

Hierocratic Aspects Related to the Legation of Archbishop Robert of Esztergom to Cumania (1227)

ROBERT-MARIUS
MIHALACHE

At least from a hierocratic perspective, the legation of Archbishop Robert of Esztergom was successful, having fully satisfied the discipline demanded by the Holy See.

The topic addressed in this study has been discussed before and there are a number of writings related to the moment when the Cumans' diocese was established in 1227. However, the motivation for approaching this subject is given by the fact that the studies dedicated to it do not present the legation of Archbishop Robert of Esztergom (Strigonium) from a hierocratic perspective. The historiography¹ of the topic tangentially describes this legatine episode, or sometimes does not even nominally identify the holder of this legation, specifying only that the Cuman population obeyed the young King Béla

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Robert-Marius Mihalache

Ph.D. candidate, Faculty of History and Philosophy, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

(the future King Béla IV, 1235–1270), a claim that is somewhat erroneous from a hierocratic perspective. In this paper, we shall attempt to highlight the hierocratic aspects of the legation undertaken by Archbishop Robert of Esztergom in “Cumania” (the southwest of Moldavia), by analyzing several published pontifical documents.²

Hierocracy is the general term that historically defines the twelfth-fourteenth centuries, when the papal Curia acted like an empire, temporally subordinating most European kingdoms.³ Broadly speaking, hierocracy means “ecclesiastical government,” that is, by the Roman Church, which tried to rule Europe in the twelfth-fourteenth centuries as an institution in monarchical garment. The main characteristic of hierocracy was centralization.⁴ By this procedure, the papacy tried to control most of the activities within the European kingdoms that had accepted the pontifical supremacy.⁵ Concretely, the popes’ power was expressed through legates.⁶ As regards the legates’ specialization and categories, hierocracy canonically stipulated three categories: *de latere, missi, nati*.⁷

The function of *legatus natus*⁸ appeared at the beginning of the twelfth century, against the background of the emergence of the hierocratic current, when some local bishops had to represent the pontifical interests in the dioceses in which they had been appointed.⁹ In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the French archbishops, except for those of Aix and Rouen, were appointed as legates for a limited period of time. Regarding the German space, it was also temporarily that the archbishops of Bremen-Hamburg, Mainz and Trier received the legatine function.¹⁰

With a view to reducing the autonomous power of the bishops, from the twelfth century on, the popes repeatedly constrained their powers. The popes were against the idea of powerful bishops in the territory administered by the Roman Church. Also, in order to reduce their autonomous powers, the primordial rights that the archbishops received on their appointment were returned in the form of pontifical rights, distributed as legations in the territory.¹¹ Therefore, following the confiscation of their rights, these archbishops increasingly began to depend on the pope. Thus, when archbishops were appointed, it was stipulated that the Roman Pontiff¹² entrusted them with this power, which was to be handed down to their successors. The most renowned examples related to the legate *natus* were the archbishops of Canterbury, Reims, Salzburg, Prague, Gniezno or Esztergom.¹³

Some of the works debating the action of converting the Cumans in 1227 place the legation of the archbishop of Esztergom in the category of successes won by the Hungarian royalty, omitting to say that in the thirteenth century, any religious or political activity was conducted only within the bounds set by and with the consent of Rome. This was, in short, the essence of the hierocratic

current amid which Robert of Esztergom activated as an apostolic legate. The Cumans,¹⁴ a pagan population who arrived at the edges of Christendom in the mid-twelfth century, represented a threat not only to the safety of the Hungarian Kingdom, but also to the eastern side of *Christianitas*.¹⁵ Their repeated invasions of the southeastern¹⁶ parts of the Arpadian Kingdom and, implicitly, of the Christian society (*Societas Christiana*) forced the Roman Curia to take defensive measures in this respect.¹⁷

The Holy See led both a literal and a figurative fight, not only against the Cumans in the Carpathian region,¹⁸ but also against other pagan populations in other areas of Europe, such as, for instance, the pagan Slavs from the Baltic region.¹⁹ This fight was waged both through armed forces, represented by the Teutonic Knights, and through the spiritual forces at work in conversion missions.

OUR PRESENTATION starts with the letter issued by Gregory IX (1227–1241) at Anagni in 1227, stating that the position of the legate *de latere* had been granted to Archbishop Robert of Esztergom (1226–1239) at the latter's request, so that he could go to the region of Cumania to baptize the Cumans.²⁰ This means that even if it was not institutionalized, some form of contact already existed between the pagan population led by Bortz and the Archdiocese of Esztergom and that this type of request for the legatine position was the modality whereby the Cumans could be included in the Christian society (*Societas Christiana*)²¹ led by the Roman Pontiff. This was a thing that the Hungarian archbishop also understood, which is why he requested the legatine function.

As legate *natus*, the archbishop of Esztergom was familiar with the political and religious situation of the realm, both inside and outside its borders. The legate *natus* knew about the existence of the Cumans ever since the time when the Teutonic Knights had operated in these areas (1211–1225), having penetrated the regions densely inhabited by the Cumans not only in military, but also in religious terms. Besides the Teutons who “raised there a great citadel beyond the mountains,” as mentioned in the pontifical documents,²² various missionaries of the Roman Church also crossed the Carpathians and led a rather intense activity among the Cumans. The already mentioned contact between the Archdiocese of Esztergom and the leaders of the Cuman populations had a common point, represented by the Dominican missionaries,²³ who had the role of spreading Christianity among the Cumans. This activity was certainly completed successfully, but the fruit of their work may have been due not only to their skill, but also to external political factors, such as the Battle of Kalka²⁴ in 1223, when the leaders of the Russian knezates allied with the Cumans from the northern shore of the Black Sea suffered a heavy defeat at the hands of the Mongol armies.

Such an event may have caused the Cumans who had escaped from that battle and returned to the Carpathian region to request being Christianized. It is probably as a result of the proximity of the Mongols that the Cumans led by Bortz²⁵ demanded, through the missionaries, the presence of a legate to Christianize them. Hence, our considerations on a possible link that existed between the Cuman leader and the Archdiocese of Esztergom.

The document issued by Rome says that the Cumans themselves had demanded the arrival of an apostolic legate who would Christianize them (“and a prince called Bortz wishes to receive, through your intercession, the Christian faith, and to this end he has deliberately sent to you his only son, along with the preaching brothers, urging that you should yourself go to him and show them the path towards Christianization”).²⁶ We might understand from these lines that following the losses suffered at Kalka in 1223, the Cumans requested to be Christianized in order to find shelter against the Mongol threat. The Cumans’ despair must have been great if after years of confrontations with the Teutons, the leader Bortz now sent his son to the archbishop of Esztergom to ask for some “help” in the face of the Tatar threat. The only solution was Christianization and the acceptance of all the elements resulting from this action. The presence of Christian missionaries alongside the son of the Cuman nobleman in the deputation that went to the archbishop of Esztergom visibly strengthened Bortz’s plea and apparently convinced the legate *natus*, Robert of Esztergom, to grant the Cumans’ requests. Anyway, from the vantage point of hierocracy, their Christianization meant an important gain for the Church, as Gregory IX would insist “that it may occasion such an increase of the Christian faith . . .”²⁷

The Hungarian prelate²⁸ carried out his legatine mandate with the assent and in the interest of Rome, this being proved by the expression used in the document—*per quod habeas potestatem in eisdem terris vice nostra predicandi*²⁹ by the bishop of Rome. The legate could baptize, raise churches, ordain priests for those churches and appoint bishops only with the consent of the pontifical Curia.³⁰ The concreteness of the above statement is confirmed by the way in which Archbishop Robert of Esztergom demanded that he should be entrusted with the legatine mission by Rome. He requested the consent of Gregory IX, as it was natural, and not of the Hungarian Crown, represented by King Andrew II (1205–1235).³¹ Therefore, any action taken in the lands inhabited by the Cumans was to benefit the papal monarchy.³²

The role of the Hungarian royalty, from its position of pontifical “ministry” (as the Holy See regarded it), in this legatine action was that of granting military support to the archbishop³³ of Esztergom. The main role, from the standpoint of hierocracy, was played by the legate *de latere*, Robert, while the young king and also duke of Transylvania,³⁴ Béla, acted as an *auxilium*. It would consequently

be erroneous to believe that Archbishop Robert of Esztergom served the interests of the local royalty, represented by Béla. They acted together, granting one another mutual support, to the benefit of the pontifical Curia.

The pope expressed in a letter his gratitude for the help provided by the young King Béla (the future King Béla IV) in converting the Cumans. The mission was successful, since it is stated verbatim that “thus increased not only the Catholic faith, but also the Lord’s people.”³⁵ In hierocratic terms, the Lord’s people would translate as the number of Christians baptized in the Roman rite. Even if the young King Béla had wanted to convert the Cumans for personal purposes, he could not have succeeded because he, like the archbishop of Esztergom, was mandated by the Apostolic See.³⁶

The Christianization and inclusion of the Cumans in *Christianitas*³⁷ represented an important gain for Rome, both politically, by expanding the territories controlled by the Holy See, and legally, by including them in *beneficium beati Petri*, which resulted in the legation of the Hungarian archbishop primate.

The positive insertion of Christian elements in the regions where the Cumans resided can be seen from the analysis of the dialogue between Pope Gregory IX, who was the guarantor of the functioning of medieval hierocracy, and the prior³⁸ of the Dominican Order in the Kingdom of Hungary. We thus learn that Archbishop Robert of Esztergom had already appointed a local bishop, Theodoric.³⁹ The leader of the Order of Preachers in the Kingdom of Hungary was imperatively demanded to send there Dominican brothers to assist in the smooth functioning of the new Cuman diocese. Within one year of the Hungarian primate’s legatine activity, in 1228, a new diocese of Roman rite had been set up.⁴⁰ Of course, this naturally raises the question of the institutional subordination of the new diocese.

The Romanian and Hungarian historiographies claim that since it was a Hungarian cleric, the archbishop of Esztergom, that had led this legatine mission, the newly established diocese belonged to Esztergom. From the viewpoint of historical events, this might be plausible, but in terms of medieval hierocracy and canon law,⁴¹ this way of thinking is not correct.

According to the tendencies of medieval hierocracy in the twelfth-fourteenth centuries, the archiepiscopal sees in most of the European kingdoms, as was the case of Esztergom, were occupied by archbishops mandated with the function of *legatus natus*. They occupied the primatial sees acting with the consent and in support of the Roman Curia and, perhaps only to a little extent, in support of the local royalty.⁴² In most cases, the archbishops appointed to primatial positions, especially during the thirteenth century, were foreigners. They came from other kingdoms than those where they received ecclesiastical offices. A concrete example was Robert himself, archbishop of Esztergom, born in the

diocese of Liège.⁴³ He arrived at Székesfehérvár (Alba Regia) in the Kingdom of Hungary in the early thirteenth century. Here he served as provost and royal chancellor from 1207 to 1209.⁴⁴ Later he was elevated to the dignity of bishop of Veszprém (1209–1226).⁴⁵ As head of this diocese, he participated in the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. In 1226, after a two-year vacation of the Hungarian primate's see and two failed attempts to choose its archiepiscopal holder, Robert was elected to this office.⁴⁶

Returning to the question of the institutional obedience of the Cumans' diocese, we should note that the ecclesiastical units newly created during this period were subjected to the jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome, so they were not subordinated to any other church institution.⁴⁷ This was also the case of the Cumans' diocese. Its diocesan⁴⁸ was directly subordinated to Rome, from a legal and institutional point of view.⁴⁹ This aspect was regulated in a pontifical letter sent to the new local bishop,⁵⁰ Theodoric. He was informed that he and his descendants, that is, the future bishops, would be subordinated only to the Apostolic See ("We hereby command that both you and your descendants shall be free of any other allegiance except to the Roman pontiff and you shall be directly under the jurisdiction of the Apostolic See").⁵¹

After having written to the legate, the king of Hungary, the prior of the Dominicans in Hungary and the new Bishop Theodoric, the pope addressed himself to the leader of the Cumans. He said that Rome took them and the Cuman people under its protection,⁵² together with the assets they now owned or would own in the future. Thus, any sense of doubt was dispelled. The pontifical gesture barred any intent or desire to occupy the newly created dignity, whether we talk of religious or secular agents. In support of these claims, Rome recognized the old freedoms of the Cuman people, but only insofar as they were exercised within the limits of the Christian faith. The document reiterated that the Hungarian royalty itself, through King Andrew II and his son, Béla, had recognized and accepted this state by applying the golden seal.⁵³ In other words, the Cuman populations in this Christianized region were spiritually and temporally exempt from allegiance to any local institution.

Even though it was located on the edge of *Christianitas*, Cumania was linked directly to Rome. Thus, the boundaries of Christendom were directly controlled by the Holy See, bypassing local temporal entities,⁵⁴ referring once again to the Hungarian royal institution in particular. The expression used in the pontifical letter clearly stated the idea of the inviolability of this region, in the sense that "no one should be allowed to violate the decisions of this letter of protection."⁵⁵

The attitude of Archbishop Robert of Esztergom⁵⁶ towards his pontifical legation was more than positive, it was downright remarkable. That is why the

Holy See bestowed upon him a new dignity, not of legate *de latere*, but of legate *natus*, whereby the Hungarian primate was to observe the comportment of King Andrew II. If the latter's conduct did not meet the approval of the medieval hierocracy and if the situation required it, this could lead to the king's excommunication by the archbishop.⁵⁷ Robert of Esztergom had his primatial rights recognized once again, in the sense that he was entitled to crown the king of Hungary and act inside the kingdom in the interest of Rome. He could therefore excommunicate anyone who proceeded against the hierocratic⁵⁸ policy, a right that had been accepted by the Hungarian royalty ever since the time of King Géza II (1141–1162), and was later confirmed by Popes Alexander III (1159–1181) and Celestine III (1191–1198).⁵⁹

The right of crowning the Hungarian kings ceded to the archbishops of Esztergom was materialized in the late twelfth century, when an apostolic legate was present on the territory of the Arpadian Kingdom. This was Cardinal Gregory of *Sancte Marie in Porticu*, who activated in Hungary for five years (1191–1196)⁶⁰ and who granted, by pontifical mandate, the right of *ius coronandi*⁶¹ to the archbishop at that time, Job of Esztergom. The same legate *de latere*, Gregory of *Sancte Marie in Porticu*, established a new ecclesiastical institution in Transylvania in the late twelfth century—the provostship of Sibiu.⁶² This was exempt, that is, it was subordinated only to Rome and not to the local diocese of Transylvania.⁶³ It was also the case of the exempt diocese of the Cumans, founded by archbishop primate of Hungary in the third decade of the thirteenth century. We know therefore of other ecclesiastical institutions on the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary that legally and institutionally belonged to the Roman Curia and not to the local royalty.⁶⁴

Four years after his first legatine mission to Cumania, the archbishop was mandated again, in 1231, to go to the regions inhabited by the Cumans with the same goal: to baptize the Cumans, to erect churches and to ordain priests who would serve there; in other words, he was once again granted *plenitudo potestatis*.⁶⁵ While the outcome of the first mission undertaken by the archbishop of Esztergom in Cumania⁶⁶ is known, for in 1227 a significant number of Cumans were Christianized and a new diocese was set up, the result of the second mission is unknown. Perhaps it was not recorded in the pontifical documents,⁶⁷ as it had been the case before.

AT LEAST from a hierocratic perspective, the legation of Archbishop Robert of Esztergom⁶⁸ was successful, having fully satisfied the discipline demanded by the Holy See. The results of the actions taken by the legate *de latere* were remarkable: he converted a large number of Cumans⁶⁹ to Christianity and he established a new diocese. Thus, the boundaries of *Christianitas*⁷⁰ (an insti-

tution led by the popes) were expanded, not only from a temporal-political perspective, but especially from a spiritual point of view. Compared to other legatine⁷¹ missions that were conducted in the Hungarian Kingdom and had a negative outcome, the actions taken by the archbishop of Esztergom registered a noteworthy success.

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(Translated by CARMEN BORBÉLY)

Notes

1. Zoltán J. Kosztoľnyik, *Hungary in the Thirteenth Century* (New York, 1996), 103–116; Pál Engel, *Regatul Sfântului Ștefan: Istoria Ungariei medievale 895–1526*, trans. Aurora Moga (Cluj-Napoca, 2006), 122; Maria Holban, *Din cronica relațiilor româno-ungare în secolele XIII–XIV* (Bucharest, 1981), passim; Ioan Ferenc, *A kunok és püspökségük*, trans. Domokos Pál Péter (Budapest, 1981), 93–142; Ioan-Aurel Pop, *Naștinea română medievală (sec. XIII–XVI)* (Bucharest, 1998), 83; id., “Din mâinile valabilor schismatici...”: Români și puterea în Regatul Ungariei medievale (secolele XIII–XIV) (Bucharest, 2011), 29, 50–51, 84–85; Viorel Achim, *Politica sud-estică a Regatului Ungar sub ultimii Arpadieni* (Bucharest, 2008), 57–59; Șerban Turcuș, *Sfântul Scaun și românii în secolul al XIII-lea* (Bucharest, 2001), 159–160, 292–296; Attila Zsoldos, *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1000–1301* (Budapest, 2011), 81, 92; László Makkai, *A Milkói (Kín) püspökség és népei* (Debrecen, 1936), 15–17, 38–40; Claudia Florentina Dobre, *Mendicants in Moldavia: Mission in an Orthodox Land* (Daun, 2009), 20–26; Victor Spinei, “The Cuman bishopric—genesis and evolution,” in *The Other Europe in the Middle Ages—Avars, Bulgars, Khazars and Cumans*, ed. Florin Curta (Leiden, 2008), 413–457; id., *The Romanians and the Turkic Nomads—North of the Danube Delta from the Tenth to the Mid-Thirteenth Century*, trans. Florin Curta and Maria Mihăilescu-Bîrliba (Leiden, 2009), 145–154; István Vásáry, *Cumans and Tatars—Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans 1185–1365* (Cambridge, 2005), 27–33; Nora Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims and Pagans’ in Medieval Hungary c. 1000–c.1300* (Cambridge, 2001), 224–263; Gyula Kristó, *A Kárpát-medence és a magyarország régmúltja (1301-ig)* (Szeged, 1994), 240; id., *Ardealul timpuriu (895–1324)* (Szeged, 2004), 247; Kristó Gyula, Engel Pál, and Makk Ferenc, *Korai magyar történeti lexikon (9–14. század)* (Budapest, 1994), 200, 385; Margit Beke, *Esztergomi Érsekek 1001–2003* (Budapest, 2003), 100–101.
2. *Documente privind istoria României*, ser. C. *Transilvania: veacul XI, XII și XIII*, vol. 1 (1075–1250) (Bucharest, 1951), passim (hereafter cited as *DIR*, C. *Transilvania*); *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor (1199–1345)*, vol. 1, ed. Nicolae Densușianu (Bucharest, 1887), passim (hereafter cited as *DIR (1199–1345)*); *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, ser. D, *Relații între Țările Române*, vol. 1 (1222–1456) (Bucharest, 1977), no. 6, 14–15 (hereafter cited as *DRH*); Ferdinandus Knauz, *Monumenta Ecclesiae Strigoniensis, tomus primus ab anno 979 ad anno 1273* (Strigonii, 1874), 257; Gusztáv

- Wenzel, *Árpádkori Új Okmánytár*, vol. 6 (899–1235) (Pest, 1867), passim; Jakó Zsigmond, *Erdélyi Okmánytár*, vol. 1 (1023–1300) (Budapest, 1997), no. 145, 167; Antonius Fekete Nagy, Ladislao Gáldi, Imre Lukinich, and Ladislaus Makkai, *Documenta Historiam Valachorum in Hungaria Illustrantia* (Budapest, 1941), no. 5, 15–16; Vladimir Drimba, *Codex Comanicus* (Bucharest, 2000), passim.
3. Walter Ullmann, *Medieval Papalism—The Political Theories of the Medieval Canonists* (London, 1948), 76–114.
 4. Jean Chelini, *Histoire religieuse de l'Occident médiéval* (Paris, 1968), 229.
 5. Sandro Carocci, “Feudo, vassallaggi e potere papale nello Stato della Chiesa,” in *Fiefs et féodalité dans l'Europe méridionale, du X^e au XIII^e siècle* (Toulouse, 2002), 43–45.
 6. Robert C. Figueira, “The Medieval Papal Legate and His Province: Geographical Limits of Jurisdiction,” in *Plenitude of Power*, ed. Robert C. Figueira (Hampshire, 2006), 74. “The legate was an agent in the fullest sense of the term. He often dressed in the papal purple; he invariably exercised powers and claimed prerogatives reserved to the pope alone. He made the pope’s will manifest in the farthest corners of the Western Church. He served as the pope’s ambassador; he kept his master informed of local conditions, circumstances, and events; he performed the majestic or modest tasks of ceremony and administration that the pope neither had the occasion nor inclination to perform. Legation was a means whereby the papacy could intervene effectively in the affairs of local churches on a regular basis.”
 7. I. S. Robinson, *The Papacy 1073–1198* (Cambridge, 1990), 147–149; Andrea Tilatti, “Legatus de latere domini pape: Il cardinale Latino e le costituzioni del 1279,” in *Scritti in onore di Girolamo Arnaldi offerti dalla Scuola nazionale di studi medioevali* (Rome, 2001), 513–543; Turcuș, *Sfântul Scaun și românii*, 25. “The legates *de latere* were most often chosen from among the cardinals. The name of these legates refers not only to the fact that they were sent by the pope, but also that they stood by his side, that they were an extension of both his spiritual and his physical body (*pars corporis papae*). The legates *missi* were also sent by the pope, but in most cases they were not part of the Curia, so they were only assigned missions that were not very difficult. The legates *nati* were the archbishops primate, the leaders of the ecclesiastical provinces, which automatically entailed their assuming the title of legate.”
 8. Robinson, 147–149.
 9. Turcuș, *Sfântul Scaun și românii*, p. 83–131.
 10. Șerban Turcuș, “Fondarea prepoziturii sașilor ca proiect transilvan al Sfântului Scaun,” *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie George Barițiu* (Cluj-Napoca), Series Historica 49 (2010): 21–37.
 11. Ibid.
 12. William J. Collinge, *Historical Dictionary of Catholicism* (London, 1997), 84; Uta Blumenthal, *Papal Reform and Canon Law in the 11th and 12th Centuries* (Hampshire, 1998), 70–75.
 13. Turcuș, “Fondarea prepoziturii sașilor,” 21–37.
 14. Berend, 224–263; Sándor Szilágyi, *A magyar nemzet története*, vol. 2 (1038–1301) (Budapest, 1896), 166; András Pálóczi-Horváth, *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians—Steppe Peoples in Medieval Hungary*, trans. Timothy Wilkinson (Budapest, 1989), 42–61;

- György Györffy, *A magyarság keleti elemei* (Budapest, 1990), 200–202; Németh Gyula, “A Kunok neve és eredete,” in *Századok* (Budapest) 76 (1942): 166–178.
15. Ullmann, *Medieval Papalism*, 114–138.
 16. Achim, 57–59.
 17. Spinei, “The Cuman bishopric,” 415; Alain Demurger, *Chevaliers du Christ: Les ordres religieux-militaires au moyen-âge XI^e–XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 2002), passim; Harald Zimmermann, *Papalitatea în Evul Mediu*, trans. Adinel-Ciprian Dincă (Iași, 2004), 153–160; Dobre, 19.
 18. Holban, 9–27.
 19. Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades 1147–1254* (Leiden, 2007), 23–75.
 20. *DIR (1199–1345)*, no. 77, 102; Jakó, 1: no. 145, 167; *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 185, 228; *DRH, D*, no. 6, 14–15.
 21. Joseph Avril, “Les institutions de la *Societas christiana* aux XI^e et XII^e siècles: diocèses, pievi et paroisses,” in *Mélanges de l’Ecole française de Rome. Moyen-Age, Temps modernes* (Paris) 86, 2 (1974): 561–565.
 22. *DIR, C. Transilvania*, no. 77, 150–151, 369–370; Jakó, 1: no. 38, 134.
 23. Guy Bedovelle, *Saint Dominic—The Grace of the Word* (San Francisco, 1987), passim; Jean de Mailly, “The Life of St. Dominic,” in *Early Dominicans*, ed. Simon Tugwell (New Jersey, 1982), 53–60; Spinei, “The Cuman bishopric,” 420–426.
 24. Șerban Papacostea, *Români în secolul al XIII-lea, între Cruciată și Imperiul Mongol* (Bucharest, 1993), 34; Thomas Nægler, “Transilvania între 900 și 1300,” in *Istoria Transilvaniei*, vol. 1 (*până la 1541*), eds. Ioan-Aurel Pop and Thomas Nægler (Cluj-Napoca, 2003), 225; Turcuș, *Sfântul Scaun și români*, 291–296.
 25. Makkai, 15–17, 38–40.
 26. *DIR (1199–1345)*, no. 77, 102. “Gregorius episcopus . . . venerabili fratri . . . Strigoniensi archiepiscopo apostolice sedis legato, salutem etc. . . . Nuper siquidem per litteras tuas nobis transmissas accepimus, quod Jesus Christus deus ac dominus noster super gentem Cumanorum clementer respiciens, eis salvationis ostium aperuit hiis diebus. Aliqui enim nobiles gentis illius per te ad baptismi gratiam pervenerunt, et quidam princeps Bortz nomine de terra illorum cum omnibus sibi subditis per ministerium tuum fidem desiderat suscipere christianam; propter quod unicum filium suum una cum fratribus predicatoribus, messis dominice operariis in terra predicta, ad te specialiter destinavit, attentius obsecrans, ut personaliter accedens ad ipsum et suos viam vite ostenderes ipsis, per quam ad veri dei notitiam valeant pervenire.”
 27. *Ibid.*, no. 77, 102; *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 185, 228.
 28. Zsoldos, 89.
 29. *DIR (1199–1345)*, 1: no. 77, 102.
 30. *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 185, 228.
 31. Engel, 116–118.
 32. *DIR (1199–1345)*, 1: no. 77, 102. “Gregorius episcopus . . . venerabili fratri . . . Strigoniensi archiepiscopo apostolice sedis legato, salutem etc. . . . et quia magis fructificare poteris si apostolice sedis legatione fungaris, cum auctoritas semper consuevit multum favoris habere in Cumania et Brodnic, terra illa vicina, de cuius

gentis conversione speratur, legationis officium tibi committere dignemur, per quod habeas potestatem in eisdem terris vice nostra predicandi, baptizandi, edificandi ecclesias, ordinandi clericos necnon et creandi episcopos et generaliter omnia que ad cultum et ampliacionem fidei pertinent exercendi. . . . accedendi ad dictas provincias licentiam tibi concedimus postulatam, devotioni tue super predictis plene legationis officium in eisdem provinciis committentes ...”; *DRH*, 1: no. 6, 14–15; Pop, *Românii și puterea*, 26–30; Nora Berend, “How many Medieval Europes? The Pagans of Hungary and regional diversity in Christendom,” in *The Medieval World*, ed. J. L. Nelson (London–New York, 2001), 77–92.

33. Collinge, 54.
34. Tudor Sălăgean, *Transilvania în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIII-lea: Afirmarea regimului congregațional* (Cluj-Napoca, 2007), 21.
35. *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 188, 230–231; *DIR (1199–1345)*, 1: no. 83, 108. “Gregorius episcopus etc. Karissimo in Christo filio B. nato karissimi in Christo filii nostri ... salutem. Immensas gratiarum actiones referimus creatori, qui tibi tam pium inspiravit affectum, ut pro Cumanis convertendis ad ipsum cum venerabili fratri nostro . . . Strigoniensi archiepiscopo, apostolice sedis legato, terram illorum intraveris, intendens totis viribus, sicut princeps catholicus et sincere devotionis alumpnus, gentem illam ad catholicam fidem adducere ac domino populum augmentare.”
36. Colin Morris, *The Papal Monarchy—The Western Church from 1050 to 1250* (Oxford, 1989), 182–188; Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies* (New Jersey, 1957), 39, 76, 166, 387.
37. Lester L. Field Jr., “Christendom before Europe? A Historiographical Analysis of ‘Political Theology’ in Late Antiquity,” in *Plenitude of Power*, ed. Robert C. Figueira (Hampshire, 2006), 141–170.
38. Lidia Gross, *Confreriile medievale în Transilvania (sec. XIV–XVI)* (Cluj-Napoca, 2004), 111; Turcuș, *Sfântul Scaun și românii*, 286.
39. *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 189, 231; *DIR (1199–1345)* 1: no. 82, 107. “Gregorius episcopus etc. Dilecto filio ... priori ordinis Predicatorum de Ungaria salutem. Cum venerabili fratri nostro . . . Strigoniensi archiepiscopo, apostolice sedis legato, iuxta suum desiderium dominus fructum dederit, conversionem videlicet non parve multitudinis Cumanorum; et in partibus illis idem archiepiscopus venerabilem fratrem nostrum Theodoricum de ordine tuo per Christi gratiam in episcopum iam prefecerit . . . Quare devotioni tue per apostolica scripta mandamus, quatenus in mittendis ad Cumanos fratribus, qui magis idonei videbuntur secundum conscientiam eiusdem archiepiscopi, nec non et ipsius episcopi, qui cum fere per quinquennium prior fuerit eiusdem ordinis in Ungaria, magis utiles plene novit, et eorum, qui se ad hoc offerunt, voluntates, te non difficilem, sed facilem debeas exhibere.” *Documenta Historiam Valachorum in Hungaria Illustrantia*, no. 5, 15–16; Pop, *Națiunea română medievală*, 83.
40. *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 190, 231–232; *DIR (1199–1345)*, 1: no. 86, 111. “Gregorius episcopus etc. Gaudeamus in domino, quod labori tuo iuxta tuum desiderium fructum dedit, conversionem videlicet non parve multitudinis Cumanorum; iamque

in partibus illis per dei gratiam venerabilem fratrem nostrum Theodoricum de ordine fratrum predicatorum, eruditum in lege domini et vita preclarum, auctoritate concessa tibi super hoc a sede apostolica, in episcopum prefecisti.” Ferent, 93–142.

41. Collinge, *Historical Dictionary*, 84; Jean Gaudemet, *Storia del diritto canonico—Ecclesia et Civitas* (Turin, 1998), passim; Gabriel Le Bras, *Histoire du droit et des institutions de l'Église en Occident* (Paris, 1955); Stephan Kuttner, *Gratian and the Schools of Law, 1140–1234* (London, 1983); James A. Brundage, “The Teaching and Study of Canon Law in the Law Schools,” in *The History of Medieval Canon Law in the Classical Period, 1140–1234: From Gratian to the Decretales of Pope Gregory IX*, eds. Wilfred Hartmann and Kenneth Pennington (Washington, 2008), 98–121.
42. Robert Folz, *The Concept of Empire in Western Europe from the Fifth to the Fourteenth Century*, trans. Sheila Ann Ogilvie (Connecticut, 1980), passim.
43. Beke, 98; Knauz, 257.
44. Beke, 99.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Enzo Petrucci, *Ecclesiologia e politica* (Rome, 2001), 261–290; Maria Pia Alberzoni, “Dalla regalità sacra al sacerdozio regale: Il difficile equilibrio tra papato e impero nella christianitas medieval,” in *L'equilibro internazionale dagli antichi ai moderni*, eds. C. Bearzot, F. Landucci, and G. Zecchini (Milan, 2005), 85–93.
48. Collinge, 127.
49. *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 193, 235; Sălăgean, 22; Agostino Paravicini-Bagliani, *The Pope's Body*, trans. David S. Peterson (Chicago, 2000), 215; Walter Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in The Middle Ages* (London, 1962), passim.
50. *DIR (1199–1345)*, 1: no. 87, 112. “Gregorius episcopus etc. Venerabili fratri . . . episcopo cumanorum salutem. Cum pro fide in gente Cumanorum plantanda sollicitè laboraveris et profeceris laudabiliter dante domino incrementum: tuis precibus benignus annuentes, te ac successores tuos a cuiuslibet subiectione preterquam Romani pontificis liberos esse decernimus et immediate ad iurisdictionem sedis apostolice pertinere.” Zsoldos, 92.
51. *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 193, 235.
52. *DIR (1199–1345)*, 1: no. 88, 112–113. “Gregorius episcopus etc. Dilectis filiis nobilibus viris ducibus et populis Cumanorum nuper ad fidem Christi conversis, salutem. . . . Cum igitur vos nuper relicto gentilitatis errore ad viam veneritis veritatis et ab infidelitatis tenebris ad fidei veram lucem, nos vestris profectibus aspirantes et quieti providere volentes, personas vestras cum omnibus bonis, que impresentiarum rationabiliter, possidentis aut in futurum etc. usque suscipimus, districtius inhibentes, ne quis in vos vel terram vestram ex eo, quod conversi estis ad Christum, dominium usurpare presumat, aut iugum vobis imponere servitutis; statuendo ut salvo dei timore gaudeatis in omni pristina libertate.”
53. *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 194, 235–236; *DIR (1199–1345)*, 1: no. 88, 112–113. “Ad hanc autem libertatis et immunitatis et possessionis pacifice terre vestre concessionem a karissimo in Christo filio nostro A. Ungarie rege illustri, Bele regis primogeniti sui accedente consensu, iam pridem factam Cumanis, sicut provide facta

est et in eiusdem regis litteris aurea bulla munitis plenius continentur, auctoritate vobis apostolica confirmamus et presentis scripti patrocínio communimus.”

54. *DIR (1199–1345)*, 1: no. 88, 113.
55. *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 194, 235–236.
56. L. Solymosi, “Egyházi-politikai viszonyok a pápai hegemonia idején (13. században),” in *Magyarország és a Szentszék kapcsolatainak ezer éve*, ed. István Zombori (Budapest, 1996), 47–53.
57. L. Besenyi, G. Érszegi, and M. Pedrazza, *De Bulla Aurea – Andreae II Regis Hungariae MCCXXII* (Verona, 1999), 35–44.
58. *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 204, 244.
59. M. J. Bak and Gy. Bónis, *The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, vol. 1 (1000–1301) (Bakersfield, 1989), 34–37; J. Temesváry, *II. Gejza magatartása a Pápaság és a Császárság második küzdelmében* (Szamosújvár, 1886), 6–65.
60. Kristó, *Ardealul timpuriu*, 186–189.
61. *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 18, 11; Gusztav Wenzel, *Árpádkori Uj Okmánytár*, vol. 6 (899–1235) (Pest, 1867), no. 114, 182–183; Knauz, 141; Jakó, 1: no. 21, 129.
62. Jakó, 1: no. 22, 129.
63. Engel and Makk, 192–197.
64. Pop, *Românii și puterea*, 29, 50–51, 84–85; Ferentz, 93–142.
65. *DIR, C. Transilvania*, 1: no. 205, 244–245; *DIR (1199–1345)*, 1: no. 89, 113–114; Ovidio Capitani, “Cardinali e Plenitudo potestatis, una difficile disputa tra i secoli XIII e XIV,” in *Forme storiche di governo nella Chiesa universale*, ed. Paolo Prodi (Bologna, 2003), 87–93.
66. Spinei, *The Romanians and the Turkic Nomads*, 145–154.
67. Bruno Gallard, “Les hommes de culture dans la diplomatie pontificale au XIII^e siècle,” *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome. Moyen Âge* (Rome), 108, 2 (1996): 615–628.
68. Zsoldos, 81.
69. Imre Baski, “On the Ethnic Names of the Cumans of Hungary,” in *Kinship in the Altaic World*, eds. Elena V. Boikova and Rostislav B. Rybakov (Göttingen, 2006), 43–54; Dobre, 20–26.
70. Chelini, 268–277.
71. Figueira, 73–105.

Abstract**Hierocratic Aspects Related to the Legation of Archbishop Robert of Esztergom to Cumania (1227)**

The topic addressed in this study has been discussed before and there are a number of writings related to the moment when the Cumans' diocese was established in 1227. However, the motivation for approaching this subject is given by the fact that the studies dedicated to it do not present the legation of Archbishop Robert of Esztergom (Strigonium) from a hierocratic perspective. In this paper, we shall attempt to highlight the hierocratic aspects of the legation undertaken by Archbishop Robert of Esztergom in "Cumania" (the southwest of Moldova), by analyzing several published pontifical documents. At least from a hierocratic perspective, the legation of Archbishop Robert of Esztergom was successful, having fully satisfied the discipline demanded by the Holy See. The results of the actions taken by the legate *de latere* were remarkable: he converted a large number of Cumans to Christianity and he established a new diocese. Thus, the boundaries of *Christianitas* were expanded, not only from a temporal-political perspective, but especially from a spiritual point of view.

Keywords

hierocracy, Robert of Esztergom, *legatus natus*, Cumans, legate *de latere*, 1227, exempt diocese