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THE CECILIAN REFORM IN THE CHURCH MUSIC — POSITIVE OR REDUNDANT?

1. Anotations

The contribution deals with the less published period in the area of the development of Church music which was the reform movement of Cecilianism. The moments which initiated the “Cecilian movement” in the 19th century, represent new information about the substance of liturgy, the unsolved context between the liturgy and the Church music, which was concluded in the program declaration. Many insights and renewed impulses, which are to the liturgists of this century after the Second Vatican Council completely obvious, occurred in simple features by the representatives of this renewed movement, and that mostly in the German speaking countries. The article treats of each individual representative of this movement, the rules and innovations, which were to bring the cataclysmal matters into the liturgical reform and the liturgical movement. The author describes individual works of liturgical representatives of Cecilianism which had influence on the attempt of renewal. The movement of Cecilianism is today often misunderstood, because its primary and directed advocacy, reasons, aims and intended results for the liturgy were not well known. The Church music has to correspond with the concrete situation even today — the community, city, occasion, culture... and with all the corresponding components build the unity and complexity of the liturgy. The tendencies of the renewal supported by the Cecilian movement caused that the Church music separated itself from the then musical streams, which could not be stopped in their musical-historical development.

C e c i l i a n i s m — (Lat.) is a reformed movement in the field of sacral music which in the 19th century evolved efforts to change the liturgical music and the attempts in the normative measure of its rules¹ These direction is in the history of music often neglected.

The moments which initiated the “Cecilian movement” in the 19th century, represent new information about the substance of liturgy, the unsolved connections

¹ J. SCHVERMER, *Der Cäcilianismus*, v: *Geschichte der katholischen Kirchenmusik*, 2. volume, Kassel 1975, p. 226. F. HABERL, *Cäcilianismus*, v: *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, volume 2, 1958, p. 868.

between the liturgy and the Church music, which was concluded in the program declaration. Many insights and renewed impulses, which are completely obvious to the liturgists of this century after the Second Vatican Council, occurred in simple features by the representatives of this renewed movement.

With the beginnings of the Cecilian reform are connected two groups:

- 1) The group around the professor Johann Michael Sailer² (to him belonged: Caspar Ett, Johann Baptist Schmidt, Johann Casper Ailinger...).
- 2) The authors belonging to the so-called *Regensburg circle* (Carl Proske, Melchior von Diepenbrock, Joseph Schrems and the young Franz Xaver Witt).

The thoughts of this reform groups were created in its basis about the year 1860, when the Cecilianism was established as a program movement and at least in the year 1968 was founded "the General German Cecilian movement" In the Slavonic countries was established in 1879 "the Common Cyrilic Union", which was publishing till the year 1948 the magazine "Cyril"³.

² „The importance of the bishop Sailer for the renewal of the Church music rests on the fact, that the centre of the movement was transferred from Landshut and Munich into Regensburg, from where 40 years later came to the breakthrough organised by the Cecilianism. Sailer's reform thoughts were mainly preserved through the wide circle of his students. The Bavarian emperor Ludovic I. (1825–1868) attended his seminars and spread his breakthrough ideas. The king's minister for the cult, schooling, science and art" Eduard Schenk was received by Sailer into the Catholic Church. To the Munich circle of Sailer's students belonged: The priest Johann Bapt. Schmidt (1772–1844) — since 1798 the director of the choir in Munich; Caspar Ett (1788–1847) — since 1816 the organist at St. Michaels in Munich; Johann K. Aiblinger (1779–1867) — Sailer's student in Landshute, since 1823 was the master of the court band. Around those people was created the Cecilian Association of Court Musicians. The most important impulse for the renewal of the Church music had Sailer's liturgical concepts. The solutions of the bishop Sailer for the liturgy and the liturgicism make up in his pastoral-theological seminars for educating priest in Ingolstadt, Dillingene and Landshute. The connection of the religion with art according to the Sailer should be understood among the basic significance of the Church and the sacral music. Sailer thinks that all real religions are to have two sided: the inner and the outer. The inner side demonstrates itself in the art and should become visible by cult. The inner side has to be displayed by the outer side. This means that the real art, as every liturgy, must become an open faith in God and an open symbol of thinking. For Sailer are the art and the liturgy unseparably connected and have their own deep meaning in: (1) Clarify the vitality of the religion (2) Where there is an active religious life, they support it but if there is none, they evoke it. The clarification and the living through are the basic functions of the liturgy. Sailer mentions into connection also the problem of the authenticity of art. He encloses that the authentic art succeeds in every act and in the whole life of which the religious life consists. The life of a Christian should be an art. The art of man becomes „the most beautiful sanctuary of God and the poorest worship....the most magnificent music, statue and speech — word of God, a song of Heaven sung on Earth" The Catholic liturgy shall be expressed and realized in the basic truth of faith. In today's opinion it means that in the liturgy appears „mysterium Christi" and „mysterium salutis" — in the worship appears the real God; cf. Ph. HARNONCOURT, *Der Liturgiebegriff bei den Frühcaecilianern und seine Anwendung auf die Kirchenmusik*, in: *Der Caecilianismus, Anfänge – Grundlagen – Wirkungen. Internationales Symposium zur Kirchenmusik des 19. Jahrhunderts, verlegt bei Hans Schneider, Tutzing 1988, Sonderdruck*, p. 79–84.

³ A. AKIMJAK, *Liturgický spev a posvätná hudba*, Spišská Kapitula 1997, p. 26.

2. The starting moments

In the 18th century undoubtedly reached the musical part of the liturgical worship a high degree of compositional independence. All was leading to the presentation of the liturgical performance and the musical production as two separated and practically independent activities⁴:

- The Gregorian chant did not reach the required level
- The lost of the spiritual trend in the musical style of churches
- In the music dominated hardly understandable liturgical text, even this one was often shortened
- The prescribed liturgical songs were often replaced or simply left out and substituted by instruments
- The sacral music matched the so-called “great style” — the opera and the symphony, and so it came to the overlaying of the sacral and secular trend
- The isolation between the liturgical and musical performances was replenished by the celebration of the priest or during longer musical performances (e.g. *Gloria, Credo, Offertorium, Sanctus – Benedictus, Agnus Dei*) the priest simply completed reading of the liturgical text

To the bishop Sailerovi it was clear that liturgy is to be celebrated with the whole church, thus with a priest and believers, and that is why the song and musical accompaniment are firm parts of the liturgy. This means that the common song truly interpretes the own character of the liturgy. The liturgy and the sacral song of believers is to take place on the feast days.

According to Sailer, it is noteworthy how elaborately the apostle Paul describes the main features of sacral songs. In his letters, resp. in letters accredited to him he “specifies”:

1. The content of song — it is appeal, praise, gratefulness, triumph
2. The births of songs — springs from the senses of the soul
3. Immediate sources of songs — the praise in our hearts
4. The Church character of music — openly talk in the form of dialog
5. “The soul of song” — springs from the word of God and preaches each word
6. The message of song — the religious sense of songs responds the Christian life

⁴ In the architecture were the baroque and the rococo succeeded by the reproduction of the medieval artistic styles — for example pseudogothic... in contradiction to the baroque stands enlightenment and josephinism — the worship and the religion were led by the dictation of the reason and edification (exm. The emperor determined how many candles should be on the altar). In the liturgical effort of the Age of Reason: The sermon was prior to the music and the Latin song; Singing of people was led in the “mother tongue”; The autocratic regulations in the art.; The emphasis on the responsibility of the local bishop; The improved edification and education for the clergy and people; The Romanticism became the fruit of the Age of Reason. Its requirements were directed towards simplicity, nature and became also a correcting rear-movement. Romanticism was the idealization of history in the face of presence and was turning towards irrational ideas and thoughts in the music too. It was upbraided with: The tendency to the historicism and restoration of the Middle Ages; The declaration of national ideas (as protestation against France, Italy and Russia); The birth of ecumenical ideas with the aim of national church unity.

Sailer during his activities as teacher and pastor of souls was devoted to translations of texts, strove to make them understandable, supported the use the common language in the liturgy and the removal of all limitations from the liturgy.

The unverbale speech of the celebrant and all worshipping believers belong also to the foundation of the liturgy which should express the virtue of the liturgy. The basic language of the liturgy is not German, neither Hebrew nor Greek....it is life, gesture, the impression of face, the look, the shape and the place of man, in one word a "complete expression of religion in life and in the whole experiencing of people" In this basic language of the liturgy is of great value the mother tongue, which is prior to every other language and enables all people to understand⁵.

The reforms were to emphasise the use of mother tongue in the worship. Sailer was personally promoting the simplicity of the liturgy, even in the field of language usage; he protested against the congestion and complication in the liturgy. On the other side he did not recommend an absolute use of *simplicia* in the liturgy.

The prominent place in the Cecilian reform occupies the Silesian doctor and an extraordinary composer Dr. Carl Proske, who was attracted by Sailer's ideas. In the 30th years he went to study the theology into Regensburg. He was the domestic doctor of Sailer and assumed his reform ideas, step by step putting them into practice. The other student of Sailer was his secretary and later the general vicar Melchior von Diepenbrock (1789–1853), which became a bishop and afterwards a cardinal.

3. The next evolution in the liturgical concept

The liturgical concept of the renewal was strongly supported by the seminary rector Michael Wittman (1760–1833), who acted in the sense of Sailer's ideas. In the year 1832 he was appointed a bishop but before his consecrations he died. The strong literal support he gained from Sailer's students, for example by Franz Xaver Schmidt⁶, who in y. 1832 published a three-volume work *Liturgie*⁷ and eagerly studying he strove to accomplish this concept. He writes:

⁵ Cf. HARNONCOURT, *op. cit.*, p. 80–88.

⁶ To the Church music by Schmidt: "In the church is the singing always connected with the cult; the beginning of this custom cannot be determined... the difference between the new and old times is that the than songs were not accompanied by music as today by the organ or other instruments. The various music makes joy, presents the assumed, awakens the bearers of faith, motivates the virtuous to love, stimulates the regret by sinners, lifts with tender strength from the dust and helps us to serve the most Highest. Singers were firstly all believers, soon they were replaced by the choir. Later on sang the individuals. In new era is the common song in many parts of Germany renewed, in some of them operate choirs, in the village churches is the school teacher mainly the head of singers (kantor). Mostly are those churches subordinated to the local bishops, who do not order the way of singing or the accompaniment of instruments" Cf. F.X. SCHMIDT, *Liturgik der christkatholischen Religion*, volume 1, Passau 1832, p. 239–243.

⁷ SCHMIDT, *op. cit.*, 3 volume.

In some churches is the accompaniment of songs by the organ or other instruments limited to the great feast days. Melodies are very varied. In many places are produced parts of operas, dances, marches or music of various character. The presented music attracts by sensitive song our senses, drums and trumpets can be heard too. In the liturgical notices in the church as in the art halls are presented messages and invitations about so-called musical markets at various anniversaries of Saints. Restrictions, what is allowed or not allowed, do not suffice. The unlimited freedom is even more attacked, the strict insight of the Church is an urgent need⁸

The processing of the Church music in the spirit of Cecilian reform and its renewal as one of the important elements of the liturgy was accomplished by Carl Proske on a clear and consequent basis. His four-volume collection *Musica Divina* contains in the introduction of the first volume the author's liturgical confession and in the content is confirmed as a liturgical book. The most genuine production to which is the human voice lifted, is the enliven organ of the Christian worship, which is ready to enter into the new relationship to the mystery of the Church. His determination is employed in every numinous task of art in the liturgy. The scope of liturgical rules is evident and limits the subjective artistic focus. Proske calls his work "integrated musical liturgy summarised in one work" The author is concerned only with documentation and the help for studies and for revival of old music; the main focus is on the gathering of liturgical materials and their complexity. This insight relates to the four-volume issue:

1. volume *12 Ordinaria of the mass (Kyriale)*
2. volume *Moteta ad propria (Graduale)*:
 - 1) *Proprium de tempore*
 - 2) *Proprium de Sanctorum*
 - 3) *Commune Sanctorum*
 - 4) *Appendix Motetorum cuilibet tempori convenientium*
3. volume *Songs of the officium (Antiphonale)*:
 - 1) *Psalmodia*
 - 2) *Magnificat*
 - 3) *Hymnodia 40*
 - 4) *Antiphonae Beatae Mariae Virginis*
4. volume *Various (Varia)*:
 - 1) *Song of the week*
 - 2) *Litany*
 - 3) *Others: Stabat mater, Asperges, Vidi aquam, Pater noster, Ave Maria, Te Deum*⁹

⁸ Cf. SCHMIDT, *op. cit.*, volume 1, p. 239–243.

⁹ Cf. HARNONCOURT, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

4. The break-through in the Cecilian reform

At times of the bishop Valentin Riedel (1842–1857) came in Regensburg to a break-through in the liturgical Church music. Riedel was consequently claiming for initiatives of Carl Proske, the cardinal Melchior von Diepenbrock and Joseph Schrems and their works later published. In those times were issued detailed „instructions of the bishop” for German speaking countries and maintained the reform system which was concerned with the liturgy and the sacral music¹⁰. The basic liturgical supplements were the following : The Church song urgently belongs to the liturgy — terms *pars actionis liturgicae*, or *musica liturgica*, and so all the liturgical rules must be consistently adhered to. It could not be overseen that the “liturgical concept has a legal significance”

5. Franz Xaver Witt as liturgical reformator

The ideas and initiatives for the renewal of the Church music springing from the liturgy gained in Regensburg a new form by the activity of Franz Xaver Witt¹¹, the founder and the first president of the Cecilian society. As a young chaplain in the y.1859 Witt already critically claimed for word. In the y. 1865 he published a extensive article, which was the beginning of his reforming efforts. Anew incorporated into the liturgy “the Gregorian chant as the own liturgical song of Church” and focused on more relative sacral music, the polyphon of the 16th century, and so it was introduced in his collection *Musica Divina*. In this collection he already proposed the society and then began to spread and realise his own reform plans¹².

¹⁰ Apart from Regensburg initiatives, the following decisions had influence on the reform focus in Rome in y. 1838, 1842 and 1856: 1854 Eichstätt — The pastoral instructions on the sacral song and music; 1856 Trier — The instructions by the bishop; 1857 Regensburg — The direct lines by the bishop; 1858 Leitmeritz — The instructions of the bishop; 1859 Augsburg — The bishop’s law on the diocese song; 1860 Colone — The regional council for diocese of Colone, Trier, Münster, Hildesheim; 1860 Praha — The provincial council with the regulations for Church music; 1866 Bratislava — The bishop’s instructions to Church music; 1870 Rom — Pius IX. *Multum ad movendos animos*; cf. HARNONCOURT, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

¹¹ He was born in y. 1834 in Walderbachu, the grammar school and the theological studies attended in Regensburg, then worked as prefect of the music and the singer in the cathedral. The musical education and formation acquired from C. Proske and J.Schrems. In the y. 1856 became a priest and in y. 1859 a magister in the seminary. Apart from that he studied the ancient music and become teacher. Since the y. 1867 worked a director of the choir in St. Emmerane, in 1870/ 71 the bandmaster in the cathedral in Eichstätt, since the y.1873 he moved overworked and in bad health to Landshut where he died in 1888. He possessed a great talent for organising and was a gifted speaker of foreign languages.

¹² 2.9.1868 Witt spoke the participants of the General meeting of the Cecilian societies in Bamberg: “We want to re-create the whole musical world of the Church, get rid of rooted prejudices and habits, which were lasting too long We want to re-build the Church music... and I introduce a new Church music associated with liturgical rules and serves the sacral art, the mastery and perfection”; cf. *Bericht über die erste Generalversammlung des ACV*, v: *Fliegende Blätter*, volume 3, p. 85.

Witt proclaimed as model C. Proske, who had visions of the renewed sacral music. *Išlo mu predovšetkým o to, aby sa hudba opäť začlenila do bohoslužieb*. Witt proved to be a good liturgist and to our surprise he wrote himself several compositions dedicated to liturgical topics. The foundation and the starting point for the Witt's reform concepts was his steadfast conviction that the sacral song is the part of liturgy, which can only be reached, when all Church musicians — composers, bandmasters, organists and church singers together take part in the liturgical production and renewal.

This basis conception reflected the situation after the council. To the extensive realisation of the Witt's aims and his sometimes combative advocacy of Church music are devoted numerous activities in several fields of his doings. On the Witt's conception of liturgy is remarkable that in spite of the listed liturgic-theological aspects he put the emphasise on the *Roman expressions and rules in the liturgy*, for the feature which renders the worship liturgically authentic is its accordance with the Roman liturgical rules¹³

6. The common principles

With the liturgical orientation of Cecilianism corresponds the effort to renew the Gregorian chant. This activity of the choral renewal was especially intensive in France, where were published the basic studies for singular issues of choral collections. Franz Xaver Haberl took care of the new edition in y. 1871 and it was named *Editio Medicea*. It was issued by the publisher Pustet in Regensburg. The Gregorian choral, according to the Cecilian efforts, is to be regarded as the official and authentic song of the Catholic Church, and therefore the priority is given to compositions *a capella*.

In the Cecilian reform can be observed the expressive concepts for song in common languages and for the realisation of the liturgy in the common language.

From the recommendations of the reform it should be reminded of the tendency to create in each parish a choir which would accompany the liturgy of the Mass or the sung Vespers. In the Slavonic countries were in this spirit established the diocese and parish „Cyrilic unions” The composers, which were creating in this intents, are: F.Z. Skuherský, J. Förster, K. Stecker, F. Musil, J. Nešvera, F. Picka, E. Tregler, J.C. Sychra, K. Douša, V. Řihovský¹⁴. These new ideas were mainly spread in magazines¹⁵.

¹³ Cf. HARNONCOURT, *op. cit.*, p. 91–93.

¹⁴ AKIMJAK, *op. cit.*, p. 26; P. CABAN, *Krátke zhrnutie dôležitých cirkevných dokumentov o hudbe a speve v liturgii*, „Liturgia” 3 (2001), nr 43, p. 233.

¹⁵ “Fliegende Blätter für katholischen Kirchenmusik”, year. 1, Pustet, Regensburg 1866; “Musica Sacra”, year 1, Pustet, Regensburg 1868; “Vereins-Catalog”, year 1, Pustet, Regensburg 1870; “Gregoriusblatt”, year 1, Verlag Schwann, Düsseldorf 1875.

7. The development of music schools

For the Cecilianism is typical the establishment of musical choirs, schools and instituts. Let mention the Institute of Sacral Music in Regensburg founded in the y. 1874, the y. 1880 *Scuola Gregoriana* in Rome and *Istituto Pontificio di Musica Sacra* in Rome in the y. 1910¹⁶.

8. Conclusion

The movement of Cecilianism is currently not very well understood, because its prim and aimed advocacy is not well-known. Already at the end of the development and the establishment of Cecilianism was the Church music expressed as part of liturgy, and for the liturgical song and music was responsible in the first line the Roman Church. The sacral music should be in accordance with concrete situation even today — the community, city, occasion, culture... and with all the corresponding elements of the liturgy build the unity and complexity of the worship.

The trends of the renewal promoted by the Cecilian movement caused, that the sacral music separated itself from the then musical streams¹⁷, which could not be stopped in their musical-historical evolution.

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 skrótego 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. Niestety trendy odnowy promowane przez cecylianistów spowodowały także, że muzyka kościelna odseparowała się od ówczesnych nurtów twórczości muzycznej.

Ks. G. Poźniak

¹⁶ Cf. HARNONCOURT, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

¹⁷ AKIMIJAŁ, *op. cit.*, p. 26.