Summary

The paper analyses the role of pilgrimage sites in Bavaria, Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary in the representation of Emperor Leopold I. This subject illustrates the strong relations between the kingdoms and regions once constituting the Habsburg Empire, consequently the interdependence of historical and art historical research in and about the different countries in Central Europe.

Key words: sacral representation, pilgrimage, Emperor Leopold I, Central Europe, Altötting, Mariazell, Stará Boleslav, Máriavölgy

When it comes to medieval kings and princes, various aspects of the sovereign’s representation related to the sacred, the rites, and the ideology of sacral legitimisation of the monarchs have been in the focus of art historical and historical-anthropological research for a longer period of time. More recently, the same phenomena have been investigated concerning the early modern rulers. Sacral representation of the Habsburg dynasty, its strategies of self-legitimisation and the cult of the Virgin at the Habsburg court in Vienna have become particularly vibrant fields of study in the past decade. Yet, royal pilgrimages have remained somewhat neglected among the different manifestations of the Habsburg rulers’ representation. The purpose of this paper is to investigate this question in a case study by analysing the role of pilgrimage sites in Bavaria, Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary in the representation of Leopold I, Holy Roman Emperor (1640–1705).

Anna Coreth has demonstrated how elements of religiosity and spirituality, particularly those surrounding the Catholic Eucharistic and Marian cults, became part of the Habsburg devotion and (sacral) representation. She has labelled the religious-political ideology of the Habsburg dynasty in the Baroque era pietas austriaca and stated that the contemporaries considered this piety as one of the cardinal virtues that a ruler should have. The pietas austriaca was predicated on the assumption that the House of Austria had been given a special mission by God to protect the Holy Roman Empire and the Catholic Church from heresy. The Habsburgs obtained this mission owing to the merits of their ancestors, particularly those of the dynasty’s founder, Rudolf IV. In order to fulfil this divine mission, Rudolf’s successors were to follow his example. Eucharistic piety and Marian devotion, the pietas eucharistica and pietas mariana, made up the core elements of the pietas austriaca, but closely related to these forms of devotion was the veneration of saints as well. The Immaculate Conception of Mary received a particular emphasis, and Mary became the patron saint who was supposed to lead the Habsburg forces to military victory.

Marian pilgrimages constituted one of the keystones of the pietas mariana. Through the dedication of the imperial house to these rituals, pilgrimages and pilgrimage sites acquired political significance. Pilgrimages were seen as essential for expressing the sacral legitimacy of the newly-crowned rulers, their marriages, having a male heir, and achieving military victories.

The case of Emperor Leopold I analysed in this paper demonstrates the role of specific sanctuaries in his representation. I will focus on four pilgrimage sites: Altötting in Bavaria, Mariazell in Austria, Stará Boleslav in Bohemia, and Máriavölgy (Marienthal, today’s Marianka) in Slovakia, in the territory of the former Hungarian Kingdom. Leopold’s visits to these sacred places can be interpreted as mirroring...
four layers of his sacral representation in correlation with his four major monarchic titles: Holy Roman Emperor, Archduke of Austria, King of Bohemia, and King of Hungary.

Altötting

Altötting in Upper-Bavaria, west of the Bavarian-Lower Austrian border, had been a major Central European pilgrimage site since the late 15th century, when miracles began to be attributed to the Black Madonna statue. Soon afterwards, the chapel acquired a significant role in the representation of the Wittelsbachs, who frequently visited the site. Prince Maximilian set the concept of *pietas mariana* in the focus of his idea of the state and became a zealous devotee and patron of the Virgin at Altötting. For instance, in 1634 he placed a letter in the Altötting chapel, written with his own blood and dedicating his country and himself to the Virgin. The *pietas bavarica*, elaborated in the early 17th century, was followed as a model in the shaping of the *pietas austriaca*, due to the strong family links between the Wittelsbach and Habsburg dynasties – it suffices to mention here that the mother of Ferdinand II was the Wittelsbach Princess Maria of Bavaria. To illustrate the parallel between the *pietas bavarica* and *pietas austriaca*, I refer to the Column of the Virgin Immaculate on Vienna’s Am Hof square, erected by Ferdinand III nine years after the Munich prototype.

The Habsburgs’ visits to Altötting in the 17th century can be interpreted in the context of this strong Bavarian influence: members of the Habsburg dynasty visited the Bavarian pilgrimage site when they travelled to Regensburg to the meeting of the Imperial Diet. In September 1658, Emperor Leopold stopped there with his retinue on his return to Vienna after his imperial coronation in Frankfurt. The fact that Leopold included a visit to Altötting in his itinerary after the coronation underscored the significance of the place as an imperial pilgrimage site or a *Reichsheiligtum*, as Coreth calls it. According to a contemporary description, Leopold entered the chapel preceded by the members of the confraternity of Our Lady of Altötting, carrying the imperial insignia. Then he received the Holy Communion, knelt humbly in front of the altar, and entrusted himself, his empire, and all his subjects to the protection of the Virgin. The following day he donated an enamelled gold crucifix decorated with pearls and gems to the treasury and set off to Vienna. Leopold again stopped in Altötting in 1689, on the way to Augsburg for the election and coronation of his 11 year-old son, Joseph I, as King of the Romans. He prayed for the success of the forthcoming *Kurfürstenitag* and donated a silver lamp, the empress a chalice and a ciborium, and the young prince a monstrance – altogether worth of 4000 gulden. The following February, while returning to Vienna, the “imperial majesties” stopped again in Altötting to render thanks to the Virgin for the successful outcome of the Augsburg diet. The above mentioned objects all fell victim to the Bavarian secularisation in 1802, but the so-called *Kaiserampel* in the Mariahilf church in Passau, a lavish work of

the Augsburg goldsmith Lukas Lang, can give a rough idea what the Altötting lamp might have looked like. It had been donated by Leopold a decade earlier, on the occasion of his wedding with his third wife, Eleonore Magdalena von Pfalz-Neuburg, which took place at the Mariahilf church in Passau on December 14, 1676.

The Habsburgs appear to have made pilgrimages to Altötting only combined with a longer journey, the purpose of which was official imperial business. In other words, the pilgrimage site at Altötting was not an independent destination for them. The tradition of including pilgrimage to Altötting when travelling through Bavaria even seems to have disappeared in the 18th century. In fact, imperial travels to western German lands declined in general. Charles VI travelled from Barcelona directly to Frankfurt for his election and imperial crowning in October 1711, and then he journeyed to Vienna without stopping in Altötting and never returned to Germany. (Nevertheless, before he left Spain, on July 7, 1711 he visited Montserrat to pray in front of the altar of the Black Madonna and donated a sword with the inscription *Ad aram Virginis Mariae... quae Mater est ejus, per quem Reges regnant... advocata ad Deum pro me... Servus perpetuus Carolus.*) Maria Theresia and Franz Stephan did not stop in Altötting either when they travelled to Frankfurt for the imperial coronation in 1745.

Mariazell

The long history of Habsburg relations to this pilgrimage site need not be discussed here in detail: the Habsburg dynasty had been closely related to Mariazell ever since the 14th century. Dynastic veneration of the Virgin at Mariazell, the *Magna Mater Austriae* as it was denominated at the time, flourished especially from 1620 to 1760. In this period, heads of the Habsburg dynasty travelled to Mariazell on at least 38 different occasions. All of them donated costly liturgical objects, vestments, and objects of devotion *ex voto* to the treasury at Mariazell. They all offered prayers for the safety of their domains against both internal and external enemies. They also prayed for the birth of male heirs and the continuation of their dynasty. Consequently, Mariazell also became strongly associated with the Habsburg dynasty in the collective memory.

Unlike the Habsburg visits to Altötting and other pilgrimage sites in Central Europe that were always attached to other events, Mariazell was a final destination for Habsburg pilgrimages and indeed an important and frequent one. Ferdinand II travelled to Mariazell four times and his son at least six. Leopold I travelled to Altötting four times and to Mariazell as many as ten. Nevertheless, Habsburg journeys to Mariazell lacked the scale and grandeur of other court trips, with their emphasis on large retinues, ceremonial receptions, and banquets, and they were not recorded in engravings for publication.

The importance of piety as a foundation of the Habsburg rule was especially underlined during the reign of Leopold I,
who consciously cultivated the traditions set in place by his immediate predecessors. The Virgin at Mariazell continued to serve as the protector of the imperial troops and the special patroness of the Habsburgs. In 1659, the recently crowned Emperor Leopold made a pilgrimage to Mariazell to pray for the safety of the imperial troops. In 1673, when war broke out with France, Leopold knelt again before the Marian statue at Mariazell and declared his dedication to the Virgin. Three years later, Leopold inscribed his name in the Book of Pilgrims along with the following prayer: "I desire to have the all-holy Virgin Mary as my commander (Generalissima) in war and my plenipotentiary in peace negotiations." After the victory over the Turks at Szentgothárd in 1664, which proved to be a turning point in the history of wars against the Ottoman Empire, Leopold donated to Mariazell a ciborium made of a coconut shell, representing the globe with scenes from the Virgin’s life on each of the Continents. This donation can be interpreted in correlation with the idea of a universal Christian monarchy, which dominated the centuries-long tradition of eschatological interpretation of the Habsburg imperial power. It also seems logical to consider Leopold’s claims that he would conquer the entire realm of Islam and establish his throne in the Orient, as expressed by some of his apologists. The high altar of the church at Mariazell, including a globe under the cross, is characterised by a similar iconography. Dedicated to the Holy Cross, it was erected as a donation of Leopold’s in 1704 and designed by Fischer von Erlach the Elder.

Leopold not only repeated the prayers of Ferdinand II and Ferdinand III for the success of the imperial troops, but also participated in similar religious services while in Mariazell. In August 1665, for example, he attended several masses, listened to the litany, knelt before the Marian statue in prayer at several points during his stay, took communion in front of the Altar of Grace, and visited the treasury to look at the objects donated by pilgrims, probably including those donated by his father and grandfather.14

In 1679, Leopold expressed his devotion to the Virgin at Mariazell through a particularly significant donation. As the renovation was being completed in the nave of the church, the emperor donated an elaborate silver railing to cover the entrance of the Gnadenkapelle (Chapel of Grace). This superb silverwork fell victim to the surrender of 1704 as a result of war against the Bavarian Elector Maximilian Emanuel II: it was taken to Vienna to be melted down, but finally it was taken back to Mariazell and set up again. Nevertheless, it was so badly damaged that it could not be repaired and was replaced by the current railing in 1756, donated by Maria Theresia. The design and iconography of Leopold’s railing is known from a contemporary engraving (Fig. 1). In the inscription tablet below the eagle, Leopold thanked the Virgin at Mariazell for the birth of his long expected son Joseph, his first male heir, who was finally born a year earlier from his third marriage with Eleonore of Pfalz-Neuburg. The royal crowns of Hungary and Bohemia, together with their coats-of-arms, flanked the inscription tablet, while the dual crowns and coats-of-arms of Leopold’s hereditary lands were placed farther to the left and right. The wealth of imperial, royal, and ducal insignia on Leopold’s railing directly linked the Habsburgs to the sacred treasure which the lattice protected: the Statue of Mercy that hereby was symbolically appropriated by the Habsburgs. One had to pass through the “Habsburg gate” to enter into the presence of the Virgin at Mariazell. Just as the imperial eagle and the various crowns adorned the entrances to Habsburg palaces and denoted the identity and status of their owners, the silver lattice explicitly marked the most sacred spot within the church as a “Habsburg” space.

**Stará Boleslav**

The third pilgrimage site to be discussed in this context is the former Jesuit church in Stará Boleslav (Altbunzlau), 10 km north of Prague. The town is the site of martyrdom of Saint Wenceslas, the first Christian duke of Bohemia, who was killed by his brother, Boleslav the Cruel. Wenceslas was venerated as the patron saint of the Bohemian Kingdom already in the Middle Ages. In the 17th century, this cult was associated with Marian devotion, when a late medieval gilt relief of the Virgin started to be venerated here as Palladium Bohemiae. In other words, Saint Wenceslas’ cult of medieval origin served as a base for creating a Marian pilgrimage site.
at Stará Boleslav in the Counter-Reformation period. At the same time, there were efforts to prove a direct genealogical relationship between the old Přemyslid princes and members of the Habsburg dynasty in order to legitimise the claims of the Austrian imperial family to the Bohemian throne, crowned with Saint Wenceslas' crown. At the last, 44th chapel on the "Holy Itinerary" from Prague to Stará Boleslav, a fictive genealogy was depicted, fabricating a direct link from Saint Wenceslas to Emperor Leopold. It is reproduced in Jan Tanner’s book about the Holy Itinerary from Prague to Stará Boleslav, published in Prague in 1680 (Fig 2). In the middle, Saint Wenceslas is shown kneeling in front of his private devotional image, which was identified as the Virgin relief at Stará Boleslav. (According to the legend, Wenceslas inherited the image from his grandmother, Saint Ludmila, who had received it from Saint Methodius.) Ferdinand II seems to have been the first Habsburg emperor to make a pilgrimage to the Church of Our Lady in Stará Boleslav, administered by the Jesuits. He visited the sanctuary twice in May 1623, accompanied by Carlo Carafa, the Apostolic Nuncio to the Emperor. In 1639, the miraculous image was taken to Vienna, where it was kept on the altar of the Hofburg chapel. A year later, in 1640, Leopold was born in the presence of the image from Stará Boleslav, which had been brought into the room on request of his mother, Maria Anna of Spain. In August 1646, one month after the coronation of Ferdinand IV as King of Bohemia, the image was taken back to Stará Boleslav.

Leopold’s coronation in 1656 in Prague was accompanied by a pilgrimage to Stará Boleslav. As the Jesuit historiographer Bohuslav Balbin recorded, on August 28 Emperor Ferdinand III, his consort Eleonore Magdalena, and Leopold made a visit to Stará Boleslav together to dedicate themselves to Saint Wenceslas and the Virgin and ask for their protection. Thus, Leopold established a new dynastic tradition: his son, Charles VI, also visited Stará Boleslav on September 24, 1703 and on November 7, 1723, after his coronation in Prague, and so did Maria Theresia on April 28, 1743.

Marianka (Máriavölgy)

The fourth and last pilgrimage site to be presented here is Marianka in the former Upper Hungary, current Slovakia. The proximity of the site to Bratislava (Prešburg / Pozsony), the capital of Hungary in the Baroque era, where the coronation ceremonies took place and also the diets of the estates in the presence of the Habsburg rulers, must have been an important factor in that Marianka acquired a role in the representation of the Habsburgs – similarly to Stará Boleslav. The origins of the church at Marianka date back to 1377, when King Louis of Anjou founded a Pauline monastery there. The church became a pilgrimage site in the 1630s, when miracles began to be attributed to its statue of Madonna. Marianka was one of the earliest pilgrimage sites of the Counter-Reformation era in Hungary, just like Stará Boleslav was in Bohemia, and was fabricated as an effective tool of the Counter-Reformation propaganda (the proportion of the Protestant population in Hungary around 1600 is estimated to have been around 70-80%).

2. Saint Wenceslas praying in front of the Virgin at Stará Boleslav, with a fictive genealogy in the background, fabricating a direct link from Saint Wenceslas to Emperor Leopold I (source: note 16)

Marianka played a significant role in Habsburg representation from the mid-17th century onwards: their visits to the site are first recorded in 1647. They took place without exception on occasion of coronation ceremonies and diets of the estates in Bratislava. In other words, the pilgrimage site at Marianka – just like Altötting or Stará Boleslav – was not an independent destination for the Habsburgs. Nevertheless, it served as a source of symbolic legitimacy for the dynasty: as in the case of Mariazell, by venerating the Virgin at Marianka they appeared as the followers of the Anjou king, both in their devout deeds and in ruling over Hungary.
The first Habsburg visit to Marianka took place in June 1647, before the coronation of Ferdinand IV as King of Hungary.24 On this occasion, he and his father came to the pilgrimage site accompanied by Archbishop György Lippay, and each donated a sum for the renovation of the church. We have more information about the next Habsburg visit, on November 29, 1659. On that day, Emperor Leopold I, crowned King of Hungary four years earlier, came to Marianka, interrupting his stay in Bratislava for the diet of the estates. He was accompanied by important representatives of the court, including Hofmarschall Václav Eusebius z Lobkovic, and prominent representatives of the Hungarian estates, such as Palatine Ferenc Wesselényi, the chief justice Ferenc Nádasdy, or Archbishop Lippay.25 Three years later, in the summer of 1662, again on the occasion of a diet in Bratislava, Leopold came anew to Marianka with more or less the same retinue.26 It is the irony of the fate that two members of the cortege, Wesselényi and Nádasdy, would become involved in an alleged conspiracy to overthrow the Habsburgs in Hungary, and the latter was beheaded in 1671, indirectly by the emperor’s command. Leopold’s third visit to Marianka took place in January 1688, after the coronation of his 9-year-old son, Joseph I, as King of Hungary, who also accompanied his father and his mother, Eleonore Magdalena. This visit may have served the symbolic legitimisation of the reign of Joseph I, since in the previous year the Hungarian estates had accepted a law according to which the Habsburg kings of Hungary were no longer elected by the diet, but simply inherited the title on the principle of primogeniture. A contemporary account informs us that they attended the Mass in the church and afterwards Leopold solemnly dedicated himself and his son to the Virgin as the Patrona Hungariae, kissing the feet of the statue.27 By this, he symbolically repeated the gesture of the first king of Hungary, Saint Stephen, who, according to the legend, dedicated his crown and thus the whole country to the Virgin, as it is represented in the altar painting in Saint Stephen’s chapel at Mariazell (Emperor Leopold also renewed the dedication of Hungary to the Virgin on August 15, 1693 at Stephansdom in Vienna, when he expressed his gratitude for the liberation of the country from the Ottomans) (Fig 3).28 Later on, the royal family had lunch with the Pauline friars in the refectory, where Leopold left behind a particular memento of his visit: he wrote a Latin panegyric on the wall, praising the Virgin. The text contained a chronosticon with the date of his visit to Marianka, 1688. His consort Eleonore added a heart to the text, containing the initial letters of Leopold’s and her own name, as it is shown in the chronicle of the Pauline order (Fig. 4).29

Just like in the case of Stará Boleslav, a visit to Marianka became a dynastic tradition of the Habsburgs, but the Marianka church does not show any trace of Habsburg patronage either. Charles VI came to Marianka only once, after his coronation in Bratislava in 1712, but Maria Theresia made a number of visits to the site, including one after her coronation in October 1741.30

In conclusion, we can state that the Marian legitimisation of Leopold’s dominion – manifested by visits to the sacred...
sites — was a crucial element of his representation. Examples of his piety, echoed by his biographers and apologists, may often be literary stereotypes, yet being a second-born son and predestined for the Church in his youth, he appears to have held the Virgin in special veneration. Nevertheless, his private devotion was consciously fashioned and integrated in his elaborate system of representation. It is remarkable that Emperor Leopold’s piety and sacral representation was manifested predominantly in ephemeral forms, mainly in the act of visiting the sanctuary. It was only rarely accompanied by visual expressions of his devotion, such as commissions on altarpieces or ex-voto donations such as liturgical vessels or paraments. Such pious donations by Leopold are recorded only in Altötting and Mariazell. Emperor Leopold’s pilgrimages and visits to these sanctuaries were performed apparently with modest ceremoniability and were not designed to impress his subjects with the glory and grandeur of Baroque theatricality. Yet, they were significant dynastic events that occupied a liminal space between the public representation and private religious life of the family.

Notes


7 ANNA CORETH (note 4, 1982), 58.

8 Vienna, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatarchiv (ÖSTA HHSTA), Zeremonialprotokolle, Bd. 1, 802–803; GABRIEL KüPFERLE, Histori von der weiträumigen unser lieben Frawen Capell zu Alten-Oeting, Munich, 1661, 91–95.

9 ÖSTA HHSTA, Ältere Zeremonialakten, Karton 16; ONNO KLOPP, Corrispondenza epistolare tra Leopoldo I imperatore ed il Padre Marco d’Aviano, Graz, 1888, No. CCXII.


13 FRIEDRICH POLLEROSS, ’Pro decore Majestatis’. Zur Repräsentation Kaiser Leopolds I. in Architektur, Bildender und Anre-
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22 TAMÁS FARAGÓ, Bevezetés a történeti demográfiaba [Introduction to historical demography], Budapest, 2011, 347.

23 SERFŐZŐ SZABOLCS (note 4)

24 ANDREAS EGGERER, Fragmen panis corvi (...) Annalium Ordinis Sancti Pauli Primi Eremitae, Vienna, 1663, 350.


26 Ibid, 282.

27 Ibid, 283.


29 NICOLAUS BENGER, Annalium Eremit-Coenobiticorum Ordinis Fratrum Eremitarum: Duos In Libros Partitum. Quibus ab Anno Christi 1663. usque ad annum 1727, Posonii, 1743, 249.


Sažetak

Szabolcs Serfőző

Hodočašća cara Leopolda I. u Srednjoj Europi

U slučaju srednjovjekovnih kraljeva i prinčeva, aspekti vladareve reprezentacije koji su povezani sa svetim, s ritualima i ideologijom sakralne legitimizacije monarha, prilično su dobro poznati. Međutim, daleko manje pozornosti posvećeno je ovom fenomenu kod ranonovovjekovnih vladara te su vladarska hodočašća ostala ponešto zanemarena u izučavanju različitih manifestacija vladarske reprezentacije. Svrha je ovog članka izučiti to pitanje kroz analizu hodočasničkih središta u Bavarskoj, Austriji, Češkoj i Ugarskoj, i to u kontekstu reprezentacije svetog rimskog cara Leopolda I. (1640.–1705.).

Anna Coreth je pokazala kako su elementi religioznosti i duhovnosti, osobito oni vezani uz katoličke kultove Euharistije i Djevice Marije, postali dijelom habsburške pobožnosti i (sakralne) reprezentacije. Vjersko-političku ideologiju habsburške dinastije u doba baroka opisala je terminom pietas austriaca i ustanovila kako su suvremenici smatrali takvu pobožnost jednom od glavnih vrlina koje bi vladar trebao posjedovati. Koncept pietas austriaca zasnovao se na pretpostavci da je Bog udijelio austrijskoj vladarskoj kući posebnu misiju, a to je da štiti Sveti Rimsko Carstvo i Katoličku crkvu od krivovjerja.
Euharistijska i marijanska pobožnost, *pietas eucharistica* i *pietas mariana*, bile su ključni elementi koncepta *pietas austriaca*, no i štovanje svetaca bilo je usko povezano s njima. Marijino bezgrešno začeće dobilo je na važnosti i Djevica je postala zaštitnicom koja je trebala povesti habsburške trupe u vojne pobjede.

Marijanska hodočašća bila su jedan od temelja koncepta *pietas mariana*. Kako se carska kuća posvetila tim ritualima, hodočašća i hodočasnička središta stekla su politički značaj. Hodočašća su smatrana središnjim elementom sakralne legitimizacije novookrunjenih vladara i njihovih brakova, kao i važnim elementom u dobivanju muških nasljednika i postizanju vojnih pobjeda. Primjer cara Leopolda I. pokazuje ulogu određenih hodočasničkih središta u toj reprezentaciji. Naglasak je na četirima središtima, a to su Altötting u Bavarskoj, Mariazell u Austriji, Stará Boleslav u Češkoj i Marianka u Slovačkoj, nekada na području Ugarskog Kraljevstva. Leopoldovi posjeti tim svetim mjestima mogu se interpretirati kao četiri sloja njegove sakralne reprezentacije, povezana s četirima glavnim monarhijskim titulama: sveti rimski car, nadvojvoda Austrije, kralj Češke i kralj Ugarske.

**Ključne riječi:** sakralna reprezentacija, hodočašće, car Leopold I., Srednja Europa, Altötting, Mariazell, Stará Boleslav, Marianka (Marienthal, Máriavölgy)