

**Beyond the Norms: Religious Practice in Late Medieval and Early Modern
Transylvania
(Project PN-II-ID-PCE-2011-3-0359)**

NEWSLETTER

June 2013

ACTIVITIES

CONFERENCE, WORKSHOP

SAINTS ANCIENS ET SAINTS MODERNES: PERMANENCES, TRANSFERTS, CONCURRENCES (ANCIENT VERSUS MODERN SAINTS. CONTINUITY, TRANSFERS, COMPETITION) – international workshop, Rennes University, February 1st 2013

Marie-Madeleine de CEVINS (CERHIO, Université Rennes 2) and Olivier MARIN (CRESC, Université Paris-Nord, IUF) have initiated a series of research meetings devoted to saints and their cults in East-Central Europe, the purpose of these meetings being a refinement of the typology of late medieval sainthood that André Vauchez had proposed more than three decades ago in his work, that has since become fundamental for this field of study, *La sainteté en Occident aux derniers siècles du Moyen Age d'après les procès de canonisation et les documents hagiographiques* (Roma: Ecole française de Rome, 1981). Within the meeting organized by the Rennes University on February 1st 2013 (Saints anciens et saints modernes: permanences, transferts, concurrences), the researchers from Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania (Carmen Florea) and France have discussed the ways in which the cult of saints has been developed in East-Central Europe during the late middle ages. The most interesting aspects covered have highlighted the magnitude of the cult of hussite martyrs in Bohemia, the persistence of the episcopal sanctity model in the Krakow Diocese, the degree of efficiency of both old and new saints from the perspective of producing the miracles that have led to freeing several prisoners from the Kingdom of Hungary from Ottoman captivity. Viewed from the perspective of the *Beyond the Norms: Religious Practice in Late Medieval and Early Modern Transylvania* research project, attending this conference has proven to be relevant from various points of view. For example, during the discussions, the prevailing focus regarded the ways in which the laity influenced, most of the times to a decisive extent, the promotion of certain candidates to sainthood, turning them into efficient protectors. From the perspective of this project, evaluating the manner in which the

clerical discourse on sainthood can be adjusted during the late medieval period depending on lay preference for a saint or another is also important. Last but not least, it is worth mentioning the usefulness of a dialogue that focuses on understanding the interaction between clergy and laity not from an institutionally dominant perspective, but from the one that favors the (sometimes tense) meeting points of the two, the negotiation process of the different attitudes proving to be fertile ground for analyzing the religious choices of the laity.

MEDIEVAL RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE IN TRANSYLVANIA/ KÖZÉPKORI EGYHÁZI ÉPÍTÉS ZET ERDÉLYBEN – international scholarly symposium, VIIIth edition, Satu Mare (Romania) – Papos (Hungary), March 8 – 10, 2013

The symposium organized by the Satu Mare County Council, the Satu Mare County Museum and the Jóna András Museum from Nyíregyháza (Hungary), which took place as a part of the Hungary-Romania Cross-Border Co-operation Programme 2007-2013, has gathered around 100 specialists in the fields of archaeology, history and medieval art history from Romania and Hungary, who have, during the three days of the symposium and



throughout more than 40 lectures, debated medieval ecclesiastic architecture viewed within the historical, social, religious-devotional and artistic context of the time. Part of the presentations, conceived as case studies, have been architectural and artistic analyses, as well as presentations of series of monuments. Others have focused on archeological research and related issues, a distinct section being devoted to the architecture of the mendicant orders. The dialogue sessions focusing on historiographic reinterpretation as well as the history and current



state of the research regarding certain ecclesiastic monuments in medieval Transylvania have been extremely interesting. The members of the Beyond the Norms: Religious Practice in Late Medieval and Early Modern Transylvania project team who attended this conference were Mária Lupescu Makó, with her lecture „Pro reparatione et refectioe monasterium...” Célirányos kegyes adományok a középkori Erdélyben / „Pro reparatione et refectioe monasterium...” Pious Donations with Specific Purpose in Medieval Transylvania and Ciprian Firea, with his “Donors and Memory in Medieval Transylvanian Churches. A research of Visual and Written Sources (sec. XIV-XVI)” presentation. Relying on a well-defined category of written sources, namely bequests and pious donations, Mária Lupescu Makó tried to prove that the donations the laity, both urban and rural, made to the monasteries most often served well-defined purposes. This has led to the conclusion that the donors were influenced by the monks, adapting their donations to the needs of the convent. The reciprocity functioned well, both parts attaining their purpose: the beneficiaries of the donations, the monks, received what they wanted (properties or parts of properties, vineyards, mills, donations for repairing the convent or the church, money for the needs of the monastic community, etc.) and the donors were convinced that, by means of the prayers of the monks, the time they were going to spend in Purgatory was going to be reduced considerably. This contractual feature of pious donations functioned quite well throughout the middle ages, with increasing intensity towards the end. Ciprian Firea focused on a similar category to the one used by Mária Lupescu Makó, namely the donors. Using documentation and visual sources from the XIV-XVI centuries, the author made a convincing demonstration of the fact that, sometimes, the donors were not satisfied with receiving a written record of the donation, desiring a

more persistent mark on the memory of the community. To achieve this they have resorted to different practices (building altars, commissioning paintings, etc.).



THE MATERIAL RUNNING OF THE MENDICANT FRIARIES IN CENTRAL EUROPE (C. 1220 – C. 1550). TOWARDS AN INVENTORY OF TEXTUAL SOURCES – WORKSHOP in the frame of MARGEC programme (Marginalité, économie et christianisme. La vie matérielle des couvents mendiants en Europe centrale (v. 1220 - v. 1550) – Prague, March 25th, 2013

On March 25th 2013, Carmen Florea and Mária Lupescu Makó, members of our research team have attended The Material Running of the Mendicant Friaries in Central Europe (c. 1220 – c.



1550). Towards an Inventory of Textual Sources workshop, which was held in Prague and was a part of the MARGEC (Marginalité, économie et christianisme. La vie matérielle des couvents mendiants en Europe centrale (v. 1220 - v. 1550)) project. This scholarly event, organized by the Centre d'Histoire Espaces et Cultures (CHEC), Université Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand 2, Centre de Recherches Historiques de l'Ouest (CERHIO) – Université Rennes 2, Collegium Europaeum – Charles University & Czech



Academy of Sciences was dedicated to researching the written sources that might facilitate knowledge of the economical life of the mendicant convents in Central and Eastern Europe. The workshop offered the possibility, both to the researchers from east-central Europe and to the ones from France whose work relates to the specified region, to present their research regarding the economical activity of the mendicant convents. Focusing on the written sources, the workshop proved to be extremely useful from a methodological point of view. Researchers from France, Germany, Hungary and Romania have not only presented the variety of written sources which can be used for analyzing the economical life of mendicant convents, they have also offered useful models for methodological analysis. Thus, Carmen Florea presented the Urban Charters and the Material Running of Transylvanian Friaries. Focusing mostly on the case study of Braşov, the author also pointed out the part played by the laity in founding and, afterwards, supporting these religious settlements. Mária Lupescu Makó, in her presentation Testaments and Donations Concerning the Dominicans, Franciscans and Augustinian Hermits in Transylvania, focused on the two categories of written sources that may offer information regarding the economical life

of the convents: testaments and donations. She showed that most of these sources, when it comes to Transylvania, come from the XIV-XVI centuries and refer mostly to the Dominican convents. Categorizing the objects found in testaments and donations, she came to the conclusion that these convents tried to survive through their own means and practiced an open economy. The agricultural properties, mills, ponds and salt they received as donations offered the mendicant friars a decent living, being at the same time an indispensable source for financing their projects to rebuild, renew or extend their convents and churches.

ȘCOALA ARDELEANĂ, the VIIIth Edition, Oradea, 12-13 April 2013

On 12-13 April 2013 Ovidiu Ghitta attended the symposium „Școala Ardeleană”, the VIIIth edition, which was held at Oradea, presenting a paper called 'Devotional models, liturgical behaviour and canonic discipline in the Romanian letters of the Bishop of Mukacevo, Andrei Bacsinszky'. The author was interested in the demarcation line traced by the bishop between “law” and “lawlessness” when he referred to the liturgical and social behaviour of the clergy and the laity under his authority. Ovidiu Ghitta used discourse analysis which has highlighted the integration of the bishop in the programme of the Catholic Reformation and Josephine reformism as well as his efforts to build a “confessional” Church.



BEYOND THE NORMS: RELIGIOUS PRACTICE IN LATE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN TRANSYLVANIA

- MONTHLY MEETINGS -

Starting in March, the members of the Beyond the Norms: Religious Practice in Late Medieval and Early Modern Transylvania project team have had the chance to present their own research related to this project. During the meetings it was taken into consideration that the presentations were the result of research still in progress, the purpose of these presentations actually being that of discussing certain problems raised by the authors.

The series of monthly presentations was opened by Ciprian Firea on March 22nd 2013 with the presentation "Donatio pro memoria. Lay and Feminine Patronage in Late Medieval Transylvania (sec. XIV-XVI). A research of visual and written sources". The presentation aimed to identify and explore visual and written sources regarding the religious practices of the laity in late medieval Transylvania. Special attention was given to the personal salvific strategies the individuals had – by means of perpetuating their memory (either by means of private masses/liturgies, or by means of visual instruments: portraits of the donors, heraldic elements, inscriptions regarding the donation etc.). Also, special emphasis was placed on the participation and involvement of women in the development and financing of these salvific strategies.



In May, through Civic Control of the Sanctity in Late Medieval Transylvania, Carmen Florea offered a very interesting presentation regarding the way in which a civic religion was being developed in the towns of medieval Transylvania during the XIV-XVI centuries. Forming an integral part of the objectives the team of the project has undertaken for the year 2013, the methodological discussion on the interpretative possibilities of a civic religion in urban Transylvania meant, for the author, a natural follow up of the critical evaluation of the sources that had been assumed in the first year of this research project.

The direction initiated by Carmen Florea started from the current historiographic debate regarding civic religion, a discussion which had its benchmarks established by the attempt of defining civic religion in the Italian territory (by means of the research of André Vauchez, Michael Goodich, Ana Benvenuti, Gary Dickson), as well as the attempts made, in the last years, to clarify this definition by studying civic religion in the towns on the Adriatic Sea coast or in the North-European ones.

Although the historiography focused on urban religious life in the medieval kingdom of Hungary pointed out its religious micro-cosmos character (using the definition given by Marie Madeleine de Cevins), there still isn't a systematic debate on the manner in which civic religion can be studied, consequently the proposed definitions may be nuanced for each geographical region. Therefore, a possible direction of investigation might deploy the results of the research dedicated to the religious life of the laity in Transylvanian towns that has highlighted the importance of the mono-parochial profile of the urban communities and the religious autonomy they benefited from. As pointed out in newer and older art historical studies (Virgil Vătășianu, Vasile Drăguț, Ciprian Firea, Ágnes Bálint, Matthew Palmer), the rebuilding of the parish churches from the most important towns (Sibiu, Brașov, Bistrița and Cluj) was motivated by the desire a privileged community had to showcase their status by means of religious edifices.

These suggestions can be developed in the direction of observing the control the magistracy exerted over the way the parish church functions, a key element of this control being the cult of the parochial patron. The involvement of the urban

government in the public celebration of the patron (as it happened in Bistrița), or of the most important socio-economic groups (the case of Brașov and Cluj) or religious ones (the case of the Marian confraternity in Sibiu) opens the tempting option of analyzing the characteristics of civic religion and its impact on urban religious life.

Last but not least, Carmen Florea pointed out that investigating the case of Transylvania not only clears the less investigated, or not at all studied aspect of the participation of the laity in religious life (in this given case by means of celebrating the cult of the parochial patron), but also brings significant nuances to the way in which this participation changes the attitude of the parochial clergy as well. The comparative approach also has the merit of facilitating finding a definition for civic religion that is not only restricted to a geographical area, but also to an institutional ecclesiastic and secular local specificity.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PARTICIPATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS

On February 1st 2013, Carmen Florea attended the international *Saints anciens et saints modernes: permanences, transferts, concurrences* workshop, organized by the Rennes University.

Between the 8th and the 10th of March 2013, Mária Lupescu Makó and Ciprian Firea attended the international *Medieval Religious Architecture in Transylvania/ Középkori egyházi építészet Erdélyben* conference, organized by the Satu Mare County Council, the Satu Mare County Museum and the Jósza András Museum from Nyíregyháza (Hungary). The international scholarly symposium, at its VIIIth edition, took place in Satu Mare (Romania) and Pápos (Hungary), as a part of the Hungary-Romania Cross-Border Co-operation Program 2007-2013. Mária Lupescu Makó presented her paper „Pro reparatione et refectioe monasterium...” *Célirányos kegyes adományok a középkori Erdélyben / „Pro reparatione et refectioe monasterium...” Pious Donations with Specific Purpose in Medieval Transylvania*. Ciprian Firea attended with the presentation “Donors and Memory in Medieval Transylvanian Churches. A research of Visual and Written Sources (sec. XIV-XVI)”



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On July 18th 2013, Carmen Florea, member of this project's research team, has publicly defended her doctoral thesis, entitled The Cult of the Saints in Late Medieval Transylvania (14th to 16th centuries, obtaining a Very Good qualificative and the Summa Cum Laude distinction.

