

THE AFTER-LIFE OF MEDIEVAL HYMNS IN HUNGARY

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As the only strophic genre of Gregorian chant, the medieval office hymn found its way easily from liturgical practice to the new congregational practice. In the following study I will examine the continuity of the hymns from the Middle Ages until the 18th century. In the first step I will describe the repertory and the most important characteristics of the Hungarian medieval hymnal based on 5 sources. Secondly, I will show how this was preserved in the liturgical collections of the 16th and early 17th century Hungarian Protestants. The final step is an analysis of the hymn repertory found in 9 later congregational hymnals.

The liturgical rite of the medieval Hungary, also called the rite of Esztergom, is clearly differentiated from the liturgy found elsewhere in Europe in its repertory, distribution, liturgical structure, melodic variants, and musical notation. The medieval hymn repertory with its melodies found in Hungarian manuscripts has been edited by Benjamin Rajeczky. The repertory of the Temporale includes the following pieces:

Ecce iam noctis
Lucis Creator optime
Splendor paternae gloriae
Immense caeli conditor
Ales diei nuntius
Telluris ingens conditor
Nox et tenebrae et nubila
Caeli Deus sanctissime
Lux ecce surgit aurea
Magna Deus potentiae
Aeterna caeli gloria
Plasmator hominis
Aurora iam spargit polum
Deus, Creator omnium
O Pater sancte
Iam lucis orto sidere
Nunc Sancte nobis Spiritus
Rector potens, verax Deus
Rerum Deus, tenax vigor
Te lucis ante terminum
Conditor alme siderum
Verbum supernum prodiens
Vox clara ecce intonat
Veni Redemptor gentium
Lux mundi beatissima
Fit porta Christi
Corde natus ex parentis
A solis ortus cardine
Stephano primo martyri
De Patre verbum prodiens
Salvete flores martyrum
Hostis Herodes impiae
Quem non praevalent

Dies absoluti praetereunt
Christe qui lux es et dies
O Nazarene dux
Ex more docti mystico
Clarum decus ieiunii
Audi benigne conditor
Aures ad nostras
Iam ter quaternis trahitur
Iam Christe sol iustitiae
Iesu quadragenariae
Summi largitor praemii
Vexilla regis prodeunt
Pange lingua... lauream
Chorus novae Ierusalem
Ad caenam agni providi
Aurora lucis rutilat
Festum nunc celebre
Iesu nostra redemptio
Veni Creator Spiritus
Beata nobis gaudia
Iam Christus astra
O lux beata Trinitas
Pange lingua...corporis
Sacris solemniis
Verbum supernum
Urbs beata Ierusalem

Some peculiarities of the Temporale are the following. *Veni Redemptor gentium* is associated with the first vespers of Christmas instead of with Advent. Each of the four weeks in Lent has its own lauds and vespers hymns (see the list from *Ex more docti* to *Summi largitor*), with a further hymn, *O nazarene dux* attached to Sunday lauds during Lent. *O pater sancte* sung during the summer and autumn months at Sunday first vespers is known elsewhere, but is quite rare.

The Esztergom Sanctorale contains several feasts whose use is widespread in Europe. Lux mundi beatissima

Fit porta Christi
Ave maris stella
Quem terra pontus aetera
Claro paschali gaudio
Aeterna Christi munera et martyris
Salve crux sancta
Signum crucis
Aeterno regi gloriae
Urbs beata Ierusalem
Ut queant laxis
O nimis felix
Aurea luce et decore
Doctor egregie
Iam bone pastor
In Mariae vitae via

Assunt festa iubilea
O Christi mater fulgida
En miranda prodigia
Lauda mater ecclesia
Iesu Christe auctor vitae
Lucis huius festa
Gaude mater ecclesia
Gaude mater pietatis
Gaude civitas Augusta
Martiris Christi colimus
Apostolorum supparem
Gaude visceribus
Gaude mater Hungaria
Magne pater Augustine
Caeli cives applaudite
Christe sanctorum
Christe Redemptor omnium
Iesu salvator saeculi
Martine confessor Dei
Ave Katherina
Exorta a Bethsaida
Exultet aula caelica
Katerva matrum personat
Exultet caelum laudibus
Aeterna Christi munera
Sanctorum meritis
Rex gloriose martyrum
Deus tuorum militum
Martyr Dei qui unicum
Iste confessor
Iesu Redemptor omnium
Virginis proles
Iesu corona virginum

Besides, it features hymns for several characteristically Hungarian saints:

Gaude mater Hungaria	King St Stephen
Plaude parens Pannonia	St Emericus
Regis regum civis ave	St Ladislaus
Gaude felix Hungaria	St Elisabeth
Novum sidus emicuit	St Elisabeth
Nova procul founded in Hungary)	St Antony the hermit (honored by the Pauline Order)
Ordo sanctorum founded in Hungary)	St Paul the hermit (honored by the Pauline Order)

The Hungarian medieval rite survived until the 17th century, when the Tridentine liturgy was adopted. But while the Catholic Church abandoned the old rite, the Protestant churches saved a great deal of the items in their special collection of liturgical chants. Although called Graduals, these collections include antiphons, short responses and hymns of the office in

Hungarian translation, as well as the ordinary and proper chants of the mass. The hymn melodies of the graduals were edited by Kornél Bárdos and Kálmán Csomasz Tóth. Graduals contain approximately one third of the texts in the Hungarian medieval hymnal, translated to the vernacular. But if we consider that Protestants cannot use Sanctorale hymns because of theological reasons, we can state that they use 40 from the 59 Temporale hymns, which is more than two thirds. These include the vespers hymns of Sundays and week days in ordinary time, the hymns of the little hours, hymns for Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Pre-lent, Lent, Passion-time, Easter-time, Ascension, Pentecost and Trinity Sunday. Some of the peculiarities of the Esztergom office mentioned above, like observing *O Pater sancte* and *Veni Redemptor*, or the use of more than one vespers and lauds hymns during Lent is preserved in the graduals. Protestants even kept hymns associated with occasions they did not celebrate and assigned them to other occasions. This way items of the terce, sext and none are transferred to the prime, the morning prayer of the Protestants, and the strophe *O salutaris hostia* from the hymn *Verbum supernum* of Corpus Christi is simply used for communion. Since Protestants do not venerate the saints, the medieval Sanctorale does not appear in their chant books, except for the re-composition of *Novum sidus*, a hymn originally for St Elizabeth, used as an Advent hymn, and also as a motto at the beginning of the Protestant graduals. Beside the 40 gradual hymns going back to medieval origins, Kornél Bárdos and Kálmán Csomasz-Tóth mention 33 more new hymn texts written especially for the graduals. The medieval Hungarian hymn repertory I have reviewed uses 70 hymn melodies, from which 34 are present in the graduals with 4 additional melodies so far not identified. The following texts appear with the same melodies in the medieval and in the Protestant tradition:

Conditor alme
verbum supernum
veni Redemptor
A solis ortus
Hostis herodes
Dies absoluti
Audi benigne
Iam ter quaternis
Iesu quadagenariae
Vexilla regis
Pange lingua gloriosi
Chorus novae
vita sanctorum
Festum nunc celebre
Iesu nostra redemptio
Veni creator spiritus
O lux beata Trinitas

(For example please take a look at the Latin and Hungarian melody version of *Conditor alme siderum*, ex. 1.)

In the case of the the following hymns the Protestant tradition uses medieval melodies, but they are not connected to the same texts as in the medieval tradition.

Lucis Creator optime
Immense caeli conditor
Telluris ingens conditor
Caeli Deus sanctissime

Magne Deus potentiae
Plasmator hominis Deus
Deus Creator omnium
Nox et tenebrae et nubila
Lux ecce surgit aurea
Aurora lucis rutilat
O salutaris hostia (Verbum supernum)

The vespers hymns of the weekdays in ordinary time form a cycle called De creatione (see the list from *Lucis creator optime* to *Deus Creator omnium*). While in Latin these texts are in iambic dimeter, the Hungarian translation was made in sapphic metre. This of course results in a melody different from the medieval use. *Nox et tenebrae* for Wednesday and *Lux ecce surgit aurea* for Thursday lauds use simple syllabic melodies in the medieval sources, but the graduals prefer more ornamented melodies known from the medieval Sanctorale (See *Nox et tenebrae* from the Psalter of Sibiu and from Batthyány Gradual, ex. 2.) In addition to these, there are 4 hymns which have more than one melodies in either the Latin or the Hungarian tradition, but one of them is common for both.

Iam lucis orto sidere
Corde natus ex parentis
Ad caenam agni providi
Novum sidus emicuit

From this group *Corde natus* of Christmas time has an unusual metre with 15+15+15+7 syllables. When the Hungarian translation follows this metre, it is used with the original medieval melody. However, there is also another translation following the form of versus saturninus (like *Pange lingua*), which needs another melody. *Ad caenam agni* is found with two different melodies in the medieval tradition, from which the graduals use only one (see the ex. 3. below), a melody that will also have a role later in the 16th-17th century practice, proved by the oral tradition surviving until the 20th century.

This means that about half of the Protestant hymn texts use the same melody as in the Middle Ages. Is the other half a free adaptation of the old melodies, or do they originate from sources that perished or are not known to us? The question remains answered.

Due to a puritan movement in the middle of the 17th century, Protestants started to give up the traditional liturgical forms, and the use of graduals was superseded by congregational hymnals. The hymns carried on to the congregational hymn books is less than the material of graduals. One of the most representative Calvinist hymn books published continuously from the beginning of the 18th until the beginning of the 19th century in Debrecen contains 64 hymn texts, from which only half reaches back to the graduals. The 18th century Calvinist hymnal lacks the following hymns compared to the repertory of the graduals: *O lux beata trinitas*, *Lux ecce surgit aurea*, *Corde natus ex parentis*, *Dies absoluti praetereunt*, *Iam ter quaternis trahitur*, *Iesu quadragenariae*, *Pange lingua... praelium*. Although it also lacks the individual hymns of the little hours except *Iam lucis*, it uses a text that contains *Nunc Sancte nobis*, *Rector potens* and *Rerum Deus* composed together. The hymns of the 18th century hymnal are sung to 7, mostly new congregational melodies from which only one can be led back to Gregorian chant. The original form of this melody appearing in several Hungarian sources contains a major third, varies in the final cadence, and carries the texts *Rex Christe factor omnium* and *Hymnum dicamus Domino*. The Calvinist version uses a minor third, its final cadence is on the fifth of the original melody, and it carries 16 texts from Advent to Pentecost. (In ex. 4. see *Hymnum dicamus* from the Psalter of Buda and the paraphrase of

Novum sidus from the 1778 Calvinist congregational hymn book).

The 17th-18th century Lutheran congregational hymnals do not contain any melodies.

However, the repertory indicated in the most important 18th century hymnal with its 30 hymns corresponds more or less to the Calvinist repertory. Exceptions are *Nunc Sancte nobis* and *Rector potens* which appear separately instead of being compiled in one text.

Singing liturgical hymns in the 17-18th century Catholic Church is documented best from the Cantional of János Kájoni. Its first edition contains 61 hymns, its second edition contains 55. The other important congregational hymnals are the three editions of *Cantus Catholici* with altogether 23 hymns, and the collection of Mihály Bozóki with 18 hymns. We know that a special form of vespers was regularly performed in Hungarian parish churches during the 17th century. The hymns found in the congregational hymn books probably represent the liturgical hymns sung within these services in Latin or Hungarian translation.

The connection of the 17th-18th century Catholic hymn repertory to the medieval Esztergom repertory is not as strong as that of the Protestant repertory. There are 12 hymns known from the Hungarian medieval hymnal and Protestant graduals that the Catholic repertory does not contain. In 1629 the Hungarian Catholic Church replaced its medieval liturgical rite with the Roman rite, which at that time meant the Tridentine liturgy. The absence of *Chorus novae, Vita sanctorum, Festum nunc celebre, Deus Creator omnium* and *Novum sidus emicuit* from the late Catholic hymnals, therefore, can be explained by the fact, that they are not prescribed in the Tridentine breviary. The absence of *A solis ortus* and *O salutaris hostia* (a passage from *Verbum supernum*) although present in the Tridentine breviary as lauds hymns, perhaps reinforces that singing the lauds with the congregation was not in practice. Finally, the vespers hymns for weekdays *Immense caeli conditor, Telluris ingens conditor, Caeli Deus sanctissime, Magne Deus potentiae* and *Plasmator hominis Deus* can all be found in the Tridentine breviary. Their absence from the congregational hymnals suggests that if vespers was performed on ordinary days, the congregation probably sang invariable hymns instead of proper items.

The next group consists of hymns found in the later Catholic books, but not present in the Protestant material: *Christe Redemptor, Aures ad nostras, Hymnum dicamus, Pange lingua (for Corpus Christi), O lux beata, Rerum Deus, Te lucis ante terminum*. From these, *Christe Redemptor* is missing from the Hungarian medieval as well as from the gradual tradition, but features in the official Roman rite, which may explain its presence in the Catholic congregational books. The continuity of some others like *Pange lingua* for Corpus Christi, *O lux beata* and *Rerum Deus* can be explained by both, the medieval relations and Tridentine use. *Aures ad nostras* and *Hymnum dicamus* missing from the Tridentine breviary, but appearing in hymnals at the end of the 17th century may be the only exceptions from the hymns that have been forgotten since the introduction of the Roman rite. The comparison of the 17-18th, century hymn repertory to the medieval repertory shows that Protestants retained a greater amount of hymns from the medieval repertory than Catholics.

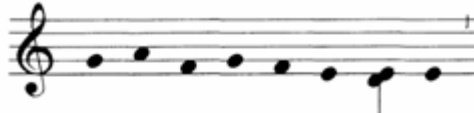
The majority of the hymns in the Catholic books uses melodies of new congregational songs. Only four texts have melodies of Gregorian origin. The first example is the processional hymn *Gloria laus et honor*, which uses a medieval melody (ex. 5). *Vexilla regis* is also featured with the melody it was always associated with in the medieval and the Protestant liturgical books (ex. 6). The melody *Pange lingua* (ex. 7.) and its Hungarian translation is connected to, is perhaps the most popular melody in the Middle Ages for this verse type (trochaic tertameter). The melody of *Christe redemptor omnium* is known to us from the medieval sources and from the graduals with the text *Ad caenam agni providi*. (ex. 8.a). Although the melody is not documented in books later than the graduals, 20th century recordings of oral transmission have brought to light two versions of it. The first one, a close variant of the medieval version (ex. 8.b) may have survived since medieval times, while the second (ex. 8.d) was probably

reintroduced to the the Catholic practice by the influence of the Franciscan order (see also the Franciscan on ex. 8.c).
The continuity of hymns sketched in this study testify the lasting value of this genre. The work of preservation and revival continues today in the different denominations, and hopefully will result in the growing cultivation of these concise texts and liturgy-close ancient melodies.

ex. 1.



Con - di - tor al - me si - de - rum
Min - de - nek - nek te - rem-tő - je



Ae - ter - na lux cre - den - ti - um
És hí - vek - nek meg-vál - tó - ja



Chri - ste Re - demptor omnium
Krisz-tus A - tyá - nak szent fi - a



Ex - au - di pre - ces sup - pli - cum. (Psalter of Buda)
Hall-gasd meg i - mád-sá- gun - kat. (Bárdos-Csomasz Tóth p. 149.)

ex. 2.



Nox et te- ne-brae et nu - bi - la



Con-fu-sa mun - di et tur - bi - da



Lux in - trat al - be - scit po - lus



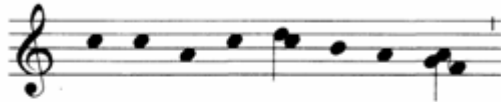
Chri - stus ve - nit di - sce - di - te. (Psalter of Sibiu)



Az éj - sza - ka - i se - tét - ség



Mely ez föl - det el - bo - rit - ja



Tá - vol le - gyen mert im - má - ron



Az nap ne - künk vi - lá - go - sít. (Bárdos-Csomasz Tóth p. 149.)

ex. 3.



Ad cae - nam a - gni pro - vi - di
Úr - nak vég - va - cso - rá - já - ra



Et sto - lis al - bis can - di - di
És ő ál - do - zat - já - ra

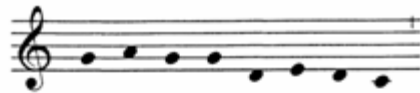


Post tran - si - tum ma - ris ru - bri
Ke - resz-tyén né - pek men - je - tek



Chri - sto ca - na - mus prin - ci - pi. (Psalter of Buda)
Hogy e - rős le - gyen hi - te - tek. (Bárdos-Csomasz Tóth p. 148.)

ex. 4.



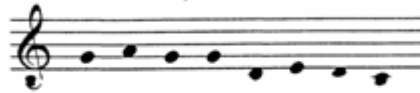
Hy-mnum di - ca - mus Do - mi - no



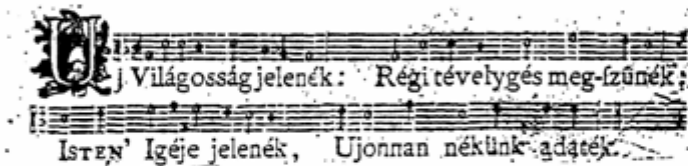
Lau-des De - o cum can - ti - co



Qui nos cu - ius pa - ti - bu - lo

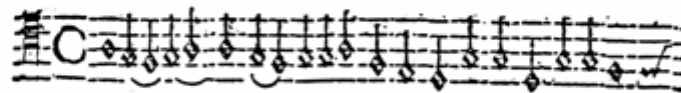


Su - o re - de - mit san - gui - ne. (Psalter of Buda)

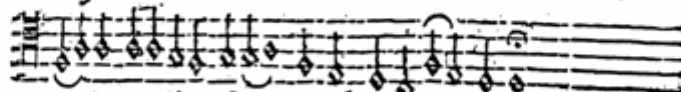


(Calvinist hymnal 1778)

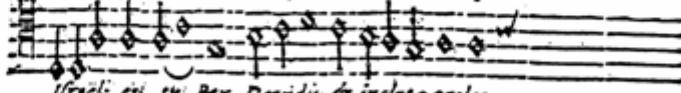
ex. 5.



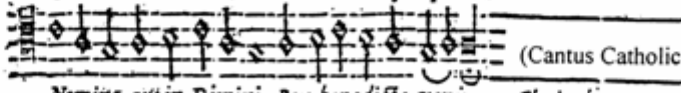
Glo ri a, laus, & ho nor ti bi sit, Rex Christe Redemptor.



Cui puerile decus, promsit Hosanna pius.



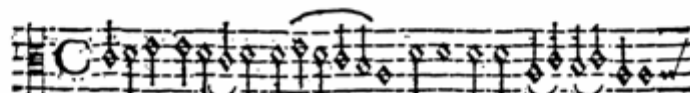
Israeli es tu Rex, Davidis, & iachae proles.



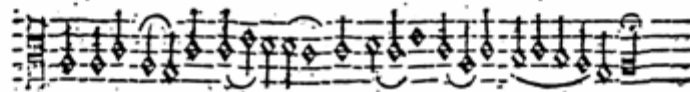
Nomine, qui in Domini, Rex benedictus venis. Gloria &c.

(Cantus Catholici 1651)

ex. 6.



(Cantus Catholici 1651) *Dexi- tera Re- gis pro- ce- dit, ful- ges Cru- cis my- ste- ri- um.*



Qua-erit mor- tem per su- lit, & mor- te vi- tam pro- salu- tis.

ex. 7.

(Cantus Catholici 1651)

Pange lingua glori o si, Corporis my ste rium.
Sanguinis, pre tiosi, quem inmundi pretium,
Fructus ventris generosi, Rex effudit gen tium.

ex. 8.

a) (Psalter of Buda)

Ad cenam agni pnic et hotis atbis can
 diti pt mntur maris rubi xpo cana pncipi

(Barslédec 1971)

b) Kü - szön - tünk kis - ded vér - ta - nük, ki - ket a vált - úg haj - na - lán
 (Franciscan Hymni Vesperarum 1741)

c) Pa - ter lu - per - ni lu - mi - nis Qui Mag - da - le - nam re - spi - cis
 (Csikkarc(alva 1967)

d) Jé - zus meg - vál - tó Is - te - nünk, kit szent A - tyánk nem - zett ne - künk

mint ró - zsa bin - lót a vi - har le - tört az ül - dü - ző po - gány.
 Flam - mas a - mo - ris ex - ci - tas Ge - lu - que fol - vis pec - to - ria.
 e - gyen - lí fel - ség - ben Ve - le e - lőbb mint ég a vi - lág le - ve.

Hungary, Budapest, National Library c. l. m. æ. 128. 'Psalterium Blasii' dating from before 1419; Hungary, Esztergom, Library of the Primateship I. 3. Psalterium (probably from Buda), 15th century; Poland, Częstochowa 583 R. I. 215. Pauline Cantual (Hymnal, Tonary, Processional), 15th century; Croatia, Zagreb, Metropolitanska Knjiznica /Bibl. Univ. MR 21.

Psalterium from Zagreb, 15th century; Romania, Sibiu, Musee National Brukenthal Ms 615.
Psalterium from Transylvania, 14th century.

László Dobszay–Andrea Kovács, *Corpus Antiphonarium Officii – Ecclesiarum Centralis Europae V/A Esztergom/Strigonium (Temporale)*, Budapest, 2004, 33-35.

Benjamin Rajeczky, *Melodiarium Hungariae medii aevi I. Hymni et sequentiae*, Budapest, 1956.

For more on the designaton and content of Protestant songbooks and liturgical books, see Ilona Ferenczi(ed), *Graduale Ráday saeculi XVII*, Budapest, 1997, 56-62; Ilona Ferenczi(ed), *Graduale Ecclesiae Hungaricae Epperiensis 1635*, Budapest, 1988, 55-62.

Kornél Bárdos–Kálmán Csomasz Tóth, „A magyar protestáns graduálok himnuszai”, in *Népzene és zenetörténet III*, Budapest 1977, 134-256, 276-277.

István Botta, *Huszár Gál élete, művei és kora (1512?-1575)*, Budapest, 1991, 395.

Op. cit. 414-419, 462-463.

More on the problem of liturgical assignments in the early Hungarian Protestant Church: Dezső Karasszon, „Synopsis Gradualis. A magyar gregorián ének és a magyar református istentisztelet”, in *Egyház és művelődés. Fejezetek a reformátusság és a művelődés XVI-XIX. századi történetéből*, Debrecen, 2000, 139-148.

Janka Szendrei, „»Új világosság jelenék«. Egy himnusz története”, *Zsoltár II/4*, 1995, 6–8.

Kornél Bárdos–Kálmán Csomasz Tóth, „A magyar protestáns graduálok himnuszai”, in *Népzene és zenetörténet III*, Budapest 1977, 254-255.

On the popularity of sapphic metre during the period concerned see Kálmán Csomasz Tóth, „Előmunkálatok a magyar graduálok hazai kapcsolatainak felderítéséhez”, in *Hagyomány és haladás. Csomasz Tóth Kálmán válogatott írásai születésének 100. évfordulójára*, Tamás Bódis (ed), Budapest, 2003, 316-317.

Kornél Bárdos (ed), *Magyarország zenetörténete II. 1541-1686*, Budapest, 1990, 202-205; Ilona Ferenczi(ed), *Graduale Ráday saeculi XVII*, Budapest, 1997, 58.

Kornél Bárdos–Kálmán Csomasz Tóth: „A magyar protestáns graduálok himnuszai”, in *Népzene és zenetörténet III*, Budapest 1977, 137, 141.

Fekete Csaba: „Öreg debreceni”, *Magyar Egyházzene XII*. 2004/2005, 181-186.

Kornél Bárdos–Kálmán Csomasz Tóth: „A magyar protestáns graduálok himnuszai”, in *Népzene és zenetörténet III*, Budapest 1977, 143. László Dobszay, *A magyar népének*, Veszprém, 1995, 41.

See the Lutheran congregational hymn books called *Zengedező Mennyei Kar* from 1696 and *Új Zengedező Mennyei Kar* from 1743.

The two editions of the *Kájoni Cantional* are: 1676 and 1719.

The *Cantus Catholici* was edited in 1651, 1675 and 1705. Bozóki's hymnal was edited in 1797.

The special term for this service is „folk-vespers” in Hungarian. See more: László Dobszay, *A magyar népének*, Veszprém, 1995, 36.

Kornél Bárdos (ed), *Magyarország zenetörténete II. 1541-1686*, Budapest, 1990, 157-160.

Breviarium Romanum, Budaë, 1827.

Szendrei–Dobszay–Rajeczky: *XVI-XVII. századi dallamaink a népi emlékezetben*, Budapest, 1979, I. 64, II. 31