

The Language of Preaching as a Language Policy Issue Choice of a Liturgical Language and its Possible Effects, the Question of Language Death

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The paper first presents the birth of the Hungarian ecclesiastical (liturgical) language, emphasizing that the basic works of the practice of preaching and prayers in Hungary can be found already in the Middle Ages (the Old Hungarian period) almost entirely in their present form (The emergence of preaching in Hungarian). The second part (Mother tongue use in churches in the waves of history) explains the historically proven nation-preserving power of language use in church, and then outlines the issues of contemporary bilingualism, especially in a diaspora setting, proposing possible answers and stimulating further discussion and reflection.

Keywords: *Funeral sermon - preaching - ecclesiastical rhetoric - liturgy in Hungarian - language and soul, faith and mother tongue - bilingualism - diaspora - spiritual and ecclesiastical existence*

Írásomban először bemutatom a magyar egyházi (liturgikus) nyelv megszületését, kiemelve, hogy már a magyar középkorban (nyelvi ómagyar korban) szinte teljes nyelvi vértetetésben, mai formájában fölfedezhetők prédikációs és imádkozási gyakorlatunk alapművei (A magyar nyelvű prédikáció születése). A második részben (2. Egyházi anyanyelvűségi program a történelem hullámai között) bemutatom az egyházi nyelvhasználat történelmileg igazolt nemzetmegtartó erejét, majd fölvázolom a jelenkori kétnyelvűségi, különösen szórványhelyzetben felbukkanó kérdéseket, és megfogalmazva, vitára, továbbgondolásra szánva válaszlehetőségeket.

Kulcsszavak: *Halotti beszéd, prédikáció, egyházi retorika, magyar nyelvű liturgia, nyelv és lélek, hit és anyanyelv, kétnyelvűség, szórvány, spirituális és egyházi létállapot*

Motto:

“For when we give you something, we give you yours, Lord” (Jókai Codex)

1. The emergence of preaching in Hungarian

The first Hungarian texts are all sacral texts. It is perhaps not so well known that in the Old Hungarian period (which in history corresponds to the Middle Ages in Hungary) the Hungarian liturgical language was already fully developed rhetorically and linguistically. This is evidenced by sermons, prayers, collections of legends in Hungarian; as well as liturgical antecedents. The first part of this paper explains this in more detail.

The first complete text in Hungarian, the Funeral Sermon and Prayer, is from 1195. Its genre is ecclesiastical oration, more specifically sermon (A.J. A. 2010: 475–477). It is, in fact, a template text without any personal elements or any mention of the deceased or the bereaved family. This way it could be tailored as needed. The text is rich in rhetorical devices, perfectly following the rules of ancient rhetoric. The settings of communication: funeral sermon delivered by the priest over the grave (as the Latin title indicates: *Sermo super sepulchrum* 'Sermon over the grave').

The full text is quoted in today's interpretation for clarity and explanation:

<p>Saját szemetekkel látjátok felebarátaim, mik vagyunk: íme, por és hamu vagyunk. Mennyi isteni kegyelemben részesítve teremtette meg kezdetben (az Úr) a mi őszünket, Ádámot, és a paradicsomot adta neki lakóhelyül. És azt mondta neki, hogy a paradicsomban levő minden gyümölcssel táplálkozzon. Csupán egyetlen fa gyümölcsétől tiltotta el őt. De megmondta neki, miért ne egyen belőle: „Bizony, amely napon enni fogsz abból a gyümölcsből, halálnak halálával halsz meg.” Ádám hallotta, midőn Isten megteremtette, hogy halála be fog következni, de feledte. Engedett az ördög rosszra készítésének, és evett abból a tiltott gyümölcsből, és abban a gyümölcsben halált evett. Megharagudott az Isten, és ebbe a gyötrelmes világba vetette őt;</p>	<p>My brethren, you see with your own eyes what we are, Surely we are but dust and ashes. God in his divine grace first made Adam our ancestor, And gave him Eden for his dwelling place. He bade him live on all the fruits of Eden, Forbidding the fruit of one tree only: He only forbade him from the fruit of one tree. “If you eat of this fruit, On that day shall you surely die the death of deaths.” And Adam heard God, his Creator, speak of his death; Yet he forgot. He yielded to the Devil's tempting, And ate of that forbidden fruit. In that fruit, he partook of death. So bitter was its juice, it burnt his throat. He ate death, not only for himself,</p>
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<p>és halálnak meg a pokolnak martaléka lett, és ez jutott osztályrészül egész fájának. Kik azok? Mi vagyunk. Ahogy ti is látjátok saját szemetekkel: íme, egyetlen ember sem kerülheti el azt a sírgödört. Íme, mindnyájan afelé tartunk. Imádkozva kérjük Urunk Isten kegyelmét ennek a léleknek, hogy irgalmazzon és kegyelmezzon neki, és bocsássa meg az ő minden bűnét! És imádkozva kérjük a szent úrnőt, Máriát és a felmagasztosult Mihály arkangyalt és valamennyi angyalt, hogy imádkozzanak érte! És imádkozva kérjük Szent Péter urat, akinek hatalma van a bűnt feloldozni és a bűnben megtartani, hogy oldozza fel e halott minden bűnét! És imádkozva kérjük valamennyi szentet, hogy legyenek neki pártfogói Urunk színe előtt, hogy az Isten az ő imádságuk következtében bocsássa meg az ő bűnét! És szabadítsa meg őt az ördög üldözésétől és a pokol kínzásától, és vezesse őt vissza a paradicsom nyugalmaiba, és adjon neki a mennyországba szabad utat és minden jóban részt! És kiáltsátok Urunkhoz háromszor: Kyrie eleison!” (Dömötör 2006: 28–29.)</p>	<p>But for all his children's children. In anger, God cast Adam out of Eden, Into this world of toil and pain, And he became the nest of death and damnation, Himself and all his children's children. Who are those children? We are they, As you can see with your own eyes. None of us can escape that pit of doom, That grave towards which we surely go. Therefore, we beg God's grace For this poor soul, his pity, His mercy, and the forgiveness of sins. We ask the Blessed Virgin and the Blessed Archangel Michael And all the angels to pray for him. We ask St Peter, to whom God gave the power To bind and unbind, To deliver this man from all his sins. And we beg all the Saints to speak on his behalf Before Our Lord, that, hearing their prayers, He may forgive his sins, Set him free from the Devil and the tortures of Hell, Lead him back to Eden's rest, show him the way to Heaven, And let him share in Heaven's blessings. Let us cry out to the Lord three times: Kyrie eleison!¹</p>
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(The funeral sermon is supplemented by a prayer, which is not quoted and analysed here.)

The funeral oration is addressed to the mourners, and its rhetorical elements suggest a live oral performance. It seems clear that the genre is a sermon, a recorded text that can be delivered at any funeral by the priest. Its

¹ English translation by Alan Jenkins (Hundred Hungarian Poems. Manchester: Albion Editions, 1976)

rhetorical devices reveal a well-developed, working method of preaching. “Its elaborate linguistic and stylistic design makes it certain that it was preceded by many oral and written funeral orations in Hungarian. This one could have been delivered many times by the time the unknown author put it into writing; but it is also possible that, in this particular form, the written version came earlier: the work of a skilled writer, with the aims and experience of oral performance in mind...” (Dömötör 206: 30).

The rhetorical devices of the Funeral Sermon and Prayer:

My brethren, you see with your own eyes	address
what we are	rhetorical question (immediately answered)
surely	pointing (to the dead)
we are but dust and ashes	item, definition
God in his divine grace	storytelling (narration), example (parable)
“If you eat of this fruit, On that day shall you surely die the death of deaths.”	quote (word of God)
Who are those children?	rhetorical question
We are they	taking a look around, responding, pointing out
As you can see with your own eyes	proof (pointing out)
None of us can escape that pit of doom, That grave towards which we surely go.	generalisation (pointing out)
Therefore, we beg God's grace... We ask the Blessed Virgin and the Blessed Archangel Michael... We ask St Peter... And we beg all the Saints...	request (address, exhortation to pray), repetition
And we beg...	call (to prayer)
And we beg...	petitioning for support (monition; also: invocation: invoking God, the saints)
Set him free... Lead him back... show him...	request
show him the way... let him share in Heaven's blessings	best wishes
Let us cry out... three times...	call, exclamation, repetition

The logical structure of the Funeral Sermon and Prayer:

attendees	Adam	we	the deceased	present
we	individual	genus	individual	we

Ways of reasoning:

cause and effect	the cause of mortality: Adam's (and Eve's) sin
inclusion	what applies to the genus (humanity) also applies to the individual (whole > part)
conclusion	since we are mortal, we can do nothing but pray
ad hominem argument	individual to genus argumentation: Who are those children? We are they.

When spoken aloud, we can observe the sermon's rhythm: the part before and after the climax (salvation, our place at God's right hand) contains short, relatively equal-length passages (11-12 syllables). László Ravasz, the distinguished orator, with considerable passionate and romantic fervour, assessed it thus:

- "The heavy, resounding sentences of the Funeral Sermon and Prayer, with their categorical statements, seem like large clods of earth falling on the eloquent coffin, in which the whole Hungarian pagan culture, with its heroic splendour, its oriental richness, its defiant youth, descended into the grave dug by friends. There is so little rhetoric, so little explanation, so little emotion in this first Hungarian sermon! There is hardly a more concise product in our literature. It simply points to the original sin, the curse of which is death, and asks the mourners to beg for mercy for the dead, because that dead is us. You can't talk about the grave with more realism, with more harshness, with more brutal sobriety. It was in fact a liturgical piece and not a free preaching work; as is proved by the fact that every word in it is stereotyped and nothing is casual, but that it twice calls on the audience to cry *kyrie eleyson*" (Ravasz 1915: 179).

The first Hungarian poem is the Old Hungarian Lamentations of Mary from the end of the 13th century, from about 1300. In this wonderful poem, Mary weeps for Christ, but the text is emotionally independent of the Bible: it expresses the infinite bitterness and pain of every mother who has lost her son. The best-known lines are as follows (translated to English): World's light, Flower's flower, They torment you bitterly, With iron nails they pierce you! (Dömötör 2006: 37)

The Gyulafehérvár Verses, written in the second decade of the 14th century, are entries in a collection of sermons in Latin. The 15 lines contain rhymed Hungarian summaries of the sermons. They testify to a contemporary

practice of preaching in the mother tongue, and to the fact that rhymed summaries were more conducive to understanding. In today's interpretation, such ideas are found in the Gyulafehérvár Codex. (Dömötör 2006: 41.)

- Viszálykodásban levőknek megbékélése. Most élőknek örök élete. Betegségben levőknek egészsége. Szűkölködésben levőknek bővelkedése. (...) Saját tanítványának árulása. A népnek, amely őt nemzette, a vádaskodása. Jeruzsálem városának tiszteletadó fogadása Isten fiának ártatlansága. Halálának gyalázatos kínja. Ezt a boldog asszonynak saját szemével látása.²

The second half of the 14th century (after 1372) saw the birth of the first Hungarian book (a collection of legends, but could even be considered a novel), the Jókai Codex. It contains the famous legends of Saint Francis. One of his best-known legends is the Miracle of the Holy Wounds (my own transcription, cf. Balázs 2021: 178–179):

- Mené csudálatossággal legyenek az Szent Ferencnek szent sebi méltók, tetszik az néminemű esmeretes csudában jelenségest mutatván néminemű prédikáló frátereknek gyülekezetiben. Mer vala az gyülekezésben néminemű prédikátor fráter, ki bódog Ferencet ezképpen gyílóli vala ő jonhában, hogy sem írásban látnia, sem beszédben hallania, sem szívében hiheti vala szent sebeknek helyivel ékesültnek lennie.

In modern Hungarian, according to my own interpretation:

- Hogy mennyire csodálatra méltók Szent Ferenc sebei, kitetszik egy bizonyos ismert csodából, amely a prédikáló fráterek egyik gyülekezetében történt. Volt ugyanis a gyülekezetben egy prédikáló fráter, aki boldog Ferencet annyira gyílozte lelkében, hogy sem képen látni, sem beszédben hallani, sem szívében elhinni nem bírta, hogy a szent sebek helyét magán viseli.³

2 English translation: Reconciliation for those in conflict. Eternal life for the now living. Health for people with illness. Abundance for the needy. (...) Betrayed by his own disciples. The accusation of his own people. The honourable welcome of the city of Jerusalem, the innocence of the Son of God. The shameful agony of his death. This is what the Virgin Mary has to see with her own eyes.

3 English translation: The admirable nature of the wounds of St Francis is shown by a certain well-known miracle which took place in a congregation of preaching friars. For there was a preaching friar in the congregation who hated Blessed Francis so much in his soul that he could not bear to see, hear about or even think of that he bore the marks of the holy wounds on his body.

t-known Christian prayer, Our Father (in Protestant terminology: the Lord's Prayer), has almost completely preserved its form since the age of the codices. The first complete version is found in the Munich Codex from 1466 (English translation is based on the reading by Gyula Décsy; Németh 1990: 297):

- Mi Atyánk, ki vagy mennyekben, szenteltessék te neved. Jöjjön te országod; legyen te akaratod, miként mennyen és azonként földön. Mi testi kenyerünk felett való kenyered adjad münénkünk ma. És bocsássad münénkünk mü vétetönket, miként es mü bocsátonk nekünk vétetteknek. És ne vigy münket késértetbe, de szabadoh münket gonosztól.⁴

In our 15th and 16th century codices we find the texts of the liturgical prayers that are still known today (source: Dömötör-Haader n.d.)

- Hiszek Istenben... (Apostles' Creed; Peer Codex, early 16th century)
- Dicsőség Istennek magasságban, és feldön békesség jóakaratos embereknek! (Apor Codex, after 1416/ cc. 1490)
- Uram, nem vagyok méltó, hogy te én hajlakom alá jejj... (Gömöry Codex, 1516)
- Úr mondja: én vagyok eleven kenyér, ki mennybelől leszállottam. Ha ki eendik ez kenyérbe, erekké él. (Keszthely Codex, 1522)
- Idvez légy, Mária, malasztal teljes, Úr vagyon teveled, te vagyá áldott asszonyállatok kezett, és áldott te méhednek gymelcse, Jézus Krisztus (Hail Mary; Munich, early 16th century)⁵

2. Mother tongue use in churches in the waves of history

Why have I evoked the very first texts of our language, of our literacy, of the Hungarian Middle Ages (the Old Hungarian period)? Because they are all, almost without exception, sacred, liturgical texts, sermons, sermon excerpts. They were born so that ordinary Hungarians could understand the message

4 English translation: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day thy bread above the bread of our flesh. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

5 English translation: I believe in God... / Glory to God in the highest, and peace on Earth to men of good will!

Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come into my dwelling... / The Lord says: I am the living bread, which came down from heaven. He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. / Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus Christ

of the Bible. Because it is best to pray, to listen to the Word, to sing in the mother tongue. The message, the rhetorical structure of the sermon is important, but so is the language. Just like the wall frescoes of medieval churches designed for illustrative purposes, these texts belonged to the so-called *Biblia Pauperum*, the Bible of the Poor: they served to provide a better, more tangible understanding, a religious experience. We know that Latin (sacred Latin) is the language of Christianity in Europe. But in Hungary, there has been an effort to interpret the Holy Scriptures (the Bible) in the native language, i.e. to develop the Hungarian sacral language, since the 12th and 13th centuries. This aspiration was then strengthened by the Reformation by emphasising the importance of the mother tongue, and even the singing of psalms in the mother tongue, even more. The Protestant Bible translation of the late 16th century, the Károli Bible, had a great influence on the Hungarian language in general through the language of the Reformed Church. István Nemeskürty (2003: 58) writes that in the tragic 16th century, the Hungarian language was the only language that kept the Hungarian nation together and perhaps even alive: “the population of the country divided into three sections remained united in culture, customs and language.” He later summarises it like this:

- “What was the force that gave spiritual unity to this area, which was divided into three? The spread of the Reformation, and consequently the conscious use and cultivation of the nation’s language at a literary level.” (Nemeskürty 2003: 64).

Even in the cities occupied by the Ottomans, there was a high level of cultural life; Catholic, Calvinist, Lutheran, Unitarian, Jewish denominations lived their lives. Where it was not possible to settle in peace, itinerant preachers travelled the country. Mihály Sztárai, a Lutheran pastor from the floodplain of the River Dráva, wrote plays for the peasants in Ottoman Hungary, one of which was printed in the far-off town of Kolozsvár, in the Transylvanian Principality, and the other in Magyaróvár, in Habsburg Hungary. Let us add that it was also the Hungarian language that preserved the Hungarian identity of Transylvania, and the churches have played a huge role in this. The cultural situation of a country divided into three parts has an important message even for today. István Nemeskürty (2003: 65) summarises this as follows:

- “After the break-up of the Hungarian state, the national language took over the role and representation of national unity.”

And this linguistic programme has lived on through the centuries; it has inspired Hungarian dictionary compilers, descriptive linguists, language innovators, folklorists and representatives of folklorism to the present day.

Only one Hungarian-speaking area has been left out of the continuous, cohesive development of the Hungarian (literary) language: the Moldavian Hungarians living outside the Carpathian Basin, who have been cut off from the mother tongue and not supported by the Catholic Church (despite numerous requests for Hungarian-language masses and sermons), and have practically lost their former mother tongue by now. Although well-intentioned linguistic revitalisation efforts have been launched to revive the Hungarian language in this region, their effectiveness is questionable. This can be a warning sign for other areas and regions.

It is worth taking a more distant example. The example of the missionaries who arrived with the colonists. They tried to learn the local customs and languages as soon as possible, so as to be able to preach and convert in their mother tongues. The fact that liturgy and preaching is now done in Spanish and Portuguese in South America is mainly due to the forced cultural and linguistic change, in which the missionaries have also played a role.

After 1920, a new situation arose in the development of the Hungarian language area as a whole, and thus also in the use of the language in the Church. The country was again divided into several parts. Inside the new borders, the Hungarian language could develop uninterruptedly, both spontaneously and in an organised way. All churches were allowed to use the Hungarian language (this was even strengthened by the Second Vatican Council with the recognition of the liturgical use of the mother tongue). Outside the borders, however, a duality emerged. Mass and worship continued to be conducted in Hungarian in the fully Hungarian inhabited areas. But according to some recollections, the expansion of state languages diminished the role of the Hungarian language in public life. Using the compelling metaphor of János Péntek (2001): "the language is running out of air". Now you can only hear Hungarian in the family and in church. In the diaspora, "the importance of the mother tongue in the practice of religion is increased. First, the mother tongue is displaced from the workplace as a professional language, then from the public sphere as an official or administrative language, then from communication with neighbours and friends, and perhaps also from families in case of mixed marriages. The last bastion in the way of language shift is the cultic sphere, which exalts, often sacralises, and further preserves the mother tongue as a ceremonial event of mother tongue use." (Péntek 2001, referring to László Vetési's 1991 study): 186). It is a common experience in diasporic settlements that Hungarian as a mother tongue is now only used in churches as a "sacred language". One can only imagine the power of this Hungarian lan-

guage, which has become mysterious, enigmatic, even archaic over time... Yet, as János Péntek (2001: 181) has previously emphasized:

- “here in Transylvania, language and soul, faith and mother tongue have always strengthened each other. This is the dual root and equally important condition for our survival.”

Nowadays, there are even more sophisticated multicultural linguistic situations and conflicts, and as a result, we can speak of linguistic regression and disadvantage. There are countries, policies and situations where we can talk about barely concealed or overt linguistic repression (banning of the mother tongue), but more often there are manipulated, barely visible situations. However, it is still a clear, humanist linguistic policy that any restriction on the use of the mother tongue should be prohibited. Well, killing and stealing is also prohibited. One of the basic European language policy positions is that all languages and even language varieties (including dialects) should be protected, and that the official language of each EU Member State is also the official language of the EU. Of course, in reality inequality is increasing, and it has recently become clear that the EU does not want to deal with minority languages, leaving them to the Member States (thus sweeping conflicts under the carpet). Minor languages, declining languages, diasporic language varieties are in principle protected by official documents. All fine in words, but not in practice. Because behind everything there are intentions, as reflected in the cunning games of language policy. (I wrote about the language policy games and manipulations in detail here: Balázs 2016). When there are good language policy guidelines and regulations, subjective and objective obstacles often arise. Subjective obstacles, for example: language policy is made by people, and people have feelings, stereotypes, and obsessions. Sometimes all it takes is one teacher, one headmaster, one party secretary... and the guidelines have no effect. Exploring the subjective causes would require a psychological, social-psychological approach, so we will leave them aside for now.

There are objective obstacles as well. An objective barrier may be, for example, the dispersion or population size of a national-linguistic community. Just to emphasise the latter: a single individual is important and unrepeatable, but a single person cannot be granted all national-cultural-linguistic rights at a given time and place. What is the threshold for a minority in terms of the number of people to get a class, a primary school, a secondary school, a university, a publishing house, etc.? And here we return to the language of preaching. How many people are addressed by the mass, the service? We guess the answer: a decreasing number of people. What is the lan-

guage of the given community? What about multilingualism and mixed languages? And once we have assessed this, we have further questions: is there a priest, a pastor; and if so, what is he doing about the situation of multilingualism and mixed languages? Even if the language of the liturgy, of the sermon, were to be decided, would the priest or the pastor know that language?

So, what is the situation in the diaspora, what happens when Hungarian is a linguistic minority? There is no doubt that recommendations should be made, and the language of liturgy and preaching, or more broadly the use of the language of the Church, should be made part of the strategy for the Hungarian diaspora. The ideal situation would be for everyone to hear the Word in their mother tongue. If this is not feasible for some objective reasons, I am convinced that the system of alternative masses and services can be a solution. If there is no solution to this, for example because of a lack of priests, bilingual masses and services could be a solution. The liturgy is so bound, so repetitive, that I would not consider it necessary for it to be in the mother tongue. Remember that Latin was the language of the liturgy in Europe for centuries. But in the case of sermons and homilies, I think mother tongue is essential. Baptisms, marriage ceremonies and funerals must also be in the mother tongue. I would also add religious education to the list, but here the requirements of the public school system come into play.

We should explore what examples (today we would say “best practices”) there are (if any) of bilingual church communication. In some cases, bilingual communication could work with a complementary function, but I still think communication should be take place dominantly in the mother tongue in the given church community. Bilingualism is possible even if the priest or pastor is only confident in his mother tongue and less confident in the other language. Members of the congregation, like native speakers in general, always appreciate an attempt in their mother tongue. But this may not even be a real problem, since the priest or pastor lives in his community, his congregation, and almost certainly speaks all the local languages to some extent.

I have so far focused on the language of preaching and the liturgy as used in the diaspora or minority settings. But there are much broader connections, and I mention them only because a more comprehensive church language strategy would have to deal with it. Church language does not stand alone. It forms part of the mother tongue in general. Because of its cultic, sacral (holy, ceremonial) nature, it is in many ways more traditional than the vernacular. It is slow to renew, but there are linguistic innovations. In general, it would be worth addressing the issues of the church language (there have been attempts to do so by the Association of Hungarian Language Cultivation in Transylvania, e.g. A. Molnár 1999), the language of the church press, the language of religious

education, and the specificities of denominations (in pastoral care, prayer meetings, confession). But it must also be acknowledged that the practice of preaching is today determined by many external circumstances, and it is probably only possible to formulate basic principles that may not apply to every congregation or situation. Bert de Leede and Ciska Start (2020: 27), in their textbook on Protestant preaching practice, highlight this in the following way, which is also understood and applicable to language choice and language use:

- “there are significant differences in the cultural, and therefore spiritual and ecclesial state of being. The ecclesial space where preaching takes place in Protestant churches is very diverse. Therefore, the way to situate Protestant preaching in this diverse space is to look at its traditional roots on the one hand, and its interconnectedness with contemporary culture and society on the other.”

The worst thing is when the mother tongue, prayers and believers are excluded from the church. Prayer may live on for a long time in its archaic, apocryphal, folk form, but the Word of God, which offers daily refreshment, often no longer reaches individuals who have become increasingly disconnected since the 20th century. When the fabric of religion is disintegrating, it has a disruptive effect on the personality. And in this world divided into individuals, the sacral acts that may still be found in some places are of little help. Yet we have built up a thousand-year-old Hungarian-language religious culture, in which we emphasise universality, cooperation, and the narrower and wider community. That’s where we feel good. Religion is a structuring factor not only for human attitudes and worldviews, but also for ethnicity. The shift of religions is most likely to be accompanied by a shift of languages. And language shifts lead to the extinction of some languages. Sticking to a language, to the mother tongue, and therefore keeping that language alive, is therefore linked to faith and religion.

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