

Thesis of a Dissertation

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Folk Elements And Roots
In Kodály's Cello And Chamber Works

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The Liszt Academy of Music

28th Doctoral School of Arts and Cultural History

Budapest

2022

I. Antecedents of the Research

Kodály's work as a collector of instrumental folk materials and as a composer of instrumental pieces were dealt separately in the past by many musicologists. There were only a few essays focusing on the interaction of the two fields. The base of my thesis is Lujza Tari's book entitled *Kodály, The Researcher Of Instrumental Folk Music*, which contains all the notated versions of Kodály's instrumental collection. In later chapters of my thesis, I mainly relied on Anna Dalos's two books, next to other shorter essays and Kodály's own statements, among which the series of conversations with Lutz Besh called *My Way to Music* stands out. From János Breuer's *Kodály Guide*, I primarily obtained useful information about the creation and presentation conditions of the discussed Kodály works. In addition, János Bereczki, Ferenc Bónis, Mihály Ittész, János Kovács, György Kroó and Olga Szalay dealt tangentially with the topic in one of their studies. I also used and mentioned these writings in my work.

II. Sources

The primary sources of my work are Kodály's instrumental pieces and his instrumental folk collections published by Lujza Tari. As secondary sources, I used Kodály's published statements, letters and speeches, as well as the folk songs he collected and wrote down.

III. Method

My work is primarily comparative. I juxtaposed Kodály's composed instrumental works next to his instrumental folk collections and examined their relationship from different points of view, with the intention of proving the inspiration arising from the collections. In the case of some pieces, I perceived this type of relationship only by placing them in the historical-environmental context, but most of the time I used the method of detailed analysis. In all cases, I considered it important to illustrate my observations with examples of scores.

IV. Results

My dissertation reveals that Kodály was concerned with folk songs not only as a melody, but also as a rhythmic and

formal structure. Since his first trips to collect folk music coincided with the writing of his early instrumental works, the 'folk song as an idea' can be seen in action in his cello and chamber music works. Instrumental folk music was equally important to him, the melodies he collected and wrote down and the folk instrumental techniques he learned also left an impression on his works. He saw the opportunity to renew and interpret Hungarian folk music in the collection and processing of vocal and instrumental folk music, and he was active in this spirit throughout his life. In his early cello and chamber works, the folk song often appears as a motto at the beginning of the pieces, from which the other melodies of the work develop. His later instrumental music is more characterized by composed pseudo-folk songs. In the latter cases, although specific folk music quotations are missing, the forms of movement referring to the instrumental techniques characteristic of folk music practice (drumming, bagpipes, flute improvisation, syncopated accompaniment, etc.) and the characteristic melodic turns make it clear that these pieces are also interwoven with folk music roots.

V. Documentation of the Activities Relevant to the Topic of the Dissertation

While writing my dissertation, I gave several concerts where I played Kodály's corresponding works. At my closing concert, I will perform his *Duo op. 7* composed for violin and cello.