

Thesis of the DLA doctoral dissertation

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Ady-songs

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## I. Antecedents of the Research

Endre Ady's relation to music and how this relation has affected his poetry has not been researched comprehensively.

My research is based on *Ady and the music* by Viktor Papp, published in 1919 in *Nyugat*, including the review and update of the repertoire, the demonstration of the performers of the time, as well as highlighting the most important approaches of the composers.

The primary sources used in my dissertation are the articles of periodicals and daily papers published during the turn of the century - such as reports in the *Nyugat* and the *Magyarság* -, furthermore two journals of musicology: the *Magyar Zene* and the *Muzsika*.

Béla Révész in his *Második közlemény*, published in 1921 in *Nyugat*, explains in detail Ady's revelry habits and taste in music, while in the book of Lajos Ady we can read a precise description of the poet's speaking and singing voice. Ady's collected writings on music, the *Péntek esti levelek*, edited by József Varga, helped me to reach important conclusions.

The book of Erzsébet Vezér: *Ady Endre élete és pályája* presents Ady's life and work. The relevant references of this book led me to discover further important bibliography. I gathered substantial data from the book *Ady Endre verselése* by Péter Szilágyi. In this

context I would like to mention the handbook *Ady-Kodály Emléknapok* edited by Mihály Ittész, in which the relation between Ady and music is under investigation in different aspects.

In her music bibliography published in 1977, Mrs. Mária Nagy Nikodémusz discussed elaborately the compilation of the repertoire of the Ady-songs, however, since then, there has been no collation published on this regard. The list of Ady's poem arrangements collected by Béla Reinitz was published in 1978 in the biography of Béla Reinitz edited by László Flórián and János Vajda.

## II. Sources

In addition to the sources of musicology, articles, descriptions of concerts, manuscripts and studies, a number of digitized recordings has been processed: concert recordings, radio broadcasts, interviews.

Courtesy of the Petőfi Literary Museum, as well as the National Museum and Institute of Theatre, I was able to get to know and analyse the singing and speaking voices of contemporary performers of Ady's poems through the digitized recordings, such as Vilma Medgyaszay, Mária Basilides and Lili Neményi. Furthermore, through the analysis process, my research focused on the performance style of that time. One of the most important sources for

this is the *Jegyzetelések* by Vilma Medgyaszay, which has been preserved in her inheritance. It contains a large number of performance instructions for future generations of singers. In regard to this are the manuscripts of Béla Reinitz's legacy, preserved in the National Széchenyi Library, which served as a fundamental source for expanding the knowledge of the performing style of the period.

## III. Method

Research has shown that the musical taste of Ady had a significant influence on the development of his particular style of poetry. His uniqueness attracted the composers of that time.

After having studied the repertoire, I have summarised the Ady songs for voice and piano – that were printed but still unpublished between 1906 and 1945 – in two large tables, taking into account various aspects. In the first table, I have listed the authors and the songs associated with them. In the second one, I have listed the composers associated with each poem. In addition, a further table summarises the manuscripts of Reinitz-Ady songs, based on research of the legacy in the Music Collection of the National Széchenyi Library.

After listening to the digitized radio recordings, I had the opportunity to analyse the interpretations in detail. I had access to all of these recordings thanks to the librarians of the National Museum and Institute of Theatre History (OSZMI) and the Petőfi Literary Museum (PIM). The scores found in the Lili Neményi legacy, researched in the library of the University of Theatre and Film Arts (SZFE), also provided me with significant information on the subject. Some of the Ady-songs of Reinitz, Kodály and Bartók were analysed and compared in some places, all according to specific, individual aspects such as prosody, rhythm, genre, and the perspective of the singer-performer.

#### IV. Results

The repertoire of the Ady-songs has been enlarged and summarized by means of systematic tables, in order to provide clear overview of the poem adaptations for voice and piano. The digitalized recordings allowed me to learn about attitudes typical of the performance style of that period, such as free performance and vocal diction. It can be said that several pieces of music were inspired by Ady songs, but it is the settings by Reinitz, Kodály and Bartók that really bear the essential characteristic of the “Ady melody”. Through the analysis of a few

selected Ady songs, I have intended to show how these arrangements of poems have risen to the illustrious level of new Hungarian music through the arts of Zoltán Kodály and Béla Bartók.

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

Csilla Kovács: „Ady-dalok”. In: Szentesi Zsolt (szerk.) *Lectio Litterare. Az Eszterházy Károly Egyetem Tudományos Közleményei XXIV. Kötet. Tanulmányok az irodalomtudomány köréből. „Félig mély csönd és félig lárma” – Ady Endre 100.* Eger, EKKE Líceum Kiadó, 2021. 21-31.

[http://publikacio.unieszterhazy.hu/7286/1/irodalom\\_ACTA\\_2021.pdf](http://publikacio.unieszterhazy.hu/7286/1/irodalom_ACTA_2021.pdf)

29 May 2021: Lecture *Ady és a zene* (Ady and the music).

Participation as a speaker at the “Tavaszi Szél” Conference

8 April 2021: Ady and the music. Lecture.

Venue: Egri Bródy Sándor Megyei és Városi Könyvtár

20 July 2021: Ady and the music. Lecture.

Venue: Eszterházy Károly University

30 May 2021: Location: University of Debrecen Faculty of Music, Liszt Hall

Marimba accompaniment by Balázs Laczkó-Pető.

Programme: Three Ady-songs by Béla Reinitz.

- Héja-nász az avaron
- Őrizem a szemedet
- Tavaszi szív

25 April 2022: Concert program for the closing event of the  
56<sup>th</sup> Hungarian Language Week.

Organizer: Anyanyelvapolók Szövetsége.

Location: House of Hungarian Music

Piano: Gergő Szalai

Program: Five Ady-songs by Béla Reinitz

- A Tisza parton
- Új vizeken járok
- Héja-nász az avaron
- A vén komornyik
- Tavaszi szív