

Healers and Lay Medics in 16th -17th - century Hungary

By

Janka Poprádi

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Supervisor: György Endre Szőnyi

Second Reader: Marcell Sebők

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Abstract

This thesis attempts to examine the medical circumstances in Hungary between 1540 and 1663. Argumentation is based on ten unpublished or partly published medical booklets collected by the National Széchényi Library in Budapest. Based on these medical manuscripts the author examines the presence of the official, educated physicians as well as less educated healers of Hungary between 1540 and 1663. The main assumption is that the notebooks went through the research of the author of this thesis were mediating between high and low culture.

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Introduction

Medical conditions in 17th-century Hungary were not satisfactory. The most significant problem was rooted in the lack of sanitary education which was connected with the fact that until the foundation of the University of Nagyszombat in 1635 there were no universities in the country. For this reason, before 1635 people who wanted to participate in higher education had to go abroad. Only a limited number of Hungarian students went on to study medicine and when they returned to Hungary they could not cater for the diverse need of the population. For instance, between 1560 and 1789 only 6 students from Hungary studied medicine in the universities of the Habsburg Empire¹ while in the universities of the Netherlands between 1623 and 1795 88 students from Hungary enrolled in the Medical Faculties.² As a result, a great multitude of healers appeared in society at large. The medical society itself was very colorful as well as complex.

Physicians who gained higher education served the social elite. They concentrated in the Royal and the more important towns of the kingdom. To be physician was always connected to intellectual science while surgeons who were humbler in status were kept artisans.³ Surgeons' job "was to treat external complaints, to set bones and perform simple operations."⁴ Apothecaries or druggists were in a lower status than surgeons and physicians but their appreciation by the society was higher because they knew more about drugs. Due to

¹ Júlia Varga, *Magyarországi diákok a Habsburg Birodalom kisebb egyetemein és akadémiáin 1560-1789* (Students from Hungary in the Less Important Universities of the Habsburg Empire 1560-1789) in *Magyarországi diákok egyetemjárása az újkorban* (Peregrination of Students from Hungary in the Modern Age), ed. László Szögi (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Levéltára, 2004), vol. 12., 23.

² Réka Bozzay, Sándor Ladányi, *Magyarországi diákok holland egyetemeken 1595-1918* (Hungarian students in the universities of the Netherlands 1595-1918) in *Magyarországi diákok egyetemjárása az újkorban* (Peregrination of Students from Hungary in the Modern Age), ed. László Szögi (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Levéltára, 2007), vol. 15., 22.

³ Roy Porter, *Disease, medicine and society in England, 1550-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 11.

⁴ Ibid.

this knowledge, people could avoid doctors and get remedy without paying physicians' hefty fee.⁵

Apart from the aforementioned people, different types of practitioners of medicine were working in the country. Wanderer quacks, barbers, bath owners, priests and so called "wise-women" concerned themselves with curing. On the one hand, this great variety was in relation with the fact that there were not enough doctors and the bottom half of the population could not pay their service. On the other hand, "this was above all a time when medicine began at home."⁶ Therefore, women were especially important in home remedial practice. "Skills in home-made medicines formed as much a part of good housewifery for a lady as making her own soap, beer and preserves out of the produce of the kitchen garden, woods and hedgerows."⁷ Aristocratic women dealt with curing.⁸ These healers were non-official, self-appointed practitioners of medicine.

Healers frequently used their own personal experience which was based on printed books on the one hand, and folk recipes on the other hand. In the late 16th century, in response to humanist principles, the Reformation and social needs, medical literature started to be published in the Hungarian language. Although these books provided a semblance of systematic education in the national language, these publications were not scientific.⁹ One reason for this was that these booklets reproduced folk knowledge and experience, the other was that they were issued for public use without any academic concept.¹⁰ The diaries and letters of these various healers contained a wide variety of medical recipes which were used in

⁵ Op. cit., 12.

⁶ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 14.

⁷ Roy Porter, *Disease, medicine and society in England, 1550-1860*, 14.

⁸ Margit S. Sárdi, "Főrangú hölgyek gyógyfüves könyvei" (Aristocratic women's herbariums) in *Áldás és átok, csoda és boszorkányság* (Blessing and Curse, Miracle and Witchcraft), ed. Éva Pócs (Budapest, 2004.) 203-222. 205.

⁹ „Minden doktorságot csak ebből kérésérték” – *Szemelvények orvosi kézikönyvekből* (Extracts from Medical Books), ed. Mária Szlatky (Budapest: Magvető Kiadó, 1983), 385.

¹⁰ Ibid.

the healing process. They also opened notebooks in order to make notations concerning medical and agricultural suggestions.

Some booklets in addition to the medical recipes, also contain recommendations for animal-husbandry or other economic suggestions for the household. Furthermore, it is also essential to take into consideration that some recipes or other recommendations were written into prayer books or other kinds of books. Hence, it is possible to examine these manuscripts from the perspective of the types of book in which they are available. Then I will focus on the systematization of the recipes, because this way I can gain knowledge about the author. As some of the notebooks are really well-organized, the reader has the feeling that these notes possessed a specific role in their authors' life. By contrast, no logical order or specific interest can be found in other booklets. It is also essential to take into account the recipes themselves. Is there any connection between the books? Do the same recipes appear in different booklets? Can folk or scientific knowledge be found in these notes?

In fact, through these manuscripts readers can see not merely authors but the world behind them as well. I am mainly interested in the writers of these medical manuscripts and their social background because they interpreted scientific thinking for the everyday life. Since in this age medicine began at home it is justified to claim that healers were predominantly aristocratic women and men. Moreover, priests were interested in medicine as well. Composers of these manuscripts often used books written originally by foreign scientists. Often they relied on their own knowledge and experience; additionally, they readily applied the remedies associated with other social classes.¹¹ Not only did they gain their medical knowledge on the basis of personal experience or readings but from educated people who were living in their manor or with whom they were in contact by correspondence.¹² Therefore, I need to introduce into the discussion these educated persons as well. Concerning

¹¹ Margit S. Sárdi, "Főrangú hölgyek gyógyfüves könyvei," 209.

¹² Ibid.

these scholars and physicians, it is necessary to examine their social background, their education and their status in their microenvironment. Hence, in the chapter called Authors, I will present three physicians who were appreciated member of their local community. What was their aim? Why were they interested in the education of these women and men? Besides, in the case of aristocratic women, why did their husbands let them possess such medical or agricultural knowledge?

In the period I examine, the country was divided into three parts and she was a war-torn area where traveling was very dangerous. Moreover, it was a society less concerned with hygiene, and where there were not enough physicians. Hence, it is understandable that doctors who worked for an aristocratic family taught basic medical knowledge to some members of the family. Under no circumstances did they want to stay in the manor for a long time because they identified themselves as free people who belonged to the town. Taking into account the question of aristocratic women, their husbands spent a large amount of time in Pozsony [Bratislava], participating in the Hungarian political life. Therefore, their wives took the responsibility of leading their manors. All of these conditions obliged women to be educated in agriculture as well as medicine. I think healing practice was not an obligation but a pleasure for several women because they wrote down their gathered recipes and they were well-known healers. In my opinion, they led the collected recipes' booklets with great attention, which is perceptible in the arrangement of the booklets. It signifies that these manuscripts were important in their own personal life. Besides, early modern medicine was connected to housekeeping. In many cases people ignores doctors' advice. "There was clearly some concurrence between public opinion and private experiences."¹³

My aim with this project is to prove that the Hungarian health culture before institutionalization was vivid, even well organized. Taking into consideration that the country

¹³ Roy Porter, *Disease, medicine and society in England, 1550-1860*, 18.

was divided into three parts and therefore, the circumstances were not favorable, my opinion is that the Hungarian health culture was a colorful scene in which enthusiastic people participated. Here it is indispensable to introduce into the discussion that these educated people and their disciples have not been researched from the perspective of popular culture in Hungary.

Although there is no monograph in the Hungarian literature on this topic, there are several analyses and studies from the viewpoint of social, medical and peregrinational history. The University of Nagyszombat was established late in the day compared with western universities. This university had neither a Faculty of Law nor a Faculty of Medicine, which caused people to wish to travel abroad in pursuit of a university degree in medicine. The peregrination started in the Middle Ages and became really popular in the late 16th century. The committee of the history of university in the Hungarian Academy published various books on the topic of Hungarian students abroad. Not only do they collect and put out the names of students but they also survey their social backgrounds, their studies, the place where the students came from as well as their nationalities. In this thesis, I utilized two editions from the series edited by László Szögi.¹⁴ Apart from these books, in the journal *Orvostörténeti Közlemények* (Studies in History of Medicine)¹⁵ there are numerous studies on medical history. Gyula Magyary-Kossa's book entitled *Magyar orvosi emlékek* (Hungarian Medical

¹⁴Júlia Varga, *Magyarországi diákok a Habsburg Birodalom kisebb egyetemein és akadémiáin 1560-1789* (Students from Hungary in the Less Important Universities of the Habsburg Empire 1560-1789) in *Magyarországi diákok egyetemjárása az újkorban* (Peregrination of Students from Hungary in the Modern Age), ed. László Szögi (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Levéltára, 2004), vol. 12., Réka Bozzay, Sándor Ladányi, *Magyarországi diákok holland egyetemeken 1595-1918* (Hungarian students in the universities of the Netherlands 1595-1918) in *Magyarországi diákok egyetemjárása az újkorban* (Peregrination of Students from Hungary in the Modern Age), ed. László Szögi (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Levéltára, 2007), vol. 15.,

¹⁵János Stirling, "Orvosi kertek a XVI. századi Magyarországon" (Medical Gardens in 16th century Hungary) *Orvostörténeti közlemények* 109-112 (1985)., Árpád Fazekas, "A magyar nyelvű herbárium-irodalomról" (About the Herbarium-literature in the Hungarian language) in *Orvostörténeti közlemények* 97-99(1982)., Mária Szlatky, A magyar nyelvű természettudományos és orvosi irodalom a XVI. században (Scientific and Medical Literature in the Hungarian Language in the 16th Century) in *Orvostörténeti Közlemények* 109-112. (1985).

Memoirs)¹⁶ is a basic source for the topic and also contains studies on Hungarian medical students. The author often mentions the 18th century historian, István Weszprémi's book: *Magyarország és Erdély orvosainak rövid életrajza* (Short Biography of Doctors in Hungary and Transylvania) which is useful in the analyses of the doctors' characters.¹⁷ These books and articles are indispensable for the research of the people who educated or were in contact with the composers of the medical manuscripts. It is necessary to approach their personality through their social status as well as their education in the discussion of the knowledge of the healers. Furthermore, in the approach of their social circle and education, letters, diaries, medical manuscripts, written mostly by aristocratic women, men and doctors, are also accessible.¹⁸

The early Hungarian medical books fall into two categories: printed books and manuscripts. The first printed Hungarian medical book was titled *Herbarium* written by Péter Melius Juhász.¹⁹ During the subsequent centuries, the *Herbarium* became important not only in the Hungarian medical literature but in daily life as well. Its influence is noticeable in

¹⁶ Gyula, Magyary-Kossa, *Magyar orvosi emlékek*. (Hungarian medical memoirs) (Budapest: Eggenberger, 1929-1940) vol. 1-5.

¹⁷ István, Weszprémi, *Magyarország és Erdély orvosainak rövid életrajza* (Short Biographies of Doctors in Hungary and Transylvania) (Budapest: Medicina, 1960-1970) vol. 1-4.

¹⁸ Margit, S. Sárdi, "Főrangú hölgyek gyógyfüves könyvei" (Aristocratic women's herbariums) in *Áldás és átok, csoda és boszorkányság* (Blessing and Curse, Miracle and Witchcraft), ed. Éva Pócs (Budapest, 2004.) 203-222., Katalin Péter "Az olvasó nő eszménye a 17. század elején" (The Image of the Reading Woman in the Beginning of the 17th century) in *A középkor szeretete* (Love of the Middle Ages), ed. Gábor Klaniczay and Balázs Nagy (Budapest: ELTE BTK Közép- és Koraújkori Egyetemes Történeti Tanszék, 1999) 323-332., Katalin Kincses, "Ím küttém én orvosságot" – Lobkowitz Poppel Éva levelezése 1622-1640 ("I Have Sent Medicine" – Éva Poppel Lobkowitz's correspondence) in *Régi magyar történelmi források* (Old Hungarian Historical Sources), ed. Ildikó Horn and Andrea Kreutzer (Budapest: ELTE Középkori és Koraújkori Magyar Történeti Tanszék és a Koraújkori Társaság, 1993), vol. 3., Éva Pócs, "Sors, bábák, boszorkányok. Archaikus sorsképzetek Közép- és Kelet-Európa hiedelemrendszereiben" (Fate, midwives, witches. Archaic fate-imaginations in Central and in Eastern Europe) in *Magyar néphit Közép- és Kelet-Európa határán. Válogatott tanulmányok* (Hungarian folk belief in Central and in Eastern Europe. Selected Studies), ed. Éva Pócs (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2002), vol.1., Tünde Lengyelová, "The Mystery of Birth: Magic, Empirical and Rational Approaches to Women's Medicine in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods" in *The Role of Magic in the Past, Learned and Popular Magic, Popular Beliefs and Diversity of Attitudes*, ed. Blanka Szeghyová (Bratislava: Pro Historia, 2005) 117-136.

¹⁹ Péter, Melius Juhász, *Herbarium*, (Kolozsvár, 1578)

several printed Hungarian medical books and manuscripts. A selection of remedial manuscripts and publications were put out by Mária Szlatky in 1983.²⁰

Considering manuscripts ten medical notebooks will be introduced in this thesis. The notebooks went through my research are accessible in the National Széchényi Library, in the Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints. I have found out about the existence of the notebooks while reading articles about Hungarian physicians and about female healers.

Concerning the structure of the thesis, in the first chapter I would like to concentrate on the appearance of botanical gardens. No doubt, the presence of botanical gardens gained significant role in the introduction of medical literature. In this chapter, I would like to focus on the owners of the botanical gardens as well as on the main author of early medical literature. Therefore, I will deal with the considerable noblemen Boldizsár Batthyány and Tamás Nádasdy, and finally I will present the author of the *Herbarium* as well as the herbal itself. Then, in the second chapter, I will present the home apothecaries I examined. In the presentation I will introduce their materials, their structure as well as some recipes and suggestions. In the third chapter, I will focus on the authors. I will deal with the names I found in the booklets and with known physicians and wise-women.

²⁰ „Minden doktorságot csak ebből készértek” – *Szemelvények orvosi kézikönyvekből* (Extracts from Medical Books), ed. Mária Szlatky (Budapest: Magvető Kiadó, 1983)

Theoretical Framework and Historical Background

The ten home remedial booklets will be approached from the perspective of popular culture. The analysis is based on my assumption that these documents are a kind of knowledge mediator between high and low cultures. Peasantry and popular culture as topic for research was discovered in the late 18th-early 19th century. Due to the phenomenon that traditional society had started to disappear, intellectuals became interested in the culture of the lower class.²¹ Scholars and poets began to collect folktales which started to appear in publications. They believed that these stories expressed the nature of the ‘folk’ and followed them up by two volumes of German historical tales or *Sagen*. For example, thanks to the Grimm brothers who published several German folktales, folktale publications started to appear all over the European continent.²²

Regarding popular culture, my main source is Peter Burke’s book, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*. In this book Burke’s aim is to describe and interpret popular culture in early modern Europe. Concerning its chronological order, it treats the topic from the early 16th century until the late 18th century. Although the area under discussion is the whole of the European continent, the author also emphasizes the regional specificities. Besides, Burke concentrates on the non-elite members of European societies while he also considers them in the examination of popular culture. He underlines the nobility’s significant participation in the preservation of popular culture. Furthermore, he divides society’s culture into two categories: the literate high culture and the illiterate low culture. He adopts the terminology invented by F. R. Leavis, the so-called “great tradition” and “the little tradition”.²³

²¹ Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Hants: Wildwood House, 1978), 3.

²² Op. cit., 6

²³ Leavis, F.R., *The Great Tradition: George Elliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad* (London: Chatto & Windus; Clarke Irwin: Toronto, 1948).

Burke explains these traditions through the book entitled *The Little Community and Peasant Society and Culture* written by Robert Redfield.²⁴ Redfield differentiates the great tradition of the educated few from the little tradition of the rest. According to him, great tradition was cultivated in schools or churches while little tradition was connected to village communities, more concretely to a society which was built on its orality.²⁵ He stresses that traditions are interdependent but his theory seems to be “narrow because it omits upper-class participation in popular culture”.²⁶ “Upper-classes or the educated people participated in popular culture. In towns at least, rich and poor, nobles and commoners attended the same sermons”.²⁷ While the elite took part in the popular culture or little tradition, common people could not participate in high culture because of their lack of education. Institutions, such as grammar schools and universities transmitted scientific thinking, and they were not accessible for everybody. The difference between these traditions is not who could really become a follower of one of the traditions but the way of handing over knowledge.

Taking into consideration the medical documents that will be analyzed in this thesis, it is necessary to generate the question which tradition includes them. This is important because several manuscripts contain knowledge from high culture as well as from popular culture. Moreover, even though the authors were literate, they were not educated persons in the sense of having received professional education. Therefore, the question rises whether it is possible to differentiate between “high” and “low culture” in the case of medicine. Even though people who dealt with curing did not participate in higher education but they could have a kind of education through the physicians with whom they were in contact. Healers who actually were the authors of the analyzed notebooks could know contemporary books and results of the high medical culture, on the one hand. But, as being the member of a local

²⁴ Redfield, Robert, *Peasant Society and Culture* (Chicago, 1956)

²⁵ Redfield, Robert, *Peasant Society and Culture*, 41-42

²⁶ Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 24

²⁷ Ibid.

community healers could gain medical recipes from his folk environment, on the other hand. This is why is legitimate to arise the question whether these people were mediators between high and low culture. Of course, to answer seems to be simple but I have to call the attention to the fact that there was no harsh border between popular medicine and scientific medicine as today we have. Hence, I think it is very important to examine those people who were neither lay medics nor healers because they stood between the two ‘official’ worlds and they utilized both kind of knowledge.

In the traditional culture, orality and visuality were the two basic media of transmission which were based on direct human contacts.²⁸ “Shop signs, broadsides, and religious images used emblems which summed up the logical relationship between various elements at a glance.”²⁹ Considering literacy, “even learning to read was an oral process; children in schools chanted letters and combinations of letters out loud. Since writing was thought after reading, children did not use writing as an aid to reading; instead they were trained to rely upon their memory.”³⁰ Moreover, early modern reading was a group activity and people came together to listen the storyteller and the readers of the texts.³¹ Although orality still is important in human communication, the appearance of diaries and notebooks in a great number in the early modern age introduced humble people and women into the historical research. In their remained letters, diaries, home remedial books their relationships as well as their knowledge became apparent. Through these written sources their direct human contacts and their knowledge was brought into the literate world. But, the question is how they mixed their everyday life and experience with so called “higher” knowledge. In this thesis I would like to concentrate on the way of transmission and the borderlands between the

²⁸ Kazimierz Dobrowolski, “Peasant Traditional Culture” in Theodor Shanin, *Peasants and Peasant Societies* (Baltimore: Ringwood, 1971) 271-298., 276.

²⁹ Mary E. Fissel, “Readers, texts and contexts-Vernacular medical works in early modern England” in *The popularization of medicine 1650-1850* ed. Roy Porter (London & New York: Routledge, 1992) 72-96., 80.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Natalie Zemon Davis, “Strikes and Salvation at Lyon” in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987) 1-17., 8.

traditions through the analysis of home remedial booklets. First and foremost, I need to consider the considerable influence of the invention of printing and the process of popularization of medicine.

In the interaction between the traditions, the appearance of printing was essential. Printing entered into popular life in the 16th century, setting up networks of communication, facilitating new options for the people, and also providing new means of controlling people.³² Of course, 16-17th-century society is still illiterate which needs somebody to interpret written tales, regulations and news. Usually, the interpreter needed to be literate and needed to speak the language of his audience. When the reader read aloud the text, he not just read aloud but he was translating the written language into the spoken language.³³ As it was presented, orality was still dominant and a kind of translator or mediator was indispensable between low and high culture. Concerning popular medicine it was the same. Not only did scholars start to translate the works of Galen and Hippocrates during the Renaissance but they also interpreted them toward the crowd. “Learned medicine, the medicine of Hippocrates and especially of Galen was undergoing popularization before and during the Renaissance. Printing alone had diffused medical knowledge more widely.”³⁴ Considering transmission between high and low culture, it was natural that interaction existed between great and little tradition.³⁵ In fact, illness was a public affair. “A quite lively oral exchange of medical information emerges the patient letters as well as from other contemporary sources.”³⁶ Illness is a constant theme in letters and diaries, between the family and friends, between literate and illiterate persons.³⁷

³² Natalie Zemon Davis, “Printing and the People” in Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987) 189-226., 190.

³³ Op. cit., 201.

³⁴ Andrew Wear, “The popularization of medicine in early modern England” in *The popularization of medicine 1650-1850* ed. Roy Porter (London & New York: Routledge, 1992) 17-40., 21.

³⁵ Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 58.

³⁶ Michael Stolberg, “Medical Popularization and the Patient in the Eighteenth Century” in *Cultural Approaches to the History of Medicine, Mediating Medicine in Early Modern and Modern Europe* ed. Willem de Blécourt and Cornelia Usborne (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) 89-107., 96.

³⁷ Roy Porter, *Disease, medicine and society in England, 1550-1860*, 17.

“Limited but still large population: those who were commoners, not noble; of modest means or poor, not wealthy; unschooled, not learned”³⁸ is under research. Furthermore, they were “those who lived in both in the town and in the countryside, and were those who worked at the land and those who carried on the crafts and lesser mysteries.”³⁹ I would not claim that the documents about common people are not appropriate because some people of towns – for instance, merchants - could read and write even though they did not have higher education. Of course, the writers of the reports knew a different culture but because of their ‘higher’ knowledge they were not closed from common people’s life. Printed books were not just sources for images and ideas but also carriers of relationship between high and low culture. Printing affected defined milieus, wherever they lived, printing affected those social class or cohesive groups which were literate. “In the countryside this means the entire settled population of a village where anyone was literate while in the cities this means the small merchants and the craftsmen and even semiskilled workers.”⁴⁰

As a matter of fact, information remained about peasantry made by outsiders. Many popular activities are documented because the authorities in church or state were trying to influence common people. “Most of what we know about them the rebellions, the heresies and the witchcraft of the period was recorded because the rebels, heretics and witches were brought to trial and interrogated.”⁴¹ Although these documents are essential for the historians, the texts cannot record a performance or any other folk activities adequately because the writers were not the members of the peasantry. It is not sure whether these texts are faithful records or not. For instance, in the case of sermons the situation is more complicated because preachers preached in their own mother tongue while the sermons were published in Latin.⁴² Moreover, they kept their sermons for less educated people, therefore, it is sure, that the

³⁸ Natalie Zemon Davis, “Printing and the People,” 190.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Op. cit., 193.

⁴¹ Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 66.

⁴² Op. cit., 67.

sermon in the living language was less complicated than in the language of science. In this case, it is necessary to emphasize that these sermons became the part of high culture.

Since illness was treated as a public affair, it is also indispensable to take note of the approach of disease in an early modern mind. “Illness was standardly seen not as a random assault from outside, but as a deeply significant life-event, integral to the sufferer’s whole being, spiritual, moral, physical and life-course, past, present and future. This view partly stemmed from contemporary assumptions about what caused illness.”⁴³ Their approach was based on the assumption that in the human body a sensible balance existed which was keeping the person healthy. If this sensible balance ended, the person would be sick.⁴⁴ “The body not allowed to become too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry; and this in turn depended upon maintaining the right equilibrium between key fluids (technically called ‘humours’) that made the system work – for example, blood or phlegm. Sickness was the outcome when the body balanced was disturbed.”⁴⁵ Medical books printed in early modern Hungary also scrutinize sickness in this way.⁴⁶

All in all, printing was essential in the aforementioned way of transmission between high and low culture. Although Hungary was not in the centre of the scientific life of the European continent, she has important personalities who dealt with the spreading of science in the country. At the same time, these people were also interested in their local communities’ knowledge since they were living among humbler people. The aim of this thesis is to preset these people through their remained medical notebooks.

⁴³ Roy Porter, *Disease, medicine and society in England, 1550-1860*, 19.

⁴⁴ Lilla Krász, “A mesterség szolgálatában – Felvilágosodás és ‘orvosi tudományok’ a 18. századi Magyarországon” (In the service of the profession” – Enlightenment and Medical Science in the 18th-century Hungary) in *Századok*, 5. (2005): 1065-1104., 1073.

⁴⁵ Roy Porter, *Disease, medicine and society in England, 1550-1860*, 19.

⁴⁶ „Minden doktorságot csak ebből késértek” – *Személyények orvosi kézikönyvekből*, 389.

Gardens and the Introduction of Medical Literature in the Hungarian Language

Hungarian medical literature came into existence under difficult circumstances: the country was divided into three parts as well as wars were common in 16-17th-century people's life in Hungary. Besides, a little group of the Hungarian aristocracy obtained a significant role in the appearance and in the spreading of medical literature in the Hungarian language. Thanks to the cultural activity of Boldizsár Batthyány and Tamás Nádasdy, Hungarian botany and non-scientific Hungarian medical literature were created in the second half of the 16th century. The aim of this chapter is to present the achievements which were based on the patronage of Boldizsár Batthyány and Tamás Nádasdy.

The introduction of Hungarian medical literature implied that botanical gardens existed and botanists were working across the country. Early botanical gardens were established in monasteries but during the 15th century these gardens started to appear in aristocratic manors as well. Since the second half of the 16th century was more peaceful, it was possible for the aristocracy to lead a more vivid cultural life in their estates. The most important proof of this alteration was the construction of gardens in the manors. Usually the function of these gardens was not merely ornamental but botanical as well where the owners cultivated fruits and herbs. They often sent fruits and other crops to their relatives and also to the monarch. Their gardens' fruits and flowers became a question of prestige and a kind of competition came into existence among the aristocracy concerning their gardens.⁴⁷ Therefore, it can be claimed that Hungary achieved importance from a botanical point of view which is proved by the fact that Maximilian II in 1573 asked grafts from the Hungarian part of his

⁴⁷ Éva S. Lauter, "Főúri kertek és reprezentáció a 17. században" (Aristocratic Gardens and Representation in the 17th century) in *Európa híres kertje* (Famous Garden of Europe), ed. Ágnes R. Várkonyi and László Kósa (Budapest, 1993.): 87-105., 89.

empire for the reconstruction of his garden.⁴⁸ As opposed to the 15th century when gardens were built for the purposes of entertainment, in the 16th century the focus was on utility. It was more important to grow plants which could be eaten or could be employed as medicine. The main difference between the cultivation of gardens in the western part of the European continent and Hungary is that Hungarian botanical gardens were the property of aristocratic families while in Western Europe gardens were maintained by doctors. One exception was the physician, György Purkircher's garden in Pozsony [Bratislava].⁴⁹

The most considerable botanical garden was in the property of Boldizsár Batthyány, in his estate in Szalónak.⁵⁰ Kristóf Batthyány, Boldizsár's father was also interested in horticulture and he gained quite a vivid exchange of plants.⁵¹ But, Boldizsár was the one who created such a cultural life in his estate which could become the basis of the Hungarian horticulture. He was a widely traveled man who studied in Vienna and Graz and visited France and the Low Countries.⁵² From the point of view of the history of the Hungarian horticulture, the most important data concerning the life of Boldizsár is that he came into contact with the significant botanist, Carolus Clusius. Clusius fled the Low Countries because of his Anabaptist belief and he found refuge in Vienna in Maximilian II's court.⁵³ Clusius often went on excursions to Western Hungary in order to make some observations on the plants of the area, especially in Szalónak.⁵⁴ It is unknown how Boldizsár Batthyány and Carolus Clusius met. According to Csapody they could have met during Batthyány's travel in the Low Countries⁵⁵ but other suggestions imply that they got to know each other in Vienna.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ János Stirling, "Orvosi kertek a XVI. századi Magyarországon" (Medical Gardens in 16th century Hungary) *Orvostörténeti közlemények* 109-112 (1985): 111-120., 114.

⁵⁰ János Stirling, *Magyar reneszánsz kertművészet a XVI.-XVII. században* (Hungarian Renaissance Horticulture in the 16th-17th centuries) (Budapest: Enciklopédia, 1996), 31.

⁵¹ Op.cit., 24.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Éva S. Lauter, "Főúri kertek és reprezentáció a 17. században", 60.

⁵⁴ János Stirling, *Magyar reneszánsz kertművészet a XVI.-XVII. században*, 24.

⁵⁵ István Csapody, "Clusius magyar mecénása és munkatársai" (The Hungarian Patron and Colleagues of Clusius) *Vasi Szemle* 27 (1973/3): 408.

The most probable place where they make acquaintance could have been in the Viennese court.⁵⁶ It is sure that Clusius had an own garden in Vienna but there is no data about his employment in the emperor's garden.⁵⁷ Stirling says that 1579 was the first time that the botanist spent some time in Hungary, in the estate of Batthyány. Thanks to Clusius having a very strong relation with the Italian scientists a large amount of special plants were sent to the country. He was the one who naturalized the potato, the lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*), the hyacinths, the tulips as well as the narcissi in Hungary.⁵⁸ Apart from Clusius, Boldizsár Batthyány patronized other botanists and scientists. Among them were István and András Beythe who helped Clusius in his botanical investigations in Hungary.⁵⁹

From the perspective of printed medical literature in Hungary, Németújvár was also important because of its printing house. The Manlius printing house in Németújvár published two significant books from botanical as well as medical point of view since both Clusius' and András Beythe's books were put out here.⁶⁰ In 1583 Clusius' book entitled *Stirpium Nomenclator Pannonicus* was published in Németújvár which is the first book on the plants of Hungary.⁶¹ András Beythe's herbal, *Fives Könyv* was put out in 1595 and this is the second published herbal in Hungarian after Melius's *Herbarium*.⁶²

Before introducing into the discussion Melius's *Herbarium* I take note of Tamás Nádasdy and his protégés because the other important center of the Hungarian botanical life situated in Sárvár, in the manor of Tamás Nádasdy. Katalin Péter presents him as a member of

⁵⁶ Dóra Bobory, "Boldizsár Batthyány (1540-1592), Erudition, Natural Sciences and Patronage in the Life of a Sixteenth-Century Hungarian Nobleman" (Central European University, Phd dissertation in Medieval Studies 2007), 97

⁵⁷ János Stirling, *Magyar reneszánsz kertművészet a XVI.-XVII. században*, 26

⁵⁸ Op. cit., 27

⁵⁹ Árpád Fazekas, "A magyar nyelvű herbárium-irodalomról" (About the Herbarium-literature in the Hungarian language) in *Orvostörténeti közlemények* 97-99 (1982): 43-64., 50.

⁶⁰ János Stirling, *Magyar reneszánsz kertművészet a XVI.-XVII. században*, 22

⁶¹ Árpád Fazekas, "A magyar nyelvű herbárium-irodalomról", 51

⁶² „Minden doktorságot csak ebből késértek” – *Szemelvények orvosi kézikönyvekből* (Extracts from Medical Books), ed. Mária Szlatky (Budapest: Magvető Kiadó, 1983), 392

an educated and an open-minded family.⁶³ It was not only him and his bother who were well-educated but their sister, Anna was literate and “able to compose long and intricate letters in Hungarian on difficult matters.”⁶⁴ Tamás Nádasdy himself, studied in Graz and he was eighteen when he enrolled at Vienna University. Then he also gained some kind of education in Padua, Bologna and Rome.⁶⁵ It was in 1533 or in the beginning of the next year when he got married with Countess Orsolya Kanizsay who “was the only heiress of an ancient and immensely wealthy Hungarian clan.”⁶⁶ Originally, Sárvár was not the center of the Kanizsay clan but Tamás Nádasdy started to create there a new home for himself as well as for his young wife. “Next to the castle, garden, orchards, wildlife park and fish pond were built.”⁶⁷

Nádasdy also founded a school in Sárvár where the most considerable Hungarian humanists taught and studied. The aforementioned István Beythe was employed here as a teacher in 1564-65, later in 1570 he went to Németújvár and he became the preacher of Boldizsár Batthyány.⁶⁸ Another considerable member of the school in Sárvár was Péter Melius Juhász, whose *Herbarium* mainly influenced the Hungarian medical literature to a great extent. In the following part of the thesis, I will present Melius and the *Herbarium* because this book was well-known by the contemporaries and it surely was among the sources which were utilized in the home remedial practice.⁶⁹

Péter Melius Juhász was born in the beginning of the 1530s to a noble family called Somogyi. He remained as an orphan in the manor of Sárvár around 1543. Thanks to the vivid cultural life in the Nádasdy manor, Melius obtained humanistic education and he learned there Latin, Greek, Hebrew and German. He probably studied theology at the University of

⁶³ Katalin Péter, “The Idea of the Community of Intellectuals in the Mind of a Renaissance Maecenas: Tamás Nádasdy (1498-1562)” in *Republic of Letters, Humanism, Humanities*, Collegium Budapest Workshop Series, No. 15. ed. Marcell Sebők (Szekszárd: Séd Nyomda, 2005): 141-167.

⁶⁴ Op. cit., 146.

⁶⁵ Op. cit., 141.

⁶⁶ Op. cit., 154.

⁶⁷ Katalin Péter, “Kanizsay Orsolya 1521-1569,” in *Nők a magyar történelemben* (Women in Hungarian history) ed. Ágnes R. Várkonyi (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 1997): 47-63., 54.

⁶⁸ János Stirling, *Magyar reneszánsz kertművészet a XVI.-XVII. században*, 30.

⁶⁹ „Minden doktorságot csak ebből késértek” – *Szemelvények orvosi kézikönyvekből*, 406.

Wittenberg during the winter of 1556/57. Because of the fact that Melius was a protestant, Archbishop Miklós Oláh imprisoned him when he came back to Hungary.⁷⁰ Later, he appeared as priest and from 1561 until his death in 1572, he was the Calvinist bishop of Debrecen. During his last ten years, he worked on his theological works as well as the *Herbarium*. Probably, after his death the widow Erzsébet Kiss got into a bad financial position, therefore she sold the manuscript of the *Herbarium* to Mrs. Gáspár Heltai who aimed to publish the herbal.⁷¹

Supposedly, the *Herbarium* was published earlier but the copies known today originate from 1578. Although it is not known how many issues were put out, but considering the fact that fourteen copies are accessible nowadays, and during the twentieth century eleven issues were lost, the original circulation must have been remarkable.⁷² Probably the publisher produced about hundreds or even several thousands of issues of the *Herbarium*. This significant number indicates the great demands of society. This latter can also be supported by the language as well as the subject matter of the book. Since the *Herbarium*'s language is Hungarian and it dispenses new scientific developments, it can be concluded that it was written with an informative rather than a scientific purpose.⁷³ Thus, this book was prepared for common people who were not that much interested in medicine but they needed these kinds of publications as well. At the same time, it is bound to happen to take note of the fact that Melius utilized foreign sources. Hence, it is sure that he was interested in the topic on a scientific level but he wanted to interpret simple knowledge towards the majority. Therefore, it could be said that he was a mediator between high and low culture. Taking into consideration the users of the book, after the examination of some remaining issues it can be

⁷⁰ Attila Szabó, "Melius Péter és a kolozsvári Herbárium" (Péter Melius and the Herbarium of Kolozsvár) in Péter Melius, *Herbárium* (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1979), 31.

⁷¹ István Kollega Tarsoly (ed.), *Magyar könyvek – magyar századok* (Hungarian Books – Hungarian Centuries) (Budapest: Dabasi Ny., 2001), 68.

⁷² Attila Szabó, "Melius Péter és a kolozsvári Herbárium," 79.

⁷³ Mária Szlatky, "A magyar nyelvű természettudományos és orvosi irodalom a XVI. században" (Scientific and Medical Literature in the Hungarian Language in the 16th Century) in *Orvostörténeti Közlemények* 109-112. (1985): 91-97., 96.

deduced that the books were important in their owner's life. For instance, they usually tried to replace the damaged or the lost pages of the books.⁷⁴

As far as Melius' sources are concerned, he surely read the book written by Adam Lonitzer, *Historie naturalis opus novum* (1551, 1552). The system of the Herbarium follows Lonitzer's logic but some descriptions of the plants probably originate from the herbal of Hieronymus Bock⁷⁵ on the one hand, and of Mattioli⁷⁶, on the other hand. Bock and Mattioli were the best known botanists of their age and Melius interpreted their results towards the common people. Moreover, as Melius presented his own observations as well as his own conclusions, it cannot be claimed that he was not scientific. In fact, he did not aim to write a scientific book but this does not mean that he himself was not a scientist. After all, the book also contains his own experimental knowledge which is apparent from the fact that the author noted next to some recipes "*próbált dolog*" which means that he had tried it.⁷⁷ Perhaps his reaction to the Hungarian society's demand for this kind of book should be taken into consideration more than his scientific knowledge.

The book begins with the index in which he names the trees and herbs in Latin, in Hungarian and in German. He describes the plants' features, their outlook as well as their effects and uses. In his interpretation of illnesses, he employs humoral pathology. "The skin

⁷⁴ Attila Szabó, "Melius Péter és a kolozsvári Herbárium", 78.

⁷⁵ Bock, Hieronymus (1498-1554) German priest, physician and botanist. Although, his educational background is unknown he became one of the founder of German botany. His major work, *New Kreuterbuch* (Strassbourg: 1539) contains detailed descriptions as well as careful illustrations of 700 plants. In *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, ed. Robert McHenry (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc., 1993), 313.

⁷⁶ Pietro Andrea Gregorio Mattioli published his considerable book *Di Pedacio Dioscoride Anazarbeo libri cinque* which became the basis of further development of botany in 1544. Thanks to this work, physicians, apothecaries, and herbalists gained some practical scientific treatise in Italian. In 1554 the Latin version was put out with the title of *Commentarii in sex libros Pedacii Dioscoridis Anazarbei de materia medica* which made this important book accessible to non-Italian scholars as well as users. In *Encyclopedia of the Scientific Revolution from Copernicus to Newton*, ed. Wilbur Applebaum (New York & London: Garland Publishing, 2000), 420-422.

⁷⁷ István Botta, *Melius Péter ifjúsága* (Youth of Péter Melius) (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1978), 76.

of the lemon is very drying and warming and its pulp makes you cold and sweaty. However its bitter pulp makes you cold, its seed is warming.”⁷⁸

As far as the recipes are concerned, most of them are remedies for dermatological and internal problems. The book includes recipes for diseases such as indigestions, sore throat, rashes, scalds and inflammations. Obviously, this was because these were frequent. In addition to the gynecological remedies, Melius also pays attention to birth control and sexual education.⁷⁹ My opinion is that it is very important that he deals with these problems because birth was in the centre of people’s life.

All in all, this publication is not necessarily an important step in Hungarian scientific life but it is considerable from the perspective of popular culture. Taking into consideration its language, it can be drawing the conclusion that this book was written with the aim of interpreting knowledge. Because of its Hungarian language, *Herbárium* became one of the main sources for the authors of the manuscripts. According to Attila Szabó, the manuscripts connected to the *Herbárium* can be divided into two categories. There are some notes on the pages of the different issues of the book and there are the independent copies.⁸⁰

As a comparison, I have to affirm that on the one hand, this book is more detailed, on the other hand it is perceptible that Melius’ aim was not only taking notes but giving something extra for common people. Therefore, I think it is right to consider him and his herbal as mediators between high and low culture. Apart from Melius, I think the development of Hungarian medical literature as well as other non-scientific literature would not have come into existence without Boldizsár Batthyány and Tamás Nádasdy. This is why I thought it would be considerable to present their participation in the cultural life of 16th-

⁷⁸ Péter Melius, *Herbárium* (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1979), 129., I translated from the original Hungarian text: „Az Citrom héja igen szárasztó, melegítő, a húsa hidegítő, nedvesítő. Ám az savanyú belső része hidegítő, de magva melegítő.”

⁷⁹ Attila Szabó, “Melius Péter és a kolozsvári Herbárium”, 54

⁸⁰ Op. cit. 85.

century Hungary. Not only did they compensate for Hungary's scientific and cultural backwardness but they also created the basis for the future Hungarian intelligentsia.

Home Apothecaries

In the following chapter of the thesis, I will present the examined home apothecaries. In the first subchapter, in a table the similarities and the differences between the examined home apothecaries can be seen. Then I will present booklets one by one and I will focus on the peculiarities which other booklets do not contain. In the third subchapter, I will deal with the contents and illnesses of the examined booklets. I will also made quotations from the booklets, which will be translated by myself from early modern Hungarian into modern English. I also need to herald that in many cases I write about healers using male pronouns, *he*, *his*, but it does not signify that only men were interested in healing as well as in home apothecaries. In the further chapter of the thesis I will consider gender as well.

1. The Examined Medical Booklets: An Introduction

In the case of health culture, in everyday life, herbals gained the most important role. Apart from Melius' *Herbarium* other herbals were also employed in early modern Hungary which were the basis for home remedial practice. Among the remaining medical manuscripts barber-surgeon notes and home apothecaries can also be found.⁸¹ The medical quality of the former ones was better than that of the home remedial books but in this thesis I would like to concentrate on the contents of the home apothecaries.

⁸¹ „Minden doktorságot csak ebből készértek” – *Szemelvények orvosi kézikönyvekből*,” 402.

Although I have seen ten manuscripts in the National Széchenyi Library, in the following pages only nine booklets will be put into the table and will be analyzed in connection to each other. In the dust-wrapper of Oct. Hung. 968 some recipes are accessible. Moreover, this book is an edition of Erasmus' book entitled *Scarabeus*. For the reason that this book is not a notebook in which the owner made notations concerning different topics, I decided to ignore Oct. Hung. 968 from the table below.⁸² Thus, this document will be presented in the next paragraph.

It originates from the 16th century and the recipes are noted in three languages: Hungarian, Greek and Latin. This book of Erasmus could be interesting in the analysis of the personality of the authors of medical booklets, because it implies some characteristic of the owner, but I would like to deal with this topic in the chapter called Authors. Taking into consideration that most recipes are collected into a separate booklet it is justified to raise other questions as why he wrote those recipes on the dust-wrapper of that book. Did not he have any other papers? Was not he interested in healing? Why did the owner of the *Scarabeus* write the recipes on the dust-wrapper of that book? Did he have any purpose with writing down the recipes to that book? Since the aim of this part of the thesis is not to answer these questions, I would like to postpone it in a later chapter of the thesis.

The remaining nine booklets are different from each other but it can be claimed that there are some similarities which will be presented in the table below. I will summarize the main similarities on the basis of the table and then I will introduce the specifics of each booklet.

⁸² National Széchenyi Library in Budapest (OSZK), Department of Manuscripts and Early Modern Prints: Oct. Hung. 968.

	Oct. Hung. 946.	Oct. Hung. 763.	Oct. Hung. 87.	Oct. Hung. 485.	Oct. Hung. 500.	Oct. Hung. 1098.	Oct. Hung. 1063.	Quart. Hung. 440.	Quart. Hung. 279.
Orginial Dust Cover	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
Measure (cm)	10x20	9x14	10x15.5	10x15	10x15	10x15	10x15	16.5x21.5	15x20
Pages numbered by the owner	no	no	yes 158	yes 104	no	no	no	yes 35	yes 83
Pages numbered by the library	71	70			80	104	180		
Name of the owner appears	no	Yes István Révay	yes József Illésházy	no	no	yes György D. Győri	yes Ferenc Tholnay	no	no
More hand- writings	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes
Recipes only for human beings	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes
Prayers	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no
More languages	yes L.	no	no	yes L.	yes L.	yes L.	yes L.	yes L.	yes L., Sk.
Date	MDXCXI	8 May 1666	no	no	1609	1692	19 May 1614	no	no

As it can be seen, half of the booklets have kept the original dust-wrapper. The first booklet in the table which has original dust-wrapper is numbered Oct. Hung. 946. This dust-wrapper is made of leather and the letters A and P are printed in the cover then Roman numerals MDXCXI. I do not know whether these are a mention to a date or a year. The next leather binding booklet is numbered Oct. Hung. 485. Its leather binding is very soft and seems that it was made by the owner himself because it is not as well made as the leather binding of the other booklets. The booklet numbered Oct. Hung. 500. has the most interesting cover, because its leather binding is dried out on the one hand, and the owner(s) of the booklet draw some figures on the missing parts of the binding, on the other hand. In addition, in its leather binding some text written by Gothic type can be seen. The booklets numbered Oct. Hung. 1098 and 1063 look like similar. Their leather binding is more strong than that of the others and these booklets seem to be real books. Which is important in the case of these booklets is that not merely look like similar but they are the only two having prayers inside. Concerning the dust-wrappers of the booklets it can be claimed that they are different from each other and only two have a kind of semblance. In my opinion these differences implies about the owner's financial situation as well as his interest in the topic.

Considering the measure of the booklets I can draw the conclusion that these notebooks had mainly the same size. Only one is different from the others but that booklet does not even have its original cover. When I was holding that booklet I had the impression that the recipes were written on sheets of paper. The writer wrote numbers on the sheets giving them some arrangement.⁸³

Continuing with arrangement it is necessary to introduce that only four booklets were numbered by the author which hints that the writers wanted to give a kind of logical structure to the recipes or at least to the notebook. But in this point I need to emphasize that other kinds

⁸³ OSZK Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Quart.Hung. 440.

of arrangements can be discovered in the booklets which will be presented in the later part of this chapter. Before taking into consideration the number of the pages, I also have to underline that the main difference between the page numerals given by the owner and given by the library is that the library gave numbers to sheets as opposed to the owners who gave numbers to pages. More precisely, it means that the librarians gave numbers every second page. Apart from the document Quart. Hung. 440 with its 35 pages, the booklets can be divided into three categories according to their page numbers. Oct. Hung. 946 and 763 have 70-71 pages numbered by the library, Oct. Hung. 500 has 80 pages numbered by the library while Quart. Hung. 279 has 83 pages by its owner. The third category is the booklets which contains more than 150 pages. These are the booklets numbered Oct. Hung. 87 with its 154 pages and Oct. Hung. 1063 with its 180 pages. Of course, it should be taken into consideration that the page numbers are given by the owners and the librarians as well, but after holding these booklets in my hands, I have to claim that this fact does not enhance the differences between the booklets. Their measures are similar to each other. Possibly, it is connected to the quality of the paper as well as to the bookbinding. Some bindings seem to be less professional. For instance, the binding of Oct. Hung. 485 is less professional than the binding of Oct. Hung 1063.

As it can be seen in the table, only four people wrote names into the booklets. They noted their names on the first pages of their notebook. In the case of the authors, it is necessary to introduce into the discussion that in four booklets more handwritings can be recognized which implies questions regarding the owners of these notebooks. On the other hand, I need to note that in the booklet Oct. Hung. 1063 another name is also written but I would like to examine it in the later part of the thesis. Obviously, the fact that more handwritings are in the booklets prompts that not only one person was dealing with curing in a family. Since the aim of this chapter is to describe the sources, in this part of the chapter I would not like to be absorbed in the handwritings and their owners.

As regards the content of the home apothecaries, it has to be claimed that not merely recipes for human beings but suggestions for animal husbandry are also included. Additionally, in two booklets prayers can also be found. The recipes and the suggestions as well as prayers are mainly written in Hungarian but most of the booklets contain some suggestions in Latin. Moreover, in the document Quart. Hung. 279 recommendations in the Slovakian language are accessible. Five booklets are dated and most of them originate from the first half of the 17th century. In one case the author wrote the date with Roman numerals.

In general, these data can be said about the booklets I examined. Since all of them possess its own specificity, in the following part of this chapter I will present them separately.

2. Individual Booklets

Oct. Hung. 946 has 71 pages, but until the page 39, only agricultural recommendations can be found in Latin. When the writer finished his agricultural suggestions, he left almost 17 pages blank. Then he started to write medical recipes for human beings in Hungarian as well as in Latin which counts only six pages. Then he wrote some recipes in Latin and left some pages blank again until the end of the booklet. Hardly can I claim that there is logical structure in the arrangement of this notebook because the type of recommendations are separated but the languages are mixed. In addition, in the arrangement of suggestions for animal husbandry some logical structure can be found since the suggestions are divided according to the months.

In my opinion, the most particular booklet among those I examined is the one which was authored by István Révay.⁸⁴ In fact, it is not a real home apothecary since it does not contain so many recipes for human beings but for horses. The name of the author is written in

⁸⁴ OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 763.

the title of the booklet, *Próbálós Bizonyos Orvosságok Melyeket néhai Révay István Uram őnagysága Konstantinápolyban az török Császár portáján lévő fő lovászmesterektől szerzett.* [Certain and Tried Medicines which were taken from the stableman of the emperor of the Osman Empire in Constantinople by my lord the deceased István Révay] The date on the cover of the booklet is *Anno 1666 8 May*. Certainly one person wrote it but not István Révay since in the title his name can be found as ‘the deceased István Révay.’ Probably one of his servants copied his recipes. The writer did not mark with numbers the pages but the recipes. This latter one is a particular characteristic because this booklet is the only one among the examined documents in which the recipes are numbered. Concerning the compound of the suggestions, it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that mainly recipes for horses can be found inside which is not surprising after reading the title of the booklet. Scarcely do some advices for human beings appear. Presumably, because of its few recommendations for human beings this booklet seems to be less important from the perspective of the history of medicine. But, even though this booklet barely contains recipes for people, it is considerable from the perspective of popular culture since it is a source for the fact that people were treating their animals as they were doing with themselves. As regards Révay, I will introduce him more detailed in the next chapter called “Authors.”

The name of the owner of *Mindenféle orvosságoknak rend szedése és orvosságos könyvecske* [The arrangement of all kind of treatments and medical booklet]⁸⁵ is written on the inner side of the cover of the book. Although the owner of this book was named as József Illésházy, more than one person made notations because this notebook contains not just one handwriting. Pages are numbered by the author as well as by the librarians but in the presentation of this booklet I will use the numbers of the authors. The owners divided this notebook into two parts. Until page 76 no logical structure was realized in the order of the

⁸⁵ OSZK Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 87.

recipes. Only the numbered pages prompt that the owner wanted to create a kind of structure which makes him easier to find a recipe. Page 76 is the end of the part one. Then, another book begins with new pages, new numbers and new handwriting. In the beginning of the second part, *Orvosságos könyvecske* [Medical Booklet] is noted again and the writer chose to create an alphabetical arrangement in the order of the recipes. The appearance of the suggestions in alphabetical order conveys the impression that the author copied that part of the book. Because of its strict structure it can be said that Illésházy treated this book with great attention on the one hand, and that he wanted to make the use of his book easier with making alphabetical order, on the other hand. Therefore, it is justified to assume that this book was frequently used. Moreover, it is rightful to suppose that the second part of the booklet is the ordered alteration of the first part but I have to say, it is not. The second part also takes 72 pages, thus the whole book has 148 pages. There are no dates written in the book but presumably, it originates from the beginning of the 17th century. Since the aim of this chapter is not to deal with the owners, József Illésházy will be presented in the aforementioned chapter of Authors.

Oct. Hung 485 *Házi Patika, hasznos receptek gyűjteménye* [Home Apothecary, collection of useful recipes]⁸⁶ is a booklet with leather binding and its pages are numbered (104) as well as one handwriting can be found inside. No logical order was realized in the arrangement of the recipes but they are separated by lines. On the other hand, one important kind of separation is perceptible in the arrangement of the recipes. The author emphasized the proportion for an adult and for a child. When the author writes two recipes for the same illness, he usually separates the recipes from one another and he writes *Más* (Other) or *Item*. Little did he use Latin words which fact will be discussed more deeply in another part of the thesis.

⁸⁶ OSZK Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 485.

In Oct. Hung. 485 recommendations for animal husbandry are separated from the human recipes which is remarkable from the perspective of the fact that some author did not divide the recipes in this way. From page 55 (I use the page numbers of the authors) the owner of the booklet started to write suggestions for animal husbandry. My opinion is that he was more accurate with these recommendations because he separated them according to the species of the animals. On page 55 *Méhekrül, próbált és hasznos orvosságok* [About bees, tried and useful treatments] and then advices for bee husbandry are written. Not only did he advice some practical things for the owner of the colony of bees but he also adds some curse against the thieves. *Lopó vagy tolvaj, hogy megkopaszuljon, aki méheidet ellopja* – Against thief who steals your bees become bald. In the end of this part of the booklet, the owner closes the ‘chapter’ with drawn crosses as well as with the written text ‘in the name of God, the Son and the Holy Spirit.’ On the page 79 a new part of suggestions starts with the title *Vadász embernek puskájához való hasznos és bizonyos mesterségek melyekkel ilyen módon kell cselekedned* [Useful suggestions for hunters and certain machinations]. Mainly superstitious suggestions and curses against enemies can be found in this part of the booklet. “You will be protected from shooting if you gain from the caul of a baby boy. The caul needs to be consecrated and wear it in your neck.”⁸⁷ As a matter of fact, the booklet became interesting from our medical point of view again on the page 94 where the writer started to collect some treatments for horses. *Lovak nyavalyjáról való bizonyos hasznos orvosságok* [Certain treatments for horses’ maladies] is written in the beginning and then he starts to write treatments for horses’ hurts. All in all, I think even though the recipes are not put into a systematical order the booklet is well structured and it implies that its owner really paid attention to the right arrangement.

⁸⁷ OSZK Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 485., 47: “A lövéstől megvéd ha a fiúgyermek burkából szerezz, szenteltesd meg és azt hord a nyakadban.”

In the inner side of the cover of the booklet numbered Oct. Hung. 500 is written *Testi orvosságok könyve* [Book of medicines for the human body]. In its dried leather binding some text written by Gothic type can be seen. Where the leather binding became threadbare, some geometrical drawings can also be perceived. It originates from 1609 because this date is written on the inside of the cover of the booklet. There is a table of contents in the beginning but the first recipe in the booklet does not correspond with the list of the table of contents. Therefore, I can draw the conclusion that this booklet is incomplete. Even though in the later part of the notebook some missing pages are noticeable it is not sure whether it misses some pages from the beginning as well because the owner did not add page numbers. The table of contents takes four pages and there is no logical order in the arrangement of the recipes. Mainly one person wrote down the suggestions but in the end, other handwritings can also be found. Comparing these two parts of the booklet, my impression is that the second person was less accurate because his handwriting is less readable and it seems that he was not really interested in the gathering of the recipes. Additionally, some personal notes are written among the recipes which raises further questions concerning the personality of the owner. There are some recipes in Latin in the end of the notes as well.

Inside of the dust wrapper of Oct. Hung. 1098 *Ex libris Georgy D. Győri, Curavit Anno 1692* is written. Around this text there are three recipes written in Hungarian and on the next page, Latin text and recipes in Hungarian can be found. The booklet mainly contains prayers, threnodies and other kinds of liturgical songs. The arrangement of the content is not structured, therefore, the songs as well as the language are mixed. Only one handwriting can be seen in the booklet except on the inside of the dust cover where under the name Georgy D. Győri is also written Stephan Zalanyi, 1750. My opinion is that this note proves that the notebooks could have been inherited. Moreover, there is too long time between the two years

which are mentioned therefore it is truthful to assume that Stephan Zalanyi inherited this booklet somehow.

In the end of the booklet, inside of the dust wrapper medical recipes appear again. Apart from the recipes and prayers, the owner also drew in the notebook. On page 110 some human figures are drawn. As far as I can recognize, a male and a female figure can be discovered in the quite hazy drawings. In fact, the owner of this notebook was not a healer. Considering the number of the prayers, threnodies and liturgical songs, I come to the conclusion that the writer was a Calvinist preacher. Another note supports my conclusion which is written on page 2: *Cantio de Collegio S. Patak*. S. Patak signifies the Hungarian town Sárospatak. This town is situated on the North-Eastern border of the country and its Calvinist grammar school was among the most considerable Calvinist grammar schools in 17th-century Hungary.⁸⁸

On the seventh page of the booklet entitled *Miscellenea*⁸⁹ (Oct. Hung. 1063) is noted *sum ex libris Francisci Tholnay Anno 1614. die 19 May*. Thus, the owner of this booklet was Ferenc Tholnay and he opened this notebook in 19th of May of 1614. In the first six pages, he wrote something in Hungarian but since the writer used pencil, I could not read because the text is very blurred. Ferenc Tholnay did not write this booklet alone which is supported by the fact that more handwritings can be found inside. Prayers and recipes can be read in Hungarian as well as in Latin. There is a clear separation between the prayers and the recipes. As a matter of fact, compared with the other booklets this one implies about its owner that he did not really care about the notebook. Apart from the separated suggestions and the prayers there is no order in the booklet. The handwriting is entangled and it is very difficult to read which cannot be claimed about other booklets I examined.

⁸⁸ *Magyar művelődéstörténet* (Hungarian Cultural History), ed. László Kósa (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2003), 250

⁸⁹ OSZK Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 1063.

The document numbered Quart. Hung. 440 is the most ordered home apothecary I surveyed. Even though it has only 35 pages, it is full of medical as well as agricultural suggestions. Its title is written on the first page: *Tseh Martini Miscellinea*. As opposed to the other booklets, the author arranged the recipes and its titles in the same line. He underlined the title as a differentiation. The handwriting is very clear and the whole document looks like something which was important for its original owner. He separated clearly the medical suggestions from the agricultural recommendations. The only one confusing feature of this booklet is that the writer mixes the language of the recipes sometimes. This fact implies that the author was copying the recipes. The notebook also contains recipes for bee husbandry and other suggestions concerning agriculture.

The last booklet what I would like to present is Quart. Hung. 279. In my opinion, this booklet is the most interesting from more than one perspectives. Firstly, some drawings appear in the beginning of the booklet which hint that this booklet was a central issue in its owner's life. He also gave numbers to the pages. Secondly, only one handwriting can be found inside which proves that only one person dealt with curing in the authors' family in a higher level. Thirdly, the author used three languages in the notebook. Of course, he used Hungarian and Latin, but he also utilized Slovakian in the end of the booklet. Which makes more interesting this notebook is that the author separated the Slovakian recipes from the Hungarian part but he mixed this latter one with Latin. Fourthly, he made an index in which he listed the recipes in alphabetical order. Moreover, he did the same with the Slovakian recipes: after the list of Hungarian recipes, he made another list with the Slovakian recipes in the order of the appearance. As far as I could see, there are no Latin words in the Slovakian text which fact raises the question whether these recipes were folk recipes.

All in all, these home apothecaries are very similar to each other but I have to claim that they are also very different from each other. Some of them is rather a prayer book (Oct.

Hung. 1098) while others full of recipes for animal husbandry or horse keeping (Oct. Hung. 763, Oct. Hung. 485). Any of them contains suggestions only for human beings. My opinion is that the owners noted information into the notebooks which were really important in their everyday life. It was the part of their survival strategy since they made notations concerning their own health as well as their animals' well-being. In this preindustrial society bee husbandry was as important as threnodies and medical recipes. Because in this part of the thesis I presented what the booklets look like, in the following subchapter I would like to concentrate on their contents.

3. Contents - Illness

As regards the recipes and the illnesses, presumably the owners recorded recipes against such illnesses which were constantly the part of their life. Hence, remedies for eyes' problems and for digestive problems are very often present in the booklets. Furthermore, a great number of treatments for head-and earaches as well as for dysentery can be found. "Against dysentery: the flower of the walnut tree has to be desiccated then it has to be cracked. Give it in wine for adult men while for children it has to be given in egg."⁹⁰ The portion of the illnesses are not the same in the booklets because in some of them there are more remedies for eyes' problems⁹¹ while some of them are full of remedies for dysentery. "About eyes' ache: boil the elder fungus in clear water and put it on your eyes."⁹² My opinion is that the type of the recipes is depended on the frequency of the same illness in the healers' social circle.

⁹⁰ OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 485., 11.,: "*Vérhas ellen: diófa virágát meg kell aszalni, meg kell törni öreg embernek borban kell adni, gyermeknek pedig tyukmonnyal jó.*"

⁹¹ OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 500.

⁹² OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 1063., 118.,: "*szem fájáról: boczia gombát tiszta vízben megfőzni, és a szemre kenni*"

Surprisingly, I did not find so much gynecological recipes in the examined notebooks. Most of them suggest some therapies for the problems of mothers who had just given birth. In many cases, the notebooks include suggestions for nursing problems. As far as nursing is concerned, the most important problem was that the mother did not have enough milk for the baby therefore notebooks suggest some herbs. “For the wife in order to have a lot of milk: boil the caraway seed in wine and drink it with milk.”⁹³

Since it was a paternalistic society, it was very important for them to have a son. Hence, they were really interested in women’s fertility as well as in the gender of the baby. They also had recipe in order to know the gender of the baby.⁹⁴ This latter booklet, the *Mindenféle orvosságoknak rend szedése és orvosságos könyvecske* [The arrangement of all kind of treatments and medical booklet] includes the greatest number of gynecological treatments. It contains recipes entitled: “for the wife could give birth; if you want to know whether the baby will be a boy or a girl; if the wife does not have milk; for that woman who has monthlies; about her bleeding; if the wife’s breasts hurt.”⁹⁵ The fact that these booklets do not contain more gynecological recipes is remarkable because in the 17th century, pregnancy was the primary aim of a marriage. Although there are some recipes concerning pregnancy these recipes are for problems that arise after the birth and do not give any suggestions to improve fertility. Only in one booklet I found recipe concerning the event of birth. “For women who give birth hardly: mix the saffron in a glass of wine thoroughly and the woman give birth immediately.”⁹⁶ Considering these data pregnancy, gynecology, obstetrics seem to be minor importance in the life of the healers but as being the member of a family I do not

⁹³ OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 485., 8.,: “hogy az asszonyembernek sok teje legyen: köménymagot megfőzni borban, és annak levét tejjel együtt igya meg.”

⁹⁴ OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 87.

⁹⁵ Op. cit., 32: ‘*hogy az asszony ember gyereket szülhessen; ha tudni akarod, hogy a gyermek fiú vagy lány lesz; ha az asszonynak nincs teje; az mely asszonynak havi betegsége vagyon; vére folyásáról; ha az asszonynak fáj a melle.*’

⁹⁶ OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Quart. Hung. 440., 4: “Mely asszony nehezen szül: sáfrányt egy pohár borban jól elkeverni, és megitatni az asszonnyal, az rögtön szül is”

think that they did not deal with pregnancy, gynecology and obstetrics. Child and heir is a central part of a couple.

I also need to introduce sexuality into the discussion. Mainly all of the books contain at least one recipe for the most expanded 17th-century venereal disease, syphilis. It signifies that syphilis or the so called *francu* (French Disease) was quite common in this country. I found only one recipe for the improvement of sexual ability in the notebook of *Tseh Martini Miscellanea Medica*.⁹⁷ "Awaken love: drink saffron, mix linseed with honey and pepper, eat cooked carrot, drink mint water."⁹⁸

Among the writers of the researched notebooks, only one author separated the portions for children and adults.⁹⁹ "Against wound for little child: take some seeds of apricots, as much as you want. After cracking, cook them in wine, add a little saffron then plunge in a cloth, and put the cloth on the wound. Against wound for old man: spill hot vinegar on toasted bread and spread it with clove, then put on the wound."¹⁰⁰ Even though the owner of this book made this differentiation only a few times, I think it is remarkable that he did it. Because it signifies that he knew about the necessity of the different rationing or different treatments for adults and children. Moreover, he also emphasizes whether the treatment is more useful for the children or for the adults. Taking into consideration the fact that children were often ill it is justified to raise the question why only in one booklet is emphasized the necessity of different dosage or different remedy. Since the aim of this thesis is not to answer this question, I do not do it but I would like to herald this question for the further research.

⁹⁷ OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Quart. Hung. 440.

⁹⁸ Op. cit., 3: „*szerelemre gerjeszt: sáfrányt inni, lenmagot keverj össze mézzel és borssal, répát főzni és enni, menta vizet inni*”

⁹⁹ OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Quart. Hung. 485.

¹⁰⁰ Op. cit., 12: “*Öklelet ellen kis gyermeknek: végy tengeri barackmagot, amennyit csak gondolsz, törd meg, és borban főzd meg, de adjál hozzá egy kis sáfrányt is. Ruhát bele kell mártani, és odatenni, ahol az öklelet van. Öklelet ellen öreg embernek: pirított kenyeret önts le meleg ecettel, azt hintsd meg szelíd szegfűvel, és tedd az ökleletre.*”

Superstition can also be found in the booklets. Superstitious suggestions are usually connected to the gender of the baby or to the defense against bad things, as injuries.¹⁰¹ Besides, they also knew that the wearing of made the owner more courageous. “About courage: if you wear the heart or eyes of a wolf you will be courageous.”¹⁰²

In many cases, the same recipes appear in different booklets which is not merely evidence for the same source but also for the interactions between the authors. Additionally, it is necessary to take into consideration the geographical position of the country which does not make possible huge difference between the therapies. Since the rudiments of the medicines are plants and in the country mainly the same trees, bushes and herbs can be found I do not think that it is legitimate to wait considerable differences between the compounds of the recipes. It is truthful to assume that in the mountains a kind of illness was more frequent than in the bank of the Danube but the plants were mainly the same.

Authors – Healers and Doctors

In the following parts of the thesis, I would like to concentrate on authors of the analyzed notebooks as well as healers and doctors in 16-17th-century Hungary. Firstly, I would like to present those people who are mentioned in the booklets I examined. Since they are mostly noblemen, I will use in the presentation the collection of Iván Nagy and Béla Kempelen.¹⁰³ Not only will I focus on these people’s life but I will consider their family as

¹⁰¹ OSZK Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 485., 47: see page 8

¹⁰² OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Quart. Hung. 440., 7: “*„bátorságról: ha farkas szemét vagy szívét magaddal hordod, bátor leszel”*”

¹⁰³ Iván Nagy, *Magyarország családai címerekkel és nemzedékrendi táblákkal* (Families of Hungary with their coat-of-arms and their tables of generations) (Pest: Beimel&Kozma, Freibeisz I., Ráth Mór, Emich Gusztáv, 1857-1868), Béla Kempelen, *Magyar nemes családok* (Hungarian noble families) (Budapest: Grill Károly Könykiadóvállalata, 1911-1932)

well as their contacts because they could have been important in their personal development. Secondly, I will present physicians from the 16-17th -century Kolozsvár [Cluj] who were not just physicians but also preachers. Concerning gender, in the third subchapter I will introduce into the discussion women and midwives' participation in home medical practice. Fourthly, I will approach the possible education of the authorship of the booklets I surveyed considering the language, superstition as well as similarities between the notebooks. This latter one reveals the relation between the authors.

1. Individuals in the Booklets

Oct. Hung 763 was the first booklet in which I found the name of the author. István Révay authored it.¹⁰⁴ More precisely, the recipes itself were written down by someone else since István Révay was mentioned as 'the deceased István Révay' in the title. From the title, the reader can know that István Révay is the one who collected the recipes during his time in Constantinople. Apart from the name, in the title a date can also be found which helped me to find 'deceased István Révay'. This date was 1666 May 8. For the reason that the Révay family is a noble family, I tried to find him in the collection of Iván Nagy. According to Nagy, two persons are possible to be the author of the booklet. István Révay II. lived between 1557 and 1598 and he was the captain in Szatmár.¹⁰⁵ Since there is a too big difference between his date of death and the date written in the booklet, I do not think that he was the author of the surveyed booklet therefore I would not like to pay attention to his life.

The other István Révay was born on September 12 of 1602 and died January 25 of 1653. After his studies he went to the manor of Zsigmond Forgács to be a page there. Then

¹⁰⁴ OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 763.

¹⁰⁵ Iván Nagy, *Magyarország családai czímerekkel és nemzedékrendi táblákkal*, (Pest: Ráth Mór, 1863) vol. 9., 694.

he was employed by the Palatine Szaniszló Thurzó where he worked with horses. He went to Constantinople.¹⁰⁶ Iván Nagy did not write how many years István Révay spent in the city and why he was there, but on the basis of the remained recipe book it is legitimate to presume that he went for studying more about horses. My opinion is that this István Révay is the aforementioned ‘deceased István Révay.’ The date as well as the fact that he spent some time in Constantinople proves the same identity. Therefore, I would like to go into details concerning his family and his life.

The Révay family is one of the oldest noble families of Hungary. The first known member was Jákó or Jakab who lived in the beginning of the 13th century. The name of the family came from the castle of Réva which was situated in Szerémség. Today is no place known as Réva in the Szerémség but a place called Rivicza.¹⁰⁷ Since the aim of this subchapter is not to dive into the origin of this surname, I would not like to detail the latter information about the family. According to Iván Nagy, István Révay received his title of baron in 1631 or in 1637 while Béla Kempelen claims that István Révay got this title in 1635.¹⁰⁸ When István Révay came back from Constantinople, he became the captain of Miklós Eszterházy’s manor and from this place he went to Tokaj where he became the captain of the castle. He died in his own house – there is no data where it was – on 25 of January in 1653. He was buried in Turóc county in Szentpéter.¹⁰⁹

Data about his studies cannot be found but considering the fact that he spent some time in Constantinople proves that he was open minded and educated in veterinary medicine. On the other hand, he was a soldier. No doubt, he was a good soldier since he became a captain of a castle and it is clear from his biography that he gained this position step by step. As far as noblemen in his biography are concerned, I claim that their influence was very

¹⁰⁶ Op. cit., 703.

¹⁰⁷ Op. cit., 690.

¹⁰⁸ Béla Kempelen, *Magyar nemes családok*, (1915) 94-95.

¹⁰⁹ Iván Nagy, *Magyarország családai czímerekkel és nemzedékrendi táblákkal*, vol. 9., 703.

important in István Révay's life. Therefore, I would like to present the aforementioned Hungarian noblemen as well.

István Révay probably spent the end of his adolescence as a page in the court of Zsigmond Forgács. Zsigmond Forgács was born in 1565 and died in 1621.¹¹⁰ His biography is considerable from my point of view from the 1610s because in those years Révay could have lived in Forgács's manor. He was Catholic and he was the captain of Upper Hungary. Since I would like to concentrate on his years in the 1610s, I do not want to describe from the beginning how he achieved the title of Palatine of the country in 1618. Before gaining this latter title he was the *országbíró* of Hungary as well as he became the comes of Sáros, Szabolcs and Nógrád county.¹¹¹ For the reason that Révay was born in 1602, I think he could have gone to Forgács's manor around the end of the 1610s. Taking into consideration that he went to Forgács's place after his studies, he could have joined when Forgács was elected as a Palatine in 1618. Forgács died in 1621¹¹² and the next Palatine, Szaniszló Thurzó again employed István Révay. Thurzó was born in 1576, he studied abroad and apart from Hungarian he also spoke Latin, German and Czech. He was appointed as the comes of Szepes county in 1614, then in 1622 he was elected to be the Palatine of Hungary but three years later he died.¹¹³ Then, István Révay went to Constantinople when he studied some veterinary practice and when he came back he joined Miklós Eszterházy's court. Miklós Eszterházy was born in 1582 in Galánta.¹¹⁴ He was a Protestant but he changed his confession for Catholicism which made him easier to achieve higher political positions in Royal Hungary. In 1625 he was elected as a Palatine in Sopron.¹¹⁵ There is no data how many years or months Révay spent in Constantinople, but supposedly he came back to Hungary during the 1620s and he became the

¹¹⁰ Iván Nagy, *Magyarország családai czímerekkel és nemzedékrendi táblákkal* (Pest: Freibeisz I., 1858) vol.2, 203.

¹¹¹ Op. cit., 207.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Iván Nagy, *Magyarország családai czímerekkel és nemzedékrendi táblákkal* (Pest: Emich Gusztáv, 1865) vol. 11., 206.

¹¹⁴ Iván Nagy, *Magyarország családai czímerekkel és nemzedékrendi táblákkal*, vol. 2., 83.

¹¹⁵ Op. cit., 84.

captain of the manor of Eszterházy. The date is supported by the fact that he became the captain of the castle of Tokaj in 1631.¹¹⁶

My opinion is that these people are considerable in the research of Révay's biography because they influenced his life as well as his mind. As a matter of fact, these three noblemen were among the political leadership of the country which implies that they were educated as well as open-minded. Since Révay was working as their employee and he himself became a captain of a castle, it is rightful to reckon that Révay was also an open-minded and educated person. Moreover, the booklet proves this assumption because Révay dictated his recipes collected in Constantinople. But for the reason that the writer mentioned him as the deceased István Révay it is rightful to arise the question whether an original notebook existed at all. On the basis of the assumption that István Révay had simple memory like everyone else, I think he made notes when he was in the stable next to the stableman of the Osman emperor. Unfortunately, there is no data about these notes either the person who copied. All in all, his booklet is an important proof for the multicolored Hungarian medical life in the 17th century.

József Illésházy owned Oct. Hung 87 in which he was the only one who made notations. Supposedly, according to the investigations of the library the booklet originated from the 17th century. In the *Families of Hungary with their coat-of-arms and their tables of generations* I found only one József Illésházy. My main problem is with this József Illésházy is that he lived lately compared to the booklet he owned. There is no data about his date of birth but it is known that he died in 1759. His father, Miklós gained countship in 1678 and later he was chancellor between 1715 and 1723.¹¹⁷ Concerning József's age, my main question is whether he grew up and he was adult in the late 17th century or he was born in the end of the 17th century. If the former one is affirmative, I have to claim that József Illésházy had a long life comparing to his generation. I do not assert that long life was not possible in

¹¹⁶ Iván Nagy, *Magyarország családai czímerekkel és nemzedékrendi táblákkal*, vol. 9., 703.

¹¹⁷ Iván Nagy, *Magyarország családai czímerekkel és nemzedékrendi táblákkal*, (Pest: Ráth Mór, 1859) vol. 5., 228.

the 17th century but it was extremely rare and therefore it would be logical if he was mentioned by someone else as ‘a man who had a long life’. Moreover, considering József Illésházy’s date of death and the results of the library I think Illésházy should have been born at least in 1680. In this case, I gave only eighty years to him but taking into account the hygienic and medical circumstances it was a quite long life. I think it is also possible that he started the booklet in his adolescence.

On the other hand, my opinion is that the date which is presented regarding his father could also be useful in the research of Illésházy’s date of birth. There is no data about his father’s date of birth but he gained countship for his branch in 1678.¹¹⁸ Taking into consideration that a 17th-century nobleman got some studies and he had to participate in political as well as military issues, I think Miklós Illésházy was in his thirties when he obtained the title. In this point, it is rightful to arise the question when he got married. Since only his wife’s name is known I can just guess when he got married with Erzse Balassa. In fact, Miklós Illésházy was a nobleman who surely got some education which took some years and because of his countship I reckon he took participation in some military issues. It was general among 17th-century Hungarian noblemen that they got married in the beginning of thirties.¹¹⁹ All in all, my opinion is that it is possible that József Illésházy was born between 1670 and 1680. Therefore, it is possible that he was adult when he opened the remained notebook. As a son of a count, it is sure that he obtained some kind of higher education which is supported by the arrangement of his booklet I examined.

The other two names which are mentioned in the booklets generate some further problems since they are not included in the collection of Iván Nagy. Therefore, it is legitimate to assert that the mentioned men were not noblemen. But, one of them was having a noble surname. It was Ferenc Tholnay whose name is noted in the eighth page of Oct. Hung 1063:

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ *Magyar művelődéstörténet* (Hungarian Cultural History), ed. László Kósa (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2003), 143.

‘*sum ex libris Francisci Tholnay anno 1614 May 19*’.¹²⁰ In the collection of Iván Nagy as well as in the collection of Béla Kempelen I found a Ferenc Tholnay in the 18th century not in the 17th century. As a matter of fact, both of them know about a Tholnay or Tolnay family which gained its nobility in the 18th century. Furthermore, Béla Kempelen listed a Tolnay family which obtained its nobility in 1606.¹²¹ Since in his collection there is no more data about the aforementioned Tolnay family I cannot claim that Ferenc Tholnay was the member of this family. Considering his surveyed booklet in the investigation of his identity I cannot claim anything about him because not merely he was the one he noted recipes and prayers but also someone else. On the other hand, as opposed to the other home apothecaries, his notebook was not readable or ‘well-treated.’

György Győri possessed Oct. Hung. 1098. He is not mentioned any of the collections which I examined. In his case, the source itself helps to identify the owner. Not only did the booklet contain the name of the author but as it was presented earlier, prayers and the name of the town Sárospatak is also included. Taking into consideration the large number of prayers and threnodies as well as the name of a Calvinist town it is rightful to claim that György Győri was a Calvinist preacher. As it was presented in the chapter called Medical Manuscripts, this booklet contains some medical recipes as well. In this point, in regard to healers, it is necessary to introduce into the discussion that preachers were important in the villages’ life not merely from religious point of view but also from medical point of view. For the reason that they were the learnt men, they dealt with curing. Some of them studied medicine during the peregrination and gained medical degree. I will present some doctor-preacher in the next subchapter of this chapter.

There is no more data about these people, but to draw the conclusion on the rudiments of these data it is legitimate to claim that these people were not professionals but during their

¹²⁰ OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Modern Prints: Oct. Hung. 1063. 8.

¹²¹ Béla Kempelen, *Magyar nemes családok* (1931), 366.

life, they gained knowledge from both high and low culture. Two of them surely were the member of the aristocracy. Hence, they got some education because in 17th-century Hungary it was popular among nobility to send their sons to universities or grammar schools abroad.¹²² Probably, as they were not scientists but they wanted to survive, they were opened towards science as well as folk practices. One of them could have gained nobility and taking into account his home apothecary, it is rightful to suppose that he was educated. The fourth one was a priest which arises further questions in regard to healers and doctors in 17th-century Hungary.

2. Learned Physicians and Preachers

In 16-17th-century Hungary it was common among the learned physicians that they became priests. This situation had very complex causes and was connected to traveling as well as salaries. Since the former one was very dangerous – especially in 17th-century Hungary – people did not like to travel or at least they tried to avoid traveling. Therefore, correspondence was very important in their life. Not only did they change news and events concerning the family but they also changed medical and agricultural suggestions. It was the same with doctors who were employed by an aristocratic family. They usually were in contact with other aristocratic families and they were well paid. But doctors in the towns were not just doctors. Especially, in the protestant parts of the country they were also preachers or teachers. Surely it was connected to financial as well as safety causes. In the following part, I would like to present three doctors from Kolozsvár [Cluj] in the end of the 16th century because they represent how many functions doctors were obtaining.

¹²² Júlia Varga, *Magyarországi diákok a Habsburg Birodalom kisebb egyetemein és akadémiáin 1560-1789* (Students from Hungary in the Less Important Universities of the Habsburg Empire 1560-1789) in *Magyarországi diákok egyetemjárása az újkorban* (Peregrination of Students from Hungary in the Modern Age), ed. László Szögi (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Levéltára, 2004), vol. 12., 22.

Ferenc Balásfi or Basilius practiced medicine in Kolozsvár [Cluj] in the late 1560s. He was not just a doctor but before his medical practice in the 1550s he was a preacher in Brassó [Brasov]. After 1565, he moved to Kolozsvár where he was employed as a teacher as well as a physician.¹²³ His successor in the city was Bernád Jekel or Jacobinus. It is unknown in which university he gained his medical degree but in a *Responsio* from 1592, he is mentioned as someone who studied medicine.¹²⁴ He also had the education to be a Unitarian preacher, but in the aforementioned *Responsio* he is named as someone who could not be a preacher because he had a lay profession. Then he left Kolozsvár and he lived in a village as a Unitarian preacher until the death of his patron, the Unitarian aristocrat, Kristóf Hagymássy. Since Hagymássy was an influential politician in the circle of István Báthory, Jekel, as a Unitarian preacher, was safe. After the death of his supporter, he fell from favor and he had to leave the village where he preached. As in Kolozsvár there was a Unitarian preacher at that time, he was obliged to become the physician of the town. Apart from his medical practice, he also accompanied aristocratic young men on their journeys to the university where they went to study.¹²⁵ Supposedly, he became a popular physician as well as a chaperon because he is mentioned in a Transylvanian aristocrat's diary: 'debt, there is in doctor Bernat's place in Kolozsvár, there is two hundred forints.'¹²⁶ This letter is notable because it proves the assumption that physicians took an influential part in the town's social life and all social classes appreciated them.

Another doctor was János Hertel, the son of Ferenc Dávid, the founder of the Hungarian Unitarian Church. János studied in the University of Padua where he gained his degree in medicine but he was also interested in botany and he became a well-prepared

¹²³ Pál Mátyás, "Kolozsvári orvosdoktorok a XVI.-XVII. század fordulóján" (Physicians in Kolozsvár in the End of the Sixteenth and the Beginning of the Seventeenth Century) in *Orvostörténeti Közlemények* 100 (1982): 61-68, 63.

¹²⁴ Op. cit., 64.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ *Erdélyi magyar szótörténeti tár*, ed. Attila Szabó T., (Bucharest: ... 1978) vol. 2., 442.: „adosságh, Bernat doctornal vgyan Colosuarinal, vagyon ket százforinth.”

botanist. Thanks to his botanical talent, he was offered to stay at the university as a professor of botany. He grabbed this opportunity and he stayed in the city but unfortunately, after some months he was sent. When he arrived in Kolozsvár in the mid 1590s, he started to practice medicine. As a city physician he was more appreciated than his predecessor, Jekel. People usually left some jewels or other valuable belongings in his house for preservation.¹²⁷

These three men were not merely doctors or preachers of their local community but they were ‘the educated men’ and everybody appreciated as well as trusted them. Being ‘the educated men’ in their community they could transfer medical knowledge and medical books toward their social circle. Therefore, even though I did not examine medical notebooks from these physicians; I think it is legitimate to claim that they were among the authors of the medical notebooks. Regarding these three men’s social background, it is necessary to note of the fact that all of them came from rich patrician families.¹²⁸ Due to their financial background they could go abroad to study and gain medical degree but which is remarkable in their biographies that before their practice they worked as preachers. A preacher was as important in people’s life as doctors were since they were learned men. Therefore, they taught the members of their local community. Especially women participation was significant in this communication hence I would like introduce into the discussion female healers, wise-women as well as midwives in early modern Hungary.

¹²⁷ Pál Mátyás, “Kolozsvári orvosdoktorok a XVI.-XVII. század fordulóján”, 67.

¹²⁸ Op. cit., 68.

3. Wise-Women in Early Modern Hungary

As it was presented in the Theoretical Framework chapter, illness was a public affair in the early modern society.¹²⁹ In general, people were ill at home, they were out of control of an institution and they could choose what kind of treatment they wanted. They could choose between the different types of practitioners.¹³⁰ According to Andrew Wear, ‘women were especially important in early modern medicine. They not only cared for their sick relatives, as is often the case today, but also treated both serious and minor illnesses.’¹³¹

Women, as the persons who treated their sick relatives, surely participated in the gathering of the recipes in the booklets I examined. Especially, women from the aristocratic ranks were famous healers. The most well known female healer of the sixteenth century was Potentia Dersffy, while in the seventeenth century Éva Poppel was remarkable.¹³² Although there is no example from them among the examined booklets, it is still necessary to mention that both of them left behind quite large correspondence. A letter of Potentia Dersffy remained in which she asks Tamás Nádasdy to copy a book more quickly because she needs it.¹³³ While on Éva Poppel’s bookshelf the *Herbarium* of Melius could also be found.¹³⁴ Thus, these aristocratic women were educated and well-known healers in their social circle.

In regard with education, my opinion is that some comments on women’s literacy in the early modern age are also needed. No doubt, literacy of women was lower than literacy of

¹²⁹ Michael Stolberg, “Medical Popularization and the Patient in the Eighteenth Century in Willem de Blécourt and Cornelia Usborne”, *Cultural Approaches to the History of Medicine, Mediating Medicine in Early Modern and Modern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2004), 89-107., 196.

¹³⁰ Lawrence I. Conrad, Michael Neve, Vivian Nutton, Roy Porter and Andrew Wear, *The Western Medical Tradition 800 BC to AD 1800* (Cambridge: University Press, 1995), 232.

¹³¹ Op. cit., 234.

¹³² Margit Sárdi S., “Főrangú hölgyek gyógyfüves könyvei” (Aristocratic women’s herbariums) in *Áldás és átok, csoda és boszorkányság* (Blessing and Curse, Miracle and Witchcraft) ed. Éva Pócs (Budapest, 2004), 203-222., 205.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Katalin Kincses, “Ím küttém én orvosságot” – Lobkowitz Poppel Éva levelezése 1622-1640 (“I Have Sent Medicine” – Éva Poppel Lobkowitz’s correspondence) in *Régi magyar történelmi források* (Old Hungarian Historical Sources), ed. Ildikó Horn and Andrea Kreutzer (Budapest: ELTE Középkori és Korajújkori Magyar Történelmi Tanszék és a Korajújkori Társaság, 1993), vol. 3., 44.

men in the 16th and 17th century, but many women could read and write in those centuries. Literate women read different kinds of books but they often read books which were in relation with religion.¹³⁵ In this point, I need to introduce the question of social classes because aristocratic women were not alone with their literacy among women. It was common that the wives of the preachers and merchants read and write. Usually they taught their wives because it helped their professional life. For instance, in the beginning of the 17th century a Calvinist preacher István Miskolczi Csulyak taught his wife as well as their daughters to read and write.¹³⁶

Csulyak's memoirs reveal that his wife, Judit read a lot and that she bought a book for her husband.¹³⁷ Being a wife of an educated man, it is normal to buy something which is connected to his profession. Therefore, it is not remarkable that Judit bought a book for her husband.¹³⁸ Furthermore, according to Csulyak's memoirs Judit read a lot, which in my view is essential because it proves that not just aristocratic women could be literate. Without doubt, other women from the lower social classes also read and wrote. Hence, it is legitimate to assume that among the authors of these notebooks, women from lower classes can also be found. For instance, in the case of György Győri – who surely was a Calvinist preacher – his wife might have gathered recipes and for some reasons she dictated them to him.

On no condition was literacy the privilege of aristocratic women. Moreover, women were gaining the key figure in home remedial practice. 'Every housewife had her own repertoire of private remedies.'¹³⁹ Thus, I can claim that among the authors of the home apothecaries I examined some female healers could have been as well. Since the authors of the notebooks were literate and among them there were at least two noblemen as well as a

¹³⁵ Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 50.

¹³⁶ Katalin Péter "Az olvasó nő eszménye a 17. század elején" (The Image of the Reading Woman in the Beginning of the 17th century) in *A középkor szeretete* (Love of the Middle Ages), ed. Gábor Klaniczay and Balázs Nagy (Budapest: ELTE BTK Közép- és Koraiújkori Egyetemes Történeti Tanszék, 1999), 323-332., 326-331.

¹³⁷ Op. cit., 326-331.

¹³⁸ Op. cit., 331.

¹³⁹ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 14.

preacher, it is legitimate to suppose that their wives were educated or at least opened towards folk remedies. Little can I assert that all of them were educated as the examples I have given above, therefore I aim to present a less educated group of them. They were the midwives who were not just less educated but they also came from a lower social class.

Regarding midwives' social prestige, 'they were valued for their knowledge, but on the other hand, they were feared and rejected because of precisely the same knowledge.'¹⁴⁰ Midwives' presence at child birth was necessary, so they ruled over life and death.¹⁴¹ 'They were the first to identify anomalies in a baby, such as teeth, hair, and excessive number of fingers or a tail, and from these an ability to predict the future of the child was attributed to them.'¹⁴² Although midwives could not read they gave and received medical information, recipes and suggestions indirectly and therefore, they could play a role in gathering of medical recipes. Because of this, it is worth presuming that the authors of the examined medical booklets were connected to the midwives of the villages. Usually women were the mediator between high and low culture. Noblemen would have not known ballads, folktales and folk remedies without their mothers, sisters and wives.¹⁴³

It is also possible to draw conclusions from the types of recipes. As I presented the content of the notebooks and emphasized that the recipes mainly treat mostly everyday illnesses such as head-or ear-ache and there are not so many gynecological recipes. I need to further analyze this fact concerning the authors' gender. "Men were usually absent from the birth chamber, except for the relatively rare and dreaded occasion when a male surgeon was called in to use his instruments to break up and bring out a dead foetus from the womb. All

¹⁴⁰Éva Pócs, "Sors, bábák, boszorkányok. Archaikus sorsképzetek Közép- és Kelet-Európa hiedelemrendszereiben" (Fate, midwives, witches. Archaic fate-imagination in Central and in Eastern Europe) in *Magyar néphit Közép- és Kelet-Európa határán. Válogatott tanulmányok* (Hungarian folk belief in Central and in Eastern Europe. Selected Studies), ed. Éva Pócs (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2002), vol.1., 85-86.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Tünde Lengyelová, "The Mystery of Birth: Magic, Empirical and Rational Approaches to Women's Medicine in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods" in *The Role of Magic in the Past, Learned and Popular Magic, Popular Beliefs and Diversity of Attitudes*, ed. Blanka Szeghyová (Bratislava: Pro Historia, 2005), 117-136., 119.

¹⁴³ Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 28.

the expertise was usually home-grown, learned from experience and from other women in a domestic setting.”¹⁴⁴ Therefore, it is logical that in the books which were written by men there are no recipes concerning giving birth but in booklets owned by men gynecological recipes can be found. József Illésházy collected the most gynecological recipes among the examined booklets.¹⁴⁵ This fact poses the question who really took part in home remedial practice: the men or the women. Especially, in the case of obstetrics, it is more logical to assume that men did not really participate in event of birth giving. Of course, they were not present in the event of birth but considering the recipes which mainly are connected to nursing and conception, it is rightful to draw the conclusion that men were interested in gynecology.

In sum, women were at home, they spent a large amount of time in the manor, in the village with women from other social classes. In the case of women in the higher social ranks, they were educated enough to collect and systematize the home recipes in a booklet. On the other side, male participation in the home remedial practice is also conspicuous. Barely could a wife of a preacher have been literate without being a wife of a preacher. Furthermore, in the surveyed booklets only male names can be found. All in all, my opinion is that women were not alone in the home remedial practice.

4. Education, Contacts

Considering the education of the authors first and foremost I would like to concentrate on the language of the notebooks. As it can be seen in the table presented on page 26, most booklets contain Latin texts as well as expressions. Comparing the authors' knowledge of Latin to each other, I have to claim that it varies to a great extent. There are

¹⁴⁴ Lawrence I. Conrad, Michael Neve, Vivian Nutton, Roy Porter and Andrew Wear, *The Western Medical Tradition 800 BC to AD 1800*, 234.

¹⁴⁵ OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Oct. Hung. 87.

some books which are full of Latin expressions and words but there are some in which only the generally known Latin words as *febris* and *item* can be found. The fact that there is Latin text in a book can have two possible implications in connection with the authors. On the one hand, it means that the author was educated, because the language of science was Latin, and the usage of Latin words and expressions implies that the author had some kind of better education. On the other hand, it can imply the opposite, for example in cases when they misused the words. Taking into account that these notebooks were not written with scientific aims, it is essential that the authors used Latin words in the Hungarian text. The presence of the Latin text as well as medical expressions in the Hungarian texts proves that the authors took really their remedial practice seriously and they educated themselves. Besides, while I was reading these booklets it was very confusing that some of the authors mixed the languages of the recipes. For instance, Oct. Hung. 946 contains Hungarian as well as Latin words. In the beginning of this notebook the author wrote economic suggestions in Latin, then he started to write medical recipes in Hungarian. The author of another notebook was not as structured in the case of language as the former one because he often started the recipes in Latin and ended them in Hungarian. Sometimes he inserted Latin words into the Hungarian text or Hungarian words into the Latin texts.¹⁴⁶

Focusing on the question of language, I need to mention that there are Greek as well as Slovakian notes in some of the booklets. The presence of the Greek language is understandable because this language was the part of the scientific discourse but in the case of Slovakian language, further explanation is needed. The use of Slovakian implies more information about the author as well as his environment. Even though the title of the booklet is in Hungarian, on the last pages some Slovakian recipes can be found.¹⁴⁷ What does this mean? Why did the author write the recipes in this language? Surely, the author knew

¹⁴⁶ OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Prints: Quart. Hung. 279.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

Slovakian but his mother tongue could have been Hungarian, because this is the language that he used in most of the book. Taking into consideration that most of the Slovaks in the 17th century were members of the lower classes it is necessary to ask the question whether these recipes were folk recipes.

Apart from the language, superstition is also remarkable in relation to practical knowledge. Considering Margit Sárdi's claim that superstition can mainly be found in booklets which were written by men¹⁴⁸ I have to claim that in those books which went through the course of my research, there were not so many superstitious suggestions. I do not think that superstition is connected to the gender of the author or the owner. Furthermore, in my opinion the fact that the owner of the booklet is named it does not signify that he was the only healer in the family. As it can be seen in the table on page 26 in four booklets other handwritings appear which does not mean that the others with one handwriting were collected by only one person. Of course, these booklets could be inherited or in the same time more than one person dealt with curing in the family. Certainly, the healer educated younger members of his or her relatives. It is enough to read a letter of Éva Poppel to her son or his wife in which she suggests certain therapies. For instance in a letter she was worrying about her daughter-in-law who was pregnant and she was just lying. "Believe me, her frequent lying in the bed is not only for her damage but for that one who is with her."¹⁴⁹ In the further part of the letter, Eva Poppel supports with examples how harmful is lying in a bed for a healthy pregnant woman.

It is also necessary to introduce into the discussion the materials what the owners used for noting the recipes. They mostly opened a separate notebook to collect suggestions, but in

¹⁴⁸ Margit Sárdi S., "Főrangú hölgyek gyógyfüves könyvei", 212.

¹⁴⁹ Katalin Kincses, "Ím küttem én orvosságot" – Lobkowitz Poppel Éva levelezése 1622-1640, 137., Letter nr. 25.: "untalan fekszik, mely eö nekj, hidgyed oly nagy ártalmra uagyon mjnt ha majnd maganak s- mjnd annak a kj nála uagyon"

one case, recipes were written down in the dust-wrapper of an edition of Scarabeus.¹⁵⁰ As the document was presented in the chapter *Medical Manuscripts*, I would not like to deal with its presentation. I also generated some questions concerning its owner, therefore, at this part of the thesis I would like to try to answer. The fact that someone possessed this book supports the assumption that he obtained higher education. Since higher educated people read Erasmus, I think the owner of this edition was a preacher or someone who gained humanistic education. I also asked why the owner noted the recipes into the dust-wrapper. Of course, after five hundred years, it is impossible to answer this question but some presumptions can be raised. For instance, the owner was in a situation when he did not have his home apothecary, or he did not have home apothecary. However, in my opinion, is not possible that the owner did not have home apothecary because a learned man is under discussion. As it was presented in the former part of this chapter, learned men usually dealt with curing. Thus, it could have happened that the owner wanted to write something quickly and this edition was close to him. Moreover, it is more affirmative to suppose that he liked this edition and he usually kept with himself because he noted recipes in other languages as well.

Considering that healers always add something new into their medical notebook, it is rightful to raise the question how they gathered these new recipes. In fact, they were in contact with each other because many booklets contain the same recipe for the same illness. Not only does this suggest that they knew one another but that they used the same sources. “Water for the eyes: crush some nuts, almonds and apricot stones and put into burnt wine, then keep the liquid in a bottle for a couple of days, then put it on your eyes.”¹⁵¹ “About eye-ache: mix almonds and apricot stones in burnt wine, squeeze its juice into a bottle, then keep

¹⁵⁰OSZK,Department of Manuscripts and Early Modern Prints: Oct. Hung. 968.

¹⁵¹ OSZK,Department of Manuscripts and Early Modern Prints: Oct.Hung.500., 10: *Szemnek való víz: égett bort, diót, mandulát, barackmagot össze kell törni, egy pár napig üvegben kell tartani, majd le kell szűrni, és azzal kell beborogatni a szemet.*

it in the direct sunlight for a couple of days and then drip it gradually into your eyes.”¹⁵²

Taking into account geographical issues, in Hungary there are no such geographical differences which would cause significant differences in the flora. Thus, as the same herbs could be found in the whole country, people used the same herbs for healing all over the country.

To sum up, the use of different languages hints that these authors were interested in folk as well as in high medicine because they used the language of science. On the other hand, they also used Hungarian and Slovakian to make notes. This fact arises further questions regarding the authors' education. Were they real humanists who supported the utilization of mother tongue in the scientific world? My opinion is that they did not aim to support such great ideas as being mediator between high and low culture but they wanted to make the life of their family and social circle easier by writing down recipes in a language which was understood by everyone. Taking into consideration the hygienic circumstances and the different kinds of diseases it was a quite logical decision. Of course, the authors gained some kind of education, which is proved by their literacy, by the recipes they gathered, by the language they utilized and some cases, by their social origin. Regarding superstition, I have to claim that the society in the focus of this research is a preindustrial society in which not merely religion but folk beliefs were also essential. Moreover, people who gathered recipes were also members of this society.

¹⁵² OSZK, Department of Manuscripts and Early Modern Prints: Quart. Hung. 440., 3: *Szemfájásrul*: mandulát, barackmagot égetett borban kikeverni, ki kell facsarni a levét egy üvegbe, azt kitenni a verőfényre, hogy megérjék, és apránként csepegtess a fájó szemre.

Conclusion

Although the Hungarian medical conditions were not as organized and institutionalized as in the Western part of the continent, I have to claim that a quite vivid and well-organized medical culture existed in the country. Not only was it connected to the peregrination and medical studies but people's general interest in the improvement in health culture. Therefore, a large number of people dealt with curing. Because the aim of this thesis was not to presents all of them, I concentrated on a tiny group of healers. They were those people who stayed at home and cured those people who they were living with. In the home remedial practice, it was common to collect and to note down recipes into different kinds of books. During the research, I found complex home apothecaries, notebooks and prayer book with recipes as well.

In the surveyed booklets, some names were written therefore it is clear that among the authors, noblemen and preachers can also be found. This information is important because they were not professionals but presumably they gained some kind of higher education. For instance, in 17th-century Hungary noblemen sent their sons to foreign universities to study. In the case of the families of the presented men – István Révay and József Illésházy – it is known that the boys from these families were sent to Graz for getting higher education.¹⁵³ Another educated man, among the examined people was György Győri who supposedly was a Calvinist preacher. Living in a catholic empire protestants who wanted to gain some kind of higher degree went on to study abroad. Probably it happened to György Győri as well. In many places of the country, only preachers were learned and people usually went to their houses if they had a problem.

Although the presented authors and healers did not participate in higher education concerning medicine, they were educated people. They knew books and results of the high

¹⁵³ Júlia Varga, *Magyarországi diákok a Habsburg Birodalom kisebb egyetemein és akadémiáin 1560-1789*, 27.

medical culture. They used their contemporaries' works in their home remedial practice. Pietro Mattioli, Adam Lonitzer, Jean Fernel and Leonhard Fuchs were well-known among the authors of the medical notebooks because these authors appeared in the Hungarian medical literature which was creating in the end of the 16th century.

All in all, preachers, wise-women, midwives and noblemen who gathered recipes and dealt with curing were important members of their social circle because they were those people who could help the sick. Moreover, they were standing on the border between the magical world and the scientific world. They were the members of their local community as they were the member of the 'Republic of Letters' as well. With mixing of these worlds they followed the Western European scientists and they became the ambassadors between high and low culture.

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