

Pauline Customs within the Esztergom Use

Archaism, Variant or Usage?

The Pauline liturgy belongs to a group of centralised and supraregional liturgical Uses. This group differs, on the one hand, from the Uses of cathedral chapters as being supraregional and, on the other hand, from those of Benedictine monks or Augustinian canons as being centralised. Consequently, the Pauline liturgy has to be analogous to those of reformed monastic orders and mendicant friars. This kind of liturgical Uses has three main characteristics:

(1) Typologically, they are strongly linked to the regional background of given cathedral Uses, which is generally identical with the geographical environment the order originates from. (2) However, it is hard to identify a single cathedral Use as their immediate ancestor. (3) From a historical perspective, the creation of the Use of a religious order usually dates from the generation that follows the order's foundation, approximately 30–50 years later. One can come to these conclusions by analysing the liturgy at least of the Cistercians, Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites or a less widespread community, the Gilbertines from England. As for the Pauline liturgy, the following questions arise: whether its regional background can be defined, whether it can be traced from a single Use beyond the confines of this region, and whether the date of its creation can be determined.

In general terms, the Hungarian roots of the Pauline Use seem to be unquestionable. It is more problematic to identify the very cathedral from which it could be derived. Pauline liturgical customs are routinely connected with those of Esztergom but the relationship between the two is not always obvious, albeit feasible and mostly well documented. If so, why be cautious about it? First, Hungary is the only region in mediaeval Europe where the same territory hosts a kingdom, two ecclesiastical provinces and a well defined liturgical Use from the beginnings of the latter up to its very end. Therefore, it is not an easy task to distinguish the Use of Esztergom from a Use of any other Hungarian cathedral. Second, the sources which could document the mediaeval liturgical practice of Hungarian cathedrals are few, sporadic and of doubtful origin. Thus, even if there were peculiarities which could enable us to differentiate between cathedral customs within Hungary, either the data are missing or their identity is unclear.

The obscurity is not any less in terms of history. Although the Pauline order was established in the 13th century, the bulk of the evidence comes from the 15–16th centuries, both for the order and for Hungarian cathedrals. Nothing sure can be said of the when and how these Pauline liturgical customs were framed. What we are faced with is only the final stage, the result of an undocumented editorial work. Sometime, somehow this work had to be done, since its outcome bears all the features of a standardised Use typical of other religious orders. Not only the arrangement of liturgical texts, but melodic variants, the structure of service books, or even the formulation of rubrics tend to be uniform. However, this standardised version is closely related to,

but not identical with, the Use of Esztergom. What lies behind the differences: the survival of an earlier stage of development, the impact of other Hungarian practices, or a conscious effort to make an independent usage? If any of these is true, is the mature Pauline Use really a late mediaeval phenomenon or was it codified earlier in the history of the order?

The method I suggest in order to answer these questions is based on a special selection of relevant sources which combines a chronological and a typological aspect of the matter at hand. Regarding chronology, there are only three sources of the Esztergom Use that can really be trusted as bearing witness to the liturgy of the cathedral itself before the 15th century. They are the so-called Agenda of Hartwick from the 11th century which I prefer to cite as the Chartvirgus Pontifical, now in Zagreb, the so-called Breviarium Notatum Strigoniense from the 13th century, now in Prague, and the so-called Missale Notatum Strigoniense from the 14th century, now in Bratislava (Pozsony or Preßburg). For the moment, I set aside the arguments as to how the Esztergom origin of these sources can be proved both liturgically and philologically. I now restrict myself to emphasising that none of the other pre-15th-century sources can be taken into account with full confidence.

Regarding typology, there are only three cathedrals and respectively four types of extant sources that can be trusted as representatives of Hungarian cathedral Uses different from that of Esztergom. They are the printed Breviary and Missal of Zagreb, the Missal of Pécs, and the Ordinal of Eger, of course, in several subsequent editions. None of the other Hungarian books can be proved with certainty whether they are representative sources, since they do not define themselves as normative documents for the liturgy of the mother cathedral. The differences between the sources mentioned above are highly useful. By comparing the Chartvirgus Pontifical, the Missale or Breviarium Notatum, and the 15–16th century books of Esztergom, an archaic, a classical and a modern layer of the same tradition can be set apart. Comparing the late books of Zagreb, Pécs, and Eger, and the contemporary ones of Esztergom, we can make a guess as to how far a Hungarian cathedral's usage could depart from that of the archbishopric. Thus, mature Pauline variants can be evaluated by contrasting them with the diachronic variability of the central tradition and the synchronic variability of the other surviving Hungarian traditions.

It can be deduced from these that the most informative constellation will be when the chronological and the typological clusters overlap one another, i.e. the comparison of those liturgical services which are equally present in the early Esztergom manuscripts, and in the late prints of Esztergom, Zagreb, Pécs, Eger, and—of course—the Paulines. Such a study can be made of the processions, blessings and other extraordinary ceremonies of Candlemas, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, and the Sacred Triduum: an ancient layer of the Roman rite itself. Until now, I have examined in detail the Candlemas, Ash Wednesday and Palm Sunday Ordines and the Vigil Offices (Matins) of the Triduum, the so-called Tenebræ. Although it may seem too technical and perhaps tedious, for the sake of a well-founded conclusion, I have to summarise my finds:

At Candlemas, there is no sprinkling of holy water before the procession, albeit all the Hungarian cathedral Uses have it. There are two processional chants, the responsory *Postquam impleti sunt* when the procession departs and the antiphon *Senex puerum portabat* when it returns, which are peculiar to the early Esztergom sources but after the 14th century they fall into disuse. The former survives in Zagreb, the latter in Eger, while both endure in the Pauline form. The arrangement of the euchological part, i.e. the blessing of the candles is the same as in all the 11th and the 15–16th century sources. However, it differs from the arrangement of the sources between the two which testify that an abortive attempt was made in the 14th century at reordering the blessings of the new fire and those of the candles. Being untouched by this reform, the Pauline variant proves to be earlier or later than the 14th century.

On Ash Wednesday, the introit-like antiphon *Exaudi nos* and the subsequent collect *Concede nobis Domine* stand at the beginning of the ceremony and there is no genuflexion between them. This is contrary to all the Hungarian cathedral Uses which have these items either after the blessing of the ashes or before the procession (during the sprinkling of holy water), always with genuflexion. It is a peculiar Hungarian custom to sing psalms under the famous antiphons of the day, the *Immutemur* and the *Iuxta vestibulum*, while the ashes are imposed on the faithful. However, only the first psalm, *Deus misereatur*, is universal—*Beati immaculati* under the second antiphon seems to be a later addition. It is already present in the 14th century Missale Notatum of Esztergom but missing from the 11th century Chartvirgus Pontifical, as well as from the Pécs, Zagreb, and Pauline Missals. Having finished the imposition of ashes, the priest recited the prayer *Deus qui humiliatione* according to the 11–14th century Esztergom sources but this survived only in Zagreb and among the Paulines. The procession of the Paulines is short, accompanied only by a litany, without any of the responsories sung in Hungarian cathedrals. Finally, the prayer *Exauditor omnium* is said at the stational church. This is missing from the Chartvirgus Pontifical but widespread from the classical period on.

On Palm Sunday, a versicle is inserted before the processional prayers: a feature that is typical at latest from the early 13th but not yet in the 11th century. It is only in the Pauline variant that the concluding prayer of the sprinkling of holy water (*Præsta nobis*) is not substituted with the collect which starts the whole procession (*Visita*), but both are recited. In the early sources, the series of processional chants began with the antiphon *Surgite sancti*. This item was also present in the Pauline rite and in the processions held at the cathedral of Pécs but nowhere else. Unfortunately, the exact date of its abandonment cannot be determined since the testimony of the 14th century Missale Notatum is lacking in this case. According to the early sources, the priest read the well-known collect of the blessed Virgin, *Gratiam tuam quæsumus Domine*, after arriving in the stational church. This was later changed to a proper prayer more fitting for Palm Sunday but it was maintained in the Pauline variant. The same thing happened to the ordinary prayer for arriving in the mother cathedral, *Via sanctorum*, which was rendered obsolete in the Eger and late Esztergom usage in favour of a Palm Sunday prayer properly speaking. The lack of a final prayer at the very end of

the processional rites is also peculiar only to the archaic sources, and to Pécs and the Paulines. Nevertheless, only the Paulines sang the hymn *Gloria laus* in front of the church door, similarly to many Western European and Mediterranean Uses but strange to Central Europe.

On the eve of Maundy Thursday and the following days, the versicles of the nocturns were sung in a simple melody, according to the classical and later Hungarian rubrics, but contrary to the 11th century ones. The first Lamentation began with the prologue *Et factum est postquam in captivitatem*—otherwise, it is first documented in the 13th century Breviarium Notatum. In the third nocturn, homilies of Bede the Venerable were read, in contrast to the Hungarian cathedral customs. The lessons were different even in Zagreb where a series of sermons was used instead. It is interesting that the closest parallel of the Pauline choice of lessons can be found in the breviaries of Trier and Tournai. On the Pauline triangle, thirteen candles were burning, a number attested first in the 15–16th century Esztergom sources and Olomouc (Olmütz). Whether it was an old custom or a recent development, we cannot say now. More can be said of the versicles of Lauds because the archaic, classical and modern layers of the Hungarian Use can clearly be set apart in this regard. In the first sources, the only versicle is *Christus factus est* for all three days. This persists up to the end of the Middle Ages in Zagreb and probably in Eger. In the late 13th-century Breviarium Notatum, there is a change to a set of three versicles, *Christus factus est*, *Proprio filio*, *Attendite*, as in Salzburg or Passau, and this is also the choice of the mature Pauline sources. Eventually, all the versicles were eliminated from the late mediaeval Use of Esztergom. Maybe a predilection for monastic simplicity is manifested in the fact that Paulines used neither tropes in the so-called Kyrie puerorum, as did Zagreb or Eger, nor a procession after them, as did Esztergom from the 11th century. Instead, they sang the antiphon *Christus factus est pro nobis obædiens* after the Kyrie puerorum, a common custom in Western Europe but unusual elsewhere in Hungary.

What conclusions can be drawn from this arid list of liturgical facts? First, all the common markers of the Hungarian Use are present in the Pauline liturgy—a statement already proved by scholarly research. Second, it is closely and exclusively related to Esztergom. All the attributes which could link the Pauline liturgy to the customs of Hungarian cathedrals different from Esztergom are fossils of an archaic period that have died out in the ecclesiastical centre but sporadically survived elsewhere. No other Hungarian cathedral had any influence on the Pauline liturgy. Third, the features that can be arranged in a chronological pattern show that the Pauline variants can be derived from a state of affairs typical to the end of the 13th century. The foundation of the Pauline liturgy was the Use of Esztergom as it was actually celebrated in the cathedral, and the project which led to the creation of the Use was initiated by the generation immediately after the founding of the order—a phenomenon already described in connection with the history of other religious orders. Fourth and last, the Pauline liturgy is not merely an archaic variant of the Esztergom Use. Many of its preferences are quite unique. Sometimes it endorses monastic simplicity, has a special

concept of structure, borrows elements of Uses alien not only to Hungary but to the whole Central European landscape.

In summary, the Pauline liturgy is not an archaic, nor a diocesan or local variant of the Esztergom Use. Rather, it is an equal parallel of Hungarian cathedral usages. Its first foundation is the 13th-century liturgy of the archiepiscopal see but its superstructure is the result of a self-conscious, creative work of competent intellectuals. It seems that this was the usual way of making a liturgical Use at that time.