



The Public Defense of the Doctoral Dissertation

of

Eszter Konrád

entitled

The Representation of the Saints of the Mendicant Orders in Late Medieval Hungary

will be held on

Monday, 11 December 2017, at 10:00

in the

**Senate Room – Monument Building
Central European University (CEU)
Nádor u. 9, Budapest**

Examination Committee

Chair Károly Bárd (Department of Legal Studies – CEU)
Members Nicole Bériou (Department of History – Université
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Ottó Gecser (Institute of Sociology, Eötvös Loránd
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Edit Madas (National Széchényi Library)
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External readers Nicole Bériou – present
Ottó Gecser – present
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Doctoral Dissertation Abstract

The dissertation examined the ways and means used by the Franciscan and the Dominican Orders for introducing, appropriating, and preserving the memory of the saints and blessed particularly venerated by their own orders in the medieval Kingdom of Hungary between the early thirteenth and early sixteenth centuries. In addition, it also explored how the fame of local saintly figures reached Italy and found their way to works that circulated widely, and through which they reached eventually the convents of these two orders in different parts of Europe. Using hagiographic and sermon literature, miracle collections, liturgical books, chronicles of the orders, charters, as well as visual representations in private and public spheres, the research aimed at providing a more complex understanding of how these saintly figures were presented to and were perceived by different audiences, with a special attention to the activities of the friars whose endeavour was supported by the royal house and the nobility from time to time. I have presented eleven canonized saints and more than a dozen blessed of these two orders. Since with the exception of Louis of Toulouse none of the saints who gained papal recognition had special connection to Hungary, I assumed that the investigation of the traces of the veneration (and in some cases, cult) of these “imported” new saints taking into account a wide range of sources would show some instructive results and supply additional details to the “saintly politics” of the two great mendicant orders and other agents as well besides the well-known cases of the Dominican nun Margaret of Hungary (d.1270) and the Observant Franciscan John of Capistrano (d.1456). In **Chapter I** I have presented the social and historical background of the friars’ activities and the source material.

The protagonists of **Chapter II** were St Dominic (c. 1234) and Peter of Verona (c. 1253), the early saints of the Order of Preachers. The presence of their relics –that was essential in the implementation in the implementation of their local cults- in the country before 1260 shows the special importance of the Hungarian Dominican Province and the friars’ particularly good relationship with King Béla IV in that period. I have argued that it was presumably the joint decision of the Hungarian ruler and the prominent members of the Order of Preachers where to place the relics. Dominic had an intense local cult in the priory of Somlyó in south eastern Hungary where his finger relic was preserved since the 1250s the latest. Based on the *acta* of the general chapters and the miracle accounts incorporated in his hagiography, an entire procedure of the promotion and the preservation of his memory could be reconstructed: on the institutional level, the master general called for the collection of the saint’s miracles from all

the provinces; on the informal level, the local village dwellers and the parish priests fostered his local cult mainly by visiting his relic by spreading the fame of his healing power that attracted pilgrims from the nearby counties. I have demonstrated that the saint's finger relic was never moved to Székesfehérvár: this widespread tradition in Hungarian scholarship is the result of a mistranslation of a Latin source. Peter of Verona's unspecified relic was placed in north eastern Hungary on the way leading to the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia from where also further Mongolian intrusion was expected. I have analysed the thirteenth-century sermons on these saints written for novices (*Sermones compilati*) and found that these were transmitting the image of a founder whose activity as preacher was combined with learning and teaching, while the sermons on Peter Martyr presented a saint targeted primarily at the eradication of moral and theological sins of people. Dominican saints were rarely depicted in murals and on altarpieces. The presence of the two Dominican and the two Franciscan saints on high-quality art works such as the diptych of Andrew III and the *Hungarian Angevin Legendary* can be related to their commissioner/owner's piety in general, a part of which was their devotion to the various religious orders. A more secure indicator for a particular devotion to St Dominic (based presumably on sharing the same name) and his order can be seen in the breviary of Domokos Kálmáncsehi. Regarding St Thomas Aquinas (c. 1323), even if he was not as popular as saint as he was as a theologian in Hungary, his vernacular legend in the Debreceni codex and his depiction in the company of the Virgin Mary and the founder in the Dominican church of Brasov indicate that in Hungary he was renowned around the sixteenth century in his quality as Doctor of the Church— at least in areas where the Order of Preachers were active.

Chapter III was centred on two large topics: the cult of St Francis (c. 1228) in Hungary and the Franciscan blessed from Hungary who had a local cult around their tomb and whose memory was preserved primarily in the Franciscan catalogue of saints. In the first part, I have presented a concise summary of the evolution of the hagiography of St Francis and the accounts on his stigmatization in Latin produced in Italy in order to be able to evaluate the material produced in Hungary. I paid particular attention to the Jókai Codex, the earliest extant book written in the Hungarian vernacular, and I have argued that the original context in which the *Speculum perfectionis* and the *Actus beati Francisci* had been written was of little relevance more than half a century later in a different geographical area not reached by the “Spiritual” versus “Community” controversy, and what in fact mattered is to provide additional material to the official legend of St Francis. Moreover, there is evidence that such works were known in Hungary outside the Franciscan milieu, too. I have also put forward the revision of the dating

of the earlier Hungarian translation of the Jókai Codex. Thanks to the relatively high amount of the extant source material, it was possible to individuate different themes and episodes from the saint's life that were widespread in Hungary, of which his stigmatization was of utmost importance. The authentication of the stigmatization was crucial in the written and visual sources alike. The two Observant Franciscan preachers, Pelbartus de Themeswar and Osvaldus de Lasko provided explanations in their sermons to questions that may arise concerning this event, and it was also described in details in the vernacular codices used by the Dominican and the Clarissan nuns in the surroundings of Buda. Except for the artworks made for private use, the images depicting St Francis were all accessible to a lay audience that could experience the saint's uniqueness in terms of bodily and spiritual conformity to Christ both through seeing and hearing. In the visual sources from medieval Hungary the stigmata were the attributes only of St Francis, and there is only one extant exception to this, a wooden panel on which also St Catherine of Siena is represented as a stigmatic. St Francis became a participant in biblical scenes and in the history of salvation, too. In the second part of the chapter, I concentrated on those holy Franciscans who were related to Hungary either because of their origin or as a result of their activity here. They, despite their *fama sanctitatis*, were never canonized. I presented the evolution of Franciscan catalogues of saints from the fourteenth to the early sixteenth century that report accounts of different length about friars who had a local cult or suffered martyrdom on missions, paying special attention to the *Memorialia*, the earliest Franciscan catalogue of saints and the first printed one in the *Speculum vitae beati Francisci et sociorum eius* (1504).

Chapter IV is made up of three parts discussing the saints canonized in the first period of Franciscanism ending symbolically in 1317. After some sporadic traces of earlier veneration, St Anthony of Padua (1231) became popular in Hungary thanks above all to the publication of his *vita* as part of the *Legende sanctorum regni Hungarie* in the 1480s and to the sermons of the two Observant Franciscans. St Anthony's intention, inspired by the example of the friars who suffered martyrdom in Morocco to convert the Muslims became a favoured theme in the sermons produced in Hungary, which must have been related to the "canonization" of the five martyrs of Morocco in 1481 and the current political situation. Several episodes from Anthony's life were used for religious instruction, and his fame as a great miracle worker was widespread by the end of the fifteenth century. In the visual representations, he appears always together with St Francis holding a book or a cross, and later on, a fish, a reference to one of his most popular miracles connected to preaching. Although the overwhelming majority of the written

and visual sources about St Clare of Assisi (c.1255) is related to the Franciscans, her veneration was not restricted to the Franciscan milieu. The Latin and vernacular sermons built on the *themata* connected to light are centred on her virtues, chiefly virginity. The two most conspicuous features of her sanctity was her devotion to the *Corpus Christi* used with pleasure by preachers and artists alike for the promotion of Eucharistic piety, and her powerful prayers that made her a popular intercessor on behalf of women. By the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century the monstrance has become her distinctive attribute also in Hungary. The case of St Louis of Anjou, the Franciscan bishop of Toulouse (c. 1317), following a promising start being the uncle of King Charles I, proved to be less successful. Although his figure would turn up in some fifteenth-century works of art, his popularity significantly decreased after the Angevin period. In the sermons of the two Observant Franciscans, Louis of Toulouse's dynastic relations were thrust into the background, and it was his simple lifestyle as a bishop and his care for the poor come into the foreground in order to underline the Christological parallels.

Chapter V was dedicated to those holy figures of the Order of Preachers that were related to the reform in the fifteenth century. Since with the exception of Margaret of Hungary the legends of those blessed of the order who had local veneration in Hungary do not survive in Hungarian sources, I turned to the works of Dominican authors from the German-speaking areas and Italy. Most of these works were written during or following the reform, often by authors who were the protagonists of this religious revival. The reform friars started to concentrate on their duties as spiritual guides of the nuns under their care, which was reflected in the composition of saints' lives and other types of devotional literature in the vernacular. They also included holy nuns and tertiaries in their hagiographic collections based also on earlier material, such as Thomas of Cantimpré's *Bonum universal de apibus*. I have presented the *De Viris Illustribus* collections, a genre in hagiography emerging in the early fifteenth-century made up of the lives of the Dominican male and female blessed of both sexes. The accumulation of these *vitae* attest to (at least some of) the authors' assiduous research in the order's past, but it was the form of the legends that was revised in order to imitate the classical tradition, not their content. The legends of Buzád, Mauritius of Csák, and Margaret and Helen of Hungary survived thanks to the Dominicans' careful record keeping and the constant up-dating of the material. This proved to be particularly successful in the case of Margaret and Helen who became significant figures in the (reform) Dominicans' long-lasting struggle to gain papal recognition to Catherine of Siena's sanctity. The second part of the chapter was dedicated to the Dominican Vincent Ferrer (c.1455), and the Sienese *mantellata* Catherine of Siena (c.1461). I came to the conclusion that

similarly to St Thomas Aquinas, the Valencian Dominican's works were known in Hungary but his veneration as a saint did not go beyond the Dominican convents. I have surveyed the extant sources that bore witness to Catherine's popularity in fifteenth and sixteenth-century Hungary. She seems to be the only canonized female saint about whose spiritual experience a Dominican female community could hear in their mother tongue. I have argued that her stigmata were not regarded as an issue of particular concern in the early sixteenth century for a non-Dominican audience: she was a stigmatic saint just as St Francis was.

In **Chapter VI** I have examined the cases of the last two saints of the Order of Minor Brothers who were canonized in the Middle Ages. Bernardino of Siena (c.1450) was known in Hungary already in his lifetime thanks primarily to those members of the entourage of King Sigismund who spent considerable time in those parts of Italy where the Observant preacher was active. Apart from the sermons of the two Hungarian Observant Franciscans, a wide range of sources testify to his veneration in Hungary that sprang up immediately after his canonization, some of which can directly be associated with John of Capestrano's activity here and the neighbouring regions. The case of Bonaventure (1482) was quite the contrary: he was a figure from the past and could be hardly associated with the present. What has come down to us from Hungary about Bonaventure as a saint –because he was an acclaimed theologian and parts of whose works (or works attributed to him) were translated to the vernacular– are the sermons of the two Observant Franciscans. In addition to the two saints who gained papal recognition, I have traced back a Franciscan friar closely related to Bernardino and the Observant movement: Blessed Lancelao de Ongaria. With the help of the collation of the two earliest versions of his story written in the Italian vernacular by authors who had a major role in the creation of the new Observant hagiography, I have shown how a character of secondary importance in someone else's legend composed in the second half of the fifteenth century was promoted to a rank of a real saint with his own *vita* by the first decades of the sixteenth century. In the **Conclusion** I reviewed the outcomes of each chapter from a different, thematic point of view. The dissertation contributed to a more nuanced view what role Dominican and Franciscan saints and blessed played in the devotional life in late medieval Hungary and how they were mediated to the public with the help of the friars and other churchmen.

Curriculum Vitae

Studies

- 2011-2017 PhD program in Medieval Studies, Central European University (Budapest, Hungary); supervisor: Gábor Klaniczay
- 2011 MA in Medieval Studies, Central European University (Budapest, Hungary)
- 2010 MA in Italian Language and Literature Eötvös Loránd University (Budapest, Hungary)
- MA in English Language and Literature at the Eötvös Loránd University (Budapest, Hungary)

Grants

- 2016 Short term research grant to Italy (Bologna, Florence, Siena)
- 2015 Short term research grant to Romania (Alba Iulia)
- Three-month doctoral research support grant in Rome
- Erasmus Plus Programme in Rome (Università degli Studi Roma Tre)

Conference papers relevant the dissertation

- 2017** Klattauból Kassára, szerzetesektől apácákhoz: a *Vitae fratrum ordinis Praedicatorum* vándorútjai a középkori Magyarországon [From Klatovy to Košice, from friars to nuns: the transmission of the *Vitae fratrum ordinis Praedicatorum* in medieval Hungary] – “A könyv és olvasója. A 14-16. századi könyvkultúra interdiszciplináris megvilágításban” [The book and its readers. Book culture in the 14th-16th centuries from interdisciplinary perspective]. Budapest, Hungary (15-16 June 2017)

Sienai Szent Katalin középkori magyarországi kódexekben [St Catherine of Siena in Hungarian codices] - *Az első 300 év Magyarországon és Európában. Nemzetközi konferencia a Domonkos rend megalakulásának 800. évfordulója tiszteletére* [The first 300 years in Hungary and Europe. International conference for the 800th anniversary of the foundation of the Order of Preachers]. Székesfehérvár, Hungary (2-3 November, 2017)

- 2016** The Transfer of Relics of the Saints of the Order of Preachers: Attempts to Build Local Cults in Hungary - The Transfer of the Exemplary IV” workshop organized by the Forschungsstelle für Vergleichende Ordensgeschichte (FOVOG), Dresden – CEU, Budapest. Budapest, Hungary (4-5 November, 2016)

The Transfer of the Cult of St Catherine of Siena in the Monastic Context of Late Medieval Hungary - “Transfer of Knowledge II: Ideas and Norms” workshop organized by the Forschungsstelle für Vergleichende Ordensgeschichte (FOVOG), Dresden – CEU, Budapest. Dresden, Germany (31 May, 2016)

- 2015** The Printed *Speculum vitae beati Francisci et sociorum eius*: its Origins and its Transmission to Old Hungarian Codex Literature – “Every(wo)man’s Book of Salvation: The Most Popular Medieval Religious Texts in Europe, their circulation and reception.” Paris, France (5-6 June, 2015)
- 2014** The Hagiography of St. Francis of Assisi in Old Hungarian Codices – “Saints and their Cult in Medieval Central Europe: The Influence of the Mendicant Orders.” Rennes, France (29 January, 2014)
- 2013** Writings on St. Francis of Assisi in the Hungarian Vernacular – Mellon Symposium on “The Middle Ages in Translation.” Northwestern University, USA (July, 2013)

Selection of works published related to the topic of the dissertation

“Veronai Szent Péter ereklyéi a középkori Magyarországon” [The relics of St Peter of Verona in medieval Hungary]. In *Micae mediaevales VI: fiatal történészek dolgozatai a középkori Magyarországról és Európáról*. Budapest: ELTE Történelemtudományok Doktori Iskola, 2017), 149-168.

“Sienai Szent Katalin középkori magyarországi kódexekben” [St Catherine of Siena in Hungarian codices] In *Az első 300 év Magyarországon és Európában*. Ed. József Csurgai Horváth, 165-180. Székesfehérvár: Alba Civitas Alapítvány, 2017.

“The Oldest Legend of Francis of Assisi and his Stigmatization in Old Hungarian Codex Literature (ca.1440-1530)”. In: *Les saints et leur culte en Europe centrale au Moyen Âge (xi^e-début du XVI^e siècle*. Ed. Marie-Madeleine de Cevins and Olivier Martin, 173-194. Turnhout: Brepols, 2017. (*Hagiologia* 13)

“Blessed Lancelao: A Franciscan Observant in Fifteenth-century Italy.” *Hungarian Historical Review* 5 (2016): 645-674.

“Holy Friars in Hungary and Beyond in Franciscan Literature.” *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 22 (2016): 121-144.

“Osservanza francescana e letteratura in volgare dall’Italia all’Ungheria: ricerche e prospettive” (paper written together with Dávid Falvay). In *Osservanza francescana e cultura tra Quattrocento e primo Cinquecento: Italia e Ungheria a Confronto*. Ed Francesca Bartolacci and Roberto Lambertini, 161-186. Rome: Viella, 2014.