

Quest for Confessionalization via Education. The Jesuit School in Vienna, 1553-1565

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Abstract

The thesis deals with the problem of employing educational institutions as tools for confessionalization in Early modern Europe.

It explores the activities of the Jesuit school in Vienna during the early stage of its history (1553-1565) in context of the recatholization process in the Habsburg monarchy. The thesis focuses on three main issues: 1. Student body of the college and its catchment area, 2. “Social policy” of the Jesuits in education, 3. Struggles for converting Lutheran students.

I argue that over one decade the Jesuits managed to create an attractive and stable school appealing to students of all social backgrounds, but especially to not very wealthy families. Having built up a substantial in size, socially diverse, and multinational student community, Jesuits sought to convert Protestant students to Catholicism and to strengthen confessional loyalties among Catholic ones. Constant confrontation with a hostile Protestant environment as well as constant financial difficulties hampered the recatholization work of the school. Despite all odds Jesuits managed to maintain and develop a school which eventually contributed to intensification of conversions and overall bolstered the positions of Catholicism.

Moreover, the study on the Jesuit school in Vienna in 1553-1565 has offered a new perspective on a history of confessionalization in Central Europe. The Viennese college is an example of a local, non-state actor operating under circumstances when the secular ruler (Habsburg emperor) was too weak to effectively impose Catholicism by the means of force or legislative measures. Jesuits certainly enjoyed significant support from the emperor but their methods were not at all “top-down”. Establishing a school allowed Jesuits to get incorporated into the urban space and to act from below. Jesuit strategy was based not on force but on persuasion and sophisticated techniques aimed at encouraging student to bolster their faith or to convert to Catholicism. The complexities the College had to show with (with the “social policy” and conversions) show that the process of recatholization was in no way straightforward. Finally, the inquiry into conversion policy at school illustrates a possible ambiguity of a confessional shift.

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Introduction

On the 19th of February 1552 a son was born in the family of Klesl in Vienna. The boy's name was Melchior. His father was a baker and a devoted Lutheran, like the vast majority of Vienna's population at that time. He wanted his son to get a proper Protestant education. At first, Melchior was trained by a Lutheran priest in the town school of Vienna and then sent to Wels to another strictly Protestant teacher.¹ In 1565 he was back to Vienna and then studied for seven years at the University also dominated by Protestant professors. Klesl remained faithful to the Lutheranism till 1573 when he became acquainted with Dr. Georg Scherer, a Catholic preacher. Scherer was a Jesuit and taught in a Jesuit school operating in Vienna since 1553. Religious conversations with Scherer must have deeply impressed young Melchior and he eventually decided to convert to Catholicism and to join the Jesuit school. He was a student in a special boarding house (*convictus*) intended for training future priests. In 1579 Klesl was ordained and appointed provost of St. Stephen's cathedral, a significant position in the Church hierarchy in the town. Afterwards, Klesl made an excellent ecclesiastical career: in 1588 he became the bishop of Wiener Neustadt, in 1598 – bishop of Vienna and in 1615 he was promoted to the cardinal's rank. What is probably even more important is the role Klesl played in the political life of the Habsburg monarchy. He was a close advisor of the archduke (and since 1612 emperor) Matthias and in 1612 became the head of the Privy Council, one of the highest dignitaries in the monarchy.² A former zealous Lutheran, Klesl was a key figure in the recatholization in Central Europe. He actively supported Habsburg monarchs in their fight against Protestantism and in the end the confessional shift in Austria towards Catholicism was partly due to his engagement.

Would a son of a baker born and raised in a Lutheran environment have become a cardinal and a leader of Counter-Reformation, if he had not been in touch with the Jesuits and entered their College? Although Klesl's classmates did not reach such heights, many of them, including those

¹ Anna Coreth. "Melchior Klesl und das päpstliche Alumnat bei den Jesuiten in Wien (1574-1585)," *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchives* 25 (1972), 347.

² Rona Johnston, Howard Louthan and Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin, "Catholic Reformers: Stanislas Hosius, Melchior Khlesl, and Péter Pázmány" in *A Companion to the Reformation in Central Europe*, ed. by Howard Louthan and Graeme Murdock (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2015), 205-207.

with Lutheran background, also contributed to spreading Catholicism. In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, they acted as preachers and teachers in the territories controlled by Protestants and were actively engaged in missionary work.³ They all were products of Jesuit education given at the school in Vienna, first Jesuit school in Central Europe. Thus, a fundamental transformation in religious landscape, a gradual recatholization of the Habsburg monarchy was to a great extent a long-lasting effect of the educational activities of Jesuits. The religious evolution was closely tied with the political domain, since normally the Habsburgs regarded adherence to Catholicism as an indication of political loyalty and hence strove to strengthen the positions of the Roman Church by all possible means. This combination of religious and political perspectives is often called “confessionalization” and Jesuit schools played a major role in this process all over Europe.

In my thesis I will study the initial phase of the history of the Jesuit school of Vienna (1553-1565) through the prism of confessionalization. I have chosen this period for two reasons. Firstly, the first two decades after 1553 were the most difficult for the Jesuits in terms of promoting their recatholization agenda. Even though they enjoyed support from the emperor until 1565, they had to develop the school in a quite hostile, Protestant environment. The first years were decisive for creating a stable educational institution and some similar colleges (for instance, the first college of Tyrnva or in Kolozsvár) failed to survive. So, it is important to assess the degree of success of a certain school in this initial, critical stage of its existence. The second reason is related to the accessibility of sources. Two of my most useful important sources (*Litterae quadrimestres* and normative regulations) are dated to the period prior to 1565. Evidence from the period between 1565 and 1578 is very scant and after 1578, another phase of the college history began when Jesuits were in a more favorable position under the reign of Rudolf II actively supporting the Catholic Church. My research will base on the analysis of different characteristics of students studying in the Viennese college and policy towards particular student groups. I will first discuss the size of the student body and the geographic origin of students. Then I will address social policy pursued by

³ Coreth, 351-355.

Jesuits in the school. I will show how Jesuits treated students of noble origin and those considered poor, so called *pauperes*. Finally, I will address the problem of confessional division of students and recatholization within the college. I argue that over one decade the Jesuits managed to create an attractive and stable school appealing to students of all social backgrounds, but especially to not very wealthy families. Having built up a substantial in size, socially diverse, and multinational student community, Jesuits sought to convert Protestant students to Catholicism and to strengthen confessional loyalties among Catholic ones. Constant confrontation with a hostile Protestant environment as well as constant financial difficulties hampered the recatholization work of the school. Despite all odds Jesuits managed to maintain and develop a school which eventually contributed to intensification of conversions and overall bolstered the positions of Catholicism. Before outlining the concrete goals in a greater detail, I should give some methodological and historiographical context in which I place my thesis.

Confessionalization

As mentioned above, in my thesis I apply the set of questions related to the so called confessionalization theory based on the new sources. It was first introduced in the early 1980s by two German scholars: Heinz Schilling and Wolfgang Reinhard. The theory drew on two previous historiographical concepts: history of “confession building” and social disciplinarization. The term “confession building” (*Konfessionsbildung*) was coined by a German historian Ernst Walther Zeeden first in his article in 1958 and then in the book published in 1965.⁴ Zeeden considered the formation of three dominant confessions in Europe after 1517: Lutheranism, Calvinism and Tridentine Catholicism. He concentrated on the dogmatic issues, compared Church organization in different confessional groups and discussed the implementation of the Church reforms in the everyday life of subjects of a particular ruler. The latter aspect was crucial for a subsequent

⁴ Harm Klueting, "Zweite Reformation" - Konfessionsbildung - Konfessionalisierung. Zwanzig Jahre Kontroversen und Ergebnisse nach zwanzig Jahren,“ *Historische Zeitschrift* 277 (Oct., 2003), 316.

discussion of “confessionalization”. However, in general Zeeden continued a traditional line of religious history often neglecting entanglements between the domains of faith and politics.

“Social disciplinarization” (*Sozialdisziplinierung*) was the invention of another German historian, Gerhard Oestreich. Oestreich claimed that a distinctive trait of an emerging modern state was a growing desire for disciplining its subjects in any possible field of life. Subjects were gradually taught to obey to the state through various kinds of legal regulations and so called “police orders” (*Policeyordnungen*). What is important is that “disciplinarization” was aimed at altering and controlling moral and spiritual domains.⁵ New rulers wanted their subjects not only to pay taxes and not to break laws, but also to behave properly. A degree of behavior control tended to become deeper than in Late Medieval period. “Disciplinarization” was first launched in military and bureaucratic structures (“*Stabsdisziplinierung*”) and then was expanded to the whole society. These disciplining processes led to fundamental changes in political, social and spiritual structures of the pre-modern society and made way to the formation of an “absolutist” state. Due to his interest to “absolutism”, Oestreich focused primarily on the eighteenth century, a period when confessional antagonisms no longer played a major role in political affairs. Oestreich’s “social disciplinarization” was predominantly secular process and religious aspects remained on the margins of his analysis. However, Oestreich acknowledged that the Church organizations of the earlier period had some kind of disciplining potential.⁶ Oestreich pointed to some extreme cases like Geneve where disciplining efforts stemmed from the religious reforms put forward by Calvin. Schilling and Reinhard adapted Oestreich’s idea and transferred it to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries stressing the importance of confessional component.

Using the example of several Calvinist counties Schilling demonstrated that imposing Calvinism from above included a growing control over personal religious practices of subjects as well as their morals and public behavior. Thus, secular authorities sought to discipline subjects by

⁵ Winfried Schulze, “Gerhard Oestreichs Begriff ‚Sozialdisziplinierung in der frühen Neuzeit‘,“ *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 14 (1987), 277-279.

⁶ Kluegel, 320-321.

religious means. Schilling asserted that this process was a sign of emergence of a new, early modern state.⁷ Reinhard brought in a Catholic perspective and argued that post-Tridentine Catholicism was, alongside with Lutheranism and Calvinism, one of the three confessions arising over the sixteenth century. Each confessional group strove for consolidation and for alienation from the other groups. This consolidation was carried out by the alliance of political and Church powers. Reinhard highlighted the new meaning of the word “confession” (confession). In the age of confessionalization *confessio* not only referred to a personal act, but also designated belonging to a particular group sharing the same confession.⁸ Reinhard distinguished several methods of implementing “confessionalization”. After a particular dogma had been clearly formulated, it was to be communicated to subjects by well-trained priests, teachers, doctors and state officials. Censorship was used to prevent spreading of confessionally “hostile” ideas. “Right” ideas, on the contrary, were to be propagated by all possible means. In Catholic case Reinhard stressed the importance of public preaching and catechization, Church music, processions, pilgrimages, veneration of saints. All these religious ceremonies were attended and supported by political power. Reinhard paid attention to the role of education in the process of “confessionalization”. In Catholic lands it was Society of Jesus that was in charge of creating a network of schools and universities which were strongholds of recatholization. Reinhard underlined that by adapting confessional agenda and participating in “confessionalization” state powers sought to strengthen their “national and territorial identity” and to impose stricter control on subjects, i.e. to socially discipline them.⁹

Although the confessionalization paradigm gained approval among historians (especially in Germany) in 1980-90s, many of its essential postulates have been seriously challenged. One can distinguish three main points of criticism. Firstly, some historians called into question a so-called “parallelism thesis” according to which the main confessional groups (Catholics, Lutherans,

⁷ Klüeting, 321.

⁸ Wolfgang Reinhard, „Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung? Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters“, *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 10 3 (1983), 263.

⁹ Ibid, 268-275.

Calvinists) followed rather similar paths in terms of development of confessionalization. Historians of religion highlighted instead specificity of each confession.¹⁰ Moreover, there was a unique case of Transylvania where different confessions were tolerated by the ruler and could coexist in a relative peace. Krista Zach pointed to this peculiarity and raised a question whether one can speak of confessionalization regarding a territory where no confession was considered dominant.¹¹ For Zach Transylvania was rather an anti-modell of confessionalization. Secondly, proponents of the confessionalization (and especially Schilling) were criticized for neglecting theological questions overshadowed by global social historical paradigm. In quest for the emergence of an early modern state in confessional domain Schilling apparently lost religious dimension in its traditional sense. Church historian Thomas Kaufmann claimed that politically and socially oriented confessionalization treated religion in a very functionalistic and reductionistic way.¹² Personal and spiritual dimensions of a religious feeling are not taken into account and it weakens substantially the explanatory potential of the theory. The third point of criticism is related to the role and application of social disciplinarization theory in confessionalization studies. A Swiss historian Heinrich Richard Schmidt argued that confessionalization theory should be expanded beyond a state-oriented, top-down approach.¹³ According to the classical interpretation, it was higher secular and ecclesiastical authorities that used an intensive indoctrination as a disciplining tool for subjects. By this mean they built up a more uniform and consolidated polity, that is, the modern state which was a crucial element in the analysis by Schilling and Reinhard. Schmidt pointed out that the role of state structures had been overemphasized while other possible actors of confessionalization had been either seen as state agents or not discussed at all. However, the endeavors to impose confessionally specified discipline were not always connected with a certain ruler and his administration. Schmidt paid

¹⁰ Klueting, 331-333.

¹¹ Klueting, 337.

¹² Ibid, 334-335.

¹³ Heinrich Richard Schmidt, "Sozialdisziplinierung? Ein Plädoyer für das Ende des Etatismus in der Konfessionalisierungsforschung," *Historische Zeitschrift* 265 (1997), 639-682.

great attention to the role of local religious communities. Self-organized Protestant parishes and presbyteries often took responsibility for disciplining their members without any involvement from the central government. This local Church control of ethics (*Kirchenzucht*) was typical of Calvinist and Lutheran lands, but certain examples can be found for Catholics as well. Thus, Schmidt argued for the importance of different kinds of “self-confessionalization” from below. In his opinion, the state mechanisms in the sixteenth century were not developed enough for pervasively introducing any disciplining measure without assistance of local communities. Actual control was in hand of local presbyteries and ultimately, they decided which regulations were needed and how they could be implemented. A prominent German historian of Reformation Luise Schorn-Schutte also pleaded for more agency for “confessionalized” subjects.¹⁴ They did not just accept measures imposed by the state, but had many options: from support to entire rejection.

Catholic confessionalization in the Habsburg monarchy

After hectic debates the classical confessionalization theory was reconsidered, but remained relevant for early modern studies. Recent works on confessional phenomena stepped back from a state-oriented perspective and tend to focus on religious situation at the local level. Historians now pay attention to confessional heterogeneity, agency within the seemingly strict religious boundaries as well as to relativity of confessional allegiances.¹⁵ The confessionalization paradigm was expanded on the new religious groups. Originally, solely three main confessions emerged after Reformation (Lutheranism, Calvinism and Tridentine Catholicism) were taken into

¹⁴ Luise Schorn-Schutte. „Konfessionalisierung als wissenschaftliches Paradigma“ in *Konfessionalisierung in Ostmitteleuropa*, edited by Joachim Bahlcke and Arno Strohmeyer (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999), 63-77.

¹⁵ Alexander Schunka, “Afterword: Entangled Confessionalizations— a European perspective” in *Entangled Confessionalizations? Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th-18th Centuries*, ed. by Tijana Krstić and Derin Terzioğlu (Piscataway :Gorgias press, 2022), 749-750.

account. In 2000-10s at least two confessions completed the list: Eastern Orthodoxy¹⁶ and Islam.¹⁷ Moreover, there is a growing tendency to make wider comparisons between the confessionalization processes in different religious groups.¹⁸

In this context, the Habsburg monarchy and East-Central Europe as a whole have been considered to be “a fruitful playground” for confessionalization studies.¹⁹ Catholic confessionalization in the Habsburg lands is a good example of how a traditional thesis elaborated by Schilling and Reinhard can be nuanced by the new approaches rejecting a state-oriented perspective and emphasizing the role of many different actors. The Habsburg monarchy in the mid-sixteenth century was ruled by Catholic sovereigns striving for confessional consolidation of their lands. Archduke Ferdinand I (1561-1564; emperor since 1556) in alliance with Catholic Church was determined to “defend” his domains from the influence of Reformation and to force his subjects to stay loyal to the Papal authority. However, in fact he reached a very limited success or even failed. Over the second half of the sixteenth century the population of the Habsburg lands in Central Europe (Austrian Hereditary lands, the lands of Bohemian crown and Hungarian kingdom) remained predominately Protestant.²⁰ It was extremely difficult for the dynasty to tip the scale in favor of Catholicism, since the political positions of Habsburgs were actually quite weak. They heavily depended on the estates in economic and military terms. Estates (first of all lower and higher nobility) paid taxes and provided the Monarchy with soldiers needed for the constant

¹⁶ For the critical discussion of the “Orthodox confessionalization” see Alfons Brüning, “Confessionalization in the Slavia Orthodoxa (Belorussia, Ukraine, Russia)? — Potential and Limits of a Western Historiographical Concept” in *Religion and the Conceptual Boundary in Central and Eastern Europe. Studies in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. by T. Bremer (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 66-97; Idem, “Die Orthodoxie im Konfessionellen Zeitalter: Von der kirchlichen Reform zur Konfessionalisierung – oder nicht? Beobachtungen in universalgeschichtlicher Perspektive” in *Orthodoxa Confessio? Konfessionsbildung, Konfessionalisierung und ihre Folgen in der östlichen Christenheit Europas*, ed. by Mihai-D. Grigore, Florian Kühler-Wielach (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), 45-77.

¹⁷ One of the first works on the Ottoman context Tijana Kristić, *Contested conversions to Islam. Narratives of religious Changes in the Early modern Ottoman empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).

¹⁸ A recent project directed by Tijana Kristić explores the entanglements of different confessionalizations in the territories of Ottoman empire. Tijana Kristić and Derin Terzioğlu eds., *Entangled Confessionalizations? Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th-18th Centuries* (Piscataway: Gorgias press, 2022).

¹⁹ Jörg Deventer, “‘Confessionalisation’ — a useful theoretical concept for the study of religion, politics, and society in early modern East-Central Europe?,” *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire*, 11 3 (2004), 420.

²⁰ Robert J.W Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg monarchy, 1550-1700. An interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 6-10, passim.

war with Ottoman empire.²¹ With the exception for Tyrol the estates consisted largely of Protestants who eagerly defended their faith in front of the emperor. Habsburg were incapable of shifting the confessional balance by force of arms or by any other kind of hard power. They had to follow a more sophisticated tactics and to rely mostly on non-violent methods of recatholization. Their attitude underwent substantial changes only in the late sixteenth century when a young Ferdinand, archduke of Inner Austria waged a systematic campaign against Lutheran priests and teachers.²² He expelled all the active advocates of Protestantism and by 1630s managed (at least formally) to combat “heresy” in his lands. After becoming emperor in 1618 he applied his methods for the entire Monarchy achieving success in Austrian and the Czech lands. Nevertheless, for a long period the role of the dynasty in confessionalization was less significant than in other Catholic territories (for example, in Bavaria).

The situation was even more complicated if one take into account that sometimes Habsburg rulers themselves sympathized with Protestantism. Maximilian II is famous for his religious tolerance. As Robert Evans pointed out, his interest in confessionally unspecified late humanism outweighed Catholic zeal.²³ Protestants or partisans of irenicism were appointed to important posts (e.g. a court librarian Hugo Blotius or general Lazarus von Schwendi) while the emperor was quite cold to Catholic activists who continued their missionary attempts.²⁴ Hence, at some

²¹ On the relationships between Habsburgs and Estates see R.J.W Evans, T.V. Thomas eds., *Crown, Church and Estates. Central European politics in the sixteenth and seventeenth century* (New York: St. Martins press, 1993); Paula Sutter Fichtner “Habsburg state-building in the Early modern period: the incomplete sixteenth century,” *Austrian History Yearbook* 25 (1994), 139-157; Géza Pálffy, “Der Wiener Hof und die ungarischen Stände im 16. Jahrhundert,” *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 109 3-4 (2001), 346-381; Thomas Winkelbauer, *Ständefreiheit und Fürstenmacht. Länder und Untertanen des Hauses Habsburg im konfessionellen Zeitalter. Teil 1.* (Wien: Ueberreuter, 2003); Karin J. McHardy, „Staatsbildung in den habsburgischen Ländern in der Frühen Neuzeit. Konzepte zur Überwindung des Absolutismusparadigmas“ in *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1620 bis 1740 Leistungen und Grenzen des Absolutismusparadigmas*, ed. by Thomas Winkelbauer and Petr Mařta (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2006), 73-99.

²² On the policy of Ferdinand II see Regina Pörtner, *The Counter-Reformation in Central Europe: Styria, 1585-1630* (Oxford: OUP, 2001); Sašo Jerše, “Glaube, Hoffnung, Herrschaft. Die „imaginaires politiques“ Innerösterreichs im Zeitalter des religiös-politischen Konflikts,” *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichischen Geschichtsforschung* 121 (2013), 352-378; Robert Bireley, *Ferdinand II, the Counter-Reformation emperor, 1578-1637* (Cambridge: CUP, 2014).

²³ Evans, 39.

²⁴ For the phenomenon of the Late humanism, religious tolerance under Maximilian II and his attitude towards Catholics see Evans, 33-40; Roman Schnur, “Lazarus von Schwendi (1522—1583): Ein unerledigtes Thema der historischen Forschung ,“ *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 14 1 (1987), 27-46; Howard Louthan, *The quest for compromise. Peacemakers in Counter-Reformation Vienna* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997); Elaine Foulton, *Catholic belief*

point recatholization was being carried out almost without assistance from the higher secular authorities. In this regard it is crucial to perceive the concrete agents responsible for spreading Catholicism on the ground. How was it possible to endorse a religious dogma and norms of social discipline when a ruler was either not strong enough or totally disinterested in the whole enterprise? In this case the burden of confessionalization fell on other actors. Certainly, the Catholic Church played a key role in this process. Despite all the problems the Church had to face in the years after the outbreak of the Reformation there were still some priests ready for missionary work. Rome was concerned about the religious situation in Central Europe and provided local Church units with financial aid and to some extent with ecclesiastical personnel. Supported by Catholic Habsburgs, preachers aimed first of all to convert the most influential social layer, aristocracy. After conversion magnates became the actors pursuing Catholic confessionalization in their domains. The role of conversions of aristocrats and their confessional policy has received substantial scholarly attention regarding all the Habsburg lands.²⁵ It has been proven that gradual recatholization of nobility did contribute to changing religious balance on the ground, but still it was not enough. Despite the help from Rome there was a constant need in professional teachers and preachers who could have converted to Catholicism wider social layers and not only aristocracy. Besides, it was desirable that public administration bodies at all levels were also equipped with Catholics. The task was then to train such kind of specialists. It was the Society of Jesus that took up the challenge of building up an efficient system of Catholic education.

and survival in Late Sixteenth-Century Vienna. The case of Georg Eder (1523–87) (Abington: Routledge, 2007); Gábor Almási, Paolo Molino, “Nikodemismus und konfessionalisierung am Hof Maximilians II.” in *Frühneuzeit-Info* 22 (2011), 112-128.

²⁵ Evans, 64-70, passim; Thomas Winkelbauer, “Sozialdisziplinierung und Konfessionalisierung durch Grundherren in den österreichischen und böhmischen Ländern im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert,” *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung*, 19 3 (1992), 317-339; Karin J. McHardy, *War, Religion and Court patronage in Habsburg Austria. The social and cultural dimensions of political interactions, 1521-1620* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Deventer, 417-419; Vaclav Bůžek, “Les cours habsbourg et la noblesse du royaume de Bohême entre 1520 et 1620,” *Histoire, économie et société* 26 3 (2007), 7-20; Géza Pálffy, *The Kingdom of Hungary and the Habsburg monarchy in XVI century*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 82-89.

Jesuit schools in the Habsburg lands

The Society of Jesus was established in 1540 as a new Catholic missionary order. Jesuits played a significant role in the refinement of the Catholic Church, the so-called Catholic reform.²⁶ By 1565 Jesuits became a global organization with about three thousand members fulfilling their missionary duties all over the globe (in Europe, India, Japan, Latin America).²⁷ The Society was governed by the Superior General and by the General Congregations summoned on the special occasions. The Society was divided into provinces. Each Province had its own superior (“provincial”) and congregation. Houses or colleges operated on a local level and were subject to the “provincial”.²⁸ The Colleges in the Habsburg monarchy at first belonged to the Upper German province. In 1563 all these lands, except for Tyrol, formed a separate Austrian province.

Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Order, initially did not have any educational projects. In his view, Jesuits were to become a new missionary order serving the Roman Church and their primary goal was to preach and not to teach. At first, he realized that members of the Society often needed more training before they were sent to missions. A solution was to educate them in the already existing universities (in 1540 in Paris where Loyola and other first Jesuits himself studied theology, in Padua, Bologna, Coimbra and other European cities), but under the condition that Jesuits had to reside separately in special colleges independent from the university authorities. However, Loyola soon grew unsatisfied with the quality of education given at the universities and asserted that Jesuits were to take responsibility for teaching. In 1545 Jesuits received right from the Pope to give classes at their colleges.²⁹ At first, they were intended only for the Society members and novices, but in 1548 Jesuits opened school in Messina accepting boys from lay families that had no connection to the Order. The school in Messina became model for all the future schools. Jesuits realized the potential of schools in promoting the Catholic faith and

²⁶ Robert Bireley, “Early-Modern Catholicism as a Response to the Changing World of the Long Sixteenth Century” in *Catholic Historical review* 95 2 (April, 2009), 232-234.

²⁷ John O’Malley, *The first Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA-London: Harvard University press, 1993), 51-52.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 53-55.

²⁹ Ladislaus Lukács, “De Origine collegiorum externorum deque controversiis circa eorum paupertatem obortis. Pars 1.” *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*. XXIX (1960), 195-201. The two Latin articles by László Lukács are still the most informative regarding institutional history of the colleges in Europe from 1540 to 1608.

attracting new members. The number of schools run by Jesuits rapidly increased over 1550-1560s. First schools were established in Italy, Spain and France, but very soon the Jesuit educational network spread to the lands of Holy Roman Empire and Poland-Lithuania.

The historiography of Jesuit education is abundant.³⁰ Scholars tended to focus on the institutional history of schools (how schools were founded, governed, and financially sustained) and pedagogical issues (how the Jesuit studies were organized and what was the distinctiveness of their approach to teaching). In general, Jesuits were invited by secular or clerical authorities (town municipalities, territorial princes, bishops) which provided the Society with housing facilities and financed the establishment of a school. In case of the Habsburg lands, it was archduke Ferdinand I who asked the Jesuits to settle in Vienna in 1551 and endowed them with adequate funding for opening a school in 1553.³¹ The College was ruled by a rector assisted by several prefects. Each college was an element of a wider structure of the Society. Rector was subject to the Head of the Order's Province (in case of Vienna in 1556-1563 it was Upper German Province and thereafter – Austrian province) and to the General of the Society in Rome.

Jesuits devised an innovative teaching system in which they merged and refined several preexisting educational traditions. This system was often referred to as a *modus parisiensis*, since many elements were borrowed from the University of Paris, alma mater of the Order's founders.³² Apart from the scholastic tradition of Paris Jesuits made use of humanistic pedagogy stressing the importance of classical authors and mastery in Latin. The most "Parisian" in the Jesuit education trait was the very idea of a college. As I have mentioned, originally colleges did not have schools and were residences where Society members lived together under the supervision of a prefect.

³⁰ A general overview of the historiography of Jesuit education before 2014 is given in Paul F. Grendler, "Jesuit schools in Europe. A historiographical essay," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 1 (2014), 7-25. As for more recent works see Paul F. Grendler, „The culture of the Jesuit teacher, 1548-1773," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 3 (2016), 17-41; Cristiano Casalini "Rise, Character, and Development of Jesuit Education: Teaching the World " in *The Oxford Online Handbook of Jesuits* ed by Ines G. Županov (Oxford: OUP, 2018); Paul F. Grendler , *Jesuit Schools and Universities in Europe 1548–1773* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2019),

³¹ Gernot Heiß, *Die Jesuiten und die Anfänge der Katholisierung in den Ländern Ferdinands I. Glaube, Mentalität, Politik* (Habilitation thesis; Vienna, 1986).

³² The *modus parisiensis* was skillfully discussed in a standard work by Gabriel Codina Mir, Gabriel Codina Mir, *Aux sources de la pédagogie des Jésuites. Le 'Modus Parisiensis'* (Rome: IHSI, 1968).

College inhabitants followed very strict rules and became accustomed to social and religious discipline. After opening schools, college rules expanded on Jesuit students as well. Some teaching methods also originated from Paris. Like in Paris students of Jesuit schools were supposed to follow an exact program of lectures and practice the acquired skills in perpetual academic disputations. Students were divided into classes and were to pass the exams to move on to next class. In the so called “lower classes” Jesuits taught grammar, poetics and rhetoric, the essential disciplines in humanistic curriculum. Then one could attend “philosophy classes” including logic, physics and metaphysics. Theology crowned this educational pyramid. Contrary to the previous university tradition, Jesuits did not include Medicine and Law in their curriculum. Another distinctive feature of the Jesuit way of organizing schools was a striving for uniformity. Jesuits educational plans (initially formulated in the fourth part of the Order’s “Constitutions” in 1558 and then finally drafted in the famous *Ratio studiorum* in 1599) were intended for every school subject to the Order. Although Jesuits made distinction between school and university, in practice it was not always possible to clearly attribute a particular institution to secondary or higher level of education basing on the curriculum. Officially school education was limited to human letters while philosophy and theology were reserved for university. In fact, Jesuits in many colleges did not pay attention to this division and gave lectures on “higher” disciplines in the institutions without a formal title of “university”.³³ It was exactly the case in Vienna where one could attend classes in philosophy and theology in the Jesuit school, although it was not formally elevated to the rank of University. This formal side was crucial at the period, since it was not the curriculum but the legal status that played the main role in the identification of a certain educational institution. University was not just a school teaching more complex disciplines. It was first of all a community with special rights and privileges; the most essential ones were the judicial immunity and the right to issue academic degrees. The privileges were granted by the Pope, the emperor or a territorial

³³ Relationships between Jesuits and universities were discussed in Karl Hengst, *Jesuiten an Universitäten und Jesuitenuniversitäten. Zur Geschichte der Universitäten in der Oberdeutschen und Rheinischen Provinz der Gesellschaft Jesu im Zeitalter der Konfessionellen Auseinandersetzung* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1981).

ruler. Curriculum specificity rather resulted from the privilege: one studied philosophy and theology at universities, since only there one could obtain degrees in these disciplines. In few certain cases Jesuits managed to get a university status for their colleges (in 1573 – Olomouc, 1578 – Vilnius, 1586 – Graz) or to take control over the already existing Universities, but quite often they offered courses of higher disciplines without any formal right. This disregard for the ancient legal principles led to acute conflicts with the “old” universities. The University of Vienna accused Jesuits of violating its fundamental privileges and over the second half of the sixteenth century constantly appealed for help to the emperor.³⁴ Jesuits ignored the criticism and in return urged for a right of issuing degrees for their college. Owing to the high quality of training offered at the College Jesuits were able to compete with the University and to prevail. The conflict lasted till 1623 when emperor Ferdinand II took the side of the Jesuits and placed the University under their control.

Studies of pedagogical ideas and institutional history have enriched our understanding of Jesuit schools and universities as educational and intellectual centers. However, the assessment of their place in recatholization requires other methods. Broadly speaking, one should consider colleges in their relation to the society and particular communities they operated in. This approach was first elaborated for the history of late medieval and early modern universities. Partisans of sociohistorical methodology propose to focus more on assorted aspects of university everyday life: frequency and attendance of universities, housing and life conditions of students and masters, costs of studies, differences between wealthy and destitute students, academic migrations, career placement after graduation and perceptions of university members by the town community.³⁵

³⁴ Kurt Mühlberger, „Universität und Jesuitenkolleg in Wien. Von der Berufung des Ordens bis zum Bau des Akademischen Kollegs“ in *Die Jesuiten in Wien. Zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte der österreichischen Ordensprovinz der „Gesellschaft Jesu“ im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Herbert Karner and Werner Telesko (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2003), 21-30.

³⁵ Rainer Christof Schwinges. *Studenten und Gelehrte. Studien zur Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte deutscher Universitäten im Mittelalter*. (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2008); Ulrike Denk, *Alltag zwischen Studieren und Betteln. Die Kodrei Goldberg, ein studentisches Armenhaus an der Universität Wien in der Frühen Neuzeit*. (Vienna: Vienna University Press, 2013); Gábor Alámsi ”Touring Europe: Comparing East-Central European academic peregrination of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth century” in *A Divided Hungary in Europe: exchanges, networks and representations, 1541 - 1699, vol. 1: Study tours and intellectual-religious relationships*, ed. by Gábor Almási (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars publishers, 2014), 17-34; Alan S. Ross “Pupils’ choices and social mobility after a

Historians of Jesuit education have not much addressed this problematic, although it would give rich insights into Jesuit schools' engagement in recatholization. A rare but a very significant exception is the work done by Zsófia Kádár. She has studied three Jesuit colleges in Western Hungary (Pozsony, Győr, Sopron) from a sociohistorical perspective.³⁶ It was the role of colleges within town communities that attracted interest of the scholar. Kádár conducted a comprehensive prosopographical analysis of all the members Jesuit personnel of the colleges and of the students attending their schools. Besides, she attached great attention to the activities of Congregations of laymen organized by Jesuits for intensification of religious life. Her monograph also discusses the missionary work of Jesuits in the towns. Moreover, Kádár investigated into confessional division of student bodies and position of Protestant students.³⁷ In recent years sociohistorical studies of Jesuit schools have been expanded on the colleges in Nagyszombat (Trnava) and Kasa (Kosice).³⁸ Thus, we already have a profound knowledge about the seventeenth century Jesuit schools in Hungary.

Thirty years war: a quantitative study," *Historical Journal* 51 2 (2014), 311-341; Idem, *Daum's boys. Schools and the Republic of letters in Early modern Germany*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015); Howard Hotson "Catchment areas and killing fields: towards the intellectual geography of the Thirty Years' War" in *Geographies of the University*, ed. by Peter Meusburger, Michael Heffernan, Laura Suarsana. (Cham: Springer 2018), 135-193;

³⁶ Zsófia Kádár, *Jezsuiták Nyugat-Magyarországon a 17. Században. A pozsonyi, győri és soproni kollégiumok* [Jesuits in Western Hungary in the seventeenth century. The colleges in Pozsony, Győr, Sopron] (Budapest: Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2020)

³⁷ Zsófia Kádár, "The difficulties of conversion. Non-Catholic students in Jesuit colleges in Western Hungary in the first half of the seventeenth century" in *Hungarian historical review* 3 4 (2014), 729-748.

³⁸ Zsuzsanna Heilauf, "A kassai jezsuita egyetem és hallgatósága" [The Jesuit university in Košice and its students] in *Universitas-Historia. Tanulmányok a 70. éves Szögi László Tiszteletére*. ed. by István Draskócy, Julia Varga and Vilmos Zsidi (Budapest: Magyar Levéltárosok Egyesülete, 2018), 61-81; István Fazekas – Zsófia Kádár–Zsolt Kökényesi–Bálint Ternovác, "Jezsuita gimnáziumok diáksága három jezsuita gimnázium, a Győri, a Pozsoni és a Nagyszombati gimnáziumok, példáján" [Students of Jesuit colleges: the cases of the colleges of Győr, Bratislava and Trnava] In *Cirkev a náboženstvo v Uhorsku v Ranom novoveku (=Egyház és vallás a koraiúj kori Magyarországon)* (Prešov: Vydavateľstvo Prešovskej Univerzity, 2020), 403-419.

The Jesuit college in Vienna

Much less has been achieved in the case of the Austrian Jesuits in the sixteenth century. It was Vienna where the history of Jesuit society in the Habsburg lands began. In Vienna Jesuits started their ambitious project of recatholization of the Habsburg monarchy which was closely connected to the process of confessionalization described above. Despite undeniable importance of this college there are still just few works dedicated to its history and none of them has made use of sociohistorical approach. All the previous historiography concentrated exclusively on institutional history, on the relationships between the college and the monarch and with the University or on a history of a particular congregation consisting of Jesuit students.³⁹ I will contribute to studies of history of the Viennese college by bringing in a wider social perspective and by combining it with confessional problematic. My primary goal is to assess the role of a particular school in the recatholization. I understand that one can approach this question from different angles. Fully acknowledging the significance of pedagogical issues, I will not address them in the thesis, since they have already been analyzed in detail in relation to other colleges. As I have pointed out, Jesuits strove for unification of pedagogical practices and basically, they were successful. Therefore, I assume that teaching methods in Vienna did not considerably deviate from a norm. The earlier works on the College show evidence for it.⁴⁰ For my part, I will focus on parameters that, in my view, reflected a potential of the school not as an education institution, but as a center of recatholization. One should identify who fell into the orbit of Jesuit education. To which social layers did their schools appeal? How large was a student body and from what regions

³⁹ Helmut Engelbrecht, *Die Geschichte des österreichischen Bildungswesens: Erziehung und Unterricht auf dem Boden Österreichs. Bd. 2: Das 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* (Wien: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1983); Gernot Heiß, *Die Jesuiten und die Anfänge der Katholisierung in den Ländern Ferdinands I. Glaube, Mentalität, Politik* (Habilitation thesis; Vienna, 1986); Johannes Wrba SJ, "Ignatius, die Jesuiten und Wien" in *Aspekte der Bildungs- und Universitätsgeschichte 16. Bis 19. Jahrhundert*. ed. by Kurt Mühlberger and Thomas Maisel (Wien: WUV-Universitätsverlag, 1993), 61-93; Kurt Mühlberger, „Universität und Jesuitenkolleg in Wien. Von der Berufung des Ordens bis zum Bau des Akademischen Kollegs“ in *Die Jesuiten in Wien. Zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte der österreichischen Ordensprovinz der „Gesellschaft Jesu“ im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*. ed. by Herbert Karner and Werner Telesko (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2003), 21-30; Zsófia Kádár, „Seaculum Marianum‘ Angaben zu der Marianischen Kongregation des jesuitischen akademischen Kollegs in Wien und zu seinen ungarischen Beziehungen (1579–1678)“ in *Wiener Archivforschungen. Festschrift für den ungarischen Archivdelegierten in Wien István Fazekas* ed. by Zsuzsanna Cziráki, Anna Fundárková, Orsolya Manhercz, Zsuzsanna Peresaud Márta Vajnági (Vienna, 2014), 205-213.

⁴⁰ Wrba, 59-62.

did students come from? What was the attitude towards non-Catholic students and how did Jesuits attempt to reconvert them? What techniques did they employ in order to spread Catholicism in a hostile Protestant environment?

Jesuits left a vast array of sources which can give insights into these questions. I will give a detailed source analysis in the chapters but here I will speak of the basic categories of sources. I can distinguish five main types of the Jesuit scribal production related to the history of the College of Vienna. Firstly, I have used the so called *Litterae Quadrimestres*.⁴¹ The rector or another College official was in charge of composing reports to Rome each four months (*quadrimestres*). According to the *Constitutions* of the Society, the *Litterae* were to “unite the disparate parts of the Jesuit corporate body both with one another and with the Roman “head.”⁴² These reports discussed various issues related to the college mission including the progress of schools. Rector of the Viennese college also regularly sent these letters to the “Provincial” and to the Head of the Society in Rome. *Litterae* were then circulated locally in the Province among other colleges to create a united information network within the Society.⁴³ Due to their detailed character, *Litterae Quadrimestres* are one the most informative sources about the early history of the Society. They were produced till 1565 when they were replaced by the *Litterae annuae* (“Annual letters”) which were much more concise and uniform.⁴⁴ Seven volumes of the *Litterae Quadrimestres* were published in different years from 1893 to 1932.⁴⁵ Secondly, I relied on the Jesuit Chronicles. The most famous Chronicle about the first years of the Society was composed by Juan Polanco who was the secretary of Ignatius Loyola and the first Jesuit historian. The main body of Polanco’s Chronicle covers only the period of life of the Society’s founder (1491-1556). I have addressed

⁴¹ Paul Nelles discussed the *Litterae quadrimestres* and their role in the Jesuit communication system in 1540-70s. Paul Nelles, “Cosas y cartas: Scribal Production and Material Pathways in Jesuit Global Communication (1547–1573),” *Journal of Jesuit studies* 2 (2015), 421-450.

⁴² Quoted in Nelles, 423.

⁴³ Ibid, 428-430.

⁴⁴ Marcus Friedrich, “Circulating and compiling the *Litterae Annuae*. Towards a history of the Jesuit system of communication” in *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 153 (2008), 9.

⁴⁵ *Litterae quadrimestres ex universis praeter Indiam et Brasiliam locis in quibus aliqui de Societate Jesu versabatur Romae missae*. T.I-VII. (Roma-Madrid, 1893, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1921, 1936, 1932).

the volumes concerning 1551-1556 years that contain the data about the College of Vienna.⁴⁶ The Chronicle often repeat the information of the *Litterae Quadrimestres*, but in several cases provide some new details. There was also a supplement to Polanco's Chronicle with a collection of his letters and the short excerpts from the unfinished Chronicle dealing with the history after 1556. The second volume of this Supplement briefly touches upon the situation in Vienna in 1560s.⁴⁷ Apart of the general Chronicle I extensively used the Chronicle of the College of Vienna (*Historia collegii Viennensis*). The manuscript of the Chronicle is stored in the Austrian National Library.⁴⁸ This copy was written around 1700 but it is based on the earlier versions. College "histories" were intended for recording all notable activities of a particular community.⁴⁹ In contrast to Polanco's chronicle the College *Historia* covers the period after 1556 and dives a more detailed account about the life of Jesuits in Vienna. Thirdly, I consulted various normative sources related to the Viennese College: different sets of domestic rules of the College and the instructions received by the Viennese Jesuits from the visitor in 1563 and 1566. These testimonies were published in the series *Monumenta Paedagogica Societatis Jesu* edited by László Lukács.⁵⁰ The fourth category is personal letters of the College officials to the Superiors. Unlike *Litterae quadrimestres* they were not intended for a wider circulation within the Society, were less formalized and often discussed some concrete issues without giving a general overview of the College life. Some letters were published in the same series as normative documents (MPSJ) and in the separate edition of letters circulated within the Society before 1556.⁵¹ Finally, I addressed the "Catalogues of the members

⁴⁶ *Vita Ignatii Loyolae et rerum Societatis Historia auctore Joanne Alfonso de Polanco*. T.2-6 (Madrid: Augustinus Avrial, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898).

⁴⁷ *Polanci complementa* T.2. (Madrid, 1917).

⁴⁸ *Historia collegii Viennensis. Pars I (1551-1638)* ÖNB Cod. 8367 HAN MAG.

⁴⁹ On the College *Historia* see Paul Shore, "The Voices of *Memoria: Diaria, Historiae, and Annuaire* as Records of Experience in the Pre-suppression Society" in *Engaging Sources: The Tradition and Future of Collecting History in the Society of Jesus (Proceedings of the Symposium held at Boston College, June 11–13, 2019)* ed. by Cristiano Casalini, Emanuele Colombo, and Seth Meehan (Chestnut Hill: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2021), 1-16.

⁵⁰ I used the volumes II-IV of this series. *Monumenta Paedagogica Societatis Jesu nova edition ex integro refacta* T.II-IV. ed. by Ladislaus Lukács (Roma: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 1974, 1981).

⁵¹ *Epistolae mixtae ex variis Europae locis ab anno 1537 ad 1556 scriptae: nunc primum a patribus Societatis Jesu in lucem editae*. T. III-V (Madrid: Augustinus Avrial, 1900, 1901).

of the Austrian province”.⁵² Matriculation lists of the College did not survive and one cannot carry out a prosopographical analysis of the student body in a traditional way. However, the “Catalogues” give the information about a particular category of students, namely those who joined the Society. The lists include the names of all Jesuits operating in the Colleges: as professors, students, or so called *coadjutores* (“assistants”). I analyzed only the data related to students. The lists inform us about the students’ places of origin, age and give some additional personal details (e.g., regarding their language skills, academic talents etc.). Apart from these five categories there were also some additional sources (excerpts from hagiographical texts, petitions from the University of Vienna regarding its relations with the Jesuits etc.). I will comment more upon them in the chapters.

The structure of my thesis will correspond to the questions outlined above. In the first chapter I will discuss two essential quantitative measurements of the school: size of the student body and places of origin of students. If one regards the College as a center of religious indoctrination of Protestants or of hesitating Catholics, it is significant to perceive how many students got in this space of intensive recatholization. It was an essential pre-requisite to accept as many students as possible to educate them in a Catholic atmosphere. A high number of students did not automatically lead to a high number of conversions, but it definitely raised the probability of a Protestant student getting in touch with Catholic doctrine and changing his mind regarding confessional allegiance. As for Catholic students, information about numbers is helpful for understanding the size of a recruitment base for the Church and the Catholic ruler. Not all graduates of Jesuit schools became priests or served the Catholic cause in other way, but the more students attended classes at the Jesuit College, the higher the chance of finding an appropriate candidate. As for the places of origin, they help to identify whether a particular school was intended just for the students from neighboring regions, or if it had a wider, international orientation.

⁵² *Catalogi personarum et officiorum provinciae Austriae. Pars I (1551-1600)* ed. by Ladislaus Lukács (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 1978).

The second chapter is dedicated to the social policy of Jesuit educators. The Jesuit school in Vienna sought to attract students of a different social and economic background. Jesuits put emphasis on the two groups: noble and the “poor” students. The aim of this chapter is to examine the place of these groups in the college the attitude of Jesuits towards this social groups in terms of recatholization tasks. I will first consider the position of the nobility in the college. I will examine the rhetoric Jesuits applied to conceptualize the role of teaching aristocrats for the prestige of a school and for the goals of confessionalization. I will present a complicated history of a boarding house for nobles illustrating the limits of the Jesuit social policy and its dependency on the external factors. Then I will turn to the poor students (*pauperes*) who had their own residence called the “new college”. I will clarify the terminology and show who was actually perceived as a “poor”. I will assess the significance of the financial support *pauperes* received from the school. Finally, I will show how Jesuit tied the aid to *pauperes* with their confessional allegiances and thus used social policy as a tool in recatholization. I will pay special attention to the methods of disciplining “poor” students which were also intended for turning them into pious and obedient Catholics.

In the third chapter I will address the problem of non-Catholic students in the college. The aim of Jesuits was to attract boys from Lutheran families and to convert them to Catholicism. The story of Melchior Klesl might prove the efficiency of their methods, but was not it an exception? In the chapter I will discuss rules of admission of Protestant to the school as well as formal regulations of the school administration regarding non-Catholic students. I will focus on the conversion policy of the Jesuit and on the problem of “disguised” confessional loyalties of the (ex)-Protestant students. By examining the attitude towards Protestant nobles in the school, I will show the social aspects of the Jesuit conversion strategies. Apart from Protestants I will take into account the attitude towards converted Jews who also studied in the College.

Chapter 1. The Student body of the Jesuit College in Vienna: size and catchment area

In 1553, two years after the college's establishment, Jesuits finally received the right to open their school in Vienna. Although the Jesuits enjoyed support from the emperor Ferdinand, they were not welcome in the city. They faced serious opposition from the side of Lutheran burgers as well as from the administration of the University of Vienna which was concerned about its exclusive rights in educational domain.⁵³ The University was reluctant to provide Jesuits with a right to teach⁵⁴, but ultimately had to yield to Ferdinand's appeal. Being placed in such hostile circumstances Jesuits were inclined to prove that they were capable of organizing an effective educational process. They aimed to advertise their school and to attract as many students as possible. The College became a stronghold of the Society of Jesus in the Habsburg monarchy and a cornerstone for recatholization of the region. A further development of the Catholic confessionalization supported by the dynasty depended largely on this Jesuit school. It was crucial for Jesuits to get rooted in the capital and to establish there a competitive school which would be a model for other Colleges in the other Habsburg lands. Did the Jesuits manage to achieve their goals in Vienna and how can one gauge it? To tackle this question, I will reconstruct a collective image of a student body in Vienna dealing with its two main parameters: size of a student body, places of origin.

Scholars dealing with the history of early modern education tend to apply various prosopographical techniques in order to define a degree of attractiveness of a particular school or university. The first method used by historians of education consists in estimating the number of students. It is considered that parents would send their children to a school with a better image and these preferences reflected in a total number of students. One could argue against this approach, since quantity does not necessarily entail quality. It would be an oversimplification to judge a

⁵³ The college rector described a suspicious attitude of the University in one of his reports to Rome. *Litterae quadrimestres*. Vol. II. ,249.

⁵⁴ According to an ancient privilege, only the University was authorized to let new schools be founded in Vienna. "...sine scitu et licentia dicti rectoris nulla Scola erigatur..." [...no new school can be established without consent and ordinance of the Rector...]. "Albrecht's III Stiftsbrief, 1384" in *Geschichte der kaiserlichen Universität zu Wien. Zweiter Band. Statutenbuch*. ed. by Rudolf Kink (Vienna: Verlag von Karl Georg und Sohn, 1854), 64.

school and quality of training there just basing on a size of the student body. However, I believe this information is relevant for studying a Jesuit college. If one regards the College as a center of religious indoctrination of Protestants or of hesitating Catholics, it is significant to perceive how many students got in this space of intensive recatholization. It was an essential pre-requisite to accept as many students as possible to educate them in a Catholic atmosphere. As I will show in the third chapter, high number of students did not automatically lead to high number of conversions, but it definitely raised a probability of a Protestant student getting in touch with Catholic doctrine and changing his mind regarding confessional allegiance. As for Catholic students, information about numbers is helpful for understanding the size of a recruitment base for the Church. Not all graduates of Jesuit schools became priests or served the Catholic case in other way, but the more students attended the classes the higher chance of finding an appropriate candidate. The second prosopographical parameter is a so-called catchment area. Studying places of origin one can identify whether a particular school was intended just for the students from neighboring regions, or if it had a wider, international orientation.

In the case of the Jesuit college of Vienna, prosopographical research would definitely nuance our understanding of this school as a center of a nascent recatholization of the Habsburg lands. Thus, I could have followed the steps of other scholars and attempted to give a quantitative account of a student body in the Jesuit college in 1553-1565 by investigating its essential parameters described above. There is, however, a crucial obstacle to this type of research related to the limitation of sources that I use. A basic source for prosopographical analysis of students is matriculation lists. They usually contain relevant pieces of data, allow us to trace the chronological dynamics and are easily quantifiable. The problem is, as I have mentioned in the source chapter, that almost no matriculation list survived from the College of Vienna. Hence, I have to rely on other kinds of testimonies which are less suitable for a quantitative investigation. It should be admitted that a final picture will not be as precise as it would be if matriculation lists had survived. However, available sources are enough to reveal some general patterns. *Litterae quadrimestres*

(literally – “Reports sent every fourth month”) as well as the college chronicle equip us with the data about numbers of students for a particular year. The reports also sometimes mention places of origin and a social status of students. “Catalogues of the Society members” suit well for identifying regional and linguistic diversity of students. They can be used for assessing frequency as well, but with significant limitations. The “Catalogues” include not all the students, but only those who had closer ties with the Order. Therefore, it is impossible to define exact number of students. However, basing on this sample one can trace certain trends which might have reflected a general frequency development. At the same time the “Catalogues” are a perfect source for studying student mobility, since they indicate if a student came from or was sent to a different college.

In order to appropriately assess the popularity of the Jesuit college I will draw parallels with other contemporary educational institutions. The most relevant comparison is with the University of Vienna, its main rival in educational milieu in the city. Secondly, I will address the experience the three Jesuit colleges in Western Hungary (Győr, Sopron, Pozsony) which have already been studied from a prosopographical perspective. Finally, I will consider the data related to Protestant schools operating in the same period in Saxony and in the Habsburg lands.

I argue that over the decade, Jesuits managed to build up a stable and highly attractive school. The number of students increased almost every year and, in some periods, exceeded that of the University of Vienna. Their student community was diverse in regional and linguistic terms. Although most of students came from Austrian and German lands, the school accepted from its very beginning youth from all over Central Europe and even from some distant regions like Scotland. The Jesuit college of Vienna maintained close ties with the main Jesuit schools in Central Europe and in Rome and this contact was reflected in a constant student exchange. Moreover, the Viennese college can be seen as a dominant educational center in the Habsburg lands which supported the development of Jesuit education in Czech and Hungarian territories. All this clearly

indicates the significant success of the College and hence a growing degree of influence exercised by it in the process of recatholization.

1.1.Size of the student body

The first important issue to be discussed is the size of the student body and its evolution during the period under consideration. In order to contextualize the situation in the Viennese college I should first give some general observations about student frequency trends in early modern Europe. The period from about 1560 until the beginning of the seventeenth century is characterized by a substantial growth of school and university attendance all over Europe. This phenomenon is called the “educational revolution” and was first studied for England by E.W.Lawrence.⁵⁵ Very similar patterns were then revealed in other European regions including the Habsburg lands where the concept of “educational revolution” was tested for the case of students of noble origin.⁵⁶ Scholars have identified two main reasons for the rise: 1. The development of new, more bureaucratized state structures that were to be equipped with a great number of well-trained public officers, 2. Confessional struggles lead to a formation of new schools and universities intended to educate people in accordance with a certain religious dogma. It is the second, confessional aspect of growth that is especially relevant for the Jesuit colleges. The school in Vienna was established at the initial stage of the global “educational revolution”, but one still can expect an upward trend in student numbers. However, one should be careful adapting any kind of generalization for a local situation. While the majority of universities indeed showed a substantial growth in student numbers over the second half of the sixteenth century (from 350 to 500 in Cambridge, from app. 650 to 1000 in Padua), few institutions of higher education

⁵⁵ Lawrence Stone, “Educational revolution in England, 1560-1640,” *Past&Present* 28 (Jul, 1964), 41-80.

⁵⁶ Richard L. Kagan, *Students and society in early modern Spain* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 159-231; Maria Rosa di Simone, “Admission” in *A History of the University in Europe*. Vol. II: 1500-1800, ed. by Hilde de Ridder-Symoens (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), 297-303; Karin J. MacHardy, “Cultural Capital, Family Strategies and Noble Identity in Early Modern Habsburg Austria 1579-1620,” *Past & Present*, no. 163 (1999): 36–75; Alan S. Ross, *Daum’s boys. Schools and the Republic of letters in Early modern Germany*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 4, 123-130.

followed the opposite trend. The Universities in Paris and in Vienna both experienced a sharp decline.⁵⁷

In the *Litterae quadrimestres* and chronicles one can distinguish two ways of referring to numerical developments of the student body. Jesuits could use either merely descriptive terms or give the exact numbers of students attending the College in a given year. I will first address the former cases. I will discuss the contexts in which such references appeared and will identify general trends they reflect. I will consider not only actual frequency dynamics, but also the ways Jesuits framed the information about student numbers in their narratives.

In the sources related to the first decade of the College's history (1553–1563) one frequently encounters claims that the Jesuit school experienced a constant increase in students. References to such kind of quantitative progress served two goals. Firstly, *Litterae quadrimestres* (literally – “Reports sent every fourth month”) composed by rector argued that rising figures were clear proof of the attractiveness of the Jesuit school for the local population. A typical explanation for sudden popularity was the quality of education provided by the Jesuits. According to the rector’s report written in 1553, as soon as the school was opened a large number (*magna turba puerorum*) of students was eager to attend classes there, since they perceived that they could not only get a good school training, but also in religious piety.⁵⁸ Similar explanations for their success were present in other reports.⁵⁹

Although the *Litterae quadrimestres* sought to create an impression that the school continuously accepted more and more new students, there is at least one mention of students leaving the college. According to a report sent in August 1560, a lot of students went away from Jesuits “due to multiple reasons” which are not clarified.⁶⁰ So as to smooth out these contradictions

⁵⁷ From 1500 to about 350 in Paris and from 1000 at the beginning of the century to 200 by its end in Vienna. Maria Rosa di Simone, 304, 309.

⁵⁸ „...Postquam itaque innotuit nobis factam esse potestatem legendi, **magna sane puerorum turba**, brevi temporis spatio, scholas nostras frequentare coepit, in quibus, cum non sint ipsi pravi imbuti opinionibus, licet facile praeter litterarum doctrinam, e aquae ad pietatem spectant fundamenta collocare”. *Litterae quadrimestres*, II, 375.

⁵⁹ *Litterae quadrimestres*, III, 565; *Litterae quadrimestres*, VI, 608.

⁶⁰ “tametsi plures ob causas permulti fluere, ut sic loquar, ac refluere soleant” *Litterae quadrimestres*, VI, 765.

with a broader success story, the rector, who was in charge of writing *Litterae quadrimestres*, immediately noticed that some of such students would often return (*refluere soleant*). In the “Catalogues of the Society members” there is also one short reference to instability in frequency numbers. According to an annotation to the “Catalogue” of 1559 it was students of lower classes who were especially vulnerable and often had to leave the school. The suggested causes for this were rather trivial and were not related to studies. Students left the college either because of the cold (*propter frigora*) (this information is quite telling as regards quality of the housing facilities possessed by Jesuits) or because they chose to spend their time not on studying, but harvesting grapes for pay.⁶¹ Students could work as day-workers in vineyards and earn some money or help their families involved in winemaking. This meant they were too busy to attend classes. However, after the harvest finished, according to the “Reports”, they might have come back. These two brief remarks in the “Reports” and in the “Catalogue” hint to the fluctuations in student numbers in the first decade after the college's foundation occurred despite an overall positive trend.

Another important context in which the numerical progress was mentioned is a competition with the University of Vienna. College rectors wished not only to represent their newly established school as an extremely successful enterprise, but also to show that it functioned much better than the ancient University. A marked contrast in students’ attendance was seen as a good argument in favor of the College. In the two reports related to 1559 the rector proudly indicated that students preferred classes in the College to those given by the University and tended to leave the University and joined the college instead.⁶² The reason for this shift is that the College philosophy professors were considered more professional than those of the University.

One could certainly question plausibility of these records. Composed by the Jesuits and intended to demonstrate the dominance of their schools over the already existing educational institutions, the reports might have exaggerated the progress. Yet petitions coming from the

⁶¹ “Istae inferiores classes maxime patiuntur fluxum et refluxum, ut ita loquar, propter frigora, vindemias et alias causas”. *Catalogi personarum et officiorum provinciae Austriae. Pars I (1551-1600)*, ed. by László Lukács (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 1978), 58

⁶² *Litterae quadrimestres*, VI, 325-326.

opposite side confirm the picture painted by the Jesuit sources. In 1593 the University consistory sent a petition to the emperor which was directed against Jesuits and their activities in the educational domain.⁶³ Although the petition was written fifty years after the founding of the Jesuit College, it referred to processes taking place from the beginning. The University would make similar complaints over 1560-70s as well.⁶⁴ The petition of 1593 among other problems touched upon the differences in frequency numbers between the College and the University. The University claimed that Jesuits had lured a lot of students which led to a substantial fall in student number at the University. The College student body was four times larger than that of the University.⁶⁵ In this case, however, the view of the University could be also biased, since the petitioners might have exaggerated the success of Jesuits in order to impress the emperor and gain his support in the struggle with the College. Nevertheless, an overall tendency is more or less clear: the number of the College students gradually increased, while the University lost its popularity.

The third context in which the growth of student body was mentioned differs essentially from the previous two. Sometimes the information about numbers were used not to advertise success, but to raise concerns. Some “Reports” addressed this issue while talking about housing problems faced by the school. Jesuit school facilities turned out to be insufficient for accepting a grand number of students. It was frequently reported that in some years due to influx of new students the College did not possess enough space neither for studies nor for housing.⁶⁶ The lack of space also affected the organization of a school theatre, a pivotal element of Jesuit education. No appropriate place could be found to accommodate the students participating in regular theater

⁶³ UAW, CA 1 0 38.

⁶⁴ Kurt Mühlberger, “Universität und Jesuitenkolleg in Wien. Von der Berufung des Ordens bis zum Bau des akademischen Kollegs“ in *Die Jesuiten in Wien. Zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte der österreichischen Ordensprovinz der "Gesellschaft Jesu" im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Herbert Karner (Vienna: Verbund für Bildung und Kultur, 2003), 26-27.

⁶⁵ UAW, CA 1 0 38, 8.

⁶⁶ “Scholarum nostrarum lectiones visitant pueri frequentes, et nisi per primam occasionem noua aedificia absoluantur, locus plane huius collegii capere omnes non poterit” *Litt. Quadr.* V, 483; Similar complaints can be found in a few reports. See *Litt. Quadr.* V, 331, 640; *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 767; *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 283-284.

plays.⁶⁷ Jesuits also asked for more funding from the emperor so that they could build new student housing.⁶⁸

Thus, the sources originated from the Jesuit side and from the University indicate a substantial growth in student numbers over the first decades after the College establishment.

1.1.1 Numbers

The lack of matriculation lists makes it extremely difficult to come up with precise numbers of students for each year. Quantitative characteristics need to be carefully collected from *Litterae quadrimestres* and the Chronicle and then compared, since the numbers given in the two different sources do not always correspond. Joannes Wrba, the author of the most detailed article about the history of the college, briefly touched upon the problem of student numbers in the first three years of the school's history.⁶⁹ Gernot Heiß, in his dissertation on the Jesuits under Ferdinand I, refers to the numbers of college students until the year 1560 omitting few years.⁷⁰ While these studies create an important foundation, they are need to be improved upon because they neither problematized the reliability of the figures and nor contextualized them by contrasting with other similar sets of data. I will check his results and expand the study until the year 1562, when the *Litterae quadrimestres*, the most informative sources were no longer produced. I will first go year by year discussing the problems arising with identification of a certain figure. Then I will give a resulting tendency for a decade and compare it with that presented in descriptive accounts. Finally, I will compare the frequency figures for the Viennese college with those for other contemporary schools in order to define its relative size.

At first, I should discuss some limitations that should be taken into account while analyzing numerical data in narrative sources. For few years there are no numerical data at all or information

⁶⁷ *Litt. Quadr.* V, 640.

⁶⁸ *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 89-90.

⁶⁹ Johannes Wrba SJ, "Ignatius, die Jesuiten und Wien" in *Aspekte der Bildungs-und Universitätsgeschichte 16. Bis 19. Jahrhundert*. Ed. by Kurt Mühlberger and Thomas Maisel (Wien: WUV-Universitätsverlag, 1993), 84-85.

⁷⁰ Gernot Heiß, *Die Jesuiten und die Anfänge der Katholisierung in den Ländern Ferdinands I. Glaube, Mentalität, Politik* (Habilitation thesis; Vienna, 1986), 70-71.

is given only for a particular group of students (for example, only for those living in a boarding house for poor students). One may also question the reliability even of those numbers that did come up in texts, since they might have been exaggerated in order to represent the situation of the college in a more favorable light. Scholars working with “Annual reports” (*Litterae annuae*), which replaced *Litterae quadrimestres* by the end of the sixteenth century, tend to be very cautious about numerical data given there⁷¹. For example, they are rather skeptical about the figures of converts to Catholicism which were often over-reported by Jesuits. Nevertheless, I am inclined to consider the information about student numbers as more or less plausible. There are several reasons for it. Firstly, frequency figures did not possess the same propagandistic value as numbers of converts. A rise in students certainly could be interpreted as a sign of positive development and this information could be manipulated, but it was far less important for Jesuit missions than the accounts about those who decided to return to the Roman Church. Recatholization was the main goal with new converts numbers the best parameter indicator, while numbers of students belonged more to the realm of technical details. The second and, to my mind, the most convincing argument in favor of plausibility is that figures for *Litterae quadrimestres* were taken from the matriculation lists that did not survive. Matriculation lists were essentially practical documents intended for informing the college administration about actual number of students. They were used only within the college by its administration, and it is unlikely that they presented a distorted picture of the student body. How can one identify that “Reports” drew upon matriculation lists if the latter cannot be directly consulted? Fortunately, as regards one particular year I can cross-check the information from the “Reports” with another source explicitly referring to the lists. The “Catalogue of the Society members” (*Catalogus personarum*) for the year 1559 contains a detailed list with numbers of students in accordance to the classes in which they studied.⁷² It is an exceptional case,

⁷¹ Gernot Heiß, “Die “Litterae Annuae” und die “Historiae” der Jesuiten“ in *Quellenkunde der Habsburgermonarchie (16.-18. Jh.). Ein exemplarisches Handbuch*, ed. by Josef Pauser, Martin Scheutz, Thomas Winkelbauer. (Vienna-Munich: Böhlau Verlag, 2004), 663-674.

⁷² *Catalogi personarum et officiorum provinciae Austriae. Pars I (1551-1600)*. Ed. by László Lukács (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 1978), 58

since “Catalogues” as a rule dealt only with those students who had entered the order of the Society of Jesus. This group accounted for a small part of the entire student body. However, in 1559 the author chose to add the figures concerning the so called “external” (i.e. non-Jesuit) students as well. The figures from the “Catalogue” were consonant with those from the “Reports”⁷³ indicates that they both relied on the same original source – students list. I assume that other exact numbers in the “Reports” for other years had the same reference point and, thus, can be used as reliable evidence.

The first exact number is related to the year 1553 and is given in the college chronicle. At the beginning of 1554 the college moved from the Dominican monastery to the former convent of Carmelites located at the am Hof square which possessed more housing facilities. The chronicler found it significant to underline that 120 students actively assisted in the relocation.⁷⁴ The relocation must have had significant impact on the attractiveness of the college, since it witnessed a threefold growth in students before the end of 1554. According to the “Reports”, the number rose to 312 and remained almost at the same level next year.⁷⁵ The progress steadily continued: in 1557 Jesuits gave classes to 370 students⁷⁶ and in 1558 already to 444.⁷⁷ 1559 saw a sudden fall to 352 students⁷⁸, followed by a quick recovery in 1560 and 1561 when college was attended by 500 students of 7 classes.⁷⁹ We do not have exact figures from the period from 1562 through the early 1590s when there were supposedly 1000 students taught by the Jesuits. This number came not from the college sources, but from the letter to the emperor written by the Consistory of the University, Jesuits’ main rival.⁸⁰ The total number might have been exaggerated to gain more

⁷³ *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 388.

⁷⁴ “In transfereindis porro ex Dominicanorum ruinis in hoc Monasterium [Carmelites] rebus nostris, non minimo auxilio nostris fuerunt scholarum nostrorum studiosi **qui tum 120 numerabantur**“ *Historia collegii Viennensis*. Pars I. ÖNB. Cod. 8367 HAN MAG. 2v.

⁷⁵ *Litt. Quadr.* III, 208, 563.

⁷⁶ *Litt. Quadr.* V, 160.

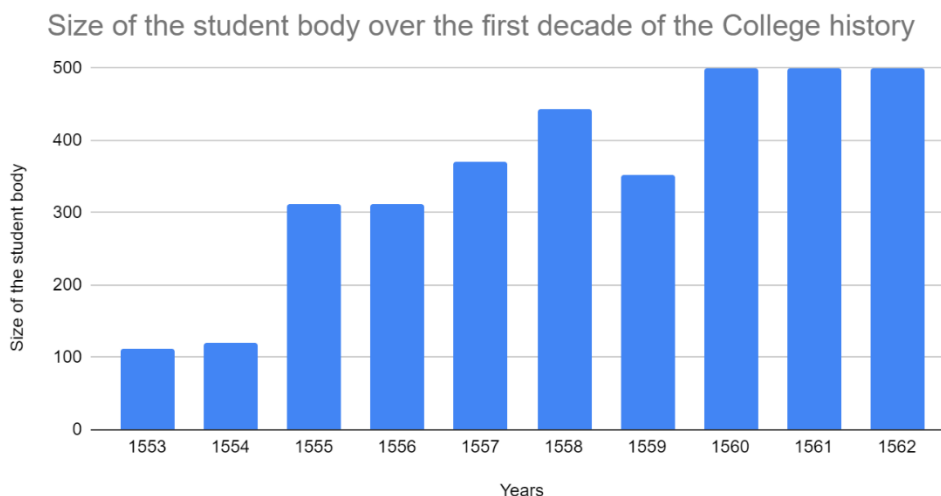
⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 637.

⁷⁸ *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 388; *Catalogi personarum...*, 58.

⁷⁹ *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 284.

⁸⁰ UAW, CA 10 38.

sympathy from the emperor. However, one could assume that starting from 1561 the number certainly grew from 500 and probably reached the point around 1000 in 1593.



The analysis of quantitative data, thus, has allowed me to get a nuanced picture of the upward tendency already traced in descriptive pieces of evidence. Overall, the growth was relatively fast. The student population of the college increased almost fivefold over the first decade of its history. There was a slight drop in 1559 which could be due to the new sanctions against the college imposed by the University of Vienna, when it prohibited its own students to attend the classes given by Jesuits.⁸¹ Even though the Jesuit rector claimed students tended to ignore this order⁸², it might have had a temporarily effect and some students with “double allegiance” chose to leave the college.

1.1.2. Comparison with other schools

How considerable was the figure of 500 students for a school in the mid-sixteenth century? In order to tackle this issue, I will consider institutions of three types: other Jesuit colleges, Protestant schools and an “ancient” University. All the examples will be taken from Central Europe.

⁸¹ *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 388.

⁸² *Ibidem.*

Only a few Jesuit schools have been studied from a socio-historical perspective which includes an analysis of students' frequency. For the middle of the sixteenth century there is only one example. The college in Innsbruck, founded in 1562, was at first attended by about 70 students, by 1570s the number rose to 250 and remained almost stable till the end of the century.⁸³ One may also take an example related to the later period and consider three colleges in West Hungary (Győr, Pozsony, and Sopron) in seventeenth century. Over the span of 40 years only the college of Győr twice hit the point of 500 at the extreme of its development. The average number of students was 306 for Győr and 324 for Pozsony.⁸⁴ In the case of Sopron, there is no evidence that the number exceeded 300.⁸⁵ So, if one relies solely on the available data for 1553-1562, one can assert that the Jesuit school in Vienna was not small. The student body in Vienna was more numerous than in Innsbruck and Sopron and was comparable to Győr and Pozsony. Taking into account the growth of the College towards the end of the century turns the Viennese college into the leader in the region.

Regarding Protestant examples, one can compare the College in Vienna with a Saxon school in Zwickau considered the largest in Saxony in 1560-80s. Saxony was an outpost of Lutherans and schools on its territories played a similar role as those of Jesuits in Habsburg lands. Like Jesuits Lutheran teachers contributed to a confessionalization, but from the other side of the front. Numbers at the Zwickau school in 1570-80s lie between 300 and 400, whereas an average school in a small Saxon town as a rule was frequented by no more than 100.⁸⁶ As for Austria, one of the leading Protestant schools situated in Loosdorf could only reach 150 in its best years.⁸⁷ In Laibach (Ljubljana), Carniola's center, the school, despite all efforts, did not manage to surpass

⁸³ Emerich Coreth, „Jesuitenkolleg in Innsbruck: Grundzüge seiner Geschichte,“ *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, 113 2/3 (1991), 142-143.

⁸⁴ Zsófia Kádár, *Jezsuiták Nyugat-Magyarországon a 17. Században* [Jesuits in Western Hungary in the seventeenth century] (Budapest: Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2020), 196-198.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 203.

⁸⁶ Alan S. Ross, *Daum's boys*, 126.

⁸⁷ Helene Miklas, „Die Geschichte der Hohen Schule zu Loosdorf von 1574 – 1627,“ *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte des Protestantismus in Österreich*, 116 (2000/2001), 64-131.

the mark of 150.⁸⁸ In Styria the situation was even worse. A Protestant school in Graz also had to struggle with a local Jesuit college. In 1570s, when the college only started opening classes, an average attendance to the Protestant school was about 40 students.⁸⁹ Thus, it can be concluded that Jesuits in Vienna were more successful in attracting students than their confessional opponents.

Finally, it is worth considering the student numbers at the University of Vienna. I have already mentioned that the University was a principal rival of the college in the competition for students. The authorities of the oldest high school in Austria were always deeply concerned about progress made by Jesuits and sought to undermine their positions. But how numerous was a student body of the University itself? Was the situation as dramatic as it was presented in the supplication to the emperor? It can be argued that the concerns were valid. Whereas at the beginning of the sixteenth century the University had more than 1000 students, the number fell to about 200 in 1580⁹⁰. It is noteworthy that the University had a formal right to give lectures not only in Arts and humanities like the college, but also in Medicine, Law and Theology. But despite these seemingly more favorable conditions, the University did not manage to raise attendance numbers. The Jesuit college had two or three times more students than the University. This fact signals that the Jesuits became an outright winner in the “educational fight” in Vienna in the second half of the sixteenth century.

Using the data from the *Litterae quadrimestres* and the College chronicle, I have argued that the college's student body reached the substantial size of 500 by the beginning of 1560s and continued to grow through the end of the century. The college considerably surpassed contemporary Protestant schools in Austria and the University of Vienna in terms of frequency numbers. An overall increasing trend was sometimes interrupted by short-time outflows caused

⁸⁸ Gernot Heiß, “Die Landschaftsschulen in den nieder- und innerösterreichischen Ländern vor dem Dreißigjährigen Krieg” in *Bildung, Politik und Gesellschaft. Studien zur Geschichte des europäischen Bildungswesens vom 16. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. by G. Klingenstein, H. Lutz, G. Stourzh (Vienna-Munich, 1978), 30

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 32-34.

⁹⁰ Maria Rosa di Simone, “Admission” in *A History of the University in Europe. Vol. II: 1500-1800.*, ed. by Hilde de Ridder-Symoens (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), 304.

either by the sanctions from the University or by the issues not related to studies. This development indicates that, at least in terms of attendance numbers, the Jesuit college in Vienna managed to become a significant player in a highly polarized field of education.

1.2 Places of origin

The second method to gauge the degree of attractiveness of a certain school is to define its catchment area.⁹¹ A school or a university could operate either at a local, regional or global level. In the age after the Reformation, some Universities became global centers for development of new confessions throughout Europe. Wittenberg and Tübingen were the key destinations for those who wanted to get the best Lutheran education. Hundreds of students from Austria and Hungary graduated at these universities and after returning home contributed to spreading Protestantism in the Habsburg lands. The University of Heidelberg and universities in the Netherlands played the same role for Calvinism. The Catholic church also sought to establish schools that could attract students not only from some neighboring villages and town, but from across Europe and around the world. The Society of Jesus was to take up this challenge.

From the very outset Jesuit educational institutions had an international appeal. In Rome there were a few colleges aimed at students arriving from the regions where non-Catholic confessions were especially rooted. For Central Europe it was the “German college” (since 1580

⁹¹ On the application of geographical analysis for the history of early modern education see Hilde de Ridder-Symoens “Mobility” *A History of the University in Europe. Vol. II: 1500-1800*, ed. by Hilde de Ridder-Symoens (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), 416-436; Ingrid Matschinegg, “Studentische Migration im Umfeld der Universität Wien” in *Die ungarische Universitätsbildung und Europa*, ed. by Márta Font and László Szögi (Pécs, 2001), 109-116; Anton Schindling, “Bildungsinstitutionen im Heiligen Römischen Reich deutscher Nation als Ziele der studentischen Migrationen. Wanderungen im Zeichen von Konfessionen und geistigen Strömungen” in *Peregrinatio Hungarica. Studenten aus Ungarn an deutschen und österreichischen Hochschulen vom 16. Bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Márta Fata, Gyula Kurucz and Anton Schindling (Stuttgart: Franz-Steiner Verlag, 2006), 39-54; Linda Wenke Bönisch, *Universitäten und Fürstenschule zwischen Krieg und Frieden. Eine Matrikeluntersuchung zur mitteldeutschen Bildungslandschaft im konfessionellen Zeitalter (1563-1650)* (Berlin: epubli GmbH, 2013), 94-112; Gábor Almási “Touring Europe: Comparing East-Central European academic peregrination of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth century” In *A Divided Hungary in Europe: exchanges, networks and representations, 1541 - 1699, vol. 1: Study tours and intellectual-religious relationships*, ed. by Gábor Almási (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars publishers, 2014), 17-34; Howard Hotson “Catchment areas and killing fields: towards the intellectual geography of the Thirty Years’ War”. in *Geographies of the University*, ed. by Peter Meusburger, Michael Heffernan, Laura Suarsana. (Cham: Springer 2018), 135-193.

German-Hungarian), founded in 1556, that played a pivotal role in the counter-offensive of Catholics in the region. It constantly supplied Austrian and Hungarian territories with well-trained priests and teachers promoting recatholization.⁹² It was the explicit goal of every single college (and not only those in Rome) to be globally oriented. Jesuits tried to manifest this idea even on a symbolical level. R.J.W. Evans in his seminal work on the early modern Habsburg monarchy pointed to the fact that the inaugural speech at the opening of the Graz University in 1586 was pronounced in 16 languages.⁹³ It does not necessarily mean that at that very moment the University community was actually so multilingual. This act rather symbolized that Jesuits invited students from every nation to participate in their educational projects.

How global was the college in Vienna? Which regions belonged to its catchment area? Did Jesuits pay special attention to the students from certain lands? By addressing these issues, I will define a geographic scope of a possible recatholizing impact made by the college. Furthermore, for certain regions I will discuss the specific connections they had with the college.

From the methodological point of view, any investigation into the regional and linguistic diversity of the College raises similar issues to those of analyzing the size of the student body. I have to rely only on descriptive references to places of origin of students. It is impossible to reconstruct an exact proportion of students from a particular region. The only quantifiable source that I have is “Catalogues of members of the Society of Jesus” residing in the college. Recent scholarship has made use of this source in the analysis of Hungarian Jesuit colleges.⁹⁴ “Catalogues” are well-suited for studying “Jesuit” students in the sense of having taken an oath to be admitted into the order of the Society of Jesus, but can tell us nothing about the origins of the bulk of a student body. Therefore, I will address the “Catalogues” as a sample keeping in mind that it is in no way representative.

⁹² István Bitskey, “Römische Priesterausbildung ungarischer Alumnien in der frühen Neuzeit“ in *Die ungarische Universitätsbildung und Europa*, ed. by Márta Font and László Szögi (Pécs, 2001), 119-132.

⁹³ R.J.W. Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg monarchy: an Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1979), 16.

⁹⁴ Zsuzsanna Heilauf, “A kassai jezsuita egyetem és hallgatósága” [The Jesuit university in Košice and its students] in *Universitas-Historia. Tanulmányok a 70. éves Szögi László Tiszteletére*, ed. by István Draskócy, Julia Varga and Vilmos Zsidi (Budapest: Magyar Levéltárosok Egyesülete, 2018), 76-79.

The discussion of an ethnolinguistic composition of the college can be started with a single, but illuminating case. In 1558 the college rector appointed a new gate-keeper (*ianitor*). Gate-keepers had specific administrative functions within the college community. They oversaw every student entering and exiting the college building. Students who did not reside in the college were to be at school on time, before classes and morning prayer started. Those students who lived in the college were prohibited to go out without special permission from a prefect. It was the duty of the gate-keeper to interrogate students and to check whether all the formalities regarding entrance and exit were kept. Thus, he had to be capable of verbally communicating with each student. Finding such a person for this seemingly low-skilled post proved to be a difficult task. The problem was that students spoke many different languages and a gate-keeper was supposed to comprehend at least some of them. Due to his linguistic abilities, a certain Spaniard called Salvator got this position.⁹⁵ It was recorded that he had a good command of “multiple languages”.⁹⁶ He spoke German and Hungarian⁹⁷ and maybe some other languages as well. It is an open question where a Spaniard learnt both languages. The important thing is that by 1558, apart from German speaking students the College also educated Hungarian speaking ones. Moreover, this number might have been considerable, since the rector found it necessary for the gate-keeper could speak Hungarian.

How quickly did the Jesuits manage to internationalize their community? Let us consider the very beginnings of the college and see how diverse it was. Regions of origin were sometimes mentioned in the “Quarterly reports”. Like in case of frequency, regional diversity was seen as an indicator of the college’s popularity. It was significant to underline that apart from Germans, students from many other regions opted for the Jesuit education in Vienna.⁹⁸ Already in 1554 there were Bavarians, Hungarians, Bohemians and “Slavs”.⁹⁹ As for the latter term, it is not entirely clear who was perceived under the word *slauus* or *sclauus*. Most likely *sclauus* was a regional

⁹⁵ “Hic propter linguarum periciam ianitorem agit..”, *Catalogi personarum...*, 34.

⁹⁶ “...ianitor, quod plures linguas noverit” ; Ibid, 48.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 22

⁹⁸ *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 497.

⁹⁹ *Litt. Quadr.* III, 208.

category designating people from Slavonia (the area between rivers Sava and Drava). This reading can be proved by the examples of *sclau* who came from the towns situated in Slavonia.¹⁰⁰ However, according to other contemporary sources *sclauus* could sometimes refer to inhabitants of the comitates of Upper Hungary populated by Slavic (or proto-Slovak) speaking people. Such cases appeared, for example, in the Ordination books at the University of Wittenberg in 1560-80s.¹⁰¹ In the “Catalogues” of the College, I came across a couple “Slavs” who were simultaneously marked as originating from Hungarian realms (*ex partibus Hungariae*).¹⁰² In this case they could be either from Slavonia (legally a part of the Hungarian kingdom) or from the region that in the later period would be called Slovakia. In addition, there was a student designated as *sclauus* who spoke a “Slavic” language very close to Czech and it was probably Slovak. Besides, this man spoke German¹⁰³. It raises the chances that he originated from multilingual Upper Hungary and not from Slavonia. Since it was not possible to attribute *sclauus* by default to one of the two regions, I had to keep in mind the ambiguity of the term and analyze it on a case-by-case basis.

Except for a short reference in the report from 1554 one can use a list of students sent from Vienna to Rome in the same year.¹⁰⁴ This list provides a nuanced picture of students’ origins. In addition to Austrians and Bohemians several students from Silesia are mentioned there. Silesia was a peculiar Habsburg dominion enjoying a high degree of autonomy from the dynasty in Vienna¹⁰⁵. Moreover, Silesia was almost entirely Protestant at the time. Comparably, I would say

¹⁰⁰ For instance, there was a student-*sclauus* originated from Samobor in present-day Croatia and historical Slavonia. *Catalogi personarum...*, 132.

¹⁰¹ Zoltán Csepregi “Ethnische versus konfessionelle Identitätsbildung im Königreich Ungarn von der Reformation bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts. Überlegungen zur Mehrsprachigkeit, muttersprachlichen Identität und Übersetzungspraxis“ in *Luther und die Evangelisch-Lutherischen in Ungarn und Siebenbürgen. Augsburgisches Bekenntnis, Bildung, Sprache und Nation vom 16. Jahrhundert bis 1918*, ed. by Márta Fata and Anton Schindling (Münster: Aschendorf Verlag, 2017), 381-383.

¹⁰² *Catalogi personarum...*, 131.

¹⁰³ “...cum praeter linguam germanicam habeat slavonicam affinem boëmicæ” *Catalogi personarum...*, 22.

¹⁰⁴ The list is given in the annotation to the Chronicle of Polanco. *Vita Ignatii Loyolae et Rerum Societatis Jesu Historia auctore Joanne Alphonso de Polanco. Tomus IV (1554)* (Madrid, 1896), 237-238.

¹⁰⁵ like the introduction of the topic see Jan Harasimowicz, ed., *Adel in Schlesien*, 2 vols. (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 2010).

the positions of Lutheran faith were there far less contested than in other lands. In this regard it is noteworthy that even Silesians heard about the Jesuit school in Vienna from the outset and found it possible for their sons to be trained by Catholics. One cannot identify confessional allegiances of those Silesian families. They might have been the rare Catholic Silesians. In any case, education under Jesuits was aimed at fostering their faith and at preparing them for spreading Catholicism at home. The most remote point for this very initial phase was the diocese of Speyer in Western Germany. The province of Speyer was another battlefield between Protestants and Catholics. Although the region was predominately Lutheran, Jesuits still struggled to support the Roman church. Perhaps they were in great need of well-educated teachers and priests, but they did not have their own school and may have sent a promising young man to colleagues in Vienna. As for the Hereditary lands, they were all present: Austria, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, Salzburg and even remote Vorarlberg. Thus, one can affirm that in first two years after foundation the Jesuit already succeeded in attracting students from all the principal territories under Habsburg rule plus Speyer and Bavaria. Being one of the most powerful Catholic states in Germany, Bavaria was the closest ally of Habsburgs in their battle against Protestantism. It seems logical that Bavarian sent their sons to Vienna to get there a proper Catholic education.

The catchment area of the college gradually expanded over the following decade from 1554 to 1564. The changes can be traced first of all in the “Catalogues”, but *Litterae quadrimestres* also can reveal some details. I will consider all the macroregions and will define which role each of them may have played in the recruitment policy of Jesuits.

A large part of Jesuit students still came from different non-Habsburg German lands. Apart from aforementioned Bavaria and Speyer some students arrived from Swabia, Lothringia and Thuringia. Jesuits highlighted that their school accepted students even from the regions closely associated with rise of Protestant denominations. Jesuits taught natives from Nurnberg, Wittenberg (main stronghold of Lutheranism!) and other places of “miserable Germany”, i.e. the lands fallen

away from the Catholic Church.¹⁰⁶ One should remember that Jesuits regarded their students as pillars of the Catholic Church¹⁰⁷ and it was actually the graduates of the various colleges who were in charge of promoting and defending Catholic confession on the ground. Therefore, it was of crucial importance to have students originated from the lands which were in most danger, in the view of Jesuit. Provided that the educational goals of Jesuits were fully achieved, a graduate was to be a pious Catholic ready to return home and to strengthen the positions of the Roman Church. Certainly, it was just an ideal model not always implementable in practice. However, presence of students from Protestant territories of Holy Roman Empire signals that potentially the college of Vienna trained specialists for future missions in the core Protestant lands. Moreover, there were certain cases illustrating the impact of this strategy. Anna Coreth mentioned that some alumni of the College who studied together with Melchior Klesl originated from Brandenburg and Prussia and had Protestant background.¹⁰⁸ After the graduation they returned back and acted as Catholic preachers in their Lutheran homelands.

As regards Hereditary lands, there can be traced an emblematic evolution in balance between Jesuit students (those students who were mentioned in the “Catalogues of members of the Society of Jesus”) and “external” ones. Till about 1560-61 students from most of Austrian territories appeared very rarely in the “Catalogues” (1 student from Vienna and 1 designated as *Austriacus*). These numbers definitely do not correspond to the overall proportion of Austrian students. In the list of 22 students sent to Rome in 1554 10 were from Hereditary lands and in the Report of 1561 Austrians are mentioned first in listing nations.¹⁰⁹ So, Austrians were probably quite numerous, but they tended not to get too close to the Jesuits and not to join the Society itself. It is telling that the only region which is relatively present in the “Catalogues” is Tyrol. Tyrol was

¹⁰⁶ *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 284; another student from Wittenberg is mentioned in *Catalogi personarum...*, 39.

¹⁰⁷ This attitude is explicitly manifested, for example, in the letters of one of the visitors who came to the college of Graz in 1583. «Ex quibus magnus proventus ad Ecclesiae catholicae commode speratur...». P. Oliverius Manaraeus. “Acta visitationum Assistentiae Germaniae de studiis” in *Monumenta Paedagogica Societatis Jesu*. Ed. Ladislaus Lukács. (Romae, 1992), 444.

¹⁰⁸ Anna Coreth, 352, 354.

¹⁰⁹ *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 504.

an exceptional land in terms of confessionalization process. Unlike other Habsburg domains Reformation did not get rooted in Tyrol and it remained predominantly Catholic during the sixteenth century. Thus, Jesuits at first managed to incorporate in the Society only those “Austrian” students who originally might have been more sympathetic with Catholicism. The situation started to change around 1562. The number of students from Lower Austria, Carinthia, Styria, Carniola and Vienna itself steadily grew up. Sometimes Jesuits noted that certain students from Vienna had just recently joined the Society.¹¹⁰ Although students from Hereditary lands still were a minority among Society members, it is evident that Jesuits now earned trust of more Austrian than at the beginning of the college activities. From “external” students they became Society members and thus showing a readiness to get more involved in missionary activities pursued by Jesuits. Beyond doubt, this tendency had far-reaching implications for the recatholization of hereditary lands conceived by Habsburgs.

As I have mentioned above, there was a visible presence of Hungarian students in the college which persisted during 1560s. According to the two *Litterae quadrimestres* from 1561, Hungarians were among the most numerous national groups¹¹¹. Jesuits in Vienna paid special attention to Hungarians, since at this period, it was an urgent task to provide Catholic church in Kingdom of Hungary with well-trained teachers and priests. 1550-1560s was the time when Miklos Oláh, archbishop of Esztergom, strove to re-establish positions of Catholicism partially lost in the years of Reformation.¹¹² Among other measures, Oláh founded a school in the town of Tyrnava. In 1561 it was handed over to Jesuits with an intention to create an analogue of the college of Vienna for Hungary. Viennese Jesuits were well aware of the endeavors made by Oláh. He often came up in Vienna, attended public events organized by the college (theatre plays and

¹¹⁰ “nondum annum est in Societate”. *Catalogi personarum...*, 93; “Novitius in Societate per unam mensem”. Idem, 100.

¹¹¹ *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 284, 504.

¹¹² Szabolcs Varga, „Die katholische Kirche im Königreich Ungarn zur Zeit des Konzils von Trient“ in *Das Trienter Konzil und seine Rezeption im Ungarn des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2019), 63-77; Géza Pálffy, *Hungary between two Empires. 1526-1711* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2021), 97-99.

public debates) seeking to maintain close ties with local Jesuits.¹¹³ Oláh needed assistance in his educational enterprises and Jesuits were eager to help. In 1558 first Jesuit teachers were sent from Vienna to Tyrnava and such transfer of professional educators and concionators continued further.¹¹⁴ To show their attention to Hungarian affairs, Jesuits referred to a great number of Hungarians already studying under their supervision in Vienna.¹¹⁵ After graduation they would probably come home and participate in recatholization. The question is, however, whether those Hungarians in Vienna were inclined to be integrated into Catholic structures rather than just get a proper education and leave the college without any further contacts with Jesuits. I argue that a number of Hungarians joining the Society during their studies might be an appropriate parameter for assessing degree of integration. In case of Hungarians, I detected the same striking disbalance between “external” students and Jesuit students recorded in the Catalogue as in Austrian case. Proceeding from the fact that proportion of Hungarians in the whole body was considerable, one might expect the same in the sample of Jesuit students. It was, however, not so. If one not counts one “Slav” from Upper Hungary, it is only in 1562 when one finds a Hungarian student being a member of the Society.¹¹⁶ He was the only Hungarian out of 25 Jesuit students. Over 1560-570s this proportion remained almost unchanged. One appeared in 1571, but this student did not become Jesuit in Vienna.¹¹⁷ He was sent to Vienna from Prague where he presumably took his oaths. Before 1571 few Hungarians were present among teachers and staff members (gate-keeper and cook), but not students. In my opinion, this fact demonstrates that Hungarians, even though ready to be educated by Jesuits, were still reluctant to get closer to the Society. In contrast to Austrians, Jesuits fail to tip the scale in favor of a deeper engagement and, therefore, recatholization. Archbishop of Esztergom also did not manage to realize his plans: Jesuits left the country in 1566

¹¹³ *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 326, 765.

¹¹⁴ *Litt. Quadr.* V, 482; *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 508-510

¹¹⁵ “Hungarorum erga nos humanitas non videtur esse exigua, quia frequentissimi scholarum nostrarum lectiones audiunt et disciplinae subsunt.” *Litt. Quadr.* V, 482;

¹¹⁶ *Catalogi personarum...*, 134

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 311.

to return only in 1580s, his school in Tyrnava was closed and Hungary remained predominately Protestant.

A somewhat similar pattern can be revealed for another significant national group – Bohemians. The "Reports" mentioned them almost as frequently as Hungarians. In Bohemia as well Jesuits were engaged in confessional struggles with different protestant denominations (Czech Brothers and Lutherans). In 1556 they founded a college on Prague which received support from Vienna. Apart from sending teaching personnel, Viennese Jesuits once collected a considerable sum of money for funding a boarding house of poor students in Prague.¹¹⁸ However, like in Hungarian case, no Bohemian or Moravian student did not seek to join the Society. The first Czech Jesuit student was recorded in the "Catalogues" in 1565 and similarly to the first Hungarian one he had been already a Society member when he arrived in Vienna.¹¹⁹ Both cases (Bohemian and Hungarian) show that one should be cautious while gauging an impact of Jesuit education on students from certain regions. The fact that one studied under Jesuit did not automatically entail that one would be inspired by them in terms of confessional debates and would be ready to stand by the Catholic church. However, studying in a Jesuit school increased probability of such transformations and Jesuits counted on it. I will come back to this issue in the chapter about methods of recatholization within the college.

The last Habsburg region belonging to the catchment area of the college is Balkans, namely Habsburg Croatia and Slavonia. Students from these lands were mentioned only twice in the "Quarterly reports"¹²⁰. Unlike Hungary or Bohemia, Balkans were not discussed by the Viennese Jesuits in any specific context. I assume that Croatians and Slavonians were less present in the student body than students from other Habsburg lands. Students from Balkans also came up relatively seldom in the "Catalogues of the Society members", although oftener than Hungarians. For the period between 1553 and 1576 I identified eight Jesuit students from Slavonia and

¹¹⁸ *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 459.

¹¹⁹ *Catalogi personarum...*, 163

¹²⁰ *Litt. Quadr.* III, 208; *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 504.

Croatia.¹²¹ Unlike Hungary proper these regions were not much affected by the Reformation. The archbishopric of Zagreb remained quite strong and was able to maintain influence of the Catholic church. At the insistence of the archbishop and Croatian ban György Draskovics Protestants in 1567 were forbidden to acquire lands in Slavonia.¹²² Therefore, Habsburg domains in Balkans were in a lesser danger from the point of view of Roman Church and Jesuits. At the same time, the Church authorities in Zagreb still needed professional priests in order to implement so called Catholic Reform elaborated at the Council of Trient. Actually, Croatians went to study in Vienna college, but one would have expected more students from such a Catholic region. It may be assumed that Croatian students tended to opt for other Catholic educational institutions which were not subject to Jesuits. For example, the Hungarian-Croatian college in Bologna, founded in 1553, was popular among students from Croatia and Slavonia.¹²³ This institution might have accepted those students who otherwise would have headed to Vienna.

The catchment area extended beyond the limits of the Habsburg and German lands. A few Italians and Poles also chose to study in Vienna. As for Italians, they mostly originated from cities of Northern and Central Italian (Ferrara, Siena, Brixen, Osio, Luca) and Rome. This information can be derived from the “Catalogues of Society members” where Italians are broadly represented. It is to be noted that, even though “Catalogues” indicated plenty of Italians, most of them were neither students nor professors. A majority was involved in various kinds of domestic services (cook, purchaser, tailors etc.) Only eight students were Jesuits, but there must have been more among “external” ones. It seems understandable that almost entirely Catholic Italy belonged to the area of attraction of Jesuits in Vienna. Their colleagues in Italy did their best to spread a network of schools in big cities, but the development was slowed down by substantial obstacles. The problems in Italy were quite similar to those faced by the college of Vienna. The two most crucial

¹²¹ *Catalogi personarum...*, 144, 164, 204, 250, 305, 365, 367, 381

¹²² Szabolcs Varga, “Etnikum, felekezeti és migráció a dél-dunántúlon és szlavóniában a 16-17. Században” [Ethnicity, confession and migration in South Transdanubia and Slavonia in sixteenth-seventeenth century] in *Vallás és etnikum Közép-Európában* [Religion and ethnicity in Central Europe], ed. by Kupa László (Pécs: B&D Stúdió, 2008), 46-48.

¹²³ Szabolcs Varga, “Croatia and Slavonia in the Early Modern age,” *Hungarian studies* 27 (2013), 273-274.

issues were hostility from the already existing schools and lack of funds¹²⁴. These local turbulences might have led to a migration of some students to the Jesuit schools beyond Italy, for instance in Vienna.

Poles (*polonus*) constituted a last huge part of the student body. The way Jesuits discussed students coming from Polish-Lithuanian kingdom stood out in comparison to other national groups. In terms of confessional division Polish-Lithuanian kingdom was in many ways similar to Habsburg lands. Different denominations of Protestantism became widespread in the Kingdom, while the Catholic church had very hard times. Till mid-1570s ruling monarchs were rather indifferent to religious struggles and quite tolerant to any confessional group. Against all odds Catholic church in Poland strove to modify the situation to its favor. Jesuits as elsewhere were key actors in this process. However, the Society arrived in Poland comparatively late. The first Jesuit school was established in 1565 with new foundations following only after 1570. Despite all the educational endeavors there was an urgent need for priest and teachers until the end of the century.¹²⁵ Because of the lack of school prior to 1565, Polish Catholics had to rely on foreign educational centers and Viennese college seemed to be an appropriate option. The most distinctive feature of Polish students in Vienna was that they were of a noble origin. I will return to this peculiarity in the second chapter of my thesis. There was one Polish noble boy who is worth a special mention, since he would play a global role for all the students studying in Jesuit schools throughout the world. His name was Stanislav Kostka, together with his brother he studied in Vienna for two years, then he proceeded to Rome where he joined the Society and soon died at the age of 17.¹²⁶ For his outstanding piety and spiritual qualities, Kostka was beatified in 1605 and

¹²⁴ Christopher Carlsmith, "Struggling toward Success: Jesuit Education in Italy, 1540-1600," *History of Education Quarterly* 42 2 (2002), 215-246.

¹²⁵ Alfons Brüning, *Unio non est unitas: Polen-Litauens Weg im konfessionellen Zeitalter (1569-1648)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2008), 206-210.

¹²⁶ For the story of Stanislav Kostka see Christina Jetter, *Die Jesuitenheiligen Stanislaus Kostka und Aloysius von Gonzaga. Patrone der studierenden Jugend – Leitbilder der katholischen Elite*. (Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 2009).

became a saint patron of studying youth.¹²⁷ According to Kostka's hagiography, it was the college of Vienna where the first miracle occurred to him. He is believed to be healed from a grievous illness by St. Barbara. This event was a starting point in his way to sainthood. The case of Kostka, firstly, again testifies for the importance of the college of Vienna for Polish elite. Secondly, this story might reveal some patterns common to the whole Polish community. Like a lot of Poles Kostka was from an aristocratic family and lived in a special convict for nobles. Furthermore, his biography has a peculiar element demonstrating an ambiguous attitude of Polish nobility towards Jesuit education. Kostka's father, although being supposedly Catholic and favoring Jesuit education, strongly opposed to his son's entry into the Society. That's why Stanislaw had to leave Vienna so as to fulfill his dream of becoming Jesuit. In 1560 a very similar story happened to another Polish noble student. His father was also furious about a son's intention to be a member of the Society. After sending several letters, the father came up personally in Vienna to stop the son, but failed.¹²⁸ According to the *Litterae quadrimestres*, the father then had a long discussion with the college rector who finally persuaded him to change his views in favor of Jesuits. A trustworthiness of this sudden shift can be called into question, but the whole story is quite illustrative. It seems likely that some parents wanted their children to get well educated, but did not see them as future active fighters for the Catholic fate. In case of Hungarians and Bohemians I demonstrated it pointing to the disbalance between Jesuit and external students. Polish case gave me chance to trace this phenomenon on a concrete example.

I will finish this geographical outline by highlighting some the students originating from the regions most distant from Vienna. They probably were not significant in terms of numbers, but they demonstrate the limits of the college catchment area. The *Litterae quadrimestres* referred to Belgians, Frenchmen and Spaniards among students.¹²⁹ Couple of them were Jesuits.¹³⁰ One

¹²⁷ Materials related to beatification were published by the Bollandist Society in 5 volumes the *Analecta Bollandina*. The years of studies in Vienna are directly addressed in the second volume. Urbanus Ubaldini SJ, "Vita et miracula S. Stanislai Kostkae" in *Analecta Bollandina* 11 (1892), 416-467.

¹²⁸ *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 759; the same student in the „Catalogues” *Catalogi personarum...*, 93

¹²⁹ *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 505.

¹³⁰ *Catalogi personarum...*, 166, 169.

cannot define exactly why those students decided to go on a journey to Vienna, given that there were quite enough Catholic schools in their homelands. I suppose that they might have followed the professors sent by the Society from Spain and France to assist in teaching in a new college. “Catalogues” mentioned quite a few French and Spanish teachers. Moreover, Spaniards were well-represented at the court of the emperor Ferdinand, a patron of the college. There was at least one occasion when a rich Spaniard supported the school by funding a house for poor students.¹³¹ I assume that sons of such high-ranking Spaniards could also be among the college students. There was at least one student from Scotland from the diocese of St. Andrew who arrived in Vienna in 1560.¹³² In Scotland 1550-60s were the years of a major confrontation between the Catholic Queen Mary Stuart and Scottish reformers. Being a Catholic, that student perhaps decided to escape ongoing conflict and for some reason opted for Vienna as a place where he could find a shelter and get good education.

Like in case of frequency numbers, it is worth comparing catchment area of the Vienna college with those of other contemporary schools and universities. As for Protestant, I have the data solely for the school in Saxony which I addressed while contrasting student numbers. The Lutheran school in Zwickau mostly attracted pupils from the neighboring lands. 85% were from the school town and 13% came from a radius of less than 100 km. from Zwickau.¹³³ The rest was from the Lutheran territories of the Holy Roman Empire. These results do not look impressive in comparison to Vienna. Even some Habsburg lands exceeded 100 km from Vienna, not to mention Polish Mazovia (homeland of Stanislav Kostka) or Scotland. Protestant school in Zwickau was frequented only by students from the lands similar to Saxony in confessional terms (exclusively, Lutheran). Viennese college, on the contrary, covered not only the areas considered Catholic, but also attracted students from core Protestant territories (e.g. Wittenberg).

¹³¹ *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 90.

¹³² *Catalogi personarum...*, 75.

¹³³ Alan S. Ross, *Daum's boys*, 128-130.

Seventeenth-century Jesuit colleges in Hungary also had a significantly narrower catchment area. The bulk of their students originated from the lands of Hungarian Crown (Hungary, Slavonia and Croatia). Very few were from other Habsburg territories (Austria, Bohemia, Moravia).¹³⁴

The University of Vienna undergoing a serious crisis, a number of foreign students there plummeted. The international prestige of the University was restored only in seventeenth century. Some other Catholic high schools in Central Europe (in Ingolstadt, Cologne, Breisgau), although being much better off than Vienna, also oriented primarily at neighboring territories¹³⁵. In this regard they differed considerably from the Jesuit college of Vienna.

The catchment area of the college was rather comparable to the biggest Protestant universities. It was characteristic of the Lutheran University of Wittenberg or Calvinist University of Heidelberg to recruit students from distant areas.¹³⁶ For example, both Universities were frequented by Hungarian students. However, it should be taken into consideration that unlike the Jesuit college in Vienna these Protestant high schools were full Universities. It means, that they had four faculties and right of promotion. Theoretically, as educational centers they may have been regarded as more prestigious than the school in Vienna where one could only study arts and could not obtain a degree. Nevertheless, Jesuits in Vienna managed to attain a comparatively similar level of internationalization.

Conclusion

Overall, it can be claimed that the Jesuit aspirations for globally attractive schools were to a great extent fulfilled in Vienna. The catchment area of the college included all the Habsburg territories (Hereditary lands, Hungary, Bohemia, Croatia, Slavonia) and expanded far beyond. Regarding Catholic lands Viennese Jesuits attracted a great number of Bavarians, Swabians

¹³⁴ Zsófia Kádár, *Jezsuiták Nyugat-Magyarországon a 17. Században*, 213-232.

¹³⁵ Hilde de Ridder-Symoens "Mobility" *A History of the University in Europe. Vol. II: 1500-1800*, ed. by Hilde de Ridder-Symoens (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), 424-426

¹³⁶ Ibid, 422-423; Armin Kohnle, "Die Universität Heidelberg als Zentrum des reformierten Protestantismus im 16. und frühen 17. Jahrhundert" in *Die ungarische Universitätsbildung und Europa*, ed. by Márta Font and László Szögi (Pécs, 2001), 141-163.

Italians and to a lesser extent Spaniards, Belgians and Frenchmen. The college established close ties with Polish-Lithuanian Kingdom and became popular attraction for Polish nobles. The catchment area was wider than those of many contemporary schools and Universities, Catholic and Protestant. In context of a broader confessional rivalry of the period it is crucial that the catchment area was not limited to Catholic countries, but also covered significant centers of Protestantism in Germany. In this respect the college of Vienna considerably differs from Protestant schools and Universities which were more oriented towards the lands with the similar confessional color. Despite these obvious signs of success, one should be careful while interpreting such kind of geographical data in terms of confessionalizing impact. I have shown that students from certain regions, however numerous they were, did not tend to intensify their contacts with Jesuits by joining the Society. While number of Austrian and German students among the Society members steadily rose, Hungarians, Bohemians and even Poles showed different pattern. On the other hand, joining the Society was not the only indication of the effect Jesuit education made on young souls. In any case, by enlarging catchment area Jesuits increased a likelihood that students from Protestant territories would be converted to Catholicism and then would serve for restoration of the Roman church at home.

Study of frequency numbers and catchment area has proven that over a relatively short period (1553-1565) Jesuit college in Vienna obtained an important place in a confessionally fragmented educational landscape of Central Europe. In a highly competitive field Jesuits could surpass their rivals at least for some time. Neither any Protestant school, nor the University of Vienna could have claimed to be superior to the college in terms of attendance rates or catchment area. The college thus became a powerful stronghold for Catholic church and Habsburg dynasty in their recatholization attempts.

What were the reasons for such a rapid progress? Why so many students from so many regions opted for the Jesuit college in Vienna? One can hardly give a single answer to these questions. Innovative teaching methods and a well-organized educational system definitely

contributed to it. I am convinced, however, that it was a well-elaborated social and economic policy of Jesuit educators that played the most important for their success. And exactly this issue will be addressed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2. *Nobiles and pauperes*: "social policy" of the Jesuit college

The complex of the Jesuit college at the square Am Hof in Vienna consisted of several buildings. Apart from the main college building situated in the former Carmelite monastery, the Jesuits possessed at least two small houses intended for the College students. At the first glance, the two groups might have seemed very similar. Students in both houses wore the same cleric-like suits, remained under the constant supervision of the Jesuit prefects, followed strict domestic rules, and lived in rather cramped conditions. This resemblance veiled a fundamental social difference between the inhabitants of the two houses. The first house (*convictus*) was intended for the sons of noblemen (*nobiles*) while the second one called the "new college" (*collegium novum*)— for poor students (*pauperes*). It is emblematic that Jesuits provided accommodation to representatives of both socially polar groups. The social dimension was as significant as a geographical one in terms of promoting recatholization. In the opinion of the Jesuits, members of every Estate needed spiritual guidance and could potentially serve the Catholic case. The Jesuit school in Vienna at the same time was to be attractive to "the wealthiest and noblest sons"¹³⁷ and available for the destitute ones who could not afford to go for the studies.¹³⁸ In this chapter I will discuss the approach of Jesuits towards nobles and poor students within the entire student community. The chapter is divided into two main parts. I will first consider the Jesuit view on nobles in the College. I will address the question of the noble education in the early modern Central Europe and show the role of Jesuits in teaching sons of aristocrats. I will focus on the rhetoric used for conceptualizing the importance of the noble element in the student body. Furthermore, I will pay attention to the living

¹³⁷ "opulentissimis et nobilissimis pueris" *Beati Canisii epistulae at acta*. Vol. I, 437.

¹³⁸ "quia pauperes erant, litteris opera dare minime poterant" *Historia Collegii Viennesnsis Pars I*, 5.

conditions of the “noble” house and to the residents' regional origins. The second part of the chapter will be dedicated to *pauperes*. First, I will deal with the rules of acceptance to the boarding house for poor. Were all the poor students to be given a place in the “new college” and was it intended solely for *pauperes*? What criteria were to be considered when the college prefect was choosing appropriate candidates? Secondly, I will attempt to gauge a degree of economic relief enjoyed by poor students. How much would they have had to pay for accommodation in the college, if their financial situation had not been considered humble? Finally, I will dwell on the measures of social discipline imposed on *pauperes* and their connection with a confessional side of the Jesuit social policy.

I argue that Jesuits effectively applied tools of “social policy” for the sake of confessionalization and for enhancing the school prestige. However, they had to face certain financial and sometimes political obstacles they were unable to overcome in the period under consideration. The economic support given to the Jesuits by the emperor was not enough for sustaining properly the houses intended for particular social groups or for purchasing new ones. The changes in the political climate after the death of Ferdinand I negatively affected the Jesuits and eventually led to the confiscation of one of the boarding houses. Due to these difficulties the results of the College “social policy” were in the end rather limited.

2.1 Nobliles

2.1.1. Education of nobles and Jesuits

Originally, it was not typical of an aristocrat to send children to an educational institution. As Rainer Schwinges points out, studying at a University in the Late Middle Ages was neither natural nor necessary for the nobility.¹³⁹ According to his estimations, an average percentage of nobility among students in German universities did not exceed 2.3%.¹⁴⁰ Home education was more

¹³⁹ Rainer Christoph Schwinges, *Studenten und Gelehrte. Studien zur Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte deutscher Universitäten im Mittelalter* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2008), 323-324.

¹⁴⁰ Ibidem.

much more common for aristocratic families. The situation started to change around 1500. The number of noble students increased considerably over the sixteenth century, reaching 15-17% in certain German universities.¹⁴¹ Although conservative views on teaching practices could still circulate in the noble milieu,¹⁴² the general trend was in favor of school education. There are two main reasons for this shift. Firstly, new humanistic cultural ideals inspired aristocrats to acquire a proper education.¹⁴³ An idea of intellectual refinement penetrated into aristocratic circles and a nobleman was now expected not only to have military and courtly training but also to be familiar with the liberal arts. The second cause was due to a broader change in the pre-modern society, namely to a gradual emancipation of “commoners.” Nobles felt threatened with the growing presence of unprivileged Estates in the domains which were previously seen as an aristocratic monopoly. Important positions in the Church and state administration were increasingly filled with burgers holding a university degree or at least several years of higher education.¹⁴⁴ Nobility slowly became aware of the importance of the formal schooling not only for personal intellectual development, but also for career perspectives. Recent studies on the German principalities have shown the increasing interest of both lower and higher nobles in university education in the first half of the sixteenth century.¹⁴⁵ As for the Habsburg lands, the competition between nobles and bourgeoisie has been addressed in the works of Gernot Heiss and Karin MacHardy.¹⁴⁶ Aristocrats came to understand the value of cultural capital associated with the school education and sought to adjust the standards of noble habitus to the changing circumstances. One tended to preserve the

¹⁴¹ Maria Rosa di Simone, “Admission” in *A History of the University in Europe*. Vol. II: 1500-1800, ed. Hilde de Ridder-Symoens (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), 314.

¹⁴² Schwinges refers to a seventeenth century noble young man was explicitly against the idea of spending his time on the university studies. Schwinges, 324.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, 313.

¹⁴⁴ Schwinges, 326-327.

¹⁴⁵ Elena Magli, “Ritter an der Universität. Universitätsbesuch der niederadligen Familie Friedingen (1324–1540)“ in *Gelehrte Lebenswelten im 15. Und 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Rainer Christoph Schwinges and Kaspar Gubler (Zürich: Hochschulverlag an der ETH, 2018), 49-65; Silvia Böhnert, „So soll der jung Adel sich auff das Studieren geben: Die Wetterauer Grafen an den Universitäten des Alten Reiches (1450–1550)“ *Ibidem*, 65-87.

¹⁴⁶ Gernot Heiss, 'Bildungsverhalten des niederösterreichischen Adels im gesellschaftlichen Wandel. Zum Bildungsgang Im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert', *Wiener Beiträge zur Geschichte der Neuzeit 8* (1981), 137-157; Karin MacHardy, „Cultural Capital, Family Strategies and Noble Identity in Early Modern Habsburg Austria 1579-1620.“ *Past & Present*, 163 (1999), 36–75.

unique traits of a noble education (fencing, courtly manners etc.), and complement them with the school and university studies. As for higher levels of academic training, aristocrats could send their sons to the already existing Universities. Noble sons usually studied at several Universities, doing a so-called Grand Tour, an academic journey throughout Europe. One can distinguish certain geographical patterns in these academic peregrinations of the nobility. The Italian universities were counted among favorite destination for the nobility from the whole Habsburg Monarchy (the University of Padua was especially popular).¹⁴⁷ In the mid-sixteenth century certain German Universities (Wittenberg, Heidelberg, Tübingen) became centers of attraction for the Austrian and Hungarian nobles.¹⁴⁸ The confessional changes in the Habsburg lands had a direct impact on the directions of academic migrations. All the aforementioned Universities were the key strongholds of Lutheranism (Wittenberg and Tübingen) and Calvinism (Heidelberg) and their noble graduates were to bolster the position of Protestantism in the Habsburg territories. The tendency to visit foreign Protestant universities was so strong that emperor Ferdinand I even tried to prohibit his subjects, including nobles, from studying in any University other than those of Vienna and Ingolstadt, which were considered Catholic.¹⁴⁹ However, Ferdinand's efforts to control academic migration had no results.

During their university studies, noble students enjoyed specific privileges. They were perceived to be superior to the "common" students and their status was always underlined in terms of symbolic and ceremonial prestige. The names of aristocratic students were written first in the university matriculation lists.¹⁵⁰ Nobles occupied the best places in classrooms and notable events

¹⁴⁷ Ingrid Matschneegg, *Österreicher als Universitätsbesucher in Italien (1500–1630). Regionale und soziale Herkunft –Karrieren – Prosopographie*, PhD diss. (Graz, 1999), 63-69; Gábor Almási "Touring Europe: Comparing East-Central European academic peregrination of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth century" in *A Divided Hungary in Europe: exchanges, networks and representations, 1541 - 1699, vol. 1: Study tours and intellectual-religious relationships*, ed. by Gábor Almási (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars publishers, 2014), 23-24.

¹⁴⁸ Almási, 24-26; László Szögi, "Hányatlás és átalakulás. A magyarországi peregrináció Moháctól 16. Század végéig [Decline and change. Hungarian peregrination from the battle of Mohács to the end of the sixteenth century]" in *Archivarium historicorumque magistra, Történeti tanulmányok Bak Borbála tanárnő 70. Születésnapjára*, ed. by Zsófia Kádár, Bálint Lakatos, Áron Zarnóczki (Budapest: Magyar levéltárosok egyesülete, 2013), 501-520.

¹⁴⁹ Notker Hammerstein ed., *Handbuch der deutschen Bildungsgeschichte. Bd. 1: 15. Bis 17. Jahrhundert. Von der Renaissance und der Reformation bis zum Ende der Glaubenskämpfe* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1996), 313.

¹⁵⁰ Schwinges, 320.

at the University. They formed a separate hierarchy parallel to the academic one. For instance, according to the academic hierarchy of the University of Vienna, doctors and masters of the Faculties of Theology were the most highly regarded. Hence, they were supposed to be at the head of each solemn procession and to sit on the first benches during the University gatherings. However, sons of higher nobility (dukes and counts), regardless of their academic status, were allowed to join this privileged group at the ceremonies.¹⁵¹ Nobles of a lower rank were equated to the doctors and masters of law and medicine, the groups considered the second and the third in terms of academic dignity. Furthermore, unlike other students, nobles had the privilege to carry arms, hunt, and to participate in tournaments.¹⁵² At the same time, nobles were expected to pay higher fees (for example, matriculation and deposition fees) than “commoners.”¹⁵³

While aristocrats could choose between various universities, secondary education was a more problematic issue. At the beginning of the sixteenth century there were almost no schools suitable for noble children. Traditional town schools were frequented almost entirely by the sons of burgers and aristocrats, at first, could not let their children study together with the lower Estates. With a heavy heart, they could accept such intermingling at the University level, but solely under the conditions of special treatment. One of the benefits of a University experience was that it could somehow balance social prejudices, but it was not the case for schools. Therefore, one needed to create a new type of secondary school designed specifically for nobles. In 1530-60s the noble Estates of Austrian lands sponsored foundations of the so called *Landschaftschulen*.¹⁵⁴ Children studied there the “trivial arts” (Grammar, Poetics and Rhetoric) and prepared for a University. In

¹⁵¹ “Statut der Universität über die Rangordnung ihrer Angehörigen“ in *Geschichte der kaiserlichen Universität zu Wien. Zweiter Band. Statutenbuch*, ed. by Rudolf Kink (Vienna: Verlag von Karl Georg und Sohn, 1854), 91.

¹⁵² Schwinges, 322-323.

¹⁵³ Marian Füssel, “Riten der Gewalt: Zur Geschichte der akademischen Deposition und des Pennalismus in der frühen Neuzeit“ in *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 32 4, (2005), 617; Schwinges, 321;

¹⁵⁴ Gernot Heiß, “Die Landschaftsschulen in den nieder- und innerösterreichischen Ländern vor dem Dreißigjährigen Krieg“ in *Bildung, Politik und Gesellschaft. Studien zur Geschichte des europäischen Bildungswesens vom 16. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. by G. Klingenstein, H. Lutz, G. Stourzh (Vienna-Munich, 1978), 13-63; Helmut Engelbrecht, *Die Geschichte des österreichischen Bildungswesens: Erziehung und Unterricht auf dem Boden Österreichs. Bd. 2: Das 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* (Wien: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1983), 70-90; MacHardy, 43-45; Ulrike Denk, „Schulwesen und Universität“ in *Wien. Geschichte einer Stadt. Die Frühneuzeitliche Residenz (16.-18. Jh.)*, ed. by Anita Traninger and Karl Vocelka (Vienna: Böhlau, 2003), 367-370.

confessional terms, *Landschaftschulen* were Lutheran. Despite all the protests from Ferdinand I, the Estates actively supported the Reformed faith and equipped their schools with teachers from the main Protestant universities (Tübingen, Wittenberg).

Jesuits offered a Catholic alternative for noble children. From the very beginning of their educational activities Jesuits aimed to create a school environment appropriate for the nobility. For instance, in Italy Jesuits tended to establish special noble boarding houses attached to schools. Over the second half of the sixteenth century, sixteen noble houses were opened in Italy.¹⁵⁵ Italian Jesuits stressed the privileged status of the noble boarders. Apart from attending general school classes, they obtained cultivated specific noble and courtly skills: fencing, designing fortifications, dancing, singing, knowledge of vernacular languages. Parents paid high fees for board, services and lessons in non-Jesuit subjects. The proportion of nobles at Italian Jesuit schools was relatively large: in 1589 nobles accounted for 15,5% of the school in Padua.¹⁵⁶ In Central Europe, founding boarding houses for nobles was even more important for the success of recatholization. In Italy confessional antagonism was not as acute as in the Habsburg lands and the Italian Jesuits focused more on cultivating civic virtues in the noble students than on the religious indoctrination. In Central Europe, Jesuit educators had to combine this task with the intensive recatholization efforts aimed at the Protestant aristocracy. In May 1554 Ignatius Loyola wrote a letter to Peter Canisius, a prominent preacher and a professor at the Viennese college, in which he discussed the developments of the Jesuit education in German lands. Among other things, Loyola argued for the foundation of a boarding house for noble boys.¹⁵⁷ The Head of the Society claimed that these boys should have pious Catholic teachers who would imbue them with the orthodox confessional ideas. Raised in a Catholic environment, the noble graduates of the College would then be appointed to the key secular and ecclesiastical posts and would further strengthen the positions of

¹⁵⁵ Paul F. Grendler, *Jesuit schools and Universities in Europe 1548-1773* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2019), 45-48.

¹⁵⁶ Paul F. Grendler, *Humanism, Universities, and Jesuit Education in Late Renaissance Italy* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2022), 115

¹⁵⁷ A passage from this letter is cited in Josef Schröteler, *Die Erziehung in den Jesuiteninternaten des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Freiburg-in-Breisgau: Herder, 1940), 29

Catholicism in the region. Loyola's suggestion was put into practice in Vienna in August of the same year.

2.1.2 Noble students at the College of Vienna

The boarding house for noble students in Vienna was the first institution of this type in the lands north to Alps. According to Polanco's Chronicle, it was initially intended for the sons of the Austrian Chancellor (head of the Court Chancellery of Ferdinand) and other noblest figures.¹⁵⁸ Parents had to cover all necessary expenses. It is worth noticing that Jesuits asked the Chancellor to set an appropriate price for accommodation. By rejecting to get involved in the financial aspects of the house foundation Jesuits showed contempt for money business and emphasized the spiritual nature of their mission.

There were seven noble boys living in the boarding house in the first year supervised by one Jesuit.¹⁵⁹ By 1559 the number rose to seventeen.¹⁶⁰ One cannot be certain that the dwellers of the noble boarding house were the only students from the privileged Estates. Renting a room in the city was another option and aristocrats certainly could afford it. It is impossible to measure the balance between those living in the College and in the city. However, Jesuits explicitly argued for accommodating nobles in a one place controlled by the College and always discussed the nobility issue only in context of the boarding house. Jesuits focused exclusively on this noble group living under the direct supervision of *patres*. Hence, I assume that its boarders must have accounted for a considerable part of noble students in the College. Drawing upon the data related to the boarding house one can maintain that the proportion of nobles in the student body was relatively low. As I have pointed out, in Italian colleges nobles could constitute 15% of all students. In the German town Dillingen in 1560-1580s, this figure reached 30%.¹⁶¹ 3,5% in Vienna did not meet the

¹⁵⁸ “ Dni. Jonae Cancellarii et aliorum primariorum filii” *Vita Ignatii Loyolae et rerum societatis Jesu Historia*. T.4, 250.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶⁰ “Litterae de forma totius collegii Viennensis 1559” in *MPSJ III*, 300.

¹⁶¹ Schrötel, 91.

expectations of Jesuits. In the reports to Rome, the College administration regularly addressed the underrepresentation of nobles. In the view of Jesuits, it was housing problems that prevented them from accepting more noble sons. In 1559 the minister of the College claimed the house of nobles was extremely small and because of that Jesuits could not admit all the new comers.¹⁶² To underline the gravity of the situation the minister asserted the Jesuits could not equip the noble house with its own kitchen, so tiny it was.¹⁶³ To solve this problem Jesuits considered purchasing new facilities but the housing prices in Vienna were too high and the College did not have enough resources. The Jesuits heavily relied on the financial support from the emperor and hoped he would help the College to acquire new residences. The minister highlighted the fact that among those noble students there were several singers promoted by Ferdinand himself. The emperor appreciated their musical talent and they used to perform at the court. The Jesuits believed the emperor would be glad to improve the living conditions of the singers. Ferdinand was rather reluctant to tackle all the housing difficulties of the Jesuits. In 1554 after his intervention, the Society received a more convenient space for the main College building, but the emperor could not provide additional houses. Thus, according to the *Litterae Quadrimestres*, housing issues continued to be relevant after 1559 as well.¹⁶⁴ As I will show later, “poor” students had to face the very same problem.

Acknowledging all the difficulties with accommodations for nobles, Jesuits did not give up the hope of attracting them to the College. They repeatedly highlighted the role of this student group for the prestige of the school in the Chronicles and *Litterae Quadrimestres*. The interest of aristocracy in the Jesuit education and their desire to send children to the boarding house indicated that the school flourished (*studia litteraria...mirifice florent*).¹⁶⁵ Talking about the progress in

¹⁶² “Inhabitant domunculam quandam parvam... quae ita angusta est ut non patiat pluris recipi, etsi multi pro filiis suis vehementer instant” *Litterae de forma...*, 301.

¹⁶³ “Propriam per se culinam habere loci prohibet angustia”. *Litterae de forma...*, 301.

¹⁶⁴ *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 283.

¹⁶⁵ *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 87.

student attendance, Jesuits often stressed the noble element.¹⁶⁶ It was important to show that each year the popularity of the Jesuit College among noble Estates only increased. This representation clearly contradicts that pessimistic picture based on the actual number of nobles boarders and constant complaints about inability to admit more. In my opinion, the discourse about the growing interest of aristocracy to the College was an important form of self-fashion of the Jesuit educators. As I wrote in the previous chapter a rising school attendance was considered to be an indication of a positive evolution. References to new noble students underscored the success, since they were perceived as more “valuable” than the sons of commoners. At the same time, Jesuits were well aware of the real limitations of attracting nobles they had on the ground.

Jesuits also put the discussion of the noble students in a broader context of the educational prestige of their College. Over the second part of sixteenth century Jesuits strove to obtain the right of issuing academic degrees in Philosophy and Theology. Traditionally, the University of Vienna enjoyed a monopoly on this issue and regarded it as a key University privilege which could not be shared with the Jesuit College.¹⁶⁷ Although the Jesuits did not manage to achieve their goal in the sixteenth century, they were quite persistent and searched for different arguments that could support their claim. One of the points was that after acquiring a higher educational status the College would become more attractive to noblemen.¹⁶⁸ Thus, they attempted to combine two discourses of prestige: school attendance by nobles and the right of promotion.

There was a remarkable detail related to the regional division of the noble boarders. The Jesuits usually did not refer to the places of origin of nobles in the *Litterae* and Chronicles. However, for the cases when this information was given one can distinguish two “noblest” regions: Hungary and Poland. In the Jesuit testimonies these countries were closely associated with the

¹⁶⁶ “...quo multo plures quam antea nobiles confluent“. *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 608; “numerus studiosorum nobilitated et praestantia augetur in dies magis magisque“. *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 497.

¹⁶⁷ A general overview of the conflict is given in Kurt Mühlberger, “Universität und Jesuitenkolleg in Wien. Von der Berufung des Ordens bis zum Bau des akademischen Kollegs“ in *Die Jesuiten in Wien. Zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte der österreichischen Ordensprovinz der "Gesellschaft Jesu" im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert.*, ed. by Herbert Karner (Vienna: Verbund für Bildung und Kultur, 2003), 21-30.

¹⁶⁸ *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 497-498.

nobility. In the first chapter I already addressed the stories of several Polish students of noble origin. The most famous one was the future saint Stanislaw Kostka who studied in Vienna with his brother in 1563-1566. There was another Polish noble holding a count's title who entered the Society of Jesus despite the protests of his father.¹⁶⁹ The father eventually reconciled with the Viennese Jesuits and, according to one of the *Litterae*, agreed to sponsor a new college in Breslau (the college turned out to be short-lived but it was the intention to help the Catholic Society that mattered). This case was of a great importance for the Jesuits, since it implicitly shows the effectiveness of their "social policy." A noble boy was sent to their College and the Jesuits established contacts with his father who eventually contributed to the development of the Jesuit education and thus to the recatholization of his homeland. A Polish student was a vice-prefect of the noble boarding house¹⁷⁰ and in 1567 his noble compatriot joined the Society and also appeared in the "Catalogues."¹⁷¹ Stanislaw Kostka shared the room at least with two other Poles beyond his brothers.¹⁷² Moreover, Jesuits emphasized the influx of nobles from Poland in their reports and in the College Chronicle.¹⁷³ The Polish students were either sent to Vienna by their parents holding the Jesuit education in high regard or were promoted by Polish ecclesiastical authorities interested in the progress of recatholization. The Polish cardinal and bishop Stanislaw Hosius played a crucial role in strengthening the ties between Poland and the Viennese college.¹⁷⁴ Hosius served as a Papal nuncio at the imperial Court in Vienna from 1558 to 1566. During this period, he maintained close contacts with Viennese Jesuits and often attended public events organized by the College (academic disputes, theatre plays).¹⁷⁵ What is more important is that he promoted his own noble proteges to the studies in Vienna.¹⁷⁶ Relying on his experience in Vienna Hosius established in

¹⁶⁹ *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 758-759.

¹⁷⁰ *Catalogi...*, 84, 93.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid*, 280.

¹⁷² Urbanus Ubaldini SJ, "Vita et miracula S. Stanislai Kostkae" in *Analecta Bollandina* 11 (1892), 434.

¹⁷³ *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 283-284; *Historia Collegii Viennensis...*, 10v.

¹⁷⁴ Rona Johnston, Howard Louthan and Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin, "Catholic Reformers: Stanislas Hosius, Melchior Khlesl, and Péter Pázmány" in *A Companion to the Reformation in Central Europe*, ed. by Howard Louthan and Graeme Murdock (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2015), 197-204.

¹⁷⁵ *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 88, 765.

¹⁷⁶ "duo inter alios primae nobilitatis vehementissime a cardinali reverendissimo Hosio sunt nobis commendati". *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 497.

1565 the first Jesuit college in Poland-Lithuania in Braunsberg (Braniewo).¹⁷⁷ This institution became a key center of Catholic confessionalization in Poland.

The second most frequent noble group were Hungarians. In the first chapter I commented on the connections between Hungarian clergy and Viennese Jesuits. Archbishop Miklos Oláh can be compared with Stanislaw Hosius in terms of his intensive engagement with the Viennese Jesuits. He also was a usual guest at the Jesuit festivities, supported Hungarian students and in 1561 founded the first Jesuit college in his country which, however, had a lesser success than the Polish one. Hungarian nobles were mentioned together with Poles.¹⁷⁸ Besides, the *Vita* of Stanislaw Kostka testifies that Polish and Hungarian noble students could be roommates.¹⁷⁹

Apart from the two major groups there were single references to “German”¹⁸⁰ and Tyrolean nobles.¹⁸¹ It is emblematic that the noble population of the College was predominantly “foreign.” While talking much about Poles and (to a lesser extent) Hungarians Jesuits did not highlight the presence of Austrian nobles. This fact is noticeable in context of confessionalization efforts of the Jesuits. The primary goal of the noble direction of the Jesuit social policy was to attract sons of aristocrats to the school and to bolster their Catholicism or to induce to conversion from Protestantism so that they could then support the recatholization as members of privileged Estate. One can conclude that while Polish and Hungarian nobles appreciated this opportunity, Austrians were hesitant to send their sons to Jesuits. I will come back to this disproportion among nobles in the next chapter dedicated to the Jesuit conversion policy.

2.1.3 A sudden closure of the house for nobles

Discussing the housing problem of the Jesuit College, I pointed out that an effective implementation of the Jesuit “social policy” was strongly linked to the aid from the emperor or other powerful figures. It was Ferdinand who was expected to finance the establishment of a new

¹⁷⁷ Józef Włodarski, “Inwestycje kulturalne kardynała Stanisława Hozjusza w Braniewie [Contribution of cardinal Stanislaw Hosius to the cultural development of Braunsberg]” in *Studia Warmińskie* 20 (1983), 108-114.

¹⁷⁸ *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 284.

¹⁷⁹ Urbanus Ubaldini SJ, “Vita et miracula S. Stanislaui Kostkae” in *Analecta Bollandina* 11 (1892), 438.

¹⁸⁰ *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 284.

¹⁸¹ *Catalogi*..., 168.

residence for nobles and who did not fulfill the hopes of Jesuits. The story of the closure of the noble boarding house is a colorful illustration of this dependency.

In July 1564 Ferdinand I, the principal patron of the Jesuits in Vienna, died. In November of the same year Ferdinand's successor, Maximilian II ordered that the Jesuits leave the house they used for accommodating nobles.¹⁸² Ferdinand transferred the house into possession of the Society but the Jesuits did not become full owners and, therefore, had no legal option for contesting the new emperor's decision. The house was to be emptied by the January of 1565, but the Jesuits stayed a bit longer, since they had to resettle their noble students (the Chronicle again emphasized that they were numerous). The Jesuits failed to find another place and the General of Austrian Province regretfully announced the dwellers would not receive any alternative house from the Society and had to look for accommodation on their own. This event must have been a hard blow to the Jesuits and it probably hurt their reputation in the eyes of nobles which was so significant for the school. It was not by chance that it was not the rector but the Provincial General (the Head of all Jesuits in the Habsburg lands) who communicated this sad information to the noble children. Letting noble students go without any explanations may have been considered offensive and the presence of a high-ranked Jesuit could at least show the respect the school paid to nobles despite everything.

After the dissolution of the boarding house many nobles like Stanislaw Kostka and his Polish comrades rented rooms in the city and continued attending classes at the Jesuit school. But it was clearly a step backwards. They always stressed the importance of a collective accommodation supervised by the Society. In such residences Jesuits could control behavior and manners of students and most importantly their religious practices. The regulations illustrating this disciplining policy survived solely for poor students and I will address this aspect below. As for the nobles, one can deduce from the letter of the college minister that they had to follow some kind

¹⁸² *Historia collegii Viennensis...* 11v-12.

of inner house rules which, however, were not especially strict.¹⁸³ Once nobles began living separately from the College, Jesuits lost their control and hence were unable to imbue children with the religious discipline.

What was the reason for Maximilian's decision to take away the noble house from the Jesuits? No source gives any direct interpretation of it, so I can just speculate. It is well-known that Maximilian II was much more tolerant to Protestants than his father.¹⁸⁴ Many of his councilors were Lutherans who were not fond of the Jesuit presence in the city. This confessional shift at the court might have had its impact on the fate of the Jesuit school. To close the entire College would have been too radical, but one could weaken the Jesuits by depriving them of the property they used for educational needs. The town patriciate consisting primarily of Protestants must have supported this attack by preventing Jesuits from finding a new large residence. These confessional tensions may have laid behind the emperor's decree to close the boarding house.

2.2 Pauperes

In contrast to *nobilis*, the category of *pauper* was much more ambiguous, since it referred not to a social (belonging to a certain Estate) but rather to an economic status of a student. In general, student community in early modern schools and universities consisted of two large groups: "wealthy" (*divites*) and "poor" (*pauperes*) students.¹⁸⁵ The definitions of these terms varied from university to university, but there were still some common features in the attitude to the "poor". It was believed that universities had to take care of students born in humble families. The most important elements of support were exemption from some obligatory fees and the provision of free housing. By investing in infrastructure for "poor" students, a particular university

¹⁸³ They had to wear the same cloths and to conform to the Jesuit "way of living". "Littera de totius...", 301.

¹⁸⁴ R.J.W Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg monarchy, 1550-1700. An interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 37-40; Howard Louthan, *The quest for compromise. Peacemakers in Counter-Reformation Vienna* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997); Paula S. Fichtner, *Emperor Maximilian II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

¹⁸⁵ An extensive monograph on the social history of universities was written by Rainer Schwinges and his colleagues. Rainer Christoph Schwinges, *Studenten und Gelehrte. Studien zur Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte deutscher Universitäten im Mittelalter* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2008).

raised the accessibility of education for a broader social scope. Such “social policy” in education could be used as an effective weapon in a competition between different schools for new students.

In the sixteenth century, Jesuits became famous for employing this strategy. Charity and care for poor was an intrinsic part of the Jesuit ideology and self-fashioning. Charity was an essential way of achieving principal spiritual goals of Jesuits formulated in the “Constitutions”: helping the other and contributing to the “common good”.¹⁸⁶ The Viennese *Litterae Quadrimestres* stressed that Jesuits regularly visited the city poor houses and provided their dwellers with spiritual and sometimes financial assistance.¹⁸⁷ Jesuit schools were also sensitive to the needs of poor. Jesuit education was free of charge which automatically lifted a financial burden on students. However, this measure did not eliminate economic problems associated with acquiring education in the early modern period. Students coming from different places needed accommodation which was often quite expensive. They also spent money on books, alimentation, and cloths. Students who could not afford such expenses were in need of a further financial aid. Jesuits acknowledged it and came up with additional support measures. Offering lodgings and meals was key point in their policy to students designated as “poor”. Although the tendency of Jesuits to be attentive to social issues in education is well-known, we still know little about *pauperes* in Jesuit colleges.

I will discuss the status of the “poor” students of the Jesuit college of Vienna in the second half of sixteenth century. In 1558, the Jesuits established a special boarding house intended for *pauperes*, the so called “new college”. It was sponsored by the emperor Ferdinand and some unknown “Spaniards” from his court.¹⁸⁸ Offering just 26 places, the “new college”, similarly to the noble boarding house, was a relatively small institution, therefore it is unlikely that its dwellers amounted to all poor students studying under Jesuits. However, the foundation of such a boarding

¹⁸⁶ Jaska Kainulainen, “Virtue and civic values in Early Modern Jesuit education,” *Journal of Jesuit studies* 5 4 (2018), 534-536.

¹⁸⁷ “Visitabant xenodochia...pauperibus, qui id poterat, pecunias sincere et maximo cum animi solatio erogabant.” *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 284.

¹⁸⁸ *Litt. Quad.* VI, 326.

house was undoubtedly a part of Jesuit social policy in education and sources related to this institution can shed light on Jesuit ideas of treating *pauperes*.

2.2.1. Normative sources regarding “poor” students

As in the case of *nobiles*, *Litterae Quadrimestres* and Chronicles give some insights into the history of *pauperes*. But for studying this category I also addressed another type of sources revealing more details about the Jesuit “social policy”. These are the Instructions concerning conditions of poor students and the Regulations of their life in the so called “new college” (a boarding house for poor students). All the testimonies were composed in Latin in 1563 at the time when the college was visited by an inspector from Rome. Before this year at least two drafts of Instructions about poor students were sent to Rome for approval, but they were not accepted by the Society General and were to be improved. These initial documents did not survive and I worked only with a final version which was handed over to the inspector and ultimately approved in Rome. It was published in 1974 in the 2nd volume of the series *Monumenta Paedagogica Societatis Jesu*. The Regulations consist of two unequal parts. The first part is attributed to the college rector. It is a sixteen-pages list of general rules that should be followed by those students who were accepted in the “new college”.¹⁸⁹ This part is supplemented by a shorter (four page) piece addressing similar questions which was written not by the rector, but by his subordinate, the “new college” prefect - a person who might have known more about the living conditions and needs of students.¹⁹⁰ If the former document is related to broader issues like the rules of acceptance in the “new college”, the regulation of students’ behavior and their religious practices etc., the latter focuses on more practical questions: exact timetable for students, meals, and fees. The third testimony that I will address was composed by the inspector himself. Having accepted the final version of the

¹⁸⁹ “Regulae pauperum studiosorum Viennae 1563” in *Monumenta Paedagogica Societatis Jesu (MPSJ) II*. ed. by László Lukács (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 1974), 298-314

¹⁹⁰ “Ordo diurnus collegii novi Viennae 1563” in *Monumenta Paedagogica Societatis Jesu (MPSJ) II*. Ed. by László Lukács (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 1974), 314-318

Regulations, he shared his own view on how the “new college” should be organized.¹⁹¹ His ideas were to be taken into consideration and implemented in addition to the general Regulations. He formulated his thoughts in the form of a formal letter to the rector where he nuanced several important aspects.

This set of instructions provides us with a detailed description of the acceptance procedure, and prescriptions about students’ everyday lives and personal finances. All these sets of rules dated back to 1563 and likely remained in force through the end of the century. All the aforementioned sources can be characterized as normative or prescriptive. This fact sets certain limits to the scope of research questions that can be posed. It is evident that no normative source directly reflects real practices. It means that while analyzing the Regulations one cannot ask how the poor students actually lived or were admitted to the college, but just how they were supposed to. Hence, I will focus primarily not on the “real” *pauperes*, but rather on the ideas and perceptions about this group formulated by the college administration and the inspector. I cannot define to which extent these prescriptions were implemented, but I can reconstruct general theoretical framework of Jesuit policy towards poor students. Furthermore, even though the relationships between norm and practice are quite complex, it is still possible to study them together. One could assume that some prescriptive documents may be based on the preceding practice. Established in 1558, the boarding house had been operating for 5 years by the time the Instructions were drafted. During this period the perfect already dealt in practice with those issues which he would ultimately write down in a prescriptive form (timetable, alimentation, fees). I suppose that this experience might have been in some way adopted in the “Regulations”.

I complemented these normative and narrative sources with a single survived list of the “new college” dwellers composed in 1562.¹⁹² This list informs us about the number and regional origin of *pauperes* in a given year.

¹⁹¹ *Instrukciones Viennae circa domum pauperum studiosorum datae 1563* in *MPSJ III*, Ed. by László Lukács (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 1974), 94-102.

¹⁹² *Catalogi personarum*, 97-98.

2.2.2. Inhabitants of the “new college” in Vienna

To analyze the category of “poor” one should at first define who could be regarded as *pauper* and which conditions one had to fulfill to be accepted to the “new college”, i.e. to be given accommodation and food from Jesuits. It should be noted that students living in a house supposedly intended only for *pauperes* actually did not have to be destitute. The “new college” community was probably quite heterogenous in terms of economic capacities of its dwellers. The “Instructions” contain a couple of details supporting this claim. Legal representatives of a child (parents or patrons) had to submit a special letter before the admission. In this letter, among other things, they indicated whether they were going to pay (and how much) for sustainment of their children. In case parents could not afford it, Jesuits took over the full financial care of a student.¹⁹³ However, it was considered possible to distribute places in the “new college” among not only totally penniless candidates, but also those able to cover at least a part of their living expenses. The latter were called semi-poor (*pauperes ex parte*)¹⁹⁴. There is another detail implying that *pauperes* in the “new college” were not necessarily poor in an economic sense of the word. After entering the “new college”, students were supposed to hand over silver and gold (if they had some) to the prefect.¹⁹⁵ Hence, one may argue that a possession of certain amount of money was at least conceivable for seemingly poor students. Moreover, students explicitly classified as “wealthy” (*divites*)¹⁹⁶ and even noble¹⁹⁷ could also apply for a place in the “new college”, provided that they paid for it.

Thus, one observes that Jesuits tended not to strictly separate actual “poor” (those unable to pay for accommodation and food) from other categories differing in terms of wealth (from semi-poor to nobles). All of them could live together in a house designated as the “college for poor”. For the year 1563 I have identified a proportion of paying and non-paying inhabitants of the “new

¹⁹³ Instructiones Viennae circa domum pauperum studiosorum datae 1563, 98.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, 100.

¹⁹⁵ “Si quid pueri adferunt auri vel argenti, vel omnino rei alicujus, quae pro illis sit conservanda, illud habeat praefectus illius collegii...” Ibid, 96.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 100.

¹⁹⁷ Instructiones Viennae circa domum...,99.

college". According to the college prefect, 9 students out of twenty-three were exempt from payments, one paid a half-sum while the rest covered all the expenses on their own.¹⁹⁸ Therefore, less than a half of inhabitants enjoyed some sort of financial support. As for noble students, one cannot be certain whether they used the opportunity to get a place in the "new college". Apart from the "new college", there was another house intended exclusively for students of noble origin which might have been more preferable than a house inhabited by students of socially lower rank. Renting accommodation in the city was another option for richer ones. However, a situation when a dweller of paupers' house was not entirely poor was possible for Jesuits.

How can one explain this contradiction? Firstly, nuancing and historicizing the understanding of the concept of "poverty" in early modern Europe may give some clues. Drawing upon early modern encyclopedic definitions of a poor, university history scholars sometimes distinguish between two types of poverty: primary and secondary.¹⁹⁹ "Primary" (or "positive") poverty relates to a situation when one cannot provide for oneself and is financially bound to another person (patron, charity giver). A person falling into the category of "secondary" (or "relative") poverty did not have to be on the verge of economic existence. The main criterion was that his material conditions did not correspond to his social status. A possible example is a "poor" nobleman who did not starve and could be quite well-off, but his income and living standard was considered inappropriate for his rank. Hence, "secondary" poverty was rather a subjective notion while "primary" one had more evident material implications. Both categories were described with the same term – *paupertas*. One could then ask if inhabitants of the "new college" in Vienna were "absolutely" or "relatively" poor. As regards *pauperes* at the University of Vienna it is assumed that they were mostly far from being destitute, but their economic situation might have been worse than that of an average student.²⁰⁰ Perhaps the Jesuits also presupposed that at least some of

¹⁹⁸ Ordo diurnus collegii novi Viennae 1563..., 317.

¹⁹⁹ Ulrike Denk, *Alltag zwischen Studieren und Betteln. Die Kodrei Goldberg, ein studentisches Armenhaus an der Universität Wien in der Frühen Neuzeit*. (Vienna: Vienna University Press, 2013), 13-15, 101-102.

²⁰⁰ Kurt Mühlberger, „Wiener Studentenbursen und Kodreien im Wandel vom 15. zum 16. Jahrhundert“ in *Aspekte der Bildungs- und Universitätsgeschichte* (Vienna: WUV-Universitätsverlag, 1993), 151.

pauperes in their college would belong to this relatively well-off group. It would explain cases of solvent dwellers, semi-*pauperes* and poor nobles.

Except for a possible terminological ambiguity there could be another interpretation of Jesuits' disinterest in a clear separation of poor students from other socio-economic groups. Poverty was not an essential criterion for acceptance to the "new college". All the instructions, although being imprecise regarding the definition of *pauper*, pay great attention to additional requirements for candidates. The most important one was that a future dweller not only had to claim his allegiance to Catholicism, but should be considered be useful for the goals of the Church.²⁰¹ Before the admission a child was supposed to declare that he would be a cleric after graduation. Jesuits claimed they would lead children gently and gradually (*suaviter et pedetentim*) on their way to priesthood, but their destiny was defined. For their part, legal representatives of a child had to confirm that they would not impede this process²⁰². To demonstrate the affinity to the Church inhabitants of the "new college" were obliged to wear clerical attire. It was an obligatory admission requirement. However, it is noteworthy that in case of clothing question Jesuits were more attentive to actual financial status of a "poor" student. The dress-code was mandatory only for those students completely exempt from payments (*omnino pauperes*) or paying a part of costs (*pauperes ex parte*). Those covering the expenses (*qui plenas expensas solvunt*) on their own were encouraged to follow the same suit, but did not have to.²⁰³ Furthermore, Jesuits viewed the student body of the "new college" as a recruitment base for the Society itself. Upon the recommendation of the prefect the most talented students could take first steps towards becoming Jesuits.²⁰⁴

Jesuits also claimed candidates should have some "talents" (*ingenia*). It is not clearly what talents were meant. At least in one place "Instructions" refer to an aptitude for studies (*apti ad studia*) as an important characteristic of a "new college" dweller.²⁰⁵ In other Jesuit colleges in

²⁰¹ „a quibus maximus fructus expectari potest pro Ecclesia Dei.” *Instructiones Viennae circa domum...*,99

²⁰² “...non impedituros pueros quod fiant sacerdotes”. *Instructiones Viennae circa domum...*,98

²⁰³ *Ibid*, 101.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 99.

²⁰⁵ *Ibidem*.

Europe (in Cologne and in Paris) students applying for a place in a “poor house” were supposed to be most talented and pious ones.²⁰⁶ However, I believe that an acceptance policy was not merit based in a modern sense of the word. The academic performance of a student might have played some role, but not a key one. Confessional rhetoric “Instructions” definitely prevails over the discussion of intellectual requirements for a student. The loyalty to Catholicism and a future utility for the Church seemed to be more important than successes in studies.

There could have been another possibility to raise one’s chances of being accepted to the “new college”. According to the only surviving list, there were 26 *pauperes* living in the “new college” in 1562. I have compared the names mentioned in this list with the names of the Society members teaching and studying at the Vienna college. It turned out that at least five *pauperes* were likely to be relatives of an active Society member. For example, among poor there were two students with the surname Bedula (probably brothers) from Swiss (*helveticus*). Meanwhile there was another Bedula, an experienced Jesuit priest (1562 was his ninth year in the Society), who in 1561 studied in the second class of Philosophy (one of the highest classes in the Jesuit system) and for several years served as a prefect of the “new college”.²⁰⁷ Therefore, two places (which were extremely limited due to the lack of living space) in the “new college” were given to those students who came from the same region and had the same surname as the prefect of this very college. I may be a mere coincidence or their brother could promote them and helped to win a competition with other 500 students of the college. The situation with the other three *pauperes* was similar: they all had fellow-countrymen with the same surnames among the Jesuits, probably their relatives. The Jesuits lived separately together in the main college building and they did not need an extra accommodation from themselves but they could assist their supposedly poor relatives to get free lodgings. Hence, apart from confessional loyalty and intellectual talents family ties and social network were a significant factor for admission to the “new college”.

²⁰⁶ Schröteler, 116.

²⁰⁷ Catalogi personarum, 41, 60, 73, 74, 80.

The list of *pauperes* provides us with data about their regions of origin. The larger part (seven out of twenty-six) of the poor students were from Vienna, 4 from Hungary, 3 from Slavonia and Swabia 2 from Italy, Croatia and Switzerland and 1 from Bavaria and Carniola. In contrast to the noble house there were much more locals in the “new college”. Thus, employing charity instruments enabled Jesuits managed to attract students from the territories (predominantly Lutheran like Vienna) which remained almost unaffected by the initiatives aimed at the nobility.

Thus, if a student arrived in Vienna and was classified as *pauper* (in whatever sense of the term: primary or secondary), he could be appointed to a place in the “new college”. However, being “poor” was not a decisive factor. One had to guarantee that one would serve the Catholic case and become cleric. Confession was a primary condition of acceptance. It does not entail that all *pauperes* were devote Catholics. I do not have information about converts from Protestantism in the poor house. However, Protestant were a significant (and maybe the main) target of the Jesuit “social policy” and it was desirable for *patres* to attract them by offering a free place in the “new college”. In exchange for the help from Jesuits Lutherans were supposed to abandon their faith and entering the “college” to adopt a new religious allegiance. Although formally obeying, students might have disguised their confessional views and persisted in “heresy”. I will expand this issue in the third chapter. What is important is that Jesuits linked financial aid to confessional loyalty. It demonstrates that the Society considered their charity work in educational domain as a tool of confessionalization.

2.2.3 Degree of economic relief

Once a student was admitted to the “new college” and considered “absolutely” poor (i.e. unable to pay for accommodation and food), the administration covered all necessary expenses. How considerable was this financial support? To which degree did they differ from a semi-poor and “wealthy” inhabitant of the boarding house? How much was an average sum paid for the costs of daily life by a non-poor dweller?

A short note written by a college prefect as an addition to the “Regulations” can give insight into these questions. The prefect indicated the exact amount of money paid by those dwellers who did not enjoy any exemption or were bound to pay a part of necessary sum²⁰⁸. Payments for food amounted to 30 or 25 guldens per year. Those dwellers who had to pay for food and for lodgings gave 30 talers (or 45 guldens, since 1 taler = 1.5 gulden). 1 student paid 14 guldens, and another was just 1 taler. The latter two were probably so called semi-poor (*pauperes ex parte*). Thus, depending on a degree of financial exemptions the payments varied from 1.5 to 45 guldens.

In order to perceive a real value of the sum of 30 or 45 guldens one can compare it with contemporary prices and salaries. Dealing with the history of *pauperes* of the University of Vienna in the same period Ulrike Denk proposed to consider the salaries of the University professors and employees of the city hospital. I assume that this data is well-suited for my purposes as well. Denk has found out that a superintendant of the city hospital earned 32 guldens, whereas a year income of a Philosophy faculty professor was between 80 and 100 guldens²⁰⁹. In comparison, a salary of a servant in the court hospital in Graz at the end of sixteenth century was about 6-8 guldens²¹⁰. Besides, one can address prices of everyday products, for instance, that of beef. In 1563 an average price of a pound of beef purchased by the Vienna hospital amounted to 6 pfennings (app. 1/30 of gulden) and increased steadily up to 10 pf. till the end of the century²¹¹.

Thus, a standard price for accommodation and alimentation in the “new college” was more than five times higher than an annual salary of a low-skilled employee and 70% higher than that of a professional official. Basing on food prices I may argue that this sum would probably have been enough for feeding a family for a year. Hence, a student considered capable of paying for a place had to possess a very considerable amount of money. I do not know the level rental prices paid by the students living outside the Jesuit housing facilities. They perhaps were not significantly

²⁰⁸ Ordo diurnus collegii novi Viennae 1563..., 317.

²⁰⁹ Ulrike Denk. *Alltag zwischen Studieren und Betteln*, 158.

²¹⁰ Fritz Popelka, „Die Lebensmittelpreise und Löhne in Graz vom 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert,“ *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*..23 2. (1930), 187.

²¹¹ Fritz Popelka, „Die Bewegung der Fleischpreise in Österreich im 16. Jahrhundert“ In *Zeitschrift des historischen Vereins für Steiermark* 29 (1935), 137.

different from those required by the Jesuits. I believe that those *pauperes* being under conditions of extreme, “primary” poverty in fact could hardly bear the cost for accommodation without financial support.

2.2.4 Social disciplining

As I have shown, in the “new college” Jesuits tended to combine two essential duties of the Society: charity and Catholic confessionalization. Dwellers of the “new college” were supposed to be loyal to Catholicism and to be ready to serve the Church after the graduation. However, these entry requirements were one element of the Jesuit confessional program.

According to the classical theory of confessionalization, religious indoctrination was always implemented through the means of social disciplining. Disciplining endeavors stemming from the state were manifested in multiple legal prescriptions (“police ordinances”; *Polizeyordnungen*) aiming to regulate the everyday practices of subjects and to control their “morals”. The key aspect of “good morals” was religious piety and a regular demonstration of conformity to a certain confession. More recent historiography shifted attention from the “state” (higher authorities) to the disciplining activities conducted by local communities and other actors. In my view, the Jesuit “new college” in Vienna is a model example of a disciplining institution acting at a local level.

Dwellers of the house for *pauperes* were to abide by a set of rigorous rules concerning different aspects of students’ everyday life. Strict discipline was characteristic of early modern student houses. Jesuits borrowed this approach from the colleges of the University of Paris. Ignatius Loyola lived in the colleges of Montagu and St. Barbara which were famous for the rigid house order. The future founder of the Society once almost got a punishment for inappropriate behavior.²¹² The prefects of the Parisian colleges paid special attention to the religious practices

²¹² Gabriel Cordina Mir, *Aux sources de la pédagogie des jésuites. Le „modus parisiensis“* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 1968), 132.

of boarders. Students were supposed to regularly attend Church services, to take communion and to confess.²¹³ Loyola believed it was an effective method of raising good and pious Christians and finally the Parisian model was adopted by the Jesuit. At first in the Rome and then in all other colleges Jesuits came up with detailed prescriptions aiming at enhancing morals of their members and everyone living under their supervision.

“Preserving and improving chastity and piety” was a central idea of the Regulations for *pauperes* proposed by Hieronim Nadal in 1563.²¹⁴ He stressed that the “new college” was basically a “religious institution”.²¹⁵ It entailed regular collective prayers, devotion of icons and public reading of spiritual literature (*devoti libri*).²¹⁶ *Hortulus Animae* (Little garden of the soul), Rosary and Hours of the Virgin were referred to as standard prayer books. In addition, one could read “Meditations” of St. Bernard and “The Imitation of Christ”.²¹⁷ As I have mentioned, all boarders had to wear cloths common to clergymen.

A proper religious conduct was closely associated with “good morals” (*mores*) in general which also were to be thoroughly regulated. “Morals” were understood quite broadly and thus the instructions concerned a vast array of everyday practices. There were prescriptions about modesty in different settings: in the Church, at school, in the canteen, in the dormitory. Even during the game (*in lusu*) one should not forget to behave in a diligent and pious way.²¹⁸ Students were forbidden to play for money or any other kind of material benefits. Instead, a student who lost was supposed to recite prayers from the main devotional books used by the Jesuits.²¹⁹ I will not go into detail of these instructions, since they all sought to communicate the same essential message to a student: be modest, god-fearing, obedient and honest under any circumstances. The most striking trait of the Regulations was the desire to control even the body movements of students. I give just

²¹³ Ibid, 144-145.

²¹⁴ *Instructiones Viennae circa domum pauperum...* 95-96, passim.

²¹⁵ “Tota eorum institutio..erit religiosa“. Ibid, 96.

²¹⁶ Ibid, 94-95, 101.

²¹⁷ *Regulae pauperum...*, 310-311.

²¹⁸ Ibid, 308.

²¹⁹ “Non ludent lucra causa, sed pro pacti conventionem, ut scilicet victus recitet officium Virginis vel mortuorum, psalmos poenitentiales aut omnes vel unum ex illis, rosarium et quid simile“. Ibidem.

few examples. While being in public a student was obliged not to “wrinkle his forehead” (*rugae in fronte non contrahantur*) or to walk with an opened mouth.²²⁰ All bodily gestures should express shyness and humility of a student. In the dormitory a student should not toss and turn but was to lie quietly (*Quietus jacebit, corporis revolutione se non nudabit*).

Except for regulating personal conduct Jesuits sought to limit contacts of the “new college” dwellers with the outside world. Boarders were not allowed neither to leave the house nor to speak to anyone not from the College without a permission of the prefect.²²¹ Moreover, Jesuits tended to check the correspondence of students. It was important to keep students separated from the Protestant community of the town. Jesuits wanted to “defend” the poor boarders from the influence of the unorthodox religious ideas and to preserve their Catholic purity.

In my opinion, by maintaining such a rigorous control over students’ life Jesuits hoped to raise a generation of highly disciplined and pious Catholics ready undertake any tasks assigned by the Church. Thus, it was another tool in a recatholization policy. It is rather doubtful that students indeed followed all the regulations and that Jesuits managed to imbue all the boarders with virtues of piety and modesty. However, as I pointed out, a normative source like these *Regulations* can give insights into the perceptions about how such an institution was supposed to operated.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have considered two directions of the Jesuit “social policy” in education: towards noble and “poor” students. One can speak of certain similarities between the Jesuit approaches to both groups. Social policy of Jesuits in education was linked to and determined by confessional aims. Attracting nobles to the school was a way of strengthening positions of Catholicism in the higher echelons of the society. In the view of Jesuits, it would have a positive effect on the recatholization at a global scale. Nobles brought up by Jesuits would become either

²²⁰ Ibid, 301.

²²¹ *Regulae pauperum...*, 313.

state dignitaries supporting Roman Church or major landowners implementing Catholic confessionalization in their domains. In case of the *pauperes* confessional motives are evident as well. Material need was not the most important factor for the admission to the “new college”. Places in the “new college” were reserved only for those who promised to serve the needs of Church and even to become cleric in the future. A strict, religious based discipline in the college was to contribute to formation of an obedient man strong in his faith and apt for pursuing recatholization policy on the ground.

Both institutions (boarding house for nobles and the “new college”) were relatively small in size and their capacities were not enough to admit a considerable number of boarders. It was a matter of constant concerns of the Jesuits who were disappointed with the impediments to their “social policy” caused by mere material difficulties. The number of noble boarders in 1559 was just 17. It probably grew to some extent by 1565 but the rise was not likely to be considerable. The “new college” showed the same pattern offering no more than 26 places in the college where student body reached the figure of 500 by the early 1560s. As regards improvement of the housing conditions, Jesuits fully depended on the wealthy sponsors, first of all on the emperor who was sometimes reluctant to tackle existing problems. The story of the sudden closure of the noble boarding house demonstrates that changes at the court could have dramatic consequences for the institutions of the Jesuit social policy at school.

While the confessional issue was pivotal for the discussion of both nobles and “poor”, there were some contexts specific to each group. Having noblemen among students was associated with prestige and honor. Jesuits tended to emphasize (and maybe exaggerate) increasing interest of nobles in the Jesuit education in order to point up the high status of the school. Jesuits used this “nobility” rhetoric to support their claims in the rivalry with the University about the right of promotion. To issue a degree was a sign of a prestige for an educational institution as well as teaching nobles. Jesuits asserted two prestigious elements should not be separated: if a school

issued degrees, it became more attractive to the nobles and vice versa if there were high rates of noble attendance, it should entail the right of promotion.

The establishment of the “new college” was perceived as an act of charity inherent to the Society of Jesus. A duty of a proper Jesuit was to help poor everywhere including schools. However, the notion of poverty was quite ambiguous and not clearly defined by the Jesuits. a term *pauper* was at least twofold and could designate either an actually destitute student (*pauper ex omnino*) or a relatively poor one (*pauper ex parte*). Relative poverty might have referred to a discrepancy between one’s social status and financial abilities or just indicated that a person was not capable of covering all the necessary expenses on accommodation. The “new college” nominally intended only for *pauperes* could also admit wealthy students who did not get any financial support from the Jesuits. Except for financial conditions and perhaps academic (or some other) talents, family ties with the members of the Society might have played a role in the admission procedure. Despite all the limitations, I would not underestimate the significance of the financial aid provided by the Viennese Jesuits. Comparison with contemporary salaries and prices has shown that an education in Vienna would have been unaffordable for people of a modest income, if they had not had a chance to get a free place in the “new college”.

Finally, there was a marked regional discrepancy between the nobles and *pauperes*. While nobles were predominantly “foreign” (the most frequently mentioned groups – Poles and Hungarians), *pauperes* originated from different regions including Austria and the capital city itself. Regarding the confessional goals of Jesuits this disproportion might mean that in 1550-1560s the “charity” policy was more effective to attract students from the Habsburg regions with a strong Lutheran influence. Protestant nobles were inclined to entrust their children to Jesuits and rather sent them to the one of the *Landschftschulen*. I will return to the problem of Protestant nobility in the next chapter.

Chapter 3. Difficulties of conversion at the Jesuit college

Many young men are growing accustomed to the regular confessions. If earlier they used to confess unwillingly and under pressure, now, after [positive] experience, they go to the priest with joy and excitement. Owing to the virtue of confession, many of them are slowly getting rid of vicious habits and impious, heretical errors. [However], many [pupils] still share these errors either due to the corruptness of their parents or to heretic teachers spreading the false doctrine. To our horror, a few of them, forced or convinced by the parents, have sworn not to denounce these errors in any time. However, our diligent confessors have persuaded almost all of them to obey God more than humans. Having promised to break the given oath, they readily did it.²²²

This extract from a rector's report sent in April 1555 to Rome gives a short glimpse of a long and controversial process of recatholization put forward by Jesuits in the college of Vienna in 1550-1560s. On the one hand, the rector wished to draw a picture of a gradual success in spreading Catholic ideas which was expected from him in Rome. On the other hand, he had to admit that due to various reasons conversion policy did not go smoothly. Fighting Protestantism among students was an essential goal and a constant challenge for Jesuits. In this chapter I will discuss the way Jesuits treated children from non-Catholic families. I argue that in their college Jesuits managed to create a system contributing to the intensification of conversion of Lutherans in Vienna. After a series of discussions Jesuits agreed on the rules of acceptance for Protestants who soon became a numerous group among the college students. During their studies, Jesuit teachers sought to establish control over students' religious practices and to indoctrinate them. The Jesuits achieved certain results, but a full-fledged implementation of a conversion policy in a predominantly Lutheran urban environment turned out to be very complicated. Jesuits almost failed to attract certain social groups (first of all, Protestant nobles) into their orbit. Many burger sons were not inclined to convert either. Nevertheless, the Jesuits laid a solid foundation for the

²²² "Assuescunt enim pueri et adolescentes confiteri saepius, et quod ante grauatim **ac velut coacti** faciebant, nunc post experientiam alacriter et certatim ad sacerdotem confessuri properant. Quorum plerique confessionis virtute tum prauas morum consuetudines, tum impios ac haereticos errores, sensim deponunt, quos multi vel parentum corruptela, vel praeceptorum haereticorum **praua doctrina, hauserant**. Inter hos non pauci (quod horrendum magis est), parentum instantia vieti atque compulsi, **jurauerant se nunquam errores huiusmodi deserturos**. Fere tamen omnes confessorum sedulitate persuai, Deo scilicet magis obedire oportere quam hominibus, quod temere iuramento promiserant, haud gravatim resciderunt". *Litt. Quadr.* III, 388.

future recatholization of Vienna and, in the long run, the entire Habsburg monarchy. In this chapter I will first discuss the terminology and general rules of admission of non-Catholic students in the school and formal attitude of Jesuits to this group. Then I will give an outline a Jesuit vision of Protestant inside the school and the ways Jesuits addressed the problem of conversion. Afterwards, I will consider the social dimension of conversions and illustrate the attitude of the Protestant nobility to the Jesuit school. Finally, I will touch upon the Jesuit policy to another group with a complicated confessional status, namely to the converted Jews.

3.1. Conversions in the Age of confessionalization

Conversion is a key concept for the period of confessionalization. Broadly defined, conversion is “an abandoning of one faith in favor of another”.²²³ The intensity of conversions was a primary indicator of a progress in a religious indoctrination and, hence, in changing confessional and political loyalties in a certain early modern polity. In quest for building up confessionally homogenous communities, secular and ecclesiastical authorities employed all possible means to accelerate the process. An author of a historical atlas would depict this religious evolution by changing “confessional” colors of the certain territories. While in 1550 Austrian lands are painted either as Lutheran or as mixed Lutheran-Catholic, in 1630 the map color highlights an absolute dominance of Catholicism.²²⁴ Based on such pictorial representations, one comes to the conclusion that the majority of the population of these lands shifted their confessional identification by converting to Catholicism. It indicates that the recatholization turned out to be successful.

However, one may ask what hides behind this simplified picture. What did it mean for a person to denounce the faith of his or her family and to enter a “hostile” confessional camp? What were the rationales for it? What was the nature of a conversion act itself? Is it possible to gauge

²²³ Peter Mazur, Abigail Shinn, “Introduction: Conversion Narratives in the Early Modern World,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 17 (2013), 428.

²²⁴ An example of such map “Die offiziell anerkannten Religionen in den Territorien Europas 1555” in *Digitaler Atlas zur Geschichte Europas seit 1500/ Digital atlas on the History of Europe since 1500*, ed. by Andreas Kunz (Mainz: IEG-Mainz, 2014). URL: https://www.atlas-europa.de/t02/rel-anerkannt/map-Eu555_Reli.htm.

accurately a number of converts in a certain period? Historians dealing with the confessionalization have been trying to find a right approach to studying conversions, but some aspects are still quite problematic.²²⁵

Early modern sources seldom leave space for agency of new converts. There can be certain exceptions in this regard. For example, diaries containing self-reflections of new converts or trial records which, although in an indirect way, can give the perspective of a person accepting or rejecting a new faith.²²⁶ However, in general testimonies (for instance, Jesuit *litterae annuae* or other kinds of missionary reports) refer to the act itself, but do not elaborate on the personal details of the decision to convert to another faith. Thus, scholars often indicate the fact of conversion as it is described in a source, but cannot explain it or have to settle for a version stemming from the side conducting a conversion. Another question is whether a conversion is a rapid change or a long and equivocal process. There were enough examples of the former Lutherans who over a very short span of time became fervent Catholics eagerly attacking Protestants dogmas (e.g. the story of cardinal Melchior Klesl, I discussed in the Introduction). However, scholars now tend to regard conversion as a more complex and multifaceted phenomenon. A convert could genuinely adopt some norms of the new confession, but at the same time continued practicing some rituals he had been used to since childhood. This syncretism sometimes does not allow us to clearly separate one confession from another in case of a single person or a whole community exercising mixed religious practices.²²⁷ Another option was that one had to convert to an “official” confession under pressure from the side of the authorities but in fact viewed it as a formal act not affecting his actual religious allegiance. As a result, there were plenty of the so called Cryptoprotestants in the

²²⁵ General overview Jörg Deventer, “Konversionen zwischen den christlichen Konfessionen im frühneuzeitlichen Europa,” *Wiener Zeitschrift für Neuzeit* 7 2/8 (2007), 8-24; Kim Siebenhüner, “Glaubenswechsel in der frühen Neuzeit: Chancen und Tendenzen einer historischen Konversionsforschung,” *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 34 2 (2007), 243-272; Maria Crăciun, Jörg Deventer, Martin Elbel, “Confession and conversion. Transcending religious boundaries in Central and Eastern Europe, 1560-1700” in *Bohemia* 48 (2008), 192-202.

²²⁶ Mazur, Shinn, 429, 432-434.

²²⁷ A good example of a confessional syncretism in Central Europe is Upper Lusatia in the second half of the sixteenth century where people combined Catholic and Lutheran ritualic systems. Martin Christ, “Catholic cultures of Lutheranism? Confessional ambiguity and syncretism in sixteenth-century Upper Lusatia,” *Past&Present* 234 Issue supplement 12 (2017), 165-188.

territories formally won by Catholicism.²²⁸ The Catholic Church was well aware of this problem and was often quite suspicious towards the “New Catholics”.²²⁹

Another research problem, closely related to disguised confessional identification, is measuring the actual evolution of a religious landscape. Large-scale studies of conversions, as a rule, have to rely on the official sources stemming mostly from the side of the formal winners in a particular confessional struggle. These sources might in some cases give a distorted picture, since they fail to detect those hiding their allegiances. Robert Evans gave a very illuminating example of an inaccuracy of the testimonies seemingly reflecting an actual confessional balance. After the intensive and sometimes violent recatholization of Austrian and Czech lands the Habsburg government wished to establish control over religious practices of the subjects. According to a new ordinance, each parishioner was to attend Catholic Church services and to confess to a Catholic priest at least every Sunday. After each confession one received a special document (*Beichtzettel*), slip of paper proving that one did not dodge the procedure. These slips were then checked by the so called Reformation commissions and if one did not have enough proofs of the confessions one could face some legal consequences. However, as Evans pointed out, people who did not want to follow the Catholic rites quickly found a solution. *Beichtzettels* were massively forged and hence do not provide us with adequate information about the confessional division of a certain territory.²³⁰

Finally, there is a serious social disbalance in conversion studies. The conversions of nobility have received much more scholarly attention than that of members of lower Estates.²³¹

²²⁸ Rudolf Leeb, Martin Scheutz, Dietmar Weigl (eds.), *Geheimprotestantismus und evangelische Kirchen in der Habsburgermonarchie und im Erzstift Salzburg (17./18. Jahrhundert)* (Vienna-Munich: Böhlau Verlag, Oldenburg Verlag, 2009).

²²⁹ Benjamin Kaplan discusses conversions in confessionally heterogenous regions of France, Netherlands and Britain. Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith. Religious conflict and the practice of toleration in Early modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA-London: The Belknap press of the Harvard University press, 2007), 266-294.

²³⁰ R.J.W Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg monarchy, 1550-1700. An interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 139-141.

²³¹ On conversions of nobles in Central Europe see Karin J. McHardy, *War, Religion and Court patronage in Habsburg Austria. The social and cultural dimensions of political interactions, 1521-1620* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Eric-Oliver Mader, “Fürstenkonversionen zum Katholizismus in Mitteleuropa im 17. Jahrhundert: Ein systematischer Ansatz in fallorientierter Perspektive,” *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 34 3 (2007), 403-440.

This disparity is also due to the nature of the sources frequently addressing the confessional changes in the noble strata while neglecting burgers or peasants. In this respect a study of conversions in a Jesuit college is insightful, since Jesuits aimed to promote Catholicism to all the students regardless of social background. Their records do pay special attention to noble children, but students from lower classes also were objects of the recatholization initiatives. Besides, unlike secular authorities Jesuit teachers could not forcibly impose confessional dogmas. They actively propagated Catholic ideas and induced students to convert, but they could not make them do it. Hence, I assume that non-Catholics were likely to be mentioned in the Jesuit accounts. At the same time, one should take into consideration all the methodological complexities addressed above. A conversion act should not be seen as a straightforward procedure. Any time Jesuit sources talk about a new convert that does not mean that a person immediately became devoted Catholic. The sources rarely let us nuance the conversion process, but one should be at least aware of its ambiguity. Basing on Jesuit sources, it is very difficult to grasp concrete reasons for a conversion and almost impossible to consider this personal act from a psychological perspective. Nevertheless, one still can gain some insights into confessional changes that occurred within the student community of the Jesuit college.

As I have shown in the previous chapter, from 1553 to 1565, Jesuits were able to build up a school with a substantial number of students coming from multiple regions and belonging to the different socioeconomic layers. What was crucial for Jesuits was that at least some of students were from Protestant families. At first glance, it might seem illogical, that Lutheran parents were inclined to send their children to a school governed by zealous Catholics who did not hide their missionary intentions. However, practical reasons could sometimes outweigh confessional prejudices. Jesuits offered a high-quality training which was free of charge and thus accessible for people from humble economic backgrounds. Especially the latter aspect made the Jesuit colleges more preferable in comparison to the Protestant schools. Hence, Lutherans may have believed their children would get a proper education but would stay unaffected by the Catholic propaganda.

According to the “Quarterly report” from 1560, even those who did not think highly of the Catholic creed entrusted Jesuits with the education of their children due to the teachers’ professionalism.²³² Benjamin Kaplan has pointed to a similar tendency in France and Poland. Some parents there were ready to send their children to a school of a different confession if it offered a better education.²³³ Jesuits for their part seized the opportunity and sought to convert them. According to the Jesuit conception, students not only should get a proper education, but also were to be raised in a pious Catholic spirit. It means that apart from attending classes students were supposed to participate in various religious ceremonies or in other activities which would indirectly imbue them with Catholic values. The “right” confessional ideas were communicated to the students during their classes as well, but Jesuits tended to put stress on extra-curricular activities such as common prayers or preaching. Moreover, Jesuits expected their students to spread Catholicism outside the school: to talk to Lutheran parents or to participate in the events organized by the Church and Jesuits in urban spaces intended for broader audiences. These could be public religious processions or a school theater plays open to everyone interested. By combining these inner-school and outside confessionalizing activities, Jesuits sought to maximize the impact on Protestants.

Dealing with the problem of conversions one has to be extremely cautious about the reliability of sources. My analysis is based entirely on the Jesuit testimonies which might be highly biased regarding the progress of conversions. According to Jörg Deventer, “Annual letters” (*Litterae annuae*), frequently used in the studies on the Jesuit colleges, tended to give overexaggerated numbers of the new converts and overall to highlight only those events creating an impression of a straightforward, successful recatholization.²³⁴ Zsófia Kádár pointed to the

²³² „Sunt etiam quamplures, quorum aliqui tamen non satis bene de fide catholica sentire dicuntur, qui dum probe pueros suos morum honestate et doctrina cupiunt ornari, ad nos, quos optimos vitae magistros praedicant, confugiunt, ac omnibus modis contendunt, ut uel in conuictu apud nos maneant, uel certe praeceptoribus sint plurimum commendati”. *Litt. Quad.* VI, 604-605.

²³³ Benjamin J. Kaplan, „The context of conversions in Early modern Europe. Personal agency and choice in the construction of religious identities” in *A Question of identity: Social, Political, and Historical Aspects of Identity Dynamics in Jewish and Other Contexts*, ed. by Dikla Rivlin Katz, Noah Hacham, Geoffrey Herman and Lilach Sagiv (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, Oldenbourg, 2019), 326.

²³⁴ Jörg Deventer, “Konversionen zwischen den christlichen Konfessionen im frühneuzeitlichen Europa,” *Wiener Zeitschrift für Neuzeit* 7 2/8 (2007), 12-13.

similar limitations of “Annual letters” (*Litterae annuae*) for studying conversions of Protestants in the three Western Hungarian colleges in the seventeenth century.²³⁵ “Quarterly reports” (*Litterae quadrimestres*), my basic source for the sixteenth century Viennese school, are generally considered to be more accurate, but as far as conversions are concerned one should be very attentive to the way Jesuits framed this information. One should pay attention to the topoi used for describing conversions and to the methods Jesuits used (or claimed to use) in their work with non-Catholics. Zsófia Kádár's access to matriculation lists of the Hungarian colleges allowed her to quantify Protestant students and those who changed their confessions.²³⁶ Due to the lack of matriculation lists, I am not able to do the same for Vienna. However, like in the case of the student body I can study descriptive references to Protestants and other non-Catholics and deduce from them if not numbers, but at least allusions to significance of Protestants among students. Apart from *Litterae quadrimestres* and chronicle, there are certain letters and normative regulations that shed light on the perception of Protestant by the college authorities.

3.2. Terminology

To begin with, it is important to identify the terms used for designating non-Catholic students in the *Litterae Quadrimestres*, Chronicles and letters written by Jesuits. The most frequent terms are “heretic” (*haereticus*) or “schismatic” (*schismaticus*). In some cases Jesuits directly referred to the exact confessional identifications, mostly to Lutheranism (*lutheranus*). I have come across only a single mention of a Calvinist (*calvinista*). This occasion is quite noteworthy, since the scribe recording the story of a new Protestant student seems to have been not certain about the differences in the two main “heretical” teachings. It was reported that a noble man (*vir clarissimus*) from the emperor's court wanted his sons to study in the college. This man was designated as a Calvinist. As for his sons, they were soon converted to Catholicism and the scribe underlined it

²³⁵ Zsófia Kádár, “The difficulties of conversion. Non-Catholic students in Jesuit colleges in Western Hungary in the first half of the seventeenth century,” *Hungarian historical review* 3 4 (2014), 736-737.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 738-744.

was Luther who they grew contemptuous for after the conversion.²³⁷ Raised in a Calvinist family, those boys might not have had much respect for Luther before the conversion either, but these nuances did not interest the scribe and probably the other Jesuits either. Luther was a primary imagined foe for the Jesuits in Vienna and the rejection of his teachings was a clear signal of a spiritual renewal. Regardless of the real confessional background of the boys, it was Luther and his teachings that were to be denounced. This episode shows that a generalized heresy associated with Luther was a more convenient concept for describing Protestants than concrete confessional denominations, although Jesuits were aware of them.

It is emblematic that all these terms were rarely attached to the students themselves. Jesuits tended to relate them to a context in which students lived. For example, the “Reports” often mention a harmful influence of “heretic” parents or lament that “heretic” teachers from the town Protestant schools damaged students’ souls by imbuing them with the false religious doctrines. Thus, children were represented not as active supporters of Protestantism but rather as victims of circumstances. In using such rhetoric, the Jesuits implied that Protestant children were open for a spiritual healing once they were taken out of the detrimental environment.

3.3. Admission of Protestants

Initially the Jesuit schools in Central Europe were hesitant to accept non-Catholics. In 1567 the rector of the Jesuit college in Prague (est. in 1556) sent a letter to the Order’s General in which he discussed this issue.²³⁸ Like Vienna Prague had a numerous Protestant (Lutherans, Czech Brethren and a few Calvinists) population.²³⁹ The Jesuits in Prague maintained close contacts with Vienna. Professors, staff members, and students constantly circulated between the

²³⁷ “Nuper, non sine multorum admiratione, quaestor caesareus in aula, clarissimus vir, **sed calvinista**, ingenuos duos filios tradidit disciplinae erudiendos<...>Adolescentes egregii sensim Lutherum detestantur, sicque paulatim ad fidem Deo propitio eriguntur”. *De felici statu domus convictorum*. 1574 . MPSJ IV, 518.

²³⁸ P. Henricus Blyssen S.I. Rector coll. Prag. to S.Francisco de Borja S.I. Praep. Gen. 1567. in *MPSJ III*, 406-409.

²³⁹ Joachim Bahlcke, *Gegenkräfte. Studien zur politischen Kultur und Gesellschaftsstruktur Ostmitteleuropas in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Marburg: Verlag Herder-Institut, 2015), 190-215.

two schools over 1550-60s,²⁴⁰ the Jesuits in Prague received a financial and academic aid from Vienna²⁴¹ and the two colleges were organized in a similar way. Therefore, I assume that the account written in Prague can be informative for Vienna too.

The college rector seemed to be confused regarding the problem of the Protestant students' admission. The situation was rather ambiguous. On the one hand, he admitted that many Lutherans (he used explicitly the term *lutherani*) indeed studied in his school and were persistent in their faith. The rector raised doubts about justifiability of teaching "heretics." In his view, by offering to Protestants good training in rhetoric and philosophy Jesuits actually armed the enemies of the Catholic Church (*videmur Ecclesiae hostes nostris armis instruere et munire*). Moreover, he feared that Lutherans could tacitly talk about dogmatic questions with the Catholic students and seduce them from the true religious path (*secreto agant de fide, ut eos seducant*).²⁴² Such conversations were strictly forbidden, but teachers could not surveille the "dangerous" students all the time. According to the rector, even though Protestants attended Catholic services, they did it half-heartedly and in fact did not believe in rightness of the Catholic dogmas. On the other hand, the rector was aware of the negative consequences of a mass expulsion of supposed heretics. Firstly, he claimed that apart from Lutherans some faithful Catholics also could have been removed from the school by mistake.²⁴³ This remark is not entirely clear. An explanation might lay in a vagueness of confessional identification at that period. In certain cases, it was hardly possible to clearly distinguish between a Lutheran and a Catholic and the rector risked punishing those who did not associate themselves with Protestantism but still were not good at formulating properly the Catholic dogmas. Secondly, the rector perceived that an expulsion of non-Catholic would deplete the school in terms of student numbers. A lot of boys from burger and noble families in Prague could not easily go against the will of their parents and convert to Catholicism but could attend the

²⁴⁰ *Litt. Quadr.* III, 565-567; *Catalogi personarum*...15, 22, 37, 39, 41, 44, 46 passim.

²⁴¹ Viennese Jesuits collected money for a college for poor students in Prague and sent books (*opera et scripta*) necessary for teaching. *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 459; *Instructiones Viennae circa domum pauperum studiosorum datae 1563* in *MPSJ III*, 94.

²⁴² P. Henricus Blyssen..., 408.

²⁴³ *Ibidem*.

Jesuit school. Their presence gave Jesuits a small chance to induce them to the right creed or at least to plant doubts in their souls. The rector did not know what was the right thing to do and asked the General for advice.

The answer to this particular request did not survive, but there are at least two letters from the Society Generals discussing the same issue. In 1557 Diego Lainez (Society General in 1556-1565) wrote to Joannes de Victoria (a professor and since 1560 the rector at the Viennes college) that heretics should be accepted to Jesuit schools, provided that they did not do any harm to others (*purché non faccino danno agli altri*).²⁴⁴ He did not specify what kind of harm he meant, but it was likely to be the unauthorized religious conversations the rector in Prague worried about. According to Lainez, it would have been especially beneficial to attract Protestants in Central European towns like Prague (or Vienna) where the majority was not Catholic. In 1566 the next General, Francis Borgia, again had to comment on this problem. This time it was Hieronymus Nadal who needed instructions regarding the policy towards the Protistans at schools. Nadal was a close companion of Ignatius Loyola, one of the so called “first Jesuits” who became famous for his educational activities.²⁴⁵ In 1548-1552 he was the rector of the first Jesuit school in Messina which was considered as a model for all the future schools ruled by the Society. After the rectorship Nadal was entrusted with broader tasks in the educational domain. He made inspectorial visits in many colleges in Europe including that in Vienna where he was in 1555, 1563 and 1568. Thus, by 1566 Nadal had a profound experience in organization of schools but was still uncertain about the place of non-Catholics. Nadal referred to the case of Prague (and thus to the conditions typical of a college in the Habsburg lands) and presumed that “heretics” could have access to the Jesuit education only if they followed all the school rules related to religious practices: attended messes, confessed in a Catholic fashion, pronounced litanies and learnt the Catholic catechism (*sentono messa, et si confessano alla catholica, dicono le lithanie, imparano il cathechismo catholico*).²⁴⁶

²⁴⁴ P. Henricus Blyssen S.I. Rector coll. Prag. to S.Francisco de Borja..., 408. Ann. 5.

²⁴⁵ John W. O'Malley, *The first Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA-London: Harvard University Press, 1993), 11-14.

²⁴⁶ Epistulae P. Nadal. III, 306.

In case students did not fulfill these requirements and one could not expect them to become Catholics (*o vero quando non s'aspetti che si farrano catholici per la conversatione nostra*), they ought to be expelled from the school. Nadal communicated similar ideas in the instructions to the College of Vienna he issued during his visit in the college in 1568. Nadal insisted that “heretics” were to be admitted solely if they pledged to conform to the essential rules of a Catholic school listed above (attending masses, learning litanies, and reading catechism).²⁴⁷ Borgia gave a very brief response to Nadal’s letter of 1566 which generally repeated the opinion expressed by Lainez 9 years before.²⁴⁸ The Society General stressed the advantages of accepting Protestants in schools where they could turn to Catholicism. He admitted that children were supposed to follow all the rules (he talked about confession and communion), but he did not mention any kind of restrictive measures for those who perpetrators. The Head of the Jesuits seemed to be more enthusiastic about discussing the benefits of teaching “heretics” than the problems emerging from this confessional tolerance. The terminology he used also points to a more favorable attitude to Protestant students. Borgia called them “children of heretics” (*figlioli di heretici*). As I have pointed out, this framing might have implied that the heresy was actually external to the children and they were prone to “healing.” Juan Alfonso Polanco (1517-1576), an official historian of the Society and the author of the first comprehensive Order’s Chronicle, followed the moderate line proposed by the Generals.²⁴⁹ Talking about the Protestant students in Central European colleges in 1566 (in Prague and in Brunswick, but I am sure one can transfer his statement on Vienna too) Polanco referred to them as “sons of heretics” and strongly argued for their admission to schools. Polanco claimed almost all of Protestants very soon denounced their false doctrine and started to adore Catholicism

²⁴⁷ “Ad scholas nostras catholici tantum admittantur. Quod si sciretur aliquis esse haereticus, et se accomodaret ad nostras regulas, audiret missam, cathechismum, confiteretur catholice, non videretur excludendus...” *Instructiones datae Viennae* 1568. MPSJ III, 117.

²⁴⁸ “Del accettar figlioli di heretici nelle schole nostre, quantunque loro istessi siano aleuati nella heresia, se uogliono osseruare tutte le regole delle schole, et si confessano et comunicano, non pare inconueniente, **anzi molto buon guadagno**; perche questo pare sia tanto, quanto farsi catholici.” *Epist. P. Nadal* III, 325.

²⁴⁹ “Cum Francfordiam missi quidam ex nostris scholas aperuissent, et ad eas etiam hereticorum filios admittere oporteret, et de ratione cum eis tenenda in iis quae ad religionem catholicam pertinent, dubitarent, nondum absoluta hebdomada, dum alius alium inuitat, et nomina etiam sanctorum describit, missae, et litanis, et aliis catholicorum ritibus interesse pro more catholico omnes voluerunt; et vt catholicos se gerere coeperunt”. *Polanci complemeta* II, 664.

and to conduct all the necessary religious rites. Nadal and the rector in Prague, on the contrary, put forward more cautious views and chose for a more strict rhetoric towards Protestant students. They attributed heresy to the students themselves and called them “Lutherans” and “heretics”. This usage might reflect their concerns about possible negative effects of an undesirable interconfessional communication within the school walls.

Thus, one may conclude that over the first two decades after the foundation of the college in Vienna Jesuits in Central Europe allowed children from Protestant families to attend classes in their schools. Moreover, non-Catholics may have accounted for a considerable part of student body, since their expulsion could empty schools. However, approaches to obligations for this category of students could differ. The higher echelon of the Society officials, the Society Generals, devised a grand strategy of recatholization through the schools and tended to emphasize its positive aspects. According to their vision, Protestants would arrive in schools, plunge into a Catholic environment and sooner or later would end up converting. Instead, those directly involved (inspectors and rectors) observed substantial obstacles for a smooth implementation of this strategy and sought to highlight them.

3.4 Protestants at school: Narratives of conversion

Once admitted Protestant students received a great deal of attention from the school administration. It was these students who, in the view of Jesuits, needed the most spiritual guidance and their conversions would be displayed as a sign of a successful recatholization. I would distinguish two dominating modes of narration about Protestant students in the *Litterae quadrimestres*. Firstly, Jesuits talked about rapid and providential transformations from “heretics” to faithful Catholic. In this respect Jesuits often underlined their religious engagement after conversion. Secondly, one addressed the problems children had to overcome on the way to Salvation and expose those evil forces attempting to lead them astray. Very rarely did *Litterae quadrimestres* mention some peculiarities in everyday practices of Protestants that differentiated

them from other students. Normative sources intended for internal use and personal letters between Jesuits could offer more details.

The main elements of a victorious narrative were the stories of Lutheran students gladly converting to Catholicism. As I already pointed out, Jesuits regarded participation in the Church services, confessions and knowledge of catechism as key indications of a progress. I quoted above a typical example of such rhetoric: students, initially disrespecting Catholic rites and following them under coercion, soon shifted their views, enthusiastically confessed and became good Christians.²⁵⁰ Each Saturday teachers discussed the Catholic Catechism to the students. Jesuits wanted the explanations to be comprehensible and adapted catechism classes according to the language abilities of students. In lower classes German was the language of catechization, while in the superior ones – Latin.²⁵¹

Another significant parameter of the changing confessional loyalties was the students' attitude to "heretical" books. In 1553, the first year of the school's operation, many students were reported to have carried "harmful" literature to the college.²⁵² One did not specify what kind of literature it was. The only thing we know is that the books were "damaged by impious and heretical doctrines" (*impia et haeretica doctrina vitiatos*). It might have been any kind of religious literature popular among Lutherans at that period: Luther's translation of the Bible, the Augsburg confession or the Catechisms. Under "heretical" books Jesuits might also have understood those which would be then included into the "Index of prohibited books" (first published in 1559). Instead of discussing the books' titles, the Jesuits drew attention to their material quality. Some of the impious codices were illuminated and decorated with gold (*ornatos egregie codices et auro vestitos <...> adferrent*). If one holds this statement for true, it is an insightful detail regarding the socioeconomic background of some Protestant students. Possessing a richly decorated book might signify a belonging to a quite wealthy social layer. Jesuits were highly disappointed with the reading

²⁵⁰ "quod ante grauatim ac velut coacti faciebant, nunc post experientiam alacriter et certatim ad sacerdotem confessuri properant". *Litt. Quadr.* III, 388.

²⁵¹ *Litterae de forma totius collegii viennesis* 1559. MPSJ III, 297.

²⁵² *Litt. Quadr.* II, 488.

preferences of the students and forbade them from bringing heretical books to school. According to the *Littera quadrimestris*, quite soon students themselves started to detest “heretic” literature and were ready to hand over all the harmful books to the teachers.²⁵³ Furthermore, the children were glad to burn the hated books at the school yard (*igni tradendos adferrent laeti*). Students sent them to fire despite their golden decorations and, hence, supposedly high price.²⁵⁴ The motivation of students handing over heretical books for their destruction was repeated several times in the *Litterae quadrimestres*.²⁵⁵ Jesuits mostly sought to create an impression of a growing Catholic piety among students which led to the entire rejection of a false literature. However, even in this optimistic representation there is one brief remark revealing the complexity of the process. Talking about measures against heretical books in 1553 the author of the *Littera* admitted that initially the Protestant students were reluctant to accept the Jesuit book policy (*licet aegre initio sit impetratum*).²⁵⁶ In my view, the normative sources could prove a persistence of the “bad” reading habits or at least a continuing preoccupation of the school administration with this issue.

In 1563 Jesuits issued a set of rules for dwellers of a house for poor students.²⁵⁷ Among others, students were prohibited from keeping books of authors suspected of heresy (*authores qui in suspicionem haeresos venerint*).²⁵⁸ In addition, they had to compile a list of all the books they possessed and to hand it over to the a teacher who was in charge of a monthly inspection of the students’ belongings.²⁵⁹ Thus, the book problem remained relevant for Jesuits throughout the period under consideration (1553-1565). One may argue that it was due to a constantly rising student body. Protestant students studying during the first years might have abounded harmful reading, but new ones arrived who had not been in contact with Jesuits and were still inclined to

²⁵³ “complures sua sponte corruptos illos libellos obtulerint planeque consignarint praeceptoribus”. *Litt. Quadr.* II, 488.

²⁵⁴ A recent study of Avner Shamir discusses the symbolic meaning of burning books and the Protestant devotion of those copies that “miraculously” remained undamaged by fire. Avner Shamir, *Incombustible Lutheran books in Early modern Germany* (Abington: Routledge, 2021).

²⁵⁵ *Litt. Quadr.* II, 639-640; *Litt. Quadr.* V, 638

²⁵⁶ *Litt. Quadr.* II, 488.

²⁵⁷ *Regulae pauperum studiosorum Viennae 1563. MPSJ* II, 298-314.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 308.

²⁵⁹ “Catalogum quoque suorum librorum magistro dabunt, isque saltem semel in mense omnium res perlustrabit”. *Ibidem*.

read Lutheran books. Another interpretation is also possible. Protestant students, regardless of the duration of studies with Jesuits, tended to preserve their confessional literature and hid it from the teachers trying to eradicate this “vice”.

While *Litterae quadrimestres* offer a rather optimistic vision regarding the progress of conversions, Hieronymus Nadal during his visitation to Vienna highlighted some problematic points. I already discussed his cautious attitude to the very idea of admitting Lutherans to the school. He worried about viability of the “heretical” spirit in students’ souls. Nadal paid attention to an extremely important problem related to a conversion, namely to a disguised religious identity. According to the visitor, a “heretic” student could proceed studying at the Jesuit school as long as he confessed, learnt Catholic catechism and attended masses, provided that he conducted all rituals in a sincere way (*nisi comperiretur omnia illa facere ficta*; literally: “unless it turns out everything he did was fictitious”).²⁶⁰ Therefore, Nadal and probably other Jesuits at the college of Vienna were well aware of a danger of teaching a student pretending being a Catholic at school while in fact staying loyal to his original faith. Apparently, it was not a simple task to detect such cases and to unmask Cryptolutherans. A Protestant student willing to get a good training in the Jesuit school may have hidden his genuine religious feelings in order not to annoy his teachers. While at school he could vigorously pronounce Catholic prayers or recite Catechism, but after classes or after graduation from school he returned to practicing Lutheran rites. There is a curious testimony from the Jesuit college in Graz in certain sense underpinning the observations of Nadal. A student from a predominately Lutheran region in Silesia studied at the college for a bit less than a year. In December 1597 he left for home and, as acknowledged by Jesuits, was “still not a Catholic” (*nec dem catholicus*).²⁶¹ I suppose that a few students in 1550-1560s Vienna “fictitiously” participating in the Catholic life might have taken the same path and to convert despite all the efforts of Jesuits.

²⁶⁰ *Instructiones datae Viennae* 1568. MPSJ III, 117.

²⁶¹ *Die Matrikel der Universität Graz 1586-1630*, ed. By Johann Andritsch (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1977), 172.

Two dominant narrative strategies (pointing up successful conversions and lamenting unwanted interferences from “heretics”) interestingly intertwined in the discussion of the role of the Protestant parents. On the one hand, the Jesuits frequently mentioned that Protestants were inclined to let their children study in the College. Polanco who was quite optimistic about the chances of the conversion policy at schools literally praised heretical parents in the Supplement to his Chronicle. Polanco reported that Protestant preachers threatened with excommunication those families sending children to the Jesuit school and clamored for a break-up of the contacts with Catholics.²⁶² The parents did not give in. Furthermore, they agreed that their sons could be brought up Catholics. The latter part of the story is likely to be a rhetorical exaggeration, but the representation of the parents is clearly positive. Even though they did not convert themselves, they are portrayed as the allies of Jesuits, since they let children go the right way. *Litterae quadrimestres* did not present parents in such a favorable light, but they constantly referred to the interest of the “chief enemies of Catholicism” (*capitales hostes nostri quoad fidem*) to the Jesuit education.²⁶³ Due to the excellent quality of training they entrusted their children to Jesuits and it was praiseworthy. Sometimes Jesuits pointed to the parents’ indifference to religious matters in education. A Calvinist nobleman is reported to have said the following words to his sons entering the Jesuit school: “My sons, go and complete your studies under Jesuit teachers; I do not give you any advice on whether you should adopt their faith or stay in mine [i.e. you may choose whatever you want]”.²⁶⁴ Regardless of the plausibility of the concrete story, the parent image is again rather positive.

On the other hand, according to some *Litterae quadrimestres* Protestant parents often posed the most essential threat to the spiritual improvement of their children studying at the Jesuit school. I started this chapter with a quotation from one of the “Reports” claiming many parents insisted

²⁶² “Cum autem concionatores hereticorum, in eorum parentes stomacharentur, et excommunicatos declararent, si filios suos ad scholas nostrorum mitterent, non modo nullum retraxerunt, sed alios etiam misserunt, et catholice insitui permiserunt”. *Polanci complemeta* II, 664.

²⁶³ *Litt. Quad.* V, 638; similar statements in *Litt. Quad.* II, 488, *Litt. Quad.* V, 330, *Litt. Quad.* VI, 604-605

²⁶⁴ “Ite filii mei, complēscite disciplinam jesuitarum; at ut vel meam fidem vel illorum complectamini religionem, **non moneo**”. *De felici statu domus convictorum*. 1574 MPSJ IV, 518.

that their sons remained faithful to the “heresy” and even forced them to pledge they would not convert to Catholicism (*parentum instantia vieti atque compulsi, iurauerant se nunquam errores huiusmodi deserturos*).²⁶⁵ A harmful influence of families on the children was a common topic in the Jesuit rhetoric related to the progress in recatholization. A *Littera* sent in April 1557 talked about students with a Protestant background complaining they were made to follow the false, heretical doctrines of their parents and masters.²⁶⁶ The college rector was determined to provide those children with an appropriate religious assistance so that they could oppose to the “domestic enemies” (*ut forti animo hostibus domesticis sese opponent*). In the next sentence the rector reassured the reader that all such students in fact preferred Catholicism, practiced it in private and in public and the more mature ones were ready to defend and propagate the right faith.²⁶⁷ This claim, however, is not particularly convincing and could not entirely eliminate the feeling of uncertainty regarding confessional loyalties of children. Jesuits may have indicated that some students were reluctant to accept the Catholic ideas and it was Protestant parents who were to blame for it. Another crucial point in the parental misbehavior was the coercion to break the Catholic fast. Jesuits underscored the assertiveness of parents in this regard. They tried to persuade their sons to eat meat during the fast and if they failed, they turned to corporal punishment (*verberibus*) to force them. Children, in the Jesuit representation, always resisted these attempts and either just refused to consume meat²⁶⁸ or tricked the parents. Unwilling to break the fasting rules, children pretended to eat, but then spat out meat or simulated illness before the lunch and thus got a chance to dodge the meal.²⁶⁹ In these cases the children are again depicted as devoted neophytes struggling against heretical rites of the parents. Moreover, Jesuits asserted that equipped

²⁶⁵ *Litt. Quadr.* III, 388.

²⁶⁶ “Aliqui eorum ad nos frequenter corde contrito ueniunt conquerentes quod uestigia parentum et dominorum in **haeresibus et falsa doctrina cogantur imitari**” *Litt. Quadr.* V, 160.

²⁶⁷ “In fide catholica libenter nobis morem gerunt, eamque priuatim et publice, qui sunt aetate prouectiores, propagant proteguntque” *Ibidem*.

²⁶⁸ “etiam nonnulli quadragesimali hoc tempore neque verbis neque etiam verberibus a suis parentibus cogi potuerunt, vt carnibus vescerentur” *Litt. Quadr.* V, 638.

²⁶⁹ “Alias autem dum se constrictos vident et ab assidentibus in mensa vi quadam detinentur, comedere se simulant, nihil interim deglutientes, sed arte quadam cibos vetitos eiicientes. Alias vero infirmitatem simulantes, vel famem certe dissimulantes, ante coenae horam mature ad quietem se recipient” *Litt. Quadr.* V, 855.

with sufficient knowledge about Catholic dogmatics children sought to catechize the parents and sometimes were successful.²⁷⁰ Some students claimed that a future conversion of the parents was a primary goal of their studies at a Jesuit school.²⁷¹

Overall, such an ambiguous representation of the Protestant parents as well as continuous concerns about “heretical” books and Nadal’s remarque about the “insincerity” of conversion in fact reflected the difficulties Jesuits faced in course of students’ catechization. They observed a considerable number of Protestant boys attending their school and at least formally accepting the Catholic rituals. Jesuits took this as a good sign. Parents sent children to the Jesuit school, they did not oppose religious components of education and perhaps even might have supported a confessional choice of the progeny. At the same time, the Jesuits were aware that conversions did not always proceed smoothly and the students continued following the Lutheran rites. Nadal’s warning about a “fictitious” faith is quite illustrative. The reason for it, according to Jesuits, was a social environment (first of all, family) of a student. According to the Jesuit representation, Protestant children were eager to take a right path, but conservative parents put a spoke in their wheel. Is this picture accurate? Did some boys really oppose their parents in the matters of faith and even try to teach them? It is possible. Or Jesuits might have glossed over a real situation and overemphasized the interference in order to disguise own fails in converting the Lutheran youth. One could hardly give a straightforward answer to this question basing only the Jesuit accounts but I believe it is still possible to deduce three elements from them: 1. Uncertainty about the actual progress of recatholization in the college. The Jesuits sought to veil it with the stories of numerous conversions and a mass support of Catholicism by ex-Protestants, but it is apparent that the conversion policy was not always successful and the process was certainly not so straightforward,

²⁷⁰ “Multi etiam parentes rudimenta fidei et alia pia **ex filiis suis discunt**, quae filia ipsorum in scholis audiverunt”. *Litterae de forma totius collegii viennensis* 1559. MPSJ III, 298; “Et efficiebat divina bonitas ut hac ratione **parentes aliqui per filios ad sanam doctrinam reducerentur**” Polanco, *Vita Ignatii Loyolae et rerum Societatis Jesu Historia*, Vol. VI (1556), 342.

²⁷¹ “Solent etiam plures parvuli admodum pueri, zelo pietatis accensi, dictitare se eam ob causam in virtutibus et litteris proficere velle ut parentos suos ab erroribus liberare et ad veram Ecclesiae doctrinam reducere queant”. *Litterae de forma totius collegii viennensis* 1559. MPSJ III, 298.

2. A generally intense atmosphere in the town due to the Lutheran children studying in a Catholic school. The Jesuit accounts might give an exaggerated picture, but there definitely must have been debates in the Protestant families and communities over benefits and drawbacks of sending sons to Catholic teachers, 3. A collision between practical and confessional interests of Protestants. The intention to give a good education for children was in conflict with confessional loyalties. Parents and students strove to get maximum of practical gains while minimizing undesired religious impact. Jesuits, from their side, induced students to conversions but at the same time perceived that the influence of the family was quite hard to overcome.

3.5. Noble Protestants?

In the previous chapter I demonstrated the desire of Jesuits to create a good environment for the sons of noblemen who chose to study in their school. They opened a special boarding house (convict) for nobles and always paid special attention to new noble students. Is it possible to identify confessional allegiance of these noble at the time of entering the school? Were there Protestants among students of a higher social rank?

One should remember that in 1550-1560s the members Austrian aristocracy were mostly loyal to Lutheranism. In Protestant families there was a tendency to educate their sons at home or to send them to the called *Landschaftsschulen*, special schools sponsored by the Protestant estates and intended for the children of nobility.²⁷² The Viennese *Landschaftsschule* was short-living and operated only from 1546 to 1554, but there were a few more stable Protestant schools in Austria available for the noble youth (schools in Krems, Linz and Enns were the closest to Vienna).²⁷³ Hence, to attract the sons of Protestant nobles Jesuits presumably had to win a serious competition with home masters and Lutheran teachers.

²⁷² Ulrike Denk, „Schulwesen und Universität“ in *Wien. Geschichte einer Stadt. Bd.2: Die frühneuzeitliche Residenz (16.-18. Jahrhundert)*, ed. by Karl Vocelka, Anita Traniger (Wien-Köln-Weimar, Böhlau Verlag, 2003), 368-369.

²⁷³ Gernot Heiß, „Die Landschaftsschulen in den nieder- und innerösterreichischen Ländern vor dem Dreißigjährigen Krieg“ in *Bildung, Politik und Gesellschaft. Studien zur Geschichte des europäischen Bildungswesens vom 16. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*. Ed. by G. Klingenstein, H. Lutz, G. Stourzh (Vienna-Munich, 1978), 23-25.

In very rare case confessional allegiances of the incoming noble students was explicitly mentioned in the Jesuit sources. Give some examples here. Humanize more. However, some indirect details indicate that many noble were probably Catholics or at least did not openly share Protestant views. In the first chapter I told the story of a Polish noble Stanislaw Kostka who while studying in Vienna in 1564-65 demonstrated an extraordinary piety. After leaving Vienna he joined the Society of Jesus then moved to Rome where he died aged 17. At the end of the sixteenth century Kostka was canonized and became a saint patron of studying youth. Testimonies collected in the course of his beatification process shed light on Kostka's life in Vienna.²⁷⁴ First of all, it is known that Stanislaw and his brother studying with him at the same school originated from a Catholic aristocratic family. According to Kostka's *Vita*, the convent where they resided was originally established for the Catholic nobles willing to stay "remote from the conversations with vicious [men] and from the harmful flames [of heresy]." ²⁷⁵ As I pointed out in the second chapter the convent for nobles was relatively small with 17 students living there in 1559.²⁷⁶ Some noble students might have resided elsewhere in the town and it is not possible to make any claims about their confessional loyalties. As for the inhabitants of the convict, another fact might testify that they were not favorable of Protestants. In 1565 the convict was closed by the new emperor Maximilian II.²⁷⁷ The reasons for this decision are unclear. Anyway, the former convict inhabitants had to search for new lodgings. Kostka, his brother and at least two Polish and one Hungarian noble boys were placed in a house possessed by a Protestant tailor Caspar Wachenschwanz. The relations between the houseowner and the boys were quite tense. The former is believed to have prevented Kostka from taking communion in the house when he was ill and, according to the *Vita*,

²⁷⁴ Materials related to beatification were published by the Bollandist Society in 5 volumes the *Analecta Bollandina*. The years of studies in Vienna are directly addressed in the second volume. Urbanus Ubaldini SJ, "Vita et miracula S. Stanislai Kostkae" in *Analecta Bollandina* 11 (1892), 416-467.

²⁷⁵ "contubernium excitatum fuerat, convictus nomine appellatum, quo sub cura ibidem aliquot patrum residentium ille flos nobilitatis concedebat, ut sic a pravorum conversatione remoti, de longinquo a malae flammae ardoribus essent". *Vita et miracula*..., 429.

²⁷⁶ *Litterae de forma totius collegii viennesis* 1559. *MPSJ* III, 300.

²⁷⁷ *Polanci complemeta* II, 648.

only the intervention of supreme powers helped to settle the issue.²⁷⁸ Kostka's roommates are, on the contrary, presented rather as his allies. He was in good relationships with the Polish boys who would then become high secular and ecclesiastical officials in Poland and would tell about Kostka's piety to the beatification commission.²⁷⁹ Moreover, before secretly leaving the college Kostka entrusted to his Hungarian roommate the letters to be sent to his parents and to the teachers.²⁸⁰ It might indicate a certain degree of friendship. I cannot say for certain, but I doubt that Kostka would have had friendly contacts with Protestants given his attitude to the Protestant houseowner.

The Jesuit sources leave the question of a specifically noble conversion almost unaddressed. In Prague, the rector of the local Jesuit college did once (and only once) mention Protestant nobles, but Viennese Jesuits did not. This omission is quite curious. I have shown above how enthusiastically Jesuits narrated about conversions in general. In the second chapter I discussed a genuine interest of Jesuits in the noble students and how widely they were present in the sources. I find it strange that there is practically no instance when the two discourses (success of conversion and growing interest from nobility) were combined. One would expect Jesuits to stress and colorfully discuss each case of a Protestant noble converted to Catholicism or sending his children to the college. However, I have managed to find just a single fragment focusing on this issue. It was the story of a noble Calvinist disinterested in the future confessional loyalties of his sons he sent to the Jesuit school. I have already addressed this example above. The Jesuit prefect referred to that Calvinist aristocrat as the "most renowned man" (*clarissimus vir*) and named his court rank (emperor's treasurer; *quaestor caesareus in aula*).²⁸¹ Such a respectful representation was characteristic of Jesuits talking about the nobles showing interest in their

²⁷⁸ Urbanus Ubaldini SJ, "Vita et miracula S. Stanislai Kostkae" in *Analecta Bollandina* 14 (1895), 298.

²⁷⁹ One became cardinal, another one – a castle's commander. Urbanus Ubaldini SJ, "Vita et miracula S. Stanislai Kostkae" in *Analecta Bollandina* 11 (1892), 434.

²⁸⁰ „...litteras manu sua scriptas (quarum si copia suppetisset, hic illas posuisse expediret : patuisset enim ex illis fervor et amor divinae vocationis) in vocabulario graeco lexicon nuncupato inclusit, **condiscipulorum suorum uni natione Hungaro secretissime commendans**, ut de iisdem parentibus et fratri et magistro domus reddendis non nisi bene post suum abitum domesticos edoceret". Ibid, 438.

²⁸¹ *De felici statu domus convictorum*. 1574 MPSJ IV, 518.

school. But it was the only occasion of a Protestant noble showing up in the source which itself dates back to a somewhat later time – 1574. The testimonies related to the main period under consideration (1553-1565) are silent about this category of converts. One may argue that while discussing conversion in general Jesuits implied the noble ones as well. But in some way, it would contradict the observation Jesuits tended to advertise all kinds of the nobility participation in a school life. In my opinion, the silence of sources could actually signify unwillingness of Lutheran nobles to educate their children under the Jesuit control. One passage from the school report of 1561 may support my claim.

The report was composed by Peter Canisius, a famous Jesuit, who at that time was a head of the Upper German province of the Society (Vienna was a part of it till 1563) and was informed about the situation in the Viennese college. Among other things Canisius complained about the rival Protestant schools. “I would hope, - wrote Canisius –

that the excellency of our Society and its popularity among studying youths finally will lead to a desolation and destruction of the multiple schools of heretics. Unfortunately, [at the moment] not only commoners, but also the most prominent figures, who would like to be Catholics, send their children to those schools. They carelessly send their third, second and what is most important, first-born sons [to Protestant]. I do not know which minor benefits [of Protestant schools] attract them. They do not perceive the enormous risks they take [by choosing Protestant schools]. And the sons of these distinguished men alienated from the true faith and proper morals one day (that is the bad fortune of our age) will become leaders of the states, provinces and regions.²⁸²

It is evident that Canisius was deeply disappointed with the success of the Protestant education among nobles. Canisius did not maintain all the noble sons opted for a Lutheran school, but according to the picture he painted the balance was not in favor of the Jesuits. He made a necessary remarque that those nobles actually wanted to be Catholics, but it sounds more like a

²⁸² „illudque divino tandem favore maxime futurum sperem, ut, vel hac sola ratione et soleritia illa, qua Societas nostra minima, pie in hoc genere officiorum erga studiosam juventutem utitur, multae haereticorum scholae studiosis destituantur, ac prorsus desolatae, ut par est, jaceant; ad quas, proch dolor, non modo variae farinae homines, sed primarii quoque viri, qui catolice et esse et haberi volunt, non secundos tertiosque filios, sed primogenitos etiam suos undique, parum circumspecte, nescio qua sob parvulas commoditates, mittunt. Neque vident illi sane, quam sint ex hoc ingentia subsecutura mala. Sunt enim horum principum filii hi, qui olim (ut fert hujus saeculi nequam conditio) tametsi depravati moribus et fide fuerint, civitatum tamen, provintiarum, regionum apixem clauumque tenuerunt.” *Litt. Quadr.* VII, 498.

desire in light of the rest of what he wrote. Canisius' fears about Protestant taking important positions in the future are also emblematic. It was actually a Jesuit strategy to train a new generation of officials (including holders of the higher dignitaries), teachers, clerics etc. who were to be devoted Catholics. Observing the advances of the rivals, Canisius might have projected this strategy on Protestants and began to worry. As already mentioned, there was actually no Lutheran school for noble in Vienna in 1561. Ferdinand I attempted to establish an analogue: a similar noble school with the only difference that it would be Catholic and closely tied to Jesuits.²⁸³ The emperor encountered a stiff resistance of the Protestant Estates and a project of a new school was not realized. Canisius' report shows that the absence of local school did not discourage Protestant nobles and they searched for other confessionally friendly school. Studying under Jesuits seemed to be out of the question.

Overall, one can assume that the number of the Protestant students of noble origin studying at the College in 1550-1570s was inconsiderable. There is only one explicit reference to an aristocrat entrusting his children to Jesuits. In their narratives Jesuits did not highlight the issue of noble conversions which might mean there was not much to tell about. Those nobles whose confessional allegiance can be identified (like Stanislaw Kostka and the noble related to him) most likely were Catholics, at least during the period of studies. Finally, the report of Canisius reveals serious concerns about confessional preferences of nobility regarding educational matters. The Protestant schools appealed to them more than the Jesuit college. All this does not exclude a possibility that there were certain Lutheran nobles among Jesuit students but for some reason they did not come up directly in the Jesuit sources.

²⁸³ Gernot Heiß, *Die Landschaftsschulen...*, 27-29.

3.6. Converted Jews at a Jesuit school

So far, I have been discussing only the conversions of the students from Protestant families. However, except for Catholics and Lutherans there was a third confessional group in Vienna – Jews. The Viennese Jews had a long and turbulent history I am not aiming to discuss in a great detail. I will point up just several important aspects. In 1421 the Jewish population of Vienna was brutally suppressed and expelled from the city during the so called “Vienna Gesera”.²⁸⁴ In the middle of the sixteenth century Jews were almost absent in the capital of the Habsburg monarchy due to the harsh settlement restrictions. Jews were allowed to visit Vienna for commercial reasons but could not spend there more than one night without a special permission.²⁸⁵ Those Jews who stayed for a short time in the city had to wear a “Jewish sign” (*judisches Zeichen*). The restoration of a full-fledged Jewish life in the city started only around 1600.²⁸⁶ Thus, during the first decade of the Jesuit college history Jews in Vienna were very few in number and lived under oppressive conditions.

Conversion to Christianity offered a way out of a discriminated position and a chance for a full integration into the town’s society. As an illustration, one may consider two stories of the converted Jews living in Vienna in 1530-1560s. Margarita Margoles, born in Regensburg in a family of rabbi at the beginning of the sixteenth century, was converted at a young age. He became a fierce Anti-Judaic polemist and used his knowledge of the Jewish dogmatics against his former fellow believers.²⁸⁷ His competences in the Jewish language helped him to make an academic career and in 1533 he got a position of lecturer in Hebrew at the University of Vienna. The second notable person, Paul Weidner, was at first physician in Carinthia. In 1558 he moved to Vienna and was converted by the Bishop of Gurk in the St. Stephan Cathedral. Similarly to Margarita, Weidner

²⁸⁴ Kurt Schubert, *Die Geschichte des österreichischen Judentums* (Wien-Köln-Weimar, Böhlau Verlag, 2008), 29-31.

²⁸⁵ Ibid, 40.

²⁸⁶ Sabine Hödl, „Die Juden“ in *Wien. Geschichte einer Stadt. Bd.2: Die frühneuzeitliche Residenz (16.-18. Jahrhundert)*, ed. by Karl Vocelka, Anita Traniger (Wien-Köln-Weimar, Böhlau Verlag, 2003), 282.

²⁸⁷ Maria Diemling, “Grenzgängertum: Übertritte vom Judentum zum Christentum in Wien, 1500-2000,” *Wiener Zeitschrift für Neuzeit* 7 2/8 (2007), 43.

was appointed to the University where he frequently served as a dean of the Faculty of Medicine and, moreover, was three times elected rector. Weidner was also engaged in a Christian missionary working the Jewish communities in Prague. Besides, he continued his medical practice and worked as a court doctor. These two cases show how conversion could contribute to the career success of a Jew in Vienna. However, apart from conversion there is another crucial element characteristic of both persons. Conversion was a necessary prerequisite for entering Christian society, but it was intellectual capacities that enabled both converts to achieve a higher social rank. One might assume that intellectual work was a convenient option for a converted Jew, but to be successful in this field one needed a proper training, first of all a school training. Margarita and Weidner already had sufficient intellectual skills when they were converted. And what was to be a strategy for the younger converts, still not educated neither in a Jewish nor in a Christian sense? It was exactly the case when Jesuits arrived on the scene.

According to the *Litterae quadrimestres*, at the beginning of November 1559 a certain woman who had been recently converted from Judaism to Catholicism asked the emperor to permit her two sons (also converted) to study and to reside at the Jesuit college in Vienna. She wanted them not only to acquire a general school knowledge but also to receive a pious religious training.²⁸⁸ This short passage illustrates simultaneously the conditions of the converted Jews in the sixteenth century Vienna and the attitude of Jesuits towards this group. First, a Jesuit source reveals a female agency which is considered very unusual for other testimonies dealing with contemporary Jewish conversions in Vienna.²⁸⁹ In this case it was mother committed to ensure an appropriate education for the children. As for the legal conditions, it is noteworthy that despite the conversion mother had to request a special permission from the higher authorities if she wanted to educate her sons at a Christian school. Therefore, the status of the recent converts perhaps was

²⁸⁸ “Octobri exacto, principio statim Nouembris, mulier quaedam ex foeda judaeorum superstitione ad CHR.M. conuersa, imperatorem exorauit uti eius duobus filiis elegantis formae, qui X. primum id temporis nomen dederant, a nostris Patribus institui ac apud nos esse liceret; non tantum de litteris quantum de adepta religione, deque pietate sollicita, quam in nostro collegio (credo relatu aliorum) florere maxime persensit.” *Litt. Quadr.* VI, 458.

²⁸⁹ Diemling, 44.

not equal to “ordinary” Christians at least regarding educational matters. Maria Diemling pointed out that former Jews found themselves in a complicated position after conversion. On the one hand, they were despised by those who remained faithful to Judaism. On the other hand, they faced substantial problems in the integration into the community of their new fellow believers. Paul Weidner wrote that Christians could be suspicious towards a converted Jew and skeptical about the sincerity of his act.²⁹⁰ Catholics did not regard the converts as true Christians and it may have been reflected in the right to attend schools. Despite these public prejudices Jesuits were ready to open the doors of their school to converted Jews. The essential objective of Jesuit education was to promote the interest of Catholicism. They admitted “heretics”-Protestants in order to induce them to the right faith or already converted Jews to strengthen and develop their Catholic identity. The first Jesuits were famous for their tolerance to converted Jews or “New Christians” as they were called in Spain. The founders of the Society were mostly Spaniards and they had to confront with a very acute problem of “New Christians” who were generally discriminated in the Spanish society. Ignatius Loyola argued for equal rights for all Christians regardless the lineage. According to Thomas Cohen, “the Jesuits under Ignatius, Lainez, and Francis Borja became known throughout Europe as a haven for New Christians”.²⁹¹ Diego Lainez, the second Society General, or the first Jesuit historian Juan Polanco stemmed themselves from the families of converted Jews. Jesuits like them sought to fully integrate converts to Christian community instead of considering them as a particular group with limited rights. I think the readiness to teach two converted Jews in Vienna in 1559 was a manifestation of this broader trend typical of the Society of Jesus in the mid-sixteenth century.

The story of two boys is a single account about converted Jews at the Jesuit school. However, there is a tiny detail probably hinting to other students with Jewish background. The converted woman chose the Jesuit school, because she knew that it was a place of flourishing piety.

²⁹⁰ Ibid, 44-45.

²⁹¹ Thomas M. Cohen, “Racial and ethnic minorities in the Society of Jesus” in *Cambridge Companion to Jesuits*, ed. by Thomas Worcester (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), 200.

The Jesuit author of the report noted that the school was advertised to the woman by some “others” (*credo relatu aliorum*). It is not clear how to interpret the word “others”. It may have been just random citizens of Vienna whose sons studied in the Jesuit school. However, I guess that the author probably referred to other ex-Jews admitted to the school. I am unable to give any solid proof for this version, can only speculate. Given a general controversial attitude towards recently converted Jews by the burgers of Vienna, that woman is likely to have been in a closer contact with the people in the same position as herself, i.e. converts. Some of them might have had positive experience with the Jesuit education and shared it with the woman.

To sum up, it is important to stress that Jesuit school in Vienna was available not only for Lutherans but also for converted Jews. Although formally they were already Catholics, there were perceived as a distinct group not equal to the “old” Christians. The Jesuits did not share these prejudices and believed it was their duty to take care of the new brothers in Christ whose faith was not yet so strong.

Conclusion

The Jesuits in Vienna regarded their school as an important rectholization center. They believed that sons of Lutheran parents, attracted to the school by the quality of education and by the exemption from tuition fees, would get a religious inspiration during their studies and convert to Catholicism. Many Jesuits educators working on the ground raised concerns about possible dangers related to the admission of Protestants. However, the leaders of the Society were convinced advantages would outweigh drawbacks and negative effects were neglectable. This approach, eventually, prevailed in the Jesuit educational practice. Jesuits tended to narrate about conversions in a rather optimistic way. They stressed the growing interest of Lutheran families to the Jesuit education and recorded successful changes of a confessional loyalty. The main indicator of a positive development was an active participation in the religious Catholic life. Jesuits took care that their students regularly confessed, learnt catechism and attend Church services. Besides, reading was also subject to a confessional censorship. “Heretical” books were to be handed over

to teachers and then burnt. Despite overall victorious rhetoric Jesuit testimonies still make it possible to grasp an actual complexity of the conversion policy. The primary problem was a “fictitious” conversion when a student disguised his real religious allegiance. Students could approach the religious requirements of Jesuits in a very practical way. In order to get a proper training they may have followed all the necessary rituals while at school, but after classes they turned back to Lutheranism. Jesuit accused the social environment and first of families of corrupting youth and preventing them from conversion. In my view, this explanation is quite plausible. However, there could be also an opposite situation when a student managed to catechize the parents. Jesuits always emphasized such cases. Participation of Protestant nobles in the school life was probably quite low. Nobles tended to send their children to Lutheran schools even if they were remote from Vienna.

Apart from Protestants Jesuits were ready to admit sons of converted Jews. This group despite being formally Christians often had to face discrimination from the burgers of Vienna. Jesuits did not share this negative approach and sought to accept to the school all Christians regardless of lineage. The important thing was to strengthen their faith, whether they were Lutherans, Calvinists or former Jews.

I am unable to come up with any quantitative estimations of the number of conversions. I can just assume that in spite of all the obstacles the Jesuit college did impact the confessional picture in the city. We know that it did not shift the balance significantly, since the Protestant positions in Vienna remained strong till the end of the century. A single school was not enough for a radical change. However, Jesuits indeed established an institution where Lutherans could come into contact with Catholicism, spend a lot of times (several school hours each day) in a Catholic environment and apparently opt for a conversion.

Conclusion

Having arrived in the capital of the Habsburg Monarchy in 1551 Jesuits became pioneers of recatholization in this region. The mission found itself in an environment rather hostile to the agents of the Roman Church. The large part of the population including aristocracy was loyal to Lutheranism, Protestant preachers and teachers disseminated their ideas in spite of the counter-measures of the emperor Ferdinand and the University of Vienna, the main intellectual center, was not immune to unorthodox dogmas. Relying on the support of the Catholic emperor, Jesuits had to find a way to put forward the Catholic agenda under such complicated conditions. One of the possible solutions was to establish a school which could function as a pillar of recatholization. It is worth noticing that in the early 1550s the educational system of Jesuit was still under formation. Vienna was actually the first place in Europe where Jesuits chose to found a school in a Protestant region and to use it as an instrument in confessional rivalry. It was an experiment and the entire strategy of the Catholic “offensive” in Central Europe depended on its results. The educational landscape in which the Jesuits developed their school was highly competitive. Lutheran *Landschaftsschulen*, the University of Vienna as well as the foreign Universities challenged the positions of the Jesuit College. However, the Jesuits not only withstood the competition but came out victorious in many respects. Considerable progress of the school in Vienna encouraged Jesuits to found new colleges in the Habsburg lands and beyond. Schools in the Czech lands (Prague - 1556, Olomouc – 1566), in Habsburg Hungary (Tyrnava - 1562) and in Poland (Braunsberg - 1565) were modelled after the Viennese example. Thus, examining characteristics of the school in Vienna gives a glimpse into “educational” recatholization throughout Central Europe. Taking into account the quest for uniformity within the Society of Jesus, the analysis of the Viennese school opens up opportunities for a broader comparison with the colleges in other confessionally-mixed regions of Europe (France, Polish-Lithuanian kingdom). In my thesis I have studied, firstly, the certain parameters that could be interpreted as an indication of success of a Jesuit school in context of recatholization. It was the scope of the recruitment area and the attendance numbers that, in my view, reflects the degree of attractiveness of the school. Besides, as can be seen from the sources,

both parameters were regarded as criteria of success by the contemporaries. Secondly, I dealt with the strategies Jesuits employed to contribute to the progress of recatholization at their school. I have focused on the two strategies. Jesuits conducted a well-considered “social policy” attracting children from different social milieus and raising them in an atmosphere of a strict religious discipline. What is even more important is that Jesuits deliberately admitted non-Catholic students and (with mixed success) induced them to conversions.

As regards the catchment area and the size of student body, in a short time Jesuits managed to create a global educational institution enjoying popularity among students from different parts of Central Europe. Jesuits sought to admit as many students as possible to educate them in a Catholic atmosphere. The student numbers constantly rose over the first decade of the College history. In 1561 around 500 students of all classes studied in the College and by the end of the century this figure reached 1000. In terms of the size of student body, the Jesuit school outran all the rivals including the University of Vienna. The latter was extremely discontent with the success of the new school in Vienna, sent multiple complaints to the emperor but apparently could not change the tendency. Jesuits encompassed students from a variety of regions. Apart from all the Habsburg lands (Austrian Hereditary lands, Czech lands, the Habsburg Hungary and Croatia), the Jesuit college turned out to be attractive from students from the German lands of the Holy Roman Empire, Polish-Lithuanian kingdom, Italian principalities, Belgium and even Scotland. By expanding the student body and geographical scope, Jesuits built up a base for promoting Catholicism. It does not mean that every student falling into the orbit of Jesuits automatically would grow into fervent Catholic or, in case he had a Protestant background, become loyal to the Roman Church. However, through such a “quantitative” expansion Jesuits raised a probability of a positive (in Jesuits’ view) religious development for a particular student. The larger the base, the higher the probability of a student getting inspired for serving the Catholic case. Moreover, Jesuits explicitly argued for admitting students from the lands “damaged by the heresy” so that they could get a proper Catholic training and then contribute to recatholization in their home countries. Jesuits

definitely succeeded in attracting young men from confessionally heterogeneous territories. I was not able to trace the future career paths of the majority of the graduates in order to identify their actual role in the restoration of Catholicism. However, several cases show that at least sometimes Jesuits indeed attained this goal. For example, one Polish graduate became cardinal while another one – military commander which was also important in a “battle” against Protestantism. Certain classmates of future cardinal Melchior Klesl arrived from North German Protestant land and after graduation returned back and preached Catholicism.

Within this large student body Jesuits distinguished two social groups which were treated in a special way: nobles and “poor” students (*pauperes*). The school provided each group with a boarding house where the students lived under a constant supervision of a college prefect. Jesuits believed that imbuing aristocratic youth with Catholic ideas would be of a great use. Playing a key role in the early modern social order nobles were to pillars of recatholization, especially in the regions the “unprivileged” majority sympathized with Protestantism. At the same time, teaching a high number of nobles was a matter of prestige. In their reports College rectors tended to associate the interest of nobles in the Jesuit education with the status of the school. The Jesuits’ approach to “poor” was also twofold. Firstly, by offering a financial aid to the destitute ones Jesuits fulfilled their charity duty intrinsic to the Society mission. Despite the fact that the boarding house for “poor” in fact admitted also solvent students, economic relief for those in need was considerable. Thus, Jesuits not only did not take tuition fees but also provided children from the most impoverished strata with accommodation and food. This policy definitely raised the popularity of Jesuit education among poor families. However, the charity motivation was accompanied by another crucial element. Namely, Jesuits linked their social policy towards *pauperes* with the essential confessional goals. Each student admitted to the “new college” (house of poor) was to pledge allegiance to the Catholic Church and to commit themselves to a future clerical career. Poor students lived in the atmosphere of a rigorous discipline comparable to that in a convent. Jesuits sought to control each tiny aspect of the everyday life of a student putting special emphasis on the

religious practices. Jesuit educators expected that after growing up in such a strict atmosphere students would turn into pious and obedient Catholics ready to take serve the need of the Church. Therefore, the “social policy” could be an effective tool in the hands of Jesuits but due to certain obstacles they did not manage to use its full potential. All over the period under consideration the College had to cope with acute housing problems. They simply did not have enough space to accommodate a significant number of nobles or *pauperes*. As a result, both institutions (the boarding house for nobles and the “new college”) remained relatively small-sized and overcrowded. Moreover, the implementation of the social policy heavily depended on the support from secular powers – the emperor and his court. While Ferdinand I striving for strengthening Catholicism favored the Jesuit school and sponsored its activities, his successor Maximilian II, who was much more tolerant to Protestants, lost interest in actively supporting agents of Counter-Reformation. An unexpected and dramatic consequence of this power shift was a closure of the noble boarding house which meant a hard blow to the Jesuit “social policy” .

The large student body of a Catholic school in Vienna had a considerable Protestant component. While in 1550-1560s the Jesuit educators were still discussing the justifiability of the admitting non-Catholics, children from Lutheran families attracted by the quality of education and “social” benefits flocked to the College of Vienna. It was simultaneously a great chance and a challenge for the Jesuits. On the one hand, as I have pointed out, spiritual work with the Protestants at schools was a crucial element of the Jesuit understanding of recatholization. Jesuits portrayed children of Lutherans as victims of circumstances that were not lost for the “true” faith. They were to be taken out from the “heretic” environment and induced to converting to Catholicism. The College rector reports frequently mentioned new conversions and pointed to the enthusiasm with which children rejected the “vicious” teachings. The Jesuits tended to exaggerate the progress in conversions to advertise the efficiency of their religious policy within the school. It is impossible to define any exact number of converts. Certain famous cases (like that of Melchior Klesl) still testified that sometimes Jesuits indeed achieved their conversion goals.

On the other hand, Jesuits clearly saw all the complexities related to teaching Protestants. Not all the Jesuit educators working in the ground shared the optimism about conversions at schools. There were certain concerns about “arming the enemies of the Church” by offering them a good education. One feared Lutherans could spread “harmful” ideas among students. “Insincerity” of the new converts was also a matter of great concern. Jesuits perceived the danger of a student acting as a Catholic at the College and “dropping the mask” at home. Constant complaints of the school administration about the “vicious” influence of families illustrate the difficulty Jesuits faced operating in a town with the Protestant majority. That is why the College sought to develop student boarding houses. Students living in a house controlled by Jesuits were believed to be better “protected” against “heretical” dogmas. At the same time, Jesuit teachers tried to find positive aspects of letting students return to the Protestant houses after classes. Imbued with the “right” religious ideas, students could proselyte the Protestant parents and thus expand the recatholization efforts outside the College. However, in general Jesuits tended to paint a rather dramatic picture of the parents preventing their children from the conversions and punishing them for any sympathies with Catholicism. Finally, Jesuits failed to attract to the school the children of Protestant nobility. While Lutheran burgers were ready to send their sons to Jesuits noblemen preferred Protestant schools. Taking into account the importance Jesuits attached to teaching nobles, inability to cover non-Catholic aristocracy shows serious limitations of the College conversion and social policy. Therefore, educating Protestant youth actually could yield results for recatholization but it was not a universal and straightforward method.

Thus, I argue that my study on the Jesuit school in Vienna in 1553-1565 has offered a new perspective on a history of confessionalization in Central Europe. The original theory of confessionalization has been criticized for its state-oriented, top-down approach, for teleology and for oversimplification of the confessional changes. The Viennese college is an example of a local, non-state actor operating under circumstances when the secular ruler (Habsburg emperor) was too weak to effectively impose Catholicism by the means of force or legislative measures. Jesuits

certainly enjoyed significant support from the emperor but their methods were not at all “top-down”. Establishing a school allowed Jesuits to get incorporated into the urban space and to act from below. Jesuit strategy was based not on force but on persuasion and sophisticated techniques aimed at encouraging student to bolster their faith or to convert to Catholicism. The complexities the College had to show with (with the “social policy” and conversions) show that the process of recatholization was in no way straightforward. Seeking to promote the Catholic agenda Jesuits remained in an opposition (at least in confessional terms) to the vast majority of burgers and nobility. Neither in 1550-1560s nor in 1570s was the future “victory” of Catholicism evident for all the actors involved in confessional struggles in Vienna and in the Habsburg lands in general. Analyzing the strategies in this period of uncertainty is crucial for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of confessionalization. Finally, the inquiry into conversion policy at school illustrates a possible ambiguity of a confessional shift. A student designated as a convert could in fact stay loyal to Lutheranism. At the same time, the pressure of Protestant relatives could prevent a student from fully joining the Catholic camp although he, inspired by the Jesuits, might have changed his personal confessional allegiance.

The study of the educational landscape of the Habsburg monarchy in the confessional Age can be further expanded in two directions. Firstly, one can consider the entire network of the Jesuit educational institutions (schools and universities) in the Habsburg territories in sixteenth-seventeenth century. One can trace the connections between the colleges, compare the strategies employed for recatholization in different regions and trace the evolution of the Jesuit educational policy over decades. Secondly, it would be worth adding a Protestant perspective and comparing two competing educational systems. In my thesis I already touched upon this rivalry between the schools belonging to the opposing confessional camps. I assume that a broader comparison of the Jesuit and Protestant school could give important insights into the confessionalization via education.

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List of Abbreviations:

MPSJ - Monumenta Paedagogica Societatis Jesu nova edition ex integro refracta, ed. by László Lukács

ÖNB – Österreichische Nationalbibliothek

UAW – Universitätsarchiv Wien.