

## WHY SACRED SPACE IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE?\*

Hides, bacon, meat, lard, tallow, but also wine, and especially wheat, and even a disassembled wagon...<sup>1</sup> The ‘inventory’ of the Lutheran church from Micăsasa (Germ. Feigendorf, Hung. Mikeszásza), from the former Transylvanian county Târnava, justified its characterization by the Principality’s Government as a granary or a storehouse, rather than as a cultic edifice.<sup>2</sup> The Lutheran pastor compensated the dramatic drop in the number of churchgoers by drawing profits from the laymen or from the Calvinist priest, who wanted to use the church as a storage for various produce. This situation, however, did not stop the Catholics, whose numbers were increasing, from claiming it. Their request was solved in a rather unusual way: the church was parted by a wall and one half was attributed to the Catholics, while the other to the Lutherans.<sup>3</sup> Later, as the Lutheran community died out, their half was given over to the Calvinists. Thus, the edifice belongs to two confessions until today.<sup>4</sup> It can be said that this is an extreme case, yet one for which some European parallels do exist.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the use of a single church by different confessional communities, although not at the same time, but in alternatively, is not singular in pre-modern Transylvania. The reasons lie in the modest financial means of many communities.<sup>6</sup> The practice could have its roots in the medieval period, set against the bi-confessional background of the province (Greek Orthodox and Catholics). Although there are some clues for this inference, further systematic

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<sup>1</sup> Report on the situation of the church from Micăsasa, forwarded to the Roman Catholic bishop of Transylvania, Ignác Batthyány, on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1781, fund “Arhiva Episcopiei” (hereafter cited as AE), no. 992/1781, f. 1v, Arhiva Arhidiecezei Romano-Catolice de Alba Iulia (hereafter cited as AARCAI).

<sup>2</sup> Letter of the Transylvanian Government addressed to the bishop Batthyány on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 1781, fund AE, no. 1254/1781, f. 3r, AARCAI.

<sup>3</sup> Letter of the Transylvanian Government addressed to the bishop Batthyány on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1781, *ibid.*, f. 1r.

<sup>4</sup> Hermann Fabini, *Atlas der siebenbürgisch-sächsischen Kirchenburgen und Dorfkirchen*, vol. I (Hermannstadt-Heidelberg: Monumenta Verlag, 1998), 180.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. “St. Willibrord” church from Hulst (Zeeland, NL) that functioned as a “simultaneous church” for the Roman Catholic and Calvinist communities between 1806-1929. Thomas Coomans, “Reuse of Sacred Places. Perspectives for a Long Tradition,” in *Loci Sacri. Understanding Sacred Places*, ed. Thomas Coomans et al. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2012), 224; “St. Willibrordusbasiliek in Hulst, Zeeland, NL,” accessed on March 18<sup>th</sup> 2015, <http://memodatabase.hum.uu.nl/memo-is/detail/index?detailId=739&detailType=ParishInstitution>.

<sup>6</sup> For the discussion of further examples, see Adrian Andrei Rusu, *Ctitori și biserici din Țara Hațegului până la 1700* [Founders and Churches from Hațeg Land up to the Year 1700] (Satu Mare: Editura Muzeului Sătmărean, 1997), 141-332.

investigations and more solid arguments are still needed. A few studies drew attention to probable sharing of churches as well as attempts to adapt the cultic interior, or edifice transfers from one rite to the other, but only from the middle and the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, as a consequence of the Florentine union on the territory of medieval Hungary.<sup>7</sup>

There cannot be simple answers for the questions raised by cases like these, which concern the mode of consecration, the confessional identity, the functioning and adaptation of the liturgical space. Moreover, such issues can constitute the subject of a more general inquiry into the significance, as sacred spaces, of the cultic edifices set in the current Romanian environment. However, the dearth of information provided by the available sources, together with the lack of thorough investigations into the inception and evolution of the parochial and monastic networks represent major hindrances.<sup>8</sup> The diversity of medieval jurisdictions (the bishoprics of Transylvania, Oradea and Cenad depended on the archbishopric of Kalocsa, while 'St. Ladislav' prepositure of the Transylvanian Saxons, and starting from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Sibiu and Burzenland chapters depended on the Archbishopric of Esztergom),<sup>9</sup> the rather late and incomplete attestation of the Catholic parochial network (14<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>10</sup> and the lack of written sources about the Orthodox network (which forces one to rely more on ecclesiastic monuments) were succeeded after only two centuries by a renewed diversification following the spread of the religious Reformation. The confessional landscape of Transylvania and of its neighbouring territories to the west is further complicated by the creation of

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<sup>7</sup> Rusu, *Ctitori și biserici*, 32-43; Idem, "Bisericile românești din Transilvania și Ungaria în secolul al XV-lea" [Romanian Churches from Transylvania and Hungary in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century] *MTI*, 1-2 (1997): 17-19. See also the general treatment of the problem in Marius Diaconescu, "Les implications confessionnelles du Concile de Florence en Hongrie," *MTI*, 1-2 (1997): 29-62. For the Banat region, see Viorel Achim, "La féodalité roumaine entre orthodoxie et catholicisme," *Colloquia I*, no. 2 (1994): 17-29.

<sup>8</sup> A research carried out from the perspective of regional and local history is a requisite preliminary stage for constructing an overview. For instance, the issue is pertinently raised for the medieval period by Rusu, "Bisericile," 11-28, and more recently by Ileana Burnichioiu, "Așezări, domenii și biserici în Transilvania medievală (II). Nord-estul comitatului Alba" [Settlements, Domains and Churches from Medieval Transylvania (II). The North-Eastern Part of Alba County], *AUA hist.* 16, I (2012): 47-140.

<sup>9</sup> Joachim Bahlcke, *Ungarischer Episkopat und österreichische Monarchie. Von einer Partnerschaft zur Konfrontation (1686-1790)* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005), 44-63; Paul Philippi, "800 de ani din istoria sașilor din Transilvania" [800 Years of the History of the Transylvanian Saxons], in *Scurtă istorie a bisericilor și comunităților religioase din Transilvania* [A Short History of Churches and of Religious Communities from Transylvania], ed. Dieter Brandes et al. (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2008), 75-101.

<sup>10</sup> Erdély egyházigazgatási beosztása és egyházas helységei (1301-1350)" [The Ecclesiastical Administrative Map of Transylvania and Localities with Churches (1301-1350)]; Géza Hegyi, "Egyházigazgatási határok a középkori Erdélyben (I. közlemény) [The Ecclesiastical Administrative Boundaries in Medieval Transylvania (Part I)], *EMLXXII*, nr. 3-4 (2010): 1-32.

the Evangelical, Reformed and Unitarian bishoprics of Transylvania, respectively of the Reformed bishopric of Debrecen,<sup>11</sup> as well as by the reorganization of a similar Orthodox structure after the attempt to create a Romanian Reformed bishopric.<sup>12</sup> However, the overlap between various administrative units pertaining to the former voivodate of Transylvania, now transformed into a principality, continued (noble counties, Saxon seats and districts, Székelys' seats, free royal towns). At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the inclusion of the Principality into the Habsburg Empire enabled the Roman Catholics to reconstitute their territorial structures. Starting from the middle of the next century, the registration of administrative structures and of holders of ecclesiastical titles in the Principality's directory, and later in the dioceses' distinct directories, offered to historians a valuable source, which facilitated the observation of the jurisdictional evolution.<sup>13</sup> The confessional conscriptions,<sup>14</sup> the protocols of canonical visitations,<sup>15</sup> and the reports on the state of the

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<sup>11</sup> Ludwig Binder, *Grundlagen und Formen der Toleranz in Siebenbürgen bis zur Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts* [Siebenbürgisches Archiv, 11] (Köln, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1976), 45-98; Ana Dumitran et al., *Relații interconfesionale româno-maghiare în Transilvania (mijlocul secolului XVI - primele decenii ale secolului XVIII) / Román-magyar felekezeti közti kapcsolatok Erdélyben (a XVI. század közepe - a XVIII. Század első évtizedei között)* [Romanian-Hungarian Interconfessional Relations in Transylvania (Middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> - First Decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)] (Alba Iulia, 2000), 37; Nicolae Bocșan et al., *Evoluția instituțiilor episcopale în Bisericile din Transilvania*, Partea I. *De la începuturi până la 1740* [The Evolution of Episcopal Institutions in Transylvanian Churches. Part I. From the Beginnings to the year 1740] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2010), 81-119, 153-164.

<sup>12</sup> Ana Dumitran, *Religie ortodoxă – religie reformată. Ipostaze ale identității confesionale a românilor din Transilvania în secolele XVI-XVII* [Orthodox Religion – Reformed Religion. Instances of the Confessional Identity of Romanians from Transylvania in the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Centuries] (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Nereamia Napocae, 2004), 91-126.

<sup>13</sup> The first published directory were, in fact, calendars: *Titulare Dacicum quo omnes omnium dicasteriorum et officiorum [...] ac formam Titularis Calendarii Inclyti Apostolici Regni Hungariae imitans [...] pro anno MDCCLXVII* (Cibinii) for the Transylvanian Principality, as well as *Calendarium dioecesanum venerabilis cleri Magni Principatus Transilvaniae pro anno MDCCXXXII* (Cibinii); *Schematismus venerabilis cleri graeci ritus catholicorum dioeceseos Fogarasiensis in Transylvania, pro anno a Christo Nato MDCCCXXXV* [...] (Blasii). From among the few studies focusing on the this matter, one can recall the work of Ioan Chindriș, "Cel mai vechi șematism românesc cunoscut: Oradea, 1813" [The Oldest Known Romanian Directory: Oradea, 1813], *AHCN* XLI (2002): 235-260, and of Ciprian Ghișa, "Structura administrativ-teritorială a Bisericii Greco-Catolice din Transilvania – aspecte instituționale și terminologice" [The Administrative-Territorial Structure of the Greek Catholic Church from Transylvania – Institutional and Terminological Issues], *Studia hist.* 51, 2 (2006), 36-74.

<sup>14</sup> For a more recent edition, with references also to the previous editions, see Daniel Dumitran et al., eds., *„... virtuti decreti tollerantiae beneficia clero Graeci restituenda ...”. Biserica românească din Transilvania în izvoarele statistice ale anului 1767* [The Romanian Church from Transylvania in the Statistical Sources for the Year 1767] (Alba Iulia: Altip, 2009).

<sup>15</sup> For example, see the extremely useful registry of Roman Catholic visitations in Rita Bernád, *A Gyulafehérvári Érseki Levéltári és az Erdélyi Katolikus Státus Levéltára II. Oklevél és iratjegyzék. Canonica Vizitatiook mutatója / Inventarul diplomelor și documentelor /1224/1429-1992. Indicele*

dioceses owed by the Catholic bishops to the Holy See<sup>16</sup> are also added to the list of sources. Although, overall, this documentation is rich, it suffers from shortcomings derived from its unequal value, particularly noticeable in the case of the visitation protocols and of the bishops' reports. Consequently, it cannot always offer answers to the questions outlined above, neither in what concerns the moment when cultic edifices came into being, their existence and functioning through the ages, nor in the religious ceremonies that took place within.

In the last quarter of century, Romanian research achieved remarkable progress in investigating the field of sacred spaces. During the communist regime, the subject had been pushed into the background, so the subsequent methodological delay had to be made up for. Starting from the 1990s, the issue of sacrality and of sacred spaces was one of the themes discussed at symposia and workshops, many concluded with volumes of studies;<sup>17</sup> gradually, it grew into a central subject. Published monographs, some resulting from doctoral projects, made essential contributions to the knowledge of ecclesiastic institutions and structures, of building and furnishing cult edifices, or of religious architecture and art.<sup>18</sup> Subjects such as the patronage of communities

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*vizitațiilor canonice 1711-1908* [The Inventory of Diplomas and Documents /1224/1429-1992. The Index of the Canonical Visitations 1711-1908] (Gyulafehérvár, Budapest: ELTE Egyetemi Levéltár és a Gyulafehérvári Római Katolikus Érsekség, 2006), 219-281.

<sup>16</sup> See Daniel Dumitran, *Un timp al reformelor. Biserica Greco-Catolică din Transilvania sub conducerea episcopului Ioan Bob (1782-1830)* [The Time of Reforms. The Greek Catholic Church from Transylvania during the Leadership of the Bishop Ioan Bob (1782-1830)], 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2007), 219-221.

<sup>17</sup> *Ethnicity and Religion in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Maria Crăciun and Ovidiu Ghitta (Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Press, 1995); *Church and Society in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Maria Crăciun and Ovidiu Ghitta (Cluj-Napoca: European Studies Foundation Publishing House, 1998); *Arhitectura religioasă din Transilvania. Középkori egyházi építészet Edelybén. Medieval Ecclesiastical Architecture of Transylvania*, vol. I-V (Satu Mare: Editura Muzeului Sătmărean, 1999, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2012); *Confessional Identity in East-Central Europe*, ed. Maria Crăciun et al. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); *Actes du XIV<sup>ème</sup> Congrès international d'études sur les danses macabres et l'art macabre en général*, ed. Cristina Bogdan and Silvia Marin-Barutcieff (București: Editura Universității din București, 2010); *Communities of Devotion. Religious Orders and Society in East Central Europe, 1450-1800*, ed. Maria Crăciun and Elaine Fulton (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011); *Identitate confesională și toleranță religioasă în secolele XVIII-XXI* [Confessional Identity and Religious Tolerance between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries], ed. Daniel Dumitran and Botond Gudor (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Mega, 2011); *Studia hist.* 58 (Special Issue *On Earth and in Heaven: Devotion and Daily Life (Fourteenth to Nineteenth Century)*), December 2013) etc.

<sup>18</sup> Ovidiu Ghitta, *Nașterea unei Biserici. Biserica greco-catolică din Sătmăr în primul ei secol de existență (1667-1761)* [The Birth of a Church. The Greek Catholic Church from Sătmăr during Its First Century of Existence (1667-1761)] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2001); Mihaela Sanda Salontai, *Mănăstiri dominicane din Transilvania* [Dominican Monasteries from Transylvania] (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Nereamia Napocae, 2002); Cristina Bogdan, *'Imago mortis' în cultura română veche (secolele XVII-XIX)* [Imago mortis' in the Old Romanian Culture (17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries)] (București: Editura Universității din București, 2002); Lidia Gross, *Confrețiile*

or of individual benefactors, the circulation of artists and of iconographic themes, the saints' cult, the impact of images on lived religion, donation acts, the presence and role of the monastic orders in Transylvania, the build up of a confessional identity, were all addressed in national or international projects,<sup>19</sup> and many of them were further explored in articles and studies.<sup>20</sup> In the last two

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*medievale în Transilvania (secolele XIV-XVI)* [Medieval Confraternities in Transylvania (14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries)] (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Grinta, Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2004); Dumitran, *Religie ortodoxă – religie reformată*; Greta-Monica Miron, "... poruncește, scoale-te, du-te, propoveduește..." *Biserica greco-catolică din Transilvania. Cler și enoriași (1697-1782)* ["... Command, Rise Up, Go, Preach..." the Greek Catholic Church from Transylvania. Clerics and Parishioners (1697-1782)] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2004); Dumitran, *Un timp al reformelor*; Mirela Andrei, *La granița Imperiului. Vicariatul Greco-Catolic al Rodnei în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea* [At the Borders of the Empire. The Greek Catholic Vicariate of Rodna in the Second Half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century] (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Argonaut, 2006); Ion Cârja, *Biserică și societate în Transilvania în perioada păstoririi mitropolitului Ioan Vancea (1869-1892)* [Church and Society in Transylvania during the Pastorate of the Metropolitan Ioan Vancea (1869-1892)] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2007); Ciprian Ghișa, *Episcopia Greco-Catolică de Făgăraș în timpul păstoririi lui Ioan Lemeni 1832-1850* [The Greek Catholic Bishopric of Făgăraș during the Pastorate of Ioan Lemeni 1832-1850], vol. I-II (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Argonaut, 2008); Ioana Mihaela Bonda, *Mitropolia Română Unită în timpul păstoririi lui Alexandru Șterca Șuluțiu (1853-1867)* [The Uniate Romanian Metropolitanate during the Pastorate of Alexandru Șterca Șuluțiu (1853-1867)] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2008); Camelia Elena Vulea, *Biserica Greco-Catolică din Vicariatul Hațegului (1850-1918)* [The Greek Catholic Church from the Vicariate of Hațeg (1850-1918)] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2009); Emese Sarkadi Nagy, *Local Workshops – Foreign Connections. Late Medieval Altarpieces from Transylvania* (Leipzig: Thorbecke Verlag, 2012); Radu Nedici, *Formarea identității confesionale greco-catolice în Transilvania veacului al XVIII-lea. Biserică și comunitate* [The Creation of the Greek Catholic Confessional Identity in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Transylvania. Church and Community] (București: Editura Universității din București, 2013); Silvia Marin-Barutcieff, *Hristofor: chipurile unui sfânt fără chip. Reprezentările din cultura românească veche și sursele lor* [Cristopher: The Faces of a Faceless Saint. Representations from the Old Romanian Culture and Their Sources] (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Mega, 2014) etc.

<sup>19</sup> E.g. "Trans National Database and Atlas of Saints" (1999-2001), accessed on 20.12.2014, <http://www.le.ac.uk/users/grj1/tascintro.html>; "Ecclesia ornata: imaginile sacre și funcțiunile lor în bisericile săsești din sudul Transilvaniei (cca. 1400-1550). Studiu despre artă, liturghie și patronaj în Evul Mediu și Renaștere" [*Ecclesia ornata: Sacred Images and Their Functions in Saxon Churches from Southern Transylvania (ca. 1400-1550). A Study on Art, Liturgy and Patronage during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*], accessed on 20.11.2013, <https://sites.google.com/site/fireaciprian/proiect-post-doc>; "Beyond the Norms: Religious Practice in Late Medieval and Early Modern Transylvania" (2011-2014) accessed on 12.12.2014, [http://hiphi.ubbcluj.ro/religious\\_practice\\_in\\_transylvania/](http://hiphi.ubbcluj.ro/religious_practice_in_transylvania/); *Marginalité, économie et christianisme. La vie matérielle des couvents mendiants en Europe du Centre-Est (XIII<sup>e</sup> - XVI<sup>e</sup> s.)*, accessed on 12.11.2014, <http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/?Projet=ANR-12-BSH3-0002>; „Text și imagine în pictura românească din secolul al XVI-lea” [Text and Image in Romanian Painting of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century] (2011-2014), accessed on 12.12.2014, <http://www.medieval.istoria-artei.ro/>

<sup>20</sup> Included especially in journals such as *Studia hist.* and *Ars Transsilvaniae* from Cluj-Napoca (some results of the above mentioned projects), and *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art. Série Beaux-Arts* from Bucharest.

or three decades, some of these themes (particularly those relating to the Middle Ages, although the modern and pre-modern periods are not excluded either) started being massively supported by archaeological and visual documents, especially by those resulting from the increasingly frequent wall surfaces' investigations.<sup>21</sup> Another issue of special interest was the redefinition of sacred spaces in the context of the diffusion of the Protestant Reformation.<sup>22</sup> There are topics that still require in-depth analyses: the appearance of cultic spaces, their (re)consecration, defining sacred spaces, the dissemination of religious images in connection to the pilgrimage phenomenon, private piety, or the alteration of sacred topography from the Middle Ages through to the modern era. At the same time, a coherent approach to the present fate of cultic edifices is requisite, as many of them are now invaluable constituents of the cultural heritage. In what follows, we will attempt to justify the importance of a continued research along these lines.

In order to define a church as an essential component of the *res sacra*, a thorough investigation into the canonical regulations set out for this space in the medieval and pre-modern periods is essential; the measure by which these regulations were actually put into practice should also be taken into consideration. Concerning the Catholic sphere, it can be assumed that the Pontificals and the provisions of the ecumenical councils in effect in the

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<sup>21</sup> Some of these were published, in more extended or condensed versions, in *Arhitectura religioasă din Transilvania* [The Religious Architecture of Transylvania]; József Lángi and Ferenc Mihály, *Erdélyi falképek és festett faberendezések* [Mural Paintings and Painted Wooden Furniture from Transylvania], vols. I-III (Budapest: Állami Műemlék-helyreállítási és Restaurálási Központ, 2003, 2004, 2006); Dana Jenei, *Pictura murală gotică din Transilvania* [The Gothic Mural Painting from Transylvania] (București: NOI Media Print, 2007); Zsombor Jékely and Loránd Kiss, *Középkori falképek Erdélyben* [Medieval Frescoes from Transylvania] (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 2008); Kollár Tibor, ed., *A szórvány emlékei* [Sparse Memories] (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 2013).

<sup>22</sup> See, for example: Maria Crăciun, "Rural Altarpieces and Religious Experiences in Transylvania's Saxon Communities," in *Religion and Cultural Exchange in Europe 1400-1700*, ed. Heinz Schilling and István György Tóth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 191-217; Eadem, "The Construction of Sacred Space and the Confessional Identity of the Transylvanian Lutheran Community," in *Formierungen des konfessionellen Raumes in Ostmitteleuropa*, ed. Evelin Wetter (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2008), 97-124; Eadem, "Marian Imagery and Its Function in the Lutheran Churches of Early Modern Transylvania," in *Lutheran Churches in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Andrew Spicer (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 133-164; Graeme Murdock, "'Pure and White.' Reformed Space for Worship in Early 17<sup>th</sup> C. Hungary," in *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Andrew Spicer and Sarah Hamilton (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 231-250; Christine Peters, "Mural Paintings, Ethnicity and Religious Identity in Transylvania: The Context for Reformation," in Crăciun and Ghitta, *Ethnicity and Religion*, 44-63; Edit Szegedi, "Was bedeutete Adiaphoron/Adiaphora im siebenbürgischen Protestantismus des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts," in Wetter, *Formierungen des konfessionellen Raumes*, 57-74.

Hungarian Kingdom were observed,<sup>23</sup> and later also the Tridentine regulations. Just because of the more sparse documentary evidence, it would be seriously wrong to believe that exceptions from the rules were characteristic only for the Orthodox environment. The practice of sharing a church, discussed above, endured in Hațeg even after the spread of the Reformation, right up to the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the new confessional formula of Greek Catholicism took shape.<sup>24</sup> It is rather unlikely that hierarchs intervened in situations like these in order to adapt or re-sanctify the cultic space. When an intervention is noted in the sources, it refers solely to solving matters of jurisdiction.<sup>25</sup> For other areas, we know, at best, the names of those who consecrated the churches, with or without the bishop's dispensation.<sup>26</sup> The difficulty (again, not just in the case of the Orthodox) resides in finding out more precisely the various local situations from the time before the ecclesiastic and state control over the territory of the Principality intensified (the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century).

Given the circumstances, it is not by chance that, in what concerns the Romanians, a more detailed definition of the church was formulated only in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This is to be found in a treatise of canonical law which organized systematically the disciplinary regulations of the Greek Catholic Metropolitanate of Alba Iulia and Făgăraș.<sup>27</sup> It reflects the Tridentine

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<sup>23</sup> E.g. Șerban Turcuș, *Sinodul general de la Buda (1279)* [The General Synod of Buda (1279)] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2001), 207, ch. 109.

<sup>24</sup> Rusu, *Ctitori și biserici*, 43-54; Sipos Gábor, "Calvinismul la românii din Țara Hațegului la începutul secolului al XVIII-lea" [The Calvinism of the Romanians from Hațeg Land at the Beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century], in *Nobilimea românească din Transilvania / Az erdélyi román nemesség* [The Romanian Nobility from Transylvania], ed. Marius Diaconescu (Satu Mare: Editura Muzeului Sătmărean, 1997), 211-212. The problem of the Romanian Reformed communities which were claimed by the hierarch Atanasie Anghel after the union with Rome is discussed in Sipos, "Calvinismul," 207-218; Maria Crăciun, "Building a Romanian Reformed Community in Seventeenth-Century Transylvania," in *Confessional Identity in East-Central Europe*, 99-120; Dumitran, *Religie ortodoxă – religie reformată*, 278-321.

<sup>25</sup> Daniel Dumitran, "Forme ale definirii identitare în Transilvania veacului al XVIII-lea. Introducere la critica imaginii istoriografice a românilor neuniți (II)" [Modes of Identity Definition in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Transylvania. Introduction to the Critique of the Historiographical Image of Non-Uniate Romanians (II)] *Apulum hist. et patr.* L (2013): 156-158, with the previous bibliography.

<sup>26</sup> For a review, see Miron, *Biserica greco-catolică din Transilvania*, 321-368.

<sup>27</sup> Ioan Rațiu, *Instituțiunile dreptului bisericescu (eclesiasticu) cu respectu la disciplina vigente in provincia Metropolitana greco-catolica de Alba Julia-Făgărașiu* [The Institutions of Church (Ecclesiastic) Law regarding the discipline in Effect in the Metropolitan Greek Catholic Province of Alba Iulia - Făgăraș] (Blaj: Cu tiparul Seminarului archidieceșan, 1877), 641-658. A similar, but more brief treatment of the subject from an Orthodox point of view can be found in Nicodem Milaș, *Dreptul bisericesc oriental* [The Eastern Church Law] (București, 1915), 464-468. For a more general report on the matter, see Andrew Spicer, "Defining the Holy: the Delineation of Sacred Space," in Spicer and Hamilton, *Defining the Holy*, 1-23.

view on the church,<sup>28</sup> complete with some elements specific to eastern churches, especially regarding the organization of the cultic space. Included in the treatise, we find the mode and conditions of consecration (carried out by the bishop), the status of graveyards and the regulations for burials, and the circumstances in which the church's reconciliation was required. The problem of reconsecration only occurred in cases where the church had to be rebuilt or its interior had to be completely restored. The adaptation of strict canonical laws did not leave room for exceptions, in fact so frequent in daily practice, such as the transfer of an edifice to another confession as grounds for reconciliation, or the absence of the bishop from the consecration ceremony. Actually, especially in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there was a tremendous transfer of cultic places between the Greek Catholic and the Orthodox confessions, and in a vast number of instances the presence of the hierarch at the moment of sanctification cannot be documented.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the regulations that were adopted mainly focused on the believers' (re)integration. The problem of the churches rather arises from the sources that deal with the iconoclastic actions of non-uniate believers, events which happened during the time of the confessional confrontations.<sup>30</sup>

However, the transfer of churches did not take place only between the two Romanian confessions, but also between Roman Catholics or Protestants and Greek Catholics, although in much fewer instances. A transfer of similar magnitude occurred between the Roman Catholic and Protestant confessions in the years following the publication of the Tolerance Edict by the emperor Joseph II (8<sup>th</sup> of November 1781). In addition, in the first half of that century the Roman Catholics undertook an ample action of recovering cultic edifices.

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<sup>28</sup> For a more extensive account, see Andrew Spicer, "Consecration and Violation: Preserving the Sacred Landscape in the (Arch)Diocese of Cambrai, c. 1550-1570," in *Foundation, Dedication, and Consecration in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Maarten Delbeke and Minou Schraven (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012), 253-274.

<sup>29</sup> The existence of a personal *Arhieratikon* is attested only for the bishop Inochentie Micu-Klein, that is before the one printed in 1777 by Grigore Maior. However, according to his editor, even the latter was written after the Romanian bishop departed for Rome. Of course, the use of a different *Arhieratikon* by Grigore Maior's predecessors is not to be excluded. See Inochentie Micu-Klein, *Arhieratikon* [Arhieratikon], ed. Ioan Chindriș (București: România Press, 2000), 9-20 (for the authorship and dating), 99-117 (for the norms for building and sanctifying the church). In the library register of the "Sfânta Treime" monastery from Blaj is recorded a copy of the Parisian edition of the Greek *Arhieratikon* dating from 1676. *Catalogus Bibliothecae Monasterii Balasfalvensis ad Sanctissimam Trinitatem*, "Manuscrite latine" fund, 435, f. 63r, Biblioteca Academiei Române, Filiala Cluj-Napoca.

<sup>30</sup> See, for instance, the report addressed to the Catholic section of the Transylvanian Government by the fiscal director Petru Dobra about the state of the religious union in Laura Stanciu, Keith Hitchins and Daniel Dumitran, eds., *Despre Biserica românilor din Transilvania. Documente externe (1744-1754)* [Regarding the Church of the Romanians from Transylvania. External Documents (1744-1754)] (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Mega, 2009), 195, no. 251.



Elucidating the scale of the liturgical (re)adaptation frequently demanded, as well as that of the cases in which reconciliations and reconsecrations were made, should be dealt with in a systematic investigation.<sup>31</sup>

Another worthwhile direction of research is into the numerical growth of cultic places towards the end of the early modern period and also into the interference between the sacred and profane spaces.<sup>32</sup> Especially at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, numerous sources testify to a significant diversity in this respect. On the one hand, there were churches, chapels, oratories, sometimes even graveyards for which the Roman Catholic bishop granted the right of blessing, on the other there were private oratories and dwellings for which the permission to celebrate the liturgy was solicited. Alongside clerics, many laymen were also counted among the petitioners. In fact, the latter were involved in the trend that led to the expansion of the confessional space to the exterior of the existing churches, by observing religious ceremonies outside the walls of the cultic building.<sup>33</sup> This is exactly what happened at Gialacuta (Mureș county), property of the count Ioan Lázár, who had recently converted to Catholicism and organized a Catholic procession on the occasion of the *Corpus Christi* feast. Instigated by the count Paul Tholdalagi, the Calvinists interpreted this event as an attempt by the Catholics to take over their church; a violent outbreak was barely avoided.<sup>34</sup> Whereas this situation illustrates the competition for prestige, investigating the dissemination of sacred images through engravings, *ex voto* plaques etc. draws attention to the new means employed by the laymen to express their piety in private.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> A pertinent discussion, using western examples, can be found in Coomans, "Reuse of Sacred Places," 222-225.

<sup>32</sup> A telling example regarding the research possibilities offered by such a theme in what concerns pilgrimage is Marc R. Forster, *Catholic Revival in the Age of the Baroque. Religious Identity in Southwest Germany, 1550-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 61-105.

<sup>33</sup> For this direction on a European level, see Andrew Spicer, "Confessional Space and Identity in Central and Eastern Europe," in Wetter, *Formierungen des konfessionellen Raumes*, 342.

<sup>34</sup> Investigation regarding the turmoil from Gialacuta village occasioned by the Catholic procession on the Sunday before the *Corpus Christi* celebration, from 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> of June 1780, "Erdélyi kancelláriai levéltár – B szekció" fund (hereafter cited as B 2), no. 85/1781 (micr. 35047), f. 11r-27v, Magyar Országos Levéltár (hereafter cited as MOL); a second investigation was executed between 29<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> of March 1781, B 2 fund, no. 758/1781 (micr. 35056), f. 20r-40v, MOL.

<sup>35</sup> Some interesting suggestions for the study of paper icons in Olga Katsiardi-Hering, "Southeastern European Migrant Groups between the Ottoman and the Habsburg Empires. Multilateral Social and Cultural Transfers from the Eighteenth to the Early Nineteenth Centuries," in *Encounters in Europe's Southeast. The Habsburg Empire and the Orthodox World in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* [The Eighteenth Century and the Habsburg Monarchy, International Series, Vol. 5], ed. Harald Heppner and Eva Posch (Bochum: Verlag Dr. Dieter Winkler, 2012), 149-150; for the Romanian historiography, see Ana Dumitran et al., *Fecioarele înlăcrimate ale Transilvaniei. Preliminarii la o istorie ilustrată a toleranței religioase*

The change in sacred topography, illustrated especially by the building of Protestant and Orthodox churches in urban settings, after the Tolerance Edict, was also connected to the Josephine reforms. As a consequence of the decree for the abolition of monasteries, some monastic churches were transformed into parochial churches. The project intent on reducing the number of parochial churches aimed at systematizing the parochial network.<sup>36</sup> So far, none of these endeavours has benefited from detailed studies.

Today, we are witnessing a continuous recreation of the socio-human universe, outside and against its initial religious reason.<sup>37</sup> Churches, as primary places for the sacred, need to find a way to adapt to this secularization process. Instances of destruction and ruining are frequent, but they are only partially caused by the same factors as those observed in the West.<sup>38</sup> The depopulation of villages and of industrial middle towns is also encountered in Romania (many examples can be recalled here, among which the aforementioned Micăsasa is representative). Instead, in most cases the grounds for replacing old edifices with larger and better located do not reside in the communities' superior financial means, nor in their actual necessities, but represent a new race for prestige, which is conceived differently from the pre-modern era. This does not always incorporate respect for constructive traditions or for the urbanism regulations governing the placement of buildings, thus leading to a much diminished patrimonial value for the new edifices. In addition, the uneducated interventions on existing churches and cemeteries cause irreparable damage that cannot be stopped even by their listing as historical monuments.

Undoubtedly, the problems discussed are not specific only to the Romanian space. They reflect rather general phenomena that can be detected in lands with multi-ethnic and multi-confessional composition and where the traditional social structures came under the scope of modernizing political projects. Therefore, it became necessary to view the issues regarding the sacred spaces within Romania's current territory in relationship to the larger context of central-eastern Europe. As a result of an inevitably random selection in some respects, the present volume illustrates just one of the possible approaches. We

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[The Weeping Virgins of Transylvania. Preliminaries for an Illustrated History of Religious Tolerance] (Alba Iulia: Altip, 2011), 25-150.

<sup>36</sup> Dumitran, *Un timp al reformelor*, 75-82, 171-176. An extensive documentation regarding the project of the systematization of parishes is kept in the funds AE, from AARCAI, and B 2, from MOL.

<sup>37</sup> Marcel Gauchet, *Dezvrăjirea lumii. O istorie politică a religiei* [Disenchanting the World. A Political History of Religion] (Bucharest: Nemira, 2006), 5. For a synthetic view on the location of churches in urban architecture and on the assertion of confessions in city life through extra-ecclesiastical religious ceremonies up to the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, see Heinz Schilling, "Urban Architecture and Ritual in Confessional Europe," in Schilling and Tóth, *Religion and Cultural Exchange*, 116-137.

<sup>38</sup> Coomans, "Reuse of Sacred Places," 225-229.

could not deal exhaustively with the multitude of confessional cases (and the more so when it comes to the religious cases) required by such a theme, and the same holds true for the variety of interpretative dimensions. However, the contents of this volume aim at answering some of the questions formulated above, capitalizing on the experience of researchers who are dedicated to the study of the confessional, social and cultural history pertaining to this European milieu.

In the first section, centred on the birth of sacred spaces, Karen Stark discusses the relationship between hagiography and the sacralization of space, drawing examples from the Hungarian Kingdom and from medieval Poland. The ritual consecration enacted upon Catholic churches from Transylvania and western Romania from the perspective of consecration crosses constitutes the subject addressed by Ileana Burnichioiu. Her vast catalogue, which takes into consideration nearly 70 churches with medieval origins, registers a significant number of reconsecrations. This material brings to light both the visual evidence indicative of the normative instructions followed in the consecration practice (for which there are no written sources), as well as elements of collective memory regarding the sanctification of spaces. Next, Szilvester Terdik presents the case of a confessional transfer, namely that of a former Jesuit church which was turned into the cathedral of the Greek Catholic bishopric of Munkács, together with the necessary transformations of the cultic edifice.

The role of sacred images inside the cultic space and their spread in connection with pilgrimage centres and routes in regard to Hungary, Transylvania and the Balkans during the pre-modern period make up the topic of the second section of the volume.<sup>39</sup> By examining the icons kept in Romanian churches from Transylvania at the time of the autonomous Principality, Ana Dumitran is able to identify the true reasons behind the destruction of many older cultic representations. Contrary to what it had been previously maintained, this was not a consequence of the Protestant iconoclasm, but resulted from the lack of interest manifested by descendants in caring for these sacred objects. Anna Tüskés looks at the dissemination of just such a sacred item in pre-modern Hungary (i.e. the Virgin Mary from Pócs) through engraved copies. In her study, Márta Nagy discusses the diffusion of a print depicting the most sacred place of the Macedo-Vlachs, the St. Naum church from Ohrid, which takes the shape of a miraculous icon. This is accompanied by a realistic perspective on the country. The emerging general picture is revealing for the imagined motherland of the 'Greeks' from Hungary. In a similar approach, Vladimir Simić presents the renewed sacralization of the territory inhabited by

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<sup>39</sup> A recent debate regarding the role of images and objects in the religious ritual can be followed in *Images and Objects in Ritual Practices in Medieval and Early Modern Northern and Early Central Europe*, ed. Krista Kodres and Anu Mänd (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 13-102.

Serbian in Hungary, accomplished by distributing to therein monasteries relics of medieval saints. By propagating their image, the cult of these saints became an important component of Serbian collective memory. Mihai-Cristian Amăriuței, Lidia Cotovanu and Ovidiu-Victor Olar analyse the meanings of donations given by several Romanian rulers from the Ghica family to another sacred place from the Balkans, the Monastery of the Great Cave (*Mega Spileon*) from Moreea.

The third section, reserved for the renewal of Transylvanian sacred topography at the end of the pre-modern age, comprises three studies. Lehel Molnár critically examines the thesis of the forced conversion to Calvinism of an important number of Unitarian parishes from the Three Seats. Radu Nedici investigates the process of Greek Catholic church building on the territory of the bishopric of Oradea during the time of the bishop Moise Dragoș. The paper of Kálmán Árpád Kovács proposes an interpretation of the religious politics directed by the Imperial Court from Vienna towards the Romanians living in Transylvania from the point of view of a 'system' grounded in the decade and a half subsequent to the eruption of the confessional turmoil (1745-1758). This was the framework in which a significant transfer of cult edifices from the property of Greek Catholics to that of the Orthodox occurred.

The articles collected in the last part of the volume focus on a sore problem: the current attitude in Romania towards heritage. The question asked in its title can hardly receive any other answer but a negative one, although positive examples are not entirely absent. However, an overall discouraging view on the matter prevails. This is the vein of two studies, one by Cristina Bogdan and the other by Liliana Condricova, dedicated to the fate of the religious heritage from pre-modern Wallachia, respectively from modern Bessarabia. The first paper shows how misunderstanding the meaning of a sacred space ultimately prevents its cultural reuse, its reinvestment with a new sacrality in accordance with the concept proposed by the recent European historiography.<sup>40</sup> Notwithstanding the irreplaceable loss of patrimonial items it draws attention to, the second study also proves the importance of a more thorough research into cultic objects.

The few books reviewed at the end of the volume, all recently published (between the years 2013-2014) come to show just how broad the spectrum of research centered on sacred spaces and their servants is today. The first book develops on the representations of St. Christopher and their circulation in the old Romanian tradition. The next work presents the results of a comprehensive inquiry into the ecclesiastic art and architecture specific to Greek Catholics from Hungary and Transylvania, while the third addresses a similar subject, this time focusing on churches from northern Oltenia. The rest of the reviewed

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<sup>40</sup> See Coomans, "Reuse of Sacred Places," 231-240.

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works deal with subjects such as the phenomenon of the institutionalization of Greek Catholic confessional identity in 18<sup>th</sup> century Transylvania, the relationships between the Orthodox and the Greek Catholics inhabiting the area towards the end of the modern period from the perspective of archival sources, and the destiny of the clerical elite of the Greek Catholic eparchy of Oradea, taken into detention during the communist regime.

Just as other publications (books, articles, studies), the present volume is but a modest impulse (and not a closure) for a course of research in which the birth, the functioning and the changes experienced by sacred spaces would benefit from new, more methodologically diverse approaches that encompass any possible type of source: archival (published and novel), archaeological, and visual. Such an extended frame of discussion would facilitate inquiries, comparisons and answers.

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