



The Public Defense of the Doctoral Thesis in Medieval Studies

of

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on

PREACHING SAINT STANISLAUS

Medieval Sermons on Saint Stanislaus of Cracow

and

Their Role in the Construction of His Image and Cult

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Doctoral Thesis Abstract
Stanislava Kuzmová

Preaching Saint Stanislaus: Medieval Sermons on Saint Stanislaus of Cracow
and Their Role in the Construction of His Image and Cult

The objective of this dissertation was to supply one of the missing pieces in the mosaic of sources which constructed the image and cult of St. Stanislaus of Cracow in the Middle Ages. Numerous studies have dealt with various issues concerning St. Stanislaus, including the obscure origins of his cult, his hagiography, the miracle collections, and the liturgy. These studies have demonstrated that devotion to the saint, variously manifested, flourished among all strata of society in the Late Middle Ages. However, sermons have been largely neglected in these studies and received only cursory attention, despite the fact that they were an integral part of the “hagiographic discourse,” and preaching was certainly instrumental in facilitating the cult’s proliferation. Preachers would retell and use the material from the saint’s legends and other hagiographic sources together with material from the Bible and various authorities in order to interpret and present a lesson about this saintly figure. Recently, scholars have called for enquiry into the sermons on St. Stanislaus, perhaps motivated by a more general renewed interest in sermon studies which has only reached Central Europe in the last decade. My dissertation, which offers a comprehensive analysis of the sermon corpus on St. Stanislaus within the late medieval discourse on him, provides at least a partial response to this express interest.

Stanislaus was the bishop of Cracow in the eleventh century. His legend tells the story of his conflict with Boleslaus II, the king of Poland, which resulted in the bishop’s murder in 1079. The oldest preserved evidence of his cult dates back only to the turn of the thirteenth century. The Polish Kingdom, which had long since ceased, had splintered into several principalities. The popularity of the cult grew in the thirteenth century and, thanks primarily to the efforts of the bishops of Cracow, but also with the concerted support of the mendicant orders, the duke of Cracow, and the area of Little Poland centred on Cracow, Bishop Stanislaus was canonised by Pope Innocent IV at Assisi in 1253. The centre of the cult of St. Stanislaus was in Cracow, where he had lived and acted as a bishop and where he had also attained his martyr’s crown. As the first Polish native to be canonised, he became an especially prominent figure among the saints venerated in Cracow and later in all Poland.

St. Stanislaus enjoyed respect and devotion from both the official and popular audience, which lasted well into the fifteenth century and, in a way, still continues to be very much present even in today's Poland. He became the patron-saint of Poland, one of the symbols and icons of Polish history and society.

An important outcome of this work is a collection of medieval sermons on St. Stanislaus which I identified in manuscripts, available as an inventory in the Appendices. It served not only as a source for my analysis of sermons in this dissertation, but it can also be utilised for further studies. I have gathered 80 different sermons and sermon materials from 86 various codices, which comprise altogether 129 instances in which St. Stanislaus appeared in sermons in manuscripts dating from the fourteenth to the fifteenth century. I have gathered the corpus without the help of the usual tools, especially Schneyer's *Repertorium*, which is an indispensable help for Latin sermons in other, more studied, parts of Europe, but was not of much help in my case. Geographically, this enquiry focused primarily on the central area of the cult of St. Stanislaus, and firstly on the major reservoirs of medieval manuscript resources in the area – Cracow and Wrocław – supplemented with materials from other locations in Poland and abroad (including Prague, Budapest, Bratislava, Uppsala, Oxford, Sankt Florian, and the Vatican).

This study examines the relationship between sermons on St. Stanislaus, the construction of his image and the operation, spread, and uses of his cult. First, the functions and uses of the sermons that survive in manuscripts were identified. Then, on the basis of the various images of the saint presented in sermons, the functions and uses of the cult of St. Stanislaus could be described. The sermons consciously constructed an image of the saint favouring certain aspects of his sanctity. The preachers chose what to emphasise depending upon the conditions and considerations during the composition and delivery of sermons. However, the inventory of images utilised by preachers was limited to a certain extent, most importantly by the type of sainthood that Stanislaus represented. The variability was also constrained by the fact that preaching occurred within the repetitive liturgical framework of the saint's feast-days, which occurred each year on the same days, and was characterised by a relatively stable repertoire of liturgical texts. Preachers frequently tended to distil the message about a particular saint (within a particular sermon, but also in general) to an essential image, which recurred in numerous sermons. Thus, the study presents multiple

images and functions of the cult of St. Stanislaus in the Late Middle Ages on the basis of the sermons and at the same time points out the most prominent and successful uses.

Chapter 1, **“The Image of St. Stanislaus in Various Sources of His Cult,”** presents the development of the image and cult of St. Stanislaus on the basis of other representations – hagiography, historiographic sources, liturgy, and visual representations. It provides a setting for my further study and familiarises the reader with the topic. I summarise the most important developments in the construction of the saint’s image chronologically, and describe the contribution of particular sources and their function in the saint’s cult.

I then proceed from preaching as an activity (Chapter 2) to sermons as written texts preserved in manuscripts (Chapter 3). Chapter 2, **“The Contexts of Preaching on St. Stanislaus – Preaching Occasions,”** provides the background to the preaching on St. Stanislaus and determines the contexts in which the preaching on the saint occurred based on sources other than sermon manuscripts. First, Chapter 2.1 delineates possible occasions for preaching about St. Stanislaus before and during the process of canonisation. In order to evaluate the distribution and impact of preaching on the cult of St. Stanislaus, it was necessary to define the feasts of St. Stanislaus observed after the canonisation, to distinguish between the feast of martyrdom and the feast of translation, and to analyse the status and diffusion of the feasts. The feasts were observed with limited success in isolated places outside Polish lands, which I describe concisely in Chapter 2.2.2. I attempted to reconstruct the prescriptions for observance of the feast as comprehensively as possible on the basis of a variety of normative sources and accessible liturgical books. Most importantly, the overview demonstrated the great significance of the feasts of St. Stanislaus, especially in Cracow and also in other Polish dioceses (2.2.1, 2.2.3). Festivities of such elevated status required sermons to be delivered in these areas not only to a small group of clergy, but also to a broad public who were engaged in the celebrations. The overview of the feast observance confirmed my assumption that a variety of sermons designed for various audiences was to be found in preachers’ manuscripts because of the significance of the feasts of St. Stanislaus in Cracow and Poland particularly. Chapter 2.2.4, devoted to the prescriptions for preaching, helps to identify particular opportunities for the delivery of sermons on St. Stanislaus, especially during the annual assemblies of the Cracow Cathedral Chapter (and rarely also synods) which took place on the feasts of St. Stanislaus and

provided a distinct framework for a special group of sermons on St. Stanislaus – the sermons delivered *ad clerum*.

While the previous chapter presented the occasions and contexts for preaching on St. Stanislaus – for real delivery of the sermons about him – Chapter 3, “**Sermons on St. Stanislaus of Cracow in Manuscript Codices – an Overview,**” presents the sermons as they survive in medieval manuscripts. It provides a comprehensive overview of the dossier, showing the variety of sermons and sermon materials present in manuscripts, a list of which is presented in the appendices for the first time. The chapter discusses a variety of materials in preachers’ manuscripts, revealing sermons in various stages of elaboration and considering their different forms of transmission and function in codices (sermons which were parts of the sermon collections, model sermons, other sermons). Different sections of Chapter 3 provide an overview of the genres and the *themata* of sermons on St. Stanislaus, summarise some remarks on the liturgical occasions of the sermons on the basis of their manuscripts, and describe the relationship of sermons and hagiography (legends) in the manuscripts.

Sermons were composed by authors from a variety of backgrounds, ranging from mendicant friars to cathedral, court, and university preachers, and perhaps even parish priests. Although a number of texts remain anonymous and are difficult to set precisely in time and place, an overview of the authors and users of sermons on St. Stanislaus resulted in some interesting observations. Most of the evidence comes from the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; a number of persons connected with Cracow University composed or copied sermons on St. Stanislaus. In the late fourteenth century the university became a centre of learning for an entire generation of Polish intellectuals who had studied at Prague University before returning to Poland. A number of these intellectuals later composed sermons on St. Stanislaus. The university also facilitated the increased production of sermon manuscripts, their exchange, and also an exchange of ideas which formed a repertoire of motifs for sermons on St. Stanislaus. The identified authors of sermons were often active among several centres – the university, the cathedral, and the city, and sometimes their Order, and so on. Thus, the texts circulated whenever students and alumni from Cracow brought their sermon manuscripts with them to their new prebend, parish or monastery.

Chapter 4 is a case study of one of the preaching texts, a model sermon by Peregrinus of Opole, a Dominican friar, composed at the turn of the fourteenth century. As it would not

be possible to analyse all collected sermons in an equally thoroughgoing manner, I chose instead to study this particular one in more detail. The chapter provides a detailed analysis of this sermon – perhaps the oldest extant, the most frequently copied, and the most influential sermon text on St. Stanislaus – including consideration of its posterity, transmission, and reception. The chapter shows the mechanism by which sermons, and especially model sermons, worked. First, it elucidates how a sermon on the saint could be composed using hagiography, images of the saint, and rhetorical devices. Second, the chapter investigates how a sermon was received, transmitted, and spread, i.e., its manuscript copies and versions, utilization of its parts and so on. The sermon continued to be used by preachers throughout the fifteenth century; there are at least 17 copies and four other redactions, and a number of other sermons borrowed various elements from it (which I was able to trace thanks to the dossier I compiled). The sermon by Peregrinus can also be used as a reference point to evaluate and analyse other sermons. Moreover, some historians have wondered about the reception of the *de sanctis* collection and this sermon is evidence of the success of Peregrinus' work.

The analysis of the remaining sermons focuses on two basic aspects of Stanislaus' cult corresponding to the two most prominent groups of topics addressed by preachers, as well as to the two basic functions of saints' cult in general: articulation and definition of the admirable and the imitable. Peregrinus had already used these patterns in his sermon. Chapter 5.1, *An Exemplary Shepherd*, deals with the imitable: the image of St. Stanislaus as an exemplar of the good shepherd for contemporary clergy and non-clerical lords, in the case of the former connected with contemporary efforts at reform of the clergy. This study demonstrates that although St. Stanislaus belonged to the traditional type of saintly bishops and martyrs, which were otherwise declining in popularity in the late Middle Ages, he was also much more. A significant group of sermons presented him as a good shepherd, including a number of sermons on the *thema Ego sum pastor bonus*. Some of these sermons were meant particularly for clerical audiences, to whom Stanislaus was presented as a role model in the period of increased efforts at reform. A number of elements which appear in sermons on Stanislaus were not specific to this genre, but appeared in sermons on other occasions as well, given the rich tradition of the good shepherd motif. Additionally, St. Stanislaus was also presented as an exemplar to secular lords, and, to a lesser extent, to ordinary Christians. Catechetical instruction was an important element of the preaching on

saints, in some cases even more important in sermons than the moral lesson from the saints' lives. These matters were present in sermons on St. Stanislaus as well, the most important point being perhaps teachings about the Passion and the Resurrection, which was a natural concern of the sermons about the Good Shepherd, Christ, and corresponded especially to the position of Stanislaus' feast of martyrdom in the Easter period of the liturgical cycle. Part 5.2, "A Powerful Intercessor," focuses on the admirable aspect, which was also represented in sermons on St. Stanislaus. Preachers frequently presented him as an effective protector and a patron-saint not only of individuals, but also of the community of Cracow, of Poland, and of the Poles, who were urged to turn to him in times of spiritual or physical hardship.

Knowledge of the corpus enabled me to consider new questions and further avenues of research. I have identified some themes which deserve more attention in the future, such as, for example, comparative studies concerning sermons on other bishop saints, including Sts. Thomas Becket, Adalbert, and other saints canonised in the same period, such as Peter the Martyr. Such studies could shed more light on the function and position of such cults in the Late Middle Ages. The next objective is an electronic edition of the collected and inventoried sermons on St. Stanislaus, only a portion of which is presented in the Appendix to the dissertation. A catalogue of the hagiographic motifs related to St. Stanislaus with their occurrences in sermons, but also in other sources, would be fruitful for further analyses of various motifs connected with St. Stanislaus. This dissertation has provided a platform for such enquiries.

Curriculum Vitae

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Education:

- 2003-2010 Ph.D. studies, Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary;
- 2002-2003 MA in Medieval Studies, Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary;
- 1997-2002 Mgr. (equivalent to M.A.) in Teaching Humanities: History and English language and literature, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia;

Scholarships, Grants and Awards:

- 2009 Research stay in the framework of the project *Monastic Landscapes* (DAAD-MÖB), Georg-August-Universität Göttingen (October)
- 2007 International Visegrad Fund Scholarship, Institute of History, Jagiellonian University, Cracow, Poland (10 months)
- 2006 CEU Award for Advanced Doctoral Students
- 2006 Marie Curie Fellowship in the framework of the EU doctoral training project *European Doctorate in Social History of Europe and the Mediterranean "Building on the Past,"* University College London, History Department (October-December)
- 2006 CEU Doctoral Research Support Grant, Lyon (CIHAM, Université Lumière-Lyon 2) and Paris (École pratique des hautes études), France (January-May)
- 2004 Queen Jadwiga Fund Scholarship, Jagiellonian University, Cracow, Poland (October)

Recent Publications (related to the topic of the doctoral thesis):

- “An Exemplary Shepherd: *Thema Ego sum pastor bonus* and Sermons on Saint Stanislaus of Krakow in the Later Middle Ages.” Forthcoming in the collected volume from the Conference of the Commission Internationale d’Histoire et d’Etude du Christianisme (CIEHC) “Religious Space of East-Central Europe – Open to the East and the West,” Lublin-Lviv in September 2007. Forthcoming Warsaw: DiG, 2010.
- “Recepcja kazania Peregryna z Opola o św. Stanisławie w kazaniach autorów późnego średniowiecza” [The Reception of the Sermon on St. Stanislaus by Peregrinus of Opole in Sermons of Late Medieval Authors]. In *Mendykanci w średniowiecznym Krakowie. Zbiór studiów* [Mendicants in Medieval Cracow. Collected Studies]. Ed. K. Ożóg, T. Gałuszka, and A. Zajchowska, 425-458. *Studia i źródła Dominikańskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Krakowie 4* (Studies and Sources of the Dominican Institute of History in Cracow 4). Cracow: Esprit, 2008.
- “Preaching on Martyr-Bishops in the Later Middle Ages: Saint Stanislaus of Kraków and Saint Thomas Becket.” In *Britain and Poland-Lithuania. Contact and Comparison from the Middle Ages to 1795*. Ed. Richard Unger and Jakub Basista, 67-85. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2008.
- “Preaching a Model Bishop: A Sample of Sermons on Saint Stanislaus.” *Annual of Medieval Studies at the CEU*, vol. 10, 2004. Ed. Katalin Szende and Judith A. Rasson, 53-64. Budapest: Central European University, Department of Medieval Studies, 2004.