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PRIORITY OF VOCAL EXPRESSION IN THE LITURGICAL MUSIC OF FIRST CENTURIES

In this article I would like to take a look at the inspiring topic of liturgical music in the antiquity as a basis to the development of richer musical liturgical forms of the younger history of music and choral singing. In the course of many centuries was established a great number of schools and liturgical trends, that each from their own particular point of view set up a direction, in which the history of choral singing in the liturgy would proceed.

From the time of Church formation are in her inner life observed musical liturgical forms, which did not belong only to individuals. Singing of the congregation in the church worship was manifested as an applied way of human musical behaviour, communication with God and demonstration of Christian faith. On one hand it means *a visible gesture* with an individual liturgical meaning. On the other hand it means *a perceived experience of the participant*, resp. a listener. Just as the verbal language is able to express and announce a rationally incomprehensible content, so is music able to make known and convey what is rationally incomprehensible, i.e. the unspeakable. And so the singing and music in the Christianity are expressions of joy, freedom, happiness, hope, security..., but in contrast also of sorrow, sadness, disaster, captivity, cry, pain ... and by means of this the desire for salvation and redemption¹. The use of music in the history of Christian worship was resting on generally human, individual and social usage of music and its further development.

1. The Old Testament

Writings of the Old Testament bear testimony to the great significance of music in the cultic life of Israel². The Israelites as a chosen people refused some musical

¹ All the clarifications of the sense of music done in the course of historical development can be comprised in two basic models: (1) Music is a language of feelings; hence it comes from human heart. (2) Music is a language of heaven, interpreted and imitated by a human.

² Sacred music of the Ancient Near East referred mainly to singing; musical instruments served rather as an accompaniment. This is witnessed by the Hebrew musical terminology in which words indicating music had also a meaning of a song. M. VARŠO, *Biblia a hudba*, „Adoramus te” (2001), No. 1, vol. 4, p. 6.

practices of surrounding pagan nations on the ground of principal theological reasons of *monotheism* – the almighty God cannot be “tuned up” in the sense of pagan practices, for He is holy and merciful and He himself chose in His absolute freedom to descend to man. Therefore the entire liturgical music of the Old Testament and its expressive value in the Hebrew nation had the character of an answer to God’s works. Israel’s experience with God was reflected in the community signing, witnessed mainly by the psalms³. Exactly in them is comprised the praise of God, revelation of His works, request for blessing and hope for salvation. In comparison to cultic musical practises of the surrounding mainly pagan nations, apart from basic common characteristics, some important and specific features of musical forms of Hebrew nation can be noticed:

- Singing within the worship has its own theological place in the *historical dialogue* of God with humans. *Singing is a space for communication*.
- While in the readings and prayer it is clearly specified who is referred to, in the singing it is difficult to determine. While the people of Israel sang in front of God, at the same time this singing could be either pointed to the assembly and tell them about God or directed straight to God.
- In the imagery of Israel music and singing has an *eschatological symbolic character*: both belong to the true vision of heaven, into the Temple of Jerusalem⁴.

Singing in the Old Testament was of higher priority than instrumental musical forms⁵. The classical place for signing was the sacred assembly with its typical form — the Hebrew *berakah*. The Old Testament prophetic literature (e.g. prophet *Amos*) affected the musical forms of worship when it lacked the expression of inner attitude of participants. The Israelites refused to sing in the most difficult times of their lives⁶. There is not much evidence about the course of liturgy and the implementation of singing and music into liturgical rites of the Old Testament. It is quite clear to us that in all stages of cultic development the chief place in the worship of Israel belonged to chants⁷. Songs of praise and thanksgiving related to the sacrifice

³ Writings of the Old Testament speak of specific sorts of psalm interpretation (e.g. Ezra 3,11). Each psalm was usually recited by foresingers (e.g. Ps 42/43, 41/42, 67/66/, 107/106/, 118/117/). People got involved into singing by repeating of verses (e.g. Ps 136/135/, Dan 3,52f.) and acclamations (*Amen*, *Alleluia*), by clapping of hands and rhythmical movements. Popular singing almost did not exist. The cultic singing of psalms and other singing were accompanied by musical instruments, which resulted from headings of psalms and its texts. The cultic instrumental music without singing was applied only in the Temple, not in the synagogue.

⁴ Cf. PH. HARNONCOURT, H.B. MEYER, H. HUCKE, *Singen und Musizieren*, in: *Gottesdienst der Kirche, Handbuch der Liturgiewissenschaft, Gestalt des Gottesdienstes, Sprachliche und nichtsprachliche Ausdrucksformen*, part 3., Regensburg 1990, p. 140–141.

⁵ Cf. A. AKIMJAK, *Liturgika, Liturgický spev a posvätná hudba*, part II/B, Spišská Kapitula 1997, p. 9.

⁶ Cf. e.g. Ps 137,4.

⁷ In the cult of the covenant, canticle had its firm place in the announcements and sacrifices. This singing was performed by single singers or a group of singers, and people completed them by acclamations.

of thanks were typical for glorifying the Lord⁸ and often were tied to different parts of the day (morning, evening or noon and of the year. Spontaneous praises of an individual or praising of Yahweh in the family circle have been preserved in the Judaism up till now as a typical sign of the Jewish devotion⁹.

In the *postexilic* time we have to distinguish the Temple from the synagogue. In the rebuilt Temple the Levites were in charge of music and singing¹⁰ there was ones again confirmed the unity of singing and the sacrifice. The cultic instrumental music developed and in time gained a theological significance. Although the worship in the synagogue was parallel¹¹ with the cult in the Temple of Jerusalem, there were also some characteristic differences: — the place of sacrifice in the temple took the study of Torah, singing and prayer in the synagogue¹². The cult in the Temple had a strict hierarchical order (active was only the priest and the Levites, the liturgy in the synagogue was understood more democratically (every man could sing and speak. In the Temple the instrumental music existed, in the synagogue it was only singing. The Temple was bound to a place, but the synagogue was more associated with gathering of people¹³. The Temple liturgy in the Old Testament used musical instruments. The psalms alone, especially of praise, were accompanied by a musical instrument. To these musical instruments belong *šofar* (horn), *hasosrah* (pipe instrument), *nebel* (harp), *kinnor* (lyre), *sabekah* (zither), serving as an accompaniment in the liturgical worship of the Old Testament times¹⁴. For percussions were used *cymbal*, *cineol* and *drums*, for the wind instruments e.g. *aulos* (flute). At other celebrations (e.g. weddings and funerals) Jews used *shawm* and *oboe*. In the liturgy of synagogue there were no musical instruments used, because the music was already present in the psalms and in the melodic reading of the Holy Scripture, whose texts were cantillated at their performance¹⁵. The Jewish liturgical synagogal singing most probably influenced the creation of melodies of the Christian worship, e.g. the prayer of *Alenu*, so-called *lamentations*. About the *tonality* and *musical forms* of cultic singing in Israel nothing is known, since melodies and rhythm of that time were not preserved in a written form and were spread only from generation to generation by the word of mouth¹⁶. In the domestic Jewish liturgy singing and prayers

⁸ Gen 12,8; 13,4; 14,18-20; 24,26f.; 26,25; Exod 15,20f.; 18,9-12.

⁹ Cf. HARNONCOURT, MEYER, HUCKE, *Singen und Musizieren*, p. 140–143.

¹⁰ Cf. Ezra 2,41.

¹¹ Gathering of people at a particular place, in the foreground is the reminder of the deeds by which God saved Israel and singing of canticles.

¹² Cf. HARNONCOURT, MEYER, HUCKE, *Singen und Musizieren*, p. 140–143.

¹³ In order to be able to worship, at least ten Jews were needed.

¹⁴ Cf. 1 Cm 25,1-3.

¹⁵ For example, there were different melodies of cantillated singing for the Torah and the Prophets. Reading from the Prophets was rendered from a text containing accents and the cadence, the Torah was recited from a scroll without any signs.

¹⁶ The description of practices used in very conservative synagogues preserved up to day on the base of the word of mouth (e.g. in Yemen), can be hardly rendered. Individual titles of psalms inform partially

were regularly led by a father; musical instruments were not in use in this type of liturgy¹⁷.

2. The New Testament

“Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” So write Matthew and Marc in their Gospels about the end of the Last Supper. (Matt 26,30; Marc 14,26)¹⁸. The Christ’s supper, before the immediate act of His redeeming Death and Resurrection was rendered in the form of Pasch and connected with singing the psalm 113 (114)–118. This remark from the Gospel is considered to be the beginning of the Christian sacral music in general. Right there the *biblical tradition of singing the psalms* found its continuation¹⁹, present not only in the Jewish liturgy but also in their own personal lives. In the same way Jesus and his disciples, the first Christian assembly in Jerusalem and other communities of the early Church did²⁰. The aim of vocal effect of first Christians in worship was building of community.²¹ The community praised and glorified God and together bore testimony to its faith²². This building-up was helped by *doxologies* and *acclamations* confirming the prayer of community²³. The Letters of St. Paul bear witness to the significant task of music and singing in the early Christian liturgy. Paul remembers “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual song with gratitude in your hearts to God.” (Col 3,16). The descriptions used by the Apostle for a nearer determination of songs cannot be clearly identified nowadays, but from their num-

about publicly known melodies. According to this there were widely known tunes whose way of singing did not change. After Christ’s death accents and vocal signs were introduced into liturgical texts. These contained also information about the way of musical performance. Up to date, however, we were unable to interpret and reconstruct these melodies.

¹⁷ Cf. AKIMJAK, *Liturgika*, p. 9–10.

¹⁸ At the Last Supper Christ probably sang psalms after the fourth cup of the Jewish Pasch.

¹⁹ Singing of the first Christians continued in the Hebrew tradition, which was partly changing into Christian tradition. This change occurred not only in hymnal texts but also in acclamations in which people responded to proclamations of God’s work of Salvation. In this way Jews who believe in Christ could bear witness to it in the synagogue. The elements rendering the Hebrew tradition a Christian content could be experienced in the worship of Christian communities. (Cf. 1 Cor 14).

²⁰ Singing has its theological place in the dialog of God with people and through it He can manifest himself (Cf. Eph 5,19; Col 3,16; 1 Cor 14,26) or it can become a prayer turning us towards God (Eph 5,20; Col 3,16) and to Christ (Eph 5,19). In the community it is an expression of knowing God, a sign of joy and enthusiasm, and an eschatological sign joining the worship of community to the worship of Heaven. It helps turn man into a new creature (2 Cor 5,17), which is indicated in the liturgy, in which a new *song of the redeemed* resounds.

²¹ Cf. 1 Cor 14,26.

²² Cf. Col 3,16.

²³ HARNONCOURT, MEYER, HUCKE, *Singen und Musizieren*, p. 143–146.

ber we can deduce the variety and persuasiveness of musical forms in the Mass, particularly in the Eucharistic celebration of the early Christian community.

To the question, on what occasion and what was sung in the worship of early Christian communities, we can provide only hypothetic answers. In the Letter to the Ephesians and Colossians (Eph 5,19 and Col 3,16) are recalled psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, resp. other forms of song difficult to detect. There is a controversial periodicity in singing the psalms in the early Church till the 4th century²⁴, doubtful is also the use of musical instruments used to accompany the psalms²⁵. The purely instrumental music, known in the Hebrew worship in the Temple and in pagan cults, can be definitely excluded from the early Christian communities. From the New Testament testimonies is evident a desire for a certain order in vocal and its status as an integral part of the liturgy. In 1 Cor 12-14 St. Paul subordinates all talents including the singing during the worship to the principle of love and wants everything to serve for building up²⁶. This order takes the model of the liturgical-theological basic structure marked also as *dialogical*: God's works in the community are proclaimed publicly, the community assumes acclaimed praises and thanksgiving, confirms them and attaches them to the proclaimed word. This proclamation is generally performed in the form of cantillation connected with words, because it is an answer of the assembly and part of the liturgy, not only its embellishment²⁷.

3. Canticles in the early Church

The given question of what was sung in the early Church is answered in the Acts of the Apostles: "About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God and other prisoners were listening to them." (Acts 16,25). The letters of St. Paul once again affirm that believers in apostolic times gathered for the liturgical prayer and singing of canticles. For instance:

1 Cor 14,26: When you come together, everyone has a hymn or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretations. All of these must be done for strengthening of the Church.

Eph 5, 19: Speak to one another with psalm, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your hearts to the Lord.

From these biblical messages is clear that from the very beginning of Christian religion the offices of Church the rites were bound to the community music. The main sources, from which the musical part of the Christian liturgy was created, came from the Greek-Hellenistic patrimony, the Jewish religious singing, the Byzantine

²⁴ Remember the facts of the persecution of Christians till 313.

²⁵ In consideration would come stringed instruments: harp, lyre, etc.

²⁶ 1 Cor 14,26-40.

²⁷ Cf. HARNONCOURT, MEYER, HUCKE, *Singen und Musizieren*, p. 145-146.

influence, as well as from other musical expressions and folk elements of diverse nations in the West and East of the Roman Empire, which gradually received the Christianity. This receiving, acceptance and concentration of different elements was a long-lasting and complicated musical-liturgical process. This era is still today a subject of disagreement among researchers in solving the questions of origin of varied forms and of the entire style of the Christian liturgical music in the West.

4. The Antique influence

The influence of antiquity in the music science on the field of purely musical impulses for the quality of liturgical-musical expression was often overestimated in the music history²⁸. As a source of origin were used the theoretical musical tractates of the Middle Ages, which were quite dependable on the Antiquity, although in a distorted form. The Antique culture acted as a general educational base for the liturgical music of first Christians, which is reflected in liturgical songs of the first centuries of Church's existence. Great expansion of the Greek scholarship and language in the periodicity, even before the birth of Christianity²⁹, provided first Christians with the ground for a wide cross-connection and had influence on universal, multinational character of Christianity and its art. As the Christianity contradicted the hedonistic lifestyle, many forms of the Antique musical expressions become unsuitable for her,³⁰ whether it regards their masterly, exclusive image of music in the educated ranks of society or the production of their Antique cult of Dionysus. In some places of the Empire people in the churches initially used to dance and clap their hands while singing.

5. The Hebrew influence

The music of the early Christian Church was at first based on the form of songs of Jewish synagogues. All the great texts of prayers were recited by the lector in an exceptional "tone" corresponding with the type of text. By this type of utterance called *cantillation*, which was also taken over into the liturgical music of Christians, the singer wanted to express the depth of texts and so render them comprehensible

²⁸ N. HRČKOVÁ, *Dejiny hudby, Európsky stredovek*, časť I., Orman, Bratislava 2003, p. 10.

²⁹ Besides that some Hellenic philosophers were already preparing the ground for ascetic Christian vision of liturgical singing, when way before accepting the Christianity they proclaimed attitudes negating for example the Epicurean lust and the hedonistic lifestyle.

³⁰ As extremely unsuitable were regarded those forms and types of music bound to public state production, because a wide range of first Christians were marked by persecution coming from the state authority in the first centuries.

to the assembly of believers. Singing of the Church under the influence of the *synagogal liturgy* was in use in the services of readings, prayer and God's word. A very important element, which gained a great significance in the liturgical music of the West, were songs used in the Hebrew synagogue as refrains — so-called *acclamations*, for instance in word *Amen* or *Alleluia*. Refrains were sung as the answer to each verse or at the last verse of the psalm. Some of them developed into types of single songs which lost their simple original character and became more or less semi-finished solo melodies. Special attention was paid to songs with a very figurative style accompanying the acclamation *Alleluia*, in which the last syllable was expanded into ecstatic melody³¹.

Another type of song which grew up in the synagogal worship was the antiphon. At first an antiphon, verse or sentence with its own melody, was repeated after each psalm. In the later practise this refrain was usually sung at the beginning and at the end of each psalm. Some of more semi-finished antiphons developed into single songs — for example in the introduction, offertory and communion. The text of an antiphon is mainly sung on one melody with only little variations by adapting to the new text. As these chants were originally intended for choirs, they are relatively simple, syllabic and only softly figurative with a limited extent and a simple rhythm. Many antiphons were composed for additional feast days which were introduced into the liturgy from the 9th up to the 13th century. Close to the antiphon by the form is the response, i.e. an answer, a short verse sung by a soloist or a group of singers and people only repeat it. The response was repeated originally entirely or partially after each single verse of the reading, in so-called long responses (*responsoria prolixa*)³².

6. The popular influence

From the beginnings the *popular elements* entered the liturgical music. In her entire development we bear witness to the mutual interaction of the popular and the "official" music culture in the liturgy. The popular moments stepped into the sacral singing not only spontaneously but sometimes knowingly³³. Later on, the enrichment of choral by popular elements became a component in spreading of Christian musical culture.

³¹ These melodies were introduced to the liturgy by the Pope Damasus about the year 380 and consequently singing of *Alleluia* was included into the liturgy outside the Lenten season.

³² HRČKOVÁ, *Dejiny hudby*, p. 16.

³³ St. Ambrose used the popular thinking in his rhythmical hymns very effectively in the fight against Arians; when in the basilica, which Arians were occupying, several days and nights he kept the faithful awake by hymns.

7. The vocal expression

In creation of music Christianity went in a different direction than the Antique music. While *musiké* in Greece meant the unity of music, poetry and dancing, the Christendom preferred singing bound to a spiritual text. The final performance of this music was rather carried out without musical instruments³⁴. It can be said that Christian musical thinking was primarily vocal, therefore in the musical theory — as it was thought for a long time — did not tie up to the Antique musical scale derived from the instruments. The first Christians did not require a *tune system* for singing, which was alive in the word of mouth for a long time. Its development, which crystallized from about the 4th century, was by itself the installation of an independent principle, which was rather connected to the Byzantine and the other cultures of the East than to Greece or the Antiquity³⁵. In the course of first two centuries the music proper to the Christendom did not stand out due to the persecutions from the part of the state authority. Although by the *Milan decree* in the year 313 the Christendom was able to spread into all ranks of society, the Church promoted certain “musical asceticism”, which was mainly visible in the missing instrumental music of that era, because this was an expressive symbol of pagan rites³⁶.

8. Singing psalms

Within the old and most significant early Christian songs of high liturgical value, which hold a firm position in the contemporary liturgy, clearly steps out the singing of psalms. The contemporary *psalmology* (science on psalms) puts a great importance on the *first Christian traditions* and the ways of delivering these liturgical songs bearing in mind the fact, that singing psalms is actually reading God's word.

In the Old Testament are found 150 psalms, which arose as an ancient syncretic type of art in the times when the poetry and song symbolized unity³⁷. The psalms

³⁴ The Church prohibitions firstly referred to instruments of so-called Dionysian cult, but for example zither as an Apolonian instrument was allowed.

³⁵ Cf. HRČKOVÁ, *Dejiny hudby*, s. 9–11.

³⁶ The first Christian communities then naturally took over, even if not word for word, the Jewish order of liturgy and singing. First Christians did not join in the solemn Jewish worship yet which was typical for the Temple in Jerusalem, and still was bound to the instrumental music, but mainly to its influence. After the destruction of the Temple in the year 70 there were no conditions for maintaining a majestic liturgy, all the more the first Christians lived in underground and their possibilities were limited. Therefore for them was acceptable a simple singing growing out from the continuation of *easy synagogal forms*, cultivated in places of their gatherings. HRČKOVÁ, *Dejiny hudby*, p. 11.

³⁷ J. LEXMANN, *Liturgický spevník pre tretie tisícročie, Ústav hudobnej vedy SAV*, Bratislava 2000, p. 71.

were always recited by singing. Their poetic body comes from the Hebrew poetry and their way of thinking. Into the Christian liturgy psalms entered through *christologisation*, i.e. their Christian interpretation³⁸.

The chief signs of psalm development:

- A psalm consists of several verses harmonized into one semantic unit.
- These verses and their musical interpretations submit to the Semitic³⁹ order so-called *parallelismus membrorum* (a formal harmony of equal parts). The idea of the first half of a verse with a specific number of syllables is often in the second half repeated, by which the statement gets intensified (*synonymical parallelism*). This intensification can be also reached by contrast (*antithetic parallelism*), or by adding, developing and broadening (*synthetic parallelism*)⁴⁰.

For example:

Psalms 150

ALLELUIA

Praise the Lord in his sanctuary,
 praise him in his mighty heaven.
 Praise for the acts of power,
 praise him for his surpassing greatness.
 Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,
 praise him with the harp and lyre.
 Praise him with tambourine and dancing,
 praise him with strings and flute.

- The main part of the psalm text was usually recited or delivered in a single tune (*tenor*, resp. *tuba*)⁴¹.

The Christendom took over from song in the synagogue even the way of delivering the psalms. On the basis of historical-liturgical development three modes of delivering psalms are known:

- *in directum*
- *antiphonal mode*
- *responsorial mode*

The psalm sung *in directum* was recited continuously, i.e. the psalmist recited it alone, and people by delivering of psalm did not answer to it either by response or antiphon.

³⁸ For instance when psalms speak of Jerusalem then this applies to the Church; the Lord in the Psalms is Jesus Christ... Cf. SLOVENSKÁ LITURGICKA KOMISIA, *Liturgický spevník I a jeho uvedenie do praxe, Ústav hudobnej vedy SAV*, Bratislava 1999, p. 27–28.

³⁹ Historically roots of *parallelismus membrorum* reach down to the Egypt and Babylon.

⁴⁰ From this came out their chant as well: there were always and still are two-part melodic models technically applicable to each verse of each psalms. Cf. LEXMANN, *Liturgický spevník pre tretie tisícročie*, p. 71.

⁴¹ Cf. H. MUSCH, *Entwicklung und Entfaltung der christlichen Kultmusik*, in: *Musik im Gottesdienst*, vol. 1, Regensburg 1993, p. 12–13.

In the alternate singing of psalm – *the antiphonal mode*, the singer, resp. the schola and the assembly of the faithful responded to each other; or one group of singers with the other part of gathering or singers. Also choirs were alternating in this way:

Exam. Ps 119 (118)

The first choir: The second choir:

¹ Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, * who walk according to the law of the Lord.

² Blessed are they who keep his statutes, * and seek him with all their heart.

³ They do nothing wrong,* they walk in his way.

⁴ You have laid down the precepts, * they are to be fully obeyed.

⁵ Oh, that my ways were steadfast, *in obeying your decrees.

The alternate singing achieved a great rise in the 4th century⁴² in connection with *psalmody*.⁴³ The Church welcomed the practise of antiphonal psalmody because it created the possibility of including the faithful into the worship. The peak of antiphonal choral singing of psalms arrived about the year 350 in Antioch, which influenced the entire Christian West. From Milan comes the well known Church Father — the bishop *St. Ambrose* (333–397), who in the year 386 strengthened the faith of his church community by the antiphonal singing and singing of hymns in the fight against the heretic Arians. By this Milan became a centre of antiphonal singing for the West Europe.

The responsorial mode of psalm performance differs from the antiphonal by principle of always the same refrain verse, by which people answer to the solo singing. In the early times, mostly it were formulas such as *Amen*, *Alleluia* or the small doxology (*Gloria Patri...*). The responsorial song was joined by its nature to the liturgical reading (in the history *Graduale*, *Tractus*)⁴⁴.

When the psalm, e.g. in the *liturgia horarum*, was recited, than it was done in one main tune known as *tenor* or *reperkusa* or *recitanda*. In the connection with the formal lay-out of psalm text in two double verses were also stabilized cadent forms. At the beginning there was a brief upgrading pattern — *initio*, at the end the final part — *terminatio*, resp. *finalis*, between them the proper reciting of the text on the *tenor*, interrupted in the middle by a brief formula — *mediatio*, resp. *metrum*. In the *metrum* and the *finalis* could be the brief *melisms*. Tenors were never sla-

⁴² In the 4th century started to appear in the liturgical delivery of psalms the first educated singers. Cf. MUSCH, *Entwicklung und Entfaltung der christlichen Kultmusik*, p. 13.

⁴³ It is visible in the delivery of the psalm which is interrupted by refrain said by people.

⁴⁴ The description *Graduale*, in the Lent *Tractus*, was used approximately in the 9th century, because the chant was sung by the psalmist on scales (lat. *gradus*) leading to the ambo, set for reading the Gospel. The old Roman mass had, just like today, three readings and between them two psalms. Instead of the second one came then *Alleluia* into use in the 5th century. Psalms in the *Graduale* were mostly shortened to one verse. Cf. LEXMANN, *Liturgický spevník pre tretie tisícročie*, p. 70.

vishly recited formulas on one tone, because there was the possibility of their melodic rippling, so-called *flexa*, if it was required by a longer text of psalm verse or accents in the texts. The melodic formula which leads the whole psalm is called *tonus*.

9. Hymns

Besides the singing of psalms which was taken out of the texts in the Old Testament, there are the hymns as independent solemn songs of the early Christian communities. Hymn is a typical kind of poetry which was preserved to date in the Roman liturgy along with psalms and canticles. It has a strophic composition. Although its texts are non-biblical, they are liturgically of high value and often connected with the concrete liturgical celebration. The hymns are divided into metric, rhythmic with equally composed type of strophes. In the relation between the text and music the syllabic perception prevails. In all likelihood some hymns of the early Christian Church were sung on the melodies of popular origin, and it is even realistic to say that some of these melodies may have entered into the official liturgical song books. From the most ancient hymns of the early Church were preserved the well-known: *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, *Sanctus* and the oldest parts of *Te Deum laudamus*. These parts of hymns, resp. the whole hymns sung by the assembly, did not have from the beginning a high artistic regard, it had rather a functional meaning. From the time of St. Augustine (354–430) was preserved a rich literature on strophic and metrical hymns, whose origin has to be seen in the Syrian church songs, e.g. in works of *St. Efrem of Syria* (the 4th century) and others. Hymns penetrated into the West Europe in the 4th century thanks to *Hilary of Poitiers*, who during his exile in the Asia Minor got to know the church songs of the East. The bishop of Milan St. Ambrose introduced them into practice. The domestication of hymns in the Christian church communities had its own deep liturgical significance in the worship of God. Gradually, as the Church was expanding into the Asia Minor and in the West into Africa and Europe, so was also acquiring musical elements coming from different national resources. Syrian churches and monasteries had their very significant share in the development of psalms and hymns. It seems that both these types of sacred songs were spread from Syria through Byzantium to Milan and other centres in the West.

10. The Church music in the non-Latin rites — the Eastern Churches

In the Eastern Churches developed from the lack of authority in each region different types of liturgy: *Assyrian, Armenian, Coptic and Byzantine...* Even if there

are none saved manuscripts with music used in those Eastern rites in the first centuries. Comparing studies between the Jewish and Byzantine culture allowed us to specify to a certain degree in the recent years views on the early Eastern Church music.

The city *Byzantion*⁴⁵ was rebuilt by Constantine II. and in the year 324 became the capital city of the united empire. After the long-lasting separation in the 395 it remained for more than thousand years the capital of the Eastern Empire till it became coquered by Turks in the year 1453. During this time was *Byzantion* a seat of government and centre of a blooming culture which connected the Hellenic and Oriental elements. The music of the Byzantine Church retained a certain influence in the West till the separation of the Church into the East and West Churches in 1054. There were three types of music in the Byzantium: *monastic*, *kathedral* and *rustikal*⁴⁶. The Byzantine monastic music is for the liturgic-historical development most significant, because the monasteries were the centres of the mature Byzantine culture and art. It is true that the music and art were cultivated on the Imperial court too, but after the fall of the Empire remained monasteries the only establishments where the liturgical life of Byzantium survived⁴⁷. The cathedral music, thus the liturgical music of cathedrals in large cities, was also influenced by the monastic music of the East. Probably from the musical-scientific point of view this music did not create any specific type, but it became known for its style of celebration and the elegance of the liturgic-musical delivery. The rustical music was simple and practiced in towns. Its concrete form was not retained but there are current efforts to retrieve it. It might have been similar to the folk music. There are some hypothesis about the similarity of the rustical music to the music in the territory of Slovakia, because the Sts. Cyril and Methodius could have brought into our territory just this simple Byzantine song and implant it into the liturgy⁴⁸. The Byzantine music is as such an original music which all the characteristics were not up till now fully clarified and explored. In its development were taking part several influences and in spite of that it is not a mixture of various elements which would be foreign to the Byzantine liturgy.

The basic characteristics of the Byzantine liturgical music are:

— the monody (in unison)⁴⁹

⁴⁵ = *Konstantinopolis, today's Istanbul.*

⁴⁶ Š. MARINČÁK, *Úvod do dejín byzantskej hudby*, Prešov 2003, p. 80.

⁴⁷ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 80–81.

⁴⁸ E. KINDLER, *Byzantská hudba*, „Velehrad“ (1990), nr 3, p. 36.

⁴⁹ Sometimes was the unison joined by so-called ison, which is a tone kept at the same level while the melody is freely floating. Ison was sung by the majority of the chorus while the melody was sung by a solist or a small group of singers. MARINČÁK, *Úvod do dejín byzantskej hudby*, p. 81.

- the relative absence of musical instruments — the chief place is given to the *vocal music*⁵⁰
- the free rhythm⁵¹

The history of the Byzantine liturgical music can be divided into epochs:

- The early Byzantine epoch (the 4th–6th century) — development of a broad hymnal-graphic form — *kontakion*⁵²
- The medieval epoch — era of Canons (7th–8th century) — *kontakion* was replaced by a new type of hymn — the *canon*⁵³
- The Byzantine Renaissance — the era after the iconoclasm (the 9th–12th century) – the independence of the liturgic-musical art, the establishment of laws for the liturgical music of Byzantium
- The neo Byzantine epoch — (the 13th–15th century) — the free invention and technical virtuosity in the musical demonstration, high vocalisations on syllables, their insertion into the liturgical texts, the composition of *new music*
- The Byzantine music after the fall of Constantinopolus (15th century – today) — the centre on the mount Athos, the hymnographic schools, the transcription of codex, the stress on the tradition, the effort to return to the original systems and structures

The most expressive example of the Byzantine music are hymns. They developed from short responses (*troparia*) among verses of psalms and their music originated in melodies or the melodic types taken over probably from the Syria. These inserts were gradually increasing in size till they developed into independent hymns. They are divided into *kontakion* (the time of bloom in the 6th century) and *canon* which creation culminated between the 8th–10th century. The texts of the Byzantine canons were not original creations but more commentaries or variations on model texts and acts in the Holy Scriptures. Alike their melodies were not entirely original. Their musical material consisted of a set of melodic motives, from which a singer could choose one or by their combination create a new melody. Some of the motives were in use at the beginning, others in the middle and the end of a me-

⁵⁰Though today are in some places in use the musical instruments, for example in Macedonia or in the Asia Minor. One can be sure that in the Byzantine Church were the musical instruments never in use and they are not in use apart from a few current cases. The Eastern monasticism in its ascetic life did not like musical instruments in the church. In the sense of understanding the phenomena of monasticism in the East, it is natural that even today are musical instruments a foreign element in the Byzantine churches.

⁵¹ To the instructed topic look at: CH. TROELSGARD, (ed.), *Byzantine chant, Rhythm in Byzantine chant*, Atény 1997.

⁵² *Kontakion* is a longer metrical sermon and likely of the Syrian origin. The peak of its development is in the work of the St. Roman Melod in the 6th century. This dramatic musical sermon often paraphrases the Biblical text, comprises cca 20–30 stanzas and was sung during the morning service in the simple syllabic style. The typical and the only preserved *kontakion* is the *Akathistos*.

⁵³ *Canon* is a set of hymns consisting of eight odes. Each ode is by its subject connected with the Biblical texts and comprises of the introductory *heirmos* which is followed by 3–4 *troparia* with the precise metrical reproductions of *heirmos*. The whole *Canon* contains eight independent melodies.

lody or were filling the gaps. There existed also the standard patterns meliziem. The originality of a singer rested on the way in which he combined motives and modulated the ornamentation that is the practice oscillated between the model and the improvisation⁵⁴. The melodies of the Byzantine Church were passed over through the centuries by the word of mouth, and only about the 9th century they gained the written form. In some cases were with a high degree of probability successfully reconstructed the ancient melodic patterns. But the singular appearance of melodies is less significant than the basic similarity of the methods and principles of construction of East chants — which meant the combination and variation of specified melodic models⁵⁵. It is not clear to what extent was the Byzantine system influenced by the Greek musical theory, but the late medieval modal system was clearly established on the Byzantine echos⁵⁶.

11. The Western rites

In the West were the local Christian Churches at the beginning relatively independent, the Eastern heritage was coming to them in a little distinct form, to which contributed also the domestic folk elements and specific conditions of a particular area. So were created several different liturgies. Apart from the Roman the most important are: *the ancient Spanish* (Mozarabic, Westgothic, Vizigothic), *the Gallic*, *the Celtic* (Irish, Anglo-saxon) and the *Milan* (Ambrosian) liturgy. In all these liturgies can be found a certain common basis. In the more independent liturgies was evolved this basis in a new way, however, some principles remained unchanged⁵⁷

12. The Mozarabic liturgy

The liturgy in the region of Spain was developing in its own way from the beginning. The geographic location, including the relative independence of its inhabitants who were conquered by Romans only after long battles in the 2nd century BC, brought into the cultural field a typical Spanish feature of independence and resistance to everything coming from outside. In the 5th century was this territory invaded by the tribe of the Arian Goths, who built a strong empire in which they intensively merged with the original inhabitants. After the Moslem invasion in the 8th century followed by the strong influence of the Arabic world, became the

⁵⁴ HRČKOVÁ, *Dejiny hudby*, p. 14–15.

⁵⁵ From this similarity can be deduced that the most ancient song of the West Church contained several Eastern elements. Some of them were derived from the Hebrew chants, some from Syria, Byzantium, Greece, Egypt and other centers.

⁵⁶ HRČKOVÁ, *Dejiny hudby*, p. 15–16.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 18.

liturgy in this region the name *Mozarabic*. In the year 1085 became the inhabitants of Toledo the permission from Rome to keep their liturgy. In the Mozarabic liturgy is recorded a vast production of versed hymns comparable only with some Christian Churches in the East. Generally this liturgy has the most individual features among the liturgies of the West, colourity and emotional depth, which is in the contradiction to the Roman objectivity and elaboration. The Mozarabic world dealt with the psalms formulas independently; there are preserved names of monks, who were not only authors of hymns but also of whole parts of the officium. The liturgy has strong emotional elements and up to date is still celebrated in one chapel of the cathedral in Toledo.

13. The Gallic liturgy

There is no original material on the Gallic liturgy, only intermediary messages of some late Roman manuscripts. The character of the Gallic liturgy is connected with the historic-social situation: After the occupation of Gaul by Cesar (57–52 BC.) entered into the original basis the Antique course. The Gallic liturgy — likewise the other Western liturgies — grew from the same basis, to which was added the domestic influence. The greatest bloom of the Gallic liturgy was reached in the 7th century, which is recorded in writings on the musically richer adaptation of the mass and the officium than in Rome. The melody of the Gallic liturgical song is more *common*, with the tendency to the tertialy composition, it is less figurative than the Mediterranean melodicism, and entirely it is an expression of the German-Frankish influence. Consequently could be employed also the musical intruments as recorded by the poet *Venatio Fortunata*. In the year 754, after the agreement between the Pipin and the pop Stephan II., was the Gallic liturgy substituted by the Roman (The Sacramentars), which was aesthetically more balanced because of its elaboration, the logical contruction of the melodicism and the reconsidered methos in the composition of the liturgical songs. Today is little in use.

14. The Celtic liturgy

The Celtic liturgy, whose fragments were recently discovered, is characterized by its originality which is linked to the facts that the Ireland never experienced the Roman or German domination. The whole time was here present the domestic Celtic element with its tendency to the individualism and the subjective sentiment. In the two discovered antiphons of the Celtic origine are found text rhymes and repetition of the melody⁵⁸. The liturgy uses many common elements, the integrating monument of the Celtic rite is the *Missal Stowe* (8th–10th century).

⁵⁸ The original region of subsequentions is Ireland.

Cecylińska reforma muzyki kościelnej — pozytywna czy zbyteczna?

Streszczenie

Prezentowany artykuł podejmuje kwestię cecylińskiej reformy muzyki kościelnej. Autor w tytule stawia pytanie, czy oddziaływała ona pozytywnie na relację muzyka – liturgia czy też była zbyteczna. Zainicjowanie w XIX w. ruchu cecylińskiego wiąże się właśnie z nierozstrzygniętą ówczesnie kwestią wzajemnego oddziaływania na siebie liturgii i muzyki oraz miejsca muzyki w liturgii. To, co dziś po Soborze Watykańskim II jest oczywiste, było w XIX w. zagadnieniem, które ze szczególnym upodobaniem podejmowano głównie w krajach niemieckojęzycznych. Autor artykułu wychodząc od skrótowego wytłumaczenia pojęcia „cecylianizm”, opisuje z kolei początki tego ruchu oraz jego główne postaci, charakteryzuje także stan ówczesnej muzyki wykonywanej podczas liturgicznych celebracji. Po takim chronologiczno-faktograficznym ujęciu, autor przystępuje do konkluzji. Wskazuje on, iż już pod koniec aktywności cecylianistów uważano, że muzyka kościelna, rozumiana jako część liturgii, musi być niejako w zgodzie ze wspólnotą, miejscem, okazją i kulturą, ale także ze wszystkimi elementami liturgii, które budują i konstytuują jedność wspólnoty zgromadzonej na eucharystii. Trendy odnowy promowane przez cecylianistów spowodowały niestety także, że muzyka kościelna odseparowała się od ówczesnych nurtów twórczości muzycznej.

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