

**Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music  
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**Hymn Melodies of the Medieval Office of Zagreb  
according to the Surviving Musical Sources**

PhD Thesis

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## 1. Background to the Research

Academic research on medieval hymns requires the contribution of at least four sub-disciplines in order to produce worthwhile results. The extant copies need to be analysed not only in terms of their textual, melodic and liturgical history, but also in view of how they were notated and codified.

József Dankó began the modern study of the texts of medieval Hungarian hymns with those written in honour of local saints at the end of the nineteenth century. Excellent researchers continued his work in the twentieth century: most notably, László Mezey, József Török and Béla Holl.

The first scholarly edition of the Hungarian hymn melodies was published by Benjamin Rajeczky. The first volume of *Melodiarum Hungariae Medii Aevi*, which appeared in 1956, set out to be as complete as possible. It includes hymns that come both from Hungary and the traditions of other countries as they were known from the manuscripts that were preserved in Hungarian collections until the 1940s. (The foreign hymns are marked with an asterisk.) The study of Hungarian folk music inspired, at least in part, the production of the volume. The supplementary volume that came out in 1982 only contains the material found in two Hungarian sources only recently discovered. In 1962, Janka Szendrei joined the workshop that Rajeczky conducted on the history of melody and subsequently became his successor in the field of hymnology. Using the comparative method that she had learnt from Rajeczky, Szendrei published significant studies on Hungarian and non-Hungarian hymns and published the lectures she gave to her students, as well. Kornél Bárdos and Kálmán Csomasz-Tóth researched the early Protestant manuscripts and printed chant books of the 16th and 17th centuries that contained the extant hymn melodies used in the Middle Ages.

In the 1980s, László Dobszay initiated the systematic exploration of the different Hungarian office traditions. The hymns explored within the CAO-ECE project can be studied in terms of the place they held in the liturgical practices of medieval Hungary. In the field of hymnology, the publications of Andrea Kovács on the traditions practised in Kalocsa and Zagreb are of prime importance.

The process of searching out, identifying and ordering the extant medieval Hungarian liturgical sources was an essential part of the work during the CAO-ECE project. Based on the publications of Polikárp Radó and László Mezey, the contributions that Benjamin Rajeczky and Janka Szendrei made in the field were also of inestimable value. A microfilm collection was established in the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (now it is called the Institute for Musicology of the Research Centre for the Humanities, henceforth BTK ZTI), above all according to the conception of László Dobszay and Janka Szendrei. This collection became the basis for the CAO-ECE project. Later, it increased in size under the direction of Gábor

Kiss and is progressively being digitised. This database is also where my own research began. The manuscripts and printed material that it contains were supplemented by the partly digitised fragments located in Hungarian and foreign collections, as well as newly discovered sources of Hungarian origin that have come to light through my research work.

The results of the research endeavours that I have mentioned above made the choice of topic for my dissertation possible, and also inspired the methodological approach that I finally took. The topic I chose was a very special sub-tradition: the liturgical rite of Zagreb and, within that, the history of the melodies of the hymns of the divine office. The extant sources within this liturgical practice are quite copious, in contrast to those of other neighbouring Hungarian traditions; furthermore, they are mostly located in one place: the city of Zagreb. The time period involved stretches over approximately 400 years. Considering these factors, this local tradition would seem to provide an excellent starting-point for a future history of Hungarian hymn melodies. Besides Rajeczky's *Melodiarum* and the research results of CAO-ECE, my own research was helped by Orsolya Csomó's DLA dissertation on the processions composed in Zagreb in the early modern era, and also by my own edition of the Oláh Psalter, which was composed sometime between 1523 and 1558, and which is the most complete example of the hymn tradition of Esztergom that we possess. This was published as the 25th volume of the *Musicalia Danubia* series of the BTK ZTI, and was entitled: *Psalterium Stigoniense 1523 cum notis musicis manuscriptis (Psalterium Nicolai Olhai)*.

My research work on the 15th-century notated hymnal of Zagreb, which is kept in the Metropolitanska knjižnica under the shelf mark MR 21, profoundly influenced the direction of my dissertation. Once I had clarified the circumstances surrounding the origin of the manuscript, and had reconstructed the disordered folios, I could embark upon a comparative examination of its melodies. My findings can be found in the introduction to my edition of the facsimile of the codex, which was published in the *Resonemus partier* series of the BTK ZTI, Department of Early Music in 2019 as *Hymnuale ecclesiae Zagrabiensis*.

## 2. Methods of the Research

In my dissertation, I undertook the following: a complete recovery of the extant hymn melodies of medieval Zagreb; a systematic historical and musical examination of these melodies; and finally an overall evaluation.

Firstly, a bringing-together of the relevant sources and their multidimensional analysis was required. The musical, liturgical, and codicological examination I pursued, to a certain extent simultaneously, began with the

hymn material that is still consultable in Zagreb. This I studied partly in digital form, partly on location. While completing this work, I had to make sure that the items which I examined genuinely belonged to the city's medieval tradition. I also had to consider whether they had been moved from their original place of composition, and, on the other hand, whether there were relevant sources not located in Zagreb. In order to make the repertory of melodies chanted at this time better known, I also took into account not only the extant notated hymnals but fragments and purely textual sources, as well. For political and ecclesiastical reasons the celebration of the medieval liturgy continued virtually unbroken in Zagreb from the close of the Council of Trent (1545–1563) until 1788. As a consequence, notated manuscripts from the 17th and 18th centuries and also a printed one from 1751 containing earlier compositions also helped me bring to light the medieval repertory of hymn melodies.

I prepared digital transcriptions of all the preserved melodies of the verified authentic sources of the Zagreb rite, then tabulated individually all the variants of the same melody on digital worksheets. Finally I ordered this body of material to the liturgical position that they had held in the divine office, and numbered them accordingly. Through this method, I was able to provide the chant tables with a systematic liturgical order; nevertheless, every notation of a given melody has received only one number. I generally list the extant variants of the melodies under a principle melody from Esztergom (or another Hungarian or non-Hungarian tradition) generally in the approximate chronological order of their sources. These chant tables preserve the liturgical order of the Zagreb hymnal of the time, since its sections follow the chapters of this hymnal. Also, for items that, on account of their melody, have lost their liturgical place, a textual reference informs the reader as to where they can be found. In earlier publications of medieval hymn melodies, the editors generally prefer to make the number of syllables and cadences the principle of the ordering. In the volumes of *Melodiarum*, Benjamin Rajeczky also edited the traditionally heterogeneous melodies that were available to him in this way. My own aim, however, was to provide the representation of a particular liturgical practice from both musical and liturgical aspects, for which an ordering of the melodies (more or less) according to their place in the liturgy was more appropriate. I supplemented this unconventional system of chant tables with the references normally employed in the field of hymnology: the textual *incipit*, the cadence, the tonality and, at the end of the dissertation, the tables organised according to the numbers of Bruno Stäblein's hymn edition.

Once I had the chant tables to work from, I could begin my comparative musical analysis. The melodic variants grouped under different numbers could be studied together, often across several centuries. Also, local musical variants could be directly compared with examples of other Hungarian

traditions or religious orders. Thus, the peculiarities of the Zagreb tradition can in many cases be identified from the tables alone. So as to throw light on the broader context, I also compared the items in the chant tables with those found in non-Hungarian medieval traditions. I did this with the aid of foreign scholarly musical editions devoted to hymnology and the analyses found therein. Chapter VII of my dissertation records my results according to the numbering of the chant tables.

I began my evaluation of the hymn melodies of the Zagreb tradition with a statistical analysis according to their tonality and the diversity of their verse-forms. For purposes of comparison, I also completed these investigations in regard to the Esztergom tradition, as well. Next, I set out the individual melodies in chronological order according to their earliest extant sources. This enabled me to see how the local repertory of melodies developed over time. In the course of this last step, new light was thrown upon how the melodies of the different sources were related to one another and, as a result, upon the sources themselves.

### **3. Structure of the Dissertation and its Conclusions**

I begin the first chapter of the dissertation with an introduction that explains essential terminology and gives a brief historical overview of the genre of the hymn. I then considered the identifying factors of local hymn traditions, such as the repertory of hymn texts, the repertory of hymn melodies, the relation between text and melody, and finally the liturgical position. When these factors undergo change, different local traditions arise and, as a consequence, researchers should primarily pay attention to the above factors during their investigations.

My second chapter summarises and broadens the methodological approach that I employed in researching the notated hymn sources, and applies it to the Hungarian context. In the course of this work, I identified the peculiarities of the different kinds of musical sources (such as medieval musical manuscripts and printings, fragments, retrospective early modern sources, Protestant musical sources and textual sources). I explained the problem with the retrospective early modern records; more specifically, I justified the inclusion of Protestant musical sources and unnotated medieval manuscripts in my research.

The third chapter contains a brief historical overview of research done in the area of Hungarian hymnology. I place the field in a wider academic context and then mention the major researchers in Hungary and their most important publications.

A history of the liturgical tradition of Zagreb was also indispensable for the investigation of the musical sources on which I focus in the dissertation. I give this in my fourth chapter, which is divided into four sections.

In the fifth chapter we reach the heart of the dissertation. It contains a detailed codicological and liturgical-historical study of all the notated sources connected with Zagreb. I also justify in detail why I have not considered the material held in Zagreb, but which does not belong to the tradition of the diocese. The 15th-century hymnal of Zagreb Cathedral (MR 21) is an exceptionally valuable medieval notated manuscript; its complete reconstruction, as well as its codicological, liturgical and musical-historical analysis, I believe to be one of this dissertation's major achievements. I show that this manuscript is the only surviving hymn source that throws light upon the musical aspects of the Dominican-inspired reforms of Bishop Agostino Gazzotti (1303–1322). My analysis of the codex also reveals much about the multifaceted character of the Zagreb tradition. Although based upon the early Esztergom model, by the fifteenth century the hymnal bears the marks of both Dominican and Ambrosian-Cistercian influence. This comparative liturgical-historical analysis succeeded in pinpointing more precisely the date when MR 21 was copied: namely, the first half of the 15th century. It could well have been before the investiture of Bishop Oswaldus Thuz in 1466. Besides the other significant notated manuscript (MR 10), only a marginal note in Ms 29 can be shown to belong to the tradition from the surviving medieval examples. The number of later sources, in contrast, is quite large: we can assign to the Zagreb tradition four choir-book-sized manuscripts (MR 2, MR 52, MR 4, III.d.204), seven processionals for personal use (VII-104, MR 108, II.a.25, III.d.175, Ruk 158, MR 191, II.a.31), and a printed processional (CantProc). Of special importance is the 18th-century psalter of the cathedral (MR 2), whose codicological and music-historical analysis is a completely new achievement. The manuscript, which is written on parchment, was made up of the folios of a 16th-century Franciscan psalter illuminated in Buda with 18th-century folios prepared in Zagreb. It contains the only notated examples of three medieval hymn melodies from Zagreb that were written down in the early modern period. At the end of chapter five, I present an overview of the textual sources (firstly the Zagreb breviaries in manuscript, and then in printed form) in the light of the most recent research.

The novelty of my system of chant tables (as mentioned earlier) is that it combines both a musical and a liturgical approach. Chapter six of the dissertation gives a detailed description of the method that I followed during the transcription of the melodies and their tabulation. I also give a short description of the many sources that I used for my comparative musical research.

In chapter seven, I summarise the results of my comparative analysis of the 75 melodies that I discovered in the course of my research. I follow the

categories that I have established for the chant tables: hymns of the psalter, temporal hymns, sanctoral hymns and hymns of the common of the saints. This is the dissertation's second most important section. As a result of a close comparative examination of Hungarian and foreign diocesan sources, as well as those of religious orders, the unique characteristics of the hymn tradition of Zagreb was revealed. Chapter eight contains an overall evaluation of this Zagreb repertory of hymn melodies.

The majority of the musical examples, as found in both the cathedral's medieval and early modern sources, come from the Esztergom tradition, probably as adopted in Zagreb in the course of the 12th and 13th centuries. During the life of Agostino Gazzotti (1303–1466), Cistercian and Dominican influences can be identified. I completely reject the assertion widespread in the western European literature in the field that Zagreb adopted the Dominican liturgy in its entirety in the 14th century. It certainly did not happen this way. The local hymnal received simply a Dominican (and Cistercian) colouring. A kind of transfer also occurred where reform-minded composers rewrote to a certain degree the melodies of the orders, so that a uniquely Zagrebian version might come into existence. Beginning with the bishopric of Oswaldus Thuz in the middle of the 15th century, a liturgical consolidation occurred: the number of Dominican elements in the divine office (and, as a consequence, in the hymnal) was reduced, while the Cistercian elements disappeared completely. In this period, the first printed Zagreb breviary was also published, which reinforced the dominance of the new practices. It is not surprising, therefore, that sources in the 17th and 18th centuries follow, for the most part, Thuz's hymnal, even if a later Ambrosian influence can be identified that has not come through the Cistercians. Two further developments should be mentioned. Firstly, after the Council of Trent, Zagreb began to modify the melodies that had been inherited from the Middle Ages to accord with the new musical aesthetic. Since for a considerable period there no centralised melodic implementation of the post-conciliar reforms had occurred, a huge number of variants came into existence. The desire to have symmetrical musical lines within a stanza is identifiable in these examples. On the other hand, the similar openings of different hymns become one version, since this would limit the variability of the opening line.

Besides temporal differentiations in the repertory of hymn melodies in the Zagreb tradition, institutional differences can also be noticed. Even though the cathedral had the duty of setting a liturgical standard for the whole diocese, which the chapters and the parishes wanted to follow, I could locate a few special melodies only in the sources of the cathedral. Five melodies (D2, D3, D14, D42, D49) have not been recorded in other traditions. Although two of these are only notated in retrospective early modern sources, they might still have originated in the Middle Ages.

Finally, this dissertation not only offers an insight into a body of melodies whose liturgical use covers a period of four hundred years, but also into how the workshop in Zagreb which had the task of editing the hymnals fulfilled their duties musically and liturgically.

#### 4. The Most Important Publications Related to the Subject of the Thesis

„Utólagos zenei bejegyzések a *Budai pszalterium*-ban” [Later musical entries in the Buda Psalter]. *Magyar Egyházzene* 21 (2013/2014), 11–20.

*Psalterium Strigoniense Venetiis 1523 cum notis musicis manuscriptis (Psalterium Nicolai Olahi)*, ed. Gábrriel Szoliva. *Musicalia Danubiana* 25. *Bavarica et Hungarica* 2. Budapest: MTA BTK Institute for Musicology, 2015.

„Proles de caelo prodiit. The First Vespers Hymn of the Office of Saint Francis of Assisi and its Subsequent History in Hungary”. *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 109 (2016), 597–611.

„»...secundum modum Ecclesiae Zagrabiensis«. Egy középkori pszalterium metamorfózisa” [The metamorphosis of a medieval psalter]. In *MONOGRAPHIA. Tanulmányok Monok István 60. születésnapjára*, ed. Judit Nyerges, Attila Verók, Edina Zvara. Budapest: Kossuth Kiadó, 2016, 673–679.

„Egy késő középkori kassai pszalteriumról” [On a late-medieval psalter kept in Kassa (Košice, Slovakia)]. In „*Mestereknek gyengyének.*” *Ünnepi kötet Madas Edit hetvenedik születésnapjára*, szerk. Hende Fanni, Kiski Klára, Korondi Ágnes. Budapest: Országos Széchényi Könyvtár – Szent István Társulat, 2019, 427–441.

*Hymnule ecclesiae Zagrabiensis. Hagománytisztelet és egyéni alakítás a zágrábi székesegyház 15. század eleji himnáriumában. Traditionalism and Innovation in the Early 15th-Century Hymnal of Zagreb Cathedral. Tradicionalni i novi elementi u himnariju Zagrebačke katedrale s početka 15. stoljeća*, ed. Szoliva Gábrriel OFM. *Resonemus pariter – Studies in Medieval Music History* 2. Budapest: BTK Institute for Musicology, 2019.

„Két középkori magyarországi kottás pszalteriumtöredékről” [On two fragments of notated psalters from medieval Hungary]. *Magyar Könyvszemle* 135 (2019), 398–399.

„*Secunda pars breviarii. A 13. századi esztergomi breviárium kottás szanktoraléjának rekonstrukciója felé*” [Towards the reconstruction of a 13th-century notated breviary of Esztergom]. *Magyar Könyvszemle* 135 (2019), 307–330.