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Abstract of the doctoral project

PLAINCHANT MELODIES IN THE WORKSHOP OF FRANZ LISZT

Franz Liszt gained his fame as a piano virtuoso, and many of his contemporaries never recognized him as a valuable composer. However, composition was always an important part of Liszt's activity. He started with piano pieces, gradually extending his interest to lieder, choruses, symphonic pieces, cantatas, masses and oratorios, while his style, original and experimental from the beginning, gained constantly more and more distance from the style of early Romantics.

The most research was and still is done on Liszt's piano pieces. In the later decades, his symphonic works enjoyed the attention of the musicologists. Liszt's church music remains a field which still offers wide space for new research.

Plainchant was part of the religious experience of Liszt, a devout Catholic since his childhood. The sounds of plainchant are evoked in the piano pieces of his youth, in some of his symphonic works, and become abundant in his religious choral works. However always mentioned, the topic of plainchant melodies used by Liszt was discussed in detail by a single doctoral thesis submitted in 1923, newer studies only brought partial contributions.

My thesis will be structured in three main parts. The first part will provide a wide introduction, in which the also scarcely researched question of plainchant in the 19th century will be presented. The second part will bring detailed analyses of the different pieces in which Liszt applied plainchant. The results of these analyses will be summarized in a third part, which will also contain the conclusions.