

RESEARCH PLAN
OTKA-K 109058

I. Mission statement

The Middle Ages were a formative period of European culture. This is from where the organised interplay of unity and diversity still determining the cultural life of Europe originates. Mediaeval culture was primarily a liturgical one. The liturgy, that is, the public life of organised Christian worship was the medium that integrated, rearranged and made widely available the most important intellectual and artistic achievements of European culture. It created a universal language and an unwavering point of reference by means of which European people—from husbandmen to high intellectuals—were able to experience a common culture. This liturgical culture was very stable from the time of its first sources in the 6-7th century until the 16-17th century, and to some extent even until the 20th century. Each institution or region carefully safeguarded its own practices; while they preserved their essential unity, they manifested themselves in an incredible richness of colourful variants. This also means that mediaeval liturgical culture has no so much a history as a typology. It is mistaken to approach it from a genealogical or statistical perspective; Hungarian scholarship is in position to offer new methods and more reliable results. Since getting to know and understanding liturgical culture is important for almost every area of social sciences, it is necessary—especially as it is still lacking—to provide a disciplinary and institutional background which could guarantee the enduring and high quality research and publication of its invaluable material. Our task would be to study this culture in a way that we can maintain our direct contact with primary sources (thereby restoring the honour of basic, primary research in the sphere of humanities), and we could still remain locked on long-distance goals and the pursuit of higher implications. This would make our work much more than a haphazard collection of historical data from a by-gone age. We would like to study, evaluate and systematise the sources with a method that perfectly corresponds to the inherent logic of the material, making it possible for several related sciences and the academic community at large to rely on dependable research. This is meant to ensure that this cardinal aspect of Europe's last millennium—as if coming to new life—would be made available to all.

II. Our results so far

In the 21st century the study of liturgical history must be built upon secular interdisciplinary institutional foundations.¹ Although in the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century there were noteworthy and valuable attempts to deepen liturgical research, recently it has come to a standstill. One of the reasons was that in many cases the political separation of church and state was concomitant with the separation of ecclesiastical and secular cultures, which approach is inapplicable to a time period when the church and state were organically intertwined. Secular science and education presume in good faith that the church takes every care to preserve and process its own cultural heritage, but it is a naïve presumption. The human and material resources available to ecclesiastical scholarly circles are much more limited than they were a 100 years ago, hence scholarly pursuits—deemed impractical from a theological or pastoral point of view—do not constitute a priority. Unless this situation is duly recognised and redressed, we run the terrible risk of letting an important, rich and complex culture sink into oblivion.

Certain areas, such as mediaeval literary history, religious ethnography, patristics, codicology or musicology have already recognised the challenge, and they created scholarly workshops without, of course, excluding competent ecclesiastical experts. The problem is that the study of mediaeval ecclesiastical, and especially liturgical, culture is a discipline very much divided and fragmented. The substantive research of this culture always has to be “camouflaged”, first, in order to make it fit into the given institutional framework, and second, to avoid raising the suspicion that one is meddling in the internal affairs of the church. In our opinion, this state of affairs is appalling.

¹ As it is explained in more detail by my article on mediaeval Pontificals: FÖLDVÁRY, Miklós István: „A Hartvik-agenda és a Német-római pontifikále”, in Kovács, Andrea (szerk.): *Hagyomány és megújulás a liturgiában és zenéjében. A Liszt Ferenc Zeneművészeti Egyetem Egyházzene Tanszéke újraindításának 20. évfordulóján tartott szimpózium előadásai. Liszt Ferenc Zeneművészeti Egyetem Egyházzenei Tanszéke, Budapest 2012. 147–158.*

This is why in 2003 with the support of the OTKA [Hungarian Scientific Research Fund] we (Balázs Déri and Miklós Földvály) launched a series of critical textual editions, entitled *Monumenta Ritualia Hungarica* (MRH),² along with a scientific workshop which has since gone through two successful periods of application for tenders. Insofar as the financial volume of the previous tenders allowed, we have laid the foundations of a veritable specialised library and digital data base. In the course of the last decade a new generation of talented students has sprung up around us, and hopefully we will be able to get them involved in our efforts as independent researchers.

The original aim of the work is the complete and representative edition of the Hungarian mediaeval liturgy's entire source material, with special attention to international readers, intensive publicity abroad, and introductions of genuine scientific value in English. However, in the process of our work, the horizon has considerably widened. First, because we have found out that the Hungarian liturgical variant is truly important, not only due to our understandable national interests but because—thanks to the particular circumstances of its genesis—it was the most enduring liturgical Use in Europe with the greatest geographical expansion of all. Thus the Hungarian Use is a kind of “demonstrative example” for liturgical historians: if we want to understand how in the Middle Ages a liturgical variant was developed, passed down, diversified and changed, the most typical and instructive example is found in the Hungarian Use. Our work is helped by the fact that in Hungary the extant material is abundant enough to be representative, but scarce enough for a modest scholarly group to process within a generation. Our horizon was widened also by the analysis of certain types of sources and ceremonies: it has become clear that we can only arrive at final and substantive conclusions if each of the types is placed within the broadest possible European context, both synchronically (geographically) and diachronically (historically). This realisation gave rise to methodological results (to some extent continuing the work of László Dobszay) which, compared to parallel (and often barren) studies abroad, may bring about a real breakthrough.³ By means of these results, the Hungarian “school” of liturgical history can spring into the forefront, becoming a centre of academic resources and scholarly systematisation. For this to become a reality we need more than intellectual capacity, we must build an infrastructure at least comparable to more advanced countries in Europe.

III. Possible overlaps

In recent times this kind of research was conducted in three Hungarian institutions. In terms of liturgical theology, the MTA (Hungarian Academy of Sciences) had a Liturgical Research Group for a short period of time with the leadership (and sole membership) of Ádám Füzes. The research group did not survive for long, and since then Ádám Füzes has ceased from scientific activity. The only active representative of ecclesiastically supervised research in liturgical history, usually associated with József Török, is now Attila Józsa, with whom we have closely collaborated from the beginning; he participated in our last project and he is planned to be part of the next one as well.

Another possible “competitor” is the Research Group of Church Music from the LFZE (Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music). Lately, this group has been focusing on areas that are quite far from mediaeval liturgical history, such as modern ecclesiastical compositions and organology. The only Gregorian-related research is entrusted to a single person, Andrea Kovács. We closely and regularly collaborate with her too, especially as regards the Divine Office.

Since 1988 the Institute of Musicology at the MTA (Hungarian Academy of Sciences) has been hosting a project with an intellectual background very similar to ours. On the basis of László Dobszay's approach and methodology they have been systematically studying and comparatively analysing the sung items (antiphons and responsories) of the Central European Office traditions with the leadership of Zsuzsa Czagány. The collective edition of antiphons and responsories is their accomplishment. Without a doubt, this partially overlaps with the work that we have envisaged. In the long run, it would be more reasonable if the CAO-ECE Project and our Research Group of Liturgical History could work hand in hand. Until then we shall try to avoid working on the same subjects: while

² The original idea is delineated in the introduction to the Missal: DÉRI, Balázs — FÖLDVÁRY, Miklós István: „Objectives of Monumenta Ritualia Hungarica”, in: DÉRI, Blasius (szerk.): *Missale Strigoniense 1484: id est Missale secundum chorum almae ecclesiae Strigoniensis, impressum Nurenbergae apud Anthonium Koburger, anno Domini MCCCCLXXXIII (RMK III 7)*. Argumentum, Budapest 2009. I–VIII.

³ For details, see the article on the Palm Sunday Ordo: FÖLDVÁRY Miklós István: „[A virágvasárnapi ágszentelés és környezet az esztergomi rítus szerint](#)”, *Capitulum Laicorum Sancti Michaelis Archangeli* (blog), 2012. április 2–4.

they research the antiphonal-responsorial material, we will concentrate on different parts of the Divine Office and other ritual elements

IV. Research strategy

How much we can actually accomplish and how we can schedule our work will greatly depend on the nature and measure of support we get. Until now, there has not been a single full or part time researcher in the workshop of the MRH; the participants had to work in their free time and without remuneration. All the financial support we have received, we spent on expanding our source material and paying our assistant colleagues. If the project were developed into a proper research group, the time and energy we could spend on scholarly work would be multiplied. Subsequently, we will draw up a comprehensive plan for our future activities. We will also try to give a projection about what can be accomplished within the different cycles of the tender.

1. Editing and publishing sources

The liturgical material of each Use is rather voluminous but not completely out of reach. The most important sources deserve to be published in independent critical editions, but in terms of individual ceremonies, their collective editions based on representative sources may often be more economical and scientifically more informative. Among the principal sources special attention must be paid to the earliest Hungarian codices, rarities and those incunabula or antiquae that represent a summary of prior traditions. As to the thematically arranged collective editions, the principles of their composition are determined by the structure of the liturgy itself which may be divided into four major areas:

- a) Mass,
- b) Divine Office,
- c) Pontifical (other episcopal ceremonies),
- d) Ritual (other priestly ceremonies).

The subject of the research we have just completed was the Pontifical. Its complete—and rather scarce—Hungarian source material will be made available in a critical edition by 2014.

We hope that the subject of our next project will be the Ritual (completely, the Divine Office (partially), and the Rubrical books (mostly supplementary material). Since the Ritual contains the sort of ceremonies that most profoundly influence the daily life of lay society (e.g. Baptism, Matrimony, Funeral service), this area will elicit the greatest interest among people from outside the world of academia. The source base of Hungarian Rituals may be described as follows:

- a) “Pre-history”: isolated Ritual-Ordos in different types of books (pl. Hartvik Agenda, Pray Codex, Missals, Pauline Chant Books),
- b) Printed books between the Baptismale/Obsequiale of 1500 and the Ordo et Ritus of Miklós Oláh.
- c) The Agendarius of Miklós Telegdi from 1583 (some of its vernacular sections have been published recently by Csaba Fekete, but he was motivated exclusively by literary interests).
- d) Pázmány Ritual (1620–1907).

The Divine Office is the most voluminous and complex component of the liturgy. Its most important textual sources are the Zagreb Breviary (MR 67), the 13th-century Notated Temporale from Prague (Strahov), and the printed Breviaries (1480–1568). In addition to these, there are several 14th-century supplementary sources. The publication and indexing of the printed material is not an unreasonable undertaking. In case it receives full support, it could be accomplished within this cycle. In the complete and final critical edition the Divine office has three volumes:

- a) Psalterium,
- b) Temporale,
- c) Sanctorale.

From among these, we could have the first one published within a single properly financed cycle, including not only the material of the principal tradition (Esztergom) but also the peripheral material of the sub-traditions (Szepesség, Erdély-Várad).

The publication of Rubrical books has already begun with the Ordinarius Strigoniensis, and we have at our disposal a significant edition of the Ordinarius Agriensis, although it leaves much to be desired both philologically and liturgically. The critical edition of the so-called Ordinarius Scepusiensis or Rubrica Strigoniensis is basically finished and awaits publication. In addition to these, it would be

very useful to publish the Telegdi-Ordinal of 1580 and the Lányi Codex; the latter is a quite unique Ordinal in the vernacular.

2. *The analysis of published material*

The most defining feature of the liturgy is how the individual ceremonies are arranged as textual compositions and dramatic acts. It is in this sense that we designate ceremonies as *Ordos*. The *Ordos* can be studied from the perspective of philology, ceremony, and composition; it is also enlightening to look at the sources, influences, and history of the *Ordo*, or its variations between several different *Uses*. This is what we mean by analysing the edited sources. Our long-term goal could be the synchronic and diachronic analysis of every single *Ordo* within the Occidental liturgy, although this—even in the best of circumstances—could not be accomplished within one generation. We could, however, finish the representative part of the work to be done, leaving to posterity all the necessary tools, methods and concrete goals. For the next cycle, our goals are the following:

a) The historical-comparative analysis of each *Ordo* of the Ritual in a monographic form. This could also be done as part of the introductions to textual editions.

b) The comparative analysis of the Psalmody of the Divine Office based on the broadest possible material (this focus is narrower than that of the CAO-ECE Project, but it would rely on a more complete source base).

c) The complete analysis of the Lectionary of the Hungarian Office, with due attention to its “foreign” context (has already begun this work).⁴

d) The edition and analysis of the Office *Ordos*, that is, the comparative study of the few ceremonial regulations pertaining to the Divine Office.⁵

e) The research of the Ordinary of the Divine Office, that is, studying the scarcely documented but very important rules and texts (Gábor Szoliva is working on this with respect to the Hour of Compline).

3. *Exploring new territories*

It is a reasonable and partially verified work hypothesis that the occidental liturgy of the Middle Ages can be divided into enduring and continuous *Uses*, while the *Uses* are made up of certain families and regions. The values and special properties of each *Use* can only be appreciated if we reconstruct the complex but logical system of which they form a part. This reconstruction is rendered difficult because the available sources are very unevenly distributed. In certain European countries we find a lot of them, in others only a few are still available. There are countries where they have been published, while elsewhere even the catalogues are incomplete or incorrect. It makes our work at once easier and harder that due to digitalisation, the amount of sources available through the internet grow exponentially. It is helpful because some data can be acquired easily and cheaply, but also a difficulty because the policy of digitalisation can be very different depending on the library; certain areas constitute an open treasury, while others remain in the dark.

It is a necessary condition for effective work that it not be based on an incomplete source base, collected in a haphazard fashion. The entire representative material of each European region must be studied systematically and proportionally. For this sort of work, we need primarily critical editions (if there are any), then incunabula, antiquae, and finally, manuscript control sources.⁶ This necessitates

⁴ See articles on the Hungarian Office lectionaries: FÖLDVÁRY Miklós István: „[A magyarországi zsolozsma-lekcionárium temporáléjának jellegzetességei I. Bevezetés](#)”, *Magyar Egyházzene* XVI (2008/2009) 143–154. IDEM: „[A magyarországi zsolozsma-lekcionárium temporáléjának jellegzetességei II. Esztergom](#)”, *Magyar Egyházzene* XVI (2008/2009) 405–440.

⁵ Cf. the series on Office *Ordos*: FÖLDVÁRY Miklós István: „[Zsolozsmarendek I. Az ünnepélyes vesperás rítusa « tridentin » szertartás szerint](#)”, *Magyar Egyházzene* XI (2003/2004) 461–476; IDEM: „[Zsolozsmarendek II. Az ünnepélyes vesperás rítusa a laoni székesegyház XII–XIII. századi ordináriuskönyve szerint](#)”, *Magyar Egyházzene* XII (2004/2005) 315–320; IDEM: „[Zsolozsmarendek III. Az ünnepélyes vesperás rítusa a salisbury-i székesegyház XIII–XIV. századi ordináriuskönyvének két változata szerint](#)”, *Magyar Egyházzene* XIII (2005/2006) 121–132; „[Zsolozsmarendek IV. az officium tenebrarum római és esztergomi szertartásrendje](#)”, *Magyar Egyházzene* XVIII (2011/2012) 159–164; IDEM: „[Zsolozsmarendek V. a monasztikus vesperás rendje 1240 körül a Metz előtti Szent Arnulf-apátság szokása szerint](#)”, *Magyar Egyházzene* XVIII (2011/2012) 423–428.

⁶ In my article on the Palm Sunday *Ordo* I explain why in this order: „[A virágvasárnapi ágszentelés és körmenet az esztergomi rítus szerint](#)”, *Capitulum Laicorum Sancti Michaelis Archangeli* (blog), 2012. április 2–4.

both an unpredictable work of collection, seizing on unexpected opportunities, and a very purposeful planning.

From the perspective of the Central European liturgies East Saxony (archdiocese of Magdeburg) and the Border Country of the Holy Roman Empire [historical explanation elsewhere] are of the utmost importance. Unfortunately, Central European libraries suffered significant losses during the Reformation, the Thirty Years' War and World War II. The research of liturgical documents was also hampered by the unfavourable atmosphere of the Communist era. For these reasons the liturgical culture of this important region of Europe is much less accessible than the eminent archbishoprics of Salzburg, Mainz, Trier, and Cologne.

Due to these considerations, we would expand our work of collection systematically, according to the mediaeval ecclesiastical provinces, in projects lasting one or two years. We would try to get local colleagues involved because it increases efficiency and decreases expenditure. After identifying the most important, representative sources, we would obtain digital copies so that—applying the same methodology—we could analyse and compare them. The first region to explore would be the archdiocese of Magdeburg.

4. *Practice in real life*

The “carriers” of the liturgy are texts and books but the liturgy itself is a living reality, a product of several art forms together, a social act, and an integral part of cultural goods. Everything that is said about the non-material elements of our cultural heritage may also be predicated of the liturgy. In Hungary, concentrated efforts to restore our mediaeval liturgical heritage have a rich history; the movement was not spearheaded by dilettanti but by the best experts in the field. This tradition was taken up by Miklós Földvály when he established the Lay Chapter of St Michael the Archangel in 2004. Due to the somewhat more propitious ecclesiopolitical situation, through the activity of the Lay Chapter the traditional Latin liturgy has been made available on a regular basis as a living experience to an ever increasing number of the faithful. Beyond its significance for popular devotion and daily liturgical practice, the Lay Chapter has become part of the Catholic intellectual milieu, and developed into a real scientific and artistic think-tank. The regular performance of the liturgy produced several practical, yet scientifically well-founded publications. These publications not only assist the daily practice of the liturgy but also demonstrate the viability of our philological results. It is analogous to the most recent results of museology and archaeology: we must step out of strictly scholarly circles and create a tangible, almost interactive medium to communicate scientific results more effectively.

Following this logic, we plan to launch a subseries to the MRH, called Series Practica. This effort is reinforced by the fact that certain religious communities with a distinct mediaeval liturgical heritage, such as the Carmelites, Norbertines, Dominicans and Paulines began to show an increasing—practical and not only academic—interest in their proper traditions. Our Research Group would assist any attempt to revive these in liturgical practice.⁷

5. *A synthesis: Usuarium Ecclesiae Occidentalis*

The long-term goal of our efforts is to publish systematically the entire material of Latin liturgies within the context of an encyclopaedic work. This would be the revival of the monumental work begun by Edmond Martène with his “*De antiquis Ecclesiae ritibus*” in 1700.

Martène, based on the (mostly French) sources available at the time, gave a description of every single Ordo in the Latin liturgy, noted their variants, and appended a chrestomathy of liturgical texts. Although the material is not complete and his methods were neither comprehensive nor consistent, Martène’s contributions were so important that he is still used, quoted, and referenced. For more than 300 years now, there has not even been a chance to compile anything comparable. The modern technical capacities for storing and analysing data have finally created favourable circumstances to make another attempt at such a monumental work. It would be called “*Usuarium Ecclesiae Occidentalis*”. This usuarium would present the liturgy monographically, Ordo by Ordo, giving an account of its items and the variable points of its structure. This would have three advantages:

- a) It would make the Ordos readily recognisable.

⁷ The *Carmelite Vesperale* is one of the concrete results in this area: FÖLDVÁRY Miklós István: „[Egy zsolozsmahagyomány újjáéledése : gondolatok a Vesperale Carmelitanum elé](#)”, *Magyar Egyházzene* XIX (2012/2013) 115–168.

- b) It would provide an accurate description of the Uses, their relationship and history.
- c) With the help of the individual Ordos that are characteristic to the particular Uses, it would provide us with a reliable means of identifying and categorising our sources.

Since the project requires an enormous amount of work and quite a long time, and because our principle is that intellectual goods must be treated with magnanimity, we would make all the duly processed and properly organised sources and Ordos available from a digital data base on the internet.

For the creation of such an Usuarium, a well-defined intellectual background is needed which we will try to provide in the form of a methodological guide and case study published in English. This case study would be equipped with rich documentation, chrestomathy, tables and maps in the appendix. During the foundational stages of our research, it became apparent that the Palm Sunday Ordo (blessing of palms and procession) seems most suitable to serve as the basis for developing a proper methodology for the Usuarium. Thus in the next cycle we would single this Ordo out for an exhaustive study in light of every single European Use. This programmatic study would be published in a book, as the first volume of the MRH Subsidia. We entertain the reasonable hope that through this publication we can prove the productivity of our approach to all the experts of the international academic community.