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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION
ABSTRACT

THE CURRENTS OF LITURGICAL RENEWAL
PRIOR TO VATICAN II AND THEIR IMPACT ON
THE LITURGICAL LIFE OF THE
ROMAN-CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ALBA IULIA

Promoter

Prof. dr. Marton József

Candidate

Nóda Mózes

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Keywords: Roman Catholic Church, Diocese of Alba Iulia, liturgical movement, reception, Solesmes, Beuron, Maria Laach, Mont César, Maredsous, Vatican II, Eucharistic celebration, *participatio actuosa*, cult of the Eucharist, cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Summary

The liturgical reform promoted by Vatican II with the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum concilium* was the culminating point of a long process of liturgical renewal that goes back to the second half of the 19th century and comprises the first half of the 20th century. Josef A. Jungmann, one of the major contributors to the text of the liturgical constitution compared the liturgy to an edifice that requires time and again certain repairs. These reforms may be painful and resented, as they deconstruct cherished customs, yet they are necessary and inevitable. The liturgical renewal essentially aimed to restore the central character of the Eucharistic liturgy and to make it accessible to the entire people of God. The underlying conviction of this endeavour was that the baptised are not aliens, but lawful members of the Church, therefore they are expected to participate in the Eucharistic celebration together with the priest in a fully conscious and active manner.¹

The liturgy is an event, an act; something happens at the celebration. The Eucharistic celebration is the act of God, the self-giving act of Jesus Christ, to which humans respond.² It embraces the sanctification of humans through the acts of the Trinity, and the glorification of God in the human response. The Eucharistic celebration is a mystery in which the acts of God are revealed, remaining nonetheless covered to a certain extent. The aim of the liturgical reform was to facilitate the access to the meaning of the Eucharistic mystery for the entire people of God, through a better understanding of what happens at the Mass, and through an informed response to the action of Christ in the Eucharist. Although the mystery cannot be revealed in its fullness, it is inappropriate to argue that participating in the Eucharistic

¹ J. JUNGMANN, *Erneuerte Meßliturgie. Gedanken und Hinweise zum Verstandnis der Liturgiereform*, Linz, 1969.

² J. DRISCOLL, *What Happens at Mass*, Leominster / Chicago, IL, 2005.

celebration does not involve understanding and participation. The liturgy is eventually a response to the divine action, a response that requires that all participants understand the meaning and depth of the Eucharistic celebration and participate actively in this response, in the action of grace.

In a time when it has become increasingly common to question the liturgical reform promoted by Vatican II, and its rejection has turned almost into a mark of orthodoxy, this dissertation explores the liturgical reform that preceded and prepared the conciliar reform. Some theologians argue that the time has come for a “reform of the reform”. This paradigm involves in fact a more or less overt questioning of the liturgical renewal, an attempt to restore the liturgy of Trent and to set back the use of vernacular languages in the liturgy. Criticism coming from conservative circles does not aim merely at correcting real errors that occurred in some places as result of a misunderstanding of the liturgical reform. It implies in fact a specific ecclesiological perspective. The repeated claim that the liturgy is ultimately a mystery, the overemphasised role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration at the cost of the actual and real participation of the lay faithful, the restrictive reinterpretation of earlier ecclesial documents which promoted such actual and active participation express in fact an image of the Church where clerics have a central, in fact quasi-exclusive role, whereas the lay are merely passive recipients of the divine grace dispensed through the mediation of the priest, therefore they do not even need to understand the language and the meaning of the liturgical event. This approach questions in fact the communal dimension of the church and of its actions, just as the role of the baptised and their need to respond actively to the divine action. This criticism not only attacks the conciliar liturgical renewal, but it also discredits those prominent theologians and liturgists of the late 19th and the early 20th century who have promoted the liturgical renewal, moved by the deepest faith. These liturgists have attempted to make the liturgy accessible to the entire people of God, to make of it the core value of the spiritual and liturgical life of all the baptised.

Under these circumstances it is essential to rediscover the aims, the work and spirituality of these prominent theologians, their deep love for the liturgy, as well as their scholarly competence, demonstrated by their research of early Christian sources. Awareness of the motivations and goals that animated their research and their initiatives shows very clearly that the liturgical movement may not be regarded an error, a detachment from the ancient liturgy of the Church; conversely, it expresses the deepest love for the Church and its liturgy. Not least, these liturgists have attempted to make of the liturgy the treasure of the entire people of God, and not the privilege of the clergy or of the members of monastic

communities. It should also be considered that the traditionalist critique takes for granted the immutable character of the liturgy, but when promoting a return to the liturgy of Trent as the ancient Roman rite, defends in fact a rite produced in a certain moment of history through the unification of various rites and liturgical influences, and does not take into account neither the fact that the rite of Trent is not the pure Roman rite, nor the continuous changes of the liturgy through time. It should not be forgotten that the forerunners and promoters of the liturgical renewal endorsed this renewal not as a break with tradition, but precisely in the spirit of a return to the sources, inspired by their research of the ancient sources on the liturgy. The liturgical renewal is intimately connected to the biblical and patristic renewal, to the more general idea of returning to the sources of Christian faith and life, so central in the second half of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century.³

The core thesis of my dissertation is that the liturgy requires time and again certain reforms, and the liturgical movement that preceded Vatican II, just as the conciliar liturgical reform was legitimate and necessary. The liturgical reform of Trent had a significant contribution to the unity of the liturgy after the Reformation, but the changes that occurred during the following centuries determined both the liturgists and the popes of the 19th–20th century to look for new answers to the accumulated problems. One of the most significant challenges was to make the celebration of the Eucharist and of the other sacraments comprehensible. This meant not only overcoming the linguistic barrier, but also endorsing the active participation of the lay faithful. The representatives of the various currents of the liturgical movement attempted to achieve these goals by disclosing the spirit and significance of the liturgy, through liturgical instruction and education, through translated and commented missals, and through scholarly journals as well as articles addressing a broader readership. The ultimate aim was to make of the main liturgical act of the Church, the Eucharistic celebration, the fundament and source of Christian spirituality, an aim that could be achieved only when the lay were not only listeners, but prayed the liturgy together with the priest.

At the beginning of the 20th century Catholic spirituality was centred on various devotions, among which the various forms of extra-liturgical Eucharistic devotion and the Cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus were the most influential. The popularity of these devotional practices among Catholics was paralleled by an ever decreasing importance assigned to the Eucharistic celebration itself. Under these circumstances the liturgical renewal understandably

³ Well shown e.g. by the liturgical initiatives of Maria Laach, especially by the work of Ildefons Herwegen. It is not by accident that Herwegen titled his volume of essays *Alte Quellen neuer Kraft*.

strived to assure the central place of the latter. This tension between the Mass, that at least in theory had a central place, and its virtual marginalisation by various popular devotions raises the question of the place of these devotions, which promote a more individualistic form of religiosity. This is another question I attempt to address in my dissertation, showing that even when these devotions have their place in the life of the Church, they may not be opposed to or dissociated from the Eucharistic celebration. The two phenomena, the oblivion of the Mass and the popularity of the various devotions are in fact connected, since these devotions became for the lay, excluded from the (understanding of the) mass, outlets of personal spirituality. In fact these tensions may be discovered even in the contemporary debate between defenders and opponents of the liturgical movement. Those who claim that lay Christians are not expected to understand the Mass, let alone to participate actively in it, argue that the priest has an exclusive role in offering the sacrifice of the Mass, are not by chance those who promote those devotional practices that allow the lay to have a personal religious experience. Nonetheless I do not wish to argue that these devotions have no place in Catholic spirituality, but I plead for a balanced devotional practice that preserves the centrality of the Eucharistic celebration, as promoted by the liturgical movement, based on the active participation of the lay.

The third aim of my dissertation is to examine the reception of the papal liturgical encyclicals and of the aims and ideas of the liturgical movement in the Diocese of Transylvania / Alba Iulia in the first half of the 20th century, and their contribution to the renewal of the liturgical life of the Diocese. It is my contention that although at the periphery of the European theological-liturgical renewal, the Diocese of Transylvania / Alba Iulia was not entirely isolated from the influence of these ideas. As shown by archival material and by contemporary publications, in the first half of the 20th century Transylvanian bishops and Catholic theologians were well aware of the ideas of the liturgical movement. The works of representative liturgists were translated, or inspired the publications of local theologians. Liturgical texts in Hungarian were produced. The comprehensive study of the reception of the liturgical movement in Transylvania has not been carried out so far. There are very few works that deal with the liturgical life of the time, and even those focusing on Hungary,⁴ or on

⁴ GALAMBOS Ferenc Ireneus, *Adalékok a magyar liturgikus mozgalom történetéhez*, in SZENNAY András (ed.), *Régi és új a liturgia világából*, Budapest 1975, 62–65.

various other aspects of the liturgical life in Transylvania,⁵ without a specific interest in the effects and consequences of the liturgical movement in the Diocese of Transylvania / Alba Iulia.

Material and Method

In the first part of my dissertation I analyse the official documents issued by popes Pius X and XII with respect to the liturgy and the church, as well as the works and initiatives of the prominent representatives of the liturgical movement, in dialogue with contemporary scholarship. Much of the material used here comes from the Library of the Theological Faculty of the Catholic University of Leuven, a place of particular importance not only because of its exceptional fund of publications, but also because many of the initiatives of the liturgical movement were connected to Belgium, some specifically to Leuven. The approach proposed in this first part is mainly theological analysis.

In what concerns the issue of the Transylvanian reception of the liturgical movement, I have turned to the material found in various archives (that of the Diocese of Alba Iulia, of the parishes of Saint Michael and of Monostor, Cluj) and to the theological publications, the scholarly and devotional writings authored by local theologians and clerics of the time. These archives were selected because of the local connections with the liturgical movement and with two forms of devotion examined in this work. I have also taken a glance at the neighbouring dioceses, and examined the encyclicals issued by the bishops of Temesvár/Timisoara and Szatmár/Satu Mare. The approach to these sources is mainly based on the methods of historical investigation.

Structure and content

The first chapter examines the situation of the Catholic theology in the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, focusing in particular on the ecclesiological renewal that preceded Vatican II and set the background for the liturgical movement. The liturgical movement is intimately connected with the ecclesiological shift put forward by the theologians of the schools of Tübingen and Rome. For that reason I explore the core ideas of prominent theologians like Johann Adam Möhler, Johannes Baptist Franzelin, John Henry

⁵ MARTON József, *Az erdélyi (gyulafehérvári) egyházmegye története*, Gyulafehérvár 1994; id., *Az erdélyi katolicizmus 90 éve (1900–1990)*, Kolozsvár 2008; id., *A keresztény jelenkor*, Marosvásárhely 2008; TAMÁSI Zsolt, *Az esperesi kerületek a püspöki rendelkezések tükrében*, in BARABÁS Kisanna, TAMÁSI Zsolt (ed.), *A maros-küküllői főesperesi kerület plébániáinak története 1900-tól 1989-ig*, Kolozsvár 2009, 79–106.

Newman, Matthias Joseph Scheeben, Yves Congar, Henri de Lubac, Romano Guardini, Karl Rahner. Whereas earlier ecclesiologies and ecclesial documents focused on the juridical, hierarchical character of the Church and understood the Church as *societas perfecta*, major 19th century theologians turn to early Christian sources, in particular to the Bible and to patristic authors, and rediscover the early models of the Church. The Body of Christ becomes the core ecclesiological metaphor of this new ecclesiology. This Body lives in mystical union with Christ, its head, and exists through the grace and agency of the Holy Spirit. This ecclesiological shift has three major consequences. First, it involves a Christocentric and pneumatological focus, compared to which the juridical, institutional perspective, though not insignificant, proves to be secondary. Second, the definition of the Church as Body of Christ raises awareness of the fact that through baptism all Christians, including the non-ordained, are equally valuable members of the Church, with distinct roles and charismas. Third, this ecclesiology is accompanied by a rediscovery of the central role of the Eucharist, of the Eucharistic celebration in nourishing the life of the Church. This ecclesiology, inspired by biblical and patristic sources, is incorporated in various ecclesial statements, of which the encyclical *Mystici corporis* of Pius XII stands out through its importance.

This ecclesiological shift has serious repercussions for the way the liturgy is understood and celebrated. Due to the intimate connection between ecclesiology and liturgical theology the aims and phases of the liturgical movement may be understood only in the context of the biblical, patristic and ecclesiological renewal of the time. Whereas during the 19th century various devotions, in particular the adoration of the Eucharist and the cult of the Sacred Heart played a major role in the spiritual and liturgical life of the Catholic Church, after this shift the Eucharistic celebration recovers its central place. Moreover, sacramental theology achieves a balance between the two aspects of the Eucharist, that of sacrifice (almost exclusively emphasised before this time), and that of communal meal, largely forgotten.

The second chapter explores the ideas and initiatives of the European liturgical movement. The movement has its origins in monastic communities, but gradually grows beyond the borders of these communities, to reach the parishes and in particular the lay. The stages of this movement comprise the initiatives coming from France, Germany, Belgium and Austria. The chapter on France discusses the role of Solesmes, and in particular the contribution of Prosper Guéranger to the liturgical renewal, especially through the renewal of the liturgical (Gregorian) chant, but also through Guéranger's magisterial *L'Année liturgique*. The study of the German (and Austrian) contribution focuses on the Benedictine abbeys of Maria Laach and Beuron, and discusses the work of theologians and liturgists like Ildefons

Herwegen, Romano Guardini, Odo Casel, Maurus and Placidus Wolter, Pius Parsch, Josef Andreas Jungmann, but also the less known Johannes Pinski. The German initiative acquires a particular dimension, as it reaches out to intellectuals and to the youth, in particular through the liturgical apostolate of Pius Parsch. Belgium plays a special role in the liturgical movement through the monasteries of Maredsous, Leuven (Mont César), Amay and Chevetogne, through the work of Gerard van Caloen, and in particular Lambert Beauduin. Beauduin is doubtlessly one of the most prominent representatives of the liturgical renewal. His liturgical and ecumenical efforts were strongly supported by Cardinal Mercier.

The encyclicals of popes Pius X and XII had a significant contribution to the liturgical renewal. Pius X has emphasised the centrality of the Eucharist and of the Eucharistic communion in spiritual life. Pius XII had a major role to play in the recognition of the liturgical renewal through his *Mediator Dei*, sometimes described as the *magna charta* of the liturgical movement.

The chapter also addresses the crises that emerged from the confrontation between proponents and opponents of the liturgical movement, and the role of Romano Guardini and others in countering unfounded criticism.

At the beginning of the 20th century the liturgical movement reached the Hungarian-speaking Catholic churches as well, as demonstrated by the work of the Benedictine Xavér Ferenc Szunyogh. Szunyogh had close connections with Maria Laach, and achieved a synthesis between the scholarly work promoted by the community of Maria Laach and the liturgical apostolate of Pius Parsch.

Ultimately, I argue, the liturgical movement is a movement of spiritual renewal, as it aims at reviving the spiritual life of the Church at the source of the liturgy.⁶ The point is well expressed by Romano Guardini, who attempted to bring the „spirit of the liturgy” closer to the Catholic religious practice, dominated up to that point by various devotional practices. He was convinced that the Church will be the community of the worshippers of God, a true community, only through the liturgy.⁷

The third chapter continues in a sense chapter two. One of the important principles of the liturgical movement was that the lay should be allowed to understand the liturgy and should be encouraged to participate actively in it. This involved that the participants were not supposed to be silent witnesses of the Eucharistic celebration, but should participate fully,

⁶ Lambert BEAUDUIN, *La piété de l'Église*, Leuven 1914, 47.

⁷ Romano GUARDINI, *Vom Geist der Liturgie*, Freiburg, 1918.

consciously and actively in the liturgy. This principle is based on the universal priesthood of the believers, acquired through baptism and perfected in confirmation, endowing them with specific duties and a particular mission. This idea has become integral part of the principles of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and has shaped post-conciliar liturgical practice. In recent times this principle has been questioned by traditionalist circles. For that reason I attempt to track down the origins of this idea, studying the use of the original concept of “partecipazione attiva” and of “participatio actuosa” in Pius X’s *Tra le sollecitudini*. I show how the original Italian text uses the unequivocal “active participation”, a concept interpreted in a restrictive manner by contemporary Hungarian translations and commentaries coming from traditionalist circles that wish to deny to the faithful the need of a true active participation. I recur not only to the original text of the *motu proprio*, but I also show that the concept can be understood from the aims of the liturgical renewal, from the desire of its representatives to make the liturgical celebration accessible to all the baptised. I also show that Transylvanian bishops (Áron Márton, János Scheffler) clearly understood the term to refer to an active participation, and not merely to the acknowledgment of the sacrifice of Christ, mediated by the priest, a fact plainly demonstrated by their encyclicals.

Chapters four and five deal with two of the most prominent forms of ecclesial, popular devotion, the cult of the Eucharist and that of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The assumption underlying this investigation is that the tensions concerning liturgical practice reflect in a sense a conflict between a communal vs. an individualistic understanding of religious practice. The liturgical movement placed the liturgy of the Church, the Eucharistic celebration and the liturgy of the hours in the centre of the spiritual and ecclesial life. Conversely, those who pleaded for the prominent role of these devotions, focusing on the adoration of the Eucharist and on the cult of the Sacred Heart, promoted in fact forms of individual religiosity that allowed a spiritual experience and an emotional outlet for those who were not supposed to be actively involved in the celebration of the Eucharist. The exploration of the origins of the two devotions shows a closer connection with the central mystery of salvation at the outset, yet eventually they acquire an increasing autonomy, and the importance they are assigned overshadows that of the Eucharistic celebration. No doubt, the various devotions need not be opposed to the Eucharistic celebration. I argue however that they are legitimate only when the centrality of the Eucharistic liturgy is preserved, an idea rightly argued by the representatives of the liturgical movement.

Chapter six is dedicated to the reception of the liturgical movement in Transylvania. In the introduction I offer an overview of the main events that shaped the life of the Diocese of

Transylvania/Alba Iulia at the beginning of the 20th century. The religious life of the Diocese was guided by two major bishops, Gusztáv Károly Mailáth and Áron Márton. Although the historical changes that incurred in 1918/1920 have had major consequences for the existence of the Church, and the Transylvanian Church struggled to find its place within the Romanian State, the Diocese was not completely isolated from the European theological-liturgical life. The encyclicals and decrees of bishops Mailáth demonstrate his attention to the spirit of the liturgical movement, and foremost to the papal encyclicals. Mailáth applied consequently the provisions of the liturgical encyclicals of the time. He informed his priests about the aspirations of the liturgical movement. He also encouraged the devotions of the time, in particular the cult of the Eucharist and that of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, but he also endorsed participation at the Mass and frequent communion. Bishops Áron Márton was at the head of the Diocese in moments of particular distress. However, he publicized in his diocese the liturgical decrees of Pius XII, providing them with comments and explanations. After Vatican II he applied in his Church the conciliar reform.

The documents of the time also show that the German and Hungarian liturgical movement was received in Transylvania. The writings of local theologians and clerics like Alfréd Eröss, József Hirschler, Imre Sándor, Károly Troján, Ernő Veress have disseminated the spirit of the European liturgical movement.

A particularly vivid aspect of this renewed interest in the liturgy was the attention given to liturgical music, manifest in many forms of training addressing cantors, other church musicians and priests.

Although we cannot speak of a local liturgical movement, it is clear that many of the ideas of the European liturgical renewal were received and applied in Transylvania.

Conclusions

1. The liturgical renewal of the 19th–20th century was a spiritual movement that led to the revitalization of the liturgical and ecclesial life of the Catholic Church. Its aims and initiatives can be understood from the historical and theological context that involved:

a. *a return to the sources*, through biblical and patristic research, and through the investigation of the liturgical sources. The liturgical renewal was motivated by the desire to return to the sources of the life and practice of the early Christian Church, not by the wish to break with tradition.

b. *a significant ecclesiological shift*. The Church is no longer defined as *societas perfecta*, but as the mystical Body of Christ, permeated by the life-giving Spirit, who works in every member of the Body, providing to each various gifts and tasks. This Body is nourished

by the Eucharist, the source of spiritual life for all the baptised. This ecclesiological paradigm was developed by major theologians of the 19th–20th century, and officially validated by Pius XII in his *Mystici corporis*.

2. The aims and manifestations of the liturgical movement had certain regional particularities. The early French initiatives, in particular those related to Guéranger, focused on the preservation of the Roman liturgy, and on the Gregorian chant. The liturgical initiatives associated to pope Pius X, expressed in his *Tra le sollecitudini*, are comparable in a sense to this aim, as they focus on the renewal of church music. Yet they also go beyond this purpose, as they introduce the concept of “partecipazione attiva / participatio actuosa”, that will resonate in many ways in the initiatives of the liturgical movement. This will constitute the root of the notion of „active participation” in the liturgy.

German liturgists, especially those of the monasteries of Beuron and Maria Laach, are mainly motivated by the wish to return to the sources of the liturgy, of the church more generally. A prominent representative of this tendency is Ildefons Herwegen, the abbot of Maria Laach. His exploration of the liturgical sources led him to recognise the communal dimension of early Christian liturgy, and his liturgical initiatives were motivated by the desire to restore the liturgy as the worship of the whole community. The mystery-theology advanced by Odo Casel revived the theological understanding of the liturgy, as well as sacramental theology.

Another German approach to the renewal of the liturgy was embodied in the liturgical apostolate promoted by Romano Guardini, in his outreach to lay Catholics, in particular to intellectuals and to the youth. His theological work contributed significantly to introducing the lay to the celebration of the liturgy.

Belgium played a major role in the liturgical renewal, not least under German influence, mainly from Beuron. The new foundations of Mont César and Maredsous had an important contribution to the rediscovery of the sources of the liturgy. Lambert Beauduin, sustained in his initiatives by Cardinal Mercier, argued even that the liturgy, as the worship of the entire Church, should be democratised. He argued that the lay should be taught and educated, and considered the ignorance of the (meaning of the) liturgy one of the roots of religious indifference. He placed Eucharistic celebration and the liturgy of the hours in the centre of Catholic spirituality, a place appropriated by various forms of popular devotion. To this purpose he argued that the missal should be the most important prayer book of the Church. The ideas of Beauduin, his emphasis on the paschal mystery, his liturgical and ecumenical initiatives foreshadow already the conciliar reform.

The German and Belgian liturgical movement was sometimes described as a monastic movement, centred on the life of the monasteries. Whereas there is certain truth in the assertion, if one considers the role these communities played, such characterisation is nonetheless simplistic, since the purpose of major figures like Herwegen, Guardini or Beauduin was to introduce the baptised into the treasures of the liturgy, to transform the liturgy into the source of Christian life. As Guardini explicitly remarked, the liturgy was not the exclusive possession of Benedictine monks, but that of every Catholic and of the entire community.⁸ The initiatives of Pius Parsch in Austria are an eminent example of liturgical apostolate amidst the people of God. He focused not only on the communal character of the liturgy, but also emphasised that through liturgy participants are drawn into the life of Christ.⁹

The Hungarian liturgical movement was in essence a reception and application of the Belgian, German and Austrian initiatives and the accommodation of these ideas to the local conditions. Its most important representative was Ferenc Xavér Szunyogh, considered the apostle of the Hungarian liturgical renewal, a follower of the views of Pius Parsch.

In all, the various enterprises of the liturgical movement aimed at a celebration of the liturgy that was both lively and life-giving. This aim was achieved through an intense activity of instruction of the baptized meant to explain the liturgy, through the translation and distribution of the missal, and various other initiatives that enhanced an active participation of the faithful in the Eucharistic celebration, the liturgy of the entire people of God.

The papal documents stand at the beginning and at the fulfilment of the liturgical movement. The *Tra le sollecitudini*, the *motu proprio* of Pius X was an incentive of the renewal and gave significant impetus to the idea of including the faithful in the celebration of the liturgy. The encyclical *Mediator Dei* of Pius XII brought about the fulfilment and the official recognition of the liturgical movement and formulated its guidelines. In a sense there is a mutual relationship between ecclesial documents and the initiatives of the liturgical movement. The papal regulations are responses to initiatives coming from the Church, but they also constitute responses to certain issues, they are incentives encouraging these initiatives. In fact there is a mutual recognition of the principles set by the other side, as the representatives of the liturgical movement respected the regulations issued by the Holy See, while papal documents integrated the proposals of liturgists and recognised the need for liturgical renewal.

⁸ GUARDINI, *Liturgische Bildung*, 11.

⁹ PARSCH, *Das Jahr des Heiles* I, Klosterneuburg, 1923, repr. Würzburg, 2008.

3. The idea that the faithful should participate in a conscious and active manner in the liturgy grows from the intention of the liturgical renewal to make the values of the liturgy available and accessible to every baptised. One of the key concepts of this apprehension is that of “active participation” (“partecipazione attiva”, “participatio actuosa” in *Tra le sollecitudini*), repeatedly emphasised by the *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. The interpretation of the concept has occasioned various debates in recent years. Traditionalist circles have given it a restrictive translation and meaning, questioning the appropriateness of the effective participation of lay Christians in the liturgy. (In the recent Hungarian translation of *Tra le sollecitudini* [Dobszay Á., 2006] the earlier “active participation” is replaced with the vague “actual participation”, understood to mean less or something else than “active participation”. One notes however that the Oxford Latin Dictionary translates “actuusus” with “active, busy, energetic, full of life, acting with extravagant gesture”.) These circles most often argue that the concept means nothing more than the acknowledgement and acceptance of the divine grace issuing from the sacrifice of Christ, mediated by the priest. This perspective on the liturgy results from a clerical ecclesiology in which the lay are mere receivers and have no active role to play in the liturgical celebration, and from a dichotomic anthropology which dissociates mental processes from their bodily manifestations. However this study has provided arguments for the view that the concept of “partecipazione attiva” or “participatio actuosa”, found in the *Tra le sollecitudini* and later, especially conciliar texts, refers to active and effective participation, e.g. through chant. This is shown firstly by the original Italian text of *Tra le sollecitudini*, which contains the unequivocal “partecipazione attiva”. This is also the interpretation given to it by Transylvanian bishops (Áron Márton, János Scheffler), who clearly speak of active participation of the faithful. The two regulations issued by Áron Márton, bishop of Alba Iulia (1958) and the earlier encyclical of János Scheffler, bishop of Satu Mare (1947) emphasise literally the active participation of the faithful. Scheffler discusses the issue of Latin vs. vernacular language, and sustains that the faithful should be involved in the active offering of the sacrifice of the Mass.¹⁰ Áron Márton addresses especially the theme of liturgical chant: seminarians, as future priests, have to participate actively in the liturgy, since they will have to teach the believers to participate actively in it.¹¹ Further, this view is grounded in the new ecclesiological perspective promoted by the *Mystici*

¹⁰ *Vissza a Szentmiséhez! Litterae circulares szathmarini* 1460/1947-V, III.

¹¹ *Liturgikus nevelésről Papnevelőben és kántoriskolában*, 23 April, 1958. Archive of the Archdiocese of Alba Iulia, 1183/1958.

corporis, which assigns to all members of the body of Christ an important role, and argues that all the baptised receive various gifts for the edification of the church. The liturgical initiatives (liturgical texts in vernacular languages, commentated missals, explanations of the Mass, catecheses) also sustain the underlying assumption that the faithful must *understand* the liturgy in order to participate in it.

4.

The two major devotions, the cult of the Eucharist and that of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, have had a valuable contribution to popular religiosity and individual piety. Nonetheless their popularity contributed to the eclipsing of the Eucharistic celebration. The adoration of Christ in the Eucharist is a legitimate and valuable practice. Adoration expressed a deep reverence for the Eucharist, yet it was also paralleled by a fearful abstention from communion. Christ was supposed to be adored; he was the prisoner of the Tabernacle, who had to be visited; yet, these mainly private practices gradually became independent from the Mass, and were frequently set above the celebration of the Eucharist and communion. This overemphasis on Eucharistic devotions was largely due to the fact that the believers no longer understood the Eucharistic celebration, and had to look elsewhere to satisfy their spiritual needs.

We assist at a similar phenomenon in the case of the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Originally the devotion was rooted in the reverence for the passion of Christ, the sign of his love, a love that believers could return. Great mystics developed a cult deeply charged with emotions. The pierced heart of Jesus was a symbol of his love, and this cult responded to the needs of a more affective spirituality. The Jesuits used the cult as an important instrument in their successful pastoral work. Whereas the devotion was not exempt of some excessive sentimentalism, it certainly promoted conversion, selflessness, dedication to apostolic work. The encyclical *Haurietis aqua* connected this devotion to the Eucharistic celebration, to communion. Even this association could not prevent an individualistic spirituality at odds with the communal character inherent to liturgical celebration.

The liturgical movement did not aim at eliminating these forms of devotion, but emphasised the centrality of the Eucharistic celebration. Devotions were supposed to lead the believers to Eucharistic celebration, not to turn them away from it. The ecclesiological shift contributed to the restoration of this centrality of the liturgy of the Eucharist, the common celebration that joined the priest and the faithful. The latter were no longer obliged to look for other devotions to satisfy their spiritual needs.

5.

The reception of the liturgical reform in Transylvania has several phases. Up to 1918/1920 the Diocese was part of Hungary and of the liturgical life of the Hungarian Church. After the historical changes that modified its belonging, the Catholic Church focused to a greater degree on survival, and less on theological research. In this new situation, in particular up to 1927, when the Concordat with the Holy See was concluded, the life of the Church was essentially a continuous struggle for the sustenance of its institutions. From 1948 with the instauration of the communist regime, the Diocese was largely isolated from other Churches and from the Holy See.

In spite of these difficult historical conditions the liturgical life of the Diocese followed its normal course. In the interbellic period traditional religious practice flourished, religious practice and education were centred mainly on the two major devotions, the cult of the Eucharist and of the Holy Heart. Numerous forms of religious associative life emerged and attracted faithful of all categories. The cult of the Eucharist was promoted especially by the Tabernacle (Altar) Societies, which were founded in every parish at the initiative of bishop Mailáth. The intensiveness of this Eucharistic associative life is well shown by the large numbers of members and of subscribers of the two main publications (*Oltáregyesületi Lap*, *Oltár*). The practice of perpetual adoration joined the parishes of the Diocese in the adoration of the Eucharist, and the encyclical of Áron Márton (1957) promoted a sense of spiritual unity in this exercise.

At the beginning of the 20th century the cult of the Sacred Heart was highly popular in the Diocese of Alba Iulia. Societies dedicated to this devotion were founded in parishes, and members attended Mass and communion on first Fridays of the month, and rites of atonement on first Sundays. Pastoral care was centred on this cult, using a rich devotional literature embracing all generations. The offering of the family, of the community and of the nation to the Sacred Heart created a sense of community and unity. In parishes the great novena, the atonements offered during the two World Wars deepened the faith of Catholics.

The liturgical renewal consisted mainly in the promulgation and application of the papal documents. Bishop Mailáth introduced the norms on daily communion and early first communion promoted by Pius X. He also endorsed the devotions to the Sacred Heart, the feast of Christ the King, the adoration on the occasion of the Holy Year in 1933. As bishop Áron Márton was arrested in 1949, in the archive of Alba Iulia there are no liturgical or other decrees from him in the early fifties. Thus there is no sign of the application of the renewed

rites of the Paschal vigil in 1951. The new rites of the Holy Week were introduced by the bishop in 1957, and were accompanied by explanations.

The influence of the liturgical movement is not comparable to that noticed in Western Europe. Yet, the encyclicals of local bishops show that the ideas of the liturgical renewal reached the Diocese of Alba Iulia as well. Bishop Mailáth followed with great attention the initiatives of the European liturgical apostolate, and sustained especially the reforms connected to church music. He demanded priests and cantors to attend regularly courses on liturgy and church music, and informed the priests and faithful about the new books of prayer and liturgical chant. He sustained the foundation of the diocesan Saint Cecilia Society. Through all these endeavours he enhanced the active participation of the faithful in the liturgy.

Bishop Áron Márton introduced the spirit and norms of *Mediator Dei* in his diocese, promoting the liturgical training of seminarians (1957). These were expected to appropriate the knowledge of the liturgy and to participate actively in the Eucharistic celebration, since as future priests they had to teach the faithful the active participation in the liturgy (see point 3 above).

The initiatives of the liturgical movement reached the Diocese through the works of its Hungarian representatives, like Xavér Ferenc Szunyogh, Ákos Mihályfi, Flóris Kűhár, Polikárp Radó, Benjamin Rajeczky, József Korompai, and Béla Körmendy.

There were few original theologians in the Diocese. Such were, to be sure, Alfréd Eröss and Ernő Veress, whose writings demonstrate the reception of the ecclesiological and liturgical renewal. The systematic theologian Alfréd Eröss knew well the theology of Matthias Scheeben and Emil Mersch, and applied the ecclesiology promoted by the *Mystici corporis*. Two of his articles published in the journal of the Tabernacle Society, *Az oltár*, presented the activities of the liturgical movement. He greeted the Hungarian missal which allowed the faithful to follow the liturgy and participate in it. He was an admirer of the liturgical apostolate of Pius Parsch, which allowed the believers to receive the gift of divine life through participation and joint celebration.¹²

Ernő Veress had an important contribution to the promotion of the spirit of the liturgical movement. He edited a *Ritual* and a *Transylvanian Prayer Book*, both in Hungarian, both reflecting the strong influence of Pius Parsch. The author endorsed the active

¹² ERÖSS, *A liturgikus mozgalom* II, 83–86.

participation of the faithful in the liturgy. He even argued that although only the priest has received the power of consecrating, the faithful offer the Holy Mass together with the priest.

The writings of the two theologians show that Transylvanian Catholic professors of theology had quite intensive contacts with the European liturgical movement, and translated, used and adapted their works.

Vernacular liturgical texts appeared rather early, due to the use of the *Rituale Strigoniense*. We also know of early local initiatives. One of the most interesting is the Hungarian handwritten booklet of rituals of Ferencz Ráduly (*Egyházi szertartások*, 1838). Ráduly introduced his work with two biblical quotations (Deut 4,14; 1 Cor 14,19), which show that the vernacular liturgical texts were instituted in order to *teach* these rituals and to permit the *understanding* of the liturgy.

The liturgical apostolate was promoted in two journals of the diocese (*Az Oltár* and the *Mária Kongregáció*). Ferenc Balázs and Géza Vilma wrote about daily communion. József Hirschler and Ferenc Faragó regularly published explanations of the Mass, educating lay believers in the spirit of the liturgy. Alfréd Eröss and Ernő Veress advertised the ideas and activity of Pius Parsch, whereas the liturgical column of Imre Sándor reflected the thoughts of Romano Guardini. Károly Troján, the liturgical columnist of the *Mária Kongregáció* considered that he had the mission to disclose to readers the beauty and importance of the liturgy. Ferenc Faragó, the co-editor of the journal, explained the parts of the Eucharistic celebration. This service allowed the faithful to participate actively in the Eucharist.

Several authors emphasised the communal dimension of the Eucharistic celebration. The Hungarian liturgist József Korompai stressed the importance of communion, and sustained that „the activity of the Eucharist had to be our activity.” Earlier the Church understood itself as *communio*, and was unified by participation in the Holy Communion. With the disintegration of the *communio*, the liturgy became the individual act of the priest, and the faithful turned to private devotions even during the mass.¹³ The Jesuite Töhötöm Nagy studies the initiatives of Beuron and Maria-Laach, and expressed high appreciation for the liturgical mystery theology of Odo Casel.¹⁴

The ideas of the biblical renewal were also present in the diocese. Ferenc Faragó noted the marginalisation of the Word of God in formation, catechesis and in Christian life. He argued that every priest should have a Hungarian Bible which he should read every day, and

¹³ KOROMPAI, *Egyházközségek és egyesületek*, 85–86.

¹⁴ NAGY, *Liturgikus misztériumjáték Krisztus Királyról*, 6–7.

suggested that religion classes for high school pupils should be introduced with a brief lecture from the Bible.¹⁵

The book review of József Lőrincz, dean of Radnalajosfalva proves that the booklets on the Mass edited by Pius Parsch were read even in the most remote parish of the Diocese.

6.

In the neighbouring dioceses of Temesvár (Timisoara) and Szatmár (Satu Mare) we also find documents attesting the reception of the liturgical renewal. The publication of the Diocese of Temesvár (Timisoara), the *Havi közlöny*, published regularly theological and liturgical writings.

The bishop of the Diocese of Szatmár (Satu Mare), János Scheffler, wrote in 1947 an encyclical in which he argued that Catholics should be brought back to the altar, and should be encouraged to participate actively in the sacrifice of the Mass. The bishop remarked the gap between priest and people, between altar and nave, and noticed that the faithful were no longer able to participate actively in the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice. He recognised that the use of Latin had a role to play in this process, without rejecting however the use of Latin. The bishop also recognised that while the priest celebrated on his own, the faithful were caught in their own devotions. In the spirit of the liturgical movement the bishop ordered the explanation of the liturgy and of the liturgical texts.

The regulations issued by bishops Gyula Glattfelder of Temesvár (Timisoara) and János Scheffler of Szatmár (Satu Mare) attest the influence of the liturgical movement in the two neighbouring Dioceses.

7.

Currently the liturgical reform is assessed in quite different ways. The voices that consider the liturgical reform a mistaken enterprise are more and more loud. Some speak of the „reform of the reform”, as they claim that the missal of Paul VI was not the result of an organic development, while some even question the legitimacy of the postconciliar ritual. The same emphasise the exclusive role of the priest in celebrating the liturgy.

Not infrequently the critics of the liturgical reform appeal to the liturgical decrees of Benedict XVI, notably to his *Summorum Pontificum*, which allows the use of the Roman Missal of 1962 without the need to ask for special permission. However the *motu proprio* does not demand only reverence for tradition and the removal of abuses, but it also shows that the authorisation of the old rite is in fact the approval of an extraordinary form of the Roman

¹⁵ FARAGÓ, *A Biblia az iskolában*, 53–55.

rite, next to its ordinary form, and the two are not to be opposed (SP 1). In the accompanying letter to the bishops the pope confirms that the postconciliar missal contains the ordinary form of the Roman rite, and invites to internal reconciliation. The *Summorum pontificum* explicitly acknowledges the need and legitimacy of the liturgical reform.

The legitimacy and importance of the liturgical reform may not be questioned. This study has aimed to show that the liturgical renewal of the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century prove precisely this point. The initiatives of this renewal served the same goal: the liturgy of the Church (the Eucharistic celebration, the liturgy of the hours and the sacraments) regained the central place. The liturgical movement did not eliminate the popular devotions, but assigned a far larger importance to the Eucharistic celebration. The conciliar liturgical reform is in fact the fulfilment of these initiatives.

Because of historical circumstances the liturgical movement did not have the same impact in the Diocese of Alba Iulia as in Western Europe. The reception of the liturgical initiatives was less marked. The same factors made that the changes in the liturgy, sustained by the authority of the bishops, did not cause significant tensions.

Lastly, a main insight that emerged from this study concerns the intimate relationship between liturgy and ecclesiology. The aims and initiatives of the liturgical movement may not be understood without the ecclesiological shift that preceded and accompanied this process. Both theology and ecclesial documents expressed a new perception of the Church as Body of Christ, as community, permeated by the Spirit, nourished by the Eucharist. The same shift allowed the recognition of the role of every baptised, whereas previous perspectives focused solely on the role of the priest. The initiatives of the liturgical renewal applied these insights to the liturgy, when they attempted to make the liturgical acts comprehensible, and endorse the active participation of the faithful.