

## FUNERAL SONGS

ÉVA PÉTER\*

**SUMMARY.** The traditional reformed community has many customs related to the three-day mourning of the dead, the period between the time of death and the time of burial. Musical performances are a crucial part of this mourning period.

According to the practices of the reformed tradition, funeral songs are performed during the wake, the cortege and at the grave. The musical repertoire consists mainly of songs from the hymnbook, but the melody of these songs can also be used with other funeral lyrics.

The origin of certain songs is still unknown. We can however distinguish local variations and anonymous productions. Some funeral lyrics use melodies from different church songs, psalms or hymns. In the following study, we intend to reveal the songs that are present solely in the traditional folklore, but that are similar to church songs as far as their style and characteristics are concerned.

Our study will present the historical and musical aspects of this repertoire with the help of twelve melody samples.

**Keywords:** funeral, songs, reformed, psalms, hymns, folklore, church, historical, musical.

According to the traditional popular practice of the reformed community, the funeral customs take place between the time of death and the funeral, in other words in the three-day mourning period. The musical productions represent an important part of this custom, along with certain religious ceremonies.

The songs performed during the three-day mourning period, the funeral songs, are a way for the community to pay their respect to the dead, and to show compassion for the family of the deceased. The funeral songs are performed in group during the wake, as well as during the procession and also at the gravesite. The repertoire consists mainly of the songs from the hymnbook. When asked to comment on the different variations of some funeral songs, the great composer Kodály said the following:

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\* Babeș-Bolyai University, Faculty of Reformed Theology, Musical Pedagogy Departement, RO-400535 Cluj-Napoca, Horea str. 7. E-mail: evapeter@hotmail.com

*“The most commonly used songs are the funeral songs. If one looks at a currently used hymnbook, one will notice that the most worn out pages are those containing funeral songs.”<sup>1</sup>*

The melodies of the funeral songs can also be interpreted with other lyrics. These could have lyrics that were never printed, therefore is it very difficult to establish their origin. Some of these lyrics have different versions depending on the area of the country, and they are usually distributed on separate sheets of paper, while other funeral lyrics borrow the melody from different genres, such as the church songs, the psalms or the hymns.

More than that, we intend to illustrate that the songs that are present solely in the popular tradition, are very similar to the church songs as far as their style and characteristics are concerned. We will also be talking about the rhymed wailing. We must emphasize the fact that the wailing has a different role in the course of the funeral process than the funeral songs. According to the professional literature, the purpose of wailing is to express deep personal suffering in a unique way; it is an organic part of the folk customs therefore we shall view it as an entirely different genre altogether.

The wake takes place on the evening before, or on several evenings before the funeral. The neighbors and the friends of the deceased gather at the deceased person's house and keep vigil until midnight. During this time some of the participants (not including the family of the deceased) sing two or three wailing songs; more often the men are those who sing these songs, sometimes joined by the women. In some reformed villages, this wailing process took on a unique form: the parish clerk or somebody who has a good voice read the lines of the song one by one, and then the participants sang the line together. Hence, the wake consists of alternating prose and musical interpretation of the wailing songs. It is most likely that this manner of performance was adopted in old times as a way of handling the lack of hymnbooks and in order to facilitate memorizing the songs.<sup>2</sup>

## **1. Psalms and Laude**

**1.1.** The Geneva Series Psalms are a valuable part of the reformed traditional Hungarian song literature, and the congregations loyally guard them. The psalms make up a fix formed repertoire that cannot be altered either by adding or by subtracting. Anyone who wants to learn them will face an enormous challenge, for they are very complex from both a musical and rhythmical standpoint, nonetheless many congregations managed to learn quite a few of them.

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<sup>1</sup> Kodály Zoltán, *A magyar népzene (Hungarian folk music)*, edited by Vargyas Lajos, Zeneműkiadó, Budapest, 1971, notes no. 67 and 97.

<sup>2</sup> In my research, I have found an audio recording of a funeral song using the melody of psalm 42. The recording was made by Fórika Éva in Magyarlapád, Fehér county, Romania, 2000.

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The ninetieth psalm is often performed during the mass or the funerals. Our first example will illustrate the abundantly ornamented melody as a woman singer from Körösfő uniquely performs it.<sup>3</sup>

### Ex. 1

Quasi giusto ♩=48 Körösfő

Te-ben-ned biz - tunk e - le - i - től fog - va, U - ram, Té - ged  
tar - tot - tunk haj - lé - künknek, Mi - kor még sem - mi he - gyek nem vol - ta - nak.  
Hogy még sem ég, sem föld nem volt for - mál - va. Te vol - tál és Te vagy,  
e - rős Is - ten És Te meg - ma - radsz min - den i - dők - ben.

1. 2. The hymnbooks<sup>4</sup> printed in Transylvania and Hungary show many funeral lyrics that should be performed with the melody of the psalm 38. The lyrics of the song start with the words “*Utaz vagyok e világban*” (*I am a traveler in this world*) in the Kv1837, 1907 and 1923 editions. The following song will illustrate the psalm sung by a woman singer from Sárvasár, who also uses many musical embellishments in her unique performance.<sup>5</sup>

It is a well-known fact that some songs often use the lyrics of another song and some lyrics borrow the melody of different songs. The abovementioned lyrics can be found in a Hungarian hymnbook in reference to the melody of a nineteenth century *lauda*<sup>6</sup>, where we come across the author of the lyrics, Kiss János (1770-1846). The concurrence of these facts, but mainly the elaborate rhythm of the verses (8, 4+7, 8, and 4+7), make us believe that the lyrics were originally written for the melody of the psalm, and that the fact that this was mentioned in the Kv1837 hymnbook suggests an original link between the two of them.

<sup>3</sup> Körösfő, Kolozs county, sung by: Péntek Jánosné Szabó Ilona, 67, collector: Kiss Lajos, 1963.

<sup>4</sup> Abbreviated hymnbook references: reformed hymnbooks printed in Kolozsvár (Klausenburg): Kv1744, Kv1778, Kv1837, Kv1907, Kv1923; The Hungarian Reformed Hymnbook: MRÉ1996; Reformed Hymnbook from Hungary: R1948, Funeral Hymnbook from Nagyenyed (Strassburg am Mieresch): NH1769.

<sup>5</sup> Sárvasár, Kolozs county, sung by Ambrus Sándorné Márton Katalin, 68; collector: Kiss Lajos, 1969.

<sup>6</sup> Lyrics R1948/409, Melody: R1948/366

## Ex. 2

Quasi giusto  $\text{♩} = 36$  Sárvásár

U - tas va - gyok ez vi - lág - ban, Menny - or - szág - ban  
vár ö - rök ha - zám ké - sen.  
A tes - tem csak lel - ke - sült por, És ha a sor  
re - ám jön, s por - rá lé - sen.

1. 3. I myself can testify through my personal collecting and deep research on this matter to the fact that the lyrics of some funeral songs can be tied also to some other psalm melodies in the popular tradition. Since these psalms were performed in their written form, without any ornaments, and the origins of most lyrics cannot be traced back, I would like to exemplify that the melody of psalm no. 33 was linked to the following lyrics: *A fájdalma éles nyilai leverék az én erőmet* (*The sharp arrows of my pain destroy my strength*), the melody of psalm no. 42 was linked to the following lyrics: *Én lelkem légy csendességben* (*Be quiet, my soul*) and *Örülj lelkem teljes szívvel* (*Be happy my soul from the bottom of your heart*). The last two examples can also be found in the 1769 Funeral Hymnbook from Nagyenyed.<sup>8</sup> The last recording of this psalm was however made with a new version of the lyrics that began with *A megfáradt öreg szolga pihen örök álmát* (*The tired old servant has his final rest*).

1. 4. At the time of their birth, only a few of the German chorale seeped into the Hungarian tradition. Their date of birth can easily be traced back to 1696, to the first edition of the *Zöngedező Mennyei Kar* volume, edited by Ács Mihály. From that day on, the German chorale was spread in the Hungarian language.

G. Neumark (1621-1681) is the author of the chorale: *Wer nur den lieben Gott lasst walten* (*Ki csak Istenre dolgát hagyja* – in Hungarian). This chorale was published in a Lutheran anthology with slightly different lyrics: *Ki Istenének átad mindent*, a chorale that can be found at: MRÉ 1996/399. We can also find this chorale in J. S. Bach's work in two variations – one in B minor

<sup>7</sup> Mákófalva, Kolozs county, song for men, collector: Péter Éva, 2000.

<sup>8</sup> NH 1769/209, 217.

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and the other in A minor. Both chorales were written having a 4/4 measure and both of them start with an anacrusis. Their melodies are ornamented. Example d will illustrate the A minor version transposed in a G finalis.

**Ex. 3**

Zahn RMDT II.p.177.

a) *Wer nur den lie - ben Gott lasst wal - ten* Kv 1996/399

b) *Ki Is - te - né - nek át - ad min - dent* Kv 1907/68

c) *Én Is - te - nem, tu - dom, meg - ha - lok*

(a)

(b)

(c)

Bach: 367.

d)

In the Kv1907/68 and Kv1923/207 volumes, we can find the aforementioned melody with the following lyrics: *Én Istenem tudom meghalok*. The folk singer<sup>9</sup> interprets the melody with many embellishments, while the rhythm is loosened to a *rubato* interpretation, elongating or shortening the notes in accordance with the following notation:

**Ex. 4**

Rubato ♩ = cca 40

Sárvásár

*Én Is - te - nem, tu - dom, meg - ha - lok, él - tem vi - rág, ha - mar her - vad.*  
*Hogy a föl - di jót én nem tu - dom, ál - lan - dó - an ben - nem ma - rad..*

*Ta - níts meg hát ke - gyel - me - sen, Hogy le - hes - sek meg cse - - de - sen.*

<sup>9</sup> Sárvásár, Kolozs county, sung by Ambrus Sándorné Márton Katalin, 68; collector: Kiss Lajos, 1969

## 2. Funeral Songs That Were Printed in Hymnbooks

This is the most common category of funeral songs present in the popular reformed practice. This repertoire consists of the earliest songs from the eighteenth century to the songs of the twentieth century; therefore, the songs reflect the same stratification historically and stylistically as the material present in the hymnbooks. These songs did not go through any changes – as we found out from the important audio recordings and from the folklore studies – they remained in their original form. The rhythmical structure of the songs is consistent with the slow tempo and their even beat that is usually associated with group singing.

The songs are mostly performed without embellishments. We can find ornaments in only a few of these songs. We will present two of these examples: no. 5 and no. 7. The other songs will only be enumerated.

**2. 1.** The melody of example no. 5<sup>10</sup> is a traditional seventeenth century melody. This song is one of the most widely spread wailing songs. We can find many lyrics to this song in the popular tradition, as well as in the hymnbook: *Én Istenem, sok s nagy bűnöm (My many sins, my Lord); Szörnyű halál ím köztünk áll (Look at Death standing among us); Örülj szívem, vigadj lelkem (Be happy my heart, be joyful my soul).*<sup>11</sup>

### Ex. 5

Magyaró

Ször - nyű ha - - lál, Ím köz - tünk áll, (ã)

Lest hány - ván é - - le - tünk - - nek. (sã)

Meg - - vant íj - jal, (sã) Mér - ges nyíl - lal (m)

Ví - - ja vá - - rát lel - künk - nek.

<sup>10</sup> Magyaró, Maros County, group performance. The music is in book: Jagamas János, *Magyaró énekes népzeneje (The singer folklore of Magyaró)*, Kriterion Kiadó (Kriterion Publishing House), Bucharest, 1984, at no. 236. This reference will appear from now on as: Jagamas 1984.

<sup>11</sup> Other versions: audio recording: Magyarlapád, Fehér County; Körösfő, Kolozs County; Magyarvita, Kolozs County.

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Researchers believe that this song came from the German and the Polish melody sources in the seventieth century.<sup>12</sup> The song's transformation took place in two separate phases. Originally, the melody had a large range in the Dorian mode, and it had a repetition between the second and fourth verse in a lower fifth. Firstly, the repetition disappeared, the fourth verse migrated to the pitch of the second verse. Therefore, its mode has become plagal.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, the melody became much more simplified – an attribute that can only be traced back in the hymnbooks from Transylvania. The first melodic line keeps the repetition of the motif with the variations of the first note, while the third line moves in a lower range to become a variation of the first line. The small changes observed in the second and fourth lines are mostly insignificant. Thus from an aaBCB structure that had a 21V1 harmonic cadence and was written in a plagal mode (example 6b), we arrive to the final version of the song that is an aaBcaB structured hexachord with a 2121 harmonic cadence (6a).<sup>14</sup>

### Ex. 6

NH 228

a) NH 228 Ter - hes baj - ra és sok jaj - ra  
Kv 1778 Én Is - te - nem, sok nagy bú - nöm D1778: RMDTII/62aIII.

b) Én Is - te - nem, sok nagy bú - nöm

(a)

(b)

**2. 2.** Our next example dates back to the seventieth century. It spread originally in the Catholic community. Its presence in the reformed hymnbooks printed in Kolozsvár will be noticed only in the twentieth century.<sup>15</sup> In spite of this fact, the song must have been present in the oral popular tradition, a pupil of Seprődi János, collected it in 1906, in Magyargyerőmonostor, Kolozs County<sup>16</sup> with the following lyrics: *Már megyek közületek (I am already leaving*

<sup>12</sup> With Hungarian lyrics see: Papp Géza, *A XVII. század énekelt magyar dallamai (Hungarian melodies sung in the 17<sup>th</sup> century)*; *Régi Magyar Dallamok Tára II (Anthology of Old Hungarian Songs II)*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1970, 62a. This reference will appear from now on as: RMDT II.

<sup>13</sup> Example no 6-b: source: RMDT II/62a/III, see hymnbook printed in 1778 in Debrecen, Hungary.

<sup>14</sup> We can find both versions in MRÉ 1996.

<sup>15</sup> Kv1907/69 and 1923/208.

<sup>16</sup> Described by: Almási István, *Monostori sugártony. Bogdán János magyargyerő-monostori népdagyűjtése 1906-ban (Folklore anthology collected by Bogdán János)*, Kriza János Néprajzi Társaság, Kolozsvár, 2003:58. From now on, it will be referred to as Almási 2003.

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you behind). Example no. 7 was collected in Körösfő.<sup>17</sup>

Ex. 7

*Körösfő*

*♩=56*

Krisz-tus, én é - le - tem - nek te vagy re - mény - sé - ge,  
Sze - gény bú - nős lel - kem nek ö - rök üd - vös - sé - ge.  
Le - szek hát én cse - des - ség - ben, n  
Bár a ha - lál ful - lánk - já - val ret - tent - sen.

2. 3. We can also identify the following wailing songs from the existing audio recordings:

a) The minor version of the 42<sup>nd</sup> psalm: *Ez élet csak füst és pára*<sup>18</sup> (*This life is nothing but smoke and vapor*)

b) The song that starts with *Seregeknek Szent Istene* (*Holy Lord of the Hosts*) first appeared in hymnbook: Kv 1837 then it was included also in the following editions.<sup>19</sup>

c) The song *Mint a rózsza, melyet sért a meleg szél* (*Like a rose hurt by the hot winds*) is present in the hymnbooks since the Kv 1837 editions; it was however published for the first time in NH 133.<sup>20</sup>

d) The song: *Gondviselő jó Atyánk vagy* (*You are our heavenly gracious Father*) is present in Kv 1907/241 and Kv 1923/80 also in the following form: *Véget ért a nagy küzdelem* (*The great battle is over*) but it cannot be found in the hymnbooks this way.<sup>21</sup>

The lyrics *Seregeknek Szent Istene* (*Holy Lord of the Hosts*) is associated with two different melodies in the professional literature.<sup>22</sup> A notable difference between the two melodies can be observed only in the first line –

<sup>17</sup> Körösfő, Kolozs County, singer: Péntek Jánosné Szabó Ilona, 67, collector: Kiss Lajos, 1963.

<sup>18</sup> Körösfő, Kolozs County

<sup>19</sup> Körösfő, Méra, Kolozs County

<sup>20</sup> Kiss Lajos, *Lőrinczréve népzeneje* (*The folk music of Lőrinczréve*), *Karsai Zsigmond Dalai* (*The melodies of Karsai Zsigmond*), Zeneműkiadó (publishing house), Budapest, 1982, 222. A few words have been changed in the lyrics.

<sup>21</sup> Magyarlapád, Fehér County.

<sup>22</sup> Dobszay László, *A magyar népének* (*The hungarian people hymn*), Veszprémi Egyetem Kiadása (publisher), 1995, not no. 335. It will be further referred to as Dobszay 1995.



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the melody itself is different, as well as the final note. The first line in the Kv 1907 version is borrowed from *Dies irae*. Dobszay says about example 8a, that originally it comes from a medieval hymn, despite the fact that it was not present in any of the previous Catholic or Protestant recordings. This version of the lyrics of song NH 38 can be traced back to the sixteenth century<sup>23</sup>, and it can be observed in Orbán Zsigmond's manuscript<sup>24</sup> in another version. The melody did not last in the reformed tradition, but still is present in the Catholic one, with lyrics that repeat the second part of the words as a refrain. Since the seventeenth century, the Catholics sing the song lyrics: *Seregeknek Szent Istene (Holy Lord of the Hosts)* with the refrain: *Jövel, jövel én Krisztusom (Come, come my Christ)*.<sup>25</sup> The latter lyrics will be used with a different melody at the beginning of the nineteenth century in Kv 1837/241. Therefore, we cannot be sure what the original melody was. I have not been able to track down from my research the version under example 8b either; the same song is present in Kv 1923, MRÉ 1996 and R 1948, not mentioning the exact date, only saying that it originated from the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Ex. 8

NH 38

a) NH: Jé - zus Krisz-tus, Is - ten Fi - ja  
OS: U - ral - ko - dó nagy Úr Is - ten

Kv 1907/241

b) Se - re - gek - nek szent Is - te - ne

The image shows musical notation for two versions of a funeral song. Version (a) is in G major, 4/4 time, and consists of two staves. The top staff is the vocal line with lyrics: 'NH: Jé - zus Krisz-tus, Is - ten Fi - ja' and 'OS: U - ral - ko - dó nagy Úr Is - ten'. The bottom staff is the piano accompaniment. Version (b) is also in G major, 4/4 time, and consists of two staves. The top staff is the vocal line with lyrics: 'Se - re - gek - nek szent Is - te - ne'. The bottom staff is the piano accompaniment. A vertical dashed line separates the two versions.

The Reformed hymnbooks contain a few songs that are part of the Cycle of Rakoczi melodies<sup>26</sup>. The title does not refer to the time of their genesis, but rather to one of the most popular songs in the cycle, entitled

<sup>23</sup> Csomasz Tóth Kálmán, *A XVI. század magyar dallamai (The Hungarian melodies of the 16<sup>th</sup> century), Régi Magyar Dallamok Tára I (Anthology of Old Hungarian Songs I)*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1958, 208. It will be further referred to as RMDT I.

<sup>24</sup> *A nevezetesebb dicséretes és némely halotti énekek (The most famous laude and some funeral songs)*, Udvarhelyi Református Gimnázium, 1766. . It will be further referred to as OS.

<sup>25</sup> RMDT II/295/IV.

<sup>26</sup> See Szendrei Janka – Dobszay László – Rajecy Benjámin: *XVI-XVII. századi dallamaink a népi emlékezetben I-II. (Our melodies from the XVI-XVIIth century in people's memory)*. Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest 1979, note no. RMDT II/316. It will further be referred to as SZDR.

*Hej Rákóczi (Hey, Rákóczi)*. The sources show that the style of the cycle first appeared in the seventeenth century, a rich style, which branched out on many genres, containing ballads, lieds or even dance music. It was popular not only in the Hungarian region, but also with Polish, Slovakian, German people. Our next example can be characterized by this unique style.

**Ex. 9**

The lyrics of these melodies were following the goliard rhythm. This rhythm was the favourite rhythm of lyrics for the medieval chanson in Europe. When this goliard rhythm merged with the rhythmical structures of the Hungarian folklore, the so-called kanásztánc-rhythm was born. The goliard verse has four measures; where in measure no. 1 and 3 we have usually four notes, in measure no. 2 less than that, while in measure no. 4 we can find one or two syllables. Our a. and b. examples will illustrate this structure, the first and last verse has the following structure: 11 syllables: 4+2+4+1, the middle verse: 4+4+3; example a. shows that song NH 133 does not have measures, here the rhythm is decided by the accents of the lyrics, of the syllables; while in example b. song Kv 1923/183 the rhythm and the musical meter is the deciding factor in arranging the verse; example c. Kv 1923/198 is a variation on this using many more syllables; while the first and last verse do not show any considerable changes, it however molds the melody to fit the enlarged number of syllables which has the following structure: 4+4+4+1; we can observe a new musical motif in the middle verse (for three measures), while the structure of the 14 syllable verse is the following: 4+3+4+3.

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The main characteristic of this style is the AABA<sub>k</sub> structure, in other words the repetition of the first verse, returning with a different cadence. We can find the same variations on the lyrics in the following: a. OS 37b; b. Kv 1837/225; reference “own melody” Kv 190/225; c. Kv 1907/72.

### 3. Melodies Spread by the Oral Tradition

3. 1. We can clearly differentiate the typical wailing style of the traditional seventeenth century. For example the funeral song *Ím látod virág voltát* (*Here you see the fait of a flower*) that had some cadence on the Dorian 5<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> step, the song was present in the anthologies of Nagyenyedi Halottas hymnbook and Orbán Zsigmond (NH 183, OS 39b. = RMDT II/342). These are the only hymnbooks that featured this funeral song. There is a similar song in the Catholic sources at RMDT II/64, which is present in the Catholic funeral ceremony, and the Catholic hymnbook.<sup>27</sup> This type of song is very rare in the Transylvanian regions where reformed people live: we could only find one version of the song, from a collection in 1906<sup>28</sup>, named *Fájdalom és siralom* (*Pain and wailing*), unfortunately we could not identify its original source. There have been some mentions of other versions of the song with ballade lyrics.<sup>29</sup>

#### Ex. 10

NH 183 = RMDT II. 342

a) *Ím lá - tod vi - rág vol - tát*

b) *Fáj - da - lom és si - ra - lom. Az - é - let fo - lyá - sa.*

c) *Ha kend tud - ná, é - des - a - nyám, Hol volt az u - tol - só ó - rám.*

a) *Fáj - da - lom és Í - té - let. A ha - lál ful - lánk - ja.*

b) *Tor - dán az A - ra - nyos mel - lett, Ott vé - ges - tem é - le - te - met.*

<sup>27</sup> Dobszay 1995, note no. 423; in the type and style catalogue: Szendrei Janka – Dobszay László: *A magyar népdaltípusok katalógusa II (The Catalogue of the Style of Hungarian Folklore Songs II)*, MTA Zenetudományi Intézete (publisher), Budapest, 1988, type 21. Will be further referred to as MNTK II

<sup>28</sup> Almási 2003. no. 59

<sup>29</sup> *Romániai Magyar Népdalok (Hungarian folk song from Romania)* edited by Jagamas János and Faragó József, Kriterion (publisher) könyvkiadó, Bukarest, 1974, 201; Marza Traian – Szenik Ilona and group, *Folclor muzical din zona Huedin (Musical folklore from the Huedin region)*, Cluj, 1978, 529 Kalotaszentkirály, Kolozs County.

We will present in the example 10 a-b the funeral song present in NH, and its popular version; the latter a variations of the 7 syllable version, which now has 7 6 7 6 syllables; nonetheless it seems that the melody was built on an original 7 syllable structure, for there are 2 places where notes are tied together in lines 2 and 4. Example 10 c. is the melodic version enriched with ballade lyrics, which has lines of eight syllables each. Comparing the three versions, we will see that their cadence is the same; they are built on the same musical motifs.

**3. 2.** In the case of the men and the women who had died before getting married, there is a long-lived tradition all over Europe to have a wedding ceremony for the deceased. This funeral custom can be found still in some villages of the region Mezőség. The custom has many characteristics: getting dressed up in wedding clothes (for the deceased and the young people escorting the deceased), ornamented tree branches, as well as a wedding orchestra present at the funeral. There is another specific custom marking the particular occasion, a song performed in a group by the mourners on the way to the cemetery, named “gózsálás”.<sup>30</sup>

One of these songs, example 11, can be associated with the aforementioned style.<sup>31</sup> In a broader sense, it can be linked to many funeral lyrics.<sup>32</sup> The most notable difference to the previous version is found in the final cadence: the scale is Dorian, but the final note, which is the second step of the Dorian scale makes it into a Phrygian mode because of the altered fourth step (enlarged second #4-3). The cadence will appear this way: 5 4 1 2, in other words the reverse order of the cadences.

These types of songs can be sung with wailing rhymes also<sup>33</sup>, but they can be associated with wailing texts as well.<sup>34</sup>

**Ex. 11**

Poco rubato  $\text{♩} = \text{cca } 69$  Szépkenyerűszentmárton

Le-e - sett a ház szar-va - zat - ja, Bú - san (ã)na - radt Marei any - ja.

Ne sírj, a - nyám (ã) ne köny-nyezz, Hogy en - gem a föld fe - dez.

<sup>30</sup> Szenik Ilona, *Erdélyi és Moldvai magyar síratók, sítaróparódiák és halottas énekek (Hungarian wailing songs from Transylvania and Moldova, wailing parodies and funeral songs)*, Romániai Magyar Zenetársaság, Kriterion könyvkiadó, Kolozsvár-Bucharest, 1996, 16. Will be further referred to as Szenik 1996

<sup>31</sup> Szenik 1996, no. 104.

<sup>32</sup> Type 24 in MNTK II; SzDR II/64 – the two versions are compared in the popular version table.

<sup>33</sup> Szenik, 1996, 71-73

<sup>34</sup> Jagamas, 1984, 237

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**3. 3.** The origin of the melody of example no. 12 can be traced back to Germany. The original funeral song was written in Latin and German, it was published in Hungarian in the *Cantus Catholici* anthology in 1675.<sup>35</sup> Originally the strophe was structured in four lines, A A B Bk, with cadence on steps 2 2 2 1. Later we notice along with some meaningless changes the following important one: a A A B B C augmented structure with 2 2 3 3 1 cadence.<sup>36</sup>

The first version of the song was spread mainly in Terra Siculorum (Székelyföld). This melody was used to commemorate the death of Báthori András monarch, when they composed a rhyming chronicle in his honor. These same lyrics are sung today at the wakes.

The augmented strophe version is mentioned frequently in the hymnbooks of the eighteenth century reformed colleges.<sup>37</sup> It seems that the song is not very popular nowadays.<sup>38</sup> The comparison of the two versions reveals that they perhaps memorized the latter version wrong, because in this version in the final line they repeat the final motif of the second line, therefore ending the song on the third step. Example no. 12b shows us that this cannot be just a simple error, for the women's group<sup>39</sup> singing this version consistently repeats the line this way.

### Ex. 12

Bartha<sup>935,176.</sup>

a) Mind-nyá - jan csak el - e - nyé - szünk

Quasi giusto ♩=46-48 Méra

b) El kell men-ni, nin - csenmit ten - ni, Vi - lá - gi é - let nem kell töb - bé,  
Igy kell len-ni, vég - bú - csüt ven - ni. Ké - szült ko - por - sóm zár - já - tok bé,

(a) El - me-gyek, bár lé - gyek a fér - ge - ké.

(b) El - me-gyek, bár lé - gyek a fér - ge - ké.

<sup>35</sup> RMDT II/98 I

<sup>36</sup> RMDT II/98 II

<sup>37</sup> Bartha Dénes, *A XVIII. század magyar dallamai*, (The Hungarian melodies of the 18<sup>th</sup> century), Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, Budapest, 1935, 176.

<sup>38</sup> We found a 4 strophe version in Almási István's *Szilágysági magyar népzene* (Hungarian folk music form Szilágyság), Kriterion Könyvkiadó, Bucharest 1979, note no. 11, that had the following structure: AABBk

<sup>39</sup> Méra, Kolozs County, women's group, collector: Péter Éva, 2000.

Nowadays we slowly keep introducing other genres at the funerals instead of these funeral songs, genres such as psalms, or more famous the laude's. The recently published Hungarian Reformed hymnbook contains only four of these songs.

We can speak a lot more about the funeral songs, but unfortunately in the past 100-200 years only the lyrics of these songs were noted, due to the lack of musical knowledge by those collecting them. Because of the lack of musical notation, these texts and lyrics should be analyzed only from the literary and the ethnographic standpoint.

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