

www.forumhistoriae.sk



This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)



© 2024 The Author(s)  
© 2024 Institute of History,  
Slovak Academy of Sciences

## Issues of the Origins, Dating and Interconnections of the Legends of Saint Gerard

Marek Druga

### Keywords

Saint Gerard, Medieval Legends, Marosvár-Csanád, Monasteries, Hungarian 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicle

### DOI

10.31577/forhist.2024.18.1.6

### Author

Marek Druga  
Historický ústav Slovenskej akadémie  
vied, v.v.i.  
Klemensova 19  
P. O. Box 198  
814 99 Bratislava  
Slovakia  
Email: [marekdruga@gmail.com](mailto:marekdruga@gmail.com)  
ORCID: 0000-0001-7233-434X

### Cite

DRUGA, Marek. Issues of the Origins, Dating and Interconnections of the Legends of Saint Gerard. In *Forum Historiae*, 2024, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 75–96, doi: 10.31577/forhist.2024.18.1.6

### Abstract

DRUGA, Marek. Issues of the Origins, Dating and Interconnections of the Legends of Saint Gerard.

The present study revisits known issues related to the time and circumstances of the genesis of the legends of Saint Gerard. Although polemics around the legends ceased in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, several issues related to the dating of the legends remain unresolved. This study covers some disputed points, especially links between the Major Legend of Saint Gerard (*Legenda maior*) and Hungarian chronicles. Earlier research, which some later works and the latest Latin-English edition of the legends of Saint Gerard did not take into account with respect to this point, have already demonstrated that the Major Legend of Saint Gerard drew some information on the pagan uprising and Gerard's death from a text which appears in the Hungarian chronicles, not the other way round. The aim of this paper is to clarify these findings and demonstrate that the author of *Legenda maior* did not pull information from a lost proto-legend or proto-chronicle (*Gesta Ungarorum vetera*) of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, but from a later text, which was very similar to the Hungarian 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicles. Moreover, these findings question the—more or less generally accepted—existence of an 11<sup>th</sup> century proto-legend—a larger volume—of Saint Gerard, which would have been the common source for both surviving legends. The present study takes the opinion that the sources the author of *Legenda maior* used were the *Legenda minor*—specifically its earlier, slightly different version—and a lost variant of an earlier chronicle text akin to the works of extant 14<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian chronicles. The author of the *Legenda maior* likely incorporated some older tradition about the early history of Marosvár-Csanád and supplemented it with numerous insertions and fabrications, like in the reports on the life and death of Saint Gerard.

Systematic research on the legends of Saint Gerard dates back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup> Issues around the dating of the two legends and their interconnections comprise the most important analysis about the 1970s. Tivadar Ortvyay and János Karácsonyi considered the Major Legend of St. Gerard (*De Sancto Gerardo episcopo Morosenensi et martyre regni Ungariae*, hereafter referred to as the *Legenda maior*) to be an authentic 11<sup>th</sup> century source with the exception of the last

This work was supported by the APVV [grant no 19-0131]: *Ars moriendi*. Fenomén smrti v stredovekom Uhorsku and by the VEGA [grant no 2/0028/22]: Stredoveká spoločnosť v Uhorsku (štruktúra, koexistencia a konfrontácia sociálnych skupín do konca 13. storočia).

1 From among earlier works, observations about the description of the circumstances of Gerard's arrival in the Kingdom of Hungary are noteworthy in INCHOFER, Melchior. *Annales ecclesiastici Regni Hungariae 1*. Roma : Grignianus, 1644, pp. 346–348. Later, a detailed analysis of the Minor Legend of St. Gerard was published by STILTING, Joannes. *Acta Sanctorum Septembris 6*. Antverpiae : Apud Bernardum Alb. Vander Plassche, 1757, pp. 713–727.

two chapters.<sup>2</sup> After comparing the texts of the legends and other reports from the chronicles of Simon of Kéza and Mark of Kalt, Raimund Friedrich Kaindl dated the Minor Legend (*Passio Beatissimi Gerardi*, hereafter referred to as the *Legenda minor*) to the late 11<sup>th</sup> century. He considered the text of the *Legenda maior* to be a later source, covering several different time periods. However, according to Kaindl, the bulk of the legend had appeared before 1285, i.e., before the contemporary form of the Chronicle of Simon of Kéza was written.<sup>3</sup>

Since 1913, the legends of Saint Gerard have been examined in detail by other Hungarian historians. Frigyes Müller shifted Kaindl's dating of the extant versions of the *Legenda maior* to 1381–1421. Consequently, the legend would have included later interpolations, created after 1381, the date stated in the last chapter. However, its author was said to have drawn on a lost legend, written by Gerard's friend Walter—or someone else from his close circle—before 1083. Müller's argument was based on passages dedicated to the cult of Mary, and, especially, on the chapters in which the words *beatus* and *sanctus* are absent after the names of Gerard and Stephen. These parts would therefore have been adopted from the so-called Walter's legend. According to Müller, the *Legenda minor* also came into being in the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century as an abridged version of the original legend. References to Gerard's stay in the hermitage in Bakonybél would also have been based on this lost proto-legend. The narrative in the *Legenda maior* on the arrival of Gerard, his meeting with Hungarian prelates and detailed accounts of Duke Ajtony and Csanád, the Church school and monasteries in Csanád-Marosvár—the Greek monastery of Saint John the Baptist (later of Saint George in Oroszlámos) and the Benedictine monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary—would also have been authentic 11<sup>th</sup> century creations.<sup>4</sup>

Imre Madzsar disagreed with Müller, dating the birth of the *Legenda minor* to a period between the late 11<sup>th</sup> and the early 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. He considered the *Legenda maior* to be a uniform work from after 1360, which was fashioned partly by expanding the text of the *Legenda minor* and partly by 14<sup>th</sup> century fabulation. Madzsar criticized Müller's hypotheses about some chapters, namely, citing chapters Seven to Twelve in the *Legenda maior* which omit the words *sanctus* and *beatus* when mentioning King Stephen I and Bishop Gerard as passages taken from Walter's legend.<sup>5</sup> Madzsar also pointed out that some conversations recorded in detail in the *Legenda maior*, passages with Anastasius and Maurus in Chapters Four and Five, Gerard's conversation with Walter, and others prove that these were parts that supplemented the shorter text of the *Legenda minor*. On the contrary, Müller claimed that

2 ORTVAY, Tivadar. Még egyszer a budavári Gellért sír ügyében. In *Archaeológiai értesítő*, 1874, vol. 8, p. 289; KARÁCSONYI, János. *Szent Gellért, csanádi püspök, élete és művei*. Budapest : MTA, 1887, pp. 280–298 (to the *Legenda minor*, see pp. 299–302).

3 KAINDL, Raimund Friedrich. Studien zu den ungarischen Geschichtsquellen XIII, XIV, XV und XVI. In *Archiv für österreichische Geschichte*, 1902, vol. 91, pp. 3–38, summary pp. 37–38. The chronicle of Simon of Kéza (the authorship is disputed) was preserved only in late copies from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

4 MÜLLER, Frigyes. A nagyobb Gellért legenda forrásai és keletkezése. In *Századok*, 1913, vol. 47, pp. 355–374 and 419–446; MÜLLER, Frigyes. A nagyobb Gellért legenda keletkezése és forrásai. In *Századok*, 1915, vol. 49, pp. 387–411.

5 MADZSAR, Imre. Szent Gellért nagyobb legendájáról. In *Századok*, 1913, vol. 47, p. 504.

the author of the *Legenda minor*, which was intended for liturgical purposes, actually omitted these passages. Madzsar also questioned the antiquity of the *Legenda maior* because of the extensiveness of the legend, the number of names mentioned in it and the dialogues. At the same time, he called attention to the existence of a certain typology of 11<sup>th</sup> century hagiographic sources and to the significance of each piece of information in the legends.<sup>6</sup> Finally, in an addendum to his original study, Madzsar revisited Kaindl's reasoning on the links between the *Legenda maior*, the Chronicle of Simon of Kéza and Canaparius's legend of Saint Adalbert, and accepted the dating of the *Legenda maior* to the late 13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>7</sup>

The genesis of some legendary elements in the *Legenda maior* was later addressed by Kálmán Juhász<sup>8</sup> and Carlile A. Macartney. Macartney pursued their origin in an older text of a lost legend, allegedly Walter's version, to a lesser extent in some later tradition.<sup>9</sup> A fundamental shift in the views on the genesis of both legends occurred only in studies written in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including mainly the polemic between Lajos Csóka and János Horváth Jr. in 1974. According to the final opinion of Horváth, the *Legenda maior* was born in the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century, except for a few items that were based on earlier sources, mainly the original legend from the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Horváth claimed that this proto-legend, as well as the oldest parts of both surviving legends, could not have been created earlier than 1145. In his assessment of the text of the *Legenda minor*, Horváth drew mainly on the formulations of the canonization of Saint Gerard.<sup>10</sup>

Csóka considered the *Legenda minor* to be an independent story of significant historical value, created between the production of the Minor Legend of Saint Stephen and Hartvik's Legend, i.e., around the year 1100. In his view, it was probably authored by a Benedictine monk, who was also behind the writing of the Minor legend of Saint Stephen. The *Legenda maior* was to be created only after 1336, i.e., after the issuance of the *Summa magistri (Benedictina)* bull of Benedict XII. This papal decree, calling for a reformation of Benedictine monasticism, was what the legendist drew from, especially with respect to the information on Gerard's education. The reform efforts of the Hungarian Benedictines, supported mainly by Sigfrid, the abbot of the Hronský Beňadik (1330–1355), later of the Pannonhalma Abbey (1355–1365), might have also created a suitable environment for the issuance of the significantly expanded legend of Saint Gerard. Since Csóka did not recognize the existence of the 11<sup>th</sup> century Walter's legend, he also rejected the credibility of material in the *Legenda maior* which cannot be found in the *Legenda minor*.<sup>11</sup>

In the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, research on the legends of Saint Gerard

6 MADZSAR 1913, p. 507.

7 MADZSAR, Imre. A Gellért legenda kérdéséhez. In *Századok*, 1915, vol. 49, pp. 572–574.

8 JUHÁSZ, Kálmán. A Gellért legend. In *Erdélyi Irodalmi Szemle*, 1929, vol. 6, no. 3/4, pp. 305–319.

9 MACARTNEY, A. Carlile. Studies on the Earliest Hungarian Historical Sources I. The Lives of St. Gerard. In *Archivum Europae Centro-Orientalis*, 1938, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 456–490.

10 HORVÁTH, A. Gellért-legendák keletkezése és kora. In HORVÁTH, János – SZÉKELY, György (eds.) *Középkori kútfontok kritikus kérdései*. Budapest : Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974, pp. 147–163.

11 CSÓKA, Lajos József. Szent Gellért kisebb és nagyobb legendájának keletkezéstörténete. In HORVÁTH – SZÉKELY 1974, pp. 137–145.

partially addressed some issues and historians began to pay attention to later versions of the legends and deviations in their textual variants. In 1947–1948, two important works were published by an Italian religious scholar of Hungarian origin, Florio Banfi. His studies called attention to Italian sources, specifically a transcription of the Venetian manuscript of the *Legenda minor* by the Dominican monk Pietro Calò from the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, two transcriptions of the *Legenda maior* from the 15<sup>th</sup> century—in a codex from Bergamo, the so-called Padua Manuscript, and to liturgical texts.<sup>12</sup> In 1980, Gedeon Borsa called attention to the existence of a previously unknown, significantly different printed version of the *Legenda maior* of 1519.<sup>13</sup> Gyula Kristó and József Gericcs then attempted to place passages from the legends of Saint Gerard about Gerard's action against the Hungarian king Samuel Aba (1041–1044) into a wider historical context of the social unrest of 1046.<sup>14</sup> With respect to the development of the cult of Saint Gerard in Venice, Paolo Chiesa dealt with the dating of the medieval versions of the legends and of their extracts preserved in Italy.<sup>15</sup> The most recent insights into the connections between the extant manuscripts and the printed versions of the *Legenda minor* were provided by Cristian Gaşpar in the latest edition of the legends of Saint Gerard.<sup>16</sup>

The prevailing opinion among historians today is that the *Legenda minor* is the earlier work, and it was created sometime around the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, or in the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The extant text of the *Legenda maior* was to have been created only in the latter half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, 1361 at the earliest with the addition to the last chapter in 1381. However, according to most historians, the *Legenda maior* contains details and entire passages that date back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Both legends are said to have originated from some older, now lost proto-legend. The *Legenda minor* is its abridged text, intended for liturgical purposes, primarily for reading at the annual Feast of Saint Gerard (24 September in the Hungarian and 23 February in the Venetian tradition). On the contrary, the *Legenda maior* should be a significant expansion of this original text.

Based on these conclusions, i.e., on the reports in the *Legenda maior*, pieces of information appear mainly in synthesizing works about the expedition of Csanád against Ajtony, the early church infrastructure in the territory of the

12 BANFI, Florio. Vita di S. Gerardo da Venezia vescovo di Csanád nel Leggendaro di Pietro Caló. In *Janus Pannonius*, 1947, vol. 1, pp. 223–241; BANFI, Florio. Vita di S. Gerardo da Venezia nel codice 1622 della Biblioteca Universitaria di Padova. In *Benedictina*, 1948, vol. 2, pp. 262–330.

13 BORSA, Gedeon. Az 1519. évből nyomtatott Gellért-legendája. In *Magyar Könyvszemle*, 1980, vol. 96, no. 4, pp. 377–384.

14 KRISTÓ, Gyula. Gellért püspök, valamint Péter és Aba Sámuel királyok viszonyának kérdéséhez (Válasz Gericcs Józsefnek). In *Magyar Könyvszemle*, 1985, vol. 101, no. 2, pp. 170–180; GERICS, József. Az 1040-es évek magyar történetére vonatkozó egyes források kritikája. In *Magyar Könyvszemle*, 1982, vol. 98, no. 3, pp. 186–197 and 299–313; GERICS, A Pseudo-Isidorus gyűjtemény szövegei és a 11. század első felének magyarországi társadalmi ideológiája (Válasz Kristó Gyulának). In *Magyar Könyvszemle*, 1985, vol. 101, no. 2, pp. 159–170.

15 CHIESA, Paolo. Recupero agiografici veneziani dai codici Milano, Braidense, Gerli ms. 26 e Firenze, Nazionale, Conv. Soppr. G.5.1212. In *Hagiografica*, 1998, vol. 5, pp. 217–271.

16 GAŞPAR, Cristian – KLANICZAY, Gábor. Saint Gerard, Preface. In KLANICZAY, Gábor – CSEPREGI, Ildikó (eds.) *Sanctitas Principum. Sancti Reges, Duces, Episcopi et Abbates Europae Centralis (saec. XI–XIII): The Sanctity of the Leaders. Holy Kings, Princes, Bishops and Abbots from Central Europe (Eleventh to Thirteenth Centuries)* (hereinafter referred to as *Sanctitas Principum*). Budapest: Central European University Press, 2023, pp. 225–232.

Diocese of Csanád and biographical data of Gerard. However, greater caution should be exercised here since the identification of earlier master copies of the legends of Saint Gerard is not as simple as some conclusions of earlier works might suggest.

The following pages focus on some disputed passages in the legends of Saint Gerard and in this respect, on the issues of origin, dating and the interconnection of the legends, and finally, on the interconnection between the legends and the Hungarian chronicles.

## Gerard and Italy

According to the *Legenda minor*, Gerard was born in Venice, entered a monastery as a boy and later left his homeland to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.<sup>17</sup> The author of the *Legenda maior* adds more detailed information about the age of Gerard as an oblate (five years) and specifies the monastery to which the boy was sent by his parents (San Giorgio Maggiore). According to the *Legenda maior*, the abbot later sent young Gerard, a talented monk, to study in Bologna. Upon his return, Gerard became the abbot of the monastery, leaving it later to travel to the Holy Land. Due to storms, he stopped in the Kingdom of Hungary where he met Bishop Maurus and Abbots Anastasius and Rasina.<sup>18</sup>

At this point, it would be useless to address the difficult question of Gerard's origin—the Sagredo, the Morosini or another, unknown family—and the monastery in which he grew up. The question of when and for what reason the respective chapters (One to Three) of the *Legenda maior* were written, which inform us in detail about Gerard's origin and life in Italy, is more important. The historical value of this part of the legend has been rejected by most historians, but they disagree on the question of whether the author of the *Legenda maior* wrote it in the 14<sup>th</sup> century or the text originated in Italy and reached the Kingdom of Hungary in the 13<sup>th</sup> or the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Müller and Horváth also assumed that the text replaced the lost pieces of information about Gerard from an original proto-legend.<sup>19</sup>

However, the references in the *Legenda maior* to Gerard's childhood, his entry into the monastery and his education may also indicate something else, namely that details of this type had not been present in the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century legends yet. Another question may also be raised here, what motives led the legendist to remove earlier pieces of information and replace them with a later narrative? What appears to be a more likely order is that any details

17 *Passio Beatissimi Gerardi* (hereinafter referred to as *Legenda minor*). Sanctitas Principum. Edited by Cristian Cașpar. Budapest : Central European University Press, 2023, pp. 240–242, c. 2; *Incipit passio beatissimi Gerardi. Legenda Sancti Gerhardi episcopi* (hereinafter referred to as *Incipit passio*). Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum tempore ducum regumque stirpis Arpadianae gestarum 2 (SRH). Edited by Emericus Madzsar. Budapestini : Academia Litter. Hungarica atque Societate Histor. Hungarica, 1938, pp. 471–472, c. 2.

18 *De Sancto Gerhardo episcopo Morosenensi et martyre regni Ungariae* (hereinafter referred to as *Legenda maior*). Sanctitas Principum. Edited by János M. Bak. Budapest : Central European University Press, 2023, p. 275, c. 3; *De Sancto Gerhardo episcopo Morosenensi et martyre regni Ungariae. Legenda Sancti Gerhardi episcopi* (hereinafter referred to as *De Sancto Gerhardo*). SRH 2. Edited by Emericus Madzsar. Budapestini : Academia Litter. Hungarica atque Societate Histor. Hungarica, 1938, p. 484, c. 3.

19 HORVÁTH 1974, pp. 150–152.

that were already undoubtedly valuable in the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries were adopted and expanded into longer passages. In the section below on the connection between the two legends of Saint Gerard, this study will demonstrate that this is how the author of the *Legenda maior* proceeded in the chapters which were based on the text of the *Legenda minor*. In the *Legenda minor*, exactly the same type of brief biographical details can be found that appear in the legends of Saints Stephen, Emeric, Ladislaus, Zorard and Benedict, and in later legends—the place of birth, the country of origin in the case of foreigners, idealized information about their exceptional education and piety, and nothing more. Detailed accounts of Gerard’s childhood and youth could only gain importance at a time of a gradual boom of his cult in the Kingdom of Hungary and abroad. Moreover, the long decades that separate Gerard’s arrival in the Kingdom of Hungary and the birth of the first legends should also be kept in mind—a period that could only be bridged by an uncertain and variable oral tradition. Even the chapters in the *Legenda maior* indicate not a replacement of the original, lost details about Gerard’s life in Italy, but, rather, their absence in the original *Legenda minor* or a lost proto-legend. Close contacts between Italy and the Kingdom of Hungary during the reign of the Anjou, especially Louis I (1342–1382), must also be taken into account, as these might have been behind the birth of the tradition about Gerard’s activities in San Giorgio Maggiore and its import to the Kingdom of Hungary, while 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicles adopted the information included in earlier chronicles (first documented by Simon of Kéza) about Gerard’s activities in the “Rosatio in Aquileia” monastery.<sup>20</sup>

## The Legends of Saint Gerard and Saint Stephen

Links between the legends of Saint Gerard and Saint Stephen have been addressed by several historians, especially Kaindl, Müller, Csóka and others, although each of them arrived at a different hypothesis. Leaving aside Csóka’s uncertain assumption regarding the same author of both the *Legenda minor* and the Minor Legend of Saint Stephen, which is based on a comparison of stylistically similar passages and the two visions—Stephen’s of the invasion of Transylvania by the Pechenegs and Gerard’s of the death of Samuel Aba,<sup>21</sup> the present study will focus on the assumptions of Kaindl and Müller on the connections between two other legends of Saint Stephen, the Major Legend and Hartvik’s version, and Saint Gerard’s *Legenda maior*.

According to Müller, the Major Legend of Saint Stephen adopted the information about Gerard as a hermit in Bakonybél from the so-called Walter’s Legend. Here, Saint Gerard’s *Legenda maior* does not refer to Gerard and Stephen as saints, which Müller perceived as proof of the antiquity of this part of the legend.<sup>22</sup> However, this argument is highly uncertain, as Madzsar has shown.<sup>23</sup> On the contrary, a direct connection between the legends of Saint Gerard can be discerned here. The *Legenda minor* and the Major Legend of Saint Stephen both

20 The identification of this monastery is unclear. According to some historians, it may be another name for the monastery in Murano.

21 CSÓKA 1974, pp. 143–145.

22 MÜLLER 1913, p. 430.

23 MADZSAR 1913, pp. 503–504.

limited Gerard's seven eremitic years,<sup>24</sup> or contemplative life in Bakonybél, to a brief mention.<sup>25</sup> However, a more obvious formal and content correspondence between them could not be found. Moreover, the *Legenda minor* mentions a hermitage (*heremum*), while Stephen's legend a monastery (*monasterium*), richly endowed by Stephen at the initiative of Saint Gunther, a monk from Niederalteich.

The *Legenda maior* develops this motif further with an extensive narrative about the seven years in hermitage, spiritual exercises and prayers. However, there are no references to Gunther or any existing monastery.<sup>26</sup> Based on the information about Gerard in Bakonybél, it is therefore impossible to determine a link between the legend of Stephen and the *Legenda minor*; consequently, we cannot decide which one is earlier either. Based on the above arguments, Müller's assumption about the link between this part of Stephen's legend to the supposedly lost legend of Walter is highly improbable.

Another shared point between the Major Legend of Stephen and the *Legenda maior* is the relationship between Stephen and Saint Adalbert. Kaindl pointed out the likelihood that the author of the *Legenda maior* had been inspired not only by the Legend of Saint Adalbert but, in the case of the references to Adalbert, even by the Major Legend of Saint Stephen.<sup>27</sup> The legends of Saint Stephen, the Major one and Hartvik's, recount the baptism of Stephen by Adalbert, who subsequently became his "protector" or tutor (*susceptor eius fuit*).<sup>28</sup> In a dialogue between Abbot Anastasius and Bishop Maurus, Gerard's *Legenda maior* mentions Adalbert as the teacher who had been educating King Stephen from his childhood.<sup>29</sup> A correlation of these pieces of information is therefore possible, although uncertain as it concerns only two similar motifs—the baptism of Stephen and Adalbert as his patron and Adalbert's long-term position as Stephen's teacher.

The reference to Adalbert in the *Legenda maior* may be more interesting with respect to the dating of Gerard's arrival in the Kingdom of Hungary. Even this piece of information about Adalbert points to an awareness of the lapse of many years between the activities of Adalbert and Gerard in the Kingdom of Hungary. The fact that the Major Legend of Saint Stephen does not name Gerard in the chapters about the arrival of Adalbert, Astrik, Benedict and Zorard, but only does so in a short insertion about the later foundation of the monastery in Bakonybél is also noteworthy. These are further indications that make Péter Püspöki Nagy's recent conclusions regarding the dating of Gerard's arrival as early as 1001–1007 difficult to sustain.<sup>30</sup>

24 *Legenda minor*, p. 242, c. 2; *Incipit passio*, p. 472, c. 2: "ubi per VII annos ieiuniis orationum exercitiis deditus excepto Mauro monacho solus habitavit."

25 *Legenda maior Sancti Stephani regis. Legenda Sancti Stephani regis maior et minor, atque legenda ab Hartvico episcopo conscripta*. SRH 2. Edited by Emma Bartoniek. Budapestini: Academia Litterarum Hungarica atque Societate Histor. Hungarica, 1938, p. 388, c. 12: "ubi monachus Gerardus de Venetia veniens vitam contemplativam agere cepit."

26 *Legenda maior*, p. 286, c. 6; *De Sancto Gerharo*, p. 488, c. 6: "ubi continuis septem annis ieiuniis et orationibus et vigiliarum exercitiis deditus."

27 KAINDL 1902, pp. 37–38.

28 *Legenda maior Sancti Stephani regis*, p. 380, c. 5.

29 *Legenda maior*, p. 280, c. 4; *De Sancto Gerharo*, p. 486, c. 4: "Tu, inquit, abba, nosti a diebus, quibus Sanctus Adalbertus magister noster intravit regnum Ungarie, qui hunc regem adhuc cum parvulus esset, erudit et nunc in iuvenili etate constitutum scimus cunctis cum eo habitantibus beneficientem."

30 PÜSPÖKI NAGY, Péter. *Szent Gellért püspök – vértanú élete és műve*. Budapest: Belvárosi Római

These theses about the interconnection of the Major Legend of Stephen and Hartvik's Legend with the *Legenda maior* are more important in the context of the detailed narrative on Abbot Anastasius. According to the Major Legend of Stephen, Abbot Astrik built a monastery in Pécsvárad. Hartvik identifies Astrik with Anastasius, and Anastasius also appears as an abbot of Pécsvárad in the *Legenda maior* in the section on the arrival of Gerard in the Kingdom of Hungary. This passage occupies the entire Chapters Four and Five of the *Legenda maior*. Here, Anastasius and Bishop Maurus play an important role as leading figures of the Hungarian Church and it was on their behalf, and King Stephen's, that Gerard remained in the Kingdom of Hungary.

For quite some time now, the story of the meeting between Anastasius, Maurus and Gerard has raised questions about the reality of the described events, or at least their historical basis. In addition to Madzsar, Csóka also disputed this passage and it must be admitted that the arguments of both historians are still hard to question.<sup>31</sup> The information regarding Gerard's journey and conversations with Hungarian clergy and the king in Chapters Four to Six of the *Legenda maior* are so detailed that they can only be explained by presuming that a legend, written by Gerard's companion Walter, or someone else close to him, existed. However, we cannot avoid the fact that, if this had been the case, we would have had before us a legend without parallel in the 11<sup>th</sup> century in terms of typology or scope.

It is also important to emphasize that the rejection of Hartvik's identification of Anastasius with Astrik has no corroboration. Hartvik's legend is a relatively close source from the early 12<sup>th</sup> century and there is no clear motive for purposefully combining these names into a single person. Hartvik's possible error excludes the participation of the Archbishop of the Kingdom of Hungary in the imperial synods, both Astrik's in 1007 and Anastasius's in 1012. At the same time, the assumption of an actual meeting of this Anastasius and Bishop Maurus with Gerard somewhere in the south of the Kingdom of Hungary fundamentally contradicts the *Annales Posonienses*. According to these annals, Gerard became a bishop in 1030, Maurus in 1036,<sup>32</sup> while Astrik, or Anastasius according to Hartvik, was appointed Archbishop of the Kingdom of Hungary, most probably with his seat in Esztergom, in 1007, apparently after having worked in Pécsvárad for several years. Some historians have tried to explain this discrepancy by pointing to more persons named Anastasius and Maurus, or to the incredibility of the *Annales Posonienses*.<sup>33</sup> However, I think these are only unsuccessful attempts to find a way out of the lack of interpretive possibilities. It seems more likely that the author of the *Legenda maior* describes Gerard's meeting with Anastasius-Astrik and Maurus, Bishop of Pécs and the author of the earliest Hungarian legend of Saint Zorard and Benedict. It is also probable that this passage in the *Legenda maior* connects the stories of these three prominent figures of the Hungarian Church<sup>34</sup> and that it is a medieval narrative that originated later than in the 11<sup>th</sup>

---

Katolikus főplébánia, 2002, pp. 116–118.

31 CSÓKA 1974, pp. 139–141.

32 *Annales Posonienses*. SRH 1. Edited by Emericus Madzsar. Budapestini : Academia Litter. Hungarica atque Societate Histor. Hungarica, 1937, p. 125.

33 In detail see: MÜLLER 1913, pp. 429–430, 438–446.

34 It should be noted that much later, even Maurus and Astrik-Anastasius became saints. Györffy



century. This fictional story may have taken definitive shape only in the *Legenda maior*, but this still does not confirm that it was only a 14<sup>th</sup> century fabrication by its author. It should be noted that pieces of information about Stephen's upcoming expedition against Ajtony—which is a motif later developed in Chapter Eight—and a reference to Gerard as the teacher of Emeric appear in Chapters Four and Five. These reports may reflect the gradual formation of the tradition of Gerard's arrival in the Kingdom of Hungary, the circumstances of his accession to the episcopal see and his teacher-student relationship with Saint Emeric following the year 1083.

### The connection between *Legenda Minor* and *Legenda Maior*

A significant part of the polemic among historians has centred around question of whether the *Legenda minor* is an abridged version of the major legend or the *Legenda maior* should be considered a substantial expansion of the text of the *Legenda minor*. Another view opinion has prevailed recently, namely that the primary and common source for the authors of both the *Legenda maior* and the *Legenda minor* was a lost proto-legend. This question will be revisited in the conclusion of this study. Here, we may just point out the agreements between some passages in these two legends.

The opening chapters of the legends of Saint Gerard differ considerably in form and content. The first two chapters of the *Legenda minor* contain brief information about Gerard's origin,<sup>35</sup> his intention to leave his homeland to visit the land of Abraham,<sup>36</sup> his meeting with King Stephen, Gerard's involuntary detention in the Kingdom of Hungary and his arrival at the hermitage in Bakonybél. Each of these points can also be found in the *Legenda maior*—with the exception of the reference to Bakonybél—but without more specific textual matches that would show the need of the author of the *Legenda maior* to copy more than the main storyline from the *Legenda minor*. In seven chapters, the *Legenda maior* details the origin of Gerard, the fate of Gerard's father on a crusade in the Holy Land, Gerard's arrival at the Monastery of Saint George and his election as its prior and abbot, the education Gerard gained in Bologna, the details of Gerard's journey to the Holy Land and to the Kingdom of Hungary, his meeting with Hungarian prelates and Stephen I, and his arrival at the hermitage in Bakonybél.<sup>37</sup>

The *Legenda minor* also contains brief references to the appointment of Gerard as bishop, the construction of the Basilica of Saint George in Marosvár and the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary promoted by Gerard. All of these motifs appear in a more extensive version in the *Legenda maior*, too. In several places, entire paragraphs of both legends are almost identical—the story of the severe verdict of the flagellation of a certain man on Gerard's order and Gerard's subsequent repentance, the midnight meeting of Gerard and his servant Walter in the *Legenda maior* with a miller maid,<sup>38</sup> the narrative of

---

and some other historians identified another abbot who appears in this part of the legend, Rasina of the Monastery of Saint Martin, with Radla.

35 *Legenda minor*, p. 240, c. 1; *Incipit passio*, p. 471, c. 1: “huius lucis lumen per Venetos parentes sortitus.”

36 *Legenda minor*, p. 240, c. 1; *Incipit passio*, p. 471, c. 1: “ad orientem, ubi Habraam dives ac pater multarum gentium factus est.”

37 *Legenda maior*, pp. 268–288, c. 1–7; *De Sancto Gerharo*, pp. 481–489, c. 1–7.

38 *Legenda minor*, pp. 251–252, c. 5; *Incipit passio*, pp. 474–476, c. 5 and *Legenda maior*, p. 310, c. 12;

Gerard's rebuke of King Samuel Aba and his prediction of the king's violent death,<sup>39</sup> and the description of Gerard's martyrdom. The metaphor of the Star of the Sea appears in both legends with almost identical wording,<sup>40</sup> and the accounts of Gerard wearing a sackcloth and giving his own bed to a leper are also very similar.

In some places, the common passages are almost identically worded, but it seems the author of the *Legenda maior* deliberately modified the master copy at some point. For example in the *Legenda minor*, King Stephen was succeeded by King Peter (*successit*), while in the *Legenda maior*, he was crowned (*coronatus est*). In the *Legenda minor*, one of the grandees dethroned him (*regalem cathedram*), whereas in *Legenda maior*, he seized the crown and court (*coronam et aulam*). In the *Legenda minor*, Samuel Aba slaughters opponents like "unclean animals" (*inmundum animalia*), but in some of the versions of the *Legenda maior* it is stated "like cattle or unreasonable beasts" (*iumenta seu bruta animalia*), and so on.<sup>41</sup>

These changes cannot be explained only by the fact that the *Legenda maior* draws from a different master copy than the *Legenda minor*. The author of the *Legenda maior* seems to have made numerous insertions into the *Legenda minor*, especially in places where the text of the *Legenda minor* may have appeared too general or brief to him. An obvious example is the motif of Gerard's meeting with the maid turning the mill with her hands while singing at midnight. The author of the *Legenda maior* presents a lengthier version, in which Walter explains to Gerard the content of the maid's song. At the same time, he answers Gerard's question—this is how the maid grinds grain for her master at a time when no other mills are operating in the area. The maid does not grind on a mechanical (water) or small hand mill, nor with the help of cattle, but drives the mill through the laborious work of her own hands.

This deviation from the text of the *Legenda minor* is very important, since it definitely does not fit the historical context of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The *Legenda maior* indicates that grain was commonly ground on various types of mills (hand, water, mechanical—driven by cattle) in this region. In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the first water mills could only have been operating on the estates of monarchs, grandees, and the Church, but certainly not on farms and homesteads, where grinding was done almost exclusively on manual mills.<sup>42</sup> The conversation about the miller indicates that the author of the *Legenda maior* changed the original text here at will, drawing neither from the *Legenda minor* nor from any lost 11<sup>th</sup> century legend.

*De Sancto Gerardo*, pp. 496–498, c. 12.

39 *Legenda minor*, p. 254, c. 5; *Incipit passio*, p. 476, c. 5 and *Legenda maior*, p. 316, c. 14; *De Sancto Gerardo*, p. 500, c. 14.

40 *Legenda minor*, p. 246, c. 4; *Incipit passio*, p. 474, c. 4 and *Legenda maior*, p. 306, c. 12; *De Sancto Gerardo*, p. 496, c. 12.

41 However, changes of this type (*sudibus–fustibus*) can also be caused by errors by the copyists. Many of the textual and semantic shifts (e.g. *adiunctum–adauctum*, *alligabant–ligabant*, *cuiuslibet–cuiusvis*, etc.) in the *Legenda maior* probably stem from this, especially in the manuscript from Padova, but not only there.

42 I addressed the genesis of water mills in the Kingdom of Hungary in the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries was addressed in more detail in the study DRUGA, Marek. Benediktíni a počiatky vodných mlynov v Uhorsku (K otázke kláštorného hospodárenia v 11. – 12. storočí). In *Historický časopis*, 2021, vol. 69, no. 3, pp. 387–416.

In the last chapters of the *Legenda maior*, there are reports on the translation of Gerard's body from Pest to Csanád—this is an extended narrative, but appears only briefly in the *Legenda minor*—and disputes between the monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Csanád Chapter about the place of burial of his remains and about his posthumous miracles. Information about the translation of Gerard's body is preserved only in the text of the *Legenda maior*, which can probably be considered a compilation drawing on earlier traditions.<sup>43</sup>

The thesis that the *Legenda maior* is a significant expansion of the earlier text of the *Legenda minor* was questioned mainly by Müller and Horváth. Müller, and then later Horváth, claimed that there are some motifs in the *Legenda minor* that the *Legenda maior* does not take and elaborate on, and that the *Legenda maior* therefore draws from another, lost legend.<sup>44</sup> However, the *Legenda maior* clearly carries over and elaborates on everything that is essential in the *Legenda minor*—the information about Gerard's origin, his stay in Bakonybél as a hermit, the circumstances of his accession to the episcopal throne at a time when peace was restored in the kingdom, stories about the miller maid and Gerard being strict, and the narrative about the circumstances of Gerard's death. In the *Legenda minor*, only one miracle is attributed to Gerard; the demonic possession and death of a man who plucked hairs from the beard of dead Gerard to mock him in front of his companion.<sup>45</sup> The *Legenda maior* does not repeat this motif however, it is a part that appears perplexing in the text of the *Legenda minor*<sup>46</sup> and one that was not part of each version of the legend.<sup>47</sup>

Horváth also pointed out that the *Legenda minor* lacks important pieces that would explain the outlined plot. For example, the legend does not say why Gerard got as far as the Kingdom of Hungary on his way to the Holy Land as the road from Venice to Jerusalem did not lead through the Kingdom of Hungary, where specifically he met King Stephen, and so on.<sup>48</sup> Only the author of the *Legenda maior* elaborates on these themes. This is not because he copied from a lost proto-legend as Horváth believes. It is precisely these long-winded passages that appear suspicious and are difficult to connect with 11<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian writing. Gerard's journey to the Kingdom of Hungary abounds with not only detail, but also motifs—a 40-day storm as a result of God's will, the accidental meeting with Anastasius and Maurus, the long and, ultimately, successful persuasion of Gerard to devote his life to the promotion of Christianity in the Kingdom of Hungary—that were probably meant to emphasize the merits of the prominent figures of the Hungarian Church and bolster the Christianization potential of the Kingdom of Hungary (*Pannonia*). This narrative sounds incredible and obscures rather than clarifies the circumstances of Gerard's journey to the Kingdom of Hungary.

The fact that the *Legenda minor* was a very important source for the author of the *Legenda maior* has already been proven by Péter Váczy in his excellent

43 *Legenda minor*, pp. 324–326, c. 16; *Incipit passio*, pp. 503–505, c. 16.

44 MÜLLER 1913, pp. 430–432; HORVÁTH 1974, p. 148.

45 *Legenda minor*, p. 262, c. 7; *Incipit passio*, p. 478, c. 7.

46 The miracle is inserted between the reports about Gerard's burial in the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary (in Pest) and the translation of his relics, after many days have passed and at the request of a companion of Gerard's (*procurator*).

47 Cf. *Legenda minor*, p. 262 (footnote 80).

48 HORVÁTH 1974, pp. 148–149.

study on the origins of the chronicling tradition, which also derived the origin of Vazul's sons from Ladislaus the Bald.<sup>49</sup> Through a detailed analysis of chronicles and legends, Váczy demonstrated that the author of the *Legenda maior* added details from the *Legenda minor* to his narration, even in the parts where he drew primarily on the chronicles. The *Legenda minor* therefore forms the basic skeleton of the *Legenda maior* in several places.

### The Legends of Saint Gerard and the Hungarian Chronicles

Links between the legends of Saint Gerard and the Hungarian chronicles, especially the oldest, the Chronicle of Simon of Kéza which has survived only in copies, were previously examined by Kaindl and later revisited by Müller, Madzsar and Horváth. According to Kaindl, Simon of Kéza drew from a non-extant chronicle, the *Gesta Ungarorum (vetera)*, from passages falling under the reign of Peter Orseolo and Samuel Aba, and even from the *Legenda maior*. These sources, supplemented by the Chronicle of Simon of Kéza, would have been available even to Mark of Kalt in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, even in this line of research, Müller insisted on his theory about an original legend by Walter from which Simon of Kéza is supposed to have drawn. The extant *Legenda maior* was to draw from Walter's legend and the *Legenda minor*, and from Simon of Kéza to a lesser extent, and the same compiler was supposed to stand behind these 14<sup>th</sup> century extracts from earlier sources.<sup>51</sup> With regard to the relationship of Simon of Kéza and the *Legenda maior*, Madzsar's theory is close to Kaindl's—that the *Legenda maior* may have been created before 1285—while Csóka did not assign much importance to this line of research.

In its parts describing 11<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian history, the Chronicle of Simon of Kéza is probably an abridged version of one of the earlier editions of the *Gesta Ungarorum (vetera)*. The first account of Gerard appears in the narrative of the assassination of 50 political opponents on the orders of Samuel Aba. The chronicle mentions Gerard's severe rebuke of the king, and the author also writes about Gerard's prediction of Aba's downfall.<sup>52</sup> This report is taken in al-

49 This work was not considered by Horváth when he argued that had the entire text of the *Legenda maior* been created only in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, it would have been based on the Hungarian 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicle and there would be no reports in the *Legenda maior* that do not figure in any 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicles. HORVÁTH 1974, p. 155. Nevertheless, Váczy has clearly shown that the *Legenda maior* draws on the text of the Hungarian chronicles. One can therefore argue a little differently here. Had the *Legenda maior* taken data from a proto-legend, it is difficult to explain why it copied the circumstances of Gerard's death from the chronicles and not from the lost legend. We do not know exactly how the reports about Gerard made their way into the chronicles of the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. If it were from some earlier, lost legend, then most probably not from the one that the authors of the *Legenda minor* and the *Legenda maior* consulted. In the *Legenda maior*, the entire passage on the uprising and Gerard's death consists of phrases that can be found in chronicles and in the *Legenda minor*. Here, Horváth was apparently alluding to the fact that we do not find the story about Csanád, Ajtony and Marosvár in the chronicles, and that it is a narrative from a lost 11<sup>th</sup> century legend. However, this is perhaps the least likely sequence; it is difficult to substantiate why these reports do not figure in at least one of the later sources (chronicles), whose authors would have undoubtedly been grateful to consult them. See also the next section: "The Legends of Saint Gerard and Hungarian Chronicles."

50 KAINDL 1902, pp. 37–38.

51 MÜLLER 1913, pp. 420–426 and 430–432.

52 SIMONIS DE KÉZA, *Gesta Hungarorum*. SRH 1. Edited by Alexander Domanovszky. Budapestini: Academia Litter. Hungarica atque Societate Histor. Hungarica, 1937, p. 176, c. 50: "Nam viros quinquaginta consiliandi causa in unam domum evocavit, quibus in eadem inclusis, crimen non confessos, nec convictos legibus, caput fecit detrungari. Unde Beatus Gerardus, Chenadiensis

most identical wording by the 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicles.<sup>53</sup> The Chronicle of Simon of Kéza also contains a brief description of Gerard's martyrdom. It says Gerard was thrown in a coach from a hill in Pest.<sup>54</sup> This piece of information is absent from the *Legenda minor* and figures only in the *Legenda maior*.<sup>55</sup>

The existence of links between the *Legenda maior* and the two 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicling branches, the Buda one and the Viennese one, is a lot clearer, from the description of the pagan uprising and Gerard's death, which is very similar in these sources. Even a cursory comparison of these passages in the legend and in the chronicles confirms that Kaindl and Müller were mistaken. The *Legenda maior* omits several pieces of politically charged, or overly general and detailed information from the chronicles and supplements the text with excerpts from the *Legenda minor*, i.e., with pieces of information not found in the 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicles. These chronicles were not based on the *Legenda maior*; quite the contrary, it was the author of the *Legenda maior* who drew from the texts of the chronicles, or from their lost template.<sup>56</sup> This is a certain and very important piece of information. If the authors of the *Chronici Hungarici compositio saec. XIV* (the Vienna Illuminated Chronicle, the Buda Chronicle etc.) did not draw from the *Legenda maior*, they must have consulted some other narrative regarding the course of the pagan uprising and Gerard's martyrdom. If we allow that the author of the *Legenda maior* copied directly from 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicles, this would mean that the entire Major Legend of Saint Gerard came into being only in the latter half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

The question is whether the author of the *Legenda maior* consulted the texts of 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicles or drew from some earlier master. With detailed arguments, Váczy tried to prove that the master for the *Legenda maior* was some earlier, shorter text which was similar but not identical nor related to the original Buda Chronicle. He relied on the following arguments. The *Legenda maior* refers

- 
- episcopus canonica severitate regem corripuens preadixit sibi periculum imminere.”
- 53 *Chronici Hungarici compositio saeculi XIV (Chron. Hung. comp. saec. XIV)*. SRH 1. Edited by Alexander Domanovszky. Budapestini : Academia Litter. Hungarica atque Societate Histor. Hungarica, 1937, p. 330, c. 76: “Quadragesima circiter quinquaginta viros nobiles sub pretextu consiliandi in quadam domo conclusit et ab armatis militibus fecit eos obruncari nec contritos nec confessos. Unde Beatus Gerardus Chanadiensis episcopus canonica severitate regem corripuit et sibi periculum imminere predixit.”
- 54 Actually, on the right, later the Buda side of the Danube.
- 55 SIMONIS DE KÉZA, *Gesta Hungarorum*, p. 178, c. 56: “Gerardus ergo episcopus de Chanad in istis casibus in Pest, per Hungaros de monte submissus in biga, martyrio coronatur, qui monachus prius fuerat de Rosacensi abbatia, quae est de territorio Aquileiae. Deinde Pannoniam ingressus in Beel fuit diutius eremita,” *Chron. Hung. comp. saec. XIV*, p. 341, c. 83: “At illi hoc viso multo magis sevientes impetum fecerunt in eum et everterunt currum eius in rippam Danubii, ibique abstracto eo de curru eius, in biga positum de monte Kelenfeld submiserunt, et dum adhuc palpitaret, in pectore lancea percussus ac deinde super unum lapidem contriverunt cerebrum eius [...] Hic siquidem Gerardus erat de Rosatio natione Wenetensis, qui in Pannoniam veniens primus in Beel vitam ducens heremiticam, tandem in Chanadiensem cathedram in episcopum est translatus.”
- 56 For details, see: VÁCZY, Péter. A Vazul-hagyomány középkori kútforrásában. In *Levél-tári Közlemények*, 1940/1941, vol. 18/19, pp. 320–333. Váczy's conclusions were misinterpreted by Richard Pražák when he referred to Váczy's study while clarifying the link between the *Legenda maior* and the Vienna Illuminated Chronicle and determined that “the chronicle took over entire parts” from the Major Legend of Saint Gerard. *Legenda a kroniky koruny Uherské*. Translated and edited by Richard Pražák. Praha : Vyšehrad, 1988, p. 344. Váczy's study is also listed in the bibliography section of *Sanctitas Principum*, but when comparing the common passages of the chronicle and the legend, the authors (following the opinion of László Szegfű) state that it is difficult to judge whether the chronicle was the source of the legend or vice versa (GAŠPAR – KLANICZAY 2023, p. 236, footnote 55; *Legenda maior*, p. 321, footnote 82).

to Andrew, Béla and Levente as sons of Vazul, whereas Simon of Kéza and the 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicles refer to them as sons of Ladislaus the Bald and his Rus' wife. According to the *Legenda maior*, Andrew and Levente came from Poland, whereas according to the 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicles they came from Rus'. The *Legenda maior* does not take the information about Gerard's monastery in Rosatio from Simon of Kéza or from later chronicles. The *Legenda maior* is aware of the foundation of monasteries in Tihany and Visegrád by Andrew I (1046–1060), whereas the chronicles mention only Tihany. According to the *Legenda maior*, the insurgents met Andrew and Levente as far as Pest (this is what Simon of Kéza says, too), while according to later chronicles, it was in Abaújvár. According to Váczy, in these passages the author of the *Legenda maior* drew from some abridged version of the 11<sup>th</sup> century *Gesta Ungarorum (vetera)* (which was later further abridged by Simon of Kéza), while the later texts of the Vienna Illuminated Chronicle, the Buda Chronicle, the Chronicle of Dubnica and others were to be based on a different version of this chronicle. Váczy also assumed that the author of this *Gesta Ungarorum (vetera)* was familiar with the text of the *Legenda minor*.<sup>57</sup>

Váczy's theses were based on cleverly constructed arguments and a detailed analysis of the sources, but his conclusion of an 11<sup>th</sup> century *Gesta Ungarorum (vetera)* being the master for the *Legenda maior* also has its faults. Although the same words appear in both legends and chronicles of the 14<sup>th</sup> century about Gerard's chest being pierced by a lance (*in pectore lancea percussus*), that is where the similarities between the *Legenda minor* and later texts end. In the *Legenda maior* and in the chronicles, the insurgents threw Gerard from the Kelenföld (Kelen Hill) and subsequently pierced his chest with a lance and smashed his head against a rock.<sup>58</sup> The *Legenda minor* contains only the passage about the lance. The *Legenda minor* records the original, 11<sup>th</sup> century tradition about Gerard's death, which was certainly closer to historical reality. The *Legenda maior* and the later chronicles no longer follow this older line but replace it with a fabulation about Gerard's crueller—or more glorious—death. Thus, the *Legenda maior* cannot have drawn from an 11<sup>th</sup> century *Gesta Ungarorum (vetera)*, but rather from some later source that was created at a time when another story about Gerard's martyrdom was being passed down.

It is true that the *Legenda maior* alters the narrative of the chronicles in several places. The reference to Gerard's stay in the monastery in Rosatio cannot have figured in this legend because the legendist would have contradicted his own, different story about Gerard's monastery in San Giorgio Maggiore. Moreover, in the legend we do not find the other piece of information about Abaújvár mentioned by Váczy either, nor the part criticizing the views on Andrew, Béla and Levente as descendants of Vazul and the pagan Tatum, or the reports about the arrival of Andrew and Levente from Rus'. In some places, this could be the negative consequence of abridging the text of the master of the legend, like the omission of the reference to Abaújvár as the place where the Árpáds and the

57 VÁCZY 1940, pp. 328–329.

58 *Legenda maior*, p. 322, c. 15; *De Sancto Gerardo*, p. 502, c. 15: "At illi hoc viso multo magis seviebant et impetum fecerunt in eum et everterunt currum eius in rippam Danubii, ibique abstracto de curru eius, in biga positum de monte Kreenfeld submiserunt, et dum adhuc palpitarret, in pectore lancea percussus ac deinde super unum lapidem ipsum trahentes contriverunt cerebrum eius."

insurgents met (it shifts their meeting directly to Pest).<sup>59</sup> However, the reference to the foundation of a monastery in Visegrád by Andrew I is more difficult to explain. Just like in the case of Csanád and Oroszlámos, the legendist knows more about the Eastern Christian monasteries of the 11<sup>th</sup> century than the chroniclers do. It therefore appears that the *Legenda maior* does not draw directly from the extant chronicles, but from their master or even more probably, from some related, very similar text apparently written much later than the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

The fact that the narrative of the pagan revolt and Gerard's death is almost identical in the *Legenda maior* and the 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicling branches cannot be ignored either. Parts on the outbreak of the uprising (*instinctu diabolico inflammati [...] primus autem/inter renatos*), the course of Gerard's last Mass in the Church of Saint Sabina in Diósd (*Cumque predicti episcopi [...] omnes communicaverunt*), Gerard's arrival on the banks of the Danube in Pest, and the circumstances of his assassination (*Deinde perrexerunt [...] contriverunt cerebrum eius*) are so similar in the *Legenda maior* and the chronicles, even in form, that the minor differences can also be explained as scribal errors or deliberate deviations from copying the master verbatim.<sup>60</sup> For illustration, let us look at least at one such part:

#### Legenda maior

Quo audito Sanctus Gerhardus, Beztridus, Budi, Beneta et Zonug comes, qui convenerant ad Albam Regalem cum multitudine Christianorum, egressi sunt de Alba versus Budam, ut Endre et Levente honorifice susciperent. Cumque predicti episcopi festinanter venissent ad locum, qui dicitur Dyod, in ecclesia Sancte Sabine Sanctus Gerhardus missam celebravit et exhortationis gratia de fide catholica premioque vite eterne sollempnem sermonem populo assistenti fecit. In fine autem sermonis prorumpens in lacrimas, sic ait: "Fratres et coepiscopi mei et omnes alii fideles, qui adestis, scitote nos hodie ad Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum cum corona martirii in eterna gaudia perventuros. Ego enim notum facio vobis archanum Dei, quod michi in hac nocte revelatum est. Vidi enim dominum nostrum Iesum Christum in gremio Sanctissime Matris sue Virginis Marie sedentem nobisque ad se vocatis de manu sua corporis et sagwinis sui ewkaristiam porrexit. Beneta vero episcopus cum ad eum accessisset, retraxit ewkaristiam Ihesus Christus, unde ipso hodie consortio martirii nostri privabitur." Post hec beatus Gerhardus ammonuit eos, ut confiterentur alterutrum peccata sua, et audita missa orationi incubentes et certi de spe beatitudinis eterne martirium adipiscentes letificati omnes communicaverunt.

#### Chronici Hung. comp. saec. XIV

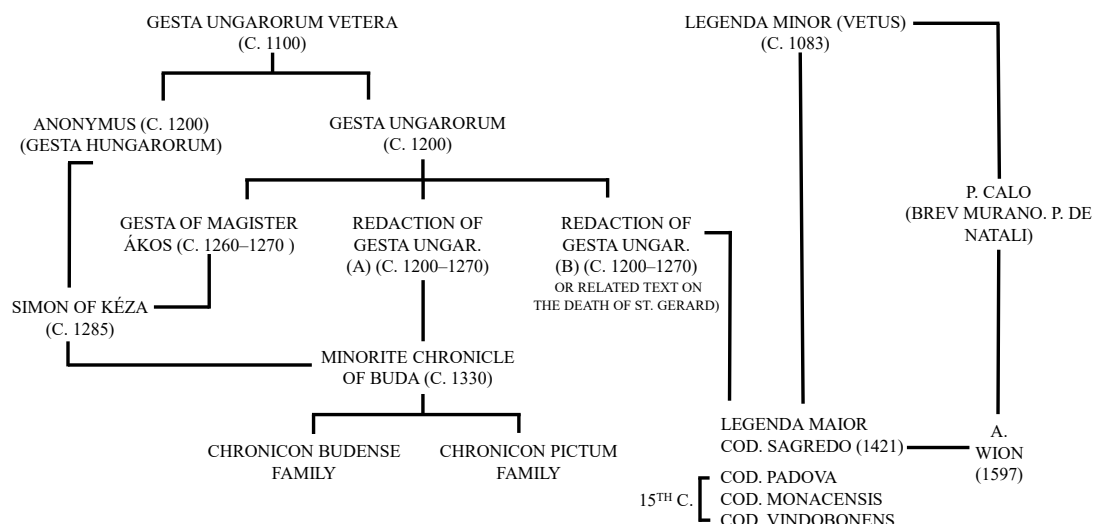
Quo audito Gerhardus, Beztridus, Buldi et Beneta et Zonuk comes de civitate Alba egressi sunt obviam Endre et Levente ducibus, ut eos honorifice susciperent. Cumque festinanter predicti episcopi ad locum venissent, qui dicitur Gyod, ibi in ecclesia Sancte Sabine, priusquam ad dominos irent, missam adire voluerunt. Beatus itaque Gerardus episcopus sacerdotalibus vestibus ad celebrandam missam indutus, exhortationis gratia locutus est eis dicens: "Fratres et coepiscopi mei et omnes alii fideles, qui adestis, scitote nos hodie ad Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum cum corona martirii in eterna gaudia perventuros. Ego enim notum facio vobis archanum Dei, quod michi in hac nocte revelatum est. Vidi enim dominum nostrum Iesum Christum in pluteo sanctissime matris sue semper Virginis Marie sedentem nobisque ad se vocatis de manu sua corporis et sanguinis sui eucharistiam communicantem. Beneta vero episcopus cum ad eum accessisset, retraxit ei Christus eucharistiam. Unde ipse hodie martirii nostri consortio privabitur." Post hoc autem Beatus Gerardus admonuit eos, ut confiterentur alterutrum peccata sua, et audita missa orationi incubentes et de certa spe eterne beatitudinis per martirium adipiscente letificati omnes communicaverunt.

59 In the legend, the events are shifted directly to Pest, just like in the Chronicle of Simon of Kéza. However, no conclusions about a direct correlation between these sources can be derived from this fact. It should be noted that the two texts differ fundamentally in several other places: in the legend, Andrew returns with Levente, whereas in the chronicle Béla does so, too; in the chronicle, they are the sons of Ladislaus the Bald, whereas in the legend, of Vazul, etc.

60 *Chron. Hung. comp. saec. XIV*, pp. 339–342, c. 83–84; *Legenda maior*, pp. 318–322, c. 15; *De Sancto Gerardo*, pp. 501–502, c. 15.

Slightly different textual variants of the same narrative appear in the description of Gerard's journey from Székesfehérvár to Pest. However, Gerard's speech, i.e., the passage in which the legendist's modifications of the master were probably inadequate, is almost the same in both chronicles. It is highly unlikely that such a degree of agreement could have been achieved if the *Legenda maior* was describing an old, shorter and different version of the 11<sup>th</sup> century *Gesta Ungarorum (vetera)* compared to the master of the legends. The author of the *Legenda maior* may have had a later text to consult, which differed from the original of the Buda Chronicle or the Vienna Illuminated Chronicle only slightly. We do not know the exact genesis of the links between the *Legenda maior* and the 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicles, we can only pose a hypothetical, which is considerably more likely—in its basic outlines—than Váczy's earlier assumption about copying from the text of an old, probably 11<sup>th</sup> century *Gesta Ungarorum (vetera)*.<sup>61</sup>

**Figure 1. A reconstruction of the assumed links between *Legenda maior*, *Legenda minor* and the Hungarian chronicles.**



It seems the text that can be found today in the Vienna Illuminated Chronicle or the Buda Chronicle was not available to the author of the *Legenda maior*.<sup>62</sup> However, even a comparison of the legends with the Hungarian chronicles indi-

61 Within such a hypothetical reconstruction, one might argue that one chronicling branch (*Gesta Ungarorum*–Redaction of *Gesta Ungarorum* (B)–*Legenda maior*) could have preserved the original narrative about the sons of Vazul (i.e., without the change to Ladislaus the Bald). Another branch (*Gesta Ungarorum*–*Gesta of Magister Ákos*–Simon of Kéza) might have spread a simplified narrative about the arrival of Andrew, Béla and Levente from Poland (according to the *Legenda maior*, only Andrew and Levente), whereas in yet another chronicling line (*Gesta Ungarorum*–Redaction of *Gesta Ungarorum* (A)–Minorite Chronicle of Buda), reports about the arrival of Andrew and Levente from Rus' to Abaújvár, or about the transfer of the stone with which Gerard was killed to Csanád appear for the first time. These are multifaceted considerations, further complicated by other determinants, like the chroniclers may have been familiar with multiple versions of earlier reports from chronicles and abridged and modified the texts to suit their purposes, and so on. What is essential is the assumption that the circumstances of the outbreak of the uprising and Gerard's death do not draw information only from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, but also from later times.

62 It is important to add that two 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicling branches, the Buda and the Viennese, whose texts differ slightly from each other, were also named after these chronicles. For details, see: DOMANOVSKY, Alexander. Praefatio. In *Chron. Hung. comp. saec. XIV*, pp. 219–222, 236.



cates that the text of the *Legenda maior* on the pagan uprising and the death of Gerard had not taken shape earlier than the 14<sup>th</sup> century. As Váczy has already argued convincingly, the Hungarian chronicles are not based on any part of the *Legenda maior*—another important indication that points to a later date for the entire text of this legend.

### The narrative of Ajtony, Csanád and monasteries in Marosvár

Chapter Eight of the *Legenda maior* contains a unique, detailed narrative about the powerful Prince Ajtony, the dukes Csanád and Gyula, the defeat of Ajtony by Stephen's troops led by Csanád and the circumstances of the formation of the Church infrastructure in Marosvár-Csanád after the establishment of the Diocese of Csanád. In historians' works, this detailed description filled the gap in our of Stephen's military campaigns, with the narrative of an unknown author of the *Legenda maior* considered sufficiently reliable in most points. Karácsonyi, Müller, Horváth, Püspöki-Nagy, Györffy and some other historians even considered Chapter Eight of the *Legenda maior* to be part of an 11<sup>th</sup> century proto-legend. They argue that its detailed familiarity with the local conditions, names, locations and events, and the relevant details of which could not have been available to a 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century legendist.

However, it should also be borne in mind that except for a brief reference in the anonymous *Gesta Hungarorum*, no details have survived about Ajtony.<sup>63</sup> This powerful prince, enemy of King Stephen, was unknown to the other Hungarian chronicles, although they mention Stephen's victory over the Transylvanian prince Gyula-Prokui and the Bulgarian-Slavic Kean. Moreover, Chapter Eight of the *Legenda maior* is a narrative full of fictitious motifs: Csanád's dream about a lion, the Tristanian theme of Ajtony's tongue being pulled as a trophy and proof of Csanád's heroic act, details about teaching grammar and music in Marosvár by Gerard's companion, Walter. We must therefore admit that whatever we know about Ajtony, the military expedition of Csanád and the circumstances of the establishment of the Diocese of Csanád comes from a single, late, hagiographic—therefore not fully credible—source.

The chapter about Ajtony, Csanád and the meritorious deeds of Gerard in Marosvár-Csanád gives the impression that the legendist captured, or expanded and “improved” a story that had been handed down for a generations about the foundation and beginnings of the town of Csanád, the Diocese of Csanád and the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Csanád. The first part, on Csanád's conquest of Marosvár and the killing of Ajtony, appears as an independent “legend” *sui generis*. Csanád first receives a miraculous sign in a dream in which a lion wakes him up at the right moment. In the ensuing battle, he defeats Ajtony thanks to a solemn vow that if he wins, he will build a monastery

63 ANONYMUS, *Gesta Hungarorum. P. magistri, qui Anonymus dicuntur, Gesta Hungarorum*. SRH 1. Edited by Desiderius Pais. Budapestini : Academia Litter. Hungarica atque Societate Histor. Hungarica, 1937, p. 50, c. 11 (briefly also p. 89, c. 44): “ex cuius progenie Ohtum fuit natus, quem postea longo post tempore sancti regis Stephani Sunad filius Dobuca nepos regis in castro suo iuxta Morisium interfecit eo, quod predicto regi rebellis fuit in omnibus. Cui etiam predictus rex pro bono servitio suo uxorem et castrum Ohtum cum omnibus apendiciis suis condonavit, sicut enim mos est bonorum dominorum suos fideles remunerare, quod castrum nunc Sunad nuncupatur.”

to Saint George in the place where he prayed to him. Csanád's dishonest competitor Gyula brings Ajtony's head to King Stephen as a trophy and proof of his merits. However, Ajtony was killed by Csanád's companions, as demonstrated by the presentation of his pulled tongue.<sup>64</sup> The miraculous signs and the details of the battle with Ajtony are undoubtedly later fabrications. What sound more interesting are the reports about the prayer to Saint George before the military clash and the foundation of the monastery. The same practice can be seen in the Kingdom of Hungary in the other important wars of the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> centuries; in 1074, Ladislaus founded a church or monastery of Saint Martin (and probably George) in Mogyoród as a votive gift for the help of these saints in his battle against Solomon and in the same way, Stephen generously endowed the Monastery of Saint Martin in Pannonhalma for the help of the patron saint of this monastery and of entire Pannonia in his fight against Koppány. Fragments of information that probably have their origins back in the 11<sup>th</sup> century emerge in some places, even in the text of the *Legenda maior*.

What may be credible is the information about the renaming of the town of Marosvár after its successful conqueror Csanád.<sup>65</sup> What appear less certain are the references to the foundation of the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary by Gerard and the relocation of Greek monks from the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Csanád to the new Monastery of Saint George in Oroszlámos. Saint George also enjoyed considerable veneration in the Eastern Church, but the monks might have perceived a change in the long-time patron saint of their monastery as controversial or might have even rejected it. In the case of the foundation and gifting of the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary by Gerard, the Bishop of Csanád, a similar issue loomed as in the case of the foundation of the monastery in Břevnov by Saint Adalbert, the Bishop of Prague<sup>66</sup>—suspiciously, Gerard's meritorious founding role is not mentioned in the *Legenda minor*.<sup>67</sup> In the case of Csanád, just like in that of Břevnov and Adalbert, Gerard may be thought of as one of the organizers of the foundation and a donor, or at most a co-founder of the monastery and Gerard's position as its founder may have been overestimated by later tradition.<sup>68</sup> Interestingly, the *Legenda minor*

64 Cf. MADZSAR 1913, pp. 502–503.

65 The historical core of this narrative had already been outlined by Anonymous. As for the current form of the narrative about Ajtony and the conquest of Marosvár, we can only repeat Madzsar's words: "If an original account of the historical person of Ajtony had survived, it would differ from the later story in much the same way as the short description of the death of Hruotland by Eginhard (*Vita Caroli Magni*) differs from the heroic stories about Roland from later centuries." MADZSAR 1913, p. 503.

66 In detail, see: KUBÍN, Petr. Založil břevnovský klášter opravdu sv. Vojtěch? In JAROŠOVÁ, Markéta – LOMIČKOVÁ, Radka (eds.) *Ora et labora. Vybrané kapitoly z dějin a kultury benediktinského řádu*. Praha : Univerzita Karlova v Praze, 2013, pp. 27–40; cf. ŠRÁMEK, Josef. Co (ne) víme o raně středověkých dějinách břevnovského kláštera – a jak s tím naložit? In *Časopis Matice moravské*, 2015, vol. 134, no. 1, pp. 215–226.

67 The author of the *Legenda minor* writes about the construction of churches at the request of Gerard in various towns and describes in detail only the foundation of the main church of Saint George by Gerard, the construction of the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the rich furnishings of the church.

68 We should remember the fact that no private ("non-royal") foundation is documented in the Kingdom of Hungary from the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The role of Gerard as a co-founder appears to be more likely for this reason, too. In the case of Gerard's merits in founding the monastery, it is hard to imagine that the *Legenda minor* would have been written by a Benedictine monk and he would not have mentioned his own monastery and its connection to Saint Gerard.

does not mention the monastery even when describing the translation of Gerard's relics to Marosvár-Csanád. On the contrary, the *Legenda maior* uses the traditional hagiographic motif of disputes between the chapter clergy of Saint George and Abbot Philip of the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary regarding Gerard's final resting place.<sup>69</sup> The canons were ultimately unable to bury Gerard's body in the chapter church and could do so only in the monastery, i.e., in the place where Gerard himself had allegedly had his tomb built.<sup>70</sup> The way this miracle is incorporated into the legend can be considered one of the important indications that point to the *Legenda maior* having been written by a Benedictine monk of the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Csanád. It should also be added that the author of the legend emphasizes and describes in detail the Christianization activities of twelve Benedictines who came to Csanád from five other Benedictine monasteries.<sup>71</sup>

## Conclusion

Earlier research on the legends of Saint Gerard has already arrived at some important conclusions. The *Legenda minor* is considerably older than the *Legenda maior*. The most probable dating of the *Legenda minor* appears to be between the close of the 11<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. However, I do not consider it likely that the *Legenda minor* is a short extract from a significantly larger legend.<sup>72</sup> The entire, currently extant text of the legend was not necessarily meant for liturgical purposes, i.e., for reading on the Feast of the Martyrdom of Saint Gerard, though it is possible that only shorter passages were read from it. It is worth considering whether some confusing passages, especially the passages that explain the absence of miracles in the legend, as well as the part about the only miracle (*Post mortem viri Dei [...] mordens vitam exilavit*) and the circumstances of Gerard's canonization made their way into the *Legenda minor* as later insertions.<sup>73</sup> The current form of the *Legenda minor* may be only a slight variation of an original, 11<sup>th</sup> century legend, brief in some places, expanded in others. These minor changes may have been executed in the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, although a later date of these changes cannot be ruled out.

69 *Legenda maior*, pp. 326–327, c. 16; *De Sancto Gerardo*, pp. 503–504, c. 16.

70 A similar motif is also found in the legend of St. Ladislaus. *Legenda S. Ladislai regis*. SRH 2. Edited by Emma Bartoniek. Budapestini : Academia Litter. Hungarica atque Societate Histor. Hungarica, 1938, p. 523, c. 8.

71 This narrative may also have its core in some 11<sup>th</sup> century records, as it mentions the oldest monasteries under royal patronage (Pannonhalma, Zalavár, Bakonybél, Zobor, Pécsvárad), which could already have been abbeys with human and material resources at the time when the Diocese of Csanád was established.

72 This study is also inclined to that conclusion on the basis of the author's work with manuscripts of the legends while preparing an upcoming Latin-Slovak edition. It is not possible to publish partial observations from this edition in their entirety here, but at least one general insight: The manuscripts of the *Legenda minor*—and extracts from the legend in the breviaries—are demonstrably not based on a single, identical master copy. Nevertheless, they exhibit few deviations and do not contain any extra passages or insertions that would not be found in other versions of the legend. Even the extant textual variants of the *Legenda minor* indicate that the original legend of Saint Gerard was not fundamentally different from the current legend. Despite this, the *Legenda maior* does not contain motifs that may have presumably figured in the earliest legend either. For this reason, it would be more appropriate to call the first, original legend the *Legenda minor* "vetus."

73 *Legenda minor*, p. 262, c. 7; *Incipit passio*, p. 478, c. 7.

The *Legenda minor* is an important source mainly because it comes from a time relatively close to Gerard's life. The legend apparently contains some pieces of information about Gerard which were known at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and which its author considered important with respect to the requirements of the genre of hagiography. The legendist supplements these modest details with traditional additions that were meant to prove Gerard's piety and holiness. On the contrary, details about Gerard's life gradually disappeared from historical memory. In the chronicles and in the *Legenda maior*, they are obscured by a later tradition.

Madzsar, Csóka and Váczy offered several valuable observations about the *Legenda maior*, while Madzsar emphasized that the *Legenda maior* does not fit into the typology of the older legends and that its entire, unduly long text probably comes only from the 13<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>74</sup> Nowadays there is a tendency to correct this view; however, the theses of Madzsar and Csóka are still essentially valid today. I am inclined towards the opinion that the so-called Walter's legend is only a fiction gradually created by earlier historiography (Ortvay, Karácsonyi, Macartney, Müller, Horváth)—the story about Ajtony, Csanád, Gyula, Anastasius, or Maurus cannot be an 11<sup>th</sup> century hagiographic text. The link of the authorship of the legend to Benedictine reform monasticism influenced by the *Summa magistri (Benedictina)* papal bull of 1336, presumed by Csóka, is also convincing.<sup>75</sup> Several details about the foundation of the monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the translation of Gerard's body to Csanád and the generous endowment of the monastery by Elizabeth of Piast, Queen of the Kingdom of Hungary, in 1361 point to the *Legenda maior* being a work of a Benedictine of the latter half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>76</sup>

74 It should be emphasized that it is not the *Legenda maior* nor its passages but the *Legenda minor* that was the source whose content and form correspond to the earliest Hungarian legends—especially to those of Saints Benedict and Zorard, and Stephen and Emeric. Given that Müller, Horváth and several other historians before them considered as suspicious not the detailed narrative of the author of the *Legenda maior*, but instead the abstract-sounding text of the *Legenda minor*, their view is hard to accept. It should be added here that Horváth attempted to support the hypothesis of the origin of some parts of the *Legenda maior* in the 11<sup>th</sup> century also philologically (the archaic rhymed prose in the parts of the *Legenda maior*), but the plausibility of this method has already been refuted by CSÓKA 1974, pp. 140–141.

75 CSÓKA 1974, pp. 144–145. Csóka's conclusions about a Benedictine author of the *Legenda maior* were disputed by HORVÁTH 1974, pp. 151–152. The author of the legend seems to have been familiar with earlier sources that preserved the tradition of the beginnings of the Diocese of Csanád. However, it is difficult to question not only the influence of the *Summa magistri* bull of Benedict XII, but also the loyalty of the author of the *Legenda maior* to the monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

76 *Legenda maior*, pp. 332–334, c. 28; *De Sancto Gerardo*, p. 506, c. 28. The connection between the creation of the *Legenda maior* and the development of the cult of St. Gerard in the Kingdom of Hungary during the reign of King Louis I (1342–1382), supported by Queen-Widow Elizabeth of Piast (cca. 1305–1380), is very probable. According to *Legenda maior*, the queen was a supporter of the veneration of St. Gerard, and after praying and being cured of her illness, she became a major donor to Gerard's monastery in Csanád. However, it should be borne in mind that the cult of the Hungarian saints from the reign of Arpád had already been continued by Charles Robert (1308–1342). Proof of the intense cult of St. Gerard in the Kingdom of Hungary is also the Hungarian Angevin legendarium, its origin dates back to about 1330–1345.

The *Legenda maior* is a complex work that draws from several sources; demonstrably from some version of the *Legenda minor*, from the text that appears in the Hungarian chronicles and from some other, unknown sources of the 13<sup>th</sup> or the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. This study seeks to show that the *Legenda maior* did not copy some 11<sup>th</sup> century *Gesta Ungarorum (vetera)*, but a much later text which was very close to the Buda Chronicle and the Vienna Illuminated Chronicle. On the contrary, the direct links between the *Legenda maior* and the Chronicle of Simon of Kéza are unsubstantiated.

The legend also bears the influence of a gradually formed tradition about the beginnings of the Csanád county castle and the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Christianization in the territory of the Diocese of Csanád and Csanád's expedition to fight against Ajtony. The details on Gerard's activities in Italy, his arrival in the Kingdom of Hungary—his meeting with Anastasius, Maurus and Rasina does not match the historical sources—Gerard's companion Walter or the school in Csanád and Gerard teaching Emeric probably also belong to a later tradition. The numbers in the *Legenda maior*—five-year-old Gerard in the monastery, five assassins of Gerard, his seven years in Bakonybél, twelve Benedictines, thirty pupils of the school in Csanád, a storm that lasted forty days, etc.—have only a symbolic value. They cannot therefore be viewed as reflecting any historical reality, nor as a basis for dating Gerard's biographical data.

The *Legenda maior* takes over several pieces of information from earlier sources apparently younger than 11<sup>th</sup> century, except for the *Legenda minor* (or its older version). The value of the *Legenda maior* lies primarily in providing insight into the literary methods and intentions of the author of the legend. The legend also reveals how the tradition about the life of Saint Gerard, about Marosvár-Csanád, Csanád and Ajtony, etc., developed from an initially brief historical basis. Several older, historically important pieces of information also appear in the legend, e.g., on the foundation of monasteries in Visegrád and Csanád or the long-term activities and the support of the Greek monks in the territory of the Diocese of Csanád. Links from the *Legenda maior* to some other sources that might have drawn relevant pieces of information from the 11<sup>th</sup> century (Gerard's recorded sermons, notes on the beginnings of the Diocese of Csanád, the core of the narrative about the conquest of Marosvár, etc.) cannot be ruled out, either. However, we must be very careful here, since even these reports could have been formed as a result of the growing cult of Saint Gerard only in 12<sup>th</sup> or the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.

In any case, a detailed analysis of the surviving manuscripts of the *Legenda maior* shows its dependence on the text which is found in the preserved version of the *Legenda minor* and on the text that appears in the 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicles. Future research could therefore be directed towards further reassessing and correcting the more or less universally held assumption of the existence of the lost 11<sup>th</sup> century proto-legend of a larger scale as a common template for the two Legends of St. Gerard.

Consequently, the issue of the legends of Saint Gerard appears to be still open. After all, even this study brings only partial observations rather than definitive conclusions. We should remember that phrases like “we have proved it safely,” “now that we already know” or “it can no longer be doubted that,” employed by some earlier historians regarding the legends of Saint Gerard mostly cease to be valid the moment their opponents react. The primary intention here was to produce a detailed study that could provide—after a longer period of several decades—further stimulus for refining our knowledge about the origins of the legends of Saint Gerard, their interconnection and their links to other sources, especially to the Hungarian chronicles.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>77</sup> The latest edition of St. Gerard's legends (*Sanctitas Principum*, 2023) has also brought some new insights into the topic, but more on partial problems and specific parts of the legends than on the topic of their genesis, dating or interconnections. Other partial theses will be brought to the forthcoming Slovak-Latin edition.