

Scholars and Literati at the University of Lwów (1608-1800)

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This note is a summary description of the set of scholars and literati who taught at the University of Lwów from its inception in 1608 to the end of the premodern period (1800).

1 THE UNIVERSITY

In 1591, Jesuits in Lwów took charge of a new convent, but faced opposition from the University of Krakow over establishing a Jesuit College. Following some delays, the College was eventually founded in 1608.

The University of Lwów was established on January 20, 1661, when King John II Casimir granted a charter to the city's Jesuit Collegium, elevating it to university status. A devastating fire in 1734 destroyed much of the collegium, including a significant portion of its 17,000-volume book collection.

In 1758, King Augustus III designated the Collegium as an academy, equal in ability to confer degrees to the Jagiellonian University. By 1772, Lwów was annexed by Austria. The suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773 and the partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth further impacted the institution, and the university was re-named as Theresianum. Under Austrian rule, the university underwent Germanization, adding faculties of law and medicine alongside theology and philosophy. Latin was the official language, with Polish and German as auxiliary languages.

In 1805, due to financial constraints brought on by the Napoleonic wars, the university was closed by Austria.

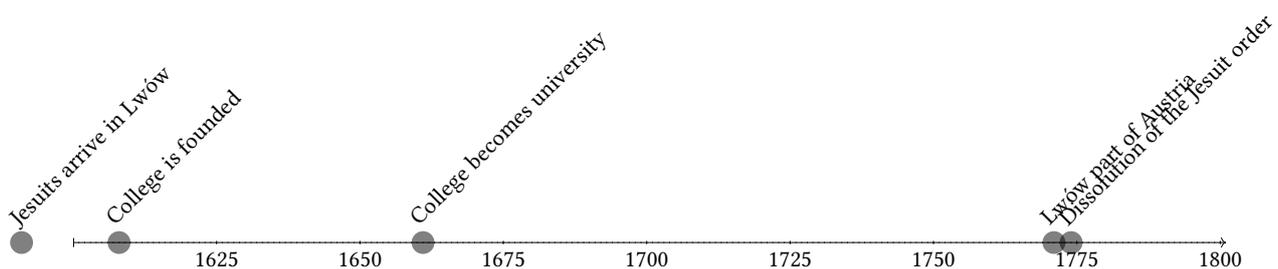


Figure 1: Timeline of the University of Lwów

2 SOURCES

Two sources provide most of our data on the University of Lwów during its “Jesuit period” (until 1773). Sommervogel (1890)’s work “Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus” (Library of the Society of Jesus), is an extensive and valuable resource which lists the writings of Jesuits, including those at the University of Lwow, before 1800. The Encyclopaedia of Information on the Jesuits in the Territories of Poland and Lithuania, 1564-1995, edited by Grzebień (2004), provides meticulous data

concerning the activities the scholars and literati who taught at the University of Lwów, as well as precise information about the locations of their births and deaths. The text of this encyclopedia can be searched online at <https://www.jezuici.krakow.pl/bibl/enc.htm>. The “Austrian period” was more difficult to document. We found some names in Rovenchak (2014).

3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 1 displays descriptive statistics. Overall, 388 scholars are linked to the University of Lwów. Their years and places of birth are often known. For the whole period, 99.5% of birth years and 70.4% of birthplaces are known. For the University of Cracow (De la Croix and Spolverini 2022), these numbers are respectively 25.5% and 80.1%. The average age at first appointment was around 36.9 years, but only 34.4 years during the first period. Longevity is low and shows no trend. The median distance between the places of birth and activity is 413 km, with a clear downward trend. The professors from the first periods came from more distant places: the recruitment pool became more and more local over time. The coverage of scholars in Wikipedia is relatively low, and the coverage in VIAF is below average. Overall, 32.2% of the scholars appear in VIAF, compared to about 37% in the full database (all universities and academies).

Period	nb. obs	birth date known	birth place known	mean age at appoint.	mean age at death	med. dist. birth-univ.	with Wiki.	with VIAF
1527–1617	29	100	93.1	34.4	57.5	426	10.3	24.1
1618–1685	134	100	75.4	38	59.2	452	6.7	24.6
1686–1733	110	100	67.3	37.1	62.9	339	7.3	39.1
1734–1800	115	98.3	61.7	36	57.7	272	14.8	36.5
1527–1800	388	99.5	70.4	36.9	59.7	413	9.5	32.2

Table 1: Summary statistics by period

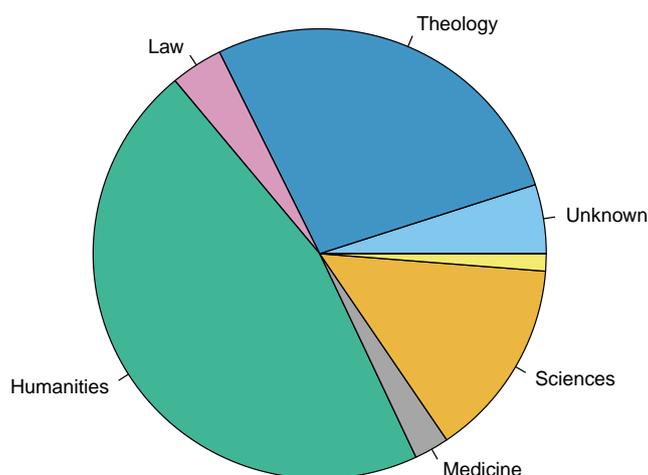


Figure 2: Broad fields at the University of Lwów (published scholars only)

4 FIELDS

Figure 2 shows the balance between the different fields. Humanities dominate, as in many Jesuit universities. Not surprisingly, theology is important as well. Sciences are not negligible, while medicine and law are absent.

5 PLACE OF BIRTH

Figure 3 displays the documented birthplaces of scholars and literati active at the University of Lwów by period. During all periods, the majority of scholars came from Poland, with occasional scholars coming from the rest of Europe. The last period seems richer than the others in terms of international movements.

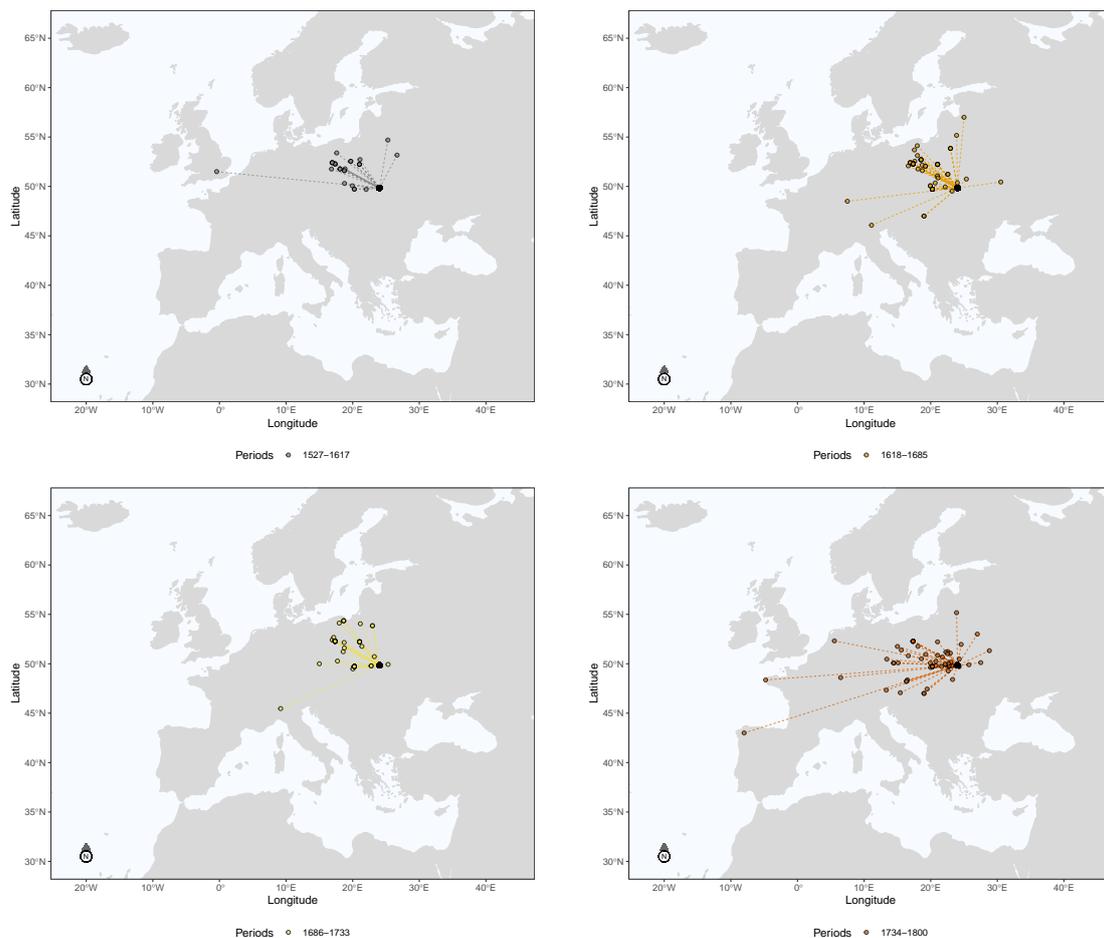


Figure 3: Places of birth of the scholars and literati at the University of Lwów

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 t by averaging the human capital of the best five scholars who were associated with the University of Lwów within a 25-year timeframe leading up to t , and concluded their careers before t . The details are given in Curtis and De la Croix (2023). Figure 4 shows the names of all the scholars with a positive human capital index. The orange line indicates the notability of the university, based on how well published its top scholars were. The trajectory traced by the orange line depicts a swift ascent and a long plateau, with a gap around 1650. After

the expulsion of the Jesuits, the university gains a new impetus and reaches its apogee. The five best scholars of all time include one at the very beginning of, and two after, the Jesuit period.

7 TOP 5 PROFESSORS

Belsazar de la Motte Hacquet (1739 Le Conquet – 1815 Vienna) studied medicine in Paris, became a professor of anatomy in the high school of Laibach from 1773, a professor of natural history in the University of Lwów (then Lemberg) from 1787, and a professor of chemistry and botany in Krakow from 1805. In 1777, he was elected as a member of the Leopoldina, and in 1787, he became a corresponding member of the Göttingen Academy of Sciences. He was protected by Marie-Thérèse I (1717-1780) and later by Joseph II (1741-1790), who funded his explorations. Hacquet travelled extensively on foot through a large part of the Austrian Empire, making numerous and significant observations in geology, petrography, paleontology, botany, and ethnology. While in Laibach, he attempted the initial ascent of Triglav. Although he did not reach the summit, he actively supported the first ascent team and established his reputation as one of the pioneers of alpinism.

Ignaz Joseph Martinovics (1755 Pest – 1795 Buda) was a Hungarian scholar, and a member of the Franciscan order. Martinovics studied theology in the University of Buda from 1775-1779. From 1783 he became a teacher of natural sciences at the University of Lwów (then Lemberg). He was known in salons as a learned and witty conversationalist and an excellent scholar, but did not produce truly lasting scientific work. Martinovics was excommunicated and beheaded for having tried to install a Republic in Austria (following the model of the French Revolution).

Mikołaj Łęczycki (1574 Nieśwież – 1653 Kaunas) was a prominent Polish Jesuit theologian and writer. At 18, Łęczycki converted from Calvinism to Catholicism, and joined the Society of Jesus on February 17, 1592. He studied in Rome, where he received holy orders in 1601. Returning to Poland-Lithuania in 1607, he served as a professor in Vilnius and Lwów. Łęczycki was known for his spiritual mastery and miracles, including revelation, prophecy, healing, levitation, psychokinesis, and bilocation.

Grzegorz Piramowicz (1735 Lwów – 1801 Międzyrzec Podlaski) was a Polish Jesuit of Armenian descent. After completing his education at the Jesuit College in Lwów, where he associated with Ignacy Krasicki, he entered the Jesuit order (1754). He earned a doctorate in theology in 1764. Piramowicz undertook several foreign trips, including one to France between 1768 and 1770. He remained a Jesuit until the order's suppression. For almost three years (1771–1773), he taught logic at the Lviv Collegium while serving as the cathedral preacher.

Joseph Liesganigg (1719 Graz – 1799 Lwów), a Jesuit priest and geodesist, served as a mathematics professor at the University of Vienna, beginning his teaching career in 1742 at the University of Graz. He participated in a geographic survey of Austria, determining the longitude of Vienna, and contributing to the early trigonometric mapping of the region. Notably, he held the distinction of being the final Jesuit astronomer at the Vienna observatory. According to Grzebień (2004), he was teaching in Lwów around the year 1750. Later, in 1772, parts of the Russian Empire was taken by Austria and Liesganigg was ordered to map the new territory. He moved his instruments from Vienna to the observatory at Lwów, where he worked until his death.

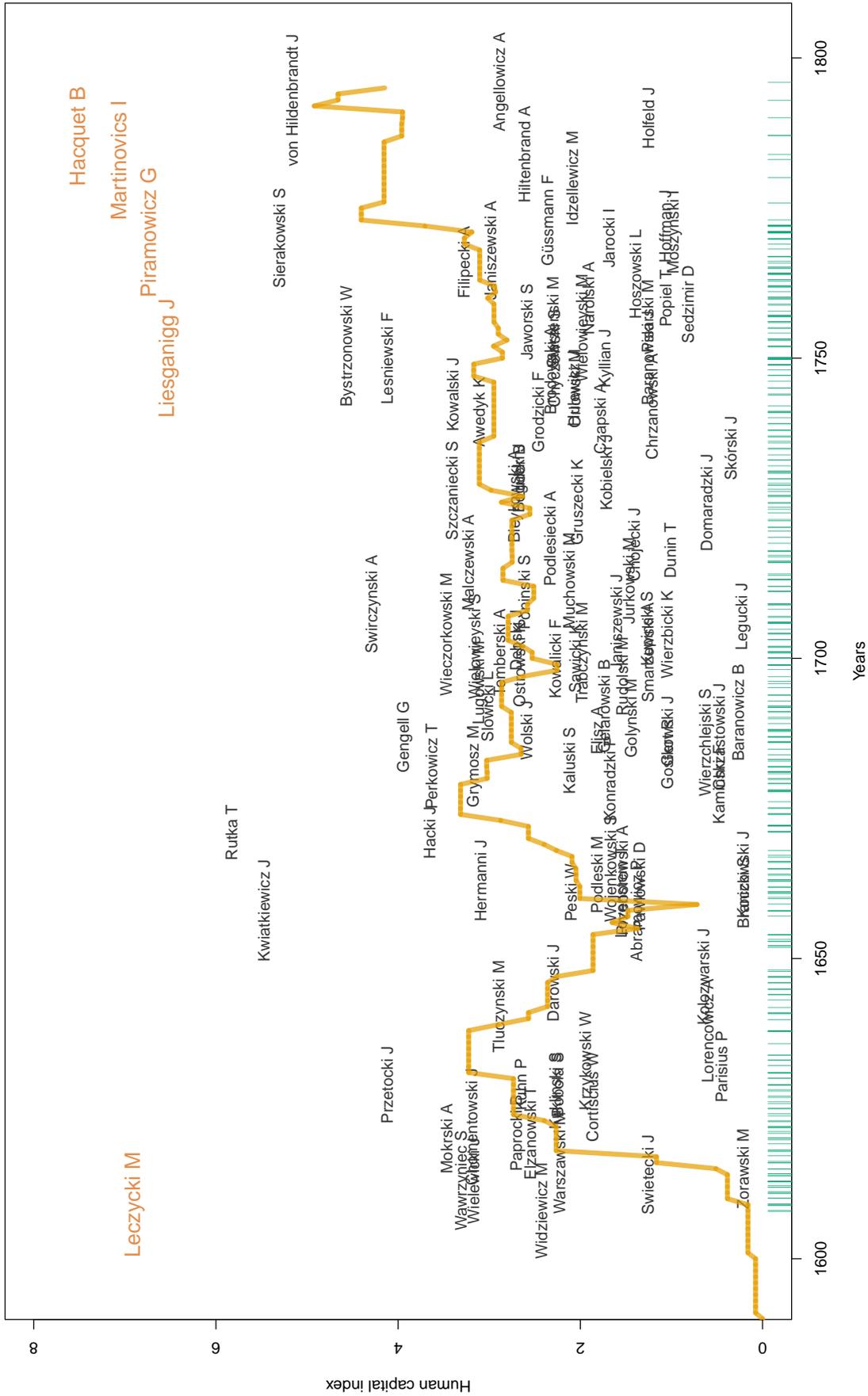


Figure 4: Famous scholars and university notability (orange)

8 RELATED SCHOLARS

In addition to the ordinary members teaching at the University of Lwów, several individuals were linked to the university via other roles, such as advisors or reformers. They had an influence on the general organization of the institution, but did not teach. These scholars are included in the calculations for all figures except Figure 4. The most notable scholar belonging to this category is presented in this section.

Ignacy Krasicki (1735 Dubiecko – 1801 Berlin) was a writer and poet, senator, Bishop of Warmia and Primate of Poland. Although Wikipedia lists him among the notable professors of the University of Lwów, we did not find sources to confirm this activity. We know that he attended the Jesuit school in Lwów, then studied at a Warsaw Catholic seminary (1751–54). In 1759 he took holy orders and continued his education in Rome (1759–61). Returning to Poland, Krasicki had a career in the Church, culminating with his nomination as Archbishop of Gniezno, hence Primate of Poland. Ignacy Krasicki stood as the foremost literary figure of the Polish Enlightenment, earning high regard from his contemporaries as both a prose writer and esteemed poet (Michaud 1811).

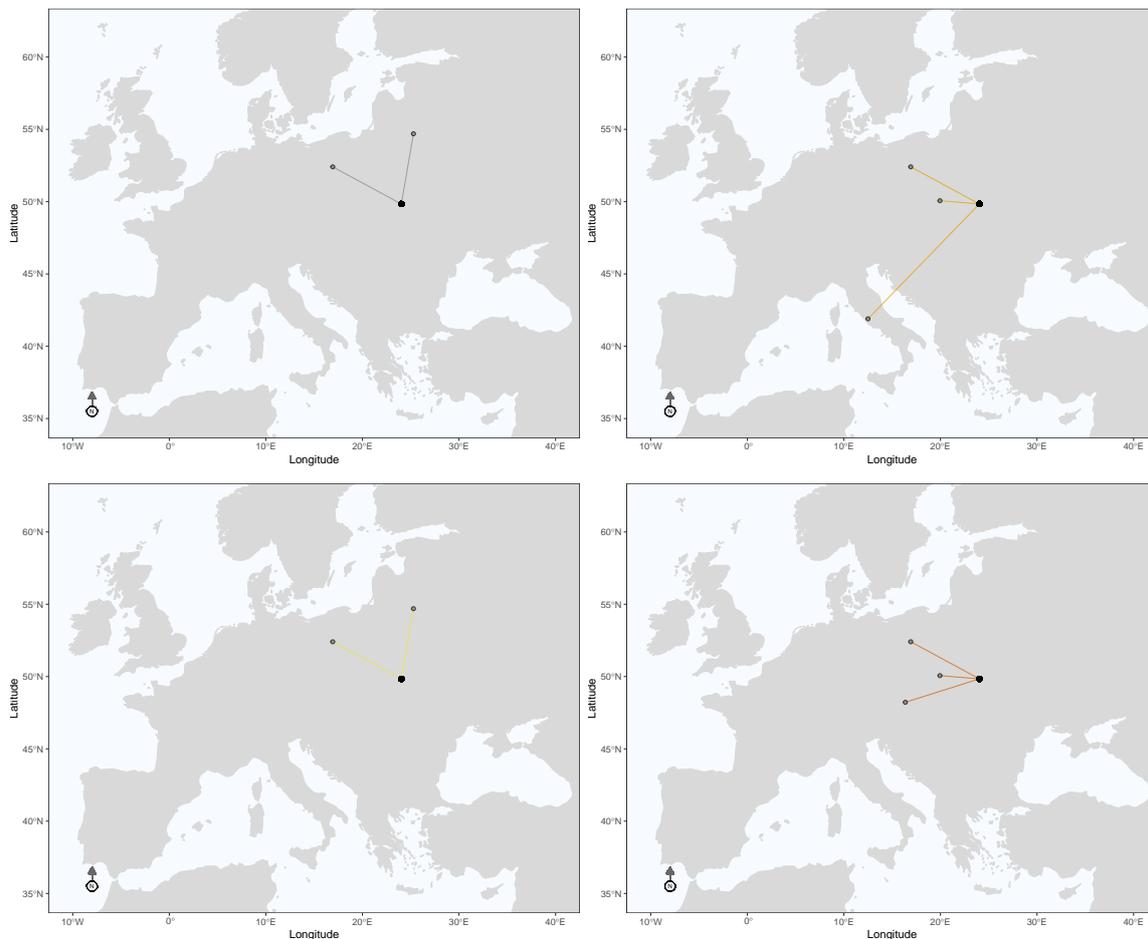


Figure 5: Links between Lwów and other universities through scholars' mobility, by period

9 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 Lwów during each period in Figure 5. On the whole, there are not many links with the other universities. The University of Vilnius and the Jesuit college in Poznań are the two main related institutions, and both are from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

10 FINAL THOUGHTS

At the borders of Latin Europe, the University of Lwów was a flourishing Jesuit university focused on theology and philosophy. When the Society of Jesus was banned, the university transformed into a secular institution, giving a new impetus to the study of sciences and medicine.

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Homepage: <https://perso.uclouvain.be/david.delacroix/uthc.html>

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

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

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