

HA FOLYÓVÍZ VOLNÉK ... (HAD I BEEN RUNNING WATER ...), EQUAL VOICES CHOIR, OP. 1, BY EDE TERÉNYI (1954)

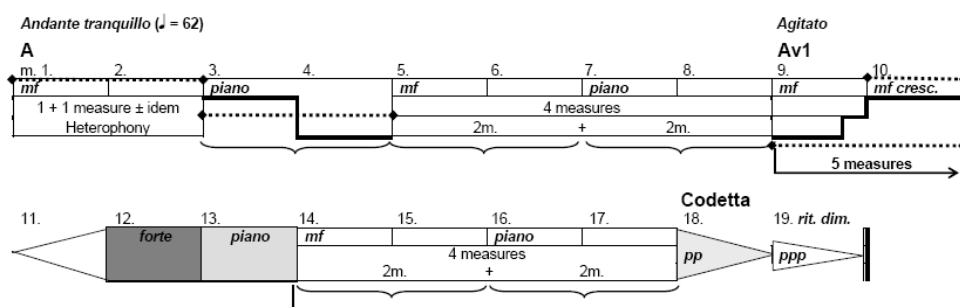
GABRIELA COCA¹

SUMMARY. In 2008 I published in the review *Studia UBB Musica* a biographical study, about the composer Ede Terényi. I had the following motto at the beginning of the study: “*Had I been running water, / I would not know the trouble; / Among mountains and valleys, / Beautifully, I would flow slowly; / I would wash shores, / I would renew herbs, / To the thirsty birds, / I would offer water.*” This is the text of a folk song, which was taken and processed by the composer Ede Terényi, in 1954, as a little choral musical work on three equal voices, a woman (or children) choir, that was inspired by the “*Choral Works for Children’s and Female Voices*” of Bartók. Retroactive, the composer, considers this little work as his really work op. 1. The present study aims to analyse this little work, which is very close to the composer’s soul.

Keywords: Ede Terényi, choir, *Ha folyóvíz volnék...*, *Had I been Running Water...*, analysis

The little work of 19 measures has a very complex construction. The form scheme of the work takes shape as follows:

Fig. 1



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The work is based on two form parts, A + Av1 (8 + 9 measures), by a two measure locking Codetta. The two part of the form, distances himself from one another, by sharp tempo change: *Andante tranquillo* (♩ = 62) / *Agitato*. The tempo of the first part helps the unfolding of melody, to express the text in an illustrative way:

*Among mountains and valleys,
Beautifully, I would flow slowly;*

The *Agitato* already express the dynamism of the action:

*I would wash shores,
I would renew herbs,
To the thirsty birds,
I would offer water.*

In the first part of the form, the dynamics formed a mosaic of 2 + 2 measures, and suggests a continuous alternation of light and shadow (*mf + p + mf + p*). The dynamics of such-like alternation, in fact, closely followed the motivic repetition of 2 + 2 measures, in a heterophonical and slightly varied form.

Ex. 1

Andante tranquillo ♩ = 62

mf
Ha fo-lyó - víz vol-nék bá-na-tot nem tud-nék,
mf
Ha fo-lyó-víz vol-nék bá-na-tot nem tud - nék,
mf
Ha fo-lyó - víz vol-nék bá-na - tot nem tud-nék,

Measures 1-2.

p
Ha fo-lyó-víz vol-nék
p
Ha fo-lyó-víz vol-nék Bá - na - tot nem tud - nék,
p
Bá - na - tot nem tud - nék,

Measures 3-4.

HA FOLYÓVÍZ VOLNÉK ... (HAD I BEEN A RUNNING WATER ...)

After the initial 4 measures, which is symmetrically divided [2 (= 1+1) + 2 (= 1+1)] the following 4 measures are uniformly divided into 2 + 2.

In the second part of the form, similarly to the first part, the composer repeated each verse after his sounding. In the initial 2 measures (measures 9-10), with the text "I would wash shores, I would renew herbs," the voices enter polyphonically, gradually in an up order way.

Ex. 2

Av1

Par - tot mo - so - gat - nék, fü - vet ú - jí - ta - nék

Measures 9-10.

The melodically line of the lower voice from the 10th measure is the same with melodically line from the middle voice of the measure 4 (see the second part of the ex. 1).

The second part of the form consists of two musical phrases, 5 + 4 measures. The phrase which contains 5 measures represents the height point of the dynamic and the ambitus of the entire work. The dynamic reaches the *forte* and the pitch of the soprano reaches the G5 sound.

Ex. 3

Par-tot mo-so-gat-nék

Measure 12 – the culmination

The second phrase of the form part (the measures 14-17) is a varied repetition of a tone higher, of the measures 5-8 from the first part.

Ex. 4

mf Szom - jú ma-da - rak-nak iny-nyok a - do-gat-nék, —

mf Szom - jú ma - da - rak - nak,

mf Szom - jú ma - dár - - - nak,

Measures 14-15.

mf He - gyek völ - gyek kö - zött szép csen - de - sen foly - nék —

mf He - gyek közt szé - pen foly - nék

mf He - gyek közt csen - de - sen foly - nék

Measures 5-6.

In these measures, the upper voice sings the tune, while the middle and the lower voice provide the harmonically support. The melodic line of these measures shows a variety of rhythm, as well as winding, “flow slowly” vocality.

Similarly, the first phrase of the second form part is related on the basis of the motifs to the first phrase of the first part (see in parallel the examples 1 and 2).

The dynamic degrees, in this second form part, too, are attached like a mosaic cubes, by one or two beats. An exception is the *crescendo* of the measures 10-11 that prepares the culmination of the work (see fig. 1 – the form scheme of the choir. The culmination of the measure 12 is the positive golden section of the entire work (also calculated on measures, as well as on quarter notes – due to the alternating beats, 4/4 with 3/4).

The final two measures, the *Codetta*, bring peace of mind, in *pianissimo*, then in *ppp rit. dim.* In the text, return two times the first verse: “Had I been Running Water”. Motivically, on the one hand appear the incipit motifs in a sound varied and mirror invert form (see the example below parallel to the ex. 1):

HA FOLYÓVÍZ VOLNÉK... (HAD I BEEN A RUNNING WATER...)

Ex. 5

pp
 Ha fo - lyó - víz vol - nék
pp
 Ha fo - lyó vol - nék
pp
 Ha fo - lyó vol - nék

Measure 18.

On the other hand, as the final measure, the composer repeats in a varied form the measure which represents the culmination of the work (see in parallel the example nr. 3).

Ex. 6

ppp rit. dim.
 Ha fo - lyó - víz vol - nék
ppp rit. dim.
 Ha fo - lyó - víz vol - nék
ppp rit. dim.
 Ha fo - lyó - víz vol - nék

The motif which in the climax moment sounded with precise rhythms and sharp dynamics in *forte*, returns here in *ppp rit. dim.* form.

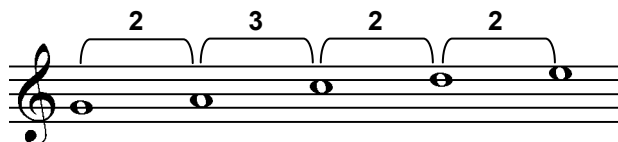
Melodically, the composer uses the hexatone and pentatonic scales. See here for example the scales of the first and second phrases of the work:

Ex. 7

1 3 1 2 3

Measures 1-4 (soprano) – semi chromatic, hexatone scale

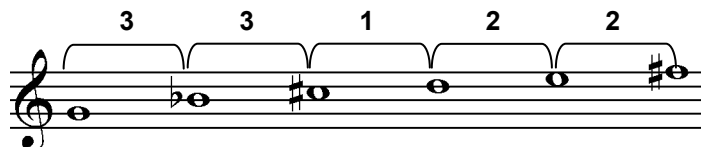
Ex. 8



Measures 5-8 (soprano) – diatonic, pentatonic scale

In the first phrase of the second part of the form (Av1 – measures 9-13), the basic hexatone scale changes in:

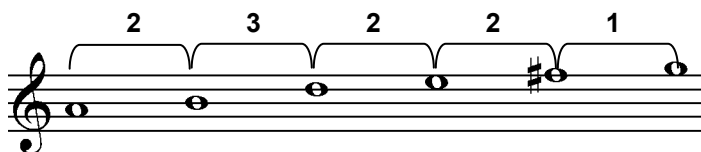
Ex. 9



Measures 9-13 (soprano) – semi chromatic, hexatone scale

Then, in the second phrase, together with the *codetta* the hexatone scale takes the following appearance:

Ex. 10

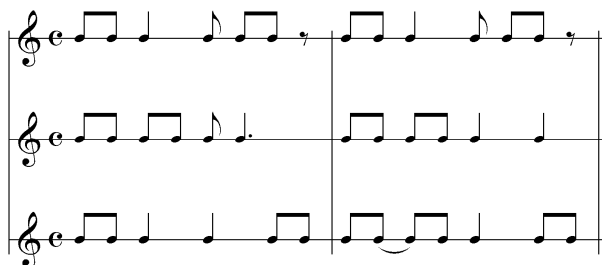


Measures 14-19 (soprano) - semi chromatic, hexatone scale

These scales are not symmetrically constructed.

Regarding rhythmic, there are only 3 out of the 19 measures, in which the composer uses in all three voices the same rhythm. The remaining measures are dominated by vertical polyrhythmic structures (see for example the measures 1-2 of the work:

Ex. 11



The Rhythm of the measures 1-2.

HA FOLYÓVÍZ VOLNÉK ... (HAD I BEEN A RUNNING WATER ...)

The composer, in his choir op. 1, develops a consonant harmonically atmosphere. Mostly, he uses major and minor chords. The dissonant occurring are created by the melodically sounds (suspended notes, transition notes, alternating notes), which are sounding at the same time with the basic elements of the chords. The author uses, at the same time, often, quart chords, that are also dissonant.

As a conclusion, the author was 19 years when he composed this work. The complexity of the work, in spite of its small size, proves the high degree of the logical thinking of the author. Moreover, the selection of this text was not random. The attraction to this content is natural for a man whose soul features are in resonance with the expressive tenderness of this text.

Translated from Hungarian by Gabriela Coca

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