

Hungarian notated codex fragments and musical paleography. Terminology and perspectives

Gabriella Gilányi

(Institute for Musicology, Research Centre for the Humanities,
„Momentum” Digital Music Fragmentology Research Group)

I. Introduction. Past and present

At the beginning of its systematic studies in the 1970s, a branch of Hungarian plainchant research concerned with the examination of the musical paleography set the analysis of Gregorian chant notations of medieval Hungary as its main goal. At the moment this branch is experiencing developments awaiting a significant breakthrough, as it seems. A realignment of the source preferences and research subjects, which are in focus of the researcher's interests plays a key role in this development. Indeed, plainchant research worldwide, apart from its traditional interest in complete sources, is turning with increasing interest to the last, and perhaps most demanding source area to be conquered: the notated fragments. This happens primarily in order to try to fill the gaps in medieval music history. A clear sign of the shift in topics is that the old-new branch of paleographic research is already appearing in research literature under its own name as “musical fragmentology” (ref. *Disiecta Membra Musicae. Studies in Musical Fragmentology*, Series in Manuscript Cultures 21, ed. Giovanni Varelli, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020).

This research promises particularly significant results in Hungary. Due to cataclysms that caused severe and lasting damage in the country, few complete medieval notated manuscripts have survived. However, the situation is different if we focus on fragments of the former codices. These sources are still found in significant numbers. They are preserved as covers of incunables, antiques and old archival documents, as single leafs or parts of leafs of obsolete liturgical codices. An inestimable segment of this source material is still unknown. It is lurking, nearly forgotten, in domestic and foreign collections.

Why is fragmentology important for musical paleographic research?

Systematic analysis of the notation reveals that the source-value of fragments can often be the same as that of entire codices. The set of notational elements of a given musical script can (at least in part) be reconstructed on the basis of a single surviving piece of the parent codex, without the need for a complete manuscript (excepts the cases, of course, where several later scripts were included into the one-time source). Thus, one of the biggest beneficiaries of fragment research is Gregorian palaeography – and vice versa: the analysis of notation is able to contribute to the identification of fragments, creating a close symbiosis between source and research method.

The Hungarian ‘Momentum’ Digital Music Fragmentology Research Group, led by Zsuzsa Czagány, was established in October 2019 at the Department of Early Music History of the Institute of Musicology of the Research Center for the Humanities at Budapest. Its task is to explore the Hungarian remnants of this old-new source-type. Here, musical paleographic research, as an exceptionally important tool of source identification, has eventually found its proper place and new, exciting responsibilities (<http://fragmenta.zti.hu>). As most recent initiative of this group, the Hungarian Neume Catalogue website (<http://neume.zti.hu>) fits into this line of research. The aim is to investigate all chant notations from the Hungarian Middle Ages, and to show all the characteristic components of these writings in an online database compiled on the basis of a homogeneous series of criteria, presenting the details systematically.

The great opportunity facing the study of medieval notated codex fragments is digitalization, i. e. the use of new forms of publication provided by online interfaces. By now, we have reached the point where it is possible to present Gregorian neumes from manuscripts in a well-organized, online database. In certain respects, all of our sources and notations can be incorporated into such systems. The emerging analogies can also be used to identify the origin of newly discovered sources.

II. The need to correct the Hungarian Gregorian paleographic terminology

At the gates of opportunity, we face a number of challenges. Many questions, many unclear points arise. They urge Hungarian paleographic research to be put on a new footing, and require a correction of older concepts. The current explorations not only increase the number of sources, but also the aspects of the research, which allow a more accurate perception of different notation types of medieval Hungarian and Central European areas. The earlier terminology, developed by Janka Szendrei requires modernization and expansion (see her groundbreaking *Középkori hangjegyírások Magyarországon* [Medieval Notation Systems in Hungary],

Studies to the Hungarian Music History 4. Budapest: Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1983; in German: “Die Geschichte der Graner Choralnotation”, *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 30 (1988), 5–234.

The first and most important task in this context is to reconsider the main categories and the subcategories of chant notations appearing in the sources. Two needs must be met. On the one hand, the terms themselves should be adapted to a nuanced, multi-level grasp of phenomena. On the other hand, they should be harmonized with internationally accepted terms. It is a problem that some of the old categories of Hungarian (Central European) musical paleographic research, such as the “Messine-Gothic notation”, which is still used in Hungarian paleographical vocabulary today, have not become internationally accepted. The reasons for this reluctance are legitimate. We must accept them, but it is worth reviewing once again (for the last time) its background, the arguments for and against the use of this term.

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Hungarian chant sources are from a relatively late period, so the specialist of medieval notations face specific questions and problems when dealing with them.

Three basic types of Hungarian notation systems can be distinguished on the basis of chronology: 1. adiaستمatic German neumes, 2. Esztergom (staff) notation, 3. Gothic notations. We do not discuss the adiaستمatic German neume notations used in Hungary in the 11th–12th century here, because they have been fully analysed by Janka Szendrei (“German Neume Notations in Hungary”, in *Medieval Notations in Hungary*, Studies to the Hungarian Music History 4. Budapest: Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1983), 91–121. This notation was introduced by German Benedictine missionaries at the turn of the millennium, although in the 11th century it was already the work of scribes with an inland education and has specific local features. The Esztergom notation is also omitted for the moment and will be briefly explained at the end of this paper.

The main terminological question relates to the late “Gothic notations”. By the end of the 14th century, the map of Gregorian notation of Europe had narrowed to a twofold western (square) and eastern (Gothic) type, replacing the local church centers’ old, more colourful traditions. The more rigidly uniform square forms relentlessly swept away local developments. Gothic notation proved to be a more inclusive system, suitable for incorporating into its neume composition the original, regional-local writing elements previously cultivated in the given areas. This means that the late medieval sources of Central and Eastern Europe – in contrast to the Western uniformed square writing – still offer the opportunity to study local variants of Gothic notations. The chronological extensibility of the research can also be applied in the case

of the Hungarian source material. We can consider Gothic mixed notations, inspired by foreign patterns, but preserving Hungarian elements known from earlier scripts.

In addition to the decorative 13th–14th-century Esztergom notation, the most important musical script of the Hungarian Middle Ages (see below), previous Hungarian studies of the 1980s primarily tried to capture the mentioned late gothicized mixed chant writings. Unfortunately, the terminological-evaluative work finally did not lead to complete success. Communication problems were caused by the shortened forms and vague, hidden interpretations of the Gothic notation names, especially in translations. Hungarian terminology did not make it clear enough that the use of the umbrella term “Gothic notation”, which is widespread abroad, is of utmost importance. The Central European notation variants (the Hungarian forms inclusive) should be classified under this term in the first place. The “Gothic notation” label, if we accept it, is able to capture the basic characteristics of this type of script. The word “Gothic” refers to a special writing technique: the thinning-thickening pen treatment that became widespread in the 14th century codex writing. It was based on the pen cutting method itself, which made textual and musical scripts suitable for creating large-scale letters/neumes, or representative ornamental codices.

Gothic notation consists of enlarged notational elements, diamond-shaped note-signs and rectangular linking elements which combine them to ligatures. However, it is clear that this single overarching category is not sufficient to describe subtypes. Our current proposal is to introduce a new two- or multilevel terminology system in which the Central European variants are included under the overarching term “Gothic notation” in such a way that their name accurately reflects the composition, place and origin and, in some case, age of the notation.

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Since this ongoing research involves a chronologically and geographically diverse source material in the Hungarian collections, the definition requires clear categories, which, in addition to being as informative as possible, are suitable for circumscribing the notation of each manuscripts and fragment. We hope that, after updating our musical paleographic or “code language,” the system is clear enough to be internationally accepted. The Hungarian and English names of the notation types we propose are given in the table below, and some of their main categories are explained after this. (The proposal is primarily based on the terms used in the article of Notation §III. History of Western notation 1. Plainchant by David Hiley and Janka Szendrei in *New Grove 2*, XVIII, 84–119, trying to reconsider them.)

Table 1 Terms

VONALRENDSZER NÉLKÜLI NOTÁCIÓK/ STAFFLESS NOTATIONS	adiasztematikus német neumák	adiastematic German neumes
KORAI VONALREND- SZERES NOTÁCIÓK/EARLY STAFF NOTATIONS	Rajna-vidéki	Rhenish
	metzi-német	Messine-German
	<i>metzi-német (sziléziai)</i>	<i>Messine-German (Silesian)</i>
	klosterneuburgi	Klosterneuburg
	cseh	Bohemian
	esztergomi	Esztergom
	<i>esztergomi (pálos)</i>	<i>Esztergom (Pauline)</i>
	<i>esztergomi (erdélyi)</i>	<i>Esztergom (Transylvanian)</i>
	ciszterci	Cistercian
KÉSŐI HAGYOMÁNYÓRZÓ NOTÁCIÓK/LATER TRADI- TIONAL NOTATIONS IN HUNGARY	késői esztergomi (pálos, erdélyi, felvidéki)	later Esztergom (Pauline, Tran- sylvanian, North Hungarian etc.)
	<i>kurzív esztergomi</i>	<i>cursive Esztergom</i>
KVADRÁT NOTÁCIÓK/ SQUARE NOTATIONS	kvadrát	square
	cseh notáció kvadrát ele- mekkel	Bohemian notation with square ele- ments
GÓTIKUS NOTÁCIÓK/ GOTHIC NOTATIONS	metzi-német gótikus	Messine-German Gothic / MGG notation
	metzi-német gótikus (felvidéki)	Messine-German Gothic (North Hungarian) / MGG notation (North Hungarian)
	metzi-német-magyar gótikus	Messine-German-Hungarian Gothic / MGH notation
	metzi-német-cseh gótikus	Messine-German-Bohemian Gothic / MGB notation
	metzi-német-cseh- magyar gótikus	Messine-German-Bohemian- Hungarian Gothic / MGBH- notation
	metzi-német-sziléziai gótikus	Messine-German-Silesian Gothic / MGS notation
	német gótikus (Hufnagelnotáció)	German Gothic (Hufnagelnotation) / GG-no- tation
	késői cseh	later Bohemian
		etc.

II. 1. Messine-Gothic notation?

A significant proportion of the surviving manuscripts from medieval Hungary shows a very widespread type of late chant notations. The region's most influential chant script used east of the Rhine, is a mixture of several notational dialects. In order to grasp its nature, Janka Szendrei, following Bruno Stäblein (and the French term *notation allemande gothique*, see *Le Graduel romain. Édition critique par les moines de Solesmes, II.: Les Sources*. Solesmes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre, 1957, 63, 144), introduced the term "Messine-Gothic" into the Hungarian plainchant terminology. This influential notation, cultivated in a vast geographical field, is at the heart of the above terminological problem.

Since Szendrei considers it a suitable term for acceptance, it is worth taking a look at its original application by Stäblein. Based on the variants, he distinguished two large "Gothic" notation types which originated in the period of adaptation of adiastematic (not indicating pitch) neumes on the staff system: the German Gothic („deutsche gotische Notenschrift") and the Messine-Gothic notation („Metzer gotische Notation") (see Bruno Stäblein, *Schriftbild der einstimmigen Musik, Musikgeschichte in Bildern, Band III*. Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik Leipzig, 1975, 67–68). German Gothic notation can be recognized primarily from the main characteristic writing elements of later German neumes, e.g. the use of the rhombic virga with shaft as a syllabic basic neume. It reminded earlier scholars on a horseshoe-nail and was thus called, rather disrespectful, "Hufnagelschrift". (The term has also been transferred to English terminology in the form of "Hufnagelnotation"). In addition to the *Hufnagel*-virga, typical elements include a round clivis form deriving from the adiastematic German clivis, a square, spurred pes (pes á ergot), the dot-like F-clef and red colouring of the f-line in addition to three additional black staves and a pipe-form custos.

In the Messine-Gothic notation, on the other hand, structures of the older Messine neumatic notation dominate, e.g. a 7-shaped clivis, 9-shaped cephalicus, the predominant use of a punctum instead of virga in syllabic contexts. The Messine notation behind the Gothic forms came from Metz/Lorraine, which developed into an important center of Gregorian chant in the 9th century, and later became the dominant notation of the whole of Lorraine. The adiastematic German neume notation that inspired the other type was the musical writing of the central and southeastern German territory, including Switzerland and Austria. ("Germany" as a nation or state did not exist at this time, and the "German" tribes of Antiquity were long gone. It is clear, however, that the term has long been accepted.)

Although Stäblein noted that the Messine-Gothic mixed writing gained great influence in Central and Eastern Europe, he does not mention an important fact about the emergence of

the two types: adiaستمatic German neumes could in all cases be transferred to the staff system by merging with adiaستمatic Messine neumes. Already Janka Szendrei pointed out that Stäblein's two "Gothic" categories are both Messine-German mixtures. But still she accepts the somewhat artificial separation seen there. She also accepts the assumption that there exist indeed two different neume sets, in which there is a significant difference in the proportion of German and Messine elements and between Western and Eastern workshops. (The long-term task of the research is to analyze, accurately define and possibly bind these Messine-German mixtures that have a great influence on Gregorian notations in Central and Eastern Europe.)

A hallmark of the German Gothic script is a) the use of both punctum and virga side by side. Other typical features of German Gothic notation are b) the abovementioned dot indicating the F-clef at the beginning of the staves, c) staff colouring, d) the spurred pes, and f) the round clivis. Characteristic Messine elements are: w) generally four red staves, x) the alphabetic form of the F-clef, y) a 7-formed clivis, and z) an articulated pes without a spur.

In order to refer to Stäblein's two main types, Szendrei coined Hungarian terms by shortening and simplifying the layered content the names include. Where the German elements predominate in the notation, she called it "German Gothic". Where the Messine elements prevail, "Messine Gothic". If a given source uses only a) but not the other features of German Gothic notation b)-f), but instead the features w)-z) we must describe the present notation as "Messine Gothic".

The old bipolar system is an undoubted guide in determining the character of a given script, as one only has to consider whether the proportion of elements, written with Gothic pen treatment, i.e. by alternating thick-thin strokes is more Germanic or more Messine.

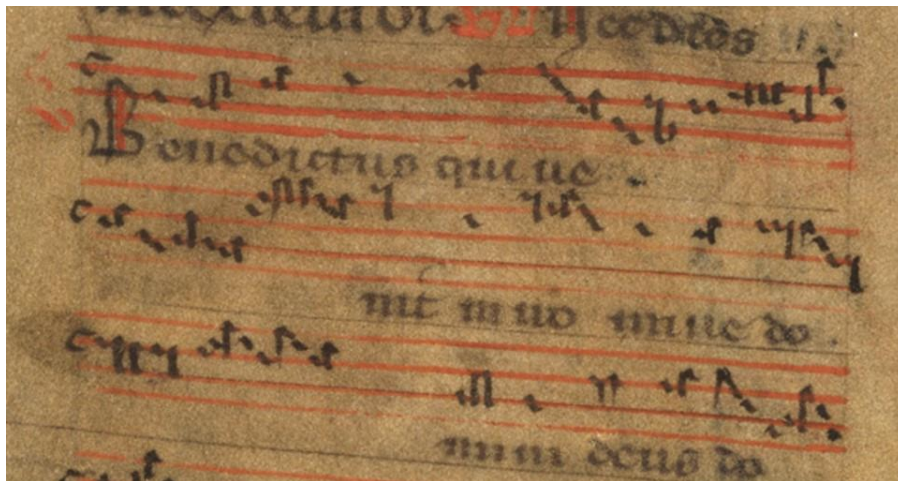
Although Szendrei created a flexible framework that is logically polarized, her proposed name choices are not really successful. The term "Messine-Gothic" actually refers to a "Messine-German Gothic mixture". The important adjective "German" is omitted from the term, and the members of the phrase ("Messine" and "Gothic") are non-equivalent attributes belonging to different aspects of analysis.

The adjective "Messine," on the other hand, is a type of musical notation cultivated in medieval Metz/Laon/Lorraine, such as the German neume notation in German, Czech, Polish, Hungarian, Baltic and Scandinavian, etc. territories, both of which existed in the times before the introduction of the staff system as adiaستمatic neume writings. In addition, the word "gothic" has a hidden meaning in Hungary, "German", despite the fact that the development of the Gothic writing (the text writing) cannot be associated with German peoples at all: its earliest examples did not come from the east of the Rhine, but from the Anglo-Saxon

territory under Norman rule (László Mezey, *Paleográfia. A latin írás története. Könyv és oklevél-paleográfiai áttekintés* [Paleography. History of Latin writing. Book and documentary paleographical overview] Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó, 1962, 62–64).

The correction of the term “Messine-Gothic notation”, which is widespread in the workshop language of Hungarian plainchant research, is inevitable due to the above. Hereafter, I suggest to use the term “Messine-German Gothic notation”, which clearly indicates the composition of the mixture, refers to the pen treatment technique, emphasizes the ornamental character of the codex, and its late medieval origin.

After this solution, new challenges will also have to be tackled. Chronological distinctions must be considered while determining notation variants, since earlier and later versions of the same writing style can be observed. In its early (13th–14th century) form, the later gothic design was still experimental: an unstable notational system in flux. The codices written in this random style were much smaller than their 15th-century successors, and mostly works by non-professional notators:



Ex. 1a Messine–German notation, notated missal fragment, c. 14, Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, T 20; <http://fragmenta.zti.hu/missale-notatum-s-14-in-2-csonka-folio-budapest-mta-konyvtar-kezirattar-k-469-olim-t-20/>

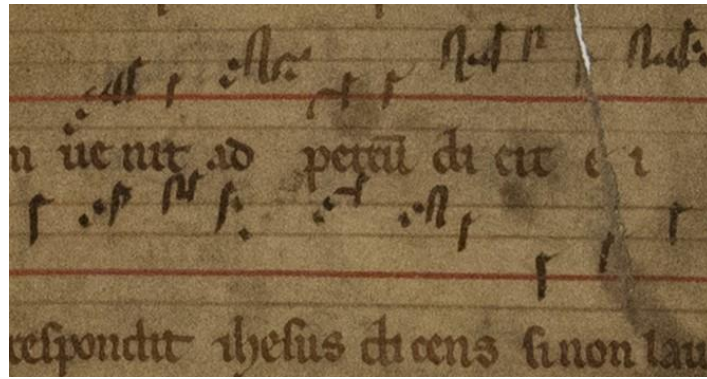


Ex. 1b Messine–German notation, c. 14/1, notated breviary fragment, ELTE University Library, Manuscripts and Rarity Collection, Budapest, Fr. l. m. 268; <http://fragmenta.zti.hu/breviarium-notatum-s-14-1-1-csonka-bifolio-budapest-egytemi-konyvtar-fr-l-m-268/>

We can also say that Gothic music script was the end result of an arc of development, the final product of a nearly two-hundred-year-long formation. Due to the palpable transience of the earlier diastematic Messine-German notations (which are structurally identical to the late enlarged writing forms), we would set aside the Gothic adjective for them, thus distinguishing this earlier type from the standardized, professional Gothic codex writing of the 15th century. Consequently, the names “Messine-German notation” and “Messine-German Gothic notation” also indicate a temporal difference in our system, the first being the early, the second the finally fixed late version.

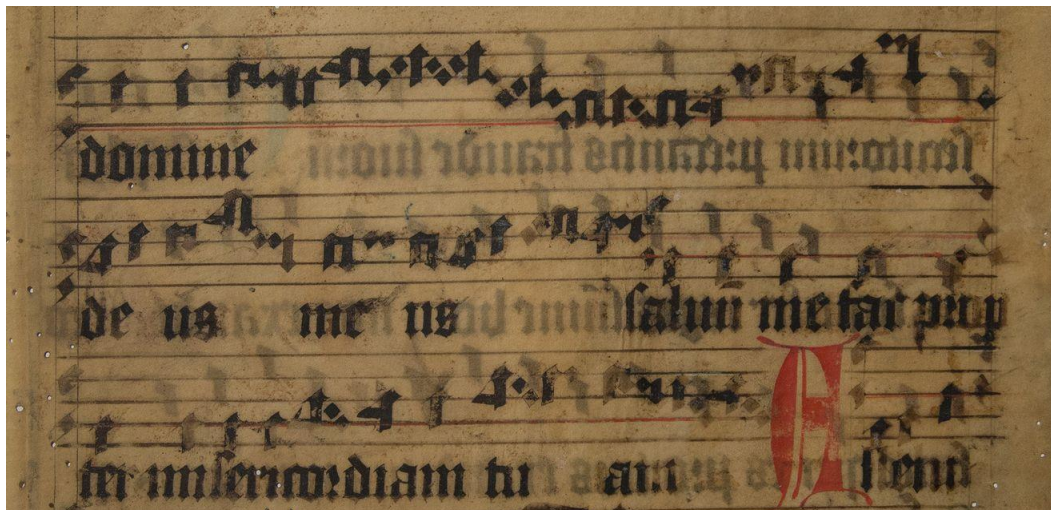
II. 2 German Gothic notation / Hufnagelnotation?

Janka Szendrei’s term “German Gothic” raises a similar problem of interpretation. For the earlier 13th–14th century form of this type, we recommend the exclusive use of the “Rhenish notation”, also known from international terminology, as opposed to the notation of southern and eastern centers, which prefer adiastrumatic German neumes or Messine-German notation at that time. Rhenish notation covers the staff notation of the West German Rhineland and the Low Countries. Rhenish staff notation primarily places older adiastrumatic German neume forms on the staves (ornamental neumes as well without interpretation their original meaning), but with the writing technique of Messine notation.



Ex. 2 Rhenish notation, notated breviary fragment, c. 14, Pauline Library of the Central Seminary, Budapest, Fr. l. m. 130

Although the Gothic pen treatment is already foreshadowed here, its later development is a mature Gothic form with rigid, standardized pen strokes (omitted from the old ornamental signs of vague, lost meaning), which receives its own name in our system (German Gothic notation/Hufnagelnotation, or abbreviated: GG notation). It should be emphasized that the formation of the Rhenish staff notation could not have taken place without the catalytic role of the Messine notation. It was, at the same time, not as strong as a reference point in the creation of the set of signs as the German neume notation, which gives the majority of the signs.

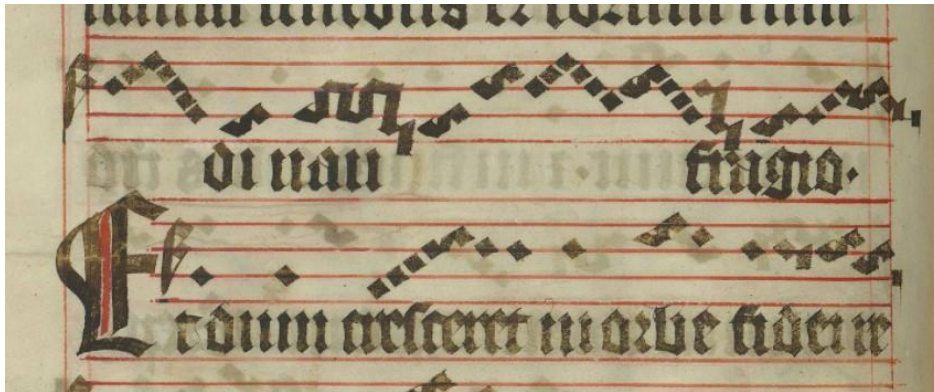


Ex. 3 German-Gothic notation (Hufnagelnotation), gradual fragment, c. 15, Pauline Library of the Central Seminary, Budapest, Fr l. m. 82

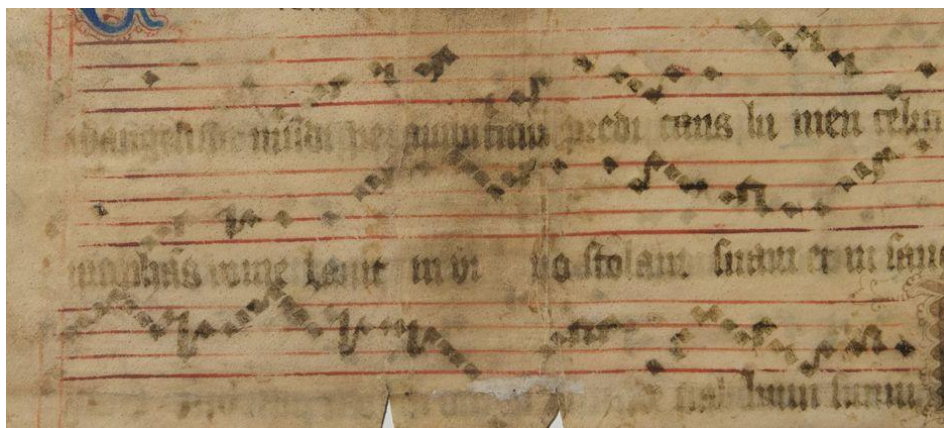
It is important to note that this notation was not applied in medieval Hungarian scriptoria, even if it often emerges in the fragment material of Hungarian collections. Thus “Hufnagelnotation” always refers to a source of foreign provenance.

II. 3 Other Gothic mixed notations

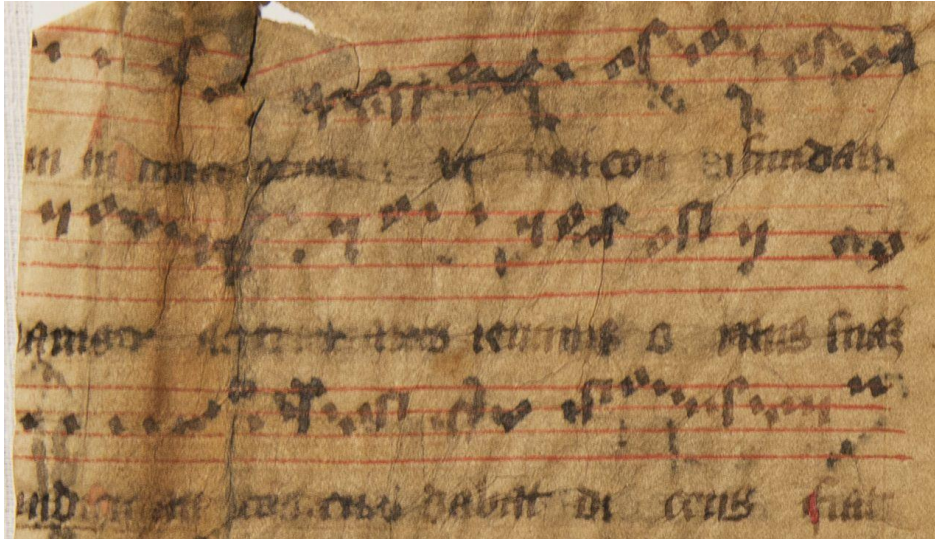
As we have already pointed out, MGG notation proved to be so powerful and malleable in the 14th–15th century's plainchant centres east of the Rhine that its formation – in contrast with square notation in Western Europe – received a new impetus. It embraced local elements in Central and Eastern Europe, and continued to be differentiated even in the late Middle Ages. In Hungary we can document it in more versions, too. During systematization, it is important to grasp the combination of the mixture, e.g. the names of Gothic “Messine-German-Hungarian” (MGH), “Messine-German-Bohemian” (MGB), “Messine-German-Bohemian-Hungarian” (MGBH), “Messine-German-Silesian” (MGS), etc. notations clearly refer to the old scriptorial traditions behind the neumes, making the provenance identifiable.



Ex. 4 MGBH notation, antiphoner fragment, c. 15/2, Esztergom Cathedral Library, Hungary, Ms. I. 1c; http://esztergom.bibliotheca.hu/scan/ms_i_3_c/index.html



Ex. 5 MGB notation, antiphoner fragment, c. 14/15; Pauline Library of the Central Seminary, Budapest, Fr l. m. 82; <http://fragmenta.zti.hu/f670-antiphonale-s-14-15-1-csonka-folio-budapest-kozponti-pap-nevelo-intezet-palos-konyvtara-fr-l-m-82/>



Ex. 6 Messine-German (Silesian) notation, antiphoner fragment, c. 14, Pauline Library of the Central Seminary, Budapest, Fr. 1. m. 81



Ex. 7 MGS notation, antiphoner fragment, c. 15, Pauline Library of the Central Seminary, Budapest, Fr. 1. m. 85

II. 4. Messine-Gothic-Hungarian mixed notation?

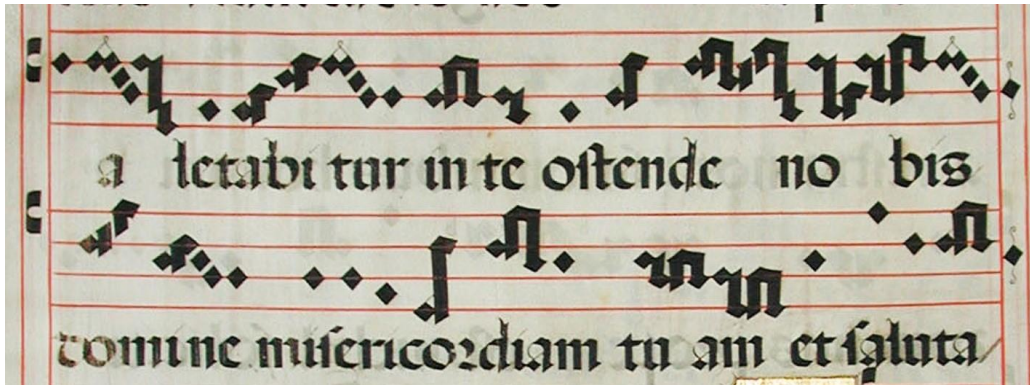
MGG notation (Messine-German Gothic) gradually conquered the Eastern areas in the 14th–15th centuries. Easily adapted in Hungary it provided an opportunity to develop a special merged writing style (see Messine-German-Hungarian / MGH notation). It is important to note that the resulting chant notation is in the same way a product of Hungarian scriptoria as the previous calligraphic notation in Esztergom. Its quality and role in its time can thus be measured to the emblematic Hungarian musical script one and a half centuries earlier. What the two notations have in common is that, for external inspirations, but after careful planning, it was designed in the scriptoria of the Hungarian ecclesiastical centre (Esztergom–Buda area),

and then further developed in professional copying workshops by professional notators. At the same time, the prevalence of late, increasingly monumental musical writing was narrower than that of the old notation of Esztergom, mainly for material reasons. Apart from the kingdom's central churches in Esztergom–Buda, costly ornamental codices could only be afforded by archbishoprics, episcopal seats and major chapters or parishes. Furthermore, this particular mixed neume-system was still shared in practice – especially in the major cosmopolitan cities – with the general MGG notation and local old-fashioned cursive writings.

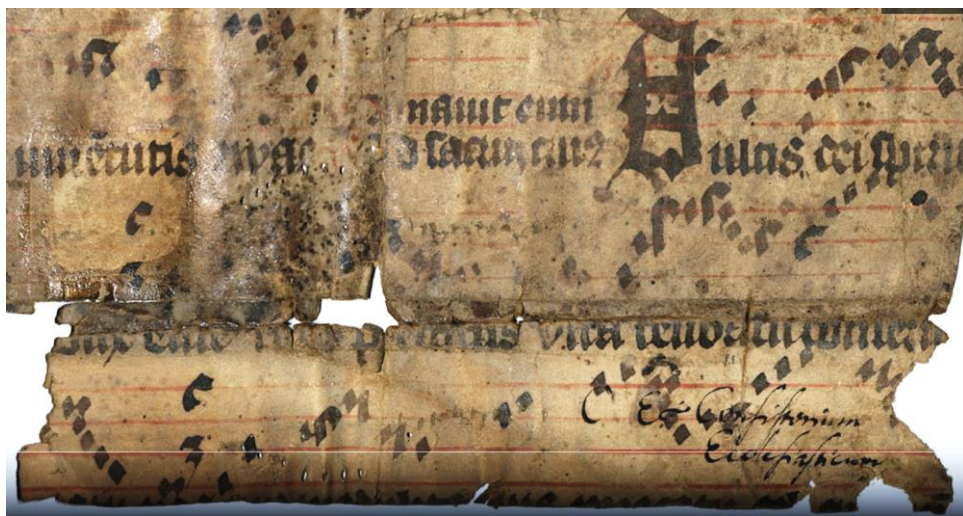
The MGH notation was the chosen musical script of the deluxe codices: it can be well distinguished from other types of Gothic mixed notations abroad by means of its specific neume forms (e.g. scandicus, climacus). This notation combines traditional elements with new ones in the spirit of Gothic fashion. In this practice it is no small compromise to shape it into a system suitable for writing monumental signs. The most magnificent works of Hungarian liturgical book culture were written with it. Until now, musical paleographic research in Hungary has referred to this special late script as a “Messine-Gothic-Hungarian mixed notation”. Instead of the problematic Messine-Gothic term, the designation of the mixture would be more suitable here: “Messine-German-Hungarian Gothic notation” can specify the musical script of the representative liturgical choir books of Hungary in the 15th–16th centuries.



Ex. 8a Messine-German-Hungarian Gothic notation, antiphoner, Esztergom Cathedral Library, Hungary, Ms. I. 3d; http://esztergom.bibliotheca.hu/scan/ms_i_3_d/index.html



Ex. 8b Messine-German-Hungarian Gothic notation, Bakócz Graduale, Esztergom Cathedral Library, Hungary, Ms. I. 1a-b, http://esztergom.bibliotheca.hu/scan/ms_i_1_a/index.html



Ex. 8c Messine-German-Hungarian Gothic notation, antiphoner fragment, c. 15, Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, K 471; <http://fragmenta.zti.hu/antiphonale-s-15-in-1-sonka-folio-budapest-mta-konyvtar-kezirattar-k-471-olim-t-21/>

It can be considered as an inherited domestic structure in this Gothic notation e.g. the uniquely designed scandicus (Table 2a) instead of the two puncta+virga form of Messine-German version. Although the writing direction of the climacus is changing, because, compared to the vertical Esztergom neume, it is tilted to the right due to the increase in the size of the note head. At the same time, unlike in the Messine-German version, it either begins with punctum (2b) or, more traditionally, like in Esztergom, with double puncta (2c), instead of virga. The conjunct form of the same sign is also an old remnant (2d), as e.g. the conjunct pes (2e), torculus (2f), porrectus (2f), and their compositions (2h) (varying from source to source, becoming more articulated in chronology). The arrangement of the folios is the earlier Esztergom form with four red staves, double writing of c-f clefs (2i), and obligatory pipe-shaped custos (2j).

Table 2 The neume set of the Messine–German–Hungarian Gothic notation (antiphoner, Esztergom Cathedral Library, Ms. I. 3d)

a)	b)	c)	d)	e)	f)	g)	h)	i)	j)

As a common feature of the modern Gothic neume set suitable for writing these deluxe notations and the 14th-century sophisticated Esztergom notation, both were influenced by the contemporary Messine notation, but the earlier was affected by its old, pure form, whereas the late Hungarian Gothic type set the Messine-German Gothic chant notation as a pattern.

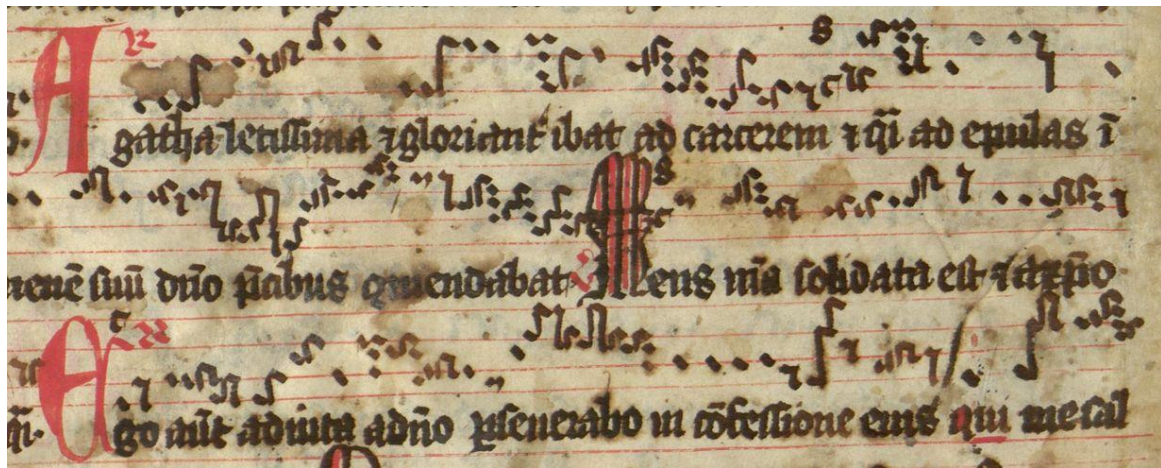
Table 3

1. Messine-German Gothic notation (= MGG notation), Kranj antiphoner, 1491, Archdiocesan Archives, Ljubljana, Rkp 18–19
2. Messine-German-Hungarian Gothic (= MGH notation), antiphoner, c. 15, Esztergom Cathedral Library, Ms. I. 3d; http://esztergom.bibliotheca.hu/scan/ms_i_3_d/index.html
3. Esztergom notation, Missale Notatum Strigoniense, c. 14/1, Štátny archív v Bratislave, EC Lad. 3 EL 18; <http://cantus.sk/gallery/16686>

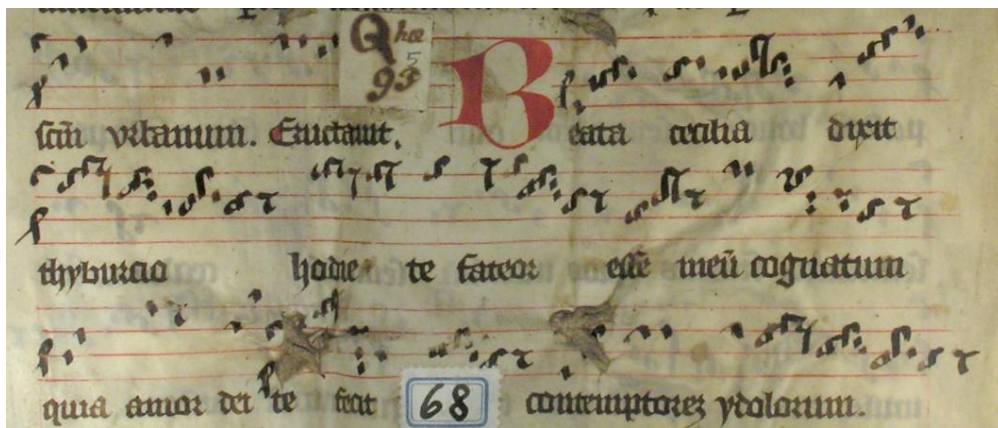
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II. 5. Later Esztergom notations

The real treasure trove of paleographic research proves to be the group of notations of the late medieval (15th–16th-century) peripheral regions of the Hungarian Church (mainly Northeast Hungary and Transylvania): those sources which transmitted the earlier Hungarian/Esztergom copying customs to a later period. They are summarized as later traditional Hungarian notations in our system. However, there seemed to be mainly material reasons behind their conservatism (perhaps with the exception of the Hungarian-founded Pauline order – order of St Paul the First Hermit – that consciously preserved its own writing tradition), as these modest churches could not afford the above magnificent, ornate codices, so they did not need the “monumental” notational style used for the representative choir-books. Actually, traditional workshops in the countryside (mainly in the north-east part of the country) continued to employ and shape the earlier Esztergom notation, which was designed and raised to the norm in Hungary in the beginning of the 13th century. Some scriptoria (e.g. Transylvanian workshops and the Paulines) developed their own calligraphic notations by the end of the 14th century: the old, elegant, delicately executed Esztergom neumes were enlarged and thickened according to the new gothicizing fashion. The signs were fractured at some points to make the notes fit better in the staff system. It is characteristic of almost all local versions that usually non-professional notators wrote them on parchment with the ease and simplicity of cursive notation. The quality of the notation depended on the dexterity of the notator, so that a wide range of presentation can be registered in the sources, from the professional work to simple, usual notations. Undoubtedly, the most elaborate system is related to the late-medieval Pauline institutions, the most faithful guardians of the Esztergom tradition, who passed the 14th century Esztergom notation into the 15th–16th centuries, the era when Esztergom itself gave up its old chant notation by moving to a more fashionable, international path of Gothic notations. Copying workshops in Northern and Eastern Hungary are also worth mentioning, however, the research only recently began to describe them. In our terminology we call all these traditional writings “later Esztergom” notations, indicating the subtypes in brackets, e.g. North Hungarian, Transylvanian, Pauline, etc.



Ex. 9a Later Esztergom notation, antiphoner fragment, c. 14/2, Archives of the National Archives of Hungary, Budapest, Qu-406, Nr. 23



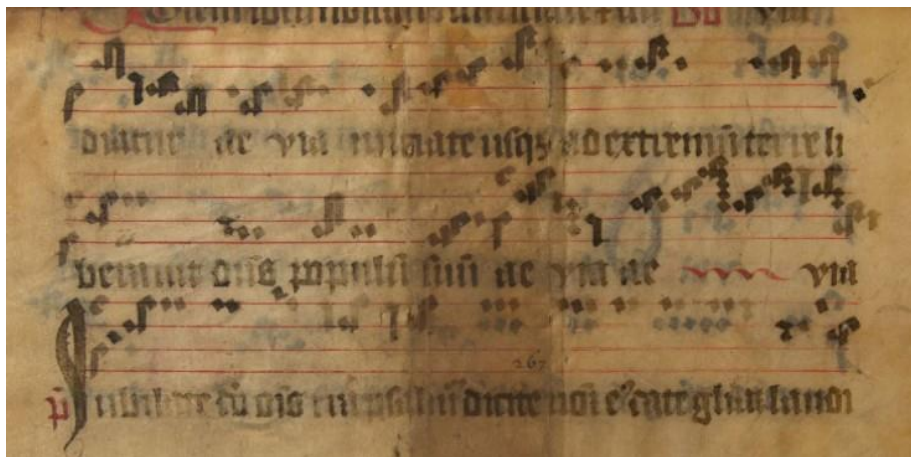
Ex. 9b Later Esztergom notation (Transylvanian), antiphoner fragment, c. 14/2, Franziskanerkloster, Bibliothek, Güssing, Austria, 4/68; <http://fragmenta.zti.hu/antiphonale-s-14-ex-1-fel-folio-gussing-franziskanerkloster-bibliothek-2/>



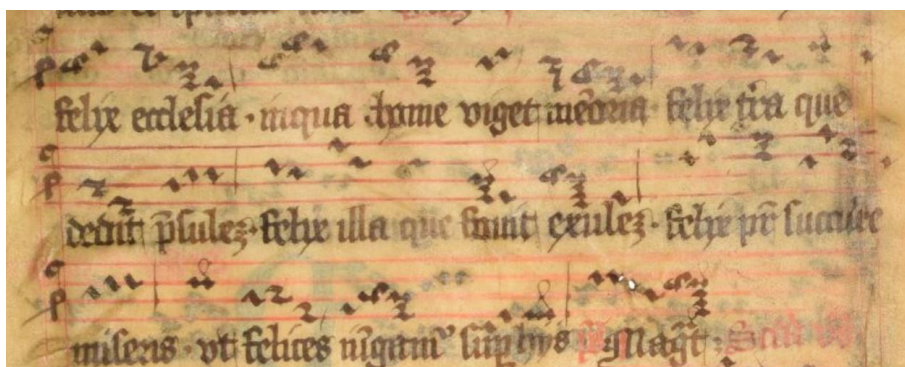
Ex. 9c Later Esztergom notation (Transylvanian), antiphoner fragment, c. 15, Pauline Library of the Central Seminary, Budapest, Fr. l. m. 87



Ex. 9d Later Esztergom notation (Pauline), gradual fragment, c. 15, Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, K 484; <http://fragmenta.zti.hu/graduale-s-15-10-csonka-folio-budapest-mta-konyvtar-kezirattar-k-484-olim-t-292/>



Ex. 9e Later Esztergom notation, gradual fragment, c. 15/1, Pauline Library of the Central Seminary, Budapest, Fr. l. m. 113; <http://fragmenta.zti.hu/f665-antiphonale-s-15-1-1-csonka-folio-budapest-kozponti-papnevelo-intezet-palos-konyvtara-fr-l-m-78/>





Ex. 9f Later Esztergom notation, vesperral fragment, c. 15/1, ELTE University Library, Manuscripts and Rarity Collection, Budapest, Fr. l. m. 232; <http://fragmenta.zti.hu/vesperale-s-15-1-1-bifolio-es-1-keskeny-csik-budapest-egyetem-konyvtar-fr-l-m-232/>



Ex. 10b Later Bohemian notation, antiphoner fragment, ELTE University Library, Manuscripts and Rarity Collection, Budapest, binding of Db 1383, c. 15/1; <http://fragmenta.zti.hu/antiphonale-s-15-1-csonka-folio-budapest-egyetemi-konyvtar-db-1383-boritoja/>

II. 7. Polish notation?

We have wondered a lot whether the term “Polish Gothic notation” can be used to define relevant notation systems of an ever-increasing fragment material of probably Polish origin in Hungarian collections. Janka Szendrei rightly asks in her study (“Choralnotationen in Polen”, in *Musica Antiqua Europae Orientalis* 10. Bydgoszcz: 1994, 257–274) whether there is a specific type of medieval chant notation that can be called Polish. All things considered, we can answer to this question with “no”. The types of Gregorian notations used in medieval Poland are very diverse, they cannot be traced back to one single type, as in Hungary the Esztergom notation. In addition to the Cistercian notation of central French origin, the Hufnagelnotation of the German Knights was widespread here (in the north, in Gdańsk, Pelplin), not to mention the general Messine-German Gothic notation used in large areas (e.g. Krakow, Wrocław, Gniezno). However, these notations in virtue of their international character, cannot be linked to the Polish church only, so they are not markers of provenance, as in Hungary the notation of Esztergom. We only know one tradition from the area, the Messine-German mixed notation of the codices of the Silesian center, Wrocław, the early and late versions of which can be identified by two emblematic neumes: the characteristic “bacon-formed” pes  and scandicus , neume shapes of this design could not be documented elsewhere in Europe. However, these two peculiar neumes have apparently also appeared in other Polish regions, it can also be registered from Kraków, Gniezno. If a vote were to decide, the Silesian notation would certainly win the adjective “Polish”, but since there is no question of a complex system, as only the two neume forms can be highlighted, the “Messine-German (Silesian) notation” or, in the case of the late medieval Gothic version, the terms “Messine-German-Silesian Gothic notation” we suggested (for examples see above).

II. 8. Esztergom notation

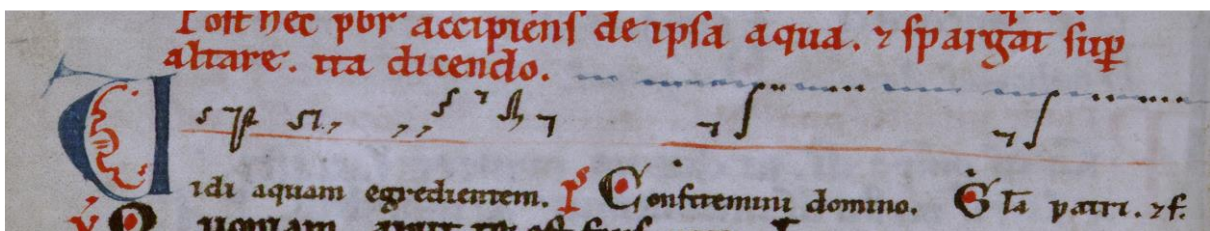
The most central Hungarian medieval musical script, the chant notation of Esztergom, deserves a more detailed detour to make visible the beginnings of the Gregorian codex-writing in Hungary, as well as the historical background.

The Hungarians who settled in the Carpathian Basin in 896 joined the community of western Christian nations late. The Hungarian church was built at a rapid pace during the founding of the Christian state under Prince Géza (945–997) and then King St Stephen (c. 975–1038). By the millennium, the peoples of ancient Roman province of Pannonia had merged and the early Christian liturgical customs influenced by Salzburg had disappeared. Thus, the structure of the Hungarian Church had to be built from the ground up. The German-Roman emperor Otto II sent a converting bishop, Bruno, a former monk from Sankt Gallen, to Hungary when he became aware of Prince Géza's intention to convert to Christianity. He and his associates played a key role in the early stages of shaping domestic liturgical life. The guardians of the early Hungarian liturgical literacy were the monasteries founded by Benedictine monks from Sankt Gallen and other German and Bohemian areas, above all the abbey of Pannonhalma, constructed atop of Mount of Saint Martin (today in north-western Hungary). The surviving sources show that the South-German Benedictine customs had a great influence not only on the Hungarian monastic network of institutions, but also on the later cathedral use of Esztergom. It is certain that in the early period it was not yet possible to assume a unified Hungarian liturgy, including a mature Hungarian Gregorian practice, just as there was no specific Hungarian chant notation.

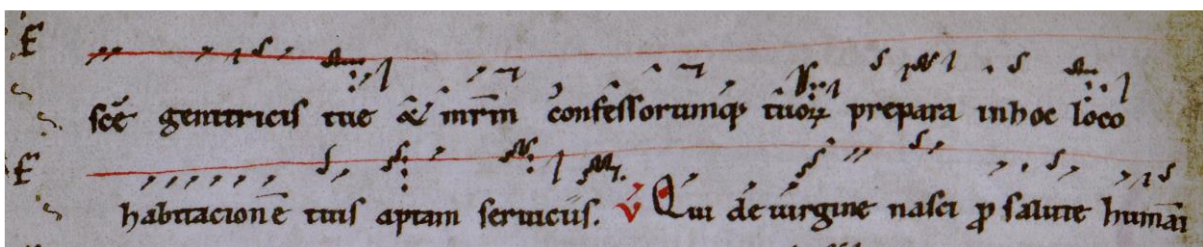
The German monastic orientation also left its mark on the first notated sources survived from the end of the 11th century. This is also reflected in the fact that the earliest manuscripts were written in adiastematic German neumes of monasteries in Switzerland. However, the Genealogy of the Hartvik Agenda/Chartvirgus Pontifical (HR-Zmk MR 165) already contains some new neumes neumes that, after about three generations of scriptors, reveals the new inland creative work, which deviated from the German path and allowed for other influences. A more or less developed own Esztergom staff notation can be documented only a few decades later, from the middle of the 12th century, in two fragments preserved in Krakow (cover page of PL-Kj Ms. 2372, middle of the 12th century), Šibenik (HR-Ši Cod. 10) and in the Pray Codex (H-Bn Mny 1), one of the most significant manuscript of the Hungarian Middle Ages from 1192–1195. These sources consist of a special selection of signs, a special compound of elements, which, as an independent system, is included exclusively in the codices from medieval Hungary.

In fact, however, the earliest sources from the 12th century provide a more abundant selection of neumes than the later manuscripts. Nevertheless, the Hungarian neume-composition (see bound scandicus, special climacus-forms, bound pes, clivis, torculus, porrectus, etc.) can already be reconstructed from these sources. The shrinking of the neume set continued in the early 13th century: this is the time when the Esztergom set of signs becomes definitive, as can be seen in the relevant notation layer of the Pray codex. (In Janka Szendrei's opinion, a group of progressive music theorists in Esztergom may have developed a new staff notation within the framework of a general liturgical reform. This work can be traced back to the reign of King Béla III and Archbishop Lukács Bánfi – the latter one studied in Paris in the second half of the 12th century. Lukács and his one time school-mate, the papal legate, Job, could not only supervise the reform, but through their contribution, the reformed Ritus Strigoniensis as well as the new Hungarian chant notation could become the norm to be followed throughout the Hungarian churches. We dispute the possibility of a late 12th century reform of the Esztergom rite, as there is no evidence for this, nor that a definitive Esztergom notation was adopted in the 12th century under Archbishop Luke.)

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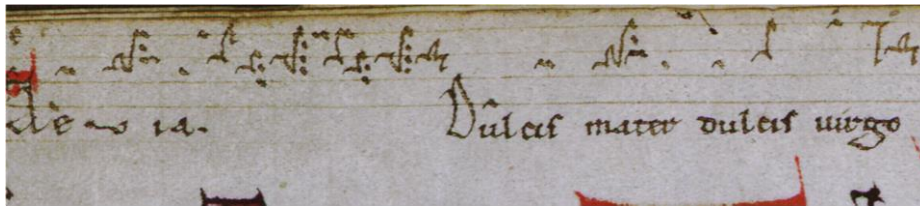
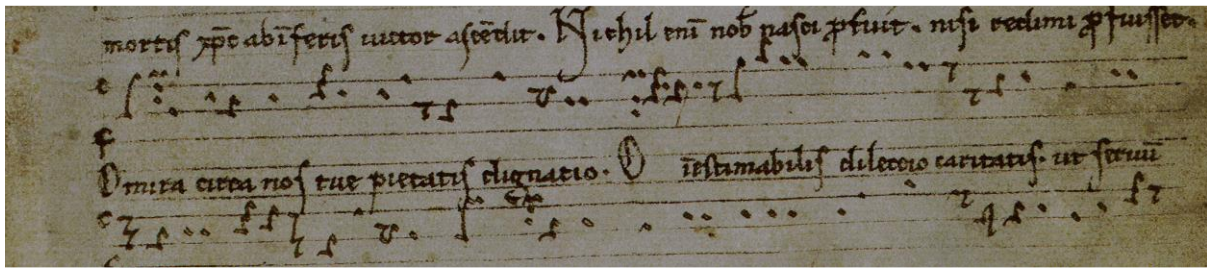


132v



Ex. 11a Early Esztergom notation, Pray Codex, Notation 1, c. 12/ex, National Széchényi Library, Budapest, MNy1; <http://mek.oszk.hu/12800/12855/>

XXVIII, 1r



Ex. 11b Esztergom notation, Pray Codex, Notation 3, c. 13/in, National Széchényi Library, Budapest, MNy1; <http://mek.oszk.hu/12800/12855/>

As such notation cannot be detected outside Hungary, its application always refers to Hungarian provenance, just as its development – together with the rite of Esztergom – certainly took place in the Hungarian archbishop's seat, Esztergom. The carefully selected neume set of the Esztergom notation, its proportional, elegantly flexible appearance evokes German examples and a strong Latinization at the same time, as a result of the reception of elements of French and Messine notations and the staff system of Guido of Arezzo, due to the studies of the Hungarian high clergy in Paris in the 12th century and their encounter with the Gregorian Reforms of the time. (But this must have been the result of a slower development process.) The approval of the educated, high-ranking Hungarian clergy, especially the members of the king's chapel, was needed for such renovation. Thus, the demand was certainly formulated at this highest level, and it took a central will and effort to make the dissemination effective.

The Esztergom notation might be first systematized at the beginning of the 13th century, then further refined until the time of the last king of the Árpád House, the Venetian-born András III. The notation flourished even in the first third of the 14th century: the former angular Messine structures were formed into North-Italian roundness, a pre-Renaissance design, which clearly indicates a subsequent shift in foreign relations. The chant notation of Esztergom notation, this exceptionally elegant, sophisticated musical script, developed into one of the most aesthetic chant writing in medieval Europe during the reign of the first Anjou house kings. In order to get an impression of it, it seems sufficient to take a look at the perfectly

proportioned calligraphic notes of the *Missale Notatum Strigoniense* from the first half of the 14th century.



Ex. 12 Esztergom notation, *Breviarium Notatum Strigoniense*, c. 13/2, ELTE University Library, Manuscripts and Rarity Collection, Budapest, Fr. l. m. 265; <http://fragmenta.zti.hu/breviarium-notatum-strigoniense-s-13-2-2-csonka-folio-budapest-egyetemi-konyvtar-fr-l-m-265/>



Ex. 13 Esztergom notation, *Missale Notatum Strigoniense*, c. 14/1, Štátny archív v Bratislave, EC Lad. 3 EL 18; <http://cantus.sk/gallery/16686>; <http://mek.oszk.hu/12800/12855/>

The Esztergom notation reached every corner of the centralized Hungarian church, but its continuous cultivation and further rethinking formed a rich system of sub-traditions in the

subordinate churches. Unfortunately, we know little about these peripheral traditions, most of them have disappeared without surviving sources. Areas such as Gregorian fragmentary research can excavate important remnants of this kind, and, thus, illuminate an important but hidden element of Hungarian cultural history.



Ex. 14 Esztergom notation (Transylvania), 13/ex National Széchényi Library, Manuscript Collection, Quart. Hung. 1395, binding of the “Benedek Jancsó” codex