# PERIPHERIES IN QUESTION IN LATE MEDIEVAL CHRISTENDOM

*Piroska Nagy*

Some time ago, the Hungarian medievalist Jenő Szűcs put the important question, "Where do the internal borders of Europe run?"[1] Seeking an answer to this question, one can work with a large number of criteria in order to determine Europe's centers and peripheries. Concerning the inner structure of Europe, one may ask, for instance, how far the geographical situation of an area on the periphery of the centers of civilisation influenced, at any given moment, its cultural and political position and role; or how far the evolution of two peripheries can be seen as parallel or similar.[2] Were the countries on the geographical periphery considered as such in the different kinds of networks of the medieval West? How far did geographical structures determine historical structures?

In this article, I will reflect on the notion of periphery in such perspectives. A frequently used concept, it now has a long history and its use necessitates clarifying the pre-suppositions relating to its choice. I shall be concerned mainly with East Central Europe,[3] and somewhat less with Northern Europe, in posing the problems of peripherality in a concrete way.

---

[1] Jenő Szűcs, "The Three Historical Regions of Europe. An Outline", *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29 (1983), 131-184; also published in: John Keane, ed., *Civil Society and the State: New European Perspectives* (London: Verso, 1988), 291-332 (hereafter Szűcs, "The Three Historical Regions"). See also Gábor Klaniczay, "The Birth of a New Europe about A.D. 1000. Conversion, Transfer of Institutional Models, New Dynamics" (in press) (hereafter Klaniczay, "The Birth").

[2] See Klaniczay, "The Birth". Concerning the Central European and Scandinavian evolution in the context of ecclesiastical history, see André Vauchez, *L'Eglise et le peuple chrétien dans les pays de l'Europe du Centre-Est et du Nord (XIV$^e$–XV$^e$ siècles)*, Actes du colloque organisé par l' École Française de Rome (27-29 Janvier 1986) (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1990); Gábor Klaniczay, ed., *Procès de canonisation au Moyen Age – Aspects juridiques et religieux, Medieval Canonization Processes – Legal and Religious Aspects* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2004); Márta Kondor, "Case Studies on the Problem of Center and Periphery in Western Christendom: Uppsala and Spalato in the Time of Pope Alexander III (1159-1181)", MA thesis (Budapest: Central European University, 2004).

[3] On this notion, see Oscar Halecki, *The Borderlands of Western Civilization. A History of East Central Europe* (New York: Ronald, 1952); Francis Dvornik, *The Making of Central and Eastern Europe* (London: The Polish Research Centre, 1949). Concerning the progressive emergence of the idea of Central Europe, see Gérard Beauprêtre, ed., *L'Europe Centrale. Réalité, mythes, enjeu XVIII$^e$–XX$^e$ siècles* (Warsaw: Université de Varsovie, 1991)

## *Medieval Christendom and its peripheries*

While Christendom is a clearly defined notion for the later Middle Ages, and the papal curia a well-known institution, peripheries are far less defined; Firstly, because the notion of periphery itself needs to be discussed; secondly, because the peripheries of Christendom have had fluctuating definitions and geographical limits throughout history, especially in the late medieval period. Thirdly, one may certainly pose the question if, and how far, the East Central European regions we are interested in – from the Baltic to Albania – formed a unity in the late Middle Ages which could be compared to the northern peripheries or to the central regions of Christendom.

Medieval Europe put in the context of *Christianitas*/Christendom[4] may be defined as a religious entity composed of countries of Roman obedience and rite. As such, it was also a cultural unit. Its unity came from a cultural heritage, from the linguistic unity of its literate elite and its written tradition. Finally, this religious and cultural framework defined the whole form of society, with its inner structures and principles that could take different shapes but showed some

(hereafter Beauprêtre, *L'Europe Centrale*); a historiographical overview in Jerzy Kłoczowski, *L'Europe du Centre-Est dans l'historiographie des pays de la région* (Lublin: Institute of East Central Europe, 1995), and, recently, Klaniczay, "The Birth".

[4] See Dominique Iogna-Prat, *Ordonner et exclure. Cluny et la société chrétienne face à l'hérésie, au judaïsme et à l'islam 1000-1150* (Paris: Seuil, 1998), 11; "Christianitas", in *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 2, col. 1915-1916; "Chrétienté" and "Chrétientés nouvelles", in: André Vauchez, ed., *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Moyen Age Chrétien* (Paris: Cerf, 1997), 319-320; André Vauchez, ed., *Histoire du christianisme* (Paris: Desclée, 1993), vols. 4-5 (hereafter Vauchez, ed., *Histoire du christianisme*); Piroska Nagy, "Les notions de *christianitas* et *chrétienté* et leur sens spatial. Abbon de Saint-Germain et la spatialisation de la *christianitas*", in: Dominique Iogna-Prat and Andràs Zemplényi, ed., *Frontières, espaces et identités en Europe* (Paris: CNRS, in press). A few older studies on the notion are: Maurice Hélin, "Christianitas", *Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi* 29 (1959), 229-237; F. Kempf, "Das Problem der *Christianitas* im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert", *Historisches Jahrbuch* 79 (1960), 104-123; Bernard Landry, *L'idée de chrétienté chez les scolastiques du XIII^e siècle* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1929); Gerhart B. Ladner, "The Concepts of 'Ecclesia' and 'Christianitas' and their relation to the idea of papal 'plenitudo potestatis' from Gregory VII to Boniface VIII", in: idem, *Images and Ideas in the Middle Ages. Selected Studies in History and Art* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1983), vol. 2, 487-515; Raoul Manselli, "Il medioevo come 'Christianitas': una scoperta romantica" and "La Christianitas medioevale di fronte all'eresia", in: V. Branca, ed., *Concetto, storia, miti e immagini del Medio evo* (Venice: Sansoni, 1973), 51-135; P. Rousset, "La notion de Chrétienté aux XIe et XIIe siècles", *Le Moyen Age*, 69 (1963), 191-203; Jean Rupp, *L'idée de Chrétienté dans la Pensée pontificale des origines à Innocent III* (Paris: Les Presses modernes, 1939); Jan van Laarhoven, "'Christianitas' et réforme grégorienne", *Studi gregoriani* 6 (1959–1961), 1-98. Two excellent definitions of the notion are: Robert Bartlett, "The concept of Christendom", in: idem, *The Making of Europe. Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950-1350* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 250-255, and Nora Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom. Jews, Muslims and 'Pagans' in Medieval Hungary c. 1000 – c. 1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 42-43.

structural similarities. Such a definition of Christendom includes, most of the time, the western part of the medieval Christian world, excluding the Orthodox sphere.[5] In the Middle Ages, people meant the whole of the Christian world by *Christianitas* only when they opposed it to the pagan world or Islam.

Western Christendom was gradually formed from the early Middle Ages on, especially through Carolingian and Roman ecclesiastical construction, which can be described in three steps: the Christianization of peoples and their rulers (fifth–eleventh centuries), the construction of an ecclesiastical system (eighth–thirteenth centuries), and finally the domination of the Roman curia over the whole of the Western Christian world (eleventh–fifteenth centuries). In this way Christendom attained its full development: a huge territory with a church-network of Latin rite, obedient to, and more and more controlled by, Rome. The papal curia became the center.[6]

Despite the growing uniformity of ever-increasing papal administration and justice, and the consequent uniformity of the framework of relations with the *partes*, the individual churches, the various parts of Christendom had quite different relations with the curia. The structure and the framework of these relations were the same: from the center, communication was passed down by papal letters and bulls and by legates; from the *partes* towards the curia there was a constant flow of embassies, pilgrims, different kinds of supplications and of supplicants themselves. However, the density and the nature of the relations varied. The reasons for this were both political and geographical. In the central regions of Christendom (Italy, France, and the Empire), their relations with the curia were both strong and frequent. Popes frequently came from Italy, France, or the Empire; the circulation of clergymen, of knowledge and of wealth (benefices and taxes) was intense. Moving away towards the East, North, or West, relations weakened and their nature changed. One can see the difference between the central regions of Christendom and its remote parts in terms of core and periphery, in degrees of development, in terms of dependence, and in the density of relations.

## *Periphery, what is it good for?*

The term 'periphery', derived from the Greek *peripheria*, is used in its first, geometric, sense to describe perimeter and arc; its broader use, in a geographical sense, is widespread. It means, then, either the limit itself, the boundary or edge of an area or surface, the outer edge of an area, or what is

---

[5] See Judith Herrin, *The Formation of Christendom* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 8, 12; Vauchez, ed., *Histoire du christianisme*.

[6] Ludwig Schmugge has also addressed the question of the curia and the *partes* in the fifteenth century in the direction of 'centro e periferia'; see idem, "Centro e periferia attraverso le dispense pontificie nel secolo XV", in: Sergio Gensini, ed., *Vita religiosa e identità politiche. Universalità e particolarismi nell'Europa del tardo Medio Evo* (Ospedaletto (Pisa): Pacini, 1998), 33-58.

beyond its limits. Defined in this way, periphery assumes a whole to which it belongs, and a center to which it is contrasted.

The 'center-periphery' model is now a well-known conceptual framework for studies in geography and economics. In recent decades, center and periphery have become fundamental categories used to characterize the status of places in a spatial system,[7] and the idea of studying cultures or human societies as spatial systems according to this scheme has been widely diffused. The conceptual framework was first popularized by Fernand Braudel in his work *The Mediterranean*,[8] where he defined the notion of world economy ('économie-monde', 'Weltwirtschaft') and analyzed the nature of relations inside such a world economy. In the 1970s, it was taken up both by Immanuel Wallerstein, who described the economy of the modern world system in terms of core, semi-periphery and periphery,[9] and again by Braudel himself, in the third volume of his *Civilization and capitalism, The Time of the World*,[10] in which he discussed the notion of world economy enriched by the reading of Wallerstein, whom he also criticized. Braudel extended the spatial system description to phenomena other than economic: political systems, social systems (slavery, serfdom) and to cultural structures.

The model, as best developed by Wallerstein and his followers who have used his approach, describes the relation between center and peripheries in terms of domination and dependence, frequently including a Marxist analysis. In this scheme, the center or core is defined as dominant, and as such having an *influence* on its environment. Degrees of periphery are defined according to the intensity of the influence of the core and according to the strength of dependence on it. Semi-peripheries are described as highly dependent on the core but dominating peripheries themselves; the ambivalence of their features suggests that they are "changing state": they are either attempting to improve their relative position in the system or they are core regions in decline. This model, based on changing relations between zones, challenged social scientists and is still highly

---

[7] See Christian Grataloup, "Centre/Périphérie", http://193.55.107.45/hpt/hpt_c9.htm (accessed September 2004). This conceptual pair goes back at least to Werner Sombart, *Der moderne Kapitalismus* (1902) and was frequently used in Marxist social analysis. In economics, see Samir Amin, *Le développement inégal* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1973) and in geography Alain Reynaud, *Société, espace et justice* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1981).

[8] Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II.* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949), 325, 328. (English translation: *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* [London: Harper Collins, 1992]); see also idem, *Civilisation matérielle, Economie et Capitalisme XVe–XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1979), vol. 3. *Le temps du monde*, 11-12. (English translation: *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th century.* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992]) (hereafter Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle*).

[9] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974).

[10] Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle*, vol. 3, 11-12.

popular in geography, sociology, and political science.[11] Its concepts remain helpful for historians who wish to establish the model of a spatial system that evaluates places at a given moment from a given point of view which can be economic, political, or cultural. However, before considering medieval Christendom with its center, Rome, and its peripheries as a spatial system, let us consider the dangers of the model.

Besides its main advantage of conceiving worlds and networks as spatial systems, the center-periphery model poses problems by its schematism. Relations among the participants of the model are described according to a rigid dominant/dominated scheme, while reality is generally more complex. The model does not take into account the fact that with growing distance, peripherality cannot only increase dependence, but can also help to maintain or develop independence. Contrasting core and periphery suggests that all equally distant peripheries of a world system are uniform in terms of the consequent disadvantages in exchange. It assumes that any country or region in a peripheral situation will respond and behave in a similar or comparable way. However, a more thorough study of any spatial system shows the great variety of situations at the same distance from the 'core', where geographical, geopolitical, cultural, and historical determinants may play important roles. The same region can represent different situations, independent of the distance from the center; mountain areas, for instance, frequently produce a kind of local micro-peripherality, which contrasts with nearby valleys or plains. One has to be aware that many factors (proximity to the sea, position in an exchange system, etc.) frequently modify the scheme to the extent that they in fact invalidate it.

In the present volume, we are dealing with center-periphery relationship in the domain of religious institutions and social life. While economic relations between center and periphery are at least partly spontaneous, in the case of the medieval Church, Rome gradually became the explicit center, for historical, cultural, and political reasons, among which tradition had a strong symbolic weight. In the later Middle Ages, Rome maintained or even strengthened its status, while other cultural, political, and economic structures of Europe were in constant change and new types of dynamics appeared. In spite of the changes in different fields, once Rome and the curia had become the institutional center of Western Christendom and had a well-functioning network as a tool, they also exercised a growing impact on various fields of social life: not only on ecclesiastical structures, taxes, and careers, but also on matrimonial habits and structures and in the field of everyday life and *mores*.

[11] On the world-system theory, see the rich bibliography at http://www.zmk.uni- freiburg.de/Wallerstein/seclit.htm (accessed September 2004).

## *East Central Europe as a periphery of Christendom in the later Middle Ages*

I do not think that one may consider all of the *partes* equally, from France to the Empire, from Finland to Croatia, as peripheries of the Western Christian world-system. One has to refine one's vocabulary after a thorough study of relations to Rome, which may allow finding levels and degrees of the spatial system of late medieval Western Christendom. To what extent did being geographically peripheral mean being culturally or religiously peripheral at the same time? How far did the one involve the other – and if not, why?

For the present, I have uniformly called all of the East Central European area belonging to the Roman Church and lying eastwards of Italy and the German-speaking countries 'Eastern peripheries' of Christendom, and Scandinavia and the British Isles 'Northern peripheries'. However, for the curia, all these different regions, institutions and operating spheres did not have the same importance; they did not represent the periphery in the same way. One realizes that 'peripherality' was far from uniform. Cultural and religious situations varied, as well as political importance and integration in economic flows. Areas having borders with other Christian regions, like the countries of the Balkans with Orthodox neighbours, were in a different situation than those which also had pagan neighbours, like Poland, or only natural frontiers on one or more sides, like Scandinavia and the British Isles. The major lines of contact such as the Mediterranean determined a better integration in all kinds of exchange. The eastern shore of the Adriatic, for instance, belonged to Italy throughout the Middle Ages more than to the Balkans. From a geographical and cultural point of view, East Central Europe had a specific position. Unlike Northwestern Europe, a natural frontier area of the continent, East Central Europe lies in the middle; the religious and cultural borders that cross it are also major contact lines.[12] This region was not perceived as a well-defined area until the nineteenth century; the birth of an intense reflection about its shape, borders, and characteristics was linked to the specific political context created at the time around the two World Wars. It may be considered as having 'moving limits'.[13] An "*oscillation des confins*", as Evelyne Patlagean put it, characterized East Central Europe from Late Antiquity to our days. In the Middle Ages, great areas of it were under the double influence of the Roman Church and Orthodox Christianity, as well as being in contact with pagans and Muslims. The features of both were present in monasticism, in architecture, and in liturgy. The two Christian worlds interpenetrated each other – even though the great lines of division went back as far as the late

[12] See also Krzysztof Pomian, "L'Europe centrale: essais de définition", in: *Europe centrale – Mitteleuropa, Revue Germanique Internationale* 1 (1994), 11-24; Beauprêtre, *L'Europe Centrale*, 7-15; Bernard Barbier, "L'Europe centrale: une définition géographique", in: Beauprêtre, *L'Europe Centrale*, 21-35.

[13] See Evelyne Patlagean, "Les Etats d'Europe centrale et Byzance, ou l'oscillation des confins", *Revue historique* 302, n. 4 (2000), 827-868.

Roman division of the empire. In such circumstances, the research problems of the East Central European "peripheries" of Western Christendom may be expected to be, at least, partly different from those of Northern Europe.

After the Mongol conquest in the middle of the thirteenth century, Hungary and Poland also had pagan neighbours and communicated with them for centuries. In the later Middle Ages, East Central Europe was the point of departure for Catholic missions towards the East. These are specific data of the context that we have to consider when speaking of comparing the 'peripherality' of Northern and East Central Europe. In the latter, not only the distance from the curia, but also from Constantinople, the center of Byzantium, counted toward the definition of the position of a region or a diocese. The strength of Orthodox networks in an area could influence the integration in the concurrent Latin Church. All these features make East Central Europe a somewhat specific part of the Christian world,[14] difficult to compare to the 'pure' Western or 'pure' Eastern model. That is why historians since the nineteenth century have chosen to speak about a third region of Europe between the other two:[15] a *Mitteleuropa* which has changing shapes according to the schemes describing it.[16] Seeking the traces of this particularity in the Penitentiary registers also constitutes a test of how far such a feature is mirrored in the supplications addressed to the curia. The questions are twofold: on the one hand, can we distinguish different features of 'peripherality' comparing, for instance, Eastern Central and Northern Europe? On the other hand, were there specificities in one area, for example Eastern Central Europe as such, which allow it to be described as a late medieval unity?

## *Peripheries and peripherality in the Penitentiary Archives*

Because of the uniformity of registration in the curial office, the material of the Penitentiary archives of the Holy See may well serve to concentrate on the criteria that define peripherality. It allows dealing with the question of the extent to which it was the geographical situation on the edges of Western Christendom that created peripherality mirrored in the cases and their contents, especially in contrast to other, more 'central', areas. How far are we able to perceive different kinds of periphery? Certainly, the findings of the Penitentiary registers alone do not allow answering these questions; rather they need to be placed side by side with other types of evidence that they can usefully complete. The most important aspect in this context is, first, to define what can be recognised as a characteristic of peripherality in the Penitentiary archives. One may interpret a high number of petitions as a sign of numerous relations and strong contacts with the

[14] See László Makkai, "Les caractères originaux de l'histoire économique et sociale de l'Europe orientale pendant le Moyen Age", *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 16 (1970), 261-287.

[15] See note 3.

[16] See also Szűcs, "The Three Historical Regions".

center. In any case, one has to examine the quantity of findings and registered cases in order to analyze what such quantities depended on; however, numeric data alone do not tell us a great deal. Certainly, geographic peripherality was mirrored by fewer cases; proximity to the center meant that relations with the curia were easier to establish and use frequently; geographic proximity lessened the cost and the difficulties of the application procedure. Certainly proximity influenced the number of supplications and perhaps also the local application of canon law. One may ask if it was more respected nearer to Rome than in remoter parts of Christendom, which might have been difficult to control. If there was not a greater acknowledgment of church law related to other cultural features, what determined a high number of cases arriving at the curia? This would also mean that, contrary to the Wallerstein model, greater peripherality might have accompanied less dependence on the center.

Other factors complicate the equation connecting distance with the number of cases and the degree of relations with the center. The level of urbanisation and the wealth of a diocese, expressed in the taxes expected from there, may also be reflected in the Penitentiary entries. Local situations, customs, and laws and their relation to canon law, the diffusion of literacy, and political relations with the Holy See may have influenced the number of cases and produced variations from one region or one period to the other which had nothing to do with geographical peripherality. Wars and religious troubles also created different backgrounds for the application procedures that may be reflected in the number as well as the content of the findings.

It seems clear that one cannot link, in a linear way, geographic and cultural peripherality. One always has to work with distinct kinds, levels and degrees of it, influenced by different components. Such an approach may lead to a better characterisation and understanding of local situations also emerging from comparisons with other dioceses or areas.

# The Long Arm of Papal Authority

Edited by

Gerhard Jaritz, Torstein Jørgensen, Kirsi Salonen

# 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

**Department of Medieval Studies**
Central European University
Nádor u. 9, H-1051 Budapest, Hungary
Telephone: (+36-1) 327-3024, Fax: (+36-1) 327-3055
E-mail: medstud@ceu.hu, Website: http://www.ceu.hu/medstud/
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**
Gesellschaft zur Erforschung der materiellen Kultur des Mittelalters
Körnermarkt 13, A-3500 Krems an der Donau, Austria
Telephone: (+43-2732) 847 93-20, Fax: (+43-2732) 847 93-1
E-mail: imareal@oeaw.ac.at , Website: http://www.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/maq/
ISBN 3-90 1094 17 2

© Editors and Contributors 2004
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in retrieval systems, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the permission of the Publisher.
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-

---

[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