

Michaela Christine Hastetter. "Horch! Mein Geliebter" Die Wiederentdeckung der geistlichen Schriftauslegung in den Hoheliedvertonungen des 20. Jahrhunderts. Erzabtei St.Ottilien: EOS Verlag, 2006. 663 p., 3 illustrations, 53 music scores.

This work represents the extended text of the PhD dissertation sustained by the author in 2005 at the Theological Catholic Faculty of the University München. It gives a pastoral-theological analysis of musical compositions of the Song of Song in the twentieth century, and the beginning of the 21st century. An impressive list of 680 compositions created in this period is enumerated and analyzed. Some 52 percent of them are considered 'secular', i.e., love songs (130), madrigals (42), song cycles (41), orchestral lyric (21), computer and electronic music (6), operas (4), hymns (3), instrumental works, jazz (2) and other kinds of laic music, whereas some 48 percent are considered 'religious', i.e., motets (158), religious songs (44), cantatas (24), oratorios (22) Gregorian choral (9), organ liturgical (8), and other kinds of religious character. Of interest is the text accompanying the musical compositions: most of them are Latin (172), English (147), German (100) and Hebrew (79). Few compositions used the full text of the Song (11), whereas the majority of them used only selected verses of it.

The long history of more than two millennia of the Song is characterized by a permanent confrontation between its religious, mystic interpretations and the laic interpretation, which was expressed in a huge number of commentaries, as well as in literature, art and music creations [note: Chaim T. Horovitz. *The Song of Songs. Two Millennia of Influence on World Culture*. Jacksonville: Bloch Publishing Company. 2008 (in print).]. In the 20th century alone, more than hundred commentaries were written. The American scholar Marcia Falk wrote that: 'Probably no other ancient text, at least in Western civilization, has been more often or more variously chanted, sung, and set to music than the Song'

The compositions dedicated to the Song by five contemporary composers, namely: Igor Strawinsky, Maurice Duruflés, Olivier Messiaen, Wilfried Hiller and Hans Zender, are analyzed in detail.

Igor Strawinsky (1882-1971), one of the most influential musicians of the 20th century, wrote religious music, wishing to establish connections with the early Western church music and the Slavonic tradition. The cantata "Surge aquilo" from "Canticum sacrum ad honorem Sancti Marci nominis" for tenor and baritone, chorus and orchestra, is Strawinsky's first exploration of the 12-tone technique, in which the organ is used extensively, especially in ritornelli between choral phrases. The subject of "Canticum Sacrum" is the honoring of St. Mark's life and work. The form of the composition is symmetrical, and representative of the five domes of the St. Mark's cathedral. In the second part of the cantata the Song verses 4:16-5:1 'Surge, aquilo et veni auster' are used. It is sung by tenor solo, flute, English horn, harp, organ, contrabass soli and mixed chorus, with an unchangeable Gregorian character, in which the orchestration and the many ornaments in the voice depict a florid and fragrant garden. Except the iconography of the mosaics of the St. Marc cathedral, the theme of Strawinsky's composition is connected with the theological interpretation of Gregory of Nyssa from the fourth century.

The antiphon "Tota pulchra es" (which is the Latin vulgate translation of Song verse 4:7), was sung in its original version in the Middle Ages, and was only changed after 1854, following the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Many commentaries of this verse were written during the centuries, and were put to music by many Italian and other composers, the most known is the composition of Anton Bruckner. To the rondo form of the antiphon motet "Tota Pulchra Es" for three feminine voices by the French composer Maurice Duruflés (1902-1986) is given a musical and theological analysis, which is the best known and often performed composition "Tota pulchra es" in the 20th century. It contains three antiphons: the first is based from the antiphonal Romanum, the second refers to apocalyptic references to book Daniel, and the third antiphon cites from the book Judith. The work was composed in 1960, as part of the three motets of Gregorian chorals characters. There can be found an analogue structure in Duruflés composition and the old Marian sermon of Hug of St. Victor (12th century).

The piano cycle "Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jesus" (Twenty considerations on the child Jesus) by the French composer Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992) has a is considered that its musical setting and treatment is similar to those of Johann Sebastian Bach, even Messiaen's religiousness has a Catholic character, as different from the Protestant believes of Bach. In this composition, as well as in his other composition "Turangalila Symphony," he used several paraphrases of the Song (5:2, 3:5 and 8:4). The composer aimed to express in his work a pastoral-theological expression of a mystical song of love, or

a divine look of love. It is seen in the Carmelite concept. as based on the Song exposition by the Carmelite St. Therese of Lisieux (1874-1897).

"Shulamit. Lieder und Tänze der Liebe" (Shulamite. Songs and dances of love), composed by the German composer Wilfried Hiller (1941- ) during the years 1977-1990, is an erotic triptych for solo singers (soprano, bas/baritone, boys voice, mixed choir and orchestra). It is structured as a book in three chapters, according to the cycle of seasons: Searching the beloved (winter), In the garden of love (spring), and Procession, dance and farewell (summer and autumn). Hiller's work is intended as a hymn to never-failing love,' and was inspired by the cycle of paintings "Cantique des Cantiques" of Marc Chagall. The composition "Shulamit" by Hiller is analyzed in light of the 86 mystic preaching to the Song by Bernard of Clairvaux from the 12th century.

The two hours long composition "Shir Ha'shirm" by the German composer and conductor Hans Zender (1936- ) wrote "Shir Ha'shirm", a canto for soprano, tenor, flute, chorus, and live-electronic large orchestra. The four part composition is constructed with harmonic, melodic and rhythmic material, which gradually represents the evolution of the four seasons. The repetitions of suites from each of the parts may be seen as a major rondo with chaotic impact, without any symmetrical architecture. The soprano and the tenor soloists singing the bride and bridegroom roles are sustained by solo flute and trombone, two instruments introducing virtuous concerting elements, that are bound to the keyboard with a ring modulator in the harmony of the whole composition. To Zender's composition a multiple interpretation is given, connected with the mystical interpretations of the Song by John of the Cross and Gregory of Nyssa, and even connected with the Zen-Buddhist philosophy.

Dr. Michaela Hastetter's work is the first detailed religious analysis of the musical expressions of the biblical poem Song of Songs created in the last century. It represents, undoubtedly, a comprehensive basis for the understanding and further investigation of these matters.

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