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THE SONGS OF KÁJONI'S CANTIONALE
IN THE FOLK TRADITION
OF THE SZÉKELY LAND AND MOLDAVIA
IN RESPECT OF THE DEÁK-SZENTES MANUSCRIPT

Theses of the Doctoral Dissertation

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I. János Kájoni's Cationale Catholicum and its editions

János Kájoni's *Cationale Catholicum* is the richest textual source of the 17th century song stock of the Catholic church. Its antecedents and sources include both handwritten songbooks with music and others with texts only. The existence of hand-written song collections had a significant influence for centuries which can be documented to this day.

In the Transylvanian Principality subdivided by religion the importance of this *Cationale* in the religious life of the population of Csík and the neighbouring areas – the “holy lands” that retained catholicism – is confirmed by its repeated re-editions. The dissertation presents in detail János Kájoni's *Cationale Catholicum*, its subsequent editions, their characteristic features and the differences between them.

For a start, the texts of all the *Cationale* editions (1676, 1719, 1805, 1921) were compared and the texts grouped as being ordered to certain tunes (*ad notam*). In general, the following textual changes can be discerned in the *Cationale* editions: There is little modification in the 1719 edition from the 1676 texts (shortened texts, Jesuitic reform implemented on the hymns); the 1805 edition substantially rewrites, shortens, replaces texts, while the 1921 edition also indicates other collections as sources (Tárkányi, Bozóky, Szentmihályi) with some further textual modifications. In the third and fourth editions not only subsequent strophes but often the first lines are also rewritten for many songs. There is ample literature devoted to the life and work of Kájoni, but this is the first systematic comparative textual analysis of the *Cationale* editions.

The *ad notam* references of the songs are often cross-referential, or refer to melodies of other related songs and rarely to lyrics of the same verse form only. It may also occur that in the third *Cationale* texts used in earlier centuries are attached to the melody of a new song by having lines or half lines repeated or contracted, or adding a short refrain to a song or line, or reducing a four-line strophe to three lines.

Music historical and ethnomusicological researches adopt different attitudes when examining Kájoni's *Cationale* editions. Studying the survival of song texts and tunes, melody history (*RMDT* [Corpus of Old Hungarian Tunes] II) only takes the notated

songbook of 1921 into consideration apart from the 1676 and 1719 editions and ignores the 1805 edition. In the literature of folk music research mainly the 1719 and 1805 editions are referred to in connection with the folk variants of the tunes.

II. The Deák-Szentes manuscript

What lends the Deák-Szentes manuscript with musical notes its extraordinary significance is its being practically a cantor's handbook to the second, 1719 edition of *Cantionale*. To be able to analyse it, the whole manuscript – which is still unpublished in its entirety – had to be transcribed. The transcription is appended to the dissertation in a separate volume. This allows access to the 18th century source, which gives retrospective information in regard to melodies. With its help our presentation of the material of *Cantionale* and the comparison of the tune variants and analogies in the songbooks can be followed.

At the end of the chapter on the Deák-Szentes manuscript there is a tabular summary of its entire contents. It is noted here in which *Cantionale* edition each tune appears together with the locus of its Hungarian or Latin text. It is also indicated which songs can be found in the oral tradition of the Székely land (including Bukovina) and Moldavia.

To most melodies in the Deák-Szentes manuscript several – often several dozen – song texts of *Cantionale* are attached. In the manuscript itself the text incipits of over one hundred songs were written in the 18th century with *ad notam* instructions in the space left blank. Research literature also lists the tunes that can be grouped via the *ad notam* references, but in some cases – of songs appearing in later editions and some texts of the 1676 edition whose text incipits changed in the third and fourth editions – the association of the texts to the studied tune is the outcome of the current research. Folk music research has found that a certain tune was sometimes disseminated with a different text than the one attached to it in the Deák-Szentes manuscript: the tunes with Latin texts of the manuscript were collected either with their Hungarian translation or with other Hungarian songs referred to it *ad notam*. Comparing the handwritten songbook with János Kájoni's texts and the rewritten texts of subsequent editors, it can safely be determined which

Cantionale edition the cantor possessed or which he copied the texts from when making his own handwritten song-collection.

The transcription in the appendix of the dissertation is not a critical edition but a preliminary study for it. Since the manuscript was truncated in the meantime, there is need to compare it to all the available copies made of the still complete manuscript.

III. The tunes of the Deák-Szentes manuscript in oral tradition – songs of Christmastide, funeral songs

Apart from its primary importance – containing the tunes that belong to the texts in Kájoni's *Cantionale* (1719) in the first place – the Deák-Szentes manuscript is also important because several of its tunes are still used in oral tradition, with one tune (*Ím midőn mindeneket*) not being recorded in any other historical source.

Before examining the variants of the handwritten tunes that survive in oral tradition, the folk hymn collections in the Székely land and Moldavia are reviewed. Since there is an immense material in the manuscript, the circle of songs to be examined had to be narrowed. In the dissertation therefore only the songs connected to the festivities of Christmastide and the funeral songs are discussed, as they constitute a song stock that have both secular and sacral use and both are very rich in folk tradition and customs.

The discussion of each tune involves comparative text analysis, the number of related texts indicated by *ad notam* references in the songbooks is given, with all the song texts listed in the footnotes, together with their loci in the *Cantionale* editions. To each tune one, sometimes more, folk transcriptions are also added, together occasionally with the notated melody in the fourth *Cantionale* edition (1921) and with its notated form in *Cantus Catholici* (1651), another songbook with scores from the period of Kájoni's collection. Summing up the conclusions, the specificities and complexity of the subject-matter and some of its problems are highlighted.

Some of the tunes have only survived in the studied areas, which adhere tightly to their traditions and religion. *Siralomnak oka* and *Ez nap nekünk dicséretes nap* are only alive in the Székely land, *Ó szép fényes kis csillag* only in Bukovina, while *Ave Maria, gratia plena; Jer, dicsérjük e mai napon; Sok rendbéli próbák vannak,* and *Ó mely félelem és rettegés* are still only found in the two areas – as we have

no information about them from Moldavia. Mention is made of songs known all over but only sung in Bukovina to the melody as in the Deák-Szentes manuscript (*Ó fényességes szép hajnal*). Characteristic tonal deviations are also pointed out, e.g. in *Ó bú látott, sok kint vallott*. Emphasis is laid on the significance of folk music collections directly aimed to explore the folk hymn stock through the folk music transcriptions that are known from a single collection: that of Magdolna Forrai. Her collections and my material of a later date testify to the great role played in the life of communities by cantors, leaders of singers, choir and church-wake organizers who can be looked upon as the successors to the “licentiates” diacons of János Kájoni’s age.

The main goal of the dissertation is to complement the research literature dating from two or three decades earlier with more recent and new collections. Wherever possible, the examples are taken from these recent collections (often mine), and when the extended material requires, the earlier consequences and inferences are modified. In the forthcoming years, new results are expected from the collaboration with literary historical research launched at the time of writing the dissertation, as the texts of the Franciscan passion plays of Csíkksomlyó are to be published in a series, together with the tunes preserved by written or oral tradition. It inheres in the specificity of folk music collection including folk hymn collection that this work cannot be finite. Innumerable more collections, transcriptions, data, comparative text and tune analyses are required to be able to describe the complete life of the song texts in Kájoni’s *Cantionale* as sung to the tunes in the Deák-Szentes melodiary.

Publications connected to the subject of the dissertation

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