



The Pharmacies of the Society of Jesus in Historical Hungary in the 17-18th Centuries

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The growth of the Society of Jesus in Hungary

The Society of Jesus is a Christian religious order of the Catholic Church. The Society of Jesus was founded by Saint Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) in 1540. The Jesuits concentrated on three activities: they founded schools throughout Europe, the second mission was to convert non-Christians to Catholicism, and their third goal was a Catholic renewal.

The setting down of Jesuits in Hungary was helped by Miklós Oláh who was the Archbishop of Esztergom (1553-1568) and the Chancellor of Hungary. He invited the Jesuits to Hungary. The Rector of the Vienna Jesuit College, the Spanishman Juan de Vitoria (†1578) took part in the Council of Nagyszombat in 1561. Juan de Vittoria was the first Jesuit who visited Hungary (1553).

First, the Jesuits established wandering missio-stations (*missio vaga*), afterwards – under favourable conditions - these became permanent stations (*missio stabilis*). Headquarters and Colleges were founded in the urban centres (*residentia* and *collegium*).

The Nagyszombat Jesuit College was founded by Archbishop Miklós Oláh in 1561 too [SZILAS]. The Austrian Province was separated from Provincia Germaniae Superioris in 1663. The Austrian Province was the biggest province of the Society of Jesus, which included Hungary too.

In 1773, at the time of the dissolution of the Order, the activity of the Hungarian Jesuits was on the summit.

The growth of the Society of Jesus in numbers in Hungary

1600.

57 Jesuits
2 Colleges; 2 Monasteries; 1 Mission in Ottoman Territory

1650.

149 Jesuits
1 University; 4 Colleges; 8 Monasteries; 14 Missions in Ottoman Territory

1700.

433 Jesuits
1 University; 9 Colleges; 13 Monasteries; 18 Missions
120 Jesuits worked in Ottoman Territory of Hungary in Missions

1773.

838 Jesuits

15 Colleges; 19 Monasteries; 10 Missions

The pharmacies founded by the Jesuits in Hungary

The foundation of Jesuit pharmacies also served the aim of the Society of Jesus to create public places visited by people.

In historical Hungary, there were 15 pharmacies founded by Jesuits [SÁGI].

The foundation of Jesuits pharmacies and their existence (from – to)

Nagyszombat 1635-1773

Zágráb 1643-1764

Pozsony 1658-1773

Kassa 1662-1773

Trencsén 1668/69-1773

Győr 1687-1773

Eger 1714-1773

Kolozsvár 1731-1773

Szakolca 1740-1773

Pozsega 1741-1773

Kőszeg 1743-1773

Székesfehérvár 1745-1773

Ungvár 1745-1773

Nagyvárad 1747-1773

Eperjes 1756-1766

The period of the foundation

to 1650 2

1651-1675 3

1676-1700 1

1701-1725 1

1726-1750 7

after 1751 1

The pharmacy of Jesuits in Kőszeg

Kőszeg is a small town with sub-alpine climate. The town is situated at the foothills of the Alps. The settlement and its vicinity at the foot of the Kőszeg Hills, in the valley of the brook Gyöngyös has been inhabited since the 6th-7th centuries. In 1328 the town was given the rank of a free royal town. The Castle built in the 13th century was named after captain Miklós Jurisics, who managed to hold up the Turkish Troops heading towards Vienna in 1532 with the help of the inhabitants.

The medieval town centre was not affected by the historical events, so inside the one-time townwalls, the remains of which can still be seen, the houses have been preserved in their original form in Jurisics Square and in neighbouring streets.

György Széchényi, who was the Archbishop of Győr, invited the Jesuits to Kőszeg in 1675. He added the direction to the St Jakab (Jacobus maior) Church near the town hall. The



Jesuits' Monastery was built between 1677-1680, on the basis of the plans of Italian architect Pietro Orsolini.

The rector of Kőszeg Jesuit College, Pál Sztankay in his application handed to the city magistrate on 1743, applied for the establishment of a pharmacy. The pharmacy was placed on the ground floor of the Monastery left from the entrance.

After the dissolution of the Jesuit Order in 1773, the Jesuit pharmacy in Kőszeg went on working under the direction of the last monastic pharmacist. In February 1775 the assest of Jesuits was canted. It was then Mátyás Svalla who bought it and named *The Golden Unicorn*. In 1777 Svalla had to move his pharmacy to its current place, to 11 Jurisics square. To move the pharmacy to this building from the Jesuit Monastery, he chose an ingenious solution: he got the narrow way next to the house and the original gateway became the room of the pharmacy. In the attic of the house he made a drug-drying room. This house has been existing as The Golden Unicorn Pharmacy House of the Pharmaceutical Museum since 1980.

The officinal furniture of pharmacy of Jesuits in Kőszeg

The brilliant officinal furniture was made by Jesuit joiners and carving monks. The furniture succesfully mingles vigorous Italian baroque conduct and carvings with the more moderate Austrian approach, so it became the typical representative of the Hungarian furniture making sometimes called Jesuit baroque [SZIGETVÁRY].

The green wooden pots on the shelves are the most significant products of Jesuits in 1743. The scrolls of wooden pots and of the drawer of the furniture are quite interesting and we can study the *materia medica* of Jesuits. Parts of this medicine came from South America, India and China.

The pictures above the two side doors of the officinal room came from a painter called Ettl. One of the pictures shows the Lady with the child Jesus and a cherub, the other one shows the two patrons of medicine and pharmaceutics St Kozma and St Damján.

Dr. Sági, Erzsébet: The late pharmacies of the Order of Jesuits
Szilas, László S.J.: A Jézus Társasága Magyarországon / The Society of Jesus in Hungary
Dr. Szigetváry, Ferenc: Pharmaceutical Museums in Kőszeg