

## MILITARY CLERGY IN THE DIOCESE OF CSANÁD IN 1848–1849

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### ABSTRACT

*More than 120 years ago, in 1892, József Ambrus, the parish priest from the Diocese of Csanád in Kisorosz, published a volume on the military clergy participants in the Hungarian Revolution of 1848. In the midst of the church conflicts and national identity questions that were raging in the 1890s, the patriotism of Catholic priests was increasingly being called into question. Ambrus expressed his disappointment that “patriotism today is a matter of throat and pen”, and he condemned the kind of “small-minded view” that considered only Hungarian speakers to be Hungarians. In his work he aimed to prove the patriotism of the linguistically and culturally diverse Catholic clergy during the Revolution of 1848. “Those who, through a thousand dangers and storms, sacrificed their blood and lives, deserve not to be forgotten. We owe it to them to prove with facts and names, to the country and to the world, that the Catholic clergy, not only in the churches and on the pulpit, not only through words but through actions, on the battlefield, in fire and water, in the smoke of guns and cannonballs, was as patriotic and brave as anyone.” These were the words with which Ambrus in his preface summarized the task before him.<sup>1</sup>*

*One hundred and twenty years in itself would be a good enough reason to take into account the more recent literature, even if we restrict the research to the Diocese of Csanád, and taking advantage of the Roman Catholic Diocesan Archives of Temesvár, we take a look again at the history of the clergy in the army. Numerous soldiers of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848, including, for example, László Baross, had a history*

*almost impossible to learn about without the sources in the Temesvár archives. Since people took up Hungarian or different names, it is difficult to track all the changes in people's names. Among our goals is the comparison of the results of military history research and church history research. In the future we hope to treat the history of the Diocese of Csanád in 1848–49 in a monograph. The first part of one of the chapters of this work is presented below, which deals with the members of the clergy who took arms in the army. Thus, in this writing we do not deal with military chaplains, national militia or other members of the clergy who took arms outside the context of national defense.<sup>2</sup>*

### **THE CSANÁD DIOCESE IN 1848–1849**

Nothing better illustrates the colorful history of the Diocese of Csanád in 1848/49 than the fact that during this time two bishops and four vicars tried to run the diocese. The emperor Franz Joseph I named József Lonovics Archbishop of Eger, and Mihály Horváth, Provost of Hatvan was appointed Bishop of Csanád on June 25th, 1848. The diocese was run by vicars during the absence of the bishops: until August 27th, 1848, Ignác Fábry, Titular Bishop, then József Róka, General Vicar. The latter, on November 1st, 1848, due to the threatening behavior of the Temesvár military council, moved headquarters to Makó, to the bishops' summer residence. Lonovics, following an unsuccessful attempt, named Fábry vicar again on February 10th, 1848, while also ordering the Makó vicariate to move to Temesvár. The latter was reluctant to obey, Róka moved to Debrecen, so József Mihálovics, Honorary Canon had to oversee the district. Fábry, however, was captured by the Hungarians, and so in Temesvár, István Oltványi canon took up management of affairs. Róka and Mihálovics were on the side of the Hungarians, Fábry and István Oltványi were loyal to the emperor.<sup>3</sup>

Lonovics' order arrived in Temesvár on February 10th, where they tried to implement it. Since Fábry did not arrive back in Temesvár until March 10th, the vicariate informed the members of the 16 subdeaneries which were under imperial control about the appointing of István Oltványi. At this time, the authority of the vicar of Makó only extended over Szeged and three districts of Arad. At the same time, it is obvious that the authority of the two vicariates was a question of the current military situation. The situation was advantageous to the vicar of Temesvár in February and March, however, things changed in spring. On April 27th, 1849, the Hungarian troops surrounded Temesvár, so the vicariate there closed down for a few months; the diocese from that point on was directed primarily by the vicar of Makó. On August 9th the blockade ended, then the Makó vicariate was dissolved, and on the 18th the direction of the diocese was taken over once again from István Oltványi by Ignác Fábry. The frequent changes introduced into the governance of the diocese made the clergy prone to join the military.<sup>4</sup>

Before we move on to the subject of clergy that took arms in the military, we would like to make a preliminary remark. In the Temesvár seminary and the lyceum founded by Bishop József Lonovics, many among the teachers and the students sympathized with modern principles. A large fraction of the teachers of the educational institutions had to be replaced following the revolutionary war because they urged church reforms, including democratic church government and the abolition of compulsory celibacy. Following the failure of the revolution, the diocese leadership took various levels of retaliation against members of the movement. For example, in the case of Pál Hegedűs (1807–1870), who was appointed administrator in September, 1849 at the border of the diocese in Kistelek.<sup>5</sup> At the end of December he was forced to withdraw his earlier requests for reform in writing.<sup>6</sup>

### **ORDAINED PRIESTS PERFORMING ARMED SERVICE IN THE MILITARY**

István Oltványi, the bishop's vicar loyal to the emperor, did not fail to mention his disapproval of the situation at the seminary in a letter that he wrote to József Lonovics:

*"It pains me to report", he wrote on March 9th, 1848 "that some of the members of the Csanád clergy followed not only as chaplains, such as for example professor Magyarai, Kornis, Kerényi; but, what is more, took arms in joining the military. Including: Baross, Bobik, Rózsafy, Klobucsár, Kőszeghy, Berecz, Bokányi. I have heard numerous complaints about this formerly poorly-behaved group of assistants, and also there is a general emergence against the whole of the young priests, their education and even their teachers (with respect to the few notable exceptions). Some parish priests prefer to work without assistants than to put up with ones who are poorly-behaved. The public wishes for a radical change!"*<sup>7</sup> Was the vicar right to connect disciplinary problems within the church with time spent in the military?

According to the laws of the church, priests may not hold arms. Those who broke this rule committed an infraction (*irregularitas*). Canon law further distinguishes between just and unjust war. In the case of the former, the chaplains who only encouraged their soldiers to be brave did not commit an infraction. However, in the latter case, supposing that opposing soldiers were killed or injured, the chaplains who had encouraged the action committed an infraction due to the lack of priestly meekness (*defectus lenitatis*). While the lack of priestly meekness is an infraction stemming from a lack of adherence to canon law (*irregularitas ex defectu*), murder and mutilation is a crime, which itself is an infraction (*irregularitas ex delicto*). Thus, those priests who took arms committed this latter category of infraction.<sup>8</sup>

According to the above-mentioned letter, László Baross (1819–1892), the chaplain from Billéd (or Billét) was born in a noble family; his father was Ferenc Baross, his mother was Borbála Nyéki.<sup>9</sup> During his time as chaplain in Billéd, he played cards regularly, and – by his own admission – accumulated a debt of 1000 pengőforints,

which the reckless chaplain partly attributed to the greediness of his usurers. For a period of time his uncle, László Nyéky, living in Makó, helped him out, but when he saw that he was accumulating ever greater amounts of debt, he also stopped supporting him. As a result, on July 25th, 1847, he turned to his bishop, and asked him to seize his assets in order to escape his creditors this way. In response the ecclesiastical court took his assets under protection on August 4th, appointing the parish priest Pál Novák as its guardian.<sup>10</sup>

On September 17th, 1847, The Ecclesiastical Court of Csanád called Baross to appear before it, where *“after his action, which put himself in debt beyond his means, put both his good-faith creditors – risking both his own honor and the reputation of the church – and himself in the kind of trouble whose pitiable consequences would affect the entire rest of his life, in the name of this court, his Leading Excellency [Bishop Ignác Fábry – P. Z.] disapproved of; telling him in very strong words to abandon his wasteful ways, to abandon playing cards, the unfortunate consequences of which he was again experiencing, and to forever abandon accumulating debt, and threatening him with more serious consequences should he again relapse, and making him promise that he would conduct himself with behavior beyond reproach, and through the tireless performance of his official duties to give all the indications of the improvement that is rightfully expected of him”*.<sup>11</sup>

However, Baross' debts greatly surpassed the amount that he indicated, since his guardian on November 10th, 1847 reported a debt of 2811 forints.<sup>12</sup> At the same time Pál Novák began paying off the most impatient creditors, first meeting the demands of Márk Krancsits, a citizen of Temesvár–Józsefváros.<sup>13</sup> László Baross, who in the meantime took the necessary exam before Frigyes Konrád, required to absolve him of his transgression, achieving a medium result,<sup>14</sup> did not improve despite the reprimand, and as a result of this he rather joined the military as a volunteer. This is because Baross, over the course of a few months, accumulated a new debt of 167 forints 40 krajcárs.<sup>15</sup> Since he did not want to turn to his church superiors again, he decided to join the national defense instead. He shared his decision with Ignác Fábry in mid-July of 1848:

*“On the 18th of this present month [July, 1848], I joined the volunteer civil defense in Pest. I thought it better to end the rest of my miserable days heroically on the battlefield than between four walls by a rope, or any other death. I thought it appropriate to share this with your Excellency.*

*It is my strong conviction that the Reverend Chapter will not take steps such that I will be forced to leave my current position. I certainly cannot work successfully in that field in which I have spent six years with certain zeal, I dare say, not least of all so that they do not force me to take such steps as I shudder to imagine.*

*I thought it best to hide my name and the position I had held heretofore, so that nobody should be horrified by my actions, and so thereby bring any kind of disrepute to the order of which I had been an unsuitable member.”*<sup>16</sup>

The Ecclesiastical Court of Csanád debated the Baross issue on August 8th, 1848, and decided that it could not take appropriate steps, since neither Baross' pseudonym nor his location were known to it. Besides this – as we can read in the record of the court's meeting, they state *“the steps that need to be taken in order to save this unfortunate individual could only become clear after a wider exposition of the circumstances”*, and so they only informed his uncle, László Nyéky about what had happened, and they ordered an inventory of all of Baross' possessions to be taken.<sup>17</sup> László Nyéky sent an additional 15 forints to pay debts, which, however, even with the 30 forints that remained from László Baross, was not enough to pay all of the debts, and so, via the guardians, the ecclesiastical court informed the creditors that it is necessary to go through the civil authorities' bankruptcy proceedings that must be undertaken in such cases.<sup>18</sup>

Baross had already asked in mid-July to be transferred to a battalion stationed in the battlefield, which in fact happened. On July 5th, 1849, The Ecclesiastical Court of Makó issued a certificate, at his request, stating that László Baross, who was a sergeant in the 5th civil defense battalion, under the pseudonym Bányai, was in the service of the church and was originally called Baross.<sup>19</sup> He was later transferred to the 92nd Civil Defense Battalion, and promoted to lieutenant.<sup>20</sup> Following the armistice, the Royal military committee ordered to Arad exempted him from military service, following which the area command furnished him with a passport, and on September 6th, he travelled to Makó to his uncle.<sup>21</sup>

Both Baross and Imre Makra, the Makó dean and parish priest, informed the ecclesiastical court about the arrival of the former military officer. In the meantime Baross visited his sister at Földeák from time to time.<sup>22</sup> At the meeting held by the ecclesiastical court on September 18th, his matter was discussed, where considering his armed service through which he committed a transgression (*irregularitas*), he was suspended from the practice of his priesthood. According to the records of the ecclesiastical court:

*“Following the appellant's, László Baross', unfaithful leaving of his post without the permission of his superiors and after leaving this prefecture, choosing to pursue a way of life which the church laws forbid all its church members to pursue under pain of committing an irregularity, which is all the more sinful action in his case because he chose to forever renounce his secure priestly post, and not shying from risking the compensation of his numerous good-faith creditors, with a disingenuous conscience, and with regard also to the small eagerness he showed even prior to that time toward his official duties, directing his efforts only toward the selection of chaplain posts, and changing them according to his whims, and squandering his time and wealth on playing cards, he did not secure any pleasure or true usefulness to himself or to his church order that he should honestly better himself following this, and with*

*the mercy of God, which is only available to those who with honest heart and humility, and who repent with committed dedication, can gain the conditions of salvation, who also commit to the necessary regulation required for this way of life, and who resolve to be suspended from his priestly service and its practice in any form, and have himself classified as forbidden, commit a binding obligation to a) enter the Szeged or Radnai Monastery of St. Francis, and there to spend two months bearing his own costs for a room and food, while during this whole time deprived of any company, including strict solitude even during meals, going alone in the morning to listen to mass in the monastery's choir, b) during this whole period to read edifying books intended to develop priestly virtues in pious meditation and with earnest prayer, c) to spend every Friday fasting except for bread and water, d) at the end of every two weeks he will perform a contrite confession, he will only contribute to communion after submission to this, and only if he has met the requirements of this resolution, and his superior in the monastery sends a letter here stating that he has made a solid renouncement of playing cards, and has paid his creditors insofar as possible, and shows promise of entering a better path, and will take appropriate steps for absolution of his suspension, and his irregularity, without causing problems in the subject of his employment.”<sup>23</sup>*

As soon as Baross received the order, he left for the Radna Monastery, where his costs were again taken on by his uncle. From here, on October 1st, 1849, he penned repentant lines back to the see: *“I sinned before God and the whole Christian world, by leaving my priestly post and choosing a way of life that was opposed to my station, and for this reason in order to earn the forgiveness of my country and the Holy Church, I will humbly submit myself to the merciful order.”*<sup>24</sup> On October 19th, 1848, László Baross and József Kornis, another priest under a similar injunction, turned to the Ecclesiastical Court of Csanád in order to release them from the performance of the remaining portion of their punishment. They justified their requests by stating that up until that time they had fulfilled the decree of the ecclesiastical court flawlessly, and since they had been deprived of their assets, the cost of their stay at the monastery was too high for their relatives. However, on October 31st, 1848, for their further spiritual benefit the ecclesiastical court ordered them to continue to perform the rest of their punishment exactly as assigned.<sup>25</sup>

The errant chaplain this time fulfilled his promise. On December 7th, 1849, he petitioned his superiors for the requested certification from the leader of the convent of Radna and confessor father, as well as sent in a written statement that he would no longer play cards. This latter statement read as follows: *“The undersigned, on the merciful order that the ecclesiastical court passed on September 18th of this year, and which was sustained, and which of my own volition I chose to submit to, I hereby officially resolve and promise that the pathetic addiction to playing cards, being the sole cause of my straying from the righteous path, I will no longer pursue. And the debts*

that have been generated through this and which are yet unpaid, I hereby oblige myself to pay as my circumstances allow.”<sup>26</sup> On January 30th, 1850, the diocese asked for an absolution for him by Rome, to which Primate János Scitovszky responded that by the mercifulness of His Holiness, and with the help of the Primate, this could be given on February 20th. He was indeed absolved from the irregularity.<sup>27</sup>

Following this, László Baross was curate at several parishes, Földeák, Bogáros, Battonya, Makó, Szentanna, and Zsombolya. In 1856 he was named a curate (independent chaplain) in Csermő. He received compensation as a parish priest in Kisfalud in 1859. He replaced this position with one in Facsét in 1869 and then in 1873 with a parish priesthood in Vecseház. In 1882 he was sent to retirement, and in the first years of the 1890s he lived in Szeged. In the church directory he was mistakenly maintained as an 1848/49 military chaplain. He passed away on July 22nd, 1892.<sup>28</sup>

The next military priest is Gusztáv Bobik (b. Bocvár, July 11th, 1824 – d. Merczyfalva, November 27th, 1907). His mother was Judit Belinghausen, his father was Pál Bobik, a notary in Bocvár. He studied in Szeged, and then continued in Temesvár. From 1845 to 1847 he was a tutor at Antal Szabó’s house in Sósút. On July 7th, 1847, he was ordained a priest and then sent to Nagybecskerek as a curate.<sup>29</sup>

In the fall of 1848 he enlisted in the 34th Infantry Regiment of the 3rd Battalion and participated in the southern battles. On March 25th, 1849 he was promoted to second lieutenant, and on June 6th promoted to first lieutenant. At the same time he served as a commander to the deeply religious general, Károly Knezić. Following the armistice, on August 26th, he was enlisted in the 59th infantry regiment. On June 20th, 1850, he was discharged from the military. Returning to his diocese, he was absolved of his irregularitas and was employed again after being required to be cloistered in a monastery for a few weeks.<sup>30</sup>

At first he was a chaplain in Világos, and then on October 1st, 1850, he petitioned to be made the Parish Priest of the Zsidóvár parish but did not receive this appointment. On October 30th, 1850, he was sent to be a curate at Nadrág (as an independent chaplain), to which the head of the Temesvár military leadership, Count Johann Baptist Coronini, the Austro–Hungarian general, strongly protested against in a letter dated October 5th, 1852. The general found it impossible that a priest, who committed treason and became so unworthy of his priestly dignity that he had fought with a weapon in his hand, should work independently in a parish. Bobik should rather be transferred to serve as a chaplain under a “*prominently reliable parish priest*” in a place where a better attitude toward the government prevails. In response to this request the ecclesiastical court transferred the chaplain to Versec, then to Zsombolya and then to Krassova.<sup>31</sup>

Following this, in 1858, János Karácsonyi, the subdean of Krassova, caused his superiors considerable surprise, when he informed them that Gusztáv Bobik,

having returned to Krassova, was occupied with the exploration and operation of coal mines. The chaplain, who had actually founded a local business together with a teacher and several others, had to defend himself before the diocese, and what is more, the company operated in breach of tax law, and so drew the attention of the civil authorities as well.<sup>32</sup>

It is hardly a coincidence that Bobik, in 1858, was transferred to a position of curate in Perkoszova, and only became a parish priest in Merczyfalva on October 24th, 1863. He did not deny his past in the military even during the period of the Austro–Hungarian Compromise, and through his whole life he was a member of the Temes County Military Club.<sup>33</sup> He also pursued literary activities: several of his articles appeared in the *Csanád* and the *Fővárosi Lapok* periodicals, and he also wrote an epic with the title *The Comedy of Man*. Due to his expressions of oppositional political views, however, his career in the church did not develop well. On September 11th, 1897, Sándor Dessewffy, the Bishop of Csanád, nominated the former military officer, who since 1888 had been the Dean of the Felső-Temes District, for an honorary canonry. As the bishop highlighted in his letter written to the Minister of Religion and Education, he “recommended Gusztáv Bobik for the highest possible distinction based on his half of a century of conscientious and earnest work as a pastor, during which with his exemplary lifestyle, scientific qualification and patriotic conduct he earned the respect and honor not only of his followers but of the priesthood of the entire diocese”.<sup>34</sup>

However, Gyula Wlassics, Minister of Culture, responded dismissively in his letter, referring to the fact that “the named man of the church, on the occasion of the latest parliamentary elections, showed himself to have the most extreme oppositional political viewpoints, in addition to which he disparages public servants at every opportunity”. He recommended the nomination of a different candidate even though Dessewffy stood by his original nomination. He nominated Gusztáv Bobik again, who “as a young presbyter participated in the revolution of 1848/49 as military aide to general Knezić, as a consequence of which he was subsequently only able to save his life by hiding; in the years following this period he devoted himself to the study of literature”. The bishop stressed the goodness of his heart, as well as the boundless love of his congregation towards him. He explained his oppositional views by saying that his followers also supported the National Party. “By contrast, it will be remembered as a sad fact in the history of this country”, the bishop continued, “that an individual who fought for his country, and moreover, later in all respects performed exemplary service in his official and civic duties, was robbed of the recognition of his whole life’s work because as a free citizen he expressed his views according to his convictions”.<sup>35</sup>

Since he did not receive the expected appointment, on February 24th, 1898 his bishop appointed him archdeacon of Krassó.<sup>36</sup> After he passed away on November 27th, 1907,<sup>37</sup> in accordance with his will, he was buried in his final resting place besides his mother in the Merczyfalva cemetery.<sup>38</sup>



We have relatively little data about József Bokányi (1820–1849). He was ordained a priest in 1844, and from 1847 he was chaplain in Szőreg.<sup>39</sup> He belonged to the radical clergy, since at the district assembly held on August 16th, 1848 in Szeged he forcefully supported the so-called “*Csanád points*”, that is, the radical reform of the church, and at the same time, as we can read in the records of the meeting, “*he thoroughly and excellently argued for the introduction of clerical marriage*”.<sup>40</sup> Antal Kreminger, the Provost Priest of Szeged, already informed the Makó vicariate on June 7th, 1849 that Bokányi, fleeing from the Serbians, “*took refuge in Szeged, joined the defense here, converted to a different religion and got married*”.<sup>41</sup> Ignác Fábry, in the spring of 1850, knew nothing about Bokányi, beyond the fact that he had joined the military, converted to the reformed faith and entered a forbidden and ungodly marriage with a girl from Szeged. He was injured in the battle of Temesvár (August 9th, 1849), and in the absence of proper medical attention, died as a result of gangrene.<sup>42</sup>

The parents of our next priest in the military, András Klobucsár (1820–1873), were József Klobucsár (Tomljenovich) and his wife, Anna Shuttija, who lived in Szirács (County of Torontál).<sup>43</sup> Klobucsár, like most of his colleagues, studied in Szeged and then Temesvár. He was ordained a priest in 1844 and then was sent to Óbesenyő as a chaplain, where he spent many years.<sup>44</sup> In July, 1848 they wanted to transfer him to Perlasz, but he – owing to his political views – asked for the decision to be altered. In his letter to Ignác Fábry he also summarized the consequences of the unfolding “*minor war*” in Délvidék:

*“On the 5th of this month, to my humble request addressed to Your Excellency, I attach some sad news I have heard from some travelers going through our city, according to which in Nagybecskerek, in Écska, and especially in Perlasz, the Rascians banded together with the Serbians, attack members in favour of the reform indiscriminately. This thieving group of people, which is growing day by day, forces every adherent of liberty, equality, and fraternity to fear for his life, and every day we are saddened to see wagons loaded with tearful mothers and four or five pieces of baggage, pass through our city with women who, having left their beloved husbands, who are ready to perish for their country, in arms, complain in tears how harshly they are treated along with their property. It truly moves one’s heart to look upon these families who have to leave their houses and homeland.”*<sup>45</sup>

On December 19th, a portion of Óbesenyő’s Bulgarian inhabitants accused curates András Klobucsár and Imre Berecz of sowing the seeds of discord among the faithful, interfering in the matters of the parish, incitement against the local parish priest, negligent fulfilment of their duties and a dissolute lifestyle.<sup>46</sup> In response, others among the faithful lodged a complaint against their parish priest, Alajos Milassevics, before the Makó vicariate on January 12th, 1849, accusing him

of anti-freedom sentiments and mistreatment of the decent local curates (András Klobucsár and Imre Berecz).<sup>47</sup> At the end of January, 1849, Óbesenyő's curates fled to Szeged together with some local inhabitants. In turn, on March 18th, the parish priest urged Klobucsár to be ordered back to the parish. According to his reasoning, *"at the end of January, while the overwhelming majority of Hungarians in Torontál – afraid of the pillaging of the advancing Serbs – fled to the neighboring Arad, Csanád and Csongrád Counties, his curates also moved to the same area, and abandoned him in the burdensome caring for the parish"*.<sup>48</sup> Subsequently, Klobucsár applied for government aid in Szeged, which he received belatedly because he had failed to report his departure from the parish to his church superiors.<sup>49</sup> According to the report by Antal Kreminger, parish priest-dean of Szeged, dated February 25th, 1849, Klobucsár had also joined the military.<sup>50</sup>

What justifies further research in his case is the fact that so far no trace of a proceeding by the Ecclesiastical Court of Csanád has been found in connection with him. After the Hungarian Revolution, he continued to serve as a chaplain in Óbesenyő, then worked as a coadjutor in the same place, and in 1860 he even published a Bulgarian language prayer book.<sup>51</sup> On June 29th, 1863, an imperial loyalist reported him to the Diocese of Csanád. According to his accusation, during his 19 years serving as chaplain, Klobucsár *"defiled our virgins, caused infidelity between married couples; he is a treacherous sedition inciter"*, who *"on the occasion of the constitutional election of officials, instead of teaching the elected members righteousness, guided them to evil, and refused them by saying not to go to him for confession; and what is unprecedented, before the delegate election he even dared campaign in the confessional"*.<sup>52</sup>

However, the parish leaders supported Klobucsár. In their opinion *"during his nearly 19 year long stay here the said curate was never scandalous among the people, he served exemplarily with his demeanor, Christian morals, and never involved himself in secular matters"*. It was also uncovered that the accuser wrote his denouncing letter under a pseudonym, furthermore, every witness who was heard stood by Klobucsár, who himself also denied every charge, emphasizing that the people were pleased to listen to his Bulgarian songs and requested that he preach in Bulgarian, but this he could not perform because of the absence of church permission.<sup>53</sup> In 1864, he was still a coadjutor in Óbesenyő; on October 3rd, he was appointed the administrator of Rafnik.<sup>54</sup> He died in Resica on March 16th, 1873, where he was staying for medical treatment.<sup>55</sup>

István Kovács (1816–1884) was born in Szeged and after completing his education he was ordained a priest in 1838.<sup>56</sup> In November, 1842, he switched from the position of chaplain of Makó to be the parish vice-priest of Bocsár. In the first half of the 19th century, for a prolonged period Bocsár did not have an independent parish priest. The Hertelendy family built a small, classicist style church for the German settlers.

Since there was no vicarage, the parish rented a room for the new administrator, only until he was relocated to the manor to be an educator for the Lord Lieutenant's son. That is where he was acquainted with his later wife, Fanni Ottoványi.<sup>57</sup> István Kovács reported to the Bishopric of Csanád in March, 1848, that the Hertelendy family was paying an annual 150 forints to the parish priest and donated 25,000 tiles for the construction of the parish.<sup>58</sup>

The adverse conditions may have been the reason that in the summer of 1848 he submitted an application to the representative body of the town of Szeged for the position of parish priest of Kistelek. As he emphasized in his brief appeal, *“thus I, who was born to a commoner woman in Szeged, relying on the grace of my townsmen, and on my faithful services performed for eleven years in the Diocese of Csanád, and referring to my diocesan bishop regarding my conduct, as well as all those with whom I have been in contact with during my pastoral activities, and primarily the Hertelendy and Rónay families, I am confident in pleading before the honorable representative body to deign to elect me to be the parish priest of Kistelek”*.<sup>59</sup> However, the parish priest position was given to Ferenc Bezdány not to him.<sup>60</sup>

István Kovács reported to the church high authority on September 19th, 1848 that *“all the income and food sources in which he partook of the voluntary charity of the local lord of the manor will be exhausted with the lord's departure to Pest”*, and as a consequence of this he requested the taking of appropriate measures for the purpose of caring for his parish.<sup>61</sup> According to the report by István Burghardt, Sub-Deacon of Nákófalva, dated in November, 1848, the faithful of Bocsár and Nákófalva, citing their poverty, did not want to increase the remuneration of their parish priests; thus the sub-deacon intended to turn to the government for assistance through the County office. According to the response expressed at the session of the see held on November 26th, 1848, there was no hope *“that in the current adverse conditions of the country aid would be offered from public funds for the supplementation of the Bocsár parish priest's remuneration and the construction of the vicarage”*. Bishop's vicar, József Róka, did not expect much success from the application to the Ministry either, but he emphasized that if the Ministry of Religion and Public Education sends him the application, then he will not neglect to send it back with a favorable opinion.<sup>62</sup>

In 1848, István Kovács was a captain in the Bocsár national militia. In January, 1849, he fled to Szeged together with his disciple to escape the Serbs. In January–February, 1849, he organized the 1st Torontál Volunteer Battalion, mainly from men who fled the agricultural lands neighboring Bocsár. He was the commander of the unit in the rank of Major. In the beginning of June, 1849, in Pétervárad, on one occasion imperial loyalist Gabriel Krantzl Garrison Priest actually hid when he was supposed to hold mass for national militiamen. General chaos was successfully averted

by István Kovács by putting his mass vestments on top of his blue militia uniform and celebrating communion in his spurred boots. Manó Bozó, a former classmate of Kovács remembered the unusual scene as follows:

*“On the day of the garrison mass, the castle army was arranged in appropriate attire (indeed there were some in shepherd cloaks and peasant trousers), the castle commander already appeared in front of the chapel tent; only the main person, the garrison priest was missing. A national militia officer was sent to the castle to find him, who searched for the man of God in his home and in the church, but could not find him or any other priest. Certainly, they were suffering from yellow oriole. Holding the garrison mass became doubtful. Amidst the greatest confusion István Kovács stood forth,<sup>63</sup> who was the young Major of the Torontál national militia’s mobile battalion (my former classmate in Pécs), and turned to the castle commander with the following words: ‘If there is no other trouble, I can perform the mass, I am a parish priest.’ His offer was greatly welcomed, and clasping off his sword, the brave priest put his mass vestments on top of his blue militia uniform and celebrated communion in his spurred boots, making a brief but pithy and inspiring speech in front of the fierce but devout audience. Having completed this, he took off his priestly garb, sat back on his horse, and, taking the lead of his battalion with his sword drawn, marched his men up to the castle commander in battle formation. The brave Major priest was greeted with thunderous hurrahs, and as an acknowledgement of his otherwise excellent attributes and good conduct was promoted to Army Major.”<sup>64</sup>*

After the disbanding of his unit, from the middle of June, 1849, he served as an orderly officer beside General Richárd Guyon in the 4th Corps. He remained faithful to the ideals of freedom even in the last days: for instance he escorted the unit of Károly László artillery Second-Lieutenant to the Hungarian camp from near Sándorháza together with 100 hussars from Szabolcs. After the failure of the revolutionary war, he fled to Turkish territory, and after converting to the Reformed faith he married Fanni Ottoványi (Winter) in Sumla on December 24th, 1849.<sup>65</sup>

Fanni Ottoványi arrived in Sumla with an engineer by the name of Gábor Jasmagy, who was the founder of the Austrian spy organization in Turkey. After her arrival she informed the governor of her travelling companion’s requests.<sup>66</sup> Jasmagy’s assignment was to observe the emigrant community, and possibly to organize the capture and extradition of refugees. He often involved women in his plans; for example, he intended a role for the young wife of Teodor Dembiński in the arrest of Kossuth.<sup>67</sup> Fanni Ottoványi’s role in the emigrant community is also unclear. Károly László learned on June 30th, 1851 that she was serving one of the Austrian spies; József Bilkai testified that the two emigrants accused of espionage, Ferenc Házmán and Ede Lórod, were receiving payments from the Austrians, and the money was delivered to them *“through the wife of Major István Kovács, the Austrian whore”*.<sup>68</sup>

In his journal written in Turkey, Gábor Egressy recorded the wedding of István Kovács and Fanni Ottoványi as follows:

*“Pista Kovács’ fiancée finally arrived from Hungary in the recent days after many vicissitudes, and on the next day the Calvinist priest, Gida Ács married the two of them in the presence of five witnesses, of whom I was one.*

*Before the revolution, Kovács was a parish priest in Bánát; his wife, W. Fanni, was a children’s governess at a noble family in the same town. She is a very resourceful woman.”*<sup>69</sup>

In January, 1850, Kovács was still in Sumla; his name appears on the list prepared of Hungarian emigrants dated January 26th.<sup>70</sup> He arrived in Kütahya together with his wife on July 12th, 1850. Their names appeared on the list of Hungarian refugees there, dated January 1st, 1851,<sup>71</sup> and in the May, 1851, István Kovács’ wife was already expecting a child; the young couple remained in Kütahya solely for this reason.<sup>72</sup> Their child was born in Turkey and according to an anonymous journal entry by Gedeon Ács related to them: *“A Catholic priest became a Calvinist in my presence, and then I married him and his fiancée. As I baptized their child, whose name was Zulejma, two Turkish colonels were present as witnesses, and one of them even signed the baptism certificate.”*<sup>73</sup> On September 10th, 1851, István Kovács and his wife, in the company of Lajos Kossuth and other emigrants, started out on their voyage to America aboard the Mississippi steamship.<sup>74</sup> István Kovács lived in the United States for the rest of his days; an Austrian court-martial sentenced him to death in his absence on May 6th, 1852.<sup>75</sup>

István Kovács and his family lived in New York, New Buda, then again in New York. His son (Kornél) was born in 1853, his daughter (Anna) in 1858. His wife divorced him, and in 1862 she married Ferenc Házmán.<sup>76</sup> In 1859 István Kovács was considering traveling to Europe to fight against the Austrians but in the end he cancelled the trip. In 1861, in New York, he was elected Colonel of the forming Hungarian Regiment but eventually there were not enough men. In spite of this, he volunteered into the Union army and on September 7th, 1861, he was drafted into the 54th New York Infantry Regiment as a Captain. On January 4th, 1862, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Major, then on June 3rd, 1862 to Major. In the battle of Gettysburg (July 1st–3rd, 1863) he was captured by the enemy, and he was held prisoner at the Libby prison in Richmond, where on special occasions he even made his fellow prisoners laugh with some anecdotes. On March 11th, 1864, he was liberated by way of a prisoner exchange and returned to the army. His Colonel, Jenő Kozlay, did not have a favorable opinion of his military skills. He was permanently discharged from the army on April 14th, 1866, in Charleston, South-Carolina. Subsequently, he returned to New York where he worked as a cigar maker. He died in 1884 at the home of his friend Dr. Attila Kelemen.<sup>77</sup>

Antal Kőszeghy (1824–?) was born on September 14th, 1824 in Szentilona, in Krassó County. He was presumably a gifted student, since after his studies at the Temesvár Lyceum, in 1845/46, he was a student at the Vienna Pázmáneum.<sup>78</sup> In the summer of 1846, Lonovics ordered him back from Vienna but, citing financial difficulties, he only returned to his diocese later. “*Your Excellency deigns to know my financial means – he wrote to his bishop on March 2nd, 1847 –, which have such dried up sources that is scarcely enough even for daily necessities in this land so appreciating its nectar.*” Since he did not have money for travel expenses, the treasurer of the “*Pázmán Institute’s Hungarian Association*” was forced to travel home using the association’s money. He withdrew 20 forints of the 300 forints he managed, obliging himself for its timely payback, which he was unable to fulfill even within six months. Therefore, he requested his superior to pay back his debt, which was done.<sup>79</sup>

After his ordainment he was appointed to be a chaplain in Makó on July 20th, 1848, then a few days later – changing the original arrangement – he was ordered to Újvár.<sup>80</sup> However, first he applied for an 80 forint loan at the County treasury for his clothing needs, the payment of his debts and for the purpose of enriching his library, which he received. He was given 10 forints by his bishop, while 70 forints were loaned to him by the County treasury for a two year term with interest.<sup>81</sup> He performed the examination generally conducted on these occasions with excellent result before József Róka and István Oltványi.<sup>82</sup> Since his debts still did not diminish, in the autumn Koppel Hirschel, an “*industrial draper*” from Temesvár, requested Antal Kőszeghy “*to be compelled for the settlement of all his so far unpaid debts*”. Consequently, on October 16th, 1848, the Bishopric of Csanád demanded that he pay.<sup>83</sup>

Instead of making a payment, Kőszeghy travelled to Fehértemplom, the German town that heroically held out against Serbian rebels in 1848. The administrator of Fehértemplom, Kornél Ruzsinszky (1808–1887), petitioned for Antal Kőszeghy, who was staying in town, to be ordered to his side. Thus, on December 18th, the diocesan authority sent a copy of the letter written by the parish priest of Újvár to Ruzsinszky for the purpose of making a declaration in which Kőszeghy was accused of several offences “*among others, the alienation of property*”.<sup>84</sup> The accused chaplain was supposed to list his debts in his reply. “*I furthermore warn you – stated the ecclesiastical court’s instruction to Ruzsinszky –, that if the stolen sword and winter coat referred to in the parish priest’s letter happened to be found in the possession of the accused, to confiscate them from him; if that is not possible in a peaceful manner, by the intervention of local police and to keep them until further instructions; and to send a report regarding the action.*”<sup>85</sup>

On January 13th, 1849, Kőszeghy volunteered to join the 28th National Militia Battalion and continued to serve all the way till the surrender at Világos.<sup>86</sup> Subsequently,

at the ecclesiastical court's session of October 31st, 1849, "*Antal Kőszeghy's plea was brought up who, having been swept away by the commotion of the revolution and performed military service, was now supplicating to be allowed to exercise priestly duties and be employed in the diocese*". However, the court rejected his appeal: "*Beyond doubt the appellant was recorded among those – said the reasoning –, who agitated the people, who are to be [!] captured on sight; his plea cannot be taken into consideration under such circumstances*".<sup>87</sup>

Bishop's chancellor, Ignác Fábry, wrote to János Scitovszky, the Archbishop of Esztergom, on March 28th, 1850 that Antal Kőszeghy had performed military service for a few months and achieved the rank of Captain, fought with arms and even participated in the siege of the castle of Buda. Before the surrender, to avoid being taken prisoner of war, he appealed to return to diocese service from the Transylvanian army, but because of his uncertain situation he was forced into penitence at the monastery of Radna. Since his revolutionary sedition activities were also investigated by imperial military authorities, they chose to take a wait-and-see approach concerning his person. Eventually, the imperial authorities drafted him into the army, transported him to Vienna where, upon the intervention of the Primate, as an ordained priest, he was released in the following days.<sup>88</sup>

After his release and absolution from the infraction (irregularitas), on June 12th, 1850, Antal Kőszeghy was ordered to be chaplain in Katalinfalva.<sup>89</sup> He also took his morals study examination belatedly, in February of 1851, as he was stationed in Nagybecskerek, he presented as an excuse that he did not have enough money to travel to Temesvár.<sup>90</sup> According to the report of Frigyes Halász, parish priest of Elemér, Kőszeghy was placed under his supervision on March 1st, 1851. He warned the chaplain that the members of his congregation knew "*he had deflowered a maiden in Becskerek, Teréz Kálmán, depriving her of the most valuable maidenly treasure*", and warned him to conduct himself in a priestly manner.<sup>91</sup> Antal Kőszeghy took his pastor examination on May 8th, 1851,<sup>92</sup> but at this time he was already haunted by the thought of abandoning the Catholic Church, as he explained to his archdeacon in a letter dated June 14th, 1851. "*Deign to believe – he wrote – that this idea did not arise following the recent catastrophe; it was rather my favorite cherished thought much earlier: as I currently aspire to let Your Excellency know about this, to request that you inform The Ecclesiastical Court of the Diocese of Canád in this regard as soon as today. As of 10 am on June 14th, I ceased to be a Roman Catholic and – as the natural consequence of the former – I ceased to be a communion performing priest, in the sense that is generally understood by the Catholic Church.*"<sup>93</sup>

Even though in 1852 he did not become an apostate yet, because of his scandalous behavior he was relocated again, this time to Pécska.<sup>94</sup> Since he violated the rules related to celibacy in Nagybecskerek, Elemér and Pécska, on May 24th, 1853, he was punished

by 3 days of seminary captivity, then he was ordered to Szentanna to be a chaplain. Since he did not abandon the keeping of lovers at his new station either, and lived together with Anna Tóth (Panni Veréb) of Pécska, who was also married, on August 14th, 1856, he was divested of his church dignitary position (degradation).<sup>95</sup> In response, on September 27th, 1856, Kőszeghy converted to the Reformed faith, and the Ecclesiastical Court of Csanád excommunicated him from the Catholic Church.<sup>96</sup> The priest gone astray made several attempts to return to the Catholic Church, in 1857 he requested the Bishop of Vác, Ágoston Roskoványi, and in 1859, the Bishop of Csanád, Sándor Csajághy, to intercede on his behalf but as of yet we have no sources regarding his further fate.<sup>97</sup>

János Nátly (1821–1849) of German ancestry, was born to a noble family in Újszentiván; his father was József Natl, his mother was Margaréta Biringer.<sup>98</sup> He was also educated in the Csanád seminary, where he completed the 4th academic year in 1843/44.<sup>99</sup> As the curate of downtown Temesvár, on September 12th, 1848, he received a passport and a permit from the Csanád diocese “to travel to Szeged and from there, as the conditions would allow it, further to Pest, and even beyond”. At the end of December, 1848 the Makó vicarage was informed that János Nátly, who was given a six week long holiday on September 12th, had not returned to his station and had not notified his superiors regarding the reason of his absence either. Later the vicarage learned that he was in Szentiván. The Szeged Provost Parish Priest, Antal Kreminger, was instructed to demand that the chaplain return to his station immediately, or if that is not possible, to report the related reasons.<sup>100</sup>

Bishop’s chancellor, Ignác Fábry, in the end of March, 1850, still only knew that János Nátly had participated in rebellious movements and had been awarded the rank of Lieutenant in a military unit, although the documents serving to prove this were missing. According to some people, he died during the Transylvanian Campaign; others say that he was drafted into the Imperial army, according to a letter by Scitovszky, the Titular Bishop and Csanád Vicar.<sup>101</sup> The Archdeacon of Nagyszeben confirmed the tragic news: János Nátly, a priest of the Diocese of Csanád had died in Nagyszeben on August 26th, 1849.<sup>102</sup>

Pál Rózsafy (Rosen) (September 18th, 1824. – April 30th, 1903.) was born in Arad, where his father was a master baker.<sup>103</sup> After his education in Arad and Temesvár (where he completed the 2nd academic year of the Lyceum in 1842/43), he attended the Temesvár seminary. In 1842 he was one of the founders of the seminarians’ reading circle and was ordained a priest on May 4th, 1847.<sup>104</sup>

He was a curate in Versec, Nákófalva, then in Tornya in 1848. About Pál Rózsafy the vicarage knew as early as in September, 1848 that he wished to travel to the Hungarian military camp. In reply vicar József Róka wrote as much to him that he hoped he would serve as a military chaplain and did not wish to take up arms at the military camp.<sup>105</sup>



On November 11th, 1848, the vicar repeatedly inquired of the parish priest of Tornya “*whether or not your curate, Pál Rózsafy, in accordance with his intent reported to you actually moved to the Transdanubian military camp*”.<sup>106</sup> On November 20th, the parish priest of Tornya replied that Pál Rózsafy had departed on October 4th to the “*upper camp*”, and wished to retain his position as chaplain for the duration of his absence.<sup>107</sup>

Meanwhile, Rózsafy – since he had not been awarded the post of military chaplain – voluntarily had himself drafted into the 4th Mounted Battery under the command of József (Holczer) Faváry, where he achieved the rank of Artillery Sergeant. He participated in numerous battles and combat engagements starting from the battle of Schwechat to the siege of the castle of Buda.<sup>108</sup> On May 15th, 1849, upon the recommendation of Baron Cézár Mednyánszky, Garrison High-Priest, General Artúr Görgei appointed him to be the military chaplain of the 1st Corps. Subsequently, he served until the surrender at Világos.<sup>109</sup> The parish priest of Tornya reported the return of Rózsafy from the military camp on September 2nd, at the same time he supportingly submitted his “*petition for the curate position in Tornya*”. According to the reply of Ignác Fábry dated September 3rd: “*For the sufficient authentication that Pál Rózsafy, applying himself faithfully to his dismissal received on September 26th of last year, from the beginning to the end solely performed the position of military chaplain, and now may be reinstated into his priestly duties without the suspicion of irregularity, I require that he submit to me his document appointing him to be military chaplain*”.<sup>110</sup>

The Ecclesiastical Court of Csanád discussed Rózsafy’s case on October 9th, 1849. This was the time when the former national militia priest’s appeal of defense was read, dated September 22nd, according to which “*after the vicarage permission number 1626, dated September 26th of last year, having travelled to Pest and not receiving the military chaplain position there, he had himself drafted into the artillery, where after receiving training in the required practices, as a result of his knowledge of Hungarian and German languages he was given duties at the office, in which he remained until May 1st of this year, at this time he was appointed military chaplain into Görgei’s Corps by the General’s order, in which he remained until August 14th of this year*”. It emphasized that he did not participate in any battle, he never used his decorative sword and his pistol because he was never attacked, but since he served in the Hungarian army he was guilty of an infraction and he was now appealing for absolution. Subsequently, they read the opinion of József Dollencz, Seminary Vice-Principal and juror of the ecclesiastical court, dated October 8th, according to which, as church disciplinary action, Rózsafy should be sent to the Radna monastery for six weeks. The court did not accept the chaplain’s appeal of defense and proved that he had taken up arms.<sup>111</sup>

According to the accepted ruling: “Curate, Pál Rózsafy, received a vicarage permission to leave the diocese, number 1626, dated September 26th of last year, solely under the clear condition that, complying with church rules, he would follow the military camp solely as military chaplain not in any other capacity”. At the same time it was evident from the presented documents and even his own account that “going beyond the permission he had been granted, he chose to pursue a way of life which the church laws strictly forbid all its church members to pursue under pain of committing an irregularity”. His defense was not accepted either since he himself wrote to the parish priest of Tornya that he participated in the battle of Schwechat. He was suspended from exercising his priestly duties and was sentenced to six weeks of penitence at the Radna monastery.<sup>112</sup>

After serving his penitence and confession, in accordance with the decision of the ecclesiastical court on December 27th, 1849, he was absolved from the disciplinary action brought against him.<sup>113</sup> He was absolved from the infraction by István Oltványi, after which Ignác Fábry reinstated him in his employment in the diocese from April, 1850.<sup>114</sup> Until 1858 he served as a curate in several places such as Temeshidegkút, Billéd, Nagyszentpéter, Lippa, Nagyikinda, Zsombolya and Versece.<sup>115</sup> His military past impeded his church advancement for a long time, since every time he applied for a parish priest position he was rejected and was told: “not to forget that you served in the national militia!”<sup>116</sup> He was appointed to be the administrator of a small mining village, Dognácska, in May, 1858.<sup>117</sup>

On October 7th, 1872, he submitted an application for the parish priest position of Kiskomlós (Ostern), the patron of which was the Ministry of Finance. He cited three things. Firstly, that he completed his philosophy as well as theology studies with general commendation and he had been an ordained communion priest since 1847, meaning for 26 years. Secondly, after serving as a curate for eleven years, he had been an independent parish priest in Dognácska since 1858. Thirdly, with “complete humbleness” he cited “the documents of his pure patriotism full of sacrifices”, which in the present as well as in 1848/49 were evident “in his unshakably faithful loyalty to the High Government and its principles, proven by his tireless and, in this region, truly difficult operation”.<sup>118</sup>

In his letter written to Bishop Sándor Bonnaz, Finance Minister, Károly Kerkápoly stated that he chose Rózsafy from among the three submitted applicants, thus eventually, he was appointed parish priest, and his salary was drafted starting from April 1st, 1873.<sup>119</sup> Starting from 1885 he was a parish priest in Nagyjécsa but after September, 1888, because of his “damaged vocal cords and asthmatic unsteady breathing”, complicated by severe nervousness, he could not perform any tasks except silent masses and written work. Therefore, he was willing to renounce his salary and at the same time applied for aid from the diocese. At the meeting of the church aid fund committee

held on February 26th, 1889, “*in consideration of his inability to perform his duties as a result of his deteriorated health*”, permanent aid was approved for him by a vote with the condition that his resignation be legally accepted.<sup>120</sup> This occurred in 1890, from then on he lived in Versece as a retired parish priest<sup>121</sup> until his death at 3:15 pm on April 30th, 1903.<sup>122</sup>

Jakab Varjasi (Vranovits, Varjassy) (1820–1886) was ordained a priest in 1844; his father was József Vranovits, a doctor from Arad. In 1848 he had been serving as a chaplain at the Szeged-Palánk parish when on June 2nd, bishop’s chancellor, Ignác Fábry, ordered him to Újvár.<sup>123</sup> “*The pain – he wrote to his superior – that the received order inflicted on my soul, almost renders me silent, all the more so: because my humble person feels the cane of punishment inherent in my relocation to Újvár! I have examined my conscience; I considered every day that has passed since I have been staying here with serious attention, and God is my witness that in my official functions, in my conduct toward my superior and the faithful, I have not found anything deserving of punishment.*”<sup>124</sup> Accordingly, he requested the bishop’s chancellor to revoke his previous order.

Consequently, Fábry changed his mind and he ordered the above mentioned Antal Kőszeghy to Újvár, while he sent Varjasi to Makó. However, the young priest did not like this order either, and he kept delaying his departure to Makó. As a result of a report by Imre Makra, Sub-Deacon Parish Priest of Makó, dated July 7th, 1848, in which he cited that the hospital of national militia soldiers “*needed in the military camps*” had been placed to Makó not only from Csanád County but also from neighboring counties, on July 8th, Ignác Fábry repeatedly urged Varjasi’s departure. Fábry made the reluctant chaplain responsible for “*all the delays and shortages that may be suffered by the pastoral office in the affected parish*” and ordered Varjasi to travel to Makó.<sup>125</sup>

In turn, Varjasi repeatedly requested, on July 16th, that he be allowed to continue performing his duties in Szeged mentioning that for him the most painful thing was “*to believe that not all of us are equal sons, subordinates of our bishop*”. Anyhow, on August 4th, Fábry definitively rejected the chaplain’s request. As he wrote, he was not relocated to Makó as punishment, and that he wished him to submit himself to the decision of the diocese, which ordered him to a more favorable station.<sup>126</sup> In September, 1848, he also participated in the Gaal Damaszcze, the “*Diocesan Council*”, in the company of József Szabados and Károly Bizek, which served for the preparation of the planned National Synod, and which was adjourned with matters unfinished because of the civil war situation.<sup>127</sup>

On February 21st, 1849, Imre Makra, Sub-Deacon Parish Priest of Makó, reported to the vicarage of Makó that Varjasi had joined the national militia, and – in our opinion – he probably hungarianized his name around this time.<sup>128</sup> He served in the 42nd National Militia Battalion, then in the Makó battlefield

command. On April 9th, 1849, he converted to the Reformed faith and married Gizella Temesvári. He participated in the Southland military campaign; on May 13th, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in the 104th National Militia Battalion. On July 14th, he was wounded in the battle of Hegyes.<sup>129</sup> All Ignác Fábry knew about him on March 28th, 1850 was that he had converted to the Reformed faith and entered into an unlawful marriage with a woman. As a former national militia soldier, he was repeatedly drafted by the Austrians into the Imperial army.<sup>130</sup> In 1852 Bishop Sándor Csajághy informed József Ébner, parish priest of Pécska that Jakab Varjasi had been excommunicated by the Catholic Church.<sup>131</sup>

After the failure of the revolutionary war, the former national militia Lieutenant became a notary in Battonya. For his participation in rebellious incitement, he was at first sentenced to death in 1853, and then out of mercy, the sentence was changed to four years of imprisonment instead. He was set free in 1856 in an amnesty after which he worked in Battonya, first as a lawyer's clerk than again as a notary. After the Austro–Hungarian Compromise of 1867 he became a deputy district judge in Kisjenő.<sup>132</sup>

## SUMMARY

It is prominent from the biographical data of the military clergy in the Diocese of Csanád which we have described that four among them – Bokányi, Kovács, Kőszeghy and Varjasi – converted to the Reformed faith, in which their antipathy toward mandatory celibacy may have played a major role, since three of them got married and one of them kept lovers. Church disciplinary problems arose – aside from their military service – in all of their cases, with the exception of Pál Rózsfy. László Baross, István Kovács and Antal Kőszeghy were driven toward the national militia by their debts and humble living conditions; Bokányi, Klobucsár and Kovács fled from the Serbs, Bobik commenced an enterprise after the revolutionary war, on top of this, Baross was even a card gambler in the 1840s. Bokányi, Klobucsár, Kőszeghy and Nátly accepted the orders of their church superiors reluctantly, or not at all.

At the same time, all of them were brave soldiers in the 1848/49 revolutionary war. István Kovács achieved field-officer rank, Baross and Bobik officer ranks. Bokányi and Nátly died heroically in the Hungarian revolution. Those who remained in their priestly career were impeded in their advancement in the church by their military service of 1848/49. Bobik, who was a member of the Temes County National Militia Association was not appointed titular canon in 1897 because of his oppositional conduct, while Rózsfy only started receiving his parish priest salary in 1873, and even then only as much as the Hungarian state patronized. The biographies of members of the clergy in the military in the Diocese of Csanád contribute to the understanding of yet lesser known correlations in the military and church history of the 19th century.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> József Ambrus (ed.): *Az 1848 és 1849-ik évi szabadságharcban részt vett római és görög katolikus paphonvédek albuma. Book VI.* Nagykikinda, 1892. (Henceforth: Ambrus, 1892)
- <sup>2</sup> We owe thanks to the episcopal archives archivist, Calin Claudiu, for help in the preparation and research of the archive material. (P. Z.)
- <sup>3</sup> Péter Zakar: *A Csanádi egyházmegye kormányzata 1848–1849-ben.* Aetas, 26. (2011) No. 4. pp. 82–101. In this source, however, I mistakenly gave the name of György Nátl, priest of Orcifalva as József Nátl after Jenő Szentkláray. Péter Miklós informed me of the error.
- <sup>4</sup> Temesvári Római Katolikus Egyházmegyei Levéltár (Henceforth: TRKEL) Protokollum Officii dioecesiani Csanadiensis de anno 1849. Article No. 129–130 on Pál Oltványi, bishop’s–vicar’s secretary of August 18th, 1849. Pál Oltványi, who was in office at the vicariate of Makó, kept it in secret that the members in Makó were reluctant to obey Lonovics and move to Temesvár. Henceforth, we will also list the name of the actual town at the articles of the vicariate of Makó from 1849. (P. Z.)
- <sup>5</sup> TRKEL Protokollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanadiensis de anno 1849. No. 306.
- <sup>6</sup> TRKEL Personalien Hegedűs Pál 1849:985.
- <sup>7</sup> TRKEL Personalien Oltványi István; from István Oltványi to József Lonovics. Temesvár, March 9th, 1849. 1849:unnumbered.
- <sup>8</sup> József Szeredy: *Egyházjog különös tekintettel a magyar szent korona területének egyházi viszonyaira, valamint a keleti és protestáns egyházakra.* Pécs, 1883. pp. 321–338.
- <sup>9</sup> Baross László keresztlevelének másolata. November 16th, 1837. TRKEL Personalien Baross László 1837:unnumbered.
- <sup>10</sup> TRKEL Personalien Baross László 1847:1344.
- <sup>11</sup> TRKEL Personalien Baross László 1847:1853.
- <sup>12</sup> TRKEL Personalien Baross László 1847:2025.
- <sup>13</sup> TRKEL Personalien Baross László 1848:23.
- <sup>14</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanadiensis de anno 1848. No. 4.
- <sup>15</sup> TRKEL Personalien Baross László 1848:1609.
- <sup>16</sup> Baross László – Tisztelt püspök atya! Hely és dátum nélkül. 1848 TRKEL Personalien Baross László 1848:1404.
- <sup>17</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanadiensis de anno 1848. No. 1404.
- <sup>18</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanadiensis de anno 1848. No. 1609.
- <sup>19</sup> TRKEL Personalien Baross László 1849:241.
- <sup>20</sup> Gábor Bona: *Hadnagyok és főhadnagyok az 1848/49. évi szabadságharcban.* Budapest, 1998. (Henceforth: Bona, 1998) p. 87.
- <sup>21</sup> TRKEL Personalien Baross László 1849:315.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibidem.
- <sup>23</sup> TRKEL Protokollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanadiensis de anno 1849. No. 315. Zsolt Tamási also published on this resolution of the see, however, he saw this as a delinquency by Baross, where the fault was “only in playing cards for money”. Zsolt Tamási: *A katolikus egyházvezetés önvédelmi törekvései az 1848–1849-es forradalom leverése után.* Történelmi Szemle, 51. (2009) No. 3. p. 366.
- <sup>24</sup> TRKEL Personalien Baross László 1849:551.
- <sup>25</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanadiensis de anno 1849. No. 550.
- <sup>26</sup> TRKEL Personalien Baross László 1849:933.

- <sup>27</sup> Ignác Fábry to János Scitovszky. Temesvár, March 28th, 1850. Primási Levéltár (Henceforth: PL) Scitovszky-akták Cat. 21. 1417. cs. Acta Iudicii deleg. polit. Compromissos concernentia. Original, unnumbered.
- <sup>28</sup> Schematismus cleri dioecesis Csanádiensis pro anno Domini 1892. Temesvár, 1892. p. 195, p. 235.
- <sup>29</sup> Testimonium Scholasticum. Szeged, July 30th, 1841. Gusztáv Bobik 1841:unnumbered. József Szinnyei: *Magyar írók élete és munkái*. Budapest, 1891. (Henceforth: Szinnyei, 1891) pp. 1110–1111. According to Petri, he received his degree in philosophy in Eger, however, on the basis of a copy of his transcript this seems unlikely. Anton Peter Petri: *Biographisches Lexikon des Banater Deutschtums*. Marquarstein, 1992. (Henceforth: Petri, 1992) p. 162.
- <sup>30</sup> Bona, 1998. p. 177. Sándor Kováts correctly stated that Bobik, for a period of 1 year and 6 months, was unemployed in his own diocese (Sándor Dr. Kováts: *A Csanádi papnevelde története. A mai papnevelde megnyitásának első centenáriuma alkalmából. 1806–1906*. Temesvár, 1908. [Henceforth: Kováts, 1908] p. 367.), which Kálmán Juhász referenced by stating that “Gusztáv Bobik, chaplain of Nagybecskerek, was punished for a period of a year and a half”. Kálmán Juhász: *A Csanádi egyházmegye 1848/49-ben*. Ed.: Antal Lotz. In: László Blazovich (ed.): *Tanulmányok Csongrád megye történetéből*. Szeged, 1994. p. 73.
- <sup>31</sup> TRKEL Personalien Bobik Gusztáv 1852:2165.
- <sup>32</sup> TRKEL Personalien Bobik Gusztáv 1858:356, p. 596.
- <sup>33</sup> Bona, 1998. p. 177.
- <sup>34</sup> TRKEL Personalien Bobik Gusztáv 1897:3114.
- <sup>35</sup> TRKEL Personalien Bobik Gusztáv 1897:4019.
- <sup>36</sup> TRKEL Personalien Bobik Gusztáv 1898:605.
- <sup>37</sup> TRKEL Personalien Bobik Gusztáv 1907:5608.
- <sup>38</sup> TRKEL Personalien Bobik Gusztáv 1907:6088.
- <sup>39</sup> Kováts, 1908. p. 360.
- <sup>40</sup> The meeting held by the deanery of Szeged. Szeged, Szt. Döme parish, August 16th, 1848. TRKEL Mihály Horváth 1848/49. 1848:unnumbered.
- <sup>41</sup> Kreminger’s declaration was published by Péter Miklós. Péter Miklós: *Adalékok a szőregi római katolikus plébánia 1848/49-es történetéhez*. Magyar Egyháztörténeti Vázlatok (METEM) 2000. No. 1–4. pp. 153–160.; Péter Miklós: *Város, egyház, társadalom. Tanulmányok a szegedi katolicizmus történetéből*. Szeged, 2004. (Henceforth: Miklós, 2004) pp. 81–90.; as well as: Péter Miklós (ed.): *“A jelenkor vészes napjaiban”*. *Dokumentumok a csanádi püspökség 1848/49-es történetéhez*. Szeged, 2006. (Henceforth: Miklós, 2006) pp. 11–23.
- <sup>42</sup> Ignác Fábry to János Scitovszky. Temesvár, March 28th, 1850. PL Scitovszky-akták Cat. 21. 1417. cs. Acta Iudicii deleg. polit. Compromissos concernentia. 1850:unnumbered.
- <sup>43</sup> TRKEL Personalien András Klobucsár. Keresztlevél másolat a daruvári plébánia anyakönyvéből September 12th, 1841:unnumbered.
- <sup>44</sup> Schematismus cleri dioecesis Csanadiensis pro anno Domini 1859. Temesvár, d.n. 175. Testimonium Scholasticum. Szeged, September 12th, 1841. TRKEL Personalien András Klobucsár 1841:unnumbered.
- <sup>45</sup> TRKEL Personalien Klobucsár András. 1848:1275.
- <sup>46</sup> Protocollum Officii Dioecesani Csanádiensis de anno 1848. No. 1864.
- <sup>47</sup> TRKEL Protokollum Officii dioecesani Csanadiensis de anno 1849. [Makó] No. 29.
- <sup>48</sup> TRKEL Protokollum Officii dioecesani Csanadiensis de anno 1849. [Makó] No. 171.
- <sup>49</sup> TRKEL Protokollum Officii dioecesani Csanadiensis de anno 1849. [Makó] No. 223.; TRKEL Mihály Horváth 1849:223.
- <sup>50</sup> “Klobucsár András öbesenyői segéd, most honvéd.” TRKEL Mihály Horváth 1849:137.

- <sup>51</sup> Szinnyei, 1891. p. 568.
- <sup>52</sup> TRKEL Personalien Klobucsár András. 1848:1863.
- <sup>53</sup> Ibidem.
- <sup>54</sup> TRKEL Personalien Klobucsár András. 1848:1486.
- <sup>55</sup> TRKEL Personalien Klobucsár András. 1848:719.
- <sup>56</sup> Kováts, 1908. pp. 360–361. There is great uncertainty in the technical literature regarding the birthdate of István Kovács. Considering that the date he was ordained priest occurred in 1838, he could hardly have been born in the 1820s; in this work we have accepted as credible the years that can be read in the Church register. *Schematismus venerabilis cleri Dioecesis Csanádiensis ad annum Jesu Christi MDCCCXLVIII*. Temesvár, d. n. 124.
- <sup>57</sup> Jenő Szentkláray: *A Csanád-egyházmegyei plebániák története*. Temesvár, 1898. pp. 370–371.
- <sup>58</sup> *Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanádiensis de anno 1848*. No. 460.
- <sup>59</sup> Ilona G. Tóth: *Az 1848/49. évi forradalom és szabadságharc szegedi dokumentumi a Csongrád megyei Levéltárban*. Szeged, 2000. p. 49.
- <sup>60</sup> Péter Miklós: *A kisteleki római katolikus plébánia 1848/49-ben*. In: Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve. Történeti Tanulmányok (Studia Historica) 5. k. Szeged, 2002. pp. 97–117.; the same article can be read in: Miklós, 2004. pp. 102–127.; as well as: Miklós, 2006. pp. 24–60. A kisteleki plébánia rövid történetét Péter Miklós also wrote about this in *Századok*, however, he wrote about János Kovács instead of István Kovács, cf.: Péter Miklós: *Fejezetek a Csanádi egyházmegye 1848/49-es történetéből*. *Századok*, 144. (2010) No. 3. pp. 640–641.
- <sup>61</sup> TRKEL *Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanádiensis de anno 1848*. No. 1729.
- <sup>62</sup> TRKEL *Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanádiensis de anno 1848*. No. 1822.
- <sup>63</sup> Correctly: István Kovács. (P. Z.)
- <sup>64</sup> Manó Bozó: *Pétervárad 1849-ben*. In: Abafi, Lajos (ed.): *Hazánk. Történelmi Közöny*. X. Book. Budapest, é. n. p. 310.
- <sup>65</sup> Gábor Bona: *Tábornokok és törzstisztek az 1848/49. évi szabadságharcban*. Budapest, 2003. pp. 458–459.; Károly László: *Katonai életemből. Napló, 1848. Between Sept 25th, 1848 and Sept 10th, 1851*. Ed.: Ildikó Pordán. Budapest, 2001. (Henceforth: László, 2001) p. 53.
- <sup>66</sup> István Hajnal (ed. and intr.): *A Kossuth-emigráció Törökországban*. Budapest, 1927. (Henceforth: Hajnal, 1927) p. 333., pp. 341–342.
- <sup>67</sup> Tibor Somlyói Tóth: *Diplomácia és emigráció "Kossuthiana"*. Budapest, 1985. pp. 102–124.
- <sup>68</sup> This is especially worthy of attention because Fanni Ottoványi later divorced István Kovács and married Ferenc Házmán. László, 2001. pp. 146–147.
- <sup>69</sup> *Gábor Egressy's diary in Turkey. 1849–1850*. Pest, 1851. p. 128.
- <sup>70</sup> Hajnal, 1927. pp. 679–683.
- <sup>71</sup> László, 2001. p. 102., p. 119.
- <sup>72</sup> László, 2001. pp. 133–134.
- <sup>73</sup> Gedeon Ács: *Mihelyt gyertyámat eloltom... Bostoni jegyzetek 1856–1863*. Budapest, 1989. p. 234.
- <sup>74</sup> Dénes Jánossy (ed. and intr.): *A Kossuth-emigráció Angliában és Amerikában 1851–1852*. Budapest, 1940. pp. 684–686.; László, 2001. p. 162.
- <sup>75</sup> *Magyar Hírlap*, May 7th, 1852. pp. 3551–3552.
- <sup>76</sup> Károly László: *Napló-töredék az 1849-iki menekülteket, internáltakat, Kossuthot és környezetét illetőleg, Törökországban és az Amerikai Egyesült-Államokban*. Budapest, 1887. p. 75.

- <sup>77</sup> István Kornél Vida: *Világostól Appomatoxig. Magyarok az amerikai polgárháborúban*. Budapest, 2011. pp. 251–253.; Ödön Vasváry: *A déliek magyar hadifoglya. Vasváry-gyűjtemény. Somogyi Könyvtár*. Szeged. K6/a pp. 55–56.
- <sup>78</sup> István Fazekas: *A bécsi Pazmaneum magyarországi hallgatói. 1623–1918. (1951)*. Budapest, 2003. p. 377.; Kováts, 1908. p. 307.
- <sup>79</sup> TRKEL Personalien Kószeghy Antal 1847:460.
- <sup>80</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanádiensis de anno 1848. No. 1172.
- <sup>81</sup> TRKEL Personalien Kószeghy Antal 1848:1145.
- <sup>82</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanádiensis de anno 1848. No. 1245.
- <sup>83</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanádiensis de anno 1848. No. 1699.
- <sup>84</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanádiensis de anno 1848. No. 1832.
- <sup>85</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanádiensis de anno 1848. No. 1856
- <sup>86</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii dioecesiani Csanádiensis de anno 1849. [Makó] No. 48.; Kováts, 1908. p. 360, p. 368.
- <sup>87</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanádiensis de anno 1849. No. 548.
- <sup>88</sup> Ignác Fábry to János Scitovszky. Temesvár, March 28th, 1850. PL Scitovszky-akták Cat. 21. 1417. cs. Acta Iudicii deleg. polit. Compromissos concernentia. 1850:unnumbered. Concerning his rank as a Captain, we have doubts, unless he, too, served in the military under a pseudonym. (P. Z.)
- <sup>89</sup> TRKEL Personalien Kószeghy Antal 1850:1330.
- <sup>90</sup> TRKEL Personalien Kószeghy Antal 1851:374.
- <sup>91</sup> TRKEL Personalien Kószeghy Antal 1851:1301.
- <sup>92</sup> Kováts, 1908. p. 356.
- <sup>93</sup> Kószeghy Antal – Esperes Úr! Nagybecskerek, June 14th, 1851. TRKEL Personalien Kószeghy Antal 1856: 1809 melléklete.
- <sup>94</sup> TRKEL Personalien Kószeghy Antal 1852:2143.
- <sup>95</sup> TRKEL Personalien Kószeghy Antal 1856:1809. Removal from priesthood (degradatio) is the most serious punishment possible, which means the church member is removed from practice of the order, from compensation and the privileges of belonging to the priesthood. (P. Z.)
- <sup>96</sup> TRKEL Personalien Kószeghy Antal 1856:2194.
- <sup>97</sup> TRKEL Personalien Kószeghy Antal 1857:1217, 1859:1323.
- <sup>98</sup> Testimonium Scholasticum. Szeged, July 30th, 1840. TRKEL Personalien Nátly János 1840:unnumbered. Natl József received a noble title in 1847. In Péter Mikós's article, he showed that János Nátly's life in 1848–49 must be a separate area of research. Miklós, Péter: *A Nátly család és a katolikus egyház*. In: Miklós, 2004. pp. 75–77.
- <sup>99</sup> Kováts, 1908. p. 376.
- <sup>100</sup> TRKEL Personalien Nátly János 1848:1880.
- <sup>101</sup> Ignác Fábry to János Scitovszky. Temesvár, March 28th, 1850. PL Scitovszky-akták. Cat. 21. 1417. cs. Acta Iudicii deleg. polit. Compromissos concernentia. Unnumbered original fair copy. The rank of János Nátly as a Lieutenant is doubtful. (P. Z.)
- <sup>102</sup> TRKEL Personalien Nátly János 1850:2381.
- <sup>103</sup> Petri, 1992. p. 1601.
- <sup>104</sup> Kováts, 1908. p. 311., p. 324., p. 360.
- <sup>105</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesiani Csanádiensis de anno 1848. No. 1626. A large part of the order was cut out of the register with scissors. (P. Z.)



- <sup>106</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesanii Csanádiensis de anno 1848. No. 1772.
- <sup>107</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesanii Csanádiensis de anno 1848. No. 1810.
- <sup>108</sup> Ambrus, 1892. pp. 160–162.
- <sup>109</sup> Hadtörténelmi Levéltár 1848/49-es fond 28/405.
- <sup>110</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesanii Csanádiensis de anno 1849. No. 199.
- <sup>111</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesanii Csanádiensis de anno 1849. No. 449.
- <sup>112</sup> Ibidem.
- <sup>113</sup> TRKEL Protokollum Officii Dioecesanii Csanádiensis de anno 1849. No. 987.
- <sup>114</sup> TRKEL Personalien Rózsafy Pál 1850:761.
- <sup>115</sup> Péter Zakar: *A magyar hadsereg tábori lelkészei 1848–49-ben*. Budapest, 1999. p. 151.
- <sup>116</sup> Ambrus, 1892. p. 162.
- <sup>117</sup> TRKEL Personalien Rózsafy Pál 1858:1158.
- <sup>118</sup> TRKEL Personalien Rózsafy Pál 1872:2374.
- <sup>119</sup> TRKEL Personalien Rózsafy Pál 1873:608, 829.
- <sup>120</sup> TRKEL Personalien Rózsafy Pál 1889:302.
- <sup>121</sup> *1848–49. Történelmi Lapok*, January, 1898. p. 15.
- <sup>122</sup> TRKEL Personalien Rózsafy Pál 1903:1807.
- <sup>123</sup> Schematismus venerabilis cleri dioecesis Csanádiensis ad annum Jesu Christi MDCCCXLVIII. Temsvár, d. n. 93. p. 128.
- <sup>124</sup> TRKEL Personalien Varjasi Jakab 1848:1202.
- <sup>125</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesanii Csanádiensis de anno 1848. No. 1266.
- <sup>126</sup> TRKEL Personalien Varjasi Jakab 1848:1423.
- <sup>127</sup> TRKEL Protocollum Officii Dioecesanii Csanádiensis de anno 1848. No. 1569.
- <sup>128</sup> TRKEL Protokollum Officii dioecesanii Csanádiensis de anno 1849. [Makó] No. 128.
- <sup>129</sup> Bona, 1998. p. 426.; Gusztáv Habermann: *Személyi adattár a szegedi polgár-családok történetéhez*. Tanulmányok Csongrád megye történetéből XIX. p. 294.
- <sup>130</sup> Ignác Fábry to János Scitovszky. Temesvár, March 28th, 1850. PL Scitovszky Files Cat. 21. 1417. cs. Acta Iudicii deleg. polit. Compromissos concernentia. Unnumbered original fair copy.
- <sup>131</sup> TRKEL Personalien Varjasi Jakab 1852:2804.
- <sup>132</sup> Bona, 1998. p. 426.