

ZSUZSA ESZTER PETŐ

**HERMITS IN THE HEART OF
THE HUNGARIAN KINGDOM**

**Medieval Monastic Landscape of
the Pauline Order in the Pilis**



BUDAPEST 2018

The publication of this volume was generously funded by
the National Cultural Fund of Hungary



Front Cover

A bird's eye view of the Monastery of the Holy Spirit.
Photo credit: János László, Civertan Grafikai Stúdió

Back Cover

3D elevation model of the Pilis area on the basis of
ASTER GDEM and various maps

Volume editor

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ISBN 978-615-5766-09-1

HU-ISSN 1216-6847

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2018

ARCHAEOLOGUA ALAPÍTVÁNY

H-1067 Budapest, Teréz krt. 13.

Language editing by Karen Stark

Copy editing by Zsuzsanna Renner

Desktop editing and layout by Szilamér Nemes

Printed by Prime Rate Kft.

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Editor's Preface

Heremites, monachi, fratres: these are the medieval terms used for different branches of monastic people and communities, who followed various rules, represented particular lifestyles and created a wide range of buildings and landscapes as their special spaces in the earthly world. For some of them, the desert in Egypt was the proper place to live, while for others, an island in the Atlantic Ocean or a royal forest in Central Europe. The Order of St. Paul the First Hermit represents a particular case of monastic culture, as the medieval history of the Paulines incorporates, to some extent, all three approaches to monastic traditions. Furthermore, this is the only monastic order that emerged in Hungary, a country in Central Europe, which was Christianized many centuries after the appearance of the first monastic communities. Thus, this study on the Pauline order offers a new insight to the general history of monasticism.

The first version of this study was defended as a thesis for the Medieval Studies Program at the Central European University in Budapest. It was based on a wide range of sources; however, the most innovative trait of the work was the usage of spatial approaches and geographical information system (GIS) to analyze the Pauline space. This topographical study is also influenced by the concept of monastic landscape. Landscape archaeology and the interpretation of monastic landscapes have proven to be one of the most fruitful research directions during the last decades across Europe as well as in other areas of monasticism. In an earlier study, I have argued the Pauline order represents a particularly interesting case for monastic landscape studies – now, Zsuzsa Eszter Pető's work demonstrates in an excellent way, how the hilly region of the Pilis offered a unique monastic space under the influence of medieval royal power.

József Laszlovszky