

Thesis of DLA Dissertation

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ADAPTATIONS OF THE STABAT MATER
IN THE COMPOSITIONS OF PÁL KÁROLYI

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I. History of research

I first encountered the choral works of Pál Károlyi in 2016, when his second wife, Mrs. Károlyi (born as Edit Király) provided me with a music package containing choral compositions. After studying the pieces carefully, it became clear to me that the person whose compositions I was holding in my hands was an outstanding musician, whose oeuvre, deserves more attention and appreciation. When reviewing the works, I found four Stabat Maters written for different instruments as well as the Dies illa composition, the textual basis of which is provided by the Stabat Mater sequence.

Besides the reviews - mainly on his instrumental works - appearing in the periodicals *Parlando* and *Music*, only two longer dissertations got published (Sophia Czifra-Philippzig: *Pál Károlyi und sein Klavierwerk*, Levente Horváth: *A genre in illegality. Compositions of masses in Hungary between 1949-1969*). The professional and artistic quality of his choral compositions, as well as the number of choral works available make the artist worthy of being the subject of a thorough research.

II. Sources

Pál Károlyi's works published in manuscript, author's edition and in print can be considered the primary sources, some of which can be found in the library of the Hungarian Academy of Arts in digital form. The missing material from the collection was made available to me by Pál Károlyi's second wife. Unfortunately, there were a few pieces, that could be traced back up to a point, the music sheet of which, however, disappeared over the years.

The autobiography of Pál Károlyi was another reliable starting point of my research. Levente Márton Horváth made a report with several Hungarian composers, including Pál Károlyi. He made the audio recording referring to the autobiography of Pál Károlyi available to me. Apart from these, I tried to find all the writings and reviews that could help me learn more about the composer's oeuvre. The bibliography of the thesis enlists the studies and reviews which were closely connected to my choice of topic.

Since the major part of Pál Károlyi's work had still been unexplored before the composition of my dissertation, the amount of sources was limited to me.

III. Method

First of all, I wanted to gain an insight into Pál Károlyi's instrumental compositions, thus I tried to examine the available pieces of music sheet comprehensively. Hence I received a broader picture of his work as a composer. This became the basis of the first chapter of the dissertation, in which, in addition to the biographical overview of Pál Károlyi, I discussed his instrumental and oratorical works as well.

After that, I narrowed down the research area and analyzed his choral works in more details (compared to my analysis regarding his instrumental compositions). I outlined three clearly distinguishable artistic eras, which I analyzed based on the aspects typical of the composer's era.

In the last phase of my research, I focused on compositions that elaborate the text of Stabat Mater. During the analysis, I used the literal translation of dr. László Kelecsényi in order to examine the relationship between the text and the music in more depth.

Finally, I summarized the choral works of Pál Károlyi in a chronological table, for which I collected the date of creation, apparatus, year of publication, place and time of their presentation, performers and conductors.

IV. Results

The research presents and elaborates on the life's work of Pál Károlyi, and it covers the most important instrumental and oratorical compositions embedded in the biographical aspect. It presents the choral works of Pál Károlyi divided into compositional periods, and then examines the compositional technique of the composer through different versions of the Lamentation of the Virgin Mary.

The year of the finalization of the dissertation coincides with the 90th anniversary of the birth of the

composer Pál Károlyi, therefore, this can also be considered as a tribute to the artist. In addition, it initiates further examination of the composer's work, which has not been processed in terms of music history yet.

V. Documentation of activities belonging to the subject of the dissertation, concerts of the author of the dissertation

March the 25th 2018 / Concert in Nádor Hall (Budapest)

- Poulenc: Hodie Christus natus est (Wesley Schola)
- Arvo Pärt: Bogoroditse devo (Wesley Schola)
- **Pál Károlyi: Ave maris stella** (Wesley Schola)
- **Pál Károlyi: Ave Maria** (Wesley Schola)
- Ola Gjeilo: Ubi caritas (Wesley Schola)
- Kodály: Szép könyörgés / Beseeching (Budapest Vándor Choir)
- Zsolt Gárdonyi: Erdő, erdő / Forest, Forest (Budapest Vándor Choir)
- József Sári: Alleluia (Budapest Vándor Choir)
- **Pál Károlyi: Stabat Mater for mixed choir and organ** (Budapest Vándor Choir, Attila Endreffy – organ)

October the 3rd 2020 / Concert in St. László Church
(Budapest-Angyalföld)

- Pál Károlyi: Dies illa (Budapest Vándor Choir,
Mária Palkovics – organ)

October the 23th 2021 / Concert in Matthias Church
(Budapest)

- Ēriks Ešenvalds: Lux aeterna (Budapest
Vándor Choir)
- **Pál Károlyi: Dies illa** (Budapest Vándor
Choir, Mária Palkovics – organ)

September the 30th 2023 / Concert in Fásor Lutheran
Church (Budapest)

- Sweelinck: Hodie Christus natus est (Budapest
Vándor Choir)
- S. Wesley: O, sing unto me Roundelaie
- Mendelssohn: Am Neujahrstage
- Stanford: Beati quorum via
- **Pál Károlyi: Dies illa** (Budaörs Pro Musica Choir
– art director: Csaba Tóth, Budapest Vándor Choir,
Mária Palkovics – organ)