PATTERNS AND LEVELS OF 'PERIPHERY'?

Gerhard Jaritz

"There is an important research field to formulate the social, cultural, political and economical role of areas called marginal, peripheries and other such problematic designations."[1] This statement was recently given by the Swedish archeologist Hans Andersson. It can also be supported by historians who concentrate their research on any kind of communication, like that of the Holy See with various areas and regions of late medieval Christendom.

The communication of the medieval papal curia with whole of the Christian world took place in a variety of elaborate forms.[2] "The divergent needs and receptivity of clergy and laity on the one hand, and the geographical scattering of the Christian audience on the other, encouraged the development of a sophisticated communication system."[3] This seems to have been particularly true for territories that, at least in the geographical sense, may have been seen as peripheral areas of Christendom. Piroska Nagy has shown that one may well use this component of 'periphery,' at least as an (auxiliary) criterium for the comparative analysis of the communication of Christians with the Holy See and vice versa.

Concerning the communication of the papal curia with medieval 'peripheries' and the roles of the latter, some important research has been done recently.[4] Systematic research in this direction, however, is still at its beginnings.

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[1] Hans Andersson, "Outland, Centre, Periphery and World Sytem Theories," in *Wider das "finstere Mittelalter." Festschrift für Werner Meyer zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. M. Letizia Heyer-Boscardin, Schweizer Beiträge zur Kultugeschichte und Archäologie des Mittelalters 29 (Basel: Schweizerischer Burgenverein, 2002), 30.

[2] For such forms see, from a general point of view, Willem Frijhoff, "Communication et vie quotidienne à la fin du Moyen Age et à l'époque moderne: réflexions de théorie et méthode," in *Kommunikation und Alltag in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Helmut Hundsbichler, Sitzungsberichte der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse 596 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992), 37: "Lorsqu'on parle de communication en histoire, il faut bien distinguer entre la communication comme processus technique et la communication comme action signifiante (instrumentale, communicative ou stratégique). ... En tant qu'action signifiante, la communication est avant tout un fait culturel impliquant pratiques sociales, représentations et codes symboliques ... ."

[3] Sophia Menache, *The Vox Dei. Communication in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 51 (hereafter Menache, *The Vox Dei*).

[4] See, in particular, Ludwig Schmugge, "Centro e periferia attraverso le dispense pontificie nel secolo XV," in *Vita religiosa e identità politiche. Universalità e particolarismi nell'*

This book is also an exploratory volume, based on comparative approaches, trying to show possibilities for future systematic and broader studies. It is mainly meant to encourage further analyses into the role that 'peripheries' played in late medieval papal policy, and into the comparability of such 'peripheries.' In no way, is it able or intends to present something definitive. It should be seen as an intermediary stage to facilitate a continuation of work at a 'site under construction.'

The papers in the present proceedings have proved that the communication was influenced by a variety of regional or local phenomena. Sometimes they led to important differences in regard to the numbers as well as the contents of communicative acts between the papal curia and people in the respective areas. This is nicely shown by the contributions of Irene Furneaux and Ana Marinković concerning the predominance of matrimony supplications from Scotland and Dalmatia in the Penitentiary Registers, which, however, occurred for different reasons. Lucie Doležalová has ascertained significant influences of the Hussite movement on the types and numbers of supplications to the Penitentiary coming from the Czech lands.

For any communication with the Holy See, the papal legates, that is, "the prolonged arms of the papacy,"[5] played an important role. For Sweden and Finland, Kirsi Salonen has been able to document the differences in the number of supplications to the Penitentiary dependent on the presence or absence of legates in the respective territories.

Beside these local differences, analogue accomplishments also seemingly existed in the communication of the Holy See with the 'peripheries' of Christendom. Kirsi Salonen, Torstein Jørgensen, and Piroska Nagy have found Northern European and East Central European patterns, for East Central Europe, for instance, concerning the leading type of *De diversis formis*-petitions to the Penitentiary from the territories of Hungary, the Czech lands, Poland-Lithuania and the Baltic region. But only accurate and detailed analyses comparing such results with those from less peripheral neighbouring dioceses and areas, and with other 'peripheries,' will make it possible to trace whether it is really possible to see such patterns as more general 'periphery models' or if they were also significant for other, less peripheral, areas.

Some of the most valuable results of the contributions in this volume are, in my opinion, the direct or indirect hints towards existing contexts, which have

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Europa del tardo Medio Evo, Atti del VI Convegno di Studi sulla Civiltà del Tardo Medioevo. S. Miniato, ottobre 1996, ed. Sergio Gensini, Centro di Studi sulla Civiltà del Tardo Medioevo, San Miniato. Collana di studi e ricerche 7 (Ospedaletto: Pacini Editore, 1998), 33-58; Rolf H. Bremmer Jr., Kees Decker, and David F. Johnson, ed., *Rome and the North. The Early Reception of Gregory the Great in Germanic Europe*, Mediaevalia Groningana, New Series 4 (Paris: Peeters, 2001). See also the contributions of Piroska Nagy, Kirsi Salonen, Torstein Jørgensen, and Ludwig Schmugge in this volume and their bibliographical references.

[5] See Menache, *The Vox Dei*, 51.

to be taken into account when doing systematic comparative, qualitative, and quantitative analysis of source corpora like the Penitentiary Registers. It is the context with all the other phenomena of communication that determined the connections of the papal curia with peripheral regions of Christendom. This is well shown in the contributions of Jadranka Neralić and Etleva Lala. The possible context with the incidents in more central areas also have to be taken in consideration (see the contribution by Gastone Saletnich and Wolfgang Müller). The context to the activities and functions of local ecclesiastical and secular courts in the different areas has been well shown in the case study by Blanka Szeghyová. Ludwig Schmugge has impressively demonstrated that also other source material kept in various local archives has to be consulted and utilised for any further context-dependent and comparative studies. Thus, the contributions of the present volume offer a multiplicity of references, motivations and further research possibilities which have to be considered in any future analyses.

It does not really matter whether future research, at the end, will lead to the outcome that the concept and designation of 'periphery' has proved important or advantageous for the comparative analysis of the varieties of papal communication with different areas and levels of Christendom, or not. This should be considered all the more as one also might only acknowledge different levels and hierarchies of 'periphery,' and their relations to one centre that was clearly Rome and the popes themselves. However, as long as further context-bound comparative approaches yield new results and significant patterns and levels of communication that may be seen as an effect of social practices, representations and symbolic code sets,[6] one may be generally satisfied, independent on the role of 'peripheries' in the research process.

Comparative analyses of that ilk can only be fruitful if accomplished within the framework of international cooperation. The first moves in this direction have already been made; the volume at hand is a result of such an attempt. But there is still a long way to go, a way that will be enthralling and, hopefully, effective.

[6] Seenote 2.

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The Long Arm of Papal Authority

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MEDIUM AEVUM QUOTIDIANUM

SONDERBAND XIV

Gedruckt mit Unterstützung der Kulturabteilung
des Amtes der Niederösterreichischen Landesregierung

niederösterreich kultur

CEU MEDIEVALIA 8

The Long Arm of Papal Authority

Late Medieval Christian Peripheries and Their Communication with the Holy See

Edited by

Gerhard Jaritz, Torstein Jørgensen, Kirsi Salonen

Bergen · Budapest · Krems

2004

Copy Editor: Judith Rasson

Cover Illustration: Pope Pius II, Hartmann Schedel, World Chronicle (Nuremberg, 1493), fol. 250

Joint Publication by:

Centre for Medieval Studies (CMS)
University of Bergen, P.O.Box 7800, N-5020 Bergen, Norway
Telephone: (+47-55) 58 80 85, Fax: (+47-55) 58 80 90
E-mail: post@cms.uib.no, Website: http://www.uib.no/cms/
ISBN 82-997026-0-7

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ISSN 1587-6470 CEU MEDIEVALIA

Central European University Press
An imprint of the Central European University Share Company
Nádor u. 11, H-1051 Budapest, Hungary
Telephone: (+36-1)327-3138, 327-3000, Fax: (+36-1)327-3183
E-mail: ceupress@ceu.hu, Website: http://www.ceupress.com
and
400 West 59th Street, New York NY 10019, USA
Telephone: (+1-212)547-6932, Fax: (+1-212) 548-4607
E-mail:mgreenwald@sorosny.org
ISBN 9-63 86569 5 6
Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data:
A CIP catalog record for this book is available upon request.

Medium Aevum Quotidianum
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ISBN 3-90 1094 17 2

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Printed in Hungary by Printself (Budapest).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abbreviations related to the collections of the Vatican Secret Archives 7

Preface 8

Piroska Nagy, Peripheries in Question in Late Medieval Christendom 11

Kirsi Salonen, The Penitentiary under Pope Pius II. The Supplications and Their Provenance 19

Torstein Jørgensen, At the Edge of the World: The Supplications from the Norwegian Province of Nidaros 29

Kirsi Salonen, The Supplications from the Province of Uppsala. Main Trends and Developments 42

Irene Furneaux, Pre-Reformation Scottish Marriage Cases in the Archives of the Papal Penitentiary 60

Jadranka Neralić, Central Europe and the Late Medieval Papal Chancery 71

Etleva Lala, The Papal Curia and Albania in the Later Middle Ages 89

Piroska Nagy and Kirsi Salonen, East-Central Europe and the Penitentiary (1458–1484) 102

Lucie Doležalová, "But if you marry me": Reflections on the Hussite Movement in the Penitentiary (1438–1483) 113

Ana Marinković, Social and Territorial Endogamy in the Ragusan Republic: Matrimonial Dispenses during the Pontificates of Paul II and Sixtus IV (1464–1484) 126

Gastone Saletnich and Wolfgang Müller, Rodolfo Gonzaga (1452–1495): News on a Celebrity Murder Case 145

Blanka Szeghyová, Church and Secular Courts in Upper Hungary (Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century) 151

Ludwig Schmugge, Penitentiary Documents from Outside the Penitentiary 161

Gerhard Jaritz, Patterns and Levels of Periphery? 170

List of Contributors 173

ABBREVIATIONS RELATED TO THE COLLECTIONS OF THE VATICAN SECRET ARCHIVES

ASV = Archivio Segreto Vaticano

Arm. = Armadio

Congr. Vescovi e Regolari, Visita Ap. = Congregazione dei Vescovi e Regolari, Visita Apostolica

Instr. Misc. = Instrumenta Miscellanea

Penitenzieria Ap., Reg. Matrim. et Div. = Penitenzieria Apostolica, Registra Matrimonialium et Diversorum

Reg. Vat. = Registra Vaticana

Reg. Lat. = Registra Lateranensia

Reg. Suppl. = Registra Supplicationum

Reg. Aven. = Registra Avenionensia

RPG = Repertorium Poenitentiariae Germanicum

PREFACE

The present publication contains selected papers from two international conferences: the first was held at the Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Bergen (Norway), in October, 2003[1] and the second at the Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University, Budapest (Hungary), in January, 2004.[2] The purpose of these meetings was to gather researchers interested in the history and significance of the papal curia and, in particular, the Apostolic Penitentiary, in the later Middle Ages. The main emphasis was placed on a comparative approach and on the role of peripheral areas of Western Christendom in their communication with the Holy See.

There are various kinds of centre-and-periphery hierarchies.[3] There are geographic, social, economic, and cultural peripheries and centres. "The general textbooks ... address materials from the geographical and social peripheries of privileged cultures only as adjuncts to their central narrative. ... The history of Scandinavia and Eastern Europe become excursus to a central narrative."[4]

However, concerning the communication of the Holy See with various areas of Christendom in the Middle Ages, the impact of 'peripheries' has attracted a new interest in recent years. Since the opening of the archives of the Apostolic Penitentiary to researchers in 1983 relatively few scholars have exploited the sources, but recently their number has increased. Most of them have studied the supplications to the Penitentiary of petitioners from their own home countries and edited material on a national basis. The German Historical Institute, under the leadership of Ludwig Schmugge, has already published several volumes of entries concerning German-speaking territories. Also, the Norwegian and Icelandic material has recently been released by Torstein Jørgensen and Gastone Saletnich. Similar enterprises are in process in several other countries: Poland, Denmark, Sweden and Finland, England and Wales. The examination of territo-

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[1] "*The Late Middle Ages and the Penitentiary Texts: Centre and Periphery in Europe in the Pre-Reformation Era.*"

[2] "Ad Confines. *The Papal Curia and the Eastern and Northern Peripheries of Christendom in the Later Middle Ages(14th – 15th c.).*"

[3] For this and the following, see Teofilo F. Ruiz, "Center and Periphery in the Teaching of Medieval History," in *Medieval Cultures in Contact*, ed. Richard F. Gyug (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003), 252.

[4] Ibidem, 248.

ries on the geographic peripheries in their relation to Rome has been a main focus in these studies.

The archival material of the Penitentiary and the communication of the papal curia with the various regions of late medieval Europe should, however, not be studied only on national levels. There is an increasing need for such studies to be supplemented by comparative searches for differences and analogies in how Christians from different corners of Europe used the papal offices and were treated by them. It is well known that even though the regulations of canon law were in theory the same for everyone, regional differences in interpreting and applying them emerged in the Late Middle Ages. The need to turn to the papal authority in matters of canon law varied depending on the role of local bishops and the presence or absence of papal legates or collectors, who often had the power to deal with similar matters *in partibus.* Also, people in the central territories of Christendom had different opportunities for turning to the papal curia with their requests than those living on the peripheries of the Christian world.

Questions like these played the central role in the discussions of the two conferences noted above. In this book we will render an overview of the present status of this new field of research. As an introduction, Piroska Nagy deals with the question of how to apply centre-periphery models to a comparative analysis of the sources. Kirsi Salonen uses the Penitentiary registers from the period of Pope Pius II to analyse the supplications, their provenance, and the role of peripheries.

Two peripheral parts of late medieval Europe and their significance concerning the communication with the Holy See represent the main part of the publication: Northern Europe and East Central Europe. Comparative analyses of Scandinavian and Scottish source material from the Penitentiary Registers are made by Torstein Jørgensen, Kirsi Salonen, and Irene Furneaux. The studies on East Central Europe are introduced by an inquiry concerning the general importance of the area for the papal curia (Jadranka Neralić), and an overview of the communication of the Holy See with Albania (Etleva Lala). Piroska Nagy and Kirsi Salonen offer a quantitative analysis of East Central Europe and the Penitentiary (1458–1484), followed by contributions on individual territories, such as the Czech lands (Lucie Doležalová) and Dalmatia (Ana Marinković). The contribution by Gastone Saletnich and Wolfgang Müller indicates that in any studies of the role of peripheries one must not neglect the more central areas. Blanca Szeghyová and Ludwig Schmugge show that local archives and their contents are an indispensable additional source for comparative analyses.

Many friends and colleagues have helped in preparing this book for print. We are pleased to thank the personnel of the Penitenzieria Apostolica, especially Padre Ubaldo Todeschini, for reading the manuscript and suggesting useful corrections. We are also much obliged to the skilled staff of the *Sala di Studio* in the Vatican Archives, who patiently brought us volume after volume of the reg-

isters and helped with other problems. Judith Rasson from Central European University deserves our gratitude for copyediting our text.

Finally, we wish to thank the academic institutions which in a more direct way have promoted this project: the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Bergen, the Department of Medieval Studies at the Central European University in Budapest, the Institut für Realienkunde of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the Academy of Finland, and the Department of History at the University of Tampere.

Bergen, Budapest, and Tampere, November 2004

Gerhard Jaritz, Torstein Jørgensen, Kirsi Salonen