

THE EFFECTS ON THE UNIVERSITY OF PRAGUE TO THE HUNGARIAN ROYAL COURT IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY*

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ABSTRACT

The University of Prague played a central role in the education of the Hungarians in the 14th century. From the identified career paths, it has been made clear that many of them belonged to the Royal Court at least with family bonds. Why was it worthwhile for them to study at a university, in order to be part of the court? According to Peter Moraw, university studies were also persuasive enough to compete with the traditional factors of military service or family backgrounds and wealth, in order to attend the royal court. Prague was indeed a very illustrious element of the educational web of Central Europe, but apart from Moraw, there is another observation in defining the importance of university studies: the majority of Hungarian noble students in Prague came from the courtly nobility, so the exemplary role of the Hungarian Angevin Kings can be suggested here. But this function will be discussed in detail at another stage of my research.

Keywords: Hungarian students – Career paths – Hungarian Royal Court – Medieval University in Prague

In my paper I focus on the life of Hungarian students at the university of medieval Prague, and, mainly, on their relations with the royal court. Piecing the path of their careers together, we are informed about the role a university played in the 14th-century Kingdom of Hungary, about the importance of higher education, or about the extent to which the royal court was considered as a model by the nobility in the given period.

The significance of the *studium generale* in Prague – founded in 1348 by Charles IV, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia – has received quite unfair treatment in research in the field of university history in Hungary. In Hungary, little interest has been shown in that medieval university in Prague;¹ the work of György Székely stands out among those researching the subject.² Concerning Prague, research has been marked by the Hussite movement; the Hungarian students at the university have mostly been studied only in that particular context. It seems really interesting, however, that several defining figures of 14th-century Hungary studied in Prague. This present work was realized as part of a larger research programme. In the course of the programme, I aimed to collect all available data on as many Praguian students as possible. Numerous factors contribute to the reason of studying abroad. In my paper, based on the data so far collected, I intend to

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¹ István BARTHA, *L'Université Charles de Prague et la Hongrie*, Revue d'Histoire Comparée 26, 1948, pp. 213–227; Sándor TONK, *Erdélyiek egyetemjárása a középkorban*, Bukarest 1979, pp. 23–25.

² György SZÉKELY, *A huszitizmus visszhangja Magyarország népeiben*, Budapest 1954; György SZÉKELY, *A huszitizmus és a magyar nép*, I–II, Századok 90/3, 1956, pp. 331–367; 90/4–6, pp. 556–590.

raise questions – concerning the period between the founding of the university and the early 15th century – and to outline methodological possibilities. Furthermore, relying on a few examples, I mean to analyse whether the royal court was able to influence families in their decision of sending one family member or another to university.

1. 14th century Hungarian students in Prague: their numbers, their place of origin and their social status

Researchers dealing with the university of Prague struggle with a serious lack of sources, as opposed to similar institutions in more fortunate areas, because – predominantly due to the destruction of World War II – the majority of university registries and other documents are lost or have been destroyed. The *matriculae* of the faculties of theology and medicine are completely missing,³ while the sources from the faculties of liberal arts and law (a separate university of law from 1372) contain only a few years of *matriculae*.⁴ Mostly, however, only data concerning achievements of degree and admissions to examinations are available, and they mention, primarily, only degrees of *baccalaureus* and *magister*, and sometimes of *doctor* or *licentiatus*, at the faculty of liberal arts from 1367 and, in the case of the university of law, from 1372. These circumstances significantly constrain researchers already at the onset of their work. Nevertheless, there have been important results pertaining to the two, less known faculties. The investigations conducted by Karel Beránek⁵ need to be highlighted here, similarly to those by František Šmahel, who collected information concerning known students of the faculty of medicine up to 1409,⁶ and, in 2001, Jaroslav Kadlec wrote the history of the theological faculty.⁷

The goal of the university of Prague, founded in 1348, was to satisfy the educational needs of the Kingdom of Bohemia and, secondly, of the Empire. Also, it was the obvious intention of Charles IV for his university to function as an educational center for the Kingdoms of Poland and Hungary, and also for Austria.⁸ This is attested to, besides the high number of foreign students, by the division of student nations: Bohemian, Bavarian, Saxon and Polish

³ Michal SVATOŠ, *The Studium Generale*, in: Ivana Čornejová – Michal Svatoš – Petr Svobodný (eds.), *A History of Charles University, I (1348–1802)*, Prague 2001, p. 55.

⁴ Only a short matriculation list survived over the centuries, from the Saxon university nation of the university of laws (1373–1375, 1382–1383). The Faculty of Liberal Arts preserved the Dean's book alone (1367–1585). František ŠMAHEL, *The Faculty of Liberal Arts 1348–1419*, in: František Šmahel, *Die Prager Universität im Mittelalter. Gesammelte Aufsätze / The Charles University in the Middle Ages. Selected Studies*, Leiden – Boston 2007, pp. 250–251.

⁵ Josef ADAMEC – Karel BERÁNEK – Ludmilla HLAVAČKOVÁ – Jana NOSÁKOVÁ – Eva ROZSÍVALOVÁ (eds.), *Biografický slovník pražské lékařské fakulty 1348–1939*, I–II, Praha 1988.

⁶ František ŠMAHEL, *Magister und Studenten der Prager Medizinischen Fakultät bis zum Jahre 1409*, in: František Šmahel, *Die Prager Universität im Mittelalter. Gesammelte Aufsätze / The Charles University in the Middle Ages. Selected Studies*, Leiden – Boston 2007, pp. 103–158.

⁷ Jaroslav KADLEC, *The Theological Faculty*, in: Ivana Čornejová – Michal Svatoš – Petr Svobodný (eds.), *A History of Charles University, I (1348–1802)*, Prague 2001, pp. 123–148.

⁸ Michal SVATOŠ, *Praha*, in: J. M. M. Hermans – Marc Nelissen (eds.), *Charters of Foundation and Early Documents*, Coimbra 1994, pp. 32–33; František KAVKA, *Die Gründung der Universität in Prag und ihre Bedeutung für die Entwicklung der tschechischen Kultur*, in: Zofia Kozłowska-Budkowa et alii. (eds.), *Les universités européennes du XIV. au XVIII. siècle. Aspects et problèmes (Actes du Colloque International à l'Occasion du VI. Centenaire de l'université Jagellone de Cracovie 6–8. Mai 1964)*, Genève 1967, p. 30; Josef EMLER (ed.), *Fontes Rerum Bohemicarum*, IV, Prague 1873–1932, p. 518.

nations. It is impossible to decide when the first students from Hungary appeared. The first, who is confirmed to have studied here, was Tamás son of Pál, a canon from Transylvania, in 1355.⁹ His name, however, appears not in university documents but in a petition, addressed to the pope. But this petition was misquoted or misread by its publisher, Henrik Denifle, and, as a consequence, was also mistakenly received by Sándor Tonk,¹⁰ for it was not in 1355 but in 1365 that Tamás son of Pál studied in Prague.¹¹ Denifle even mistook Tamás son of Pál for a certain *Thomas Ungarus*, appearing in 1371, who is identical with Tamás Ethiopis from Rohonc.¹² In 1371, Thomas Ungarus was admitted to examinations for *baccalaureus* degree at the *artes* faculty, and he received his degree in the same year, while Charles IV recommended Tamás son of Pál to the Pope as worthy of the degree of *baccalaureus* – already in 1365. That is why the starting date of the research should be set for the year 1365.

Concerning the period between 1365 and 1401, it can be stated, relying on previous research evidence, that altogether 110, unquestionably Hungarian, students attended the university of Prague, while, in the case of further 56 people, it is not possible to confirm without doubt whether they had Hungarian origins. Naturally, a student would sometimes attend multiple faculties. In the case of the students examined, there were five probable occurrences. *Nicolaus Bleyweger de Rivulo Dominarum*, *Nicolaus Ungarus*, *Petrus de Strigonia*, in his case, three students might be identical to him, *Bartholomeus Ungarus de Strigonia*, and *Johannes Wittich de Molenbach*.¹³ Out of the 110 cases of enrolment, it is in 62 cases that students successfully passed their examinations, which is 56%. This means a wide spectrum of degrees from *baccalaureatus* to *doctor*. Forty *artium baccalaureus*, five *licentiatius artium*, twelve *magister artium*, and further three *baccalaureus* of law and two *doctor* of law (probably in canon law) degrees are known, up until the year 1401. It shows an interesting Central European peculiarity that the most popular faculty, in contrast with the universities of ‘old Europe’, is not the legal faculty but the faculty of liberal arts, offering the fundamentals. The same is true for Hungary, for more than two thirds of the students studied there, while only one third chose the faculty of law. Students from Hungary were members of the Bohemian student nation, though a few appeared in other nations as well. At the same time, it is truly surprising that in the Bohemian nation, the ratio of Hungarian students was the same as that of Moravian students (15%).¹⁴ Károly Kapronczay could only report one

⁹ S. TONK, *Erdélyiek*, p. 334; R. R. BETTS, *The university of Prague: 1348*, Slavonic and East European Review 27, 1948, p. 215.

¹⁰ Henrik DENIFLE, *Die Entstehung der Universitäten des Mittelalters bis 1400*, Berlin 1885, pp. 591, 594.

¹¹ Fredericus JENŠOVSKÝ (ed.), *Monumenta Vaticana res gestas Bohemicas illustrantia, sumptibus comitorum regni Bohemiae ediderunt et recensendos historiae Bohemicae fontes delegate*, III, Pragae 1944, p. 354; Vladimír RÁBIK (ed.), *Monumenta Vaticana Slovaciae*, II/1, Trnava – Romae 2009, p. 503.

¹² For Thomas de Rechnitz, a student at the University of Vienna, is probably identical with Thomas Ungarus, appearing in Prague in 1371. However, according to Henrik Denifle, neither of the numerous students in Vienna, under the name of Thomas de Ungaria, was Ethiopis. Henricus DENIFLE – Aemilius CHATELAIN (eds.), *Auctarium Chartularii Universitatis Parisiensis. Liber Procuratorum Nationis Anglicae (Alemanniae) in Universitate Parisiensis*, I (1333–1406), Parisii 1894, p. 839.

¹³ The Prosopography of the Prague University of Law mistakenly attached him to the Hansa region. Projekt ‘Prosopografie Pražské právnické univerzity v letech 1372–1419’, <http://www1.cuni.cz/~borovic/matrika/projekt_en/vysledky/cesi/cesi.htm> (November 9, 2014).

¹⁴ M. SVATOŠ, *The Studium Generale*, p. 74.

Hungarian student at the faculty of medicine in Prague,¹⁵ while information is uncertain concerning nine Hungarian students at the faculty of theology.¹⁶

According to Peter Moraw, the faculties of *artes* and theology were sites of education for the ‘middle classes’, while wealthier nobles primarily preferred the faculty of law. This middle class occupied positions under the most important ones.¹⁷ I can neither approve nor disapprove of this claim from a Hungarian perspective, since the reconstruction of the social status of students has been realized only to a slight extent, to about one third. Preliminarily, it can be claimed that about half of the students with known background came indeed from the gentry, who then found their way into positions considered as more (or, sometimes, the most) significant. The Hungarian gentry, in this period, was a somewhat new layer of society, its formation began around the early 13th century, but only the acts of 1351 ended the process ‘officially’. Apart from outlining its formation, all that can be said is that the gentry comprised the soldierly elements of the royal castle system (castle-warriors) – dissolved by the end of the 13th century –, and also royal servitors and (still) independent landowners. Among their numerous privileges, the most significant was that they were directly under the jurisdiction of the king. They primarily acted within county borders and held offices there (*vice-ispán* – a royal officer in charge of a county, a count –, castellan, noble magistrate or juryman, but the majority of royal bailiffs came from their ranks as well),¹⁸ predominantly as noble retainers (*familiaris*) of a greater landowner. This relationship, however, was different from the one in the West, the parties could dissolve this form of feudal link any time. Their numbers were high, in Szabolcs county about 60% of landowners belonged to this stratum.¹⁹ One of the best ways for them to rise was to enter royal service, which, at that time, demanded heavy financial sacrifice, be it the gentry entering military service or other means. The source of their power was, of course, the size of their lands, and, according to the research of Pál Engel, their position was enhanced if they could trace their ancestry to one of the kindreds of the Árpáadian era, since then they would already possess lands of greater size.²⁰ We do not mean a homogeneous group: the size of their estate, their lineage and the efficiency of their service would greatly influence their social standing within the

¹⁵ Károly KAPRONCZAY, *Adatok a prágai egyetem magyar orvosi vonatkozásaihoz (1348–1850)*, Orvostörténeti Közlemények 89–91, 1980, p. 223; Károly SCHRAUF, *Magyarországi tanulók a bécsi egyetemen*, Budapest 1892, p. 171; Johannes Nep. GERZABEK (ed.), *Liber Decanorum Decanorum Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Pragensis, ab anno 1367 usque ad annum 1585. E Codice membranaceo illius Aetatis nunc primum luce donatum*, Pragae 1830, p. 373. His name, however, does not appear in Šmahel’s cited paper, neither in Karel Beránek’s relevant database.

¹⁶ K. KAPRONCZAY, *Adatok*, p. 223. It is in the case of two students that theological studies can be presumed, but only one of them studied in the 14th century: Nicolaus de Czypcz (1376), who was ‘ain guet ler von der mess’, *Liber decanorum*, p. 172; Josef TRÍŠKA (ed.), *Životopisný slovník předhusitské pražské univerzity, 1348–1409* (Repertorium Biographicum Universitatis Pragensis Praehussiticae, 1348–1409) Praha 1981, p. 385. It is hard to identify the last seven students.

¹⁷ His observations mainly focus on the Holy Roman Empire. Peter MORAW, *Careers of graduates*, in: Peter Moraw (ed.), *Gesammelte Beiträge zur deutschen und europäischen Universitätsgeschichte*, Leiden – Boston 2008, pp. 411–412.

¹⁸ A királyi emberekre ld: Pál ENGEL, *Királyi emberek Valkó megyében*, in: Csukovits Enikő (ed.), *Honor, vár, ispánság – Válogatott tanulmányok*, Budapest 2003, pp. 578–600.

¹⁹ Pál ENGEL, *Szabolcs megye birtokviszonyai a 14.–16. században*, in: Csukovits Enikő (ed.), *Honor, vár, ispánság – Válogatott tanulmányok*, Budapest 2003, p. 602.

²⁰ Pál ENGEL, *Szabolcs megye*, p. 619.

otherwise (theoretically – as stated in the decree of 1351) uniform nobility.²¹ The dominant voices of county life aspired to country-wise dominance, and the university was an appropriate place to draw attention to themselves.²² In mapping their careers, several obstacles appear which hinder the understanding of the lives of the individuals.

Due to the proximity of Prague, one would expect students to come in greater numbers from the western and northwestern parts of the Kingdom of Hungary. Their places of origin – in cases where they are identifiable – indicate, however, that Hungarian students went to Prague from all regions of the country. Students arrived to the capital of Bohemia from the majority of the counties in Upper Hungary (today primarily belonging to Slovakia), but one finds students from Győr, Baranya, or even Bihar and Zaránd counties, in other words from the southern and eastern parts of Hungary. The numbers of students from Transylvania (21) and from Esztergom (11) are outstandingly high. This fact can be explained by the good domestic reputation of the university of Prague, but, naturally, the initial difficulties of the other three universities founded in this region (in Vienna, Cracow and Pécs) must also be taken into account.²³

Hungarian students in Prague did not form their own student nation, they belonged to the Bohemian one, but their number was not insignificant.²⁴ If one accepts that education at the university actually began in the mid-1350s, then Hungarian students appeared quite early.²⁵ Students in Prague arrived from almost every region of the country, which indicates the great reputation of the university. This research might produce an interesting outcome: in some cases it might manage to supplement known archontologies.²⁶ The research of the social status of students is, however, not finished yet: relying on the names provided, numerous students were of bourgeois origins, but several open questions remain.

²¹ FRANCISCUS DÖRY – GEISA ÉRSZEGI – GEORGIUS BÓNIS – JOHANNES BAK – SUSANNA TEKE – VERA BÁCSKAI (eds.), *Decreta Regni Hungariae Gesetze und Verordnungen Ungarns 1301–1490*, I–IV, Budapest 1976–2012, pp. 124–140.

²² The sociological analysis of Hungarian nobility and the exploration of the definitive moments in their lives were carried out by Erik Fügedi, while it was Elemér Mályusz who discussed the internal structure of (and changes within) the gentry. ERIK FÜGEDI, *Az Elefánthyak – A középkori magyar nemes és klánja*, Budapest 1992; ELEMÉR MÁLYUSZ, *Zsigmond király uralma Magyarországon*, Budapest 1984, p. 133–149.

²³ GYÖRGY SZÉKELY, *A pécsi és óbudai egyetemalapítások helye a közép-európai egyetemalapítási hullámokban*, in: Csizmadia Andor (ed.), *A 600 éves jogi felsőoktatás történetéből, 1367–1967*. A pécsi egyetemtörténeti konferencia anyagából (1967. október 12.), Pécs, pp. 117–129.

²⁴ In research conducted by Hana Václavů we find a great number of students of uncertain origin, but it can be certainly claimed that there were more students from Hungary in Prague between 1367/1368–1398 than those 68, assuredly of Hungarian origin, suggested by Hana Václavů in 1977. HANA VÁCLAVŮ, *Počet graduovaných a negraduovaných studentů na pražské artistické fakultě v letech 1367–1398 a jejich rozdělení podle původu do univerzitních národů*, *Acta Universitatis Carolinae – Historia Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis* 17/1, 1977, p. 23.

²⁵ HASTINGS RASHDALL, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, II, Oxford 1895, p. 215; M. SVATOŠ, *The Studium Generale*, p. 34.

²⁶ András, canon of Kalocsa, can be mentioned as an example, from 1376, or László Berzencei, canon of Várad, from 1381, whose family name was previously never referred to in the sources. JOHANNES SPURNY (ed.), *Album seu Matricula Facultatis Juridicae Universitatis Pragensis ab anno Christi 1372 ad annum 1418 E Codice membranaceo illius Aetatis nunc primum luce donatum, plenoque nominum indice auctum: Codex diplomaticus Universitatis eiusdem: originem, incrementa, privilegia, iura, benefica...cui item personarum rerumque index, atque [...] imagines exhibentes subnecuntur*, Pragae 1834, pp. 31, 35. The case of ‘Nicolaus de Swecia’, canon of Esztergom, is similarly intriguing. The toponym Swecia is suspicious in itself, and it proves difficult to reconcile with his position of canon in Esztergom. In solving the question, the work of Josef Tříška has been helpful, where students with origins indicated as de Swecia appear multiple times, primarily in the Saxon nation. In one case, with ‘Carolus de Swecia’, his church office is indicated (archdeacon of Uppsala), and also: ‘canonicus Strenginensis’. Strenginensis refers to the town of Strängnäs of modern Sweden. Strigoniensis, therefore, most probably was the result of misunderstanding or misreading. J. TŘÍŠKA, *Životopisný*, pp. 61, 26, 29; BRANISLAV VARSÍK, *Slováci na pražskej univerzite do konca stredoveku*, Bratislava 1926, p. 23.

2. The exploration of student careers

As mentioned before, serious problems arise in outlining the career paths of students. The first factor which hinders identification is the usage of names. The documents present 19 students simply with the identifier *Ungarus*, or with name forms such as de Ungaria, de Pannonia. The second hindering factor is the multiplicity of Hungarian settlements with identical names. It is from this perspective that the case of Mihály from Toplica proves difficult – in his case it is hard to decide whether he comes from Toplica (Topuszkó) in Slavonia, or from one of the identically named settlements in Trencsén, Nógrád, Szepes, Sáros, Hunyad or Temes counties.²⁷ A third factor also appears among the problems surfacing during the analysis of name use. It is uncertain whether an individual actually comes from the settlement written next to his name in the sources. Várad, Esztergom, Pécs, but even the names of counties often indicate centres of church administration rather than birthplaces. For instance, it is known about *Dionisius archidiaconus de Jauriensis* (registered in 1376)²⁸ that he is identical with Dénes Hédervári,²⁹ and, as his birthplace, the diocese (and the archdeaconate within) is given, not one of his family's estates. In his case his church office is known, but perhaps not every student gave his benefice so accurately. Thus, one may understand why the identification of citizens of towns proves difficult as well. As a further problem, even students who successfully passed their examinations would fail to indicate their degrees after returning home.

Fortunately, there are numerous factors which help identify the individuals. The most obvious assistance, unquestionably, is indicating the church office. Several cases are known where due to the name use, there was little chance for identification, but providing secular or ecclesiastical offices in university documents helped identify the individual in question. *Emericus prepositus de Ungaria*, from 1367, is a great example.³⁰ Since Imre Cudar was appointed provost of Kalocsa that year,³¹ and no other provost called Imre has been found in the given period, it might be he, I presume, who is mentioned in the documents in Prague.

Further assistance is provided in identifying the social status of an individual by the titles used in connection with him in university documents, for instance, see *nobilis*, *servus domini*, *baro*, *hospes*. Separating individuals of bourgeois and noble origins is possible only in fortunate cases. With Prague, however, this help is rare, for with seven individuals the term *dominus* appears,³² while with only one does the term *baro*; in the majority of cases with the title *dominus*, ecclesiastical offices are known of. The only baron, Fridericus de Scharfynek from 1378,³³ is supposedly identical with Frigyes Scharfenecki claiming to be

²⁷ Iván BORSÁ – Norbert C. TÓTH – Bálint LAKATOS – Elemér MÁLYUSZ (eds.), *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár*, I–XII, Budapest 1951–2014, II, Nr. 1488, 922; Dezső CSÁNKI – Nagy Antal FEKETE – Ferenc ÖRDÖG, *Magyarország történelmi földrajza a Hunyadiak korában*, I–V, Budapest, 1890–2002, I, pp. 268, 312, II, p. 67, IV, p. 196, V, p. 142.

²⁸ *Album seu Matricula*, p. 31.

²⁹ Béla RADVÁNSZKY – Levente ZÁVODSZKY (eds.), *Héderváry család Oklevéltára*, I–II, Budapest 1909, I, pp. 1, 64–65, 97.

³⁰ *Liber Decanorum*, p. 134.

³¹ József ÚDVARDY, *A kalocsai főszékeskáptalan története a középkorban*, Budapest 1992, pp. 47–48.

³² *Liber Decanorum*, p. 207; *Album seu Matricula*, pp. 31, 56, 38, 12.

³³ *Album seu Matricula*, p. 65.

from Sárfenék, since Louis I (the Great) gifted Scharfeneck to the family two years earlier, thus identification becomes possible.³⁴

It also might help to know if an individual attended a different university as well, or another faculty at the same one, in cases where different names are used. However, no such case has been found in Prague. If I referred to the use of degrees as a hindering factor, now I must mention it as a helpful one as well, since retracing degree use might identify the individual. According to the documents of the faculty of liberal arts in Prague, *Georgius de Foro Caseorum* was admitted to examinations of *baccalaureus* degree in 1393,³⁵ which he passed *sub mag. Jo. de Mutha*. In domestic and in secondary sources, György Késmárki, canon of Szepes – later vice secret chancellor and provost of Szepes –, is often mentioned. When in 1400, Hermann Lomnici (a Praguian student himself) resigned from his position of canon of Szepes and continued his studies in Padova,³⁶ Boniface IX gave Lomnici's benefice in the chapter to Késmárki.³⁷ György Késmárki is mentioned in the document of the 9th of November, 1400 as *baccalaureus artium*. The place of issue and the degree positively suggest that the two individuals are identical, considering that so far the place where Késmárki obtained his degree has been unknown.³⁸

Name usage, as opposed to what has been discussed, serves neither only to hinder – if sobriquets and cognomens are explored. In Prague, *Johannes Malacz* (whose surname means pig) is an example to mention.³⁹ Since the 'de' preposition is missing from his name, I found, after some research – presuming that it is not a toponym but a proper name –, the family Arany and (on Pál Engel's genealogical table) János (Johannes) himself.⁴⁰

Thus, these are the factors that affect this research. Considering this all, in general, it can be stated that in the case of one fourth of the students of undoubted Hungarian origins, we possess solid biological data, or assumed possibilities for identification. Upcoming research will, hopefully, improve this ratio.

3. The role of the royal court in peregrination abroad

Hungarian nobility, in the Anjou period, meant aulic nobility, and this explains the high number of connections between the court and university students of noble rank. Belonging to the court meant a significant raise in status, thus it is by no means surprising that many

³⁴ Frigyes himself lived in the royal court as 'strenuus miles', at least he is thus mentioned in 1404. Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltár Diplomatikai Fényképtár (MNL OL DF) 200390.

³⁵ *Liber Decanorum*, p. 288.

³⁶ Arnold IPOLYI – László FEJÉRPATAKY – Vilmos FRAKNÓI – Antal PÓR – Tivadar ORTVAY (eds.), *Monumenta Vaticana Historiam Regni Hungariae Illustrantia*, Series I/1–6, Series II/1–3, Budapestini 1887–1909, I/4, *Bullae Bonifacii P. M. 1396–1404*, Budapestini 1889, p. 249. Márta Török does not reject the idea of him belonging to the family Berzevici and, thus, of his noble lineage. Márta TÖRÖK, *Az egyházi középréteg mobilitása a szepesi káptalanban*, PhD dissertation, 2011, p. 175.

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁸ Bónis mentions no university studies. György BÓNIS, *A jogtudó értelmiség a Mohács előtti Magyarországon*, Budapest 1971, pp. 101, 114–120; M. TÖRÖK, *Az egyházi középréteg*, p. 172; Norbert C. TÓTH, *A székes- és társaskáptalanok prépostjainak archontológiája 1387–1437*, Budapest 2013, p. 83.

³⁹ *Liber Decanorum*, p. 187, 203, 205.

⁴⁰ Pál ENGEL, *Magyar középkori Adattár – Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301–1457*, *Középkori magyar genealógia* (CD-ROM), Aranyi (Bencenci, Piskinci család).

attempted to enter the direct proximity of the king. The royal court of Hungary played a crucial role in controlling and shaping political life, social order and culture as well. According to Pál Engel, only one court existed, which accompanied the king on his journeys, the *aula*. Its members comprised possessors of the most significant *honor* estates (landed properties given with offices) – that is, statewide offices –, who received (alongside with those *honors*) further offices (including those of *ispán* and castellan) and lands from the king – but only for as long as the king desired.⁴¹ However, this concept of the court focuses only on the immediate surroundings of the king; while there was another – from the perspective of aulic jurisdiction –, the *curia*, where central courts of law and their personnel were situated.⁴² Members of the court included the king's knights, his noble retainers, and even his pages. Ecclesiastic personnel, in charge of satisfying the spiritual needs of the royal family, gathered in the royal chapel.⁴³ The court, however, consisted of further clerical people, besides the clergy of the royal chapel, including the prelates who composed the royal council, together with the most significant office-holders. The composition of the royal council, however, was not made permanent in that period yet. Thus, the Hungarian court consisted of the royal council (comprising the holders of *honors* and offices, as well as the prelates); the pages, knights and noble retainers of the court (*aula*); and the clergy of the chapel. Due to their significance, the roles of the judicial bodies in the *curia* (including employees of the chancellery and of the offices of chief judges) need to be mentioned here, counting them as part of the royal court.⁴⁴ Professionals in the economy (connected to the king through private law), not only lessees of royal chambers or of incomes in toll or salt, but royal physicians and educators of royal princes are to be included here as well. Becoming a member kindled the possibility of a bright future, for which many would go as far as putting everything they owned in pawn, so that they could, for example, draw attention to themselves in armed service.⁴⁵ Others, however, would try to do the same through education.

Based on preliminary investigations, more Praguian students from the Hungarian nobility had connections to the court than students of noble origins in Vienna, for example; but their numbers were less than those studying in Italy.⁴⁶ All this suggests that, in this period, certain factors made the capital of Bohemia a more favoured destination than Vienna. Asking questions and exploring the issue are not to be neglected, nor are they without antecedent. According to Hans Jürgen Brandt, the framework for research in university history is formulated by the personal interlocking of academic society and the courts, as well as that of the bourgeoisie and the ecclesiastical sphere.⁴⁷ Peter Moraw claims that royal councillors in the Holy Roman Empire are to be considered as a network of relations, rather than

⁴¹ Pál ENGEL, *Nagy Lajos bárói*, Történelmi szemle 28/3, 1985, p. 406.

⁴² András KUBINYI, *A Mátyás-kori államszervezet*, in: Gyula Rázsó – László V. Molnár (eds.), *Hunyadi Mátyás – Emlékkönyv Mátyás király halálának 500. évfordulójára*, 1990, pp. 62–69; Ágnes KURCZ, *Lovagi kultúra Magyarországon a 13–14. században*, Budapest 1988, pp. 34–37.

⁴³ Lajos Bernát KUMOROVITZ, *A budai várkapolna és a Szent Zsigmond-prépostság történetéhez*, Tanulmányok Budapest múltjából XV, 1963, pp. 114–115.

⁴⁴ Iván BERTÉNYI, *Az országbírói intézmény története a XIV. században*, Budapest 1976, pp. 41–50.

⁴⁵ Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltár Diplomatikai Levéltár (MNL OL DL) 40990.

⁴⁶ The number of those who went on to study in Vienna after Prague might increase the number in Vienna. For Praguian students of noble origins, who also were related to the court, Prague was the first university platform.

⁴⁷ Hans Jürgen BRANDT, *Universität, Gesellschaft, Politik und Pfründen am Beispiel Konrad von Soltau*, in: Jacques Paquet – Jozef Ijswijn (eds.), *Les universités à la fin du moyen âge*, Louvain 1978, p. 614.

individually.⁴⁸ Parts of a network of relations which involved family and the native soil, as well as those they met during their careers or their studies.⁴⁹ As mentioned before, based on the careers so far analysed, it is probable that the proportion of nobles was relatively high at the university. It is a novelty, considering the previously rather aristocratic university studies in Central Europe (or at least Hungary), that most of them came from the gentry.⁵⁰ This aspect is attributed not only to the standards of the university of Prague but also to its proximity, since it was relatively cheap to reach. Since until the mid-14th-century, the nearest universities to Hungary were found in Italy and in the Kingdom of France, all the expenses, pains and dangers of travel, as well as the costs of the studies and examinations, rendered it accessible only for the richest youths to study.⁵¹ That is why the foundation of the universities of Prague, Vienna or Cracow was of outstanding significance. One might also say that Central European universities proved profitable for the monarchs as well, since from then on they could pick and choose from a great number of educated, ecclesiastical or secular, individuals.⁵²

Due to the costs of studying at university, the patronal role of monarchs often appears in primary and secondary sources, and it was the same at the beginning of Hungarian peregrination.⁵³ A similar practice can be observed during the reign of Louis the Great: for example, in 1345, for the sake of István Szigeti (later to become bishop of Nyitra, then

⁴⁸ Peter MORAW, *Conseils princiers en Allemagne au 14ème et au 15ème siècle*, in: Peter Moraw (ed.), *Gesammelte Beiträge zur Deutschen und Europäischen Universitätsgeschichte: Strukturen, Personen und Entwicklungen*, Leiden 2008, p. 548.

⁴⁹ The well-known relations between János Budai and Tamás Pöstyéni are accommodated into this network of relations, and also the relations between and the elevation of the aforementioned secret chancellors and vice secret chancellors. The example of László Csapi, a student in Prague in 1409, is a questionable one in that his ‘dominus’, Mátyus Pálóci sent his son, Péter, to university; as it is possible that Csapi, previously related to the Perényi family, saw Imre Perényi as a model for his studies in Prague. Csapi later became counsellor and attendant to Sigismund. *Liber Decanorum*, p. 406, 408. Cf.: 1430. október 13. *Regesta Imperii*: <http://www.regesta-imperii.de/id/1430-10-13_3_0_11_2_0_1941_7851>, 1431. július 30; <http://www.regesta-imperii.de/id/1431-07-30_3_0_11_2_0_2911_8769>, 1422. január 13; <http://www.regesta-imperii.de/id/1422-01-13_1_0_11_1_0_5275_4707> (November 9, 2014). Péter E. KOVÁCS, *Emperor Sigismund's coronation in Rome*, in: Péter E. Kovács – Kornél Szovák (eds.), *Infima Aetas Pannonica. Studies in Late Medieval Hungarian History*, Budapest 2009, pp. 140, 142.

⁵⁰ Also, many have called attention to the fact the peregrination of the bourgeoisie was more significant than previously believed. Cf: Rainer Christoph SCHWINGES, *On recruitment in German Universities from the Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries*, in: Rainer Christoph Schwinges (ed.), *Studenten und Gelehrte: Studien zur Sozial und Kulturgeschichte deutscher Universitäten im Mittelalter*, Leiden 2008, p. 40; András KUBINYI, *A középkori magyarországi városhálózat hierarchikus térbeli rendje kérdéséhez, Településtudományi Közlemények*, 23, 1971, pp. 58–78.

⁵¹ The expenses of students (‘baccalaureus’ and ‘magister’) at the university of Vienna has been published by Sándor Tonk. S. TONK, *Erdélyiek egyetemjárása*, p. 115. According to Tonk, the university of Vienna was one of the cheapest in the region, compared to Leipzig or Prague. Šmahel claims that poor students paid 6–10, average ones 14, while the wealthy paid 24 or more groats during registration at the university of laws. František ŠMAHEL, *Pražské universitní studentstvo v předrevolučním období 1399–1419. Statistickosociologická studie*, Praha 1967, pp. 39–40. The statutes indeed state the registration fee as 6 groats, but without the ‘matricula’ of the three faculty university, no precise data is accessible. In contrast, the registries of the Saxon nation at the university of laws, which are left only from a few years, shows that most students paid 1–2 groats. M. SVATOŠ, *The studium generale*, p. 55; *Liber decanorum*, I, pp. 46–51.

⁵² Elemér MÁLYUSZ, *Zsigmond király központosító törekvései Magyarországon*, *Történelmi Szemle* 3/2–3, 1960, p. 176.

⁵³ We know, for example, of the case of Elvinus – brother of Boleszló, bishop in Vác –, sent to Paris by Béla III to pursue musical studies. György SZÉKELY, *Magyar tanárok és hallgatók az európai egyetemeken az Árpád korban*, *Levéltári Szemle* 45, 1993, p. 5.

archbishop of Kalocsa), the King and the Queen Mother appealed to Pope Clement VI.⁵⁴ Later, the King and Queen Mother Elisabeth made an appeal for the *baccalaureus* degree of *Nicolaus Nicholai*, student in Paris.⁵⁵ Then, István Szigeti himself appealed similarly to the pope in the case of another Parisian student, Péter Verebélyi, so that he could obtain the degree of *magister*.⁵⁶ Thus, this patronal role of monarchs (and taking on this role, in the case of Szigeti) is known of; however, in the case of Prague, I have not found such an unambiguous relation between the monarch and the students. Yet, several factors are to be considered.

Out of the individuals with identified noble origins, a markedly high number were linked to the court, predominantly through familial relations. Every brother of Imre Cudar – who, as royal chaplain, had access to the court – served there.⁵⁷ Ágnes Kurcz and György Bónis claim that the eldest brother, Péter, could arrange his brother's entry into the court – and also their education –, who, importantly, had started out as a page in the court in 1343 and was still doing the same service in 1352.⁵⁸

The father of Dénes Hédervári – Miklós Hédervári III, the Queen's master of the doorkeepers – was a knight of the court (*aule regie miles*) in 1348,⁵⁹ and Pál son of György – the father of Miklós of the Šubić family (*nepos comitis de Breberio*, studying in Prague in 1377),⁶⁰ – also became royal page in 1380, and then knight of the court in 1393.⁶¹ *Johannes Malacz* (mentioned before) appears in the documents of the faculty of liberal arts in 1379, whose father, Miklós Aranyi Malac is referred to as royal page in 1351.⁶² Miklós, the father of Lőrinc Mezölaki Zámbo (provost of Pozsony),⁶³ appears in 1361–64 as a youth in the Queen's household, just as his uncle, István.⁶⁴ János, the father of Frigyes Scharfeneck, was a knight of the *aula* in 1376.⁶⁵

Yet, probably the most well-known of them are Imre Perényi and Stibor Beckói, also known as Stibor the Younger. Perényi appears in Prague in 1384, when he is admitted to *baccalaureus* examinations, but he never obtains his degree.⁶⁶ Similarly to Scharfenecki, he was already a member of the royal *aula*. Apart from his father, Péter, being a knight of the court between 1359 and 1387,⁶⁷ Imre Perényi appears among the royal pages in 1388, after

⁵⁴ Asztrik GÁBRIEL, *Magyar diákok és tanárok a középkori Párizsban*, Archivum Philologicum (Egyetemes Philológiai Közlöny) 4–9, 1938, p. 9–10.

⁵⁵ *Ib.*

⁵⁶ A. GÁBRIEL, *Magyar diákok és tanárok*, p. 10.

⁵⁷ Simon, Miklós and György served as a page in 1352, while Mihály in 1357 and István in 1360 did so. Á. KURCZ, *Lovagi kultúra*, p. 302.

⁵⁸ Á. KURCZ, *Lovagi kultúra*, p. 301.

⁵⁹ Á. KURCZ, *Lovagi kultúra*, p. 292.

⁶⁰ *Album seu Matricula*, p. 32. As it currently stands, either he or Miklós Malac was the first secular nobleman to study at the university and maintain a secular career in the history of Hungarian peregrination.

⁶¹ Á. KURCZ, *Lovagi kultúra*, p. 289, 303. According to the Prosopography Research Group at the university of laws in Prague, the nephew of Brebiri comes was of French origin, which is a mistake. Projekt 'Prosopografie pražské právnické univerzity v letech 1372–1419' <http://www1.cuni.cz/~borovic/matrika/projekt_en/vysledky/cesi/cesi.htm> (September 16, 2014).

⁶² Á. KURCZ, *Lovagi kultúra*, p. 302.

⁶³ *Album seu Matricula*, pp. 37–38.

⁶⁴ Á. KURCZ, *Lovagi kultúra*, p. 303; P. ENGEL, *Magyarország világi*, II, p. 262.

⁶⁵ P. ENGEL, *Magyarország világi*, I, p. 486.

⁶⁶ *Liber decanorum*, p. 222. Josef Trška, however, writes about him obtaining the degree. J. TRŠKA, *Životopisný slovník*, p. 98.

⁶⁷ P. ENGEL, *Magyarország világi*, II, p. 190.

returning home.⁶⁸ Stibor the Younger, the son of the voivode of Transylvania, was admitted to examinations in 1400 in Prague and received his *baccalaureus* degree in 1401.⁶⁹ His father, Stibor Stiborci, was knight of the court in 1388⁷⁰ and the most loyal man of King Sigismund. Others, however – according to our data – became related to the court only a long time after finishing their studies. This category includes Miklós Alcsebi, Benedek Makrai and, supposedly, István Upori, as well as – among others of foreign origin – János Uski (Ústí nad Labem) from Bohemia.

Benedek Makrai received his *baccalaureatus* at the *artes* faculty in 1384⁷¹ and became *magister* in 1387.⁷² But his desire to learn led him to Vienna,⁷³ Paris⁷⁴ and Padova,⁷⁵ which greatly influenced his later life.⁷⁶ After his participation in the uprising of 1403 and his release, he became advisor to Sigismund, then, in 1420 the lay governor of the bishopric of Eger, and even comes Palatinus Lateranus.⁷⁷

In 1402, Miklós Alcsebi, son of Jakab, – who had received a *baccalaureus* degree in Prague in 1385 – became lord lieutenant of the royal chapel to King Sigismund.⁷⁸ *Artium magister* already in 1418,⁷⁹ it is unknown exactly where he received his degree, although Vienna cannot be ruled out, where Alcsebi studied as well.⁸⁰

It cannot be claimed without question that István Upori was also a student of Prague, but there are signs that indicate this. A charter of Pope Boniface IX from 1392 refers to Upori

⁶⁸ Á. KURCZ, *Lovagi kultúra*, p. 304.

⁶⁹ *Liber decanorum*, pp. 358, 365.

⁷⁰ Á. KURCZ, *Lovagi kultúra*, p. 296.

⁷¹ *Liber Decanorum*, p. 225.

⁷² *Liber Decanorum*, p. 250.

⁷³ By the name of Benedictus de Macra de Ungaria, in 1385. Paul UIBLEIN (ed.), *Acta Facultatis Artium Universitatis Vindobonensis 1385–1416. Quellen zur Geschichte der Universität Wien*, 2. Abteilung, Graz – Wien – Köln 1968, pp. 5, 20–21, 23, 37, 41, 48, 54, 62, 63–67.

⁷⁴ Benedictus de Makra de Hongaria néven 1395-ben. *Auctarium Chartularii*, I, p. 989.

⁷⁵ Endre VERESS, *Matricula et acta Hungarorum in Universitate Patavina studentium (1264–1864)*, Budapest 1905, pp. 5–6.

⁷⁶ Renáta SKORKA (ed.), *Eberhard Windecke emlékiratai Zsigmond királyról és koráról*, Budapest 2008, p. 30; József GELCICH – Lajos THALLÓCZY (eds.), *Raguza és Magyarország összeköttetéseinek oklevéltára*, Budapest 1887, p. 846. He was held captive up until 1408, and the circumstances of his release go back to his university studies. Tamás Ethiopis, mentioned above, studied in Prague in 1371 under the name of Thomas Ungarus, then became a fellow student to Makrai in Paris. Ethiopis was born in the diocese of Győr and became ‘procurator’ of the English nation at the university of Paris in 1408. *Auctarium Chartularii*, I, p. 839; *Auctarium Chartularii*, I, p. XXXV; *Zsigmondkori*, II, Nr. 6376; *Auctarium Chartularii*, I, p. 928. Recorded as amicus Benedicti de Makra on the 8th of June, 1406. *Auctarium Chartularii*, II, p. 839.

⁷⁷ P. ENGEL, *Magyarország világi*, II, p. 153; *Zsigmondkori*, VII, Nr. 1835.

⁷⁸ *Liber Decanorum*, pp. 232–233.

⁷⁹ József LUKSICS (ed.), *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*, I–II, Budapest 1931–1938, I, p. 57.

⁸⁰ Willy SZAIVERT – Franz GALL – Kurt MÜHLBERGER (eds.), *Die Matrikel der Universität Wien*, I–VIII, Wien – Köln – Graz – Weimar 1956–2014, I, p. 18. Alcsebi, on the 2nd of February, 1412, – in his letter as governor (‘gubernator’) of Budafelhéziv – expresses his gratitude to his sister, Katalin, and his brother-in-law, István, for educating him. “Ab infantia sua educantes in diversis locis et partibus, quibus litterarum viget scientia, causa studii in eorum sumptibus et expensis fovissent et conservassent.” *Zsigmondkori*, III, Nr. 1677. His brother-in-law came from the family Gatályi, cf. P. ENGEL, *Genealógia (CD-ROM)*, Gatályi család; Antal ÁLDÁSY, *Magyar címeres emlékek*, III. füzet, Budapest 1926, pp. 27–28. His familial relations to the Gatályi family of Zemplén county explains László Gatályi’s studies in Cracow and his admission to the royal court. On the 17th of September, 1421, he appears as a royal bailiff in the charter of Judge Royal Péter Perényi. *Zsigmondkori*, VIII, Nr. 983.

as *magister in artibus* and a student of canon law.⁸¹ Considering the timeframe⁸² and the name of the students, three individuals can be taken into account. Two of them studied in Vienna (*Stephanus de Ungaria* in 1377,⁸³ and a student under the same name in 1383),⁸⁴ while the third one, *Stephanus Ungarus* studied in Prague, in 1379.⁸⁵ In the case of the first two, the well-preserved documents from the university of Vienna do not report any degrees received, but *Stephanus Ungarus* in Prague was admitted to *baccalaureus* examinations, and he is already *artium magister* under Master Albert Engelschalk in 1382.⁸⁶ His usage of the rank, amongst other students of the name *de Ungaria*, thus suggests that Upori also received his degree in Prague. This, however, does not rule it out that unearthing new information might question the identification of Upori with *Stephanus Ungarus* in the future.⁸⁷

It goes without saying that this is not a peculiarity of Prague; the same tendency is observed in Vienna and Italy. What makes Prague special is the great number of noble students with courtly relations in the 14th century, when compared to Vienna⁸⁸ or even to Italy.⁸⁹

From the individuals listed above, the families Cudar, Hédervári and Šubić (lords of Bribir) belonged to the wealthiest of nobles, while the others contributed to the emerging, or already well-to-do gentry. For them, the universities of Central Europe (first and foremost, the one in the centre of emperors, in economically strong Prague) meant a type of easy-to-reach universities. Prague, in particular, was not as demanding financially as Italy but was considered as more prestigious than Vienna. Scanning through the list of students, we find that – compared to Paris or Italy, but even to the others nations of the university of Prague – the ratio of bourgeois names to (presumably) noble ones is exceedingly high. Who, thus, could not afford Italy, but financial issues did not force him to go to Vienna, would look at

⁸¹ *Monumenta Vaticana Hungariae*, I/3, pp. 207–208.

⁸² Sándor Tonk supposes 1,5–2 years of study for both the BA and the MA levels but admits that they may have lasted even longer, and he assumes the average age for registration, based on István Hajnal and others, to be between 13 and 16. Thus we can calculate with 6–8 years, if we take graduation around 20–21 years of age to be the average. Tonk, however, calls attention to the fact that students from Transylvania would go to university as adults. In the case of Hungary, in a more restrictive sense (that is, without Transylvania), further research is necessary to reach a conclusion. S. TONK, *Erdélyiek egyetemjárása*, pp. 97–98.

⁸³ *Die Matrikel der Universität*, I, p. 6.

⁸⁴ *Die Matrikel der Universität*, I, p. 13.

⁸⁵ *Liber Decanorum*, p. 190.

⁸⁶ *Liber Decanorum*, pp. 203–204.

⁸⁷ His family was also affected by his studies. One of his sisters, Ilona, married into the Semsei family, she became the wife of János Semsei, a wealthy landowner in Abaúj county. They had several children, including János, later to become archdeacon in Pankota. Of him it is known that he studied in Vienna in 1413, under the name of Johannes de Zemsche archidiaconus de Pankotha in ecclesia Agriensi. His family belonged to the upper layer of the wealthy county gentry, who bore more than one county offices, adding to their merits with military service as well. Among his relatives, it is his highly influential uncle, Bishop Upori, who can be assumed to be his patron. István KÁDAS, *Középkori család- és birtoktörténet. A Semseiek*, in Fons 20, 2013, p. 440; P. ENGEL, *Magyarország világi*, II, p. 212; I. KÁDAS, *Középkori*, pp. 445–448.

⁸⁸ According to Anna Tüskés, only 7% of the whole student body were of noble rank, which is not a high number, considering the more than 7200 students she gave account of. Even after László Szögi with the University History Research Group (founded since then) canvassed Tüskés's data and found only 6600 students between 1365 and 1526. In Prague, however (considering only the period explored in my research), this proportion was 10%. Anna TÜSKÉS, *Magyarországi diákok a bécsi egyetemen 1365–1526*, Budapest 2008, p. 10.

⁸⁹ This applies, however, only to individuals related to the court, not to those who served there (for instance, at the chancellery). This research, at a further stage, might be modulated by comparing the courts of Hungary, Austria and Bohemia, and also by contrasting it with the studies of Polish students in Prague.

Prague as the obvious choice in the region. The university of Cracow was virtually inoperative until the dawn of the 15th century, and the university of Vienna had to be founded again by Albert III in 1383, which, moreover, was permitted to set up a theological faculty only in 1384.⁹⁰ Compared to them, education was carried on undisturbed in Prague, despite such internal conflicts as the separation of the faculty of laws,⁹¹ and the debates concerning Charles College, which eventually led to the first departure of German students to the recently founded universities of Heidelberg and Cologne.⁹²

Undisturbed education, renowned teachers, good accessibility and its central role in the Empire made Prague a popular university in 14th-century Central Europe. From a Hungarian perspective, this was primarily apparent in the case of lower level (liberal arts) education. Many were satisfied with a *baccalaureus* or *magister* degree in liberal arts, and few would proceed further. Only in thirty cases altogether can it be supposed that a student attended another university as well, which is slightly less than one quarter of cases.⁹³ This suggests, first, that universities in Italy still proved too expensive, and secondly, that it was primarily at the initial stage of studies that Prague was considered as popular. Prague would produce only a minimal number of trained jurists, popular in the West, and even fewer would later get into the royal court.⁹⁴ Elemér Mályusz pointed out that even ecclesiastic personnel would hardly need an especially high level of education in Hungary. Even Pope Boniface IX, in one of his charters from 1389, prescribed only that canons should learn singing, reading, and also Latin language and composition.⁹⁵ What follows is to conclude that the university of Prague was one of, but not the most important of educational institutions for the Hungarian intelligentsia.

The royal court, however, not only meant financial support but a cultural model as well. That Hungarian peregrination was predominantly ecclesiastic is considered evident. Gaining secular positions in Hungary (and, in several known cases, even ecclesiastical ones) would require no university qualification, for it was defined by the proper lineage, familial connections and relations with the court. Still, why would it benefit Imre Perényi (coming from an actual military family) or János Malac and Stibor the Younger – or even Benedek Makrai, all of them secular individuals, to go to university?

The answer is manifold and sometimes varies per person. For an individual from the lower strata of the nobility, it was drawing the attention of the monarch to themselves and gaining better positions that led them to university. This can be assumed in the case of Benedek Makrai.⁹⁶ He came from the Gacsalkéri family of the kindred of Szentemágócs, his

⁹⁰ H. RASHDALL, *The Universities*, II, pp. 237–238.

⁹¹ Jiří KEJŘ, *The Prague Law Faculty and the Law University*, in: Ivana Čornejová – Michal Svatoš – Petr Svobodný (eds.), *A History of Charles University*, Prague 2001, pp. 152–154.

⁹² M. SVATOŠ, *The Studium generale*, pp. 78–79.

⁹³ The majority of them would choose the university of Vienna as a second stage, while others would move between the universities of Cracow, Bologna, Padova and Paris. Only four students attended more than one further universities (György Kassai, Benedek Makrai, Leó parish priest in Nagycsúr, and Lőrinc Zámbo). Benedek Makrai stood out amongst them, who attended three more universities after Prague.

⁹⁴ The suggestion of György Bónis, concerning the legal qualifications of Polish individuals, is worth considering. He claims that politicians played a more important role than jurists did in the development of Poland. György BÓNIS, *A jogtudó értelmiség a középkori Nyugat – és Közép-Európában*, Budapest 1972, p. 139.

⁹⁵ Elemér MÁLYUSZ, *A konstanzi zsinat és a magyar főkegyúri jog*, Budapest 1958, pp. 109–110; *Monumenta Vaticana Hungariae*, I/3, p. 3.

⁹⁶ G. BÓNIS, *A jogtudó*, p. 116; E. MÁLYUSZ, *A konstanzi*, pp. 108–109.

father's name was Balázs. One of his siblings, István was the *vice-ispán* of Baranya county, while his other brother, Sebestyén, was *ispán* of the salt monopoly in 1397 and is mentioned as such in 1403 as well,⁹⁷ – also, according to his title, as *litteratus*⁹⁸ – which indicates a certain relation with the court. This atmosphere may have benefited Benedek's education. In his case, we can mainly count personal ambitions and family influence which – although through deviations – brought him success.

With Imre Perényi, locating this reason proves more difficult. It is intriguing that, even though the Perényis rose from the service of the Drugeth family⁹⁹ and predominantly held the offices of castellan and *ispán* (maybe certain offices in the court as well),¹⁰⁰ the military family of the day sends one of its sons to university, who does not even plan to pursue an ecclesiastical career. It cannot be ruled out, however, that that is what he was intended for. He had two brothers, Miklós and János, who fell at Nikopol, in the service of Sigismund. Miklós was known to be a loyal devotee of Sigismund, and it was he who got his brothers into the court.¹⁰¹ His father, Péter, who died around 1388, presumably intended to ensure the career of his son, Imre, through university education.¹⁰²

The Aranyi family was part of the wealthy nobility of Hunyad county. One of the first significant members of the family, István, was a noble magistrate in Hunyad in 1333.¹⁰³ His son, Miklós, entered the court and became an 'aulic youth' (*aulae iuvenis*) in 1351. His son was János, whose name is mentioned in the documents of the university of Prague. He had the name 'Malac' (pig) recorded as his own, probably after the cognomen of his father, in the documents of the *artes* faculty in Prague. In his case it is beyond doubt that it was the dream of the gentry to rise higher which motivated his studies. The extent to which this later affected his family depends on how connected János Malac was to István Aranyi, Director of Royal Affairs (*Causarum Regalium Director*) who later reached a high standing, and his family. All that is certain is that János himself became *ispán* of Hunyad by the end of the 14th century.¹⁰⁴

Besides the desire to draw attention to themselves, besides the desire for better offices and richer benefices, a further factor can be suggested, which may correspond with the relationship between university studies and the royal court, as so far discussed: the influence of the mentality of the royal court. The royal court served as a pool for the most qualified scholars of the country, for Louis the Great liked surrounding himself with qualified individuals. For example, János Bredenscheid (known abroad simply as 'the legist of the Hungarian king'),¹⁰⁵ Pál Jägerndorf from Silesia,¹⁰⁶ or Péter Verebélyi (mentioned above),

⁹⁷ *Zsigmondkori*, II, Nr. 2378–2380.

⁹⁸ P. ENGEL, *Genealógia*, Szentemágócs nem 6. tábla Gacsalkéri család.

⁹⁹ Erik FÜGEDI, *Ispánok, bárók, kiskirályok*, Budapest 1986, p. 314.

¹⁰⁰ P. ENGEL, *Magyarország világi*, II, pp. 189–190.

¹⁰¹ E. FÜGEDI, *Ispánok*, p. 314.

¹⁰² János Szepesi, later to pursue a considerable ecclesiastic career, entered the university of Padova as a layman, still referred to as 'miles', if we consider him identical with 'd. Johannes miles, filius quondam [...] comes domini regis Hungariae', recorded on the 17th of January, 1379. E. VERESS, *Matricula et Acta*, p. 3.

¹⁰³ P. ENGEL, *Genealógia*, Aranyi (Bencenci, Piskinci család).

¹⁰⁴ P. ENGEL, *Magyarország világi*, I, p. 248.

¹⁰⁵ G. BÓNIS, *A jogtudó*, p. 36.

¹⁰⁶ G. BÓNIS, *A jogtudó*, p. 33.

also a chaplain of King Louis.¹⁰⁷ The appearance of Professor Bartolomeo Piacentini from Padova in the royal court, right in the early 1360s, is also of great significance. He is presumed to have been invited by Bishop Vilmos of Pécs from the Hungarian-Venetian peace talks in Zára (Zadar) in 1358 and was later appointed counsellor to Louis the Great.¹⁰⁸ A further crucial example is the growth of the royal library during the reign of Louis.¹⁰⁹ A glorious part of the loot from King Louis's Neapolitan campaign was the royal library of Naples. Presumably, these volumes included a pseudo-Aristotelian 'mirror of princes', titled *Secreta Secretorum*.¹¹⁰ Here one may mention the King's act of founding a university, since being a patron of culture at such a high level may have greatly inspired members of the court to gain knowledge. Cultural influences the court had, however, might also include such earlier ones as the appearance and propagation of the ideals of chivalry in the early 13th century, or the early 14th-century organisation of the oligarchic household modelled on the royal court,¹¹¹ and what Ágnes Kurcz points out is exactly the differences between churches founded by religious orders during the era of Charles I and that of Louis the Great. While Charles I preferred to support the Franciscans, his son would lean toward the Pauline Fathers, and Kurcz successfully revealed that lords (under both Charles's and Louis's reign) would follow and copy the trends of the royal court when founding their own churches.¹¹² In his monography on King Sigismund, Elemér Mályusz noted – concerning the Anjou period – that in the fields of culture, civilisation and art, it was the court and the king that could define what is beautiful and what society should feel as such, and he gives a list of further examples (although predominantly from the 15th century) when lords copied the artistic and cultural norms of the royal court.¹¹³ Literary works and book culture might shed light on the role of the court as a model in the Anjou period, though not much was left to us from that age. As an example, the so-called Néksei Bible can be mentioned from the Caroline era, possibly ordered from Bologna by Charles I's Master of the Treasury,¹¹⁴ and maybe the codex *Moralia in Job*, copied in Visegrád around 1367 on the request of János Bredenscheid, royal diplomat and jurist.¹¹⁵ It may have had significant influence on the outstanding number of Hungarian students in Prague in the 1380s that the second son of Charles IV, Sigismund, – after lengthy diplomatic negotiations – moved to the Hungarian royal court in 1379. The place of origin of Sigismund, potentially considered as the central figure of the decades to follow, and the interests related to his person played a large role in that the nobles of the court went to Prague. They, in turn, would also be considered models for other nobles, who felt the future of one of their relatives safer with university education, besides traditional military-courtly service.

¹⁰⁷ Royal chaplains are worth mentioning in this context, see, for example János Garai (lord lieutenant of the royal chapel and royal envoy) or Bálint Alsáni and István Szigeti. A. GABRIEL, *Magyar diákok és tanárok*, p. 11; Kinga KÖRMEY, *Studentes extra Regnum 1183–1543*, Budapest 2007, p. 177.

¹⁰⁸ Tamás FEDELES, *Studium Generale Quinqueecclesiensis*, in: Tamás Fedeles – Gábor Sarbak – József Sűmegi (eds.), *A pécsi egyházmege története*, I, Pécs 2009, p. 557.

¹⁰⁹ Á. KURCZ, *Lovagi kultúra*, p. 223.

¹¹⁰ Emil JAKUBOVICH, *Nagy Lajos király oxfordi kódexe, a bécsi Képes Krónika kora és illuminátora (Egy képpel)*, Magyar Könyvszemle 3–4, 1930, pp. 382–393; Dezső DERCSÉNYI, *Nagy Lajos kora*, Budapest 1941, p. 138.

¹¹¹ Gyula KRISTÓ, *Csák Máté*, Budapest 1986, p. 168.

¹¹² Á. KURCZ, *Lovagi kultúra*, pp. 155–156.

¹¹³ E. MÁLYUSZ, *Zsigmond király*, p. 243.

¹¹⁴ Dezső DERCSÉNYI, *Nagy Lajos kora*, Budapest 1941, pp. 137–138.

¹¹⁵ D. DERCSÉNYI, *Nagy Lajos*, p. 139.

4. Summary

The university of Prague exceeded in significance to the ones in Vienna or Cracow in 14th-century Central Europe, and was one of the most important universities of the time from a Hungarian perspective. In defining its role, the exploration and analysis of student careers are of primary importance. It becomes clear from the known careers that several important individuals studied in Prague, and many were closely connected to the royal court. For the nobility, gaining better positions may have been a crucial goal. According to Peter Moraw, university education (primarily, earning a degree) offered such opportunities as social rank, lineage, wealth or military service did.¹¹⁶ As opposed to those, however, their value was constant all across Europe. University career, lineage, service, military merits: the more one possessed the greater their chance was for success. Others, however, looked at the court as a model, which, through its mentality, cultural variety and effervescence, urged them to begin university studies. Thus, it seems that higher education was, at the same time, a means for drawing attention to oneself and for living a better, financially more secure life. Nevertheless, the court may have proven exemplary in more than the arts: its influence in studying abroad is also apparent.

PÉTER HARASZTI SZABÓ

Význam pražské univerzity pro uherský královský dvůr ve 14. století

RESUMÉ

Pražská univerzita sehrála ústřední roli v uherském vzdělávání ve 14. století. Na základě identifikace profesních drah jejich studentů uherského původu autor ukazuje, že mnozí z nich náleželi ke královskému dvoru, a to přinejmenším svými rodinnými vazbami. Proč se jim tedy vyplatilo věnovat se studiu na univerzitě? Podle Petera Morawa univerzitní studia měla dostatečnou váhu na to, aby mohla soutěžit s ostatními tradičními faktory přispívajícími k přijetí na královský dvůr, jako byla vojenská služba, rodinné zázemí či bohatství. Praha byla velmi proslulým místem ve vzdělávací síti střední Evropy. Vedle kritérií uvedených P. Morawem existují i další, určující význam univerzitních studií. Většina uherských šlechtických studentů na pražské univerzitě pocházela z dvorské nobility, takže lze hypoteticky předpokládat, že velkou roli hrál příklad uherských anjouovských králů. Tento aspekt však bude probrán v jiné fázi autorova výzkumu.

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¹¹⁶ P. MORAW, *Careers of graduates*, p. 403.