

Monasteries under private patronage within the social and economic topography: centers, residences, estates. Several case studies of medieval Hungary

Abstract:

The social and economic relationship between private monasteries has proven to be an important issue in assessing their function and role. In this sense, several cases from medieval Hungary were selected, in order to analyze the position of monastic sites within the structure of estates of that micro-region, especially the relation between the monasteries and the landed properties of the patrons. Furthermore, sources on the residence of the patrons will be reviewed in context with the monastic site. Several abbeys were connected to earthen fortifications or to other types of castles as well. These features and the topography revealed through this analysis suggest that the site of private monasteries had a more or less a central character. Aside from the obvious advantages offered by this position, the abbeys became more vulnerable towards the patrons. The patrons, according to custom, were directly involved in the administration of the monastic estates. Moreover, they were able to use the economic resources of the monasteries not only for the abbey but also for their own benefits and purposes—sometimes even by expropriating their lands.

Keywords: -