

# 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 creștine și la diseminarea normelor și deciziilor Bisericii. Pe urma 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 orașului Cluj (magh. Kolozsvár/ germ. Klausenburg). Unul dintre centrele urbane majore ale regiunii, Clujul se distingea printr-o populație mixtă, de sași și maghiari, a căror pastorație intra în grija mai multor instituții religioase. Cu toate că sursele păstrate nu dezvăluie detalii despre cuvântările omiletice rostite în oraș, despre conținutul sau punerea lor în scenă, lucrarea schițează profilul activității uzuale de predicare pe baza colecțiilor de predici care au aparținut clericilor seculari și fraților cerșetori, precum și a surselor documentare care atestă acțiunile complementare sau concurente ale acestora. Analiza dezvăluie că preocupările pastorale și omiletice au cunoscut o creștere progresivă în decursul secolului al XV-lea, atingând apogeul în 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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

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

<sup>2</sup> ANR-SJ Cluj, *Primăria Municipiului Cluj, A. Privilegii și acte, 1. Privilegiile orașului*, no. 168; Gustav Gündisch et al. (eds), *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen* (henceforth: Ub), Vol. VI: 1458-1473, (București: Editura Academiei R.S.R, 1981), no. 3102, 2-3; Elek Jakab (ed.), *Okleveltar Kolozsvár története* (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.<sup>3</sup>

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,<sup>4</sup> or with the evolutions in the urban government and political affairs.<sup>5</sup> 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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<sup>3</sup> Kemény, *Deutsche Fundgruben*, 73.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> Andras Kiss, 'Kolozsvár város önkormányzati fejlődése 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<sup>6</sup> - an urban phenomenon.<sup>7</sup> 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,<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup>

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 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries and often took a stand for the defence of the Christian values and virtues that were under assault within the cities<sup>10</sup> 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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<sup>6</sup> 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 Circulation 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

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

<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> 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.<sup>11</sup> Although some of these mendicant wandering preachers expanded their tours north of the Alps, like John of Capestrano,<sup>12</sup> 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.<sup>13</sup> 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.<sup>14</sup> 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”.<sup>15</sup> 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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<sup>11</sup> 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).

<sup>12</sup> 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.

<sup>13</sup> Bernhard Neidiger, ‘Wortgottesdienst vor der Reformation. Die Stiftung eigener Predigerpfründen für Weltkleriker im späten Mittelalter’, *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter* 22 (2002), 142-189.

<sup>14</sup> Rita Voltmer, ‘Political Preaching and a Design of Urban Reform: Johannes Geiler of Kaysersberg and Strasbourg’, *Franciscan Studies*, Vol. 71 (2013): 71-88.

<sup>15</sup> 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 pursued 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.<sup>16</sup> 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<sup>17</sup> –, 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.<sup>18</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards.<sup>19</sup> 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 14<sup>th</sup> century, although attested in written sources only in 1397.<sup>20</sup> 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.<sup>21</sup> The Observant

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<sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>17</sup> 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.

<sup>18</sup> Ub, Vol. I, no. 346, pp. 319-320; KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 16, 31-33.

<sup>19</sup> Elek Benkó, *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.

<sup>20</sup> 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. Várostartörténeti tanulmányok = studii de istorie urbană* [Cluj – Kolozsvár – Klausenburg 700. Studies of Urban History] (Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2018), 279-286.

<sup>21</sup> Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane*, 142, 149.

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

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.<sup>24</sup> In addition, the town's citizens themselves expressed their devotional concerns, through the practice of charity,<sup>25</sup> pious donations and bequests in favour of the parish and of the mendicant orders,<sup>26</sup> 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.<sup>27</sup> 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

<sup>22</sup> Ub, Vol. VII, no. 4765, p. 463; KvOkI, 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.

<sup>23</sup> Salontai, 'Așezămintele monastice ale ordinelor cerșetoare', 281-283.

<sup>24</sup> Carmen Florea, *The Late Medieval Cult of Saints: Universal Developments within Local Contexts* (Routledge, 2023), 258-305.

<sup>25</sup> 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.

<sup>26</sup> 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.

<sup>27</sup> Lidia Gross, 'Bresle și confrerii în Clujul medieval (sec. XIV-XVI)' [Guilds and Confraternities in Medieval Cluj], in Ionuț Costea, Carmen Florea (eds), *Orașe și orașeni / Városok és városlakók* [Cities and Citizens] (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2006), pp. 394-403; Eadem, 'Meșteșug și 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 60<sup>th</sup> 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, especially 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.<sup>28</sup> The document confirms a donation made by the confraternity of St. Catherine<sup>29</sup> 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,<sup>30</sup> 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.<sup>31</sup> 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

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<sup>28</sup> 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.

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

<sup>30</sup> 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.

<sup>31</sup> Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane*, 142; Marie Madeleine de Cevins, 'Clercs de paroisse et frères mendiants dans les villes hongroises à la fin du Moyen Âge: 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: relațiile dintre clerul secular și 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.), *Orașe și orașeni. Varosok és városalakok*, 404-417.



priest, who was compelled to limit his sermons to one hour.<sup>32</sup> 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.<sup>33</sup>

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 15<sup>th</sup> 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.<sup>34</sup> 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.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> “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.

<sup>33</sup> 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.

<sup>34</sup> “parrochianos dicte ecclesie parochialis 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; KvOkI, Vol. I, no. 131, 214-215; Carmen Florea, ‘Despre tensiunea unei solidarități în evul mediu firziu: 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.

<sup>35</sup> de Cevins, ‘Clercs de paroisse et frères mendiants’, 289-290.

The homiletic activity is better documented in Cluj towards the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> 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,<sup>36</sup> it probably belongs to the last phase of construction, together with other interior furnishings.<sup>37</sup> At the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, other Transylvanian ecclesiastical edifices were also embellished with stone pulpits, including certain hall churches from the northern part of the province.<sup>38</sup> 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*.<sup>39</sup> 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,<sup>40</sup> 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.<sup>41</sup> 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.<sup>42</sup> In Sibiu (germ. Hermannstadt/ hu. Nagyszeben) and Bistrița

<sup>36</sup> 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 Könyvkiadó, 1957), 24-32, especially 30-31 and fig. 28-33.

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

<sup>38</sup> 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.

<sup>39</sup> "coram providis ac circumspicis 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); KvOkI, Vol. I, no. 184, 300-302.

<sup>40</sup> 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.

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

<sup>42</sup> Cotoi, 'Predica medievală între oralitate și scris', 167.

(germ. Bistritz, Nösen/ hu. Beszterce), they are explicitly placed among the parish clergy together with chaplains.<sup>43</sup> 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. Szászvolkány), as well as preacher in Cluj and Bistrița.<sup>44</sup> Then, an anonymous cleric from Cluj, mentioned as *predicator dicte ccclesie maioris*, benefited from a bequest in 1531.<sup>45</sup> 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.<sup>46</sup> 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.<sup>47</sup> 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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<sup>43</sup> 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 ecclesie Cibiniensis vigintisex capellanos et unum predicatorem", ANR-SJ Sibiu, *Magistratul oraşului 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 oraşului Bistrița*, no. 352.

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

<sup>45</sup> „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.

<sup>46</sup> 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.

<sup>47</sup> 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 Schleyinig, in 1481.<sup>48</sup> As Géza Hegyi emphasized, the urban community did not seem to raise any objections, although its privilege appears to have been violated.<sup>49</sup> 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,<sup>50</sup> 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 preachings 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.<sup>51</sup> 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.<sup>52</sup> 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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<sup>48</sup> ANR-SJ Cluj, Primăria Municipiului Cluj-Napoca, A. Privilegiile și acte, 6. Acte constituite în fascicule pe probleme și după proveniență, Fascicula 23, no. 3; Ub, Vol. VII, no. 4454, 302-303; KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 167, 268-270.

<sup>49</sup> Hegyi, 'Kolozsvári plébánosok a középkorban', 758.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 761.

<sup>51</sup> Neidiger, 'Wortgottesdienst vor der Reformation', 145-146, 152-154.

<sup>52</sup> "quod domini iudex et cives jurati ante omnia curam ecclesasticam gerant et defectum divinorum officiorum agnoscentes redarguent, in super dominum plebanum ad servandos sacellanos ad numerum susceptum ac praedicatorum Hungarorum cohortentur", ANR-SJ Cluj, Primăria Municipiului Cluj-Napoca, A. Privilegiile și acte, 1. Privilegiile orașului, no. 7; KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 242, 379-383.

convent.<sup>53</sup> 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.<sup>54</sup> Other documents from the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> 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,<sup>55</sup> and later towards the appointed chaplain who was neglecting his office.<sup>56</sup> By the end of the century, the situation improved and the Hungarian community enjoyed the presence of their own priests.<sup>57</sup> 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 16<sup>th</sup> century seems to have had the required instruction and tools required in preaching. Gervasius Teremi, attested as priest in Cluj between 1516 and 1528,<sup>58</sup> 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.<sup>59</sup> 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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<sup>53</sup> Elek Jakab, *Kolozsvár története*, Vol. II (Budapest: Magyar Királyi Egyetemi Könyvnyomda, 1888), 111.

<sup>54</sup> András Kovács, 'Kolozsvár legrégebbi számadáskönyvéről (1453)', in Lupescu Makó et al. (eds), *Cluj - Kolozsvár - Klausenburg 700*, 181-212.

<sup>55</sup> ANR - SJ Cluj, *Primăria Municipiului Cluj-Napoca, A. Privilegii și acte, I. Privilegiile orașului*, no. 327; Ub, Vol. V, no. 2839, pp. 391-392; KvOkl, vol. I, no. 111, 187-188.

<sup>56</sup> Ub, Vol. VI, no. 3494, p. 262; KvOkl, Vol. I, no. 133, 216-218.

<sup>57</sup> Enikő Rűsz-Fogarasi, *Privilegiile și îndatoririle orașelor din Transilvania voievodală* [The Privileges and Duties of the Towns from the Transylvanian Voivodate] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2003), 134-135.

<sup>58</sup> Hegyi, 'Kolozsvári plébánosok a középkorban', 760.

<sup>59</sup> 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 Jako, *Az első kolozsvári egyetemi könyvtár története és állományának rekonstrukciója 1579-1604* [The History of the First University Library in Cluj and Its Reconstruction, 1579-1604] (Szeged: Scriptorum, 1991), no. 72, 77.

de eadem civitate".<sup>60</sup> 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-16<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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.<sup>61</sup> 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.<sup>62</sup>

The Dominican friars had been present in town since the 14<sup>th</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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)<sup>63</sup>, Gregorius Arcuparis (1491-1492)<sup>64</sup>, Blasius (1524)<sup>65</sup>, supporting the idea that mendicants were capable

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<sup>60</sup> 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".

<sup>61</sup>"Mítler 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. Also 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.

<sup>62</sup> Jakab, *Kolozsvár története*, Vol. II, 102.

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

<sup>64</sup> 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*.<sup>66</sup> 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*.<sup>67</sup> 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.<sup>68</sup> The arrangement of a spacious room for the storage of books in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>69</sup> and the attempt to draw up a catalogue, within the inventory of the convent from 1509,<sup>70</sup> 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,<sup>71</sup> 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.<sup>72</sup> However, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when Miklós Asztalos studied the old books preserved in the tower of the St. Michael church, he concluded that

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<sup>65</sup> Fabritius, 'Zwei Funde', 29.

<sup>66</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>67</sup> "frater etiam Demetrius ordine predicatorum in clastro 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.

<sup>68</sup> 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.

<sup>69</sup> 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], *Szépíróészet* 3 (1942), 117.

<sup>70</sup> 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”.

<sup>71</sup> 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 16<sup>th</sup> century to the Dominican friar *Laurentius de Dees*. Ibidem, no. 47.

<sup>72</sup> 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 – bore ownership notes that indicated this provenance.<sup>73</sup> 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.<sup>74</sup> 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, Brașov (germ. Kronstadt/ hu. Brassó), or Bistrița, which are better documented.<sup>75</sup>

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 Mureș (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 17<sup>th</sup> century at the Franciscan community from Călugăreni (hu. Mikháza).<sup>76</sup> A volume comprising Osualdus de Lasko's *Sermones dominicales Biga salutis intitulasi* 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.<sup>77</sup> Only a few fragments of liturgical

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

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

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

<sup>76</sup> Teleki-Bolyai Library, Târgu Mureș, 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-Mureș: [s.n.], 1971), no. 35.

<sup>77</sup> Library of the Semmelweis Museum for the History of Medicine, Budapest, 11685/S/81: Osualdus de Lasko, *Sermones dominicales, Biga salutis intitulasi* (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 Șumuleu 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.<sup>78</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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.<sup>79</sup> 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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”.<sup>80</sup> 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.<sup>81</sup> 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 *predicadores ad Saxones*.<sup>82</sup> 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: MTA, 1988), no. 1116, 307.

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

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

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

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

<sup>82</sup> *Ibidem*; EEMH, Vol. II, 484.

of preachers appointed *ad Hungaros* is uninterrupted until 1542.<sup>83</sup> 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*.<sup>84</sup> 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.<sup>85</sup>

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.<sup>86</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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<sup>87</sup> 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 Brașov.

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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<sup>83</sup> Afterwards the decisions of the provincial chapters only mentions the appointed guardian. EEMH, Vol. II, 496.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 493.

<sup>85</sup> 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

<sup>86</sup> András Kiss, 'Az 1405-ös városi kiváltságok szerepe Kolozsvár történetében', in Costea et al. (eds.), *Orășe și orașeni. Városok és városlakók*, 333-341.

<sup>87</sup> 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).<sup>88</sup> 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.<sup>89</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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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<sup>88</sup> For instance, in 1507, Andras de Azar is attested as *predicator hungarorum*, see ANR-SJ Maramureș, *Primăria orașului Baia-Mare*, 2. *Documente privilegiale*, no. 29.

<sup>89</sup> 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 losses 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.