

**MUSIC LIFE IN OSIJEK PORTRAYED THROUGH THE ACTIVITIES OF
MUSIC SOCIETIES IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL THE
ARCHANGEL IN TVRĐA¹**

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The key idea of this M.Sc. thesis was to illustrate how a music society can be a fundament for music life and culture in a certain society through a period in history (from the 18th to 20th century). The subject matter is based on the work of four music societies (from 1850 to 1943), whose activities were connected to the Church of St Michael the Archangel: *Essegger-Kirchen Musik-Verein* (1850-1862), *Essegger Liedertafel* (1862-1868), *Esseker Gesangs Verein* (1868-1890) and *Cecilia's Society in Osijek II* (1933-1942). Three of these societies have their place in older archival funds (*Essegger-Kirchen Musik-Verein*, *Essegger Liedertafel* and *Esseker Gesangs Verein*), whereas the fourth (*Cecilia's Society in Osijek II*) is a part of more recent archival records of the Church of St. Michael.

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The music history of Tvrđa from the 18th to 20th century

Josip Kamnikar (1876-1942) was the author who wrote about the development of music in Tvrđa in his work *Crtice iz glazbene poviesti Osijeka, Grad Osiek* (1942.) (Anecdotes from Osijek's music history). According to him, the first musicians of that time were music teachers and organ players. As significant musicians in the 18th and the first half of the 19th century, he mentioned Father Ivan Velikanović (Franciscan Theology professor, 1723-1803), Father Petar Knežević (1702-1768) and Father Josip Pavišević (abbot of Osijek's monastery and provincial, 1734-1803).

¹ Summary of the M.Sc. thesis, Academy of Music, University of Zagreb, March 26, 2010. Thesis supervisor: Vjera Katalinić, PhD.

Kamninar also presented a review of Osijek's musicians and artists of that period. His work was known as *Osijek's directory of secular artists in the 19th/20th century*. Thus we learnt about 69 names of composers, *kapellmeisters* and instrumentalists from Tvrđa and 107 names of singers. Some of the organ players from the period from the 18th to 20th century are listed here chronologically: Joannes Oberritter (1820-29); Franz Oberritter (1829-45), Ivan Nepomuk Hummel (1845-70), Antun Truhelka (1870-77), Đuro Rožić (1877-78), Ivan Žak (1878-1914), and J. Kamninar (1914-1941). The first organ for the parish church in Tvrđa was mentioned in 1799; the new organ for the same church was built by Joseph Fischer (from Apatin) in 1830; Osijek's organ workshop run by the Fabing family was first mentioned at the beginning of the 19th century.

Opera company tours and visits to Tvrđa were recorded from the 18th century on; choirs and music societies were founded from 1850.

In the library of St. Michael in Tvrđa, as the centre of the music life in the oldest part of Osijek, there are 19 preserved liturgical books with music notation: five from the 18th century (1704, 1756, 1758) and seven from the 19th and 20th century.

The Essegger-Kirchen Musik-Verein, Essegger Liedertafel and Esseker Gesangs-Verein Societies

The founder of *Essegger-Kirchen Musik-Verein* was Ivan Nepomuk Hummel (Kalocsa, Hungary, 5 May 1820 — Budapest, 14 June 1896). He also founded the next two societies: *Essegger Liedertafel* and *Esseker Gesangs Verein*.

The regulations and member list of the *Essegger Kirchen Musik-Verein* Society (1850-1862) have not been found. Their music collection originally had 161 shelf numbers classified into nine cardboard folders (80 printed and 81 manuscript compositions). Today — after the 1990s war — there are only 110 completely preserved catalogue entries (50 prints and 60 manuscripts). Among other valuable volumes, the collection contains 28 autographs or probable autographs (by Hummel (9), Jan/Jovan Urban (4), I. Žak (7), J. Kamninar (2), Đuro Arnold (1), Peter Schmi(e)d (1), Emanuel Trišler (1), Emerik Beran (1), Ferdo Miler (1), and Ivo Muhvić (1)). Some of the most valuable preserved compositions are: a piano reduction of the oratorio *The Creation*, by Joseph Haydn (No. VIII-91) and the first edition of the *Offertorium op. 46*, by Franz Schubert (No. VII-74). The society's records preserved in the State Archives in Osijek also mention the school singers Josip Bösendorfer and Fran Mađarević, and their notes on Hummel's music lessons.

The first secular singing association in Tvrđa was the *Essegger Liedertafel* Society (1858-1862). Its concert activities started as early as in 1859. The number of its members varied from 50 to almost 200. Honorary members were, for example: Count Petar Pejačević, Baron Gustav Prandau and Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer. Supporting members were, among others, the lord mayor Vjekoslav Schmidt, the lawyer Eduard Breitenfeld, and the violin virtuoso Franjo Krežma. In 1859 the

ethnomusicologist Franjo Ksaver Kuhač (then still bearing his original name, Franz Xaverij Koch) also joined the society. He substituted for Hummel as conductor only once and soon organised a smaller group of singers for performing Croatian songs. The society's trademark was a *Liedertafel zu Essegg* emblem. Archival records, kept in the State Archives in Osijek, are preserved in boxes and contain various files: for example, there are 16 files for the year 1858. Some of them are: programmes for music academies, when various opera excerpts were performed from operas by, for example, Rossini, G. Preyer, Mayerbeer, Mozart, and Flottow as well as different arrangements for chamber quintets including the eolodicon (Physharmonica) (for example, Quintet aus der Oper *Cosi fan tutte* von Mozart). There are also some invitations to dance academies, the rules of the Society, a poster for the members' excursion, etc. The programmes were printed by the Carl Lehman & Company printing office in Osijek. The files indicate Hummel's involvement in the founding of the *Direkcija* institution (connected to concert organisation in Osijek in 1858). One of the main tasks of the *Liedertafel* was the organization of music schools. The first singing school was founded in Tvrđa in 1861, the second in 1867. The society had its own instruments, sufficient for a smaller symphonic orchestra, as well as a collection of 314 music scores.

Esseker Gesang Verein (1868-1890) was founded when *Essegger-Kirchen Musik-Verein* and *Essegger Liedertafel* merged. The fund for supporting schools was named after Hummel (Hummel's Foundation, established in 1867). To mark this event a society flag was made and new concert halls were opened. According to the 1862 member list, the choir had 26 executive members, 30 honorary and 187 supporting members. The list of officials from 1864 records indicates that most members of the *Essegger Lefertafel* were »notable« citizens. The preserved records contain 72 files and a notebook signed by I. N. Hummel. *Mozart / Secular-Fest / 1856 / Salzburg* is imprinted on the notebook and it contains 10 compositions. The *Society's Rules and Regulations* were printed separately (also by Carl Lehmann & Company) as a part of the publication, *Chronicle of »Esseker Gesang Verein«*.

Esseker Gesang Verein ceased to exist in 1873. In 1885, the *Sloga* Croatian Singing Society was founded (but not attached to St. Michael's church). It took over the Hummel society's archives and the *Esseker Gesang Verein's* flag. In 1891, in Gornji Grad, another part of Osijek, the *Osječko dobrovoljno društvo* (Osijek Volunteers Society) was founded, which later became the *Hrvatsko pjevačko i glazbeno društvo Kuhač* (the *Kuhač* Croatian Singing and Music Society). *Kuhač* took over the *Sloga* society's archives and the flag. Therefore, *Kuhač* was considered to be the immediate successor to *Esseker Gesang Verein* and *Sloga*.

The Cecilia's Society in Osijek II (1933-1944)

The founder of *Cecilia's Society in Osijek II* (the fourth in general and the second church society attached to St Michael's Church) was Dr Ivan Matijević together

with Josip Kamnikar. The first president was Robert Beszetzky (honorary canon, dean and vicar), soon succeeded by Matijević (6 July 1933). The *Cecilia's Society* music library at St Michael's Church contains some 100 catalogue entries, divided into five groups: OScdm-I (contains 23 masses, and other vocal-instrumental church compositions); OScdm-II (contains 49 organ compositions, 12 of which are didactic, 7 arrangements of opera fragments, 10 written for harmonium and physharmonica and 13 compositions for solo organ); OScdm-III contains two Old-Slavonic masses (by Vilko Novak and Stanislaw Niewiadomski); OScdm-IV has seven masses and religious compositions by Slovene composers (such as Viktor Čadež, Josip Gruber, Fran Gerbič, Stanko Premrl, Ignacij Hladnik, Anton Nedvėd, Fran Kimovec); OScdm-V (11 catalogue entries of various printed collections of church music, collected by J. Kamnikar — marked by his seal).

Conclusion

If the *Essegger-Kirchen Musik-Verein's* inherited records are added to the music library's records of more recent St Michael's archives — archival records of *Cecilia's Society in Osijek II* — they reach the number of 197 preserved catalogue entries of St Michael's archival records (as stated in 2010).

Two significant personalities, Ivan Nepomuk Humel and Josip Kamnikar, influenced the music life of Tvrđa in the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries. The key 19th century personality in Osijek's music culture was Ivan Nepomuk Hummel (who founded *Essegger-Kirchen Musik-Verein*, *Essegger Liedertafel* and *Esseker Gesang Verein*), and started the Concert Office and encouraged openings of new concert and music halls in Tvrđa and the rest of Osijek. The second central person, Josip Kamnikar (Svibno, Slovenia, 1902 — Osijek, 1942), founded *Cecilia's Society in Osijek II* — the second church society in the Parish church of St Michael Archangel. He also significantly enriched the music library of the church. In his booklet *Crtice iz glazbene poviest Osijeka, Grad Osiek* (Anecdotes from Osijek's music history), he connected the existence of all four societies within the music history of Osijek from 1850 to 1943 as the central idea of its development, and explained the mobility of choir members as the key factor in all four societies' work. He described Hummel's concert office, the famous »Osijek music trefoil« (violinist Spiller, Hummel as organist, cellist Faith), who represented the best part of Osijek's chamber music, and the emergence of the Board for foundation of the Croatian National Theatre in Osijek in 1907. These two strong personalities not only founded and started organized music life, but also encouraged their co-citizens to take a more intensive part in it.