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A Friar-Bishop in the Episcopal Seat of Transylvania

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Abstract: Focused on the election of the bishop of Transylvania at the beginning of the fourteenth century, this study aims to present the circumstances in which friar Benedict, member of the Dominican Order, reached the episcopal seat of the Transylvanian diocese. However, in order to acquire this position, the first mendicant bishop of Transylvania had to file a litigation that claimed time, money, and numerous trips. Taking into account the ecclesiastical electoral practice from the turn of the thirteeenth-fourteenth centuries, as well as the regulations of canon law, the present study will also try to identify the political factors that influenced the election and ordination of friar Benedict. Since the occupation of the episcopal seat of Transylvania also had repercurssions on the strengthening of the central power, held to a greater or lesser extent by King Carol I of Anjou, a process in which the Holy See was also actively involved by sending the papal legate Gentilis, the study will try to explore the factors that ultimately led to Benedict's acquisition of the most important ecclesiastical office in medieval Transylvania. Finally, the study proposes a brief presentation of the career of Benedict, the Dominican who became a bishop, the role he played in the recovery of the Holy Crown from Voivode Ladislau Kán, and the activity carried out for over a decade as bishop of Transylvania.

Keywords: designation of bishop, medieval Transylvania, friar-bishop, Bishop Benedict, Ladislau Kán, Gentilis, Holy Crown

Rezumat: Concentrat asupra alegerii episcopului Transilvaniei la începutul secolului al XIV-lea, acest studiu îşi propune să prezinte împrejurimile prin care fratele Benedict, membru al Ordinului Dominican a ajuns în scaunul episcopal al diecezei transilvane.

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Pentru a dobândi însă acest lucru, primul episcop mendicant al Transilvaniei a fost nevoit să poarte un proces care a reclamat timp, bani şi numeroase călătorii. Luând în considerare practica electorală ecleziastică de la turnura secolelor XIII-XIV, precum şi reglementările dreptului canonic, studiul va încerca să identifice şi factorii politici care au influenţat alegerea şi hirotonirea călugărului Benedict. Deoarece ocuparea scaunului episcopal al Transilvaniei avea repercusiuni şi asupra întăririi puterii centrale, deţinute într-o măsură mai mare sau mai mică de regele Carol I de Anjou, proces în care s-a implicat activ şi scaunul papal prin trimiterea legatului papal Gentilis, studiul va încerca să exploreze acei factori care au condus într-un final la dobândirea celei mai importante funcţii ecleziastice din Transilvania medievală de către Benedict. De asemenea, studiul îşi propune prezentarea succintă a carierei lui Benedict, dominicanul devenit episcop, rolul jucat de acesta în recuperarea Sfintei Coroane de la voievodul Ladislau Kan, şi activitatea de peste un deceniu desfăşurată în calitate de episcop al Transilvaniei.

Cuvinte cheie: desemnarea episcopului, Transilvania medievală, călugăr-episcop, episcopul Benedict, Ladislau Kán, Gentilis, Sfânta Coroană

On 27-28 November 1307,[1] Peter Monoszló, who had served as head of the Transylvanian bishopric for thirty-seven years, passed away. This was the longest period any medieval prelate had spent on the episcopal see of Transylvania. Upon his death, Transylvania was to go through "tough and troubled times," to quote a document of the time.

[1] The uncertainty concerning the exact time of Bishop Peter's death comes from the contradictory information encountered in the proceedings of a trial regarding the election of Fr. Benedict, prior of the Dominican convent on the isle (Insula Leporum/today Margaret Island) in Buda. The trial, which was presided over by Cardinal Gentilis, the papal legate, will be examined in depth in this article. According to one of the documents, Bishop Peter died "anno Domini millesimo trecentesimo septimo, secunda feria proxima ante festum beati Andree apostoli" (27 November 1307), while another suggests that the date was "in anno Domini millesimo CCCVII. in vigilia vigilie beati Andree" (28 November 1307), see Antal Pór (ed.), *Acta legationis Cardinalis Gentilis. Gentilis bíbornok magyarországi követségének okiratai* / Monumenta Vaticana historiam regni Hungariae illustrantia. Vatikáni magyar okirattár. I/2/ (Budapest: Franklin, 1885, hereinafter: *Acta Gentilis*), vol. I/2, 155, 161; Zsigmond Jakó – Géza Hegyi – András W. Kovács (eds.), *Codex diplomaticus Transsylvaniae. Diplomata, epistolae et alia instrumenta litteraria res Transsylvanas illustrantia. Erdélyi okmánytár. Oklevelek, levelek és más írásos emlékek Erdély történetéhez* (5 vols, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó–Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára–BTK Történettudományi Intézet, 1997–2021, hereinafter: *CDTrans*), vol. 2, no. 94, cf. no. 141. Considering that the date of 27 November is mentioned several times, it appears to be the most accurate. On the bishop's biography, see Mihai Kovács, '"Semper meliora prospiciuntur et utiliora attenduntur." Monoszló nb. Péter erdélyi püspök társadalmi és politikai kapcsolatai' ["Semper meliora prospiciuntur et utiliora attenduntur." Political and Social Relationships of Peter Monoszló Bishop of Transylvania], *Erdélyi Múzeum,* 77.1 (2015): 1-13.

The question that arises is not what was the cause of that, but who caused it? The culprit was, as expected, the powerful Voivode Ladislau Kán. There had been no episcopal elections in the Transylvanian diocese for the past four decades so the event the members of the chapter were about to attend was of the utmost importance. According to the canons and customs of the thirteenth century, the last century of the Arpadian Age in the Hungarian Kingdom, in the overwhelming majority of cases the chapter was to elect the king's candidate as bishop, who would be later confirmed by the pope.[2] Canons could not *de facto* exercise their right to elect the bishop. However, things were about to change in the first decade of the fourteenth century. As the royal authority weakened, chapters were now not just formally entitled to elect the bishop but could exercise that right. In 1308, when elections for the Bishop of Transylvania took place, although Charles Robert considered himself King of Hungary,[3] he did not have sufficient leverage to influence the canons' opinions about the new prelate. This gave the chapter an opportunity to exert its voting rights.[4] According to the provisions of canon law, the cathedral chapter was bound to elect the new bishop within three months. If the deadline was not met, the chapter would forfeit this prerogative. In such situations, the right to designate the one who would occupy the episcopal see would pass unto the next higher authority, in this case, the Archbishop of Kalocsa, who would, of course, have to take the king's nominee into account. The next compulsory stages were the papal confirmation and the bishop's

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[2] László Solymosi, 'Egyházi-politikai viszonyok a pápai hegemónia idején (13. század)' [Ecclesiastical-political relations during the papal hegemony (thirteenth century)], in István Zombori (ed.), *Magyarország és a Szentszék kapcsolatának ezer éve* [A thousand years of the relationship between Hungary and the Holy See] (Budapest: Magyar Egyháztörténeti Enciklopédia Munkaközösség, 1996), 47-48.

[3] The uncertainty arises from the fact that Charles of Anjou was crowned king of Hungary three times: first in 1301, second in 1309 and third in 1310. The repeated ceremonies were necessary since by this time the triple rule had already been established, according to which the kings of Hungary had to be crowned by the Archbishop of Esztergom, in Székesfehérvár, with the Holy Crown, and for the coronation to be valid, all three conditions had to be met together. Yet, the most important element of the rule of three was the crown itself. Charles of Anjou's first two coronations, however, took place with an occasional crown, and in addition, other elements were not fulfilled. Thus, the third coronation of Charles with the Holy Crown complied with the triple rule, despite the fact that Charles himself counted the beginning of his reign from his first coronation, namely from 1301. Enikő Csukovits, *Az Anjouk Magyarországon I. I. Károly és uralkodása (1301–1342)* [The Anjous in Hungary I. Charles I and his reign (1301–1342)] (Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont Történettudományi Intézet, 2012), 55-56, 59-61.

[4] It should be noted that the number of cathedral chapters had grown since the mid-thirteenth century, as the middle class of the ecclesiastical society, comprising canons, consolidated itself in several dioceses (in Pécs, for instance). One of the signs that chapters were now enjoying greater independence was the role they played in episcopal elections; of course, they also had a patrimony of their own and separate legal status.

ordination.[5] Towards the end of the first decade of the fourteenth century, the chapter of Transylvania had to go through this entire procedure.[6] However, while this routine had unfolded without major complications in similar situations in the past, things appeared to be far from simple now. With the demise of Peter Monoszló, the relative balance of powers had been destabilised. Up until then Ladislau Kán had been on good terms with the church of the Holy Archangel Michael in Transylvania, out of respect for the bishop's power, who was his elderly relative and who had supported him by challenging the excommunication sentence passed against him.[7] After Monoszló's death, however, the voivode deemed it was time to consolidate not just his temporal powers, but also his influence upon the ecclesiastical authorities. In his view, the easiest way to achieve that goal was to secure the Transylvanian episcopacy for his underage son. He straight away occupied the diocesan estates and the bishop's residence to give weight to his claim and enhance his odds of success. As he also wished to keep the appearance of legality, the voivode motivated his action by stating that his son was the late bishop's rightful successor (*postulatus*).[8] After more than a year and a half, in July 1309, a new prelate was appointed to the helm of the diocese. He was not the son of Ladislau Kán, however, but Benedict, the first mendicant Bishop of Transylvania.[9] Another year would pass before Cardinal Gentilis in the name of the Pope publicly confirmed the election of Benedict, on 2 July 1310, ordaining him as bishop in the presence of numerous high prelates. All the steps taken towards securing the episcopacy had thus been completed: election, confirmation, and ordination. And yet again, to achieve this, Fr. Benedict, the Bishop elect, had to go through a trial that entailed financial expenses, time, and countless journeys. In the present study, I shall outline the circumstances in which friar Benedict was elected from the

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[5] The canonical foundations of episcopal elections were laid down in the *Decretum Gratiani*, later supplemented by numerous synodal decrees. For details on the election of medieval bishops and the selection criteria, see Péter Erdő, *Egyházjog a középkori Magyarországon* [Ecclesiastical law in medieval Hungary] (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2001), 182-199.

[6] Adinel Dincă, 'Aprecieri preliminare privind alegerea episcopului Transilvaniei în secolele XIII-XIV' [Preliminary assessments regarding the election of the bishop of Transylvania in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries], in Susana Andea (ed.), *Transilvania (sec. XIII-XVII). Studii istorice* [Transylvania (thirteenth-seventeenth centuries). Historical studies] (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Academiei Române, 2005), 162-186.

[7] Gyula Kristó (ed.), *Documenta res Hungaricas tempore regum Andegavensium illustrantia. Anjou-kori oklevéltár* (Budapest–Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1992-1998, hereinafter: *DocHungAndeg*), vol. 2, no. 91-93, 114; Tibor Róbert Varga, 'Az állam és az egyház kapcsolata a 14. századi Erdélyben' [The connection between the state and the Church in the fourteenth century Transylvania], *Magyar Egyháztörténeti Vázlatok,* 23.3-4 (2011): 8-9.

[8] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 74; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 301; *Acta Gentilis*, vol. II/1, 155.

[9] For the most comprehensive overview of Benedict's episcopacy, see János Temesváry, *Erdély középkori püspökei* [Medieval bishops of Transylvania] (Cluj-Kolozsvár: Minerva, 1922), 112-140.

ranks of the Dominican Order to the episcopal see of Transylvania,[10] as well as the main events that marked the ten years of his episcopacy.

The election of the Bishop of Transylvania

In January 1308, when they were summoned to elect their new bishop, the members of the chapter of Transylvania were already aware of the voivode's intentions. This is attested by the fact that the canons who were opposed to the election of Ladislau Kán's son sought refuge in the convents of Alba Iulia – the youngest in the Dominican friary and the others most likely in the monastery of the Augustinian Hermits. They were mistaken to think, however, that they could thus avoid participating in the bishop's election because Ladislau Kán had them brought by force to the electoral assembly. Other opponents, such as the older canons, were simply incarcerated (only to be released a few days later, on certain terms). Having thus eliminated any opposition and obtained the canons' consent by force, the voivode wished to give even greater weight to his position and, on 7 January 1308, as the historian Antal Pór indicates, he "showed up [in the electoral assembly], seated himself in its midst, and did not appoint any vote-counting commission or even permit the voting to take place, but had the charter stipulating his son's election read out loud, demanding that it should be confirmed right away with the chapter's authentic seal and with the canons' and archdeacons' own seals."[11] Tudor Sălăgean suggests that Kán was following the pattern provided by the election of Nicholas Kőszegi as Bishop of Győr; however, considering that this could only have happened after the death of his predecessor, Bishop Tivadar, on

[10] This subject has also been approached in another context, see Mária Lupescu Makó, 'Benedek, az erdélyi egyházmegye első szerzetespüspöke' [Benedict, the first monastic bishop of the diocese of Transylvania], in József Csurgai Horváth (ed.), *Az első 300 év Magyarországon és Európában. A Domonkos-rend a középkorban* [The first 300 years in Hungary and Europe. The Dominican Order in the Middle Ages] (Székesfehérvár: Alba Civitas Történeti Alapítvány Press, 2017), 277-294 and Eadem, 'Între canoane și realitatea politică: practică electorală în episcopia Transilvaniei la începutul secolului al XIV-lea' [Between the canons and the political reality: Electoral practice in the Bishopric of Transylvania at the beginning of the fourteenth century], in Ionuț Costea – Radu Mârza – Valentin Orga (eds.), *Pasiune și rigoare. Noi tentații istoriografice. Omagiu profesorului Ovidiu Gitta* [Passion and rigor. New historiograhic temptations. Homage to Professor Ovidu Ghitta] (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut & Mega, 2022), 157-174. More recently, the situation of the Transylvanian diocese during the time of Ladislau Kán has been approached by Sándor Hunyadi, 'Az erdélyi püspökség és székeskáptalan Kán László vajdasága alatt' [The chapter and the Diocese of Transylvanian under the voivodeship of Ladislau Kán], *Belvedere Meridionale*, 33.1 (2021): 19-46.

[11] Antal Pór, 'Bevezetés,' [Introduction], in *Acta Gentilis,* lxxxviii; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 74; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 301.

1 May 1308, this supposition can easily be eliminated.[12] Pór emphasises that the Transylvanian voivode intervened to support his son's candidacy without any prior inquiries and without asking for anyone's opinion. Thus, by eluding the vote, the voivode ordered a document to be authenticated with the seals of the canons, archdeacons, and the chapter claiming that the members of the chapter wished his son to be the next bishop. Ladislau Kán's desire was not unique in that age. As seen above, in 1308, Ivan Kőszegi, the oligarch ruling the western parts of the Hungarian Kingdom, secured the election of Nicholas, his illegitimate son, to the episcopal see of Győr.[13]

Ladislau Kán appears to have spent the year 1308 trying to consolidate his son's – and indirectly his own – position by seeking to obtain the episcopal see.[14] The escalating tithe-related disputes between the chapter of Transylvania and the priests in the deanery of Mediaş was used by the voivode to his advantage, for he could thus pose as protector of the chapter and reward the canons' "amicable gesture."[15] The Transylvanian Saxons claimed that in 1308, when Cardinal Gentilis, the papal legate, had come to Hungary, they wanted to submit a complaint before him but the voivode had not allowed them to pass through his province.[16] Not only did he not grant them safe passage, but he also summoned them to pay their dues to the chapter and the bishop right away, and to forbear seeking litigation before the legate.[17] These threats were to be the prelude to a lengthy trial.[18] It should be noted that Ladislau Kán was guilty on two

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[12] Tudor Sălăgean, *Transylvania in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century* (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2016), 181 cf. Ádám Vajk, '"Mibe került ezen hűségi levél?" Kőszegi Miklós győri püspöksége és az országos politika' ["What did this letter of loyalty cost?" Nicholas Kőszegi's bishopric in Győr and statewide politics], in Gábor Nemes – Ádám Vajk (eds.), *In labore fructus. Jubileumi tanulmányok Győregyházmegye történetéből* [*In labore fructus.* Jubilee studies from the history of Győr Diocese] /A Győri Egyházmegyei Levéltár kiadványai, Források, feldolgozások 13./ (Győr: Győri Egyházmegyei Levéltár, 2011), 416.

[13] Vajk, 'Mibe került ezen hűségi levél?', 411-440; Attila Zsoldos, 'Kings and Oligarchs in Hungary at the Turn of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries', *Hungarian Historical Review,* 2.2 (2013): 227-228.

[14] Gyula Kristó, 'Kán László és Erdély' [Ladislau Kán and Transylvania], in Idem, *Tanulmányok az Árpád-korról* [Studies on the Árpád age] (Budapest: Magvető, 1983), 285-286, 288-290.

[15] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 75-77.

[16] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 87-88, 90-91, cf. *Ibidem*, no. 101, 102, 105, 110.

[17] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 89, cf. *Ibidem*, no. 114.

[18] On the protocol of the litigation between the chapter of Transylvania and the Saxon deaneries, which took place between 8 January and 3 July 1309, see *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 194; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 98, and *Ibidem*, no. 96, 97, 99, 103, 104, 109; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 552. One of the witnesses was the Dominican friar Benedict, from the convent on the isle in Buda (between 9 June and 3 July 1309), see *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 121. On the conflict between the Saxon deaneries and the chapter of Transylvania, with particular focus on the events of 1277, see also Cosmin Popa-Gorjanu, 'Conflict și memorie în Transilvania secolelor XIII−XIV: Episcopia Transilvaniei și Gyan, fiul lui Alard' [Conflict and memory in Transylvania in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries: The

accounts: he got involved in an ecclesiastical matter and he abused his public, lay authority.[19]

Cardinal Gentilis, who came from the ranks of the Franciscan Order, was the legate of Pope Clement V to Hungary from 1308 to 1311. He was there on a twofold mission, fulfilling all his diplomatic duties related to the recognition of Charles Robert's succession to the throne of Hungary[20] and carrying out equally important legislative duties, as his decrees were meant to consolidate the eccleciastical institutions that had suffered significant damage during the interregnum. The measures he adopted concerned the retrieval of the church's patrimony, organising canonical elections for the vacant sees, and reinforcing ecclesiastical discipline. His aims may be determined based on the general decrees adopted in the synods he convened and the resolutions he issued in various trials.[21] Research on the assignation of ecclesiastical dignities in the Kingdom of Hungary includes analyses of the episcopal elections in Pécs and Transylvania which have become known to us thanks to the documents issued in the context of Gentilis's legation.[22]

Bishopric of Transylvania and Gyan, the son of Alard], in Adrian Andrei Rusu (ed.), *Secolul al XIII-lea pe meleagurile locuite de către români* [The thirteenth century on the lands inhabited by Romanians] (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2007), 143-174.

[19] Ladislau Kán extended his authority over the Transylvanian Saxons in Mediaș, Șeica and Biertan. He separated them from the Saxons in Sibiu, alongside whom they had enjoyed similar freedoms, see Kristó, 'Kán László', 284-285.

[20] Moreover, he exhibited diplomatic astuteness in securing the triumph of the Holy See, while also paying attention to the Hungarian nobility's radically different stance on the matter of the succession to the throne of Hungary, see György Rácz, 'Az Anjou-ház és a Szentszék' [The House of Anjou and the Holy See], in Zombori (ed.), *Magyarország és a Szentszék kapcsolatának ezer éve*, 59-60; György Rácz: 'Gentilis és Károly. Levélírás Pozsonyban – koronázás Fehérvárott. A papír megjelenése Magyarországon' [Gentilis and Charles. Letter writing in Bratislava – coronation in Fehérvár. The appearence of the paper in Hungary], in Terézia Kerny – András Smohay (eds.), *Károly Róbert és Székesfehérvár* [King Charles Robert and Székesfehérvár] (Székesfehérvár: Székesfehérvári Egyházmegyei Múzeum, 2011), 34-35.

[21] Viktória Kovács has conducted a complex analysis of the ecclesiastical measures adopted by Cardinal Gentilis in Hungary, dividing them into several categories, as follows: 1) the distribution of benefices, ecclesiastical governance, 2) the protection of rights, 3) ecclesiastical jurisdiction, 4) church discipline, 5) the assets of the church, see Viktória Kovács, 'Causae coram nobis ventilatae. Adalékok Gentilis de Monteflorum pápai legátus magyarországi egyházi bíráskodási tevékenységéhez (1308-1311)' [Causae coram nobis ventilatae. Appendices to the ecclesiastical judicial activity of the papal legate Gentilis de Monteflorum in Hungary (1308-1311)], in Tamás Fedeles – Márta Font – Gergely Kiss (eds.), *Kor – szak – határ. A Kárpát-medence és a szomszédos birodalmak (900–1800)* [Age - period - limit. The Carpathian Basin and the neighboring empires (900-1800)] (Pécs: Pécsi Tudományegyetem, 2013), 75-99, especially 76.

[22] See the document concerning the bishop's election in Pécs in *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 126-152. For a discussion on these sources, see László Koszta, 'Az 1306-os pécsi püspökválasztás. Megjegyzések a pécsi püspökség 14. század eleji archontológiájához' [Bishop election in Pécs in 1306. Notes on the archontology of the Diocese of Pécs at the beginning of the fourteenth century], *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis de Attila József nominatae. Acta Historica,* 98 (1993): 37-52. See the documentary sources on the election of the Bishop of Transylvania in *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2,

These sources offer particularly important information about the procedure for the appointment of the two bishops and the abuses committed by the oligarchs. The circumstances in which the election of Transylvania's bishop occurred were examined by master Philip of Sardinia, canon of Oristano, who held a doctorate in canon law, and by master Ioannes/Vannes of Aretio, canon of Osimo, who also served as the legate's general auditor and chaplain. They received two search warrants for the case under trial, from 10 December 1308 to 2 July 1310. The first came on 20 December 1308, when Cardinal Gentilis entrusted them with the mission to inquire into the complaint filed by Peter of Paris – who styled himself as the commissioner of the Transylvanian chapter – concerning the organisation of a new election, and then to communicate to him the findings of their investigation.[23] The second warrant was issued on 25 August 1309, when masters Peter of Paris and Nicholas, both canons of the Transylvanian chapter,[24] had requested the confirmation of the unanimously elected bishop, Fr. Benedict, prior of the Dominican convent from the isle in Buda.[25] The positive answer to the request made in December 1308 came as late as the summer of 1309,[26] when the political competition took a different turn. While in the spring of the same year, the Saxon parish priests had shown that the ecclesiastical institutions in Transylvania were engaged in an unequal "battle" with a particularly powerful voivode, who controlled the assets of the diocese,[27] things had changed by July. This idea is supported by a letter the Saxon deans sent Cardinal Gentilis. They informed him that, while the lay authority (that is, Voivode Kán) had forcefully prevented the members of the cathedral chapter to elect a new bishop by 1 July,[28] at that time [on 19 July], the Voivode of Transylvania had assured the canons in writing, through Dean Elijah, that he would not hinder the election of the new bishop in any way, either for his son's status as *postulatus* or for any

154-177. For a detailed analysis of the subject, see: Pór, 'Bevezetés', lxxxviii-xc. Other tangential approaches: Dincă, 'Aprecieri preliminare', 181-182; Géza Hegyi, 'Az erdélyi dékánkanonoki tisztség betöltése az Árpád- és az Anjou-korban' [Holding the function of Transylvanian dean-canon during the Árpád and Anjou ages], in Péter G. Tóth – Pál Szabó (eds.), *Középkortörténeti tanulmányok 6. A VI. Medievisztikai PhD-konferencia (Szeged, 2009. június 4-5.) előadásai* [Medieval history studies 6. The lectures of the VIth Medieval PhD-Conference (Szeged, June 4-5, 2009)] (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 2010), 65-66.

[23] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 155-156; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 94.

[24] On the ecclesiastical careers of the two, see Géza Hegyi, 'Az erdélyi káptalan Árpád- és Anjou-kori archontológiája (1199–1387)' [Archontology of the Transylvanian Chapter during the Árpád and Anjou ages (1199–1387)], *Turul*, 92.2 (2019): 88-89.

[25] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 156; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 138.

[26] On 2 June 1309, the episcopal see of Transylvania was still vacant, see *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 123.

[27] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 201-203; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 114.

[28] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 149.

other reasons. However, the voivode was only willing to return the diocesan estates[29] if the election favoured Fr. Peter from the Order of St. Augustine, the Dominican friar Benedict, or one of his own men.[30] This subtle blackmail attempt sheds new light on the allegedly "free" episcopal election. In any case, the members of the cathedral chapter took advantage of the opportunity of a vote with limited options, which, after having been postponed for over half a year, was finally held on 24 July 1309.[31] This time, the election was, at least in technical terms, "compliant with the statutes, as [the canons] met in session in the cathedral." "To put an immediate end to the perilous trials to which the Transylvanian church had been subjected," the chapted accepted the suggestion of master Benedict, Archdeacon of Ozd,[32] and unanimously elected Fr. Benedict, prior of the Dominican convent from the isle in Buda – who was one of the voivode's two candidates – as Bishop of Transylvania. The canons solemnly announced their decision both to the clergy and to the people in the diocese.[33] Later, during the trial, master Benedict, Archdeacon of Ozd, and the chapter's commissioner would explain their decision as follows: on the one hand, out of all the candidates, Fr. Benedict was the one the voivode trusted the most, and, on the other hand, he was well known to the canons, considering that he had been prior of the convent in Alba Iulia, as well as a friend and advisor of the late Bishop Peter Monoszló.[34] This information is confirmed by a letter that Paul, the Dominican provincial in Hungary, wrote to Gentilis a year later. When the master provincial asked the legate to confirm the episcopacy of Benedict, he invoked the following argument: the chapter had elected as bishop a cleric "who was only too familiar with the situation there."[35]

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[29] Master Benedict, accredited to represent the chapter of Transylvania, mentioned the assets and *the fortresses* of the church as early as December 1309, see *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 159. Cf. Sălăgean, *Transylvania in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century*, 171; Hunyadi, 'Az erdélyi püspökség', 29.

[30] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 170-171, 174-175; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 131, 149; Hegyi, 'Az erdélyi káptalan', 82. Cf. Idem, 'Az erdélyi dékánkanonoki tisztség betöltése', 71.

[31] Sălăgean considers that this election took place two months later and that the documents referring to it, presented before the papal legate's inquiry commission, were forged, given the complicity between the Transylvanian voivode and the canons. This assumption is, however, based on the erroneous interpretation of a document. Tudor Sălăgean, *Un voievod al Transilvaniei: Ladislau Kán (1294-1315)* [A voivode of Transylvania: Ladislau Kán (1294-1315)] (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2007), 147-157, cf. Géza Hegyi, 'Új utak a román történetírásban?' [New tendencies in Romanian historiography], *Erdélyi Múzeum,* 72.1-2 (2010): 159-160.

[32] Hegyi, 'Az erdélyi káptalan', 80, 85.

[33] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 157-159; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 133. The election of Fr. Benedict by unanimous vote is consistently emphasised also in the trial's subsequent stages. It is an important aspect considering that only a unanimous vote would have been deemed valid in this case, see *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 174-176; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 159.

[34] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 174-176; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 159.

[35] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 159-160; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 137.

Before briefly presenting the career of Benedict, the Dominican friar turned bishop, we shall focus on the events of the two months leading to his election, a period when something must have occurred to determine Ladislau Kán to relinquish the idea of elevating his son to the episcopal see. As seen above, in May 1309 the voivode had mentioned his son as the future bishop. However, five days before the elections, on 19 July, he informed the members of the chapter, who probably had already convened for the vote, that he would not obstruct the election in any way but would only return the episcopal assets if one of his followers were elected. The outcome shows that while the voivode had given up supporting the candidacy of his son, he nonetheless managed to impose one of his favourites to the episcopal see. Thus, the "freedom" Ladislau Kán offered was, in fact, void of content. It was rather a rational decision on the part of the voivode, who realised that the pope would never confirm his son as bishop – a son about whom the historical documents offer no other information[36] – because of the irregularities committed during the voting process. Hence, he chose the lesser evil and imposed the election of another candidate nominated by him.

[36] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 155, 161. We do not know which of Ladislau Kán's sons this was. We know the names of two of his sons, masters Ladislau the Elder and Ladislau the Younger (*CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 208, 210, 248). One of these was appointed Voivode of Transylvania in a document dated August 1315 (*CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 246). This may indicate Ladislau Kán's intention to grant hereditary status to the title of voivode. The rank of bishop may have been reserved for one of his sons called Ladislau, while the other was to become voivode. This strategy was most likely part of the oligarchs' attempts to accrue as much secular and ecclesiastical power as possible, sparing no effort to achieve this goal, from invasions to arranged marriages (Zsoldos, 'Kings and Oligarchs', 227-228). The voivode may have had other sons besides the two Ladislaus because, after his death, they became the leaders of the Transylvanian uprising against Charles Robert and the kind mentioned the "disloyal sons" of the late Voivode Ladislau in the letters patent by which he rewarded his faithful servants. One such document, issued in August 1322, mentions the "rebellion of Ladislau, son of the late Voivode of Transylvania, and *his brothers*" (emphasis mine, *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 438). Phrases like the "disloyal sons" and "rebellious sons" of the late Voivode Ladislau speak volumes about the situation in Transylvania during the uprising of Ladislau Kán's descendants (*CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 423, 482, cf. Csukovits, *Az Anjouk Magyarországon I*, 74; Attila Zsoldos, 'Hűséges oligarchák' [Loyal oligarchs], in Magdolna Baráth – Antal Molnár (eds.), *A történettudomány szolgálatában. Tanulmányok a 70 éves Gecsényi Lajos tiszteletére* [In the service of the historical science. Studies in honor of Lajos Gecsényi on his 70th birthday] (Budapest–Győr: Magyar Országos Levéltár Győr-Moson-Sopron Megye Győri Levéltára, 2012), 353-354. In 1329, the sons of Voivode Ladislau were referred to as "being even at this time in contact with the rebels", attacking and setting fire to royal demesnes, as well as depopulating them through repeated murders (*CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 644.), cf. Pál Engel, 'Az ország újraegyesítése. I. Károly küzdelmei az oligarchák ellen (1310–1323)' [The reunification of the country. Charles I struggles against the oligarchs (1310–1323)], *Századok*, 122.1-2 (1988): 352, 405-406. For an older article about the Kán lineage (with a genealogical tree), see Mór Wertner, 'Újabb nemzetségi kutatások VIII. A Kán-nemzetség erdélyi vagy vajdai ága' [New genealogy researches VIII. The Transylvanian or the vojvode branch of the Kán kindred], *Turul*, 26 (1908) 122-129, for details, see Kristó, 'Kán László', 275-279.

The events of the following months, when the canons filed numerous complaints, claiming that even the second election had been non-statutory, show that Benedict himself probably did not have the canons' full, *unanimous* support, and the chapter was reluctant to accept the voivode's interference in the episcopal election. Analysing the circumstances in which the vote took place, we can notice that only fifteen of the twenty-four members of the chapter[37] participated in this event, but they all agreed to elect Benedict. The election document, authenticated with the canons' signatures and hanging seals, attests their endorsement of the new bishop.[38] Thus, based on the votes expressed by the canons who were present in the Alba Iulia cathedral, the ballot may indeed have been unanimous. However, if we consider that nine canonical members were absent, the chapter's unanimous choice may be questioned. Shortly after the election, "the chapter" informed Gentilis that Benedict's election had been rushed by several canons excluded from the chapter, in particular by cantor Thomas, who had been repeatedly convicted for his deeds.[39] It was clear that "the chapter" had not been represented by the fifteen canons who had supported Benedict's election and the opponents had to be found among the nine other canons who had not been present. We do not have too much information about four of these,[40] but five others had had "leave of absence". Some of the reasons that had prevented them from voting were explained during the trial. Of the five canons who had acceptable grounds for not attending the election, master Gaşpar was in Buda, Nicholas, the son of Gabriel, was in Oradea, where he had another prebend, or on his father's estates in the area of Sătmar, Peter of Paris, the son of Loránd, was in Eger, where he was provost of the local chapter, and Philip's young son was in Trnava, with his father. The absentees included John, the Provost of Alba Iulia, who was in Buda at the time of the election, and on 30 August 1309 he submitted a claim concerning both the voting process and the bishop.[41] We cannot assume that his absence was premeditated, considering that, beginning in the fourteenth century, provosts were rarely ever present in the capitular residences. However, Provost John's absence may have been somewhat deliberate. He had probably learned about the chapter's intentions regarding

[37] There were twenty-four canons in the chapter of Transylvania in 1331, see Elemér Mályusz, *Egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon* [Ecclesiastical society in medieval Hungary] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1971), 117.
[38] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 133.
[39] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 142.
[40] One of those absent "without leave" was probably Gregory, former Provost of Transylvania. So were masters Peter of Paris and Nicholas, who were in Buda shortly after (or even during) the election, see *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 138; Temesváry, *Erdély középkori püspökei*, 126.
[41] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 159. On their ecclesiastical careers, see Hegyi, 'Az erdélyi káptalan', 79, 80, 89. There is no John in the list of provosts, see *Ibidem*, 74.

Benedict's election and that is why he left for Buda, to try to obstruct the electoral process in the proximity of Gentilis. We could also suspect that he was behind "the chapter" that had informed the legate Gentilis about the misdeeds of cantor Thomas and the other canons, as part of his plan to thwart Benedict's election. Provost John was to achieve his goal only later, at the end of August 1309, when, as shown above, he submitted a claim. Thus, following the election of 24 July, there were two plans of action: on the one hand, there was a trial started by those who contested the election, and on the other hand, there was the reaction of the Bishop elect Benedict, coupled with the measures he and his supporters took to ensure his confirmation in the episcopal see. Before discussing the details of this extraordinary trial, let us see the reaction of the Dominican friar elected as bishop.

Fr. Benedict learned about his election from masters Nicholas and Peter of Paris, canons, while he was still in Buda. By 17 August he had already received the consent of Fr. Paul, the Dominican provincial of Hungary, to accept the episcopacy.[42] Benedict needed this consent because of a provision adopted in the Dominican Order in the early 1220s, which stipulated that the friars who wished to assume higher offices in the secular ecclesiastical hierarchy would need their superior's approval. This provision was seconded by another, which stated that in case a Dominican was elected as an ecclesiastical official – for instance, bishop – the candidate was bound to suspend his membership in the Order of Preachers.[43] That was the case of Benedict, who had to suspend his status as Dominican friar throughout the period in which he occupied the episcopal see, that is, until his death. On 17 August, in another letter sent by the same provincial Paul, he requested Cardinal Gentilis to confirm the unanimous election of Fr. Benedict, prior of the Dominican convent from the isle in Buda, as Bishop of Transylvania.[44] One week later, the election decree issued in July and attested with the 16 hanging seals of the chapter and the attending canons – together with the two above-mentioned letters requesting confirmation that had been sent by the provincial Paul, and the acceptance letter for the Dominican prior from Buda – was handed over to the legate in his chapel

[42] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 159; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 136.

[43] Benedictus Maria Reichert (ed.), *Acta capitulorum generalium Ordinis Praedicatorum* (9 vols, Romae: Typographia Polyglotta S. C. De Propaganda Fide, 1898-1904), vol. I, 235; William A. Hinnebusch, *Brève histoire de l'Ordre dominicain*. Adaptée par Guy Bedouelle (Paris: Cerf, 1990), 65-67. On the Dominicans elected as bishops at the beginnings of this order, see Rudolf Schieffer, 'Die frühesten Bischöfe aus dem Dominikanerorden', in Franz J. Felten – Nikolas Jaspert (hrsgg.), *Vita Religiosa im Mittelalter. Festschrift für Kaspar Elm zum 70. Geburtstag* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1999), 405-419.

[44] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 159-160; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 137.

in Buda, along with the entreaty that he should confirm the election of the new bishop.[45] However, Paul, the Dominican provincial in Hungary, was not the only one who solicited the confirmation (*confirmatio*) of Benedict. The candidate himself filed a written request, showing that because of repeated disturbances, the Transylvanian diocese had long been without a shepherd. Now, however, as peace had been restored, the election of a bishop had become possible.[46] Fr. Benedict, the Bishop elect, had to submit this request because a bishop elected by the chapter (*electus*) had, at least in theory, the obligation to obtain papal confirmation (which, in this case, could also be granted by the legate Gentilis), enabling him to become a full-fledged bishop. Adding to the above-mentioned provisions, the legate adopted another decree in December 1308 that barred the Dominicans and Franciscans from becoming abbots or holding other ecclesiastical offices: without a special dispensation from the pope, their appointment would have been invalid.[47] On 25-28 August 1309 he entrusted his *auditors* Philip of Sardinia and Vannes of Aretio to investigate under what conditions the capitular election had been held and to determine the merit of the bishop elect.[48] Given that John, the Provost of Alba Iulia, filed a claim, the trial, which was to last for one year and a half, began on 1 September. During this dispute, several violations of canon law were investigated: the election had not taken place within three months of the predecessor's death, and the chapter of Transylvania had not complied with the deadline allowing it to exercise its voting right, which meant that the decision now rested with the Holy See;[49] the election process had been speeded up by

[45] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 156-157; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 138; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 723.
[46] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 161-162; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 143; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 732.
[47] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 125-126; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 503.
[48] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 156-157; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 138.
[49] The twenty-third canon of the Fourth Council of the Lateran (1215) decreed that if a chapter failed to elect a bishop within three months, this would entail its losing voting rights and the next higher authority would become entitled by devolution to oversee the appointment of a prelate in the vacant diocese. Erdő, *Egyházjog*, 189. Inquiries conducted from 1307 to 1310 into the election of Peter I as Bishop of Pécs (1307-1314) revealed a set of irregularities similar to those found in Transylvania. After the death of the previous bishop, the chapter was convened to elect his successor. The canons could not reach an agreement so no bishop was elected. Since the deadline stipulated in canon law had expired, the chapter's delegates requested Thomas, Archbishop of Esztergom, to appoint the new bishop. The archbishop used his canon law prerogatives and appointed Peter, archdeacon of Tolna, ordaining him as bishop. However, Bishop Peter was unable to occupy the episcopal palace in Pécs or celebrate mass in the cathedral for a long time. Nicholas, the chapter's cantor, did not accept the new prelate as he wanted the episcopal see for himself and had found a few supporters. In the first decade of the fourteenth century, political battles in the kingdom were also felt in the chapter of Pécs. Aside from the canons who supported Charles Robert and accepted, therefore, Peter's episcopacy were those who represented the interests of the oligarch in the Transdanubian region, Henry Kőszegi. After occupying the fortress of Pécs and seizing most of the episcopal revenues, Kőszegi handed them over to the cantor,

several canons who had been excluded from the chapter; and, not least, as revealed in a report drafted by the Archbishop of Kalocsa, the chapter had been excommunicated on the grounds of its failure to contribute financially to the legate's maintenance. As a result, the Holy See was now entitled to elect the bishop. The decisive moment concerning the episcopal election and Fr. Benedict came in December 1309, when the chapter's commissioner testified under oath before the two auditors appointed by the legate. We can learn from the questions and answers recorded in the minutes of this hearing that the two auditors wanted to find out the circumstances in which the election had taken place, the factors that could have influenced the canons' options, the different elements that might have cast doubt on the legitimacy and validity of the electoral procedure, as well as the voting process and every individual canon who had not attended the chapter assembly.[50]

To sum up, Fr. Benedict was already bishop elect in July 1309, but he could not occupy the episcopal see because of the trial that was underway. He was even prohibited from travelling to the episcopal residence or to the diocese, under the threat of excommunication.[51] Regarding the trial that began at the legate's court in Buda and was thereafter transferred to Trnava and, eventually, to Bratislava, it should be noted that it continued even though two months after submitting the claim, Provost John informed the court through his representative that he no longer had any objection concerning the election and the bishop elect, and that he was willing to provide a written statement to that effect.[52] The investigation nonetheless continued. In the initial stage, the canons of the Transylvanian chapter appointed three of their fellows to take the necessary steps and persuade the legate to confirm and ordain Benedict, the bishop elect. The three were: master Benedict, Archdeacon of Ozd, master John, Archdeacon of Cluj, and Nicholas, Archdeacon of Tileagd.[53] All three belonged to the

excluding thus Bishop Peter and the canons who were loyal to him as well as to King Charles. This is how the lawsuit came to be heard by Gentilis. In the end, Nicholas was excommunicated and a part of the diocesan territory was subject to interdict, see László Koszta, '[A püspökök és városuk.] A 14. század közepéig' [(The bishops and their town.) Till the mid-fourteenth century], in Tamás Fedeles – Gábor Sarbak – József Sümegi (eds.), *A pécsi egyházmegye története I. A középkor évszázadai (1009-1543)* [The History of the Diocese of Pécs I. The centuries of the Middle Ages (1009-1543)] (Pécs: Fény Kft., 2009), 90-91.

[50] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 159.

[51] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 151.

[52] The trial, which began in the chapel of Gentilis's house in Buda on 10 December 1308, continued, on 7 October, in the convent of the Friars Minor in Trnava. On 30 October, it was transferred to Bratislava, where a verdict was reached by 2 July 1310 (*CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 93, 158).

[53] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 153. On their ecclesiastical careers, see Hegyi, 'Az erdélyi káptalan', 77, 78, 79, 80, 85.

group of the fifteen canons who had placed their seals on the document attesting Benedict's election. Shortly afterwards, the names of the latter two disappeared from the list of attorneys (*procuratori*), so master Benedict, Archdeacon of Ozd remained the chapter's only commissioner with full rights.[54] In mid-September 1309, Bishop elect Benedict took into account the possibility of appealing to Rome in this trial and circumventing the court of the legate Gentilis,[55] but he seems to have given up this idea eventually.

In the autumn of 1309 Fr. Benedict's situation was still unclear. His election was rumoured to have been orchestrated by Thomas, the chapter's cantor, a cleric who had very quickly progressed from various instances of disciplinary misconduct to being excommunicated, together with other individuals who were just as guilty as he was and who therefore had to be excommunicated, too. Gentilis's two auditors offered Benedict the chance to bring, within forty days, two witnesses from among the chapter members who had been present at the election and were very well aware of the circumstances in which the vote had been cast.[56] Moreover, the bishop elect and the canons who supported him, represented by masters Peter of Paris and Nicholas, had forty days to refute the accusations brought against them during the trial and to prove that the election could not have been held any sooner because of the threats the chapter had received, and that the failure to pay the legate's maintenance expenses had not led to the canons' excommunication.[57] It appears that the legate Gentilis was not fully convinced that masters Peter of Paris and Nicholas could bring evidence to counter the accusations levelled against the chapter because on that same day he issued a general decree (*edictum generale*), appointing the two (Dominican and Augustinian) priors from Alba Iulia to publish it. In this decree, he openly stated that the deadline for the election had not been met and that, according to Archbishop Vincent of Kalocsa, the person appointed to oversee the maintenance of the legate, the members

[54] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 155. In addition to Benedict, those who repeatedly represented the chapter in the trial concerning the bishop's confirmation were Benedict, Archdeacon of Ozd, the prosecutor of the Transylvanian chapter, masters Peter of Paris and Nicholas, Archdeacon of Chizd, and both canons of the chapter of Transylvania (*CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 138, 140-141, 145, 147-148, 152). However, in December 1309, Benedict, Archdeacon of Ozd, questioned Peter of Paris's legitimacy as a prosecutor, see *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 173; Kovács, 'Causae coram nobis ventilatae', 89.

[55] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 147-148.

[56] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 144.

[57] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 145.

of the Transylvanian chapter were excommunicated on account of their failure to pay their overdue taxes.[58]

Therefore, what was the truth regarding all aforementioned accusations?

One of the most frequently proferred accusations concerned their non-compliance with the deadline. For instance, at the beginning of September 1309, Gentilis reproached the canons for not having met the deadline provided by canon law, even after the disappearance of past hindrances (after Bishop Peter's death, the members of the Transylvanian chapter were for a long time afraid to organise the election).[59] To answer this accusation, master Benedict, mandated by the chapter, submitted two documents explaining the belated election to the auditors one month later.[60] One of these documents, issued in mid-September 1309 by one of the seven Saxon deans, showed that following Bishop Peter's death (November 1307), the lay authorities had forcefully prevented the election of a new bishop until 1 July (1309), and that things took a different turn only on 19 July, when the voivode sent word through canon Elijah that he was no longer going to obstruct the process.[61] The document issued on 16 September 1309 by Fr. Stephen, prior of the Hermits of St. Augustine in Alba Iulia, includes a similar testimonial.[62] It may appear surprising, at first sight, that the seven Saxon deaneries in Transylvania supported him but this makes sense if we consider that, in June that same year, they had summoned Benedict, prior of the Dominican convent from the isle in Buda, as a witness before the auditor appointed by Gentilis in the lawsuit they waged against the chapter of Transylvania.[63]

According to the second indictment, the election of Fr. Benedict as Bishop of Transylvania had been rushed by excommunicated individuals. The commissioner of the Transylvanian chapter, master Benedict, tried to refute this serious charge by relentlessly claiming that neither he, nor the other canons were aware that Thomas, the cantor canon, was under some major excommunication.[64] Prior to that, from 1303 to 1307, cantor Thomas was often featured in the list of dignitaries at the end of documents issued by the chapter.[65] In November 1308, he was mentioned, alongside other

[58] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 163-165; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 146.
[59] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 146; Temesváry, *Erdély középkori püspökei*, 122-123.
[60] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 156.
[61] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 170; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 149.
[62] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 150; Temesváry, *Erdély középkori püspökei*, 125.
[63] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 212-246; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 121.
[64] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 159.
[65] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 33, 37, 40, 44, 46, 48, 63, 67, 71.

canons, as having paid the tax imposed by the chapter.[66] Before July 1309, a disciplinary inquiry was undertaken against him and some of his fellows.[67] The reason was revealed at the end of the same year. It appears that he had misappropriated livestock and assets from the people in the chapter.[68] The plural used in the sources referring to this suggests that Thomas did not act by himself, but together with a few other canons against whom the excommunication weapon was used. Thomas, "who had been repeatedly convicted," was seemingly not very affected, but continued his ecclesiastical activity.[69] At the beginning of the fourteenth century, excommunication did not necessarily entail a prohibition to exert ecclesiastical authority. In fact, in September 1309, Gentilis summoned cantor Thomas before him but he probably failed to show up. Gentilis warned the members of the chapter – thwarting, perhaps, the canons' intention to obtain a deferral by not showing up for trial – that the lawsuit would go on even in their absence.[70] Although we do not know all the details, the chapter's argument that it was unaware of cantor Thomas's excommunication may have been accepted in the legate's court.

The third and final indictment, related to the irregularities surrounding the election, targeted the entire chapter of Transylvania. Thus, not only Thomas and his companions, whose names and number remain unknown, were excommunicated: the entire chapter had received this ecclesiastical punishment because of having failed to pay in time the sums they owed for the legate's maintenance. Gentilis had learned about this from Vincent, Archbishop of Kalocsa, his commissioner, who had the duty to impose and collect the tax for the legate's maintenance from the chapters in his ecclesiastical province.[71] Refuting this accusation was probably the easiest. In October 1309,[72] master Benedict, commissioner of the Transylvanian chapter, presented to the two auditors, with Bishop elect Benedict as witness, the document issued by Saul, Archdeacon of Turda and vicar of Transylvania's vacant episcopacy, which confirmed the amount paid by the chapter in November 1308.[73] The acceptance of this evidence and the acquittal for this accusation are indirectly proved by a letter Gentilis wrote in May 1310, demanding that maintenance expenses should be paid. In this document,

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[66] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 86.
[67] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 176; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 132.
[68] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 159.
[69] He was cantor of the chapter in 1303-1316, see Károly Vekov, *Locul de adeverire din Alba-Iulia (secolele XIII-XVI)* (Cluj-Napoca: Fundația Culturală Română–Gloria, 2003), Anexa 7.
[70] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 163-165; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 146.
[71] *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 733, 735; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 146.
[72] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 156.
[73] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 169; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 86; Hegyi, 'Az erdélyi káptalan', 80, 90.

the legate urged Bishop elect Benedict to transfer to his chamber the tax that had been already collected for the first two years of his legation.[74] The legate also wrote to the chapter: if it did not pay the entire amount owed for the maintenance of the legation, he would demand a tripled sum.[75]

Having analysed each of the three indictments, our imaginary scales of judgement inclines towards rejecting the accusations, because master Benedict, commissioner of the church of Transylvania, successfully dismantled two of these (the canons could not have organised the episcopal election in time for reasons independent of their will, and they also proved they had paid the amount of the tax owed to the legate). Moreover, the chapter commissioner's testimony under oath sufficed for the third (the status of Thomas, the cantor canon) even in the absence of documents.

The crowning in Székesfehérvár

It appears that Transylvania's first mendicant Bishop also had a role in shaping the political landscape of the early fourteenth century. András Harsányi, the author of a monograph on the medieval history of the Dominican Order in Hungary, states that Fr. Benedict, Bishop elect of Transylvania as of 1309, played a significant part in the history of the Holy Crown.[76] What is he referring to?

It is well known that Gentilis, as papal legate, made serious efforts to consolidate the authority of King Charles I (also known as Charles Robert in historiography) in Hungary. Crowning the monarch according to the local customs would have played an important part in this process. Even though King Charles was crowned for the second time in 1309, in the presence of Gentilis, the Holy Crown could not be used during this ceremony, for it was with the Voivode of Transylvania, Ladislau Kán, at that time. Since Kán had no intention of returning the crown and, despite repeated warnings, had refused to return the king and queen's estates that he had occupied in the past, in December 1309, the papal legate used the weapon of excommunication against him, demanding that the Dominicans, Franciscans and Hermits of St. Augustine should apply it most rigorously.[77] His choice was probably not haphazard considering

[74] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 165.
[75] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 166; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 877.
[76] András Harsányi, *A Domonkos rend Magyarországon a reformáció előtt* [The Dominican Order in Hungary before the Reformation] (Debrecen: Nagy Károly Grafikai Müintézete, 1938), 322.
[77] By the turn of the fourteenth century, the weapon of excommunication had already lost much of the efficiency it had in the previous century. While kings could be deposed by excommunication at the height of the papal authority period, in the fourteenth century this

that the Dominicans and the Hermits of St. Augustine were surely among the supporters of Fr. Benedict, the bishop who had once been prior of the Dominican convent in Buda, and who was also protected by the voivode. Gentilis, himself a Franciscan, could count on his brethren's support. The legate urged Ladislau to hand over the Holy Crown of Hungary to the Alba Iulia Church, namely the Transylvanian Bishopric, or to the king himself by 2 February 1310. However, both out of a desire to solve the kingdom's problems and because of other reasons, Gentilis excommunicated the voivode for having violated the provisions of the Synod held in Buda from 8 May to 14 July 1308. This decision took into account other sins of Ladislau Kán's, such as his stubborn intention to marry his daughter to the son of the Serbian king, deemed to be schismatic.[78] We know that Voivode Ladislau did not comply with the legate's demand for over half a year. Things changed when, in April 1310, the voivode kneeled before Charles Robert, becoming thus a "loyal oligarch." This gesture was obviously accompanied by the return of the crown (of course, in exchange for a hefty reward). In fact, the voivode himself assumed this obligation, setting a new deadline for 1 July.[79] In our opinion, Bishop Benedict became involved in the process of the crown's return in the spring of 1310.[80] It was roughly at that time that Voivode Ladislau informed the legate Gentilis of the

proved to be a double-edged sword. For instance, around 1304 the inhabitants of Buda excommunicated the pope. Gyula Kristó – Ferenc Makk (eds.), *Károly Róbert emlékezete* [The memory of King Charles Robert] (Budapest: Európa Könyvkiadó, 1988), 58-59. The significance of this punishment was much lower than before and could simply be ignored, as it happened in Transylvania. In the spring of 1310, Fr. Benedict, the elected bishop, informed the legate Gentilis that the diocesan clergy in Transylvania did not respect the interdict he had issued, even though the bishop himself listened to mass only in his private chapel (*CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 163).

[78] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 369-374; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 160.

[79] The voivode promised he would return other goods besides the crown (salt mines, salt warehouses, counties, villages), see *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 374-375; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 162; Zsoldos, 'Hűséges oligarchák', 352.

[80] In Temesváry's view, Fr. Benedict had already arrived in Transylvania by the autumn of 1309 to negotiate the return of the crown with Ladislau Kán. His first voyage as bishop to Transylvania appears not to have been very successful because the voivode would only return the crown in exchange for a hefty sum and the bishop was captured, upon his return, by Ban Henry's men. Temesváry, *Erdély középkori püspökei*, 129. We do not think this voyage was undertaken in the autumn, after the bishop's election, because this was held on 24 July 1309 and a document issued on 1 August talks about the mission of Fr. Benedict, *prior of the Order of St. Dominic from the isle* [*in Buda*], to the voivode's court, mentioning the fact that the prelate was detained, upon his return, by master Henry's men for a few days (*DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 708). The brief time span and the title of Fr. Benedict show that this mission probably took place before he was elected bishop. It may be the case that the goal of his mission was, indeed, the retrieval of the crown, considering that Benedict was on good terms with the voivode and his odds of success were therefore higher.

voivode's promise to send the crown through him.[81] In his answer of 2 May 1310, Gentilis told Benedict, Bishop elect of Transylvania, that the ecclesiastical punishment (which, as seen above, was not enforced) had to be maintained until Ladislau Kán returned the royal crown, accepted the authority of the church, and respected the promises he had made to the king. As stated in the document, "we firmly desire that the same Voivode Ladislau should send us the crown through you [Fr. Benedict, Bishop elect al Transylvania], for, as stated in your letter, he promised us to do that, and thus, his case will be swiftly and kindly reconsidered by the king and by ourselves."[82] The document also mentions the expenses for the legate's maintenance and the fact that the chapter would be forced to pay a triple amount if it failed to acquit itself of its debt.[83] It is possible that Benedict himself handed the crown to Gentilis, on 1 July, the very term promised by the voivode, according to some sources.[84] Because of that, the legate wished to reward Benedict by confirming his episcopacy in Bratislava, in a public place (*in sala publica*), in the presence of a large number of ecclesiastical and lay officials, as well as by ordaining him the next day, on 2 July 1310.[85] It is clear that the crown was returned to the king and that, on 27 August 1310, a Thursday, Thomas, Archbishop of Esztergom, crowned Charles for the third time.[86] From among the protagonists of our narrative, Cardinal Gentilis undoubtedly attended the event. The already ordained Bishop Benedict must also have been in attendance, especially if we consider the role he had played in the retrieval of the crown.[87]

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[81] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 164. Temesváry goes so far as to suggest that Benedict's confirmation as bishop depended on the success of the voyage he went on at the beginning of 1310 (Temesváry, *Erdély középkori püspökei*, 130).

[82] Besides its content, this document is also important because it is the first one on filigree paper in medieval Hungary. It therefore holds a prominent place in the history of local writing. The filigree, a dragon, was discovered only in 2009, following very thorough research. This is the only surviving document on paper related to Gentilis's activity in Hungary and it has only been preserved because it mentions the crown. This document marks thus the beginning of the widespread use of paper in Hungary, see Rácz, 'Gentilis és Károly', 32-43, especially 35-37, 39-41; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 165; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 877.

[83] Rácz, 'Gentilis és Károly', 41; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 165; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 877. On the same day, Gentilis also wrote to the chapter of Transylvania, emphasising the duty of this institution to oversee compliance with the ecclesiastical punishment against Voivode Ladislau. The threat that the maintenance sum would be tripled in case the payment failed to be made should come as no surprise (*CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 166).

[84] See the documents of Ladislau Kán, Voivode of Transylvania: *Acta Gentilis*, vol. II/1, 375.

[85] What was also taken into account was the provision concerning the ordination of the bishop. According to this, at least three bishops had to attend this event. When Fr. Benedict was ordained, Henry, Bishop of Wrocław, Nicholas, Bishop elect of Győr, and the legate Gentilis himself were present (*CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 169).

[86] Kristó – Makk (eds.), *Károly Róbert emlékezete*, 85.

[87] Temesváry, Erdély középkori püspökei, 132.

A mendicant bishop in Alba Iulia

Who was Benedict? The surest information we have about him: he was the first mendicant Bishop of Transylvania. The election of a mendicant to an episcopal see was a novelty only in the local landscape. Dominicans could be encountered at the helm of some dioceses even earlier. In the 1220s, after Robert, Archbishop of Esztergom, was appointed legate to Cumania, he founded the diocese of Milcovia or of the Cumans, placing Theodoric, the Dominican prior provincial in Hungary, at its leadership.[88] We also know that in the 1230s *Johannes Teutonicus* and *Pousa* led missionary bishoprics in Bosnia and that they also were members of the Dominican Order.[89] Throughout the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries, several bishops of the dioceses in Dalmatia and Croatia were Dominicans of Croat or Italian extraction. For instance, Jacob of Corvo was appointed Bishop of Zagreb in 1322 but did not occupy the episcopal see since he was transferred to a diocese in France.[90]Augustin Gazotto headed the Diocese of Zagreb for nearly two decades.[91] Fr. Rudolf (1329-1341), Bishop of Vác, also came from the Dominican order.[92] Fr. Benedict's Transylvanian episcopacy completed this gallery of Dominican prelates.

The fact that he belonged to the regular clergy is also indicated, but the appellative *frater* that Benedict continued to use after he became bishop. He was a member of the Dominican Order, and had advancinged to the position of prior in the hierarchy. According to available data, he held the office of prior in two convents, first in Alba Iulia,[93] and later on the isle in Buda – which was his status when he was elected bishop in 1309.[94] Before he became a prior in Buda, he must have spent a longer period in

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[88] Ioan Ferenț, *A kunok és püspökségük* [The Cumans and their diocese] (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1981), 136; Attila Zsoldos, *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1000-1301* [Lay archontology of Hungary 1000-1301] (Budapest: História–MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 2011), 92; Solymosi, 'Egyházi-politikai viszonyok', 49, cf. *CDTrans*, vol. 1, no. 150, 168.

[89] Bálint Ternovácz, 'A boszniai latin püspökség története 1344-ig' [The history of the Latin diocese of Bosnia], in Laura Fábián et al. (eds.), *Micae Mediaevales V. Fiatal történészek dolgozatai a középkori Magyarországról és Európáról* [Micae Mediaevales V. Essays of young historians on medieval Hungary and Europe] (Budapest: ELTE BTK Történelemtudományok Doktori Iskola, 2016), 219-222.

[90] Pál Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301-1457* [Lay archontology of Hungary 1301-1457] (2 vols, Budapest: História–MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1996), vol. 1, 79.

[91] Péter Rokay, 'Zágrábi püspökség', in Gyula Kristó – Pál Engel – Ferenc Makk (eds.), *Korai magyar történelmi lexikon (9-14. század)* [Early Hungarian historical lexicon (9-14th century)] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1994), 739-740.

[92] Engel, Magyarország világi archontológiája, vol. 1, 75.

[93] *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 514, 698, 707, 729, 732, 735, 743.

[94] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 133.

Transylvania, considering that several sources mention his familiarity with the situation in the region and his close relationship with Bishop Peter Monoszló.[95] We have no information regarding his activity as leader of the convent in Alba Iulia, but in 1295 documents mention a *lector* friar called Benedict.[96] It is possible that this *lector* Benedict was the same man as the later prior, given that after graduating from *studium generale*, friars could obtain the title of *lector*[97] and subsequently become priors. We believe that the statement according to which Benedict was *in lege Dei doctum*, holding *sufficiens scientia* and *litterarum peritia,*[98] is evidence of his education. Obviously, such considerations can be seen as commonplaces, but it should be noted that they were not used about all the bishops. This means that, as a bishop, he fulfilled one of the fundamental criteria: he had a literate education and knew the Holy Scripture and the teachings of the church.[99] There is no information that could confirm the date when Benedict left Alba Iulia for Buda, to serve in the isle-convent there, dedicated to the Holy Virgin,[100] or how long he was a prior.

Moreover, we have only scant data regarding his decade-long episcopacy. We may find out something about Bishop Benedict, especially in relation to the acquittal of the sums owed for the maintenance of Gentilis's legation. After being confirmed and ordained, his main concern was to pay the amount incumbent on the Church of Transylvania for the maintenance expenses of Gentilis's court. This was a considerable sum and it was paid "after three and a half years of *sedis vacantia*, a period in which he offered the laity the opportunity – which they seized – to lay their hands on the Transylvanian diocese's estates and to appropriate its assets," which indirectly led to the impoverishment of the clergy.[101] This statement is supported by

[95] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 159-160; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 137; *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 174-176; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 159.

[96] Among others, Teodor, the Dominican prior from Alba Iulia, confirmed a donation for the Bishop of Transylvania with the conventual seal (*CDTrans*, vol. 1, no. 534).

[97] As a rule, *lectors* held the title of *baccalaureus*, which they could obtain after studies conducted both locally and as part of the *studium generale,* after the age of 26 (Harsányi, *A Domonkos Rend*, 77, cf. *Ibidem,* 122). If we accept this identification, then Benedict must have been around forty when he was elected bishop in 1309. If that was so, he complied with the canonical provision stipulating the age of thirty of over for bishops. Cf. Erdő, *Egyházjog*, 194.

[98] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. II/1, 157, 159.

[99] Erdő, *Egyházjog*, 194.

[100] In December 1306 Fr. John was already prior of the Dominicans in Alba Iulia, see *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 53, 55; Harsányi, *A Domonkos Rend*, 81.

[101] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 186, 187. In 1318 some of the church's domains were still under the control of lay individuals (*CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 288).

several data referring to invasions of the Transylvanian bishops' lands since the late thirteenth century.[102]

In 1311, when Gentilis left Hungary, there were probably more people who were glad to see him gone than those who missed him. Why was this the case? As seen above, Gentilis's activity had a major significance for the recognition of Charles's succession to the throne. However, his presence was also of use for the clerics in Hungary, who no longer had to file their complaints far way in Avignon, but could do that in Buda, and later in Trnava and Bratislava, thus managing to cut down their expenses significantly. Still, what they saved there they spent here, considering that the legation's maintenance expenses (travel, food) were not covered by the Holy See but by the clergy in the host country. Gentilis's expenses were paid for by the clergy in Hungary. The legate's accounts, only partly preserved,[103] suggest that the local church had to bear a considerable burden. Suffice it to think of the fact that when Gentilis left the kingdom, the outstanding debts of the Transylvanian diocese for the first three years of the legation had reached 938.5 marks. Although the legate had his own personnel in charge of collecting that income, this was very troublesome, and he had to be content with receiving only part of the sums owed to him.

Shortly after he was ordained, in December 1310, Bishop Benedict paid another installment of 15 Buda marks of fine silver for the legate's maintenance.[104] The total sum amounted thus to 520.5 marks of fine silver from the outstanding 938.5 marks that had accrued during the first three years of the legation. The bishop assumed the obligation to pay the remaining 418 marks by next Easter (26 March), under the threat of punishments,[105] but he only managed to pay that sum partially, in several installments, over the course of the next seven years.[106] By 1318, Bishop Benedict had paid another 370 marks and three Vierdungs of fine silver to cover the legation's expenses for the first three years.[107] Meanwhile, Benedict had to take a

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[102] *CDTrans*, vol. 1, no. 437; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 5, no. 6. Even the trials concerning land ownership rights show how complicated the situation was in the diocese, see *CDTrans*, vol. 1, no. 539, 542, 543, 550.

[103] 1308-1311. Notes regarding Transylvania in Gentilis's accounting fragments (*CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 95).

[104] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 179. In the account books of Rufinus of Civino, Benedict is still featuring as bishop elect even though he was ordained after 2 July.

[105] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 190; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 3, no. 139.

[106] On 25 August 1311, mention was made of a payment made by the bishop through his chaplain, but the sum is not detailed. On 12 September of the same year, there was another reference to the sum of 228 Venice marks having been deposited, on behalf of the bishop, by John Nemes, a canon from Transylvania. This sum was a payment on account of the 646 marks the bishop still owed for the first three years of Cardinal Gentilis's legation, see *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 63-64, 95.

[107] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 467; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 194.

stand to defend the interests of his diocese on several occasions. Although he tried to pay his debts, Benedict did not hesitate to protest when he considered that his church had been treated unjustly. One such case occurred shortly after he was ordained. Benedict was aware of the situation of the Transylvanian diocese and its material difficulties. It is therefore easy to understand why he was determined to refuse, even before the Holy See, paying the legate Gentilis's maintenance tax for the fourth year, since he considered this to be an abuse. In July 1311, Bishop Benedict expressed his discontent with the Transylvanian diocese being forced to pay 450-500 silver Buda marks when the legate had demanded a similar sum from the much richer Archdiocese of Kalocsa, which had five suffragan dioceses.[108] The bishop accused Gentilis of not respecting the principle of equity. We have found that this was an older problem of the Transylvanian chapter and church, as the canons had tried to contest such taxes before but had been forced to concede because of the high litigation fees. This time, however, they addressed directly to the Apostolic See, because, in Benedict's opinion, Gentilis was influenced by his tax collectors and relied on them in making decisions, which is why the Transylvanian bishop did not trust that his sentence would be fair.

The Dominican bishop continued to be, over the following years, a prelate who was eager to defend the rights of his church. The departure of the legate Gentilis and his subsequent death shortly afterwards (in October 1312) did not lead to cancelling outstanding maintenance expenses, considering that the taxes were due not just to the legate himself, but also to his court, which had numerous personnel.[109] After the legate died, the tax collecting task was taken over by Homboth/Hamboth, a citizen of Bratislava. Bishop Benedict had to go to trial against him too, as he believed that the demand to also pay tithes after paying the installments was unfair.[110] In June 1318, Pope John XXII was still demanding the Bishop of Transylvania to pay 953 silver Buda marks as part of the expenses owed for the late legate.[111] In September that same year, Bishop Benedict paid 44.5 pure silver Buda marks (one mark being the equivalent of four gold florins),[112] and, in October, two Buda marks and another four and a half measures of silver. Thus, according to the calculations of Archdeacon of Tolna, Rufinus of Civino, papal nuntio and decimator, Bishop Benedict paid a total of 46 marks and 3 Vierdungs, that is, the equivalent of 187 florins, as outstanding

[108] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 186, 187, 189, 191; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 3, no. 115, 116, 130, 140.
[109] Rácz, 'Az Anjou-ház', 60.
[110] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 196; *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 2, no. 270, 272.
[111] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 465-466; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 298.
[112] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 308.

sums for the maintenance of the legation.[113] Subsequently, he refused to pay any more money, openly opposing the payment of the tax for the final year. Instead of a new sum of money, he sent Rufinus, the papal nuntio and decimator, the receipt of the payments made thus far, through Peter, Archdeacon of Solnoc.[114] On 13 January 1320, Rufinus officially recorded the death of the Bishop of Transylvania. This means that Benedict had to pay the outstanding taxes for the maintenance of Gentilis right until the end of his episcopacy.

Besides the sums he owed for supporting the legation of Gentilis, Bishop Benedict also had to pay another tax. This referred to the income for the first year of the vacant benefices that had to be paid to the papal curia. The pope's administrative apparatus, significantly enlarged by the fourteenth century, was particularly ingenious in obtaining new sources of revenue, which it tried to secure through different legal provisions. Under his bull of 8 December 1316, Pope John XXII introduced a new mode of taxation benefiting the Holy See. He decided that the income for the first year from the vacant benefices or from the benefices that were to be vacated over the following three years was owed to the Apostolic Chamber. Rufinus, who benefited from the revenues of the Archdeanery of Tolna, was appointed to collect this tax in Hungary. He also had, as seen above, a "secondary" duty, namely to collect outstanding debts for the maintenance of Gentilis's legation.[115] Although Rufinus himself estimated the income from the Provostship of Sibiu, subordinated to the Archdiocese of Esztergom, Bishop Benedict did not entrust him with this task on the territory of the Transylvanian diocese. Instead, he appointed Corradus, the parish priest of Orăştie, as *subcollector*. Corradus collected the sums owed to the Apostolic Chamber from October 1317 to March 1320.[116] The canonical revenues that had become vacant in the chapter of Transylvania were estimated to 16 marks of fine silver. The sources we have consulted suggest that towards the end of the three-year period, after the death of Bishop Benedict, Rufinus had difficulty estimating the revenue from vacant benefices. What became evident was the key role played by the bishop in the inventory of benefices, and his absence was exploited by those in charge, who were often not willing to offer their help for any kind of estimation. Rufinus managed to collect a total of 137 fine silver Buda marks from the Transylvanian diocese.

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[113] *Acta Gentilis*, vol. I/2, 466; *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 313.
[114] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 345.
[115] During his three-year activity (1317-1320), he managed to collect 1054 florins from the overdue sums owed to Gentilis, as well as 1913 florins from vacant benefices. Over half of this amount was used to cover Rufinus's personal expenses (Rácz, 'Az Anjou-ház', 66.).
[116] For details regarding the payments that were made, see *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 280.

If we apply the formula "one mark equals four florins", the sum represented 548 gold florins. The amount collected from the Transylvanians was just short of one-third of the total collected throughout the Kingdom of Hungary for the vacant benefices.[117]

Aside from the financial measures he imposed, we have only fragments of information regarding the activity of Bishop Benedict. One important aspect was his participation in a "league" against the king that was set up in Kalocsa. In 1318, Bishop Benedict joined the group that opposed the measures imposed by Charles Robert regarding ecclesiastical assets. By the end of 1317, the monarch had managed to consolidate his power throughout most of the kingdom's territory and the church played an important role in this process. However, the prelates considered that the king did not respect the rights of the church and were revolted by the peace concluded with Matthew Csák, which had left the deeds committed by the oligarch against some ecclesiastical institutions go unpunished (Csák had returned the estates belonging to the Archdiocese of Esztergom but was permitted to keep the assets of the Diocese of Nitra). The prelates were outraged especially by the possibility of setting a precedent, so they decided to act together.[118] The two archbishops and eleven bishops who were discontent with and disappointed by the king they had supported, and who included Benedict, Bishop of Transylvania, held an assembly in Kalocsa in February 1318, where they made a solemn alliance, pledging to unite their forces against anyone who would try to cause damage to the church, to rob it, to impose unfair taxes on it, or to infringe its rights in any way.[119]

To what extent and how did Benedict stay in touch with his former community, the Dominican Order, after he became bishop? This is indeed an interesting question, but it is difficult to give a definitive answer. The information scattered in the documents suggests that Benedict used his connections inside the order and the Dominicans' literate and juridical expertise to exercise his episcopal function much more efficiently. We are referring here to the administration of the sums of money deposited by the Dominicans in Buda, the trials started by the Dominicans in Alba Iulia on behalf of the bishop, and their activity of transcribing/confirming some documents.[120] He kept the title of *frater* even during the period in which

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[117] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 280, cf. Rácz, 'Az Anjou-ház', 66.
[118] Rácz, 'Az Anjou-ház', 62-63.
[119] *DocHungAndeg*, vol. 5, no. 46; László Koszta, *A kalocsai érseki tartomány kialakulása* [Formation of the Archbishopric of Kalocsa] (Pécs: Pécsi Történettudományért Kulturális Egyesület, 2013), 49 (especially note no. 213).
[120] *CDTrans*, vol. 2, no. 187, 189, 191, 204.

he was bishop (Fr. Benedict, Bishop of Transylvania), emphasising thus his former membership in the Dominican Order.[121]

To conclude, we may state that the first mendicant Bishop of the Transylvanian diocese, the Dominican friar Benedict was active during one of the most troublesome periods in the history of Transylvania. The documents of that age are rife with references to disturbances, or to the dangers looming along the highways, which obstructed a smooth tax collecting process, deplenished the revenues, and imperiled the safety of the documents. Ladislau Kán's voivodeship, remarkable through the capture of a king,[122] and Benedict's episcopacy reflect the context of the political struggles from the cusp of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, an age when holding ecclesiastical offices became an efficient way to expand one's influence and prestige. It is not by chance that Ladislau Kán tried to secure the Transylvanian diocese for his own son. A family's power could increase if secular and ecclesiastical offices were cumulated. When Fr. Benedict was elected bishop, one opinion that was voiced in the chapter was that a learned, powerful, and influential noble would be preferable because he could thus retrieve the church's assets. We do not know if Benedict was of noble descent, but he was a scholar who tried to use his knowledge to best represent the interests of the Church and his diocese.[123]

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[121] For instance, in the list of dignitaries from 1314 (*DocHungAndeg*, vol. 3, no. 718) and in a document from 1315 (*DocHungAndeg*, vol. 4, no. 64).

[122] Otto Wittelsbach was crowned king of Hungary in December 1305, but he had no serious followers in the country. When Pope Clement V urged Otto and his followers to recognize Charles I as King of Hungary under the burden of excommunication, Ladislau Kán captured him, took the Holy Crown from him, and then let him run. Csukovits, *Az Anjouk Magyarországon I*, 58-59.

[123] The possible memory of his bishopric that remains to this day is the tombstone attributed to him in the Alba Iulia Cathedral. Vladimir Agrigoroaei, 'La pierre tombale d'un évéque 'suffragant' d'Alba Iulia: SAVLVS (†1309?) ou BENEDICTVS (†1320)', *Annales Universitatis Apulensis. Series Historica*, 17/II (2013): 155-172. Cf. Pál Lővei, *Posuit hoc monumentum pro aeterna memoria. Bevezető fejezetek a középkori Magyarország síremlékeinek katalógusához* [Posuit hoc monumentum pro aeterna memori. Introduction au catalogue des monuments funéraires de la Hongrie médiévale], Academic doctoral thesis (3 vols, Budapest, 2009), vol. 3, 33 (fig. 187). According to Temesváry, already in the middle of the nineteenth century, suspicions arose that the indistinct tombstone at the base of the so-called princely gate of the southern aisle of the Alba Iulia Cathedral belonged to him. Temesváry, *Erdély középkori püspökei*, 138.

Emblems of Faith: Holy Companions on the Road to Observance

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Abstract: The present study focuses on the specific devotional models that were promoted by the Observant Dominican friars in the late Middle Ages. By closely investigating textual and visual sources, previous research has noted that the reformed friars were eager to disseminate, particularly within the communities of the Observant Dominican women, the cult for the Passion of Christ and cults of saints that were easily transformed into models that pious women would adopt and emulate. Since the Observance was an European phenomenon and strong contacts existed between local friars and influential centres of reform, the prerequisites of the Dominican *forma vitae* became the standard according to which the communities of Observant Dominican women were organized and functioned. An integral part of this process of standardisation concerned the holy companions of the pious women affiliated to the Order of the Friars Preachers, who were usually recruited from the same cohort of saints represented by the Virgin Martyrs.

Keywords: Observant movement; the Order of the Friars Preachers; Dominican nuns; Passion devotion; cult of the saints

Rezumat: Studiul de față investighează modele devoționale care au fost promovate cu predilecție de către Dominicanii Observanți în perioada evului mediu târziu. Analiza detaliată a surselor textuale şi vizuale produse în ambianță observantă a evidențiat faptul că devoțiunea cristocentrică şi cultele unor sfinți care puteau fi uşor transformate în modele imitabile au fost susținute şi diseminate de către frații dominicani, îndeosebi în comunitățile călugărițelor dominicane observante. Mişcarea

observantă, un fenomen european, a facilitat răspândirea unor formule specifice care caracterizau modul de viață în cadrul ordinului, de multe ori intermediarii acestei diseminări fiind frați din regiune care au studiat în centre ale reformei observante (universități sau conventuri). Procesul de uniformizare şi standardizare care a organizat mănăstirile călugărițelor dominicane a inclus şi adoptarea unor culte specifice, integrate modelului de sanctitate virginală şi martirală.

Cuvinte cheie: mişcare observantă; Ordinul Fraților Predicatori; călugărițe dominicane; devoțiune christocentrică; cultul sfinților

In 1390, Johannes Sartorius, vicar of the Congregation of Friars Pilgrims for the province of Ruthenia-Wallachia, undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The direct contact with the places where the sufferings of the Holy Victim were both commemorated and deeply venerated only increased Johannes's profound devotion to the Sacrifice of Christ. On his return to the friary he headed, that of Siret, in the Principality of Moldavia (**Map 1**), Johannes Sartorius generously divided a veil he had acquired during the pilgrimage into three parts: one was sent to the Dominicans in Lvov, another to those in Kamyenyets, while the third remained with the friars in Siret. The white linen cloth was transformed into a corporal, the altar cloth on which the bread and wine were placed during the Eucharistic celebration. A year later, in 1391, blood appeared on the corporal of the friars of St John the Baptist.[1] The miraculous event was investigated by Nicholas Goldberg, then inquisitor in Moldavia, and many witnesses testified to the supernatural power of the drops of blood on the altar cloth. In the months that followed, people coming from different dioceses were miraculously healed. At the request of the city council of Siret, the notary Conrad recorded the miracle stories, which revealed with great accuracy the growth of the cult of the Holy Blood with the Friars Preachers in Siret.

Two decades later, in 1417, an Austrian master, Peter Lantregen, executed a monumental work-of-art representing Christ crucified in the

[1] To this day, Renate Möhlenkamp's study "Ex Czeretensi Civitate": Randnotizen zu einem in Vergessenheit geratenen Dokument", *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie şi Arheologie "A.D. Xenopol"* XIX (1982): 105-130 is the most comprehensive analysis of the context within which the veil relic has been used by the Friars Preachers in their missionary activities in late fourteenth century Moldavia. Her study includes the editing of the miracles recorded in relation to this blood-relic in Siret and the identification of a good number of individuals who were the beneficiaries of these miracles. More recently, Claudia Florentina Dobre has focused the discussion on the strategies used by the Mendicant Orders among the Orthodox population and Catholic communities in Moldavia, an integral part of which has also been the recourse Friars Preachers made to the miraculous blood in their work of conversion, see *Mendicants in Moldavia: Mission in an Orthodox Land (Thirteenth to Fifteenth Century)* (AUREL Verlag: 2008), particularly 53-54.

company of the Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist. According to early modern accounts, this Crucifix was placed outside the fortifications of the town of Sibiu *ante portham Elizabethanam*.[2] Although there is no documentary evidence that this work was commissioned by the Dominicans of the Holy Cross friary in Sibiu, its location was most likely in the vicinity of the site where the first church of the Friars Preachers was built in the course of the thirteenth century.[3] Moreover, it has recently been convincingly argued that the way in which Master Lantregen depicted the torrent of blood flowing from Christ's side wound, not to mention the lifeless body of the Saviour with his eyes closed and his head bowed (**Fig. 1**), faithfully illustrated the Friars Preachers' affectionate devotion to Christ's sufferings, which the Holy Blood faithfully embodied.[4] According to local tradition, the people of Sibiu showed great devotion to the Holy Cross when, on the feasts of the Invention of the Cross and the Exaltation of the Cross, they piously visited the city's two crucifixes.[5] It is very likely that one of these crucifixes was the work of Lantregen, the *magna crux*, with the figure of Christ at a height of six metres and his outstretched arms reaching more than three metres, an impressive representation of Christ which, with its strong emphasis on the sacrificial blood, captured the viewers' attention (**Fig. 2**).

Conflicts between the mendicant friars and the parish church were quite frequent in Transylvanian towns during the 15th century, as the mono-parochial profile and the very active apostolate of the friars put them at odds with each other on issues related to the administration of the sacrament of confession and burial.[6] In Sibiu, it was precisely the opposition of the parish priest that prevented the friars from moving their church inside the city walls in the mid-15th century, after it had been severely damaged in several Ottoman attacks.[7] Such local conflicts reveal the success of the

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[2] Georg Soterius, *Cibinium. Eine Beschreibung Hermannstadts vom Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts*. Translated and edited by Lore Wirth-Poelchau (Köln Wiemar Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2006), 38.

[3] Irina Băldescu, *Transilvania medievală. Topografie și norme juridice ale cetăților Sibiu*, Bistrița, Brașov și Cluj [Medieval Transylvania. Topography and juridical norms of the towns of Sibiu, Bistrița, Brașov and Cluj] (București: Editura Simetria, 2012), 153; Mihaela Sanda Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane din Transilvania* [Dominican monasteries in Transylvania] (Cluj-Napoca, Mega: 2022), 215.

[4] Ferenc Veress, "The Dominicans and the Holy Blood: from Late Medieval Devotion to Baroque Piety. Cases in Austria, Hungary and Romania", *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege*, LXX Heft 3-4 (2021): 134-149, especially 138 and footnote 22.

[5] Soterius, *Cibinium*, p. 38.

[6] Marie Madeleine de Cevins, *L'Église dans les villes hongroises à la fin du Moyen Age (vers 1320-vers 1490)* (Budapest – Paris - Szeged: Publications de l'Institut Hongrois de Paris – Université de Szeged, 2003), 57-61.

[7] Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane*, 202-203; Mária Lupescu Makó, "Domonkos rendi obszerváns törekvések Magyarországon" [Observant trends in the functioning of the Dominican Order in Hungary] in Veronka Dáné – Teréz Oborni – Gábor Sipos (eds), *"…éltünk mi sokáig 'két hazában'…". Tanulmányok a 90 éves Kiss András tiszteletére* [*We lived for a long time in "two countries"*.

friars with the urban population, while the strong support they gave to the cult of the Holy Blood could be better understood if further contextualized.

Officially confirmed at the Council of Vienne in 1311, devotion for Corpus Christi rapidly spread Europe-wide, as revealed by an ever-growing number of fraternities, altars and chapels that were dedicated to it, developments which transformed Eucharistic devotion into the hallmark of late medieval piety.[8] Transylvania was an integral part of this picture, as revealed by the importance that the veneration of the Body and Blood of Christ came to acquire both in urban parishes and in village churches.[9] A highly relevant example in this regard is the chapel in Mălâncrav dedicated to the Blood of Christ, a chapel which benefited from the patronage of Nicholas Apafi, the nobleman who secured an indulgence for its functioning in 1424, which eventually turned it into a noteworthy pilgrimage place in the region.[10] The Dominicans involvement in promoting the cult for the Holy Blood was thus not only in tune with the more general spread of this cult, but it was also an efficient strategy that would enhance their apostolate. At the Council of Konstanz in 1415, it was decided that the communion in both species was reserved to the clergy alone, the reception of the chalice being forbidden to the laity, a decision that was supposedly meant to increase the clerical control of the cult for the Eucharist.[11] To be sure, ordinary believers were denied partaking in the Blood of Christ during the liturgical celebration; however, to them, the Friars Preachers offered other means by which devotion to *Sanguinis Christi* could be expressed. In Sibiu, these took the form of large drops of blood abundantly flowing from the wounds of Christ, the visible expression of Christ's sufferings on the cross that people adored when processing to the Crucifix of the town.

Miraculous bleeding hosts, object of popular devotion, were kept in other churches of the Dominican province in Hungary. In Pécs, one of

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Studies dedicated to the 90th anniversary of Kiss András] (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó/Debrecen University Press, 2012), 264-266; Beatrix F. Romhányi, "A koldulóbarátok szerepe a XV-XVI századi vallási megújulásban" [The role of the friars in the religious revival during the 15th and 16th centuries], in Beatrix F. Romhányi and Gábor Kendeffy (eds.), *Szentírás, hagyomány, reformáció*, [Scripture, tradition, reformation] (Budapest: Gondolat, 2009), 144-155.

[8] Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi. The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 210-214.

[9] Maria Crăciun, "Attitudes to Religious Art and the Confessional Identity of the Saxon Community. Passion Cycles in the Context of Lenten Observance and Easter Celebrations in Late Medieval and Early Modern Transylvania", *New Europe College GE-NEC Program, (2004-2007)*: 13-70.

[10] Anca Gogâltan, Dóra Sallay, "The Church of Mălâncrav and the Holy Blood Chapel of Nicholas Apa", in Adrian Andrei Rusu, Péter Levente (eds.) *Arhitectura religioasă medievală din Transilvania* [Religious architecture in medieval Transylvania], vol. II (Satu Mare: Editura Muzeului Sătmărean, 2002), 195-9.

[11] Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 72-77.

the largest convents in the kingdom, in 1491, the Master General of the Order of the Friars Preachers asked the local friars to allow women to visit the miraculous host kept in the sacristy of the church. A few years later, Alexander VI (1492-1503) referred to the miracles that took place in the Church of the Holy Cross of the friars in Vasvár, in western Hungary, where another bleeding host was kept. (**Map 1**).[12] There is high certainty in considering that both friaries have adopted the Observance by the end of the fifteenth century, when these miracles related to the Holy Blood were recorded, something which draws our attention to the modalities within which this cult became an integral part of the devotional models this reform movement propagated.[13]

In 1390, Raymond of Capua, Master General of the Order of the Friars Preachers, strongly advocated for an urgently needed reform of religious life, and that its aims could be achieved by strict observance of the Rule of St Augustine and the Constitutions of the Order, requiring that there should be at least one friary in each province which would adhere closely to these exigencies. As we know from recent research into the adoption of the Observance by religious orders, such a return to the pristine ideal of monastic life was a process that was neither straightforward, nor easy to achieve.[14] Following serious crises such as the Great Schism or the Black Death, the society had greatly changed since the first century of the Dominican Order's existence, when its legislative body was established, and the reform movement had to adapt to the needs and expectations of a very different late medieval society.

The accommodation of the Observant reform was thus translated into new saintly models that were constructed and propagated. The preservation of strict enclosure was strongly emphasized, whereas interest in regulating and controlling the religious behaviour of the faithful became of key importance.[15] From an institutional point of view, the long fifteenth

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[12] Veress, The Dominicans and the Holy Blood, 135-136.

[13] András Harsányi, *A Domonkosrend Magyarországon a reformáció előtt* [The Dominican Order in Hungary before the Reformation] (Debrecen: Nagy Károly grafikai müintézetének nyomása, 1938), 69-71.

[14] Among recent contributions on the investigation of the Observant movement as a multifaceted phenomenon oriented towards reforming not only the religious orders, but the entire society, there are those of James D. Mixson – Bert Roest (eds.), *A Companion to Observant Reform in the Late Middle Ages and Beyond* (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2015), 5-10; Sylvie Duval, Haude Morvan, and Ludovic Viallet, "Introduction." *Mélanges de l' École française de Rome* 130/2 (2018) https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrm.4182 (last accessed 10 September 2023) and Michele Lodone, 'Riforme e osservanze tra XIV e XVI secolo', *Mélanges de l' École française de Rome*, 130/2 (2018): 267-273.

[15] Anne Huijbers, Zealots for Souls. Dominican Narratives of Self-Understanding during Observant Reforms, c. 1388-1517 (De Gruyter: 2018), 179-185.

century also witnessed a change in the way the Observance was adopted. Between 1390 and 1460, the reform was carried out by energetic friars who were vigorously supported in their undertakings by the highest officials of the Dominicans, a piecemeal strategy that led to the reformation of several friaries and women's convents, but without having a strong impact on the Order as a whole. The turning point came with the pontificate of Pius II (1458-1464) and the canonisation in 1461 of Catherine of Siena, the paradigmatic model of the Observance in the eyes of the Preachers. The autonomy gained by the Observant Congregations (such as that of Lombardy in 1459 or that of Holland in 1462) proved to be effective, and it finally allowed the Observant reform to prevail within the Order.[16]

During the pontificate of Pius II, fierce disputes arose between the Observant Franciscans and the Dominican ones. James of the Marches reiterated the idea (which was otherwise condemned as heretical in the fourteenth century) that the effused Blood of Christ was unworthy of veneration, since it no longer belonged to the sacred body of Christ, something which was promptly condemned by the Observant Dominicans in Lombardy and recourse to papal mediation was made. In the end, the pope and the cardinals decided that the Holy Blood, even if effused, remains part of Christ's sacred body, hence, it should be venerated.[17]

This dispute brings to the fore a key dimension along which the Observance had influenced late medieval devotion. At the heart of this reform movement, there was a renewed emphasis on the regulation of religious life by norms to be obeyed by clergy and laity alike, a development intertwined with a centring of piety, in the words of Berndt Hamm. In his view, the more general tendency, visible in government and law, but also in humanism and the visual arts, was towards greater standardisation, discipline and control, which largely characterized the formation of early modern states. Such a tendency was paralleled in the world of devotion through the enforcement of norms and the reduction and simplification of complex belief systems. The most valued of such normative centring was identified in the Christ of the Passion, the powerful image of divine mercy that prompted repentance.[18] Placed within this interpretative framework, the Observant Dominicans' support for the cult of the Holy Blood not only exalted the redemptive value of Christ's sacrifice, but also transformed it into the focal point of the religious experience. However, this normative

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[16] Sylvie Duval, "Les Dominicaines ou les paradoxes de l'Observance. Une approche historiographique", *Mélanges de l' École française de Rome*, 130/2 (2018), http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/4515 (accessed 1st September 2023)

[17] Veress, The Dominicans and the Holy Blood, 134.

[18] Berndt Hamm, The Reformation of Faith in the Context of Late Medieval Theology and Piety (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2004), 12-22.

centring of piety gained enormous importance within the devotional world of religious women affiliated with the Observant Dominicans.

Chapter XVI of the *Constitutiones sororum*, authored by Humbert of Romans and approved by the General Chapter in 1259, made obedience the cornerstone on which the life of women religious was to be built. Obedience was pledged to when the nuns took their profession to God, the Virgin Mary and St. Dominic, to the prioress and the Master general of the Order, to the Rule of St. Augustine and the Constitutions of the Order.[19] A uniform and standardised way of life was thus imposed on the *Moniales Ordinis Sancti Augustini sub cura et instituta Fratrum Predicatorum viventes*, not only with regard to obedience to the Rule, the Constitutions and the officials of the Order, but also with regard to the inner life of their communities. Monastic life was a communal life, and living in the community required that the nuns also obey and observe the liturgical tasks that they had to fulfil according to the Constitutions and the decisions of the general chapters, as well as the duties that kept the convents functioning, such as those arising from the offices of prioress or sub-prioress, or the more mundane activities of the simple members of the convent.[20]

With the advance of the Observance in the course of the fifteenth century, enclosure became even more important and had a significant impact on the life of women religious. From 1298, the bull *Periculoso* imposed both passive (no one could enter a nunnery except confessors, doctors and, in rare cases, the patron of the house) and active (the nuns could not leave their nunneries) enclosure on all professed nuns.[21] The reformed friars placed great emphasis on the enclosure of women affiliated to the Order of the Friars Preachers, given that the assumption was that only by adopting a cloistered way of life could women fulfil their spiritual role. The Brides of Christ were instructed both in the guidelines drawn up for them by influential Observant friars such as Johannes Nider and Johannes

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[19] Modus faciendi professionem: talis est. ego N. facio professionem et promitto obedianciam deo. et beate marie et beato dominico. et tibi N. priorissa. vice N. magistri ordinis fratrum predicatorum…. secundum regulam beati augustini et instituciones sororum. Quarum cura predicto ordinii est comissa: quod ero obediens tibi. aliisque priorissis meis. usque ad mortem, quoted from Nicola Vohringer, Chanting Nuns, Chiming Bells: Sound in Late Medieval Mystical Literature and Devotional Culture (PhD Thesis Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures, University of Toronto, 2017), 132, footnote 283.

[20] Claire Taylor Jones, *Ruling the Spirit. Women, Liturgy and Dominican Reform in Late Medieval Germany* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 64.

[21] Carola Jäggi and Uwe Lobbedey, "Church and Cloister: The Architecture of Female Monasticism in the Middle Ages" in Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Susan Marti (eds.), *Crown and Veil. Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 109-132.

Meyer, and in the decisions taken by the General Chapters in 1468 and then again in 1508, on the strict observance of enclosure.[22]

Communal and enclosed life, fundamentals of Dominican *forma vitae*, decisively shaped the daily and yearly liturgical and cult practices the Observant Dominican women were engaged in. The nuns were to participate in the choir for the celebration of the Divine Office at each canonical hours every day, to say the Little Office of the Virgin Mary, to attend the Mass, to sing and speak designated sequences of psalms and hymns, to pray, to read or to listen to a text from the Bible or a legend of a saint that were read aloud to them.[23] The prerequisites of women's liturgical performance can be found in the Rule of St. Augustine, according to which *when you pray to God in psalms and hymns, consider in your heart what you offer with your voice,*[24] an instruction which was given week after week when the Rule was read aloud to female religious. Claire Taylor Jones has further argued that Johannes Nider, the influential promoter of the Observance, placed great emphasis in his works on the correct, informed and considered performance of the Divine Office by the nuns. Pious and attentive singing in the choir, together with correct participation in the liturgical ritual (one had to know by heart the various movements to be made, such as inclinations, standing, kneeling or prostrating), was a constant exercise of obedience within a liturgical framework, and at the same time fostered a collective sense of identity with female religious communities.[25]

The key figures in the implementation of the Observance in the Dominican Province of Hungary were Jacob Richer and Leonardus Huntpichler, who began this work in the middle of the 15th century. Richer was sent to Transylvania in 1444 by Eugene IV (1431-1447), who appointed him vicar of the Dominican houses in the region. At the time of this nomination, Richer was a friar in the convent of Basel, a convent that is considered to have played an enormous role – if not the most important role – in the advancement of the Observance in the mid-fifteenth century. According to the papal charter, Jacob Richer came together with several like-minded friars, having the clear mission of introducing the Observance

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[22] Heike Uffmann, "Inside and Outside the Convent Walls. The Norm and Practice of Enclosure in Reformed Nunneries of Late Medieval Germany", *The Medieval History Journal* 4 (2001): 91-104. Franz Andreas Frühwirth – Benedictus Maria Reichert (eds.), *Acta capitulorum generalium Ordinis Praedicatorum* (Romae: In domo generalitia, 1900), vol. 3, 308 and Andreas Frühwirth – Benedictus Maria Reichert (eds.), *Acta capitulorum generalium Ordinis Praedicatorum* (Romae: In domo generalitia, 1900), vol. IV, 85.

[23] Gisela Muschiol, "Liturgy and Rite in Female Monasteries of the Middle Ages", in Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Susan Marti (eds.), *Crown and Veil. Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 192.

[24] Taylor Jones, *Ruling the Spirit*, 14-15.

[25] Ibid., 70-72.

in the friaries belonging to a region where religious life was considered to be in severe decay and thus in urgent need of reform. Richer and his companions spent three years in Transylvania, between 1444 and 1447.[26] In the early sixteenth-century, the prior provincial of the Dominicans reports that the first house to be reformed was that of Cluj, and it seems that it became an influential center of the reform movement.[27] We lack more precise details on how Observance was implemented in the friary of Cluj, but we do have a much clearer picture of what the Observance meant to the Dominican nuns of Cluj.

Belonging to the second generation of reformers, Johannes Nider was magister and lector at the Vienna University, then became prior in Basel in 1429, the one who reformed the nunnery of St. Catherine in Nuremberg.[28] In each house that he reformed, or encouraged to be reformed, Nider never failed to instruct the nuns in active and informed participation in the liturgy, given that the necessary step in reforming a convent was the provision of the correct liturgical books needed by the nuns in order to fulfil their duties in the choir. Johannes Meyer, a great admirer of Nider's reform efforts, further promoted the Observance. Like Nider, Meyer was also a friar in Basel between 1442 and 1454, and later, as confessor to Dominican nuns in Schönensteinbach and Bern, he exerted an enormous influence on the life of the women religious belonging to the Friars Preachers. For Meyer, the Divine Office was the perfect medium in which and through which the liturgical ritual shaped the community of nuns, since it involved the whole convent in prayer in a way that was both uniform and regulated.[29]

In 1450, prioress Gertrude, together with nun Elizabeth of St. Egidius nunnery in Cluj, having been given the consent of the prior of the friary of the town, sold three liturgical books (a gradual, an antiphonary and a Missal) that were of no use to their community.[30] Seen within the broader context of the reformation of Dominican nunneries, the decisions made by the nuns of Cluj, having received the consent of the local prior, as it was required by the Order's regulations, can be regarded as an act of reform. Unlike their counterparts from Germany, Spain or Portugal, who, in many cases, adopted the Observance through the involvement of nuns who had

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[26] Lupescu Makó, Domonkos rendi obszerváns törekvések Magyarországon, 262-264.
[27] János Eszterházy, "A kolozsvári Boldog-Asszonyról címzett domonkosok, jelenleg ferenczieknek egyházának történeti és építészeti leírása" [Historical and architectural evidence concerning the Franciscan (former Dominican) friary of the Virgin Mary in Cluj], *Magyar Sion* 4 (1866): 567.
[28] Huijbers, *Zealots for Souls*, 192-197.
[29] Taylor Jones, *Ruling the Spirit*, 11.
[30] Zsigmond Jakó (ed.), *A kolozsmonostori konvent jegyzőkönyvei (1289–1556)* [The protocols of the Benedictine convent from Cluj-Mănăştur 1289-1556], (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990), vol. 1, 402, doc. no. 828.

come from an already reformed nunnery,[31] the adoption of the Observance by the nuns of St. Egidius seems to have been the work of the friars, themselves reformed as a result of Jacob Richer's mission, the friar who came from Basel.

Surviving sources do not indicate the existence of any Dominican community of women in Transylvania until the mid-fifteenth century, when the reformation of the friaries started. The initiative of reforming the liturgy by the nuns in Cluj is the first recorded information not only regarding the female religious in this particular town, but in the whole of Transylvania. Undoubtedly, there is a strong connection between Observance and the emergence of Dominican nunneries in the most important towns of the region such as Cluj, Sibiu, Bistrița, Braşov and Sighişoara. This connection is on the one hand suggested by chronology. There is evidence of the presence of communities of Observant Dominican women in Cluj (1450) at the time when the friary of the town has adopted the Observance, in Braşov in 1474 where the friary had been reformed in 1454, in Bistrița where the reformation of the Holy Cross friary and the formation of an Observant Dominican nunnery can be dated to the 1470s, in Sibiu where the friars became Observant in 1447, whereas the nuns of Mary Magdalene are mentioned in 1497, and in Sighişoara where the friars adopted the Observance by 1455, and the first indices about the Dominican nuns are dated to 1510.[32]

The firm promoters of the Observance in Transylvania proved to be the local friars such as Thomas *Siculus*, who studied at the University of Vienna (a prominent center of the reform movement) in 1453, and then became prior in Braşov (1464), Lawrence *de Valle Rosarum*, who pursued his studies in the Dominican *studium generale* in Naples in 1475, and then became the prior in Bistrița one year later, or Johannes Episcopi, a student in Cologne in 1460s, then prior in Cluj, vicar in Transylvania and took over the office of prior provincial between 1474-1477 and then again in 1495.[33] The leading positions they acquired in governing the friaries or even the province, helped enforce the Observance in the region. Highly relevant was also the work they provided to the formation of the communities of Observant Dominican women.

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[31] Claire Taylor Jones, "Negotiating Liturgical Obligations in Late Medieval Dominican Convents", *Church History* 91 (2022): 24-26.

[32] Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane*, 88-183, 202-259.

[33] Sándor Tonk, *Erdélyiek egyetemjárása a középkorban* [Transylvanian students in the Middle Ages] (Bukarest: Kriterion Könyvkiadó, 1979), 258, 278; Béla Iványi, "Geschichte des Dominikanerordens in Siebenbürgen und der Moldau", *Siebenbürgische Vierteljahrschrift* 62 (1939): 252.

In 1474, in Braşov, the prior was licensed by the Order's officials to affiliate ten women *cum scapulari* to the Order of the Friars Preachers. Two years later, Lawrence *de Valle Rosarum* was granted permission from the Master General to allow the sisters to wear the scapular and also to receive three more women in the community of female religious in Bistrița.[34] The scapular was the indisputable symbol of the nuns' professed status, a marker of identity which, as shown by these Transylvanian examples, was defined within the frame of the Observant movement. Of outstanding importance concerning the advance of the Observance with the involvement of noteworthy friars in the functioning of the houses of religious women was also the work of Paul of Vác, *magister in artibus et theologie*, trained at the universities in Vienna and Heidelberg. Friar Paul translated into Hungarian the Rule of St. Augustine and the Dominican Constitutions, a translation that unambiguously proves the friars' strategy in making available to the nuns the foundational texts according to which their communities were organized and their vocation should be pursued.[35]

Whereas this translation is part of the more general efforts made by the Observant Dominican friars in regulating the life of the female religious communities they supervised, another noteworthy feature should be observed. Since 1468, by decision of the general chapter, the women affiliated with the Order of the Friars Preachers were to strictly obey to the authority of the prior provincial whose decisions, not least concerning the observance of enclosure by female communities, must rigorously be followed.[36] In the Dominican Province of Hungary, reform-minded friars, such as Lawrence of *Valle Rosaru*m or Paul of Vác, were supporters of the formation or reformation of nunneries at the time when the prior provincial was Johannes Episcopi (1474-1477). The 1470s was thus the time when the institutional framework designed for the spiritual cure of Dominican women was consolidated with local initiatives aimed at strengthening their integration into the reformed family of the Order of the Friars Preachers.

As I have argued elsewhere, the friars and nuns were not alone in their commitment to Observant ideals, saints proved to be of invaluable help in this regard. The emblems of faith that embody the essence of the *forma vitae* that the Dominican friars and nuns were called to adopt and

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[34] Salontai, Mănăstiri dominicane, 98.

[35] Lea Haader, "Domonkosokhoz köthető középkori kódexek" [Medieval codices related to the Dominicans], in Gábor Barna (ed.), *A Szent Domonkos rend és a kunok* [The Order of St. Dominic and the Cumans], (MTA-SZTE Vallási Kultúrkutató Csoport, 2016), 134-135 the translation has survived, albeit in fragmentary form in the so-called Birk-codex, being used by the Dominican nuns of the Virgin Mary convent on the Margaret Island/ *Insula Leporum* of the Danube.

[36] *Acta Capitulorum*, vol. III, 308-309.

follow can be identified in the patron saints who became their protectors, mediators and intercessors. If we were to compare the saints who became the patrons of the Transylvanian convents, most of which were founded in the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, with the saints who assumed this patronage in the Observant Dominican communities of the region, we could easily see a change. The Virgin Mary and the Holy Cross were the saintly patronages under which the friars worked in the region, an integral part of the great esteem in which these devotions were held by the Friars Preachers. At the same time, these dedications also reveal the very firm attachment of the friars to cults that were not only popular Europe-wide, but also highly revered at a local level.[37]

Such a coherent plan of adapting their mission to the devotional profile of the communities where the friars undertook their apostolate was slightly modified in the course of the fifteenth-century. The change was the result of the spread of the Observant movement, a process in which saints who conformed to the exigencies of the reform were called to protect the nuns. Sts. Anthony and Egidius became paradigmatic models of the life of asceticism, renunciation and confession for the friars and nuns in Cluj, Mary Magdalene the great repentant saint was employed as patroness for the nuns of Sibiu, while in Braşov, John the Evangelist, the beloved disciple of Christ was the exemplar of faith for the Dominican women.

A further comparison will add more weight to this idea. The Dominican nunneries that functioned in the Province of Hungary were in their greatest majority founded in the course of the thirteenth century and the following one, and were dedicated to the Virgin Mary, St. Catherine and St. Stanislaus. Of those founded in the course of the fifteenth century outside Transylvania, the dedication of only one is documented, that of the Holy Spirit for the nuns living in Pécs (1461).[38] Not only did five communities of Observant Dominican women emerge in Transylvania in the second half of the 15th century, but placing their patron saints in the wider context of the holy patronage promoted by the Observant Dominicans highlights the successful attempt to link their celestial protectors with the demands of the reform movement. This was undoubtedly the result of Observant friars educated in centres of reform (such as the University of Vienna) or in reformed friaries such as those of Bologna, Cologne or Heidelberg,[39] who employed suitable holy figures to achieve this goal.

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[37] Carmen Florea, The Late Medieval Cult of the Saints: Universal Developments within Local Contexts (London-New York: Routledge, 2022), 159-166.

[38] Beatrix F. Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok a középkori Magyarországon* [Monasteries and collegiate churches in medieval Hungary] (Budapest: Pytheas, 2000), 69.

[39] Harsányi, A Domonkosrend Magyarországon, 71-73.

The fact that this can indeed be regarded as a piety that was centred on exemplary models to be followed by nuns is further revealed when approaching the patrons of friaries and nunneries as saintly pairs. When we look at the map of the medieval town of Sibiu (**Map2**), the Dominican friary and the nunnery were placed in proximity, next to each other in the Upper part of the town, close to the fortifications. Previous research has already drawn the attention and dealt at length with the difficulties the friars of the Holy Cross had to overcome when attempting to relocate their house inside the city walls.[40] A series of charters dated to 1444, 1445 and 1447, coinciding with Richer's mission in Transylvania, reveal the support the friars received from both the papacy and the city council.[41] Mentioned in 1447 as Observant friars, the Dominicans of Sibiu would only be able to settle within the city walls three decades later. The agreement concluded between the Order's officials and the magistrate faithfully revealed the ways in which the city authorities had devised to control the apostolate of the friars. The most important means was the provision that the majority of them, including their prior, had to be of German origin, thus strengthening their apostolate among the city's population.[42]

Therefore, from 1474 onwards, the friars became involved in the construction of their convent, a project that was also civic in nature. Detailed studies of the Observance have shown that, in most cases, the support of the municipal authorities and the territorial lords proved to be key to succeeding.[43] This was also the case in Sibiu, not only because the municipal government cherished the reformed way of life the friars embarked upon and the prestige it derived from it, held in great esteem by the laity, but also because it offered effective means of controlling religious life. This is of increased significance for a town such as Sibiu was in the Middle Ages, where the collaboration of the city council with the local parish had a long history and strongly impacted on the religious life of the town.[44] It was now, with the help of the Observance, that the councillors of the city

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[40] Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane*, 202-203.

[41] Karl Fabritius (ed.), *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte des Kisder Kapitels vor der Reformation und der auf dem Gebiete desselben ehedem befindlichen Orden* (Hermannstadt: 1875), 54, doc. no. LXXXV and. 55, doc. no. LXXXVI; Franz Zimmermann and Gustav Gündisch (eds.), *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen* (Bucureşti: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1975), vol. 5, 138, doc. no. 2495; Augustin Theiner (ed.), *Vetera monumenta historica Hungariam sacram illustrantia* Roma: Typ. Vaticanis, 1860), vol. II, 238, doc. no. CCCXCVIII.

[42] Gustav Gündisch, Herta Gündisch, Konrad Gündisch and Gernot Nussbächer (eds.), *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen* (Bucureşti: Editura Academiei Române), vol. VII, 28-30, doc. no. 4022.

[43] Gabriella Zarri, 'Osservanze mendicanti tra Quattro e Cinquecento. Una riflessione storiografica e alcuni esempi milanesi', *Memorie domenicane*, XLVII (2016): 24-30.

[44] De Cevins, L'Église dans les villes hongroises, 101-135.

of Sibiu were able to extend their involvement in ecclesiastical matters further and in a more subtle way.

The Observant friars understood how reform could be of social benefit, contributing to the social disciplining, the project in which city governments invested considerable energy at the end of the Middle Ages. They were thus ingenious enough to integrate into their apostolate those devotional traits that would largely be mirroring the Dominican *forma vitae*. The saintly emblems of an Observant Dominican identity in Sibiu were the Holy Cross and Mary Magdalene. By choosing, as patron for the nuns, the sinner who underwent profound repentance and became a saint, the Observants in Sibiu not only remained faithful to their Order's allegiance to this intimate of Christ,[45] but they also thus provided the nuns, who lived a cloistered life, a constant example and guide to transcend the sinful nature of their being. It was also a visible symbolic connection since it was at the foot of the Holy Cross that Mary Magdalene lamented and mourned the sacrifice of Christ, symbols that were held together in Sibiu by placing the friars' church next to that of the nuns.

Research on Transylvanian Dominican establishments has already pointed out that, similar to the situation observed in other European regions, in the greatest majority of the cases, the nuns' churches were located in the vicinity of the churches the friars used. This was the case not only in Sibiu, but also in Bistriţa, Braşov, and Sighişoara, evidence of urban topography that further illustrates the friars' spiritual cure, and most likely also control, of the nuns.[46] Significantly enough, the churches used by the nuns and their cloisters were built next to the city walls for pragmatic reasons, both to protect the nuns and because of the space available inside the walls at the end of the Middle Ages. The need to enclose the nuns also played a decisive role in the municipal authorities' choice for the sites. Great care was taken by the councillors to ensure that the complex of buildings used by the nuns was separated as much as possible and was difficult to access,

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[45] By decision of the general chapters, the feast of Mary Magdalene was included in the Dominican calendar in 1297, while in 1505 an octave was added to the celebration, *Acta Capitulorum*, vol. III, 283 and *Acta Capitulorum*, vol. IV, 198. The support provided by the mendicant friars to the development of the cult of Mary Magdalene has been discussed at length by Katherine Ludwig Jansen, *The Making of the Magdalen. Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 44-227. I have also attempted to provide a detailed approach to the means by which Mary Magdalene was transformed into a patron and protector of women religious in "Identity and Patronage in the Religious Experience of Observant Dominican Women", *Brukenthal. Acta Musei*, XVIII.2 (2023) (forthcoming).

[46] Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane*, 160; *Cura monialium* was provided to the nuns by friars belonging to the convents of the towns where the nunneries functioned, for example Gaspar *de Rupe*, friar in Sibiu is mentioned as *confessor monialium* to the nuns of Mary Magdalene, Harsányi, *A Domonkos rend Magyarországon*, 110-111.

thus enforcing their enclosure.[47] Urban fortifications were not only the most appropriate means of confining women religious within the city, they also effectively detached them from the outside world. Our Transylvanian examples further complicate this discussion in a most interesting way.

The nunnery of St. Egidius was *in promontorio vinearum fundato*, the exception to the rule of proximity to the convent already mentioned, the nuns of Cluj lived outside the city fortifications, completely separated from the tumult of urban life. The norm of enclosure that the Rule of St. Augustine, the Dominican Constitutions, papal bulls and several decisions of the general chapters imposed on the formation and functioning of the convents of Observant Dominican women was also visibly expressed within the city walls. In Braşov, the nunnery of St. John was formed at the periphery of the town, and the name of the street where it was located *Nova Platea* (1486) or *platea Sancti Johannis* (1540) indicates that it was a recently urbanized area.[48] The situation was similar in Sibiu, where the nuns *ad sanctam Maria Magdalenam* had their church located on the street which was named *Nonnengasse*, belonging to an urban nucleus which started developing from the end of the fourteenth-century onwards.[49] A detailed investigation of the topography of the area where the Holy Cross friary and the nuns' convent were placed in Sibiu has shown that the streets at the intersection of which the friars' church and cloister were built were scarcely inhabited. The architectural evidence also revealed that the existing buildings on the *Nonnengasse* had all been constructed in the course of the eighteenth century.[50] An isolated and deserted area within the town's walls was thus the place where the city council allowed the Observant Dominican women to form their community, thus reinforcing the norm of leading a cloistered way of life.

The interior of the Dominican churches was a divided space that enforced the active and passive enclosure of the nuns through choir screens, galleries, tribunes or movable wooden panels. There was also a visual enclosure, in that the nuns were not to be seen, but were also prevented from seeing, visual access to the Eucharist celebrated by the clergy was only possible through large openings in the fixed or mobile structures that

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[47] Ana Marinković, Zehra Laznibat, "Monastic Enclosure as Urban Feature: Mapping Conventual Complexes vs. Public Space in Early Modern Dubrovnik", in Ana Plosnić Škarić (ed.), *Mapping Urban Changes/Mapiranje urbanih promjena* (Zagreb: Institute of Art History, 2018), 196-219.

[48] Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane*, 126-129.

[49] Radu Lupescu, "The Medieval Fortifications of Sibiu", in Olaf Wagener (ed.), *"vmbringt mit starcken turnen, murn"*, *Ortsbefestigungen im Mittelalter* (2010): 358.

[50] Alexandru Avram and Christoph Machat (eds.), Denkmaltopographie Siebenbürgen. Stadt Hermannstadt. Die Altstadt/ Topografia monumentelor din Transilvania. Municipiul Sibiu. Centrul istoric (Köln: Rheinland, 1999), 208-256.

separated the nuns from the most sacred place in the church, the high altar.[51] Not much is known about the interior of the churches used by the Transylvanian Observant Dominican women. Those of Cluj and Sighişoara completely perished, that of Bistrița has also been largely destroyed. Similarly to the situation encountered in other European regions, the church of St. John the Evangelist in Braşov and that of Mary Magdalene in Sibiu underwent considerable changes over the course of the eighteenth century. Such significant losses and transformations, not to mention the lack of archaeological investigations conducted on these edifices, makes it difficult to have a precise idea of the interior layout where Observant Dominican women once lived, prayed and sang.[52]

In 2016, restoration and conservation work were carried out in the church used by the nuns of Mary Magdalene from Sibiu in medieval times. Thus, several (albeit rather incomplete) wall paintings that decorated the chancel of the church were brought to light.[53] There was a strong emphasis placed on the Christocentric devotion that these representations illustrate. The first scene from the left in the lower register of the chancel's southern wall depicted the Crucifixion, with the Virgin Mary in prayer turned to her Son, John the Evangelist – the only animated figure in the scene – gesturing towards Christ. In addition, it also depicts a kneeling donor for whom most likely the patron saint of the church was interceding. The execution of the scene is simple – it used sombre colours and it is set in a sombre landscape, which is an invitation to meditation and contemplation of Christ's sacrifice.[54] The representation of Christ interceding before God, which is almost twice as high, is placed on the right and extends into both the upper and lower registers. It visually expresses the redemptive power of Christ's sacrifice and, according to several convincing arguments, it

[51] Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Petra Marx and Susan Marti, "The Time of the Orders 1200-1500" in Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Susan Marti (eds.), *Crown and Veil. Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 72-73.

[52] Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane*, 160, 244, 101, 127-128 and 216-217.

[53] Dana Jenei, "Murals Discovered in the Choir of the Present Franciscan Church in Sibiu", *Ars Transsilvaniae*, XVII-XVIII, Cluj-Napoca (2017-2018): 31-48 and Anna Kónya, *Eucharistic Imagery in the Late Gothic Wall Paintings of Transylvania (c. 1440−1530)*, (PhD dissertation, Budapest: Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University 2020) 44-47, 127-130, 396-402 offer detailed discussion on the production, stylistic traits, identification of the saints and devotional beliefs related to these wall paintings.

[54] Kónya, *Eucharistic Imagery*, 45 and Fig. 1.61; Denis Zaru, "Les Observances dominicaine et franciscaines: ferments de nouveauté artistique ou gardienne de la tradition? Éléments de réponse et perspectives de recherche", MEFR 130 2 (2018): 14-19 has drawn the attention to the privileged place detained by the representations of the Passion of Christ in the churches of Observant Dominican women, paintings which primary role was that of instilling meditation during the liturgical practices these pious women were engaged in.

symbolically links the meanings contained in these compositions.[55] The image of interceding Christ, a rarely represented (or rarely preserved) depiction in Transylvanian paintings (**Fig. 3**) where God the Father blesses His Son, angels are carrying the instruments of the Passion, while Jesus is mediating for the humankind apparently showing his wounds, reveals, with great accuracy, the Christocentric devotion these mural paintings prompted.[56]

The dead Christ on the cross and the resurrected Christ were images that explicitly and unambiguously offered the viewer the essentials of the history of salvation. In his *Buch der Reformacio*, Johannes Meyer gives us a vivid example of how Observant Dominican women engaged in and were stimulated to get engaged into Christ-centred piety. In 1397, Conrad of Prussia presided over the ceremony of the enclosure of the nuns in Schönensteinbach, during which he offered each nun an image of Christ illustrating different moments of His Passion. However, a miracle took place: through the intervention of God, all the images came to represent only one scene: the Crucifixion of Jesus, accompanied by the Virgin Mary and St John. The identical gift received by the nuns corresponded in every detail to the Observant ideals of uniformity, equality and devotion to the Passion, as has been suggested.[57]

For the Observant Dominican women, the contemplation of the Passion, the identification with it and the devotion to it became an even more compelling integral part of their daily liturgical and cultic activities through the mediation of the cult of the Eucharist.[58] As a re-enactment and remembrance of Christ's sacrifice, devotion to the Eucharist not only became increasingly important in women's spirituality in the late Middle Ages, but was also adopted and expressed in particular ways by the Observant Dominican women. For the cloistered nuns, whose church was divided so as to separate them from the laity and the clergy who celebrated Mass at the high altar, architectural solutions were devised, such as openings in the choir screens through which the consecrated host was passed to them.[59] Moreover, since their Constitutions required that the Sacrament of Communion be administered to them fifteen times a year, images with

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[55] Kónya, Eucharistic Imagery, 46.
[56] Jenei, Murals Discovered in the Choir, 38.
[57] June L. Mecham, *Sacred Communities, Shared Devotions. Gender, Material Culture and Monasticism in Late Medieval Germany*, edited by Alison I. Beach, Constance H. Berman, and Lisa M. Bitel, with an Introduction by Lisa M. Bitel (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 168-170.
[58] Richard Kieckhefer, The Mystical Presence of Christ. The Exceptional and the Ordinary in Late Medieval Religion (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2022), 145-179.
[59] Uffmann, Inside and Outside the Convent Wall, 93.

Eucharistic overtones fulfilled the desire of those who yearned for direct and more frequent identification with the Holy Sacrifice.[60]

The location of the nuns' choirs in their churches has received increased attention in recent research. It has been emphasised that the choir, where the nuns were obliged by their constitutions to perform their liturgical duties every day of the week, at every canonical hour, was, according to the norms of enclosure, a distinct, separate place where their devotion was shaped by singing, praying and contemplating the images that adorned this sacred space.[61] The nuns' choirs were located at the west end of the church, in an elevated gallery, or a tribune, sometimes in the eastern part of the church, in which case the nuns' separation from the main altar where the Mass was celebrated was made possible by portable, wooden-made panels.[62] In the convent of the Virgin Mary on the Margaret Island of the Danube, for example, the nuns' choir was on the west end of the church, on the ground floor, as information from thirteenth-century discloses. It was, however, in the early fifteenth century that an elevated gallery was built, with access provided by stairs placed on the southern wall of the church.[63]

In 1510, the Master General of the Order of the Friars Preachers limited the number of nuns of Mary Magdalene in Sibiu to twenty-four.[64] The decision is of high relevance from several points of view. As enclosed communities, the nunnery could only accommodate a number of residents limited to the amount of sustenance they could provide, depending on the economic means they had at their disposal through donations, testaments or civic subsidies. To *monialibus nigris*, the city council of Sibiu allocated 6 Fl. in 1497, and, in 1507, the town officials also provided the support necessary for their functioning. Bequests were also made to them in the last wills issued in 1502 by the parish priest from Rupea, in 1512 and 1523 respectively, by two highly prosperous, influential ladies belonging to the urban elite.[65] It is more than coincidental that this support surfaces from existing documentation in the early sixteenth-century. This was the time, as it has already been observed, when the nuns' church underwent architectural changes, the pointed-arched

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[60] Ann Roberts, Dominican Women and Renaissance Art. The Convent of San Domenico of Pisa, (London-New York: Routledge, 2016), 21.

[61] Hamburger, Marx, Marti, *The Time of the Orders*, 43-46.

[62] Roberta Gilchrist, *Gender and Material Culture. The Archaeology of Religious Women* (London-New York: Routledge, 1994), 95-99.

[63] Rózsa Feuerné Tóth, "A Margitszigeti domonkos kolostor" [The Dominican convent on the Margaret Island], *Budapest Régiségei* XXII (1971): 254-256.

[64] Salontai, Mănăstiri dominicane, 216.

[65] *Rechnungen aus dem Archiv der Stadt Hermannstadt und der Sächsischen Nation (1380−1516)*, (Hermannstadt: in Commision bei Franz Michaelis, 1880), 241, 473 and Salontai, Mănăstiri dominicane, 215-216.

windows of the nave, but also of the chancel having been walled-up prior to the execution of the mural paintings that were dated to around 1520.[66] The norm of enclosure thus formed the community of the Observant Dominican women in Sibiu, visibly separated from the outside world, but at the same time integrated into it through the system of mutual benefices, donations and testamentary clauses articulated.[67]

The existing research has also shown that the nuns' church was a small one, with a single nave and a chancel that measured 11.60 metres long. In medieval times, the nave was shorter and it was significantly enlarged in the course of the eighteenth-century.[68] Further archaeological research paired with the use of ground-penetrating radar would most likely provide a more accurate picture of the interior design of the church and would also reveal the precise location of the nuns' choir. Until then, the visual environment of the nuns of Mary Magdalene could fill in these gaps. During the restoration work that resurfaced the mural paintings on the south wall of the choir, another image was revealed: a large Gothic monstrance painted on the north wall.[69] Although only the upper part could be restored during the 2016 campaign, the visibility of the host in the centre suggests the active participation of the Observant Dominican nuns in the Eucharistic cult. It is possible that the choir stalls of the nuns were placed in the chancel where they performed their liturgical duties. This way, they were always, day and night, close to the symbol that continually re-enacted the sacrifice of Christ. The nuns of Mary Magdalene could not approach the high altar during Mass, as required by the norms of their Order, and may have had only a concealed view of the consecration and elevation of the host during the liturgical celebration. However, they had constant access and visual contact with the Host placed in the painted monstrance.

Detailed art-historical research has also emphasised that, given the proximity of these frescoes to the main altar, they set the scene for the celebration of the Eucharist, as is also suggested by the representation of the martyrdom of the Ten Thousand and that of St. Ursula and her Eleven Thousand Virgins.[70] The cult of the Ten Thousand has gained particular currency with the Order of the Friars Preachers who actively promoted it

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[66] Kónya, Eucharistic Imagery, 396.

[67] Gabriela Signori, "Wanderers Between Worlds: Visitors, Letters, Wills, and Gifts as Means of Communication in Exchanges Between Cloister and the World", in Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Susan Marti (eds.), *Crown and Veil. Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 270-271.

[68] As it has been revealed during the archaeological research undertaken in 2008, see Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane*, 217.

[69] Jenei, Murals Discovered in the Choir, 32 and Fig. 2, 41; Kónya, Eucharistic Imagery, 47.

[70] Kónya, Eucharistic Imagery, 128.

throughout Europe from the early fifteenth century when a feast with nine lessons was added to the Dominican liturgy.[71] The martyrs were often represented in the churches of the Observant Dominicans, as they offered them a vivid example of perseverance, of steadfastness in the faith that eventually brought heavenly rewards. The literal imitation of the sufferings of Christ, as faithfully represented by the depiction of the soldiers crucified in their loincloths like Jesus (**Fig. 4**), the blood flowing abundantly from the wounds of the martyrs is a visible and tangible identification with the Passion of Christ.[72] Such a representation of the Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand was not only visually rendered. It echoed the Dominican liturgy, which emphasized that the suffering of these martyrs was equivalent to Christ's Passion.[73]

On the southern wall of the chancel of the nuns' church in Sibiu, the Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand is juxtaposed with that of St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins. By the end of the Middle Ages, visual emphasis on mass martyrdoms prompted devotion for the Passion, being frequently represented in concert, such hagiographical compositions of the violence and suffering that Acathius and Ursula together with their companions underwent, also began to be present in the decoration of Observant Dominican churches.[74] Sacrifice and faith were illustrated by the slaughtered virgin falling from the ship, her neck pierced by an arrow, while in the lower part of the painting in Sibiu, a virgin with a halo, possibly St. Ursula, is depicted in devout praying (**Fig. 5**).

Devotion to Ursula and her martyred companions developed strongly in the Kingdom of Hungary. Their relics were kept in several churches in the kingdom, while the feast of these virgin martyrs on 21 October enjoyed early, widespread and special veneration in local liturgical celebrations. The Transylvanian evidence complements this picture, as Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins are frequently encountered in surviving visual representations, as well as in church patronage.[75] This cohort of holy figures acquired increased significance for Observant Dominican women who could easily identify themselves with the examples of profound piety these virgins stood for. The legend of St. Ursula and her Eleven Thousand companions to be found in the Codex of Érsekújvár strongly emphasizes the importance of the

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[71] Roberts, *Dominican Women*, 218 and footnote 79.

[72] Anna Kónya, "Eucharistic References in the Representations of Saints: a Case Study of Late Gothic Wall Paintings in Transylvania", *Acta Historiae Artium* 58 (2017): 85-92.

[73] Roberts, *Dominican Women*, p. 228-229.

[74] Jenei, Murals Discovered in the Choir, 33-36.

[75] Anna Tüskés, "The Cult of St. Ursula in Hungary: Legend, Altars and Reliquaries" in Jane Cartwright (ed.), *The Cult of St. Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins* (University of Wales Press: 2016), 187-205.

tortures these martyrs suffered. Despite the violence of their passion, Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins remained faithful to Christ and preserved their virginity, merits that eventually earned them heavenly glory.[76]

Codex of Érsekújvár was composed in vernacular between 1529 and 1531 in the scriptorium of the convent of the Virgin Mary on Margaret Island, where the nuns adopted the Observance in the late fifteenth century.[77] Compiled of rather miscellaneous texts, i.e., legends, sermons, *exempla*, meditations, passion and prayers, the codex was meant to serve the devotional and liturgical needs of Observant Dominican women, a special group of pious women on the Danube island who were under constant threat from the Ottomans after 1526. Márta Sövényházi was the nun who worked extensively on this codex, both copying most of it and decorating the initials, also in addition to carefully selecting the writings to be included, as the nuns were ready to leave behind their convent and the codex was their portable library.[78] Thus, the legends included in the Codex of Érsekújvár were the result of a careful selection made by the nuns, who chose the texts that were useful for private and collective devotion, including the legend of Saint Ursula and her companions.

These Brides of Christ, embodiment of virtues and sacrifice, became role models for enclosed nuns. When the legend of St. Ursula and her companions was read out loud to them, celebrating their feast days with a *totum duplex* as the Dominican liturgy required, Observant Dominican women were able to find many similarities with their own way of life. For the enclosed nuns, the images served a didactic purpose by offering simple instructions on how to live cloistered and which virtues were to be cultivated within their communities.[79] St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins, as they were seen by the nuns in Sibiu, conformed with and embodied the Dominican *forma vitae.* This assumption is further confirmed by the almost simultaneous integration of these holy figures into the devotional world of

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[76] György Volf (ed.), *Érsekújvári codex* (Budapest: 1888), 378.

[77] Sándor Lázs, *Apácaműveltség Magyarországon a XV-XVI. század fordulóján. Az anyanyelvű irodalmi kezdetei* [Nuns' literacy in Hungary at the turn of the fifteenth to sixteenth century. The beginnings of the vernacular literature] (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2016), 40-59.

[78] Edit Madas, *Az Érsekújvári kódex mint a menekülő apácák hordozható könyvtára és két új forrásazonosítás (Műhelytanulmány)* [Codex of Érsekújvár as a portable library of fleeing nuns and two newly identified sources. A workshop essay] in László Boka and Judit P. Vásárhelyi, *Szöveg – emlék – kép* [Text - Tradition - Image] (Budapest: Bibliotheca scientiae & artis, 2011), 92-93.

[79] Saintly models offered to the nuns were - in the view of Johannes Meyer - meant to be imitated, instead of admired, while in order to help the nuns emulate these models, images that faithfully reflected the lives of the saints became catechetical tools for the religious education of Observant Dominican women, Huijbers, *Zealots for Souls*, 240 and Paula Cardoso, "Shaping an Observant Identity: Narrative and Image in the Services of Reform in the Portuguese Dominican Nunneries", *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez* 52-2 (2022): 3-5.

pious women. Ursula and the virgin martyrs in her company were set as imitable saintly models: around 1520, by visual means, to Observant Dominican women in Sibiu, and, less than a decade later, by textual means, to the Observant Dominican women of the Virgin Mary on the Margaret Island of the Danube.

Last, but surely not least, there was also a strong local relevance that the Virgins of Cologne acquired with the nuns of Mary Magdalene in Sibiu. The fact that they were portrayed as young, elegantly dressed women alluded to more than just the royal and aristocratic status enjoyed by Ursula and her Eleven Thousand companions. Their depiction may also refer to the status of the Observant Dominican women in the city. Although their church and convent were located in an uninhabited area, the street where they were built was very close to the so-called *Grosser Ring*, the main market place of Sibiu, the place where influential and wealthy citizens lived.[80] Furthermore, Mary Magdalene, the nuns' patron saint, the Ten Thousand Martyrs, St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins benefited from a strong parish-based cult, as they were celebrated daily in the most important church of the town, that of the Virgin Mary.[81] Not to mention that the chancel of the church of Mary Magdalene was also transformed into a place of memorialization, as the painting of the kneeling donor in the scene of the Crucifixion suggests.[82] Girls coming from well-to-do families in town could become novices of Mary Magdalene by taking the vow of profession, most likely in the chancel, while gazing upon and being protected by the familiar figures of St. Ursula and her companions. As nuns, these pious women were offered emblems of faith to instruct them, to inspire and to model their behaviour. When the nuns of Mary Magdalene in Sibiu sang the Divine Office devoutly and attentively, when, through psalms and hymns, they celebrated the feast days of the saints they visually encountered on the chancel's walls, companions from Heaven joined their enclosed community.

[80] Băldescu, *Transilvania medievală*, 153.

[81] According to an agreement concluded in 1432 between the parish priest of Sibiu and the city council in the parish church *missae legende omni die* would be dedicated to Mary Magdalene, the Ten Thousand Martyrs, and St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins, Franz Zimmermann and Gustav Gündisch (eds.), *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, (Hermannstadt: Krafft & Drotleff, 1937), vol. IV, 461-462, doc. no. 2147.

[82] Hedwig Röckelein, "Founders, Donors, and Saints: Patrons of Nuns' Convents" in Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Susan Marti (eds.), *Crown and Veil. Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 207-225.

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(Source: András Harsányi, *A Domonkosrend Magyarországon a reformáció előtt* (Debrecen: Nagy Károly grafikai müintézetének nyomása, 1938), 83)

Map 2 The Mendicant convents of Sibiu

(Source: Irina Băldescu, *Transilvania medievală. Topografie şi norme juridice ale cetăţilor Sibiu, Bistriţa, Braşov şi Cluj* (Bucureşti: Editura Simetria, 2012, 151)

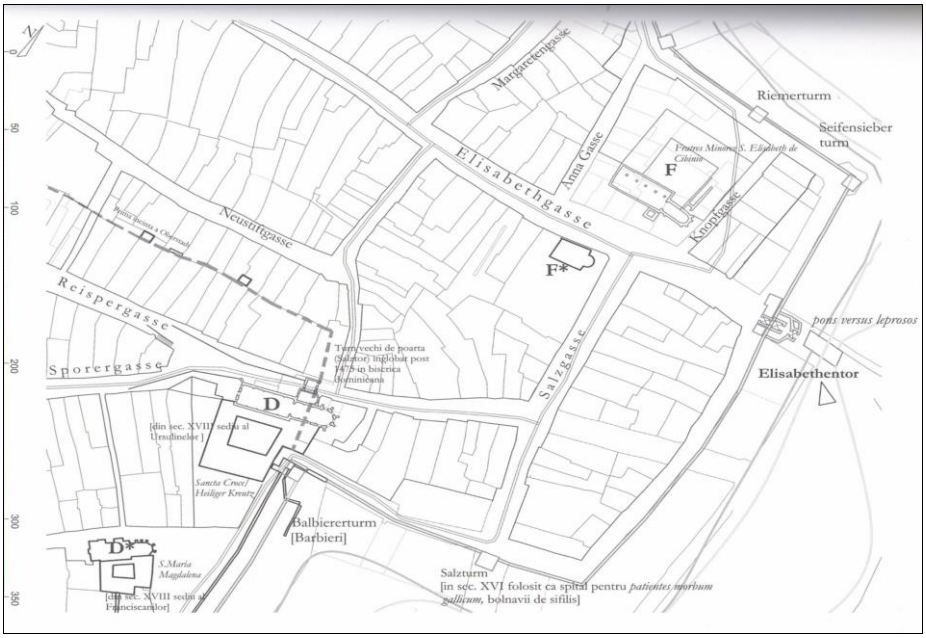

Fig. 1 The *Crucifixion* of Sibiu - Detail with Christ's side wound
(Source: Ferenc Veress, "The Dominicans and the Holy Blood: from Late Medieval Devotion to Baroque Piety. Cases in Austria, Hungary and Romania", *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege*, LXX Heft 3-4 (2021): 137)

Fig. 2 The *Crucifixion* of Sibiu
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Fig. 3 Christ as intercessor - Wall painting in the (former) Dominican church of Mary Magdalene in Sibiu
(Photo credit: Raluca Georgiana Cobuz)

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Fig. 5 The Martyrdom of St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins - Wall painting in the (former) Dominican church of Mary Magdalene in Sibiu
(Photo credit: Raluca Georgiana Cobuz)

Instances of Preaching in a Medieval Transylvanian Town. The Case of Cluj in the Century before the Reformation

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Abstract: Preaching was an essential component of the religious life during the Middle Ages, shaping the Christian identity and promoting the norms and decisions of the Church. In line with recent contributions that have drawn attention to Transylvanian expressions of medieval preaching, the present paper intends to examine its significance in the urban milieu prior to the Protestant Reformation, by exploring the case of Cluj (hu. Kolozsvár/ germ. Klausenburg). An important town of the region, it was inhabited by a mixed population of Hungarian- and German-speaking communities, whose pastoral care and access to the divine Word was facilitated by various religious institutions. Although the extant sources do not provide detailed accounts regarding specific sermons delivered in town, their actual contents and mise-en-scène, the present paper outlines the profile of the routine preaching activity, based on homiletic works that belonged to the secular and regular clergy of the town, as well as charters attesting their complementary or competing actions. The analysis reveals that homiletic concerns progressively increased from the beginning of the 15th century onwards, reaching a pinnacle in the decades prior to the adoption of the Reformation.

Key words: medieval sermons, urban history, town preachers, mendicant orders, parish clergy, linguistic plurality

Rezumat: Predica a constituit o componentă esențială a vieții religioase pe parcursul Evului Mediu, contribuind la fasonarea identității creştine şi la diseminarea normelor şi deciziilor Bisericii. Pe urma unor contribuții istoriografice recente care au atras atenția asupra expresiilor

transilvănene ale acestui fenomen medieval, prezentul studiu propune examinarea importanței predicării în ambianță urbană, înainte de Reformă, prin sondarea cazului oraşului Cluj (magh. Kolozsvár/ germ. Klausenburg). Unul dintre centrele urbane majore ale regiunii, Clujul se distingea printr-o populație mixtă, de saşi şi maghiari, a căror pastorație intra în grija mai multor instituții religioase. Cu toate că sursele păstrate nu dezvăluie detalii despre cuvântările omiletice rostite în oraş, despre conținutul sau punerea lor în scenă, lucrarea schițează profilul activității uzuale de predicare pe baza colecțiilor de predici care au aparținut clericilor seculari şi fraților cerşetori, precum şi a surselor documentare care atestă actiunile complementare sau concurente ale acestora. Analiza dezvăluie că preocupările pastorale şi omiletice au cunoscut o creştere progresivă în decursul secolului al XV-lea, atingând apogeul in deceniile imediat anterioare adoptării Reformei.

Cuvinte cheie: predica medievală, istorie urbană, predicatori, ordine mendicante, cler parochial, pluralitate lingvistică

In 1568, the two main linguistic communities inhabiting the Transylvanian town of Cluj (hu. Kolozsvár/ germ. Klausenburg) got into a conflict.[1] The representatives of *natio Hungarica* complained to the king that the Saxons were no longer respecting the arrangement agreed upon a century earlier, in 1458, concerning the equal and alternative participation in the government and administration of the town.[2] They were particularly dissatisfied because the German-speaking group was controlling the parish church alone. The response to this accusation was firm:

> […] licet tempore Catholicae Religionis in audiendarum missarum ceremoniis, baptisandis infantibus, nubentium conjunctionibus, et mortuorum contumulationibus aequale dominium Hungari cum Saxonibus in templo ipso principali, seu parochiali habuerint, tamen

[1] Romanian National Archives, Cluj County Office (henceforth: ANR-SJ), *Primăria municipiului Cluj-Napoca,* A. *Privilegii şi acte*, 1. *Privilegiile oraşului*, no. 178; edited by József Kemény, *Deutsche Fundgruben der Geschichte Siebenbürgens,* Vol. 1 (Klausenburg: J. Tilsch und Sohn,1839), 71-87.

[2] ANR-SJ Cluj, Primăria Municipiului Cluj, A. Privilegii şi acte, 1. Privilegiile oraşului, no. 168; Gustav Gündisch et al. (eds), *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen* (henceforth: Ub), Vol. VI: 1458-1473, (Bucureşti: Editura Academiei R.S.R, 1981), no. 3102, 2-3; Elek Jakab (ed.), *Okleveltar Kolozsvar törtenete* (henceforth: KvOkl) [Collection of Documents for the History of Cluj], Vol. I (Buda: Magyar Királyi Egyetemi Könyvnyomda, 1870), no. 115, 192-193. Mária Lupescu Makó, 'Der Ausgleich von Klausenburg 1458', in Ulrich Burger, Rudolf Gräf (eds.), *Klausenburg – Wege einer Stadt und ihrer Menschen in Europa* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2007), 39–49.

> nunquam in eodem templo lingua Hungarica concionatum fuisset, neque plebanus unquam Hungaricus in eadem civitate extitisset.[3]

The Saxons were ready to prove they spoke the truth and they even challenged their opponents to provide evidence in support of their claims. Indeed, the agreement from 1458 did not regulate the election of the parish priest, nor the use of the parish church. It was only in 1568 when these aspects were officially included among the shared responsibilities and rights of the two *nationes,* together with stipulations regarding the management of other urban institutions, previously unregulated. Hence, the cited document marks a shift in the history of Cluj and, consequently, it aroused scholarly interest, being analysed in connection with the changes of the ethnic and/or confessional identity of the town,[4] or with the evolutions in the urban government and political affairs.[5] However, its relevance for the current paper lies in a detail provided by the quoted testimony of the Saxons, referring to the exercise of pastoral care before the Reformation. The allegation that sermons were never delivered in the Hungarian language in the parish church raises multiple questions: Does this mean that the parish clergy was preaching in Latin, or in German? Did the Hungarian inhabitants have access to preaching in their language at all? Where could they listen to such sermons? If the parish priest had always been a member of the German-speaking community, who preached for the Hungarians? Moreover, since no investigations have, so far, been conducted on the very topic of medieval preaching in Cluj, one may reasonably question the intensity of this homiletic activity altogether.

Preaching was an essential component of religious life during the Middle Ages. Sermons shared the divine message, explained the doctrine,

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[3] Kemény, Deutsche Fundgruben, 73.

[4] Edit Szegedi, 'Sächsische Identität im Klausenburg des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts', *Zeitschrift für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde,* 22/1 (1999), 14-21; Eadem, 'Die Bedeutung des Ungarischen und Sächsischen im Klausenburg des 16. bis 17. Jahrhunderts', in András F. Balogh, Julia Brandt, Ulrich A. Wien (eds.), *Radikale Reformation. Die Unitarier in Siebenbürgen* (Köln – Weimar – Wien: Böhlau, 2013), 179-189; Eadem, 'Zwischen Sprachen und Kulturen: die sächsische Nation im nachreformatorischen Klausenburg (16.-17. Jh).Überlegungen zur vormodernen nationalen Identität', *Banatica,* 20 (2010), 177-192; Eadem, 'Klausenburg als antitrinitarische Stadt (?)', *Konfluenzen. Jahrbuch der Abteilung Protestantische Theologie,* 16-17 (2017), 117-137; Carmen Florea, 'Shaping Transylvanian anti-Trinitarian Identity in An Urban Context', in Maria Crăciun, Ovidiu Ghitta, Graeme Murdock (eds), *Confessional Identity in East-Central Europe* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002), 64-80.

[5] Andras Kiss, 'Kolozsvár város önkormányzati fejlõdése az 1458-as „unióig" és kiteljesedése az 1568-as királyi ítélettel' [The Municipal Development of the Town of Cluj until the "Union" of 1458 and Its Completion through the Royal Judgment of 1568], *Erdélyi Múzeum*, 59/3-4 (1997), 189-197; Benczédi Gergely, 'A kolozsvári magyarok panasza a kolozsvári szászok ellen 1568-ban' [The Complaint of the Hungarians of Cluj against the Saxons of Cluj in 1568], *Keresztény Magvető*, 20 (1880): 25-30.

taught the moral precepts, shaped the Christian identity, and functioned as a powerful instrument of public communication, announcing and promoting the reforms, norms and decisions of the Church. While ideally it was meant to impart the Word of God to all members of the church, in the Middle Ages preaching was primary - although not exclusively[6] - an urban phenomenon.[7] In the beginning, the wider access of the inhabitants of cities and towns to the divine Word was associated with the presence of the bishop, who held a monopoly on giving sermons,[8] then with the existence of a well- or better-trained clerical corpus, capable of providing religious instruction, and also with the presence and activity of mendicant friars, whose mission had an important urban component.[9]

In the high- and late-Middle Ages, urban preaching knew unprecedented developments. Two particular expressions of the phenomenon can be associated with two different areas of the European continent. In Italy, popular preachers rose from among mendicant friars during the 14th and 15th centuries and often took a stand for the defence of the Christian values and virtues that were under assault within the cities[10] where they were based or which they visited during preaching tours. Moreover, such charismatic figures took a step further by getting involved in political affairs, acting as peacemakers and mediators between factions, or addressing municipal

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[6] Studies concerning medieval sermons repeatedly emphasized that the sources documenting the preaching activity in the countryside are sparse, but also that in these areas pastoral concerns lack the intensity and vigour specific to cities. John M. Frymire is among the few who, analyzing the situation of the Holy Roman Empire, argues that preaching was not limited to urban centers, but rural communities had access to preaching on their turn, even if not constantly. John M. Frymire, *The Primacy of the Postils*, 15-22. For the case of Transylvania, see: Paula Cotoi, 'Pre-Reformation Sermon Collections in Transylvania. Some Evidence Concerning Their Circulation in Rural Areas', in Ulrich A. Wien (ed.), *Common Man, Society and Religion in the 16th century/Gemeiner Mann, Gesellschaft und Religion im 16. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2021), 55-64; Adinel Dincă, 'Dorfkirche und Schriftlichkeit in Siebenbürgen um 1500', in Wien (ed.), *Common Man, Society and Religion,* 39-53.

[7] Anne T. Thayer, 'Introduction: The City', in Jacqueline Hamesse et al. (eds.), *Medieval Sermons and Society: Cloister, City, University* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Brepols, 1998), 147; Phyllis B. Roberts, 'Preaching in/and the Medieval City', in Hamesse et al. (eds.), *Medieval Sermons and Society*, 151-155.

[8] Emmet McLaughlin, 'The Word Eclipsed? Preaching in the Early Middle Ages', *Traditio*, 46 (1991), 77-122.

[9] Jacques le Goff, 'Apostolat mendiant et fait urbain dans la France médiévale: l'implantation des ordres mendiants. Programme-questionnaire pour une enquête', *Annales. Economies, sociétés, civilisations*, 23/2 (1968), 335-352; Idem, 'Ordres mendiants et urbanisation dans la France médiévale. État de l'enquête', *Annales. Economies, sociétés, civilisations*, 25/4 (1970), 924-946; Clifford Hugh Lawrence, *The Friars: The Impact of the Early Mendicant Movement on Western Society* (London – New York: Longman, 1994), 1-25, 102-126.

[10] Roberts, 'Preaching in/and the Medieval City', pp. 161-164; Cecilia Iannella, 'Predicazione domenicana ed etica urbana tra due e trecento', in Laura Gaffuri, Riccardo Quinto (eds.), *Predicazione e società nel Medioevo: riflessione etica, valori e modelli di comportamento* (Padova: Centro Studi antoniani, 2002), 171-185.

authorities in support of certain measures, such as the foundation of charitable institutions.[11] Although some of these mendicant wandering preachers expanded their tours north of the Alps, like John of Capestrano,[12] in this part of Europe, mainly in Germany, but also in Central Europe, urban preaching was institutionalized in the form of municipal preaching offices. Initially established by bishops, soon such preacherships (*Prädikaturen)* started being founded and endowed with benefices by local authorities.[13] The holders of such offices had the duty to discipline the urban population, while the most zealous ones took on a more active role, as was the case of Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg in Strasbourg.[14] What all these preachers had in common, regardless of the region, was their drive to reform the morals and to implement a "godly order in the daily life".[15] In this respect, they sometimes tried to impose moral control by proposing changes in the urban statutes meant to fight heresy, superstitions, usury, luxury, gambling, promiscuity and other sins.

Recent research concerning preaching in medieval Transylvania indicates that more or less faded echoes of these vigorous preaching movements are detectable even in this peripheral region of the Latin

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[11] The literature on this topic is too vast to be covered entirely, but some important and/or recent contributions include Carlo Delcorno, 'Predicazione volgare e volgarizzamenti', *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Moyen-Age, Temps modernes*, 89/2 (1977), 679-689; Bernadette Paton, *Preaching Friars and Civic Ethos: Siena, 1380-1480* (London: Centre for Medieval Studies, Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London, 1992); Marina Montesano, 'Aspetti e conseguenze della predicazione civica di Bernardino da Siena', in *La religion civique à l'époque médiévale et moderne (chrétienté et islam)* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1995), 265-275; Cynthia Polecritti, *Preaching Peace in Renaissance Italy: Bernardino of Siena and his Audience* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2000); Nirit Ben-Aryeh Debby, *Renaissance Florence in the Rhetoric of Two Popular Preachers: Giovanni Dominici (1356-1419) and Bernardino da Siena (1380-1444)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001); Daniel R. Lesnick, *Preaching in Medieval Florence. The Social World of Franciscan and Dominican Spirituality* (Athens – London: The University of Georgia Press, 2012).

[12] Kaspar Elm, 'John of Capistrano's Preaching Tour North of the Alps (1451-1456)', in *Religious Life between Jerusalem, the Desert, and the World: Selected Essays by Kaspar Elm*, translated by James D. Mixson (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 255-276; Ottó Gecser, 'Preaching and Publicness: St. John of Capestrano and the Making of his Charisma North of the Alps', in Katherine L. Jansen, Miri Rubin (eds.), *Charisma and Religious Authority: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Preaching, 1200-1500* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 145–159.

[13] Bernhard Neidiger, 'Wortgottesdienst vor der Reformation. Die Stiftung eigener Predigerpfründen für Weltkleriker im späten Mittelalter', *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter* 22 (2002), 142-189.

[14] Rita Voltmer, 'Political Preaching and a Design of Urban Reform: Johannes Geiler of Kaysersberg and Strasbourg', *Franciscan Studies*, Vol. 71 (2013): 71-88.

[15] Voltmer, 'Political Preaching and a Design of Urban Reform', 75. The 'city of God' or the 'New Jerusalem' was the ideal model for the urban life during the Middle Ages, promoted and pursuit not only by preachers. Wilfried Ehbrecht, 'Jerusalem: Vorbild und Ziel mittelalterlicher Stadtgesellschaft', in Thomas Schilp, Barbara Welzel (eds.), *Dortmund und Conrad von Soest im spätmittelalterlichen Europa,* (Bielefeld: Verlag für Regionalgeschichte, 2004), 73-100.

Christendom.[16] Although the extant sources do not provide detailed accounts regarding specific sermons delivered in the area, their actual contents and mise-en-scène – with a few notable exceptions[17] –, there are other clues about a homiletic activity carried out especially in the major urban centres. The investigation of the case of Cluj seeks to provide a close-up image of urban preaching in pre-Reformation Transylvania.

Located in the northern part of the region, Cluj was a vibrant town with a growing number of inhabitants and a dynamic economy by the end of the middle ages. The privilege granted by King Carol Robert in 1316 not only gave an important impetus to the urban development of this settlement, but also offered citizens the right to elect the parish priest.[18] The religious life of the town articulated primarily around the parish church dedicated to St. Michael, with an increasing role of the church of St. Peter and Paul from the second half of the 15th century onwards.[19] The religious offer was diversified through the presence of the mendicant orders, with their masculine and feminine houses. Friars Preachers were the first to settle inside the town walls, their convent dedicated to St. Mary and St. Antony dating most probably from the sixth or seventh decade of the 14th century, although attested in written sources only in 1397.[20] Half a century later, a testament mentions the Dominican nuns as well, while at least two chapels belonging to the same order were enriching the ecclesiastic landscape.[21] The Observant

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[16] Adinel C. Dincă, Paula Cotoi, 'Latin Manuscript and Printed Sermons in Late Medieval Transylvania (1470–1530)', in Veronica O'Mara, Patricia Stoop (eds.), *Circulating the Word of God in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Catholic Preaching and Preachers across Manuscript and Print (c. 1450 to c. 1550)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2023), 187-219.

[17] Dincă, 'Dorfkirche und Schriftlichkeit in Siebenbürgen um 1500', 48-51; Paula Cotoi, 'Predica medievală între oralitate și scris. Abordări metodologice și perspective transilvănene' [Medieval Preaching between Orality and Writing. Methodological Approaches and Transylvanian Perspectives], *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie „George Barițiu". Series Historica*, 58 Suppl. (2019): 159-174, especially 163-164.

[18] Ub, Vol. I, no. 346, pp. 319-320; KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 16, 31-33.

[19] Elek Benkő, *Kolozsvár magyar külvárosa a középkorban. A Kolozsvárba olvadt Szentpéter falu emlékei* [The Hungarian Suburb of Cluj in the Middle Ages. Memories of the Szentpéter Village] (Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2004), 32-37.

[20] Radu Lupescu, 'A kolozsvári domonkos kolostor alapítása és korai története' [The Foundation and Early History of the Dominican Cloister in Cluj], in Veronka Dáné, Mária Lupescuné Makó, Gábor Sipos (eds), *Testimonio litterarum. Tanulmányok Jakó Zsigmond tiszteletére* [Testimonium litterarum. Studies in Honor of Zsigmond Jakó] (Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2016), 251-267, especially 253-258; Mihaela Sanda Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane din Transilvania* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2022), 141; Eadem, 'Așezămintele monastice ale ordinelor cerșetoare din Cluj și Sibiu la sfârșitul Evului Mediu' [Late Medieval Religious Houses of the Mendicant Orders at Cluj and Sibiu], in Mária Lupescu Makó et al. (eds.), *Cluj – Kolozsvár – Klausenburg 700. Várostörténeti tanulmányok = studii de istorie urbană* [Cluj – Kolozsvár – Klausenburg 700. Studies of Urban History] (Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2018), 279-286.

[21] Salontai, Mănăstiri dominicane, 142, 149.

Friars Minor arrived in Cluj only towards the end of the 15th century, after the municipality, at the intervention of King Matthias Corvinus, offered them land for the building of a convent in town in 1486.[22] Benefitting of royal and local support, the Franciscan community grew rapidly, including from the first decades of the 16th century tertiaries. Moreover, a nunnery of the Poor Clares is mentioned in the vicinity of the Franciscan friary in 1544.[23]

The various ecclesiastic institutions were ready to guide and assist lay men and women from Cluj in spiritual matters, but municipal authorities also proved determined to ensure the access of the community they represented to the demanded religious services.[24] In addition, the town's citizens themselves expressed their devotional concerns, through the practice of charity,[25] pious donations and bequests in favour of the parish and of the mendicant orders,[26] affiliation with the Third Order, stipulations included in guilds' statutes regarding the religious behaviour of the members and their patronage of certain chapels or altars, or through enrolment in devotional fraternities.[27] This dynamic religious life must have included, demanded, and been stimulated by preaching. The present paper intends to outline the profile of the routine homiletic activity that took place in the town, by examining homiletic works that belonged to

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[22] Ub, Vol. VII, no. 4765, p. 463; KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 169, p. 272. János Karácsonyi, *Szt. Ferencz rendjének története Magyarországon 1711-ig* [The History of the Order of St. Francis in Hungary until 1711], Vol. II (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1924), 99-103; Salontai, 'Așezămintele monastice ale ordinelor cerșetoare', 279.

[23] Salontai, 'Așezămintele monastice ale ordinelor cerșetoare', 281-283.

[24] Carmen Florea, The Late Medieval Cult of Saints: Universal Developments within Local Contexts (Routledge, 2023), 258-305.

[25] Carmen Florea, 'Exersarea carității în Clujul medieval' [The Practice of Charity in Medieval Cluj], in Lupescu Makó et al. (eds), *Cluj – Kolozsvár – Klausenburg 700*, 271-277, especially 272-273; Lidia Gross, 'Exercițiul carității în viața confreriilor medievale din Transilvania (sec. XIV-XVI)' [The Practice of Charity in the Life of Medieval Confraternities from Transylvania], *Historia Urbana,* Vol. 18 (2020): 77-89.

[26] Mária Lupescu Makó, 'Material Culture in the Mirror of the Testaments. The Art of the Home in Cluj in the First Half of the Sixteenth Century', *Colloquia. Journal of Central European History,* 13/1-2 (2006), pp. 50-77; Eadem, '*Item lego*… Gifts for the Soul in Late Medieval Transylvania', *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU*, 7 (2001): 161–185.

[27] Lidia Gross, 'Bresle şi confrerii în Clujul medieval (sec. XIV-XVI)' [Guilds and Confraternities in Medieval Cluj], in Ionuț Costea, Carmen Florea (eds), *Oraşe şi orăşeni / Városok és városlakók* [Cities and Citizens] (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2006), pp. 394-403; Eadem, 'Meşteşug şi pietate în Clujul medieval: confreria Tuturor Sfinților' [Craftsmanship and Piety in Medieval Cluj: The Confraternity of All Saints], in Ioan Bolovan, Ovidiu Ghitta (eds), *Istoria ca datorie. Omagiu academicianului Ioan-Aurel Pop la împlinirea vârstei de 60 de ani* [History as a Duty: Studies in Honour of Acad. Ioan-Aurel Pop on His 60th Birthday] (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2015), 545-552; 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), 91-120, especialy 101-106.

the secular and regular clergy of the town, as well as charters attesting their complementary or competing actions.

The earliest information related to preaching occurs in a charter from 1408, issued by the bishop of Alba Iulia.[28] The document confirms a donation made by the confraternity of St. Catherine[29] for the parish church, and the foundation of certain special masses. One of the liturgies was supposed to be celebrated on the altar of St. Catherine every Monday *post sermonem ad populum.* This brief mention provides a first clue that sermons were delivered regularly in the parish church, but what stands out is the fact that they could take place on working days. Ecclesiastical regulations of various Hungarian dioceses only demanded secular clergy to preach every Sunday and Feast day,[30] which makes the situation attested in Cluj even more intriguing. Although, for the diocese of Transylvania, no statutes are preserved, one could assume that they would not have imposed higher standards than, for instance, the archbishopric of Esztergom.

The next piece of evidence occurs twenty years later, in 1428, in a verdict pronounced by the vicar of the Transylvanian bishop for settling the conflict between the parish clergy and the Order of the Friars Preachers. Although the main cause of the dissensions was the administration of funeral services, the Dominicans being accused of refusing to pay the canonical portion, the charter touches more or less directly on the topic of preaching too.[31] A subtle allusion can be grasped in the admonition directed to the friars to not influence the decision of parishioners concerning the burial place. Such a concern suggests that Dominicans used to persuade the inhabitants of Cluj to be buried in their convent, perhaps addressing topics like death, afterlife, redemption, sins and eternal punishments in their sermons. Despite this explanation being rather speculative, there is still a clear statement regarding preaching, this time directed to the parish

[28] Hungarian National Archives (henceforth: MNL-OL), DF 275210, available online: https://archives.hungaricana.hu/en/charters/98867 (accessed: 10. 05. 2023); Ub, Vol. III, no. 1605, pp. 446-449; KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 85, pp. 147-148.

[29] Lidia Gross, *Confreriile medievale în Transilvania (secolele XIV-XVI)* [Medieval Confraternities in Transylvania (14th – 16th c.)] (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2009), 270-273.

[30] Marie Madeleine de Cevins, 'L'exercice de la prédication pastorale en Hongrie à la fin du Moyen Âge', in Sophie Cassagnes Brouquet et al. (eds), *Religion et mentalités au Moyen Âge. Mélanges en l'honneur d'Hervé Martin* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2003), 325-336.

[31] Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane,* 142; Marie Madeleine de Cevins, 'Clercs de paroisse et frères mendiants dans les villes hongroises à la fin du Moyen Age: entre coopération et concurrence', *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte. Kanonistische Abteilung*, 85 (1999), 277-297; Maria Lupescu, 'Egy konfliktus margójára: a világi papság és a domonkosok kapcsolatai a középkori Kolozsváron/Pe marginea unui conflict: relaţiile dintre clerul secular şi dominicani în Clujul medieval' [On the Margins of a Conflict: The Relations between the Secular Clergy and the Dominicans in Medieval Cluj], in Costea et al. (eds.), *Oraşe şi orăşeni. Városok és városlakók*, 404-417.

priest, who was compelled to limit his sermons to one hour.[32] The sentence from 1428 only reinforced this decision, about which it comments that was taken earlier 'per reverendissimum in Christo patrem et dominum dominum Georgium almae ecclesiae Strigoniensis archiepiscopum in castro dicti domini nostri episcopi Gyalu'. No original charter that would correspond to this description could be identified, so far. If it ever existed, Georgius Pálóci, archbishop of Esztergom (1423-1439) and former Transylvanian bishop (1419-1423), should have issued it in the context of a previous dispute, when the representatives of the Dominican order probably complained about the long sermons delivered in the parish church. This aspect would have been important because it limited the time when they were able to address the believers, since mendicants were forbidden to preach while a sermon was being given in the parish.[33]

The violation of this regulation – stipulated in the bull *Super cathedram* – might have triggered another conflict between the same two parties, in the seventh decade of the 15th century. At that moment, the parish priest, Gregorius Schleynig, denounced in front of the Roman curia the fact that his parishioners were hindered from attending the mass and from receiving the sacraments in the parochial church because of the friars.[34] However, the aforementioned papal bull, quoted directly in 1466, did not refer to the celebration of liturgies and divine offices, regulating only preaching, hearing of confessions, and burials. For this reason, Marie Madeleine de Cevins, discussing the various disagreements between the secular clergy and the mendicant orders in Hungary, concludes that in 1466 preaching must have been one of the disputed issues in Cluj.[35]

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[32] "quatenus singulis diebus dominicis et festivis sermone in ecclesia parochiali finito ipse plebanus ad spatium unius integrae horae intervallum tenere debeat, et teneatur et hoc servandum sit adstrictus", MNL-OL, DF 287873, available online: https://archives.hungaricana.hu/en/charters/132245/ (accessed: 10. 05. 2023); Ub, Vol. IV, no. 2048, 354-357.

[33] Robert N. Swanson, 'The 'Mendicant Problem' in the Later Middle Ages, in e Ages', in Peter Biller, Barrie Dobson (eds), *The Medieval Church: Universities, Heresy, and the Religious Life, Essays in Honour of Gordon Leff* (Woodbridge, U.K.: Boydell, 1999), 217-238.

[34] "parrochianos dicte ecclesie parrochialis ab illius visitatione diebus dominicis et festivis retrahentes eos diebus ipsis temere ad divina recipere et sacramenta ecclesiastica preter et contra tenorem constitutionis a felicis recordationis Bonifacio papa VIII predecessore nostro editam que incipit: *Super cathedram* et per pie memorie Clementem papam V, etiam predecessorem nostrum, in Viennensi concilio innovatam", MNL-OL, DF 275438, available online: https://archives.hungaricana.hu/en/charters/187612/ (accessed: 10. 05. 2023); Ub, Vol. V, no. 3461, 237-238; KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 131, 214-215; Carmen Florea, 'Despre tensiunea unei solidarități în evul mediu târziu: exemplul unor orașe transilvănene' [Concerning the Tension of Solidarity in the Late Middle Ages: The Example of Some Transylvanian Towns], in Mihaela Grancea (ed.), *Discursuri despre moarte în Transilvania secolelor XVI-XX* [Discourses about Death in Transylvania Sixteenth to Twentieth Centuries] (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2006), 51-70; Eadem, 'The Third Path', 101-105.

[35] de Cevins, 'Clercs de paroisse et frères mendiants', 289-290.

The homiletic activity is better documented in Cluj towards the end of the 15th century, when the gothic stone pulpit from the St. Michael church must have been erected as well. Discovered behind the wooden panels of the baroque pulpit and uncovered during the restoration works carried out in 1956-1957,[36] it probably belongs to the last phase of construction, together with other interior furnishings.[37] At the turn of the 15th century, other Transylvanian ecclesiastical edifices were also embellished with stone pulpits, including certain hall churches from the northern part of the province.[38] This piece of ecclesiastic furniture would have improved the scenography of sermons delivered in the parish church of Cluj, which, at that time, seem to have been the task of a specialized preacher.

The testament of *domina Anna, vidua magistri Jacobi aurifabri,* issued in 1492, discloses that, among the witnesses in front of which the woman expressed her last will, there was a certain Urbanus *Keuel,* designated as *predicator huius civitatis*.[39] He caught the attention of other scholars as well. Most recently, Géza Hegyi tried to clarify his status. Refuting the previous interpretation of the term *predicator* as meaning parish priest,[40] he considers Urbanus to be a German-speaking Dominican friar holding the preaching office, since a contemporary Hungarian-speaking Dominican occurs in a different charter as preacher and later the same title of town preacher is used in connection with another Dominican.[41] However, I am inclined towards a different explanation. Since Urbanus is mentioned as *dominus,* not as *frater,* he should have been a member of the secular clergy, similar to other preachers mentioned as witnesses of various transactions, in other parishes of the region.[42] In Sibiu (germ. Hermannstadt/ hu. Nagyszeben) and Bistrița

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[36] Lajos Bágyuj, 'Beszámoló a kolozsvári Szent Mihály-templom 1956/57. évi helyreállítási munkálatairól' [Report on the Restoration Works of the Church of St. Michael in Cluj from 1956/57], in András Bodor et al. (eds.), *Emlékkönyv Kelemen Lajos születésének nyolcvanadik évfordulójára* (Bukarest-Kolozsvár: Tudományos Kőnyvkiadó, 1957), 24-32, especially 30-31 and fig. 28-33.

[37] Viorica Guy Marica, *Biserica Sf. Mihail din Cluj* [The St. Michael Church from Cluj] (Bucureşti: Meridiane, 1967), 21.

[38] Corina Popa, 'Biserici sală gotice din nordul Transilvaniei' [Gothic Hall Churches from the North of Transylvania], *Pagini de veche artă românească* [Pages of Old Romanian Art], Vol. IV (București: Editura Academiei R.S.R., 1981), 78-79.

[39] "coram providis ac circumspectis viris videlicet honorabili domino Urbano, artium liberalium baccalaureo almae universitatis Viennensis, cognominato Keuel, pro tunc predicatore civitatis nostrae", MNL-OL, DF 230903, available online: https://archives.hungaricana.hu/en/charters/view/230903/ (accessed: 10. 05. 2023); KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 184, 300-302.

[40] Pál Binder, *Közös múltunk. Románok, magyarok, németek és délszlávok feudalizmus kori falusi és városi együttéléséről* [Our Shared Past. About the Rural and Urban Coexistence of Romanians, Hungarians, Germans and Southern Slavs during Feudalism] (Bukarest: Kriterion, 1982), 220.

[41] Géza Hegyi, 'Kolozsvári plébánosok a középkorban', *Református Szemle*, 99 (2006): 755-779, here 758-759.

[42] Cotoi, 'Predica medievală între oralitate și scris', 167.

(germ. Bistritz, Nösen/ hu. Beszterce), they are explicitly placed among the parish clergy together with chaplains.[43] Not only was the presence of a preacher in the parochial curia more and more common in Transylvania in the years prior to the Protestant Reformation, but also, in Cluj, there are two additional cases. Nicasius, who joined the Dominican friary from Sighisoara (germ. Schäßburg/ hu. Segesvár) in 1505, previously functioned as parish priest of Vulcan (germ. Wolkendorf/ hu. Szásvolkány), as well as preacher in Cluj and Bistrița.[44] Then, an anonymous cleric from Cluj, mentioned as *predicator dicte ccclesie maioris*, benefited from a bequest in 1531.[45] Their status should have been that of secular priests, members of the auxiliary clergy, who were assisting parish priests in the word ministry, but also in liturgical services.[46] In fact, the preacher attested in 1531 was required to celebrate masses for the soul of his benefactor, which thus proves that his duties were not limited to merely delivering sermons.

Still, the question remains: why was Urbanus called *predicator civitatis*? As shortly specified at the beginning, in southern Germany, as well as in other Central-European areas, it was common for urban authorities to establish preaching offices and to endow them with benefices. It often happened in towns that did not have the privilege to freely elect their parish priest; therefore, citizens found a way to express their choice and appointed highly educated preachers, able to provide the desired instruction.[47] Although Cluj was granted this privilege in 1316, this aspect might still be relevant for Urbanus, who appears as town preacher while the parochial office belonged to Jacobus Pécsi. Jacobus was the only parish

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[43] The conditions formulated in 1474 regarding the use of the revenues of the Cistercian abbey from Cârța, once its patrimony was transferred to the benefit of the parish church in Sibiu, included the obligation of the parish priest to keep twenty six chaplains and a preacher: "isto tamen adiuncto quod plebanus pro tempore constitutus teneatur semper et sine notabili mora tenere continue in dote et mensa sua, secundum priora instituta ecclesiae Cibiniensis vigintisex capellanos et unum predicatorem", ANR-SJ Sibiu, *Magistratul orașului Sibiu*, *Colecția de documente medievale*, U II, No. 354; Ub, Vol. VII, no. 4005, 17-19. Similarly, in Bistrița, the parish priest was compelled to employ eight chaplains and a preacher according to an agreement with the urban authorities from 1504: "pro decore sue ecclesie, unum predicatorem cum capellanis octo obligatus sit tenere", ANR-SJ Cluj, *Primăria orașului Bistrița,* no. 352.

[44] Karl Fabritius, 'Zwei Funde in der ehemaligen Dominikanerkirche zu Schässburg', *Archiv des Vereines für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, 5/ 3 (1862): 1-40, here p. 1.

[45] „Item pro septem missis in sacello diue Marie Magdalene in die depositionis funeris mei a predicatore dicte ecclesie maioris celebrandis, eidem predicatori lego florenum unum", ANR-SJ Cluj, *Colecția Generală*, *Documente medievale*, no. 27; KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 237, 372-375.

[46] Marie Madeleine de Cevins, *L'Eglise dans les villes hongroises à la fin du Moyen Âge (vers 1320–vers 1490)* (Budapesta – Paris – Szeged: L'Institut hongrois de Paris, 2003), 40-43, 177-178; Eadem, 'L'exercice de la prédication pastorale en Hongrie à la fin du Moyen Âge', in Sophie Cassagnes Brouquet et al. (eds), *Religion et mentalités au Moyen Âge. Mélanges en l'honneur d'Hervé Martin* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2003), 325-336.

[47] Neidiger, 'Wortgottesdienst vor der Reformation', 181-183.

priest of Cluj who was not elected, but assigned by the Transylvanian bishop at the recommendation of King Matthias Corvinus, after the dismissal of Gregorius Schleynig, in 1481.[48] As Géza Hegyi emphasized, the urban community did not seem to raise any objections, although its privilege appears to have been violated.[49] The extraordinary circumstances could explain this lack of reaction, while the appointment of Urbanus as a town preacher might have worked as a compromise solution.

In addition, according to the prosopographic research of Géza Hegyi, Jacobus Pécsi was the only parish priest of Hungarian origins in Cluj,[50] making the appointment of a German-speaking preacher for the parish church both equitable and necessary. Such a hypothesis concerning the status of Urbanus Keuel is consistent with the narrative presented by the Saxon nation in 1568, when its representatives argued that sermons in Hungarian were never delivered in the parish church. Even in this exceptional case, when the parish priest belonged to the Hungarian nation, the divine message might have been communicated in St. Michael's church only by a German-speaking preacher. Moreover, in Bohemia, the occurrence of preacherships was related precisely to the need to provide access to the divine word in two different languages in bilingual communities, so German-speaking preachers were appointed where the parish priest spoke Czech and vice-versa.[51] A similar concern for both linguistic groups is attested in Cluj as well. The town statutes from 1537 made the judge and the jurors responsible for supervising the exercise of pastoral care, which translated mainly into encouraging the parish priest to keep the agreed number of chaplains and the preacher of the Hungarians.52 The clause appears to balance the fact that customarily the parish priest belonged to *natio Saxonica.* Therefore, the assignment of preachers for each of the two communities after the emergence of the Reformation was only a continuation of a previous tradition.

What remains unclear is where this preacher delivered his sermons, if St. Michael's church is out of discussion. In the years following the adoption of the Protestant dogma, the Hungarian-speaking priests were allowed to preach in the St. John chapel and in the former Dominican

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[48] ANR-SJ Cluj, Primăria Municipiului Cluj-Napoca, A. Privilegii și acte, 6. Acte constituite în fascicule pe probleme şi după proveniență, Fascicula 23, no. 3; Ub, Vol. VII, no. 4454, 302-303; KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 167, 268-270.

[49] Hegyi, 'Kolozsvári plébánosok a középkorban', 758.

[50] Ibid., 761.

[51] Neidiger, 'Wortgottesdienst vor der Reformation', 145-146, 152-154.

[52] "quod domini judex et cives jurati ante omnia curam ecclesiasticam gerant et defectum divinorum officiorum agnoscentes redarguent, in super dominum plebanum ad servandos sacellanos ad numerum susceptum ac praedicatorem Hungarorum cohortentur", ANR-SJ Cluj, *Primăria Municipiului Cluj-Napoca,* A. *Privilegii şi acte,* 1. *Privilegiile oraşului,* no. 7; KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 242, 379-383.

convent.[53] If this decision also followed an existing custom, the chapel might have been the place where sermons in Hungarian could be heard during the Middle Ages as well. However, a more plausible assumption is that the town statutes from 1537 were considering the appointment of a preacher for the St. Peter and Paul church, located *extra muros* in the eastern part of the town. The majority of the inhabitants of this suburb were part of *natio Hungarica*, according to a tax register from 1453.[54] Other documents from the second half of the 15th century reveal the complaints of the same community directed towards the parish priest, who did not observe his duty of appointing a chaplain for the St. Peter and Paul church,[55] and later towards the appointed chaplain who was neglecting his office.[56] By the end of the century, the situation improved and the Hungarian community enjoyed the presence of their own priests.[57] Given their concern for spiritual matters, it would have been only natural for the town council to consider providing the necessary personnel for preaching too.

The idea that sermons were performed in the church of St. Peter and Paul cannot be definitely proven, but one of the priests active there at the beginning of the 16th century seems to have had the required instruction and tools required in preaching. Gervasius Teremi, attested as priest in Cluj between 1516 and 1528,[58] owned at least two books, both of them suggesting a possible interest for homiletics. His name is written down on the pages of a Bible with the commentaries of the Franciscan friar Nicolaus de Lyra, currently preserved at the Library of the Romanian Academy from Cluj.[59] Another volume, extant in the holdings of the 'Lucian Blaga' Central University Library, was offered in 1532 to the Dominican convent in Alba Iulia by a certain Petrus Teremi from Cluj "pro anima domini Gervasii sacerdotis

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[53] Elek Jakab, *Kolozsvár története,* Vol. II (Budapest: Magyar Királyi Egyetemi Könyvnyomda, 1888), 111.

[54] András Kovács, 'Kolozsvár legrégebbi számadáskönyvéről (1453)', in Lupescu Makó et al. (eds), *Cluj – Kolozsvár – Klausenburg 700*, 181-212.

[55] ANR – SJ Cluj, *Primăria Municipiului Cluj-Napoca*, A. *Privilegii şi acte*, I. *Privilegiile oraşului*, no. 327; Ub, Vol. V, no. 2839, pp. 391-392; KvOkl, vol. I, no. 111, 187-188.

[56] Ub, Vol. VI, no. 3494, p. 262; KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 133, 216-218.

[57] Enikő Rüsz-Fogarasi, *Privilegiile şi îndatoririle oraşelor din Transilvania voievodală* [The Privileges and Duties of the Towns from the Transylvanian Voyvodate] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2003), 134-135.

[58] Hegyi, 'Kolozsvári plébánosok a középkorban', 760.

[59] Library of the Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca Branch, Inc. 54: Biblia latina cum postillis Nicolai de Lyra et expositionibus Guillelmi Britonis in omnes prologos S. Hieronymi et additionibus Pauli Burgensis replicisque Matthiae Doering. Add: Nicolaus de Lyra: Contra perfidiam Judaeorum, Pars II (Nürnberg: Anton Koberger, 1497): „Liber Gerwasii Theremj"; Klára Jakó, Az első kolozsvári egyetemi könyvtár története és állományának rekontstrukciója 1579-1604 [The History of the First University Library in Cluj and Its Reconstruction, 1579-1604] (Szeged: Scriptum, 1991), no. 72, 77.

de eadem civitate".[60] Petrus was undoubtedly a member of the family acting as executor of Gervasius, who must have been the first owner of the book comprising the sermons of Pelbartus de Themeswar, printed in 1501.

Regarding the access to preaching of the Hungarian population of Cluj, an additional mid-16th century source might be informative. In the conflictual context of 1568, a member of the Saxon community wrote a small historical account, edited by Jozsef Kemeny in the 19th century. The anonymous author stated that the town of Cluj was founded by German colonists like other towns from Transylvania, while Hungarians were living on its outskirts and settled within the city walls later. As everywhere else, for religious services, they were allowed to use a chapel, but only attended sermons in the cloisters.[61] Although the biased position of the author cannot be disregarded, the information he provided on this topic might be at least partially true. In support of his affirmation, a charter from 1557 attests, according to Jakab Elek, the selling of a chapel that used to belong to the Dominican friars and where they used to deliver sermons in Hungarian.[62]

The Dominican friars had been present in town since the 14th century, ready to preach the divine message even before the existence of a Hungarian-speaking parish preacher. Their interest in homiletic activity was suggested by the previously mentioned conflicts with the parish clergy. Furthermore, from the last decades of the 15th century, we know the name of certain friars who held the office of preacher. Most of them are mentioned as *predicator hungarorum*: Bartholomeus Stephani (1481)[63], Gregorius Arcuparis (1491-1492)[64], Blasius (1524)[65], supporting the idea that mendicants were capable

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[60] The 'Lucian Blaga' Central University Library, Cluj-Napoca (henceforth: BCU Cluj), BMV 46: Pelbartus de Themeswar, *Sermones Pomerii quadragesimales* (Hagenau: Heinrich Gran pro Johanne Rynman, 30. IV.1501): "Liber sum fratris Petri de Vasarhel et propinavit michi domino Petrus Teremi de Colosvar pro anima domini Gervasii sacerdotis de eadem civitate. Pertinet ad conventum Albegiulensem quia et ego filius sum istius conventus 1532, die Marie virginis".

[61] "Mitler Zeit, als die Ungern nun durch Hilff unssrer Vätter befriedet seyn worden, und angefangen sich in bekommen, da seyn sie hernach in den Stadten kommen, haben da gedienet, und gearbeitet, da haben die Teutschen ihnen Capellen bauen lassen auff den Feyheithöffen, ihnen Mess halten, beichten, und communiciren lassen, aber in den Klostern haben sie Predigten gehöret. Alsso sind sie auch gegen Klausenburg kommen, und haben zu ersten nur in der Burg Gassen gewohnet, haben alda ein kleines Kirchlein gehabt, aber nimmehr hat man drinn geprediget." Kemény, *Deutsche Fundgruben,* 91.

[62] Jakab, *Kolozsvár története,* Vol. II, 102.

[63] Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane,* 149; Béla Iványi, 'Geschichte des dominikaner Orden in Siebenbürgen und in der Moldau', *Siebenbürgische Vierteljahresschrift*, 62/ 1 (1939), 383.

[64] MNL-OL, DL 46163, available online: https://archives.hungaricana.hu/en/charters/228585/ (accessed: 12.04.2023); Zsigmond Jakó (ed.), *A kolozsmonostori konvent jegyzőkönyvei (1289-1556)* [The Protocols of the Convent from Cluj-Mănăștur, 1289-1556, henceforth: KmJkv] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990), Vol. II (1485-1556), no. 2725, 2832, 73, 103-104.

and focused on ensuring the access of the Hungarian-speaking inhabitants to the divine word. Still, the Saxons were not neglected, given that, in 1524, friar Georgius was mentioned as *predicator almanorum*.[66] Moreover, one could also note that in the years when Urbanus Keuel was preaching in German in the parish church, a friar was delivering sermons in Hungarian in the conventual church, or perhaps in the chapel sold in 1557. Interestingly enough, in 1531, another member of the Dominican Order, Demetrius, was designated as *predicator huius civitatis*.[67] It is not clear whether this meant that the friar simply occupied (alone) the preaching office in the convent from Cluj, or that he was a town preacher in the sense that he was employed by the urban authorities to impart the Word of God.

The homiletic activity of all these friars would have been supported by the library of the convent, constantly mentioned in the historiography as an example for the functioning and organization of Dominican book collections.[68] The arrangement of a spacious room for the storage of books in the mid-15th century[69] and the attempt to draw up a catalogue, within the inventory of the convent from 1509,[70] are interpreted as signs of the importance and large size of this library. As Mária Lupescu demonstrated, after the Reformation, two of the books belonging to this collection ended up in the library of the Jesuits,[71] while others were destroyed in 1551, when the mendicant friars were driven out of town for the first time, and many must have been disassembled and used as binding materials.[72] However, at the beginning of the 20th century, when Miklós Asztalos studied the old books preserved in the tower of the St. Michael church, he concluded that

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[65] Fabritius, 'Zwei Funde', 29.

[66] Ibidem.

[67] "frater etiam Demetrius ordine predicatorum in claustro Beatissime Virginis Marie in dicta civitate Koloswar fundato degente, predicator eiusdem civitatis, confessor ipsius condam Pauli Zylahy", MNL-OL, DL 36404, f. 29v; KmJkv, Vol. II, no. 4362, 533.

[68] Mária Lupescu Makó, 'The Book Culture of The Dominican Order in Transylvania', *Philobiblon: Transylvanian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Humanities*, 22/1 (2017), 187-204, especially 194-196.

[69] The location of this room within the convent was also discussed based on architectural and archeological evidence, see Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane,* p. 156; Géza Lux, 'A kolozsvári ferencrendi, egykor dominikánus kolostor' [The Fransiscan, formerly Dominican friary of Cluj], *Szépművészet* 3 (1942), 117.

[70] BCU Cluj, Ms. 1030: *Inventarium Conventus Colosvariensis*, f. 2r: „Inventarium autem hoc in quinque capitula distinguendum censuimus: […] Demum in quarto, numerum librorum ordinabimus."; f. 12r: „Capitulum Quintum de libris et eorum numero […] Id circo nimirum venerabiles patres huius conventus ut honor ordinis conservetur utque ocium vitetur, edificarunt domum librarie pulcram et amplam pro librorum conservacionem".

[71] Jakó, *Az első kolozsvári egyetemi könyvtár,* no. 1, 33, 330, pp. 67, 71, 112. A third volume, comprising homilies of St Augustine, might have the same provenance, since it belonged in the 16th century to the Dominican friar *Laurentius de Dees*. *Ibidem,* no. 47.

[72] Lupescu Makó, 'The Book Culture', 196.

a part of that collection was taken over from the Dominican convent after the Reformation. Certain medieval volumes – manuscripts and printed books alike – bared ownership notes that indicated this provenance.[73] The incunabula of this library were inventoried by Baráth Béla in the 1940s. Among them, there are also a few homiletic works and other texts useful for preaching: a copy of the sermon collection of Ambrosius de Spira, *Quadragesimale de floribus sapientiae*, a single sermon joining the *Opuscula parva* of St. Bonaventura, a copy of the Bible *cum glossa ordinaria*, works of Jean Gerson, the epistles of St Jerome.[74] Their provenance is undisclosed, so further research must be conducted on this collection in order to clarify whether or not these books belonged to the Dominicans. Hopefully, the outcome of the on-going cataloguing process will clarify such aspects. However, the large and active community of friars must have had a library comparable to those from Sibiu, Braşov (germ. Kronstadt/ hu. Brassó), or Bistriţa, which are better documented.[75]

The same type of evidence attests to the homiletic activity of the Friars Minor as well. Two preaching aids that bear ownership annotations of their convent prove that Franciscans had the necessary instruments, models, and sources of inspiration to instruct believers. A copy of *Sermones Thesauri novi de sanctis,* currently preserved in the Teleki-Bolyai Library from Târgu Mureş (hu. Marosvásárhely/ germ. Neumarkt), displays an almost illegible note that informs the book pertained in 1512 to the convent *ad plateam Lupi,* before arriving in the 17th century at the Franciscan community from Călugăreni (hu. Mikháza).[76] A volume comprising Osualdus de Lasko's *Sermones dominicales Biga salutis intitulati* left the library of the Observant friars from Cluj, passed through the hands of a priest from Crasna in 1544 and finally ended up in the Library of the Semmelweis Museum for the History of Medicine in Budapest.[77] Only a few fragments of liturgical

[73] Miklós Asztalos, 'A Kolozsvári Szent Mihály templom XVI. századi könyvtára' [The 16th-century Library of the St. Michael Church in Cluj], *Könyvtári Szemle*, 1/6 (1934), 41-42.

[74] Béla Baráth, 'Ősnyomtatványok Kolozsváron' [Incunabula in Cluj], *Erdélyi Tudósító,* 20(1941), pp. 117-119.

[75] Lupescu Makó, 'The Book Culture', 189-194; Adrian Papahagi, 'The Incunabula of the Dominicans from Bistriţa at the Central Piarist Library in Budapest', *Philobiblon: Transylvanian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Humanities*, 22/2 (2017), 51-66.

[76] Teleki-Bolyai Library, Târgu Mureş, 0671: [Pseudo-] Petrus de Palude, *Sermones Thesauri novi de sanctis* (Strasbourg: Martin Flach, 1488): "Conventus Colosvariensis ad plateam Lupi 1512 Fratrum Minorum de observantia"; *Catalogus incunabulorum bibliothecae Teleki-Bolyai* (Târgu-Mureş: [s.n.], 1971), no. 35.

[77] Library of the Semmelweis Museum for the History of Medicine, Budapest, 11685/S/81: Osualdus de Lasko, *Sermones dominicales, Biga salutis intitulatis* (Hagenau: Heinrich Gran, for Johannes Rynman, 1498): "Liber Conuentus Coloswariensis fratrum minorum observantium, jam ad Johannem plebanum de Carasna residentem pertinet. Ibidem ad posteros 1544"; Csaba

manuscripts and a single printed book that travelled to Şumuleu Ciuc (hu. Csíksomlyó) can be additionally placed in relation with the medieval Franciscan library from Cluj, the book collection having been dispersed after the expulsion of the friars from the town.[78] It is impossible to know whether they had other sermon collections that were lost, but additional evidence documents their preaching activity.

Although settled in Cluj quite late, at the end of the 15th century, the Friars Minor seem to have integrated in the local religious landscape rapidly. A Franciscan preacher might have been present in town immediately after the granting of permission for the erection of a new cloister and he would also have been the one responsible with the supervision of the construction works. At least, this is a hypothesis proposed by Marie Madeleine de Cevins for a document copied in a diplomatic *formularium* used by the Hungarian Franciscan province, which omitted to mention the place where the friar was assigned, but which fits quite well the context of Cluj.[79] If the assumption is correct, it could reveal that the superiors of the order considered attracting believers through sermons even before establishing a religious community, perhaps intending precisely to win their goodwill and support for the completion of the works. The documents of the order from the beginning of the 16th century also mention several Franciscan preachers. In *acta capituli provinciali* from 1533, one preacher is mentioned in the list of *coasesores*: "Andrea de Chyk predicator Coloswariensis".[80] Based on his origins, one can infer that he was Hungarian, similar to Paulus de Chyk, attested as one of the preachers of the Hungarian community two years later, together with Andreas de Andrashida.[81] In 1535 and 1537, the Observant Friars Minor from Cluj were ready to address the German-speaking inhabitants as well, since Jacobus de Buzd and Andreas de Kysdemeter were appointed as *predicatores ad Saxones*.[82] However, the list

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Csapodi, Klára Csapodiné Gárdonyi, *Bibliotheca Hungarica. Kódexek és nyomtatott könyvek Magyarországon 1526* [Bibliotheca Hungarica. Codices and Printed Books in Hungary before 1526], Vol. I (Budapest: MTAK, 1988), no. 1116, 307.

78 Adrian Papahagi, A Transylvanian Puzzle: Reconstructing Medieval Culture from Manuscris Fragments (Cluj-Napoca, 2022), pp. 61-67, 86; Erzsébet Muckenhaupt, A Csíksomlyói Ferences Könyvtár Kincsei. Könyveletek 1980-1985 [Treasures of the Csíksomlyó Franciscan Library. Books discovered in 1980-1985] (Budapest – Cluj-Napoca: Balassi – Polis, 1999), no. II. 71, 175.

79 Marie Madeleine de Cevins, *Les franciscains observants hongrois de l'expansion à la debacle* (Roma: Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 2008), 531.

80 Vincze Bunyitay, Raymund Rapaics, János Karácsonyi (eds), Egyháztörténelmi emlékek a magyarországi hitujítás korából / Monumenta ecclesiastica tempora innovatae in Hungaria religionis illustrantia (henceforth: EEMH), 3 vols (Budapest: Szent-István-Társulat, 1902-1906), Vol. II, 475.

81 Karácsonyi, *Szt. Ferencz rendjének története Magyarországon 1711-ig,* Vol. II, 101-102.

82 *Ibidem*; EEMH, Vol.II, 484.

of preachers appointed *ad Hungaros* is uninterrupted until 1542.[83] The friars occupying this office seem to have been well prepared, since two of them delivered sermons during the provincial chapter from 1542, both *ad populum* and *ad clerum*.[84] Unfortunately, there are no similarly detailed accounts of their homiletic activity in town. It is only the popularity enjoyed by the Franciscan order in Cluj, which suggests that the sermons delivered by these preachers were effective.[85]

In conclusion, despite the paucity of sources and the scarcity of information they provide with regard to the phenomenon of preaching, the existing data still suggests an intense activity of this sort in the town of Cluj. Concerns for pastoral care, including a more energetic engagement in preaching, appear to have amplified especially after the settlement became a royal free town through the privilege granted in 1405.[86] During the century preceding the adoption of the Reformation, the extant sources reveal a progressive increase of homiletic endeavours. The long sermons delivered in the parish church, on Sundays, feast days, and sometimes probably on Mondays, were supplemented by the engagement of the Dominicans and Franciscans, at the end of the 15th century, each of whom appointed their own specialist in the Divine Word to impart the message and to instruct the inhabitants of Cluj. What and how they preached is impossible to know, but their education[87] and the fact that they had access to the most recent homiletic literature testify to the quality of their services. To a certain extent, this was characteristic to all the major urban centres of the region, such as Sibiu or Braşov.

However, the linguistic pluralism characteristic of the urban population imposed the need for specific solutions in the preaching activity, through the agency of the parish clergy, of the friars, and presumably of the urban government as well. One of these solutions was the appointment of specialized parish preachers capable of supplementing the sermons of the parish priests, in order to cover the needs of both linguistic communities

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[83] Afterwards the decisions of the provincial chapters only mentions the appointed guardian. EEMH, Vol. II, 496.

[84] Ibid., 493.

[85] Carmen Florea, 'Reformă și înnoire religioasă în Transilvania' [Reform and religious renewal in Transylvania], in Carmen Florea, Greta Monica Miron (eds.), *Istoria ca interogație: Mariei Crăciun, la o aniversare* [History as an Interrogation: Maria Crăciun, on an Anniversary] (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2020), 41-74, especially 67-69; Karácsonyi, *Szt. Ferencz rendjének története Magyarországon 1711-ig*, Vol. II, 101-102; Salontai, 'Așezămintele monastice ale ordinelor cerșetoare', 282.
279-286, especially 282

[86] András Kiss, 'Az 1405-ös városi kiváltságok szerepe Kolozsvár történetében', in Costea et al. (eds.), *Oraşe şi orăşeni. Városok és városlakók*, 333-341.

[87] Concerning the education of the parish priests from Cluj, see Hegyi, 'Kolozsvári plébánosok a középkorban', 761-764. Many Dominican friars from Cluj studied theology in the *studia* of the order, in Hungary, Germany, or Italy, see Iványi, 'Geschichte des dominikaner Orden', 381-383.

in town, as was also the case in Bohemia, and in other urban settlements from Hungary, like Baia Mare (hu. Nagybánya/ germ. Frauenbach).[88] The case of Urbanus Keuel, if my interpretation is correct, suggests a vigorous involvement of the urban authorities in the parish life, otherwise attested by decisions regarding the celebration of certain liturgies and the supervision of the cult of the parish patron saint, as demonstrated by Carmen Florea.[89] If the town council was responsible for founding a preaching office for Urbanus, in order to sustain German preaching in the main church, it makes up a nice example of civic religion and indicates that preaching was perceived as an important component of *cura animarum.* Urban authorities definitely valued sermons, as the single means for parishioners to be in contact with the divine message and religious precepts in a language they understood, as they proved in 1537, when they drafted the new town statutes. The obligation for the parish priest to employ a Hungarian preacher foreshadowed the extension of the government system based on the principle of parity to include the parish administration, enacted in 1568. Moreover, it demonstrates that the office became permanent.

Additionally, the pastoral care of an ethnically mixed population involved a certain complementarity of the activity of the parish clergy and the mendicants, who proved ready to respond to the increasing demand for religious instruction within the growing Hungarian community of Cluj. Before the parish priest provided the necessary personnel for the St. Peter and Paul church, it is possible that the Dominican community filled in by supplementing the German sermons performed in the parish church, as recalled by the oral tradition in the mid-sixteenth century. Moreover, both mendicant orders constantly appointed Hungarian friars as preachers of their convents from the last decades of the 15th century onwards. Sermons delivered in conventual churches and chapels might have also been heard by members of the noble families from the surrounding areas, who were devoted supporters of the friars, to whom they offered substantial donations and bequests.

The case of Cluj epitomizes the phenomenon of urban preaching in Transylvania. Similar developments can be identified in other important towns of the region. Especially the high education of the Saxon clergy acquired through studies at the Central European universities offered good premises for the conscientious fulfilment of pastoral duties and the adequate instruction of the parishioners. Typical is also the competition with the mendicant friars. Despite the fact that it sometimes led to conflicts, generally

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[88] For instance, in 1507, Andras de Azar is attested as *predicator hungarorum,* see ANR-SJ Maramureș, *Primăria oraşului Baia-Mare,* 2. *Documente privilegiale,* no. 29.
[89] Florea, The Late Medieval Cult of Saints, 258-305.

it must have been stimulating, pushing the clergy to raise their standards and multiplying the contexts in which the urban population had access to the divine message. Intellectual and pastoral concerns materialized in a dynamic circulation of books. Although the medieval libraries from Cluj had a convoluted fate, suffering loses and dispersion or falling into oblivion, the few volumes of this provenance that were identified so far prove that the local clergy was familiar with contemporary homiletic works, a situation better documented in other Transylvanian towns.

Andreas Schrywer vs. Blasius Deydrych: A Case Study in Marriage Litigation in Pre-Reformation Transylvania (1521)

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Abstract: The present article analyses a 1521 marriage trial opposing two Saxon peasant families from the Transylvanian village of Scharosch. The aim of this case study is to illustrate the functioning of ecclesiastical courts and marriage litigation in pre-Reformation Transylvania. Andreas Schrywer, the village judge of Scharosch, presented to the chapter of Schenk a complaint against Blasius Deydrych, whom he accused of deflowering and impregnating his daughter, Rosa Schrywer. Drawing upon the testimonies recorded by the chapter, this article highlights the procedural course followed by the tribunal, the strategy of the petitioner, and the villagers' views on the relationship between marriage, love and sexuality.

Keywords: ecclesiastical tribunal, marriage trial, Transylvanian chapter, *sponsalia per verba de futuro*, wedding ring

Rezumat: Articolul analizează un proces matrimonial desfăşurat în 1521 între două familii de țărani saşi din satul transilvănean Şaroş. Scopul acestui studiu de caz este de a ilustra funcționarea curților ecleziastistice de judecată şi desfăşurarea proceselor matrimoniale din Transilvania în perioada de dinainte de adoptarea Reformei. Andreas Schrywer, judele Şaroşului, a prezentat capitlului de Cincu o plângere împotriva lui Blasius Deydrych, pe care l-a acuzat că o dezonorase şi o lăsase însărcinată pe fiica sa, Rosa Schrywer. Pe baza mărturiilor

înregistrate de capitlu, articolul evidențiază procedura de judecată urmată de tribunal, strategia petentului şi opiniile sătenilor privind relația dintre căsătorie, dragoste şi sexualitate.

Cuvinte-cheie: tribunal ecleziastic, proces matrimonial, capitlu transilvănean, *sponsalia per verba de futuro*, inel de căsătorie

Introduction

In January 1521, the chapter of Schenk (Cincu) examined a lawsuit between two Saxon peasant families from the Transylvanian village of Scharosch (Şaroş pe Târnave). Two court letters, issued on January 24, 1521,[1] and February 26, 1521, respectively,[2] describe the development of the trial. Andreas Schrywer,[3] the village judge (villicus) of Scharosch, accused Blasius Deydrych of deflowering and impregnating his daughter, Rosa. The defendant had allegedly gifted a ring to her, presumably as a marriage suggestion. Upon discovering the pregnancy, the two families had initially agreed to marry the two, but Blasius refused the plan against his father's will. Because the chapter of Schenk could not reconcile the parties after three terms, the judges advanced the case to the chapter of Hermannstadt (Sibiu), the superior court.

The chapter of Schenk recorded in direct speech many of the testimonies given by the trial participants, revealing the complex and occasionally unexpected social interactions within the village. Although the oral depositions were translated into Latin, they retained part of their spoken expressivity. They depict various episodes of rural life and reflect the emotions manifested by the litigants during the trial. Some accounts drew attention to the relationship between Blasius and Rosa, recollecting details about their sexual entanglement, while others focused on their parents' reaction. More than just a private matter, the case saw the involvement of the local community, with villagers taking sides based on their sympathy or resentment towards one family or the other.

Marriage litigation in the Latin Church has received substantial scholarly attention, with regard to both Western[4] and Central European

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[1] Romania, Serviciul Județean Sibiu al Arhivelor Naționale ale României, Fond Capitlul evanghelic C. A. Sibiu, Seria 1 – Acte cu instrumente contemporane de evidență, no. 62 (henceforth referenced as 'no. 62').

[2] Ibid., no. 63 (henceforth referenced as 'no. 63').

[3] Spelled 'Schrywer' in the January 24 letter (no. 62) and 'Sterber' or 'Scerber' in the February 26 one (no. 63).

[4] General works include: Richard H. Helmholz, *Marriage Litigation in Medieval England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Charles Donahue Jr., Law, *Marriage, and Society in the Later Middle Ages: Arguments About Marriage in Five Courts* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Cecilia Cristellon, *Marriage, the Church, and its Judges in Renaissance Venice*, 1420-1545, trans. Celeste McNamara (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Wolfgang P. Müller, *Marriage Litigation in the Western Church*, 1215-1517 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

ecclesiastical courts. In particular, a number of authors have examined trials involving litigants from medieval Hungary[5] and Poland.[6] The problem has been explored from a procedural, social, and cultural perspective, with implications for research areas such as clerical knowledge and application of the Romano-canonical procedure, social practices and views surrounding marriage, and medieval sexuality. Still, the situation for medieval Transylvania is not well understood. While several studies have analyzed Transylvanian marital lawsuits from the second half of the sixteenth century, their focus has been on adultery and divorce cases from within the Lutheran community.[7] Comparatively, literature on marriage trials preceding the Reformation remains limited because of the source scarcity.[8]

While past contributions on Transylvanian post-Reformation trials have explored the judges' and the litigants' views on love, marriage, and

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[5] Péter Erdő, 'A házasság érdekében folyó perek a középkori Magyarországon' [Marital Lawsuits in Medieval Hungary], in *Egyházak a változó világban* [Churches in a Dynamic World], ed. István Bárdos and Margit Beke (Esztergom: Tatabánya, 1992), pp. 191-194; Gabriella Erdélyi, 'A Sacra Poenitentiaria Apostolica hivatala és magyar kérvényei a 15-16. században' [Hungarian Petitions to the Sacra Poenitentiaria Apostolica in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries], *Levéltári Közlemények* 74, nos. 1-2 (2003): 33-57; Péter Erdő, *Kirchenrecht im mittelalterlichen Ungarn* (Leipzig: Frank & Timme, 2005), pp. 114-135; Gabriella Erdélyi, '"Szerettem egyszer egy nőt": Házasságkötés és házasságtörés 1500 körül' ['I Once Loved a Woman': Marriage and Adultery Around 1500], *Történelmi Szemle* 49, no. 2 (2007): 165-178.

[6] Martha A. Brożyna, 'Not Just a Family Affair: Domestic Violence and the Ecclesiastical Courts in Late Medieval Poland', in *Love, Marriage and Family Ties in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. Isabel Davis, Miriam Müller and Sarah Rees Jones (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 299-309; Martha A. Brożyna, *Private Oaths, Broken Promises and Illicit Relations: Marriage Litigation in the Consistory Court of Fifteenth-Century Gniezno, Poland*. PhD Dissertation, Manuscript, University of Southern California. Los Angeles, 2005.

[7] Julia Derzsi, 'Un proces de adulter din 1585, la Reghinul Săsesc' [A 1585 Adultery Trial at Reghinul Săsesc], *Historia Urbana* 23 (2015): 141-161; Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, *Sibiul veacului al XVI-lea. Rânduirea unui oraş transilvănean* [Sixteenth-Century Sibiu: The Order of a Transylvanian City] (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2018), 193-199; Julia Derzsi, 'Unzucht und Ehebruch vor Gericht. Sexualdelikte bei den Siebenbürger Sachsen in der zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts', in *Common Man, Society and Religion in the 16th Century/Gemeiner Mann, Gesellschaft und Religion im 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Ulrich A. Wien (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2021), 275-296; Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, 'The Idea of Good Marriage at the End of the Sixteenth Century Transylvania: Mathias Raw vs. Catharina Birthalmer', in *Common Man, Society and Religion in the 16th Century/Gemeiner Mann, Gesellschaft und Religion im 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Ulrich A. Wien (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2021), 309-320; Julia Derzsi, *Delict şi pedeapsă. Justiţia penală în oraşele săseşti din Transilvania în secolul al XVI-lea* [Crime and Punishment: The Operation of Criminal Justice in Transylvanian Saxon Cities During the Sixteenth Century] (Cluj-Napoca: Egyetemi Műhely, 2022), 271-286.

[8] References to a few Transylvanian cases, in Erdő, *Kirchenrecht*, pp. 115, 119. Some Transylvanian cases transmitted to the Apostolic Penitentiary are highlighted in Erdélyi, 'Szerettem egyszer egy nőt', 168, 173-174. A short discussion on the court of the bishop of Transylvania, in Adinel Ciprian Dincă, *Instituţia episcopală latină în Transilvania medievală (sec. XI/XII-XIV)* [The Latin Episcopal Institution in Medieval Transylvania (Eleventh-Twelfth to Fourteenth Centuries)] (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut-Mega, 2017), 145-149.

sexual intercourse, their conclusions cannot be entirely extended to the pre-Reformation period, due to dogmatic, procedural, and cultural changes. Since the Catholic Church viewed marriage as indissoluble, most pre-Reformation marital trials were initiated in order to enforce a marriage rather than to terminate one.[9] Compared to the post-Reformation period, conjugal dissolution was complicated to obtain, although ecclesiastical courts could grant separation without formal termination of the union in some cases.[10]

From a procedural standpoint, clerical jurisdiction over marital suits narrowed down significantly following the adoption of the Reformation in Transylvania. Post-Reformation disputes related to pregnancy, broken marital vows, and adultery were typically judged by lay tribunals, and court proceedings were oriented towards civic and moral disciplining.[11] By contrast, prior to the Reformation, most cases related to marriage and sexuality were under clerical jurisdiction.[12] On a cultural level, the model of the 'holy household' spread among Saxon circles in the second half of the sixteenth century, reshaping the vision of the ideal relationship between spouses, in accordance with Lutheran teachings.[13]

Given its substantial documentation, the Schrywer-Deydrych lawsuit provides an excellent case study in pre-Reformation Transylvanian marriage litigation. The focus of this article is twofold: on the one hand, to highlight the procedural aspects of the litigation process and the operation of a small Transylvanian clerical tribunal; on the other hand, to explore the participants' ideas on marriage, love, and sexual relations.

The Documentary Evidence

Like other ecclesiastical courts in medieval Hungary, the chapter of Schenk has no surviving systematic records of its proceedings.[14] Only cases that could not be resolved locally and thus had to be advanced to higher courts are typically known. For this reason, the documentation on marital trials is mainly comprised of transmissional letters (*litterae transmissionales*)

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[9] Helmholz, Marriage Litigation, 25.

[10] Donahue Jr., Law, Marriage, and Society, 33; Helmholz, Marriage Litigation, 74; Müller, Marriage Litigation, pp. 2, 218; Erdő, Kirchenrecht, 125.

[11] Derzsi, 'Unzucht und Ehebruch', 296.

[12] On the competence of pre-Reformation clerical tribunals in Hungary during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, see György Bónis, 'Die Entwicklung der geistlichen Gerichtsbarkeit in Ungarn vor 1526', *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Kanonistische Abteilung* 49, no. 1 (1963): 224-227. See also Elemér Balogh, 'Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction in Medieval East Central Europe', in *Lectures on East Central European Legal History*, ed. Pál Sáry (Miskolc: Central European Academic Publishing, 2022), 94-95.

[13] Pakucs-Willcocks, 'The Idea of Good Marriage', 319-320.

[14] Erdő, *Kirchenrecht*, 115.

and mandates. While mandates are letters concerned with particular issues related to court organization and provide little information about the actual deliberations, transmissional letters usually describe the full course of action followed by the lower court. The officials of the superior tribunal would also sometimes record brief notes about their own proceedings on the back of the original letter.

The documentation of the Schrywer-Deydrych trial consists of one transmissional letter and one mandate. The former provides the majority of the information about the case and was issued on January 24, 1521, by Georgius, the substitute judge (*surrogatus*)[15] of the chapter of Schenk. He was transferring the cause to the dean of Hermannstadt, Petrus Thonhewszer. The second act, dated February 26, 1521, is a mandate issued by Mathias Colommani, the substitute judge of the chapter of Hermannstadt. He was asking several priests of the chapter of Schenk to hear a new group of witnesses gathered by Blasius Deydrych.

On its own, the narrative of the first letter can be difficult to follow, due to frequent changes between timeframes. Therefore, this article presents a chronological reconstruction of the lawsuit, even though it does not always coincide with the sequence in which the chapter recorded the events. It could also be noted that the original testimonies were modified in translation. The villagers' words were filtered through the understanding of the priests who recorded them, and many conversations ended sounding like literary dialogues, rather than an accurate representation of someone's speech. For this reason, the initial messages can only be partially reconstructed.

The Litigant Parties and Their Supporters

According to the January 24 letter, the lawsuit opposed Andreas Schrywer and his daughter, Rosa, as plaintiffs, against Lucas Deydrych and his son, Blasius, as defendants.[16] However, the February 26 letter presents the litigant parties as Andreas Schrywer versus Blasius Deydrych, which suggests that Blasius was supposed to represent himself in court.[17] A group of relatives and friends supported each side before the tribunal.

Andreas Schrywer held the position of village judge in Scharosch. He was accompanied by his friend and former village judge Gallus Klosch,

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[15] On this function, see Balogh, 'Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction', 83-84.

[16] 'Providus Andreas Schrywer de Scharwsch unacum filia sua, Rosa, ut actrix, ab una, necnon Lucas Deydrych de eadem unacum filio suo, Blasio, ut reus, ab altera partibus, coram nobis comparuere' (no. 62).

[17] 'Ventilatur quedam causa coram nobis, homini sedis Schenk de magno Scharos, racione et pretextu cuiusdam Blasii Deydrich, accusatum per providum Andream Scerber quod filiam suam, Rosam, impregnaverit' (no. 63).

although he could not qualify as witness given their cordial relationship. Andreas Schrywer also had the support of the parish priest of Scharosch, Ambrosius, who testified in his favour. On the other hand, the Deydrych family was supported by six oath-helpers (compurgators), four of whom are identified in the chapter's record. They were various men and women from Scharosch, both old and young. Apart from them, the court also noted the presence of a certain villager named Petrus Conradt, who always spoke in Blasius' defence, despite not being formally appointed as his lawyer (*procurator*).[18] The nature of their relationship is unclear, but it seems to have been a close one, since Petrus Conradt's son was among Blasius' six compurgators. Another supporter present in court was Ruffus Iohannes *scolaris*, identified as Lucas Deydrych's friend.

For some villagers, such as Gallus Klosch and Petrus Conradt, the trial was an opportunity to express their solidarity towards one family or the other. For others, participation was a chance of acting upon old grudges. The chapter invalidated two of Blasius' compurgators for the reason that they swore 'out of hatred and envy' (*racione odii et invidie*) against Andreas Schrywer. One of them was a young woman (*puella*), daughter of a villager named Andreas Berthleff. In the past, her family had a conflict with Andreas Schrywer over some grapes she and her siblings had stolen from other villagers' vineyards. Andreas Schrywer recalled that when he confronted the girl's family and demanded compensation in the form of a fine, she and one of her brothers spoke disrespectfully to him. He could even remember and repeat before the court the girl's words, which hinted at his supposed lack of compassion and hostility towards the poor (*Vos, Andrea Schrywer, vultis plus devorare pauperes quam alter quispiam in communitate*! *Deportate, solo modo penitebis nos*!).[19]

Another woman had a similar conflict with Andreas Schrywer, motivating her to side with the Deydrych family. One year, she and her husband were unable to pay their wine-tax (*ducillatio*), and they could not

[18] 'Quodammodum procurator videretur et in omnibus ipse Petrus Conradt pro Blasio, filio Luce Deydrych, responderet' (no. 62).

[19] 'Contigit ut pueri Andree Berthleff mandatum talem non curarent, sed, ea temeraritate qua antea consueverunt, vineas intraverunt et in eis fuisse notati sic, quare per cives monitus et ex officio compulsus sum ab Andrea Berttleff pignus recipere et, recepto pignore, videlicet scuto vel clipeo, eo me deferente, venit puella, presens testis, N., filia Andree Berttleff. Commota ait, "Vos, Andrea Schrywer, vultis plus devorare pauperes quam alter quispiam in communitate! Deportate, solo modo penitebis nos!" in brevi et plura alia verba iniuriosa post me clamando et post tergum meum repetendo, que verba narrare non sufficio, dixit. Quidam eciam unus ex fratribus iam dicte puelle verba inhonestissima super me et cives meos protulisse perhiberet, audientibus certis honestis hominibus, que non est phas dicere. Hec et alia, digni domini, maximam et gravem suspicionem generant in me contra et adversus puellam sepe dictam, quod propterea ex odio et invidia ad iurandum et testificandum se offeret' (no. 62).

provide any monetary compensation for it either.[20] Andreas Schrywer, who was in charge of collecting the tax, suggested they sell some of their dairy goods to earn more money, but his idea angered the couple. During their argument, the woman suggested that Andreas Schrywer was acting entitled, as if his position as village judge was hereditary (*Tu, Andrea Schrywer, non semper eres villicus, teneas mente!*)

These recollections suggest that animosities tended to be long-lasting within the village, and they often stemmed from pecuniary matters. As village judge, Andreas Schrywer was prone to conflicts with other villagers, since his function implied collecting various fines and contributions from them. Villagers remembered past arguments in detail, and resent could resurface even in a situation as delicate as a marital trial. Moreover, the testimonies point to the smoldering tension between the better-off villagers, such as Andreas Schrywer, and the destitute ones (*pauperes*), who could barely afford to pay their contributions. The latter seemed to perceive the village judge as an extorter, rather than as a leader of their community. From this perspective, it becomes less surprising that the Deydrych family seemed to attract more supporters in court compared to Andreas Schrywer.

When judging the social standing of the parties, litigation costs can also be taken into account. The distance between Scharosch and the places where the court assembled was rather long by medieval standards. The chapter of Schenk held the second litigation term in Gürtheln (Gherdeal) and the third one in Schenk. In a straight line, the distance between Scharosch and each of these locations is approximately 40 km, but the medieval path connecting them was probably longer. This would amount to 80-90 km for the two-way trip, a distance too long to travel in a single day, especially since a few hours had to be spent litigating.[21] In addition, the trial happened during the winter, likely reducing travel speed. Thus, the participants might have had to spend the night away from home, either in the litigation village or at another place. Food and accommodation had to be provided for the witnesses and oath-helpers, adding to the expenses of the two families.

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[20] On this tax (*ducillatio*, *educillatio*) in Transylvanian context, see David Prodan, *Iobăgia în Transilvania în secolul al XVI-lea* [Serfdom in Transylvania in the Sixteenth Century] (3 vols., Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1967-1968), vol. 1, 341-353 (*crâşmăritul*).

[21] Estimates for medieval travel speeds are 25-40 km per day on foot, a maximum of 60 km per day on horseback and 45 km per day by wagon: Norbert Ohler, *Reisen im Mittelalter* (Munich: Artemis, 1986), 141.

The Events Leading to the Trial

The dispute began with an ex officio investigation initiated by the chapter of Schenk, under whose ecclesiastical jurisdiction Scharosch was.[22] The inquiry was opened in response to local rumours that Rosa Schrywer was pregnant, probably at the suggestion of the parish priest of Scharosch, Ambrosius. A commission comprising Ambrosius and two other clerics from neighbouring parishes was assigned to verify the rumours, with the assistance of three 'honest women'.[23] In this regard, the priests followed canonical recommendations, which called for three midwives of good reputation for virginity testing.[24] The women were gathered in Ambrosius' house to be sent to Andreas Schrywer and perform the physical exam on his daughter.

In court, the parish priest recalled that Andreas Schrywer acted in shock and disbelief when approached with the investigation proposal. He said he would have his own wife look into the matter. [25] He then went home and spoke to Rosa, who admitted to being pregnant. When asked more about it, she pointed to Blasius Deydrych.[26] Shortly after, Andreas Schrywer happened to see Lucas Deydrych through the window, so he invited him inside.[27] According to Andreas Schrywer's statements (which were later denied in court by Lucas Deydrych), they discussed the problem and agreed to a marriage arrangement. Andreas Schrywer also recalled Lucas Deydrych saying that he thought Blasius and Rosa loved each other, so he had been thinking about marrying the two.[28]

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[22] On the parishes under the jurisdiction of Schenk, see Georg Müller, *Die deutschen Landkapitel in Siebenbürgen und ihre Dechanten, 1192-1848* (Sibiu: Kraft & Drotleff, 1934), 58-59.

[23] 'Michi et domino Simoni, plebano de Rurbach, necnon domino Benedicto, presbitero capellano in Maiori Schenk, a venerabili magistro Martino, tunc surrogato, commissum erat ut honestas feminas, mulieres, per mandatum convocaremus et ad domum Andree Schrywer mitteramus, ad experiendum si filia sua, ut famabatur, impregnata foret' (no. 62).

[24] Cristellon, Marriage, the Church, and its Judges, 89.

[25] '"Bone vicine, de vestra filia Rosa sic famatur, quod sit impregnata." Ipse vero stupefactus respondebat, "Hoc malum esset!" Ego autem eidem respondi, "Videatis ad rem, nam certe sic fertur et secus non esse, et ego habeo mulieres apud me, ex commissione domini decani congregatas, que eam revidere debent." Ipse autem Andreas Schrywer, tristis et conturbatus, iterum respondebat, "Bone domine plebane, vos dicitis michi grave factum et mirabile. Ego vadam ad domum et cum coniuge mea factum hoc experiar et iterum revertor ad dominationem vestram." Et sic, tristis et turbatus, rediit in domum suam' (no. 62).

[26] 'Cum eam impregnatam agnovissem, interrogabam eam, "Quis istius facinoris perpetrator esset?" Ipsa respondit, "Nemo alter nisi filius Luce Deydrych"' (no. 62).

[27] 'Sic itaque eam examinans, casu prospexi per fenestram. Vidi comparem meum Lucam Deydrych in platea ambulantem et, viso eo, mox et statim exivi et, clamando post eum ut staret, dixi, "Compar Luca, state modicum!" Qui mox stetit et, stante eo, accesi eum propius et petum eum ut in edes meas declinaret' (no. 62).

[28] 'Vidi et consideravi quod mutuo se amaverunt. Volumus eos matrimonio tradere'.

Andreas Schrywer and Lucas Deydrych then went back to the parish priest and expressed their wish to contract the marriage between their children. The priest did not want to delay the wedding any further, so he asked for the future spouses to be brought before him right away.[29] When Blasius arrived at the priest's house that day, Lucas Deydrych explained to him that he wanted him to marry Rosa because he understood she was pregnant by him. However, Blasius replied that he would never marry her, which made both parents angry. They left the priest's house soon after the incident, and the wedding never took place.[30] The entire scene was described in court by the parish priest, but he did not mention Blasius formulating any defence against the accusation of impregnating Rosa. The priest might have excluded that part out of sympathy for the girl's family. Unfortunately, there is no further information on what happened in the time span between the failed marriage negotiation and the beginning of the trial.

An Overview of the Trial

Literature on medieval ecclesiastical courts usually distinguishes between two types of lawsuits: *instance suits* and *office suits*.[31] Instance suits were initiated by one litigant party against another, through a complaint presented to an ecclesiastical court. By contrast, office suits were opened ex officio by clerical tribunals whenever evidence surfaced of deviant behaviour under their jurisdiction. Still, cases which started as ex officio prosecutions would often turn into instance litigations,[32] a tendency also illustrated by the Schrywer-Deydrych lawsuit. Following the chapter's inquiry into Rosa's pregnancy and the unsuccessful attempt to resolve the situation with the Deydrych family, Andreas Schrywer took the matter to the ecclesiastical tribunal of Schenk.

Although the court records do not use this term, the lawsuit could be classified as a case of *sponsalia per verba de futuro carnali copula secuta*.[33] Before

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[29] 'Hiis auditis, dixi ad ambos, "Vocemus igitur famulum et ancillam!"' (no. 62).

[30] 'Adveniente autem famulo Blasio, filio Luce Deydrych, et patre eius eidem voluntatem suam declarante, quod scilicet eum nuptiis tradere velit et Rosam filiam comparis sui Andree Schywer in coniugem sibi copulare, quia intelligeret ab eo ipsam fore impregnatam, ipse autem Blasius, filius Luce Deydrych, patri respondit hoc se numquam esse facturum et voluntati patris et verborum eius renunciando, resistebat. Et sic uterque parens conturbati de domu mea recedebant' (no. 62).

[31] For a helpful explanation of the distinction between instance and office suits, see Henry A. Jefferies, 'Women, Marriage and Sex in Early Tudor England: Evidence from an Irish Act Book', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 74, no. 2 (2023): 263-264. On the procedural aspects related to these cases, see also: Helmholz, *Marriage Litigation*, pp. 112-140, especially 123-140; Donahue Jr., *Law, Marriage, and Society*, 33-41; Cristellon, *Marriage, the Church, and its Judges*, 33-93.

[32] Helmholz, Marriage Litigation, 72.

[33] On this type of cases, see Donahue Jr., *Law, Marriage, and Society*, 345-362.

the tribunal, Andreas Schrywer accused Blasius Deydrych of deflowering and impregnating his daughter (*filiam meam deflorasset, dehonestasset ac impregnasset*). He also claimed that she had received a ring from him (*eidem anulum unum tradidisset*).[34] Since the ring was a gift typically offered to a future spouse or wife, canon law viewed it as a symbol of marriage and a 'sign of love' (*signum amoris*).[35] Judging by Andreas Schrywer's narrative, he seems to have learnt about this gift only in the time span between the confirmation of the pregnancy and the start of the trial. Admittedly, it is not completely clear whether Blasius had given her the ring with the intention to contract a clandestine marriage, or just as a token of affection with the promise of a future marriage. The second scenario seems more plausible, since the plaintiff did not explicitly invoke any secret exchange of vows. In any case, in view of the events preceding the trial, the ring should be understood as a private gift between the lovers, rather than a part of a betrothal ceremony organized by the two families.

Blasius' defence consisted in an all-negating stance on Andreas Schrywer's accusations.[36] This strategy is understandable, taking into account the canonical arguments the chapter could have used to force him into the wedding if the claims against him proved to be substantiated. According to the canon law, there were two equally valid means of contracting a marriage: 'by words of present' (*per verba de praesenti*) and 'by words of future' (*per verba de futuro*), followed by a sexual act.[37] The first was the customary exchange of marital vows between a man and a woman of marriageable age, regardless of whether it was performed publicly or in secret. In cases of marriages contracted by words of present, sexual knowledge of each other was not necessary for the partners to be considered married. By contrast, the second way implied a betrothal or any other marriage promise followed by carnal consummation of the relationship.

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[34] 'Andreas Schrywer contram dictum filium iam dicti Luce Deydrych proposuit hoc modo: "Venerabiles domini! Accedit quedam causa inter filiam meam Rosam et Blasium filium Luce Deydrych, propter quam et coram venerabili magistro Martino, eo tunc plebano Senthagatensi et huius capituli sedis Schenk similiter surrogato, comparemus et eandem eidem exposimus, quia ipse Blasius, filius Luce Deydrych, filiam meam deflorasset, dehonestasset ac impregnasset necnon eidem anulum unum tradidisset"' (no. 62).

[35] Cristellon, Marriage, the Church, and its Judges, 54-55.

[36] 'Respondit se filiam ipsius Andree Schrywer non defloruisse, nec dehonestasse, nec impregnasse, neque unquam carnaliter cognovisse, sed neque anulum, quem ab ipso recepisse dicit, ab eo sibi collatum fore, neque suum fuisse, sed nec unquam vidisse' (no. 62).

[37] The two ways of contracting a canonically valid marriage are explained in: Donahue Jr., 'The Canon Law on the Formation of Marriage and Social Practice in the Later Middle Ages', *Journal of Family History* 8, no. 2 (1983): 144-145; Sara McDougall, 'Marriage: Law and Practice', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Canon Law*, ed. Anders Winroth and John C. Wei (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 461-462. See also Melodie H. Eichbauer – James A. Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, 2nd ed. (Abingdon, New York: Routledge, 2023), 136-137.

In other words, if a couple ever expressed their intention to marry in the future, any subsequent sexual relation between them served as a confirmation of the union and offered the Church grounds to consider them canonically married.

In light of these canonical constraints, it is explicable why Blasius rejected all accusations before the chapter. If he hoped to avoid marrying Rosa, denial of ever owning the ring was essential. Had he ever admitted to gifting the ring to her, the ecclesiastical tribunal could have forced him into the marriage, due to her pregnancy and the fact that another villager, as shown below, had spotted them together at night. On the other hand, an affair between unmarried partners, although punishable as fornication, would not have been enough to enforce a marriage in the absence of a wedding proposal.[38]

The first judge to review the case was Martinus, the substitute judge of the chapter of Schenk and the cleric who had first commissioned the inquiry into Rosa's pregnancy. He requested two witnesses in support of Andreas Schrywer's claims, which was the standard number required for full proof of a fact.[39] The two witnesses had to testify that Rosa's ring had previously belonged to Blasius, thus proving the supposed marriage promise.[40]

The second term was scheduled for January 10, 1521 in Gürtheln. The plaintiff could not present the two requested witnesses[41], so the chapter demanded a collective oath from the adverse side. This practice, known as *compurgatio,* served to clear the name of the accused and restore his or her good reputation following defamatory accusations or suspicions of ecclesiastical delicts.[42] Six oath-helpers were to swear in unison with Blasius that he was not guilty of the charges against him.[43]

The third litigation term took place in Schenk on January 24, 1521, exactly two weeks after the previous one. It was chaired by Georgius, the

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[38] As an ecclesiastical crime, fornication was understood as sexual intercourse outside of marriage or without a marital promise (Donahue Jr., *Law, Marriage, and Society*, 361).

[39] Ibid., 40; Cristellon, Marriage, the Church, and its Judges, 49.

[40] 'Idem tamen magister Martinus, interim meliori a Deo provisus beneficio, causam ipsam coram sese terminare nequivit, sed eandem ad futuram confraternitatem in Gyrttheln celebrandam prorogavit istomodo: ut ibidem Andreas Schrywer terciusmet comprobaret anulum apud filiam suam existentem Blasii, filii Luce Deydrich, fuisse' (no. 62).

[41] 'Die igitur illa, termino scilicet, per dictum magistum Martinum prefixo instante, idem Andreas Schrywer hoc, scilicet quod anulus ille Blasii, filii Luce Deydrych, fuisset, comprobare non potuit' (no. 62).

[42] Wolfgang P. Müller, 'Procedures and Courts', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Canon Law*, ed. Anders Winroth and John C. Wei (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 331.

[43] 'Fidem suam non dedisset, nec eam impregnasset, neque eam unquam carnaliter cognovisset, neque eciam alique muneris ad hoc dedisset' (no. 62).

parish priest of Schenk, who had become the substitute judge of the chapter in the meantime. The litigants and their supporters gathered in Georgius' house to hear Blasius' purgatory oath. Although the Deydrych family managed to bring the six compurgators requested, Andreas Schrywer invalidated half of them. The tribunal rejected a villager named Thomas Roth based on his dubious character, as he was known to have stolen a wagon of wood in the past. The other disqualified witnesses were the two women who had personal conflicts with Andreas Schrywer over the stolen grapes and the wine-tax. This evaluation process was also standard practice, since canon law procedure required oath-helpers to be people of honest reputation, and they were not allowed to swear for personal reasons.[44] The numerical deficit deemed Blasius' oath invalid, so the judges could not release him from suspicion.

Although procedure recommended witnesses to be interviewed in private,[45] the tribunal heard the depositions openly. This presented an opportunity for Gallus Klosch, Andreas Schrywer's friend and former village judge of Scharosch, to intervene. He admitted that litigants' friends were removed from testimony (*scio quod amico meo, Andrea Schrywer, quia amicus meus est, testimonium dare non possum*), but was still allowed to speak in court.[46] Gallus Klosch provided a short description of a sixteenth-century romantic meeting. He told the judges that one early morning he happened to spot Blasius and Rosa together in a hemp field near the village. Blasius was apparently resting over her (*super eam iacentem*), and when he saw the villager approaching, he quickly covered Rosa's lower body, as to not raise suspicions.[47] This account likely played a central role in the chapter's sentence.

Ambrosius, the first cleric to inquire into the matter, also presented his take on the events that led to the trial. Although not a judge in this lawsuit, he was still a member of the chapter, so his opinion weighed heavily. He emphasized the marriage agreement between Andreas Schrywer

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[44] Donahue Jr., *Law, Marriage, and Society*, 39-40; Müller, 'Procedures and Courts', 336.

[45] Helmholz, Marriage Litigation, 128.

[46] 'Hiis sic stantibus et peractis, quidam aderat de rure Scharwsch vir providus, honestus, fidedignus, aliquando in eodem villicus et civis existendo, nomine Gallus Klosch, et ille veniam petens a nobis, ut aliqua verba et ipse proferret. Cum admissum erat ut loqueretur, ipse vero Gallus Klosch inquiens sic ait, "Ego, digni domini, scio quod amico meo, Andrea Schrywer, quia amicus meus est, testimonium dare non possum, sed ea que dicturus sum, dico ad conscienciam meam"' (no. 62).

[47] 'Conversus ad Blasium, filium Luce Deydrych, dixit ad eum, "Scis quod te reperi in ortu canapi, super eam (salva dignitate vestrarum reverentiarum et honore!) iacentem et, cum me considerares, illico surgebas et, ne de te suspicarer, fasciole quod ipsa puella Rosa gebat sub cingulo extrahebas. Et adhuc possum tibi demonstrare vestigia capitis, pedum (salvo honore!) et ani!"' (no. 62).

and Lucas Deydrych, which had happened in his own house. This particular detail served to further incriminate the Deydrych family, since they had initially denied any involvement with Andreas Schrywer and giving their consent to the wedding. Ambrosius also recalled the moment when Blasius disconsidered his father's wish and refused to marry Rosa.

Upon hearing Ambrosius' testimony, the chapter announced their sentence, which enforced the marriage between Blasius and Rosa.[48] The legal reasoning behind it seems to have been mostly based on 'artificial proof' (*probatio ficta*) rather than 'real proof' (*probatio vera*). While elements of real proof (confessions, testimonies, and oaths) directly established facts and had decisive value in court, artificial proof was composed of circumstantial evidence, indirect clues and presumptions.[49] The testimony of Gallus Klosch suggested the carnal consummation of the relationship, but could not definitively prove it, since he did not formally qualify as a witness. The possession of the ring also gave Rosa the presumption of a marriage proposal, despite her father's inability to fully demonstrate it by two witnesses. On the other hand, Ambrosius' deposition describing the marriage negotiation between the two fathers qualified as real proof. The three elements pointed towards a case of *sponsalia per verba de futuro* followed by sexual intercourse.

Devastated by the sentence, Blasius told the priests he preferred death to marrying Rosa.[50] In response, the judges threatened to detain and send him to Hermannstadt for disobedience.[51] Although their reaction is hard to interpret, the Deydrych family also seemed to turn against Blasius once they realized they had lost the case. They shouted at the judges to execute Blasius, as they did not care for his fate anymore (*Decapitate, in palum figite, excoriate, suspendite… Nos non curemus!*).[52] This backlash might have been the family's attempt to preserve some of their credibility after

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[48] 'Unde nos, fassione domini Ambrosii plebani de dicta Scharwsch Maiori exaudita et admissa, sententiam talem proferre curamus, ut ipse Blasius, filius Luce Deydrych, Rosam, filiam Andree Schrywer, in matrimonium reciperet' (no. 62).

[49] On *probatio vera* and *probatio ficta* in the context of marriage litigation, see Cristellon, *Marriage, the Church, and its Judges,* 49-58.

[50] 'Capitu se pocius privari magis velit quam quod ipsam Rosam, filiam Andree Schrywer, in coniungem recepiat' (no. 62).

[51] 'Nos vero eidem sic respondebamus: quod si eam sponte nollet accepere, fortassis eo invito eam accepere oporteret vel ipsum concatenatum vinctumque observare vellemus, vestre dominacioni transmittendum' (no. 62).

[52] 'Cum pater eius et consanguinei, tunc coram nobis existentes, audivissent, insolenter clamabant, dicentes, "Ecce hic, presens est, ducatis eum quocumque vultis et facte cum eo quecumque placuit vobis! Ecce hic, habetis eum in potestate vestra! Decapitate, in palum figite, excoriate, suspendite… Nos non curemus!"' (no. 62).

supporting Blasius' lies in court. The priests attempted to calm the spirits[53] and offered the alternative of picking a surety (*fideiussor*) for Blasius until the next litigation term. None of his angry relatives volunteered, but after some insistence, the priests managed to convince Lucas Deydrych.

The chapter then transmitted the cause to the chapter of Hermannstadt, and the development of the lawsuit is uncertain thereafter. The February 26 letter mentions a new hearing scheduled for March 2 in Agnetheln (Agnita), where Blasius hoped to gather a new group of witnesses in his support. Although the hearing was commissioned by the chapter of Hermannstadt, it was held by three members of the chapter of Schenk: the parish priests of Agnetheln, Braller (Bruiu), and Zied (Veseud). According to the chapter's mandate, this delegation of authority served to lower litigation costs, since travelling to Hermannstadt would have been expensive for the families.[54] The priests had to report their findings to the higher court in Hermannstadt after three days. Handwritten notes on the back of the two acts suggest that other court sessions might have taken place on March 18 and May 1, but the final outcome of the trial is unknown.

A Sixteenth-Century Love Affair

The Schrywer and Deydrych families presented two mutually exclusive stories in court. The accuser depicted a carnal relationship based on an unfaithful marriage promise, while the defendant denied any sexual involvement or wedding arrangements. Therefore, what was the relationship between Blasius and Rosa?

One difficulty posed by this question stems from the fact that the tribunal hardly ever recorded their voices directly. Rosa was entirely represented by her father, and the judges never asked her to speak in court. Similarly, understanding Blasius' feelings is complicated by the lack of distinction between his personal declarations and what his older relatives spoke in his name. Although many other depositions were recorded in first person, the chapter accounted for Blasius' few statements in reported

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[53] 'Hiis auditis, respondebamus, "Boni fratres, estimabamus vos prudenciores esse et sapienter respondere, nam nobis non licet quemquam interficere et occidere. Bene intelligimus vos illa verba nobis in oprobrium et contumeliam dicere et proferre"' (no. 62).

[54] 'Quare ut causa plus examinata et merarius discussa resciatur et expensis maioribus parratur, mandamus vobis, venerabilibus dominis predictis, in virtute sanctae obedienciae, quatenus presentibus requisiti annotate nostra, citetis omnes personas quascumque predictus Blasius vobis duxerit nominandas, ad examinanda testes et fassiones. Super eo articulo, dominus surrogatus rennuit mihi dare appelationis diem. Statuimus vestris dominationibus proximum sabbathum, locum Walleagnetis, ut dominationes vestrae citatarum iuratarum fassiones personarum per tactum sacrosancti Evangelii audiant diligenter, quas diligenter presentes nostras vestris inclusas, nobis vero sigillo privato munitas, remittatis inscriptis ad feriam terciam venturam, in sede nostra presentando' (no. 63).

speech. Moreover, the January 24 letter mentions that Petrus Conradt was answering the judges' questions in his name.

For this reason, reconstructing the relationship can only be attempted through the accounts of the trial participants. There certainly was a romantic or sexual relationship between them. Blasius himself admitted to it in response to Gallus Klosch's testimony, although for obvious reasons he denied the sexual aspect of it (*verum est, vos ibi me reperistis, sed cum honore*). By his statement, the relationship had been completely innocent in nature, but since the time and place of the amorous meeting were morally questionable, the judges were not convinced. In fairness, Gallus Klosch did formulate his testimony in a deliberately provocative manner. He spoke directly to Blasius, as if to shame him (*scis quod te reperi*), and asked for the priests' forgiveness when referencing sexually implicit details, such as the marks left in the hemp field by the lovers' bodies (*adhuc possum tibi demonstrare vestigia capitis, pedum – salvo honore! – et ani*).

Another significant episode is the discussion Andreas Schrywer and Lucas Deydrych had upon discovering Rosa's pregnancy. It provides an unexpected validation of love as a legitimate reason to contract a marriage. The chapter recorded their dialogue in two slightly different versions: one as remembered by Andreas Schrywer in court[55] and the other as narrated by Ambrosius, the parish priest of Scharosch, who heard it from the two villagers when they approached him with the wedding plan.[56] Both variants concurred on the main arguments brought by the two fathers in favour of contracting a marriage between their children. They highlighted the romantic and sexual aspect of the relationship, the conception of a child, and the rumours surrounding the couple. In particular, Lucas Deydrych allegedly said he had been aware of the love affair for a while (*revera ego eciam sepius vidi et consideravi quod se mutuo amaverunt*). From his perspective, contracting a marriage between Blasius and Rosa would have at least kept the malicious rumors about them to a bearable amount, despite not being able to suppress

[55] '"Bone compar Luca, bene scitis quod dum filiam meam impregnatam esse perceperam, ex tunc vos in domum meam vocaveram, ubi vos sic aloquebar, "Quondam factum, cuius Deus misereatur, inter proles nostros contigit, nam filia mea impregnata est et a nullo alio nisi a filio vestro Blasio se impregnatam fatetur". Vos ita michi respondebatis, "Bone compare Andrea, certe dolendum est, sed exim sic actum est, ne aperiamus hominum ora et tantomodo de prolibus nostris fabuletur. Vidi et consideravi quod mutuo se amaverunt. Volumus eos matrimonio tradere"' (no. 62).

[56] '"Bone compar, filia mea Rosa impregnata est et non nisi a vestro filio Blasio se impregnata fatetur. Quid consulitis?" Ipse vero michi respondit, "Bone compar Andrea, revera ego eciam sepius vidi et consideravi quod se mutuo amaverunt. Volumus eos matrimonio coniungere, ne plus de nostris prolibus quam de aliorum caviletur." Sic itaque compare meo Luca Deydrych respondente, dixi ad eum, "Eamus, si placuit, ad dominum plebanum nostrum!" Qui ait, "Placuit!"' (no. 62).

them entirely (*volumus eos matrimonio coniungere, ne plus de nostris prolibus quam de aliorum caviletur*).

Although Andreas Schrywer tried to seem appalled before the priests, it is unlikely he had been completely oblivious of his daughter's affair prior to the trial. Even if he would have failed to notice her absence from home, his friend Gallus Klosch must have informed him of what he saw that early morning. In reality, perhaps Andreas Schrywer viewed the Deydrych family as a potentially advantageous match and assumed he would soon be approached with a marriage offer, so he turned a blind eye to the sexual aspect of the relationship. That would also account for the fact that he did not take any legal action until the chapter of Schenk initiated the ecclesiastical inquiry and the ensuing negotiation with Lucas Deydrych led to nothing due to Blasius' opposition.

The ring mentioned in the beginning of the trial was likely a private gift Blasius had given Rosa sometime before their break-up point. It is unlikely that they had been betrothed to each other by their families, since neither Andreas Schrywer nor the parish priest mentioned it in court. That would have been an important detail in Andreas Schrywer's favour, and he had no reason to withhold that information from the judges. Instead, the gifting of the ring appears as a personal exchange of promises based on the mutual attraction of the couple. It did not involve their parents or relatives, which suggests that marriage initiative sometimes belonged to the future spouses, even if their families later became involved in the wedding arrangements.

The reason for the relationship's failure is unknown, and the court letters do not provide any more clues about it. Given its extent, the January 24 record is suspiciously silent on the reason Blasius refused to marry Rosa. He probably offered an explanation for it, be it substantiated or not, but the chapter chose not to record it. Either his reasons did not ultimately matter in the eyes of the priests, or the chapter only recorded the evidence supporting their marriage sentence. In any case, the break-up probably happened shortly before the chapter of Schenk carried out the inquiry into the pregnancy rumours. This would explain why Lucas Deydrych was still under the impression that his son loved Rosa and that he would be happy to marry her. It would also account for the strong feelings of rejection Blasius expressed before the parish priest and the chapter. If they had an argument in the weeks before, the negative emotions would still be boiling inside him.

The Court of Schenk

As the Schrywer-Deydrych case shows, the court of Schenk was an ad hoc tribunal that assembled in various villages across its jurisdiction. It could initiate prosecutions based on local rumours and reports, which points to the close scrutiny of the parish priests over their communities. Deliberations usually took place in the house of the local parish priest and were presided over by the dean or by a substitute judge (*surrogatus),* who led court sessions in the dean's absence. The judges acted rather quickly, with spans of two weeks between hearings. Some court sessions were scheduled to coincide with the reunion of the chapter's confraternity (*fraternitas*).[57] In particular, it was the case of the second term in the Schrywer-Deydrych trial. [58] However, not all court sessions required the presence of every member of the chapter. Only three or four priests were typically summoned for terms outside the confraternity's meetings. Although the chapter of Hermannstadt had its own public notary, there is no similar evidence for the court of Schenk.[59]

Most likely, the priests' source on procedural law related to marriage cases was the thirteenth-century *Summa de matrimonio* by Raymond of Penyafort, also known as the Tancredian-Raymondian *Summa*.[60] This influential treatise, written by Tancred of Bologna around the year 1215, was revised by Raymond of Penyafort two decades later.[61] The *Summa* had been known in Transylvanian Saxon circles for a long time, as suggested by one copy mentioned in the book inventory of the parish church of Hermannstadt in

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[57] The activity of the confraternity of the chapter of Schenk is poorly documented. See Lidia Gross, *Confreriile medievale în Transilvania (secolele XIV-XVI)* [Medieval Confraternities in Transylvania (Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries)], 2nd ed. (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2009), 168, note 83.

[58] 'Decimo die mensis Ianuarii ad possessionem Gyrtthln, pro celebranda fraternitate, sacerdotes capituli sedis Schenk congregati essent. […] Dum simul consedissemus, providus Andreas Schrywer de Scharwsch unacum filia sua Rosa, ut actrix, ab una, necnon Lucas Deydrych de eadem unacum filio suo Blasio ut reus, ab altera partibus coram nobis comparuere' (no. 62).

[59] The notary of the chapter of Hermannstadt was Simon Schönman. He signed the February 26 mandate of the Schrywer-Deydrych trial (*Simon Schoenman, notarius de mandato*). On public notaries in medieval Transylvania, see Adinel Ciprian Dincă, 'Notarii publici în Transilvania Evului Mediu târziu: premise ale receptării unei instituții juridice' [Public Notaries in Transylvania in the Later Middle Ages: Prerequisites for the Reception of a Legal Institution], in *Exercițiul scrierii în Transilvania medievală şi premodernă/Literacy Experiences Concerning Medieval and Early Modern Transylvania*, ed. Susana Andea and Adinel Ciprian Dincă (Cluj-Napoca, Gatineau: Argonaut, Symphologic Publishing, 2016), 35-51.

[60] Raymond of Penyafort, *Summa on Marriage*, trans. Pierre J. Payer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2005).

[61] Donahue Jr., *Law, Marriage, and Society*, p. 15; Eichbauer – Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, pp. 136-139, 179-180, 182.

1442.[62] The same collection also included a manuscript of Iohannes Andreae's *Summa de sponsalibus et matrimonio*, an early fourteenth-century commentary on Book IV of the *Decretales* of Gregory IX.[63]

Overall, the judges had a pragmatic approach to the scandal, although their position implied a bias in favour of the girl's family. From a procedural standpoint, their sentence was based mostly on circumstantial rather than direct evidence. Although he could not present full proof of the alleged wedding suggestion nor of the consummation of the relationship, the accuser was still granted a favourable verdict. Gallus Klosch's testimony likely influenced the chapter's decision, despite being procedurally inadmissible due to his close relationship to the plaintiff. Establishing innocence or guilt through cleansing oaths (compurgation) also played a key role in court proceedings. In this respect, the chapter of Schenk functioned similarly to other ecclesiastical courts of the Northern half of Europe, such as the English and Franco-Germanic tribunals.[64] While the judges offered the defendants a chance to present their stance, they tried to balance between imparting legal justice and adopting a sentence that would reinstate moral order and promote their view of social harmony.

Although the chapter ultimately failed to settle the dispute, conciliatory efforts also took place out of court. At the bottom of the January 24 letter, the chapter recorded a private conversation between the judges and Ruffus Iohannes *scolaris*, a friend of the Deydrych family. After the litigants left on January 24, the priests asked Ruffus to persuade Lucas Deydrych into accepting the wedding, arguing that continuation of the trial would be expensive for the family.[65] In response, Ruffus spoke about the disagreements within the Deydrych family. Allegedly, the parents had

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[62] Robert Szentiványi, *Catalogus concinnus librorum manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Batthyanyanae*, 4th ed. (Szeged: Bibliotheca Universitatis Szegediensis, 1958), no. 294, 168.

[63] On this jurist, see Peter D. Clarke, 'Giovanni d'Andrea (1270-1348)', in *Law and the Christian Tradition in Italy: The Legacy of the Great Jurists*, ed. Orazio Condorelli and Rafael Domingo (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2021), 145-159; Eichbauer – Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, 178-179.

[64] On the distinction between 'Northern' and 'Southern' courts, see Müller, *Marriage Litigation*, 3-9.

[65] 'Postquam hec omnia sic coram nobis agerentur et recedentibus singulis nobisque in stuba sic remanentibus, reversus post paululum Ruffus Iohannes scolaris et quando littere presentes conficerentur interrogavit. Nos eidem terminum et diem prefigentes, sic eum alloquebantur, "Bone frater Iohannes, vos ex quo litteratus estis, sapitis plus ceteris, avisetis ergo amicum vestrum Lucam Deydrych et consulite ei ut copulentur. Et nos suademus vobis, quia fortassis non statim terminabitur lis et plures resas et fatigas necnon expensas habebitis"' (no. 62).

always supported the marriage plan, but the other relatives and friends were opposed to it.[66]

If Ruffus' account is to be believed, it not only suggests the judges' limited understanding of the scandal, but also points to the power dynamics within the Deydrych family. The priests assumed that Lucas Deydrych had the final word in the marriage arrangements. However, according to Ruffus, the father's consent was not enough to impose a decision, and the other relatives' opinions ultimately weighed more. From this perspective, it becomes understandable that Lucas Deydrych initially agreed to the wedding, only to take his word back when met with resistance from Blasius and his other relatives. This detail is also consistent with the chapter's observation that Blasius was unofficially represented in court by a villager named Petrus Conradt, rather than by his own father. Unfortunately, Ruffus did not elaborate on the reasons behind the relatives' opposition to the wedding, or perhaps the chapter did not record the rest of the discussion.

The Strategy of the Plaintiff

Although Andreas Schrywer was unable to gather the number of witnesses required to prove his claims, the chapter of Schenk still granted him a favourable sentence. His litigating strategy involved a believable account of the events regarding his daughter and a realistic depiction of himself as a trustworthy man. The support received from a former village judge, Gallus Klosch, and from the parish priest of Scharosch, Ambrosius, further improved his credibility in court.

Andreas Schrywer had likely received legal advice beforehand, presumably from the parish priest. He displayed excellent knowledge of the grounds on which oath-helpers could be invalidated, and knew to construct his narrative around the argument of *sponsalia per verba de futuro carnali copula secuta*. Since a marriage promise followed by sexual intercourse formed a canonically valid marriage, he essentially argued that the couple should already be considered married, and the chapter only had to enforce the wedding between them. Thus, he suggested that his daughter's loss of virginity did not happen as a result of fornication but by means of deceit on Blasius' part.

The central point in Andreas Schrywer's self-constructed image of respectability was his position as the village judge of Scharosch. In court, he presented himself as dependable, honest, and humble in relationship to other

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[66] 'Ille vero e vestigio respondit, "Venerabiles domini, sciatis pro certo quod diu et ab initio parentes et ego semper voluntarii fuimus quod copularentur, sed ceteri consanguinei et amici resteterunt et adhuc resistunt"' (no. 62).

villagers. For example, when explaining that Andreas Berttleff's daughter was ineligible to swear in Blasius' favour, he depicted the background of their conflict in great detail, as it was a good opportunity to demonstrate his merits as the village's judge. He described the villagers' complaints about the children who frequently trespassed into their vineyards and stole their grapes. Determined to take action, he gathered the entire community, and they settled on a fine to be paid by the parents whose children would be caught stealing from the vineyards in the future.[67]

By contrast, the Deydrych family made several mistakes which diminished their chances of winning the lawsuit. They damaged their standing by presenting dubious oath-helpers in court, such as two villagers guilty of theft. Another mistake was Blasius' admission that Gallus Klosch spotted him together with Rosa at sunrise, which confirmed the suspicion that their relationship had been sexual in nature. The Deydrych family's inappropriate reaction in receipt of the marriage sentence, which the priests carefully recorded in their transmissional letter (*insolenter clamabant*), most likely did not made a positive impression to the higher court either. These were all weak points in the Deydrych family's defence, which played to Andreas Schrywer's advantage. Ultimately, when neither part could produce direct proof of their claims, convincing the judge of one's honesty was essential. Marriage litigation was not just a numerical battle of witnesses or oath-helpers, but also a competition to gain the sympathy of the judges.

Conclusion

Although the chapter of Schenk recorded an unexpected unfolding of events, the Schrywer-Deydrych lawsuit is not an unusual case, if understood in a broader European context. Since marriage proposals were often followed by undelayed sexual initiation, ecclesiastical tribunals were asked to intervene whenever one partner reneged on the promise. The chapter of Schenk operated in a similar way to other clerical tribunals across the Northern half of Europe. Judges displayed fair knowledge of canon law related to

[67] 'Secundus testis iurando, puella filia Andree Berttleff, contra quam talem suspicionis causam vestris dignitatibus antepono: Ego, cum essem villicus immeritus, cum meis civibus considerans magna dampna a pueris communitatis in vineis fieri et continuus esse, a quibusdam ingressis, qui vineas in territorio meo non haberent, nil minus tamen continuarent ingressum, inito consilio volentium huiusmodi dampnis ne fuerent contravenire et consulere, convocamus totam comunitatem, proponendo ipsis quomodo multa incomoda et dampna fuerent in vineis a pueris ipsorum. Si placeret omnibus, velint facere et constituere pactum seu mandatum cum pena inflicta, quod de cetero nullus ex pueris ipsorum vineas, sicut antea fecissent, ingredi auderet. Facto itaque mandato, ego ex officio coram tota communitate demandavi quod nemo de cetero pueros suos ad vineas intrare permitteret, quia si quis in eis repertus aut notatus foret, ipsi cives velint recipere penam' (no. 62).

marital cases, even though its rigorous application was sometimes abandoned in favour of more pragmatic goals, such as restoring social peace and moral order by marriage enforcement. The records of this case also suggest the interest of the future spouses in choosing their own partners, although their families eventually became closely involved in the wedding negotiations. Still, the idea that love and mutual attraction were legitimate reasons for contracting a marriage seemed to be present among both the younger and older generation in Scharosch. If some villagers displayed a rather lenient attitude towards premarital sexual relations, it was only with the assumption that they would be quickly followed by marriage. A systematic investigation of pre-Reformation Transylvanian church tribunals remains unachievable due to a lack of serial records, but further case studies can still illuminate other aspects related to the operation of ecclesiastical justice and marriage litigation in this area.

Court Jesters in the Service of the Transylvanian Nobility

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to provide a brief overview of the jesters found in the Principality of Transylvania. Our analysis is largely based on memoirs, autobiographies and chronicles written by Transylvanian nobles and intellectuals, and occasionally on princely charters. The earliest records on court fools in the principality date to the 16th century, while the latest are from the 19th century. Two types of fools can be encountered in the sources: *natural* and *artificial* ones. Dwarfs, mentally ill, ugly or slow-minded adults fall in the first category. In contrast, the artificial or *wise fools,* as they are referred to, possessed special skills, and they were not only good entertainers, but often educated people, sometimes even members of the nobility. They distinguished themselves from their colleagues by the intimacy they manifested around the prince or nobles, and their freedom to comment and criticize politics, to offer advice and in general to speak freely.

Keywords: court jester, Transylvania, dwarfs, cultural history, foolery

Rezumat: Scopul lucrării noastre este de a oferi o scurtă prezentare a bufonilor din Principatul Transilvaniei. Analiza noastră se bazează în mare parte pe memorii, autobiografii şi cronici (redactate de nobili şi intelectuali transilvăneni), respectiv diplome princiare. Cele mai vechi înregistrări despre bufonii de curte din principat datează din secolul al XVI-lea, iar cele mai recente sunt din secolul al XIX-lea. Sursele noastre relatează despre *bufoni naturali* şi *artificiali*. Din prima categorie fac parte piticii, persoanele cu boli mintale, diforme sau lente la minte. În contrast, bufonii înţelepţi erau buni oratori, glumeți, adesea proveneau din familii nobiliare şi de obicei erau educați.

Aceştia se deosebeau de ceilalți curteni prin intimitatea pe care o manifestau în jurul principelui, sau al nobililor, şi prin libertatea de a comenta şi critica deciziile lor politice, de a oferi sfaturi şi, în general, de a vorbi liber, atunci când alții nu îndrăzneau.

Cuvinte cheie: bufon, nebun de curte, Transilvania, pitici, istorie culturală

The court jester is a universal but elusive phenomenon, encountered in many cultures and historical eras.[1] Even though the figure of the jester was already known in some respects in the antiquity, and the jester of the Middle Ages fits into this tradition, medieval jesters also played a special role in addition to their talents: they were allowed to offer a critique of the era, the society and, to a certain extent, the church. From a rather early period, Renaissance Italian courts had a fascination for court jesters. According to the Italian historians, the so called *giullari, buffoni* or *folli* were extremely important for the society, not only because they provided the main form of entertainment, but also because they were the sole repository of the ancient theatrical heritage that survived "the cultural genocide wrought by the medieval Church".[2] The Spanish Court also has a long jester history, going back to the 6th century. The *bufón, albardán* or *truhan* was described as a man without shame, honour or respect, having a license to say whatever he pleases, sometimes paying a high price for these liberties, but his position was otherwise considered to be a fortunate one.[3] Thanks to Philip II's real fascination for them, we have some ideas about how they looked, since most of the beloved buffoons are immortalized in paintings.[4] In England, *court jesters, fools, clowns,* and *madcaps* were studied more from the perspective of literature and theatre studies, because most of the evidence about fools are to be found in poems and plays, and only occasionally in letters and account books.[5] This would certainly explain the universal perception of jesters, strongly influenced by Shakespeare's fools as multi-talented courtiers, madcaps free from conventions, mostly drunk and witty, tools for both social criticism and comic relief. They possessed a various range of talents, from singing, dancing, storytelling, and acrobatics, beside having a "theatrical" wardrobe full of motley costumes, brightly coloured clothes paired with specific hats

[1] Beatrice K. Otto, *Fools Are Everywhere: The Court Jester Around the World* (Chicago, 2001), xvii.
[2] Francesco Massip, "Giullari, folli e buffoni" (Book review of Tito Saffioti, *Gli occhi della follia. Giullari e buffoni di corte nella storia e nell'arte*, (Milano, 2009) in *Artifara*, vol. 10 (2010).
[3] Victoriano Roncero López and Esther Cadahía, "The Court Jester in 16th and 17th Century Spain: History, Painting, and Literature" in *South Atlantic Review*, vol. 72 (2007): 94.
[4] Ibid. 97–98.
[5] Otto, *Fools Are Everywhere*, xx.

and a marotte. This classical archetype is not remotely similar to the image provided by historical sources, even if these representations are still associated with the common perception of court jesters. A new sort of jester emerges in the French Court around the 13th century, where the *bouffon, fou du roi* or simply *fou* is usually a product of "breeding". Thus, in this story, the name of the town Troyes emerges, although the charter that gave the town the privilege to train fools for the court turned out to be a forgery.[6] Nonetheless, fool-breeding is only present in French culture, and it could be explained by the fact that French kings enjoyed ugly and deformed but trained *bouffons*. According to Friedrich Flögels's *Geschichte der Hoffnarren* (1789) – the first study on court fools – jesters appeared to satisfy a universal need for laughter and comedy.[7] Laughter could be caused deliberately or unintentionally, only by looking at something unconventional or ridiculous in itself – and this is probably the reason people found grotesque bodies amusing. It was in the early modern period when Germans started to appreciate different talents in their jesters too. The *Hoffnarr* or *Narr* had to be a witty and humorous character, who held up a mirror to their rulers and was often as knowledgeable in political and diplomatic matters as the rest of the court. This is the time when the so-called *artificial fools* started to overshadow the *natural* ones.[8]

This short prelude served as a point of reference for our brief overview on the Transylvanian jesters because we believe that western jester-culture had a great impact on the princes of the region. We approach this topic from a chronological, rather than a thematical perspective, given the lack of similar studies regarding Transylvanian court fools.[9] It is also important to mention that this study is not intended to be exhaustive. We gathered as much data as we could, but we are certain that more stories are waiting to be found. Our earliest records on court jesters date back to the 16th century, to the very beginning of the principality, after which they appear rarely but constantly in chronicles, memoirs, court diaries and occasionally in charters. Most frequently, they were called *bolond* [Hun.: fool], but sometimes were referred to as *jádzdi* [Hun.: playful man], *markalf* [marcolf], *bohóc* [clown], or *puja* and *törpe* [both meaning dwarf].

The first record on the presence of a fool in Transylvania refers to a nobleman called György Truppay, who was in the service of cardinal

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[6] Maurcie Lever, *Korona és csörgősipka* [Le spectre et la marotte] (Budapest, 1989), 105–107.
[7] Karl Friedrich Flögel, *Geschichte der Hofnarren* (Liegnitz– Leipzig, 1789), 5.
[8] Ruth von Bernuth, "Über Zwerge, rachitische Ungeheuer und Blödsinn lacht Man nincht: zu Karl Friedrich Flögels "Geschichte der Hoffnarren" von 1789" in *Traverse*, vol. 13 (2006), 70.
[9] See also: Andrea Fehér, "elöl bolond – hátul bolond." Udvari bolondok az erdélyi nemesség szolgálatában" in *Korunk,* vol. 34 (2003).

George Martinuzzi (Fráter), archbishop of Esztergom, legal guardian of the Transylvanian prince John Sigismund Zápolya (Szapolyai). Truppay "lost his mind" due to a head injury, and could no longer perform military duties, but this trauma made him "clownish", and therefore was kept in the Transylvanian castle of the cardinal, in Vinţu de Jos [Hun.: Alvincz, Alba County].[10] According to a contemporary chronicle, the cardinal was very fond of Truppay, even calling him his "brother", and taking him along everywhere. The bound was so strong that the former soldier predicted the violent death of his master, but as the prophecy annoyed the cardinal, the fool was sent to the dungeon, only for history to prove him right.[11] However, Truppay is clearly not a typical court jester, but rather an unfortunate man, forced to take this course, and probably kept in the court out of pity, but mostly to entertain others.

We do not know if the young prince Zápolya had any memories of the fool Truppay, but it seems that once he reached maturity, he also got a court jester for himself, who: "was an experienced and knowledgeable man. […] He was also a good musician, but when he started to play comedy, he sometimes got a beating. He knew many farces".[12] The above quote is to be found in the verses of the Polish poet Jan Gruszczyński, who spent some time in the service of the prince and was quite fascinated by the court life of Alba-Iulia [Hun.: Gyulafehérvár]. The Court of the prince John Sigismund Zápolya, grandson of an Italian princess and a Polish king of the Lithuanian dynasty was a vibrant centre of Renaissance culture, full of Hungarian, Italian and Polish nobles and artists. The one who stands out from among these courtiers was "Bal Horos", the fool, who must have been very popular at the court, because, in his poem, Gruszczyński devoted more than twice as many lines to him than to other courtiers. We are unsure whether this buffoon was Hungarian or Polish, but he was probably the latter, since, according to the poem, he was accounted with the jester of the Polish king, Sigismund Augustus, named Guzman.[13] We do not know what kind of fool-tradition the Polish kingdom had, but we do know, on the one hand, that Charles V of Spain gave a dwarf jester to Sigismund, king of Poland, grandfather of the Transylvanian prince.[14] On the other hand, the influence of the Italian Bona Sforza (grandmother

[10] József Bíró, *Erdélyi kastélyok* (Budapest, 1943), 146.
[11] Ferenc Forgách, "Emlékirat Magyarország állapotáról", in Péter Kulcsár (ed.), *Humanista történetírók* (Budapest, 1977), 590–591.
[12] Helena Kapełuś, "Zápolya Zsigmond udvara Gruszczyński epigrammáiban", in István Csapláros, Lajos Hopp and László Sziklay (eds.), *Tanulmányok a lengyel-magyar irodalmi kapcsolatok köréből* (Budapest, 1969) 149, 157–158.
[13] Ibid.
[14] López and Cadahía, "The Court Jester in 16th and 17th Century Spain", 97.

of John) on the royal courts of Krakow is well known to us, therefore the tradition of keeping a buffoon can probably be traced back to her,[15] since, in this century, Italian courts out-rivalled others in the fashion of buffoons and clowns.[16]

The next piece of data regarding court fools is to be found in the chronicles of István Szamosközy. In his register from 1597, he recorded the names of the Italians serving in the court of Sigismund Báthory, among whom there was a fool "whose name was Sicilia, and who was also paid a handsome salary."[17] Szamosközy, as well as his fellow chronicler Ambrus Somogyi, was scandalized by the sums Báthory was willing to pay to "all sorts of useless Italians", mostly musicians, considering them the main reason for the depraved morality of the prince and for the decline of the principality.[18] We must read these records carefully, since the criticism of the court life has a prolonged history in Hungarian historical writing. It became fashionable in this era to scourge princely courts, especially if they were showing western influences. This was done at the highest level by those who had spent years courting princes themselves.[19] In the meantime, the court of Báthory was well-regarded by foreign chronicles, who were delighted by the Italophilia of the controverted prince and praised his good taste and refinement.[20]

While John Sigismund Zápolya had a Polish buffoon, Sigismund Báthory had an Italian one. After their reign, a paradigm shift can be noted, since, according to our data, *domestic* fools invaded courts. Their characteristics changed as well: the artistic Italian or Polish buffoons are replaced with lowly truth-teller jokers and dwarfs. From then on, fools were to be found not only in the princely households but in different noble courts as well.

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[15] Mónika Molnár, "Isabella and Her Italian Connections", in Ágnes Máté and Teréz Oborni (eds.), *Isabella Jagiellon, Queen of Hungary (1539–1559). Studies* (Budapest, 2020), 163–172.

[16] Sylvia Konarska-Zimnicka, "Ugly Jester – Funny Jester? The Question of the Comic Nature of Ugliness in the Middle Ages and Renaissance" in *Holy Cross University Periodical Publications*, vol. 29 (2012): 129.

[17] István Szamosközy: "Az olaszok nevei, kik Bátori Zsigmondnál Erdélyben egyszer is másszor is laktanak" in Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Szamosközy István történeti maradványai. 1542–1608* (Budapest, 1880), 77.

[18] Ambrus Somogyi, "Báthori Zsigmond első évei", in László Makkai (ed.): *Erdély Öröksége. Erdélyi Emlékírók Erdélyről*. II. *Sárkányfogak* (Budapest, 1993), 68.

[19] István Tringli, "A bolondok hajója. Kultúrkritika a középkor végén" in *Történelmi szemle,* vol. 54 (2012): 180. Péter Erdősi, "Az itáliai erényekben vétkesnek mondott erdélyi fejedelem (Az olasz udvari emberek helyzete, tevékenysége és megítélése Erdélyben Báthory Zsigmond uralkodása idején)" in *Sic itur ad Astra,* vol. 1–3 (1996): 12–13.

[20] Ibid., 23–24; 31. The same narrative is to be found in the case of Bona Sforza, who was depicted by the Polish chronicles as a depraved woman, while other contemporaries considered her to be gracious, insightful and a keen political observer. Molnár, "Isabella and Her Italian Connections", 165.

As mentioned before, Szamosközy was scandalized because of the large sums spent on follies, but no chronicler seemed to be bothered by the fact that the next prince, István Bocskai ennobled some of the jesters. He granted nobility to the dwarfish brothers István, Márton and János Kys [*Little*]. The charter of 1606 reveals that of the three siblings, János was the only one who lived a peasant life. The agile and sharp-witted Márton made a career in the court of István Csáki – the inner councillor of the prince – because he was "hilarious and a natural entertainer." István worked at the pigsty when Margit Hagymássy, István Bocskai's wife found him. After the death of Hagymássy, the dwarf entered the service of Bocskai, where he served not only as a jester but also as a bodyguard – rather an "honorary" task, giving the physical aptitudes of István. On his coat of arms, he was depicted in noble attire, wearing a green dress and scarlet trousers, with a broom in one hand and a lily in the other, and a key hanging from a silk cord around his neck, suggesting that he was the guardian of the prince's innermost apartments.[21] The broom symbolizes his courtly duties and the lily, the honesty and sincerity of his service. We would expect the coat of arms to depict a "traditional" representation of the jester, yet what we get is a dwarf dressed in Hungarian noble garments. Sources suggest that Transylvanian court fools were dressed as any courtier, in everyday servant's dress. In this century, the representative jester's clothes were not common: we have only one occurrence of a harlequin dress from the end of the 18th century; otherwise, the expenses recorded regarding the wardrobe of the fools suggest no extravagancy. But there was no cause for complaint, since according to the household account books, nobles spent considerable sums on their fools.[22]

Not only Bocskai granted privileges to jesters, but also his successor. The multi-talented Gergely Telek, the servant of the chancellor János Petki, was exempted in 1607 from military service and tax-paying by Sigismund Rákóczi to entertain the "gentlemen exhausted by their very difficult occupations" with his "invented jokes." There was only one condition stipulated in this exemption, i.e. that this "Aesopian talent" should always be at the side of the chancellor and the councillors, equipped with a sickle-shaped axe, and to be "ready to go," wherever his services are required.[23] We do not know what the significance of the axe

[21] Éva Gyulai, "Bocskai-armálisok az Erdélyi Királyi Könyvekben (Letters patent granting armorial bearings of Prince Bocskai in the Libri regii of Transylvania)" in *Publicationes Universitatis Miskolcinensis Sectio Philosophica,* vol. 13 (2008), 43.

[22] Lever, Korona és csörgősipka, 45, 49.

[23] "Rákóczi Zsigmond királyi könyvei" in Éva Gyulai (ed.), Az Erdélyi fejedelmek oklevelei (1560–1689) – Erdélyi Királyi Könyvek. DVD-ROM (Budapest, 2005) vol. VII. r. 205.

was, since the only equipment Telek needed was his sharp mind and witty humour.

In addition to the aforementioned qualities of the jesters, we can enumerate their whimsical nature and wittiness. We have no specific description of their physical appearance – other than dwarfishness, but the 'next generation' court jesters also distinguished themselves through ugliness. Born with such "monstrous deformities" was Mihály, Gabriel Bethlen's jester, who was a descendent of a noble family and lived in one of the best houses in the princely seat,[24] which suggests his privileged position in the court. This hideously ugly man, a dwarf who was a mere one and a half meters tall, is depicted in John Kemény's autobiography [also a Transylvanian prince] as "a very fine master, a playful man, but with a hideously ugly figure, short in stature."[25] Kemény recorded a quarrel that took place at the second wedding of the prince Gabriel Bethlen, between Mihály and Cserkesz, the court buffoon of the horse-master Ferenc Balási. The two made quite a spectacle with their fight, which was was won by Cserkesz, who punched Mihály so hard in the nose that "he became much uglier afterwards". His physical appearance probably made him even more suitable for his buffoonish tasks.[26]

The court fool of Bethlen performs not only at his master's wedding but at his funeral as well. Despite the possibility that the story written by the Pauline monk András Francisci, who attended the "solemn but whimsical" event, might not be entirely true, it is still worth referencing.[27] The prince's coffin was followed by the nobles, among whom was the court jester as well. He was dressed in mourning clothes, but he was in good spirits, mocking the fact that the prince requested to be buried in purple, proving himself "dumber than his fool."[28]. This record, on the one hand, suggests that it was accepted or even expected from court jesters, to attend less

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[24] Charter from 20 December 1652 regarding the houses of the noble elite in Alba Iulia. Archives of the Chapter of Gyulafehérvár [Rom.: Alba Iulia] Hungarian National Archives. Transylvanian Princely Charters. Libri regii vol. 29. 121–122.

[25] "Kemény János Önéletírása" in Éva V. Windisch, *Kemény János és Bethlen Miklós művei* (Budapest, 1980), 63.

[26] Cserkesz at the time of his glorious fight was in the service of Ferenc Balási, and was also known as a talented violinist, who later entered the services of another nobleman, Ferenc Bethlen, serving in his household until his violent death – he drowned drunk in the Someș river. Ibid. 63. Therefore, he had more than one master, a common feature of the early modern fools.

[27] The letter is preserved in the Roman Archives (Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide) and was published by István György Tóth, "Bethlen Gábor mókás temetési menete" [Gábor Bethlen's funny funeral procession] in *Történelmi Szemle,* vol. 39 (1997): 121–130. We have to emphasize again, that the source is written by a catholic monk, probably for a catholic archbishop Péter Pázmány, or the Bosnian bishop János Tomkó Marnavich, who both did not liked the protestant prince Bethlen.

[28] Ibid., 124, 126.

pleasant events, and also to mourn their masters.[29] On the other hand, the source underlines the general popularity of Bethlen's jester as well.

The next jester distinguished himself by his vulgar roguishness. János Szalárdi gives a thorough description on George I Rákóczi's "ingenious fool", Gazsi, who was "very lame on both legs, cripple, but with an impenitent tongue."[30] He served, or, more precisely, was raised – at the court of an influent Hungarian noble, Ádám Forgách, the enemy of the Transylvanian prince in the Thirty Years' War. Forgách complained to Emperor Ferdinand III that his soldiers were deserting him in favour of Rákóczi's side, and it seems that the deserters included his jester as well, who, according to the chronicle, "fell out somehow of Forgách's court and stuck in the princely household." The fool and his former master met during the peace treaty, where Forgách took leave of Gazsi: "Well Gazsi, it seems that after all, your mother was also a whore!"[31] He was probably referring to the cowardly desertion of the buffoon, who preferred to serve the promising Transylvanian prince, rather than the Hungarian general.

Another jester of the Rákóczi family, Géczi became part of the history of the principality due to his gloomy prophecy, i.e. he foretold the unfortunate outcome of George II Rákóczi's campaign in Poland.[32] According to the Saxon chronicler Georg Kraus, only the fool saw that the prince acted like "the greedy dog in Aesop's tale, who grabbed his own reflection in the water, and dropped the bone from his mouth," and since Géczi made a disturbing prophecy on the loss of the principality, he was almost hanged. The jester was saved then by the future prince John Kemény. Rákóczi's campaign had a disastrous end, most of the Transylvanian nobles participating in the Polish war were taken prisoners into Tartary – this included s Géczi, who, according to Kraus, found his death there. In this story, there are several rhetorical similarities with previous cases. The name of Aesop is mentioned, just as in Telek's case, who possessed *Aesopian talent*, which suggests that in the common perception court fools had whimsical wisdom. The other interesting common feature is that Géczi's life was endangered by his prophecy, just as Truppay's was when he predicted the violent death of the archbishop Martinuzzi, suggesting that the real fools

[29] This data is also important, because we usually know of analogies that suggest that the monarchs mourned their favourite fools, or fools mourned each other (John Doran, *The History of Court Fools* (London, 1858), 10, 343), but there is no description on court jesters at royal or noble funerals.

[30] János Szalárdi, *Siralmas magyar krónikája*, (ed. by. Ferenc Szakály) (Budapest, 1980), 212.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Georg Kraus, *Erdélyi Krónika. 1608–1665*, (ed. trans. by Sándor Vogel), (Csíkszereda, 2008), 351.

in both cases were the masters, who were blind to see the impending tragedies.

The name of Prince John Kemény emerged twice in this paper. He gave us a vivid description on Gabriel Bethlen's fool, and we also know from a Saxon chronicle that he saved the life of George II Rákóczi's jester, yet we have no information regarding his own court fools. However, his opponent, prince Michael I Apafi, did enjoy the company of fools. He even had a favourite one "whom he used to feed," and who indirectly saved the life of the Saxon count and royal judge of Sibiu [Hun.: Szeben; Ger.: Hermannstadt], Andreas Fleisher. The court fool attending breakfast on the morning Fleisher was taken prisoner, asked plainly, to the astonishment of the participants "if the royal judge had breakfast on that morning before he has undertaken a trip to Deva?" [33] It seems that at the table no one else knew about the imprisonment of Fleisher, but the fool, who attended a secret meeting between the prince and two of his trusted courtiers. This once again emphasises the liberties jesters had in princely courts. Thanks to the fool's intervention, the prince reconsidered his decision, mostly due to the insistences of the princess, Anna Bornemissza, who had a great influence on her husband.

However, when it comes to jesters and court influence, the greatest impact must be attributed to István Vida, the best-known court fool in the history of the principality. Stories regarding Vida are to be found in every major biographical enterprise of the century. He is described by Péter Apor as "a court jester, a great playful man", and by Mihály Cserei as "a famous playful man".[34] Miklós Bethlen portrayed him as "a worthy noblemen of Turda [Hun.: Torda], an intelligent man, a lawyer, well known everywhere, an illustrious, humorous, foolish man".[35] György Wass remarks in his diary that "he served with a good heart and a silver tongue those able to grease his palm better," suggesting his highly opportunistic character.[36] József Dienes Hermányi, who was already fond of collecting unpleasant stories about prominent people, dedicated a few lines to Vida's stories as well, "so that they would not be easily forgotten".[37] But the one who immortalized Vida is János Kolumbán, who collected all the stories related

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[33] János Bethlen, *Erdély története*, (ed. by. József Jankovics) (Budapest, 1993), 357.
[34] Péter Apor, "Syntagma vivorum", in Lajos Szádeczky (ed.), *br. Apor Péter verses művei és levelei (1676–1752)*. Vol. I. (Budapest, 1903), 200; "Cserei Mihály névsora", in Ibid. 268.
[35] *The autobiography of Miklós Bethlen*, (trans. by Bernard Adams) (London, New York, 2004), 391.
[36] Czegei Wass György és Wass László Naplói 1659–1739 (ed. by Gyula Nagy) (Budapest, 1896), 217.
[37] József Dienes Hermányi, "Nagy Enyedi siró Heráklitus, és – Hól mosolygó s hól kacagó Demokritus" in Margit S. Sárdi (ed.), *Hermányi Dienes József szépprózai munkái* (Budapest, 1992), 308–309.

to this "wise fool", and published *The Facets of György Vida*, – a very popular book of that time, given the fact that it had – in only a few decades – five editions (1759, 1770, 1780, 1789, 1793).[38] Kolumbán deliberately changed the name of the fool from István to György, but otherwise tried to "render the actual facts". He did, however, face certain difficulties after the first edition, because the Teleki family felt offended by the stories regarding the liberties Vida took around their greatest ancestor, Mihály Teleki, probably the most influential politician in the court of Michael Apafi. Kolumbán defended himself by offering the Teleki family the possibility to oversee the contents of the second edition, although: "I could only write the history as I had heard it from others. I can certainly acknowledge that, after so much time has passed, enough falsehood attached itself to everything that had indeed happened; For that […] which I now understand or know to be […] derogatory to the worthy family, I rewrote, revised, and corrected."[39] Ironically, Vida was discovered by Teleki himself, to whom he owed his illustrious prankster career. Vida, unlike most of the previous jesters, came from a respected noble family, and had a normal physical appearance. He first worked in the chancellery, and then, for a time, as a lawyer. He did not win his trials, but his jokes attracted the attention of Transylvanian lords, including Mihály Teleki, who introduced him to the court, where he became an occasional entertainer for various nobles, because: "he played April's Fool with everyone, he didn't mind being beaten or locked up for it."[40] Fortunately for Teleki, not all his fools gave him a hard time, although the expenses regarding his other fools do not reflect the quality of their performances, but merely the amounts of money spent on them. Mihály Teleki's household-accounts (1674–1676), contain the expenses regarding the fools, András and Saul. Most of the entries refer to clothing, and, as mentioned before, the colourful clown dresses we know from the illustrations are not to be found in these account books either. The jesters' clothing reflected their courtly duties, in colour and quality. In 1674, András got "soaked linen fabric," and "a short cloak, dolman, trousers," and in the next year, the chancellor gave his "little fool" a horse, too.[41] For the year 1676, the data records the name of another court jester, Saul, who's existence can also be deduced from the expenses caused by the additions to his wardrobe, as he received a "white dolman and trousers."[42]

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[38] Sándor Dömötör, *Vida György facetiái* (Cluj–Kolozsvár, 1932), 3.
[39] Ibid., 6.
[40] Ibid.
[41] *Teleki Mihály udvartartási naplója (1673–1681)* (ed. by János Fehér) (Kolozsvár, 2007), 157, 186, 60.
[42] Ibid., 293.

Most of our data on court jesters are from the 16th and 17th centuries, as if the end of the principality also brought about the end of this court office too. In the beginning of the 18th century, there is only one reference to a marcolf [Hun.: *markalf*], living in the entourage of the governor György Bánffy. The jester named Piszli made his appearance at the wedding of Ádám Székely and the daughter of the governor from 1702,[43] and caught the attention of the guests due to his skills in the fir-climbing game,[44] but there are no other records of his existence. Moreover, if Miklós Jósika had not collected anecdotes about the jesters, it would have seemed that in Transylvania, just as in Western Europe, this courtly office disappeared after the Enlightenment.

The first chapter of Miklós Jósika's memoir, the one which contains stories from the childhood of the author, lists the jesters who served in the main Transylvanian households in the early 19th century. The baron was most impressed by the Romanian court jester of Antal Haller, named Tronf, who was dressed, as one would expect from a court fool, in "veritable harlequin costume of black and yellow gowns, wearing a genuine cap with bells".[45] He was an educated jester, who also read magazines and was a great admirer of Napoleon. During his lectures on the French emperor, he often shouted: "what a great guy!" Haller was also very fond on his jester and took him everywhere on his carriage as a valet. Some jesters had humorous masters as well. Dániel Horváth Petrichevich, for instance, had a leather belt made for one of his jesters, embroidered with the words 'fool in front, fool behind'. And the anonymous jester often stood between two gentlemen and repeated aloud the words embroidered on his belt. The only female jester we have knowledge of served in the Petrichevich household. She was a dwarf, who, according to the baron's memoir, was a very sensitive spirit. Another dwarf, Kozma, the smallest dwarf Jósika had ever seen, served in the court of Leopold Bornemissza and was famous for his amorous nature. Jósika makes a clear distinction between dwarfs [Hun.: *puja, törpe*] and jesters, suggesting that the former were kept as a curiosity, and, since they had no responsibilities, they spent their days "eating, drinking and doing nothing", while the buffoons were in charge of the entertainment. Such a figure must have been Buci, the gipsy, whose "main act was that he quarrelled with himself and then threw himself out of the room". Miklós Jósika also mentions several fools in Cluj-Napoca

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[43] Péter Apor, *Metamorphosis Transylvaniae* (trasl. By Bernard Adams), (London–New York, 2010), 74.

[44] On the traditional Transylvanian nuptial games, see: Andrea Fehér, "From Courtship till the Morning After: The Role of Family, Kin and Friends in the Marriages of László Székely" *in Hungarian Historical Review*, vol. 7 (2018): 795–799.

[45] Miklós Jósika, *Emlékirat*. Vol. I. (ed. by. János Győri) (Budapest, 1977), 23.

[Hun.: Kolozsvár; Ger.: Klausenburg], who were often invited to serve by acting out their jokes in the noble households. However, he also notes the existence of a delusional "miserable" fool, who used to "spend hours on the shores of the Someş river, dropping small pieces of wood into the water, exclaiming: let it be fish!" He therefore made another distinction between common fools and professional ones.[46] These stories recorded in the memoires of Jósika suggest that the once indispensable buffoons were still present in a few noble households by the end of the 18th century, and that they belonged to eccentric nobles who themselves enjoyed fooling around. This eccentricity could probably explain the fact that – according to the art-historian József Bíró – in 1906 there was still one court fool in Transylvania, namely in the Bethlen castle from Bahnea [Hun.: Bonyha, Mureş County].[47]

In conclusion, we can say that Transylvania has had its own jester-tradition. If we look at the jesters and their function, we can first note that court fools were encountered in different contexts. Most of our sources talk about court jesters, among whom we can occasionally find foreigners, such as Sicilia or Bal Horos. Sources mention house jesters too, as were the 18th century fools of the Haller, Horváth and the Bornemissza families presented by Jósika. Town jesters as Buczi also appear in the sources, and we have knowledge of jesters who played the role of the fool only periodically. The basic functions of these jesters did not differ greatly, but, nevertheless, they held different positions. The court jester was provided with a stable position, benefits, rights and duties, while the occasional or town jester got by, for better or for worse, with performances in private events. The main function of the jester was to provide entertainment. The majority did this through pranks, jokes, mockery, storytelling or even surprisingly profound statements, such as prophesies, as did Truppay or Géczi. The object of mockery – as we have seen in Vida's case – could be the jester's employer himself. Thus, it was possible for the jester to offer a more or less candid critique, as did Gazsi, knowing that it implied certain risks as well. Jesters had to possess a number of skills, they had to be artistically talented, endowed with playfulness and a certain amount of spontaneity. Nevertheless, there was a distinction between the natural and the artificial fools. Natural jesters were those who were deformed (Gazsi), mentally handicapped (Truppay), uncommonly ugly (Mihály) or those who were dwarfs (the Kys brothers) – and who thus for this reason alone provided amusement at court. The fool as a cripple thus refers, as mentioned, to the natural fool who, due to a congenital deformation or impairment, was

[46] Ibid., 22–23.
[47] Bíró, Erdélyi kastélyok, 147.

regarded as deviant, and this deviation served as amusement and entertainment.[48] In contrast, the "wise fools", such as Telek or Vida, possessed special skills, and offered entertainment through their wittiness and intelligence, not by their appearance. Being an entertainer was not an easy task: not only did they have to know a large repertoire of amusing anecdotes, songs, and stories, but they also had to be able to improvise. These *wise fools,* as many authors call them, did not differentiate themselves from other courtiers, but they possessed a guaranteed freedom, which assured them that they would not be called to account for their "misdeeds", as it would have happened to others in the court. They were supposed to make the court laugh, and to provide entertainment and fun, whenever the prince or the nobles desired.

[48] Doran, *The History of Court Fools,* 45; Konarska-Zimnicka, "Ugly Jester – Funny Jester?", 125.

Notes on the Historical Study of Corruption

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Abstract: Over the last fifteen years, the field of corruption studies underwent a historical turn. Social scientists added a historical dimension to their traditional concern with corruption and political and economic development. Historians joined the debates and brought a constructivist approach to the study of corruption, one that examines this phenomenon in its historical context. The present article examines the most important issues in the historical studies of corruption: the way in which the understanding of corruption transformed throughout the centuries, the precise moment the modern understanding emerged and the factors that triggered this transformation. Historians and social scientists tend to agree on the importance of the period around 1800 as the moment when corruption came to designate the abuse of the public office for private gain. At about the same time, various activities which were hitherto tolerated – gifts to officials, patronage, exploitation of the office for private gain – lost any legitimacy and became illicit, i.e., corruption in the modern sense. The factors which contributed to the change were the crises of the modernization process and the obsession with clear-cut categorization specific to the modern thought.

Keywords: corruption, modernization, public, private, ambiguity

Rezumat: În ultimii cincisprezece ani domeniul studiilor despre corupție a înregistrat o turnură istorică. Cercetătorii din ştiințele sociale au adăugat o dimensiune istorică la interesul mai vechi

pentru corupție şi dezvoltare politică şi economică. Istoricii s-au alăturat dezbaterilor şi au adus o abordare constructivistă în studierea corupției, una care examinează fenomenul în contextul său istoric. Articolul examinează cele mai importante probleme în studiul istoric al corupției: cum s-a transformat înțelesul corupției de-a lungul secolelor, când a apărut sensul modern al acestei noțiuni şi ce factori au determinat această transformare. Istoricii şi cercetătorii din ştiințele sociale tind să conveargă asupra importanței perioadei din jurul anului 1800 ca momentul în care corupția începe să desemneze abuzarea de funcția publică pentru interes privat. Cam în aceeaşi perioadă, diferite activități care până atunci au fost tolerate – daruri către dregători, patronaj, extragerea de venituri din dregători – şi-au pierdut legitimitatea şi au devenit ilicite, adică corupției în sensul modern. Factorii care au contribuit la schimbare au fost crizele declanşate în procesul de modernizare şi obsesia cu organizarea lumii în categorii bine definite specifică gândirii moderne.

Cuvinte cheie: corupție, modernizare, public, privat, ambiguitate

It is undeniable that corruption and anticorruption occupy a place in the public contemporary discourse. As one of the most important historians of corruption, Jens Ivo Engels, has noted, "[w]e are confronted with the fight against corruption literally every day."[1] Accusations of corruption are one of the most potent weapons used in political struggles. Politicians or political regimes, local and central administrations, national or multinational corporations can be, and often are, subject to the delegitimizing charges of corruption. International organizations like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Commission, NGOs like Transparency International, as well as NGOs acting at a national level, see corruption as the main obstacle in the path of promoting the rule of law, economic development, social integration and transparency in government and administration. These organizations produce, and periodically revise, indexes and surveys that measure corruption all across the globe, ranking countries from the least to the most corrupt. On the basis of these indexes and surveys, social scientists produced a massive literature that examines the causes and the types of corruption, the aim being that of identifying and proposing solutions to governors.

[1] Jens Evo Engels, "Corruption and Anticorruption in the Era of Modernity and Beyond," in Ronald Kroeze, André Vitória & G. Geltner eds., *Anticorruption in History. From Antiquity to the Modern Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 167.

Historians are latecomers to the field of corruption studies. Despite being a relatively new area of research2, the history of corruption became a thriving field of historical research over the last ten-fifteen year. Conferences, collective volumes and monographs approached the problem of corruption from various angles. Taking up the concepts and theories put forth by social-scientists (mostly political scientists) in the study of corruption, historians have tested them against historical evidence and challenged them in several respects. At about the same time as a field of historical corruption was taking shape, some social scientists, finding the focus on the contemporary period too limiting, started to add a historical dimension to their studies. The time is ripe for an assessment of the contributions of these literatures on the history of corruption. In the following pages, I will trace the main trends in the historical study of corruption and discuss the salient problems raised by the researchers of corruption in history.

The history of corruption in social science

A shift in the corruption studies has prompted scholars to look into the past. Due to the fact that simply copying the institutions of the most developed and relatively corruption-free countries does not seem to work, some scholars have proposed to look into the past and see what those countries have done to attain a reasonable control over corruption.[3] Alina Mungiu-Pippidi starts her historical explanation from the Middle Ages, where she identifies two governance regimes: patrimonialism and republicanism. In the former case, which designates medieval and early-modern kingdoms, the issue of corruption is superfluous, since the ruler is not accountable to the people he governs and "the rule of the patrimonial monarchs is based on patronage and favour". The republican regime refers to the political model of the Italian city-states which managed to develop "control of corruption systems based on collective action, not on the principal-agent model". Through the appointment of the city managers (*podestà*), short mandates for public offices, rotation of positions by family, recruitment of officials by a lottery system or by complex electoral systems, appointments of outsiders and a culture of participation in public affairs contributed to "a reasonably effective, prosperous and fair government".

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[2] The field in the sense frequent academic events and regular scholarly exchanges on the topic exists for some 15 years according to Jens Ivo Engels and Frédéric Monier, "Colonial and Corruption History: Conclusions and Future Research Perspectives" in Ronald Kroeze, Pol Dalmau, Frédéric Monier (eds), *Corruption, Empire and Colonialism in the Modern Era. A Global Perspective* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 339.

[3] Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, "Becoming Denmark: Historical Designs of Corruption Control," Social Research 80 (2013): pp. 1259–86.

Mingiu-Pippidi's approach raises several questions. The virtues of republicanism seem to be overstated, omitting the formation of oligarchies and the class divisions which often led to internal strife. Moreover, there is little explanation for the fate of the medieval republics and their impact on the modern states that incorporated them. What is even more striking is that the breakthrough, that is, the transition to less corrupt regimes, happened in the patrimonial regimes. However, how the breech of the corrupt regime specific to patrimonial monarchies occurred is not properly explained. The thesis advanced by Alina Mungiu-Pippidi is that absolute monarchs, acting as principals, managed to discipline their agents (royal servants) and to transform them into modern, honest bureaucrats. The main example is, as the title indicates, Denmark. But it is not clear why other absolute monarchies (France, Spain) did not follow the same path. In addition, the argument that Denmark managed to control corruption because it constructed a professional bureaucracy is circular. The professionalization of the Danish bureaucracy itself needs an explanation, as does the failure of other absolute monarchies to build it.

A similar argument was advanced in two articles focusing on the control of corruption in Sweden. Bo Rothstein and Jan Torell argued that the success of the anti-corruption reforms in 19th century Sweden hinged on "a relatively fair and clean court system". Yet, it is precisely the creation of a fair judicial system that needs explanation. If Alina Mungiu-Pippidi relied on historiography to formulate her arguments, Bo Rothstein and Jan Torell deploy an analysis of the judicial sources produced by the Swedish High Court. Although they are well aware that sources do not equate the phenomenon they study and that the frequency of sources documenting corruption cases does not necessarily correspond to the dimension of corruption, they seem to suggest exactly this. They interpret frequent occurrence of sources indicating corruption as high level of corruption and declining number of such occurrences as decline of corruption.[4]

The studies of Alina Mungiu-Pippidi and of Bo Rothstein and Jan Torell share a view of a transition from corruption to less corruption or from regimes in which corruption was rampant to regimes in which corruption was exceptional. Yet, even before their studies, other scholars expressed doubts over the employment of a universal understanding of corruption. Peter Bratsis criticized the "official history of corruption as a concept common

[4] Jan Torell and Bo Rothstein, "Getting to Sweden, Part I: War and Malfeasance, 1720–1850", *Scandinavian Political Studies* 38, No. 3 (2015): 217-237. Bo Rothstein & Jan Teorell, "Getting to Sweden, Part II: Breaking with Corruption in the Nineteenth Century", *Scandinavian Political Studies* 38, No. 3 (2015): 238-254.

to nearly all political forms and historical epochs."[5] Whereas the notion of corruption existed since Antiquity, its meaning varied considerably. Taking note of the most commonly used definition of corruption as abuse of public office or subversion of the common good for private interest,[6] scholars have rightly noted that all the terms of the definition depend on "social constructs". They argued that the meaning of notions like "misuse", "public" and "office" "is defined by social and professional norms that vary by time and place."[7]

It comes as no surprise that historians have been sensitive and receptive to the argument that the understanding of corruption is always context-bound. From their perspective, the political science literature, interested mainly in modernization, has either neglected the historical dimension of corruption or "engaged in a selective, frequently anachronistic interpretation of often complex and ambiguous data."[8] Moreover, equating the fight against corruption with rule of law, transparency and bureaucratisation, these approaches were exposed to critiques of teleology and circular argumentation.[9] Recently, the arguments about "getting to Sweden" or "becoming Denmark" were derided for taking at face value

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[5] Peter Bratsis, "The Construction of Corruption, or Rules of Separation and Illusions of Purity in Bourgeois Societies," *Social Text* 77, vol. 21, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 11.

[6] From a vast literature using this definition, see James C. Scott, *Comparative Political Corruption* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972), 3-5. Joseph Nye, "Corruption and political development: A cost-benefit analysis." in *Political corruption: A handbook*, Arnold J. Heidenheimer, Michael Johnston, and Victor T. LeVine (eds.). New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1989. Mark Philp, "Defining Political Corruption." In *Political Studies* XLV (1997): 440–441; the same, "The Definition of Political Corruption." In: Paul M. Heywood (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Political Corruption* (London-New York 2014): 21–22; Michael Johnston, *Syndromes of Corruption: Wealth, Power and Democracy* (Cambridge 2005), 11; Michael Johnston, "Democratic Norms, Political Money and Corruption. The Deeper Roots of Political Malaise." In: Ina Kubbe and Annika Englebert (eds.), *Corruption and Norms. Why Informal Rules Matter*, Cham 2018; Daniel Kaufmann, "Corruption: the Facts." In *Foreign Policy*, 107 (1997): 114; Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, *The Quest for Good Governance: How Societies Develop Control of Corruption* (Cambridge 2015); Alina Mungiu-Pippidi/Mihály Fazekas, "How to Define and Measure Corruption." In: Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, Paul M. Heywood (eds.), *A Research Agenda for Studies of Corruption* (Cheltenham, UK-Northampton, MA 2020), 7–26.

[7] Mark Granovetter, "The Social Construction of Corruption," in *On Capitalism* eds. Victor Nee and Richard Swedberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 153.

[8] Ronald Kroeze, André Vitória & G. Geltner, "Introduction. Debating Corruption and Anticorruption in History" in Ronald Kroeze, André Vitória & G. Geltner (eds.), *Anticorruption in History. From Antiquity to the Modern Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 3.

[9] Ronald Kroeze, André Vitória and G. Geltner, "Introduction" in Ronald Kroeze, André Vitória and G. Geltner eds., *Anticorruption in History. From Antiquity to the Modern Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 3.

surveys and indexes of corruption perception that "reproduce deeply rooted prejudices."[10]

Partially as a reaction to this literature, the historiography of corruption and anti-corruption proposes an approach that stresses the long-term impact of social, political, economic and cultural factors. Without claiming that the past can teach lessons in the present, historians who subscribe to this approach believe that

> "[s]uch a historical approach could help explain major moments of change in the past, which in turn may support or undermine the perceptions and unwarranted certainties we hold today about the reasons for the success and failure of specific anticorruption policies and their relation to a country's image […] as being more or less corrupt."[11]

But the most important contribution made by historians to the study of corruption is the constructivist understanding of this phenomenon and the emphasis they put on the way corruption was understood in various (proto)national contexts. This approach rejects the ahistorical perspective on corruption that fails to take into account what corruption meant in a certain time and place. Although, since Antiquity, corruption denoted, among other things, the abuse of public power to the detriment of public interest, this notion was shaped by various political, cultural, intellectual and economic factors and for long periods of time had completely different meanings.[12] Thus, historians tend to historicize corruption and to trace its transformations, especially in relation to modernity. Three major aspects have been examined by the historians of corruption: the understanding of the notion of corruption in the pre-industrial societies; the timing of the transformation of this understanding; and the factors which contributed to the change or how and why this transformation took place. This is a rather analytical distinction that I make, since all these aspects are to be found, in various proportions, in most of the studies that I will discuss below.

What and when was Corruption?

Intellectual historians have showed that, by and large, corruption had two main denotations. From Antiquity to the 18th century, it referred to the moral lapses of individuals or to the decline of states caused by the

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[10] Engels and Monier, "Colonial and Corruption History", p. 348. The authors unceremoniously likened this type of argument to the thinking of Cecil Rhodesm, an advocate of British imperialism.

[11] Kroeze, Vitória & Geltner, "Introduction. Debating Corruption", 1.

[12] Ronald Kroeze, André Vitória and G. Geltner, "Introduction. Debating Corruption", 2.

lack of virtue of the governors and the malfunction of institutions. Corruption understood as abuse of the public office to attend to private interests existed during this period too, but form the 18th century on, it displaces the former meaning (without the latter vanishing completely). Thus, by 1800, corruption takes on a more precise and concrete meaning, designating illicit gains from the exploitation of the office.[13] This semantic evolution coincided by and large with a declining tolerance with regard to activities hitherto accepted: patronage, gifts to officials, officials' using the office as a sources or revenue etc. Moreover, administrative malpractice ceased to be framed as treason of the monarch to be regarded as violation of the laws and of the common good. In what follows, I will insist on this second meaning of corruption as administrative malpractice.

The new understanding of corruption was not the result of some "natural" evolution, but the outcome of political struggles. The constructivist perspective favoured by most historians, admits the contested character of notions like "public", "private", "abuse", "office", "common good" etc. and the role of the competing social forces in their definition. As Mark Knights has convincingly argued "the shifting concept of corruption, the birth of public office, the development of the state and empire, and the redrawing of public and private were all contested processes."[14] James C. Scott went even further and claimed that we need to study corruption as any other political process and to ask "who gets what, when, how?"[15]

Such reflections derive from the research on corruption in pre-industrial societies. In these societies, some facts that today pass as corruption were either legitimate or had an ambiguous status. A case in point is the patron-client relations which played a pivotal role in pre-industrial administrations and governments. Studies dedicated to this problem suggest that such relations were not always and automatically understood as corruption.[16] German researchers insist on what can be called the plurality or parallelism of norms (*Normenpluralität*, *Normenkonkurrenz*). As a result, pre-industrial officials oscillated between the loyalty to the

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[13] Bruce Buchan & Lisa Hill. *An Intellectual History of Political Corruption*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2014). Maryvonne Génaux, "Early Modern Corruption in English and French Fields of Vision," in Arnold J. Heidenheimer and Michael Johnston (eds.) *Political Corruption. Concepts & Contexts*, 3rd ed. (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers 2002), 107–22; Maryvonne Génaux,"Les mots de la corruption. La déviance publique dans les dictionnaires d'Ancien Régime," *Histoire, Économie et Société* 21 (2002): 513–30.

[14] Mark Knights, Trust and Distrust. Corruption in Office in Britain and its Empire, 1600–1850 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 6.

[15] James C. Scott, "The Analysis of Corruption in Developing Nations," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 11, no. 3 (Jun. 1969): 340.

[16] As will become clear in the following, my references predominantly focus on the situation in Europe in particular.

family (or the patron-client networks) and the duties towards their office. To qualify some activities and relations as corrupt in such conditions means to commit anachronism.[17] Criticizing the emphasis on bureaucratization in the theories of state formation, these studies argue that, far from being a residue of the previous social organizations that needed to be removed, the patron-client networks in administration have, in fact, contributed to the centralization of power and to the formation of the modern states.[18] Moreover, corruption or what can be called corruption from a modern standpoint, was not a malaise which states needed to overcome, but a symptom of state formation.[19]

So, what and when was corruption in these societies? Were there cases or scandals of corruption? If pre-industrial corruption cannot be defined from the point of view of the 21st century, it is equally true that pre-industrial people had a notion of the misuse of the public office. Corruption was prosecuted and corrupt officials were punished, but this happed in certain conditions. This problem was raised even before the recent interest in the history of corruption by the American historian Sharon Kettering in a series of studies dedicated to patronage in 17th century France. She starts from the general observation that early-modern officials were corrupt, according to modern standards, although they were not seen as corrupt by their contemporaries. A series of factors contributed to this state of affairs: the influence of patrons in favour of their clients, low salaries, imprecisely defined responsibilities, blurred lines between public and private and lack of proper auditing. She shows that activities like bribery, abuse, favouritism, peddling of influence were legitimate or, at least, had a morally ambiguous status. Then what constituted then

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[17] Jens Ivo Engels, *Die Geschichte der Korruption von der Früher Neuzeit bis ins 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 2014), 39-50. Niels Grüne and Tom Tölle, "Corruption in the Ancien Régime" *Journal of Modern European History*, Vol. 11, No. 1, Corruption and the Rise of Modern Politics (2013): 31-51.

[18] Sharon Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers, and Clients in Seventeenth Century France* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1986), 192-206. Similar arguments are advanced in several of her other studies: "Patronage and Politics during the Fronde," *French Historical Studies*, vol. 14, no. 3 (1986): 409-441; "The Patronage Power of Early Modern French Women," *The Historical Journal*, vol. 32, no. 4 (dec. 1989): 817-841; "The Historical Development of Political Clientelism," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. 18, no. 3 (1988): 419-447; "Patronage and Kinship in Early Modern France," *French Historical Studies*, vol. 20, no. 2 (1989): 221-239; "Brokerage at the Court of Louis XIV," *The Historical Journal*, vol. 36, no. 1 (1993): 69-87. Anthony Molho, "Patronage and the State in Early Modern Italy," in Antoni Mączak (Hg.), *Klientelsysteme im Europa*, 233-242.

[19] See especially Wim Blockmans, "Patronage, Brokerage and Corruption as Symptoms of Incipient State Formation in the Burgundian-Habsburg Netherlands," in Antoni Mączak ed, *Klientelsysteme im Europa*, 117-126 and Helmut G. Koenigsberger, "Patronage, Clientage and Elites in the Politics of Philip II, Cardinal Granvelle and William of Orange," in Antoni Mączak ed, *Klientelsysteme im Europa*, 127-148.

corruption in such a context? Surely, the diverging of the resources of the crown towards private benefit was regarded as undermining the public interest. But, in order to have a formal accusation and a trial to be initiated, several factors were necessary. The social status, the protection offered by the patron and the reputation played a significant role in the opening of an investigation. The magnitude and the frequency of the abuses – which could trigger denunciations, petitions and tensions – could weigh a lot in such a situation. Moreover, the reputation of a government could influence whether or not it was perceived as corrupt (or legitimate).[20]

Similar situations are documented in other early-modern states. In 17th-century England, corruption was a political weapon aimed at royal patronage.[21] In a recent study, Mark Knights demonstrates that abuse of office and private gains obtained from a public office were negatively connoted, but also that "'abuse', 'fairness', 'excess', 'private', and 'public' were not fixed values. It was acceptable for an official to demand various taxes for his services, if they were not excessive or extorted, even when there were formal payments (salaries)."[22] During the 18th century, the system of sinecures granted on clientelist grounds was given the name "the Old Corruption".[23] In early-modern Amsterdam and Hamburg, the profits derived from the exercise of public office were not automatically perceived as immoral or illegal. Like in the French case discussed above, only under the impact of certain events, accusations of corruptions were formulated and investigations started.[24]

Scholars studying 17th century Romanov Russia reached similar conclusions. Corruption was inscribed in the very social and administrative structures based entirely on patron-client ties. Charges of administrative malpractice were frequently raised, but they merely reflected certain intra-elite struggles. It is notable that in spite of central power codifications, corruption was still circumstantially defined.[25] Just like in France, personal relations between office-holders, insufficient salaries, lack of training and

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[20] Sharon Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers, and Clients*, 192-206. For the previous century, N. Z. Davies, *The Gift in the Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) argues that personal relations and gift practices characterized the working of the administration and that a scrupulous distinction was made between legitimate and illegitimate gifts.

[21] Linda Levy Peck, Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England (London: Routledge, 1993 [1990]).

[22] Mark Knights, *Trust and Distrust*, 4-5.

[23] W.D. Rubinstein, "The End of 'Old Corruption' in Britain 1780-1820," *Past & Present*, Bd. 101, H. 1, (1983), 55-86.

[24] Mary Lindemann, "Dirty Politics or 'Harmonie'? Defining Corruption in Early Modern Amsterdam and Hamburg," *Journal of Social History*, vol. 45, nr. 3 (2012): 582-604.

[25] David L. Ransel, "Character and Style of Patron-Client Relations in Russia," in *Klientelsysteme im Europa der Früher Neuzeit*, (ed.) Antoni Mączak (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1988), 211-231 (infra: *Klientelsysteme im Europa*, ed. Mączak).

of monitoring institutions created structural conditions for practices that look corrupt.[26] For the long time, the Ottoman Empire was depicted as a state marked by rampant corruption, which was, to a considerable extent, responsible for its decline. More recently, both the decline paradigm and the idea of massive corruption were rejected by Ottomanist scholars. Rifaat Abou-El-Haj tackled the problem of Ottoman corruption in a vigorous attempt to de-exoticize and de-orientalize Ottoman history. He rejects the notion of a declining post 16th century Ottoman Empire marked by growing corruption; he shows that the chronicles which supported this view were partisan historical writing which employed the vocabulary of corruption to delegitimize rival groups. Thence, he argues, what was called corruption was basically doing politics, no different from the contemporary situation in Western monarchies.[27] Iris Agmon noted that services, gifts and favours exchanged in the Ottoman society were conditioned culturally and did not automatically imply bribery or abuse of power.[28] When and why did this situation change?

When does the understanding of the administrative malpractice change?

This question has received a variety of answers, according to the studied historical configuration and varying perspectives of the authors. From the standpoint of intellectual history, the transformation occurred during the eighteenth century. It was during the Enlightenment that the notion of corruption as moral degeneration, political decline and physical decay is displaced by a narrower and more concrete understanding of corruption as the officials' illicit private gain.[29] Historians who studied the history of corruption in various (proto)national contexts tend to agree on the importance of the 18th century, but they do add nuances which lead to slightly diverging chronologies.

German historians converge on the importance of the period of rapid modernization known as *Sattelzeit* (1750-1850) in the transformation of the meaning of corruption. They link it to processes such as bureaucratization and the emergence of the modern ideologies (mostly liberalism and

[26] Nancy Kollmann, *Crime and Punishment in Early Modern Rusia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 94-112.
[27] Rifa'at 'Ali Abou-El-Haj, Formation of the Modern State. The Ottoman Empire Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries. Syracuse, 2005 [1992].
[28] Iris Agmon, "State, Family and Anticorruption Practices," in Kroeze, Vitória and Geltner eds., *Anticorruption in History*, 251-263.
[29] Bruce Buchan & Lisa Hill. *An Intellectual History of Political Corruption*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

conservatism).[30] Not far from this point of view are those among British historians who insist on the reforms from the late 18th century and the first half of the 19th century.[31] A quantitative research on corruption in Sweden shows that the number of indictments grew spectacularly towards the end of the 18th century and then in the period 1820-1850, only to decline significantly in the second half of the 19th century. This trend reflects, according to the authors, a transformation of the Swedish administration in a Weberian bureaucracy and a high level of integrity of the Swedish officials.[32] The case of The Netherlands suggests a different chronology. Alternatively, it is argued that a transition from plurality of norms to value monism and from debates on corruption triggered by the "parallelism of norms" to debates on corruption arisen from clashing ideologies (conservative, liberal or bureaucratic) occurred during "the long 19th century" (late 18th-early 20th century).[33]

Instead of a sudden transformation in the understanding of corruption, some authors propose a slow transformation over a long period of time. In England's case, Mark Knights posits an "uncertain, inconsistent, patchy, and protracted" process stretching from 1600 to approximately 1850.[34] Denmark has drawn the attention of specialists, both political scientists and historians,

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[30] Engels, *Die Geschichte der Korruption*, 217-251. Jens Evo Engels, "Corruption and Anticorruption in the Era of Modernity and Beyond," in Kroeze, Vitória and Geltner eds., *Anticorruption in History*, 167-180. Robert Bernsee, "Corruption in German Political Discourse between 1780 and 1820," *Journal of Modern European History*, Vol. 11, No. 1, Corruption and the Rise of Modern Politics (2013): 52-71. Robert Bernsee, "Patronage in Übergang. Personale Verflechtung um 1800 und die Sozietäten der Sattelzeit" in Robert Bernsee, Jens Ivo Engels, Volkhard Huth, Volker Köhler eds. *Modern Patronage. Annäherungen an die Bedeutung personaler Verflechtungen in Politik und Wirtschaft im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main: Klosterman, 2020), 22-44.

[31] Philip Harling, 'Rethinking "Old Corruption"', *Past & Present* no. 147 (1995): 127–158. Harling, - *The Waning of 'Old Corruption': Thee Politics of Economical Reform in Britain, 1779–1846* (Oxford, 1996). Harling, 'Parliament, the State, and "Old Corruption": Conceptualising Reform, c.1790–1832', in Arthur Burns and Joanna Innes eds., *Rethinking the Age of Reform: Britain, 1780–1850* (Cambridge, 2003), 98–113.

[32] Jan Teorell and Bo Rothstein, "Getting to Sweden, Part I: War and Malfeasance, 1720–1850", *Scandinavian Political Studies*38, No. 3 (2015): 224-228.

[33] Toon Kerkhoff, Ronald Kroeze, Pietar Wagenaar, "Corruption and the Rise of Modern Politics in Europe in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Comparison between France, the Netherlands, Germany and England. Introduction," *Journal of Modern European History*, 11 (2013): 19-30, Pieter Wagenaar, Toon Kerkhoff, Ronald Kroeze, "Conclusion", *Journal of Modern European History*, Vol. 11, No. 1, Corruption and the Rise of Modern Politics (2013): 130-133. Toon Kerkhoff, "Corruption in the Netherlands: Changing Perceptions from Early Modern Pluralism to Modern Coherence," *Journal of Modern European History*, Vol. 11, No. 1, Corruption and the Rise of Modern Politics (2013): 88-108. Toon Kerkhoff, "Princely patronage and Patriot Cause: Corruption and Public Value Dynamics in the Dutch Republic (1770s-1980s)," *Public Integrity*, 18/1: 25-41.

[34] Knights, *Trust and Distrust*, 20. For a concise version of his argument see his "Anticorruption in Seventeenth-and Eighteenth-Century Britain," in Kroeze, Vitória and Geltner eds., *Anticorruption in History*, 181-195.

due to its excellent score. The successful limitation of corruption is naturally predicated on employing the modern definition of the phenomenon (abuse of public office). Thus, it was important to find out when this understanding prevailed. According to Mette Frisk Jensen, the curbing of public office corruption occurred over a long period of time and was the unintended consequence of the absolute Danish monarchs to centralize and streamline their administration from 1660 to 1848. It was during this period that elements of anticorruption were successfully introduced in Denmark: rule of law, a close monitoring of the royal agents, petitions of the subjects with regard to the officials' behaviour, "a growing general notion that corruption was a severe crime and sin" and the rise of the modern understanding of corruption "that criminalized malfeasance such as bribery, fraud and embezzlement for royal servants in particular."[35]

Why did the understanding of corruption change?

This question gives rise to two others: how did that corruption become a major concern for modernizing states and how did they go about limiting it? In order to answer these questions, historians propose a mix of factors. In the absolute monarchies, the understanding of corruption as abuse of public office and the attempts to control it were the unintended outcome of reforms means to centralize and consolidate the state. This was the situation in Denmark and some German states. In the case of Denmark, following military defeat and territorial losses in the war against Sweden, the fullest form of absolute monarchy was introduced and this type of regime would last until 1849. Engaged in a competition with Sweden, the Danish kings sought to create a loyal and disciplined administrative apparatus able to efficiently mobilize the necessary resources. They passed legislation criminalizing administrative malpractice, broke the monopoly of the nobility on the state offices by recruiting members of the urban class. In time, criteria of merit were introduced and from the 18th century the office of judge, and latter a wide range of offices, required a formal law degree. All these measures, in combination with the resolve of successive kings to improve the administration of their realm, introduction of salaries and pensions, complex surveillance mechanisms, and a more developed notion of corruption "most likely contributed to a new and fairly non-corrupt Danish administration, which was securely in place around the middle of the 1800s."[36]

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[35] Mette Frisk Jense, "Statebuilding, Establishing Rule of Law and Fighting Corruption in Denmark, 1660-1900," in Kroeze, Vitória and Geltner eds., *Anticorruption in History*, 197-198.

[36] Mette Frisk Jense, "Statebuilding, Establishing Rule of Law and Fighting Corruption in Denmark", 198-208.

Similar arguments were put forth by the researcher on corruption in Sweden. Like in the case of Denmark, the existential threat resulting from the defeat in the war against Russia (1809) prompted the Swedish elites to introduce a series of reforms. Criminalizing of malfeasance by means of legal codes, recruitment of officials on meritocratic criteria and their remuneration with salaries instead of fees, as well as a systematic conviction of dishonest officials describe "the transition from the if not systemically corrupt, at least patrimonial, personalistic and grossly ineffective state administration to the clean, Weberian and largely non corrupt state."[37] In distinction to Britain and Netherlands, the free press was absent and, thus, played no role until the middle of the 19th century.

In the Germanies, debates on corruption accompanied the processes of bureaucratisation and emergence of modern ideologies (especially liberalism and conservatorism) during the so-called *Sattelzeit* (cca. 1750-1850). By 1800, in Bayern and the Netherlands, corruption became the target of reform-minded politicians and civil society. Members of secret societies, publicists, pamphleteers and even officials criticized what they perceived as corruption, these critiques gaining weight in times of crisis of military defeat (as the defeat of Prussia in the Napoleonic Wars). Interestingly enough, corruption proved to be a double-edged weapon. It was used to demand the end of the Old Regime, but also to criticize products of the modernization process, like the bureaucracy or the secret societies.[38] In The Netherlands, the plurality of norms specific to the early-modern world gave way by the end of the 18th century to a coherent view on corruption in a context marked by the hardships and the tensions caused by the French Revolution The free press had an important role in making corruption a public matter.[39]

A wide range of factors contributed to the redefinition of corruption in England in a context marked by the emergence of the fiscal-military state and imperial expansion. A reasonably free press, scandals and popular pressure, resentment from below and retrenchment from above caused by the pressures of war financing, moral reform campaigns, a strengthening legal culture, and Enlightenment ideas of good governance helped to draw the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in office. Salaries were introduced and informal payment was either discontinued or minimized, gifts were strictly circumscribed and accountability mechanisms became more robust. In consequence, by 1850, the office came to be regarded as public trust carrying expectations of probity, impartiality, selflessness and accountability.[40]

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[37] Torell and Rothstein, "Getting to Sweden, Part I": 222.
[38] Bernsee, "Corruption in German Political Discourse".
[39] Kerkhoff, "Corruption in the Netherlands".
[40] Knights, Trust and Distrust.

Thus, most explanations of the change in the meaning of corruption revolve around socio-economic pressures, changes in the legal culture and higher expectations with regard to the morality of the officials. A quite distinctive approach focuses on the invention or construction of corruption as part of the modern thought. Peter Bratsis argues that in the modern understanding of corruption, in contrast to the traditional one, "there is no division based on something that is in itself good and desirable and something that is not." Instead, "a strict division of the public and private is asserted and various phenomena that may conflict with that presumed division are termed corruption." The ordering of the social world according to a sharp separation of the public and the private sectors is specific to the modern thought and to the bourgeois society. The "public" here is derived from the notion of body politic, as distinct from the physical and private body of the king, as discussed by Ernst Kantorowicz.[41] How do private interests come to be regarded as bad since they are not bad in themselves? Here, Bratsis resorts to the theory of purity and cleanliness enunciated by the anthropologist Mary Douglas, who argued that objects or behaviours are unclean if they "confuse cherished classifications."[42] Thus, the contamination of the public by private interests render the latter dirty and thus corrupt.

Along the same lines, Jens Ivo Engels argued that corruption was constructed as a result of "important epistemological shifts."[43] Two innovations characterized this process: the sharpening of the public/private division and the simplification of the normative systems in the sense that the parallelism of norms was replaced by the common good as sole legitimation of the public office. Both innovations were informed, according to Jens Ivo Engels, not by attempts to solve objective problems, but rather by a fight against ambivalence, a mark of the modern thought obsessed with establishing clear-cut categories and classifications.[44] In spite of Jens Ivo Engels, his explanation of the rise of the modern concept of corruption is complementary, rather than outright opposed to the explanations that emphasize the role of objective factors. It is hard to accept that such a momentous transformation originated only in the realm of ideas. Even more so, if one were to think that strict definitions of corruption, of public office and common good as well as attempts to control the office-centred corruption were triggered to concrete tensions and crises that is by conscious policies.

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[41] Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Political Theology* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997 [1957]).
[42] Quoted in Bratsis, 15.
[43] Engels, "Corruption and Anticorruption", 176.
[44] Engels, "Corruption and Anticorruption", 173-177.

Conclusion

Preoccupations with corruption and anticorruption are omnipresent notions in the contemporary society. Political scientists and economists have taken up the issue long ago in their effort to understand political and economic development and offer advice to governors. More recently, in the context of anticorruption strategies, some scholars proposed to study the history of those countries that score well in the corruption indexes and are considered the least corrupt. However, the historical work of the social scientists was met with criticism by historians. The latter reproach social scientists a teleological view of history as a march from systemic corruption to a situation in which corruption is only accidental, an essentialist definition of corruption and a much too confident interpretation of ambiguous data.

Historians are latecomers to the field of corruption studies. They have never attempted to inform political strategies to curb corruption, but pretend that the historical study of corruption facilitates a better understanding of the phenomenon. Moreover, and this is their most important contribution to the discussion about corruption, they favour a constructivist understanding of the phenomenon. In their view, corruption is not a universal category but one that needs to be studied in context. Thus, historians have mostly focused on three questions. What is corruption and what did corruption mean in various historical configurations? When did the modern understanding of corruption arise? What factors triggered the transformation of corruption?

Historians have noted that, although all societies have a notion of administrative malpractice, this was not understood as corruption all the time and did not entail the same consequences irrespective of the context. Due to the so-called plurality or parallelism of norms (*Normenpluralität*, *Normenkonkurrenz*), blurred division between the public and private sectors and proprietary officeholding, the early-modern society could, to a significant extent, accommodate activities and behaviours that today look illicit: patronage, gifts to officials, exploitation of the office for private income, etc. without necessarily regarding them as corrupt. Things changed in the period of transition from the early-modernity to modernity. Various periodizations were proposed: a long early-modernity running from 1600 to 1850, the 18th century, a long 19th century running from the late 18th to the early 20th centuries or the so-called Sattelzeit in the German historiography covering approximately the period between mid-18th to the mid-19th century. What all these periodizations have in common is the pivotal role of the

decades immediately prior to and after 1800. By the end of the transition, corruption most often came to signify a subversion of the public office or of common good for private gain.

Why did the modern understanding of corruption arise? Here, both social scientists and historians posit several concrete factors: political crises, wars (or preparations for war) and the necessity to finance them, a change in legal culture, campaigns of moral reform, free press. Other scholars argued that the concern with corruption was not so much a response to immediate problems, but rather the result of epistemological shifts. The modern notion of corruption, based as it is on a clear division of public and private, was the result of the fight against ambiguity and of the modern obsession with ordering the social world in clear categories.

Medievalism. Historiographic Markers*

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Abstract: The present study aims to shed light on the intellectual origins of medievalism studies, on the evolution of this historical research approach and the primary directions of inquiry employed in this field at the end of the 20th century and over the first two decades of the 21st century. The main focus of the present article is placed on the institutionalization of the research on medievalism (conferences, journals, editorial collections, university courses) and on the formation of several scholarly groups around the special research programs in this field (Kalamazoo, Yale, Medieval Electronic Multimedia Organization). Moreover, the present paper approaches the debates circling the contemporary historiography, particularly regarding the terminology (medievalism, neo/medievalism) and the establishment of medievalism as a research field (the relations with medieval studies, with literary and cultural studies, as well as with postmodernism and post-postmodernism).

Keywords: Medievalism, Medieval Studies, Historiography, History of Historiography, Popular Culture, Cultural Studies

Rezumat: Prezentul studiu își propune să facă lumină asupra originilor intelectuale ale studiilor medievalismului, asupra evoluției acestui demers al cercetării istorice și asupra direcțiilor primare de investigație folosite în acest domeniu la sfârșitul secolului XX și pe parcursul primelor două decenii ale secolului XXI. Accentul principal al prezentului articol este pus pe instituționalizarea cercetării asupra medievalismului (conferințe, reviste, colecții editoriale, cursuri universitare) și pe formarea mai multor grupuri academice în jurul programelor speciale de

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cercetare în acest domeniu (Kalamazoo, Yale, Medieval). Electronic Multimedia Organization). De asemenea, lucrarea de față abordează dezbaterile care înconjoară istoriografia contemporană, în special în ceea ce privește terminologia (medievalismul, neo/medievalismul) și stabilirea medievalismului ca domeniu de cercetare (relațiile cu studiile medievale, cu studiile literare și culturale, precum și cu postmodernism și post-postmodernism).

Cuvinte cheie: medievalism, studii medievale, istoriografie, istoria istoriografiei, cultură populară, studii culturale

Introduction

My interest in neo/medievalism originated from certain aspects of daily life and was triggered by two pieces of news that caught my attention. The first regarded the war in Ukraine. The recount mentioned the existence of a Ukrainian female sniper, depicted as a prototype of the war heroine associated with the Medieval French heroine Joan of Arc.[1] The use of a medieval motif in the construction of a journalistic discourse drew my attention towards the more general phenomenon of using medieval themes and motifs in the context of the contemporary culture – in other words, towards the process of symbolically depicting the Middle Ages from the viewpoint of different historical periods. This process of "continuously reinventing" the Middle Ages is called neo/medievalism.

Moreover, there was a news story about the international medieval studies congress held on 9-14 May 2022 in Kalamazoo. An overview on the subjects of the presentations showed 20 texts that approached neo/medievalism and 23 texts that approached Tolkien.[2] Approaching the issues of medievalism as part of the professional debates held by the medieval historians turned into a challenge: What does medievalism actually mean? What is the relation between neo/medievalism and medieval studies? Is medievalism a separate field of study? In an attempt to answer these questions, we aim to cover the origins of medievalism, the institutionalisation process, the evolution of this research direction and the efforts made for its establishment as a means of approaching the Middle Ages, even from outside the academic sphere.

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[1] Alexandra Rotarescu, "S-a măritat Ioana D'Arc a Ucrainei! Lunetista și-a cunoscut soțul pe front" [Joan of Arc of Ukraine got married! The sniper met her husband on the front], *Click pentru femei* [Click for women], https://clickpentrufemei.ro/ghid-de-viata/evenimente/foto-s-a-maritat-ioana-darc-a-ucrainei-lunetista-2213443.html (Accessed in November 2022).

[2] R. Utz, "Kalamazoo 2022: What the Congress Program Tells Us," *Medievalists.net*: https://www.medievalists.net/2022/05/kalamazoo-2022-what-the-congress-program-tells-us/ (Accessed in November 2022).

The approach proposed in the present paper is part of the history of historiography horizon. The sources are represented by scholarly literature on medievalism and neo-medievalism, from periodicals (both in print and online), editorials, websites, edited collections and monographs, as well as the programmes of the conferences and congresses held on this topic and the interviews and debates published in the scholarly publications or in the wider-circulation newspapers and magazines.

1. Prestige and notoriety

Medievalism / neo-medievalism was established as a cultural movement in the 1970s and 1980s. Its rise was emphasised by two researchers, both of whom had published remarkable studies on the Middle Ages. One of these two researchers is none other than the famous analyst of medieval poetics, Paul Zumthor. In a book published in 1980 (translated into English in 1986), entitled *Speaking of the Middle Ages*, the Swiss author noted that "The Middle Ages besiege and challenge us from all sides."[3] Moreover, P. Zumthor expressed his conviction that it is an "illusion … to speak of the past in any other way than from the present."[4] The second researcher, the Italian semiotician Umberto Eco,[5] several years earlier, in 1983 (in Italian), also noted that the contemporary western society's return to the medieval subjects and motifs was "obsessive." The initial observations, from the viewpoint of the medieval presence in the post-medieval Italian culture, from his lecture in 1983 at the San Gimigniano[6] conference, was later expanded to both the European culture and the culture across the Atlantic.

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[3] Paul Zumthor, *Speaking of the Middle Ages* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 8: "For several years now, despite a certain pessimism in universities, many signs have appeared that proclaim a renewal of medieval studies, affecting both their procedures and the interest they arouse. We must distinguish two aspects of this renewal: one concerns the researchers' basic approach; the other, the curious but uninitiated public."

[4] Ibid.

[5] Umberto Eco, "Dreaming of the Middle Ages," in *Faith in Fakes* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1986), 61-72.

[6] Tommaso di Carpegna Falconieri reconstructed the contents of U. Eco's lecture in *Il medievo nel fumetto*, in vol. *Il fometto nel Medioevo*, a cura di Massimo Miglio (Rome: Nella Sede Dell'Instituto Per Il Medio Evo, 2021), 163, note 17: U. Eco, "Dieci modi di sognare il medioevo," in *Sugli specchi e altri saggi* (Milano: 1985), 78-89; Idem, *Il sogno del medioevo. Il revival del medioevo nelle culture contemporanee* (Relazioni e comunicazioni del convegno, San Gimignano, 11-12 novembre 1983), *Quaderni medievali* 21 (1986): 187-200 (reprinted as a book in 2018); the study was also included in vol. Idem, *Scritti sul pensiero medievale* (Milan: 2013), 1093-1108 (the Romanian translation was entitled "Zece moduri de a visa Evul Mediu," *Scrieri despre gândirea medievală* (Iași: Polirom, 2016), 663-672).

What did the two scholars, P. Zumthor and U. Eco, mean by this massive presence of the Middle Ages in the popular culture from end of the 20th century? On the one hand, the approach to the expansion of the studies conducted in the research field around medievalism and, on the other hand, the massive presence of the medieval topics in popular culture (cinema, television, radio, theatre, arts, new media – games, comic books, social media) are the elements that make up the obvious signs of the siege, the challenge and the obsession to which the two scholars referred. Moreover, U. Eco noted that this nostalgia for the Middle Ages, on a cultural level, emerged immediately after the respective period ended. If P. Zumthor observed the explosion of medieval themes in the contemporary popular culture, U. Eco was among the first to propose a systematic analysis of this massive presence, both from a diachronic viewpoint and as a typology for populating the contemporary society with a wave of such cultural motifs. The theme of medieval chivalry appears in Renaissance poetry, and motifs and themes from medieval chronicles were borrowed by the literature of the Renaissance era (Shakespeare used elements from Saxo Grammaticus' *Gesta Danorum* in *Hamlet*). In the early 17th century, Cervantes introduced a character, Don Quixote, whose behaviour was shaped by the dominant chivalric literature of the time. The novels of the 18th and 19th centuries, with authors like Sir Walter Scott and Victor Hugo, also influenced the view on the Middle Ages in a certain way.[7] Zuleyha Cetiner-Oktem,[8] who conducted a highly insightful analysis of Umberto Eco's essay in 2004, noted that, in Eco's opinion, the reason for this massive presence of the Middle Ages was the eternal "search for roots" or origins. From this viewpoint, the aforementioned researcher showed that our modern world inherited everything from the medieval model. The inventory compiled by Eco, containing this inheritance, can be summarised as follows: "Modern languages, merchant cities, capitalistic economy (…) are intentions of medieval societu. (…) the rise of modern armies, of the modern concept of the national state (…) the idea of a supernatural federation (…) the struggle between the poor and the rich, the concept of heresy or ideological deviation even our contemporary notion of love as a devastating unhappy happiness (…) the conflict between church and state, trade unions … the technological transformation of labour."[9] In Eco's view, "The Middle Ages represent

[7] Ibid., 65-67.
[8] Zuleyha Cetiner-Oktem, "Dreaming the Middle Ages: American Neomedievalism in *A Knight's Tale* and *Timeline*," *Interactions* 18 (2009): 43-56, and especially 44-49. For Umberto Eco's contribution to the analysis of medievalism, see also Domenico Pietropaolo, "Eco on Medievalism," *Studies in Medievalism* 18 (2009): 135.
[9] Eco, "Dreaming of the Middle Ages," 64.

the crucible of Europe and modern civilization."[10] The proposed typology for cataloguing dreams/forms of the imaginary that depicted the Middle Ages in the present was as follows: as a manner and pretext, ironic, barbaric, romantic, as *philosophia perennis*, elaboration of national identities, Carduccian (or "antidote to modernity"), as medieval studies, as tradition (mystical and syncretic), as the *anticipation of the Millennium*.[11]

The transformation of U. Eco's text into a mere argument used in the discourse of legitimacy, prestige, and notoriety is proven by its publication and republication in different formats, in periodicals, collective volumes or author's volumes, in addition to the redundant references to these texts (as well as to P. Zumthor's), repeatedly made in the scholarly literature about medievalism and the transformation of the Italian author's phrases into commonplaces (*Dreaming on the Middle Ages* and *Living in the Middle Ages*).

2. Origins, institutionalisation, evolution

Established and enshrined by the intellectual notoriety of P. Zumthor and U. Eco, the approach characteristic to medievalism has deeper roots and implies a theoretical construction and the establishment of the intellectual networks that do not directly concern the two researchers. The founding father of medievalism, as an academic research field, is considered to be historian Leslie J. Workman.[12] He was born in London, but his career flourished across the Atlantic. As early as 1971, he was the one to define medievalism as "he study of the Middle Ages as an imaginative construct in Western society, beginning with the late Middle Ages."[13] Leslie J. Workman consequently defined medievalism as "the continuous process of creation of the Middle Ages."[14] In 1987, L. Workman formulated a concise definition of medievalism: "the study of the Middle Ages, the application of medieval

[10] Idem, "Zece moduri," 666.
[11] Ibid., 667-670; Tison Pugh, Angela Jane Weisl, *Medievalisms. Making the Past in the Present* (London, New York: Routledge, 2013), 2-3.
[12] Richard Utz, "Medievalism in the Making: A Bibliography of Leslie J. Workman," *The Year's Work in Medievalism* XV (2000): 127-132; see also Richard Utz and Tom Shippey (eds.), *Medievalism in the Modern World: Essays in Honour of Lesie Workman* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998); K. Verduin, "The Founding and the Founder: Medievalism and the Legacy of Leslie J. Workman," *Studies in Medievalism* 17 (2008): 1-27; Davis Matthews, *Medievalism: A Critical History* (Cambridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2015), 8.
[13] Leslie Workman, "*Medievalism Today*," *Medieval Feminist Forum* 23, 1 (1997): 32. https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1380&context=mff (Accessed in November 2022).
[14] Ibid., 30.

models to contemporary needs, and the Middle Ages as inspiration for all forms of art and thought"[15]

In Workman's opinion (and according to others as well), the assertion of medievalism was largely due to romanticism, with which it had a complex historical relationship.[16] Thus, a certain number of researchers believed that medievalism was rather an epiphenomenon of romanticism.[17] The enfranchisement of this conviction was also observed by Paul. E Szarmach. The initial assumption was that "medievalism was a romantic reaction to the medieval past, a general projection of the medieval past according to the interests and conception of the present", or that "it was primitive reflex, a feature of the romantic revival,"[18] or even that "medievalism implies any post-medieval response to the Middle Ages…from politics to fantasy."[19] This definition for medievalism became the commonplace, in synthetic terms, and it was reproduced by the works dedicated to this field in recent years. One such recent work mentioned the definition of medievalism as a means of "reception, interpretation or recreation of the European Middle Ages by post-medieval cultures."[20]

L. Workman's efforts focused not only on identifying and defining a new historical research topic, but also on building an institutional network that would permanently establish this field as a subject of historical research. Thus, in 1971, he organised a panel on medievalism at the International Congress of Medieval Studies at the University of Michigan, Kalamazoo. Several years later, he laid the foundations for the publication of a journal that was meant to shed light on these concerns regarding the study of medievalism, entitled *Studies in Medievalism*. The journal was published under his editorial coordination between 1979 and 1999. During the first period, until 1990, the journal was financed by

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[15] Idem, "Editorial," *Studies in Medievalism* 1 (1987): 1. See also Richard Utz, "Contesting the Critical Site: Philology, Mittelalter-Rezeption, and Medieavalismus in Germany," *The Year's Work in Medievalism* 10 (1999): 239. Richard Utz and Thomas Shippey, "Medievalism in the Modern World: Introductory Perspectives," in *Medievalism in the Modern World*, Richard Utz and Thomas Shippey (eds.), 5. See also R. Utz, "Speaking of Medievalism: An Interview with Leslie J. Workman," in ibid., 439.

[16] L. Workman, "Medievalism," in *The Year's Work in Medievalism* X (1999): 226.

[17] Ibid.; see also Leslie J. Workman, "Medievalism and Romanticism 1750-1850," *Poetica* 39-40 (special issues for 1993): 1-44; Elizabeth Fay, *Romantic Medievalism: History and the Romantic Literary Ideal* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

[18] Paul L. Szarmach, "Medieval Studies and Medievalism: Emergent Relations," in *The Year's Work in Medievalism* X (1999): 228-229.

[19] Williams D. Paden, "'New Medievalism' and 'Medievalism'," in *The Year's Work in Medievalism* X (1999): 233.

[20] Louise D'Arcens, "Introduction: Medievalism: Scope and complexity," in *The Cambridge Companion to Medievalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 1.

private funds. Subsequently, it was taken over by the Boydell & Brewer publishing house and its publication continues to the present day. As Karl Fugelso, its current editor-in-chief, noted, the journal maintained its initial editorial policy: "Since then, *Studies in Medievalism* has blossomed into thirty volumes of articles ranging from broad definitions of the field to minute exploration of plain chant in videogames, with myriad essays on such timely and important subjects as discrimination, politics, and commercialism. Ever adapting to the many fluid contexts and ways in which the Middle Ages continue to be reimagined and redeployed, this serial looks forward to many more years informing, inspiring, and improving perhaps the most diachronic and dynamic area of the Humanities."[21] In 1992, a new periodical appeared, based on the same intellectual efforts, entitled *The Year's Work in Medievalism*.[22]

In 2010, a new journal joined the list of periodicals in this field, namely *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies*.[23] Today, it is edited by three researchers: Shazia Jagot (University of York), Julie Orlemanski (University of Chicago) and Sara Ritchey (University of Tennessee, Knoxville). Its stated purpose is that of an "experimental engagement" with the Middle Ages: "Our aim is to facilitate collaborative, ethical, and experimental engagements with the medieval – with its archives and art, its thought and practices, its traces and its enduring possibilities."[24]

Leslie J. Workman is also credited with the establishment of an international conference on medievalism, launched in 1986; similarly, between 1996 and 1998, he organised a summer camp at the University of York. Beginning with 1994, what had taken place in Kalamazoo was mirrored in Europe through the congress in Leeds, where the theme was "Medievalism and the reception of the Middle Ages."[25] After 2010, this topic was approached through another international congress, held in Scotland (Saint Andrews, 2013) and in England (Lincoln, 2015; Manchester, 2017) initially; afterwards, it was moved to the continent, namely to Rome (2018). This congress was initially organised by "The Middle Ages in the Modern World."[26] Once these gatherings and conferences were established

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[21] "Studies in Medievalism," *Proofed. A Boydell & Brewer Blog*: https://boydellandbrewer.com/blog/medieval-history-and-literature/studies-in-medievalism/ (Accessed in November 2022).
[22] Workman, *Medievalism*, 227.
[23] D'Arcens, *Introduction*, 1.
[24] *Postmedieval journal*: https://sites.google.com/view/postmedieval/about (Accessed in November 2022). From 2010 to the present day, it had several editors-in-chief: Lara Farina (2015-2020), Eileen Joy (2010 - 2019), Myra Seaman (2010-2020).
[25] Matthews, *Medievalism*, 166-167.
[26] Tommaso di Carpagna Falconieri, Pierre Savy, Lila Yawn (eds.), *Middle Ages without borders: a conversation on medievalism* (Rome: Ecole francaise de Rome, 2021), 1-8.

as practices in the academic field, they proved their consistency and attracted even wider audiences.

If Leslie J. Workman was considered to be the founder of medieval studies, the movement that appeared at the end of the 20th century, the field is also associated with the consistent or sporadic endeavours carried out by other historians from different cultural areas. One such starting point, as Workman himself claimed, was the book entitled *A Dream of Order*, authored in 1970 by Alice Chandler.[27] It is in fact a collection of studies carried out by the North American linguistics researcher. Chandler, because of this book, was considered by Workman to be the "true founder of modern medievalism." However, Workman evaluated his own contribution as a process of institutionalisation, as a conference organiser and due to his role as editor of publications that, in his own words, "gave the word an institutional meaning and presence."[28] In the years following World War II, literary history is supplemented with a series of contributions that, from the perspective of establishing the precedents of medievalism, focus on the history of ideas and ideologies,[29] as well as the history of art and architecture.

The studies in the field of medievalism did not remain merely within the binds of the Anglo-Saxon North American cultural space. They permeated other cultural spaces as well. For instance, in the linguistic space of the German historiography, namely in Austria, Ulrich Muller organised, in 1979, in Salzburg, a conference on the means of interpreting the Middle Ages. The "final victory" of medieval studies in Germany, in the academic field, in the face of "the impermeable bastion of philology," was marked by the publication of collections of studies. One was edited by the specialist in medieval German literature, Peter Wapnewski, in 1986, titled *Mittelalter – Rezeption*, and the other was Otto Gerhard Oexle's book, focused on the history of mentalities.[30] At the beginning of the 1990s, this research area also received the term *Mediaevalismus*.[31]

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[27] Alice Chandler, *A Dream of Order: The Medieval Ideal in Nineteenth-Century English Literature* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1971); Davis Matthews places Chandler's book alongside the works of Janine Dakyns, *The Middle Ages in French Literature* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), and those of Arthur Johnston, *Enchanted Ground: The Study of Medieval Romance in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Athlone Press, 1964), as significant precedents for the establishment of medieval studies; see D. Matthews, *Medievalism,* 7-8.

[28] Workman, Medievalism Today, 29; Utz, Speaking of Medievalism: An Interview with Leslie J. Workman, 448.

[29] Lionel Gossman, Medievalism and the Ideologies of the Enlightenment: The World and Work of La Curne de Sainte-Palaye (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968); Jürgen Voss, Das Mittelalter im Historischen Denken Frankreichs (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1972).

[30] Utz, Contesting the Critical Site, 241.

[31] Ibid., 242-243.

Toshiyuki Takamiya, a Japanese professor from a university in Tokyo, had similar intellectual preoccupations. The same research perspective on the popular culture of the second half of the 20th century, from the viewpoint of the use of medieval themes, was also present in the Italian space. *Nota bene*: Umberto Eco's intervention in the '80s predominantly focused on the American cultural space, but did not overlook the western European culture or that of his native country. However, the approach to medievalism in quasi-institutional terms in Italy was supported by a permanent section in the journal of medieval studies *Quaderni medievali*. From the very beginning, in the 1960s, until the cessation of its publication, in 2005, the journal contained a section entitled "The other Middle Ages" (L'Altro Medioevo). It was addressed to non-specialists and it approached what was reproduced through different media channels about the Middle Ages.[32] Within the Italian Institute for Medieval Studies, in 2020, a centre for the study of medievalism was established.[33] Since 2018, when the international congress dedicated to the reception of the Middle Ages across the world left the English cultural space, it found refuge in Rome, within the Rome-based French School.[34]

In France, at the end of the 1980s, a research direction focusing on the paradigm of "modernity," "actuality," or "contemporaneity," related to a Middle Ages of the "now" (*maintenant*), "today" (*aujourd'hui*), or the miraculous (*merveilleux*), emerged.[35] The starting point of this research direction was given by certain aspects of literary history. In 1979, the launch was triggered by P. Zumthor, during the conference in Beaubourg. In 1982, the *La Licorn* journal published a special issue dedicated to this subject, namely that of the representation of the Middle Ages in the French literature, from the Renaissance to the present day.[36] One year later, in 1983, the journal *Europe* reintroduced the relevance of the Middle Ages into contemporary debate. Subsequently, between 1995 and 1996, a series of symposiums were held in Ceristy. The seminars and academic gatherings on this topic took place increasingly more often in the 2000s,

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[32] "Quando il Medievo e la contemporanita si incontrano: il medievalismo spiegato dal Prof. Tommaso di Carpagna Falconieri," *Medievaleggiando:* https://medievaleggiando.it/quando-il-medioevo-e-la-contemporaneita-si-incontrano-il-medievalismo-spiegato-dal-prof-tommaso-di-carpegna-falconieri/ (Accessed in November 2022); Tommaso di Carpagna Falconieri, "Medievalismi: il posto dell'Italia," in *Medievalismi italiani (secoli XIX-XXI)*, Tommaso di Carpagna Falconieri, Riccardo Facchini (eds.) (Rome: Gangemi, 2018), 9-28.

[33] Tommaso di Carpagna Falconieri, Pierre Savy, Lila Yawn (eds.), *Middle Ages without borders*, 4.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Vincent Ferre, "Introduction. Medievalisme et theorie : pourquoi maintenent?" *Itineraires* 3 (2010): 7-25.

[36] "L'image du Moyen Âge dans la littérature française de la Renaissance au XXe siècle," *La Licorne* 6 (1982).

when, in 2004, the organisation *Modernites medievales* was founded. This organisation intended to hold an annual conference on the topic of the presence of the Middle Ages in literature and art.[37] The research conducted on the relevance of the Middle Ages in the French contemporary culture crossed the borders of the literary studies and of art history by approaching both the ideological aspects and the aspects pertaining to the daily use, namely to a certain "taste" for the Middle Ages.[38] It simultaneously became a research field for historians, established though the journal *Cahiers de recherches médiévales,* which, after 2007, launched a column entitled "Modernité du Moyen âge." Over the years, Vincent Ferre, the French historian who stood out in this field, carried out a series of retrospectives on the evolution of the medievalism studies in France. With respect to the key moments (the debut and the assertion of the process of defining the field), he noted that the continental initiatives were simultaneous with the preoccupations of the North American or Anglophone historians in general.[39] The debates regarding the definition of the research field are reflected in the discussions of the colloquium held in November 2009, in Metz-Malbrouck, and during the gathering of the following year, that brought together the European and North American researchers, in Groningen, entitled "Medievalism: Transatlantic Dialogues."[40]

However, P. Zumthor and U. Eco's aforementioned observations consolidated, on an academic level, the prestige gained by the new

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[37] Under the auspices of this association, colloquiums and conferences were organized and their proceedings were published: Isabelle Durand-Le Guern (dir.), *Lectures du Moyen Âge* (2006); Anne Besson,Myriam White, *Fantasy: le merveilleux médiéval aujourd'hui* (2007); Élodie Burle et Valérie Naudet, *Fantasmagories du Moyen Âge: entre médiéval et moyenâgeux* (2010); Séverine Abiker, Anne Besson, Florence Plet-Nicolas, *Le Moyen Âge en jeu* (cop. 2009); Anne Besson, Vincent Ferré, Anne Larue, *La* Fantasy *en France aujourd'hui. Écrire, éditer, traduire, illustrer;* Nathalie Koble, Mireille Séguy, *Le Moyen Âge contemporain: perspectives critiques* (2007); Nathalie Koble, Mireille Séguy, *Passé présent. Le Moyen Âge dans les ictions contemporaines* (2009); Michaël Devaux, Vincent Ferré, Charles Ridoux, *Tolkien aujourd'hui,* actes du colloque de Rambures [juin 008], Valenciennes, Presses de l'université de Valenciennes, 2010; Alicia Montoya, Vincent Ferré, *Médiévalisme: dialogues transatlantiques / Medievalism: Transatlantic Dialogues », sous-titré « Parler du Moyen âge*, Groningen, 2010. The aforementioned organisation also has a website, as of 2005: http://www.modernitesmedievales.org.

[38] Christian Amalivi, *Le gout du Moyen Age* (Plon, 1996).

[39] Vincent Ferre, "Le médiévalisme a quarante ans, ou « L'ouverture qu'il faudra bien pratiquer un jour…," *Médiévales* 78 (2020): 193-210, 193: "En 2019, le médiévalisme moderne – conçu comme l'étude de la réception du « Moyen Âge » dans son versant savant, érudit, et son versant créatif, artistique – a fêté ses quarante ans. C'est en effet en 1979 que Paul Zumthor a prononcé à Beaubourg des conférences publiées l'année suivante**2** et que Leslie Workman a lancé du côté américain la publication d'une revue, *Studies in Medievalism*. Effet de l'esprit du temps ? La simultanéité est remarquable également en ce qu'elle illustre certaines des divisions fondamentales de ce domaine de recherche: linguistique, culturelle, disciplinaire" See also page 208.

[40] Ibid.

research endeavour, despite its "audience" having grown rather slowly, a situation which changed only at the beginning of the '90s.[41] In this sense, an essential role was played by the monograph authored by Norman Cantor, *Inventing the Middle Ages*, published in 1991[42] and considered to be the "catalyst" of the polarisation of the public on the subject of medievalism. Another sign indicating the growing prestige of the studies on medievalism at the beginning of the '90s was the fact that the journal *Studies in Medievalism* was taken over by the prestigious Boydell & Brewer publishing house. Leslie Workman deems this moment to be worthy of assessment. He noted a progressive forsaking of the view on medievalism as a mere "modest ancillary" to medieval studies. However, Workman acknowledged the reciprocal influence exerted by medieval studies and medievalism and, using Yeats' words, he asked "How can we know the dancer from the dance?"[43]

The relation between medievalism and medieval studies is rather controversial. Despite the fact that, initially, L. Workman saw an indissoluble connection, medievalism distanced itself and he actually became known as a "founding father," as an independent cultural research field. Similarly, from the perspective of the academic world within which medieval studies evolved, the relation with medievalism was problematic in nature. At first, a complete detachment from medievalism can be observed, followed by a slow integration into the "academic citadel." This trajectory is visible particularly in the relation with the strong, well-rounded academic environments, namely the ones deemed traditional, as was the case of the German academic sphere, for instance. On more than one occasion, Richard Utz emphasised this situation in his articles. Thus, as R. Utz noted, philology retained its great importance for the German research in the humanities.[44] The convergence between the fields of medieval studies/academics and medievalism occurred through a compromise: "the compromise turned out to be the reception theory."[45] (Rezeptionsgeschichte, Mittelalter-Rezeption),

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[41] Workman, Medievalism Today, 30.

[42] Norman Cantor, Inventing the Middle Ages: The Lives, Works, and Ideas of the Great Medievalists of the Twentieth Century (New York: William Morrow, 1991).

[43] Workman, Medievalism Today, 31.

[44] Utz, *Contesting the Critical Site*, 240. See also Idem, "Resistance to the (The New) Medievalism? Comparative Deliberations on (National) Philology, Mediävalismus, and Mittelalter-Rezeption in Germany and North America," in *The Future of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Problems, Trends, and Opportunities in Research*, Roger Dahood (ed.) (Brepols: Turnhout, 1998), 151-70; Jürgen Kühnel, Hans-Dieter Mück, and Ulrich Müller (eds.) Mittelalter-Rezeption: Gesammelte Vorträge des Salzburger Symposions "Die Rezeption Mittelalterlicher Dichter und ihrer Werke in Literatur, Bildender Kunst und Musik des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts., Kümmerle Verlag, Göppingen, 1979.

[45] Utz, Contesting the Critical Site, 241.

rooted in the works of H. G. Gadamer and H. R. Jauss. According to historians Francis G. Gentry and Ulrich Mueller, four reception models could be outlined for the topic of the Middle Ages: a creative reception, termed productive; a reconstruction perceived as "authentic," understood as "reproductive reception"; the investigation and interpretation of the Middle Ages using the methodology of critical historical research, titled as academic reception; and the reshaping of the Middle Ages for political purposes in the construction of a legitimising discourse, defined as a political-ideological reception.[46]

In the North American cultural space, medievalism emerged in the proximity of medieval studies, with significant influences from the literary studies. Later, in the 20th century, medievalism overflowed in the area of cultural studies in regards to the popular culture and mass culture. However, this case also required a firm dissociation between medievalism and medieval studies. Paul Szarmach, despite having noted several tangent points (the Arthurian studies or the art and architecture studies), also noted the separation of medievalism and medieval studies into different research fields. For Paul Szarmach, medieval studies represented "an ancient, venerable discipline rooted in philological research, involving the verification and ascertainment of reality limited in time and space"; however, medievalism "it was a footnote in the intellectual history of the 19th century that probably continued into the 20th century in what is called popular culture."[47] Those who sought to affirm the connection between the two fields undertook "a series of risks," according to Szarmach.

Richard Utz's recent plea[48] for a closer connection between the academic body/medieval studies and the body of enthusiasts and dilettantes/medievalism, in the sense of giving medieval studies a social meaning, of a dialogue between these researchers and the contemporary public, was the expression of the preservation of the dissociation from the previous period.

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[46] Francisc G. Gentry, Ulrich Mueller, "The Reception of the Middle Ages in Germany: An Overview," *Studies in Medievalism* III (1991): 401.

[47] Szarmach, "Medieval Studies and Medievalism…," 228.

[48] Richard Utz, *Medievalism: A Manifesto* (Kalamazoo: ARC Humanities Press, 2017). That very same year, 2017, he readdressed the issue, noting that "Therefore, they replaced it with the umbrella term, "medievalstudies," which warned anyone with aspirations about learning about medieval culture that hard and serious academic effort was a pre-condition for comprehending it. "Medieval history," "medieval philology, "medieval archaeology," etc., further specialized and refined the process of pastist "othering." Professional medievalists had drawn up the drawbridge between the general public and their ivory tower castle. Anything to be known about the medieval past would have to be mediatedby and through them." See R. Utz, "Medievalism is a Global Phenomenon: Including Russia," *The Years Working in Medievalism* 32 (2017): https://www.academia.edu/36545977/Medievalism_is_a_Global_Phenomenon_Including_Russia_The_Years_Work_in_Medievalism_32_2017_ (Accessed in November 2022).

These studies in the research area encompassed by medievalism have experienced a new surge in the first two decades of the third millennium. The number of monographs on medievalism increased and a growing number of medieval historians showed an affinity for this research subject. The epicentre of these studies remained in the proximity of Leslie Workman's collaborators. However, a new generation of historians emerged and they used new means of communication to popularise their message. One of these new means of communication was the website *Medievally Speaking*, a website that appeared in January 2009 and that was overseen by Richard Utz and Tom Shippey.[49] Both historians were involved in an editorial endeavour in 1998, the purpose of which was to pay homage to the "founding father" of medievalism, L. Workman. The contents of this website were also uploaded to the social media platforms, using Facebook as an interface. The increasingly larger audience for medievalism can also be explained as a result of its being approached in the collections published by the great publishing houses specialised in the production of academic books, such as Cambridge, Oxford, Palgrave-Macmillan, or as part of the launch of certain editorial collections held by increasingly more prestigious publishing houses. One such case would be that of Arc Humanities, where a book on medievalism launched the *Past Imperfect* collection. In 2016, under the coordination of Louise D'Arcens, a professor at the University din Wollongong, Cambridge University Press published a guidebook for the sphere of studies on medievalism, entitled *The Cambridge Companion to Medievalism*.[50] More recently, in 2021, the same historian published a monograph on medievalism at the Oxford University Press, entitled *World Medievalism*.[51] For the establishment of medievalism as an autonomous research field, the publication of the anthology by Cambridge University Press represented a key moment. On that occasion, Louis D'Arcens, the editor of the volume, stated that it was "a sign that this field of research has come of age in reflecting on its own progress, in order to provide a summary of key themes and the development of its own, critical approach."[52]

In 2017, Richard Utz, professor at the Georgia Institute and president of the International Society for the Study of Medievalism, published a book that bore a militant and challenging title and message: *Medievalism:*

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[49] http://medievallyspeaking.blogspot.com/ (Accessed in November 2022).

[50] See note 15.

[51] Louise D'Arcens, World Medievalism: The Middle Ages in Modern Textual Culture (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).

[52] Idem, *Introduction*, 1. That very same years, the following work was also published: B. Bildhauer, C. Jones (eds.), *The Middle Ages in the Modern World. Twenty-First Century Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

A Manifesto.[53] The book aimed to reconcile medievalism and the academic field, the latter understood as a self-sufficient sphere that is exclusivist as both membership and audience,[54] as opposed to the enthusiasts and dilatants, who compile the non-academic field. Medieval studies, as an academic field, defined its own "identity as a major", based on the endeavour of gathering historiographic knowledge and excluding the historian's affectivity and subjectivity, proclaiming itself as a means of obtaining objective, empirical knowledge, employing a series of "formal academic practices such as editing, translation, or criticism."[55] Affectivity was left to the non-academic sphere, contributing to the "invention" of the Middle Ages within popular culture. Richard Utz, however, following in Cantor's footsteps, considered that "any form of knowledge is (…) an autobiographical form and that the multitude of researchers' efforts to recover the Middle Ages were the result of numerous (subjective) reinterpretations of this time period." He also noted that the term "amateur" came from Latin, from the verb "to love", while the term "dilettante" was borrowed from Italian and meant "to sing". Therefore, the book aims to encourage the acceptance of "the subjective and affective origins of interest in the medieval past."[56] Thus, the editorial contribution was understood as a manifesto, given its suggestion that our interest, as historians of the Middle Ages, must not be limited to merely "interpreting texts and artefacts for other specialists, but must be seen as a nobler task, that of making those texts and artefacts relevant to contemporary non-academic audiences."[57] The historical reconstruction of the past was circumscribed to the historian's biographic experience, on the one hand, and to the reason of the present, on the other hand. By proclaiming this stance, Richard Utz applies it throughout the book in the form of the studies that approach, from the viewpoint of medievalism, his hometown, Amberg (Germany), which holds festivals that continue the medievalist tradition created by the Weimar Republic and the Nazi regime.[58] Another study brings up his city of residence, Atlanta, as a place that celebrates chivalry and slavery, as Confederate values, supported by

[53] See note 31.
[54] Nadia Altschul, "Utz, Medievalism: A Manifesto," *The Medieval Review*, 2020: https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/tmr/article/view/31330/35466 (Accessed in November 2022)
[55] Richard Utz, *Medievalism*, IX. For the impact of this book, see https://www.medievalitas.com/post/medievalism-a-manifesto-responses (Accessed in November 2022).
[56] Ibid., 86. Richard Utz interview: https://www.academia.edu/30840907/Medievalism_A_Manifesto, (Accessed in November 2022).
[57] Ibid., 103.
[58] Ibid., chap. 3.

the medievalist architecture and art.[59] Last but not least, it contains a third study that mentions the need for "support" for the research endeavours that focused on the study of the Christian traditions and rituals "as bridges between the medieval past and the present."

The manifesto quality that R. Utz assigned his book resided precisely in the author's desire to contribute to the recovery of medieval studies / medievalism, as constituent parts of the same phenomenon, at the forefront of the contemporary culture. Considering himself both medieval historian and medievalist, Utz militated for communicating the Middle Ages to the broader audience and pulling them out of the "ivory tower" of the academic sphere.[60] From this viewpoint, as Nadia Altschul also noted in her review, Utz brought up a series of recommendations for discussion: medieval studies as a form of medievalism stood out by eliminating the passion for the study of the medieval past; in the future, high-class research practices would accept the "sentimental" relationship between the researcher and the object of their investigation; we must not write merely for ourselves, but for the larger audience; the academic sphere would focus on matters of public agenda; medievalism represents more than an entry point towards medieval studies, but also a means for an in-depth theoretical approach, for critical reflection and for increasing the social impact; the plea was for a reconceptualization of the academic profession through an "active engagement" and a "confrontation" with the "non-academic audience."[61]

The last several years of research conducted in the field of medievalism have brought forth a series of new observations, thus enriching and re-systematising the typology of the means by which the Middle Ages became relevant to the contemporary popular culture. For instance, Matthew M. Reeve,[62] from his perspective as an art historian, identified a series of means of intercepting the Middle Ages in the society of the present: he identified the so-called modern-medieval, a way of recreating the Middle Ages in modern art, a "removal from time" (Alexander Nigel); another means resided in intercepting the "The Subjective Middle Ages,

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[59] Ibid., chap. 4.

[60] Ibid., XI: "The book is called a manifesto because it has an obvious political objective. I hereby wish to help reform the way we academically think about and practice the study of medieval culture, and I will use my own observations as a medievalist and medievalist for over twenty-five years to suggest ways in which we can reconnect with the general public after that we allowed ourselves to become, starting from the end of the 19th century, almost an exclusive clan of specialists who communicate mostly with each other."

[61] Altschul, "Utz, Medievalism: A Manifesto…".

[62] Matthew M. Reeve, "Living in the New, New Middle Ages," *The Rambling* 2 (2018): https ://the-rambling.com/2018/10/18/living-in-the-new-middle-ages/ (Accessed in November 2022).

or, My Own Private Middle Ages," the period thus being assumed as a "subjective investment;"[63] a new direction was illustrated by the so-called "the Racial Middle Ages, or the New Crusade," in which case, the period under scrutiny identifies "as a place to project current constructions of nationalism and race;"[64] there was also "the Queer Middle Ages;"[65] the new revolution of communication also influenced the view on the Middle Ages in the contemporary society, designating a "Digital Middle Ages;"[66] last but not least, the cultural transformations that occurred at the turn of the millennium brought forth a new generation with its own cultural characteristics, which led to the assertion of the "Millennial Middle Ages,"[67] resulted from the "medievalist fantasy" assimilated by this generation from the SF novels and movies. Through exhibitions and monographs, the last decade had outlined the analysis of medievalism's manifestations of this nature. Other contributions tried to systematise and reflect on these directions by editing collective volumes, as is the case of the work entitled *Whose Middle Ages?* (2019), a volume coordinated by a series of historians affiliated with Fordham University in New York.[68]

The neo/medievalism phenomenon can also be felt in the Romanian cultural sphere from the last several decades, despite the fact that the approaches in this respect do not use the concept in itself, nor do they pretend to ingrate into such a historiographic movement. In the case of the Romanian culture, the antecedents of such an approach can be found in the studies conducted by literary historians. They traced the origins and dissemination of certain literary themes (Lucreția Cartojan[69]) or the

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[63] Tison Pugh and Angela Jane Weisl, *Medievalisms: Making the Past in the Present* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Elizabeth Emery and Richard Utz (eds.), *Medievalism: Key Critical Terms* (Cambridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2014).

[64] Michelle Warren, Creole Medievalism: Colonial France and Joseph Bédier's Middle Ages (University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Zrinka Stahuljak, Pornographic Archaeology: Medicine, Medievalism, and the Invention of the French Nation (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013); Patrick J. Geary and Gábor Klaniczay (eds.), Manufacturing the Middle Ages: Entangled History of Medievalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013).

[65] See, for instance, Tison Pugh, Queer Chivalry: Medievalism and the Myth of White Masculinity in Southern Literature (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2013).

[66] Lynn T. Ramey and Tison Pugh (eds.), *Race, Class, and Gender in "Medieval" Cinema* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); L. D'Arcens, A. Lynch, *International medievalism and popular culture* (New York: Cambria Press, 2014).

[67] Daniel T. Kline, Digital Gaming Re-imagines the Middle Ages (Routledge, 2013).

[68] Andrew Albin, Mary C. Erler, Thomas O'Donnell, Nicholas L. Paul, Nina Rowe (eds.), *Whose Middle Ages? Teachable Moments for an Ill-Used Past* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019).

[69] See Lucreția Cartojan, "Legenda `Mama lui Ștefan cel Mare`," *Cercetări literare V* (1943): 65-95.

representations of the lords form the Middle Ages in the literature of the 19th century (Tudor Vianu[70]).

These contributions are rather studies on the historical culture within the Romanian space (Andi Mihalache[71]), studies that circumscribe the Romanian national version of using and abusing history, from the historiographic discourse (Lucian Boia[72]) to the ideological-political propaganda (Mihaela Grancea[73], Ionuț Costea, Virgiliu Țârău[74]) and imagology (Alexandru Duțu[75], Cristina Bogdan[76], Ana Maria Ştefan[77], Mihaela Grancea[78]), or works in historical biography (Ionuț Costea[79]).

3. Medievalism: Field of Study or Anti-Field of Study?

The past decade has shown a new scope for medievalism. The number of attempts to define the research field, the directions and characteristic research methods have increased. In the absence of a unique scrutiny, with respect to the field of aforementioned issues, these debates became more visible, placed within prestigious academic and cultural spheres. Thus, Louise D'Arcens, in her introduction to the anthology published in 2016, noted the tendency to outline two movements within medievalism, namely "a medievalism based on the found Middle Ages and a medievalism based on the made Middle Ages."[80] The former refers to the "contact and interpretation" of the material medieval traces that were preserved in a post-medieval period; the latter includes "texts, objects,

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70 Tudor Vianu, "Ștefan cel Mare în literatură," in *Studii de literatură română* (Bucharest: Ed. didactică și Pedagogică, 1965), 610-625.

71 Andi Mihalache, Mănuși albe, mănuși negre. Cultul eroilor în vremea Dinastiei Hohenzollern (Cluj-Napoca: Limes, 2007), see the approach to the Middle Ages in the studies entitled Ștefan cel Mare în cultura istorică a începutului de secol XX, 71-123 and Mihai Viteazul și ceremoniile corpului absent, 200-232.

72 Lucian Boia, *Istorie și mit în conștiința românească* (Bucharest: Editura Humanitas, 1997).

73 Mihaela Grancea, "Filmul istoric românesc în proiectul construcției "națiunii socialiste": 1965-1989," *Studia Politica: Romanian Political Science Review* 6, 3 (2006): 683-709.

74 Ionuț Costea, Virgiliu Târău, "Matthias Corvinus Statue – Political propaganda. Past and Present," *ISHA Journal*, 4, Mainz, 1996.

75 Alexandru Duțu, *Călătorii, imagini, constante* (Bucharest: Editura Eminescu, 1985).

76 Cristina Bogdan, "O temă medievală recuperată de epoca romantică: dansurile macabre," in Andi Mihalache, Alexandru Istrate (eds.), *Romantism și modernitate. Atitudini, reevaluări, polemici* (Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2009), 239-256.

77 Ana Maria Ștefan, "O ipostază a alterității în drama istorică românească: pretendenții la coroană," in ibid., 257-268.

78 Mihaela Grancea, "Haiducul și tâlharul – o dilemă culturală? Schiță de imagologie istorică și literatură comparată," in ibid., 507-543.

79 Ionuț Costea, Biografie şi istorie: Pintea Viteazul, reprezentări culturale, în vol. Societate. Cultură. Biserică. Studii de istorie medievală şi modernă (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2014), 329-350.

80 D'Arcens, "Introduction," 2.

performances and practices that are not only post-medieval in provenance, but are also imaginary representations of ideas about the medieval, as concepts rather than as historical categories."[81] In connection with this second category of the imagined Middle Ages, the concept of neo-medievalism (New Medievalism) arose. Louise D'Arcens, in turn, considers that such a distinction is complicated and ambiguous and, as such, evaluating the approaches to medievalism in the sense outlined by the two movements would be almost impossible.

A resuscitation of the term neo-medievalism also emerged in the area of the international relations studies. The interpretation is connected to the cultural ambiance of the Cold War and its consequences at the end of the 20th century. The theory of modernisation, in this sense, is an ideological construct meant to prove the supremacy of the neo-liberal western civilisation over the development of the countries from the soviet bloc. Thus, the Middle Ages were considered, from an economic, industrial and intellectual perspective, a "fountain of modernisation" and that "the very theory of modernization is part of the medieval European heritage."[82] Thus, Bruce Holsinger concluded that "modernization theory is the medievalization of theory."[83]

In this situation, if the nation state, on an ideological level, represented a creation of medievalism, its dissolution at the end of the 20th century could be associated with a new ideology, namely that of neo-medievalism: "sovereignty became more fluid. More and more states share power and authority with subnational units (like the old vassalage), with supranational political entities (like the Holy German Empire), and powerful non-governmental forces (analogous to the Roman Catholic Church)."[84] The new political project debated by the politological literature at the end of the 20th century at the beginning of the 21st century linked itself with the Middle Ages from the viewpoint of the similarities and analogies. Therefore, the prefix "neo" was justified "by the historical analogy", the future being foreseen as "the new Middle Ages." From the viewpoint of political theory, neomedievalism refers to the non-statal and transnational political actors who define "the emerging environment of globalization."[85]

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[81] Ibid.

[82] Bruce Holsinger, "Neomedievalism and International Relations," in Louise D'Arcens (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Medievalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 171. For the relation between politology, political practice and neomedievalism, see Tommaso di Carpegna Falconieri, *Medioevo Militante: La politica di oggi alla prese con barbari e crociati* (Torino: Einaudi, 2011).

[83] Holsinger, "Neomedievalism…," 171.

[84] Ibid., 173.

[85] Ibid., 165, 171-173.

Neomedievalism, as opposed to medievalism, is a creation of the 1990s and it emerged through the terminology promoted by the journals *Romantic Review* (1988) and *Speculum* (1991).[86] William D. Paden, one of the supporters of this terminology, connected neomedievalism, "an unstable subatomic particle," with the outlet of postmodernism ("neomedievalism is the postmodern medievalism"). The theoretical basis is given by the postmodern thought defined by Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, in association with the features of this movement, namely eclecticism, anachronism, pastiche, subjectivism, indeterminism, emphasised by Jean-Francois Lyotard's "postmodern condition."[87]

In fact, in the proximity of the French literary studies department, and the studies dedicated to Romance languages and literatures at Yale University, the so-called neomedievalism movement emerged. Both W. D. Paden and R. Howerd Bloch taught old French and Italian literature at the aforementioned institution. They also proved to be the supporters of neomedievalism as a movement. The attempt to establish neomedievalism in association with "New Historicism," "New Philology," but especially with the postmodern representations in contemporary culture, has sparked a series of controversies. These controversies were illustrated by the polemic interventions that came in the form of the reviews for the book on neomedievalism, published in 1996 and edited by R. Howard Bloch and Stephan G. Nichols.[88] The polemic reviews belonged to historians Leslie Workman and Richard Utz, published in the journals *Arthuriana*[89] (1997) and *The Medieval Review*[90] (1998). As the reviewers noted, the book under scrutiny was not devoid of merits, it "it contained, Utz noted, a good number of fine essays and offered original insight."[91] Concurrently, it was at fault for "the exclusion of much existing research, a somewhat nonchalant approach to terminology, and various formal lacunae show dark clouds on the bright horizon of expectations the editors' introduction attempts to paint."[92] The omission of a period of almost three decades of studies on medievalism, the side-lining of the contribution to the consecration of the field by a few historians, its institutionalization, and the attempt to present a

[86] Williams D. Paden, "'New Medievalism' and 'Medievalism'…," 231.
[87] Ibid., 232-233.
[88] R. Howard Bloch and Stephen G. Nichols (eds.), *Medievalism and the Modernist Temper* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University, 1996).
[89] Leslie Workman, in *Arthuriana* 7, 1 (1997): 161-163; Utz, 159-160.
[90] Richard Utz, "Bloch, Medievalism and the Modernist Temper," *The Medieval Review* (1998): https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/tmr/article/view/14577/20695, (Accessed in November 2022).
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid.

novel approach in the form of neomedievalism has stirred a wave of "outrage" among historians orbiting around the *Studies in Medievalism* journal. According to them, the use of the term *neomedievalism* was not only inappropriate, but also confused and wrong. As a result of the mimetic tendency from philology, divided into the old and new philology, it actually demonstrated a misunderstanding of the concept of "new philology." As Utz notes, while "the old philology" focused on the studying the literature of the classical antiquity, the "new philology" approached the horizon of the modern, vernacular languages and literatures. The use of the concept of "new philology" in the journal *Speculum* referred to "the current issues in literary studies." Truthfully, for all philologists, as Utz pointed out, "The New Philology marks the new territories conquered, compared to the earlier ones, by the old philology with a preoccupation with classical languages and literature, from the second half of the 19th century."[93]

In his turn, Leslie Workman attacked the terminological ambiguity and noted the similarity between medievalism and the new research field proposed by Bloch and Nichols, neomedievalism. He emphasised that the explanations offered by the two scholars regarding medievalism had nothing to do with the meanings outlined by the dictionaries of the 19th and 20th centuries. It was more a matter of the term having been borrowed from a mistranslation of the French word *medievalisme* into the English *medievalism*. He wrote that "the English term medievalism never referred to medieval studies."[94] From Workman's viewpoint, the name of the research field was not the only issue, given that so was its contents, as defined by Bloch and Nichols. In the two scholars' opinion, neomedievalism placed "historical context the cultural proximity of the studies about the Middle Ages as they were practiced starting from the middle of the 18th century … From these positions we imagine a history of medievalism that aims at the different ways of exploration by which medieval studies were determined due to specific ideologies or local, national, religious, political or personal interests."[95] To Workman, this way of defining the preoccupations of neomedievalism seemed superfluous, given that medievalism had already assumed this programme. With irony, the American historian stated: "sorry to rob Bloch and Nichols of their innocent pleasure in reinventing the wheel."[96]

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[93] Ibid.

[94] Leslie Workman, in *Arthuriana*, 161. The terminological clarification is connected to Bloch and Nichols' statement that "the term new medievalism denotes a revisionist trend in romantic medieval studies … a disposition to interrogate and reformulate assumptions about the broader conception of medieval studies."

[95] Bloch, Nichols, 162.

[96] Ibid.

Leslie Workman criticised the book's structure, which had been meant to assume the definition of an original field of study ("The Founders of the discipline", "Continuators" etc.). In Workman's opinion, this structure was in contradiction not only with the existence of an institutionalised field of study, but also with the authors' own statements that noted the existence of "emergence of medieval studies and modernism in France in the 1860s."[97] The American historian deemed this judgement as outright "absurd." He emphasised: "One thing must be made clear at the outset: the English term *medievalism* never meant *medieval studies*."[98]

The issue, in essence, was one of terminological incoherence and ambiguity, as well as defining the boundaries of medievalism as a field of study. Medievalism already had its own status as a research field. Richard A. Marsden noted the integration of medievalism studies into the spectrum of contemporary culture, its inclusion in university programs engaged in a dynamic that compares it to literary studies. Thus, medievalism initially embraced an elite culture, after which it encompassed expressions from the spectrum of popular culture, and, to an increasingly greater extent, it became associated with cultural studies.[99]

Over the last decade, more and more historians have pointed out this direction in which the studies on medievalism have developed, namely that of becoming a form of transdisciplinary research. David Matthews, in his turn, noted "a clear affinity between medieval studies and cultural studies."[100] For Matthews, the affinity for cultural studies had two causes. The first would be the cultural ambiance of the 1960s and 1970s – the moment the studies on medievalism emerged, as well as the manifestation period for the counter-cultures that showed somewhat of an attachment to "the romantic Middle Ages" and the representation of the

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[97] Leslie Workman, in *Arthuriana*, 161.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Richard Marsden, "Medievalism: New discipline or scholarly no-man's land?" *History Compass*. 16. e12439. 10.1111/hic3.12439 (Accessed in November 2022): This broadening of research topics by medievalism was understood as a "sign of its vitality … although it originally encompassed the artistic and literary manifestations of scholarly culture, scholars of medievalism are claiming a wider territory for themselves, from film, TV and electronic games, from fan fiction, role-playing games and historical reenactment, to social theory, theology and the use of medieval motifs in politics and polemics. Thus, medievalism studies transcends the existing frontiers of the discipline. It is an arena where research in art, history, literature, music, religion, political science and sociology are brought together, bringing with them methods and approaches associated with each discipline…"

[100] Matthwes, *Medievalism*, 177. The approach to cultural studies of medievalism was formulated in 2007 by Eișeen Joy, Myra Seaman, Kimberly K. Bell, and Mary K. Ramsey, the editors of the volume *Cultural Studies of the Modern Middle Ages*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2007; it was also approached by Ute Berns and Andrew James Johnston in the study entitled "Medievalism: A Very Short Introduction," *European Journal of English Studies* 15 (2011): 97–100.

"communitarian, pastoral and anti-industrial" Middle Ages. The approach to this historical period, namely that of the Middle Ages, generated a "form of nostalgia," specific not only to Great Britain, but also to Central Europe. Secondly, regarding the meeting point between the Middle Ages and the counter-culture of the '60s and '70s, Matthews noted the outlines of a new critical examination with respect to medieval studies: the interference with gender studies, the rehabilitation of lower social classes, as specific issues within cultural studies.[101]

In actuality, the terminological controversy *medievalism vs. neomedievalism* and the relation with medieval studies showed the ambiguity and fluidity of the delineations with respect to the statute of studies on medievalism per se. D. Matthews thus brought forth the definition of medievalism formulated by L. Workman, "the founding father", and the means by which he had explained the relation with medieval studies. If we were to understand medievalism as "a continuous process" of reinterpreting the Middle Ages across the post-medieval periods, then medieval studies, the historiographic research on the Middle Ages, should also be encompassed in the area of medievalism. Moreover, chronologically, medievalism implies a manifestation that took place prior to medieval studies, given that the performance at the level of amateurs and dilettantes preceded the engagement of professionals, of academic historians.[102] Therefore, medievalism's detachment from medieval studies, from the perspective proposed by Workman, no longer appears as clear and firm. Naturally, Workman's position on the relation between medieval studies and medievalism changed over time, as Matthews also admits. Leslie Workman, once he had renounced the firm distinction between the two research fields, advanced the idea of placing medieval studies within the broader spectrum of medievalism, as a form of studying the Middle Ages that was institutionalised in the academic environment, developed at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

In D. Matthews' opinion, other criteria would make a difference, if a separation were to be made between the two research directions. To him, medievalism is nothing more than "a modern judgement, based on a retrospective understanding of their relative positions."[103] The separation criteria are connected with the nature of the process of depicting the Middle Ages: while some researchers opted to "discover the Middle Ages," others "invented their Middle Ages."[104] These options separate

[101] Matthews, *Medievalism*, 177-178.
[102] Ibid., 170-172.
[103] Ibid., 171.
[104] Ibid.

"the good medieval studies from the bad," medievalism being "the bad," from what he regarded as the *disjecta membra* of medieval studies (he also uses the concept of "residual medievalism"[105]). However, even this separation seems "illusory," since the criteria based on which such a distinction can be made are unstable: "only the occult ideological criterion separates the sheep of medieval studies from the geese of medievalism."[106] More recently, D. Matthews, using the ideological criterion, highlighted the emergence, within 19th-century British medievalism, in contrast to elite and middle-class medievalism, of the so-called "subaltern medievalisms,"[107] forms of medievalism embraced by the working class, socialists, the radical movement, and the feminist movement.

D. Matthews also showed that, from the viewpoint assumed by the researchers who had chosen to study the Middle Ages, matters were equally confusing. The proposed demonstration is based on the discussion around two examples, namely two books that detail biographies of medievalists. The first is the book authored by Normal Cantor,[108] characterised

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[105] "Residual medievalism," in Matthews' understanding, was a form taken by medievalism in the contemporary popular culture. This type of medievalism distances itself from the dominant, "central" position held within the culture of the 19th century and transforms into a cultural substrate, into a set of cultural references or into an implicit presence, thus taking a "residual" form. The criterion that separates the two forms of medievalism would be their placement within the broader cultural project of an epoch, as either a "central" theme or a "residual" theme (see D. Matthews, *Medievalism*, 19). However, Andrew Elliott (Andrew B.R. Elliott, *Medievalism, Politics and Mass Media. Appropriating the Middle Ages in the Twenty-first Century*, D.S. Brewer, Cambridge, 2017) uses the expression "banal medievalism", borrowed from the concept of "banal nationalism" used by Michael Billig (Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, London: Sage, 1995). "Banal medievalism" refers to the presence of medieval themes in everyday life, like an "endemic condition" that "most often goes unnoticed" (A. Elliott, *Medievalism*, 17). In other words, "banal medievalism" it does not attach itself "to the past, but to the absence of the past, its power of persuasion deriving not from historicity and representation, but from repeated retransmission by means of the mass media - which is possible only when the medieval reference has been replaced" (Ibid., 19). This form taken by medievalism is distinctive from the ideological-political, intentional, militant form. The "banal medievalism" could overlap the "residual medievalism" in its hypostasis of an implicit presence. However, these typologies are based on different criteria (*central vs. marginal*, for D. Matthews, and *intentional vs. unintentional*, for A. Elliott). A precise delineation between these forms of medievalism is complex and difficult to obtain – even circumstantial and idiosyncratic. From this viewpoint, namely that of the intentionality of approaching medieval themes, Marisa Galvez brought forth the concept of "unthought medievalism", as a "performative and phenomenological" form of medievalism. See Marisa Galvez, "Unthought Medievalism," *Neophilologus*, 105 (2021): 365-389. Similarly, from the viewpoint of the contemporary social practices, there is a distinction between a "participatory medievalism" and an "experimental medievalism," see D. T Kline, "Participatory Medievalism, Digital Gaming, and Role Playing," *Companion*, 75-84.

[106] Matthews, *Medievalism*, 173.

[107] D. Matthews, M. Sanders, Subaltern Medievalisms: Medievalism "from below" in Nineteenth-Century Britain (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2021).

[108] Cantor, Inventing the Middle Ages.

as "a tabloid approach to academic medievalism" and which pointed out that "when medieval studies are contaminated by ideology, they become medievalism."[109] The second is the work of Helene Damico,[110] a book that presents a series of "unspeculative, «objective»" biographies that recover, for medieval studies, a series of historians from the horizon of medievalism, where N. Cantor had initially placed them.[111]

D. Matthew's conclusion emphasises, on the one hand, that "the attempt to differentiate medieval studies from medievalism is compromised from the start"[112] and, on the other hand, "rather than recognizing [medievalism] as a new and separate discipline, it is simply part of medieval studies – an inseparable part of it."[113] As opposed to Workman's revised viewpoint and to Utz's opinion that medievalism and medieval studies belong to the same phenomenon in which medievalism precedes and includes medieval studies, Matthews reversed this relation. To him, medieval studies are predominant, while medievalism, particularly after the end of the 19th century, plays a marginal or residual role in the grander common phenomenon. The different stances taken by the three historians were not without echo. Between R. Utz and D. Matthews a small polemic took place.[114] R. Utz criticised D. Matthews' attempt to subordinate medievalism studies to medieval studies, emphasising that "medieval studies at the academic level is in no way epistemologically superior to other modes of reinvention"[115] of the Middle Ages. However, R. Utz acknowledged medievalism's status as an "anti-discipline (undiscipline) which (like cultural studies) blows up existing canons, reintegrates excluded voices, but remains in the stage of productive uncertainty regarding the boundaries of the discipline."[116]

Medieval studies' attempt to defend their own territory seemed to turn into a fratricidal war. However, the detachment "bomb" had not yet been primed, in the post-postmodernist environment of neomedievalism. The group of researchers at Yale formed around R. Howard Bloch and

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[109] Ibid., 176.
[110] Helen Damico, Joseph B. Zavadil (eds.), *Medieval Scholarship: Biographical Studies in the Formation of a Discipline* (New York and London: Garland, 1995).
[111] Ibid., 175.
[112] Ibid., 177.
[113] Ibid., 178.
[114] R. Utz, "Medievalism: A Critical History: A Response," *Práticas da História. Journal on Theory, Historiography and Uses of the Past* 3 (2016): 155-161; David Matthews, "Putting on the Armour: A Response to Richard Utz," *Práticas da História* 4 (2017): 237-243.
[115] R. Utz, "Medievalism is a Global Phenomennon: Including Russia," *The Year's Working in Medievalism*, 32 (2017): https://www.academia.edu/36545977/Medievalism_is_a_Global_Phenomenon_Including_Russia_The_Years_Work_in_Medievalism_32_2017_ (Accessed in November 2022).
[116] Utz, *Medievalism*, 85.

Stephen Nicholas maintained their viewpoint, despite the aforementioned reviews. In 2014, they edited a new volume and, just as they did in the previous volume, they used the term neomedievalism for the particular means of representing medieval studies in the context of the "communication revolution." Bloch considered the significance of the new direction in the sense of a *renovatio*, of a renewal in the field of medieval studies.[117] Nichols, in his turn, advocated for placing medieval studies on a return to the original sources, the medieval texts and manuscripts, and exploiting the relationship between medieval studies and new communication technology, a transition "from analog to digital research."[118] The terminological ambiguity introduced and maintained over time was further complicated by the adoption of the phrase in the early 2000s and its placement in the extension of medievalism proper. In fact, in 2002, an electronic platform led by Carl L. Robinson entitled MEMO (Medieval Electronic Multimedia Organization) was launched.[119] Despite the group having initially asserted themselves in the electronic environment, they returned to the "print culture," beginning with 2012, by publishing several collections of studies under the title *Neomedievalism in the Media: Essays on Film, Television and Electronic Games*.[120] The collection of studies was preceded by a broad historiographical debate hosted by the journal *Studies in Medievalism*. Carol L. Robinson, together with Pamela Clements, outlined the principles of neomedievalism in the aforementioned publication.[121] They assumed the tradition of the studies on medievalism of the final decades of the 20th century, but emphasised the fact that despite neomedievalism "it is a form of medievalism, it implies a philosophical and technological mutation."[122] Neomedievalism

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[117] R. Howard Bloch, "The New Philology Comes of Age," in R. Howard Bloch, Alison Calhoun, Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet, Joachim Kuepper, Jeanette Patterson, *Rethinking the New Medievalism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 1-2.

[118] Stephen G. Nichols, "New Challenges for the New Medievalism," in R. Howard Bloch, Alison Calhoun, Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet, Joachim Kuepper, Jeanette Patterson, *Rethinking the New Medievalism*, 12.

[119] Carol L. Robinson, http://medievalelectronicmultimedia.org/definitions.htlm, (Accessed in November 2022).

[120] Carol L. Robertson, Pamela Clements (eds.), *Neomedievalism in the Media: Essays on Film, Televizion and Electronic Games* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2012).

[121] Carol L. Robinson and Pamela Clements, "Living with Neomedievalism," *Studies in Medievalism* 18 (2009): 55–75: "neomedievalism is a post-postmodern ideology (…) that draws its sap from French theorists and other postmodern thinkers (including Eco) … For better or worse, neomedievalism starts from the European Middle Ages, but also from its non-European sources (such as the Japanese one). Unlike postmodernism, it does not refer to the Middle Ages in order to use, study, reproduce it; the perception of the Middle Ages is filtered, as a perception of perception (and distorted) without any connection to facts and reality… This lack of attention to historical accuracy is not like that of traditional fantasy literature, the difference lies in the degree of self-awareness and self-reflexivity. It is not the same as that found in medievalism."

[122] Amy S. Kaufman, "Medieval Unmoored," *Studies in Medievalism* XIX (2010): 2.

asserts its independence from both medievalism and the "postmodern condition." How can one characterise this independence?[123] Firstly, by focusing on the epistemological issues, by embracing the investigation of virtual reality that reproduces "traces" or medieval themes, dominated by a vision anchored in relativism, deconstructivism, and fragmentarism, it becomes a form of "representation of representation." The electronic environment was presented as a "third space" that contains objects, characters, medieval legends or legends merely imagined as medieval, selected and intermixed so as to construct a different fantasy universe – a "new history" and a "new meaning", as a space that defines different identities. Through these practices, neomedievalism is more detached and independent from the Middle Ages and it lacks nostalgia, which leads to a conscious denunciation of history (a negation of history) by a inventing a new, fantasy one. Moreover, neomedievalism established a contemporary moral ethics by promoting a dichotomous, simplistic vision, such as the confrontation between good and evil. Despite emphasising all of these aspects, neomedievalism essentially covers "a substantial number of specific cultural manifestations … from political ones, to literature and digital media."[124] Fundamentally, neomedievalism was not far from the objectives of medievalism and, according to U. Eco's judgement (from whom it claimed its title), it was rather an "eleventh medieval period," as a means of representing the Middle Ages in the contemporary culture and society, or as "part of the medievalisms," in A. T. Shippey's words.

If by 2010 there was a certain reluctance towards using the concept of neomedievalism,[125] the subsequent attitude has been rather conciliatory. R. Utz admitted that, on a terminological level, "current usage is under negotiation"[126]. Moreover, in 2012, R. Utz agreed to write

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[123] See Lesly Coote, "A Short Essay about Neomedievalism," *Studies in Medievalism* XIX (2010): 25-33 and Cory Lowell Grewell, "Neomedievalism: An Eleventh Little Middle Ages," *Studies in Medievalism* XIX (2010): 34-43.

[124] Grewell, 35.

[125] Kathleen Verduin, "The Founding and the Founder," *Studies in Medievalism* 17 (2009): 23–24; Tom Shippey, "Medievalisms and Why They Matter," *Studies in Medievalism* 17 (2009): 45–54; Nils Holger Peterson, "Medievalism and Medieval Receptin: A Terminological Question," *Studies in Medievalism* 17 (2009): 36-44.

[126] R. Utz, "Medievalism is a Global Phenomennon: Including Russia," *The Year's Working in Medievalism* 32 (2017): https://www.academia.edu/36545977/Medievalism_is_a_Global_Phenomenon_Including_Russia_The_Years_Work_in_Medievalism_32_2017_ (Accessed in November 2022): "… among the works on the reception of medieval culture in the post-medieval periods, I believe that a major paradigm shift has occurred, requiring that this reception be named with the term «neomedievalism». Researchers who adhere to this terminology consider that, while early medievalisms attempted a relationship directly with the "real" Middle Ages and made an effort to represent it as an authentic image of the past, as much as possible and necessary, many recent representations, especially those that employ computer technology, are counted as «Neo»."

the preface of the book on neomedievalism, edited by Carol L. Robinson and Pamela Clements.

Additionally, recent historiographic contributions, such as the collective volume edited by the French School in Rome following the congress held in 2018 in the capital of Italy, used the expression "a vast phenomenon currently" to define medievalism as an "object of historical investigation." The phenomenon of medievalism brought together "different disciplines and social practices," which is why the historiographic approach was "comparative, intertextual, and croisé." Multidisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity defined an "broad forum of new scholarship on the perceptions, uses, abuses of the Middle Ages in the last half millennium."[127]

Closing remarks

As early as the final quarter of the last century, contemporary historiography was already drawing attention to the shaping of representations of the Middle Ages. This shaping was driven, among other things, by the emergence of modern historiography under the banner of nation-states. Later, the emphasis was also put on how some representations were ideologised due to the attachment to liberal ideology, a representation that adopted a view on the Middle Ages elaborated during the Renaissance. The Middle Ages were seen as a dark period, a time when individual freedom was limited to privileged groups. This perspective contrasted with the representation of the modern era as a liberation of the individual, with modernity being associated with human emancipation.

The exploration of the Middle Ages from the viewpoint of national mythologies became a commonplace. An increasing number of volumes, studies, articles, and conferences were dedicated to various national spaces or regions in Europe. These efforts highlighted the approach to the Middle Ages as a legitimization of national identity or as an era from which representative figures of the national pantheon were selected: "medievalism had a consolidating role in asserting national languages and state logic and national constructions in the post-medieval period, from the early modern era to the 20th century."[128]

These contemporary approaches to the Middle Ages are part of the historiographic revisionism movement, on one hand, and the advocacy for the project of global historical narrative, on the other hand. As a consequence, David Perry, a professor of medieval history at a university in the United States, stated in radical terms that the Middle Ages never existed and continue to not exist today. According to his opinion, this notion has always

[127] Tommaso di Carpagna Falconieri, Pierre Savy, Lila Yawn (eds.), *Middle Ages without borders*, 3.
[128] Holsinger, "Neomedievalism and international relations," in *Companion*, 166.

been a fiction.[129] The justification for this radical statement is of a general nature, in the sense that "all epochs are fictions," and that it corresponds to an intellectual practice of "retrospectively applying" a series of criteria when "visiting the past," delineating limited periods with their help in order to "make sense of the flow of time." Therefore, these periods only exist in "our cultural imagination." David Perry also believes that there is nothing dangerous in this "manufacturing" of historical periods, and the danger only arises when we tend to objectify this fiction.[130]

However, in terms of cultural representation, the Middle Ages "have undoubtedly existed" since the Renaissance, when this concept came into being, until today. Everything became even more complicated as the understanding and approach to the Middle Ages were circumscribed by a reference to both "history and the present." The approach to the historical essence of being, the fact that humans cannot exist outside of history, the adaptation to the postmodern condition, and perhaps precisely the backlash against the attempt to undermine metanarratives have led to the affirmation of an inertia that prevents the past from losing its "fascination," and to our being unable to completely detach ourselves from the past.[131] Beginning from the general characteristics, medievalism shaped its research area in the proximity of the major movements of contemporary social thought – namely the feminist movement, the negation of eurocentrism, the fear of foreigners, the cultural construct of the enemy in the wake of religious and racial alterity (Jews, Muslims, African Americans etc.), the decolonisation phenomena, contemporary migration and many more – that updated specific and particular models in the cultural representation of the Middle Ages within the framework of contemporary society.

Medievalism studies were institutionalised in the 1970s through the efforts made by Leslie Workman, but a series of precedents from the previous years were invoked, namely the ones that presumably paved the way ahead of this research area. The precedents were set by the research endeavours in the field of literary history (A. Chandler, Janine, Dakyns), the history of ideas and ideologies (Gossman, Voss), as well as the history of art and architecture. A recent study assessed Leslie Workman's role as an attempt to unite, into a single field, the different preoccupations that emerged over time regarding "the re-use of the Middle Ages in all historical periods … as research material for a single discipline."[132] Initially, researchers defined medievalism as "re-use of medieval motifs, themes, genres and

[129] David Perry, "Introduction," in Andrew Albin, Mary C. Erler, Thomas O'Donnell, Nicholas L. Paul, Nina Rowe (eds.), *Whose Middle Ages?*, 1.
[130] Ibid., 2-7.
[131] Cetiner-Oktem, 43.
[132] Matthews, *Medievalism*, 8.

topos in post-medieval culture in architecture, art, social and political theory, novels plays, poetry, film."[133] Subsequently, other modern popular culture spaces (tourism) and new forms of communication (the internet – video games) were included.[134] This dynamic of studies in the field of medievalism over half a century, the period from 1970 to the present, describes an upward trajectory, integrating into the "academic citadel." At first, medievalism research appeared as marginal within the academic environment (conducted by researchers with an academic background, presented at conferences and academic colloquia); in a second stage, during the 1990s, it became institutionalised, creating its own journals and collections at prestigious academic publishers; in a third stage, after 2010, we witnessed the maturation of medievalism and its integration into academic programs as a university discipline or sub-discipline (in the USA, the UK, Australia).[135] From a theoretical, thematic, and methodological perspective, the evolution of medievalism has been presented as a succession of three periods: "modernist medievalism," understood as the fictional representation of medieval themes within modern culture; "postmodernist medievalism," characterised by fragmentation and fictional representations striving to reproduce original medieval themes; and "neomedievalism," in which the medieval is integrated into fiction to construct an "alternative reality."[136]

Although medievalism may appear to be initially a product of North American cultural space, one should not overlook the contributions of German and French historiography. Furthermore, the fact that their efforts were synchronised must not be overlooked. In the years that followed, British and Australian historiographies also joined this trend. The synchrony between American, German, and French historiographies could be a sign that the field of medieval studies, the "parent discipline," in these historiographical cultures was going through a period of crisis or decline at the end of the 20th century.[137] In this sense, the expansion of medievalism can also be seen as a re-signification of medieval studies for the modern world, acting as a "secondary discipline" or a "meta-discipline."[138]

Are medievalism studies a proper discipline? Richard A. Marsden found it "difficult to characterize medievalism studies as a discipline in

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[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.
[135] D'Arcens, "Introduction," 1-2; Richard Marsden, "Medievalism: New discipline or scholarly no-man's land?" *History Compass*. 16. e12439. 10.1111/hic3.12439; Mattews, *Medievalism*, 8.
[136] Carol L. Robinson, "Introduction," 7, in Carol L. Robinson, Pamela Clements (eds.), *Neomedievalism in the Media: Essays on Film, Television and Electronic Games*. See also Carole M. Cusack, in *Parergon* 30, 1 (2013): 313-314.
[137] Matthews, *Medievalism*, 6-7.
[138] Ibid.

the traditional sense." It represents an intellectual space of "confluence of perspectives and methodologies put together for the purpose of studying a particular phenomenon."[139] These concerns were also pointed out by other researchers. R. Utz and E. Emery in 2014,[140] R. Utz, in his 2017 book, wrote about the lack of theoretical and methodological unity, characterising medievalism as an "anti-discipline … that blows up the existing canons … and remains in an uncertain stage about its own frontiers."[141] David Matthews shared a similar conclusion. He considered medievalism studies as a "particular phenomenon" that lacked its own research methodology and precise affiliation (history, art history, literature?). In a way, Matthews suggested a characterization using Raphael Samuel's formula as an "expansion of historical culture." However, he also wondered if medievalism could encompass this general attitude, typical of modernity, toward the past.[142]

[139] Richard A. Marsden, "Medievalism: New discipline or scholarly no-man's land?" *History Compass* 16. e12439. 10.1111/hic3.12439 (Accessed in November 2022).
[140] E. Emery, R. Utz, "Making medievalism, a critical overview," in E. Emery, R. Utz (eds.), *Medievalism: Key critical terms* (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2014), 8-10.
[141] R. Utz, *Medievalism: A Manifesto* (Kalamazoo: Arc Humanities Press, 2017), 85.
[142] Matthews, *Medievalism*, 9.

Book Reviews

Elisabeta Scurtu, *Familii de preoți greco-catolici din Țara Năsăudului: 1700-1948* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2021) [Families of Greek Catholic priests from the Land of Nasaud (1700-1948)]

Elisabeta Scurtu's professional activity was distinguished by a constant preoccupation for cultural and ecclesiastical history. She was initially a history teacher at the "Logos" High School of Bistrița. Subsequently, she collaborated with the County Center for Culture in Bistrița Năsăud County, and, in the end, she was the assistant counselor of the County Directorate for Culture, Bistrița-Năsăud. Elisabeta Scurtu's fields of research focus on local history, with an emphasis on cultural and ecclesiastical issues. From a geographical viewpoint, the studies she conducted focused on the historical area called the Land of Nasaud. Thus, Elisabeta Scurtu's book, entitled *Familii de preoți greco-catolici din Țara Năsăudului: 1700-1948* [Families of Greek Catholic priests from the Land of Nasaud (1700-1948)], is a reflection of her long-standing concerns and a well-rounded approach to a topic from her primary field of interest. Given her previous publications that approached cultural and religious matters, her qualification is well-founded and her research endeavour is thus supported by a strong scholarly background.

The subject of the book addresses the issue of the families of priests in the Land of Nasaud, in a very wide chronological interval: from the founding of the Romanian Church United with Rome, to the dissolution of the Greek Catholic Church by the communist authorities. The author specifies that the subject of her research is not necessarily an outright novely, given that it had been approached in the past by the priest Ştefan Buzilă, who had conducted genealogical studies on the families of priests from the Vicariate of Rodna.

The author's aim is to bring to draw the general public's attention to a topic that she deems important, both as a part of the local history and as a significant component of the larger ecclesiastical history. In this book, Elisabeta Scurtu applies a scientific method that could serve as a model for other historians, and, in this sense, she states that the book could potentially open the path towards similar research applications in other geographical areas. Concurrently, the author notes that her work is not exhaustive, given the complexity of the subject under scrutiny, and, as such, over time, new information related to her work may indeed resurface.

One of the fundamental aspects of scholarly research is the corpus of sources. Elisabeta Scurtu's book totals 1117 footnotes that comprise a truly wide range of bibliographic sources. Most of the referenced sources are primary: eight archival holdings, a certain number of published documents,

as well as 14 schematisms. In addition to the primary sources, the historian also references 97 books and articles. The starting point of the present research endeavour was given by books on demography, genealogy and anthropology, the main reference being Jack Goody's book, *The European Family. An attempt at historical anthropology*. In order to be able to highlight details related to family life and other social aspects, she had as a reference point the book "Istoria vieții private" vol. III (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1995), by Georges Duby. For the reconstruction of the overview on the domestic lives of priestly families, her investigation started from the archival documents that capture the significant moments in an individual's life: civil status, marriage records, baptisms, as well as information on the number of family members and kinship ties. Elisabeta Scurtu also consulted a series of published documents about the Land of Nasaud, such as: "Satele năsăudene la mijlocul secolului al XIX-lea. Mărturii documentare" (Cluj-Napoca: Accent, 2002) by Simion Retegan, or "Districtul Năsăud (1861-1876). Contribuţii documentare", (Năsăud: George Coşbuc, 2003), by Simion Lupşan and Adrian Onofreiu, documents related to the economic and social situation of the villages" The consistent number of sources used demonstrates the extensive approach employed by the author to provide as much information as possible about both the immediate and the extended family.

Elisabeta Scurtu begins the present research endeavour by employing both anthropological and sociological probes in approaching the functioning mechanisms of the family. The information on the families of priests extracted from the avaibale documents is analysed and, by use of comparison, a series of different cases are scrutinsed in order to identify certain differences and similarities.

Structurally, the book contains five chapters, each dealing with distinct issues related to the families of priests in the Land of Nasaud. Each aspect presented in each chapter is viewed within its own chronological evolution. The book opens with two sections, namely an opening argument and the current avaiable historiography on the matter. The end contains the conclusions, the bibliography and the annexes.

In order to verify whether or not the book truly acomplished the goal it had initially set, the quality of the demonstration in each of the five chapters must be assessed. The first chapter provides various information about the Land of Nasaud: historical framework, administrative and religious aspects, a series of significant events from the thirteenth century until the establishment of the Vicariate of Rodna in 1786. After acquainting the reader with the main characteristics of the Land of Nasaud, Elisabeta Scurtu highlights, in the second chapter, the peculiarities of the public and private life of a priest, and how priests managed to divide their activity between: church, school and community. The author makes an essential analogy for her

analysis: the priest, in his private life, is the pillar of his family, just as he is the pillar of the community in his public life. Then, in chapters III and IV, she makes a more in-depth presentation of the complexity of family ties, which include both those within the immediate family and those with the extended family. In addition to the issue of kinship, the book also approaches the matter of the tense situations in which priests end up living in cohabitation, or in which conflicts arise between priests and their communities of believers, highlighting the manner in which the Church had tried to resolve these issues. In the final chapter, which is also the most extensive, the author analyzes the most famous families of priests in the Land of Nasaud. Elisabeta Scurtu compiles the genealogical tree of each family, highlighting their dynamics and pointing out the fact that there were situations in which several sons of the same priest also chose the path of priesthood. The aim of the research is achieved: by analysing the families of priests from The Land of Nasaud, the author manages to capture many particularities of the public and private life of the clergy, the way in which the priests were trained, but also the tense situations that could occur between clergy and believers, and the role of the latter in the election of the priest.

Therefore, this book is a very good example of a synthesis work that captures many specificities of the religious life in the Land of Nasaud. Regarding its classification into a certain genre, due to the complexity of the research, I consider that it is not merely a work of local history, given that it contains a series of important elements related to ecclesiastical history, religious life, and even cultural and social history. The intended audience for the book is made up primarily of specialists in the field, namely researchers interested in church history. However, I find the work appealing to a wider audience, such as students or people who are otherwise passionate about the subject.

What makes the book open to a wider audience is the style used by the author. The information is presented in an accessible language, an aspect that does not, in fact, diminish the scientificity of the contents.

In conclusion, *Familii de preoți greco-catolici din Țara Năsăudului: 1700-1948* [Families of Greek Catholic priests from the Land of Nasaud (1700-1948)] is a laudable work of historiography and a detailed overview on the ecclesiastical history of the Land of Nasaud, and, implicitly, of the Greek Catholic Church.

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Lidia Cotovanu, Émigrer en terre valaque. Estimation quantitative et qualitative d'une mobilité géographique de longue durée (seconde moitié du XIVe – début du XVIIIe siècle) (Brăila: Editura Istros a Muzeului Brăilei « Carol I », 2022)

L'historiographie des Principautés danubiennes se voit copieusement enrichie par les apports épistémologiques que cet ouvrage de grande envergure, minutieusement documenté — la bibliographie finale, elle seule, s'étend sur 50 pages ! —, riche d'enseignements des plus féconds et adroitement rédigé, nous offre si généreusement d'une page à l'autre. À travers les phénomènes historiques qu'il étudie, ce livre fort passionnant, l'un des plus remarquables qu'il nous ait été donné de lire depuis longtemps, emmène le lecteur à suivre, au-delà des cadres conventionnels de la recherche, les multiples liens de parenté qui ont uni toute l'Europe du Sud-Est jusqu'au seuil de l'ère moderne. La richesse des données empiriques recueillies, vraiment sans précédent, est accompagnée à chaque pas d'un travail pointilleux d'érudition mené par l'auteure, qui entame et combine habilement de nombreuses études de cas généalogiques, anthroponymiques, d'histoire sociale, commerciale ou politique, dans le but avoué de donner un aperçu plus convaincant, à la fois quantitatif et qualitatif, sur le phénomène majeur de l'émigration vers la Valachie et la Moldavie. L'étude poussée de la mobilité géographique des individus à l'âge prémoderne suppose la connaissance approfondie d'une vaste littérature savante écrite en plusieurs langues que Mme chercheuse Lidia Cotovanu semble la maîtriser comme nulle autre pareille. La manière très érudite dont l'auteure s'est acquittée de sa tâche est à coup sûr digne de tous les éloges. À défaut de mieux, nous nous limiterons dans les pages suivantes à résumer les idées maîtresses de l'ouvrage dont il s'agit ici, en y ajoutant quelques brèves remarques méthodologiques et historiographiques qui pourront s'avérer utiles pour les recherches futures.

Le livre suit dans une certaine mesure l'encadrement hiérarchique de la société prémoderne, sans pour autant oublier de mettre en évidence la mobilité sociale. On commence par les chefs politiques et les hauts hiérarques de l'Église et puis on descend progressivement l'échelle sociale — les dignitaires laïcs, les boyards grands et petits, les hommes d'armes, les marchands, les habitants des foires, les prêtres ou les serviteurs de toute sorte — jusqu'aux laboureurs les plus pauvres. En passant au crible une vaste base documentaire, l'auteure cherche à montrer que le rôle joué par les allogènes, quelle que soit la catégorie sociale dans laquelle ils s'intègrent, semble avoir été particulièrement significatif, tant numériquement que qualitativement. L'exemple des voïévodes nous apparaît à cet égard particulièrement révélateur : « dans le cas des chefs

séculiers (souverains), on a pu constater qu'au moins 71 (55 %) du total de 129 princes qui ont régné en Valachie et en Moldavie jusqu'en 1714 ont été des allogènes et de descendants d'allogènes (comptés jusqu'à la troisième génération) ; 41 (32 %) parmi eux étaient nés d'un ou de deux parents allogènes » (p. 288). Fondé sur un juste mais délicat équilibre entre études de cas bien documentées et vues d'ensemble aux ambitions quantitatives, le livre se présente de la sorte comme une très efficace plaidoirie en faveur de l'acceptation des diversités ethniques, des pluralités linguistiques et de l'étroite interdépendance de plusieurs milieux culturels différents les uns des autres. De ce point de vue aussi, l'auteure a bien raison de critiquer les approches nationalistes et autochtonistes de certains historiens roumains du passé, qui voyaient derrière chaque phénomène historique la manifestation irréfragable, sinon d'une volonté nationale roumaine qui transcende les temps les plus reculés, au moins des actes accomplis par des acteurs sociaux toujours caractérisés en tant que Roumains de souche.

Dès le chapitre introductif (p. 7–22), le lecteur est prévenu que « l'enquête porte — chose rare dans l'historiographie roumaine récente — à la fois sur la Valachie et la Moldavie, ce qui comporte plusieurs avantages » (p. 14–15). Néanmoins, nous sommes tout prêts à admettre que l'étude distincte de la Valachie et de la Moldavie représente l'une des plus grandes conquêtes de la médiévistique roumaine post-décembriste, et le traitement simultané des deux Pays roumains, même s'il peut présenter certains avantages, est assez fréquemment une épée acérée à double tranchant. Nous nous bornerons à rappeler ici seulement deux exemples. Dans une certaine mesure, on s'attendait à ce que, après trois décennies au cours desquelles l'histoire des élites a souvent été privilégiée, des pages plutôt discutables soient écrites sur les travailleurs agricoles (qui constituent pourtant la majorité de la population). En lisant ce livre, il se dégage que les paysans, ces présences énigmatiques, étaient séparés à l'époque en deux « vastes catégories » sociales, à savoir les « paysans libres » (mais « libres » par rapport à quoi ?) et les « paysans asservis » (p. 16, n. 28 ; p. 18 ; p. 173 ; p. 176 ; p. 203, n. 72 ; p. 267–268). Comme pour nous embrouiller davantage, l'auteure appelle les villageois tantôt « parèques » (p. 114, 173, 247, 262), tantôt « colons » (p. 18, 171, 173, 191, 241–242, 246, 248–249, 251, 259, 264) et, selon toute apparence, certains d'entre eux possédaient même des « domaines » (p. 109, n. 132). Quant à la Moldavie, on affirme traditionnellement que les « paysans libres » étaient nommés *răzeşi* dans les sources de cette époque-là (p. 151). En fait, il existe toute une littérature scientifique qui démontre avec maintes preuves à l'appui que

les *răzeşi* n'étaient point des paysans libres[1] (quoi que cela veuille dire). D'après le sens le plus commun du mot, les *răzeşi* étaient des boyards appauvris, c'est-à-dire des nobles contraints — à cause de leur situation matérielle précaire — de se livrer parfois à des activités qui supposent la dérogeance (processus de paupérisation économique). Outre cette signification, le mot *răzeş* a pris aussi le sens de maîtres qui tirent une partie quelconque de leurs revenus d'une fraction relativement petite d'un village, qu'ils soient apparentés ou non entre eux, mais sans aucune connotation économique quant à leur richesse totale (processus de parcellisation des revenus). Par exemple, le grand boyard et puissant dignitaire Solomon Bârlădeanu était lui-même considéré comme *răzeş* par rapport aux autres *răzeşi* du village Nedeeni, tout simplement parce que Solomon possédait également une certaine fraction du village.[2] De plus, l'aspect historiographique peut-être plus important encore que l'auteure a complètement omis est précisément la théorie assez bien connue qui suggère même qu'aux origines de la formation de la catégorie sociale des paysans asservis — mentionnés dans les sources moldaves sous les termes de *sused* et *vecin* — se trouvaient aussi les paysans venus d'autres pays et installés à demeure en Moldavie.[3] Une brève discussion de cette question — car, d'après nous, la part de vérité qu'elle peut contenir n'a jamais été examinée de plus près — aurait permis d'enrichir davantage le cinquième chapitre (p. 239–268), consacré justement à la colonisation rurale avec des allogènes.

Le deuxième exemple concerne le groupe social des « gens de cour » (*curteni*) (voir surtout p. 151–167), pour lequel l'auteure admet les définitions suivantes: les *curteni* était des « serviteurs princiers investis d'offices » (p. 149) ou, encore plus vaguement, des « vassaux du souverain » (p. 151). Cependant, le lecteur se rend bien vite compte que l'auteure a inclus dans cette catégorie sociale des individus entre lesquels il y a des différences de statut social assez importantes. Les réputés *viteji* moldaves attestés en tant que grands témoins au conseil voïévodal dans les premières années du XV^e^ siècle côtoient les petits gens de cour qui paient des impôts à la fin du XVI^e^ siècle ! Ces gens de cour, toujours restés énigmatiques, semblent se trouver partout, remplissant toutes les fonctions envisageables: spathaires, logothètes, échansons, écuyers, douaniers, jardiniers, serviteurs

[1] Voir, plus récemment, le livre écrit par Lucian-Valeriu Lefter, *Boieri ai Moldovei înainte şi în vremea lui Ştefan cel Mare* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Mega, 2022), 51, 52, n. 131; 55, n. 153; 65, 78, 116, 126, 136, 174, 186; 195–196, n. 1269; 216–217, 254, 258, 328, 330–333, 342, 345–347.

[2] Gheorghe Ghibănescu, *Surete şi izvoade*, vol. IV (Iaşi: Tipografia « Dacia », 1908), doc. CLXXIII, 170.

[3] Cf. Liviu Burlec, « Consideraţii asupra originii veciniei în Moldova », *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie şi Arheologie « A. D. Xenopol »*, vol. XXIII, no. 2, 1986, 823–834.

domestiques etc. Si nous lisons attentivement le sous-chapitre consacré aux « gens de cour », nous voyons que ces gens pouvaient être presque n'importe qui, du petit ouvrier qui travaille de ses propres mains au grand dignitaire. Malheureusement, l'auteure ne semble pas prêter attention aux manières dont le mot roumain *curtean* est utilisé à l'époque. Bien que chez les chroniqueurs le mot *curtean* paraisse revêtir le sens d'homme noble avec un certain rôle à la cour, les documents émis par la chancellerie voïévodale font usage de ce mot d'une manière très différente, en l'utilisant surtout pour des gens de condition modeste, dépourvus parfois de moyens d'existence, traditionnellement soumis au paiement des impôts, qui travaillent de leurs propres mains auprès des cours princières, nobles et monastiques.[4] Ces actes de chancellerie brossent un tableau très différent de celui que les médiévistes nous dressent assez souvent. Certes, toutes ces ambiguïtés ont deux causes principales: (1) l'imprécision avec laquelle la terminologie (toujours polysémantique) des sources apparaît aux yeux des historiens et (2) l'absence d'études sérieuses sur l'histoire des couches sociales autres que les grands boyards et les marchands.

Laissant de côté ces détails souvent considérés comme des faits divers sans importance, nous passons maintenant aux problèmes encore plus sérieux. L'anthroponymie historique est un domaine de connaissance qui offre à l'auteure une partie assez significative de son argumentation. Malgré le fait que l'ouvrage trouve dans l'étude des noms d'individus la plupart des arguments qu'il invoque, le vaste champ de l'anthroponymie historique est resté à bien des égards insuffisamment exploré. À quelques exceptions près, l'auteure ignore les recherches d'anthroponymie que la science roumaine a produites au cours de ces dernières décennies (des recherches signées, entre autres, par Alexandru Graur, Nicolae A. Constantinescu, Ioan Pătruţ, Christian Ionescu, Gheorghe Bolocan, Aspazia Reguş, Corneliu Reguş, Domnița Tomescu, Şerban Turcuş ou Ruxandra

[4] Pour la Valachie, voir *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, série B. Țara Românească, vol. XXVIII (1641–1642), éd. Oana Rizescu, Ovidiu-Victor Olar, Elena Bedreag, Ruxandra Lambru et Lidia Cotovanu (București: Editura Academiei Române, 2018), doc. 657, p. 790–791; *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, série B. Țara Românească, vol. XXXIII (1648), éd. Gheorghe Lazăr, Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu et Andreea Iancu (București: Editura Academiei Române, 2006), doc. 241, p. 320; *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, série B. Țara Românească, vol. XXXIX (1654), éd. Violeta Barbu, Gheorghe Lazăr, Florina Manuela Constantin, Constanța Ghițulescu et Oana Mădălina Popescu (București: Editura Academiei Române, 2010), doc. 154, p. 177–178. Pour la Moldavie, voir *Documente privind Istoria României*, série A. Moldova, XVII/2 (1606–1610), éd. Ion Ionașcu *et alii* (București: Editura Academiei, 1953), doc. 82, p. 74; *Documente privind Istoria României*, série A. Moldova, XVII/5 (1621–1625), éd. Ion Ionașcu *et alii* (București: Editura Academiei, 1957), doc. 182, p. 132; *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, série A, vol. XVIII (1623–1625), éd. I. Caproșu et V. Constantinov (București: Editura Academiei Române, 2006), doc. 189, p. 263–264 et doc. 238, p. 306–307; *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, série A, vol. XXI (1632–1633), éd. C. Cihodaru, I. Caproșu et L. Șimanschi (București: Editura Academiei, 1971), doc. 136, p. 172–173.

Lambru), bien que cette littérature, une fois soumise à un regard critique, aurait pu offrir des suggestions méthodologiques pertinentes afin de réduire les incertitudes autant que possible. Par exemple, l'opinion plutôt hasardeuse qui voit dans le lien entre la forme des noms personnels et l'origine géographique de ceux qui les portent un critère méthodologique inébranlable permettant l'identification aisée des allogènes pourrait être substantiellement nuancée à la lumière de cette littérature anthroponymique. Nous notons pareillement que l'ouvrage accorde une attention assez déséquilibrée aux transferts anthroponymiques qui ont eu lieu dans l'Europe du Sud-Est et de l'Est à la fin du Moyen Âge, puisque l'auteure s'intéresse particulièrement à l'analyse des influences anthroponymiques exercées par l'espace sud-slave sur les Pays roumains aux dépens des influences venues de l'espace slave oriental et occidental. Ce choix s'avère, pour des raisons que nous évoquerons tout de suite, particulièrement désavantageux. Il est symptomatique à cet égard de constater que cette étude, le fruit de nombreuses années de recherches, ne connaît pas l'un des dictionnaires les plus importants de noms médiévaux produit jusqu'à présent, une véritable mine d'or, intitulé *Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych* et publié en pas moins de sept volumes,[5] dont l'utilisation aurait considérablement révisé bon nombre d'hypothèses émises par l'auteure et, de surcroît, aurait pu même donner plus de poids à l'argumentation du livre.

Il ne faut qu'accumuler des exemples. Le nom masculin *Aldimir* (p. 159) et le nom féminin *Anania* (p. 93), bien qu'ils puissent également être présents dans des contextes balkaniques, ne représentent pas en eux-mêmes des preuves anthroponymiques pour l'émigration sud-danubienne vers les Pays roumains, puisque ces deux noms se trouvent aussi dans des contextes plus variés en Europe de l'Est, sous les formes *Aldmirus* et *Oldmirus* (un célèbre chef Couman est nommé, comme il est bien connu, *Oldamur*), pour l'un, et *Anania* et *Onanya*, pour l'autre.[6] Un certain *Ardău* est placé parmi les paysans balkaniques installés en Moldavie (p. 245), mais le nom *Ardău* peut fort bien renvoyer soit à l'espace hongrois (*erdő*, « forêt », qui, une fois devenu nom, pourrait signifier l'individu qui travaille en forêt), soit à l'espace polonais (où la forme *Ardui* apparaît).[7] Le nom *Baba*, attesté à la fois dans l'Empire ottoman et en Valachie (p. 56, 144, 182), est également mentionné dans l'immense espace polono-lituanien et,

[5] *Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych*, 7 vols., éd. Witold Taszycki, Maria Bobowska-Kowalska, Janina Czerna-Szymowa, Aleksandra Dudek-Cieślikowa, Zygmunt Klimek, Zofia Kowalik-Czemerdzina, Maria Malec, Kazimierz Rymut, Elżbieta Supranowicz, Adam Turasiewicz, Ludwik Zabrocki, Maria Karpluk, Varsovie, Polska Akademia Nauk, 1965–1987.

[6] Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, I, 25, 34.

[7] Nicolae Drăganu, *Românii din veacurile IX–XIV pe baza toponimiei și a onomasticei* (București: Imprimeria Națională, 1933), 365; Emil Petrovici, « Etimologia toponimicului Hordou », *Cercetări de Lingvistică*, vol. IV, 1959, 153–154; *Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych*, I, 64–65.

pour semer encore plus de confusion, on le voit aussi porté par un citoyen génois, nommé *Pablo Baba*.[8] Il y a aussi des Juifs et des Tchèques chrétiens appelés *Baba*.[9] Selon l'auteure, le logothète valaque *Baldovin* détient un « nom franc, répandu outre-Danube sous la forme courte *Baldo*, *Baldus* », ce qui fait de lui l'un des « immigrés originaires d'espaces sud-slaves » (p. 121–122, 138). Quoi qu'il en soit, le même dictionnaire polonais prouve que la diffusion de ce nom était plus grande qu'on ne le pensait auparavant (les principales variantes graphiques attestées là sont *Baldwin*, *Balduinus*, *Baldujnus*, *Baldwinus*, *Baldvinus*, *Baldewin*, *Baldevinus*, *Baldewinus* et *Balduwinus*).[10] Les appellations *Ban* ou *Bana* suggéreraient parfois l'origine balkanique des porteurs (p. 177, 268), mais ce nom, d'une variété insoupçonnée de formes, dont l'origine doit être recherchée dans le mot ban], se retrouve aussi bien en Transylvanie (*Ban*, *Bana* ou encore *Banus*) qu'en Pologne (*Ladislous Ban* ou *Emericus Ban*).[11] Il est intéressant de noter que le nom du dignitaire valaque *Berindei*, rangé par l'auteure parmi les « descendants des populations turques/coumanes » (p. 121, 123), à bien juste titre d'ailleurs, présente un parallèle assez étonnant avec quelques noms attestés dans l'espace polono-lituanien (*Berenda*, *Berynda*, *Byerenda* ou *Berendi*).[12] Le nom *Bora*, tiré lui aussi de sources valaques, ne prouve pas nécessairement l'origine sud-slave du porteur (p. 122–123), puisque des formes telles que *Bore* ou *Borathe* apparaissent également en Transylvanie[13] (sans compter que les sources moldaves connaissent les anthroponymes *Bora*, *Borăleanul* ou *Borăşel* et les toponymes *Borăle*, *Borăleana* ou *Borăşti*). Le nom personnel *Borcea* serait « un indice de l'origine sud-danubienne » (p. 106, 138, 255). Toutefois, on a pu découvrir, sans trop chercher, la forme *Borcha* en Transylvanie et la forme *Borco* en Pologne.[14] Qui mieux est, chez les Moldaves, le nom personnel *Borcea* a donné naissance à plusieurs noms de villages *Borceşti* (un phénomène qui n'a pas eu d'équivalent en Valachie, pays plus proche de l'espace sud-slave).

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[8] Trevor J. Dadson, The Genoese in Spain. Gabriel Bocángel y Unzueta (1603–1658). A Biography, London, Tamesis, 1983, p. 11 et n. 46; Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, I, p. 74. Voir aussi S. B. Veselovskij, Ономастикон. Древнерусские имена, прозвища и фамилии, Moskva, Izdatel'stvo Nauka, 1974, p. 18.

[9] Alexander Beider, « Onomastic Analysis of the Origins of Jews in Central and Eastern Europe. The Knaanites: Jews in the Medieval Slavic World », *Jews and Slavs*, vol. 24, 2014, p. 61, 63, 107 (n. 10 et 12), 111 (n. 52).

[10] Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, I, 80–81.

[11] Șerban Turcuș, Adinel Dincă, Mihai Hasan, Victor Vizauer, Antroponimia în Transilvania medievală (secolele XI–XIV). Evaluare statistică, evoluție, semnificații, vol. I (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Mega, 2011), 184, 227; Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, I, 85.

[12] Ibid., 124. Pour *Berendej*, *Berendeevy*, voir aussi S. B. Veselovskij, *Ономастикон*, 36.

[13] Antroponimia în Transilvania, 187, 234.

[14] Ibid., 187, 252; Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, I, p. 218.

D'après l'auteure, le nom *Cehan*, qui rappellerait les débuts de la famille *Racoviță*, était un « surnom turc » (p. 79, on n'y trouve aucune référence à ce propos![15]), mais cette idée peut aussi être mise en doute. Ce nom, totalement inconnu en Valachie, apparaît dans les sources moldaves d'abord comme *Cehan*, de sorte qu'à l'époque phanariote il coexiste avec la forme *Gehan*.[16] Aussi étrange que cela puisse paraître, les deux formes *Cechan* et *Gehan* peuvent être trouvées dans le dictionnaire polonais en tant que noms de personne utilisés à la fin du Moyen Âge.[17] Pour rendre ce mystère encore plus impénétrable, nous notons ici l'observation linguistique — d'ailleurs non sans écho chez les Polonais — que le nom roumain *cehan* dérive du mot *ceh*, c'est-à-dire « tchèque ».[18] L'auteure écrit que le nom *Coman* « renvoie fortement à l'espace sud-slave » (p. 138, voir aussi p. 174–175), mais ce nom personnel, sans mentionner ici les toponymes qu'il a pu faire naître, est utilisé dans un espace très étendu qui englobe, entre autres, la Valachie, la Moldavie, la Transylvanie et la Pologne (partout sous la forme *Coman*).[19] Toujours dans la même veine, les formes *Coste*, *Costea* ou bien *Costha* n'ont rien de spécifiquement balkanique (cf. p. 177), se trouvant en fait dans toute la moitié orientale du continent européen et au-delà de ses confins: *Costa de Illice*, *Costa de Caffa*, *Costa de Cimballo*, *Costa greco*, *Costa de Trapezondis* (attestés en Crimée), *Coste*, *Costa* (en Pologne), *Costa* (en Transylvanie) ou encore *Coste*, *Costea* (en Moldavie).[20] L'un des détails les plus intéressants que l'auteure ne prend pas en compte est le sceau de *Costea viteazul* (attaché à un acte de l'année 1395) portant une inscription en grec: « † [ΣΠΗΡ]ΑΑ[Γ]ΥΑS ΚΟΣΤΥΟS ».[21] À propos des quelques habitants nommés *Dobre*, l'auteure note avec

[15] Le nom turc le plus proche que nous ayons pu trouver est *Ceyhan* (cf. *Türkischer biographischer Index*, vol. I, éd. Jutta R. M. Çıkar, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2011, p. 233), mais dans ce cas-là on lit la lettre « *c* » comme « *g* ».

[16] Cf. Ion Răuțescu, « Documente dâmbovițene », *Revista Istorică*, vol. X, nos. 10–12, 1924, p. 281, 285–286; *Documente privind relațiile agrare în veacul al XVIII-lea*, vol. II, Moldova, éd. Vasile Mihordea, Ioana Constantinescu et Corneliu Istrati (București: Editura Academiei, 1966), doc. 280, p. 305; doc. 309, p. 327; doc. 310, p. 328; doc. 318, p. 333; doc. 319, p. 337.

[17] Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, I, p. 362; II, p. 96.

[18] Claudia Tudose, *Derivarea cu sufixe în româna populară* (București: Tipografia Universității din București, 1978), 27, 184, 189; Dumitru Loșonți, « Nume de familie provenite de la nume de localități (I) », *Cercetări de Lingvistică*, vol. XXIX, no. 1, 1984, p. 51.

[19] Antroponimia în Transilvania, 190, 228; Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, III, 59.

[20] Alexander Dzhanov, « Каффа и Крым во второй половине XIV в. (преимущественно по данным книг массарии Каффы) », *Sougdaia Collection*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2018, p. 64, 152–153; *idem*, « Каффа, Крымское ханство и османы в 1454–1456 гг (по данным книг массарии Каффы) », *Sougdaia Collection*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2019, p. 229, 236, 239, 244; *idem*, « Каффа, Крымское ханство и соседние государства в 1456–1459 гг. (по данным книг массарии Каффы) », *Sougdaia Collection*, vol. 9, nos. 3–4, 2020, p. 419; *Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych*, III, 97; *Antroponimia în Transilvania*, 190, 236.

[21] Leon Șimanschi, « Cele mai vechi sigilii domnești și boierești din Moldova (1387–1421) », *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie « A. D. Xenopol »*, vol. XVII, 1980, p. 151 et fig. 18 (p. 156).

hésitation soit que ce nom est l'un « des plus répandus sur les deux rives du Danube » (p. 230, n. 179), soit que les porteurs de ce nom peuvent être considérés comme des « allogènes ou des descendants d'allogènes » (p. 259). La Valachie et la Moldavie mises à part, le nom *Dobre* — l'adjectif dobra signifie « bien » — apparaît pareillement en Transylvanie (*Dobra*, *Dobray*, *Dobrin*), en Pologne (*Dobra*, *Dobre*) et en Bohême (*Dobra*, *Dobriza*, *Dobrohna*).[22] Le nom slave *Dobromir* est encadré par l'auteure dans le stock anthroponymique de « noms sud-slaves » (p. 97) ; pourtant, ce nom se retrouve aussi chez les Slaves occidentaux (*Dobromir*, *Dobromirus*, *Dobromira*) et chez les Slaves orientaux (même jusqu'au lointain bourg de Novgorod).[23]

Il ressort, suivant toujours ce livre, qu'une autre indication anthroponymique sur l'origine sud-danubienne des gens est le nom slave *Dragomir*, dont on fournit plusieurs exemples pour la Valachie (p. 106, 123, 138). On passe malheureusement sous silence que le nom *Dragomir* surgit également aux yeux du chercheur à la fois en Moldavie (les diplômes émis par de chancellerie au cours du XV^e^ siècle qui ont traversé les siècles jusqu'à nous attestent l'existence de plus de 20 individus portant ce nom) et en Transylvanie (avec les variantes suivantes: *Dragomir*, *Dragomyr*, *Dragamer*, *Dragumer*, *Dragamerus*, *Dragmer*, *Dragamyr* ou *Dragomer*) dès l'apparition des sources écrites[24]. Certaines suggestions anthroponymiques sont assez courageuses mais dépourvues d'arguments: *Ghedeon*, le nom du scribe de la quatrième épouse d'Alexandre le Bon, est jugé comme d'origine « sud-slave » (p. 138). Outre le simple constat que *Ghedeon* est un nom monastique employé dans tout l'espace orthodoxe (il n'est pas non plus absent dans les milieux catholiques avoisinants: *Gedeon*, *Gedeone*[25]), il convient de remarquer tout de même que nous sommes encore très mal renseignés sur l'origine et l'entourage de la dernière épouse du voïévode, *Marena* (dont le père s'appelait *Marin*, nom presque inconnu en Moldavie, mais son frère portait le nom *Bratul*, utilisé couramment chez les Moldaves[26]). Même le nom *Ivan*, dont toute l'Europe orientale fait communément usage, devient parfois un attribut anthroponymique utilisé pour détecter plus facilement les allogènes sud-slaves (p. 138). Outre cela, l'auteure critique énergiquement « la traduction roumaine des

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[22] Antroponimia în Transilvania, p. 192, 253; Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, I, p. 485–486; Alexander Beider, Onomastic Analysis, p. 61–63, 93.

[23] Daniel H. Kaiser, « Naming Cultures in Early Modern Russia », *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, vol. XIX, 1995, p. 273; *Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych*, I, p. 489.

[24] Antroponimia în Transilvania, p. 192, 253.

[25] Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, II, p. 96.

[26] Voir une discussion chez Nicolae Iorga, « În jurul pomenirii lui Alexandru cel Bun », dans *idem*, *Studii asupra Evului Mediu românesc*, éd. Șerban Papacostea (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1984), 150–151.

noms slaves opérée par les éditeurs des actes slavons de Moldavie », en donnant comme exemple, entre autres, la traduction du nom « *Ivan* par *Ion* » (p. 139, n. 81). À dire la vérité, ce problème est bien plus complexe qu'on ne le songerait au premier abord: dans les diplômes slaves de la chancellerie voïévodale, le même individu a souvent son nom écrit sous plusieurs formes graphiques, ce qui rend la traduction d'autant plus difficile. Voici un cas de cette catégorie: le nom d'un grand boyard du temps d'Alexandre le Bon investi de l'office de *dvornik* ne cesse point d'apparaître de manière différente dans les textes slavons conservés (Oana, Òanna, Òna, Íòna, Ivan ou Vana).[27] Comment s'appelait ce boyard à l'oral ? *Oană*, *Ona* (qui existe aussi[28]), *Ion*, *Ioan*, *Ivan* ou encore *Vană* ? Nul ne peut le dire. Lorsque l'ethnicité même dépend de la forme du nom (!), cette question devient encore plus aiguë. Ces problèmes, on le voit, vont bien au-delà de la simple traduction moderne des noms personnels.

Un scribe de la chancellerie valaque, appelé *Laţco*, reçoit une ascendance sud-slave (p. 138), de nouveau sans aucune raison particulière ; son nom, sous ses nombreuses formes *Laszko, Laszco*, *Lasco*, *Laczko*, est connu de l'espace allemand à celui polonais.[29] Des noms comme *Milco* ou *Miroslav* (cf. p. 138, 177) ne peuvent pas être attachés sans équivoque à l'espace sud-slave.[30] Grâce à son nom, le scribe moldave *Nan* a également des origines balkaniques (p. 138). Cette hypothèse est probablement basée sur l'existence du nom grec Νάννος, mais des noms semblables trouvés en Transylvanie (*Nan*, *Naan*, *Nana*) ou en Pologne (*Nan*) pourraient être aussi invoqués.[31] L'anthroponyme *Paşco* représente l'un des noms, lui aussi, qui rappelle « fortement » de l'espace sud-slave (p. 138), même si nous n'avons aucune raison de croire que nous sommes ici en présence d'un allogène sud-danubien (l'Union polono-lituanienne compte des habitants portant ce nom: *Paszko*, *Paschco*, *Pasco*, *Paschko*, *Pascho*, *Passzko* ou *Pasko*).[32] L'anthroponymie exige beaucoup de prudence. On pourrait encore citer quantité d'autres exemples qui montrent nettement combien délicate est l'interprétation de ces noms personnels. Le cas de *Popovic*,

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[27] *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, A. Moldova, vol. I (1384–1448), éd. C. Cihodaru, I. Caproşu et L. Şimanschi, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei, 1975, doc. 22, p. 31; doc. 24, p. 35; doc. 37, p. 52; doc. 38, p. 54; doc. 40, p. 57; doc. 41, p. 59–60; doc. 47, p. 67; doc. 50, p. 73; doc. 51, p. 75; doc. 52, p. 76. Cf. *Antroponimia în Transilvania*, p. 139 et n. 244.

[28] Nicolae A. Constantinescu, *Dicţionar onomastic românesc* (Bucureşti: Editura Academiei, 1963), XXVIII, 80, 84–85.

[29] Cf. Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, III, 228.

[30] *Ibidem*, p. 511 (*Milco*, *Milko*, *Mylko*), 523–525 (*Miroslaw*, *Miroslaua*, *Miroslaus*, *Mirozlaus* etc.). Cf. S. B. Veselovskij, *Ономастикон*, 198–199.

[31] Antroponimia în Transilvania, 82, 131, 205, 257; Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, IV, 13.

[32] Ibid., 196–197. Cf. S. B. Veselovskij, *Ономастикон*, 240.

Popovici, *Popoviciu* n'est pas moins remarquable. Selon l'auteure, ce nom devrait facilement être inclus dans la catégorie, trop large et aux contours fluides, de noms sud-slaves (p. 138–139). Cependant, la formation locale du nom *Popovici* à partir de *popa* et *-vici* (à savoir « fils de prêtre », celui « du prêtre »[33]) ne doit pas être écartée sans précautions[34] et, du moins pour ce qui est de la Moldavie, une influence de la Pologne peut également être prise en considération: *Poppowicz*, *Popouicz*, *Popowicz* ou *Popowycz*.[35] À propos du nom *Radoslav*, on apprend qu'il était « abondamment usité sur l'autre rive du fleuve » (p. 175), c'est-à-dire au sud du Danube, ce qui est une vérité incontestable. Mais on le trouve également en Pologne, un fait qui nous invite à la prudence lors de la recherche des allogènes balkaniques: *Radozlau*, *Radozlaus*, *Radozlauus*, *Radoslaus*, *Radoslau*.[36] Parmi ceux dont les noms « renvoient fortement à l'espace sud-slave » figure aussi le célèbre logothète moldave qui écrit son nom tantôt *Sima*, tantôt *Simon* (p. 138). Néanmoins, il est en effet difficile de supposer une ascendance sud-slave du logothète qui repose essentiellement sur un argument anthroponymique plutôt fragile: ces noms aux résonances bibliques sont particulièrement populaires en Moldavie à l'époque et, en plus, ils ne sont pas absents en Transylvanie (*Sima*, *Simon*, *Symon*, *Simoun*, *Simun*, *Symeon*, *Sÿmon*) ou en Pologne (*Simon*, *Symon*).[37]

Le nom *Stan*, lui non plus, n'apporte aucune preuve pour l'identification des allogènes sud-slaves (p. 138), car *Stan* est l'un des noms personnels les plus populaires utilisés par les sujets valaques et moldaves durant la période étudiée (on le voit encore dans les régions plus

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[33] Cf. Nicolae A. Constantinescu, *Dicţionar onomastic românesc*, XXXI, 134.

[34] L'auteure se trompe en pensant que « la manière serbe ou ukrainienne de former les patronymes, à l'aide du suffixe *-ić* (*-ici*), a été importée en Moldavie telle quelle » (p. 139, n. 81). Il ne s'agit pas d'un usage mécanique, dénué de toute raison, de quelques suffixes empruntés de leurs voisins, que les Moldaves n'auraient jamais compris, mais d'une utilisation pragmatique des patronymes en fonction du contexte et de la place que l'individu nommé occupe dans sa famille. En voici un exemple: une importante famille de boyards moldaves du XV[e] siècle s'appelle *Jumetate* (Jümetate). Le premier membre de la famille attesté dans les sources est identifié par le nom *Ion Jumetate* (Ion Jùmetate). Ultérieurement, en passant d'une génération à l'autre, les fils d'*Ion* sont mentionnés dans les documents originaux sous des formes telles que *Giurgiu Jumetatevici* (Júrju Júmetatevic), *Ştefu Jumatatevici* (Weful Jumatatevic) et *Mândea Jumătatici* (M\ndr[Jum]tatici), portant ainsi non seulement le nom du père mais aussi le signe de sa filiation. Cependant, cet usage n'empêche pas les scribes d'utiliser aussi la forme simple du patronyme, comme *Ştefu Jumătate* (Weful Jum]tate) (voir *DRH*, A, I, doc. 18, p. 25–27; doc. 77, p. 112–113; doc. 79, p. 115–117; doc. 150, p. 206–207; doc. 157, p. 216–217; doc. 158, p. 218–219; doc. 163, p. 227–229; doc. 189, p. 268–269; doc. 219, p. 307–309).

[35] Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, IV, 323–324.

[36] Ibid., 421–423.

[37] *Antroponimia în Transilvania*, 146–147, 211; *Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych*, V, 60, 347–349. Cf. Valéria Tóth, *Personal Names in a Medieval Context*, Hamburg, Helmut Buske Verlag, 2022, 178–187.

septentrionales: *Stan*, *Sthan*, *Stano*, *Stanus*, *Stana*).[38] De manière similaire, le nom *Stoian* semble être en soi un indice permettant de deviner les possibles origines balkaniques de ceux qui le portent (cf. p. 174–175, 177). On ne peut pas cacher sous le tapis que ce nom, courant dans les contrées moldo-valaques, est en outre attesté en Transylvanie (*Stoyan*, *Ztoyan*) et en Pologne (*Stoyan*, *Stoianus*, *Stoyanus*).[39] Le cas de *Stravici* nous met devant une situation plutôt curieuse: d'une page à l'autre, les porteurs du nom *Stravici* (dont on ne sait rien d'autre que ce que leur nom personnel nous laisse soupçonner) appartiennent parfois à des « noms polono-lituano-russes » (p. 127), parfois à des noms qui « renvoient fortement à l'espace sud-slave » (p. 138). Le lecteur est donc libre de choisir ce qui lui conviendra le mieux. Le nom slave *Tatomir* indiquerait pareillement la présence en Valachie de quelques allogènes venus d'outre-Danube (p. 175). Il est assez périlleux d'aborder des sujets si complexes en ne regardant que les arguments qui paraissent valider notre hypothèse préférée. La Moldavie n'est point étrangère au nom *Tatomir* (on y trouve également deux villages appelés *Tatomireşti*), la Transylvanie connaît toute la gamme de variantes envisageables (*Tatamerius*, *Tatamyrus*, *Thatamerius*, *Thatamer*, *Tatamyr*, *Thamerius*, *Thathemirus*), et la Pologne peut se targuer d'une variété graphique tout aussi impressionnante (*Tatomir*, *Tathomir*, *Thatumyr*, *Thathemirus*, *Thatomir*, *Tatomyer*, *Tatumir*).[40]

Avant de clore cette section controversée mais passionnante de l'anthroponymie historique, tellement importante pour la méthode dont l'auteure s'est servie, un dernier exemple s'impose, cette fois-ci sur le rapport entre l'anthroponymie et la toponymie, auquel nous ajouterons quelques remarques de portée générale. Le nom *Racoviță* porté par la célèbre famille voïévodale du XVIII^e^ siècle — dont les historiens locaux sont souvent fiers d'affirmer qu'elle avait des racines roumaines — trouve son explication étymologique chez Mme Cotovanu dans les contrées éloignées d'Épire. L'avis traditionnel des historiens a pu s'appuyer sur un passage de l'ouvrage *Descriptio Moldaviae*, écrit par l'érudit voïévode Démètre Cantemir, où le nom de famille *Racoviță* est expliqué par le nom du village moldave de *Racova*.[41] Quant à la nouvelle hypothèse épirote, on attire l'attention sur le fait que « selon l'ancien métropolite de Korytsa Evlogios Kourilas, les *Racoviță* étaient originaires du village de *Rakovitsa* (Ρακοβίζντα), aujourd'hui tombé en ruines, mains autrefois situé entre les villages de Droviani et d'Abaritsa, dans le diocèse épirote de Delvino. Je n'ai

[38] Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, V, 171–173.
[39] Antroponimia în Transilvania, p. 212, 259; Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, V, 209.
[40] Antroponimia în Transilvania, p. 213, 259; Słownik staropolskich nazw osobowych, V, 431.
[41] Dimitrie Cantemir, *Descriptio antiqui et hodierni status Moldaviae*, éd. Dan Sluşanschi (Bucureşti: Institutul Cultural Român, 2006), 256–259.

pas pu accéder à la source de cette information » (p. 80). Cette hypothèse intéressante devra être vérifiée et explorée plus à fond lors de futures recherches. Pourtant, il ne faut pas penser que le village épirote de *Rakovitsa* est le seul village de la Péninsule balkanique portant ce nom. En effet, outre le village *Rakovitsa* d'Épire, il existe au moins trois villages et un monastère avec le nom *Rakovitsa* en Bulgarie, un autre village et un monastère portant le même nom en Serbie, et des toponymes similaires ne manquent pas en Croatie ou en Slovénie. Il ne faut pas oublier non plus qu'en Valachie pas moins de six villages appelés *Rakovitsa* sont attestés jusqu'en 1600. Les chercheurs de l'Europe orientale sont très prudents lorsqu'ils étudient les noms de lieux, car le monde slave médiéval est surtout connu pour ses nombreux homonymes toponymiques, qui ne font que semer la confusion.

Selon l'une des conclusions avancées, « l'anthroponymie des conseillers allogènes d'avant 1500 indique que la plupart d'entre eux tiraient leurs racines des régions sud-danubiennes de langue grecque ou slavonne » (p. 128). Toutefois, les ombres du doute — nous l'avons vu ci-dessus — peuvent être jetées sur cette conclusion. Il y a toujours un stock anthroponymique slave commun à plusieurs peuples, et les Roumains, situés au cœur du monde slave, ont assimilé une bonne partie de ce stock. Le nom seul ne nous renseigne pas beaucoup sur l'origine d'un individu. Qui plus est, la question souvent négligée de la popularité de certains noms à l'époque, très difficile à étudier en particulier du fait que la plupart des noms attestés couvrent une minorité noble ou commerçante de la population,[42] devra assurément être approfondie à l'avenir. Les transformations du stock anthroponymique peuvent être liées à de multiples causes qui s'influencent mutuellement: le changement de la domination politique, l'augmentation de l'emprise de l'Église, les mouvements de population et même l'évolution des goûts et des préférences. Il faut prendre garde à ne pas se tromper: la simple prépondérance numérique de noms laïcs d'origine slave dans les diplômes rédigés en slavon d'Église et délivrés par les chancelleries princières de Moldavie et de Valachie ne peut pas être invoquée en vue de prouver que les porteurs de ces noms d'emprunt slave n'étaient pas des roumanophones nés dans les Principautés danubiennes (soit dit en passant, une partie de l'historiographie ukrainienne croit encore, on le sait bien, que la plupart des boyards moldaves auraient eu une origine ethnique ruthène, voire ukrainienne). Pour tout dire, peu

[42] En outre, il y a relativement beaucoup de noms d'esclaves, mais très peu de noms de paysans. Il ne faut pas perdre de vue que le nombre total d'individus nommés dans les documents est particulièrement faible; les chercheurs l'ont estimé à 1 % de la population totale (Christian Ionescu, « Sistemul antroponimic românesc în secolele al XIV-lea și al XV-lea (Țara Românească) », *Limba română*, vol. XXVII, no. 3, 1978, p. 243).

importe ce que nous souhaitions prouver, mais il importe beaucoup de savoir comment nous le prouvons.

Une fois ces précautions gardées à l'esprit, il n'est point niable que le livre parvient bel et bien à mettre en avant toute une série de noms balkaniques, presque inconnus parmi les autochtones nord-danubiens, que les sources slavo-roumaines font surgir de plus en plus souvent au fur et à mesure que les Pays roumains s'intègrent au monde ottoman: *Andoca*, *Andronache*, *Andronic*, *Apostol*, *Aranite*, *Aslan*, *Balş*, *Braga*, *Caloian*, *Casandra*, *Catarina*, *Chirana*, *Chiriac*, *Conde*, *Costachi*, *Dabija*, *Darie*, *Dedu*, *Diamandi*, *Dona*, *Duca*, *Elina*, *Enache*, *Ene*, *Fota*, *Ghica*, *Ghinea*, *Ghioca*, *Ghiorma*, *Giva*, *Grama*, *Hagi*, *Harvat*, *Hrizea*, *Hurmuzachi*, *Iamandi*, *Ianache*, *Iane*, *Iordache*, *Iorga*, *Isar*, *Istratie*, *Jipa*, *Jivco*, *Lambru*, *Lambrino*, *Leca*, *Lefter*, *Macrea*, *Malcoci*, *Manolache*, *Manta*, *Mavrodin*, *Milea*, *Necula*, *Nica*, *Novac*, *Palade*, *Panait*, *Pangratie*, *Pascal*, *Pavlache*, *Petcu*, *Proca*, *Procop*, *Răgep*, *Rustea*, *Stamatie*, *Statie*, *Stavru*, *Sterie*, *Stelea*, *Ştirbei*, *Trandafir*, *Trufanda*, *Verga*, *Zota*. Il faudra certainement approfondir et élargir cette étude de l'anthroponymie historique comme manifestation des interactions sociales entre les hommes issus des différents milieux culturels. Cet ouvrage a l'indéniable mérite de placer l'étude des noms personnels au centre de l'analyse historique, mais — il faut bien l'admettre — nous sommes encore très loin d'avoir une profonde compréhension des transformations anthroponymiques engendrées par la présence des émigrés balkaniques dans leurs nouveaux milieux d'accueil qui s'avérèrent être les Pays roumains.[43]

Les notions-clés d'« allogène », d'« autochtone » et de « roumain », chacune avec un parcours historiographique long et sinueux, suscitent pareillement l'intérêt des lecteurs. L'attention particulière portée à la définition de ces concepts traverse tout l'ouvrage, de telle sorte que personne ne devrait rencontrer trop de difficultés à comprendre l'acception que l'auteure donne à ces notions indispensables pour sa démarche. Ainsi, par « allogène », on entend des individus « nés/originaires d'ailleurs », à savoir des « sujets des princes valaques et moldaves arrivés d'ailleurs, intégrés dans les corporations fiscales locales, avec famille et patrimoine

[43] Voici quelques-unes des questions de recherche posées il n'y a pas si longtemps dans l'introduction d'un volume collectif : « Qu'arrive-t-il au nom porté par un migrant ? Son anthroponymie est-elle modifiée par la migration ou résiste-t-elle à l'installation dans un nouveau milieu ? (…) Son origine étrangère [du migrant] est-elle traduite par un surnom qui garde la mémoire de son origine, toponyme ou choronyme ? Ou par la conservation de son nom originel qui peut sonner aux oreilles locales d'une manière qui indique sans ambiguïté l'endroit d'où il vient ? Ou bien ce surnom est-il adapté à la langue et aux prononciations locales ? Quelle solution traduit-elle la plus forte intégration ? (…) Combien dure le souvenir de l'immigration comme un mémoire active, essentielle, identitaire ? » (Anthroponymie et migrations dans la chrétienté médiévale, éd. Monique Bourin et Pascual Martínez Sopena (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2010), 3).

fondés sur place », mais qui, « en dépit de leur intégration sociale et politico-juridique », « gardaient des degrés d'extranéité (par la langue, la mémoire de l'origine géographique, l'attachement à la famille, la communauté et les lieux de culte de l'espace de départ), qu'ils transmettaient à leurs descendants par l'effet de la première socialisation des enfants, mais aussi par l'alimentation de leur environnement social immédiat avec des nouveaux arrivés du même espace géographique » (p. 14), et « les descendants d'allogènes », quant à eux, ont été « comptés jusqu'à la troisième génération » (p. 288) ; par « autochtone », on comprend tous ceux qui sont nés dans les Principautés danubiennes, « autochtones par leur naissance sur le sol valaque/moldave » (p. 187) ; et, dernièrement, par « roumain », on entend toute personne qui parle l'ancienne langue roumaine, « roumain par la langue » (p. 187). Cependant, ces définitions ne sont pas sans ambiguïtés.

La notion d'autochtonie, définie comme telle et appliquée à ceux nés sous juridiction valaque/moldave, remet en question la notion de « descendant d'allogène », éventuellement né au nord du Danube, tout en donnant lieu à une délimitation très vague, quelquefois même indéchiffrable pour l'historien, entre « allogène » et « autochtone », dont les gens de l'époque ont su fort bien se servir en vue de résoudre leurs propres soucis. Au demeurant, l'autochtonie ne doit bien entendu pas être confondue avec la roumanité, et cela malgré une tradition historiographique dont les fidèles se plaisent à mettre un signe d'équivalence entre Roumains et autochtones. L'État médiéval compte ses sujets selon des critères économiques, fiscaux, liés à la résidence, mais jamais selon des critères linguistiques et ethnico-raciaux. La question de la religion pratiquée par les sujets, parfois oscillante mais en tout cas ouverte à la négociation politique, varie en quelque sorte en fonction du contexte. À proprement parler, la naissance en terre valaque/moldave ne suppose pas forcément la pureté des origines, toujours discutables, et n'exclut pas nécessairement les appartenances culturales multiples ou encore les contacts noués à l'étranger. Nourrie de la sève des études récentes, l'auteure semble très bien connaître tous ces aspects. Nonobstant, ce qui n'est pas affirmé carrément — pour ne donner ici qu'un seul exemple — c'est que beaucoup des « marchands issus d'immigration » (p. 187) ont rapidement fini par devenir des « autochtones », et certains d'entre eux même des Roumains, en apprenant la langue locale au fil du temps. Certes, les grands commerçants ayant la résidence principale dans les Principautés danubiennes étaient des présences plutôt rares, et les voïévodes en sont conscients[44]. Mais, oui! Les Pays roumains ont eu une classe marchande autochtone, généralement composée d'Allemands,

[44] Un voïévode moldave se plaint que sa ville de résidence reste sans marchands: *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, série A. Moldova, vol. XX (1629–1631), éd. I. Caproșu, C. Burac (București: Editura Academiei Române, 2011), doc. 473, p. 497–499.

d'Arméniens, de Hongrois, de Juifs, de Grecs, d'Italiens et de Polonais. Ne pas admettre que nombre d'entre eux deviennent eux-mêmes des autochtones au fur et à mesure que le temps passait, c'est ignorer le problème sous-jacent. Les conclusions du chapitre sur le commerce (p. 237–238) nous paraissent être plutôt décevantes, car l'auteure semble maintenir intacte l'équivalence traditionnelle, d'ailleurs très contestable, entre Roumains et autochtones.[45] Les Roumains étaient la plupart (mais pas tous !) des autochtones.

L'ambition de ce livre — qui est précisément de fournir aux lecteurs une image globale du phénomène de l'immigration dans les Pays roumains jusqu'au début du XVIII^e^ siècle — se reflète admirablement dans l'utilisation soutenue de la méthode de recherche quantitative, que les médiévistes roumains n'emploient guère parce qu'elle exige une méthode de travail et des données nombreuses se déroulant sur une longue période, ce que les sources conservées ne nous permettent souvent pas. Malgré ces difficultés qui auraient découragé toute autre volonté moins déterminée que la sienne, les résultats présentés par l'auteure sont parmi les plus encourageants pour l'avenir des recherches. En parcourant les riches annexes de l'ouvrage, le lecteur a l'occasion de découvrir un véritable effort de mise en ordre et de systématisation — tout à fait extraordinaire par rapport à ce que la science historique nous a donné jusqu'ici — des connaissances disponibles sur les élites politiques qui ont géré l'administration des Principautés danubiennes. À titre d'exemple, nous mentionnons la constatation selon laquelle environ 85 % des douaniers connus pour avoir administré les douanes en Moldavie entre 1400 et 1711 (de toute façon, la liste dressée n'est pas complète) sont soit des allogènes, soit des descendants d'allogènes (p. 404–409). Les données sur lesquelles se fondent certaines de ces estimations quantitatives sont parfois insuffisantes. En ce qui concerne la Moldavie du XV^e^ siècle, on étudie particulièrement le commerce moldo-polonais, pour lequel l'auteure met en lumière un nombre de 36 de marchands (p. 215–218). L'existence d'un fragment du registre douanier couvrant les années 1480–1481, rédigé à Braşov et publié par Gernot Nussbächer, passe totalement inaperçue. Ce fragment du registre, qui nous permet de jeter un coup d'œil sur le commerce entre la ville de Braşov et la Moldavie à l'époque d'Étienne le Grand, comprend pas

[45] « Les marchands "autochtones", à savoir "roumains", sont-ils moins visibles dans les sources parce que, pour des raisons inconnues, les sources n'en parlent pas ou parce que ce sont eux (à supposer qu'ils ont [aient] existé) qui se manifestaient en marge d'une classe marchande qui, depuis toujours, a tiré ses origines de l'extérieur des Principautés et qui n'a jamais cessé de renouveler ses rangs avec des nouveaux arrivés ? Les données qui j'ai pu réunir ici convergent en faveur du second cas de figure. L'existence d'une classe marchande "roumaine et autochtone" ne tient pas la route et la participation des "autochtones" aux échanges commerciaux autrement qu'en qualité de simples agriculteurs, éleveurs de bétail et artisans ne se confirme pas » (p. 237).

moins de 114 noms d'individus impliqués dans le commerce qui franchit le territoire moldave.[46] L'absence de cette source anthroponymique de première main dans une analyse d'une telle ampleur trouve difficilement une explication. Tout compte fait, les tableaux et les textes ne correspondent pas toujours. Ainsi, on considère deux burgraves de Cetatea Albă, *Iurghici* et *Hărman*, comme susceptibles d'être des allogènes (p. 125–126), mais le tableau des burgraves ne retient aucun burgrave allogène de Cetatea Albă (p. 132).

Le dernier chapitre du livre, intitulé la « Géographie de l'immigration » (p. 269–285), présente une discussion fort intéressante sur les lieux d'origine des allogènes arrivés dans les Pays roumains. Des observations méthodologiques qui revêtent une importance toute particulière viennent s'intégrer harmonieusement aux études de cas et aux bilans quantitatifs tout aussi judicieux dans une présentation cohérente et convaincante. Il aurait été souhaitable que l'auteure dresse une liste aussi complète que possible des cités de l'espace grec mentionnées dans les sources slavo-roumaines (voir, par exemple, le cas des marchands d'*Alasona* qui, en 1624, entretiennent des relations commerciales à Craiova[47]). Les données avancées ne sont pas exemptes de petites erreurs: quatre individus sont présentés ici comme venant de « Trébizonde, en Crimée » (p. 270), et la péninsule de Crimée est considérée comme un « espace de langue grecque » vers lequel les sujets valaques et moldaves envoient des donations religieuses (p. 279). Étant donné que l'habitude des *errata* à la fin des livres est tombée malheureusement en désuétude et que de nombreuses rédactions et maisons d'édition ne prennent plus la peine de lire attentivement les textes avant publication, il n'est peut-être pas sans intérêt de signaler en bas de page quelques fautes d'écriture que l'on rencontre en parcourant le livre.[48]

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[46] Gernot Nussbächer, « Un document privind comerțul Brașovului cu Moldova la sfârșitul secolului al XV-lea (I) », *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie « A. D. Xenopol »*, vol. XXI, 1984, p. 425–437; *(II)*, vol. XXII, no. 2, 1985, p. 667–678; *(III)*, vol. XXIII, no. 1, 1986, p. 325–342; *(IV)*, vol. XXV, no. 1, 1988, p. 319–330.

[47] *Documente privind Istoria României*, série B. Țara Românească, XVII/4 (1621–1625), éd. Ion Ionașcu *et alii* (București: Editura Academiei, 1954), doc. 395, p. 385–387 et doc. 440, p. 429–430.

[48] Tout au long du livre, le mot « État » est écrit avec une minuscule, malgré le fait que l'auteure se réfère assez fréquemment à une autorité souveraine (p. 8, 11–12, 18, 19, 25–26, 36, 62, 74, 87, 89, 90 (n. 5), 110 (n. 134), 119–120, 128, 138, 150 (n. 137), 166, 180, 186 (n. 2), 188, 190, 204, 207–209, 212, 222 (n. 144), 229, 231, 233, 239, 265, 269, 283, 289 etc.), « plu tôt » (p. 35), « le vatse réseau » (p. 45), « celuic-ci » (p. 54), « dan les pays » (p. 55, n. 146), « difficile a définir » (p. 61, n. 170), « voïïévode » (p. 72), « réseaux de pouvoirs sans le sud-est de l'Europe » (p. 74, n. 236), « à queques km » (p. 75), « Qant au prince » (p. 76), « la sescendance » (p. 84), « j'ai jugé oportun » (p. 88), « le domaine du religieu » (p. 88), « matérièlement » (p. 89), « nom inabituel » (p. 94, n. 21), « se sont les affaires » (p. 95), « cmptant » (p. 111), « vastes dommaines » (p. 117), « les beasoins de la Cour » (p. 119), « la précence coumane » (p. 121, n. 13), « registres de récencement » (p. 121, n. 17), « d'utres sources » (p. 121, n. 17), « ausi bien » (p. 126, n. 50), « à été importée » (p. 139, n. 81), « phénomène recurent » (p. 149), « les privilèges étaient meintenus » (p. 171, n. 270), « terrain de constructon » (p. 176),

Le compte rendu, injustement relégué au stade de genre mineur, n'est ni décernement d'éloges stériles, ni résumé informatif à courte vue, mais c'est plutôt l'occasion de réfléchir ensemble sur les données qui façonnent même notre vision du monde. Le succès d'un ouvrage se mesure au nombre de réactions qu'il suscite, et il n'y a aucun doute que ce livre, passionnant d'un bout à l'autre, ne cessera jamais de faire réfléchir ses lecteurs. À n'en pas douter, l'œuvre *Émigrer en terre valaque*, écrite par Mme Lidia Cotovanu, est assurément l'un des meilleurs livres d'histoire prémoderne que la culture roumaine a vu dans ce siècle.

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Ion Cârja, Ioana Rustoiu, Smaranda Cutean, Zoran Marcov (editors), *Proiecte şi destine româneşti în amurg de imperii: Legiunea Română din Italia (documente vizuale) = Progetti e destini romeni al tramonto degli imperi: la Legione Romena d'Italia (documenti visuali)*. Cluj-Napoca, Ed. Argonaut & Mega, 2021, XL, 115 p.

In the historiography of recent decades, the First World War and visual sources have gained increasing notoriety. On the one hand, there is the attention the Great War has received – and continues to receive – after 2014-2018, when we remembered the centenary of the conflagration. Historiography has gone beyond the phase of factographic reconstruction and has focused on cultural aspects, on everyday life, on sensitivity and humanity, aspects that have been facilitated by the discovery and exploitation of new types of sources, archival, memorial, including visual sources.

This volume is at the meeting point between the cultural reconstruction of the Great War and the visual sources. It is dedicated to the Romanian Legion in Italy, formed in 1917-1918 of Romanian soldiers of the Imperial-Royal army of Austria-Hungary, who had been taken

« parmi les les Saxons » (p. 181), « domicile fical » (p. 187), « enregistrent l'a contribution » (p. 191, n. 15), « mes métaux précieux » (p. 191, n. 15), « Ssciences sociales » (p. 191, n. 15), « à été signé » (p. 193, n. 24), « des produis agricoles récoltés » (p. 201), « marqueur idntitaire » (p. 206), « le dévellopement » (p. 209, n. 95), « si-dessus » (p. 217), « fut povoquée » (p. 222, n. 144), « la politique protectioniste applliquée » (p. 222, n. 144), « villages des alentour de la ville » (p. 244, n. 25), « les produis récoltés » (p. 247), « on à affaire » (p. 259), « le recceuil d'articles » (p. 262, n. 124), « Rconomic » (p. 262, n. 124), « les villageois ont fuit » (p. 263, n. 137), « métoquee » (p. 264), « las villes » (p. 267), « afficher tout autre appartenance » (p. 284), « Intrnationale » (p. 309), « Małowist Mariana » (p. 323), « ptrévôt » (p. 174, 427) etc.

prisoners or had deserted on the Italian front and who were recruited to form a Romanian legion to join the Romanian army, which participated in the War alongside the armies of the Entente.

Of the wide variety of themes and topics related to the Great War, the legions formed of prisoners and thrown into battle against their original armies is a distinct theme. These include legions of prisoners from the Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Ottoman Empires, which formed Czechoslovak legions (France, Italy, Russia), Romanian legions (Italy, Russia), Serbian, Yugoslav, Polish and Jewish legions. The best known is undoubtedly the Czechoslovak Legion, which continued its existence during the Russian Civil War, fighting in Siberia and repatriating via a complicated route through Vladivostok, the United States and France[49].

In Romanian historiography, the Romanian legions that were organized during the First World War have been less studied, and yet it is worth mentioning as an example the memorial restitution work *Legiunea Română din Siberia*. Ioana Rustoiu, Marius Cristea, Smaranda Cutean, Tudor Roșu (eds.), 3 volumes. Alba Iulia, Editura Muzeului Național al Unirii Alba Iulia - Cluj-Napoca, Ed. Mega, 2021[50]. In addition, professor Liviu Maior has written about the Romanian soldiers in the Austro-Hungarian army over the past years[51].

Originally, this publication was an exhibition organized by the National Museum of the Union in Alba Iulia, in collaboration with the National Museum of Banat in Timișoara and the historian Ion Cârja from the Faculty of History and Philosophy of Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj, a Great War specialist. The exhibition was presented in Italy in Trento, Valcellina and Fanna (2018-2020), and then turned into an impressive bilingual Romanian-Italian album.

The visual part of the work (its centrepiece) is preceded by a substantial *Introduction [Introducere]*, which explains its genesis, subject and approach, as well as the source categories employed (see also *Note on the edition [Nota asupra ediției]*). The visual material is divided into three

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[49] See for example Karel Pichlík, Bohumír Klípa, Jitka Zabloudilová, *Československí legionáři (1914-1920)* (Praha, Mladá fronta, 1996); Joan McGuire Mohr, *The Czech and Slovak Legion in Siberia, 1917-1922* (Jefferson, North Carolina, McFarland & Company, Inc. Publishers, 2012).

[50] See also Vasile Dudaș, Legiunea română din Franța (1918-1919). Pagini de istorie militară și diplomatică (Timișoara, Ed. Mirton, 1996); Dumitru Zaharia (ed.), Legiunea Română din Italia. Documente italiene (București, Ed. Militară, 2019).

[51] Liviu Maior, *Românii în armata habsburgică. Soldați și ofițeri uitați* (București, Ed. Enciclopedică, 2004); id., *Habsburgi și români. De la loialitatea dinastică la identitate națională* (Bucureşti, Ed. Enciclopedică, 2006); id., *Doi ani mai devreme. Ardeleni, bucovineni și basarabeni în război: 1914-1916* (Cluj-Napoca, Şcoala Ardeleană, 2016); *Sub cenuşa imperiului. Soldați români în armata austro-ungară*. Radu Stanca, Florica Bucur, Liviu Maior (eds.) (Bucureşti, National Archives of Romania), 2018.

chapters, which communicate convincingly through their images. The first chapter is dedicated to the Romanian soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian army who fought on the Italian front. The second chapter is dedicated to Petre Ugliș, an officer of Romanian origin in the Austro-Hungarian army, a representative figure who has been transformed by the authors of the album into a case study. Petre Ugliș began his military career like thousands of other Austro-Hungarian officers, fought on the front in Italy, where he decided to desert (along with 82 soldiers from his regiment) and became one of the organisers of the Romanian Legion in Italy. His case is well known, as the National Museum of the Union in Alba Iulia holds important archival material (including visual documents) acquired 50 years ago from or donated by their owner. In fact, most of the material published in the album comes from the fund of the Alba Iulia museum. The third chapter of the album is dedicated to the Romanian Legion in Italy: organisation, activity and departure to Romania (at the end of the war).

The illustrated documentary material is spectacular as organised by the editors of the volume and illustrates the daily life of the soldiers at the front very well. It consists especially of photographs and postcards. The photographs were taken by Romanian soldiers, most of them at the front, even from the front line. They do not depict battle scenes, but scenes with military or relaxation themes (groups of soldiers in front of shelters, in the dining hall, repairing their uniforms or shoes, shaving). Most postcards are written by Petre Ugliș to his fiancée and have a greater degree of intimacy, illustrating the thoughts and feelings of the sender in various military units and even on the front line, even if "problematic" details are avoided because of censorship ("Scumpo! Sunt într-o peșteră la câțiva pași de inamic, în care am să stau, cu feciorii, douăzeci și patru de ore. Astă noapte era să mă prindă, cu toată ceata, dar am scăpat norocoși. Stăm aici ca într-o cocină. Afară ninge. Vecinii lucră în pădure și fac larmă. Îți sărut mânuțele!" / "Darling! I'm in a cave a few feet from the enemy, where I'm going to stay, with the boys, for twenty-four hours. The other night they [the enemy] almost caught me, with the whole group, but we were lucky to escape. We're sitting here like in a pigsty. It's snowing outside. The neighbors are working in the woods and making a racket. I kiss your little hands!" (November 22nd, 1917, published on p. 45). These postcards are exceptional and informative documentary materials for a history of the intimacy of front-line soldiers[52]

[52] See also Mária Lupescu and Radu Mârza, *Sending Greetings during the Great War*, in *World War I. The other face of the war*. Edited by Ioan Bolovan, Rudolf Gräf, Harald Heppner, Oana Mihaela Tămaș. Cluj-Napoca, Romanian Academy, Center for Transylvanian Studies, Cluj University Press, 2016, p. 411-441.

and are also valuable as sources for postal history, but also for the actual postcard illustrations, some of which bear various marks made by the senders (crosses, arrows) to show the recipients places they passed through or buildings they lived in (see pages 38-45).

Other sources published in the album are extracts from Petru Ugliș's diary, front newspapers, propaganda posters, documents concerning the establishment of the Romanian Legion in Italy, invitations, lists of soldiers, diplomas, business cards.

The editors of the album have managed to collect, document and bring together an impressive number of documents within the pages of the publication that speak about the "little history" of the Romanian soldiers at the front in Italy, but also about the "big history" of the constitution and functioning of the Romanian Legion in Italy. It is a historiographical enterprise that combines the historian's documentation work and the spectacle represented by the visual and archival materials.

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Constantin Ardeleanu, *O croazieră de la Viena la Constantinopol. Călători, spații, imagini: 1830-1860*. Bucureşti, Ed. Humanitas, 2021, 302 **p.**

In a bibliography of the Romanian cultural history of 19th century, Constantin Ardeleanu's book must absolutely be included. It represents a necessary contribution to a field hitherto less considered in Romanian historiography, one that is at the meeting point between political history – historical geography – history of travel – history of transport, and not least, the history of literature and visual sources.

Historian Constantin Ardeleanu's book is a continuation of a preoccupation for the history of navigation and trade on the Lower Danube that dates back more than a decade, which is an undeniable advantage. The author is familiar with the subject matter, as well as with Romanian and foreign specialised literature and, very importantly, has read numerous period sources (travel memoirs, travel guides, memoirs and diaries, correspondence). All this makes the book, suggestively titled *O croazieră de la Viena la Constantinopol* [A Cruise from Vienna to Constantinople], a must for anyone interested.

The author's thesis is that at the beginning of the 19th century, especially after the Treaty of Adrianople (1829) and the great political and economic aperture that the Romanian Principalities experienced in this

context, the Danube – more precisely the sector that represented the southern border of Wallachia and Moldova – became a real river "highway", one of the main axes of navigation, mobility and trade in Europe. This historical process happily intersects the development of steam navigation on the Danube, thanks to the Austrian navigation companies and the interests of the Austrian Empire, in the context of the "passage from the small to the large Europe" (I borrowed the phrase from the French historian Pierre Chaunu, even if he used it for the Early Modern Period). In addition to this, Romanian cereal production was entering the international market, which required adequate infrastructure: the Danube was the communication route, and steamboats were the means of transport. The Danube is the road on which the prosperity of the Principalities depends. The author rightly speaks of a commercial revolution in the Lower Danube (p. 21), but it is also a revolution of mobility, of communication between countries and between people. He is equally justified in talking about the role of the Danube in the creation of modern Romania (p. 26).

The book is indeed a cruise from Vienna to Constantinople, which the author reconstructs in all its complexity. Each chapter of the book reveals a different perspective. For example, the first chapter tells of a 1500-kilometre *Cruise among civilisations* [O croazieră printre civilizații], i.e. from Central Europe (Southern Germany, the Austrian Empire) along the Danube (the Ottoman Serbia and Bulgaria, Wallachia) to Ottoman Dobrogea and the mouths of the Danube (which become Russian possessions after the Congress of Paris) and finally to Constantinople. In fact, this axis of communication links not only two imperial capitals, but two worlds: Europe and the East, and the sector of the Danube that the author looks at closely is a fascinating area of transition.

The first steamboat runs on the Danube in the middle sector of the river (between Vienna and Buda) in 1830, and four years later steamboats crossed the difficult Iron Gates (Rom. Porțile de Fier, Serb. Đerdapska klisura), soon providing regular trips from the Austrian capital to Constantinople. Here we also read about the possible routes from Vienna to Constantinople (terrestrial, fluvial), each with its advantages and disadvantages, about the organisation of steam navigation, travel times, frequency of trips, costs, competition, political context (the interests of the Austrian Empire towards the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire, the interests of Russia to control the mouths of the Danube, etc.). It is interesting that on the Lower Danube, Austrian ships preferred to sail on the left (Romanian) bank of the river (p. 67). An alternative to navigation

on the Russian-controlled sector of the Danube (the Delta area) was to disembark passengers and goods at Cernavodă, from where the journey continued overland. Not coincidentally, the Ottoman administration was in a hurry to build a railway to Constanța (inaugurated in 1860, the first in the Ottoman Empire), but there were also plans to build a river canal (p. 79, see also p. 135).

It is worth noting the author's conclusions regarding the development of the Danube ports of the Romanian Principalities in the context of steam navigation and the collateral development of roadways. The end of steam navigation on the Danube – as an economic engine – will be caused by the rapid spread of railways in the areas crossed by the Danube, first in the German countries and the Austrian Empire, then in the Romanian Principalities and Ottoman Dobrogea (p. 76-84).

The next chapter, *Un oraș plutitor* [A Floating City], whose title paraphrases that of a famous novel by Jules Verne, refers to the time spent by travellers on the steamboat. The author looks at the journey from a socio-cultural perspective, placing great emphasis on the ethnic and social diversity of the travellers, the cultural worlds that they come from, their customs, sociability, spending time, dining, manifestations of intimacy (and especially the lack thereof). All these observations are made by carefully reading the travel writings of contemporaries, important testimonies regarding the society, people, places and landscape.

The third chapter is a gaze upon the *territory*, seen from a political and geopolitical perspective. The Danube has always been both a border and a communication route. Constantin Ardeleanu rightly looks at the Danube in the wider context of the "Eastern Question", showing that the development of steam navigation and new political and economic circumstances only increase the role of the river in the region (see Russian expansionism in the Danube Delta, p. 130-135).

Last but not least, it is worth mentioning the geographical and political image (images) being built up along the Danube (p. 152) through Western or Central European travellers observing people and landscapes from steamboats and constructing images of Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the East...

The fourth chapter follows the Romanian travellers who crossed the Danube by steamboat (Dimitrie Bolintineanu, Mihail Kogălniceanu, George Barițiu, Vasile Alecsandri, Nicolae Filimon). Some of them have written travel reports, memoirs or letters about their journey on the Danube. These pages prove the potential that the theme of Danube

steamboat travel has for researchers studying the Romanian history during the 19th century.

A more unusual dimension is provided by Chapter 5, *Călătorii și epidemii* [Travels and Epidemics], a chapter that examines the Danube as a frontier space, fiercely guarded by Austrian, Romanian and Russian border guards, not only for military or commercial reasons, but also for sanitary and even political reasons (p. 194-195, 214-216). The experience of quarantine is among the most interesting fragments of the travellers' accounts of the time. The sanitary issue proves once again how complex travel becomes in modern times and how varied the aspects to be considered are.

The sixth chapter is equally interesting, devoted to the relationship between *Nature and Technology in the Iron Gates* [Natură și tehnologie în Clisura Dunării]. The steamboat is in itself a very important technical innovation, revolutionising travel between Europe and the East, and the great advances of the age (the use of steam-powered machinery, new construction techniques) make it possible to smooth the journey along the most difficult (and spectacular!) stretch of the Danube, at the Iron Gates. This is the age of the Industrial Revolution. Until then, the journey on the Danube had been broken up into several stages, travellers and goods from Vienna and Buda being most often disembarked at the entrance to the gorge (Moldova Nouă) and transported overland in carriages or ox-carts and then re-embarking on (other) steamboats at Schela Cladovei, from where they continued their journey to Cernavodă or Galați, from where they were transhipped onto the marine vessels bringing them to the Black Sea ports or Constantinople. Since the Roman period, the journey on the Danube would be limited at the Iron Gates, and it was not until modern times that it became more fluid.

The numerous period sources that Constantin Ardeleanu draws on and generously shares with us are worth noting. He has read them carefully and has extracted a wide variety of aspects from them, making his approach a real cultural journey. Moreover, the book excels through its political and geopolitical, anthropological and sociological interpretations and, not least, is a brief technical history of navigation on the Danube. These are the most important and compelling arguments of a book that is read with bated breath, just like the travellers from 1840-1850 must have also traversed the most dangerous segments of the Danube, at the Iron Gates.

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Petre Alexandrescu, *Continentul scufundat. Conversații despre trecut*. Interviews by Mihaela Udrescu, preface by Cătălin Pavel. Edited by Vlad Alexandrescu. Iaşi, Bucureşti, Ed. Polirom, 2022, 463 p.

Memoir is an attractive literary genre (also) due to the human factor of the written text. It appeals to ordinary readers, but it also appeals to historians who are always eager to know more about the author of the memoir, their family, childhood, training, biographical and professional journeys, the people they met throughout their life, their readings and ideas, etc., all the more so when the author is also a historian.

I regretfully confess that I have not heard about this historian, more precisely archaeologist, or I may have but he has not caught my attention, likely because he pertained to a different environment (professionally, geographically and historically) from mine, but from the first pages, the book and its author have captivated me.

Petre Alexandrescu (1930-2009) was a historian and archaeologist who worked in Bucharest, mostly at the "Vasile Pârvan" Institute of Archaeology, spending several decades on ancient archaeological sites, especially linked to Histria and other Greek sites. He has published important scientific contributions, has engaged in debates and contributed to the development of contemporary Romanian archaeology.

The present work is a memoir, organized in the form of interviews (dialogues) conducted by Mihaela Udrescu. Reading the book and reflecting on some of the author's statements, my appreciation for this way of transposing memorial information was reconfirmed. On the one hand, in the case of a classic memoir, in which the authors quietly writes down their memories, they have time to dwell, to remember, to go back over some of the written information, in other words they have the opportunity to "self-censor". On the other hand, a dialogue with another person has more authenticity, the information resulting from the discussion is more... raw, less "self-censored" (although even in this case, the author, the family or the book's editor have the opportunity to go back, to correct some nuances). In this case, Mihaela Udrescu was the perfect interlocutor: she graduated from the Faculty of History in Bucharest a few years after Petre Alexandrescu, she has been on several

archaeological sites, worked at the publishing house of the Romanian Academy, among many of those mentioned in the book.

Continentul scufundat [The Sunken Continent] is the story of a world that has died and about which, without saying it directly, Petre Alexandrescu *dă sama* [i.e. "gives an account"], in the words of the chronicler Miron Costin. The memoirist approaches this world chronologically, starting from his own family, and the way in which he presents it, with its entanglements, the social and cultural profiles of some of the family members, the fate that they suffered, prove how important the family background was to the formation and path of the memoirist. The same can be said of the Vianu family, into which he entered through his marriage to Maria, Tudor Vianu's daughter. Here, too, he dwells on the important family members and convincingly recreates a world, an atmosphere. His entry into the Vianu family is described as a kind of (human, intellectual) salvation after the critical moment of his life – the years 1947-1948, a moment of personal crisis, caused – at a sensitive age (17-18) – by the radical transformations Romania was undergoing: the establishment of the Communist regime. Here a drama is documented that other historians or memoirists may brush aside more easily. The reconstruction of the two families – Alexandrescu and Vianu – and the human dimension of the memorial reconstruction are among the book's most important contributions.

One of the fundamental contributions of the book is the portrayal of the people that the author has met. Great personalities of Romanian historiography and archaeology "parade" through the pages of the book: Ion Nestor, Radu Vulpe and Alexandru Vulpe, D.M. Pippidi, Emil Condurachi, Mihail Roller, Kurt Horedt, Constantin Daicoviciu, Aurelian Petre and Zoe Petre, Vlad Georgescu, Andrei Pippidi, Virgil Cândea, Răzvan Theodorescu, along with other leading intellectuals of the time: Iorgu Iordan, Alexandru Rosetti, Mihai Ralea, Ion Vianu, Geo Bogza, and not least Tudor Vianu, his father-in-law. There are also references to those who frequented the Vianu house, but whom Petre Alexandrescu never met personally: George Călinescu, Ion Barbu and Lucian Blaga. A very interesting world, treated unequally; many characters are accompanied by value judgements, some warm, some neutral, some harsh, but all are valuable because those who will use *Continentul scufundat* as a historical source will know how to sift through the personal and, of course, subjective opinions of the memoirist. A world that manifested itself unequally in the decades that the author lived through or was told about by those close to him, a world that collaborated with the Antonescu regime and then with the Communist regime (with the Party, with the

Securitate) or that tried to resist, even to dissent, but that for the most part struggled to survive, making smaller or greater compromises.

Another noteworthy contribution is, in relation to the people, the reconstruction of the intellectual and human atmosphere around some of the representative figures. Alexandrescu writes about the "courts" that were created around figures like Emil Condurachi, D.M. Pippidi, even Tudor Vianu, and he does so with a lot of subjectivity, but not in a bothersome manner. Tudor Vianu's "house" and "court" are beautifully portrayed, with people, habits, family routines, the world that frequented the Vianu family, resulting in a very convincing intellectual and familial atmosphere.

The book can also be read as a history of Romanian archaeology, starting with the second half of the 19th century, but with emphasis on the Interwar Period and especially on the period after 1945, with people, schools, ideas, "trends" imposed by the Communist regime, not least with the institutions of the time: research institutes, museums, universities (the one in Bucharest), the Romanian Academy, the Historical Monuments Commission. A more unusual institution is worth mentioning here: "Casa Oamenilor de Știință" [The House of Scientists], the "official" restaurant where the Bucharest intelligentsia dined in the 1960s-1980s.

An archaeologist's memoir cannot lack a reference to their scientific interests, especially the archaeological sites where they have trained, have worked and that they have managed. Petre Alexandrescu writes most beautifully about Histria and shows how well he understood the site that he investigated for half a century; he understood it in its intimacy: in a historical perspective and in relation to the natural environment: geographical setting, the Danube, the Black Sea. In my opinion, these are the most beautiful pages of the book.

The author mentions some of his travels abroad, which were not few, but he writes about some of them beautifully, with passion: the United States of America (Princeton, New York, Chicago, Bloomington, etc.), Georgia (a Soviet republic at the time), Iran. These are pages worth remembering for a Romanian history of travel abroad.

The last 150 pages are dedicated to the period immediately before the 1989 Revolution, to the author's dissidence (regarding the problem of the destruction of Romanian historical heritage) and especially to the period after 1989, when Petre Alexandrescu became involved in the management of the institution where he had worked for several decades: the "Vasile Pârvan" Institute of Archaeology. There are pages with perhaps more radical formulations, with value judgments that are often

harsher than in the previous pages, perhaps because not enough decades have passed since the events and the people that are remembered.

However, as I have pointed out elsewhere, *Continentul scufundat* is an enjoyable reading for the reader eager to peruse the memoirs of a very good and passionate archaeologist, as well as an instructive and valuable documentary reading for the historian in search of memorial sources.

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