

**Monophony and polyphony in liturgical music
of the 15th and 16th centuries:
coexistence and mutual inspiration in the territory of Central Europe
(50th Brno International Musicological Colloquium)**

Location: Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts, Institute of Musicology, Janáčkovo náměstí 2a, room N21

Date: Monday 12th (09.30) – Wednesday 14th (16.00) October 2015

The International Musicological Colloquium in Brno is devoted to the wider context of the monophonic and polyphonic liturgical repertoire at the dawn of the early modern period. The coexistence of plainchant and polyphony is to be observed on various levels: plainchant still remains the essential element of liturgical music; with regard to polyphonic music, it not only defines the framework of the compositional layout, but also represents the monophonic backbone by providing the motivic material. At the same time it symbiotically represents a contrasting type of musical utterance as well as the starting material for improvising polyphony – a technique which is embedded in the emerging theory of counterpoint.

With the arrival of the Reformation this symbiosis is enriched by the process of vernacularisation. This is evident, for example, in contrafacta of plainchant in the vernacular (here the primary importance of the so called Jistebnický kancionál and the related group of sources is to be named), and the supplementation of the liturgy of various Christian denominations by the integration of songs in the vernacular. The attitude of the Catholic church as set forth by the Council of Trent stands in contrast to the well-known use of vernacular songs in non-Catholic liturgies. But at least in Central Europe the church continues to follow its usual practice rather than teaching and pushing through the new rigorous standpoint.

The Colloquium should thus deal with the performance practice of plainchant, song and polyphony in the liturgical music of the 15th and 16th centuries, and the liturgical embodiment of each repertoire type (including the liturgical use of the main Central European sources). Attention will be paid to the diversity of liturgy (monastical / diocesan environment, festive / common liturgy, professional / amateur musical forces), different denominations (and particular types of music as signs of confessional identity) and local traditions (local performance practice, the *longue durée* phenomenon in some types of repertoire).

The specifics of musical culture in the Czech lands should be among the key topics: the repertoire of so called Jistebnický kancionál and related sources (with special focus on the development of late medieval lamentations), the integration of the main sources of polyphonic music into liturgical practice, or the use of the local plainchant repertoire within polyphonic music.

Other key topics are: particular types of music institutions taking part in liturgical music, i.e. school choirs, aristocratic and town music ensembles (including the question of the use of instruments in church music, records of alternatim practice, *colla parte* use and the growing autonomy of instruments and/or distinct instrumental types of liturgical music). Last but not least, the activities of religious brotherhoods in the broader Central European context will be of interest.

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