényi provides summaries of the literature on the latter. Haraszti Szabó offers a history of the university founded by Charles IV, describes the judicial and economic aspects of the institution, and plots the rise and fall in the number of students. He also
addresses the influence of monarchs (such as the aforementioned founder and Louis the Great) and figures and groups such as John Wycliffe and the Hussites. The introduction concludes with a list of Hungarian students in Prague. Though the sources are fragmented, some 252 students (of which 84 are potentially Hungarian in origin), most of whom studied at the institution before 1420, can be identified. (To highlight the difficulties with the sources, the estimated number of Hungarian students at this important university over the course of the two centuries in question is around twelve to fifteen hundred.) Borbála Kelényi introduces a much wider corpus concerning the Hungarian students in Kraków. The Jagiellonian University, founded in 1364 by Casimir the Great (and re-founded in 1386 by Vladislaus II), hosted 4,476 students (229 of whom had ambiguous origins) from the territory of medieval Hungary between ca. 1365 and 1526. In its heyday in the second half of the fifteenth century, the Jagiellonian University was the most popular destination for Hungarian students. In its peak year (1484), there were 109 registered students of Hungarian origin. Notably, almost ten percent of those who studied in Kraków continued their studies at other European universities (mainly in Vienna and at German and Italian institutions). While information regarding Prague is rare, Kraków has copious accurate and detailed descriptions allowing for a variety of views. Both authors adopt a wide-ranging view which takes into consideration the history, structure, and everyday life of the university, with information about university circles (such as the Bursa Hungarorum in Kraków) and Hungarian professors. They also include numeric information regarding graduations and average student numbers, and they comment on the geographical and social origins of students. (Interestingly, while most of the Hungarian students in Prague appear to come from southwestern Hungary, the largest number of students in Kraków came from Upper Hungary and the east-central region.) Both introductions have extensive bibliographies, and the first volume concludes with illustrations and detailed maps and visualizations.

The second volume (published in 2017) contains a list of the students with indices of names and places. Though the preface, which details the methodology and format, is in Hungarian, the entries follow a logical pattern: student name, ecclesiastical rank, dioceses from which the person was sent, date of birth, date of registration at the university, faculty, academic rank received, names of other universities the student visited, information concerning later career, and other details about the student and his studies. Though the editors repeatedly stress that the entries could be expanded (as the new charters and data in the second
volume prove), the 4,722 names clearly bear witness to the effort invested in the enterprise. Though further findings will be included in the planned online edition on peregrination, these two volumes are a substantial resource for any scholar even vaguely connected to the topic. Any researcher dealing with a figure who attended one of these universities, which exerted a strong influence on the intellectual, political, and cultural life of the Hungarian Kingdom in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, will find ample context, and any researcher interested in the broader picture will likewise be fruitfully rewarded.

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