

TAPPING INTO UNKNOWN MUSICAL AREAS ANALYSIS OF A MEDIEVAL BOHEMIAN MUSICAL MANUSCRIPT

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SUMMARY. This research presents a medieval musical manuscript that has not yet been analyzed in detail. Catalogued under the name of *Graduale Latino-Bohemicum*, and currently held in the Batthyaneum Library of Alba Iulia, it has many peculiarities in comparison with other similar codices from the Transylvanian area, hence also compared with other Czech manuscripts. We offer analysis around the date of its creation, then debate different naming options. To create the proper context of understanding for the analysis, we present a brief historical background of the time and place in question, that is the turbulent 15th and 16th century of Europe, with special focus on Transylvania. We continue with the physical aspects of the manuscript that guide us through the colorful world of medieval codices. From a structural standpoint the work has two delimited parts. The bilingual manuscript starts with chants written in Czech and finishes with melodies in Latin. The existence of the Czech language, as well as many other clues govern us to set up hypotheses regarding its provenance. During the content analysis we dedicate a subchapter to the later page inserts that contain additional notes for the chants, wherefrom we can further conclude theories about the usage of the codex, authors of the later annotations, and so forth. We offer a more in-depth analysis of the musical notation where aspects like rhythm, staff, neumes used and special solutions are shown. Finally, we conclude all major, raised questions related to the name, origin, and genre.

Keywords: *Graduale Latino-Bohemicum*, musical manuscript, codex, medieval, paleography, Gradual, Cancional, Antifonal, Hussite, Czech, Latin, Gregorian, unison, polyphony.

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The focus point of our research is a Transylvanian “Graduale”, currently held in the Batthyaneum Library of Alba Iulia, Romania, namely *Graduale Latino-Bohemicum*. While researching Transylvanian Graduals in general, this manuscript raised our attention after several research trips. The material had not been researched in detail up until now, so we are approaching this unknown valuable musical material.

The manuscript was first studied in the context of Roman Catholic graduals, specific to this area, but it showed a great number of differences in terms of form, content, religious ideology, and musical aspect.²

“
This manuscript stands out in the particularities of its form, content, religious ideology and musical aspect. It is an unknown treasure ready to be revealed.
 ”

1. Creation date

The dating of the manuscript raises doubts, as each of the few referral sources mark different eras as the time of creation. Most reliable sources mark the 16th century as the creation period³, while other resources indicate the 15th century. Webographical references are inconsistent as well, because data found in the (Romanian) National Digital Library states that the manuscript was created in the early 16th century⁴, in contrast with another known digital library⁵ that categorizes the codex between 1300 and 1400⁶.

We are guided by a short note in the manuscript, written in Latin, executed with careful calligraphy, most likely by a different person than author of the Gradual. The annotation dates from the 15th century and we consider it as an important clue about its time of creation: “Manuscript. Sec. 15 Slav.

² Márton Szabolcs, “*Cantate Domino canticum novum*” (*Sing to the Lord a new song*), Cluj-Napoca, Editura Verbum, 2019, p. 32-36.

³ Elemér Varjú, *A gyulafehérvári Batthyány-Könyvtár (Batthyány Library in Alba Iulia)*, Budapest, Editura Athenaeum, 1899, p. 197.

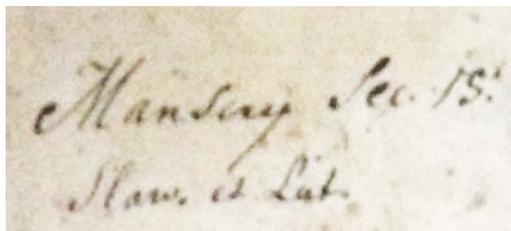
⁴ Images of the manuscript are published on the web page of the Romanian National Digital Library: http://digitool.bibnat.ro/R/VHYH6Q62UHU1SA2I6IDE6GHUUXL16MHJKFU6S2S2JVP4HVCGJ704241?func=results-jump-page&set_entry=000081&result_format=002, Manuscript number: 88, accessed on 10.02.2021.

⁵ Data source: <https://usuarium.elte.hu/book/1420/view> Accessed on 18. 08. 2022.

⁶ We suppose that this is a mistake, because at the description of the codex is dated between 1300-1400, but then in the title of the manuscript (Graduale) it appears the year 1420. We found no reference of this dating.

et Lat.”⁷, which without abbreviations is read as: “Manuscriptum Secoli⁸ 15 Slavicum et Latinum”, that is “Manuscript from the 15th century, in Slavic and Latin (languages)”.

Figure 1



Note from the inside cover⁹

Three other researchers briefly mention the existence of this manuscript that we are aware of: Róbert Szentiványi¹⁰, Elemér Varjú¹¹ and Zsigmond Jakó¹². It is quite interesting that all of them ignore the above note from inside the manuscript and they date it from the beginning of the 16th century¹³. It may happen that the extra annotation was inserted after they researched the material, or they considered it as incorrect, or they simply neglected it. Varjú describes the manuscript¹⁴ as being executed on large sheets of papers, neatly written, with „beautiful initials and leafy wind ornaments”. The ornamentation is indeed executed artistically: at the bottom of the first sheet there is a coat of arms in blue, two knife blades pierced into each other. This confirms that he indeed studied the material physically. However, both Varjú, and then Szentiványi offer a very brief description of the material.

⁷ ***, *Batthyanem Library*, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

⁸ From the way the latin word “saeculum” is written we deduce that the writer was a classicist, because it was a medieval practice to write this word like “seculum”.

⁹ Source:

http://digitool.bibnat.ro/R/VHYH6Q62UHU1SA2I6IDE6GHUUXL16MHJKFU6S2S2JVP4HVCGJ704241?func=results-jump-page&set_entry=000081&result_format=002, Manuscript number: 88. Access date: 10. 02. 2021.

¹⁰ Robertum Szentivány, *Catalogus concinnus librorum manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Batthyányae*, Szeged, Editio Quarta Retractata Adaucta Illuminata, 1958, p. 20.

¹¹ Elemér Varjú, *A gyulafehérvári Batthyány-Könyvtár (Batthyány Library in Alba Iulia)*, Budapest, Editura Athenaeum, 1899, p. 259.

¹² ***, *Biblioteca Batthyanem*, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

¹³ Elemér Varjú, *Op. cit.*, p. 259.

¹⁴ Elemér Varjú, *Op. cit.*, p. 260.

Figure 2

Design elements from the manuscript ¹⁵

2. Naming

At its current location, the Batthyaneum Library from Alba Iulia it is categorized in several ways. According to Róbert Szentiványi it is called as *Graduale Latino-Bohemicum*, as per Elemér Varjú as *Antiphonarum Latino-Polonicum*, while Zsigmond Jakó¹⁶ mentions it as *Graduale et Antifonale Bohemicum et Latinum*. These naming differences that refer to the genre of the codex raised our curiosity to dig deeper, analyze, and finally come up with our own conclusion regarding the genre of the manuscript. In the following part we analyze the form, content and the musical value added by the manuscript and compare it with other the like.

3. Historical background

To properly analyze the manuscript, we need to understand first its historical and cultural background. Hence a brief retrospective. The 15th century of Europe was full of social turmoil where the Roman-Catholic church was losing ground because of the abuses of power and wealth. It's not only the peasants who wanted freedom without burdens, or the poor citizens, but even some nobles felt used by the clerical upper class. All these made them turn away from Catholicism and determined them to organize new congregations. This led to the appearance of new, alternative religions.

The one that is crucial from the perspective of our manuscript is the Hussite Reformation, led by Jan Hus¹⁷. Hus, born from a poor family, became priest, also having a bachelor's in arts and preached in Prague. He was not

¹⁵ Source: http://digjtool.bibnat.ro/R/VHYH6Q62UHU1SA2I6IDE6GHUUXL16MHJKFU6S2S2JVP4HVCGJ704241?func=results-jump-page&set_entry=000081&result_format=002, Manuscript number: 88. Date of accession: 10. 02. 2021.

¹⁶ ***, Biblioteca Batthyaneum, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

¹⁷ He may also be referred to as John Hus or Huss or Iohannes Hus or Huss.

totally against Catholicism, but opposed many aspects of it, thus he was judged a heretic by the Council of Konstanz in 1416 and sentenced to death by burning at the stake¹⁸. This was the spark that triggered a strong wave of protests throughout Europe and later contributed to the well-known Protestant Reform. The incident evolved into large protests locally, in the Kingdom of Bohemia (currently Czech Republic). Because of the execution of Jan Hus, his spirituality began to work and spread even more strongly. All reinforcements and bans proved to be in vain, as they provoked even more violent reactions amongst the Czechs, and gave tremendous spiritual strength for the oppressed. This way the religious movement gradually grew into a national anti-feudal movement.

Two major groups were formed: 1. The Utraquists¹⁹, also known as the Calixtinians²⁰, who were a peaceful group, not even denying the Catholic religious dogma at first. 2. The Taborites²¹, the more aggressive group formed by the radical Hussites, who represented the military line²².

The response from the Church was rather hardline and initiated bloody wars against the Taborites that implied great human sacrifice. The so-called Hussite Wars lasted almost two decades²³. Hus' death proved to be only a catalyst and his doctrines found more and more followers. After many failures by the German-Roman emperor Sigismund, who attacked them in the name of the pope²⁴, the bloody Battle at White Mountain fought with Catholic forces on 8 November 1620 finally marked the end of Hussitism²⁵.

“
As seen throughout the history, hard times, including wars paradoxically have a positive impact on culture, with many cultural works being born in these dark times. Thus, the emergence of Hussitism has enriched us with a multitude of valuable manuscripts.
”

¹⁸ Gusztáv Gecse, *Vallástörténeti kislexikon (Dictionary of religious history)*, Budapest, Kossuth, 1971, p. 121.

¹⁹ From the Latin “sub utraque specie”, meaning they were divided in two ways.

²⁰ From the Latin word “calix”, meaning chalice.

²¹ Named after the town of Tabor, where the movement was headquartered.

²² Tóth-Szabó Pál, *A cseh-huszita mozgalmak és uralom története (History of the Czech-Hussite movements and ruling)*, Budapest, Hornyánszky, 1917. p. 45.

²³ Karl Heussi, *Az egyháztörténet kézikönyve, (Handbook of Church History)*, Budapest, Osiris, 2000, p. 259.

²⁴ Ibidem.

²⁵ Karl Joseph von Hefele, *A katolikus egyháztörténet tankönyve (Textbook of the Catholic church history)*, Volume II., Timişoara, Csanád-Egyházmegyei Könyvnyomda, 1905, pp. 29-34.

By the above historical summary we created a good enough context for the codex to be analyzed.

4. Physical aspects of the manuscript

The manuscript bears the typical aspects of Czech codicils from the late 15th and 16th centuries, respectively.

It has a considerable size of 450 x 320 mm and weighs over 7 kg. Its monumental size was appropriate to be placed on the ambo²⁶, wherefrom a group of singers (schola) sang even from a greater distance, thus serving the musical part of the liturgy. The Gradual contains 341 folios, including some sheets of paper later inserted. The binding of the book is typical to the codices of the period: the base is made of wooden boards, which are covered with reddish-brown leather and provided with a rectangular frame.

The edges of the covers are bordered by metal strips, which are fitted with two metal buckles to protect the manuscript. We find traces of other protective elements on the cover: round metal marks²⁷, that were placed at the 5 key points on the book cover (4 in the corners and one in the middle), to protect the leather from exposure and wear.

Inside the cover there are some added notes and sketches:

- an older catalogue number (Ms. I-7.);
- a musical system with text (executed in black), which seems to be an attempt of a composition;
- a few hard-to-read letter, with lines crossed over;
- the most significant sketch is the one mentioned above, which refers to the manuscript's creation date: "*Manuscrip. Sec. 15 Slav. et Lat.*".

Surely, after centuries of use, or even just as the time passes by, the material becomes outdated, and no matter how well the book has been cared for, the material becomes vulnerable to damage. However, given the circumstances, the manuscript has been protected to the extent possible, and is therefore currently in good enough condition.

Its significant weight required careful handling during research: it can only be examined in a room with a certain humidity, can only be touched with sterile surgical gloves and wearing a protective mask.

The text, often abridged, as well as the notated melody are relatively easy to read, even though there are torn and crumpled pages in several places in the book. The manuscript also contains initial letters, mostly executed in red or blue at the beginning of each song.

²⁶ The Ambon is an elevated platform for reading and singing in church.

²⁷ These "buttons" were around 220 mm in size, currently missing. We can only see their traces.

There are also 11 exquisite, meticulously painted initials in larger sizes, which are well complemented by leaf ornament designs executed on the edges of the respective pages.

Figure 3.



Decorative initials from the manuscript²⁸

The scriptor used *gothica bastarda*²⁹, while the neumes reflects late form of Czech notation, which is not very angular, as it usually was in those times. For example, the custos symbol appears in three different ways:

1. usually in the monophonic chants most of them are realized by square heads with a vertical dash;
2. in monophonic chants that appear on the page insertions, the square head becomes a little more concave and have a vertical dash;
3. in polyphonic pieces the head appears in wavy form, with a dash drawn 45 degrees upwards to the right.

The staff is relatively large, most likely for practical reasons. If the manuscript was used by a large group of singers, it would be readable even from a greater distance. The five red lines of the staff contain, among other things, the C and F clefs in various forms, and even the G clef, which appears only once in this codex. The notes are most frequently executed with black ink, except for some representative chants (usually also accompanied by a nice miniature-like ornamented initial, like presented above) that uses, at least partially red or blue. In the note additions we also find four-line staffs, even in combination with five lines, with notes usually in black, and in some rare examples the text is even highlighted with green ink.

²⁸ Folio no. 19v, folio no. 31v, folio no. 91v.

²⁹ For a comparative paleographical study we used the following source: http://paleography-hexe.co.uk/gothic_minuscule/bastard_gothic/index.html, accessed on 11. 09. 2022.

“It is particularly interesting that this medieval manuscript contains polyphonic pieces. Moreover, we see not only Gregorian rhythm with its usual syllabic and neumatic, but also chants with mensural notation.”

We are awestruck by the combinations of different types of musical notations like syllabic-neumatic, belonging to the Gregorian notation type, as well as mensural notation with notes having underlying values, also having different modal structure, and different physical aspects.

5. Structure of the manuscript

The structure of the manuscript differs from the Roman-Catholic Graduals of the same period that may serve as a comparison base. Although it begins with the Advent period³⁰, as we have ordinarily seen in other Graduals, it develops differently along the way. Apparently, the structure of the manuscript is not standardized.

Looking at their themes, most of them consist of songs praising the Virgin Mary³¹ and Jesus Christ, including songs with a general meaning for the Creator-God³². There are also chants composed on the theme of various saints or prophets³³.

³⁰ The first song is “*Antifony przed rorate*”, meaning Antiphon before the Rorate. The first impression is that it relates to the beginning of the church year, deduced from the word “rorate” (dew) that symbolizes the Advent period. In the Roman Catholic tradition, the church year begins on the first Sunday of Advent. According to the Roman-Catholic rite the 4th Sunday of Advent begins with a processional song (Introitus), namely: *Rorate Coeli desuper* (i.e.: “Dew, O heavens, from above”), so the song can be associated with this period. However, as we will see later, this Advent antiphon has no connection with the church year, so this situation seems to be merely coincidental.

³¹ Some chants praising the Virgin Mary are: *Marya wssi milosti plna Hospodin stebau* (“Rejoice Mary, the Lord is with you”), *Zdrawa bud' Marya* (“Hail, oh, Marie”), *Zdrawa Marya a milosti plna* (“Welcome Mary, full of grace”), *Angelus ad Virginem* (“Angel to the Virgin”), *Ave Maria angelorum* (“Rejoice, Mary of the angels”), and others.

³² Some chants written in praising the God: *Gloria* from the mass ordinary (in Czech), *Antifony przed rorate: Swaty, swaty, swaty* (Antiphon before Rorate: “Holy, holy, holy are You”), *Antiphony: tent nemaly bude ale weliky a Syn neywyssiho Boha* (Antiphon: “He shall not be small, but great, the son of the high God”), *Venit Rex noster* (“Our King is coming”), *Dominum laudemus voce* (“Let us praise the Lord with a loud voice”), *Ave Maris stella* (“Star of the sea, welcome”), and others.

³³ For example, some chants to the prophet Isaiah: *Izajáš, Adventnũro: Rorate Ewangelia natrzy* (“Isaiah, Advent: Rorate the Gospel of Birth”), *Okliczi Dawiduw a huol domu Izrahelskeho* (“David, successor of, the house of Israel”) and many others.

It is a bilingual manuscript, and it commences with a large part written in Czech, and it ends with chants in Latin.

6. Provenance

Returning to our analyzed codex, we propose some hypotheses regarding the origin of the manuscript and how it reached the Library of Bishop Ignác Batthyány.

1. The basis of the library comprises of about 5000 volumes that Bishop Batthyány had bought from an Italian library. On this occasion he acquired many valuable incunabula and manuscripts from the 12th to the 15th centuries³⁴. Our analyzed manuscript may be one of them. Given the historical and religious situation at the time, it is possible that the manuscript comes from a Calixtin Hussite community. This statement will be argued below through a comparative analysis.

2. Historical sources claim that our region was not spared from Hussite attacks, so besides Bavaria and Austria, Transylvania was also hit by Hussite attacks. Presumably during the Hussite attacks parishioners came to proclaim the word, and so the manuscript would have reached Transylvania, and later the Batthyaneum.

3. A third hypothesis is that the Hussites, after being repulsed by the troops of the papal army, fled to Moldova³⁵, where they could have taken the manuscript with them, together with the translations of the Bible³⁶, to protect them. According to historian Gh. I. Năstase, there was a Hungarian community of Hussite Csángós who settled in Huși around 1460³⁷.

In the following we argue the Hussite origin of the manuscript. We have accessed reliable sources of Czech Hussite manuscripts to draw similarities between them and our manuscript. Therefore, we present a comparative analysis through which images of different fragments are dissected. We use identical passages to effectively demonstrate the similarities between the manuscripts. With the aid of a deductive analysis, we compare these document parts in detail, in this example the letter “K”.

³⁴ Ibidem, p. 49.

³⁵ The founding of the city of Huși (Moldova, part of Romania) can also be related to this.

³⁶ György Galamb, *A Huszita biblia és a ferencesek (The Hussite Bible and the Franciscans)*, Sárospatak, Maxima Cs-A. Publisher, Volume 10, nr. 2., 2009, pp. 3-12.

³⁷ Năstase I. Gheorghe, *Ungurii din Moldova la 1646 după „Codex Bandinus” (Hungarians in Moldova in 1646 according to the “Codex Bandinus”)*, Volume IV, Chișinău, „Tiparul Moldovenesc” Publisher, 1935, p. 81.

Figure 4.



Graduale Latino-Bohemicum³⁸

Figure 5.



Antiphonale E. P. Ad Usum Utraquistarum³⁹

Figure 6.



Latin-Czech Gr.⁴⁰

Figure 7.



Czech Gr. from Chrudim⁴¹

Figure 8.



Czech Gr. from Litomyš⁴²

³⁸ *Graduale Latino-Bohemicum*. Image source from (Romanian) National Digital Library: http://digitool.bibnat.ro/R/VHYH6Q62UHU1SA2I6IDE6GHUUXL16MHJKFU6S2S2JVP4HVCGJ704241?func=results-jump-page&set_entry=000081&result_format=002, Manuscript number: 88. Accessed at: 10. 02. 2021.

³⁹ *Antiphonale E. P. Ad Usum Utraquistarum*. Image source from *Biblioteca Ecclesiae Metropolitanae Strigoniensis* (Library of the Cathedral from Esztergom) with catalogue number: Ms. I. 313. Accessible: http://esztergom.bibliotheca.hu/scan/ms_i_313/index.html, Accession date: 06. 01. 2023.

The letters “K” appears in the same context (Kyrie, Kryste), therefore comparable. We see the initial “K” with angular execution, with Bastard Gothic⁴³ font, with an authentic Gothic shape and a yellow background in all five resources. There is an obvious similarity between the five images as they share the same stylistic characteristics. An additional feature can be identified in image no. 3, where the initial is completed with a red ornamental line. The similarities between the texts are clear, however images 4 and 5 best justify the common roots.

As for the musical notation 5 red lines are used in almost all manuscripts, however the head of the neume punctum shows a slight difference in some sources. The neumes follow the tradition of Czech notation, but there are small stylistic differences, which we present in the below comparative table:

Table 1

Comparative elements	Figure 4	Figure 5	Figure 6	Figure 7	Figure 8
System of 4 red lines		✓			
System of 5 red lines	✓		✓	✓	✓
Similar clefs	✓	✓		✓	✓
Custos	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Angular notehead	✓			✓	✓
Less angular notehead		✓	✓		
Signs of alterations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Decorative elements (miniatures, coloured initials, etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rounded text		✓	✓		
Latin language	✓	✓	✓		
Czech language	✓		✓	✓	✓

Comparative table of similar Czech notes⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Gradual Latin-Czech. Image source: Manuscriptorium Digital Library of Written Cultural Heritage, of the National Library of Czech Republic. Link: https://www.manuscriptorium.com/apps/index.php?direct=record&pid=AIPDIGNKCR__59_R_5133__48VER83-cs#search, Date: 21. 01. 2023.

⁴¹ Czech Graduale from Chrudim. Image source: Manuscriptorium Digital Library of Written Cultural Heritage, of the National Library of Czech Republic. Link: <https://www.manuscriptorium.com> Date: 21. 01. 2023.

⁴² Czech Graduale from Litomyš. Image source: Manuscriptorium Digital Library of Written Cultural Heritage, of the National Library of Czech Republic. Link: https://www.manuscriptorium.com/apps/index.php?direct=record&pid=AIPDIGRML__R203PRC10419064AD51-cs#search Date: 17. 01. 2023.

⁴³ Associate professor dr. Mihai Maga in his courses on the evolution of the Bastard Gothic font: <https://www.mihaimaga.ro/dh/pdf/Pal-07-sec14-beamer-Ro.pdf>, Accessed on 03.03.2023.

⁴⁴ Source: Author's own processing.

In conclusion we see a great similarity in these manuscripts, from which we deduce that our manuscript has the same origin. Moreover, our manuscript (Figure 4) might have come from the Czech Republic and was probably made for the Hussites in the same workshops, using very similar execution methods.

7. Content analysis

The content of the manuscript is varied: it includes both hymns, parts of masses and songs, called *cantio sacra*. The most frequent and beloved theme of the pieces is inspired by Virgin Mary, but there are also pieces about Jesus Christ. Surely, in minor cases the songs also celebrate other well-known saints. So the codex authentically represents the field of sacred music. Its content is classified very specifically, so we unequivocally delimit two large parts.

The first part, which represent most of the codex, is written in Czech⁴⁵. It consists of 233 songs in total, most of which are monodic songs, but we also find some composed for two, three or four equal voices, as follows:

- 182 unison songs;
- 5 works for two voices;
- 45 works for three voices;
- 1 work for four voices.

The second part is written in Latin⁴⁶, with different voice structures. It contains only 68 works, all with Latin text, in equal voices, as follows:

- 18 unison songs;
- 1 work for two voices;
- 49 works for three voices.

From a morphological standpoint, the different genres, like hymns, *cantio sacra* songs have a syllabic-neumatic (Gregorian) musical body, or “rhythmic” (unison), respectively. Often without, and in some cases with indication of measure. The polyphonic pieces all contain indication of measure.

Graduals typically contain songs in unison. So, the manuscript’s greatest peculiarity is the presence of polyphonic songs, which even compared to the few other similar Czech polyphonic examples, proved to be complex.

⁴⁵ Interesting to note that only the Czech part contains illuminated illustrations, so this is for sure the main part of the codex from all points of view.

⁴⁶ The Latin part contains only decorative initials, as opposed to the rich illuminated illustrations from the first part.

“
The greatest peculiarity of the manuscript is the integration of early polyphony. Moreover, these chants are more complex than the few other polyphonic examples of similar Czech manuscripts
 ”

The content of the Gradual shows a rich variety from musical⁴⁷, religious⁴⁸, or even linguistical standpoints⁴⁹. The physical material of the manuscript also shows complexity. The sheets of the codicil are not homogeneous, as extraneous elements appear that were probably added later.

7.1. Page insertions

At the beginning of the codex there are three sheets bound together (with songs for the Christmas feast), which at first glance seem to be organic part of this codex. The font of the text is identical indeed (with minor differences in shape), but on a closer examination we notice other differences. The most striking difference is the styling of the handwritten musical notation (neumes) of the Czech notation. Hence, we can say that the three pages were made by another person, with a different notation. The later insertion of these pages is further proven by the pale color of these pages, as well as some glue marks.

A similar phenomenon is found in the middle of the book, between pages 126 and 127, but further analyzing the codex, we find many such cases. All these later insertions are usually executed with different handwriting, on different (usually smaller) size papers that became paler over time, facts that further prove the later supplementation.

Let us generalize the similarities and differences between the body of the codex and the later additions.

Text and font: The handwriting of the text clearly differs. The letters in the appendices are of the same type but reduced in size. We see a different arching of the letters, which are slightly slanted.

⁴⁷ Several musical genres can be found in the codex.

⁴⁸ As we will develop later, the codex resembles the Catholic liturgy, but does not originally follow it.

⁴⁹ Content available in Czech and Latin.

Musical notes styling: We see differences in this sense as well. There is a more simplistic curvature of the neumes, and the notes are smaller and flatter in size than those found in the “parent” material.

Design and illustrations: the additional pages lack any illuminated illustrations, although the main body of the manuscript is quite rich in these, as it has 11 abundantly decorated initials. Instead, there are only decorative initials⁵⁰ in the appended pages.

Our assumptions for the later insertions are:

1. these songs were not planned from the inception, and with the development of the Hussite rite, there was an arising need for more religious songs in the ceremony;

or

2. the original sheets, which would have contained these musical materials, were destroyed, or torn from the manuscript (as happened in the case of the Cluj Gradual and many others), then a later replacement was necessary.

In conclusion both the text and the musical notes show signs of different handwriting than those in the main body of the codex, so we affirm that these originate from different authors. There is a total of 18 different sized insertions at/between the following folios: 1, 19-20, 29-30, 31-32, 32-33, 36-37, 51-52, 54-55, 60-61, 84-85, 91-92, 92-93, 105-106, 111-112, 112-113, 119-120, 126-127. At the end of the manuscript 2 folios are appended (in Czech) as full pages under folio number 337-338.

The lack of decorative elements, the succinct manner of presentation, as well as symbols like * + are all signs of their functional, rather than artistic scopes. We suppose that these additional pages were intended to help the Hussite liturgy, which underwent continuous changes in those times.

7.2. Chants written in Czech

Unlike most medieval manuscripts that used the common language, the Latin, this is a bilingual Gradual that commences with songs written in Czech. Moreover, this segment represents the greater part of the codex. It is important to note that this is the sole part that contains illuminated illustrations, 11 by number, whereas the rest of the Gradual contains only decorative initials. From a musical perspective most chants follow the usual

⁵⁰ The first letter of the song is made with colored ornamentation.

Gregorian style and appear in monodical form (usually neumatic, some syllabic-melismatic, and the so-called “rhythmic-Gregorian chants”⁵¹) and in polyphonic edition (composed in two, three and four equal voices). This part contains basically all⁵² the inserts presented above, for example the three bound-together pages from the beginning of the codex, in random places.

We continue the analysis focusing on musical aspects, like the neumes used in the main codex in comparison with the annotations. While both use the Czech notation, one can easily observe their different notation style, due to the peculiarities of the different authors. The Do clef is realized in a more gothic manner in the main manuscript (MM⁵³), while a bit rounded in the page insertions (PI⁵⁴). The custos has a simple rectangular head in the MM, and a concave shape in the PI. Other neume groups bear signs of differences as well. For example, *Torculus* shows different ways of connecting the neumes (especially between the first and the second note): in the MM the first two neumes are connected by a short, 45-degree sloping line, while in the PI the neumes are connected by a longer, vertical line. The MM uses 5-line red staff, usually with black, sometimes with blue or even red ink notes, while the PI uses a greater variety: it frequently uses 5-line black staff, sometimes 5-line red staff, but even combined with 4-line ones.

In conclusion the analyzed manuscript starts with its most important and massive part, the one written in Czech. This book was surely used in practice, proven also by the (practical) annotations that are specific to this part (as well as at the end of the entire book), all in Czech language. This probably means that the Czech section played a more important role than the pieces written in Latin, as the former were used more frequently. Its importance is further underlined by the fact that only the Czech part is decorated with beautiful illustrations⁵⁵. These illuminated⁵⁶ pages are enriched with border decorations, nice initial letters, or frame illustrations on a whole page.

The Czech part ends with the last song being “*Wieleny w život Marye*” (Mary’s incarnated Christ, Savior of the world) on folio no. 256v, then the manuscript continues with the Latin part.

⁵¹ This phenomenon is a kind of syllabic solution, but the rhythm is realized with notes from mensural notation that offers a standardized, metrical rhythm formula.

⁵² The last additional pages are found at the end of the Latin part, which is the second part of the codex, but these inserts are also written in Czech.

⁵³ Main body of the manuscript abbreviated hereinafter as MM.

⁵⁴ Additional pages abbreviated hereinafter as PI.

⁵⁵ There are 10 pages with decorative illustrations: folio no. 19 recto, folio no. 37 recto, folio no. 53 recto, folio no. 71 verso, folio no. 91 verso, folio 112 verso, folio no. 132 verso, folio no. 147 recto, folio no. 241 recto, folio no. 313 recto.

⁵⁶ John Bradley, *Illuminated Manuscripts*, London, Bracken Books Publisher, 1996, p. 27.

7.3. Chants written in Latin

The second part of the manuscript contains songs written in Latin. It starts with folio no. 257r. Although this is the shorter part, from a musical point of view the Latin chants are also valuable and outstanding. There is, however, a significant difference between the two parts, namely that the one in Latin contains more polyphonic works, so from the point of view of musical construction, it raises our attention even more. We find 68 pieces in Latin, with different voice structures:

- 18 unison songs;
- 1 work for two voices;
- 49 works for three voices.

This part is also rich in chant genres and their themes as it contains hymns, mass parts and *cantio sacra* songs, most of which were composed in honor of the Virgin Mary, then a significant part in praise of Jesus, and we also find remarkable works on human mortality or on other saints.

From a musical standpoint the most fascinating songs of the Latin chants are polyphonic works. Songs composed in three equal voices in Latin bring the typical compositional customs of the era. The aesthetics of the musical spelling and the high quality of the composition are remarkable.

Titles of the polyphonic works, according to the order in the manuscript are as follows:

Hac nube inorante; Leta promat; Vita mundo prodiit; Universi pangamus; Salve virgo nobilis; Dominum laudemus voce; Virgo nobilis genitrix; Ave celsi conditoris; Ave candens thronus celse; Omnes cum gaudio; Regi rerum; Vigilanti jam animo; Vitae dator; Optimus rerum conditori; Venite dei cultores; O mirandum commercium; Nos mortales; Salve filii matris; Memorantes Christi; Vox angeli; Pie Jesu gloriose; Ave speciose; Missus ab aethero; Sed laceratum; Venit in mundum; Ave genitrix superni; Supremus rerum; Unigenitum parentis; Mirifica res et nova; Os almi telegati; Venit tempus; Christicolis; Aurem lucis visitat; Virtuosissime matris filium; Venter quem tulit; Misericordis Christe; O conditor rerum; Virginis nunc filium; Agne Dei patris; Verbum hoc incarnatum; Vertamus nunc cantica; Virgo preclarissima; Virginis caste uterus; Confluentes in Dei; Unanimi voce; Magni parentis matrem; Concinet vox Christicolarum; Aurem orbis; Magna Dei summi; Ave Maris Stella.

The last work in Latin is Ave Maris stella, however the manuscript ends with a song composed for two (equal) voices in Czech. This is also a later insert, like the ones mentioned above. The different text style, as well as the shape and color of the applied musical writing obviously differ from the original

manuscript. This is the last inserted material in the manuscript, with dimensions in line with the original codex, with constitutes the end of the Gradual.

8. Analytical aspects of the musical notation

In this manuscript we find remarkable musical solutions. The biggest challenge represents the unison chants, where the application of mensural notation rules creates ambivalent situations. Monody often appears metrical, becoming the so-called “rhythmic Gregorian”⁵⁷, with or without⁵⁸ time signature.

Polyphony manifested in two, three, or even four (equal) voices form a massive part of this material.

Regardless of the genres or the language used, the musical notation of the songs is executed on a five-line⁵⁹ red⁶⁰ staff, in which the key of C or F and the key of G are applied without exception. Notes have various colors as well, as expressed above, most frequently with black ink (both black and white notation), or even with red or blue ink. At the end of each staff, we see the usual custos symbol, and an ornamental double bar at the cadence of the work.

Another peculiarity that we find in several songs - either belonging to the monophonic or polyphonic category – is that often the chant is somehow unfinished. Even though there is a custos at the end of the staff, there is no new staff started with the continuation, but rather starts a new chant. In the absence of literature for official reasoning of this phenomenon, we surmise two theories:

1. The next page with the continuation of the song was torn from the book (although no tearing marks are visible).

2. The most likely theory: the song or melodic material in question with which it would have continued was so well known that it did not need to be further noted, but the first 2-3 notes were only used as a mnemonic aid. In case the latter was true, it could have been probably for reasons of saving paper and ink.

⁵⁷ Some unison chants have notes that indicate duration, hence we may interpret them in metrical context. We are talking about the presence of the following neumes: breve, semibreve, and minima. Their rhythm is relative because at the beginning of the songs there are typically no indications of measures that would be standard for the metrical notation (e.g. tempus perfectum, which is indicated by the sign), so the performer chooses the tempo, and in some cases also the duration of the notes sung, particularly at cadence.

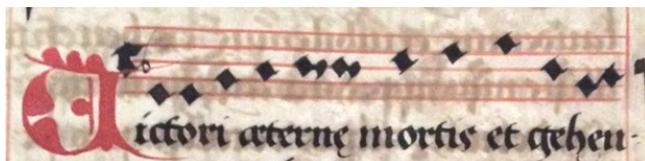
⁵⁸ Most often we do not find an indication of measure.

⁵⁹ As exceptions we find 4-line staffs as well.

⁶⁰ In some exceptional cases – presumably because of the lack of red ink – the authors used blue or black color.

Let us present one such example at the *Victoria aeterne mortis et Gehenne* chant where the musical material is interrupted at the cadence, according to the circumstances mentioned above.

Figure 9.



Original chant example - Victoria aeterne mortis et Gehenne⁶¹

This is a melodic outline that we can easily reconstruct from a famous hymn that is still used today in the Roman-Catholic liturgy. It is the hymn *Ave Hierarchia*, written in the honor of the Virgin Mary:

E.g.1

A - ve Hie - rar - chi - a, coe - le - stis et pi - a De - i Mo - nar - chi - a,
 un - de ter - ris lae - ta, An - ge - lus fert ma - gna Pa - tris be - ne - fi - ci - a.

Techno edited musical example – Ave Hierarchia⁶²

This hymn dates from the 15th century, but we need to share some information to clearly understand the phenomenon. The first score of this century appears in 1508, in the Codex from Nador, which means that before the melody was written down, it had been living for centuries by word of mouth. This hymn was used intensively until the end of the 17th century in this form, and later appeared with other texts through which the melody has survived to the present day. The famous hymn appears in several well-known

⁶¹ From Folio no. 316v.

⁶² Author's own processing.

manuscripts and incunabula, such as the Czech Canticle⁶³, Cantus Catolici⁶⁴ (1651) or in the Book of Songs from Oradea⁶⁵ (1566).

This song is just one instance that well exemplifies the particular musical manifestations present in this manuscript.

9. Conclusions

The *Graduale Latino-Bohemicum* is an outstanding manuscript from many points of view. We have encountered valuable songs written in one or more voices, composed in two different languages (Czech and Latin), which were often inspired by melodies of known Catholic songs that have survived through the centuries. The manuscript has a total of 301 chants, out of which the majority, 233 are in Czech, and the rest of 68 in Latin. The vast majority of the book contains unison chants, 200 in number, but surprisingly we have examples of polyphony as well, with 6 songs for two voices, a spectacular number of 94 for three voices, and 1 for four voices.

This manuscript does not meet the criteria of the standard graduals of the Roman Catholic rite, neither in terms of music, nor in text or form. Since the book contains several genres of songs (mainly antiphons and responsories, but also hymns, psalms, *cantio sacra*, verses, and psalm tunes), we believe that none of the names encountered during the research cover the true nature of the manuscript. With professional humility though, we therefore suggest a different name for the manuscript, that is *Cantionale Bohemico-Latinum*.

Translated from Romanian by Dóra Márton

⁶³ Guido Maria Dreves, *Cantiones Bohemicae Leiche, Lieder und Rufe des 13., 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, Fues Press, 1886, p. 34.

⁶⁴ The technoedited example is the first hymn in the book (that appears on page 3), which is titled "Other Old Chants" and is categorized under the church year of Advent.

⁶⁵ Szabó Katonáné Judit, Harmat Artúr "Szent Vagy, Uram! népénektár filológiai feldolgozása" (Philological processing of the hymn "You are Holy, Lord!"), Budapest, Doctoral thesis at Franz Liszt Musical Academy, 2007, p. 67.

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