

# FINAL REPORT

NNF 78739.

*"Research into and preservation of the Greek Catholic cultural heritage of the Carpathian Euroregion: study of the foundation and development of the Byzantine-rite (Greek) Catholic community of the historical Diocese of Munkács (1646-1818) and the exploration of its relics in Hungary"*

## 1. The purpose and results of the research program – Brief summary

The Byzantine-rite (Greek) Catholic Church established in the 17<sup>th</sup> century upon Western influence in the territory of the historical Diocese of Munkács is a multi-ethnic religious community consisting of minorities living in four of the five states comprising the Carpathian Euroregion, that is Ukraine, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania. The historical Diocese of Munkács covering thirteen North-Eastern counties of historical Hungary was broken up in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, as a result of efforts to satisfy church governance requirements and ethnic demands as well as an outcome of political decisions. In the territory of these four states, today church administrative units known as the Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church, the Slovak Greek Catholic Church, the Romanian Greek Catholic Church and the Hungarian Greek Catholic Church share among themselves the common heritage of the former Diocese of Munkács, and have developed it to reflect their national characteristics.

Our research program covered three areas of this cultural heritage: 1. church history (Tamás Véghseő, leading researcher), 2. art history (Szilveszter Terdik) and 3. liturgical history (János Nyirán).

The leading researcher, Tamás Véghseő conducted research focusing on the establishment of the Greek Catholic church in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and its development in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, in archives of Hungary and abroad<sup>1</sup>. His research findings were summed up in a monograph: *"...as a true churchman..." Foundation And Development Of The Greek Catholic Church Of The Historical Diocese Of Munkács In The 17<sup>th</sup> Century*, Nyíregyháza 2011 (Collectanea Athanasiana I/4.), ISBN 978-615-5073-03-8.

Szilveszter Terdik carried out a survey and documentation of fifty Greek Catholic church buildings situated in today's Hungary, once belonging to the historical Diocese of Munkács, and pursued architectural history research in archives and public collections.<sup>2</sup> He also supervised the work of a team of five architects, headed by architect Csaba Csajbók, that performed a full architectural survey of sixteen endangered buildings out of these fifty churches. The results of this survey and documentation work were organised in a database by Szilveszter Terdik, and summed

---

<sup>1</sup> A detailed list of the researched archives can be found in the attachment.

<sup>2</sup> A detailed list of the researched archives and collections can be found in the attachment.

up in a monograph enriched with an abundant treasure of photographs and source references: *"...according to the taste and rite of our age" Addendum to the art of Greek Catholics of Hungary*, Nyíregyháza 2011 (Collectanea Athanasiana I/5.), ISBN 978-615-5073-04-5.

János Nyirán brought under critical review one of the oldest sources of the Hungarian language Greek Catholic cultural heritage, the so-called Hungarian liturgy translation by Mihály Krucsay (end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century). The critical edition of this work was completed as a result of this analysis: *The First Hungarian Language Liturgy Translation In The Manuscript of István Lupess in 1814*, Nyíregyháza 2011. ISBN 978-615-5073-05-2.

In addition to the volumes published as above, the members of the research team presented their findings in 31 publications and 18 conference talks during the research period, the dissemination of which has been guaranteed also by the Greek Catholic heritage information portal ([www.byzantinohungarica.hu](http://www.byzantinohungarica.hu)).<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Detailed description of research results

### 2.1. Church history – Tamás Véghseő, leading researcher

Analysing the circumstances of the birth of the Greek Catholic Church founded in the historical Diocese of Munkács in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, through the union with Rome, and the development of this Church in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and early 18<sup>th</sup> century, I tried to present the events and the motivations by keeping a distance from the narrow-minded denominational/theological approach, and re-reading the published sources and supplementing them with the written materials discovered during my research in the archives. The key findings of my research can be summed up in the form of theses in the following ten points:

1. The "fundamental situation" of the Eastern rite communities living in this region is seen as decisive for the progress of the strivings for union. The communities arriving from beyond the country borders – made to settle or settling voluntarily here – with underdeveloped social structures, differed from the majority, recipient population not only in terms of religion, but also in their languages, social norms and cultural characteristics, which also proved to be distinctive. The majority society – irrespective of denominational affiliations – judged their "isolated" world somewhat backward, and distant from the generally accepted norms of the age. Therefore, the intent to establish a religious union was not only based on ecclesiological and theological foundations, but emerged also as a complex integration program taking into consideration social, cultural and economic aspects as well. Modernisation, or as it was designated in the contemporary sources, the "reform" (or the synonyms of that word) was an essential element of the integration program. In our opinion, the formula of "union = integration + modernisation" is suitable for briefly summarising this intention.

---

<sup>3</sup> A detailed list of publications can be found in the attachment.

2. The integration of the Eastern communities took place in the context of denominational development and competition among the churches. Although, finally the scenario of integrating into the Catholic Church was accomplished, the Protestant alternative could be sustained for a relatively long period. The Principedom of Transylvania as a formation of power and the Rákóczi dynasty as a major landholding family were able to provide adequate support to the Protestant tendencies. The Catholic-Reformed Church competition for the integration of the Eastern communities was finally decided in favour of Catholicism due to the weakening positions of Protestantism and the catholicizing of Zsófia Báthory.

3. The Eastern-rite community living next to and under the pressure of the two large churches did not possess the resources that would have allowed for its renewal relying on its own strength. When the need for renewal arose within the community, its leaders selected from among the available alternatives the one that provided the most reassuring guarantees for the community's survival, from the aspect of their characteristics and traditions, all in all, their rite.

4. The acceptance of the Catholic alternative, and consequently the realisation of the union, proved to be successful only when the leaders of the community growing up from within, and especially the bishops of Munkács, who had played a key role, took identified with it out of sincere conviction. When the leader was completely left out from the processes (like in the Krásny Brod attempt), the acceptance of the union could not be successful. If the leader did not arise from within the community (the turbulent times following the death of Parthenius, and even the epoch of Bishop De Camillis), the efforts to ensure acceptance of the union and to strengthen it were hindered by severe difficulties.

5. The establishment of the union and the integration of the Eastern community into the Catholic Church was predominantly a process driven by the Catholic Church and the Habsburg government, in which the Holy See played a reserved role, in comparison with the other unions of the early modern age. This is explained by the extensive rights of the advowee paramount – almost unparalleled in the European comparison – and the Holy See's full respect for it.

6. The establishment of union with Rome was not the encounter of two parties of equal ranks, according to the spirit of the Tridentine ecclesiology. As per the Tridentine model, the termination of the schism meant the re-acceptance of the broken off, "renegade" easterners to the Catholic Church. The moving away from the Firenze model and the enforcement of the Tridentine approach manifested themselves also in the rituals accompanying the realisation of the union.

7. The positioning of the Greek Catholic Church being born through the union within Catholicism has been a question calling for an answer since the beginning. No firm and elaborated concept could be detected. On the Easterners' side the natural need arose for preserving the previous structures of church government. Nevertheless, on the part of the Latin Church this question was analysed mainly from the aspect of which solution would secure most powerfully the sustaining of the union. While Primate Lippay considered the inclusion in the Esztergom archbishopric an adequate guarantee, and regarded the relative autonomy of the bishop of Munkács acceptable, Cardinal Kollonich – relying on experience of the preceding time

period – was in favour of total subordination of the local Latin bishop. The subjugation to Eger did not yet constitute a really severe problem, due to practical reasons, during the office of Bishop De Camillis. After his death, however, the actualisation of the subordination of the bishops of Munkács to Eger paralysed the development of the Greek Catholic Church for decades.

8. The key risk originating from the side-by-side existence of the Latin and the Byzantine rites, i.e. latinisation no longer appears to be an urgent problem in our age. The Greek Catholics did not regard the practices that evolved (e.g. participation in the Corpus Christi processions, and even biritualism) as violations of the union's basic principle calling for the preservation of the Greek rite, at least not in such extent that would elicit their objections. Suggestions worded by some Roman Catholic clergymen aiming at easing the transition to the Latin rite, were met rather by the rejection, than with the support of influential Catholic circles.

9. The transformation of the Eastern-rite community integrated into the Catholic church was driven by the Tridentine reform program. Acceptance of the norms and approach that led to the successful renewal of the Catholic Church in recent decades form a precondition for the Greek Catholics' becoming a denomination in the modern sense of the word. In our age it was Bishop De Camillis who made attempts at the Tridentine type reform of Greek Catholicism. Due to his rejection arising from his foreign origin, and because of the continued existence and episcopal support of the old norms (i.e. the operation of the Orthodox bishop, József Sztojka) the Greek bishop was only able to lay the foundations and promote the new approach.

10. The actual social emancipation of the Greek Catholic clergy is subject to setbacks again and again in our age. The reason for this can be found in the opposing interests of the central and regional power factors, and the successful resistance of the latter. The Greek Catholics live in a region where resistance against the Hapsburgs, which sometimes even led to armed conflicts, had a significant tradition. The nobility (irrespective to their denominational affiliations) of the historical counties successfully obstructed the implementation of measures imposed from Vienna that sometimes by-passed the national assembly. Until the Hapsburg government was able to fully enforce its will in the region, the Greek Catholic priests could only dream of living as "true churchmen".

## **2.2. Art history – Szilveszter Terdik**

Terdik completed the art history survey of fifty Greek Catholic churches built before 1818 according to preliminary data available, in these two years' time. In the course of the research activities, he strived for exploring, fully gathering and clarifying the historical data pertaining to the individual churches. The collection, digital photographing of 18th century written archival sources located in various church-run and public archives in Hungary and across the country borders was accomplished, and in doing so, he succeeded identifying censuses or listings not known until now and never subjected to research before, and archival materials relating to the individual churches. The censuses relating to the individual parishes and surviving in a grouping by dioceses, from before the age of the schematisms were almost fully collected. In the course of

reviewing the material it was discovered in connection with several church buildings that the construction data known so far were inaccurate and untruthful. In several villages, the church was surely built after 1818 (Nyírpárasznya, Kántorjánosi), while in other villages the accurate year of church building could still not be determined, although it is probable based on their architectural design that they were built after 1818 (Kokad, Vértes).

With the help of this grant the architectural survey of the 16 most endangered churches was accomplished, which will allow for preparing the architectural typology (form analysis) of the churches, the analysis of any historical changes, and the detection of identical masters or workshops within the scope of relics that belong to the same category. The survey documentation contains ground floor, organ-loft level drawings and the floor plan of the tower, the four façades, the cross and longitudinal section drawings (each in three printed copies, in 1:50 scale, in pdf and jpg formats on digital media).

In the next phase of research he reviewed the photo storages of major state museums and libraries, and other collections, where he researched archive photographs or old postcards showing the churches. The reviewing of the collections of the National Office of Cultural Heritage (Budapest) was outstandingly important, as here one can find materials not restricted to only the protected historic buildings. He made copies of the collection of images. Thus, Terdik was able to explore a source material consisting of pictures that show details of these churches in a condition preceding later alterations, and parts that were pulled down later on (e.g. the demolished tower in the case of Nagykálló, the condition of the Csegöld church prior to 1907, and its iconostasion that has been disassembled since, and the church interior in Nyíradony, which was altered since, and the iconostasion that was destroyed).

Research carried out in institutions was followed by field work to compile the external and internal photo documentation of the buildings, and to take inventory of the pieces of equipment manufactured prior to 1950 (description + photography). The results were recorded in a computer database. Wherever possible at the individual parishes, the records were also checked and digitalised partially, and the material collected this way will also become accessible in the database. On a number of occasions, Terdik transported to Nyíregyháza, to the Greek Catholic Episcopal Archives, the parochial archives that were on the brink of destruction, where their professional processing commenced. As a result of his field work, several liturgical objects that were already out of use, could be taken or transported to the Church Art Collection of Nyíregyháza.

The data and results that surfaced in the tail of the research work enriched further and sometimes even added new tones to our view of the Greek Catholic art in the region. This is because in the Greek Catholic Diocese of Munkács the political, church administration, religious life and cultural conditions that made it possible for the bishops, the clergy and the believers of the diocese to reconsider their relationship to art were in place only by the end of the 18th century. In this century church architecture changed drastically, churches built of solid materials instead of wood became predominant, and the patrons began to play a more intensive role in many places, and new equipment – often financed by the state – were manufactured for the new

buildings. From the second half of the century, the bishops of the diocese could instruct painters and craftsmen, and in the 19th century they could even express their art concepts in more detail. Naturally, in the 19th and 20th centuries the churches underwent various alterations, because owing to the favourable economic trends people started to build new churches or renovate the old ones in many places. Often, equipment dating back as many as a hundred years fell victim to such alterations. Therefore, in the course of taking stock of the pieces of equipment one could not stick to the 1818 date limit, or it made no sense to do so, and so Terdik performed this work part up to the middle of the 20th century. This borderline was not completely arbitrary, as it designates a historical epoch when the political and social circumstances permitting the manufacturing of the relics in question ceased gradually, or changed dramatically.

Information regarding the research results may be obtained at various levels. Some of the data are public, and the other part is made available for studying in databases reserved for researchers. Several conference lectures and scientific papers witness the results of the research work, and these are accessible via the Internet, from the web site of the research team. All those interested were able to constantly keep track of the latest results of the research work in short popular science articles in the *Görögkatolikus Szemle* (Greek Catholic Review), which is also available on-line on the Internet. A summary of the work was published in a separate volume, in which the study paper is accompanied by a valuable selection of archival sources, many archive and new photos; and some of the drawings of the architectural survey were also published.

### **2.1. Liturgical history – János Nyirán**

Nyirán undertook to analyse the liturgy translation existing in a copy made by István Lupess, through the two-year research period. In the course of studying the liturgical text, he followed the methodology of comparative liturgy analysis, and in doing so the primary aim was not the comparison of the liturgies of the various Eastern traditions, but the identifying of the relationship among the Greek Catholic liturgical relics of Hungary (i.e. the manuscript translations and copies) belonging to the Byzantine tradition. Such detailed analysis was conducted during the transcribing of the text of the Holy Liturgy now existing in the manuscript written by István Lupess, which constituted one of the main aims of Nyirán's research work.

Nyirán considered it essential to compare the text of the Lupess Manuscript with the Liturgicon of 1920, which has been in use to this day both in the Diocese of Hajdúdorog and in the Apostolic Exarchate of Miskolc, and was also determined to identify the book or manuscript that served as an original for the translation.

Without exception, from the second half of the 20th century, all parties identified Mihály Krucsay, a parish priest of Gálszécs as the translator of the Holy and Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom found in the manuscript of István Lupess. The personality and work of the alleged translator was presented as a focal topic on a number of occasions during liturgical symposia organised by the Saint Athanasius Greek Catholic Theological College. Attributing the liturgy translation to Mihály Krucsay resulted not only in the increase of the number of Hungarian

language liturgical translations considered to be made at the end of the 18th century, but also moved the date of the full Hungarian language liturgy translation back by two years, in other words the Hungarian language liturgical text originally attributed to György Kritsfalusi and dated to 1795 was positioned second in line due to a note entered by canon Ignác Roskovics in the manuscript, stating that Mihály Krucsay completed his similar work as early as in 1793. The most important finding of Nyirán's research in this field was the setting up of a new order that he believes to be correct, and which can be summed up as follows.

In the light of the liturgical documents in existence, it may be concluded that only one full liturgy translation was made at the end of the 18th century, and it is unquestionably attributed to György Kritsfalusi. From the end of the 18th century, copies of his manuscript were made up until the publication of the first liturgy translation in book form, the one that was published as the work of the translators' committee in 1879.

Judged by the manuscripts, the translation of Kritsfalusi developed in two directions, one being the transcript by István Lupess (1814), and the other that of Antal Papp (1854), based on which the first can be called the "Tímár line" and the other the "Dorog line", since certain differences can be discovered between the texts, and the documentation referring to them. Based on all these, it may be concluded that people started to copy the Kritsfalusi translation of 1795 very early, and István Lupess transcribed not the original work, but a copy of it, while Antal Papp had access only to the copy of the copy, which was clearly a source from Dorog, clearly different from the manuscript of István Lupess. These statements and conclusions shed a significantly different light on the liturgical history researches of the preceding nearly two centuries.

The results of this research work include corrections of certain established notions (e.g. the divisions of the Holy Liturgy), unfounded statements (regarding the zeon rite) and also some texts included in the Holy Liturgy that are considered inappropriate today (the *Oratre fratres* dialogue or the extended *Epiclesis* text).

Still not all problematic issues have been answered, and so the accurate identification of the original translation is still to be done. At the same time, reading together and carrying further in our line of thought the conclusions of István Udvari and Lajos Szőke, one could again get closer to the original Old Slavic liturgicon, in which not only the Orthodox influence can be highlighted, but also the process of wandering of manuscripts and books can be detected. With the propagation of book-printing the liturgical manuscript volumes (copies) became unnecessary in the richer parishes located on the other side of the Carpathians, and these could be sold for a cheap price to the poorer parishes of Sub-Carpathia, and these could be preserved in the Diocese of Munkács as early as in the 17th and 18th centuries. If György Kritsfalusi happened to work on such a volume, then it would make clear why the Hungarian translation differed from the printed liturgical books of Sub-Carpathia, and this could explain why the Old Slavic liturgicon serving as basis for the translation could not be identified to date. (The clarification of this question calls for further research.)

In connection with the analysis of the age characterised by the first Hungarian language liturgy translation and its copies, one cannot bypass the incredible intellectual fight and activities

pursued by the Hungarian Greek Catholics in the interest of setting up the diocese and raising the Hungarian language to the altar. We can observe the historical aspects of these events even today, in the desire for clarifying the Hungarian canon-law entities on the one hand, and in efforts to renew the Hungarian liturgical language on the other hand. The studying of the ancient liturgical books can be very useful in the realisation of these intentions, since they allow for the more thorough understanding of the liturgical present on the one hand, and help to compile and edit new liturgical publications on the other hand.

### 3. Summary

The achievements of the research program – in my judgement – contributed to the significant expansion of our scientific knowledge accumulated so far in all the three fields (ecclesiastical history, art history and liturgical history). The conclusions of the three published volumes will hopefully be included soon in the blood-circuit of scientific research, and find their way to publications on such topics, and also be integrated in the tertiary educational curriculum.

The new source materials identified during the execution of the research project mark for us the direction of continuing this program. The source material (archives of the Bishopric of Munkács) kept in the Regional State Archives of Sub-Carpathia – which proved to be inaccessible for us earlier – now offers new perspectives for us, that is for our researches in church history (censuses), art history (documents related to the architectural history and equipment of churches) and liturgical history (documents related to the emergence of Hungarian as a language of liturgy and the Hajdúdorog movement). In January 2011, OTKA judged the research plan elaborated for this purpose as deserving to be supported.

The "Greek Catholic Heritage" Research Team formed to carry out this project – and now comprising four members, after the joining by Lilla Anna Ivancsó – will continue its work. The Saint Athanasius Greek Catholic Theological College, being the tertiary educational institute of the Hungarian Greek Catholic Church – and the institution hosting the research team – is willing to continue providing the infrastructural conditions for the team's continued operation in the future, too. Both this institution and the Greek Catholic Church, as the maintainer of the institution, fully support the prospective idea that this research team should develop into a research institute over time, operating as a major scientific workshop researching the Greek Catholic cultural heritage of the whole region, that is the Carpathian Euroregion.

Nyíregyháza, 31 March 2011

dr. Tamás Véghseő  
leading researcher



## List of archives and collections visited in the course of the research program

### **Hungary**

Hungarian National Archives, Photo and Manuscript Collection of the National Office of Cultural Heritage,  
Photo Collection of the Museum of Ethnography,  
Manuscript Collection of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences,  
Manuscript Collection and the Collection of Small Prints at the National Széchenyi Library,  
Primate's Archive of Esztergom,  
Manuscript Collection of the Esztergom Cathedral Library,  
Archives of the Archdiocese of Eger  
Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Archives (Miskolc),  
Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Archives (Nyíregyháza),  
Hajdú-Bihar County Archives (Debrecen),  
Archives of the Hajdúdorog Episcopal Office (Nyíregyháza).

### **Italy**

Vatican Secret Archives,  
Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples - Historical Archives,  
Roman State Archives,  
Pontifical German-Hungarian College Archives (Rome).

### **Slovakia**

Archives of the Greek Catholic Archdiocese of Eperjes (Prešov in Slovak),  
Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Kassa (Košice),  
Archives of the Roman Catholic Bishopric of Szepes (Spiš).

### **Ukraine**

State Archives of Beregszász (Beregovo).

### **Romania**

State Archives of Nagyvárad (Oradea).

### **Austria**

Haus- Hof- und Staatsarchiv (Vienna).