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**On Earth and in Heaven:
Devotion and Daily Life
(Fourteenth to Nineteenth Century)**

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Shepherds and Flocks: Religious Practice between Ecclesiastic Priorities and Secular Needs*

Maria Crăciun

Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca

The project *Beyond the Norms: Religious Practice in Late Medieval and Early Modern Transylvania* has set out to explore the construction of religious/confessional identity in the late medieval and early modern period with a focus on lay involvement in this process. The project thus wished to assess changes in religious practice shaped by secular agency in response to the norms set up by the church/churches. However, by taking a closer look at the changes in ecclesiastical prescriptions, both during the late Middle Ages and after the Reformation, this investigation has also considered the possibility of secular impact on the development of church norms. The project has consequently emphasized the role of the two-way communication between the clergy and secular society. It has addressed such issues as the place of religion in society, the strength of habit in religious practice and the power of allegiance to a confessional community. The project has consequently aimed to look at religious life in late medieval and early modern Transylvania from below, particularly and when possible from the perspective of the laity.

On the one hand this research has been stimulated by developments in existing scholarship which has increasingly dealt with religious feeling and the practicalities of worship.¹ Moreover, the state of the art in existing local scholarship, focused particularly on ecclesiastical institutions and interested primarily in normative documents, has also suggested the need to

* This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research, CNCS – UEFISCDI, project number PN-II-ID-PCE-2011-3-0359, code 225/2011

¹ John Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400-1700*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985). André Vauchez, *Les laïcs au Moyen Age. Pratiques et expériences religieuses*, (CERF, 1987). Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi. The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars. Traditional Religion in England c. 1400-c. 1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992). Robert Swanson, *Catholic England: faith, religion, and observance before the Reformation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993). R. N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe c.1215-c.1515*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Beat Kümin, *The shaping of a community: the rise and reformation of the English parish, c. 1400-1560*, (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996). Andrew Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). Sara Nalle, *God in la Mancha: Religion, Reform and the People of Cuenca 1500-1550* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

look beyond the norms at actual religious practices and the construction of religious/confessional identity.²

The contributors to this collection of studies hosted by the journal *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai. Historia*, are members of the research team involved in this project or have closely cooperated with it at various stages of the process. They have thus chosen research topics that fit into the purposes outlined by the project and within its conceptual and methodological framework providing common ground and contributing to the coherence of the volume.

Reflecting the overall focus of the project, the essays in this collection deal with the complex interactions between clergy and laity (as highlighted by the essays signed by Carmen Florea, Maria Crăciun, Elena Firea, Ünige Bencze, Ovidiu Ghitta and Diana Covaci). In an effort to explore the religious beliefs and practices of the laity, several studies, such as those of Anca Gogâltan, Mária Lupescu Makó, Ciprian Firea and Radu Lupescu deal with specific social groups, particularly with the nobility. Moreover, a true view at grass-roots' level is brought by Diana Covaci's exploration of a small mining community in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Whether analyzing public manifestations of religiosity and the magistracy's tendency to control religious life in the urban parish churches (Carmen Florea), examining participation in public worship (Maria Crăciun), or the development of a cult (Elena Firea) the studies in this collection highlight the process of negotiation between clergy and laity concerning norms and their implementation, the interplay between ecclesiastic priorities and secular needs. Moreover, the essays in this volume approach subjects that have previously been very little explored in local historiography. For example Anca Gogâltan places *the self* at the centre of her analysis, while Ciprian Firea articulates his argument around *memoria* (a topic previously visited by Carmen Florea)³ and examines the strategies of

² Lajos Pásztor, *A magyarság vallásosélete a Jagellok korában* (Budapest: 1940). Elemér Mályusz, *Egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon* (Budapest: 1971). Sándor Bálint, *Ünnepi kalendárium. A Mária-ünnepek és jelesebb napok hazai és közép-európai hagyományvilágából* (Budapest: 1977). András Mező, *A templomcím a magyar helységnevekben 11.-15. század* (Budapest: 1996). Beatrix Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanak a középkori Magyarországon. Katalógus*, (Budapest: 2000). József Laszlovszky, Zsolt Hunyadi (eds.), *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity* (Budapest: CEU Press, Mediaevalia 1 2001); Marie Madeleine de Cevins, *L'église dans les villes hongroises à la fin du moyen âge, vers 1320-vers 1490*, (Budapest: Institut hongrois de Paris, 2003).

³ Carmen Florea, 'The Construction of Memory and the Display of Social Bonds in the Life of *Corpus Christi* Fraternity from Sibiu (Hermannstadt, Nagyszeben)' in Lucie Doležalova (ed.), *The Making of Memory in the Middle Ages* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2009), pp. 283-309.

Transylvanian men and women to ensure remembrance. Commemorative strategies are also a subject approached by Mária Lupescu Makó who, by looking at last wills and pious donations explores attempts to perpetuate presence, name and prestige beyond the threshold of death.

The chosen topics bring forth important and often previously unexplored issues. One such issue is that of religious/confessional identity present in the essays signed by Maria Crăciun, Ovidiu Ghitta and Carmen Florea. While Ovidiu Ghitta's study deals with the identity of the Greek-Catholic Church and its relation with its eastern heritage, Maria Crăciun examines the connection between religious practice and a specific (Lutheran) confessional identity and attempts to establish whether the Saxons had developed a distinct devotional behaviour when compared to other confessional communities.

On the other hand, the issue of civic religion addressed by Carmen Florea brings to the fore questions related to the spiritual identity of urban communities. Hierarchically, the parish churches were affiliated to the bishopric of Transylvania and to the archbishopric of Esztergom but they were also patronized by the secular authority of the towns. Thus, the urban community of faithful was required to live its religious experience within this framework. Their specific spirituality, which included devotion to the dedicatee of the parish church, also became a matter of civic identity and of civic pride. Thus, the cult of saints (their individual or collective veneration) was also subject to negotiation between the clergy and the laity.

This leads one to consider the main issue approached in this volume, that of religious practice and its deviation from the norm. This issue is highlighted by all the essays in this collection. By looking at a specific source, Petru Pavel Aaron's *The Pastoral Duty*, Ovidiu Ghitta analyzes the clergy's view of popular religiosity and its intention to reform religious practices while Diana Covaci explores the functioning of ecclesiastical norms related to marriage at parish level. Maria Crăciun on the other hand examines the role of a middling social group in appropriating and disseminating Protestant ideas and the mechanisms involved in fostering correct belief and proper conduct, while Mária Lupescu Makó approaches the religious practices of the laity by focusing on pilgrimage and the specific devotional actions it fostered, such as the veneration of specific saints or the imitation of Christ. Finally, Elena Firea aims to assess whether the accounts of St John the New's miraculous activity reflected the increased popularity of the saint at the level of lay religiosity or were merely the expression of clerical projections popular at that time.

The issue of patronage is also one that is present in many of the subjects explored in this collection (Ciprian Firea, Anca Gogâltan and Radu

Lupescu). Ciprian Firea for instance convincingly demonstrates the involvement of the patrons in both the aspect and the content of medieval art works while highlighting how complicated the issue of female commissioners of art really is under the impact of social conventions which tend to privilege the male partner in any family endeavour of this type. Anca Gogâltan attempts to provide a more refined understanding of the values promoted by a specific social group and explores the making of the self as a process of adaptation and interpretation of a world that was already established. Also focused on the nobility Radu Lupescu provides insight into the political aspirations of the social elite of the Hungarian kingdom.

Beyond their originality, the topics chosen by the contributors to this collection challenge firmly entrenched views of the existing literature. For example, Maria Crăciun's essay aims to revise the top-down view of the Reformation of the Saxon community and widely-spread assumptions concerning the compliance of the population with the decisions of the secular authorities while Anca Gogâltan challenges the general belief that the medieval self was a social self shaped by complex interactions with various communities and structures of power.⁴ On the other hand, Carmen Florea builds on current historiographical debates by introducing the parish patron saint as a catalyst in the articulation of civic religion while Elena Firea convincingly challenges the conclusions of existing literature which contends that miraculous interventions were an early modern phenomenon.⁵

⁴ For a top-down view of the Reformation in Transylvania, see Erich Roth, *Die Reformation in Siebenbürgen. Ihr Verhältnis zu Wittenberg und der Schweiz* in *Siebenbürgisches Archiv – Archiv des Vereins für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, dritte Folge, Band II, (Köln Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 1962). Ludwig Binder: *Grundlagen und Formen der Toleranz in Siebenbürgen bis zur Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts*, (Köln Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1976). Krista Zach, 'Stări, domeniu seniorial și confesionalizare în Transilvania. Reflecții asupra disciplinării sociale (1550- 1650)' in *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai Historia* 53/1-2 (2008): 100-126. For the social self, see David L. Miller, *The Individual and the Social Self* (Chicago: University Press, 1982); Richard C. Trexler, *Persons in Groups, Social Behaviour as Identity Formation in Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (Binghampton: Texts & Studies, 1985). Thomas C. Heller - Moton Sosna - David E. Wellerby (eds.), *Reconstructing Individualism. Autonomy, Individuality and the Self in Western Thought* (Stanford: University Press, 1986). David Gary Shaw, *Necessary Conjunctions. The Social Self in Medieval England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

⁵ Richard C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, (New York: Academic Press, 1980). André Vauchez (ed.), *La religion civique à l'époque médiévale et moderne (Chrétienté et Islam)*, Actes du colloque organisé par le Centre de recherche "Histoire sociale et culturelle de l'Occident, XIIIe-XVIIIe siècle" de l'Université de Paris X-Nanterre et l'Institut universitaire de France, Nanterre, 21-23 juin 1993, Rome: Ecole française de Rome, 1995. Nicholas Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities and Civic Religion in Renaissance Bologna*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Antonio Ivan Pini, *Città, chiesa e culti civici in Bologna*

The collection wishes to propose a new approach to the issue of religious experience in terms of pious actions and devotional patterns. Undoubtedly, the clergy had its own ideas concerning correct belief and proper religious practice and they must have been busy producing devotional literature, manuals and normative texts in order to shape the religious experience of their fellow clergymen as well as that of the laity. In everyday practice however, clerical suggestions lost some of their edge and both the clergy and the laity developed particular devotional behaviour and a set of beliefs that were not necessarily strictly informed by existing theological treatises. Moreover, when producing prescriptive literature and normative texts, the clergy had to take into account the needs of the laity and adjust their discourse so that those requirements could be met. They also had to cater to the needs of the parish clergy, both as educators of the community and as living models of faith and piety.

Keeping these caveats in mind, the scholars involved in this collection have attempted to approach their chosen topic from a new perspective. For example, by assuming that changes in devotional behaviour allow one to monitor the reforming process, Maria Crăciun has focused on the Lutheran service in her attempt to explore the devotional patterns of the Saxon community in the context of public worship, by taking into account church attendance, collective prayers and congregational singing. Thus, the focus has shifted to the role of the laity, particularly that of a specific group, the master artisans, in the religious transformation of the community. Elena Firea looks at Mohyla's writings from a new perspective, not only in reference to local miracles performed by St John the New but also as the embodiment of the ecclesiastical view of the public veneration of a saint. The author is thus primarily concerned with the motives for recording the miracles and the general aims of these texts. The broader issue of the negotiation between clergy and laity is also seen from a different

medievale, (Bologna: CLUEB, 1999). André Vauchez, 'La religione civica', in *Esperienze religiose nel Medioevo*, (Roma: Viella, 2003), pp. 247-51. Andrew Brown, *Civic Ceremony and Religion in Medieval Bruges, c. 1300-1520*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Matei Cazacu, 'Saint Jean le Nouveau, son martyre, ses reliques et leur translation à Suceava', in Petre Guran, Bernard Flusin (eds.), *L'Empereur hagiographe. Culte des saints et monarchie byzantine et post-byzantine*, (București: New Europe College, 2001), pp. 137-158. Ștefan S. Gorovei, 'Mucenicia Sfântului Ioan cel Nou. Noi puncte de vedere' [The Martyrdom of St. John the New. New Considerations], in Ionel Căndea, Paul Cernovodeanu, Gheorghe Lazăr (eds.), *Închinare lui Petre Ș. Năsturel la 80 ani*, (Brăila: Editura Istros a Muzeului Brăilei, 2003), pp. 555-572. Matei Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii și vise premonitorii în trecutul românesc* [Miracles, Visions and Premonitory Dreams from the Romanian Past], (București: Sigma, 2003).

perspective by Elena Firea who discusses St John the New as the protagonist of a cult constructed by hagiographical and liturgical means as well as orchestrated and supervised by the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Thus, both the source and the issue are approached in new ways.

Ovidiu Ghitta explores his chosen topic from a new perspective as he considers the Greek-Catholic Church as subject to reforming projects specific to the building of confessional churches. The other innovative approach to the subject consists of placing the Greek-Catholic Church at the centre of competing projects, such as the state's reconstruction of a system of power and the Catholic Church's concern to monitor the periphery of the Catholic world.

As Bob Scribner has suggested many years ago, the sacred is always experienced from within the profane.⁶ Bearing this in mind, contributors to this volume have had to remember that the motivations of the faithful when engaging in devotional actions were not always entirely spiritual; they could be equally mundane. For example, the issue of memory, which constitutes the main focus of Ciprian Firea's article highlights the fact that the preoccupation to ensure remembrance and commemoration is at once spiritual and pragmatic and touches upon concern for the afterlife and the wish to be remembered as an upstanding member of the community. Thus, salvation and social prestige seem to share the field. In the same vein, Mária Lupescu Makó's article, devoted to the religious experiences of the nobility has to deal with the fact that bequests made in last wills are shaped by pragmatic as well as devotional concerns. Faced with death, the nobleman was torn between care for his soul in the afterlife and responsibility for his loved ones.

Interdisciplinary in its approach, this project has focused on, discussed and refined a number of controversial concepts in current scholarly debate, such as "popular religion" and "superstition", "acculturation" and "confessionalization", "piety" and "confessional identity", "religious norm" and "religious practice". They are the dominant concepts in any recent discussion of religious experience on the threshold of modernity. For instance, the concept of "popular religion" was very much at the forefront of research and scholarly debates in the 1970s and 1980s, attention which was followed by an eclipse in subsequent decades, although interest in approaching issues from below, of unraveling religious culture and

⁶ Bob Scribner, 'Popular Piety and Modes of Visual Perception in Late Medieval and Reformation Germany' in *The Journal of Religious History*, 15/4 (1989): 448-469. Bob Scribner, 'Cosmic Order and Daily Life. Sacred and Secular in Pre-industrial German Society' in Robert Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany*, (London: Hambledon Press, 1996), pp. 1-16.

reaching to the core of religious practice was still very much alive.⁷ Discarding the concept of “popular religion” as obsolete, scholars have been hard-pressed to replace it with an adequate label, although “religious culture” seems to be one of the winners in this contest.⁸ In this endeavour, the members of the team have taken their cue from Natalie Zemon Davis, who has explored the religion of the laity beginning with her book on Martin Guerre and has important theoretical contributions to the topic, William Christian who has introduced and refined the notion of “local religion” and Gábor Klaniczay who has discussed witchcraft and supernatural phenomena in central European context.⁹

Thus, the articles in this collection have tried to avoid the idea of “popular religion” and the underlying assumption that there is a rigid

⁷ Ronnie Po-chia Hsia, *Society and Religion in Münster, 1535-1618* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984). Bob Scribner, Trevor Johnson (eds.), *Popular religion in Germany and Central Europe 1400-1800* (London: Macmillan, 1996). Bob Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). Graeme Murdock, *Beyond Calvin: the intellectual, political and cultural world of Europe's Reformed churches, c. 1540-1620*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004). Bridget Heal, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Early Modern Germany. Protestant and Catholic Piety 1500-1648* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). C. Scott Dixon, *The Reformation and Rural Society. The Parishes of Brandenburg Ansbach-Kulmbach 1528-1603* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Trevor Johnson, *Magistrates, Madonnas and Miracles: the Counter Reformation in the Upper Palatinate* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

⁸ See Natalie Zemon Davis, ‘From “Popular Religion” to “Religious Cultures”’ in Steven Ozment (ed.), *Reformation Europe: A Guide to Research* (St Louis: Center for Reformation Research, 1982), pp. 321-342.

⁹ Natalie Zemon Davis, ‘Some Tasks and Themes in the Study of Popular Religion’ in Charles Trinkhaus, Heiko A. Oberman (eds.), *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion* (Leiden: Brill, 1974). pp. 307-336. Natalie Zemon Davis, ‘Anthropology and History in the 1980s: the Possibilities of the Past’ *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Volume 12/2 (1981): 267-275. Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (London: Duckworth, 1975), *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983). Natalie Zemon Davis, *Women on the Margins* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995). William Christian, *Person and God in a Spanish Valley* (Elsevier Science&Technology Books: 1972) (reprint Princeton University Press, 1989). William Christian, *Local Religion in Sixteenth Century Spain* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1989). William Christian, *Divine Presence in Spain and Western Europe 1500-1960* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2012). Gábor Klaniczay, *The Uses of Supernatural Power. The Transformations of Popular Religion in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Polity Press, - Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990). Gábor Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses. Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Gábor Klaniczay, Éva Pócs (eds.), *Communicating with the Spirits. Demons spirits and witches I*. (Budapest: CEU Press, 2005). Gábor Klaniczay, Éva Pócs (eds.), *Christian Demonology and Popular Mythology. Demons, Spirits, Witches II* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2006).

divide between the religion of the clergy and that of the laity, as well as a clear distinction between elite and popular. Nor do members of the research team wish to treat “the clergy” and “the laity” as monolithic categories. While norms are generally collective (because they are conceived for communities), the interpretation of norms and thus practice is often personal and hence individual. And, as the essays in this collection show, this is true of both the religious and the profane realms. For example, in her essay dedicated to the self-representation of the Apafi family Anca Gogâltan addresses the assumption that the social self is culturally determined and concludes that individuals attempted to shape their social self in the public domain in accordance with the private self and their self-interpretation.

Standing alone in this endeavour, Carmen Florea articulates her research around the concept of civic religion, a complex and multifaceted phenomenon which implies the administration and public use of the sacred by those invested with civic authority.

Confessionalization and other associated concepts, such as religious and social disciplining, also underlie much of the research in this collection.¹⁰ While many existing studies propose an “ethnic confessionalization” as applicable to the Saxon community, and others introduce important categories such as “regional confessionalization” and “local confessionalization”, the essays in this volume attempt to further test the applicability of such concepts.¹¹ For example, Ovidiu Ghitta’s work is pioneering in looking at the Greek-Catholic Church as a confessional project and especially in regarding this as a second stage in the encounter of an ethnic group (the Romanians) with a confessional church. Maria Crăciun on the other hand is more interested in the driving forces behind this process and the relationship between confessionalization and confessional identity. This approach is particularly important as confessionalization in Transylvania can be studied against the background of intense confessional rivalry.

¹⁰ For a discussion of the concept, see Ute Lotz-Heumann, ‘The Concept of “Confessionalization”: a Historiographical Paradigm in Dispute’ *Memoria e Civilización* 4 (2001): 93-114. Jörg Deventer, “‘Confesionalizarea” un concept teoretic relevant pentru studierea religiei, politicii și societății Europei est-centrale din perioada modernă timpurie?’ in *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Historia* 53/1-2 (2008): 33-58.

¹¹ Edit Szegedi: ‘Konfessionsbildung und Konfessionalisierung im städtischen Kontext. Eine Fallstudie am Beispiel von Kronstadt in Siebenbürgen (ca. 1550 -1680)’, in *Berichte und Beiträge des Geisteswissenschaftlichen Zentrums Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas an der Universität Leipzig. Heft 2 Konfessionelle Formierungsprozessen im Frühneuzeitlichen Ostmitteleuropa. Vorträge und Studien*, ed. Jörg Deventer, Leipzig 2006, pp. 126-253. Edit Szegedi, ‘Politica religioasă a principilor reformați’ in *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Historia* 53/1-2 (2008): 76-89.

Moreover, while previous literature has focused on disciplining by privileging its social dimension (whose benefits for social cohesion are obvious),¹² Maria Crăciun attempts to distinguish between religious and social disciplining and concentrates on the priorities of the Lutheran Church and their appropriation by secular society.

Unfortunately, sources that allow the study of lay beliefs and practice are scarce and scholars are often obliged to resort to the usual normative documents when attempting to probe the experiences of the past. As historians are still struggling to read prescriptive sources in novel ways and reconstruct actual practice with often too little material evidence to help them, they also focus on extending the scope of their research including less conventional and formerly less used documents, such as visual, musical, material and spatial ones. Thus, in the past few decades the field of history has encountered a pictorial turn, a spatial turn and, eventually a cultural one.¹³

Fully aware of these developments and in order to reconstruct the religious experience of ordinary people and to attain the much-coveted view from below, this collection has attempted to look at types of documents that are not normally used when considering religious life. For example, Maria Crăciun has looked at guild statutes, a type of source most often consulted in the context of economic or social history, without neglecting church

¹² For the most relevant approach to the topic, see Mária Pakucs, 'Behavior Control in Sibiu in the 16th century between Norm and Practice', in Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Ionela Băluță (eds.), *Bonnes et mauvaises moeurs dans la société roumaine d'hier et d'aujourd'hui* (București: NEC EDR, 2004), pp. 43-60, especially pp. 59-60. Mária Pakucs, 'Gute Ordnung und Disziplin': Patterns of Social Discipline in Sibiu (Hermannstadt) in the Sixteenth Century' in *New Europe College Yearbook 2003-2004* (București, 2005): 175-206.

¹³ The pictorial turn is a concept coined by W.T.J Mitchell, *Picture Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995). Historians have later used the phrase to emphasize other trends in historical research such as an interest in space or in culture. For interest in space, see Andrew Spicer, Will Coster (eds.), *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). Andrew Spicer, Sarah Hamilton (eds.), *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005). A cultural approach to history has been discussed by Peter Burke in his theoretical articles on the issue as well as several books and edited volumes. Peter Burke, 'Cultural History: past, present and future' *Theoretische Geschichte* 13 (1986). Peter Burke, 'Popular Culture between history and theology' *Ethnologia Europaea* 14 (1984). Peter Burke, 'Cultural History' *The Cambridge Review* 105 (1983). Peter Burke, *Culture and Society in Renaissance Italy, 1420-1540* (London: Batsford, 1972). Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1994). Peter Burke, *Varieties of Cultural History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997). Peter Burke, Ronnie Po-chia Hsia (eds.), *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). The issue is pursued by his followers. See Melissa Calaresu, Filippo de Vivo, Joan-Pau Rubiés (eds.), *Exploring Cultural History: essays in honour of Peter Burke* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).

orders, the decrees of the Lutheran synods and visitation records. Ünige Bencze on the other hand takes into account landscape as a document and uses it to unravel the motives of both regular clergy and the laity when choosing the site of a monastic establishment, such as the Cistercian House at Cârța (Kerz, Kerc).

All members of the team have tried to look beyond prescriptive documents, generally written by the clergy and take into account a number of texts and images produced with stronger involvement from the laity. They have thus attempted to identify documents where the choices of lay men and women are highlighted and their voices can be heard. In saying this, one is thinking about wills, donation deeds, and the objects that are bequeathed to various churches, which are the focus of Mária Lupescu Makó's and Ciprian Firea's studies. Although produced by the clergy (as the writers of the letters in question are both priests), the correspondence analyzed by Diana Covaci is a complex source that challenges norms and provides individual interpretations of the letter of the law.

Images, which constitute the main sources for Anca Gogâltan, Ciprian Firea and Radu Lupescu are considered primarily as vehicles of communication, instruments that render ideologies visible. The combination of documents, visual and material sources allow all three authors a better understanding of their subject, whether it is to reconstruct commemorative strategies (Ciprian Firea), public images (Radu Lupescu) or to explore the social self (Anca Gogâltan). Images serve as indicators of the individual's capacity to use the material world to create, assert and perpetuate the social self. Moreover, Ciprian Firea is aware that sacred images, coats of arms and donor inscriptions all act as visual mnemonic devices to perpetuate memory and to solidify social hierarchies. He regards coats of arms particularly as simulacra for donors. Radu Lupescu, who focuses his analysis on a unique visual source, fourteen coats of arms from the fifteenth century depicted in Hunedoara castle reconstructs the political context John Hunyadi was involved in. He persuasively demonstrates that the programme was not based on John Hunyadi's sympathies but rather on the political reality as many of the individuals whose coats of arms are represented were members of the royal council. The heraldic display is consequently decoded as a means of representation able to bring to the fore the political ambitions of its commissioner (John Hunyadi).

Whether focused on a specific source (such as the contributions of Radu Lupescu - a Heraldic Wall in Hunedoara castle - , Anca Gogâltan - a fragment of a fresco decoration in the church at Mălâncrav (Malmkrog, Almakerék) - and Ovidiu Ghitta -*The Pastoral Duty* of Petru Pavel Aaron), on an array of different sources (Carmen Florea, Elena Firea, Diana Covaci)

or on multiple examples of the same type of document (Mária Lupescu Makó – wills – and Maria Crăciun –guild statutes) the contributions in this collection provide original readings of the evidence.

Although she focuses on a specific textual source, that is, Peter Mohyla's notes on miracle-working saints, Elena Firea places it in the context of other types of evidence, such as hagiographic, material (relics and reliquaries, church dedications), and visual (such as iconic representations and elaborate narrative cycles). Thus, she takes into account all the available indicators of St John's veneration as a miracle worker before the 1620s. In the absence of obvious written sources, Elena Firea turns to various indirect evidence such as the decisions of Russian church councils regarding the canonization of saints, the inclusion of St John in various texts such as the *Menaion of New Miracle Workers* and the *Palinodia* written by Zacharij Kopystenskyi in 1621-1622, the addressing formula used in an internal official document of 1629 and a letter from 1637 addressed by the Metropolitan Varlaam to the Russian Tsar Mikhail Fyodorovich, from whence she painstakingly extracts every shred of proof concerning devotional practice, including all references to rituals and gestures.

This brings to the fore the issue of methods used to decode the available evidence. Some of the methods deployed in this collection are not new, but rather revisited and perhaps slightly refined in order to fully explore the richness of the sources. Maria Crăciun chooses to revisit the comparative method which she uses in order to enter the inner world of the Transylvanian artisans. By comparing the statutes they had written themselves with the normative documents issued by the clergy, this study allows an assessment of the artisans' interest in and willingness to adopt and implement the programme outlined by the ecclesiastical elite, the appropriation of norms and the integration of prescribed devotional behaviour. Moreover, a comparison between the statutes written before and after the Reformation of the Saxon community highlights the changes in the attitudes of the artisans to religious practice and the gradual development of their confessional identity. Elena Firea, on the other hand attempts a comparative analysis of the narratives meant to highlight the development and devotional particularities of St John's cult. This involved an in-depth study of the texts in question in relation to the rest of Mohyla's notes on miracle-working saints as well as the contextualization of these writings within the confessional tensions and conflicts of the early modern period in the multi confessional worlds of east-central Europe. In the context of confessional rivalries, manifest in conflicts over access to the sacred and divine benevolence bestowed on particular denominations, miracles and their recording and dissemination were used by theologians as polemical weapons.

In the same vein, using textual and visual sources together is not a novelty, but rather an increasingly recurring method. However, using these sources together in order to discern how a certain family wished to be remembered, as both Anca Gogâltan and Ciprian Firea have done has certainly been a road less taken. Moreover, Anca Gogâltan successfully uses the iconographical method by comparing images in order to emphasize innovations and differences that may be read as individual choices of self-representation. She analyzes the pictorial programme, not just individual compositions, and the visual strategies deployed in order to direct the public's gaze. The analysis thus takes into account minute changes in the visual representation of the individual. On the other hand, by analyzing the fourteen coats of arms as a complete coherent series, Radu Lupescu delves into the deeper meanings and functions of the pictorial programme.

Ünige Bencze has used landscape archaeology which is a relatively recent field in local research in order to show that the norms established by the Cistercian order for the location of monasteries were implemented at regional level by taking local interests into account and thus brings new insights concerning the chosen site.

The research in this volume also represents an effort to read prescriptive sources in a new way or to be aware of the narrative dimension of personal documents such as wills which were also written according to a template as Makó's study clearly illustrates. Elena Firea makes richer use of an ecclesiastical source that, although known has remained only partially explored in existing historiography. Moreover, by analyzing the newly-restored paintings on the southern wall of the nave of St George's church in Suceava, located in close proximity to the reliquary, Elena Firea interprets the earliest known illustration of the saint's public veneration by ordinary believers.

Finally, Diana Covaci does detective work in order to properly identify the protagonists of her story but also carefully analyzes her archival data through both historical and sociological methods. Moreover, Covaci contextualizes her case study by analyzing the local economy, social hierarchy and power structures.

Much of the research undertaken in these studies requires the deployment of sociological, psychological and anthropological theories. However, most studies in this volume are exercises in the cultural history of religion. For example, a discussion of pious practices in the context of cultural studies allows an assessment of their complex functions within secular society.¹⁴ Thus, Maria Crăciun deals with devotional patterns as a

¹⁴ In broader European context, see Karin Maag, John Wietvliet (eds.), *Worship in Medieval and Early Modern Europe. Change and Continuity in Religious Practice* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004).

specific category able to act as a barometer of religious transformation impacted by regulations of the clergy (the norms), the needs of the faithful and traditional forms of worship. Ovidiu Ghitta also suggests that religious practice, which was the contentious topic of contemporary debates was meant to provide stability and cohesion to the church and to strengthen its identity. Taking its cue from Trent in its drive towards standardization and the development of a new religious culture, the Greek-Catholic Church was also impacted by the ambivalent attitude of Post Tridentine Catholicism towards popular religiosity: tradition was important in the competition with confessional rivals (mainly with Protestants) but excesses had to be expunged while good practices were firmly distinguished from superstition.¹⁵

The studies in this collection all represent small but significant steps that enrich our knowledge of the past. For example, Radu Lupescu's essay not only makes an important contribution to the history of heraldry in the Hungarian kingdom, it also succeeds in identifying not just the family but also the particular individuals the arms refer to. Moreover, Lupescu was able to date the wall paintings based on the office occupied by the personalities whose coats of arms were included and offers a new date for the construction of the so-called Matthias Loggia which can in fact also be related to John Hunyadi.

Anca Gogâltan's article points out that the individual self existed alongside the social self and was partly informed and modeled by it. Her study which explores some practices of the nobility when decorating their family churches, with special focus on 'donor' portraits occurring in private religious contexts highlights the relationship between the individual and the group in all its complexity. The essay also reconstructs visual strategies meant to assert the noble social self.

By approaching wills as a symbolic gesture of survival, Mária Lupescu Makó succeeds in highlighting the religious practices of the nobility informed as they were by both spiritual and pragmatic concerns.

In Ciprian Firea's case, making women the focus of investigation is in itself a fresh topic that has been far less investigated although the pious life of women has been the subject of some recent literature. However, the idea to explore their more mundane motivations, focused on memory, for their pious bequests, is new. The essay persuasively demonstrates that the need for remembrance is closely interwoven with the quest for salvation.

¹⁵ For the European context, see Philip M. Soergel, *Wondrous in his saints : Counter-Reformation propaganda in Bavaria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). Marc R. Forster, *The Counter-Reformation in the villages: religion and reform in the Bishopric of Speyer, 1560-1720* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992). Marc Forster, *Catholic revival in the age of the baroque: religious identity in southwest Germany, 1550-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Carmen Florea's essay underlines the involvement of the urban leadership in the religious domain and their role in the establishment of the type and frequency of the liturgical celebrations to be accomplished in the parish church. Thus, through agreements between the urban communities and the parish priests, the cults of the parish patron saints became civic cults. Florea's essay brings to the fore the agenda of municipal governments which was meant to enlarge the saintly Pantheon so that it would reflect the social hierarchy of urbanized societies. Moreover, Florea persuasively shows that lay involvement in religion was multilayered and hierarchically structured. On the one hand, she convincingly demonstrates that prominent social and economic groups in the towns engaged with the promotion of the parish patron saint. On the other she argues that the magistracy controlled the religious life of important economic and social urban groups but also adapted to the needs of the faithful by endorsing cults that were already popular among broader segments of the urban population.

By taking into account the changes in the divine service after the Reformation both in its structure and its setting, Maria Crăciun's essay reaches interesting conclusions concerning the participation of the community in these new rituals, the creation of new focal points within the church and the development of new devotional patterns. She persuasively argues that the artisans adapted the suggestions of the clergy to their own agenda privileging devotional conduct over correct belief and fostering primarily a disciplined community.

Elena Firea's study highlights the shift in clerical interest from typical individual healings to more 'political' public miracles and the fact that St John the New acquired a new profile not just as a mere local thaumaturgical saint, but also as a fighter against denigrators of the Orthodox faith. She convincingly demonstrates St John's association with the metropolitan institution and contends that the revival of his cult was triggered by the transfer and deposition of his relics (which is seen as a second entombment) into the newer and more representative cathedral church of Suceava in 1589.

Ovidiu Ghitta aptly shows that the Greek-Catholic Church was a confessional church concerned with homogeneity and inner cohesion, advocating doctrinal, liturgical and institutional specificity, interested in the quality of its clergy and the religious conduct of its members. In this context, reforming trends fostered by Trent and embraced in episcopal and aulic environment bred critical attitudes towards excess in popular piety.

Diana Covaci manages to look at the difference between norm and practice in marriage law through the lens provided by a case study from a Transylvanian mining village. With the help of careful archival research she

painstakingly reconstructs not just the complex social world of the village but also the views of the local clerical elites concerning union with Rome and the confessional identity of the Greek-Catholic Church.

No volume is entirely successful if it does not highlight directions of further research and possibilities to better understand the past. In the current case this is best illustrated by Elena Firea's study of a constructed cult, in itself a daring proposition in the current historiographical climate.¹⁶

The construct ultimately changes the profile of the saint from a protector of the city of Suceava to a protector of the Orthodox faith, from a thaumaturgic saint and the protagonist of healing miracles, to a defender of the Orthodox cause in confessional competition. The analysis draws attention to a particular category of miracles, those of punitive nature directed against the Catholic or Calvinist calumniators of Orthodox religious practice (particularly the veneration of relics). Although underplayed in the interpretation, the analysis of the source points to conversion to Orthodoxy as a consequence of miracles performed by the saint's relics. In this context, Firea explains Mohyla's interest in St John the New as more than a personal preference or as a tribute to his family's older attachment to the saint but rather as a choice motivated by St John's newly forged profile, as a Greek Neo Martyr and defender of the Orthodox faith, which suited his polemical purposes. It could be further noted that the vindictive actions were both exorcisms and as such highlighted the role of the clergy as conduits of the sacred, as the privileged group allowed to access and make it available to the faithful. Moreover, the use of exorcism could be further interpreted as meaningful in the context of confessional rivalry. Jesuits, for instance used exorcisms to illustrate divine favour in competition with the Protestants. This gives new meaning to the actions of the Orthodox hierarch who exorcises the Polish Catholic dignitary punished for his derision of Orthodox religious practice. Finally, devotional practices focused on the saint have also changed. Firea persuasively suggests that while earlier miraculous healings probably fostered local forms of pilgrimage due to St John's reputation as a thaumaturg, the introduction of a procession among the rituals involved in the veneration of the saint may have accommodated the needs of believers to have direct and more frequent access to the saint. Moreover, while pilgrimage could be individual, processions are always collective actions orchestrated by the clergy, sometimes with the

¹⁶ Kathleen Ashley and Pamela Sheingorn (eds.), *Interpreting Cultural Symbols: Saint Anne in Late Medieval Society*, (Athens Ga. and London: University of Georgia Press, 1990). Katherine Ludwig Jansen, *The Making of the Magdalene. Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001).

involvement of the political authority. Thus, by promoting processions the clergy gained an even stronger control over devotion to the saint.

This particular study points out something that is valid for the rest of the collection and that every scholar worth his/her salt knows: no research is ever over and one question endlessly leads to another. However, after considering each particular contribution, it is perhaps important to highlight the outcomes of the collection as a whole and of the research undertaken within this project. This has brought to the fore issues concerning lay reaction, and even secular initiative in religious practice, the integration by the laity of the norms designed by the clergy, as well as secular needs and expectations. The complex relationship between clergy and laity as highlighted by several studies in this collection dictates the outcome of the battle between norm and practice. The research undertaken has also persuaded scholars that the clergy in its turn developed devotional behaviour that strayed from the norms prescribed by their hierarchical superiors. Moreover, the framework of the project has forced the members of the research team to grapple with several concepts that have been defined and constantly refined by historians during the past few decades. Finally, the aims outlined for the project have prompted scholars to focus on approach and methodology while exploring new lines of inquiry. In this way the specific investigation of well-delineated topics has been brought together to create new methodologies for researching the religious experience of the past. Ultimately, the essays in this collection highlight the importance of certain issues, such as that of identity and social networks for the regional context discussed here. They have also raised the issue of change and the possible continuities between religious practice during the late Middle Ages and the early modern period (particularly after the Reformation, Counter Reformation and/or Catholic Reform).

Despite the diversity of topics, sources and approaches the essays are bound together by their interest in religious experience and devotional practice, especially in the context of previous research which has privileged institutional development and the elite of the clergy, their reforming or conservative programmes. The common aims that give coherence to this collection are thus the attempt to distinguish between the norm and its transgression in devotional practice (comprising the social and cultural dimension of such actions) and to rethink the existence of the clergy and the laity as monolithic blocs in their relationship to religious experience and to each other.

The Monastery of Cârța: Between the Cistercian Ideal and Local Realities*

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Abstract: The article deals with the Cistercian monastery of Cârța situated on the territory of Romania. It gives an overview of the debated issue of its foundation, and aims to raise new questions about the integration of this region into the ideal place for Cistercian monks in the beginning of the thirteenth century based on the use of new sources. As a wide range of sources were consulted certain deviations from the ideal Cistercian way of life could be observed. These resulted partly from the changes taking place inside the order as well as from the challenges posed by local circumstances. One could mention the absence of *conversus* brothers and granges, participation in regional or even long-distance trade, and income mainly from villages.

Keywords: medieval, monastery, Cistercian, architecture, foundation

Rezumat: Mănăstirea de la Cârța între idealul Cistercian și realitățile locale. Articolul prezintă, în linii mari problemele fondării mănăstirii cisterciene de la Cârța, de pe teritoriul României și propune noi întrebări despre integrarea acestei regiuni în idealul cistercian. O varietate mare de resurse au fost consultate pe baza cărora s-au putut observa devieri locale de la idealul cistercian. Acestea, au rezultat din schimbările produse în interiorul ordinului cistercian la începutul secolului XIII cât și din provocările ridicate de circumstanțele locale. Se menționează lipsa fraților converși și a fermelor, participarea în comerțul local sau chiar și pe distanțe lungi, și veniturile mănăstirii, care proveneau în mare parte din taxele satelor.

Cuvinte cheie: medieval, mănăstire, cistercian, arhitectură, fondare

Introduction

Located in the southern part of today's Transylvania (west-central part of Romania) in the so-called Făgăraș Land (known name from the fourteenth century), the Cistercian monastery of Cârța (Kerz, Kerc) enjoyed extensive attention from the scholarly world from the nineteenth century until today.¹

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¹ I will use the official Romanian place names in the text and their German and Hungarian names will be placed in parentheses. A part of this study will be published in German in the journal *Zeitschrift für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde*.

The latest comprehensive study, encompassing and discussing parts of the history of the monastery based on information provided mainly by written documents, was published in the year 2000.² Another, short study, which critically approached written sources and architectural remains, offers a 3D reconstruction of the Cistercian monastery as well.³ However, these studies and books concentrated only on certain parts and aspects of the history of the monastery, thus, giving the research an unbalanced character. One of the major themes, discussed over the years and still debated was the foundation of the monastery. In the question concerning the foundation, emphasis was placed mainly on the founder, the dating and on the foundation process itself. Another aspect that was heavily discussed was the reconstruction of the building complex and the possible influences of the workshop, which built the monastery, in the region. After consulting the available literature, one can observe that scholarly approaches to reconstructing the history of this monastery fall within three main fields of research: art history, history and archaeology. In this paper I wish to present a short overview of the existing literature, then a discussion of the debated issues and interpretations after which, I will present questions and ideas arising during my own investigation. I aim to look at different source materials concerning Cistercian life in this region and highlight possible new sources and research directions.

A number of lacunae can be identified in the literature concerning the history and evolution of this monastery as well as a one-sided interpretation of the written evidence. This paper aims to identify some of these omissions and to explore alternative possibilities while drawing attention to the wealth of unexploited sources that are actually available for a much more thorough analysis. Important topics such as the monastery's struggles to keep their lands and relationships with surrounding areas and entities were marginalized, and possible interpretations of the sources were not fully explored. Also, a multi-disciplinary approach can shed light on aspects such as the social and economic life of the monastery, and can bring new data to complete the existing picture of this monastic site. I wish to focus more on the local circumstances of the monastery and compare it, to a certain extent, to the ideal Cistercian monastic life, which was set out from the beginnings.

² Dan Nicolae Busuioc von Hasselbach, *Țara Făgărașului în secolul al XIII-lea* [The Land of Făgăraș in the Thirteenth Century] (2 vols, Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2000).

³ Vladimir Agrigoroaei - Ana Maria Gruia, 'Abația cisterciană de la Cârța' [The Cistercian Abbey from Cârța], in Valentin Sălăgeanu (ed.), *12 Monumente din istoria românilor* [12 monuments from the history of Romanians] (București - Cluj-Napoca: Grupul Român pentru o istorie alternativă, 2008), pp. 96-105.

In the following I will present a short overview of the existing literature, which dealt with the monastery and its foundation, this being a first endeavor to summarize in English the main works of three different historiographies (German, Hungarian, Romanian). This will only be schematically discussed since the paper's main focus is on the differences and similarities of the Cistercian ideal and local realities, which concerns site selection, internal organization, estate structure and architecture. Some of these topics (site selection, estate structure and management) were never discussed or analyzed in earlier literature this being a first attempt to use these as sources for a better understanding of Cistercians life at Cârța.

The issue of foundation in the light of the scholarship

Written evidence was prioritized while the architectural remains of the monastery provoked intense debates mainly among art historians. The earliest excavations were carried out by the architect Heinrich Eder in 1889 and in 1911 by Oskar Fritz-Lászay. Their contribution also consisted of restoration works, clearance of the rubble heap and elaboration of a ground-plan. Later on, extensive archaeological research continued in 1927,⁴ and then between 1981 and 1985,⁵ almost thirty years ago. Recently, the result of rescue excavations from 2009 and 2011 were published together with the unpublished finds from the 1981-1985 excavation campaigns.⁶ From the published archaeological reports one can see that research was restricted only to certain areas of the monastic complex such as the church (the choir, nave and northern transept) and south-eastern corner of the cloister. Since the unearthed materials were never entirely published it is therefore hard to get a full picture of the excavated areas as a whole, not to mention the data related to material culture, which would be one of the main sources for reconstructing the daily life of the monastery. The archaeological reports offer a very schematic presentation of the finds but they do outline the general results of the excavations. One of the significant outcomes was that a semicircular apse was already identified in 1927, during the excavation under the northern rectangular transept of the church but was taken into consideration by scholars only after the excavations from 1982. Through this

⁴ Victor Roth, 'Raport despre săpăturile făcute la mănăstirea din Cârța săsească' [Report about the excavations carried out at Saxon Cârța] *Annuarul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice. Secția pentru Transilvania* (1929): 224-227.

⁵ Thomas Năgler - Martin Rill, 'Monumental Cistercian de la Cârța, jud. Sibiu' [The Cistercian Monument from Cârța, County Sibiu] *Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice* (1983): 489-493.

⁶ Petre Munteanu-Beșliu, 'Mănăstirea cisterciană de la Cârța. Cercetări arheologice de salvare (2009 și 2011)' [The Cistercian Monastery from Cârța: Rescue Excavations (2009 and 2011)] *Acta Terrae Fogarasiensis*, I (2012): 11-28.

discovery, researchers assumed that this was probably the northern side aisle of an earlier Romanesque basilica from the first decade of the thirteenth century, before the Cistercian construction, although it may have been part of the first Cistercian church,⁷ or a chapel as it was lately suggested.⁸

Other types of sources were never used for the study of this abbey. Here, I refer to sources such as features and data collected from the surrounding landscape and environment, a very rich source in recent research for understanding how changes occurred in the landscape and how environments were shaped by the people who settled in certain areas.⁹ Landscape archaeology, which developed extensively in the recent decades with special emphasis on monastic landscape, equips specialists with a great variety of approaches and resources for understanding various processes that took place over the centuries, and brought change to the environment.¹⁰ In the case of Cârța, the possibilities emphasized by James Bond should be considered as a whole: "We thus find monastic communities actively involved in improving agricultural production, clearing woodland, draining marshes... planting orchards and vineyards, altering watercourses, constructing mills and fisheries, building churches, houses, barns and dovecotes, removing or re-planning villages, and even founding new towns on their estates".¹¹ A discussion of this active role of the Cistercian community in the Land of Făgăraș has not been attempted by previous literature; the settlement of the monks was always treated as a passive, non-interactive presence in the region. The monastery's role as social and economic center was almost totally neglected. One of the most important events in the history of a monastery was its foundation, involving a process of negotiations, site selection, donations, and endowments as well as building activity with a need for resources. Thus, it is important to present a short overview of the main works that deal with the founder and foundation of this particular monastery.

⁷ Nægler - Rill, 'Monumentul Cistercian', p. 493; Martin Rill, 'Die Zisterzienserabtei in Kerz am Alt im Lichte neuer Grabungen', *Südostdeutsche Vierteljahresblätter*, 39/2 (1990): 143-152; Martin Rill, 'Zur Datierung des Zisterzienserklosters Kerz', in Anemarie Schenk (ed.), *Kulturdenkmäler Siebenbürgens* (6 vols, Thaur bei Innsbruck: Wort und Welt Verlag, 1992-2007), vol. 3, pp. 86-95.

⁸ Busuioc von Hasselbach, *Țara Făgărașului*, vol. 2, p. 133.

⁹ Michael Aston, *Interpreting the Landscape* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 9-21, 91-120.

¹⁰ For a general view of landscape archaeology and a detailed discussion of monastic landscape, see: Tim Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2004); Johannes Meier, *Klöster und Landschaft: das kulturräumliche Erbe der Orden* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2010); James Bond, 'The location and siting of Cistercian houses in Wales and the West', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 154 (2005): 51-79.

¹¹ James Bond, *Monastic Landscapes* (Stroud: Tempus, 2004), pp. 12-13.

The first attempts to date the foundation of the monastery started as early as the seventeenth century when Péter Pázmány, archbishop of Esztergom and an important figure of the Counter-Reformation in Hungary, set the foundation of the monastery of Cârța to the year 1216.¹² Almost the same date was given in the middle of the eighteenth century by Fridvalszky, who set this event to the year 1218.¹³ In the nineteenth century, scholars such as Victor Kästner, Elek Jakab and Flóris Rómer thought to place the date of foundation during the reign of Andrew II (1205-1235) also connecting it to its mother house at Igrış (Egres).¹⁴ Today, this view is considered to be out-dated and no longer valid. It is important, however, to present the very beginnings of the research here.

Among the first endeavors to settle the founder and the date of foundation, another trend started in the nineteenth century with the work of Georg Adolf Schuller, a local historian and publicist, one of the leading figures of Transylvanian Saxon historiography, born in Sibiu (Hermannstadt, Nagyszeben). He thought that the foundation took place in the second half of the twelfth century during the reign of Béla III (1172-1196), a period in which the king gave numerous rights and privileges to the Cistercian order in Hungary.¹⁵ Some decades later, the poet and writer Charles Boner and then the historian László Kővári dated the foundation to the same period.¹⁶ The historian and Lutheran bishop, Georg Daniel Teutsch approaching the same issue, based on the fact that Béla III was a keen supporter of the Cistercians, concluded that the king founded first the monastery at Igrış and only later the monastery at Cârța.¹⁷ The twelfth-century foundation issue

¹² See in: Alán Baumgartner, *A kerci apátság a középkorban* [The abbey of Kerc in the Middle Ages] (Budapest: Stephaneum, 1915), p. 22.

¹³ See in: Leopold Janauschek, *Originum Cisterciensium Liber Primus* (Vindobonae/Vienna, 1877), p. 209.

¹⁴ Elek Jakab, 'Erdély egyháztörténelméhez' [To the Church History of Transylvania] *Magyar Történelmi Tár*, XIII (1857): 20; Victor Kästner, 'Die Sage von der Gründung und Zerstörung der Kerzer Abtei', *Blätter für Geist, Gemüth und Vaterlandskunde*, Neue Folge 1 (1851): 129, 137; Flóris Rómer, 'Kirándulás a kertzi apátságához Erdélyben' [Trip to the Abbey of Kertz in Transylvania] *Archaeológiai Közlemények*, XI (1877): 4. For further details about Igrış, see: Suzana Moré Heitel, *Începuturile artei medievale în bazinul inferior al Mureșului* [The Beginnings of Medieval Art in the Lower Basin of the Mureș River] (Timișoara: Excelsior Art, 2010), pp. 49-61.

¹⁵ Georg Adolf Schuller, 'Die Kerzer Abtei', in Friedrich Teutsch (ed.), *Bilder aus der Kulturgeschichte der Siebenbürger Sachsen* (Hermannstadt: Krafft & Drotleff, 1928), vol. 1, pp. 100-101.

¹⁶ Charles Boner, *Siebenbürgen: Land und Leute* (Leipzig: Weber, 1868), p. 561; László Kővári, *Erdély régiségei* [The Antiquities of Transylvania], (Pest: Beimel és Kozma, 1852), p. 238.

¹⁷ Georg Daniel Teutsch, *Geschichte der Siebenbürger Sachsen für das sächsische Volk* (3 vols, Leipzig, Hermannstadt: 1874-1899), vol. 1, p. 20.

was re-opened in the first decades of the twentieth century by the architect Josef Makoldy when he took part in the restoration and conservation works of the monastery between 1911 and 1913. He was impressed by the building remains and architectural work that the Cistercians, invited in his view by Béla III directly from France, were able to produce.¹⁸ After a period of silence, the question of foundation was brought back into discussion again by Michael Thalgott in 1990 but from another point of view.¹⁹ The author believed that it would be more correct to set the foundation date between 1180 and 1190, again during the reign of Béla III. In his opinion, the monks from the mother-house of Igrış had enough time to train the first generation of novices, who together with older French monks arriving from Pontigny in 1179, were sent to populate the monastery of Cârța.

Among the possible founders one can also find King Emeric (1196-1204), son and successor of Béla III. The theologian Franz Winter, dealing with the Cistercian order in his large, three-volume work, proposed a date for the foundation of the monastery to between the years 1202-1203 based on the chronological registers of the abbacies of the order.²⁰ This hypothesis entered the European historical discussion only a decade later when, the priest and professor of history, Leopold Janauschek, the author of the *Originum Cisterciensium Liber Primus* also concluded that the monastery was probably founded in 1202.²¹ Although he tried to provide an overview of all the monasteries of the order, he could not fully resolve all the problems raised by their different histories. Still, his work remains fundamental to the present day in research on Cistercian houses. In the case of the Cârța monastery, he did not explain the differences concerning the foundation dates provided by the registers written between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. Ferenc Levente Hervay, who compiled the first repertoire of the Cistercian monasteries of medieval Hungary, also opted for King Emeric as the founder of Cârța.²² Others, such as Otto Mittelstrass, G. A. Schuller, Victor Roth and Heinz Rosemann dated the foundation to the turn of the twelfth

¹⁸ Josef Makoldy, 'Ueber die Kerzer Abtei', *Die Karpaten. Halbmonatsschrift für Kultur und Leben*, 5 (1912): 52.

¹⁹ Michael Thalgott, 'Die Zisterzienser von Kerz in ihre Zeit', *Südostdeutsche Vierteljahresblätter*, 39/2 (1990): 19.

²⁰ Franz Winter, *Die Cistercienser des nordöstlichen Deutschlands bis zum Auftreten der Bettelorden. Ein Beitrag zur Kirchen- und Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Mittelalters* (3 vols, Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Berthes, 1868-1871), vol. 3, p. 92.

²¹ Janauschek, *Originum Cisterciensium*, pp. 208-209.

²² Ferenc Levente Hervay, 'Repertorium historicum Ordinis Cisterciensis in Hungaria', *Bibliotheca Cisterciensis* 7 (1984): 112-119.

century, but most of them also failed to provide any detailed evidence.²³ Matthias Untermann, in his huge work on the medieval architecture of the Cistercians, used 1202 as the foundation date of Cârța abbey without referring to the possible founder and shortly indicating the main foundation dates that have been raised, while he rightfully questioned the results of the excavations. He reached the conclusion that the best dated part of Cârța abbey remains its eastern part, dated to 1225-1230, based on the characteristics of the decoration.²⁴ It is important to mention that the year 1202 became a generally accepted foundation date in Hungarian and international historiography and the founder was identified as King Emeric. Michel Tănase observed that some of the researchers were not aware that the *Statute* of the order existed, where 1208 was mentioned as the year the general chapter of the order inquired about the abbot from Transylvania, who had not gone to Cîteaux for ten years.²⁵ Based on the same document, the historian Șerban Papacostea inferred that the foundation of the Transylvanian *filia* happened before the year 1200.²⁶ A new element was introduced by Alán Baumgartner, based on a confirmation charter issued in 1223 by Andrew II. The charter concerned the donation of a piece of land by magister Gocelinus to the monastery of Cârța. He recognized that an earlier donation is confirmed in this document as well, one made in the time of voivode Benedict. Based on this observation, he fixed the donation date between the years 1202 and 1206 or 1208 and 1209 when Benedict was voivode of Transylvania.²⁷ Among scholars who are of the opinion that the monastery was founded in the last years of King Emeric's reign, one can

²³ Otto Mittelstrass, 'Beiträge zur Siedlungsgeschichte Siebenbürgens im Mittelalter', *Buchreihe der Südostdeutschen Historischen Kommission* (1961): 58; Schuller, 'Die Kerzer Abtei', p. 138; Roth, 'Raport despre săpăturile', pp. 225-227; Heinz Rosemann, 'Die überlieferten Kunstdenkmäler. Die Bauten', in Victor Roth (ed.), *Die Deutsche Kunst in Siebenbürgen* (Berlin: 1934), p. 82.

²⁴ Matthias Untermann, 'Forma Ordinis: die mittelalterliche Baukunst der Zisterzienser', *Kunstwissenschaftliche Studien* 89 (2001): 511-512.

²⁵ Michel Tănase, 'L'expansion de Cîteaux vers le sud-est européen: essai de localisation des possessions cisterciennes de Transylvanie', in CTHS (ed.), *Crises et réformes dans l'Église de la Réforme grégorienne à la Préréforme, Actes des congrès nationaux des sociétés historiques et scientifiques* (Paris: CTHS, 1991), p. 10; *Statuta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Cisterciensis*, ed. Joseph-Marie Canivez (8 vols, Louvain: Bureaux de la Revue, 1933), vol. 1, p. 349.

²⁶ Șerban Papacostea, *Românii în secolul al XIII-lea. Între cruciată și Imperiul mongol* [Romanians in the Thirteenth Century. Between Crusades and the Mongol Empire] (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1993), p. 177.

²⁷ Baumgartner, *A kerci apátság*, pp. 22-23. For a detailed list on the office holdings of voivodes, prelates, barons, and *ispáns* (*comites*), see: Attila Zsoldos, *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1000-1301* [The Secular Archontology of Hungary] (Budapest: História, 2011), p. 37.

find historians, art historians and archaeologists such as: László Szabó, Gheorghe Oprescu, Virgil Vătăşianu, Géza Entz, Vasile Drăguţ, Ernő Marosi, György Györffy, Hermann and Alida Fabini, and Martin Rill.²⁸ More recently Busuioc von Hasselbach tried to re-assess the above-mentioned document and reconstruct in more details the process of the foundation²⁹.

However, seeing how much emphasis and energy was put into establishing the foundation date of the monastery throughout centuries of research one can see perhaps more clearly the importance of this monastery for scholars dealing with medieval Transylvania. It was important to present here the main options of dating to such an extent because otherwise it is hard to understand the different agendas and trends that appeared in historiography and how they changed in time. Thus, the reader can have a fuller image and the necessary basis for understanding one of the most important events in the life of this monastery.

Cistercian ideal or local reality?

Another important issue, which frequently arises when discussing Cistercian monasteries, is the ideal monastic life and ground plan of their churches and monastic buildings, which were organized and built according to rigorous prescriptions and statutes. In the case of Cârţa, scholars have so far relied too much on the ideal plan both in terms of Cistercian everyday life and especially architecture. Regional and local variations or exceptions were rarely looked upon. Similar cases to the one of Cârţa were scarcely identified or discussed, except from an architectural point of view but the emphasis was rather placed on the activity of building masters and workshops, and on artistic influences coming from the west.

²⁸ Vasile Drăguţ, *Arta gotică în România* [Gothic Art in Romania] (Bucureşti: Editura Meridiane 1979), p. 10; Géza Entz, 'Le chantier cistercien de Kerc', *Acta Historicae Artium Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 9/1-2 (1963): 11; Hermann Fabini - Alida Fabini, *Kirchenburgen in Siebenbürgen* (Wien, Köln, Graz: ?, 1986), p. 63; György Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori Magyarországnak történeti földrajza* [The Historical Geography of Hungary in the Age of the Árpáds] (4 vols, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1963-1998), vol. II, p. 451-452; Ernő Marosi, *Die Anfänge der Gotik in Ungarn. Esztergom in der Kunst des 12.-13. Jahrhunderts* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1984), p. 126; George Oprescu, *Bisericile cetăţi ale saşilor din Ardeal* [Castle Churches of the Saxons from Transylvania] (Bucureşti: Editura Academiei R. P. R., 1957), pp. 144-146; László Szabó, *Árpád-kori magyar építőművészet* (Budapest: Németh József Műszaki Könyvkiadó, 1913), pp. 262-263; Rill, 'Zur Datierung', p. 149; Virgil Vătăşianu, 'Arta în Transilvania în sec. XI-XIII' [The Art in Transylvania in the Eleventh and Thirteenth Centuries], in George Oprescu (ed.), *Istoria artelor plastice în România* [The history of plastic arts in Romania] (Bucureşti: Editura Meridiane, 1968), vol. 1, p. 98-99.

²⁹ Since this is not the primary subject of this study, for a more detailed discussion about this and the argumentation for his dating, see Busuioc von Hasselbach, *Țara Făgăraşului*, vol. 1, pp. 50-56.

Since, the choir, parts of the nave and eastern wing of the monastery is more-or-less still standing the architectural analyses focused also on the spread of the Gothic style in the region through the workshop from Cârța.³⁰ Thus, the different construction phases were used for dating the monument. Besides these studies the ideal Cistercian monastic life in this region was not analyzed mainly because of the scarcity of data provided by archaeological research and the lack of published material culture coming from the monastery. This situation did not improve much over the years but other sources became available, which were not used before and can provide additional data to a better understanding of Cistercian monastic life in this area.

One of these unused sources can be the site selection. The process of site selection represented a series of complex negotiations between the order and the donator. This process is still not fully understood as only few individual cases were explored, where written evidence was better preserved.³¹ Site selection implied also a kind of “field work”, which meant that the place where the monastery was going to be built was inspected before the actual constructions began, and had to be found suitable by the abbot. Monasteries had to provide subsistence for the monks or nuns living there and they also had to provide space for spiritual life. Thus, the sites were carefully chosen, generally along the criteria listed in the statutes as well, where the necessary buildings could be erected and the religious personnel could be adequately sustained. In many cases monasteries acted as focal places and became social or economic centers. The reasons behind site selection could be multiple reflecting the aspirations of the founders but also the ideals of the orders.

The perfect site dictated by the ideal way of Cistercian life would have been an isolated, undisturbed place, far away from the hustle and bustle of society although it is known that the regulations specified by the general chapter concerning site selection and internal life did not mean a low standard of living or extreme poverty.³² Then, how did the Land of Făgăraș fit into the Cistercian ideal? As discussed in recent studies, many of the Cistercian monasteries on the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary were located in already populated areas and close to commercial routes.³³ In this

³⁰ For details see the works of Drăguț and Entz.

³¹ For a good example, see: Glyn Coppack, *Fountains Abbey: the Cistercians in Northern England* (Stroud: Tempus, 2006).

³² For additional detailed discussion and comparison of the Cistercian ideal and reality, see: Louis Julius Lékai, *The Cistercians: Ideals and Reality* (Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 1977); Kaspar Elm (ed.), *Die Zisterzienser. Ordensleben zwischen Ideal und Wirklichkeit* (Köln: Wienand Verlag, 1982).

³³ Beatrix Romhányi, ‘The role of the Cistercians in medieval Hungary: Political activity or internal colonization?’, *Annual of Medieval Studies* 1 (1994): 188.

respect Cârța was not a typical foundation. From the point of view of site selection, the area resembled rather closely the Cistercian ideal, as it was located away from big towns in the valley of the River Olt, fed by a couple of streams that supplied the monastery with water and surrounded by extensive forests and fairly rich agricultural land. The first to settle in this area were the Saxon *hospites* invited by King Géza II. When the Cistercians arrived in the beginning of the thirteenth century, one of their main estates, mentioned in a charter from 1223 was already taken *de Blaccis* indicating a somewhat populated area. Written documents do not indicate early settlements. Only two villages of the monastery were situated in the close vicinity but probably developed at a later stage since they were mentioned for the first time by a charter from 1322: the one that appeared around the buildings of the abbey (today: Cârța, Kerc) and Cârțișoara (Oberkerz, Kercisóra). Other estates appeared later and were scattered around but fairly close to the monastery and Saxon settlements as observed in the literature.³⁴ Following this observation, Beatrix Romhányi hypothesized that there must have been a close connection between the Saxon communities and the Cistercians, probably based on economic activity. Until further excavations this role of the Cistercians, taking part in the economic life of the region can remain only at the level of hypothesis. Even if this was suitable land for a Cistercian foundation, the question remains why the monks chose to go so far, to the eastern boundaries of the Hungarian Kingdom? Cârța lies at a distance of almost 360 km (295 km in a straight line) from its mother house Igrış, not to mention Pontigny, and thus was the easternmost Cistercian monastery in all of Europe. The complaints of the general chapter show the many problems the abbot from Cârța faced when he wished to attend the annual meeting of the chapter. Finally, in 1214 he was allowed to attend less frequently, that is, only every fourth year and then, in 1237, every five years.³⁵ What could have been the motivation for founding a Cistercian monastery so far away from other houses and from the center? Sources indicate that Cârța was a third generation Cistercian monastery. Igrış and Cârța were the only monasteries of the Pontigny line in the medieval kingdom of Hungary. Why were Igrış and then Cârța founded through the Pontigny line? The decision seems to be somewhat inconsistent with the general line of Cistercian foundations in the Hungarian kingdom. Scholars agree that each genealogical line shows evidence of distinct regional priorities, so in the case of Pontigny it has been observed that it

³⁴ Romhányi, 'The role of the Cistercians', pp. 189-190. The data on the lands and possessions of Cârța will be dealt with in a separate study.

³⁵ Kristóf Keglevich, 'A ciszterci nagykaptalan és a magyar apátságok a középkorban' [The Cistercian General Chapter and the Hungarian Abbeys in the Middle Ages], *Magyar Egyháztörténeti Vázlatok*, 1-2 (2008): 22.

expanded mainly towards the west and southwest of Europe, in north-central France, in Burgundy and then mainly in south-central Spain as well as establishing two monasteries in Italy.³⁶ What one finds in Transylvania seems to be a later chronological development that displays an expansion of the Pontigny filiation system in a very different direction, into the main expansion territory of the Morimond line.³⁷ Could this decision have been determined by the papacy, the king, or was it the choice of the order? Was it influenced by dynastic marriages or political aspirations? These questions cannot be answered in this stage of research but what one can hypothesize is that Cârța was probably consciously and strategically placed in that particular region. Explanations include the colonization of a sparsely populated land, perhaps even missionary activity towards the pagan Cumans and heretics (probably the Orthodox population). Another possibility would be the wish to give an economic boost or generate progress to the region beside the Saxons of Sibiu as the Cistercians are usually associated with technological diffusion, agriculture, economic exchange, hydraulic engineering and metallurgy.³⁸ Research has shown that exceptions and individual cases always existed, just as in the case of Bordesley abbey in England, where excavations showed that the abbey was involved in metalworking (ironworking, copper alloy working, lead-working) with a significant number of mills using waterpower with traces of a medieval smithy as well.³⁹ Other industries were carried out as well within the precinct of Bordesley, such as textile-, leather- and woodworking.⁴⁰ It is known that Cistercians were employed in the colonization of some of the border regions in Europe, for example in Spain, on the Ebro frontier⁴¹ or in the Elbe River area⁴² but they are not well known for their missionary

³⁶ Frédéric van der Meer, *Atlas De L'ordre Cistercien* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1965), maps: V, IX and tables: I, VI; Parker Snyder, 'A Network Analysis - Spatial and Temporal Patterns of the Cistercian Reform from 1098-1400', *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 15 (2009): 43-63.

³⁷ The main monastery of the Cistercians was at Cîteaux from which other great monasteries were founded (Clairvaux, Pontigny, Morimond, La Ferté), that also became motherhouses founding a number of monasteries all over Europe. Thus, these four monasteries established their own lines of foundations.

³⁸ Constance B. Bouchard, *Holy Entrepreneurs: Cistercians, Knights, and Economic Exchange in Twelfth-Century Burgundy* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991).

³⁹ Grenville Astill, *A Medieval Industrial Complex and its Landscape: the metalworking watermills and workshops of Bordesley Abbey* (York: Council for British Archaeology, 1993), pp. 246-290.

⁴⁰ Astill, *A medieval Industrial Complex*, pp. 291-311.

⁴¹ Clay Stalls, *Possesing the Land: Aragon's Expansion into Islam's Ebro Frontier under Alfonso the Battler 1104-1134* (New York: E. J. Brill, 1995), pp. 224-278.

⁴² Wolfgang Ribbe, 'Zur Ordenspolitik der Askaniern. Zisterzienser und Landesherrschaft im Elbe-Oder-Raum', *Zisterzienser Studien*, I (1975): 77-96.

activity (only in Scandinavia).⁴³ The question of the economic interests of the Cistercians in the Hungarian Kingdom was already raised and discussed to a certain extent by Beatrix Romhányi. The author concluded that Cârța was placed in a region with valuable woodland but also lay on one of the major commercial routes connecting Transylvania to the Balkans. Two market towns of later development could also be identified in its proximity (at Tâlmăciu/ Talmesch/ Nagytalmács and Sâmbăta de Sus/ Obermühlendorf/ Felsőszombatfalva) as well as a major Saxon economic center at Sibiu. As mentioned above, all these observations lead the author to assume a kind of connection between the Cistercians and the Saxon community, and their participation in long-distance trade.⁴⁴ To shed light on the reasons that could have motivated the foundation of this monastery in this region future research has to extend its perspective on analyzing the landscape, the network of estates and their use, to pursue further excavations and to look at the larger picture of Cistercian expansion with the monasteries in their own local contexts and relationship with surrounding communities.

Regarding architecture, it can easily be observed that most publications on Cârța used the ideal Cistercian ground plan of monasteries to illustrate the monastery's reconstruction. The reconstructions show a rectangular plan with the church, sacristy, chapels, cloister, chapter-house, refectory, kitchen, dormitory, and the lay-brothers' range, which was usually placed on the western part of the monastery. Although the archaeological excavations from 1981-1985 clarified that the western wing of the monastery never existed but only one wall replaced it, researchers did not emphasize this fact and most failed to mention it at all. However, the absence of the western wing indicates an important and unusual characteristic of Cârța, the absence of lay-brothers (*conversi*), which is a general phenomenon and can be found throughout the medieval Hungarian Kingdom. This represents a change in Cistercian life, which occurred from the beginning of the thirteenth century, especially as they expanded towards the east. This change included losing many of their

⁴³ There also exists a strong conviction that the Cistercians at Cârța had only missionary roles in the region and could be founded solely by the papacy, and thus fulfilled the order's missionary "project" towards the east. Although some of the ideas expressed in this work seem convincing I feel that the interpretations offered by the authors remain limited and based on selected primary sources and secondary literature neglecting certain sources, and offer a one-sided view. See more about this hypothesis, in: Șerban Turcuș – Veronica Turcuș, *Ordinul Cistercian. Artă și instituții cisterciene în Transilvania medievală* [The Cistercian Order: Art and Cistercian Institutions in Medieval Transylvania] (București: România Press, 2003), pp. 252-288.

⁴⁴ Romhányi, 'The role of the Cistercians', pp. 180-204; Keglevich, 'A ciszterci nagykáptalan', pp. 35-36.

characteristics and the softening of ideals. A number of Cistercian monasteries in the Hungarian Kingdom lacked lay brothers or granges with only very few exceptions.⁴⁵ In 1203, permission was granted by the general chapter to monasteries from the Hungarian province to employ servants, because there were no lay-brothers.⁴⁶ Explanations for this phenomenon include the decreasing number of people who wanted to join the order and, already in the beginning of the thirteenth century, the rise of the mendicant orders. Lay-brothers played an essential role in the daily labour of a monastery, mainly doing the bulk of the physical work usually working on granges. Thus, the absence of lay brothers had an impact on the estate structure and management, and types of possessions held by the order, as well as on the income from different sources. Others emphasize the missionary activity of the monastery in a region, where only Orthodox population existed and the number of German population was still very low with the close presence of the Cumans just on the other side of the mountains.⁴⁷ These questions in the case of Cârța still remain largely open and need to be analysed from a multi-disciplinary approach and with focus on a greater variety of sources, such as landscape, surrounding environment as well as new archaeological research, study of estate structure and the relationship of the monastery with surrounding communities.

Conclusions

Although the monastery of Cârța enjoyed extensive attention and detailed studies, it still offers a rich subject for research, especially for those who come from different backgrounds with new methodologies. Taking into account the abundance of new approaches and methods of research, the history of this Cistercian monastery can be supplemented with additional data. The purpose of this article was to offer new insights into arising problems and discussions appearing in the latest literature. The monastery must be placed in the complex history of a multi-cultural and multi-confessional region, the southern part of Transylvania. Although Transylvania was rarely analyzed as a border region from the point of view of economy, religion and culture, it is now time to extend our views in this perspective in more detail.⁴⁸ Thus, the issue of border regions in the case of

⁴⁵ Szentgotthárd, Topusko. See: László Ferenczi, 'Estate structure and development of the Topusko (Toplica) Abbey: a case study of a Medieval Cistercian Monastery', *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU*, 12 (2006): 83-99.

⁴⁶ Romhányi, 'The role of the Cistercians', p. 199;

⁴⁷ Turcuș, *Ordinul Cistercian*, p. 272, footnote 460.

⁴⁸ For a more comprehensive work, see: Marian Țiplic, *Die Grenzverteidigung*

the medieval Kingdom of Hungary would need a much more detailed discussion concerning the role of monastic orders.⁴⁹ What written sources indicate is that the monastery of Cârța was probably founded and supported extensively by the kings of medieval Hungary but the role of the papacy and the internal politics of the order also played an essential role, although the primary function of the monastery still remains unclear.⁵⁰ The appearance of the Cistercians in this region in the beginning of the thirteenth century indicates there was strong royal support without which such a foundation could hardly take place, especially through a direct filiation from Pontigny through Igrış. In comparison to the other communities that appeared in this period in Transylvania and received large land holdings (such as the Saxon community or the Teutonic knights), the Cistercians received smaller and scattered pieces of land, and mainly the income of villages. This can be linked to the lack of *conversus* brothers while the types of possessions testify also to a change in the ideal Cistercian way of life and accommodation to local circumstances. Even if the exact foundation date and founder cannot be specified, the fact that the monastery received increasing numbers of privileges and donations from the Hungarian kings up until the point when they had the same rights as the Saxons from Sibiu shows that they were strategically placed in that region for manifold purposes that still remain unknown.⁵¹

Siebenbürgens im Mittelalter (10.-14. Jahrhundert) (Heidelberg: Arbeitskreis für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde, 2007).

⁴⁹ A detailed discussion on issues concerning the border regions of the Hungarian Kingdom can be found in: Nora Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁵⁰ One charter from 1418 issued by Sigismund I of Hungary (1387-1437) mentions that the monastery was founded, built and endowed with privileges and other rights by his royal predecessors. See: DF (Diplomatikai Fényképgyűjtemény) 244670 in the Hungarian National Archives' online catalogue. Another, from 1474 issued by king Matthias (1458-1490) in which he dissolved the monastery "*ex auctoritate juris patronatus regii*" indicates that the monastery was under the patronage of the king. See, in: *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen* (ed. Gustav Gündisch, Herta Gündisch, Konrad G. Gündisch, and Gernot Nüssbacher) (Bukarest: Verlag der Akademie der Sozialistischen Republik Rumäniens, 1991), VII (1474-1486), pp. 5-6, nr. 3986.

⁵¹ The monastery received the privileges from Charles I (1310-1342), the charter containing these was issued in 1322. In this way the monastery's connection to Sibiu became tighter but in the same time it received a more independent status. See the text in: Zsigmond Jakó (ed.), *Erdélyi Okmánytár II (1301-1339)* [Transylvanian Documentary Records] (Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár, 2004), pp. 165-166, nr. 420.

Lay and Ecclesiastic in the Heraldic Representation on the Matthias Loggia in Hunedoara Castle*

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Abstract: The Heraldic Wall is a unique pictorial source from the mid fifteenth century preserved in the Castle of Hunedoara until the beginning of the twentieth century. It consisted of fourteen coats of arms that can be attributed to the most influential laic and ecclesiastic officeholders of the Hungarian Kingdom. These arms serve as a particular historical source to understand the political context John Hunyadi was involved in. The present essay offers important clues about the identity of its owners and about the historical context the Heraldic Wall was commissioned in. It also tries to reconstruct the original design and tinctures of the arms, since the original wall painting no longer exists.

Keywords: Hunedoara Castle, wall painting, coat of arm, John Hunyadi, Wladislaw I Jagiello

Rezumat: Laic și ecleziastic în reprezentările heraldice din loggia lui Matia (Castelul din Hunedoara). Peretele heraldic al castelului de la Hunedoara este o sursă vizuală istorică realizată la mijlocul secolului al XV-lea și păstrată până la începutul secolului al XX-lea. Seria blazoanelor era compusă din patrusprezece scuturi heraldice ale celor mai influenți fruntași laici și ecleziastici ai Regatului Ungar. Aceste blazoane sunt surse unice în felul lor pentru înțelegerea contextului politic în care Ioan de Hunedoara a activat. În acest articol am încercat să ofer noi detalii asupra identificării blazoanelor și asupra contextului istoric în care pictura murală a fost realizată. De asemenea am încercat reconstituirea grafică a însemnelor heraldice și a cromatiei având în vedere că pictura a fost distrusă la începutul secolului al XX-lea.

Cuvinte cheie: castelul de la Hunedoara, pictură murală, blazon, Ioan de Hunedoara, Vladislav I Jagello.

The castle of Hunedoara is one of the most spectacular aristocratic residences of the Middle Ages. It was built in the mid-fifteenth century by John Hunyadi, an influential member of the Hungarian aristocracy. Among its particular features is a mural painting depicting fourteen coats of arms covering the wall of the so-called Matthias Loggia. This Heraldic Wall is a

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remarkable testimony of Hunyadi's aristocratic display, and gives an insight into the political life of the social elite of the Hungarian Kingdom.

Discovery and destruction

The mural paintings of the Matthias Loggia were discovered by Lajos Arányi just before 1867. He visited the castle several times, and made the first attempt to write an exhaustive monograph on the history of the castle.¹ He uncovered only some fragments of the frescoes, the rest being revealed during the restoration of the castle starting in November 1868. The murals were completely uncovered by the spring of the following year, when Ferenc Schulcz, the architect-restorer of the castle, called for Ferenc Storno to make a copy of the frescoes. Storno stayed at Hunedoara between November 18 and 28, and made several sketches and a watercolour copy of these paintings.² Although they are not very accurate, these drawings preserve many details, which were lost during the following decades.

The idea of removing the Heraldic Wall was contemplated for the first time in 1871.³ This was necessary in order to strengthen the wall which supported it. At that time nobody assumed the responsibility for the removal, and the problem was not settled until the beginning of the twentieth century. Finally, in 1902 the Hungarian National Committee for Historic Monuments decided to remove the frescoes.⁴ In this context the photographer László Hollenzer made a photo documentation of the mural paintings. Although these are black and white pictures they are the most reliable sources of the frescoes.⁵ On the other side, István Gróh made some new detailed drawings before the murals were completely removed. These representations are much more reliable than those of Ferenc Storno, but

¹ Lajos Arányi, *Vajda-Hunyad vára. 1452. 1681. 1866. Szóban és Képben* [The Castle of Hunedoara. 1452. 1681. 1866. In Words and Pictures] (Pozsony: Arányi Lajos, 1867).

² Storno's account on his trip in Transylvania: *Archaeológiai Értesítő*, 2 (1870): 2. His diary is preserved in the Museum of Sopron. The sketches are kept in the Museum of Hunedoara, and the final watercolour work was published by István Möller, *A vajda-hunyadi vár építési korai* [The Construction Periods of the Hunedoara Castle] (Budapest: Franklin, 1913). Plate VIII/2.

³ *Archaeológiai Értesítő*, 5 (1871): 21.

⁴ Gyula Forster (ed.): *Magyarország műemlékei* [The Monuments of Hungary] (Budapest: Hornyánszky Viktor császári és királyi udvari nyomdája, 1905), vol. 1, p. 165.

⁵ Ibolya Plank (ed.), *Hollenzer László (1870-?) műemléki fotográfus emlékkiállítás* [Exhibition of László Hollenzer (1870-?) Photographer of Historical Monuments] (Budapest: Országos Műemléki Felügyelőség, 1990). Some of the photos were published by István Möller and Jolán Balogh. See Möller, *A vajda-hunyadi vár*, Plate VII/2; Jolán Balogh, *A művészet Mátyás király udvarában* [The Art in the Court of King Matthias] (2 vols, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1966), vol. 2, Fig. 456-458.

their coloured surface later became slightly faded, and many details have disappeared.⁶ After the frescoes were documented István Möller removed them, the plaster being deposited for a later restoration.⁷ This never happened, and later the majority of the plaster fragments were lost or accidentally destroyed.

Description

The mural paintings representing the coats of arms decorated the north wall of the upper floor of the so-called "Matthias Loggia". This Heraldic Wall consisted of two registers. The upper part was a row of fourteen armorial bearings, the lower was made up of a bushy vegetal ornamentation. Starting from left to right the following blazons were depicted:

1. King Wladislaw I Jagiello

Quarterly. 1st field gules, eagle displayed Argent, armed, beaked and crowned Or (for Poland); 2nd field barry of eight, Argent and gules (for Hungary); 3rd field gules, double cross Argent on three hills vert (for Hungary); 4th field gules, an armoured knight armed, mounted on a horse salient, holding in his dexter hand a sword above his head Argent. A shield Azure hangs on the sinister shoulder of the knight, charged with a double cross Or. The horse saddles, straps, and belts Azure (for Lithuania).

2. Hédervári family

Paly of six, gules and Argent.

3. Garai family

Azure, a serpent glissant, crowned Or, who appears to have an orb with cross in his mouth Or.

4. Újlaki family

Party per fess. Chief Azure, a fess gules. Base gules. Overall an Angel Azure, naissant from a crown Or, winged, crowned Or.

5. Csáki family

Azure, a man's half-length-portrait, haired and bearded Or, calpac and overcoat Azure.

6. Losonci family

⁶ Radu Lupescu, 'Vajdahunyad Castle' (see the Watercolour copies of the coats of arms on the "Matthias Loggia"), in Péter Farbaky et al (eds), *Matthias Corvinus, the King. Tradition and Renewal in the Hungarian Royal Court 1458-1490*. Exhibition catalogue (Budapest: Budapest Történeti Múzeum, 2008), pp. 186-187.

⁷ Möller, *A vajda-hunyadi vár*, p. 20.

Gules, a griffin segreant sable, winged Or.

7. Rozgonyi family

Azure, a cygnet displayed Or, naissant from a crown Or.

8. Alsólendvai family

Azure, an ox's head caboshed Or.

9. Unknown

10. Hunyadi family

Azure, a raven (corbie) displayed proper (sable) naissant from a crown Or, a ring in his beak Or.

11. Dénes Szécsi

Gules, two-headed eagle, crowned Or. Above the arms a scarlet cardinal's hat having cords and tassels pendent on either side gules.

12. Unknown

13. András Kálnói

Azure, Latin cross Or, three fleur-de-lis Or, two mullets of six points Or.

14. Mátyás Gatalóci

Gules, three horseshoes Argent.

It is noteworthy that the armorial shields are not the same size, and they even belong to two different types without any particular rule. Three of them have a shield with a rounded bottom (half-round shield), the rest are triangular shields. The coats of arms are surrounded by quatrefoil frames painted to give the impression of a relief. Only the coat of arms of the Hunyadis has a particular frame called a barbed quatrefoil. From the frame two wavy ribbons project with a text in Gothic minuscule. Only some fragments of the original text could be deciphered. In 1869 on the ribbon to the right the following probable text was read: *timidi exunde... teneat... vel... orare...* The interior surface of the foils was covered with vegetal motifs.⁸

The wall below the coats of arms was richly decorated with bushy traceries on a reddish background. The arms and the decoration below are not organized in two different registers lending thus homogeneity to the composition. Before the nineteenth century, these paintings were heavily mutilated by cutting three doors into the wall, and only two scenes have survived. To the right a wild man was painted holding a spear and riding a four-legged wild animal. Both of them were covered with fur and were

⁸ *Archaeológiai Értesítő*, 1 (1869): 254.

represented on a natural scale. The tracery originates from the spear of the wild man and from the animal's tail. To the left the traces of a large bird and an archer could be identified. In this part of the wall the design of the tracery was slightly different, which means that the mural paintings below the coats of arms consisted of two different scenes divided in the range of the Hunyadi arms. The bottom line of the murals was not preserved at all.

Identification

Attempts to identify the coats of arms have been made since these mural paintings were discovered in 1869. In that year, Ferenc Storno made some drawings of the paintings, and he noted in his sketchbook the name of some of the owners.⁹ He identified only seven out of the fourteen arms correctly: Hédervári, Garai, Csáki, Rozgonyi, Bánfi, Hunyadi, Szécsi. These drawings were used by István Möller in his monograph on Hunedoara castle and he identified one further coat of arms (Losonci).¹⁰ In the same year as Möller published his research, a heraldist, József Csoma, published a book on the main epochs of Hungarian heraldry.¹¹ He dealt with the blazons of the Matthias Loggia and made some interesting remarks. He called attention to the first arms which was attributed by him to King Wladislaw I, and thus he offered a clue to the dating of these paintings. Moreover, he made progress by attributing the fourth blazon to the Újlaki instead of the Forgács family. However, he made an inexplicable mistake by attributing the tenth blazon to the Kompolti family, although it was quite clear from the beginning that it belonged to the Hunyadis. Later, Jolán Balogh, in her treatise on Hungarian Renaissance art, repeated the results Csoma had achieved, but had reservations in some respects. Since she considered the Matthias Loggia a Renaissance work, and dated it to the 1470s or 1480s, the coat of arms of Wladislaw I did not fit in with her interpretation. Probably this is the reason why she never accepted the blazon as belonging to the Jagiellonian king. She could only admit that it was a retrospective coat of arms. It is also very strange that in the case of the fourth blazon she reverted to the Forgács attribution.¹²

Recently, important discoveries have been made and it seems that the identification of the coats of arms is now complete. I started my work

⁹ Sketchbook in the Museum of Sopron, Hungary. Storno-legacy.

¹⁰ Möller, *A vajda-hunyadi vár*, pp. 19–20.

¹¹ József Csoma, *A magyar heraldika korszakai* [The Periods of the Hungarian Heraldry] (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1913), p. 42.

¹² Jolán Balogh, *Az erdélyi renaissance* [The Transylvanian Renaissance] (1 vol., Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Tudományos Intézet, 1943), vol. 1, pp. 295–296.

based not on the drawings made by Ferenc Storno and István Gróh, but on the photos taken in 1908.¹³ In the case of the first blazon, although it is quite difficult to observe, the first field of the quartered shield depicts the eagle of Poland. This means that the attribution of Csoma was correct. The answer to the question as to whether it was accomplished in the early or late Jagiellonian period, is given by the rest of the arms. Another important discovery is related to the blazon of the Szécsi family. Storno and Gróh have never noticed that above the shield there is a cardinal's hat with cords and tassels. This detail points clearly to Dénes Szécsi, the Archbishop of Esztergom, who was also a cardinal, and who died in 1465. Meanwhile Pál Lővei has identified two further coats of arms.¹⁴ They were heavily damaged, and thus offered only some minor clues. He attributed the thirteenth arms to András Kálnói, Bishop of Pécs, and the last one to Mátyás Gatalóci, Bishop of Veszprém. Only two coats of arms remained unidentified. Their state of conservation was very poor already when they were discovered in the nineteenth century, and nobody could identify them.

The following table summarizes the main attribution issues:

	Storno 1868	Möller 1913	Csoma 1913	Balogh 1943	Lupescu/Lővei
1	Szilágyi	Országos	I. Ulászló	Országcímer	I. Ulászló
2	Hédervári	Hédervári	Hédervári	Hédervári	Hédervári
3	Bethlen/Garai	Garai	Garai	Garai	Garai
4	Forgács	Forgács	Újlaki	Forgács	Újlaki
5	Csáki	Csáki	Csáki	Csáki	Csáki
6	?	Losonci	Losonci	Losonci	Losonci
7	Rozgonyi	?	Rozgonyi	Rozgonyi	Rozgonyi
8	Bánfi	Alsólendvai Bánfi	Alsólendvai Bánfi	Alsólendvai Bánfi	Alsólendvai Bánfi
9	?	?	?	Kompolti*	?
10	Hunyadi	Hunyadi	Kompolti	Hunyadi	Hunyadi
11	Szécsi	Szécsi	Szécsi	Szécsi	Szécsi
12	?	?			?
13	?	?	Bebek?	Bebek?	Kálnói
14	?	?			Gatalóci

¹³ Radu Lupescu, *Vajdahunyad vára a Hunyadiak korában* [The Castle of Hunedoara in the Age of the Hunyadis']. PhD Dissertation, Manuscript, Department of Art History, Eötvös Loránd University. Budapest, 2006.

¹⁴ Lupescu Radu "Vajdahunyad vára a Hunyadiak korában" című doktori (PhD) értekezésének vitája' [Radu Lupescu, The Castle of Hunedoara in the Age of the Hunyadis. PhD debate], *Művészettörténeti Értesítő*, 57.1 (2008): 167–176.

Interpretation

The arms displayed on the Heraldic Wall of the Matthias Loggia can be attributed not only to some families of the Hungarian aristocracy, but there is a strong chance of identifying the particular individuals the arms referred to.

As I remarked above, the first blazon can be attributed to a Jagiellonian ruler. The shield contains the charges for Hungary and Poland, and it is very likely that in the fourth field the mounted knight for Lithuania was displayed. Considering some other arms of the Heraldic Wall, King Wladislaw I of Hungary (1440-1444) seems to be the owner of the first blazon.

The second coat of arms refers to the Hédervári family. In the mid-fifteenth century this family provided some very influential and important officeholders, such as Imre Hédervári, Ban of Macsó (Mačva), László Hédervári Bishop of Eger, but first and foremost Lőrinc Hédervári (†1447) Palatine of Hungary (1437-1447).¹⁵ Being placed right next to the coat of arms of the king, it is very likely that it refers to the palatine of Hungary.

The owner of the third coat of arms was the Garai family. At that time the head of the family was László Garai (†1459), who held some very important positions, but beyond these offices he represented one of the most influential families of Hungary, his ancestors being Palatines of Hungary for a long period. He was Ban of Macsó (1431-1441, 1445-1447), and Palatine of Hungary (1447-1458). László was one of the leading figures of the party opposing John Hunyadi.

The fourth blazon belongs to the Újlaki family. It was represented by Miklós Újlaki († 1477) who had a career strongly connected with that of John Hunyadi. They were appointed together Ban of Szörény (Severin), chief captain of Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade), Voivode of Transylvania and Count of the Székelys. Beside these offices, he was Ban of Macsó for a long period (1438-1458) and count of several counties of Hungary.

The next blazon places the Csáki family in the fifth position. Its members held some important offices during the reign of King Sigismund. In the next period only Ferenc Csáki († about 1470) managed to be appointed Count of the Székelys (1439-1440, 1446-1448) and count of some other counties. Ferenc was a trusted man of John Hunyadi, who joined the governor in his campaign to Kosovo in 1448.

The sixth coat of arms belongs to the Losoncis, the wealthiest family in Transylvania. During the civil war in 1440-1441 they sided with the Habsburgs, and after their defeat the Losoncis were neglected by the Jagiellonian royal court. Until 1441 Dezső Losonci was the Voivode of

¹⁵ Offices are specified based on the archaeontology made by Pál Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301-1457* [The Lay Archaeontology of Hungary, 1301-1457] (2 vols, Budapest: História - MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1996).

Transylvania, an office granted in the same year by Wladislaw I to John Hunyadi and Miklós Újlaki. In the mid-1440s the conflict between John Hunyadi and the Losoncis appears to have been settled. The nephew of Dezső Losonci, Benedek, joined the army of John Hunyadi in 1448, and died at the Battle of Kosovo.

The owner of the seventh coat of arms was the Rozgonyi family. Many of its members held important offices. Among them Simon Rozgonyi was Bishop of Eger (1440-1444) and his brother, György († about 1457) Judge royal (1441-1446). Because on this side of the Heraldic Wall are placed the coats of arms of the lay main office holders, it is very likely that this blazon refers to György Rozgonyi, the Judge royal of Hungary.

It is interesting to observe the presence of the armory of the Bánfi of Alsólendva family in the eighth position. They held no important offices in the first half of the fifteenth century. In the middle of that century the family was represented by two brothers, István and Pál. Both of them were regarded as members of the social elite of Hungary, although they were not officeholders at that time. István Bánfi of Alsólendva died at the Battle of Kosovo in 1448.

The next blazon cannot be deciphered. The tenth coat of arms refers to the owner of the castle, namely the Hunyadi family, more precisely to John Hunyadi. He, besides some other important offices, was Voivode of Transylvania (1440-1446) and after that Governor of Hungary (1446-1453).

Regarding the eleventh coat of arms there was no doubt even from the nineteenth century that it belonged to the Szécsi family. However, only recent research has discovered the cardinal's hat above the heraldic shield, which offers a distinct clue to the person the blazon refers to. It is the blazon of Cardinal Dénes Szécsi (†1465) Archbishop of Esztergom (1440-1465).

The next coat of arms preserves no traces of its charges and cannot be attributed. The last two coats of arms belong to some less important families of the Hungarian nobility. Their members achieved this position thanks to their ecclesiastical careers. Thus the thirteenth blazon can be attributed to András Kálnói, bishop of Pécs (1445-1455), and the last one to Mátyás Gatalóci, Bishop of Veszprém (1440-1457).

Only two shields remain unidentified. No traces have been preserved of their original charges. The first shield was part of the group relating to lay men, and could be attributed to the following families: Tallóci, Pálócia, Gúti Ország. The owner of the second shield was a priest of a higher rank, probably the archbishop of Kalocsa, Johannes Buondelmonte.

Taking into account all the above mentioned possibilities, I presume that the coats of arms of the following dignitaries of Hungary are present on the Heraldic Wall:

1. Wladislaw I Jagiello, King of Poland and Hungary (1440-1444)
2. Lőrinc Hédervári, Palatine of Hungary (1437-1447)
3. László Garai, Ban of Macsó (1445-1447)
4. Miklós Újlaki, Voivode of Transylvania (1441-1458)
5. Ferenc Csáki, Count of the Székelys (1446-1448)
6. Losonci family
7. György Rozgonyi, Judge royal (1441-1446)
8. Bánfi of Alsólendva family
9. ?
10. John Hunyadi, Voivode of Transylvania (1441-1446)
11. Dénes Szécsi, Cardinal and Archbishop of Esztergom (1440-1465)
12. ?
13. András Kálnói, Bishop of Pécs (1445-1455)
14. Mátyás Gatalóci, Bishop of Veszprém (1440-1457)

Considering the time interval specified for these officeholders the Heraldic Wall was painted very likely in 1445, or in 1446 at the latest. In this context, especially the career of András Kálnói is a determining factor, being appointed bishop of Pécs in 1445. It was the year when the return of King Wladislaw I was still awaited after the severe defeat of the Christian army at the Battle of Varna. The deadline for return was set by the Hungarian Diet for the end of May 1445.

However, there are some clues for a slightly later dating too. The presence of the armories of the Hungarian barons in the castle of a noble family seems to be very strange in the context of the aristocratic display of that time. There is no other evidence in this respect among the Hungarian nobility. John Hunyadi was Voivode of Transylvania, in charge only of a region of the kingdom. He had no authority over the whole of Hungary. This armorial programme fits better the next stage of his career, when he was elected Governor of Hungary in 1446. As governor, Hunyadi took over some elements of the royal display, and the heraldic presence of the barons in his castle is much more acceptable. This is the period when the position of the raven in his arms was slightly changed. Previously, it was displayed mainly from profile, but now appeared frontally resembling much more an eagle. In this case the presence of the Jagiellonian coat of arms on the Heraldic Wall can be regarded as a retrospective insertion in this heraldic programme, but even in this case the murals were painted no later than the mid-1440s.

Up to this time the Heraldic Wall has been dated to the period 1460-1480s, namely during the reign of King Matthias. This is the reason why,

based on the arms, the whole construction that housed these paintings, that is the loggia, was called the Matthias Loggia. Considering the new dating of the arms, it seems that this loggia-like architecture now has to be dated a little bit earlier, and is related to the king's father, John Hunyadi.

The relatively accurate identification of the armorial bearings allows us not only to date the fresco, but some important conclusions can be reached concerning the meaning and the logic of this heraldic composition.

In the context of the interpretation of the Heraldic Wall it is very important to establish whether the whole row of the blazons was preserved, or it has some missing parts. Since the row starts with the royal coat of arms, the beginning of it has no missing parts. The end of the row seems to be complete as well, because the frame of the last blazon is not adjoining a new one, but stops. Thus the fourteen coats of arms form a complete series, which is a rare record of medieval Hungarian heraldry.

The coats of arms were not placed randomly in the row of the Heraldic Wall but rather their position was carefully weighted. First of all, our attention is called to the blazon of John Hunyadi. It is larger than the rest of the arms and it has a more elaborate frame and ribbons with texts. It is noteworthy that the blazon was not placed either at the beginning of the row or in the middle of it. It was placed slightly to the right of the centre, probably just above the entrance to the main chamber of the first floor. Apart from this blazon, the row of the coats of arms has to be read from left to right. It starts with the arms of the king and continues with eight further arms until that of the Hunyadis. The common feature of these arms is that their owners are laymen, mostly principal officeholders, called barons in Hungary. The row continues on the right of the Hunyadi arms with the coats of arms of the prelates. It means that this heraldic programme is articulated by two main arms, that is the blazon of the king and of John Hunyadi. The rest of the arms make up two groups: the armories of the barons and of the prelates. Not all the families present in this programme were involved in the governance of the kingdom. The members of the Losonci and Bánfi of Alsólendva families held no offices at that time. But without doubt they were very influential. It is remarkable to note the presence of some of the most important political enemies of John Hunyadi, especially Ladislaus Garai. This demonstrates clearly that the heraldic programme was not based on the sympathies of John Hunyadi, but more likely on the political reality. Probably all of them were members of the Royal Council, although the council was made up of many more members.

In addition to the fact that the coats of arms of the loggia form a complete heraldic programme, the presence of the original tinctures also represents another important feature.

However, in this regard we face some difficulties, because at the time when the Heraldic Wall was pulled down, only black and white photos could be made. There are also the watercolour drawings, but their accuracy is not totally reliable. Nevertheless, in some cases this is the only documentary source from the Middle Ages concerning the original tinctures.

Analogies

Usually this kind of heraldic display was part of the royal representation, where the members of the royal court and other vassals were present with their coats of arms. A remarkable example of a Heraldic Wall was preserved in the so-called Wenceslaus Castle (Wenzelschloss) near Lauf an der Pegnitz, Germany.¹⁶ The castle was rebuilt by Emperor Charles IV in the mid- fourteenth century, and the Great Hall of the eastern wing was decorated with about 120 coats of arms. This is the largest heraldic programme preserved in an architectural context from the Middle Ages of a ruler who regularly involved heraldry in his imperial representation.

Almost at the same time, Pope Clement VI (+1352) continued with the construction of the Papal Palace in Avignon. The Wardrobe Tower became a central piece in the structure of the residence, which linked the old and the new palace. It housed the private rooms of the popes, among them the study, called the Stag Room. The frescoes of this room start with a heraldic frieze, and beneath them magnificent hunting and fishing scenes are depicted. It is noteworthy that the whole structure of the frescoes, coats of arms placed above some hunting scenes, and even the barbed quatrefoil frame of the arms resemble very much those from Hunedoara.¹⁷

Closely related to the heraldic frescoes of the Avignon Palace are those painted around 1400 in Runkelstein Castle (Castel Roncolo, Italy).¹⁸ The castle was rebuilt by the Vintler family shortly after they bought it in 1385. Among the lavishly decorated interiors our attention is called to the Sommer House and the western wing, especially the Wappenzimmer situated on the third floor. Here, beneath the ceiling, the same heraldic frieze goes around the hall, followed by some spectacular courtly scenes of dancers and hunters. The arms belong to the electors and other nobles of the

¹⁶ Ulrich Großmann – Daniel Burger – Hans-Heinrich Häffner (eds), *Burg Lauf a.d. Pegnitz. Ein Bauwerk Kaisers Karls IV.* /Wartburg-Gesellschaft zur Erforschung von Burgen und Schlössern e.V. Forschungen zu Burgen und Schlössern. Sonderband 2./ (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2006).

¹⁷ Dominique Vingtain, *Avignon, le palais des papes* (La Pierre-qui-Vire: Éd. Zodiaque, 1998).

¹⁸ André Bechtold (ed.), *Schloß Runkelstein – Die Bilderburg*. Ausstellungskatalog (Bozen: Athesia, 2000).

Holy Roman Empire. In this case, however the frame of the arms is slightly simpler.

After a further half-century this kind of interior design appeared in the castle of Hunedoara. Here we have a segment of heraldic frieze, and below it some hunting scenes can be deciphered. Starting from the prototypes of the fourteenth century the stylistic development can be clearly observed: in this case the row of the arms is not cut off from the scene below but they blend together. Furthermore, the hunting scene is not represented in a clear manner, but the fantasy-like hunter and the wild animals are hidden behind a bushy vegetal decoration, just like in the so-called Green Chambers (Grünstube). This kind of decoration was widely spread in the fifteenth century, and some further examples have survived from the Hungarian Middle Ages too.

Some scanty pieces of evidence demonstrate that the architecture of the Hungarian royal court had involved heraldry since the reign of King Louis I of Anjou (1342-1382). The new fashion spread very rapidly, and during the reign of King Sigismund very complex heraldic programmes appeared, similar to those on buildings commissioned by Emperor Charles IV, the father of the Hungarian King. We know from written evidence about the existence even of a Heraldic Tower erected in Buda Castle.¹⁹ Later it was pulled down, and there is no architectural evidence or detailed written records about the coats of arms that covered the façade of the building. After the death of King Sigismund, the architectural activity of the royal court declined, and this is the period when John Hunyadi, first as Voivode of Transylvania and, later as Governor of Hungary, commissioned important works, thus making the transfer to the age of King Matthias. Influenced by the aristocratic display of his father, but also by the courtly art of the Habsburgs, King Matthias used heraldry in an ostentatious way. Some very good examples have survived in Kosice Cathedral, where a large heraldic programme is present on the south-western tower and on the tabernacle of the cathedral. However, in these cases, around the royal arms are placed the arms of the historical territories he owned, and not the blazons of his noblemen. A more complex armorial programme was displayed on the decorative balcony of the Palace of Visegrád, built during the 1480s. Beside the arms of the royal couple and those of different territories, here were displayed the arms of the barons too. Even this late example has not survived, but was recovered from archaeological excavations.²⁰

¹⁹ Balogh, *A művészet Mátyás király udvarában*, p. 47.

²⁰ Gergely Buzás – Pál Lővei, *A visegrádi királyi palota északnyugati épülete és az utcai homlokzat zárt erkélye* [The North-Western Building of the Royal Palace of Visegrád and the Oriel of the main Façade] (Visegrád: Mátyás Király Múzeum, 2001), pp. 29–32.

The examples mentioned above clearly show the bad state of preservation of the Hungarian monuments, and it is hard to still find existing examples of larger heraldic programmes displayed in an architectural context. The recovery of all kinds of evidence is very important in this respect, and the main aim of the present article was to recover the Heraldic Wall of the Hunedoara Castle. This heraldic display linked the European tradition which started from the mid-fourteenth century and reached an apogee at the royal court of King Sigismund with the Late Medieval period of King Matthias. These arms are an important source for understanding the political ambitions of John Hunyadi, and the heraldic tradition in the Hungarian Kingdom, and help us to document the coats of arms of some families unknown from other sources.

1. The Castle of Hunedoara
2. The upper floor of the Matthias Loggia. The heraldic decoration covered the whole surface of the wall
3. The watercolour copy of the Heraldic Wall painted by Ferenc Storno in 1869
4. The coat of arms of King Wladislaw I Jagiello
5. The coat of arms of the Hédervári family
6. The coat of arms of the Garai family
7. The coat of arms of the Újlaki family
8. The coat of arms of the Csáki family
9. The coat of arms of the Losonci family
10. The coat of arms of the Rozgonyi family
11. The coat of arms of the Bánfi of Alsólendva family
12. The coat of arms of the Hunyadi family
13. The coat of arms of the Szécsi family
14. The coat of arms of András Kálnói
15. The coat of arms of Mátyás Gatalóci
16. The interior of the Stag Room with heraldic frieze. Papal Palace, Avignon, France
17. The "Wappenzimmer" of Runkelstein Castle (Castel Roncolo, Italy)



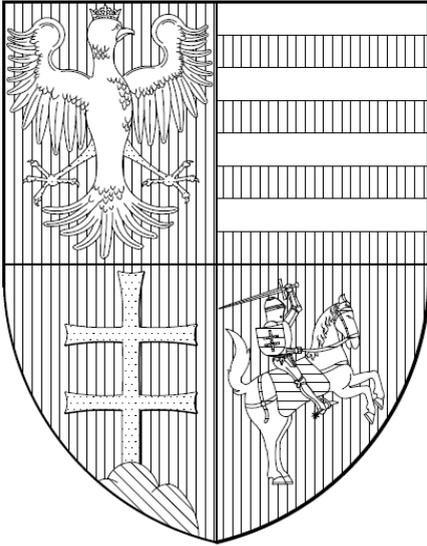
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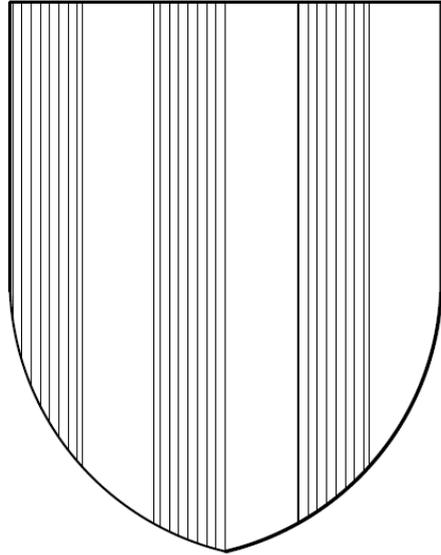


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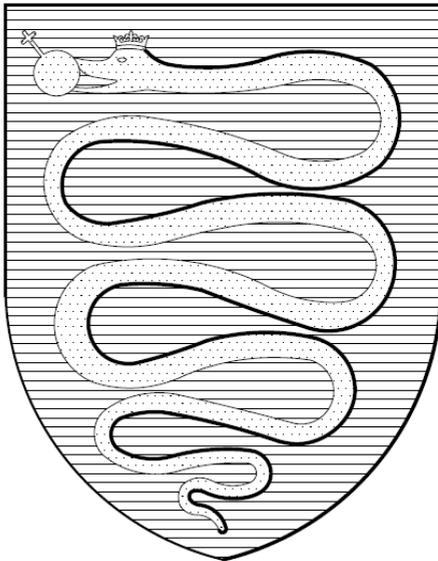




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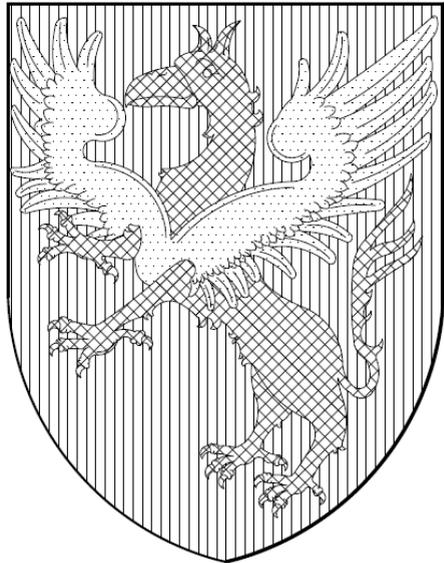
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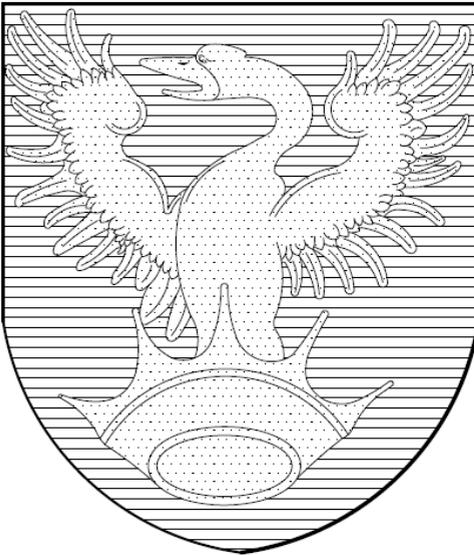
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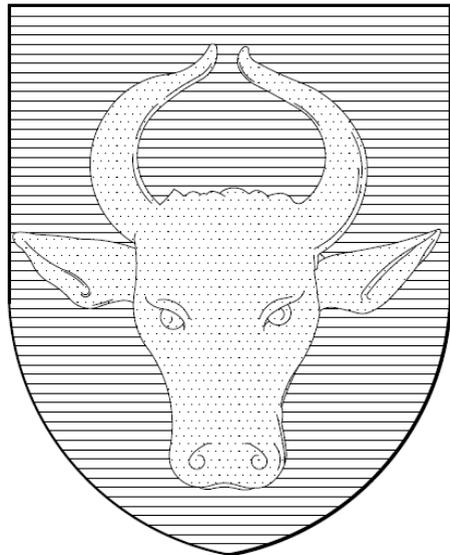
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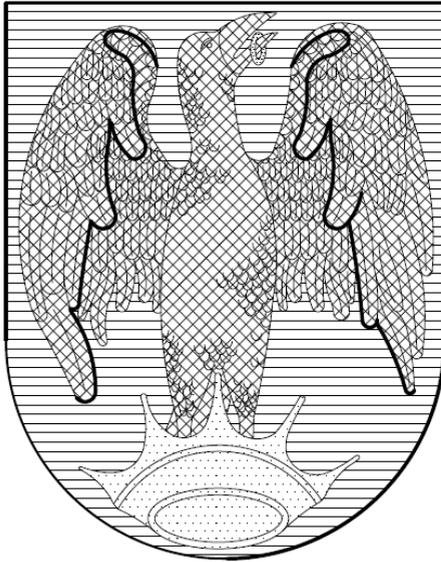
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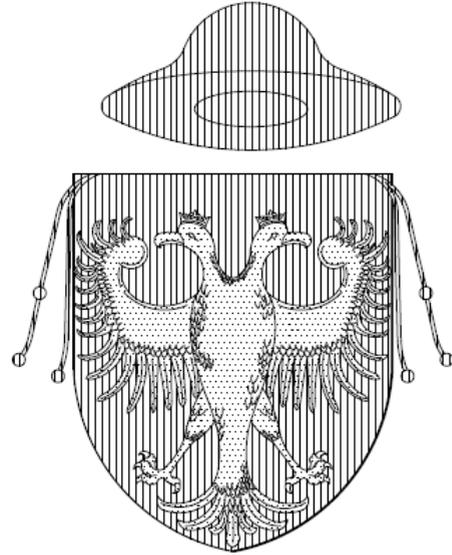
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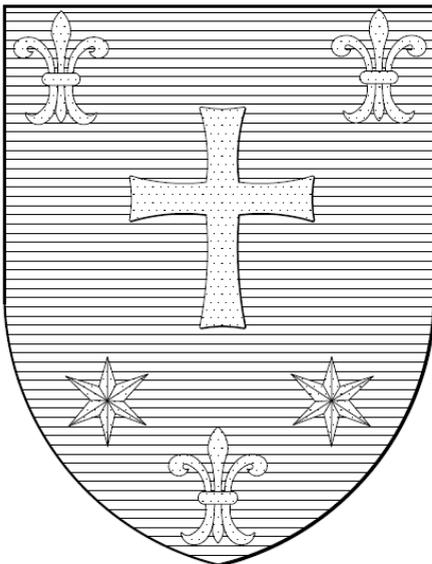
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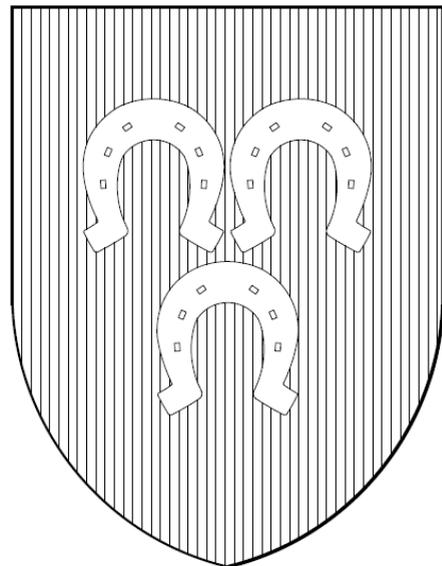
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The Self: Religious and Noble Identity in Late Medieval Transylvania

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Abstract: This analysis focuses on an early fifteenth century cycle of wall paintings from a small church in Transylvania. This belonged to a Hungarian family of nobles called Apafi. They were members of the lesser nobility meaning that they were not very rich but were well connected to elite members of the Hungarian kingdom. The goal of this article is to study a peculiar composition situated in the lower area of the sanctuary on each side of an image of Christ *Vir Dolorum*. This row of frescoes includes representations of saints as well as several characters that seem to be laymen. Although these figures do not conform to the established patterns of donor representation, they are comparable, at least in message, to self-representations occurring in family churches of members of the higher nobility of the land such as Jolsvai and Drugeth.

Key words: Transylvania, family church, *Vir Dolorum*, donors, representation of the self.

Rezumat: Sinele: identitate religioasă și identitate nobiliară în Transilvania medievală târzie. Această analiză este centrată asupra unui ciclu de picturi datate la începutul secolului al XV-lea. Ele apar într-o mică biserică din Transilvania care aparținea unei familii de nobili maghiari, Apafi. Aceștia erau membri ai nobilimii mici și nu foarte afluenți dar aveau legături puternice cu elita regatului maghiar. Scopul acestui articol este de a studia o compoziție mai neobișnuită situată în registrul inferior al sanctuarului de o parte și de alta a unei imagini a lui Iisus *Vir Dolorum*. Acest șir de fresce include reprezentări ale sfinților precum și mai multe personaje în aparență laice. Cu toate că aceste figuri nu se conformează unor modele bine stabilite în ceea ce privește reprezentarea donatorilor, ele sunt comparabile, cel puțin din punct de vedere al mesajului cu reprezentările de sine care apar în bisericile aulice ale marii nobilimi a regatului, familii cum ar fi Jolsvai și Drugeth.

Cuvinte cheie: biserică de familie, *Vir Dolorum*, donatori, reprezentări ale sinelui.

Scholars focusing on identity in the Middle Ages have argued that the medieval self was most of all a social self.¹ This was shaped by complex

¹ Since the 1980s there has been a lot of interest among historians to explore and define the sources revealing the self during the medieval, early modern and modern times. See for example: David L. Miller, *The Individual and the Social Self* (Chicago: University Press,

interactions with various communities and structures of power.² On the other hand, it has been demonstrated that individuals actively engaged the community in order to achieve their own social goals. They used the accepted conventions in order to assert their social selves. Therefore, the making of the self was not only a process of adaptation but also of interpretation of a world that was already established.³

Trying to refine the analysis on the nature of social agency, sociological, psychological and anthropological theories argue that the social self was and is culturally determined. Culture means in this case the totality of habits, customs and beliefs, including both spiritual and material aspects typical in a certain group or society, in a certain period of time. Therefore, as David Garry Shaw has demonstrated, in establishing the place of individuals in local hierarchies, besides studying the rules governing the group, clothing, handiworks and death arrangements should be taken into consideration. In the same category one may also consider the images. These may serve as indicators of the individual's capacity to use the material world to create, assert and perpetuate the social self.⁴ Shaw underlined that people tried to shape their social self in the public domain by acting in accordance with their private self and their self-interpretation. The social self was not a total innovation being created from inherited public beliefs. It was a continuous dialogue between "cultural representations, perceptions of its own life story, possibilities and the meanings offered by friends and social groups".⁵

Obviously, such theories were successfully applied in studying the self in the urban cultural space of Medieval England. In this case, sources are richer and the communities easier to identify, but what about the 'multicultural' regions like Medieval Hungary and Transylvania where the

1982); Richard C. Trexler, *Persons in Groups, Social Behaviour as Identity Formation in Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (Binghampton: Texts & Studies, 1985); Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Boundaries and the Sense of the Self in Sixteenth-Century France', in Thomas C. Heller - Moton Sosna - David E. Wellerby (eds.), *Reconstructing Individualism. Autonomy, Individuality and the Self in Western Thought* (Stanford: University Press, 1986), pp. 53-63; Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self. The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Susan Crane, *The Performance of the Self. Ritual, Clothing and Identity During the Hundred Years War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002); Derek G. Neal, *The Masculine Self in Late Medieval England* (Chicago, London: Chicago University Press, 2008).

² David Gary Shaw, *Necessary Conjunctions. The Social Self in Medieval England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 3.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

material and written evidence is quite scarce? Could the combination of documents, visual and material sources add more details to the reconstruction of the social self? And by placing the self in the center of the analysis could this kind of approach provide a more refined understanding of the values promoted by a specific social group on which particular persons depended or in which they aspired to achieve certain privileges and status?

The main focus of my study is a fragment of a fresco decoration from a medieval church in the small village Mălâncrav (Almakerék, Malmkrog) in Transylvania. This belonged to a Hungarian family of nobles called Apafi. Documents from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries show that several men of this family were connected to the royal court of Hungary. Therefore, examples of wall paintings preserved in family churches of similar social status in Medieval Hungary will serve as terms of comparison. This study aims to observe some practices of the nobility when decorating their family churches with special focus on donor "portraits" occurring in private religious contexts. Comparisons between images will emphasize innovations and differences that might prove to be individual choices of self-representation. These could help us reconstruct some visual strategies meant to assert the nobles' social self. Ultimately, this approach tries to refine our knowledge concerning the religious and noble self in the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary in the time of King Sigismund of Luxemburg and the "agents" of social influence and transformation, aiming to show "how different similar lives can be" as David Garry Shaw put it.⁶

The church and its interior decoration

Art historical arguments such as the architectural features of the family church of the Apafis in Mălâncrav indicate that this was built in the fourteenth century.⁷ The church is a small basilica with one nave, two side aisles, a polygonal choir with a sacristy and a tower situated on the western side of the church. This was raised above a richly decorated portal which initially provided the entrance to the church. The interior decoration consists of two cycles of wall paintings: an earlier one in the nave dated, on stylistic grounds, to the second half of the fourteenth century and one in the sanctuary painted before 1405. Dating is based on stylistic arguments and on information provided by a pilgrim's inscription on the southeastern wall

⁶ Ibid., p. 12.

⁷ For more details on the supposed phases of construction see Anca Gogâltan, 'Family, Patronage and Artistic Production: The Apafis and Mălâncrav (Almakerék, Malmkrog), Sibiu District, in Transylvania', *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* 39 (1998): 138-157, (especially 139-140).

of the apse.⁸ In the second half of the fifteenth century, a later generation of Apafis donated the winged altarpiece as it is indicated by the presence of their family coat of arms on the predella. The central panel of the altarpiece contains a representation of the Virgin and Child and includes images of the donors accompanied by their patron saints Michael and Claire of Assisi.⁹

Several attempts were made to understand the iconographic meanings and the messages carried by both cycles of wall paintings as well as by the winged altarpiece. Their emphasis on the physical aspects of the Passion of Christ was linked to Late Medieval piety and the devotional Franciscan literature, especially the *Meditations on the Life of Christ*.¹⁰ The presence of two representations of Christ as Man of Sorrows in the frescoes decorating the sanctuary was related to the existence of a chapel dedicated to the Holy Blood of Christ. This was mentioned in an indulgence *supplication* addressed by Nicholas Apafi to Pope Martin V (1368-1431) in 1424 in order to raise funds for repairing the structure of the chapel.¹¹ Several representations on the southern wall of the sanctuary showing saints like the Holy Hungarian Kings Stephen, Ladislas and Emeric, near Saint Sigismund and Saint Nicholas, as well as the depiction of Saint George fighting the dragon, were considered to be manifestations of noble identity and linked with the owner's family, the Apafis.¹² However, the peculiar composition situated on the lower register of the frescoes in the sanctuary still remains puzzling.

⁸ See Anca Gogâltan, 'Passion iconography and narrative strategies in the medieval frescoes decorating the church at Mălâncrav (Almakerék, Malmkrog)' *New Europe College GE-NEC Program 2003-2004/2004-2005/2006-2007* (Bucharest: New Europe College, 2010): 105-152, especially 105. Dana Jenei proposed a later dating, after 1418 and before 1424, based on the idea that the career of one of the prestigious members of this family, Nicholas Apafi, developed after 1416. See Dana Jenei, 'The Church of Virgin Mary in Mălâncrav', (<http://www.mihaieminescutrust.org/images/content/Virgin%20Mary%20Church%20Malancrav.pdf>), accessed on 5 February 2014.

⁹ See Maria Crăciun, 'Polipticul și Devoțiunea Euharistică în Transilvania Evului Mediu Târziu' [The Polyptych and the Eucharistic Devotion in Late Medieval Transylvania], *Caiete de Antropologie Istorică. Sărbătoare, Celebrare Comemorare IV*, 1/7 (2005): 45-110, especially 60-61.

¹⁰ Gogâltan, 'Passion iconography', p. 112.

¹¹ Anca Gogâltan - Dóra Sallay, 'The Church of Mălâncrav and the Holy Blood Chapel of Nicholas Apa' in Adrian Andrei Rusu - Szócs Péter Levente (eds.), *Arhitectura religioasă medievală din Transilvania*, (Satu Mare: Editura Muzeului Sătmărean, 2002), vol 2, pp. 181-210.

¹² See Anca Gogâltan, 'The 'Holy Hungarian kings', the Sainly Bishop and the Sainly King in the Sanctuary of the Church at Mălâncrav (Almakerék, Malmkrog, Transylvania)', *Ars Transilvaniae* (2002-2003): 103-121.

Measuring 62 cm in height, this row of wall paintings is neither well nor entirely preserved.¹³ Unfortunately, in the nineteenth century, this area was partly white washed up to three meters high,¹⁴ but some uncovered remains on the chancel walls support the idea that this decoration stretched on the whole lower register of the sanctuary.¹⁵ Situated at eye level, at approximately 150 cm from the ground, the wall paintings show illusionistic architectures with niches in which several bust characters appear.¹⁶ (Fig.1) The choice to depict half-length characters, resembling icons, determined art historians like Vasile Drăguț and Dana Jenei to consider them all representations of saints but no explanations for their presence in that particular place was provided.¹⁷ One may question who these characters were and why were they visually separated from the rest of the paintings? What is the meaning of this composition occurring in such a prominent place? How does it relate to the whole iconographic program in the sanctuary?

Located in the eastern axis of the sanctuary, the central niche presents an image of Christ *Vir Dolorum*. (Fig.2) This is visually highlighted by the symbolic placement of the composition as well as by the fact that it is slightly taller than the rest of the niches as well as the only rectangular one in shape. Christ is represented in bust, emphasizing his side wound with his right hand. His head is tilted to his right and, in spite of the suffering shown, his eyes are widely opened. This image is framed by representations of two saintly bishops. Better preserved, the one on the left, supposedly an older character is blessing Christ with his right hand while holding the crosier in the left. (Fig.3) Depicted like in a mirror in three-quarters-view looking towards Christ, the second bishop on the right is partly destroyed but one may still see the blessing gesture and the halo, attribute of his sanctity.¹⁸

¹³ This area was little taken into consideration by art historians. Vasile Drăguț mentioned them in his scheme of the frescoes in the sanctuary and identified the representations as follows: „images of saints looking identical; holy bishops, *Vir Dolorum*, decorative architectural elements, woman saint”. See Vasile Drăguț, ‘Iconografia picturilor murale gotice din Transilvania. Considerații generale și repertoriu de teme’ [Iconography of the Gothic Mural Paintings in Transylvania. General Ideas and Theme Repertory], *Pagini de veche artă românească* (București: Editura Academiei, 1972), pp. 7-85, here 34, fig. 19.

¹⁴ Viktor Roth, ‘Az Almakerékitemplom és műkincsei’ [The Church in Mălâncrav and its Treasures], *Dolgozatok az Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Érem és Régiségtárából* (Cluj: 1912), pp. 129-184, especially 139.

¹⁵ The southern wall of the sanctuary is partly covered by the wooden choir stalls.

¹⁶ Traces of color preserved on the southern wall suggest that beneath this register were decorative rectangles painted in alternating nuances of dark grey, brown and ochre.

¹⁷ Drăguț, ‘Iconografia’, p. 34, fig. 19. See Jenei, ‘The Church of Virgin Mary’, p. 8.

¹⁸ Jenei supposed that the Holy Bishop on the right side of the composition with *Vir Dolorum* on the eastern wall in the sanctuary is Saint Peter arguing that there is a key in

On each side of the central composition appear other bust figures. The first one on the left is a male character depicted in three-quarters-view. (Fig.4) It is noteworthy that his size is similar to that of Christ and the previously-mentioned saintly bishops. Shown in prayer, oriented towards the central image of Christ, he is dressed in a light-colored shirt, closed around the neck. He has long hair, moustache and beard and, in spite of the bad state of preservation of the frescoes, it seems that this man has no halo.

Next, also to the left, under a similar architectural framing one may see a young woman with braided, chestnut-colored hair. (Fig.1) She is depicted with the back towards the central image of Christ as well as to the previous male character. Represented in three-quarters-view with her head slightly lowered, her right hand is raised in what could be interpreted as a greeting gesture whereas her left hand is resting on the margins of the niche. Although the image is not very well preserved one may notice that she wears a blouse decorated with geometric patterns and she also seems not to have a halo. In the next space, similarly painted in three-quarters-view, appears the figure of a man oriented towards the woman and the representation of Christ. This image is partly damaged but one is still able to see the character's dark hair, trimmed up to the ears and his bearded face, as well as the absence of the saintly attribute. Further on the northern wall, after a large white-washed area, there is only one character preserved. This is placed on the left side of the tabernacle and shows the half-length figure of a young blond woman with hair up to the shoulders wearing a light-colored head kerchief. (Fig.7) She is depicted in three-quarters-view, oriented towards the east, facing the image of the *Vir Dolorum*.

On the southeastern wall, more saintly figures appear than on the northern and north-eastern walls. The first one to be seen is that of Saint Andrew. (Fig.5) Although this area was poorly preserved one may easily recognize his halo, his bearded face and the typical attribute, the saltire cross (*crux decussata*). It is puzzling, however, that his figure (depicted in three-quarters-view) is placed with the back towards the image of Christ, being oriented towards the west. A similar orientation also occurs in the case of the next representation despite the fact that only the halo, the blessing gesture and an open book in his left hand are still visible. In fact, all the preserved characters on the southeastern and southern walls look in the same direction. After quite a large zone where the paintings are only partly preserved, close to the choir stalls on the southern wall, two more bust

his hand. This would be quite unusual because Saint Peter is not generally represented as a bishop. What seems to be a key in his hand is more probably the upper part of his decorated crosier. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

images may be seen. One is seemingly a female character wearing a crown and holding a round object, probably a wheel, in her hand. Taking into consideration that the contour of her halo is clearly visible one may suppose that she represents Saint Catherine of Alexandria. Further towards the west, in the next architectural niche, there is another figure whose body and face were partly damaged. The image seems to represent a young person who has the hair trimmed to the ears and wears a tight, fashionable, tunic. His right hand is resting on the front of the niche whereas the left is placed on the chest in what appears to be a homage gesture. (Fig.6) Similar to the figures appearing on the northeastern and northern walls he does not look like a saint and apparently has no halo.

It is important to point out that this row of wall paintings is identical in style with the rest of the frescoes decorating the sanctuary. The fact that the central representation of the Man of Sorrows is a bust replica of the full-length figure of the *Vir Dolorum* with the chalice appearing above the tabernacle niche supports this idea. It is also noticeable that the artist used various visual strategies to emphasize the illusionistic architectural structures. He alternated saturated and unsaturated colors, and imposed strict geometrical rhythm to the spaces where the above-mentioned bust figures occur. In this way he achieved a separated area from the rest of the frescoes intentionally directing the public's gaze to this peculiar composition.

Bohemian stylistic connections

Painted architectural structures and illusionistic framings were nothing new in the artistic landscape of Bohemia and Medieval Hungary around 1400. It is known that such experiments occurred in Italy already in the beginning of the fourteenth century and appeared in panel paintings as well as in book illuminations and in frescoes. From the second half of the fourteenth century, this way of organizing the painted space spread from Italy further to the north of the Alps and became a part of the painted decoration.¹⁹ Conferring elegance to narrative or iconic representations, the illusionistic architectures and framings occurred in religious as well as in secular buildings like the frescoes in Runkelstein castle in southern Tyrol (dated around 1390-1400).²⁰

¹⁹ See Dušan Buran, *Studien zur Wandmalerei um 1400 in der Slowakei. Die Pfarrkirche St. Jakob in Leutschau und die Pfarrkirche St. Franziskus Seraphicus in Poniky* (Weimar: VDG, 2002), pp. 91-92.

²⁰ Kristina Domanski - Margit Krenn, 'Die profanen Wandmalereien in Westpalast', in *Schloss Runkelstein. Die Bilderburg* (Bozen: Athesia, 2000), pp. 62-63, 65-77, figs. 42-45.

This place belonged to a rich family of bankers named Vintler, counselors of Leopold III, Duke of Austria and Count of Tyrol (1351-1386). Around 1388 they began to reconstruct the castle and decorated it with frescoes that are representative for the International Gothic style. It is important to mention that the elegance of the depicted characters strongly reminds the fashionable style of the saints in the sanctuary paintings at Mălâncrav. At Runkelstein, in the upper registers of the so-called bath-chamber, several busts of elegantly dressed female and male characters as well as depictions of exotic and local animals appear. They are shown inside a row of illusionistic niches behind painted curtains and balustrades.²¹ From a stylistic point of view these niches, as well as the characters depicted inside, are less rigorously structured compared to those in the church of Mălâncrav. Placed in theatre-like balconies embellished with curtains, the characters in the Runkelstein bath-chamber adopt a variety of postures either looking or turning their back towards the public, talking among themselves or bending over the balustrade. They seem to be the spectators of a theatre performance. Better suited for decorating a secular space they look elegant and playful, having little of the devotional attitude of the characters in the church of Mălâncrav.

Looking further back in time, the best analogies for the architectural patterns (without the figures inside) could be found in the imperial religious environment of Bohemia. In the royal castle of Karlštejn, in the Virgin's chapel, a whole register with painted architectures, ceilings, arches and pillars, appear under the scenes depicting Emperor Charles IV (1316-1378), receiving the relics of the Holy Cross, and the cycle of the Apocalypse. These images suggest the reception of the Italian illusionistic experiments in Bohemian art. The relic scenes were dated before 1357 whereas the Apocalypse cycle was made before 1362-63.²² Especially the design of the upper part of the architectures on the eastern wall of the chapel present similar successions of well-designed arches framed by coffered ceiling-like structures and rood

²¹ Sabine Czymmek, 'Wirklichkeit und Illusion' in *Die Parler und der Schöne Stil 1350-1400. Europäische Kunst unter den Luxemburgern* (Cologne: Anton Legner, 1978-1980), p. 238; See also the images in Nicolò Rasmo (ed.), *L'età cavalleresca in Val d'Adige* (Milan: Electra, 1980), esp. figs. 84-109.

²² Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, *Triumph der Gotik 1260-1380* (München: C.H. Beck Publishing House, 1988), fig. 303. See also Jiří Fajt (ed.), *Magister Theodoricus. Court Painter to Emperor Charles IV. The Pictorial Decoration of the Shrines at Karlštejn Castle* (Prague: National Gallery, 1998), p. 66, fig. 38. In the churches of medieval Hungary there are many examples of architectural structures imagining painted altarpieces, sacrament houses, as well as imitations of statues. For examples found in the medieval churches at Levoča and Poniky see Buran, *Studien zur Wandmalerei*, figs. 11, 58, 86.

beams supported by consoles. However, at Karlštejn their destination was purely decorative whereas at Mălâncrav the painted structures were used to delimit the space for the characters appearing in the niches.

We may suppose that the half-length figures must have had special meanings for those who ordered and paid for the paintings namely the members of the local owners of the land and of the church, the Apafis.

The Apafis: social status and personal careers

The existing documents show that at the time when the church was built and decorated, the social status of the Apafi was steadily developing in connection to the royal court of Hungary. From the middle of the fourteenth century several generations of this family served as knights at the court.²³ The highest social achievements seem to have been those of Nicholas Apa at the beginning of the fifteenth century. His career developed from a page and a knight at the court in the last decade of the fourteenth century to castellan in three fortifications in Bosnia between 1414 and 1418.²⁴ King Sigismund of Luxemburg praised his bravery in the wars against the Turks in Bosnia when he defended these castles.²⁵ According to Nicholas's last will from 1447, at that time he was a rich man with a numerous family but no adult male heir, as his son had probably died before 1440.²⁶

In this case, it is important to explore, as much as documents allow, Nicholas Apafi's social networks in the beginning of his career, at the time when the frescoes in the sanctuary were created.

Documents indicate that, beginning with 1403 Apafi was among the *familiares* of Nicholas Csáki meaning that he was part of the group of nobles forming Csáki's court and supporting him in his actions.²⁷ Nicholas Csáki held the title of *comes* of the Bihar County in 1395-1403 and 1409-1426. Between 1415 and 1437 two members of this family, Nicholas and Ladislaus, held the position of Voivode of Transylvania.²⁸ Although Nicholas Csáki

²³ Gogâltan - Sallay, 'The Church of Mălâncrav and the Holy Blood Chapel', pp. 184-85.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 183-84.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

²⁷ *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen* eds. Franz Zimmerman et al., (Sibiu: Franz Michaelis Kommission, 1902), vol.3, p. 302, doc. 1495. More about the medieval meaning of the terms *familiares* and *familiaritas* in Cosmin Popa-Gorjanu, 'Despre *familiares* și *familiaritas* în cazul familiei Himfi' [*Familiares* and *familiaritas* in the Case of Himfi Family], www.academia.edu: pp. 363-382, especially 364-65.

²⁸ See Mihai Bărbulescu - Anton E. Dörner - Ioan Glodariu - Susana Andea - Ionuț Virgil Costea - Ioan-Aurel Pop, -Thomas Nægler - András Magyari, *Istoria Transilvaniei*

was among the nobles who revolted against King Sigismund of Luxemburg in 1403 and supported King Ladislaus of Naples' claims to the Hungarian throne,²⁹ he was one of the first to surrender on 8 October 1403. Eager to preserve his social position and political influence he served as mediator between King Sigismund and the rebels.³⁰ Consequently, he continued to develop his career as a member of the new political elite of the land. Nicholas Csáki was one of the founding members of the Order of the Dragon (created at Pécs in December 1408) together with the chancellor Emeric Perényi, the later judge royal Peter Perényi, the ban of Mačva John Maróti, the voivode James Lack and other nobles like Peter Lévai and the son of Ladislaus Sárói. This suggests the high level of his social position because all these individuals were descendants of ancient Hungarian noble families. King Sigismund granted them important offices as well as many possessions.³¹ For example, in 1395 the Csáki family received from the King the market town of Sălard (Szalárd, Bihor district) in Partium and they also owned a castle at Adrian (Adorján) situated 2 km further from Sălard on the banks of the River Barcău (Berettyó). Around 1400, during Nicholas Csáki's ownership, the local church at Sălard was turned into a Franciscan monastery³² and became their family burial place. This fact is symbolically suggested by the presence of their coat of arms on the keystone of the cross ribbed vault in the funerary chapel located under the tower in the western part of the church.³³ Sometimes in the fifteenth century the church was decorated with frescoes but only some remains were found on the northern and the southern walls of the sanctuary. Unfortunately, the paintings are in a poor state of conservation so we may say little about their style. The iconographic program included representations usually encountered in churches found under noble patronage, such as Saint Catherine and the

(*până la 1541*) [History of Transylvania (until 1541)] (Cluj: Institutul Cultural Român, 2003), vol. 1, p. 256.

²⁹ More about the conflict between King Sigismund and the nobles see in Pál Engel, *The Realm of Saint Stephen. A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526* (London, New York, I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2001), pp. 206-208.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 280-283. Nothing is known about Nicholas Apa's actions during this crises but documents prove that his career continued to develop. See Gogâltan - Sallay, 'The Church of Mălâncrav and the Holy Blood Chapel', p. 186.

³¹ Engel, *The Realm*, pp. 213-214.

³² Ferenc Hervay, 'Geschichte der Franziskaner in Ungarn bis um Beginn der Reformation' in *800 Jahre Franz von Assisi. Franziskanische Kunst und Kultur des Mittelalters* (Vienna: Katalog des Niederösterreichischen Landesmuseums, 1982), pp. 312-317, here 315.

³³ Gyula Borzási - Tamás Emödi, *Szalárd református templom* [The Reformed Church in Sălard] Erdélyi műemlékek 20 (Cluj: Utilitas, 1996), p. 7.

Holy Hungarian Kings, Stephen and Emeric, placed on each side of the enthroned Virgin with Christ.³⁴

Therefore, we may suppose that, being one of Nicholas Csáki's supporters and knight at the royal court, Nicholas Apafi, like his father and grandfather before him, must have come in contact with various members of the nobility, either peers or superiors in rank. Consequently, he had to adjust to specific group expectations. These obviously included the idea of the family 'nest' as place of origin and representation.³⁵ Although there were no archaeological excavations in the sanctuary, we may suppose that the church in Mălâncrav served as the Apafi's burial place beginning with the time when it was built.³⁶ The visual signs of family ownership are the elements of their coat of arms on the eastern keystone in the sanctuary and the representation on the predella of the winged altarpiece.³⁷

Keeping all that in mind, one may suppose that, in the beginning of the fifteenth century the construction of their social image could have also included visual representations of the self as pious donors praying to the

³⁴ See Borzási - Emödi, *Szalárd*, p. 16. See also Adrian Andrei Rusu et al. (eds.), *Dicționarul mănăstirilor din Transilvania, Banat, Crișana și Maramureș* [The Dictionary of Monasteries from Transylvania, Banat, Crișana and Maramureș] (Cluj Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2000), pp. 222-224. More information about the paintings in József Lángi - Ferencz Mihály, *Erdélyi falképek és festett faberendezések* [Wall Paintings and Painted Wooden Furniture in Transylvania] (Budapest, Állami Múemlékhelyreállítási és Restaurálási Központ, 2002), pp. 96-97; Marie Lionnet, *Les peintures murales en Hongrie á la fin du Moyen Âge (v. 1300-1475)* (Paris, Nanterre: Doctorate Thesis, 2004), vol. 1, p. 117, vol. 2, fig. 60.

³⁵ Documents from the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth century do not inform us if the Apafis actually lived in Mălâncrav at that time. However, archaeological research on the higher plateau near the church where the present day "Apafi manor house" is located indicate the existence of a medieval structure that, according to the archaeologists, could date from the fourteenth century. See Angel Istrate, 'Le Manoir Apafi de Mălâncrav (Dép. de Sibiu). Une description archéologique' in Daniela Marcu Istrate - Angel Istrate - Corneliu Gaiu (eds.), *In memoriam Radu Popa. Temeiuri ale civilizației românești în context european* (Cluj: Accent, 2003), pp. 371-385, especially 371.

³⁶ There is information about the fact that family members were buried under the sacristy in the last decades of the seventeenth century. See Gogâltan, 'Family, Patronage, and Artistic Production', pp. 156-157.

³⁷ Gogâltan - Sallay, 'The Church of Mălâncrav and the Holy Blood Chapel', p. 186. For examples of other family churches and chapels built and embellished by nobles and used as burial places see Zsombor Jékely, 'A Zsigmond-kori magyar arisztokrácia művészeti reprezentációja' [The Representation in the Arts of the Hungarian Aristocracy during the Time of Sigismund] in Takács Imre (ed.), *Sigismundus Rex et Imperator. Művészet és kultúra Luxemburgi Zsigmond korában 1387-1437* (Budapest: Szépművészeti Múzeum, 2006), pp. 298-310.

suffering Christ. On the other hand, if we accept that the figures without halos appearing in the composition flanking the *Vir Dolorum* on the lower area in the sanctuary are donor “portraits” how may we explain the atypical way in which they were represented compared to similar examples in noble family churches in Medieval Hungary?

The arguments of the iconography

There are a few cases of donor representations praying to the Man of Sorrows in family churches belonging to the nobility of the land dated around the same period. One good example is provided by the church at Maconka (Nógrád County) dedicated to Saint Stephen that was the family church of the palatine Eustache Jolsvai.³⁸ There, on the eastern wall of the rectangular sanctuary, above the central window,³⁹ there is a depiction of the Man of Sorrows with donors. Following the model of the Italian art around 1400 the image is a combination of a representation of a Man of Sorrows with Christ’s emaciated bust emerging erect from the sarcophagus, his hands crossed in front of him, his eyes closed and his head slightly tilted to the right and a Pietá, as Christ’s body is tenderly supported (in the left side of the image) by his mourning Mother.⁴⁰ On the right side of the image, St. John is slightly further from the Savior’s body but still supporting him, while behind him, representations of donors, in the typical kneeling position, may be seen. Their size is slightly smaller than that of the saintly characters but their social position is clearly indicated by their fashionable clothing (light-colored tight tunic, belt, hose and pointed shoes). The wall paintings are not very well preserved so it is difficult to identify the individuals in this group. There seems to be a man, two children and a woman (saint?), but the individual features of these characters may not be distinguished. However, nothing of the decorative style of the paintings in Maconka indicates any preoccupation for realism in their “portraits”.

A similar example is provided by the donor representations, dated around 1400, in the church dedicated to Saint Andrew at Vizsoly (Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County) that belonged to the members of the powerful Drugeth family. Nobles of French origin, they accumulated some of the greatest estates in the whole country located in present-day Slovakia and

³⁸ Mária Prokopp, *Italian Trecento Influence on Murals in East Central Europe Particularly Hungary* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1983), p. 164.

³⁹ The window is framed by painted illusionistic architectures showing rood beams and wooden ceilings that recall parts of those painted at Mălâncrav.

⁴⁰ Prokopp, *Italian Trecento Influence*, p. 95.

Ukraine.⁴¹ They also held important political positions in the kingdom as several members of this family were palatines and high *comites*.⁴² In the sanctuary of their family church at Vizsoly, on the southern wall one may see a large representation of the *Vir Dolorum* painted in Italian style. He is shown in bust with his hands crossed on the chest and the head with closed eyes resting on his right shoulder. On the right side of this depiction there is the small figure of a kneeling man. His noble identity is suggested by the elegant cloak and the pointed shoes he is wearing. Behind him, in a castle-like architectural structure three other praying figures appear. Under them, close to the feet of the first-mentioned character a small-sized depiction of a horse may be seen. Unfortunately, the details of their faces are not recognizable because of the poor state of conservation of the wall paintings in this area. We cannot say if these are 'real portraits' of persons. However, like in the previous case at Maconka, the way they were represented does conform to the typical donor depiction; they are humbly and piously kneeling close to the divine image of the suffering Christ and their noble rank is clearly indicated by their elegant attire.⁴³

Both above-mentioned donor images were made in a period of significant changes in the visual representation of the individual.⁴⁴ It was a time when such experiments included depictions of kings and emperors like Charles IV from the House of Luxembourg (1316-1378) as well as persons belonging to lesser social categories like the self-representations of the painter Johannes Aquila in the churches decorated by him. Although his portraits present realistic features they show many similarities with some of the saints' representations painted by Aquila in the churches at Velemér (1378, Hungary) and Martjanci (1392, Slovenia).⁴⁵ Therefore, in spite of the fact that the painter's self-representations may be considered a turning point in the evolution towards the portrait, they should be included in the category of devotional images, more easily understood in connection to the

⁴¹ Engel, *The Realm*, p. 268.

⁴² Prokopp, *Italian Trecento Influence*, pp. 100-101.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, fig. 101.

⁴⁴ Daniel Spanke, 'Najstarejša avtoportreta v Evropi? Pomen lastnih podob Janeza Aquile iz Radgone v Velémeru (1378) in v Martjancih (1392) za starejšo zgodovino portreta' [Die älteste Selbstbildnisse Europas? Zur Bedeutung der Malerdarstellungen Johannes Aquilas von Radkersburg in Velemér (1378) und Martjanci (1392) für eine Frühgeschichte des Porträts] [The Eldest Portrait from Europe? About the Importance of the Representations of the Painter Johannes Aquila of Radkersburg in Martjanci/Velemér], *Gradivo. Miscellanea* (2005), pp. 114-159. See also Götz Pochat, 'A portré születéséről' [About the Birth of the Portraits] in Takács (ed.), *Sigismundus Rex*, pp. 124-142.

⁴⁵ See Spanke, 'Najstarejša avtoportreta', pp. 114-159.

rest of the iconographic program. In this case, the kneeling position, showing the expected devotional attitude, is very important. Aquila's "self-portraits" may be seen as expressions of personal piety and social position, as images of the social self.⁴⁶

More interesting examples are provided by Emperor Charles IV's portraits (dated around the middle of the fourteenth century) that were considered by specialists to be real portraits.⁴⁷ It has been argued that these show his individual features, namely a rather longish face covered with beard and moustache, a strong nose, dark eyes and hair loosely falling to his shoulders. Approximately sixty images of the emperor are known to us in sculpture, wall paintings and miniatures out of which some are considered to be crypto portraits.⁴⁸ Apparently these led to establishing a type of "portrait" in which the accent is on the suggested realism. This "realistic" type of portrait was spread also outside Bohemia and this is proved by the depictions of Reinhart of Mühlhausen on the winged altarpiece he donated in 1385 to Saint Vitus chapel in Mühlhausen near Stuttgart.⁴⁹ Created by a Bohemian master, in the memory of his brother Eberhart who died in Prague in 1380, the winged altarpiece includes two representations of the donor Reinhart: one is on the closed altarpiece where he is kneeling in front of a full-length image of Christ *Vir Dolorum* and one on the exterior of the wings where both brothers are represented kneeling on the sides of the image of the crucified Christ with Mary and Saint John the Evangelist. The brothers are holding speech scrolls in their hands and their identity is indicated by their coat of arms appearing at their feet. Represented in three-quarters-view Reinhart's features are very similar to those of Emperor

⁴⁶ See more on the concepts of the self and social self in Shaw, *Necessary Conjunctions*, pp. 11-16.

⁴⁷ Karel Stejskal, *Karl IV und die Kultur und Kunst seiner Zeit* (Prague: Artia, 1978), pp. 208-218.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

⁴⁹ I am grateful to Jiří Fajt who drew my attention to the iconography of this altarpiece. Opened, the altarpiece presents images of three national saints of Bohemia: Saint Vitus (as a martyr, holding a palm frond and imperial orb), Saint Wenceslas (as a duke with shield and a flag bearing the Bohemian imperial eagle) and Saint Sigismund (as emperor, with sceptre and imperial orb). Closed, it shows Christ as a Man of Sorrows on the left, with the patron kneeling before him, and the crucified Christ flanked by Mary and John on the right. The middle section contains a depiction of the Annunciation and above it the Coronation of the Virgin. A second crucifixion group is shown on the reverse, along with the donor's inscription and the full-figure portraits of the brothers Reinhart and Eberhart. See the image and its description in the catalogue of the National Gallery in Stuttgart on http://www.staatsgalerie.de/malereiundplastik_e/altdeu_rundg.php?id=2. See also *Die Parler*, vol 1, pp. 339-341.

Charles IV; he has hair down to his shoulders, beard and moustache, his nose is quite strong and his eyes emphasized. Reinhart's portraits, like those of the Emperor Charles IV, recall very much the first bust-portrait appearing on the northeastern wall in the sanctuary composition at Mălâncrav. This suggests once again the Mălâncrav artist's familiarity with the Bohemian art of the Imperial court of Prague around 1350 and also betrays his intention to portray a real individual by painting a "realistic" type of portrait. These examples support Shaw's arguments that people did not totally invent their way of expressing themselves because they had to be understood across their culture.⁵⁰

The search for "realism" at Mălâncrav is evident when comparing the individualized features of this male character to the idealized faces devoid of expression of the saints and participants in the story of the Passion of Christ appearing in the rest of the sanctuary frescoes.

Less realistically made, the representation of the young woman with long braided hair, presents certain likeness to the bust portrait of Anna von Schweidnitz (1339-1362), the third wife of Emperor Charles IV, depicted above the door of Saint Catherine's Chapel in Karlštejn Castle (dated around 1357-8).⁵¹ There are also similarities in composition as the woman and the next male character in Mălâncrav are placed face to face like the Emperor with his wife (in the above-mentioned composition where they are piously holding the reliquary-cross). However, the woman's depiction with the back towards the most important image in this row, namely the half-length figure of *Vir Dolorum*, as well as her greeting-like hand gesture, are puzzling. The illusionistic architecture clearly separates the two characters but one may only suppose that they were meant to depict a married couple. The other man and the woman on the northern wall close to the tabernacle niche present more "realistic" features. Despite the bad state of conservation of the painting in this area, it would seem that the woman points with her right hand towards the tabernacle niche.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to give names to the characters without halos which appear in the painted architectural niches at Mălâncrav as no coats of arms or other inscriptions may be seen in this area. On the other hand, it is important to notice that in spite of the desired realism all the characters without halos present idealized features; they all look quite young and handsome.

⁵⁰ Shaw, *Necessary Conjunctions*, p. 14.

⁵¹ Erich Bachmann (ed.), *Gothic Art in Bohemia. Architecture, Sculpture and Painting* (Oxford: Phaidon Press Ltd., 1977), fig. 105.

Could they represent devout images of members of the owner family, the Apafis?⁵² The arguments that support this hypothesis are quite poor but it is important to notice that this row of portraits and saints' representations is part of an iconographic program that has been carefully structured. Whereas the northern and north-eastern walls of the sanctuary were dedicated to the Passion of Christ, all the saints appearing on the southern and south-eastern walls expressed a combined message of knightly and noble family ideology. As previously mentioned, on the southern wall several representations of dynastic, knightly and other saints that were probably important for the family like the Holy Kings of Hungary, Saint George, Saint Michael, The Holy Kinship, Saint Francis and Saint Anthony of Padua, appear. To these one should add two rows of nine male and nine female saintly characters in the upper registers on the eastern and south-eastern walls. All these saints look very similar: elegantly dressed in courtly attire with tight tunics and hose, with pointed shoes. Their hair is elegantly trimmed up to the ear and some of them hold little crosses in their hands. Their similar image indicates that they were supposed to be seen together, as a group. In this case their number is significant and in spite of the fact that they are depicted as saints, it is possible that they represented the Nine Male and Nine Female Worthies. Scholars argue that the Nine Worthies were a widely spread theme in the fourteenth- fifteenth century courtly literature and art. They were preferred by upwardly mobile lesser nobility for reasons of prestige and self-esteem and this was also the case of the Apafi family from Mălâncrav⁵³

Coming back to the main argument, if we suppose that the characters without halos in the lower register in their family church represented donors how may we explain their relation to the image of the *Vir Dolorum*, taking into consideration that some were placed with their back towards the holy image?

The image of the Suffering Christ

The representation of Christ *Vir Dolorum* in the sanctuary of the church at Mălâncrav represents a specific type because he is strongly emphasizing his side wound with his right hand.

Images of the Man of Sorrows were quite spread in churches of Medieval Hungary and Transylvania in the second half of the fourteenth

⁵² The devotional function of the decorative program was also stressed by Crăciun, 'Polipticul', p. 61.

⁵³ See Muriel Whitaker, 'Early Arthurian Art' in Norris J. Lacy (ed.), *History of Arthurian Scholarship* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2006), pp.198-219, especially 200.

and in the fifteenth century.⁵⁴ These appear in different iconographic contexts and their location varies according to the attributed function.⁵⁵ Concerning their composition and style, almost all of them seem to prefer the Italian version in which Christ is shown in bust with his head tilted to the side, his eyes closed and his hands crossed in front of him.⁵⁶ Christ's wounds are shown but they are not over emphasized like in our case. One of the few examples (with no connection to a tabernacle niche) from medieval Hungary in which Christ is emphasizing his side wound⁵⁷ is a small representation (dated to the end of the fourteenth century) on the eastern wall of the sanctuary of the church in Saint Martin's monastery in Čerín (Cserény, Slovakia).⁵⁸ In this case, the *Vir Dolorum* appears in a small

⁵⁴ Ernő Marosi, *Magyarországi művészet 1300-1470 körül* [Hungarian Art around 1300-1470] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987), vol 1, p. 718. For Transylvania see Drăguț, 'Iconografia', p. 74. For Slovakia see Ivan Gerát, *Stredoveké obrazové témy na Slovensku. Osoby a príbehy* [Medieval Image Themes in Slovakia. Persons and History] (Bratislava: Veda, 2001), p. 293.

⁵⁵ In many cases such depictions occur above the tabernacle niche and represent visual references to the sacrament preserved there. See Dóra Sallay, 'The Eucharistic Man of Sorrows in Late Medieval Art' *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 6 (Budapest: CEU, 2000): pp. 45-80, especially 45-47.

⁵⁶ In Transylvania, representations of the *Vir Dolorum* on the eastern wall in the sanctuary appear in the church at Strei (Romania, dated around 1370-80) and at Vlaha (Magyarfenes, Romania, dated to the end of the fourteenth century). For Strei see Elena Dana-Dana Prioteasa, 'Western and Eastern Themes in the Iconography of the Sanctuary of the Church of Strei (Hunedoara County, Romania)' *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 9 (2003): pp. 181-196, especially fig. 5. At Vlaha the image is located on the right side of a composition that includes the representation of Veronica in the eastern axis of the sanctuary and a Crucifixion with Mary and St. John, on the left side of the wall. See Vasile Drăguț, *Arta gotică în România* [Gothic Art in Romania] (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1979), pp. 203-207. For other examples in Transylvania see Drăguț, 'Iconografia', p. 74. Dana Jenei suggested that a representation of the *Vir Dolorum* also existed in a similar location in the church at Sântana de Mureș (Maroszentanna, Romania). See Dana Jenei - Kiss Loránd - Pál Péter, 'Sântana de Mureș. Picturile murale din biserica reformată' [Sântana de Mureș. The Wall Paintings of the Reformed Church] in Marcu Istrate - Istrate - Gaiu (eds.), *In memoriam Radu Popa*, pp. 429-437, especially 431.

⁵⁷ In the relief from Šamorín (Somorja, Slovakia) located above the tabernacle, dated around 1400, the half-length figure of Christ is represented emphasizing his side wound with both his hands whereas on the same side, close to him an over dimensioned chalice may be seen. See Marosi, *Magyarországi művészet*, vol 2, fig. 951. Maria Crăciun mentioned that the image of the *Vir Dolorum* at Sântimbru (Alba district) on the northeastern wall of the sanctuary also presents the gesture of *ostentatio vulnerum*. However, this was dated by Vasile Drăguț to the end of the fifteenth century, therefore, is much later than the representations taken into consideration here. See Crăciun, 'Polipticul', p. 61. See also Drăguț, 'Iconografia', p. 74.

⁵⁸ Prokopp, *Italian Trecento Influence*, p. 146.

rectangular icon-like representation, with his naked bust emerging from a sarcophagus, his head tilted to the side, his eyes half opened, his right hand emphasizing, almost opening his side wound whereas his left hand is raised to show his hand wound.⁵⁹ This monastery was built around 1315 by a certain Paul of Krtíš on the model of churches in mining towns in the region of Banská Bystrica that were largely populated by Germans.⁶⁰

Scholars argue that such images of the *Vir Dolorum* with *ostentatio vulnerum* were more frequently encountered in German art.⁶¹ Several examples occur in southern areas of the Empire, especially in the funerary art of the region of Middle Franconia, around the imperial city of Nuremberg. The image of the Man of Sorrows on the epitaph of the physician Friedrich Mengot (who died on January 21st 1370) from the Cistercian church in Heilsbronn (dated to 1370), is one of the cases in which Christ is making a similar gesture to emphasize his side wound. Berndt Hamm argued that this epitaph was a typical representation of a double intercession on an individual judgment scene as Christ is accompanied by his mother who is showing her breast and both are pleading God the Father to have mercy for the praying Magister.⁶² It is known that the work was ordered by the physician himself during his lifetime. On the epitaph he is shown as an older character with white hair and beard, richly dressed in a red mantle and a hat trimmed with white fur. The fact that his size is quite similar to that of the holy characters appearing near him is significant. Shirley Nielsen Blum argued that this way of representing the donors suggests the appearance of a new, more aggressive type of donor during the Late Middle Ages.⁶³ One may notice that Magister Mengot's attitude is pious but quite confident in front of the divine apparitions.

⁵⁹ Ibid., fig. 95a. Vlasta Dvořáková - Josef Krása - Karel Stejskal, *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba na Slovensku* [Medieval Wall Paintings in Slovakia] (Prague: Odeon, Tatran, 1978), p. 83, fig. 128.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 83.

⁶¹ Gert von der Osten, *Der Schmerzensmann: Typengeschichte eines deutschen Andachtsbildwerks von 1300 bis 1600*. Forschungen zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte 7 (Berlin: Deutscher Verein für Kunstwissenschaft, 1935), passim; Wiltrud Mersmann, 'Schmerzensmann' in Engelbert Kirschbaum (ed.), *Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie* (Rome, Freiburg, Basel, Vienna: Herder, 1972), pp. 87-95.

⁶² *Die Parler*, vol. 1, p. 380. See also Berndt Hamm, *Religiosität in späten Mittelalter* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), p. 432, fig. 18.

⁶³ Elisabeth Heller, *Das altniederländische Stifterbild* (München: Tuduv Verlagsgesellschaft, 1976), p. 557. See also Rosemarie Stratmann-Döhler, 'Stiftung und Stifterbild' in Cornelia Baumann et al., *„Ora pro nobis“ Bildzeugnisse spätmittelalterlicher Heiligenverehrung* (Karlsruhe: Badisches Landesmuseum, 1992), p. 45 and Shirley Nielsen Blum, *Early*

On the tombstone of Elspet Salchau from Regensburg,⁶⁴ dated around 1401, and on the later one from Schwäbisch Hall (dated to the second quarter of the fifteenth century)⁶⁵ are shown similar full-length-figures of the Man of Sorrows pointing to the side wound with the right hand whereas the deceased are piously kneeling on the left side of the above-mentioned reliefs. In all these representations the Man of Sorrows was clearly attributed an intercessory role.

In her analysis of the patterns of Eucharistic devotion in Transylvania Maria Crăciun suggested that the fresco at Mălâncrav showing the *Vir Dolorum* flanked by the Saintly Bishops should be seen together as a painted altarpiece.⁶⁶ On the other hand, one cannot ignore the fact that the artist clearly intended to create a unified composition but it is arguable that he created a hierarchy of meanings combining the architectural divisions of the sanctuary space, the illusionistic architectures and the location of the images depicted inside. The *Vir Dolorum* appears clearly emphasized by the rectangular shape of his niche whereas the triptych-like composition with Christ and the Holy Bishops was intentionally located together on the eastern wall of the sanctuary.

It is noteworthy that the whole program in this register, its iconography and especially the illusionistic architecture framing the half-length figures appearing in the niches, recalls the predellas of Italian polyptychs from the first half of the *Trecento*. Several similarities may be observed with the predella of Simone Martini's polyptych made for the Dominican convent Saint Catherine in Pisa (dated to 1320).⁶⁷ The Italian example shows a row of arcades supported by twisted colonnettes framing half-length representations of saints.⁶⁸ For the first time in Sienese painting, the center of the predella focuses on the depiction of Christ as the Man of Sorrows flanked by the Virgin and the two evangelists, Mark and Luke.⁶⁹

Netherlandisch Triptichs A Study in Patronage (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), p. 2.

⁶⁴ Now kept in Ulrichsmuseum in Regensburg. See Gert von der Osten, *Der Schmerzensmann*, p. 82, fig. 75.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 82, fig. 76.

⁶⁶ Crăciun, 'Polipticul și Devoțiunea Euharistică', pp. 60-61.

⁶⁷ See Joanna Cannon, 'Simone Martini, the Dominicans and the Early Sienese Polyptych' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 45 (1982): 69-93, especially p. 82.

⁶⁸ At the sides, appear twelve more bust images of saints like Stephen and Apollonia, Jerome and Lucy (?), Gregory and Luke, Thomas Aquinas and Augustine, Agnes and Ambrose, Ursula and Lawrence.

⁶⁹ See Cannon, 'Simone Martini', p. 73. Simone Martini's image of Christ follows the Western canons of representation as he is standing in his sarcophagus with his hands hanging crosswise in the front.

An even closer analogy may be found in the Franciscan environment, namely the fresco by Lippo Vanni (dated around 1360) in a chapel that belonged to the family of the Martinozzi in the San Francesco church in Siena.⁷⁰ Lippo's wall painting includes all the framing and ornamentation resembling a Gothic wooden structure. In the center of the predella may be seen the half-length figures of Christ *Vir Dolorum* flanked by Mary and Saint John and depictions of the four evangelists holding scrolls in their hands.⁷¹ In the middle part of the polyptych full-length figures of saints appear: the Virgin and her Child in the middle flanked by Saint John the Baptist and Saint Catherine of Alexandria, Saint Francis with the stigmata and a Franciscan monk the Blessed Peter of Siena. More important is the fact that in the upper part, above the Virgin, the half-length figure of Christ is shown as *Salvator mundi* flanked by the four Fathers of the Church. Therefore, van Os argued, the altarpiece proposes a vertical axis of significance with Christ *Vir Dolorum* in the predella as a symbol of the Eucharist located close to the altar *mensa*, with Mary and her Child in the middle, symbolizing the Word become flesh and, above all Christ the Savior of the World.⁷²

It is important to mention that, in all the known examples from medieval Hungary the *Vir Dolorum* is shown either alone or accompanied by the Virgin and Saint John and in some images he has angels by his side sometimes carrying the instruments of the Passion. In none of the known representations is Christ accompanied by Holy Bishops. Maybe it is not by chance that the composition in Mălâncrav recalls another Italian example, a diptych attributed to Vitale da Bologna and dated around 1353-1355. This monumental diptych (each wing is 0.61x0.39 m) is divided between the National Gallery of Scotland and the Longhi Foundation in Florence and was probably destined for private devotion.⁷³ Both compositions are framed by mouldings showing decorated arches supported by slender columns on the sides. The panel on the left shows the Adoration of the Magi with the enthroned Virgin attended by Virgin Martyrs (Catherine and Ursula). The Longhi panel (representing the right side of the diptych) shows the image of the Man of Sorrows or Pietá with the bust of the suffering Christ supported

⁷⁰ Henk van Os, *Sienese altarpieces. 1215-1460. Form, Content, Function* (Groningen: Bouma's Boekhuis BV, 1984), vol. 1, p. 37.

⁷¹ van Os argued that there were more such frescoed altarpieces made by Sienese Masters due to the fact that they were cheaper than a painting on panel. *Ibid.*, pp. 36, 39, endnote 4, p. 216.

⁷² van Os, *Sienese Altarpieces*, p. 37, fig. 5.

⁷³ Robert Gibbs, 'Tomaso da Modena a italské vlivy v českém malířství' [Tomaso da Modena and Italian Influences in Bohemian Painting] *Umění XXXVIII/4* (1990): pp. 291-304, especially 302.

by the Virgin (who appears on his left) and accompanied by Saint John the Evangelist, Saint John the Baptist and Mary Magdalene on the sides.⁷⁴ What is of interest for us is the fact that on the lower part of the panel, on each side of the *Vir Dolorum* there are two small figures of saintly bishops in the proximity of a male ascetic and a Virgin Martyr. The two bishops were not precisely identified but there are suggestions that they could represent Saint Ambrose and Saint Augustine as Doctors of the Early Church.⁷⁵

The depictions of the Saints Augustine and Ambrose framing the image of the *Vir Dolorum* is meaningful. This may be interpreted as a visual reference to their doctrinal contribution to the increasing adoration of the Eucharist, the Holy Wounds of Christ as well as his Sacred Heart. In both Church Fathers' commentaries on the Bible there are relevant interpretations that gave authority to the wide-spread veneration of the Holy Wounds and of the Sacred Heart of Christ during the Late Middle Ages.⁷⁶ In his *Commentary on Saint Luke* and in the *Treatise on the Sacraments* Saint Ambrose wrote about the redeeming power of Christ's blood that flows from his side wound.⁷⁷

On the other hand, Saint Augustine was the one who made the explicit connection between the idea of the Church and of the sacraments born from the side of Christ on the cross. He based his arguments on the particular significance of the word "*aperuit*," which is used in the Latin version of John's Gospel (John 19:35).

„A suggestive word was made use of by the evangelist, in not saying pierced, or wounded His side, or anything else, but „opened;“ that thereby, in a sense, the gate of life might be thrown open, from whence have flowed forth the sacraments of the Church, without which there is no entrance to the life which is the true life.”⁷⁸

The emphasis on sacrifice and redemption through piety is further enhanced in Mălâncrav by the presence, on the south-eastern and southern

⁷⁴ Emily Jane Anderson, 'Vitale da Bologna's Adoration of the Magi/Man of Sorrows Diptych Reconsidered' in Monica Boria - Linda Russo (eds.), *Investigating Gender, Translation and Culture in Italian Studies* (Leicester: Troubador Publishing Ltd., 2007), pp. 3-20.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁷⁶ See Peter Milward, S.J, 'Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I and II', (<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?id=3139>)

⁷⁷ S. Ambrosii, *Opera. Pars III Expositio Evangelii Secundum Lucam* in Caroli Schenke (ed.), *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (Prague, Vindobonae, Lipsiae: F. Tempesky, 1902), vol. 32, pp. 504-506.

⁷⁸ St. Augustin: *Homilies on the Gospel of John. Homilies on the First Epistle of John. Soliloquies* in Philip Schaff (ed.), *A Selected Library on the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), vol. 7, p. 434.

walls, of Saint Andrew and Saint Catherine of Alexandria (?), who also suffered martyrdoms for their faith.⁷⁹ On the other hand, we may suppose that on that wall there was also another center of meaning, probably a representation of the Virgin with Christ that might explain the westward orientation of the characters on this wall, as well as the presence of another donor "portrait" on the southern wall of the sanctuary separated from the others located on the northern and north-eastern walls.

It is more than probable that the representation of the Man of Sorrows flanked by the depictions of Saint Ambrose and Augustine in the church at Mălâncrav carried liturgical meanings. This is suggested by their location close to the altar *mensa* as well as by the symbolism attached to the image of the *Vir Dolorum* with *ostentatio vulnerum* in the commentaries of the Church Fathers. This was a visual representation of the Eucharist but also a reference to the redeeming power of the Blood streaming from the Side Wound of Christ. The fact that in the church at Mălâncrav such a representation of the *Vir Dolorum* appears again in the same location in a later version on the predella of the winged altarpiece suggests the importance of this particular meaning attached to this representation.⁸⁰

Specialists argue that, during the Late Middle Ages the Holy Wounds of Christ and, most of all the Side Wound were attributed significant powers.⁸¹ In the medieval Missals, corresponding to the Mass *Humiliauit* of the Roman Missal there was a special Mass in honor of Christ's wounds attributed to Saint John the Evangelist and revealed to Pope Boniface II (532). It was known as the Golden Mass and it was indulgenced by Pope John XXII (1332) or Pope Innocent VI (1362).⁸² According to a fifteenth century manuscript from Heidelberg it was believed that the one who said or heard this particular mass five consecutive days could liberate a soul from Purgatory.⁸³

As Adolph Franz demonstrated, in the fourteenth century, in southern Germany it was customary to recite the *Pater Noster* fifteen times a day, which amounted to 5475 in a year, representing the supposed number

⁷⁹ Donald Attwater - Catherine Rachel John, *Dictionary of Saints* (London:Penguin Books, 1995), pp. 39, 77.

⁸⁰ The composition on the predella is slightly changed as the Man of Sorrows with *ostentatio vulnerum* is shown between the Virgin and Saint John the Evangelist. I thank Maria Crăciun who drew my attention to this similarity in iconography.

⁸¹ Adolph Franz, *Die Messe in deutschen Mittelalter. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Liturgie und des religiösen Volkslebens* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 192), p. 159.

⁸² See *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 'The Five Sacred Wounds', (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15714a.htm>).

⁸³ Franz, *Die Messe*, p. 159.

of the Sacred Wounds of Christ.⁸⁴ In fifteenth-century Books of Hours and on engravings dedicated to Christ's Heart, there were already included isolated and enlarged depictions of the side wound in order to focus the prayers and the meditation of the devotees.⁸⁵

The fact that the Heidelberg manuscript recommended that the Golden Mass should be said in German by a Franciscan monk attended by two women is significant because devotion to the Side Wound of Christ was particularly important in Franciscan piety.⁸⁶ In his treatise on the *Vitis Mystica*, for example, Saint Bonaventure explained the importance of the Side Wound for the believers as a way to get closer to Christ's Heart:

„For this cause was your side pierced, that an entrance might be opened for us. For this was Thy Heart wounded, that in it and in Thee we might dwell secure from exterior troubles. No less, also, it was wounded for this, that by the visible wound we may see the invisible wound of love. For can this burning [love] be better shown than in His having permitted, not only His Body, but even His Heart to be pierced through with the spear? Thus the carnal wound shows the spiritual wound“.⁸⁷

It is known that the Franciscans centered their devotion on the image of the Suffering Christ. The fact that they relied very much on visual mnemonic devices in their preaching is important. About Bernardino da Siena, for example, it is known that he used a small-scale *tavoletta* painted with the Holy Name of Jesus which he showed the public during his preaching whereas John of Capistrano drew the attention of the believers to an image of the Man of Sorrows. He was depicted with such a representation in his hands in the former Observant church of the Virgin in Olomuc.⁸⁸

The connection with Franciscan spirituality occurs in various instances in the whole decorative program of the sanctuary in the Apafi church at Mălâncrav: it is suggested by the representation of the founder of the order himself receiving the stigmata on the frescoes of the southern wall as well as by the emphasis on the physical aspects of Christ's suffering

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 159.

⁸⁵ Jean Wirth, „L'apparition du surnaturel dans l'art du Moyen Age“ in Françoise Dunant - Jean-Michel Spieser - Jean Wirth (eds.), *L'image et la production du sacré* (Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 1991), pp. 139-164, especially 159-160.

⁸⁶ Franz, *Die Messe*, p. 159.

⁸⁷ See the translation Bernard Brownlow, „*Vitis Mystica*“ or *The True Wine: A Treatise on the True Passion of our Lord* (London: Washbourne, 1873), pp. 21-22.

⁸⁸ Edina Ádám, *Pelbárt of Temesvár and the Use of Images in Preaching* (Budapest, 2008) M.A. thesis at the Medieval Studies Department, Central European University. I am indebted to Frabrizio Conti for this reference.

during his Passion in the wall paintings of the northern and northeastern walls. Moreover, the wall paintings in the nave (dated earlier, towards the end of the fourteenth century) show a similar emphasis on the suffering of Christ during his Passion,⁸⁹ whereas on the winged altarpiece, commissioned around 1450-1460, the woman donor is accompanied by the representation of Saint Claire of Assisi.⁹⁰ Therefore, in spite of the fact that there are no documentary proofs there are numerous suggestions that the Apafi family was under Franciscan spiritual guidance when the interior decoration of their family church was made. This explains the sophisticated structure of the iconographic program of the wall paintings in the sanctuary as well as other narrative illustrations of dogmas supported by the Franciscans.⁹¹ All these might be related to the funerary role of this family church at Mălâncrav and explains the possibility of the presence of the half-length donor "portraits" in the same row with the central composition showing the *Vir Dolorum* and the Holy Bishops. In this way the donors were ensured perpetual prayers and a place in the memory of the family members and those who visited the church in order to receive indulgences.

The high quality of the frescoes in the sanctuary and the strong influence of the Bohemian style are also significant. These could be explained either by direct connections with the Bohemian environment, as was the case with the brothers Reinhart and Eberhardt of Mühlhausen, or by the artistic formation of the Master who executed the paintings in the church at Mălâncrav. On the other hand, the choice of the style might be a consequence of the particular desires of the Apafis to embellish their family church with a decoration recalling the Bohemian imperial environment. The spiritual connection with the Franciscans and the special interest of the donor family for the cult of the Holy Blood of Christ, mentioned in the indulgence request of 1424, might be other motivations behind this particular stylistic choice.⁹² There are no indications that the Apafis had any connections with Bohemia or Prague and the cult of the Holy Blood in the church at Mălâncrav is not documented in any other written sources except the already-mentioned indulgence supplication. However, the specific

⁸⁹ See Gogâltan, 'Passion Iconography', pp. 120-122.

⁹⁰ See Anca Gogâltan, *Patronage and Artistic Production in Transylvania. The Apafis and the Church in Mălâncrav (14th-15th centuries)* (Budapest: Ph.D. Dissertation, 2002), p. 152, fig. 113.

⁹¹ This was articulated along several axis of significance like the east west one combining the image of *Vir Dolorum* with the representation of the Virgin with the Protective Mantle to which were generally attributed intercessory roles. See Gogâltan, 'Passion iconography', pp. 120-121, figs. 8,9,11.

⁹² See Gogâltan - Sallay, 'The Church of Mălâncrav and the Holy Blood Chapel', pp. 194-198

elements of the Apafi coat-of-arms might be an indication of their special veneration for the Holy Blood that could have been older than the church itself.

The eastern key-stone decoration in the sanctuary contains elements of the first known version of their coat-of-arms.⁹³ This looks like a seal and shows in the middle a Crusader helmet⁹⁴ having as a crest ornament grapes and a grape vine. This type of helmet was used during the fourteenth century and may be seen on other seals of Hungarian nobles as well, for example on Thomas Szécsényi's (dated to 1339)⁹⁵ and on that of Nicholas Kont (of 1358).⁹⁶ Documents suggest that the use of coats of arms in Hungary appeared towards the end of the twelfth century although some symbols existed already in the eleventh century. In the twelfth century the Beche family, the precursor of the noble kindred Beche-Gergely, ancestors of the Apafi and Bethlen families, used a snake as a symbol.⁹⁷ Documents prove that the separation between the Apafis and the Bethlens was achieved in 1305 when they officially divided their properties.⁹⁸ It might be possible that the Apafis chose the grapes and the grape vine at that time while the Bethlens kept the snake as their family symbol. It cannot be proved that the Apafis have chosen these heraldic elements in order to indicate their veneration to the Holy Blood of Christ. Moreover, one has to keep in mind that some of their properties including Mălâncrav were situated in winemaking regions but the Eucharistic symbolism of the grapes present in their family coat-of-arms cannot be denied.

Conclusions

It is noteworthy that at the time when the church was built and painted, the Apafis were members of the lesser nobility who had to choose a military career in order to progress socially. They were not very rich but, apparently,

⁹³ The decoration of the key stone contains on the margin an inscription written with Gothic majuscles. This includes an earlier version of the family name Appa but the meaning of the entire inscription is not known. See Imre Lukinich, *A bethleni Gróf Bethlen-család története* [The History of the Bethlen Family of Beclean] (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1927), p. 6. See also József Sebestyén Kőpeczi, 'A Becse-Gergely nemzetség. Az Apafi és a Bethleni gróf Bethlen család cimere' [The Becse-Gergely Kindred. The Coat-of-Arms of the Apafi and the Bethlen counts of Beclean] in *Erdélyi Irodalmi Szemle* (1928): 69-83, especially p. 80.

⁹⁴ See Bradford B. Broughton, *Dictionary of Medieval Knighthood and Chivalry. Concepts and Terms* (New York, Connecticut, London: Greenwood Press, 1986), pp. 237-238.

⁹⁵ Marosi (ed.), *Magyarországi művészet*, vol. 2, 112, fig. 310/1.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 119, fig. 317/2.

⁹⁷ Engel, *The Realm*, p. 86.

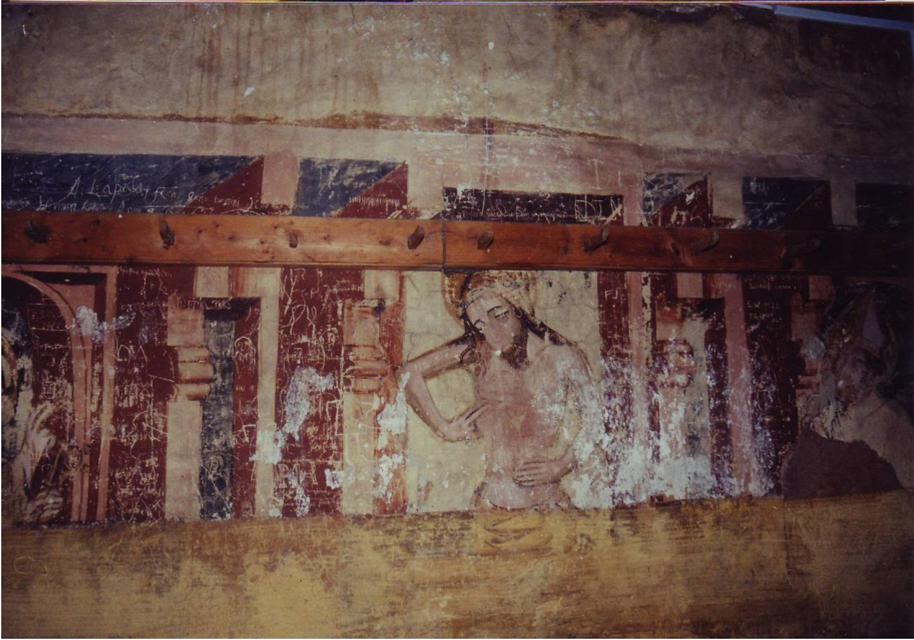
⁹⁸ *Urkundenbuch*, vol. I, pp. 229-230. For further references see Gogâltan - Sallay, 'The Church of Mălâncrav and the Holy Blood Chapel', p. 183.

they were well connected to members of the higher nobility of the kingdom, like the Csákis. Therefore, one may suppose that the cycle of paintings decorating the sanctuary was more likely to express their social ambitions rather than their actual social position at the time when they were created. Although they do not conform to the established patterns of donor representation, the characters in the composition on the lower area in the sanctuary are comparable, at least in message, to self-representations of members of the higher nobility of the land such as the already-mentioned Jolsvai and Drugeth. The „portraits” of the Apafis on the lower register in the sanctuary show an original display of piety and prayers addressed to the suffering Christ but seen in connection with the selection of saints depicted on the southern and southeastern walls they also visualize the Apafis self-awareness as knights and nobles of the land.

List of images:

1. Eastern and north-eastern walls in the sanctuary of the church at Mălâncrav.
2. Christ *Vir Dolorum* (estern wall in the sanctuary)
3. Bishop saint (eastern wall in the sanctuary)
4. Male and female characters (north-eastern wall in the sanctuary)
5. Saint Andrew (south-eastern wall in the sanctuary)
6. Female character (northern wall in the sanctuary)
7. Male character (southern wall in the sanctuary)





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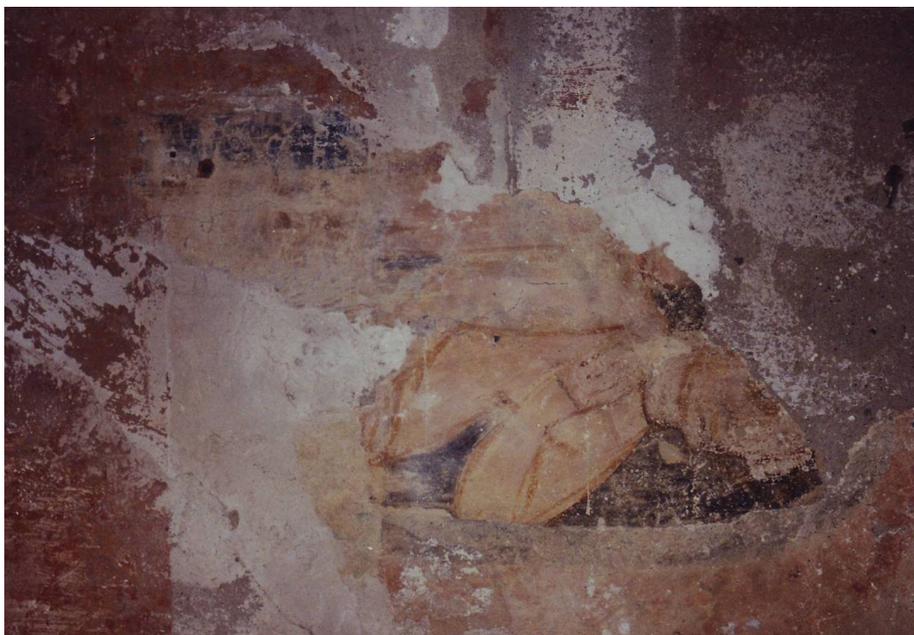
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The Transylvanian Nobles: Between Heavenly and Earthly Interests in the Middle Ages*

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Abstract: Established since the earliest of times, originating in the written document itself wills have always been legal documents regulating patrimonial rights and intergenerational relations due to the possibility of transmission of goods and material and spiritual values. A will sanctions socially and culturally regulated rights and obligations which have been recognized as social norms ensuring civilized functioning. Psychologically it is also a very complex document which reflects the profoundly human nature of the sense of intimacy in relations between ancestors and descendants. In the opinion of Serge Briffaud "the existence of a will is based both on ambiguity and balance". The first is the result of putting side by side within the same text seemingly irreconcilable prescriptions of temporal and spiritual nature. The second, namely the balance, was provided by a certain solidarity between the two parties, an agreement that needed to be analogically added to the relation when the document was drawn up. Thus, through the testament, the dying person finds the chance to satisfy a double aspiration: salvation of his/her soul and to preserve his/her possessions on this earth. The article hereby intends to detect the medieval nobleman of Transylvania in exactly this state, as a testator having two concerns: care for his own soul, on the one hand drives him to make pious donations, while responsibility for his beloved, on the other hand, drives him to donations offered to his relatives and other people. From among the dispositions of the wills aiming to ensure redemption only those referring to pilgrimages shall be presented. Also the other means by which noblemen cared for their soul and the soul of their beloved and also for the possessions gathered in their lifetime, measures considered to be complementary to the wills will be examined.

Key words: medieval last wills and testaments, nobles, Transylvania, pilgrimages, donations

Rezumat: Nobilii transilvăneni între interesele lumii celeilalte și interesele pământești în evul mediu. Atestat din cele mai vechi timpuri, avându-și originea în apariția documentului scris, testamentul a reprezentat un act juridic, de reglare a drepturilor patrimoniale și a relațiilor intergeneraționale, sub aspectul transmisibilității bunurilor și valorilor materiale și spirituale. Actul testamental consfințește, pe de o parte, drepturi și obligații reglate socio-cultural, recunoscute ca norme de funcționare civilizată a unei societăți, pe de altă parte, el constituie un act de mare complexitate psihologică care reflectă natura profund umană a sensului intimității în relațiile dintre înaintași și urmași. Potrivit lui

Serge Briffaud “existența testamentului se bazează deopotrivă pe o ambiguitate și un echilibru”. Prima rezultă din juxtapunerea în interiorul aceluiași text a prescripțiilor de ordin temporal și spiritual, aparent ireconciliabile, iar echilibrul era dat de o anumită solidaritate între cele două părți, solidaritate care trebuie pusă analogic în relație cu momentul redactării actului. Astfel, prin testament, muribundul găsește posibilitatea satisfacerii unei duble aspirații: mântuirea și păstrarea averilor de aici. Articolul de față își propune să surprindă nobilul medieval transilvănean chiar în această ipostază. Ca testator, fiind măcinat de o dublă frământare: pe de o parte, grija pentru sufletul său îl îndeamnă spre donații pentru mântuirea sufletului (*donum pro remedio animae*) și donații pioase, ilustrate cu ajutorul pelerinajelor, iar pe de altă parte, grija pentru cei dragi îl conduce spre donații oferite rudelor și altor persoane. Deasemenea, vom prezenta și celelalte căi prin care nobilii s-au îngrijit de sufletul lor și al celor dragi, precum și de bunurile acumulate în timpul vieții, măsuri considerate ca fiind complementare testamentelor.

Cuvinte cheie: testamente medievale, nobili, Transilvania, pelerinaje, donații

A relevant piece of information to begin with is that most of the written sources of the medieval period that have been preserved until today are legal documents certifying the status of a domain or other form of property and this is no accident. The documents have been preserved since they were of real interest: the proprietary right of one or several domains depended on their existence. Fortunately besides the unilateral documents certifying the proprietary right also other sources have been created from a very different motivation. And this difference is in fact what makes them valuable. The most important types of documents among these are letters having preserved the moments of everyday life and wills foreseeing the end of life. The direct and personal style of these two types of sources contributed greatly to writing in one's own mother tongue: already at the end of the Middle Ages there were cases when letters and testaments were drawn up not only in Latin, but also in Hungarian.¹ At the end of the Middle Ages and the early modern period (the sixteenth – seventeenth centuries) the custom of leaving a will was greatly developed in Transylvania, people from all walks of life had an unprecedented interest in legally transmitting the results of their lifelong toil to their descendants or the chosen institutions.

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¹ The earliest letters and last wills in Hungarian can be found in Attila Hegedűs - Lajos Papp (ed.), *Középkori leveleink (1541-ig)*[Medieval Letters until 1541] / Régi Magyar Levéltár 1./ (Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó Vállalat, 1991), pp. 3-117.

Thus there were not only the legal descendants who received significant material, spiritual and cultural inheritances, but also the entire society through its institutions like parish churches, monasteries and almshouses.

Established since the earliest of times, originating in the written document itself wills have always been legal documents regulating patrimonial rights and intergenerational relations due to the possibility of transmission of goods and material and spiritual values. A will sanctions socially and culturally regulated rights and obligations which have been recognized as social norms ensuring civilized functioning. Psychologically it is also a very complex document which reflects the profoundly human nature of the sense of intimacy in relations between ancestors and descendants. However, wills are not only legal instruments. In the history of written documents wills can be considered one of the most personalized and complex documents of the human race. They are the illustration and measure of the quality of a person's life on earth and in the afterlife, and they are endowed with a significant transcendental value. At the same time a will is also a vivid reflection of all human emotions and attitudes from the deeply negative ones (like egoism, spitefulness, vengefulness, suffering, disappointment) to the highly positive ones (like generosity, dedication, love, responsibility, care for fellow beings and the descendants even beyond death). In most cases the will is the only written product of the testator and at the same time an original illustration of everyday life and the spirit of the age, a witness to both the personality of the testator and the historical age of reference. Therefore it is certain that for the thorough historian a will can be a useful source even though it has been discovered relatively late. In spite of that it proved to be an essential source in the attempts to obtain more information regarding the history of the family or of the religious mentality of an age. The works of Michel Vovelle² and Pierre Chaunu³ have consecrated this source and the subsequent research in France, England and Italy⁴ offered new arguments and diversified the conclusions of the above-mentioned French specialists. We are thinking here of the discussions generated by the reservations expressed regarding this type of document. The most frequently mentioned concern of the skeptics was the stereotypical nature of the testamentary discourse, the recurrence of some clichés specific

² Michel Vovelle, *Piété baroque et déchristianisation en Provence au XVIIIe siècle. Les attitudes devant la mort d'après les clauses des testaments* (Paris: Plon, 1973); Idem, *Mourir autrefois: attitudes collectives devant la mort aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Gallimard - Julliard, 1974); Idem, *La mort et l'Occident de 1300 à nos jours* (Paris: Gallimard, 1983).

³ Pierre Chaunu, 'Mourir à Paris (XVIe, XVIIe, XVIIIe siècles)', *Annales ESC*, 31.1 (1976): 29-50; Idem, *La mort à Paris 16e, 17e, 18e siècles* (Paris: Fayard, 1978).

⁴ A summary of the western research conducted on the basis of this source can be found in Vovelle, *Piété baroque*, pp. XVI-XXIII.

to an imposed form of the will, which however seems to prove right those who suspect that the will reflects social convention. Another difficulty in this respect is that this is a mediated discourse: we do not get in touch directly with the convictions and sentiments of our ascendant (except in the case of handwritten wills) only through the work of the writer of the will who was different from the person making the will in most cases. Yet these objections are justified only in part. Of course there is a stereotype for formulating wills, but as Vovelle also demonstrated it is not perfectly followed, for upon closer analysis it can be easily discovered that in fact one will does not resemble another.⁵

In the opinion of these scholars the will is an excellent support for the modern discourse on death and a careful questioning during its analysis offers answers to fundamental questions related to last preparations for this inevitable moment, to representations of death and to the complex solidarity existing between the living and the dead. Pierre Chaunu considers wills “the most widely spread document of personal nature defining the individual” after the dowry contract and the inventory after death.⁶ In his already classic book, Michel Vovelle was convinced that “the will has the advantage of offering a complete system of usable elements, either regarding the individual or the relations between people from the preamble formulas to the pious clauses of a material nature (the required post-mortem religious services, charitable foundations)”.⁷ Another approach was used by Serge Briffaud. He reached the conclusion that the researcher needs to consider a very important aspect, i.e. that “the existence of a will is based both on ambiguity and balance”. The first is the result of putting side by side within the same text seemingly irreconcilable prescriptions of temporal and spiritual nature. The second, namely the balance, is provided by a certain solidarity between the two parties, an agreement that needed to be analogically added to the relation when the document was drawn up.⁸

⁵ Wills from Transylvania confirm this assertion. On the other hand let us not forget that even the priest in a close relation to the local parochial environment has no relevant instructions and cannot ignore the final wishes of the testator which, even in the form drawn up by the priest or the deacon bear many signs of orality and thus the original expressions used on the deathbed. Vovelle, *Piété baroque*, p. XXIII. Vovelle’s above-presented opinion has been shared also by others familiar with the domain of wills of Early Modern and Modern France such as Chaunu, *La mort à Paris*, p. 233; François Lebrun, *Les hommes et la mort en Anjou aux XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: La Haye, 1971), p. 330.

⁶ Chaunu, *La mort à Paris*, p. 226.

⁷ Vovelle, *Piété baroque*, p. XV.

⁸ It needs to be mentioned that this aspect has been observed for the first time by Philippe Ariès, *Omul în fața morții* [The Hour of Our Death] (2 vols, București: Meridiane, 1998), vol. 1, p. 260.

Having in view both this and the other world “the will is in fact fitted in a zero time and in the space of a psychological drama: considering both the necessity to be saved and to preserve his/her possessions on this earth the dying person finds through the will the chance to satisfy a double aspiration.”⁹

The article hereby intends to detect the medieval nobleman of Transylvania in exactly this state, as a testator having two concerns: care for his own soul, on the one hand drives him to make donations for the salvation of his soul (*donum pro remedio animae*)¹⁰ and pious donations, while responsibility for his beloved, on the other hand drives him to donations offered to his relatives and other people.¹¹ From among the dispositions of the wills aiming to ensure redemption only those referring to pilgrimages shall be presented. Also other means by which noblemen cared for their soul and the soul of their beloved and also for the possessions gathered in their lifetime, measures considered to be complementary to the wills will be examined.

Concern for saving one’s soul – Pilgrimages

When the testator felt that the time was nearing, he did not passively wait for his death, but sent for the priest to prepare him for death, a state which according to the teaching of the Church and the conviction of the believer was the transition to eternity. The priest encouraged the dying person to trust the mercy of God. After declaring that he left behind all enmities and was at peace with his faith, the priest heard his confession, gave him Holy Communion, and finally anointed him with oil that had been blessed by a

⁹ Serge Briffaud, ‘Le temps de la source. Testament et méthodologie en l’histoire des mentalités’, *Sources. Travaux historiques*, 11 (1987): 16.

¹⁰ Antal Murarik, ‘A lélekváltság (*Donum pro salute animae*)’ [The Salvation of the Soul (*Donum pro salute animae*)], *Regnum*, 2 (1937): 155–167; Idem, *Az ősiség alapintézményeinek eredete* [The Origin of the so-called *Avicitas* Institution] /*Értekezések* Eckhart Ferenc Jogtörténeti Szemináriumából, 6./ (Budapest: Murarik Antal, 1938), pp. 114–130. More recently Kornél Szóvák, ‘*Meritorum apud Dominum fructus cumulatorum* (Megjegyzések a 14. századi főúri vallásossághoz)’ [*Meritorum apud Dominum fructus cumulatorum* (Remarks concerning the Fourteenth Century Aristocratic Religiosity)], in Péter Tusor (ed.), *R. Várkonyi Ágnes emlékkönyve születésének 70. évfordulója ünnepére* [Festschrift on the 70th Birthday of Ágnes R. Várkonyi] (Budapest: ELTE, 1998), pp. 79–87.

¹¹ The interest of the church in drawing up wills is well illustrated also by the fact that the synod of Veszprém of 1515 regulated in detail the process of leaving a will in accordance with general practice. László Solymosi (ed.), *A veszprémi egyház 1515. évi zsinati határozatai* [The Synodal Decrees of the Veszprém Diocese from 1515] (Budapest: Argumentum, 1997), pp. 93–94.

bishop while performing a sacrament, i.e. the extreme unction.¹² Forgiveness of sins after the last confession was especially important for the dying person. And that could be given only by a member of the clergy. Thus the priest played a very important part in cases when there were suspicions regarding the cause of death. He was the person to whom the dying person had to confess about potential enemies. Therefore his declaration was of great value.¹³ Preparations having been performed it was time to draw up a will. A decisive role in this action was played by the priest who was present at the moment. On the one hand the (parish) priest was the one drawing up the testament in writing. Sometimes besides his role as an editor of the will he became also one of the witnesses. He influenced the content of the will on the one hand, since he drew the attention of the sick person that after death there were no more chances to gain credit for his behaviour and gestures. Therefore this was the final moment when he could do good to make up for his sins, this was his last chance of acting towards gaining credit for the salvation of his soul and his happiness in the other world. Thus, great importance was attached to donations, testified by the fact that the substantial part of the wills begins with them. It seems that the main beneficiaries of these donations are the ecclesiastical institutions. Real estate,

¹² A detailed description of the preparations for death is to be found in the will of Nicholas Deni's wife of 1453. Magyar Országos Levéltár [National Archives of Hungary], Budapest (henceforth: MOL), Diplomatikai Levéltár [Collection of pre-1526 charters; henceforth: DL] 30316.

¹³ This results also from the agreement between Peter, the son of Michael of Sanislău (Szaniszlófalva) and the noblemen of Bátor of October 1365. It seems that the circumstances of Michael of Sanislău's death were not exactly clear, he did not die of "natural causes". Michael, the priest of Sanislău (Szaniszlófalva), tending to the dead man's soul was the one who could shed light on the case, since he heard the dying man's confession on his deathbed. Still Nicholas Konth, the palatine of Hungary and the judge of the Cumans was not in a comfortable position, since it seems that the priest gave two conflicting testimonies. One of the testimonies says that Michael of Sanislău did not mention anything about being ill-treated by the nobles of Bátor to his priest. But in another letter the priest of the dead man declared that, on his deathbed Michael of Sanislău accused the nobles of Bátor of being his murderers, but when receiving the extreme unction he declared them innocent. Still Michael of Sanislău's son makes an agreement with the nobles of Bátor, but its content is not known to us. Sabin Belu - Ioan Dani - Aurel Răduțiu et al. (eds), *Documenta Romaniae Historica, C, Transilvania*, vol. 10-15 (1351-1380) (6 vols, București - Cluj: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România - Editura Academiei Române, 1977-2006), vol. 12, pp. 453-454 (henceforth: *DocRomHist*); Imre Szentpétery (ed.), *A nagykállói Kállay család levéltára. Az oklevelek és egyéb iratok kivonatai* [The Archive of the Kállay Family of Nagykálló. The Resumes of the Charters and of the Other Writings] (2 vols, Budapest: Magyar Heraldikai és Geneológiai Társaság, 1943; henceforth: *Kállt*), vol. 2, no. 1567.

animals, objects made of precious metals, clothing (to be turned into chasubles) and money could be donated to them. Preferred ecclesiastical institutions were the friaries and convents of the mendicant and Pauline orders and parishes and chapels, especially those to which the testator or the deceased was a patron. Less frequently the beneficiaries were the houses of the beguines and the almshouses. The persons preparing for death believed and declared with conviction that in case they temporarily had to face purgatory instead of heavenly bliss, their suffering in the afterworld could be shortened by donations for the redemption of the soul, masses, pilgrimages, repairs of the church and by providing churches with the necessary equipment, care for the poor and orphans and by any other means. A good example of such an expression of faith is found in John Drágfi's last will of 1526. On the one hand, he made some last minute changes in his testament drawn up earlier (1524), since "as far as salvation is concerned" he disliked some of his former resolutions. On the other hand, he strongly requested the executors of his will to "care greatly for the almshouse, let the poor living there never go hungry... The masses and psalms shall not grow fewer... they should not be forgotten and holy masses should go on because the salvation of my soul depends on these."¹⁴ Vice-voievode Nicholas of Ocna Sibiului (Vízakna, Salzburg) found another method to accede to the salvation of his soul. He left to his chaplain, Thomas 25 golden florins in order that he would go on a pilgrimage either to the Roman Curia or to the church of the Virgin Mary in Aachen (*ut cum ipsis florenibus visitet curiam Romanam, aut ecclesiam beate Marie virginis in Aquisgrano*). He specifies however that should Thomas not be willing to go, another person capable for such a mission should be found.¹⁵ Ladislas of Șintereag (Somkerék) in his will of 1407 commanded the same thing. He disposed that from a casket where he had golden florins and relics, the latter were meant to be taken to the Blood of Christ church in Cepar (Csépan, Tschippendorf) and the Blessed Virgin in Șintereag (Somkerék), while the money in the casket should be used for the purposes of a pilgrimage to

¹⁴ Gyula Zolnai, *Nyelvemlékeink a könyvnyomtatás koráig* [The Monuments of the Hungarian Language until the Time of Printing] (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1894), p. 256.

¹⁵ Franz Zimmermann - Carl Werner - Georg Müller et al. (eds), *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen (1191-1496)* (7 vols., Hermannstadt - Bucharest: Ausschuss des Vereines für siebenbürgische Landeskunde and Verlag der Rumänischen Akademie, 1892-1991; henceforth: *Ulb*), vol. 6, p. 220; Zsigmond Jakó (ed.), *A kolozsmonostori konvent jegyzőkönyvei, 1289-1556* [The Convent Records from Cluj-Mănăstur, 1289-1556] / *A Magyar Országos Levéltár Kiadványai II.* / (2 vols, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990; henceforth: *KmJkv*), vol. 1, no. 1676.

Rome.¹⁶ It seems, in many cases the bequest for a pilgrimage is far more general in nature, leaving any details to be settled subsequently. An unknown testator, whose will is dated around 1430, stated simply that he bequeathed 15 florins for the purposes of a pilgrimage to Bába (*causa peregrinationis ad Batha*).¹⁷

Pilgrimage is a widely spread religious experience extending far beyond the borders of Christianity. It was known and practiced in pagan antiquity and also by the Jews. In this respect the medieval West is but an heir to this custom, yet an heir that contributed to this traditional rule with some original additions of its own. The classic Latin vocabulary contained the word *peregrinus* conferring two meanings to it. First of all *peregrinus* meant a peregrine, a stranger or a person in exile who lives far away from his relatives for whatever reason and enjoys a special status conferred by the law. Secondly it meant a pilgrim in the contemporary sense of the word, i.e. a traveler heading to a sanctuary out of devotion. Christianity adopted the term with both its formerly mentioned meanings. Not every journey to a sanctuary is a pilgrimage, only those made out of devotion. Such attitudes meant valuing the place to be visited far more than regarding it out of curiosity or scientific interest. Devoted pilgrims do not leave their house and family merely to travel or to perform a more profound ascetic gesture. Their journey has a purpose and they know what they are looking for even if their hopes are formulated indistinctly. They do not expect the same favours from every sanctuary. In Jerusalem, for example, pilgrims visit the olive garden, the Holy Tomb, the Church of Resurrection and many other places reminiscent of the earthly life of Christ. These are reason enough to motivate thousands of pilgrims to set out on a journey. To follow the Lord step by step on the land touched by his feet is a strong motivation which gathers people together to achieve a common goal, that of pilgrimage and the imitation of Christ. Jerusalem, the holy city is also considered a city of blessings where God's grace manifests itself more fully. One can come here to enjoy this special kindness. On the holy hills the earth is closer to heaven. Those coming to Jerusalem to pray take advantage of this closeness to heaven, those who stay for a while can wait here for the end of the world in a special, sanctifying environment, while those who find their grave here will be the first to be woken up by the trumpet of the angel. In short, pilgrimage to Jerusalem, especially when one intends to stay is a quest for

¹⁶ "... pixidem ... in quo essent floreni auri et reliquiae sanctorum, ad se recipere deberet et cum florenis illis peragere peregrinationem ad limina beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum ac reliquias pro dictis ecclesiis sanguinis Christi de Chepan et beate virginis de Somkerek deberet distribuere..." *Urb*, vol. 3, p. 427.

¹⁷ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 25.

salvation on the most righteous paths. Even though pilgrimage to the Holy Land was considered in fact the “true” pilgrimage, among those who chose this destination on their way to salvation, only a few people came from Transylvania. This may have had financial reasons. According to some calculations a pilgrimage to Jerusalem could be five times more expensive than one to Rome.¹⁸ It seems that pilgrimage destinations were closely related to the social status of the pilgrims: while Aachen was visited mostly by town dwellers and Rome was reached by Hungarian pilgrims of various social standing, the Holy Land remained a destination to be chosen by noblemen who were at least *comites*.¹⁹

In Rome, pilgrims visited besides other places and monuments the tombs of the apostles Peter and Paul. By such a gesture they reaffirmed their attachment to the church. They transferred their devotion to Peter to his heir, the Pope. Thus the apostolic chair gained absolute prestige. After their arrival in Rome the pilgrims may have visited either the successor of Peter or his chancellery. Nobody ignores the fact that he received the power to tie and untie. Therefore a solution can be found here for the most serious cases. Besides being a place of ecclesiastic pilgrimage Rome was also a place of penitential pilgrimage where the most profound forgiveness could be received. The couple Peter and Sophia of Jimbor (Zsombor) intended to visit Rome as well (*sanctorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum limina, Romanamque curiam gratia obtinendarum indulgentiarum adire intendit*). But as true Christians they had their common will drawn up before they left for Rome, in February 1482. According to their will composed in the convent of Cluj-Mănăstur (Kolozsmonostor), Peter and Sophia of Jimbor left their part of the Jimbor (Szászsombor) property along with the fish pond within to the Virgin Mary monastery of Cluj (Kolozsvár, Klausenburg), the friary of the Dominicans as a foundation for masses. From the income of the fish pond the cemetery of the church of the Virgin Mary of Jimbor was to be renovated and a stone column bearing the images of the holy martyrs Fabian and Sebastian was to be erected (*ad honorem sanctorum Fabiani et Sebastiani martyrum unam columpnam lapideam cum ymaginibus eorundem sanctorum depingere faciant*). To the altar of Saint Clara in the parish church of Jimbor the couple left the Újtó (New Lake) fish pond created by them at the border of Jimbor so that the incomes of this pond would be enough to pay a rector of the altar (*unum idoneum sacerdotem in rectorem altaris ad ipsam aram eligere valeant*).²⁰

¹⁸ Enikő Csukovits, ‘„Cum capsă ... cum bacillo”. Középkori magyar zarándokok’ [„Cum capsă ... cum bacillo”. Medieval Hungarian Pilgrims], *Aetas*, 1994.1: 5-27, especially p. 12.

¹⁹ Csukovits, ‘Cum capsă’, p. 17.

²⁰ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 2342.

In Santiago de Compostela and in every sanctuary that claims the patronage of a saint, pilgrims usually arrived to a tomb.²¹ In these cases the value of the place is usually based on the customary ideas regarding holy bodies. To the body of the persons who entered the celestial glory a sacred force is attributed which manifests itself wherever the holy body is, especially through miracles. Pilgrims come to these sanctuaries to receive for their own benefit a bit of the heavenly power hidden in these bones. At the end of the journey pilgrims strove to touch the relics, to sit on the tomb or to sleep in its vicinity. Others who had appealed to the saint in their prayers and their supplication had received a favourable answer arrived to the sanctuary to take a vow and to provide a symbolic offering. Pilgrims asked saints mainly for miracles as their reputation stemmed from their thaumaturgical power. The protection of crops, the dangers of the sea, lost belongings and some of the less important subjects inspired both requests and thanksgivings. John Bogáti did not formulate any special requests when he decided to go on a pilgrimage to Rome, he simply stated that his reverence to the apostles Peter and Paul convinced him to make this gesture.²²

So it seems that most of the pilgrims set out to their destination out of devotion. This is well illustrated by the wills drawn up at the beginning of their journey. Therefore it is not surprising that in a hierarchical classification of the types of pilgrimages in medieval Hungary, pilgrimages out of devotional reasons are at the top followed by those for penitence, the political ones, chivalrous ones and surrogate pilgrimages.²³ However it needs to be mentioned that in many cases these types of pilgrimages interpenetrate. In the cases presented in this article an overlap between the devotional and the so-called delegated pilgrimages can be observed. In wills the testator formulated a wish that this task should be performed by another person, as he was incapable – many times due to his illness – of performing the pilgrimage himself. Usually a sum of money was left for this purpose, rarely real estate. The person who was to make the pilgrimage instead of the testator was often named in the will or it was left to the best judgment of the beneficiary of the will to choose the right person for such a task. In the above-mentioned example, the vice-voievode Nicholas of Ocna Sibiului combined nomination with selection when he stated that Thomas, his chaplain shall have the great honour to go on a pilgrimage to Rome or

²¹ Alphonse Dupront, 'Pèlerinage et lieux sacrés', in Branislava Teneti (ed.), *Mélanges en l'honneur de Fernand Braudel* (2 vols, Toulouse: Privat édition, 1973), vol. 2, pp. 189–206.

²² *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 41.

²³ Erikó Csukovits, *Középkori magyar zarándokok* [Hungarian Pilgrims from the Middle Ages] /*História Könyvtár. Monográfiák 20.* (Budapest: História - MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 2003), pp. 50–88.

Aachen. He also seems to have expected a possible refusal of the task as he stipulated that, should Thomas be unwilling to make the journey another person capable of performing it should be found.²⁴

To make a pilgrimage means of course to embark on a journey regardless of whether the destination is defined or not, of whether that destination is in a far away country or nearby. At all times a certain number of rituals had to be performed. One of these was to obtain papal approval and to take the pilgrim's vow first. The vow, once taken, could be canceled only by the Pope if explicitly requested, claiming a serious reason. It is interesting that the existence and practice of this vow are known in Transylvania due to two cases, both referring to a request petitioning absolution from the vow during the thirteenth century. From a letter sent by Pope Gregory IX to Robert, the archbishop of Esztergom in July 1227 we find out that the Hungarian prelate obtained an exemption from his pilgrim's vow. From the letter of the Pope one can reconstruct step by step the whole story. It seems that Robert, the archbishop of Esztergom took a pilgrim's vow to leave on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Yet the chance to convert the Cumans made the archbishop change his plans. When a certain Cuman prince called Bortz sent his only son to the archbishop escorted by the Dominican friars of that place to request verbally that the archbishop personally would come to them to show them the way to salvation for he and his people would like to convert to Christianity the priorities of the prelate changed completely. Therefore, Archbishop Robert decided to request the cancellation of his vow. The letter of request was sent to the pontiff through the archdeacon of Zala. Pope Gregory IX weighed the two issues against each other and decided to the benefit of the Church. Therefore in his reply to the archbishop he argued that since from the Church's point of view the honour of being required to assist at the conversion of this people brought greater benefits he would absolve the archbishop from his pilgrim's vow to the Holy Land. Moreover, he was appointed apostolic legate as he requested, being given the task of propagating the Scripture, baptizing, building churches and ordaining priests and even appointing bishops in Cumania and in the neighbouring land called Brodnic.²⁵

²⁴ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 1676.

²⁵ Zsigmond Jakó (ed.), *Codex diplomaticus Transsylvaniae. Diplomata, epistolae et alia instrumenta litteraria res Transsylvanas illustrantia. Erdélyi okmánytár. Oklevelek, levelek és más írásos emlékek Erdély történetéhez*, vol. 1 (1023–1300), vol. 2 (1301–1339), vol. 3 (1340–1359) / *A Magyar Országos Levéltár Kiadványai II, Forráskiadványok.* (3 vols, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó - Magyar Országos Levéltár, 1997–2008; henceforth: *CDTrans*), vol. 1, no. 145; Georgius Fejér (ed.), *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis* (tom. I – XI, 40 vols, Buda: Typogr. Regiae Universitatis Hungaricae, 1829–1844; henceforth

The second case when the pilgrim's vow was cancelled is interesting also for another reason. The document reveals another legal aspect of pilgrimage, i.e. the pilgrim's vow was inherited. When in March 1288 ban Mykud, the son of comes Mykud of the Kőkényes-Radnót family and his late brother, magister Emeric were absolved of the pilgrim's vow, in fact this was the cancellation of a pilgrim's vow inherited by the ban (*banus* – a royal officer) from his father. The document mentions that it was their father who took a pilgrim's vow to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The absolution was given to the two brothers by Philip, the bishop of Fermo, the apostolic legate of the Hungarian Kingdom and of Poland. But, if in the first case there was no mention regarding a compensation for the cancellation of the vow – in this case it is mentioned indirectly, since the apostolic legate gives absolution to the sons of comes Mykud only under the condition that they should offer 50 marks to any church they chose. It seems that even this absolution tax could be changed into a donation of real estate. This is what the document issued by ban Mykud from the Kőkényes-Radnót family suggests. He decided to donate his possession of Szentmiklós²⁶ near the Arieş (Aranyos) river in the county of Turda (Torda, Thorenburg) to Peter, bishop of Transylvania for the redemption of his soul and of his brother's soul, guided by the reverence to Christ, the Virgin Mary and the archangel Saint Michael. We also find out that the domain in question was a royal donation from Bela IV, which was later confirmed also by the kings Stephen V and Ladislas IV.²⁷ The beneficiary, in this case the bishopric of Transylvania ensured the possession of the newly acquired domain. Ban Mykud promised them that if the privileges received from the above-mentioned kings needed to be presented in court regarding the domain he would do so with no hesitation. On the other hand, the ban showed that he would do so only if he needed to present just the documents strictly regarding this estate and not other properties and custom places in his

CDHung), vol. III/2, pp. 109–111; Augustinus Theiner (ed.), *Vetera monumenta historica Hungariam sacram illustrantia* (2 vols, Romae: Romae Typis Vaticanis, 1859–1860; henceforth: Theiner, *MonHung*), vol. 1, pp. 86–87; Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki – Nicolae Densușianu (eds), *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor* [Documents Concerning the History of the Romanians] (tom. 2, București: Editura Academiei Române, 1887–1890; henceforth: Hurmuzaki – Densușianu, *Documente*), vol. I/1, p. 102; *Documente privind istoria României. C. Transilvania* (Veacul XI–XIII. vol. I–II. Veacul XIV. vol. I–IV, București: Editura Academiei Republicii Populare Romine, 1951–1955; henceforth: *DIR C*), veacul XI–XIII, vol. 1, p. 228; Aloysius A. Täutu, *Acta Honorii III. et Gregorii IX* /*Fontes*, Series III, vol. III/ (Romae: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1950), pp. 206–207.

²⁶ A settlement belonging to the town of Turda which has since disappeared.

²⁷ *CDTrans*, vol. 1, no. 236, 295.

possession. Besides this, the *banus* undertakes in his and his descendants' name to tend to the administration of this possession by the bishopric and in case the bishopric would lose the village received as a donation it will compensate for the village either with a possession having the same value or by paying back the 50 marks. The donation will be confirmed by the privilege of the chapter of Alba Iulia (Gyulafehévár, Karlsburg/Weissenburg).²⁸

After a petition addressed to the Pope, requesting permission to go on a pilgrimage²⁹, and after obtaining a favourable answer and taking the pilgrim's vow, the pilgrim received from the priest of his parish a benediction, a stick and a bag. These distinctive symbols are procured on the occasion of a ceremony when pilgrims confessed, they held penitence and participated in a mass officiated for them. There is an entire liturgy for such occasions during which psalms are sung, and various invocations are made. This is a coherent and homogenous ritual born out of a well-rooted tradition.³⁰ Due to the consecration conferred by the benedictions of the ritual the pilgrims represent a specific *ordo* recognized by the decrees of the councils.

Before setting out on his journey the pilgrim also needed to have at his disposal a small sum of money to use when needed. In fact, providing the sum of money necessary to perform the pilgrimage was the main component of the expedition. The amount depended on the destination, the reason for the pilgrimage and the pilgrim's social status. Naturally, a pilgrimage to Jerusalem was more expensive than one to Aachen. Also a pilgrimage of penitence made on foot without an escort was cheaper than the pompous pilgrimage of a knight. Since many people do not have great sums of money in cash, amounts necessary for a pilgrimage were often obtained by sales or pawning possessions. The first method mentioned was used by Anthony of Seuca (Szőkefalva) in 1468. In this year, the scribe

²⁸ *CDTrans*, vol. 1, no. 434; *CDHung*, vol. V/3, pp. 436–438; Hurmuzaki - Densuşianu: *Documente*, vol. 1/1, pp. 470–472; *DIR C*, veacul XIII, vol. 2, pp. 294–296; Gusztáv Wenzel (ed.), *Codex diplomaticus Arpadianus continuatus. Árpádkori új okmánytár* (12 vols, Pest - Budapest: Eggenberger Ferdinánd, 1860–1874; henceforth: *CDArp*), vol. 4, pp. 332–334.

²⁹ On 12 January 1357, Pope Innocent VI approves the petition of Demeter, the bishop of Oradea (Várad, Grosswardein) to graciously allow twenty-four people from the Hungarian Kingdom to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. *DocRomHist*, vol. 11, p. 69; Árpád Bossányi (ed.), *Regesta supplicationum. A pápai kérvénykönyvek magyar vonatkozású okmányjai. Avignoni korszak* [Regesta supplicationum. The Documents Regarding Hungarians of the Papal Suppliant Registers. The Period from Avignon] (2 vols, Budapest: Stephaneum Nyomda, 1916–1918; henceforth: *RegSuppl*), vol. 2, p. 300, no. 76.

³⁰ Francis Garrisson, 'A propos des pèlerins et de leur condition juridique', *Études d'histoire du droit canonique*, 113 (1965): 1165–1189.

Anthony of Seuca decided that, having no children and being a foreigner in Transylvania (*in partibus Transsilvanis homo esset alienus*), he would leave to his lord and benefactor, the vice-voievode of Transylvania, John of Réde his part from the domain of Seuca (Szőkefalva) in the county of Târnava (Küküllő). The document shows that in that deserted place he erected a new church of stone in honour of Saint Anne (*in honorem beate Anne martiris et virginis gloriose in deserto loco ecclesiam lapideam de novo fundasset*), a gesture which he lengthened by providing a daily mass for the salvation of his soul. Anthony, the scribe also requested the vice-voievode to protect his wife and her children by protecting their proprietary rights for their domains against the claims of other noblemen. It seems that, even though this part of the domain was offered to the nobles from the vicinity to be bought they refused the offer, hoping for the death of the scribe so that they would have the chance to take possession in an abusive manner, without paying anything for the propriety. The document shows that the scribe intended to perform pilgrimages with the money obtained by selling the above-mentioned part of the property of Seuca (*firmiter voto stabilivisset diversa sanctorum limina visitare*).³¹

Pawning domains in order to be able to go on a pilgrimage was chosen as a means by Ladislav Dezsőfi of Lučenec (Losonc) and Michael of Ghiolț (Göc). Ladislav Dezsőfi pawned his parts in the domains in Bahnea (Bonyha, Bachnen), Ormeniș (Örményes, Urmesch), Ceuaș (Csávás, Grubendorf), Daia (Dányán, Dengel), Bernadea (Bernád), Gogan-Valorea (Váralja, Gogeschburg), Șoimuș (Solymos, Salmen) in the county of Târnava, with the consent of his brother Benedict to Helena, the widow of Michael, the son of Solomon of Albești (Fejéregyháza) for 400 golden florins, since he prepared to go on a pilgrimage to Rome (*limina beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum visitare intenderet*).³² Michael of Ghiolț acted in the same manner in October 1450 when he pawned, also in the name of his sons, his part in the domain of Ercea (Ercse) in the county of Turda to Andrew of Toldal (Toldalag) for 40 florins, since he intended to go on a pilgrimage to Rome. The condition for accepting the pawn in the case of Michael of Ghiolț was that he did not have the right to redeem his property for three years.³³

Having all the permits and enough money for the road, the pilgrim could set out on his long journey to the chosen spiritual destination. Most of „God’s travelers” who intended to go to the Holy Land chose to do so by sea (as opposed to a journey by land) and sailed from one of the Italian

³¹ DL 36393, pp. 49–50, no. 1; *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 1808.

³² DL 36407, p. 86, no. 4, p. 95; *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 890.

³³ DL 36407, p. 91, no. 1; *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 912.

ports. Venice, for instance began to specialize in transporting pilgrims. During 1376 several documents issued in Venice highlight the necessary steps in organizing this type of sea travel. The pilgrim intending to go to Jerusalem was no other than Stephen Lackfi, the former voievode of Transylvania. In the summer of that year the former voievode was already in Venice where the town senate decided to give him a galley in order to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Tomb. Even the itinerary is known, the galley was headed to Beyrut.³⁴ Within approximately a month and a half, in August the town senate decided the measures needed to be taken in order to provide galley transportation for Stephen Lackfi to his place of pilgrimage in the Holy Land and back. But pilgrims, once in the Holy Land did not settle for merely visiting the Holy Tomb, they proposed to visit as many sacred places as possible. Thus, we find out that also the former voievode intended to visit, besides the tomb of Christ, the Saint Catherine monastery on Mount Sinai. But such a visit would take up much time and he might not be able to return on time, for 15 August 1377 to Venice. The Venetian senate finds a way to compromise in the matter of his return. It was settled that Stephen would be taken to Beyrut or Alexandria by the galleys of Venice and upon his return he would be collected from Beyrut by another galley, not the one which took him there.³⁵ At the beginning of September, the senate of Venice considers it only fit to reward the Transylvanian dignitary before he headed out to the Holy Land. Therefore, he was offered some gifts: a beautiful pillow and two bed sheets that had been formerly prepared to receive the Pope and two barrels of Monemvasia wine.³⁶ It was also settled that the former voievode would be received with all honours in his journey towards and from the Holy Land.³⁷ It seems that Stephen Lackfi tried to take advantage of this journey to the holy places also by asking for some personal favours. In February 1377, Louis I, the king of Hungary authenticated the protest of the representatives of the Order of Holy King Stephen and of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem against selling some domains in the county of Tolna pertaining to the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem to Stephen Lackfi, the former voievode of Transylvania. Representatives of the two orders complained to the king that Stephen Lackfi while on pilgrimage to the Holy Tomb also visited the grand master of the Hospitaller Order in the isle of Rhodos and obtained from him an

³⁴ *DocRomHist*, vol. 15, pp. 57-58; *CDArp*, vol. 3, p. 130; Hurmuzaki - Densușianu, *Documente*, vol. 8, p. 1, no. 1.

³⁵ *DocRomHist*, vol. 15, pp. 72-73; Hurmuzaki - Densușianu, *Documente*, vol. 8, p. 1, no. 2.

³⁶ *DocRomHist*, vol. 15, pp. 74-75; Hurmuzaki - Densușianu, *Documente*, vol. 8, p. 2, no. 3.

³⁷ *DocRomHist*, vol. 15, p. 75; Hurmuzaki - Densușianu, *Documente*, vol. 8, p. 2, no. 4.

exchange of domains in favour of his family. The problem was that these lands were initially dedicated to tend to the house of the order in Székesfehérvár, thus the hospitallers' protest.³⁸ Stephen Lackfi was not the only one combining pleasure and business. Many other pilgrims going to Rome, for example, took advantage of the fact that they were in the town of the Pope and addressed him countless petitions regarding various personal matters. The numerous supplications preserved are testimony to this practice. Matthias Pongrácz of Livada (Dengeleg) deceased before 1501 was the son of John Pongrácz of Livada and of Lady Elisabeth. In 1493 he went on a pilgrimage to Rome with his mother. He took advantage of this opportunity and also enrolled in the confraternity of the Holy Spirit of Rome. In his will, he bequeathed to the Dominican friars of Cluj a choir cape of purple decorated with golden flowers.³⁹

Even with such thorough preparations and sacrifices it was not certain that the pilgrim would reach his destination, as he was constantly exposed to physical and natural dangers. Some of the pilgrims were forced to give up by some of their fellows. Such is the case of Felician, the priest of the church of Dipşa (Dipse, Dürrbach) who was stopped on his pilgrimage to Rome by judge Jacob Mün in Cluj who made him pay his debts to some of the town dwellers. After paying the 60 florins he owed he had to abandon the pilgrimage to which he had committed in the will of his sister (*sacra via sibi per condam sororem ipsius testamentaliter commissa*).⁴⁰

Since early times, a special legislation was drawn up to protect pilgrims on the road and their household while they are away. The texts of these laws present the dispositions that formed the norm. The everyday application of the law was certainly quite different if we are to believe the stories written in *Le guide du pèlerin de Saint-Jacques*.⁴¹ However, it is quite difficult to form a well-documented opinion since no account with the least detail could be found. Pilgrims usually traveled in groups, together with merchants and escorted by armed men. On some parts of the road, obviously measures of special precaution were taken. Yet risks presented by these dispositions did not discourage travelers who were headed in increasing numbers to various sanctuaries. There are firmly established and marked itineraries, towns that marked the stages of the journey, indicating the distance between two important towns of the pilgrimage route, places of

³⁸ *DocRomHist*, vol. 15, p. 127; *CDHung*, vol. IX/5, pp. 149–151.

³⁹ Jolán Balogh, *Az erdélyi renaissance* [The Transylvanian Renaissance] (Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Tudományos Intézet, 1943), p. 196.

⁴⁰ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 914.

⁴¹ Jeanne Vielliard, *Le Guide du pèlerin de Saint-Jacques de Compostelle* (Macôn: Vrin, 1969).

refuge and almshouses, where pilgrims could be hosted and cared for.⁴² Popes and kings also provided protection for pilgrims translated into strict measures against those who committed atrocities against pilgrims. Mainly, the pilgrims were those who tried to protect the members of their family and their wealth as well as possible. In such circumstances, as could be seen, drawing up a will was strongly recommended. Besides that, if pilgrims managed to find a protector for their goods while they were away they were even more at ease if, upon their return, they would find everything just as they left it. This is what John of Bogata (Bogát) must have thought to himself in March 1430 when he left under the protection of Barnaba of Șilea (Sülye) all his domains wherever they might be. As he confessed in front of the convent of Cluj-Mănăștur, he made this gesture out of devotion to Saint Peter and Paul which led him to undertake a pilgrimage to Rome (*ob spem et devotionem beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum ad limina eorum ultra partes maritimas est profectus*).⁴³

Even though a pilgrim's belongings were – at least in theory – under the protection of the Church, pilgrims were often victims of abuse. Some of these can be considered less serious, such as stealing the good horse worth six marks along with the saddle and the stirrups belonging to master Peteu while he was on a pilgrimage to Rome (*in peregrinatione apud limina apostolorum Petri et Pauli beatorum nunc in vere existente*).⁴⁴ Others are of a more serious nature, like the occupation and selling of domains belonging to people who were away on pilgrimage. In April 1377 a petition was filed at the royal court of Visegrád from Nicholas, the son of Alexander of Lyphthovia. He pleaded that, while he was away on a pilgrimage to the Holy Tomb in Jerusalem, his property of Soșdea (Sósd) was occupied by Benedict, the son of Paul, the son of Heem, the former ban. As it was expected, Louis I, the king of Hungary ordered the chapter of the church of Cenad (Csanád) to investigate this petition.⁴⁵ In 1377, Gedeuch, the son of Myke of Mica

⁴² Francis Garrisson, 'Les hôtes et l'hébergement des étrangers au Moyen Âge. Quelques solutions de droit comparé', in Paul Ourliac (ed.), *Études d'histoire de droit privé offertes à Pierre Petot* (Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1959), pp. 199–222.

⁴³ DL 36407, p. 111, no. 1; *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 41.

⁴⁴ *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 399; Gyula Kristó – László Blazovitch – Lajos Géczy et al. (eds), *Documenta res Hungaricas tempore regum Andegavensium illustrantia 1301 – 1387. Anjou-kori oklevéltár 1301 – 1387*, vols. 1 – 15 (1301 – 1331), vol. 17 (1333), vols. 19 – 20 (1335 – 1336), vols. 23 – 28 (1339 – 1344), vol. 31 (1347) (25 vols, Budapest – Szeged: no publisher, 1990 – 2010, henceforth: *DocHungAndeg*), vol. 6, no. 167.

⁴⁵ *DocRomHist*, vol. 15, pp. 137–138; Tivadar Ortway (ed.), *Oklevelek Temesvármegye és Temesvár város történetéhez* [Chartulary for the History of Timiș County and Timișoara] / *Temesvármegye és Temesvár város története IV.* / (Pozsony: no publisher, 1896), vol. 1, p. 135.

(Mikefalva), faced problems regarding the sale of a domain owned by him and his brothers. While he was on a pilgrimage to Aachen, his brothers, Ladislav and Bartha, wanted to sell the domain of Sânmărgăhita (Szentmargita) owned by the three of them. It seems they could not carry out their plan. Gedeuch returned from the pilgrimage in time to stop his brothers from committing such a felony.⁴⁶

Going on a pilgrimage also meant to adopt a well-defined state of mind particular also to penitence and poverty. It is so obvious that, heading to a holy place cannot occur without a previous conversion to the most obvious Christian requirements. In fact, in the Church, the status of the poor, the penitents and the pilgrims is very similar. Due to their lifestyle, involving suffering of all kinds, they were regarded as being on a quest for individual redemption. The act of pilgrimage itself was a personal endeavour, a confession regarding a deep belief in the intercession of the saint to whom prayers were addressed or to whom thanks were given. This was the „driving force” of the enterprise called a pilgrimage. It is also to be remembered that these pilgrimages undertaken out of devotion represented only a part of the actions aiming at providing salvation for the soul. Testators took advantage of all the possibilities so that, in the hour of Final Judgment they would be among the saved, pilgrimage being one of the most effective tools in this respect.

Care for the beloved ones – material dispositions of testaments

The medieval testator preparing to pass on to the other world was primarily thinking of his own soul. After the devotional donations that were meant to ease his life after death were made, it was time to think about those he left behind in the world of the living. This was the moment when the testator, also following the customs and laws of his country considered his beloved ones. Members of the family and of the testator’s environment were enumerated as beneficiaries of the goods left by the testator or, as was especially the case of the servants, they were rewarded for the last time in the lifetime of the person who had been their master for so many years. This is a clear delimitation also from a structural viewpoint, since most of the wills contain dispositions regarding the members of the family, relatives, familiars and servants. The object of the inheritance was made up of the pieces of patrimonial property, on the one hand and of the goods acquired by the testator in his lifetime, on the other. These constituted the core of the family wealth whose protection and transmission were ensured by the will as a legal means. As far as real estate was concerned, testators had to follow

⁴⁶ *DocRomHist*, vol. 15, pp. 334–335.

the legal regulations of the time, but they could dispose freely of the movable property which meant that the testators could dispose of it according to their own wishes. This did not mean that they automatically increased the number of the beneficiaries of the goods. The studied cases show that – in the case of movables – testators preferred to leave their belongings to members of the family rather than strangers, who were not part of the family. Movables comprised jewelry, clothes, weapons, cutlery, furniture, money and crops. Another common feature of movables is that testators did not pay very much attention to describing them, they merely named the person who was going to be the beneficiary of that particular bequest.

In most of the wills, testators clearly defined which items would be left to each beneficiary, thus also easing the task of the executors of the testament. However, there are also cases when the last will is formulated in a very general manner. When John, the son of Solomon of Călnic (Kelnek) had his will drawn up he was convinced that his general manner of expression saying *omnes res suas mobiles et immobiles, videlicet equatias, oves, boves, porcos et quelibet animalia sua, necnon omnia vasa sua argentea, scilicet scutellas, urceos, coeliaria, baltea, piccaria ac omnia utensilia domus sue* could not possibly be misinterpreted. It is to be noted however that such generalities come up in wills when the number of beneficiaries is small or even reduced to one as is the case of John of Călnic. In his testament, formulated before 20 September 1386 he motivated his decision of leaving a will by the expression *in remedium et salutem anime sue ac parentum suorum*, and disposed that all his belongings should be inherited by master Stephen, the son of Luke of Stremț (Diód, Nußschloss).⁴⁷ A similar case is that of Nicholas, the son of Ladislás of Șintereag. When he drew up his will, on 16 June 1427 at Șintereag he stated very briefly and concisely that all his immovable and movable belongings, his goods of gold and silver and all his possessions should be inherited by his wife, Sophia.⁴⁸ Although as far as material culture is concerned this testament is not very useful, it is still worthy of our attention due to its form. This is one of the few wills of a nobleman in medieval Transylvania drawn up by a notary public, a certain Francis Széki, a Transylvanian presbyter, and the document also bears his notarial sign.⁴⁹ Due to the very strict rules regulating the work of the notary

⁴⁷ Samu Barabás (ed.), *Codex Diplomaticus Sacri Romani Imperii Comitum Familiae Teleki de Szék. A Római Szent Birodalmi Gróf Széki Teleki család oklevéltára* (2 vols, Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1895, henceforth *CDTel*), vol. 1, pp. 214–215.

⁴⁸ "Quandocunque universe carnis viam ingressurus esset, extunc omnia bona, res mobiles et immobiles, clivodia aurea et argentea, vestes et possessiones emptas pro domina coniuge sua nomine Sophia legasset et legaverit." *CDTel*, vol. 1, p. 504.

⁴⁹ DL 6653. In the Hungarian Kingdom the system of notaries public developed more slowly than in the other parts of the continent pertaining to the Latin Christian culture,

public it could be discovered also that the will had been drawn up in the parochial church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Şintereag. The widow of George Apafi, lady Anne detailed only the dispositions regarding the salvation of her soul and then disposed that all her other immovable and movable goods should pass to her daughter, also called Anne, Nicholas Erdélyi's wife. She was to own also her outstanding debts.⁵⁰ As lady Anne herself was keen to mention at the end of the document she confirmed the will by putting her own seal on it. Another widow, lady Dorothy, the widow of Nicholas Sükösd of Tirimia (Teremi), in her will, drawn up sometimes before 28 September 1495 acted in the same manner, except that she used all her belongings to help in the salvation of her soul.⁵¹ The will of Dorothy Sükösd of Tirimia links to the afterlife of the will, namely to the observance of the dispositions of the will. In this notarial deed, drawn up in front of the notary public Lawrence of Târgu Mureş (Vásárhely, Neumarkt), Martin Erdélyi's widow, acting in the name of Dorothy's daughters, forbids that the goods left by Dorothy in her will, to help in the salvation of her soul, would be given out abusively and in an uncontrolled manner.⁵² It is worth mentioning that the last wills of the Sükösd couple of Tirimia have not been preserved, yet there are other documents of the age which refer to them. Thus, the testament of Nicholas Sükösd of Tirimia is known in an indirect manner, the mediator being his widow. On 18 November 1494, in front of the convent of Cluj-Mănăştur, Dorothy, the widow of Nicholas Sükösd of Tirimia mentioned her husband's last wish to leave Peter of Jimbor, for 500 golden florins a third of half of the domain in Aiton (Ajtony) where he built a new house and a nobleman's mansion.⁵³

due to the creation and development of the native institution of the place of authentication which undertook and replaced the tasks of the notary public. Sándor Tonk, 'A középkori közjegyzőség Erdélyben', [The Public Notary in Medieval Transylvania], in Elek Csetri – Zsigmond Jakó – Gábor Sipos – Sándor Tonk (eds), *Művelődéstörténeti Tanulmányok* [Studies of Cultural History] (Bukarest: Kriterion, 1980), pp. 36–61.

⁵⁰ "... alia omnia bona tam mobilia quam immobilia pro filia mea Anna..." *CDTel*, vol. 2, p. 39.

⁵¹ "... omnia sua bona tam mobilia quam immobilia, aurum et argenteum testamentaliter sibi legasset, ut totaliter omnia bona predictae domine [domina Dorothea relicta Nicolai Sikesd de Theremi] quocunque nomine vocentur pro anima eiusdem domine Dorothee iam decesse distribuat..." *CDTel*, vol. 2, p. 204.

⁵² *CDTel*, vol. 2, pp. 204–205.

⁵³ "... domina Dorothea nolendo prescriptam portionem possessionariam, tertiam scilicet partem dicte directe et equalis medietatis Aython vocate simul cum domo et curia nobilitari, quam idem condam Nicolaus Sykesd de novo edificasset, aput manus eiusdem in detrimentum et periculum anime sue et dicti condam Nicolai Sykesd domini et mariti eiusdem tenere et conservare, sed eandem simul cum cunctis suis utilitatibus et pertinentiis quibuslibet de iure ad dictam portionem possessionariam ac

If the main heir is mentioned generically (husband/wife, child, etc.), the will usually does not detail the goods inherited by those other than the legal heirs. When there are several main heirs, the inheritance is divided starting with objects and ending with the domains. John Drágfi who, quite surprisingly legitimated his natural son⁵⁴ made dispositions in all his wills from the years 1524 and 1526 regarding the domains to be inherited by the legitimated natural son. On the other hand, it is also true that compared to the four legitimate sons of John Drágfi he inherited a lesser part of his father's assets having to be content with the castle and domain at Cehu Silvaniei (Szilágysomlyó). It is certain that the closest family members are always considered in the first place as far as receiving benefits are concerned. The wife and the children are the most important beneficiaries of the wills. The longest part of the testaments deal with the closest family members. Except in the case of testators with no heirs, there is no will where there would not be any mention regarding the wife or the husband. They are followed by the children. Most of the wills mention them by name, as in the case of the wife or the husband. Among the closest family members, siblings are less mentioned than spouses and children. It seems that more or less openly the testators primarily take into consideration the members of their own family. However, we cannot say the same thing about brothers. In this respect the law regulated only dispositions regarding real estate, where in many cases there is a common proprietary right on the estates and the testator considered that this problem should be solved by means of the will. The emotional factor cannot be ruled out either. Although there are too few pieces of information for the researched period which could help clarify this type of sentiments (i.e. fraternal love) their existence cannot be denied. Why would it be impossible to imagine that siblings had strong feelings for each other also at the end of the Middle Ages? Should we attempt to define the common traits of this first group of beneficiaries of wills, besides their relationship to the testator, the nature of the benefits received could be mentioned. It can be easily noticed that spouses and children are the true „winners“ as far as goods mentioned in wills are concerned, both in

domum et curiam nobilitarem spectantibus et pertinere debentibus prelibato Petro Sombory pro tertia parte dictorum quingentorum florenorum auri dedisset, remisisset et resignasset....” *CDTel*, vol. 2, pp. 198–199; *KmJkv*, vol. 2, no. 2935.

⁵⁴ In Rome, Drágfi obtained from Pope Leo X the legitimation of his natural son called Francis. When he returned home on 7 April 1521 in the fortress of Ardud (Erdőd) he made this decision public in front of elected bishops Francis Várdai of Alba Iulia (!) and Francis Perényi of Oradea, of Caspar Nagymási Somi, Nicholas Atkári Apafi, the castellan of Debrő, Balthazar Zsadányi Spácai and the vicars of Ardud and Livada (Dengeleg). *CDTel*, vol. 2, pp. 448–449.

quantity and quality. They inherited most of the pieces of real estate, the most valuable goods and even the titles.

Besides the closest family members also distant relatives (nephews, sons-in-law), but also friends and familiars and people of inferior rank, like serfs or servants are made beneficiaries of wills. Even though the number of relatives who benefited from wills was quite small, the same conclusion does not apply to the number of familiars. The studied wills show that noblemen truly took care of their familiars in their testaments. Nicholas of Ocna Sibiului, the vice-voievode of Transylvania disposes in his will of 1465 that all his familiars should be remunerated for their services. He does not forget his notary, Jeremy either, as he leaves him money and felt.⁵⁵ Peter of Jimbor, before he leaves on a pilgrimage to Rome also ensures in his last will that familiars would be remunerated.⁵⁶ In a similar way acted an unknown testator in the first half of the fifteenth century, who mentions in his last will also his familiar, Peter. He disposes that should Peter want to leave, he should be given decent clothing.⁵⁷ Confessors are mentioned just as frequently as familiars. Regarding the benefits received, members of this category inherited mainly various sums of money and pieces of clothing which had an emotional value, such as reminding them of their benefactor whenever they wore them. Another type of possession left to family members or members of the clergy are animals, especially horses. However, this system functioned vice-versa as well. For example, masters are also mentioned as beneficiaries in the testaments of some familiars.

Serfs and servants, albeit rarely are also present as beneficiaries in wills. They are left pieces of clothing, animals and small sums of money. This type of donation was also considered a charity which could also help in the salvation of the soul of the testator. George Pósa of Bârlea (Ónok) insistently asked the executors of his will to give his poor serfs the things left to them without however mentioning what these were.⁵⁸ Ladislav of Popești (Papfalva) in his will of 1492 mentioned by name several servants to whom he bequeathed mainly domestic animals. For his servant Helene he provided two cows, four oxen and four piglets and for his servant Martin two calves.⁵⁹

Even without giving any detailed account of the goods the nobles of Transylvania disposed of in their last will and testaments it is clear that legal

⁵⁵ *Ub*, vol. 6, pp. 218–221; *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 1676.

⁵⁶ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 2342.

⁵⁷ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 25.

⁵⁸ *KmJkv*, vol. 2, no. 5328.

⁵⁹ *KmJkv*, vol. 2, no. 2832.

obligations and care for their beloved ones drove them to do so, since passing away, especially if it was the head of the family, brought uncertainty in the life of the family. By this act the noble testators meant to somewhat ease their situation. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that the same act could make life difficult for some members of the family if the testator considered that they were not worthy of the testator's gratitude. Yet it is also true that cases when somebody was disinherited are rare, since the context in which this document was born urged forgiveness. Moreover, it was the confessor's duty to remind the testator that this was the last chance when he could come to peace with himself and with others. In the same manner, the quoted examples lead us to another important conclusion: care for the beloved ones does not manifest itself merely through goods of material nature, but also through care for the salvation of their soul.⁶⁰

A second "insurance": the need to protect and administrate goods

It is important to emphasize that besides wills there were also other ways by which the fate and life of the heirs could be regulated and provided for in good time. This concern – highlighted by securing the assets intended for them – is shown by many data referring to giving loans, declaring the heirs, donating real estate, dividing the possessions beforehand, transferring the administration right of possessions or signing contracts of inheritance. For example, on 19 June 1441, George, the son of the late Ban of Szántó takes as a loan from his wife, Sophia, the daughter of the late Andrew Botos of Harapko/Harapk 76 silver marks calculated with the measurement of Buda

⁶⁰ Donations for the salvation of the soul are not only a characteristic of wills. Many donations to various ecclesiastic institutions belong to this category of the donations without any connection to wills. Quantitatively speaking, these donations for the salvation of the soul are at least as many as wills, while chronologically they are present in documents even since the period of the Arpad dynasty and up to the Reformation. No doubt that in most of the cases the donor and his family members (parents, children) also benefit from the salvation of the soul that goes with the donation. The article hereby does not allow for the development of his topic. Still I did develop it partially in another article and in my PhD thesis, more recently see the article in this volume written by Ciprian Firea. Mária Lupescu Makó, 'Donum pro salute anime – un alt tip de oblație?' [Donum pro salute anime – Another Type of Oblation?], *Studia Universitatis "Babeş-Bolyai". Historia*, 51.2 (2006): 167–181; Eadem, *Societate nobiliară și cultură materială în Transilvania medievală. Testamente nobiliare din Transilvania până la 1540* [Noble Society and Material Culture in Medieval Transilvania. Noble Testaments from Transylvania until 1540]. PhD Thesis. Cluj-Napoca, 2008, the chapter: „Ob remedium parentum suorum ac pro sua salute” – Donații non-testamentare pentru mântuirea sufletului [„Ob remedium parentum suorum ac pro sua salute” – Non-Testamentary Donations for the Soul's Salvation], pp. 169–181.

under the condition that in case he would die during his next visit to the royal court or wherever else his demise would occur (*ipsum in proximo regiam maiestatem visitaturum in curia regia aut alibi mori contingeret*), his wife would be able to occupy the locality of Chintelnic (Kentelke) with its mills and vineyards, intended legally to be her inheritance, with all its benefits and to be able to possess them until his heirs give back the borrowed amount.⁶¹ It seems that, in this case thinking of his wife was the reason for contracting the loan.

Ladislav and Gregory Erdélyi, the sons of the late Peter of Camăr (Kémer) found another way to solve possible problems of inheritance. On 19 January 1483 the two brothers declared that, should they die without an heir, all their belongings – that means also the mansion of their father in Camăr (Kémer) inherited by Gregory, the youngest of the sons – should be inherited by the one who lived longer, and also that – for the period of their widowhood – the brothers' wives should be declared heirs, i.e. Justine, the wife of Ladislav and Potentiana, the wife of Gregory under the guarantee of 50 silver marks calculated with the measurement of Buda. They also decided that, should one of the widows marry again, the other should have the right to exclude her from the possession of the goods without paying her dowry and wedding presents.⁶²

Starting with the middle of the fifteenth century many people chose the option provided by law of making donations in real estate. Obviously this legal regulation was valid only for estates that had been bought, received as a present or acquired. Donating such estates through other means than that of a will offered the donor the possibility of having a broader view on the beneficiaries. Although the legislation concerning testaments does not include any rules about the beneficiaries, there are still unwritten customs as far as the circle of beneficiaries are concerned. Through donations, donors managed to transfer the estates to whoever they intended to, they were not constrained by any written or unwritten law. Thus, on 17 July 1449, Anne, the widow of ban Martin of Chidea (Kide), having in view her old age and needing sustenance and protection cedes her share in the domain of Chidea for a period chosen by herself to Simon Nagy of Nădășel (Nádas) under the condition that should her son, ban Nicholas return from captivity of the Ottomans (*de captivitate perfidorum Turcorum divina providentia eliberaretur*) Simon should hand her son the property. Should her son not return, Simon would keep half of the domain as a reward for his faithful services, while the other half would be donated to the

⁶¹ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 329; DL 36390. p. 72, no. 3.

⁶² *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 2425; DL 36395. pp. 45–46, no. 1; DL 26438.

Virgin Mary church of Chidea (Kide), but only after Simon had compensated the relatives regarding the engagement gift.⁶³ Due to a reason not known to us lady Anne reconsidered the same day the bequest she made and slightly changed her document of donation. Thus the benefaction is motivated by her status as a widow and her female frailty, by her need of salvation and protection. In the second document there is no reference made to the period of „trial” mentioned in the first one. It is important to mention that, in the second act, death is also mentioned as a clause in inheriting part of the domain. So Anne, the widow cedes her share in the domain of Chidea to Simon Nagy, the son of Egidius of Nădășel under the condition that, should her son, Nicholas return alive from the battle against the Ottomans (*in bello contra perfidos Turcos instaurato periclitatus reveniret*) Simon should hand her son the domain. Should her son not return and should she also die, Simon will keep half of the domain as a reward for his faithful services, while the other half will be donated to the Virgin Mary church of Chidea (*ecclesie parochiali beate Marie virginis in eadem Kyde constructe*), but only after Simon had compensated her relatives regarding the dowry and the wedding gift.⁶⁴ As it was to be expected, such a gesture triggered the discontent of many of the relatives. Protest came soon afterwards: on 25 September 1449, Elisabeth, the daughter of Andrew Bíró of Chidea, the widow of Ladislas of Mikó protests in the name of her siblings, Brigida, Potentiana and Matthias against the fact that Anne, the widow of ban Martin of Chidea had given her share in the domain of Chidea, which she received based on a continuous proprietary right, to Simon Nagy, the son of Egidius of Nădășel.⁶⁵ There are other documents that prove that this conflict created regarding a donation, which was perfectly legal, continued for a long time after the process of donation ended. On 27 December 1455, Simon Nagy of Nădășel puts Margaret, the wife of John, the son of Jacob Szárhegyaljai and her children at ease that the dowry and wedding gift of Anne, the widow of ban Martin of Chidea and the parts due to the church of the Virgin Mary in Chidea would be compensated.⁶⁶ It seems that, in the meantime lady Anne had deceased and Simon Nagy tried to defer honouring the duties undertaken once he received lady Anne’s share in the domain of Chidea, a gesture that rightfully triggered discontent among the relatives that were entitled to be paid the dowry and wedding gift.

The need for protection motivated also the bequest made by Michael, the son of Nicholas Csiszér of Doba Mare (Doba) in May 1440. Due

⁶³ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 719; DL 36391. pp. 84–85, no. 2.

⁶⁴ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 720; DL 36391. p. 85, no. 1.

⁶⁵ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 758; DL 36391. p. 91, no. 1.

⁶⁶ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 1237; DL 36407. p. 78, no. 2.

to his having no children and being old, Michael donated in his own name, but also in other relatives' names the seventh part of his paternal inheritance of the domain of Ilyéstelke⁶⁷ to his sister, Elisabeth.⁶⁸ Fear of an unexpected death motivated the action of handing over some domains to the wife of Christian, the son of Ladislav Ördög of Dăbâca (Doboka). In a document drawn up sometime after 18 March 1446, Christian – should he die an unexpected death – hands his wife his share in the possessions of Dăbâca (Doboka), Românași (Egrefy) or any other Hungarian of Romanian village (*in aliis quibuscunque possessionibus tam Hungaricalibus, quam Wallochalis*) for the 100 golden florins taken as a loan from his wife, Anne, the daughter of Ladislav, the son of Jacob Vetési. He also adds that his relatives should have the domains only if they paid his wife the above-mentioned sum.⁶⁹ At the same time, Anne makes a similar gesture regarding his inheritance in the case she dies. So in case Anne, the daughter of Ladislav Vetési died before her husband, Christian Ördög of Dăbâca, she left him her wedding gift and those 100 golden florins she lent to him.⁷⁰ On 10 November 1460, John, the son of the late Ladislav, son of John Erdő of Murgești (Szentbenedek) also motivated his donation. He gave for ever, out of brotherly love, the forsaken lands of the domains Ilioara (Ilye), Papiu Ilarian (Bodon) and Chimitelnic (Keménytelke) in the county of Turda to Thomas, the son of the late Ladislav, son of John Erdő of Murgești.⁷¹

Sharing the assets between the heirs was another manner to administrate the fate of movables and immovables. On 15 September 1449, Benedict, the son of Denis of Sfăraș (Farnas) protested – in the name of Michael and Barbara, the children of the late Ladislav Apafi of Mălâncrav (Almakerék, Malmkrog) and of Margaret, the daughter of Thomas, called Farkas of Herina (Harina, Mönchschorf), and in the name of Stephen, the child of the above-mentioned Denis and Margaret – against the intention of lady Margaret to make an agreement with her brothers, John, the son of Thomas Farkas and Nicholas regarding their rights to the domains, the movables, jewelry, animals (for example studs), an agreement which did not favour her children and left them with a far smaller share of the assets than they were entitled to.⁷²

A more convenient solution was ceding the administration of the domains, since thus the owner could maintain all his rights without

⁶⁷ Barren land next to Șarmășag (the county of Outer Solnoc/ later the county of Sălaj).

⁶⁸ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 229; DL 36390. p. 41, no. 3.

⁶⁹ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 565; DL 36391. p. 10, no. 2.

⁷⁰ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 566; DL 36391. p. 10, no. 3.

⁷¹ *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 1484; DL 36392. p. 102/a, no. 1; DL 28406.

⁷² *KmJkv*, vol. 1, no. 1484; DL 36392. p. 102/a, no. 1; DL 28406.

triggering the discontent of his relatives. Proceeding in this way, he could also obtain some advantages provided by the administrator. Such is the case of Peter, the son of Jacob of Mera (Méra). In a document, issued on 2 September 1393 by the convent of Cluj-Mănăştur, he motivated his gesture by the great distance, having no heirs and the fact that, after his death his domains would be inherited anyway by his administrator, i.e. John called Darabas of Jucu (Zsuk). Therefore, he gave his administrator his share of the domain in Mera (Méra) for 100 golden florins.⁷³ Although, when this deal had been done it seemed that both parties had agreed to it, in five years, when both parties to the agreement were dead and their heirs dealt with the problems of inheritance, things did not seem so clear anymore. This is at least what can be concluded from a document issued by the vice-voievode of Transylvania on 2 June 1398. Michael, the son of John called Darabas of Jucu was demonstrating then that Dominic, the son of John of Iara (Jára), reoccupied for the daughters of Valentin of Mera the part of the domain placed in pawn by the late Peter, the son of John of Mera to the late John Darabas for 100 golden florins. It seems that the vice-voievode decided in favour of Michael of Jucu. It is to be observed that, in the first document pawning the assets is not mentioned at all, the text of the document suggesting rather a sort of „contract of administration”.⁷⁴ In the middle of the fifteenth century motivation for having the domains administrated diversifies. Due to the unusual political situation many people chose this solution. On 28 July 1456, in front of the chapter of Alba Iulia, John of Fărăgău (Faragó), preparing to join the battle against the Ottomans charged Andrew Toldal to be the administrator of his domains and named him his heir in the case of his death.⁷⁵

Contracts of mutual inheritance became more frequent at the end of the Angevin era and during the rule of Sigismund of Luxemburg. The process required royal approval. This is what happened in April 1391, when

⁷³ Elemér Mályusz - Iván Borsa - Norbert C. Tóth - Tibor Neumann (eds), *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár* [Chartulary on the Sigismund Era], vols. I-II/1-2 (1387-1410), vols. 3-11 (1411-1424) / *A Magyar Országos Levéltár Kiadványai, II. Forráskiadványok*, no. 1, 3-4, 22, 25, 27, 32, 37, 39, 41, 43, 49./ (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó - Magyar Országos Levéltár, 1951-2009, henceforth: *ZsOkl*), vol. 1, no. 3063.

⁷⁴ *ZsOkl*, vol. 1, no. 5345; DL 26873.

⁷⁵ "Johannem de Pharago ... relatum... quomodo ipse pro defensione fidei catholicae ac totius Christianitatis religione, necnon pro tuitione sacrae regni Hungariae coronae ab refrigerium animae suae certamen et bellum contra saevissimos Thurcos, Christianorum aemulos pura ex devotione iniri et ingredi nititur, ob hoc interim inde deo duce reverti poterit..." Elemér Varjú - Béla Iványi (eds), *Oklevéltár a Tomaj nemzetségbeli losonczi Bánffy család történetéhez* [Cartulary on the History of the Family Bánffy of Losonc de genere Tomaj] (2 vols, Budapest: Hornyánszky Viktor, 1908-1928, henceforth: *BánfOkl*), vol. 1, p. 690.

king Sigismund of Luxemburg allowed that Gregory of Bethlen and Peter of Mălâncrav sign a contract of mutual inheritance with Ladislav of Dumbrăveni (Ebesfalva, Eppeschdorf).⁷⁶

Sometimes, even though not very frequently, the option of caring for a person in exchange for some, mostly real estate donations was taken into consideration. The first such case in Transylvania is dated to the end of the Arpadian period. In 1291, the chapter of the Transylvanian church of Saint Michael the Archangel authenticated that Jacob, the son of Filpe undertakes that, should he die without heirs he would donate to comes Denis, the son of palatine Denis his possession called Bahnea (Bonyha, Bachnen) in the county of Târnava under the condition that he would be cared for by the *comes* until his dying day.⁷⁷ In a short while also Dominic of Beldiu ((Béld) proceeded in the same manner. In November 1319 the same place of authentication mentioned that Dominic, the brother of Zarias of Beldiu donated his relative, Jako, the son of Jacob of Beldiu two shares of the Beldiu (Béld) domain inherited by him in exchange for care and clothing. It is also mentioned that the *terragium* of Dominic's men will continue to be his and also the royal tax (*collecta*), should he be able to obtain it. If Jako obtain this latter benefit, he must give the tax for two houses to Dominic until the end of his life.⁷⁸ Around the middle of the fourteenth century, in 1356 a contract of care is signed also in front of the convent of Cluj-Mănăştur. In this contract, John, the son of John called Chente donated to Nicholas Wass the Borzua hill and the Valea Luncii (Gorbómező/Hosszúmező) domain under the condition that Nicholas and his sons, the sons who are or will be born from the above-mentioned Nicholas Wass shall have the obligation to care for him and feed him until his death. Even the sources for covering these costs are mentioned, that is from the income and crops of the above-mentioned hill of Borzua and of the domain in Valea Luncii.⁷⁹

Conclusions

It seems that for most of the noble testators the gesture of making a will was interpreted as a symbolic gesture of surviving through the heirs. For them inheritance was also a guarantee for the continuation of their name and thus of the identity, prestige and accumulation of wealth, but also a protection of their own need to be present through their heirs even after death. This

⁷⁶ *ZsOkl*, vol. 1, no. 2006; *Ulb*, vol. 3, p. 30.

⁷⁷ *CDTrans*, vol. 1, no. 488; *Ulb*, vol. 1, p. 187; *BánfOkl*, vol. 1, pp. 27–28; *DIR C*, veacul XIII, vol. 2, pp. 349–350.

⁷⁸ *DocRomHist*, vol. 11, p. 40.

⁷⁹ *DocRomHist*, vol. 11, p. 40.

attitude may suggest a great attachment to material values (but also to spiritual ones to a lesser extent), some kind of aspiration to „immortality“ through the others (but mainly through the heirs). For others, a smaller number of noble testators, the gesture of making a will seems to be equal rather to the idea of „unconditional giving“ materialized in the gift made to God, his „representatives“ on earth (churches, monasteries) and rarely to the poor. There is no testament which would not include this type of bequest which means that the testators have a significantly developed spirituality. Care for one's soul and care for the beloved ones are essential elements of this world: a changeable, conscientious, deeply religious world, having a developed practical sense and a strong inclination to beauty. This kind of care motivated them to act toward the salvation of their soul, of the soul of their family members and to make sure that the material goods acquired during their lifetime would not be ill-spent and would offer material security for the family. Last wills represent an excellent source for this double trait of the behaviour of members of the nobility in a certain situation of life, since they clearly show the intention of the testator to prepare his way to salvation by his devotional actions and to take care of his beloved ones by dispositions of a „material“ nature. Still it became obvious quite soon that the will making habits cannot cover all intended aspects of the spiritual and material life so they found ways by which to supply these failings. Therefore donations for the salvation of the soul ceased to be exclusively part of the will, they became independent. Thus, the believer had the opportunity to make donations for the salvation of his soul earlier than in the vicinity of death and several times and to prepare in good time for the afterlife. From the many types of donations for the salvation of the soul only one was chosen for the purposes of this article: pilgrimage, and it was attempted to collate the very few existing data on this type of offering so that the process of pilgrimage itself would be revealed. Even the pilgrimage shows the ambivalence mentioned in the title of the article: although this is most certainly a devotional action performed for the salvation of the soul, in its preparation and performance there is rather a continuous material struggle. At the same time the need to protect the members of their families and their assets lead nobles to exploit besides testaments other means by which to reach goals similar to what wills were intended for. Thus, loans, declaration of heirs, donation of possessions, division of the assets in advance, cession of the administration of domains or signing contracts of inheritance complete the dispositions of the wills having the members of the family as their beneficiaries. In all these various situations the medieval nobles of Transylvania still have a common trait: consciously or not, they act in a certain manner motivated by the same thing: faith in the afterlife and the possibility of the salvation of their soul.

“Donatio pro memoria”: Lay and Female Donors and their Remembrance in Late Medieval Transylvania. Research on Visual and Documentary Evidence*

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Abstract: In the last few decades research has focused on the theme of *memoria*, a manifold phenomenon which pervaded the everyday life of medieval men and women. In the conception of that time, the remembrance of the deceased was intimately related to his/her personal salvation. Therefore, medieval men and women alike invested a significant share in memorial programmes intended to ensure their presence even after death in the society of the living. The latter, through prayers and suffrages, were supposed to help the dead in their purgatorial journey and in the quest for redemption. People already made provision during their lifetime for the hereafter, and strove for *viaticum*: an accumulation of good deeds that could likewise ensure good memory, and eventually the reward of eternal life. Gifts made to religious institutions and individuals were considered instrumental for triggering remembrance. The expected counter-gifts consisted in masses and liturgical services, prayers *pro anima* and suffrages for a determined period of time or for eternity. *Memoria*, closely related to personal identity, was largely incited by visual stimuli or props: inscriptions bearing the name of the deceased, donor portraits, coats of arms, tombstones, epitaphs etc.

This study aims to analyse some late medieval Transylvanian evidence from the point of view of *memoria*. The main purpose is to identify and emphasise specific strategies (related to gender, or distinct social classes) adopted by Transylvanian laymen and (particularly) women in order to ensure their remembrance. The study relies upon different categories of sources, both written (wills, *dona pia* recorded in documents, registers of benefactors etc.) and visual (donor portraits, heraldry, monumental or public inscriptions, funeral slabs etc.).

Keywords: women, testaments, offerings, memorial art, liturgy, patronage, Transylvania

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Rezumat: „Donatio pro memoria”: donatoare laice și comemorarea lor în Transilvania medievală târzie. Analiza surselor textuale și vizuale. În ultimele decenii, studiile medievale au devenit tot mai interesate de cercetarea temei comemorării (*memoria*) ca fenomen cu multiple manifestări, deosebit de prezent în societatea evului mediu. În concepția epocii *memoria* era strâns legată de mântuirea personală. Ca urmare, oamenii timpului, bărbați și femei deopotrivă, au investit mult în „programe memoriale” care să le asigure chiar și după moarte prezența în societatea celor vii. Aceștia din urmă, prin rugăciunile lor urmau să-i ajute pe morți în spălarea păcatelor și dobândirea mântuirii. Pentru a-și perpetua memoria postumă, oamenii se străduiau încă din timpul vieții sau *in articulo mortis* să facă anumite daruri către instituțiile religioase sau semenii lor. Răsplata așteptată consta în liturghii și slujbe, rugăciuni și sufragii pe perioade determinate de timp sau pentru eternitate. *Memoria*, intim legată de identitatea personală, se baza de asemenea pe stimuli vizuali: inscripții, portete de donatori, pietre de mormânt, blazoane etc.

Studiul de față își propune să cerceteze din perspectiva *memoriei* câteva mărturii transilvănene de la sfârșitul evului mediu. Accentul este pus pe contribuția laicilor și, mai ales, pe acela al femeilor în fondarea unor astfel de „programe memoriale”, urmărindu-se identificarea și evidențierea anumitor strategii specifice (de gen, de clasă sau categorie socială etc.). Sursele folosite sunt în egală măsură documentare (testamente, *dona pia*, registre sau liste de binefăcători ai instituțiilor religioase) și vizuale (imagini de donatori, mărturii heraldice, inscripții monumentale etc.).

Cuvinte cheie: femei, testamente, daruri pioase, artă memorială, liturghie, patronaj, Transilvania

In the inventory of the Dominican convent of Cluj (Kolozsvár, Klausenburg), first drawn up in 1509, one can read the following entry: *Inclito ac nobili viro domino Nicolao seniori de Wysackna quondam wicewoywode transilvano Conuentus noster Coloswariensis se obligauit ad missam die lune perpetuis temporibus omni septimana pro defunctis cantandam ob salutem anime eiusdem domini Nicolai, et animarum parentum et omnium progenitorum suorum. Item quod dies defuccionis eiusdem domini, quod est XII. februarij, in kalendario conuentus notetur.*¹ *Inventarium Conuentus Colosuariensis* was compiled with the aim of preserving the memory (*ne... pereat memoria*) of past actions, offers and labours in the benefit of the foundation. One should notice here

¹ In the transcription of Esterházy (Eszterházy János, 'A kolozsvári Boldog-Asszonyról czimzett domonkosok, jelenleg ferencziek egyházának történeti és építészeti leírása' ['The Historical and Architectural Description of the ex-Dominican now Franciscan Church of Our Lady in Cluj'] in *Magyar Sion*, 4 (1866): 579 (henceforth abbreviated Esterházy, 'A kolozsvári Boldog-Asszonyról').

the scrupulous recording of the date of the death of *Nicolaus de Wizakna* (Ocna Sibiului, Salzburg), former vice-voivode of Transylvania, more than forty years after the actual event (12 February 1466).² The perpetual mass had been instituted as a response (or counter gift) to the generous donation of Nicholas, as attested by his will of 08 July 1465: *Item unam piscinam cum curia in Zeck fratribus ordinis praedicatorum in Coloswar causa salutis animae nostrae... relinquimus*.³

In the same document, one of the most quoted testaments of laymen in medieval Transylvania, the knight also made a bequest to the convent of the same order in Sighișoara (Schässburg): *Item medietatem possessionis nostrae Feyereghaz cum medietate molendini absque curia seu domo ibidem habita fratribus religiosis in Segeswar similiter pro perpetua missa legamus*. And indeed, in the register of benefactors of the latter institution,⁴ the donation of Nicholas was the first entry on the list, even though, again, the document was compiled long after the original bequest (1529). In the opening of this remarkable document, its author, Antonius Fabri, *predicator generalis* of the convent explained the reasons for drawing up such a list: *Quoniam mater ingratitude est oblivio igitur ego frater Anthonius Fabri... ne vicio ingratitude a posteris arguer fratribus excogitari mihi in animo compillare Libellum sue inventatorum benefactorum... pro memoria futurorum*.⁵

Considering only these few pieces of evidence one notices the importance given to memory by medieval men (in Western Europe and Transylvania alike), both by those offering goods of a material kind as well as by others responding with spiritual rewards. In the last three decades or so scholarly research has concentrated on *memoria*, this “total phenomenon”, as a “key organizing principle, not only in medieval theology but in every aspect of medieval life”.⁶ By remembrance, the dead were effectively

² It should be said that this precise dating was not used in published genealogies of the family.

³ *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, eds. Franz Zimmermann et al. (7 vols.) vol. VI, (Bucharest: Verlag der Rumänischen Akademie, 1892-1991), doc. 3432 (henceforth abbreviated *Ulb.*).

⁴ Transcribed by Fabritius (Karl Fabritius, ‘Zwei Funde in der ehemaligen Dominikanerkirche zu Schässburg’, in *Archiv des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, 5 (1861): 1-40. (henceforth abbreviated Fabritius, ‘Zwei Funde’).

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

⁶ Truus van Bueren, ‘Care for the Here and the Hereafter: a Multitude of Possibilities’ (henceforth abbreviated Van Bueren, ‘Care for the Here’), in Truus van Bueren, (ed.), *Care for the Here and the Hereafter. Memoria, Art and Ritual in the Middle Ages* (Tournhout: Brepols, 2005) pp. 13-28 (henceforth abbreviated Van Bueren (ed.), *Care for the Here*) apud Patrick J. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994) p. 18.

present⁷ ("Die Gegenwart der Toten")⁸ in the everyday life of their kin, parish, town or village, convent, confraternity or guild. The persons made provision already during their lifetime for the hereafter, and strove for *viaticum*: an accumulation of good deeds that could likewise ensure good memory, and eventually the reward of eternal life. «La comptabilité de l'au-delà» or «la mathématique du salut»⁹ are very expressive formulas to describe the way in which medieval men referred to the afterlife. Indeed, it was thought that each gift one made in the earthly life, or ensured to be made after death had to be followed by a counter gift in the hereafter, in ways similar to accurate mathematics or bookkeeping. And there is no wonder if one keeps in mind that in the medieval economic system gifts and returning gifts (*do ut des*) "formed the basis for social and economic interaction".¹⁰ In this logic, individuals strove to provide sufficient "care for the here and the hereafter" and one of the most evident symptoms in the Later Middle Ages was the tendency to accumulate and multiply the suffrages, masses and indulgences by the thousand.¹¹

Remembrance was triggered by different means: good deeds, support of any kind, money, property, annuities, leases, distributions, goods, food, "art",¹² liturgical equipment etc. addressed to fellows or religious institutions. The response could be expressed in different ways or media (oral or mental, in liturgy, music and prayer) and was largely stimulated by visual means. The mentioning of the living or deceased's name was considered instrumental for his/her salvation. Thus *memoria* was closely related to personal identity and it was based on memorial items or props: calendars or registers of benefactors, inscriptions, coats of arms, tombstones, epitaphs, *Totenschilder* (funerary hatchments), portraits of donors etc.

⁷ «La mort en effet est au centre de la vie» (Jacques Chiffolleau, *La comptabilité de l'au-delà. Les hommes, la mort et la religion dans la région d'Avignon à la fin du Moyen-Âge (vers 1320 - vers 1480)* (Rome : Collection de l'École Française de Rome, 1980) p. 6 (henceforth abbreviated Chiffolleau, *La comptabilité*)

⁸ Otto Gerhard Oexle, 'Die Gegenwart der Toten', in Hermann Braet - Werner Verbeke (eds.), *Death in the Middle Ages* (Louvain : Mediaevalia Lovanensia Series I, Studia 9, 1983), pp. 19-77.

⁹ *Apud* Chiffolleau, *La comptabilité*, *passim*.

¹⁰ Van Bueren, 'Care for the Here' p. 14, *apud* Arnoud-Jan Bijsterveld, 'The Medieval Gift as Agent of Social Bonding and Political Power: a Comparative Approach', in Esther Cohen - Mayke de Jong (eds.), *Medieval Transformations: Texts, Power and Gifts in Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2001) p. 151.

¹¹ Chiffolleau, *La comptabilité*, p. 4.

¹² On the relationship between "art" and remembrance, see also Samuel K. Cohn Jr., *The Cult of Remembrance and the Black Death. Six Renaissance Cities in Central Italy*, (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1992).

This study aims to analyse some late medieval Transylvanian evidence from the point of view of *memoria*. The main purpose is to identify and emphasise strategies adopted by Transylvanian laymen and (particularly) women in order to ensure their remembrance. Certainly, as has been mentioned, in that period the need for remembrance was closely interwoven with the quest for salvation. Therefore, the isolation of *memoria* from the intricate texture of the medieval religion and devotion may seem fallacious. However, this approach can provide some useful insights in both the domains of religion and art history. The focus will be directed on lay donors and especially on women. On the one hand, the research project circumscribing the present collection of studies particularly addresses lay involvement in the shaping of religious or confessional identity and its dialogue with ecclesiastic authorities.¹³ On the other hand, even though Transylvanian women were particularly active in devotional, charitable and memorial activities, their contribution is still insufficiently investigated.¹⁴ The following pages will attempt to consider female memorials, founded for their own and often also for their partners' or late husbands' salvation.

The evidence considered here is both documentary and visual. In the first category the most revealing for the theme are testaments¹⁵ and records of pious donations, but also registers or lists created with the

¹³ On clerical memorials and art patronage in late medieval Transylvania, see Ciprian Firea, 'Evidence of Patronage in Late Medieval Transylvania. Saxon Priests as Promoters of the Arts', in *Annales Universitatis Apulensis. Series Historica*, 16/2 (2012): 149-172; Idem, 'Casa parohială evanghelică din Bistrița și unul dintre ctitorii săi' [The Evangelical Parish House in Bistrița and One of Its Founders] in Vlad Țoca et alii (eds.) *Studii de istoria artei. Volum omagial dedicat profesorului Nicolae Sabău* [Studies in Art History. Volume Dedicated to Professor Nicolae Sabău] (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2013), pp. 39-51.

¹⁴ On female religion and devotion in Transylvania, see, Carmen Florea, 'Women and Mendicant Orders in Late Medieval Transylvania', in *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Historia*, 56/1 (2011): 67-86 (henceforth abbreviated Florea, 'Women and Mendicant Orders'); Eadem, 'The Third Path: Charity and Devotion in Late Medieval Transylvanian Towns', in Maria Crăciun - Elaine Fulton (eds.), *Communities of Devotion. Religious Orders and Society in East Central Europe, 1450-1800*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 91-120.

¹⁵ On Transylvanian testaments, see Mária Lupescu Makó, "Item lego..." Gifts for the Soul in Late Medieval Transylvania', in *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU Budapest*, 7 (2001): 161-185 (henceforth abbreviated Lupescu Makó, 'Item lego'); Eadem, 'Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval Sighișoara (Segesvár, Schässburg)', in *Caiete de Antropologie Istorică* [Historical Anthropology Notebooks], 5-6 (2004): 93-106 (henceforth abbreviated Lupescu Makó, 'Death and Remembrance'); Eadem, 'Considerații privind testamentele nobiliare din Transilvania la sfârșitul evului mediu' [Remarks Concerning Noble Testaments in Late Medieval Transylvania] in *Acta Musei Napocensis*, 39-40/2 (2002-2003): 115-138 (henceforth abbreviated Lupescu Makó, 'Considerații privind testamentele nobiliare').

specific purpose of perpetuating someone's memory.¹⁶ The second category includes especially objects and artworks bearing insignia of personal identity: inscriptions with the name, coats of arms, "portraits" etc. They often make the object of (art) patronage.¹⁷ Therefore, the following investigation addresses various directions of medieval studies: the history of the church, religion and devotion, as well as the history of art and patronage.

The altarpiece in Mălâncrav (Malmkrog, Almakerék)¹⁸ (ill. 1) has lately attracted much scholarly attention precisely on account of its important memorial content.¹⁹ The central panel (ill. 2) displays a lavishly

¹⁶ Such as lists of members of confraternities.

¹⁷ The most important works concerning patronage in Late Medieval and Renaissance Transylvania remain those of Jolán Balogh, *Az erdélyi Renaissance, I, 1460-1541* [Transylvanian Renaissance] (Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Tudományos Intézet, 1943) (henceforth abbreviated Balogh, *Renaissance*) and Géza Entz, *Erdély építészete a 11-13. században* [Transylvanian Architecture in 11-13th Centuries] (Cluj: Az Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület Kiadása, 1994); *Erdély építészete a 14-16. században* [Transylvanian Architecture in 14-16th Centuries] (Cluj: Az Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület Kiadása, 1996). See, also, Anca Gogâltan, *Patronage and Artistic Production in Transylvania. The Apafis and the Church in Mălâncrav, 14th- 15th Centuries*, PhD. Thesis (Manuscript), CEU, Budapest, 2002 (henceforth abbreviated Gogâltan, *Patronage*); Eadem, 'Patronage and Artistic Production in Transylvania: The Sacristy Portal in Saint Michael's Church in Cluj' in Maria Crăciun - Ovidiu Ghitta (eds.) *Church and Society in Central and Eastern Europe* (Cluj-Napoca: EFES, 1998), pp. 339-386.

¹⁸ Victor Roth, *Siebenbürgische Altäre* (Strassburg: Heitz und Mündel, 1916), pp. 12-25; Dénes Radocsay, *A középkori Magyarország táblaképei* [The Medieval Hungarian Panel Painting] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1955) pp. 255-256; Virgil Vătășianu, *Istoria artei feudale în țările române* [The History of Feudal Art in Romanian Countries] (București: Editura Academiei Române, 1959), pp. 777-778; Vasile Drăguț, *Arta gotică în România* [Gothic Art in Romania] (București: Editura Meridiane, 1979), pp. 247-249; Andrei Kertesz, the chapter *Altarele și sculptura* [Altarpieces and sculptures], in *800 de ani Biserica a germanilor din Transilvania* [Eight hundred years of the German Church in Transylvania] (Thaur bei Innsbruck: Wort und Welt Verlag, 1991) p. 78.

¹⁹ Gisela Richter, Otmar Richter, *Siebenbürgische Flügelaltäre* (Thaur bei Innsbruck: Wort und Welt Verlag, 1992) pp. 46-57 (henceforth abbreviated Richter, *Flügelaltäre*); Anca Gogâltan - Dóra Sallay, 'The Church of Mălâncrav and the Holy Blood Chapel of Nicholas Apa', in *Arhitectura religioasă medievală din Transilvania* [Medieval Ecclesiastical Architecture in Transylvania], 2 (2002): 181-210 (henceforth abbreviated Gogâltan - Sallay, 'The Church of Mălâncrav'); Ciprian Firea, *Arta polipticelor medievale din Transilvania (1450-1550)* [The Art of Medieval Transylvanian Altarpieces], PhD. Thesis (Manuscript), Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca, 2010, vol. I, pp. 22-23; vol. II, pp. 210-218; Maria Crăciun, 'Mendicant Piety and the Saxon Community of Transylvania c.1450-1550', in Maria Crăciun - Elaine Fulton (eds.), *Communities of Devotion. Religious Orders and Society in East Central Europe, 1450-1800* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011) pp. 29-32 (henceforth abbreviated Crăciun, 'Mendicant Piety'); Eadem, *Transformarea polipticelor mariologice în timpul Reformei Evanghelice/Luterane* [The Transformation of Marian Polyptychs in the Time of Evangelical/Lutheran Reformation] in *Arhitectura religioasă medievală din Transilvania* [Medieval Ecclesiastical Architecture in Transylvania], 5 (2012):

painted image of the enthroned Virgin with the Child adored by singing angels and flanked by two lay donors, male and female (ill. 3). They are represented in small scale kneeling in front of the throne, with scrolls inscribed with prayers (he: *O fili dei miserere mei*; she: *Ora pro me s[an]cta dei genitrix*) and introduced by two patron saints. On the subjacent predella, on the heraldic right a coat of arms is still present (ill. 4), while the corresponding one on the left has disappeared.²⁰ The donors can be identified, on the basis of the relative dating of the artwork (ca. 1450-60) and of the patron saints as Michael Apafi (introduced by the Archangel Michael) and his wife Claire (introduced by St Claire of Assisi).²¹

It must be emphasised that the altarpiece in Mălâncrav constitutes one of the very rare surviving Transylvanian instances where a couple of patrons, male and female, is represented.²² Therefore, one should question the share of each actor in the creation of such a memorial prop or piece. This question opens an important theoretical debate, concerning the involvement of the patrons in both the aspect and the content of medieval artworks.

As Van Bueren has pointed out,²³ the identification of the *real* donor (or patron) of an art work on the basis of “donor portraits” is sometimes problematic. When a couple of patrons were represented, usually it is simply taken for granted that the man was the commissioner: he paid for the work, negotiated with the artist, chose the iconography and agreed with the church authorities for the display. In the case of altarpieces it would also be assumed that he had been the founder or the patron of the altar beneath.

In a series of articles and a book,²⁴ Corine Schleif and Volker Schier

359-381 especially 359-361; Emese Sarkadi Nagy, *Local Workshops – Foreign Connections. Late Medieval Altarpieces from Transylvania* (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke, Studia Jagellonica Lipsiensia, Band 9, 2012) pp. 27-29, 172-175.

²⁰ The original presence of the female coat of arms is indicated also by the heraldic reverence of the male coat of arms (reversed to the left).

²¹ The first to make the identifications were Gisela and Otmar Richter (Richter, *Flügelaltäre*, p. 47).

²² For other cases, see below n. 114.

²³ Van Bueren, ‘Care for the Here’, p. 22.

²⁴ Corine Schleif, ‘Forgotten Roles of Women as Donors: Sister Katerina Lemmel’s Negotiated Exchanges in the Care for the Here and the Hereafter’, in Van Bueren (ed.), *Care for the Here*, pp. 137-152 (henceforth abbreviated Schleif, ‘Forgotten Roles’); Corine Schleif – Volker Schier, ‘Views and Voices from Within: Sister Katerina Lemmel on the Glazing of the Cloister at Maria Mai’, in Rüdiger Becksmann (ed.), *Glasmalerei im Kontext. Bildprogramme und Raumbfunktionen (Akten des XXII. Internationalen Colloquiums des Corpus Vitrearum)* (Nürnberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 2005), pp. 211-228; Corine Schleif – Volker Schier, *Katerina’s Windows: Donation and Devotion, Art and Music, as Heard and Seen Through the Writings of a Birgittine Nun* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009).

have masterfully switched the focus from male to female patronage. Due to an impressive corpus of documentary sources (re)discovered by the two scholars, they could reconstruct thoroughly "one of the best documented cases of a bourgeois (female) donor, fund raiser and commissioner of memorials in the Early Modern Era":²⁵ Katerina Lemmel (born Imhoff). As a member of one of the most prominent families of merchants from Nuremberg, belonging to the *Patriziat*, Katerina was a successful businesswoman, investing in the commercial society of the Imhoff brothers. She married a Lemmel, and, after his death (1513) she decided to enter the Birgittine monastery of Maria Mai in Maihingen, at the age of 50 (1516). From this location, the only contact with her previous life and distant world was by letters. A fortunate chance has preserved these letters. They prove strikingly how Katerina assumed the role of "patron", donor and "broker" for her monastery, and also as negotiator of *memoria* for her kin. Her plan was to rebuild the cloister gallery and to equip it with a range of stained glass windows decorated with images of the Salvation. On the one hand, she herself invested a part of her fortune into the project, but on the other she negotiated with many of her friends and relatives (from the Tucher, Imhoff, and Straub families) to contribute their share. She asked for support in a variety of (tonal) ways, from begging to pressing, knowing how to stimulate the munificence by flattering the correspondents, making use of rivalries or inciting the sense of competition between them. The windows were intended to bear the coats of arms of the donors and, in this matter Katerina made very important and meaningful assertions from the point of view of the modern critique. She revealed the "function" of arms in such a restricted space as follows: "on all holidays the sisters will process ... chanting songs of praise, and continually every day they will commemorate the people, whose coats of arms they see"; or: "when the sisters process through the cloister with the holy relics and on Friday when they sing the seven psalms, and when daily pass by at other times, seeing the coats of arms, they will pray for them all the more". The coats of arms were, as Schleif proposed, "simulacra for donors", and they were meant to trigger *memoria*.

After a long epistolary campaign, Katerina saw the windows completed, at the end of the year 1519. They had been executed by the renowned master glazier Veit Hirsvogel, who previously made an agreement with Martin Tucher, Katerina's brother-in-law. The large panes of windows represented sacred stories and included many coats of arms. For the sake of precision and respecting inner (familial) hierarchies Katerina made provision that each window should have its conspicuous inscription with the name of the donor.

²⁵ Schleif, 'Forgotten Roles', p. 141.

Six years later, the windows were destroyed under the grief stricken regard of their conceiver, in the time of the Peasant War (1525). The texts of her letters are the only testimonies of the vanished “work of art”. They provide “an unsurpassed account of the ways in which visual mnemonic devices such as sacred images, coats of arms, and donor inscriptions were intended to work together to perpetuate memory, and thereby likewise to solidify social hierarchies”.²⁶ Let us wonder ourselves, together with the author of the study: what if a window had survived, without any other documentary source? It would be simply attributed to Veit Hirsvogel the Elder. The coat of arms of the Imhoffs would indicate the patronage, maybe of one of the male members of the patrician family. If the text of the contract would have survived alone, the patron would be easily, but erroneously, identified as Martin Tucher.

This account may be concluded with the words of Van Bueren: “without Katerina Lemmel’s correspondence we would never have known how much trouble she took in inducing others to make donations...; without those letters Katerina would not have existed for us at all.”²⁷ On the one hand, this case is extremely revealing for the feminine engagement in supporting pious actions and in sponsoring memorial furnishing. As Chiffolleau suggested, women have dedicated to God as much resources as their men, or even more.²⁸ On the other hand, it implies that material or visual memory embodied in artworks had very often vanished. Therefore, the historian should look for his sources in several fields, equally visual and documentary.

Returning to the starting point, namely the altarpiece in Mălâncrav, one may notice that, traditionally, the focus in what concerns the patronage of the altarpiece has been decisively directed on Michael Apafi. And indeed,

²⁶ Ibid, p. 151.

²⁷ Van Bueren, ‘Care for the Here’, p. 22.

²⁸ « ...les femmes consacrent à Dieu autant d’argent que leurs pères, leurs maris ou leur frères (et même parfois d’avantage). C’est le signe d’une égalité des sexes devant la mort et dans l’au-delà, alors que l’inégalité des processus de transmission des patrimoines écarte en général les testatrices. Celles-ci donnent pour prix de leur passage la majeure partie de leurs biens-propres. Elles n’hésitent pas à mettre en vente leurs vêtements et leurs bijoux pour payer les *funeralia*, créer des anniversaires, subventionner des hôpitaux, tandis que les hommes au contraire doivent veiller à ne point trop grever la part d’héritage qu’ils lassent à chacun de leurs enfants. Cette attitude des femmes est révélatrice, sans aucun doute, d’une piété très forte, plus forte peut-être que celle des hommes. Elle montre en tout cas que désormais, à l’heure de la mort, Eve est l’égale d’Adam. » Chiffolleau, *La comptabilité*, p. 220.

from ca. 1450²⁹ until ca. 1469 Michael had been the heir and the owner of the estates of the noble Apafi family, and Mălâncrav was one of his possessions. Like his predecessors, Michael contributed to the endowment of his church. Given the fact that already in about 1400 the church was built and painted,³⁰ the most conspicuous patronal enterprise of Michael can be considered the altarpiece itself. The inclusion of donor portraits and coats of arms (ill. 4) indicates a certain care for *memoria*, in the trend inaugurated by his ancestors.³¹ His grandfather, Nicholas Apafi, *strenuus miles* of king and emperor Sigismund's *curia*, not only strove for papal approval and support (indulgence) for the chapel of *Sanguinis Christi* he founded in Mălâncrav,³² but he also made generous bequests to the churches of his estates. The formula *ut habere me in memoria perpetua*³³ that can be found in his will clearly shows the care for remembrance.

The Richters affirm that, since Michael was already dead in 1469, the art work can be dated before this year.³⁴ On the one hand Michael was certainly the owner of the domain and of the church (*dicti loci in Malenkrach in temporalibus dominus*)³⁵, and on the other hand his wife has virtually unknown origins and biography before the marriage. Therefore, emphasis was placed on the knightly patronage.

In fact, further research reveals that Claire was the offspring of a prestigious family (at that time even higher in the hierarchy of the Kingdom than the Apafis) and she might have contributed as well to the content of the altarpiece. In a letter of 1493, long after Michael's death, she referred to herself as *Clara de Macedonia relicta quondam egregii Michaelis Appafy*.³⁶ The

²⁹ In 1447, when his grandfather Nicholas Apafi made his will (*Ub. V, doc. 2605*), Michael was still minor. Nicholas put him under the protection of guardians. We may presume that around 1450 he became mature and he could take control over his estates.

³⁰ The painting on the northern wall of the nave is roughly dated ca. 1350-1370, and the one in the sanctuary to about 1400 (thus giving a *terminus ante quem* for the construction of the choir).

³¹ Another coat of arms of the Apafis can be noticed on the vault keystone of the choir.

³² Pál Lukacsics, *XV századi pápák oklevelei* [Fifteenth Century Papal Charters] (2 vols., Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1931-1938) vol. 1, nr. 731, p. 157 (regest) and Gogáltan - Sallay, 'The Church of Mălâncrav' p. 181-182 (the *supplica* reproduced *in extenso*).

³³ 05 Nov. 1447:...*item eidem Petro sacerdoti tunicam nostrum cum pallio et duas mitras cum caligam legamus ut habere me in memoria perpetua in orationibus suis...* (*Ub. V, doc. 2605*)

³⁴ Richter, *Flügelaltäre*, p. 47.

³⁵ As the *supplica* of Nicholas, his grandfather, literally indicates.

³⁶ Magyar Országos Levéltár - Arcanum Adatbázis Kft. [Hungarian National Archives - Arcanum Database] (henceforth abbreviated MOL Arcanum): 03 Nov. 1493, DL 62941.

Macedoniai family was an important noble family³⁷ with estates located in the region of Banat (Macedonia, Macedónia). At the time when Nicholas Apa was *miles* of the royal court, Dancs (John) of Macedonia held the position of *banus Sewriniensis* (1435 – “ban” of Severin)³⁸ and later, in the sixteenth century a member of the family became bishop of Sirmium (Ladislas Macedoniai).³⁹ Therefore, the missing coat of arms on the predella in Mălâncrav should almost definitely be assumed to have contained the eagle of the Macedoniai family (ill. 5), as displayed on the seal of bishop Ladislas in the charter of 1525.⁴⁰

Documentary evidence indicates that the Macedoniai family and the neighbouring (and related) Himfis were strong supporters of the Franciscan order. The friary of *Kevesd* (now Bocşa (?) in Banat) was located on the edge of the Himfis’s *Remethe* domain,⁴¹ and the Macedoniai family, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, owned the castle of *Kevesd* in the vicinity of the convent.⁴² Presumably, both families patronised or supported this institution. In the years of Claire’s childhood and adolescence (ca. 1430-1440) the Franciscan friaries in the area of Banat (Caransebeş, *Cheryn*, Orşova, Severin and *Kevesd*), part of the Bosnian vicariate,⁴³ were particularly active.⁴⁴ Furthermore, as Maria Crăciun has argued, the altarpiece under discussion has a significant Franciscan content.⁴⁵ Given the fact that the previously cited will of Michael’s grandfather, Nicholas, even though detailed and generous as far as parish churches were concerned, made no provision for mendicant orders whatsoever, one may presume that this Franciscan “vein” might originate in the cultural heritage of Claire.⁴⁶ Even

³⁷ See, Pál Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia* [The Genealogy of Medieval Hungary] (*Magyar középkorinadattár* CD-ROM), Budapest, 2001.

³⁸ Pál Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301-1457* [The Hungarian Secular Archontology] CD-ROM (Budapest: Arcanum Digitéka, 2001).

³⁹ 22 May 1525: MOL Arcanum DL 24148 (the seal 9).

⁴⁰ See also *Siebmacher’s Wappenbuch. Der Adel von Ungarn (Supplementband)* CD-ROM (Budapest: Arcanum Digitéka, 2002) under the name Maczedóniai.

⁴¹ Dumitru Teicu, *Geografia ecleziastică a Banatului medieval* [The Ecclesiastical Geography of Medieval Banat] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2007), p. 84 (under the name *Cuieşti / Kövesd*).

⁴² Pál Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája, V. Várnagyok és várbirtokosok: Kövesd*.

⁴³ János Korácsi, *Szt. Ferencz rendjének története Magyarországon 1711-ig* [History of the Franciscan Order in Hungary until 1711], (2 vols., Budapest: A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Kiadása, 1923-1924), vol. 2, p. 109.

⁴⁴ In 30 Nov. 1433 Pope Eugenius IV confirmed the privileges of the Franciscan convents in this specific province (see, MOL Arcanum DF 275476).

⁴⁵ Crăciun, ‘Mendicant Piety’, p. 30.

⁴⁶ Was she the daughter of a Macedoniai man and a Himfi woman?

her name indicates a particular devotion for the founder of the feminine branch of the Franciscan order.

Some years after the creation of the altarpiece, Michael was involved in the Transylvanian revolt against his sovereign Mathias Corvinus (1467). This choice brought him misfortune, as the king confiscated his estates, and he died a few years later (1468/69) in disgrace. Claire herself embarked on the difficult task of regaining the domain for her sons and the heirs of Michael (Francis, Leonard and Nicholas), which she eventually succeeded in doing (in the mid-1480s).⁴⁷ Maybe she also ensured that the memory of her late husband would be preserved in a Franciscan convent. A tombstone originally located in the friary of Târgu Mureș (Marosvásárhely), now in the Historical Museum of Cluj and dating (according to its stylistic features) to the second half of the fifteenth century bears the coat of arms of the Apafis (ill. 6). The stone may have belonged to Michael's grave.

The documentary evidence just reviewed suggests that clearer⁴⁸ signs of Franciscan piety came into the Apafi family with the decisive contribution of Claire Macedoniai, a share which might also be recognised on the preserved altarpiece.

Remaining in the same Transylvanian noble milieu, it may be worth considering the possibility that the concern of some families towards specific convents or orders could be also explained by familial links with their members (often female). Salontai, in her chapter dedicated to the (now disappeared) Holy Cross Dominican convent in Bistrița (Bistritz, Beszterce),⁴⁹ mentioned the patronal contribution of a local nobleman, Thomas Farkas de Harynna (Herina, Mönchschorf, Harina). His support can be inferred both from some preserved donation charters⁵⁰ for the convent and the (lost) display of personal insignia in the church. Several descriptions dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries⁵¹ recorded that the tombstone of

⁴⁷ See, *Ulb.* VII, doc. 3988; doc. 4019 (1474).

⁴⁸ One should keep in mind the presence of Francis of Assisi and Anthony of Padua on the mural painting in the choir at Mălâncrav (ca. 1400).

⁴⁹ Mihaela Sanda Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane din Transilvania*, [Dominican Convents of Transylvania] (Cluj-Napoca: Nereamia Napocae, 2002), pp. 97 sqq. (henceforth abbreviated Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane*).

⁵⁰ *A kolozsmonostori konvent jegyzőkönyvei* (1289-1556), [The Protocols of the Cluj-Mănăștur Convent] ed. Zsigmond Jakó (2 vols., Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990) (henceforth abbreviated Jakó, *A kolozsmonostori konvent*), vol. 2, doc. 2807, 2809 and 3187; see, also, MOL Arcanum DF 247405; MOL Arcanum DF 247414; MOL Arcanum DF 247416.

⁵¹ *Floruit isthic* (sc. Bistriciae) ordo S. Dominici... *Utriusque aedificii fundamenta, ad perfectionem perduxit nobilis vir Thomas Farkas de Harina, ut testatum fecit sepulchralis lapis, sub quo pii fundatoris manes conquiescunt: tum etiam gentilitia arma, foribus Templi praefixa, adjecto nomine fundatoris; & quanquam cicatrices vetustatis illud ex parte exterserint, sparsa tamen*

Thomas (apparently one bearing the effigy of the deceased knight alongside his coat of arms and an inscription) was still to be seen in the church at that time. Other coats of arms of Thomas were displayed on the portal of the church and on a “column” (a pillar) in the interior. Salontai tends to underestimate the role of Thomas as patron, assuming that the presence of the tombstone has no special significance *per se*, giving the example of another person who made provision for his burial in the church (Antonius Heenn).⁵² And indeed, other examples could also be added, such as the one of Albertus Litteratus de Mara⁵³ or that of Demetrius and Dominicus Porkolab de Bongard (Bungard, Baumgarten, Szászbongárd).⁵⁴ However, the central role of Thomas Farkas and of his family⁵⁵ as principal sponsors and patrons of the Dominicans in Bistrița at the end of fifteenth and the beginning of sixteenth centuries might be inferred from other details, too. The presence of his coat of arms on the portal suggests an important contribution to the rebuilding of the church in the years 1480-1490. The donation of fishponds in Viile Tecii (Grosseidau, Kolozsnyida) was also related to the performance of some perpetual divine services in the Holy Cross convent: *...pro certis serviciis et missis perpetuis celebrandis...*⁵⁶ Unfortunately, the document⁵⁷ describing *in extenso* the content of the liturgy is badly damaged. However, some parts of the text are still legible: *...singulis diebus dominicis de Sancta Trinitate, deinde feriis secundis pro defunctis, terciis feriis pro..., quartis feriis pro defunctis (again ??), item feriis ... de omnibus sanctis... sextis feriis de Sancta Cruce... pro diebus... de assumptionis... Marie virginis.. qualibet ebdomada... feriis quintis de angeli...* etc. The extent of the liturgical counter gift makes clear the privileged patronal status of Thomas Farkas.

Even offerings made by other actors were in fact orchestrated by the Farkas de Harynna. For example, the gifts made by Michael de Zob⁵⁸ (a fishpond) and others made by the abovementioned Porkolab family were

fragmenta scuti, leonem referentia, hunc benefactorem & authorem tanti operis fuisse testantur. (Franciscus Fasching, *Nova Dacia ex probatis scriptoribus deprompta*, Claudiopoli, 1743, pp. 88-89); This description of 1743 is based on an earlier account made in 1699 by the Jesuit Rudolph Bzenszky (transcribed by Vasile Rus, ‘Syllogimaeorum Transylvaniae Ecclesiae Libri Septem de Rudolph Bzenszky (I)’, in *Acta Musei Napocensis*, 33/2 (1996): 369-457.

⁵² 1513: MOL Arcanum 247565.

⁵³ 1502: *... sepultura eligo apud fratrum predicatorum...* (MOL Arcanum DI. 22550 and DF 277674).

⁵⁴ Their case is discussed below.

⁵⁵ See, for example, the donation of different precious liturgical items made by Sinsiana, the widow of Johannes Farkas de Harynna (MOL Arcanum DF 247554).

⁵⁶ MOL Arcanum DF 247405; DF 275389.

⁵⁷ MOL Arcanum DF 247414.

⁵⁸ 1492: MOL Arcanum DF 247405.

probably dependent on the influence of the patron, the family of de Harynnas. If the Zobi family⁵⁹ was an equal (if not hierarchically superior) to the Harynnas, the Porkolabs instead were *familiares* of Nicolaus, Thomas and Johannes Farkas. Their offerings often coincide precisely with donations previously made to them by the de Harynnas.⁶⁰ One could assume that at that time the convent of friars preacher in Bistrița was largely patronised by a political group of noble families from the neighbouring areas, dominated by Farkas de Harynna. The status of Thomas Farkas in relation to the convent might have been similar to that of Nicolaus de Bethlen in the convent of the same order in Sighișoara: *perpetuus patronus*.⁶¹

Other reasons could also explain the special attention of Thomas Farkas towards the Dominicans, and the discussion will bring us back to the initial point, namely female patronage. In 1485,⁶² he made a testamentary provision for the newly-erected church of the Dominican nuns in Bistrița, dedicated to the Annunciation of the Virgin.⁶³ He donated a pond with a mill in his possession at Mihăiești (Nádasszentmihály) and the countergift of the nuns was prayers *pro anima*.⁶⁴ The donation has nothing special excepting one detail revealed by other documentary sources: in 1503, Catherine, the daughter of Thomas Farkas and her cousin Magdalene were nuns in this Dominican female house.⁶⁵ We don't know exactly when

⁵⁹ Petrus de Zob (*magnificus*) was royal castellan of Bistrița (1464: *Ulb.* VI, doc. 3360; 3394) and owned several estates near Bistrița (Archiud, Teaca, Pinticu etc.). Michael was his son and heir.

⁶⁰ See below, footnote no. 65.

⁶¹ Fabritius, 'Zwei Funde', p. 8. The exact formula is *perpetuus cum suis patronus*.

⁶² The dating of the charter might be also 1487 or even 1497. On the one hand, the year in the heading of the document is not quite legible, and on the other Thomas Farkas died much later, some time before 1502. To draw up a testament already in 1485 is not impossible, but it seems rather improbable.

⁶³ Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane*, p. 122 sqq. indicates the dedication as Holy Trinity, but several documents challenge this assertion (e.g.: 1525: *quodam causa... cuiusdam vinee in promontorio civitatis Biystriciensis inter religiosas moniales in claustro sew cenobio annunciacionis beatissime virginis Marie in civitate Bistriciensii fudato degentes...* MOL Arcanum DF 247771).

⁶⁴ *...ecclesie que nunc fundatur... pro monialibus et sororibus ordinis sancti Dominici... quandam piscinam suam cum molendino intra metas possessionis Zenithmihaltelke ... ut oret pro parentibus et aliorum defunctorum fratrum animabus* (*Ulb.* VII, doc. 4592, MOL Arcanum DF 277598). One should also notice the close connection between Thomas and Demetrius Porkolab in this donation, as attested by the further transfer of the possession to the nuns (26 April 1501: *introducatoria* for the nuns recorded in the registres of Cluj-Mănăștur Convent: Jakó, *A kolozsmonostori konvent...*, doc. 3187, similar with MOL Arcanum DF 275354).

⁶⁵ 1503: *...Katherine filie egregy quondam Thome Farkas de Harynna... Madalene... puellarum sanctimonialium in Claustro Beate Marie Virginis in Civitate Bistriciensii...* (Jakó, *A kolozsmonostori konvent...*, doc. 3272; MOL Arcanum DI. 36405, p. 240-241 orig_0129). This

Catherine joined the house, but maybe the donation of the father intended to provide a kind of a dowry for the daughter. We could also hypothesize that the nun acted as fundraiser for the convent, in the way in which Katerina Imhoff did (certainly, on a smaller scale) but we have no further evidence. The church of the Annunciation has also disappeared and there is very sparse information about its endowment.

A revealing case regarding the way in which a nun of noble origin acted as a sponsor of her monastery comes from another vanished Transylvanian institution: St Giles monastery in Cluj belonging to the female branch of the same Dominican order. In 1481, nun Elizabeth, the daughter of the late *magnificus* Georgius Lorandfy (from the prestigious and noble Ratold family),⁶⁶ donated to the convent all her proprietary rights in several possessions situated far away in the heart of the Hungarian Kingdom. As a noblewoman, she had that specific Hungarian right over only a quarter of the inheritance (*quartalia puellaris*), but it still represented a very significant contribution for the recipient institution. The donation, made *ob spem in salutem anime sue*, would have triggered a spiritual reward, of which we have no information. The convent of St Giles itself disappeared a long time ago, leaving no material trace.

In investigating the feminine manner of “dealing” with *memoria* the previously mentioned case of the Porkolab family may provide some other significant insights. Demetrius Porkolab⁶⁷ (i.e. Castellan), a member of the lesser nobility in the retinue of the Harynnas, but also in the service of the magistrate of Bistrița, apparently had a memorial agenda and he was very interested in the sponsoring of religious institutions as well. In 1500, Demetrius entered the Archconfraternity of the Holy Ghost in Rome, as recorded by an entry of the registers: *Demetrius Chastillanus et uxor sua Justina cum filiis Ladislao, Imbrico, Georgio, Dorodea, Anna filiabus Albensis diocesis intraverunt in hanc sanctam confraternitatem die 10 mensis Januarii anno iubilei*.⁶⁸ In 1501 he made the aforementioned joint-gift (together with Thomas Farkas) to the Dominican nuns, and sometime before 1512 he founded an altar in the Holy Cross Dominican convent. This altar was dedicated to the Three Holy Kings and St Demetrius, a choice with obvious

fact was also recently noticed by Carmen Florea (Florea, ‘Women and Mendicant Orders’, p. 84, footnote 59).

⁶⁶ 27 January 1481: *...ad legitimam petitionem religiose puelle Elisabeth vocate fylie quondam magnifici Georgii Lorandfy de Gede in clastro sancti Egidii abbatis sororum sanctimonialium extra murum in suburbium civitatis Coloswar fundato...* (MOL Arcanum DF 275407 and 275408).

⁶⁷ Attested ca. 1485 (Jakó, *A kolozsmonostori konvent...*, doc. 2508) – ante 1512 (Jakó, *A kolozsmonostori konvent*, doc. 3577)

⁶⁸ Vince Bunytayi, *Liber Confraternitatis Sancti Spiritus de Urbe* (Budapest, 1889) p. 88.

personal significance. After his death, the widow Justina married another man with the same cognomen Dominicus Porkolab.⁶⁹ They lived together for about a decade, until ca. 1523 when Dominic also died. Apparently, on his deathbed he made a will, with the intention to offer a possession (the village of Sălcuța, Fűzkút) to the same Holy Cross Dominican convent in Bistrița. Practically, our sources⁷⁰ are mainly related to the transfer of the property from the family to the convent, with the approval of the voivode and the king.

The documents reveal that the entire business was conducted by Justina: she (and not one of the sons and heirs of both Porkolabs) took care of the legal procedures concerning the property transfer (the gift) and also negotiated the spiritual reward (counter-gift) of the receiving institution. The latter included a carefully established sequence of perpetual memorial masses at the altar of the Three Holy Kings and St Demetrius where both her husbands were buried,⁷¹ for the salvation of their and her souls.⁷²

Concluding this discussion, we should note that the houses of the Dominican order in Bistrița and Cluj, both male and female, were the objects of intense patronal enterprises by lay families of noblemen and their clients. They made generous gifts for the institutions (certainly, only very partially documented here), and in exchange, the brothers and the nuns provided a sufficient "amount" of *memoria*, both liturgical and visual. In this negotiation women took an active part. It is a cause of regret that in neither church have their furnishings survived.

In the previous cases were considered mainly patrons belonging to the nobility. This is partly due to the character of written sources of medieval Transylvania, far more generous in what concerns the nobility compared to those related to urban (and patrician) environment. Certainly, a closer approach to the presented instance of Katerina Lemmel/Imhoff would provide investigations on the Transylvanian patrician milieu. A very

⁶⁹ It is very possible that the two Porkolabs were relatives.

⁷⁰ 1523: MOL Arcanum DL 28702; DF 247735.

⁷¹ ...*Eadem ... domina Justina in perpetuam elemosynam donasset... dictos fratres ordinis predicatorum... transtulisset tali modo: Quod iidem fratres... singulis hebdomadis seu septimanis tres missas primam ut puta die Lune sive feria secunda pro defunctis alteram vero die Jovis sive feria quinta in honorem Corporis Christi et salvatori nostri et terciam sabbato in honorem gloriose dei genitricis Marie cum sollitus earum collectis in dicta ecclesia in altari Trium Regum et Beati Demetrii in eadem ecclesia per quondam Demetrium similiter Porkolab priorem dominum et maritum ipsius domine Justine constructum ubi scilicet corpora ipsorum condam maritorum suorum humata iacerent successivis semper temporibus celebrari administrareque facere debeant...* (MOL Arcanum DF 247735).

⁷² ... *pro refrigerium animarum dictorum condam maritorum suorum et posthac sue...* (MOL Arcanum DF 247735).

interesting source can be found in the will of Ursula,⁷³ a member of the prestigious family of Eiben⁷⁴ from the same town of Bistrița. She was the sister of Fabianus Eiben, *iudex civitatis* (mayor) several times between 1502 and 1514 and she married twice, with Hans Koler and then Paulus Sutor, both members of the town council. When she drew up her last will she was already a widow and apparently she had no children. The testament itself represents a very rich source concerning both the social network within the town and the province, as well as the memorial agenda of a woman of the patriciate. In her will she made provisions for more than fifteen different religious institutions (parish church,⁷⁵ chapels,⁷⁶ Dominican male⁷⁷ and female⁷⁸ convents, Franciscan⁷⁹ and Poor Claires⁸⁰ convents, hospitals⁸¹) for confraternities⁸² and a dozen or so private individuals.⁸³ The distributions were made directly or by intermediaries, Ursula's debtors, who were allowed to keep a part of the debts in exchange for prayers, and the other part they had to direct to the aforementioned institutions. All the beneficiaries had to pray for her soul (*vor mich lassen bitten*) in different "degrees", depending on the value (real or symbolic) of the received gift.

⁷³ The testament was published only partially in the original Latin by Teutsch (Friedrich Teutsch, *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche in Siebenbürgen* (2 vols., Hermannstadt: W. Krafft, 1921-1922), vol. 1, p. 121) (henceforth abbreviated Teutsch, *Geschichte ev. Kirche*) and *in extenso* translated into German by Müller (Friedrich Müller, *Deutsche Sprachdenkmäler aus Siebenbürgen* (Hermannstadt: Theodor Steinhaussen, 1864), pp. 156-159). The last was copied after the late sixteenth century translation of Emericus Amicinus. The undated document could be assigned to 1512 (and not to 1505) on the basis of the coincidence of the Visitation's day with a Friday (... *gemacht ist dies Testament am freitage der besuchung unserer lieben frauen*) and with a year when Fabianus Eiben was *Richter*.

⁷⁴ On the Eiben family, see Konrad G. Gündisch, *Das Patriziat siebenbürgischer Städte im Mittelalter* (Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau, 1993), p. 438 (index).

⁷⁵ St. Nicholas in Bistrița.

⁷⁶ St Dorothy's chapel near the parish church (a foundation of the family), St Leonard's, St Catherine's (*aufm berg*) all in Bistrița and the chapel in Rodna.

⁷⁷ Holy Cross in Bistrița, *schwarzen Mönchen* in Sibiu (Hermannstadt, Nagyszeben) and Cluj.

⁷⁸ *Schwarzen Nonnen* in Bistrița, Sibiu and Cluj.

⁷⁹ *Mönche zu Marienkirch* in Bistrița; *groen Monchen zu Clausenburg* (Cluj); *brudern zu Prensdorf* (Suseni); *den Mönchen zu Zepan* (Cepari, Franciscans?).

⁸⁰ *Der Nonnen zu Regen* (Reghin, Poor Clares ?); *groen Nonnen zu Marienkirch* (Bistrița).

⁸¹ *zu vnserm Spital* (Bistrița).

⁸² The confraternity of the chapter (deanery) of Bistrița (*bruderschaft vnserer lieben frauen des Capitels*); the confraternity of goldsmiths (*bruderschaft der göldner*) in the Holy Cross convent; for each confraternity in the parish church (*item zu der Pharrkirch S Nicolaj einer ieder bruderschaft fl. 5 so viel irer ist*).

⁸³ Beginning with her brother Fabian and the other brothers (Nicholas, Michael) and sisters (Agnes, Salome), relatives, friends, servants etc.

Some of the institutions had to respond with a definite spiritual reward: perpetual daily masses.⁸⁴

A specific provision in such a will, which usually was not present in noble testaments, was constituted by gifts for the town's fabric. Patrician status in an important town of the province implied, beside a prestigious lineage, a certain wealth and social network, and participation in the government (especially in the inner council). The recurrent election to the highest offices of the commune was also related to personal involvement in the common good, in *res publica*. Sponsoring municipal works and euergetism brought to the patron a certain prestige, enhanced by the public display of personal insignia (coats of arms, portraits, inscriptions of the name etc.). Ursula acted in this ethos of the patriciate, offering money for building the tower of the parish church (which had a mixed religious and municipal function; see ill. 7) and for public works such as the town fortifications: *zu dem gebeü des Turns fl. 50. Vnd zur stadt gebeü fl. 25*. The sums were noteworthy. This kind of sponsorship activated public gratitude and ensured lasting memory on the part of the citizens. At the same tower, marking successive stages of the construction, there are inscriptions with the year and with names. On the second storey one can see the year 1487⁸⁵ and the name *David* respectively; at the third storey there are the year 1509 and the names of *Fabianus Eiben* and *Stephanus Sartor* (ill. 8).⁸⁶ There is a chance that Fabianus Eiben prompted his sister to participate in the building project, for the public good but also for the glory of the family and its good memory. But let us notice that there is no Ursula (or other feminine) name⁸⁷ marked on the walls. In these public works the woman could not stand alone as in religious and devotional matters.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ *Honesta domina Ursula, relicta quondam circumspecti domini magistri Pauli, jurati consulis civitatis Bistriciensis, ob refrigerium animae suae suorumque testamentaliter legavit pro fraternitate assumptionis virginis gloriosae unum domum lapidea..., ut quotiescunque fraternitas eadem per venerandos plebanos capituli Bistriciensis in ecclesia parochiali civitatis Bistriciensis perageretur, extunc iidem domini plebani eodem die pro anima ipsius dominae Ursulae et pro sua genealogia duas missas, unam de assumptione virginis gloriosae et secundum pro defunctis in capella sanctae Dorotheae virginis et martyris ecclesiae sancti Nicolai adiuncta legere teneatur...* (Teutsch, *Geschichte ev. Kirche*, vol. 1, p. 131).

⁸⁵ Spelled as M48Λ (= 1487). After the last "restoration" the figure 7 disappeared.

⁸⁶ My colleague Sanda Salontai identified the last as *vitricus ecclesiae*. He was also present at the drawing up of Ursula's testament (Steffan Schneider).

⁸⁷ It should be remembered that in tax registers of Transylvanian towns and other documents women names were spelled after their (late) husbands' names with the German feminine suffix *-in*. Ursula was *Meister Paulin*. Barbara, the widow of Fabianus Eiben was *Herr Fabianin*; the widow of Painter Thomas was *Thomas Molerin* etc.

⁸⁸ A noteworthy exception should be reminded here: in 1545 Apollonia, widow of Lucas Hirscher, a leading member of the town council of Braşov (Kronstadt, Brassó), sponsored the building of merchants' hall located in the town's main square. A

Finally, it is worth mentioning that Ursula also sponsored “art”. She contributed, through an indebted intermediary, with a share of twelve Florins to an altarpiece which was to be made for (presumably) the Franciscan church.⁸⁹ Evidently, this altarpiece was rather a collateral “good deed” than a personal project.⁹⁰ The work has disappeared like each and every medieval altar image from the District of Bistrița, but we may wonder if or how this contribution would have been recorded on the real object.

Another prominent case is from Cluj and this time it concerns a woman from the class of rich craftsmen: Magdalena, the widow of Georgius Lapidica, who made her last will in 1531.⁹¹ This document contains a remarkably long list of gifts to recipient institutions and (a few) individuals. As a lay adherent of the Franciscan friars’ confraternity (*confratrisa fratrum minorum claustru beatissime virginis Marie in eadem Coloswar fundati*) she made very generous bequests to the Order: for the convent in Cluj, its altars and chapels; for the chapel of sisters belonging to the Third Order Regular that she herself founded (*ad capellam sorrorum Tercy ordinis beati Francisci quam ego feci fieri*); for different convents and *loca* in Transylvania or neighbouring areas,⁹² as well as for distant places in the heart of the kingdom.⁹³ Notwithstanding her declared Franciscan affiliation, Magdalena also made generous donations to other local institutions: to the parish church St. Michael’s and its altars and chapels;⁹⁴ to both male and female Dominican houses, to the hospital of Sanctus Spiritus etc. The gifts consisted in cash (running from ca. 100 golden

monumental inscription bearing her name (*D[OMINI] LVCAE HYRSEER RELICTA CONIVX APOLLONIA F[ECIT] C[ONSTRVERE]*) and the coat of arms of her late husband are still preserved (See, ill. 9). One may notice that noble women displayed the coats of arms of their fathers (see also the case of Affra of Wizakna, ill.12) while townswomen those of their husbands.

⁸⁹ *Dem Johanni Râbel lass ich die schwartzte schaub die zobelen dafor soll er geben zur tafel zu Marienkirch 12 fl.*

⁹⁰ The sum of twelve Florins would have covered only a small part of the whole price of a medium sized altarpiece. For example, the altarpiece sponsored by Stephanus Erdélyi, former vice-voivode of Transylvania for his chapel in the Dominican convent in Cluj cost one hundred Florins (*Ulb. VII, doc. 4618*).

⁹¹ Published by Elek Jakab, *Oklevéltár Kolozsvár története első kötetéhez* [Chartulary for the first volume of Cluj history] (Buda: Nyomatott a Magyar Királyi Egyetemi Könyvnyomdában, 1870), doc. CCXXXVI. The will was studied by Maria Lupescu Makó (Lupescu Makó, ‘Item lego’) and Carmen Florea (Florea, ‘Women and Mendicant Orders’).

⁹² *Wasarhel* (Târgu Mureș), *Thyws* (Teiuș), *Felffalu* (Suseni), *conventus Waradiensis* (Oradea), *Karansebes* (Caransebes).

⁹³ *Conventus Strigoniensis* (Esztergom), *conventus Budensis* (Buda), *conventus Pesthiensis* (Pest), *ad locum de Gyengyes* (Gyöngyös) *et Beren* (Jászberény), *Thata* (Tata) *et Wyssegrad* (Visegrád).

⁹⁴ For St Magdalena’s funerary chapel (an obvious personal choice), for St Mary’s chapel (*ad capellam beate Virginis extra muros*, the so-called Rakonad Chapel), for Corpus Christi altar and its confraternity, for All Saints’ altar, for St Ambrose’s altar.

Florins to a mere one), properties (the entire house, a vineyard, a field), objects (furniture, cloths, rugs, silverware) etc. This woman had a special predilection for liturgical textiles and cloths, as one may infer from her recurrent demand that the ready money she left had to be used for such articles.⁹⁵ But she also bequeathed for *vasa sacra* (chalices),⁹⁶ crosses⁹⁷ or even altarpieces.⁹⁸ Like Ursula from Bistrița, she made provisions for a pilgrimage to Rome.⁹⁹ The returning gifts consisted of different amounts of liturgical services, prayers *pro anima*, commemorations and suffrages.

Similarly to Ursula, Magdalena apparently had no heir, so that she presumably bequeathed all her belongings.¹⁰⁰ The bulk went to numerous religious institutions and just a small part to a few private individuals. This might be related to her confidence in the efficiency of the Church as advocate of souls rather than in individual intercession. Even though she manifested a preference for the Franciscan Order,¹⁰¹ the dispersal of gifts to so many different recipient institutions indicates a certain concern for ensuring diversity of suffrages. No perpetual mass was instituted by the offerings of her last will, but she made sure that a dozen or so of separate establishments prayed simultaneously for her salvation. The longest term of services was to last for a period of twenty-five years.

As opposed to Ursula, Magdalena did not belong to the patriciate, but nevertheless she was able to make substantial offerings.¹⁰² In quantitative terms, Magdalena's gifts were much similar to those of the patrician woman, but partly they had different categories of beneficiaries. Ursula was much more involved in the social web of her kin and class, as resulting in the many allowances addressed to individuals. Magdalena

⁹⁵ *Item lego centum florenos (!) ad ornandum sericum album deauratum vulgo kamuka, de quo fiat indumentum sacerdotale ad maius altare claustrum prefati...; item similiter lego vigintiquinque ad unum indumentum altaris...; ...pro uno alio indumentum sacerdotale... quod fiat de nigro atlasio vulgo Altłacz in memoria defunctorum...; ...sedecim florenos pro indumento sacerdotale ad capellam sorrorum... etc.*

⁹⁶ *...ut ex fiat calix ad cultum divini obsequy...; ...ad preparacionem dicti calicis florenos X... etc.*

⁹⁷ *... de ipsis C florenos emantur crux...*

⁹⁸ As her fellow Ursula from Bistrița, she left small sums of money for the completion of such artworks: *...item pro deauracione tabule omnium sanctorum in prefata parochialis ecclesia existentis similiter florenum unum...; ...ad capellam sanctorum Fabiani et Sebastiani martirum apud fratres predicatores pro reformacione tabule lego florenos II...*

⁹⁹ *Item pro voto meo redimendo mittatur unus homo devotus ad Urbem Roma, cui lego florenos viginti in auro.* This special request is to be found in several Transylvanian wills, both masculine and feminine.

¹⁰⁰ *...omnibus bonis mobilibus et immobilibus mihi a Deo colatis...*

¹⁰¹ *... quas lego ex illa devocione, quam ad eorum Ordinem habui...*

¹⁰² Apparently the mason's craft of her late husband brought into the family a considerable income.

instead directed the bulk of her offerings to the Church, expecting spiritual reward and memorials from that direction.

A final piece of evidence to be considered here comes from the aforementioned register of benefactors of the Dominican convent in Sighișoara. One of the most significant entries in the roster concerns the offerings made by Dorothea, the widow of Martinus Creuz of Brașov, to the benefit of the religious house.¹⁰³ With personal resources she founded a “vaulted” chapel which she adorned with a small altarpiece, a chalice and liturgical vestments.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, she gave 50 Florins in cash out of which the friars commissioned a pew. For these generous offerings, valued at over 200 Florins (*ultra ducenti fl.*), the convent had to respond with a weekly mass in the chapel for a period of twenty years *pro refrigerio animarum parentum eius atque maritorum ipsius*. Also future friars had to pray continuously for her and to preserve her memory (*...obligantur posteri fratres ei ad satisfactionem in sui oracionibus et aliis operibus virtuosis et continuam eius habere memoria*).

This private chantry founded by a lay woman¹⁰⁵ has completely disappeared, together with its endowment.¹⁰⁶ One may however wonder what kind of visual props were used in order to mark the patronage? In what way liturgical (thus oral) memory was completed by visual instruments?

The cases discussed above certainly represent some of the most detailed and significant wills and *dona pia* relating to women in late medieval Transylvania. The documentary evidence proves that women founded chapels and altars with attached prebends, paid for masses, suffrages and memorial services, donated *vasa sacra*, liturgical clothes, images etc. In one way they may “compete” with the masculine documented cases,¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Fabritius, ‘Zwei Funde’, pp. 16-17, doc. XX. Her case is discussed by Maria Lupescu Makó (Lupescu Makó, ‘Item lego’ and Lupescu Makó, ‘Death and Remembrance’); Ciprian Firea (‘Polipticul din Sighișoara – un retablu dominican?’ [The Altarpiece from Sighișoara – A Dominican Retable?]) in *Ars Transsilvaniae*, 19 (2009): 69-79 and Carmen Florea (Florea, ‘The Third Path’).

¹⁰⁴ *Item Dorothea relicta quondam Martini Creuz de Corona... facit propriis suis expensis fabricari capellam ante foris ecclesie... fecit denique testitudinem sive boltam fieri... et cum tabula pro 24 fl. ornari... fecit fieri calicem pr 26 fl. et duas casulas de optimo serico... cum omnibus pertinenciis et antependiis.*

¹⁰⁵ After the death of her (second) husband, as the cited document attests, Dorothy joined the Third Order of the Franciscans (*suscipiens habitum sacre religionis de penitencia*). The Dominicans refused a previously addressed request on the basis of her widowed status.

¹⁰⁶ I suggested (Firea, ‘Polipticul din Sighișoara’, pp. 78-79) that St Martin’s altarpiece preserved in Sighișoara might possibly be the one donated by Dorothy. I am now convinced that this is not true.

¹⁰⁷ Such as the aforementioned wills of Nicolaus Apafi and Nicolaus de Wizakna, or those of vicewoyvode Leonardus Barlabassy (28 January 1525: Samu Barabás, *Codex*

confirming the assumption of Chiffolleau about feminine involvement in sponsoring pious activities and funding *memoria*. The commitment of Transylvanian women to such enterprises was thus comparable with that of men, while still maintaining some gender peculiarities. For example, wives surviving their husbands were much keener to preserve the memory of their late partner(s) than their male counterpart. Several documents¹⁰⁸ support this conjecture.¹⁰⁹ Women often made explicit requests to be buried next to their husbands¹¹⁰ so that their joint memory could be celebrated by descendants. It should be also remembered that testamentary provisions and resources invested in memorials depended upon local particularities of female proprietary rights and other laws and customs concerning the inheritance or the transmission of assets.¹¹¹ Difference in wealth and social status (noble, patrician, bourgeois, craftsman etc.) certainly influenced memorial agendas and their "magnitude". There is also convincing (documentary and comparative) evidence that Transylvanian women participated in the conception of memorial programmes. The previous pages have summarily touched these issues.

On the other hand, material and visual evidence of *memoria* (epitaphs, heraldry, donor portraits, inscriptions, tombstones etc.) in late medieval Transylvania is overwhelmingly masculine. A few tombstones,¹¹² very rare

Diplomaticus Sacri Romani Imperii Comitum Familiae Teleki de Szék (2 vols., Budapest: Athenaeum, 1895) vol. 2, pp. 450-455); Stephanus Erdely de Somkerek (1485: MOL Arcanum DL. 39010); Andreas de Tholdalag (26 October 1471: *Székely Oklevéltár*, vol. 3, doc. 478, pp. 91-94) etc.

¹⁰⁸ See, also the wills or offerings of: Clara Thabyassy widow of Johannes Lulay and then Marcus Pemfflinger (04 September 1523: full transcription in Karóly Fabritius, *Pemfflinger Márk szász gróf élete, különös tekintettel a reformatio elterjedésére az erdélyi szászok között* (Budapest: Akadémia könyvkiadó-hivatala, 1875), pp. 121-124, doc. XIV); Elizabet Patócsi, widow of the voivode Johannes Pongracz de Dengeleg (post 1479; see Esterházy, 'A kolozsvári Boldog-Asszonyról', p. 579); Ursula, the widow of Paulus Zylahy of Cluj (1531: Jakó, *A kolozsmonostori konvent*, doc. 4362; MOL Arcanum DL. 36404_orig. 031-033) etc.

¹⁰⁹ Formulas such as: *ob salutem et perpetuam salubrem memoriam prelibati mariti sui...*, or *pro refrigerium animarum maritorum eius...* are to be found in these female wills and offerings. Instead, the preferred formulas in male wills were *ob salutem meam et refrigerium parentum et fratrum meorum...*; *pro salutem animae nostrae* etc.

¹¹⁰ Clara Thabiassy: *...corpus suum ad sacellum eiusdem parochiali ecclesiae annexum, ubi scilicet primus maritus eius urna repositus quiescit...*; Magdalena: *...sepulturam eligo in iam fato claustro beate Virginis fratrum minorum quemadmodum et maritus meus predecessor...* etc.

¹¹¹ Discussed by Lupescu Makó, 'Considerații privind testamentele nobiliare', pp. 118 sqq.

¹¹² Such as the one of Helena Hago of Cluj (1503), buried in the Franciscan convent (ill. 10). A cogent instance of the memorial use of tombstones is embodied in the inscription of the slab belonging to Thomas Gyero de Zamosfalva (Someșeni, Szamosfalva), ca. 1510: *Hic iacet egregius dominus Thomas Gereu de Zamosfalva cujus anima deo commendatur. Rogo successores meos ut orent Deum pro anima sua* (see, Balogh, *Renaissance*, pp. 262-263).

female “portraits”¹¹³ and coats of arms¹¹⁴ represent sparse relics of the memorial endeavours of Transylvanian women,¹¹⁵ even though a lot of the material commissions (architecture, painted and sculpted images, silverware, textiles etc.) were susceptible to bear patronal *insignia*. The repertoire is certainly “unfair” for the local context and very poor compared with other cultural areas. One thing to blame is, probably, a massive loss of medieval visual evidence. But we should also consider the fact that often genuine female memorial initiatives were “disguised” in manly clothes. The result is a more decided “male Middle Ages”.¹¹⁶ This investigation of the somewhat richer documentary evidence may thus provide partial reparation and by attempting to combine different categories of sources aims to restore, at least in part, a female aspect to the history of late medieval Transylvania.

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6. Cluj (Kolozsvár), Historical Museum. Tombstone with the coat of arms of the Apafis (originally in the Franciscan convent of Târgu Mureş / Marosvásárhely) (photo C. Firea)
7. Bistriţa (Bistritz). Tower of the parish church (photo C. Firea)
8. Bistriţa. Monumental inscription on the tower (1509) with the names of Fabianus Eiben and Stephanus Sartor (photo C. Firea)
9. Braşov (Kronstadt). Inscription with the name of Apollonia and the coat of arms of her deceased husband Lucas Hirscher (photo C. Firea)
10. Cluj (Historical Museum). Tombstone of Helena Hago (originally in the Franciscan convent) (photo C. Firea)
11. Sântămărie Orlea (Óraljaboldogfalva). “Portrait” of a female donor
12. Sibiu (Hermannstadt). Coat of arms of Affra de Wizakna on the Altemberger House (photo C. Firea)

¹¹³ Besides the aforementioned example in Mălâncrav there are very few female representations: on the mural painting at Sântămărie Orlea (ill. 11), on the altarpiece in Fişer (a badly damaged representation of – presumably – a couple of patrons on the predella). In Orthodox churches in Transylvania female portraits were more present (as at Streisângeorgiu, Ribiţa, Crişcior).

¹¹⁴ As, for example, those belonging to Affra de Wizakna (Ocna Sibiului) on the Altemberger House in Sibiu (ill. 12).

¹¹⁵ After the 1550s (and the spreading of the Reformation) female memorials multiplied considerably.

¹¹⁶ George Duby, *Mâle Moyen Âge : de l'amour et autres essais* (Paris: Flammarion, 1988).



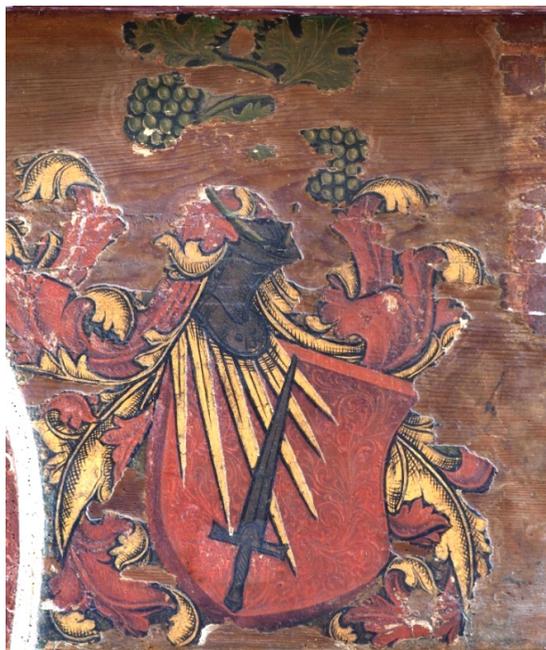
1. Mălâncrav (Malmkrog, Almakerék). Altarpiece in and its setting
(photo C. Firea)



2. Mălâncrav. Central panel of the altarpiece with donors

3. Mălâncrav. "Portrait" of Clara Macedoniei





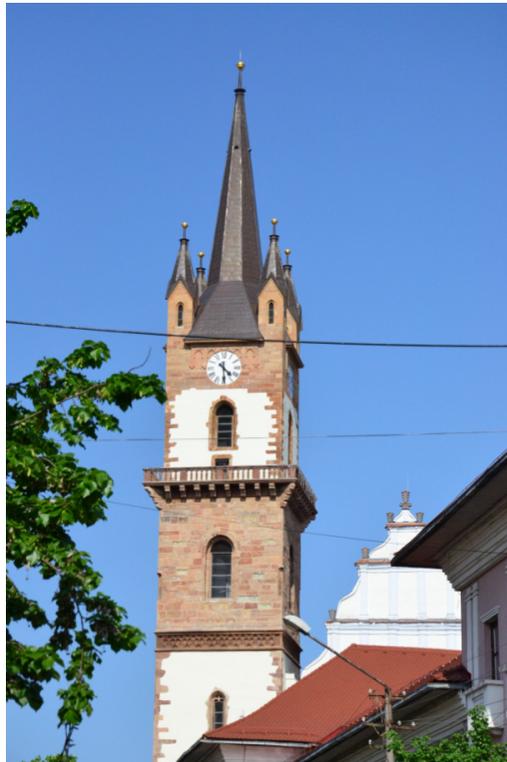
4. Mălâncrav. Coat of arms of Michael Apafi (photo C. Firea)



5. Coat of arms of Macedonaii family (after Siebmacher)



6. Cluj (Kolozsvár), Historical Museum. Tombstone with the coat of arms of the Apafis (originally in the Franciscan convent of Târgu Mureş / Marosvásárhely) (photo C. Firea)



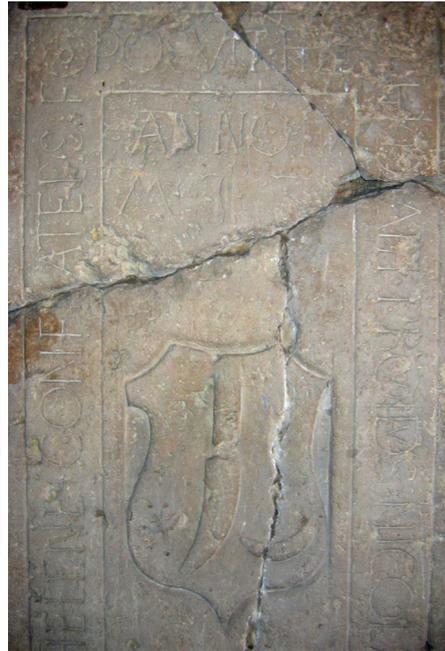
7. Bistrița (Bistritz). Tower of the parish church (photo C. Firea)



8. Bistrița. Monumental inscription on the tower (1509) with the names of Fabianus Eiben and Stephanus Sartor (photo C. Firea)



9. Brașov (Kronstadt). Inscription with the name of Apollonia and the coat of arms of her deceased husband Lucas Hirscher (photo C. Firea)



10. Cluj (Historical Museum). Tombstone of Helena Hago (originally in the Franciscan convent) (photo C. Firea)



11. Sântămărie Orlea (Óraljaboldogfalva). "Portrait" of a female donor



12. Sibiu (Hermannstadt). Coat of arms of Affra de Wizakna on the Altemberger House (photo C. Firea)

Civic Control of Sainthood in Late Medieval Transylvania*

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the shaping of civic religion in late medieval Transylvanian towns. Its starting point is represented by a discussion of existing research that focused on the concept of civic religion both in the Italian city-states and the towns of northern Europe. The characteristic features of civic religion will then be explored in connection to several Transylvanian examples provided by the cult of the parish patron saints. The chosen case studies concern the most important towns of the region (Bistrița, Brașov, Cluj and Sibiu) that will be explored from the point of view of the way the city councils' involvement in the promotion of parochial protectors decisively contributed to the transformation of these cults into civic ones. As a result, further nuances will be added to the ongoing discussion of the concept of civic religion.

Key-words: civic religion, parish, cult of the saints, towns, public, social prestige, late medieval Transylvania, Italian city-states, Northern Europe

Rezumat: Controlul civi al sanctității în Transilvania medievală târzie. Studiul de față își propune să investigheze modalitățile în care a fost articulată religia civică în orașele Transilvaniei medievale. Pornind de la discuția existentă în istoriografie asupra conceptului de religie civică în orașele-state italiene și a celor din nordul Europei, studiul va analiza exemplul oferit de cele mai importante centre urbane transilvănene (Bistrița, Brașov, Cluj și Sibiu) în legătură cu dezvoltarea cultelor patronilor parohiali. Această evoluție va fi urmărită din perspectiva implicării magistraturii urbane în promovarea protectorilor parohiali și transformarea cultelor acestora în culte civice. Rezultatele acestei analize vor contribui la nuanțarea discuției referitoare la conceptul de religie civică purtată în și de către istoriografiile occidentale.

Cuvinte cheie: religie civică, parohie, cultul sfinților, orașe, public, prestigiul social, Transilvania medievală târzie, orașele-stat italiene, nordul Europei

On the ninth day of February in the year 1457 the judge and jurors of Sibiu acting on behalf of the entire community of the citizens of the town decided to make public their protest against priest Anthony by posting the document issued by the notary *Urbanus* on the southern doors of the Virgin

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Mary parish church. Seven days later, the same protest has also been displayed on the cathedral church of St. Michael from Alba-Iulia.¹ According to these charters, the urban magistracy opposed the decisions of the parish priest of the town not to celebrate certain divine services. This was considered to gravely disturb the religious life of the community that was shaped by a daily and weekly sequence of liturgical celebrations to be performed in the parish church as it was agreed in 1432 between the city council and the parish priest.² Similar conflicts were recorded by the surviving sources in another important town, that of Cluj, where the citizens requested the mediation of the Transylvanian Bishop in order to maintain unchanged the type and number of the Masses to be performed by the local curia in the parish church of St. Michael.³

It would be easy to consider these disputes as reflecting the growing involvement of the laity in the religious domain, an indisputable proof of the way the urban authority controlled religious life. In what follows, I would like to suggest that the conflicts of the fifteenth century are an integral part not only of the religious history, but also of the more general history of the Transylvanian towns and that by placing them within the discussion of the civic religion more light could be shed on the interactions between clergy and laity in the late Middle Ages.

But what is civic religion? The concept has benefited from increased attention in the last three decades, being researched in a thorough manner as testified by numerous studies, articles and monographs that have been published. Among the main contributions made, one can mention the close scrutiny of religious life from the point of view of the involvement in the rituals and public ceremonies of the urban authorities from the Italian communes.⁴ Another approach to civic religion is connected to the way the

¹ *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, eds. Franz Zimmermann et al. (7 vols, Bucharest: Verlag der Akademie der Republik Rumänien, 1892-1991), vol. 5, pp. 558-60 and pp. 562-3.

² *Ibid.* vol. 4, pp. 461-2

³ *Oklevéltár Kolozsvár története első kötetéhez*, ed. Elek Jakab, (Buda: Nyomtatott a Magy. Kir. Egyetemi Könyvyomdában, 1870), pp. 152-4.

⁴ Richard C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, (New York: Academic Press: 1980); Alba Maria Orselli, 'Vita religiosa nella città medievale italiana tra dimensione ecclesiastica e cristianesimo civico. Una esemplificazione', *Annali dell'Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento*, VII (1981): 361-398; Giampaolo Tognetti, 'La religione civica nell'Italia comunale. Primi elementi di un indagine', *La Cultura*, 22 (1984): 101-127; Brian Kempers, 'Icons, Altarpieces, and Civic Ritual in Siena Cathedral (1100-1530)', in Barbara Hanawalt and Kathryn L. Reyerson (eds.), *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe*, (Minneapolis-London: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), pp. 89-136; André Vauchez (ed.), *La religion civique à l'époque médiévale et moderne (Chrétienté et Islam)*, Actes du colloque organisé par le

cult of the saints has been used by the authorities of the towns from the Italian Peninsula. Illustrative in this regard are the works which pointed out the key role played by the Mendicant Orders in the transformation of the saints and *beati* of their ranks into heavenly protectors of the municipal governments which would invest into the celebration of their feast days and in the buildings that would perpetuate their memory.⁵

The investigation of the relationship between Mendicant sainthood and the civic authorities' agency in the new cults that emerged in the Latin Christendom has also brought to light that indeed the municipal government was interested to modify and enlarge the saintly Pantheon to the extent that it would reflect with more accuracy the social hierarchy that emerged in the urbanized societies of Western Europe.⁶ Significantly enough, this development would become an inseparable part of the memory of the communes, the inclusion of the celebration of saints' cults among the decisions made by the magistracy as reflected by urban charters,

Centre de recherche "Histoire sociale et culturelle de l'Occident, XIIe-XVIIIe siècle" de l'Université de Paris X-Nanterre et l'Institut universitaire de France, Nanterre, 21-23 juin 1993, (Rome: Ecole française de Rome, 1995); Nicholas Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities and Civic Religion in Renaissance Bologna*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Antonio Ivan Pini, *Città, chiesa e culti civici in Bologna medievale*, (Bologna: CLUEB, 1999); Ana Benvenuti, 'Culti civici: un confronto europeo', in Sergio Gensini (ed.), *Vita religiosa e identità politiche: universalità e particolarismi nell'Europa del Tardo Medioevo*, Atti del VI convegno internazionale del Centro Studi I Capuccini a San Miniato, (San Miniato: Fondazione Centro Studi sulla Civiltà del Tardo Medioevo, 1998); Pierre Racine, 'Saint patron et religion civique en Italie: l'exemple milanais', *Le Moyen Age. Revue d'Histoire et de Philologie*, CV (1999): 475-479; Joanna Cannon and Beth Williamson (eds.), *Art, politics and civic religion in central Italy, 1261-1352*. Essays by postgraduates at the Courtauld Institute of Art, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); Paolo Golinelli, 'Hagiographie et cultes civiques dans l'Italie du Nord (XIIe-XVe siècle)', in Isabelle Heullant-Donat *Cultures italiennes (XIIe-XVe siècle)*, (Paris: Cerf, 2000), pp. 239-267; Mario Rosa, 'Dalla religione civica alla pietà illuminata: la cintola della Vergine di Prato', *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa*, 38 (2002): 235-271.

⁵ André Vauchez has given a detailed investigation of this aspect of civic religion in several of his studies such as: 'La commune de Sienne, les Ordres mendiants et le culte des saints. Histoire et enseignements d'une crise (novembre 1328-avril 1329)', *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Moyen Age-Temps Modernes*, 89 (1977): 757-767; Idem, 'Patronage des saints et religion civique dans l'Italie communale à la fin du Moyen Age', in Vincent Bartolo Moleta (ed.), *Patronage and Public in the Trecento*, St. Lambrecht symposium, Abtei St. Lambrecht, Styria, 16-19 July, 1984, (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1986), pp. 59-80; Idem, 'Santa Margherita da Cortona (+ 1297): dalla religione civica al culto universale', in *Vita religiosa*, pp. 251-262.

⁶ Michael Goodich, "Vita Perfecta". *The Ideal of Sainthood in the Thirteenth Century*, Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 25, (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1982), particularly pp. 146-7.

granted in fact citizenship to the new saints that won the favor of the urban communities.⁷

At the same time, research dealing with the way civic religion took shape has also emphasized that not only Mendicant cults were adapted to the needs of the urban authorities. Similar transformation has also been observed in the case of long-established cults, such as the very popular and universal cult of the Virgin Mary.⁸ In fact, by the late Middle Ages not only the Mendicant-based cults, but also the parochial ones were channeled by the magistracy, so that they could bring peace and stability for the communities it represented. Such a trend is best evidenced by the cult of Corpus Christi, the public display and celebration of the most important sacrament of Christian religion reinforcing social cohesion.⁹

To be sure, civic religion, as it has been convincingly argued, was not restricted to the territory of a given commune. On the contrary, in the territories subjected to the city-states of northern Italy, the civic cults prove to be an effective tool for underlying political supremacy.¹⁰ In fact, among the latest trends in researching civic religion is that emphasizing that even if most previous scholarship focused on the Italian towns, the concept could be tested in other European regions. Interesting results have already been achieved in the case of the towns from the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea in Dalmatia, of those from France and the Flemish regions.¹¹

⁷ Ana Benvenuti, 'I santi protagonisti della storia cittadina', in Ana Benvenuti, Sofia Boesch-Gajano, Simon Ditchfield, Roberto Rusconi, Francesco Scorza Barcellona, Gabriella Zari (eds.), *Storia della santità nel cristianesimo occidentale*, (Roma: Viella, 2005), pp. 164-6.

⁸ Mary Bergstein, 'Marian Politics in Quattrocento Florence: the Renewed Dedication of Santa Maria del Fiore in 1412', *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 44, 4 (1991): 673-719; Gary Dickson, 'The 115 Cults of the Saints in Later Medieval and Renaissance Perugia: a Demographic Overview of a Civic Pantheon', *Renaissance Studies*, vol. 12, 1 (1998): 6-25; Diane Webb, *Patrons and Defenders: the Saints in the Italian City-States*, (London and New York: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 1996); Augustine Thompson O.P., *Cities of God. The Religion of the Italian Communes 1125-1325*, (University Park PA: Pennsylvania University Press, 2005).

⁹ James Mervyn, 'Ritual, Drama and Social Body in the Late Medieval English Town', *Past and Present* 98 (1983): 3-29; Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi. The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 247-272 and Charles Zika, 'Hosts, Processions and Pilgrimages: Controlling the Sacred in Fifteenth-Century Germany', *Past and Present* 118 (1998): 25-64.

¹⁰ Giorgio Chittolini, 'Civic religion and the countryside in late medieval Italy', in Trevor Dean and Chris Wickham (eds.), *City and countryside in late medieval and Renaissance Italy: essays presented to Philip Jones*, (London: The Hambledon Press, 1990), pp. 69-80; Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, 'Children's First Name in Italy during the Late Middle Ages', *The Medieval History Journal*, vol. 2, 1 (1999): 37-54.

¹¹ Ana Marinković, 'Territorial Expansion of the Ragusan Commune/Republic and the Churches of Its Patron Saints', *Dubrovnik Annals*, 13 (2009): 7-23; Jacques Rossiaud, 'Les

Yet, as one of the first researchers of civic religion, André Vauchez, has observed fairly recently, the concept still requires further investigation.¹² The provisional definition the French historian proposed refers to the civic religion as being a religious phenomenon decisively shaped by the intervention of local/urban authorities which not only supervised and financed the organization of religious life, but also appropriated religious values in order to use them as legitimizing sources when exercising public power.¹³

It can be said therefore that civic religion is, in as much as one can comprehend it from existing research, a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, its main features revealing the orchestration and public use of the sacred by those invested with civic power. The main aim of the analysis that follows would be that of assessing the degree with which the public manifestations of religiosity in the most important Transylvanian towns can be associated to the concept of civic religion, contributing thus further to the

rituels de la fête civique à Lyon, XIIIe-XVIe siècles', in Jacques Chiffolleau, Lauro Martines, and Agostino Paravicini Bagliani (eds.), *Riti e rituali nelle società medievali*, (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1994), pp. 285-307; Jean-Arnault Dérens, 'La prédication et la ville: pratiques de la parole et religion civique à Montpellier aux XIVe et XVe siècles', in *La Prédication en Pays d'Oc (XIIIe-début XVe siècle)*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, no 32, Toulouse, Privat, 1997, pp. 335-362; Andrew Brown, *Civic Ceremony and Religion in Medieval Bruges, c. 1300-1520*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

¹² Vauchez, 'La religione civica', in *Esperienze religiose nel Medioevo*, (Roma: Viella, 2003): 247-51, outlined several criteria which could prove their usefulness when attempting to define civic religion. These refer to the involvement of the urban magistracy in regulating religious life as derived from the legal rights it enjoyed, the adaptation of religious exigencies to the needs of those participating in government, the initiatives taken by the urban leadership in the religious domain which in fact broke the clerical monopoly, and the extent to which the administration of the sacred by the secular power can be considered proof for the laicization of society in the late Middle Ages. Many of the above constituent ingredients of civic religion were addressed by Donald Weinstein, 'Critical Issues in the Study of Civic Religion in Renaissance Florence', in Charles Trinkhaus and Heiko Oberman (eds.), *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), pp. 265-269. Unlike Vauchez who advocated the cause of the applicability of the concept in various regions and religions, including Islam, Weinstein focused exclusively on the Italian Peninsula. Inspired by the work of Richard C. Trexler, Weinstein suggests an examination of civic religion according to four main points: the issue of laicization which could highlight the replacement of clerics by laymen in what concerns creation and propagation of religious values, the growing role played by and attributed to the young in the religious rituals, the secularization understood as both the transfer of religious ceremonies from the sacred space of monasteries for example to that of the public space of the towns and the uses of religious values in order to validate the activity of the temporal institutions, and finally, derived from this secularization process, the prolongation of the sacred over the entire community, the sanctification of the city itself.

¹³ Vauchez, *La religione civica*, p. 247

existing knowledge of this concept. When attempting to achieve this goal, I would scrutinize the modalities within which the cult of the saints has become an integral part of the religious initiatives the city councils of Sibiu, Braşov, Bistriţa and Cluj undertook in the late Middle Ages.

The conclusions reached thus far by older and more recent research on urban religious life in the kingdom of Hungary have emphasized the strong relationship that existed between the magistracy and the local parish curia. This collaboration derived from the privileged status of the royal towns, which expressed their autonomy in the ecclesiastical domain by the free election of the parish priest.¹⁴ As it has been convincingly argued, this right significantly contributed to the forging of urban identity, a process which proved to be of great importance in the case of the Transylvanian towns, largely mono-parochial in the last centuries of the Middle Ages.¹⁵

Despite the highly valuable suggestions formulated by previous scholarship which emphasized the key role played by the urban magistracy of the Transylvanian towns in supervising religious life, the possibility of broadening the enquiry by addressing the issue of civic religion has marginally been addressed, the most important contribution in this regard being that of art historical research. General monographs drew attention to the great reconstruction work undertaken in the timeframe between 1350 and 1500 to the parochial churches of the most important Transylvanian towns, suggesting that the enterprise intended to reflect the pride of privileged communities.¹⁶ More recent research however, sought to

¹⁴ András Kubinyi, 'Plébánosválasztások és egyházközöségi önkormányzat a középkori Magyarországon', in *Főpapok, egyházi intézmények és vallásosság a középkori Magyarországon*, (Budapest: Magyar Egyháztörténeti Enciklopédia Munkaközösség, 1999), pp. 271-90 argued that the magistracy's right to freely elect the parish priest was one of the privileges which articulated urban autonomy and it can be considered a sub-patronage, since it was a right granted by the King.

¹⁵ Marie Madeleine de Cevins, *L'Église dans les villes hongroises aux XIVe et XVe siècles* (Thèse pour le Nouveau Doctorat), (Paris-Sorbonne, 1995), pp. 377-83 when discussing the process of the communal election of the parish priest in the towns of the medieval Hungarian kingdom pointed out that this involvement of the urban leadership in the functioning of the parish church led to the emergence of a civic mentality based on the relationship between the community of the citizens and that of the *universitas parochiorum*.

¹⁶ Virgil Vătăşianu, *Istoria artei feudale în Țările Române*, vol. I, (Bucureşti: Editura Academiei Republicii Populare Române, 1959), pp. 213-7; Vasile Drăguţ, *Arta gotică în România*, (Bucureşti: Editura Meridiane, 1979), pp. 70-71; Hermann Fabini, *Die Stadtpfarrkirche in Hermannstadt*, Baudenkmäler in Siebenbürgen, Heft 18, (Sibiu: Monumenta Verlag, 1997), pp. 7-8; Idem, 'Die Schwarze Kirche in Kronstadt', in *Baudenkmäler in Siebenbürgen*, (Sibiu: Monumenta Verlag, 1999), Heft 20, pp. 6-8; Idem,

demonstrate that the re-building and the changes in the architectural program were meant to illustrate the civic identities the towns of Cluj, Sibiu and Braşov chose to display after having acquired their autonomy.¹⁷ Whilst heavily relying on these observations, I would also like to introduce within this discussion the cult of the saints, more specifically, that of the parish patron saint, which in my view functioned as a catalyst in the articulation of a civic religion in late medieval Transylvania.

As I have mentioned above, the four towns that will be analyzed belonged to the so-called category of free royal towns, a status which sanctioned their autonomy both in leadership and in the ecclesiastical sphere. Consequently, the urban magistracy of Sibiu, Braşov, Bistriţa and Cluj had the right to elect the parish priest. In the light of the surviving sources this right was indeed exercised by the city councilors.¹⁸ Another similarity resides in the fact that all these towns grew in size and economic importance between the fourteenth and the sixteenth century, becoming the largest and the most important Transylvanian towns. Furthermore, Sibiu, Braşov and Bistriţa were inhabited throughout the Middle Ages predominantly by a German population, their ethnic homogeneity contributing to the increased importance of the single parish church. By contrast, Cluj was inhabited by groups of Germans and Hungarians which from mid-fifteenth century onwards participated on an equal and alternative manner in the urban government. This situation was also reflected in the religious domain, as precisely from the same period, in Cluj the functioning of two parish churches integrated the religious life of the citizens.¹⁹

Starting from the premise that the single parish church existing in Sibiu, Braşov, Bistriţa and Cluj for the most part of the Middle Ages and the election of the parish priest by the city council cemented the collaboration between the town's officials and the local clergy, it would be worth

'Die Michaelskirche in Klausenburg', *Baudenkmäler in Siebenbürgen*, (Sibiu: Monumenta Verlag, 1999), Heft 37, pp. 3-6.

¹⁷ Matthew Palmer, 'A Tendentious Plan. Towards an Understanding of St. Michael's Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca)', *Acta Historiae Artium Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 40 (1998): 1-23; Ciprian Firea, 'Biserica Sf. Maria din Sibiu- liturghie medievală și arhitectură gotică (cca. 1350-1550)', *Ars Transilvaniae* XVIII (2008): 47-74; Ágnes Bálint, 'Biserica Neagră din Braşov- noi propuneri privind cronologia și contextul construcției', *Ars Transilvaniae*, XIX (2009): 5-18.

¹⁸ For the election of the parish priest of Sibiu see *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 1, pp. 324-30, for that of Braşov see *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 2, pp. 477-8, for that of Bistriţa see *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 5, pp. 412-4 and for that of Cluj see *Oklevéltár*, pp. 31-4.

¹⁹ De Cevins, *L'Église*, pp. 104-113.

investigating the extent to which this collaboration impacted on the functioning of the cult of the parish patron saint. A first step seems to have been taken very soon after these towns acquired urban autonomy. Sanctioned by the royal charters issued for Sibiu (1317), Braşov (1353, 1366), Cluj (1316, 1405) and Bistriţa (1453), these liberties may have stimulated increased interest on the part of the urban communities for their parish churches.²⁰

Chronologically, this can be dated at Sibiu to 1321 when the town's representatives and the parish priest firmly defended their ecclesiastical autonomy, opposing the provostship's interference in their religious life.²¹ In 1383, Braşov witnessed the start of the impressive work initiated by the parish priest and sustained by the citizens of reconstructing the church of the Virgin Mary.²² At Cluj, after the town has been freed from the authority of the Transylvanian Bishop, several citizens applied in 1349 for an indulgence to be granted for the construction of the St. Michael parish church, whereas in Bistriţa significant changes were made to the church of St. Nicholas starting with the mid-fifteenth century.²³ The architectural transformations undertaken in the course of the fifteenth century and the first decades of the following one were not only suited to accommodate an increased number of parishioners, but were also meant to reflect the civic ideals of the communities from Sibiu, Braşov, Bistriţa and Cluj.²⁴

²⁰ *Codex Diplomaticus Hungariae Ecclesiasticus ac Civilis*, Studio et Opera Georgii Fejér, (Bvdae: Typis Typogr. Regiae Vniversitatis Vngaricae, 1852), t. VIII, vol. II, pp. 62-3; *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 2, pp. 152-3; *Oklevéltár*, pp. 31-4 and pp. 123-6; *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 5, pp. 412-4.

²¹ *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 2, pp. 350-2:... *quod cum ecclesia eorum parochialis Cybiniensis libertatis privilegio fulciatur licet iam per aliquos annos eadem ecclesiae et eiusdem ecclesiae plebani velut oppressi per tyrannidem prepositorum inviti fecerit subiectionem eo quod iuxta continentiam regalium privilegiorum dictis dominis meis et provincialibus eorundem concessorum parochialis ecclesia Cybiniensis praedicta ius habet plenarie patronatus, quo iure patronatus idem Nicolaus prepositus et antecessores eiusdem praepositi indebite demembravit eandem ecclesiam et demembrarunt non iure sed facto, cum nullum super hiis privilegium habeat vel habuerint nec aliquam causam rationabilem praetenderint nec praetendat.*

²² 1383 is mentioned twice as the year when the construction of this church started: *Kalender Aufzeichnungen*, p. 49: 1383 *fangt man Croner Kirch an zu bauen* and the *Chronicle of Simon Massa*, Marcus Fuchs et al., p. 73: 1383- *structura templi Coronensis strenue urgetur et a multis iuvatur*; whilst Joseph Teutsch, *Kurzegefasste Jahr- Geschichte von Siebenbürgen, besonders Burzenland*, p.98: records that 1385 *wird die grosse Kirche zu Cronen angefangen zu bauen*; the same year occurs also in the *Notizen von Thomas Tartler*, p. 153: 1385 *Templum cathedrale Coronensium, beatae Mariae virginis dicatum...*; see *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Brassó*, vol. IV, (Brassó: 1903).

²³ *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 2, pp. 51-2; Drăguţ, *Arta gotică*, p. 70

²⁴ The changes in the interior of the parish church of Sibiu that might have stimulated communal feelings are discussed by Firea, *Biserica Sf. Maria*, see particularly pp. 64-8.

Simultaneous and interwoven with this process was the city councils' engagement in the propagation of the cults of the parochial patron saints which eventually led to the transformation of these cults into civic ones. This development is well attested in the four analyzed towns and is for the most part illustrated by the agreements concluded between the urban authorities and the parish priests. At Sibiu, the celebration of the parish patron saint, the Virgin Mary, was included in 1432, 1457 and 1474 among the obligations the local curia would have to assume, veneration for the Mother of God being stimulated by the daily performance of the divine services honoring her.²⁵ Similar decisions concerning the festive celebration of St. Michael, the patron saint of the Cluj parish church were made in 1404 when the city council elected the priest, decisions which were re-confirmed by the ecclesiastical superiors, the Transylvanian Bishops in 1414-1422 and 1453.²⁶

An interesting case is represented by Bistrița where in 1504 the city council strongly encouraged the cult of the patron saint Nicholas. According to the charter issued then, the parish church was regarded as the most important ecclesiastical institution of the town whereas the collaboration between the urban magistracy and the local clergy could greatly contribute to the preservation of the community's cohesion.²⁷ The cult of St. Nicholas received strong impulses as the city councilors required that Sunday divine services would be solemnly celebrated and the bequests, contained in the testamentary clauses of the citizens included first and foremost donations made to the parish church.²⁸ It seems therefore that in Bistrița at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the town's leadership devised effective ways in order to transform the cult of the parish patron saint into a civic cult.

The case of Brașov also eloquently speaks about this peculiar strategy on the part of the urban elite. In the largest medieval Transylvanian town and prominent commercial center from the south-eastern part of the

Bálint, *Biserica Neagră*, pp. 8-14 suggested that the change in size and structure of the choir hall were meant to illustrate the recently acquired liberties by the town of Brașov. At Cluj, Palmer argues that the nave of St. Michael's church started to be constructed at the turn of the fourteenth to fifteenth century and it reflected the urban culture of a privileged community, see *A Tendentious*, especially pp. 25-6.

²⁵ *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 4, pp. 461-2, [item] *missa legenda ad beatam virginem in aurora...*, see also *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 5, pp. 558-60; pp. 560-1, pp. 563-4 and pp. 565-6.

²⁶ *Oklevéltár*, pp. 152-4: *tempore medio Missa B. Michaelis Archangeli sub Silencio celebretur, Sumpma missa cum Cantu Scolarium, et alia Missa sub silencio peragatur*, and pp. 187-8.

²⁷ Friedrich Teutsch, *Geschichte der evangelische Kirche in Siebenbürgen*, vol. 1 (1150-1699), (Hermannstadt: 1921), p. 150, Article 27 specified: *...quod civitatem et omnem populum hic constitutum in unione conservare dignetur*.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Article 9 mentioned: *...et quod primum ecclesiam patroni divi Nicolai episcopi provideant*.

kingdom, the urban leadership consisted of important traders and members of professional associations.²⁹ Among the latter category, the furriers were constantly involved in government, filling the offices of *magister civium* and jurors for the most part of the fifteenth century and the first decades of the following one.³⁰ The first guild regulations to have survived from medieval Braşov are, not surprisingly, those of the furriers. According to the statute issued in 1424, one of the guild's masters would undertake responsibilities concerning the maintenance of the altar's chandelier on Sundays, the feast of the Virgin Mary and All Saints' feast day.³¹

Although the patronal dedication of the altar is not mentioned, it can be supposed with a great degree of accuracy that it was that of the Virgin. Mary was the patron saint of the parish church of Braşov and as it has been discussed above the church underwent significant re-building work starting with the last quarter of the fourteenth century. Most likely at the time the furriers drafted their regulations, the construction of the chancel was finished and the high altar was in place.³² Furthermore, in the light of the surviving sources, no altar dedicated to All Saints has existed in the church of Braşov,³³ a situation which makes it plausible to consider that the altar the furriers would have to take care of was that of the parish patron saint.

There is no doubt that the guild of the furriers belonged to the town's elite and represented an influential and prosperous group whose members were closely involved in the governing of the town. By designating a master, and not an apprentice or a journeyman to maintain the Virgin Mary altar of the parish church, the guild intended to display its

²⁹ Maja Philippi, 'Cives civitatis Brassoviensis. Untersuchungen über die soziale Struktur des Bürgertums von Braşov im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert', *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, tom XV, 1 (1976): 11-28 and Konrad G. Gündisch, *Das Patriziat Siebenbürgischer Städte im Mittelalter*, (Köln-Weimer-Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1993), pp. 182-7 and pp. 252-9.

³⁰ The economic importance of the furriers is reflected by the 258 masters of this profession that were attested in the timeframe between 1424 and 1498, among them several belonged to the important patrician families of Braşov such as *Seidenschwancz*, *Revel*, *Reudel*, *Eichhorn*, *Schon*, *Weyroch*, *Schirmer*, *Schumkabunk*, see Maja Philippi, *Die Bürger von Kronstadt im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Sozialstruktur eine siebenbürgischen Stadt im Mittelalter*, (Bukarest: Kriterion Verlag, 1986), pp. 179-81.

³¹ *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Kronstadt*, eds. Gernot Nussbächer and Elisabeta Marin, (9 vols, Kronstadt: Heidelberg, 1999), vol. 9, pp. 4-8.

³² Antal Géza Entz, 'Zu den Stillbeziehungen der Schwarzen Kirche in Kronstadt', in Benda Kálmán et al. (eds.) *Forschungen über Siebenbürgen und seine Nachbarn. Festschrift für Zsigmond Jakó und Attila T. Szabó*, vol. 1, (München: Trofenik, 1987), pp. 103-4.

³³ Géza Entz, *Erdély építészete a 14-16. században*, (Kolozsvár: Az Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület kiadása), 1996, pp. 254-7.

power and social importance. Furthermore, the connection between this guild and the urban leadership reveals an interesting feature of the shaping of civic religion in late medieval Transylvania. The cult of the parish patron saint became a civic cult through the articulation of a complicated web of power relations. This is demonstrated at Braşov by the involvement of one of the most important social and political groups of the town in the preservation of the altar dedicated to the parish patron saint. Furthermore, as convincingly argued by previous scholarship, providing for the candles and for the preservation of an altar's chandelier was not only important for liturgical purposes. Such an involvement was of at least equal significance for the display of the social prestige within the sacred space.³⁴ In our case, the guild of the furriers connected its influential position in the town with a similarly important one in the ecclesiastical domain by shaping its religious life around the altar of the parish patron saint.

Such a process can be observed in another Transylvanian town, that of Cluj. Association with and belonging to the social and economic most important groups of the town was reflected in the religious sphere by engagement with the promotion of the parish patron saint. According to a charter issued by the urban magistracy in 1422, several masters of the guild of the butchers requested the councilors to mediate the conflict occurred among them concerning the proper care of the altar of the parish patron saint, Michael.³⁵ This conflict put in sharp relief one of the most important responsibilities the urban magistracy assumed in late medieval Transylvania, that of approving the guilds' statutes and overseeing their functioning.³⁶ As such, it can be observed that when endorsing the functioning of professional groups, the urban leadership identified and indeed used an effective way of monitoring and perhaps controlling the religious goals the guilds pursued.

Interestingly enough, the city council of Cluj identified in St. Michael the supreme patron of the community and established severe penalties for those butchers who would refuse to properly maintain the altar of their protector.³⁷ At the time this conflict disturbed the inner life of this

³⁴ Catherine Vincent, *Fiat Lux. Lumière et luminaires dans la vie religieuse du XIIIe au XVe siècle*, (Paris: Cerf, 2004), has discussed in great detail the importance of candles, torches and chandeliers in the religious life of professional associations, see particularly pp. 390-406.

³⁵ *Oklevéltár*, pp. 161-3.

³⁶ For Cluj see for example *Oklevéltár*, pp. 221-3; pp. 255-7 and pp. 237-9; for Braşov see *Quellen*, vol. 9, pp. 75-6, pp. 76-7, and p. 92. For Sibiu see *Documente privind istoria oraşului Sibiu*, ed. Monica Vlaicu, vol. 2: *Comerţ şi meşteşuguri în Sibiu*, (Sibiu: Editura Hora Sibiu, Societatea de Studii Transilvane Heidelberg, 2003), pp. 168-75, pp. 183-8 and pp. 213-20.

³⁷ *Oklevéltár*, p. 161: *Quod ipsorum fraternitas, ad honorem diuini cultus et reuerenciam precipue, et consequenter sancti Michaelis archangeli ecclesie nostre parochialis supremi patroni,*

professional association to the degree that the festive celebration of the parish patron saint was endangered, the butchers were an important group in the town, inhabiting their own street and safeguarding one of the town's gates.³⁸ The growing importance of the butchers in the economic and social life of Cluj accurately revealed by the surviving sources was also reflected in relation to the solemnity with which the patron saint was to be constantly celebrated. Thus, in 1422 when conflicts occurred among these craftsmen, the confraternity of the butchers was a well-organized one, as illustrated by the mention of *gubernatores et provisores altaris sancti Michaelis patronos*.³⁹ This institutional structure thus has the merit of demonstrating the key role played by St. Michael in the religious life of this professional association.

Although survived evidence did not indicate the butchers' participation in the urban government of Cluj, as it was the case with the furriers in Braşov, it can be argued that through the city council's supervision of the guilds' functioning, there was a good collaboration between the urban magistracy and the professional association of the butchers. This is suggested by the promptness with which and the measures taken by the councilors in order to solve the conflicts occurred in the guild's life. Furthermore, the justification offered by Cluj's governing body in the charter of 1422, that the proper preservation of St. Michael's altar should rapidly be resumed so that the life of the civic community would not be further disrupted, additionally demonstrates the importance of the cult of the parish patron saint.

The butchers' association with and promotion of St. Michael's cult bear close resemblance to the example provided by the furriers of Braşov. In Cluj, those craftsmen who would fail to adequately maintain the altar of the parochial patron were imposed penalties consisting of various amounts of wax.⁴⁰ This suggests that maintenance of St. Michael's altar by the guild of the butchers played a similar role both in the liturgical setting of the parish church and the display of social prestige as it was the case with the parish church at Braşov. Furthermore, both examples illustrate the magistracy's

prepositique paradisi cuius precibus nostris in adversitatibus subleuamur miro dispendio mysterio adiuuamur, fundata.

³⁸ Samuel Goldenberg, *Clujul în secolul XVI*, (Bucureşti: Editura Academiei Române, 1957), pp. 65-8, *linea seu vicus macellorum* was mentioned firstly in 1404, precisely during the time of economic and demographic growth and when urban autonomy was achieved additionally demonstrating the influential social standing of the butchers in the town of Cluj.

³⁹ Lidia Gross, *Confreriile medievale în Transilvania (secolele XIV-XVI)*, (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Grinta, Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2004), p. 262.

⁴⁰ *Oklevéltár*, pp. 161-2.

endorsement of the cult of the parish patron saint through the supervision of the religious life of important social and economic urban groups.

The above-discussed examples reveal that civic agency in the promotion of the protector of the community was shaped by the city councils' collaboration with professional associations. Further nuances could be added to this picture by the analysis of the situation in another Transylvanian town, that of Sibiu. As one can learn from previous research, civic religion was public and involved the participation within a well-defined order of various social groups, often organized in devotional associations.⁴¹ Attendance at the patron saint's festival or at Corpus Christi processions was according to professional or devotional affiliation, the guilds' members and those of confraternities playing an important part in these public ceremonies. Whilst in Braşov and Cluj, the guilds of the furriers and the butchers respectively undertook responsibilities concerning the proper, weekly celebration of the parish patron saint, in Sibiu it seems that the great promoters of the cult of the Virgin Mary were the fellows of the Marian confraternity.

This devotional fellowship was attested already in the course of the fourteenth century and it was a clerical fraternity, grouping the parish priests of Sibiu chapter.⁴² However, starting from mid fifteenth-century those belonging to this confraternity were lay persons, men and women alike. It would be worth analyzing in what follows the membership of the Marian fellowship, in order to find out who were those individuals who on a regular basis gathered in the church of the Virgin Mary, prayed for their deceased fellows and participated in the liturgical celebrations honoring the patron saint of the parish church of their town?

There are sixteen fellows mentioned together with their wives in a liturgical book that belonged to the Marian confraternity.⁴³ Among them, the greatest majority, more precisely fifteen, belonged to the urban elite. Furthermore, eleven fellows filled the highest office in the town

⁴¹ Analyzed at length by Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities*, pp. 14-38 and 171-217.

⁴² Gross, *Confreriile*, pp. 136-61, four Marian clerical fraternities were attested in medieval Transylvania, those of Sibiu, Bistriţa, Sebeş, and Sighişoara chapters. Among them, Sibiu fraternity was the first to be founded, its existence being dated in the first half of the fourteenth-century.

⁴³ Gustav Seiwert, 'Die Brüderschaft des heiligen Leichnams in Hermannstadt', *Archiv des Vereins für Sibenbürgische Landeskunde. Neue Folge*, 10 (1872): 316-8 has identified all these lay members and gave short biographical information about them. It is also useful to see Lidia Gross's own analysis of these fellows, *Confreriile*, pp. 153-9, because whilst she follows Seiwert's suggestions, she also updates some of the earlier assumptions (as for example that concerning the name of the second wife of Thomas Altemberger).

government, that of *magister civium*, in the second half of the fifteenth century.⁴⁴ Strong association between Sibiu's magistracy and the devotional fellowship of the Virgin is also illustrated by several chronological sequences, 1448-1454, 1471-1495, 1495-1504, and 1519-1522, when all those undertaking the responsibility of *magister civium* were also Marian fellows.⁴⁵

It can therefore be observed that starting from mid fifteenth century onwards in Sibiu the cult of the Virgin Mary, the parish's patron saint, was promoted by the town's officials through their adherence to a devotional association. Highly illustrative in what concerns the emergence of the civic cult of the Virgin precisely when the urban elite started to enroll into the Marian confraternity is a request for an indulgence forwarded to the Holy See in 1448. The supplicants were the parish priest of the town, the *magister civium* and the parishioners of the Virgin Mary church.⁴⁶ Collaboration between the city council and the local clergy concerned then not only the devotional goals assumed by the devotional association dedicated to the Virgin, but also the enforcement of the cult of the parish patron saint.

Thus, Mary's cult flourished in Sibiu in the course of the fifteenth century and it was adopted by the urban magistracy in order to strengthen its own authority and prestige. If one agrees with the proposed pattern according to which civic religion implied the appropriation of religious values by the urban authority,⁴⁷ then such a development is well attested at Sibiu. Election in the urban government was made annually in the timeframe between Christmas and the feast of the Epiphany.⁴⁸ The Codex Altemberger, a juridical compilation that belonged to one of the very influential political leaders of the town, Thomas Altemberger, contains on its last page the oath those elected in the city council would have to take.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Jacob Schoren, Oswaldus, Thomas Altemberger, *dominus Jacobus, dominus Paul Remzer, Jacob Sneyder, Magister Michel, Peter Wolf, George Sartor, Nicholas Proll, and George Hecht.*

⁴⁵ Seiwert, 'Chronologische Tafel der hermannstädter Plebane, Oberbeamten und Notare, (1309-1499)', *Archiv des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, 12(1874/1875): 204-13 and Zimmermann, 'Chronologische Tafel der hermannstädter Plebane, Oberbeamten und Notare in den Jahren 1500 bis 1884', *Archiv des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, NF, 19 III (1884): 531-3.

⁴⁶ *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 5, p. 250: *Antonius decretorum doctor plebanus plebes parochialis ecclesiae de Cibinio Strigoniensis d. ac magister civium dicti loci ac parochiani, ut indulgentia praefatam ecclesiam visitantibus concedatur.*

⁴⁷ Vauchez, *La religion civica*, p. 247.

⁴⁸ Gündisch, *Das Patriziat siebenbürgischer Städte*, p. 78.

⁴⁹ Gustav Gündisch, 'Der Hermannstädter Bürgermeister Thomas Altemberger (+ 1491). Leben und Werk', *Zeitschrift für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, Herausgegeben vom Arbeitskreis für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde. Schriftleitung Harald Zimmermann, 2 (1983): 137-155.

In order to be able to bring peace and prosperity to their community, the town's representatives invoked the help of God, of Mary the Queen of Heaven and of All Saints.⁵⁰ It has been suggested that since Codex Altenberger was a juridical compilation the last page that contains the above-mentioned oath was an addition made by Thomas, *magister civium* of Sibiu for several years in the last quarter of the fifteenth century and a Marian fellow.⁵¹

What is of outmost interest to our discussion is the identification of Mary as the Queen of Heaven, a status which underlined both the stainless nature of her body and soul and the power of the intercession the Mother of God could provide to her devotees.⁵² It is surely no accident that the magistracy of Sibiu wished to associate the authority it was invested with to that of the Virgin. For those exercising earthly power the Queen of Heaven was the most suitable holy helper and this was a choice the civic authority of Sibiu firmly opted for.

The display of the power of the urban government within the sacred space the parish church of the Virgin Mary provided is further revealed by other information. According to the town's protocols for the year 1494, the election of the urban magistracy was solemnly celebrated, the festivities including a Mass that would be performed in order to endorse the authority of the newly elected city council.⁵³ In the light of the surviving sources, this ceremony and hence the deployment of the cult of the parish patron saint for civic goals seems to become a well-established custom in Sibiu. But, there is also an interesting detail recorded in the towns' protocols that deserves to be dealt with in some detail.

In the years 1494 and 1506 the election of the new city council was solemnly sanctioned by the celebration of the Mass of the Holy Spirit,

⁵⁰ Friedrich Müller, *Deutsche Sprachdenkmäler aus Siebenbürgen*, (Hermannstadt: 1846), p. 109: *Ich...Swer Got und der Kwonigin Marie und alle lieben Heiligen...*

⁵¹ Radu Constantinescu, *Codicele Altenberger*, (Bucureşti: Editura Meridiane, 1988), p. 8 and p. 57.

⁵² As already discussed by Christine Peters, 'Mural Paintings, Ethnicity and Religious Identity in Transylvania: the Context for the Reformation', in Maria Crăciun and Ovidiu Ghitta (eds.), *Ethnicity and Religion in Central and Eastern Europe*, (Cluj: Cluj University Press, 1995), p. 51 the authority of Mary as Queen of Heaven has been strongly emphasized in one of the sermons delivered in 1502 by John Zekel, the parish priest of Sibiu. According to his instructions, Mary's high status within the celestial court is derived from the way she ascended to Heaven, being received by angels, the righteous and the Holy Trinity.

⁵³ *Rechnungen aus dem Archiv der Stadt Hermannstadt und der Saechsichen Nation*, (1380-1516), vol. 1, (Hermannstadt: in Commission bei Franz Michaelis, 1880), p. 543: *pro decantatione missae dominorum post electionem consulatus et pro lucerni et cetera...*

celebration which was financially supported by the urban magistracy.⁵⁴ Since an altar dedicated to the Holy Spirit is not attested by the existing sources,⁵⁵ it can be supposed that the Mass would be performed at the high altar of the parish church. But why was this Mass not performed in order to venerate the Virgin Mary, the civic patron in Sibiu? I would like to argue in what follows, that the occurrence of the Mass of the Holy Spirit might reveal the urban magistracy's readiness to adopt and consequently use a cult that was revived precisely at the end of the fifteenth century.

The cult of the Holy Spirit was not a new cult in Sibiu, as a hospital with this dedication was attested already at the end of the thirteenth century. Furthermore, the city council seems to have been deeply involved in the supervision of the functioning of this charitable establishment and thus could have been familiar with this cult for a long time.⁵⁶ At the same time, in the last decade of the fifteenth century and the first decade of the following one, the surviving sources testify for a growing popularity of the cult among the citizens of Sibiu. This popularity is reflected by the numerous enrollments into the fraternity of the Holy Spirit established in Rome, several associations were formed at the time when it was decided that the Mass of the Holy Spirit was to be performed after the election of the city council.⁵⁷ As such, it can be observed that the appropriation of the cult of the Holy Spirit by the magistracy of Sibiu coincided with the growing popularity of this cult in the town.

Civic agency in regard with several cults is not peculiar to the Transylvanian towns. On the contrary, as it has been mentioned at the beginning of this discussion, the involvement of the urban authorities in the organization of saints' cults, including those of the would-be-saints as

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 177, 1 Fl. was paid in 1494 *pro missa decantata pro honore sancti spiritus tempore electionis consulatus Cibiniensis*, and p. 445, in 1506 1 Fl. 50 d. were paid *pro decantatione misse dominorum in honore sancti spiritus iuxta alias observatam consuetudinem in festo epiphaniarum presbyteris, scholaris et organistae ceterisque necessariis in unum computatis*, p. 445.

⁵⁵ Karl Henrich, 'Altäre in der Hermannstädter Pfarrkirche vor der Reformation', *Korrespondenzblatt*, 4-5 (1910): 63-64.

⁵⁶ Kubinyi, 'Orvoslás, gyógyszerek, fürdők és ispotályok a késő középkori Magyarországon', in *Főpapok*, pp. 260-1.

⁵⁷ Enikő Csukovits, 'A római Szentlélek-társulat Magyar tagjai (1446-1523)', *Századok* 134 1 (2000): 228-30, there were nineteen individuals from Sibiu who became members of the Holy Spirit fraternity established in Rome. Among them, six clerics entered the fraternity in the years 1489, 1493, 1495, 1496 (2), 1497 and 1500, whilst the remaining thirteen lay people (men and women alike) became members of the Holy Spirit fraternity in the years 1496, 1497, 1499 and 1520. It can easily be observed that the occurrence of the Mass of the Holy Spirit in the town's protocols occurred precisely at the time when association with the Holy Spirit fraternity peaked.

observed in the case of the Italian communes, constitutes one of the main features of civic religion.⁵⁸ In Sibiu, at the end of the fifteenth century, in a rather interesting way the cults of the Virgin Mary and that of the Holy Spirit were conflated in order to legitimize ascension into the urban leadership.

At this point, I would like to suggest that the transformation of the cults of the parish patron saints into civic cults, as this transformation has been revealed by the analysis undertaken thus far, allows putting forward several observations that could help define the concept of civic religion in Transylvania on the one hand and refine the general discussion on the other. Charters issued by the city councils of Bistrița, Brașov, Cluj and Sibiu in the late Middle Ages refer to the parish patron saint as the supreme protector of the urban community. The decisions made by urban governing bodies support and promote parochial cults, integrating them into the town's leadership and using them as symbol of those exercising earthly power. To a great extent such integration derived from the magistracy's wish to control religious life and relied on the privileges free royal towns enjoyed in the ecclesiastical domain. In the Transylvanian towns urban autonomy was granted by the royal house and the free election of the parish priest was the most visible illustration of their liberties. And this was in fact the channel through which the city councils in the region sought to control and influence religious life not only from an administrative point of view, but also in regard with the development of parochial cults.

One of the criteria identified by André Vauchez as being instrumental in the shaping of civic religion, namely the involvement of the urban leadership in the religious domain as result of the prerogatives it enjoyed, is fulfilled by the policy devised by Transylvanian city councils.

When further analyzing the way civic religion was articulated in this region as compared to similar developments taking place in other European towns another interesting observation emerges. The adoption of the religious values by the urban leadership, in fact as a result of the

⁵⁸ It was in the last decades of the thirteenth century that no less than five new saints started to be honored at Siena, among them, four were supported by the religious orders of the town. Thus, Ambrogio Sansedoni was member of the Order of the Friars Preachers, Peter Pettinaio was a Franciscan tertiary, Joachim belonged to the Order of the *Servites* of the Virgin Mary and the cult of Augustine Novello was promoted by the Austin Friars. The urban leadership strongly supported the development of these devotions by including in the decrees it issued the offerings to be made on the feast days of these *beati* and the modalities with which the members of the city council would personally participate in the yearly celebrations of these local holy figures, see Vauchez, *La commune*, pp. 757-67.

promotion it endorsed, is well reflected at Sibiu where the Queen of Heaven became the patron of those wishing to strengthen their political authority within the town's walls. Moreover, can one speak about diminished clerical control over the sacred in the aftermath of the civic authority's involvement in religious life as suggested by examples from the towns of the Italian Peninsula and those from northern Europe? Such developments took place in the Transylvanian towns as well concerning the cults of the parish patron saints. This is accurately demonstrated by the magistracy's involvement in the establishment of the type and frequency of the liturgical celebrations to be accomplished in order to venerate the parochial patrons. Highly relevant from this perspective are decisions concerning the civic funds to be spent for maintaining the altar of the Virgin Mary as it happened at Braşov and responsibilities undertaken by professional associations in regard with the preservation of the main altars of the parish churches.⁵⁹

Another important dimension of the shaping of civic religion is represented by the way the urban leadership assumed supervision of religious life in the Transylvanian towns. In light of the surviving sources, it can be argued that the city councils were concerned not only with the parish church and its patron saint, but also with other parish-based cults. This became evident when analyzing the involvement of the magistracy of Sibiu in the promotion of the cult of the Holy Spirit, but other examples disclose similar initiatives in the propagation of devotion for Corpus Christi.⁶⁰ The case of Sibiu is by no means the only one in late medieval Transylvania. For example, at Bistriţa, in 1504 when the magistracy regulated the functioning of the parish church, it requested that Masses for St. Catherine, St. Anne and for the Body of Christ should be performed on a regular basis by the parish clergy.⁶¹

There is also a significant nuance that the analysis of the shaping of civic religion in Transylvania brings to the more general discussion of this topic. I have already mentioned at the beginning of this discussion, the key role played by Mendicant cults in the religious life of the Italian city-states. On the other hand, as discussed above, in northern Europe, despite the strong Mendicant presence, the cults of the saints belonging to their branches did not enjoy great attention on the part of the city councils more interested in propagating and controlling the celebration of the cults of the saints long-venerated in those towns. In many ways the Transylvanian case is similar to the northern one. In towns like Bistriţa, Braşov, Cluj and Sibiu

⁵⁹ *Quellen*, vol. 3, p. 168.

⁶⁰ *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 5, pp. 254-5 and pp. 278-9.

⁶¹ Teutsch, *Geschichte*, p. 150.

the Dominicans and Franciscans managed to establish their houses already at the turn of the thirteenth to fourteenth century.⁶² Furthermore, as illustrated by testamentary clauses and donations, as well as by confraternities organized with the friars, one can speak about significant impact made by the Mendicants in urban religious life.⁶³ Despite this, the city councils restricted themselves to supporting the friaries only to a limited extent and often as a result of impulses coming from the royal house and did not engage with the propagation of the cults supported by the friars.⁶⁴

This seems to have been the result of the great involvement of the urban authorities in the support of parochial cults, an idea which gives further weight to the consideration of the mono-parochial profile of the Transylvanian towns as instrumental in the transformation of parish cults into civic cults. Of particular significance from this point of view is the case of Cluj. There, the church of Sts. Peter and Paul located outside the town's walls became a parish church starting with mid fifteenth-century.⁶⁵ Yet, surviving sources do not reveal any involvement of the town's magistracy in the promotion of the cult of the Apostles, its engagement remaining concerned with the cult of the patron saint of the oldest parish church of the town, St. Michael.

The Transylvanian case discussed within the frame of the present study is an attempt at understanding how civic religion was shaped not only in the Italian Peninsula, but also beyond this geographical and cultural area. The detected similarities with the northern towns can be explained by the specific conditions under which the urbanization process took place in Transylvania. A belated phenomenon that can be dated in the thirteenth century, strongly connected with the Saxon colonists and the policy of the royal house. The emergence of a Transylvanian urban patriciate integrates this region into the European one. The efforts this group made in order to control urban space and life, including from a religious point of view, represent the starting point in the shaping of civic religion. Of key

⁶² Adrian Andrei Rusu, Nicolae Sabău, Ileana Burnichioiu, Ioan Vasile Leb, Mária Makó Lupescu (eds.), *Dictionarul mănăstirilor din Transilvania, Banat, Crișana și Maramureș*, (Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară, 2000), pp. 67-9, pp. 80-82, 105-8 and pp. 234-7.

⁶³ Mária Lupescu Makó, "Item lego..." Gifts for the Soul in Late Medieval Transylvania, *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU*, 7 (2001): 161-86 and De Cevins, *L'Église*, pp. 294-9.

⁶⁴ For example at Brașov the allowance granted in 1455 by John of Hunedoara that yearly a certain amount from the royal tax would be paid to the Dominicans was reconfirmed several years later by King Mathias and, as evidenced by the survived tax registers the city council paid the due amount to the friars, see *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 5, p. 509, *Urkundenbuch* vol. 6, pp. 109-11 and *Quellen*, vol. 2, p. 170, p. 234, and p. 535.

⁶⁵ De Cevins, *L'Église*, p. 112

importance in this process were the governing bodies, the city councils which not only elected the parish priests, but also regulated the celebration of the cult of the parish patron saints. The size and economic importance of the region's largest urban centers, as compared to the Italian or North-European ones, might further explain the importance of the single parish church and the subsequent transformation of its patron saint into a civic protector. At a time when late medieval sainthood is characterized by a slow increase in the number of recent saints that were canonized and a revival of traditional cults, in Transylvania the civic control of sainthood will concern first and foremost the protectors of the parish churches.

Communities of Devotion: the Saxons in Early Modern Transylvania*

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Abstract: Focusing on the Lutheran service this study explores devotional behaviour in the context of public worship, particularly practices such as praying and singing and examines their connection to a specific confessional identity. The essay also aims to understand the role of the laity, especially of master artisans in the religious transformation of the community, their position as mediators between the reforming clergy and the broader segments of urban society. Starting from the assumption that devotional patterns are subject to both the regulations of the clergy and the needs of the faithful the essay focuses on religious practice in its attempt to explore the appropriation of the discourse of the church by the Saxon community and considers devotional behaviour an accurate barometer of religious change. Without neglecting the normative documents issued by the clergy, the study takes into account a different set of rules, the statutes of the guilds written by the elite of these corporations. By comparing the two sets of prescriptive sources as well as the post-Reformation statutes to those issued in medieval times, the study measures the degree of appropriation of ecclesiastical norms and the integration of prescribed devotional behaviour.

Key words: devotion, liturgy, religious practice, urban, laity, guilds, artisans

Rezumat: Comunități devoționale: sașii în Transilvania modernă timpurie. Luând în considerare serviciul divin luteran studiul de față explorează comportamentul devoțional în contextul pietății publice, mai ales practici cum ar fi rugăciunea și cântul încercând să stabilească conexiunea acestora cu o identitate confesională specifică. Lucrarea își propune să înțeleagă rolul laicului, mai ales al meșterilor artizani în transformarea religioasă a comunității, poziția acestora ca mediatori între clerul reformator și segmente mai largi ale societății urbane. Pornind de la premisa că modelele devoționale sunt atât subiectul regulamentelor inițiate de cler cât și reflexul unor nevoi ale credincioșilor, studiul se concentrează asupra practicii religioase în tentativa de a explora integrarea discursului bisericii de către comunitatea sașilor, considerând comportamentul devoțional un barometru acurat al schimbării religioase. Fără să neglijeze documentele normative emise de cler, studiul ia în calcul un set diferit de reguli, statutele breslelor scrise de elita acestor corporații. Prin compararea celor două seturi de documente normative, precum și a statutelor emise în epoca Reformei cu cele redactate în perioada medievală, studiul măsoară nivelul de apropiere a normei ecleziastice precum și integrarea comportamentului devoțional prescris.

Cuvinte cheie: devoțiune, liturghie, practică religioasă, urban, laicat, bresle, artizani

**"et dimitte nobis debita nostra,
sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris;"**

On the 2nd of April 1555 the magistracy of Sibiu (Hermannstadt, Nagyszeben) wrote to the magistracy of Braşov (Kronstadt, Brassó) requesting that the exiled goldsmith Wolfgang would be readmitted to the guild and to the urban community. More than the request itself, the argument in favour of forgiveness and reconciliation is somewhat surprising. In the opinion of the magistracy, Wolfgang's deed should not go unpunished but he needed to be forgiven because in every individual there is something of value for his home country. Moreover, the appeal for forgiveness is inspired by the model of divine benevolence.

"Quanquam autem hoc perpetratus facinus impune abire non conveniebat, tamen cum non omnia vicia secundum rigidum ius prosecui fas est, alioquin tale ius iniusticiae potius, quam iustitiae nomen mereretur. Est itaque in hoc quoque homine quod aliquando patriae maxime utilis esse poterit, aliqua iuris habenda levitas atque eius misereri non impium erit quemadmodum et deus nostri. Quomodo enim nos ad deum orabimus quamne conscientia ei dicemus: deus dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris si causa abest, quare deus nobis remittat peccata, quomodo consistet effectus? Considerare igitur debemus dictum quod provocat nos ad misericordiam, quo deus nostri misereretur, et exemplo dei moniti, sicut deus non semper procedit sua iusticia ad vindictam nos quoque aliquam in nos delinquentibus noxae relaxationem concedere oportet. Homines nos esse meminimus, precare possumus et ut nostri deus miseratur nos prius aliorum misereri iustum est. Quapropter rogamus dominationes vestras ut nostrae praeces apud vos aliquam dignentur habere auctoritatem atque hunc praefatum Wolffgangum ab uxore et patria exulante, domum revocare, in gratiam vestram recipere, et perpetrata noxam eidem concedere et remittere velint."¹

The formulaic language of the letter, especially since it alludes to the *Pater Noster*, the central prayer in Protestant worship and to the concept of grace raises interesting questions concerning the integration by the laity of a Protestant ethos ten years after evangelical ideas had been officially adopted by the Saxon community of Transylvania (1544-1545).² As the letter is not

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¹ Gernot Nussbächer, Elisabeta Marin (eds.), *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Kronstadt*, IX, 1420-1580 (Kronstadt: Aldus Verlag, 1999), p. 220.

² For a history of the Reformation in Transylvania, see Edit Szegedi, 'Reforma în Transilvania. Construirea identităților confesionale' in Ioan Aurel Pop, Thomas Nägler,

written by a cleric but by the magistracy of the town who spoke on behalf of the citizens and as is emphasizes the value of the individual for the group, one needs to consider the role of the laity in the reforming process and the appropriation of clerical discourse by secular elites and by the Saxon community in its entirety. Moreover, the focus on the group, on the community highlights the issue of its identity. How did this group negotiate an identity rooted in its juridical status – as a privileged community³ – in the new political, confessional and cultural context? One thus needs to address the issue of confessional identity of the Saxon community in terms of their conscious integration of the new beliefs and particularly in terms of devotional behaviour which had been impacted by clerical expectations. Assuming that the Saxons had a strong cultural identity, framed by juridical status, language and customs it is important to assess whether the integration of evangelical ideas had transformed this group into a community of devotion.

Attempting to answer such questions, this essay will focus on the quintessential moment when the Saxon community was brought together, the Lutheran service. The study wishes to explore devotional behaviour in the context of public worship, pious attitudes and practices such as praying and singing and to examine their connection to a specific confessional identity. The essay thus aims to assess whether, by the middle of the seventeenth century, the Saxons had integrated the message forged by the Lutheran clergy and had developed a distinct devotional behavior when compared to other confessional communities who lived in the region.

On the other hand, the study wishes to understand the role of the laity, particularly of the master artisans in the religious transformation of the community, their position as mediators between the reforming clergy and the broader segments of urban society. Besides raising the issue of the integration of a set of beliefs and practices by this particular group, this

András Magyari (eds.), *Istoria Transilvaniei*, II (de la 1541 până la 1711), (Cluj-Napoca: Institutul Cultural Român, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2005), pp. 237-248. For the views of Protestant reformers on prayer, particularly the Lord's Prayer, see Virginia Reinburg, 'Hearing Lay People's Prayer' in Barbara B. Diefendorf, Carla Hesse (eds.), *Culture and Identity in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), pp. 20-39. For Martin Luther's theology of grace, see Bernard M.G. Reardon, *Religious Thought in the Reformation* (London: Longman, 1981), pp. 55-63.

³ Konrad Gündisch, 'Autonomie de stări și regionalitate în Ardealul medieval' în *Transilvania și sașii ardeleni în istoriografie. Din publicațiile Asociației de Studii Transilvane. Heidelberg* (Sibiu Editura hora, Arbeitskreis für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde e.v. Heidelberg, 2001), pp. 33-53, especially p. 43 suggests that the name Saxon is synonymous with juridical status and not an indicator of the group's geographical provenance. The group defined itself through the written privileges granted by the Hungarian king in 1224.

discussion also invites the exploration of the mechanisms involved in disseminating the main tenets of faith (correct belief) and the implementation of specific forms of pious behaviour (proper conduct) within the broader social context. It also wishes to explore the construction of confessional identity within secular society and particular actions of religious disciplining initiated by the group.⁴

The choice of the Lutheran service as the main focus of this investigation is dictated by the centrality of public worship in the religious life of the Saxon community. As a centre piece of their religious experience the liturgy could be used to define a particular religious group while distinguishing it from others. Since the beginnings of Christianity, participation in the liturgy set Christians apart from the rest of the population. The sacrament of the Eucharist, which reiterated Christ's sacrifice, also brought cohesion to the group of faithful. By being present at this symbolic meal, and especially by receiving communion, Christians made powerful statements concerning their religious identity. During the Middle Ages, the liturgy fulfilled significant spiritual and social functions structuring the religious experience of the faithful and fostering an ever stronger sacramental piety.⁵ When the religious landscape became

⁴ For a discussion concerning the confessionalization paradigm and associated concepts, see Ute Lotz-Heumann, 'The Concept of "Confessionalization": a Historiographical Paradigm in Dispute' *Memoria e Civilización* 4 (2001): 93-114. Jörg Deventer, "'Confesionalizarea" un concept teoretic relevant pentru studierea religiei, politicii și societății Europei est-centrale din perioada modernă timpurie?' in *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Historia* 53/1-2 (2008): 33-58. For the concept of Konfessionsbildung (confessional construction), see Ernst Walter Zeeden, 'Grundlagen und Wege der Konfessionsbildung im Zeitalter der Glaubenskämpfe' in *Historische Zeitschrift* 185 (1958): 249-299. Ernst Walter Zeeden, *Die Entstehung der Konfessionen, Grundlagen und Formen der Konfessionsbildung im Zeitalter der Glaubenskämpfe* (München, Wien, Oldenburg, 1965). Ernst Walter Zeeden, *Konfessionsbildung. Studien zur Reformation, Gegenreformation und Katolischen Reform* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1985). For the concept of religious disciplining, see Heinz Schilling, 'Kirchenzucht im frühneuzeitlichen Europa in interkonfessionale vergleichender und interdisziplinärer perspective - eine Zwischenbilanz' in Heinz Schilling (ed.), *Kirchenzucht und sozialdisziplinierung im frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Berlin: Drucher und Humblot, 1994), pp. 11-40. Heinz Schilling, 'History of Crime or History of Sin? Some Reflections on the Social History of Early Modern Church Discipline' in E.I. Kouri, Tom Scott (eds.), *Politics and Society in Reformation Europe* (London: MacMillan Press, 1987), pp. 289-310.

⁵ John Bossy, 'The Mass as a Social Institution 1200-1700' in *Past and Present*, 100 (1983): 29-61. Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars. Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 91-131. R. N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe c. 1215- c. 1515* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 92-101, 136-141. Charles Zika, 'Hosts, Processions and Pilgrimages: Controlling the Sacred

increasingly diverse in the wake of the Reformation, Protestant congregations felt the need to delineate themselves from the Catholics and to participate in a Lutheran service clearly distinguishable from the Catholic Mass.⁶ Moreover, in the second half of the sixteenth century, the celebration of the sacrament at the altar became a significant focus of conflict between the two main Protestant faiths. By examining the relationship between ritual and confessional piety, Bodo Nischan has convincingly argued that Germany's early Lutherans and Calvinists used liturgy to define and distinguish themselves from the medieval Catholic Church and from each other.⁷ This study consequently takes into account Nischan's valuable suggestion that liturgy and ritual had become much more than an indifferent matter and were regarded as marks of confessional identity.⁸

While divine service has benefited from some attention in existing literature on the Lutheran Reformation in Transylvania, the focus has never been on its specific nature or on the involvement of the laity in shaping this event.⁹ If considered at all, the role of the laity was always understood as the involvement of the political authorities in shaping the fate of the Reformation while completely disregarding the needs of the faithful which impacted the same events. The best example in this sense is Erich Roth who has suggested that, in Transylvania the success of the Reformation was ensured by the cooperation between the ecclesiastical and political authority.¹⁰ Ludwig Binder on the other hand has argued that the Saxon community reacted to the decrees of István Báthory - who had defended the

in Fifteenth-Century Germany' in Charles Zika, *Exorcising our Demons. Magic, Witchcraft and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2003), pp. 155-196.

⁶ Susan C. Karant -Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual. An interpretation of early modern Germany* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 91-137. Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation. Incarnation and Liturgy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) has a chapter on the Lutheran Eucharist (pp. 94-138).

⁷ Bodo Nischan, 'The Fractio Panis: a Reformed Communion Practice in Late Reformation Germany' in Bodo Nischan, *Lutherans and Calvinists in the Age of Confessionalisation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), pp.17-29. Bodo Nischan, 'The Elevation of the Host in the Age of Confessionalism: Adiaphora or Ritual Demarcation' in Nischan, *Lutherans and Calvinists*, pp. 1-27. Bodo Nischan, 'Ritual and Protestant Identity in Late Reformation Germany' in Nischan, *Lutherans and Calvinists*, pp. 142-158.

⁸ Nischan, 'Ritual', pp. 144-145.

⁹ Alexander Ungváry, *The Hungarian Protestant Reformation in the Sixteenth Century under the Ottoman Impact* (Lewiston, 1989), has a chapter called 'The Reformation among the Saxons of Hungary' (pp. 179-184) which does not mention liturgical practice at all.

¹⁰ Erich Roth, *Die Reformation in Siebenbürgen. Ihr Verhältnis zu Wittenberg und der Schweiz* in *Siebenbürgisches Archiv - Archiv des Vereins für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, dritte Folge, Band II, (Köln Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 1962), p. 12 and pp. 74-78 mentions the involvement of the secular authorities in organising visitations.

validity of the Augsburg Confession and traditional ceremonies - when advocating its right to organize its own divine service.¹¹ Thus, a distinctive 'divine service' was a consequence of political interplay between the Transylvanian ruler and the Saxon community. Consequently, in his own way, Binder has also privileged political explanations for the events and little attention has been paid to the structure of the new service. Stimulated by his main concern for the theological development of the Lutheran Church and the concept of toleration, Binder further argued that doctrinal decisions taken by the clergy were also influenced by the secular authorities who participated in the synods. In this context, Binder discussed the debates among the Transylvanian reformers concerning the meaning of the sacrament.¹² Again, the way the sacrament was administered and the way worship was organized remained unexplored. More recently, Edit Szegedi has brought remarkable insights into the relationship between the Lutheran Reformation and tradition as well as the issue of *adiaphora*, but despite her interest in ritual and ceremonial she did not focus primarily on the development of the Lutheran liturgy.¹³

Consequently, investigating the role of the artisans in appropriating and perhaps implementing the Reformation is relevant in the current historiographical context. While an older historiography has discussed the Reformation of the Saxon community as a top-down process taking for granted the compliance of the broader segments of society with the decisions of the elite,¹⁴ more recent scholarship has focused on the efforts of

¹¹ Ludwig Binder: *Grundlagen und Formen der Toleranz in Siebenbürgen bis zur Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts*, (Köln Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1976), pp. 62, 128-129.

¹² Binder, pp. 55-63.

¹³ Edit Szegedi: 'Konfessionsbildung und Konfessionalisierung im städtischen Kontext. Eine Fallstudie am Beispiel von Kronstadt in Siebenbürgen (ca. 1550 -1680)', in *Berichte und Beiträge des Geisteswissenschaftlichen Zentrums Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas an der Universität Leipzig. Heft 2 Konfessionelle Formierungsprozessen im Frühneuzeitlichen Ostmitteleuropa. Vorträge und Studien*, ed. Jörg Deventer, Leipzig 2006, pp. 126-253, here pp. 161-163. While in relation with the Lutheran divine service she uses the phrase "liturgical conservatism", Szegedi is much more interested in baptism (pp. 170-172) and the cult of saints (pp. 167-170).

¹⁴ Among the advocates of the top-down process one can mention Roth, pp. 86-106, 174-196 and Binder, pp. 45-65. Krista Zach, 'Toleranța religioasă și construirea stereotipurilor într-o biserică multiculturală. „Biserici populare” în Transilvania' in *Transilvania și sașii ardeleni în istoriografie*, pp. 64-96, especially pp. 71-78 suggests that decisions regarding faith were the prerequisites of the Diets, while in the territories administered by the *natio saxonica* there was a monoconfessionalization required by one of the estates. Also see Krista Zach, 'Stări, domeniu senorial și confesionalizare în Transilvania. Reflecții asupra disciplinării sociale (1550- 1650)' in *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai Historia* 53/1-2 (2008): 100-126, especially pp. 122-125.

urban institutions to create an ideal world of social consensus where the same civic, political and moral values were shared by all members of the community.¹⁵ It has further been argued that social consensus led to convergent strategies informed by an ideology of social harmony centered on the concepts of order and discipline. Recent and older scholarship concur that the disciplining impulse does not stem solely from the authorities but also from the communities who strove to achieve appropriate behaviour in conformity with internalized norms.¹⁶

Starting from the assumption that after 1552, when the Saxon University sanctioned the Church Order (Kirchenordnung aller Deutschen in Siebenbürgen) written by Johannes Honterus and decreed Lutheranism as the faith of all Christians living in Saxon territory, that is the Crown Lands, some studies have argued for the existence of a coherent strategy of confessionalization.¹⁷ This perhaps blunt view is questioned by Edit Szegeedi who proposes the concepts of 'regional confessionalization' for the Crown Lands and 'local confessionalization' for the Burzenland and argues for a late confessionalization of the Saxons, which occurred in the seventeenth century, as a response to pressures from the political authority. In this context the Saxon nation appealed to its privileges in order to impose Lutheran orthodoxy.¹⁸

This approach is further stimulated by the interchangeable use of the terms 'Saxon' and 'Lutheran' in an older literature, which suggests that

¹⁵ Mária Pakucs, 'Behavior Control in Sibiu in the 16th century between Norm and Practice', in Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Ionela Băluță (eds.), *Bonnes et mauvaises mœurs dans la société roumaine d'hier et d'aujourd'hui* (București: NEC EDR, 2004), pp. 43-60, especially pp. 59-60. Mária Pakucs, 'Gute Ordnung und Disziplin': Patterns of Social Discipline in Sibiu (Hermannstadt) in the Sixteenth Century' in *New Europe College Yearbook 2003-2004* (București, 2005): 175-206, especially pp. 176, 180-182.

¹⁶ Pakucs, 'Behavior Control', pp. 53, 59 suggests that the heads of the neighbourhoods were agents of the city council in enforcing town laws. Pakucs, 'Gute Ordnung und Disziplin', pp. 176, 198. Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, "'Alle die so jnn und kreis der Mauern wonen werden hermanstaedter genannt": Neighbours and Neighbourhoods in Sixteenth-Century Sibiu' in *Colloquia. Journal of Central European History* XVIII (2011): 51-67. Konrad Gündisch, 'Natürlichen Geboten zu geborchen Freiwillige Socialdisziplinierung am Beispiel mittelalterlichen Zunftordnungen in Siebenbürgen' *Historia Urbana* VI/1-2 (1998): 23-28.

¹⁷ Zach, 'Toleranța', pp. 73-74, 78. Zach, 'Stări, domeniu seniorial', pp. 121-125 advances the idea of a spiritual university (Geistliche Universität) for the Saxons although she considers state confessionalization impossible to achieve in the Transylvanian context.

¹⁸ Edit Szegeedi, 'Politica religioasă a principilor reformați' in *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Historia* 53/1-2 (2008): 76-89, especially pp. 79-80, 82-84, 86-87. She points out that the *Confessio Augustana*, integrated into the *Formula Pii Consensus* was obligatory in the Crown Lands.

Lutheranism is an essential element of Saxon identity. It seems to be assumed that ethnicity and confession overlapped perfectly and that the Crown Lands were the territory of unfailing confessional uniformity.¹⁹ Although more recent scholarship has dramatically refined this point of view placing the option in favor of orthodox Lutheranism in the seventeenth century and suggesting that confessional plurality had prevailed in the previous decades,²⁰ the issue of the confessional identity of the Saxon community during the early period of the Reformation remains a tantalizing question.

However, by assuming that moral supervision of the community was transferred from the ecclesiastical to the secular authority, studies have often privileged the process of disciplining, considering that its religious and social dimensions were simultaneous and interdependent processes as consensus existed between the Saxon University and the synod of the Lutheran Church.²¹ These assumptions have had several consequences: religious disciplining has not been studied as an independent process with mechanisms of its own, while the priorities of the Lutheran Church have remained largely unexplored despite the fact that it has been suggested that the Saxon University undertook the 'mission of church discipline in earnest'.²²

Although the similarities between the language used in the preambles of guild statutes and that deployed in the decrees of the

¹⁹ At best, the adoption of the Lutheran faith by the Saxon nation has been seen as an expression of linguistic solidarity and cultural links with German cities. Cesare Alzati, *Terra Romena tra Oriente ed Occidente. Chiese ed etnie nel tardo '500* (Milano: Jaca Books, 1982), p. 39. Zach, 'Stări, domeniu seniorial și confesionalizare', p. 119 considers the Saxons an exception within the Transylvanian context as they were a *natio* (or estate), a territorial and juridical group who shared ethnicity and language. This point of view has been questioned by Szegedi, 'Politica religioasă', p. 90 who considers that one should be circumspect concerning the overlap between ethnicity and confession. She provides the example of the Burzenland where Hungarians were Lutheranzed.

²⁰ Szegedi, 'Reforma', pp. 236, 246. Edit Szegedi, 'Confesionalizarea', in Pop, Năgler, Magyari (eds.), *Istoria Transilvaniei*, II, pp. 249-262. Szegedi, 'Politica religioasă', pp. 82-89.

²¹ Pakucs, 'Behaviour Control', pp. 50-51, 53. Pakucs, 'Gute Ordnung und Disziplin', pp. 185-186, 189, 191. Szegedi, 'Confessionalization', pp. 241-254, suggests the close cooperation between clergy and secular authority in exercising control over the communities. Edit Szegedi, 'Moartea, disciplina ecleziastică și socială în mediile protestante din Transilvania (sec. XVI-XVIII)' in Mihaela Grancea (ed.), *Reprezentări ale morții în Transilvania secolelor XVI-XX* (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2005), pp. 70-85, especially p. 71 makes a distinction between religious and social disciplining although she considers that the actions of the agents of both types of discipline complemented each other.

²² Pakucs, 'Gute Ordnung und Disziplin', p. 191. Pakucs further suggests that the Saxon University and the Synod of the Lutheran Church reached an agreement to be as one in 1559.

reformers has not gone unnoticed, the changes in the devotional behavior of artisan communities have not benefited from sufficient attention.²³ That is why this study wishes to focus on religious practice and devotional behavior in its attempt to explore the appropriation of the discourse of the church by the community of faithful.

In contrast with previous literature this study focuses on Lutheran religious practice, on devotional behavior and on the mechanisms of religious disciplining initiated by the community itself, distinguishing them from actions of social disciplining. Changes perceived at the level of devotional acts – the reforming of pious behavior – may offer important clues concerning the progress of the reforming process. The Transylvanian Saxon community can be considered Protestant only when its devotional patterns have changed and when the pious actions themselves have become free of the specific traits of late medieval piety. Devotional patterns are interesting for the cultural historian of religion because they are subject to both the regulations of the clergy and needs of the faithful, as well as informed by traditional forms of worship. Equally shaped by the clerical discourse and by secular reactions to it, devotional behavior can consequently be considered an accurate barometer of religious transformation.²⁴

The specific actions that will be taken into account in this essay are church attendance and participation in the service through song and prayer. The underlying assumption is that each of these actions may highlight changes in religious practice which reflect deeper transformations in belief and define the particular identity of a Saxon Lutheran.

The choice of the master artisans as the focus of this study is a deliberate one. Being a middling group in the social hierarchy of Transylvanian towns, they had not become a decisive factor in their government. Although the artisans from the more prestigious or simply more prosperous professions, such as the goldsmiths, the locksmiths, the furriers and the butchers wished to have a stronger political voice, their number in the town council, which was the main governing institution, remained small.²⁵ In this context, this urban ‘middle class’ expressed their

²³ Pakucs, ‘Gute Ordnung und Disziplin’, pp. 180-182, 193-194.

²⁴ For a discussion concerning devotional patterns before and after the Reformation, see Karin Maag, John Wietvliet (eds.), *Worship in Medieval and Early Modern Europe. Change and Continuity in Religious Practice* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), especially Robert Kingdon’s chapter, ‘Worship in Geneva Before and After the Reformation’, pp. 41-62.

²⁵ For the social structure of Transylvanian towns, see Gustav Gündisch, ‘Patriciatul din Sibiu în evul mediu’ in *Transilvania și sașii ardeleni în istoriografie*, pp. 127-145. Konrad Gündisch, ‘Patriciatul orășenesc medieval al Bistriței până la începutul secolului al XVI-

opinions and their self-awareness as a group through the guild system created during the fourteenth and fifteenth century.²⁶ Guild regulations thus became their social and political voice and epitomized their values and lifestyle. It is therefore important to understand their involvement in the dissemination and consolidation of the new religion, particularly since the adoption of the Reformation by the Saxon community had been a decision of the town magistracy and ultimately of the political authority in the Crown Lands.²⁷

Moreover, existing literature often relies on normative documents issued by the clergy and allows the exploration of intention rather than the actual implementation of a reforming programme. Without neglecting church orders, the decrees of the Lutheran synods or visitation records, the present study will also take into account a different set of rules, the statutes of the guilds written by the elite of these corporations, the master artisans, in an effort to bring coherence to the artisan community in accordance with their own particular world view.²⁸

lea', *File de Istorie* IV (1976): 147-189. Maja Philippi, 'Structura socială a Braşovului în evul mediu' in *Transilvania şi saşii ardeleni în istoriografie*, pp. 146-161. Gustav Gündisch, 'Peter Haller. Bürgermeister von Hermannstadt und Sachsengraf 1490-1569' in *Deutsche Forschung im Südosten* 1 (1944), pp. 43-102, here p. 66. Gustav Gündisch, 'Der Hermannstädter Aufstand des Jahres 1556' in *Aus Geschichte und Kultur der Siebenbürger Sachsen: ausgewählte Aufsätze und Berichte* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1987), pp. 201-234, here p. 212.

²⁶ Philippi, 'Braşov', p. 157. Konrad Gündisch, 'Bistriţa', p. 153.

²⁷ The chronicle of the organist of the parish church of Braşov, Hieronymus Ostermayer, which recounts the beginning of the Reformation in that town, mentions the active involvement of the urban political authority in this process: "Item mit willen der Obrigkeit". Hieronimus Ostermayer, *Chronik* in G. Joseph Kemény, *Deutsche Fundgruben der Geschichte Siebenbürgens* (Klausenburg: Verlag von J. Tilsch und Sons Buchhändler, 1839), pp. 9-68, especially p. 29. For the adoption of the Reformation by the Saxon University, see Szegedi, 'Reforma', pp. 238-239.

²⁸ The guild statutes for Braşov have been published in a bilingual edition by Gernot Nussbächer and Elisabeta Marin, see footnote 1. The guild statutes from Sibiu have been published by Monica Vlaicu, *Documente privind istoria oraşului Sibiu vol. 2 Comerţ şi meşteşuguri în Sibiu şi în cele Şapte Scaune 1224-1579* (Sibiu, Heidelberg: Editura hora, Societatea de Studii Transilvane, 2003). The Lutheran Church Orders have been published as Johannes Honterus, *Reformatio Ecclesiae Coronensis ac Totius Barcensis Provinciae*, Coronae MDXLIII in Oskar Netoliczka (ed.), *Johannes Honterus's ausgewählte Schriften. In Auftrage des Ausschusses zur Errichtung des Honterusdenkmals in Kronstadt* (Hermannstadt, 1896), pp. 11-28. 'Reformatio Ecclesiarum Saxoniarum in Transsylvania' in Georg Daniel Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch der Eoangelischer Landeskirche A. B. in Siebenbürgen*, vol. I (Hermannstadt, 1862), pp. 6-36. The articles of the 1577 visitation, 'Articuli der Visitation fürtragen 1577' have been published in Georg Daniel Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch der Evangelischer Landeskirche A. B. in Siebenbürgen*, vol II (Hermannstadt, 1883). pp. 204-214. The visitations of the Burzenland were published by Szegedi, in

One could argue that guild statutes are also prescriptive sources, which tell one nothing about actual devotional behavior or the feelings and beliefs inspiring it. However, by comparing the requirements of the Lutheran clergy – who attempted to model the devotional patterns of the faithful in agreement with the precepts of Lutheran orthodoxy – with the regulations concerning devotion included in guild statutes – which allow a glimpse into the views of the middling group of urban society – one can assess the degree of appropriation of ecclesiastical norms and the extent of the integration of prescribed devotional behavior.

This analysis inevitably has a quantitative and a qualitative component. A quantitative analysis allows one to assess the quantum of the rules concerning religious practice within the corpus of regulations established by the elite of the guild. This can lead to some conclusions concerning the involvement of the laity in the construction of the confessional identity of the group. A qualitative analysis would further enrich our understanding of this process as it would serve to highlight the priorities of the laity and the possible overlap with those of the Lutheran clergy.

Finally, the sources used in this analysis allow a second and equally relevant comparison. Unlike the documents generated by the Lutheran Church, which survive from the second half of the sixteenth century, guild statutes exist from the later Middle Ages allowing historians to consider the discrepancies between the two sets of rules concerning religious behaviour – those written in the context of traditional Catholicism and those forged after the Reformation of the Saxon community – and formulate conclusions not just about the pious behaviour prescribed to the ordinary Lutheran, but also concerning changes in the attitudes of this group to religious practice as well as the gradual development of their religious identity.

“Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie;”

Ever since, in 1542 an ‘evangelical mass’ was held in the church at Braşov, the Saxon churches of Transylvania celebrated a Lutheran service.²⁹ Its meaning and practice can both be reconstructed with the help of church orders and the decrees of the synods of the Lutheran Church as well as

‘Konfessionsbildung und Konfessionalisierung in städtischen Kontext’ as an appendix of edited documents including the visitation articles from 1556 (1579), 1616 and 1650, pp. 254-271.

²⁹ Ostermayer mentions the first evangelical mass held in Braşov. ‘Hat man im Monath October angefangen Ewangelische Mess zu halten in der Croner Kirch, und die Papistische weggeschafft, Gott, und seinen heiligen Nahmen zu Ehren, Amen’ Ostermayer, *Chronik*, in Kemény, p. 27.

visitation records.³⁰ As liturgies cannot be separated either from the beliefs which created them or the physical space in which they were performed, one has to consider both the theological underpinnings of the new service and its spatial context.

Whilst the Lutheran community was defined primarily by a particular understanding of the Eucharist,³¹ the doctrine of the real presence was central to the liturgical ritual and frequently given visual expression during the service, by insisting on the presence of the Crucifixion in the decoration of the altar, by privileging Passion cycles and by the continued use of the host, strongly associated with the body of Christ in the practice of the medieval church and in the minds of the faithful.³² That is why it becomes particularly important to understand how the Lutheran service has changed in comparison with the Catholic mass.

If one starts with the number of services, one has to note that Transylvanian Lutheran churches celebrated only one mass each day and always with communicants present.³³ This was an obvious difference which cannot have escaped the notice of early modern congregations. Only one mass would be in progress at any given time with the minister officiating at the high and, often the only altar in the church.

³⁰ For an attempt, see Maria Crăciun, 'Transylvanian Lutheran Liturgical Practices in Comparative European Perspective' in Irene Dingel, Ute Lotz-Heumann (eds.), *Entfaltung und zeitgenössische Wirkung der Reformation im europäischen Kontext / Dissemination and Contemporary Impact of the Reformation in a European Context* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, forthcoming 2014).

³¹ Wandel, p. 107.

³² For the relation between liturgy, art and confessional identity in Transylvania see Maria Crăciun, 'Marian Imagery and Its Function in the Lutheran Churches of Early Modern Transylvania' in Andrew Spicer (ed.), *Lutheran Churches in Early Modern Europe* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 133-164. Maria Crăciun, 'Eucharistic Iconography and the Confessional Identity of the Saxon Community in Early Modern Transylvania' in Jaroslav Miller, László Kontler (eds.), *Friars, Nobles and Burghers- Sermons, Images and Prints. Studies of Culture and Society in Early Modern Europe, In memoriam István György Tóth* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2010), pp. 49-71. Maria Crăciun, 'Art, Religious Diversity and Confessional Identity in Early Modern Transylvania', in C. Scott Dixon, Dagmar Freist, Mark Greengrass (eds.), *Living with Religious Diversity in Early Modern Europe*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 81-108. Maria Crăciun, 'Reforming Church Space. Altarpieces and Their Functions in Early Modern Transylvania' in *Church History and Religious Culture*, No. 1 (2007): 1-28. Maria Crăciun, 'Rural altarpieces and religious experiences in Transylvania's Saxon communities' in Heinz Schilling (ed.), *Religion and Cultural Exchange in Europe 1400-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 191-217.

³³ Honterus, p. 16. 'Reformatio Ecclesiarum Saxonicarum' in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, p. 15.

At first glance this evangelical mass seems disturbingly similar to its Catholic predecessor, as the order of the service had changed very little, although all sacrificial elements had been removed and the Words of Institution - which were closely associated with the sacrament, the centre piece of the performance - were greatly emphasized.³⁴ However, a closer exploration of its practice highlights the fact that this service was, distinctly and recognizably Lutheran. The balance between the parts was different and more time was allocated to the sermon, to readings from the Old and New Testaments, to music, particularly to the congregational singing of Hymns and Psalms and to prayer. Although Latin was not completely eliminated the important parts of the service were conducted in the vernacular.

Longer and more frequent sermons, mentioned in church orders and decrees of the synods of the Transylvanian Lutheran church must have been a considerable and noticeable difference as, before the Reformation, preaching was not equally imbedded in the fabric of routine worship.³⁵ Thus, the change from the rather peripheral use of preaching to a service that was structured around the sermon and gave it a prominent place was significant. Although medieval congregations sometimes sang, Psalms and hymns in the vernacular seem to have been more common for early modern Lutheran congregations and several moments during the service were dedicated to song. In fact, scholars seem to suggest that a combination of a choral liturgy with congregational singing was the mark of the Lutheran mass during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries.³⁶ Finally, there was more room for prayer during Lutheran liturgies. Services generally opened and closed with prayer and the *Pater Noster* was often included in the proceedings.³⁷

³⁴ Honterus, pp. 16-17. 'Reformatio Ecclesiarum Saxoniarum' in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, pp. 32-33. Synod of Mediaș (1565) in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, pp. 103-104.

³⁵ Honterus, p. 17. 'Reformatio Ecclesiarum Saxoniarum' in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, pp. 32-33, 35. Synods of 1557, 1565, 1574, 1578 in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, pp. 5, 107, 195, 227. For the role of the sermon before and after the Reformation, see Andrew Pettegree, *The Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 15-16. Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, pp. 57-58. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion*, pp. 66-68.

³⁶ Pettegree, *The Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion*, pp. 40-42. Joseph Herl, *Worship Wars in Early Lutheranism. Choir, Congregation and Three Centuries of Conflict* (Oxford: University Press, 2004), pp. 23-35.

³⁷ Honterus, pp. 16-17. 'Post haec minister conversus ad populum, primo dominicam orationem vernacula lingua, ...' in 'Reformatio Ecclesiarum Saxoniarum' in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, p. 33.

Thus, the new format of the service reflected the theological underpinnings specific to Lutheranism as the principles of *sola scriptura*, *sola gratia* and *sola fide* were evidenced by the importance attached to the sermon and to the words of God. On the other hand, the central role of the Eucharist in Lutheran belief was highlighted by the prominence afforded the Words of Institution and the correct understanding of the sacrament.

As far as its spatial context is concerned the setting of the Lutheran liturgy was primarily dictated by the fact that the Saxon community retained ownership of its medieval churches. Religious buildings were thus adapted to make them better suited for Lutheran worship and even the most cursory glance reveals that these adaptations betray a concern for enhanced visibility and better acoustics.

Moreover, as iconoclastic incidents were rare, the Lutheran service took place within richly furnished spaces comprising both medieval artifacts and early modern additions to the décor. The latter are particularly relevant as they give expression to the changes in the order of the service. While the importance of the sacrament led to the preservation of the high altar (**image 1**: altar and altarpiece in the church at Tătârlăua), complete with its decoration, the reduction of the number of services led to the elimination of secondary altars. In the same vein, the centrality of the sermon and the emphasis placed on the Word of God, together with the important role afforded preaching in the structure of the Lutheran service led to the emergence of more pulpits, pews and galleries (**image 2**: interior of the church in Cincu). In similar manner, the importance of music eventually induced the installation of organs either in the west end of churches (**image 3**: image of the west end of the church at Cincu) or in the chancel in a unitary presentation with the pulpit and altar (**image 4**: image of altar and pulpit, Netuș).

The location of the furnishings within the church suggests that it was important for services to take place in particular sites within the building. The altar remained in its place in the chancel (**image 5**: the altar in the church at Tătârlăua), the pulpit was generally installed at the crossing between chancel and nave (**image 6**: pulpit from Ungra), pews were introduced in the chancel (**image 7**: pews from Șura Mare) and the nave (reflecting the status of those who occupied them), galleries were placed exclusively in the nave (**image 8**: galleries from Meșendorf) while the font was brought from the west end of the church to the chancel area. Concern for the visibility of the liturgical performance, at least in urban churches - where this is documented - led to the partial demolition of the choir screen in its central area, which discreetly transformed it into galleries.³⁸

³⁸ Mihaela Sanda Salontai, 'Structuri medievale dispărute la biserici din mediul urban. Lettnerul bisericii evanghelice din Sibiu' in *Ars Transsilvaniae*, XX (2010): 53-59, here p. 56.

This rearrangement of the furnishings reflects concern for visibility and audibility but also makes strong visual statements concerning the sacraments retained by the Lutheran Church, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which were both performed in full view of the congregation. Besides making all the rituals in the church visible and hence public, as opposed to all the instances where a Catholic priest would address God alone, while isolating himself from the congregation, this rearrangement of church furnishings in the early modern period leads one to consider the occurrence of new focal points in the context of the Lutheran service. While the performance of the sacrament focused the eyes of the congregation on the altar in the chancel, the sermon delivered from the pulpit drew their attention to the minister performing it in this new location, thus creating a second focal point both visually and in terms of the structure of the service (**image 9**: chancel area at Meşendorf).

Finally, the service was performed by a minister, who sometimes wore vestments and made specific gestures, turning to the congregation when pronouncing the Words of Institution, while communion was distributed in both kinds, usually by two ministers positioned at either end of the altar. Thus, in Transylvanian Lutheran churches the congregation witnessed the unfolding of a new ritual, utterly different in rhythm and focus from the mass, the old, Catholic rites replaced by a new order of prayer, scripture readings, preaching and communal singing.

This survey of furnishings in Transylvanian Lutheran churches suggests that a top-down Reformation supported by the political authority led to the retention of the old buildings and stimulated a conservative attitude towards their appearance. However, an assessment of the changes that have taken place in Lutheran places of worship leads one to conclude that the Lutheran service defined the appearance of the building, altered to accommodate theological as well as ceremonial requirements, doctrine as well as religious practice.³⁹ Moreover, recent scholarship has persuasively

³⁹ This has been suggested by several scholars such as Riitta Laitinen, 'Church Furnishings and Rituals in a Swedish Provincial Cathedral from 1527 to c. 1660' in Spicer (ed.), *Lutheran Churches*, pp. 311-332, here pp. 322, 331. Krista Kodres, 'Das "Geistliche Gebäwde" der Kirche': The Lutheran Church in Early Modern Estonia as a Meeting Place of Theological, Social and Artistic Ideas' in Spicer (ed.), *Lutheran Churches*, pp. 333-376, here pp. 347, 374. Andrew Spicer, "'Hic coeli porta est, hic domus ecce dei': Lutheran Churches in the Dutch World, c. 1566-1719' in Spicer (ed.), *Lutheran Churches*, pp. 445-482, here p. 409. Øystein Ekroll, 'State Church and Church State: Churches and their Interiors in Post-Reformation Norway, 1537-1795' in Spicer (ed.), *Lutheran Churches*, pp. 277-310, here p. 302. Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen, Hugo Johannsen, 'Re-forming the Confessional Space: Early Lutheran Churches in Denmark, c. 1536-1660' in Spicer (ed.), *Lutheran*

suggested that a Lutheran place of worship was not perceived as a sacred space in the same way as a Catholic church was, as it gained its sacred status only through its use as a place of worship.⁴⁰ Finally, as Vera Isaiasz has pointed out, for Luther sacrality was constituted not spatially but temporally through the time of the congregational service of worship.⁴¹ Thus, the community was brought together to worship not so much in a particular space as at a particular time during the day, the week and the year.

While the service brought the congregation together, the main actor in this performance was the minister. He was part of, yet separate from the community of faithful and by his actions structured its religious experience and designed its devotional life. The duties of the clergy were outlined by various ecclesiastical documents, such as church orders, the decrees of the synods of the Lutheran Church and visitation guidelines. Although these documents often echo each other, espousing a similar discourse, developments over time also highlight some changes in the way the priorities of the church were defined. As outlined by these texts the duties of the ministers included correct performance of the sacrament (administered respectfully), spreading the Word of God (preaching), eliminating errors in belief and practice, persuading those who had strayed from the faith to return, visiting the ill and instructing the congregation, catechizing and conducting visitations.⁴²

The clergy thus presented the congregation with daily services modeled on the practice of the early church and distinct from the Catholic liturgy.⁴³ Ministers strove for uniformity in practice, avoiding innovation and contamination from the teachings of other confessions such as

Churches, pp. 241-276, here p. 273. Emily Fisher Gray, 'Lutheran Churches and Confessional Competition in Augsburg' in Spicer (ed.), *Lutheran Churches*, pp. 39-62, here pp.48, 57. Margit Thøfner, 'Framing the Sacred: Lutheran Church Furnishings in the Holy Roman Empire' in Spicer (ed.), *Lutheran Churches*, pp. 97-132, here pp. 104, 119. Maria Deiters, 'Epitaphs in Dialogue with Sacred Space: Post-Reformation Furnishings in the Parish Churches of St Nikolai and St Marien in Berlin' in Spicer (ed.), pp. 63-96, here p. 63.

⁴⁰ Vera Isaiasz, 'Early Modern Lutheran Churches: Redefining the Boundaries of the Holy and the Profane' in Spicer (ed.), *Lutheran Churches*, pp. 17-38, here p. 34. Laitinen, p. 322. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual*, p. 192.

⁴¹ Isaiasz, p. 23.

⁴² 'Reformatio ecclesiarum saxonicarum' includes 'De officiis ministrorum', 'De sacramento baptismatis', 'De abusu Missae privatae', 'De Coena domini', in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, pp. 12-18. Honterus, 'De Baptismate', 'De Missa privata', 'De Missa publica', pp. 14-17, Article XXII 'De vita et moribus ministrorum ecclesiae', in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, p. 170.

⁴³ Honterus, pp. 16-18. Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, pp. 16-18, 30-36. Article 3 (1616), Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', p. 262.

Calvinism, Anti-Trinitarianism and Anabaptism.⁴⁴ Moreover, ministers were expected to administer the sacrament according to correct ritual forms anchored in Scripture.⁴⁵

The Lutheran clergy felt that it was its duty to build a Godly community, distinct from the God less one, "as Christians are different from pagans".⁴⁶ Following in the footsteps of Martin Luther, to whom attendance at service was an identifying mark of an orthodox and pious community, the clergy expected the laity to attend church, morning and evening services on a daily basis and the main service on Sundays and feast days, leaving work behind and engaging in pious deeds that would lead to salvation in agreement with the third commandment.⁴⁷ As Luther has encouraged an Augustinian arrangement of the commandments, the third one refers to observing the Sabbath.⁴⁸

As ministers wanted to make sure that services would not be disturbed, they discouraged all practical activities in the town, which could interfere with attendance at church. The council was not supposed to hold meetings on a Sunday, while mills would stop operating and trading, as well as all other commercial activities, would be forbidden. Shops, including bakeries would close, except for emergencies.⁴⁹ If urgent harvesting was needed, the laity had to ask the minister for permission to work.⁵⁰

For feasts that fell during the working week the clergy conceded that they would only be celebrated until noon with the administration of the sacrament and the preaching of the Word of God. Afterwards, people

⁴⁴ Honterus, pp. 16-17. Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, pp. 15-16. Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', pp. 254, 255, 261, 271. Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, pp. 175-176, 205.

⁴⁵ Synods of 1572 and 1578 in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, pp. 167, 224.

⁴⁶ „Es muss ja ein Unterschied sein zwischen den Christen und den gottlosen heidnischen Menschen" Article III *auditores* (1577) in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, p. 209. Article 3 *auditores* (1616) in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', p. 266.

⁴⁷ Article 4 from 'Reformatio Ecclesiarum Saxonicarum' in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, p. 29. Articles VIII and IX from visitation articles in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, pp. 210-211. Articles 32 (1556), 35 (1556), 8 (1616), 12 *auditores* (1616) in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', pp. 258, 267-268.

⁴⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."

⁴⁹ Articles 32, 34, 35, 36, 37 (1556), 11 a (1616), 12 a (1616), 19 a (1616), 13 a (1616), 14 a (1616) in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', pp. 258, 268, 269, articles XI b *auditores* (1577), XII *auditores* (1577), in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, p. 211.

⁵⁰ Article 32 (1556) in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', p. 258.

would be able to attend to their business. However, for the main feasts of the year, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost, each member of the congregation was expected to avoid leaving the town and to attend church regularly.⁵¹ Weddings should preferably not be held on Sundays so that they would not interfere with the service and the sermon.⁵²

In order to ensure attendance at church, particularly for vespers, the clergy waged war on taverns, beerhouses and *Spielstube* requesting that they would be open only after the sermon at vespers.⁵³ The clergy did not wish people to fail to attend church because they were working in the fields, roaming the streets, loitering in the square or talking loudly in the churchyard.⁵⁴ They were even harsher in their criticism of those who ate, drank, and played cards, gambled or danced during the service and the sermon.⁵⁵

Once at church, parishioners were expected to engage actively in the instruction offered by the clergy through reading and interpreting the Bible, through sermons, catechism lessons and songs.⁵⁶ This often took place in church and was integrated during the service itself. For example, after the

⁵¹ Article 38 (1556) in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', pp. 258-259.

⁵² Article 13 (1616) in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', p. 265.

⁵³ Article 3 in 'Reformatio Ecclesiarum Saxonicarum' in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch* I, pp. 28-29. Article XIX *auditores* (1577) in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, p. 213. Articles 37 (1556), 13 *auditores* (1616) in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', pp. 258, 268.

⁵⁴ Articles 33 (1556), 9 (1616) in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', pp. 258, 267.

⁵⁵ Article IX *auditores* (1577) in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, pp. 210-211. Articles 33 (1556), 9 *auditores* (1616), Article 17 (1650) in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', pp. 258, 267, 271.

⁵⁶ "nisi quod post epistulam interdum adhibemus cantiones Germanicas, interdum vero alias consuetas, si non repugnent scripturae. Loco epistulae aut evangelii integrum caput novi testamenti ad populum legitur" in Honterus, 'De missa publica', p. 16. "Ceteris vero diebus per septimanam ante auroram praemissa cantiuncula fit contio familiaris pro institutione iuventutis, quae clauditur cantione alicuius psalmi vel decem praeceptorum." "Post haec publice praelegitur caput veteris testamenti cum succinta interpretatione, in cuius fine rursus canitur a populo psalmus aliquis Germanicus" Honterus, 'De Reliquis caerimoniis', pp. 17-18. "Minister vero per septimanam in officio aurorae post consuetas vulgares cantiones lectionem unius capituli secundum ordinem novi testamenti populo publice praelegat et insigniores locos illius textus ad utilitatem auditorum interpretetur, nec quisquam excuset voluntariam cessationem paucitate auditorum" in Honterus, 'De Officiis Ministrorum', p. 22. Honterus' requests were reiterated in the 'Reformatio Ecclesiarum Saxonicarum' and church synods: 'De annuis Visitationibus' article 6 in 'Reformatio Ecclesiarum Saxonicarum', Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, p. 31. Article 4 from 'De Summo officio', Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, p. 33. Article 4 from 'De officio matutino', Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, p. 32. Article VI *pastores* (1577), in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, p. 206. Articles 34 (1556), 37 (1556). 4 (1616) in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', pp. 258, 262.

recitation of the *Pater Noster*, the minister would turn to the people and would recite, clearly and in the vernacular the words of the New Testament referring to the pieces of bread and to the chalice and wine.⁵⁷ The young were particularly targeted by the clergy and sometimes, after the service, one of the ministers would explain the fundamental tenets of the Catechism to them. Ministers were instructed to use words that the children would understand and want to learn. The girls from the school were supposed to quiz each other from the Catechism and to explain the questions to the audience.⁵⁸ In fact, the clergy tried to involve the laity in the educational process. Thus, parents were urged to raise their children and their servants in the discipline of God, to take them to church and to the sermon, to teach them the Catechism and instruct them in the Word of God.⁵⁹

The clergy obviously wanted parishioners to grasp the fundamental tenets of the new faith. For example, congregations needed to be aware there was only one mediator between God and mankind, Jesus Christ the Savior.⁶⁰ Moreover, the faithful had to understand why they were Christians after having received baptism and to become familiar with the meaning of the Eucharist.⁶¹ However, ministers seemed to favor a minimalist approach to the issue of correct belief, as parishioners were expected to know the *Pater Noster*, the Creed and the 10 commandments and thus grasp the bare fundamentals of the new faith.⁶² Familiarity with the Bible, with the Catechism and with pious songs, particularly with Psalms was also expected. To this end the morning service would often include a

⁵⁷ "Post praefationem cum suo cantico, praemissa brevi commemoratione mortis domini et oratione dominica, minister versus ad populum verba testamenti e scripto lingua vernacula super particulas panis iuxta numerum participantium praeparatas, mox etiam super calicem et vinum clarissima voce pronuntiat." Honterus, 'De Missa publica', pp. 16-17.

⁵⁸ "Peractis omnibus puellulae scholasticae aut aliquas cantiunculas in templo decantant aut quaestiones de praecipuis partibus catechismi mutuo proponunt et ad instructionem auditorum explicant." Honterus, 'De Reliquis caerimoniis', p. 18. Interest in instruction is reiterated by Article 3 from 'De vespertino officio', Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, p. 34.

⁵⁹ Article II *auditores* (1577), in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, p. 209. Article 2 *auditores* (1616) in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', p. 265.

⁶⁰ "Unus enim Deus, unus mediator Dei et hominum, homo Christus Jesus, qui dedit semet ipsum pretium redemptionis pro omnibus." in Honterus. 'De Reliquis caerimoniis', p. 17.

⁶¹ Article V (1577), in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, p. 205.

⁶² "hinc post collectam additur aliqua pia sequentia vel tractus cum lectione unius capituli ex novo testamento ac symbolo fidei et oratione dominica,..." in Honterus, p. 17.

reading of the 10 commandments.⁶³ Religious instruction was more intense at certain times during the liturgical year. For example, during Lent, besides the reading from the Catechism, the emphasis would be on the 10 commandments, the Creed, the *Pater Noster* and the words for Baptism and the Eucharist. However, ministers wished the laity to understand that the sacrament should not be subject to idolatry, such as the adoration of the consecrated host and the use of sacramentals, that is, blessed herbs, water and salt.⁶⁴

In order to ensure orthodoxy in belief it was recommended that all churches should have Latin and German Bibles, a Postil, Martin Luther's Catechism and other useful German books.⁶⁵ As Transylvanian reformers were anxious that "useless books" would poison the minds of the people and seduce them with "strange opinions", they tried to prevent their congregations from straying from the "true faith"⁶⁶ Consequently, those who traveled to areas "dominated by our adversaries in matters of religion", such as merchants and messengers were forbidden to bring into the country "heretical" books of any kind or spread those erroneous teachings to their neighbours in their homes, at weddings or in taverns. In fact, all books brought into the country and sold there had to be approved by the pastor or other learned men.⁶⁷ Moreover, in order to strengthen their own community the clergy decided that people of the Lutheran faith should not become related to Arians (anti-Trinitarians), or people who despised the sacrament, as they could be drawn into error by that community.⁶⁸ Thus, restrictions were placed upon marriage because it could be the site of inter-confessional relations, a stimulus for religious choice, posing the risk of conversion to another denomination.

As far as devotional behaviour was concerned, the clergy expected the community to engage in song, for example during the distribution of the elements, attaching an important role to music in the church. This was meant to instruct and to build the community. For example, the acts of the synod held at Mediaş in 1563 asked the congregation to sing 'Jesus Christus'

⁶³ "Ceteris vero diebus per septimanam ante auroram praemissa cantiuncula fit contio familiaris pro institutione iuventutis, quae clauditur cantione alicuius psalmi vel decem praeceptorum." Honterus, pp. 17-18.

⁶⁴ Synod of 1561 article XIV in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, p. 56.

⁶⁵ Article 6 from 'De anuvis visitationibus', in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch* I, p. 31.

⁶⁶ Article 5 from 'De quibusdam politicis abusibus reformandis' in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, p. 29.

⁶⁷ Articles 3 (1556), 13 (1556), 14 (1556), 15 (1556), in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', pp. 254, 255, 256.

⁶⁸ Article 7 (1556) in Szegedi, 'Visitationsartikel', p. 254.

or 'Gott sei gelobet und gebenedeiet'.⁶⁹ Taking things one step further, the synod of 1565 asked the congregation to sing pious German songs explaining the doctrine concerning the Lord's Supper.⁷⁰ Moreover, Psalm number five was to be sung in German during Vespers for the building of the community.⁷¹ The text of this particular Psalm refers to a community of faith constructed by the grace of God as a community of devotion. The Saxons were to turn to God and to feel sheltered by Him if they carefully followed the righteous path.

Thus, the functions of music performed by the congregation were complex. On the one hand, music had a role in instruction. On the other, music was intended to foster a sense of solidarity. Emphasizing the role of music in the Lutheran liturgy, Susan Karant-Nunn has argued that, in the framework of confessionalization congregational singing and the carefully crafted lyrics were used to indoctrinate the people and to ensure their conformity to the norms defined by the elite.⁷² This only serves to highlight the role of music in communication in an age where most opinion forming took place in communal rather than a private setting as Andrew Pettegree has suggested.⁷³ It has also been pointed out that congregational hymn singing demonstrated the participation of the congregation in this rite, their active involvement in the service as opposed to the predominantly passive role of many pre-Reformation congregations.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ "Dum administratur Coena Domini, canatur plerumque: Jesus Christus, vel Gott sei gelobet und gebenedeiet." Article IX, synod 1563 in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, p. 76.

⁷⁰ "Adhibeantur quoque inter distribuendum cantiones germanicase, piae, continentis doctrinam de institutione et usu coenae dominicae." Article IX, 1565 synod in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, p. 105.

⁷¹ "In vespertinis precibus nihil penitus est immutatum, praeterquam quod quintus psalmus ad aedificationem ecclesiae canitur lingua vulgari". Honterus, p. 18. "Im Vesperamt ist gar nichts geändert worden, ausser dass der 5 Psalm zur Erbauung der Gemeinde in deutscher Sprache gesungen wird." Honterus, p. 176. "Nisi quod quintus psalmus ad aedificationem praesentis populi plerunque canitur lingua vernacula"; "Tempore autem paschali, idem quintus psalmus In exitu, iuxta morem priscorum latine canitur" tit. XVIII, *Reformatio Ecclesiarum Saxonicarum* (1547) in Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, I, pp. 33-34.

⁷² Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual*, p. 136. Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion*, p. 49 also highlights the role of music in conveying the central messages of the new evangelical teachings.

⁷³ Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion*, pp. 41, 53 highlights the role of music as a pedagogical tool in the service of the Reformation. Bob Scribner, 'Oral Culture and the Diffusion of Reformation Ideas', in Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany*, (London: The Hambledon Press, 1987), pp. 49-70.

⁷⁴ Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion*, p. 40 argues that singing inculcated a sense of loyalty and identification with the new worship tradition. Matthias

Finally, ministers also wished parishioners to engage in both congregational and private prayer as this was always pleasing to God. Considering that the *Pater Noster* was the prayer often recited in church, it is tempting to imagine that this was the prayer they were expected to address to God. In order to structure the work day and encourage people to pray, bells would ring morning and night, not as “papist” idolatry but reflecting love of order.⁷⁵

These prerequisites were very much in tune with guidelines from the heartlands of the Reformation. Ever critical of medieval piety, Protestants argued strenuously for a sound scriptural basis for prayer and for intellectual comprehension. They encouraged devotees to pray the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus’ most direct instruction concerning devotional acts. Luther published commentaries on the Lord’s Prayer and hoped that it would replace the “deceptions” of the Book of Hours and teach lay people how to pray in a “simpler, more direct and more heartfelt way”. Luther and his followers composed and published devotional books that were explicitly designed as alternatives to the medieval Book of Hours and thus offered a new model of Christian practice.⁷⁶

Thus, correct belief was encouraged by the ministers when they requested familiarity with the *Pater Noster* and with pious songs, especially with the Psalms. On the other hand, the emphasis placed by the clergy on proper conduct is obvious in the provisions concerning the 10 commandments - which stimulated religious discipline - and in the discussion about the treatment of the sacrament as well as in their effort to eliminate sacramentals, the invocation of saints and processions. Thus, keeping an eye on both sides of the coin, the clergy expected that right belief would be reflected by proper conduct. They urged congregations to grasp and internalize theological fundamentals and hoped that these would be mirrored by their religious practices. That is why the clergy insisted on

Range, ‘The Material Presence of Music in Church: The Hanseatic City of Lübeck’ in Spicer (ed.), *Lutheran Churches*, pp. 197-230, here p. 199. Herl, *Worship Wars in Early Lutheranism* seems to disagree with this view. On the one hand he argues that German congregations sang even before the Reformation, although a choral liturgy predominated. On the other he convincingly shows that the choral liturgy continued its dominance in Lutheran churches and that choral and congregational liturgy were in competition with each other. He consequently concludes that ‘the change from a choral to a congregational liturgy took place slowly’ (p. 177).

⁷⁵ Article XV pastores (1577), Teutsch (ed.), *Urkundenbuch*, II, pp. 207-208, Article 7 pastores (1616) in Szegedi, ‘Visitationsartikel’, p. 263.

⁷⁶ For these criticisms and for the Protestant practice of prayer, see Reinburg, pp. 21, 29, 32-34.

attendance at church and the active participation of the parishioners in the divine service. They were the first small steps towards the Reformation of the community and the building of their confessional identity as Lutherans. However, the means the clergy had at its disposal in order to implement its programme were mostly of a spiritual and pastoral nature, such as public admonition, the ban from communion, refusal of the sacrament at the time of death and burial in the cemetery.⁷⁷ This leads one to inquire whether cooperation existed between the ecclesiastical and secular elites in order to implement a programme of religious disciplining.

**“Pater noster, qui es in caelis:
sanctificetur Nomen Tuum;
adveniat Regnum Tuum;
fiat voluntas Tua,
sicut in caelo, et in terra.”**

How much of this programme initiated by the clergy was supported by the laity? On the one hand, the magistracy seems to have assumed the agenda of the church. First of all, several members of the town council were committed Lutherans and a Protestant ethos seems to have permeated the language used as they advocated order and concern for the “common good”.⁷⁸ It has been suggested that the legitimization of the central authority and the public expression of the ideology of good order is captured in the words of the town statute of Sibiu (1589) written under the supervision of Albert Huet, the royal judge. According to this document, good customs, order and discipline were necessary for the preservation of the town’s

⁷⁷ For examples, see Articles III *auditores* (1577), IV *auditores* (1577), VI *auditores* (1577), VII *auditores* (1577) in Teutsch, *Urkundenbuch*, II, pp. 209-210. Szegedi, ‘Moartea’, pp. 72-73 discusses the right to be buried in the cemetery or in the fields like the animals. For a discussion and conceptualization of the issue, see Schilling, ‘History of Sin or History of Crime?’ pp. 294-295, 300-301 who discusses the occurrence of a Protestant church discipline and points out the qualitative differences between church and secular punishment, between ‘sin discipline’ and ‘crime discipline’ and ultimately argues that church discipline was pastoral in character. He thus introduces the concept of penitential discipline and comments on the effectiveness of the ban from communion.

⁷⁸ Pakucs, ‘Gute Ordnung und Disziplin’, pp. 179, 190 mentions Markus Pemfflinger who played a decisive role in the Reformation, but also Peter Haller, as well as Georg and Albert Huet. For the concept of ‘common good’ see Philip Broadhead, ‘Guildsmen, Religious Reform and the Search for the Common Good. The role of the guilds in the Early Reformation in Augsburg’ in Andrew Pettegree (ed.), *The Reformation. Critical Concepts in Historical Studies* (London, New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 71-92. First published in *Historical Journal* 39/3 (1996): 577-597.

liberties and privileges. In return, citizens were offered protection and security by the town authorities.⁷⁹

Moreover, the plea for forgiveness formulated by the magistracy of Sibiu suggests the integration of the Protestant rhetoric and perhaps even a more profound adoption of the ethos. The model for human forgiveness is the divine one, as expressed in the most important prayer addressed to God, the *Pater Noster*. According to its words human compassion should mirror the mercy that God had granted mankind.⁸⁰ A careful reading of the letter highlights the fact that the words of the prayer were reproduced verbatim and that its message was interpreted within the spirit of the theology of grace. On the other hand, the magistracy of Braşov invoked God when they had to make their ruling in cases presented before them: “solum Deum et iustitiam prae oculis habentes”.⁸¹

In practical terms, the magistracy was instrumental in implementing the agenda of the church and in punishing offenders.⁸² It was the town council who were able to stop all commercial activity in the town during the church service, so that it would not be disrupted, and who could punish the publican who did not respect the established opening hours or closing time.⁸³ They could thus contribute in significant ways to keeping the town’s population on the straight and narrow, turning them into good citizens as well as good Christians.

If one looks beyond the elite one has to find out how this agenda was implemented within a broader social context, among the artisan community of the Saxon towns. The examination of guild statutes allows an assessment of the principal concerns of this particular group.

⁷⁹ Pakucs, ‘Gute Ordnung und Disziplin’, pp. 180-181. Sándor Kolozsvári, Kelemen Óvári (eds.), *Corpus Statutorum municipalium. A magyar törvényhatóságok jogszabályainak gyűjteménye*, vol. I (Budapest, 1885), pp. 542-543.

⁸⁰ *Quellen*, IX, p. 220.

⁸¹ The ruling in the litigation between the furriers’ guild of Braşov and the butcher Martinus Onsch, *Quellen*, IX, p. 305.

⁸² Pakucs, ‘Gute Ordnung und Disziplin’, p. 188 suggests that with the town ordinance of 1565 the council took steps towards controlling and disciplining the citizens.

⁸³ Pakucs, ‘Behaviour Control’, pp. 49, 51. Pakucs, ‘Gute Ordnung und Disziplin’, pp. 189, 191, 196 mentions the decrees of the Saxon University of 1550 and 1557 concerning church attendance and measures to be taken against the disobedient. The statute of 1550 closed Spielstuben in order to avoid scandal. The statute of 1557 only allowed people to spend time in the tavern from noon until vespers. For details, see Kolozsvári, Óvári (eds.), *Corpus statutorum*, vol. I, pp. 525, 531, 535, 545. The town statutes of Braşov approved by the town magistracy and the centumviri show that no one was allowed to sell wine after closing time. They also forbade games and gambling: “Allerley schadlige Spiel, es seyn Karttlen, Kegell, Würffell unndt was es will, das schadlig ist, sollen gestraffet werden...” Town statutes of Braşov (1577), article XIX, in *Quellen*, IX, p. 349.

A careful reading of the preambles of statutes suggests that some of the Protestant ideas had been integrated by the master artisans. For example, they consistently mention the “common good” and thus “das myr zu Guet und Wolffaren gemeynes Nucz des ganczen Landts” is a phrase that unfailingly appears in an impressive number of statutes.⁸⁴ It is true that this phrase occurs in the statutes approved by the Saxon University for the various guilds beginning with 1539 and thus suggests that it was inspired by the elite of the Saxon community rather than by the artisans themselves.

If the preambles may be the result of cooperative work between the master artisans and the magistracy, the articles themselves are more likely to reflect the artisans’ world view. Many statutes highlight concern for order and unity: “czwischen in selbst Einigkeit und Frieden zu erhalten”.⁸⁵ In fact, the barrel-makers of Sibiu renewed their statutes because they wished to foster unity, “Christian love” and “good understanding” among themselves: “dass wir ohne Zwanck aus besonderlicher Freundschaft und zu erhalten Eintracht und christliche Lieb und Einigkeit zwischen uns.”⁸⁶ The brotherhood of the journeymen of the cloth-makers’ guild also strove to live in peace and harmony with each other: “und also inn einer Eintracht und Fridenn mit einander lebenn”.⁸⁷ Christian order and Christian fundamentals for the brotherhood are also invoked by the statutes of the cloth-makers’ guild (1577).⁸⁸

Sometimes this rather stereotypical language makes way for deeper convictions and allows the strong bonds that brought the artisan community together to surface. For example, the statutes of the barbers of 1572 explicitly state that the artisans wished to maintain unity and harmony until God decided to call them away from this imperfect world. The entire text mentions God’s will, God’s protection and God’s punishment (as illness and inability to work are interpreted as such) and ultimately asks for God’s forgiveness.⁸⁹

Later statutes of the barbers also mention “Christian love” in more specific contexts related to their trade. When people were ill but too poor to pay for treatment, barber surgeons were urged not to abandon them but

⁸⁴ For examples, see *Quellen*, IX, pp. 180, 182, 186, 208, 257, 276, 287, 291, 309, 359, 373, 382, 389, 391 and Vlaicu, pp. 305, 309, 313, 316, 320, 325, 329, 336, 340, 343, 350, 396, 409, 419, 425.

⁸⁵ Statutes of the builders from Braşov (1570) in *Quellen*, IX, p. 298. Order and unity in the guild was the purpose of the millers of Braşov (1571) in *Quellen*, IX, p. 319.

⁸⁶ *Quellen*, IX, p. 307.

⁸⁷ *Quellen*, IX, p. 343.

⁸⁸ Vlaicu, p. 459.

⁸⁹ *Quellen*, IX, pp. 327-328.

rather care for them out of “Christian love”: “Wo eyner in derselben Gemeyne in eine Schmerzen fiele unnd so arm were das er nit hette dem Arcz Lohn zu zalenn, so sollenn sye ym aws christlicher Lybe aws der ganczer Zech in hülfflen heylen unnd nyt verlassen.”⁹⁰ “Christian love” was also invoked in the statutes for the cloth-weavers of Sibiu (1577) as the incentive for the father of the journeymen who had to offer his house, a bed to sleep in and sustenance according to his possibilities to ill journeymen.⁹¹ Finally, the rhetoric of the “common good” and the pervasive power of “Christian love” are underlined by the agreement reached in 1570 between the barrel-makers’ guilds of Sibiu and Braşov concerning the admission of apprentices and journeymen. The motive for signing this agreement was the “extraordinary friendship”, the maintenance of “Christian unity and love” and of “mutual understanding”.⁹² While responsibility undertaken by the community of artisans in cases of illness, poverty and other misfortunes serves to highlight the solidarity of the group, the motives reiterated in these texts, particularly the appeal to “Christian love” suggest the integration of Protestant rhetoric. The statutes of the barbers are most relevant in this respect as they were not only required to care for members of their own guild but for any person afflicted by illness and poverty.

This attitude also emphasizes concern for charity which is taken over by secular institutions such as the guilds and the brotherhoods. In fact, some guild regulations suggest the development of a system of mutual aid with financial implications. When a journeyman fell ill, other journeymen would lend him the money necessary for his sustenance. Moreover, brotherhoods of journeymen created a fund to be used in case of illness.⁹³ These examples highlight the institutionalization of charity and its secularization in the wake of the Reformation.

But what about the artisans’ concern for patterns of devotion and for the reforming programme promoted by the Lutheran ministers? A quantitative analysis highlights the fact that only four statutes written after the Reformation refer to the pious practices of the artisans.⁹⁴ A qualitative analysis of the same material proves more relevant as it highlights the

⁹⁰ Statutes of the barber-surgeons (1562) in Vlaicu, p. 398. Statutes of the barber-surgeons (1580) in *Quellen*, IX, p. 384.

⁹¹ Vlaicu, pp. 394, 461.

⁹² *Quellen*, IX, p. 308.

⁹³ Journeymen of the weavers’ guild (1577) in Vlaicu, p. 461. The statutes of the belt-makers (1558) in *Quellen*, IX, p. 224.

⁹⁴ In 1551, the statutes of the carpenters and the statutes of the leather-makers, in 1561 the statutes of the weavers from Cîsnădie, in 1572 the statutes for the cloth-makers of Sebeş. Vlaicu, pp. 363, 375, 394, 428.

priorities of the master craftsmen. After the Reformation, the few guild statutes that mention religious practice focus on church attendance and emphasize instruction. Artisans, particularly journeymen had to come to church regularly and to listen attentively to the sermon without talking or falling asleep. They were also to attend Catechism classes.⁹⁵ Guild statutes further mention that apprentices should be taught in the fear of God, which also implies concern for a degree of religious instruction or at least the internalization of moral commandments.⁹⁶

Although there is little information on actual devotional behavior, the post-Reformation guild statutes seem to emphasize the appropriate attitude and proper practices of the artisans during the services they attended. For example, the statutes drawn by the weavers' guild of Cisnădie for their journeymen (1561) mention that they had to stand when the name of Jesus was mentioned.⁹⁷ On the other hand, the guild of the leather-makers instructed its journeymen to join in song after the main sermon, suggesting that the elite of the association encouraged congregational singing.⁹⁸ Moreover, a pious attitude would be projected by their clothing – which had to be decent, appropriate and devoid of ostentation – and by their posture as they were not to lean against walls or pews. Active engagement with the service and an attitude reflected by body language – for example showing reverence by standing – seems to suggest the integration of the message of the church concerning respect for the sacrament and faith in Jesus as the only saviour of mankind.

If information concerning devotional patterns is not very generous, suggesting limited interest in this issue on the part of master artisans, the guilds seemed much more preoccupied by behaviour outside the church. While this can very easily be the subject of a separate study, even the most superficial glance at the texts suggests that artisans were concerned to discipline their subordinates such as journeymen and apprentices and thus forbade them to gamble and punished them if they were seen in the company of prostitutes.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Vlaicu, p. 394.

⁹⁶ *Quellen*, IX, p. 237.

⁹⁷ Vlaicu, p. 394.

⁹⁸ Vlaicu, p. 375.

⁹⁹ The statutes for the journeymen of the cobblers' guild of Sibiu (1559) refer to "offenboren Frauen" in Vlaicu, p. 370. The document also mentions playing games in the churchyard (p. 371). The statute compiled for the journeymen of the weavers' guild of Cisnădie mentions loitering in the square after the liturgy. Vlaicu, p. 394. The statutes for the journeymen of the tailors of Braşov (1476) refer to "frey Weib" in *Quellen*, IX, p. 59.

Moreover, while the guilds had always insisted that apprentices should be born within wedlock, after the Reformation they required proof not only of the youngster's legitimacy but also of his piety and that of his parents. Thus, the phrase "der soll ehelich geporen unnd frum sein" began to appear with increasing frequency in guild statutes approved by the Saxon University.¹⁰⁰

When one compares the statutes of the craft guilds with the elaborate programme devised by the Lutheran clergy, a first conclusion is suggested by the quantitative analysis. The small number of statutes written after the Reformation which mention devotional practices, especially when compared with the much larger number of documents produced in the second half of the sixteenth century lead one to conclude that the elite of the guilds was not particularly interested in implementing the guidelines of the clergy concerning devotional practice. In pursuit of a qualitative analysis, if one compares the priorities outlined by the guild with the priorities outlined by the clergy one can find some common ground as well as some very liberal interpretation of the ecclesiastical guidelines. Both the clergy and the artisans insisted on church attendance, instruction, the new theology of salvation and active participation in the service. However, while the clergy was concerned by familiarity with the main tenets of faith, particularly the meaning of the two sacraments retained by Lutheranism, master artisans were not really interested in doctrine or eager to disseminate the principles of faith that the Lutheran Church wanted to inculcate. They did however encourage instruction either by listening to the sermons or by attending Catechism classes. The biggest difference occurs in the understanding of the theology of salvation which was central to the definition of Lutheranism. While the Lutheran clergy wished the faithful to grasp the principles of grace and faith as well as to understand the Words of God and perceive

¹⁰⁰ "Ein jeden soll haben einem Geburths Brieff, das er von Teütschen ehrlichen Eltern gebohren sey.." The statutes of the tailors from Braşov (1558) in *Quellen*, IX, p. 238. Many guild statutes contain the expression "soll ehelig geborn" or "soll ehlich geboren". This is true for the wheelmakers (1490), the goldsmiths (1511), furriers (1539), stonemakers (1540), cloth-weavers (1540). One has to note that the expression sometimes changes to "ehrlich geboren und frum seyn". "Redlich geboren" and "redlich sey" also appear. *Quellen*, IX, pp. 175, 182, 186, 192, 249, 257, 276, 287. "Das man nyemandnn yn dy obgelmelte Czech Goltzschmitwercks awff sol nemen, her sey dan eelich von rechter kristenlicher Gepwrt, von frwmwn erberenn Elterenn, dy do awss dewtscher Czwnngnn sein gepornn, wnd darwber Priff wnd Sigl hab..." Statutes of the goldsmiths of Braşov (1511) in *Quellen*, IX, p. 93. "dar er von redlichenn Leytenn geporen say und der Jung auch redlich say" statutes of the tankard-makers (1500); "der sol erberlich geporen seyn von Vatter und Muetter" statutes of the cloth-makers of Sibiu (1500); "als fer als frum unnd erber geporen ist" statutes of the painters' guild, Sibiu (1520) in *Vlaicu*, pp. 231, 234, 265.

Jesus as the sole saviour of mankind, the artisans merely insisted that reverence be shown only to Jesus. This change in emphasis suggests that they had already translated right belief into proper devotional conduct. In this vein the guilds required proof of piety from their prospective members. Moreover, artisans seemed eager to discipline their subordinates particularly journeymen and showed concern for their morality. They thus required proof of legitimitae birth, forbade gambling and punished those who visited prostitutes. Thus, while the clergy seemed intent to create a Godly community, the artisans were content to foster a disciplined one.

However, the motivations of master artisans, as expressed by the statutes drafted for the journeymen of the weavers from Cisnădie (1561) suggest that concern for discipline and control over the behavior of their subordinates were informed by the Protestant ethos. They required from their journeymen Christian and decent behavior and strove for social harmony where rows and rifts had no place, while individual will was swallowed by the "common good".¹⁰¹ As we have already seen, this rhetoric of the "common good", combined with the ideology of order may have been inspired by the political authority. By contrast, concern for unity and social harmony, the notion of "Christian love" and a preoccupation with charity were very much their own.

Equally fruitful, the comparison between guild statutes drafted before and after the Reformation highlights the priorities and mind set of the guilds. First of all, a shift in interest is suggested by the much smaller number of regulations concerning devotional practice in the statutes drafted after the Reformation. While many (roughly 30) medieval guild statutes contain regulations concerning devotional practice, it has already been noted that only four such documents refer to these matters after 1545.¹⁰² This may signal the fact that artisans considered that devotional matters were no longer their concern.

Second, a more important change can be noted at institutional level. Although all members of the urban community belonged to the parish church many individuals and even organizations also patronized other religious institutions in the town. For example, while medieval guild

¹⁰¹ "...wie dass wir eine Ordnung haben machen wollen, zwischen Brüdern und geselle-Knechten, also dass sich ein ieder christlich und züchtig verhalten soll, auff dass nicht Zanck und Zwietracht zwischen ihnen entstehe und nicht ein ieder seinen freien Willen brauche, sintemahl solches alles gar hesslich einem jeden bei Brüdern und gut Verwandten zu gebrauchen anstehet." Statutes for the journeymen of the woolweavers' guild from Cisnădie (1561) in Vlaicu, p. 388.

¹⁰² These statutes are written in 1551, 1561 and 1572. For details, see Vlaicu, pp. 363, 375, 394, 428.

statutes tended to place the religious life of the artisans in the context of the parish church, it has been argued that brotherhoods of the journeymen would sometimes conduct their religious activities within the framework provided by the mendicant orders.¹⁰³ This was part of a broader movement where the religious experience of the urban laity was shaped by the friars as well as by the secular clergy. This conclusion is supported by their wish to be buried in mendicant establishments and by the generous donations they bestowed upon them in order to secure the friars' intercession.¹⁰⁴ After the Reformation, urban religious life was centered on the parish church as these powerful competitors were expelled from the towns.¹⁰⁵ This meant that in the first decades of the Reformation, members of the Saxon community had to form stronger links with the parish church and disengage from their allegiance to mendicant establishments. In this sense, based on the evidence of the statutes drafted for the journeymen of the various guilds, which insisted on attendance and active participation it can be construed that the master artisans worked together with the clergy to bring the journeymen to the parish church.

A third significant change can be detected at spiritual and devotional level. As Carmen Florea has suggested, members of the same craft had developed a specific spiritual identity and a distinct devotional profile by placing themselves under the protection of particular saints, the goldsmiths St Loy and all Saints, the weavers St Nicholas and the painters St Luke.¹⁰⁶ The guild's patron saint would be honored by founding chapels and/or altars in his/her honour, by endowing these foundations and by commissioning liturgies and especially remembrance services to be held in these places.¹⁰⁷ The pious behavior of the artisans included ritual actions, such as lighting the candles on the altar – a duty that was not to be neglected

¹⁰³ Carmen Florea, 'The Third Path: Charity and Devotion in Late Medieval Transylvanian Towns' in Maria Crăciun, Elaine Fulton (eds.), *Communities of Devotion. Religious Orders and Society in East Central Europe, 1450-1800* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 91-120, especially pp. 106-112.

¹⁰⁴ For examples, see Mária Lupescu Makó, "'Item lego...': Gifts for the Soul in Late Medieval Transylvania', *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 7 (2001): 161-186, especially pp. 166, 170, 173, 178, 180-184. For the diverse spiritual offer of the mendicant orders, see Gabriella Erdélyi, 'Conflict and Cooperation. The Reform of Religious Orders in Early Sixteenth-Century Hungary' in Crăciun, Fulton (eds.), *Communities of Devotion*, pp. 121-152.

¹⁰⁵ The diet of Turda 1566 expelled all Catholic clergy as being idolaters. *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. I-XXI (Budapest: 1875-1898), here vol. II, p. 302.

¹⁰⁶ Carmen Florea, 'Despre tensiunea unei solidarități în evul mediu târziu: exemplul unor orașe transilvănene' in Grancea (ed.), *Reprezentări ale morții*, pp. 51-69, especially pp. 61-62.

¹⁰⁷ Vlaicu, pp. 220, 238, 269. *Quellen*, IX, pp. 101, 137.

or delegated – and taking part in processions, especially for the major feasts such as *Corpus Christi*.¹⁰⁸ Although these are more difficult to document, the devotional patterns of the Saxon community probably also included private prayers to these saints requesting their intercession. In fact, in the medieval statutes there is no provision for private prayer. The emphasis is on the intercession of the clergy who would perform the required liturgies and/or remembrance services. On the other hand, the actions prescribed for the faithful were of a votive or intercessory nature, giving and lighting candles, participating in processions and attending funerals.¹⁰⁹

A comparison between the medieval guild statutes and those drafted after the Reformation highlights the rather dramatic change in devotional patterns. First of all, as invocation of saints as intercessors had been forbidden by the clergy it is only natural that the only sacred figure mentioned in the guild statutes is Jesus. In this sense, the lacunae in the text are as relevant as the words, as guild members were no longer required to look after the altars or, for that matter contribute to build them. The example of the weavers' guild suggests that, after the Reformation, members of the middling group of urban Saxon society were more concerned with individual conduct, with piety expressed by appropriate behavior. Pious actions with intercessory purpose, such as the lighting of candles or attending processions, which had dominated medieval devotional patterns were eliminated by stealth as they ceased to be mentioned in the guild statutes. These absences highlight yet another area where guild statutes fail to reflect the concerns of the clergy. The one element that coincides is the christocentric focus of piety expressed through gesture (standing at the mention of Christ's name) and participation in collective forms of worship such as congregational prayer and singing.

By juxtaposing the priorities highlighted by the development in time of the guilds' attitude to worship with those emphasized by the comparison between guild statutes and the programme outlined by the clergy one comes to the conclusion that master artisans adapted the suggestions of the clergy concerning right belief and proper conduct to their own agenda. Their interest in religious instruction is only suggested by provisions concerning Catechism classes. They did however insist on church attendance and active participation in the service by means of congregational singing and communal prayer. They also encouraged the

¹⁰⁸ Vlaicu, pp. 70, 220. *Quellen*, IX, pp. 27, 61, 99, 141, 144, 189-190.

¹⁰⁹ The statutes of the belt-makers' guild (1511), the statutes of the painters, sculptors and joiners of Sibiu (1523), the statutes of the furriers of Braşov (1528) in *Quellen*, IX, pp. 98, 140, 147.

christocentric focus of piety by hailing Jesus as the sole saviour of mankind. To them a community of faith was a community who shared „Christian love” and expunged conflicts from its midst. While this still occurred in a specific place, i.e. the parish church, it also happened at particular times, that is, during the service of worship. Thus, artisans concurred with the elites of the town and of the church that the service was a time set apart from the rest of their work day which brought the community together.

**„et ne nos inducas in tentationem;
sed libera nos a Malo”**

The most difficult question implied by this study concerns the religious experience of the congregation during the new service of worship. Was their devotional experience within the framework of the Lutheran liturgy different from that of their medieval predecessors? We do not know whether this community had internalized the new tenets of Lutheran faith and we have little or no evidence concerning their behaviour during the service, the actual acts of piety they engaged in. However, in order to answer this question one can start from the assumption that the divine service had changed in terms of structure and setting and that these transformations probably elicited a different response from the congregation and fostered specific religious experiences.

The first observation one is led to make is that the congregation experienced the service together, as a body of faithful. During medieval church services audiences were divided, as individuals or groups focused on various liturgies performed at various altars, sometimes simultaneously.¹¹⁰ This no longer occurred after the Reformation because secondary altars had been eliminated as a consequence of the prohibition of private masses. The attention of the congregation was thus focused on a single service that took place in the church at a given time. Moreover, in medieval times, the faithful could pray individually while the liturgy was performed. This also changed dramatically after the Reformation as the faithful were required to pray together, although it is not clear whether they were meant to do so silently

¹¹⁰ Ciprian Firea, 'Biserica Sf Maria din Sibiu – Liturghie medievală și arhitectură gotică (cca. 1350-1550)' *Ars Transsilvaniae* XVIII (2008): 47-73, especially p. 61 makes this case for Sibiu taking his cue from Eamon Duffy, p. 131. Paul Binski, 'The English Parish Church and Its Art in the Later Middle Ages. A Review of the Problem' *Studies in Iconography* 20 (1999): 1-25, here p. 3. Also see Pamela Graves, 'Social Space in the English Medieval Parish Church' *Economy and Society* 18 (1989): 317-322.

or aloud. Moreover, the congregation was expected to join in song, reciting the words of Psalms and Hymns in the vernacular.

Receiving communion in both kinds, the body and blood of Christ was the ultimate form of participation in the liturgy. During the administration of the sacrament, the gestures and ritual actions of the minister structured the experience of the congregation. The fact that the minister faced the altar while officiating and then turned to the congregation to recite the Words of Institution, read from the Gospels and distribute communion suggest a choreography of engagement and disengagement with the community of faithful. This could serve to draw attention to the parts of the service which required their more active participation. In this case they were expected to absorb the Words of Institution, understand the Word of God and receive the body and blood of Christ into their very being.

Thus, the attention of the congregation was focused on the same events; they acted together as a single body of faithful and participated as a community in the liturgical ritual, truly becoming a "community of devotion". By receiving communion in both kinds, by singing Psalms and Hymns and by praying in church the congregation not only participated more actively in the service but also strengthened their bonds as a community of worship. The use of the vernacular also suggests a stronger degree of participation. If people understood the words they were saying they did not risk reciting them as a meaningless incantation but rather with heartfelt involvement.

Besides engaging in worship that was different from that of a medieval congregation, the Lutheran community also experienced ecclesiastical space in a different way. As it has already been noted the church building was no longer conceived as sacred space in the same way, as its sacredness now derived solely from its function.

Despite this significant change, the altar played a key role in the gradual evolution of these interiors as the hierarchy of sacredness between the choir and the nave never disappeared. However, no longer restricted to the clergy, the choir increasingly became part of the space directly experienced by parishioners as opposed to what had been the case before the Reformation. This was true both for those participating in communion and those observing it from the benches.¹¹¹

As several scholars have suggested, each member of the congregation was allocated a specific seat depending on gender and status.¹¹² The seating hierarchy was however subject to tensions between the desire to see and to

¹¹¹ Laitinen, p. 328.

¹¹² Johansen, p. 272. Ekroll, p. 283. Kodres, pp. 342-345. Isaiasz, p. 32. Fisher Gray, p. 58.

be seen. On the one hand, the seating hierarchy was dictated by the relation to the liturgical focal points of the building.¹¹³ On the other hand, the pews for the political authorities and religious leaders were established in places where they could be seen.¹¹⁴

Through the placement of the furnishings within the church, the Lutheran liturgy created new focal points for the participants. The elimination of secondary altars made the congregation focus on the main altar located in the chancel while a second focal point was created by the placement of the pulpit. However, these foci of devotion did not make demands on the attention of the audience at the same time, as the minister performed either at the altar or in the pulpit. While the attention of the faithful in a medieval church would be focused on the altar in the chancel and yet divided between the services carried out simultaneously in front of secondary altars or in the chapels of the building, Lutheran congregations focused successively on the altar and on the pulpit at different moments during the service. This meant that through their senses they participated alternatively in different ritual performances.

Finally, the experience of the service involved changes in the attitudes and gestures of the congregation. As it has already been suggested the congregation had to sit quietly and listen to the sermon. As restlessness remained a central element of church life, building benches was an important tool in bringing order to a poorly behaved congregation. Thus, the introduction of seating also meant increased disciplining.¹¹⁵ Congregations thus sat to listen to the service, stood to show reverence when the name of Jesus was mentioned and approached the altar to receive communion, marking the progress of the service by the movements of their bodies.

Recent literature has persuasively demonstrated that the medieval liturgy was a deeply sensual experience. Spectators saw the well-lit elevated host, heard the bells and the rhythm of the Latin words uttered by the priest, smelled the incense and tasted the host.¹¹⁶ It has also been suggested that after the Reformation, the experience of the service was predominantly aural.¹¹⁷ However, existing evidence leads one to conclude that the transition from a predominantly visual to a predominantly aural experience

¹¹³ This has been noted by several scholars. For example, see Kodres, p. 342.

¹¹⁴ Fisher Gray, p. 58.

¹¹⁵ Laitinen, pp. 329-330.

¹¹⁶ Bob Scribner, 'Popular Piety and Modes of Visual Perception in Late Medieval and Reformation Germany' in *The Journal of Religious History*, 15/4 (1989): 448-469. Bob Scribner, 'Cosmic Order and Daily Life. Sacred and Secular in Pre-industrial German Society' in Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements*, pp. 1-16.

¹¹⁷ Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion*, p. 40.

was not as straightforward as some scholars would have us believe. In fact, while the Catholic *Mas* was a „multi-media“ performance, experienced by the faithful through all their senses, sight, smell, hearing and taste, the Lutheran service retained a degree of sensorial complexity. While the ears of the audience were engaged by the sermons and songs, their eyes were busy taking in the ritual, the decorations, the movements of the minister and his gestures. Even their tastebuds were stimulated as they partook of the body of Christ while receiving the two species of the sacrament. Thus, the experience of worship was lived by the members of the congregation, registered by their very bodies and difference was heard, seen, smelled, felt and tasted.

Finally, as a community is made up of several individuals one needs to consider the Lutheran divine service from the perspective of the people who experienced it. If one were to imagine a day in the life of an artisan one would notice that demands on his time were rather strenuous. On the one hand, the master of the workshop required artisans to work a very long day. The norm seemed to be starting work at 5 a.m and finishing at 6.00 p.m., although certain artisans started earlier (4.00 a.m.) and finished later (8.00 p.m.) at least in winter.¹¹⁸ Craftsmen were also expected to deal with guild business and attend guild and brotherhood meetings. They also had to fulfill various civic duties which were monitored by both the magistracy and the neighbourhoods.¹¹⁹ On the other hand, according to the minister, artisans had to attend the morning and evening services on a daily basis and the main service on Sundays and feast days. They were particularly concerned that artisans would respect the Sabbath and not dedicate any time to practical activities during the service.

Thus, the master of the workshop wished the employee to give his undivided attention to his work, while the clergy wanted the ordinary person to improve his religious knowledge by listening to the sermon and taking part in Catechism lessons. He was also expected to pray, even during his workday as this was pleasing to God.

The clergy also tried to control the life of the congregations outside church. Imposing high moral standards they wanted artisans, particularly journeymen and apprentices to visit taverns only after the evening service and stay only until the imposed closing time, marked by the tolling of the bells. Worried that a journeyman who stayed out late, drinking wine and enjoying the company of “loose women” would be unable to rise early

¹¹⁸ 1561 the pewter smiths, 1570 the builders, 1572 the zimmerleute. *Quellen*, IX, pp. 268, 302, 325.

¹¹⁹ Pakucs, ‘Neighbours and Neighbourhoods’, pp.57-60.

enough and do his work properly, the master artisans devised their own regulations meant to curtail the enjoyment of life during hours of leisure.

Thus, the ordinary artisan would start his day praying and singing in church and listening to the sermon. This was followed by a hard day of work which ended in the evening with prayer, singing, listening to readings from the Bible and a Catechism lesson. Reading between the lines of the many regulations set out for the artisans, it seems fairly clear that this life of drudgery and austerity was a model to aspire to rather than an everyday reality.

If one were to answer the questions set out at the beginning of this study one would have to conclude that within the context of the devine service the Saxons had developed a distinct devotional behaviour: they had become a community that worshiped together in the parish church at specific times during the day, joined in collective prayers and congregational singing, received communion in both kinds, listened to the sermons and attended other forms of religious instruction such as Catechism classes. But was this devotional behaviour linked to a specific confessional identity?

By trying to instill correct belief, the clergy emphasized confessional identity as congregations needed to be aware of belonging to the Christian community which they entered through baptism, but also of their affiliation to a specific Christian Church, by understanding and integrating the proper meaning of the Eucharist. Thus, the required familiarity with the Creed and with the Catechism was intended to reinforce correct belief. From a more practical point of view, attending a specific service - with a distinct structure and setting - shaped a particular and, at the same time, confessional religious experience. By emphasizing active participation in the service through song and prayer and frequent reception of communion in both kinds the clergy shaped the confessional identity of the group by insisting on specific devotional conduct. Singing and praying as a group as well as receiving both species of the sacrament were important markers of Lutheran identity. While these elements distinguished Lutherans from Catholics - who did not pray comunally, did not sing congregationally and received only one of the species of the sacrament, the host, generally before Easter - they did not help set them apart from Reformed congregations. In this respect, the traditional elements of the service, such as the retention of the host, parts of the choral liturgy in Latin and specific church furnishings, such as altarpieces and organs helped Lutherans feel different from the Calvinists.

As a second purpose the study has attempted to establish the role of the laity, particularly of master artisans in the religious transformation of the community and their position as mediators between the reforming clergy and broader segments of urban society. The evidence examined here suggests that master artisans did not only take their cue from the Lutheran

clergy but also from the political authority who governed the town. On the one hand, it is difficult to ascertain from guild statutes whether artisans had integrated the fundamental tenets of Lutheranism as their concern for doctrine was minimal. On the other hand, their concern for pious behaviour was strong and they also emphasized church attendance and active participation in the service. They also showed concern for gestures and attitudes for the right pious actions, such as reverence for Jesus which suggests that they had translated right belief into proper conduct. Thus, one may conclude that their interest in religious disciplining was stronger than their desire to foster religious instruction. However, they integrated more readily a Protestant ethos which had filtered down to them from the secular rather than the ecclesiastical elites. These allegedly new ideas could be easily superimposed on long-held values. For example, social consensus was dressed up as „harmony” and subordination was disguised as „Christian love”. Thus, the hierarchies of the artisans’ little world continued to be upheld as religious values.

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Seventeenth Century Miracles of St. John the New And their Impact on his Cult in Early-Modern Moldavia

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Abstract: Before Peter Mohyla's precious testimony concerning the three recently performed miracles of St. John the New, extant internal sources do not contain any reference to the miraculous activity of his relics deposited at Suceava during the first two centuries after the cult was adopted in Moldavia. The silence of the sources has fostered skepticism in the existing scholarly literature concerning the manifestation of the miraculous powers of the relics in question and it is generally believed that, before the first decades of the seventeenth century St. John the New had remained a „deus otiosus“. By inventorying and evaluating all direct and indirect evidence concerning the thaumaturgic virtues of St. John the New, the present study reaches different conclusions in this respect. Although disparate and laconic, the few preserved clues suggest that the relics of the martyr venerated at Suceava were perceived as miracle-working also during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In the absence of more specific descriptions, it can be surmised that these were mostly miraculous healings performed near the saint's shrine, which generated local forms of pilgrimage enhancing, at the same time, the reputation of St. John the New as a thaumaturg in other territories, sometimes as far as Moscow.

Obviously, the public veneration of the relics connected to their miraculous virtues increased at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the following, when the more systematic attempts to record these miracles in writing were also made, culminating in Peter Mohyla's manuscript. Discussing the three narratives that have St. John the New as a protagonist in the context of the more general goals of the manuscript and the religious climate in which this text was written, but also in relation to the internal development of the cult, the second part of the study focuses on the analysis of the early modern miracles of the saint and on their impact on popular devotion. A consequence rather than a cause of the revitalization of the cult at this time, in the version recorded by Peter Mohyla, these miracles reflect the views of the ecclesiastical elite concerning the veneration due to the relics at Suceava and the devotional patterns recommended. Against the background of increased interest in miracles at this particular time, the distinct character of these divine interventions, especially when compared with previous ones outlines not so much the profile of a thaumaturg saint as that of an advocate of right belief and defender of Orthodoxy in the context of confessional polemics but also an efficient protector of the community under his patronage.

Key words: St. John the New from Suceava, Peter Mohyla, the cult of saints, miracles, popular veneration of saints.

Rezumat: Miracolele din sec. al XVIII-lea ale Sf. Ioan cel Nou și impactul lor asupra cultului acestui sfânt în Moldova pre-modernă. Anterior prețioasei mărturii a lui Petru Movilă, despre trei dintre minunile recente săvârșite de Sfântul Ioan cel Nou, izvoarele interne păstrate nu conțin nicio referire la activitatea miraculoasă a moaștelor sale de la Suceava, pentru primele două secole de la adoptarea cultului în Moldova. Această tăcere a surselor a condus la un anumit scepticism în literatura de specialitate privind manifestarea puterilor miraculoase ale moaștelor în discuție, crezându-se chiar că înainte de primele decenii ale secolului al XVII-lea Sf. Ioan a rămas mai degrabă un "deus otiosus". Prin repertorierea și evaluarea tuturor mărturiilor directe sau indirecte referitoare la virtuțile taumatrice ale Sf. Ioan cel Nou, studiul de față ajunge la concluzii diferite în acest sens. Deși disparate și foarte laconice, cele câteva indicii păstrate sugerează că moaștele martirului venerat la Suceava erau percepute ca făcătoare de minuni și în secolele XV-XVI. În lipsa unor descrieri mai specifice, se poate presupune că era vorba predominant despre tămăduiri miraculoase la racla sfântului, care atrăgeau forme locale de pelerinaj, determinând totodată răspândirea faimei de taumatric a Sf. Ioan și în spații mai îndepărate, chiar până la Moscova.

În mod evident însă, venerarea publică a moaștelor în legătură cu virtuțile lor miraculoase s-a accentuat la sfârșitul secolului al XVI-lea și începutul celui următor, de când datează și primele încercări mai sistematice de a consemna în scris aceste minuni, culminând cu lucrarea manuscrisă a lui Petru Movilă. Raportând cele trei narațiuni ce îl au ca protagonist pe Ioan cel Nou la scopurile generale ale întregii scrieri și la climatul religios în care a fost redactată, dar și în relație cu evoluția internă a cultului, a doua parte a studiului de față se concentrează pe analiza minunilor pre-moderne ale sfântului și a impactului lor asupra devoțiunii populare dedicate acestuia. Consecință și nu cauză a revalorizării cultului în epocă, în versiunea consemnată de către Petru Movilă, ele reflectă proiecția elitei ecleziastice asupra venerării moaștelor de la Suceava și a modelelor devoționale recomandate în acest sens. Pe fundalul interesului crescut pentru miraculos specific epocii, caracterul diferit al acestor intervenții divine comparativ cu perioada precedentă, conturează nu atât profilul unui sfânt taumatric, cât a unui revelator al dreptei credințe și apărător al Ortodoxiei în contextul polemilor confesionale ale timpului, dar și protector eficient al întregii comunități aflate sub patronajul său.

Cuvinte cheie: Sf Ioan cel Nou de la Suceava, Petru Movilă, cultul sfinților, miracole, venerarea populară a sfinților

*[...] with fear and joy, everyone praised the Lord and worshiped the holy martyr for exposing and awfully punishing the one who had mocked and denigrated the holy Orthodox faith, in the name of which St. John had suffered and received the heavenly wreath for the glory of God [...]*¹

¹ Petru Movilă, *Povestiri despre minuni și întâmplări cu tâlc, petrecute în Biserica Ortodoxă (din sudul Rusiei, Moldo-Vlahă și Grecească)* [Accounts about Miracles and Meaningful

On the eve of the seventeenth century, after two hundred years of apparent lethargy, the relics of St. John the New, enshrined for public worship in the metropolitan church from Suceava, suddenly recommenced performing miracles. At least this is what the available source material seems to suggest and what the scarce existing literature on the subject directly or indirectly asserts.² Since their acquisition and transfer to Moldavia, in 1415, at the initiative of prince Alexander the Good (1430-1432),³ St. John's relics had been deposited in the most representative church of the Moldavian capital, where they enjoyed a gradually growing veneration for the next two centuries.⁴ All the more so, since the uncorrupted body of this neo-martyr, brought from a pagan land, was the first and most prestigious holy relic purchased by the local Orthodox authorities throughout this period, as well as the only one solemnly welcomed to Suceava and subsequently installed

Stories which Happened in the Orthodox Church (Southern Russian, Moldo-Walachian and Greek)], in Idem, *Împăcarea Bisericii Ortodoxe* [The Reconciliation of the Orthodox Church], translated by Ștefan Lupan and edited by Vlad Chiriac, (Iași: Polirom, 2002), p. 53. Under this fictitious title, the volume includes the most recent edition and translation into Romanian of Peter Mohyla's manuscript notes on miracles, a work on religious hymns, a meditation on monastic life and his testament.

² Matei Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii și vise premonitории în trecutul românesc* [Miracles, Visions and Premonitory Dreams from the Romanian Past], (București: Sigma, 2003), p. 38; Violeta Barbu, *Purgatoriul misionarilor. Contrareforma în Țările Române în secolul al XVII-lea* [The Purgatory of the Missionaries. The Counter-Reformation in the Romanian Principalities during the Seventeenth Century], (București: Editura Academiei Române, 2008), p. 612; Gabriel Gherasim, *Visul „Patriarhului”. Gheorghe III Movilă printre contemporanii* [The Dream of the “Patriarch”. Gheorghe Mohyla the IIIrd among his Contemporaries], (București: s. n., 2006), pp. 56-57.

³ For the date and circumstances of the event, see Petre Șt. Năsturel, “Une prétendue oeuvre de Grégoire Tsamblak: «Le martyre de saint Jean le Nouveau»”, in *Actes du premier Congrès International des Études Balkaniques et Sud-Est Européennes*, VII, Sofia, 1971, pp. 345-351; Matei Cazacu, “Saint Jean le Nouveau, son martyre, ses reliques et leur translation à Suceava”, in Petre Guran, Bernard Flusin (eds.), *L'Empereur hagiographe. Culte des saints et monarchie byzantine et post-byzantine*, (București: New Europe College, 2001), pp. 137-158 and Ștefan S. Gorovei, “Mucenicia Sfântului Ioan cel Nou. Noi puncte de vedere” [The Martyrdom of St. John the New. New Considerations], in Ionel Căndea, Paul Cernovodeanu, Gheorghe Lazăr (eds.), *Închinare lui Petre Șt. Năsturel la 80 ani*, (Brăila: Editura Istros a Muzeului Brăilei, 2003), pp. 555-572.

⁴ For a succinct overview of the major phases in the evolution of St. John's cult during the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Elena Firea, “Despre un episod uitat din istoria moaștelor Sf. Ioan cel Nou de la Suceava și implicațiile lui” [About a Forgotten Episode in the History of St. John the New's Relics from Suceava and its Implications], in Ovidiu Cristea, Petronel Zahariuc and Gheorghe Lazăr (eds.), *Aut viam inveniam aut faciam. In honorem Ștefan Andreescu*, (Iași: Editura Universității „Al. I. Cuza”, 2012), pp. 368-372.

for public worship in the precincts of the metropolitan institution. According to the hagiographical text, during the ceremonial *adventus*, the prince himself prostrated himself before the relics and publicly venerated them, while he proclaimed St. John as divine protector of the country⁵ – a role that he maintained until the second half of the seventeenth century.⁶

The official reception of the holy relics and the ensuing writing, in the local clerical milieu, of the *Passio*⁷ marked the starting point for the local cult dedicated to St. John the New – the one eventually responsible for his inclusion in the Orthodox pantheon of saints.⁸ A quick look at its subsequent evolution suggests the deliberate establishment of an official cult, promoted top-down, through the combined efforts of the local political and ecclesiastical hierarchy. Among the common indicators of a cult, the ensuing circulation of the hagiographical text in monastic manuscripts,⁹ the creation of a liturgical office in the saint's honor,¹⁰ the commissioning of

⁵ *Pătimirea sfântului și slăvitului mucenic Ioan cel Nou, care a fost chinuit la Cetatea Albă, scrisă de Grigore călugărul și prezbiterul din marea biserică a Moldovlahiei* [The Passion of the Holy and Venerated Martyr John the New, who was Tortured at Cetatea Albă, Written by Gregory, Monk and Presbyter of the Great Church of Moldovlahia], edited by Bishop Melchisedec Ștefănescu, *Revista pentru Istorie, Arheologie și Filologie*, II, Bucharest, 1884, vol. III, pp. 165-174, here p. 174.

⁶ St. John the New eventually lost this role in favor of St. Parasceve of Turnovo, after her prestigious relics were purchased from Constantinople and translated, in 1641, to the new capital of Iași; see Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii*, p. 43. For the political significance of St. Parasceve's cult in medieval Moldavia, see Dan Ioan Mureșan, "Autour de l'élément politique du culte de sainte Parascève la Jeune en Moldavie", in vol. *L'Empereur hagiographe*, pp. 249-280 and more recently Ivan Biliarsky, "The Cult of Saint Petka and the Constantinopolitan Marial Cult", in Ivan Biliarsky, Radu G. Păun (eds.), *Le cultes des saints souverains et des saints guerriers et l'idéologie du pouvoir en Europe Centrale et Orientale* (București: New Europe College, 2007), pp. 81-104.

⁷ For a critical and comprehensive overview of the historiographic debate concerning the paternity of the hagiographical text, see Gorovei, *Mucenicia*, pp. 555-572.

⁸ Albeit venerated in Moldavia since the fifteenth century, St. John the New was officially canonized by the Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church only in the year 1950.

⁹ The earliest copy of St. John's *Passio* was preserved in a *Sbornik* copied, in 1439, by the famous calligrapher Gavril Uric, at Neamț monastery; Petre P. Panaitescu, *Manuscrisele slave din Biblioteca Academiei R.P.R.* [The Slavonic Manuscripts from the Academy Library in Bucharest], (București: Editura Academiei, 1959), ms. 146, pp. 245-247. Later versions included in several monastic manuscripts attest the circulation of the hagiographical text in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries.

¹⁰ See Emil Turdeanu, "Manuscrisele slave din timpul lui Ștefan cel Mare" [Slavonic Manuscripts from the Time of Stephan the Great] in Idem, *Oameni și cărți de altădată*, Ștefan S. Gorovei, Maria Magdalena Szekély (eds.), (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1997), pp. 40-41. Although the oldest preserved local version of a liturgical office dedicated to St. John the New dates from 1534, there are strong reasons to believe that

decorated reliquaries to host and display the relics,¹¹ the church dedications in St. John's name,¹² as well as the inclusion of his iconic representations and/or of elaborate narrative cycles illustrating his martyrdom in monumental painting¹³ point to the progressive strengthening of his veneration in the devotional practices of the Moldavians, throughout the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries. Moreover, in the absence of any reliable evidence regarding his worship in Crimea, prior to the emblematical moment from 1415,¹⁴ one can fairly argue that the hagiographical and

such a text was written much earlier, probably contemporaneous with the hagiographical text; see A.A. Turilov, at www.praven.ru/text/471404.html, under the voice *St. John the New*; Radu Pava, "Cartea de cântece a lui Eustatie de la Putna" [The Song Book of Eustatie from Putna], *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, 5 (1962): 335-337, especially pp. 342-345.

¹¹ Two decorated reliquaries have been fragmentarily preserved, namely the silver one (still visible nowadays in St. George church from Suceava) and, respectively, two panels depicting St. John's martyrdom, from a painted wooden reliquary. Although art historians do not agree in dating the two artifacts, the most influential opinions attribute both pieces to the fifteenth century; see Teodora Voinescu, "Cea mai veche operă de argintărie medievală din Moldova" [The Earliest Medieval Silver Work from Moldavia], *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei. Seria Artă Plastică* 11/2 (1964): 265-289; Virgil Drăghiceanu, "O icoană din sicriul sfântului Ion cel Nou din Suceava" [An Icon from the Bier of St. John the New from Suceava], *Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice*, 8/3 (1916): 21-24; Corina Nicolescu, "Un nou fragment din racla pictată a Sf. Ioan cel Nou de la Suceava" [A New Fragment from the Painted Reliquary of St. John the New from Suceava], *Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei*, 44 / 7-8 (1970): 377-390 and, more recently, Constanța Costea, "Despre reprezentările Sf. Ioan cel Nou în arta medievală" [On St. John the New's Representations in Medieval Art], *Revista Monumentelor Istorice*, 67 / 1-2 (1998): 9-24.

¹² Namely, the pareklesion from Bistrița monastery (1498), the church founded by Luca Arbore at Șipote (1507) and the small porch added by metropolitan Theophanes to Mirăuți church (1578-1579).

¹³ Iconic full-length portraits of St. John the New or extensive narrative cycles illustrating his martyrdom have been included in the fresco decoration of several Moldavian churches, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: Bistrița (end of the fifteenth century), Arbore (beginning of the sixteenth century), Dobrovăț (1529), St. George church from Suceava, Humor (1535), Moldovița (1537), St. Demetrius church from Suceava (1536-1538), Voroneț (1547), the episcopal church from Roman (1552-1561), Sucevița (1596). For a selective view on the subject, see Sorin Ulea, "Originea și semnificația ideologică a picturii exterioare moldovenești (I)" [The Origin and Ideological Significance of Moldavian Exterior Paintings], *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei. Seria Artă Plastică*, 1(1963): 57-94, especially pp. 84-87; Costea, *Despre reprezentările Sf. Ioan cel Nou*, passim; Elka Bakalova, "Tzambalakovoto Machenie na sveti Ioan Novi v rumanskata monumentalna zhivopis ot XVI-XVII vek" [Tambalak's Passio of St. John the New in Monumental Romanian Paintings of the 16th-17th Centuries], *Paleobulgarica*, 15 / 4 (1991): 56-77.

¹⁴ Although intriguing, the two scattered pieces of information mentioned by Matei Cazacu in relation to the veneration of an unspecified St. John in Crimea are far from

liturgical construction of St. John's cult was a Moldavian development, centered on the presence of his mortal remains / *moschi*¹⁵ at Suceava.

Under such circumstances, it is rather intriguing that no record of any miracles performed by the most prominent Moldavia 'local' saint or his relics has survived, before the first decades of the seventeenth century.¹⁶ Apart from a brief reference in the hagiographical text, which only conventionally mentions healings taking place at St. John's shrine,¹⁷ no written or visual sources register miraculous interventions performed by the holy martyr in his adoptive country, for the first two centuries of his veneration there. This unfortunate state of the preserved documentary material has led to the assumption that St. John the New manifested himself as a genuine 'deus otiosus' before the eve of the seventeenth century,¹⁸ when his thaumaturgical and miraculous powers were suddenly activated in the context of the revitalization of his cult, through the efforts of the influent Mohyla family.¹⁹ A special role in this respect was assigned to archimandrite Peter Mohyla, who disseminated several of St. John's recent miracles through his notes on miracle-working Orthodox saints²⁰ - the main narrative source for the miraculous activity performed by St. John the New in Moldavia before the middle of the seventeenth century. Dating roughly

enough to prove the existence of a cult dedicated to St. John the New there, prior to the relics' transfer to Moldavia; see Cazacu, *Saint Jean le Nouveau*, pp. 138-139 and note 6 on page 139.

¹⁵ For a discussion of terminological aspects pertaining to the mortal remains of the saints in the Orthodox tradition, Elka Bakalova, "Relics and the roots of the cult of saints", in Aleksey M. Lidov (ed.), *Eastern Christian Relics* (Moscow: Progress-Tradition, 2003), pp. 19-39 (in Russian, with an English abstract at pp. 38-39).

¹⁶ Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii*, p. 38. However, one should take into consideration the high probability that the old metropolitan archives may have contained additional information in this respect, unfortunately lost now.

¹⁷ *Pătimirea*, p. 174.

¹⁸ Gherasim, *Visul „Patriarhului”*, pp. 56-57.

¹⁹ For the Mohylas' special devotion towards St. John the New, see Maria Magdalena Székely, "Manifeste de putere la Ieremia Movilă" [Statements of Power of Prince Jeremia Mohyla], in *Movilești. Istorie și spiritualitate românească*, vol. II (Sucevița Monastery: 2006), pp. 123-136, especially pp. 126-133; Firea, *Despre un episod uitat*, passim.

²⁰ First signaled in Romanian historiography in 1883, by Ghenadie Enăceanu, Petru Mohyla's manuscript notes were apparently a preliminary draft for a more comprehensive book he was preparing on miracle-working Orthodox saints; see Petre P. Panăitescu, "Petru Movilă și românii" [Peter Mohyla and the Romanians], in Idem, *Petru Movilă. Studii*, edited by Ștefan S. Gorovei and Maria Magdalena Székely, (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1996), pp. 76-96, here p. 78; Ștefan S. Gorovei, "Un memorialist uitat: Petru Movilă" [A Forgotten Memoirs Writer: Peter Mohyla], in *Cronica*, XVIII, nr. 17 (870), 29th of April 1983, p. 7. For their most recent Romanian edition, see *supra* note 1.

from the late 1620s, the accounts in point relate at length two punitive interventions against denigrators of St. John's relics, as well as a collective rescue miracle for the benefit of the whole town of Suceava,²¹ which enhanced St. John's reputation as miracle-worker and protector of the city, thus giving a remarkable impetus to the evolution of his cult.²² With the princely institution and the ecclesiastical authorities as its main promoters,²³ an increased interest for St. John the New's cult is indeed quite evident in the third decade of the seventeenth century, mostly among the elite of Moldavian society: new religious foundations were dedicated to the saint,²⁴ icons of him were commissioned, at princely initiative, as far as Moscow,²⁵ the reliquary containing his relics was further adorned,²⁶ while the church hosting them in Suceava was richly endowed in his name.²⁷

Taking further the suggestion of Ștefan S. Gorovei that such an unprecedented devotional revival must have been influenced by the saint's

²¹ See Movilă, *Povestiri despre minuni*, pp. 49-54.

²² Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii*, pp. 39-42; Barbu, *Purgatoriul misionarilor*, pp. 612-613; Gorovei, *Mucenicia*, pp. 568-569.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 568.

²⁴ Sometimes between 1626 and 1629 a small sacristy dedicated to St. John the New was build by archbishop Anastasie Crimca in the precincts of the metropolitan church from Suceava; roughly in the same period was founded Bârnova monastery, dedicated to both St. George and St. John the New, while a new church dedicated only to St. John was founded by the boyar Nicorița in the city of Iași; see *Ibidem*, pp. 568-569. In 1631, Peter Mohyla himself dedicated to St. John the New the newly restored monastery from Golosvienski (Ukraine); see Petre P. Panaitescu, "Influența operei lui Petru Movilă, arhiepiscop al Kievului, în Principatele Române" [The Influence of Peter Mohyla's Work, Archbishop of Kiev, in the Romanian Principalities], in *Idem*, *Petru Movilă*, pp. 9-75, here p. 15; Antonie Plămădeală, "Petru Movilă. Câteva descoperiri recente care îi întregesc biografia, dar i-o și încurcă!" [Peter Mohyla. Several Recent Findings which Complete, but also Complicate, his Biography!], in *Mitropolia Ardealului*, XXXII/6 (1987), p. 50.

²⁵ In 1628, prince Miron Barnovschi commissioned two icons to be painted by Muscovite artists, one of which was supposed to be an historiated icon of St. George and St. John the New; see Silviu Dragomir, "Contribuții privitoare la relațiile Bisericii românești cu Rusia în veacul XVII" [Contributions Regarding the Relations of the Romanian Church with Russia in the Seventeenth Century], *Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice*, Seria II, tom XXXIV, București (1912): 1-179, here pp. 20-23 and mostly 81-88.

²⁶ An icon of the saint, painted on the internal side of the reliquary's cover, was dressed in silver at prince Miron Barnovschi's initiative, in 1627; see Voinescu, *Cea mai veche operă*, p. 268 (with a reproduction of the image at page 266).

²⁷ Among the donations to the metropolitan church from Suceava, one that specifically indicates St. John the New as the main beneficiary of the donation, in *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, A. Moldova, vol. XIX (1626-1628), Haralambie Chirca (ed.), (București: Editura Academiei Române, 1969), no. 178, pp. 231-232.

recent miracles,²⁸ but, at the same time, challenging the assumption that such interventions were exclusively an early modern development, the present study aims to scrutinize all the available evidence concerning the miraculous activity performed by John the New after the transfer of his relics to Moldavia, in order to assess whether he was indeed perceived as a miracle-worker only as late as the first decades of the seventeenth century. A preliminary phase of the inquiry will therefore try to establish if the early modern reactivation of St. John's miraculous powers was indeed a new phase in the development of his cult or merely the consequence of a conspicuous contemporary interest for recording and disseminating miracles in the epoch.

By examining them in relation to the evolution of his cult and to other religious developments in the neighboring Orthodox territories, the second part of the present endeavor will focus on an in-depth analysis of St. John's early modern miracles, in order to determine whether and to what extent they impacted on his public veneration. Given their official ecclesiastical recognition, what adjustments to the model of sanctity previously embodied by John the New did these miraculous accounts promote and what devotional patterns did they recommend to the general public of believers? Finally, did they reflect an increased popularity of the saint at the level of lay religiosity or were they solely the expression of a clerical projection on his cult in the epoch?

Alas, as it often happens in these parts of the world, such research purposes may seem rather ambitious when confronted with the available documentary material. Or, more precisely, with the apparent complete lack of it. Or, more precisely, with its apparent absence. As already mentioned, the three miraculous accounts related by Peter Mohyla remain the only preserved descriptions of specific miracles performed by St. John the New during the first two centuries after the *translatio* of his relics to Moldavia. Unlike the laconic formulation from St. John's hagiographical text,²⁹ the Kievan archimandrite narrates at length three of the most recent and, presumably, most outstanding miracles performed by the relics of St. John the New in Suceava. The singular source which preserved and transmitted their memory - Mohyla's memorialistic notes on miracle-working Orthodox saints - remained unpublished until the second half of the nineteenth century and even after its introduction to the Romanian public, in 1883,³⁰ it

²⁸ Gorovei, *Mucenicia*, pp. 568-569.

²⁹ See *infra*, footnote 58.

³⁰ The earliest translation of the passages referring to Romanian realities (and, implicitly, to St. John the New) from Peter Mohyla's notes on miracle-working saints, belonged to Ghenadie Enăceanu and was included in his extensive monographic study dedicated to

hardly roused any notable interest among scholars.³¹ Never investigated in its entirety or integrated into the specific context of its creation, this source was only fragmentarily considered in Romanian scholarly literature, mostly in order to extract information concerning Moldavian or Walachian religious life in the early seventeenth century.³² Although the great potential of such a source for the investigation of “la petite histoire” in the two Romanian Principalities in the early-modern period was expressly pointed out several decades ago,³³ the historiographical responses in this direction remained rather modest.³⁴

Even if it focuses only on a limited case-study, the present essay aims to reexamine Mohyla’s writings from a new perspective, not only as the main reference source for local miracles performed by St. John the New in Suceava, but also as a privileged testimony of the ecclesiastical projection on the public veneration dedicated to him, in the first decades of the seventeenth century. From a methodological point of view, the three narratives in question will be examined both through a comparative analysis, meant to highlight the evolution and devotional particularities of St. John’s cult in the epoch, as well as in close relation to the rest of Mohyla’s notes on miracle-working saints, to their original motivations and general goals.

* * *

Written against the background of a very difficult and challenging confessional context for the Ruthenian Orthodox Church,³⁵ while he was the

the famous archimandrite, published serially in the year 1883; see Idem, “Petru Movilă”, in *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, VII (1883), mostly pp. 734-772.

³¹ Gheorghe Bobână, “Idei și tendințe umaniste în activitatea și opera lui Petru Movilă” [Humanist Ideas and Tendencies in Petru Mohyla’s Activity and Work], in *Un veac de aur în Moldova (1643-1743). Contribuții la studiul culturii și literaturii române vechi*, (București-Chișinău: Știința-Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1996), p. 22.

³² Before the more recent and complete edition of Mohyla’s writing, republished in 2002, the fragments translated by Ghenadie Enăceanu were the only reference source for scholars interested in the cult of St. John the New; see Simeon Florea Marian, *Sântul Ioan cel Nou de la Suceava. Schiță istorică* [St. John the New from Suceava. Historical Outline], (București: Lito-Tipografia Carol Göbl, 1895), pp. 60-68; Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria Bisericii românești și a vieții religioase a românilor* [The History of the Romanian Church and of the Religious Life of the Romanians], second edition, vol. I, (București: Editura Ministeriului de Culte, 1929), p. 304; Constantin Morariu, “Citiți, citiți, ce poate credința în Dumnezeu” [Read, Read about the Power of the Faith in God], in *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, XXX (1906): 1355-1378, here mostly pp. 1370-1372; etc.

³³ Gorovei, *Un memorialist uitat*, p. 7.

³⁴ As a notable exception, one should nevertheless mention Matei Cazacu’s work on manifestations of the supernatural in the Romanian past; see Idem, *Minuni, vedenii, passim*.

³⁵ Already confronted with the Protestant and Jesuit propaganda in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the position of the Ruthenian Orthodox Church was seriously undermined, at the end of the sixteenth century and the first decades of the

superior of the famous Cave Monastery (Lavra Pecherskii) in Kiev, Mohyla's manuscript work has a strong polemical character, intended to defend the Orthodox devotional practices connected to the veneration of saints from both Protestant and Catholic attacks and to strengthen the position of the Orthodox Church by advertising the active miraculous powers of its saintly figures.³⁶ This fervent focus on divine interventions was characteristic both to the Counter-Reformation³⁷ and to the Russian Orthodox³⁸ religiosity of the epoch, since miracles were one of the most explicit revealers of sanctity and, at the same time, the most effective means of overcoming the skepticism of nonbelievers.³⁹ Consequently, they were very appealing to the general public and often exploited by theologians as a polemical weapon in the confrontation with other denominations.

Another distinct feature of Peter Mohyla's personal notes is that they concentrate predominantly on recent miracles performed by the multitude of

seventeenth century, as a consequence of the Union from Brest (1596); see Josef Macha, *Ecclesiastical Unification. A Theoretical Framework Together with Case Studies from the History of Latin-Byzantine Relations* (Roma: Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 1974), pp. 144-168, 202-223; Frank E. Sysyn, "The Formation of Modern Ukrainian Religious Culture: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", in Geoffrey A. Hosking (ed.), *Church, Nation and State in Russia and Ukraine* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), pp. 1-22. For the more general context which led to this situation, see Oscar Halecki, "From Florence to Brest", in *Sacrum Poloniae Millennium*, t. V, (Rzym, 1958), especially pp. 223-231; Borys Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform. The Kyivan Metropolitanate, the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Genesis of the Union of Brest* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 77-88; 105-118; 189-255; Ambroise Jobert, *De Luther à Mohyla. La Pologne dans la crise de la chrétienté 1517-1648* (Paris: Institut d'Études Slaves, 1974) (extensively quoted in the literature, unfortunately the last book was not available to me during the elaboration of this study); Ioan I. Ică jr., "Shitul Mare din Pocuția - „veriga lipsă” sau un capitol uitat din istoria spiritualității răsăritene" [The Great Hermitage from Pokuttia - „The Missing Link” or a Forgotten Chapter from the History of Eastern Spirituality], in *Isihasm și viață monahală la Schitul Mare. Viața cuviosului Iov. Testamentul lui Teodosie. Regula Schitulețului*, (Sibiu: Deisis, 2004), pp. 5-53. For signaling and facilitating my access to most of these works, I am most grateful to Professor Ovidiu Ghitta.

³⁶ Panaitescu, *Influența operei lui Petru Movilă*, pp. 15-17; Gheorghe Bobăna, *Petru Movilă. Profilul unui destin* [Peter Mohyla. The Profile of a Destiny] (Chișinău: Editura „Știința”, 1996), pp. 42-44; Barbu, *Purgatoriul misionarilor*, pp. 603-604.

³⁷ Barbu, *Purgatoriul misionarilor*, pp. 530-531.

³⁸ Dwelling at length on the revival of miracle cults in Russian Orthodoxy, Paul Bushkovitch has entitled the period from 1550 to the first decades of the seventeenth century 'the era of miracles'; see Paul Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society in Russia. The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, (New York - Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 100-127.

³⁹ Michael E. Goodich, *Miracles and Wonders. The Development of the Concept of Miracle, 1150-1350*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), p. 119.

relics preserved in the caves of the Pecherskii Monastery – the most important Ukrainian Orthodox pilgrimage site at that moment, in the refurbishing and promotion of which he was deeply involved.⁴⁰ Although other miraculous Orthodox sites or events are referred to as well,⁴¹ by far the most numerous accounts relate divine interventions performed at Lavra Pecherskii by the holy icon of the Mother of God and/or by the multitude of relics venerated in its caves. Many of these miracles are of punitive nature, directed against Catholic or Calvinist calumniators of the holy bodies preserved there.⁴² Therefore, one can consider Mohyla's work a *pro domo* collection of miracles, destined to promote the famous Kievan monastery, but also to counter contemporary skepticism concerning the holiness and/or effectiveness of its relics. Nevertheless, it seems that the text aspired to wider geographical dissemination, since it was not written in the local Ruthenian redaction of Old Church Slavonic, but in its more widespread Medio-Bulgarian variant, used in the Romanian Principalities as well, at the time.⁴³ Moreover, the very accessible and naïve style of these notes, strongly contrasting with the rest of Mohyla's more erudite writings,⁴⁴ may indicate the author's presumable intention to address a larger audience, beyond the narrow literate circles of clerics, to the more general public of common believers.

From this perspective, the inclusion of no less than three miraculous interventions of St. John the New becomes most relevant. The first one was the most recent in relation to the moment of the writing, even though the author left blank the space in the manuscript where he should have indicated its date. It has been argued that this was intentionally done, probably due to the fact that he did not remember the exact day of the month.⁴⁵ However one cannot help but notice that the omission is rather surprising, given that the miraculous event itself seems to have been of major importance for the Moldavian Orthodox Church, since it provided a new celebration date for St. John, namely the 2nd of June.⁴⁶ Moreover,

⁴⁰ Barbu, *Purgatoriul misionarilor*, p. 603.

⁴¹ As suggested also by the title given by Peter Mohyla to his notes (see note 1), besides the future Ukrainian territory, he refers only to miraculous interventions occurred in Moldavia and in the Greek world.

⁴² Only in one case (the narration of the contemporary martyrdom of a Greek monk, who died in Thessalonica, in 1628), Mohyla overtly expresses anti-Ottoman tones, by engaging the Muslims into the confessional confrontation.

⁴³ Panaitescu, *Influența operei lui Petru Movilă*, p. 16.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 16 and footnote 1 on p. 16.

⁴⁵ Gorovei, *Mucenicia*, p. 568.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 567-570. Before this additional commemoration, St. John's feast was a mobile one depending on the Pascal cycle, namely the first Thursday after the Pentecost. For the rather complicated issue of St. John the New's feast days, see also Florea Marian,

Mohyla's source - the oral testimony of the future Moldavian metropolitan Varlaam, who personally told the story during his visit to Kiev, in August 1629⁴⁷ - should have been well informed and more than trustworthy. According to Varlaam, the miraculous occurrence took place in the aftermath of the military confrontation between the Polish and the Ottoman troops at Hotin, in 1621, when, on their way back, the Zaporozhian Cossacks made a detour to Suceava with the intention to plunder the city. As they were approaching the Moldavian capital, the local authorities and its inhabitants secured their lives and goods by taking refuge in the upper fortified citadel. When metropolitan Anastasie Crimca and his priests wanted to transfer the relics of St. John the New to the same place, in order to protect them, the holy body suddenly became very weighty, refusing to be taken away from its shrine. Recognizing in this a divine sign, the people of Suceava gave up defense preparations and, instead started fasting and praying to St John for deliverance. The martyr answered their supplications and caused a small brook nearby to flood abundantly just when the attackers were about to cross it, which terribly frightened and finally chased them away. Grateful that the whole city was thus saved through the intercession of their saint, the metropolitan together with the ecclesiastical hierarchy decided to liturgically commemorate the miraculous event and disposed the subsequent celebration of St. John the New on that particular day, when his relics were to be carried in procession around the metropolitan church.⁴⁸

This was not only the most recent miracle of St. John selected by Peter Mohyla for his notes, but it was obviously the most significant one, confirming the martyr's role as divine protector of Suceava.⁴⁹ While the *topos* of the flooding waters for a good purpose was quite frequent in Byzantine hagiography,⁵⁰ the singularity of this episode compared to the

Sântul Ioan cel Nou, pp. 65-68; Ioan Zugrav, "Data serbării Sf. Ioan cel Nou de la Suceava" [The Commemoration Date of St. John the New from Suceava], in *Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei*, XXXIV / 9-10 (1958): 763-769.

⁴⁷ Movilă, *Povestiri despre minuni*, p. 49. For Varlaam's visit to Kiev, in 1629, see also Dragomir, *Contribuții*, pp. 20-21, 81-87.

⁴⁸ For the whole text of the miraculous account, see Movilă, *Povestiri despre minuni*, pp. 49-50.

⁴⁹ Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii*, p. 42; Barbu, *Purgatoriul misionarilor*, p. 612.

⁵⁰ Edina Bozóky, *La politique des reliques de Constantin à Saint Louis. Protection collective et légitimation du pouvoir* (Paris: Beauchesne, 2006), p. 45. As a more or less contemporary analogy, the same *topos* was employed in a miraculous account from nearby Walachia, when the relics of St. Gregory of Decapolis refused to be transferred from Bistrița Monastery (Oltenia) to the new metropolitan church from Bucharest, in the sixth decade of the seventeenth century; see Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii*, p. 68.

rest of John's miracles resides in its collective nature, since it involves the rescue of the whole city that owned and piously venerated his relics. In contrast, the other two miraculous stories included in Mohyla's manuscript are of punitive nature, consisting in individual punishments against calumniators of the saint.

The first one has as a source the same testimony of the future metropolitan Varlaam. According to the hierarch, in the year 1620, during the traditional celebration of John the New in Suceava,⁵¹ the treasurer of the metropolitan church misappropriated some of the money left behind by pilgrims as offerings to the saint's relics. At once, he became possessed by the devil, throwing himself in front of the reliquary, screaming and frothing at the mouth in a bedeviled fit. When he was informed of the peculiar occurrence, the metropolitan immediately realized it was a divine punishment and correctly assumed that the guilty cleric had stolen either a piece of the holy body, or some of the offered money. After the wrong deed was revealed, the metropolitan successfully exorcised the contrite and repentant ecclesiarch. In his closing remark, Mohyla stresses that greed for money is a serious sin and that God allowed such a severe punishment in order to expose the evil behavior and to exemplary discourage any future attempt to steal what rightfully belongs to Him and his saints. The moralizing message was obviously addressed to clerical custodians of holy relics in general,⁵² but the story accounts for a typical miracle of power – the only one known for John the New – in which the saint usually intervenes in order to protect the material possessions of the monastery or church where his holy body rested.⁵³

Whereas the punitive intervention from 1620 was more an 'internal affair', directed against a cleric who had misbehaved in his capacity as custodian of the relics, the last miracle of the saint from Suceava narrated at length by Peter Mohyla is an exorcism of a more complex nature. This time, its source was no longer Varlaam's testimony, but Mohyla's personal family memories. Even if he was merely a child when it had happened, the author recalls an episode related to him by his own parents, who had personally witnessed it. The miraculous intervention occurred during the reign of his

⁵¹ This time, the archimandrite explicitly refers to the Thursday after Pentecost; Movilă, *Povestiri despre minuni*, p. 50.

⁵² As already mentioned, when he was writing his notes, Mohyla was the superior of the famous Pecerskii monastery, which hosted a great multitude of venerated holy bodies. Therefore, such a recommendation for the clergy in charge of the custody and display of relics was probably addressed to his own monastic community, as well.

⁵³ For typical miracles of power in early modern Russia, compared to those in medieval Western Europe, see Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, pp. 100-101.

uncle, prince Ieremia Mohyla (1595-1600; 1600-1606), when his other uncle, Gheorghe Mohyla, was at the head of the Moldavian metropolitanate.⁵⁴ The setting was once again St. John's shrine, where the prince himself together with numerous members of his court had come to venerate the holy relics, on the martyr's feast day. At a certain moment, a Catholic Polish dignitary named Uiazdowski started to ridicule the worshipers, mocking their devotional practices and expressing his distrust concerning the holiness of the relics. He immediately became possessed by the devil and horribly tormented in the sight of everyone present. As the demoniac crisis got worse after his companions took him out of the church, they begged metropolitan Gheorghe Mohyla to pray to the martyr, so that their friend would be delivered from his torture. Contrary to the prompt exorcist intervention from the other miracle account, once the hierarch found out what had caused the divine punishment, he intentionally delayed the liberating moment, so that everybody could see what happens to denigrators of the Orthodox faith and its saints. Later, as the prince himself interceded on Uiazdowski's behalf, he finally agreed to perform the exorcising ritual, but only after he had finished celebrating the liturgy. The procedure took place in close proximity to the saint's relics, where the metropolitan officiated a *tedeum* in St. John's honor and recited absolution prayers over the tormented body of the calumniator. Freed from his suffering while lying prostrated in front of the reliquary, the repentant Polish dignitary confessed his newly gained faith in St. John the New, venerated his holy body and, eventually, converted to the Orthodox faith. Moreover, after cursing potential denigrators of the saint to be similarly punished by God, he asked for forgiveness and publicly proclaimed St. John's status as true martyr of Christ and, most importantly, as miracle-worker. Finally, the new convert received the metropolitan's recommendations on how to properly venerate the saints and never to defame them again. Very careful in always indicating his sources, Peter Mohyla assures his readers that, while he was informed about it directly from his eye-witnessing parents, the miraculous event was still fresh in the collective memory of his contemporaries and, furthermore, it was also recorded "in the books of the metropolitanate from Suceava".⁵⁵ In the end, he reveals his motivation for including it into his work, namely to discourage prospective calumniators of the true Orthodox faith and its

⁵⁴ By corroborating the dates, Maria Magdalena Székely approximated that the event took place sometimes around the year 1600; Eadem, *Manifeste de putere*, p. 133.

⁵⁵ Movilă, *Povestiri despre minuni*, p. 53.

saints, by showing the divine punishment awaiting them.⁵⁶ The subsidiary intention was, of course, to illustrate that Orthodoxy was the only true faith, in favor of which divinity does not hesitate to actively intervene, even when its denigrators are of high social status.

* * *

A collective rescue miracle and two punitive ones: these are the only specific miracles performed by St. John the New at Suceava, the memory of which has survived thanks to the manuscript notes of Peter Mohyla. Roughly two hundred years after the adoption of his cult in Moldavia, they sketch the image of an active and powerful thaumaturgic saint, at the same time vindictive towards denigrators of the Orthodox faith and its holy relics, and acknowledged as such both by the ecclesiastical elite, and by the large public of believers. But before proceeding towards a more in-depth analysis of the significance and implications of these miracles on the veneration dedicated to John the New, one needs to establish first if his popularity as a miracle-working saint preceded the apparent reactivation of his miraculous powers in the first decades of the seventeenth century, or if it was rather the consequence of such recent interventions. As it has already been mentioned, with one particular exception, no memory of other miracles, or even mere allusions that they existed, survived in the internal written or visual documents during the first two centuries after the solemn installation of St John's relics in the metropolitan church, in spite of the unquestionable strengthening of the cult during this period. Only a brief, stereotypical reference from the hagiographical text, written shortly after the relics' arrival to Suceava,⁵⁷ succinctly refers to ensuing miraculous cures taking place at the saint's shrine: „Concerning the ensuing healing of all kinds of suffering people, I let their witnesses speak about.”⁵⁸ Meant to proclaim the holiness of the relics and, at the same time, to symbolically legitimize their transfer to the new destination, such mentions of anonymous individual

⁵⁶ For the narration of the whole episode, see *Ibidem*, pp. 51-54.

⁵⁷ It is generally considered that the *Passio* of St. John the New was written in the Moldavian metropolitan milieu, roughly two decades after the arrival of his relics to Suceava; see Năsturel, *Une prétendue oeuvre de Grégoire Tsamblak*, p. 349; Alexandru V. Diță, “În legătură cu paternitatea primei scrieri în proză a literaturii române” [Regarding the Paternity of the Earliest Writing in Prose in Romanian Literature], in *Luceașfârul*, XXVI, nr. 44 (1122), 5th of November 1983, p. 6; Constantin Cojocaru, “Grigorie monahul și prezviterul Marii Biserici a Moldovlahiei” [Gregory, the Monk and Presbyter of The Great Church of Moldovlachia], in *Idem, Pași prin secole de istorie bisericească*, (Iași: Editura Golia, 2005), pp. 66-83, here pp. 80-81.

⁵⁸ *Pătımirea sfântului și slăvitului mucenic Ioan cel Nou*, p. 174.

healings at the saint's latest shrine were common in Byzantine hagiography. They usually followed standard formulas, vaguely reporting that many people were cured there, while giving little or no details at all about the facts in question.⁵⁹ The above cited comment from the *Passio* perfectly fits this description, which transforms it rather into a hagiographical *topos* and puts into perspective its reliability as a genuine source for St. John's miraculous activity, at the beginnings of his veneration in Moldavia.

Leaving aside the formulation from the *Passio*, the only surviving evidence for local miracles performed by St. John the New remains Peter Mohyla's work. However, does this unfortunate state of the source material necessarily mean that, before the third decade of the seventeenth century, the official protector saint of Moldavia actually manifested himself as a 'deus otiosus', as suggested in previous literature?⁶⁰ Did Mohyla's time actually witness a sudden reactivation of St. John's miraculous powers or, perhaps, just an increased interest in recording his miracles, which led to the first systematic effort in this respect known to us? In order to offer at least tentative answers to such questions, the following part of the analysis will scrutinize all the available indicators of his veneration as a miracle-worker saint, before the 1620s.

At first glance, the discouraging scarcity of the sources may easily mislead towards a rather pessimistic conclusion in this respect, for the first phase of his veneration in Moldavia. Nonetheless, one cannot help but wonder if their incidental absence does inevitably imply that they did not exist at all? To start with, it should be taken into consideration that, in the Eastern Christian world, it often happened that, once relics were purchased and installed in their final location, the sources usually stopped referring to them, thus rendering almost impossible any attempt to reconstruct their posthumous fate⁶¹ or to assert with certainty if they performed miracles or not. On the other hand, in the particular case of St. John the New, the situation is further complicated by the unfavorable circumstance of the dispersion and subsequent loss of the medieval metropolitan archives,⁶² which permanently

⁵⁹ For instance, before the sixteenth century, accounts of saints' miracles in Russia tended to mostly resume to such brief comments; see Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, p. 102.

⁶⁰ Gherasim, *Visul „Patriarhului”*, pp. 56-57.

⁶¹ John Wortley, "Introduction", in Idem, *Studies on the Cults of Relics in Byzantium up to 1204*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), pp. xi-xvi, here p. xv.

⁶² For the dispersion and subsequent loss of the metropolitan official documents, after their transfer to Poland, in 1686, see N.A. Ursu, Nicolae Dascălu, *Mărturii documentare privitoare la viața și activitatea mitropolitului Dosoftei* [Documentary Sources Concerning the Life and Work of Metropolitan Dosoftei], (Iași: Trinitas, 2003), pp. 101-102.

deprived us of most of the internal sources regarding the initial phase of his cult and the history of his relics from Suceava. Therefore, one is compelled to look elsewhere for potential indicators in this respect.

Whereas nothing seems to have survived for the fifteenth century, some insights on the subject in question are surprisingly traceable in Muscovite sources, dating from the middle of the sixteenth century. Thus, against the background of a tremendous increase in the popularity of miracles in sixteenth century Russian religiosity, the expansion of miracle cults triggered the necessity to regulate the canonization of saints and to strengthen the official ecclesiastical control over the new cults.⁶³ Consequently, in the years 1547 and 1549, metropolitan Makarii of Moscow assembled two church councils, which focused precisely on establishing the official setting for the proper liturgical celebration of miracle-working saints in Russia. Miracles were not a main criterion for granting sanctity, but the council of 1547 was nevertheless the first known instance when the Russian Church officially recognized a series of holy figures as miracle workers, whose veneration was thus generalized and regulated in the territories under its jurisdiction.⁶⁴ The various lists registering their names slightly differ,⁶⁵ but a later variant included towards the end of the sixteenth century in the third redaction of the *Life* of Metropolitan Iona of Moscow, mentions the name of St. John the New from Suceava among the miracle-working martyrs validated by the 1547-1549 councils.⁶⁶ Moreover, the later inclusion of his *Vita* in the great *Menaion to New Miracle-Workers* compiled shortly after⁶⁷ indicates that a hagiographical narrative dedicated to St. John, as well

⁶³ Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, p. 99.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 80-81.

⁶⁵ It is generally considered that the saints mentioned in the decisions of this council were classified in three categories – ‘great miracle workers’, ‘new miracle workers’ and, respectively, just ‘miracle workers’; the significance of these distinctions still remains unclear; see *Ibidem*, pp. 81-82.

⁶⁶ Makarii - Archbishop of Vilnius and Lithuania, *History of the Russian Church* (in Russian), Sankt Petersburg, 1874, vol. VIII, pp. 43-45 (I am grateful to Ivan Biliarsky for indicating this bibliographical reference to me); Andrei Sergeevich Usachev, „Zhitie mitropolita Iony tre’ei redaktsii” [The Third Redaction of the *Life* of Metropolitan Iona], in *Vestnik tserkovnoi istorii*, Moscow, 2 (2007): 5-60. For the whole discussion on the church councils of 1547 and 1549 and their sources, I am deeply indebted to my former New Europe College colleague, Ilya Kharin, who guided me through the most recent conclusions of the vast Russian bibliography on the subject. I here express my strong gratitude to him.

⁶⁷ A. E. Musin, “Sobory sv. mitropolita Makariia 1547-1549 gg.: Fakt istorii ili fakt istoriografii?” (in Russian) [The 1547-1549 Councils of Metropolitan St. Makarii: Fact of History or Fact of Historiography?], in *Soobscheniia Rostovskogo muzeiia*, XIII (2003): 74-86.

as his liturgical service were officially approved by the ecclesiastical authorities for general distribution in Russian territories. Even though the evidence suggests that his veneration in these lands had been introduced earlier,⁶⁸ the Russian Church officially recognized his cult and formally acknowledged his designation as 'miracle-worker' in the middle of the sixteenth century, at a time when Moldavian sources seem to completely lack any indicators regarding his miraculous activity.

Possibly as a consequence of this recognition, but also of the gradual spreading of his cult towards the western parts of Russia, another echo (albeit chronologically distant) of St. John's reception as miracle-worker comes from Kiev, in the early 1620s. It consists of the passage referring to John the New in the well-known *Palinodia*, written by archimandrite Zacharij Kopystenskyj in 1621-1622, while he was the superior of the famous Lavra Pecerskii monastery. Compiled against a strongly polemical background, when the Orthodox Church from the Polish-Lithuanian territories was facing serious confessional challenges coming from the Counter-Reformation propaganda and the Uniate movement,⁶⁹ Kopystenskyj's work aimed at promoting recent Orthodox saints and their active miraculous powers, in response to the contemporary Jesuit accusations that Orthodoxy had failed to produce significant miracle-working saints after the great Schism.⁷⁰ Presenting various national or local Orthodox saints in order to contradict this assumption, the Kievan archimandrite also included into his work a section referring to Moldavia, where the first and most important saintly figure mentioned is precisely St. John the New: "*In Suceava, in the metropolitan church, St. John the New, a martyr for the faith, lies in a gilded silver reliquary, his body perfectly uncorrupt, where miraculous healings take place, for the benefit of the visitors.*"⁷¹ In addition to the standard information regarding the precise localization of the relics and their ability to perform miracles, indicated for each of the

⁶⁸ Turilov, *St. John the New*, at www.praven.ru/text/471404.html. The author argues that the spreading of St. John's cult in Russia began in the second half of the fifteenth century, against the background of the dynastic allegiance between Steven the Great and the great knez Ivan the III of Moscow.

⁶⁹ See *infra*, footnote 35.

⁷⁰ It has been argued that Kopystenskyj's work was written in response to the allegations of the Jesuit Piotr Skarga and the Uniate theologian Leon Kreuzza that, after its separation from the Church of Rome, the Orthodox Church was deprived of any important miracle-working saints, as a sign of God's disapproval for its deflection; see Liviu Stan, *Sfinții români* (Sibiu: Tipografia Arhidiecezană, 1945), pp. 15-16; Barbu, *Purgatoriul misionarilor*, p. 602.

⁷¹ The whole fragment referring to Moldavian saints, with Romanian translation, is reproduced in Stan, *Sfinții români*, pp. 45-46.

Moldavian saints cited by Kopystenskyj,⁷² in St. John's case the author specifies the preservation of his uncorrupted body in the famous silver reliquary still on display to this day,⁷³ as well as the most relevant detail of individual miraculous healings performed at the shrine. Without excluding the possibility that, by that time, St. John's thaumaturgical fame had spontaneously reached the Kievan monastery, it is more likely that the archimandrite had been informed about such details from a local source. It has been argued (although not thoroughly demonstrated) that the reference for the whole fragment referring to the Moldavian saints was a sixteenth century manuscript, preserved in the Synodic Library from Moscow.⁷⁴ Its exact origin is not indicated, but it is highly probable that it was produced in Moldavia, in which case it would count as the earliest known attempt of recording local miracle-working saints, among whom John the New was obviously the most prominent.

Whereas the evidence about the reception of St. John as miracle-worker in sixteenth century Moldavia is only conjectural, the first decades of the seventeenth century bring more reliable, albeit still extremely scarce, data to this dossier. In a chronological sequence, one would have to consider first the information offered by Peter Mohyla that one of St. John's miracles included in his notes had also been recounted in the metropolitan documents from Suceava.⁷⁵ Only a most fortunate and equally improbable recovery of the lost metropolitan archives could further clarify if this was a monastic chronicle⁷⁶ or perhaps a collection of miracles compiled in the metropolitan milieu that recorded St. John's miraculous interventions, including the one narrated by Mohyla. The only reasonable deduction which can be drawn from this particular detail is that, despite some views on the contrary,⁷⁷ even before Peter Mohyla's attempt to register and advertise them, there had been a certain local interest in recording the miracles performed by St. John the New, at least in the environment of the

⁷² Besides St. John the New, the other miracle-working Moldavian saints nominally mentioned in Kopystenskyj's *Palinodia* are: St. Leontius from Rădăuți, St. Daniel the Hermit from Voroneț and, respectively, St. Basil from Moldovița; see *Ibidem*, p. 46.

⁷³ For the most complete description of the silver reliquary, see Voinescu, *Cea mai veche operă*, pp. 265-289.

⁷⁴ Eugen A. Kozak, *Die Inschriften aus der Bukovina*, I, Teil, Wien, 1903, p. 206 apud Stan, *Sfinții români*, footnote 1 on p. 17.

⁷⁵ Movilă, *Povestiri despre minuni*, p. 53.

⁷⁶ It has been assumed that it might refer to an ecclesiastical chronicle, that we have no other information about; see Gorovei, *Un memorialist uitat*, p. 7.

⁷⁷ Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii*, p. 42; Ioanichie Bălan, *Sfintele moaște din România* [Holy Relics from Romania], (Vânători: Mănăstirea Sihăstria, 2004), p. 19.

ecclesiastical institution which possessed and exhibited his relics for public worship. Furthermore, another indicator that he was indeed perceived as a miracle-worker in the epoch, even prior to the redaction and dissemination of Mohyla's notes, is provided by the addressing formula used in an internal official document from 1629, which refers to a newly built monastery nearby Iași, dedicated to "the holy, most worshiped and *miracle-worker*, great martyr St. John the New."⁷⁸ It is true that prince Miron Barnovschi, who released the afore mentioned confirmation act, seems to have been a fervent devotee of St. John the New,⁷⁹ but this first occurrence in the official chancellery documents of the attribute '*miracle-worker*' in relation to St. John cannot be assigned solely to the princely personal devotion towards him. More likely, it was a reflection of the contemporary echo of the martyr's miraculous activity⁸⁰ or even of a more recent noteworthy event related to his relics, that might have taken place closer to the year 1629 and the memory of which has not been preserved. The documentary detail is nevertheless indicative for the local reception and increasing popularity of John the New as a miracle-working saint in Moldavia, towards the late 1620s. Not coincidentally, only several months later, during his visit to Lavra Pecerskii, the future metropolitan Varlaam would comprehensively inform Peter Mohyla about St. John's latest miracles in Suceava, thus providing the source material for the narratives that constitute the subject of the present inquiry.

To conclude this survey of the available evidence, despite their discouraging scarcity, the image that emerges after 'squeezing' the direct and/or indirect sources referring to St. John the New's thaumaturgical activity thus contradicts the hypothesis of his manifestation as a 'deus otiosus', unable or unwilling to perform miracles prior to the seventeenth-century. In the light of what had been presented so far, it becomes more and more evident that what its first decades witnessed was not so much a sudden startup of the saint's miraculous powers, which apparently had

⁷⁸ *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, A. Moldova, vol. XX (1629-1631), I. Caproșu, C. Burac (eds.), (București: Editura Academiei Române, 2011), doc. 70, p. 74. The document was issued the 28th of April 1629, in Iași, while Peter Mohyla's encounter with hieromonk Varlaam (who informed him about the miracles performed by St. John the New in Suceava) took place, according to his own indication, in August 1629; see Movilă, *Povestiri despre minuni*, p. 49.

⁷⁹ Unfortunately, Miron Barnovschi's special devotion to St. John the New has not constituted yet the subject of a specific investigation in Romanian historiography. For several preliminary considerations on this, see Székely, *Manifeste de putere*, pp. 134-135.

⁸⁰ According to Peter Mohyla's chronological indications, the most recent miracle of St. John narrated in his notes had taken place in 1621.

been active during the whole period of the relics' presence in Suceava, but rather an increased interest in accounting and promoting his miracles, culminating with Peter Mohyla's more systematic effort in this respect.

* * *

What is the specificity of these narratives and how did they impact upon the veneration of St. John the New in the epoch? As the present inquiry has attempted to point out, the three miraculous events selected by Peter Mohyla were definitely not the first or the sole local miracles performed by St. John before the seventeenth century. What created a distorted image to the contrary in previous historiography was precisely the precarious state of their documentation in writing, due initially to a presumable local lack of experience and/or interest in doing so,⁸¹ but mostly to the subsequent permanent loss of the relevant source material. Nevertheless, the few sparse traces of evidence that survived suggest that his relics from Suceava were perceived as working miracles already from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, both by local and foreign worshipers. In the absence of any specific details, it is reasonable to assume that they were mostly miraculous healings at the saint's shrine, which unfortunately remained unattested in writing, as it often happened throughout the Byzantine world.⁸² They probably attracted local forms of pilgrimage⁸³ and ensured the spreading of St. John's thaumaturgical fame as far as Moscow, by the 1550s. Yet, more substantial and direct indicators of his miraculous activity survived mostly from the first decades of the seventeenth century, culminating with the accounts related at length by Peter Mohyla in his collection of miracles.

In the attempt to ascertain the impact of the latter on the early-modern veneration dedicated to St. John the New, one needs to first

⁸¹ Bălan, *Sfintele moaște*, p. 19.

⁸² This was also the case with most of the narrative sources or saints' lives from Russia, before the sixteenth century; see Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, p. 100.

⁸³ As far as the concept of 'pilgrimage' is concerned, the present study fully adheres to the distinctions and definitions offered by Annemarie Weyl Carr, in whose opinion medieval pilgrimage in the Byzantine world should be considered less as a journey or the state of being on the way toward a transformative experience, but rather in terms of presence, of seeking to gain access to the sacred and become a *proskynetes* worshiper in its actual presence. Therefore, the Byzantine pilgrims should rather be seen as "people appealing to sites of sacred intervention", while their journeys "will assume varied, even metaphorical, forms that are defined less by the act of travel than by the state of being at the place in which access is sought"; see Eadem, "Icons and the Object of Pilgrimage in Middle Byzantine Constantinople", in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 56 (2002): 75-92, especially pp. 76-77.

establish their specificity in relation to the saint's previous fame as a miracle-worker, but also to other miraculous accounts included in Mohyla's notes. To start with the last point, the mere selection of not one, but no less than three narratives referring to St. John for his collection becomes most relevant. On the one hand, it could reflect the aspiration to ensure a broader circulation for the writing, while on the other hand, it could respond to the radiation of St. John's cult in the Ruthenian Orthodox milieu, during the first decades of the seventeenth century.⁸⁴ Nonetheless, given that very few non-Ukrainian miracle-working saints are referred to in his notes,⁸⁵ what could have motivated the archimandrite's choice to mention the martyr from Suceava at all? Besides a presumable personal preference for this particular saint, towards whom the Mohyla family had shown a special veneration towards the end of the sixteenth century and the first decades of the seventeenth,⁸⁶ another possible reason for accommodating St. John's miracles into his collection may have resided in the fact that he epitomized a profile of sanctity very suited for Peter Mohyla's polemical purposes. A fourteenth century Greek neo-martyr,⁸⁷ St. John the New had suffered and received a martyr's death defending his true Orthodox faith in utterly contentious circumstances, loaded with polemical overtones directed both against the Catholic community and the pagan authorities of Cetatea Albă – later envisaged as Muslim Turks in the collective imagery of Moldavians.⁸⁸ As Peter Mohyla was probably aware of from his family background, both written and visual hagiographical narratives dedicated to St. John's

⁸⁴ However, according to Anatolij Turilov, evidence suggests that St. John the New's cult first spread towards Moscow and Novgorod (at the end of the fifteenth century) and only much later (in the second half of the seventeenth century) it reached the Polish-Lithuanian territories, in connection to the transfer of St. John's relics there, in 1686; Idem, at www.praven.ru/text/471404.html.

⁸⁵ The only saints not connected to the Polish-Lithuanian territory included in Mohyla's notes were St. John the New and four Athonite monks; see Movilă, *Povestiri despre minuni*, passim.

⁸⁶ Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii*, p. 42; Székely, *Manifeste de putere*, pp. 128-133; Firea, *Despre un episod uitat*, pp. 373-380.

⁸⁷ For the historical circumstances of St. John's martyrdom in Crimea, see Cazacu, *Saint Jean le Nouveau*, pp. 152-158.

⁸⁸ The final switch in identifying the pagan authorities responsible for his death in Crimea with Muslim Turks is to be found in the earliest translation into the Romanian language of St. John's hagiographical text, namely in metropolitan Varlaam's *Cazania* or *Carte românească de învățătură* [Romanian Book of Learning], printed in 1643. For a comparative look at St. John's martyrdom narratives in the fifteenth century *Passio* and, respectively, in Varlaam's book, see Dan Horia Mazilu, *Proza oratorică în literatura română veche* [The Oratorical Prose in Old Romanian Literature], vol. II, (București: Editura Minerva, 1987), pp. 84-91.

martyrdom in Moldavia emphasized the antithetical juxtaposition between the righteous Orthodox saint and his religiously-other aggressors, whether pagans (significantly depicted like Muslim Turks in the frescoes from Voroneț⁸⁹), Jews or Catholics.⁹⁰ Faced by serious contemporary confessional challenges, promoting such a profile of sanctity might have proven quite suitable for Peter Mohyla's polemic agenda. And what better way to do so, than advertising some of St. John's most renowned miracles, in order to proclaim the holiness and the active miraculous powers of his relics from Suceava, as a sign of divine validation for the pious veneration due to Orthodox saints in general?

Coming back to the three accounts in point, while nothing can be inferred about the particulars of the official recording of St. John's miracles in the lost metropolitan documents, what immediately draws the attention concerning the selection operated by the Kievan archimandrite is that all chosen examples were of recent date in relation to the moment of the writing and that none of them conformed to the typology of healing miracles previously attributed to the martyr from Suceava. Although they presumably continued to be performed without interruption at his shrine, as explicitly indicated in an ensuing letter from 1637 addressed by metropolitan Varlaam to the Russian tsar Mikhail Fyodorovich,⁹¹ Peter Mohyla preferred a collective rescue miracle and two punitive ones for his collection. The exceptional and communal character of the former perfectly satisfied the general current taste for public miracles⁹² and, at the same time, it eloquently exemplified the active miraculous powers of Orthodox saints, which corresponded so well to the main purpose of his writing. As for the two punitive interventions selected by Mohyla, although they

⁸⁹ Voinescu, *Cea mai veche operă*, p. 285; Sorin Ulea, "Pictura exterioară" [The External Paintings], in vol. *Istoria artelor plastice în România*, George Oprescu (ed.) (București: Editura Meridiane, 1968), pp. 366-382, here pp. 375-376.

⁹⁰ It has been justly argued that all the negative characters in the written and visual hagiographical narratives dedicated to St. John the New are confessional others; see Maria Crăciun, "Tolerance and Persecution. Political Authority and Religious Difference in late medieval Moldavia", in *Colloquia. Journal of Central European Studies*, 10-11/1-2 (2003-2004): 5-58, here p. 27. As for the specific incrimination of the Catholics as responsible for the martyr's death, see Elena Firea, "Hagiographic Narratives of St. John the New in 15th-16th century Moldavia. The Illustrated Cycle from the Episcopal Church in Roman", in *New Europe College Ștefan Odobleja Program Yearbook 2011-2012*, (București: New Europe College, 2013), pp. 85-125.

⁹¹ In which the hierarch clearly specifies that St. John's "*unblemished holy body performs healing miracles in my metropolitanate from Suceava*"; see Dragomir, *Contribuții*, p. 92.

⁹² Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, p. 100.

fundamentally qualify as miraculous healings at the saint's shrine,⁹³ it is nevertheless significant that both of them originated in vindictive actions of John the New, consisting in exemplary punishments of his offenders through demonic possession. In Eastern as in Western Christianity alike, punitive interventions were usually directed against those who mocked the saints and did not treat them with due reverence, who expressed skepticism or incredulity in their miraculous powers, or offended the religious community placed under their patronage.⁹⁴ By showing the frightening dimension of the saints' divine protection and their undoubted victory over adversaries, punitive miracles were very efficient in polemical contexts and often used by hagiographers as eloquent instruments in the confrontation with nonbelievers or religious-others.⁹⁵ The two examples chosen by Mohyla perfectly fit this description, the first one denouncing a misappropriation of St. John's patrimony, while the second harshly sanctioned the disbelief in the sanctity of his relics, as well as the disrespectful remarks regarding the devotional practices of the community that worshiped them. Moreover, in the last case, the punished calumniator was a confessional-other of high social status. From this perspective, the main function of the miracle is not so much to authenticate sanctity, but to reveal the true faith.⁹⁶ Therefore, the mere selection operated by Peter Mohyla points out a significant shift of focus from typical individual healings to more 'political' public miracles, which seems to respond to the author's intention to present St. John the New rather as triumphant against his denigrators and revealer of the true Orthodox faith,⁹⁷ than merely as a local thaumaturgic saint.

In the attempt to further investigate the specificity of the three discussed miracles, a quick comparative look at their accounts immediately

⁹³ It has been argued that, statistically, the most common malady cured at saints' shrines was precisely demonic possession; see Alice-Mary Talbot, "Pilgrimage to Healing Shrines: the Evidence of Miracle Accounts", in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, vol. 56 (2002): 153-173, here p. 158.

⁹⁴ See Gábor Klaniczay, "Miracoli di punizione e *maleficia*", in Sofia Boesch Gajano, Marilena Modica (eds.), *Miracoli. Dai segni alla storia* (Roma: Viella, 2000), pp. 109-135, especially pp. 116-117.

⁹⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 114-115.

⁹⁶ Stéphanos Efthymiadis, "Le miracle et les saints durant et après le seconde iconoclasme", in Michel Kaplan (ed.), *Monastères, images, pouvoirs et société à Byzance. Nouvelles approches du monachisme byzantin* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2006), pp. 153-173, here p. 166.

⁹⁷ Barbu, *Purgatoriul misionarilor*, p. 613. The author argues that this new feature of St. John the New, as revealer of the true faith, was quite specific to the confessional challenges of the seventeenth century.

reveals that they all have in common the localization at St. John's shrine, in close proximity to the relics, as well as their occurrence in the presence and with the direct implication of the highest ecclesiastical authorities. As far as the first aspect is concerned, it is common knowledge that miracles mostly took place where believers could have immediate, physical access to the saint, through the relics.⁹⁸ However, the recurrent insistence in specifying that they all happened in the metropolitan church from Suceava shows an evident concern to indicate the focal point of St. John's cult, marked by the presence of his relics in this particular location, probably in order to promote it as a pilgrimage site.⁹⁹ Given that both the author of these narratives and his direct source were members of the high clergy, well connected to the Moldavian political and ecclesiastical hierarchy, the intention to deliberately advertise St. John's sanctuary from Suceava seems even more plausible, all the more since the cult was enjoying a remarkable radiation far beyond the limits of a local devotion in the epoch.¹⁰⁰

The second common feature shared by all three events selected by Peter Mohyla, namely the direct implication of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in their occurrence, points to a strong high clerical control over the early-modern miraculous activity performed by St. John the New. The setting for each of them is the metropolitan church from Suceava (in the case of the rescue miracle, not the flooding of the waters episode, of course, but the unnatural gaining in weight of the reliquary), where the relics were in the custody of the cathedral clergy. Moreover, if each of the two exorcisms were actually completed through the agency of the metropolitan's ritualistic interventions, the whole episode of the salvation of the city, which also took place in the presence of the metropolitan, was brought about by the particular circumstances of the clerical handling of St. John's relics (the intention to move them to the fortified citadel, the impossibility to lift them, the subsequent decision to carry them in procession). In addition to that, one cannot help but notice that the divine punishment of the Polish dignitary, followed by his delivery from torment, were significantly associated with the solemn celebration of the Eucharist – the quintessential miracle by definition,¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Pierre-André Sigal apud Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii*, p. 18; Talbot, *Pilgrimage*, p. 159.

⁹⁹ In most cases, accounting the miracles performed shortly after the transfer of a saint's relics was needed mostly for the promotion of the new sanctuary; see Michel Kaplan, "Le miracle est-il nécessaire au saint byzantin?", in Denise Aigle (ed.) *Miracle et karâma. Hagiographie médiévales comparées* (Tournhout: Brepols, 2000), pp. 167-196, especially p. 179.

¹⁰⁰ Anatolij Turilov at www.praven.ru/text/471404.html; Barbu, *Purgatoriul misionarilor*, pp. 613-614.

¹⁰¹ Sofia Boesch Gajano, "Uso e abuso del miracolo nella cultura altomedioevale", in *Les fonctions des saints dans le monde occidental (IIIe – XIIIe siècle)*. Actes du colloque organisé

exclusively administered by the clergy. Thus, the clerical control over miracles refers precisely to the religious and ritual means to supervise and intervene upon the natural and social context of their production,¹⁰² which perfectly applies to all three accounts under discussion. More specifically, in the case of St. John the New one can even speak about a metropolitan control over his miraculous activity, which might indicate that more than the official divine protector of the country and of the ruling dynasty,¹⁰³ in the high clerical circles he was promoted (and possibly perceived by the large public, as well) as a saint associated with the metropolitan institution. Especially after the transfer of the political and administrative capital to Iași, in the second half of the sixteenth century,¹⁰⁴ this inseparable connection between the supreme ecclesiastical institution and the presence of St. John's relics at Suceava must have become stronger in the eyes of contemporaries. One of its most eloquent expressions is to be found in the story of the collective salvation episode from 1621 when, from their usual location in the metropolitan church, the relics of St John the New rescued the entire city.

This outstanding miraculous intervention not only enhanced his prestige as protector of Suceava, but it is highly probable that it impacted significantly upon his popular veneration. The collective and public character of the miracle implicitly meant that all inhabitants of the city were involved in its occurrence, both as pious supplicants for the saint's intervention and as its main beneficiaries. According to Mohyla's text, once they acknowledged the relics' refusal to be taken away from their shrine, not only the clerics, but all those present in the fortress invoked the martyr's help through prayers and fasting. Afterwards, the decision of the ecclesiastical authorities to establish an annual liturgical commemoration of the miraculous event, with a solemn procession of St. John's relics outside the church, was probably intended to gratify the increasing demands of common believers to have direct and more frequent access to the saint.

par l'École française de Rome avec le concours de l'Université de Rome "La Sapienza", Rome, 27-29 octobre 1988 (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1991), pp. 109-122, here p. 119.

¹⁰² Ibidem, p. 112.

¹⁰³ See Elena Firea, "An Official Patron Saint of Moldavia? St. John the New and the Dynastic Significance of His Cult in Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries", in *Studia Universitatis "Babeș-Bolyai"*, *Historia*, 56/1, (2011): 111-134.

¹⁰⁴ For the question of the gradual transfer of the political and religious capital to Iași, see Sorin Iftimi, "Moaștele Cuvioasei Parascheva și rolul lor în istoria Moldovei" [The Relics of St. Paraskevi and the Role they Played in Moldavian History], in Idem, *Cercetări privitoare la istoria bisericilor ieșene. Monumente, ctitori, mentalității* (Iași; Editura Trinitas, 2008), pp. 67-83, here, p. 79.

As far as their specific devotional practices are concerned, the data which can be extracted from these accounts is quite modest. Not entirely surprising though, given the ecclesiastical provenience, and the apologetic character of the only preserved source which recorded St. John's early modern miracles. Whereas the salvation of the city episode is practically sterile in this respect, the narratives of the two punitive interventions parsimoniously offer a few insights into the subject. They both mention numerous pilgrims coming from long distances, even from abroad, to venerate St. John's holy body on his traditional feast day, namely the first Thursday after Pentecost. As for their devotional gestures, the text barely mentions the ritual kissing of the relics and the offering of money or other material goods to the saint: "...on the first Thursday after Pentecost, when at the metropolitan church from Suceava takes place the celebration of the great martyr St. John the New ... people, who usually come from distant places, bring many gifts and offer a lot of money when they kiss the saint's relics..."¹⁰⁵ and, respectively: "...the crowd of believers gathered from several countries kiss the uncorrupted holy body and leave many offerings behind..."¹⁰⁶ Additional information about the physical setting of the relics' display can be extracted from the passage where the Polish Catholic takes in derision their veneration, before receiving his divine punishment: "...look at these apostates how they anointed with sweet fragrant myrrh the dead body of another apostate, made it dry, adorned it with precious ornaments as if he were a saint and, for the sake of earnings, induce in error so many people."¹⁰⁷ The motif of Polish dignitaries, either Catholic or Protestant, mocking or even openly attacking Orthodox devotional practices related to the cult of saints is quite frequent throughout Peter Mohyla's notes,¹⁰⁸ but its particular employment in the case of St. John the New clearly indicates that, at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, the latter enjoyed strong popular devotion, centered on the veneration of his relics in Suceava. According to the text, St. John's uncorrupted body, anointed with myrrh and richly adorned, was fully exposed for public worship in the metropolitan church, where it occasionally performed miracles. It obviously constituted the devotional focal point within the sacred space of the church, as well as the object of worship for many foreign pilgrims, who could see and touch it on the saint's feast day.

¹⁰⁵ Movilă, *Povestiri despre minuni*, pp. 55-51.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 51-52.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 52.

¹⁰⁸ Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii*, pp. 40-41.

* * *

Whether the public veneration dedicated to St. John the New in Moldavia had been shaped in similar devotional forms even earlier is difficult to establish, since almost no information in this direction has been preserved for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. As for the remarkable revival of his cult in the 1620s, scholarly opinions generally agree that it was due precisely to the recent 'reawakening' of St. John's miraculous activity and mostly to the reverberation of the outstanding episode concerning the rescue of the city.¹⁰⁹ Even though these divine interventions definitely gave a significant impetus to his local veneration and prestige as defender of Suceava, it is my opinion that their mere occurrence, as well as the increased interest in recording them in writing were rather the consequence and not the cause of an unprecedented renewal of St. John's cult at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth. Strongly promoted by the Mohylas, this revival was triggered by the transfer and deposition of his relics into the newer and more representative cathedral church of Suceava, in the year 1589.¹¹⁰ The ceremonial *translatio* was followed, soon after, by a programmatic effort of the, now reigning, Mohyla family to construct and decorate a special setting for the relics within the church, meant to ensure their public exposure and to encourage their worship. The installation of the holy remains in the south-eastern extremity of the nave, in front of the iconostasis, the commissioning of an elaborate ciborium that sheltered the silver reliquary, as well as the repainting of the corresponding wall decoration with specific scenes related to the history of the relics¹¹¹ were all deliberate actions to create a proper shrine for St. John in the new metropolitan church. They all constituted a genuine 'relic programme',¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Gorovei, *Mucenicia*, p. 569; Liviu Pilat, "Ortodoxie, catolicism și „Contrareformă” în Moldova la mijlocul secolului al XVII-lea" [Orthodoxy, Catholicism and 'Counter-Reformation' in Moldavia, in the Middle of the Seventeenth Century], in Ion Toderașcu (ed.), *Etnie și confesiune în Moldova medievală* (Iași: Editura Universității „Al. I. Cuza", 2006), footnote 168 on p. 147.

¹¹⁰ I have elaborated elsewhere on the particular circumstances and significance of this event; see Firea, *Despre un episod uitat*, *passim*.

¹¹¹ All these details were brought to light by the recent restoration works undertaken in St. George church from Suceava; see Ovidiu Boldura, Anca Dină, "Dania Movileștilor de la biserica Sf. Gheorghe din Suceava" [The Mohylas' Donation to St. George Church in Suceava], in *Movileștii. Istorie și spiritualitate românească*, vol. III, (Sucevița Monastery: 2007), pp. 189-203 and Firea, *Despre un episod uitat*, pp. 375-380.

¹¹² A succinct definition of the concept, at Danica Popović, *Under the Auspices of Sanctity. The Cult of Holy Rulers and Relics in Medieval Serbia* (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2006), p. 327.

meant to liturgically orchestrate their display within the sacred space and to facilitate the access of believers to the holy body.

From this point of view, it is worth mentioning that recent restoration works have brought to light several frescos unknown before, painted on that occasion on the southern wall of the nave, in very close proximity to where the reliquary initially stood.¹¹³ Unfortunately their poor state of conservation does not allow a positive identification of the scenes, but the fragments still visible clearly illustrate various episodes referring to St. John's relics (Fig. 1), at first glance not necessarily following the standard iconography of his monumental pictorial cycles.¹¹⁴ Since the later interventions on the original frescoes roughly coincide with the occurrence of the great exorcism narrated at length in Mohyla's notes,¹¹⁵ one could reasonably wonder if these paintings – meant to illustrate the holiness of the relics, as well as the devotion of the Mohyla family towards them – did not also allude to St. John's contemporary miraculous interventions, after their installation from 1589 in St. George church. All the more so, since miracles frequently took place after relics were moved to a different location, thus revealing their thaumaturgic power as an additional authentication of sanctity and legitimizing the transfer itself.¹¹⁶ At their new destination, the holy remains were often the source of miraculous divine powers, providing all sorts of cures which attracted and efficiently gratified the needs of popular piety, advertising the respective sanctuary as a potential pilgrimage destination. That in the case of St. John's new sanctuary, things must have followed a similar pattern is suggested by the discussed passage from

¹¹³ Ovidiu Boldura, *Pictura murală din nordul Moldovei – modificări estetice și restaurare* [The Mural Paintings from Northern Moldavia – Esthetic Modifications and Restoration] (Suceava: Accent Print, 2007), p. 395, with color reproductions on p. 396.

¹¹⁴ At the time when these scenes were painted, monumental hagiographical cycles dedicated to St. John the New had been included in the internal or external decoration of his parakklesion from Bistrița monastery (probably beginning of the sixteenth century), St. George church from Suceava (1534), Voroneț (1547), the episcopal church from Roman (1552-1561) and Sucevița monastery (1596).

¹¹⁵ Given the simultaneity of the later interventions on the original fresco decoration from the eastern part of the nave, including the much discussed *Offering of the Ciborium* scene that was dated in the spring of 1601, it is reasonable to assume that they were probably painted at the same time. For the dating of the *Offering of the Ciborium* composition, see Ștefan S. Gorovei, "Familia lui Ieremia Movilă în tablouri votive. Contribuții la istoria mănăstirii Sucevița" [Jeremia Mohyla's Family in Votive Images. Contributions to the History of Sucevița Monastery], in *Movileștii. Istorie și spiritualitate românească*, vol. II, (Sucevița Monastery: 2006), p. 47 and also Székely, *Manifeste de putere*, p. 126.

¹¹⁶ Efthymiadis, *Le miracle et les saints*, pp. 157-159.

Kopystenskyj's *Palinodia*, which refers precisely to miracles taking place, for the benefit of visitors of the martyr's holy relics, at their new location in St. George church. If the precarious state of the preserved visual evidence allows but mere speculation on whether these miracles were visually exploited in the promotion of St. John's cult at the beginning of the seventeenth century, it is definitely no coincidence that their first recording in writing (that we know of) in the metropolitan documents occurred shortly after the elaborate enshrinement of his relics in the metropolitan church, through the efforts and direct involvement of the Mohyla family.¹¹⁷

The ensuing revival of his cult, strongly promoted by the ruling house and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, coincided with a general religious climate marked by an increasing interest in miraculous events in the epoch.¹¹⁸ Combined, they prepared the ground for the so-called 'reactivation' of St. John's miraculous activity in the first decades of the seventeenth century and, mostly, for Peter Mohyla's endeavor to account some of them through his work. As it has already been pointed out, their selection was definitely not by chance, just as the narrative discourse employed for each of them was intended not only to disseminate these miracles, but also to fit Mohyla's purpose to promote miracle-working Orthodox saints, in a polemical dialogue with other religious denominations of the time. Therefore, one might consider in all fairness that the three chosen examples are illustrative not so much for the internal evolution of St. John's cult, as for the ecclesiastical projection on the latter, in the first decades of the seventeenth century. From this perspective, it is not surprising that none of the miracles selected by the Kievan prelate conformed to the common typology of anonymous healings at the saint's shrine, but they were of a more public nature, meant to popularize an active, strong miracle-worker

¹¹⁷ The connection between the special devotion of the Mohyla family to St. John the New and the revival of his cult after the transfer of the relics, in 1589, was repeatedly pointed out in previous historiography; see Cazacu, *Minuni, vedenii*, pp. 31-42; Barbu, *Purgatoriul misionarilor*, p. 612; Gherasim, *Visul "Patriarhului"*, pp. 55-57. The last author interpreted the relics' transfer from 1589 in the context of Gheorghe Mohyla's ambitious plans to obtain patriarchal status for the Moldavian metropolitan institution. According to this reading, both the ceremonial event itself and the ensuing miracles performed by St. John's relics were great opportunities for the ritual display of Gheorghe Mohyla's ecclesiastical power.

¹¹⁸ Mostly in Russia, with which the Moldavian Church had more intense ecclesiastical connections towards the end of the sixteenth century and where metropolitan Gheorghe Mohyla found inspiration for his patriarchal ambitions; Ștefan S. Gorovei, "Relațiile bisericești româno-ruse în secolele XV-XVIII" [The Romanian-Russian Ecclesiastical Relations from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries], in *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie „A.D. Xenopol”*, XXXI (1994): 601-607, especially p. 603. See also *supra*, footnotes 37 and 38.

capable of defending the community under his patronage, but essentially a revealer of the true Orthodox faith, triumphant over its potential denigrators.

Illustrating a strong clerical control over his recent miraculous activity, the discussed accounts are quite parsimonious concerning the reflection of St. John's popular devotion in the epoch. One can only conjecture that the notoriety of such exceptional episodes, such as the salvation of the whole city of Suceava or the exemplary public punishment of a high dignitary affiliated to the princely court, did enhance the saint's increasing reputation as a miracle-worker in the first decades of the seventeenth century. Since the focal point of his cult consisted in the presence of his relics in the metropolitan church, this evolution probably led to an intensification of their popular veneration there. That the worshiping of St. John's holy remains seems to have enjoyed more and more popularity with the dissemination of his recent miraculous activity is also indicated by the decoration of the wooden lid of the reliquary. (Fig. 2). On its internal side, it bears a painting undated with certainty, but which was partially dressed in silver at the initiative of prince Miron Barnovschi and metropolitan Anastasie Crimca, in the year 1627.¹¹⁹ The fore ground of the image displays St. John the New recumbent on his bier, surrounded on each side by clerics and a multitude of devotees in a worshipping attitude. A fragmentary inscription designates it as *The Dormition of the Saint*, but such a composition has no textual reference in the hagiographical text and it is not to be found in the extensive narrative cycles dedicated to St. John the New in monumental painting. Although the detail of the officiating priests alludes indeed to a ceremonial funerary moment, one should keep in mind that the solemn transfer of a holy body and its enshrinement in a new location was generally considered as a 'second entombment' of the saint throughout the Middle Ages.¹²⁰ Therefore, it is more likely that the discussed composition referred to St. John's deposition in St. George church from Suceava, at the end of the sixteenth century. Taking into account its disposition in the closest physical proximity to the relics that were laying just in front of it, one can assume that the painting's main function was to provide a suitable visual background for their public exposure and veneration. The mere fact that the reliquary was equipped with a removable wooden cover, decorated on its internal side with a devotional image of John the New, points out that the display of his holy remains in the metropolitan church, in the first

¹¹⁹ See *supra*, footnote 26.

¹²⁰ Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Strigoi. Vii și morții în societatea medievală* [Ghosts in the Middle Ages: the Living and the Dead in Medieval Society], translated into Romanian by Andrei Niculescu and Elena-Natalia Ionescu (București: Editura Meridiane, 1998), p. 44.

decades of the seventeenth century, was explicitly intended to permit the viewing and the touching of the relics. While addressing the large public of worshipers, it becomes significant that, besides the officiating clerical figures, the discussed visual composition does not represent the political elite in the vicinity of the body – as in the rest of the scenes depicting the veneration of St. John's relics in Moldavia,¹²¹ but a large group of anonymous, simple devotees. From this perspective, it may be considered as the earliest known illustration of the saint's public veneration by ordinary believers – a potential indicator of the increased popularity of his cult at the level of lay religiosity, in the epoch.

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At the end of this extended foray into the subject of the miraculous activity of St. John the New during the first two centuries of his veneration in Moldavia, one is compelled to make tentative assumptions rather than formulate definitive conclusions. Contrary to the current opinion that he did not perform miracles prior to the third decade of the seventeenth century, a reconsideration of the available source material seems to suggest otherwise. Albeit scanty and non descriptive, several traces of evidence indicate that St. John's relics from Suceava were perceived as working miracles already from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, both in the local and even more distant devotional milieus. In the absence of any narratives referring to them, one can only conjecture that they were primarily individual miraculous healings at the saint's shrine, that attracted local forms of pilgrimage and ensured the gradual spreading of the martyr's thaumaturgical fame.

The public veneration of St. John the New and, apparently, his miraculous activity definitely gained impetus with the revival of his cult at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the next, triggered by the transfer of his relics to the more representative metropolitan church from Suceava and strongly supported afterwards by the influent Mohyla family. Coinciding with a general religious climate that cultivated a more and more intense taste for the miraculous, the first decades of the seventeenth century witnessed not only an unprecedented flourishing of his cult, but also an increased interest in recording St. John's recent miracles, which culminated with Peter Mohyla's more systematic effort in this respect. Their selection, however, was motivated both by Mohyla's personal devotion to John the New, but also by his propagandistic aims, against the

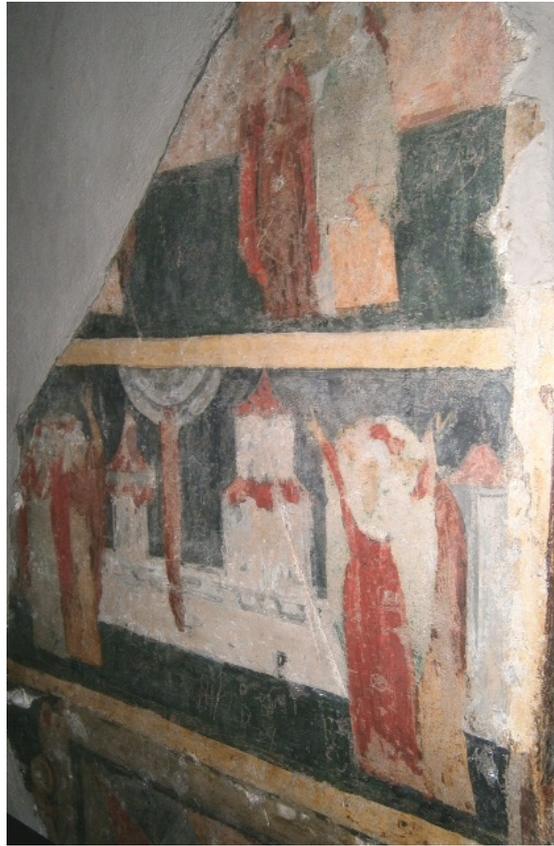
¹²¹ As in all scenes of the *Bringing of St. John's relics to Suceava* in narrative cycles dedicated to St. John the New or the *Offering of the Ciborium* composition, from St. George church, in Suceava.

background of the very challenging confessional context in which he wrote his notes on miracle-working saints. Shifting from the common individual miraculous cures at the shrine, to more public, 'politically' charged, collective miracles, the accounts in question do not highlight so much St. John's healing powers, as his role as revealer of the true faith, as well as his triumph over denigrators of Orthodoxy and its saints. Beyond their immediate relevance for Peter Mohyla's polemical agenda, the discussed narratives strongly endorse clerical control over the occurrence and dissemination of these miraculous interventions. Consequently, they rather reflect the clerical projection on the cult of St. John the New at the beginning of the seventeenth century, while they say very little about its reception on a broader social scale. Nevertheless, the early modern miracles performed by St. John do testify for the increasing popularity of his cult, presumably also as a consequence of this evolution from anonymous healings to unique and remarkable miraculous interventions, such as the collective rescue of the whole city of Suceava.

List of illustrations:

Fig. 1 - *Episodes relating to St. John's relics*, St. George Church, Suceava, (nave, south-east pillar)

Fig. 2 - *The Veneration of St. John's relics*, wooden cover of the reliquary (ante 1627)



1



2

The Greek-Catholic Church from Transylvania and the Traditional Popular Religiosity*

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Abstract: The present study aims to assess the attitude of the Greek-Catholic hierarchy of Transylvania in the eighteenth century towards traditional popular religiosity. The essay starts from the assumption that, at the time of the union with the Roman Church, the Romanian bishops and the archpriests expressed conservative views concerning the rite and canon law, both considered essential for the internal stability and the cohesion of their Church and, implicitly for its identity. The image they wished to transmit was that of a homogenous religious community (through its „law” and tradition), which was meant to remain the same, unchanged. However, until 1729, mainly because of Jesuit influence, texts with normative value reveal a tendency to intervene in the realms of religious practice, emphasising the need for rigour and discipline in the liturgical and sacramental activity of the parishes and communities. This tendency was effaced during the episcopate of Inochentie Micu (1730-1744), when the attachment of the Romanian clerical elite to the Eastern ecclesiastical tradition and to time-honoured customs was programmatically reaffirmed. In this ideological atmosphere there was no place for discussing the eventual correction of some of the traditional forms of popular religiosity. This position was maintained despite the fact that, from outside the Church it was recurrently implied (especially by those irritated by the political requirements of the Uniate Bishop) that the Romanians lived in astounding ignorance, practicing innumerable superstitions and witchcraft. The Orthodox movements occurring between 1744 and 1761, which contested the Greek-Catholic formula forced the Uniate hierarchy to react. They initiated, at that moment an ample transforming process, meant to reveal the identity of their Church as a confessional one. Conceived within this particular denomination, by an elite formed in Rome, Vienna and Trnava the discourse which directed the entire process contained the central idea that the union brought no real change to church tradition or to the law. It needs to be remarked however that some members of this generation, familiar with the new reforming trends, hostile to Baroque piety – trends which relaunched the Tridentine reforming spirit – came to position themselves critically towards some of the hypostases of popular religiosity, towards the devotions and rituals considered to be mere additions, lacking both Biblical and patristic fundament. In *Păstoriceasca datorie* (published in Blaj in 1759), the Bishop Petru Pavel Aaron openly challenged such practices for the first time in the official discourse of the Greek-Catholic hierarchy from Transylvania. The majority of the customs incriminated were linked to the cycle of the main Christian feasts, which the Bishop, in agreement with an important Tridentine

imperative, wished to transform into moments dedicated exclusively to prayer and pious behaviour. To repress, in Bishop Aaron's view were also other old abuses: spells, incantations and witchcraft, but also clandestine marriages, performed without the knowledge of the local priest. Unique for its time, the attack launched by Petru Pavel Aaron was followed, a few decades later by that initiated by Josephinism against the obstacles in the path of the aulic project of regulating religious practice and of achieving uniformity within the ecclesiastic institutions of the monarchy. After 1780, the bishoprics, including the Greek-Catholic one of Transylvania were willy-nilly integrated within this ample modernising process, the results of which have not been in full agreement with the expectations of the reforming monarch.

Key words: Greek-Catholic Church of Transylvania, popular religiosity, ecclesiastical tradition, Catholic reformism, supersition, Josephinism

Rezumat: Biserica Greco-Catolică din Transilvania și religiozitatea populară tradițională Studiul de față își propune să surprindă atitudinea ierarhiei Bisericii greco-catolice din Transilvania în secolul al XVIII-lea față de religiozitatea populară tradițională. Se pornește de la constatarea că, în momentul unirii cu Biserica romană, episcopul și protopopii români au exprimat o poziție conservatoare în materie de rit și de drept canonic, ambele considerate a fi esențiale pentru stabilitatea internă și coeziunea Bisericii lor și, implicit, pentru identitatea ei. Imaginea pe care au dorit să o transmită a fost aceea de comunitate religioasă omogenă (prin „legea”, prin tradiția sa), ce-și propunea să rămână la fel, neschimbată. Totuși, pînă în 1729, în principal datorită influenței iezuite, se poate observa în textele cu valoare normativă o tendință de a se interveni în sfera practicii religioase, accentuându-se nevoia de rigoare și disciplină în activitatea liturgico-sacramentală a parohilor și a comunităților. Tendința s-a estompat în perioada episcopului Inochentie Micu (1730-1744), cînd s-a reafirmat programatic atașamentul elitei clericale românești față de tradiția bisericească răsăriteană, față de obiceiul statornicit. În acea atmosferă ideatică nu a fost loc pentru discuții despre eventuala corectare a unora dintre formele tradiționale ale religiozității populare. Aceasta, cu toate că din afara respectivei Biserici (îndeosebi de către cei iritați de revendicările cu caracter politic ale episcopului unit) era formulat în mod recurent reproșul că românii se află în cea mai grosolană ignoranță, practicînd nenumărate superstiții și vrăji. Mișcările ortodoxe dintre anii 1744-1761, de contestare a formulei greco-catolice, au obligat ierarhia unită să reacționeze. Ea a declanșat atunci un amplu proces transformator, menit să releve identitatea acelei Biserici, ca una confesională. Conceput în interiorul acelei denominațiuni, de o elită formată la Roma, Viena și Trnava, discursul care a direcționat întregul proces conținea ideea centrală că unirea n-a adus nicio schimbare în tradiția bisericească, în lege. E de remarcat însă că unii membri ai acelei generații, familiarizați cu noile curente reformatoare ostile pietății baroce – curente ce au relansat spiritul reformator tridentin –, au ajuns să se raporteze critic la unele ipostaze ale religiozității populare, la devoțiunile și ritualurile considerate a fi simple adaosuri, lipsite de temeuri biblice sau patristice. În *Păstoriceasca datorie* (publicată la Blaj în 1759), episcopul

Petru Pavel Aaron atacă deschis asemenea practici, pentru prima dată în discursul oficial al ierarhiei greco-catolice din Transilvania. Majoritatea obiceiurilor incriminate erau legate de ciclul marilor sărbători creștine, sărbători pe care episcopul, în conformitate cu un important imperativ tridentin, le dorea transformate în momente dedicate exclusiv rugăciunii și comportamentului pios. De reprimat, în viziunea episcopului Aaron, erau și alte vechi categorii de abuzuri: farmecele, descîntecele și vrăjitoriile, dar și căsătoriile clandestine, încheiate fără știința preotului locului. Singular în epocă, atacul declanșat de Petru Pavel Aaron va fi urmat, cîteva decenii mai tîrziu, de cel pornit de iozefinism împotriva obstacolelor aflate în calea proiectului aulic de regularizare a practicii religioase și de uniformizarea a cadrului instituțional ecleziastic din monarhie. După anul 1780, episcopatele, inclusiv cel greco-catolic din Transilvania, au fost vrînd-nevrînd integrate în acest amplu demers modernizator, ale cărui rezultate n-au fost însă pe măsura așteptărilor monarhului reformator.

Cuvinte cheie: Biserica greco-catolică din Transilvania, religiozitate populară, tradiție bisericească, reformism catolic, superstiții, iozefinism

The unaltered preservation of its own ecclesiastical tradition was one of the requirements repeated by the members of the Romanian clerical elite from Transylvania involved during the last decade of the seventeenth century in negotiations for a union with the Roman-Catholic Church. 'shall be no gradual change of the rite or the [church] discipline, and these shall not be replaced by those in use in the Catholic Church', they asked in 1697.¹ A year later, once again at a synod, they were even more unequivocal: 'in this manner we enter into communion and avow to be the limbs of the Holy Catholic Church of Rome, and we or our traditions of our Eastern Church shall not be altered, but we will be allowed to celebrate all the ceremonies, feasts, fasting days as before, according to the old calendar'.²

We could, therefore, ask ourselves if this inflexible position regarding the liturgical-sacramental practices and the canonical discipline – which is, as a matter of fact, common to all the Greek clergy who concluded such agreements with the 'Latins' in Central Europe³ – should be interpreted

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¹ Silviu Dragomir, *România din Transilvania și Unirea cu Biserica Romei. Documente apocrife privitoare la începuturile unirii cu catolicismul roman (1697-1701)*, (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Arhiepiscopiei Ortodoxe Române a Vadului, Feleacului și Clujului, 1990), p. 7.

² Ioan Lupaș, *Documente istorice transilvane*, (Cluj: Tipografia „Cartea Românească, 1940), vol. I, pp. 466-467.

³ Boris Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform. The Kyivan Metropolitanate, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard

as proof for the existence of a unitary heritage of rites and system of norms, unanimously accepted and respected by those who formed the Church in question. However, the evolution of the Church during the Middle Ages, the lack of a consistent hierarchical control and of instruments for the standardisation of religious practices, but also the events of the seventeenth century, against the background of the religious policy promoted by the Calvinist rulers of Transylvania in the spirit of the Confessionalisation age,⁴ suggest a rather negative answer. The Romanian Church could not have been a monolith at the time, a compact block with respect to religious practices. All the more, as in the above-mentioned century, the religion practiced by its constituents, most of whom were illiterate peasants, had been considered 'pure superstition' by the superintendents of the Calvinist Church,⁵ and had thus become the target of direct actions animated by acculturative and shaping intentions.

Varying in intensity and consistency, the undertakings aimed, among others, to create a new type of religious culture (using sermons in the vernacular language, systematic catechesis and the standardisation of the religious service with the help of the printed book),⁶ but also to uproot the traditional forms of popular religiosity: feasts and their associated rituals, fasts, the cult of saints, images and the cross, the belief in miracles.⁷ Nevertheless, the results in this latter direction did not match the expectations. Furthermore, instead of simplifying things, the situation actually became more complicated, because old practices coexisted with the new ones. Nonetheless, what happened at that time represents the first contact of the Romanians from Transylvania, as a religious group, with the spirit and the objectives specific to the creation of Confessional Churches.⁸

University Press, 1998), pp. 209-257; Michael Lacko, "The Union of Užhorod", in *Slovak Studies*, VI, *Historica*, 4 (1966): 70-160; Enrico Morini, "L'identità delle Chiese Orientali Cattoliche: prospettive storiche", in *L'identità delle Chiese Orientali Cattoliche*, (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1999), pp. 39-52.

⁴ Ovidiu Ghitta, "The Orthodox Church of Transylvania (The 16th Century - the Second Half of the 17th Century)", in Ioan-Aurel Pop - Thomas Nögler - András Magyar (eds.), *The History of Transylvania* (Cluj-Napoca: Center for Transylvanian Studies, 2009), vol. II, pp. 255-271.

⁵ Lupaș, *Documente*, p. 210.

⁶ Maria Crăciun, "Building a Romanian Reformed community in seventeenth-century Transylvania", in Maria Crăciun - Ovidiu Ghitta - Graeme Murdock (eds.), *Confessional Identity in East-Central Europe*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 99-121.

⁷ Ana Dumitran, *Religie ortodoxă, religie reformată. Ipostaze ale identității confesionale a românilor din Transilvania în secolele XVI-XVII*, (Cluj-Napoca: Nereamia Napocae, 2004), pp. 136-178.

⁸ About 'confession-building' and 'confessionalisation', see Wolfgang Reinhard, "Disciplinamento sociale, confessionalizzazione, modernizzazione. Un discorso storiografico",

The conservatism with respect to the rite and canon law displayed by the Romanian clergymen who responded to the Catholic offer of a Church union must, therefore, be interpreted as a statement of principles, the expression of a programmatic position. Actually, they had in mind and strived to defend the norm, the Canon, or more precisely, what the Church prescribed. They were by no means willing to give ground in a field that was considered essential for the inner stability and cohesion of that Church and, implicitly, for its identity. Even if, in reality things were different, the image that they wished to convey was that of a homogenous religious community by appeal to its 'Law', its tradition, which they intended to preserve as it was, i.e., unaltered even after the union with the Church of Rome.

However, in practice the union meant entering into a sacramental communion and a relationship of hierarchical subordination with another Confessional Church⁹ (such as the Calvinist Church); it also meant ecclesiastical structures set on new foundations, with regard to the governing and judicial institutions, to the liturgical and sacramental practice, the catechesis and the behavioural and devotional models.¹⁰ The affiliation to such a structure - carried out, in this case, with the assistance of the Jesuits and the Primate of Hungary, Leopold Kollonich - could only have meant opening the way for suggestions to abolish practices and states of affairs considered unacceptable in that very Church. And for the ultra rigorist Kollonich, as for the Jesuits involved in the union movement, the Romanian communities, especially due to their priests, were burdened not only by the old 'Greek errors', but also by the effects of prolonged Calvinist action.¹¹ Their efforts to correct things clearly showed that, from

in Paolo Prodi - Carla Penuti (eds.), *Disciplina dell'anima, disciplina del corpo e disciplina della società tra medioevo ed età moderna*, (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994), pp. 101-123; Heinz Schilling, "Chiese confessionali e disciplinamento sociale. Un bilancio provvisorio della ricerca storica", in *Disciplina dell'anima, disciplina del corpo*, pp. 125-160; Ute Lotz-Heumann, "Conceptul de confesionalizare - o dezbateră a paradigmei istoriografice", in *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai. Historia*, vol. 53, no. 1-2 (2008):15-33.

⁹ Paolo Prodi, *Il paradigma tridentino. Un'epoca della storia della Chiesa*, (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2010), p. 27.

¹⁰ Paolo Prodi, "Contre-réforme et/ou Réforme catholique: nouveaux panoramas historiographiques et dépassement de vieux dilemmes", in *Christianisme et monde moderne. Cinquante ans de recherches*, (Paris: Gallimard, Seuil, 2006), pp. 102-104.

¹¹ Andreas Freyberger, *Relatare istorică despre unirea Bisericii româneşti cu Biserica Romei (Romanian version and introduction by Ioan Chindriş)*, (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Clusium, 1996), pp. 39, 55, 83, 85, 119; Octavian Bârlea, "Unirea Românilor (1697-1701)", in *Perspective*, no. 49-50, anul XIII, iulie-decembrie (1990), pp. 45-46; Basile Bârbat, "L'institution de l'office du <théologien> dans l'Eglise Roumaine Unie", in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, vol. XXIX, fasc. I, (1963): 163-164. Zenovie Păclişanu, *Istoria Bisericii Române Unite*, (Târgu-

the Catholic perspective, the solution for the future of the Uniate Church was the adjustment to the reforming programme established at the Council of Trent; and that was expected to lead gradually to a change in the appearance of that Church, to the enforcement, practically, of a new type of Christianity.

The diocesan synod, as the main legislative forum, was the first instrument targeted by the promoters of this trend.¹² Within this framework, in September 1700 a series of decisions were issued, visibly influenced by the regulatory and unifying spirit of the Catholic Reformation, even if, in terms of content, most of them were in line with the existing norms of the Eastern Church in this field.¹³ Essentially, by drafting a project for the reformation of the clergy – a mandatory prerequisite for the renewal of the whole ecclesiastical structure,¹⁴ according to the Tridentine strategy – the articles of the synod also reveal what were considered to be the priorities of the intervention in the area of piety and of individual and collective religious practices: on the one hand erasing the traces of the Calvinist actions (by establishing punishments for churches without images, for those who wouldn't comply with the four fasting periods, the Wednesdays and the Fridays, or for the priests who were married for the second time), and on the other hand, the disciplining of the liturgical-sacramental practices (by requiring, under the threat of very severe penalties, the celebration by the priests, and regular attendance, by the faithful, of the Holy Mass on Sundays and on the main feast days, the celebration of all the religious feasts declared compulsory by the Church, abandoning games on all liturgical days, forbidding the archpriests' right to declare divorce sentences, abolishment of the practice of not getting married in front of the parish priest). The other synodal decisions, dating back to a time that one could qualify as that of more obvious Jesuit influence on the Greek-Catholic Church from Transylvania (1700-1728)¹⁵ also reveal the wish

Lăpuș: Galaxia Gutenberg, 2006), pp. 122-128; Greta Monica Miron, "*poruncește, scoale-te, du-te, propoveduește*". *Biserica greco-catolică din Transilvania. Cler și enoriași (1697-1782)*, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2004), pp. 53-61; William O. Oldson, *The Politics of Rite: Jesuit, Uniate and Romanian Ethnicity in 18th Century Transylvania*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), p. 101.

¹² Miron, "*poruncește, scoale-te, du-te, propoveduește*". *Biserica greco-catolică din Transilvania*, pp. 109-117.

¹³ The decisions of the synod, in *Magazinu istoricu pentru Dacia*, tomul III, (1846), București, pp. 312-317.

¹⁴ Prodi, *Il paradigma*, p. 35.

¹⁵ Ioan M. Moldovanu, *Acte sinodali ale baserecei romane de Alb'a Julia si Fagarasiu*, (Blasiu, 1869), tom I, pp. 101-123.

of the Church legislators to impose upon the communities the obligation to attend the liturgical service and to resort on a regular basis to the two sacraments which had been given special attention by post-Tridentine Catholicism: confession and Holy Communion.¹⁶ A recurrent issue in this legislation was also the careful compliance with the four fasting periods of the year. It can, therefore, be said that all the ingredients of the 'Law', of the Church tradition, quoted in the age of the union (Eastern liturgy, Holy Sacraments, feasts and fasts) had been named and confirmed as decisive, even as intangible. New was, as a matter of fact, the persistent and threatening plea for regularity and uniformity in this area, and this was a sign that the Church had started to wish to standardise things, to impose a single rule in the territory. Just one example of a practice considered superstitious emerges from these texts, and that was because it contravened blatantly the prescriptions regarding the matter and the ritual performed to obtain the Holy Communion: the Communion, at Easter, with plants' sprouts.¹⁷ And from the subtext of this first synodal instruction, something else surfaced as well: the church was to become the main setting for the religious experiences of the Christians.

A systematic catechesis using a handbook with questions and answers was the second instrument employed by the Catholic promoters of the reformation of the Uniate Church from Transylvania. *The Bread of the Infants*, a catechism compiled by the Jesuit Lászlo Baranyi (printed in Romanian in 1702) was the first document invested with the task to generate a new religious culture in the Uniate parishes, articulated around the criteria of affiliation to the Catholic Church,¹⁸ with direct support of the clergy and through repeated practice. From the point of view of the topic treated here, this catechism, which had actually been written for the needs of a Roman-Catholic community, is worth mentioning, because it clearly reflects the ambivalent attitude of Post-Tridentine Catholicism towards popular religiosity.¹⁹ Very important for its identity, especially in the struggle against Protestantism, tradition had to be suppressed only in its excessive forms,

¹⁶ Adriano Prospero, *Il Concilio di Trento: una introduzione storica*, (Torino: Einaudi, 2001), pp. 119-122.

¹⁷ Moldovanu, *Acte sinodali*, p. 112.

¹⁸ *Pânea pruncilor sau Învățătura credinții creștinești strânsă în mică sumă care o au scris în mici întrebăciuni și răspunsuri ungrești cinstitul Pater Boroneai Laslo Parochușu besearecii catholicești de la Belgradu*, ed. Florina Iliș, (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2008), 136 p.

¹⁹ About the ambivalent attitude of the post-Tridentine Catholicism towards popular religiosity see Peter Hersche, "Religiosità popolare e riforme giuseppine", in Ferdinando Citterio - Luciano Vaccaro (eds.), *Storia religiosa dell'Austria*, Fondazione Ambrosiana Paolo VI, (Milano: Centro Ambrosiano, 1997), p. 204; Prodi, *Il paradigma*, p. 25.

those out of the reach of the Church. In this regard, the author distinguishes 'good practices' from superstitions, i.e. from those outside the 'traditions of the Church', the 'bewitching prophecies', apotropaic practices, incantations and spells, 'association with the Devil in order to damage others'.²⁰

During this first stage of the evolution of the Greek-Catholic Church from Transylvania one can, hence, detect a tendency in the normative texts, to intervene in the realm of popular religiosity. Visibly marked by the Jesuit influence on the higher echelons of the Romanian ecclesiastical hierarchy, the official discourse of the Church had emphasised especially the need for rigour and discipline in the liturgical-sacramental practice of the communities. Due to the requirement expressly formulated by the Romanian clergy, to keep 'the Law' intact, but also due to the way in which reformed Catholicism regarded Church tradition, the broad range of the other church practices and customs wasn't a special or a constant concern, without, nonetheless, a complete lack of the impetus to divide what was legal from what was illegal. The attitude towards these practices can also be interpreted as an expression of the desire of the Greek-Catholic clergy to inculcate in the communities the idea that the most important rituals were the celebration of the Holy Mass and the administration of the Sacraments. The others were of secondary importance, and had to be treated as such.

The practical realisation of this programme had been compromised by the political upheavals of the first decade of the eighteenth century, and afterwards by the long periods in which the bishop's see remained vacant (for 25 years between 1713 and 1754).²¹ The inability of the diocese to bring under its control the ordination of the priests,²² the lack of a seminary for the consistent instruction of the future priests, but also the absence of a printing press for religious literature necessary for the standardisation of practices in the country, also weighted considerably.

These shortcomings were also felt during the time of the bishop Inochentie Micu (1732-1744). He was also involved in an effort to discipline the priests, to make them more responsible, as a first step towards the reorganisation of the Church,²³ as it emerges from the synodal legislation and the pastoral activities that he had carried out. Through such programmatic steps, as well as through the objectives of a vast institutional

²⁰ Ovidiu Ghitta, „Pânea pruncilor - context istoric, discurs și mize”, introduction to *Pânea pruncilor sau Învățătura credinții creștinești*, pp. LXXIII-XCII.

²¹ Pâclișanu, *Istoria Bisericii Române Unite*, pp. 155-347.

²² Miron, „poruncește, scoale-te, du-te, propoveduește”. *Biserica greco-catolică din Transilvania*, pp. 182-211.

²³ Augustin Bunea, *Din istoria românilor. Episcopul Ioan Inochentiu Klein*, (Blaș, 1900), passim; Pâclișanu, *Istoria Bisericii Române Unite*, pp. 209-270; Miron, „poruncește, scoale-te, du-te, propoveduește”. *Biserica greco-catolică din Transilvania*, pp. 192-200.

project that aimed to establish and organise the episcopal residence at Blaj, the diocese of Inochentie Micu started to come close to a connecting link between Rome and the Christians from this periphery of the Catholic world.²⁴ The energetic political activity of the bishop indicates that he was aware as well, of how much the development of the institution that he steered, depended on the relationship to the state, which also underwent a process of transformation at the time, of reconstruction as a system of power.²⁵ Inochentie Micu's time also represents a period of vocal reiteration of the attachment of the Romanian clerical elite to the traditions of the Eastern Church.²⁶ A truly identitary manifesto, this movement must also be linked to the bishop's attempt to eliminate from the Uniate Church the institution of the Jesuit theologian, enforced by Kollonich.²⁷

That was the starting point of an anti-Jesuit tendency which began to take shape in the environment of the Episcopal see from Blaj. This trend intensified in the following decades, and had even become one that aided in distinguishing the Uniates from the 'Latins', from the rules and habits of the Roman-Catholics. Within such an atmosphere - when, for instance, it was declared that the union must be strictly confined to the four Florentine articles,²⁸ that the Eastern canon law would remain the fundamental normative benchmark,²⁹ or that images in the episcopal church should be painted according to the tradition from Wallachia (Țara Românească)³⁰ - there was, of course, no time for debates about the potential correction of some of the traditional forms of popular religiosity. This was espoused despite the fact that from the outside of that Church (albeit from those irritated by the political, 'constitutional' requests of the Uniate bishop), there was a recurrent criticism at the time, that Romanians 'stumble pathetically in the darkness, in the most gross ignorance, in profound schism, and numerous superstitions, witchcraft and sorcery'.³¹

²⁴ Prodi, *Il paradigma*, p. 108-111.

²⁵ Charles W Ingraio, *The Habsburg Monarchy 1618-1815*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 150-178; Regina Pörtner, "Policing the Subject: Confessional Absolutism and Communal Autonomy in Eighteenth-Century Austria", in *Austrian History Yearbook*, 40 (2009): 71-84.

²⁶ Octavian Bârlea, "Biserica Română Unită și ecumenismul Corifeilor Renașterii culturale", in *Perspective*, no. 3-4 (19-20), anul V, ianuarie-iunie (1983): 45-51.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 63-67; Francisc Pall, *Inochentie Micu-Klein. Exilul la Roma 1745-1768*, vol. I, (Cluj-Napoca: Fundația Culturală Română, 1997), p. 6.

²⁸ Moldovanu, *Acte sinodali*, p. 83.

²⁹ *Ibidem*

³⁰ Păclișanu, *Istoria Bisericii Române Unite*, p. 243.

³¹ David Prodan, *Supplex. Libellus Valachorum. Din istoria formării națiunii române*, (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1984), p. 158; Bârlea, *Biserica Română Unită și ecumenismul*, p.58.

What followed, between 1744 and 1761, represented a severe crisis for the Greek-Catholic Church. The Church lost at the time its status as the only officially acknowledged Church of the Romanians from Transylvania, its territory shrank dramatically and it became a minority from the point of view of the number of parishes and the faithful, compared to the Orthodox Church.³² This regression, impossible to stop for a while, was the consequence of several succeeding contesting movements of those in favour of reconstructing the Orthodox ecclesiastical hierarchy from Transylvania. The most outstanding among these, due to their scope and social impact were those initiated by the monks Visarion Sarai and Sofronie from Cioara.³³ Very austere and solemn characters, akin to the prophets who have always seduced the masses with their aura of holiness and the critical discourse towards the existing order, the two stirred up the depths of the Romanian world, which had been only superficially touched by the discontinuous organisational momentum of the Uniate hierarchy. Stereotypical but highly efficient in the mentality of those times, their message emphasised the idea that the Uniates alter the Law, a fundamental identity pillar, by introducing Catholic innovations.³⁴

The rising of a powerful Orthodox competition due to the professed anti-union discourse and the size of the rapidly organised ecclesiastical body, forced the Greek-Catholic hierarchy to react. Its response materialised in strategies to counter the opponents, in missionary and control actions, in education and cultural establishments.³⁵ Those who had reacted that way,

³² Virgil Ciobanu, "Statistica românilor ardeleni din anii 1760-1762", in *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie Națională*, III, 1924-1925, Cluj (1926): 616-700.

³³ Augustin Bunea, *Episcopii Petru Paul Aron și Dionisiu Novacovici sau Istoria românilor din Transilvania de la 1751 până la 1764*, (Blaș: 1902), pp. 58-199; Silviu Dragomir, *Istoria dezrobirii religioase a românilor din Ardeal în secolul XVIII*, (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 2002), vol. I, pp. 197-323, vol. II, pp. 146-209; Pâclișanu, *Istoria Bisericii Române Unite*, pp. 276-280, 358-373; Keith Hitchins, "Religia și conștiința națională românească în Transilvania în secolul XVIII", in *Conștiința națională și acțiune politică la românii din Transilvania 1700-1868*, (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1987), pp. 44-54; Radu Nedici, *Formarea identității confesionale greco-catolice în Transilvania secolului al XVIII-lea*, (București: Editura Universității din București, 2013), pp. 208-233.

³⁴ Ovidiu Ghitta, *Nașterea unei biserici. Biserica greco-catolică din Sătmar în primul ei secol de existență (1667-1761)*, (Cluj Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2001), pp.302-339; Greta-Monica Miron, *Biserica greco-catolică din Comitatul Cluj în secolul al XVIII-lea*, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2007), pp.59-123; Ciprian Ghișă, *Biserica greco-catolică din Transilvania (1700-1850) Elaborarea discursului identitar*, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2006), pp. 255-261; Nedici, *Formarea identității confesionale greco-catolice*, pp. 218-228.

³⁵ Bârlea, *Biserica Română Unită și ecumenismul*, p. 99; Iacob Mârza, *Școală și națiune. Școlile din Blaj în epoca renașterii naționale*, (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1987), pp. 28-47; Pompiliu Teodor, *Sub semnul Luminilor: Samuil Micu*, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2000), pp. 76-93.

more specifically the bishops and their followers from Blaj, were from a generation consisting of churchmen with a very significant cultural-religious profile: they belonged to the monastic order (usually more traditionalistic), and had been educated, mainly in Rome and Vienna.³⁶ The whole changing process, decisively propelled by the need of the Greek-Catholic Church to mark its identity and territory very clearly, had been thus conceived from within, by an elite familiar with the reforming ideas in circulation at the time in the capital of the Apostolic See and in that of the Empire. The key instruments that they used – catechesis, visitations, printed religious literature (ritual books as well as normative books), theological seminaries and even visual propaganda³⁷ – are the best indication that they had conceived their Church as a Confessional Church; a Church concerned with its homogeneity and inner cohesion, preoccupied to clarify and promote among its members its own doctrinal, liturgical and institutional specificity, a Church interested in the quality of its clergy and the religious conduct of its members.

Sheer conservatism concerning the Church tradition: this was the fundamental message that the generation in question strived to convey through writings and actions. The Union had caused ‘no changes, neither regarding the traditions of the Law, nor the commands of the Holy Church’.³⁸ This is the keynote of all the catechetical works printed in Blaj. However, a very significant variation started to become visible: ‘the unaltered preservation of the Law, i.e. of the traditions and the order of the Church given by the holy people’.³⁹ The contact of the Romanian clergy (in the university environment from Vienna or Rome) with ideas such as Jansenism or similar movements has made them associate attachment to the

³⁶ Nedici, *Formarea identității confesionale greco-catolice*, pp. 306-335.

³⁷ Dimitrie Popovici, *La littérature roumaine à l'époque des Lumières*, (Sibiu: Centrul de Studii și Cercetări Privatoare la Transilvania, 1945), pp. 90-92; Păclișanu, *Istoria Bisericii Române Unite*, pp. 377-417; Bârlea, *Biserica română unită și ecumenismul*, pp. 99-145; Cristian Barta, “Floarea Adevărului și Păstoriceasca Poslanie sau Dogmatica Învățătură a Bisericii Răsăritului. Studiu istorico-teologic”, in *Floarea Adevărului pentru pacea și dragostea de obște & Dogmatica învățătură a Bisericii Răsăritului*, ed. Meda-Diana Hotea, (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Argonaut, 2004), pp. 9-54; Gabriela Mircea, *Tipografia din Blaj în anii 1747-1830*, (Alba Iulia: Editura ALTIIP, 2008), pp. 46-208; Greta-Monica Miron, Maria Crăciun, “Tipografia din Blaj și comunicarea religioasă în societatea transilvăneană a secolului al XVIII-lea”, in *Istoria culturii, cultura istoriei Omagiu Profesorului Doru Radosav*, (Cluj Napoca: Editura Argonaut, 2010), pp.116-152; Ovidiu Ghitta, “Modalités de communication en Transylvanie au XVIIIe siècle”, in *Transylvanian Review*, vol. XX, no. 1, (spring 2011), pp. 27-31; Nedici, *Formarea identității confesionale greco-catolice*, pp. 335-382.

³⁸ *Floarea Adevărului pentru pacea și dragostea de obște*, p. 116.

³⁹ *Învățătură creștinească prin întrebări și răspunsuri pentru procopseala școalelor, acum a doua oară tipărită cu blagoslovenia Preașfințitului kiriu kir P. Pavel Aaron, vlădica Făgărașului (anexa Dialogos ucenicul cu dascălul)*, (Blaj, 1756), p. 58.

tradition with the obligation to turn to the spirit of the primitive Church, to its fundamental ideas, to the Holy Fathers. That explains the stubbornness with which Atanasie Rednic enforced 'the immaculate and complete order of Saint Basil the Great' in the monasteries from Blaj,⁴⁰ with its extremely severe diet, which discouraged and disconcerted many.⁴¹ From the new reforming trends, hostile towards Baroque piety – trends which relaunched the reforming Tridentine spirit and have been embraced, both in episcopal and in aulic environment⁴² – comes then the critical attitude towards the excesses of the popular piety, towards the countless small devotions and rituals considered to be simple additions, without any biblical or patristic basis. In *The Pastoral Duty* (published in 1759),⁴³ Bishop Petru Pavel Aaron openly attacks such practices for the first time in the official discourse of the Greek-Catholic hierarchy from Transylvania.⁴⁴

The text informs us that, most of the incriminated customs – that the people had to abandon under the supervision of the priests, – are, in fact, practices associated to major Christian feasts, when, traditionally the communities indulged in somewhat immoderate behaviour: jumping over the fire,⁴⁵ drenching your women with water on Easter Monday,⁴⁶ ugly

⁴⁰ Ioan Bălan, „Un sinod diecezan necunoscut de sub Rednic”, in *Cultura Creștină*, anul XVI, nr. 5, aprilie (1936), p. 285.

⁴¹ Samuil Micu, *Istoria românilor*, ed. Ioan Chindriș, (București: Editura Viitorul Românesc, 1995), pp. 348, 352-355.

⁴² Hersche, *Religiosità popolare e riforme giuseppine*, pp. 212-21.

⁴³ Păstoriceasca datorie dumnezeieștii turme vestită, și acum cu blagoslovenia Preosfințitului și Prealuminatului Kiriu Kir Petru Pavel Aaron Vlădicul Făgărașului întâiu tipărită, (Blaj, 1759).

⁴⁴ „săriri peste foc, trageri în apă a doua zi de Paști, colinde urâte din noaptea Crăciunului⁴⁴, pentru carele mulți și de Sfânta Liturghie cu păcat de moarte atunci rămân (..), de nedeile ceale cu băuturi și cu jocuri⁴⁴, precum și de ieșirea cu crucea într-aceiași chip între hotară, de gâlcevi la Vovedenie, adecă noaptea la oamenii morți când să adună să nu gâlcevească, cu lopeți pe spate să nu lovească, ce pentru sufletul acelu răposat și pentru ale sale păcate lui Dumnezeu să să roage; de plugul cel negru în vreamă de ciumă⁴⁴, de călușari⁴⁴ și de alte acestora asemenea, carele toate sânt izvodite de la protivnicul creștinătății, diavolul”; „duminecile și în zile de praznic să să ferească de beție, de gâlcevi, de sfezi, de jurământuri, de danțuri, de jocuri și de altele acestora asemenea, că duminecile și zile de praznic pentru aceea Dumnezeu și Maica Besearică ni le-au rânduit și a le sfinți ne-au poruncit.” *Păstoriceasca datorie dumnezeieștii turme vestită*, p. 94-98.

⁴⁵ The ritual of 'leaping over the fire' with purifying and protective functions (as it was described in the questionnaires of the Romanian Ethnographic Atlas compiled in the eighth and ninth decades of the twentieth century) was practiced particularly by the young at New Year (Sânvasii) when the old year „was buried” and „boys danced around the fire” or leapt „over the fire”, on the feast day of the fifty martyrs of Sebastia (9 March) when, on the eve of the feast „the children lit fire on the hills from dried tree branches” and

carols at Christmas,⁴⁷ as well as feasts (“nedei”) celebrated excessively, with plenty of drinking, and games.⁴⁸

The bishop's criticism clearly shows his attachment to the Tridentine prerequisite to transform feast days into occasions dedicated exclusively to the liturgical service, Christian meditation and prayer, from which impious

„leapt over the fire, so they would not be bitten by fleas” and on the feast of the Annunciation when „fruit trees, cattle, people and houses were smoked so that they would not be bitten by snakes, so that bad flies which killed the cattle would not come”, „old wheels covered by chaf were set on fire” and children „leapt over the fire”. Fires and wheels were lit on the feasts of St George, St Demetrius, and on the start of the feast before Christmas: *Sărbători și obiceiuri. Răspunsuri la chestionarele Atlasului Etnografic Român*, vol. III (*Transilvania*), (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2003), pp. 285-287. For the custom of lighting wheels, also see Adrian Fochi, *Datini și eresuri populare de la sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea: Răspunsurile la chestionarele lui Nicolae Densușianu*, (București: Editura Minerva, 1976), p. 258.

⁴⁶ Drenching with water was a custom described as follows at the end of the nineteenth century: „In some places, in Bucovina as well as Transylvania there is a custom that on Easter Monday young lads would throw water on the maidens and boys on the girls. This water drenching could be rather brutal. The youth would try to surprise the girls when they came out of their houses, would catch them and, dressed in their finery as they were, would take them to a well, a brook, a pond or a lake nearby and they would drench them with at least two or three jugs of water, or they would immerse them in the water with all of their clothes. Once baptized in this manner they would release them. Despite this treatment none of the girls would be upset; on the contrary they were rather glad as it was believed that once this happened they would be married within the year.”: Simeon Florea Marian, *Sărbătorile la români*, vol. 3 (*Cincizecimea*), (București: Editura Saeculum I.O, 2011), pp. 148-149

⁴⁷ In reference to this custom, Ovidiu Bârlea (în *Folclorul românesc*, vol. I, București: Editura Minerva, 1981, p. 293), states: „After the solemnity with which the carols were sung, in an attitude of obvious introspection, followed the other, completely opposite moment, of laughter and joy, triggered by these orations whose dominant feature was exactly the combination of the ceremonial and the burlesque, sometimes even with indecent elements, all the more hilarious according to the archaic mentality. Such cascades of mirth were in agreement with the ultimate purpose of carolling, to bring, through similarity joy and health throughout the coming year, as well as an apothropaic effect against evil spirits.”

⁴⁸ They were popular (community) feasts organized on religious feast days such as the Ascension, Pentecost. St Peter, St Elijah, the dedication of the church etc. with „food and drink”, with „fairs where goods were exchanged”, where „the young would gather and dance, sing and fight”: *Sărbători și obiceiuri*, p. 378-380. Another custom involving dancing that was condemned was that practised by the „călușarii”. They [„călușarii”] were a group of men, who during the eight days following Pentecost would wander through the villages dancing. It was believed that they had the power to „keep health within the house where they danced” and to heal various ailments (especially the chills, but also back aches and madness) by „dancing around the afflicted person”. Fochi, *Datini și eresuri populare*, p. 38-54

conduct had to disappear. According to the views of the austere Aaron, other abuses had to be suppressed as well: sorcery, magic spells and witchcraft, on the one hand, as well as clandestine marriages, performed without the knowledge of the local priest (these would be banned by synodal decision).⁴⁹

That a new direction in the approach to the traditional expression of popular piety had emerged, also becomes clear from the way in which the case of the image of the Virgin Mary, who wept at Blaj on the death of the bishop Aaron (in 1764), has been analysed and classified.⁵⁰ On that particular occasion, the 'enlightened', rationalistic state signaled explicitly that it looks at and treats such miraculous phenomena very warily, even if these, due to the emotions elicited among the faithful, could have brought benefits to the Catholic cause. In 1773, the state also called upon the Greek-Catholics from the monarchy to align to the rule already enforced among the Roman-Catholics, to reduce to sixteen the number of the main, compulsory religious feasts.⁵¹ The central political authority proved in this way, that it had embraced the criticism of traditional religiosity also for economical and utilitarian reasons, as they were interested in adjusting to the challenge set by the Protestant world.⁵² Around the time when Josef II effectively took the power, the signs that the state wished to have initiative in the field of the renewal of spiritual life became more and more obvious.

After 1780, the bishoprics, including the Uniate one from Transylvania, were subordinated to the Josephinian project to regulate religious practices and standardise the ecclesiastical framework,⁵³ thus becoming the principal vehicles for conveying the imperial orders to the territory, and instruments for their implementation. A series of topics to be implemented occurred at the time on the agenda of the Greek-Catholic bishop, Ioan Bob, although not all of them were new: regular attendance on the part of the faithful of the religious service celebrated by the parish priest, the catechesis of young people every Sunday and on feast days, a decrease in the number of processions and religious feasts; the ban on house blessings on Epiphany as

⁴⁹ Bunea, *Episcopii Petru Paul Aron și Dionisiu Novacovici*, pp. 388-389.

⁵⁰ This case is detailed in *Icoana plângătoare de la Blaj*, (Cluj-Napoca, 1997), pp. 5-146.

⁵¹ Michael Lacko S.J., *Synodus Episcoporum Ritus Byzantini Catholicorum ex antiqua Hungaria Vindobonae a. 1773 celebrata*, (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1975), pp. 50-53, 77-79.

⁵² Grete Klingenstein, „Radici del riformismo asburgico”, in Ferdinando Citterio - Luciano Vaccaro (eds.), *Storia religiosa dell’Austria*, Fondazione Ambrosiana Paolo VI, (Milano: Centro Ambrosiano, 1997), pp. 143-149.

⁵³ Ingrao, *The Habsburg Monarchy*, p. 197-202; Jean Bérénger, *Joseph II d’Autriche serviteur de l’État*, (Paris: Fayard, 2007), pp. 383-413.

well as on bringing sick people into the church; everybody had to abide by the new rules regarding funerals and the creation of cemeteries, the belief in troubled spirits (*strigoi*) was to be abolished, as were the feasts with excessive food and drink at baptisms, weddings, funerals or saints's feasts, compliance with the contractual character of the matrimonial bond, the transcribing, by the parish priests, in church registers of all the orders from above.⁵⁴

However, as Derek Beales notes, the policies of Joseph II were far "less drastic in result than in intention".⁵⁵ A series of factors – among which the attachment of the parish priests to the traditions of the communities that they guided – meant that many of these guidelines were difficult to implement or they remained a dead letter. The obvious difficulty to impose a drastic reduction of the number of religious feasts among the Uniates and the Orthodox population is, in this regard, significant.⁵⁶

We shall stop here without following the interesting and long posterity of some of these Josephinian topics, and conclude that the development of the Greek-Catholic Church from Transylvania in the eighteenth century is worth considering also from the perspective of its hierarchy's understanding of popular religiosity. Generally speaking, what we find out is that the incentives to reform religious practices and piety came (when they did come!) from outside of the Romanian world of the principality, either as suggestions or guidelines, or as a consequence of the integration by the Uniate clerical elite of European ideas. At the end of the day, this is, usually, the way in which a traditional society is drawn to reforms and, implicitly, to modernisation.

⁵⁴ Daniel Dumitran, *Un timp al reformelor. Biserica Greco-Catolică din Transilvania sub conducerea episcopului Ioan Bob (1782-1830)*, (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Argonaut, 2007), pp. 82-92.

⁵⁵ Derek Beales, *Enlightenment and Reform in eighteenth-century Europe*, (London & New York: I.B.Tauris, 2005), p. 239.

⁵⁶ Dumitran, *Un timp al reformelor*, pp. 90-92.

The Story of Dumitru and Elenuța: A Transylvanian Romance in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century *

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Abstract: The story of Dumitru and Elenuța illustrates the intricacies of obtaining a marriage dispensation for two people who had become engaged in the village of Bucium Șasa, a small mining settlement in Transylvania, in the second half of the nineteenth century. The story offers the context for the activation of an entirre system of relations which functioned at local level but was also interconnected with decision-making factors at central level within the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church. Starting from archival documents, the essay allows an interdisciplinary approach to the issue combining historical and sociological methods in order to reconstruct the communication mechanisms representative for a rural and traditional society. At the level of the communities, the norms imposed by the Church were interpreted within various contingencies including the social status of each member of the group.

Key words: dispensation, relational system, deviance, Transylvania, nineteenth century

Rezumat: Povestea lui Dumitru și a Elenuței: o „afacere” de dragoste transilvăneană în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea. Povestea lui Dumitru și a Elenuței ilustrează demersurile obținerii unei dispense pentru doi logodnici din satul Bucium Șasa, o localitate minieră din Transilvania, în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea. Povestea oferă contextul activării unui întreg sistem de relații funcțional la nivel local, dar interconectat cu factorii de decizie de la nivel central din Biserica greco-catolică română. Pornind de la surse de arhivă, lucrarea permite o abordare interdisciplinară care combină metodele istoriei cu cele ale sociologiei, în vederea reconstituirii unor mecanisme reprezentative pentru o societate rurală tradițională. La nivelul comunităților, normele impuse de Biserică erau interpretate inclusiv prin prisma poziției sociale pe care o deținea fiecare membru al grupului.

Cuvinte cheie: dispensă, sistem de relații, devianță, Transilvania, secolul XIX

My study is focused on a mining Romanian Greek-Catholic community in the Apuseni mountains, where in 1885 the priest was very interested to

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obtain a marriage dispensation for Dumitru and Elena. The bride and groom were two faithful from the village of Bucium-Șasa, Alba County¹, whose story is extremely interesting and constitutes the background of the present study. The area was representative for a particular type of Romanian elite: the mine owners from the Apuseni mountains, who were richer than other Romanians in Transylvania and adopted a specific matrimonial behaviour in order to protect their property,² and the groom to be was one of those mine owners.

The story of this couple offers the necessary starting point for analysing the implementation of ecclesiastical norms in the world of the small communities of believers in the second half of the nineteenth century. After the establishment of the Romanian Uniate Metropolitan Church, two synods for the entire province and other three episcopal synods took place in Blaj (German Blasendorf, Hungarian Balázsfalva). Their decrees had the role of consolidating the confessional identity of the Romanians united with the Church of Rome. The normative framework had been intensely debated by the Romanian ecclesiastical elites and had been subsequently submitted to the Holy See for numerous corrections and adjustments. From the point of view of the ecclesiastical law, the process of identity definition was over, and the Romanian Greek-Catholics had been 'aligned' to the standards of a Catholic Church united with Rome. However, in places more remote from the ecclesiastical centre of the Romanian Uniates, things were much more nuanced and open to interpretation.

My study consists of three parts: the first is dedicated to the story that led to the present study, the second aims to identify the key-characters who give life to the story and analyze their motivation, whereas the third is dedicated to exploring local interpretations of the normative prescriptions of the church that were in force at the time. Accordingly, the study aims to analyze the assumptions of the religious representatives, based on their knowledge of the laws and of the people involved in the story. The sources used are for the most part previously unedited archive documents, which allow an inter-disciplinary approach that combines historical re-enactment with sociological analysis. The sociological approach is focused on the study of deviance in a certain group or community, and on the social control mechanisms that are applied in order to ensure that the group's members

¹ The National Archives of the county of Alba (in the following SJAAN). Fund: *The Greek-Catholic the Bucium-Șasa parish* (in the following *Parohia Bucium-Șasa*) D.2/1885, f. 53.

² Daniela Deteșan, "Matrimonial Behaviours of the Transylvanian Romanian Rural Elite (Second Half of the 19th Century)", *Transylvanian Review*, vol. XXI, Supplement No. 4, (2012): 327-328.

are in compliance with the norms agreed and respected by the group as a whole.

The affair is narrated from the perspective of outside participants, being outlined in the correspondence from the summer of 1885 between the priest Iosif Ciura and the archpriest from Roșia Montană, Ioan Laslo. The two clergymen were aware of the problem and knew the persons involved, so they referred to them in a familiar manner, without providing many details that would facilitate their identification. It was therefore necessary to appeal to information, from other sources, such as data from the parish registers regarding baptisms, marriages and deaths that took place in the Greek-Catholic parish of Bucium Țasa. This type of information was then corroborated with some data from the media. I was able to discover more information about the future groom, Dumitru David, son of Pavel, in comparison to his fiancée about whom the preserved documents kept neither the full name nor other relevant data. A letter of the archpriest Laslo revealed that the girl's name was 'Elenuța', but despite extensive research in the archives, I was not able to discover more information about her. The following story is the result of putting together all the collected information:

1. The Story of Dumitru und Elenuța

In the house no. 33 in the centre of the village Bucium Țasa lived Dumitru David and his wife Eva Ciandreu (or Șandreu). They were a pre-eminent family in the community, since Dumitru was a share holder in the mines Rohdenpock and Concordia from Bucium Țasa. Dumitru and his wife were also related to many of the villagers, as shown in the registries on the marital status of the Greek-Catholic community from Bucium Țasa. The prestige they enjoyed was reflected by the fact that they were frequently asked to serve as godparents for young couples who joined their destinies in front of the priest or to baptise the babies born in the Greek-Catholic community of the village.³ In the spring of 1884 Eva died of tuberculosis and

³ Between 1882-1883 the two spouses were marriage godparents on three occasions for young couples in the village. SJAAN, Fund: *The collection: Registre de stare civilă Bucium Țasa*, Register no. 755/1881-1903, *Protocolul matricular al cununărilor din parohia gr. catolică a Buciumului, a Arhidiecezei greco-catolice de Alba Iulia și Făgăraș în Transilvania* (in the following *Protocolul cununărilor Bucium Țasa*), ff. 1-3. Furthermore, in 1882-1883 they also godfathered 4 children. *Protocolul matricular al botezărilor din parohia gr. catolică a Buciumului, a Arhidiecezei gr.cat. de A.Iulia și Făgăraș în Transilvania* (in the following *Protocolul botezărilor Bucium Țasa*), ff. 1-4

Dumitru became a widower; he was 56 years old⁴ and had two children: Ioan, 17, and Teresa, 8 years old.⁵

One year after his first wife died Dumitru David drew the attention of the ecclesiastical authorities of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church one more time, because he wanted to marry again. Being a widower, a home owner, and shareholder in the mines in the area, he was surely considered a good match, so there was no shortage of suitable marriage candidates from his community. Furthermore, he had two children to raise and a house to keep, so he started looking for a new wife. His attention was drawn by Elena, but a serious problem stood in the way of their marriage: the existence of a serious canonical impediment. This obstacle consisted in an affinity of consanguinity of the 2nd degree between the two,⁶ which meant that Elena was the sister of the Dumitru David's deceased wife.⁷

The Catholic Church included this impediment among those that could prevent a marriage from taking place.⁸ However, there was the possibility of asking for a dispensation from the Holy See, in exchange for a certain amount of money. In such a case it was recommended that the priest of the parish where the bride was affiliated should ask for the dispensation, so that the marriage could take place legitimately. The procedure required that the file accompanying the request be sent first to the diocesan authorities, who had to submit the file with the request for dispensation to Rome.⁹

The priest Iosif Ciura initiated the whole procedure by sending first the request to the archpriest, from whom he received several explanations and a form containing the pertaining fees: 'With regard to the intention of Dumitru David, for a better guidance, I attach here the Fees Table so that these can be combined according to the financial and social situation and to his deviation, on which one of the first five articles should the dispensation

⁴ Idem, *Protocolul matricular al morților din parohia gr. catolică a Buciumului, a Arhiepiscopiei gr.cat. de A.Iulia și Făgăraș în Transilvania* (in the following *Protocolul morților Bucium Șasa*), f. 11.

⁵ Idem, *The Bucium Șasa Parish*, D. 2/1884, f. 49.

⁶ *Ibidem*, D. 2/1885, f. 57v.

⁷ The canon law laid out that after a legitimately closed and consumed marriage, the husband/wife entered an affinity relationship with all the relatives of the husband/wife, the affinity degrees being considered equal to the sanguinary ones. In this case, because there are two sisters related in the second sanguinity degree, the husband of one of them entered the second affinity degree with the wife's sister. See *Legislația ecleziastică și laică privind familia românească din Transilvania în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea*, Texts edition, Introduction and Notes by Ioan Bolovan, Diana Covaci, Daniela Deteșan, Marius Eppel, Crinela Elena Holom, (Cluj-Napoca, The publishing house of the Centre for Transylvanian Studies, 2009) [in the following *Legislația privind familia românească*], p. 538.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 559.

⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 559-561.

request be grounded. I wish to mention that paper is patient, the most adequate manner can be chosen, but the arguments and motivations should be well-placed. With regard to the Note on page 1, if we were to seek for a reduction of the established fees, once he is back from Karlsbad, the secretary Matei who is there with his Excellency, I could ask him to inform us. Nonetheless, the request should already be drafted in Romanian; they will write it then in Latin, and mention that the Most Revered Ordinariate should first inform the applicants: how much must he send in fees with the promise of an immediate answer? The issue here regards the pecuniary question, the dispensation is a sure thing',¹⁰ answered in July 1885 the archpriest Ioan Laslo.

Initially the priest thought the amount required had been calculated wrongly, or the dispensation had been classified to another category by mistake, because he doubted the sum for a dispensation could be so high. He answered the archpriest that the amount of '268 gulden and 38 kreuzer in the fee table is frightening for the mentioned parishioner, who could barely afford to pay at the most 30 gulden for everything'.¹¹ Moreover, the priest considered it would be better to postpone the lodging of the request, and wait for the metropolitan to be back from the resort, in order to get clarifications about the price of the dispensation.

However, what is interesting about the priest's answer, preserved as a draft in the archival documents, is the fact that it gave him the opportunity of expressing some personal feelings concerning the situation created by the case of his community [With sad pain - deleted in the text <A/N>] I regret deeply that our superiors, since the restoration of the metropolitan authority had [come under the papists- deleted in the text <A/N>] made themselves dependent on Rome in matrimonial questions too, matters that had been previously decided upon by our bishops themselves, without supplicating for such to Rome. This subordination only makes us [ridiculous - deleted in the text <A/N>] look foolish in front of other confessions. Our union with Rome was agreed based exclusively on those four items, whereas our rite and discipline must remain untouched'.¹² His letter was only meant for his friend the archpriest, so that such formulations were not in danger of being analysed or penalised by anybody else but the archpriest.

Ioan Laslo's answer came some days later: 'Coming back now to the affair of y[ou]r parishioner Dumitru David, I can tell you sincerely that with

¹⁰ SJAAN, *Fund Parohia greco-catolică Bucium-Şasa*, D. 2/1885, f. 48.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, f. 53.

¹² *Ibidem*.

regard to jurisdictional matters our [Church T/N] has long become aligned. Then Rome is not to be compared to the Greeks from Istanbul, with Constantinople [Țarigrad in original T/N]. The fees in the table are those generally applied, but *nulla regula sine exceptione*. In Zlatna a Greek-Orthodox Christian by the name of Tanislas Petru Marian paid 100 gulden, namely one hundred gulden, last year when he married a niece of his deceased wife and she was a more distant relative. In our case, after the information which I got privately from my good friend Matei – the metropolitan secretary, who recently came back with his Excellency from Carlsbad – with all their belongings – it will be possible to hope for the much desired dispensation from the Holy See for the sum of 50 gulden, and then, for a share holder in Rohdenpock and Concordia, even such a small amount is too much? Considering that he's a second degree relative, how much would it take for him to win 'on the other side' the amount it would cost him? Undoubtedly double as much. All he has to do is not to go to Abrud one Monday. Now that everything is clear, please be so kind and proceed with conceiving the request in the Romanian language, address it in the name of the dispensation's applicants to the 'Most Revered Ordinariate of the Archbishopric', whereby submitting it to the office of the archpriestship, please specify some of the reasons faithfully reproduced here: no admonition could divert the lovers from their intention; they are both widowers with children, and they need each other's help to raise them, and should one of them become ill, he or she will need the help of the spouse; there is the fear they might change their confession just to reach their goal; to avoid scandalous living together out of the wedlock' etc. etc., and include the matrimonial contract voluntarily. Their personal status must be recorded both in the request, and in the contract: widowers or what? And with regard to the excerpt regarding the death of the first wife, they could enclose it, or not. The money, in the specified amount, without mentioning it in the request, must be enclosed; the sum will cover the charges required by Rome, Blaj and very little for Zlatna (German: Schlatten, Goldenmarkt; Hungarian: Zalatna; Latin: Ampellum). Based on all that, starting the whole business, there is no doubt that this autumn there will be a wedding.^{13'}

It can be inferred from the letter exchange between the two members of the clergy that the problem could be considered solved if the file was correctly compiled and submitted with all the necessary documents. In addition to that, the archpriest had managed to obtain, with the aid of his friend the 'secretary Matei' a substantial reduction of the dispensation price,

¹³ *Ibidem*, f. 57v-58r.

to only 50 gulden, by invoking probably the poverty clause on behalf of the two fiancées.

Considering all this, we would have expected to find the recording of the marriage of Dumitru to Elena, and maybe also the full name of the bride, in the marriage register of Bucium Şasa. Nonetheless, there is no such recording in the register, and the ending of the case is to be found in another letter from the archpriest, where, after analysing the question of the school and church renovation, we find the following paragraph: 'So Dumitru made us all roll up our sleeves, he should have first made sure Elenuţa loved him, then made us set to work. I tried to make excuses for him in front of the secretary who kept us informed, so that he would not blame us for making him work for nothing. This will be a lesson for all of us'.¹⁴ Not only had they not been granted the dispensation, but it seems Elena had given up on the marriage to Dumitru David altogether, bringing thus the whole effort of the ecclesiastical authorities of supporting the formation of a new Greek-Catholic family in Bucium-Şasa to an end. The reasons for this were not given, and Elenuţa had left the scene of history the same way she had entered it: through a letter.

2. Secondary, but Influential Characters Enter the Scene

In the first part of this study I used the historical method of positivist reconstruction to recreate the general framework of this case, rendered as a real-life story. In this second part my intention is to change the focus of the analysis by employing the method of prosopographical analysis, in an attempt to offer a foundation for the interpretation in the last part of the study. My attention focused on the authors of the letters, secondary characters of the story, but main characters of my study: the priest Iosif Ciura, the archpriest Ioan Laslo and the 'secretary Matei', the one offering wise advice particularly on obtaining fee reductions.

Priest Iosif Ciura was a highly respected member of his community of Bucium Şasa. He was given the parish in 1840 and he shepherded it continuously until his death in 1900. Son of a Romanian notary from Abrud (Latin: *Abruttus*, Hungarian: *Abrudbánya*; German: *Großschlatten*) and Bucium, he studied theology in Blaj and afterwards was directly ordained as priest of the parish of Bucium. He married the daughter of the Greek-Catholic archpriest from Abrud and during his first years in office he was forced to live in Abrud and commute every day to Bucium because the village did not have a parish house. As a result of the efforts of emperor

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, f. 64.

Ferdinand, he was approved a special help of 1000 gulden and the right to use wood from the forest, which allowed him to build the parish house and move to Bucium together with his family before 1848. Through his efforts he managed to build the confessional school, to rebuild the church and to leave a capital of more than 52000 crowns to the village church. He was chosen to represent the community of the village Bucium and a founding member of the Roșia-Abrud Friendly Society (a charity fund), and even managed to secure the appointment of a physician to the mountain village of Bucium. He was also a member of the Transylvanian Association for the Culture of the Romanians and subscriber of the *Transylvanian Gazette*. In 1897 the community of Bucium-Șasa celebrated their priest's 80th birthday, as he was preparing for retirement. With regard to his ecclesiastical activity, in 1889 he was honoured with the Red Belt and received the title of honorific archpriest.¹⁵

At a local level, he acted as a marriage 'protector' (defensor) and prosecutor for the archpriestship of Bistra district, then for Roșia Montană (Latin: *Alburnus Maior*; Hungarian: *Verespatak*, German: *Goldbach*, *Rothseifen*) during the archpriests Grigore Mihali and Simeon Balint, until January 1878, when he quit the archpriests' synod because of lung disease. In 1885 his appointment as consistorial assessor in Blaj (German Blasendorf, Hungarian Balázsfalva) was taken into consideration, but he refused because his old age did not allow him to travel anymore, in case investigation was needed. Moreover, the disease affected his sight quite seriously.¹⁶

From the entire description of the life and activity of this priest one can notice that he was a cultivated and educated person, member of numerous local committees; furthermore, he was a marriage defender and *fiscus decanati* in the Bistra archpriestship, both positions with significant responsibility, requiring extensive knowledge of the canon law and of the tradition of the Eastern Church. He was an outstanding member of the community having had links to the village of Bucium even before his appointment there; he worked in the same parish his whole life, and was so highly respected by the community that they celebrated his 80th anniversary. All this information portrays a strong personality, well informed and very influential in local society.

The second character involved in the correspondence exchange from the summer of 1885 was the archpriest of Roșia Montană, Ioan Laslo. Much younger than priest Ciura, he compensated his youth with education: he had studied at the Theological Seminary in Blaj, and he later continued

¹⁵ *Unirea*, 1900, no. 20, p. 170-172.

¹⁶ SJAAN, *Parohia Bucium-Șasa*, D. 2/1885, f. 86.

his studies at the University of Vienna where he graduated in Theology in 1865; he was ordained in 1868, but remained in Blaj until 1869 as a teacher at the Blaj gymnasium. In 1869 he was appointed priest in Zlatna, and in 1881 he was promoted archpriest of Roșia Montană, position that he occupied until 1890, when he left for Cluj (Latin: *Claudiopolis*, German: *Klausenburg*; Hungarian: *Kolozsvár*) in order to take over the office of archpriest.¹⁷

As in the case of Iosif Ciura, this is an educated person, younger but nonetheless, familiar with the norms and regulations of the Romanian Uniate Church; he had acted, for a while as teacher in Blaj, then served as priest, to be subsequently promoted amongst the ecclesiastical elite at local level.

The last character of my research appears only incidentally in the letters between the priest and the archpriest: the formula 'Matei, the secretary' designates Simion Pop Matei, secretary of the Consistory and Chapter in Blaj and at the same time secretary of the Matrimonial Court of the archdiocese and member of the School Committee for the Archdiocese.¹⁸ He had occupied numerous positions in the administration of the Blaj archdiocese since 1859; he had filled the position of secretary of the matrimonial Court of second instance for the archdiocese since 1868, and beginning with 1879 he was the secretary of the metropolitan Ioan Vancea. He took part in the second provincial synod in 1882, as a Master of Ceremonies. In 1888 he was appointed canon theologian in the metropolitan Chapter and at the same time he was instituted rector of the theological seminary in Blaj.¹⁹

In his case we also deal with a person exerting great influence within the Romanian Uniate Church, someone who served in the ecclesiastical administration at central level, and who was permanently in contact with decision-making institutions through his position as secretary; moreover, he was the metropolitan's secretary, whom he accompanied even to resorts, which renders the idea of a relationship that was much more relaxed than a normal relationship between a superior and a subordinate.

At this point one has to ask why these three personalities serving in the ecclesiastical administration were interested in helping with the dispensation problem of a member of the community from a Transylvanian mountain village. We were interested in the motivation supporting the decision of the priest to make every effort to resolve the request of his

¹⁷ *Șematismul Veneratului Cler al Arhidiecezei Mitropolitane gr. cat. române de Alba-Iulia și Făgăraș pe anul domnului 1900, de la Sfânta Unire 200*, (Blaj, 1900) (in the following *Șematismul pe 1900*), p. 716.

¹⁸ *Șematismul Veneratului Cler al Arhidiecezei Mitropolitane gr. cat. române de Alba-Iulia și Făgăraș pe anul domnului 1886*, (Blaj, 1886), p. 12, 15-16.

¹⁹ *Șematismul pe 1900*, pp. 84-85.

parishioner, and to activate an entire network system in order to obtain the dispensation for Dumitru David.

3. 'This Will Be a Lesson for All of Us'

In the first two parts of my study, I focused on the historical reconstruction of a real-life story from Transylvania in the second half of the nineteenth century, as well as on analysing the characters involved. In this third part the emphasis will shift to historical and sociological analysis, in an attempt to offer possible answers to the above-mentioned questions, related to the motivation of the priest into resolving the matter of Dumitru David' marriage dispensation.

Thus, to begin with, I intend to analyse the question of the dispensation from the perspective of the canon law of the Romanian Uniate Church. The definition of impediments for a marriage was part of the large-scale process of aligning the Romanian Greek-Catholics to the provisions of the Catholic Church. Therefore certain boundaries were drawn, and the Catholic Church had to pronounce itself in this regard, in order to establish if such boundaries were insuperable or dispensable. Some of the dispensations could only be granted by the Holy See, while others by bishops as delegates of Rome. In fact bishops, by their power of governance were able to relax a general rule in a particular case, for the general interest of the Church, of the faith, or of the believers involved.²⁰

In this particular case, the impediment was serious enough to be an exclusive right of the Holy See, who had to analyse it and to deliver a decision on the subject. If the file was well compiled and there were sufficient reasons given, then 'the dispensation was a sure thing' as the archpriest Laslo asserted; one simply had to possess enough money for the fees that had to be paid, and be patient enough to wait for the documents to follow the entire legal route.

In this context, one has to consider the statements of the priest and of the archpriest, because these reflected their true opinions on the process of receiving a dispensation from the Holy See. Considering the generally held belief that matters would be resolved at all costs, the comments made by priest Ciura about the subordination to Rome assumed by the Romanian Greek-Catholic hierarchy along with the reactivation of the Metropolitanate highlight two problems: the first regards the fact that Rome was imposing

²⁰ *Legislația privind familia românească*, pp. 556-560. On the powers of the Bishops in the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church, see also *Conciliul provincial prim al provinciei bisericești greco-catolice Alba-Iulia și Făgăraș ținut la anul 1872*, Second Edition, Blaj, 1886, p. 35.

other conditions and norms than those accepted as a result of the Union in the seventeenth century, which brought prejudice to the oriental rite and discipline of the Church. In this context, the confessional component was being breached, since the priests considered that the new regulations of the Romanian Greek-Catholic church compiled under the strict supervision of the Holy See and adopted in 1882 were affecting the traditions of an Eastern Church, placed under the strict control of the Latins from Rome. Secondly the members of the clergy seem to have believed that dependency on Rome was making them look ridiculous in front of other confessions: Orthodox or Catholics, which prejudiced both the confessional and the national component. The neighbours of the Romanian Greek-Catholics from Bucium Țasa were in their vast majority Romanian members of the Eastern Orthodox Church, in a proportion of 5:1 in favour of the Orthodox; there was also a very small community of Hungarian Catholics.²¹ The fact that the Greek-Catholic Romanians lived in mixed ethnic and confessional communities made their priests sensitive to contacts with the alterity; other confessions could always offer an attractive alternative for some of the faithful who felt discriminated by the norms and regulations imposed by the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The reestablishment of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Metropolitanate had been followed by an extensive process of identity restructuring led from Rome through Blaj, a process convincingly described by Ana Victoria Sima.²² The changes enforced from top to bottom through council decrees, circulars and newsletters had been received and accepted differently in the territory. And in this mountain mining village the priest regretted the old customs and traditions, altered by Rome, especially since the procedures involved in resolving similar situations in the Orthodox Church were not as complicated, or as expensive, as the ones that were imposed to the Romanian Greek-Catholics (see the case of Tanislas Petru Marian and his dispensation, depicted above). Also, their ethnic sensibilities were somewhat affected, since the final decision in such cases of dispensation required from the Holy See was made in a foreign country by foreigners, who were unaware of the realities from Transylvania and of the Romanian situation.

Another issue to be considered is the price that had to be paid for the dispensation. Priest Iosif Ciura initially thought the amount of 268

²¹ According to the Census in 1880, the Romanian Orthodox were 3205, the Romanian Greek-Catholics were 621, while there were also 13 Hungarian Catholics living in Bucium. *Recensământul din 1880. Transilvania*, Traian Rotariu coordonator, Maria Semeniuc, Cornelia Mureșan, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Staff, 1997, pp. 8-9.

²² See Ana Victoria Sima, *Vizitele nunțiilor apostolici vienezi în Transilvania (1855-1868)*, vol. I, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2003, *passim*.

gulden was too high, so there must have been something wrong, either concerning the assessment of the costs, or the classification of the impediment. For comparison purposes, we could look at the expenses list of the church from Bucium Șasa in 1885: according to the list, the monthly wage paid to the village teacher amounted to 20 gulden, while 27 gulden were spent for the purchase of a silver cross; other registered services regarded the travel costs, accommodation and daily allowance of the archdiocese architect in Bucium Șasa, which amounted to 56 gulden, while 30 gulden were paid for the architectural plans for the church and the school.²³ Thus, the 268 gulden asked for the dispensation represented a high amount in comparison to the revenues and purchasing power at the time.

Nonetheless, the norm regarding the dispensation fees was not new and one could not consider inflation to be the cause, because the norm was the one issued in 1868.²⁴ So in this context, one should ask whether this was the first request submitted to Rome for a dispensation by priest Ciura since he had taken over the parish. This could be the possible answer to the fact that the priest was not familiar with the dispensation fees paid to Rome, as well as regarding his lack of trust related to the correctness of the amounts required.

The answer of archpriest Laslo was that Rome was not to be compared to 'the Greeks from Istanbul' and that, in any case, he had been informed by secretary Matei that it was possible to reduce the fee to an amount of 50 gulden. As a counter-example he presented a similar case within the Orthodox community in Zlatna, where a dispensation of 100 gulden had to be paid in a case involving an even more distant relative. The threat of switching to the Orthodox faith was widespread, especially in communities with mixed confessions. As long as the decision was personal, its impact was relatively limited; but when an influent member of the community was involved, a member of an extended family, this threat of abandoning Greek-Catholicism in favour of another confession was carefully evaluated.

Another aspect I wish to insist upon regards the whole process of preparing the file in order to receive the dispensation. Archpriest Laslo constantly stated that obtaining the dispensation was not a problem at all, as long as the file was well compiled. Therefore he was very careful to describe the whole procedure in detail, to put forward all the possible reasons that should be mentioned in the dispensation request. At the same time he advised the priest to apply some pressure by means of the letter, by

²³ SJAAN, *Parohia Bucium Șasa*, D. 1/1885, ff. 1-2.

²⁴ SJAAN, *Fund Mitropolia Română Unită Blaj – Cabinetul mitropolitului*, file no. 864/1868, f. 89.

highlighting all the potential dangers that could arise from the rejection of the request: he resorted both to the spectre of the couple living together unmarried and to the threat of converting to Orthodoxy, as the Eastern Church would surely grant them the dispensation. Everything converged towards the good progress of things in order to keep the faithful happy, and, had the file been correctly made, there would have been a wedding feast the following autumn.

Nonetheless, one must still ask the question why the priest was so involved in the dispensation process. A possible explanation for all the manoeuvres comes from the necessity to rebuild the church and the confessional school, which were on the agenda of the Bucium Şasa community. In 1885 the Romanian Greek-Catholic community in the mining village of Bucium-Şasa (German: *Baumdorf*; Hungarian: *Bucsony*) was concerned with the renovation of the village church and confessional school, both much wanted by the church authorities and the community. The number of the faithful was rising and the church proved unable to accommodate them, reasons for which, the extension of the building and the restoration of its iconostasis were taken into consideration upon a recommendation from the archdiocese architect. In turn, the confessional school built in 1837 was in danger of becoming a public school because it no longer fulfilled the general standards stipulated in the Education Act by the Ministry of Cults and Public Instruction.²⁵ By the summer, these issues had become a priority for the parish priest, Iosif Ciura, as is shown in his official correspondence with the ecclesiastical authorities from the archpriestship or with those at the level of archdiocese.²⁶

In order to achieve this goal, the priest needed the cooperation and collaboration of the faithful: it is likely that solving an important problem for a notable member of the community, coming from an outstanding family, should offer exactly the necessary incentive for the support of his projects. Similar examples, motivated exactly by the same reasons come from the Greek-Catholic community of Cuzdrioara (Hungarian: *Kozarvar*; German: *Altenburg*) in the diocese of Gherla (Hungarian: *Szamosújvár*; German: *Neuschloss*).

Simion Retegan discovered two such cases, in which, in order to obtain a dispensation for important members of the community or for their

²⁵ For further details about the Romanian Greek-Catholic schools in Transylvania, at Daniela Mărza, *Învăţământ românesc în Transilvania. Şcolile Arhidiecezei de Alba Iulia şi Făgăraş la sfârşitul secolului al XIX-lea şi începutul secolului XX*, Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Cluj-Napoca, 2011, pp. 225-227.

²⁶ SJAAN, *Parohia Bucium-Şasa*) D. 2/1885, f. 53.

children, the priest invoked exactly this argument: the parents of those applying for the dispensation were former trustees, pillars of the community, who had actively contributed to the building of the church tower or to the building of the parish house. The dispensation was justified as 'a consolation for the services rendered' 'which would connect them even more 'to the merciful church.²⁷

In the same volume dedicated to Cuzdrioara, Simion Retegan concludes that a family's morality was assessed as positive or negative according to the public respect its members enjoyed.²⁸ His observation is extremely pertinent, considering that many deviations were intentionally overlooked in the case of people from the prosperous layer of the community, but severely sanctioned if these occurred in the homes of peasants or day-workers. Under these circumstances, a connection has to be established between the present study and extant sociological research on the topic of deviation and group psychology.

In his work dedicated to social issues particularly, Edwin Lemert states that the orientation towards norms and standardisation associated to modern societies is summarised in the attitude of punishing the diverter who does not align to the generally accepted rule. In this regard, a number of studies demonstrated that pecuniary punishments associated to law infringements were considered by those sanctioned as unavoidable for their acts; compliance or non-compliance became a question of money.²⁹ For those in possession of the necessary amount of money, the financial penalty associated to a deviation from the norms represented the way in which they could elude the rule.

The same author discusses active and passive social control: active social control refers to the implementation process of common goals and values which pertain to social integration, whereas the passive social control regards the maintenance of social order. Active social control is a continuous process, through which values are consciously examined, decisions are taken according to the dominant values and actions are conducted towards the established goal.³⁰

Lemert considers that sociologists should take interest not necessarily in transgressions, in by-passing norms, but rather in what the society or the group in which the individual acts considered to be moral

²⁷ Simion Retegan, *Drumul greu al modernizării. Un veac din istoria unui sat transilvănean: Cuzdrioara 1820-1920*, (Cluj-Napoca, Argonaut, 2011), pp. 49-50.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 50.

²⁹ Edwin M. Lemert, *Human Deviance, Social Problems, and Social Control*, New Jersey, 1967, p. 11.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

failures or transgressions, because society will decide if the individual in question must be punished or not based on the common values it shares.³¹ The societal reactions refer both to the reactions of other members of the group, like moral indignation against deviation, and to the effective control actions of such deviations. Sometimes, these show the paradox of supporting, but also penalising the actions and the categories of people classified as deviant. In this manner, previous studies have underlined the necessity of deviation in promoting group solidarity by emphasising what is right and moral, and at the same time, by keeping the alert mechanisms at a high level.³²

One of Howard Becker's studies highlights another important aspect: the fact that, in time, the parameters which establish what is licit or illicit in a society change. Thus, it is possible to consider certain behaviour lawful in a certain period of time or in a certain context, or a deviation can be more easily accepted if it comes from an individual who enjoys a certain degree of tolerance from the group he belongs to.³³

By analysing the present case within the framework of conclusions related to deviance, it is noticeable that many of these are valid: Dumitru David enjoyed a significant position in the society he lived in, was a member of a large family who contributed to the establishment of rules. At the same time he possessed financial power, which allowed him to initiate a complex process of eluding the norms by obtaining the dispensation to marry the sister of his deceased wife. The influence he exerted in the community ensured the help of the parish priest, who, in turn, was respected and received help from the archpriest. They were joined at the central level by another member of the group who had the final decision power in this case. All these factors lead to greater simplification and even relief from paying the dispensation fee. The case sheds light on an entire system of relationships, a support network which, if need be, was activated in order to support the endeavours of a member of the group who found himself in need.

In the end, the one obstacle in the path of successfully activating the entire network seems to have been Elenuța, who, by changing her mind, threatened the entire system: 'So Dumitru made us all roll up our sleeves, he should have first made sure Elenuța loves him, then make us all set to work. I tried to make excuses for him in front of the secretary who informed us, so

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 41-42.

³³ Howard S. Becker, „On Labeling Outsiders”, in *Deviance. The Interactionist Perspective. Text and Readings in the Sociology Of Deviance*, 2nd Edition, Eds. Earl Rubington, Martin S. Weinberg, New York, 1973, pp. 13-14.

that he doesn't blame us for making him work for nothing. This will be a lesson for all of us'.³⁴

As a conclusion for the story, I will let the archives speak again; they show that in february 1886 Dumitru David, 58, got married for the second time to Maria David, Moise's daughter, a 26 year-old woman from Bucium Șasa.³⁵ He had three children with her and passed away in 1903 still enjoying a lot of influence in the community of Bucium-Șasa.

³⁴ SJAAN, *Parohia Bucium-Șasa*, D. 2/1885, f. 64.

³⁵ *Idem*, *Protocolul cununărilor Bucium Șasa*, f. 4.