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12th International Conference on Education & Educational Psychology**COMPOSER MILAN UHEREK. HIS INFLUENCE ON THE
REPERTOIRE OF CHILDREN'S CHOIRS**

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Abstract

The paper is part of primary research on the prominent Czech choirmaster, pedagogue, and composer Milan Uherek, the founder of the Severáček children's choir, Liberec, Czech Republic. It focuses on his adaptations of Czech, Moravian, and Slovak folk songs and their inclusion in the repertoire of children's choirs in the Czech Republic. Based on a case study of Severáček graduates, the author examines the degree of popularity of arrangements of folk songs by Milan Uherek and their use in the repertoire of Severáček and other children's choirs in the Czech Republic. Another indicator of the popularity of Uherek's compositions among choral conductors of children's choirs is the statistics on the occurrence of his adaptations and compositions at national competitions of school choirs. Through interviews with influential choirmaster personalities of the Czech Republic and experts, she shows the importance of Milan Uherek in the development of Czech children's choirs.

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1. Introduction

Children's choirs have a rich history in the Czech Republic, having developed as a social movement in the 1930s in former Czechoslovakia. This continued during World War II and experienced an unprecedented boom after the war when hundreds of choirs were formed in schools and other organizations (Burešová, 2002; Gregor & Sedlický, 1990). Since then, Czech children's choirs have been developing extensive concert activities, organizing domestic and foreign tours and multi-day gatherings, and successfully participating in Czech and international choir competitions. In 2007, there were about 350 children's choirs in the Czech Republic, from schools to select choirs, in which 17,000 children sang (Lážňovská, 2007). The expansion of the children's choral movement also required adequate artistically valuable choral compositions and arrangements of folk songs. They were taken over by erudite composers of artificial music, such as P. Eben, Z. Lukáš, I. Hurník, M. Kopelent, M. Raichl, and others.

Milan Uherek, choirmaster and founder of the Severáček children's choir in Liberec, has also made a significant contribution to this movement, both in terms of pedagogy and as choirmaster and composition. Severáček inspired many other followers with its activities and results. Milan Uherek and his wife Jiřina also worked methodically at seminars, workshops and influenced the generation of other choral conductors in the Czech Republic and abroad with their approach. The activity of Milan Uherek in the juries of Czech and international choral competitions is also significant. Milan Uherek, as a composer and arranger of folk songs, contributed to the enrichment of the repertoire of children's choirs.

As for the state of scientific research on Milan Uherek, we can state that there are not many primary sources on this figure, except some qualifying works, numerous references in monographs, and publications by Jiřina and Milan Uherek (Pálková, 2019). This choirmaster, conductor, and composer is the theme of the author's research.

2. Milan Uherek, a Leading Figure of Czech Choral Singing

Choirmaster and pedagogue Milan Uherek, together with his wife Jiřina Uherková, was the founder of the Liberec children's choir Severáček, which became one of the most successful children's choirs in the Czech Republic. Milan Uherek also worked as an opera choirmaster at the F. X. Šalda Theatre, Liberec, piano accompanist, and composer.

2.1. Milan Uherek, career, Severáček

He was born on December 23rd, 1925, in Bzenec, Moravia. Music was actively practiced in the family environment, giving Uherek his lifelong love of art and music, especially Moravian folk songs (Zapletal 1997). The young Uherek played the violin, piano, and organ. After graduating from the Přerov grammar school, he entered the Faculty of Arts of Masaryk University to study philosophy and Czech in September 1945. He later added musicology and music education. During his studies, he worked with several choirs. He also studied a one-year composition course at the Janáček Academy of Performing Arts in the class of Vilém Petrželka. After his studies, he met Jiřina Nyklová (1930-1989), a student at the Faculty of Education. They married in 1953, and in 1954 Milan Uherek accepted the position of choirmaster

of the opera at the North Bohemian Theatre in Liberec (since 1957 the F. X. Šalda Theatre). Jiřina started as a teacher at the local primary school in Orlí street and founded the Radost choir. This school choir, which had significant success, was transformed by the couple in 1958 into the Severáček selection choir. Since its inception, Severáček has become one of the most successful children's choirs in Czechoslovakia. Under the direction of the Uherek couple, they performed on three continents, participated in international music festivals, collaborated with leading Czech orchestras and soloists. Severáček recorded music on television and radio and won more than thirty first places in international choral competitions. In addition to working in children's choral singing as a lecturer and a member of international juries, Milan Uherek was primarily an opera choirmaster and conductor. He also worked as a pianist and accompanist. His composing activities are significant. He died in Nová Paka on August 9th, 2012, at the age of 87 (Langrová, 2021b).

2.2. Milan Uherek, composer

The focus of Uherek's musical work became mainly children's choirs and arrangements of folk songs. The list of arrangements of Czech, Moravian, and Slovak songs for the children's choir alone makes up 227 opuses. He also composed instrumental music and was the author of dozens of music pieces for the stage of the F. X. Šalda Theatre in Liberec.

His first compositional attempts date back to childhood. Instrumental music can also be found in Uherek's work, but the focus is on vocal-instrumental compositions. The compositions and arrangements were created mainly from the practical needs of Severáček and his preparatory choirs or at the request of other choirs. As a choirmaster and pedagogue, he was able to capture in his music what the children would be interested in and what they would sing with joy, and he also knew in detail the possibilities of the child's voice (Harciníková, 2015). According to Pecháček (2010), his arrangements were popular among Czech children's choirs. His music and arrangements of folk songs are characterized by melodicy, the often polyphonic conduct of individual voices with a feeling for maintaining the specific mood of the song.

Uherek composed many cycles for different age groups of children, mostly with piano accompaniment, e.g., *Hrátky se zvířátky*, *Od jara do zimy*, *Maminka mi ráda zpívá*. Of the hundreds of arrangements of folk songs, such as the cycles *Jarní trojlístek* and *Líto, líto zelený*. He also edited many cycles of Christmas carols, e.g., *Kolednice idú*, *Ten vánoční čas*, *Koledujte s námi I and II*, and *Evropské koledy*. We must not forget the stage music for the play by the F. X. Šalda Theatre in Liberec. Many of these compositions were then rewritten by Uherek as cycles for children's choirs, e.g., *Vrabčí písničky*, *Hosana*.

His pedagogical contribution to the development of children's musical perception is adaptations (transcriptions) and paraphrases for children's choir. With a sense for the possibilities of a child's voice, he adapted compositions of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Baroque (Čančíková, 2009; Langrová, 2021a). He provided transcriptions from instrumental compositions with his own text (e.g., Bach, Händel), and translated and rewrote foreign compositions. He also prepared anthologies of Renaissance authors for publication. He modified the original four-part SATB rate to the four-part SSAA children's choir and rewrote most texts into Czech (Langrová, 2021a, in print).

3. Problem Statement

The paper follows the author's primary research on the importance of Milan Uherek for children's choirs in the Czech Republic and abroad. It focuses on Uherek's composing activities, especially on his arrangements of Czech, Moravian, and Slovak folk songs and their popularity among Czech choral conductors and former members of Severáček.

The reflection of these compositions is based on the following detailed research:

- a list of compositions and arrangements by Milan Uherek, which the choirmasters of school choirs selected for the representation of choirs at the National festival of school children's choirs in the years 1995-2018,
- a list of arrangements by Milan Uherek, which the choirmasters of the selected children's choirs have chosen for the competitive and representative programs at the National competition *Porta musicae* in the years 1998-2018,
- analysis of profile CDs of Czech children's choirs, on which the choirs also included compositions and arrangements by Milan Uherek,
- a questionnaire survey among Severáček graduates, which was attended by 159 respondents. They answered the question of what their favorite composition or arrangement by Milan Uherek was. Another question was whether they thought these arrangements were popular with children's choirs,
- in-depth interviews with Czech active or emeritus choir directors of successful children's choirs and experts, which the author conducted in 2020-21.

4. Research Questions

In the article, the author formulates and answers the following research questions:

- 1) How did Milan Uherek's arrangements affect the repertoire of Czech children's choirs?
- 2) Did the choirmasters of the children's choirs include these compositions on the profile CDs of their choirs? To what extent? Which songs or arrangements were the most popular for this purpose?
- 3) How do Severáček's graduates reflect the compositions and arrangements of Milan Uherek?
- 4) How do experts evaluate Uherek's contribution to the enrichment of the children's repertoire? From their point of view, what impact do Uherek's compositions have?

5. Purpose of the Study

The study's primary goal is to show how Milan Uherek, as an arranger of folk songs, enriched the repertoire of Czech children's choirs. Through the analysis of interviews with choral conductors and representatives of the expert sphere, to verify the hypothesis that Milan Uherek influenced this repertoire so much that his adaptations are now the basis of the repertoire of most Czech choirs. On the analysis of the results of the interviews of Severáček graduates, point out the most popular arrangements of folk songs.

Within the research, the author worked with the following hypotheses:

- 1) The arrangements and compositions of Milan Uherek permanently influenced the repertoire of Czech children's choirs. Choral conductors of all types of children's choirs regularly include them in the repertoire for their melodiosity, interesting musical procedures, and practicality in rehearsal.
- 2) The compositions and arrangements of Milan Uherek were extremely popular with all generations of children who sang in Severáček. Even after years, these former members remember their favorite songs and believe that they were popular with them and with other children's choirs.
- 3) Experts point out Uherek's fundamental contribution in this area as well.

6. Research Methods

Several methods were used in the research. Data collection was based on in-depth interviews with current or emeritus choir directors of leading children's choirs and experts on choral events in the Czech Republic and a questionnaire survey of Severáček graduates. This survey focused on Severáček's influence and the pedagogical work of the Uherek couple on the way and quality of life of his graduates in adulthood, including a reflection of compositions and arrangements by Milan Uherek. Another source was the analysis of documents and music media - published qualification works, monographs, concert programs of Severáček, programs of the competition of school children's choirs from 1995-2018, selected analyzes of profile CDs of Czech children's choirs.

7. Findings

7.1. Analysis of the programs of the National Festival of School Children's Choirs from the years 1995-2018

This selective show takes place every year in Uničov. Fourteen competitive selection rounds precede it in all regions of the Czech Republic. An expert jury selects one, exceptionally, two winners from each show to represent the region at the national show. It has a non-competitive character. An expert jury evaluates the performance of each choir. Thanks to the selection rounds, the best school children's choirs from the Czech Republic participate in this show every year. It is therefore assumed that they present the best of their repertoire at the show for their performances. Each performance lasts 10 - 12 minutes, and the program must contain at least one folk song. In addition to the performances of school children's choirs in all four categories, the analysis also included concert programs of the guest select children's choir, which also sang representative compositions from its repertoire.

How Uherek's compositions appeared in the programs can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency of compositions and arrangements by Milan Uherek at the National Competition of Children's Choirs in Uničov 1995-2018

| No. | Year | Festival venue | Frequency |
|----------------|------|----------------|-------------|
| 1 | 1995 | Krásná Lípa | 1x |
| 2 | 1996 | Uničov | 5x |
| 3 | 1997 | Uničov | 4x |
| 4 | 1998 | Uničov | 2x |
| 5 | 1999 | Svitavy | 3x |
| 6 | 2000 | Uničov | 2x |
| 7 | 2001 | Svitavy | 4x |
| 8 | 2002 | Rychnov n. Kn. | 5x |
| 9 | 2003 | Rychnov n. Kn. | 8x |
| 10 | 2004 | Český Krumlov | 5x |
| 11 | 2005 | Český Krumlov | 2x |
| 12 | 2006 | Pardubice | 5x |
| 13 | 2007 | Pardubice | 1x |
| 14 | 2008 | Pardubice | 2x |
| 15 | 2009 | Rychnov n. Kn. | 3x |
| 16 | 2010 | Rychnov n. Kn. | 2x |
| 17 | 2011 | Uničov | 5x |
| 18 | 2012 | Uničov | 3x |
| 19 | 2013 | Uničov | 2x |
| 20 | 2014 | Uničov | 4x |
| 21 | 2015 | Uničov | 0x |
| 22 | 2016 | Uničov | 5x |
| 23 | 2017 | Uničov | 5x |
| 24 | 2018 | Uničov | 0x |
| Average | | | 3,25 |

The table shows that Milan Uherek's adaptations or compositions did not appear at the shows from 2018 and 2015. His compositions or adaptations were most numerous in 2003, with eight. Five of his compositions were performed in 2017, 2016, 2011, 2006, 2004, 2002, and 1996. On average, 3.25 of Uherek's compositions or arrangements were performed at each show. This average can be considered a high frequency from personal experience due to the participation of 14-16 choirs in each show year. We can therefore conclude that Milan Uherek was one of the most abundant authors in those years. However, this premise must be verified by further research.

Let us now look in detail at Uherek's most famous compositions or arrangements performed at the shows (see Table 2). The table shows the compositions that occurred more than three times.

Table 2. The most frequent adaptations and compositions within the National festival of school children's choirs

| No. | Title of folk song | Frequency | Performed in |
|-----|--------------------|-----------|---|
| 1 | Komáři se ženili | 8x | 2011 2x, 2009, 2008, 2004, 2003, 2001, 1998 |
| 2 | Černé oči | 6x | 2017, 2004 3x, 2002, 1996 |
| 3 | Tovačovský hatě | 6x | 2017, 2005, 2003 2x, 2002, 2000 |
| 4 | Co to máš, Janičku | 4x | 2014 2x, 2002, 2000 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|----|---------------------------|
| 5 | Kdybys měla, má panenka | 4x | 2011, 2006, 2001, 1996 |
| 6 | Dybych byla jahodů | 3x | 2003, 2002, 1995 |
| 7 | Chodila Maryška | 3x | 2012, 2010, 2006 |
| 8 | Kdepaks ty bejvával | 3x | 2013, 2006, 2002 |
| Title of composition (cycle) | | | |
| 9 | Kouzelný máj | 6x | 2003 3x, 2001, 1999, 1997 |
| 10 | Veselé vrabčí cestování (Vrabčí písničky) | 4x | 2012, 2010, 2009, 2007 |

A total of sixty Uherek's compositions were performed at the shows, of which the most significant share consists of folk songs (44), artificial compositions (11), and the rest (5) are Uherek's transcriptions and arrangements of old masters. The frequency of individual songs is also closely related to their difficulty. While the songs *Komáři se ženili* and *Kdybys měla má panenka* are duets, i.e., arrangements suitable for younger children, the other songs are three-part (*Černé oči*, *Co to máš*, *Janíčku*, *Kdepaks ty bejvával*), or even four-part (*Dybych byla jahodů*, *Chodila Maryška*). Uherek modified the Moravian folk song *Tovačovský hatě* in four-part and three-part adaptations according to the technical possibilities of the choir. The performance of three-part and four-part compositions presupposes the technical sophistication of the choir singers; quality interpretation is an indisputable advantage for the show's repertoire.

7.2. Analysis of the programs of the national competition of selective children's choirs *Porta musicae* 1998-2018

Unlike school children's choirs, which meet regularly at the National festival of school children's choirs in fourteen regional rounds, the *Porta musicae* is a national competition of selective children's choirs. The competition is held on behalf of the Ministry of Culture NIPOS ARTAMA every two years in Nový Jičín. Choirs that have achieved a gold award at the selected rounds of the National festival of school children's choirs can also take part in it. The competition is divided into two categories according to the age of the children.

The representation of compositions and arrangements by Milan Uherek in competition programs and at opening concerts was also examined (Table 3).

Table 3. Frequency of arrangements of folk songs by Milan Uherek at the *Porta musicae* choir competition in Nový Jičín 1998-2018

| No. | Year | Frequency |
|----------------|------|-------------|
| 1 | 1998 | 1x |
| 2 | 2000 | 0x |
| 3 | 2002 | 4x |
| 4 | 2004 | 3x |
| 5 | 2006 | 0x |
| 6 | 2008 | 3x |
| 7 | 2010 | 1x |
| 8 | 2012 | 0x |
| 9 | 2014 | 4x |
| 10 | 2016 | 0x |
| 11 | 2018 | 3x |
| Average | | 1,73 |

None of Milan Uherek's original compositions appeared in the competition programs or the programs of the opening concerts. The reason for the absence of his original compositions may be their lower degree of technical complexity. Most of Milan Uherek's compositions are intended for preparatory choirs, i.e., for younger children, and these compositions are therefore less suitable for competition programs. Tab. No. 3, therefore, shows the presentation of arrangements of folk songs. No performances of these were registered in 2016, 2012, 2006, and 2000.

On the contrary, the most, four performances, were made in 2014 and 2002. Here, the average frequency of performances - 1.73 - is lower than at the National festival of school children's choirs. It can be attributed to creating competition programs, where choral conductors prefer more demanding polyphonic compositions to primarily demonstrate the choir's technical qualities. Fewer folk songs are included in these programs, usually only one to two. Considering these requirements for creating competition programs, even this lower average performance of a folk song can be considered numerous.

Table 4. The most frequent arrangements of folk songs and transcriptions within the Porta musicae choir competition in Nový Jičín 1998-2018

| No. | Name of folk song | Frequency | Performed in |
|-----|------------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| 1 | Tovačovský hatě | 4x | 2018 2x, 2008, 2004 |
| 2 | Co to máš, Janičku | 2x | 2002, 2008 |
| 3 | Důbravěnko zelená | 2x | 2008, 2014 |
| 4 | Dybych byla jahodú | 2x | 2000, 2004 |
| 5 | Chodila Maryška | 2x | 2002, 2010 |
| 6 | Má mamička neví | 2x | 2000, 2018 |
| 7 | Boleráz | 1x | 2014 |
| 8 | Kačena divoká | 1x | 1998 |
| 9 | Laštověnka létá | 1x | 2002 |
| 10 | Mám já milučkého | 1x | 2004 |
| 11 | Ola Glomstulen | 1x | 2002 |
| 12 | Už ho vedou, Martina | 1x | 2014 |
| 13 | V horném konci svítá | 1x | 2000 |
| | Title of transcription | Frequency | Performed in |
| 14 | Veniki | 1x | 2014 |

From Table No. 4, which includes individual titles of folk songs that were represented at Porta musicae, it is evident compared to Table No. 2 that more demanding compositions, i.e., four-part songs (Dybych byla jahodú, Chodila Maryška), predominated in this competition in those years (Má mamička neví, Kačena divoká, Už ho vedou, Martina, V horném konci svítá) and three-part songs (Co to máš, Janičku, Důbravěnko zelená, Mám já milučkého). The song Tovačovský hatě is written for four-part and three-part voices. The composition Veniki, which Milan Uherek adapted from a mixed original by Feodosij Rubcov, is intended for six voices. The only two-part song is the Moravian folk Boleráz. The choirs that participate in this competition must show the highest possible technical maturity, which is why their choirmasters usually look for more demanding compositions. A comparison of the frequency of modifications by Milan Uherek and other authors is the subject of further analysis.

7.3. Analysis of the frequency of compositions and adaptations by Milan Uherek on profile CDs of Czech and foreign children's choirs

The overall analysis included 307 CDs from 155 Czech children's and boys' choirs. Profile CDs cover the entire spectrum of children's choirs - from top choirs, which have recorded ten or more CDs, to "nameless" choirs from one class or school. Fifty-four of Uherek's arrangements of folk songs or cycles of Christmas carols appeared in the research sample. Some of them are interpreted several times (see Table No. 5).

Table 5. The most frequent arrangements of folk songs within the profile CDs of Czech children's choirs

| No. | Title of folk song | Frequency | Children's choir |
|-----|-------------------------|-----------|---|
| 1 | Tovačovský hatě | 11 | Severáček Liberec, Radost Praha, Jitro Hradec Králové, Kalinka Liberec, Moravské děti Holešov, Ostravský dětský sbor, Sedmihlásek Vrbno p. P., Sluníčko Kladno, Rolnička Praha, Kvítek Dačice, Zvonky Hulín |
| 2 | Černé oči, děte spát | 8 | Severáček Liberec, Sedmihlásek Vrbno p. P., Přerovský dětský sbor, Sluníčko Kladno, Slavík Zábřeh, Jiskřička Praha, Kopretinka Liberec, Kvítek Chotěboř |
| 3 | Co to máš, Janičku | 5 | Vrabčáci Jablonec n. N., Skřivánek Suchdol n. Odrou, Hlásek Litoměřice, Sedmihlásek Vrbno p. P., Sluníčko Kladno |
| 4 | Teče voda, teče | 5 | Severáček Liberec 3x, Cantabile Hradec Králové, Jizerka Semily |
| 5 | V horném konci svítá | 5 | Severáček Liberec, Tachovský DS, Domino Opava, Medvíďata Krumlov, Výšinka Liberec |
| 6 | Dybych byla jahodů | 4 | Severáček Liberec 2x, Radost Praha, Cantica Zlín |
| 7 | Kdybys měla, má panenka | 4 | Skřivánek Suchdol n. O., Sluníčko Kladno, Zvoneček Praha, Sborové studio Orlová-Lutyně |
| 8 | Ej, láska, láska | 3 | Severáček Liberec, Krumlovská medvíďata, Kvítek Dačice |
| 9 | Chodila Maryška | 3 | Severáček Liberec, Ondrášek Nový Jičín, Vivat musica Kraslice |
| 10 | Kdepaks ty bejvával | 3 | Severáček Liberec 2x, Slavík Zábřeh |
| 11 | Kolednice idu | 3 | Severáček Liberec 2x, Motýli Šumperk |
| 12 | U Dunaja | 3 | Severáček Liberec 2x, Hlásek Litoměřice |
| 13 | Von Luzern | 3 | Severáček Liberec 3x |

The table of Milan Uherek's most recorded arrangements shows that the most performed compositions are Tovačovský hatě with eleven recordings, followed by a three-part adaptation of the Czech folk Černé oči. It should be mentioned here that Uherek's arrangement among Czech choirs has become most prevalent. It is in the repertoire of almost every children's choir that sings in three voices. This song so often sounds like communal singing in choir meetings. Five recordings then have arrangements of Co to máš, Janičku, Teče voda, teče and V horném konci svítá.

From the total number of three hundred and seven profile CDs, one can find Uherek's song on every third CD. This proportion is 2.89 tracks per CD. Severáček from Liberec, in which Milan Uherek worked in the years 1958-2012, has the most recorded compositions, followed by Motýli Šumperk and Radost Praha.

From the above, it can be stated that Uherek's arrangements of folk songs are very popular with choral conductors of all kinds of Czech children's choirs, and they often include them on the profile CDs of their choirs.

7.4. Analysis of a questionnaire survey of former members of Severáček

One hundred fifty-nine former members of the Severáček choir of all generations took part in a questionnaire survey conducted in July and August 2021. Respondents answered, among other things, the question of what is their most popular arrangement or composition by Milan Uherek. The second question was whether they thought these compositions and arrangements were popular with other children's choirs. If the answer was yes, the respondents were asked to explain why this is the case.

In the case of the popularity of Milan Uherek's adaptations and compositions, only seven respondents (4.4%) answered that they do not remember/do not know any. Twenty-seven respondents (16.98%), on the other hand, gave a general answer, i.e., any song/anything/folk song in general. In total, the respondents mentioned forty-two titles of folk songs, compositions, or cycles of Christmas carols. There were also twenty-four adaptations or compositions in the answers, composed by other authors.

Table No. 6 shows arrangements of folk songs and carols or Uherek's compositions, which recorded the highest frequency.

Table 6. The popularity of arrangements and compositions by Milan Uherek among Severáček graduates

| No. | Title of folk song | Frequency |
|-----|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Dybych byla jahodú | 47 |
| 2 | Tovačovský hatě | 45 |
| 3 | U Dunaja stála | 33 |
| 4 | Teče voda, teče | 32 |
| 5 | Chodila Maryška | 15 |
| 6 | Kdepaks ty bejvával | 10 |
| 7 | V horném konci svítá | 9 |
| 8 | Dobru noc | 8 |
| 9 | Dúbravěnko zelená | 8 |
| 10 | Kačena divoká | 9 |
| 11 | Frajír, milý frajír | 7 |
| 12 | Černé oči | 6 |
| 13 | Na tom bošileckým mostku | 5 |
| No. | Title of cycle of Christmas carols | Frequency |
| 14 | Christmas carols | 11 |
| 15 | Kolednice idú | 9 |
| No. | Title of composition | Frequency |
| 16 | Vrabčí písničky | 7 |
| 17 | Hosana/Komedie o umučení | 6 |
| 18 | Kouzelný máj | 4 |

The table shows that a third of the respondents (forty-seven, i.e., 29.56%) stated their favorite composition, the Moravian folk song *Dybych byla jahodú*. This four-part song was also most appreciated by Uherek himself, musicologist Jaroslava Macková said (author's in-depth interviews with experts, 2020).

The other most popular arrangements are the Moravian folk songs Tovačovský hatě, U Dunaja stála and Teče voda, teče (see Figure 1). These folk songs have become the choir's core repertoire, and all generations of the choir know them.



Figure 1. QR code: Severáček children's choir sings Moravian folk song Teče voda, teče

The second question, whether the respondents think that Milan Uherek's adaptations and compositions are also popular with other children's choirs, was answered by one hundred fifty-five respondents, i.e., 97.5%, that yes, of which more than half further elaborated this answer. When giving reasons why Uherek's compositions are famous, the respondents mentioned in particular: musical qualities - melodiosity, interesting harmony; feeling for setting the folk song to music; pedagogical attributes - they are easily learnt and sung; listener perception - emotionality, receptivity. The most frequent answers were that they are beautiful, gorgeous, and pleasing.

This survey among Severáček graduates proved the popularity of Milan Uherek's arrangements and compositions among Severáček members of all generations.

When comparing tables No. 2, 4, 5, 6, it can be observed that there is an agreement between the choirmasters and former members of Severáček regarding the most popular arrangements. These compositions include the Moravian folk song Tovačovský hatě and the Czech folk song Černé oči, děti spát.

7.5. Analysis of in-depth interviews with representatives of the expert sphere

The author conducted in-depth interviews with representatives of the expert sphere in 2020 and 2021. There were a total of nine leading figures of the Czech choral scene: former choirmaster of the Šumperk children's choir Motýli Tomáš Motýl (1a), current choirmaster of this choir Helena Stojaníková (1b), husband and wife Bohdan and Milena Čančík, Milena is the daughter of the Uherek couple, choirmaster (2), husband and wife Vladislav and Zdena Souček, choral directors of the children's choir Radost Praha and the boys' choir Pueri gaudentes (3), PhDr. Jan Pírner, choirmaster of the children's choir Radost Praha, musicologist (4), Alena Brádllová, choirmaster of the children's choir Jizerka Semily (5), PhDr. Jaroslava Macková, musicologist, NIPOS ARTAMA specialist (6), Josef Baierl, choirmaster of the Sušice Children's Choir (7), Josef Brabenec, choirmaster of the Tachov Children's Choir (8). In the

interviews, they were asked about the contribution of Milan Uherek as a composer and arranger of folk songs.

Table 7. The matrix of answers of representatives of the expert sphere

| No. | Thesis | Respondent |
|-----|---|-------------|
| 1 | Severáček was a great source of repertoire, incl. compositions and adaptations of Milan Uherek | 1a, 4, 6, 8 |
| 2 | Milan Uherek was a pioneer of adaptations of old masters for children's choirs; he wanted Renaissance and Baroque compositions to become part of a broader repertoire concept | 1a, 3, 6 |
| 3 | Uherek's compositions are a standard part of the children's choral repertoire to this day | 1b, 4, 6 |
| 4 | He wrote his arrangements and adaptations to the choirs "to measure," he dedicated them to the choirs | 2, 5, 7 |
| 5 | The children liked to sing and love his compositions and arrangements | 1b, 3, 4, 5 |

Table 7 shows the matrix of answers of representatives of the expert sphere. Four out of eight respondents consider Severáček to be a great source of repertoire, which inspired other choral conductors in creating concert programs or taking over compositions, incl. Uherek edits and compositions. The adaptations of Renaissance and Baroque compositions for children's choir, through which Milan Uherek mediated this music to children's performers, are considered a benefit by three respondents. The exact number of respondents mentioned Milan Uherek's compositions as an integral part of today's choral repertoire. Three respondents mentioned Uherek's willingness to write for specific choirs and dedicate his compositions to them. It should be mentioned here that Milan Uherek did not compose or arrange songs only for friendly choirs but for all those who asked him to. The manuscripts of his compositions are thus scattered among many choirs in the Czech Republic. It makes it difficult to work on a comprehensive catalog of his adaptations and compositions. The final thesis, mentioned by three respondents, concerns that the children's singers enjoyed singing his compositions and arrangements very much; they loved them. The author's direct experience as a choirmaster also confirms this, as well as a questionnaire survey among Severáček graduates.

8. Conclusions

In the conference paper, we introduced the personality of Milan Uherek as a songwriter and creator of arrangements of folk songs for children's choirs and his influence on the permanent repertoire of the children's singing movement in Czechoslovakia, resp. The Czech Republic. In this chapter, we answer the established research questions and verify the input hypotheses.

8.1. Answering research questions, verification of hypotheses

To research question number 1, how Milan Uherek's adaptations influenced the repertoire of Czech children's choirs, it can be answered that these compositions have had a lasting impact on the repertoire of Czech children's choirs. Choral conductors of all types of children's choirs regularly include them in the

repertoire, which was evidenced by analyzing the programs of the national parade of school choirs and the national competition of selected children's choirs.

Research question No. 2, which concerned the classification of Uherek's compositions and adjustments to the profile CDs of choirs, the degree of frequency and popularity of individual compositions, was answered by analyzing the programs of profile CDs of Czech children's choirs. These compositions and arrangements are widely represented on the profile CDs of Czech children's choirs. The popularity of Milan Uherek's compositions and arrangements with choral conductors is also confirmed by in-depth interviews with Czech experts on children's choral singing.

Based on the answered research questions No. 1 and 2, research hypothesis No. 1 was also verified.

Research question No. 3, how the Severáček graduates reflect the compositions and arrangements of Milan Uherek, was answered by analyzing the results of a questionnaire survey, i.e., that the compositions and arrangements of Milan Uherek are extremely popular with former members of the choir. Even years later, respondents remember their favorite songs and believe that they were popular with them and with other children's choirs. Representatives of the expert sphere also confirmed the popularity among children from other children's choirs.

Hypothesis No. 2 was confirmed.

Research question No. 4, how Uherek's contribution to the enrichment of the repertoire of children's choirs is assessed by experts and what impact Uherek's compositions have from their point of view, was answered through in-depth interviews with Czech experts. In these interviews, the respondents mentioned the fundamental contribution of Milan Uherek in enriching the repertoire of children's choirs with their compositions and arrangements, as well as the transcription of compositions by old masters. Experts call Milan Uherek one of the most significant personalities of the Czech choral scene.

Hypothesis No. 3 was confirmed.

8.2. In conclusion

A questionnaire survey among Czech choral conductors will now follow the author's current research, analyzes of concert programs by Severáček and other children's choirs, and analyzes of programs of national competitions concerning Milan Uherek as the author and arranger of folk songs.

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