

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM THE CHARTERS OF THE ORDER OF ST. ANTHONY'S ACTIVITY IN HUNGARY

DR. HABIL. ORSOLYA FALUS

Ph.D, LL.M

Associate professor, Institute of Social Sciences, University of Dunaújváros:
H-2400, Táncsics M. st. 1/A, Hungary;
Women Researchers Council, Azerbaijan State University of Economics;

Abstract:

The order of the Crusaders of St. Anthony, the predecessor of the Antonites, was a lay brotherhood founded at the end of the 11th century in France. This organization differed from the other Hospitaller Crusaders in that they did not engage in warfare. Since the foundation, their task has consistently been patient care and, within that, the fight against "St. Anthony's fire": ergot poisoning. The earliest documents on the nursing activities of the Antonites in Hungary date back to the beginning of the 14th century. The paper presents the operation of the order in Hungary by analyzing the available contemporary documents, focusing primarily on its main house, Daróc (now: Šarišské Dravce, Slovakia), and the conditions of the management of the Pozsony (now: Bratislava, Slovakia) hospital. The charters are, on the one hand, agreements regarding hospitals they operated, and on the other, documents related to their fundraising. Indulgence letters from the period of the above-mentioned preceptor Albert of Tapolca belong to the latter category. The role of the Antonites seems to decrease more and more starting from the 15th century. City councils gradually took complete control over their hospitals everywhere, and after the Reformation that spread in the meantime eventually led to the end of the role of the Antonite Order.

Keywords: *Crusaders of St. Anthony; "St. Anthony's fire"; Hungary; hospitals; indulgence letters.*

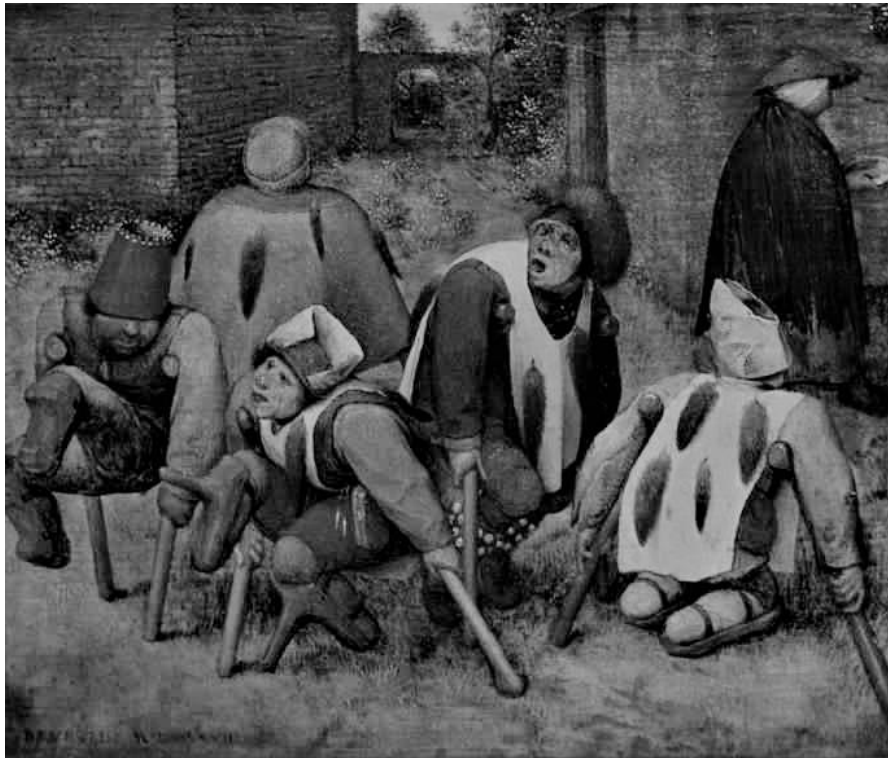
1. INTRODUCTION. THE FOUNDATION OF THE ANTONITE ORDER

The order of the Crusaders of St. Anthony, the predecessor of the Antonites, was a lay brotherhood founded at the end of the 11th century in the city of St. Didier in France, especially for the care of pilgrims suffering from the disease called "St. Anthony's fire" - rye poisoning, ergotism. The body of St. Anthony, which was brought there from Constantinople, was previously placed in the church of the city.

Today, "St. Anthony's fire" mainly refers to thrush, and within it mostly only human thrush caused by "streptococcus haemolyticus" and various forms of "erysipelas". Folk medicine, however, also refers to the so-called "pork scurvy" - "erysipeloid" - caused by the bacterium "erysipelothrix rhusiopathiae". However, in the course of history - in the absence of the possibility of carrying out bacteriological tests - several other diseases of different origins, but believed to be similar based on their appearance, were also categorized here. Such was the case with the "Fire of St. Anthony". Péter Melius Horhi, Reformed preacher from Debrecen, in his *Herbarium*¹ published in 1587 refers to the disease "erysipelas", i.e. "gangraena", i.e. "ignis sacer", "St. Anthony's fire", which is also mentioned in the same place as "fiery sty". Saint Anthony the Hermit (†356) was already revered as the patron saint of domestic animals, including pigs, in the Middle Ages, which is where the name of the disease can originate from. The cult of St. Anthony the Hermit, which was later almost completely supplanted by St. Anthony of Padua (†1231), was introduced in Hungary by the order of sick care of the Antonites founded in France. The purpose of this order was primarily to provide the population with grain and flour free of contamination from the so-called "ergot alkaloids" - "claviceps purpurea". In the Middle Ages, due to insufficiently purified grain flour, many serious, apparently epidemic-like diseases arose throughout Europe. However, this was actually not an epidemic, but a mass poisoning: ergotism ("ignis

¹ Péter Horhi Melius, HERBARIUM. AZ FÁKNAK, FÜVEKNEK NEVEKRŐL, TERMÉSZETEKRŐL ÉS HASZNÁIRÓL. [HERBARIUM. ABOUT THE NAMES, NATURES AND BENEFITS OF TREES AND GRASSES] (1578)

sacer"). Due to the similarity of the external symptoms of "ergotism gangraenosus" caused by ergot alkaloids and stye, these two diseases were then understandably identified for a long time. However, with the development of mill technology, ergotism has now disappeared, but the name "St. Anthony's fire" has remained, moreover, it is now only used to designate the erysipelas.



Picture 1: Beggars who lost their limbs due to ergotism. Pieter the Elder Bruegel: The Beggars (1568)²

Its cures are related to St. Anthony: you must not touch flour on St. Anthony's day (January 17: St. Anthony the Hermit; June 13: St. Anthony of Padua; or "great" Anthony's days, Tuesdays and Fridays). The matching of the names of the two St. Anthonies and the confusion of folk images can explain why the people of Szeged in the Lower Town did not touch flour on St. Anthony of Padua's day, nor did they even make roux, "lest the fire of St. Anthony knock them out". This may also be the origin of the treatment with flour: "he sprinkles it with flour, rolls it in flour, beats it with an upturned flour or tarragon bag, hides it in a flour bag, sprinkles it with flour scraped from the bottom of the bread". The archaic, also analogical type of healing: "fire is the best medicine for fire" and "grit burning" can only be performed by a person named Anthony with steel and flint. It is also cured with the water in which the blacksmith cools the fiery iron, and with which he sprinkles the embers. The oldest and richest variants of the readings against St. Anthony's fire were found from the Csángós³ of Ghimes and the Székelys⁴ of Bukovina (Bucovina, Bukowina).⁵

² Original title: De Geuzen. Location: Louvre, Paris, France. Wikiart, <https://www.wikiart.org/en/pieter-bruegel-the-elder/the-beggars-1568> (last visited Febr. 20, 2023)

³ The Csángós (Hungarian: Csángók; Romanian: Ceangăi) are a Hungarian ethnographic group of Roman Catholic faith living in Romania.

⁴ The Székelys (also referred to as Szeklers) are a Hungarian subgroup living mostly in the Székely Land in Romania.

⁵ See also: József Szinnye, *Egy XVI. századbeli nyelvemlék [A XVI. century language memory]* MAGYAR NYELVÖR. 168, 169 (1879). Sándor Bálint, *NÉPÜNK ÜNNEPEI. AZ EGYHÁZI ÉV NÉPRAJZA. [OUR NATION'S HOLIDAYS. ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE CHURCH YEAR]* 264 (1938).; Károly Berde, *A MAGYAR NÉP DERMATOLÓGIÁJA. A BŐR ÉS BETEGSÉGEI NÉPÜNK NYELVÉBEN, HIEDELMEIBEN ÉS SZOKÁSAIBAN [THE DERMATOLOGY OF THE HUNGARIAN PEOPLE. THE SKIN*

The disease called "St. Anthony's fire" was a common cause of death at this time not only in France, but throughout Europe. Pilgrims therefore came by the hundreds to the coffin of St. Anthony, begging for healing. Among them was a rich nobleman named Gaston, who luckily recovered from this disease together with his son named Querin. Out of gratitude, they made a donation to care for the sick. In 1095 Pope Urban II (March 12, 1888 - July 29, 1099) strengthened the brotherhood at the Council of Clermont, and in 1218 Pope Honorius III (July 18 - March 18, 1227) allowed them to take the three monastic vows: virginity, poverty and obedience. In 1297, with the permission of Pope Boniface VIII (February 19 - November 12, 607), they were transformed into an order of knights operating on the basis of their own regula - formulated according to the rules of Saint Augustine - and from then on also caring for those suffering from other diseases.⁶ The clothing of the members was a white undergarment, a cloak with a black hood, and a blue tau cross (in the shape of a large letter T) on their shoulders, which was named "Anthony Cross" after the Egyptian hermit St. Anthony.⁷

2. The organization and operation of the Antonite Order

The knight order, placed directly under the authority of the Holy See, was headed by the abbot of St. Didier de la Mothe, while their hospitals were headed by the "comhtur" ("commendator"), who was already referred to as "praeceptor" according to later sources. Among the privileges of the order was the provision of nursing services at the papal court, which is why they also had a monastery and hospital in the neighborhood of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, where, according to chronicles, St. Francis of Assisi often visited.⁸

The new organization differed from the other Hospitaller Crusaders in that they did not engage in warfare. Since the foundation, their task has consistently been patient care and, within that, the fight against ergot poisoning. The nursing system spread rapidly throughout Europe, especially in the New Latin-speaking countries. Soon, 369 convents and the closely related hospitals belonged to it. However, increasing prosperity soon loosened discipline, and the nursing order began to decline. This, together with the Reformation, led to the closing of most of the houses. Although reform measures were introduced in 1616, the disintegration of the order was already unstoppable: in 1777 it merged with the Knights of Malta, and its last monasteries disappeared during the French Revolution.⁹

In addition, from the 13th century onwards, the popes supported them with the possibility of absolution, which meant that those who supported the Antonites with donations were absolved of all their sins. Charters have also survived, from which it can be concluded that the order itself did not shy away from acquiring even greater wealth by forging indulgence letters.¹⁰ Indulgence letters were already printed starting from the 15th century. The order also enjoyed this opportunity in Hungary. Four such documents from the years 1505-1506 have survived and are preserved in the National Archives. Gedeon Borsa describes them in detail in his paper cited here.¹¹

AND ITS DISEASES IN THE LANGUAGE, BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS OF OUR PEOPLE] (1940); Zoltán Kallós, RÁOLVASÁS A MOLDAVI ÉS A GYIMESI CSÁNGÓKNÁL [RUNE AT THE MOLDAVIAN AND GHIMES CSÁNGÓS] 137, 158 (1966)

⁶ Jakab Rupp, MAGYARORSZÁG HELYRAJZI TÖRTÉNETE - FŐ TEKINTETTEL AZ EGYHÁZI INTÉZETEKRE. [TOPOGRAPHICAL HISTORY OF HUNGARY - WITH A FOCUS ON CHURCH INSTITUTIONS] 178 (1872)

⁷ Gedeon Borsa, A SZENT ANTALRÓL NEVEZETT ISPOTÁLYOS REND MAGYARORSZÁGON TERJESZTETT NYOMTATVÁNYAI (1505-1506) [PRINTS OF THE HOSPITALLER ORDER NAMED AFTER SAINT ANTHONY DISTRIBUTED IN HUNGARY (1505-1506)] 223 (1963)

⁸ Emily E. Graham, *Memorializing Identity: The Foundation and Reform of San Lorenzo in Panisperna* FRANCISCAN STUDIES 467, 496 (2017)

⁹ Max Heimbucher, DIE ORDEN UND KONGREGATIONEN DER KATHOLISCHEN KIRCHE 401, 402 (1896)

¹⁰ Borsa, *supra*, 223. More information in chapter 4.

¹¹ Borsa, *supra*, 223.

The Hungarian history of the hospital order named after St. Anthony can only be read in the literature from 2014 onwards.¹² The reason for the delay is partly that relatively few data has survived about them, and on the other hand - as is often the case with other, smaller, less known nursing orders - they have been confused with other hospital orders on several occasions.¹³ Prior to 2014, the most usable information about the history of the Antonite Order in Hungary was contained in the work of Zoltán Somogyi, a Piarist monk.¹⁴

Our earliest documented information on the nursing activities of the Antonites in Hungary date back to the beginning of the 14th century, from the last decades of the Árpád House.¹⁵ Based on these, it can be stated that the houses of Daróc (now: Šarišské Dravce), Pozsony (now: Bratislava, Slovakia), and Segesvár (now: Sighișoara, Romania) together formed the autonomous order province. The preceptory in Daróc was presumably the first house of the order in Hungary, founded in 1288.¹⁶ Hain's chronicle also dates the year of the foundation of the Daróc monastery to this period.¹⁷

We can first learn about the origin of the name of the village of Daróc from a document of King Béla IV (21 September 1235 - 3 May 1270) dated in 1263.¹⁸ From this we can learn that the locality got its name from the royal falconers ("draucarii") that settled there. In 1282, King László IV (6 August 1272 - 10 July 1290) donated the locality under the name Drauch to comes Helias comes, son of Jordan, for 100 silver „gira” and 1 golden gira to be paid annually.¹⁹ A heavy silver gira was worth 4 gold forints, 1 such forint was worth 40 denars, a heavy one was worth 1 garas, and 6 garas was worth 1 obon.²⁰ Regarding the circumstances of the foundation of the hospital belonging to the house in Pozsony, we can only draw conclusions from the content of later documents, since written memories only survive from the 14th century, when the order came into conflict with the city authorities regarding the operation of the hospital.²¹ According to Gyula Magyary-Kossa²² and István Vámosy,²³ the hospital was founded by St. King László I (1077 - 1095), and after his canonization in 1192, the order offered the hospital and the chapel to his protection out of gratitude.

¹² Orsolya Falus, *Az Antonita lovagrend istopályainak működtetése a középkori Magyarországon* [*Operation of the hospitals of the Antonite order in medieval Hungary*] VIKÉK 201, 208 (2014); Orsolya Falus, *ISPOLYOS KERESZTES LOVAGRENDEK AZ ÁRPÁD-KORI MAGYARORSZÁGON*. [HOSPITALLER CRUSADER ORDERS IN ARPAD-ERA HUNGARY] 90, 99 (2015); Orsolya Falus, *SZPITALNE ZAKONY RYCERSKIE W CZASACH ARPADOW NA WEGRZECH* 117, 130 (2019)

¹³ Falus, *Ispotályos kereszties lovagrendek az Árpád-kori Magyarországon*, supra, 12.

¹⁴ Zoltán Somogyi, *A KÖZÉPKORI MAGYARORSZÁG SZEGÉNYÜGYE*. PALAESTRA CALA SANCTIANA. A PIARISTÁK DOKTORI ÉRTEKEZÉSEI AZ 1932. ÉVTŐL. [THE ISSUE OF POVERTY IN MEDIEVAL HUNGARY. PALAESTRA CALA SANCTIANA. DOCTORAL THESES OF THE PIARISTS FROM 1932.] 28, 37 (1941)

¹⁵ The first ruling dynasty of Hungary from 1000 to 1301, named after their ancestor, Árpád, head of the confederation of the Hungarian tribes at the turn of the 9th and 10th centuries.

¹⁶ Rupp, supra, 178.

¹⁷ Gáspár Hain (ed.), *SZEPESSEGI AVAGY LŐCSEI KRÓNKA ÉS ÉVKÖNYV A KEDVES UTÓKOR SZÁMÁRA*. [SZEPESSEG OR LŐCSE CHRONICLE AND YEARBOOK FOR DEAR POSTERITY] 16 (1988)

¹⁸ János Bárdossy, *SUPPLEMENTUM ANALECTORUM TERRAE SCEPUSIENSIS*. 96 (1802)

¹⁹ Bárdossy, supra, 225.

²⁰ Jakab Rupp, *MAGYARORSZÁG' EKKORIG ISMERETES PÉNZEI, LERAJZOLVA: TÖRTÉNETI'S PÉNZTUDOMÁNYI KÚTFÓK UTÁN MEGMAGYARÁZVA. ÁRPÁDI KORSZAK*. [HUNGARY'S KNOWN MONEY UP TO THAT POINT, DRAWN: EXPLAINED AFTER HISTORICAL AND FINANCIAL SOURCES. ÁRPÁD ERA] 5 (1841)

²¹ Marie-Madeleine de Cevins, *A szegények és a betegek gondozása a középkor végi magyar városokban* [Caring for the poor and the sick in late medieval Hungarian cities] KORALL, 52, 53 (2003)

²² Gyula Magyary-Kossa, *MAGYAR ORVOSI EMLÉKEK. ÉRTEKEZÉSEK A MAGYAR ORVOSTÖRTÉNELEM KÖRÉBŐL* [HUNGARIAN MEDICAL MEMORIES. ESSAYS ON HUNGARIAN MEDICAL HISTORY] 13, 16 (1940)

²³ István Vámosy, *A Pozsonyi katolikus polgári ápoló intézet. - Fennállásának ötszázéves évfordulója alkalmából* [The Bratislava Catholic Civil Nursing Institute. - On the occasion of the five hundredth anniversary of its existence] 12 (1898)

3. The Antonites' hospital in Pozsony

The relationship of the order not only with the superiors of the free royal cities that housed their hospitals, but also with their own subjects in Daróc proved to be ambivalent. All this is clear from a 1399 document: "...according to which the following contract was created between Almann, the head of the hospital, on the one hand, and the village and other squires, as well as the serfs of the hospital, on the other hand: First of all, to Almann and his legal successors, all landowners should plow 3 days a year; with due warning, a to bring in wood for a cart; to hand over the usual wages, stipends, gifts and favors, to pay 100 gira for every stubbornness and transgression committed against the head of the hospital until St. Martin's Day; finally to show obedience and respect to him; and for the hospital chaplain and candidate for priest, everyone should give food, clothing and hand over the usual income in the province, namely under the burden of a penalty to be imposed by the count of Szepes in case of neglect.²⁴ At the request of the commander of the Crusaders in Daróc, this contract was authenticated and issued in 1431 by the chapter of St. Martin in Szepes, and in 1656 it was published in the transcript of the same chapter."²⁵

Regarding the income of the preceptory we also have approximately accurate data from the time of Almann. When the preceptor was appointed to this position at the request of King Sigismund (31 May 1433 - 9 December 1437), the preceptor also specified in his charter that his annual income should not exceed 40 silver marks.²⁶

In his apostolic transcript dated 1523, Pope Clement VII (1523-1534) gave the St. Anthony monastery in Daróc a free begging and alms-collecting license in recognition and support of its nursing activities, but Daróc and the hospital soon fell out of the possession of the Antonites. The next written information from this village dates back to 1655, when King Ferdinand III (1637-1657) donated the allowance to the Szepes provost János Pálfalvai and the Szepes chapter.²⁷

As already mentioned above, we have written data on the operation of the hospital of the order in Pozsony from 1309, when on the day of St. John the Baptist, the management of the free royal city of Pozsony took over the management of the institution, after which only spiritual care and ecclesiastical tasks remained with the Antonites.²⁸ According to the agreement, a lawsuit was pending between Father Lantzlin, the head of the order in Pozsony, and the city's prefect for the ownership of the hospital. Taking into account the fact that the city contributed financially to the founding of the hospital at the time, the trial before the chapter ended with the brothers of Szent Antal retaining only the care of souls for themselves. All income from the hospital went into the hands of the procurator (Spitalmeister), who was therefore obliged to pay the Antonine Order 500 marks in silver on September 18 of each year, and also on November 11 of each year - St. Martin's Day - 16 ounces of the best quality wine to provide. The contract also stipulated that if the procurator failed to pay in breach of the agreement, the city would be responsible as guarantor instead, and if the city did not comply either, the hospital would once again become the property of Father Lantzlin and his successors. The parties also stipulated in the contract that the donations collected on behalf of the hospital belong to the hospital's procurator, however, the foundations intended for the brothers of St. Anthony belong to Father Lantzlin or his successors. The order managed to save so much of its authority that the hospital master elected by the city had to be introduced to the preceptor. After that, the order was obliged to include the master of the hospital and his successors among its members ("*habitu investire teneantur*").²⁹ Based on the contract, Father Lantzlin and his descendants

²⁴ Carolus Wagner, ANALECTA SCEPUSII SACRI ET PROFANI 168 (1802)

²⁵ Rupp, *Magyarország helyrajzi története - fő tekintettel az egyházi intézetekre*, supra, 179.

²⁶ Vilmos Fraknói (ed) MONUMENTA VATICANA HUNGARIAE, 497 (1881)

²⁷ Wagner, supra, 1774, 1778.

²⁸ Tivadar Ortway, POZSONY VÁROS TÖRTÉNETE. A VÁROSLAKOSSÁG CSALÁDI, ANYAGI, ÉRTELMI ÉS VALLÁSERKÖLCSI ÉLETE 1300-1526. [THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF POZSONY. FAMILY, FINANCIAL, INTELLECTUAL AND RELIGIOUS MORAL LIFE OF THE URBAN POPULATION 1300-1526] 301 (1903); Ignác Acsády, *Pozsony város története [History of Bratislava]* MAGYAR GAZDASÁGTÖRTÉNETI SZEMLE 64, 67 (1904)

²⁹ Somogyi, supra, 30, 31.



will also receive a house built of stone with the land attached to it forever. Here, it is important to note that even in the 13th and 14th centuries, stone houses were rare, since the buildings were mostly made of wood. After the conclusion of the contract, the Antonites remained in the city and operated the hospital according to the agreement.³⁰ From then on, the spiritual leadership of the hospital was carried out by a priest ordained by the preceptor from among the members of the order, who acted as chaplain alongside the hospital master as co-rector.

The next data originates from 1326.³¹ Based on this, Judge Jacob from Pozsony and his jurors filed a complaint against the order before the Pozsony chapter, as the head of the order from Pozsony failed to ask for their consent regarding the rental of St. Anthony's house in Pozsony ("*super locatione certae domus B. Antonii de Posonio*").³² We also know from a charter that preceptor Gydot was the head of the house in Daróc this year ("*Guido, ordinis S. Antonii magister, et commendator in Drawcz*").³³

In 1341, Péter Myribel, the Hungarian and Slavonic grandmaster, gifted land to a citizen of Pozsony on the condition that he would pay him 32 Vienna denars for this property on St. Stephen's Day, and if he wanted to sell the land at some point, the right of pre-emption would be fit hospital patients. Dated in 1341 on the Tuesday after the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary. ("*Datum a.d. 1341 proxima tertia feria post marivitatem Sanctae Mariae virginis gloriosae.*")³⁴

Despite the concessions, the relationship between the secular parish priest of the town and the Antonite chaplain of the hospital could not be said to be cloudless. According to a charter from 1384, co-rector Ulrich, Antonite hospital chaplain ("*Ulricus conrector sire capellanus hospitalis Sancti Antonii*") buried someone in the hospital chapel against the will of the parish priest. This resulted in financial damage to the parish, since they were not paid for the church funeral. The provost of Pozsony, who made the decision in the case, decided that the body should be exhumed, and if the parish priest so desired, he could be reburied in the cemetery of his church. In addition to the burden of excommunication for the future, he prohibited the repetition of similar cases, as well as preaching in the infirmary during the high mass of the parish, or curtailing the parish priest's rights in any other way.³⁵

On July 2, 1397, Paulus Domicellus and László Újházi ("*Ladislaus de nova Domo*") solemnly handed over the hospital to the free royal city of Pozsony.³⁶ From the content of the 1309 contract and the subsequent documents indicating financial and moral losses, we can conclude that the agreement and its financial consequences caused a legal dispute that lasted until the middle of the 15th century, until the city finally managed to take over the hospital completely.³⁷

³⁰ Vámosy, *supra*, 16, 17.

³¹ Somogyi, *supra*, 29.

³² Vámosy, *supra*, 17.

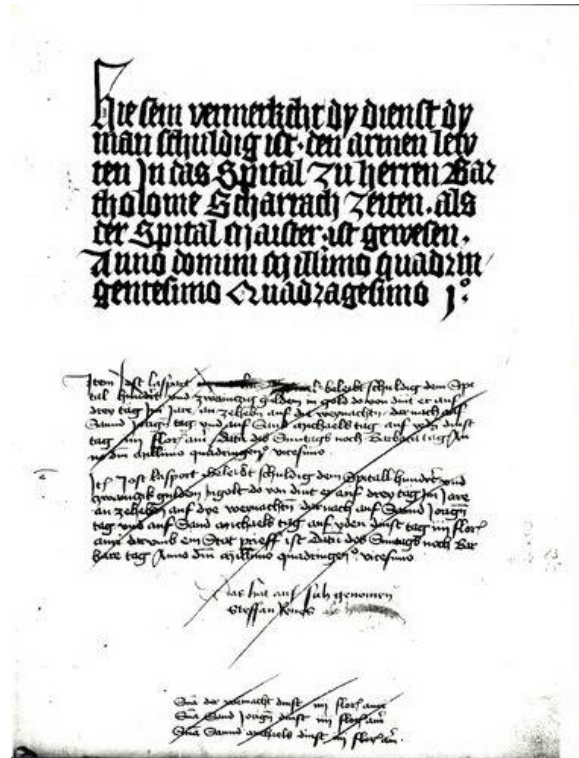
³³ Wagner, *supra*, 108..

³⁴ Vámosy, *supra*, 17.

³⁵ Carolus Rimely, *CAPITULUM INSIGNIS ECCLESIAE COLLEGIATAE POSONIENSIS. INSTAR MANUSCRIPTI*, 325 (1880)

³⁶ Vámosy, *supra*, 19.

³⁷ Falus, *Ispotályos kereszties lovagrendek az Árpád-kori Magyarországon*, *supra*, 95.; Falus, *Szpitalne zakony rycerskie w czasach Arpadow na Wegrzech*, *supra*, 124.



Picture 2: Hospital document issued by Pozsony city council in 1447³⁸

In 1428, the city's head office informed the king in a letter that the invading Hussites had dealt a more serious blow to the city and the hospital than the Mongols had in 1241. If the members of the order were still in Pozsony at that time, they would probably have reported the loss themselves. Of course, all this is just an assumption, a logical conclusion. It is a fact, however, that in 1429 the Antonite provincial governor (preceptor) Gerhardus de Tombres appeared in Pozsony, who, convinced of the hospital's deplorable condition, handed it over to the ownership and management of the free royal city of Pozsony, free of everything, with its benefits and rights. "Dated in Pozsony, in the year of the Lord 1429, on the Sunday before the feast of St. Margaret the Virgin, in testimony and confirmation of the above, with my seal." ("Datum Posonij anno Domini Millesimo CCC vicesimo nono dominico die ante Festum sanctae Margaretae virginis sub mei sigilli opressione in testimonio et robore omnium premissorum".) The solemn deed can be found in the City Archive.³⁹ Even in 1505, the Antonites tried to regain their position of power over the hospital, but this attempt again proved unsuccessful.⁴⁰

The role of the Antonites seems to decrease more and more starting from the 15th century. However, documents from some eras have survived, according to which their activities were revived in order to increase their income. Such was the period at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, when Albert of Tapolca - Albertus de Thapolcza - a former clergyman from the diocese of Veszprém, was at the head of the domestic order. Albert of Tapolca took over the leadership of the order province in 1483.⁴¹ We can trace his activities in this capacity until 1507. In 1487, he concluded an agreement with the city council of Segesvár on the division of the hospital's revenues. Pursuant to this, the office

³⁸ Diplomatic Photo Collection (U Section) • Slovakia • Archive Hlavného Mesta Sr Bratislavy • Bürgerspital (St. László Hospital) (U 1028), DL-DF 283629. Hungarian National Archives. <https://archives.hungaricana.hu/hu/charters/156286/?list=eyJxdWVyeSI6ICJXSkVMPShclkJcdTAwZmNyZ2Vyc3BpdGFsIChTenQulExcwTAWZTFzemxcdTAWZjMga1x1MDBmM3JoXHUwMGUxeikgKFUgMTAyOClclikifQ> (last visited Febr. 21, 2023)

³⁹ Vámosy, supra, 21.

⁴⁰ Ortway, supra, 301.; Acsády, supra, 64, 67.

⁴¹ Fraknói, supra, 289.

of the rector of the hospital and the church becomes vacant, and their filling is the task of the city council due to the right of benefice (jus patronatus). However, it is the responsibility of the city to present the chosen one to the preceptor. The preceptor's duty is to accept the chosen one among the members of the order, and if he still intends to remain in the order after the probationary year, to admit him to vows.⁴² Through the agreement, the domestic order received a regular, defined annual income. And in 1505 - as already mentioned above - the Antonites also attempted to renovate their positions and revenues in Pozsony.⁴³

4. The charters of the Antonites survived in Hungary

The sole task of the hospital order named after Saint Anthony was patient care, so we do not have any data on its certificate-issuing or accreditation activities (locus credibilis authenticus)⁴⁴. The charters we have left are therefore, on the one hand, agreements regarding the hospitals they operated, and on the other hand, documents related to their fundraising. Indulgence letters from the period of the above-mentioned preceptor Albert of Tapolca belong to the latter category. In fact, during this period, the province carried out a wide-ranging, well-organized collection campaign, the documents of which have survived in the form of the four indulgence letters mentioned in point 2.⁴⁵



Picture 3: Indulgence letter for the Hungarian Antonites⁴⁶

The text of these one-page forms is almost identical to each other, and they are not much different from similar forms made for other countries at the time.⁴⁷ Studying the text, it can be established that the first, most extensive part of the documents lists the privileges and opportunities to receive farewell granted by the popes to the brotherhood of St. Anthony, later to the order, its members, and their possibilities for gaining absolution. We find them in almost the same wording in a document

⁴² Somogyi, supra, 31.

⁴³ Hungarian National Archives (Pre-Mohács Collection) /DL/ 21. 676

⁴⁴Falus, *Ispótlályos kereszties lovagrendek az Árpád-kori Magyarországon*, supra, 42.

⁴⁵ Borsa, supra, 223.

⁴⁶ Hungarian Electronic Library. National Széchenyi Library https://mek.oszk.hu/03300/03301/html/bgkvti_3/bgki0305.htm (last visited Febr. 21, 2023)

⁴⁷ Borsa, supra, 228.



of Pope Clement VII, in which he confirmed the previous privileges of the order.⁴⁸ The second part contains the essence of the document: it proves that the persons written in handwriting in the blank parts were members of the supporting brotherhood of the order and helped it with their donations. In exchange for the alms, of course, the persons named in the document could enjoy the church benefits listed in the first part: full or partial absolution. The place of issuance and the date of the document could also be filled in by hand on these forms. Indulgence letters invariably end with the absolution formula after confession.⁴⁹

The four forms in question were filled out for the following names, places and times:

1. [DL 21.519] September 30, 1505. - „*In castro Reuisthe. - Ladislaus cum uxore sua Ursula necnon filiis Michaele necnon Francisco et Nicola de Tharcza necnon cum uxore sua Elena*”.

The certificate was issued in Revistye Castle, Bars County, next to the Garam River. Two László Tarczays are known in history: "János' son László 1466" and "György 1450 Transylvanian viceroy's son, László". We can only assume that of the three sons of László Tarczai, Miklós is the one whose name appears as the addressee on the charter.⁵⁰

2. [DL 93.720] December 1, 1505. - „*Zenthlewryncz. - Egregius Dominus Johannes de Naghwelgh, Lodovicus et Bonaventura filii, Anna et Katherina filiae et Justina*”.

Another indulgence letter from 1502 has survived, in which the same János Nagyvölgyi's wife Erzsébet and son Lajos were issued in Újlak.⁵¹ Újlak was considered a suburb of Buda during this period, based on this it can be assumed that the place of issue of this 1505 charter is Budaszentlőrinc.⁵²

3. [DL 74.979] (?), 1505. - „*Egregius Dominus Stephanus Marjassy capitaneus Scepusiensis una cum consorte sua Potentiana et filio suo Francisco*”

Some families took advantage of the opportunity to receive the absolution several times. This is also an example of István Máriássy, whose name is addressed to one such document from the years 1501 and 1502.⁵³

Gedeon Borsa draws attention to Béla Iványi's mistake in the analysis of the 1505 charter.⁵⁴ When he wrote that the mentioned members of the Máriássy family were "admitted to the members of the Confraternity of St. Anthony of Vienna", he incorrectly identified "Vienn" in the form and seal with the city of Vienna. Gedeon, however, Borsa points to the fact that the place designation actually refers to the episcopal see of Vienne, France. St. Antoine de Viennois, which was the central house of the Hospitaller order named after St. Anthony, belongs to this diocese.⁵⁵

4. [DL Károlyi] March 4 (?), 1500. - „*Nicolaus ... cum coniuge sua Ursula et Katherina filia ac Stephano Paulo fratribus (?)*.”

The handwritten text of this charter cannot be read, so neither the place of issue nor the name of the family to whom the indulgence letter was issued can be determined from it.

The printing of the indulgence letters suggests that the fundraiser was planned on a large scale. However, it seems that this did not live up to the expectations, as there is a debt letter issued on March 13, 1507, which was issued by Provincial Governor Albert of Tapolca to the Cistercian Abbey of Savnik, located near Daróc.⁵⁶

5. Conclusion. Reasons leading to the termination of Antonite patient care institutions

⁴⁸ This can also be found in an edition published in print after 1526 (lev. 63-64), one of the incomplete copies of which was made on parchment and is kept by the National Széchenyi Library (under reference Ant. 3102).

⁴⁹ Borsa, supra, 228.

⁵⁰ Borsa, supra, 230.

⁵¹ Borsa, supra, 265.

⁵² Borsa, supra, 230.

⁵³ Borsa, supra, 264.

⁵⁴ Béla Iványi, [A MÁRKUSFALVI MÁRIÁSSY CSALÁD LEVÉLTÁRA. □THE ARCHIVE OF THE MÁRIÁSSY FAMILY FROM MÁRKUSFALVA] 81 (1917)

⁵⁵ Borsa, supra 230.

⁵⁶ Hungarian National Archives (Pre-Mohács Collection) /DL/ 21.676.



A bull of Blessed Pope Urban V (1362-1370) dated 1364 ordered that the archbishop of Esztergom and his suffragans - the county bishops belonging to him - ensure that the order's hospitals are operated according to their original purpose.⁵⁷ This measure was used by the Antonite order to obtain new sources of income with reference to their patient care activities. For this purpose - as we have seen above - several attempts were made to acquire the management and income of the hospitals of certain cities.⁵⁸

Between 1366 and 1399, legal proceedings of this nature were ongoing in the city of Kassa (now: Košice, Slovakia) several times. In the end, the hospital was acquired by the city, but the order did not give up easily, so even in 1412 it tried to acquire the hospital.⁵⁹ At the same time as the Kassa lawsuit, they also tried to take possession of the Igló (now: Spišská Nová Ves, Slovakia) hospital. However, the city resisted and eventually repelled the order's attempt here as well.⁶⁰

A similar process to Pozsony can be observed in Segesvár a century and a half later. Here, too, the city management narrowed the authority of the order in relation to the hospital, until finally they gradually took over complete control from them. The 1487 agreement⁶¹ establishing this also generated further disputes between the city and the order in this case, however, the Reformation that spread in the meantime eventually led to the end of the role of the Antonite Order.⁶²

⁵⁷ Georgius Fejér, *CODEX DIPLOMATICUS HUNGARIAE ECCLESIASTICUS AC CIVILIS /FCD/ 436 (1844)*

⁵⁸ Borsa, *supra*, 227.

⁵⁹ Béla Dragoner, *Adalékok a kassai Szent Lélekről nevezett ósrégi kórház történetéhez [Additions to the history of the ancient hospital called Holy Spirit in Kassa]* *MAGYAR SIÓN* 524, 531 (1904)

⁶⁰ Máté Pajdussák, *Az iglói régi városi kórház története [The history of the old city hospital in Igló]* *SCEPUSIA ÉVKÖNYVE* 73, 89 (1912)

⁶¹ Freidrich Müller, *GESCHICHTE DER SIEBENBÜRGISCHEN HOSPITÄLER BIS ZUM JAHRE 1625.* 30, 38, 55, 60 (1856)

⁶² Müller, *supra*.