

Scholars and Literati at the University of Zamość (1594–1784)

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This note is a summary description of the set of scholars and literati who taught at the University of Zamość (Zamoyski Academy) from its inception in 1594 to its dissolution in 1784.

1 SOURCES

The only source used is the online encyclopedia of Zamość (Kedzoria 2021). For university related notices, it draws information from Kochanowski (1900).

2 THE UNIVERSITY

The university was established in 1594 in Zamość by Jan Zamoyski, the Crown Chancellor, who also founded the city itself. Poet Szymon Szymonowic, known as Simon Simonides, assisted in its establishment and later became a lecturer there. The university aimed to educate the elite in humanist culture and prepare them for public service. Its founding was authorized by a Papal bull in 1594, issued in Rome. Initially, it consisted of three faculties: liberal arts, law, and medicine. The faculty of theology was added later in 1648. According to our source, during its first decade, the university gained significant recognition not only in Poland but also throughout Europe. The university peaked during the late 16th and early 17th centuries before entering a long decline. It was dissolved in 1784 after Zamość was occupied by Austria during the first partition of Poland. It was then transformed into a secondary school.

3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 1 displays descriptive statistics. Overall, 117 scholars are linked to the University of Zamość. Their years and places of birth are seldom known. For the whole period, 34.2% of birth years are known and 54.7% of birthplaces. For the University of Cracow (De la Croix and Spolverini 2022), it was respectively 25.5% and 80.1%.

The average age at first appointment was around 30.9 years, slightly declining over time. This is very young compared to other universities. Longevity has a positive trend. To compute those two numbers, the year of birth must be known, so they are based on very few observations.

The median distance between the places of birth and activity is 113 km, showing that more than half of the scholars were from the area around the city.

The coverage of scholars in Wikipedia is relatively low, but the coverage in VIAF is above average. Overall, 59% of the scholars appear in VIAF, compared to about 35% in the full database (all universities and academies). In sum, the professors at the University of Zamość are well published but not well documented.

4 FIELDS

Figure 1 shows the balance between the different fields. Arts (humanities) dominate, attesting to the humanistic aim of the university at its inception. Medicine and sciences have a fair share of the

Period	nb. obs	birth date	known place	mean age at appoint.	mean age at death	med. dist. birth-univ.	with Wiki.	with VIAF
1594–1617	27	51.9%	74.1 %	32.5	60.9	113	44.4 %	66.7 %
1618–1685	36	25 %	50 %	31.4	61.7	113	11.1 %	66.7 %
1686–1733	18	11.1%	44.4 %	30	75.5	173	5.6 %	50 %
1734–1784	36	41.7%	50 %	29.2	72.9	142	16.7 %	50 %
1523–1800	117	34.2%	54.7%	30.9	66.6	113	19.7%	59%

Table 1: Summary statistics by period

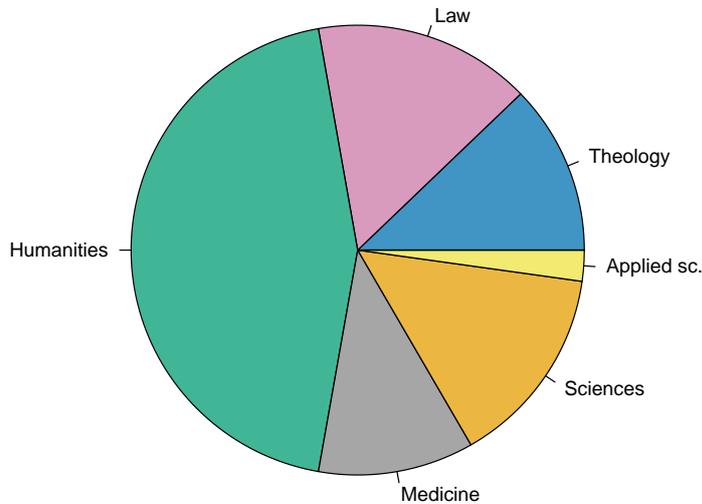


Figure 1: Broad fields at the University of Zamość (published scholars only)

total. On the whole, this is a very balanced university.

5 PLACE OF BIRTH

Figure 2 displays the documented birthplaces of scholars and literati active at the University of Zamość by period. During the first periods, some scholars come from far away in the West. Later, there is less long distance hiring, and most scholars come from the city of Zamość itself or from the region of Cracow.

6 HUMAN CAPITAL OF SCHOLARS AND LITERATI

For each person in the database, we compute a heuristic human capital index, identified by combining information from VIAF and Wikipedia, using principal component analysis. We also compute the notability of the university at each date by averaging the human capital of the scholars active at Zamość 25 years before that date. The details are given in Curtis and De la Croix (2023). Figure 3 shows the names of all the scholars with a positive human capital index. The orange line displays the notability of the university, based on how well published its top scholars were.

The path followed by the orange line fits the description of the university in the encyclopedia of Zamość. A rapid rise followed by an apogee around 1620 and then a continuous decline.

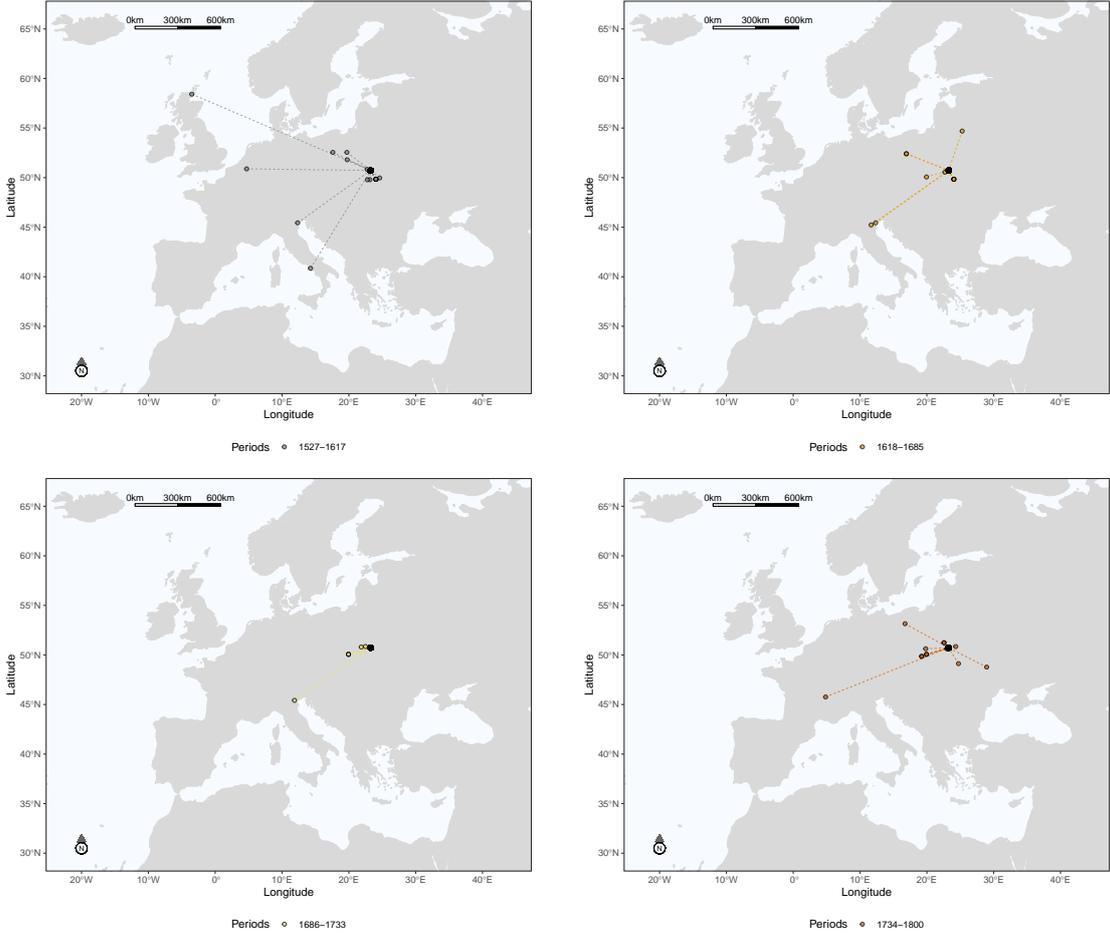


Figure 2: Places of birth of the scholars and literati at the University of Zamość

7 TOP 5 PROFESSORS

Szymon Szymonowic (Lwów 1558 – Zamość 1629) was a Polish humanist and poet. From 1586 he was associated with Jan Zamoyski (celebrated in his poems), with whom he co-organized the University of Zamość in 1593 – 1605. In 1595, thanks to his efforts, an exemplary printing house was established in Zamość at the university. He corresponded with several foreign humanist scholars such as Isaac Casaubon and Justus Lipsius. Upon his death, his rich library became the property of the university.

Stanisław Staszic (Pila 1755 – Warsaw 1826) was a Polish writer, philosopher, geographer, and geologist. He received an extensive education, first in Poland, then in Germany and at the Royal College in Paris. After returning to Poland (1781), he was appointed tutor to the sons of former chancellor Andrzej Zamoyski. When he expressed his interest in taking up a chair at the University of Zamość, his extensive knowledge was disregarded (or perhaps he was poorly thought of due to his liberal beliefs), but he was still allowed to teach French. When the university was dissolved, he traveled around the country, conducting geological and geographical research. He was also very active in several emerging scientific societies and took many scholarly initiatives.

Adrienus Romanus (Leuven 1561 – Mainz 1615) was a mathematician, professor of medicine, and medical astronomer from the Duchy of Brabant. Romanus was a professor of mathematics and medicine at Louvain from 1586 to 1592. In 1593, Van Roomen became the inaugural professor of medicine at the newly refounded University of Würzburg. It was at the peak of his medical career that, as a professor of medicine, he requested a teaching exemption from the university authorities on May 19, 1603, in order to fully dedicate himself to his mathematical research. The authorities directed him to the prince-bishop, and to everyone's surprise, the latter not only granted him the requested exemption but also hired him as his personal physician. In 1610, he travelled to Poland at the invitation of Jan Zamoyski to give public mathematics lectures at Zamość, where he stayed for two years.

Bazyli Rudomicz (Vilnius 1620 - Zamość 1672) was a lawyer, physician, and chronicler. He studied at the University of Zamość and obtained a bachelor's degree in arts and philosophy in 1644. The same year, he converted from Orthodoxy to Catholicism. He was employed as a lecturer at the university and subsequently earned a doctorate in philosophy and both civil and canon law. In 1656, he was elected rector of the university, holding this position six times. Bazyli Rudomicz's most well-known work is a journal written in Latin, covering the last 16 years of his life.

Adam Burski (Brzeziny 1560 - Zamość 1611) was a Polish philologist, logician, and philosopher. He is representative of Polish Renaissance philosophical thought. A student and then a professor at the University of Cracow, he joined the moral philosophy department at the University of Zamość in 1597, responding to Jan Zamoyski's invitation. He later served as rector of the university on multiple occasions. As a prominent figure in Polish Renaissance philosophy, he held influential positions as a professor, overseeing printing houses, and spearheading scientific and publishing initiatives. Burski advocated for empiricism and the use of inductive methods in scientific inquiry. Additionally, he actively campaigned for secularism and school autonomy, challenging the dominance of the clergy.

8 UNIVERSITY NETWORK

Our assumption is that a professor's involvement in multiple universities throughout their career establishes a connection between those institutions. We present the universities that were linked to the University of Zamość during each period in Figure 4, highlighting two noteworthy observations.

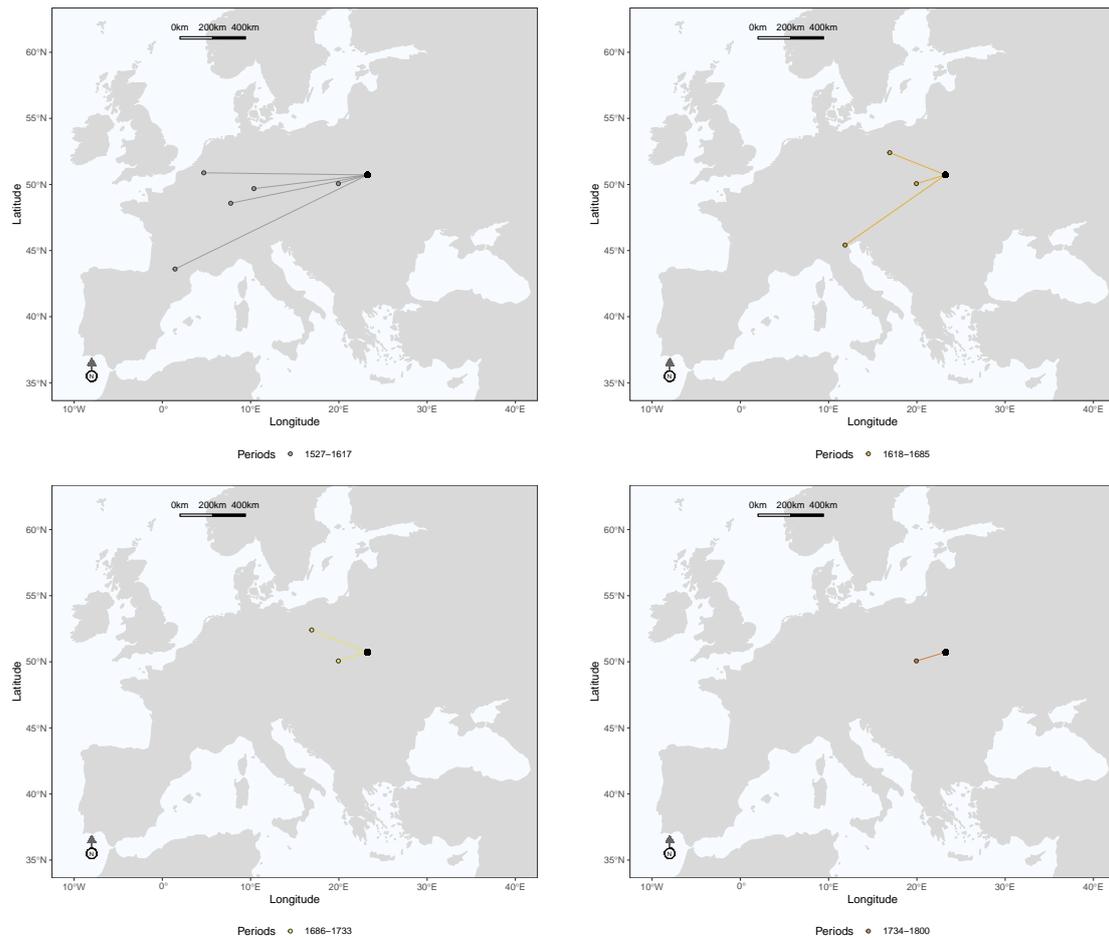


Figure 4: Links between Zamość and other universities through scholars' mobility, by period

Firstly, there is a remarkable occurrence of connections with universities located significantly to the West. Secondly, as time progresses, the network of the university exhibits a shrinking pattern.

9 FINAL THOUGHTS

The University of Zamość stands as a prominent contributor to the Polish movement of humanism, striving to foster well-rounded individuals equipped with essential skills in literacy, critical thinking, and rationality. Its remarkable success and longevity distinguish it from the Lubranski College (De la Croix 2021), which eventually became a subsidiary of the scholastic University of Cracow, emphasizing the exploration of doctrine, dogma, and morality.

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Twitter: <https://twitter.com/UTHCerc>

Database: <https://shiny-lidam.sipr.ucl.ac.be/scholars/>

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