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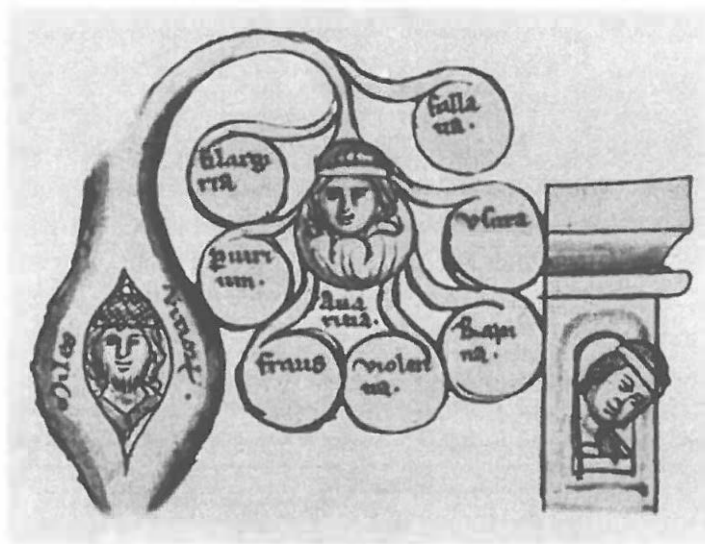
VIOLENCE AND THE MEDIEVAL CLERGY

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and
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PREFACE

Studies of the Apostolic Penitentiary and its role and function for all strata of late medieval society have become an important field of research at the international level. The requests of Christians for grace to be granted by the papal curia offer information about a variety of problems and needs that confronted both clerics and lay-people and made petitions to the pope necessary or, at least, advisable.

Since 2001, the Department of Medieval Studies of Central European University has been concentrating on comparative research in the East Central European data of the Penitentiary Registers. This has led to intensive cooperation with other scholars in the field, to a number of international meetings and the publication of their results.¹ The most recent of these workshops was held in Dubrovnik in 2008 and dealt with a research question for which the Penitentiary registers contain rich material: "Coping with Violence, and the Medieval Clergy (from the Local Settlement of Dispute to Approaching the Apostolic Penitentiary)."

In recent decades research into violence in the Middle Ages has seen a particular boom. In a large number of studies historians discovered that violence was omnipresent in medieval society and affected all areas of life and the members of all social strata. Although one has to be careful with such generalizations, it can be stated that the surviving sources deal regularly with issues of violent actions, signs and results of violence, violent people and coping with violence. Members of the clergy played an important role in recording such evidence – as writers about violence and critics of violence, but also as perpetrators, victims, and witnesses. However, systematic analyses of the patterns of behaviour and the different functions and actions of clerics on these issues have not yet been realized often in a context-bound and comparative way. The Dubrovnik workshop aimed to contribute towards changing this situation and offer a forum to discuss questions about the various roles of medieval clerics in the attempts

¹ The results of meetings at Bergen (2003) and Budapest (2004) were published in Gerhard Jaritz, Torstein Jørgensen and Kirsi Salonen (ed.), *The Long Arm of Papal Authority. Late Medieval Christian Peripheries and Their Communication with the Holy See*, CEU Medievalia 8 (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2005); selected papers of a workshop at Rome (2005) may be found in *idem* (ed.), ... et usque ad ultimum terrae *The Apostolic Penitentiary in Local Contexts*, CEU Medievalia 10 (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2007).

and processes designed to cope with violence. Particular emphasis was put on the function of the Apostolic Penitentiary and its decisions in this context. This volume contains selected contributions from the meeting.

In his introductory paper, Peter Clarke offers an overview of the state of the art of research into the connection of the clergy and violence in the Middle Ages. Kirsi Salonen concentrates on violence at the Roman curia and its reflection in the Penitentiary records. Torstein Jørgensen and Etleva Lala deal with violence and the clergy in two peripheral areas of medieval Western Christianity, namely, Norway and Albania, and also include Penitentiary evidence in their analysis. Gerhard Jaritz studies the role of one important object in the violence-bound argumentation of the supplicants to the Penitentiary: the short bread-knife that was allowed to be carried by everyone and did not count as a weapon, but seems to have been used regularly as such. Gordan Ravančić and Nella Lonza offer analyses of problems of violence occurring in the clerical space of medieval Dubrovnik.

November, 2011

Gerhard Jaritz (Budapest and Krems)
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