# The Construction of the Miracles of Saints in the Age of Medieval Canonization Processes*

**Gábor Klaniczay**

Miracles constitute central elements in the cult of the saints. While alive, the charismatic holy men (or women) perform acts that appear miraculous in their environment and to the people surrounding them, and in many cases contribute to spreading their *fama sanctitatis* already in their lifetime. After their deaths, the miracles mediated by the saints to the benefit of those who turn to them for help constitute an indispensable element in their recognition as saints. The first reports of such miracles provide the *vox populi* that can trigger further investigations leading to the recognition of their sanctity.

The models for the healing miracles of the saints were above all those ascribed to Christ in the Gospels, and the miracles *in vita* described in the late antique and early medieval "holy biographies" did indeed amply draw upon this model. As Gregory of Tours put it, saints were repeating the acts of the Saviour, with the help of his *virtus.*[1] As for the other, quantitatively much more numerous, class of miracles, the *miracula post mortem*, which occurred near the relics or even at a distance after a solemn vow addressed to the saint, other antique traditions may have had some influence (such as dream healing in the Asclepios temple in Epidauros, or holy wells and trees, or other faith-healing sites),[2] but the miraculous powers ascribed to relics belonged to one of

* Besides the useful discussion of this paper at the Berlin workshop in 2004 I have benefited from the comments of colleagues at two other occasions in October 2005, at the University of Göttingen (I am especially grateful for the suggestions made by Hedwig Röckelein) and at the Dubrovnik symposium of *Hagiotheca*, the Croatian association for hagiography. I also owe thanks to Mathew Suff for stylistic help in English.

[1] Gregorius Turonensis, *De virtutibus sancti Martini episcopi*, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 1.2. pp. 134–211, XXX.

[2] M. Hamilton, *Incubation and the Cure of Diseases in Pagan Temples and Christian Churches.* London: Henderson, 1905; E. J. Edelstein and L. Edelstein, *Asclepius. A Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies.* Baltimore: Johns

the lasting and most successful innovations of the cult of the saints rising to prime importance in late antiquity.[3]

My study will examine the multilayered difficulties dealing with the historical source material documenting the miracles of Christian saints. My concern is not the miracles themselves. I will not address the complicated issue of the veracity or the self-deceptive, fictitious nature of miracle accounts, and nor will I discuss the insights that modern medical science can give to the explanation of these healings, trying to diagnose the specific (often psychosomatic) nature of the illnesses healed at the shrines according to the diagnoses that could be deciphered and interpreted from the documents.[4] My analysis will not extend to how miracles relate to the changing explanations of phenomena that defy the boundaries of human rationality and the explanatory capacities of natural sciences – I will not approach the fascinating relationship between miracle, wonder and the "marvellous".[5]

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Hopkins University Press, 1945, 1998[2]; Karl Kerényi, *Der göttliche Artzt. Studien über Asklepios und seine Kultstätten.* Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1948, 1998.

[3] Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints. Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981.

[4] Jürgen Jansen, *Medizinische Kasuistik in de »Miracula Sanctae Elisabet«: Medizinhistorische Analyse und Übersetzung der Wunderprotokolle am Grab der Elisabeth von Thüringen 1207–1231* (Marburger Schriften zur Medizingeschichte, 15), Frankfurt am M.–Bern, 1985; Barbara Ruth Wendel-Widmer, *Die Wunderheilungen am Grabe der Heiligen Elisabeth von Thüringen. Eine medizinhistorische Untersuchung*. Zürich: Juris, 1987; a CEU MA Thesis by the Croatian Amir Muzur (Miraculous Healings in the Late Middle Ages. Budapest: CEU, 1996), published later in Croatian (*Čudesna izlječenja. Usporedna studijas osobitim osvtrom na kasni srednji vijek,* Rijeka: Adamić, 2001) analysed the fifteenth-century miracles of San Bernardino of Siena from a historico-medical perspective; Anne Harrington**,** ed., *The Placebo Effect: An Interdisciplinary Exploration.* Cambridge, Mass, 1997; the last thorough examination of this aspect is in Maria Wittmer-Butsch and Constance Rendtel, *Miracula. Wunderheilungen im Mittelalter.* Köln-Wien, Böhlau, 2003.

[5] On this, see Jacques Le Goff, "Le merveilleux dans l'Occident médiéval", in idem, *L'imaginaire médiéval.* Paris: Gallimard, 1985, pp. 17–39; Lorraine Daston, "Marvellous Facts and Miraculous Evidence in Early Modern Europe", in James Chandler, Arnold I. Davidson, and Harry Harootunian, eds., *Questions of Evidence. Proofs, Practice, and Persuasion across the Disciplines.* Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994, pp. 243–289; Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750.* New York: Zone Books, 1998; Caroline Walker Bynum, "Wonder", in eadem, *Metamorphosis and Identity.* New York: Zone Books, 2001, pp. 37–76.

I will not dwell on the complex theology of miracles either, a field amply cultivated by learned historians of Christian doctrines such as John A. Hardon,[6] Bernard Bron,[7] Benedicta Ward[8] or William D. McCready,[9] following the evolution of sophisticated theological interpretations from Saint Augustine[10] to Saint Thomas Aquinas[11] and beyond.

My concern will be more limited: I will examine how one important fraction of the sources at our disposal, the miracle lists of late medieval canonization investigations, can reveal the mechanisms that construct the evidence over which we dispose on miracles. In the second half of my essay I will illustrate this with a few examples taken from the closer domain with which I am dealing as a historian: late medieval Central European canonization processes.

Miracle accounts had been central components of hagiographic narrative since late antiquity.[12] Besides being added to the accounts of the passion of the martyrs[13] and the legends of confessor saints,[14] miracle lists related to important shrines also showed up as an autonomous

[6] John A. Hardon, "The Concept of Miracle from St. Augustine to Modern Apologetics", *Theological Studies* 15 (1954), 229–257.
[7] Bernard Bron, *Das Wunder. Das theologische Wunderverständnis im Horizont des neuzeitlichen Natur- und Geschichtsbegriffs*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975.
[8] Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind. Theory, Record and Event 1000–1215*. Aldershot: Wildwood House, 1987; eadem, *Signs and Wonders: Saints, Miracles, and Prayer from the 4th Century to the 14th.* Aldershot: Ashgate/Variorum, 1992.
[9] William D. McCready, *Signs of Sanctity. Miracles in the Thought of Gregory the Great*. Studies and Texts, 91 Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1989, idem*, Miracles and the Venerable Bede.* Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1994.
[10] F. M. Brazzale, *La dottrina del miracolo in S. Agostino.* Roma, 1964; Sofia Boesch Gajano, "Verità e pubblicità: i racconti nel libro XXII del *De civitate Dei*", in Elena Cavalcanti, ed., *Il* De civitate Dei. *L'opera, le interpretazioni, l'influsso.* Roma, 1996, pp. 367–388.
[11] Brian Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1992, pp. 169–174.
[12] Martin Heinzelmann, "Une source de base de la littérature hagiographique latine: Le recueil des miracles", in *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés* (*IVe-XIIe siècle)* Actes du colloque organisé à Nanterre et à Paris, 2–5 mai 1979. Études Augustiniennes, Paris, 1981, pp. 235–257.
[13] Herbert Musurillo, ed. tr., *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs.* Clarendon, Oxford, 1972.
[14] Thomas J. Heffernan, *Sacred Biography. Saints and Their Biographers in the Middle Ages.* Oxford University Press, Oxford / New York, 1988.

genre: those of St. Thecla,[15] SS. Cosmas and Damian, SS. Cyrus and John, [16] St. Artemios,[17] or later of St. Martin,[18] Sancta Fides,[19] St. Benedict[20] and others provided hundreds of miracle accounts with an elaborated narrative referring to eyewitnesses and including colourful oral reports. The hagiographic genre of the miracle has been analysed by a series of important conferences, including those organized by Evelyne Patlagean,[21] Sofia Boesch Gajano,[22] Denise Aigle,[23] Klaus Herbers and Martin Heinzelmann.[24] The most comprehensive analysis of early medieval miracles, the book by Pierre André Sigal, based its statistical analyses on around 5,000 miracles, documented in hagiographic legends or autonomous miracle lists, up to the end of the twelfth century. Much of what can be said about this genre must be based on this important material.[25]

Late medieval miracle documentation produced by canonization investigations, my narrower topic, allows, however, a much more detailed insight into this phenomenon than the corpus examined by Sigal. This rich material could offer us the hope of approaching some other

[15] Gilbert Dagron, ed., *Vie et miracles de sainte Thécle: texte grec, traduction et commentaire.* Bruxelles: Société des Bollandistes, 1978.
[16] Hippolyte Delehaye, "Les recueils antiques de Miracles de saints", *Analecta Bollandiana* 43 (1925), pp. 1–85, 305–325; A.-J. Festugière, *Sainte Thècle, Saints Côme et Damien, Saints Cyr et Jean (extraits), Saint Georges.* A. et J. Picard, Paris, 1971; for a recent overview, see Ildikó Csepregi, "The Miracles of St Cosmas and Damian. Characteristics of Dream Healing", *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 7 (2002), pp. 89–122.
[17] V. S. Crisafulli and J. W. Nesbitt, *The Miracles of St. Artemios. A Collection of Miracle Stories by an Anonymous Author of Seventh-Century Byzantium*. Brill, Leiden, 1997.
[18] Gregorius Turonensis, *De virtutibus sancti Martini episcopi*, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 1.2. pp. 134–211; idem, *De passione et virtutibus sancti Iuliani martyris*, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM* 1.2. pp. 404–422; cf. Raymond van Dam, *Saints and Their Miracles in Late Antique Gaul.* Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1993, pp. 162–318.
[19] Luca Robertini, ed., *Liber miraculorum sancte Fidis*. Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo, 1994; Pamela Sheingorn and Robert L. A. Clark, eds., *The Book of Sainte Foy*. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1995; Kathleen Ashley and Pamela Sheingorn, *Writing Faith. Text, Sign and History in the Miracles of Sainte Foy.* The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London.
[20] E. de Certain, ed., *Miracula S. Benedicti*, Paris: Société d'Histoire de France, 1858; cf. Bernhard Töpfer, "The Cult of Relics and Pilgrimage in Burgundy and Aquitaine at the Time of the Monastic Reform", in Thomas Head and Richard Landes, eds., *The Peace of God: Religious Responses to Social Turmoil in France around the Year 1000.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992, pp. 41–57.
[21] *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés*. Actes du Colloque organisé à Nanterre et à Paris (2–5 mai 1979), Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1981.
[22] Sofia Boesch Gajano and Marilena Modica, eds., *Miracoli. Dai segni alla storia.* Roma: Viella, 2000.
[23] Denise Aigle, ed., *Miracle et karāma. Hagiograhies médiévales comparées.* Turnhout: Brepols, 2000.
[24] Klaus Herbers, Martin Heinzelmann, and Dieter R. Bauer, eds., *Mirakel im Mittelalter. Konzeptionen, Erscheinungsformen, Deutungen.* Stuttgart: Steiner, 2002.
[25] Pierre-André Sigal, *L'homme et le miracle dans la France médiévale (XIe-XIIe siècle).* Paris: Cerf, 1985.

layers of the "miraculous", getting closer to experience, revealing more about the various modalities of its construction and providing considerably more varied forms of its representation. This is largely due to the papal centralisation of canonization, which occurred at the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century and developed a new kind of precision by means of the judicial investigation of sanctity. As studies by Eric Waldram Kemp,[26] Stephan Kuttner,[27] André Vauchez,[28] Michael Goodich,[29] Roberto Paciocco,[30] Thomas Wetzstein[31] and Otfried Krafft,[32] as well as the authors in a recent conference volume edited by myself,[33] have shown, the new procedure for the recognition of the cults of the saints was the outcome of a gradual evolution. With decisive steps made during the pontificate of Alexander III, it continued with the new style of papal canonizations of the time of Pope Innocent III, and had become stabilized by the time of the *Decretal* collection of Pope Gregory IX.[34] The new procedures introduced detailed rules for the investigations concerning the sanctity of the proposed candidates.

Following an official request accompanied by the description of the *vita* and the *miracula* (based on the emerging local *fama sanctitatis* and preferably a first rudimentary investigation), a committee consisting usually of three papal legates was nominated. They were asked to make an

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[26] Eric Waldram Kemp, *Canonization and Authority in the Western Church.* London: Oxford University Press, 1948.
[27] Stephan Kuttner, "La réserve papale du droit de canonisation", *Revue Historique de Droit Français et Étranger*, 4e série 17 (1938), pp. 172–228.
[28] André Vauchez, *La sainteté en Occident aux derniers siècles du moyen âge. D'après les procès de canonisation et les documents hagiographiques.* Roma: École française de Rome, 1981.
[29] Michael Goodich, *Vita Perfecta: The Ideal of Sainthood in the Thirteenth Century.* (Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 25) Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1982.
[30] Roberto Paciocco, *"Sublimia negotia." Le canonizzazioni dei santi nella curia papale e il nuovo Ordine dei frati minori*, Padua: Centro Studi Antoniani, 1996.
[31] Thomas Wetzstein, *Heilige vor Gericht. Das Kanonisationsverfahren im europäischen Spätmittelalter.* Köln-Weimar-Wien: Bölhlau, 2004.
[32] Otfried Krafft, *Papsturkunde und Heiligsprechung, Die päpstlichen Kanonisationen vom Mittelalter bis zur Reformation. Ein Handbuch.* (Archiv für Diplomatik, Beiheft 9) Köln-Weimar-Wien: Böhlau, 1995.
[33] Gábor Klaniczay, ed., *Procès de canonisation au Moyen Âge. Aspects juridiques et religieux – Canonization Processes in the Middle Ages. Legal and Religious Aspects.* Roma: École française de Rome, 2004.
[34] *Alexandri III papae epistolae et privilegia*, MCDXLVII *bis*, Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 200, col. 1261; André Vauchez, "Les origines et le développement du procès de canonization (XIIe-XIIIe siècles)", in *Vita Religiosa im Mittelalter. Festschrift für Kaspar Elm zum 70. Geburtstag.* Hrsg. von Franz J. Felten -- Nikolas Jaspert, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1999, pp. 845–856.

*inquisitio in partibus* at the places where the saint was active, and hear the testimony *de vita et miraculis*. This would be translated by sworn interpreters, recorded by professional notaries, and arranged by the committee for the purpose of submitting it for a further examination in the papal Curia. The consistory of the cardinals there subsequently analysed and criticized this evidence. If finally accepted, the canonization was pronounced and made public by a papal bull, providing the justification of the sanctity of the new saint and frequently containing a restrained selection of the miracles as well.

The format of these investigations was shaped by repeated papal interventions in the time of Innocent III, Honorius III and Gregory IX, decrying the lack of precision of local enquiries.[35] The format defined in the *Decretal* collection of Gregory IX prescribed the investigation of legitimate witnesses under oath.[36] A letter written at about the same time (in 1232) by the pope to Conrad of Marburg, responsible for the investigation of the sanctity of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, contained a precise description of the modalities of the examination of the witnesses. This text subsequently became known as *testes legitimi*, a passage to be inserted in each bull ordering a new investigation in view of the canonization of a new saint – it is worth quoting it in detail, because it illustrates well how legalistic the framework of this enquiry on the supernatural was:

> … first they have to make an oath, then they should be thoroughly examined as to how they got to know about it, and at what time, in which month, on which day, in whose presence, in what place, to whose invocation it happened, what the wording resorted to was, and what the name of those in whose presence these miracles were said to be accomplished was, and

[35] André Vauchez, "De la Bulle 'Etsi frigescente' à la décrétale 'Venerabili': L'histoire du procès de canonisation de Saint Maurice de Carnoët d'après les registres du Vatican", in Caroline Bourlet and Annie Dufour, eds., *L'écrit dans la société médiévale. Divers aspects de sa pratique du XIe au XIVe siècle. Textes en hommage à Lucie Fossier.* Paris: CNRS Editions, 1991, pp. 39–45.
[36] *Decretales Gregorii IX,* Lib. III, tit. XX, *De testibus et attestationibus*, c. 52. Potthast no 7469.

if they had seen them [the cured people] earlier when they were ill, and [if so] how long this illness had lasted, what the city was from which they originated…[37]

All this not only illustrates an increased interest in the authenticity of the testimonies, but should also make historians who deal with this material well aware of the different layers of mediation in the documentation of miracles.

The "fact-finding" investigations recorded in canonization protocols were aimed at authenticating miracles that had already taken place and were mostly even recorded in a first rudimentary manner. The "original" *vox populi* was once again deconstructed this time, and the witnesses were summoned to testify on the veracity of their previous assertion under oath and respond to the checking, investigating, even challenging questions of the inquisitors. Since Le Roy Ladurie's discovery of Montaillou and Carlo Ginzburg's meeting with Menocchio,[38] historians have come to know how much they owe to the evidence assembled and recorded by medieval inquisitorial investigations. In the footsteps of medieval inquisitors, we can hope to have a detailed and critically tested insight into many tiny and intimate details of medieval everyday life, and also exceptional situations.[39] The judicial-inquisitorial sources of canonization processes offer, in addition, serial sources for our investigation (as recently Maria Wittmer-Butsch and Constance

[37] *Ut series testimonii et verba testium de miraculis langravie redigantur in scriptis. Testes legitimi qui super vita, conversatione ac miraculis quondam E., langravie Turingie, sunt recipiendi, prius ab eis prestito juramento, diligenter examinentur et interrogentur de omnibus que dixerunt, quomodo sciunt, quo tempore, quo mense, quo die, quibus presentibus, quo loco, ad cujus invocationem, et quibus verbis interpositis, et de nominibus illorum circa quos miracula facta dicuntur, et si eos ante cognoscebant, et quot diebus ante viderunt eos infirmos, et quanto tempore fuerunt infirmi, et de qua civitate sunt oriundi, et interrogentur de omnibus circumstantiis diligenter; … Et series testimonii et verba testium fideliter redigantur in scriptis.* L. Auvray, ed., *Les Registres de Grégoire IX,* Paris, 1890–1955 (*BEFAR*, 2e série, 9) col. 548. No. 913; cf. other variants in Paciocco, *Sublimia negotia,* p. 43; Thomas Wetzstein, "*Virtus morum et virtus signorum?* Zur Bedeutung der Mirakel in den Kanonisationsprozessen des 15. Jahrhunderts", in Herbers, Heinzelmann, and Bauer, *Mirakel im Mittelalter,* pp. 359, 372; idem, *Heilige vor Gericht,* pp. 538–539.

[38] Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou, village occitan de 1294 à 1324*. Paris: Gallimard, 1975; Carlo Ginzburg, *Il formaggio e i vermi. Il cosmo di un mugnaio del '500*. Torino: Einaudi, 1976.

[39] Carlo Ginzburg, "The Inquisitor as Anthropologist", in idem, *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method.* Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989, pp. 156–164.

Rendtel reminded us[40]). The same miracle is described by several witnesses (sometimes by dozens or even several dozens), and these parallel accounts allow a nuanced enquiry.

The first vogue of historical anthropology based on inquisitorial documentation also provoked useful critical remarks from the side of more traditionally minded archival historians (such as Leonard Boyle,[41] Mathias Benad[42] and Andrea Del Col[43]). They reminded us that after the enthusiastic discovery of the copious judicial material the historian must go about very carefully with this evidence: the "archives of repression" assembled by the inquisition contain testimonies that probably dissimulate and distort much more than they show and reveal. *Mutatis mutandis*, this is also true for the canonization processes, which rely on the same inquisitorial methods and show many similar features to the investigations concerning heresies.[44] The beliefs and experiences narrated by the witnesses of the miracles of the saint candidates, with all their colourful *Sitz im Leben*, are framed and distorted by several specific mechanisms of the investigation. The questions in the enquiry solicit and filter the information according to what fits the classificatory grid of learned hagiographic concepts of miracles. Translating and putting into writing the oral and mostly vernacular testimonies (a problem examined by Michael Richter and Christian Krötzl[45]) can also add to the "streamlining" of the miracle tales.

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[40] Wittmer-Butsch and Rendtel, *Miracula*, pp. 93–94.

[41] Leonard E. Boyle, "Montaillou Revisited: *Mentalité* and Methodology", in J. A. Raftis, ed., *Pathways to Medieval Peasants.* Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1981, pp. 119–140.

[42] Mathias Benad, *Domus und Religion in Montaillou. Katholische Kirche und Katharismus im Überlebenskampf der Familie des Pfarrers Petrus Clerici am Anfang des 14. Jahrhunderts.* Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1990.

[43] Andrea Del Col, *Domenico Scandella Known as Menocchio. His Trials Before the Inquisition (1583–1599).* Binghampton: Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1996; Andrea del Col and Giovanna Paolin, eds., *L'inquisizione romana: metodologia delle fonti e storia istituzionale*. Trieste: Edizioni Università di Trieste, 2000.

[44] Jean-Michel Sallmann, "Du bon usage des sources en histoire culturelle. Analyse comparée des procès d'inquisition et des procès de béatification", *Revista de História* (São Paulo) 133 (1995), pp. 37–48; Dyan Elliott, *Proving Woman. Female Spirituality and Inquisitional Culture in the Later Middle Ages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

[45] Michael Richter, *Sprache und Gesellschaft im Mittelalter. Untersuchungen zur mündlichen Kommunikation in England von der Mitte der elften bis zum Beginn des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts.* Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1979, pp. 171–219; Christian Krötzl, "*Vulgariter sibi exposito*. Zu Übersetzung und Sprachbeherrschung im Spätmittelalter am Beispiel von Kanonisationsprozessen", *Das Mittelalter* 2 (1997), pp. 111–118; idem, "Prokuratoren, Notare und

This ecclesiastical-juridical documentation of ongoing religious practices of the *populus cristianus* not only restructured its already existing evidence but also set new miracle-producing processes in motion. The investigations themselves triggered new expectations and a sudden, although not very lasting, upswing of the popularity of the shrine, supported by intensive propaganda on behalf of the promoters of the cult, sending circular letters to neighbouring parishes for the purpose of inciting all the ailing and needy to seek immediate healing and to contribute with their testimony (sometimes *sub poena excommunicationis*[46]) to the success of the new saint candidate. This can be verified from the statistical examination of the cluster of pilgrimages in canonization processes, very intensive at the beginning and quickly declining afterwards.[47] Thus the *inquisitio* is partly responsible for producing the evidence that it intends to examine. Despite all the required factual precision, we are very far from the requested "laboratorial" conditions. The repeated actions that operationally constitute and redefine these events make medieval miracle accounts indeed somewhat similar to what Hans-Jörg Rheinberger labelled "epistemic things" in scientific enquiries.[48] We should keep in mind the fact that this is the "raw material" that was subsequently submitted to further inquisitorial, bureaucratic, clerical, theological and hagiographic re-elaboration.

To complicate matters even further, I must briefly recall here that, in addition to this "officially" provoked and monitored upswing of pilgrimages and miraculous healings, there was another, more spontaneously emerging set of factors, which influenced the birth of these miracle narratives. Whether officially incited or spontaneously occurring, the miracles became the *nuclei*

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Dolmetscher. Zur Gestaltung und Ablauf der Zeugeneinvernahmen bei spätmittelalterlichen Kanonisationsprozessen", *Hagiographica* 5 (1998), pp. 119–140.

[46] Such a wording is cited from the process of St. Leopold (1468) by Thomas Wetzstein, "*Virtus morum*", p. 360.

[47] In the case of St. Elizabeth, in 1232–1234, 50 of the 129 miracle accounts were recorded in the first 5 months, 36 in the subsequent 6 months, and the remaining 22 in the ensuing two years; for other examples, see Wittmer-Butsch and Rendtel, *Miracula,* pp. 86–89.

of a dramatic ritual complex: the seemingly timeless one of faith-healing shrines. Discarding some obvious rhetorical exaggerations, we should probably give credit to descriptions speaking of huge crowds streaming to and fluctuating around these shrines. Desperate vows and imprecations surely belonged to the picture; sleeping around the relics was part of the prescribed scenario. All this could not fail to create a dense psychological climate for the drama of healing, seasoned by the groans of the afflicted and the enthusiastic, almost contagious, success proclamations: a kind of "holy radioactivity" as it was called by Ronald Finucane,[49] a real *dynamique miraculeuse*, to use the terminology of Pierre-André Sigal.[50]

This means that despite all the official, institutional, ecclesiastical regulating mechanisms much of the miracle corpus remains an uncontrollable, grassroots phenomenon. The ways in which miraculous events are produced and documented already predestine them to a disturbing multiplicity. If we contemplate the resulting miracle accounts from the other side, and examine how the narratives themselves could be ordered and classified, further observations could be made. In the first place, instead of talking about one narrative, one has to work with a series of interrelated but differently fashioned accounts. In a recent article on "Filiation and form in late medieval miracle story" Michael Goodich proposes that miracle stories, as we know them, could be seen as "concentric circles focussing on the original transcendent event", where "each new ring of transmission represents many authors who may claim participation in its composition". I have already tried to point out that the "miraculous event per se", which Goodich places at the centre of these concentric circles, cannot be dislocated from the cluster of social, psychological, institutional and religious factors that produced it. This should not, however, disturb us here, where we

[48] Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, *Toward a History of Epistemic Things. Synthesizing Proteins in the Test Tube.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997.
[49] Ronald C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims*, *Popular Beliefs in Medieval England.* London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1977, p. 26

contemplate the transmission and communication of this story, once it has surfaced, for which the scheme provided by Goodich resumes the different stages well: the verbal report of the participants of the event; the immediate audience of eyewitnesses, family and friends, who provide the social acceptance of the reports; the notaries, scribes and clerics, who are entrusted with translating and recording the event; the theologians, who place it in the context of the Christian theory of miracles; the hagiographer, who provides a literally elaborated version; the preacher, who transmits the miracle as an *exemplum* to a wider audience; the visual artist or composer, who summarizes the miracle in an iconographic or liturgical form.[51]

Starting with the kernel of the miracle story, the miraculous event per se as narrated by the beneficiaries of the miracles themselves, we should observe that such stories, universally present in different forms of healing practice in history, are not only accounts, but have a specific therapeutic function; they are "healing fictions" as James Hillman called them,[52] in which the renewed formulation and the changing interpretations of one's own affliction, and the way of getting out of it, constitute a part of the healing mechanism. Such accounts could have been the basis of a diagnosis leading to a choice of medical or a supernatural (sacral or magical) remedy. Adjusted and reworked in dialogue between the ailing persons and their helpers or advisers, a rounded-up story is already there in the formulaic invocations where the help of the saint is asked for. Subsequently, these accounts are completed in the public announcements of the healing, where one can identify the first fully fledged version of the miracle story.[53]

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[50] Sigal, *L'homme et le miracle,* pp. 165–225.
[51] Michael Goodich, "Filiation and Form in Late Medieval Miracle Story", *Hagiographica* 3 (1976), pp. 306–322, here pp. 306–307; the study is reprinted now in his *Lives and Miracles of the Saints. Studies in Medieval Latin Hagiography*. Aldershot: Ashgate/Variorum, 2004.
[52] James Hillman, *Healing Fiction*. Station Hill Press, New York, 1983; J. M. Bernstein, "Self-knowledge as Praxis: Narrative and Narration in Psychoanalysis", in Christopher Nash, ed., *Narrative in Culture. The Uses of Storytelling in the Sciences, Philosophy, and Literature.* London and New York: Routledge, 1990, pp. 51–80.
[53] The close interrelationship and circularity of the healing ritual, and its oral and written accounts, have been examined on early medieval evidence by Giselle de Nie, "Die Sprache im Wunder – das Wunder in der Sprache. Menschenwort

As a second circle, there comes the reformulation of these stories by those who "speak about it": the immediate eyewitnesses, family members, bystanders and spreaders of gossip. In the way in which they present the story, the operation of rhetorical, semantic and folkloric rules of oral transmission could be observed.[54] The rhetoric of judicial narrative is, as one can observe in early canonization protocols, such as those of St. Elizabeth, rather dry and factual.[55] The investigators and the scribes, however, could not resist including a number of catchy folkloric stereotypes and colourful literary characterizations – I will soon come back to such details.

Reading a large number of accounts, one can also observe the recurrence of a typical narrative sequence, which consists of a limited set of constitutive elements, such as the causes of affliction, diagnosis, diverse healing attempts, mediators, vow, pilgrimage, time, place, conditions of healing, public proclamation of the miracle, and thanksgiving offerings. In a few cases this could continue with the occasional negligence of the promises made and the ensuing relapse of the person into illness or other punishment. It seems fruitful to rely in the analysis of these narrative structures on the insights of folklore. The "morphology" that Vladimir Propp elaborated for the analysis of the narrative structures of folktales could provide some insights here.[56] Propp interpreted the repetitive motifs of folktales by distinguishing typical actors and their functions (altogether 31), and by ordering the morphological forms and characterizing the combinations and repetitions of the individual episodes. Some of the functions pinpointed by him, such as VIII (damage or

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und Logos bei Gregor von Tours", *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 103 (1995), pp. 1–25; eadem, "Text, Symbol and 'Oral Culture' in the Sixth-Century Church: the Miracle Story", *Mediaevistik* 9 (1966), pp. 115–133.

[54] Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.

[55] Klaniczay, "Speaking About Miracles: Oral Testimony and Written Record in Medieval Canonization Trials", in Anna Adamska and Marco Mostert, eds., *The Development of Literate Mentalities in East Central Europe.* Turnhout: Brepols, 2004, pp. 365–396, esp. pp. 384–385; on judicial narrative, see Bernard D. Jackson, "Narrative Theories and Legal Discourse", in Nash, *Narrative in Culture,* pp. 23–50.

[56] Vladimir Propp, *The Morphology of Folktale*, /1928/ tr. Laurence Scott, Austin, 1968; in his later, more comprehensive book, *Historical Roots of the Wondertale* /1946/, he enriched these categories by further anthropological and historical insight, cf. the excerpts in Vladimir Propp, *Theory and History of Folklore,* ed. Anatoly

misfortune), XV (spatial migration between the two worlds, or pilgrimage), XVIII- XIX (victory, recovery of what had been lost, or healing) can very well characterize miracle accounts as well.

The analytical categories of Vladimir Propp and other folklorists were applied by Gerd Theissen in 1967 to biblical miracles. Besides typical characters (such as the miracle worker, the postulant and the audience), he distinguished 33 motifs, among them several that can be used very well for the analysis of medieval miracle accounts as well, above all to those related to "living saints", but *mutatis mutandis* also to those of their relics: the coming of the miracle worker (1), the appearance of the crowd (2), the appearance of the distressed person (3), the appearance of his representatives (4), the appearance of his opponents (6), cries for help (11), scepticism and mockery (14), the resistance and submission of the demon (16), setting the scene (21), touch (22), healing substances (23), the miracle-working word (24), recognition of the miracle (26), acclamation (31) and the spreading of the news (33). Theissen also defined six narrative themes (among them exorcisms, healings, rescue miracles, and so on), and analysed how in the miracle narratives faith and doubt intersected, and how compositional mechanisms reconfigured synchronic and diachronic structures.[57] The historical analysis of miracles cannot do without the awareness of the literary-narrative rules that shape their sources.[58]

A useful complement to this "morphology of the miracle" could be provided by its confrontation with another set of serial sources, that of the "negative miracles", the bewitchment and *maleficium* narratives to be read in late medieval and early modern witch trials. The comparison between miracles and bewitchments could be legitimized by a series of important

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Liberman, tr. A. Y. Martin and R. P. Martin. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984; see also Eleasar M. Meletynsky, "Structural-Typological Study of the Folktale", *Genre* 4 (1971), pp. 249–279.

[57] Gerd Theissen, *The Miracle Stories of the Early Christian Tradition*. tr. Francis McDonagh, Edinburgh: T. A. Clark Ltd., 1983.

[58] Réginald Grégoire, *Manuale di agiologia. Introduzione alla letteratura agiografica*. Fabriano: Monastero San Silvestro Abate, 1996, pp. 301–308; also Sigal, *L'homme et le miracle,* pp. 79–163; Michel Goodich, *Violence and*

similarities. The miraculous was in the uncanny neighbourhood of magic,[59] and the similarity of their respective effects could frequently only be distinguished by a careful "discernment of spirits", for "Satan himself goes disguised as an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11, 14).[60] Furthermore, the accounts of the *maleficia* of the witches, the diagnosis, and the action of "unbewitching" are just as much part of a popular therapy to explain misfortune and provide tools for coming out of it[61] as the miracles of the saints are. This analogy prompted Robert I. Moore to examine the cure sought and obtained by miracles, as described in the miracle collections compiled by the monks of Cluny in the line of the analysis by Edward Evans Pritchard on Azande witchcraft, interpreting them as a popular interpretation of misfortune in life and therapy to enable people to come to terms with it.[62]

It is on these bases that I have been experimenting with such a morphological analysis for more than fifteen years, comparing the narrative structures of miracle and bewitchment, distinguishing four important actors of miracle and bewitchment stories: 1) the *miraculé* or the victim of *maleficium*, 2) the diagnostician or advisor, 3) the saint (or his relic) and the witch, and 4) finally the person actively helping in the cure: the guardian of the shrine or the healer/witch doctor. In case of miracle stories I tried to distinguish seven morphological elements constituting an

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*Miracle in the Fourteenth Century. Private Grief and Public Salvation*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1995, pp. 6–8; idem, "Filiation".

[59] William R. Schadel and Bruce J. Malina, "Miracles or Magic?", *Religious Studies Review* 12 (1986), pp. 31- 39; Valerie Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1991; Giselle de Nie, "Caesarius of Arles and Gregory of Tours: Two Sixth-Century Bishops and 'Christian Magic'", in Doris Edel, ed., *Cultural Identity and Cultural Integration. Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1995, pp. 170–196; Fritz Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1997; L. Kolmer, "Heilige als magische Heiler", *Mediaevistik* 6 (1993), pp. 153–175.

[60] Nancy Caciola, *Discerning Spirits. Divine and Demonic Possession in the Middle Ages*. Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 2003; Gábor Klaniczay, *The Process of Trance, Heavenly and Diabolic Apparitions in Johannes Nider's* Formicarius. Collegium Budapest, Discussion Paper Series No. 65. June 2003 pp. 81. http://www.colbud.hu/main/PubArchive/DP/DP65-Klaniczay.pdf.

[61] Jeann Favret-Saada, *Les mots, la mort, les sorts. La sorcellerie dans le Bocage.* Paris: Gallimard, 1977, English transl.: *Deadly Words. Witchcraft in the Bocage.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980; eadem, *Corps pour corps. Enquête sur la sorcellerie dans le Bocage.* Paris: Gallimard, 1981; eadem, "Unbewitching as Therapy", *American Ethnologist* 16 (1989), pp. 40–57.

[62] Robert Moore, "Between Sanctity and Superstition: Saints and Their Miracles in the Age of Revolution", in Miri Rubin, ed., *The Work of Jacques Le Goff and the Challenges of Medieval History.* Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1997, pp. 55–67.

idealized sequence: sin, misfortune, supplication/vow, pilgrimage/personal encounter, dream/vision, public penance/ renewed supplication, healing.[63] The analysis of numerous sequences of miracles or *maleficia*, the careful recording of the structural changes in their dominant patterns, allows a new type of approach to historical transformations in this seemingly immobile world of archaic religious stereotypes. One could sense slowly unfolding proportional changes in the structure of beliefs concerning the operation of – beneficial or maleficent – supernatural powers.

An example of this: in the course of, and probably because of, the evolution of canonization processes, medieval miracle belief and faith-healing witnessed a considerable change in this script, which had been analysed by Andre Vauchez[64] and Christian Krötzl.[65] From a majority of shrine miracles in the thirteenth century in most collections, by the fifteenth century the opposite proportions had started to prevail. In the investigations around the sanctity of John Capestran, as was demonstrated by Stanko Andrić, 84% of the 514 healing miracles recorded between 1458 and 1461 in Ujlak (Ilok) by the Hungarian Observant Franciscans were distance miracles, with only thanksgiving pilgrimages to the relics.[66]

We are far from the end of reviewing the "concentric circles" of the transmission and reformulation of medieval miracle accounts: we could continue with the analysis of the rhetoric

[63] Gábor Klaniczay, "*Miraculum* and *Maleficium*: Reflections Concerning Late Medieval Female Sainthood", in *Problems in the Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Europe,* ed. R. Po-Chia Hsia and R. W. Scribner, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen Bd. 78. Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1997, pp. 49–74, and also in my "La struttura dei racconti delle sventure e delle guarigioni. Un confronto tra miracoli di punizione e *maleficia*", in Boesch Gajano – Modica, *Miracoli,* pp. 109–136. This scheme was further developed by Stanko Andrić in his book on St. John Capestran; cf. Stanko Andrić, *The Miracles of St. John Capistran.* Budapest: CEU Press, 2000, pp. 225–297.
[64] Vauchez, *La sainteté,* pp. 495–559, table XXX on p. 523.
[65] Christian Krötzl, *Pilger, Mirakel und Alltag. Formen des Verhaltens in skandinavischen Mittelalter (12.–15. Jahrhundert)*, Helsinki: SHS, 1994, pp. 48–54; idem, "Miracles au tombeau – miracles à distance. Approches typologiques", in Aigle, *Miracle et karāma,* pp. 557–576.
[66] Andrić, *The Miracles of St. John Capistran*, p. 259.

and literary clichés,[67] the genre of miracle as a *Faszinationstyp*,[68] the elaborate scholastic speculations on miracle,[69] or the moral finality and pedagogical stereotypes of miracles in sermons and exempla, not to speak of the additional vast dimensions of liturgy and iconography.

Instead of continuing in this direction, however, let me rather present some examples showing how this complex and difficult documentation allows different kinds of insight into medieval beliefs in miracles.

As a first step, let me review the immediate documentary context of the three processes from which my examples come.

St. Elizabeth's canonization process provides a good model for the organization of such an enquiry. After her death on November 17, 1231, her confessor, Conrad of Marburg, became the principal promoter of the campaign for her canonization, one of the three papal legates. From the beginning of 1233 they questioned about 700 witnesses and recorded 106 miraculous healings (*Miracula Sancte Elyzabet*). After the murder of Conrad of Marburg by heretics on 30 July, 1233, a new commission was nominated in October 1234, which re-examined some cases of the older list and added 24 new miracles. The protocols were taken to Pope Gregory IX, and they may have involved some debate; this explains the origin of the curial treatise explaining the process and the

[67] Hedwig Röckelein, "Miracle Collections in Carolingian Saxony: Literary Tradition versus Original Creation", *Hagiographica* 3 (1996), pp. 267–275.

[68] Hans-Ulrich Gumbrecht, "Faszinationstyp Hagiographie. Ein historisches Experiment zur Gattungstheorie", in Christoph Cormeau, ed., *Deutsche Literatur im Mittelalter. Kontakte und Perspektiven*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1979, pp. 37–84; an analysis on this basis was made by Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, "Sexual and Textual Violence in the 'Femme d'Arras' Miracle by Gautier de Coincy", in Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski et al., eds., *Translatio Studii: Essays by His Students in Honor of Karl D. Uitti for His Sixty-Fifth Birthday.* Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000, pp. 51–64.

[69] Cf. Michael Goodich, "A Chapter in the History of the Christian Theology of Miracle: Engelbert of Admont's (Ca. 1250–1331) *Expositio super Psalmum 118* and *De miraculis Christi"*, in *Cross Cultural Convergences in the Crusader Period. Essays Presented to Aryeh Grabois on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday,* ed. M. Goodich, S. Menache, and S. Schein. New York: Peter Lang, pp. 89–110, now also in Goodich, *Lives and Miracles of Saints,* XVII.

arguments for Elizabeth's canonization in greater detail[70] The canonization was solemnly proclaimed and celebrated in the church of S. Domenico in Perugia at Pentecost 1235.

The canonization process of St. Stanislaus, a Polish martyr bishop killed in 1079, was first initiated by Iwo Odrowaz, Bishop of Cracow (1218–1229), and then carried through by another bishop from the same family, Prędota Odrowaz (1242–1266). The latter elevated his relics after 1243, and the first list of miracles at his grave was completed by 1250. This served for obtaining the permission of an official investigation. A pontifical legate from Italy, Giacomo da Velletri, directed the *inquisitio in partibus* in 1252, authenticating 52 miracles, using already the germs of a questionnaire, *articuli interrogatorii*, which helped the standardization of the responses of the witnesses in the canonization processes, and took the form of a *relatio* including the summaries of each miracle story, with the remarks made by the relevant witnesses. Stanislaus was canonized in 1253, and his major legend written after this by the Dominican Vincent of Kielcza included a reformulated, coloured narrative of these same miracles.[71]

The trial with which I have dealt most thoroughly is that of St. Margaret of Hungary, St. Elizabeth's niece, daughter of Béla IV, King of Hungary. She spent her life as a Dominican nun and died on January 18, 1270, in the royal convent founded for her on the Danube island

[70] The documents of the canonization process are edited by Albert Huyskens, *Quellenstudien zur Geschichte der hl. Elisabeth*. Marburg, 1908; on their analysis, see P. G. Schmidt, "Die zeitgenössische Überlieferung zum Leben und zur Heiligsprechung der heiligen Elisabeth", in *Sankt Elisabeth. Fürstin Dienerin Heilige*. Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1981, pp. 1–6; Joseph Leinweber, "Das kirchliche Heiligsprechungsverfahren bis zum Jahre 1234. Der Kanonisationsprozeß der hl. Elisabeth von Thüringen", ibid., pp. 128–136; Otfried Krafft, "Kommunikation und Kanonisation: Die Heiligsprechung der Elisabeth von Thüringen 1235 und das Problem der Mehrfachausfertigung von päpstlichen Kanonisationsurkunden seit 1161", *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Thüringische Geschichte* 58 (2004), pp. 27–82; Gábor Klaniczay, "Il processo di canonizzazione di Santa Elisabetta. Le prime testimonianze sulla vita e sui miracoli", in *Il culto e la storia di Santa Elisabetta d'Ungheria in Europa.* 18–19 novembre 2002, *Annuario 2002–2004. Conferenze e convegni.* Accademia d'Ungheria in Roma. Istituto storico "Fraknói", Roma, 2005, pp. 220–232.

[71] The canonization documents of St. Stanislaus were published by Wojciech Kętrzyński, *Miracula sancti Stanislai,* in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica.* Lviv, 1884, vol. 4, pp. 285–318, and Jazmina Pleziowa and Zbibgiew Perzanowski, eds., "Cuda Świętego Stanisława", *Analecta Cracoviensia,* 11 (1979), pp. 47–141; cf. Aleksandra Witkowska, "The Thirteenth-Century *Miracula* of St. Stanislaus, Bishop of Krakow", in Klaniczay, ed., *Procès de canonisation,* pp. 149–163.

subsequently to be named for her. The miracles at her grave started one year after her death. The pope soon delegated a first commission, which questioned between 1272 and 1274 at least 40 witnesses and recorded 10 miracles in life, 4 miraculous visions concerning Margaret's death and 29 *post mortem* miracles. A list of these was incorporated in the oldest legend of St. Margaret, probably written by her confessor Marcellus, Prior Provincial of the Hungarian Dominicans.[72] The investigation continued in 1276, with a new commission delegated by Pope Innocent V – consisting, this time, of Italian clerics – who recorded the testimonies of 110 witnesses. From the witnesses of the first investigation only those of 14 miracles were available at this time. On the other hand, the legates were able to find testimonies on 52 new miracles.[73] This raised the total number of her miracles to 95.

St. Margaret's canonization process is comparable to that of St. Elizabeth and St. Stanislaus in many ways. There were two rounds of the investigations in all three cases, with some of the witnesses appearing before both commissions – this will allow the careful observation of the transformation of the miracle accounts.

A detailed investigation could, of course, detect also significant differences here: while in St. Elizabeth's miracle lists there was only one case where, with a renewed questioning, the second commission added significant new elements to a miracle account judged irrelevant by the first

[72] *Vita beate Margarite de Ungaria Ordinis Predicatorum*, in Kornél Bőle, *Árpádházi Boldog Margit szenttéavatási ügye és a legősibb latin Margit-legenda* /The Canonization Case of the Blessed Margaret of the Arpad Dynasty and the Oldest Margaret Legend/. Budapest: Stephaneum, 1937, pp. 17–43; F. Albin Gombos, *Catalogus fontium historiae Hungariae*. Budapest: Stephaneum, 1937–1939, vol. III, pp. 2009–2029; it is also included now in the reprinted and augmented version of Emericus Szentpétery, ed., *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum tempore ducum regumque stirpis Arpadianae gestarum*. Budapest: Academia Litter. Hungarica, 1938; 2nd edn. Budapest: Nap Kiadó, 1999, pp. 685–709, I will refer to this last edition. cf. Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers*, pp. 423–424.

[73] Vilmos Fraknói, ed., *Inquisitio super vita, conversatione et miraculis beatae Margarethae virginis, Belae IV. Hungarorum regis filiae, sanctimonialis monasterii virginis gloriosae de insula Danubii, Ordinis Praedicatorum, Vesprimis diocesis*, In *Monumenta Romana episcopatus Vesprimiensis.* Budapest, 1896, Tomus I, pp. 162–383; on its analysis, see Gábor Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses. Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

commission,[74] in the acts of the second investigation of the miracles of St. Stanislaus we find a more systematic effort to check the truthfulness of the first set of testimonies that they care to record, for instance, if "because of the distance" a witness could not come to the second hearing.[75] the second investigation of St. Margaret's miracles provides numerous cases of a thorough and interested investigation of the conditions or even the truthfulness of certain miracles. A routine question, for example, was whether the witnesses had not been "coached" to tell a story that they did not actually witness. This might be the consequence of the evolution of the investigation criteria during the four decades between the two canonization trials. The two lists of St. Margaret's miracles show also a much greater disparity. The first one, appended to the text of her oldest legend, bears the traces of an immediate hagiographic reformulation, giving only one highly coloured and polished "story" for each miracle and making only an imprecise reference to the circumstances and the witnesses. The acts of the second investigation of Margaret's miracles, on the other hand, give a more faithful rendering of the witness hearings than those of St. Elizabeth do. They present the repetitive dialogue between the legates and the witnesses (*Interrogata, quomodo scit hoc,… respondit, … item dixit…*), and also make a regular reference to the person of the interpreters.[76]

The subsequent evolution of canonization investigation, the large-scale processes of the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century (those of Louis IX, King of France, in 1282,[77] Peter of Morrone (Pope Celestin V) in 1306,[78] Thomas of Cantiloupe, Bishop of Hereford,

[74] The healing of a blind girl, Gertrud of Wetzlar, cf. Huyskens, *Quellenstudien,* pp. 231 and 249 (96/I and 7/II).
[75] Kętrzyński, *Miracula sancti Stanislai,* and Pleziowa and Perzanowski, "Cuda Świętego Stanisława," Nos. XIX, XLIV.
[76] I have dealt in greater detail with such aspects of these three trials in my "Raccolte di miracoli e loro certificazione nell'Europa centrale", in Raimondo Michetti, ed., *Notai, miracoli e culto dei santi.* Milano: Dott. A Giuffrè editore, 2004. pp. 259–288.
[77] Jacques Le Goff, "Saint de l'Eglise et saint du peuple: les miracles officiels de saint Louis entre sa mort et sa canonisation (1270–1297)", in *Mélanges Robert Mandrou.* Paris: Mouton, 1983, pp. 169–180; Louis Carolus-Barré, *Le procès de canonisation de Saint Louis (1272–1297). Essai de reconstitution*. Roma: École française de Rome, 1994.

in 1307,[79] Louis of Anjou, Bishop of Toulouse, in 1308,[80] and Claire of Montefalco in 1318–1319[81]) continue the production of an ever-increasing volume of evidence. The number of witnesses and their miracle accounts can rise to several hundred, and consequently the supporting evidence can also become quite monstrous. The *articuli interrogatorii* used in the process of Claire of Montefalco consisted of no fewer than 313 questions – this explains the fact that although a considerable part of the testimonies is not extant, the process documentation still constitutes a thick volume.

This same series of processes provides us with yet another type of precious miracle documentation, related to the so-called "curial phase" of canonization processes. We possess a few valuable fragments of the curial treatises that re-examined the materials submitted by the *inquisitiones in partibus.*[82] As demonstrated in the analyses by André Vauchez[83] and Aviad Kleinberg,[84] they show a rising awareness of the difficulty of assembling indubitable proof for miracles with such investigations. They enumerate possible objections (*dubia*), resorting, besides theological arguments, to medical and "scientific" ones, and formulate replies in advance. In the treatise written by a curialist, pronouncing an opinion of *sic et non* on 26 miracles from among 38

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[78] F. X. Seppelt, ed., "Die Akten des Kanonisationsprozess un dem Codex zu Sulmona", in *Monumenta Coelestiniana. Quellen zur Geschichte des Papstes Coelestin V.* Paderborn, 1921, pp. 211–334; Paolo Golinelli, *Il papa contadino. Celestino V e il suo tempo*. Firenze: Camunia, 1996, pp. 213–247.

[79] Partial publication of his miracles from Cod. Vat Lat. 2015 in *Acta Sanctorum,* October I, coll. 585–696; cf. Richter, *Sprache und Gesellschaft*; for a microhistorical investigation of one exceptionally documented miracle, see Robert Bartlett, *The Hanged Man. A Story of Miracle, Memory, and Colonialism in the Middle Ages.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

[80] Margaret Toynbee, *S. Louis of Toulouse and the Process of Canonisation in the Fourteenth Century.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1929; *Processus Canonizationis et Legendae Varie Sancti Ludovici OFM, episcopi Tholosani.* Analecta Franciscana VII. Quaracchi, 1951.

[81] Enrico Menestò, ed., *Il processo di canonizzazione di Chiara da Montefalco*, con un appendice documentaria di Silvestro Nessi. Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1984.

[82] Louis Carolus-Barré, "Consultation du Cardinal Pietro Colonna sur le IIe miracle de S. Louis", *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartres,* 117 (1959), pp. 57–72; "Procès-verbal du dernier consistoire secret préparatoire à la canonisation" [de S. Pierre Célestin], *Analecta Bollandiana* 16 (1897), pp. 389–392, 475–487; "Rapport d'un curialiste sur la vie et les miracles de S. Thomas de Cantiloupe, évêque de Hereford", edited in Vauchez, *La sainteté,* pp. 631–648.

[83] Vauchez, *La sainteté,* pp. 569–581.

proposed for examination to the Curia by the enquiry held on Thomas of Cantilupe, Bishop of Hereford, in 1307, one was rejected and three more were pronounced dubious. One of the latter was the case of a miracle of a child who had fallen from the top of a tower and been found with only a few minor fractures, instead of being dead as might have been expected. The anonymous curialist developed here a long theory of the fall of the bodies, quoting examples designed to demonstrate that the fact in itself was not impossible.[85] These fascinating debates illustrate that healing miracles, even at the highest level of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, were far from being self-evident by that time, and the rhetorical devices and narrative structures of the miracle accounts had precisely the function of enabling people to discard those doubts arising from learned circles or just commonsense scepticism.

Coming to such concrete examples, in the remaining part of my study I will examine three miracle accounts that might allow some glimpses at the diverse mechanisms that contribute to the construction of the miracle story. We will be able to discover the intrusion of folkloric narrative schemes into judicial records; we will see the interference of rational and miraculous explanations and even medical-sounding diagnoses; we will also learn how a typical theme of the miracles *in vita*, the power of the saint over nature, was received by the immediate surroundings; finally, I will compare the judicial miracle accounts with the loquacious legend written on the basis of them in the fourteenth century.

The first story is a well-formulated narrative sequence from the miracle lists of St. Elizabeth of Hungary.

> A peasant from the Utrecht diocese named Dietrich stated under oath that once he woke up at night, and it seemed to him that he saw a cat. He lifted his right hand to hit the cat, and,

[84] Aviad Kleinberg, "Proving Sanctity: Selection and Authentication of Saints in the Later Middle Ages", *Viator* 20 (1989), pp. 183–205.

> immediately, his hand became lame and useless. [Here we have a rather clear case where the help of the saint is called for to heal a bewitchment.] He remained lame from Easter until the feast of St. John the Baptist two years ago. He went twice to the threshold of the Blessed Elizabeth, but he was not healed. The third time when he hastened to Marburg, filled with much piety, accompanied by his wife, he met in the woods called Stheterwalt an old man with a venerable look. He greeted him and asked whence he came. The old man responded that he came from Marburg… and when he asked whether there happened any miracles, he answered "Many." And the wretched man showed his weak hand. And the old man said, "Just continue your journey with confidence, because you will heal beyond any doubt, if you follow my advice: put your weak hand underneath the cover of the sarcophagus, on the side where the head lies. The deeper you manage to thrust, the sooner you will regain your health… [a number of other pieces of advice follow]." Having said this, he gave a blessing in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and they parted. After less than five steps the peasant and his wife looked back to ask something more but they could not see him any more. They went on, with much marvelling, but firmly trusting his advice, to Marburg… [where he obtained the longed-for healing].[86]

Besides the valuable information on the healing practices described here, related to touching or even penetrating the shrine, we can see the appearance of an archetypal character of the narrative structures of folktales: the miraculous supernatural advisor, a mysterious old man, appearing and disappearing in the forest, a typical scene of marvels and strange experiences, on the margins of

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[85] Vauchez, *La sainteté,* pp. 577–580.

[86] "Dietericus quidam fossor de diocesi Traiectensi oriundus iuratus dixit, quod, cum nocte quadam dormiens excitaretur, sicut ei videbatur a catto, levata dextera manu, ut cum percuteret, subito usum eiusdem manus perdidit, ipsa remanente contracta a festo Pasche usque ad festum Johannis baptiste ante hos duos annos. Et, cum limina beate Elyzabet bis adiisset et curatus non esset, tercio cum multa devocione una cum uxore Marpurc petens, obvium habuit senem reverendi vultus in silva, que Stheterwalt dicitur, quem salutans quesivit, unde veniret. Respondit, quod de Marpurc, et quod ibi moram XV dierum fecisset. Deinde querebat, si ibi miracula fierent. Respondit quod plurima. Cui egrotus debilitatem manus exposuit. Cui senex: 'Fiducialiter', inquit, 'transi, quia sine omni dubio curaberis, si meo consilio manum debilem at caput sepulchri sub lapidem miseris, et, quanto profundius miseris, tanto cicius curaberis.'… Hoc dicto data benedictione eundi in nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti pertransiit circiter spacium V passuum; vir et famina subito rescipientes, ut plura ab eo quererent, non comparuit. Super quo plurium ammirati sunt, sed de verbis eius firmiter confidentes Marpurc processerunt…" Huyskens, *Quellenstudien*, pp. 253–254.

civilization.[87] While usually concentrating on the dry facts, the papal legates and scribes could not resist this time recording the added adornments of the *imaginaire* as well. Although such clearly folktale-like narrative constructs and other folkloric occurrences are rather rare in the acts of canonization processes, we must not forget that they constituted an ever-present background to these stories, circulating among the lay and clerical clientele of these shrines. To mention only one example from the surroundings of thirteenth-century Marburg: the Cistercian abbot, Caesarius of Heisterbach (c. 1180–1240), author of the first elaborate *vita* of St. Elizabeth,[88] was most well known for his popular and influential spiritual treatise entitled *Dialogus Miraculorum*,[89] reporting dozens of folktale-like stories on apparitions, spectres, ghosts and devils.[90] The thirteenth century, when the canonization processes opened the path for a massive ecclesiastical documentation of popular experiences and narratives on miracles, constituted also a period of an increasing receptivity of ecclesiastical culture to absorb, document (and subsequently discipline and repress) folkloric culture.[91]

The second story belongs to a frequent type among medieval miracles, the resurrection of a child who had suffered a fatal accident. This type of miracle has been studied in detail by Didier Lett,[92] Ronald Finucane,[93] Michael Goodich,[94] Maria Wittmer-Butsch and Constanze Rendtel,[95]

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[87] Jacques Le Goff, "Le merveilleux dans l'Occident médiéval", and "Le désert-forêt dans l'Occident médiéval", in idem, *L'imaginaire médiéval*. Paris: Gallimard, 1985, pp. 17–39, 59–75.
[88] Caesarius Heisterbacensis, "Die beiden Schriften über die heilige Elisabeth von Thüringen", ed. A. Huyskens, in *Die Wundergeschichten des Caesarius von Heisterbach*, ed. Alfons Hilka, Vol. 3. Bonn: Hanstein, 1937, pp. 329–390.
[89] Joseph Strange, ed., *Caesarii Heisterbacensis monachi ordinis Cisterciensis Dialogus Miraculroum*, 2 Vols. Paris, 1851.
[90] Brian Patrick Macguire, "Friends and Tales in the Cloister. Oral Souces in Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus Miraculorum*", *Analecta Cisterciensisa* 36 (1980), pp. 167–247; Jacques Berlioz and Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, "Césaire de Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*", in Jacques Berlioz and Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu, eds., *Les Exempla médiévaux*. Introduction à la recherche, suivie des tables critiques de l'*Index exemplorum* de Frederic C. Tubach. Carcassonne, 1992, pp. 91–109
[91] Cf. Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Le saint lévrier. Guinefort, guérisseur d'enfants depuis le XIIIe siècle*. Paris: Flammarion, 1979; idem, *Religione, folklore e società nell'Occidente medievale*. Bari: Laterza, 1988; idem, *Le corps, les rites, les rêves, le temps. Essais d'anthropologie médiévale*. Paris: Gallimard, 2001.
[92] Didier Lett, *L'enfant des miracles. Enfance et société au Moyen Âge (XII^e – XIII^e siècle).* Paris: Aubier, 1997.

and others. In St. Elizabeth's miracle collections nine resurrection miracles belong to this type.[96] In the descriptions, the rhetorical emphasis on the visible evidence of death and also that of the return of life into the bodies of the deceased might be worth noting. We find here a combination of impressive narrative constructs with convincing-sounding medical indices. Thus, in the case of a deceased three-year-old boy, subsequently resurrected, we hear of "all the signs of death: rigidity, paleness and coldness of the body" (2/I);[97] the witnesses state that a stillborn child's upper body was completely black (13/I). The black coloration of the skin, together with the swollenness of the body and the fearfully wide open, motionless eyes, are also stressed in the detailed description of the resurrection of a four-year-old boy found drowned in a well (10/I).[98] As to the *signa* of the returning life, we hear of the returning breath (6/I, 13/I), the feeling of the pulse (7/I, 10/I), and subsequently, of course, the movements and the return to consciousness.[99]

In the canonization process of St. Margaret of Hungary, the most voluminous sequence of testimonies also relates to the resurrection of a child. The story's first version is there in the first miracle list appended to the oldest legend (written probably by the confessor of Margaret, Marcellus).

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[93] Ronald Finucane, *The Rescue of the Innocents: Endangered Children in Medieval Miracles*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997.

[94] Michael Goodich, "Il fanciullo come fulcro di miracoli e potere spirituale (XIII e XIV secolo)", in Agostino Paravicini Bagliani and André Vauchez, eds., *Poteri carismatici e informali: chiesa e società medioevali.* Palermo: Sellerio, 1992, pp. 38–57; idem, "A Saintly Child and a Saint of Children: The Childhood of Elizabeth of Thuringia (1207–1231)," in idem, *Lives and Miracles of Saints,* V.

[95] Wittmer-Butsch and Rendtel, *Miracula,* pp. 160–175.

[96] Miracles 2/I, 6/I, 7/I, 10/I, 13/I, 47/I, 49/I, 17/II, 21/II (the Arabic numbers refer to the number of the miracle and the Roman numbers the acts of the two investigations). Cf. Wendel-Widmer, *Die Wunderheilungen am Grabe,* p. 24, and H. Zielinski, "Elisabeth von Thüringen und die Kinder", in U. Arnold and E. Liebing, eds., *Elisabeth, der Deutsche Orden und die Kirche: Festschrift zur 77jährigen Wiederkehr der Weihe der Elisabethkirche*. Marburg, 1983, pp. 27–38.

[97] "omnia signa mortis in rigore, in pallore, in frigiditate habens", Huyskens, *Quellenstudien*, pp. 163.

[98] Huyskens, *Quellenstudien*, pp. 171–172; There is a very detailed and insightful analysis of this miracle in N. Ohler, "Alltag im Marburger Raum zur Zeit der heiligen Elisabeth", in *Archiv für Kulturgeschicht,* 67 (1985), pp. 1–40, at pp. 12–18.

There was an upright householder named Boch, from Felhévíz (de calidis Aquis) near Buda, in the diocese of Veszprém. He was dining after vespers in his stone storeroom with his wife and household. His little seven-year-old son Benedict was sleeping in the same storeroom. A large chunk of the wall and floor collapsed; the debris crushed the sleeping boy. After those who had escaped aroused the whole neighbourhood by bursting into tears over the boy's danger, some people used shovels and other appropriate metal or wooden tools to remove a mass of stone, earth and cement. With much time and effort they extracted the boy. He was so bruised and crushed that none of his limbs and bones seemed to be unbroken. His mother, with maternal care and great grief for the death of her only son, gently pulled him out. His tongue, which had been clenched between his teeth, was covered with blood… they began to invoke the mercy of God through the merits of the virgin Margaret. They said, "Our lady virgin Margaret, we ask for your merits; bring back to life for us our only son, comforter of our souls and bodies. We know with double assurance that you are able to obtain this merciful favour for us by your merits." … About the time when the nuns from the island of the glorious Virgin Mary had finished matins, the father left the dead boy at home with his relatives and ran with candles and offerings to the tomb of the virgin sister Margaret. There he poured out prayers to God and to His most glorious Virgin Mother, and commended his son's life and death to the prayers of the saint. He made his offering and finished praying at the tomb of the virgin Margaret. When he returned home at sunrise weeping for his only son, he met persons who ran up to him and said that while he was at the tomb his son had come to life again.[100]

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[99] Cf. Christian Krötzl, "*Evidentissima signa mortis.* Zu Tod und Todesfeststellung in mittelalterlichen Mirakelberichten", in Gertrud Blaschniz, ed., *Symbole des Alltags – Alltag der Symbole. Festschrift für Harry Kühnel zum 65. Geburtstag.* Graz, 1992, pp. 765–775.

[100] "Vir honestus pater familias de Calidis Aquis iuxta Budam, nomine Benedictus septennis in eodem cellario dormiret, magna pars muri cum pavimento corruit et ipsis presentibus remocius cenantibus puerum oppressit dormientem, qui mortis periculum festinato fuge presidio evaserunt. Nam ruina tanta erat, quod merito periculum poterant formidare. Puero itaque sic oppresso intra cellarium derelicto, de eius periculo prorumpentes in fletum cum totam commovissent viciniam, quidam cum ligonibus fossoriis et aliis instrumentis tam ferreis, quam ligneis in hoc aptis per magnos labores et per multam horam lapidum et terre ac cementi mole remota puerum extraxerunt ita attritum et compressum, quod nulla in membris eius et ossibus integritas appareret, sicque mater pueri pre nimio dolore pro unici filii morte materna sollicitudine attrectavit, linguamque extra buccas dentibus constrictam puer defunctus habebat sanguine cruentatam… Dei misericordiam per meritum Margarete virginis ceperunt invocare dicentes: « Domina nostra, Margareta virgo, rogamus tua merita, resuscita nobis filium nostrum unicum, animarum et corporum nostrorum solatium! Scimus et scimus, quia per merita tua hanc misericordiam nobis potes patrare cognatis et vicinis hoc idem conclamantibus.» Pater vero completo matutinali officio sanctimonialium de insula Gloriose Virginis, puero in domo inter suos mortuo relicto cum cereo et oblatione cucurrit ad sepulcrum sororis virginis Margarete et fusis ad Deum et ad eius genitricem, Gloriosissimam Virginem precibus lacrimosis funus et animam pueri oracionibus sororis

In the protocols of the second round of investigations in 1276 we find five witnesses who gave a detailed account on this case.[101] The reported speech of the testimonies brings a considerable rhetorical colouring: the miracle accounts frequently resort to what Roland Barthes calls a "reality effect,"[102] whereby through the enumeration of details they infuse their stories with a sense of verisimilitude. The most vivid narration comes in the testimony of Elena, the aunt of the boy:

> … the wall fell down, and stones fell from a height onto the bed where the boy was lying…, they dragged him from the stones on cloaks, and no bones were alive within him, and they carried him dead to the courtyard, and many men and women gathered there and said, "He will get up when those get up who have been dead for seven years"; and he remained that way until the middle of the night, and then we saw that there was life in him around the fork of his breast, and we saw no life in him in any other part of his body, and the next day his father went to the tomb of saint virgin Margaret, and when he came home, the boy spoke and said, "Do me no harm," and on that day he rose up and walked around, and said that he had no distress, and that they should give him some chicken to eat.[103]

Beside the lively observations, at a closer look we can also discover the traces of some hesitations whether the boy had been really dead: apparently around midnight he seemed to come to life, and

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Margarete commendavit. Qui cum ad domum propriam, facta oblacione et oracione ad sepulcrum virginis Margarete completa, lugens pro unico filio, orto iam sole remearet, occurrentes sibi recepit personas, que ipso ad sepulcrum existente ipsum puerum dixerunt revixisse." *Vita beate Margarite.* In Emericus Szentpétery, ed., *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum tempore ducum regumque stirpis Arpadianae gestarum.* (1938) 2nd ed. Budapest: Napvilág, 1999*,* vol. II, pp. 701–702.

[101] Testimonies No. 89, 106, 107, 109, 110; the text of three among them is only preserved in fragments. Fraknói, *Inquisitio,* pp. 354, 375–378, 380–383, the *lacunae* of the acts edited by Fraknói have been recently analysed by Viktória Hedvig Deák, *Árpád-házi Szent Margit és a domonkos hagiográfia. Garinus legendája nyomában* [St. Margaret of Hungary and Dominican Hagiography. In the Traces of the Legend by Garinus]. Budapest: Kairosz, 2005, pp. 280–293.

[102] Roland Barthes, "The Reality Effect", in idem, *The Rustle of Language*, tr. Richard Howard, Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1989, pp. 141–148.

[103] Witness 106: "cecidit murus et petre ceciderunt longe a lecto, ubi iacebat puer… et traxerunt eum de lapidibus cum cappis, et nulla ossa eius habebant animam, et mortuum portaverunt in curiam, et venerunt ibi multi homines et multe femine, et dicebant: 'Iste surget, quando isti qui mortui sunt iam fuerunt septem anni, surgent';.et sic stetit usque ad mediam partem noctis, et postea vidimus, quod habebat animam circa forcellam pectoris, et non vidimus, quod ipse haberet animam in alia parte corporis sui, et pater suus venit sequenti die in mane ad sepulchrum sancte Margarethe virginis, et quando venit ad domum, (puer) locutus fuit et dixit: 'Non faciatis mihi malum', et illa die surrexit et ambulavit, et dixit, quod nullum malum habebat, et dixit, quod darent sibi ad manducandum de una gallina." Fraknói, *Inquisitio,* p. 375.

the father only departed to make a supplication at Margaret's grave, when these hopes seemed to vanish again. The inquisitors felt it to be their duty to try to clarify this issue, and insistently questioned the witnesses as to how they knew "that the said boy was dead." They enquired "who were present, when the mother of the said boy opened his eyes, and saw he was dead."[104] Another neighbour, Michael, added that he touched him "on the hand, and he was cold," and "he had a small rupture on his jaw."[105] We can also hear a rather sceptical voice on the resurrection of the boy from another neighbour, Andrew, who also participated in helping the child in danger, dragging him out from under the earth. In a slight opposition to the other testimonies, he states that he "saw twice there was the motion of breathing," and "when asked if the said boy had any breakage in any part of his body, he replied: 'No.'"[106]

Despite such slight doubts, however, the noteworthiness of this miracle of Margaret remained apparently unchallenged: this was the one chosen to be represented on her sepulchral monument, prepared on the order of Queen Elizabeth in Margaret's convent on Rabbit Island (its original name) between 1336 and 1340 by the Neapolitan workshop of Tino di Camaino.[107] The reason for the enduring success of resurrection miracles, especially those related to children, might lie with the fact that these events had an especially intensive and traumatic emotional charge, and the saints' help was certainly pleaded for and gracefully recognized if the victim stayed alive. One might add to this, from the narrative point of view, that the opposition of death and life is a more clear-cut distinction than that of illness and sanity, and allows a rhetorical sequence where even the

[104] Witness 107: "Interrogata, qui erant presentes, quando mater dicti pueri aperuit oculos dicti pueri, et viderat quod mortuius erat." Fraknói, *Inquisitio,* p. 377.
[105] Witness 110: "tetigit eum …in manu et erat frigidus," "In facie habebat parvam rupturam in maxilla." Fraknói, *Inquisitio,* p. 382.
[106] Witness 109: "vidi, quod per duas vices flatus motus fuit," "Interrogatus, si dictus puer habebat aliquam rupturam in aliqua parte sui corporis, respondit: 'Non'," Fraknói, *Inquisitio,* pp. 380–381.
[107] Pál Lővei, "The Sepulchral Monument of Saint Margaret of the Arpad Dynasty", *Acta Historiae Artium,* 27 (1980), pp. 175–222.

motif of the doubt and scepticism (is the victim really dead? can he/she be revived?) becomes endowed with a clear-cut function on the whole structure: it sets the right emotional tension for the miracle to occur.

My third detailed miracle story, also about St. Margaret of Hungary, will be examined from two angles: how the miracle accounts give an insight into the perception of such an extraordinary event within a smaller community, and, subsequently, how these individual testimonies got reformulated and reconstituted in hagiographic legend-writing.

There are several telling examples for the reverberation of a miraculous event in the slight variations of the accounts of immediate eyewitnesses, and the ensuing hagiographic elaboration of these texts,[108] also in the processes I have been dealing with right now. The most popular legend of St. Elizabeth, the *Libellus de dictis quatuor ancillarum*, was collated from the witness testimonies of Elizabeth's handmaids,[109] and this became the basis of most of her subsequent legends by Caesarius of Heisterbach, James of Voragine, Rutebeuf and Dietrich of Apolda.[110] Some other legends of hers, in addition, also drew on her amply circulating miracle lists,[111] and added to them a few other more miracle stories, which stem from literary invention and have no precedents in the

[108] Michael Goodich, "The Judicial Foundations of Hagiography in the Central Middle Ages," in Étienne Renard, Michel Trigalet, Xavier Hermand and Paul Bertrand, eds., *"Scribere sanctorum gesta": Recueil d'études d'hagiographie médiévale offert `a Guy Philippart,* Turnhout: Brepols, 2005.

[109] Albert Huyskens, ed., *Der sogenannte Libellus de dictis quattor ancillarum s. Elisabeth confectus*. München/Kempten, 1911); Raoul Manselli, "Santità principesca e vita quotidiana in Elisabetta d'Ungheria: La testimonianza delle ancelle", *Analecta Tertii ordinis regularis sancti Francisci* 18 (1985), pp. 23–45; the most recent investigations on this have been made by Ingrid Würth, "Der *Libellus de dictis quatuor ancillarum* im Kontext des Kanonisationsprozesses der heiligen Elisabeth von Thüringen", forthcoming. I should like to thank her for showing me her manuscript.

[110] For a brief overview of Elizabeth's hagiography, see Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses,* pp. 420–423.

[111] This is the claim of the anonymous Franciscan author of the legend published by Lori Pieper, "A New Life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary", *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum,* 93 (2000), pp. 29–78..

witnesses' hearings, such as the famous miracle of the roses, or the legend of the *leprosus* to whom she offered her own bed.[112]

The acts of the canonization process of St. Stanislaus[113] are found in the *Legenda maior* of St. Stanislaus, written by the Dominican friar Vincent of Kielcza around 1260, seven years after the canonization of the martyr bishop, which merges, regroups and rewrites the full miracle list of the bishop.[114] Aleksandra Witkowska made a detailed stylistic analysis of how the friar's account rearranged the order of the miracles.[115] He assembled at the beginning the six accounts where St. Stanislaus appeared in a vision,[116] then, after reporting about the canonization preparations, he provided a slightly coloured description of 43 miracles attested in the investigation. He regrouped them according to subject categories of decreasing importance, such as raising the dead, healing ulcers, epilepsy, paralysis, dropsy, blindness and madness, rescuing the drowned, and miracles involving animals. Finally, he added a few more that happened around or after the canonization.

The canonization protocol of Margaret of Hungary was also used in several hagiographic narratives. In the fourteenth century, two distinct varieties of her legend emerged. Among the Hungarian Dominicans a voluminous compilation was made from the oldest legend and the acts: the anecdotes and stories of the latter were carefully inserted into the narrative sequence of the former. This compilation (no longer extant) served as the basis for the Hungarian translation of the legend, one of the most prestigious vernacular literary monuments from medieval Hungary,

[112] Ottó Gecser, "Santa Elisabetta d'Ungheria e il miracolo delle rose", in *Il culto e la storia di Santa Elisabetta* (as n. 70), pp. 240–247..
[113] Cf. n. 71.
[114] *Vita sancti Stanislai episcopi Cracoviensis (Vita maior). Auctore fratre Vincentio de ordine fratrum praedicatorum,* ed. Wojciech Kętrzyński. *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*. Lviv, 1884, vol. 4, pp. 319–438, the miracles are at pp. 400–438.
[115] Witkowska, "The Thirteenth-Century *Miracula* of St. Stanislaus", pp. 156–163.
[116] *Vita sancti Stanislai,* III/ 1–6.

preserved in a manuscript of a Dominican nun from Margaret Island, Lea Ráskai, from the early sixteenth century.[117]

The other hagiographic development from the acts was completely independent. Around the 1340s, when the Dominicans in Avignon felt the need for a legend to support the emerging *fama sanctitatis* of the blessed Margaret of Hungary, they apparently did not have her oldest legend at hand, for they commissioned friar Garinus de Giaco (Garin Gy l'Évêque) to write a legend of her on the basis of the canonization protocols. He resolved this task with an admirable care and assiduity, using almost every single fact from the witnesses' testimonies, and amplifying them into a well-written narrative that described Margaret as an ecstatic-mystic female saint according to the tastes of fourteenth-century spirituality. His legend was preserved in two versions: the better-known *Legenda minor*, included in the *Acta Sanctorum*,[118] was only recently identified by philological research as the abbreviated version of the longer *Legenda maior*, (in earlier Hungarian research named *Legenda Neapolitana* from one of its copies).[119]

To illustrate the hagiographic methods of Garinus de Giaco, I have selected the description of a miraculous inundation of the Danube, narrated by seven witnesses during the canonization investigations.[120] One among them was her confessor, friar Marcellus, Prior Provincial of the Hungarian Dominicans, whom Margaret intended to reprimand with this miracle of vengeance,

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[117] György Volf, ed., *Szent Margit élete* [Life of St. Margaret]. Budapest, 1881; János P. Balázs, *Szent Margit élete 1510* [Life of St. Margaret, 1510]. Budapest: Akadémiai, 1990; for a filiation of the legends of St. Margaret cf. Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses,* pp. 423–428.

[118] *AA SS,* 28 Ianuarii, pp. 516–522.

[119] *Vita b. Margaritae Hungaricae,* in Albin Gombos, *Catalogus fontium historiae Hungariae*. Budapest: Szent István Akadémia, 1937–1939, pp. 2481–2545; Tibor Klaniczay, "La fortuna di Santa Margherita d'Ungheria in Italia", in Sante Graciotti and Cesare Vasoli, eds., *Spiritualità e lettere nella cultura italiana e ungherese del basso medioevo*. Firenze: Olschki, 1995, p. 19; Gábor Klaniczay, "La Hongrie" (en collaboration avec Edit Madas), in *Hagiographies. Histoire internationale de la littérature hagiographique latine et vernaculaire en Occident des origines à 1550.* Corpus Christianorum, sous la direction de Guy Philippart (Brepols, Turnhout, 1996), vol. II, pp. 126–127; for its detailed analysis, see Deák, *Árpád-házi Szent Margit*.

[120] Witnesses 4, 5, 6, 7, 14, 22, 38, in Fraknói, *Inquisitio,* pp. 183, 186, 191, 196, 223, 242–243, 280–281.

demonstrating her power over nature. I cite the account of one of the nuns, Princess Anne, the niece of Margaret:

> She also said that on that day the Danube rose to such a height that it entered the main hall, where the nuns of the monastery stay, and after eight days had gone by, Brother Marcellus, the provincial of the Dominicans in Hungary, came to the said monastery, and the aforesaid virgin Margaret told him that the Danube had risen in this way and had entered their main hall; but the brother refused to believe her, saying, "How could this have happened?" and the said virgin Margaret said, "O Virgin Mary, you know well that lies are not wont to leave my lips; please show Brother Marcellus that I am speaking the truth," and immediately the water rose to such a level that it invaded the living quarters of the monastery, so that Brother Marcellus climbed on to a branch, because of the water.[121]

The papal investigators made a thorough fact-finding enquiry as to where precisely this remarkable event took place: "in front of the parlour, in the cemetery of the ladies,"[122] or, according to others "in the *lebium* behind the parlour,"[123] or "outside the cloister, in that small garden."[124] The other precision for which they were looking was the precise timing. While most of the sisters place the event between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday (unconsciously adding some flavour of Carnival to the story of the scared Prior Provincial seeking refuge on a branch from the rising water), Friar Marcellus expresses himself at this point with a taint of sceptical ambivalence:

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[121] Witness 4: "Item dixit, quod in tantum crevit flumen Danubii quadam die, quod intravit cortem, ubi stant sanctimoniales eiusdem monasterii, et elapsis octo diebus frater Marcellus, provincialis predicatorum in HUngaria venit ad dictum monasterium, et predicta virgo Margaretha dixit ei: 'Sic aqua Danubii creverat et intraverat cortem nostram' predictam; sed frater noluit ei credere dicens: 'Quomodo potuit hoc esse?' et dicta virgo Margaretha dixit: 'Oh sancta Maria, tu bene scis, quod de ore meo non consuevit exire mendacium, unde ostendas fratri Marcello, quod sit verum quod dico' et ita incontinenti crevit in tantum aqua, quod intravit domos monasterii, ita quod frater Marcellus ascenderit super quoddam lignum, propter illam aquam." Fraknói, *Inquisitio,* p. 183.
[122] Witnesses 5 and 38: "ante loquutorium, quod est in coemeterio dominarum." Fraknói, *Inquisitio,* pp. 187, 281.
[123] Witness 22: "in lebio, quod est post loquutorium." Fraknói, *Inquisitio,* p. 243.
[124] Witness 16: "extra claustrum, in quodam viridario." Fraknói, *Inquisitio,* p. 223.

When asked the month, he replied, "I believe that it was in April, when there's usually high water."[125] Taken all together, the accounts do not overstate Margaret's role in "producing" the miracle, but her invocation to God in order to clear her reputation sufficiently justifies the categorization of this event among the miracles.

Let us now see how the inundation miracle appears in the hagiographic elaboration made by Garinus de Giaco:

> To prove her truthfulness, the water of the Danube started to multiply, rise and inundate everything in the courtyard. The Danube broke in as an angry river driven by the spirit of the Lord. The strong waves of the river arose, and flooding everything, they smashed against the walls of the living quarters of the nuns; the river entered the territory of the monastery, the buildings and the rooms… [126]

One can clearly sense here the biblical reference to the Book of Exodus. While Garinus does not dwell much on the comic episode of flight of the confessor climbing a tree to save himself, we find a detailed account of how Margaret subsequently repairs the damage done:

> Around vespers the sisters approached St. Margaret and asked her to pray to God to liberate the monastery from this great danger, because the river had caused already much damage in the monastery and the sisters were afraid to be drowned themselves. And then the virgin, in tears, addressed the following prayer to the Lord: "Lord Jesus Christ and Glorious Virgin Mary, as you listened to me, your unworthy servant, for making the river come out of its banks, so please make the water return to its banks." As soon as she finished, the water returned and everything got dry again.[127]

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[125] Witness 38: "Credo quod fuerit in Aprili, quando solent inundare aque." Fraknói, *Inquisitio,* p. 281.

[126] "Mox igitur, ut veritas probaretur, multiplicate Danubii aque intumuerunt nimis et inundaverunt et omnia repleverunt, que erant in curia. Irruit Danubius, quasi fluvius violentus, quem spiritus Domini cogit. Ascenderunt aque fluminis fortes, et inundatione facta, illisum est flumen domui sororum. Intravit claustrum, domos et officinas earum…" Gombos, *Vita b. Margaritae,* p. 2507.

[127] "Circa vesperas vero sorores ad asnctam Margaritam venerunt et rogaverunt eam, ut oraret Dominum, quatenus monasterium tam grandi periculo liberaret, quia iam damna plurima monasterio fecerat fluvius et sorores timebant submergi. Tunc virgo cum lacrimis alta voce fudit preces ad Dominum in hec verba: « Domine Yhesu Christe et gloriosa virgo Maria, sicut me indignam famulam vestram exaudistis pro inundatione istius aque, sic et modo dignemini exaudire, ut ista aqua ad suum alveum revertatur ». Oratione finita statim aqua fluminis retrocessit, aque reverse sunt in alveum et converse in siccum, quod auditu mirabile est." Gombos, *Vita b. Margaritae,* p. 2507–2508.

We can see here a balanced, learned concept of miracles, very far from the archaic popular notion of the "miracles of vengeance", based on a careful pedagogical use of benevolent menace, and a full reparation of any possible harm.

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After all these examples showing how medieval miracle accounts betray to us different traces of a constructed narrative, let me pose the following question: where can we look for the hoped-for accurate representation of the richness of everyday life, popular beliefs and *mentalité*? Should we give up this query and be satisfied with the full deconstruction of hagiographic construct? I do not think so. To conclude, let me return to the words uttered by the resurrected boy in Buda.

"Do me no harm" (*Non faciatis mihi malum*); this is what we read in the protocols translated into Latin. This moving sentence of the little boy coming to life again might, in fact, be much closer to reality than to invention, and strangely enough the subsequent hagiographic rewriters of Margaret's legend forgot to pick up this element in their amplified descriptions of this miracle story. Garinus de Giaco tells us the following instead: "Coming to himself he began praising God and St. Margaret and invited the others to do the same."[128] Maybe precisely this oversight or lack of interest by the hagiographers might indicate that the testimonies, recorded in the investigation, preserved here a precious true element of the popular healing drama. Something that does not fit, and was not deemed worthy to be retained by the more elaborate narrative constructs.

This might be precisely what we should be looking for.

[128] "surgens quoque Deum ac sanctam Margaritamn cepit laudare et ad laudandum alios invitare." Gombos, *Vita b. Margaritae,* p. 2543.