

Ruščin, Peter

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# A Few Notes on the Spread of the Song “Vímť já jeden stromeček jest krásná oliva” in Slovakia

Peter Ruščin

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## ABSTRACT

During the Baroque period in Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia there was a significant development in the creation of spiritual love lyrics. This includes the anonymous song “Vímť já jeden stromeček” (“I know a little tree”), probably of Bohemian origin, which was also spread as a broadside ballad as early as the 17<sup>th</sup> century. While in Bohemia and Moravia the song entered the folk singing tradition, in Slovakia it was mainly known as a hymn in the church tradition of Slovak Lutherans. This study is devoted to variants of the hymn and its setting in Lutheran manuscript and printed sources in Slovakia from the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The analysis of manuscript sources shows that the song spread on the territory of Slovakia at least from the 1660s, earlier than we had previously assumed.

## KEYWORDS

Broadside ballad; hymnal; manuscript source; Slovak Lutheran Hymn.

## CZECH ABSTRACT

Několik poznámek k rozšíření písně „Vímť já jeden stromeček jest krásná oliva“ na Slovensku

V období baroka se v Čechách, na Moravě i na území Slovenska rozvinula tvorba milostné duchovní lyriky. Její součástí je i anonymní píseň „Vímť já jeden stromeček“, pravděpodobně českého původu, která se už od 17. století šířila i prostřednictvím kramářských písní. Zatímco v Čechách a na Moravě píseň pronikla do tradice lidového duchovního zpěvu, na území Slovenska se uplatnila hlavně v církevní tradici slovenských luteránů. Studie je věnovaná variantám písně a jejímu nápěvu v lu-

teránských rukopisných i tištěných pramenech na Slovensku od 2. poloviny 17. století. Z analýzy rukopisných pramenů vyplývá, že píseň se rozšířila na území Slovenska dříve, než jsme doposud předpokládali, přinejmenším od 60. let 17. století.

## KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Kramářská píseň; kancionál; rukopisné prameny; slovenská luteránská duchovní píseň.

## Introduction

The song “Vímť já jeden stromeček jest krásná oliva” (“I know a little tree, it’s a beautiful olive tree) already belonged at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Bohemia and Moravia, as well as in the territory of contemporary Slovakia, among the widespread broadside ballads with a metaphorical, even loving, religious theme. Its incipit places it in a broader group of religious and secular broadside ballads or folk songs of varying verse structure beginning in a similar manner – “Vímť já zahrádku, místečko krásné” (“I know a little garden, a beautiful place”), “Vímť já jedno krásné místo” (“I know a beautiful place”), “Vímť já jeden krásný domek” (“I know a beautiful house”), “Vímť já jeden krásný zámek” (“I know a beautiful castle”) and many more.<sup>1</sup> The earliest mentions of such songs can be found as far back as the 16<sup>th</sup> century (a reference to the melody “Vímť já jeden nový mlýn” / “I know a new mill” in a Czech hymnbook printed in 1585).

The origin of the song “Vímť já jeden stromeček” is unclear. Most scholars date its origin to the 1630s, or, according to the dating in the 1889 edition of the *Evangelický kancionál* (the hymnal of Czech and Moravian Lutherans),<sup>2</sup> more precisely to 1637. The song reflects in naive poetics the central stories from the life of Jesus Christ (the symbolic nightingale) in the form of the contemplation or meditation of a man – the symbolic pilgrim – on his journey through life. In Bohemia and Moravia it was known in the Catholic environment, it is also present in the first volume of Kamaryt’s collection of Czech national spiritual songs.<sup>3</sup> Karel Konrád considered it to be the work of Václav Svorc, the rector of Zlín, as its inscription

1) As Karel Konrád stated, there are 21 folk songs with such incipit in František Sušil’s collection of Moravian folk songs from 1860. Cf. KONRÁD 1893: 429–430.

2) *Evangelický kancionál, to jest: Zpěvník žalmů a písní duchovních pro chrám, školu i dům* (Evangelical Hymnbook, that is: a Hymnal of Psalms and Spiritual songs for the Church, School and Home). Praha: Alois Hynek, 1889, hymn no. 68 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the hymnal, with four-voice arrangements of melodies). Cf. VÁŠA 1897, p. 126. In later editions of Evangelical Hymnbook the year 1737 is given, which is the year the *Cithara Sanctorum* was published in the printing house of Jiří Sarganek in Prague. Probably there is a typographical error in the 1889 edition, and the year 1737 should have originally been given.

3) KAMARÝT 1831: 78–82 (abridged version, 15 stanzas only).

was found in Svorc's manuscript hymnal from 1681.<sup>4</sup> Vilém Bitnar, in his anthology of natural lyrics of the Czech Baroque, cited Václav Svorc as the originator of this song and refers to his handwritten hymnbook as the source of the published transcribed version of the lyrics.<sup>5</sup> Within recorded sources, however, the song is also documented in older printings from 1660 and 1662.<sup>6</sup> Slovak literary historian Gizela Slavkovská-Gáfriková considered it to be an anonymous song, probably translated from a German original, but with no further references to its origin.<sup>7</sup> In the recent past, evidently incorrect interpretations regarding the origin of the song have been made – relating it to the influence of German Pietism on Slovak evangelical culture at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup> Jozef Minárik characterised it as an emotionally exalted Baroque song expressing mystical love for Christ.<sup>9</sup> This is probably one of the reasons why the song was published in selected anthologies of Baroque poetry in Slovakia.<sup>10</sup>

## Versions of the song in Slovak sources

In Slovakia, the song first spread in the Lutheran tradition. The oldest Slovak source that contains a record of its lyrics is considered to be the manuscript *Turoľúcky kancionál* (hymnal from Turá Lúka, close to the contemporary Slovakian-Czech border) by Ján Liborčan from 1684.<sup>11</sup> The song later also appears in another manuscript source of Lutheran origin, the 1689 hymnal of Samuel Palumbini.<sup>12</sup> However, a record of the song in an anonymous Lutheran manuscript hymnal from the Literary Archive of the Slovak National Library (sign. B III-107), which was probably written between 1674 and 1710, could be slightly older than in the above-mentioned manuscripts.<sup>13</sup> There is an interesting remark made by one of the anonymous transcribers of the manuscript B III-107 in the title of

4) KONRÁD 1893: 429.

5) BITNAR 1940: 604–608.

6) Cf: *Knihopis* no. 13666, 13667.

7) SLAVKOVSKÁ 1977: 451.

8) FORDINÁLOVÁ 2009: 110.

9) MINÁRIK 1997: 27.

10) SLAVKOVSKÁ 1977: 123–127; MINÁRIK 1997: 45–49.

11) Karel Konrád, who thought that Liborčan had copied it from Svorc's hymnal, drew attention to the occurrence of what he asserted as Svorc's song in this source (KONRÁD 1893: 431). Considering that this song has older sources, we consider any discussion of the connection between the manuscripts of Liborčan and Svorc to be purely hypothetical.

12) SLAVKOVSKÁ 1977: 451.

13) Information about this source was published more than a decade ago. It is interesting from a literary-historical and musicological point of view, as it not only records several unknown hymn texts, but also contains notated sacred hymns with polyphonic settings, which are quite rare in the preserved Slovak manuscripts of the time. Cf: RUŠČIN 2011: 40–41.

this hymn: “Anno 1666 à D[omi]no Tarnocio Episcopo Martino Superintendenti Prividiensi”. It is not clear from this reference whether the recorder attributed the authorship of the hymn to the well-known Lutheran bishop.<sup>14</sup> Martin Tarnóci was a parish priest in Prievidza and superintendent of the Pressburg, Tekov and Nitra counties. He had to leave Prievidza on 30 August, 1660, when he was expelled from the town by the widow of the palatine Pál Pálffy, Francisca Khuen de Belassi, who supported the Catholics. Between 1660 and 1673 he served as rector of the school in Diviaky, where he took refuge under the protection of the noble Ujfalussy family, so the 1666 date in the note refers to this period.<sup>15</sup> This date does, however, admit different interpretations. It is debatable whether the writer meant to indicate the year in which the song was supposedly composed, or whether he was referring to the bishop’s visit to the locality in which he wrote his hymnal and to which the singing of this song may have been related (after all, it cannot be ruled out that the manuscript was written directly in Diviaky). Alternatively, the writer may have made a mistake and had the year 1660 in mind, namely the sad event of the expulsion of Bishop Tarnóci from Prievidza, when perhaps the parishioners sang this song with their priest as a farewell. Whether any of these hypothetical considerations are true or not, based on the above-mentioned reference we can at least assume that the song was known in the evangelical environment in Slovakia as early as the 1660s. However, given the older source documents in Bohemia, it is more likely that it is of Czech origin.

The earliest Slovak printing containing the text of this hymn was the fifth Levoca edition of the lutheran hymnal *Cithara Sanctorum* from 1696. The song is listed among the new texts in the section *Písně obecné* (“General Songs”). In the same section, another song beginning with the same incipit, “Vímť já zahrádku, místečko krásné” (“I know a garden, a place of beauty”), is also included. The *Cithara* version of the text contains numerous Slovakisms, which is in line with Daniel Krman’s well-known reservations about this edition mentioned by Jan Mocko:

“He [namely Krman, note P.R.] says of this edition that ‘with innumerable letters, according to the art of good writing, uncorrected beyond measure, [it] was rather scorned by many’. This reproach refers to the fact that the publisher often Slovakised the written language, which was also done by others before him.”<sup>16</sup>

14) Although Martin Tarnóci (\*1620 Beckov, †1685 Blatnica) was the author of numerous theological works, he is not known to have been the author of original church hymns or their translations.

15) Cf. DROBNÝ 1929: 155.

16) MOCKO 1909: 117.

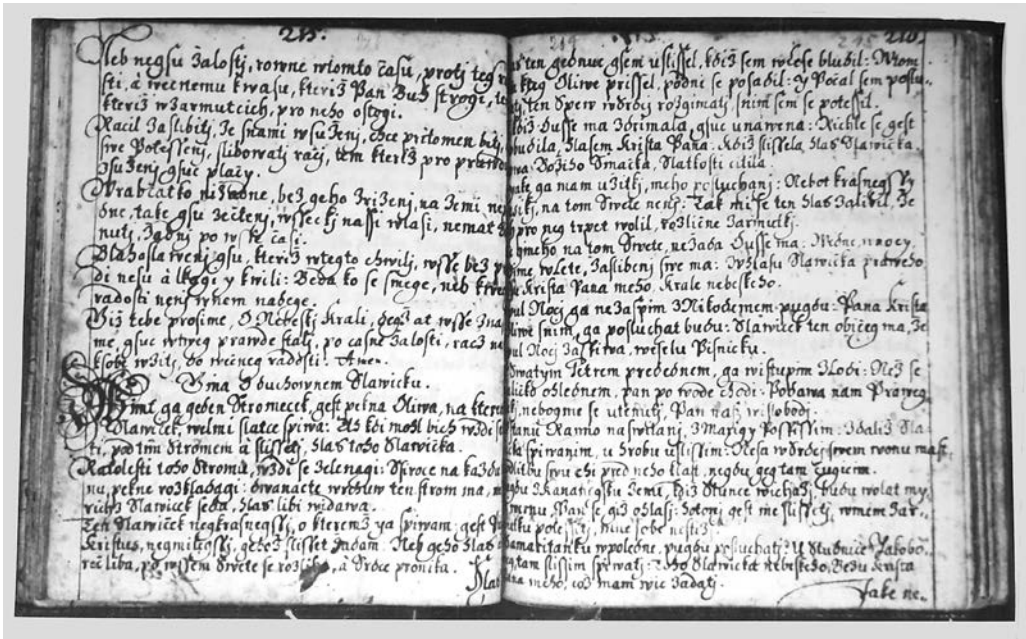


Figure 1. Lyrics of the song “Vímť já jeden stromček” (“I know a little Tree”) in the Hymnal from Ľubietová, pp. 215–216.

The text of the song is also recorded in the so-called *Ľubietovský kancionál* (hymnal from the village of Ľubietová; abbreviated below as “LK”). According to information on the title page, the manuscript was written by Pavol Fábry (1641–1711), son of the rector of the Ľubietová school, on 1 May, 1696, and it is likely that he also added to it more songs during the following years.<sup>17</sup> This record may have been made after the text of the song was published in *Cithara Sanctorum*, but there are numerous textual deviations from the printed version.<sup>18</sup>

Interesting connections can be revealed if we compare the versions of the text from the above-mentioned edition of the *Cithara Sanctorum* and the deviations in the LK (left-hand column) with the version in the manuscript B III-107 (right-hand column), whose margins also contain, beside some stanzas, biblical references to the relevant passages in the Bible.<sup>19</sup>

17) ĎUROVIČ 1940: 355–356.

18) At present, the *Ľubietovský kancionál* is unfortunately missing. We only know its contents from a microfilm that was created in the 1950s and deposited at the Department of Music History of the Institute of Musicology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava. Cf. RUŠČIN 2022: 62.

19) The transcription of the text from the *Cithara Sanctorum* is given according to the published versions of Slavkova-Gáfríková and Minárik (SLAVKOVSKÁ 1977: 123–127; MINÁRIK 1997: 45–49), but without some editorial

<i>Cithara Sanctorum</i> (Levoča: S. Brewer, 1696), pp. 746–749	Msc. LA SNK, B III-107 fol. 129r–130
Písnička pobožná o duchov. slavíčku. <sup>20</sup> (A devotional song about a spritual night- ingale)	Anno 1666 à Domino Tarnocio Episcopo Martino Superintendenti Prividiensi.
<p>1. Vímť já jeden stromeček (I know a little tree) jest krásná<sup>21</sup> oliva, (It’s a beautiful olive tree,) na kterémžto slavíček (On which the nightingale) velmi sladce spívá. (Sings very sweetly.) R: Ach, kdybych mohl viděti<sup>22</sup> (Oh, if I could see) a pod tým stromem slyšeti<sup>23</sup> (And hear under that tree) hlas toho slavíčka! (The voice of that nightingale!)</p> <p>2. Ratolesti toho stromu (The branches of the tree) vždy se zelenají, (Are always green,) široce na každú stranu (Wide on every side) vetvě rozkládají.<sup>24</sup> (They spread their branches wide.) R: Dvanácte vrchův ten strom má, (The tree has twelve tops,)</p>	<p>1. Vím já jeden stromíček, (I know a little tree,) jest pekná oliva, (It’s a nice olive tree,) na kterejžto slavíček (On which the nightingale) velmi pekně spívá. (Sings very nicely.) R: Ach, kdybych mohl tam seděti, (Oh, if I could just sit there) pod tým stromem slyšeti (To hear under that tree) hlas toho slavíčka. (The voice of that nightingale.)</p> <p>2. Psal. 19, 5 Ratolesti toho stromu (The branches of the tree) když se zelenají, (When they turn green,) široce na každú stranu (Wide on every side) listy rozkládají. (They spread their leaves wide.) R: Dvanácte vrchov ten strom má, (The tree has twelve tops,)</p>

changes which I point out in the notes. The text from manuscript B III-107 is transcribed in accordance with the usual rules of transcription of older Slovakised Czech texts (modification of the compound spelling to diacritical, modifications of syllable quantity and punctuation, preservation of Czech spelling when writing softened consonants *de* – *dě*, *fe* – *tě*, *ne* – *ně*, vowel “*i*” instead of “*y*”, preserving the Slovakisms).

20) LK: Jiná o duchovném slavíčku. (“Another about the spiritual nightingale.”)

21) LK: pekná (as in B III-107)

22) LK: Ach, kdy mohl bych viděti (different word order)

23) LK: pod tím stromem a slyšeti (as in B III-107)

24) LK: pekně rozkládají (“nicely spreading”)

<p>na které<sup>25</sup> slavíček sedá, (On which the nightingale sits,) hlas libý vydává. (Making a lovely voice.)</p> <p>3. Ten slavíček nejkrásnější, (The most beautiful nightingale,) o kterémž já spívám, (Of whom I now sing,) jest Pán Kristus nejmilejší, (Is the Lord Christ most beloved,) jehož slyšet žádám. (Whom I ask to hear,) R: Jehožto hlas řeč libá<sup>26</sup> (Whose voice is a pleasant speech,) po vším<sup>27</sup> světě se rozlívá, (That is heard throughout the world,) až srdce proniká. (So that it goes straight into the heart.)</p> <p>4. Hlas ten jednu sem uslyšel, (I once heard that voice,) kdy sem v lese blúdil, (When I was wandering in the forest,) vtom sem k té<sup>28</sup> olivě přišel, (Suddenly I came to this olive tree,) pod ní se posadil. (I sat down under it.) R: I počal sem poslúchati (And I began to listen,) ten spěv v srdci rozjímati, (My heart musing on this singing,) nímž<sup>29</sup> sem se potěšil. (I was pleased with it.)</p>	<p>na kterém slavíček sedá, (On which the nightingale sits,) hlas libý vydává. (Making a lovely voice.)</p> <p>3. Cant. 2, [1]4 Slavíček ten nejkrásnější, (The most beautiful nightingale,) o kterém já spívám, (Of whom I now sing,) jest Pán Kristus nejmilejší, (Is the Lord Christ most beloved,) jeho slyšeti žádám. (Whom I ask to hear,) R: Neb jeho hlas a řeč libá (For his voice and pleasant speech) po všem světě se rozlívá, (Is heard throughout the world,) až srdce proniká. (So that it goes straight into the heart.)</p> <p>4. J [1, 49] Hlas ten jednu sem polyšel, (I once heard that voice,) když sem v lese blúdil, (While I was wandering in the forest,) vtom k tej olivě sem přišel, (Suddenly I came to this olive tree,) pod ní se posadil. (I sat down under it.) R: I počal sem poslúchati, (And I began to listen,) hlas ten v srdci rozjímati, (My heart musing on this voice,) ním sem se potěšil. (I was pleased with it.)</p>
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25) Slavkovská, Minárik: na kterém, LK: na kterýchž ("on which")

26) LK: Neb jeho hlas a řeč libá (as in B III-107)

27) LK: po všem (as in B III-107)

28) LK: k tej (as in B III-107)

29) LK: s ním (as in B III-107)



<p>5. A když duše má zdřímala, (And when my soul slumbered,) jsouce<sup>30</sup> unavena, (Being so weary, rychle jest procítla<sup>31</sup> (It woke up quickly) k hlasu<sup>32</sup> Krista Pána. (To the voice of Christ the Lord.) R: Když slyšela hlas slavička, (When it heard the nightingale's voice,) slovo Božího Synáčka, (The word of the Son of God,) sladkost ucítla.<sup>33</sup> (It felt the sweetness.)</p>	<p>5. L 24, 32 A když duše má zdřímala, (And when my soul slumbered,) jsúce unavena, (Being so weary, rychle se jest probudila, (It woke up quickly,) slovem Krista Pána. (By the word of Christ the Lord.) R: Když slyšela hlas slavička, (When it heard the nightingale's voice,) slova Božího Synáčka. (The words of the Son of God,) sladkosti ucítla. (It felt the sweetness.)</p>
<p>6. Ach jaké já mám užitky Oh, what cheer I have mého poslouchání,<sup>34</sup> From my listening, nebo krásnější muziky There is no more beautiful na tom světě není. Music in this world. R: Tak mi se ten hlas zalíbil, I liked that voice so much, že bych pro něj trpet' volil That I would suffer for it rozličné zármutky. All kinds of sorrows.</p>	<p>6. Ó jaké mám užitky Oh, what cheer I have toho poslouchání, From listening, nebo krásnější muziky There is no more beautiful na tom světě není. Music in this world. R: Tak mi se ten hlas zalíbil, I liked that voice so much, že bych proň i trpet' volil, That I would suffer for it rozličné zármutky. All kinds of sorrows.</p>
<p>7. Nic jinšího<sup>35</sup> na tom světě (There's nothing else in the world)</p>	<p>7. Nic jiného na tom světě (There's nothing else in the world)</p>

30) LK: jsúc (as in B III-107)

31) SLAVKOVSKÁ 1977, MINÁRIK 1997: tu rychle jest procítla (first word added), LK: rychle se jest probudila (as in B III-107).

32) LK: hlasem (“By the voice”)

33) LK: sladkosti cítila (“It felt the sweetness”)

34) SLAVKOVSKÁ 1977, MINÁRIK 1997: poslouchání! (exclamation mark added)

35) LK: Nic jiného (as in B III-107)

<p>nežádá duše má, (My soul asks,) ve dne, v noci, v zimě, v létě (Day and night, winter and summer) zalíbení své má, (It delights to please,) R: vedle slavička milého<sup>36</sup>, (Beside the lovely nightingale,) Jezu Krista Pána mého, (Jesus Christ my Lord,) krále nebeského. (The king of heaven.)</p> <p>8. O půlnoci já nezaspím, (I don't fall asleep at midnight,) s Nikodémem půjdu, (I will go with Nicodemus,) Pána Krista s ním bedlivě<sup>37</sup> (With him, carefully to the Lord Christ) poslouchati<sup>38</sup> budu. (I will listen.) R: Slaviček ten obyčej má, (The nightingale has the custom,) že o půlnoci zaspívá (that he usually sings) veselú písničku. (a merry song at midnight.)</p> <p>9. Těž s svatým Petrem přede dněm (Also with St. Peter before the day) já přistúpím<sup>39</sup> k lodi, (I will approach the boat,) prv než se málo ohlédnú<sup>40</sup>,</p>	<p>nežádá duše má, (My soul asks,) ve dne, v noci, v létě v zime (Day and night, summer and winter) zaslíbení své má, (It delights to please,) R: v hlasu slavička pravého, (In the voice of true nightingale,) Jezu Krista Pána mého. (Jesus Christ my Lord.) Což mám více žádati?<sup>41</sup> (What more can I ask?)</p> <p>8. Jn 3, 2 O polnoci já nezaspím, (I don't fall asleep at midnight,) s Nikodémem půjdu, (I will go with Nicodemus,) Pána Krista bedlivě s ním (With him, carefully to the Lord Christ) poslouchati budu. (I will listen.) R: Slaviček ten obyčej má, (The nightingale has the custom,) že o polnoci zaspívá (that he usually sings) veselú písničku. (a merry song at midnight.)</p> <p>9. Mt 14, 25 Až s svatým Petrem přede dněm (When with St. Peter before the day) já vystúpim z lodi, (I will get off the boat,) než se máličko ohlédnú,</p>
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36) LK: v hlasu slavička pravého (as in B III-107)

37) LK: bedlive s ním (as in B III-107)

38) LK: já poslouchat ("I will listen")

39) LK: já vystúpim (as in B III-107)

40) Slavkovská, Minárik: ohlédněm (adjustment for rhyming); LK: než se máličko ohlédnem (similar to B III-107)

41) See the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> stanza.

<p>(Before I look glance back,) Pán po vodě chodí. (The Lord walks on water.) R: Podává nám pravé<sup>42</sup> ruky, (He's giving us his right hand,) nebojme se utonutí, (Let's not be afraid of drowning) Pán nás vysvobodí.<sup>43</sup> (The Lord will deliver us.)</p> <p>10. Vstanu ráno na svítání, (I will get up early at dawn,) s Marií pospíším, (I'll hurry with Mary,) zdali slavička spívání<sup>44</sup> (Whether the nightingale's singing) u hrobu uslyším. (I'll hear at the grave.) R: Nesa v srdci svém drahú<sup>45</sup> mast', (Carrying in my heart the precious ointment,) modlitbu svou chci před něj<sup>46</sup> klást, (I want to lay my prayer before him,) najdu jej, se těším.<sup>47</sup> (I'll find him, I look forward to it.)</p> <p>11. Půjdu s kananejskou ženou, (I will go with the Canaanite woman,) již<sup>48</sup> slunce vychází, (The sun is already rising,) budu volat myslí věrnou, (I will call with a faithful mind,) Pán se již ohlásí.</p>	<p>(Before I glance back), Pán po vodě chodí. (The Lord walks on water.) R: Podává své pravé ruky, (He's giving us his right hand,) nebojme se utonuti, (Let's not be afraid to drown,) Pán nás vyslobodí. (The Lord will deliver us.)</p> <p>10. Jn 20, 1 Ráno vstanu na svítání, (I will get up early at dawn,) s Marií pospíším, (I'll hurry with Mary,) zdaliž slavička u hrobu (Whether I will at the grave) zaspívati slyším. (Hear the nightingale's singing.) R: Nesu v svém srdci vonnou mast', (I'm carrying in my heart the fragrant ointment,) modlitbu svú chci před něj klást, (I want to lay my prayer before him,) najdu jej tam, myslím. (I'll find him there, I think.)</p> <p>11. Mt 15, 22 Půjdu s ka[na]nejskou ženou, (I will go with the Canaanite woman,) když slunce vychází, (When the sun is rising,) budu volat myslí věrnou, (I will call with a faithful mind,) Pán se již ohlásí.</p>
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42) LK: pravej ("right")

43) LK: vyslobodí. (as in B III-107)

44) LK: spíváním ("singing")

45) LK: vonnou (as in B III-107)

46) LK: před neho ("before him")

47) LK: najdu jej tam čujícím. ("I'll find him there smelling.")

48) LK: když (as in B III-107)

<p>(The Lord will make Himself known.) R: Hotový jest uslyšeti<sup>49</sup>, (He is ready to hear,) v mém zármutku potěšiti, (In my grief to comfort,) mne sobě nestíží. (He will not be burdened by me.)</p>	<p>(The Lord will make Himself known.) R: Hotový jest mne slyšeti (He's ready to hear me,) a v zármutku potěšiti, (And to comfort in grief,) mne sobě neztěží. (He will not be burdened by me.)</p>
<p>12. S Samaritánkou v poledně (With the Samaritan woman at noon) půjdu poslouchati, (I will go to listen,) u studnice Jákobové<sup>50</sup> (By the well of Jacob) jej<sup>51</sup> slyším spívati. (I hear him singing.) R: Toho slavíčka pravého<sup>52</sup>, (The real nightingale,) Jezu Krista Pána mého, (Jesus Christ my Lord,) což mám víc žádati? (What more can I ask?)</p>	<p>12. Jn 4, 9 S Samaritánkou k poledni (With the Samaritan woman at noon) půjdu poslouchati, (I will go to listen,) u studnice Jákobovej (By the well of Jacob) tam slyším spívati, (I hear singing there,) R: Toho slavíčka premilého, (The most beloved nightingale,) Jezu Krista Pána mého, (Jesus Christ my Lord,) Krále nebeského. (The king of heaven.)</p>
<p>13. Také v nešporní<sup>53</sup> hodinu (Also at the vespers hour) s lotrem se obrátím, (I'll turn with the rogue,) Jezu Krista Hospodina<sup>54</sup> (Jesus Christ's the Lord's) milosti nestratím. (grace, I shall not lose.) R: Tu<sup>55</sup> uslyším přelibý hlas: (I will hear the most lovely voice here:)</p>	<p>13. L 23, 42 Také v nešporní hodinu (Also at the vespers hour) s lotrem se obrátím (I'll turn with the rogue) k Kristu Pánu Hospodinu, (to Christ the Lord,) milosti nestratím. (I'll not lose his grace.) R: Tu uslyším přelibý hlas, (I will hear the most lovely voice here,)</p>

49) LK: mne slyšeti (as in B III-107)

50) LK: Jákobovej (as in B III-107)

51) LK: tam (as in B III-107)

52) LK: nebeského (“heavenly”)

53) LK: nešpornú (“vespers”)

54) LK: v Kristu Pánu Hospodinu (“in Christ of the Lord”)

55) LK: Tu (as in B III-107)

jistotně budeš se mnú dnes  
(You will surely rejoice with me)  
v ráji se těšiti.  
(Today in paradise.)

14.

K večeru půjdu s Jozefem,  
(I'll go with Joseph tonight,)  
slunce se sklonívá,  
(The sun is stooping low,)  
tuť jest všecken svět zarmúcen,  
(Here all the world is saddened,)  
slaviček nespívá.  
(The nightingale does not sing.)  
R: Zatím musím naříkati<sup>56</sup>,  
(For now, I must lament,)  
smrt' Krista Pána plakati<sup>57</sup>,  
(The death of Christ the Lord to weep,)  
slz oči zalívá.  
(Tears water the eyes.)

15.

Večer půjdu do mestečka,  
(In the evening I'll go to the town,)  
Emaus řečeného,  
(Emmaus, so called,)  
tu<sup>58</sup> mne táhne mysl všecka  
(Where all my mind is drawn)  
jíť z světa bídného.  
(To go from this wretched world.)  
R: I<sup>59</sup> tu celú naději mám,  
(And I have all the hope,)  
že na té<sup>60</sup> cestě uhlídám  
(That I will see on this road)  
zase Pána svého.  
(My Lord again.)

jistě dnes se mnú byti máš  
(You are to be with me today)  
v rájském potěšení.  
(In the pleasure of paradise.)

14. Mt 27, 57

K večeru půjdu s Jozefem,  
(I'll go with Joseph tonight,)  
slunce se sklonívá,  
(The sun is stooping low,)  
tu jest všecek svět zarmúcen,  
(Here all the world is saddened,)  
slaviček nespívá.  
(The nightingale does not sing.)  
R: Zatím musím plakati,  
(For now, I must weep,)  
smrt' slavička litovati,  
(The death of nightingale to regret,)  
slz duše vylievati.  
(To shed tears of the soul.)

15. L 24, 29

Večer půjdu do mestečka  
(In the evening I'll go to the town,)  
Emaus řečeného,  
(Emmaus, so called,)  
tam mne táhne mysl všecka,  
(Where all my mind is drawn)  
zde z světa bídného.  
(From this wretched world.)  
R: Ej tu celú naději mám,  
(Behold, I have here all the hope,)  
že o polnoci uhlídám,  
(That at midnight I will see)  
zase Pána mého.  
(My Lord again.)

56) LK: plakati (as in B III-107)

57) LK: litovati (as in B III-107)

58) LK: neb (“because”)

59) LK: Ej (as in B III-107)

60) LK: tej (“this”)

<p>16. A když na hospodu půjdu, (And if I go to the inn, abych odpočinul, (To get some rest, za to Pána prosit budu, (I will beg the Lord, aby se mnou zůstal. (That he may stay with me.) R: A když pak máličko<sup>61</sup> pospím, (And if I get a little sleep, k hlasu slavička procítím (I shall wake up to the voice of the night- ingale) v den soudný, jist sem tím.<sup>62</sup> (On the day of judgment, I'm sure of it.)</p>	<p>16. A když půjdu na hospodu, (And if I go to the inn, abych odpočinul, (To get some rest, za to Pána prosit budu, (I will beg the Lord, aby zůstal se mnú. (That he may stay with me.) R: A když již máličko pospím, (And if I get a little sleep, k hlasu slavička procítím, (I shall wake up to the voice of the night- ingale) v den súdný již sem s ním. (On the day of judgment I'll be with him.)</p>
<p>17. Ach spívej, spívej slavičku, (Oh sing, sing, little nightingale, privolej mne k sobě, (Call me, please, to you, probud' ospalú dušičku, (Wake up the sleepy soul, ať túží po tobě. (Let it long for you.) R: Ó Pane Kriste Ježíši, (O Lord Christ Jesus, v tú hodinu nejposlednější<sup>63</sup> (In that final hour) dej, ať tvůj hlas slyší!<sup>64</sup> (Let your voice be heard!) Amen.</p>	<p>17. Ej spívej, spívej slavičku, (Oh sing, sing, little nightingale, privolej mne k sobě, (Call me, please, to you, probud' ospalú dušičku, (Wake up the sleepy soul, ať túží po tobě. (Let it long for you.) R: Ó Pane Kriste Ježíši, (O Lord Christ Jesus, v hodinu nejposlednější (In the final hour) nech mne tvůj hlas zazní. (Let me hear your voice.) Ó Pane Kriste Ježíši. (O Lord Christ Jesus tobě poručím mú duši (To thee will I command my soul) v hodinu nejposlednější. (In the final hour.)</p>

61) LK: A když máličko

62) LK: v den súdný budem s ním. (similar to B III-107)

63) LK: v hodinu mú poslednější ("In my final hour")

64) LK: nechť mi tvůj hlas zazní. (similar to B III-107)

The analogies between the printed version and the manuscript version of Pavol Fábry (LK) on the one hand, as well as a certain affinity between the two manuscript versions on the other, indirectly confirm the claims made by Ján Ďurovič. According to him, the editions of the *Cithara Sanctorum* at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century did not yet fulfil the function of an obligatory handbook for Lutheran church congregations, which contrasts with the situation in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, for example. Ďurovič argues that in Fábry's time, cantors, in addition to printed hymnbooks, also drew extensively on writings and records, both their own and those obtained in various ways from other localities. According to Ďurovič, the resulting form of the text in the source is the result of using different written sources, as evidenced by some other alternative translations of German hymns in the manuscript compared to the *Cithara Sanctorum*.<sup>65</sup> The influence of unknown manuscript sources is similarly assumed by the scribe of manuscript B III-107, who most probably did not copy from the *Cithara* for this text.

The song did not become part of the church tradition of Slovak Catholics. It is interesting that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century it disappeared for some time from the numerous editions of the *Cithara Sanctorum*, although we can still find it in Sarganek's edition from 1737. It is not, however, contained in the 1743 and 1745 exile editions of the *Cithara* (the so-called *Tranoscius*) from Lauben edited by Hruskovic, nor in the later editions from Bratislava (Pressburg) up to 1790.<sup>66</sup> In subsequent editions of the *Tranoscius* the song is incorporated in the final appendix under the number 1006, thus it did not become a permanent part of this hymnal until the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Examples of other hymnographic printed sources in which it is contained include Petrmann's Dresden exile hymnal from 1748, as well as Patzko's Bratislava edition of the *Ruční kancionálík domovní i pocestní* (“Hand Hymnal for Home and Travelling”) from 1790.<sup>67</sup> However, the Evangelical hymnal published from 1842 onwards did not adopt it. Surprisingly, too, this song is not recorded in the published bibliography of fair and pilgrimage prints (broadside ballads) from the territory of Slovakia, although it is clear that, at least in the Skalica printing house, the song was also published in these types of prints. This fact suggests that the song was mainly used in the church tradition of Slovak Lutherans, and that the

65) ĎUROVIČ 1940: 361.

66) AUGUSTÍNOVÁ 2011: 356–357.

67) To the best of our knowledge, the hymn was not included in the 1749 edition of the *Ruční kancionálík*, nor in Weber's 1790 edition of the same hymnal. Cf. MALURA 2010: 422.

oral tradition reflected it only to a limited extent, even in areas where the proportion of the population from the Evangelical A.V. denomination (Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession) was higher.

## Melody of the song in the Slovak tradition

In the manuscript B III-107 the song has a recorded tune which is a variant of the melody of the New Year's hymn “Vzdejmež čest Pánu Bohu” (“Give Honour to the Lord God”), which is Tranovsky's translation of the text of Paul Eber's “Helft mir Gott's Güte preisen” (sheet music example, Fig. 3). This melody is an adaptation of the French popular chanson “Une jeune fillette” by Jean Char-davoine, published in the collection *Le Recueil des plus belles et excellentes chan-sons* (Lyon 1557, fol. 135v). The melody of the hymn appears in German sources from 1563.<sup>68</sup> In the 17<sup>th</sup>-century editions of the *Cithara Sanctorum*, several other hymns were also sung to this tune: “Má duše se nespouštěj nikdy Boha svého” (“My soul shall never let go of thy God” – a Slovak version of the German hymn “Vom Gott will ich nicht lassen”) and “Stvořiteli můj mocný, Otče milosrdný” (“My mighty Creator, my merciful Father”). Benedict Szöllösi also used this tune in his Catholic hymnal “Cantus Catholici” (1655) for the text “Pán Bůh náš veliký jest nadevše svatý” (“The Lord our God is holy above all”). Finally, Slovak hymnographic sources of the 18<sup>th</sup> century record at least 13 other songs with the same verse structure (7676886) that refer to this melody.

Although there is no reference to the melody of the song in the *Cithara Sanc-torum*, given the aforementioned popularity of the hymn “Give Honour to the Lord God”, it is not surprising that Juraj Petrmann also refers to it in his hym-nal published in exile in Dresden.<sup>69</sup> We assume that the use of this tune for the lyrics of the song “Vímť já jeden stromeček” was a common practice in Slova-kia. However, we do not know whether the variant verse from the manuscript source indicates some variation of the melody in the oral tradition, or whether it is a variant of the tune that belonged to this text as its “own tune”. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the Czech broadside ballad of 1660 and 1662 refer to the melody of the German emigration song “[Und] Wer sich auf dem Wasser begibt” in the same text.<sup>70</sup> Surviving Czech sources of the same

68) DKL III (EdK) 1/1 B76 (*Helfft mir Gottes guete preisen*).

69) A reference to the hymn *Vzdejmež čest Bohu*. Cf: PETRMANN 1748: 270, no. 218.

70) *Pijsničky welmi pěkné a pobožné w nowé složené. Prwnj o Duchownjm Slawičkowi Krystu Pánu...* Litomyšl: Ján Arnolt,



broadside ballad from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries often refer to the melody of the folk song “Kdo se na vojnu odevzdá” (“Whoever is going to war”).<sup>71</sup> We do find this tune in Škultéty’s *Melodyatura* (many texts refer to it), but the song “Vímť já jeden stromeček” is missing from the list of text incipits. The reason for this is its omission in the 1787 and 1790 editions of the *Cithara Sanctorum*, which apparently formed the basis of Škultéty’s collection of hymn tunes.<sup>72</sup>

## Conclusion

It is obvious that the song “Vímť já jeden stromeček jest krásná oliva” spread in Slovakia quite early, probably before the strong wave of re-Catholicisation in the 1770s which impacted Slovak Lutherans so severely. Although there are still many unanswered questions about the origin of the song and the way it was disseminated, it undoubtedly belonged to the song repertoire that characterised the evangelical church of the Slovaks in the High and Late Baroque. This song was one of those that Slovak exiles brought to their new homeland in Saxony. While in Bohemia and Moravia the song also took root among Catholics in the folk tradition, in Slovak conditions it was sung mainly in the Lutheran church environment. Since it was not counted among the church songs of Slovak Catholics, who constituted a significant majority of the population, it did not penetrate so strongly into the tradition of folk singing. The distribution of this song in the form of broadside ballads through the Škarničl family’s printing house in Skalica seems to have focused mainly on the Moravian region.<sup>73</sup>

1660; fol. II: Zpjwá se gako (It’s sung like): Wer sich auff das Wasser begibt. Wjmť gá geden Stromeček gest krásná Oliwa... Cf: Knihopis, no. 13666.

71) Cf: HOLUBOVÁ – KOPALOVÁ 2015, *Rejstřík kramářských tisků* (Index of Broadside Ballads), *Rejstřík nápěvů* (Index of Tunes), password “Kdo se na vojnu odevzdá”.

72) ŠKULTÉTY 1798 no. 406.

73) This paper is a part of the VEGA project No. 2/0082/20 “Spiritual song of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries in Slovakia in the genre and music-style context” investigated at the Institute of Musicology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, v.v.i. in Bratislava.

Vzdej-mež čest Pá - nu Bo - hu, ma - lí i ve - li - cí,  
za je - ho mi - lost mno - hou, nás ob - ži - vu - jí - cí.

Zvláš - tě chví - le té - to, když sta - rý rok od - chá - zí a  
slun - ce k nám při - chá - zí, sla - víc no - vé lé - to.

**Figure 2.** The tune “Vzdejmež čest Pánu Bohu” according to the version in the second edition of *Cithara Sanctorum* (Levoča: V. Brewer, 1653), pp. 80–81.

Vímť já je - den stro - mí - ček jest pek - ná o - li - va, Ach,  
na kte - rejž - to sla - ví - ček vel - mi pek - ně spí - vá.

kdy - bych mohl tam se - dě - ti, pod tým stro - mem sly - še - ti hlas to - ho sla - víc - ka.

**Figure 3.** The Tune of the Song “Vímť já jeden stromíček” (“I know a little Tree”) in the manuscript hymnal B III-107, fol. 129v.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Mgr. Peter Ruščin, PhD., peter.ruscin@savba.sk, Institute of Musicology, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovakia / Ústav hudobnej vedy SAV, v.v.i., Bratislava, Slovensko*



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