

The Franciscans from the Mountainous Banat at the End of the Second and the Beginning of the Third Habsburg Rule (1695–1701, 1716–1738)

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IN THE late summer and early autumn of 1688, most of the Mountain Banat was occupied by the Habsburg troops. With these, many of those who had left the town and the area in 1658 returned from neighboring Transylvania to their native places. They all started interceding both with the imperial commanders in Transylvania and the Banat and with the Aulic War Council and the Neoacquistic Commission of the Viennese Aulic Chamber in order to be reinstated in full possession of the immovable property they had lost during the Ottoman occupation. However, despite all the endeavors they had made for almost ten years, Emperor Leopold I, encouraged by the Aulic War Council and supported by the Aulic Chamber, imposed the principle of *uti possidetis* (the right to use the real estate owned). The matter of full ownership rights was to be decided only after peace was concluded with the Porte.¹ Moreover, the sinuous evolution of the military situation in the Mountain Banat during the years 1688-1695,² with withdrawals and, respectively, comebacks of the Habsburg and the Ottoman troops, contributed, in turn, to a state of uncertainty, which was hardly favorable to the resolution of property issues. A watershed moment was the defeat of General Veterani's troops near Lugoj (September 1695), followed shortly by the Turks' occupation of Caransebeș. On this occasion—the chronicle of the Franciscan Blasius Kleiner informs us—“the remains of our ancient monastery were wrecked even more.”³ According to Kleiner, the monastery of Caransebeș was dedicated to the Black Virgin Mary at that time, a fact he ascertained from the legend of the seal that was still preserved in the second half of the 18th century: *Sigill(um) Convent(us) Caranseb(essiensis) ad S(anctam) Mariam Nigram*.⁴ Kleiner also explains that instead of the old monastery building, which was unusable anyway, the Franciscan monks resorted to “a small oratory, which they could maintain during the Turkish rule.”⁵ It is therefore clear that the Franciscans did not cease their activity in Caransebeș and its surroundings even during the Ottoman rule.⁶ Also, at the time of the Habsburg occupation in 1688, they undertook, as did the other men of the place, efforts to regain possession of the chattels that had belonged to them prior to 1658.

In the autumn of 1695, while the Ottoman troops were about to withdraw from Caransebeș again, the Franciscans obtained from General Caprara, the commander of the troops destined to reoccupy the Banat and, at the same time, Vice-President of the Aulic War Council, a document marking the taking of their church in Caransebeș under the protection. Moreover, the imperial protection extended to the village of Slatina Timiș, with all its pertinences.⁷

In the winter of 1695-1696, Marcus Pejacsevich returned to Caransebeș from Chiprovăț (present-day Kiprovac in Bulgaria), the leader of the Bulgarian Franciscan Province.⁸ He appointed the monk Gheorghe (probably also from Chiprovăț) as special administrator of the Franciscan Order in the land of Caransebeș, much to the displeasure of the Jesuits,⁹ who wished to resume their dominant position in the Roman-Catholic world of Caransebeș from the first half of the 17th century.¹⁰ The monk Gheorghe's duty was to intervene with the imperial authorities in order to obtain the restitution of the property that had been in the possession of the Caransebeș Franciscan monastery prior to 1658. To support his efforts, he requested a statement of evidence from several "townspeople from Caransebeș" (*civitatenses Caransebeșsienses*) and "peasants or subjects" (*rustici vel subditi*) from the surroundings. This was to attest that only the Franciscans had had a parish priest and a place of worship for the Roman Catholics in Caransebeș up to the Habsburg occupation. That the attestate was targeted at the Jesuits is more than obvious. In the letter of testimony drawn up on 25 July 1696,¹¹ the six signatories¹² also stated that the Franciscans from Caransebeș had owned—before 1658, of course—several houses at Valea Boului (present-day Păltiniș), Iaz, Peștere and Slatina Timiș.¹³ We do not know whether and to what extent the monks made use of this letter of testimony, particularly given the fact that they continued their efforts before the highest ecclesiastical and military courts. Eventually, their perseverance was rewarded. Following the directives given by Cardinal Kollonich, the Archbishop-Primate of Hungary, on 26 February 1698, and by Count Rabutin of Bussy, the General-Commander of Transylvania, on 17 March 1698, the Franciscans from Caransebeș acquired the *right of usufruct* (our emphasis) over several real estate properties. Finally, on 22 April 1698, Gallatin, the War Commissioner, and Mihail Olosz, the Vice-Comes of Severin, the Franciscans were placed in possession (*dedimus possessionem*) of the *Red Church*¹⁴ in Caransebeș and of ten plots of land, four of which were in Slatina Timiș, two at Var¹⁵ and at Valea Boului, and one at Peștere and at Maciova.¹⁶ The grounds for granting these benefices, in return for which the Franciscans promised to provide parish services, were the "ancient deeds of donation" (*antiquae donationes*) they had submitted in support of their claim. Since the situation of real estate property in the district of Caransebeș was far from having been clarified, the imperial authorities reserved their right to increase or reduce the number of plots of land given to the Franciscans.

The Caransebeș Franciscans' hopes of regaining full ownership of the immovable property that had belonged to them were completely shattered by the Peace of Karlowitz (26 January 1699), which left the entire Banat under Ottoman rule. True, Article 13 of the Treaty of Peace provided the Franciscans from Caransebeș with a framework for continuing their activity. By virtue of this article, the Porte was bound to allow the Christians from the territories remaining under its authority—especially the Roman

Catholics—both to freely exercise their religion and to repair and maintain the existing churches. General Luigi Ferdinando Marsili (Marsigli), the imperial plenipotentiary in the Joint Committee for the enforcement of the peace treaty provisions and the delimitation of the border between the Ottoman Banat and imperial Transylvania, invoked precisely the provisions of Article 13 to ensure that the Franciscans would be able to continue their work in Caransebeș even after its retrocession to the Porte.

In a report addressed to Emperor Leopold I on 14 March 1701, less than two months before the withdrawal of the last imperial official from the Mountain Banat, General Marsili presented the sovereign with an overview on the state of the Roman-Catholic believers in the entire province.¹⁷ From the outset, Marsili pointed out the very small number of Roman Catholics—only about 697 families¹⁸—most of them (around 500 families) living in the district of Carașova. There were other Roman-Catholic communities in a village near Timișoara, whose name Marsili did not remember, even though there were 100 families living there, in Slatina Timiș (40 families), at Vărădia (30 families) and in Vârșeț (15 families). In Timișoara, due to the losses caused by the plague of 1699-1700, there were only about 12 families of Roman Catholics left.¹⁹ Regarding the situation of the Roman-Catholic places of worship, Marsili deplored the fact that the churches were in ruins both in Carașova and in Slatina Timiș. The imperial plenipotentiary had nonetheless obtained the promise of the Serasker (general-commander) of Belgrade and the Pasha of Timișoara that they would allow the reconstruction of the two churches without charging any fees. On the other hand, “inside the city of Timișoara” (our emphasis), as Marsili reported to his sovereign, “there still exists a church, quite well endowed with religious objects and those of need,” but during the war, “there was no priest there to give the Holy Sacraments to the good Catholics, so they were forced to do their prayers with an educated layman, saying the litanies of the Holy Virgin instead of the liturgy on every holiday.”

Enjoying *carte blanche* from the emperor, Marsili reported to him that he had brought over the (Conventual) Franciscan monk Francisc from Chiprovăț, entrusting the latter with the mission to shepherd the Roman Catholics in the Mountain Banat, especially those from Carașova and Slatina Timiș. Marsili had decided on this step “because the monks from the said (Bulgarian, our note) Province have always taken care of the souls from the Caransebeș district.” Carrying an open letter written by Marsili, which informed the Ottoman authorities of his appointment, Francis was sent to Timișoara.

The missionary also had a *vidimus* in the Osman language of Article 13 of the peace treaty, authenticated both by Marsili and by the Ottoman Muteselim (delegate) Ibrahim Effendi, his partner in the Joint Border Commission. Marsili had also given the monk Francisc two letters of recommendation: one to the Serasker of Belgrade, the other to the Pasha of Timișoara. At the same time, the imperial plenipotentiary had firmly requested the monk Francisc to always wear the robes of his Order, and “I reminded him to assert himself through zeal and good example not only before the Christians, but also before the Turks.”

As regards the Roman Catholics from Lipova Nouă, that is from Radna, which had remained under imperial authority through the Peace of Karlowitz, Marsili reported to Leopold I that the Franciscans from the Province of Bosnia would continue to cater

for their spiritual needs. Nonetheless, Marsili expressed his reservations regarding their desire to reclaim and shepherd the Roman Catholics from Timișoara and from the neighboring villages: he was afraid that the free movement of the Bosnian Franciscans might be hampered by state interests, the Turks' suspicions, and unpredictable events.

Less than a month before the last imperial official withdrew from the Mountain Banat, Marsili sent the last instructions to the monk Francisc, who was already in Carașova.²⁰ After reminding the latter of the directives he had received when he had presented himself in Timișoara, Marsili drew his attention that "if the Turks should commit any violence or disturbance against the holy capitulations (the provisions of the peace treaty—our note) or against the Christians," the Franciscan monk had to immediately inform the Archbishop-Primate of Hungary or the nearest bishop. Until he received instructions on the attitude to adopt, he was bound "to bear with measureless patience the insolence of the infidels, waiting for comfort from both God and the emperor's piety." As a final incentive, Marsili informed the monk Francisc that, at his order, the military commissioner Cavazzi would pay 24 florins into his salary account from 1 May to 31 October 1701.

For the Franciscans in the Bulgarian Province, the Austro-Turkish War that broke out in 1716 and was waged largely on the territory of the Banat meant a welcome opportunity both to revive their activity in the mountain area and obtain, at last, the restitution, this time with the full title, of the immovable properties in Caransebeș and the surrounding areas.²¹ On 10 November 1716, Blasius Marinovich, the ruler of the Franciscan Bulgarian Province, sent General Count Mercy, the commander of the imperial commander in the Banat, a letter through the monk Stephan Novoselich (could he have been the Franciscan guardian from Caransebeș the in autumn 1716?). Marinovich demanded that the chattels once held by the Order in Caransebeș should be restituted to it. On 28 November 1716, General Mercy answered that an inventory would shortly be made of the "ruins belonging to the monastery from the Bulgarian Province that are found here in Caransebeș."²² Mercy also envisaged other measures, which were left unspecified, to settle the claims of the Franciscan Order.

Having been engaged ever since the first half of the year 1717 in military operations against the Turkish troops from the South-Eastern Banat and the Danube area, the imperial commanders did not respond immediately to the Franciscans' requests. That is why General Viard, the military commander of Caransebeș, received a new request from the Franciscans, asking for the restitution of their real estate properties. The arguments they invoked referred both to the documents issued by the imperial generals who had commanded the Mountain Banat in 1688–1699 and to the evidence the Franciscans had obtained from the inhabitants of Caransebeș, "through the voice of the people" (*per vocem populi*). All these were considered sufficient grounds to demand the restitution of both the church and several houses, mills, gardens, vineyards, terrains and other immovable property whose usufruct had previously been held by the Franciscans from Caransebeș. Taking into consideration the religious services they had brought since the end of 1716 and General Mercy's order, de Viard ordered, on May 4, 1717, that all those under his authority should "until a future decision of the author-

ities, leave them untroubled and allow them (the Franciscan monks—our note) to enjoy their land and their pertinences in peace.” The Franciscans were to benefit especially from the “mill located near the ruins of the monastery.”²³ Since no final decision on the ownership regime in the imperial Banat had been reached, the general’s delaying tactic should not be surprising. The situation from 1688-1699 seemed to be repeating all over again. Just like they had done twenty years earlier, the Franciscans from the Bulgarian Province addressed themselves to the Aulic War Council in the second half of 1717.²⁴ Again they invoked the reassurances they had received from the imperial generals Caprara (in 1695), Mercy (in 1716) and de Viard (in 1717), as well as the old donations made to the Franciscan Order by the Măciçaş (Macskási) family. Moreover, a copy (after the original then kept in archives of the Măciçaş family) was attached of the document whereby, on 30 October 1455, Iacob and Ana of Măciçaş were received into the confraternity of the Franciscan Order as a reward for the services rendered to it.²⁵ Having perhaps become more realistic after their repeated requests had been elegantly postponed, the Franciscans were willing to accept compensation in exchange for the properties they had demanded, if “neither state reason nor our promise of poverty” allowed for their regaining their old properties.

In 1719, while attempts were undertaken to recover the properties, the Franciscan guardian from Caransebeş passed away. Blasius Marinovich, the leader of the Bulgarian Province, repeatedly tried to send a Conventual Franciscan monk from Transylvania as the successor, but failed because of the plague epidemic that had broken out in the meantime. In those circumstances, the Franciscan residence from Caransebeş²⁶ was occupied by Petrinus,²⁷ the Roman-Catholic parish priest of the place. When the plague epidemic came to an end (1720), Blasius Marinovich personally came to the Banat to plead the causes of his Order. In March 1720, after removing Petrinus from the Franciscan residence in Caransebeş, he went to Timișoara to present the demands of his Order to Governor Mercy. Since he was unable to meet him in the capital of the Banat, Marinovich left Mercy a memorandum regarding the properties that had belonged to the Franciscans in Caransebeş.²⁸ Again, historical elements formed the core argument: “. . . since time immemorial, as shown by the annals of our Order, Caransebeş and Orșova have pertained to the Bulgarian Province and we, the Franciscans, have never left these areas (but have shepherded the faithful—our note) both in the time of the Turks and in that of Emperor Leopold I of pious remembrance, when he ruled this province, as attested by the people of Caransebeş and the neighboring villages.” Moreover, Marinovich invoked the sacrifices his fellow brethren had made in the Banat: the monk Elia Matejanich, who was caught by the Turks in Orșova and killed in prison during the war of 1683-1689, and the monk Balthasar Jurkovich who was wounded, caught by the Turks at Mehadia during the war of 1716-1718 and died in captivity. Mercy was reminded that in Oltenia, which was occupied by the imperials after the Austro-Turkish war, several monasteries were given to the “schismatic Romanians” and “everyone possesses and enjoys what they had before.”²⁹ Still, Marinovich’s supreme argument was of a practical nature, being designed to counter any hesitation on the part of the governor of the Banat: “. . . through our settlement in Caransebeş much will be done for the public good, because

we want to raise a monastery and increase the number of the monks serving the Catholics.” Mercy was also enticed by the prospect of several Catholic families in the Banat, mostly Bulgarians (inclined to emigrate after the anti-Ottoman uprising of the people from Ciprovac was suppressed in 1688). It is unknown, at least for now, what the effect of the memorandum submitted by Blasius Marinovich was. It seems that—as it had happened before—an elegant deferral was once again the response received from Governor Mercy, who was undoubtedly occupied with other—certainly more stringent—problems of the Banat. Otherwise one could not explain the fact that on 14 November 1724, the Aulic Chamber sent the memorandum received from the Franciscans in the Bulgarian Province to the Imperial Administration of the Banat for review. Through this memorandum, the Franciscans requested that the “existing ruins of their church, destroyed during the last war, as well as their land and other assets”³⁰ in Caransebeș should be returned to them.

Eventually, the situation was settled in favor of the Franciscans, who in 1725 obtained the administration of the Roman-Catholic parish of Caransebeș.³¹ In 1730 they began to raise the walls of the new monastery, and their new-built church was consecrated on 8 October 1733.³² A watershed moment for the settlement of the Franciscans from Caransebeș was the Romanian uprising of 1738, which broke out in the context of the battles waged nearby between the imperial and the Turkish troops. Then,³³ as Blasius Kleiner recounts, “the Romanians set fire to the new church and the residence, pulled out by force the iron structures that supported the church vault, which immediately collapsed, opened the built-in case where the holy relics were kept, looted the valuable objects in the church, destroyed the altars and, lest they should remain inferior to the Turks, they entered the crypt, whence they took out the recently buried corpse of a monk, leaning it against a window upstairs, so that those who saw it would know what a Franciscan looks like.”³⁴ How the Franciscans from Caransebeș managed to draw so much hostility from the Romanian Orthodox majority remains to be investigated. In any case, after the events of 1738, the destruction was gradually removed, and in 1751 a new residence was built as part of the monastery.³⁵

The investigation of the archives from Vienna and Budapest, as well as those from the Vatican, is yet to bring new information and clarifications on the history of the Franciscans from the Mountain Banat, of which so little known today.



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Notes

1. See Costin Feneșan, “Stăpâni și supuși în comitatul Severinului în timpul celei de-a doua ocupații habsburgice (1688-1699),” *Banatica* 14 (1996): 159 and Feneșan, “Comitatul Severinului la sfârșitul secolului al XVII-lea,” *Tibiscum. Studii și comunicări de etnografie-istorie* 7 (1988): 196–200.
2. Pesty Frigyes, *A Szövény Bánság és Szövény vármegye története*, vol. I (Budapest, 1877), 102 passim and vol. II (Budapest 1878), 183 passim.

3. Blasius Kleiner, "Ortus et progressus Provinciae Bulgariae et Valachiae," in *Hronika na balgarskoto franĥiskanstvo (XIV-XVIIIv.) sĥstavena prez 1775 g.v.gr. Alvinĥ ot Blazius Klainer* (= Archivum Tripartitum III), ed. Istvĥn Lĥnĥrt Magyar, Donka Dimitrova Markovska, Mĥrta Bŭr, (Sofia, 1999), 104/p. 70 MSS. (we used the Latin text reproduced in the second section of the edition in anastatic form); see Archivum Franciscanum Hungaricum Budapesta, Archivum Tripartitum, pars III, MSS. 65, 70–72.
4. Here is Blasius Kleiner's detailed description of the old (Conventual) Franciscan monastery from Caransebeĥ: "In the beginning, this monastery lay beyond the street (at present, Michael the Brave Street—our note), as proved by the ruins which are visible to the present day. Judging from the angle of their foundations, it is clear that the monastery was positioned obliquely to the one now and, at the same time, that where it lies now there was not a street, but the building of the monastery. In fact, at that time (before 1658—our note), the layout of Caransebeĥ was altogether different, which indicates quite clearly that the wall found in the ground (when the foundations were dug for the lower part of the new monastery) stretched in such a way that the edifice erected upon it formed a rectangular angle oriented obliquely to the present-day monastery. The church stood next to the monastery, toward the house where the oberknez of Bulgarian descent (sic!) now lives. In front of his house, not far from the ruins that may be seen today, the crypt of the monks apparently lay and - as the Romanians have been telling the story from days of yore—a heavenly glow was often spotted in that place, coming from the dead. Of course, there can be no-doubt that the monks' crypt used to be there, because many of those buried in it who found their rest there are worthy of attention through the fame of their sanctity. The old cemetery used to be where the home, yard and garden of the above said oberknez are now. This is proved beyond the question of a doubt by the numerous human bones that were unearthed when the said oberknez built his house, cellar and well. This monastery stood in the suburbs, outside the fortress or buttresses, and was dedicated to the Black Virgin Mary. After it was destroyed, this place was turned into a cemetery, as shown by the gravestones that are still lying there. This cemetery was used until the barracks were built. Then the place where the Catholics are buried now was designated as a cemetery." See Archivum Franciscanum Hungaricum Budapesta, Archivum Tripartitum, pars II, MSS. 65, § V, 217–218/The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Hungary Microfilms, reel 857, c. 113–114. The testimony provided by Kleiner, who more than likely visited the monastic settlement from Caransebeĥ, dispels, we believe, the last doubts about the origin of the ruins discovered on Michael the Brave Street in 1988. The vestiges undoubtedly belong to the ancient Franciscan monastery and church, built most probably in the second half of the 14th century, cf. Dumitru Ţeicu, *Die ekklesiastische Geografie des mittelalterlichen Banats*, (Bucureĥti, 2007), 86. In the 18th century, the monastery was dedicated to St. Mary of the Angels (*Sancta Maria Angelorum*), see Archivum Franciscanum Hungaricum Budapesta, Archivum Tripartitum, pars II, MSS. 65, § V, 217–218/The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Hungary Microfilms, reel 857, c. 113–114.
5. Archivum Franciscanum Hungaricum Budapesta, Archivum Tripartitum, pars III, MSS. 65, 70–72.
6. Viorel Achim, "Catolicismul la romĥnii din Banat ĥn Evul Mediu," *Revista Istoricĥ* 7, 1–2 (1996): 44 and I. Gy. Tťth, *Relationes missionariorum de Hungaria et Transilvania* (Rome–Budapest, 1994), 218–223. Blasius Kleiner's account of the Franciscan monastery in Caransebeĥ from before the Ottoman occupation (1658) is as brief as it is confused and hesitating: "I could not find anywhere how big this monastery was and when it was established. From a letter by Pope Nicholas V, I only managed to realize that in its time, the monastery grew. In 1421, during the reign of Sigismund, King of Hungary, it seems to have been torn

down (in a marginal note from the 19th century, the Franciscan Fr. Ferdinand Kaiser insisted on adding: ‘It existed until 1558, and the last guardian was Nicholas Csomortány then’—our note). This is uncertain, all the more so since the monastery flourished in the time of Saint (John) Capistrano, around the year 1455. Moreover, even after that, in 1552, when the Turks occupied Timișoara and the Banat, the monastery survived because—as I said elsewhere—Lugoj and Caransebeș appeased the Turks’ rage with money. It is true that then the number of Catholics dropped very much, because Petru Petrovici, the lord of the land, along with many other nobles, departed from the faith and where Queen Izabella allowed him, he destroyed the holy sanctuaries and altars. It is certain, however, that insofar as the building is concerned, the monastery of Caransebeș was not torn down, but we know nothing about the number of the monks. That was the situation until 1658, when the monastery was demolished along with the fortress and the other buildings,” see *Archivum Franciscanum Hungaricum Budapesta, Archivum Tripartitum, pars II, MSS. 65, § V, 217–218*/ The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Hungary Microfilms, reel 857, c. 113–114.

7. Hofkammerarchiv Wien, Anhang vermischter ungarischer Gegenstände, Fasz. Rote 31, f. 676; a copy from the beginning of the 18th century/The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Austria Xerographs, batch 26, 28.
8. In 1675–1676 the custody of Bulgaria was transformed into the Province of Bulgaria, which included Wallachia, Bulgaria and the Banat. See in *Archivum Franciscanum Hungaricum Budapesta, Archivum Tripartitum, pars II, MSS. 65, 75–76*. The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Hungary Microfilms, reel 857, c. 4–6, the list of the rulers of the Bulgarian Franciscan Province between 1679 and 1727. Blasius Kleiner informs us that “in 1696 the most pious Fr. Marcus from Chiprovăț, by the family name of Pejacevich, a connoisseur of the Romanian language and most beloved by Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, followed here (in Caransebeș—our note) the imperial troops from Transylvania to the Banat and requested a statement of evidence from the judge and the community, attesting that no other monks than those from the Bulgarian Province had ever been in Caransebeș. He did this because the Jesuits, who had insinuated themselves into Lugoj and Caransebeș.” (A.R.P. Marcus à Chiprovacio, cognomine Pejacevich, Valachicae linguae peritus et principi Constantino Brankovan acceptissimus, hic anno 1696 caesarem militiam ex Transylvania ad Bannatum secutus est et petiit à iudice et communitate testimonium, quod Caransebeșini nunquam alii religiosi quam se Lugosini et Caransebeșini intruserant), cf. *Archivum Franciscanum Hungaricum Budapesta, Archivum Tripartitum, pars II, MSS. 65, cap. VII, 76*/ The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Hungary Microfilms, reel 857, c.5.
9. *Archivum Franciscanum Hungaricum Budapesta, Archivum Tripartitum, pars III, MSS. 65, 70–72*.
10. On this, see Livia Magina, “Nova India: Misiunea iezuită în Banatul Otoman în secolele XVI–XVII,” in V. Leu, C. Albert and D. Țicu, eds., *Studii bănățene* (Timișoara, 2007), 137–152, especially 139–140. On the activity of the Jesuits in Caransebeș, see Adrian Magina, “In Karansebes Patres Societatis Jesu evangelizant: Misionarii,” in V. Leu, C. Albert and D. Țicu, eds., *Studii bănățene* (Timișoara, 2007), 153–183; A. Magina, “Legislație și toleranță. Statutul juridic al catolicilor din Caransebeș în prima jumătate a secolului al XVII-lea,” in I. Costea, O. Ghitta, V. Orga and I.A. Pop, eds., *Istoria culturii, cultura istoriei. Omagiu profesorului Doru Radosav la vârsta de 60 de ani* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2010), 107, 109, and A. Magina, *De la excludere la coabitare. Biserici tradiționale, Reformă și Islam în Banat (1500-1700)* (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2011), 91–116.
11. E. Fermezdžin, *Acta Bulgariae ecclesiastica ab anno 1565 usque ad annum 1779* [= Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium XVIII] (Zagreb, 1887), 318; see also note 8.
12. The signatories, whose name is partly rendered in corrupt form, are the following: Mihai Vaida de Bossus (a corrupt form for *Borzous*, *Berzeus* or *Borzawch*, a locality that has vanished, which

- was either near Babșa and Târgoviște, or near Berzovia), a juror of the town; Ioan Vaida, a former judge of the town; Sigismund Simon, a citizen of Caransebeș (in 1698, he was attested as master of Zorlențul Mare and Vărciorova, cf. Feneșan, “Stăpâni și supuși,” 188 and 191); Mitea Angelat (?), a citizen of the town; Luca Letsati (?), vice-judge of Caransebeș; Petru, “priest of the Romanians” (*popa Valachorum*) from Caransebeș.
13. It is surprising that, among those who claimed in Caransebeș, on 30 August 1688, the restitution of their properties there was no mention *expressis verbis* of any Franciscan monk. Instead, *domus ecclesiastica* appeared on the list drawn up on that occasion, most likely belonging to the Franciscans, cf. Costin Feneșan, “Caransebeșul la începutul celei de-a doua stăpâniri habsburgice (1688),” *Revista Istorică* 7, 1–2 (1996): 76.
 14. The name, which is rather surprising, seems to suggest an edifice under construction (“shell and core”).
 15. In January 1699, on the occasion of a witness hearing, mention was made of *possessio Vaar reverendorum patrum*, see Feneșan, “Stăpâni și supuși,” 190.
 16. Hofkammerarchiv Wien, Anhang vermischter ungarischer Gegenstände, Fasz. Rote 31, f. 677; a copy from the beginning of the 18th century/ The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Austria Xerographs, batch 26, no. 29.
 17. A concept at Biblioteca Universitaria Bologna, Manoscritti Marsili, MSS. 69, Relazione 34-ta à S.C.M./ The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Italy Microfilms, reel 47, c. 510–512.
 18. A calculation with the demographic factor 4 would give 2,788 persons, while a calculation with the demographic factor 4.5 would suggest that the number of Roman Catholics was 3,136. Thus, on the cusp between the 17th and the 18th centuries, there were, in the entire Banat, between 2,800 and 3,200 Roman Catholics. In the absence of reliable data on the total population in the Banat, it would be hazardous to pronounce ourselves on the proportion represented by the Roman-Catholic confession.
 19. The figures presented by Marsili are very close to those mentioned by Lodovico de Ragusa, the last Franciscan missionary in Timișoara until 1716. The latter found that the Catholic community in the entire Banat numbered only 900 families, 700 of which were in Carașova, cf. I. Gy. Tóth, “Un francescano raguseo à Timișoara: l’ultimo missionario cattolico dell’Ungheria turca,” *Atti e memorie della Società Dalmata di Storia Patria*, (2001) apud Magina, *De la excludere la coabitare*, 148.
 20. A concept at Biblioteca Universitaria Bologna, Manoscritti Marsili, MSS. 69, Relazione 34-ta à S.C.M./ The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Italy Microfilms, reel 47, c. 573–574; a contemporary copy in MSS. 16/ Italy Microfilms, reel 39, c. 8–10.
 21. On the activity of the Franciscan Order in the Banat during the 18th century, see K. Juhász, “Die Franziskaner im Banat den Jahren 1716–1806,” *Südostdeutsches Archiv* 4, 1 (1961): 30–47. The references for the Mountain Banat and especially for the Franciscans from Caransebeș are extremely scarce (46–47), most of them coming from L. Baróti’s regest publication.
 22. A contemporary copy at Hofkammerarchiv Wien, Anhang vermischter ungarischer Gegenstände, Fasz. Rote 31, f. 678/ The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Austria Xerographs, batch 26, 307.
 23. A contemporary copy at Hofkammerarchiv Wien, Anhang vermischter ungarischer Gegenstände, Fasz. Rote 31, f. 679/ The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Austria Xerographs, batch 26, 31.
 24. A contemporary copy at Hofkammerarchiv Wien, Anhang vermischter ungarischer Gegenstände, Fasz. Rote 31, f. 680–681/ The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Austria Xerographs, batch 26, 32.
 25. The text of the document was published by Pesty, *Szöreny*, vol. III, 70–71.
 26. Referring to this, Blasius Kleiner claims that it was “in the house built here (in Caransebeș—our note) over the ruins of the ancient monastery,” cf. Archivum Franciscanum Hungaricum

Budapesta, Archivum Tripartitum, pars II, MSS. 65, § V, 217–218, The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Hungary Microfilms, reel 857, c. 113–114. Kleiner also informs us that, around 1723, the Franciscans from Caransebeș “built another residence for themselves from wood and wicker, across the water (this was the Mill Channel or the so-called *ierurga*—our note), in the midst of a garden.” There they allegedly resided until 1738, two houses and a refectory, the church and the porch, as well as a second floor of the residence being built during this time.

27. This was Karl Petriner, see A. Ghidiu, I. Bălan, *Monografia orașului Caransebeș* (Caransebeș, 1909), 95.
28. A copy from the 18th century, reproduced in *Hronika*, 105–106.
29. On this aspect, see N. Dobrescu, *Istoria bisericii române din Oltenia în timpul ocupației austriece (1716–1739)* (Bucharest, 1906), 17 passim, but especially 26 passim.
30. L. Baróti, *Adattar Délmagyarország XVIII. századi történetéhez*, vol. I (Timișoara, 1894), 14. K. Juhász, “Die Franziskaner,” 42 assigns the aforementioned memorandum to the Franciscans in Timișoara, but it is evident that it belonged to the ones from the Caransebeș.
31. A. Ghidiu, I. Bălan, *Monografia*, 95.
32. Archivum Franciscanum Hungaricum Budapesta, Archivum Tripartitum, pars III, MSS. 65, 70–72; *Hronika*, 104–106; see also note 26. A. Ghidiu and I. Bălan, *Monografia*, 96–97 publish the nominal list of the guardians from the Franciscan monastery in Caransebeș from 1725 to 1788. The monastery was dissolved in 1787, by order of Emperor Joseph II. Five of the Franciscan monks remained in place until the attack of the Turkish troops on Caransebeș (14 September 1788), when the monastery fell prey to the flames.
33. We do not have certain information on the date when the event took place. A. Ghidiu, I. Bălan, *Monografia*, 39 reproduce a note written by Fr. Ioan Popescu on the leaves of a book of worship: “Let it be known when the town of Caransebeș was broken in 1738, on May 3, and we came to Hațeg.” Pesty, *Szövény*, vol. II, 193 notes that on 29 June 1738, when the imperial troops set camp south of Caransebeș, they found a town that was completely deserted, with dilapidated houses. Citing a letter from Baron Toussaint (kept in the Imperial Library of Vienna), Pesty also makes reference to the fate of the Franciscan sanctuary in words similar to those used by Blasius Kleiner later. As far as we are concerned, we consider 3 May 1738 as the date when the action of the revolted Romanians from Caransebeș took place.
34. Archivum Franciscanum Hungaricum Budapesta, Archivum Tripartitum, pars III, MSS. 65, 70–72; *Hronika*, 104–106; see also Archivum Franciscanum Hungaricum Budapesta, Archivum Tripartitum, pars II, MSS. 65, § V, 217–218/ The Bucharest Central National Historical Archives, Hungary Microfilms, reel 857, c. 113–114.
35. Kleiner also informs us elsewhere in his chronicle that after concluding peace with the Porte, the Franciscan monks built four cells over the old cellar, to serve them as temporary housing (See note 34).

Abstract**The Franciscans from the Mountain Banat at the End of the Second and the Beginning of the Third Habsburg Rule (1695–1701, 1716–1738)**

Documentarily attested in Caransebeș, the major center of the Mountain Banat at that time, the Franciscans maintained, from the second half of the 14th century, their monastery there, with all its immovable properties (mills, gardens, plowing fields), despite the religious battles that took place there in the sixteenth and 17th centuries. Even after the Ottoman occupation from 1658, under arguably even more difficult circumstances, the Franciscans continued their activity in Caransebeș and the surrounding area. At the time of the second Habsburg occupation (from 1688 until 1701, with some brief interruptions), the Franciscans strove to regain ownership of their real estates, which they had lost during the Ottoman rule. However, they benefited only from the right to use part of the chattels they claimed. The same steps were taken by monks originating in the Bulgarian province of the Franciscans after the Habsburgs occupied the Banat again (1716), successfully this time. All these endeavors of the Franciscans from Caransebeș are reconstituted on the basis of documents collected from the archives of Vienna, Budapest and Bologna.

Keywords

Franciscans, Caransebeș, Slatina, Timiș, Carașova, Luigi Ferdinando Marsili, Blasius Kleiner