

## The Double-Choir Motets of Rudolphine Prague

*Dedicated to Ladislav Kačic on the occasion of his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday*

### Introduction

In the musical culture of Bohemia before the Thirty Years' War, whether this involved the court ensemble of Emperor Rudolph II (1552-1612) or institutions of townsmen such as confraternities of *literati* and school choirs, the repertoire of vocal polyphony intended for multiple choirs began to assert itself very intensively at the end of the sixteenth century. Performers in Bohemia reacted remarkably quickly to this wave of fashion, which was disseminated from Italy mainly by printed music and migrating musicians. The technique of five-voice through-composed counterpoint inspired by such famed Franco-Flemish composers as Jacobus Clemens non Papa (*ca.* 1510 – *ca.* 1556), Nicolas Gombert (*ca.* 1495-1560), or a generation later Philippe de Monte (1521-1603) and Orlando di Lasso (1532-1591) was then gradually superseded by voice leading conceived for two or more choirs with the emergence of a predominantly homorhythmic texture. The style of polychoral Italian vocal and vocal-instrumental sacred music caught on all over Europe very quickly, and it documents the final stage of development of the art of music in the Renaissance. The popularity of this repertoire in Bohemia is documented by a number of preserved musical prints primarily of foreign provenience, which are still in the holdings of Czech archives and libraries, and also by Bohemian musical manuscripts, into which their users copied borrowed compositions.

One of the exceptional Bohemian sources of double-choir eight-voice repertoire is a set of partbooks from the library of the famed Bohemian Rudolphine humanist, man of letters, and composer Georgius Carolides a Carlsperga (Jiří Carolides z Karlšperku, 1569-1612, ► Fig. 1-3). The set is kept at the Department of Manuscripts and Early Printed Books of the National Library of the Czech Republic in Prague under the shelf mark Se 1337. It consists of four partbooks containing two volumes of an anthology, enormously popular at the time, of motets by Italian composers titled *Sacrae cantiones* (Nuremberg 1585) and *Continuatio Cantionum sacrarum* (Nuremberg 1588) and a manuscript with notation of eighteen compositions mostly for double choir in the motet genre. The manuscript was created in the 1590s and the first decade of the seventeenth century. The set of parts is not complete. The parts have been preserved that bear the designations “Discantus”, “Tenor”, “Basis”, and “Sexta vox”. The printed edition consisted of six partbooks, and the manuscript addendum was arranged in the same manner. Therefore, in the case of compositions for eight voices, some of the partbooks contained two voices, so in the best case there are six preserved voices, and in the worst case five of the eight original parts. Carolides's convolute therefore represents one of the most com-

pletely preserved manuscript sources in the history of Bohemian musical culture of the period before the Thirty Years' War. Most Renaissance musical manuscripts and prints kept in Bohemia that take the form of partbooks (*Stimmbücher*, *Stimmhefte*) have come down to us today merely as torsos, so it is very difficult to reconstruct the period repertoire on their basis. Carolides's manuscript reproduces the compositions in a form that enables their supplementation from other sources or the composition of completions that fully respect the style. The source has thus become the basis of an edition that we are presenting to the public and especially to performers.

The manuscript in Carolides's convolute is a unique anthology of eight-voice motets that were being performed in Bohemia during the Rudolphine period. It is varied in terms of the attributions of authorship and with respect to the texts set to music and the manner of their treatment. In choosing works to notate, the person who acquired or used the convolute was guided not only by the music's availability or popularity. In selecting the content, apart from considerations of the available voices, he also definitely took other interpretive, aesthetic, and confessional needs into consideration. One of these needs was apparently for spiritual content, because most of the texts set to music are of liturgical origin or are quotations from the Bible. The texts of compositions that were intended for the occasion of a funeral or wedding are also written in a spiritual or moralistic tone. A third criterion was the linguistic aspect of the motet. Typically, Latin is predominant in the notated compositions, but a substantial number of them were composed to Czech texts, or Czech words were at least placed alongside the original Latin. Thirdly, the convolute contains compositions that could be used mainly in the milieu of Utraquist society. Above all, the motets on texts commemorating Jan Hus or Jerome of Prague are especially rare in this respect.

The convolute of two prints and a manuscript addendum served its users – among whom were certainly school teachers and pupils and possibly the members of a confraternity of *literati* – at solemn worship services, weddings, funerals, and congratulatory occasions. Ambitious occasional compositions of this kind appear only in exceptional cases in Bohemian sources predating the Thirty Years' War. Although in some cases the compositions were probably connected with a unique event and were therefore performed only once, the level of quality of the compositions is relatively high. None of them belong in the category of semi-professional or dilettantish music. The content of the manuscript addendum thus bears witness to the advanced level of musical culture in the milieu of Prague's intellectual townsmen.

The manuscript part of Carolides's convolute contains compositions of diverse origins. Some were copied from period printed anthologies (Ruggiero Giovannelli: *Laudate Dominum, Iubilate Deo*; Giovanni Croce: *Factum est silentium*). In addition, there is also a composition that was created by revising a popular chanson by Orlando di Lasso (*Qui seminant in lachrymis*) and providing it with a new text. There is also a piece that circulated around Europe with attributions to various composers (Christophorus Clavius / Jacobus Handl Gallus: *Hodie natus est Salvator mundi*). Most of the copied motets are in two-part form (*Prima* and *Secunda pars*). An exception among them is the six-part *Lamentace proroka Jeremiáše (Incipit oratio Ieremie Prophetae)*, the author of which is Dominique Phinot. Written in Carolides's hand beneath the original words is a contrafactum in Czech, a text intended for the occasion of a funeral (*Žalostné rozloučení přátel milých* – The Sorrowful Parting of Dear Friends). We can definitely attribute authorship of two of the compositions in the manuscript, which are not

found elsewhere, to the owner of the convolute, i.e. to Georgius Carolides (*Confitebor Domino nimis in ore meo; Augustine sacros thalami intrature penates*). There are also three compositions with Hussite subject matter, some of which may also have been composed by Georgius Carolides (*Salve, sancte cinis; V naději Boží Mistr Hus Jan* – In God's Hope the Master Jan Hus; *Iubila, felix Boëmia*). Apparently the oldest composition notated in the manuscript is a Christmas motet by the imperial organist Carolus Luython (*Dies est laetitiae*), which was popular and frequently performed around Europe. Like most manuscripts from the period, this source also contains compositions for which a definite determination of authorship is difficult or impossible (*Os iusti meditabitur sapientiam; Dilecte Deo Galle perhenni; Nobilis et pulchra et sapiens Catharina puella; Divinus cytharis et sacro carmine David; Jak jsou milí příbytkové tvoji* – How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place).

The order of the compositions in the manuscript is as follows:

№	Author	Incipit	Discantus (fol.)	Tenor (fol.)	Basis (fol.)	Sexta vox (fol.)
1.	[Ruggiero Giovannelli]	<i>Laudate Dominum in sanctis eius</i>	1 <sup>r</sup> -2 <sup>r</sup>	1 <sup>r</sup> -2 <sup>r</sup>	1 <sup>r</sup> -4 <sup>r</sup>	1 <sup>r</sup> -3 <sup>r</sup>
2.	[Orlando di Lasso]	<i>Qui seminant in lachrymis</i>	2 <sup>r</sup> -2 <sup>v</sup>	2 <sup>v</sup> -3 <sup>r</sup>	3 <sup>v</sup> -5 <sup>r</sup>	2 <sup>v</sup> -5 <sup>r</sup>
3.	[Christophorus Clavius]	<i>Hodie natus est Salvator mundi</i>	3 <sup>r</sup> -3 <sup>v</sup>	3 <sup>r</sup> -4 <sup>r</sup>	5 <sup>v</sup> -7 <sup>r</sup>	4 <sup>v</sup> -7 <sup>r</sup>
4.	[Dominique Phinot]	<i>Žalostné rozloučení přátel milých / Incipit oratio Ieremie Prophetae</i>	4 <sup>r</sup> -6 <sup>r</sup>	4 <sup>r</sup> -6 <sup>r</sup>	6 <sup>v</sup> -12 <sup>r</sup>	6 <sup>v</sup> -11 <sup>r</sup>
5.	Georgius Carolides	<i>Confitebor Domino nimis in ore meo</i>	6 <sup>r</sup> -7 <sup>r</sup>	6 <sup>r</sup> -6 <sup>v</sup>	11 <sup>v</sup> -13 <sup>r</sup>	10 <sup>v</sup> -12 <sup>r</sup>
6.	Anonymous	<i>Os iusti meditabitur sapientiam</i>	7 <sup>r</sup> -7 <sup>v</sup>	7 <sup>r</sup> -7 <sup>v</sup>	12 <sup>v</sup> -14 <sup>r</sup>	12 <sup>v</sup> -13 <sup>r</sup>
7.	Georgius Carolides	<i>Augustine sacros thalami intrature penates</i>	7 <sup>v</sup> -9 <sup>r</sup>	7 <sup>v</sup> -8 <sup>v</sup>	14 <sup>v</sup> -17 <sup>r</sup>	13 <sup>v</sup> -16 <sup>r</sup>
8.	Anonymous	<i>Salve, sancte cinis, salve, sanctissime martyr</i>	9 <sup>v</sup> -10 <sup>r</sup>	9 <sup>r</sup> -10 <sup>r</sup>	17 <sup>r</sup> -18 <sup>v</sup>	16 <sup>v</sup> -18 <sup>r</sup>
9.	Anonymous	<i>Iubila, felix Boëmia, adsunt tibi solennia</i>	10 <sup>v</sup> -11 <sup>v</sup>	10 <sup>r</sup> -11 <sup>r</sup>	18 <sup>v</sup> -20 <sup>r</sup>	18 <sup>v</sup> -21 <sup>r</sup>
10.	Anonymous [Georgius Carolides?]	<i>V naději Boží Mistr Hus Jan</i>	12 <sup>r</sup> -13 <sup>r</sup>	11 <sup>v</sup> -12 <sup>v</sup>	20 <sup>v</sup> -22 <sup>r</sup>	21 <sup>v</sup> -24 <sup>v</sup>
11.	Anonymous	<i>Dilecte Deo Galle perhenni</i>	13 <sup>v</sup> -15 <sup>r</sup>	13 <sup>r</sup> -14 <sup>v</sup>	22 <sup>v</sup> -24 <sup>r</sup>	–
12.	Anonymous	<i>Nobilis et pulchra et sapiens Catharina puella</i>	15 <sup>v</sup> -16 <sup>r</sup>	14 <sup>v</sup> -15 <sup>v</sup>	24 <sup>r</sup> -24 <sup>v</sup>	25 <sup>r</sup> -26 <sup>r</sup>
13.	Anonymous	<i>Šťastný, kdož v Boží bázni cestou Páně chodí</i>	16 <sup>r</sup> -17 <sup>v</sup>	15 <sup>v</sup> -17 <sup>v</sup>	24 <sup>v</sup> -26 <sup>r</sup>	–
14.	Anonymous	<i>Divinus cytharis et sacro carmine David</i>	17 <sup>v</sup> -18 <sup>v</sup>	17 <sup>v</sup> -19 <sup>r</sup>	26 <sup>r</sup> -27 <sup>v</sup>	–
15.	[Ruggiero Giovannelli]	<i>Iubilate Deo, omnis terra, cantate et exultate et psallite</i>	19 <sup>r</sup> -20 <sup>v</sup>	19 <sup>r</sup> -20 <sup>v</sup>	27 <sup>v</sup> -29 <sup>r</sup>	26 <sup>r</sup> -26 <sup>v</sup>
16.	[Charles Luython]	<i>Dies est laetitiae in ortu regali</i>	21 <sup>r</sup> -22 <sup>v</sup>	20 <sup>v</sup> -21 <sup>r</sup>	29 <sup>r</sup> -29 <sup>v</sup>	27 <sup>r</sup> -28 <sup>r</sup>
17.	Anonymous	<i>Jak jsou milí příbytkové tvoji</i>	23 <sup>r</sup> -24 <sup>v</sup>	21 <sup>v</sup> -23 <sup>r</sup>	30 <sup>r</sup> -31 <sup>v</sup>	28 <sup>v</sup> -32 <sup>r</sup>
18.	Giovanni Croce	<i>Factum est silentium in coelo</i>	24 <sup>v</sup> -25 <sup>v</sup>	23 <sup>r</sup> -24 <sup>r</sup>	31 <sup>v</sup> -32 <sup>v</sup>	31 <sup>v</sup> -34 <sup>r</sup>

From Carolides's manuscript, this edition contains a selection of eight compositions (the numbers highlighted in grey in the table), to which we have added the eight-voice *Dialogismus octo vocum de amore Christi sponsi* by Franciscus Sale (ca. 1545-1599), court singer to the emperor. The motet was published by the Prague printer Georgius Nigrinus (Jiří Nigrin) in 1598. A complete specimen with all of the voices, which served as the basis for our transcription, is kept at the Music Department of the National Library of the Czech Republic in Prague under the shelf mark 59 E 710.

### Note on the edition

Nine eight-voice motets for double choir that are related to the musical culture of Rudolphine Prague were selected for inclusion in the edition. With a single exception (no. 9, F. Sale: *Dialogismus*), which appeared in print, all of the works have been preserved incompletely in the remarkable torso of a set of partbooks at the National Library in Prague under the shelf mark Se 1337, one of the users of which was the Prague poet and composer Georgius Carolides a Carlsperga. In view of the exceptional value of the set and of the minimal probability of finding the two or three missing voices, the editors decided to reconstruct the compositions. Martin Horyna undertook this task, bringing to a climax his approximately forty years of efforts to breath life even into the incompletely preserved artefacts of Bohemian music from the era before the Thirty Years' War. In doing so, he applied the following principles:

- The greater the number of preserved voices, the greater the chance of finding the key to reconstruction, but it generally cannot be an identical copy of the original. A reconstruction is worth considering only if more than half of the voices have been preserved, e.g. in works for double choir at least five or six out of eight voices, and at least two from each choir. The frequent use of echoes allows the filling in of missing parts by analogy; if the same voices are missing in both choirs (and especially the highest voices), it is more difficult to fill in what is missing. In the chosen set, there are also cases like this.
- The eight-voice compositions of the manuscript addendum are for double choir, and four-voice chordal writing is present in larger passages of all of the pieces. That allows not only the filling in of missing tones in the vertical harmonic structures with a high degree of probable accuracy, but also the estimating of the ranges and pitches of the missing voices. Full eight-voice writing is typified by an effort to make regular use of the full range from the lowest to the highest tones in chords and to avoid the droning of two or more voices on the same tone.
- For the use of imitative writing, it is necessary to look for possibilities for the entrances of the missing voices within the framework of the norms given by analysis of the preserved torso.
- Analysis should reveal technical aspects of work on composition. The analysis should encompass the manner of voice leading, the degree of employment of linear and chordal writing, the intervallic structure of melodic

lines, the motifs of parts using imitation, the forms of imitative writing, the treatment of borrowed melodies, the use of figures in diminution, the treatment of modality, the frequency of accidentals, the forms of cadential figures, the relationship between the music and the words, the employment of rhetorical figures, and declamation. Anyone attempting such reconstruction should be capable of evaluating the technical aspects of the composition and should be at least as technically skilled at the work of composing as the actual composer of the incompletely preserved work. In doing the reconstruction, he or she should proceed in accordance with the composer's intentions as observed from the composition, should not alter the music into a different style, and should avoid the temptation of making any kind of "improvements".

### Notation

All of the motets are written in white mensural notation, while in one composition, plainchant notation is used to give more of an indication of a doxology than its outright notation (no. 6, introit *Os iusti meditabuntur sapientiam*). The white mensural notation has been transcribed into modern notation with a 2 : 1 reduction of note values. All of the compositions were notated in the mensuration *tempus imperfectum diminutum* (♩), and a contrasting mensuration like *proportio sesquialtera* is used only in three compositions, and it is notated by various symbols (♩<sub>3</sub>, ○<sup>3</sup>/<sub>2</sub>). For transcribing the concluding note (*longa* in the sources), the *brevis* note shape is employed. Ligatures are indicated by square brackets, and the *color* is marked with a broken square bracket. The treble clef is used in place of C clefs, and for octave transpositions (for parts in the tenor and alto range), the numeral 8 is added to the treble clef. The compositions have been rewritten in normal measures with the use of ties where note values cross bar lines. Added accidentals are placed above the note in question. The notation of the reconstructed voices uses the same type face. Which voices are reconstructed can be seen from the critical commentary and from the incipit, which contains the initial notes of the individual voices or an empty staff in the case of reconstructed voices. Individual added notes are enclosed in square brackets. Other changes to the notation are discussed in the critical commentary. Plainchant notation has been realised using black noteheads without stems, and ligatures are indicated by curved slurs.

### Text

The spelling of the Latin text is left in the form of the Humanist period. Czech spelling was not consistent in the practice of manuscripts of the period. Contemporary standardised forms are used for the indications of vowel length (usually not given in the original manuscript) and for writing the letters *i*, *y*, *j*, *ě*, *u*, and *v*, and digraph orthography has been replaced by the use of diacritical marks. The dual spellings *jsme* – *sme* and the period use of the letters *s* and *z* in prepositions and prefixes have been retained. The text has been added to places where repetitions were not written out. Textual variants in different voices have been edited to match the form that appears most frequently. All changes to the spelling of the

text are mentioned in the critical apparatus. Punctuation has been added.

### **Commentary**

The commentary for each composition contains the text set to music and its translation, critical apparatus, commentary on the text (origin, place in the liturgy), information about rubrics and attribution, and critical commentary on the music with references to the vocal part and bar number separated by a slash from a numeral for position in the bar (e.g. 15/4 means bar 15, 4<sup>th</sup> note). Designations of voices (often missing in the source) are added for the sake of clarity, and in doubtful cases, reference is made to the order of voices in the score).

### **Note on interpretation**

All of the selected compositions are for double choir. The most noteworthy feature of these compositions is the pos-

sibility of stereophonic spatial effects and the sonic contrast between four-part and eight-part writing, the latter usually being reserved for important messages in the text. Attentiveness to the text being set to music is also demonstrated by the homorhythmic writing, which accommodates the comprehensibility, and the use of rhetorical figures that highlight the meaning of the words. These compositions are not actually written for large numbers of singers, and they sound best sung by small chamber forces. Likewise, an exaggerated emphasis on stereophonic effects (wide separation of choirs, simulation of echoes) is out of place here; what we have in this case is musical dialogue. This can also be seen from the fact that within a composition, the assumed spatial contrast between two choirs with identical vocal ranges tends to alternate with passages contrasting between high and low voices and vice versa. The correct, uniform declamation of the text is important.

*Petr Daněk – Martin Horyna*  
(Translated by Mark Newkirk)