

HISTORY OF ART

SEMANTIC AND COMPOSITIONAL FEATURES OF THE CANTICLE GENRE IN THE CZECH SPIRITUAL TRADITION

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The XVII century became a turning point for the Czech Republic, a time of choosing a certain historical and cultural path, changing the previous sociocultural paradigm. Having lost political independence as a result of the decisive battle on White Mountain in 1620, the Czechs acquired national and cultural immunity, which was strengthened many times under the influence of the re-Catholicization process, helping to preserve the Czech mentality, historical and zemstvo patriotism and Czech culture in difficult times for the people. This led to the formation of new forms of religiosity, both local and general cultural, which included the cult of saints, processions, sermons, the growth of monasteries, religious brotherhoods, and pilgrimage centers. In this way, the Czechs are trying to preserve their identity in new historical conditions, when their lands became part of the megaspace of the Habsburg Empire.

At this time, there was a process of intensive joining of the Czech Republic into the new pan-European cultural space, re-Catholicization and religious rehabilitation of the country within the Catholic world. In the Baroque era (XVII–XVIII centuries), it was within the framework of Catholicism that the program of preserving one's ethnocultural identity was carried out. It is necessary to especially highlight such a phenomenon as baroque patriotism, clearly manifested in the musical and literary genre of the cantional, which gained wide popularity among the Czech people and contributed to the preservation and development of their ethnocultural and ethnohistorical identity. Therefore, the cantional as a genre is representative in terms of expressing the Czech cultural mentality and worldview of the era.

Cantional (Lat. *Cantionale*, from *cantio* – [spiritual] song; Germ. *Cantional*, Kantional; Czech *Kancionál*) – is a collection of polyphonic spiritual chants of

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the Catholic and Evangelical churches for joint performance by the church choir and community. The main features of the cantional are the concept of a collection (collection of songs), an anthology, a selection of spiritual songs united by a certain theme or integrity.

Since the XV century, cantionals (*cantionale ecclesiasticum*) have been part of church singing practice. Unlike the antiphonary and gradualal, the cantional was not clearly regulated in terms of the composition of the chants. In the early Catholic cantionals, a significant part of the repertoire consisted of single-voice Gregorian chants with the addition of songs in Latin (mainly) and national languages, as well as polyphonic compositions – motets, including multi-text ones. Over time, the name "Cantionale", originally referring to one of the parts of the book, was assigned to the entire collection of selected hymns of the mass and officia.

Catholic songbooks had various names in the Czech national church tradition: "Česká mariánská muzika" by Adam Vaclav Michna z Otradovic (Prague, 1647), "Kancionál český" by Matej Vaclav Steyer (Prague, 1683), "Slavíček rájský" by Jan Josef Božan (Hradec Králové, 1719).

The theme of songs of Czech cantionals embodied the ideologeme of baroque patriotism, nationalism, ethnocultural identity and sacredness, religious, cultural and church traditions. The themes and content of the songs met the requirements of re-Catholicization in the Czech Republic and the interests of the Catholic Church. Thematically, songs from Czech Baroque cantionals can be divided into three groups. The first group mainly consists of songs of broad themes, subordinated to liturgical themes and theology, for example, songs arranged in a hierarchical sequence: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Ascension, Trinity. The second group includes those songs the lyrics of which are determined by the texts of the Psalter with its rich allusions from the Old Testament. Most often, this section included paraphrases of the Psalter of Jiří Střejc, which was popular in the Czech lands at that time. In the third group the topics are very diverse. Songs in both the national and Latin languages about the Virgin Mary and the patron saints of the Czech Republic: Wenceslas, Ludmila, Vita, Vojtech, Jan Nepomucký have a special place and play an important role in various canals. Songs from the third group are most widely represented in various cantionals, which thematically proves the connection of hymnography with the ideology of baroque patriotism.

In the Baroque era, the glorification of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the saints occurs not only in Latin, but also in the native language. The native language seemed to be an emanation of the divine mind, a gift from God. Thus, the Czech language becomes a sacred category, and love for it becomes not only a duty, but also a manifestation of religious service. Written Czech language continued to occupy a high position in Jesuit printing houses. Poetry,

religious, preaching and moralizing literature, hagiography, and cantionals developed intensively in the Czech language.

Numerous literary brotherhoods, organized not only in cities, but even in small settlements of the Czech Republic, became translators of handwritten culture, promoting the spread of handwritten cantionals locally. Jesuit printing houses in Prague, Brno, Olomouc, Pilsen, and Mlada Boleslav played a major role in spreading of printed cantionals. The participation of big sections of the population in the performance of cantionals is the embodiment of the synthesis of the categories of national and sacred. This contributed to the preservation of patriotism among the people and the development of ethnocultural identity.

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