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*Dedication Ordo of the Veszprém Pontifical*  
dla theses

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## **The antecedent history of this research and the determination of its topic**

Previously those scholars who studied the Veszprém Pontifical (simply VP in the following) mostly inquired about questions of origin, and they published theories relating to bibliography and palaeography, whereas the actual content of the book was only superficially treated. The goal of my research was to become intimately familiar with its content, and also to present my conclusions along the lines of the following criteria.

It has already been determined by other scholars before me that the liturgical order of the VP – at least according to the relevant scholarly treatises – is not in agreement with the so-called Durandus Pontifical which was already in wide circulation at the time of the VP's composition. The question naturally arises: where does its content come from? In order to provide an answer, we must turn to the Roman sources that predate the Durandus Pontifical, and make a careful comparison between them and the VP. Soon after I began my inquiry, it became manifest that the sources for each Ordo in the VP is different, hence every single chapter has to be examined individually. Since this task would exceed the framework of my thesis, I had to pick one particular Ordo. Among the pontifical rites the consecration of churches is by far the most extensive, and so it seemed reasonable to choose this ceremony as the topic of my study.

As Janka Szendrei has already pointed out, the VP is an important source also from a musicological perspective, given that many of its chants cannot be found in any other Hungarian source. Even a superficial examination of its easily legible musical notation reveals that the VP contains quite a few “irregular” solutions that are not consonant with the well-established Hungarian liturgical tradition. Thus in addition to a

liturgical analysis, it is indispensable to conduct a thorough study of its musical material, as well.

### **Methodology**

The liturgy of Western Christianity is more or less uniform. Nonetheless, it is not surprising that, due to its wide geographical expansion and long duration, it became somewhat diversified. If we are looking for the closest relatives of a source, we have to take into account these differences. When it comes to ceremonies that are rarely performed – such as the consecration of churches – it is not a simple task, since the rite is long and not nearly as uniform as the rites connected with the Mass or the Divine Office. Although some specific parts and chants can be found in almost all of the sources, we are faced with a rather diversified material. The quantity and order of ceremonial details show great variation, but even more complicated is the assignation of chants to these particular parts of the rite. My aim is to place the study of the VP in a wider context, in the hope of finding akin material and so becoming familiar with the features that are particular to VP.

If we presuppose that the relationship between different Pontificals is genealogical in nature, and so a line of continuous development can be detected in their history, our point of departure will have to be the earliest Pontificals and Ordos. International research seems to follow this logic, therefore – as it was made clear earlier – this was also my initial position. If, however, there is no continuous thread of development, only parallel traditions (Uses) that are contemporaneous but not necessarily related, then this process of comparison and identification is only sufficient to establish whether an Ordo is identical to the standard Roman sources, thus becoming irrelevant to a study of independent traits.

The second step is comparing the VP with other known Hungarian sources in an effort to find out whether the VP

actually follows a proper Hungarian tradition. If our finding is in the affirmative, we have to determine if this old Hungarian tradition adopts an earlier foreign example or represents a proper Hungarian variant. If the answer is that the VP does not follow the Hungarian tradition, we have to decide if the old Hungarian trend was rejected in favour of a foreign prototype or we have to presuppose some individual creative activity behind it.

Once it became clear that the VP's Ordo of consecrating churches is unlike any other Roman Pontifical's ceremony, there was no other significant source that could have helped my effort to answer the above-described questions. I did not think it was reasonable to make inquiries at random, so it seemed that the only workable solution was to expand considerably the source material of my research. In the end, I compared the Ordos of consecrating churches in some 40 different Pontificals from abroad, and examined them in light of all the extant Hungarian sources. For the lack of a better method, I used the same comparative tables that are usually employed in the comparison of Mass and Office items, although it was not always easy on account of the difficulties I mentioned earlier. I tried to find the stable components – that is, the items that are featured in most of the sources – and use them as points of departure for the rest. Slowly the basic structure of the ceremony began to emerge before me, and with it came a better understanding of the relationship between different sources. The analysis of the musical material also warranted a comparative type of examination but in this case I reversed the order. Considering that we have no other notated Hungarian Pontifical at our disposal, I first compared the items from the VP that are also featured in the Divine Office with the variants of other Hungarian sources. If they were basically identical, I considered them proofs that in the entire mediaeval Kingdom of Hungary the Esztergom variant

was the standard example to be followed. If they did not match, it is safe to say that the Pontificals represented a different line of tradition which is not identical to the melodic traditions of the Mass and the Divine Office. In such a case, once again the pontifical books of other countries can be helpful. If we find no parallels there, we arrive at the same question as in our liturgical analysis: whether our source follows a concrete foreign example – perhaps unknown to us – or it applies an individual solution purposefully.

### **Results**

In the process of my comparative study – as I have already stated above – it became clear that the Ordo of consecrating churches does not have a stable structure and there is great variation in its choice of chant material. It is especially striking that we can barely find sources whose similarity is immediately apparent. Even if our research managed to establish some relations and allowed us to differentiate between akin sources, it was not at all certain that the analysis of other components would offer the same results. Nevertheless, based on some more characteristic aspects or components it seemed appropriate to establish certain groups which were then named primarily by their geographical origin. Thus I ended up with a Western and an Eastern trend, and these trends were then split up into “Norman” and “French” groups in the West, PRG and PR types in the East, with a further subdivision within the PRG-type into a Czech-Polish group. According to this scheme, the VP can be placed within the PR group. The closer examination of the structure and the choice of chants made it possible to form ideas about the original creation and further development of particular variants within the Ordo of consecrating churches. The first layer that ensures the unity of Franko-Roman dedication Ordos is the set of items based strictly on ceremonial actions, and used everywhere and in the

same position. The second layer determining the larger groups of particular traditions contains some characteristic but not universally adopted solutions, as well as the selection and assignation of certain items that seemed specific to a group of sources (related geographically, institutionally, or in terms of tradition). This does not mean that the *Ordos* within the larger groups are identical to each other. In fact, their variations are often considerable. If we suppose that these are not chance variations, we have to specify a third layer: that of creative interventions within the same type resulting from deliberate liturgical redaction. This is responsible for the existence of individual, concrete variants within the same type.

It is not always easy to decide what data belong to which layer; it can only be determined responsibly after clearly separating the three layers by means of a meticulous comparative analysis. Once this is done, details that first seemed insignificant in terms of classifying our sources and learning their history, soon become quite valuable. Within the Franko-Roman liturgy the available means of individuation are rather limited but not indescribable.

(1) It is most obvious if an *Ordo* belongs to a type that is alien within its geographical environment. This is often the case with the most wide-spread Roman (Germano-Roman) Pontificals. These types can be found anywhere in Europe, independently of age and region, and it is very easy to set them against a “local” variant.

(2) The next level is when a Pontifical fits well within its group but partially contains “foreign” elements from other traditions.

(3) The third possibility is that a Pontifical includes specific solutions not identifiable anywhere else, be that the use of a completely new arrangement or proper items, or simply a very peculiar, novel sort of reorganization of old elements. My analysis has proved that the VP often uses all three means of indi-

viduation, and so our next questions are: what exactly are these means, how do these variations relate to the immediate or mediate milieu, and what kind of sources, historical circumstances or editorial activity may be responsible for them.

It seems probable that the VP's dedication *Ordo* is not a simple adoption of an already existing form but a deliberate composition with individual features. As a foundation we can identify underneath it a Hungarian tradition based on the PRG group and updated in accordance with the PR-type. It does not follow the PR slavishly; there are individual solutions in it both in selection and structure which presupposes a careful process of redaction, although in certain parts we can detect points of contact with the Norman and the Czech-Polish liturgies. Since we have no other contemporaneous Hungarian sources, it is not possible to determine how wide-spread the VP-type dedication *Ordo* was in Hungary, prior to the adoption of the *Durandus Pontifical*. We cannot rule out the possibility that this kind of conformity to international trends was also followed elsewhere in Hungary, either generally or in some specific cathedrals of the kingdom. This much is certain: this *Ordo*, moving away from the PRG in the direction of the PR, represents a break from the earlier traditions of the country or wider region. Consequently, we consider this *Ordo* of the VP to be specific to its period in time and its geographical origin, and to be a short-lived, ephemeral phenomenon, due to the general adoption of the PGD in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Upon studying the VP's music, it became apparent that it is an exceptional source for the Hungarian tradition of Gregorian chant. It is surprising that the VP differs not only from parallel sources of other countries but often from other variants of the local (Hungarian) Office Books. Thus our analysis of the melodies confirms the results of musical palaeography and litur-



giology. While there can be no doubt that the VP is a Hungarian document, its liturgical order, notation and musical content are at variance with the typical, central trends of the Hungarian tradition. This difference, however, is coincidental or haphazard; it can be traced back to a unique partial tradition or a “reform effort”, or both. Since the VP’s liturgical order is based on several different examples or patterns, and yet it is an original composition, we may presuppose the same about its melodies. The fact that it belongs to the PR-type and exhibits Norman influences is in agreement with its diatonic tendencies. Its preference for scales and the abbreviation of concluding melismas might just be signs of contemporary trends; the consistent change in the tonality of antiphons in the 4<sup>th</sup> tone shows theoretical interests, and it has a Hungarian parallel. It is not very likely that the melodic variants can be traced back to foreign examples, but it is equally unlikely that they represent an organic Hungarian tradition. I suspect that they are the “artificial” results of a deliberate creative effort, much like the Ordo of dedication and the entire VP.

It is a more complicated question whether these melodies were actually ever used ceremonially, given that the variants deeply rooted in collective memory are not easily replaced with new ones, especially if these changes do not concern structural arrangement or soloistic chants. Due to its specific genre, the VP is not primarily a musical source (which is clear from the ratio between simple and notated texts). Most of the chant material is made up of sung items that were well-known to mediaeval scholas and also featured in other books. Moreover, the Pontifical itself was probably not used during the actual ceremonies, so it is not unlikely that in the liturgy different variants were sung. Posterity, however, can only rely on written sources, as to the performance we can only make conjectures. It is not impossible that the musical material of the VP is only a theoretical construction. If that is the case,

this richly notated, well legible codex with numerous peculiarities is an important document of early Hungarian music history.

Behind the liturgical and musical oddities of the VP there could have been an unknown Hungarian tradition, perhaps specific to Veszprém. It also seems certain that the VP – over and above this particular tradition – bears witness to some kind of a “romanizing” reform effort which was later rendered irrelevant by the wide-spread adoption of the Durandus Pontifical. If the VP’s peculiar elements predate this “romanizing” reform or its individuation was, in fact, contemporaneous with that effort is something we cannot decide due to the lack of comparative source material.

The prospects of my work take us beyond the analysis of the VP. The study of Pontifical Ordos necessitates a special methodology. Because of digital technology we can now have access to a much larger source material and the different methods of classification can also assist our research. New horizons open up before us but these methods will only work if there are a lot of available sources which are studied minutely and with an eye for synthesis. My analysis is meant to be a contribution to a better understanding of the repertoire, structure and variations of pontifical rites.

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