

## Book Review: The Life of Dr. Bódog Félix Beck

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### ABSTRACT

This review examines *The Life of Dr. Félix Bódog Beck*, a 239-page book in the *Literatura Apiterapiae* series, published in 2019 by Lilli Publishing House. Written in Hungarian, the book stands out for its meticulous historical reconstruction of Dr. Beck's life and contributions, enriched by rare photographs, multilingual summaries, and authentic documents. Highlights include Beck's pioneering medical work, his multilingual legacy, and his profound influence on apitherapy. The book also addresses inaccuracies about Beck's life and offers rare insights into his relationship with Franklin Everett Phillips. This work is essential for readers interested in apitherapy history, medical advancements, and historical emigration narratives.

Keywords: Dr. Bódog Félix Beck, Apitherapy, Historical biography, Medical history, Hungarian-American legacy, Franklin Everett Phillips, Emigration history, Multilingual historical summaries, Dental X-ray innovations, Beekeeping history

### INTRODUCTION

This 239-page hardcover book, part of the *Literatura Apiterapiae* series, was published by Lilli Publishing House in 2019. The review's timeliness stems from a recent event: a public square was named after Dr. Beck in his hometown [1].

The book, written in Hungarian, features clean typesetting and font choices, making it accessible for reading with mobile translation apps like Google Translate. It includes numerous original articles and documents. Pre-1901 document texts are in Hungarian, while those from 1901–1942 are in English.

One of the book's highlights is its inclusion of the first authentic photograph of Dr. Beck showing his face. Previously, only an image of him with his back turned was known. Through meticulous research using extant documents, the book reconstructs many details of Dr. Beck's life. For instance, it uncovers a report accusing him of owning a (then-prohibited) radio device. However, the investigation led nowhere, likely because the equipment was an X-ray machine, which Beck used for pioneering dental examinations and cancer diagnostics.

A fascinating inclusion is certified copies of records from the New York Supreme Court, such as his marriage certificate. The author also accessed Beck's original birth record, which notes not only his birthdate but also his family's address. The book accurately cites his birthdate as August 6, 1868, based on his Petition for Naturalization.

Another standout feature is a multilingual summary of key dates and events in Dr. Beck's life, presented in seven languages: Hungarian, English, German, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, and Arabic. This summary has also been made freely available on ResearchGate [2].

A dedicated chapter addresses errors about Beck's life propagated by newspapers and other sources, particularly focusing on inaccuracies regarding his birthdate.

The book marks a milestone in the history of apitherapy. Like Dr. Philip Terč before him, Dr. Beck faced criticism from contemporary medical professionals. The book reproduces the critical article in its original English from page 112 and provides Beck's masterful 11-page response (his third surviving work) in both English and Hungarian from page 130.

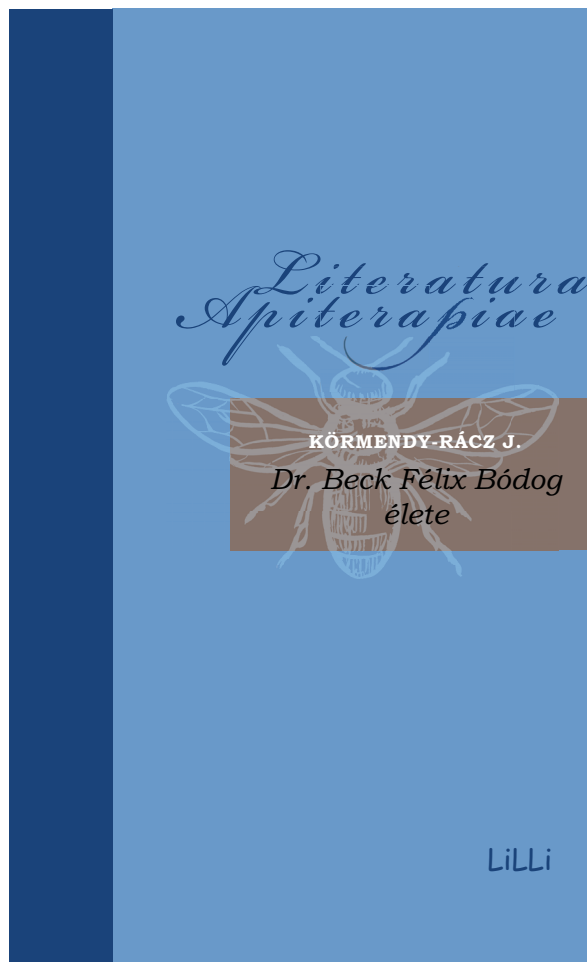
The book also explores Beck's close relationship with Franklin Everett Phillips, evidenced by a photo of them at dinner with Phillips's wife, Phillips's preface to Beck's second book, and rare beekeeping books from Beck's collection now

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Picture 1. The cover page

housed in the Phillips Collection [3]. Some of these books have been digitized. An inscription on the book's inner cover refers to Beck's favorite reading spot, a small balcony room, noted simply as "balkony".

The final pages summarize Beck's key life events in a table and provide a detailed index.

The book is registered in the National Library of Hungary [4].

## CONCLUSION

The book, rich in original documents, offers an authentic portrayal of Dr. Beck's life. It is recommended for those interested in historical contexts, a remarkable life journey, the steps of emigration to the United States, or the api-therapy-related masterpiece that is Dr. Beck's response to his critics.

## REFERENCES

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