AGATHA, MOTHER OF ST. MARGARET: THE SLAVIC VERSUS SALIAN SOLUTIONS – A CRITICAL OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The published evidence is reviewed and critically assessed regarding the ancestry of Agatha, mother of St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland. The debate continues, and although the solution remains in doubt, the author concludes that on balance the evidence is stronger for the Slavic ancestry rather than the Germanic (Salian) one.

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As we enter the 21st century we are no nearer to identifying, or agreeing upon, the maternal ancestry of one of the most important characters in Scottish medieval history – St. Margaret, wife of King Malcolm III (d.1093). The dynastic usurpation and post-invasion trauma of 1066 dictated that St. Margaret's maternal origins were of secondary importance to English Chroniclers until the marriage of her daughter Edith-Matilda to Henry I in 1100. The debate as to the maternal ancestry of St. Margaret is now becoming more relevant as the known pool of descendants grows ever larger and align themselves, as do many writers, to one of two basic, generic solutions – Slavic or Salian. The last six years have seen a re-igniting of the debate with seven major articles being published[2].

Historiographers may already look back at the flurry of articles in the late 1930s/early 1950s as a sub-conscious attempt by the writers of the time to align with or distance themselves from Germany. Several (Fest, 1938; Moriarty, 1952) sought to establish Agatha as an otherwise unknown daughter of St. Stephen, King of Hungary (d.1038). In more recent years the quest for an 'anti-Salian' solution has seen the re-emergence of Agatha as a daughter of Iaroslav Vladimirich, Grand Prince of Kiev (d.1054)[3].

However, to suggest that the competing solutions have polarised so succinctly is too simplistic. In addition to previous German, Hungarian and Russian solutions, 2002 has seen the emergence of a Bulgarian solution[4] (Mladjov, 2002) and the re-emergence of a

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[2] Lauder-Frost (2002) summarises many of the relevant articles published since 1808.

[3] As a line of thought it is not new. An earlier 'recent' example of this emanates from a comparatively unknown pedigree compiled by Burke (1877) when confirming the pedigree and arms for the family of Fuller.

[4] Few would be desirous or qualified to reconstruct what is unknown about Bulgarian History. The Anglo-Norman 'authority', Geoffrey Gaimar, wrote a rhymed poem in *c* 1137, *'L'Estoire des Engles',* from which we derive cautious speculation about Edward 'the Exile's' possible life. Gaimar tells us that 'the Confessor' came to his young nephew in exile to help in the war against the 'Velcase'. 'In the end they agreed that they should send to Normandy for Edward (the Confessor) and Alfred. Edward was the elder brother and he had gone into Hungary to help his cousins in the war they had. The people of Velcase caused it' (Ronay, 1989, p.195). It would seem unlikely that 'Velcase' is an embellishment of the provincial town of Veles in Macedonia, to the south east of Hungary and south west of Bulgaria. Barlow (1970), acknowledges it improbable that the Confessor remained exclusively in Normandy during his exile. Therefore, 'Velasace' might be synonymous with '*The*

compromise (Parsons, 2002). Parsons' article is as excellent as it is honest for its unprejudicial appraisal of a difficult subject matter, the main thrust being to qualify the limitations of onomastics, otherwise known as anthroponymy.

Ronay (1989, pp.45-46)[5] was the first in recent times to try systematically to analyse the root source of evidence used by chroniclers, chroniclers whose testimony potentially leads us to the identity of Agatha, mother of St. Margaret. However Ronay appears, as with other notable commentators such as de Vajay (1962), to rely on the accuracy of the *earliest* implicit sentiment derived from John of Worcester that 'Agatha was a daughter of the *germani* of the Emperor Henry' (1017) or, as derived from the Worcester version of *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle* (Douglas and Greenaway, 1979), 'the Emperor's kinswoman' (1057). As a consequence of interpolation it is difficult to attribute precise dates. General consensus indicates *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* testimony of *caseres maga* 'the emperor's relation/kinswoman' emanates from the early part of the 12th century, probably just prior to John of Worcester's '*filia germani imperatoris henrici*' – 'daughter of a close male relation (brother?) of the Emperor Henry'[6].

Although Ingham (1998) provided resolution of the argument first propounded by Jetté (1996)[7], the physical evidence he cited[8], together with an effective although lengthy analysis of the arguments of others, led him to the very plausible solution that Agatha was daughter of Iaroslav Vladimirich, Grand Prince of Kiev (d.1054). This argument was convincing for several reasons. Not only did it reconcile with much of what had been deduced about Edward's life in exile (Ronay, 1989)[9] but it appeared to explain an environment which might have provided onomastic influences behind the choices of the names Agatha, Alexander, David and Mary – otherwise alien to the Royal Courts of western Europe[10].

Ves' who, as Whittow (1996) observes, were one of the four indigenous 9th century peoples in the land of Rus who traditionally asked the Rurikidian Vikings to govern over them for protection. As the 'Confessor' is suspected of a militaristic incursion into Hampshire (from exile) in 1036, a visit to Kiev, partaking in a military action, is not out of character (although not elsewhere recorded) with the observations made by Barlow as to his life at this time.

5 The constraints of this article do not make it possible to recount the full traditions and sources leading to our understanding of The Atheling's life in exile. However, those that wish for an expansive account of the life and times of Edward 'The Exile' are referred to Ronay (1989).

6 The Salic Emperor Henry III (of Germany) was born 28th October 1017 and succeeded his father, the Franconian Emperor Conrad II 'The Salic', in 1039. Henry III died in October 1056.

7 Jetté was not the first to seek filiation from Iaroslav of Kiev (see Burke, 1877).

8 Ingham appeared to shift finally the balance of opinion in the direction of the Slavic solution, citing the recently re-discovered evidence of a fresco in St. Sophia's Cathedral, Kiev. Ingham reviews what appeared to be a donor portrait, attributed as being Iaroslav, five sons and five daughters shown astride of Iaroslav. Previously, only three of a possible five daughters were known to history. However, Parsons (2002) suggested caution as two of seven sons, who are known to history, are omitted. This, suggests Parsons, was to achieve artistic symmetry – the portrait still portraying ten children.

9 Ronay's unique insight targeted the Germano-Rus discussions of 1043 and the failure of Iaroslav to marry his daughter to the German Emperor Henry III. Ronay believes by way of a reciprocal compromise Agatha, Henry's niece, was sent back to Kiev with the Russian Embassy of 1043 and was there married to Edward 'the Exile'.

10 It is overlooked that under the 'Slavic' scheme of things Agatha had a sister-in-law 'Maria' of Byzantium, Mother of Vladimir 'Monomakh'. Furthermore, it would seem unlikely that Agatha or a member of her immediate household were not somehow instrumental in facilitating the probable marriage of the bastard Wessex Princess Gytha, to Agatha's 'Slavic' nephew – Vladimir, post the Norman invasion.

Meanwhile, Faris and Richardson (1998) and Parsons (2002) were right to qualify the limitations of onomastics. While the religious fervour of St. Margaret provides another possible means of justifying names such as Alexander, David and Mary[11], the Salianists, or more precisely 'Liudolphians', cannot wholly validate their line of counter-argument as no names from the 'Liudolphian' *fund*, borrowing from a concept used by Jackman (2001)[12], appear in Agatha's descendants whereas at least some Kievan *fund* names, in preference to the term 'Rurikidian', appear amongst Agatha's descendants. This appears indirectly to corroborate our suspicions of a lengthy period of exile at the Kievan Court[13] where Edward 'the Exile' may well have come into contact with the exiled Prince Andrew of Hungary[14], an exile inferred by the testimony of the slightly less well known Chroniclers Gaimar (*c* 1137), Adam of Bremen[15] and the *Chronica* of Roger of Hoveden (late 12th century).

This last source is integral to the arguments of the Slavicists, Jetté (1996) and Ingham (1998) as it incorporates an earlier passage from a work more recently named *Leges Edwardi Confessoris* which, in its root form, is suggested as being attributable to the 1130s. Ingham (1998, pp.252-256), provides an excellent appraisal of this source but what is most interesting for our discussion is that it is the only authority that is definitive in its association with Russia and its rulers, not compromising through interpolative reconciliation, the garbled tradition of relationship to/from the Hungarian throne or an Emperor Henry.

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11 Alexander's conception was possibly contemporary with the passing of the then Pope Alexander. Mary, as identified by Parsons (2002), may be identifiable with the emergence of the Marian cult. David is more problematic. If Jetté (1996) and Ingham's (1998) identification of Agatha is correct, St. Margaret had a first cousin David of Hungary (compatible in age).

Further, it may be worth considering the legend of the 3rd century St. Margaret of Antioch, the only celebrated bearer of the name prior to St. Margaret of Scotland. St. Margaret of Antioch was the daughter of a pagan priest. Tradition has us believe that she converted to Christianity and for this act was disowned by her pagan Father. The rejection of paganism, the embracing of Christianity and subsequent disownership by her Father resulted in her martyrdom (Anon., 1911; see also, http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/saintm19.htm). This story has particular poignancy when we consider 10/11th century Scandinavia/Russia were poised between the legacy of a pagan past and the new forces of Christianity. Perhaps in Agatha, St. Margaret of Scotland's mother, we have a lady whose family had pagan roots; they rejected this background in favour of Christianity. The poignancy of her family's experience may have led her symbolically to call one of her daughters Margaret, after the 3rd century St. Margaret of Antioch.

12 See Jackman (2001). Using Jackman's model of analysis it would be intriguing to study the dispersal of the then very rare forename 'Christina'. The Swedish Princess Christina (b. c1080), daughter of Inge I of Sweden (d.1112) by his second wife Helen, had a sister Margaret – a name also unusual at that time (see above). Both Christina's daughters transmitted the 'Christina' name to their own daughters, behaviour almost Byzantine in character. Scholars in early medieval Swedish history may like to comment on what is known or speculated about Queen Helen's ancestry.

13 Fest (1938) (and in another article by him in 1940), noted the opinion of his fellow Hungarian writer Karácsonyi in 1928 as to the probable exile of the English Princes in Kiev.

14 It is through the exile of the Hungarian Prince Andrew at Kiev, c1037-1046, that Edward 'the Exile' probably came to Hungary in 1046. Makhai (1975) suggested that the exiled young English princes – Edmund and Edward, first came to Hungary in the vanguard of Peter Orseolo's German army, designed to help Peter re-acquire the Hungarian throne in 1044.

15 I have not been able to ascertain for the purposes of this article whether the testimony of this 11th Century Bishop of Hamburg is attributable to the 11th century or inherited in an interpolated form from the 12th century.

However, there has been a reluctance by those who have reviewed this subject to seriously oppose the 'scientific' and logical reasoning of the Hungarian scholar, Szabolcs de Vajay (1962). This is because if we start with the controlling assumption that the implicit sentiment of John of Worcester in *Chonicon ex Chronicis* is sound, then de Vajay's reasoning, through process of elimination, comes to the only tenable solution – Agatha the 'Liudolphian'. Ingham (1998) rightly suggested that we need to investigate the root of this controlling assumption and to analyse systematically how chroniclers of this period were applying the phraseology *germanus* i.e. the full extent of the relationships it was used to describe and, as such, we will return to this issue shortly.

Although we have few, relevant fixed dates what can statistical probability tell us? An analysis of the chronology of the female consort in England between 1153 and 1355 indicates the average age upon marriage was 17 and the average age on the birth of the eldest child was approximately 20.5[16]. Henry II, John, Henry III, Edwards I, II & III had 55 known legitimate children by their first or principal childbearing consort i.e. 9.2 known children per marriage spanning, on average, 16 years – a child every 1.74 years. More relevantly, from the evidence of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the *Chronicles of John of Worcester* it is improbable that St. Margaret and Malcolm III of Scotland were formally married earlier than 1068[17] and are known to have had at least 8 children. As Euphemia, the eldest child of Edith-Matilda is thought to have been born in August 1101 we can extrapolate that Edith-Matilda, as a probable 5th child of St. Margaret, was born *c* 1080. For the purposes of statistical uniformity we might conclude that St. Margaret was child bearing until *c* 1085/86. As genealogists will know it is rare for a woman in the middle ages to be child bearing after 42 years of age. Therefore, while the sample date is not extensive, statistical analysis indicates the probability that St. Margaret was born between *c* 1044 and *c* 1051, fitting with much of what has been deduced about the life of Edward 'the Exile'. Assuming that traditional interpretations as to Margaret being the eldest child are sound, this uniformly places the window of birth for her own mother, Agatha, as *c* 1023/30[18].

So, in *Chronicon ex Chronicis*, John of Worcester tells us (1017) that Edward Atheling *alias* 'the Exile' '*Eadwardus vero Agatham, filia germani imperatoris henrici, in matrimonium accepit'* before she was probably born. The same passage goes on to talk about Edward and Agatha's children, 'Margaret, Queen of Scots and Christina the Nun'. As Howorth (1916) suggested, the entry of 1017 represents a clear departure from the textual style attributable to Marianus and we might infer, due to its retrospective nature, may at the latest be attributed a scribal date of c1120-1131. The key therefore is to date accurately the process of interpolation and we need to be reasonably sure that the source or sources used were coherent and reliable. This is vitally important as the arguments of Herzog (1933), de Vajay (1962), Ronay (1989), Wilson (1993) and Faris and Richardson (1998) derive from the implicit sentiment of Salian relationship or descent[19]. We need also to reflect that the 'D' version of *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle*, later associated with

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16 Such analysis is limited by the chronologies we choose to accept as being broadly correct.

17 Wilson (1993) firmly indicates 1070, naming both the Officiary, Fothad, and the place, Dunfermline. *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle* (Douglas & Greenaway, 1979) gives the following testimony under the year 1067, "Then the aforesaid King Malcolm began to desire his (Edgar's) sister for his wife, but he (Edgar) and all his men opposed it for a long time; and she also refused". In light of this 1070 would not seem an unrealistic date.

18 Faris & Richardson (1998) were correct, on grounds of probable chronology, to argue that Liudolph of Brunswick could have been father to Agatha.

19 Unlike the 'D' variant of *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle*, John makes no mention of Agatha under the year 1057 only furnishing us with the tradition that Edward had long been in exile in Hungary.

Worcester, shows clear signs of interpolation under the years under 1057 and 1067 when, in the latter instance[20], Agatha, Edgar and his two sisters Margaret and Christina took refuge in Scotland. In respect of St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland (d.1093) the preferred translation of 1067 (Douglas and Greenaway, 1979) furnishes phrases such as *afterwards performed, prospered, was descended* as opposed to *is* descended, *has* prospered and *has* performed. This retrospective appraisal of her life cannot be attributed a date earlier than 1093 and the lone entry of 1130 (entered as 1080) suggests a greater degree of probability that the interpolation was contemporary to the efforts of John of Worcester.

This same passage from 1067 states of St. Margaret that 'her Mother's family goes back to the Emperor Henry's family who ruled over Rome'[21]. Undeniably vague and evasive, the 12th century scribe obviously at a loss to articulate the relationship as he was for 1057 (possibly writing within the space of a few hours/days) when he named Agatha as *caseres maga* – the Emperor's kinswoman. If viewed with the erroneous belief of John of Worcester that the Hungarian King Saloman (brother-in-law of the German Emperor Henry IV) received the Atheling in exile (1017), together with the belief of Agatha's descendants of relationship to the Hungarian Crown, then some 12th century chroniclers would inevitably deduce relationship to a German Emperor Henry. So goes the Slavist counter reasoning[22].

De Vajay (1962) was not the first to position Agatha as a daughter of an uterine brother of the Salian Emperor Henry III. As Moriarty (1952) observed this line of thought had first been propounded by Herzog (1933) who favoured the interpretation that Agatha was a grandaughter of Gisela of Swabia (d.1043) through her son Ernest of Babenburg. Moriarty mentions that Herzog also recognised another uterine half brother, Liudolph of Brunswick (c1008-1038), as a possible candidate for Agatha's parentage, an interpretation later championed by de Vajay (1962) and supported recently by Faris and Richardson (1998). While concerns have been raised over the tightness of Liudolph's chronology (Jetté, 1996)[23], there is also the distinct lack of conveyance of what Jackman (2001)[24] might describe as the *onomastic fund.* Coupled to this is the troublesome justification of how a West Friesland Count would sufficiently be able to enjoy interaction within the Kievan Orbit in a short period in or before 1038, as initially implied by Jetté (1996), to impose sufficiently on the life of Edward in exile in Kiev[25].

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[20] In this instance, John's testimony of 1068 seems more realistic.

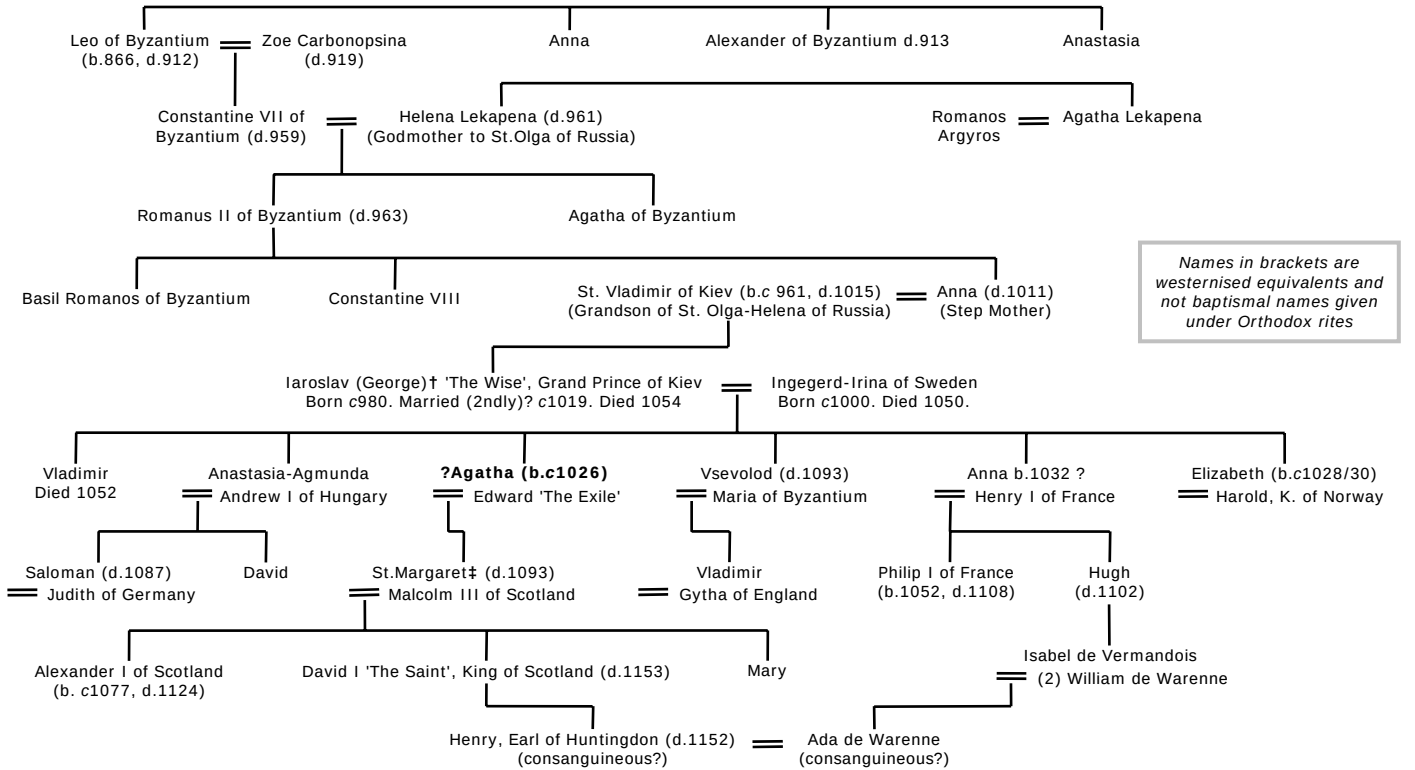
[21] In the sentence preceding, an incorrect parentage is given for Edward 'the Exile's' grandfather, an issue of far more national relevance and importance. Edgar, Father of Aethelred II (d.1016), is given as son of Eadred which is an error for Edmund.

[22] It is difficult to assimilate a rationale for why the Arpadian household of the time would have tolerated the German Emperor Henry's niece (and her husband) living in their land, given that these two countries were supposedly at war. These facts, coupled with the traditional understanding that Agatha's party was accompanied in exile by Hungarian noblemen (as opposed to German) make it increasingly difficult to accept German affinity without question. Ultimately, the events of 1054 and Bishop Ealdred's embassy to the German Emperor Henry may be far more complex than history records.

[23] Faris and Richardson (1998) affirmed that Liudolph had six children in his short life.

[24] It is fair to observe that Jackman (p.54), accepts the 'Salian' solution although it is not clear whether this is purely on the sole condition that Agatha 'the Liudolphian' may have had a paternal first cousin 'Margarethe'.

[25] Wunder (1975) is acknowledged by Ronay and others to have propounded the variant theory that one of Iaroslav Vladimirich's elder sons may have married a relation of the Emperor Henry. This might explain how the daughter of a German Count would have been in the Kievan Orbit but the evidence for this is even more fragile than the evidence we have for Edward 'the Exile's' life.



† The naming of Iaroslav as Prince of Novgorod in 988 necessitates he was the son of an earlier union of Vladimir. By preference this has been indicated as Ragnilda of Polotsk (c981). Contemporary to St. Vladimir's life were George I of Georgia and George Surzabaal, Regent of Bulgaria - possibly father of his known Bulgarian bride.

‡ Through 'shared' ancestry from Olave III of Sweden, St. Margaret was 2nd cousin to Inge I of Sweden (d.1112), father of the Princesses Christina & Margaret (born 1080s). Mtislav-Harold, son of St. Margaret's 1st cousin Vladimir (& Gytha) m. his own 3rd cousin, Christina of Sweden, the same Christina daughter of Inge I above.

Fig 1. Abridged chart (incl. Slavist view) showing potential for trans-migration of the Greco-Roman onomastic tradition from Byzantium to the orbits of the Kievan state and the homelands of the Varangian Guard (Scandinavia)

The Salianists observe that if Agatha were a daughter of Iaroslav of Kiev why is it the case that her family were not given refuge, protection and assistance by their Norwegian or Capetian cousins? While this might be a subject matter in its own right we can at least contemplate the following by way of a counter argument. The tradition of 1067 is that Agatha and her family were considering (or attempting) a return to Hungary where Agatha's 'nephew' Saloman ruled (Slavist) or 'cousin' Judith was Queen (Salianist)[26]. The anecdotal evidence established by Hungarian researchers in the 1930s[27] make it probable the family held estates there. Therefore, to return to Hungary would seem a logical, and instinctive, initial course of action. Shortly after, by 1068 it is probable Margaret, the eldest daughter, was under pressure to marry Malcolm III, King of Scotland – not a bad match for a landless Princess. Being close to the partisan 'old guard' in Northumbria and brother-in-law to the King of Scotland undoubtedly represented one of Edgar's most realistic chances of establishing an effective powerbase, not served by travelling to a then almost landlocked France that was 'sandwiched' from England by the imposing and then still growing Norman state[28]. Ultimately there appears to have been a near abandonment of Edgar, Margaret and Christina by their 'Salian' relations[29].

At this juncture we need once more to return to the Chronicles of John of Worcester as, despite the excellent nature of John Carmi Parsons' work (2002) and the high regard in which he is held, he did not take the opportunity in writing to appraise critically both the dates and root sources of the chroniclers usually cited as 'authorities' in this matter. In brief, John of Worcester continued a copy of a chronicle of 'world' history begun by the Irish monk 'Moelrig', more commonly known as Marianus Scotus (d.*c* 1082/83). Marianus was born in Ireland in 1028 before emigrating to Germany in 1056 and entering the Irish monastery of St. Martin in Cologne. He eventually became resident at Mainz and is generally attributed with having 'completed' the bulk of his work in the early 1070s although his chronicle was continued until his death[30]. Sometime in the intervening years between 1082 and 1095, tradition related to us by William of Malmesbury (cited by Darlington and McGurk, 1995), has it that Robert of Lorraine – Bishop of Hereford (d.1096?) – brought a copy of this work to England. The adjacent location of the ecclesiastical sees of Worcester and Hereford add credence to the claim of Orderic Vitalis (Howorth, 1916, pp.7-8) that St. Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester (d.1095) ordered John to continue in the work started by Marianus.

However, Worcester was ravaged by fire on 19th June, 1113. Against this backdrop we then begin to understand the possible role of Florence (d.1118) in collecting materials and sources for *Chronicon ex Chronicis* which, in its surviving, original, generic form, may

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[26] Ronay (1989, pp.53, 193) believed Ealdgyth, Edward the Exile's mother, was a daughter of King Olaf of Sweden by his mistress Aedla and therefore a sister-in-law to Iaroslav of Kiev. No authority for this statement is given.

[27] This is summarised by Wilson (1993, pp.32-40).

[28] There is some evidence from *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle* (1074) that Phillip I of France (Edgar's 'Slavist' 1st cousin) offered Edgar a position of castellanship in France.

[29] It is also overlooked that the Hungarian King Coloman was married in the 1090s to the Sicilian Princess Buscilla – a lady possibly descended from the Ducal House of Normandy. Not necessarily an environment to which Edgar would ultimately wish to have returned. Ronay (1989, p.171) notes the showering of gifts upon Edgar 'the Atheling' by the German Emperor in 1099/1100. However, this is no more indicative of relationship than the gifts made by the Byzantine Emperor, Alexios I Kommenos (d.1118), at the same time.

[30] Despite Marianus' exposure to the German 'orbit' it is perplexing that he appears to provide no information on the supposed marriage of Henry III's niece to Edward 'the Exile'.

be attributed a scribal date of c1120[31]. This might also explain how Worcester acquired a copy of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* which, as Whitelock (1979) observed, was probably destined for the Scottish Court and included interpolations of St. Margaret's ancestry to glorify the dynastic worth of her daughter Edith-Matilda following her marriage to Henry I of England i.e. written post-1100[32]. In summary, circumstantial evidence together with written analysis of John's work (Darlington and McGurk, 1995[33]), point to a logical period of activity in collecting information between 1113 & 1118 (Florence), a role also agreed upon by Howorth (1916, p.9), followed by post-interpolative completion c1140 (John). This scenario is given credence by the observation of Orderic Vitalis who, collecting information for his own Ecclesiastical History in the period 1124-1137 and having visited Worcester in or before 1124 (Darlington and McGurk, 1995), noted the collative techniques being employed by John in the *Chronicle's* construction.

However, recent analysis of the lives of Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester (Mason, 1990) and William of Malmesbury (Thomson, 1987) illuminate the possibility that neither the Worcester version of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* or the writings of John of Worcester are the oldest donor authorities in this matter. Mason (1990), analysing the life of Bishop Wulfstan, notes that Prior Warin of Worcester (c1124-42) invited William of Malmesbury to write a Latin translation of Coleman's biography[34] of the Bishop, originally written in the English vernacular of the time. Saliently, Mason observes that one version of William's '*Vitali Wulfstani*' contains a prefatory letter by the author referring to his previous '*Gesta Regum Anglorum*', a second edition of which is generally agreed to have been completed by 1125[35] and, in view of the fire at Worcester in 1113 and William's post-1123 invitation, may have been one of the donor authorities later collated by John.

Mason (1990) further raises the spectre of William 'the donor' authority by referring to the compressed interpolation by John in *Chronicon ex Chronicis* under the year 1062, being a biographical account on the life of Bishop Wulfstan (that was to be). Mason appears to imply that this particular passage is 'borrowed' from William's *Vitali Wulfstani*. This certainly fits with what Vitalis tells us in the ensuing years, impressing upon us the role of John as a 'collator'.

The inter-relationship of these individuals is, by default, vitally important. Turgot, confidant and biographer of St. Margaret of Scotland, writing at the instruction of her

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[31] Darlington and McGurk (1995) argues that sometime between 1120 & 1131 a transcript of John's work was available to Simeon of Durham for his *Historia Regum.* Also, both Howorth (1916) and Darlington and McGurk (1995) observe no break in handwriting style in *Chronicon ex Chronicis* from before and after Florence's death in 1118 until 1128/1131. Therefore, we can tentatively suggest an early text was under construction sometime in or after 1118, was still under construction in or before 1124 – as observed by Vitalis (Darlington and McGurk, 1995) and later included post 1122 interpolations from Eadmer's *Historia Novorum*, and post 1124 interpolations from William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Pontificum*, as noted by Darlington and McGurk (1995). Therefore, the phrase '*filia germani imperatoris henrici*' would seem to emanate in scribal form from the period c1120 to post-1124 i.e. c100 years after the birth of Agatha.

[32] Whitelock also observed a total disregard of interest in affairs pertaining to no lesser person than St. Wulfstan of Worcester which, together with the interest in the affairs of the North, points towards York as a pre-Worcester domicile.

[33] These authors note that the Chronicles of John of Worcester incorporate passages from Eadmer of Canterbury's 'Historia Novorum' – itself not completed until c1122.

[34] Coleman of Worcester died 1113.

[35] Mason (1990) in her authoritative work on Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester, often drawing on Thomson (1987), suggests a first edition was completed by 1118 (p.295). Darlington and McGurk (1995) expressed belief that the next (secondary) stage of development of the *Gesta Regum Anglorum* was completed by 1125.

daughter Edith-Matilda at the start of the 12th century, makes no reference to Agatha's family and yet, unlike many chroniclers, we are led to believe he knew Margaret personally. At a similar time, Eadmer of Canterbury[36] commented about the religious life of Christina, younger sister of St. Margaret of Scotland and her strict relationship in the 1090s with Edith-Matilda, eldest daughter of St. Margaret. Again this gives no illumination as to the maternal origins of St. Margaret.

However, from a prosopographical perspective, Eadmer is vitally important as demonstrating the likelihood that Christina was active in the religious community of Wilton Abbey in Wiltshire in the 1090s. We must also consider that our potential 'donor' authority was William who, as a boy oblate in the religious community of Malmesbury (also in Wiltshire), may have come into controlled contact with Christina, or more possibly those that knew her closely, in the late 1090s/early 1100s. What we know of William is that he was committed in his intent of historical writing from an early age. This article is not seeking to disprove that Agatha was a kinswoman of the German Emperor Henry, moreover to clearly understand the 'donor' process involved as our potentially earliest and most reliable authority, Turgot, declines this opportunity[37].

Revealingly, Mason (1990) observed that according to William of Malmesbury's *Vita Wulfstani,* Bishop Wulfstan visited Wilton Abbey, calling upon Gunnhilda – sister to Gytha the wife of Agatha's 'Slavist' nephew Vladimir 'Monomakh' of Kiev-Rus (d.1125). We do not know precisely the date of this event but it was probably contemporaneous with the granting away of lands formerly belonging to the church of Worcester by William 'the Conqueror' from Christina to Ralph de Limesi in 1086[38]. More specifically, these lands were at Itchington in Warwickshire where Bishop Wulfstan is thought to have been born and his family are known to have resided for several generations (see Mason pp.28-29, 228 & 251).

Mason (1990) observes this avuncular or guardian type role played by Wulfstan as being a familial link between the nobility and their cloistered offspring, also evidenced through a letter that the *Vita Wulfstani* tells us was written by St. Margaret and her husband King Malcolm, asking Wulfstan to keep a paternal eye on their daughter Edith-Matilda while she was a nun at Wilton in Wiltshire. Through the *Vita Wulfstani* (as related to us by Mason, 1990) we know that Malcolm III (d.1093) broke off his attendance at a Royal Court at Gloucester in 1093 to retrieve Edith-Matilda from the Nunnery at Wilton where, Eadmer of Canterbury would have us believe, Christina was being all too successful in scaring away potential suitors for Edith-Matilda.

Clearly then, there is a more than reasonable link between Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester, St. Margaret and her sister Christina, Gunnhilda - sister-in-law of Vladimir 'Monomakh' (d.1125) of Kiev-Rus and the religious community of Wiltshire. This same County also nurtured the boy oblate, William of Malmesbury c1090-1143 who was later commissioned, post-1123, to translate into Latin the life of Bishop Wulfstan, hence *Vita Wulfstani.* Contrary to what has been written previously it would seem very relevant to

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[36] Most relevant to our discussion is Eadmer's *Historia Novorum* which, although begun in a rudimentary form in c1093 is not thought to have been completed until c1122. For a summary of the roles of Eadmer & Turgot refer to Wilson (1993).

[37] Turgot appears to have been closely linked with the religious community of Durham. Authorities on Simeon of Durham, who appears also to have been writing in the 1130s, are invited to confirm (or disprove) the supposition that Simeon 'lifted' his information relating to St. Margaret's family from John of Worcester, as implied by Fest (1938).

[38] Ronay (1989, p.169) attributes this to the taking of the veil by Christina in this year.

underline the importance and continuity of Bishop Wulfstan and William of Malmesbury as authorities in this matter.

In reality, the Saxon princess Christina, probably left Hungary at approximately 7/8 years of age. Like most children, she would have had some knowledge of who her brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts were but perhaps had little comprehension of names and wider relationships. To know that her mother was 'the Queen's sister' is ideal phraseology compatible with the perceptual vocabulary of a child i.e. at the time of Christina and Margaret's probable arrival in England in 1057 when knowledge of some familial relationships became frozen. '*Agatham reginae sororem*'[39] is all they ever knew. No names, other than Agatha who was already known, hence the silence and confusion of the Chroniclers.

While William of Malmesbury understandably may not have known the genealogy of the Hungarian kings it is highly conceivable that, post-1125 but pre-1131, he donated the information 'the Queen's sister' to John of Worcester. Such interaction between the two is seen as unavoidable by Thomson and Winterbottom (1999)[40]. We can only speculate that John may have also had access to writings emanating from Bishop Ealdred of Worcester (and York) that survived the fatal fire of Worcester in 1113 but may, just as conceivably, have been working from oral tradition. This tradition, as reported by John[41], was that Saloman, King of Hungary, had received the Atheling in exile and had determined to make him his heir – a chronological impossibility[42].

It is stronger than conjecture but short of proof that William brought with him his early *Gesta Regum Anglorum* to Worcester as a form of reciprocation when translating, into Latin, Coleman's account of Bishop Wulfstan. Mason (1990) believed that John 'borrowed'

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[39] William of Malmesbury*: Gesta Regum Anglorum.* The inability of Agatha's descendants to articulate their maternal ancestry explains two potential problems of consanguinity. Firstly (Slavic), Henry – Earl of Huntingdon (d.1152) and great-grandson of Agatha, married Ada de Warenne, potentially his third cousin through hypothetical shared descent from Iaroslav of Kiev (d.1054). Secondly (Salian), the German Emperor Henry V married Matilda of England, potentially grand-daughter of his second cousin St. Margaret of Scotland (d.1093) through a hypothetical shared descent from Gisela of Swabia. As events pertaining to the Salian Dynasty were relevant to Rome it seems alarming that none would have been aware of this shared 'Swabian' ancestry. There appears to be no record of a papal dispensation. Interesting also to note that with the above exceptions of possible consanguinity aside, no English or Scottish monarch married a descendant of Iaroslav of Kiev until the 13th century. Also, the notable authorities on 'non-Salian' descent, Vitalis, Gaimar, Ailred, Roger of Hoveden, *Leges Edwardis Confessoris* were all definitely writing after the marriage of Matilda of England to Henry V of Germany in 1114 – potentially quite significant, almost as if the German Court confirmed non-consanguinity.

[40] 'The balance of probability is that William & John exchanged information and some material while both their works were in progress but that William did not make use of the published version of John's Chronicle. Such is the view of Martin Brett…….' (Thomson and Winterbottom 1999).

[41] '*Chronicon ex Chronicis*' – 1057.

[42] Saloman, King of Hungary had been betrothed in great solemnity in 1058 to Judith, daughter of the German Emperor, Henry III. This was the same year that Bishop Ealdred of Worcester passed through Hungary on his pilgrimage to Jerusalem. In respect of John's romanticisation of Edward being an intended heir to Hungary there is perhaps a little truth in this. Although wholly conjectural, it is often overlooked that Andrew, King of Hungary did not sire a surviving male heir (Saloman) until very late in life, possibly late 1040s. Until Andrew's brother, Duke Bela, returned to Hungary to organise the Hungarian military in their defence against Germany (attributable to c1051/56), it is not inconceivable that Andrew discussed with Edward, his hypothetical brother-in-law, contingency plans for regency until Saloman, or the sons of his brother Bela, were old enough to rule with strength.

from William's translation of Coleman and conceivably, we might infer, tried to reconcile what William knew of Agatha (possibly through the orbit of Christina) with oral or written traditions emanating from Bishop Ealdred of Worcester and York. Similarly, William's decision to rework his *Gesta Regum Anglorum* in the 1130s may have been as a consequence of being able to share some of John of Worcester's sources. We can also surmise that John had retrieved, possibly from a religious community in the north of England, the 'D' version of *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle* (Worcester), possibly between 1113 and 1118 but no later than 1131, the same chronicle which told us that it was the Emperor Cona who died in 1056. It was, more precisely, the German Emperor Henry III. And it was the same chronicle that, while trying to articulate Agatha's ancestry under the year 1067, incorrectly states the ancestry of her English husband – heir to the English.

As John understandably demonstrates little written knowledge of either the chronology or genealogy of the Hungarian kings (*re* Salomon), his implicit authority in the matter of 'filia germani imperatoris henrici' must be tempered by the fact he was quite possibly in close proximity to an authority (the 'D' version of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*) that believed it was the Emperor Cona (Conrad?) who died in 1056. While 'Cona' may have been a sloppy colloquialisation for the Emperor Henry III of Franc*onia*, there is no guarantee that chroniclers writing 80 years after the event would have known this. Barlow (1970) was himself distrusting of the genealogical value of the *Chronicon ex Chronicis*, noting as *most unsatisfactory* (p.45), that Florence (John) gave an incomplete list of children of King Aethelred (d.1016), adding that those that were given were listed in the wrong order. Barlow is not alone in his concerns as Mason (1990, p.297), commented of John that his lack of originality and factual accuracy was striking in view of Orderic Vitalis' observations. It is timely then to quote Sir Anthony Wagner, one of the more respected genealogical minds from the 20th century:

> "All history is biased by accidents of documentation, the accident of whether evidence survives or not and the personal bias of those who have written things down".

In summary, we probably have only two effective testimonies to work from. Firstly 'the Queen's sister'. As Parsons (2002) observes – we have theoretically five to choose from on chronological grounds[43]. Secondly, 'caseres maga' - the emperor's relation which, as Ingham (1998) observes, is a completely different and broader concept of relationship than that of 'germani'[44]. Perhaps, in reality, Edward really did take Agatha from her home in Russia on his adventure to Hungary with Prince Andrew, their relationship may be ultimately an illicit one[45], the relative silence of the children compensated for by the vague (and potentially erroneous) PR gloss of the chroniclers.

Moving forward, Darlington and McGurk (1995) are encouraged to confirm a probable scribal date for the interpolation of 1017 in *Chronicon ex Chronicis* whence the phrase 'filia germani imperatoris henrici' emanates. Also, those who specialise in the written vernacular of the time are asked to consider or discuss just how broad and flexible the then contemporary application of *maga* might have been. These areas are, it is

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43 In chronological order the Queens in question are: 1) Tuta of Formbach (d.1046?) – first wife of Peter, King of Hungary; 2) NN (Maria?) wife of Samuel Aba, King of Hungary (d.1044); 3) Judith of Schweinfurt (d.1058) – second wife of Peter Orseolo, King of Hungary; 4) Anastasia of Kiev (d.1096) – wife of Andrew I, King of Hungary; 5) 'Richeza' of Poland (d.1059?) – wife of Bela I, King of Hungary (from Bak, 1994)

44 Sandor Fest (1938) argued unconvincingly that Abbot Ailred of Rievaulx had used the term 'germanus' (c1153) to signify a relationship of 'brother-in-law'.

45 Inferring without pre-requisite parental approval, as opposed to illegitimacy.

suggested, integral to revealing the oldest[46] and potentially most unblemished evidence as to Agatha's parentage; *de facto* William of Malmesbury (Slavic) *versus* John of Worcester (Salian)[47].

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[46] In a longer article it would be possible to examine the evidence by Orderic Vitalis (*c* 1136) and Abbot Ailred of Rievaulx (*c* 1153). Both inferred Agatha was descended from the kings of Hungary, however this seems suspiciously like selective editing of the more likely reality - a relationship **to** the kings of Hungary, by which Vitalis and Ailred inferred descent **from** the kings.

[47] The assumption is that the 'frozen knowledge' of Edgar, Margaret & Christina in 1057 related to their hypothetical aunt Agmunda alias Anastasia – wife of Andrew I and *de facto*, Queen of Hungary.

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