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## THE PRESENCE OF THE THEME OF MARY IN *KAZANIA ŚWIĘTOKRZYSKIE* (*THE HOLY CROSS SERMONS*)

**ABSTRACT:** The main topic of this article is the theme of Mary in *Kazania Świętokrzyskie* – the oldest known monument of the Polish language. Undoubtedly, 13th century theologians attached high importance and a significant role to the Virgin Mary in Christianity. The collection of sermons was an opportunity to present a universe in which the Mother of God is a key figure, which would reflect the intellectual trends of the time. However, for some reason or reasons, it did not happen. In the collection, the narrative about the Mother of God seems to be minimized. In this article an image of Blessed Virgin Mary was depicted in two collections of sermons chronologically close to the Holy Cross. Owing to this comparison, as was mentioned by other clergymen and the author of the Holy Cross Sermons, we can notice that the narrative about the Mother of Jesus in the latter is sparse, limited in content and quantity, and closed within dogmas.

**KEYWORDS:** *Kazania Świętokrzyskie* (the Holy Cross Sermons), medieval preaching, Mary, Mother of God, medieval spirituality, Catholicism, 13th century.

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### Introduction – on the main historical source, that is *Kazania Świętokrzyskie*

*Kazania Świętokrzyskie* are the oldest monument of the Polish artistic prose. They depict the beginning of the literary Polish language and long tradition of writing in Polish. They are the first known continuous text, in which the Old Polish language, existing until now in the oral form, was preserved in a written form. They prove the high level of literary culture in Poland before the middle of the 14th century.<sup>1</sup> Taking this into consideration, it becomes obvious

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<sup>1</sup> W. Wydra, *Wokół fenomenu Kazań świętokrzyskich*, [in:] *Kazania świętokrzyskie*. Nowa edycja. Nowe propozycje badawcze, ed. P. Stępień, Warszawa 2009, p. 57; comp. K. Bracha, *Nowa edycja tzw. Kazań świętokrzyskich. Nowe pytania i nowe*

that this work has an unusually huge genre weight. This is also evidenced by the extraordinarily vast amount of scholarly literature devoted to this collection, which has been the object of the research by many scholars representing various fields (such as palaeography, art history, history, Polish philology, linguistics).<sup>2</sup>

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*odpowiedzi*, „Przegląd Humanistyczny”, 1 (424) 2011, p. 73; T. M i k a, *Kazania świętokrzyskie jako obiekt badań filologicznych. Pytania o tekst i przekaz*, [in:] *Z badań nad książką i księgozbiorami historycznymi*, vol. 4 (2010), p. 76; *Idem*, *Tajemnice „Kazań świętokrzyskich”*, „Teraz. Świętokrzyski Miesięcznik Kulturalny”, 2006, No. 1 (25), pp. 14-15, <http://staropolska.pl/sredniowiecze/opracowania/Mika1.html>, accessed on 31.07.2017; *Nad złoto droższe: skarby Biblioteki Narodowej*, ed. H. T c h ó r z e w s k a - K a b a t a, M. D ą b r o w s k i, P. B a g n o w s k i, Warszawa 2000. p. 117. Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that this high literary level of *Kazania Świętokrzyskie* amounts to technical matters – its author knew the principles of *ars praedicandi*, built his sermons following the arcana of the art of preaching, beginning with *thema*, moving to *divisio* and *subdivisio*, and adorning the texts with summaries. He also knew Latin and combined it skilfully with the Polish language. However, these qualities cannot be dubbed as circumstantial evidence, let alone the proof that he was an outstanding intellectual. Why this is so is explained at the end of the article, in the summary.

<sup>2</sup> Examples of some important works: S. U r b a ń c z y k, *U progu polszczyzny literackiej*, [in:] *Idem*, *Prace z dziejów języka polskiego*, Wrocław 1979; T. M i k a, „*Kazania świętokrzyskie*”: *od rękopisu do zrozumienia tekstu*, Poznań 2012; *Idem*, *Tajemnice „Kazań świętokrzyskich”*..., No. 1 (25); *Idem*, *Kazania świętokrzyskie jako obiekt...*; *Idem*, *Interpunkcja Kazań świętokrzyskich a ich składnia i styl*, [in:] *Kazania świętokrzyskie*. Nowa edycja. Nowe propozycje badawcze, ed. P. S t ę p i e ń, Warszawa 2009; W. W y d r a, *Wokół fenomenu...*; K. B r a c h a, *Noty łacińskie w Kazaniach świętokrzyskich*, [in:] *Z badań nad książką i księgozbiorami historycznymi*, vol. 4 (2010); T. M. T r a j d o s, *Wokół genezy Kazań świętokrzyskich*, [in:] *Z badań nad książką i księgozbiorami historycznymi*, vol. 4 (2010); J. Z. L i c h a ń s k i, *Kazania świętokrzyskie – aspekt retoryczny*, [in:] *Z badań nad książką i księgozbiorami historycznymi*, vol. 4 (2010); M. M e j o r, *Łacina w Kazaniach świętokrzyskich* [in:] *Kazania świętokrzyskie*. Nowa edycja. Nowe propozycje badawcze, ed. P. S t ę p i e ń, Warszawa 2009; J. G o d y ń, *Retoryka w pieśni pasyjnej Władysława z Gielniowa, „Psalterzy Floriańskim” i „Kazaniach tzw. świętokrzyskich”*. (*Funkcje średniowiecznej interpunkcji*). „Ruch Literacki”, vol. 37 (1996), z. 6; J. K r z y ż a n o w s k i, *O artyzmie „Kazań świętokrzyskich”*, [in:] *Ibidem*, *Tradycje literackie polszczyzny. Od Galla do Staffa*, by M. B o k s z c z a n i n, Warszawa 1992; P. S t ę p i e ń, *Kazania świętokrzyskie w trzech odstonach. O problemach rekonstrukcji tekstu, o pewnej omyłce autora, o źródłach Kazania na dzień św. Katarzyny*, [in:] *Kazania świętokrzyskie*. Nowa edycja. Nowe propozycje badawcze, ed. P. S t ę p i e ń, Warszawa 2009; M. S k w a r a, *Struktura i sposoby argumentacji w Kazaniu na dzień św. Katarzyny*, [in:] *Kazania świętokrzyskie*. Nowa edycja. Nowe propozycje badawcze, ed. P. S t ę p i e ń, Warszawa 2009; K. O b r e m s k i, *Retoryka ponad gramatyką (składnią)? O tradycjach*

The manuscript of the monument is formed of eighteen fourteenth-century parchment strips.<sup>3</sup> Theoretically, this can be mistakenly considered as the first explanation why the motif of Mary in the Polish monument is extremely modest. One might suspect that there were paragraphs or even whole Marian sermons in the świętokrzyskie collection, but by chance they were not preserved, and what we have is unrepresentative. No historian wishing to function within the framework of science, rather than pseudo-science, could decide to follow such a line of thinking. First of all, such a claim is unverifiable (for it is impossible to disprove or deny that there were, or were not, sources that have not been preserved until today), and this alone makes it unscientific. The only thing we are allowed to do in the present situation is to assume that there may have been other texts that formed part of the Holy Cross Sermons, but also to assume – with every likelihood – that what we have is representative. If we do not make such methodological assumptions, we must be prepared to face discrediting the sense of further research into the świętokrzyskie monument.

The researchers agree that we deal with a copy, and the original was created in the 13th century. Scholars hold divergent conceptions on the more precise datation of the monument.<sup>4</sup> It is particularly important for us that texts included in the collection are characterised by conciseness

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*literackich Kazań świętokrzyskich*, [in:] *Z badań nad książką i księgozbiorem historycznymi*, vol. 4 (2010).

<sup>3</sup> Wiesław Wydra points out that a fact of writing Sermons on expensive thin parchment indicates that they were important, *idem*, *op. cit.*, p. 56. Tomasz Mika supplemented this opinion with a statement that the use of this material does not stand in opposition with draft and careless writing and failure to complete the manuscript (and initials). The scholar emphasises that the text was to be a final draft, which can be deciphered on the basis of spaces left for initials. T. M i k a, „Kazania świętokrzyskie”: od rękopisu..., pp. 64, 210.

<sup>4</sup> Ewa Ostrowska opted for the beginning of the century, *Eadem*, *Kompozycja i artyzm językowy „Kazań świętokrzyskich”*, [in:] *Eadem*, *Z dziejów języka polskiego i jego piękna. Studia i szkice*, Kraków 1978, p. 100, R. S k r z y n i a r z, *Kazania Świętokrzyskie: przepowiadanie w XIII wieku*, Lublin 2001, *passim*; Tadeusz Trajdos before the first half, *Idem*, *Wokół genezy Kazań świętokrzyskich...*, p. 24; Tadeusz Witczak after half a century, *Idem*, „Kazania świętokrzyskie” [entry in:] *Dawni pisarze polscy od początków piśmiennictwa do Młodej Polski. Przewodnik biograficzny i bibliograficzny*. Vol. 2: I-Me, ed. R. L o t h, Warszawa 2001, p. 110 („w początkach drugiej połowy XIII w.”), Teresa Michałowska for the end of the century, *Eadem*, *Średniowiecze*, Warszawa 1995, p. 310.

– they are short; constitute a set of points which the clergyman was to develop into a full sermon; they reflect the structure by presenting *divisio* and *subdivisio* without overdeveloping the issues. They were rather a preaching aid than ready-made texts.<sup>5</sup> This conciseness is yet another reason to treat the content of the Holy Cross Sermons representative to the extent enabling them to be put to scientific research. It is different when a single paragraph that is out of context is preserved, and it is different when we consider a collection of thoughts and points on the basis of which the development was built.

### On Mother of God in *Kazania Świątokrzyskie*

One of the figures that appears in *Kazania Świątokrzyskie* is Mary. However, her role in the Polish monument appears to be more modest than the one she performed in thirteenth-century theology, in which she was primarily an intercessor for the members of the Church before Christ and a mediatrix of grace. The Benedictines, Cistercians, Dominicans and Franciscans promoted the idea of Mary as the spiritual mother of the faithful, as well as the Mother of mercy.<sup>6</sup> The members of the Mendicant Orders were characterised by Marian piety.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> M. Skwara, *op. cit.*, p. 164; I. Winiarska-Górska, *Z dziejów badań nad Kazaniami świętokrzyskimi*, [in:] *Kazania świętokrzyskie*. Nowa edycja. Nowe propozycje badawcze, ed. P. Stępień, Warszawa 2009, pp. 16, 19; K. Bracha, *Nowa edycja*, p. 75; T. Mika, „Kazania świętokrzyskie”: *od rękopisu*, pp. 201-203; comp. K. Bracha, *Noty łacińskie*, p. 94.; a solitary voice of objection to the concept of conciseness of *Kazania świętokrzyskie* was expressed by Jakub Lichański, *Idem*, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-46.

<sup>6</sup> A. A. Napiórkowski, *Maryja jest piękna. Zarys Mariologii i maryjności*, Kraków 2016, p. 80; P. Nowak, *Pobożność Maryjna św. Jadwigi Śląskiej na tle ówczesnej Europy*, [in:] „Tarnowskie Studia Teologiczne”, vol. 36 (2017), No. 1, p. 67.

<sup>7</sup> R. P. Mortier, *Histoire des maîtres généraux de l'Ordre des frères prêcheurs*, vol. 2: 1263-1323, Paris 1905, pp. 411-415; P. Glorieux, *Répertoire des maîtres en théologie de Paris au XIIIe siècle*, Vol. 1. [in:] „Études de philosophie médiévale”, Vol. 17. Paris 1933, p. 42, after: P. Oleś, *Letania more solito dicantur. Przyczynek do badań nad pobożnością maryjną wśród średniowiecznych dominikanów*, „Folia Historica Cracoviensia”, vol. XIX (2019), pp. 43-47; J. P. Torrell, Tomasz z Akwinu – człowiek i dzieło, trans. A. Kuryś, Kęty-Warszawa 2008, pp. 101-102; *Frateris Galuagni de la Flamma Cronica Ordinis Praedicatorum. Ab Anno 1170. usque ad 1333*, ed. B. M. Reichert, [in:] „Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Historica” (henceforth: MOFPH), vol. 2., Romae-Stuttgartiae 1897, p. 97; *Acta Capitulorum Generalium Ordinis Praedicatorum*, vol. 1: *Ab anno 1220 usque ad*

The topic of this article is the minor significance of Mary in the universe that emerges from the texts of the Holy Cross Sermons. It manifests itself in leaving the role of Mother of God unsaid as a help and intercessor of men, infrequent references to Her figure, and the minimisation of the importance of these references through the absence of any significant moral teaching arising from the attitude of the Blessed Virgin. In the final part of the article conclusions will be presented and possible explanations of this state of affairs.

The author of this article will attempt to prove that the representation of the Virgin Mary in the Polish monument appears to be atypical. For this purpose, excerpts from other sermons will be depicted written by two prominent clergymen of the time when the original *Kazania* could have been written: Anthony of Padua and Peregrin of Opole. In these texts, the figure of Mary was given much more attention than in the Polish monument. Works of these two clergymen were selected for the comparative analysis, since the first author represented the Western Christian thought and the second was associated with Polish culture and spirituality. The selection of sermons used in this comparative study is not accidental. Both Anthony of Padua and Peregrin were distinguished preachers, whose texts were recited beyond the boundaries of the territorial units they governed.<sup>8</sup>

What particularly indicates that the importance of Mary in the *Sermons* is insignificant and inadequate for the role of this figure in the 13th century? The first premise is the *Sermon on the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary* from the Polish collection. No reference was included in this text written for a Marian feast to the Mother of God. Its subject comprises 5 instances of theophanies found in the Holy Bible.<sup>9</sup> However, we do not have the sermon in its entirety,

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*annum 1303*, eds. B. M. Reichert, A. F. Frühwirth, [in:] MOFPH, vol. 3., Romae 1898, pp. 82-83, 96-97; *Acta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Praedicatorum*, vol. 2: *Ab anno 1304 usque ad annum 1378*, ed. B. M. Reichert, A. F. Frühwirth, [in:] MOFPH, vol. 4, Romae 1899, pp. 109, 223, 228; W. R. Bonniwell, *A history of the Dominican liturgy 1215-1945*, New York 1945, p. 224.

<sup>8</sup> C. Niezgoda, *Teologia i mariologia św. Antoniego z Padwy*, „Collectanea Theologica”, vol. 51 (1981), fasc. IV, pp. 72-73.

<sup>9</sup> *Kazania świętokrzyskie*, Biblioteka Narodowa, sygn. 8001, dv 1-19, (henceforth: Kśw); one of many editions of the monument is to be found there [in:] T. M i k a, „*Kazania świętokrzyskie*”..., pp. 215-226.

and consequently conclusions drawn from it must be comprehended as *cum grano salis*. The conciseness of the świętokrzyskie collection allows us to make cautious opinions on whole sermons, owing to the fact that the preserved key fragments do not represent chaotic thoughts taken out of context, but points from which further narratives were developed.

This sermon, forming a part of the Polish monument, is not the only indication of the minor significance of the figure of the Mother of God in *Kazania Świętokrzyskie*. Mary is also mentioned in the *Sermon on the Nativity of Our Lord* from the Polish collection:

“For he was a poor prince, and that had no place to bow his head. *Vulpes foveas habent et volucres celi nidus, filius autem hominis non habet, ubi caput suum reclinet*. And therefore he had no place, where he would <bow his head> than in front of the ox, and in front of the donkey in the Nativity scene <the Son of God> was, cause Virgin Mary though had no good nappies <in it>, and wrapped him in the wrong shawl. *Invenerunt eum pannis involutum et positum in presepio*”.<sup>10</sup>

The author of the świętokrzyskie collection completed the text, from which the above paragraph has been taken, by stating that Christ’s poverty is a guide for the faithful not to complain about poverty.<sup>11</sup> With reference to this view, Mary’s poverty is presented, as if, alongside the poverty of Jesus and thus appears to be something secondary, less important or even irrelevant to the teaching of the sermon, since the clergyman did not derive from it any useful instruction for the faithful. It would also be required to consider whether the above paragraph is about the poverty of the Blessed Virgin or perhaps of Jesus. After all, it is Christ who is presented, as the one who experiences negative effects of poverty, not Mary and it is He who epitomises the acceptance of poverty for the faithful.

The author of *Kazania Świętokrzyskie* called the Mother of God *Virgin* four times. He also used a somewhat more precise epithet “*a poor virgin*”.<sup>12</sup> However, this piece of information is solely a quotation from a dogma on Immaculate Conception of Mary, which, although became a fully-fledged dogma not until 1854, was already

<sup>10</sup> Kśw, cr 27-34.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, cv 12-13.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, cr 31-33, cv 17, 22-23, 30.

a common part of faith in the Middle Ages. Additionally, notes of the Blessed Virgin from the świętokrzyskie monument concern parental and property issues, which are not very adequate for accentuating Mary's high status in Catholicism.<sup>13</sup>

The image of Mary did not have to be depicted in such a manner: insignificant, reduced to the role of a poor Virgin and a nurturing mother. There exist collections of medieval sermons which make this claim possible: the collection of sermons of Anthony of Padua and the collection of sermons of Peregrin of Opole. Two collections that have been chosen as the comparative material are examples that the thirteenth-century clergy could present the figure of Mary well, who fulfils numerous roles and possesses numerous virtues.

### **Mother of God in the *Sermons on the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary* by Anthony of Padua**

The first evidence of the minor importance of Mary in *Kazania* is the *Sermon on the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. An analogous sermon, written for the same feast, is to be found in the collection of Anthony of Padua and the collection of Peregrin of Opole. Let us first look at the motif of the Virgin Mary from the sermon composed for this feast by the Doctor of the Church.

Owing to its length, it appears to be impossible to quote it or even refer to it in its entirety in this very article. Likewise, it is also not essential to refer to the whole of the sermon, but what extent of information on the Mother of God it includes and whether this figure is fundamental for the teaching of this text. Already the first paragraph of the sermon brings us a substantial difference in creating the motif of the Mother of God in the collection of the Franciscan and in the Polish monument. This Portuguese clergyman emphasised that the Blessed Virgin was not marked by impurity after childbirth prescribed by the Moses law (Leviticus 12:2); "... this injunction did not apply to

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<sup>13</sup> A. A. Napiórkowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 71, 73-74, 76; *Breviarium fidei. Wybór doktrynalnych wypowiedzi Kościoła*, by S. Głowa, I. Bieda, Poznań 1988, p. 216 n. after A. Sutowicz, *Maryja w duchowości śląskich klarysek i benedyktynek w okresie średniowiecza*, [in:] „PERSPECŦIVA Legnickie Studia Teologiczno-Historyczne”, r. X, 2011, No. 1 (18), p. 209; J. Rutkowska, „Zielony Drogowskazie...”, p. 108; C. Niezgodna, *Teologia i mariologia...*, p. 79.

Mary, who gave birth as a Virgin “<sup>14</sup> In the analogical text of *Kazania Świątokrzyskie*, there is no reference to the figure of Mary.

In the second paragraph, the Doctor of Church clarified the motivations behind the purification of the Mother of God. Although she and her Son did not have to do it, they chose to do purification, “(...) in order to exempt themselves of the fear of the law, which was in fact kept out of fear (...)”<sup>15</sup> This Portuguese clergy noted in the third paragraph that: “The Poor Virgin Mary made sacrifice for her poor Son, so that, above all, Lord’s humility was shown”<sup>16</sup>

In the seventh paragraph, the clergyman referred to the meaning of the name of Mary, as: *enlightened, bitter sea* or *Lady*. He saw in her a symbol of righteous soul who had been enlightened at baptism: “she is a bitter sea in the contrite heart and tormented body; she will be mistress in the kingdom when she unites with the King of the ages”<sup>17</sup>

In the *Allegorical Sermon on the Purification of the Blessed Mary*, Anthony of Padua dedicated more attention to Mary. In the third paragraph of this text, he included the following information referring to the Mother of God: she gave birth to Jesus without losing her virginity; she was humble and full of love; she contemplated heavenly glory; she is bothered by “the smell of debauchery”, while she is pleased by “the smell of virginity”, and for this reason whoever wishes to please her should restrain from debauchery and care for chastity.<sup>18</sup>

In the fourth paragraph of the sermon, the clergyman included a thought that Mary does not reject any sinner and that is why she is

<sup>14</sup> Św. Antoni z Padwy, *Kazania święteczne: od Narodzenia Pańskiego do Uroczystości świętych Piotra i Pawła*, trans. C. Niezgodą, Kraków 2003, s. 125, comp. p. 133; C. Niezgodą, *Teologia i mariologia...*, pp. 76, 78.

<sup>15</sup> Św. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, p. 125. N. M. Siwiński, *Rogamus te...*, p. 127.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, sp 126. Comp. p. 133; comp. on the poverty of the Mother of God: N. M. Siwiński, *Kazanie na cześć...*, p. 93; *idem*, *Rogamus te...*, p. 127.

<sup>17</sup> Św. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 133-134 comp. pp. 174, 178, 184; comp. on virtues of Mary: N. M. Siwiński, *Kazanie na cześć Błogosławionej Maryi Dziewicy św. Antoniego z Padwy*, „Studia Leopoliensia”, 14 (2021), pp. 91, 93; *Ibidem*, *Herbarium Mariae: Maryjny zielnik św. Antoniego*, „Posłaniec św. Antoniego”, vol. 2 (2020), p. 101; *Ibidem*, *Rogamus te, Domina Nostra – sześć modlitw maryjnych św. Antoniego z Padwy jako świadectwo mariologii franciszkańskiej XIII w.*, „Collectanea Theologica”, 86 (2016) No. 3, p. 127; C. Niezgodą, *Teologia i mariologia...*, pp. 76, 78; L. Bertazzo, *Maria...*, p. 43.



called the Mother of Mercy.<sup>19</sup> The next paragraph contains statements that she drew life from her Son Jesus (the honey of angels), and that she chose Nazareth (meaning flower) from among other places for Christ to be conceived there.<sup>20</sup> In the sixth paragraph, the Franciscan made the observation that Mary prepared her spirit through humility and her body through virginity, in order that Jesus inhabited it.<sup>21</sup> In the seventh paragraph, the Doctor of the Church pointed to the proof of Our Lady's humility – her words about God: “He looked upon the humility of his servant”.<sup>22</sup> Still other proof of Mary's humility, indicated by Saint Anthony in the eighth paragraph, is that she remained humble, even though she was endowed with numerous virtues and deserved numerous privileges.<sup>23</sup> In the ninth paragraph of the sermon, the Doctor of the Church called Mary “the glorious Virgin” and recalled that she brought Jesus to the temple when He was a baby.<sup>24</sup> The preacher also mentioned the procession of St Simeon, Anne, Mary and Joseph. He attributed symbolism to each figure; the Mother of God equalled justice.<sup>25</sup>

The most important fragment, however, is the penultimate sentence of the allegorical sermon: “Therefore, good Jesus, for Thee own sake, be unto us Jesus, that Thou, who has given us the beginning of sweetness, that is faith, give us also hope and charity, that by living in it and dying in it, deserve to come to Thee, and this through pleas of Thy sweetest Mother, through You, who are blessed for ever”.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ś w. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-134; comp. on the need of the sinners to surrender to Mary: N. M. Siwiński, *Kazanie na cześć...*, p. 93; *Idem, Herbarium Mariae...*, p. 100; L. Bertazzo, *Maria Oliva Benedicta: A Reflection on the Mariology of Anthony of Padua/Lisbon*, [in:] *The Medieval Franciscans, vol. 16: Medieval Franciscan Approaches to the Virgin Mary Mater Sanctissima, Misericordia, et Dolorosa*, eds. S. J. Mc Michael, K. Wrisley Shelby, Leiden 2019, p. 40.

<sup>20</sup> Ś w. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 134; N. M. Siwiński, *Kazanie na cześć...*, p. 91; C. Niezgoda, *Teologia i mariologia...*, p. 78.

<sup>22</sup> Ś w. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 134; comp. on the virtues of Mary: N. M. Siwiński, *Kazanie na cześć...*, pp. 91, 93; *Idem, Herbarium Mariae...*, p. 101; *idem, Rogamus te...*, p. 127; C. Niezgoda, *Teologia i mariologia...*, pp. 76, 78.

<sup>24</sup> Ś w. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-135; L. Bertazzo, *Maria...*, p. 35.

<sup>25</sup> Ś w. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 135; comp. C. Niezgoda, *Teologia i mariologia...*, p. 77.

The above quotations and paraphrases of passages of the sermons by the Doctor of the Church indicate how many themes concerning Mary were discussed in his sermon on the Marian feast. He mentioned the virtues of the Mother of God and proved his stance on the matter; he portrayed the role of the Blessed Virgin as an intercessor of the people, and even referred to events from Her life. In principle, this sermon cannot be compared to an analogous text from the świętokrzyskie collection, because it does not contain reference to the figure of the Mother of God.<sup>27</sup> This is both thought-provoking and unusual.

In view of the conciseness of the collection, which has been well argued by the researchers, despite insignificant amount of text, we can assume that in the świętokrzyskie *Sermon on the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary* there might not have been the teaching on Mary.<sup>28</sup> Such a suspicion may be strengthened by the fact that the entire monument appears to be devoid of the spirit of Marian devotion.

### **The totality of teachings on the Mother of God in the Sermons of Anthony of Padua**

It is worth drawing on other sermons by the Portuguese Franciscan and take a closer look at the set of virtues attributed to Mary. She was called *Queen of Angels, Star of the Sea, Virgin, Blessed Virgin, Glorious Virgin, Shining Pearl of Virginity* and *Most Glorious Virgin*, owing to whom God is with us.<sup>29</sup>

This is a significant analogy with the *Sermons*, in which the author also mentioned the virginity of the Blessed Virgin (*Sermon on the Nativity of the Lord, Sermon on Epiphany*).<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, it merely

<sup>27</sup> Kśw, dv 1-19.

<sup>28</sup> The text written for this feast, included in *Kazania Świątokrzyskie*, refers to five examples of teophany, which can be found in the Holy Bible.

<sup>29</sup> Ś w. A n t o n i z P a d w y, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28, 59, 111, 174, 182, 184; comp. on the virginity of Mary and the title *the Star of the Sea*: N. M. S i w i Ń s k i, *Kazanie na cześć...*, pp. 92-93, 111; *idem, Rogamus te...*, p. 105; on the passion of the Evangelic Doctor for calling Mary *the Queen*: C. N i e z g o d a, *Teologia i mariologia...*, p. 78; L. B e r t a z o, *Maria...*, pp. 35, 38-39, 41, 43, 45-47, 49.

<sup>30</sup> "(...) Virgin Mary had no good nappies <in it>, but wrapped in a bad shawl. Invenereunt eum pannis involutum et positum in presepio", Kśw, cr 31-33. "(...) the prince born with a virgin (...) for the Bible of the prince born with a virgin born (...) <in Bethlehem> born with a poor virgin.", Kśw, cv 17, 22-23, 30.

refers to the widely recognised “unofficial” dogma on the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.<sup>31</sup>

Anthony also mentioned Mary’s motherhood and warned that she needed adoration and glory since, through her, people had become full, healthy and blessed.<sup>32</sup> Motherhood brings her glory and happiness.<sup>33</sup> She brought Jesus humanity and weaknesses.<sup>34</sup>

The Portuguese Franciscan noted that Mary wrapped Jesus in nappies, and laid Him in a manger.<sup>35</sup> The whiteness of Christ’s nappies symbolises the purity of His mother.<sup>36</sup> The motif of the Blessed Virgin putting Jesus in a manger also appeared in the Holy Cross Sermons. Referring to this scene, the author of the Polish monument reminded us of Mary’s poverty.<sup>37</sup> This is not one of the most fundamental elements building the motif of Mary in medieval Christianity. Perhaps its appearance in the świetokrzyskie collection resulted from a desire to appeal to the emotions of a less intellectually sophisticated and poorer audience.

The Doctor of the Church provided us with a number of claims on Mary that are not found in the świetokrzyskie monument; for example, that she is a princess and queen.<sup>38</sup> The clergyman pointed out that the Blessed Virgin—the Star leads us to the harbour of eternal salvation. The second reason for naming her by this term results from the fact that she pulls out of storm those who cry out to her and shows them the way by leading them to the haven, i.e. heaven.<sup>39</sup> The Doctor of the Church referred to the antithesis of Eve–Mary, which manifests

<sup>31</sup> A. A. Napiórkowski, *Maryja jest piękna...*, pp. 71, 73-74, 76; *Breviarium fidei. Wybór doktrynalnych wypowiedzi Kościoła*, by S. Głowa, I. Bieda, Poznań 1988, p. 216 n. after A. Sutowicz, *Maryja w duchowości...*, p. 209; J. Rutkowska, „Zielony Drogowskazie, na rozstajach niepewności czekająca...” – o nazwaniach Matki Bożej w „125 litaniiach maryjnych” (w oprac. ks. Janusza Kumali MIC). *Cz. I. Imię Matki Bożej i formacje odimienne*, „Język. Religia. Tożsamość”, 2 (18) 2018, p. 108.

<sup>32</sup> Św. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 175, 184; comp. on the maternity of the Blessed Virgin, N. M. Siwiński, *Kazanie na cześć...*, p. 93.

<sup>33</sup> Św. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 86.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 26.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 27, 87; comp. L. Bertazzo, *Maria...*, p. 49; N. M. Siwiński, *Rogamus te...*, p. 115.

<sup>36</sup> Św. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

<sup>37</sup> Kśw, cr 27-34.

<sup>38</sup> Św. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, p. 28. 39.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 179, 182; L. Bertazzo, *Maria...*, pp. 38-39, 43.

itself in the opposing characteristics of these two women: earthiness-heavenliness; a herald of suffering for the first and salute for the other.<sup>40</sup> The Portuguese Franciscan also recollected that the Mother of God attended St Elizabeth, during the last three months of her cousin's pregnancy, and raised the newborn St John from the ground.<sup>41</sup> As we can therefore see in the sermons of the Western clergyman, the role of Mary goes far beyond that assigned to her by the Polish preacher. The most important difference is the theme of Mary as the help of sinners, leading them to heaven and the Heavenly Queen. The researchers adhere to the view that the sermons of the Evangelic Doctor examine all Marian themes and exemplify a great number of references to the Mother of God in the collection of the Franciscan's sermons.<sup>42</sup>

### **The Mother of God in the *Sermon on the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary* by Peregrin of Opole**

Knowing a set of roles that Mary played from the sermons of Anthony of Padua we can move on to an analogous motif from the collection of another clergyman. Peregrin of Opole, in a similar way to the author of *Kazania Świętokrzyskie*, included in his collection the *Sermon on the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. The Silesian clergyman, in a similar way to Anthony of Padua, pointed out that the Mother of God did not need purification and was purer than all other creatures. The Dominican explained this by the fact that she was sanctified in the womb and exempted from birth-sin; did not commit even a venial sin throughout all her life, and that the Holy Spirit made her the Saint of all Saints when He came to her. Peregrin inferred that Mary's way to the temple testified to her humility and constituted an example for the faithful to purify themselves in every piece of their body and in senses.<sup>43</sup> It is also significant that this way of narration elevates the Mother of God considerably. Firstly, it places her at

<sup>40</sup> Św. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, p. 182; L. Bertazzo, *Maria...*, pp. 39, 41.

<sup>41</sup> Św. Antoni z Padwy, *op. cit.*, pp. 281.

<sup>42</sup> G. M. Roschini, *La Mariologia di sant'Antonio da Padova*, „Marianum”, 8 (1946), 16n; C. Niezgodna, *Teologia i mariologia...*, p. 77; L. Bertazzo, *Maria...*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>43</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania „de tempore” i „de sanctis”*, trans. J. Mrukówna, Kraków 2001, p. 393; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis*, ed. R. Tatarzyński, Warszawa 1997, p. 369.

the centre of the lecture – she becomes the most important figure in the sermon. Secondly, a lesson is drawn out of her behaviour for the recipients of the sermon.

Peregrin of Opole continued the theme of the necessity to imitate the Virgin Mary, or more specifically, to purify themselves following her example. The clergyman explicated that the faithful should “(...) purify their hearts of bad thoughts following the example of the Blessed Virgin (...)”.<sup>44</sup>

Somewhat later in this sermon, the Dominican recalled that today’s feast is called the Candlemas Day. The Silesian clergyman explained the genesis of the celebration of this feast. The Romans worshipped Februa, the mother of Mars, by burning candles and torches at night in early February. Since it is difficult to eradicate old customs, Pope Sergius decreed that, in honour of Mary, Christians would illuminate the world with candles. The second reason for the celebration is the representation of the procession with the participation of Mary, Joseph, Simeon and Anne to sacrifice Jesus in the temple. In addition, Peregrin noted that the wax of the candles symbolises the body of Christ born without violating the virginity of the Mother.<sup>45</sup>

The Silesian Dominican referred to a story about a miracle that took place on the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Some woman was distinguished by her devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. She had a chapel in her house where a chaplain celebrated daily Mass in honour of Mary. The priest had to travel far to arrange some things. The woman had a vision during which she attended the service. After the vision, she thanked the Blessed Virgin that she had attended the Mass that day, and a candle seen in the vision was kept as a relic.<sup>46</sup>

We can now conclude the comparison of the motifs of Mary from the *Sermon on the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary* by Peregrin

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<sup>44</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 393; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, p. 369.

<sup>45</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, pp. 395-396; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, pp. 371-372; B. Kochaniewicz, *Biblia w średniowiecznym kaznodziejstwie: perspektywa teologiczno-fundamentalna*, „Biblioteka Teologii Fundamentalnej”, 5 (2010), p. 51; R. Mazurkiewicz, „Świebodość Boga żywego”: *średniowieczna pieśń o wniebowzięciu Maryi*, „Salvatoris Mater”, 2/4 (2000), p. 246.

<sup>46</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, pp. 396-397; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, pp. 372-373.

of Opole and the author of the świętokrzyskie monument. As we can easily see, the Silesian Dominican addressed many important issues in this text concerning the Mother of God: her holiness, her humility, the example given to the faithful, devotion to her worshippers and the occurrence of miracles. This is not only the quantitative but also the qualitative difference against *Kazania Świętokrzyskie*. In the sermon created by Peregrin for the Marian feast, the Blessed Virgin is a key and active figure, and her actions enable us to draw a practical lesson for the recipients of the sermon. Whereas, in the sermon for the Marian feast from the świętokrzyskie monument, Mary does not appear.<sup>47</sup>

### **The totality of the teaching on Mary in the Sermons by Peregrin of Opole**

The Silesian clergyman, in a similar way to Anthony of Padua, presented numerous assertions about the Mother of God. Some of these repeat thoughts present in the analysed *Sermon on the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. Nonetheless, it appears to be necessary to consider them in order to have a broader view of the creation of this motif in the collection of the Dominican. Peregrin pointed to Mary as an exemplar of the virtue of humility. This virtue was depicted in her flight into Egypt and in the fact that she did not speak of herself as Queen of the world.<sup>48</sup> Peregrin also noted that Our Lady is abundant in heavenly virtues and gifts.<sup>49</sup>

The Lord freed her from birth-sin.<sup>50</sup> Throughout her whole life she did not commit even one venial sin.<sup>51</sup> She was holier than evangelists, martyrs, confessors, virgins and angels.<sup>52</sup>

Thanks to the Holy Spirit, Mary conceived and gave birth to Jesus, without pain or loss of virginity.<sup>53</sup> She is called the *Star of the Sea*,

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<sup>47</sup> Kśw, dv 1-19.

<sup>48</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 49, comp. pp. 351-352, 421.

<sup>49</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, pp. 59-60; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>50</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 60; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, p. 26.

<sup>51</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, pp. 423, 524, 544.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 524-525, comp. pp. 528.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 59-61, 67, 352, 421, comp. pp. 528, 541-542.

since her virginity brightened and enlightens sinners.<sup>54</sup> She found God's grace, which was lost by people. Therefore, the faithful should refer to Her to ask Her to return it.<sup>55</sup> She came to this world to reinvigorate the sinners with Her grace.<sup>56</sup> She was poor and that is the reason why the Three Magi offered her gold. The Virgin laid the newborn Jesus in a manger.<sup>57</sup> Thanks to her, Jesus received a body and could suffer.<sup>58</sup> Peregrin called her the most powerful woman, thanks to whom women "became armed with power".<sup>59</sup> Evil spirits fear her, and she triumphed over them. In many hardened hearts she evoked repentance.<sup>60</sup>

Of the above-mentioned claims, only the one referring to Mary's poverty finds its reflection in the świętokrzyskie collection. Its author talked about the poverty of the Mother of God, who laid the newborn Jesus in a manger and that she wrapped him in the nappies of poor quality.<sup>61</sup>

Peregrin of Opole noted that Mary serves sinners through her prayer by changing the sentence of eternal death and condemnation expressed by God the judge.<sup>62</sup> Her throne is close to the throne of her Son, so that she can intercede for the faithful.<sup>63</sup> At the same time, the clergyman warned that Mary does not dare to pray for people if they sin.<sup>64</sup>

She was characterised by beauty of spirit and body.<sup>65</sup> She welcomed Jesus with kindness, a pilgrim from the heavenly homeland, to her womb

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<sup>54</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, pp. 60-61; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, pp. 26-27; A. Wojtczak, *Pochodzenie i rozwój maryjnego tytułu „Gwiazda Zaranna”*, „Studia Koszalińsko-Kołobrzeszkie”, 17 (2011), p. 174.

<sup>55</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 62; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, p. 28.

<sup>56</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 542.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 74, comp. pp. 351-352.

<sup>58</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 182; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, pp. 153-154.

<sup>59</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 342; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, p. 316.

<sup>60</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 544; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, p. 500.

<sup>61</sup> Kśw, cr 27-34.

<sup>62</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 421; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, p. 397; R. Mazurkiewicz, *Świebodność...*, pp. 255-256.

<sup>63</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 527; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, p. 482.

<sup>64</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, pp. 542-543.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 423, 525.

and raised him as her beloved son. In return, Christ welcomed Her soul to heaven, and on the third day after death also her body.<sup>66</sup>

The Silesian clergyman referred to a number of events from the life of Mary: her service in the temple, Annunciation and birth of Jesus.<sup>67</sup> He also mentioned Mary's visit to Elisabeth and the help she provided in the last trimester of her pregnancy.<sup>68</sup> Peregrin also related to the offering of Jesus in the temple and His Mother's participation in this event.<sup>69</sup> The Silesian preacher recounted Mary's participation in the passion of Jesus Christ.<sup>70</sup> The clergyman also touched on the events which occurred in the life of the Mother of God from the death of her Son to her Assumption.<sup>71</sup>

Peregrin, unlike Anthony of Padua and the author of *Kazania Świątokrzyskie*, noted the miracles performed thanks to Mary. Let us quote a few to better understand the issue. Some sinful knight joined the Cistercian Order. When he found himself in a difficult situation, Our Lady appeared to him and promised him salvation. As he was characterised by great devotion to Her and always bent his knees at Her name, he was saved.<sup>72</sup> This example is part of the general principle controlling the narratives of the miracles of the saints from the medieval texts. Worshippers usually have a greater chance to receive help after addressing a request to the saint.

The next story on Mary's miracles concerns a man who denied Christ to get gold from the devil. He went to the church and wept at the statue of the Virgin Mary. The statue spoke to the statue of the Child yet could not receive forgiveness for the man. Eventually, the statue of Mary took the hand of the repentant sinner and went with him to the statue of the Child on the altar. In this way, the Blessed

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<sup>66</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 523-524; B. Kochaniewicz, *Biblia...*, p. 51; R. Mazurkiewicz, *Świebodność...*, p. 243.

<sup>67</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 99; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, p. 69.

<sup>68</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, pp. 485-486.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 75, 77.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 144-146; R. Mazurkiewicz, *Świebodność...*, p. 246.

<sup>71</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, pp. 525-527; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, pp. 480-482.

<sup>72</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 117; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, p. 88.



Virgin reconciled the man with Jesus.<sup>73</sup> One of her worshippers fell ill. She appeared to him and proposed that he merited the kingdom of heaven with her.<sup>74</sup>

Let us end with other tales included in the collection by Peregrin. A woman sentenced after ordering the murder of her son-in-law turned to the Blessed Virgin for rescue during a tearful prayer. The judge passed a sentence of burning the woman, but after the attempt to execute her, no traces of fire were found on the body of the condemned woman.<sup>75</sup> She first took away the sight from one unbeliever, but later restored it when he surrendered himself to her for life.<sup>76</sup> In one copy it was written that Mary saved a mother wrongly accused of murdering her child.<sup>77</sup>

Taking into consideration the overall narrative on the motif of the Mother of God in Peregrin's sermons, we can note several issues. Firstly, the Dominican emphasised Mary's virtues, such as humility or holiness. Secondly, the clergyman drew richly on the stories about the life of Mary from the Holy Bible and apocrypha. Thirdly, he listed examples in order to encourage the less educated faithful to Marian devotion. Fourthly, Peregrin showed the role of the Blessed Virgin as an intercessor for sinners. The only points in common between the teaching on Mary in the Dominican's sermons and *Kazania świętokrzyskie* is the recollection of her poverty and virginity.<sup>78</sup>

## Conclusion

The author of *Kazania Świętokrzyskie* assigned a minor role to the Mother of God in his work. When he wrote about Mary, it was only because he discussed the birth of Christ. *The Sermon on the Purification*

<sup>73</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, pp. 422-423; comp. T. Szostek, *Quidam Iudaeus...*, „Symbolae Philologorum Posnaniensium Graecae et Latinae”, XVIII (2008), p. 252.

<sup>74</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 525; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, p. 480.

<sup>75</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 543; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, p. 499.

<sup>76</sup> Peregryn z Opola, *Kazania*, p. 544; Peregrini de Opole, *Sermones*, p. 500.

<sup>77</sup> J. Wołny, *Exempla z kazań niedzielnych Peregryna z Opola*, [in:] *Kultura elitarna a kultura masowa w Polsce późnego średniowiecza*, ed. B. Geremka, Wrocław 1978, pp. 256-257.

<sup>78</sup> Kśw, cr 27-34, cv 17, 22-23, 30.

*of the Blessed Virgin Mary* is an exemplary part of the Polish monument demonstrating this phenomenon. The person responsible for the final draft did not invoke Mary in the sermon for the Marian feast. The conciseness of the *świętokrzyskie* collection suggests that certain losses in the source do not explain this state of affairs. If this were not the case, the motif of the Blessed Virgin Mary would probably have appeared in a short passage constituting a set of points to be developed in the oral version of the sermon. The author did not use a chance, although he could, as did St Anthony of Padua, to include a detailed description of the virtues of the Mother of God in the sermon on this feast.<sup>79</sup>

Mary is not a significant person in the *świętokrzyskie* collection. In the Polish collection there is only one scene in which the Blessed Virgin appears as a person undertaking actions – a manger with Jesus wrapped by his Mother in nappies. Apart from this fragment, Mary was several times defined as the *Virgin* and *poor Virgin*. The first term stemmed from dogma, while the second was a combination of dogmatic truth and the desire to show the poverty of Mary, which would presumably create a psychological-emotional bond between a poor listener of the sermon and the Mother of Jesus.

In the Polish collection, the Mother of God was not a character used to present important and difficult theological issues. This depicts that the monument was aimed at the poorly educated audience, who were closer to folk piety than to university theology. The motif of the manger also speaks in favour of this. We can also point to several other premises for the fact that the text was aimed at the intellectually unsophisticated audience.<sup>80</sup>

Perhaps the author of the text was negatively disposed towards Marian devotion, in which he saw a threat to traditional Christocentricity.

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<sup>79</sup> Ś w. A n t o n i z P a d w y, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-134.

<sup>80</sup> These premises are as follows: the promotion of the extrovert piety typical of uneducated theological masses; the presence of the examples (which can be vividly seen on the example of the *Sermon on the Day of St Catherine*); the absence of deeper theological thoughts, as in antithesis Eve-Mary, Jesus-Adam, or the teaching on the power of the souls; the simplification of the lecture to the narrow frames designated by dogmas and not going beyond them even by adding something on the specific topics; the evocation of the scenes, which were to influence the emotions (Mary at the manger, idolatrous Israelites begging God for mercy) instead of logical reasoning and arguing science on religious topics.

Some scholars indicate that Marian devotion was more characteristic of men mystics than women mystics, who preferred Christocentric piety.<sup>81</sup> It is also possible that the environment in which he created was not marked by Marian devotion. We learn from the text, which has been preserved until today, that the creator of the monument did not attribute to Mary such virtues as holiness or humility, he did not see her in the role of an intermediary between God and the people, or help to sinners. He did not present her as a model for the Catholics either. The comparison between the *Sermons on Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary* from the collection of Anthony of Padua and Peregrin of Opole and the motifs of the Mother of God from the collection of *Kazania świętokrzyskie* indicates that the Virgin Mary was irrelevant, secondary, or even unnecessary to the lecture in this latter. This minor significance of Mary also suggests that świętokrzyskie monument was not created in the milieu of the Dominicans and Franciscans, since these two orders were characterised by Marian piety.

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<sup>81</sup> A. B. Romagnoli, *L'immagine di Maria negli scritti delle donne medioevali*, [in:] *Hagiologica. Studi per Réginald Grégoire*, eds. A. Bartolomei Romagnoli, U. Paoli, P. Piatti, Fabriano 2012, pp. 491-519, after: L. Bertazzo, *Maria...*, p. 39.

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