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Volume Saint Gerard of Cenad: Tradition and Innovation

Introduction

The *Saint Gerard of Cenad International Symposium*, Second Edition

“Saint Gerard of Cenad: Tradition and Innovation”

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The papers in this volume are the result of the second edition of the *Saint Gerard of Cenad International Symposium*, “Saint Gerard of Cenad: Tradition and Innovation,” held in Timișoara between November 13th and 14th 2014 and organized by the West University of Timișoara (the Faculty of Political Sciences, Philosophy and Communication Sciences); the Centre for Research in the Historiography of Philosophy and the Philosophy of the Imaginary; and the Roman-Catholic Diocese of Timișoara, under the high patronage of His Excellency Martin Roos, Roman-Catholic Bishop of Timișoara, Doctor Honoris Causa of Fulda University, Germany. we express our gratitude to his Excellency for the precious help and good will in supporting our symposium, as the direct successor of Saint Gerard at the diocese of Timișoara.

The life of Saint Gerard of Cenad was recorded in two medieval sources known as *Legenda Minor* and *Legenda Maior*, both later compilations of an earlier lost version. Although for centuries the information in the two biographical sources was taken for granted, recent research has shown that their hagiographical character is highly relevant and historical data should be reconsidered.

Gerard was a Benedictine monk of Venetian origin, deeply involved in the Christianisation of Pannonia and Banat and in paideic acts; as the first bishop of the Diocese of Cenad, he organized the province, built a school, and debated on the relation between spiritual instruction and devotional life, fully aware of the philosophical features of his own time, such as the debate between the dialecticians and anti-dialecticians, or the status of reason for the Christian effort of approaching God.

The only extant work of Saint Gerard, the *Deliberatio supra hymnum trium puerorum ad Isingrimum Liberalem*, survived in only one copy (München Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 6211) and was edited for the first time in 1790 by the Bishop Ignatius Batthyány of Alba Iulia, who added to it a scholastic introductory study and named Gerard a philosopher. The *Deliberatio* appears as a work of biblical hermeneutic pertaining in a context when the

distinction between theology and philosophy was a matter of moral profile and sanctity, and not as much a problem of method or argumentative discourse: for Gerard, the hermeneutical tools taught by authors such as Aristotle, Plato or the donatist Tychonius, were equally valid to the extent that their user was a follower of the *amor vitae* and considered Saint Peter a philosopher model.

The importance of this work is enormous. It was the first text written on the territory of today's Romania, edited seven centuries later in Alba Iulia by the Transylvanian Bishop Ignatius Batthyány, and re-edited in the twentieth century twice. Only one partial translation of the text exists in Romania which dates from 1984. However, it is selective and repressive to the original text. The academic research of the original *Deliberatio* is therefore mandatory not only for the Romanian academia but also for the Central European researchers in general.

During the first edition of the *Saint Gerard of Cenad International Symposium*, we encouraged academics to get involved in studying the little-known work of St. Gerard of Cenad, *Deliberatio supra hymnum trium puerorum ad Isingrimum Liberalem*. It was a great success which resulted in valuable contributions to the volume *Filosofia Sfântului Gerard în context cultural și biografic (The Philosophy of Saint Gerard in cultural and biographical context)* Claudiu Mesaroş (ed.), Szeged, Jate Press, 2013.

We continued the study of Saint Gerard and his work which resulted in this second volume of contributions. The second edition aimed to explore the subject on a deeper level and to enlarge the perspectives on the life and work of Gerard. Following the proposals made by the participants to the first edition, we broadened the perspectives of investigation on St. Gerard's work, life, and heritage. The symposium was open to interdisciplinary debates and a large variety of subjects: theology, hagiography, philosophy, history of science and intellectual history, local and ecclesiastical history, philology, cultural geography and cultural studies, classical and medieval studies, palaeography, archaeology, arts, history of arts and musicology, which could range from the Early Middle Ages to modern times.

We are honoured to mention the participants, although some of them could not contribute with their full papers, but hopefully will in the future editions: Előd Nemerkenyi, OTKA Budapest: *The Classical Tradition and the Deliberatio of Bishop Saint Gerard of Csanad*; Cristian Gaşpar, Central European University Budapest: *Through a Glass, Darkly: St. Gerard of Morisena in the Distorting Mirror of Hagiography*; Béla Zsolt Szakács, Central European University Budapest: *The Spatial Organization of the Medieval Cult of Saint Gerard*; Boris Stojkovski, University of Novi Sad: *The Bollandist' Life of Saint Gerard*; Svetozar Boškov, University of Novi Sad: *Saint Gerard of Cenad and Banat in the Serbian Textbooks of the 19th Century*; Nicoleta Demian, Museum of Banat Timișoara: *"Under the sign of Clio." The Activity of Some Roman-Catholic Clerics in the Society of History and Archaeology in Southern Hungary (1872-1918)*; Gabriela Tănăsescu, Romanian Academy Bucharest: *Saint of Gerard Cenad and the Intellectual Disputes of the Year 1000*; Coman Iacob, Institutul Teologic Penticostal Bucharest: *Christological Accents in the "Lives of Saints" and their Impact in the Social and Religious Formation of Believers*; Ramona Băluțescu, Oradea Press: *Two Visits to the Church of Santa Maria e San Donato from Murano, at the Relicts of St. Gerard*; Radu Cernătescu, Università degli Studi di Milano: *The Birth of "Occult Egypt" Theme in Medieval Theology*; Franz Metz, Gerhardsforum: *Die Rolle des hl. Gerhard im sozio-kulturellen Leben der Banater Christen*; Felician Rosca, West University of Timișoara: *Musique et les vaisseaux de Tăuteni*; Péter Zakar, University of Szeged: *Catholic Priests from the Diocese of Csanád in the Hungarian Revolution and the War of Independence (1848 – 1849)*; Doina Hendre Biro, Batthyaneum National Library Alba Iulia: *Contributions of Bishop Ignàc Batthyány (1741-1798) to the Study of Church History. His Manuscript «Sancti Gerardi episcopi Chanadiensis Scripta et Acta inedita, cum serie episcoporum Chanadiensium», Preserved in the Batthyaneum Library in Alba Iulia*; Mircea Măran,

Training College "Mihailo Palov" Vrsac: *Gheorghe Mocioni and the Castle in Vlajkovac*; Dorel Micle, West University of Timișoara: *Cenad in the Context of the Medieval Defence System of the Banat Plain*; Călin Timoc, West University of Timișoara: *Christian Buildings on the Lower Mureș River in Light of the Archaeological Information (11th-13th centuries)*; Feraru Remus Mihai, West University of Timișoara: *Église, royauté et hérésie en Hongrie dans la première moitié du XIe siècle*; Mihai Panu, West University of Timișoara: *Alternative Diplomacy and the Political Role of the Clerical Elites: The Roman Catholic Church as an Ideological Counterforce in the Interwar Banat*; Răzvan Mihai Neagu, Technical College Turda: *Considerations regarding the Beneficial Policy Led by the Popes of Avignon in the Diocese of Cenad in the 14th Century*; Ramona Lorena Stuparu, Romanian Academy Bucharest: *The Medieval Idea of the Legitimacy and the Two Bodies of the King*; Florin Lobonț, West University of Timișoara: *Anselm – An Anti-Cartesian Ally of the British Idealists*; Ionuț Mladin, West University of Timișoara: *Mind and Religious Experience in St. Gerard of Cenad*; Claudiu Mesaroş, West University of Timișoara: *The Cosmic Harmony in Gerard of Cenad*; Alin Cristian Scridon, West University of Timișoara: *Western Biblical Studies in the Works of Roman - Catholic and Orthodox Theologians from Banat. 1867-1918*; Claudiu Călin, Roman-Catholic Diocese of Timișoara: *Bishop Augustin Pacha (1870-1954). The Years of Imprisonment and his Release Shortly before his Death*; Dușan Baiski, Banaterra Association: *Christening Names in Cenad*; Ramona Băluțescu, Oradea Press: *How did St. Istvan, the Disciple of St. Gerard, Become an Orthodox Saint?*.

A special point is the contribution of Father Ionel Popescu, administrative vicar of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of Timișoara, dedicated to the memory of the Orthodox Metropolitan Archbishop of Banat and member of the Romanian Academy Dr. Nicolae Corneanu (1923-2014). He was one of the most beloved personalities in Timișoara because of his ecumenical and inter-religious open-mindedness, as well as his permanent dialogue with all the Christian confessions in Banat, including the Jewish community. The Metropolitan Corneanu was also a high-class intellectual, with solid preoccupations for the Patristic literature, and that is, in our opinion, an argument for Ionel Popescu to consider the late hierarch among the followers of the spirit of Saint Gerard.

The members of the organizing committee were: Claudiu Mesaroş (West University of Timișoara); Claudiu Călin (Roman-Catholic Diocese of Timișoara); Teodora Artimon (Central European University, Budapest); Cristian Nicolae Gașpar (Central European University, Budapest); Constantin Jinga (West University of Timișoara). Media partnership was offered by Ramona Băluțescu (Oradea Press). Special thanks go to Teodora Artimon and Monika Jetzin from Trivent Publishing for their inestimable help in organizing the event and in preparing the papers. My colleagues and students who supported and offered a helping hand are deeply cherished.