

The Theses of DLA Doctoral Dissertation

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**Zoltán Tibay**

(1910-1989)

The influence of the Prague double bass school on his work

His relationship with contemporaries, the survival of its work

Liszt Ferenc University of Musical Art

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## **I. The preliminaries of research**

When collecting material for my doctoral dissertation I had to face the fact that no written documents analysing or summarising the Hungarian relations of Zoltan Tibay' life were available for researchers. The research into his life-work was a blank spot of musical history both in Hungary and abroad. First of all, my dissertation aims to fill up this gap. At the beginning of my research I could rely on two reference books published in Hungary:

- Bordás, Tibor (1981): Adatok a nagybőgő történetéhez. [Facts and Figures to the History of the double bass. Debrecen: Kodály Zoltán Zeneművészeti Szakközépiskola [Kodály Zoltán Secondary Technical School of Musical Art].
- Bordás, Tibor (1995): Nagybőgők és nagybőgősök. [Double basses and bassists]. Budapest: Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó [National Publishing House of Textbooks] 1st edition, edited by Enreiter, István.

In addition to this, I was also informed about some source I had not known before that was owned by Zsolt Tibay, the son of Zoltán Tibay. My dissertation draft included four chapters the topics of which helped me search materials that I considered to be available.

## II. Sources

- van der Meer, John Henry (1998): Hangszerek. [Musical instruments]. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó. Publishing House for Musical Works]
- A Nemzeti Zenede. [The National Music School.] (2005) Budapest: Liszt Ferenc Zeneművészeti Egyetem Budapesti Tanárképző Intézete [Liszt Ferenc University of Musical Art], Institute for Teachers' Training].
- Bordás, Tibor (1981): Adatok a nagybőgő történetéhez. [Facts and Figures to the History of the Double-bass.] Debrecen: Kodály Zoltán Zeneművészeti Szakközépiskola. [Kodály Zoltán Secondary Technical School of Musical Art].
- Bordás, Tibor (1995): Nagybőgők és nagybőgősök. [Double-basses and bassists]. Budapest: Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó. [National Publishing House of Textbooks].
- Kilenc Évtized a Magyar Zeneművészet Szolgálatában [Nine Decades in the Service of the Hungarian Musical Art] (1943). Budapest: Filharmóniai Társaság. [Philharmonic Society]
- Simandl, Franz (1964): New Method for the Double Bass. New York: Carl Fischer Inc.
- Staud, Géza (ed.): (2005): A Budapesti Operaház 100 éve [100 years of the Budapest Opera House]. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó [Publishing House for Musical Art].
- Mezei, Gyula – Benedek, András (2005): A közoktatás rendszere [The System of Secondary Education]. Budapest: BME Pedagógiai tanszék. [Budapest Technical University Pedagogical Institute].

After studying the above-mentioned primary sources and getting acquainted with the material provided for me by Zsolt Tibay, I started to fill up the four chapters with content. I had the intention of completing a dissertation which deals with the life-work of Zoltán Tibay with scientific preciseness, and in addition to that it also commemorates the legendary teacher, who worked for more than 50 years at the Department of Double Bass at the Academy of Musical Art.

Of-course, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century I also used the possibilities provided by the Internet in case of secondary resources.

Sources from the Internet:

- <http://mek.niif.hu/02200/02227/html/03/718.html>
- <http://mek.niif.hu/02100/02139/html/sz10/193.html>
- <http://www.soroksar.hu>
- <http://www.classiconline.com/catalogue/product.aspx?pid=257641>
- <http://www.elib.hu/02100/02139/html/sz23/129.html>

### **III. Research methods**

When completing the first chapter I focused on the description of the currently used double bass from the aspect of musical history. In the next part of the chapter I started with the beginnings of the double bass teaching through the masters in the Prague conservatory. I presented in detail the common roots of the Czech and Hungarian double bass school and those teachers whose life path helped me get to the two centres of the one-time Hungarian music teaching: the Academy of Music and the National Music School.

The second chapter, which focuses on the introduction of Tibay's biography, is the most impressive considering its length and illustration. The second chapter lists the concerts by Zoltán Tibay in chronological order from 1931 to 1962.

It was also an important criterion for me to mention only those performances on which I had some written documents. These documents mostly include the sources provided to me by Zsolt Tibay. At the same time I have to mention that the illustrations, newspaper articles and other one-time documents in Chapters 3 and 4 derive from Zoltán Tibay's students and colleagues. In this way I found the one-time organiser of the Debrecen Double Bass Meetings, and the one-time double bass teacher of the Debrecen College, Károly Saru; the Hungarian Secretary of the International Double Bass Association, István Enreiter; the helpful wife and daughter of Zsolt Tibay; the granddaughter of Tibay Zoltán, the excellent double bass artist Anikó Horváth, who coached Zoltán Tibay's class at the Academy of Music in the 1980s.

At last, but not at least, I contacted Péter Tóth-Kiss, one of the last students of professor Tibay, the double bass teacher at the Liszt Ferenc University of Musical Art. When selecting contemporaries, colleagues and one-time students it was very important for me to make each generation of Zoltan Tibay's teaching career path speak if possible.

## **IV. Results**

Zoltán Tibay's life was connected to the 20<sup>th</sup> century history of playing the double bass in many aspects. From his birth on in 1910 until his death in 1989, he gave all his efforts and talent to increasing the level the Hungarian double bass culture to high standards. His name was equivalent with a high level of professional background, professional humility in the good sense of the word, the support of talents and the flourishing of the Double Bass Department at the Academy of Music. According to his contemporary, Lev Rakov, he was an orchestral artist and a soloist in one person. One of the values of my dissertation is that it lists the major stages of his carrier and life in a chronological order. How much unbelievable it may seem, such deep research work has not come to light in Hungary. One of my aims was to present the period between 1930s and 1980s through Zoltán Tibay's life. With the help of the one-time reviews and newspaper articles I believe I managed to give a complex picture of the professor. The reference in the subtitle to the survival of his life-work is timelier than ever. It is proven by the great success of the Centenary Feast. The concrete results of my research also show that it is necessary to discover the blank spots of the 20<sup>th</sup> century double bass culture, and classify them on a scientific basis. The four chapters of the dissertation deal with 78 years of Zoltán Tibay's life in the most detailed way. The greatest achievement of my dissertation would be if the Tibay life-work could get to a large number of bassist colleagues and students who would get acquainted with the life path of one of the greatest musicians of the last century.