

**DAAD Workshop 3:**  
**Borders and Interactions:**  
**Monastic Regions, Cult Centers and Pilgrimages**

November 8–9, 2021, Vienna, Central European University (Department of Medieval Studies)

Medieval monasteries and their connections shaped monastic landscapes, but they also served as indicators of political, social and economic structures of regions. The workshop “Borders and Interactions: Monastic Regions, Cult Centers and Pilgrimages” (originally planned for spring 2020, postponed to November 2021 due to the pandemic) focused on these spatial dimensions, emerging networks and individual case studies from Central and Eastern Europe. In addition to the insight gained into completed and ongoing interdisciplinary research projects, the discussions that took place during the workshop as well as during the guided visit to mendicant friaries in Vienna (in the afternoon of the last day of the event) were an enriching opportunity to engage in exchange with researchers from Budapest, Heidelberg, Munich, Prague, and Vienna.

The papers – ranging from Holy Men from Lincoln to the Paulines from late medieval Lower Austria or to the Franciscans in Dalmatia – profitably examined different facets of general questions posed by the workshop’s organizers, such as the density and composition of a network. A general analysis of monasteries in East-Central Europe, presented by keynote speaker Beatrix F. Romhányi, showed that only about 10% of them were women's communities – whose appearance in Western Europe, on the other hand, was very strong. Another illustrative phenomenon featured at the workshop was the absence of Premonstratensian foundations in Austria, which had a direct impact on the possibility of making conclusions about connections within their networks.

Through the numerous case studies, participants not only gained insight into current research discourses but to a special extent the workshop opened up the possibility to question their own “borders”. As a Ph.D. student whose focus is on the study of medieval monasteries of Western Europe, I gained an intensive insight into the world of Eastern European monasteries and regional peculiarities, such as the interaction of Dalmatian Franciscan friars with the Italian universities of Bologna and Padua. Thanks to my following research visits to CEU libraries in Vienna and Budapest, I was able to deepen the impressions I obtained during the workshop.

After two productive workshops discussing “Dynastic Principle and Regnal Persistence” (April 24–25, 2019) and “Urban Societies in Border Zones” (October 17–19, 2019), the workshop on “Borders and Interactions: Monastic Regions, Cult Centers and Pilgrimages” successfully concluded the DAAD-supported project “Regions and Regional Exchanges in Medieval Central Europe”, which was initiated by the Central European University and the University of Heidelberg. The project made a vivid international exchange possible and gave new impulses for upcoming projects.

*Isabel Kimpel, Heidelberg*