

Maria Crăciun / Volker Leppin /
Katalin Luffy / Ulrich A. Wien (eds.)

Prayer Books and Piety

in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe

Gebetbücher und Frömmigkeit

in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit



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Worship of the Written Word: Books and Piety in Late Medieval and Early Modern Religious Experience

The initial purpose of this project was to draw attention to a particular manuscript (MS 683) from the collection of the University Library of Cluj and to make this a centrepiece of a conference discussing late medieval Books of Hours and the fate of the genre in subsequent centuries. The ensuing conference inevitably widened the scope of the research as it progressed beyond the interest in the detailed analysis of individual examples of prayer books and towards the need to place them within the broader genre of devotional literature and to consider them in connection with prevailing cultural, religious and artistic developments in late medieval and early modern Europe, taking into account the advent of the Reformation, the revolution in communication brought about by the printing press and the growing interest in the religious life of the laity. Wishing to showcase an exceptional fifteenth-century manuscript, insufficiently explored in existing literature, which could be approached from the perspective of literary criticism, codicology, art history, cultural history of religion and the sociology of reading, the conference became a starting point for a lively debate concerning devotional literature analysed in inter and transdisciplinary manner. This fresh approach brought to the fore more general issues related to the role of books, prayerbooks, liturgical books, postils, catechisms, hymnals, psalters and songbooks, as well as bibles and biblical commentaries in late medieval and early modern piety and led participants to contextualise the broad category of devotional literature in all its guises, leading to more refined understandings of devotional practice and its relationship with the written word, while the fifteenth century manuscript, which had sparked the initial discussion remained the focus of some of the presentations (Katalin Luffy, Regina Cermann) and stimulated analysis of similar texts (Kata Szűcs and Adrian Papahagi).

In an attempt to underline the relevance of this volume it has to be noted that Regina Cermann's research has dated MS 683 to the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century and traced its origin to Augsburg on the basis of iconographical, stylistic and literary analysis. The comparative analysis has also clarified the nature of the manuscript, which Cermann deems to have been a workshop serial product rather than a unique and singular commission and thus

unable to shed light on individual spiritual expectations. She also suggests that the manuscript cannot be associated with the production of printed books developed at that time but is firmly inserted into the Augsburg manuscript tradition. A similar exercise undertaken by Adrian Papahagi has traced the origin and context of production for a second manuscript from the University Library's collection, MS 684, by using minute analyses of its features. Although these valuable items cannot be placed within a regional culture of prayer or lay devotional life in late medieval Transylvania, they have stimulated a discussion concerning the role of written texts in the religious life of the laity.

The idea of this volume was born from two observations made during the conference: the presence of late medieval prayer books in the collection of the University Library of Cluj, highlighted in this volume by the studies of Katalin Luffy and Adrian Papahagi, and the absence of any trace of the use of prayerbooks in the devotional patterns of the Transylvanian medieval laity, heralded by Paula Cotoi and Adinel Dincă. The fact that the prayer books from the collection of the University Library, as well as other libraries throughout present day Romania, were produced either in the Holy Roman Empire or the Netherlands and were acquired by early modern or modern collectors, as suggested by the studies of Katalin Luffy, Adrian Papahagi and Constantin Ittu, only serves to highlight their absence from Transylvanian medieval devotional patterns.

According to Katalin Luffy's article, which sets the scene for the discussion, the manuscript which acted as the initial focus of the volume, now part of the holdings of the University Library of Cluj, was previously included in the collection of the Transylvanian Museum Society. According to the Society's records, one of the librarians, Szabó Károly, bought it in 1870 from a certain Borosnyai, for 35 florins. The item was described in the inventory of the collection as a richly illuminated manuscript in German, an observation that has led to its subsequent identification with MS 683. The marginalia and annotations in the manuscript allow one to trace part of its journey until it found its way into the Transylvanian Museum Society's collection. The name Nemes, which appears several times is that of a rather famous antiquarian, Nemes Literáti Sámuel, active at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Apparently, he had bought the manuscript in Vienna and then given it to his sister in 1841. The manuscript must have remained in the family until it was acquired by the Transylvanian Museum Society, as Borosnyai was the son in law of Nemes Literáti's sister. Thus, despite its selection of texts and beautiful decorations, this particular manuscript will not enrich our knowledge concerning Transylvanian devotional culture at the end of the Middle Ages, but will throw some light on the elite's interest in collector's items during the nineteenth century.

The articles of Adrian Papahagi and Constantin Ittu suggest that prayerbooks produced in distant lands in late medieval context did not make their way to Transylvania until much later and were integrated into individual piety only in the early

modern period. Thus, at the end of his codicological and artistic analysis, Adrian Papahagi concludes that the little book that caught his attention, MS 684, was produced in the third quarter of the fifteenth century or a little later in the Southern Netherlands, possibly in Bruges. In his opinion, the manuscript is the product of a minor workshop, and was probably intended for a client from Saint-Omer. More interestingly for its use in Transylvanian context, the book may have belonged to Francis I Rákóczy, Prince of Transylvania in the second half of the seventeenth century, while, in 1687, it belonged to a parish priest from the east of the province, who was using it for his private devotion. As the author points out, in the absence of Books of Hours demonstrably used by laymen in medieval Transylvania, MS 684 supplies one with precious evidence that aristocrats and parish priests still had recourse to medieval books of private devotion in the seventeenth century. In the same vein, analysing the so-called *Brukenthal Breviary*, which is in fact a Book of Hours, Constantin Ittu briefly mentions that this has been acquired by Brukenthal in the eighteenth century.

These observations have brought to the fore a number of questions concerning lay piety in late medieval and early modern times, revolving around the place and role of written texts in lay devotional practices, particularly in the culture of prayer fostered by traditional Catholicism and early modern Protestantism.

It has often been suggested that the development of a culture of prayer was the direct result of the involvement of the regular clergy, particularly the mendicants, in the shaping of lay piety and their commitment to pastoral duties, expressed primarily through their heightened interest in preaching. Particularly in the later Middle Ages, the clergy taught the laity that salvation could be obtained through the recitation of prayers at appointed times during the day (Bossy: 1991; Winston Allen: 1998; Duffy: 2006 a). This devotional exercise, aided by the use of prayer books, existed alongside and in harmony with ecclesiastical rhythms of prayer and reflected the structure of the mass (Wieck: 2008, 390–392, 395–396, 400, 412). Thus, it is generally acknowledged that the Book of Hours was designed for lay people seeking to imitate clerical prayer (Wieck: 1997; Wieck: 1998; Duffy: 1992; Fassler: 2004).

This stimulated the mendicants, particularly the observant branches of these orders to instruct the laity in the exercise of prayer (Duffy: 2006a, 143). The pious behaviour of the laity was to be modelled on that of the female members of the mendicant orders (Honée: 1994; Hamburger: 1989) and thus the devotional practices of a clerical society were transferred to the laity. Consequently, the laity began to use books in their private devotion and prayerbooks, particularly the Books of Hours became staples of affluent households (Wieck: 1997; Wieck: 1998, Duffy: 2006 a).

Considered to have been initially a luxurious product, and hence the preserve of royalty, aristocracy and the urban elite, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries,

the Book of Hours became increasingly available to middling segments of society (Wieck: 2008, 389). According to Eamon Duffy, this democratization of the prayer-book can be explained by the invention of printing, which made it available to anyone capable of reading, and the marketing strategies of stationers, who produced these books in vellum and decorated them with illustrations bought in bulk from artists. In Duffy's opinion, these "assembly-line books" were favoured by individuals with social 'pretensions,' keen to emulate their social superiors (Duffy: 2006a, 141–148; Duffy: 2006b, 4). Their popularity is suggested by the fact that many people owned more than one Book of Hours and these items were carefully transmitted from one generation to the next within families and kinships as well as outside them, as they were given or bequeathed to friends, chaplains and servants. They had thus become widely accessible to the point where bourgeois women "felt naked without these devotional fashion accessories" (Duffy: 2006a, 145–146; Wieck: 2008, 392). It was consequently concluded that, in the course of the fifteenth century, the Book of Hours and the religion it represented ceased to be the monopoly of the aristocracy and the upper gentry and became an integral part of the religious experience of the "urban and rural middling sort" (Duffy: 2006a, 148).

Consequently, Duffy suggests that, by the fifteenth century, Books of Hours were mass-produced and had become an increasingly common devotional accessory, superseding the Psalter, which until then had been the most popular prayer book for literate lay people (Duffy: 2006 a, 144; Wieck: 2008, 392–393). In Duffy's opinion, the prayer regimes inculcated by the use of the Book of Hours, which are often considered elitist, were in fact firmly rooted in the world of popular devotion and popular belief and not so far removed from magic (Duffy: 2006a, 142). They are thus presumed to have held together rather than polarized the conventions of lay and clerical piety, the belief systems and devotional practices of educated and ignorant, rich and poor, orthodox and marginal (Duffy: 2006a, 142). The divide between elite and 'popular' religion has sometimes been equated with the contrast between "the religion of the bead and the religion of the book", a contrast that, according to Eamon Duffy, implies "a gulf between a religion of uninformed mechanical repetition and a religion which is text-based, discursive, rational, verbalized". In challenging this assumption, Duffy suggests that "the exponents of the religion of the book and those of the religion of the bead have been, if not identical, then at least overlapping constituencies" (Duffy: 2006a, 141). The use of the book was thus located in a devotional regime which included, with no apparent sense of hierarchy, the recitation of the rosary, the use of devotional images, the recitation of the liturgical office and the cultivation of extended devotional meditation on the Passion (Wieck: 2008, 396–397, 400, 407). In Duffy's view, if Books of Hours were expressions of the religion of the word, or of a newly-awakened lay appetite for religious instruction and a more active and personalized devotional regime, they were also very much part of the religion of the image, where the pictures were

at least as important to their users as the texts they accompanied (Duffy: 2006a, 143–144). Seeing Books of Hours as objects, other scholars have argued that they were imbued with the tension between public, ceremonial and ecclesiastical uses of texts and personal, private and individualized reading (Wieck: 2008, 393). In fact, scholars have suggested that the emergence of new and distinctive types of portable prayer books was closely tied to the development of reading habits in the late medieval period and that the proliferation of Books of Hours resulted from the advent of silent reading (Saenger: 1987, 139–142).

Duffy concludes by asking whether the popularity of the Book of Hours was a sign of the growth of individualism, associated with the privatization of religion, the proliferation of private pews and chapels, which could be construed as means by which the gentry were able to insulate themselves from the communal devotion of the rest of the parishioners. In his view, the use of the Book of Hours was part of the promotion of lay interiority, a personalization of religion, which provided the laity with an opportunity to share in monastic forms of piety (Duffy: 2006a, 150–152). After all, people used their Books of Hours alone, whether in a public space or in the privacy of their “closets”. Duffy however counters that the essential feature of the Book of Hours is that it offered lay people a share in the church’s official cycle of daily prayer. Moreover, he suggests that printed Books of Hours offered new opportunities for communal worship. Whereas manuscripts hindered communal recitation of prayers because they were not identical, printed versions encouraged it because they were uniform. Consequently, the lay person who recited prayers was best equipped to understand and appropriate words which they routinely heard recited by clergy and ministers in the public liturgy (Duffy: 2006a, 153). In the same vein, Paul Saenger suggests that Books of Hours proliferated in a milieu that accommodated different types of reading ability, involving the public act of reciting and silent prayer. In both cases however, reading a Latin prayer aloud or reciting a written text from memory were pious acts performed by individuals in public contexts (Saenger: 1987, 142; Wieck: 2008, 392).

One can only conclude that discussions in international scholarship have highlighted a complex culture of prayer which prevailed in the later Middle Ages, fostered as it was by a clergy committed to its pastoral duties, by macro-societal developments, such as urbanization and increased literacy, and by the revolution in communication brought about by printing. Engaging with the issues raised by international scholarship on the place of the written word in devotion in late medieval and early modern times, the contributors to this volume have raised several converging questions focused on the interplay between the apparent absence of prayerbooks and the development of a lay culture of prayer, taking into account both agency and regional traits, as well as the broader issue of the role of the word, handwritten or printed, in lay devotional practices. As Transylvanian society transitioned from the Middle Ages to the early modern period, a development strongly

impacted by the emergence and appropriation of evangelical ideas, new questions were brought to the fore concerning the place of written texts in individual and communal piety when traditional Catholicism was replaced by confessions which privileged the Word of God. Consequently, attempts to identify the types of written texts deployed in these diverse contexts have naturally become part of this inquiry.

Some of these questions have benefited from tentative answers in existing literature. For instance, in her survey concerning book culture in medieval Hungary, Anna Boreczky has argued that devotional literature and particularly prayer books were not abundant in the manuscript production or in the book collections of the medieval Hungarian kingdom. The existing book culture was born in the context of royal and ecclesiastical patronage and responded to practical needs associated with the liturgy or the representation and legitimacy of royal authority. This was combined with a conspicuous absence of books in the private sphere, suggested by the very few examples of Books of Hours that have survived from medieval Hungary. This is explained by the fact that this type of literature did not benefit from clerical patronage as these books were preferred by women and wealthy, secular, and, mostly urban elites. In Boreczky's opinion, this segment of medieval society did not have the economic strength to sustain permanent workshops of illustrators, a fact that impacted on local production, but did possess books, even luxuriously illustrated ones, as sometimes attested by their testaments (Boreczky: 2018, 297–299).

Several scholars who have dealt with ownership of books in medieval Transylvania seem to concur with this conclusion. For example, in her previous work, Paula Cotoi has already suggested that the Transylvanian laity seems to have placed their salvation in the hands of the clergy and resorted to pious gifts, bequests and patronage in exchange for their prayers (Cotoi: 2021, 10–11). This falls within existing interpretative paradigms in international literature, which posited that religious books in the hands of the laity were proof of intense piety and an expression of devotion, even when they were not meant to be read. In these circumstances, they may have been part of a soteriological strategy, intended as pious gifts to ecclesiastical establishments (Pettegree: 2005, 156–159; Bischof: 2013, 46–49, 59–69).

Engaging with these previous efforts to unravel the mysteries concerning the role of the written word in medieval devotion, some of the articles in this volume have noted the absence of the prayer book from the religious experience of the Transylvanian laity as there are no surviving examples of this type of devotional literature nor any mentions in any other relevant documents. As Adinel Dincă has persuasively suggested, evidence that the typical prayerbook was not in use comes from notations of prayer on the margins of both handwritten and printed books, which seem to have acted as substitutes for prayerbooks.

These authors have concluded that devotional literature, designed for either public or private worship of the laity, seems to be the missing piece in the puzzle of

the spiritual landscape that integrated simultaneously traditional piety with new European devotional practices.

Asking himself whether this could be considered a clue towards acknowledging that written texts were not a component of the standardized lay pious performance, or whether it implies an alternate devotional pattern, Adinel Dincă suggests that the only acceptable explanation for the absence of devotional literature in the religious behaviour of the Transylvanian laity – if one chooses to exclude the hypothesis of the complete, traceless destruction of such texts and books – is that lay religiosity in late medieval Transylvania was articulated without a significant implication of individual reading of inspiring texts or the contemplation of images, other than those from the ornately-decorated church buildings. Going against the grain of conclusions in international scholarship, Dincă suggests that there was no interest in luxury products as devotional accessories in late medieval Transylvania, that Books of Hours implied the presence of wealth and social status, that they were in fact a tool of representation, that the local book market was oriented towards the practical needs of the parish clergy or members of the religious orders, that owners of prayerbooks were members of the secular and ecclesiastical aristocracy and that use of Books of Hours implied literacy. Without explicitly discussing literacy, Dincă suggests that literate expressions of devotion and lay piety were shaped by local writing and reading processes.

Starting from the actual absence of the most common textual support of the devotional behaviour specific to the laity, Books of Hours and prayer books, and, in a sense, taking things one step further, Paula Cotoi focuses on the existence and circulation in Transylvania of homiletic literature addressing the topic of prayer and explores the content of the sermon collections written by two late medieval Hungarian authors, looking for the contexts in which the topic of praying was approached, highlighting specific issues they emphasized, and gleaning relevant information concerning lay engagement in devotion. This particular approach brings to the fore the issue of agency, more precisely clerical involvement in the shaping of lay piety, supplementing previous similar endeavours which have privileged visual material. It is the author's contention that the clergy's intentions in wishing to shape lay piety amounted to a need to control their behaviour rather than an encouragement of individual, private actions. The author also seems to suggest that the laity was subjected to clerical discourses disseminated through a diversity of channels, while sermons and images may have replaced prayer books as the necessary props in their pious behaviour.

Remaining in the realm of clerical agency, Carmen Florea explores the impact of norms on religious practice by focusing on Observant reform in relation to the Third Order. Building on the work of Marie Madeleine de Cevins (de Cevins: 2008), Carmen Florea starts from the premise that norm and practice are inextricably linked and proceeds to investigate the appropriation of the guidelines

for devotion provided by the clerical hierarchy among the membership of the order. The daily devotional routine included communal and private prayer as well as the reading of the breviary. By analysing the texts, produced in the context of Observance, Florea appeals to the most suitable tool for the exploration of the aims and strategies of the regular clergy in shaping female piety within the Franciscan Order, among the Poor Clares and the Tertiaries. This is particularly relevant to the themes approached in this volume as the strategies developed by the regular clergy for female religious were subsequently deployed in fostering a culture of prayer among the laity. The article also explores the Christocentric piety encouraged by the Franciscan Order, which found particular expression in the spiritual life of Poor Clares and Tertiaries for whom identification with Christ's suffering was transformed into standardized religious practice, reduced to a literal imitation of Christ. The author ultimately suggests that the investigation of the functioning of the province's hierarchy and its structures of government could shed light on the norms which were imposed to the body of friars and sisters in their pious practices. As these were closely linked to devotions more generally promoted by the Observant Franciscans, they have the merit of highlighting the most relevant features that shaped the identity of this particular religious community.

Bringing to the fore the issue of piety and ultimately the culture of prayer, Volker Leppin analyses a *Hortulus animae* of German provenance, printed in Nüremberg in 1519. By the end of the fifteenth century, these had become the most popular and widely disseminated prayer books, possibly because they shifted the focus of prayer away from monastic routine and towards the personal and devotional (Haemig: 2016, 162). Leppin uses this to highlight the different strands of late medieval piety, fostered in this particular case in an environment that had much in common with the prevailing spirit that animated Luther in his endeavours. Starting from a subtle analysis of the prayer associated with the Mass of St Gregory, Leppin traces the spiritual development from forgiveness of sins to the internalising of Christ's suffering and the attainment of salvation. The author suggests that this particular medium of communication offered the faithful a rich variety of choices in the practice of piety.

One is thus led to conclude that use of the prayerbook was a specific form of devotion that was supplemented by the veneration of saints through images and relics. Viewed up-close rather than from afar and manipulable/portable, images in prayerbooks served several functions. First of all, they helped orient the reader within a manuscript and even suggested the correct comprehension or proper meaning of the text (Chartier: 1987, 2–5; Wieck: 2008, 393). Secondly, images contributed to the enhancement of personal piety as the owner often requested to be depicted with the patron saint. In fact, more often than not, prayer books were personalised either by the inclusion of donor portraits or by the depiction of a particular selection of saints (Wieck: 1991, 172; Wieck: 2008, 409). In this volume,

preference for a specific saint is illustrated by Kata Szűcs' article focused on depictions of St Elizabeth of Hungary in prayerbooks, often shown accompanying the donor. For instance, Isabella of Portugal is portrayed with St Elizabeth, as the latter was her personal patron saint, the two were distant relatives and they were both connected to the Franciscans. By analysing these images, Szűcs suggests that Books of Hours offer insight into an individual's private devotion as the prayers to specific saints were customized to suit the spiritual needs and preferences of the owner.

As evangelical ideas spread from Wittenberg to all corners of Europe, a new practice of piety was developed alongside the new theology proffered by reformers. The emphasis on the Word of God made knowledge of the Bible a desirable component of lay piety, as the clergy encouraged congregations to become familiar with the Scriptures. Prayer consequently acquired a sound scriptural basis, as the laity was urged to address God by using the Lord's Prayer, which was instituted by Christ himself. One is thus compelled to ask whether prayer books continued to be used in the new confessional context, or whether they were gradually replaced with other types of text. As Mary Jane Haemig has suggested, sixteenth-century reformers, Martin Luther particularly, condemned prayer books because they contained beliefs and practices directly opposed to his views by presenting prayers as good works conducive to salvation (Haemig: 2004, 522–523). Moreover, as Virginia Reinburg has astutely remarked, Martin Luther's commentaries on the Lord's Prayer expressed hope that this would replace the "deceptions" of the Book of Hours and teach lay people how to pray in a "simpler, more direct and more heartfelt way" (Reinburg: 1993, 22,29, 32–34). Moreover, Haemig argues that Martin Luther wished to change both the theology and practice of prayer and encouraged simple and direct prayer to God, as prayer was no longer perceived as a good work but rather as communication with the divine. Consequently, the prayer book produced by Luther in 1522 was intended to shape people's piety, but reflected the structure of the catechism and provided direction and advice concerning prayer, instead of including a sample of written prayers (Haemig: 2016, 163). Moreover, book collections throughout Europe suggest that the laity's daily devotions were structured by a mixture of genres and that people's libraries were flooded by hymn books, catechisms, postils, prayer books and handbooks as well as bibles in smaller formats (Dahl: 2011, 47–58). What all of these genres had in common was a preference for a mixture of texts anchored in the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and explanations of the sacraments, consisting mainly of biblical excerpts, as the ultimate goal was knowledge of the bible and the Lutheran articles of faith.

It has been suggested, notably by Mary Jane Haemig, that, during the Middle Ages, boundaries were not finely drawn between prayer book, catechism and breviary, nor between texts created for communal worship and those deemed suit-

able for individual and sometimes private devotion, while, after the Reformation, prayer books became decidedly catechetical (Haemig: 2016, 162–163). In fact, some scholars, for instance Roger Chartier, had already suggested that Books of Hours contained parts designed for ritual use, which were read aloud during communal worship, while others were designed for private devotions and based on silent reading (Chartier: 1987, 2; Saenger: 1982; Saenger: 1987, 139–141). Thus, while Haemig points to a significant shift in emphasis from the Middle Ages to the Reformation, by suggesting, albeit implicitly, that medieval Books of Hours were mostly used during the liturgy or at least reminiscent of it, while Protestant prayer books were more firmly anchored in individual piety, scholars working on central Europe have highlighted continuities as well as breaks with the past. For example, in the peripheral territory of Transylvania, prayers continued to be used in, sometimes surprising, continuity with the medieval period. Thus, András Bándi's study focuses on the medieval liturgical tradition, which survived in printed and handwritten Lutheran agendas from the early modern period, bestowing particular attention to prescriptions concerning the saints and prayers addressed to them, which were only gradually eliminated during the eighteenth century. Using the agenda of 1653, Edit Szegedi posits that the recycling of prayers addressed to saints inherited from the medieval period was not an *adiaphoron* but rather a political statement laden with confessional meaning, especially since the agenda was printed the same year as the compilation of Transylvanian laws, *Approbatæ Constitutiones*.

Peripheries are also explored in Niranjana Goswami's article, which gives the collection a much broader perspective. Any attempt to understand devotional practices in Europe benefits from a discussion of the multifarious developments within Protestantism in England and their continuities in New England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. By examining a few early texts written in both England and New England, Goswami explores the increasingly intolerant attitudes towards the Prayer Book that offered set prayers as opposed to spontaneous ones. This attitude heralds a break rather than continuities with medieval practice and focuses one's attention on the realignments that occurred in the transition from traditional Catholicism to reformed piety, in both individual and communal worship.

In this volume, changes in communal worship are highlighted by Ulrich Wien's study. Focused on the analysis of the first Protestant Songbook printed in Transylvania in 1543 by Honterus' press at Braşov (Kronstadt, Brassó), the study explores the context for its production, the early development of the Reformation in urban environment under Humanist influence. Compiled by Andreas Moldner, these songs reflect the influence of the Bohemian Brethren (*Unitas Fratrum*), which was gradually expunged from later copies of the book. The production of a songbook highlights alternative uses of the word, in this case sung in unison

during the service. Communal worship focused on the word, in this case read, spoken and memorized, is the underlying issue in Maria Crăciun's study dedicated to the intricate web of communication established between clergy and laity in the Lutheran churches of Transylvania, where the Words of God, in the form of "kernels of knowledge", brief biblical quotations, were placed on church furnishings, particularly altarpieces. Familiar with these words because of having memorized them in catechism classes or from readings of the Gospel performed by the minister during the service, the congregation recognized and responded to them when they saw these fragments displayed in church, despite their limited literacy.

Besides tracing the development of a regional culture of prayer in the *longue durée*, highlighting continuities and changes from the late Middle Ages to early modern times, this volume emphasizes differences between regional devotional cultures and the norms set by the universal Church. The volume can also show the complexity of a specific culture of prayer, where use of the prayer book was often replaced by oral instruction and visual interaction with the sacred through contemplation and meditation, which both placed images at the centre of religious practice. Some of the articles in this volume seem to suggest that devotional behaviour in Transylvania was less connected with written texts, and more with memorized psalms and prayers, recited orally, as well as with devotional objects owned privately or placed in public settings like the ecclesiastical buildings.

By focusing on prayerbooks or lack thereof, the volume also highlights the tension between private and public devotion. Scholars mostly agree that prayer was an individual exercise conceived of as private. Moreover, use of the prayerbook is generally associated with domestic devotion and, if not, at least with individual devotion performed in a private chapel or chamber, or privatized space, a chapel or an altar cut off from the public realm. Contrary to this general belief, the contributions to this volume suggest that public, rather than private settings for worship seem to have been the norm in late medieval piety, as people seemed more attached to communal acts of devotion performed in church than to individual piety performed in private. While communal recitation of prayers and congregational singing emphasized the public nature of worship after the Reformation, uses of the book, be it the bible or other genres that fell under the umbrella term of devotional literature, highlight individual devotional exercises, often performed in domestic setting. Use of the prayerbook in these devotional exercises, which can be equated with the private use of the written word, can be understood within a specific literate culture.

Consequently, by looking at the role of texts in lay devotion across the divide caused by the Reformation, this volume is able to make a contribution to the theme of continuity between late medieval and early modern religious cultures, particularly the so-called cultures of prayer. Studies in this volume highlight the fact that the basic prayers the laity was supposed to become familiar with, such as the

Lord's Prayer and The Creed, have stayed the same. This ultimately suggests that expectations concerning the laity's involvement in religious matters were limited in both traditional Catholic and Protestant contexts. However, the evidence analysed in this volume suggests a substantial involvement of the clergy in shaping the devotional life of the laity, whether by regular orders, particularly the mendicants, as highlighted by Paula Cotoi's article, or by the new type of parish priests, who had begun to be trained at university, particularly that of Vienna, as concluded by Adinel Dincă. Consequently, one is led to surmise that, in late medieval context, a new type of university-educated ecclesiastical figure was to guide the common man towards pious conduct, while in the early modern one, he was customarily replaced by ministers and preachers trained in the new Protestant universities and seminars. This leads one to conclude that the clergy was consistently involved in shaping the religious life of the laity before and after the Reformation.

Another area of continuity is highlighted by strategies of communication. Again, at least two articles in the volume suggest that the discourse contained in books was transmitted to the laity through different channels, sermons and images, highlighting the fact that oral and visual means of communication were intended to shape lay experiences of piety. This is best illustrated by the contributions of Paula Cotoi, who suggests that the absence of prayerbooks should not be equated with the absence of prayer from the devotional lives of the laity, and Maria Crăciun, who suggests that emphasis on the Word of God did not eliminate the visual from the realm of worship. Paula Cotoi's article highlights the emphasis on prayer that can be gleaned from sermons, which can be construed as a means of instruction for various audiences. Starting from deceptively simple questions about the prayers to be recited, the times best suited for prayer, the most appropriate places for this particular devotional exercise and the favoured postures and gestures of prayer, Paula Cotoi explores the clergy's expectations concerning the devotional behaviour of the laity in an attempt to reconstruct prescribed expressions of piety. Maria Crăciun, on the other hand, argues that the Bible reached the laity through oral and visual means and that the Words of God, in the guise of brief quotations, the already-mentioned "kernels of knowledge", were not only heard but also seen in church and that memorizing them and sometimes reciting them was an act of devotion. Both articles emphasize the role of memory and mnemonic techniques in expressions of devotion. On the one hand, prayers transmitted orally were learned by heart and recited from memory, on the other, brief excerpts from the Bible, including the Lord's Prayer, were committed to memory and reproduced during the service or in catechism classes.

Thus, uses of the written word were numerous and not restricted to private, individual reading. Lay piety was articulated without a significant involvement of personal engagement with the book, without reading or contemplation of images other than those present in church buildings. This means that literate behaviour

did not overlap with devotional behaviour, because the faithful often relied on orality, listening to prayers read to them or reciting prayers that had been committed to memory. Improvised substitutes for prayer books suggest that memory and prayer learnt by heart, in the church or at home, were essential and surely dominant in comparison to the read prayers. Moreover, prayers were focused on representations of the sacred, whether these were images of Christ, the Virgin and other saints, or depictions of the Words of God. Lay devotion was organized around objects and orality, a pattern enhanced by impulses both visual and spoken coming from the parish clergy, which ultimately encouraged oral and collective prayer. While during the Middle Ages, the faithful seem to have been expected to recite a limited number of prayers committed to memory and to respond affectively to visual narratives, after the Reformation, individual efforts were directed towards instruction, a better grasp of the Bible and the articles of Lutheran faith, while recitation of prayers learnt by heart and sometimes addressed to saints remained surprisingly resilient.

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Von Süddeutschland nach Klausenburg: Zur Geschichte der Handschrift Ms. 683

Die Grundidee unserer Konferenz ergab sich durch den in unserem Besitz gehüteten, reich illuminierten kleinen Kodex mit der Signatur Ms. 683,* und durch dessen teilweise legendäre Geschichte. Die Konferenz ist das Ergebnis einer anregenden internationalen Zusammenarbeit. In meiner Darlegung versuche ich den Weg zu skizzieren, wie die Universitätsbibliothek aus Klausenburg in den Besitz dieses Kodex kam. Darüber hinaus werde ich mich mit dessen Legende beschäftigen.

Die Forschung bezieht sich auf zwei voneinander zu unterscheidenden Phasen dieses Weges. Sicherlich gäbe es noch mehr Zwischenphasen, die aber von Klausenburg aus schwer zu verfolgen sind. In umgekehrter zeitlicher Abfolge stellen sich der Forschung zwei Fragen: Erstens: Wann und wie kam der Band in den Besitz unserer Bibliothek? Und zweitens: Welchen Weg ging der Kodex bis er in die Bibliothek gelangte, durch wie viele Hände ist er gegangen, wer waren seine ehemaligen Eigentümer?

Der Band enthält das Siegel und die Inventarnummer¹ in dem alten Etikettenformat der Manuskriptenabteilung des Siebenbürgischen Museum-Vereins [Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület]. Der Siebenbürgische Museumsverein (SMV) wurde auf Initiative des Grafen Imre Mikó im Jahre 1859 in Klausenburg gegründet, nach einer langen Reihe von Vorbereitungen und Genehmigungen. Wie der Name schon andeutet, war das Vereinsziel, Museumsobjekte aus Siebenbürgen zu sammeln, zu bewahren und als Kulturgut öffentlich zugänglich zu machen.²

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* Online erreichbar: https://www.bcucluj.ro/public-view/vpdf.php?htsbt=dsf4RFdsfRT|BCUC_LUJ_FCS_MS683.pdf (07.06.2022).

1 Manuskriptenabteilung des Siebenbürgischen Museum-Vereins IV.A.18b – wo die römischen Zahlen auf die Schranknummer, die Kennbuchstaben auf das Regal und die arabischen Zahlen auf den Platz des Buches im Regal verweisen.

2 Das 19. Jahrhundert ist die Blütezeit der Gründung ethnisch bestimmter Kultur-Vereine in Siebenbürgen. 1840 wurde der Verein für siebenbürgische Landeskunde, 1849 der Verein für Naturwissenschaften begründet, deren zunächst überethnischer Charakter sich aufgrund des sächsischen Schwerpunkts und Mitgliederstruktur sich verzweigte, gefolgt vom Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület im Jahre 1859 und im 1861 von der Siebenbürgischen Gesellschaft für rumänische Literatur und Kultur des rumänischen Volkes (ASTRA – Asociația Transilvană pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român).

Überlegungen zur Vereinsgründung beschäftigten die Elite der siebenbürgischen Gesellschaft schon länger. Deshalb konnte er bereits im Gründungsjahr auf eine bedeutende Bibliothek zurückgreifen, weil die Grafen József Kemény und Sámuel Kemény schon 1841 ihre eigenen Sammlungen für einen zukünftigen Verein in weiter Vorausschau angeboten hatten. Dessen Zielsatz, siebenbürgische wissenschaftliche und museale (historische) Wertobjekte zu sammeln und zu bewahren, stand schon damals im Raum.

Nach seiner Gründung rief der Verein die siebenbürgische Gesellschaft mehrmals dazu auf, private Sammlungen und Wertobjekte an den SMV zu spenden. Dieser Aufruf fand in der breiten Öffentlichkeit rege Resonanz und hatte sich in eine echte gesellschaftliche Bewegung verwandelt. Spenden kamen aus ganz Siebenbürgen: Wertsachen aus Familienbesitz – egal ob es sich um Bücher, Manuskripte oder andere Wertgegenstände (Gemälde, Münzen, alte Waffen) handelte. Zu dieser Zeit entstand auch die Pflanzen- und Tiersammlung mit zahlreichen Fossilien.

Wirft man einen Blick auf die Liste der Spender, so wird die gesellschaftliche Zusammensetzung der Spender deutlich: Alte Adelsfamilien spendeten dem Verein beispielhaft, der Gründer Imre Mikó selber spendete dem SMV nicht nur den Großteil der Kulturgüter aus dem Familienbesitz, sondern kaufte auf eigene Kosten weitere Wertobjekte von anderen siebenbürgischen Familien oder Sammlungen früherer Gesellschaften für den SMV. Eine ähnliche Großzügigkeit zeigten weitere Familien, wie Bánffy, Teleki, Torma und Lázár.

Die städtische Mittelschicht und der ländliche Kleinadel haben es als ihre eigene Angelegenheit betrachtet, und haben alle zur Vervollkommnung der Sammlung am neuen Institut beigetragen. Im Laufe der Jahre wurden die SMV-Sammlungen durch Spenden, Ankäufe, Austausch und Dauerleihgaben vergrößert. 1950 wurde auch die Sammlung des SMV verstaatlicht, der Großteil seiner Bibliotheksammlung ist heute Teil der Klausenburger Universitätsbibliothek.³

Folgende Forschungs-Hypothesen zum hier behandelten Kodex seien vorgestellt:

Unter Berücksichtigung von Siegel und Inventarnummer wird deutlich, dass der Kodex nicht mit der Vorgeschichte des SMV verknüpft werden kann.⁴ Das alte Etikettenformat verrät uns, dass der Kodex ganz bestimmt vor 1907 in den Besitz des SMV kam; zu diesem Zeitpunkt zog die Bibliothek des SMV in das neue Gebäude der Universitätsbibliothek um, danach wurden die alten Inventarnummern durch die neue Ms. Bezeichnung ersetzt. 1904 wurden neuartige Aquisitionsbü-

3 Über die Sammlungen des SMV siehe die Jubiläumsausgabe zum 150. Jahrestag des Vereins: Sipos: 2009. – mit ausführlichen fremdsprachlichen Resümees.

4 Die Hand- und Druckschriften, die in den ersten 10–15 Jahren nach der Gründung zum SMV gelangten, trugen nur das Siegel der Siebenbürgischen Museumsbibliothek, das kleiner war als das später verwendete Siegel.

cher geführt, aber der Kodex befindet sich weder im fachgemäßen Zugangsbuch, das 1904 eingeführt wurde, noch im vorherigen, in dem zwischen 1891 und 1904 geführten Aquisitionsbuch.

Nach einer Recherche anhand der Spendenakten der Bibliothek kommt – gemäß der Such-Kriterien – ein einziger Kodex in Frage: Graf Miklós Lázár spendete im Dezember 1862 „Ein Kodex aus Pergament (Gebetbuch) aus dem 15. Jahrhundert“.⁵ Eine solche Hervorhebung lässt darauf schließen, dass die Schönheit und der Wert des Kodex’ nicht unbemerkt geblieben sind, wäre er eine Spende gewesen, so hätte er Spuren in den Spendenlisten hinterlassen. Wie wir später feststellen werden, ist der von Miklós Lázár stammende Kodex nicht der Ms 683.

Der wissenschaftlicher Bibliothekar Károly Szabó⁶ leitete 1860–1891 die Bibliothek des Vereins und nach 1872 – nach der Gründung der Universität – die Universitätsbibliothek samt Vereinsbibliothek.

Szabó hat auch ein Zugangsbuch über die angekauften Bänder geführt, einige davon sind in der Dokumentensammlung unserer Bibliothek zu finden. Im zwischen den Jahren 1860 und 1872 geführten Register⁷ gibt es von ihm einen Eintrag zum 15. Mai 1870: „Ein deutschsprachiger Kodex mit Bildern aus dem XVI. Jahrhundert. Angekauft von Borosnyai“ – anbei die Kaufsumme: 35 Forint.⁸ Der Verkäufer hieß also Borosnyai, den Namen sollen wir uns merken.

Dieser Eintrag von Károly Szabó wurde mit weiteren Akten des Vereins untersucht und korreliert. Die Leitung des SMV hielt monatlich mehrere Sitzungen, jährlich wurde eine Mitgliederversammlung abgehalten. In den Sitzungen wurde regelmäßig über die neuen Akquisitionen berichtet. Die Berichte und Beschlüsse wurden in der Vereinszeitschrift veröffentlicht, zwischen 1860 und 1874 gelegentlich in der Gazette des Siebenbürgischen Museums, dann ab dem Jahr 1874 diese Dokumente regelmäßig in der Zeitschrift des Siebenbürgischen Museums publiziert. Zwischen 1869 und 1870 wurde der Versammlungsbericht in gedruckter Form nicht veröffentlicht. Die Originalprotokolle der Versammlungen befinden sich im Staatsarchiv Klausenburg. Betreffs der Sitzung vom 7. Mai 1870 wurde Folgendes eingetragen:

Vorgestellt wird ein auf Pergament geschriebenes Gebetbuch aus dem frühen 16. Jahrhundert oder spätem 15. Jahrhundert. Das Gebetbuch ist mit 30 Miniaturen geschmückt, steht zum Verkauf und wurde vom Besitzer der Vereinsbibliothek angeboten. Der Bibliothekar

5 Karteizettel: (undatiert); Liste: 1860–1890, 44.

6 Geschichtswissenschaftler, Bibliograph, Autor vieler Fachstudien. Sein Hauptwerk, die *Alte ungarische Bibliothek*, eine retrospektive Bibliographie, erschien zwischen 1879 und 1898 und enthält die bibliographische Beschreibung aller vor 1711 herausgegebenen Bücher mit ungarischem Bezug.

7 Signatur: Col. Doc. 105.

8 Bei Weitem der teuerste Kauf in diesem Register. Für die SMV war das ein guter Kauf. Damals war das 28,22 Gr. Gold wert.

wird aufgefordert und gleichzeitig bevollmächtigt, sich mit dem Besitzer auf einen guten Kaufpreis zu einigen und die Handschrift für die Bibliothek anzukaufen.⁹

Der Kassensführer berichtet nach der Sitzung am 16. Mai über den Kauf des Kodex⁷ für 35 Forint.¹⁰

Mit einem Ausschlussverfahren können wir eine erste Hypothese formulieren:

In unserer Bibliothek befinden sich drei deutschsprachige Kodizes aus dem 16. Jahrhundert: Der erste ist ein Hutterer-Manuskript, kopiert zwischen 1570–1580, ab 1907 im Besitz unserer Bibliothek, der andere ist *Der Tabernakelje* von Adam Reisner aus dem Jahr 1559 (es ist jedoch fraglich, ob er ein Original ist, ein Exemplar davon befindet sich in der Bibliothek von Wolfenbüttel, offensichtlich könnte es auch noch anderswo Kopien geben, er stammt aber ohne Frage aus der 16. Jahrhundert), diesen erwarb die Bibliothek 1903. Man vermutet also, dass das 1870 gekaufte Manuskript der heutige, mit der Referenznummer Ms. 683 signierte Kodex ist.

Über die Identität des Verkäufers lassen die unterschiedlichen Inschriften auf der Rückseite des Vorsatzblattes deuten.

Die erste Inschrift heißt:

Nro. 83. Saec. XV. 121 Blättern, 31 Bildern.

Nb. Folio 22 Recto:

Ablaß: Pii II. (Aeneas Sylvius) de Anno 1459

Dies ist eindeutig ein Antiquareneintrag, die Schrift wurde mit der Reihenummer 83 signiert. Ihr Wert und Alter werden mit dem auf Textabschnitt auf dem 22. Blatt hervorgerufen, bezüglich einer Verordnung von Pius II.

Darunter steht eine andere, durchstrichene Handschrift, die sogar verkratzt und mit einem dickeren Füller durchstrichen wurde. Nur ein paar Wörter sind lesbar: *Anna... Regina Hungariae*. Dieser Vernichtungsakt stammt wahrscheinlich nicht vom Antiquaren und zielte nicht darauf, einen Eintrag über das Alter des Kodex oder über die Identität der vorherigen Besitzer zu vernichten, denn der Eintrag hätte den Wert des Kodex vergrößert.

Der nächste, konkrete Eintrag: „Diese Rarität [wurde] mit dem geheimen Siegelabdruck aus feinem Gold, mit farbenprächtiger Emaille von König Ludwig der II. von Nemes. MP entdeckt.“

⁹ Sitzungsprotokoll: 1870. Übersetzung aus dem Ungarischen von Beatrice Nicoriuc.

¹⁰ „Der Bibliothekar berichtet ebenfalls, dass im laufenden Jahr, bei der Sitzung vom 7. Mai laut Protokolleintrag – unter dem Punkt 90 – die angebotene Handschrift für 35 Forint gekauft wurde, die Kaufsumme wird genehmigt und dem Bibliothekar überwiesen.“ Ebd. In der Korrespondenz des Vereins gibt es über den Handlungsverlauf mit dem Verkäufer keine Spuren. Dessen Namen kennen wir nur aus den Akquisitionsbüchern von Károly Szabó: Borosnyai.