

THE REGISTER OF STUDENTS AS A SOURCE

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This paper reveals some of the academic applications of the registers of students, as sources, with special regard to the school history. We will point out, that the register of students is equally useful in educational and social history research. It implies important data regarding institutions and their students, it may shed light on the relationship of education and society. Student registers as databases is frequently used by historians and they may also be attractive for sociologists and first of all is very useful in mapping individual genealogies.

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Sources are essential part of historical science, they may also be viewed as it's origin. Anything that concerns the past can be a source. The object of this study, the register of students is also a source. This study's aim is to reveal some of the academic applications of these registers, with special regard to the school history.

The registers

The censuses of the 18-19th century were made as appendixes of official reports. It is important regarding censuses that they were made with a statistic purpose. It gives source value to the censuses, that they were directly recorded, so the census-taker most of the time was there at the formation of the censuses. Their source value is enhanced by two other circumstances: on one hand they are data-like records, which make certain events of the past reality easy to measure and interpret in a statistical sense, so they are especially appropriate for the objective approach. On the other hand it can help to model besides occupational situations and other circumstances of certain people, also the characteristics of bigger masses. So the statistically processed sources can be labelled as a treasury for social history. (Fazekas, 2001)

The register of students is a document type, which is counted among the censuses. It registers the fulfillment of the school attendance and the study obligations. On the basis of this were issued - and are issued even today - the certificates attesting the completion of certain educational levels. (Sasfi, 2004)

From among the documents of the schools and the public education administration - among the archival substances - the parish registers can be found in the most considerable quantity, and it provides not only for

education- and school history, but also for social history researches a huge quantity of source-material.

The data types

László Szögi, one of the experts of the theme, in his work had tried to collect ten data types from school parish registers (when it was possible): 1. Name of the student 2. Place of his birth (giving the later Hungarian name of it) 3. The occupation of his parents or his guardian's, and their social rank. 4. The religion (the non catholic student was rare, so only the different religion – like protestant or Jewish - was marked in most time) 5. Nationality (its marking was very rare before 1850) 6. The date of the registration. In the case of the most important universities such as the University of Vienna, it is not possible to find out the correct date. 7. The faculty or the course of the student 8. The name of the institution, where he continued his preliminary studies, or the name of the university he was come from. 9. From when till when studied at that university. 10. Acquired grade or degree on the university at which he enrolled. (Szögi, 1994)

In most cases the most of the data types are not available in reference of the students. In general it can be said, that the data concerning of the students' religion, the social status of the parents and the former education institute were not registered at most of the universities and colleges. But fortunately the other data types are available in big rate.

Two possible ways can be distinguished speaking about the use this data set. First, we can explore and define the certain persons' studies on abroad. Secondly, we can find out about the composition of the population's territorial and social background, studying at foreign universities. The results of these two different points of view may shed light on social components, possibilities and determinants of the peregrinations. (Sasfi, 2002)

Two manners of the scientific use of the *matricula can be distinguished*. The data is possible to be approached from the individual, and from the institution. Of course, there are several common points of both directions.

Information about the individual

In the first case - approaching from the individual - we can get some personal information about the individual and about his family too. Most of the registers contain the name, the place and time of birth of the students and the name, the occupation or social rank of the parents. With the help of this information we can open up the social position of several persons and families.

On the ground of that it is possible to discover the social status of the students in the institution, and to assume, what could be the social background of students joined to a school.

We can point out not only to the differences between the school types, but also between areas. For example if there was only one school in a village, each student had their own register there, so we can map the whole village from a social view approach. It can be found only after the Eötvös law, but not necessarily. Also with the help of the registers, which were made before the compulsory education we can map which families were able to afford to let their children going to school, and how long and in what kind of schools. So it is possible to follow one student from the primary school to the *univestitas*.

We can analyze that in what kind of schools what kind of education was offered for the students. So it is also possible to observe whether the children they followed their parents' trade or profession, or not.

Certain student registers may include information about the students' religion and nationality. The then *natio* shows us only that in which country lived the person. For example if in a student register was the nation marked as *hungarus*, it means that the student is from Hungary, not that he is Hungarian. But that information can be also very useful.

We also have to mention the *peregrination*. The peregrination of the Hungarian students was influenced by many factors. For example the financial state of the family, whether they could afford their child to continue education, and when they were able to, then in what kind of school and how long could studied the student. It's an important question from the point of view of the schools, that what kind of circle of students they have, and from what kind of social classes and what nationality's members became the students of a certain institution.

The peregrination

With the help of László Szögi's database we provide a smaller summary about the peregrination of the Hungarian students in the 19th century, which makes the analysis according to the already mentioned viewpoints possible.

In the first half of the so-called long 19th century (1790-1850) it happened to be more than eleven thousand registrations on the universities of the Habsburg Empire, Netherlands, Switzerland and the German areas. The two-thirds of the registrations happened in one of the institution of higher education in Vienna. 40% of them was at university of arts, 17% at the technological university, and the last 9 % at the academy of fine arts, or engineering or else. In the Monarchy were three other institutions also popular among the students: the universities of Graz, Prague and Lemberg. Outside of the Monarchy the German universities were very popular, 20% of the all registrations happened at them. At Dutch and Swiss universities studied in this period only 104 Hungarian-born students.

These are the faculties' distribution of the Hungarian students at the universities of the Monarchy between 1790 and 1850: in the biggest rate (15%) of enrolled students were at theological faculties, following them the doctors and surgeons, and also the engineers represent pretty much the same importance (10-11%). The medicals, the surgeons and the engineers studied in Vienna in most cases, the 2/3 of theological students studied in Vienna, the others in Graz and in Lemberg (Lvov). Continuing commercial studies was that time in the Monarchy only possible at the Viennese Polytechnics' trade department: 7% of the Hungarian students studied here. At the German universities and colleges enrolled between 1789-1919 14,5 thousand students. The 32% of these students studied theology, 13-13% of them law and arts, 9% studied engineering and 7-7% continued medical and agricultural studies.

The territorial distribution of students studying in Vienna is remarkable. "It is natural, that the west-Hungarian German native speaker population in Moson, Sopron, and Vas county send their sons to study to Vienna. It is unequivocally in evidence, that the Transdanubia, the county of Upper Hungary and also the more important cities sent the most of the students to Vienna." (Szögi,1994) In the case of Vienna there are more factors: it was the capital city of the Monarchy, it had a reputable university with

departments, which were not found at Pest. And the natural attraction area of Vienna - the geological and language - made the capital city most likely a cheaper solution than the home university for the students from Hungary. It is more or less probable in the case of the other border-close University of Graz.

That information shows us the structural factors, along them is worth to make this phenomenon's deep statistical analysis. This huge database is very useful to the peregrination research, which provide important information to explore a country's or an ethnicity's school-, and cultural history.

We have to mention another use of the student registers. With several information can help the matricula to the genealogy researches, because it includes the students' and their parents' data, such as the name, the time and place of birth and the permanent address and also the occupation.

School's history researches

Another approach to process the registers is from the institutions, as it was mentioned before. The registers of students are important sources of the school's history researches.

The Minister of Culture published an order in 1893: all high schools had to write their own history. Most of the high schools did it, and for their works were the student registers very important sources. Since the first *Ratio Educationis* the issue of the student registers was obligatory, and it has been complied by the schools. As a help to write a school history there are several censuses from the so called reform period. We have got also a lot of school-inspectors' reports, files of new schools'- and high schools' organizations, state grant's payoffs etc. from the period of the dualism. These files could help the researchers to create a more complete and a clearer picture.

We have to mention as a curiosity, that into the student registers of the school of Kunszentmiklós were fallen the internal laws of the institution in Latin language. It is probably not a unique example. It gives the researcher newer information hereby.

With the help of these student registers it is possible to map the situation and the changes of the education system. And these documents give us useful information about the school networks.

As we could see, the register of students is equally useful for the education- and social history researches. It implies important data regarding institutions and their students too, it may shed light on the relationship of education's and 'society'. The data which can be found in student register-databases is not only used by the historians, they may be attractive for sociologists, but may also serve with useful information for mapping individual genealogies.

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