

ADULTERY IN THE TRANSYLVANIAN MIDDLE AGES. CASE STUDY: THE VOIVODESHIP OF TRANSYLVANIA (14TH-15TH CENTURIES)

Abstract: Focusing on the issue of adultery in the medieval space of voivodal Transylvania, this article intends to bring to the fore little-known cases of adultery committed in this frontier area of the Christian world and to provide a picture of the environment in which these acts, deemed to be illegal from the vantage of social morality, took place.

Keywords: sexuality, adultery/fornication, clergy, laity, Transylvania

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The issue of adultery represented a Jewish heritage that the new Christian theology had debated ever since its beginnings. There are numerous biblical examples that reveal the point of view of the Jewish society, as Moses did when he gave the laws to the people of Israel, to these being added the “fulfillment of the covenant” accomplished by Jesus Christ.

The historiographical “milestone” from which, anywhere in Western Europe, one can start a meaningful analysis, based on rich and diverse sources, is *Montaillou*, the study Ladurie dedicated to the small Occitan village with so many problems; however, our space does not have such sources to present an “adventure” like that of the Clergue family.² There are other sources for the treatment of such a topic in this space and I will outline them below.

According to any explanatory dictionary of the Romanian Language, the meaning of *adultery* is: “the violation of conjugal fidelity by one of the spouses.”³ Still, adultery had and still has the significance of fornication⁴ and the documents invoked in the creation of this typology reveal that the term also applies to the celibate “Latin” clergy who engage in sexual intercourse with married or unmarried female partners.⁵

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² E. Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou, sat occitan. De la 1294 la 1324*, vol. I, București: Ed. Meridiane, 1992, pp. 313-359.

³ V. Breban, *Dicționar al limbii române contemporane*. For current usage. București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1980, p. 15. For another definition, see Ovid Sachelarie, N. Stoicescu, *Instituții feudale din Țările Române. Dicționar*, București: Editura Academiei RSR, 1988, pp. 4-5.

⁴ *Dicționar biblic*, Oradea: Editura Cartea Creștină, 1995, p. 210. *Curvia* (fornication)=adultery.

⁵ Gustav Gündisch and Franz Zimmermann, *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen, Band. 5, 1438-1457 [hereinafter Ub.]*, Köln: Editura Bohlau, 1998, doc. 2612, pp. 218-222: “contra presbiterum vel clericum in loco suspecto vel hora suspecta et cum muliere suspecta

As another source suggests (if the editor's translation is accurate), the demarcation, in theological terms, operated among the laity, separating the *fornicator* (an unmarried individual who has sexual relations with different partners, *porneia* in Gk.) from the *adulterer* (a married individual who violates the sacrament of matrimony by having sexual relations with different partners, *moiheia* in Gk.), also applied to the Roman Catholic clergy who had concubines, for such priests were referred through this last syntagm.⁶

In fact, medieval European literature is replete with stories touching upon sexual issues, featuring members of the regular or secular clergy, without distinction by gender.⁷

It is obvious that the starting point of trials in which adultery was incriminated was the Bible, which offered the model of punishment for those who attempted to break this sacrament of the Church: Christian marriage. As I have shown elsewhere, this found its birth in the miracle accomplished by Jesus in the Cana of Galilee.

In the Leviticus, Moses, the leader of Israel, said: "Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife, to defile thyself with her" (Leviticus 18:20). "And the man that commiteth adultery with another man's wife, even he that commiteth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death" (Leviticus 20:10). "And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them" (Leviticus 20:11). He also clearly stated about priests and their wives: "They shall not take a wife that is a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband" (Leviticus 21:7), and said about the punishment of the priests' adulterous daughters: "And the daughter of any priest, if

repertum **adulterium vel criminem adulterii** per hos quorum interest legitime probari nequierit, tunc [...] clerico suspecto purgationem canonicam indicare debet [...] in officio suo ministrare permittat [...] ipsum suspendere non postponat. "

⁶ "the inveterate adulterous clerics who openly keep concubines should be suspended throughout the required period, stipulated even under ordinary law provisions. However, as they say that in those parts the sin of fornication is excessively widespread among the clergy ...," from the Establishment of Archbishop Chanadin for the Provostship of Sibiu in 1343, in doc. 194/1343, pp. 161-165 from *Documente privind Istoria României, seria C, Transilvania, veac XIV*, volume IV [1341-1350], București: Editura Academiei RSR, 1955 [hereinafter DIR, C, Trans.].

⁷ Dante Alighieri, for instance, places those who seduce and lure women in the eighth circle of the *Inferno*, in *Divina Comedie*, București: Editura de Stat pentru Literatură și Artă, 1954, pp. 183-185. Also illustrative is Boccaccio's tale recounted by the character Pampinea, a tale about the monk Alberto who tricks a young woman into sleeping with him, lying to her that he is the Archangel Gabriel, in *Decameronul*, București: Editura de Stat pentru Literatură și Artă, 1963, vol. I, pp. 372-382. In any case, these explicit references are interspersed throughout Boccaccio's work. Such allusions can also be found in the licentious lyrics of the Parisian poet with a penchant for criminality, François Villon, who stated in a poem (138): "Item to those genteel girls, who/ Have a father, mother, and aunts,/ I can give nothing of value,/ Since it all went to the servants;/ How wonderful if these sweet belles,/ Who have made do with a smidgen,/ Could get their hands on choice morsels,/ That the Jacobins have hidden," in *Poezii*, București: Editura Minerva, 1983, p. 108. Master Villon also wrote a dedication to an unidentified chaplain (159): "Item to Chappelain I pass/ My chapel of simple tonsure,/ Where you only do a dry Mass,/ Which cuts out the literature;/ I'd also give my curacy,/ But care of souls isn't his trade;/ Confessions aren't his fancy,/ Except for lady and chambermaid," p. 124.

she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father; she shall be burnt with fire” (Leviticus 21: 9). And in the Decalogue, in the book of Exodus, chapter 20, verse 14, and in Deuteronomy, chapter 5, verse 18, there appears the commandment that says: *Thou shalt not commit adultery!*

The Book of Deuteronomy, or of the second law, reiterates those asserted in the book of Leviticus, chapter 22, verses 20-24. What is important for this study is stated in verse 22: “If a man be found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.”

In reference to this subject, Jesus said: “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matthew 5: 27-28). In the same chapter, he also stated: “It hath been said: That whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery” (Matthew 5: 31-32). In his first epistle to the Romans, the Holy Apostle Paul asserted with regard to this subject: “For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man” (I Romans 7: 2-3).

The Saviour did not pronounce himself as regards the punishment thereof, but his references to the adulterous woman contained glimpses of the possibility of repentance, with the forgiveness of the sins committed and the subsequent avoidance to commit them (John 8: 3-11, Luke 7: 37-50).

St. Paul also gave exhortations to temperance, considering fornication as a sin that dishonoured the Creator himself: “Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” (I Corinthians 6: 18-19).

His spiritual advice for putting an end to fornication is marriage: “Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband” (I Corinthians 7: 2), and also “But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn” (I Corinthians 7: 9).

The Apostle urges that the adulteress or the adulterer should be forgiven, and there can be no reconciliation between them, they should separate in good peace: “And the woman which hath a husband that believeth not, and he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now they are holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases; but God hath called us to peace” (I Corinthians 7: 13-15). However, there is no forgiveness for unrepentant or

unbaptised fornicators: “For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (Ephesians 5: 5). There can be no forgiveness for unrepentant fornicators, because they destroy Christ Himself, whose limbs are represented by humans: “Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take members of Christ, and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid! What? Know ye not that he which is joined to a harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be one flesh” (I Corinthians 6: 15-16).

Moreover, document 2612 from volume V of the *Urkundenbuch* suggests that if a man lured a virgin into a sexual relationship, which was, in any case, illegal, he was bound to wed her.⁸

In fact, Jean Delumeau remarked in one of his works that “The observers of yore also noted that shame, the cause of so many ‘pangs’ of conscience, manifested itself particularly on the occasion of sexual sins and paralysed especially women. For instance, Gerson was aware that the confession of bodily sins could only be wrested from most people with extreme difficulty.”⁹

I have inserted this quotation here because a common sense observation ought to be made. Adultery had dramatic consequences for perpetrators only when there existed a flagrant or an accusation, demonstrated beyond any legal doubt, even through entrapment or, why not, through perjury. As for the rest of the situations, they remained “crimes” managed between the penitents and their confessors, under the secrecy of confession.

I stated above that as a primordial source of law, the Bible underlies, in most cases pertaining to the church, the resolution of the problems of the time. In this sense, we can notice the great authority of the Old and the New Testament, as exemplified by the writings of Dionisie, cardinal priest of St. Chiriac’s Church of SER, Archbishop of Esztergom and legate of the Apostolic See. On this issue of matrimonial separation on the grounds of adultery, Dionisie proclaimed the authority of the Gospel before any impediments that the secular courts might invoke.¹⁰

⁸ “Art. 5. De viro et virgine invicem ad fornicandum (*fornication*) vel stuprum (*rape, adultery, incest*) committendum consentientibus de iure taliter censemur observandum, quod vir cum virgine fornicans vel stuprum committens vel virginem quam corrumpit in uxorem ducat...,” in *Ub.*, V, doc. 2612, pp. 218-222.

⁹ Jean Delumeau, *Mărturisirea și iertarea. Dificultățile confesiunii. Secolele XIII-XVIII*, Iași: Editura Polirom, 1998, p. 17. Probably in order to encourage the reception of the redemptive effect achieved through confession at the Fourth Council of the Lateran (1215), the canon *Omnis utriusque* ruled that confession before the parish priest was compulsory for all Christian believers. This obligation is highlighted by Jonathan Hughes in “The administration of confession in the Diocese of York in the fourteenth century,” in *Studies in Clergy and Ministry in Medieval England*, ed. David M. Smith, York: York University Press, Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, 1991, p. 88.

¹⁰ “quod si vir vel mulier in adulterio deprehensus vel deprehensa in vestro seculari vel ecclesiastico iudicio accusari et iudici aliter experiri debeat, dicimus, quod quia causam matrimonii ad ecclesiasticum forum et iudicium discutiendam pertinere non sit dubium pro eo, quod si aliquando alter coniugium coniugem suum de adulterio accusare et quod separationem thori instare voluerit, hoc coram ecclesiastico iudice et non alio de iure prosequi debet. Quin et si separationem thori accusatore coniuge instante vel reconciliationem coniugum ipso accusatore coniugi suo adultero veniam vel gratiam faciente

One of the ecumenical councils that addressed issues related to the sexual life of Christians and their shepherds and to the reformation of the clergy in this respect (during the period under analysis) was the one organised in Basel (1431-1435). Here, in the session of 15-26 November 1433, the problem of concubinage or libertine sexual relations was brought into discussion with reference to the diocesan synods.¹¹ It was during this council that several statements related to adultery¹² were made. Thus, a demand was made that the laity, whether married or unmarried, should not make recourse to concubines, for any type of sexual relation outside marriage fell under divine law.

What remains to be discussed is the impact of the Council of Basel and the extent to which the conciliar recommendations were taken into account. It is certain that three ecclesiastical documents were issued in Hungary in the third decade, addressing precisely these problems. However, the claim that they represented the consequence of a council contested by Pope Eugenius IV is exaggerated. I believe that the situation in the field led to these “outbursts,” which nonetheless occurred 11 years after the Council of Basel. It is important to note that within the context of the problems discussed in the council, several speakers took a stand on the abnormal evolution of things in the *Sancte Ecclesie Romane*.

Prior to the period under discussion, attempts to regulate the situation in the Hungarian space had also been made via the recommendations issued by the General Synod of Buda (1279), which betrayed, in any case, numerous French and Provencal influences,¹³ some authors even considering that entire passages in the Angevin statutes had been transcribed exactly into the synodal text.¹⁴ The consequences of adultery or of the priests’ fornication are addressed in canon 11, which indicates the manner of raising children resulting from such relations.¹⁵

instantia super hoc **coram ecclesia et statutis ecclesiasticis tam veteris quam novi testamentorum auctoritate deferenda est.**,” in *Ub.*, vol. V, doc. 2538, pp. 166-169. Another example in which the scriptural message is invoked as the supreme authority appears in a passage from the Statutes of the Mediaș Chapter, where the amount due for the funeral service is laid down in the section devoted to this subject, with the mention that if a greater fee was demanded, this bordered on downright avarice, serving the idols, according to the Apostle, who pronounced himself on the subject in chapter 3 of his Epistle to the Colossians, in *Ub.*, III, doc. 1406, p. 205. In fact, A. Vauchez had noted, at one point, that: “at every stage in the life of the Church, Christians have made choices within the vast Biblical heritage and have shown a special preference for some episodes or figures that met their aspirations better than others. The high Middle Ages was especially, attracted to the Old Testament, more attuned than the New to the state of the society and mentality of the time,” in *Spiritualitatea Evului Mediu Occidental (secolele VIII-XII)*, București: Editura Meridiane, 1994, p. 9.

¹¹ The Council of Basel (1431-1435), the session of 15-26 November 1433 cf. <http://www.piar.hu/councils/>, accessed on 3.05.2007.

¹² *Ibidem*, the session of 20-22 January 1435.

¹³ Ș. Turcuș, *Sinodul general de la Buda (1279)*, Cluj Napoca: PUC, 2001, pp. 43-44.

¹⁴ Joseph Avril (Paris), “Les prescriptions consiliaires et synodales des pays de l’ Est de l’ Europe au regard des législations françaises du XIIIe siècle. Pour une première approche,” in *Christianity in East Central Europe. The Late Middle Ages*, ed. Jerzy Kłoczowski, (Proceedings of the Commission Internationale d’ Histoire Ecclesiastique Comparée, Lublin, 1996), pp. 17-32, Lublin: Instytut Europy Środkowo-wschodniej, 1999, p. 24.

¹⁵ Ș. Turcuș, *Sinodul general de la Buda (1279)*, p. 211 (Romanian translation).

a. Adultery among the regular or the secular clergy.

I have encountered no such reference to the clergy in the voivodate, except for those mentioned in the documents which are reproduced in the collection *Urkundenbuch*, where it is stated that “contra presbiterum vel clericum in loco suspecto vel hora suspecta et cum muliere suspecta repertum **adulterium vel criminem adulterii** per hos quorum interest legitime probari nequierit, tunc [...]clerico suspecto purgationem canonicam indicere debet [...]”¹⁶ and which make reference, indeed, to the deaneries of Sibiu and Braşov, at the time of the canonical visitation undertaken in the area in 1447 by Thomas Armenus “licentiatus in decretis, prepositus collegiate ecclesie sancti Georgii martiris de viridi campo Strigoniensis ac canonicus alme ecclesie Strigoniensis [...] in Cibiniensi et Braschoviensi partium Transilvanarum decanatibus, iurisdictione alme ecclesie Strigoniensis subiectis visitator iudexque ac causarum auditor,” as well as “inquisitor heretice pravitatis generaliter et specialiter deputatus.”¹⁷

From inside the Voivodeship of Transylvania, we have information circulated by Pope Boniface IX. On 1 December 1391, the pontiff sent a letter to the Bishop of Transylvania to investigate whether, indeed, Iohannes, son of Nicolaus Wivarasy, Canon of the Church of Transylvania, who was known for his dissolute life (“ac vitio libidinis estuans”) with Helena, the wife of Iohannes, son of Demetrius from Aiud, and with the late wife of the late Antonius the miller, also from Aiud, was still worthy of holding a canonry and a prebendry. If he was found guilty, he should be stripped of any possession and removed from the clergy.¹⁸

Another case, involving an incestuous relation between a godmother and her godson, was also signalled by Pope Boniface IX, on 23 October 1400, when he wrote to the Bishop of Transylvania about the withdrawal of clerical revenues from Antonius yclept Heczal, rector of the parish church in Călnic, who had engaged in sexual relation with his godmother, Dorothea, the wife of Iohannes Koncz from Călnic, even after they had been caught red-handed in her home and after her husband had forgiven her for her notorious infidelity.¹⁹

From outside the voivodeship and the adopted chronology, there is some incomplete information from the Register of Oradea for the year 1214, case number 89, where it is literally stated that: “Archdeacon Martinus accused Belue and Mathia from the village of Ioubag (Timiş County) and Geka from the village of Zor (Arad County) and Kelemen from the village of Segu (Arad County) of having murdered his son.”²⁰ We can only suspect that this son was born from an adulterous relationship or from concubinage.

¹⁶ *Ub.*, vol. V, doc. 2612, pp. 218-222.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ *Monumenta Vaticana historiam regni Hungariae illustrantia, seria I, vol. III, Budapest, 1889*, doc. 200, p. 175. The situation was rather convoluted because the late miller had murdered his wife for adultery and Helena had also engaged in sexual relations with a secular familiar of the canon, who had meanwhile been killed in Aiud.

¹⁹ *Monumenta Vaticana Hung.*, I/4, Budapest, 1889, doc. 295, p. 237.

²⁰ *DIR, seria C, Trans., veac XI-XIII*, vol. I (1075-1250), Bucureşti: Editura Academiei RSR, 1951, p. 63.

In addition to this, there is a mention referring to the abbot of the Monastery of St. Stephen the Protomartyr from the promontory of Oradea, in the Diocese of Oradea, who was allowed by Pope Innocent IV (1243-1254) “to serve in the priestly degrees received and rightfully remain at the head of the abbey of Saint Stephen’s Monastery,” despite the fact that he was “born from a priest and a wanton woman.”²¹

On 15 October 1337, Pope Benedict XII (1334-1342) wrote to the Bishop of Agria about some pseudo-monks from various orders, including a certain Stephanus, who, “without having been ordained in the priesthood, put on the habit of the Order of St. Benedict, as he well pleased,” and seized hold of four abbeys of the order in the Dioceses of Cenad, Kalocsa and Vác: Bulci (the present-day Buls, near Lipova), Bizere (disappeared, also there), Garap (disappeared, near Velika Kikinda) and Mongerod (disappeared, in Pest-Pilis County). “Often taking off his habit [...], he walks around like a layman, carrying deadly weapons and leading an altogether dissolute life.”²²

b. Adultery among the laity.

The first information regarding the involvement of the laity in such acts comes from the county of Cojocna, where the town magistrate of Cluj sentenced an adulteress to death. On 6 February 1430, Pope Martin V addressed himself to the Bishop of Transylvania, George Lépes, demanding that the latter should intervene and release the wife of Michael Koscher, Elizabeth Jacobi from Cluj, from prison: “ex carceribus, quibus suo marito propter adulterium denunciate a iudicibus secularis curie dicti oppidi mancipata et postea mortis damnata est.”²³

Since the husband had filed the complaint, that desperate appeal had most probably been made by the relatives of the woman caught in the act and sentenced to death. Unfortunately we do not have the slightest information about her partner and what happened to him. Actually, what is also not known is how the bishop solved the request, if he intervened in that case or whether the pontifical letter arrived too late or not.

The second case comes from the county of Alba and the incident involving adultery and murder happened in Aiud (1391). The characters implicated in this case were: Canon Iohannes, Helena, the wife of Iohannes, a resident of Aiud, Paulus Quinternistas, the lay familiar of the canon and the spouses, who has passed away in the meantime.²⁴

The third case, which involved an incestuous relation between a godmother and her godson was highlighted, again, by Pope Boniface IX. On 23 October 1400, he wrote to the Bishop of Transylvania about removing Antonius yclept Heczal from clerical revenues. Heczal was the rector of the parish church in Călnic and he had engaged in sexual relations with his godmother, Dorothea, the wife of Ioan Koncz from Călnic, even after they had been caught in the act at her home and after her husband had forgiven her infamous infidelity.²⁵

²¹ *DIR, seria C, Trans., veac XI-XIII*, vol. II (1251-1300), București: Editura Academiei RSR, 1952, doc. 6 of 22 November 1252, p. 6.

²² *DIR, seria C, Trans., veac XIV*, vol. III, doc. 348, p. 425.

²³ *Ub. Vol. IV*, doc. 2085, p. 397.

²⁴ *Monumenta Vaticana Hung.*, I/3, Budapest, 1889, doc. 200, p. 175.

²⁵ *Monumenta Vaticana Hung.*, I/4, Budapest, 1889, doc. 295, p. 237.

The fourth case also came from Aiud (Enyed) and involved adultery and the serious, death inflicting injury of a resident of this borough. The letter was written by the town magistrate and his judges and was addressed to the Vice-Voivodes of Transylvania, who also served as Comites of Alba. According to the document, in March 1467, the vice-voivodes were Iohannes Dénesi²⁶ of Illye (= Ilioara, near Reghin) and Ladislaus of Nádasd (Nădăștia, near Alba Iulia).²⁷ The magistrate of the borough was Iohannes Lewsch (*judex*), and the mentioned jurors were: Martinus the shoemaker (*Sutor*), Petrus of Curia and Andreas the tanner (*Pellifex*). They recounted how the widow of the late Oswald had been accused before them for acts of fornication (*fornicationis*) and injury causing bloodshed. The council unanimously decided to expel her from their midst. With the approval of the late Ioan Yazar, a respectable citizen of the borough, the woman had lived in his house. In order not to offend the good memory of the deceased, the magistrate had to remove her from that man's house, but not without scandal. Much to her public disgrace, they decided to drive her away at night and in secret, as she was deemed to be a harlot (*impudica*).²⁸

What is not known is who the "accomplices" were, who was wounded, the grounds of the lawsuit or the relations between the widow and the respectable citizen Yazar, who had consented to receive her in his home after she had been widowed. Could she have rendered "services" like a prostitute or did she have a conflict with one of her occasional lovers? Or did she have a secret relationship that degenerated into a conflict in the end? It is difficult to draw an irrefutable conclusion in this case, based solely on a rather incomplete "briefing note" issued by the notables of the borough. I have included this example here because given the fact that she lived in another man's house, she could not be a prostitute, since harlots exercised their profession in their own home, in a specific location or on the outskirts of the settlement. Although the magistrate accused her of fornication, the widow did not fall into the category of "classic" adulteresses precisely because she had been released from her husband by his death (see also the statements made by St. Paul).

Could one of the two vice-voivodes have known the two characters involved and, in this case, did the magistrate wish to inform his "hierarchical superior" of what had been decided and of the action undertaken in this respect? This may have been the case, because the magistrate and the judges passed and enforced the sentence, as the text reveals, by mutual agreement.

A fifth case, close to the space under discussion, which I will merely mention, occurred in the Dominican convent from Braşov in 1454, featuring the monk Iohannes Scharff and causing outrage throughout the entire region.²⁹

²⁶ According to the list compiled by Fr. Pall in *DIR, Introducere*, vol. I, Bucureşti: Editura Academiei RSR, 1956, p. 505.

²⁷ *Ub.*, vol. VI, doc. 3525, p. 280. These were familiars of Voivodes Iohannes Pongrácz of Dindeleg and Nicolaus Csupor of Monoszló (1468-1472).

²⁸ "Immo de facto bone memorie condam Johanii Yazar, tunc cohabitator noster, eandem de domo, quam ex ipsius condam Johannis annuentia inhabitabat exire debere commiserate omnibus modis. Sed ne in scandalum et dedecus suum manifestum publice eiceretur quasi nocte clandestine se e medio nostri transtulit et velut impudica deducta extitit," in *Ibidem*.

²⁹ *Ub.*, V, doc. 2942, pp. 471-472. Petrus, Vicar General of the Dominicans from Hungary, demanded that the fornicator should be tried by the ecclesiastical courts of the order, even though the secular arm

The sixth case involved the court of the Queen Mother Elizabeth, the widow of Charles Robert, who intervened with the pontiff in 1345 to obtain ecclesiastical benefices for Ladislaus, son of Andreas of Gubbio, the queen's personal physician (*dilecti psihici sui*), as Ladislaus, the physician's son, had been born illegitimate.³⁰

All these elements entitle us to claim that adultery was a social constant: although it was little emphasised in the official documents, it could give rise to violent reactions towards those exposed to public opprobrium in the local society, especially in the urban environment, as noted above.

Such cases will certainly have been much more numerous, for we know little to nothing about the rural world; however, forgetfulness, the lack of sources and clearer information give us just a glimpse of what must have happened in a society that sought outlets for a life full of moral norms that appear to have been complied with only at the level of appearances.

was also involved. From the document, it may be inferred that this was a huge scandal and that the brothers took initiative towards punishing the apostate monk.

³⁰ *DIR, C, Trans, veac XIV*, vol. IV, doc. 350, p. 258.