

## TWO CONNECTED MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS OF NICOLAUS DE LYRA'S *POSTILLA* IN CLUJ AND ALBA IULIA

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**Abstract:** The article argues that two manuscripts of Nicolaus de Lyra's *Postilla*, kept in Alba Iulia and in Cluj, are possibly the product of the same Viennese scriptorium, and were both used in Cluj in the last decades of the fifteenth century or in the early sixteenth century. The Cluj manuscript, kept at the archives of the Roman-Catholic Archdiocese of Transylvania in Cluj (inventory number MS 52), has only recently become available to the scholarly community. It contains commentaries to the four Gospels, and is dated in 1470. The Alba Iulia manuscript (Batthyaneum Library, MS I.12) contains the *postilla* to the remaining books of the New Testament, and is dated in 1471. Furthermore, the two manuscripts have the same size and layout, and were demonstrably bound in the same workshop. A colophon formula in German in the Cluj manuscript shows that the manuscript was copied in a German-speaking area; moreover, the watermarks in the Alba Iulia manuscript suggest that it was copied in the area of Vienna.

**Keywords:** Nicolaus de Lyra, *Postilla super Novum Testamentum*, Paulus Burgensis, dated manuscripts, Cluj, Alba Iulia, 1470, 1471.

In 2018, the medieval parish church of Cluj entered a massive and spectacular renovation process, which was completed in 2021. On this occasion, the almost two thousand books kept in St Michael's church were transferred to the newly established archive. Until recently, little

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information circulated about these books;<sup>1</sup> with the exception of six incunabula included in a national catalogue, the collection is uncharted territory.<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 1. St. Michael's Church, Cluj: the library and archive space is indicated by an arrow.

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Péter Sas, "A kolozsvári egyházi levéltárak", in *Források és stratégiák. A II. Összehasonlító magyar kisebbségtörténeti szimpózium előadásai, Székelyudvarhely, 1997. augusztus 21–22* (Miercurea Ciuc: Pro-Print, 1999), 401–410, and "A kolozsvári Szent Mihály-plébániakönyvtár. Egy könyv- és olvasmánytörténeti kuriózum", in "...mint az gyümölcsös és termett szőlőveszszöc..." *Tanulmányok P. Vásárhelyi Judit tiszteletére*, ed. Ágnes Stemler, Bernadett Varga (Budapest: Országos Széchényi Könyvtár – Balassi Kiadó, 2010), 277–284.

<sup>2</sup> Elena-Maria Schatz, Robertina Stoica, *Catalogul colectiv al incunabilelor din România* (Bucharest: CIMEC, 2007), nrs [B-120], [G-21], [G-42], [H-29], [M-71], [T-17].

After the Roman-Catholic archdiocese of Alba Iulia made this and other archives available to researchers,<sup>3</sup> more information about their holdings became available. I was able to peruse an inventory of the collection, drafted on 18 December 1963 by canon Béla Baráth, then priest of St Michael's church.<sup>4</sup> The inventory lists 1838 printed books, and 52 manuscripts. The last item in the latter section, and the only medieval manuscript in this collection, is described as "*Postilla Nicolay de Lira super Quattuor Evangelistas*, Latin, 1470, bound in wooden boards and leather, chained" (fig. 2). The most precious item of the archive was kept safely in the vicar's office for a while, but it integrated the archive in 2023.

52.	Postilla Nicolay	- - de Lira super Quattuor Evangelistas	latină	1470	"	legat tablă lemn, piele, gat s: lant
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Fig. 2. Cluj, Archive of the Roman-Catholic Parish, inventory (detail).

Although the manuscript was mentioned in passing in a Hungarian language newspaper that scholars cannot be expected to read, it was never properly studied and described. Thus, when my colleagues and I drafted a census of Western medieval manuscripts kept in Romanian libraries and archives, we ignored its existence.<sup>5</sup> Only after I brought the manuscript to the attention of local media did I become aware that the manuscript had been mentioned rather poetically by Péter Sas, whose readership could learn about "the soul-nourishing and eye-pleasing calligraphic copy of the *Postilla super quattuor Evangelistas*."<sup>6</sup> Obviously, much more can be said after the due provenance research, and the necessary codicological and palaeographical investigations have been carried out.

The paper manuscript measures 405 x 290 mm, and contains 275 leaves. Like many incunabula in the same collection, this is a chained book (*liber catenatus*), with a perfectly preserved, full leather and blind tooled, Gothic binding containing various metal pieces. Nicholas

<sup>3</sup> Thanks to Dr. György Jakubinyi, former Roman-Catholic archbishop of Alba Iulia, Dr. Gergely Kovács, current archbishop, and Dr. Rita Magdolna Bernád, archivist of the Archdiocese of Alba Iulia. I would like to thank Fr. Attila László, parish priest of St. Michael's church in Cluj, and Dr. Emőke Nagy, archivist of the Roman-Catholic parish of Cluj, for granting me access to the archive in Cluj.

<sup>4</sup> Cluj, Archive of the Roman-Catholic Parish, *Inventarul Bibliotecii Bisericii romano-catolice Sfântul Mihail din Cluj: Cărți, Manuscrise* – typewritten document.

<sup>5</sup> Adrian Papahagi, Adinel Ciprian Dincă, with Andreea Mârza, *Manuscrisele medievale occidentale din România: Censu* (Iași: Polirom, 2018).

<sup>6</sup> Péter Sas, "A kolozsvári Szent Mihály-plébánia könyvtára," *Szabadság*, 23 March 2020 (online, last consulted on 5 March 2025).

of Lyra's (c. 1270-1349) commentaries to the four Gospels are completed by the usual additions of Paul, archbishop of Burgos (c. 1351-1435).

These are the contents of the manuscript, in the original spelling:

- 1r Incipit po[stilla Nicolai de] lira, Ordi[nis Fratrum Minorum] Super Qu[atuor Ewangelistas]. Et primo Pre[facio?]...
- 3r Prologus Ieronimi
- 4v Exposicio literalis magistri Nicolai de Lira. Cap. 1 [super Matthaeum]
- 89v [Additiones Pauli Burgensis]
- 101r Expliciunt addiciones magistri Pauli de Sancta Maria episcopi Burgensis in postillam magistri Nicolai de Lira super Matheum
- 101v Incipit exposicio literalis... super Marcum ewangelistam
- 121v Explicit exposicio literalis magistri Nicolai de Lira super Marcum. *O, wie fro ich was do ich sprach. Deo Gracias.*
- 122r Incipiunt addiciones...
- 124r Expliciunt addiciones; Incipit expositio [super Lucam]
- 171v Additiones ad Postillam...
- 175v Expliciunt addiciones...; Expositio super Ewangelium Johannis
- 270r Explicit exposicio...
- 270v [Additiones]
- 275v Expliciunt addiciones ad Postillam Magistri Nicolay de lira super quatuor ewangelistas. Anno domini 1470.

Thus, the colophon on f. 275v dates the manuscript in 1470 (fig. 3).

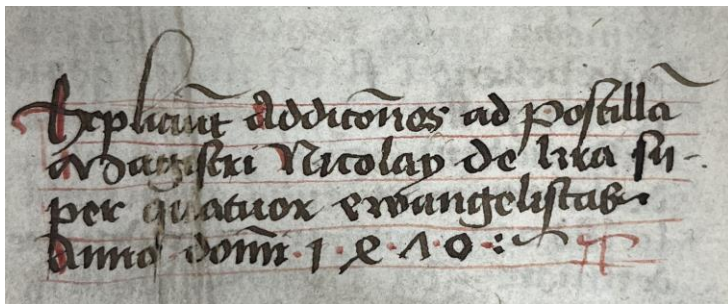


Fig. 3. Cluj, Archive of the Roman-Catholic Parish, MS inv. 52 (323c?), f. 275v.

The rubricated scribal formula on f. 121v, at the end of the commentary to Mark, shows that the manuscript was copied by a German-speaking scribe: *O, wie fro ich was do ich sprach Deo Gracias* ("O, how glad I was when I said 'Thank God!'", fig. 4).

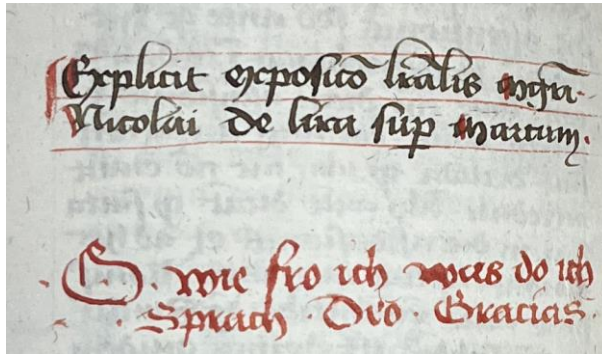


Fig. 4. Cluj, Archive of the Roman-Catholic Parish, MS inv. 52 (323c?), f. 121v

Alone, the Middle High German (MHG) formula does not localise the manuscript: unrhotacised MHG *was* (preterite 1, 3 sg) > NHG *war*, and MHG *do* (*dô*) > NHG *da* are standard.<sup>7</sup> Similar formulas (most frequently MHG *Wie fro ich was da ich schreib Deo gracias*, NHG "Wie froh ich war als ich schrieb *Deo gratias*", "How glad I was when I wrote *Deo gratias*") appear in manuscripts from various German-speaking areas in the fifteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Here are just two examples:

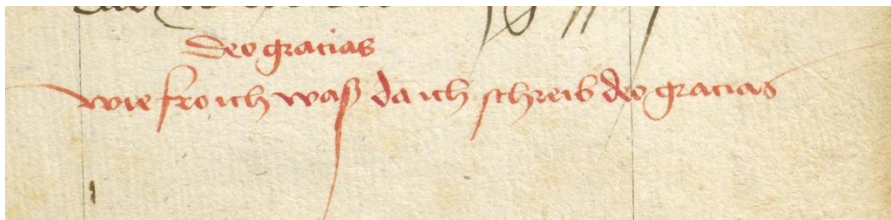


Fig. 5. Frankfurt am Main, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. Praed. 91 (1477-1498), f. 62r:  
*Deo gracias. Wie fro ich was da ich schreib deo gracias.*

<sup>7</sup> Hermann Paul, *Mittelhochdeutsche Grammatik*, 10<sup>th</sup> edn (Halle: Niemeyer, 1918), §§ 178, 348.1.

<sup>8</sup> For instance, Frankfurt am Main, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. Praed. 91, ff. 62r, 129r (Frankfurt?, 1477-1498); Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 1590, f. 136r (Nürnberg, c. 1460-1465); Augsburg, Staats- und Stadtbibliothek, 2<sup>o</sup> Cof. 160, f. 104r (Schwabens, 1447); Augsburg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. III.1.2<sup>o</sup> 36, f. 404v (Hohenburg, 1460). Derived formulas also appear in Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 699, f. 85r (after 1491), and Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 3801, f. 242v (Mondsee, s. XV<sup>1</sup>). I would like to thank Mr Maximilian Nöldner and Prof. Margit Dahm, from the University of Kiel (*DFG-Projekt: Kolophone in deutschsprachigen Handschriften des Mittelalters*) for this information.



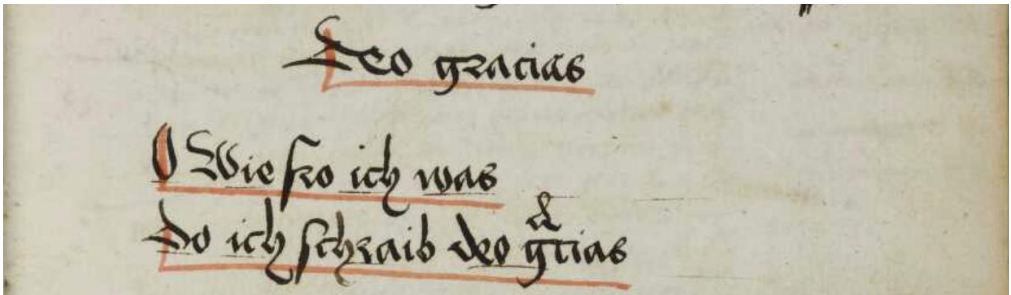


Fig. 6. Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 1590 (c. 1460-1465), f. 136r:  
*Deo gracias. O Wie fro ich was Do ich schraib deo gracias.*

Fortunately, more information about the book's origin and provenance is provided by another manuscript of Nicholas' *Postilla*, now kept at the Batthyaneum Library in Alba Iulia. Indeed, the resemblances between the two manuscripts are striking. To begin with, Alba Iulia, Batthyaneum Library, MS I.12 contains Nicholas of Lyra's *postilla* to the other texts of the New Testament (*Acts of the Apostles, Epistles, Revelation*) with the additions of Paulus Burgensis.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, it has exactly the same size and layout as St Michael's book: 405-410 x 290 mm. The ruled space of 280-300 x 200 mm displays two columns of c. 90 mm each, with a 20 mm gutter in the middle, accommodating 49 text lines. The only difference between the two paper codices is that the one in Alba Iulia displays drypoint ruling (fig. 7a), whilst the one in Cluj was ruled in faint black ink (fig. 7b).

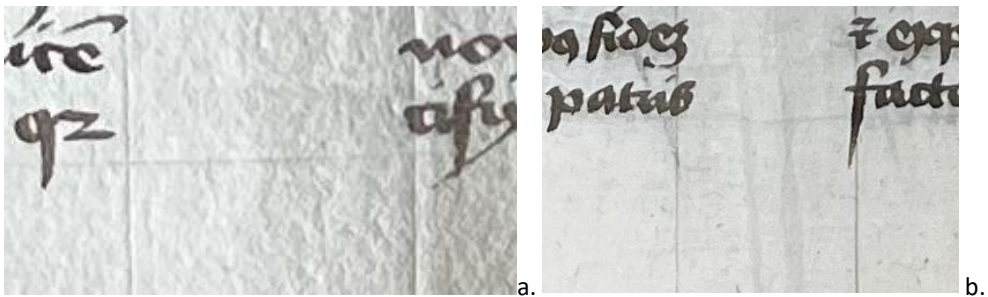


Fig. 7. The ruling of Alba Iulia, MS I.12 and Cluj, MS inv. 52.

<sup>9</sup> See description in Papahagi, Dincă, Mârza, *Manuscrisele medievale occidentale din România*, no. 10. Previous references: András Cseresnyés, *Conscriptio bibliothecae Instituti Batthyani facta anno 1824*, 2 manuscript volumes (Alba Iulia, Batthyaneum Library, MSS XI.478-479), shelfmark K5I 10; Antal Beke, *Index manuscriptorum bibliothecae Batthyaniensis dioecesis Transilvaniensis*, Alba Iulia, 1871, nr 340; Elemér Varjú, *A gyulafejevári Batthyány-Könyvtár* (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1899) 248; Robert Szentiványi, *Catalogus concinnus librorum manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Batthyanyanae*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn (Szeged: s.n., 1958) 12.

Moreover, the Alba Iulia manuscript was copied in 1471, as shown by the colophon on f. 328v: *Expliciunt addiciones ad Postillas magistri Nicolai De lira super nouo testamento edite a Reuerendo patre domino paulo magistro in theologia episcopo Burgensi. Finitus anno 1471 etc.* (fig. 8). If the commentary on the Gospels was copied at the end of 1470, and the *postilla* on the subsequent New Testament books was completed early in 1471, the two manuscripts may be the successive work of the same workshop.

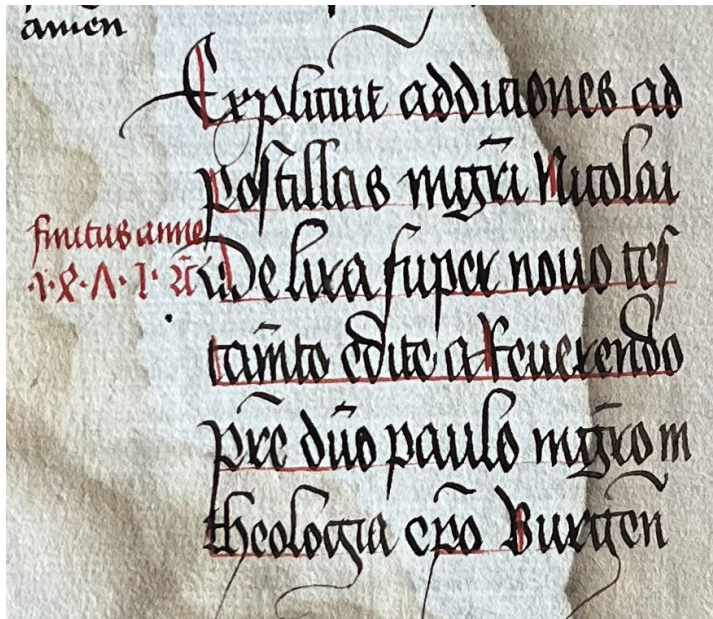


Fig. 8. Alba Iulia, Batthyaneum Library, MS I.12, f. 328v.

In terms of script and decoration, the manuscripts are not the work of the same scribe, but this does not exclude the possibility that they were produced in the same scriptorium. Both texts are copied in a cursive Gothic script, which tends towards hybridity, if one adopts G. I. Lieftinck's and Albert Derolez's sometimes too fine distinctions.<sup>10</sup> Since the nomenclature of Gothic scripts is still a vexed topic,<sup>11</sup> this calls for an explanation. *Hybrida* can designate a mixture

<sup>10</sup> Albert Derolez, *The Palaeography of Gothic Manuscript Books from the Twelfth to the Early Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 163-169.

<sup>11</sup> For debates on nomenclature, see T. J. Brown, "Names of Scripts: A Plea to All Mediaevalists," in *A Palaeographer's View: The Selected Writings of Julian Brown*, ed. by Janet Bately, M. P. Brown, and Jane Roberts (London/New York: Harvey Miller, 1993), 39-45, figs. 1-44; Françoise Gasparri, "Pour une terminologie des écritures latines: doctrines et methods," *Codices manuscripti* 2 (1976): 16-25; Françoise

(or “mengschrift”, as Obbema calls it in Dutch<sup>12</sup>) of the one-compartment *a* and the long descenders of *f* and straight *s* typical for *littera cursiva* with the straight ascenders of *b*, *h*, *k*, and *l* of the *littera textualis*. “It is therefore difficult to isolate the general characteristics of *Hybrida* other than the treatment of the ascenders,” Derolez insists.<sup>13</sup> Some German scholars prefer to speak of “loopless *bastarda*” (“schleifenlose Bastarda”) instead of *hybrid*.<sup>14</sup>

The Cluj manuscript was copied by two hands (ff. 1-121v; 122r-275v). Although loopless morphologies dominate (fig. 9b, g), looped ones are also present (fig. 9c, h), and sometimes the two coexist in the same word (fig. 9d). The second hand sometimes uses open final *s* (fig. 9j, k), whilst the first prefers the characteristic final *s* of the cursive Gothic tradition (fig. 9i). The *i*'s are dotted unsystematically (fig. 9f), and not only when they appear next to other minims. Initial *v* appears in a broken, angular form (fig. 9l). The back of the *d* is rounded (fig. 9d), the crossed Tironian *et* has the characteristic 7 shape (fig. 9m), and the scribe uses a flat-topped, spiked *Rücken-g*, characteristic for Northern cursive scripts (fig. 9e), and the standard one-compartment *a*, with a slightly flat top (fig. 9a).

In the Alba Iulia manuscript, the scribe leans more consistently towards the *hybrida*, and thus the ascenders of such letters as *b* and *l* have no loops (fig. 10b, f). The one compartment *a* is pointed rather than flat-topped (fig. 10a), the back of the uncial *d* is an oblique line rather than a curve (fig. 10c), the spikes of the *g* are less marked than in the Cluj manuscript (fig. 10d), the *i* is consistently dotted (fig. 10e), the final *s* always has two closed compartments (fig. 10g), the initial *v* (fig. 10h) does not have the broken morphology found in the Cluj manuscript, and the crossed Tironian *et* leans towards a more rounded 2 shape (fig. 10i).



Fig. 9. Morphology of individual letters in Cluj, MS inv. 52.

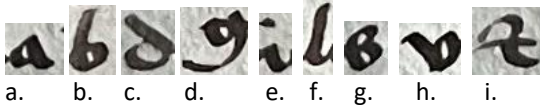


Fig. 10. Morphology of individual letters in Alba Iulia, MS I.12.

Gasparri, “La terminologie des écritures. Rapport présenté à la table ronde « Nomenclature et Terminologie »,” in *Paläographie 1981: Colloquium des Comité International de Paléographie, München, 15.-18. September 1981. Referate*, ed. by Gabriel Silagi (Munich: Ardeo-Gesellschaft, 1982), 31-37.

<sup>12</sup> G. I. Lieftinck, *Manuscripts datés conservés dans les Pays-Bas, Tome I: Les manuscrits d'origine étrangère (816-c. 1550)* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1964), xiv-xvii; Pieter Obbema, “De opkomst van een nieuw schrifttype: de *littera hybrida*,” in his *De middeleeuwen in handen: Over de boekcultuur in de late middeleeuwen* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1996), 69.

<sup>13</sup> Derolez, *The Palaeography of Gothic Manuscript Books*, 164.

<sup>14</sup> Jacques Stiennon, *Paléographie du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1991), 139-141; Karin Schneider, *Paläographie und Handschriftenkunde für Germanisten: Eine Einführung* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1999), 71-74, fig. 16.



Notwithstanding the minor differences between the main scribal hands, we are obviously looking at contemporary declensions of the same type of script.

In terms of decoration, both manuscripts are relatively modest. In addition to the types found in the Alba Iulia manuscript, the Cluj one has a few pen-flourished red and blue initials, like the large *Q* on the opening page (plate I), and smaller ones, occupying five or six lines (fig. 11a, b). However, most initials in both manuscripts are parted or simple red and blue lombards occupying three to six lines (figs 11c-e, 12 a-c). A comparison of the / lombards (figs 11e and 12c) shows that they were not made by the same person. Both manuscripts have reserved places where no initials were drawn, but such empty slots are more numerous in the Alba Iulia codex.



Fig. 11. Initials in Cluj, MS inv. 52.

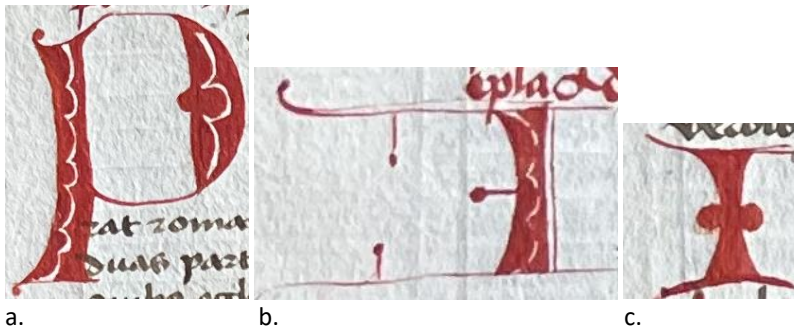


Fig. 12. Initials in Alba Iulia, MS I.12.

It is not easy to localise such relatively unsophisticated and standard initials, but one can find slight similarities to manuscripts copied in the area of Vienna, such as Cod. 3390 of the

Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, made a few decades earlier (fig. 13b).<sup>15</sup> In particular, the patterns of the infilling stems with grains have a family resemblance.

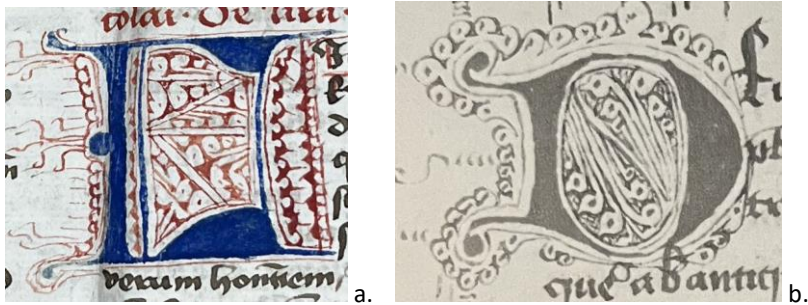
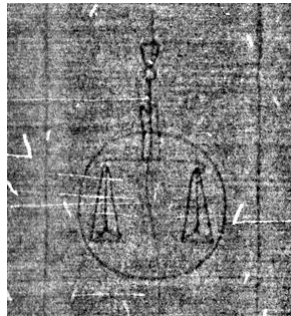


Fig. 13. Initials in Cluj, MS inv. 52 (a) and Vienna, ÖNB, Cod. 3390 (b).

The watermarks are hard to see in the Cluj manuscript, because all pages are written, but they are clearly visible on the blank pages at the end of the Alba Iulia manuscript. Similar types, with roughly the same measurements (height 62 mm, width 42 mm, distance between chain-lines 32 mm), are frequent in Austrian manuscripts copied in the same period (fig. 14).



Alba Iulia, Batthyaneum Library, MS I.12, f. 330, 1471.  
62 x 42 mm; 32 mm



AT5000-393\_8<sup>16</sup>:  
Klosterneuburg, Augustiner-Chorherrenstift, Cod. 393, f. 8, c. 1470.  
60 x 38 mm; 32 mm



AT8900-387\_190<sup>17</sup>  
Vienna, Schottenstift, Cod. 387, f. 190, 1469.  
60 x 39 mm; 32 mm

<sup>15</sup> Katharina Hranitzky et al., *Mitteleuropäische Schulen V (c. 1410-1450): Wien und Niederösterreich* (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2012), cat. no. 128, fig. 489. For more details see: <https://manuscripta.at/?ID=1421>.

<sup>16</sup> <https://wzma.at/4603>.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.wzma.at/13535>.



AT7993-C-1\_123<sup>18</sup>  
Vienna, Erzbischöfliches  
Diözesanarchiv, Kirnberger  
Bibliothek der Wiener  
Dompropstei, Cod. C-1,  
f. 123,  
Vienna/Niederösterreich,  
c. 1470.  
60 x 38 mm; 31 mm



AT8900-18\_89<sup>19</sup>  
Vienna, Schottenstift,  
Archiv, Hs. 18 (Hübl 18),  
f. 89, 1466.  
60 x 40 mm; 34 mm



AT8500-5432\_138<sup>20</sup>  
Vienna, ÖNB, Cod. 5432,  
f. 138, c. 1460-1470.  
61 x 39 mm; 33 mm

Fig. 14. Watermark of Alba Iulia, MS I.12 and similar types.

Even if the two parts of the *Postilla* were copied and decorated by different scribes and illuminators, they were possibly bound in the same workshop. Their full leather bindings (Plates II and III) were decorated with similar or identical tools, and the main metal pieces are similar or identical in terms of size and decoration (fig. 15). The Alba Iulia manuscript has lost its chain, and the Cluj book has lost its label on the front cover, but they also had these elements in common.



a



b.

Fig. 15. Corner-pieces of Alba Iulia, MS I.12 (a), and Cluj, MS inv. 52 (b).

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.wzma.at/9916>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.wzma.at/12555>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.wzma.at/12125>

Moreover, other books in St. Michael's archive in Cluj display similar or identical bosses, whose sides measure 55 mm (fig. 16).



Fig. 16. Central bosses of Alba Iulia, MS I.12 (a), Cluj, MS inv. 52 (b), and Cluj, 332 (c).

Furthermore, the same tools were used to decorate the bindings of various incunabula from St. Michael's collection, which suggests that the book in Alba Iulia initially belonged to the Cluj collection (fig. 17).



Fig. 17. Stamps on the bindings of Alba Iulia, MS I.12 (a, f, h), Cluj, MS inv. 52 (b, g, i), Cluj 322a (c), Cluj 322b (d, j), and Cluj 332 (e, k).



Scrolls like those shown in fig. 17h-k are common in late Gothic bindings produced in Central Europe. Such *Spruchbänder* can bear the name of the binder (e.g. *mathias*,<sup>21</sup> *Blasius*,<sup>22</sup> active in Vienna), or, more generically, the name of the Virgin Mary (*maria*), as in this case.<sup>23</sup> Medieval books could be bound where they were produced, or, more likely, where they were used. Given the number of books from St Michael's collection decorated with the same tools, one may suppose that the books were bound locally, or that a batch of manuscripts and incunabula bound abroad were imported at the same time.

One might also be reminded that, like scribes and illuminators, bookbinders travelled across boundaries: for example, in the 1470s, Blasius Holtimensis, a native of Hosman (Ge. Holzmenge) in Transylvania, was employed in Vienna by another Transylvanian, Petrus Gotfart from Braşov.<sup>24</sup> Whether or not he was the same person as Blasius Coniugatus, active in Vienna,<sup>25</sup> Blasius Holtimensis certainly circulated between Vienna and Sibiu.<sup>26</sup>

It thus seems that the two parts of the *Postilla* were copied in late 1470 and early 1471 in the same workshop, most likely in Vienna, and were bound by the same artisan, using identical or similar tools and metal pieces, for use in Cluj (where other books with similar bindings have survived).

Two provenance questions remain to be asked: who used the books in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, and how did the second volume end up in Alba Iulia? The most obvious answer is that the books were used where they were kept until recently, namely in St Michael's parish church of Cluj. However, ownership notes demonstrate that at least two of the incunabula kept for centuries in St Michael's secret tower (shelfmarks 44 and 360) had belonged to the Franciscans of Cluj in the early sixteenth century.<sup>27</sup> The note on nr 360, Bonaventura's *Opuscula* (Strasbourg: [Printer of the 1483 Jordanus de Quedlinburg (Georg Husner)], 1495 – ISTC ib00928000) reads: *Ordo Fratrum Minorum: Liber Conventus Coloswariensis per*

<sup>21</sup> Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1794, bound in Vienna around 1456; Otto Mazal, *Europäische Einbandkunst aus Mittelalter und Neuzeit: Ausstellung der Handschriften- und Inkunabelsammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Prunksaal, 22. Mai-26. Oktober 1990* (Graz: ADEVA, 1990), no/fig. 29.

<sup>22</sup> Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 3147, bound in Vienna by Blasius Coniugatus around 1479; Mazal, *Europäische Einbandkunst*, no/fig. 30.

<sup>23</sup> e. g. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 13649, bound for the charterhouse of Gaming in 1513; Mazal, *Europäische Einbandkunst*, no/fig. 35.

<sup>24</sup> Adrian Papahagi, "The Library of Petrus Gotfart de Corona, Rector of the University of Vienna in 1473," *The Library* 20.1 (2019): 37-38.

<sup>25</sup> See n. 22 above.

<sup>26</sup> Theodor Gottlieb, *K. K. Hofbibliothek: Bucheinbände. Auswahl von technisch und geschichtlich bemerkenswerten Stücken* (Vienna: Anton Schroll, 1910), cols 71-72, no 78 and plate 78; Gertraut Laurin, "Bemerkenswerte Einbände der Bibliothek des Franziskanerklosters in Graz," *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 38 (1963): 280-283.

<sup>27</sup> Adrian Papahagi, *Books from Lost Libraries: The Medieval Dioceses of Cenad, Oradea, and Transylvania* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2023), 114-115, 136.



*honorabilem patrem fratrem Georgium de Dalmad tempore Gwardianatus sui procuratu[s a] nullo alienandus* (fig. 18).<sup>28</sup>

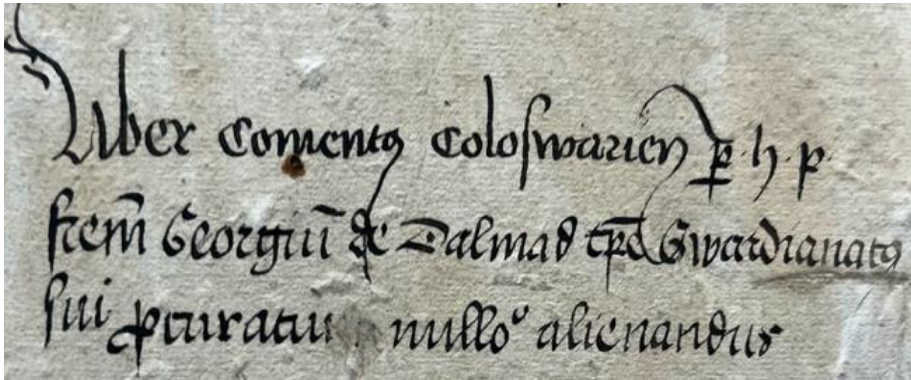


Fig. 18. Cluj, Archive of the Roman-Catholic Parish, Inv. 360, front pastedown.

We know that Georgius de Dalmad (now Domadice, Slovakia) is a Franciscan rather than a Dominican, because only the Franciscans had wardens. Unfortunately, the earliest warden of the Franciscan convent of Cluj known by name was appointed in 1529,<sup>29</sup> and thus we have no knowledge of George, who must have held office before that date. If the works of the Franciscan Nicholas of Lyra belonged to the Franciscan convent of Cluj, they may have integrated this collection after the dissolution of the order, in 1556.

The second question can be answered by invoking further analogues. We know that the Catholic bishops of Transylvania did transfer medieval manuscripts from parishes to the great library established by Ignatius Batthyány in Alba Iulia. Thus, two large graduals copied around 1500 were transferred from Cluj to Alba Iulia in 1913, at the order of bishop Gusztáv Majláth: today, they bear the shelfmarks MSS I.1 and I.2.<sup>30</sup> MS I.1 was the gradual used in the choir of St Michael's church, but, as I argue elsewhere, MS I.2 appears to have belonged to the Franciscans of Cluj.<sup>31</sup>

To conclude, I believe that the two parts of Nicolaus de Lyra's *Postilla* were produced successively in late 1470 and early 1471 in the same scriptorium, most likely in Vienna. They were bound in the same workshop, in Vienna or in Cluj. They belonged to a larger collection of manuscripts and incunabula purchased by the Franciscan convent of Cluj, or (less likely) by St Michael's parish church. At some point in the nineteenth or twentieth century, when the collection had become disorganised, one of the volumes was transferred to Alba Iulia.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>29</sup> János Karácsonyi, *Szt. Ferencz rendjének története Magyarországon 1711-ig* (Budapest: MTA, 2 vols, 1922-1924), vol. II, 102.

<sup>30</sup> Papahagi, *Books from Lost Libraries*, 96.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 115-116.

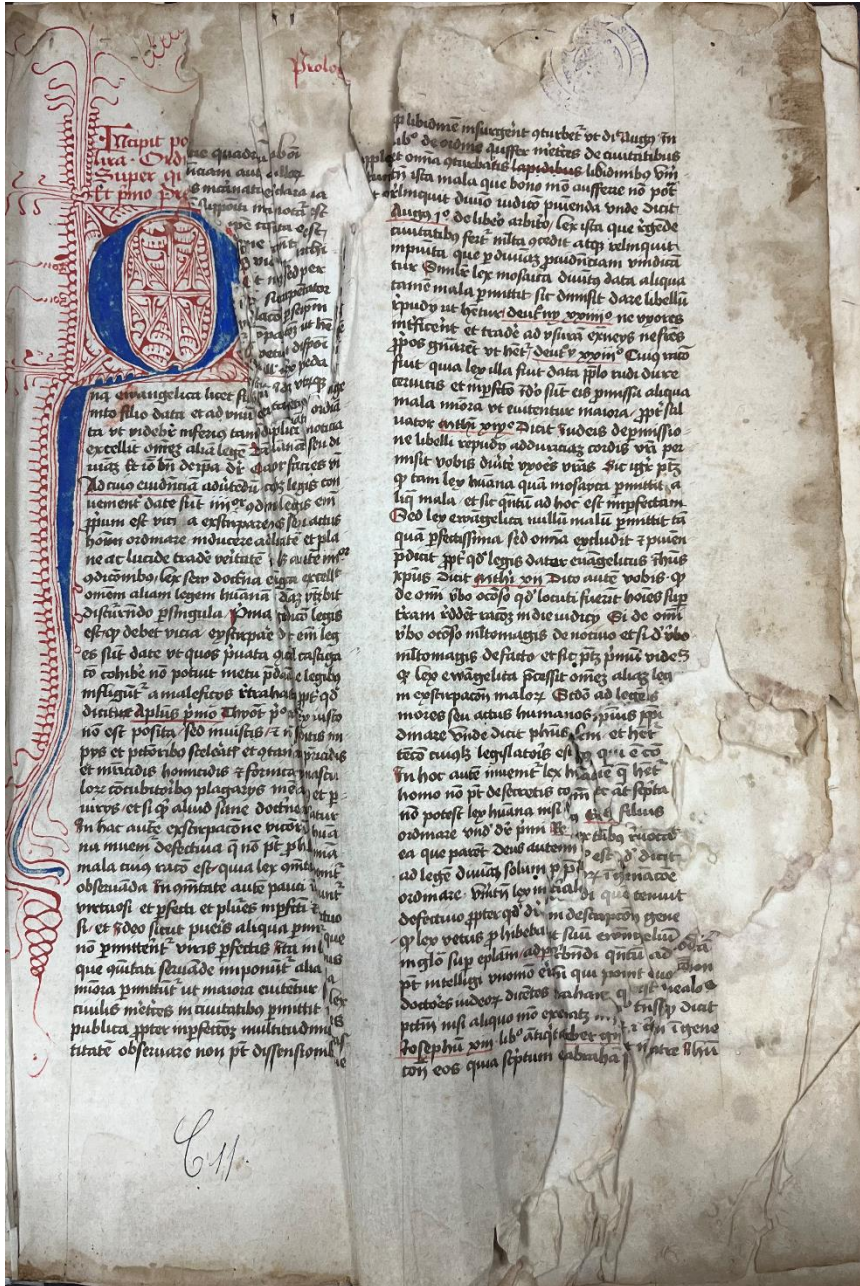


Plate I. Cluj, Archive of the Roman-Catholic Parish, Inv. MS 52, f. 1r.





Plate II. Bookbinding of Cluj, Archive of the Roman-Catholic Parish, Inv. MS 52, front panel.



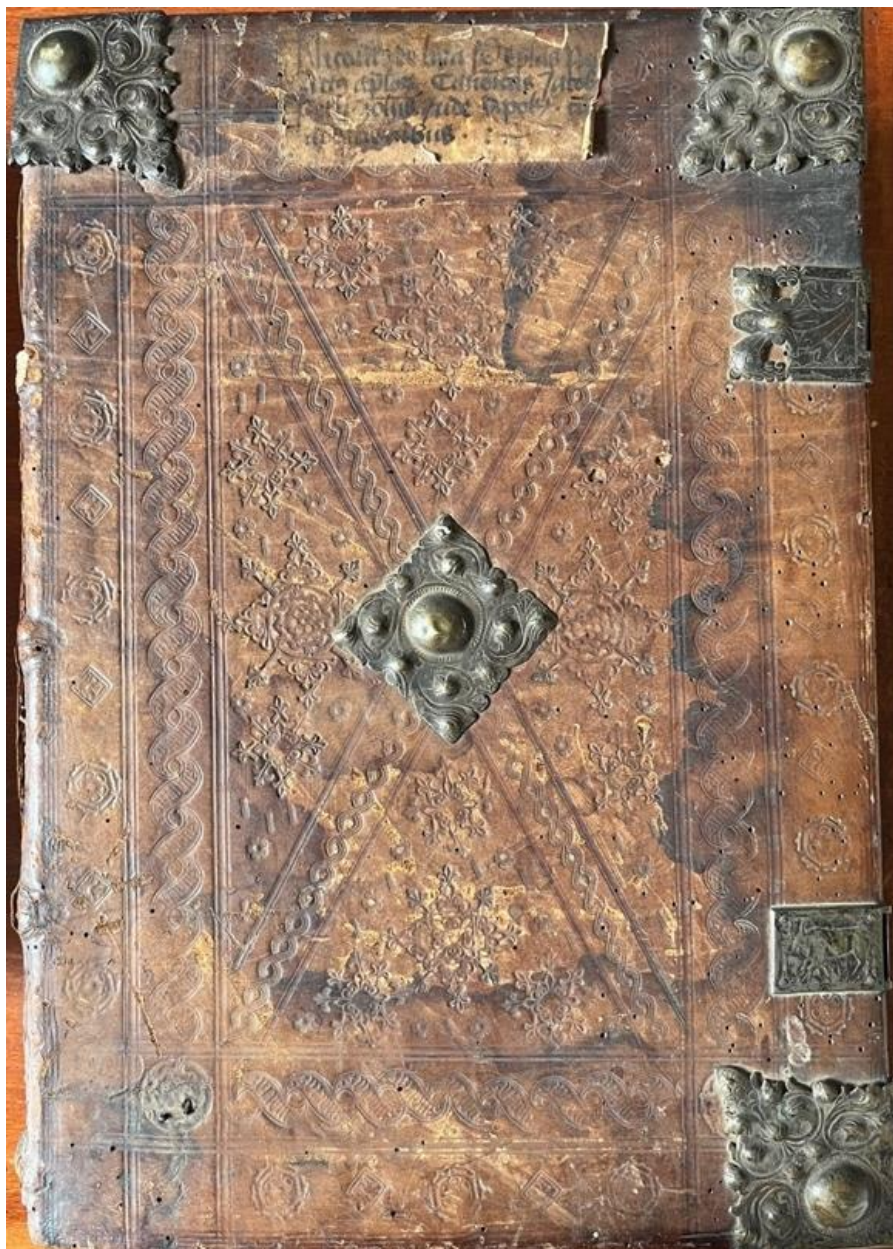


Plate II. Bookbinding of Alba Iulia, Batthyaneum Library, MS I.12, front panel.