

Karen Stark

**SAINTS, STONES, AND SPRINGS:  
CULT SITES AND THE SACRALIZATION OF LANDSCAPE IN MEDIEVAL  
CENTRAL EUROPE**

MA Thesis in Medieval Studies

Central European University

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May 2014

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by

Karen Stark

(United States of America)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,  
Central European University, Budapest, in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
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Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

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Chair, Examination Committee

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Thesis Supervisor

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Examiner

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External Reader

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Budapest, 21 May 2014

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Signature

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<sup>1</sup> Please note: Unless otherwise noted, all photographs taken by the author, April 2014.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC	<i>Analecta Cracoviensia</i>
BJ	Cracow, Biblioteka Jagiellońska (Jagiellonian Library)
BME	Budapesti Műszaki Egyetem Továbbképző Intézete előadássorozatából
CEU	Central European University
DI.	Diplomatikai Levéltár (Mohács Előtti Gyűjtemény)
KUL	Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski
MKA	Magyar Kamarai Archívum
MPH	<i>Monumenta Poloniae Historica. Series 2.</i> (Cracow, 1946ff.)
MPH N.S	<i>Monumenta Poloniae Historica Series nova</i>
SRH	<i>Scriptores Rerum Hungaricum tempore ducum regumque stirpis Arpadianae gestarum</i> , ed. Emericus Szentpétery. Budapest: Academia Litter. Hungarica, 1938; repr. and augmented. Budapest: Nap kiadó, 1999.

## INTRODUCTION

For wherever a saint has dwelt, wherever a martyr has given his blood for the  
blood of Christ,  
There is holy ground, and the sanctity shall not depart from it  
Though armies trample over it, though sightseers come with guide books  
looking over it;  
From where the western seas gnaw at the coast of Iona,  
To the death in the desert, the prayer in forgotten places by the broken  
imperial column  
From that ground springs that which forever renews the earth.<sup>2</sup>

-T. S. Eliot, *Murder in the Cathedral*

These words are spoken by the chorus of T. S. Eliot's dramatization of the martyrdom of St. Thomas Becket after the archbishop's blood had been shed in Canterbury Cathedral. Faithful pilgrims soon took notice of this holy ground, and the site became a revered sanctuary, with the focus of Thomas's cult a pool of water said to contain drops of the saint's blood. The landscape of medieval Europe is rife with these sacred places, sanctuaries believed to host the spiritual presence and power of God or one of his saints. Like at Canterbury, these places may have been the site of a saint's martyrdom, but they may also be a saint's birthplace, the site of a divine vision, or the dwelling place of a sacred relic. In addition to churches and chapels, elements of the landscape — from magnificent mountains to humble wells — also acquired this sacred character.

These sacred landscapes present a multilayered image of medieval thought, culture, and religiosity. They also present the problem of the "Durkheimian juxtaposition between the sacred and the profane," that confronts any scholar wishing to study sacred space in medieval Europe, particularly because, "sacred space is defined by Christians whose cosmology

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<sup>2</sup> T. S. Eliot, *Murder in the Cathedral* (Orlando, FL: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014), 87.



regards the whole world as God's creation."<sup>3</sup> Another layer is added by the original meaning of the Latin words *sacer* and *profanus*, which was spatial in nature: *sacer* referring to objects and places that could be considered sacred (in our present understanding of the term), and *profanus* indicating any area outside the temple, or *sacrum*, and which eventually began to denote the opposite of *sacer*.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, even from its earliest usage in Europe, the "sacred" was believed to manifest itself on a spatial level.

Sacred space, the "sacralization of landscape," and the relationship between medieval Christianity and nature is a topic that has garnered much attention in western European scholarship, especially in the past thirty or so years. Sofia Boesch Gajano and Lucetta Scaraffia have pioneered the study of sacred space in Europe, while André Vauchez has brought the study of sanctuaries to the forefront of religious studies in the Middle Ages.<sup>5</sup> In the United Kingdom sacred space and landscape has drawn considerable attention from scholars such as Andrew Reynolds, James Bond, and Andrew Spicer, to name but a few.<sup>6</sup>

Central Europe possesses many "natural" cult sites, which have the potential to reveal much about contemporary popular devotion, the relationship between the Church and the lay community, and personal, communal, and regional identity. However, in comparison with the West, the topic has been less studied in Central and Eastern Europe, though some substantial research has been conducted. Gábor Klaniczay has analyzed cult and pilgrimage sites such as

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<sup>3</sup> Andrew Spicer and Sarah Hamilton, ed., *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Hants, England: Ashgate, 2005, repr. 2008). For the Durkheimian division of the sacred and profane, see: Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, trans. J.W. Swain (London: Macmillan, 1915), 36-42.

<sup>4</sup> Spicer and Hamilton, *Defining the Holy*, 3.

<sup>5</sup> André Vauchez, ed., *Lieux Sacrés, Lieux de culte, sanctuaires*, Collection de l'École française de Rome 273 (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2000); Sofia Boesch Gajano and Lucetta Scaraffia, ed., *Luoghi sacri e spazi della santità* (Turin: Rosenberg & Sellier, 1990).

<sup>6</sup> W. Davies, G. Halsall, and A. Reynolds, ed., *People and Space in the Middle Ages, 300-1300. Studies in the Early Middle Ages 28* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006); James Bond, *Monastic Landscapes* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus Publishing Ltd., 2004); Andrew Spicer, *Defining the Holy. Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe* (Ashgate: Aldershot, 2006).

Margaret Island, Gellért Hill, and Budaszentlőrinc.<sup>7</sup> Landscape studies and monastic landscapes in particular have also been the foci of research of East-Central European scholars, among them József Laszlovsky, Máté Urbán, Péter Szabó, and Beatrix F. Romhányi.<sup>8</sup>

What is missing from this corpus is an over-arching analysis of the sacred landscape of Central Europe, one that looks at the region from a broader perspective and from an interdisciplinary angle. In this study I will examine the following eleven “natural” cult sites (in no particular order):

- St. Ulrich’s Spring (Austria)
- Capistran’s Well (Czech Republic)
- Gellért Hill (Hungary)
- Ivy Well (Hungary)

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example: Gábor Klaniczay, “Domenicani, eremiti paolini e francescani osservanti ungheresi e i loro santuari alla periferia,” in *Ordini religiosi e santuari in età moderna*, ed. Lucia M. M. Olivieri (Bari: Edipuglia, 2013), 19-34; Klaniczay, “Il monte di San Gherardo e l’isola di Santa Margherita: gli spazi della santità a Buda nel Medioevo,” in *Luoghi sacri e spazi della santità*, 267-284; Klaniczay, “Miracoli di punizione e malefizia,” in *Miracoli. Dai segni alla storia*, ed. Sofia Boesch Gajano and M. Modica (Rome: Viella, 2000), 109-137. For pilgrimage by Hungarians to locations outside of Hungary see: Enikő Csukovits, *Középkori magyar zarándokok* (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, Történettudományi Intézete, 2003).

<sup>8</sup> Máté Urbán, “Pálos zarándokhelyek a későközépkori Magyarországon” [Pauline pilgrimage sites in late medieval Hungary], *Vallástudományi szemle* 5/1 (2009): 63-85; Máté Urbán, *Világon kívüli hely a világ közepén: Remeterendi és ciszterci tájszemlélet a 11-12. századi elbeszélő források alapján* [Our place in the middle of the outside world: The hermetic order and Cistercian approach to landscape based on narrative sources] (Budapest: ELTE BTK Történelemtud. Doktori Isk., 2013); Péter Szabó, *Woodland and Forests in Medieval Hungary* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2005); Beatrix F. Romhányi, “Life in the Pauline Monasteries of Late Medieval Hungary,” *Periodica Polytechnica* 43 (2012): 53-56; Romhányi, *A lelkiek a földiek nélkül nem tart hatóak fenn – Pálos gazdálkodás a középkorban* [Estate management of the Pauline monks in the Middle Ages], (Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 2010); József Laszlovsky, “The Royal Palace in the Sigismund Period and the Franciscan Friary at Visegrád. Royal Residence and the Foundation of Religious Houses,” in *The Medieval Royal Palace at Visegrád*, ed. Gergely Buzás and József Laszlovsky (Budapest: Archaeolingua, 2013), 207-218; József Laszlovsky and Péter Szabó, ed., *People and Nature in Historical Perspective* (Budapest: CEU & Archaeolingua, 2003); József Laszlovsky, “Középkori kolostorok a tájban, középkori kolostortájak” [Medieval monasteries in the landscape, medieval monastic landscapes], in *Quasi liber et picture; Tanulmányok Kubinyi András hetvenedik születésnapjára* [Studies in honor of András Kubinyi’s seventieth birthday], ed. Gyöngyi Kovács (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, 2004), 337-349. See also on the topic the work by the following scholars: István Méri, *A klastrompusztai legendák nyomában* [On the track of the legends in Klastrompuszta] (Dorog: József Attila Művelődési Ház, n.d.); László Ferenczi, Márton Deák, Balázs Kohán, and Tamás Látos, *Történelmi útvonalak kutatása a Pilisben: tájrégészeti-tájtörténelmi vizsgálatok térinformatikai háttérrel* [Research of historical pathways in the Pilis: landscape archaeological and landscape archaeological examinations with GIS] (Budapest: Script., 2013); Károly Belényesy, *Pálos kolostorok Abaúj-Hegyalján* [Pauline Friaries in the Abaúj Hegyalja Region] (Miskolc: Herman Ottó Múzeum, 2004); Júlia Kovalovszki, “Pálos remeték szent Kereszt-Kolostora: Meri Istvan ásatása Klastrompusztán” [The Abbey of the Holy Cross of the Hermits of St. Paul digs Istvan Meri to Klastrompuszta], *Communicationes archaeologicae Hungariae* (1992): 173-207.

- Margaret Island (Hungary)
- Mátraverebély Holy Well (Hungary)
- St. Martin's Mountain (Hungary)
- Jasna Góra (Poland)
- Pool of St. Stanislaus (Poland)
- Marianka (Slovakia)
- Skalka nad Váhom (Slovakia)<sup>9</sup>

These sites represent a sample of the “natural” cult sites of Central Europe for which a medieval heritage can be plausibly shown. By “natural” cult site, I mean holy sites for which a geographical or natural feature, such as height or water, constitutes a major or even defining aspect of the sacred site including hills, mountains, caves, and wells. While this list is not exhaustive, it does represent those cult sites for which there is the most relevant source material. The precise area in Central Europe that is the focus here is within or very near the greatest extent of the Hungarian kingdom during the Middle Ages, thus constituting a broad, but cohesive geographical area.

The nature of my topic and the problems with the contemporary written sources, or, rather, the lack of them, makes an interdisciplinary approach necessary. I will be analyzing these sites from three perspectives: that of the hagiography and miracle accounts, the historical and folkloric sources, and finally the spatial aspects using historical maps and Geographic Information System (GIS).

Through an interdisciplinary approach I will dissect the “sacralization” process and answer the following questions: How and why did these natural sites become “sacred,” while other natural sites and landscapes did not? How did medieval people interact with and

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<sup>9</sup> Here I list each site's location by the modern-day country name. Where possible, I use the Anglicized form of the site name. Also note that the name I use for each site is the one that most closely refers to the natural aspect of the site. Thus, I use “Ivy Well” and not the village name of Bakonybél, to draw attention to the supposed holy nature of the environmental or topographical feature. For more details on each site, including other names by which each site is known, see: Appendix: Site Catalogue, 69.

perceive these sites and how did this interaction and perception contribute to various facets of identity? and finally, What role did these sacred landscapes play in the bigger picture of medieval religion in Central Europe? The Greek philosopher Heraclitus famously said, “Geography is fate,” meaning that societies are shaped by their surroundings; this study will attempt to discover if this holds true in medieval Central Europe.

Before the sacralization of landscape can be examined, landscape itself must be defined. Today, landscape at its simplest is defined as “all the visible features of an area of land,” and to some extent this was true for the Middle Ages, although the concept is more complicated in both the Middle Ages and today.<sup>10</sup> The medieval person did have a perception of landscape, “but this image was not a two-dimensional representation from a very particular viewpoint. It was a ‘mosaic’-type representation with many different viewpoints and with many different ‘fix points’ for orientation.”<sup>11</sup> This representation was composed of multiple elements: natural elements — vegetation, topography, animals — and constructed elements. The natural elements will be the focus of this study; however, constructed elements such as shrines and chapels cannot be ignored and are vital to the interpretation of the landscape because they signify a sort of “focusing lens” on the land.<sup>12</sup>

The medieval conception of nature, the foundation of landscape, is a multifaceted one. There has been a tendency in medieval scholarship to polarize this conception—either as corrupted and rid with temptation, especially in the context of medieval monasticism and asceticism, or romanticized in the same context, particularly in the figure of St. Francis.<sup>13</sup> But, in fact, the issue is far more complex, with medieval attitudes towards nature

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<sup>10</sup> “Landscape,” *Oxford Dictionary of English* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 991.

<sup>11</sup> József Laszlovszky, “Space and Place: Text and Object, Human-Nature Interaction and Topographical Studies,” in *People and Nature in Historical Perspective*, 86.

<sup>12</sup> Spicer and Hamilton use the image of a “lens” in the context of holy sites saying, “Sacred spaces are interpreted as foci for the religious identities of communities acting as a ‘lens’, focusing ‘attention on the forms, objects and actions’ in it.” *Defining the Holy*, 4.

<sup>13</sup> Roger S. Sorrell discusses these views in detail, and in particular the image of St. Francis and his relationship with nature, *St. Francis of Assisi and Nature: Tradition and Innovation in Western Christian Attitudes toward the Environment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

simultaneously affected by the classical or classically influenced interpretation, the scientific or philosophic tradition, and the folk or barbaric outlook as represented in vernacular literature such as lyric poems and epics.<sup>14</sup> These influences, compounded with the medieval conception of the natural world as both created by God, and thus sacred, and corrupted by man, and thus sinful, means that the landscape was a multidimensional concept in the Middle Ages. Therefore, the many aspects of nature and landscape — from the role of animals to the elements — will be considered as a whole as representing “landscape,” in this study. In the following analysis, a multi-methodological and interdisciplinary approach will support the uncovering of the process of the sacralization of this multifaceted notion of landscape in medieval Central Europe.

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<sup>14</sup> These three viewpoints taken from: Sorrell, *St. Francis of Assisi and Nature*, 10-14.

## CHAPTER ONE: HAGIOGRAPHY, MIRACLES, AND THE PRESENTATION OF SACRED LANDSCAPE

Of the eleven cult sites identified in this study, five have related hagiography and miracle accounts dating to the Middle Ages. The literature related to these sites – Skalka nad Váhom, Jasna Góra, Margaret Island, the Pool of St. Stanislaus, and Gellért Hill – illustrates the role and function of the landscape at each site with varying degrees of emphasis on place. While place is clearly important in the hagiography and miracle accounts associated with each site, its role is notably different in each case, dependent on, among other characteristics, the type of saint or relic treated in the text as well as the natural features of the site.

The following analysis looks at each site individually and considers both the miracle accounts and foundation legends, referring to the description of the saint's interaction with the site that marked a pivotal transition in the spiritual character of the location or the translation of a sacred object to the site.<sup>15</sup> The foundation stories establish how the place in question began to be revered, how it became “holy,” and how the place and the saint are connected. The miracles related to each site, as will be shown, are particularly revealing, reflecting how pilgrims interacted with and valued sacred space as well as how the writers of such accounts wanted to portray the site.

### 1.1 Skalka nad Váhom

The representation of landscape and its place in the hagiographic narrative is evident in the vitae of Saints Andrew and Benedict. Andrew, who likely came to Hungary from Poland (though the issue is contested amongst Polish and Slovakian scholars) and his disciple Benedict were both hermits who consecutively inhabited the same cave at Skalka nad

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<sup>15</sup> Please note that the sites are not listed in any particular order.

Váhom, Slovakia.<sup>16</sup> The saints' many commonalities and connections, and, I would argue, especially their connection to the same sacred place, caused them to be treated in a single hagiographic work by Maurus, the bishop of Pécs, around the year 1064.<sup>17</sup> Scattered throughout the text are references to the environment and nature motifs one would expect to see in the vita of a hermit. When Andrew enters his hermitage he is described as having "entered the solitude of the desert" and needing to "go into a solitary part of the forest in order to work," that is, in order to do pious physical labor.<sup>18</sup> Following the death of Andrew, Benedict began to live in the same cave, as was common in the case of hermitic masters and disciples. Three years had passed when thieves, thinking the cave contained some great treasure, murdered the hermit and threw his body into the Vah River, which flowed just below the cave. Benedict's body could not be recovered until "an eagle was observed sitting for an entire year on the banks of the river Vah, as if it were intending to watch over something."<sup>19</sup> This motif, the watchful animal guarding the remains of the deceased saint, as if commanded by God or drawn to the sacred body out of an innate respect, was a common one. The same tale is told in the life of the Polish bishop St. Adalbert, in which an eagle also

<sup>16</sup> For more on this debate see: Blessed Maurus, Bishop of Pécs, "Lives of the Holy Hermits Zoerard the Confessor and Benedict the Martyr," in *Vitae Sanctorum Aetatis Conversionis Europae Centralis (Saec. X-XI) Saints Of The Christianization Age Of Central Europe (Tenth-Eleventh Centuries)*, trans. Marina Miladinov, ed. Gábor Klaniczay, Cristian Gașpar, and Marina Miladinov (Budapest: CEU Press, 2013), 318. The Polish side of the debate was led by Henryk Kapiszewski, who wrote several articles on the matter including: "Tysiąclecie eremity polskiego: Świrad nad Dunajcem" [Millenary of a Polish Hermit: Zoerard above the Dunajec River], *Nasza Przeszłość* 8 (1958): 45-81; "Eremita Swirad w Panonii. Ze stosunków polsko-pannonskich na przelomie X-XI wieku" [Hermit Zoerard in Pannonia. On Polish Pannonian relations at the turn of the tenth to eleventh centuries], *Nasza Przeszłość* 10 (1959): 17-68; "Cztery źródła do żywota św. Świrada" [Four sources on the life of St. Zoerard], *Nasza Przeszłość* 15 (1964): 5-31; "Eremita Świrad na ziemi rodzinnej" [Hermit Zoerard in our lands] *Nasza Przeszłość* 23 (1966): 65-103. For additional supporters of the Polish argument see: Jerzy Kłoczowski, "L'Érémisme dans la territoires salves occidentaux," in *L'Eremitismo in Occidente nei secoli XI e XII. Atti della seconda settimana internazionale di studio: Mendola, 30 agosto-6 settembre 1962* (Milan: Università Cattolica di Sacro Cuore, 1965), 330-54; and Józef Tadeusz Milik, *Święty Świerad, Saint Andrew Zoerardus* (Rome: Edizione Hosianum, 1966). For the Slovak side see: Jozef Kútňik, "O pôvode pustovníka Svorada (K. počiatkom kultúrnych dejín Liptova)" [On the origins of hermit Zoerard (about the beginnings of the cultural history of Liptovo)], *Nové obzory* XI (1968), 5-122; Rudolf Holinka, "Sv. Svorad a Benedikr, svätci Slovenska" [Saint Zoerard and Benedict, saints of Slovakia], *Bratislava* 8 (1934), 304-52. Imre Boba has argued that the saints actually originated from Pola in Istria, see: "Saint Andreas-Zoerard: A Pole or an Istrian?," *Ungarn Jahrbuch* 7 (1976), 65-71.

<sup>17</sup> However, despite their common history, they also had distinct cults. See: Marina Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude: Eremitism in Central Europe between East and West* (Zagreb: Leykam, 2008), 187.

<sup>18</sup> Miladinov, "Lives of the Holy Hermits Zoerard the Confessor and Benedict the Martyr," 329.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 333.

stood watch over his decapitated head for several days, and we shall see it again in the life of another Polish Bishop, St. Stanislaus.<sup>20</sup> Adalbert's vita explicitly states the importance of the eagle's presence: "Yet, in order that almighty God might reveal the merits of such a great martyr and bishop, for thirty days his most holy body was guarded by an eagle following divine orders. No wild beast, no bird of prey could approach that place, as they saw the divine sign, an eagle guarding it."<sup>21</sup> It would be reasonable to extend this reasoning to the parallel episode in Benedict's life.

The importance of the cave itself is emphasized in a later miracle. A band of thieves are gathered together in the forest and described as "mostly inhabit[ing] solitary places," either just a passing observation or perhaps intended to draw a paradoxical parallel between the thieves and the hermits.<sup>22</sup> A fight breaks out among them and one man is severely injured in the process; however, instead of leaving the man in the forest, they decide:

...to take him to the cell of the aforementioned man Andrew, whose fame had reached all persons thereabout. But the robber died on the way when that place was still at a fair distance. Nevertheless, they brought his body to the cell and laid it inside. It was now the middle of the night and they wanted to commend his remains to the earth, when suddenly his spirit returned to his body and the dead man began to come back to life.<sup>23</sup>

The other thieves, shocked, begin to flee when the resurrected man tells them not to fear and that St. Andrew had brought him back to life. The man then vows that "he would never leave the cell" and that he will stay there and serve God and St. Andrew at that place until his death.<sup>24</sup> The fact that the thieves bring their wounded companion to the cave of Saints Andrew and Benedict suggests that the site was already considered a sacred place,

<sup>20</sup> Anna Rutkowska-Płachcińska, "Pasje świętych Wojciecha i Brunona z tzw. kodeksu z Tegernsee" [The Martyrdoms of SS. Adalbert and Bruno in the so-called codex of Tegernsee], *Studia Źródłoznawcze* 40 (2002): 39-40; S. *Adalberti, Pragensis episcopi et martyris, vita prior*, in *Św. Wojciecha biskupa i męczennika żywot pierwszy* [The first life of the bishop and martyr St. Adalbert], MPH N.S., 4.1, ed. Jadwiga Karwasińska (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1962), 83-84.

<sup>21</sup> Cristian Gaspar, 2013, *Św. Wojciecha biskupa i męczennika żywot pierwszy: S. Adalberti, Pragensis episcopi et martyris, vita prior* [Saint Adalbert, bishop and martyr, the first life], MPH N.S. 4.1, ed. Jadwiga Karwasińska (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1962), 83-84.

<sup>22</sup> Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude*, 335.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 335-6.



because of its associations with the holy men, presumably in an unofficial, popular capacity. The thieves felt comfortable bringing a man they themselves had injured there, and moreover, no one else appears to be present, least of all anyone connected to the Church, overseeing the site.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, it is not enough for the thieves to pray to Andrew for their companion; being physically present at the cave is vital. Finally, by the thief's promise to stay at the cell, the place becomes central to his expression of religiosity.

## 1.2 Jasna Góra

A different case is presented in the contemporary literature related to Jasna Góra. Here the sacred status of the natural place, the mountain itself, is more ambiguous. One may be tempted to attach some spiritual significance to choice of the Polish name "Jasna Góra," since this translates as "Bright" or "Luminous Mountain." This is the title used in medieval Latin texts as well, that is, *Clarus Mons*. The landscape of Jasna Góra is striking and beautiful; it would make sense that the site would be considered sacred or special in some capacity. However, it has been suggested that the title refers not to any sacred character of the place, but instead, to something much more mundane – the bright white limestone that the mountain is composed of.<sup>26</sup> In fact there is little evidence to suggest that Jasna Góra was known as a sacred place before the foundation of the Pauline monastery in the late fourteenth century, which was constructed to house its most holy relic – the painting of the Black Madonna.

The translation story, however, contains elements reminiscent of a common topos found in relic legends – divine intervention in the selection of a shrine site — a feature found

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<sup>25</sup> This assumption is supported by, for example, Marina Miladinov in: *Margins of Solitude*, 186.

<sup>26</sup> Jerzy Groch, "The Town-formative Function of the Jasna Góra Shrine," *Peregrinus Cracoviensis* 3 (1996): 203.

most often in the stories of remote shrines.<sup>27</sup> In these legends, a relic, sacred image, or statue made it known that it wanted to be worshipped in a particular place. This was demonstrated, typically, by the relic miraculously reappearing at a certain location after being moved or by the inability of the cart or animal helping to carry the relic to move from a specific spot.<sup>28</sup> The latter was the case for the Black Madonna of Częstochowa. Duke Ladislaus of Opole discovered the painting at the castle of Belz, and following a siege of the castle, decided to take the picture back to his homeland with him. He loaded the image on a cart along with other goods, but the cart would not move even after adding more horses. Ladislaus prayed to the Virgin Mary, promising to place the venerable painting in a monastery, and soon after, the cart was finally able to move. This episode is conspicuously reminiscent of a story from the twelfth-century vita of St. Ladislaus. After the saint's death, he was meant to be buried at Székesfehérvár, but the cart, divinely inspired, "set out for Várad on its own, unassisted by any draft animal."<sup>29</sup> It is possible that the author of the Częstochowa legend wanted to draw a parallel to this episode, especially considering the shared name of the Duke of Opole and the saintly king. However, this was a common topos in saints' lives with the purpose of designating a "chosen" place for a relic or holy image, so it may be problematic to carry the parallel too far.<sup>30</sup>

Later, the text states that Ladislaus chose the mountain, *qui dicebatur Clarus*, as the resting place of the sacred image.<sup>31</sup> However, in his prayer, Ladislaus promises to place the painting in a monastery, not specifying Jasna Góra in particular in his prayer until after the cart is finally able to move, seeming to indicate that the Virgin was content with the promise

<sup>27</sup> Mary Lee Nolan, "Shrine Locations: Ideals and Realities in Continental Europe," in *Luoghi sacri e spazi della santità*, 79.

<sup>28</sup> William A. Christian, Jr., *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 75.

<sup>29</sup> *Legenda Ladislai*, 523, quoted from: Gábor Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses: Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 175.

<sup>30</sup> This topos reached as far as sixteenth-century Spain, see: Christian, Jr., *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain*, 75.

<sup>31</sup> Robert Maniura, *Pilgrimage to Images in the Fifteenth Century: The Origins of the Cult of Our Lady of Częstochowa* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), 196.

of a proper resting place, but not the Bright Mountain in particular. Thus, here the specificity of place in the *translatio* topos is noticeably absent.

The monastery at Jasna Góra was essentially a “monumental votive offering” presented by Ladislaus to house the image of the Virgin.<sup>32</sup> In the text, the site does not seem to have been regarded as a sacred place prior to the establishment of the monastery and the translation of the image. However, looking at the extant miracle records of the monastery, place and space are emphasized more than the miraculous image itself.

Five texts dating from the late fifteenth to the sixteenth century survive from the monastery, although at least some of the texts are likely copies of earlier records.<sup>33</sup> Of the more than 300 miracle stories, only nine of them contain explicit references to the painting of the Virgin and only ten occur at or near the shrine itself.<sup>34</sup> The majority of the miracles actually occur after an individual makes a vow to go to the shrine. Many of these vows state explicitly that the pilgrim will go to *Clarum Montem*. Other vows are made to go to Częstochowa or simply to the Virgin or to the shrine of the Virgin, but the emphasis throughout the miracle accounts on the Bright Mountain is significant. In his analysis of the cult of Our Lady of Częstochowa, Robert Maniura emphasizes that in these miracle accounts “the vow is not *to* the image but *to go to* the image.”<sup>35</sup> It was the movement from the mundane sphere to a specific sacred sphere that made the pilgrimage meaningful, and in the case of Jasna Góra the significance of place was likely magnified simply by being a striking singular feature in the landscape; thus, pilgrims were more inclined to consider Jasna Góra a sacred place.

What can be deduced from both the *translatio* and the miracle stories is that the choice of Jasna Góra as the host of the Black Madonna was a strategic one by Duke

<sup>32</sup>Maniura, *Pilgrimage to Images in the Fifteenth Century*, 116.

<sup>33</sup> Robert Maniura analyzes these miracles in detail, looking in particular at the role of the image in the miracle accounts, in the chapter “Miracle,” *Ibid.*, 95-115.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 104, 113.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

Ladislaus, influenced by political factors and a “wider pattern of patronage,”<sup>36</sup> rather than by the mountain’s inherent sacrality. But, as is often the case at holy places, the presence of the sacred painting extended to the mountain; pilgrims were quite receptive to this and, in fact, pilgrims probably contributed to the formation of this association.

At Jasna Góra we see what Dominique Iogna Prat has referred to as “*la spatialisation du sacré*,” a theme evident from antiquity.<sup>37</sup> The Black Madonna is the focus of sacred power at Jasna Góra, but that sacrality radiates outward, permeating the chapel in which it is enclosed, the monastic complex, and finally the mountain itself, with the natural physical border of the Virgin’s spiritual presence and effect. Thus the mountain does not need to be sacred in itself, but becomes so through this process, which was typical for the cult of Christian saints and relics in the Middle Ages.

### 1.3 Margaret Island

The miracle stories related to Margaret Island, most of them of a slightly earlier date than those of Jasna Góra, offer a more explicit concept of sacralized landscape, similar to that detailed in the hagiography of Andrew and Benedict. At these types of cult sites, those where a saint lived, died or otherwise granted sanctity by interacting with the site, the land and the saint’s presence are more fused. Margaret Island already had a long history of religious connotations before it became associated with Margaret; it was the site of a series of chapels and convents before a Dominican convent was constructed there to house the daughter of King Béla IV, which she inhabited from 1252 until her death in 1270.

Throughout Margaret’s vitae and miracle accounts, as well as in her canonization records, the island and the Danube play prominent roles. A punishment miracle involving a

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<sup>36</sup> For more details on Ladislaus’ patronage efforts and the political landscape see: Maniura, *Pilgrimage to Images in the Fifteenth Century*, 116-121.

<sup>37</sup> Dominique Iogna Prat, “La spatialisation du sacré dans l’Occident latin (IVe-XIIIe siècles),” Centre d’Études Médiévales d’Auxerre, *Études et travaux* 1 (1988-1989): 44-57; Id., *La Maison Dieu. Une histoire monumentale de l’Église au Moyen Âge* (v. 800- v. 1200) (Paris: Seuil, 2006), 168-203.

layman named Ponsa, found both in her vita and canonization records, vividly shows the role that the landscape surrounding Margaret's shrine played in her cult.<sup>38</sup> In the story, Ponsa suggests to his companions that they make a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Margaret, but they convince him to abandon the venture. When he later suggests they make a trip to the island of Our Lady the Virgin Mary and his companions agree, the text states that:

When they took the boat, his right hand was seized by a violent pain, which spread to his shoulder before they had crossed the Danube. His right hand became totally numb and stiff, so that he did not have the strength to lift it up or move it down even a little way below his chest. He at once realized that he had been punished for letting himself be led astray. Fearful and trembling he approached the tomb of the aforesaid virgin Margaret, but he received no mercy or blessing from the creator because his mind had not yet been purified as it ought to have been from the fault of hesitation...Meanwhile the pain grew much worse, and the repentant man shed his tears all the more profusely at the base of the tomb, and kept begging for the blessing of a cure all the more insistently. When his petitions had increased in fervor, a cure was not long in coming.<sup>39</sup>

Integral to this miracle's agency and effectiveness again is "*la spatialisation du sacré*."<sup>40</sup> Ponsa begins to feel pain in his hand immediately upon stepping onto the boat that is meant to take him across the Danube. Even before crossing the Danube the pain spreads to his shoulder, and intensifies once at Margaret's tomb. Not only through prayer and a contrite heart, but also by physically being at her tomb, Ponsa is at last cured.

Compared to other sanctuaries, I would argue that the sacrality of Margaret Island is more profound because the saint spent most of her life on the island as well as died there.

<sup>38</sup> Gábor Klaniczay has written extensively on the miracles of Margaret; for his analysis of this miracle in particular see: "Domenicani eremiti paolini e francescani. Osservanti ungheresi e i loro santuari alla periferia," in *Ordini religiosi e santuari in età moderna*, 19-34; Id., "*Miraculum and maleficium: Reflections Concerning Late Medieval Female Sainthood*," in *Problems in the Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Europe*, ed. R. P. C. Hsia and R. W. Scribner (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997). For literature on the miracles of Margaret in general see: Viktória Hedvig Deák, *La légende de sainte Marguerite de Hongrie et l'hagiographie dominicaine* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2013); Tibor Klaniczay and Gábor Klaniczay, *Szent Margit legendái és stigmái* [The legends and stigmata of Saint Margaret] (Budapest: Argumentum, 1994). See also the introduction by Gábor Klaniczay and bibliography in: *Árpád-házi Szent Margit legrégebb legendája és szentté avatási pere. Boldog Margit élettörténete. Vizsgálat Margit szűznek életéről, magatartásáról és csodatetteiről* [The oldest legend and canonization trials of Saint Margaret of the house of Árpád. The life of Blessed Margaret. Examination of the life of the Virgin Margaret, actions, and miracles], trans. by Ibolya Bellus and Zsuzsanna Szabó with notes by Ibolya Bellus (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 1999), 5-26.

<sup>39</sup> Translation from the unpublished manuscript of Ildikó Csepregi: "Life of Blessed Margaret of Hungary," (2014).

<sup>40</sup> Iogna Prat, "La spatialisation du Sacré," 44-57.

Margaret's connection to the landscape was evident even in the miracles that occurred during her lifetime. In one such case, the Danube had risen to such a level that it entered the main floor of one of the island's convent buildings. About a week later, Margaret related the event to her confessor, Marcellus, but he refused to believe her. Margaret prayed to the Virgin to show her confessor that she was not lying and instantly the river water rose to such an extent that it flooded the monastery and Marcellus had to climb a tree to escape the rising waters.<sup>41</sup> This miracle illustrates the connection of Margaret's spiritual power with the elements, and specifically with the Danube itself.

The island itself could, in a way, "enclose" Margaret's sacrality. Because it is a landscape physically separated from the mundane world and with a history of religious use, Margaret's sacred aura could be considered to exist there more intensely than, say, if her shrine were located in the main urban area of Buda. Islands also have a propensity for hosting spiritual power because they are liminal places, a meeting point between two elements, water and earth. There is a long tradition of holy islands in Europe. They were central to Celtic mythology, medieval legends such as Avalon Island of the tales of King Arthur, and pagan cults.<sup>42</sup> Thus in the case of Ponsa, as he comes nearer to Margaret's relics and her island, her holiness and spiritual power can be felt more intensely and Ponsa's pain increases.

Gábor Klaniczay addresses this "concentric sacrality" in his work on peripheral shrines.<sup>43</sup> He states that the island had long been a sacred place, but it was the foundation of

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<sup>41</sup> Vilmos Fraknói, ed., *Inquisitio super vita, conversatione et miraculis beatae Margarethae virginis, Belae IV. Hungarorum regis filiae, sanctimonialis monasterii virginis gloriosae de insula Danubii, Ordinis Praedicatorum, Vesprimiensis diocesis*, in *Monumenta Romana episcopatus Vesprimiensis* I (Budapest: Collegio Historicorum Hungarorum Romano, 1896), 280-281; and the same story told by other witnesses: 183, 186, 191-192, 223, 242-243. Natural causes may have attributed to this miracle story, for interpretations of this event in the context of the flooding of the Danube see: Andrea Kiss, "Floods and Long-Term Water-Level Changes in Medieval Hungary," (PhD diss., CEU, Budapest), 228-232, and András Vadas, *Weather Anomalies and Climatic Change in Late Medieval Hungary: Weather events in the 1310s in the Hungarian Kingdom* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, 2010).

<sup>42</sup> Klaniczay, "Il monte di San Gherardo e l'isola di Santa Margherita," 268. Valerie Flint gives the example of a pagan holy island, complete with sacred spring and cattle, from the life of St. Willibrord, see: Valerie I. J. Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 212.

<sup>43</sup> See, for example: Klaniczay, "Domenicani eremiti paolini e francescani"; Id., "Il monte di San Gherardo e l'isola di Santa Margherita," 267-284.

the Dominican convent there at the point where Old Buda, Pest, and the former Roman colony of Aquincum – and of course Margaret’s integral connection to the convent — that made the island the symbolic “heavenly center” of King Béla’s new capital of Buda. Despite being a “heavenly center,” as Klaniczay states, Margaret Island existed on the edge of the city, the northern “spiritual edge” to complement the southern “spiritual edge” at Gellért Hill.<sup>44</sup> Therefore there is a symbolic conception of the island as both a spiritual center and an embodiment of the sacred periphery. This paradoxical combination magnified the holy character of Margaret’s tomb and its attraction as a pilgrimage site during the Middle Ages.

This was not a lasting sanctity, however. Margaret Island’s sacrality was dependent on the presence of her relics there. In 1540, the nuns of the island escaped from the Turkish invasion, carrying Margaret’s relics with them. In 1541 the Turks burned down the Dominican convent, and in the absence of the convent and Margaret’s relics, the island lost its sacred role.<sup>45</sup>

#### 1.4 Pool of St. Stanislaus

Indeed, water as a sacred conduit appears in many natural cult sites. This was the case of at another of the cult sites considered here, the Pool of St. Stanislaus at Skalka in Cracow. The origins of this purportedly miraculous pool can be found in the principal source for the life of St. Stanislaus, the *Vita S. Stanislai* written by Jan Długosz (1415-1480) between 1461 and 1465. The Bishop Stanislaus had long been an opponent of the current Polish king, Boleslaus II, particularly, according to Długosz, for his pride and sexual immorality.<sup>46</sup> Boleslaus, after failing to coerce others into murdering the bishop, killed him himself while

<sup>44</sup>Klaniczay discusses this idea of a dual spiritual periphery, marked by Gellért Hill and Margaret Island, in: “Domenicani eremiti paolini e francescani,” 20.

<sup>45</sup> Klaniczay, “Il monte di San Gherardo e l’isola di Santa Margherita,” 274.

<sup>46</sup> Stanislava Kuzmova, “Preaching Saint Stanislaus: Medieval Sermons on Saint Stanislaus of Cracow and Their Role in the Construction of His Image and Cult,” (PhD diss., CEU, 2010), 45; Joannes Dlugossius, “Vita sanctissimi Stanislai episcopi Cracoviensis,” in *Joannis Dlugossii Opera omnia* 1, ed. I. Polkowski and Z. Pauli (Cracow: Typographia Ephemeridum “Czas” F. Kluczycki, 1887), 26-32

Stanislaus was celebrating mass at St. Michael's Church at Skalka, outside the city walls of Cracow.

The episode that led to the creation of the sacred pool is found in Długosz's vita; however, it can also be found in an earlier source from the turn of the fifteenth century, which itself likely reflected an even earlier oral tradition.<sup>47</sup> Długosz records that Stanislaus had been brutally murdered and dismembered into many pieces. Most of the body was collected together by pious onlookers, and was watched over by, notably, *aquilarum custodia*. Not all of the body could be collected however, and a portion of his finger fell into a nearby lake and was eaten by a fish. The fish began to glow with a spiritual white light and was caught by fishermen, who cut out the finger out of the belly of the fish and reunited it with the rest of the bishop's body. Thereafter the pool was endowed with miraculous properties *ex contactu sacri corporis*.<sup>48</sup> Nearly the same miracle is recorded in the life of St. Adalbert from the turn of the thirteenth century, although no sacred pool was "created" in Adalbert's case.<sup>49</sup> This begs the question, however, whether Długosz directly appropriated the story from Adalbert's

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<sup>47</sup> Kuzmova, "Preaching Saint Stanislaus," 46-7; Also from Kuzmova, 47, fn. 181: The early account of this miracle was noticed by Agnieszka Ronowska-Sadraei (*Pater Patriae: The Cult of Saint Stanislaus and the Patronage of Polish Kings 1200-1455* (Cracow: Unum, 2008), 365ff.) in Dominic of Prussia's *Corona gemmaria Beatae Mariae Virginis* of 1433-39. For more about the author see: K. J. Klinkhammer, "Des Kartauser Dominikus von Preussen (died 1461) Lied über die Schönheit der Gottes (um 1435)," *Das Münster am Hellweg. Mitteilungsblatt des Vereins für die Erhaltung des Essener Münsters* 17 (1964): 159-162; and Z. H. Nowak, "Kraków i jego uniwersytet w wietle wspomie kartuza Dominika z Prus (1384-1460)" [Cracow and Its University in the Light of the Memories of Carthusian Dominic of Prussia (1384-1460)], in *Cracovia – Polonia – Europa. Studia z dziejów redniowiecza ofiarowane Jerzemu Wyrozumskiemu w szedziesi piat rocznice urodzin i czterdziestolecie pracy naukowej* [Studies from Medieval History offered to Jerzy Wyrozumski on the Sixty-fifth Birthday and the Fortieth Anniversary of Work], ed. Krzysztof Baczkowski et al. (Cracow: Secesja, 1995), 61-67. Kuzmova also discovered that the episode with the lost finger is mentioned in the 1430s, before Długosz, in the sermon by Nicholas of Kozłow (Sermon VIII), MS. BJ 1614, f. 79v-80r.

<sup>48</sup> *Ex tot corporis beati frustis unus notabatur manus dextrae defuisse ex indice articulus, in proximum lacum proiectus: sed et hunc quoque requirendum atque reperiendum divina monstravit miseratio. Piscem enim, qui illum glutiverat, quocumque se nando verteret, superni luminis candor quidam et supereminens prodebat: itaque facile a nautis captus, adhibito in viscera scrutinio, articulus quoque qui desiderabatur repertus, et cetero corpori appositus, magnitudinem auxit apud singulos miraculi. Sed et lacus praedicti undis, ex contactu sacri corporis, singularis divina ab eo tempore attributa est potestas, ut aegritudinum variarum sanent passiones, et si quando ad usus adhibeantur humanos, inficiunt illos potius; quam explent, declarantes se illis aptas de cetero non esse, et quodammodo naturam suam mutavisse: quod, dante Domino, in sequentibus latius nos credimus explicatur*, Jan Długosz, *Vita sanctissimi Stanislai episcopi Cracoviensis. Opera omnia* 1, ed. Ignatius Polkowski and Żegota Pauli (Cracow: Typographia Ephemeridum "Czas" Fr. Kluczycki, 1887), 73-4.

<sup>49</sup> Wojciech Kętrzyński, ed., "Miracula Sancti Adalberti," in MPH, 4 (Lwow, 1884; repr. Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1961), 221-38, with variant readings p. 904-7.



vita. Stanislava Kuzmova, in her analysis of the medieval sermons on St. Stanislaus, argues that he did not, but that the story is evidence of an earlier tradition and that he “only repeated what had been incorporated to the tradition about St. Stanislaus earlier, as he actually had done with other motifs as well.”<sup>50</sup>

This episode with the pool explicitly illustrates how a natural place could become holy by virtue of physical contact with a saint, or at least a part of a saint. Water is an excellent conduit for such a transfer of sanctity because it is all-consuming – sacred power can dissolve exponentially into water just as, if we allow the metaphor, salt dissolves equally and completely in water. At the same time, water, although fluid, can be enclosed and controlled in vessels and structures, making it portable and manageable.

This miracle was particularly important for the cult of St. Stanislaus at Skalka. While the site was important because Stanislaus was martyred and initially buried there, his body was transferred to the nearby Wawel Cathedral in 1088, less than ten years after his martyrdom. The pool miracle allowed the community at Skalka to make some sort of physical claim to the saint’s sanctity.<sup>51</sup> This claim was further intensified by the recording of multiple miracles occurring at Skalka or the pool itself beyond the initial creation miracle and the brief mention of the pool’s miraculous qualities. The miraculous power of the water of the pool is, interestingly, only attested to a handful of times. One curious miracle recounts how an unknowing servant-woman who meant to draw water for washing from the Vistula River instead collected water from *lacum Sancti Stanislai*.<sup>52</sup> After returning to the bucket of water she had collected she was frightened to find that it was filled with grasshoppers. She was instructed by the cathedral scribe to return the vessel of grasshoppers to the lake, and, after

<sup>50</sup> Kuzmova, “Preaching Saint Stanislaus,” 47.

<sup>51</sup> Maria Starnawska, *Świtych życie po życiu Relikwie w kulturze religijnej na ziemiach polskich w średniowieczu* [The Life of Saints After Life. The Relics in Religious Culture in Polish Lands in the Middle Ages] (Warsaw: DiG, 2008), 126-7.

<sup>52</sup> Here it should be noted that the use of “lacum” and the servant-woman’s blunder would indicate that this was a natural pool or small lake surrounded by willow trees (*quae habet salices ad littora*), not the pool lined with stone fenced off by pillars seen today in front of the Church of St Michael.

doing so, all the grasshoppers disappeared much to everyone's astonishment and relief.<sup>53</sup> A similar incident follows. In this instance a man attempts to draw water from the lake for the purpose of brewing beer, but his team of horses refuses to leave the place until all the water is poured back into the pool.<sup>54</sup> In both cases the message is clear – this is *sacred* water designated for *sacred* purposes.

Most of the miracles recorded in Stanislaus' vita are noted to have occurred at his tomb or *Cracoviensis ecclesia* — that is, Wawel Cathedral, where Stanislaus was buried in 1088. However, a not insignificant number of miracles are recorded as happening at Skalka, or more precisely, *ecclesia Sancti Michaelis de Rupella*, or following a vow to go there. Most of these miracles actually do not mention the pool at all, indicating that while there may have been folk traditions regarding the pool, its role as a miraculous place was largely a fifteenth century invention. Most miracles simply involved the afflicted person vowing to go to the church at Skalka if Stanislaus would heal them, or else the afflicted are healed once having stepped through the entryway of St. Michael's Church. Consider, for example, the miraculous healing of Marcus of Cracow:

Marcus, citizen of Cracow, trembling with a fever, and having disregarded the opinion of science, turned to the protection of the most holy Father Stanislaus: and that was not useless. As soon as he had faithfully made his vow of visiting Stanislaus's dwelling [*limina*] in Rupella, the fever immediately cooled down and he began feeling freed from within; hence immediately satisfied, he went to the church of Rupella, and honored the Saint of God with offerings and sacrifices.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup>*Sine mora mulier, olla simul cum cicadia accepta, ad lacum Sancti Stanislai cum tota familia sua pergit, et ollam cum cicadis in aquam lacus vertit, Mira res! Quam cito enim illae cicadae aquae lacus admixtae sunt, amplius nulla cicada apparuit. Quod cum, vidissent astantes, Deum et Sanctum Stanislauum glorificaverunt, postulantes sibi ignosci, quod non ex industria, sed per ignorantiam in eius sanctitatem deliquissent.* Długosz, *Vita sanctissimi Stanislai*, 168.

<sup>54</sup>*Allud quoque in aqua eiusdem lacus accidit miraculum. Vir grandaevus, Iohannes nomine, cognomento Glathky, civis Kazimiriensis, braxat cervisiam in domo sua: et cum aqua ad consummandum opus defecisset, familiari suo praecepit, ut iuncto curru equis, vas aquae de lacu Sancti Stanislai, pro consummando labore praedicto, tantocius adduceret. Et servus, iussa domini complens, ingressus cum curru in lacum, aqua vas replens, equis ascensis, minabat eos; sed nulla ratione equi progredi de loco poterant, nec currum trahere, donec aqua de vase totaliter emissa est. Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup>*Marcus civis Cracoviensis, febribus quatitur, et physicorum praetermissis suffragiis, ad sanctissimi Patris Stanislai se patrocinia convertit: et non incassum. Quamprimum enim votum visitandi limina eius in Rupella fideliter emisit, illico febribus refrigeratum et penitus absolutum se persensit; atque illico voto suo satisfaciens, ecelesiam de Rupella adiit, et Sanctum Dei victimia et oblationibus honoravit. Ibid., 165.*

Other miracles are said to have occurred *ad tumbam beatissimi Martyris Sancti Stanislai in Rupellam* or at *Stanislaus sepulcrum in Rupellam*.<sup>56</sup> This might seem odd since these miracles apparently occurred between 1441 and 1460, when Stanislaus's body had already been moved to its permanent and prominent place at Wawel Cathedral three and a half centuries earlier. This could be further evidence for a strong cult of Stanislaus at Skalka from the time of his martyrdom — so strong, in fact, that long after his body has been translated to Wawel Cathedral, the faithful still saw Skalka as the symbolic burial place of Stanislaus.

### 1.5 Gellért Hill

A similar interaction with the landscape is illustrated in another martyrdom story, that of St. Gerard, bishop of Csanád. There are two main sources for Gerard's life: the *Vita minor*, thought by many to be the older and more reliable source completed in the late eleventh century,<sup>57</sup> and the *Vita maior*, dating to the fourteenth century.<sup>58</sup> According to both sources, Gerard was born to a high-ranking Venetian family and entered religious life at a young age. He piously attempted to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land ca. 1020, but was detained in Hungary due to stormy weather. There he met the Christian King Stephen, who was so taken with Gerard that the saint was “persuaded” to serve as a spiritual tutor to the king's son, Prince Imre, and to aid the king in his efforts to secure the Christianization of the Hungarian people.

Despite holding these prestigious positions (or perhaps because of them) Gerard was

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 162, 165.

<sup>57</sup> The initial *Vita minor* was probably completed sometime before 1083 and took its final form by the first half of the twelfth century; see: Gábor Klaniczay, “Il monte di San Gherardo e l'isola di Santa Margherita,” 268.

<sup>58</sup> For contributions to this debate see: Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude*, 135-6; Lajos Csóka, “Szent Gellért kisebb és nagyobb legendájának keletkezéstörténete” [The history of the formation of the greater and lesser legends of Saint Gerard], in *Középkori kútforrásaink kritikus kérdései* [A wellspring of critical medieval issues], ed. János Horváth and György Székely (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974), 137-45.

drawn to the comfort of solitude.<sup>59</sup> He lived for several years at Bakonybél as a hermit in complete isolation save for one companion, a monk named Maurus — the same Maurus who would later write the lives of the hermit saints Andrew and Benedict. As one would expect in the life of a hermit, his *vita* contains episodes that emphasize Gerard's relationship and connection with nature. The *Vita maior* includes two stories of wild animals being drawn to and tamed by Gerard. In the first, a doe and her fawn come to Gerard and lie down at his feet. The doe is scared off by a rushing stag, but the fawn remains with Gerard. The second tells of a wounded wolf that comes to Gerard and also lies at his feet until he has fully recovered. Both the fawn and wolf remain under Gerard's care in complete harmony.<sup>60</sup>

But Gerard was not solely a hermit. His situation was more complex as he was also a very public figure, with important missionary, ecclesiastical, and political activity. He was made bishop of Csanád in 1030 and continued to oppose pagans and the corruption of church officials in Hungary. Following the death of St. Stephen in 1038, Gerard refused to give his blessing to the next Hungarian king, Samuel Aba. When Samuel Aba's successor, Peter, died in 1046, Gerard went out to greet two potential successors, the sons of Vazul, at Pest.<sup>61</sup>

It was at this time, when Gerard, travelling from Fehérvár (Székesfehérvár) reached the banks of the Danube in Buda, near the hill that would later be named for him (at this time called Kelenföld), that Gerard met a group of hostile pagans and his martyrdom.<sup>62</sup> The sources contain two variants of his death. The earlier *Vita minor* relates that,

...a great crowd of people surrounded him and were throwing stones at the father sitting in the carriage, which do not touch him due to the Lord's protection. And against the pagans the father was saying a blessing and making the sign of the cross. Eventually the pagans, grabbing the heads of the horses, overturned the carriage, threw the father to the ground, and with a

<sup>59</sup> Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude*, 138.

<sup>60</sup> More detailed comments on this episode with further references can be read in: Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude*, 138-9; 139, fn. 504.

<sup>61</sup> Vazul was of the house of Árpád. It is uncertain if Gerard actually supported Vazul's sons, especially since the eldest was a pagan. *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>62</sup> While Gerard is the Anglicized version of the saint's name, the hill which is named for him is called by his Hungarian name, Gellért, in English as well as Hungarian, and will thus be referred to as "Gellért Hill" hereafter.

furious passion were continuing to stone him. So, in the manner of the first martyr, the first martyr of Pannonia fell upon his knees and cried aloud: “Jesus Christ, my Lord, do not judge them for this sin, for they know not what they do.” And when he said this they threw a lance into his chest and he fell asleep in the Lord.<sup>63</sup>

The version included in the *Vita maior* is more detailed. After the initial stoning as told in the previous version, the pagans,

...dragged him down from the chariot, threw him on a cart and pushed him down the Kelenföld. But since he was still breathing, they pierced his chest with a lance; after that, they laid him on a rock and smashed his skull... even though the Danube frequently flowed over it for seven years, it could not wash the blood away from the rock on which they had smashed the head of Gerard and eventually the priests carried the rock away.<sup>64</sup>

After Gerard’s murder, he was buried at Holy Mary Church in Pest (the site of today’s Belvárosi *plébániatemplom*, the Church of the Holy Virgin, which is the parish church of Pest) and seven years later his body was relocated to Csanád.<sup>65</sup> The episode at the end of this account refers to a large stone that was brought to Csanád and used as an altar.<sup>66</sup> Because of the presence of Gerard’s body and this important stone, as well as to Gerard’s connections to the place during his life, Csanád, unsurprisingly, became the center of his cult. Prior to the growth of Gerard’s cult at Csanád, however, the place of his martyrdom became an important sanctuary. A church dedicated to Gerard was built at the base of the hill possibly as early as the eleventh century, although the first evidence for the site does not come until the thirteenth century, when we encounter privileges that were granted to the Church of St. Gerard the Martyr in 1236.<sup>67</sup> The saint’s continued connection to the site is exemplified by the fact that in 1273, it first began to be called Gellért Hill.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Emericus Madzsar (ed.), *Legenda S. Gerhardi Episcopi*, SRH II, 478.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 502. English translation from Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude*, 141.

<sup>65</sup> György Györffy, *Pest-Buda kialakulása: Budapest története a honfoglalástól az Árpád-kor végi székvárossá alakulásig* [The formation of Budapest: The history of Budapest, from the original settlement in the Arpadian Age to the development of a chief city] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1997), 91.

<sup>66</sup> Sándor Bálint, *Ünnepi Kalendarium I. and II. A Mária-ünnepek és jelesebb napok hazai és közép-európai hagyományvilágából* [Marian and other important feasts from the Hungarian and central European traditions] (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1977), 431.

<sup>67</sup> Klaniczay, “Il monte di San Gherardo e l’isola di Santa Margherita,” 269; Bálint, *Ünnepi Kalendarium*, 432.

<sup>68</sup> Klaniczay, “Il monte di San Gherardo e l’isola di Santa Margherita,” 268.

Marina Miladinov, remarking on the appearance of the bloodied rock in the later vita, says that the addition occurred, “apparently for the purpose of giving legitimisation of antiquity to the rock as a relic.”<sup>69</sup> Gábor Klaniczay, in his analysis of Gerard’s life and associated holy places, comments on the additions in the *Vita maior* from the standpoint of the church at Buda saying, “*Azzarderei l’ipotesi che l’esigenza di compensare la mancanza di reliquie provocasse forse nei curatori del santuario, l’idea di attribuire al monte roccioso che si innalzava dietro la chiesa, un ruolo nel supposto martirio e, di conseguenza, nel culto del santo.*”<sup>70</sup> The chronology certainly seems to support this.

However, while I agree that the emphasis on the hill and bloodied rock in the later vita certainly might have been motivated by an act of promotion on the part of the curators of Gerard’s sanctuary in Buda, I would venture that there was already a strong local cult for Gerard at Kelenföld before this addition. This is evidenced by the fact that there was already a church built there and more importantly, that it was the place of the saint’s martyrdom and thus, literally, stained by his sacred presence. But certainly, the elaboration on Gerard’s death in the *Vita maior* compounded the importance of this place significantly.

The spilling of martyr’s blood on the land and especially its staining of this land was profound for the medieval Christian. One need only look at the centrality of the Eucharist, Christ’s actual body and blood, in medieval religiosity to witness its importance. It was the shedding of Christ’s blood that led to the atonement for the sins of all of mankind. Thus, at the core of Christian belief is the conception of blood’s atoning properties, a concept that broadened in the Middle Ages to that of martyr’s blood, asceticism, and then the suffering of religious persons in general.<sup>71</sup> It makes sense, then, that the emphasis on the blood shed by a martyr and its permanent presence at a specific place would draw pious Christians to it, satisfying both the human need for a spirituality and physicality — in other words, the desire

<sup>69</sup> Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude*, 142.

<sup>70</sup> Klaniczay, “Il monte di San Gherardo e l’isola di Santa Margherita,” 269.

<sup>71</sup> Bettina Bildhauer, *Medieval Blood* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2006), 141.

for “holy matter.”<sup>72</sup>

All of these stories considered together exhibit similar features, although they are related to different geographical locations, saints, and times. The basic unifying theme seen in the hagiography and miracle accounts is, simply, that landscape matters. A prominent natural feature in the landscape — a mountain, cave, or spring — captured pilgrims’ religious imaginations and allowed them to focus their religious expression. As important as the actual physicality of the site was, the sacred place was still “made,” in the sense that its conception as sacred was formed in the mind of the pilgrim. This was true for Jasna Góra, where most of the miracles occurred after vows to go to the shrine and thus it was the intent to go this place and not actually being there that made the difference in the miracle. However, physical interaction was often vital if a cult at a certain location was to be successful. At Skalka in Cracow, for instance, the memory of Stanislaus’ martyrdom at the site would not have been enough to create a successful cult there; the episode with his finger, with water as the conduit, allowed the site to lay a lasting claim on the physical presence of the saint.

Many of the motifs and topoi discussed above are remnants of traditions originating in late antiquity regarding the representation and function of space, place, and the landscape. How these features reflect a singularly medieval Central European form of religiosity will be examined below.

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<sup>72</sup>Caroline Bynum Walker, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone Books, 2011), 129.

## CHAPTER TWO: BETWEEN HISTORY AND FOLKLORE: THE HISTORIC “REALITY” OF SACRED LANDSCAPE

Sacred environmental features are characteristic of many medieval sacred sites; however, it is a rare thing for a natural cult site in Central Europe to have solid historical proof of its medieval origins. This is, in fact, the case for many of the natural cult sites across medieval Europe as a whole. The sites discussed in the previous chapter have the luxury of possessing contemporary hagiographic texts; there are no such texts explicitly associated with the remaining six sites considered in this study. They do have the benefit, however, of medieval historical connections and rich folk traditions. But how should scholars interpret these sites without the benefit of hagiographic texts that detail both saints’ interaction with these sites and individuals’ interactions with these sites through miracles?

Differentiating between the historical and the traditional or folkloric “reality” of holy places can present problems. Following the end of Ottoman rule and the Counter-Reformation and lasting well into the nineteenth century there was a resurgence of interest in national and religious identity in much of Central Europe. This national romanticism coincided with a romanticising of nature that made sacred places such as holy wells especially attractive, and thus many wells received a sacred medieval pedigree where before they had none or else such connotations were weak at best.<sup>73</sup> Indeed, many of the supposedly medieval holy wells in Central Europe only have historical documentation dating to the eighteenth century at the earliest.<sup>74</sup>

However, rather than mere romantic invention, many of the sacred sites in Central

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<sup>73</sup> For more on romanticism in Europe see: Stephen Prickett, ed., *European Romanticism: A Reader* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010); Balázs Trencsényi and Michal Kopeček, ed., *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945)* Vol. II *National Romanticism - The Formation of National Movements* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2007). For more on the Counter-Reformation in Central Europe see: Regina Pörtner, *The Counter-Reformation in Central Europe: Styria 1580-1630* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 2001).

<sup>74</sup> There is currently no academic literature analyzing the holy wells of Central Europe as a whole, either on a national or regional scale. The best resources for comprehensive collections of the holy wells of Central Europe are actually modern pilgrimage booklets and guides. See, for Hungary, for instance, *Szentkutak Magyarországon: jelvénytulajdonos túramozgalom igazolófüzete* [Holy wells of Hungary: Personal completion booklet of the badge-collecting hiking movement] (Vasas SC Természetbarát Szakosztálya, 2004).



Europe have preserved their holy pedigree over hundreds of years through oral tradition, folklore, and local veneration. Folklore is a valuable tool for the historian, especially in cases such as these where more traditional historical sources are lacking. Folklore is a representation of the collective memory and traditions of a community. It might reflect a very small, local circle or extend further, making connections on a regional and even national scale. In regards to the sites considered here, the historical evidence actually frequently supports the folkloric tradition; thus, considering the folkloric and historical sources together can reveal more about the sacralization process at these holy sites than if they were considered separately.

## **2.1 Capistran's Well**

Located in the Moravian town of Olomouc there is today a little known, but once highly revered, well associated with the famed fifteenth-century inquisitor and preacher, St. John Capistran (1386-1456). John Capistran was born in Naples and as a young man actively pursued a political career. After being cast into prison for a short period of time, he redirected his life towards religion and began to study under St. Bernardino of Siena. Capistran became a well-known Franciscan preacher and inquisitor and travelled throughout Italy and beyond, from Croatia to Poland, preaching in support of the Observant Franciscan movement. After a vivacious and often vicious career preaching against heresy and the Jews, he found his ideal subject in the crusade against the Turks. Capistran even participated in the Battle of Belgrade in 1456. The preacher did not fall in battle, but died shortly thereafter from illness.

Prior to his crusading activities, John Capistran spent the years between 1451 and 1453 preaching and promoting the Observant movement in Olomouc as well as founding an Observant convent in the city. His connection to the convent is imprinted on its very walls, where a large (46 square meters) fresco was painted in the choir in 1468. It depicts the Battle

of Belgrade, with Capistran in the center of combat holding a portrait of Christ.<sup>75</sup>

Capistran also left his metaphorical mark on a well near this convent.<sup>76</sup> There is currently only one known historic reference to this “holy” well; it appears in the chronicle of Olomouc’s Observant convent, dating from the seventeenth to early nineteenth century, which states:

This Convent also has under the outermost arch of the cloister facing west a bubbling spring of the most nourishing water blessed by St. Capistran, so it is the popular tradition of the community, for these wholesome waters cured illness and also drew out fever.<sup>77</sup>

From this reference it can be ascertained that the local community used the “blessed” waters to cure illness from, at the earliest, the seventeenth century. Swedish soldiers were even recorded as having used well’s waters to cure various diseases, particularly fever, during the occupation of Olomouc (1642-1650).<sup>78</sup> Use of the well during the Middle Ages, however, cannot be confirmed and it is possible that veneration of Capistran’s well was a later development.

Miraculous association with the well gradually dwindled, however, and today the

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<sup>75</sup>The painting of the fresco also had political motivations. In addition to St. John Capistran the painting prominently features John Hunyadi who had led the Hungarians into victory during the battle. The fresco was painted on the occasion of the visit of Hunyadi’s son, King Matthias Corvinus, to Olomouc during his war against King George of Poděbrad. The fresco thus served both to promote Capistran and the Observant movement as well as to glorify the king of Hungary. Stanko Andrić, *The Miracles of St. John Capistran* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2000); Ivo Hlobil, “Bernardinské symboly Iména Ježíš v českých zemích šířené Janem Kapistránem” [Bernardinian symbols of the name of Jesus in the Czech lands as propagated by John Capistran], *Umění* 44 (1996): 223-34; Antonín Kalous, “Bohemians and Moravians in the Court of Matthias Corvinus,” in *Matthias Corvinus, the King: Tradition and Renewal in the Hungarian Royal Court 1458-1490*, Exhibition catalogue ed. Péter Farbaky, Enikő Spekner, Katalin Szende, and András Véghe (Budapest: Budapest History Museum, 2008), 65-76.

<sup>76</sup>This is one of two wells associated with St. John Capistran. The other “Capistran’s Well” is located in Ilok, Croatia near his chapel and tomb. No miraculous qualities are associated with the waters of the well in Ilok and the exact connection between the well and Capistran is unknown. The earliest known reference comes from Josephus C. Firmanus, author of a seventeenth-century chronicle of Ilok, who recorded that at the end of the seventeenth century the Turks supposedly thrown the saint’s body into a convent’s well and later removed it in order to sell it to Orthodox monks. Andrić, *The Miracles of St. John Capistran*, 53, 313.

<sup>77</sup>*Habet hic Conventus quoque sub fornice extremo claustris versus Occidentem saluberrimae aquae fontem a S. Capistrano benedictam, ut est communis et universalis traditio, nam aquae ipsae ab infirmantibus, atque etiam febricitantibus haustae sunt salutes. Františkáni v Olomouci u sv. Bernardina*, 1610-1804, section 7, in: Zemský Archiv Opava-Olomouc, Arcibiskupství Olomouc, sg. Bb 38, Kart. 412, quoted from Andrić, *The Miracles of St. John Capistran*, 313, 347.

<sup>78</sup>Maria Craciun and Elaine Fulton, ed., *Communities of Devotion: Religious Orders and Society in East Central Europe, 1450-1800* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2011), 233.

well's holy past is largely unknown. This may be due partly to the dissolution of monasteries that occurred under Joseph II. Both Franciscan and Dominican monasteries were dissolved at this time; however, the Dominicans pleaded to be reinstated and were allowed to return to their holy way of life, though not in their original monastery, but that of the Observant Franciscans. It is possible that traditions involving the well and possibly even further relevant historical documentation left the monastery when the Franciscans did.

## 2.2 St. Ulrich's Spring

Unlike Capistran's Well at Olomouc, Ulrichsquelle (St. Ulrich's Spring), in the aptly named village of Heiligenbrunn in modern-day Austria, possesses a relatively unbroken line of veneration; however, its holiness is attributed to two different saints.<sup>79</sup> In his *A Ünnepi Kalendarium: Mária-ünnepek és jelesebb napok hazai és közép-európai hagyományvilágából*, Sándor Bálint, discussing the various churches named for St. Clement, states, "It is not by chance that he was chosen as a patron saint of one of the old holy wells."<sup>80</sup> Bálint is referring to Ulrichsquelle, named for Ulrich of Augsburg (c. 890 – 973), although he links the well with Pope Clement I (ca. 1<sup>st</sup> c. – 101). Bálint substantiates his claim by relating a story from Clement's life in the Érdy-kódex. The codex tells that Clement was exiled to Chersonesos on the Black Sea to work as a slave in a marble quarry. In response to the miners' complaint about their lack of water Clement tells them to pray. Clement prayed with them and soon saw a white lamb digging in the earth with its right leg. Clement took it as a sign, dug at the spot,

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<sup>79</sup> The village takes its name from the German *heilige*, "holy," and *brunnen*, "well, fountain, spring, font." Lajos Kiss, *Földrajzi nevek etimológiai szótára* [Etymological dictionary of geographical names], (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1978); J. J. Egli, *Nomina geographica. Sprach- und Sacherklärung von 42 000 geographischen Namen aller Erdäme. Zweite, vermehrte und verbesserte Auflage* (n.d.: Leipzig, 1893), 399; Adolf Bach, *Deutsche Namenkunde 2/1* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1953), 409; Wilhelm Sturmfels and Heinz Bischof, *Unsere Ortsnamen im ABC erklärt nach Herkunft und Bedeutung. Dritte, verbesserte und stark erweiterte Auflage* (Bonn: Bildungsverlag Ein, 1961), 108; R. Fischer, E. Eichler, H. Naumann, and H. Walter, *Namen deutscher Städte* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1963), 103.

<sup>80</sup> Sándor Bálint, *Ünnepi Kalendarium*, 557.

and clean drinking water sprang forth.<sup>81</sup>

The Catholic parish church at Heiligenbrunn is of medieval origin and indeed named for St. Clement.<sup>82</sup> The well too was known from the Middle Ages as a *fons sacrum*. A charter from 1198 lists the fountain amongst the donations given to the Cistercians of the monastery of St. Gotthard as “*ad sacrum fontem*,” though it does not associate the well with either Clement or Ulrich.<sup>83</sup> From as early as 1339 the Hungarian “*Szent Kut* [sic]” can also be found in reference to the well at Heiligenbrunn.<sup>84</sup>

The details and chronology concerning the links of Ulrich and Clement are not entirely clear. Today, a small chapel stands just behind the well, both of which are named for Ulrich. The parish church of St. Clement overlooks the wells and chapel from a small hill immediately behind them (fig. 1). Local tradition holds that Bavarian settlers in the area brought with them the veneration of St. Ulrich and so named various chapels and wells for the saint, including the well of Heiligenbrunn, though it is uncertain if the well had been previously dedicated to Clement.<sup>85</sup>

### 2.3 Ivy Well

St. Gerard’s presence in the Hungarian landscape at Gellért Hill has been discussed in detail above, but Gellért Hill was not the only place that Gerard left transformed. Gerard spent seven years as a hermit at Bakonybél, but Bakonybél had a religious heritage before

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<sup>81</sup> Bálint, *Ünnepi Kalendarium*, 557.

<sup>82</sup> Adelheid Schmeller-Kitt, ed., *Dehio-Handbuch – Die Kunstdenkmäler Österreichs – Burgenland/Wien* (Vienna: Anton Schroll & Co, 1976), 129.

<sup>83</sup> ...*Concessit idem Comes ad sacrum fontem et capellam cum vinea, cui terram adiacentem, ex mandato regis Belae certis signis et metis signavit Augidius, tunc temporis Comes ferrei Castri. Circa eundem sacrum fontem in territorii noui castri habent idem Fratres vineas...*György Fejér, ed., *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis II* (Budapest: typis typogr. Regiae Universitatis Ungaricae, 1829), 326-7.

<sup>84</sup> The “Heiligenbrunn” entry contains a succinct list of the various names by which the holy well at Heiligenbrunn was known in manuscripts dating from 1198 onwards found in: Vera Zimányi and Gisela Auer, *Der Bauernstand der Herrschaft Güssing im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert, Burgenländische Forschungen*, 46 (Eisenstadt: Burgenländ. Landesarchiv, 1962): 167.

<sup>85</sup> This is also found in written form, including various pamphlets, a plaque at the site itself, and local histories including, for example: Josef Rittsteuer, *Zur Kirchengeschichte von Heiligenbrunn*, Ortschronik von Heiligenbrunn (1998); Siegfried Hirsch and Wolf Ruricka, *Heilige Quellen Niederösterreich und Burgenland* (Unterweikersdorf: Freya-Verlag 2002).

Gerard decided to settle in this *regione heremum*.<sup>86</sup> St. Stephen had founded a Benedictine abbey here in honor of the martyr St. Maurice in 1018, at the recommendation and encouragement of St. Gunther, a German monk and hermit, with whom he and his wife Queen Gisela had a close relationship.<sup>87</sup>

Gunther had established a hermitage at Bakonybél, possibly at the top of a rock near the Ivy Spring, now called Gellért Rock or Ivy (*Borostyán*) Stone. Mátyás Bél has stated that St. Gunther died at this spot, a claim supported by a benefice from 1086, in the register of “Mogus” *praedium*, which mentions Gunther’s tomb at Bél.<sup>88</sup> While St. Gerard’s connection to Bakonybél is well documented the location of his hermitage and his connection to the holy well in the village are more dubious. This may be on account of a thirteenth-century fire that destroyed the Benedictine abbey as well its medieval charters.<sup>89</sup> It may also be due to the hermit St. Gunther’s presence at Bakonybél, which while not simultaneous with Gerard’s stay was only shortly before, and may have led to some confluence between the sites connected to the two hermit saints. According to local tradition the area surrounding the well was the site of the hermitage of both Gunther and Gerard, which would account for the association of the

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<sup>86</sup> Madzsar, *Legenda S. Gerhardi Episcopi*, 472

<sup>87</sup> Gáspár Csóka states that Gunther was a relative of Gisela, however other historians simply say he was of noble or imperial birth and do not link him to Gisela. Gáspár Csóka, “Bakonybél,” in *Korai magyar történeti lexikon, 9-14. Század* [Encyclopedia of the Early Hungarian History (9th–14th centuries)], ed. Gyula Kristó (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1994), 77, cf. Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude*, 85. For more on Bakonybél and Gunther’s life see: Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude*, 84-90; L. Erdélyi and P. Sörös, ed., *A pannonhalmi Szent-Benedek-rend története* [History of the order of Saint Benedict at pannonhalma], VIII (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1902-1916), 9-123; P. Váczy, *Levéltári Közlemények* 8 (Budapest: 1930), 314-331; György Györffy, *István király és műve* [King Stephen and his work], (Budapest: Gondolat, 1977), 326-7; Imre Takács, *Paradisum Plantavit: Benedictine Monasteries in Medieval Hungary. Bencés monostorok a középkori Magyarországon. Kiállítási katalógus* (Pannonhalma: Pannonhalmi Főapátság, 2001), 593; Izsák Baán OSB and Géza Xeravits, ed., *A remeteélet iskolájában: Válogatott források és tanulmányok* [The hermit’s life in school: Selected studies and sources] (Budapest: L’Harmattan, 2005); Anzelm Vásárhelyi, *A Béli Szent Maurícius Monostor története, 1018-1998* [History of the Saint Maurice Monastery in Bél, 1018-1998] (Bakonybél: Szent Maurícius Monostor, 2002); Genevieve Bühner-Thierry, *Évêques et pouvoir dans le royaume de Germanie: les Églises de Bavière et de Souabe, 876-973* (Paris: Picard, 1997), 152, 180. For the most important hagiographic writings on Gunther by his contemporaries Wolfhere of Hildesheim and Arnold of Regensburg see: Wolfhere of Hildesheim, chapters 8 and 9 in *Vita Godehardi episcopi posterior, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores* 11 (Hanover: Hahn, 1840-), 196-218, and Arnold of Regensburg, *Ex libris de s. Emmerammo*, 2, 61-8, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores* 4 (Hanover: Hahn, 1840-), 546-74.

<sup>88</sup> Mátyás Bél, *Veszprém vármegye leírása* (Veszprém: Veszprém Megyei Levéltár, 1989), 67.

<sup>89</sup> Csóka, “Bakonybél,” 77.

rock outcrop near the well as “Gellért Rock.”<sup>90</sup> This is the assertion made by Beatrix F. Romhányi in her analysis of the Benedictine abbey at Bakonybél,<sup>91</sup> however other scholars have identified the local cemetery, or a remote hill a little east of Gunther’s hermitage as the site of Gerard’s hermitage.<sup>92</sup>

Sándor Bálint stated that the well at Bakonybél is a reminder of Gerard’s hermitage, and that Gerard named the three springs that fed the well for the Trinity; further, he notes that still in the mid-twentieth century the people of the village honored the well with a procession on the feast of St. Gerard and the Assumption of the Virgin Mary.<sup>93</sup> Looking at the modern arrangement of the well and the surrounding area, one can still see the connections to Gerard; a plaque near the well states that Gerard lived here as a hermit between 1023 and 1030 and a plaque inside the well itself depicts the scene from the saint’s life in which a tame fawn and wolf sit at his feet (fig. 2 and 3).

However, the former and likely the latter plaque both originated in the nineteenth century and although Gerard is historically associated with the well, it was never named for him. The well currently is known as *Borostyán-kút* (Ivy Well) and its first historical mention in a 1397 charter is simply as: *abbatia trium fontium de Beél*.<sup>94</sup> While this reference partially supports Bálint’s claim of Gerard’s naming of the three springs that fed the well, it still does not explicitly link Gerard to the well.

I believe Bálint is accurate when he describes the well at Bakonybél as a

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<sup>90</sup> The assertion that Gunther and Gerard lived at the same hermitage, located near the holy well is made also in written form at the site, in signage outside the Saint Maurice Church and in pamphlets available at the church, (author unknown), “Szent Maurícius Monostor Bakonybél,” (Szent Maurícius Monostor, n.d.) acquired April 20, 2014.

<sup>91</sup> Beatrix F. Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok a középkori Magyarországon* [Monasteries and collegiate chapters in medieval Hungary] (Budapest: Pytheas, 2000), 12.

<sup>92</sup> Szilveszter Sólomos, “The First Benedictine Monks in Hungary,” *Paradisum Plantavit*, 593; Vásárhelyi, *A Béli Szent Maurícius Monostor története 1018-1998*, 45.

<sup>93</sup> Bálint also recounts other traditions surrounding the well, for instance, that angels fly to the well from the church of the abbey every night. Bálint, *Ünnepi Kalendarium*, 431.

<sup>94</sup> Vásárhelyi, *A Béli Szent Maurícius Monostor története 1018-1998*, 48.

“reminder,”<sup>95</sup> a modern reminder of Gerard’s time in the village, a reminder of his hermitage, and a reminder of the local people’s unique connection with Gerard through his time spent there. The holy character of the well, however, is something that can only be substantiated in modern times and its medieval sacred character is still uncertain.

## 2.4 Mátraverebély Holy Well

The holy well near the Hungarian village of Mátraverebély is by far the most famous holy well in Hungary, currently attracting over 200,000 pilgrims annually.<sup>96</sup> Mátraverebély has a rich popular history beginning in the eleventh century, which includes the miraculous hoof print of St. Ladislaus’s horse, visions of the Virgin Mary, and marvelous cures. It would be tempting to write off much of the purported history of the well as later romantic invention, however the historical sources do substantiate many popular claims and the associated folklore fits into a larger picture of Hungarian religious culture.

According to legend, the holy well’s source originates from a spring that was created from the nail of the hoof (or in other variants, simply the hoof print itself) of the horse of St. Ladislaus.<sup>97</sup> Today this spring has dried up, but it was still flowing as late as 1962 (fig. 4). This legend is remarkably similar to a well formation legend from Jászó-Debrőd recorded in the *Hungarian Simplicissimus* in 1683 which states,

Of king St. Ladislaus they tell quite many other wondrous deeds in Hungary and Transylvania. So they showed me a well in Jászó which he caused to spring in a high, mountainous, rocky place where once he was forced to retreat with his army from the enemy and they all suffered from a lack of water. This myself have seen once during a church procession, for it is the custom there to make a pilgrimage to that well every year on the day of St. Ladislaus. They say that he prayed for this water to God as follows. He prayed arduously in horseback and when his horse jumped with him against a rock, water

<sup>95</sup> Bálint, *Ünnepi Kalendarium*, 431.

<sup>96</sup> “Történet,” *Mátraverebély-Szentkút, Magyarország Nemzeti Kegyhelye*, <http://www.szentkut.hu/>, accessed May 7, 2014.

<sup>97</sup> Tekla Dömötör, *Hungarian Folk Beliefs* (Budapest: Corvina Kiadó, 1981, repr. 1982), 248.

immediately sprang from it and this wondrous well remains to this day.<sup>98</sup>

The well formation tale fits quite well into the motifs of Ladislaus' legends. The saint's tears are reported to have bored holes into stone; and his footprints, the mark of his spear, and the mark of his shield and helmet that he had placed on the ground were all preserved in stone.<sup>99</sup> His horse too was attributed with supernatural abilities in his hagiography.<sup>100</sup> Legends surrounding the figure of St. Ladislaus are thought to have started even in his lifetime, and he was frequently attached to the appearance of sacred plants, animals, wells, and rocks.<sup>101</sup> One of the most enduring signs of his folk worship is witnessed by the name of a medicinal plant called "St. Ladislaus's herb" (crosswort, *Gentiana cruciata*), which was first recorded in 1583.<sup>102</sup>

The spring supposedly attracted pilgrims throughout the Middle Ages, but cures were not recorded actively until the eighteenth century.<sup>103</sup> The first known miracle (although the purported date varies significantly in the popular literature from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century), and that which attached it to the Virgin Mary, involved a shepherd and his mute child who were tending sheep in the area, then called Veréb or Verebély.<sup>104</sup> When the child went to look for water, the Virgin Mary, with the baby Jesus in her arms, appeared to him in the branches of a nearby tree, telling him where to find water. The boy found the

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<sup>98</sup> József Turóczi-Trostler, ed., *Magyar Simplicissimus* [The Hungarian Simplicissimus] (Budapest: "Művelt Nép" Tudományos és Ismeretterjesztő Könyvkiadó, 1956), quoted from Zoltán Magyar, *Hungarian Royal Saints: The Saints of the Arpadian Dynasty* (Herne: Gabriele Schäfer Verlag, 2012), 145-6.

<sup>99</sup> Zoltán Magyar, *Motif-Index of Early Hungarian Saints* (Herne: Gabriele Schäfer, 2009), 132. For similar motifs see: A972.1. A972.1. Indentions on rocks from imprint of gods and saints; A972.3.1. A972.3.1. Holes in stone caused by saint (warrior); A972.4. A972.4. Imprint of horse in rocks; A972.5.6. A972.5.6. Hole in stone caused by weapon of warrior, in Stith Thompson, *Motif-index of Folk-literature: A Classification of Narrative Elements in Folktales, Ballads, Myths, Fables, Medieval Romances, Exempla, Fabliaux, Jest-books, and Local Legends*, rev. ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1955-1958).

<sup>100</sup> Magyar, *Motif-Index of Early Hungarian Saints*, 142.

<sup>101</sup> Magyar, *Hungarian Royal Saints*, 107

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Dömötör, *Hungarian Folk Beliefs*, 247.

<sup>104</sup> Veréb was granted the rights of a market town by King Sigismund in 1398 (1398: DL 8316). Today the village is referred to as Verebély or Matraverébely. György Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori Magyarországi történelmi földrajza*, vol. 4 (Budapest: n.p., 1963-1987), 318; Dezső Csánki, *Magyarország történelmi földrajza a Hunyadiak korában*, vol. 1 (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1890-1913), 93; Kiss, *Földrajzi nevek etimológiai szótára*, 412.



place she had pointed out, drank from it, and was cured of his muteness.<sup>105</sup>

In addition to these legends, there are historical references to this site. The spring was known in charters since 1290 and by 1400 the papacy confirmed Mátráverebély's position as a shrine and place of pilgrimage. From the Chapter of Eger there is a transcription made in the year 1444 of an original charter from 1290 describing the areas of land owned by various persons in the territory in and surrounding today's Mátraverebely. The charter refers to the well simply as *ad fontem Vereb*.<sup>106</sup> Here the well is referred to as a point of reference, a boundary marker in a charter whose primary purpose is to record territorial boundaries. What is important here is that it was known and important enough to the community to serve as a boundary marker and the only well or fountain to be mentioned, although it is only one amongst many landmarks mentioned in the charter.

This second claim, Mátráverebély's position as a shrine and place of pilgrimage, is confirmed by papal records. A charter attributed to Pope Boniface IX, from November 9, 1400 offers is addressed to *parochialis ecclesia beate Marie de Vereb, Strigoniensis diocesis*.<sup>107</sup> Boniface IX's charter granted the parish church of Mátráverebély the same indulgences as those of the pilgrimage sites at Aachen and Assisi; it can therefore be assumed that the site was already a place of pilgrimage or that church leaders at the site were making efforts to promote it. What is missing from this charter is any reference to the

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<sup>105</sup>Dömötör, *Hungarian Folk Beliefs*, 247.

<sup>106</sup>MS Dl. 1303, 1444-06-01, MKA, *Neo-regestrata acta* (Q 311).

<sup>107</sup>*Cupientes igitur, ut parochialis ecclesia beate Marie de Vereb, Strigoniensis diocesis, a Christifidelibus congruis honoribus frequentetur, et etiam conservetur, omnibus vere penitentibus et confessis, qui a primis vespere usque ad secundos vespere festivitatis Assumptionis beate Marie virginis predictam ecclesiam devote visitaverint annuatim, et ad conservationem huiusmodi manus porrexerint adiutrices, illas indulgentias et remissionem suorum peccatorum concedimus, quam beate Marie virginis de Portiuncula, alias dictam de Angelis extra muros Assisinate, primo et secundo diebus Augusti annuatim, nec non Collegiatam beate Marie de Aquisgrani, Leodiensis diocesis, ecclesias in festivitate sancte Margarete virginis, quotienscumque dicta, festivitas sancte Margarete in die Sabbati celebratur, visitantes quomodolibet consequuntur. Et nichilominus . . . ut dilectus filius rector dicte parochialis ecclesie . . . per se duodecim alias presbiteros ydoneos . . . in confessores eligere possit et etiam deputare, qui confessiones quarumcumque personarum . . . in ipsa festivitate Assumptionis et per tres dies dictam festivitatem Assumptionis immediate precedentes dumtaxat audire et eisdem personis . . . debitam absolutionem impendere valeant ac iniungere penitentiam salutarem, nisi forsantalia fuerint, propter que Sedes Apostolica sit merito consulenda. . . indulgemus. Presentibus perpetuis futuris temporibus duraturis. Datum Rome apud Sanctum Petrum Quinto Idus Novembris Anno Duodecimo.* Charter 312, 1400 9 Nov., *Monumenta Vaticana historiam regni Hungariæ illustrantia* .... IV (Budapest: 1884- )252.

miraculous *ad fontem Vereb*. Can one assume that the fountain was the primary attraction at Vereb? Or was the connection of the Virgin Mary to the fountain a later invention, influenced by the growth of the Marian cult in the High Middle Ages and the popularity of other Marian pilgrimage places such as Mariazell in Austria?<sup>108</sup>

The influence of Mariazell can be seen, for instance, in the statue of the Virgin Mary and the child Jesus like the one at Mariazell, which stands in the chapel of Mátráverebély. A similarly inspired recreation of a popular Marian pilgrimage site is located just steps from the well: a reconstruction of the cave at Lourdes where religious services are held. However, unlike at Mariazell, it is not Mátráverebély's statue but the well that is attributed miraculous qualities, and one need not view the promotion of the Marian cult in Hungary as solely a phenomenon of the later Middle Ages. Although the Marian cult became more popular in Central Europe from the twelfth century onwards,<sup>109</sup> the Virgin Mary (*Nagyboldogasszony*) had a significant presence in Christian Hungary from very early in its Christianization. The country was dedicated to the Virgin by St. Stephen according to the *Legenda maior* of the saint king and St. Gerard himself was noted as having promoted devotion to the Virgin in his vita.<sup>110</sup> It could even be said that Gerard was in a sense the, “founder of the Hungarian cult of the virgin as well as the idea of *Regnum Marianum*.”<sup>111</sup>

It is uncertain if the holy well of Mátráverebély was actually considered sacred during the Middle Ages or that it attracted pilgrims any earlier than the Early Modern period. It can

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<sup>108</sup>For the pilgrimage cult at Mariazell and specifically its relationship with Hungary see: Walter Brunner et al., ed., *Mariazell és Magyarország: 650 év vallási kapcsolatai, Strigonium Antiquum 6* (Esztergom: Esztergom-Budapesti Főegyházmegeye, 2003), and especially: Péter Farbaky and Szabolcs Serfőző, ed., *Mariazell és Magyarország: Egy zarándokhely emlékezete*. Budapest Történelmi Múzeum Kiscelli Múzeumában, 2004. május 28-szeptember 12 (Budapest: Budapesti Történelmi Múzeum, 2004).

<sup>109</sup>See Miri Rubin's book for a succinct discussion on the role of the Virgin Mary in medieval Christian tradition: Miri Rubin, *Emotion and Devotion: The Meaning of Mary in Medieval Religious Cultures* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2009), esp. 17-19. For a discussion of how the cult of Mary was adopted in the kingdom of Hungary see: Gábor Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, 139-42.

<sup>110</sup>Madzsar, *Legenda S. Gerhardi Episcopi*, 473-4.

<sup>111</sup>Sólymos, *Paradisum Plantavit*, 596. On the concept of the “*Regnum Marianum*,” see: Dezső Dümmerth, “A Mária országa-eszme és Szent István,” in József Török, ed., *Doctor et apostol. Szent István-tanulmányok* (Budapest: Márton Áron Kiadó, 1994), 171-98.

be said, however, that there was a church at Mátraverebély that likely hosted pilgrims during the Middle Ages and that there also existed a well near this church; any further assumptions concerning the holy well would be based on folkloric evidence.

## 2.5 Marianka

If Mátraverebély can be considered the Mariazell of Hungary, then Marianka is the Mariazell of Slovakia. Here, however, the similarities between Mariazell and Marianka are more striking. According to legend, as early as the early eleventh century hermits lived in the forest of Marianka. One of these hermits carved a statue of the Virgin and Child, which bears a striking resemblance to the Mariazell statue. During pagan uprisings in the mid-eleventh century the hermit hid the statue in the hollow of a tree (or, in alternate versions, this was done to hide it from thieves). The statue was forgotten there until the thirteenth century when a man prayed to the Virgin Mary to help his disfigured child. The Virgin Mary appeared to him in a dream, telling him to go to the nearby forest to a certain tree where the statue had been hidden, and under that tree he would find a stream from which the child should drink. The child drank from it, was healed, and the spring's miraculous properties spread.<sup>112</sup>

At Marianka then, a combination of two pilgrimage-site archetypes is present: the miraculous statue and the holy well (or in this case, stream) making it a formidable sacred place. Unfortunately, however, Marianka's past is composed more of folklore than historical documentation. The origin of the statue is dubious. In their study on Hungarian pilgrimages, Sándor Bálint and Gábor Barna claim that though according to folk tradition the statue was carved from a linden tree in 1030, according to research by an "unknown specialist" the statue was carved by a (likely Hungarian) artist between 1240 and 1260,<sup>113</sup> a clearly unsubstantiated claim.

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<sup>112</sup> Sándor Bálint and Gábor Barna, *Búcsújáró Magyarok: A magyarországi búcsújárás története és néprajza* (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1994), 74.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 338.

However, Marianka must have been a place of some spiritual significance, as King Louis the Great of Hungary, who had also built the basilica at Mariazell, founded a Pauline monastery at Marianka in 1377,<sup>114</sup> and, according to some scholars, Marianka then became the most important pilgrimage place in Hungary at the time.<sup>115</sup> While Marianka was certainly an important pilgrimage place in the Middle Ages, it is uncertain if the stream itself was considered holy in the Middle Ages or if again it was an Early Modern invention.

## 2.6 St. Martin's Mountain

St. Martin's Mountain in the village of Pannonhalma is a case of a place considered special or holy due to its association with a saint, but where the association was later overshadowed by other religious or spiritual characteristics. According to tradition St. Martin of Tours (316-397) was born at the base of this mountain, and therefore the place took on his name. The mountain is called "St. Martin's Mountain," in the *Anonymi Bele Regis Notarii Gesta Hungarorum*, the oldest extant chronicle of the history of the Hungarians. This thirteenth-century chronicle recounting the movements of Prince Árpád's army states, "... Prince Árpád and his warriors encamped beside St. Martin's Mountain, and they and their beasts drank of the spring of Sabaria. Having ascended the mountain and seen the beauty of the land of Pannonia, they became exceedingly happy."<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok*, 43; Tamás Guzsik and Rudolf Fehérváry, *A pálosrend építészeti emlékei a középkori Magyarországon* [Architecture of the Pauline order in medieval Hungary] (Budapest: BME, 1980), 10; Lajos Némethy, *Series parochiarum et parochorum Archi-dioecesis Strigoniensis: ab antiquissimis temporibus usque annum MDCCCXCIV* (Strigonii: Typis G. Buzárovits, 1894), 160; Jakab Rupp, *Magyarország helyrajzi története* [Topographical history of Hungary] I-III (Pest: Eggenberger Ferdinánd Akad. Könyvtárusnál, 1870-1876), 165-172; *Documenta Artis Paulinorum* I. Kézirat. (Budapest: 1975-78), 278-364; Bálint and Barna, *Búcsújáró Magyarok*, 74

<sup>115</sup> Martin Čičo, "A Mariazelli Szűzanya Tisztelete Poszonyban," in *Mariazell és Magyarország*, 217.

<sup>116</sup> *Dux autem arpad et sui milites sic eundo iuxta montem sancti martinj castra metati sunt, et de fonte sabarie tam ipsi quam eorum animalia biberunt. Et montem ascendentes et uisa puchritu(di)ne terre pannonie, njimis leti facti sunt. Et inde egressi usque ad rabam et rabuceam uenerunt, sclauorum et pannoniorum gentes et regna uastauerunt et eorum regiones occupauerunt.* For the Latin text see: Simon Kézai, *Gesta Hungarorum/Deeds of the Hungarians*, László Veszprémy and Frank Schaer, ed. and trans. (Budapest: Central European Press, 1999). For the newest English translation see: Martyn Rady, László Veszprémy, and János M. Bak, ed., trans., and annotated, *Anonymi Bele Regis Notarii Gesta Hungarorum: Magistri Rogerii Epistola in miserabile carmen super destructione regni Hungarie per Tartaros facta* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2010), 107.

The life of St. Martin, written by his friend Sulpicius Severus (c. 360-c. 420) in 397 before the former's death, states that Martin was born in Sabaria, in Pannonia.<sup>117</sup> Sabaria is typically equated with the Hungarian city of Szombathely, located over 100 kilometers from the Mount of St. Martin. However, as demonstrated in the previously mentioned chronicle, there was also a spring known by the same name at St. Martin's Mountain, which would account for the dual traditions of origin.<sup>118</sup>

This association with Martin, the mountain's impressive view, and because Benedict was characteristically known as a "mountain-lover," all contributed to the choice of the Mount of St. Martin as the site of the first Benedictine monastery, "in accordance with old Benedictine traditions."<sup>119</sup> Prince Géza founded the monastery here in 996 and in 1002 King Stephen granted the monastery the same privileges as that of the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino. Some of the first Benedictine monks, many of whom had at least spent some of their lives as hermits, settled at the abbey, and the abbey developed a heremitic tradition.<sup>120</sup> The abbey continued to grow and gain grants and privileges both from the popes and the Hungarian kings. By the height of the Middle Ages, the Pannonhalma Archabbey truly could be called a "symbol of Western monasticism."<sup>121</sup>

St. Martin's Mountain was considered a *mons sacer* from the early Middle Ages because of its association with St. Martin, but it never became an important pilgrimage site or a sanctuary believed to host Martin's saintly presence, although we can assume pilgrims probably did visit the place, especially since the site was on the pilgrimage route to

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<sup>117</sup> Régine Pernoud, *Martin of Tours: Soldier, Bishop, and Saint* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 12-19; Sulpicius Severus, in "The Life of Saint Martin of Tours," *The Western Fathers Being the Lives of Martin of Tours, Ambrose, Augustine of Hippo, Honoratus of Arles and Germanus of Auxerre*, trans. F. R. Hoare (NY: Sheed & Ward, 1954), 1-9.

<sup>118</sup> *Gesta Hungarorum*, 107, fn. 3.

<sup>119</sup> Gáspár Csóka, *Pannonhalma: Pictorial Guide to the History and Sights of the Benedictine Abbey* (Pannonhalma: Pannonhalmi Főapátság 1996), 5.

<sup>120</sup> Sóllymos, "The First Benedictine Monks in Hungary," 588-596, *Paradisum Plantavit*.

<sup>121</sup> Csóka, *Pannonhalma*, 2.

Jerusalem.<sup>122</sup> It did, however, possess a multilayered spiritual character with its connection to St. Martin, hermitic tradition, and ecclesiastical importance, which imbued it with a spiritual ambience unique amongst the holy places of Hungary.<sup>123</sup>

We do not have the benefit of hagiography for the interpretation of the above six sites. Instead, folklore associated with the sites in question indicates popular motifs and traditions that have circulated in local communities for hundreds of years and historic sources reveal when and how such sites were officially identified. What these two sources express sometimes coincide and sometimes differ, but both cases can be revealing.

The sites discussed above all had some sort of religious or spiritual connection — by the presence, for instance, of a pilgrimage church, monastic foundation, or folkloric tradition. However, it cannot be said with certainty that these places in the landscape were holy sites during the Middle Ages, in the same way that Margaret Island or Jasna Góra were. Even if the actual medieval sacrality of these sites cannot be proven, it was the “medieval-ness” that was later imposed on them that made them sacred sites during the Early Modern period.

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<sup>122</sup>Albert of Aachen describes how King Coloman received and entertained the leaders of the First Crusade of their way to the Holy Land at Pannonhalma. While these events were not religious in themselves they may have set the tone for future pilgrims passing through the area. Albert (of Aachen), *Albert of Aachen's History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, Vol. 1, trans. Susan B. Edgington (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2013), 44, 45, 47, 269.

<sup>123</sup>For more on the history of Pannonhalma see: Imre Takács, ed., *Mons sacer, 996-1996: Pannonhalma 1000 éve* (Pannonhalma, Hungary: Pannonhalmi Főapátság, 1996) and Takács, ed., *Paradisum plantavit*.

### CHAPTER THREE: CENTRALITY VS REMOTENESS: A SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF SACRED SITES

In the preceding chapters I have analyzed a selection of sites from the standpoint of the written sources – the hagiography, historical documents, and folklore. This is a useful and necessary element in beginning to decipher these places, but these sites are still, essentially, places, and how one interacts with and perceives a place is largely determined by its spatial elements. This is especially true for pilgrimage sites, for here the location and arrangement of the site are absolutely essential to the pilgrim’s perception of his or her spiritual journey, possible miracles, and relationship with the saint.

In 1990 Mary Lee Nolan completed a large, comprehensive study entitled, “Shrine Locations: Ideals and Realities in Continental Europe,” an analysis of over 6,000 shrines.<sup>124</sup> The study examines one of the basic problems of Christian sacred space, the dichotomy of the “celestial center” and the “sacred periphery.” This problem relates also to the one of the major problems addressed in this study, that it, how a place becomes sacred and what is the contribution of geography to sacrality. Shrines located in “centers,” had their advantages and attractiveness; they could be reached by a greater number of people and could serve as the spiritual (and often the economic) backbone of a community. This is exemplified in the ultimate spiritual center, Jerusalem, as well as the center of Christianity in the West, Rome, and in the East, Constantinople. But the periphery had its lure as well. It had a multi-layered appeal, representing both the desert of Christ and the early hermit saints where they faced temptation as well as a “Garden of Eden” in the earthly world, unspoiled and separate from the constructed world of man. Peripheral sites had the additional benefit of distance, for the journey was central to pilgrimage, and the further one travelled the greater the spiritual

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<sup>124</sup> Mary Lee Nolan, “Shrine Locations: Ideals and Realities in Continental Europe,” in *Luoghi sacri e spazi della santità*, ed. Sofia Boesch Gajano and Lucetta Scaraffia (Torino: Rosenberg & Sellier, 1990), 75-84. The study is described in greater detail in: Mary Lee Nolan and Sidney Nolan, *Christian Pilgrimage in Modern Western Europe*, Studies in Religion (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

reward.

In Nolan's study she considers Christian shrines located in Western Europe that were still active in the later twentieth century.<sup>125</sup> But how do Nolan's results compare with medieval Central Europe? Do Central Europe's shrines uphold the same ideals as those of Western Europe, or is there a pronounced difference? In this study there is the additional element that the holy place is largely defined by a topographical or natural feature, unlike Nolan's study in which only four percent of the shrines were considered holy solely because of a "sacred environmental feature."<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Nolan analyzes shrines located in Italy, France, Spain, West Germany, Austria, Portugal, Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Norway. Excluding Austria, she did not include shrines located in the countries considered in this study. Nolan, *Christian Pilgrimage*, 5.

<sup>126</sup> However, of the shrines Nolan includes, about forty-four percent contain one or more "sacred environmental feature" (in addition to relics or sacred images that the site might host; the environmental feature was not necessarily the focus of sacred power at the site), but there is no indication of when these sacred features began to be considered as such, leading me to believe that many are likely of early modern origin. Nolan, "Shrine Locations," Table 4, 5, pp. 81, 82.



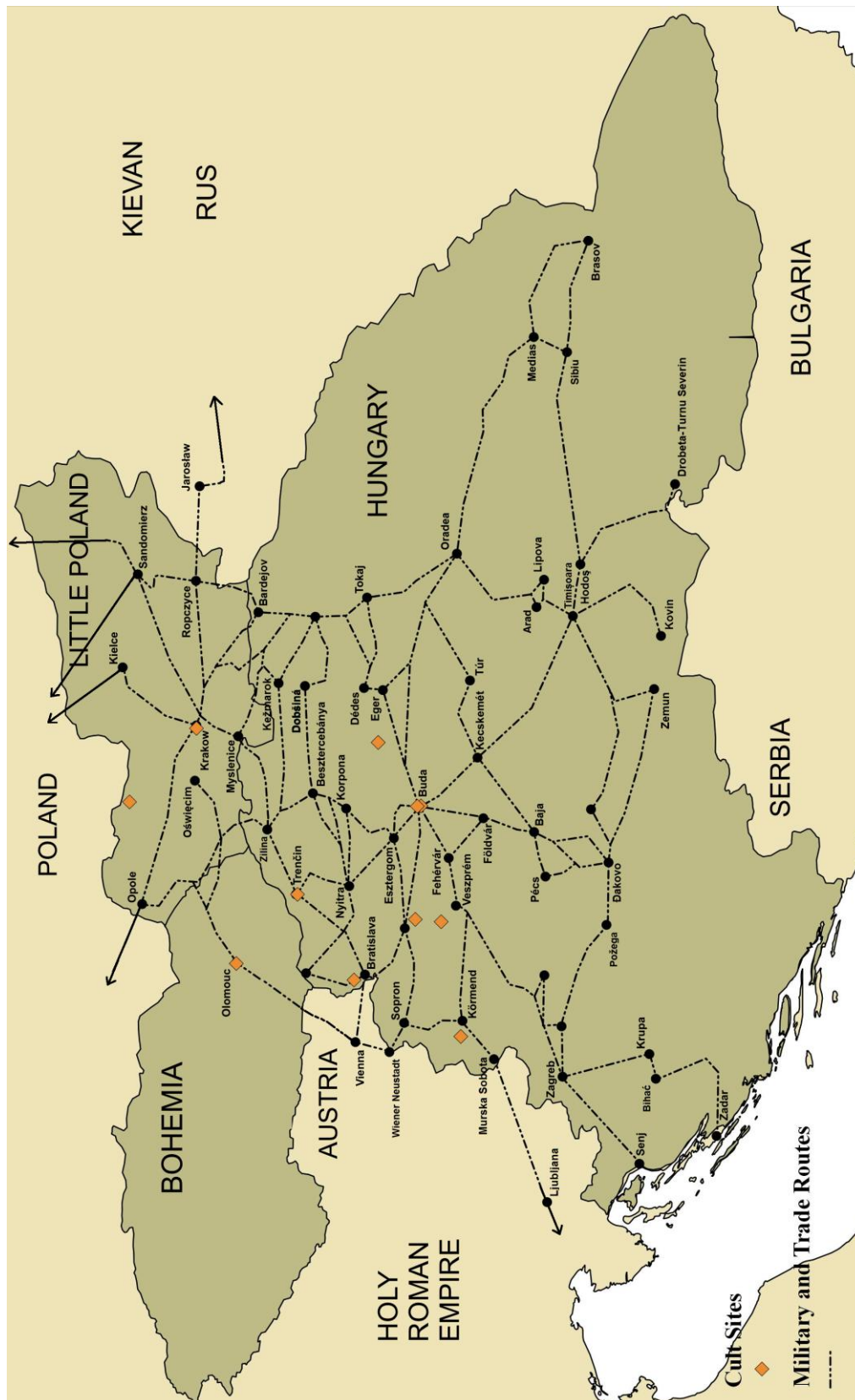


Figure 5. Major military and trade routes in Central Europe, 13th-14th c.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>127</sup> Please note: Cities are given by their modern-day names and in the language of their modern-day country of origin.

To measure remoteness or centrality I analyze historic maps and use GIS (Geographic Information Systems) as a method to store, organize, georeference and visualize geographical information.<sup>128</sup> Perhaps both the simplest and the most immediately indicative way to measure remoteness or centrality of a site is to analyze its distance from population centers as well as its accessibility. I thus am looking at the relationship between natural cult sites, and the major towns, cities, and roads of Central Europe.

The above map illustrates the major towns and cities and the military and trade routes dating from the thirteenth to the fourteenth centuries found in the area of Central Europe that is our focus.<sup>129</sup> All of the cult sites analyzed in this study neglecting Capistran's Well at Olomouc had by this time come into existence. Capistran's Well at the earliest would have been known by the mid-fifteenth century, however Olomouc continued to be an important town in Bohemia and the road running through Olomouc pictured on the map continued to be used for many hundreds of years later, so the map still is valid in the case of Capistran's well.

What is perhaps most striking is how many of the sites are located in or very near towns or cities. Six are located along roads, five of which are also located in cities, and a further two are within twenty kilometers of a town or city. Only three sites: Bakonybél, Mátraverebély, and Jasna Góra, are located in comparatively remote areas.

People often associate natural cult sites with remoteness. There is the assumption that sacred natural features such as mountains or springs are things of the wilderness, of the forest, not something close to our secular world as it is the distance that contributes to their sacredness. This is a concept addressed by Victor W. Turner and Edith L. B. Turner, in their

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<sup>128</sup> I do not use GIS to complete statistical analyses of my data at this time, however, research on the sacred sites of Central Europe would benefit greatly from such analyses in the future.

<sup>129</sup> I have created this map with GIS using several other maps depicting trade and military roads as a reference. For the primary military and trade routes in Hungary I used the map created by Attila Zsoldos found in: Gyula Kristó, ed., *Korai magyar történelmi lexikon (9-14. sz.)* [Early Hungarian historical lexicon (9th-14th c.)] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1994). For those roads extending north of Hungary into Poland I used the following maps from F. W. Carter, *Trade and Urban Development in Poland: An economic geography of Cracow, from its origins to 1795*. Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography (Book 20) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): Fig. 9. Cracow's land routes with northern Hungary in the Later Middle Ages, 72 and Fig. 11. Principal trade routes from Cracow, 95.

definition of pilgrimage in the sense of liminality, as a “movement from a mundane center to a sacred periphery.”<sup>130</sup> But, in fact, what denotes a “wilderness” is subjective. Wilderness might simply refer to the woodland or any uncultivated land, regardless of the distance from inhabited areas.

So why is remoteness the exception and not the rule in this case? What makes Bakonybél, Mátraverebély, and Jasna Góra unique? Certainly there is the eremitic element. Bakonybél was the site of the hermitage of both saints Günther and Gerard. There are several hermits’ caves at Mátraverebély carved into the nearby hill and overlooking the holy well (fig. 6). These hermits’ caves were not used until the eighteenth century, however, and given the religious climate and romanticism of nature at the time, it is not surprising that a remote site was chosen. But we cannot think of these sites as entirely isolated. Bakonybél may have been a hermit’s haven, but it was also the site of Benedictine monastery, founded between 1016 and 1020 by King Steven, and also previously a royal curia, making it a “center” in its own right.<sup>131</sup> Mátraverebély too, while more remote, was less than ten kilometers from the village of Pásztó, the site of both Benedictine and Cistercian twelfth-century foundations.<sup>132</sup> Pásztó was also an important town in its own right—it was had the privilege of a market town from the fourteenth century.<sup>133</sup> Mátraverebély itself, however, was considered important enough to include in the *Tabula Hungariae* or Lazar Map, the earliest extant printed map of Hungary from ca. 1528, where it is depicted by an icon of a church and the title “Werbil” (fig. 7 and fig. 8).

Jasna Góra, the northernmost of the sites and the most remote, also had links to eremitism as it was the site of a Pauline foundation. The Order of St. Paul the First Hermit

<sup>130</sup> Victor Witter Turner and Edith L. B. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (NY: Columbia University Press, 2013), 34.

<sup>131</sup> Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok*, 12; Gáspár, “Bakonybél,” 77.

<sup>132</sup> Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok*, 68.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 68; Ilona Valter, “Pásztó, egy Zsigmond-kori mezőváros,” in *Művészet Zsigmond király korában 1387–1437*. I Katalógus, ed. László Beke, Ernő Marosi, and Tünde Wehli (Budapest: MTA Művészettörténeti Kutató Csoport, 1987), 271–282.

had a mixed character, comprised of monastic, mendicant, and eremitic elements, but the eremitic elements were particularly strong, not surprising given their namesake.<sup>134</sup> As such it is no surprise that Pauline monks would be attracted to isolated places, ideal for quiet spiritual contemplation.<sup>135</sup> Today Jasna Góra is surrounded by the city of Częstochowa, but before the foundation of the Pauline monastery in 1382, Częstochowa was but a small town and Jasna Góra would still have been a relatively remote location.<sup>136</sup> Adding to the attraction of a remote location is the viewshed of Jasna Góra, which is certainly impressive.<sup>137</sup> At its tallest point it reaches 295 m above sea level, although not particularly tall by mountain standards, it is a singular place in the surrounding area, which is comparatively flat.<sup>138</sup> The hermitic character of the Pauline Order at Jasna Góra is more pronounced if compared to other Polish Pauline foundations. The Pauline monastery at Beszowa, founded in 1421, was located in a central location on an important route to the city of Lublin. The monastery “explicitly ministered to the parish whose church they took over,” so site selection in this case was motivated more by the later mendicant character of the order.<sup>139</sup>

However, the Pauline link cannot be the sole justification for the remote nature of this holy place. Firstly, two of our “central” holy places, Marianka and the Pool of St. Stanislaus, are also sites of Pauline foundations and the Pauline Order has a history of paradoxically

<sup>134</sup> Romhányi, “Life in the Pauline Monasteries of Late Medieval Hungary,” 53-6.

<sup>135</sup> Máté Urbán, “Pálos zarándokhelyek a késő középkori Magyarországon,” 64.

<sup>136</sup> Jerzy Groch, “The Town-Formative Function of the Jasna Góra Shrine,” 204.

<sup>137</sup> Though not within the scope of this study, future study of the cult sites of Central Europe would benefit from analysis of viewshed and intervisibility with GIS. Such studies have been revealing in other regions and time periods, see, for example: Will Megarry, “Pastoralism and Peak? A GIS Study into the origins of Minoan peak sanctuaries in Eastern Crete,” in *On the Road to Reconstructing the Past*, ed. Erzsébet Jerem, Ferenc Redő, and Vajk Szeverényi, (Budapest: Archaeolingua, 2011), 415-22; S. Soetens, A. Sarris, K. Vansteenhuyse, and S. Topouzi, “GIS Variations on a Cretan Theme: Minoan Peak Sanctuaries,” in *Metron: Measuring the Aegean Bronze Age, Aegaeum 24*, ed. K. P. Foster and R. Laffineur, (Liège/Austin, 2003), 483-488; John Waldron and Elliot M. Abrams, “Adena Burial Mounds and Inter-Hamlet Visibility: A GIS Approach,” *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology* 24/1 (Spring, 1999): 97-111. Another revealing study that has a parallel approach to the present study, though it does not use the statistical analytical capabilities of GIS, is: Anders Andréén, “The significance of places: the Christianization of Scandinavia from a spatial point of view,” *World Archaeology* 45/1, *Archaeology in Religious Change* (March 2013): 27-45

<sup>138</sup> Groch, “The Town-Formative Function of the Jasna Góra Shrine,” 203.

<sup>139</sup> Maniura, *Pilgrimage to Images*, 132-133.

founding monasteries in more central locations.<sup>140</sup> The presence of the Paulines at Jasna Góra has more to do with politics than the attraction of a certain kind of geography. Duke Ladislaus of Opole, the founder of the Pauline monastery, was a relative of King Louis the Great of Hungary and spent some time in his court where he likely became acquainted with the order. The year before the foundation at Jasna Góra, the Paulines had achieved a major victory for their order when they received the body of St. Paul the First Hermit. Certainly this was a time when the Pauline Order was in *vogue*.

In the above map centrality is clearly dominant to remoteness. Capistran's Well, Margaret Island, Gellért Hill, Skalka, and the Pool of St. Stanislaus are all located within major cities. The remaining two sites are neither located in cities or on a major road, but they are not exactly isolated locations either – Pannonhalma is located about twenty kilometers from the nearest city, Győr, and Ulrich's Spring in Heiligenbrunn is a little over 15 kilometers from Körmend.

Mircea Eliade has referred to holy places as “centres,” saying, “Every temple or palace, and by extension, every sacred town or royal residence is assimilated to a ‘sacred mountain’ [‘where heaven and earth meet’] and thus becomes a centre.”<sup>141</sup> All holy places are “centers” to some extent in the way Eliade describes, being a focal point between the heavenly and earthly spheres, a point where man and God communicate. But did the location of a holy site within an already important secular place significantly contribute to the site's sacrality?

These sites were situated in central locations, making them more easily accessible and more visible, however it is their precise placement within these locations that is significant to their conception as sacred. The five cult places located in cities were all located on the

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<sup>140</sup> Urbán, “Pálos zarándokhelyek a késő középkori Magyarországon,” 64.

<sup>141</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. R. Sheed (London: Sheed & Ward, 1958), 375; Robert A. Markus, “How on Earth Could Places Become Holy,” *Journal of Christian Studies* 2, No. 3 (Fall 1994), 258.

respective city's periphery. Margaret Island and Gellért Hill frame Buda's northern and southern edge (fig. 9).<sup>142</sup> Capistran's Well was located in the Observant Convent of Olomouc, which at the time of its foundation was at the edge of the town. According to the present tradition at the monastery, the well was located at the walls of the city where the women washed clothing, and situated in two possible locations – either where today stands a grand marble well just outside the walls of the church, or at the site of a more humble spigot in the cloister gardens (fig. 10 and 11).<sup>143</sup> Similarly, the Pool of St. Stanislaus was located just outside of what at the time was the city of Cracow, in the nearby suburb of Kazimierz (fig. 12). In the Middle Ages the Vistula River split into tributaries around Cracow, dividing the central area of Cracow — Wawel, where the cathedral and Royal Court are located — from Kazimierz. Lastly, Skalka and Marianka are located about ten kilometers from important cities, Trenčín and Bratislava, respectively, putting them outside the secular sphere but still conveniently close for the casual pilgrim.

This trend is concurrent with Nolan's finds.<sup>144</sup> She claims that the opposing ideals of centrality and remoteness found resolution through compromise resolutions.<sup>145</sup> Nolan states, for instance, that “where topography permits, hilltops overlooking urban centers, have often been chosen for shrines,” and that “many other shrines are on the edges of towns and cities, or a few kilometers beyond in the countryside or village.”<sup>146</sup> This is evident in Buda, where Gellért Hill overlooks the city, although the church dedicated to St. Gerard was built not on the top, but at the base of the hill (fig. 13). In this case the exact spot of martyrdom was favored over a more prominent location and greater viewshed.

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<sup>142</sup> The role of these two sites as the sacred periphery in Buda is analyzed in detail by Gábor Klaniczay in: “Domenicani, Eremiti Paolini e Francescani Osservanti Ungheresi e i Loro Santuari Alla Periferia,” 19-34; “Il monte di San Gherardo e l'isola di Santa Margherita,” 267-284.

<sup>143</sup> Personal communication with Dominican Brother Pavel Mayer, chaplain of the church, Klášter Dominikánů Olomouc, April 19, 2014.

<sup>144</sup> Nolan classifies about 70% of the shrines she analyzes as “Intermediate Shrines.” Nolan, “Shrine Locations,” Table 1, 80.

<sup>145</sup> Nolan, “Shrine Locations,” 76-7.

<sup>146</sup> Nolan, “Shrine Locations,” 77.

The situation at Skalka is the inversion of that of Gellért Hill. In representations of Buda, Gellért Hill rises up on the edge of the map, marking the sacred periphery of the city with a distinct natural feature. Maps depicting Cracow, however, show Wawel in the middle, situated on a limestone outcropping dominating the cityscape;<sup>147</sup> Skalka lies on the edge of the map, almost unnoticed on the flat, low-lying suburb of Kazimierz (fig. 14). But Skalka, and by extension the holy pool, also represented sacred periphery of the city. On the day of his martyrdom, St. Stanislaus had come to Skalka to pray as a sort of retreat from the city center. Ten years after his martyrdom, ca. 1088/89, the translation of his body from Skalka to the cathedral at Wawel saw the martyr's return to the city center. Liturgical celebrations beginning in the sixteenth century (though according to some scholars possibly earlier),<sup>148</sup> included processions from Stanislaus's tomb at Wawel to his place of martyrdom at Skalka.<sup>149</sup> It also became traditional that on the succession of a new Polish king, the king would be required to make a procession from Wawel to Skalka before the day of his

<sup>147</sup> F. W. Carter, *Trade and Urban Development in Poland: An economic geography of Cracow, from its origins to 1795*, Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography, Book 20 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 5.

<sup>148</sup> Most recently see, Maria Starnawska (*Świętych życie po życiu*, esp. 200-203); Idem, "Dominikanie, św. Jacek i elewacja szczątków św. Stanisława przez biskupa Prandotę" [Dominicans, St. Hyacinth and Elevation of Remains of St. Stanislaus by Bishop Prandota], 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), 419; Marian Plezia, *Dookoła sprawy świętego Stanisława* [Concerning the Report on St. Stanislaus] (repr. Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Homini, 1999), 70-102. For the dating to 1088 see in addition to Starnawska: Jerzy Rajman, "Przedkanonizacyjny kult św. Stanisława biskupa" [The Cult of Bishop Saint Stanislaus before the Canonisation], *Nasza Przyszłość* 80 (1993): 9-18; Gerard Labuda, *Święty Stanisław, Biskup krakowski, patron polski. Śladami zabójstwa – męczeństwa – kanonizacji* [Saint Stanislaus, the Bishop of Cracow, the Polish Patron Saint. Murder – Martyrdom – Canonisation] (Poznań: Instytut historii Uniwersytetu Adama Mickiewicza, 2000), 134-8, 142-3; Rożnowska-Sadraei, *Pater Patriae*, 17-26. See also the dating given in the Stanislaus vitae: (*Vita maior*, II, 20 (ff.) 388-9 and *Vita minor*, 282; and III, 1, 394), and in the Short Cracow Annals. For a more detailed bibliography, see: Kuzmova, "Preaching Saint Stanislaus," 17, fn. 19.

<sup>149</sup> Kuzmova, "Preaching Saint Stanislaus," 110-11.

coronation, in remembrance of the Polish patron's murder by a Polish king.<sup>150</sup>

These processions and depictions of Skalka illustrate the character of the cult of Stanislaus at Skalka and Wawel. Wawel was the center of Cracow, prominently displaying the Wawel Castle and Cathedral, the physical symbols of the state and the sacred. As Stanislava Kuzmova remarks, Wawel became “the centre of the official cult pertaining to the dynastic, episcopal and national patronage; while Skalka became the focus of folk worship.”<sup>151</sup> This is confirmed by the miracle accounts in Jan Długosz's life of the saint, twenty-six of the forty-two miracles recorded by Długosz were associated with Skalka, compared to only five at Wawel Cathedral.<sup>152</sup>

Not all sites were so close to their patrons and pilgrims. Skalka nad Váhom is located about six kilometers from the neighboring city of Trenčín. The sanctuary of Sts. Andrew and Benedict did not have the same kind of relationship with Trenčín as did Skalka with Cracow or Gellért Hill and Margaret Island with Buda, but here there was still a thriving local cult. While the site was a sanctuary of both Andrew and Benedict, it was Benedict who was the focus of the cult at Skalka nad Váhom and by 1208 a chapel was dedicated to him at the site.<sup>153</sup> This is not surprising as this was the site of his martyrdom, perhaps the most reliable way for a saint to form a connection with a place. Indeed, his blood is even said to still be visible in the cave paralleling the “staining of blood” at Gellért Hill and contributing an

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<sup>150</sup> For more on the pre-coronation process of Polish kings see, for example: Richard Roepell, “History of Poland,” *The Foreign Quarterly Review*, 28, Part 1 (Hamburg: 1840): 327; Kuzmova, “Preaching Saint Stanislaus,” 112; Michał Jagosz, “Procesje ku czci św. Stanisława z Wawelu na Skalkę w okresie przedrozbiorowym” [Processions in Honour of St. Stanislaus from Wawel to Skalka Before Partition Period], in *AC 9* (1979), 608-13; and idem, “Procesje ku czci św. Stanisława biskupa i męczennika z Wawelu na Skalkę,” [Processions in Honour of St. Stanislaus Martyr-Bishop from Wawel to Skalka], in *Święty Stanisław w życiu kościoła w Polsce. 750-lecie kanonizacji* [St Stanislaus in the Life of the Church in Poland. 750th Anniversary of Canonisation], ed. Andrzej A. Napiórkowski, (Cracow: Skalka, 2003), 161-172; Aleksander Gieysztor, “Gesture in the Coronation Ceremonies of Medieval Poland,” in *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual*, ed. János Bak (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 152-162.

<sup>151</sup> Kuzmova, “Preaching Saint Stanislaus,” 110. For the character of Stanislaus's cult at Skalka see also: Aleksandra Witkowska, *Kulty pątnicze piętnastowiecznego Krakowa* [Pilgrim Cults in Fifteenth-Century Cracow] (Lublin: Towarzystwo naukowe KUL, 1984).

<sup>152</sup> Kuzmova, “Preaching Saint Stanislaus,” 110.

<sup>153</sup> Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude*, 186-7.



additional, visual attraction element for pilgrims.<sup>154</sup>

More important than the relationship with the nearby city of Trenčín, was that between the site and the monastic community, which was established at the site. A Benedictine abbey was founded here in 1224 by Bishop Jacob I, and the site selection was largely motivated by the connection with Andrew and Benedict, though the saints' bodies did not rest there.<sup>155</sup> Paralleling the translation of Stanislaus's body to Wawel Cathedral, St. Benedict's body was translated from the place of his martyrdom to St. Emmeram's Cathedral in the bishopric of Nitra, which was also the closest city to the site of his first hermitage, Mount Zobor. And like the martyr Stanislaus, Andrew and Benedict became patron saints of Nitra.<sup>156</sup> Though the center of Andrew and Benedict's cult was in an official sense located at Nitra, the saints' popular cult remained almost ninety kilometers away at Skalka.<sup>157</sup>

Most natural cult sites had some sort of relationship with a monastic foundation. At times the monastery was founded at a site partly due to the site's already known sacred reputation, at other times the foundation spurred on or inspired the sacralization of a site. Perhaps the most evident example of the latter is at Margaret Island. A Premonstratensian abbey already existed on the island before King Béla began construction of a Dominican convent for his daughter there in 1246. Béla also had practical motivation for choosing the island as the future home of his daughter — the queen had a residence there and it was also the site of royal gardens. The island was part of Béla's building program in which the Danube was central after the Mongol invasion, and Margaret Island itself was the site of two military buildings. A Franciscan convent was later also established on Margaret Island in 1270, an

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<sup>154</sup>Szilveszter Sólymos, *Szent Zoerard-András (Szórád) és Benedek remeték élete és kultusza Magyarországon* (Budapest: Magyar Egyháztörténeti Enciklopédia Munkaközösség, 1996), 19.

<sup>155</sup>Sólymos, *Szent Zoerard-András (Szórád) és Benedek*, 15; Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude*, 187.

<sup>156</sup>Sólymos, *Szent Zoerard-András (Szórád) és Benedek*, 14.

<sup>157</sup> A church was built at Skalka on the presumed exact location of the hermitage and in 1520 a chapel was built along the Vah River by Count Thurzo where Benedict's body was believed to have been thrown. The site was particularly famous in the sixteenth-century when it drew in pilgrims from across the Vah valley and Moravia. Miladinov, "Margins of Solitude," 187.

indicator of the islands presence on the periphery of urban settlements.<sup>158</sup> The concentration of religious and royal institutions contributed to the island's importance, and its sacred remoteness in the time of King Béla is illustrated in his retirement to the royal curia attached to the nunnery, but this alone did not make the island sacred. The island's definitive sacralization came by way of its connection with St. Margaret. Gábor Klaniczay pinpoints the years 1273 to 1276 as essential to this sacralization process.<sup>159</sup> Two canonization trial proceedings occurred between these years, at which time over 130 people provided testimony of Margaret's sanctity and of miracles connected to Margaret and her tomb on the island.<sup>160</sup> The cult of St. Margaret proved to be one of the most important in Hungary, even though both of these canonization attempts failed and she was not properly canonized until 1943.

So in medieval Central Europe is the axiom of Greek philosopher Heraclitus, "geography is fate," true? Yes — but only to an extent. Certain natural features — hills, mountains, fountains, rocky outcroppings — attract spiritual and religious connotations. Certain spatial qualities, in particular a site's presence on the periphery of a community, also make places especially receptive to sacred nuances. But if this were universally true then all mountains would be considered holy, which while maybe true in some cultures, is not the case in medieval Christian Europe. Natural cult sites were just as much victims of chance as of fate. Political circumstances and the promotion of certain cults in certain places over others contributed to the final "choice" of a particular environmental feature. This was a process that could occur from the top or bottom — by popular veneration or official promotion — but more often than not one had to follow the other to fully solidify the sacralization process.

Central shrines only accounted for a little over a tenth of the total shrines in Mary Lee

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<sup>158</sup> Gábor Klaniczay, "Il monte di San Gherardo e l'isola di Santa Margherita," 267-284. For a detailed description of the monastic foundations on Margaret Island and a succinct bibliography see: Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok*, 16.

<sup>159</sup> Klaniczay, "Il monte di San Gherardo e l'isola di Santa Margherita," 272.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

Nolan's study,<sup>161</sup> while over half of the sites analyzed here can be categorized as such. Despite their "centrality" almost all of these natural cult sites adhere to the concept of the sacred periphery. In the case of medieval Central Europe then, the assertion made by Victor and Edith Turner that most holy places in major religions are located on the edge or periphery of towns, cities, or other territorial units, holds true.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Nolan, "Shrine Locations," Table 1, 80.

<sup>162</sup> Turner & Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*, 241. For more on the Victor Turners' views on liminality in major religions see, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975).

## CONCLUSION

I have examined these sites from three perspectives: the hagiography and miracle accounts, the folkloric and historic sources, and spatial analysis. The five sites for which there is hagiographic material — Skalka nad Váhom, Jasna Góra, Margaret Island, the Pool of St. Stanislaus, and Gellért Hill — exhibit some similar features by way of their associated origin legends and miracles. The earlier eleventh-century hagiography concerning saints Andrew and Benedict (Skalka nad Váhom) and St. Gerard (Gellért Hill), both relate to hermit saints and the typical hermetic topoi are present in both, though St. Gerard was a more complex figure and his vitae reflect this as well. All three saints, significantly, were amongst the first saints to be canonized in medieval Hungary in 1083. Thus their vitae record some of the first (Christian) religious interactions with the landscape in medieval Hungary.

The fourteenth-century hagiography related Margaret Island, Jasna Góra, and the Pool of St. Stanislaus present later expressions of medieval religiosity in Central Europe. The Pool of St. Stanislaus and Jasna Góra were both intimately tied with the Pauline Order, which had grown in prominence by the end of the fourteenth century. In fact one third of the Pauline monasteries in medieval Hungary were pilgrimage sites and ten percent of pilgrimages made in medieval Hungary were to Pauline pilgrimage sites.<sup>163</sup> Another example of fourteenth century religiosity is expressed in the figure of St. Margaret of Margaret Island, one of the most important saints in Hungary and one of the best examples of female religious expression of the period.

In all five of these sites, the hagiography and miracle stories emphasized the importance of place and space. Emphasis on water and blood as conduits of spiritual power further tied a saint's figure to the landscape. In the hagiographic literature the sacred place

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<sup>163</sup> Máté Urbán, "Pálos Zarándokhelyek A Késő Középkori Magyarországon," 64.

often becomes the symbolic and actual representation of the saint on earth, by virtue of the saint's interaction with the site, and especially if the saint had died there.

When no hagiographic sources are present, historic and folkloric sources attest to the multi-faceted character of the final six sites – Capistran's Well, St. Ulrich's Spring, the Ivy Well, Mátraverebély, Marianka, and St. Martin's Mountain. Even without medieval miracle stories, these sites can be proven to have existed in the Middle Ages in some capacity, which is more than can be said about many other supposedly medieval natural cult sites. They also reveal other ways in which religion affected the landscape. The presence of hermits, such as Gunther and Gerard, permanently connected these two foreign saints to the village of Bakonybél, and to its landscape features like the Ivy Well and Gellért's Rock. At St. Martin's Mountain, legend, a strategic location, and an impressive height, also permanently linked the site with the Hungarian church from the tenth century onwards, so much so that its religious connotations have become equivalent to the mountain's identity.

Collectively, these natural cult sites exhibit some definitive patterns. The opposing shrine ideals of centrality and remoteness find compromise in the concept of the sacred periphery. Most of the sites discussed here were located very near important towns and roads, making them more prominent and accessible. However, they preserved the mystique we would expect to find at natural cult sites by their locations at the edge of towns or centers, and "separated" from the mundane sphere in some capacity—by height like at Gellért Hill, or by water (the tributary of the Vistula River) as at the Pool of St. Stanislaus.

The sacred periphery as embodied in these natural cult sites seems to reflect similar findings in Western Europe, and certainly there are commonalities between the two regions. Mary Lee Nolan's study of shrine locations reflected similar findings with "intermediate shrines" representing the majority of shrines in modern Western Europe. There are commonalities of religious expression as well. Miri Rubin in her work on the role of the

Virgin Mary in medieval religion, has made the insightful remark that we need not make Western Europe as the “center” and Central and Eastern Europe as the “periphery” too strict a dichotomy. She offers the example of the promotion of the Marian cult by St. Stephen of Hungary and the parallel promotion by the Cluny Abbey, saying, “Taken together, the moves made towards Mary by the King of Hungary and by the leaders of the Cluniac congregation seem more akin than apart, more alike than not. They suggest that events at the ‘center’ and the ‘periphery’ are often best looked at in different combinations...”<sup>164</sup>

Nevertheless, it cannot be ignored that the natural cult sites in the area of Central Europe examined in this study exhibited singular characteristics that differ considerably from other parts of Europe. Perhaps the aspect that is at first most striking is that there simply are much fewer natural cult sites in Central Europe than in Western Europe, and especially compared to areas such as the British Isles, another supposed “frontier” region of medieval Europe. In Britain many holy sites are considered to have originally been pagan sites, Christianized by medieval missionaries in an effort to convert the general population.<sup>165</sup> The smaller number of natural cult sites in Central Europe may be a result of the “quicker” Christianization that occurred in Central Europe and particularly in the Hungarian kingdom, and a stricter denunciation of pagan places and practices because of the very real threat so-

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<sup>164</sup> Miri Rubin, *Emotion and Devotion*, 19.

<sup>165</sup> For discussion of the pagan origins of medieval well cults in medieval Britain and Wales see: Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 34-5; John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 221-8, 471-89; Warwick Rodwell, *The Archaeology of the English Church: The Study of Historic Churches and Churchyards* (London: Batsford, Ltd., 1981); John Blair, “Minster Churches in the Landscape,” in Della Hooke (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Settlements* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 35-58; *Ibid.*, “Churches in the Early English Landscape: Social and Cultural Contexts,” and Nancy Edwards, “Identifying the Archaeology of the Early Church in Wales and Cornwall,” in John Blair and Carol Pyrah, ed., *Church Archaeology: Research Directions for the Future* (York: Council for British Archaeology, 1996), 6-7, 10, and 58-9 respectively.

called “pagan” groups presented so near Central Europe’s eastern border.<sup>166</sup>

It is difficult to do more than conjecture on this point; however, the areas of Central Europe discussed here were a frontier zone, and the sacred landscape of this area suggests this. While the Catholic Church was the official church in the medieval Hungarian kingdom and southern Poland, their location made other influences inevitable. Marina Miladinov elaborates on this point saying, “the border of old and new Christianity presented virgin soil for the transplantation of religious ideas,” and that “the frontier character of Eastern Europe evidently inspired and stimulated spirituality that had once originated in the desert and similar uninhabited or hostile regions.”<sup>167</sup> This is illustrated, for example, in the hermits Andrew and Benedict who practiced forms of asceticism unique to the Eastern tradition.<sup>168</sup> Oriental, Greek, Kievan Rus, and Bulgarian eremitism were present simultaneously with western practice as illustrated in the figure of St. Gerard who received his religious education in Italy and whose eremitism was likely influenced by the Italian St. Romauld.<sup>169</sup>

The religious landscape too was affected by this confluence of cultures. There are, for example, clusters of caves identified as hermitages at Óvár and Zebegény near the monasteries of Tihany and Visegrád, respectively. The monasteries had been founded by

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<sup>166</sup> For more on the Hungarian kingdom as a “frontier,” see: Nora Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims and ‘Pagans’ in Medieval Hungary, c. 1000-c. 1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), and Nora Berend, “Hungary, ‘the Gate of Christendom,’” in *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 195-216. See Brendan Smith’s text in the same volume for a discussion of Poland as a border zone: “Boundaries and Men in Poland from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Century: The Case of Mosavia,” 217-238.

<sup>167</sup> Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude*, 18.

<sup>168</sup> In particular, strict forms of sleep asceticism, see: Krisztina Ilkó, “Az aszkézis gyakorlatának szélsőséges formái Szent Zoerard-András vitájában. The Extreme Forms of Ascetic Practice in the Life of Saint Zoerard-Andrew,” in *Mű & Szerző. Fiatal kutatók konferenciája – Tanulmánykötet* [Works & Authors. Young Researchers Conference - Study Volume], ed. Zsófia Ágnes Bartók, Nóra Emőke Dobozy, Gábor Fölköli, Borbála Lovas, Zsófia Nádor, Emőke Rita Szilágyi (Arianna Könyvek 4.) (Budapest: ELTE BTK, 2012), 91–100.

<sup>169</sup> Sólumos, “The First Benedictine Monks in Hungary,” *Paradisum Plantavit*, 595-6. For more on the influence of the eastern church in Central Europe see: Klaniczay, *Holy Ruler and Blessed Princesses*, 99; Francis Dvornik, *The Making of Central and Eastern Europe* (Polish Research Centre London, 1949); Id., *The Slavs in European History and Civilization* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1962); Id., *Byzantine Missions among the Slavs* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971); A. P. Vlasto, *The Entry of the Slavs into Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Vladimir Vavřínek, ed., *Byzantium and Its Neighbours from the Mid-9<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> Centuries*. Papers read at the Byzantinological Symposium Bechyně 1990 (Byzantinoslavica, 1990).

King Andrew in 1055, and it is the consensus in the academic community that the caves were inhabited by a number of monks from Andrew's wife Anastasia's entourage from the Kievan Cave Monastery.<sup>170</sup> However, these caves never became natural cult sites, unlike the cave of Andrew and Benedict at Skalka nad Váhom, which had the advantage of a connection to two of the first saints to be canonized in Hungary, related hagiographic texts, and the active promotion of the cult by the Benedictine monks at the site.

Central Europe had the additional distinction of the prominent dynastic cult of saints, which also influenced the formation of the sacred landscape. Margaret Island (St. Margaret) and Mátraverebély (St. Ladislaus) were both associated with royal saints, and many of the remaining saints — Gellért Hill and the Ivy Well (St. Gerard), Skalka nad Váhom (St. Andrew and St. Benedict), and the Pool of St. Stanislaus (St. Stanislaus) — were associated with saints who contributed to the very early Christianization process in Central Europe. In the same way the “virgin soil” of Central Europe facilitated the influence of both eastern and western Christianity, so it facilitated the growth of the cult of royal saints. In the words of Gábor Klaniczay, these frontier regions’ “very newcomer status meant that they – unlike the European core – were unencumbered by paradigms of sainthood inherited from late antiquity. The new saint type that evolved in these regions was not the adversary of secular power, nor its counterweight; he was, rather, at once the manifestation of the alliance between the Church and the new Christian kingships, and the token of this alliance.”<sup>171</sup>

These dynastic saints represented both the secular and religious identity of the early medieval Hungarian kingdom. It makes sense then that many of the natural cult sites of the region would be associated with these saints; they physically signify in the landscape religious and historical Hungarian identity. Saints Gerard, Stanislaus, Andrew, and Benedict

<sup>170</sup> See Marina Miladinov's chapter, “The laurae of Tihany and Visegrád and the Import of the Oriental Model of Organisation,” for a detailed history of the monasteries and caves in *Margins of Solitude*, 157-163.

<sup>171</sup> Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, 99. On this concept see also: Roger W. Stump, *The Geography of Religion: Faith, Place, and Space* (NY: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008), esp. 167.



as some of the first saints canonized in the region also signified the beginnings of Christianization in Central Europe and it seems natural that just as they transformed the religious character of the area, so they would transform the physical landscape by their presence.

Collectively these sites show that, indeed, the sacralization of landscape in medieval Central Europe during was a multifaceted and complex process. In this process a codependent relationship between landscape and religion emerges: with individuals “choosing” and transforming the landscape according to their needs and desires, and the landscape also “speaking” to individuals, suggesting into what it could best transform. Most holy sites were not born from one event; the accumulation of spiritual and religious connections garnered the attention of individuals, both lay folk and the ecclesiastical elite, and through patronage, promotion, and pilgrimage sites acquired sacred connotations.

It is my hope that this study will help to foster future dialogue amongst scholars — both between scholars from different regions within Central and Eastern Europe and between East-Central European scholars and the West. Sacred landscape is a topic that has only just been breached in Central Europe and it offers us novel insights into the minds of medieval European and their conceptions of nature, religion, and culture.

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## APPENDIX: SITE CATALOGUE

### ORGANIZATION OF CATALOGUE

The purpose of this catalogue is to provide a brief overview of each site considered in this study for easy reference. Sites are grouped first by landscape feature and then by (modern-day) country of origin. Images related to each site follow the catalogue entry. Landscape features include:

- I. Caves
- II. Bodies of water
- III. Islands
- IV. Hills and Mountains (height)

### SITE DESCRIPTION

Each site entry in the catalogue contains the following information<sup>172</sup>:

1. Identifiers: site name, local toponym(s)
2. Location: Geographical location; modern-day borders and names.
3. GPS Coordinates: All GPS coordinates are taken directly in front of the entry-way of the site, unless otherwise noted.
4. Elevation: (meters)
5. Saint(s): Name of associated saint(s)
6. Description: Brief summary of the site including relevant associated relics and important dates related to the development and transformation of the site during the Middle Ages.
7. Primary Sources: Known primary source material related to the site including hagiography and chronicles. In the case that the primary medieval connotation is according to folkloric tradition “Folkloric tradition” will be entered.
8. Secondary Literature: Includes a selection of the main secondary literature related to the cult site.

### ABBREVIATIONS

Languages:

Czech = CZ  
German = GER  
Hungarian = HUN  
Italian = IT  
Polish = POL  
Serbian = SRB  
Slovakian = SLV  
Croatian = CRO  
Latin = LAT

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<sup>172</sup> Model for this catalogue taken from P.M. van Leusen with contributions by G.W. Tol & C. Anastasia 2009/2010, “Archaeological sites recorded by the GIA Hidden Landscapes Survey Campaigns in the Monti Lepini (Lazio, Italy),” *Palaeohistoria* 51/52 (2005-2009): 329-424.

## I. CAVES

### Slovakia

#### I.1 Skalka nad Vahóm

1. Identifiers: Vágsziklás (HUN); Skalka nad Váhom - kláštor, Skalka, Veľká Skalka, Stará Skalka (SLV)
2. Location: Trenčín, Slovakia
3. GPS Coordinates: N 48.54'52.2" E018.04'24.4"
4. Elevation: 276
5. Saint(s): Andrew-Zoerard<sup>173</sup> (c. 980-11th c.); Zoerardus (LAT); Swirad, Sworad, Świerad (SLV); András, Szórád (HUN) & Benedict (10<sup>th</sup> century – 1012, 1033 or 1037 AD); Benedek (HUN)
6. Description: Site of the hermitage of Zoerard and his disciple Benedict, and the site of Benedict's martyrdom. A Benedictine Abbey was founded near the cave in the early thirteenth century in honor of the two saints. Active cult site from the thirteenth century onwards.
7. Primary Sources: Blessed Maurus, Bishop of Pécs, *Legenda sanctorum Zoerardi et Benedicti* (1064 or shortly before), "Lives of the Holy Hermits Zoerard the Confessor and Benedict the Martyr," trans. and annotated by Marina Miladinov, in *Vitae Sanctorum Aetatis Conversionis Europae Centralis (Saec. X-XI)/ Saints of The Christianization Age of Central Europe (Tenth-Eleventh Centuries)*, ed. Gábor Klaniczay, Cristian Gaşpar, and Marina Miladinov (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2013), 315-337.
8. Secondary Literature: Marina Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude: Eremitism in Central Europe Between East and West* (Zagreb: Leykam International, 2008); Szilveszter Sólomos, *Szent Zoerard -András (Szórád) és Benedek remeték élete és kultusza Magyarországon* (Budapest : Magyar Egyháztörténeti Enciklopédia Munkaközösség, 1996).

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<sup>173</sup> The saint's Slavic name is Zoerard, at the time he assumed the habit he took the Christian name Andrew.





**Figure 15. The monastery at Skalka nad Vahóm overlooking the Vah River.**



## II. BODIES OF WATER

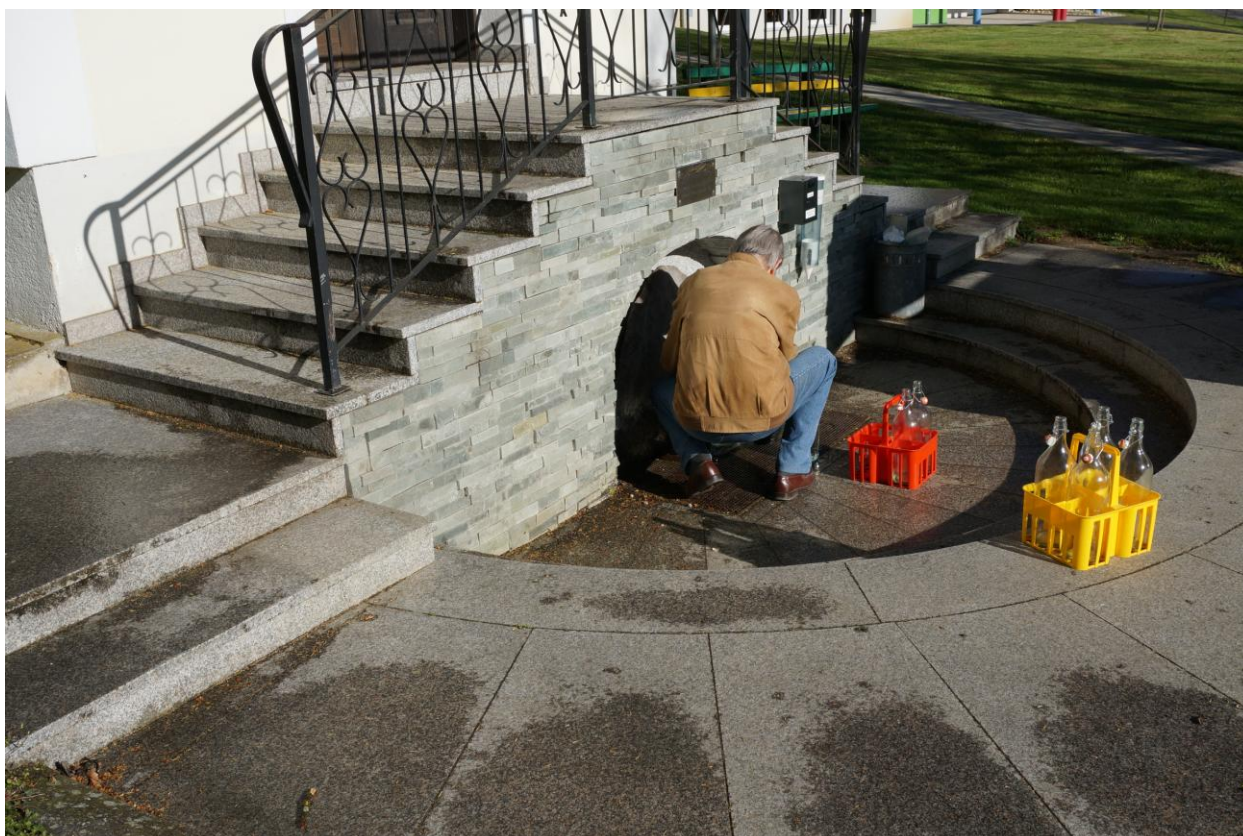
### Austria

#### II.1 Ulrich's Spring

1. Identifiers: Parish Church of St. Clement; Ulrichsquelle (GER); Clemenskirche (GER); Ulrich-forrás (HUN)
2. Location: Heiligenbrunn, Austria; Szentkút (HUN)
3. GPS Coordinates: N 47.01'31.3" E016.24'59.0" (Well)  
N 47.01'31.1" E016.24'56.6" (Well Chapel)
4. Elevation: 222 (Well)  
223 (Well Chapel)
5. Saint(s): Clement (1st c. - 101); Kelemen (HUN); Clemens Romanus (LAT) & Ulrich of Augsburg (c. 890 – 973)
6. Description: Located at a parish church dedicated to St. Clement, which was first documented in 1198. The chapel is associated with the hermitage of St. Ulrich.
7. Primary Sources: Two most important charters date from 1198 and 1339. For the 1198 charter: György Fejé, ed., *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis II* (Budapest: typis typogr. Regiae Universitatis Ungaricae, 1829), 326-7. For reference to the 1339 charter see: Vera Zimányi and Gisela Auer, *Der Bauernstand der Herrschaft Güssing im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert, Burgenländische Forschungen*, 46 (Eisenstadt: Burgenländ. Landesarchiv, 1962): 167.
8. Secondary Literature: Adelheid Schmeller-Kitt (ed.), *Dehio-Handbuch – Die Kunstdenkmäler Österreichs – Burgenland/Wien* [Dehio Manual - The historical monuments in Austria - Burgenland / Vienna] (Vienna: Anton Schroll & Co, 1976), 129; Claudia Huber, *Heiligenbrunn: Die bewegte Geschichte des Wallfahrtsortes im Wandel der Zeit* (Passau: 1999.); Vera Zimányi, *Der Bauernstand der Herrschaft Güssing im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert, Burgenländische Forschungen*, Issue 46 (Eisenstadt: Burgenländische Landesarchiv 1962).



**Figure 16. St. Ulrich's Well and Chapel. Clement's Church can be seen behind.**



**Figure 17. A pilgrim fills bottles with water from St. Ulrich's Spring.**

## Czech Republic

### II.3 Capistran's Well

1. Identifiers: Olomouc Observant Church, Olomouc Observant Convent; Franciscan-Observant Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary; Kostel Neposkvrneného poceti Panny Marie (CZ)
2. Location: Olomouc, Czech Republic; Olmütz (GER); Olomucium or Iuliomontium (LAT)
3. GPS Coordinates: N 49.35'47.2" E017.15'00.9"
4. Elevation: 237
5. Saint(s): John Capistran (1386-1456), John of Capistrano; Kapisztrán János (HUN); Janez Kapistran (SLO); Jan Kapistran (POL); Ivan Kapistran (CRO); Јован Капистран, Jovan Kapistran (SRB); San Giovanni da Capestrano (IT)
6. Description: The well dates to the mid-15th century, according to a later chronicle of the town's Observant convent. John Capistran visited the town in 1451 and 1453, during which time he supposedly blessed the well.
7. Primary Sources: *Františkáni v Olomouci u sv. Bernardina*, 1610-1804, section 7, in: *Zemský Archiv Opava-Olomouc, Arcibiskupství Olomouc*, sg. Bb 38, Kart. 412.
8. Secondary Literature: Stanko Andrić, *The Miracles of St. John Capistran* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2000).





**Figure 18. Side view of one of the possible “Capistran's Wells.” The Franciscan church stands just to the right.**

## Hungary

### II.4 Ivy Spring

1. Identifiers: Saint Spring, Gellért's Well; Borostyán-kút, Szentkút-kápolna (HUN)
2. Location: Bakonybél, Hungary
3. GPS Coordinates: N 47.14'39.4" E 017.43'57.6" (Well)  
N 47.14'39.1" E 017.43'57.6" (Well Chapel)
4. Elevation: 284 (Well)  
284 (Well Chapel)
5. Saint(s): Gerard (980-1046); Gellért (HUN) & Gunther (955-1045); Günter (HUN)
6. Description: Site of a Benedictine abbey founded by St. Stephen in honor of the martyr St. Maurice between 1016 and 1020. Gerard spent seven years here in a hermitage, formerly the hermitage of St. Gunther, a monk of Altaich, Germany. In 1251 Gerard was made patron saint of a chapel located here. The spring is located outside the chapel of the Virgin Mary, which was the location, according to the tradition, of the Gerard's hermitage.
7. Primary Sources: See St. Gerard's vitae for references to his time in Bakonybél. Madzsar, Emericus, ed., *Legenda S. Gerhardi Episcopi*, SRH II, 461-506. Budapest, 1938, repr. 1999.
8. Secondary Literature: Gáspár Csóka, "Bakonybél," in Kristó, Gyula, *Korai magyar történeti lexikon, 9-14. század* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1994), 77; Beatrix F. Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok a középkori Magyarországon*, (Pytheas: 2000), 9; Pongrácz Sörös, *A bakonybéli apátság története, Pannonhalmi Szent-Benedek-Rend története*, 8-9 (Budapest: Stephaneum, 1903-4).





**Figure 19. The holy well and chapel at Bakonybél.**

## II.5 Mátraverebély Holy Well

1. Identifiers: National Shrine of the Holy Well, Well of St. Ladislaus's leap; Mátraverebély-Szentkút Nemzeti Kegyhely, Szentkút (HUN)
2. Location: Mátraverebély, Hungary
3. GPS Coordinates: N 48.00'02.4" E019.45'32.6" (Well Church)  
N 48.00'14.1" E019.45'29.8" (St. Ladislaus Spring)  
N 48.00'12.0" E019.45'50.0" (Hermits' Caves)
4. Elevation: 287 (Well Church)  
264 (St. Ladislaus Spring)  
298 (Hermits' Caves)
5. Saint(s): Ladislas (1040-1095), Ladislaus; László (HUN); & the Virgin Mary
6. Description: According to legend, the spring that feeds the holy well located at the village of Mátraverebély had as its source the footprint of the hoof of the horse of St. Ladislas. By the fourteenth century a church was built near Mátraverebély and it quickly became a major pilgrimage center. The well's curative powers are typically attributed to the Virgin Mary.
7. Primary Sources: Chapter Charter, Eger, 1444 (copy of 1290 charter): MS Dl. 1303, 1444-06-01, MKA, *Neo-regestrata acta* (Q 311). ; Papal Charter, Boniface IX, 1400: 1400 9 Nov., *Monumenta Vaticana* IV, Charter 312, 252.
8. Secondary Literature: Tekla Dömötör, *Hungarian Folk Beliefs* (Budapest: Athenaeum Printing House, 1982).





Figure 20. View of the pilgrimage church at Mátraverebély. The site is currently undergoing massive renovations.



Figure 21. Plaque at Mátraverebély describing the well's origins.

## Poland

### II.6 Pool of St. Stanislaus

1. Identifiers: Church of St Michael the Archangel and St Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr and Pauline Fathers Monastery; Church on the Rock; Skałka (POL)
2. Location: Kraków, Poland
3. GPS Coordinates: N 50.02'54.5" E019.56'17.1" (Pool)  
N 50.02'52.2" E019.56'21.9" (Church)
4. Elevation: 207 (Pool)  
207 (Church)
5. Saint(s): Stanislaus (1030-1079); Stanisław (POL)
6. Description: The Pool of St. Stanislaus' has its origins in the martyrdom of Stanislaus in 1079. After Stanislaus's had been dismembered, a portion of his finger fell in the pool. A fish ate the finger and began to glow, allowing the clerics to find it. Thereafter the pool was attributed with miraculous powers, and attracted many pilgrims.
7. Primary Sources: *Chronica Poloniae Maioris* [Chronicle of Greater Poland], (fourteenth century); Jan Długosz, *Vita S. Stanislai*. In *Joannis Długossii senioris canonici Cracoviensis Opera*. (1460s)
8. Secondary Literature: Aleksandra Witkowska, *Kulty pątnicze piętnastowiecznego Krakowa* [The Pilgrim Cults in the Fifteenth-Century Cracow] (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Naukowego KUL, 1984), 83-86; Teofil Krauze, "Zarys dziejów kościoła św. Michała i Stanisława w Krakowie na Skałce do 1472 roku" [An Outline of the History of the Church of St. Michael and Stanislaus at Skaka until 1472], *Studia Claromontana* 17 (1997): 275-305; Wiesław Skiernia, "Sadzawka św. Stanisława biskupa na Skałce" [The Pool of Saint Stanislaus at Skałka], *ibid.*: 595-623; Janusz Zbudniewek, "Św. Stanisław w dziejach Skałki" [St. Stanislaus in History of Skałka], in *Święty Stanisław w życiu kościoła w Polsce*, esp. 330-347.





**Figure 22. The Pool of St. Stanislaus.**



**Figure 23. The Church of St. Michael and the Pauline cloister at Skalica.**

## Slovakia

### II.7 Marianka

1. Identifiers: Marianka (SLV); Máriavölgy (HUN); Marient(h)al, Mariathal, Maria Thal (GER); Vallis Mariana (LAT)
2. Location: Marianka, Slovakia
3. GPS Coordinates: N 48.14'50.8" E017.04'08.2" (Well)  
N 48.14'51.5" E017.04'09.0" (Well Chapel)  
N 48.14'52.8" E017.03'52.7" (Pilgrimage Church)
4. Elevation: 267 (Well)  
277 (Well Chapel)  
256 (Pilgrimage Church)
5. Saint(s): Virgin Mary
6. Description: The focus at the holy site of Marianka is, historically, a sacred stream, which is now redirected into a water fountain. According to legend a hermit hid a statue of Mary that he had carved in a tree near the stream, which was later rediscovered in the thirteenth century following a vision from the Virgin Mary indicating the location of the stream and the statue. King Louis founded a Pauline monastery at the site in 1377.
7. Primary Sources: The most important documents related to Marianka are associated with the monastic foundation there, beginning with a 1377 charter, see: Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok*, 43; Tamás Guzsik and Rudolf Fehérváry, *A pálosrend építészeti emlékei a középkori Magyarországon* [Architecture of the Pauline order in medieval Hungary] (Budapest: BME, 1980), 10; Lajos Némethy, *Series parochiarum et parochorum Archi-dioecesis Strigoniensis: ab antiquissimis temporibus usque annum MDCCCXCIV* (Strigonii: Typis G. Buzárovits, 1894), 160.
8. Secondary Literature: Sándor Bálint and Gábor Barna, *Búcsújáró Magyarok: A magyarországi búcsújárás története és néprajza* (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1994).





**Figure 24.** The pool into which the holy stream at Marianka flows.





Figure 25. “Lourdes” style grotto with votive offerings at Marianka.

### III. ISLANDS

#### Hungary

##### III.1 Margaret Island

1. Identifiers: Margaret Island, Island of the Virgin Mary, Rabbit Island; Margit-Sziget, Nyulak Sziget (HUN); Insula leporum (LAT)
2. Location: Budapest, Hungary
3. GPS Coordinates: N 47.31'45.2" E 019.03'05.4"<sup>174</sup>
4. Elevation: 109
5. Saint(s) Margaret (1242–1270); Margit (HUN)
6. Description: Margaret Island was the site of a nunnery built for Margaret, daughter of King Béla IV, which she moved to in 1252. After her death in 1270 she was buried on the island and her shrine there became a site of many miracles and was the focus of her cult. The island first became known as “Margaret Island” in the early fourteenth century and was regularly called by that name by the fifteenth century.<sup>175</sup>
7. Primary Sources: There are numerous medieval sources related to Margaret in both Latin and Hungarian, beginning in the thirteenth century. The first life of St. Margaret, the *Legenda vetus*, was written by her confessor, Marcellus between 1271 and 1274.<sup>176</sup>
8. Secondary Literature: Ilona Király, *Árpádházi Szent Margit és a sziget* [Saint Margaret of the Arpad and the Island] (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1979); G. Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses: Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 195-294.

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<sup>174</sup> Taken in front of Margaret’s tomb as it stands today.

<sup>175</sup> Gábor Klaniczay, *The Uses of Supernatural Power* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1990), 115.

<sup>176</sup> Marcellus, *Vita Margarite de Ungaria Ordinis Praedicatorum*, in *Árpádházi Boldog Margit szenttéavasási ügye és a legősibb latin Margit-legendá / The canonization trial of the Blessed Margaret of Hungary and the oldest Margaret Legend*, ed. Kornél P. Böle (Stephaneum, Budapest, 1937), 17-43. For the account of her canonization trials see: Vilmos Franknói, *Inquisitio super vita, conversatione et miraculis beatae Margarethae virginis, Belae IV. Hungarorum regis filiae, sanctimonialis monasterii virginis gloriosae de insula Danubii, Ordinis Praedicatorum, Vesprimis diocesis*, in *Monumenta Romana episcopatus Vesprimiensis*, I (Budapest, 1896), 162-383 (*Acta canonisationis S. Margaritae, Bibliotheca Batthyányana*, 317. R. III. 5.; *Archivio Generale Ordinis Praedicatorum*, Convento di Santa Sabina, X/1930). For a list of references to her other legends see: Bellus and Szabó, *Árpád-Házi Szent Margit legrégebb legendája és szentté avatási pere*, 24.





Figure 26. St. Margaret's grave as it currently appears at Margaret Island.





**Figure 27. Ruins of the Dominican convent on Margaret Island.**

## IV. HILLS AND MOUNTAINS

### Hungary

#### IV.1 Gellért Hill

1. Identifiers: Hill of St. Gerard; Kelenföld, Gellért-hegy (HUN)
2. Location: Budapest, Hungary
3. GPS Coordinates: N 47.29'05.7" E 019.03'08.2" (Cave Church)<sup>177</sup>  
N 47.29'14.4" E 019.02'37.2" (Peak)  
N 47.29'20.0" E 019.02'50.3" (N Base)<sup>178</sup>  
N 47.29'06.5" E 019.03'08.5" (S Base)
4. Elevation: 119 (Cave Church)  
212 (Peak)  
135 (N Base)  
113 (S Base)
5. Saint(s): Gerard (980-1046); Gellért (HUN)
6. Description: Gellért Hill is located in Buda along the banks of the Danube. Gellért was martyred here by pagans in 1046. A church dedicated to Gellért was built at the base of the hill in the eleventh century. The church no longer survives, but it continues to be considered a sacred site.
7. Primary Sources: See St. Gerard's vitae for references to his martyrdom at Gellért Hill. Madzsar, Emericus, ed., *Legenda S. Gerhardi Episcopi*, SRH II, 461-506. Budapest, 1938, repr. 1999.
8. Secondary Literature: György Györffy, *Pest-Buda kialakulása: Budapest története a honfoglalástól az Árpád-kor végi székvárossá alakulásig* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1997) ; Gábor Klaniczay, "Il monte di San Gherardo e l'isola di Santa Margherita: gli spazi della santità a Buda nel Medioevo," in *Luoghi sacri e spazi della santità*, eds. Sofia Boesch Gajano and Lucetta Scaraffia (Torino: Rosenberg & Sellier, 1990), 267 – 284 ; Marina Miladinov, *Margins of Solitude: Eremitism in Central Europe Between East and West* (Zagreb: Leykam International, 2008).

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<sup>177</sup> The Cave Church at Gellért Hill was founded by the Pauline Order in 1926.

<sup>178</sup> Taken at the North point of the base of the hill on the Danube side.



**Figure 28. Views of Gellért Hill from Pest.**



## IV.2 St. Martin's Mountain

1. Identifiers: Millenary Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma, Pannonhalma Archabbey; Márton-hegyi Apátság (HUN), Pannonhalmi Bencés Főapátság (HUN)
2. Location: Pannonhalma, Hungary
3. GPS Coordinates: N 47.33'10.4" E017.45'37.3"
4. Elevation: 274
5. Saint(s): Martin of Tours (316-397)
6. Description: According to tradition, the Mount of St. Martin is sacred due to it being the birthplace of Martin of Tours in the fourth century. In 996 a Benedictine Abbey was founded here by Prince Géza.
7. Primary Sources: *Anonymi Bele Regis Notarii Gesta Hungarorum: Magistri Rogerii Epistola in miserabile carmen super destructione regni Hungarie per Tartaros facta* [The deeds of the Hungarians: Epistle to the sorrowful lament upon the destruction of the kingdom of Hungary by the Tartars], ed., trans., and annotated by Martyn Rady, László Veszprémy, and János M. Bak (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2010).
8. Secondary Literature: Imre Takács, *Mons sacer, 996-1996: Pannonhalma 1000 éve. I-III.* (Pannonhalma: Pannonhalmi Főapátság, 1996); László Erdélyi and Pongrác Sörös (eds.), *A Pannonhalmi Főapátság története. I-VII.* (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1902-1916).



**Figure 29. View of the surrounding countryside from Pannonhalma Abbey.**



**Figure 30. The basilica of Pannonhalma Abbey, originally constructed in the thirteenth century.**

## Poland

### IV.2 Jasna Góra

1. Identifiers: Bright Mountain, Jasna Góra Monastery, Shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary; Jasna Góra (POL), Częstochowa (POL); Clarus Mons (LAT)
2. Location: Częstochowa, Poland
3. GPS Coordinates: N 50.48'43.9" E019.05'53.1"
4. Elevation: 124<sup>179</sup>
5. Saint(s): Virgin Mary
6. Description: Jasna Góra, translated from the Polish as “Bright Mountain,” is the site of Jasna Góra monastery of the Pauline order, founded in 1382. Duke Ladislaus of Opole brought the image of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa to the site. The painting was supposedly painted by St. Luke the Apostle on the wood of a table belonging to the Virgin. The painting attracted throngs of pilgrims to the mountain since its translation making the site the greatest pilgrimage site in Poland, and one of the greatest in Europe.
7. Primary Sources: The oldest, from 1474, is found in a codex in the archive of the monastery. Another version from a printed pulpit published in 1524 is entitled *Historia pulchra, et stupendis miraculis referta, imaginis Mariae quomodo et unde in Clarum montem Czastochovvie et Olsztyn advenerit*. The earliest extant miracle records have been to the 1470s.
8. Secondary Literature: Robert Maniura, *Pilgrimage to Images in the Fifteenth Century: The Origins of the Cult of Our Lady of Częstochowa* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press , 2004); Anna Niedźwiedz , *The Image and the Figure : Our Lady of Częstochowa in Polish Culture and Popular Religion*, Tr. Guy Torr. (Cracow: Jagiellonian University Press, 2010).

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<sup>179</sup> At its tallest point the Jasna Góra hill reached 295 m above sea level.



**Figure 31. View of Jasna Góra from the main street of Częstochowa. Illustrates how the city was built with Jasna Góra as the focal point.**





**Figure 32. Aerial view of the Monastery of Jasna Góra.**

**FIGURES<sup>180</sup>**



**Figure 1. St. Ulrich's Well and Chapel and parish church of St. Clement in the background.**

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<sup>180</sup> Numbering follows the sequence that the figures follow in the text.





Figure 2. Plaque dedicated to St. Gerard at Bakonybél.





**Figure 3. Plaque in the inner wall of the Ivy Wall at Bakonybél depicting St. Gerard's tame wolf and fawn.**





**Figure 4. Pilgrims collect water from Ladislaus's Spring in 1962.**



**Figure 6. Hermits' Caves at Mátraverebély.**









Figure 8. Close-up of Lazar Map showing the location of Mátraverebély (here, Werbil).





Figure 9. Ottoman map showing Buda and Pest from the east.

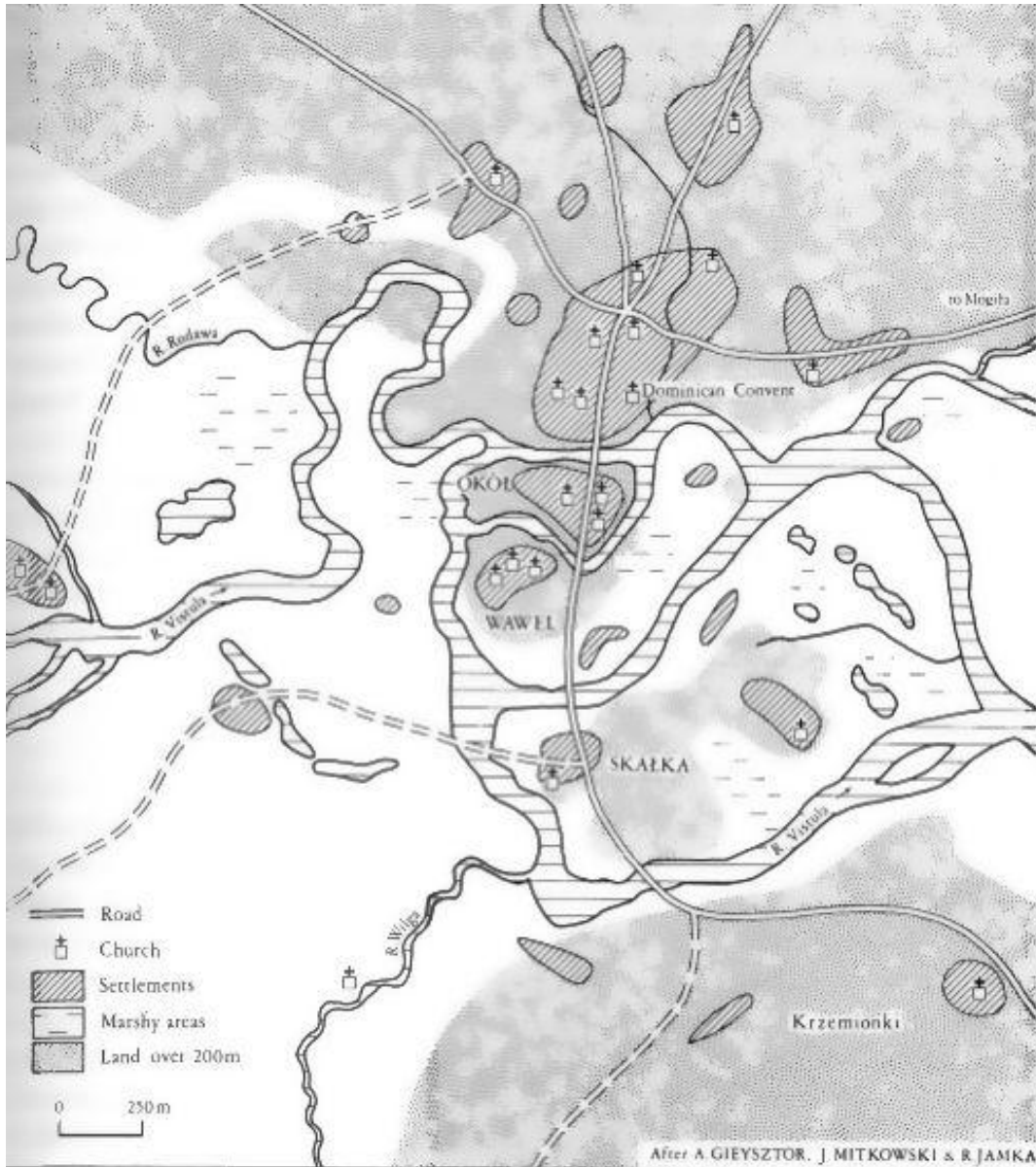




**Figure 10. Stone well outside the convent at Olomouc.**



**Figure 11. Well inside the garden of the Obersvant cloister in Olomouc. Possible site of Capistran's Well.**



**Figure 12. Map of Cracow, 10th-12th c. The church of St. Michael at Skalka is seen in the bottom center of the map.**

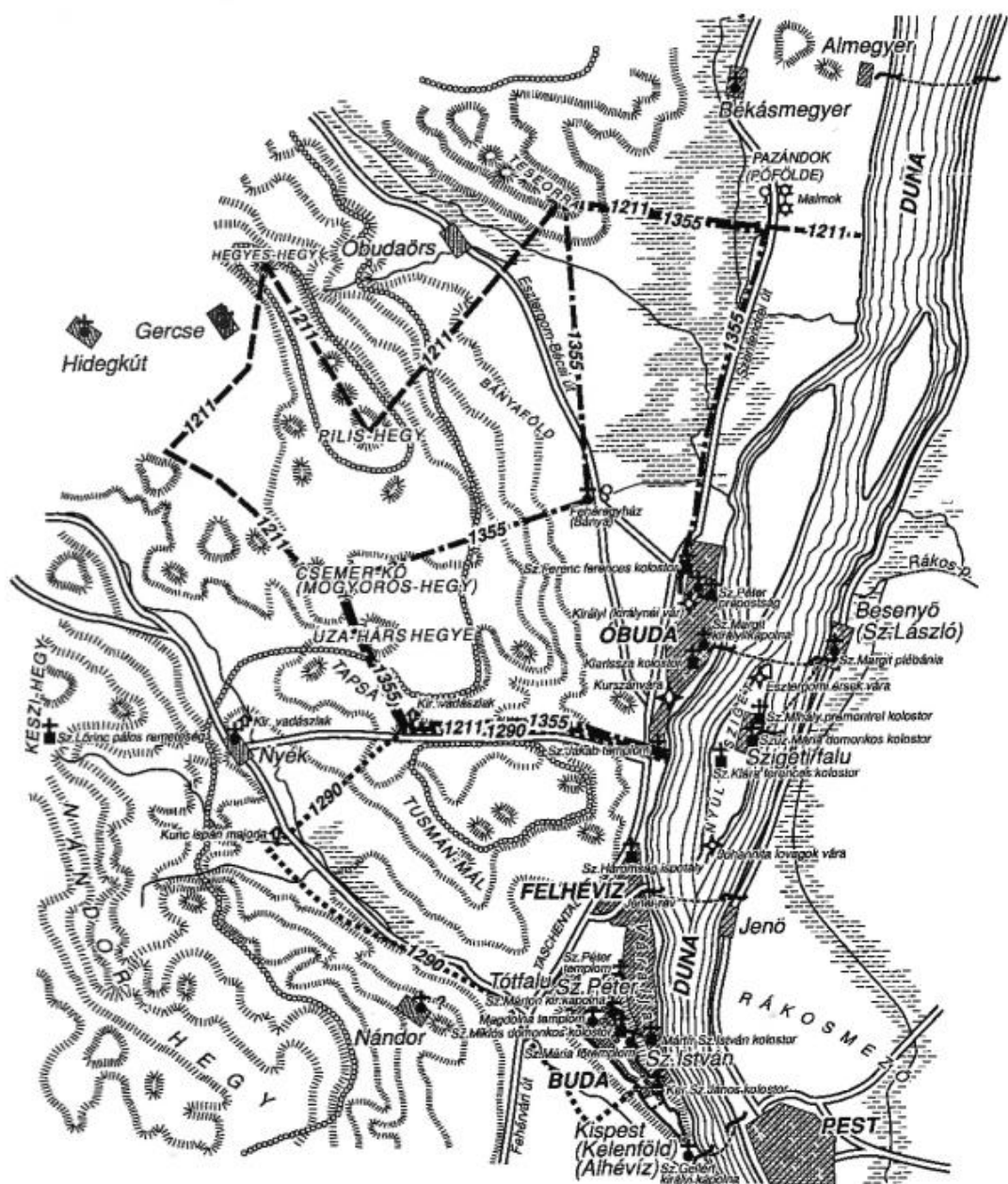


Figure 13. Map depicting Buda, 13th-14th c. Notice St. Gellért Chapel at the southern base of the map.





Figure 14. Woodcut map of Cracow from the Nuremburg Chronicle, 1493.