

Jezsuiták Nyugat-Magyarországon a 17. században. A pozsonyi, győri és soproni kollégiumok [Jesuits in Western Hungary in the Seventeenth Century. The Colleges of Pressburg (Bratislava), Győr and Sopron]. By Zsófia Kádár.

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László Pilikta 

Department of Early Modern History, Eötvös Loránd University, 6–8 Múzeum körút, Budapest 1088, Hungary; pilikta@caesar.elte.hu

Zsófia Kádár is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Vienna and a member of the ELTE–MTA University History Research Group, which is working on the history of the Austrian Jesuit Province and the educational function of the Jesuits. In 2017, the author defended her PhD thesis at the Doctoral School of History of Eötvös Loránd University, which served as the basis for this work, and is also a kind of synthesis of the achievements of many years of researching Jesuit friaries in Western Hungary.¹ According to her own objective, Zsófia Kádár has tried to present the continuous development, change, and adaptation of the early modern Jesuit institutional system from the beginning to 1671 in the three colleges of the Austrian Province of the Society of Jesus in Western Hungary, interpreting them as a model. In the preface to her book, the author herself states that she did not want to write a history of the Order or the history of individual colleges but aimed to describe to the reader the presence and influence of the Jesuits in Western Hungary from a modern socio-historical perspective. Breaking with the previous historiographical practice, Kádár did not seek to present the history of individual friaries or the Jesuits more broadly, but to analyse their functioning and relationships with local society by treating the Jesuit institutions of the three western Hungarian cities as a complex unit. The source of the work are documents in the archives of Bratislava, Győr, and Sopron, which are mainly related to the establishment and functioning of Jesuit institutions in the given cities, and to a lesser extent, ‘external’ (i.e., non-Jesuit) orders. During her research, Kádár supplemented the data from these sources with other documents related to the operation of the Austrian province, preserved in domestic (Budapest, Esztergom) and foreign archives (Vienna and Rome).

1 Kádár, “Jezsuita kollégium és helyi társadalom.”

In addition to the manuscript sources, the author has also tried to delve as deeply as possible into the literature on the subject, as evidenced by the impressively lengthy bibliography at the end of the volume.

The work is divided into six thematic parts, which are located in six separate chapters. In the first chapter, we get to know in detail the history of the founding of the Jesuit order and its development in Europe, and then its arrival and settlement in the Kingdom of Hungary. In the subsequent segment we learn about the specific circumstances of the establishment of the three colleges in Western Hungary and their development in the seventeenth century.

This is followed by a presentation of the people serving in the institutions, during which we learn about the stages of Jesuit training and life path, its associated opportunities and difficulties, and even its pitfalls. We find out from where and which social strata the friars who served in Western Hungary came, what their training background was, what the process of becoming a Jesuit was like, what hierarchy prevailed in a particular dormitory, and for how long a Jesuit from Western Hungary served in one place and what kind of relationship there was between the staff of each college.

The fourth major unit of the monograph, in addition to covering pastoral service, deals with the institutional system of education, which is considered the most important task of the Jesuits—namely, the college, as well as their student population. There are detailed analyses of the distribution of students visiting Jesuit schools by place of origin, nationality, religious denomination, social status and age, as well as the catchment area of each school in connection with the cases of Győr and Bratislava. Here, Zsófia Kádár also undertakes to expand and correct the previous literature, which largely relied on institutional history, using new sources that have not yet been included in research. In the next chapter, confraternities with schools are discussed. We are familiarized with the Jesuit model of congregations and the history of the spread of the associations in Hungary and presented with details about their organisation, membership and tasks based on the example of the three towns in Western Hungary.

In the last major unit, we learn about the relationship between the Jesuits and the local community through the tasks performed by the friars in such communities. The author shows how much work the Jesuits had to do in the towns of Western Hungary, but at the same time, we see how they were able to win over the local population through their activities, while being forced to become as familiar as possible with the conditions of society around them and to adapt to its needs and expectations. A good example of this is that, in addition to the introduction of cults associated with Jesuit saints (St Ignatius of Loyola and St Francis Xavier), great attention was paid to cultivating local veneration, mainly associated with the Virgin Mary.

At the end of the monograph, we find a short summary in Hungarian and English, followed by a voluminous appendix containing three repositories. In the

first are the names of the 735 Jesuits who served in the three colleges of Western Hungary until 1671, as well as their main biographical data (rank of order, type of vow, nationality, year and place of birth, friary) and the address of the source containing this information. This is followed by data on the secondary education of students who entered ecclesiastical careers from Jesuit colleges and references to their further careers, grouped according to whether the student became a secular priest or a member of one of the religious orders (Benedictine, Franciscan, Jesuit, or Pauline). In the third appendix, we get to know the officials of the *Patrona Hungariae* congregation in Győr, together with their brief biographies. Finally, the blueprints of the buildings of the three colleges follow.

The most important lesson of the volume is that, although the Jesuits sought to establish a unified structure of orders, they nevertheless faced different conditions in the three towns under study. Bratislava (after Vienna) was the second capital of the Kingdom of Hungary, Sopron was a commercially significant free royal town, while Győr was a military-dominated fortress town under the authority of the local cathedral chapter during this period. These three towns, moreover, had a different ethnic composition, too. This situation was exacerbated by the problems characteristic of frontier societies, in this case, due to the expansion of the Ottomans (which led to a weakening of social norms and social discipline), as well as the mainly Protestant denominations of all three towns.

Overall, Zsófia Kádár's monograph is an impressive publication in terms of its scope alone. Using a large amount of multifaceted source material, the author illuminates the activities of the Jesuits in Western Hungary with extraordinary data richness, fleshes out many small details, and at the same time, convincingly depicts the most important processes. All this is greatly presented by tables and graphs, with the help of which trends and correlations between the data in the sources become transparent and comparable to the reader. Similarly illustrative are the maps in this volume, which allow the reader who is less familiar with the region to obtain an idea of the geographical conditions of Western Hungary and the spatial location of the colleges.

Literature

Kádár, Zsófia. "Jezsuita kollégium és helyi társadalom a 17. századi Nyugat-Magyarországon (Pozsony, Győr, Sopron)" [Jesuit College and Local Society in Western Hungary in the Seventeenth Century (Pressburg, Győr, Sopron)]. PhD diss., Eötvös Loránd University, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.15476/ELTE.2016.149>

