

## **V. Documentation of activities linked to the thesis subject**

OMCE lecture on Artúr Harmat, 12 January 2016. Központi Szeminárium (Bp. Papnövelde u. 7-9.);

Tree planting and concert on the 130. anniversary of Artúr Harmat's birth, 24 September 2015. Diósd – Diósd Women's Choir;

Harmat's "Négy időszaki Mária" antiphon was regularly performed by the women's choir of Diósd, and movements of his "Négy karácsonyi ének" and "Margit asszony" for children's choir were performed in many concerts by Műhely kórus, a choir organised from the singer classes of Szent Angéla Ferences Általános Iskola és Gimnázium, a Franciscan school in Budapest.

DLA doctoral thesis

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Artúr Harmat's life and contribution to church music

Franz Liszt Academy of Music

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## Theses

### I. The reasons for my choice

Composer Artúr Harmat (1885-1962) was a professor at the Academy of Music who conceived and created two academy departments. He was also a conductor of two church choirs: the choir of the Belvárosi church, and that of Szent István Bazilika. In spite of his remarkable career path, Harmat is still a lesser-known figure of Hungarian church music history. Disproportionate to his marked role in 20th century Hungarian church music, literature presenting his life and work is scarce. I found it surprising that nobody had given a detailed account of Harmat's life and career to date.

As a basis to rely on I used the articles in the commemorative book published to mark the 100th birth anniversary of Artúr Harmat,<sup>1</sup> especially the catalogue of his works collected by his daughter Jerry Marosné Harmat, and the chronological review of his bibliographical data compiled by László Lukin.

Books generally give brief accounts of Harmat, hardly ever going into detail. Publications seldom mention him at all, although some superficial accounts do exist. In the doctoral dissertations published by the Doctoral School of Liszt Academy there is only one paper dealing with one of the most important segments of Harmat's work. It is a philological study written by

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<sup>1</sup> *Harmat Artúr – emlékkönyv születésének 100. évfordulójára.* [Harmat Artúr, Balássy László, Bárdos Lajos, Bucsi László, Lukin László, Maros Rudolfné Harmat Jerry, Nagy Olivér, Perényi László, Pődör Béla és Rajeczky Benjamin írásai] Budapest, Zeneműkiadó, 1985.

some of Harmat's unknown works and add something new to his biography. I managed to achieve both of these goals. I succeeded in broadening the biography of Artúr Harmat considerably, with special regard to his school years and those during the First World War. Earlier I would never even dream of finding some of Harmat's unknown works of music. Later, however, while I was compiling the catalogue and organising his music into a structure, I gradually kindled up some hope. And when I finally finished I was happy to find that I had discovered twelve unknown Harmat compositions. Accessible only to the conductor and the archivist of the church storing the sheet music, these works had been "lost" to the public since they were not included in Jerry Harmat's one and only benchmark publication. That result greatly surpassed my preliminary expectations.

I researched and annotated documents (such as diaries, yearbooks, certificates, military files, etc.) from archives, collections, and libraries. I visited many places to put the pieces of his scattered legacy together. I checked all the possible written traces of his long career, such as school class-books, school reports, sheet music, bills, magazines, notes and photographs.

However, I didn't manage to find documents that may have served as sources for the writings mentioned above, so my investigation into it was unsuccessful. Thus, starting out from Harmat's autobiography, Lukin's biography, and a number of other biographical articles I went my way to supplement the existing picture with my own findings about Artúr Harmat.

When making my choice as to which pieces of music I should analyse in depth, I had one question in mind: had Harmat's substantial research into Gregorian music and hymns influenced him as a composer? In Harmat's works I also looked for the stylistic features of Renaissance, an era that Harmat had also studied and even made into a school textbook.

I also organised Harmat's works of church music (including notes of their whereabouts) into a chart, which may prove valuable for those searching. This may also boost Harmat's popularity.

#### IV. Results

Since there hasn't been a concise biography of Artúr Harmat so far - and his works haven't been studied either - my dissertation is definitely unique of its kind.

The most important objective of my dissertation - the research of which, in the end, also yielded the best results - was to find

Judit Katonáné Szabó about the hymnal titled "Szent vagy, Uram!".<sup>2</sup> After introducing the genre itself and disclosing the circumstances in which the aforementioned hymnal came to be, the dissertation chiefly concerns the structure of the hymnal, and studies each song in depth. Doubtlessly, Harmat is mostly remembered in academic circles by the hymnal „Szent vagy, Uram!” (Hozsanna), which was also his most popular work selling the most copies in Hungary, yet in comparison with the volume of his complete works, this hymnal is nothing but a small fraction.

There are a few short articles about the stages of Artúr Harmat's life in some encyclopaedias,<sup>3</sup> and a chronological chart compiled

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<sup>2</sup>[http://docs.lfze.hu/netfolder/public/PublicNet/Doktori%20dolgozato/k/katonane\\_szabo\\_judit/disszertacio.pdf](http://docs.lfze.hu/netfolder/public/PublicNet/Doktori%20dolgozato/k/katonane_szabo_judit/disszertacio.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>Brockhaus - Riemann: Zenei lexikon II. (G-N) szerk. Boronkay Antal, Zeneműkiadó Budapest, 1984. 134. o, Szabolcsi Bence\_Tóth Aladár: Zenei lexikon II. főszerkesztő: Bartha Dénes, Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, Budapest 1965. átdolgozott, új kiadás (Harmat was also a contributor to this encyclopaedia) 135. o.

Nagy tanárok, híres tanítványok, 125 éves a Zeneakadémia, szerk.: Gábor Ágnes és Szirányi Gábor, Liszt Ferenc Zeneművészeti Egyetem, Zeneakadémia, 2000. Tamás Katalin 126-127.o.

[http://lfze.hu/hu/keres?p\\_p\\_auth=WAVVqv6B&p\\_p\\_id=101&p\\_p\\_lifecycle=0&p\\_p\\_state=maximized&p\\_p\\_mode=view&p\\_p\\_col\\_id=column-](http://lfze.hu/hu/keres?p_p_auth=WAVVqv6B&p_p_id=101&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_state=maximized&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=column-1&p_p_col_count=1&101_struts_action=%2Fasset_publisher%2Fview_content&101_assetEntryId=23058&101_type=content&101_groupId=10192&101_urlTitle=harmat-artur)

[1&p\\_p\\_col\\_count=1& 101\\_struts\\_action=%2Fasset\\_publisher%2Fview\\_content& 101\\_assetEntryId=23058& 101\\_type=content& 101\\_groupId=10192& 101\\_urlTitle=harmat-artur](http://lfze.hu/hu/keres?p_p_auth=WAVVqv6B&p_p_id=101&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_state=maximized&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=column-1&p_p_col_count=1&101_struts_action=%2Fasset_publisher%2Fview_content&101_assetEntryId=23058&101_type=content&101_groupId=10192&101_urlTitle=harmat-artur) (Cf. Katalin Tamás's summary in the part "notable alumni" on the website of Franz Liszt Academy of Music),

<http://www.parlando.hu/2015/2015-1/KEREK2015-1.pdf>, 54. o.

Britannica  
Hungarica:  
<http://info.bmc.hu/index.php?node=artists&table=SZERZO&id=146>

by László Lukin also exists.<sup>4</sup> To amend Lukin's publication, Imre Varga's 2009-degree thesis<sup>5</sup> includes a few novelties, which are mostly about Harmat's years spent in Upper Hungary. Some information about Harmat's childhood and school years in Upper Hungary (now Slovakia) can be found in a summary of Peter Medek's 2015 study titled "*Artur Hubáček Harmat vyznamnyrodák z Bojne*". These few works gave me a reinforced encouragement to commence my own study that aimed to clarify and complete oblique or partial information.

## II. Sources

Investigation into Harmat's legacy and the organisation of new material led me to draw novel conclusions. Study also contributed greatly to what had already been known. Research done in the Military Archives revealed some important details about Artúr Harmat's years in the army during the first world war. At the archives of the Hungarian Saint Cecily Society I could find ample documentation: letters, notes, compositions, drafts, manuscripts. I give account of them in some of the chapters of my dissertation and disclose some others in full in the Appendix. As an evidence of his school years in Esztergom I added many interesting information to Harmat's biography from surviving school grade books and exam reports. Based on the documents I found in the Komárom-Esztergom county

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<sup>4</sup>He/LL82.o – 90.o.

<sup>5</sup>VARGA, Imre: Harmat Artúr alkotó munkássága és a „Szent vagy, Uram!” helye a magyar egyházzeneben (Degree thesis). Konstantin University, Nitra. Faculty of Pedagogy, Department of Music. NITRA – FŠŠ UKF, 2009.

branch of the National Archives I could e.g. get the more or less precise time of his name change to Artúr Harmat.

I have also collected plenty of oral data – reminiscences and personal stories - from the people I met during research. Where I felt relevant I compiled some of these stories into the chapters of my dissertation. Obviously, there must be a number of letters and documents in the possession of private individuals (the living descendants probably don't even know about them), which might resurface in the years and decades to come.

Although some of the compositions of Artúr Harmat did appear in print in a limited number of copies, most of his works only survive in manuscripts stored in the music archives of a few churches. A part of Harmat's legacy was acquired by the Music Collection of the National Széchényi Library. Another part that survived by sheer chance is in the possession of the Hungarian Saint Cecily Society.

## III. Methods

I deemed it important to illuminate the cultural-historical background and present Harmat's biography parallel to the cultural questions and big moments of his age in order to make the biographic stages of his life more readily understood.

The scarcity of relevant literature and the multitude of missing data made me rely mostly on primary sources. So when commencing my work I arranged these first.

Having learnt about the locations László Lukin had disclosed in his Harmat biography found in the commemorative book mentioned above I started to look for documents in various archives.