

Krisztina Dóra Fodor: Syneros martyr, the 'monachus' in the light of the passions and martyrologies

Syneros (otherwise also known as Synerotas) was one of the well-known martyrs who died during the Christian persecution under Diocletian and became a Pannonian saint in the early 4th Century.^[1] His short *vita* informs us that he was a Greek person (*graecus civis*) and a gardener who came to Sirmium, and when the persecution started, he hid himself. At the end of the persecution, he came back to his garden and one night he saw a married woman who walked in his garden. He reprimanded the woman that she should be in her husband's house. The woman became angry with Syneros and wrote a letter to her husband who served as a guard in the emperor's court. The husband came to Sirmium to report Syneros to the local authorities, who called in Syneros and who, after a short interrogation, realized that Syneros must be a Christian. The martyr did not deny this fact, the authorities condemned him and ordered him to be executed by decapitation.

A part of our written sources calls Syneros a monk, but this claim is debated among scholars. The two passions give us different descriptions of the saint. In one of them the term *monachus* is applied to the image of a young and strong man but the other passion does not contain this word and presents the saint as a kind old man. The martyrologies also copied this information differently.

Those scholars who doubt that Syneros could have been a monk usually base their arguments not only on the passions but on the usage of the word 'monachus'. This word came into use in Europe at the end of the 4th Century; but Syneros died in the first years of the 4th Century. The first appearance of the word 'monachus' can be found in the letters of Jerome.^[2] I discussed the usage of the word 'monachus' and the features of the monastic lifestyle in a previous study and I explained that the usage of the word 'monachus' and the monastic lifestyle do not match the life of Syneros. I argued that Syneros could not be a monk.^[3] But what if we take a look at the sources? In this study I would like to demonstrate how the martyrologies and passions show us that the word 'monachus' and the monastic tradition are only later insertions and Syneros was not a monk.

Sources

The two larger groups of the sources of Syneros are the epigraphic and hagiographic sources.

Epigraphy

The epigraphic sources were found in the old cemetery of Sirmium during the excavation of Adolf Hytrek in 1884. The two Latin epitaphs in the cemetery testify that once the tomb of Syneros was nearby because the content of the two inscriptions refers to the vicinity of his tomb. On the basis of the Syneroti (dative) and Synerotem (accusative) forms of the inscriptions Giovanni Battista de Rossi suggested that the original nominative form of the name must have been Syneros.^[4] He connected this person with the similarly named person of the passions (known from the passions of *Acta Sanctorum* and *Acta Martyrum*).^[5] The inscriptions were written probably in the second half of the 4th Century^[6] and there was no reference there to the monastic life nor the word 'monachus'. However, from the second half of the 4th Century we have only literary sources with this word^[7] and no epigraphic sources. In the epigraphic sources the massive spread of this word can be dated to the 7-9th Century.^[8]

Hagiography

The hagiographic sources contain the texts of the two extant passions and the martyrologies. In 1658 Iohannes Bollandus in *Acta Sanctorum* (February) published a passion of Syneros from a codex of Utrecht. This passion is shorter and certainly closer to us in time. It contains the word 'monachus'.^[9] The other passion is a longer version which was published in 1689 by Theiry Ruinart in the *Acta Martyrum*^[10] and it was found in the monastery of Noailles. This passion is older than the shorter version and does not contain the word 'monachus'.^[11] At the end of this study I will draw up the manuscript tradition of these passion texts.

The martyrologies are in two groups: the martyrologies of Hieronymus (Jerome) and the historical martyrologies (and copies thereof). The martyrologies were copied constantly and this caused a lot of text corruption.

The forerunner of the historical martyrologies was Beda Venerabilis who used the martyrology of Jerome combining it with other literary sources (mostly passions). The historical martyrologies kept the structure of the martyrologies (they preserved the calendar form) but the text of the anniversary of the martyrs and saints was completed with narrative content and further data from the passions and the tradition. In this way a more detailed martyrology was created. Beda lived in the 7-8th Century and his work was copied and expanded by other authors like Florus, Hrabanus Maurus, Ado, Usuardus, and Notker. The name Syneros appears in the martyrologies of these writers but with many errors and textual corruptions.

Research history

Source collections from the 17-18. Century

The *Acta Sanctorum* contains not only the shorter passion but makes an attempt to collect all information about Syneros. The word 'monachus' already appears in the title of the chapter of Syneros: "From the Sirmian St. Sirenus or Sinerius monachus and martyr of Pannonia Inferior". The Bollandists did not question the monastic identity of Syneros. The description interprets the 'monachus' as a person who disposes of his goods, or lives away in the desert (like a hermit). Some copies of the martyrologies are also mentioned in the *Acta Sanctorum* for example the work of Beda, Ado, Notker and Usuard that present Syneros as a 'monachus'.^[12]

I should note that the texts published in the *Acta Sanctorum* were not the primary sources of these authors. Probably the sources used by the *Acta Sanctorum* were the umpteen copied versions of Beda, Ado, Notker, Usuard and so on, and therefore we can't be sure that the texts in the *Acta Sanctorum* were the first texts of the authors.

Thierry Ruinart who published the longer passion also wrote a shorter description of the tradition-history of the martyr. He mentioned that the passion which he found did not contain the word 'monachus' but, according to him, it is possible that Syneros was a monk. He thought that there could have been many people under the last great Christian persecution who were characterized as 'monachus'.^[13]

Between 1751 and 1819 a monumental eight-volume work was published by Daniele Farlati and Jacobo Coleti that contains longer studies concerning the saints of Illyricum. The 7th volume (which was edited by Farlati) is important to us in the research history of Syneros due to the most detailed processing of sources and tradition of Syneros the martyr.^[14]

Farlati gives us a list of the martyrologies that mention the martyr.^[15] He noticed that there were sources about monastic life even from the time of Decius. He mentioned two other ecclesiastical historians who addressed this issue: Joseph Bingham distinguished between the monastic and ascetic lifestyle. An ascetic person lives far away from people as a hermit and does not participate in church services. At the same time the monastic person lives in society and joins in church services. According to the opinion of Louis-Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont the two lifestyles were the same: the ascetic lifestyle turned into the monastic lifestyle. He thought that the passion could be based on an earlier Greek manuscript which contained the

word 'ἄσκητης' (*askētēs*) and the author of the passion translated it to 'monachus'. Farlati's opinion is different from that of the two historians mentioned above. He thought that the monastic and ascetic lifestyles were different. The usage of the word 'monachus' came from Egypt and under the Christian persecutions the usage of this word did not spread elsewhere. Farlati, therefore, regarded Syneros as an ascetic. Against the opinion of Tillemont, Farlati did not find any sign in the passions that could refer to a translation from a Greek *acta*. He emphasized that Syneros's lifestyle was ascetic. Some author mixed the two lifestyles and this is why the word 'monachus' appeared in the passions not because it is a translation of a Greek original containing the word 'ἄσκητης'.^[16]

Research in the 20th Century

Albin Balogh published his work in 1932 about the early period of Christianity in Pannonia which discussed the problems of Syneros in more detail. The author agrees with Tillemont that the original text of the passions, or *acta*, was written in Greek, and the word 'ἄσκητης' was translated into Latin as 'monachus'. However, Balogh thought that Syneros lived an ascetic life in the east before he came to Sirmium. Furthermore, he informs us that only one copy of the Hieronymian martyrologies contains the word 'monachus'.^[17]

Tibor Nagy in his essential work also discusses in detail issues to do with the 'monachus' problem. He described Syneros as the first example of Pannonian asceticism.^[18] He noticed that the shorter passion (from *Acta Sanctorum*) could have been written at the end of the 4th Century or at the early 5th Century due to the usage of the word 'monachus'.^[19]

The *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* was published in 1968 by the Pontifical Lateran University; it is a revision of the *Acta Sanctorum* because it gives us many details about the martyrs. The work used orders the names of the saints and martyrs in alphabetical order. Joseph-Marie Sauget, the author of the 'Syneros' entry thought that the attribute 'monk' was a later addition to the Syneros-tradition. He left his home and moved to Sirmium and this was the reason they called him 'monachus' due to his leaving everything to live alone.^[20]

The literature of the 21st Century

In our century the recent works of (non-Hungarian) scholars argue that Syneros had been a monk who lived an ascetic lifestyle, therefore the word 'monachus' in the shorter passion does not need to be emended. In this group Rajko Bratož thinks that Syneros was a Greek ascetic^[21]; and Miroslava Mirković writes that Syneros did not participate in church services but his lifestyle corresponds to the monastic life.^[22]

From the Hungarian works I would like to highlight a shorter commemorative volume about the Greek (Orthodox) martyrs of Hungary. This volume gives only one page about Syneros but the tradition is unbroken – it presents Syneros as a monastic martyr.^[23]

Péter Kovács gives us a more detailed summary in his work.^[24] He takes sides in more issues. About the passion problem he notes that there isn't any sign in the text that could refer to a Greek *acta*, therefore the passion could have been made from Latin sources – in spite of the fact that the martyr was Greek. The usage of the word 'monachus' does not refer to the ascetic lifestyle, but it means here a man who lives alone.

In the last 10 years, Levente Nagy researched more deeply in this subject. He mentioned Syneros the martyr in some of his articles and in a monograph about the Pannonian martyrs.^[25] He agrees with Kovács that there is no sign in the passions of their being translated from Greek. He is also of the opinion that the usage of the word 'monachus' doesn't mean that the sources had to be in Greek. He thinks that the usage of the word 'monachus' was conscious when the passion was written. He refers to the ascetic people of Aquileia. This community grew steadily in the 360s CE. Therefore, he does not rule out the possibility that this urban ascetic style could have been present in Sirmium in the age of Syneros, but the community did not use the word 'monachus' for themselves even if their lifestyle was similar to the ascetic type. Based on that he thinks that the shorter passion could be the original one, and not the longer version without 'monachus'.

According to Levente Nagy the use of the word 'monachus' is the correct text version in the tradition of Jerome's martyrology, and he dates the shorter passion to the end of the 4th Century. But Balogh said that only one copy of the Hieronymian martyrologies contained this word. Based on these two arguments he concludes that there could be a tradition in the 5th Century in Italy which considered Syneros as an urban ascetic and attached to a monastery.

The summary of the research history

We need to talk about three issues in this summary.

The first one is that the order of the publication of the passions determine the researchers' opinion in many ways. In an unfortunate way the shorter passion with the word 'monachus' had been found 50 years before the longer version without that word. To eliminate the contradiction of the two passions the scholars turned to the martyrologies; but these sources also led them astray. The copies of the Hieronymian martyrology were not studied until the 19th Century, as the copies of the historical martyrologies. I think that many scholars made a

mistake by using only one copy of the martyrology to substantiate their argument; they did not analyse the content of all the copies of the martyrologies.

The second part of the summary is connected to the meaning of the word 'monachus'. A lot of researchers were embarrassed about the usage of this word and they tried to deviate from the classic meaning of 'monachus'. Therefore, they argued that the Greek 'ἄσκητης' was translated incorrectly by the author of the passion as this word only refers to an ascetic life and seclusion. I think if the ascetic lifestyle is accepted as the meaning of the word 'monachus', the question is: why did an ascetic person – whose purpose is to hide himself and live alone – come to Sirmium which was a city of the Roman emperors at this time? To eliminate this problem the arguments of Levente Nagy might be acceptable if there was urban monasticism in Sirmium in the time of Syneros. However, these urban monastic adherents lived together in houses, whilst Syneros possibly lived alone. In this article I will not discuss these issues since a previous study contains my opinions.^[26]

In the third part: I draw attention to the fact that hardly any research has been done about the textual tradition of the two passions. Most researchers used the two published texts (*Acta Sanctorum* and *Acta Martyrum*). I make an attempt to prove that Syneros was not a monk and that this word is only a later addition in the sources.

The copies of the Hieronymian martyrology

In the time of the *Acta Sanctorum*, and of Daniele Farlati, the copies of the martyrologies of Jerome were scattered, and no one saw the totality of these sources. At the end of the 19th Century the copies were collected and systematized and the result was two important text editions of the martyrologies.

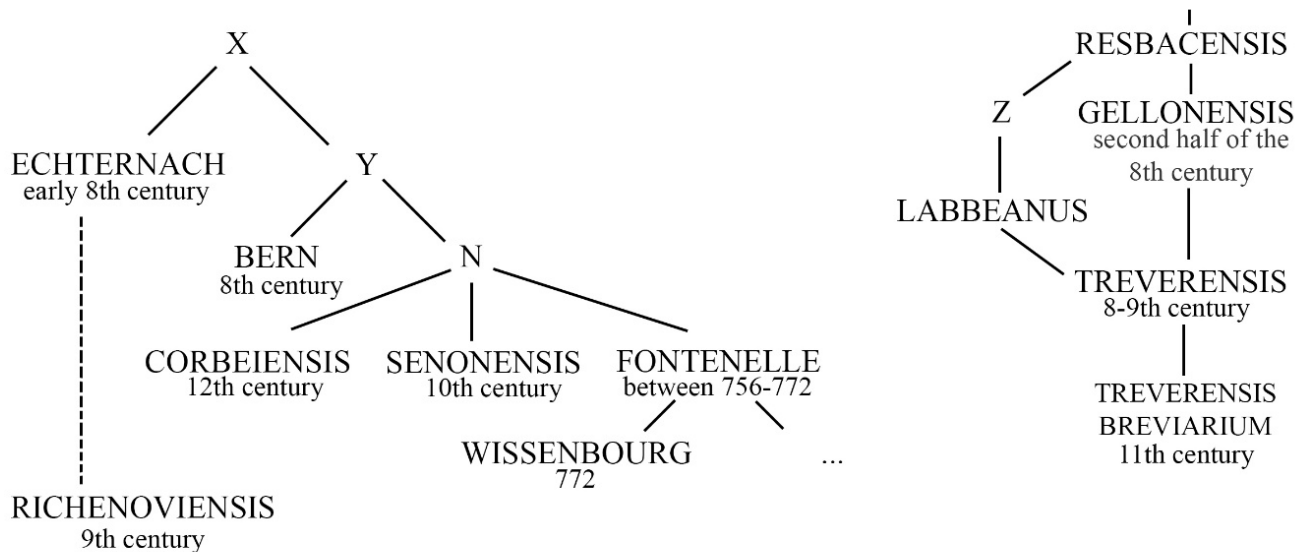
At the end of the 19th Century Giovanni Battista de Rossi began an enormous work, which would have been very thorough, but his sudden illness prevented his continuing the volume. He handed over the task to Ludovicus Duchesne who completed the work. The year of the publication was 1894, the same year de Rossi died. They collected an impressive number of copies of the Hieronymian martyrology and systematized these manuscripts.^[27]

In 1931 Hippolyte Delehaye with his colleagues reviewed and emended the errors of the previous opus in the *Commentarius Perpetuus*.^[28]

The collection of Giovanni B. de Rossi and Ludovicus Duchesne – the Martyrologium

Hieronymianum

The opus includes the copies of the martyrologies divided into days and gives us information about the provenance and date of the codices and manuscripts, as well as the place where they were found. I used the stemma created by them with some addition. The left side of the illustration contains the original stemma from the book to which I added the codex Richenoviensis. In the stemma on the right, I summarize the information given by Rossi and Duchesne in the preface of their book.



The martyrology of Jerome is not actually Jerome's work, this name is deceptive. The Hieronymian martyrology may have been compiled in Italy in the second half of the 5th Century. Levente Nagy refers to this original martyrology when he thinks there was a 'monachus' tradition in the 5th Century about Syneros. The Hieronymian martyrology was written as a compilation of martyrologies of local churches: a Roman calendar, an African calendar and a Greek compilation. The content of the latter is known from a Syriac martyrology owing to the Greek original now lost. The first extant copy of the Hieronymian martyrology was written in the 6th Century in Gallia, Auxerre. All the further copies can be traced back to this, therefore we can only guess what the original martyrology contained.^[29] The Auxerre copy also unknown to us, and the oldest extant copies whose content we know, were written in the 8th Century. These are the codices of Echternach, Bern and Wissenbourg.

The oldest is the codex of Echternach which was written in the 8th Century - possibly in 704/710/711 in England; St. Willibrord brought it to Echternach which is in Luxemburg today.^[30] The codex of Bern was written also in the 8th Century but in the abbey of St. Avoldus close to Metz; it is now in France. The manuscripts of Bern and Echternach have a common

source.^[31] The third oldest copy is the codex of Wissenbourg which was written to the monastery of St. Wandrille in 772 but was later moved to Wissenbourg which is also in France.^[32] However this codex is not the direct descendant of the codex of Bern, but a distant redaction of it: the direct sequel of the codex of Bern is unknown to us and from this unknown codex came the codex of Fontenelle. The codex of Wissenbourg is the direct descendant of this Fontenelle codex-family. There are more direct descendants of the Fontenelle, not only the codex of Wissenbourg, but this is more complete and correct than the others.

There are more copies of the Hieronymian martyrology which mention Syneros the martyr. The “siblings” of the codex of Fontenelle are the codices Corbeiensis and Senonensis. The codex from the abbey of Corbeiensis was written in the 12th Century, and in the 17th it was moved to the library of Adamus Saint-Germain. The codex contains the whole martyrology.^[33] The manuscript Senonensis was written in the 10th Century and it is close to the Fontenelle codices-family. There are entries that are missing in the Senonensis codex, but they can be found in the Fontenelle family.^[34]

The codex and the breviary of Reichenau was made in the 9th Century. The text of the codex is close to the text of the codex of Echternach, but probably it is not the direct descendant of the Echternach. The codex was written between 827 and 842 and the breviary was made shortly after.^[35]

The right-hand part of the illustration was made by me based on the information from the book of de Rossi and Duchesne. This branch contains the codex Gellonensis (codex from the abbey of Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert) and its descendants. The exact origin of the Gellonensis is unknown, but probably it was copied from the codex of Rebais (Resbacensis). Leopold Delisle notes that the codex Gellonensis could have been written between 772 and 795 in the time of Pope Hadrian I.^[36] The manuscript of Labbeanus is negligible according to Rossi and Duchesne owing to the many errors which it contains.^[37] The codex of Trier (Treverensis) was in the abbey of St. Margaret and was written at the end of the 8th Century or in the first years of the 9th Century. The text of this codex could be a descendant of codex Gellonensis but it also contains elements from the codex of Labbeanus. The breviary of Trier could have been made in the 11th Century, based on the codex.^[38]

Hippolyte Delehaye – the Commentarius Perpetuus

Delehaye and his colleagues reviewed the content of Rossi’s and Duchesne’s work. They clarified and completed the opus with newly found codices. In the case of Syneros we have

one more codex. This is the codex of Dublin, written in the 11th Century probably before 1082. It is a descendant of the codex of Echternach.^[39]

The summary of the two collections

After this introduction I would like to turn to the text of codices about Syneros the martyr. Our martyr has two days in the calendar according to the tradition (22nd and 23rd February), therefore I took into consideration both days.

The three oldest codices (8th Century) are on solid foundations which do not contain the word 'monachus':

Codex of Echternach (early 8th Century):^[40]

22nd February: „Sirmi natale Sereni et aliorum XVI”

23rd February: „In sirmi sinerotis...”

Codex of Bern (8th Century):^[41]

22nd February.: „Sirmium natale sancti Sereni et aliorum LXII”

23rd February.: „In pannoniis natl scorum seneroti...”

Codex of Wissenbourg (second half of the 8th Century):^[42]

22nd February: „Syrmium natale sancti Seneri et aliorum LXII”

23rd February.: „In pannoniis Seneroti”

The codex and breviary of Reichenau were written in the 9th century and were traced back to the codex of Echternach through further copies which are unknown to us. This codex and breviary also do not contain the word 'monachus':

Codex and breviary of Reichenau (9th century):^[43]

22nd February: „Syrmio sancti Seneri et aliorum LXXI”

23rd February: „In Syrmio Senerotis”

The codex of Dublin was written in the 11th Century and was also traced back to the codex of Echternach. This also does not contain the word 'monachus':

Codex Dubliniensis (11th Century):^[44]

23rd February.: „In Panonis Seneroti”

The more distant copies in time are the codices Senonensis and Corbeiensis which are between the codices of Bern and Wissenbourg. Senonensis was written in the 10th Century and the Corbeiensis in the 12th Century. These also do not contain the word 'monachus':

Codex Senonensis (10th Century) and Codex Corbeiensis (12th Century):^[45]

22nd February.: „Syrmium natale sancti Seneri et aliorum LXII”

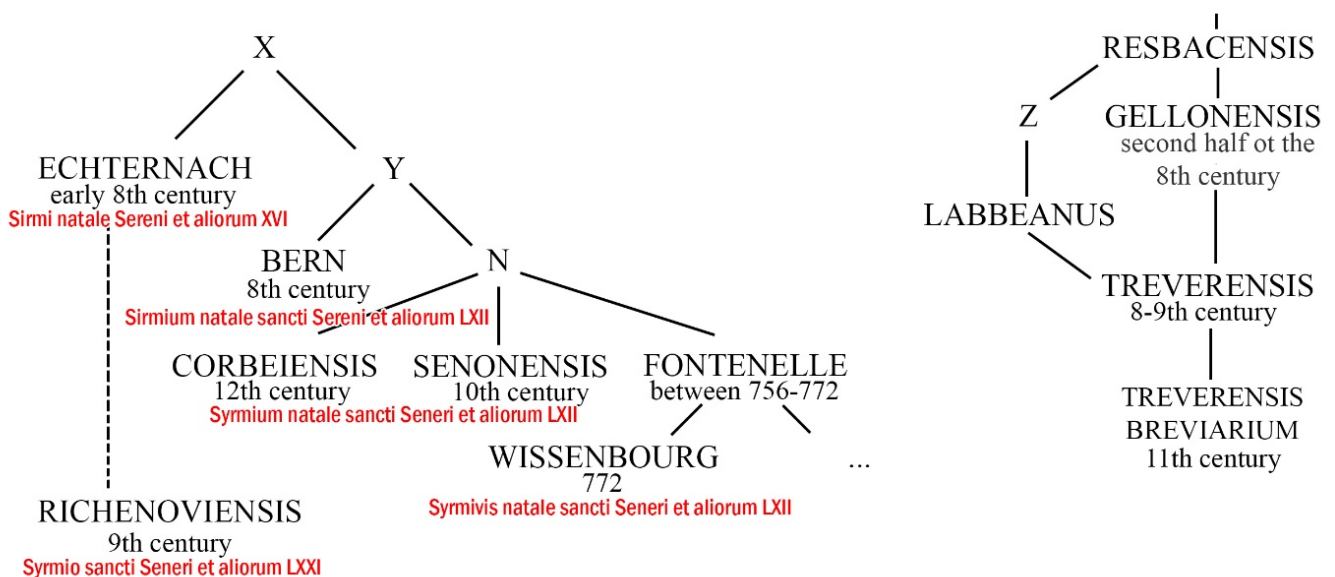
23rd February.: „In Panoniis Seneroti”

The codex of Trier was based on the codex Gellonensis of uncertain origin and the omitted codex of Labbeanus. The codex of Trier has a breviary which was written in the 11th Century and only this one contains the word 'monachus':

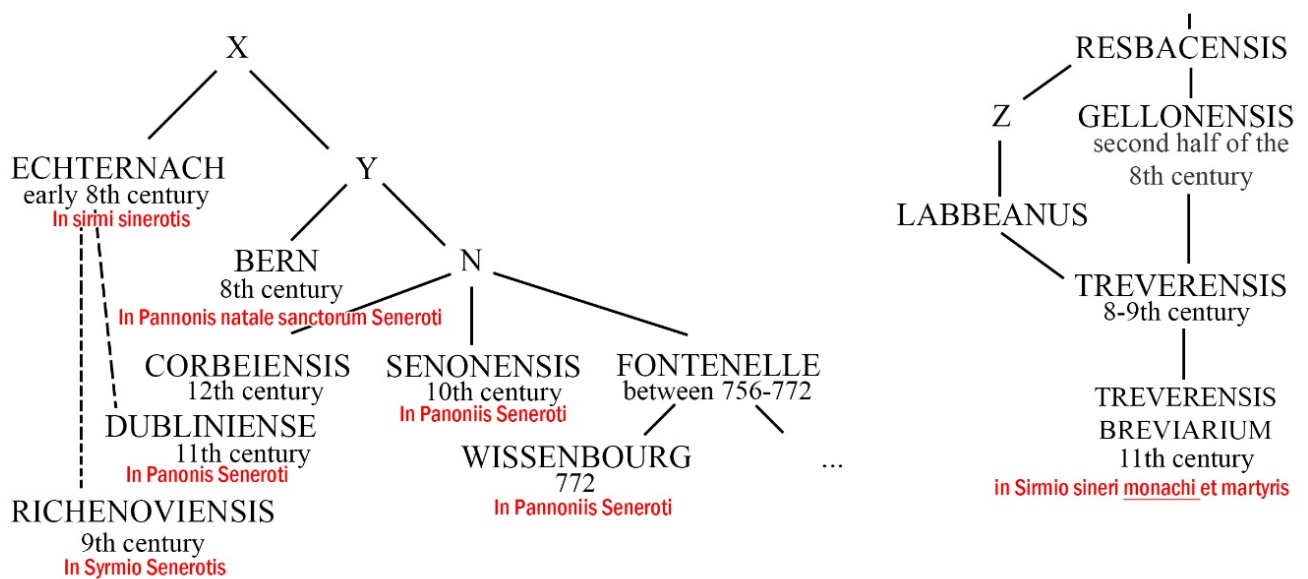
Breviary of Trier (11th Century):^[46]

23rd February.: „in Sirmio sineri monachi et martyris”

VIII. KAL. MART. – 22nd February



VII. KAL. MART. = 23rd February



Conclusions based on the two collections of the Hieronymian martyrologies

In summary we can say that none of the oldest manuscripts and their descendants consider Syneros as a 'monachus'. The word only appears in the breviary of Trier in the 11th Century which has a doubtful origin. At the end of this study, I will demonstrate why could this word is included in this breviary.

The historical martyrologies

The work of Henri Quentin (*Les Martyrologes Historiques du Moyen Age*) was a great help to us to see through the historical martyrologies. He collected and systemized the copies of the martyrology of Beda, and the martyrologies of Lyon, Florus and Ado.^[47] He researched the copies of the historical martyrologies, as Rossi, Duchesne, and Delehaye did the copies of Hieronymian martyrologies. We must also mention the series of *Patrologia Latina* which contains a great volume of Beda's works.^[48]

Beda Venerabilis

According to scholars, Beda was the forerunner of the historical martyrologies who liked to mix the martyrology of Jerome with other literature sources (especially the passions). Beda is important also because he could use an older Hieronymian martyrology than other extant martyrologies - older than the codex of Echternach which was written in the 8th Century because Beda lived between 672 and 735. He wrote several works and the most part of his

works survived. At first, he created biographies of saints and after this he wrote the martyrology. In fact, he completed the Hieronymian martyrology with other information and notes about the saints which were given to him from the passions. This is the way the historical martyrologies were created.^[49] Beda in his martyrology left some days blank, and these days were completed later by other authors and copiers.^[50] Quentin notices that perhaps Beda was not the forerunner of the historical martyrologies, and he may have used an older historical martyrology for his work. Beda was a careful author who used and chose his sources conscientiously. The second redactions of his work were written at the end of the 8th Century or in the early 9th Century. This work used sources from the liturgical literature.^[51] Quentin gives us a list of the 114 martyrs who are included in both redactions. Syneros is not in this list,^[52] however there are also copies of the redactions and these copies are different from each other; but Syneros the martyr was found in none of the copies.^[53]

The *Patrologia Latina* (PL) also confirms this fact. The 94th volume, which contains all the works of Beda, presents two redactions of Beda's martyrology: one was published by the Bollandists and the other one is a manuscript of Colonia Agrippina. This last one was written in 1616. The editor of PL added a commentary to the bottom of every page of the martyrology by Smith which was written in 1722. In this work we can find Syneros, but as I mentioned these sources (17-18th Century) are much younger than the time of Beda (7-8th Century).^[54]

There is a text called Beda's martyrology in the 138th volume of *Patrologia Latina* but this could be only a calendar extract from Beda's martyrology according to the editor. This little calendar is a part of a codex which is in the library of Laurentiana and was written in the 11th Century. The scholar who examined this codex found that the notes to the days were not in the same handwriting. So, he was able to make a distinction between the original text of Beda's martyrology and the later additions.^[55] The result of this research was the same as Quentin claimed: the original work of Beda did not contain Syneros the martyr neither on the 22nd nor 23rd February.

The question is why Beda left somebody out from his martyrology? As we mentioned Beda liked to skip days and information especially if the sources of this information was uncertain. The problem with Syneros is thus: he has a lot of name forms and is also listed on two days - this could be enough reason for Beda to have left out this martyr.

The martyrology of Lyon

The martyrology of Lyon was written in the first half of the 9th Century. The manuscript was

used in Velay. It was based on the second redaction of Beda's martyrology which was created before 806. This second redaction was completed by the author of the martyrology of Lyon whom we do not know by name. He used a few literary sources, and therefore the work contains less error.^[56] Quentin also gives us a list of martyrs who were included in this work as an addition to Beda's work. Here we can find S. Syrenus on 23rd February.^[57] The text of the martyrology of Lyon is completed with the details of the passion:

St. Syrenus 'monachus' was reborn in Syrmium: who expelled with sharp words from his garden a married woman, the wife of one of the emperor's soldiers, in the time of Emperor Maximianus, because she walked there at an inappropriate time. Emperor Maximianus ordered Syneros to be brought before him; Syneros confessed his Christian faith and then was executed by decapitation.^[58]

The martyrology of Lyon could be the first historical martyrology which contains the word 'monachus' and it was written in the 9th Century.

Florus of Lyon

The next martyrology is the work of Florus of Lyon. He completed the previous martyrology (Beda and Lyon) with hagiographic sources, testimonies, reports, and therefore it was exposed to text corruption. The extractions were made carefully and the author Florus also used the Hieronymian martyrology, but the times and places are sometimes false.^[59] Florus completed the martyrology of Lyon. The first version of his work is a manuscript used by the abbey of Saint-Croix, and more redactions followed this version. The text we used was in the codex of D. Antonii Faure which was written in the 12th Century.^[60] The author added only a short addition to the text of martyrology of Lyon, to the day 23rd February: "*62 martyrs*".^[61] The Hieronymian martyrology they used could be from the family of the codex of Bern, but there are some other elements which could be from the codex Gellonensis.^[62] The text with the addition is as follows:

St. Serenus 'monachus' was reborn in Syrmium: who expelled with sharp words from his garden a married woman, the wife of one of the emperor's soldiers, in the time of Emperor Maximianus, because she walked there at an inappropriate time. Emperor Maximianus ordered Syneros to be brought before him. Syneros confessed his Christian faith and then was executed by decapitation. There were 62 other (martyrs) who died in the same place.^[63]

Ado of Vienne

Ado wrote his martyrology between 850 and 860.^[64] Quentin tried to show up what was taken up from Florus and what could be Ado's own work. The first version (edition) of Ado's martyrology did not survive. Quentin thinks that it was written in Lyon, but the town did not use this work of Ado, but Florus' martyrology. The second edition of Ado's martyrology was more common and better known but as Quentin said – it did not contain information about Vienne. The third edition contains a long list of information about Vienne, but it is doubtful if this was published by Ado himself. The copies of this third edition were written in the 10th Century.^[65]

Only those parts were highlighted from Ado's work by Quentin that were the part of Florus' martyrology. In this list we can find that Ado took over the part of Syneros from Florus without change.^[66] Therefore we can conclude that it was the same text:

St. Serenus 'monachus' was reborn in Syrmium: who expelled with sharp words from his garden a married woman, the wife of one of the emperor's soldiers, in the time of Emperor Maximianus, because she walked there at an inappropriate time. Emperor Maximianus ordered Syneros to be brought before him. Syneros confessed his Christian faith and then was executed by decapitation. There were 62 other (martyrs) who died in the same place.

The summary of the historical martyrologies

I used the stemma which was drawn by Quentin in his work but I omitted some parts of it for easier understanding. In the case of this stemma the names refer to whole codices-families and not single exemplars. These codices-families exist in several copies from every century. I only highlighted the most common information about these families in this stemma: their relationship to each other and the earliest date of writing/publication of these families. I did not have the chance to follow through these copies as I did with the copies of the Hieronymian martyrologies.

The stemma contains the Florus M. family. This family is older than the 12th Century, but the codex which I examined was written in the 12th Century, therefore I indicated this century in the list. I didn't have the possibility to work with copies that were earlier than the 12th Century.

We can conclude that on the one hand Beda's martyrology did not contain Syneros the martyr. The martyr's first appearance might be in the first half of the 9th Century in the martyrology of Lyon.

X

|

Beda
before 735
none

|

Beda II
8-9th century
none

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Martyrology of Lyon
before 806

VII. KAL. MAR. Apud Syrmium, natale sancti Syreni monachi

|

Florus (St Croix)

|

Florus M
manuscript from the 12th century

VII. KL. MAR. Apud Syrmium natale sancti Sereni monachi
... aliorum sexaginta duorum

|

Florus ET

|

Ado 1
850-860

|

Ado 2

VII. KL. MAR. Apud Syrmium natale sancti Sereni monachi
... aliorum sexaginta duorum

|

Ado 3

On the other hand, this appearance carries within itself the word 'monachus'. We don't know a historical martyrology that doesn't contain the word 'monachus'. The location of this 'monachus' tradition was widespread in the south-east of France and the time could be the 9th Century. The copies of the Hieronymian martyrology which were created in the 9-10th Century did not contain the word 'monachus' because these copies were written in another location. Furthermore, we know that all authors of historical martyrologies continued the work of their predecessors - this is why the word 'monachus' was repeated in the later copies and works. From the same cause neither Florus nor Ado omitted it from their martyrology.

We have to ask the question: if the historical martyrologies were based not only on the Hieronymian martyrology but the passions also, is it possible that the authors of the historical martyrologies used a passion which already contained the word 'monachus' - especially the text of the shorter passion? Can this be the cause why the historical martyrologies present Syneros as a monastic person?

The manuscript tradition of the passions

In the research of the passion the project of *L'indexation informatique de la BHL et des catalogues de manuscrits hagiographiques* was a great help to us.^[67] This project is an internet database which helps us to find the manuscripts and codices of the martyr and the search is based on the Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina. The BHL contains Syneros under no. 7595 and no. 7596. The longer passion without 'monachus' belongs to the no. 7595^[68] and the shorter passion with 'monachus' belongs to the no. 7596.^[69]

The manuscript tradition of the longer passion (Ruinart)

This version does not contain the word 'monachus'. The database of the project gives us the next result: there are 5 copies of the longer passion.

- The oldest is in a codex of Vatican and it was written between 851 and 950.^[70]
- There are two codices of Brussels - one of them was written between 1101 and 1200, the other was written in the first half of the 13th Century.^[71]
- The fourth manuscript was found in a codex of Angers which was written in the 12th Century.^[72]
- The fifth is the youngest copy, it is in a codex of Paris and was written in the 14th Century.^[73]

The manuscript tradition of the shorter passion (*Acta Sanctorum*)

There isn't any copy of the shorter passion based on the database of the project. So far, no copies have been found which would match the shorter passion from the codex of Utrecht. However, we overviewed the original BHL and the *Novum Supplementum* and these didn't contain any copy except the codex of Utrecht. The database is newer (1998) than the *Novum Supplementum* (1986) and it doesn't know any other manuscript. So, we can suppose that the codex was lost in the centuries after its publication in the *Acta Sanctorum*, and it obviously represented only a marginal version of the tradition with a single manuscript.

It is important to notice that the martyr's name in the shorter passion is the same as in the martyrology of Lyon (Syrenus). This is a rare form of the martyr's name and therefore we can recognize that the early monachus tradition belonged together with the name Syrenos. Later this Syrenus was changed to Serenus by Florus.

Conclusions

Based on the content of the martyrologies and passions we can come to the following conclusions:

- The copies of the Hieronymian martyrology do not contain the word 'monachus' except one: the breviary and codex from Trier (from the 11th century) of dubious origin. I think that this breviary and codex could have been intertwined with the established tradition of the historical martyrologies. The author of the codex (and breviary) knew the 'monachus' tradition from the historical martyrologies and completed the codex and breviary with this information.
- The author of the martyrology of Lyon may have created the 'monachus' tradition in the 9th Century; or that tradition could have been created in the 8th Century (with the shorter passion) according to the usage of the martyr's name and the author of Lyon took over this tradition from the shorter passion.
- The historical martyrologies were created on the basis of the Hieronymian martyrologies and passions. In examining the latter, we ascertained that while the non-monachus passion has several copies, the other passion has no extant copy. The longer passion has copies from the 9th Century (when probably the martyrology of Lyon was written) to the 14-15th Century. Therefore, we can advance two theories:
- the martyrology of Lyon or the source from which the author worked used the 'monachus' tradition from the shorter passion and therefore the possible date of origin of the shorter passion could be from the 8th Century.
- or the shorter passion was based on the historical martyrologies and the larger passion. In

this case the historical martyrologies didn't take over the word 'monachus' from the shorter passion and it could be the post-insertion of a copier. The text of the larger passion may have given rise to this because the life of Syneros contains elements similar to an ascetic lifestyle, and the society within which the passions and martyrologies were copied was a monastic community. In this case the date of origin of the shorter passion is the beginning of the 9th Century.

Overall, we can say that Syneros the martyr who died in the early 4th century was not a monastic person based on the sources and the text of the passions. This tradition which is determinative to this day was created probably in the 9th Century by a real 'monachus'.

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 30. The abbey of Echternach was established by St. Willibrord. The codex of Echternach contains 45 letters and 43 of that were survived. The martyrology can find on the letters 2-32 and a calendar on the letters 34-41. The martyrology and the calendar formed part of an earlier codex. Due to the codex was written in England it contains more saint from England. See: De Rossi – Duchesne: Acta Sanctorum, 1894., VIII. ↑

31. The text of the manuscript is incomplete between 22th November and 24th December. There are local information and holidays about the parish on the margins of the codex, but these are not older than the year 855. This codex contains the most geographical locations. See: De Rossi – Duchesne: *Acta Sanctorum*, 1894., IX. ↑
32. The cover page and the margin notes of the codex clearly indicate that it was used by the St. Peter church. See: De Rossi – Duchesne: *Acta Sanctorum*, 1894., XV-XVII. ↑
33. De Rossi – Duchesne: *Acta Sanctorum*, 1894., XI-XIV. ↑
34. The original codex was in the property of the abbey of St. Benedict but it was divided into two parts: one became a part in a codex of Vatican and the other part moved to Orleans (Aurelainensis). This part was stolen and sold in England. Only a copy stayed in Orleans which was written in the 17th century – de Rossi used this version but during the edition of the book in 1888 the original stolen part appeared and it was given back to France. Duchesne copied this original part and in the end the volume of Rossi and Duchesne contains the text of the original codex. See: De Rossi – Duchesne: *Acta Sanctorum*, 1894., XIV-XV. ↑
35. De Rossi – Duchesne: *Acta Sanctorum*, 1894., XXXIV. ↑
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56. Quentin: Les Martyrologues, 1908., 682–683. ↑
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58. *“VII. KAL. MAR. Apud Syrmium, natale sancti Syreni monachi: qui tempore Maximiani imperatoris, cum unius ex domesticis eius uxorem, hora incongrua in horto quem ipse sibi excolebat deambulans acrius increpando repulisset, iubente Maximiano tentus, et christianum se esse confessus, capite caesus est.”* See: Quentin: Les Martyrologues, 1908., 186. ↑
59. Quentin: Les Martyrologues, 1908., 682–687. ↑
60. The codex came from the church of Saint-Pierre de Macon and most part of it was written in the 12th century. See: Quentin: Les Martyrologues, 1908., 225, 248. ↑
61. Quentin: Les Martyrologues, 1908., 248. ↑
62. Quentin: Les Martyrologues, 1908., 324–325. ↑
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64. Quentin: Les Martyrologues, 1908., 682–687. ↑
65. Quentin: Les Martyrologues, 1908., 674. ↑
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70. Vatican Lat. MS. 5771. 319v-320v., The scanned photo can be viewed here: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.5771 Download time: 2021. 03. 29. ↑

71. Bruxelles MS 9290 (3223) is from the 12th century and the Bruxelles MS 207-208 (3132) was written in the first half of the 13th century. The text of the two codices of Brussel are the same. See: Bollandists (eds.): *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum Bibliothecae regiae Bruxellensis*, Tom. 1-2., Bruxellensis, 1886-1889., 143-144., 303. ↑
72. Angers MS. 807., 108v-109v. See.: M. A. Molinier: „Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque d’Angers” in: *Catalogue Général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France*, Paris, 1898., 455.; Joseph van der Straten: *Les Manuscrits Hagiographiques d’Orléans Tours et Angers*, Bruxelles, 1982., 264. ↑
73. Paris MS 5289., 21v-22r. ↑