

***AMICI HUMANI GENERIS ET CONSOLATRICES PRO SALUTE FIDELIUM.  
MODELS OF SAINTHOOD IN LATE MEDIEVAL TRANSYLVANIA AS REFLECTED  
IN PAPAL AND EPISCOPAL INDULGENCES***

**Diana-Maria Dăian, PhD Student, “Babeş-Bolyai” University, of Cluj-Napoca**

*Abstract: One of the constants of the devotional universe that had a great influence upon the clerical discourse as well as upon the laity's initiatives was represented by the soul's salvation. Turning to be a real tension, the labor of salvation was in the spotlight of the laics' acts and directed their efforts towards it. So, the middle Ages testified the belief that the ordinary Christians were able to influence the manifestation of the divine grace through the so-called “good facts”. The belief in the remission of sins as a direct result of the “good acting” was once more powered by the Episcopal and the Papal indulgences; reducing a number of days from the penitence the laics were submitted to with the condition of going to certain churches, of attending masses, of saying the prayers Pater noster and Ave Maria and of donating certain goods, the Episcopal and the Papal indulgences testified also laic behavioral patterns by affiliating with devotional patterns and by directing the piety towards some models of sainthood.*

*From this point of view, the following research intends to show the fact that in late medieval Transylvania the labor of salvation is brought into the spotlight of the parishioners' actions as a direct consequence of the internalization of the clerical teachings. Secondly, the project aims to emphasize that the Episcopal and the Papal indulgences promote a large range of models of sainthood, developing the laic piety towards certain saints and encouraging the Christians to establish a personal relation with them. Finally, the analysis wishes to outline the impact the devotional patterns popularized through the indulgences have had upon the laic initiatives, leading to a more active implication in the field of the religious life.*

***Keywords: remission of sins, soul's salvation, local cults, popular devotion, patronage***

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 1320, pope John XXII wrote to Chanadin, the provost of Oradea the following: “we mercifully forgive 60 days from the penitence assumed by all those who, once confessed and truly repented, will go every year to the above mentioned churches (a.n. Saint Michael Church and Virgin Mary Church from Oradea) or to one of them, full of honor, on the dedication day of those churches and on each of the celebrations of this holy and blessed Virgin and of the church consecration, whereas we <mercifully forgive> 40 days from the penitence assumed by all those who will piously go to <those churches> once a year during the octave of these celebrations”<sup>1</sup>.

The cited paragraph makes a direct reference to one of the coordinates of the medieval devotional universe that has influenced the clerical discourse and also the laic initiatives: the soul's salvation as a direct consequence of the “good deeds” and of the reduction of the time spent in Purgatory. Turned into a real tension, the labor of salvation was in the foreground of the clerical message as well as of the laic actions, channeling their efforts. So, the Middle Ages witnessed the birth of the faith that the laity was able to influence the manifestation of the divine grace through the so-called “good deeds”, meant to ensure the forgiveness of the

<sup>1</sup>*Documente privind istoria României( hereinafter referred to as DIR), series C, Transylvania, vol. I (1301-1320), Printing Press The Academy of the Romanian Popular Republic, Bucharest, 1953, doc. 430, pp. 362-363.*

sins and to shorten the time spent in Purgatory: the individual prayers, the processions on the celebration days, the donations consisting of religious objects, financing an altar, building a chapel, the charitable actions and also the votive masses.<sup>2</sup> The faith in the absolution of sins as a consequence of the “good deeds” was once more powered by the Papal and the Episcopal indulgences; forgiving a number of days from the laic penitence provided the attendance at masses within certain churches, the reciting of prayers, the donations or the testaments, the Papal and the Episcopal indulgences represented at the same time important testimonies for different laic behavioral examples by joining various devotional patterns and by directing the pious manifestations to multiple sainthood models.

But what is to be said about late medieval Transylvania? What kind of information regarding the sainthood models meant to be popularized and followed by the laics can be detached by analyzing the Papal and the Episcopal indulgences? But most of all, to what extent can we observe a more active participation of the Christians in the religious life as a direct consequence of the internalization of the clerical devotional patterns?

To begin with, this research is meant to emphasize the fact that in late medieval Transylvania the labor of salvation stands in the foreground of the laic initiatives as a result of becoming aware of the clerical teachings and also of the collaboration between the Church and the Christians. Secondly, the analysis aims to show that the Papal and the Episcopal indulgences dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries and related to the Transylvanian territory assign different sainthood models, encouraging the laic piety towards various saints through prayers and by invoking their help. Finally, the research intends to outline the way in which the coordinates of the clerical message take the shape of multiple laic manifestations, in other words, the impact the devotional models popularized by the Papal and the Episcopal indulgences has had upon the laic actions.

In what regards the sources<sup>3</sup>, this research turns to good account three classes of fonts- Papal and Episcopal indulgences, donations and testaments. With respect to the research methods, we intend to resort both to the quantitative analysis (source sampling) and to the qualitative analysis (criticizing and interpreting the historical fonts, linking the pieces of information coming from historical sources to the main historiographical ideas brought into requisition).

The core assumption of this research is represented by the idea that the religious life in thirteenth-fifteenth-century Europe was characterized by the affirmation of numerous sainthood models. During the 13<sup>th</sup> century one must notice a *penitential trend*; within it, the

---

<sup>2</sup> Karl Vocelka, “The Counter-Reformation and Popular Piety in Vienna”, în C. Scott Dixon, Dagmar Freist, Mark Greengrass (eds.), *Living with Religious Diversity in Early-Modern Europe*, Ashgate, Farnham, 2009, pp. 128-129.

<sup>3</sup> In a study aimed to bring into discussion the layout of a possible research focused on the cult of saints in medieval Transylvania, Maria Crăciun and Carmen Florea advert to the particular problems of the territory mentioned above, especially in what concerns the availability of the historical fonts. In spite of the lack of hagiographies, there is a series of fonts that can testify different cults of saints in Transylvania, such as: donations and testaments, indulgences, relics, church dedications, altars, names of places, names of people, images of saints coming from the mural paintings, sculpture, altar pieces, stove tiles, coins, seals, guild regulations and charters, towns regulations, pilgrimages, oaths made in front of an altar, fees collected on different feast days. Maria Crăciun, Carmen Florea, „The Cult of Saints in Medieval Transylvania”, in Graham Jones (ed.), *Saints of Europe. Studies towards a Survey of Cults and Culture*, Paul Watkins Publishing, Stamford, 2001, p. 41.

devotion towards the humanity of Christ and the appetency for imitating the Christ theanthropic pattern (*sequela Christi*) through strenuous fasts, permanent abstinence or submittal to voluntary sufferings represented the main components of perfection.<sup>4</sup> The asceticism, the voluntary poverty and the imitation of the godly model were doubled by searching and finding Jesus in each Christian, an aspect that got to involve both charity and predication.<sup>5</sup> Thirteenth century was also the period when a new pattern of feminine sainthood averred since women managed to overreach the marginal place occupied within Church and to become “forerunners of the divine revelation”<sup>6</sup>. At the same time, the religious, social and political participation of the municipal authority in the development of the community became more tinted, scoring decisive changes in the ways of representing the sainthood.<sup>7</sup> A laic and “popular” sainthood (contemporary saints, fellow countrymen) was thus affixed to the saints found in the urban hagiographical tradition, meant to express the „mystical body” of the town collectivity.<sup>8</sup> The fourteenth century generated a crisis in the “evangelical” model since the renunciation of goods, the embracement of a penitential status through charity and active predication represented no more a sainthood criteria; the fall of the evangelical model came as a result of promoting the cultural values within Church. During the pontificate of Urban V *studium* turned to be one of the major components of *sanctitas* where the policy of cultural development imagined by the papacy had started from the strong belief that a rise in the cultural level of clerics and laics would not be otherwise than benefic.<sup>9</sup> Beginning with the last decades of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, one can notice a fall of the humanist directions made against a sainthood model both deistic and pietistic, defined by a strong distrust in the intellectual activities.<sup>10</sup> Pursuant to the crises that had affected the papacy, “the invasion of mysticism” aimed to go back to the *penitential trend* of the former period, popularizing a sainthood pattern related on a traditional basis to the most rigorous ascetic spirituality and shaping a new concept understood as “a perfect familiarity with God though a direct vision”<sup>11</sup>. Taking

<sup>4</sup> Andre Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages, Book II: Typology of Medieval Sainthood*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005, p. 388; Clifford Hugh Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, 3rd edition, Longman, London, 2001, p. 241; Alain Boureau, “Vitae Fratrum, Vitae Patrum. L’ordredominicain et le modele des peres du desert au XIIIesiecle”, in *Melanges de l’Ecole Francaise de Rome-Moyen Age*, 99, 1987, 1, pp. 79-100.

<sup>5</sup> One of the charity dimension appreciated and encouraged by the Roman Church in the 13<sup>th</sup> century was given by the appetence for the soul’s salvation (*zelusanimarum*), an assertion that was certified by the transformation of the charity into the main criteria of canonizing and promoting those saints that had proved their pastoral and apostolic activeness. The decision of the Holy See to bring forward the sainthood models associated with the active apostolate within laics was certainly not surprising, because it came as a direct consequence of the appointed goals: the consolidation of the Church authority upon society and the profound Christianization of the populations living in the territories submitted to heresies. Vauchez, *Sainthood*, pp. 390-391.

<sup>6</sup> Among the most illustrative women of the newly emerged saithood pattern, one can find Angela of Foligno, Margareta of Cortona, Clara of Montefalco. Idem, “Between Virginity and Spiritual Espousals: Models of Feminine Sainthood in the Christian West in the middle Ages”, in *The Medieval History Journal*, vol. II, no. 2, 1999, p. 354.

<sup>7</sup> Anna Benvenuti, “La civiltà urbana”, in *Storia della santità nel cristianesimo occidentale*, Viella, Roma, 2005, pp. 166-167.

<sup>8</sup> The mendicant orders (Franciscans, Dominicans) enabled the transition from the old patron to the new one, a person that rose from the citizens, served the civic aspirations and was asked to intercede for the community. *Ibidem*, p. 167.

<sup>9</sup> Vauchez, *The Sainthood*, pp. 404-405.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 407.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 409-410.

into consideration this background, the feminine sainthood model characteristic of the late medieval period benefited from a distinct authority following their charismatic and mystic force, proved by spectacular ascetic exercises, auto flagellation, mystical visions and paramystical phenomena (receiving the stigmata).<sup>12</sup>

But what can we say about the Transylvanian devotional universe in late middle Ages? Which are the sainthood models found in the Papal and the Episcopal indulgences emitted for the Transylvanian territory during the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries? In other words, which are the cults encouraged by the clerical discourse aimed to channel the popular piety and the laic religious manifestations? So as to give an answer to these questions, one must briefly discuss certain aspects regarding the indulgences. By indulgences we understand a particular feature of the penitential system of the Roman Church consisting of the total or the partial remission of the temporal punishment for sinning. There were two major motivations that accounted for the process of emitting indulgences: on one hand, according to the sacrament of penitence, it was not enough that the culpability for sinning (*culpa*) to be cleared through the absolution of sins, but it was also necessary to go under a temporal punishment (*poenitentia*).<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, indulgences relied on the belief in Purgatory, a place in the life after death where the labor of remission of the punishments gathered for the committed sins.<sup>14</sup> From ancient times bishops had been invested with the power of reducing the punishments to which the Christians were submitted, but one can talk about a generalization of indulgences only beginning with the 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>15</sup> It is generally known that indulgences could be provided by the Pope, the archbishops and the bishops and were meant to ensure a total or a partial remission of the temporal punishments for sins, so partial indulgences were often accompanied by chronological intervals (days, months, years). Being provided with an indulgence meant for sure well-doing during life time and also affiliation to the devotional models represented by Jesus, Virgin Mary and the saints; from this point of view, indulgences became important clues of popularizing different cults of saints and of promoting certain devotional patterns.

Which is then the place of the Papal and the Episcopal indulgences in the equation of the religious life of the Transylvanian laity? But most of all, which are the sainthood models to which the clerical teachings try to direct the Christians' efforts? In order to answer these questions, we must firstly point out a few aspects regarding the coordinates of the Transylvanian religious life during the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. The religious life of the

<sup>12</sup> Gabor Klaniczay, "Miraculum and Maleficium: Reflections concerning Late Medieval Female Sainthood", in Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, R. W. Scribner (eds.), *Problems in the Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Europe*, Harrasowitz, Wiesbaden, 1997, p. 63; Carolyne Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1987, p. 26.

<sup>13</sup> Lawrence G. Duggan, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/286800/indulgence>, accessed on 11.03.2014, at 11:30.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*; see also Jean Delumeau, *Mărturisirea și iertarea: dificultățile confesiunii (secolele XIII-XVIII)*, Polirom, Iași, 1998, p. 9.

<sup>15</sup> It was also the period when the faith in Purgatory became a general issue and when the Holy See lead a policy of reconquering the former Christian territories-the *Reconquista* of Hispania and the *Cruciades* of the Holy Land, giving the full indulgence (total remission of sins) to all those who would engage in the „holy war”. Jacques le Goff, *Imaginarul medieval*, Printing Press Meridiane, Bucharest, 1991, p. 130. See also Lawrence G. Duggan, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/286800/indulgence>, accessed on 11.03.2014, at 12:30.

Transylvanian laity was encompassed by the parochial church, situated centrally and by the mendicant convents, situated on the outskirts; therefore not once or twice one can notice the existence of a close competition between the secular clergy and the mendicants especially in meeting the devotional requests of the Transylvanian laics (administering the sacraments, officiating the rituals-baptize, marriage, burial).<sup>16</sup> The large popularity both the Franciscans and the Dominicans benefited from is due to the predication network that ensured the successful dissemination of the Gospel; on the other hand, the active apostleship within the population fostered the communication between the religious orders and the laity as well as the adjustment of the religious teachings to the laic religious expectations.<sup>17</sup>

So as to reconstitute the sainthood models found in the clerical discourse, we have turned to good account the information provided by a number of 40 indulgences regarding the late medieval Transylvanian territory that were emitted during the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries;<sup>18</sup> we can however distinguish a number of 26 Papal indulgences compared to 14 Episcopal indulgences meant to channel the acts of popular piety towards certain devotional spaces: 24 parochial churches, 9 mendicant churches and convents, 4 chapels and 3 altars belonging to parochial churches.

The pieces of information detached from the text of the Papal and Episcopal indulgences and related to the late medieval Transylvanian territory can be analyzed on many levels. First of all, we have focused our attention on the issue of the authority of those who emitted the indulgences; the final remark is that half of the documents seen have mentioned only St. Peter and St. Paul, making no mention of other saints.<sup>19</sup> We could easily explain the clerical initiative of consolidating the cult of St. Peter and St. Paul since Peter was the first apostle invested by Jesus himself with the attribute of the “first Pope” (“*you are Peter and on this stone I will build my Church*”); Peter and Paul became so the founders of the Christian

<sup>16</sup> Maria Crăciun, “Mendicant Piety and the Saxon Community of Transylvania, c. 1450-1550”, in Maria Crăciun, Elaine Fulton (eds.), *Communities of Devotion. Religious Orders and Society in East Central Europe, 1450-1800*, Ashgate, Farnham, 2011, p. 37; Maria Mako-Lupescu, “Pemargineaunui conflict: relațiile dintre clerul laic și dominicanii în Clujul medieval”, in Ionuț Costea, Carmen Florea, Pal Judit, Rüz Fogarasi-Enikő (coords.), *Orașeșiorășeni*, Printing Press Argonaut, Cluj-Napoca, 2006, pp. 416-417.

<sup>17</sup>The idea of active apostleship was incompatible with the sacerdotal professionalism of the Roman Church. The Franciscans’ and the Dominicans’ efficiency as preachers and confessors was all the more so the number of well-trained parochial priests able to direct the moral and the doctrinal education of the faithful was small. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, pp. 250-256; Crăciun, *Mendicant Piety*, pp. 38-39.

<sup>18</sup>*DIR*, C, vol. I, doc. 430, pp. 362-363; vol. IV (1341-1351), doc. 117, pp. 107-108; doc. 251, p. 202; doc. 283, p. 222; doc. 368, p. 266; doc. 600, pp. 415-416; doc. 686, p. 474; doc. 779, pp. 533-534; doc. 789, p. 540; doc. 790, p. 540; *Documenta Romaniae Historica (hereinafter referred to as DRH)*, series C, Transylvania, vol. XI (1356-1360), Printing Press Academy of the Romanian Socialist Republic, Bucharest, 1981, doc. 138, p. 136; doc. 226, pp. 235-236; doc. 227, p. 237; vol. XIV (1371-1375), doc. 231, pp. 357-358; doc. 232, p. 358-359; doc. 243, pp. 371-372; *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, vol. V (1438-1457), Printing Press Academy of the Romanian Socialist Republic, Bucharest, 1975, doc. 2495, p. 138; doc. 2534, p. 166; doc. 2634, pp. 242-243; doc. 2639, p. 245; doc. 2693, pp. 289-290; doc. 2709, pp. 300-301; doc. 2725, pp. 310-311; doc. 2761, p. 334; doc. 2976, p. 498; vol. VI (1458-1473), doc. 3243, p. 95; doc. 3281, pp. 118-119; doc. 3346, p. 164; doc. 3346, pp. 228-229; doc. 3347, p. 229; doc. 3470, p. 246; doc. 3693, p. 385; vol. VII (1474-1486), doc. 4041, p. 43; doc. 4052, pp. 50-51; doc. 4080, pp. 69-70; doc. 4125, pp. 98-99; doc. 4355, p. 237; doc. 4360, 240-242; doc. 4548, pp. 350-351; doc. 4558, p. 356.

<sup>19</sup>The formula for the emitter’s authority is the following: *de omnipotentis Dei misericordia ac beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum eius auctoritate confisi*.

Rome, forming and leading the first Christian community, but also acknowledging their faith in Jesus by voluntarily taking on the martyrdom.<sup>20</sup>

Secondly, the sainthood models meant to be popularized and assumed by the Transylvanian Christians can be recomposed by appealing to the dedication of the churches/convents as well as the dedication of the chapels/altars that are the subjects of the indulgences dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. The first remark we can make concerns the way by which the cult of St. Michael and of Virgin Mary have come gradually in the foreground of the clerical discourse, the Church strongly encouraging the popular adherence to St. Michael and the Virgin. Not irrelevant at all have appeared to be the indulgences conferred to devotional spaces dedicated to mendicant saints; the clerical initiative of channeling the popular piety to these cults meant also the „validation” of the Christians’ affection to these religious orders as well as a consolidation of the marian devotion, being well known the decisive role played by the mendicants in popularizing the cult of Virgin Mary among the faithful. Taking into consideration the fact that each indulgence has been preceded by a demand (in most cases made by the parochial priest), we are dealing with attempts of fixing local sainthood models, aimed to sustain the cult of the patron saint of a certain community and to „validate” the expressions of popular piety towards the saint who patronizes the community mentioned above.

In addition to this, the Papal and the Episcopal indulgences related to the Transylvanian space and dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries outline the clerical attempts of stimulating the laic piety and of directing the popular devotion towards certain cults, assigning a laic behavioral pattern and emphasizing the importance of the direct and active participation in different moments of the religious celebration. One must bring into attention the fact that the remission days (40, 60, 100, one year and 40 days) were bestowed on those Christians who would go to the parochial churches/mendicant convents on their dedication days and on the „significant feasts”. If during the 14<sup>th</sup> century by „significant feasts” one understood the celebrations related to Jesus, Virgin Mary, the Holy Cross, John the Baptizer, the Apostles, the Evangelists, the Doctors of the Church, the bishops, the martirs, the 15<sup>th</sup> century would bring a rationalization of the „significant celebrations”: the feasts related to Jesus, Virgin Mary, John the Baptizer, the Apostles, the dedication day of the space the indulgence is conferred to, the consecration day of that space. This rationalization came as a direct consequence of the changes scored by the Papal policy concerning the indulgences system (Martin V) and gave place to the recent devotion of certain saints.<sup>21</sup> In spite of the aspects mentioned above, at a regional level we can admit a multiplication of the marian days (*Nativitatis, Annuntiationis, Conceptionis, Visitationis, Purificationis, Assumptionis*), whereas at a local level (fifteenth-century Transylvania) the Papal and the Episcopal indulgences continued to associate the “significant feasts” with different intercessory saints chosen by the faithful: George, Lawrence, Martin, Catherine, Dorothy,

<sup>20</sup><http://www.santiebeati.it/dettaglio/20350>, accessed on 30.03.2014, at 17:23.

<sup>21</sup> A relevant example is given by the cult of St. Anne, the mother of the Virgin. The celebration of St. Anne intervenes in the context of the growing veneration towards Virgin Mary and of the prepossession in favor of Jesus’ ancestors. Maria Crăciun, “Narativ și iconic. Rolul educative și de voțional al iconografiei referitoare la sfinți în altarele polipectice din sudul Transilvaniei”, in Nicolae Boșan, Ovidiu Ghitta, Doru Radosav (coords.), *Tentația istoriei*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2003, pp. 63-65.

Barbara, Lucy, Agnes, Margaret. This association made a clear reference to local sainthood models, to the cults of saints that patronized the communities and that channeled the laic devotion, but at the same time illustrated complex theological concepts that predominated over the spirituality of the late middle Ages (the transubstantiation, the importance of the Christological sacrifice, the Immaculate Conception, the role played by the Jesus' feminine genealogy in the process of His embodiment).<sup>22</sup>

The Papal and the Episcopal indulgences prove once more their importance in what concerns the issue of rebuilding the way in which the Church sees the laic involvement in the religious life and, of course, in the individual labor of salvation that begins during lifetime. Which is therefore the laic behavior imagined and encouraged by the Church? Which are the concrete acts "prescribed" by the Church so that the Christians should be given a certain number of remission days? But most of all, is there any relation between the coordinates of the clerical discourse and the popular devotion towards specific saints? The pieces of information detached from a number of 19 Papal and Episcopal indulgences related to fourteenth-fifteenth-century Transylvania seem to fix a form, a pattern regarding the laic actions in the universe of the religious life, having as a starting point the following coordinates: taking part in different moments of the religious celebrations, reciting prayers (*Pater noster*, *Ave Maria*), making donations, supporting the work of reconditioning and maintaining the buildings, decorating the devotional space as well as devising and bequeathing (gold, silver, books, chalices). Furthermore, the clerical teachings intended to stimulate the laic devotion towards various saints and to encourage Christians to establish a personal relation to them. Not irrelevant at all seems to be the fact that all the 19 indulgences indicated above have stated among the laic „duties” kneeling down and reciting three times *Ave Maria* in the morning or in the evening, on the bells ringing; this became synonymous to easing the direct communication with Virgin Mary, but at the same time we are dealing with a clear attempt of stimulating the marial devotion on behalf of the Church.<sup>23</sup> So as to support this idea, we bring into discussion the demand of the parochial priest for prolongating the indulgence conferred to the parochial church of the Virgin from Braşov (1450) and the indulgence consisting of 100 days of remission given by pope Nicholas V (1450); moreover, in 1475 the archbishop of Esztergom attested the Papal indulgence dating from 1450, while the bishop of Transylvania bestowed on the Church of the Virgin Mary another 100 days of remission. All these clerical initiatives were meant to prolongate the penitential time and also to fix the moment in which the Christian communicated, established a direct and personal relation with the Virgin through prayers.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup>*Ibidem*, p. 75.

<sup>23</sup> The cult of Virgin Mary stood in the late middle Ages in the foreground of the laic devotion and the Mother of God intercession was considered to be the most efficient, aspects that were demonstrated by the large number of churches built in Mary's honor, but also by the altars, the statues and the votive coronets for decorating the altars dedicated to the Virgin. The Mariology included two fundamental dimensions of the Mother of God: Mary as embodiment of the Church and Mary as bride of Christ (*sponsa Christi*) and queen of heaven (*reginacaeli*). Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1976, pp. XXII; 103.

<sup>24</sup>Carmen Florea, „Identitate urbană și patronaj marian în Evul Mediu târziu”, in *Studia Universitatis Cibiniensis*, Series Historica, tom 5/2008, p. 66.

Equally important for the attempt of directing the popular piety towards certain saints appears to be the case of the parochial church of St. Andrew from Brădeni. In 1350 pope Clement VI conferred to the Christians that would come to this church 40 days of remission while the bishop of Transylvania attested the Papal indulgence and attached another indulgence consisting of 40 days. Wide of one century (1475) the bishop of Moldavia prolonged the Papal indulgence from 1350, adding 40 days of remission whereas one year later the bishop of Vidin conferred the parochial church of St. Andrew another indulgence of 40 days. In 1483 the church was awarded other 100 days of remission, prolonged by the bishop of Argeș. It is clear enough that we are dealing with repeated efforts on behalf of the Church with the intention of stimulating the popular piety and of encouraging the Christians to establish an active and personal relation with the patron saint of the community they belong to. At the same time, we must not fail to mention the fact that the Papal and the Episcopal indulgences we have analyzed allude to chapels and altars. There are 2 indulgences emitted for the chapel of St. Jacob of the parochial church from Cluj (1348-1349, 1350), for the altar dedicated to Corpus Christi of the parochial church from Brașov (1451, 1466) and for the altar of John the Baptizer of the parochial church from Sibiu (1469, 1484); these indulgences testify clearly the clerical attempt to encourage the laics to carry out spiritual exercises within these devotional spaces, to make them establish an active relation with the saints through the intercessory prayers and through the invocation of their help.

The ensemble of sainthood models recomposed through the analyse of the Papal and the Episcopal indulgences must be interrelated to the main coordinates of the clerical discourse regarding the individual labor of salvation. As the supreme spiritual authority, the Church invested the salvation with the dimension of leading achievement during lifetime, trying hardly to channel the laic efforts and to make them become more active in the religious sphere. So there is not much surprise that in the late middle Ages the soul's salvation turned to be a real tension, an aspect that was also demonstrated by the text of the indulgences.

Which were the means that proved the efficiency of the Church teachings? To what extent did the coordinates of the clerical discourse underlie the various expressions of the laic piety? Did the precepts of the Church really have an impact upon Christians, leading to a larger involvement in the religious life? In order that we should give an answer to the questions mentioned above, it is necessary to resort to two indicators of the laic actions in the sphere of the religious life: donations and testaments.<sup>25</sup> The first remark we can offer is related to the major motivation that underlies the donations as well as the testaments: ensuring the soul's salvation. There are some relevant examples: at 1302 Blasiu made a donation „(a.t.) after calling to mind His builder and being willing to meet the final harvest day through acts

<sup>25</sup>The following demonstration is based on 29 acts of donations and 13 testaments dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. *DIR*, C, vol. I, doc. 215, pp. 230-231; doc. 218, pp. 232-233; vol. III (1331-1340), doc. 417, pp. 490-491; vol. IV, doc. 74, p. 73; doc. 171, pp. 146-148; doc. 202, pp. 167-168; doc. 716, pp. 493-494; *DRH*, vol. XIV, doc. 171, pp. 263-264; vol. XV (1376-1380), doc. 317, pp. 513-514; doc. 507, pp. 789-790; *Urkundenbuch*, vol. V, doc. 2315, pp. 11-13; doc. 2377, p. 54; doc. 2494, p. 138; doc. 2500, p. 142; doc. 2616, p. 226; doc. 2662, p. 265; doc. 2665, p. 266; doc. 2906, p. 442; doc. 2915, p. 450; doc. 2955, pp. 480-481; doc. 2970, p. 494; doc. 3155, p. 38; doc. 3180, pp. 54-55; doc. 3249, pp. 97-98; doc. 3256, pp. 103-104; doc. 3276, p. 115; doc. 3295, pp. 126-127; doc. 3325, pp. 149-150; doc. 3344, pp. 162-163; doc. 3350, pp. 165-166; doc. 3405, pp. 202-203; doc. 3432, pp. 218-220; doc. 3602, p. 331; doc. 3878, pp. 503-504; vol. VII, doc. 4357, pp. 238-239; doc. 4384, p. 255; doc. 4592, p. 388; doc. 4597, pp. 391-392; doc. 4618, p. 407.

of mercy.” At 1315 Renold made two donations „being guided by the pious thought of changing the fleshly belongings to the heavenly ones [...] and being willing to rank Jesus as his heir”, whereas at 1339 Margaret, Blasius’ wife, devised and bequeathed „being led by a good thought and being broiled by the eagerness of her soul’s salvation”. At 1344 Beken made a donation „on the chance of the beyond and of achieving the feast” while at 1349 Ladislau made a donation act, receding from „the belongings of this deceitful world whose pleasures heavily endanger the souls”. A century later the same earnest desire, the same leading goal, that of the soul’s salvation got through the text of the donations and of the testaments. At 1438 Catherine, widow, made a donation with the purpose of gaining „heavenly treasures”, whereas Mihail Salamonis donated at 1444 so that he should earn a place in the heavenly Jerusalem. It is clear the fact that from this point of view, the clerical teachings give proof of their efficiency, the soul’s salvation being in the foreground of the actions of the Transylvanian Christians, channeling their efforts and turning into a real tension. The donations and the testaments are not to be considered as simple charitable acts, but they are imagined as ways of expressing the laic attachment to certain cults and devotional patterns, of gratifying the spiritual services expected by the Christians *pro perpetua memoria* and with the intention of ensuring the salvation.

But is it possible to establish a relation between the devotional spaces the indulgences dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries are conferred to and the beneficiaries of the laic donations and testaments? So that that we should demonstrate the efficiency of the coordinates of the clerical discourse found in the indulgences analyzed and, of course, the impact of the Church message upon the Transylvanian faithful, it would mean that the devotional spaces the indulgences were conferred to and the laic effort was directed to were the same to those the Christians address their donations and testaments. If we were to apply the analysis pattern proposed at the beginning of the demonstration (parochial churches/mendicant convents/chapels, altars), the distribution of the laic donations and testaments would be the following: a number of 28 donations and testaments conferred to parochial churches<sup>26</sup>, 27 to mendicant convents<sup>27</sup>, one donation made to a chapel<sup>28</sup> and 4 donations and testaments conferred to altars that belonged to parochial churches<sup>29</sup>. Despite the fact that most devotional spaces mentioned above would be awarded a Papal or an Episcopal indulgence during the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, we were able to identify only two donations made to a devotional space soon afterwards an indulgence had been emitted. So, on February

<sup>26</sup>St. Michael Church, Alba-Iulia (1301; 1302; 1315; 1315; 1343; 1349; 1361; 1370; 1440; 1444); St. Michael Church, Cluj (1372; 1448; 1459; 1471); Virgin Mary Church, Braşov (1444; 1447; 1463; 1464); Virgin Mary Church, Sibiu (1465, 1485); Holy Cross Church, Oradea (1339); St. Martin Church, Oradea (1339); Virgin Mary Church, Oradea (1339); St. Nicholas Church, Sighişoara (1438); St. Nicholas Church, Seliştat (1461); Virgin Mary Church, Şintereag (1363); St. George Church, Ebesfawlwa (1448).

<sup>27</sup> St. Anne Franciscan Convent, Oradea (1339; 1344; 1349; 1364; 1366); Virgin Mary Dominican Convent, Cluj (1380; 1459; 1462; 1465; 1471; 1480); Sts. Peter and Paul Dominican Convent, Braşov (1342; 1461; 1462; 1463; 1464); Holy Cross Dominican Convent, Bistriţa (1454; 1455; 1485); Virgin Mary Dominican Convent, Sighişoara (1378; 1465; 1468); Virgin Mary Dominican Convent, Alba-Iulia (1363); St. Anthony Franciscan Convent, Cluj (1458), St. Egidius Dominican Convent, Cluj (1471, 1481).

<sup>28</sup> St. Martin Chapel, Braşov (1455).

<sup>29</sup> St. Catherine Altar from St. Michael parochial church, Cluj (1368); Corpus Christi Altar from St. Michael parochial church, Cluj (1459); St. John the Baptizer Altar from St. Michael parochial church, Cluj (1459); Mary of Recanati Altar from Virgin Mary parochial church, Sibiu (1485).

1464 Sts. Peter and Paul Dominican Church from Braşov was awarded an indulgence to which we could associate the donation made by Christian Rod and Simon Clump on December 1464. The donation consisted of a yard and was made with the purpose of celebrating votive masses at St. Nicholas altar from the Dominican church. A similar situation was scored in Cluj, where St. Anthony Dominican Church was awarded an indulgence on March 1480; the donation came a month later (April 1480) and was made by Elisabeth, the widow of John Pongracz of Dengeleg.

However, we must not neglect the fact that the sainthood models „recommended” by the Church are reflected with certain particularities in the devotional preferences of the Transylvanian faithful; we are dealing with a well-documented marian cult as well as a clear attachment to St. Michael, with various ways of expressing the piety directed to St. Anne (14<sup>th</sup> century), Sts. Peter and Paul, Holy Cross, St. Egidius and St. Nicholas (15<sup>th</sup> century). All these aspirations represent however some of the devotional patterns found in the fourteenth-fifteenth-century clerical discourse, aspect that leads us to conclude that we can not talk about an opposition between what the Churches „recommends” and what the faithful „prefer”, but about an intersection of the clerical teachings and of the laic demands, about a collaboration for achieving the ultimate goal: the soul’s salvation.

The largest number of the laic donations and testaments belonging to the Transylvanian faithful were made before or simply after the Papal and Episcopal indulgences had been emitted, an idea that makes us think about an intervention of the Church with the intention of „validating” the laic preferences in what the regional cults and the local intercessory saints are concerned. Thus we consider that it is not surprising that after repeated donations conferred to St. Michael Church from Alba-Iulia, pope Clement VI gave this church an indulgence (1345), whereas in the case of Virgin Mary Church from Braşov, the period between the emission of the indulgences is full of laic donations and testaments. A similar situation is scored in the case of the mendicant convents: after one testament and 4 donations made to St. Anne convent from Oradea, pope Gregory XI gave an indulgence to this space at 1373, encouraging once more the laic piety towards the Virgin’s Mother; moreover, the Papal indulgence from 1464 and conferred to Sts. Peter and Paul Dominican Church came to complete the sequence of various donations and testaments the Mendicants benefitted from. From this point of view, we are dealing with new arguments that testify the interfingering of the clerical discourse and the laic ways of expressing the piety and so, the co-operation between the Church and the faithful.

To conclude, the current research has aimed to reconstitute the Church teachings regarding the laic religious practices and to outline the sainthood models popularized by the Papal and the Episcopal indulgences given to this territory. As far as we can see, the two dimensions of the analysis have emphasized the clerical initiatives of stimulating regional cults and local sainthood models that have been meant to back up the cult of the patron saint of a certain community. Furthermore, the enterprise has tried to establish a relation between the local devotional patterns and the regional diffusion of a cult, the 15<sup>th</sup> century witnessing the rationalization of „significant feasts” to the detriment of a multiplication in the marian days and of the recent devotion to certain saints (St. Anne). Finally, the research has intended to evaluate the efficiency of the clerical message and the assimilation of the Church teachings

by the Transylvanian faithful, showing that we are dealing with an intercrossing of the clerical discourse and of the laic aspirations, with a co-operation between the Church and the faithful with the intention of accomplishment of the individual labor of salvation.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

- Benvenuti, Anna, “La civiltà urbana”, in *Storia della santità nel cristianesimo occidentale*, Roma, 2005
- Boureau, Alain, “Vitae Fratrum, Vitae Patrum. L’ordredominicain et le modele des peres du desert au XIIIesiecle”, in *Melanges de l’Ecole Francaise de Rome-Moyen Age*, 99, 1987, 1
- Crăciun, Maria, Florea, Carmen, „The Cult of Saints in Medieval Transylvania”, in Graham Jones (ed.), *Saints of Europe. Studies towards a Survey of Cults and Culture*, Stamford, 2001
- Crăciun, Maria, “Mendicant Piety and the Saxon Community of Transylvania, c. 1450-1550”, in Maria Crăciun, Elaine Fulton (eds.), *Communities of Devotion. Religious Orders and Society in East Central Europe, 1450-1800*, Farnham, 2011
- Eadem, “Narativ și iconic. Rolul educativ și devoțional al iconografiei referitoare la sfinți în altarele poliptice din sudul Transilvaniei”, in Nicolae Bocșan, Ovidiu Ghitta, Doru Radosav (coords.), *Tentația istoriei*, Cluj-Napoca, 2003
- Delumeau, Jean, *Mărturisirea și iertarea: dificultățile confesiunii (secolele XIII-XVIII)*, Iași, 1998
- Documenta Romaniae Historica*, series C, Transylvania, vol. XI (1356-1360), vol. XIV (1371-1375), vol. XV (1376-1380), Bucharest, 1981
- Documente privind istoria României*, series C, Transylvania, vol. I (1301-1320), vol. III (1331-1340), vol. IV (1341-1351), Bucharest, 1953
- Duggan, Lawrence G., <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/286800/indulgence>, accessed on 11.03.2014, at 11:30.
- Florea, Carmen, „Identitate urbană și patronaj marian în Evul Mediu târziu”, in *Studia Universitatis Cibiniensis*, Series Historica, tom 5/2008
- Klaniczay, Gabor, “Miraculum and Maleficium: Reflections concerning Late Medieval Female Sainthood”, in Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, R. W. Scribner (eds.), *Problems in the Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Europe*, Wiesbaden, 1997
- Lawrence, Clifford Hugh, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, 3rd edition, London, 2001
- Le Goff, Jacques, *Imaginarul medieval*, Bucharest, 1991
- Mako-Lupescu, Maria, “Pe marginea unui conflict: relațiile dintre clerul laic și dominicani în Clujul medieval”, in Ionuț Costea, Carmen Florea, Pal Judit, Rűsz Fogarasi-Enikő (coords.), *Orașeșiorășeni*, Cluj-Napoca, 2006
- Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, vol. V (1438-1457), vol. VI (1458-1473), vol. VII (1474-1486), Bucharest, 1975
- Vauchez, Andre, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages, Book II: Typology of Medieval Sainthood*, Cambridge, 2005

---

Idem, “Between Virginity and Spiritual Espousals: Models of Feminine Sainthood in the Christian West in the Middle Ages”, in *The Medieval History Journal*, vol. II, no. 2, 1999

Vocelka, Karl, “The Counter-Reformation and Popular Piety in Vienna”, in C. Scott Dixon, Dagmar Freist, Mark Greengrass (eds.), *Living with Religious Diversity in Early-Modern Europe*, Farnham, 2009

Walker Bynum, Carolyne, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1987

Warner, Marina, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, Oxford, 1976

<http://www.santiebeati.it/dettaglio/20350>, accessed on 30.03.2014, at 17:23.