

## STATE INSTITUTIONS

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### TOWN COUNCIL OPERATIONS IN KOŠICE AND MISKOLC, 1830–1860

#### Abstract

Košice and Miskolc are socio-economic centers of the same region, which had its own councils in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Differences between the official systems depended on contemporary status of the two towns. First of all it is necessary to specify the status of the city, then the presentation of town offices, and finally the study shows differences in the two administrations. Characteristics of office systems and the administration are presented in chronological progress in the light of political changes.

**Key Words:** Town council, Košice, Miskolc, town administration, Reform and Bach Era.

**Słowa kluczowe:** rada miasta, Koszyce, Miskolc, administracja miejska, reformy i era Bacha.

The clarification of the status by law of Košice and Miskolc in the Reform and Bach Eras fundamentally influences the legal status of these towns in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the differences between Košice and Miskolc's town law and town administration. Their continuously broadening privileges had been affecting the economic and social lives of the towns since the Middle Ages and early modern times. Actually, we can state that the residents gained the particular town privileges by the mediation of the town office. Town administration basically used to work in the same way in a market town and in a free royal town; however, they had numerous differences and particular characteristics in practice. In the detailed analysis of two free royal towns' councils we can find some differences and particular administrative practices, but in the case of two towns with different legal statuses these differences are much more significant.

The fact that Miskolc was a part of the market town of Diósgyőr's feudal estate typically influenced the town. This status led to several limitations on the town, and as a market town it did not have much autonomous decision-making authority. From the second part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the demand for the status of

free royal town came into the spotlight and grew into a centuries-long fight that never achieved its goal. Its legal status in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was mainly influenced by the rights given in the previous century when the town liberated itself – at its own expense – from the chamber, which therefore gave free decision-making authority to Miskolc.

The first liberalisation happened in 1702, which meant that the town could rule itself within its own territory and make decisions regarding its own matters. According to the contract, the town liberated itself at its own expense for 25 years and this liberation happened again in 1731. Besides the free-decision rights already mentioned, Miskolc was given two other economic benefits from the legal processes: Miskolc did not have to pay taxes to or labour for its landlord.<sup>1</sup> The legal-social status of the town was set back, especially in the legal sense, in 1755 by a contract<sup>2</sup> with Antal Grassalkovich,<sup>3</sup> as it reduced the non-noble citizens of Miskolc into serfdom, meaning that the chances of avoiding the burden towards the landlord were minimal.<sup>4</sup>

The liberations and the Grassalkovich contract<sup>5</sup> did not result in the desired objectives, and Miskolc still was not given the title of free royal town.<sup>6</sup> According to the surviving sources, the town had the title of *oppidum privilegium coronale* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; thus, as a privileged crown town, Miskolc was actually a market town that had privileges and was controlled by the chamber.

It was 1836 when the laws of the Hungarian Reform Era changed the public law of Miskolc for the first time. According to Articles IX and XX, Miskolc be-

<sup>1</sup> Erzsébet Leveles, “A 800 éves Miskolc,” [in:] *Miskolc* (Magyar városok monográfiája, V.), ed. Béla Halmay, Andor Leszih, Budapest: Magyar Városok Monográfiája Kiadóhivatal, 1929, pp. 88–89; József Ö. Kovács and Attila Szendi, “Jogi helyzet és normák,” [in:] *Miskolc története III/1*, ed. István Dobrossy, Miskolc: Borsodi Nyomda, 2000, p. 524.

<sup>2</sup> The text of the contract can be found B.–A.–Z. m. Lt. (Borsod–Abaúj–Zemplén Megyei Levéltár [Archives of Borsod–Abaúj–Zemplén County], 1501/a, Miskolc Város Levéltára 1569–1911 [Archives of city Miskolc] / Tanácsülési jegyzőkönyvek [Protocols of city council]), Vol. 3/1755, pp. 893–894.; János Szendrei, “Oklevéltár Miskolcz város történetéhez 1225–1843,” [in:] *Miskolc város története és egyetemes helyirata III.*, comp. János Szendrei, Miskolcz 1890, pp. 452–458; Péter Spóner, “Egy mezőváros céhes ipara a városi jegyzőkönyvek tükrében: Miskolc céhes ipartörténete”, PhD diss. University of Debrecen, 2011, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Count Antal Grassalkovich (1694–1771) Royal Crown Guard, Head of the Chamber, Maria Theresa’s Counsellor, lord-lieutenant of the county of Arad and later Nógrád, builder of the castles of Gödöllő and Hatvan.

<sup>4</sup> István Stipta, “Miskolc igazgatásának jellegváltozásai 1755–1871 között,” [in:] *Miskolc a millecentenáriumi évében*, Vol. 1. ed. István Dobrossy, Miskolc: Borsod–Abaúj–Zemplén Megyei Levéltár, 1997, p. 203.; Ö. Kovács and A. Szendi, *op. cit.*, p. 524.

<sup>5</sup> In detail about contract: Tibor Rémiás, “Miskolc mezőváros XVIII. századi birtoklástörténete,” [in:] *Studia Miskolcinsia*, Vol. 3, Miskolc: Miskolci Egyetemi Kiadó, 1999, pp. 176–178.; Tibor Rémiás, *Miskolc 18. századi társadalma – feudális kori összeírások alapján*, Miskolc: Bátor, 2004, pp. 58–64.

<sup>6</sup> Judit Tóvári, *Az elit Miskolc város társadalmában 1872–1917*, Nyíregyháza: Stúdium, 1997, pp. 3–4.

came a town with a regulated council. The laws determined the judicial bodies, the composition of the court and the new system for electing judges. The notary was no longer elected by the town annually, but instead was centrally appointed. Although the law expanded the authority of the town council, it also stated that the chamber was present at all council meetings and, what is more, they were held under “*Cameralis Praefectus presidium*”.<sup>7</sup> The chamber had custody over financial management, and it had the right to revise the finished budget as well as accounts of the town. Besides the chamber, the Councils of the Governor-General also started to monitor the town continuously and Miskolc often even had to ask the central bodies for defence against the county.

In the case of Kassa, a totally different way of legal development can be recognised before the chosen era. The first known collection of town statutes connected to the town administration dates from 1404.<sup>8</sup> Kassa, as a free royal town, not only had the right to freely choose its principals, but had decision-making, judicial and administrative rights over all of the feudal estates under its legal authority. Kassa had noble prerogative and it practised judicial power not only over its citizens, but also over people who owned property in the town as well as over all other people regardless of their legal status (with the exception of those in the Church) who were temporarily staying in the town – if their affairs fell under the juridical authority of the town. Kassa was a free royal town and Article XXIII of 1848 entitled it to municipal rights, which made possible to have its own jurisdiction and choose its officers independently.<sup>9</sup>

### Internal council

While Miskolc was continuously struggling for legal independence during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Kassa obtained most of these privileges during the Middle Ages. In Kassa, the town’s executive power was in the hands of the 12 members of the internal council, the head of which was the chief justice, whose power gradually declined over the centuries until its leadership rights were taken over by the mayor. The position of chief justice was finally removed in 1872. On the other hand, the internal council of Miskolc consisted of 24 members. The first mayoral election in Miskolc took place on 1 May 1789. The date of the Kassa elections

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<sup>7</sup> István Stipta, “A városigazgatás szervezete és működése,” [in:] *Miskolc története III/1*, ed. István Dobrossy, Miskolc: Borsodi Nyomda, 2000, pp. 712–713.

<sup>8</sup> Jozef KIRST and Michal POTE MRA, comp., *Mestská správa v Košiciach v rokoch 1848–1945: Tematická bibliografia*, Košice: Štátna vedecká knižnica v Košiciach, 1984, p. 24. The statutes clearly determine the structure of the council which consisted of 12 members (*iurati cives*) which controlled the matters of the town with the 100 members of the elected municipality (*electa communitas*), and all the citizens (*plena seu tota communitas*).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 30.

is not known exactly,<sup>10</sup> but the position of mayor<sup>11</sup> (*Bürgermeister*; *mešťanosta*) must have become a custom in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as well. As the leading officer for the town's administrative matters, the mayor led the meetings of the internal council. According to the minutes of the council meetings, he chaired the sessions during the Reform Era and the Bach Era. The minutes show this practice in both towns. However, Miskolc had a strange practice because the first mayors chaired the external council (it was convened at their request), while the chief justice remained the leader of the magistrate (internal council), the executive body of the Elected Township. The fact that Miskolc did not have such a position caused a lot of curiosity. According to a town order, the mayor supervised the management of the town from 1790, about which he reported to the chief justice. The chief justice decided the judicial cases and the mayor was not allowed to encroach on these matters.<sup>12</sup> The chief justice could decide about the civil and criminal cases, but only for citizens who were not nobility. It was the district administrator who wielded administrative and judicial power regarding the civil and criminal cases of the nobles. The town's administrative expenses were paid by non-nobles.<sup>13</sup> Arguments between the internal and external councils were handled by the chief justice.<sup>14</sup> The first mayoral election in Miskolc was held in 1789. This was the first time when the chamber decided to change the structure of town administration so that it would be similar to free royal towns' administration. The structure of the two towns became similar from this point, but they never had the same legal practice.

The management of the two internal councils, however, was quite different. In the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, both councils usually met twice a week, on Tuesday and on Friday. Until the middle of the century, the number of meetings increased depending on how often the town's numerous cases requested the aldermen's assembly. The internal council had an extremely wide range of authority in Kassa. It actually handled almost every case concerning the town. On the other hand, in 1860, it happened that the town council met only once a month in Miskolc, and then it only discussed the most important matters in the town. This phenomenon was due to the difference in the two towns' legal status and to the fact that matters regarding the management of Miskolc were handled by the general assembly. Moreover, the restrictive jurisdiction of the Bach Era also

<sup>10</sup> The list of consuls from 1788 can be found in: Samu B o r o v s z k y and János S z i k l a y, ed., *Abauj-Torna vármeye és Kassa*; Magyarország vármegyei és városai, Vol. 1, Budapest: Apollo Irodalmi és Nyomdai Részvénytársaság, 1896, pp. 96–97.

<sup>11</sup> István H. N é m e t h, *Kassa város archontológiája – Bírák, belső és külső tanács 1500–1700*, Budapest: Szentpétery Imre Történettudományi Alapítvány, 2006, p. 10.

<sup>12</sup> István S t i p t a, "A miskolci közigazgatás jellegváltása," [in:] *Miskolc Története III/2*, ed. István Dobrossy, Miskolc: Borsodi Nyomda, 2000, p. 709.

<sup>13</sup> Anna S z e g ő f i, "Az önkényuralom 1849 után," [in:] *Miskolc Története IV/1*, ed. István Dobrossy, Miskolc: Borsodi Nyomda, 2003, pp. 39–40.

<sup>14</sup> I. S t i p t a, *op. cit.*, pp. 709–710.

affected the towns' autonomy, so that the legal status of Miskolc decreased significantly.<sup>15</sup> According to the minutes, the council of Kassa managed between 6,000 and 8,000 cases yearly in the 1840s;<sup>16</sup> while in Miskolc, the number of cases was probably between 1,000 and 1,700 a year, and this number decreased radically during the Bach Era – there was a year when the council handled only 284 cases.<sup>17</sup>

The structures of the internal councils in Kassa and Miskolc were similar. Both councils were led by the chief justice, and he was followed by the citizens' officer, who was the member of the internal council in Kassa.<sup>18</sup> In Miskolc, the external council was controlled by the mayor. Besides the 12-member internal council, town officers were elected in both towns: the vice magistrate, the police superintendent, the notary, the clerks, the taxmen, the solicitor, the economic inspector<sup>19</sup> and the town lieutenant. In Kassa, four officers (cashiers) and eight taxmen were elected to the town treasury,<sup>20</sup> while in Miskolc there were two cashiers and one taxman.<sup>21</sup> During an analysis of the elections, it was found that the town administration of Miskolc was smaller in the number of employees and simpler in structure compared to the town administration in Kassa. Moreover, it was the internal council that handled most of the cases regarding the town in Kassa, while in Miskolc the Elected Township had more executive power.

### The external council

Besides the internal council, there was another body, the Elected Township or external council, which basically represented the citizens. Its role was to make the citizens accept the orders and guidelines made by the internal council. The Elected Township was led by the people's tribune (spokesman, *forminder*, *fürmender*), which was a member of the internal council in Kassa. The internal council tried to put pressure on the external council (which had more members) from the early modern times, as the spokesman was a member of the internal management (magistrate).<sup>22</sup> In 1847, the Elected Township had 64 members in Kassa<sup>23</sup> and 60 members in Miskolc,<sup>24</sup> which is quite similar in size. These bodies

<sup>15</sup> István Dobrossy, ed., *Borsod és Miskolc 1848–1849-ben (Naplók, töredékek, visszaemlékezések)*, Miskolc: Borsod–Abaúj–Zemplén Megyei levéltár, 1998, pp. 118–119.

<sup>16</sup> AMK (Archív Mesta Košice [Archives of city Košice]), R/2 (Stredná manipulácia [Intermediary administration]), Prot. (Protokoly mestskej rady [Protocols of city council]), 1840–1848.

<sup>17</sup> B.–A.–Z. m. Lt., IV. 1501/a., 1840–1848; 1602/a.

<sup>18</sup> J. KIRST and M. POTE MRA, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>19</sup> This officer was appointed in Miskolc. B.–A.–Z. m. Lt., IV. 1501/a. 66/1840, pp. 294–295.

<sup>20</sup> J. KIRST and M. POTE MRA, *op. cit.*, p. 26. About the town treasury: AMK, Účtářeň a pokladnica [Accounting department and booking-office], 1788–1848.

<sup>21</sup> BAZML, IV. 1501/a. 66/1840, 299.

<sup>22</sup> I.H. NÉMETH, *op. cit.*, p. 12. The leader of the Elected Town had his own clerk in Košice.

<sup>23</sup> J. KIRST and M. POTE MRA, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

<sup>24</sup> János Szendrei, *Miskolcz város története 1800–1910: Miskolcz város története és egyetemes helyirata*, Vol. 4, Miskolcz 1911, p. 168.

were to decide about all the statutes of the towns, monitor the town offices and enforce the rules. During the Reform Era, more and more offices were managed by the town (guardianship became a part of town administration then),<sup>25</sup> which was mainly due to the law introduced in 1836. According to this law, Miskolc was a town with a regulated council and had its own jurisdiction. Although the law expanded the authority of the town council, it allowed the chamber to attend almost all the council meetings and even the re-elections of officers were monitored by the chamber:<sup>26</sup> all of the re-elections were chaired by the governor general of the feudal estate of Diósgyőr<sup>27</sup> and he approved and signed them at the end.<sup>28</sup>

After 1830, only the minutes of Kassa's Elected Township from between 1841 and 1843 have survived. We can learn from these minutes that the Elected Township met once or twice in a month. They mainly dealt with the cases that did not come under the authority of the internal council: cases concerning citizens within the town. They did not correspond with any other national bodies or authorities. In Kassa, the internal council and the Elected Township often co-operated with regards to cases of town management. They often discussed and adjudicated the same case, but the officers were the people who held together the management, because the citizens' officer (the head of the Elected Township) dealt with several cases that belonged to the internal council and the mayor also attended most meetings of the external council. However, the primary activity of the Elected Township was the renewal of officers. This process happened several times yearly, since individual officers were elected on different days of the year depending on when their mandate expired. The practice of the election of lower positions also differed, for example rural constables were just elected from 1850<sup>29</sup> while this position can be found on the list of Kassa's elected officers in 1846.<sup>30</sup> Even the streets and roads of Kassa had their own office (*Aediliatus officium*), in which six officers worked; the Forest Office (*Sylvanale officium*) had ten associates.<sup>31</sup>

### Changes in 1848

The main effect of the laws of April 1848 on the towns was the annulment of serfdom. Kassa, which no longer possessed noble rights, had serfs in a legal sense.

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<sup>25</sup> I. Stipta, *op. cit.*, p. 711. In 1686, there were two officers who dealt with guardianship in Kassa, but from this year there was also regulated control over orphans. Ondrej R. Halaga, *Archív mesta Košice: Sprievodca po fondoch a zbierkach*, Praha: Archivní správa ministerstva vnitra, 1957, p. 85.

<sup>26</sup> I. Stipta, "A városigazgatás," p. 713.

<sup>27</sup> B.-A.-Z. m. Lt., IV. 1501/a. 66/1840, pp. 289–290.

<sup>28</sup> B.-A.-Z. m. Lt., IV. 1501/a. 67/1841, p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> B.-A.-Z. m. Lt., IV. 1602/a. 2/1850, p. 1.

<sup>30</sup> J. Kirst and M. Potemra, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 26.

The change was not realized in practice, however, until the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867.

The laws of 1848 did not change the public life and administration of Miskolc in practice and nor did they fundamentally shake Kassa's. The most important changes for Miskolc due to the law were that it could send two delegates to the Parliament and its judicial power increased. The laws of 1848 proclaimed equality before the law at the courts, but this was not realised in practice: even in 1861, the citizens of Miskolc complained that no equality could be observed at the courts.<sup>32</sup> The serfdom situation was a bit different in Miskolc than in Kassa. Miskolc – as a subordinate legal authority of the county – was actually in the position of a serf before 1848. Although the April Laws annulled serfdom, the district administrator still supervised the town and could even intervene in the renewal of its officers.<sup>33</sup>

The jurisdiction of 1848 made some changes to the administration of Kassa. The town council meetings discussed cases in two committees: in the civil-economic council and the judicial seat. These cases had already been reported in different minutes, but this was the first time when the representatives of the internal council were divided and two groups, each with six members, and discussed civil-economic cases and the judicial cases separately.<sup>34</sup> A new office came into existence in the town council of Kassa, the National Defence Committee, which managed the conscription in the town from November 1848. The National Defence Committee was controlled by the internal council, so it did not have its own authority.

### **The Bach Era and the period of moderation**

Public administration was totally subordinated to military command in the new system. Jurisdiction was reorganised at the beginning of the Bach Era. As a result of the cancellation of the judge of the Court of Appeal in Miskolc, the independence of the arbitral tribunal and the renewal of officers disappeared.<sup>35</sup> With the introduction of gendarmerie, the police station, previously the main defensive institution, lost its importance. A new leading officer was appointed to the top of both towns – a president with decision-making authority that even extended over the entire county. The presidents started their work in 1849 in the occupied territories. In Miskolc, no council meetings could be held without the presence of the president, while in Kassa his name cannot always be found in the minutes of the

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<sup>32</sup> A. Szegőfi, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 40.

<sup>34</sup> J. Kírst and M. Potemra, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

<sup>35</sup> BAZML 1501/a 75/1849. 43–44. On 22<sup>nd</sup> June the vice-president of Borsod county appointed all the officers of the town where everybody was replaced with the exception of the solicitor and the councillor

council meetings but he instructed the council in important cases several times, so he must have had supervisory authority.<sup>36</sup>

The autocracy meant that the renewal of officers lost its independence in Kassa and Miskolc. In both towns, the mayor and the councillors were appointed by the imperial county commissioner and after that, at the end of the Haynau Era, by the district high commissioner (the lord-lieutenant of the district). With the establishment of the Military District of Kassa, Kassa remained an important administrative centre, although it lost its independence. New offices appeared that were not subordinated to the town. The institution of the gendarmerie also appeared here with the establishment of the Police Directorate (*K. k. Politzeidirektion in Kaschau*).<sup>37</sup> The laws of 1850 and 1851 that regulated the administration of towns claimed that the councillors of town offices might be appointed or elected, but they were mainly appointed. The town court was disbanded in Kassa and 24 councillors were elected to the body of representatives for life, but no replacements were elected to take the place of deceased councillors. Instead, the Councils of Governor-General filled it by appointment.<sup>38</sup> In Kassa, the positions and roles of the mayor and chief justice were mixed in the Bach Era, when, after the disappearance of town jurisdiction, the mayor took over the management of town administration instead of the chief justice. The judicial power of the town practically disappeared. The position of the chief justice remained for a while and the last chief justice resigned in 1872.<sup>39</sup>

The October Diploma, which was published on 20 October 1860, claimed that the ruler practiced his legislative rights with the parliaments and the imperial council, so it allowed the convocation of the Parliament and restored the 1847 county system.

In November 1860, Baron Lajos Vay, who had been the former lord-lieutenant, was appointed again in Miskolc and during his ceremonial speech a crowd of citizens broke the windows of the buildings of the district court as well as the notary office, and the imperial coats of arms were also knocked off public buildings.<sup>40</sup> The general assembly met firstly after 1849, after the county's German officers had been dismissed. The town council of Miskolc, without county instructions, started to define the term of "constitutionalism" in its own way and started prearrangements for the renewal of officers, but they wanted to wait for the reorganisation of the county. Similarly to Kassa, an electoral president was authorised to control the re-election process in Miskolc as well.<sup>41</sup> Miskolc composed the requests for its local government in five points, which firstly claimed

<sup>36</sup> AMK, R/2, Mag., (Magistrátne spisy [Documents of Magistrate]), 1849, n. 2602, 2605.

<sup>37</sup> AMK, Pol. (Policajný kapitanát mesta [Police Directorate]) 1857.

<sup>38</sup> J. K í r s t and M. P o t e m r a, *op. cit.*, pp. 44–45.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 326.

<sup>40</sup> A. S z e g ő f i, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>41</sup> The electoral president of Miskolc became László Pálóczi.

the independence of administration.<sup>42</sup> Besides the equal bearing of common burdens, the town wanted to obtain the right to self-taxation and to have its statute right restored. Then, the county claimed that they were ready to annul the district administrator's position in Miskolc and accept the authority of the town in its entire territory, with the exception of the county hall, and provided the required rights for self-taxation,<sup>43</sup> although this only came to fruition in 1867. Miskolc started to plan the structure of the new administration although the county only gave an approval. Lajos Jekelfalusy remained the leader of the town as the mayor (the position was changed to chief justice in 1861). However, the composition of councillors changed completely. The councillors whose names could be found in the minutes of the last council meeting in 1860 were missing following the first council meeting for renewal of officers in 1861.

There were no riots in the more conservative town of Kassa, and they were not influenced by the county. The officers who had been dismissed in 1849 could return, so Ferenc Dessewffy, who had resigned from the position of mayor in 1849, was asked to chair the renewal of officers in the first public general assembly on 5 January 1861.<sup>44</sup> The general assembly held a secret ballot for the renewal of officers in the presence of the imperial commissar, who was not allowed to intervene in the re-election process, which elected the former government commissioner, Pál Luzsénszky, as mayor in January 1861. A few councillors who had been members of the council before 1860 were allowed to remain in their positions.

Both towns were searching for the ways of constitutionalism: Kassa regained its old autonomy and Miskolc continued to fight for real independence.

The administration of the two councils were determined by contemporary law; the official systems of the two towns were different, however. First, we find differences in terms of status, and can see that their official systems had been significantly influenced by the traditions and justice of earlier centuries in addition to legal regulations. The market town status of Miskolc and its subordination imposed constraints on the power of the office systems; however, a significant number of single posts can be found in both Košice and Miskolc. Although in the case of Miskolc we can speak about a populous city considering the demographic indicators of the age, the council's power and decision-making law were more extensive in Košice, which was influenced by the reasons listed above. The county in Miskolc was consistently interfering in the affairs of the city, while Košice, as a squire, exercised that sovereignty over its own territory. The Bach era brought a new situation, as both towns completely lost their independence and were granted similar statuses with minimal government. However, Košice even played a central role during the Bach era, as it was the seat of the district, which was outside the jurisdiction of the city council.

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<sup>42</sup> BAZML IV. 1601/a 1/1860, 22.; A. Szegőfi, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

<sup>43</sup> BAZML IV. 1601/a 1/1860, pp. 20–22.

<sup>44</sup> AMK, R/2, Prot, 1861, n. 1.

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DZIAŁALNOŚĆ RAD MIEJSKICH W KOSZYCACH I MISZKOLCU  
W LATACH 1830–1860

Streszczenie

Dogłębne badania działalności węgierskich władz miejskich w okresie reform pozostaje niestety w stadium początkowym. Tym niemniej możemy stwierdzić, jakie zmiany prawne epoki reform wpływały na lokalne społeczności poprzez działalność tamtejszych władz. Rady miejskie dwóch miast: Koszyc i Miszkolca, różniły się znacząco pod względem statusu prawnego. Miszkolc był miastem handlowym, które w omawianym okresie uczyniło znaczący krok w kierunku uzyskania statusu wolnego miasta. Koszyce od pewnego czasu korzystały z przywilejów wolnego miasta, co nie uległo zmianie w badanym okresie. Pomimo innego statusu prawnego Rady Miejskie w obu przypadkach miały podobne zadania, podejmowały podobne działania, chociaż równocześnie istniały znaczące różnice wynikające z uwarunkowań historycznych. Artykuł poświęcony jest zasygnalizowaniu podobieństw i różnic pomiędzy tymi ośrodkami miejskimi.