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**THE BOOKS OF ADMISSIONS OF THE HOSPITAL DE LA SANTA CREU IN BARCELONA (15<sup>TH</sup> - 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES)**

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**Resum**

Aquest article analitza el conjunt de llibres de malalts de l'Hospital de la Santa Creu de Barcelona entre els segles XV i el XVIII que es conserven actualment a la Biblioteca de Catalunya i a l'Arxiu Històric de l'Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau. Els llibres s'estudien des de diferents punts de vista i s'agrupen a partir de la seva ubicació, de la seva tipologia, morfologia i cronologia. S'hi identifiquen de forma sistemàtica les dades que contenen i la seva evolució al llarg del temps. La inclusió d'un bon nombre d'exemples i de comparances amb altres fonts històriques, mostra la dimensió d'aquesta documentació com a recurs estadístic fiable, però a més, l'article vol posar de relleu la riquesa informativa d'aquests documents com a font primera de gran valor per a la recerca en el camp assistencial d'època medieval i moderna.

**Paraules clau:** Hospital de la Santa Creu, hospitals, assistència, Catalunya, Barcelona, arxius hospitalaris, documentació

**Abstract**

This article analyses the books of admission of the Hospital de la Santa Creu in Barcelona, between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> century, currently preserved in the Library of Catalonia and the Historical Archive of the Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau. In this paper, the books are studied and grouped according to the following criteria: location, type, morphology and chronology. The data they contained, as well as their evolution over time, are systematically identified. The inclusion of examples and comparisons to other historical sources highlights the importance of these documents as a reliable statistical resource. Furthermore, this text aims at emphasizing the richness of these documents as a valuable primary source for the research on medieval and modern welfare.

**Key words:** Hospital de la Santa Creu, Hospitals, Welfare, Catalonia, Barcelona, Hospital archives, Documents

## 1. Introduction

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Joseph Townsend explained in his book on his trip to Spain (TOWNSEND, 1791) that the Hospital de la Santa Creu in Barcelona was one of the best organized hospitals he had seen in the entire European continent. To realise if this statement had any real basis or was only a frivolous and uninformed comment, it is essential to establish a careful survey of the institution's administrative books. The first hospital regulations, written in 1417, are indeed a magnificent manual of internal organization. Their prologue states that in the early years the staff performed several tasks indistinctly, which resulted in a relaxation of accountability and a proliferation of fraud and abuse. The lack of control fully justified the establishment of rules in order to define each position, their functions, hierarchical dependencies and individual responsibilities. For the same reason, the regulations specified exactly which and how many books each officer was in charge of, and which data had to be recorded. Concerning the accounting system it is stated that the *escrivà de ració* managed four books, the *rebedor i distribuïdor de monedes* five books and, finally, three books were administered by the *racional o oïdor de comptes*. When referring to the patients, it was the infirmarer who had to keep a record of admissions and movements in the book of the infirmary, as it was called in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. All these books were kept in the archive of the institution, organized under this name since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, in order to justify, when required, the rents and legacies that could provide some kind of income to the institution.

The first regulations introduced the infirmarer as one of the most important employees of the hospital. He had to live in the hospital and was usually an ecclesiastic, although this was not an indispensable condition. He was in charge of the admission of the poor sick, who he received 'graciosament' (gracefully), that is, in a kind way, washing their feet in a clear evangelical symbolic gesture. Once clean, he assigned them a bed, 'els prenia l'aigua' (collected their bodily fluids) and supervised that the prior and rector of the chapel took spiritual care of them. Both the rector and the infirmarer had to interrogate the patients concerning their possessions, money and debts, and the place where they kept or hid them, as well as their name, origin and 'de quin art acostumaven obrar' (their occupation). All this information had to be diligently recorded in the books of the infirmarer, both to safekeep the possessions of the sick and, especially, in order to preserve the rights of the hospital if needed.

The documentary collection of the Hospital de la Santa Creu consists in thousands of records (Fig. 1); among all these registers the records of admissions are precisely the most important, containing the data referring to the patients' surveys. Josep Danon studied them partially in his monograph concerning the hospital (DANON, 1978) displaying statistical charts concerning the number and the mortality of patients organized by sex until 1615, introducing numerous contradictions and raising still currently unresolved issues. Other investigators have also immersed in the research of specific information, especially the one concerning the names and origin of the patients. Among

them, Jordi Nadal and Emili Giralt (NADAL, GIRALT, 2000), who reviewed all the books from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries in order to find French emigrants in Catalonia, or Pierre Vilar, who also consulted the books for the elaboration of the demographic chapters of his essay (VILAR, 1964 to 1968). More recently and since 1980, Teresa Vinyoles has worked in depth the collection of books concerning the abandoned children (VINYOLES 1980, 2013) as well as Antonio Conejo, who has studied them extensively in relation to the architectural evolution of the building (CONEJO, 2002, 2003, 2013). Likewise, the books have also been a fundamental documentary source for the thesis of Adrià Cases on hospitalized soldiers during the War of the Spanish Succession (CASES, 2012). However, it is not my intention to make an exhaustive list of the available bibliography on the old Hospital de la Santa Creu, which is well known, yet to endeavor an exclusive study of the books of admissions from an archival point of view. Currently, under the protection of the Private Foundation of the Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau and the Library of Catalonia, the hospital's documents are described and open for public consultation since the database created on the websites of both institutions.<sup>1</sup> The simple review of these records provides comprehensive information related to the content of each book, concerning the data gathered from the patients, chronologies, the caregiver's annotations, the language, the extension, the rooms mentioned, the existence of related documents, as well as other formal aspects such as the book preservation or the bindings. The documentary collection is currently an essential tool for the study of the hospitals's history. We must also observe that most of these ancient books of patients have been recently digitized and can be viewed in high quality images in the Digital Memory of Catalonia<sup>2</sup>. In the following pages we aim to sort, classify, make an account, and analyze their contents, considering as patients books all those providing information related to the hospital's interns, that is, not only the admission records, but also the books concerning deaths, statements of the patient's assets, the abandoned children, their placement within new families, and the admittance of the insane.

## 2. *Where Are the Books?*

The documentation of the Hospital de la Santa Creu in Barcelona is currently divided between the Historical Archive of the Hospital de la Santa Creu and Sant Pau (AHSP) and the Historical Archive of the Library of Catalonia (BC). The history of this segregation is well-known: in 1918, on the occasion of the transfer of the building, the Hospital de la Santa Creu sold part of its archive to the Barcelona Provincial Council (Diputació de Barcelona) which deposited it to the Library of Catalonia. Both institutions, aware of the inconvenience that the fragmentation of the collection supposed to researchers, collaborate since some years ago on common projects which aim to offer a complete and consistent information to the users of the hospital's archive. From the series of admission books enumerated until the 18th century, the major part (88%) are preserved

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.bnc.cat/fonshistorichsc/formulari\\_fonshistorichsc](http://www.bnc.cat/fonshistorichsc/formulari_fonshistorichsc) [last consulted 28 June 2013]

<sup>2</sup> <http://mdc.cbuc.cat/cdm/search/collection/hospstcreu> [last consulted on 28 June 2013]

in the Library of Catalonia whilst the 11, 9%, almost all referring to foundlings, can be found in the Historical Archive of the Hospital de Sant Pau.

### 3. How Many Are There?

We consider four basic types of books of patients between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century: the general books, the books of foundlings, the books of the deceased, and the books of the insane. In subsequent chapters we will describe their particular features and subdivisions. Regarding to their number, they are distributed as stated by the following chart:

Type	Units	Location	Comments	Timeline
General books of patients	173	BC	166 books of admission, both from soldiers and civilians, all digitized, plus seven bundles of soldier records from 1770 to 1799	15 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> c.
Books of Foundlings	29	AHSP (25) BC(4)		15 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup> c.
Books of the Deceased	13	BC (12) AHSP (1)	11 demise books, 1 'dixit' book and 1 book of 'bosses de malalts i morts'	16 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> c
Books of the Insane	3	BC		17 <sup>th</sup> c.
TOTAL	218	BC/AHSP	192 books in the BC and 26 in the AHSP	

### 4. Chronology

The preserved books of patients are distributed following an irregular chronology throughout the late Middle Ages and the Early Modern period. As is shown in Fig. 1, the highest amount of books dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

#### 4.1. Fifteenth Century (Fig. 2)

From the 15<sup>th</sup> century only five general books of adult patients have been preserved. The oldest is from 1457, without any news from previous examples. It is titled as *Llibre segon de la infermeria* (*Second Infirmary Book*) indicating that there was a first one, currently lost. Chronologically, the subsequent preserved book is from 1473, denoting a gap of 16 years, yet afterwards, the series

follow an order until 1501. There are also some books of foundlings preserved for this century. There are two books of 'afernements' or children's assignments to families in the Library of Catalonia. The first one is dated from 1401 to 1447 and the second from 1490 until 1511. In the historical archive of St. Pau, there are four books from the fifteenth century, between 1412 and 1490, with some important gaps as for example from 1439 to 1488.

**11 books have been preserved from the 15<sup>th</sup> century: 5 books of patients and 6 concerning abandoned children.**

#### 4.2. *Sixteenth Century*

There are 27 books of patients preserved from the 16th century since 1539 until 1599. The century begins with a gap of 37 years in which data on the hospital's patients are missing, followed by another gap between years 1542 and 1566.

The remaining books follow more or less an order, with some gaps of two to three years. A book of 'bosses de malalts i morts' (BC AH 194) can also be added, which includes the years 1537 to 1549, plus seven books of foundlings and a book of 'afernements' containing data between years 1507 to 1520, preserved in the archive of St. Pau.

**35 books have been preserved from the 16<sup>th</sup> century: 27 books of patients, one book concerning 'bosses de malalts' and 7 books of foundlings**

#### 4.3. *Seventeenth Century*

The 17<sup>th</sup> century is the wealthiest when referring to books of patients: there are 99 general books of patients from 1600 to 1699, without any gaps (references BC AH 32 to BC AH 130). In addition, there are three books of the insane dated between 1593 and 1702, which completely embrace the century, plus eight books of the deceased (BC AH 169-176) and 14 books of foundlings.

**124 books have been preserved from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, including 99 general books of patients referring to soldiers and civilian, 8 books of the deceased, three books of the insane and 14 books of foundlings.**

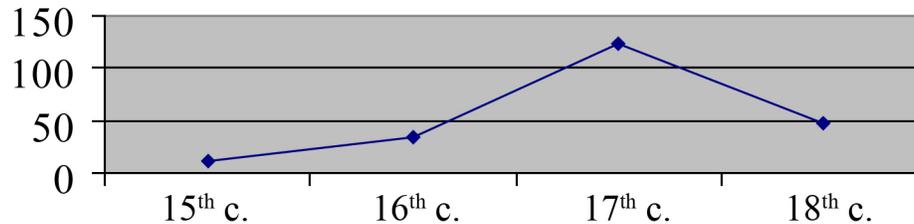
#### 4.4. *Eighteenth Century*

As for the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the general patients books are only preserved until 1765. There are 36 volumes (BC AH 131 - BC AH 166), ending abruptly in an incomprehensible gap until 1825. There are a series of soldier books consisting in seven bundles which contain approximately 25

and 50 files each, between 1770 and 1799 at the Library of Catalonia (BC). Additionally, there are two books of the deceased dated between 1708 and 1758 also in the Library of Catalonia, plus a book of 'dixits' preserved in the archive of the Hospital of Sant Pau. Strangely, all of the admissions of foundlings for the eighteenth century, preserved in the Archive of the Hospital of Sant Pau, were not registered within a record book, or perhaps the books have been lost. Only three folders, which in great part are from the nineteenth century, have been preserved, including a variety of documents concerning the admission of children in the hospital, their baptism, their assignment to families, and other administrative policies related to the children. There are also two records of wet-nurses including data concerning the children; despite the fact that the second one dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we will only take these two volumes into account.

**48 books have been preserved from the 18<sup>th</sup> century: 36 adult books of patients, 7 bundles concerning soldiers, two books of deceased, 1 'dixits' book, and 2 books related to wet-nurses and foundlings.**

Hospital de la Santa Creu  
Extant books of admission



## 5. Typologies

The books of patients can be grouped in four basic types which are: the general admission books, the books of the deceased, the books of the crazy or insane, and the books of the foundlings or abandoned children.

### 5.1. The General Books of Admission

These are the books of the admission records concerning adult patients, which gather both soldiers and civilian, sometimes separately, and others jointly. They are intermixed until the 17<sup>th</sup> century. From the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards the books always differ soldiers from civilians. The containing data are detailed in the subsequent chapters.

### 5.1.1. *Books of Soldiers (Fig. 3)*

Soldiers entered the hospital since the beginning of the institution, together with civilian, yet from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards they will be registered in specific different record books. The first book named specifically as book of soldiers is from 1639, becoming customary since the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, therefore we can state that this period concentrates most of the 22 books of soldiers from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and during the Spanish War of Succession there are specific books concerning French, English and Portuguese soldiers (BCAH 127, BCAH 136 and BCAH 139). In total, 50 are the military volumes existing from the studied period. They usually contain the same data as the civilians or the mixed books, generally adding the name of the regiment of each soldier.

### 5.1.2. *Soldiers' books of admission*

These books gather the registers concerning the admission of the soldiers, consisting in a total series of 10 bundles (from BC AH 183 to BC AH 192) from 1770 to 1809, seven belonging to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Each bundle has between 24 and 48 quires.

### 5.1.3. *Books of Civilians*

The creation of books to exclusively register the soldiers compelled the hospital to differentiate them from civilians, as indicated by the titles of the books, so that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, 65 of the 124 books preserved are exclusively related to civilian. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century 17 within a total of 48 are related to civilian.

## 5.2. *Books of Foundlings*<sup>3</sup>

The books of foundlings are those records related to abandoned children who were admitted in the hospital by different ways, as well as those books which registered their subsequent placement in society.

### 5.2.1. *Admission records (Fig. 4)*

These books detail the child's name, the age (there are registers since newborns to 8 years old), the date and time they were left in the hospital or the various ways of admission: they could come from either other parishes of Barcelona or from surrounding villages, born in the hospital

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<sup>3</sup> Concerning foundlings see, VINYOLES, Teresa-Maria, i GONZÁLEZ, Margarida, 1980. 'Els infants abandonats a les portes de l'Hospital de Barcelona (anys 1426-1439)', *Pobresa y asistencia a los pobres en la Cataluña medieval*, 2 vol., Barcelona: CSIC, p. 191-285.

from a mother who had died ('Johana Antonia, filla de una malalta qui és morta en la present casa, y dita infanta és nada y batejada assi');<sup>4</sup> abandoned by their parents who agreed to pay and recover them, or taken to the hospital by people who found them in the streets. These books also describe the clothes they were wearing, and transcribed the dispatch notes that the children had attached to their clothes, the objects that accompanied them such as images, necklaces, stones... were also detailed. The dispatch notes are all quite similar, indicating if the child is baptized and his/her name, requests of good treatment and the promise to recover the infant and compensation for the hospital: 'Aquesta criatura ha nom Catherina. Donau-li bon recapte que bé serà satisfet'.<sup>5</sup> Another example: 'Aquesta minyona és crestiana y ha nom Eulàlia, filla de bona mare y de bon pare, per temps serà demanada. Fet a tres de juliol Mil DXXXII'.<sup>6</sup> Or this other: 'A x de janer nasqué aquesta criatura [Llorenç, d'un dia] y per no poder-la criar sa mare se portà al spital. Plàcie-us donar-li recapte y posar-la en memòria perquè quant la volran quitar la troben, y no és batejada; feu-la batejar. Son pare no és en la terra, que quant serà vengut ell lo quitarà. Feu que quant lo demane lo puga quitar'.<sup>7</sup>

In a separate paragraph, the name of the assigned wet-nurse is annotated, detailing where she lives and the name of her spouse, usually adding the phrase 'a tota llet y for acostumat' (full nursing care at the usual wage). They also annotated when the wet-nurse changed or either if the child returned to the hospital. If the child dies, the date is stated, yet not the cause of the death. If the child dies in the hospital it is the 'mother' or the person in charge who reports the matter to the caregiver. The many gaps in the series indicate that certainly many of these books of foundlings, which usually comprehended from minimum age 2 to a maximum of seven, have been lost, and the gaps are significantly higher from 1507 to 1533 (26 years), from 1536 to 1559 (23 years), and from 1576 to 1587 (11 years).

### 5.2.2. Books of 'afermaments' or Children's Assignments to Families (Fig. 5)

The books of 'afermaments' of foundlings registered the children's assignments to families, usually from age 6, but often infants aged 2 or 3 can be observed, assigned as maidens in girl's cases, or as apprentice the boys, with conditions listed and signed in the presence of a notary. If not done in this way it was stated 'sense carta ni scrit' (without any letter or writing). The name of the notary was confirmed, as well as the duration of the contract—usually between 12 and 15 years—and the amount the children would receive when finished, that was generally in the range

<sup>4</sup> 'Johana Antonia, daughter of a patient who died in this house, baptized and born in this way' BC AH 695,f. 37

<sup>5</sup> 'This child is named Catherine. Give her good treatment and this will be compensated' BC AH 695,f. 190

<sup>6</sup> 'This maiden is a Christian and her name is Eulalia, daughter of a good mother and a good father, who will be eventually required. Made on July the third DXXXII'. BC AH 695,f. 178

<sup>7</sup> 'The X of January this child was born [Llorenç, a day old] and because his mother was not able to raise him he was took to the hospital. Please give him shelter and record it, for when they want to find him, and he is not baptized; baptize him. His father is not in the territory now, yet he will recover him at his return. Please make possible his recovery when he asks for him' BC AH 695,f. 45

between 25 and 30 *lliures*, which in the case of the girls would normally consist in their dowry. Some ‘aferment’ books provide annotations done by the hospital concerning their situation in the city of Barcelona: If they were alive, dead, if they had got married, if they had escaped, or if they were in good circumstances, well dressed, if they had returned to the hospital, or as often happened, if they could not be found or even if they were good boys and girls. Sometimes the expression ‘li fan tant com pròpiament a sos infants’ (they take care of them as if they were their own children) appears, indicating those cases of adoption. Occasionally, the record of the book of foundlings and the folio where they were first registered in entering the hospital is detailed.

### 5.3. *Books of the Insane*

Only three Books of the Insane have been preserved, which are not very different from the others mentioned in terms of patient information registers: name, age, parents’ names, civil state, if they had children, the room where they were accommodated and if they died or left the hospital. They often exclude detailing the clothing. Sometimes they specify additional information, such as the circumstances of their admittance, if they are speechless, if they are simple, if they have been found on the street ‘fent l’orat’ (acting as a madmen), etc. An insane man who had been taken bound into the hospital was finally released and ‘fou esborrat [del llibre] per no ésser estat més que una afflicció y no aver.se tornat orat’ (was erased [from the book] because it had been only a passing affliction, and was not insane). Each book of the insane includes more than a decade: BC AH 195 – 1593-1620 (28 years); BC AH 196 – 1621-1646 (26 years); BC AH 197 – 1649-1702 (53 years).

The decision of recording specific separate books for the insane is given only in the 17<sup>th</sup> century; before and after this time they were registered along with the other patients. In these cases only the annotations indicating the room of the insane allowed to acknowledge their difference within the rest.

The insane were not especially numerous within the hospital population. They were categorized as ‘orats’ (insane), ‘furiosos’ (furious), ‘innocents’ (innocents) or sometimes ‘bojos’ (mad) or named by expressions such as ‘va incórrer en bogeria’ (became mad).

A recount done on the book of the insane with register BC AH 197 (1649-1702) indicates that between June 1649 and February 1692, that is, 43 years and 9 months, 239 men and 205 women were admitted in the hospital, a total of 444 insane which correspond to approximately 10 per year, with a balanced gender distribution. (Fig. 6).

The origin was predominantly Catalan, with the presence, however, of 21 foreigners, especially French (13), one Portuguese, one Armenian, two of Flanders, a German, an Irishman... and nine

Spaniards. The patients registered were quite young, and soldiers and civilians were intermixed. Many of them died soon after their admission, an incomprehensible fact if we take into account their youth; it could possibly be a consequence of the hospital infections or perhaps because their sickness was actually some other disease, or even caused by the menial jobs that the insane had to do in the hospital...

#### 5.4. *Books of the deceased*

Patients who died in the Hospital were recorded in these books which were also used to manage the deceased's assets. These were divided among the books of death records, the 'dixit' books,<sup>8</sup> and the books of 'bosses de malalts i morts'<sup>9</sup>

##### 5.4.1. *The books of the deceased*

11 of these books have been preserved from the period 1582-1758, although we can also find data among the books of admission, for example contained in the reference BC AH4, dated from 1484 up to 1492, which includes a list of deceased from April, May and June 1490, intermixed between the sick, annotating name, employment, room and date of death. Usually the information was annotated in the margins of the books of admissions, used as an accurate record of the deaths. The books of the deceased mentioned the patients who actually died in the hospital, yet only those who had some goods the hospital could claim, that is, those patients who had made any statements ('dixit') when admitted. In the first of these books the sick were inscribed on the verso of the folio, leaving the following recto for the additions of the procurator of the deceased. The latter was in charge of visiting the people or the houses where the furniture was guarded, personal belongings, money, food or goods of the dead, often traveling out of town to take care of the transfer of goods to the hospital. The result of his efforts was usually profitless, discovering often that the house or the persons declared by the patient did not exist, or frequently, that the assets declared were either inexistent or of a much lower value than stated in the 'dixits' books of patients. The annotations of the attorney are explicit: 'aquest està en plet' (pending lawsuit), 'la roba està cobrada' (the clothing has been paid), 'no s'és trobada la capa' (the cape has not been found), 'ha fet testament y ha fet heretara la sua ànima' (he made his will and stated his soul as inheritor), or 'no ha volgut donar caxa ni roba per[què] l'a ha tengut molts mesos a sa casa malalta' (they did not give money or clothing because they had the patient many months sick at home).

<sup>8</sup> TN: 'dixit': confessions concerning properties, money debts, possessions, or dispositions in case of death, etc. that the sick made when they were admitted in the Hospital de la Santa Creu.

<sup>9</sup> TN: Daily register of the money the patients gave in a bag to the infirmarer. Each line begins with the name, the quantity given, the hospital room and the number of the folio of the book of admission. On the left margin is annotated if the patient died in the hospital and the date the money is returned.

In the books of the deceased, each line refers to the folio of the patients admittance books where the deceased is registered at the time of entering the hospital. The first demise book preserved is from 1582, and on the first page a text dated on June 3 of the aforementioned year explains that the hospital administrators, Carles Sagarriga, Jaume Cassador canons of the See, and Galceran Burguès i de Santcliment, military, and Joan Casademunt, merchant, in a meeting in the hospital's archive and 'inseguint los vestigis antichs de llurs antecessors' (following the steps of their predecessors) decided to begin this series of demise books in which necessarily had to be recorded 'tots los béns així mobles com immobles de les persones qui moririen en lo dit hospital per los dèxits o codicils per ells fets'.<sup>10</sup>

As of 1733, patients's possessions are no longer recorded in the books of the deceased, and the lists (Fig. 7) seem to reflect the total amount of deceases. Only the marital status is annotated (youngsters, bachelors/maidens, married and widowed), and in some cases if a soldier or sergeant. The dead are separated by sex and room and, inside each room, organized chronologically by the month of death. Each line refers to the folio stated in the patient's admittance book, and assigns them a number which corresponds to the date in which the inventory of the room wardrobe is done: 'Se ha pasat guardarova de la Quadra de Febres als 10 de 8bre, essent administrador el Illtre Se Dn Salvador Clariana, canonge de la Iglesia Cathedral'.<sup>11</sup>

There are numerous marginal notes informing the cause of death, the patient's condition and various incidents: *ètico/a* (consumptive), *rabioso/a* (rabid), *orada* (insane), *govern* (foundling), *llatse* (leper), *de llet* (babe in arms), *és viu/viva* (alive) (strange misunderstanding in this case), *entrà mort* (registered dead), etc.

Since the number of folios occupied by each room in the book, one can see that the number of patients hosted is quite balanced: 115 folios in St. Pere, 120 folios in St. Roc, which takes in all the soldiers, 125 folios the of febrility room, comprising only women, and 115 folios from the room of Sta. Eulalia, also taking in only women. These data suggest that the capacity of these rooms must have been quite similar.

#### 5.4.2. *The 'dixit' Books*

Most of the 'dixit' books are specified in other books: in the demise and 'dixit' books or either in the admission and 'dixit' books. As a proper 'dixit' book only one is preserved, dated between 1679 and 1730 and kept in the archives of the St. Pau Hospital.<sup>12</sup> This book is entitled *Llibre*

<sup>10</sup> 'all the assets stated by the persons that died in the aforementioned hospital, either movable or immovable', BC AH 167, f. 1

<sup>11</sup> 'the inventory of the wardrobes of the room of the febrility has been made on the 10th of October, being the administrator the illustrious Dn Salvador Clariana, canon of the Church Cathedral', BC AH 178

<sup>12</sup> AHSCSP Llibre de dèxits Vol II, Inv. 6.1

*dels dèixits faran los malalts del present Hospital general, en poder del reverent Joseph Ansalada, prevere, vuy infermer* [...] containing 89 folios which include the assets, debts, dispositions in case of death, etc., declared by that patients when admitted in the Hospital de la Santa Creu. In fact, it is exactly alike the first of the demise books. In the margins are the references to the folio of the corresponding book of admission.

#### 5.4.3. *The Books Named 'Llibres de les bosses de malalts'* (Fig. 8)

Only one of these books is preserved, dated between 1537 and 1549, entitled as *Llibre de les bosses dels malalts morts en lo present Hospital de Sancta Creu de Barcelona. Comensant lo primer dia del mes de ffebrer, any Mil D xxxvii, per mi, Barthomeu Miquel, notari, escrivà de ració de la casa del dit Hospital*.<sup>13</sup> It comprises the money deposits of the hospitalized patients (bags), stating the name of the patient, the date when the caregiver collected the money, the quantity, the room where the patient was installed, and the folio of the admission book where the patient is registered. A marginal annotation on the right indicates the equivalences between *escuts, pacífics, ducats, doblons, rals* and other different currencies in circulation within different places and time, in *lliures, sous* and *diners*. On the left margin is specified the day the assets were returned if the patient healed, or withdrawn if the patient died or they were used for another purpose. Very often, also the note 'obiit' (dead) is stated. In some cases, part of the money was returned to the patient because 'els ha mester' (they needed it).

The books of admission from 1539 to 1542<sup>14</sup> overlap three years of the *Llibre de les bosses*. Comparing the informations it can be stated that some of the patients owning money are indeed specified; yet there are very few cases of coincidence because often the folios do not match, the admission book has chronological gaps, and not all the deceased are recorded in the margins. All these facts can be explained by the annotation in the *Llibre de les bosses* (f. 102 v) indicating that 'a causa de la malaltia i mort de Mossèn Miquel no.s serve lo orde acostumat' (due to the illness and death of father Miquel the established order is no longer followed).

Some examples: Però/Peyró den Coch, cowman, 50 years old, from Tarbes, who was hospitalized on March 9, deceased, as recorded in the *Llibre de les bosses* (f. 35v) -Not recorded in the books of admission- he owned a golden ducado and 20 pieces of money, which were withdrawn on March 21. Instead, Martí de Carasa (or Martin Carranza according to the *Llibre de Bosses* f. 36), was 28 years old, native of Vizcaya, and entered the hospital penniless on March 9 (patients book f. 25) and was released on April 12, recovering his bag with 2 rals. Francina Farigola (patients book f. 26r), aged 35 years old, from Pujalt (Segarra) was admitted in the room of the Crucifix. She had no money yet she owned a psaltery, other pieces of coral and a silver ring which the *escrivà de ració* kept and returned to her when she healed.

<sup>13</sup> BC AH 194

<sup>14</sup> BC AH 6

## 6. Data Comprised in the Books of Admission

The books include general information found in almost all the typologies:

*Alphabetical index* of the sources names, for example the books BC AH 20 to BC AH 24 corresponding to the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, most of the books from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and some from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. They are normally situated at the beginning of the book yet sometimes, as the example offered by reference BC AH 90, they can be located in the middle.

*Name of the infirmerer*. Whilst the first books of the 15<sup>th</sup> century are anonymous, from 1485 onwards the caregiver is stated as the author. Baltasar Arnau priest and caregiver at the hospital, is the first to mention himself on the header of the books of admission.<sup>15</sup> The caregiver Bernat Ferrer appears for the first time in the book comprising the years 1714 to 1716,<sup>16</sup> yet in the book from 1724 to 1726 he states in a marginal annotation that: ‘14 anys que só enfermer’.<sup>17</sup> He must have begun his activity, therefore, in 1711. From this year on, he occasionally writes the years he has been working in the hospital, until 1736, when he states that he has been caregiver for 25 years. In the book from 1738 Pasqual Pérez appears in his place.

*Years*. Generally the books include on the first folio the year of their beginning. Subsequently they state the day of the patients admittance, often adding the day of the week. When the year changes, it is stated in the book, sometimes with decorated letters, in a very obvious way. Sometimes, as in 1473-1479,<sup>18</sup> the dates of the month indicated on the header of the pages do not correspond with the entry dates. Also some of the books have chronological gaps, for example in the folio 26 of reference AH 194 BC, where there is a gap between March and July.

*Poems and literary notes (Fig. 9)*. Sometimes the books include caregiver’s literary creations or either copied excerpts. The most significant example is the one of archivist Sebastià Roger who inserts his own poetic compositions in the pages of the patients books.<sup>19</sup> In the last part of the book with reference BC AH 22 (f. 200), a fragment of the *Araucana d’Ercilla* can be read, and in the book with reference BC AH 10, on the back cover, the caregiver Joan Llauder writes some sentences in verse: ‘Con fatigas y trabajos / buela el tiempo de corrida / y tras él va nuestra vida...’

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<sup>15</sup> BC AH 5

<sup>16</sup> BC AH 145

<sup>17</sup> ‘I have been the infirmerer for 14 years’ BC AH 151, f. 417v

<sup>18</sup> BC AH 2

<sup>19</sup> See TOLDRA, Maria, 2012. *Sebastià Roger, el primer arxiver de l’Hospital de la Santa Creu* a <http://www.bnc.cat/El-Blog-de-la-BC/Sebastia-Roger-arxiver-de-l-Hospital-de-la-Santa-Creu#comments>. Also [http://mceem.iec.cat/veure.asp?id\\_manuscrits=362](http://mceem.iec.cat/veure.asp?id_manuscrits=362) <accessed on 28/06/2013> See Toldrà Mary, 2012. Sebastián Roger, the first archivist at the Hospital of the Holy Cross in <http://www.bnc.cat/El-Blog-de-la-BC/Sebastia-Roger-arxiver-de-l-Hospital-de-la-Santa-Creu#comments>. And [http://mceem.iec.cat/veure.asp?id\\_manuscrits=362](http://mceem.iec.cat/veure.asp?id_manuscrits=362) <accessed on 28/06/2013>

In the book of soldiers with reference BC AH 107, from 1683-84, the following verses are copied on the back cover: ‘Si per ma gran bogeria / me ha volgut Déu fer mussol, / yo crech que no só tot sol. / que molts me fan companyia...’ etc. In the book with reference BC AH 140, a civilian book dated between 1709 and 1710, during the War of Succession, on the folio 1v. we can read the following: ‘Abrid la puerta, castellanos, / a aquel que el cetro enpuña, / que hos dará rey Cathaluña / y a él besaréis las manos’, Or the reference BC AH 9 (1570-1571) which contains verses in Latin and Spanish, such as ‘Qui bien está y mal escoge, por muxo mal que le venga, no se anoge’.

*Annotations* or comments concerning the events occurred in the Hospital, written as a memento or curiosity by the caregivers, such as the death of the house servants, including the details for the disposition of their assets and their burial ceremony.<sup>20</sup> Or either on the book reference BC AH 13, which indicates on its front cover: ‘fas memoria com avuy, vigilia de Nadal ...de 1576, prestí a Jaume Molló de la parròquia d’Argentona, quatre lliures 15 sous...’,<sup>21</sup> and on the heading of the same cover: ‘a 11 de maig 1577, la muller de Alonso Penyaranda restitueix Caterina, filla de la present casa...’<sup>22</sup> or ‘dilluns XI de mars de 1577 lo calderer ha portat una caldera per les bugades. Dix que pesava 18 ll’.<sup>23</sup>

Some books include notes of the internal movements of the hospital such as the book with reference BC AH 57 where the caregiver Macià Moncalp annotates in 1630: ‘...són entrades malaltes 4.698 persones en dit any, justament contades, Y per que sia major edificació dels devots, sia notori com en dit any moriren en esta santa casa 1.006’<sup>24</sup> or the book number BC AH 19, from 1586: «a 31 de juliol, 486» (on July 31, 486) or on folio 195r: «207 entrats en aquest mes» [de setembre] (207 have been admitted this month [September]).

These comments can be used to redo the list of employees of the hospital, as well as the priors, the administrators, archivists, notaries, etc. They can also be useful to know some details of the assistance to patients, as indicated on the note of the book with reference number BC AH 19 from 1585-1586, stating that in the room of the febrile, young children were accommodated with their mothers.

## 7. *Personal Details of the Admitted Patients*

7.1. *Names*: the patients are registered with name and surname; the women names are always annotated with the spouse’s reference. Sometimes the spouse’s surname is written in female genre.

<sup>20</sup> BC AH 3, f. 199v i 200; BC AH 4, f. 298v

<sup>21</sup> ‘remember that today, Christmas eve... year 1576, 15 sous have been lent to Jaume Molló, from the parish of Argentona’

<sup>22</sup> ‘on May 7 year 1577, the spouse of Alonso Penyaranda restores Caterina, daughter of the present house’

<sup>23</sup> ‘Monday, March 11, 1577, the boiler maker has brought a boiler for the laundry, he said it weighed 18 ll’

<sup>24</sup> ‘4.698 sick people have been admitted this year in the hospital, precisely counted, and for better satisfaction of the piety, note that in this same year, 1006 died in this saint house’.

7.2. *Origin:* The origin of the patients is diverse, coming mainly from Catalonia, yet there are many from the southern France, Italy, Castile, Aragon and Andalusia. The place of origin less common is in fact, Barcelona. Everything indicates that most of the patients of the hospital were part of the floating population that frequented the city, soldiers, workers, migrants, people passing by, mostly men, who sickened in Barcelona and had no other shelter than the hospital.

7.3. *Parents:* The parents names normally are indicated as a recognition data. On several occasions the patient does not know the name of his/her parents and so is expressed in the registry.

7.4. *Marital status:* Most of the patients were bachelors, also there are many widows and widowers. There are very few married, and the same happens in the case of maidens. When the women is married her husband's name is indicated. There is a curious category that sometimes appears when referring to women: nor married nor widowed.

7.5. *Sons and daughters:* When the hospital's patients with sons or daughters are admitted these usually appear in the register, especially during the first years. The children's name was often indicated.

7.6. *Diseases:* the information concerning the diseases is not always detailed. We have preserved data in the first book (BC AH 1, 1457) and in some other. The causes of admission detailed in the *Llibre Primer* (The First Book) provides the first doubts: most of the admitted come from the galleys, stating this fact as a disease, actually this is the third cause of admittance in the hospital from a total of 44 patients a year, which seem not to have been seriously ill because only 3 died. Other patients are 'galions', that is, 'forced'. There are examples of individuals arrived to the hospital brought by porters, rescued from the sea, or another example of a man brought in 'pastera'<sup>25</sup> because he had fallen from the cage of a galley. The other books only provide information concerning the cause of admittance in special circumstances, mainly if the person is wounded, or sometimes if its an insane person or a child. Josep Danon (DANON, 1978, p. 77) gathers the reasons of admittance detailed in the first book, elaborating a statistical table which I reproduce:

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<sup>25</sup> TN: The 'pastera' is a rudimentary bed for the transportation of the sick or wounded (the definition can be consulted online on *Diccionari català-valencià-balear* d'Alcover i Moll, <http://dcvb.iecat.net/>; accessed on october 2013).

(BC AH 1) 1457

Disease	Hospitalized	Deceased
Fever	171	29
Legs abscess	2	
Dropsy (oedema)	8	3
Pain	3	1
Joint pain	1	
Apoplexy	2	1
Fractures and trauma	2	
Ventral	1	
Wound	6	1
Ganglia	63	42
Legs and feet	5	
Kidney	2	
Scabies	1	1
Aging	1	
Galleys	44	3
From the sea	3	1
Not detailed	32	9

7.7. *Age*: The age is detailed in the first book, yet in the second this data is rarely founded, only when the patients are very young, or either children between 8 and 15 years old. In the fifth book (1497-1501) the age of the patients is reassumed, indicating thereafter this data erratically. The age is also specified in the books of the insane.

7.8. *Trades*: Without taking military into account, the patient's trades are quite varied, abounding especially farmers and people related with the sea, such as sailors, fishermen and galley slaves. There are many workers but also slaves, beggars, prostitutes, tailors, bakers, transporters, prisoners and some employees of the same hospital (chambermaids, guard of the insane, vicars...) who become sick and die there, often leaving part of their possessions to the institution.

7.9. *Clothes*: Clothes are described in detail, not only the different pieces each patient wore, but also their color, shape and quality. This is done following the instructions of the ordinations of 1417 in which it is stated that the rector had to ‘interrogar e escutar be e diligentment si porta monedes en si; e après quins béns ha e en qual part seran... per ço que les dites monedes, robes e altres béns no prenguen mala via e que·l dit pobre pacient com serà guarit, ho puxa tot recobrar’.<sup>26</sup> Also the ordinations of 1571 and those reformed in 1667, confirmed in 1707, provide instructions: ‘Item que quant entre algun malalt, dega lo Infermer notar.o en sos llibres y assentar juntament tot lo que aporta ab claredat y expressió de sa bondat y qualitat, perquè no se puga defraudar cosa al malalt ni a la casa’.<sup>27</sup>

The clothes were categorized as valuable, subtle, used, bad or very bad. Very often expressions such as ‘robota’, ‘roba de bassa’ or ‘basses’ were used to describe the poor cloths in a pejorative way, when these were no good for the hospital in case they received them by rights. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century the buyer was in charge of selling the clothes of the patients who died in the hospital without inheritors (BC AH 2, f. 4r).

7.10. *Belongings*: All objects are indicated, such as silver jewelry, coral jewelry, psalteries, a will belonging to one of the patient’s father (kept by the attorney), books, and also worthless objects that are designated with the words ‘brolaries’ o ‘barboleries’.

7.11. *Money*: Most of the patients had no money when admitted in the hospital. When this was the case the regular expression written in the books was ‘diners, no malla’ (*diners*, very poor) or ‘sense diners’ (no money). When the admitted patients had money three things could happen: 1) the money was declared and held out, and kept in the archive, if the patient died without inheritors, the hospital kept them; 2) They declared the money and kept it –fact stated in the registries–; 3) or either: not declaring the money and hide it within the clothes. If the patient died the hospital’s employees found it and disposed of it. Concerning the hospital’s role regarding the money, the institution could charge the patients some of the costs when these could afford them.

7.12. *‘Dixits’* The patients declarations concerning their assets. The hospital annotated these in order to safeguard the patients’ interests and their own. They also declared the debts they had, or others had with them. In the same way, to prevent the possibility of the appearance of other people claiming the assets, they annotated the patient’s marital status and the existence or not of sons or daughters.

<sup>26</sup> ‘scrutinize and interrogate diligently and with good proceedings for coins, subsequently asking for the assets and where can these be found... for this reason the aforementioned coins, clothes and other assets were not lost and the poor patient must recover everything when healed’

<sup>27</sup> ‘when a patient was admitted, the caregiver has to jointly annotate and refer in his books everything he provides in a clear way, with kindness and quality, so that nothing can be evaded from the patient or the house’

7.13. *The hospital's rooms*: The first book of admission preserved mentions the rooms of Sta. Maria, St Pere, St Miquel and St Jaume for men, and the First Chamber and Second Chamber for women. A few years later, in the books BC AH 3 (1480-1483) and BC AH 5 (1497-1501), the room of the Innocents is mentioned. In the book with reference BC AH 4 (1484-1492) a 'new chamber' is stated. The rooms of Sta. Eulalia and the Crucifix, both for women, are mentioned for the first time in the book with reference BC AH 6 (1539-1541), the same as the one of St Roc, for men. Instead the First Chamber and Second Chamber for women disappeared. The rooms named Sta. Maria, St Pere, St Miquel and St Jaume remain unchanged.

The Febrility Chamber, a room for women, is first mentioned in the book reference BC AH 7 from 1566, disappearing the room of the Crucifix. The room of Saint Miquel for men also disappears. A few years later, in the book reference BC AH 8 (1569-1570) only the rooms of Sta. Maria, St. Pere, St. Jaume and St. Roc, for men, and the rooms of St. Eulalia and the Febrility, both for women, are mentioned.

These seven rooms are maintained for a long period. In the book with reference BC AH 17, from 1582-83 compiled by the caregiver Llauder, a new room is mentioned, the one named as the Archdeacon chamber, mentioned again in 1585 (AH 18) under a new formula: *cambra de l'obra del Sr Ardiaca* (f. 82v) (the room 'performed by the Archdeacon'). The same year other rooms are mentioned: The one of the wet-nurses, *torres* (towers) (f. 52) 'cambra del prior' [o procurador?] (chamber of the prior) 'Sàrdica o sandica'?) (f. 146) which are no longer mentioned in the following books.

During the great plague of 1589-90, the rooms of the hospital remain the same: St Pere, Sta. Maria, St. Jaume and St. Roc for men and the Febrility Chamber, Sta. Eulalia and the Insane (*orades*) for women. In the book with reference BC AH 22 (f. 125v), the room of St. Roc, maybe due to the situation of emergency, was used both for men and women, and a «*cambra nova*» (new chamber) for women is mentioned. Up to this point, this room accounting is only a small sample, and a survey of the books of patients for the all the hospitals' life is required in order to study its continuity.

7.14. *Deceased*: Usually death was indicated by drawing a cross beside the name of the patient. In the books from the 15<sup>th</sup> century the date of the death was also revealed together with the expression 'mori a' (died on). There are some books therefore, which do not follow this standard of indicating the deceased, as for example the book ranging from 1539 to 1541 (BC AH 6).

#### 8. *The Books of patients and other historical sources*

The hospital institution is often stated as the mirror of a certain society and the city life where it was located; a miniature testing ground containing all the elements of urban living and social

conditions of its time. In order to survey the suitability of the patient books as historical sources, I have made some specific verifications comparing the data with other appointment books and chronicles of the same period. The purpose is to discern if the data provided by the hospital's books, are indeed an accurate image of the social events of its environment or either if the information provided has to be previously clarified by the comparison with other sources.

The first book of patients contains 346 admissions between February 10 and November 23, 1457, 323 correspond to men and only 23 to women. Almost a quarter of the men died, whilst only half of the women did. As a matter of fact, in 1457 there was an epidemic bubonic plague in Barcelona since spring and the *Dietari del Consell de Cent*<sup>28</sup> stated the deaths by plague from May to December. Yet the 26.3% of mortality detected in the hospital is not superior to other years, it is even much lower than stated in the following book, from 1473, which indicates a mortality of 43,7% in a year without the plague. Nonetheless, in 1457 were admitted in the Hospital de la Santa Creu 63 patients with ganglia 'vèrtola' (adenopathy caused by the bubonic plague) and Danon counts 42 deaths, this is, a 66.6%, a very tight rate, if not lower, compared with the average mortality calculated for this disease. The *Dietari del Consell de Cent*, indicates three institutions when stating the deaths by plague: The Hospital General, the convent dels Àngels and Sant Francesc de Paula. Only an example: of the 3,313 deaths from the different parishes in Barcelona stated between July 1 and August 15, 1457, Sant Francesc de Paula has 586, and the convent dels Àngels 60, a number more close to the 42 deaths by ganglia stated in the first book of admissions, although there is a difference of 20 dead. We know by the same *Dietari* that during the great plague of 1651-54, the Convent of Jesús was enabled as 'morberia', and only common patients were admitted in the hospital. In 1653, with the revival of the disease, the plague victims were taken to the convent of Natzaret. This obviously affected the hospital's mortality data. It is also difficult to explain why in 1589, the year of the plague in Barcelona, the hospital only records a mortality of 16%, one of the lowest registered, and the following year an 18%. The adaptation of specific centers to house the infected during epidemics is a plausible explanation for the low mortality rate of the Hospital de la Santa Creu, where they were conscious that the plague was contagious and they avoided mixing the infested with other patients.

In order to survey the impact of the acknowledged social changes in the hospital's admittances, I have studied the data of the books of admission corresponding to the 'Corpus de Sang' (June 7, 1640) and subsequent. The deduction of this examination demonstrates that the serious events suffered in Barcelona during those days are not at all reflected in the books of admissions (BC AH 66). There are only 6 entries in the hospital for this day. The following day, June 8, the riots continued yet among the 12 new hospitalizations, only one was a harvester, who died the same day. As a peculiar data, in the 'dixit' the unhappy man mentions a women named Maria Calveta,

<sup>28</sup> *Manual de novells ardis vulgarment apellat Dietari del Antich Consell Barceloni*, 1892-1975. Barcelona : Imprempta de'n Henrich y Companyia, p. 237

inn-keeper, who knew a Trinitarian friar who owed him money. It is probable that this woman is the one named 'Calveta' in the *Crònica* of Miquel Parets,<sup>29</sup> who was violently hauled from the Hospital on June 8 and murdered by the same harvesters which accused her of causing the death of a partner.

## 9. Morphology of the Books

### Language:

The books of admissions are wrote in Catalan until 1639-40, when Catalan and Spanish start to be combined (BC AH 67). Among the 218 total books, 145 are written completely in Catalan, 23 in Spanish, and 19 combine both languages with a Catalan prevalence, and 31 with a Spanish prevalence.

### Folios:

Most of the books are foliated in the age of their creation, often with gaps. The 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries have an average of 200 folios per book. The size of the books increases up to 350 folios in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, although in the second half of the same century this average decreases to 263 folios. The books of the 18<sup>th</sup> century have an average of 472 folios. The 218 folios of the books of admissions have been summed to this quantity, with a result of approximately 65.000 total folios. Estimating an average of 10 patients by folio, it can be deduced that the admission books of the Hospital de la Santa Creu dated between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century contain personal data of approximately 650.000 people.

### Bookbindings (Fig. 10):

Most of the books have kept their original covers. These are usually flexible folded parchment bindings, with a button fastener and laced plaited strap which was usually made of tawed leather (leather treated with alum). The fasteners are reinforced by a double thong of parchment in the inside covers. The stitchings are left at view and made with camden cord and brown lambskin leather reinforcements on the upper board, to avoid the parchment from breaking because of the sewing. The bindings of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries are the worse preserved. Some are almost entirely missing due to the action of rodents. They usually are entitled or either dispose of a note on the upper board indicating if the books contains data concerning civilians, soldiers or children, sometimes the hospitals badge is drawn, especially in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Often they contain annotations from later periods like random accountings, inscriptions or pen trials. Sometimes the years covered by the book are specified on the boards. The bindings can be made out of reused parchment notarial documents. In some special cases, the reused parchments have been recuperated and restored, replacing the old bindings by new parchment ones.

<sup>29</sup> PARETS, Miquel, 2011. *Crònica*, Llibre I, vol I, M<sup>a</sup> Rosa Margalef (ed), Barcelona: ed. Barcino, p.373

## 10. *Conclusions*

The detailed analysis of the books of admission provides substantial information concerning the daily life of the Hospital de la Santa Creu, yet also raises many questions which remain yet unanswered and should be the subject of a new research project concerning the history of the hospital. Up to which extent are the data from these books reliable without making comparisons with other historical sources, is one of the main topics. It is a complex issue. The observation of the books of admission, however, awakens new research subjects, some very obvious. The number and origin of the patients, their age, gender and social status, for example, are issues that have not been completely analyzed so far. The definitive history of the hospital, its building phases, creators and architectural forms has not been studied in depth either. The direct assistance to the patients, the caregivers, employees, and doctors, along with other administrative positions in the hospital, should be identified and studied since its foundation to analyze their origin and evolution over time. Also, many other issues such as mortality rates, the incidence of epidemics and the social conflicts in the hospital's life are likely to be studied from the basis of these books, so abundant in explicit data and full of vague information. From an archivist point of view point, the question raised is whether hospital's employees followed the ordinances when managing the accounting books. Could the total amount of books that were part of the hospital's archive, and are now disappeared, be calculated if we fill in the chronological existing gaps? The suspicion that the losses have been many is the result of a close examination of the books. The gaps deny us a part of the history, yet the documentary material is rich enough to allow us acquire a huge benefit from their pages. The personal data of more than half a million patients between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries are available to those who want to take forward their study. Archivists identify, classify, categorize and publish the documents. Researchers have now to take move and begin the investigations, which can provide many fruits.

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Fig. 1. Books of admission in the archive of the Hospital de la Santa Creu in Barcelona. Library of Catalonia (BC).

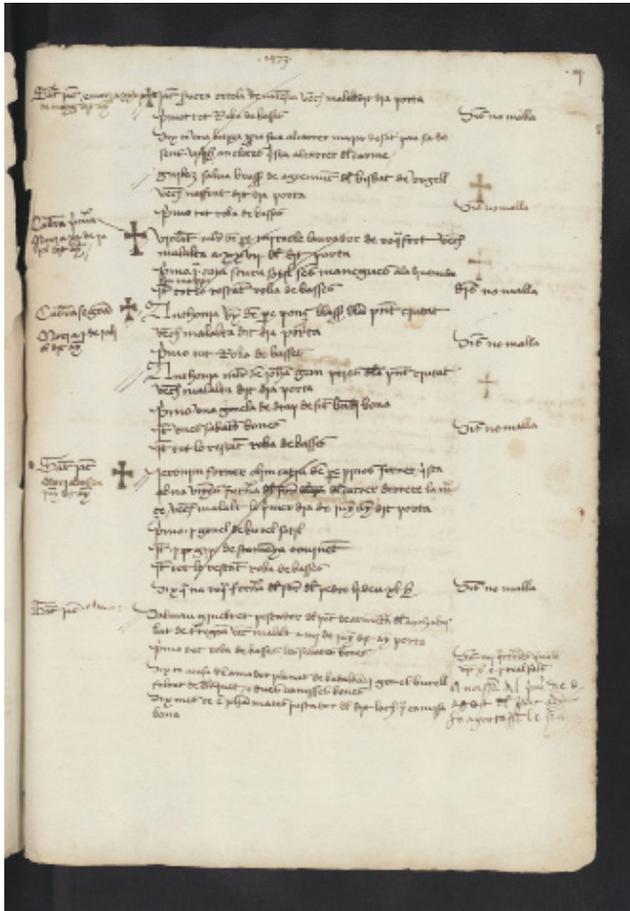


Fig.2. Book of admissions, 1473 (BC AH 2).

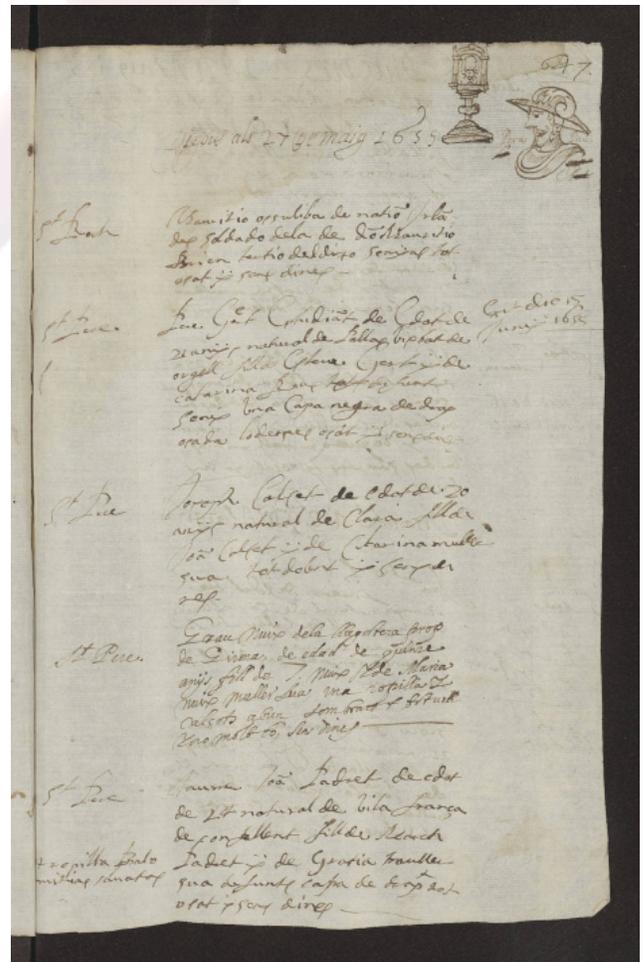


Fig.3. Books of soldiers admissions, from 1654 to 1655. (BC AH 81, f. 647).

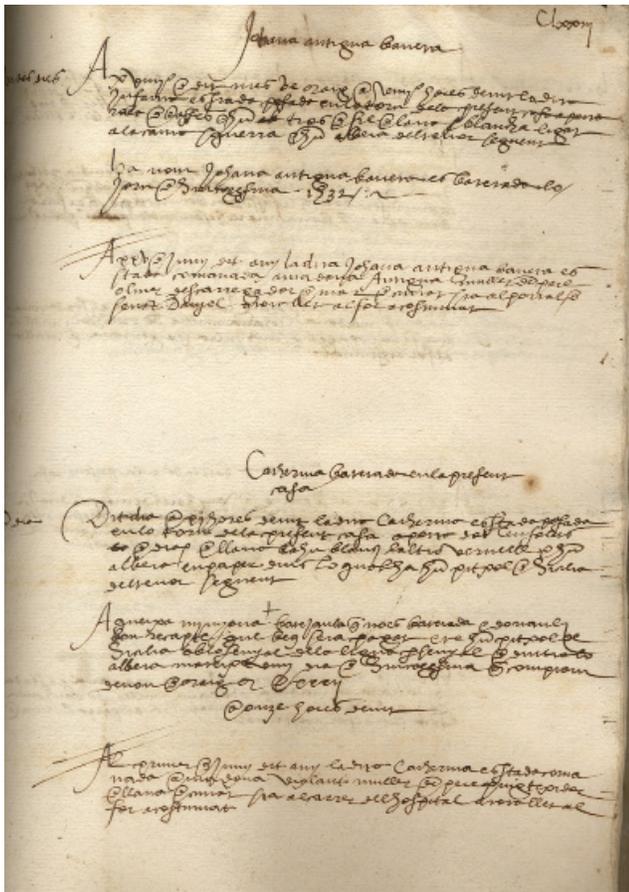


Fig.4. Book of admissions of foundlings (BC AH 696, f. 173).

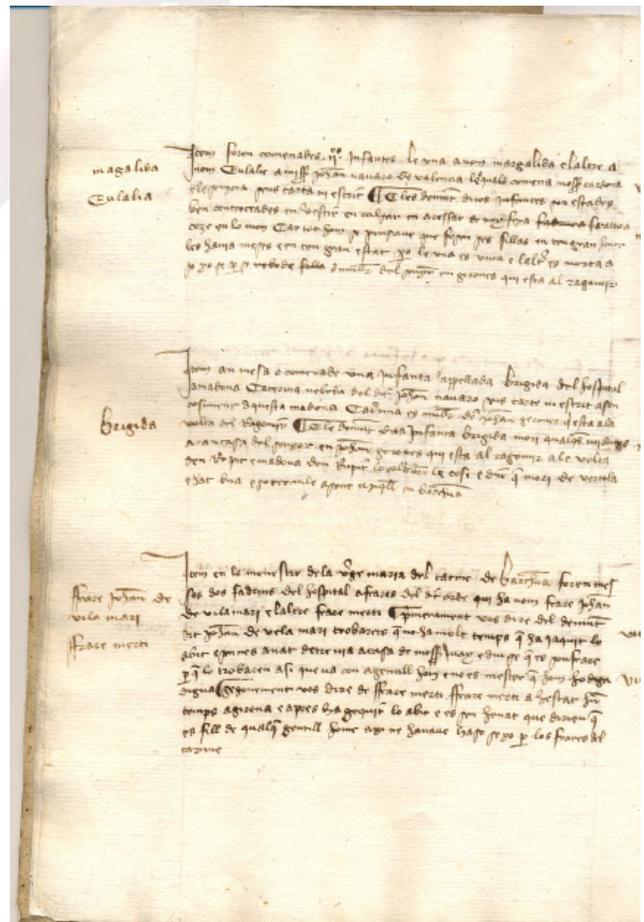


Fig.5. Books of ‘afermaments’ or establishment of foundlings from 1401 to 1446 (BC AH 696, f. 11).



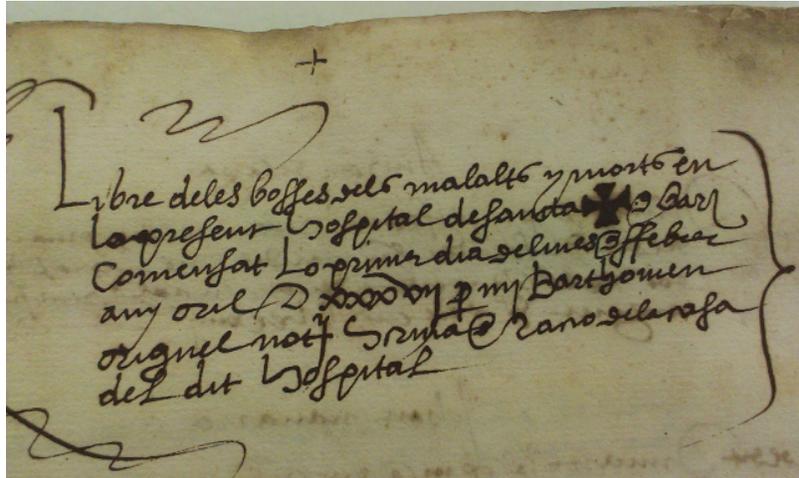


Fig.8. Book of 'bosses dels malalts y morts', from 1537 to 1549 (BC AH 194).

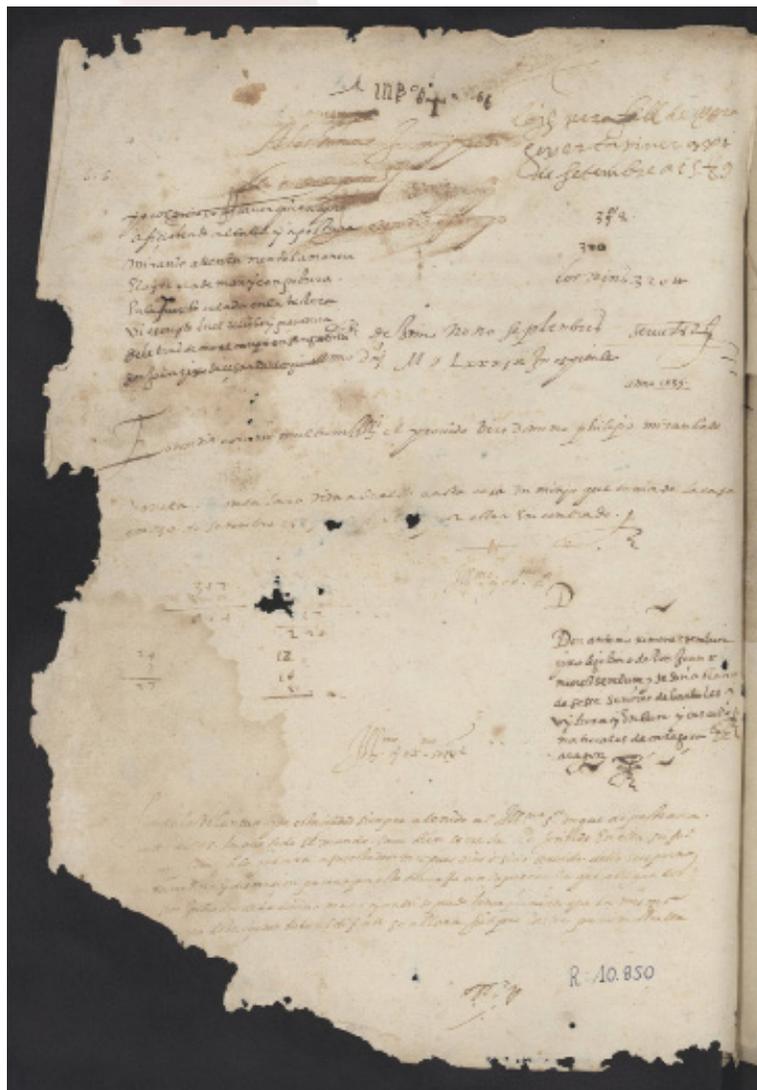


Fig.9. Book of patients with annotations and poems, 1590 (BC AH 22).



Fig.10. Original binding of a book of admissions, with the hospital's coat of arms (BC AH 4)