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PhD thesis summary

**Reception of the Viennese classics’ compositions in
Transylvania in the first half of the 19th century**

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The doctoral thesis with the title **Reception of the Viennese classics’ compositions in Transylvania in the first half of the 19th century** presents an under-researched subject of local musical historiography. The research’s aim was to sketch a broader picture of the 19th century local musical landscape, with the special artistic heritage and musical practice along its ever-altering places and platforms, protagonists and trends. My thesis focuses on the reception of the Viennese Triad’s composers, Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven

Musical historiography, especially the history of Transylvanian music and its prominent musicians in the “long” 19th century offers a great variety of research subjects and tools. It is intriguing to search for manuscript data and also vital to future research to present them to a wider scientific audience.

The thesis is structured in three main parts. The first chapter presents **the musical landscape of 19th century Transylvania**, focusing on its musical heritage and special musical practice. I briefly touch upon the history of the musical education, the process of democratization, the *Kenner* and *Liebhaber* duo and the special interaction and dichotomy of nationalization and musical networking. The subchapter dealing with the altering venues of music lists a short chronology of the lyric stage with its premiers, conductors and main singers as well as the collaboration between the theatre and the local Musical Society and its school. It also includes the evolution of the concert from private assemblies to public performances. Narratives and communication on music present a colourful subject and include various documents from Austrian and Transylvanian journals to memoirs and letters. The mediatization of music and artistic events represents the roots of early music criticism. New musicology uses the tools of ego-documents and different means of narratives and communication. I applied this practice in order to combine local events with the reception of the Viennese Triad's compositions and their reception.

The second chapter of the doctoral thesis, **Reception of Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven's works in Transylvania in the first half of the 19th century** focuses on identifying links and patterns during the process of integration history of the music of the Viennese Triad. Choosing special, Transylvania-related subtopics, like the case of the Cluj and Sibiu Haydn oratorios premiers, the Josepha Palm-episode in the Mozart research and Georg Ruzitska's personal response to Beethoven's music emphasized even more the local reception and its history. Although distantly linked to the focus of the study, I also included the professional biographies and the bibliographies of local musicologists, Francisc László, András Benkő and István Lakatos. They esteemed scholars all contributed with publication of sources, premier chronologies and ample monographies or articles to the history of research of the Viennese Classic's reception in Transylvania and Romania.

In the chapter on **Transylvanian *Kleinmeisters* and their works during the first decades of the 19th century** I draw attention to a few of the lesser known, Cluj- and Sibiu-based composers and their personal and professional links to Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven's works. The characteristics and importance of the *Kleinmeisters* is being discussed in one of the subchapters. These "little masters" of the 18th and the first half of the 19th century composed in the Classical style, characterized by clarity, balance, and formality, following the models of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, even after the

Triad's members died. They wrote for various genres, including symphonies, chamber music, operas, and sacred music. Many of these composers were prolific and well-known in their time, composing music that was performed across Europe. Their contribution to the Viennese musical culture, as well as the Transylvanian and European music is multifaceted.

By including a list of Viennese composers and their works present in Transylvania in the first half of the 19th century and by presenting the biography and list of compositions of seven local composers (Anton Hubatscheck, János Lavotta, Anton Polz, József Heinisch, Joseph Dominic Grosspeter, Philipp Caudella and Karl Filtsch) a deeper knowledge of the region's special effervescent musical life of the period can be traced.

A whole subchapter is dedicated to the **life and works of Georg Ruzitska** (Vienna, 1786 – Cluj, 1869). The case study presents the typical local artist, his career's path from the center of the Habsburg Empire to its periphery (Nuşfalău).

One major impact of the Viennese great and little masters in Transylvania at the beginning of the 19th century is the stylistic adoption. According to this specific element, many Transylvanian or Transylvania-based composers incorporated elements of Viennese Classicism into their works (like reaching for the variational form or genre), blending them with local (folk) music traditions to create a unique fusion. The variational form and the use of national character (such as the stylistic elements of the *polonaise*) are also present.

The thesis emphasised that along their different stagings and representations, the translation of the oratorios and opera librettos and transcription for chamber music ensembles of the triad's works represented one important means of getting to know and understand their works.

The research brought to light new data regarding the Transylvanian interpretation of works by Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven widened the list of sources. In the case of all three composers, slight addition to the reception history was possible. (This means that there are still sources to consider when dealing with the connection and welcome of the Viennese composers in Eastern Europe.)

The **Appendix** unites very different sources that are considered all relevant while studying the 19th century musical heritage in Transylvania and the musical practice of this region. Translations of ego-documents (letters, memoirs) belonging to musicians and music-

lovers are complemented with selections of contemporary journal articles on the musical culture of Transylvania.

Ego-documents like the **letters of Michael Esterházy to János Bánffy and Kata Zeyk to Pál Bodor** gave valuable personal insights on the public discourse of Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven. **Georg Ruzitska's autobiography** is among the most valuable documents of 19th century Transylvanian music culture and has relevant information on Vienna's music as well. **Mrs. Déry's diary** also presents subjective but vivid details on the evolution of the lyric stage and its prominent members in Cluj.

Selection of **19th century journal articles** from the *Allgemeine Musikalisches Zeitung*, the *Erdélyi Figyelő* and the *Siebenbürgisches Wochenblattes* regarding the musical life of the Habsburg province, Transylvania complete our information on the subject.

Facsimiles of 19th century local musical compositions, such as **Franz Pöschl's IX variations** and **Georg Ruzitska's Six polonaise** provide us with a glimpse of the abundance of music written in Transylvania at the time.