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Volume *The Modern and Contemporary Reception of Saint Gerard of Cenad*

An Englishman's Overview on Saint Gerard of Cenad Butler's *Lives* and Saint Gerard

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Abstract

In this paper the authors will present an interesting modern reception of Saint Gerard, found in the Lives of the Saints written by the well-known English Roman Catholic priest and hagiographer, Alban Butler. This piece of hagiographic work is widely read not only as a religious work, but also as vernacular literature. The authors will attempt to provide an overview of this work, while also providing additional commentary regarding sources and possible influences, as well as incorrect and somewhat confusing information provided by Alban Butler. The authors will also attempt to identify the key sources of Alban Butler in depicting the life of Hungarian protomartyr and patron-saint. Additionally, a brief overview will be given of how modern editors of Butler's work perceive Saint Gerard and his life.

Keywords:

Saint Gerard of Cenad; Alban Butler; *Lives of the Saints*; eighteenth-century England; medieval Hungary.

I. Introduction

Saint Gerard of Cenad has been celebrated as saint in the Roman Catholic Church from the medieval period up until the present day. Thus, his cult has spread throughout western Christendom. He is primarily venerated among the Hungarians and other Catholics (Germans, Romanians, and others) residing in the Banat Region (which extends throughout Serbia, Romania, Hungary), and in parts of Italy, namely Venice and Murano, which are the places of his origin and the final resting place of his relics. He was also known to a peculiar kind of minority – the Roman Catholics of England.

This article will attempt to present an intriguing kind of reception of Saint Gerard of Cenad in the eyes of Alban Butler, a particularly prominent English Roman-Catholic priest and scholar who lived during the turbulent eighteenth century. Butler was the author of a well-known work titled, *The Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Principal Saints*, which is widely known and cited as "*Butler's Lives*." Following a brief introduction consisting of a description of the time period in which Butler lived and a presentation of Butler and his work, this paper will provide an overview of how Alban Butler presented Saint Gerard in his work. The key points that will be mostly considered will include questions about the methodology and structure of the Life of Saint Gerard as well as a discussion of which sources were used by Alban Butler and, in particular, which of them had the greatest influence on Butler's work.

Finally, the paper will briefly touch on how later compilers and editors of Butler's Lives changed the way Saint Gerard of Cenad is depicted in this highly recognized hagiographic work.

II. Historical Background. The Times of Alban Butler

The history of the eighteenth-century English Roman Catholic community is highly complex and contradictory. The prevailing position both within historiography and among historians is that this community was marginalized and that its contribution to English (and British) society overall was extremely small and almost negligible. As this position is beyond the scope of this paper, no discussion of it will be provided here. The primary aim here is to present a broader picture of this particular time period by providing these views in the historiography concerning the position of Catholics in England after 1688 when Anglicanism was finally restored.

Following the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the earliest decades of the eighteenth century are considered to be in some respects the "depths of despair" or "the darkest chapter" for Roman Catholicism and its followers in Post-Reformation England. Although the persecution was not as violent as in the past, the number of Roman Catholics and their influence and visibility in English society was weaker than it perhaps had ever been, and their civil rights had been severely curtailed by the new government. This included being barred from bearing weapons or even owning a horse above the value of five pounds, as well as their rights to own property or inherit land being strictly limited or even prohibited. They were also burdened with special taxes, they could not send their children abroad for Catholic education (even though they mostly did so),¹ they could not vote in Parliamentary elections, and priests were liable to imprisonment. As had been the case during the Stuart era, there was no longer any notable Catholic presence at court, in public life, in the military, or in various professions. John Cannon writes that Catholic peers lived as a "group apart." Furthermore, the Catholic descendants of Charles II and James II were excluded from political life by the Act of Succession. Many of the Catholic nobles and gentry had followed King James into exile, while others appeared, at least publicly, to have converted to Anglicanism, thus decreasing the number of Roman Catholic communities in England.²

However, by the later part of the period (which is of particular interest for this paper), this position had changed. In a new study of the English Catholic community during the period of 1688–1745,

¹ John Cannon, *Aristocratic century. The peerage of eighteenth century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1984), 40, eleven sons of the Catholic peers went to Douai, two to Saint Omer.

² G. Culkiln/Eds, "The Catholic Church in England." In *New Catholic Encyclopaedia* Second edition 5 Ed-Fre, (Washington: Gale-Thompson, 2003), 249-250. It is said that at the beginning of the eighteenth century the percentage of Roman Catholic peerage was somewhere around 12% and by the end of the same century it had diminished to 3%. J. Cannon, *Aristocratic century*, 11, 40, 60-61.

Gabriel Glickman notes that Roman Catholics, and especially those whose social position gave them access to the courtly centers of power and patronage played a significant role in eighteenth-century English society. They were not as marginal as thought today or as was primarily emphasized in the historiography. In addition, Glickman always states the paradoxical situation in which the Roman Catholic clergymen and gentry had found themselves: they were torn between patriotism, national sympathies, and loyalty to crown and country on the one hand, while on the other hand still belonging to the persecuted Roman Catholic Church. Nevertheless, Roman Catholic culture and literature continued to flourish within the small Catholic community. Some English Catholics even played an important role at the dawn of the English Enlightenment. Alexander Pope is an example of one of the most prominent Catholics whose contributions (*Essays on Man*, in particular) become part of the key milestones of this up-and-coming worldview. In addition to Pope, Glickman notes, James Gibbs, a Catholic architect, “returned baroque forms to the London skyline,” and a Catholic composer, Thomas Arne, composed the famous “Rule Britannia.” There are other scholars who are also of the opinion that the Catholic position in England, as well as the whole of the United Kingdom, significantly changed for the better during the eighteenth century.³ From this complex period of English history, a specific figure arose – that of Alban Butler.

III. The Life and Work of Alban Butler

Alban Butler was born in 1710, in Appletree, Northamptonshire, as the second son of Simon Butler, Esq. Orphaned at the age of eight, he was sent to the renowned English College, Douai, in France. Butler was then ordained in 1735. At Douai, he was appointed as a professor of philosophy, and later became a professor of theology. It was at Douai where he began his principal work: *The Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Principal Saints*. He also prepared material for Richard Challoner's *Memoirs of Missionary Priests*, a work on the martyrs of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. The English college in Douai, where the well-known Douai-Rheims Bible was compiled, was founded during her reign. In 1745, Alban Butler came to the attention of the Duke of Cumberland, the younger son of King George II, for his devotion to the wounded English soldiers during the defeat at the Battle of Fontenoy. Butler also served as tutor to George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury and his two brothers.⁴ Butler accompanied his two pupils on their trip to France and Italy, after which he returned to Douai and resumed his teaching career. Both James and Thomas Talbot later became Catholic bishops. Butler returned to England in 1749 where he was appointed for a time as a missionary priest in Staffordshire, Midlands and Warkworth, and was eventually named chaplain to the Duke of Norfolk, whose nephew and heir, Edward Howard, Butler had accompanied to Paris as his tutor. Howard later died suddenly of an illness in Paris. While he was in Paris, Alban Butler completed his *Lives*. Butler was finally named president of the English seminary (English college) at Saint Omer in France in 1766, where he remained until his death. During his term as President of the English seminary, Butler also served the bishops of Arras, Saint-Omer, Ypres, and Boulogne-Sur-Mer as their Vicar-General. Butler died in Saint-Omer in 1773 and was buried in the parish church of Saint-Denis.⁵

His most notable work, the voluminous *Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Principal Saints*, was the result of thirty years of study, and was first published in four volumes in London, 1756–1759.

³ Gabriel Glickman, *The English Catholic community 1688-1745. Politics, culture and ideology* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2009), we especially recommend parts 1-53, 121-158, even though the whole book is highly recommended for this topic.

⁴ Even in 1799, Shrewsbury remained one of the rear Catholic peers. Cf. J. Cannon, *Aristocratic century*, 61.

⁵ The most extensive biography is that of Alban Butler's nephew, Charles Butler, Esq, barrister-in-law and the first Catholic solicitor after state pressure towards the Catholics in England was decreased. Besides classical biographical notes on Alban Butler, one can see detailed accounts in this biography on the achievements of hagiography, with a list of Bollandists, as well as the editions of *Acta Sanctorum*. Charles Butler also gives some brief information on the sources used by Butler, with just a limited description and title. An account on the process of beatification and canonization in the Roman Catholic Church can also be read. Charles Butler, “An account of the life and writings of the Rev. Alban Butler: interspersed with observations on some subjects of sacred and profane literature, mentioned in his writings.” In Alban Butler, *The Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Principal Saints*, vol. I (Dublin-London, 1866), XXI-LXXIV, R. J. Bartman, “Butler, Alban.” *New Catholic Encyclopaedia* Second edition 2 Baa-Cam, (Washington: Gale-Thompson, 2002), 718-719.

It is a popular and compendious reproduction of the *Acta Sanctorum* that exhibits great industry and research, and is in all respects the best compendium of the *Acta* in the English language. Butler's magnum opus passed through many editions and was translated into French, German, Spanish, and Portuguese, among others. This edition was printed initially in 4 octavo volumes, with no stated publisher or author's name. However, they were so thick that they were usually bound in more volumes. There were actually 6 title pages since Vol. 3 and Vol. 4 both have a "part II" that was published thusly: vol. I, vol. II, vol. III, vol. III part II, vol. IV, and vol. IV part II. Each volume contained three months of the liturgical calendar's saints' lives, which comprised a total of 1600 saints. Vol. I also had a copperplate engraving with figures of Roman devices of torture and a two-page explanation of their use. Based on an assertion by Alban Butler's nephew and biographer Charles Butler that all the notes were left out of the first edition at the suggestion of Bishop Challoner, it is widely believed that Butler did not include notations or sources. However, this would appear to have been overstated. There are, in fact, many useful and even extended notes in the first edition, although they are not nearly as numerous as those which appear in the second or in successive editions that were more detailed. According to Charles Knight, the edition published in twelve volumes in 1847 is considered to be the best and most complete. After Alban's publication of the original edition of his *Lives*, many successors revised and updated the work. Herbert Thurston edited and significantly revised it. His twelve-volume Revised Edition was published between 1926 and 1938. An English layman, Donald Attwater made further significant changes in the Second Edition published in 1956 in the same number of volumes. A modern, complete edition (1995–2000) is also available in 12 volumes, and is organized by month and feast day. The work has influenced both Catholics and non-Catholics and is considered to be popular, vernacular literature in the Anglo-Saxon world.⁶

According to Alban Butler himself, "Besides the principal saint for each day, in this collection is added a short account of some others who were very remarkable in history, or famous among our ancestors."⁷ Apart from this, the author stresses many times the *virtues* of saints as key characteristics that led them to be included in the calendar of saints.⁸ The nature of Butler's methodology is best explained in the preface, where he states that the

first care in this work hath been a most scrupulous attachment to truth, the foundation or rather the soul of all history, especially of that which tends to the advancement of piety and religion. The indignation is often a task both nice and laborious. If we weigh the merit of original authors, some we shall find careless and injudicious, and many write under the bias of party prejudice, which strangely perverts the judgment.⁹

But, at least in the example of the life of Saint Gerard of Cenad, it is more obvious that the virtue of the saint bishop and his martyrdom precede the historical data, even though most of the information presented is historically accurate, as will become apparent later in this paper. There is also an interesting opinion by Butler that:

Another difficulty is, that ancient writings have sometimes suffered much by the bold rashness of modern critics, or in the manuscripts, by the slips of careless copiers. Again, authors who polish the style, or abridge the histories of others, are seldom to be trusted; and experience will show us the same of translations.¹⁰

⁶ R. J. Bartman, "Butler, Alban", 719.

⁷ A. Butler, "Introductory notes," In Alban Butler, *The Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Principal Saints*, vol. I (Dublin-London, 1866), X.

⁸ Eg. *It is also objected, that certain actions of some saints, which were performed by a special instinct of the Holy Ghost, are to us rather objects of admiration than imitation: but even in these we read lessons of perfect virtue, and a reproach of our own sloth, who dare undertake nothing for God. But some may say, What edification can persons in the world reap from the lives of apostles, bishops, or recluses? To this it may be answered, that though the functions of their state differ from ours, yet patience, humility, penance, zeal, and charity, which all their actions breathe, are necessary virtues in all persons.* A. Butler "Introductory notes" XII.

⁹ A. Butler, "Introductory notes" XIV.

¹⁰ A. Butler, "Introductory notes" XIV-XV.

This is, without a doubt, a very interesting attitude towards methodology and critics. What is debatable is if it is necessary to provide a critical edition of the source; however, Butler has a point when it comes to translations and possible mistakes that can arise from them. Of course, it must also be taken into consideration that the time period during which Butler was writing was a period when neither critical historiography nor critical hagiography had yet emerged, although the Bollandists were already carrying out a considerable amount of critical analysis concerning the lives of saints.

IV. The Life of Saint Gerard of Cenad by Alban Butler

In Butler's *Lives*, the Life of Saint Gerard is found in the month of September and falls on the 24th day. It is titled *St. Gerard, Bishop of Chonad, Martyr. A. D. 1046*. This hagiographic work is by no means extensive. At the beginning of all of the later editions (1866 in particular, which is the most complete),¹¹ the list of sources is provided and, judging by them, it seems clear that Butler used almost all of the best-known works of the time.¹² Of course, bearing in mind that he was writing during first half of the eighteenth century when critical analysis had yet to become developed, with the exception of the Bollandists and their well-known *Acta Sanctorum*. Again, it should be noted that the aim of this work was to celebrate Roman Catholic saints. Therefore, the lives provided here should be regarded as a work of literature, as well as hagiographical with a strong religious connotation.

Laurentius Surius, a German Carthusian monk and geographer best known for his hagiographic works, *De probatis Sanctorum histories*, is listed at the beginning, while the *Rerum Ungaricarum decades* by the Italian-Hungarian historian Antonio Bonfini is also cited and noted as the first source used. It should be mentioned that Antonio Bonfini is not necessarily the best source for information on the life of Saint Gerard, firstly because this work is primarily dedicated to the time of King Matthias Corvinus, and secondly because he lived four centuries after Saint Gerard. It should also be noted that Surius and both his sixteenth-century edition and seventeenth-century edition (published posthumously), have been firmly criticized since the eighteenth-century.¹³ Nevertheless, Butler did not, in fact, make extensive use of Bonfini's work. As far as Surius is concerned, his *Historia sancti Gerardi episcopi Canadiensis in Pannonia et martyris* is merely a version of the *Legenda minor*. As will be demonstrated, Butler also made extensive use of some additional versions of this particular *Legenda*.¹⁴

The following source is of particular interest, since it is stated that at the beginning of Butler's work that he used the 9th volume of Claude Fleury's *Histoire ecclésiastique*, but this presents a problem because in the editions of the aforementioned work, the volume mentioned comprises only the seventh and the eighth century.¹⁵ Therefore, determining which particular work and which volume Butler used for Saint Gerard's life is quite complicated.¹⁶ Fleury was mostly interested in the martyrdom of Saint Gerard of Cenad, while the rest of the biography is only briefly presented, more as an overview and rather an introduction to the story of Gerard's martyrdom.¹⁷ Concerning the death of Saint Gerard, Fleury states that he used the chronicle of Janos Thuroczy and the work of Jean

¹¹ This is the reason for using this particular edition.

¹² Alban Butler, *The Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Principal Saints*, vol. IX (Dublin-London, 1866), 276-280.

¹³ Surius has even been firmly criticized by Johannes Stilling, the Bollandist who wrote about Saint Gerard of Cenad in the *Acta Sanctorum*, cf. Boris Stojkovski, "The Bollandist's Life of Saint Gerard." In *Saint Gerard of Cenad. Tradition and Innovation*, ed. Claudiu Mesaros and Claudiu Calin (Budapest: Trivent, 2015), 105-106; on Surius cf. Hildegard Hebenstreit-Wilfert, *Wunder und Legenden. Studien zu Leben und Werk von Laurentius Surius (1522-1578)* (Universität Tübingen 1975) with the most extensive biographic work with account on his principal work and large bibliography.

¹⁴ Laurentius Surius, *De probatis Sanctorum historiis, tomus quintus* (Coloniae Agrippinae, 1574), 348-351.

¹⁵ M. Fleury, *Histoire ecclésiastique, tome neuvième depuis l'an 679 jusques à l'an 794*, (Paris, 1750), 3-6 for a summary of the work.

¹⁶ One possibility is that Butler used a 12th volume, and this is just a mistake. Of course, there is an option that Butler used another edition of Fleury's work. For a part on Saint Gerard of Cenad cf. M. Fleury, *Histoire ecclésiastique, tome neuvième depuis l'an 925 jusques à l'an 1053*, (Paris, 1751), 551-552, 565-567.

¹⁷ M. Fleury, *Histoire ecclésiastique, tome neuvième*, 551-552.

Mabillon which will be briefly discussed later on. What is worth mentioning before discussing the structure of Butler's work, is that Fleury places his martyrdom in the year 1047, but Alban Butler indicates the correct year, 1046.¹⁸ Apart from this, the structure of the *Life* by Alban Butler is, in fact, similar to that of Fleury's.

A multivolume work by abbots Goujet, Mesenguy and Roussel on the *Vies des Saints* is also noted as having been used, but with an incorrect transcription of their last names. Although Butler spoke French and made extensive use of works written in this language, he transcribed these first two names as something similar to Gowget and Mezangui. The September volume of this hagiographic work was compiled by Claude-Pierre Goujet. Butler made extensive use of Abbot Goujet's work, and even made word-for-word translations of many parts of his *Life of Saint Gerard* from French into English. Goujet himself stated that he mostly relied on Fleury and his work, but since Fleury's writing was not particularly extensive, it is certain that Goujet must have compiled his work on the basis of other sources.¹⁹

The other source mentioned at the beginning of the *Life of Saint Gerard* in Butler's work is the work of Johannes Stiling in the September volume of the *Acta sanctorum*. One very interesting point noted by the editors of Butler's *Lives* is that the *Life of Saint Gerard* in the *Acta sanctorum* starts on page 713, so it would appear that Butler used all of Stiling's *Life of Saint Gerard*, including the prologue and commentaries, as well as the appendices, and not only the *Vita* itself. The *Vita* itself is just another version of the *Legenda Minor* of Saint Gerard, and the other parts of this Bollandist hagiographic work are more of scholarly interest.²⁰

The next source mentioned is *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti: In Saeculorum Classes Distributa* volume 6, part 1, by Jean Mabillon, which is also a version of the *Legenda Minor*. The Chronology is incorrect, since Mabillon states that the martyrdom of Saint Gerard of Cenad occurred in 1048. He also mentions that this *Vita* was written on the basis of a work by Laurentius Surius.²¹ What is perhaps of greater interest is the *observations preavie* where Mabillon argues with some earlier authors who wrongly stated that Gerard was the founder of the Servite and Carmelite monastic orders. This is, of course, incorrect as it is known that he was a Benedictine monk, and since these two monastic orders emerged much later, it would thus have been impossible for him to have even belonged to either of them, let alone founded them.²² Further on, Mabillon argues in favor of this incorrect date he believed to be of Gerard's martyrdom and claims confirmation from some older scriptures.²³

Thus, it is quite difficult to fully draw a conclusion, but would appear that the *Life of Saint Gerard* in the *Acta Sanctorum* as written by Johannes Stiling and the work of Claude Fleury were Butler's key sources for his brief hagiographic account of Saint Gerard. Additionally, many parts were just translated into English from French, specifically from the work of Claude-Pierre Goujet. Antonio Bonfini was only used to discuss the martyrdom of Saint Gerard.

Nonetheless, in terms of the structure of Butler's version of Saint Gerard's life, there are more differences than one might expect. On one hand, similar to Fleury, less than half of the *Life of Saint Gerard of Cenad* is dedicated to his complete life from his origins until his martyrdom.²⁴ On the other hand, more than half is comprised of a depiction of the riots after the death of Saint Stephen, the pagan revolt of Vatha, and the death and martyrdom of Saint Gerard.²⁵ First of all, the introduction is quite short, and the life of Saint Gerard is given briefly with only some key pieces of information. However, at the very beginning, Butler notes that, "Gerard was a Venetian, and born at about the beginning of

¹⁸ Ibidem, 565-567, in fact, all the versions in sources used by Butler are actually parts from *Legenda maior* that discuss his martyrdom.

¹⁹ *Les vies des saints pour tous les jours de l'année*, (Paris 1734), 228-231. There is no mention of authorship in the book itself, therefore it has not been cited, but the author is known to be Abbot Goujet.

²⁰ *Acta Sanctorum septembris*, tomus sextus (Antverpiae: 1757), 713-727. Cf. B. Stojkovski, "The Bollandist's *Life of Saint Gerard*," 105-113.

²¹ J. Mabillon, *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti: In Saeculorum Classes distributa*, Saeculum VI, pars prima, (Luteciae Parisiorum, 1701), 549-553.

²² Ibidem, 549; cf. B. Stojkovski, "The Bollandist's *Life of Saint Gerard*", 107, fn. 15.

²³ J. Mabillon, *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti*, 549.

²⁴ A. Butler, *The Lives of the Fathers IX*, 276-278.

²⁵ Ibidem, 278-280.

date of the saint's martyrdom is accurately given (24th September 1046), as well as his posthumous destiny. Drawing appropriately from the sources, Butler states that Gerard was interred in the cathedral of the Cenad bishopric, canonized during the reign of Saint Ladislav, and that his relics were transferred to Murano – all of which has been confirmed as historical fact.³⁵ This part was most probably taken from Bonfini, and even more so from the work of Claude Fleury.³⁶

The end of this short, but nevertheless fascinating, piece of hagiographical work is dedicated to how a good pastor should act. It is therefore a kind of object lesson and instruction for pastors to never refuse any labor (a word Butler made frequent use of), to never abandon any sinner and, in short, to live a pious life dedicated to his shepherd. Butler also deems self-love to be an unacceptable characteristic for a pastor.³⁷ Maybe this conclusion was also influenced by Claude-Pierre Goujet and his *Les vies des saints*. At the end of the *Vita* of Saint Gerard of Cenad, Goujet has two *pratiques*. One is that serving as an example is more important than words, after which the French author asks of us what example we give. The other is that loyalty to princes does not exclude speaking about their shortcomings.³⁸

Over time, there have been various editions of this principal work by Alban Butler. The modern, critical edition takes a very large step towards critical analysis but, as an object of study, the Life itself is somewhat less interesting. First, the bibliography in the modern edition is more elaborate and up-to-date, but is, of course, without Hungarian editions and any critical edition of Lives of Gerard or his legends. Furthermore, the Life is much shorter, and it is actually only a brief overview of his life, from his birth until his death.

³⁵ Ibidem, 278-280; among the sources which Butler states that he used, almost all of them mention this martyrdom. As was previously mentioned, Fleury also dedicated a vast part of his short account of Gerard to describe the martyrdom, as written in *Legenda maior*, even though he cites Mabillon for that. Cf. M. Fleury, *Histoire ecclésiastique, tome neuvième*, 565-567. As it was the case before, in many parts earlier, at the end the work of Goujet is used and, of course, literally translated, such as the parts where king Aba Samuel summons Gerard to his court to hold divine service. What is interesting is that coming to the end of the work, Butler did not use that much of the *Les vies des saints*, instead he relied much more on Fleury and Bonfini. Cf. *Les vies des saints*, 230-231. The saint's life in the work of Goujet is much more extensive, and the story of Aba Samuel and his relationship with Gerard, as well as the Gerard's journey to Aba Samuel's court is presented in more detail. Also, in Goujet's work it is also cited that Gerard refused to pay respect to Aba Samuel as the new king, and his words to him are also cited. Therefore, we can say that by the end of the work Butler did not use that much of Goujet's work, translating only couple of short sentences and telling a shorter version of the story. This part can be found in its entirety in the *Legenda Maior* of Saint Gerard of Cenad, and it is therefore one of Butler's most used sources of Alban, although not directly. SRH II, 500-502.

³⁶ Antonii Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, ed. Ioanni Sambuci, (Basileae: Ex officina Oporiniana, 1568), 224; M. Fleury, *Histoire ecclésiastique, tome neuvième*, 565-567. This is actually the only direct use of Bonfini that we can find in the text, and it is also very similar to the aforementioned *Legenda Maior*.

³⁷ A. Butler, *The Lives of the Fathers IX*, 279-280. The text is as follows: "The good pastor refuses no labour, and declines no danger for the good of souls. If the soil where his lot falls be barren, and he plants and waters without increase, he never loses patience, out redoubles his earnestness in his prayers and labours. He is equally secure of his own reward if he perseveres to the end; and can say to God, as St. Bernard remarks: "Thou, O Lord, wilt not less reward my pains, if I shall be found faithful to the end." Zeal and tender charity give him fresh vigour, and draw floods of tears from his eyes for the souls which perish, and for their contempt of the infinite and gracious Lord of all things. Yet his courage is never damped, nor does he ever repine or disquiet himself. He is not authorized to curse the fig-tree which produces no fruit, but continues to dig about it, and to dung the earth, waiting to the end, repaying all injuries with kindness and prayers, and never weary with renewing his endeavours. Impatience and uneasiness in pastors never spring from zeal or charity; but from self-love, which seeks to please itself in the success of what it undertakes. The more deceitful this evil principle is, and the more difficult to be discovered, the more careful must it be watched against. All sourness, discouragement, vexation, and disgust of mind are infallible signs that a mixture of this evil debases our intention. The pastor must imitate the treasures of God's patience, goodness, and long-suffering. He must never abandon any sinner to whom God, the offended party, still offers mercy."

³⁸ *Les vies des saints*, 231. This is also accompanied by a prayer to Saint Gerard.

V. Conclusion and hypothesis about the nature of Butler's work

As demonstrated here, Butler's primary aim was to present Gerard as a good Christian and a devoted bishop, a truly saintly man martyred by idolaters and pagans. Therefore, his martyrdom had the most significant place in the Life of Saint Gerard. However, as a writer in the eighteenth century, Butler demonstrated quite a sophisticated use of critical analysis and he relied on sources, which is clearly visible from the Life itself. There are not many particularly significant factual errors or mistakes, with the exception of the measure of distance and the name of Cenad, while almost everything is in accordance with known sources. Once again, he conducted his work within the context of the period he was writing in, i.e. the Enlightenment. An important source for him was the *Acta Sanctorum*, which also included the *Legenda Minor*. The most important messages Butler sends to his readers are the *virtues* that a good pastor should have, and the *zeal* one should have in one's faith and when carrying out pastoral work.

As already known, Butler wrote a work on martyrs from the reign of Queen Elizabeth I; it is not unlikely that he had in mind the persecution of the Catholics in England under the new, post-Reformation rule. When depicting Gerard, the martyrdom is the key part of his Life, and his modesty, piety and humble life are greatly emphasized. As a devoted Catholic, Butler also provided a lesson about how a good pastor should act. As a professor at the English College, it can be suggested that he also wanted to present to his pupils how a good Catholic – and especially a priest of the Roman Catholic Church – should act through the life of Gerard (and other martyrs and saints). *Virtue* and *zeal* are the two most common words used in Butler's account of Saint Gerard of Cenad. Nevertheless, his insistence on Saint Gerard's martyrdom can also be understood as a depiction of martyrdom as the highest sacrifice a pious believer can make, with perhaps a particular stress on the destiny of Roman Catholics in England after the Glorious Revolution and even before, from the time of the Reformation and the establishment of the Anglican Church onwards. Thus, it can be concluded that, in addition to being a historical reminiscence, this work by Alban Butler is also of a pedagogical and didactical nature, and it is not simply an account of the life and martyrdom of a particular saint, or even 1600 saints for that matter.

Butler's *Lives of Saints* contains intriguing presentations of the lives of many saints from almost all of Christendom. They are a fascinating mirror of the times in which they were written and demonstrate the Roman Catholic attitude towards the martyrdom of a saint who lived in the distant, and a relatively unknown territory, of medieval Hungary. Indeed, the nineteenth-century versions, which are very close to the original written by the author himself are of much more scholarly interest. They are a valuable historical source depicting not only the early modern and modern perceptions of a medieval Hungarian/Venetian saint among the minority population of English Catholics, but also are interesting as a stage in the development of a medieval saint's cult in modern times, also in a very distant part of the world.

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