

ZOLTÁN GÁRDONYI SERVING ECCLESIASTICAL MUSIC

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SUMMARY. Zoltán Gárdonyi is an ecclesiastical musician, musicologist, composer and professor, an outstanding personality of the 20th century European music. The paper hereby offers a glimpse into the outstanding ecclesiastical choral pieces Zoltán Gárdonyi composed in his lifetime.

Keywords: vocal ecclesiastical music, strophic adaptations, through-composed pieces, homophonic and polyphonic structural techniques.

1. Biographical data

Zoltán Gárdonyi was born on 25th April 1906 in Budapest.² His father was historian Albert Gárdonyi (1874-1946), his mother pianist Mária Weigl (1880-1969). In the home of the Gárdonyis playing instrumental and chamber music was an everyday activity, for his father was also an amateur musician: he played the violin. Such family atmosphere inspired his first compositions. His mother was especially keen on his learning to play the piano, but he was attracted from the very beginning by the sonority of the organ. He was very much impressed by how Gusztáv Krausz (1858-1921), the organ player of the church on Kálvin Square in Budapest played.

His outstanding abilities showed also in the study of other subject matters. He completed his final examinations at 17, earlier than the other pupils in his generation and he was immediately admitted into the *Academy of Music* in Budapest. Since 1923 for four years he had been a student in the composer class of Zoltán Kodály. Then his studies in Berlin followed between 1928 and 1930 in *Hochschule für Musik*, in the composer class of Paul Hindemith (1895-1963), then at the University of Berlin, where he earned his PhD in 1931 with the thesis entitled *Die ungarischen Stileigentümlichkeiten in der musikalischen Werken Franz Liszts*.

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² I collected biographical data of Zoltán Gárdonyi from the specialized literature presented at the end of the paper hereby.

In autumn 1931 he started teaching at the *Lutheran Training Collage* in Sopron. And in autumn 1936 this was supplemented by ecclesiastical music classes at the *Lutheran Theological Institute* of Sopron. Then he was asked to preside the *Franz Liszt Musical Association of Sopron*. And as a pianist for various chamber music formations he had a chance to familiarize himself with the chamber music repertory of the 19th and 20th century and to present his own compositions.

After a decade's work in Sopron, his activities lead him back to Budapest. Here he met and in 1942 married Ilona Wallrabenstein (Bujdosó) (1914-1999) who was a music teacher and singing master and also a former student of Zoltán Kodály. Zoltán Gárdonyi had been lecturer at the Academy of Music and also a music teacher at the *Training Collage*. Finally, in 1946 he was awarded a position as an Associate professor at the *Academy of Music*. He thought many subject matters, the most important being: theory of music, solfège, counterpoint studies, musical forms, harmonics, history of music, history of ecclesiastical music. In this period studies and counterpoint by Liszt and Bach were published³. In 1946 he was appointed a successor of Aladár Zalánfy (1887-1959) as head of the Department of Protestant Ecclesiastical Music at the Academy of Music. But in 1948, due to political changes the department was liquidated and he became a persona non grata and as a consequence he was allowed to teach only subject matters of little consequence. From 1949 to 1953 he taught ecclesiastical music and singing at the *Reformed Theological Academy* in Budapest. In 1959 he edited a choral book to the trial hymn book that had been edited in 1948 by Kálmán Csomasz Tóth (1902-1988). Collaborating with a committee he compiled the curriculum for chorister formation and he published this curriculum in 1969 with the title *Egyházzenei Vezérfonal (Guidelines of Ecclesiastic Music)*. He was a member in several scientific committees, a collaborator for several musical encyclopedias and a lecturer at many congresses of musicology. At 61 he retired and in 1972 he moved to Germany with his family. He died at Herford at 27th June 1986.

As a composer he has a varied life work, including pieces for orchestra, for the piano, for the organ, pieces of chamber music for stringed and wind instruments, choral pieces with accompaniment and a cappella entailing secular and ecclesiastical lyrics, chamber choral pieces, songs for voice or for the piano. He made a real effort to revive the Hungarian Protestant music. As he confessed⁴, his interest for vocal ecclesiastical

³ *Basics of the Art of Counterpoint at JS Bach* (1967); *The Art of Canon and Fugue Construction at JS Bach* (1972).

⁴ Gárdonyi Zoltán, *Önvallomás (Confessions About Myself)*, In: *Reformátusok lapja*, Budapest, 1981

music was established at Kodály's counterpoint classes and the Gregorian music classes of Artúr Harmat (1885-1962). He created his first composition in ecclesiastical music during his studies in Berlin, as a student of Hindemith. The cantata was entitled *Neujahrgesang*. Its lyrics were a poem by Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676), a musical poet of the 17th century. His composition for the final examination was a cantata for the German text of the 114th Psalm and it was performed for the first time in 1930. After 1931 he created choral pieces for Hungarian lyrics one after another. Some of them use the tunes of the Reformed hymn book, others are completely his own invention as a composer with lyrics from the *Bible*. He was a student of the Academy of Music yet when he identified the problems concerning the discordance in the rhythm of the Genevan Psalms and Albert Molnár Szenci's Hungarian lyrics to the psalms. Zoltán Kodály's instructions for him regarding this topic were of an utmost importance. His attention was drawn to the beauty and value of the tunes in the old Hungarian songs of praise by Béla Árokháty (1890-1942), the editor of the Yugoslavian Reformed hymn book. In his writing entitled *Önvallomás (Confessions About Myself)* he points out how uplifting these old Hungarian works of praise were to his own inventiveness as a composer. As an ecclesiastical composer he contributed to the perpetuation of these valuable tunes also by adapting them for new compositions.

The paper hereby can undertake to present only a small part of this great oeuvre. My intention in this paper is to present the choral pieces that had at their basis tunes of psalms and tunes of praise from the official hymn book of the Hungarian Reformed Church⁵. These choral pieces can be found in the two volumes compiled by his son: *Szívemnek kösziklása I. (Rock of My Heart I.)*, (1998); *Magasztaló ének II. (Songs of Praise II)*, (2001)⁶. The two volumes contain together 75 pieces⁷. Following practical considerations the two volumes present the choral pieces in four groups according to genre: canons, choral pieces for single gender choir, choral pieces for mixed choir and choral pieces with instrumental accompaniment. In every group pieces are presented according to their degree of difficulty. Both volumes begin with an introduction on the time when the pieces were created, on the lyrics and the musical source.

⁵ In the following I will abbreviate the *Hymn book* published in 1948 in Budapest and the tunes in it with the formula Ref+the number of the song having the respective tune.

⁶ Both volumes were published in Budapest by the workshop of the Reformed ecclesiastical musicologists. In the following I will abbreviate the two volumes with I and II. The piece entitled *A 26. genfi zsoltár (Genevan Psalm No. 26)* can be found in the volume entitled *Magyar zsoltárok (Hungarian Psalms)*, on page 70. (The volume was published by the Press Department of the Reformed Synodal Office, Budapest, 1979.)

⁷ I will not deal in the paper hereby with the third volume presenting 25 compositions.

2. Stylistic classification of the adapted tunes

The songs of praise adapted by Zoltán Gárdonyi were written in **various ages**. From the oldest stratum found in the Reformed hymn book, i.e. **the Gregorian songs** he adapts five tunes: two hymns of Advent from which the first one is a hexachord scale in major, while the second is a scale of the same composition in minor; the third tune is a descending scale in major with lyrics about the resurrection of Christ; the fourth is a hymn to the Holy Spirit with Mixolydian scale and the fifth an Aeolian tune teaching us how to have faith⁸.

Hexachord scale in major (*Új világosság jelenék*, Ref 301)

Hexachord scale in minor (*Jöjj népek megváltója*, Ref 303)

Major scale (*351. Emlékezzünk ez napon*, Ref 351)

Mixolydian (*Jövel, teremtő Szentlélek*, Ref 373)

Aeolian (*Úr Isten, te tarts meg minket*, Ref 233)

From among **the Medieval songs** he adapted three tunes: the first one is a song for Advent mornings with a Phrygian scale; the second a carol with Phrygian scale and the third a song for Easter with a scale in Dorian/Aeolian.

Phrygian (*Jézus Krisztus szép fényes hajnal*, Ref 485)

Phrygian (*Jézus születél*, Ref 314)

Dorian/Aeolian (*Krisztus feltámadott*, Ref 185)

The majority of the adapted tunes have been composed **during the Reformation**. Among these there are three with hexachord scales with small ambitus. The first tune originates in the hymn books of the 17th and 18th centuries. The second in the Hoffgreff collection (1553) and its tune has been augmented with accidentals specific to the melodic minor scale during the 19th century. The third has lyrics of thanks giving. The tunes of the Reformation often use ecclesiastic modes. The Advent song of Hungarian reformer Gergely Szegedi (1511-1570) and the Eastern song of an unknown Protestant composer have Mixolydian scale; the song of repentance of Bálint Balassi (1551-1594) and the song of prayer of the Hymn book of Várad (1566) have Phrygian scale; the song from the manuscript of Brestov and the tune of the Gradual of Prague with a tune of tenth (1567) have scales in major; András Batizi's (1515-1546) song to the Holy Spirit has a Dorian/Aeolian scale; the song on Jesus' seven sayings has an Aeolian scale and finally Luther's (1483-1546) world famous psalm paraphrase and Mihály Sztárai's (1520-1574) song have scales in major.

⁸ The parentheses contain the first line of the hymn and its number in the hymn book published in 1948 in Budapest.

Hexachord scale in minor (*Jer mindnyájan örüljünk*, Ref 318; *Ó, örök hatalmú* Ref 402)
Hexachord scale in major (*Mondjatok dicsérete,t* Ref 196)
Mixolydian (*Szent Ézsaiás*, Ref 311; *Krisztus feltámadá*, Ref 353)
Phrygian (*Bocsásd meg Úr Isten*, Ref 220; *Emlékezzél, Úr Isten, híveidről*, Ref 379)
Dorian (*Nagy hálát adjunk*, Ref 225; *Az Úr Isten az én reménységem*, Ref 275)
Dorian/Aeolian (*Jövel Szentlélek Úr Isten*, Ref 369)
Aeolian (*Paradicsomnak te szép élő fája*, Ref 337)
Major (*Erős vár a mi Istenünk*, Ref 390; *Mindenkoron áldom*, Ref 254)

From among the specific group of Reformed tunes, i.e. **the Genevan psalms** he adapts only seven.

Phrygian (Psalm 26 and 51)
Dorian (Psalm 107 and 125)
Mixolydian (Psalm 121)
Major (Psalm 54 and 97)

Tunes of later ages are little represented in Zoltán Gárdonyi's adaptations. He uses a choral tune in major and one in minor from among the folk songs of **the age of the Counter-Reformation**.

Major (*Dicsérvétek Istent*, Ref 198)
Minor (*Ki Istenének átad mindent*, Ref 274)

From the oldish tunes of wailing of the **Baroque Pietistic style** he adapts a tune in minor and two more tunes in minor **from the 19th century**.

Minor (*Krisztusom kívüled*, Ref 226; *Az én időm*, Ref 366; *Szelíd szemed Úr Jézus*, Ref 465)

3. Groups of performers

Zoltán Gárdonyi composed the adaptations to various choirs. Among these works there are both smaller adaptations for single gender ecclesiastical choirs for two or three voices, pieces for mixed choir for three or four voices and pieces with instrumental accompaniment.⁹ The greater part of the

⁹ Single gender choirs for two voices: II/3,4.

Single gender choirs for three voices:I/8,9,10,11,13; II/5,7.

adaptations (fifteen choral pieces) are pieces for a mixed choir for four voices. Besides these there are 8 pieces for single gender choir. In the case of several of the choral pieces with accompaniment the choir sings the tune unisono or the tune alternates between the various voices at various times.¹⁰ In the case of two pieces the unisono extends into a mixed choir for four voices at the end.¹¹

4. Structure of the choral pieces

The choral pieces belong to two categories: pieces adapting a single tune (of strophic or through-composed form, i.e. the adaptation is different for every stanza) or pieces adapting several tunes. In one of the pieces there are two adapted tunes: that of a psalm and of a song of praise.¹²

In the case of the strophic adaptations neither the tone, nor the manner of adaptation changes in the stanzas of the piece.¹³ But the through-composed pieces are more complex. They fall into two categories as far as tone is concerned: five pieces have the same tone from the beginning to the end¹⁴, in thirteen pieces there are changes in tone throughout the piece. These changes are usually to a tone close to the initial tone within the tonic. In eight cases there is a simple oscillation between the initial tone or mode and the dominant tone,¹⁵ in one case between the initial tone and the subdominant tone,¹⁶ in two pieces the tune oscillates both to the dominant and the subdominant tone,¹⁷ in one piece the oscillation is to the subdominant tone at a distance of two fifths (the modal structure of the piece alters as follows: *c-g-f-g-b flat-c*)¹⁸ and in one case the oscillation is to a tone distant from the initial tone (*d-a-c sharp-d*).¹⁹

5. The technique of adaptation

Zoltán Gárdonyi uses both homophonic and polyphonic structural techniques in the choral pieces. In the simpler adaptations intended for

Mixed choir for three voices: I/14,15,16; II/12.

Mixed choir for four voices: I/18,20,21,23,24,26,27,31; II/15,17.

Pieces with organ accompaniment: I/33,37,38,39,41; II/27.

Pieces with organ and violin accompaniment: I/34; II/25.

Pieces with violin, chello and organ accompaniment: II/23.

¹⁰ I/33,34,37.

¹¹ I/37; II/23.

¹² I/41.

¹³ I/8,9,10,11,20,21,33,34; II/3,4,5,7,12.

¹⁴ I/24,31,38,39; II/25.

¹⁵ I/13,14,18,23,26,37; II/17,27

¹⁶ II/15

¹⁷ I/17; II/23

¹⁸ I/41

¹⁹ I/27

ecclesiastical choirs he uses homophonic technique (for 21 pieces), while for all the other pieces the homophonic and polyphonic structural technique does not appear clearly. These alternate from one stanza to another or often within one stanza without disruption in the continuity of the various voices. I selected the compositions analyzed in the following with the purpose of illustrating every manner of adaptation with an example.

5.1. Paradicsomnak te szép élő fája (Oh Thou Lovely Living Tree of the Paradise)

This choral piece for mixed choir for four voices starts in E minor without the soprano. The adapted tune is in the alto, then it moves to the soprano from the third melodic line with high pitch. In the second stanza the tune is presented a fifth higher in H minor in bass. The third stanza, which is the last, starts with a unisono of the female voices in the original tone of the piece, in E minor. The last, short verse of the Sapphic stanza can be found in the soprano with augmented notes. During the entire piece the counter-voices counterpoint the main voice with short, repetitive motifs and musical parts.

Ex. 1

Lassan

Pa - ra - di - csomnak te szép élő fá - ja, Ó, kegyes Jé - zus, Istennek Bá - rá - nya,
 Ke - gyes Jé - zus, ke - gyes Jé - zus, Is - ten - nek
 Ke - gyes Jé - zus, ke - gyes Jé - zus, Is - ten - nek

At the end of the piece there is a short part of free imitation using tune sequences of the original hymn.

Ex. 2

poco f

És megszerző - je szent békessé - günknek, id - ves - sé - günk - - -
 ki megszer - ző - je szent bé - - - kessé - günknek,
 nek, ki megszer - ző - je idves - nek, az Is - ten - nek, ki megszerzője id - ves -

The composer mainly uses a slow tempo and quiet dynamics. The only *poco forte* part is the third verse of the third stanza: “És megszerzője szent békességünknek (And the donor of the peace we cherish so much)”. This is the summit of the entire piece and after this the volume drops to *pianissimo* again.

5.2. Genevan Psalm No. 121

In this choral piece for four voices the tune of the psalm is presented at the beginning in the soprano, then it gradually moves to the lower voices. It moves in G Mixolydian during the entire piece. The counter-voices counterpoint the tune of the Genevan psalm with an original, gradual melodic curve.

Dynamic rise is created by the composer increasing the number of voices. He starts adapting the third stanza already with tempo description *a little more vividly* when the fourth voice joins into the choral. He presents the part “Az Úr téged megőrizzen, kezet rád terjesztvén árnyékkal befedjen (May the Lord protect you and cover you with the shadow of his hands)” in *forte*, then the dynamics decreases again.

When it is required by the prosody, he replaces the uniform eighths of the Genevan psalm with a more vivid rhythmic formula.

Ex. 3

31 Kissé élénkebben

Az Úr téged meg - ő - rizen, ke - zet rád terjeszt - vén árnyékkal befedjen! Hogy a nap

Az Úr téged megő - rizen, ke - zet rád terjeszt - vén árnyékkal befedjen! Hogy a nap

Az Úr téged meg - ő - rizen, ke - zet rád terjeszt - vén árnyékkal befedjen! Hogy a nap

Az Úr téged meg - ő - rizen, ke - zet rád terjeszt - vén árnyékkal befedjen! Hogy a nap

5.3. Krisztusom kívüléd (Oh Christ I Have No One to Lean On Besides You)

The first two melodic lines of this ecclesiastical piece is presented in unisono by the soprano and the tenor. The alto and the bass counter these also in unisono with short, descending motifs of lengthened rhythm.

Ex. 4

Krisztusom, kívü - led nincs kihez já - rul - nom, Ily beteg voltom - ban nincs kitől gyógyulnom,
 Krisz - tu - som, kí - vü - led nincs ki - hez já - rul - nom,
 Krisztusom, kívü - led nincs kihez já - rul - nom, Ily beteg voltom - ban nincs kitől gyógyulnom,
 Krisz - tu - som, kí - vü - led nincs ki - hez já - rul - nom,

From the fifth measure the adapted tune can be found only in the soprano, the other voices counter it with a parallel movement of a third and a fifth with the alternating motif of the soprano as a counterpoint.

Ex. 5

⁵
 Nincs ily fekélyem - ből ki ál - tal tisztul - nom,
 Nincs ily feké - lyem - ből ki ál - tal tisztul - nom,
 Nincs ily feké - lyem - ből ki ál - tal tisztul - nom,
 Nincs ily feké - lyem - ből ki ál - tal tisztul - nom,

At the adaptation of the second stanza the adapted tune is presented by the male voices: the first two verses in unisono, then first the tenor, then the bass. They are countered by the female voices by a combination at various pitches of the variants of the afore mentioned alternating motif. Metrical shifts between the various voices are reconciled by long, pedal point like verse ending notes in the alt and in the bass.

Ex. 6

9

p *cresc.*

Gyűjtsd meg szövé - ne - két áldott szent i - géd - nek, És bennem virraszd fel napját kegyel -

p *cresc.*

Gyűjtsd meg szövé - ne - két áldott szent i - géd - nek, És bennem virraszd fel napját kegyel -

mf

Gyűjtsd meg szövé - ne - két áldott szent i - géd - nek, És bennem virraszd fel napját kegyel - med - nek;

mf

Gyűjtsd meg szövé - ne - két áldott szent i - géd - nek, És bennem virraszd fel napját kegyel - med - nek;

The third stanza is presented by the soprano. The alternating motifs of the counter-voices widen, sometimes the two pairs of voices form parallel octaves. The piece ends with a short coda where the soprano ends ascending on the fifth of the musical sequence and the other voices within the tonic. The closing chord is a perfect fifth.

Ex. 7

23

p

Háromság egy Is - ten, áldj meg dolgaink - ban, áldj - meg - dol - ga - ink - ban.

p

Áldj meg - dol - ga - ink - ban, áldj meg dol - ga - ink - ban.

p

Háromság egy Is - ten, áldj meg dol - ga - ink - ban.

p

Áldj meg - dol - ga - ink - ban.

5.4. Szelíd szemed, Úr Jézus (Cast Your Kind Eyes Upon Me)

This piece has a melodic arch and is presented by the soprano in D minor. The counter-voices of the four-voice pieces create a harmonic basis observing the principle of least movement and applying descending or ascending passing note sequences.

In the second stanza the theme is sung by the alto, lower with a fifth, in the dominant tone, i.e. in A minor. The counter-voices join in at every other measure singing the notes of the upper tetrachord of the melodic minor. The third scale, which is the culmination of the melodic arch is strengthened by the

tenor with a parallel third, which is imitated by the bass in stretto. The melodic pattern of the fourth, descending scale is followed also by the counter-voices, but even in this descendance they maintain the 6th and 7th augmented degree of the melodic minor.

Ex. 8

The tenor and the soprano sing a tune descending with repetitive second steps in parallel sixth, using chromatic notes (*G-sharp, F-sharp, D-sharp, C-sharp*), which lead to a new and distant tone: C-sharp minor.

The third stanza of the piece is presented on the same tone by the tenor. From this distant tone the composer leads us back to the initial D minor with two measures of transition in which there are repetitive, descending seconds with a parallel sixth between the tenor and the alto. The scale of the last stanza starts with an unisono, but after three ascending notes the voices take their individual paths. The piece ends with a short coda presenting the most specific motifs of the tune. After a large melisma the piece ends in a Picardy third.

The composer uses quiet dynamic shades for this piece. The only exception to this are measures 21 to 23 where the line “Vétkeztem én, ítéljen el (I sinned, let them cast your judgement upon me)” has a *forte* dynamic.

5.5. Genevan Psalm no. 107.

This piece starts in two voices: the female voices sing the psalm, while the counter-tune of the male voices starts with a salient lengthened rhythm. The tune starts with a firm *forte* dynamic. In the second part of the stanza the dynamic is reduced to *mezzoforte*, the tune of the psalm is continued only by the soprano, while the other voices imitate the most specific motifs of the tune. The initial motif of the second part is imitated by the tenor with a tonal response delayed with two measures.

In the second stanza the tune of the psalm is started by the bass and taken over by the tenor. The female voices counter with voices in parallel sixth with the lengthened rhythmic patterns from the beginning and then with a series of syncopes. In the second part of the second stanza the counter-voices use for imitation the same tune motifs and melodic curves as in the first stanza, but the combination is different for the various voices.

The motif of tonic imitation is present again, this time the alto imitates the tenor.

Ex. 9

24

The musical score for Ex. 9 consists of four staves. The top staff is the Soprano line, the second is the Alto line, the third is the Tenor line, and the bottom is the Bass line. The lyrics are in Hungarian. The score is in 2/4 time. Dynamics include *mf* and *p*. The lyrics are:
 től - té é - tel - lel.
 től - té é - tel - lel.
 Mi - helyt ő egy szót szól, Meg -
 Mi - helyt ő egy szót szól, Meg - job - bul az e - rőt -
 é - tel - lel. Mi - helyt ő egy szót szól, Meg - job -

The tune of the psalm starts in the third stanza at the same time for the soprano and the tenor, but the tenor has augmented notes. The soprano presents only the beginning of the theme, while the tenor takes us through the entire first part of the psalm. The tune of the psalm is continued in the bass with augmented notes and parallelly the beginning of the theme with the initial notes is sung by the tenor. There is a tonic imitation between the soprano and the alto.

Ex. 10

48 *mf*
 jat, a sereg nyá - jat. A jók, kik ezt lát - ják, ezt lát - ják, Ör - ven - dez
 mint a sereg nyá - jat. *mf* A jók, kik ezt lát - ják, ezt lát - ják, ezt lát - ják, A jók, kik ezt lát - ják, ezt lát - ják, Ör - ven - dez
 jat. *mf* A jók, kik ezt lát - ják, ezt lát - ják, ezt lát - ják, A jók, kik ezt lát - ják, ezt lát - ják, Ör - ven - dez

The fourth stanza is only half a verse. While in the previous parts there was an alternation of the homophonic and polyphonic parts, this half verse is homophonic. As far as dynamic is concerned the *forte-piano* dialogue every half sentence is an interesting solution. The piece ends in a Picardy third.

5.6. A song of praise for Pentecost

This choral piece starts with an imitative introduction for harmonium or organ. In this introductory part we find the scale step jumping an ascending fifth specific to the tune of the initial Pentecostal song of the 16th century. The beginning of the upper voice is followed by a tonic imitation in the lower voice in stretto. There is a strict imitation between the two voices, which are a fifth apart. In the 6th and 7th measures the difference becomes an octave apart. This strict imitation from note to note is kept until the cadence of the instrumental introduction.

Ex. 11

Harmónium
vagy
orgona
 8 *p*
 Jő - vel, Szentlélek Úr Is - ten,
p

In this piece for mixed choir in four voices the unisono parts alternate with homophonic parts. The tune cut out from the medieval tune based Credo of Luther²⁰ is in E Aeolian/Dorian mode. The Doric accent is due to the temporary sharpening of the 6th degree. In the harmonization, in the accompanying tune sometimes also the 7th degree of the mode appears after the 6th degree, giving the tune a resemblance to the melodic minor.

In the mixed voice of the tune, in the last two measures of the first part of the song there is a deviation in tone to H minor in the dominant direction, but at the end the tune returns to the original tone. In the two measures where the tonic deviation takes place (measures 17 to 19) the mirror pattern of the undulatory melodic curve of the soprano appears one and a half measure later in the instrumental accompaniment a parallel octave apart.

Ex. 12

The musical score for Ex. 12 consists of two systems. The first system shows a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (bass clef). The vocal line starts at measure 15 and includes the lyrics: "Lel-künknek vigas-sá-ga, Szí-vünknek bátor-sá-ga, Ad-jad". The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the upper voice that mirrors the vocal line's undulatory curve. The second system continues the piano accompaniment, showing a melodic line in the upper voice that mirrors the vocal line's undulatory curve. The piano accompaniment is marked *mf*.

In the tune and the accompaniment we find complete seven-note scales or parts of these scales. For example: the gradual Doric scale in measures 36 to 40, in the bass. In the ending scale of each of the two sections of the tune the *G-sharp* extended fifth emphasizes the Doric style in the scale section between the third and seventh degree of the scale. This section is imitated by the upper voice of the instrumental accompaniment, one measure apart and one octave deeper (measures from 27 to 29 and from 48 to 50).

²⁰ See: László Dobszay, *A magyar népének (Hungarian Folk Music)*, Veszprémi Egyetem kiadása, 1995, note no. 85/329.

Ex. 12a



Comparing the adaptation of the first and second stanzas it is obvious that there is a disproportion in the unisono and homophonic parts. In the second stanza there are far more homophonic parts. So the two stanzas have been adapted in different manners. Due to the pauses lasting for several measures of the instrumental accompaniment the music of the choral part is well emphasized. This is probably specific to the vocal musical tradition of the Reformed congregations.

5.7. A song of praise

The adapted tune originates from a 17th century Slovakian hymn book, the *Cythara Sanctorum* (1636) by Georgius Tranoscius (1592-1637). About its tune László Dobszay wrote that it seems to be of Sapphic origin²¹. Two variants of the lyric are known. The Reformed hymn books usually use the lyric variant noted as second in Gárdonyi's adaptation²².

The homophonic first section of this choral piece for mixed choir starts in unisono, then the tune is sung only by the soprano, while the other voices counter it with simple harmonization. The second stanza is a polyphonic adaptation. The cantus firmus presented in the first section in C minor is present now in subdominant tone in F minor sung by the bass and taken over later by the tenor. The other voices counterpoint using some of the motifs of the tune. In the tune of the third stanza the cantus firmus appears in the external voices, first in the soprano, then in the bass with augmented notes. The other voices complete the harmony by imitating motifs and sequences of the tune.

The initial motif of the cantus firmus containing a musical arch (c-c-c-d-e flat-d-c-b flat) appears several times as an imitation: as a parallel third in the voice of the tenor and the bass (measures 37 and 38), then in the alto (measure 39). A small part of this motif appears only in mirror pattern in the dialogue of the alto and the tenor (measures 32 to 36).

²¹ See: Dobszay note no. 120/390.

²² *Az Úr Isten az én reménységem (The Lord Is My Hope)*, Ref. hymnbook, song no. 275.

32

tem - ben e - gész az - ért é - le - tem fogy - tá - dom, Ma - gasz - dá -

mf

É - le - temben Ót, csak Ót i - má - dom, csak Ót i - má - dom.
Azért é - le - tem, az - ért é - le - tem, él - tem fogytá - ig,

mf

É - le - temben Ót, csak Ót i - má - dom, É - le - temben azért Ót i -
Azért é - le - tem, él - tem fogytá - ig, az - ért e - gész é - le - tem fogy -

ben lesz ré - - - - szem. É - le - temben azért Ót i -
ben lesz ré - - - - szem. Azért e - gész é - le - tem fogy -

39

ta - lom lom itt És nagy mű - ve - it val - lom.
lom itt Szent ke - zé - nek mun - ká - it,

É - le - temben csak Ót i - má - dom És nagy mű - ve - it val - lom.
azért egész él - tem fogytá - ig szent ke - zé - nek mun - ká - it.

má - - - dom, És nagy mű - ve - it val - lom.
tá - - - ig, szent ke - zé - nek mun - ká - it,

má - - - dom. Nagy mű - ve - it, nagy mű - ve - it val - lom.
tá - - - ig Cso - dá - lom itt ke - zé - nek mun - ká - it,

The ascending scale motif with parallel third of the tenor and the alto voices from measures 9 to 12 of the first part appears again in measures 41 to 46 in a counter movement with an emphasis shift resembling a series of syncopes and a melodic minor structure.

9

Én hatal - má - ban bizom s oltal - má - ban Éltem foly - tá - ban.
Csak tő - le vá - rom l - gaz boldog - sá - gom; S megis ta - lá - lom.

Én hatal - má - ban bizom s oltal - má - ban Éltem foly - tá - ban, él - tem foly - tá -
Csak tő - le vá - rom l - gaz boldog - sá - gom; S megis ta - lá - lom, meg is ta - lá -

Én hatal - má - ban bizom s oltal - má - ban Éltem foly - tá - - - -
Csak tő - le vá - rom l - gaz boldog - sá - gom; S megis ta - lá - - - -

Én hatal - má - ban bizom s oltal - má - ban Éltem foly - tá - - - -
Csak tő - le vá - rom l - gaz boldog - sá - gom; S megis ta - lá - - - -

The middle parts of the piece starting with a *forte* dynamics use *mezzoforte* dynamics, but the piece closes again on *forte* from the line “Magasztaló ének zengjen Istennek (Songs of praise be sung to the Lord)” with a Picardy third at the end.

5.8. Psalm 34 by Sztárai

Mihály Sztárai was a 16th century reformer, a Lutheran pastor, composer, an important personality of the 16th century Hungarian literature. Reformed hymn books contain up to this very day some of the religious hymns he composed. This paraphrase of Psalm 34 of the Bible can be found in the 16th century hymn book by Gál Huszár, in the *Cantionale* by Kájoni and in most of the Reformed hymn books until the beginning of the 19th century²³. As it was customary in that age the tune was used with many secular and ecclesiastical lyrics. The tune was not put on a score until late. The scored version appears for the first time in the hymn book of Debrecen edited in 1778. This piece has a plagal Dorian melodic line, the structure of the tune is ABCB. The verse has 11 syllables and a structure of 8+3.

²³ I took these data from Dobszay's note no. 78/316.

Gárdonyi names the piece after the author of the lyrics. From among the choral pieces with an instrumental accompaniment this is the only one using a cello and a violin besides the harmonium/organ. This piece starts with an instrumental introduction of 23 measures. For the first four stanzas the vocal part is on one voice as is customary in singing for most congregational songs. The author harmonizes only the fifth and sixth stanza, which are for four voices. These voices are used in a different variation in each of the last two stanzas.

The instrumental accompaniment is based on chords. The composer requires various modes of performance: pizzicato, staccato, tenuto, legato; chord decomposition, repetition of notes, long notes, imitation of the specific motifs of the tune are quite frequent. The simple phrasing of the vocal part is counterbalanced by an ambitious musical composition of the instrumental accompaniment, which has several parts.

Ex. 15

56

4. Lám Istennek angyala mind tá - bort jár, Az is - ten - fé - lő emberek kő - rül jár.

The pieces analyzed in the paper hereby reflect the various adaptation modes Zoltán Gárdonyi used as a composer. He was very keen on quality music being played in churches regardless of the musical qualification of the congregation performers. Every choir can freely choose from the wide range of choral pieces of various degrees of difficulty. He adapted the most valuable tunes of the European and Hungarian Protestant ecclesiastical musical tradition. Therefore these choral pieces represent a unique value in the repertory of the 20th century Protestant ecclesiastical music. In his writing

entitled *Önvallomás (Confessions About Myself)* the composer summarizes his activity in the field of ecclesiastical music thus: “My work in the field of ecclesiastical music may seem to outsiders a more or less freely paid tithe, but the persons close to me know that I am thankful to the Lord that I may use to his glory the talent bestowed on me by Him for such a long time and until such old age.”

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