MARGARET OF SCOTLAND AND MONASTIC TRADITIONS IN THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

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The eventual sanctity of Margaret, an eleventh-century queen of Scotland, is typically assumed to have been the direct result of her uniquely pious upbringing. Biographers assert that she was raised in a strict and unvarying Benedictine tradition, which was complemented and reinforced by her experience at the uniformly Christian courts of Hungary and Anglo-Saxon England.[1] A careful analysis reveals, however, that she was introduced to a variety of coenobitic and ascetic traditions as her life touched upon the emerging kingdoms and cultures on the periphery of Europe, beginning with her father's origin in Anglo-Saxon England, then moving to Sweden, Kiev, Hungary, England, and finally Scotland. Her experience was certainly not one of the *stabilitas loci* so favored by the Benedictines. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to analyze the confluence of various monastic cultures in the eleventh century and to modify the perception that her formative religious and spiritual experiences were purely or even primarily within the Benedictine tradition.

Margaret's father, Edward, was the son of Edmund Ironside, who was briefly king of Anglo-Saxon England before he died and the crown was assumed by the Danish conqueror, King Cnut. The exact details of Edward's fate remain murky and the subject of tangled debate, the result of scant and often conflicting sources. Without summarizing the complex historiographic arguments, which are not the subject of this paper, a brief sketch of the most probable events can be

[1] See, for example, popular biographies such as: T. Radcliffe Barnett, *Margaret of Scotland, Queen and Saint; Her Influence on the Early Church in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1926); Samuel Cowan, *Life of the Princess Margaret, Queen of Scotland, 1070–1093* (Newcastle-on-Tyne: Mawson, Swan & Morgan, 1911); A. M. D. Henderson-Howatt, *Royal Pearl: The Life and Times of Margaret Queen of Scotland* (London: S.P.C.K., 1948); and the most recent, Alan J. Wilson, *St Margaret Queen of Scotland* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1993). More scholarly treatments of her life also tend to make the same assumption; see, for example: Derek Baker, "A Nursery of Saints: St. Margaret of Scotland Revisited," in *Medieval Women*, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), 119–142; Lois Huneycutt, *Matilda of Scotland: A Study in Medieval Queenship* (Woodbridge, Suffolk and Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2003), 14.

reconstructed.[2] Cnut swiftly exiled the infant prince, who sojourned for a time in Sweden before settling in Kievan Rus. There he became acquainted with fellow exiles, the young princes of Hungary who had been expelled by King Stephen. In 1046 he helped one of these Hungarian exiles, Andrew, claim the throne of Hungary and married a women named Agatha whose heritage is the subject of great and inconclusive speculation.[3] They settled in Hungary to raise their three children: Margaret, Christina, and Edgar. In 1057, Edward the Exile, as he has come to be known, and his family journeyed to England at the invitation of the childless Edward the Confessor and as the acknowledged heir to the Anglo-Saxon throne. Within five days of landing in England, Edward the Exile was dead, and any further hope of continuing the Anglo-Saxon line was firmly quashed by the Norman Conquest. Margaret and her family fled to Scotland, where she married King Malcolm III. As queen, she became known for her great personal piety, which was characterized by her ascetic practices and charitable good deeds. Her hagiography was composed within ten years of her death in 1093 by her chaplain and advisor, a Benedictine monk named Turgot.[4] Perhaps not surprisingly, Turgot, as a monk, emphasizes the role of monasticism in Margaret's life, portraying her as an important supporter of monastic communities. Therefore, a more informed understanding of the different monastic traditions which she encountered is an essential component of a critical assessment of her spiritual life.

[2] For the most detailed examination of Edward's life see Gabriel Ronay, *The Lost King of England: The East European Adventures of Edward the Exile* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, and Wolfeboro, NH: The Boydell Press, 1989).

[3] For examples of the various arguments regarding the identity of Agatha see: Jenő Horváth, "Anglo-Hungarian Connections in History," *Danubian Review* (1937): 25–37; Ferenc Dőry, *The Family History of St. Stephen* (Budapest, 1938); Sándor Fest, *The Sons of Eadmund Ironside, Anglo-Saxon Kings at the Court of Saint Stephen* (Budapest, 1938); Szabolcs de Vajay, "Agatha, Mother of Saint Margaret Queen of Scotland," *Duquesne Review: A Journal of the Social Sciences* 7, No. 2 (1962): 71–80; David Faris and Douglas Richardson, "The Parents of Agatha, Wife of Edward the Exile," *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 152 (1998): 224–235; Norman Ingram, "Has a Missing Daughter of Iaroslav Mudryi Been Found?" *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 25, No. 3 (1998): 231–270; John Carmi Parsons, "Edward the Aetheling's Wife, Agatha," *The Plantagenet Connection,* Summer/Winter (2002): 31–54.

[4] Turgot, "The Life of S. Margaret," tr. W. M. Metcalfe, in *Ancient Lives of Scottish Saints, Part Two*, (Paisley, 1895) (reprint: Felinfach: Llanerch Publishers, 1998), 45–69 (hereafter: *Vita*).

Monastic Traditions in Eleventh-Century Hungary

Let us begin our analysis in Hungary, the place of Margaret's birth and a relatively recent addition to the Christian world. The traditional story is that as result of missionary efforts in 995–996 by St. Adalbert, bishop of Prague, and the conversion of St. Stephen before the turn of the millennium, Hungary became a uniformly Christian kingdom in the Latin tradition. Indeed, the pervasive monastic presence of Latin Christianity is evident, furthered by the fact that an integral aspect of Stephen's effort to secure administrative control of his nascent kingdom was the establishment of a number of dioceses, together with significant monastic foundations. The monastery of Pannonhalma, structured on the Benedictine ideal exemplified by the monastery at Monte Cassino, was founded toward the end of the tenth century,[5] as was Veszprém, ostensibly the first Latin episcopal church. Stephen also established monasteries at Zalavár on an island in the marshes of the River Zala, at Bakonybél, and at Pécsvárad.[6] A Benedictine convent near Esztergom, called Esztergom-Sziget and dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, is assumed to be an eleventh-century, probably royal, foundation. Evidence of its existence is provided by that fact that King Salamon is known to have visited it in 1073.[7] Another Benedictine convent near the Toma River at the foot of Somló hill, called variously Somlóvásárhely, or Apácavásárhely, or Apácasomlyó was in

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[5] On Pannonhalma see: *Mons sacer, 996–1996: Pannonhalma 1000 éve* (*Mons sacer, 996–1996: A Thousand years of Pannonhalma*), ed. Imre Takács (Pannonhalma: Pannonhalmi Főapátság, 1996), esp. Pius Engelbert, "Prágai Szent Adalbert – püspökideál, politika és szerzetesség" (St Adalbert of Prague: ideal of a bishop, politics, and monasticism), ibid., 25–37; Géza Érszegi, "Szent István pannonhalmi oklevele" (St. Stephen's charter for Pannonhalma), ibid., 38–46; Ernő Marosi, "Bencés építészet az Árpád-kori Magyarországon – A "rendi építőiskolák" problémája" (Benedictine architecture in Hungary in the Arpadian Period – The issue of "building schools connected to religious orders) ibid., 131–142; Csaba László, "Régészeti adatok Pannonhalma építéstörténetéhez" (Archaeological data on the building history of Pannonhalma), ibid., 143–169.

[6] On the early Benedictine monasteries see *Paradisum plantavit: bencés monostorok a középkori Magyarországon. Benedictine Monasteries in Medieval Hungary*, ed. Imre Takács (Pannonhalma: Pannonhalmi Főapátság, 2001), especially: Kornél Szovák, "The Early Centuries of Benedictine Monasticism in Hungary," ibid. 580–588 and Szilveszter Sólymos, O.S.B., "The First Benedictine Monks in Hungary," ibid. 588–597.

[7] Beatrix F. Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok a középkori Magyarországon* (Monasteries and collegiate chapters in medieval Hungary) (Budapest: Pytheas, 2000), 24 (hereafter: Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok*).

existence by 1212, and at least one scholar has hypothesized an early foundation dating to the eleventh century.[8]

Such evidence would seem to corroborate the general perception of a ubiquitously Christianized Hungarian kingdom in the early eleventh century, adhering to the Latin rite. In reality, however, the picture was much more complicated. To begin with, pagan practices persisted, at times conflated with the interests of the native elite against those of the foreign, Christian class.[9] For the purposes of this paper, however, an evaluation of the continuing influence of other Christian monastic traditions is more enlightening. To begin with, in view of Margaret's eventual role as Queen of Scotland and her purported efforts to reform the Irish religion, it is worth contemplating whether and to what degree the monastic culture in Hungary was influenced by the Irish tradition. The Abbey of Saint Gall, which was named after St. Gallus, one of the original twelve companions of the Irish missionary saint Columbanus (d. 650), seems to have provided a possible source for such Irish influence. Bruno, a monk at the abbey, was chosen as bishop to the Hungarians, and is credited with having baptized Stephen's father, Géza. Settlements named Szentgál located around the tenth-century centers of Árpádian royal power bear witness to the more generalized influence of the Irish-based monastery.[10] The earliest liturgical sources reflect the Rhine liturgy and cult with an unusual emphasis on the saints of St. Gall.[11] Finally, the relics of St. Columbanus himself, the quintessential Irish saint, are known to have been at Pécs in the eleventh century.[12] Was their existence and the Irish tradition they represented perhaps known to Margaret?

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[8] Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok,* 71. György Györffy asserts that the foundation dates to the eleventh century. György Györffy, *King Saint Stephen of Hungary* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 151–153 (hereafter: Györffy, *King Saint Stephen*).

[9] Nora Berend, József Laszlovszky, Béla Zsolt Szakács, "The Kingdom of Hungary," in *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy*, ed. Nora Berend (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 319–368; especially 339–340 (hereafter: Berend, Laszlovszky, Szakács, "The Kingdom of Hungary").

[10] Györffy identifies "the Szentgáls near Esztergom, Kalocsa, Szekszárd and Veszprém, in the vicinity of the quarters of the ruling prince, the prince and the princess respectively, the two Szentgáls in the west of Baranya County were situated on the banks of two streams that lead to Koppány, near Siklós. The sixth, above Orci in the County of Somogy, can be linked to Orci, Géza's Swabian knight." Györffy, *King Saint Stephen,* 54.

[11] Györffy, *King Saint Stephen,* 55–6. Although the surviving sources may be later, they suggest the earlier influence of the cult of St. Gall.

[12] "Historia fundationis coenobii Mellicensis," in Albinus F. Gombos, *Catalogus Fontium Historiae Hungaricae aevo ducum et regum ex stirpe Arpad descendentium ab anno Christi DCCC usque ad annum MCCCI.* Vols. 1–4. (Budapest: Szent István Akadémia, 1937–1938), 1117–1118.

The Orthodox Greek Church had been present in Hungary as early as the mid-tenth century, as is evidenced by the conversion of the Hungarian leaders Bulcsú in 948 and Zombor in 953. Stephen's mother, Sarolt, might also have followed the Greek rite.[13] In addition to individuals, the Byzantine tradition was adhered to by extensive regions of the kingdom. For example, in the tenth century the Byzantine Church was prominent in Transylvania and also in the area of eastern Hungary under the control of Prince Ajtony, as manifested by the Greek monastery of St. John the Baptist at Marosvár (Csanád, Cenad: Romania).[14] A Greek monastery in Szávaszentdemeter (Sremska Mitrovica: Serbia), ancient Sirmium, was revived by St. Stephen and was still in operation as late as 1071, almost two decades after the schism.[15] Also in the eleventh century under St. Stephen, the Greek convent of Veszprémvölgy was founded in a charter written in Greek, perhaps for Stephen's mother, Sarolt, or his sister, the abandoned wife of Bulgarian prince Gavril-Radomir, or the intended Byzantine wife of Prince Imre.[16] It is possible, although direct evidence is lacking, that King Stephen supported communities of Greek monks at Szávaszentdemeter and Pentele. Another community, Oroszlámos, was founded by one of King Stephen's military leaders for the express purpose of housing Greek monks who had been displaced following Stephen's conquest of Ajtony's largely Greek Orthodox territories.[17] At St. Hippolytus at Zobor, the Greek and Latin monks coexisted quite comfortably, each group following their own liturgy.[18]

This Greek monastic presence continued well after the official schism of 1054 and was perhaps even strengthened when King Andrew I (1046–1060) ascended to the Hungarian throne. Andrew and his brothers had been exiled from Hungary to Kievan Rus, which had been converted to the Byzantine rite in the tenth century. He therefore had the opportunity to become familiar with the Eastern tradition, which was then underscored by his marriage to Anastasia, the

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[13] Györffy, *King Saint Stephen,* 33; 44–47.
[14] Györffy, *King Saint Stephen,* 99–102; 154; Ferenc Makk, "Les relations hungaro-byzantines aux Xe–XIIe siècles," in *European Intellectual Trends and Hungary*, ed. Ferenc Glatz (Budapest: Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1990), 13–15 (hereafter: Makk, "Les relations hungaro-byzantines").
[15] Györffy, *King Saint Stephen*, 152.
[16] Marina Miladinov, "Eremitism in Central Europe Between East and West (Eleventh Century)," PhD Dissertation, (Central European University, Budapest, 2003), 45–46 (hereafter: Miladinov, "Eremitism in Central Europe").
[17] Berend, Laszlovszky, Szakács, "The kingdom of Hungary," 353–354.
[18] J. T. Milik, *Świety Świerad. Saint Andrew Zoeradus* (Rome: Edizioni Hosianum, 1966), 47–57; 184 (hereafter: Milik, *Świety Świerad*).

daughter of Jaroslav, the ruler of Kiev (1019–1054).[19] The two royals probably brought elements of the Byzantine faith with them in 1046 when Andrew claimed the Hungarian crown. The most persuasive evidence of such cross-pollination is the close proximity of Benedictine and Greek communities. King Andrew founded the Benedictine monastery of Tihany on the northeastern shore of Lake Balaton in 1055, where he was eventually buried, and a Greek monastery near Visegrád on the Danube bend, which was named after his patron saint. Each of these coenobitic communities co-existed with their eremitic complements; the caves of Óvár were located near Tihany and those of Zebegény were across the Danube from Visegrád. In both cases, these caves were probably inhabited by monks from a Kievan Cave Monastery (Pechera or Pcherskij Monastery). They were either Russian or Greek, but certainly Orthodox. The geographical locations of the caves near Visegrád and at Tihany—located on a steep incline above a lake or river—were commensurate with those of Kiev, Pskov, and Zymne. Archaeological excavations indicate that they were comprised of individual cells in order to facilitate the seclusion of hermits living in eremitic groups.[20] The Kievan monks were probably ensconced in the caves shortly after the arrival of Andrew and his Kievan queen in 1046, where they remained sequestered until the formal establishment of the abbeys in 1055. In 1056 they might have relocated to the monastery of St. Andrew where they were joined by the exiled monks of Sázava, forming a mixed community practicing Latin and Greek liturgies.[21] In any event, it is likely that the eremitic monks at Zebegény were connected to the St. Andrew monastery at Visegrád, in which Greek monks continued to live according to their rite until the thirteenth century. Two important observations should be highlighted here. First, coenobitic and eremitic communities coincided, with members moving fluidly between them. Second, the Orthodox and Roman traditions coexisted comfortably, a situation which continued well past the schism of 1054 until as late as the first half of the thirteenth century.[22]

Such respect for variant types of eremitism extended to other models. Great reverence was paid to a particular Western hermit who based his asceticism on

[19] Makk contends that Andrew was baptized according to the Byzantine rite while in Kiev, Makk, "Les relations hungaro-byzantines," 16.

[20] On the hermits' cells at Tihany-Oroszkő see Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok*, 68 and Miladinov, "Eremitism in Central Europe," 222–225.

[21] Miladinov, "Eremitism in Central Europe," 219–227; Berend, Laszlovszky, Szakács, "The kingdom of Hungary," 354. Such coexistence was not necessarily unusual in the eleventh century; see, for example, a comparable arrangement at St. Alexius and St. Boniface in Rome.

[22] Makk, "Les relations hungaro-byzantines," 16–17.

the Eastern model. Zoerard-Andrew fled his native Poland in the first half of the eleventh century. He settled at St. Hippolytus at Zobor, a monastic community combining coenobitic and eremitic life. As briefly noted above, it observed both the Latin Benedictine and the Greek-Slavonic rites governed by an Oriental typikon. Zoerard-Andrew seems to have subscribed to the eremitic ideal based on the model of Zosimas, a sixth-century Palestinian monk and confessor to St. Mary the Egyptian. His distinctive brand of asceticism involved such heroic feats as fasting three days a week, living through Lent on only forty walnuts, sleeping while sitting up surrounded by spikes, and wearing a wooden crown with heavy stones in addition to a copper chain that his flesh eventually grew over. After his death, his cult spread quickly, reaching Pannonhalma Abbey, and furthered by a *Life* written 1064 by Maurus of Pécs. In 1083 Zoerard-Andrew was canonized along with Sts. Stephen, Imre, Benedict his disciple, and the martyr bishop Gerard, who was also one of the new hermits.[23]

The new hermits arriving in Hungary from Italy based their ascetic practices on the Italo-Greek model, viewing their eremitism as compatible with the exercise of secular power. They combined intermittent withdrawal from the world for spiritual renewal with an active life in the secular world, not necessarily after a period of monastic training and supervision which was more typical for monks. St. Romuald and his community at Pereum (near Ravenna) provide one of the earliest examples of this type of ascetic practice.[24] Interestingly, one of Romuald's followers might have been Gerard, or Gellért, who figures so prominently in the history of Hungary in the first half of the eleventh century. He was an oblate at an abbey in Venice and later abbot of same abbey. Detained by King Stephen while on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, he became an advisor to the king and a tutor to Stephen's son and heir, Prince Imre. Although a Benedictine monk, he was critical of indulgent monastic life, which he countered with periodic retreats to his hermitage at Bél. As bishop of Csanád, he was instrumental in engineering Andrew's successful return to Hungary and was regarded as martyr as a result of his death during the pagan uprising that accompanied Andrew's return. He was canonized in 1083 along with his royal patrons, Saints Stephen and Imre, and the two eremitic saints, Zoerard-Andrew and Benedict.[25] Perhaps stories of this saintly bishop and hermit influenced Margaret, who was born about the same

[23] Cf. Milik, *Świety Świerad.*
[24] Cf. Henrietta Leyser, *Hermits and the New Monasticism: A Study of Religious Communities in Western Europe 1000–1150* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984).
[25] Zoltán J. Kosztolnyik, *Five Eleventh Century Hungarian Kings: Their Policies and Their Relations with Rome* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 17–18.

time as his death, to seek a similar advisor and confidant in Turgot, the monk who was coincidentally at the vanguard of the new hermit movement in England.

So, at the very least one can conclude that the Benedictine monastic tradition need not have been the only one to which Margaret was exposed in Hungary. She was probably familiar to some degree with the Greek and perhaps even the Irish tradition; maybe even the varying models of eremitism that complemented the different coenobitic practices.

Monastic Traditions in Late Anglo-Saxon England

In comparison, the monastic tradition in late Anglo-Saxon England was almost exclusively Benedictine after the reform movement of the tenth century. It is likely that Margaret was raised at one of these establishments, probably Wilton Abbey, since these monastic foundations were closely tied to distinct branches of the royal family[26] and Margaret's family was associated primarily with Wilton; Margaret sent her daughter Edith there to be brought up under the guidance of Margaret's sister Christina, who was perhaps the abbess.[27] It would therefore be unusual if Margaret herself had not also resided at the same institution.

It should be noted that these monasteries were more comparable to boarding schools for female nobility than to severe monastic institutions.[28] This was not the life of austerity so often associated with religious houses, and being raised at a nunnery, contrary to so many of the assumptions made by Margaret's biographers,

[26] See, for example Pauline Stafford, "Queens, Nunneries and Reforming Churchmen: Gender, Religious Status, and Reform in Tenth- and Eleventh-Century England," *Past and Present* 163 (1999): 25. For further documentation specifically of the dynastic affiliation and royal patronage of Wilton see Sarah Foot, *Veiled Women II: Female Religious Communities in England, 871–1066* (Aldershot, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2000), 221–231. The most recent treatment of this subject is provided by Barbara Yorke, *Nunneries and the Anglo-Saxon Royal Houses* (London: Continuum, 2003) (hereafter: Yorke, *Nunneries*).

[27] The issue of when and whether Christina and Edith were at Romsey and Wilton has remained the subject of debate. David Knowles favors their placement at Wilton, although he concedes that Christina might not have been abbess. David Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke, Vera C. M. London, ed., *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales,* vol. I, *940–1216*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 295. Barbara Yorke supports the view that Edith was initially at Romsey and later moved to Wilton. Yorke, *Nunneries,* 157, n. 95.

[28] Yorke, *Nunneries*, 147–150; Frank Barlow, *The Godwins: The Rise and Fall of a Noble Dynasty* (Harlow, Essex: Longman, 2002), 78.

would not have implied any degree of religious vocation.[29] Instead, Wilton Abbey was a well-appointed, luxurious residence, even sporting its own zoo of exotic animals.[30] The women would have all been well dressed by court standards and expected to avail themselves of the very best education available. They would have studied languages, the liberal arts, and spiritual devotion, as well as more artistic ladylike pursuits such as embroidery and weaving.[31] The patron saint of the nunnery, St. Edith, was "skilled in painting, writing and working textiles in gold and gems."[32] Queen Edith likewise had been instructed in such fine arts as painting and needlework, and the sciences.[33] Goscelin of St. Bertin exclaims that she was "a most learned queen."[34] In his obituary for the queen, Godfrey of Winchester specifies that she possessed mastery of measures, numbers, and music in addition to languages and grammar.[35] Furthermore, pre-Conquest nunneries, like Wilton, tended to be located in urban settings, where they were major foci of commerce and settlement.[36]

[29] Pauline Stafford makes this statement regarding Edith's upbringing at the convent in *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-Century England* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 259 (hereafter: Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*) and Frank Barlow, makes the same argument regarding Edward the Confessor and his early childhood stay among the monks at Ely in *Edward the Confessor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 33, 39.

[30] Goscelin, "La légende de Ste Édith en prose et vers par le moine Goscelin," ed. A. Wilmart, *Analecta Bollandiana* 56 (1938): 298 (hereafter: Goscelin: "La légende de Ste Édith").

[31] Stafford *Queen Emma and Queen Edith,* 258–259.

[32] Goscelin, "La légende de Ste Édith," 68–69: … *manus pingendi, scriptitandi, dictitandi tam decentes, quam artificiose; digiti aurifices, gemmarii, citharedi, citharizantes …*

[33] *The Life of Edward the Confessor Who Rests at Westminster / attributed to a monk of Saint-Bertin*, ed. and tr. Frank Barlow, 2nd edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 2–3 (hereafter: Barlow, *The Life of Edward the Confessor*).

[34] Goscelin, "Vita Kenelmi" in *Three Eleventh-Century Anglo-Latin Saints' Lives*, ed. and tr. R. C. Love (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 52: *doctissima regina Edgyde nobis exposuit que de ipso legisse dicebat preclara indicia*

[35] Christine Fell, Cecily Clark, Elizabeth Williams, *Women in Anglo-Saxon England and the Impact of 1066* (Oxford: Blackwells, 1984), 103–107.

[36] Roberta Gilchrist notes briefly that the few nunneries that were located in urban settings were those, like Wilton, that flourished in the pre-Conquest era, during which they were major foci of "commerce and settlement." Roberta Gilchrist, *Gender and Material Culture: The Archaeology of Religious Women* (London: Routledge, 1994), 63–64 (hereafter: Gilchrist, *Gender and Material Culture*).

Monastic Traditions in Scotland in the Eleventh Century

In Scotland, however, the only monastic tradition was Celtic. Scotland had been converted to Christianity by Irish missionaries beginning in the sixth century, including St. Ninian, who founded Whithorn in the early fifth century, St. Columba, who founded Iona in the late sixth century, and St. Cuthbert, who was bishop of Lindisfarne in the seventh century. It was, therefore, a wholly Christian kingdom in the Celtic tradition well before Margaret's arrival, before even the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. It is, however, misleading to speak of a Celtic Church *per se* since there was no ecclesiastical hierarchy or strict ordering of dioceses, although episcopal centers certainly existed and their relative power waxed and waned through the centuries.[37]

The details regarding the history of the early Christian Church in Scotland are cloudy. It is, however, safe to posit three types of communities: royal foundations with more of a secular orientation, monastic communities, and ascetic communities of Culdees which had emerged in the eighth century as a response to the increasing secularization of Celtic monasteries. Examples of the first include Abernathy, Brechin, St. Andrews, and Dunkeld. The abbots at Abernathy and Brechin were heads of monastic communities that had been secularized. St. Andrews had a bishop and at times boasted an archbishop while it also supported lay priests and their families. The grandfather of Malcolm III, Crinan, was the lay abbot of Dunkeld, who had died in battle while fighting to support his son Duncan against Macbeth. Margaret's son, Aethelraed, would also serve as abbot of Dunkeld.[38]

The most notable monastic community was that of Iona, founded in the sixth century by Columba. Adomnán's *Life of Columba* observes that the monastery, located on an island off the west coast of Scotland, was comprised of various buildings designated to serve specific functions, including a church, a communal

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[37] Nancy Edwards, *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 100 (hereafter: Edwards, *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*). For example, Old Melrose and Abercorn were centers of episcopal authority in the seventh century. Abernethy gained ascendancy in the early eighth century but was soon eclipsed by Dunkeld in the ninth century. St. Andrews emerged as a center of episcopal power in the tenth century. See Ian B. Cowan and David E. Easson, *Medieval Religious Houses: Scotland,* 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1976), 1–5 (hereafter: Cowan and Easson, *Medieval Religious Houses: Scotland*).

[38] Alan Macquarrie, "Early Christian Religious Houses in Scotland: Foundation and Function," in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), 110–133.

building, and a number of huts intended for diverse purposes.[39] It seems that in terms of its self-sufficiency, enclosure, and separation from the world Iona resembled a typical monastic community. Other monastic communities might have existed but were destroyed by the Norse invasions, such as Coldingham in c. 870 and Tyninghame in 941, or were deserted, such as Old Melrose sometime before 1074.[40]

When considering the Culdees it is important to note that many variant models existed. Some organized themselves into ascetic, communal hermitages. However, with the exception of Skellig Michael in Ireland, very few were located in remote or difficult-to-access areas. Instead they were often found in places with dense settlement and fine agricultural land.[41] One example of such a community is St. Serf's in Lochleven, which was patronized by Margaret and her husband.[42] Many Culdees, however, adopted aspects of secularized priests, co-existing at episcopal centers such as Dunkeld and St. Andrews.[43] Cowan and Easson surmise that in these cases "an early monastic site appears to have existed, and two identifiable communities, one associated with the earlier monastic community and the other with the Culdees, eventually emerged." The monks became secularized while the Culdees continued to work with the bishops. Indeed, it was very much in the Irish tradition for the eremitic Culdee elite to live alongside a monastic community,[44] perhaps not unlike the cave hermits from Kiev and the monasteries at Tihany and Visegrád.

A further possible similarity is the fact that there seems to have been an easy co-existence between the Irish and Roman Churches, analogous to the situation in Hungary between the Roman and Greek. The traditions of the Roman Church had steadily influenced Celtic practices through the centuries of proximity.[45] Margaret and Malcolm were married by a Celtic priest and the couple patronized

[39] Adomnán, *Life of Columba*, ed. and tr. A. O. Anderson and M. O. Anderson (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1961), 112, 504–507, 113, 220–221, 109, 112–113, 258–259, 536–537. See also A. D. S. MacDonald, "Aspects of the Monastery and Monastic life in Adomnán's Life of Columba," *Peritia* 3 (1994), 271–302. For details on recent excavations at Iona see Edwards, *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, 111–112.
[40] Cowan and Easson, *Medieval Religious Houses: Scotland*, 2.
[41] Edwards, *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*, 116.
[42] Archibald C. Lawrie, *Early Scottish Charters Prior to AD 1153* (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1905), viii.
[43] Cowan and Easson, *Medieval Religious Houses: Scotland*, 2–3.
[44] Cowan and Easson, *Medieval Religious Houses: Scotland*, 3.
[45] D. E. Easson, *Medieval Religious Houses: Scotland* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1957), 4 (hereafter: Easson, *Medieval Religious Houses*).

the Culdees of Lochleven, as did their predecessors, Macbeth and his queen. Yet, both Thorfinn the Mighty of Orkney and King Macbeth made pilgrimages to Rome. Indeed, the Irish and Roman traditions seem to have been viewed as complementary rather than contradictory.

Although the influence of the Roman Church was evident, a Benedictine presence was entirely absent. Margaret is often credited with establishing the first Benedictine foundation at the site of her marriage in Dunfermline. During Margaret's tenure as queen, however, the extent of the Benedictine influence consisted of exactly three monks sent by Lanfranc, the archbishop of Canterbury.[46] Dunfermline itself remained a modest establishment during Margaret's lifetime. Archaeological excavations have revealed that the original structure was comprised simply of a nave with a square tower on the west side and an oblong choir ending in an apse. It was not until the reign of her youngest son, David I (1124–1153), that Dunfermline was established as an abbey and the building embellished significantly to reflect its enhanced status.[47] Indeed, the Roman monastic orders penetrated Scotland rather slowly over the next half century during the rule of Margaret's three sons.[48] The church that Margaret encountered in Scotland at the end of the eleventh century, however, was Christian, Celtic, and accustomed to

[46] Lanfranc of Bec, The *Letters of Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. and tr. Helen Clover and Margaret Gibson (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1979), letter 50, 160–1. I believe that it is possible that Lanfranc was acting, in typical fashion, as an ecclesiastical opportunist by sending these monks. He states that he is sending brother Dom Goldwin, as she requested, and two more brothers since Goldwin alone could not do all that she asked. Evidently only a single monk was expected, but three were sent. Perhaps Margaret, whose letter no longer exists, was asking simply for spiritual guidance, since Lanfranc also thanks her for her request to be her spiritual father, but Lanfranc took the opportunity to expand the mission.

[47] Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions of Scotland, *Eleventh Report with Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the Counties of Fife, Kinross, and Clackmannan (*Edinburgh: HMSO, 1933), 106–7; Eric Fernie, "The Romanesque Churches of Dunfermline Abbey," in *Medieval Art and Architecture in the Diocese of St Andrews*, ed. John Higgitt (British Archaeological Association, Conference Transactions XIV, 1994), 25–27.

[48] Edgar (1097–1107), founded Coldingham, which evolved into a Benedictine monastery with a priory associated with Durham; Alexander (1107–1124) brought Augustinian canons to Scone; and in 1113, before becoming king, David established the Benedictines of Tiron at Selkirk. After ascending to the throne, David (1124–1153), continued to show favor toward the Benedictines, elevating Dunfermline to the status of a Benedictine abbey (1128), and founding the priories of Urquhart (c. 1136), the Isle of May (1153), and Lesmahagow (1144). Additionally, he established the Cistercians at Melrose Abbey (1136), which boasted many daughter-houses, and the Augustinian foundations of Holyrood

and accepting of Roman Catholicism. With the exception of three Benedictine monks at the small foundation of Dunfermline, it was much the same at her death.

Margaret also sought out and patronized solitary hermits who lived outside of any community in the tradition of the earliest ascetics of the Church.[49] The majority of hermits, by the very nature of their seclusion, remain unknown to us, yet the scant evidence available in the sources led G. W. S. Barrow to conclude that probably "a considerable number" existed in Margaret's day.[50] Florence of Worcester records that in 1043 a Scottish monk named Animchadus "who led a life of seclusion in the monastery of Fulda, died on the third of the calends of February."[51] During the reign of Margaret's son, Alexander, an anchorite was living on the island of Inchcolm in the Forth, only a short distance from the royal residence at Dunfermline.[52] Some of the earlier ascetics had become well known by virtue of the hagiographic literature they inspired, such as the successive seventh-century bishops of Lindisfarne, Aidan (d. 651), Cuthbert (d. 687), and Æthelwald, who periodically sought solitude and a respite from their official duties at the hermitage on the island of Farne off the coast of Northumbria.[53] Taking specifically the case of Cuthbert, it is possible to see how he, like Gerard in Hungary, embodied various spiritual traditions; he was a bishop, a missionary, a leader of a monastic community, and during his periodic retreats to Farne, an

(1128), Jedburgh (1138), and Cambuskenneth (1140). Easson, *Medieval Religious Houses: Scotland*, 5–6.

[49] *Vita,* paragraph 19: *Quo tempore in regno Scottorum plurimi, per diversa loca separatis inclusi cellulis, per magnam vitae districtionem, in carne non secundum carnem vivebant: Angelicam enim in terris conversationem ducebant.*

[50] G. W. S. Barrow, *Kingship and Unity: Scotland 1000–1306* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 77. Clayton attributes the lack of evidence for hermits to "the shortage of evidence in general from the second half of the ninth and the first half of the tenth centuries," and that subsequent sources are derived almost solely from the monastic reform movement so they understandably do not focus on hermits, Mary Clayton, "Hermits and the Contemplative Life in Anglo-Saxon England," in *Holy Men and Holy Women: Old English Prose Saints' Lives and Their Contexts,* ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 157 (hereafter: Clayton, "Hermits and the Contemplative Life in Anglo-Saxon England").

[51] Florence of Worcester, *Chronicon ex Chronicis* ed. B. Thorpe, 2 volumes (London, 1848; repr. Vaduz: Craus Reprint, 1964), 145.

[52] John Dowden, *The Celtic Church in Scotland* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1894), 281.

[53] Clayton, "Hermits and the Contemplative Life in Anglo-Saxon England," 153; Rotha Mary Clay, *The Hermits and Anchorites of England* (London: Methuen, 1914), 1–7.

ascetic hermit. His cult flourished at Durham where his relics had been brought for safekeeping during the Viking raids and it is possible, indeed likely, that Turgot was influenced by his example.

Turgot was part of the early movement of new hermits, who began by concentrating their efforts on reclaiming holy sites which had been destroyed and abandoned.[54] He was at Durham when its bishop, Walcher, advised him to journey to the recently re-established community at Jarrow in order to exchange "the costume of a clerk for the monastic habit."[55] From there, Turgot and a fellow hermit-monk, Aldwin, proceeded uninvited and with similar intent to the devastated site of Melrose, which was under the jurisdiction of Durham. Malcolm, still smarting from his concession to William the Conqueror at Abernathy, "failed to see eye to eye with them on the true relation of spiritual to temporal authority and on property rights at Melrose, and, after much correspondence had passed, came and turned them off his land, even adding insult to injury."[56] Turgot was recalled unceremoniously back to Durham in order to avoid any further conflict with the king. It is difficult to say whether Turgot's presence was the cause or the effect of Margaret's favoritism toward hermits, but it is certainly no coincidence that she chose one of these new eremitic reformers to be her closest spiritual advisor. It is especially significant in view of the documented hostility between Turgot and Margaret's husband.

As a new hermit himself, it is perhaps only natural that Turgot stresses Margaret's ascetic practices in his hagiographic treatment of her life; she ate meagerly, recited the Psalter often, prayed almost continually, washed the feet of the poor, fed the destitute and orphaned, and freed slaves.[57] Yet how does a queen intent on following an ascetic life find the seclusion of a hermit? Female hermits did exist, but they tended to be regularized rather quickly into nunneries,

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[54] Henrietta Leyser, *Hermits and the New Monasticism: A Study of Religious Communities in Western Europe, 1000–1150* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 36–37.
[55] Simeon of Durham, *Symeonis Dunelmensis opera omnia* ed. Thomas Arnold, two vols. (Rolls Series, London, 1882–5, repr. 1965), 111 (hereafter: Simeon of Durham, *Symeonis Dunelmensis opera omnia*). Jarrow and nearby Wearmouth were of particular significance as the home of the Venerable Bede (673–735). By the late eleventh century, however, they had been reduced to ruins as a result of the Viking invasions, see Rosemary Cramp, *Wearmouth and Jarrow Monastic Sites* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2005), 31–38.
[56] Simeon of Durham, *Symeonis Dunelmensis opera omnia*, 112: *Graves ab illo [Malcolmo, ad quem iste locus pertinebat] injurias et persecutiones pertulerunt, pro eo quod Evangelicum praeceptum servantes, jurare illi fidelitatem noluerunt.*
[57] *Vita*, paragraphs 18–23.

so they were unlikely to have provided a model for Margaret.[58] On the other hand, she was familiar with the examples provided by others who would seek solitude from time to time for spiritual renewal while holding positions of importance; Gerard retreated to his cave at Bél and Cuthbert would isolate himself on Farne Island.[59] It is possible that Margaret imitated them by frequenting a cave close to the royal residence at Dunfermline. According to an account in the *Annals of Dunfermline*, which were composed by the nineteenth-century scholar Dr. Ebenezer Henderson (and so, it should be stressed, are not true annals at all), St. Margaret was accustomed to retire to the seclusion of a cave near Dunfermline in order to pray in peace. Curious about her nocturnal assignations and perhaps expecting the worst betrayal of their wedding vows, Malcolm followed her one day. When he saw her at prayer, he was both relieved and inspired, and immediately arranged to have the cave properly outfitted. The entrance of the windowless retreat faced west, and the confined interior space measured six feet, nine inches high, eight feet six inches wide, and eleven feet, nine inches long. It is thought that Malcolm arranged to have the cave sparsely decorated with an altar, a bench, some candles, and perhaps a door at the entrance. Dr. Henderson took great care to underscore the veracity of this story by establishing that it was attested to by an aged man, a native of Dunfermline, who remembered how in his youth, in the early 1700s, he recalled visiting the Oratory Cave and seeing the ruins of a stone table or bench with a faint carving of something similar to a crucifix. Thanks to Malcolm's generous impulse, Margaret was able to pray in both peace and Spartan comfort in what has become known as Queen Margaret's Cave Oratory.[60]

[58] Gilchrist, *Gender and Material* Culture, 90–91.

[59] Perhaps Margaret was also familiar with the story of St. Radegunde (c. 525–587); while married to Clothar, king of the Franks, Radegunde would seek seclusion for prayer in the middle of the night. Venantius Fortunatus, "The Life of the Holy Radgund," in *Sainted Women of the Dark Ages*, ed. and tr. Jo Ann McNamara, John E. Halborg, E. Gordon Whatley (Durham, NC: Duke University Press), 73.

[60] Ian B. Cowan, *The Medieval Church in Scotland,* ed. James Kirk (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1995), 111; Ebenezer Henderson, *The Annals of Dunfermline and Vicinity from the Earliest Authentic Period to the Present Time, A.D. 1089–1878*, ed. Rhoderick and Alison Moncreiff (Rhoderick and Alison Moncreiff, 1999), an. 1080: "An old man, a native of Dunfermline, who died in 1844 at an advanced age, knew an aged man in his young days, who was wont to relate, that he had seen in the Oratory-Cave the remains of a stone table, or a stone bench, or seat, with something carved on it resembling a crucifix. This second aged man's 'young days' probably refers to A.D. 1700, or thereabouts, when this interesting memorial was to be seen." Today, the cave is a tourist attraction, complete with a statue of Margaret at prayer.

Whether or not this specific tale of Margaret's nocturnal devotions is true, it demonstrates that the perception of Margaret's spirituality had come full circle; because she was popularly revered for her personal piety and asceticism, it was assumed that she must have found some means of accommodating her need for seclusion despite her highly public role as queen. She could not live in a cave, but she could retire to one on occasion, finding temporary solitude. Whether this story contains an element of truth and she did indeed imitate the new hermits she had heard of in Hungary, or it is a later legend devised to embroider her reputation for asceticism, it illustrates the popularly perceived need for such pious accommodation, and that this perception was now evident in Scotland.

Conclusion

It can be safely asserted, then, that Margaret encountered a wide variety of monastic traditions during her lifetime. She would have witnessed the easy co-existence of the Roman, Greek, and Celtic coenobitic traditions in addition to the eremitic practices of Kievan monks, new hermits, and Celtic Culdees. Certainly the Benedictine tradition remained a constant in her life, but to view it as the exclusive agent of her pious upbringing would be a misleading simplification. Margaret's monastic world was complex and inter-connected, a catalyst for her unique expression of piety.