

The Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century and the Remarkable Career of One of its Archivists

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FOLLOWING THE return of Queen Isabella and her son from Poland to Transylvania in the autumn of 1556, it became apparent that the political setup previously considered temporary would endure for an extended period. Consequently, the institutional foundations of the new administration needed to be established:¹ that was the moment when the organization of a new state, later to be known as the Principality of Transylvania, had begun. This reorganization clearly followed medieval models, applying the traditions of the former medieval Hungarian court to the realities of the Transylvanian society of the mid-sixteenth century.

The places of authentication that functioned under the jurisdiction of the elected king John Sigismund, i.e., the chapters of Alba Iulia and Oradea and the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur, underwent a particular transformation in the mid-sixteenth century.² After several attempts at their reorganization and mostly as a consequence of the secularization of the properties of the Catholic Church, a specific Transylvanian institution was created, that of the *requisitores* or letter-searchers. Their main task was to issue and keep legal documents, which were essential for the preservation of the privileges and domains of the nobility. Following this reorganization, the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur once again became one of the most important institutions for issuing charters in Transylvania, alongside the princely chancellery and the places of authentication in Alba Iulia and Oradea. The location of these institutions influenced their activity of issuing and preserving charters. In the case of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur, its relocation to the town of Cluj gave it a more “urban” character as compared to its previous trait of being a typically noble institution.³ In this paper, I will show how this urban character was manifested in the functioning of the place of authentication, and how the urban community used this institution, reorganized on a secular basis, to promote its own interests. I will exemplify this particular relationship with the career of one of the appointed letter-searchers (*requisitores*) who lived in the main square of the town.

Following the Reformation that swept across Transylvania beginning with the 1520s, the sole function of the former Benedictine abbey of Cluj-Mănăştur deemed valuable,

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particularly to the nobility, was serving as a place of authentication. After 1556, the last notary of the Benedictine monastery, János Óvári, ensured the continuity of the issuing of documents until the establishment of the *requisitores* (1575).⁴ The Transylvanian estates, despite the changing times, tried to ensure the preservation and the use of the old archival material kept in the monastery's sacristy, which held an important part of their personal and familial privileges. The Diet of 1557 decided to entrust the archives of the Chapter of Alba Iulia and those of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur to trustworthy nobles who, in addition to the custody of the archives, were tasked with drawing up and issuing authentic copies of the documents. However, in the case of the Convent, the appointment of these noble letter-searchers did not take place. As an ad-hoc solution the Convent's archives from the sacristy of the church of Cluj-Mănăştur were assigned to the custody of the magistrate of Cluj until 1575. Thus, whenever documents kept in the archive were needed for a lawsuit or for any other reasons, the *mandatum (requisitoria)* for the letters was addressed to the town magistrate as "searchers of the letters kept in the sacristy of the monastery."⁵ Essentially, the royal free town took over part of the duties of the place of authentication by issuing these transcripts. In the period between 1560 and 1573, it was the notary of the Convent and of Cluj County János Óvári, accompanied by citizens of the town, who, following the letter-searcher mandate, went to Cluj-Mănăştur and searched for the requested document.⁶ Those in charge of carrying out the procedure unlocked and then locked again and sealed the door of the sacristy, copying on the spot the requested text on the back of the mandate or took the original with them and brought it to Cluj, where they issued the document in a transcript in the name of the town magistrate endorsed with the town's greater seal.

The place of authentication of the Convent was radically reorganized as a secular institution, with the Instructions issued in the autumn of 1575.⁷ The appointed three *requisitores* mainly performed the same tasks (recording transactions, performing the *statutiones* and *attestationes* and other legal tasks, issuing all kind of undertakings—*fissiones* that carried legal authority, registering the issued charters in the protocols) as the previous *loca credibilia*. Although the clergyman Bálint Somogyi was appointed head of the lay staff, the lay archivist-letter searchers in charge of preserving and issuing documents were all closely connected with the town of Cluj, considering that they were all ennobled citizens.

Since the Middle Ages, many of the educated inhabitants of Cluj were employed at the Benedictine abbey's *loca credibilia*, and a significant number of the notaries of the Convent also originated from the neighboring town.⁸ This tendency intensified after the secularization, especially after the relocation of the Convent's archives to the town, so that more than half of the known *requisitores* until the end of the seventeenth century were natives of Cluj and held at the same time important positions in the town government. We note that among the sixteenth century *requisitores*, Miklós Zalánkeményi came into office as notary of the town, and the conservator or the chief-requisitor Márton Kolozsvári, as well as Mátyás Kövendi, were all elected *centumpaters*, members of the greater town council.⁹

In addition to the fact that the *requisitores* became members of the urban community, the Convent's new location also contributed to its urban character. With the secularization, the monastery's buildings and estate became the property of the Transylvanian

treasury, and later came into the possession of different nobles. As a consequence, the archives of the Convent could no longer be kept in the sacristy of the church, as all the appointed requisitors lived within the town walls. It is highly probable that the relocation of the archives and, with it, of the place of authentication happened after the appointment of the new requisitors in June 1575. At that time, we can suppose that the archives were temporarily kept in the town hall in Cluj, and from then until the first part of the eighteenth century, the Convent archives had no permanent place of preservation in the town.¹⁰ This reality would explain the fact that in a document from 1648, the house on Farkas Street (today Str. Kogălniceanu) belonging to István Pálfi, who was conservator of the Convent in the mid-seventeenth century, served as the “sacristia” of the place of authentication (*domum... quae... pro sacristia sive conservatorio conventus Colosmonostrensis reputaretur*).¹¹ Clearly we can assume that the archives were kept in the same way in the earlier period. From the sporadic data at our disposal it seems that the Convent’s archive was divided into two categories: the current material was kept *domestice* by the archivists in their own houses, while the old archive was stored most likely in rented locations (e.g., in the mid-seventeenth century in the house of the orphans of protonotary István Kassai).

The change of location naturally had a significant impact on the activity of issuing charters. In the Middle Ages, if a nobleman wanted a document to be issued, he would go in person or send his servant to the abbey on Monastery Hill in Mănăștur. The situation, however, changed after 1575 following the reorganization of the place of authentication and the transfer of the Convent’s archive to the town. As the issuance of charters was entrusted to the requisitors who lived in their houses in different parts of Cluj, in order to obtain a document a person had to go to the home of the three archivists, where the letter-searcher in question would briefly write down the testimony, and the authentic charter could only be issued and sealed if at least two requisitors were present. If one of them was away—which could happen due to the increasing number of princely mandates to be executed—they could be replaced by citizens of Cluj. This happened, for example in the seventeenth century, when Miklós Váradi and Péter Huszár, citizens of the town, wrote down the will of Elisabeth Borsvai instead of the requisitors, who were busy in the service of the prince.¹² In addition to this example, we can also deduce from the petition of the conservator István Pálfi addressed to the prince in the mid-seventeenth century that there was no permanent *conventualis locus* in Cluj, and that the testimonies were recorded and the charters issued in the residences of the requisitors.¹³ More rarely, if the parties were unable to travel or were of high social standing, the letter-searchers themselves traveled to record their testimony. In 1601, for example, the Convent’s archivists (*requisitores*) János Kibédi and Mátyás Kövendi went to the smaller church on the town’s main square and recorded the testimony of the estates assembled there in the Diet that János Gyerőfi had given an account before them of the expenses for the maintenance of the army.¹⁴ This example demonstrates that the new location of the place of authentication, the town of Cluj, also largely satisfied the needs of the interested individuals, i.e., the nobility who often gathered there during the diets or for the octave sessions of the judiciary. It should also be noted here that from the mid-sixteenth century onward, the nobility of the Cluj County held their congregations in town, too, and the judicial seat of the county court also functioned here.

As regards the relationship and attitude of the townspeople towards the institution moved within the walls of the town, we can observe how this change is reflected in the output of the requisitors, i.e., in the documentary material, in the protocols, and in the charters issued. We have already talked about the fact that Cluj provided both the location and the staff for the newly created institution, the appointed requisitors being at the same time citizens of the town as well as officials appointed and ennobled by the princes. Before the secularization, the citizens of Cluj rarely registered their testimonies concerning their possessions in the town or in the counties before the Convent. In addition to the town law, Werbőczy's *Tripartitum* also forbade them from doing so, stating that testimonies concerning town property could only be made before the town magistrate. Following the secularization and the change of location the practice changed in this respect as well. The sentence of the princely table of March 1577 is significant in this respect: under the seal of the town of Cluj, the town magistrate could appoint procurators/attorneys, but in these cases the citizens of the town had to apply to the places of authentication (*in loco credibili constitui debere*).¹⁵ From the middle of the seventeenth century, even the magistrate appointed procurators before the Convent, who represented the town in the various lawsuits with the nobility of the county.¹⁶ According to our calculations, about 20% of the documents and testimonies in the Convent's protocols between 1576 and 1590 refer to Cluj, i.e., the person giving a testimony was a local, the testimony refers to real or movable properties in Cluj.¹⁷ This number clearly indicates the increasing trust of the townspeople in the Convent, showing at the same time the process of urbanization of the institution. For historians, the protocols became a significant source regarding the history of the town.

This statement is supported by several illustrative examples. The Convent played an important role in recording various transactions related to the acquisition of possessions and other goods by the town or its citizens. Thus, when the town council requested it, the requisitors were able to record in the town hall the declaration of a freed serf from Hungary. This particular individual had been bound as a serf of the town and had been placed in the town's estate of Apahida, in exchange for which he received a sum of money and a few measures of wheat.¹⁸ The records of this kind show how the town acquired its possessions in the counties, but it also demonstrates the methods by which it tried to populate them. In any case, the relationship between the landowner—in this case the town—and the serf was much more complex, involving responsibilities for both parties. The serf was entitled to be protected by the landowner and sometimes, especially in times of calamity, even received material aid from the landowner.¹⁹

The town council would address the requisitors of the Convent whenever it needed written proof of its various transactions with the nobility of the neighboring counties. Based on these dealings, we can trace the way in which the citizens acquired their estates in the counties and the numerous transactions with the nobles, who were always in need of money. In 1608, for example, János and András Sándor pledged their estate in Ciumăfaia (Dăbâca county) for the sums they borrowed from the royal judge of the town, Caspar Schemel.²⁰ As a result of these financial transactions, not only various estates, but also valuable movable property could end up in the hands of the townspeople. We mention here only two examples dated around 1608, when the senator Johann Stenczel received gold valuables from Mihály Bánffy for a total debt of 300 florins, while in another case

Druzina Kálnoky gave her dress, valued at 500 florins, to Johann Bek, a citizen of the town, to redeem the debt of her deceased husband.²¹

The town magistrate also addressed the requisitors if written testimony was considered necessary for the financial transactions of the town. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the town granted a substantial loan of 5000 florins to the imperial commissioners for the expenses of the army and of the chancellery.²² Later, town officials financed László Gyulaffi, the captain-general of Prince Stephen Bocskai, by lending him a large sum for the payment of mercenaries, for which the town received in return the neighboring possession of Florești/Szászfenes, Cluj County, as collateral.²³ In 1630, the prominent citizens of the town, among them one of the judges, appeared before the Convent to declare that if Prince István Bethlen failed to pay the price of the marble tomb of Gábor Bethlen and Zsuzsanna Károlyi, they would pay the debt to the sculptors Antonio and Andrea Castello up to the sum of 9000 Polish florins.²⁴

IN THE following section I will exemplify the strong connections between the Convent and the town of Cluj described above by presenting the career of one of the sixteenth century convent requisitors, who owned a house in the main square of the town. He was Márton Kolozsvári or Martinus *litteratus*—as he appears in documents—who was presumably of Saxon origin, as his predecessors resided in the Old Town (Óvár) of Cluj, a neighborhood inhabited mainly by the German-speaking Saxons.²⁵ We can only suppose that the last notary of the Benedictine Convent, János Óvári or János deák, could have been his father, considering the similarities of their clerk careers (they were both employed as notaries at the Convent and at the county). If our supposition is correct, Martinus *litteratus*/Márton Kolozsvári must have been born around 1550, because when the Convent was moved in 1575, he is already mentioned as the notary of the county and one of the appointed requisitors.²⁶ He probably remained in this office until his death (1600) considering the fact that in 1595 he was still mentioned as the clerk of Cluj County.²⁷ Thus, it is a fact that Kolozsvári was simultaneously requisitor of the Convent (from 1592 with the title of conservator as the ruler of the *loca credibilia*), notary of the Cluj County (from 1575), and sworn assessor of the Princely Table (from 1593).²⁸ In the latter function he served as one of the twelve so-called “sons of the Judicial seat” (in Hungarian: *tábla fia*), who judged in the trials together with the protonotaries. Although we do not have any information on Márton Kolozsvári’s education, he must have been very versed in the judicial practice of the court, otherwise he would not have reached the peak of his career as a protonotary in 1597.²⁹ In the second half of the sixteenth century, two protonotaries were appointed as principal judges of the princely court of justice. They had charge of the judicial seals of the prince and this entitled them to issue all kinds of charters and correspondence in the name of the ruler (the so-called “small chancellery”). In the contemporary vernacular, they were called “sentencing masters” (*ítélőmesterek*). While he filled all these other offices, Kolozsvári remained the head of the *locus credibilis* until his death and sometimes he even played a role in the financial administration of the state.³⁰ If he is the same person with the Martinus *litteratus* sent to Constantinople by Prince Sigismund Báthory, then he also played a role in Transylvania’s diplomacy.³¹

Given the lack of documentary sources, it is difficult to draw conclusions about the kinship or wealth of Márton Kolozsvári/Martinus litteratus and his family. However, we do know that he owned a house on the north side of the main square, where the most respectable and the wealthiest citizens had their homes.³² He also possessed a bakery in the Old Town which came from his wife, Katalin Bek.³³ The house in the main square of Cluj is mentioned in a document from 1586, when the *requisitor* Martin is mentioned as a neighbor during an institution to property or *statutio*. This house must be one of the buildings that appear in the late nineteenth century painting of István Sárdi of Renaissance houses in the main square, and considering the fact that Kolozsvári was the Convent's archivist, the county's notary and the country's protonotary at the same time, his house must have been from 1597 the headquarters of all these "institutions."³⁴ In any case, we can be sure that the archives of the Convent (or a part of them) were kept in this house, as well as the county archives (the judicial protocols of the county and other documents). When Márton Kolozsvári became a protonotary in 1597, this house occasionally served as the *domus iudiciaria*, a building where the adjudication of the court cases took place when the judicial term (the so-called octave) was held in Cluj and even the place where the small chancellery of the princely court functioned, when the protonotary was at home together with his scribes.

Although Márton Kolozsvári /Martin literatus came to hold important functions in the town government (he was centumvir from 1577) and in the central administration of Transylvania as an ennobled citizen, he failed to purchase many properties outside his hometown. We only have scant information on his owning small plots of land in Rediu and Boju in Cluj County,³⁵ interestingly in the same location where another requisitor of the Alba Iulia Chapter, Péter Lippai, had a small possession.³⁶ Márton Kolozsvári's extraordinary career and his life during which from a simple townsman he rose to one of the most important offices in the state ended in the first half of 1600. He is the only archivist of the former Convent whose fragmentary tombstone has been preserved and is still kept in the archway of the nowadays Museum of History in Cluj. The tombstone was discovered during the excavations for the restoration work on the church on Farkas Street in 1911.³⁷ At the time of Kolozsvári's burial, the church was in the possession of the Jesuits, a fact which proves conclusively that he was a Catholic with close ties to the Order. In this regard, we can also mention the account of the rector of the Jesuit college in Cluj, Leonardus Rubenus, in which Márton Kolozsvári is mentioned as a fervent Catholic with the right to have his burial in the Jesuit church, who publicly declared that he was and would remain a Catholic.³⁸ Therefore, it is not surprising that Kolozsvári and his assessor colleague at the princely judiciary, István Kakas,³⁹ who was also his neighbor, owning two houses in the main square in Cluj, both took under their protection the Jesuit college in 1586, during the plague outbreak, when it was menaced by furious and mainly Unitarian townsfolk.⁴⁰

IN CONCLUSION, following the move of the Convent archive from Mănăştur within the town walls, both the Convent's functioning and its patrons underwent important changes to the extent that in the seventeenth century sources, the institution is sometimes referred to as the Convent or Chapter of Cluj. Márton Kolozsvári/Martin

litteratus, one of the prominent inhabitants of the central square of Cluj, began his career in this transformed place of authentication (*locus credibilis*). His career shows the importance—both local and regional—of this office, as well as the fact that legal education and experience became the main factor in filling important offices in the administration of the Principality.



Notes

1. Regarding the birth of the new state see Gábor Barta, *Az Erdélyi Fejedelemség születése* (The birth of the Principality of Transylvania) (Budapest: Gondolat, 1983); Teréz Oborni, *Udvar, állam és kormányzat a kora újkori Erdélyben. Tanulmányok* (Court, state and administration in premodern Transylvania. Studies) (Budapest: ELTE, 2011); Teréz Oborni, “Entre deux grandes puissances: le royaume hongrois des Szapolyai” (Between two great powers: the Hungarian kingdom of the Szapolyais), *Histoire, économie et société* 42 (2023): 46–64.
2. About this transformation see Emőke Gálfi, *A gyulafehérvári hiteleshely levélkeresői (1556–1690)* [The Requisitors of the place of authentication from Alba Iulia (1556–1690)] (Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2015); Zsolt Bogdándi, *A kolozsmonostori konvent a fejedelemség korában* (The Convent of Cluj-Mănăștur in the period of the Principality) (Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2012); Idem, “A váradi hiteleshely a szekularizációt követően” (The place of authentication from Oradea after the secularization), *Erdélyi Múzeum* 73 (2011): 104–116.
3. Zsolt Bogdándi, “A kolozsmonostori konvent és Kolozsvár a fejedelemség korában” (The Convent of Cluj-Mănăștur and Cluj during the Principality), *Urbs. Magyar Városhistória Évkönyv* 15 (2021): 123–136.
4. On this reorganization: Bogdándi, “A kolozsmonostori konvent,” 29–50.
5. National Archives of Hungary (Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára), Budapest (henceforth: MNL OL), Collection of pre-1526 charters (Diplomatikai Levéltár, henceforth: DL), DL 36957 (1563), DF 255030 (1568).
6. MNL OL DL 28003, DL 74362, DL 36957, DF 253576.
7. Sigismund Jakó, “Instrucțiunile arhivistice ale oficiilor din Transilvania, 1575–1841. Problema reorganizării arhivelor vechi din Transilvania” (The archival instructions of the Transylvanian offices, 1575–1841. The issue of the reorganization of the old archives in Transylvania), *Revista Arhivelor* 1 (1958): 54–56; Attila Sunkó, “A Gyulafehérvári Káptalan és a Kolozsmonostori Konvent Levéltárának működésére vonatkozó iratok” (Documents regarding the functioning of the archives of the Chapter of Alba Iulia and the Convent of Cluj-Mănăștur), *Lymbus. Magyarágtudományi forrásközlemények* (2003): 79–87.
8. *A kolozsmonostori konvent jegyzőkönyvei I. (1289–1484)* (The minutes of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăștur I. 1289–1484), Zsigmond Jakó, ed. (Budapest: Akadémiai 1990), 121.
9. Bogdándi, “A kolozsmonostori konvent,” 72–76, 78. For the institution of the *centumpaters* (*centumviri*) see László Pakó, “Defending the Town’s Interest: The Council of the *Centumviri* and the Administration of Justice in Early Modern Cluj,” in *Towns between Empires. Good Governance and “Police” in Case Studies from Transylvania, Wallachia, and*

- Moldavia, 1500s-1800s*, ed. M. Pakucs-Willcocks and Julia Derzsi (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2025), 33–51.
10. Bogdándi, “A kolozsmonostori konvent,” 157–164.
 11. Bogdándi, “A kolozsmonostori konvent,” 158.
 12. MNL OL, A kolozsmonostori konvent levéltára (The archive of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur), Protocolla (F 15), XXXII. fol. 36.
 13. Bogdándi, “A kolozsmonostori konvent,” 100–102.
 14. MNL OL, A kolozsmonostori konvent levéltára (The archive of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur), Protocolla (F 15), XV. fol. 50v–51r.
 15. *Oklevéltár Kolozsvár története második és harmadik kötetéhez. Második kötet.* (Cartulary to the second and third volume of the history of Cluj. Second volume), Elek Jakab, ed. (Budapest: Magyar Királyi Egyetemi könyvnyomda, 1888), 101–103.
 16. MNL OL, A kolozsmonostori konvent levéltára (The archive of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur), Protocolla (F 15), XX. fol. 180, XXIII. fol. 34v.
 17. *A kolozsmonostori konvent fejedelemség kori jegyzőkönyvei I. 1326–1590.* (The minutes of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur in the period of the Principality I. 1326–1590), Zsolt Bogdándi, ed. (Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2018).
 18. Bogdándi, “A kolozsmonostori konvent,” 117.
 19. Bogdándi, “A kolozsmonostori konvent,” 117–118.
 20. MNL OL, A kolozsmonostori konvent levéltára (The archive of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur), Protocolla (F 15), XIII. fol. 86v–87r.
 21. MNL OL, A kolozsmonostori konvent levéltára (The archive of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur), Protocolla (F 15), XIII. fol. 66r–66v.
 22. MNL OL, A kolozsmonostori konvent levéltára (The archive of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur), Protocolla (F 15), XVI. fol. 83v.
 23. MNL OL, A kolozsmonostori konvent levéltára (The archive of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur), Protocolla (F 15), XV. fol. 243v.
 24. MNL OL, A kolozsmonostori konvent levéltára (The archive of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur), Protocolla (F 15), XXIV. fol. 51v–52r.
 25. Bogdándi, “A kolozsmonostori konvent,” 74–76.
 26. Mentions of his offices in Cluj County: Bogdándi, “A kolozsmonostori konvent,” 67.
 27. Arhivele Naționale ale României, Serviciul județean Cluj al Arhivelor Naționale (Cluj County Branch of the Romanian National Archives), Cluj-Napoca (SJAN CJ), Colecția generală de documente (General collection of documents), no. 200.
 28. On this office see Zsolt Bogdándi, *Az erdélyi fejedelmi tábla a 16. század második felében* (The judicial seat of the Transylvanian princes in the second half of the 16th century) (Budapest: HUN-REN BTK Történettudományi Intézet, 2025), 217–219.
 29. MNL OL, A kolozsmonostori konvent levéltára (The archive of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăştur), Protocolla (F 15), X. fol. 369r; Tamás Fejér, “Kancelláriai jegyzetek az erdélyi fejedelmi kancellária okleveles gyakorlatában a Báthoriak korában (1571–1602)” (Chancellery notes of the princely chancellery in the period of the Báthorys 1571–1602), *Turul* 88 (2015): 94.
 30. Zsolt Trócsányi, *Erdély központi kormányzata 1540–1690* (The central administration of Transylvania 1540–1690) (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980), 316.
 31. Zsolt Bogdándi, *Az erdélyi fejedelmi tábla*, 218.
 32. SJAN CJ, Colecția generală de documente, no. 136.

33. Zsolt Bogdándi, *Az erdélyi fejedelmi tábla*, 218.
34. A copy of this painting has been published lately by Melinda Mihály, “A kolozsvári Bácsi–Münich-ház” (The Bácsi–Münich house in Cluj), In *Közösségben közösségért. Tanulmányok Kiss András születésének századik évfordulójára* (In the community and for the community. Papers on the 100th anniversary of the birth of András Kiss), ed. Ágnes Flóra and László Pakó (Cluj-Napoca, Budapest: EME–HUN-REN BTK Történettudományi Intézet 2023), 206.
35. SJAN CJ, *Colecția generală de documente*, no. 200.
36. MNL OL, A kolozsmonostori konvent levéltára (The archive of the Convent of Cluj-Mănăștur), *Protocolla* (F 15), X. fol. 298r–298v; XVI. fol. 99r.
37. Bogdándi, “A kolozsmonostori konvent,” 76.
38. *Monumenta antiquae Hungariae III. (1587–1592)*, ed. Ladislaus Lukács, (Romae: 1981), 247.
39. István Kakas became protonothary in 1600, after Márton’s death or as his fellow in the office.
40. Klára Jakó, *Az első kolozsvári egyetemi könyvtár története és állományának rekonstrukciója 1579–1604* (The history of the first university library in Cluj and the reconstruction of the collection 1579–1604) (Szeged: Scriptum, 1991), 17.

Abstract

The Convent of Cluj-Mănăștur in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century and the Remarkable Career of One of its Archivists

The Convent of Cluj-Mănăștur underwent a significant transformation in the second half of the sixteenth century, as a consequence of the changes that took place in the emerging state of Transylvania. Following the return of Queen Isabella to Transylvania in 1556, the Convent was gradually transformed into a secular institution primarily responsible for issuing legal documents. After the appointment of the lay *requisitores* (letter-searchers) the Convent’s relocation to Cluj further reinforced its urban character, integrating it into the town’s legal and administrative framework. Over time, most of the Convent’s archivists were Cluj citizens, holding important positions in the city administration. Among them, Márton Kolozsvári was a key figure, serving simultaneously as a *requisitor*, county notary, and later protonotary. The townspeople increasingly relied on the Convent for issuing legal documents, leading to its urbanization. The Convent facilitated transactions between nobles and citizens, reinforcing the economic and political influence of Cluj. This transition highlights the merging of medieval religious institutions with early modern secular governance.

Keywords

Principality of Transylvania, Convent of Cluj-Mănăștur, *locus credibilis*, secularization, archives