

## MASTER AND HIS “ILLEGITIMATE PUPIL”: ZOLTÁN KODÁLY AND FERENC FARKAS

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**SUMMARY.** A printed copy of his song cycle *Fruit Basket*, which Ferenc Farkas gave to Zoltán Kodály, bears the following dedication: “To Zoltán Kodály from his illegitimate pupil”. With the help of surviving written sources and other memorabilia, the present study attempts to explain the term “illegitimate pupil”. It answers the question of why Farkas did not study with Kodály, examines the relationship that later developed between the two. The influence of Kodály on Farkas as a composer is also discussed; however, only the most important examples and trends will be presented. This study also examines the actions Farkas took to cultivate Kodály’s memory after his death, and what he thought of the Kodály epigonism.

**Keywords:** Zoltán Kodály, Ferenc Farkas, 20<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian music, biography, influence, epigonism

### Introduction

This study is based on my research in the Ferenc Farkas Estate, held in the National Széchenyi Library in Budapest (hereafter referred as H-Bn, FFE), which contains the manuscripts, letters, newspaper clippings, and other written documents that were in the composer’s possession at the time of his death and which was donated to the library in 2015 by the composer’s son, András Farkas.

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Another main source for this study is the selected writings of Ferenc Farkas, edited by László Gombos.<sup>2</sup> The second half of the book (pp. 207–321) is the first complete edition of the so called “Lellei beszélgetések” (Conversations in Balatonlelle), which is a long, informal interview with the composer, conducted by his son in the summers of 1975, 1977, 1980 and 1981. Comparing Gombos’s publication with a partial, but more faithful edition by László Dalos,<sup>3</sup> it has become clear that in Gombos’s edition many details have fallen out due to the stylization of the text.<sup>4</sup> Thanks to the kindness of András Farkas and his wife Françoise, I was also able to study the 607-page transcript of the now-lost original tape recordings.

In addition to this, I have also reviewed the joint press releases of the two authors using the *Arcanum Digitális Tudástár* (Arcanum Digital Knowledge Repository).<sup>5</sup>

Unfortunately, I did not have the privilege of researching the Kodály Zoltán Archives. Only the correspondence between the illegitimate pupil and the master’s widow gives an idea of the Farkas material in the Zoltán Kodály Archive. In the spring of 1978, at the request of Mrs. Zoltán Kodályné (Sarolta Péczely) Farkas sent copies of all Kodály-related items in his possession to the Archives. According to his reply, his delivery included a few dedicated sheet music, photos, and an original Kodály manuscript (a fragmentary note related to music theory), but it did not contain letters.<sup>6</sup>

Because of the closed nature of the archives, I could only use the Kodály documents that had already been published. Unfortunately, the name of Ferenc Farkas does not appear in any of the volumes of Kodály’s collected writings intended for the public,<sup>7</sup> and appears only twice in Kodály’s notes, which were originally unpublished and not intended for the public.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, due to the source situation, my study necessarily presents the relationship of the two masters through the lens of Ferenc Farkas.

<sup>2</sup> Farkas, Ferenc. *Vallomások a zenéről: Farkas Ferenc válogatott írásai* (Testimonies on Music: Selected Writings of Ferenc Farkas). Ed. László Gombos. Budapest: Püski, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> A small part of it already appeared more than twenty years earlier, see Dalos, László. “Lellei beszélgetések - Farkas Ferenc zenei emlékezéseiből (Lelle Conversations - from the musical memoirs of Ferenc Farkas).” *Kritika* (18/2 (1980)): 8-10.

<sup>4</sup> On László Gombos’s editing principles, see Farkas, op. cit., 16-17.

<sup>5</sup> *Arcanum Digitális Tudástár* (Arcanum Digital Knowledge Repository). 2023. <https://adt.arcanum.com/>. 2023. January 31.

<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Kodály’s letters to Farkas, May and October 1978 (the exact days are not indicated) H-Bn, FFE. Farkas’s answer of June 19 is sketched up on the former letter.

<sup>7</sup> Zoltán, Kodály. *Visszatekintés* (In Retrospect). Ed. Ferenc Bónis. Vols. 1-3. Budapest: Argumentum, 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Zoltán, Kodály. *Magyar zene, magyar nyelv, magyar vers* (Hungarian music, Hungarian language, Hungarian poetry). Ed. Lajos Vargyas. Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1993. 70, 265.

In the following, unless specifically indicated, I quote biographical information on Kodály from a work by László Eősze, on Farkas from a work by László Gombos.<sup>9</sup> The dates of the Budapest concerts mentioned in this study were obtained from the Concert Database of the Archives for 20th–21st Century Hungarian Music.<sup>10</sup> An earlier version of this article was published in Hungarian in 2017, on Kodály's 50th anniversary of death.<sup>11</sup>

### The legitimate and the illegitimate master

According to the current online edition of the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (the descendant of the oldest American English dictionary), one of the meanings of the word "generation" is the following: "the average span of time between the birth of parents and that of their offspring."<sup>12</sup> Zoltán Kodály and Ferenc Farkas are thus separated by a generation: Farkas was born on December 15, 1905, the day before Kodály's 23rd birthday. Since Kodály had already taken over Hans Koessler's first-year composition students at the Academy of Music in 1908, it would have been obvious that Farkas should have studied composition with Kodály some decades later.

Farkas was enrolled at the Academy of Music in the course of 1921/1922. His entrance examination piece, *Két zongoradarab magyar népdalok felett* (Two pieces for piano on Hungarian folk songs), based on the folk ballad "Kőműves Kelemen" and on the folk song "A kertmegi kert alatt", was a clear indication of the path he wanted to take. That he wanted to study with Kodály, one of the representatives of New Hungarian Music, is also evidenced by the fact that at the time of his admission he also tried (unsuccessfully) to get in touch with Béla Bartók through his high school classmate László Cs. Szabó, who had studied piano with Márta Ziegler, Bartók's first wife.<sup>13</sup>

In the academic years 1922/1923 and 1923/1924, however, Kodály was only assigned to teach the third- and fourth-year classes. According to rumors of the time, this was the way director Jenő Hubay wanted to please Albert Siklós (another composition teacher at the Liszt Academy and a now

<sup>9</sup> Eősze, László. *Kodály Zoltán életének krónikája (A chronicle of the life of Zoltán Kodály)*. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1977.; Gombos, László. *Farkas Ferenc*. Budapest: Mágus, 2004.

<sup>10</sup> *Koncertadatbázis: budapesti hangversenyek 1900-tól napjainkig (Concert Database: Concerts in Budapest from 1900 to the present)*. n.d. 31 January 2023. <<http://db.zti.hu/koncert/>>

<sup>11</sup> Németh, Zsombor. "Mester és "törvénytelen tanítványa": Kodály Zoltán és Farkas Ferenc." *Magyar Zene* (LV/4 (2007)): 454-474.

<sup>12</sup> "Generation." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*. 2023. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/generation>. 2023. February 3.

<sup>13</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 214.

completely forgotten composer), because Hubay found that almost all the aspirants applied to Kodály.<sup>14</sup> Hubay's opposition to Kodály was certainly fueled by the events of 1918-1919 and their aftermaths.<sup>15</sup>

After a preparatory year with Leó Weiner, Farkas was supposed to enter Siklós's composition class in 1922/1923, but he missed both semesters due to his matriculation exams and a prolonged lung disease. In the next academic year, 1923/24, he could have asked to be transferred to Kodály's class, who was again teaching all grades, but at that time – as Farkas remembered – “it was not advisable to change from one teacher to another,” so he remained in Siklós's class.<sup>16</sup>

According to Farkas, Siklós was extremely jealous of Kodály, and if he felt that what his students were writing was Kodály-like, he would immediately remark: “Well, maybe you shouldn't compose like that.”<sup>17</sup> Siklós's alleged jealousy is obscured by the fact that the two teachers made no comments about each other in any public forum, and no other document, not even a recollection by a third party, has survived that would shed light on Kodály's relationship with Siklós. It should also be added that after Siklós's unexpected death on April 3, 1942, his students were instructed until the end of the academic year by Kodály, who in fact had not officially taught composition at the Academy of Music since November 1940.

Farkas's first published writings or statements disparaging his former official teacher were the “Lellei beszélgetések” of the late 1970s, which was made after the death of most of the persons involved in the story. (And which, by the way, was also originally not intended for public use.) However, neither this nor his later communications revealed what Farkas's real problem with

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<sup>14</sup> Eősze, László. “Kodály Zoltán, a zeneszerzés tanára (Zoltán Kodály, teacher of composition).” Bónis, Ferenc. *A nemzeti romantika világából*. Püski: Budapest, 2006. 246-250. 248. I use of the word “rumor” because Eősze's only source is György Szomjas-Schiffert's recollection (see (Bónis 303)), but Szomjas-Schiffert's words are not confirmed by any document. It is therefore particularly interesting that Béla András, János Gergely, Zoltán Pongrácz and Imre Sulyok all refer to the same unconfirmed reason in the book *Thus we saw Kodály* when they say that they would have liked to be Kodály's students, but ended up with another composition teacher, yet they still consider Kodály to be their true master.

<sup>15</sup> Kodály was appointed vice-director of the Academy of Music on February 14, 1919, during the First Hungarian Republic. (Ernst von Dohnányi was appointed director on the same day.) Kodály continued his duties during the Soviet Republic, which was proclaimed on March 21, 1919. After the collapse of the Soviet Republic, Kodály was dismissed from his post and on December 18 a disciplinary committee was set up to investigate his case. The lengthy disciplinary proceedings resulted in the annulment of his appointment as vice-director on June 25, 1920.

<sup>16</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 141.

<sup>17</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 215.

Siklós was. Among his known documents, the most detailed list of his objections against Siklós is in a letter written to Gian Luca Tocchi, composed while Siklós was still alive. Tocchi wanted to know more about Siklós and one of his sextets; in his response Farkas wrote that Siklós is a "Hungarian by language, but Jewish by race", an extremely arrogant man, who wrote self-praising reviews under a pseudonym to hide his own mediocrity and noted that dealing with Siklós is a waste of time.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, Farkas studied only indirectly with Kodály. In his memoirs, he recalled that Kodály's "principles, his thoughts, his apt remarks, the spirit of his teaching spread through the walls of the classroom".<sup>19</sup> Ferenc Szabó and Zoltán Gárdonyi, who studied composition at the same time as him and were pupils of both Kodály and Siklós, were identified as the main transmitters.

Farkas was up to date on Kodály's new works already before enrolling in the Academy of Music. According to the "Lellei beszélgetések", he came across the piano piece "Rubato", later the last number of *Hét zongoradarab* (Seven Piano Pieces, op. 11, 1910 és 1917–1918) already in Lajos Kassák's journal *Ma* (Today) as early as 1919.<sup>20</sup> On October 22, 1922 he was present at Kodály's composer's matinee, where he heard excerpts from the song cycles *Énekszó* (Songs on Hungarian Folk Verses, op. 1, 1907–1909), *Megkésett melódiák* (Seven Songs, op. 6, 1912–1916), and *Öt dal* (Five Songs, op. 9, 1915–1918), as well as pieces from *Zongoramuzsika* (Nine Piano Pieces, op. 3, 1909) and the aforementioned *Hét zongoradarab*.<sup>21</sup>

The famous world premiere of *Psalmus Hungaricus* (1923) was held already during Farkas's student years at the Academy of Music, and of course he did not skip this occasion. (He later also visited the Roman premiere in 1930, when he was staying at that city). He heard the String Quartet No. 2 (op. 10, 1916–1918) and the *Serenade* for two violins and viola (op. 12, 1919–1920) at the Waldbauer–Kerpely Quartet's season concerts between 1922 and 1924, for which he owned season tickets. As a student of the Academy of Music he also gained underhand access the green and white proof sheets of Bartók's and Kodály's 1923 publication *Erdélyi magyarság* (*Népdalok*), which contained 150 Hungarian folk songs from Transylvania. In addition, he mentions that he attended Bartók's piano recitals of Kodály works and heard a performance of the first series of *Háry János* (1926).<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Ferenc Farkas's letter to Gian Luca Tocchi, July 28, 1939. H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark.

<sup>19</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 83, 215.

<sup>20</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 211.

<sup>21</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 141, 217.

<sup>22</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 83, 211, 217.

### The early footsteps towards Kodály

After graduating from the Academy of Music, Farkas became a piano accompanist and later a conductor in the Municipal Theater. Shortly before his departure for Italy, on July 19, 1929, Farkas conducted the male chamber choir of the Municipal Theater on the Hungarian Radio. The program included Kodály's *Bordal* (No. 1 of Two Male Choruses, 1913–1917) and two other male choruses by Farkas which sound very similar to Kodály's.<sup>23</sup> His songs from this period – e.g., *Egy tulipánhoz* (To a Tulip) on the text of Mihály Csokonai Vitéz, 1928 – were written mostly to old Hungarian time-measured verses and seem to be modelled on Kodály's similar works.<sup>24</sup>

One of the most famous episodes in the life of Ferenc Farkas was the year and a half he spent in Rome between the autumns of 1929 and 1931, where he continued his studies with Ottorino Respighi and met many important figures of Italian new music. Farkas's trip to Roma was primarily an attempt to break out of the treadmill of the Municipal Theater, where he had been working as a piano accompanist and conductor since the fall of 1927. His works from the first half of 1930 (most notably the Divertimento for small orchestra, and the Sonatina No. 1 for violin and piano, once called *All'italiana*) were influenced exclusively by Italy.<sup>25</sup>

In the summer of 1930, he returned briefly to Budapest, which he left again in January 1931 for Rome. During this period, he deepened his professional relations with some of his Hungarian colleagues (e.g. Pál Kadosa, György Ránki, Ferenc Szabó) who had once been Kodály's students, but who were basically critical of their master and preferred to regard Bartók as the standard-bearer of new Hungarian music.<sup>26</sup> At the same time, he began to experiment with the synthesis of the neoclassical principles he had learned in Rome and Hungarian folk and "verbunkos" music.

The first result of his experimentation was the *Kállai táncok* (also known as *Alla danza ungherese*), originally scored for violoncello and piano (this version is now lost). It was reworked for a small orchestra in May 1931, during Farkas's second stay in Rome. The music was later re-used in the 1932 film music *Ítélet a Balaton* (The Verdict of Lake Balaton), which was Farkas's first project with the famous director Paul Fejős. After 1950, when Kodály wrote his famous *Kállai kettős* (Double-Dance from Kálló) on the

<sup>23</sup> Németh, Zsombor. "Farkas Ferenc pályakezdése (1927-1931) (The beginning of the career of Ferenc Farkas)." Dalos, Anna and Viktória Ozsvárt. *Járdányi Pál és kora: tanulmányok a 20. századi magyar zene történetéből (1920-1966)*. Budapest: Rózsavölgyi, 2020. 163-202. 168.

<sup>24</sup> Dalos, Anna. "Nézőpontok (Point of Views)." *Muzsika* (50/4 (2007)): 32-34. 32.

<sup>25</sup> Németh, op. cit., 165-185, 194-200.

<sup>26</sup> Németh, op. cit., 186-193.

same melodies, Farkas did not allow his own youthful work to be performed for more than two decades, out of respect for his older colleague.<sup>27</sup> This decision may also have been influenced by the fact that Farkas's *Alla danza ungherese* drew heavily from the ideas also present in Kodály's *Marosszéki táncok* (Dances from Marosszék, the original version for piano composed between 1923–1927 and premiered in 1927, the orchestral version premiered in 1929). The *Kállai táncok* was followed in 1934 by the *Hétfalusi boricza tánc* for violin or cello and piano. This work was later also called *Alla danza ungherese No. 2* or simply *Alla danza ungherese*; an undated version for violin and cimbalom, as well as a 1980 arrangement for violin and string orchestra also survived. For both *Alla danza ungherese* Farkas used the collection of Marián Réthei Prikkel as inspiration.<sup>28</sup>

The violoncello-piano version of the first piece was received very badly by the Hungarian critics; the famous critic Aladár Tóth wrote that "[t]he Hungarian Dance of Ferenc Farkas is the work of a composer who, even on the well-compressed path, is a little unsteady."<sup>29</sup> Perhaps this incident, together with the Mediterranean trip with the film director Pál Fejős, where he was introduced to Spanish flamenco, prompted him to go on a folk song collecting trip to the village of Szabás in Somogy County in March 1934.<sup>30</sup> Later that spring, after attending a workshop conducted by composer-ethnomusicologist László Lajtha, he returned to the village with a phonograph, where he collected further songs. Unfortunately, these cylinders were destroyed during World War II.

Probably in the summer of 1935 or 1936, Farkas joined ethnographer Gyula Ortutay, composer and ethnomusicologist Sándor Veress, and conductor-composer Viktor Vaszy (who, like Farkas, had little experience in ethnomusicology) on a field trip to Kákics (Baranya County). The collecting was led by the musically uneducated Géza Kiss, a Reformed pastor, writer, a passionate researcher of the folk art, ethnography, and dialect of the Ormánság region, who lived throughout his life in the village of Kákics. The next year Kiss published a book about this trip with an appendix, where "the selection of the melodies and their accurate transcription were made by Ferenc Farkas and Sándor Veress, partly on the basis of the phonograph rolls."<sup>31</sup> An unpublished note of Kodály confirms that this publication also

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<sup>27</sup> Németh, op. cit., 193.

<sup>28</sup> Réthei Prikkel, Marián. *A magyarság táncai (Dances of the Hungarians)*. Budapest: Studium, 1924.

<sup>29</sup> Németh, op. cit., 193.

<sup>30</sup> See his 1973 recollection "Somogy köszöntése" (Greeting of Somogy) in Farkas, op. cit., 122-125.

<sup>31</sup> Kiss, Géza. *Ormánság*. Budapest: Sylvester, 1937.

caught his attention.<sup>32</sup> His view were, however, critical: he remarked, that it is not clear exactly who did what, and he believes that much of the results should be questioned. It is indeed true that for each individual song there is no record of the collector or the method of collection (by field notation or phonograph).

Later, now equipped with real folk music experience, Farkas made further instrumental folk-dance arrangements. The *Capriccio all'ungherese* for small orchestra (1939) were based on folk songs that he collected in the village of Szabás. The *Két magyar tánc* (Two Hungarian Dances, 1940, reworked for piano in 1975, and later also for harp) recycled remnants of scores he wrote for propaganda films in the end of the 1930s, which used various folk materials. The most important work of this group from this period is *Rhapsodia carpatiana* (1941), also originally composed as a music for a short film celebrating the return of Transcarpathia to Hungary in 1939. The work is based on Bartók's unpublished Carpathian-Ukrainian collection, which was then already available for research at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In this composition Farkas rhapsodically juxtaposes different characters in a single-movement form, while the unity of the work is maintained by internal recurring rondo-thematic references, like the designs of Kodály in the *Galántai táncok* (Dances of Galanta, 1933).

Farkas was soon influenced by Kodály as an intellectual mind. As the younger composer said in the "Lellei beszélgetések", "one could learn perspectives from Kodály".<sup>33</sup> From the mid-1930s Kodály became a kind of reference point for Farkas as a public figure in the Hungarian music life.

The most striking example of this is his public debate with Ferenc Ottó from 1939 and 1940.<sup>34</sup> Farkas's main axiom was that it was up to the generations following the two "geniuses", Bartók and Kodály, to build the edifice of Hungarian musical culture to its full potential, and that each must find the right task according to his or her inclinations, aspirations, and talents. Thus, he urged the "talents" to take on the duty of filling the gaps in the Hungarian musical literature that still existed. Therefore, Farkas encouraged his colleagues to compose smaller pieces and applied music instead of larger works. He added that at present there are too many self-proclaimed prophets

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<sup>32</sup> Kodály, *Magyar zene...*, 265.

<sup>33</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 287.

<sup>34</sup> The thread was opened in the summer of 1939 by Farkas's article "Remekmű és irányított zene" (Great Work and Applied Music), published in the far-right journal *Magyar Élet* (Hungarian Life); Ottó reacted to this article in October 1939 in the music journal *A zene* (The Music); this was followed by Farkas's counterreaction in the same periodical in the same month. This seemed to end the debate, but he still continued the discussion in the February 1940 issue of *A zene* under the title "Kritika a zenekritikáról" (Criticism of Music Criticism). All these, including Ottó's article, were republished in Farkas, op. cit., 50-56.

instead of dutiful students. Ottó replied with accusing Farkas of imposing the aesthetics of German "Gebrauchsmusik" on Hungarian composers. As pointed out by Anna Dalos, in these essays Farkas was constantly paraphrasing Kodály's writings of 1939, i.e., "Mi a magyar a zenében?" (What is Hungarian in Music) and "Magyarság a zenében" (Hungarianness in Music), almost without alteration.<sup>35</sup> It is interesting, that Ottó, a former Kodály pupil who was associated with the *Magyar Kórus* (Hungarian Choir) and who was also derided at the time as "Little Kodály" for his overzealousness in imitating his master,<sup>36</sup> did not recognize what Dalos did.

### Kodály meets Farkas in Kolozsvár

Although Kodály and Farkas apparently met several times within the walls of the Academy of Music, it was when the Budapest University Choir went on an international tour in the second half of the 1930s that the older master became aware of Farkas as a fellow composer. In addition to Kodály's *Karádi nóták* (Songs from Karád), they included two pieces for men's choir by Farkas in their program. Mrs. Zoltán Kodály (née Emma Schlesinger/Sándor) was not shy to call the conductor of the choir, Viktor Vaszy, and ask him why he had chosen two works by the unknown young man and only one by her husband. In his 1976 radio program "This is how I saw Kodály," Farkas dated this story to 1930 and linked it to a tour of the United States. In his 1993 memoir of Vaszy, however, he connected his memories to a concert in Copenhagen in 1936.<sup>37</sup>

Whether or not Mrs. Kodály did in fact call Vaszy is no longer possible to verify. It is true, however, that the Budapest University Choir was the first non-professional Hungarian vocal ensemble to tour the United States in December 1937. This important visit was preceded by a trip to Scandinavia in 1936, which included a concert in Copenhagen. The Scandinavian tour was meant as a kind of dress rehearsal for the overseas performance a year later.<sup>38</sup> The exact program of the concert in the Danish capital is not known, but a publication about the choir's American tour was published, a copy of which is preserved in Farkas's estate.<sup>39</sup> According to this document, the program of the university choirs included two works by Farkas: "Katonasors"

<sup>35</sup> Dalos, Anna. "Mérföldkövek a magyar zenetörténetben (Milestones in Hungarian Music History)." *Muzsika* (48/3 (2005)): 36-39. 38.

<sup>36</sup> Ottó, Ferenc. *Kodály*. Pécs: Dunántúli Pécsi Egyetemi Könyvkiadó és Nyomda, 1942. 3.

<sup>37</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 141, 182.

<sup>38</sup> Kovács, Mária. *Budapesti egyetemi énekkarok 1862–1948 (Budapest University Choirs, 1862–1948)*. Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, 2001. 310-315.

<sup>39</sup> *Program of the Budapest University Chorus*. New York: [s. n.], 1937.

and "Két palóc katonadal".<sup>40</sup> However, the program included not one, but three works by Kodály: *Ave Maria* (1935), *Huszt* (1936), and *Karádi nóták* (1934), which had previously been dedicated to the choir.

The first real meeting between Kodály and Farkas, however, took place in the next decade in the capital of Transylvania. In 1941, Farkas moved from Budapest to Kolozsvár (Cluj), which had been returned to Hungary after the Second Vienna Award in the fall of 1940. Farkas became chorus master of the reestablished Hungarian National Opera and professor at the reopened Music Conservatory.<sup>41</sup> Kolozsvár celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kodály's birth in during the first half of 1943; in these events Farkas also played an important part.

The first festive Kodály concert took place on 28 February.<sup>42</sup> Although it was organized by János Viski, a former student of Kodály and the former director of the Music Conservatory in Kolozsvár, the introductory speech was given by the newly appointed Farkas. His speech preceded the performance of the *Psalms hungaricus* (1923) and the *Te Deum* (1936), which were conducted by Viktor Vaszy, also a former student of Kodály and a close friend of Farkas, at present director of the Kolozsvár Opera. The chorus which participated in the performance of these works was coached by Farkas. Farkas's words were first published on 24 May, when Kodály was already present at the city.<sup>43</sup>

In May 1943, Viktor Vaszy organized a festival unofficially called "Kodály Days", at which the celebrated composer was also present.<sup>44</sup> Kodály arrived in the morning of May 19, rehearsed with the Philharmonic Orchestra,

<sup>40</sup> The former is the 1933 *Rekrutasor* (Soldier's Fate), dedicated to "To Viktor Vaszy with love and grateful thanks". The later (Two Palóc Soldier's Song) was composed in 1932, but Farkas enlarged it with another movement and published the cycle as *Három palóc katonanóta* in 1933.

<sup>41</sup> Fekete, Miklós. "Kéznyomok és visszacsengések – Farkas Ferenc kolozsvári évei (Handprints and echoes - Ferenc Farkas' years in Cluj)." Egyed, Emese-Pakó, László-Sófalvi, Emese. *Certament VII*. Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2020. 219-242.

<sup>42</sup> Lakatos, István. "A Kolozsvári Zenekonzervatórium Kodály hangversenye (Kodály concert of the Music Conservatory of Cluj)." *Erdélyi Helikon* (16/4 (1943)): 231.

<sup>43</sup> See the Appendix.

<sup>44</sup> Kodály and his wife were originally scheduled to travel to Kolozsvár on April 14, but Kodály's wife fell ill during a rest in Galyatető, so the trip had to be postponed (Kodály's letters to Vaszy, March 24, 1943, and April 6, 1943). The first alternative date was May 13-16 (Kodály's letter to Vaszy, April 30, 1943). Kodály wrote at the beginning of May that if the organizers did not want to include his personal appearance in the planned program, he would feel that his appearance would be an indiscretion, a demonstration - he felt that the city of Kolozsvár was already making too great a sacrifice to be there in person - and suggested postponing the trip until the fall or winter (Kodály's letter to Vaszy, May 4, 1943). See Kodály, Zoltán. *Kodály Zoltán levelei (Zoltán Kodály's letters)*. Ed. Dezső Legány. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1982. 162-163.

then in the afternoon he retired to his quarters and worked on his forthcoming lectures.<sup>45</sup> In the evening of May 20, he gave his lecture "Zenei anyanyelvünk" (Our musical mother tongue) at the Mátyás Király Diákház (Mátyás Király Student House).<sup>46</sup>

In the morning of 21<sup>st</sup> he attended the rehearsal of Orchestra and in the afternoon, he visited the sights of Kolozsvár, with his wife, Vaszy and Lajos Sigmond, a professor at the Music Conservatory. In the evening he attended the performance of *Háry János* at the Kolozsvár Opera.<sup>47</sup> Kodály's Singspiel was staged for the second time in Kolozsvár on June 2, 1942, with the choirs coached by Farkas, the choirmaster of the Opera. There were fourteen performances in this series, including this festive performance, on which Kodály himself conducted the famous *Intermezzo*.<sup>48</sup>

After the performance Vaszy had to leave immediately for Budapest (from which he returned already the next day).<sup>49</sup> Thus it was probably after this event, when the Kodály and Farkas couples had dinner together at the New York Coffee House. It was thanks to Margit Krummer, Farkas's wife, that the atmosphere between the two artists became more relaxed: "My wife's open, talkative, honest manner - which contrasted with my shy, always a little too shy attitude towards the master - was much appreciated by both Kodály and especially by Mrs. Kodály."<sup>50</sup>

On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Kodály attended the season concert of the Philharmonic Orchestra of Kolozsvár in the Mátyás Király Diákház, where he conducted the Concerto for Orchestra (1939) and the *Főszállott a páva* (Variations on a Hungarian Folk Song, 1937–1939), the opening pieces of each part of the concert. The first part also included the Three Songs (op. 14, 1918–1923) with Gyula Angyal Nagy as soloist, and a selection of Hungarian folk music performed by Erzszi Török; in the second part, the Variations were followed by the *Galántai táncok* (Dances of Galánta, 1933). The works not conducted by Kodály were led by Vaszy.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Bíró-Balogh, Tamás. "Egy névsor faggatása: Kodály Zoltán életrajzához (Querying a list of names: for a biography of Zoltán Kodály)." *Korunk* (3/6 (2020)): 100-107. 103.

<sup>46</sup> "Hódoló, meleg elismerésben részesítette Kodály Zoltánt szabadegyetemi előadásának közönsége (Warm and adoring tribute to Zoltán Kodály from the audience of his lecture at the Open University)." *Ellenzék - Független politikai napilap, Cluj-Kolozsvár* 21 May 1943: 8.

<sup>47</sup> Bíró-Balogh, op. cit., 103.

<sup>48</sup> Fehérvári, László. "Kodály Zoltán színpadi művei Kolozsváron (The stage works of Zoltán Kodály in Cluj)." László, Ferenc. *Utunk Kodályhoz*. Bukarest: Kriterion, 1984. 166-187. 167-168.

<sup>49</sup> Bíró-Balogh, op. cit., 104.

<sup>50</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 142.

<sup>51</sup> "Tüntető melegséggel tett hitet Kolozsvár az új magyar zene mellett (Kolozsvár put its faith in the new Hungarian music with demonstrative warmth)." *Keleti Újság* 23 May 1943: 12.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Kodály attended the matinee of the *Éneklő ifjúság* (Singing Youth) at the National Theater, organized by Péter Pál Domokos and István Nagy. Kodály's works were performed by the choirs of the Reformed Girls' High School, the Roman Catholic High School, and the State Teachers' Training Institute. The concert was closed with the canon *A magyarokhoz* (To the Hungarians), sung by all three choirs together and conducted by Kodály. In the afternoon he gave a lecture entitled "Zenei ABC" (The Alphabet of Music) at the Institute for Reformed Theology.<sup>52</sup>

On May 24 Kodály traveled to Szék to listen to the remarkable folk songs and dances recorded by László Lajtha a year earlier. The event was organized by Farkas; their company included Mrs. Kodály, János Bartók, Andor Borbély, János Kemény, György Kerényi, and Erzsébet Török.<sup>53</sup> Also thanks to Farkas, on the next day Kodály visited Szamosújvár, where he studied the treasury, old books, and manuscripts of the Armenian Church.<sup>54</sup>

After the festive year, on February 23, 1944, Farkas gave a longer lecture in the Great Hall of the State Girls' Lyceum, entitled "Kodály művészetének nemzeti jelentősége" (The National Significance of Kodály's Art).<sup>55</sup> His lecture, which included music excerpts as well, was later published in the last issue of the Transylvanian periodical *Pásztortűz*.<sup>56</sup> He praised Kodály's work as a composer, ethnomusicologist and teacher, but also discussed more general, typically Kodályian themes, such as the role of the folk music in the modern Hungarian music, the ideal of a national Hungarian music, and the need for Hungarian composers to fulfill a communal role – topics, which he had already discussed at the turn of the decade in his debate with Ferenc Ottó.

Around 1943–1944, Farkas began to think about a new direction in which he should develop his current neoclassical-diatonic compositional style. His incidental music to Zoltán Jékely's play *Angalit és a remeték* (Angalit and the Hermit), premiered in May 1944 but composed probably slightly earlier,<sup>57</sup> starts with an experimental fugue composed in a free, a non-

<sup>52</sup> "Lelkes ünneplésben részesítette Kodály Zoltánt az "Éneklő Ifjúság" (An enthusiastic celebration for Zoltán Kodály at the "Singing Youth" concert)." *Keleti Újság* 1943. May 5: 2.; Dezső, Molnár. "Kodály Kolozsváron." *Ifjú Erdély* (22/6 (1943)): 84-85.

<sup>53</sup> "Megmentik Szék nagyközség értékeit (Saving the values of Szék)." *Ellenzék - Független politikai napilap, Cluj-Kolozsvár* 1943. May 27: 2.

<sup>54</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 142.

<sup>55</sup> "Farkas Ferenc előadása Kodályról (Ferenc Farkas's Lecture on Kodály)." *Ellenzék - Független politikai napilap, Cluj-Kolozsvár* 24 February 1944: 3.

<sup>56</sup> See the Appendix.

<sup>57</sup> The composer's date on the sketches and the fair copy (H-Bn, FFE, FF-comp. XI/7/a) is simply May 1944.

schoenbergian twelve-tone system.<sup>58</sup> However, the sketches of *Angalit és a remeték* reveal that during the composition of the incidental music Farkas sketched up ideas to another fugue, written in a strict pentatonic system. This later became the third (final) movement of *Musica Pentatonica*. In September 1944, when the Soviet troops reached the then Hungarian borders, Farkas left Kolozsvár for Budapest, never to return to Transylvania. He finished the fugue only on January 9, 1945, during the harshest day of the siege of Budapest.<sup>59</sup> During the following months he wrote two more movements in this strict pentatonic style. The draft of the second movement (Aria), which can also be found in the sketches to the *Angalit és a remeték*, is dated to March 28, without year, but should possibly be read as 1945.<sup>60</sup> (The estate does not contain a manuscript version of the first movement.)

Bartók and Kodály had recognized the semitone-less pentatonic system in the Hungarian peasant music already in the first decade of the century, which they designated as an ancient element of Eurasian origin. Especially from the second half of the 1930s, one of the central questions of modern Hungarian music became whether and to what extent pentatonic music could be integrated into the compositional principles of the western classical music.<sup>61</sup> Until the 1940s, however, pentatonic scale was used only as an element of melodic structure.

Farkas has stated that he was the first to compose a piece strictly in a "five-tone system", and his composition precedes, or is contemporary with Kodály's similar experiments,<sup>62</sup> the *Gyermektáncok* (Children's Dances) and *24 kis kánon fekete billentyűkön* (24 Little Canons on Black Keys), which were composed only after Kodály returned to his home from the shelter on March 12, 1945,<sup>63</sup> and which were premiered on November 19, 1945 in the National Theater of Pécs, and introduced to the audience of Budapest in

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<sup>58</sup> Farkas incorporated serial principles into his compositions, but he was not following the Second Viennese School in strictly avoiding tonal relations; furthermore, he heavily relied on the principles of the fugues of Johann Sebastian Bach. This fugue was later separated from the incidental music, supplemented with an opening movement in 1947 and premiered as Prelude and Fugue for orchestra in 1957.

<sup>59</sup> Date according to the composer's date on the draft (H-Bn, FFE, FF-comp. II/43/a; only the first page survives, which is notated on a leftover page of draft of the incidental music to *Csongor és Tünde*).

<sup>60</sup> Farkas later recalled that he completed *Musica Pentatonica* around the birth of his son András, i.e., April 14, 1945 (see Farkas, op. cit., 86, 248-249.); this roughly coincides with the date of the second movement.

<sup>61</sup> Willson, Rachel Beckless. *Ligeti, Kurtág, and Hungarian Music during the Cold War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 24.

<sup>62</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 86, 248-249.

<sup>63</sup> The foreword of the canons is dated as June 1945 in the printed editions.

early 1946.<sup>64</sup> With these remarks on chronology, Farkas was obviously trying to soften his bitterness over the fact that his work was not performed until June 16, 1947.<sup>65</sup>

He probably deliberately forgot that Kodály had already composed pieces at the turn of the 1930s and 1940s that attempted to apply pentatonic principles to non-melodic aspects of musical composition: these short works for two voices only, written purely for educational purposes in the manner of Renaissance exercises, were included in the *Bicinia Hungarica* (1937-1942).<sup>66</sup> Farkas's *Musica pentatonica*, on the other hand, is a much larger work written for string orchestra, in which he fuses pentatonic melodies with more complex baroque models (motoric toccata, binary and ternary forms, fugue with thematic inversions and augmentations), which still bears traces of experimentation, but has more the feel of a genuine musical work.

Unfortunately, it is not known whether Kodály and Farkas discussed the possibilities of using pentatonic music at the 1943 dinner in Kolozsvár, or in the shelter of the Budapest Opera House, where they met in the end of the winter of 1945.<sup>67</sup>

Farkas's work following *Musica pentatonica* is the *Szent János kútja* (St. John's Fountain), later subtitled *Cantata lirica*, completed in Püspöknádasd (today: Mecseknádasd, Baranya county) in the summer of 1945.<sup>68</sup> References to and quotations from Kodály abound in this symmetrically structured work, which consists of an orchestral introduction and five choral movements.<sup>69</sup> László Gombos pointed out that the melody of the first choral movement, which returns in shortened form as an episode of the last movement, resembles the main melody of the *Psalmus hungaricus*; he also wrote that the beginning of the last movement quotes Kodály's canon *A magyarokhoz*.<sup>70</sup> Farkas wrote in a discarded section of his 1981 radio lecture "Zenés magyar parnasszus" (Musical Hungarian Parnassus) that Kodály once told him that it was impossible to write truly Hungarian music on the rising verse of the

<sup>64</sup> *Life on Track: Zoltán Kodály*. Budapest: Balassi Kiadó–Kodály Archivum, 2011. 379-380.

<sup>65</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 250.

<sup>66</sup> All this is particularly interesting because in early 1938 the periodical *Énekszó* (Singing) published Ferenc Farkas's six arrangements of folk songs for three voices together with some movements of Kodály's *Bicinia Hungarica*.

<sup>67</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 142, 248.

<sup>68</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 249. According to the dating of the manuscript (fair copy of the score, see H-Bn, FFE, FF-comp. VI/5/a), Farkas wrote only the now lost drafts in 1945, and he orchestrated the piece in October 1946.

<sup>69</sup> In the printed score the movements are numbered from I to VI; however, the manuscript (H-Bn, FFE, FF-comp. VI/5/a) proves that the orchestral introduction was an afterthought only.

<sup>70</sup> Gombos, op. cit., 10-11.

iambus, but he took up the challenge and tried to do so in the second movement of the *Cantata lirica*.<sup>71</sup> Thus, this movement can be also seen as a kind of homage to Kodály.

Tibor Tallián, on the other hand, emphasized the references to Transylvania in the *Cantata lirica*. The text of the work was compiled by Farkas from the posthumous collection *Angyalok citeráján* (On the Zither's of the Angels) by the Transylvanian poet Jenő Dsida, who died in 1938 and with whose widow Farkas and his wife had a good relationship during their year in Kolozsvár. Furthermore, the name "St. John's Fountain" comes from the name of a popular place of excursion near the city. According to Tallián, all this, as well as the work's strikingly nostalgic, farewell tone, is a hidden message: with this work, Farkas bids farewell not only to love and youth, but also to Transylvania and to the city, which inspired him so much.<sup>72</sup> Tallián could not have known that shortly after the composition of the work, Farkas referred to it as "Cantata Kolozsvariana" and "Kolozsvári kantáta" in his correspondence,<sup>73</sup> and on the title page of the manuscript he added a motto by Henry de Montherlant (in Hungarian by Miklós Radnóti), which is also very reminiscent in character.<sup>74</sup>

In fact, the two approaches are complementary. In this retrospective cantata, Farkas places his meeting with Kodály among his defining experiences in Transylvania. By alluding to the works performed at the "Kodály Days" in 1943, he also declares that Kodály's person and art were very important not only to him, but also to the (Hungarian) community of Kolozsvár, which, at the time of the composition, had again been renamed to Cluj.

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<sup>71</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 156.

<sup>72</sup> Tallián, Tibor. *Magyar képek: Fejezetek a magyar zeneélet és zeneszerzés történetéből, 1940–1956* (*Hungarian Sketches: Chapters from the History of Hungarian Music and Composition, 1940-1956*). Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2014. 208.

<sup>73</sup> Ferenc Farkas to Alfred Schlee (Director of the Universal Edition), October 18, 1945. H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark. It is reasonable to assume that Farkas originally wanted to give his work a title that included the word "Kolozsvár", but the political situation prevented him from doing so. This may be the reason why he preferred the title *Szent János kútján* from the first edition of the score (1959) on. Although this title referred to a geographical location, due to its reference to saints it was also not a politically acceptable title until the end of the 1950s. Thus, the title of the first edition of the piano reduction, which appeared as a self-publication of Farkas in 1952, is simply *Lírikus kantáta / Cantata lirica*. Nota bene, the title *Szent János kútján* is in fact not very practical and could be misunderstood by many (it implies a religious work, but the text used touches on almost erotic themes), and the *Cantata lirica* is more typical of his titling habits.

<sup>74</sup> "...de mindörökké mozdulatlanul maradsz te mégis két karomban és emléked meg se rezdül."

### After the war

Although the period immediately after World War II, the second half of the 1940s and the first half of the 1950s, was a very eventful time in the lives of both composers, it was during this period that their relationship deepened. Of course, this was also since Kodály became a central figure in Hungary immediately after the war, while Farkas, after a short period of enforced silence (due to his connections with the extreme right and his questionable behavior in the 1940s) and then a few years in Székesfehérvár, became a central figure in the emerging socialist music scene.<sup>75</sup>

After a short period in Budapest, Farkas became the founding director of the Székesfehérvár State Conservatory in the fall of 1946, which position he held until the fall of 1948.<sup>76</sup> In connection with this work, he repeatedly asked Kodály for his opinion, especially regarding the recruitment of teachers.<sup>77</sup> There are no primary documents on this, but it is known that Székesfehérvár was one of the first cities in Hungary to introduce the preparatory classes advocated by Kodály.

The vibrant choral life of Székesfehérvár was also brought to Farkas's attention by Kodály.<sup>78</sup> Upon his arrival in Székesfehérvár, Farkas also took over the direction of the MÁV (Hungarian State Railway) Men's Choir, where he began to eradicate the so-called Liedertafel-traditions and included Kodály's works from the 1930s in the choir's program: the *Huszt*, the *Karádi nóták* and the *Felszállott a páva*.<sup>79</sup> The choral life of Székesfehérvár inspired Farkas to write more works based on the models of Kodály, such as the canon *Magot a földbe* (Seed into the Earth) and the famous *Rózsamadrigál* (Rose Madrigal), both composed in 1947 to poems by Sándor Weöres, a poet whose verses were also occasionally set to music by Kodály. Like many of Farkas's other works, the canon was composed on request, this time for the closing piece of the *Éneklő Fehérvár* (Singing Székesfehérvár) open-air choir festival in May 1948. The first program of the same event was Kodály's canon *A magyarokhoz*, that Farkas knew well from the 1943 "Kodály Days". Thus, the *Magot a földbe* was composed specifically as a counterpart to *A magyarokhoz*.

<sup>75</sup> Péteri, Lóránt. "Több mint zord korszak": Farkas Ferenc, Ligeti György és az 1940-es évek ("More than a stern era": Ferenc Farkas, György Ligeti and the 1940s)." *Magyar Zene* (58/4 (2020)): 430-447.

<sup>76</sup> Kelemen, Éva. "Amikor Székesfehérváron trubadúrdalokat forsítottál...": Farkas Ferenc és Weöres Sándor találkozásai ("When you translated troubadours' songs in Székesfehérvár...": Ferenc Farkas meets Sándor Weöres)." *Muzsika* (53/4 (2015)): 388-402.

<sup>77</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 250.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 114.

In the second half of the 1940s, Farkas was a regular guest at Kodály's apartment in Körönd. This was probably not because of his position in Székesfehérvár, but because he was the piano accompanist of Erzsébet Török. Török specialized in singing folk songs with piano accompaniment and was one of the few singers who had earned Kodály's praise and recognition. In 1946 and 1947, Török and Farkas regularly gave concerts in small towns.<sup>80</sup> The two, along with Cynthia Jolly, the English singer and musicologist who was studying in Budapest at the time and who also accompanied Farkas, received regular coaching from Kodály.<sup>81</sup>

Probably in 1946 or 1947, Kodály gave to Farkas a copy of the first edition of his 24 Little Canons, published by Rózsavölgyi & Co. in 1946. It bears the dedication "Farkas Ferencnek / per aspera ad astra / feketéken át a világoosságra / Kodály Z[oltán]" [To Ferenc Farkas. per aspera ad astra, through the black to the light].<sup>82</sup> This can be interpreted either as a gift of guidance to the person responsible for the renewal of music education in Székesfehérvár between 1946 and 1948, or as a tribute to the composer of *Musica pentatonica*, which was completed in a shelter in 1945 and premiered in 1947, under much better and more hopeful circumstances (even if the situation is nowhere near what it was before the war).

When Ferenc Farkas's song cycle *Gyümölcskosár* (Fruit Basket, 1946-1947) was published by Püski in 1948, he gave Kodály a copy, the dedication of which read: "Kodály Zoltánnak tisztelettel törvénytelen tanítványától" [To Zoltán Kodály with respect from his illegitimate pupil].<sup>83</sup> Farkas must have felt that the Fruit Basket was a paradigmatic work of his oeuvre to date – the work's popularity to this day confirms this view – and that it deserved to be introduced to the composer who had been a kind of father figure to him from the very beginning.

### **The illegitimate pupil becomes an indirect successor**

Ferenc Farkas was nominated professor of composition at the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music in 1949, a post he held until his retirement in 1975. It might seem that Farkas took over Kodály's former cathedra of composition, but this is not true in a literal sense. Farkas took over the position from Sándor Veress, who had left Hungary in 1949; and while it is true that Veress himself took over Kodály's students in 1942, this was because Kodály had

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<sup>80</sup> On the relationship of Török and Farkas, see Farkas, op. cit., 162-165.

<sup>81</sup> Kelemen, op. cit., 392.

<sup>82</sup> H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark. See the facsimile of it in Farkas, op. cit., 143.

<sup>83</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 141.

just returned for a short time after the death of Albert Siklós.<sup>84</sup> Thus, Farkas succeeded not his illegitimate but his legitimate master at the center of Hungarian musical education.

As a professor of composition, he was to have the greatest influence in the second half of the century. He taught György Ligeti and György Kurtág, among others. His own methods of teaching composition, as he explained in a lecture in 1967, built significantly on the principles Kodály had developed over decades. He taught composition through the study of styles that were all complete, developed to perfection. These were Palestrina's renaissance vocal counterpoint (according to Knut Jeppesen), Bach's baroque instrumental counterpoint and chorale harmonization, the masterpieces of Viennese Classicism and Romanticism in sonata form, and the folk music of Hungary and its neighbors.<sup>85</sup> In the unpublished parts of the "Lellei beszélgetések", however, he mildly criticizes Kodály's teaching methods, in particular the fact that when Kodály was writing one of his larger works, he gave his students the task of solving problems that had also appeared in his own work.

### During the Zhdanov era

In 1948, the Soviet Communist Party issued a decree castigating selected Soviet composers for their neglect of the audience and their overemphasis on technical experimentation and atonality. Andrei Zhdanov's decree, however, would have a lasting effect. Notorious Soviet buzzwords such as "socialist realism" and "formalism" were forcefully introduced into the national vocabulary of the Eastern Bloc countries. Although many Hungarian composers agreed on some level with a selection of Zhdanov's principles, they were forced to make significant changes in their compositional and rhetorical practices.<sup>86</sup>

In his memoirs, Farkas explicitly cites the Intermezzo from *Háry János* as the main model of the "neo verbunk" style that spread in Hungary during the Zhdanov era,<sup>87</sup> a style that he actively shaped from 1949. His main work, composed according to these principles, is the *Csinom Palkó*, first conceived as a singspiel for the radio (1949) and later reworked for the theater (1950, 1960). But this group of Farkas's works also includes pieces based on folk dances, like *Rhapsodie über ungarische Volkslieder* (1949), *Bihari román táncok* (Romanian Dances from Bihar, 1950), and *Erdélyi tánc*

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<sup>84</sup> Dalos, Anna. "The Forgotten Youth of Sándor Veress." *Studia Musicologica* 6 (62/3-4 (2021)): 327-349. 342.

<sup>85</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 90.

<sup>86</sup> Willson, op. cit., 34.

<sup>87</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 262.

(Transylvanian Dance, 1954), among others. Farkas, however, did not only refer back to Kodály (and partly to Bartók), but also to his own earlier experiments in the 1930s, which were actually also based on Kodály's principles.

During this time, Farkas also produced countless folk song arrangements. In one of his unpublished note probably originating from this period, Kodály describes Farkas, together with Jenő Ádám, as a positive example of a composer who writes folk song arrangements, pointing out that Farkas (and Ádám) knew folk music "from its roots" and "not from an herbarium, as a dried flower."<sup>88</sup> Farkas's cantata *Tisza partján* (On the Banks of the Tisza), composed in March 1950 in Sárospatak, and premiered in that year in Budapest,<sup>89</sup> was one of the first attempts to create a large-scale piece for choir and small orchestra, based purely on folk songs but without turning the piece into a garland of melodies. Kodály attended the premiere ex officio (as was customary at the time, the work was first performed at a meeting of the Hungarian Musicians' Association) and, according to Farkas's recollections, was very pleased with it.<sup>90</sup> He also suggested some minor changes; these are preserved in the printed materials found in Farkas's estate.<sup>91</sup>

In the early 1950s, Farkas tried to meet the demand with music in a genre far removed from his nature. During 1951-1952, he began writing a traditional, forty-five minutes long orchestral work in four movements, entitled *1. szimfónia. In memoriam 1945. IV. 4.* (Symphony No. 1, in memory of 4<sup>th</sup> April 1945). It was premiered on June 3, 1952, under the baton of Viktor Vaszy, but was later withdrawn due to the negative reaction from the Hungarian Musicians' Association.<sup>92</sup> However, the first three movements were revised and published as separate works: In 1952, after the premiere of the Symphony, he detached the first and second movements from the original work under the titles *Szimfonikus nyitány* (Symphonic Overture) and *Elegia* respectively, and in 1970 he reworked the third movement as *Scherzo sinfonico*.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Kodály, *Magyar zene...*, 70.

<sup>89</sup> Dates according to the printed score and piano reduction found in the estate: H-Bn, FFE, FF-comp. VI/22/b.

<sup>90</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 143.

<sup>91</sup> H-Bn, FFE, FF-comp. VI/22/b.

<sup>92</sup> The harshest reaction was Szelényi, István. "Farkas Ferenc szimfóniájának programmszerűsége (The programmatic nature of Ferenc Farkas's Symphony)." *Új Zenei Szemle* (3/11 (1952)): 36-38.

<sup>93</sup> The manuscript fair copy of the score of movements I, III, and IV by an unknown copyist is dedicated "Al Maestro Lamberto Gardelli in riconoscenza": H-Bn, FFE, FF-comp. II/8/a. On the title page the date by Farkas is 1952, at the end of the copy, 1953 by the copyist.

The *Elegia*, according to the Symphony's program, depicts destruction and ruin, and weeps over the deceased. The piece begins with a tragic, mournful mood, but by the end it is not without the serene, uplifting character that characterizes Farkas. After the introductory section, an ostinato theme emerges, first played by the pizzicato cellos and double basses; this theme recurs throughout the rest of the piece. The ostinato is like the Kodály's "Pleni sunt coeli et terra maiestatis gloriae tuae" from the *Te Deum*, which theme is also heard in the final bars of that work.<sup>94</sup> Perhaps this allusion is not coincidental, since both works were written to commemorate some kind of a liberation. Kodály's *Te Deum* was composed on the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Buda from the Turks, while Farkas's Symphony, as mentioned above, commemorates the end of World War II in Hungary.<sup>95</sup>

Shortly before the premiere of the Symphony, Farkas wrote the cantata *Tinódi históriája Eger Vár viadaláról* (Tinódi's History of the Battle of Eger),<sup>96</sup> which was premiered only on April 15, 1953. Farkas's Catalogues of Works proudly proclaims that the composer dedicated the composition to Kodály, who turned 70 that year. However, this was only an afterthought. The title page of the manuscript score clearly shows that the inscription "Kodály Zoltánnak 70. születése napjára" (To Zoltán Kodály on the occasion of his 70th birthday) was added later under the inscription "Egervár viadalának négyszázadik évfordulójára / 1552-1952" (On the four hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Eger Castle), written in the same shade of ink as the rest of the title page. The dedication to Kodály only appeared on the page when Farkas corrected "Egervár" to "Eger Vár" in the title and in the passage cited above. The music itself does not refer to the celebrant in any way other than the general style. As can be seen from the cases of the *Cantata lirica* and the Symphony, if Farkas had really wanted to write a work that addressed Kodály from the very first moment, he would have composed this cantata differently.

Perhaps the dedication of the work was reciprocated by the personally signed portrait of Kodály (a photograph taken by Károly Glink for the Hungarian

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<sup>94</sup> Orchestra, MÁV Symphony. *Ferenc Farkas Orchestral Music, Volume Five*. cond. Gábor Takács-Nagy. By Ferenc Farkas. London, 2017. CD. Booklet by László Gombos. Szelényi, who published on the programmatic nature of Farkas's symphony, either did not realize or did not want to mention this obvious correlation.

<sup>95</sup> 4 April 1945 is the day when the last Nazi German troops left Hungary, which at the same time marked the beginning of the Soviet invasion; until the fall of the communist regime this date was considered the "Day of Liberation".

<sup>96</sup> According to the composer's own dating, the sketches for the nine-minute work were completed on April 21, 1952; the fair copy (which was also used for the first performance) is dated May 12, 1952. H-Bn, FFE, FF-comp. VI/21/a.

Telegraphic Office in 1952),<sup>97</sup> or by the card thanking Farkas for his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday greeting, dated December 20, 1952, both of which survive in Farkas's estate.<sup>98</sup>

### Diverging paths

After 1956, during the period of cultural détente, Farkas returned to and continued his twelve-tone experiments, which he had abandoned in 1947. He was not alone: even among Kodály's "legitimate" students were those who did so. It is well known that Kodály had an ambivalent attitude towards twelve-tone music, although he was particularly interested in the dodecaphonic works of one of his most beloved students, Gyula Dávid.<sup>99</sup> Kodály's interest was awakened by the compositional challenges that arose: how to synthesize the compositional method he did not favor with Hungarian traditions. He seems to have had a similar attitude towards Farkas's twelve-tone compositions.

Kodály was present at the premiere of two of Farkas's *Cantus Pannonicus* (1959) and *Missa in honorem Sancti Andreae* (1962), which are both based on the principles of the twelve-tone system, but rejects the orthodox schoenbergian way and show traces of diatonic ideas.<sup>100</sup> The *Cantus Pannonicus*, which is now considered one of Farkas's most important works, must have been particularly well received by Kodály, who called it a "successful work" after its first performance, and his interest is also evidenced by the anecdote that he listened to another performance of the cantata.<sup>101</sup> After the Mass performance, he said to Farkas with an ironic reproach: "there is no dodecaphony in it, the last movement is the most

<sup>97</sup> See the reproduction of the original picture in Bónis, *Life on Track*, 448.

<sup>98</sup> H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark. For a facsimile of the picture with dedication, see Farkas, op. cit., 64.

<sup>99</sup> Dalos, Anna. "Dávid Gyula dodekafon fordulata (Gyula Dávid's dodecaphonic turn)." Dalos, Anna. *Ajtón lakattal: Zeneszerzés a Kádár-kori Magyarországon (1956-1989)*. Budapest: Rózsavölgyi és Társa, 2020. 63-76.

<sup>100</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 263. The first performance of *Cantus Pannonicus* took place at the Academy of Music on November 3, 1959. Kodály heard the Mass in the University Church of Budapest on February 12, 1963, but the first performance of the work ever was in Balatonakarattya in August 1962.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. Farkas recalled that sometime later, his work was performed on two consecutive days, together with Honegger's *Jeanne d'Arc*. On the first day, the concert started earlier because of the theater engagements of Lajos Básti, the narrator of Honegger's work. Since the *Cantus Pannonicus* was the first piece and Kodály was unaware of the change, he missed it. The next day he reappeared in the company of György Gulyás, this time just in time for the start. The event in question took place on or around May 21, 1962: on the May 21, Miklós Forrai conducted the performance at which Básti also appeared, and on the same week a recording of Farkas's work was made.

beautiful.” Farkas interpreted this as praise,<sup>102</sup> but Kodály was maybe also referring to the phenomenon of the time, that everything was called dodecaphonic which in fact was only atonal music in the strictest sense.<sup>103</sup>

Of course, Farkas did not completely deny what he had once achieved in the field of using original folk material, and he also composed works using this method. For example, his *Kőműves Kelemen Balladája* for voice and piano or small orchestra (1960) clearly follows Kodály’s setting of folk ballads: this is indicated by the form, which is based on the repetition of melodies from folk song stanzas, and the depicting elaboration of the accompaniment, which seeks to evoke emotional effects.<sup>104</sup> Interestingly, in his self-analysis Farkas explicitly points out that he tried to make the this work “not Kodály-like”.<sup>105</sup>

Farkas also continued to be interested in the new works of his older colleague. A copy of the pocket score of the Symphony in C by Zoltán Kodály was signed by the author and was given to Farkas on June 11, 1962.<sup>106</sup>

### Kodály’s Greeting

Although Farkas was only an “illegitimate pupil,” he played a significant role in the creation of the *Kodály-köszöntő* (Kodály’s Greeting: Variations on a Theme by Zoltán Kodály), which his former students composed for their former professor’s 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. In the summer of 1962, four émigré students (Antal Doráti, Géza Frid, Ödön Pártos, and Tibor Serly) planned a series of variations on the theme of the fourth movement of Kodály’s String Quartet No. 1 (Op. 2, 1907-1909). They first called Sándor Veress, resident of Switzerland, to join, but Doráti also wanted to involve other former Kodály students living in Hungary through the Association of Hungarian Musicians. However, a late letter prevented the participation of the composers living on the other side of the iron curtain. Following the idea of the former students living abroad, the Hungarian pupils planned another cycle of variations (consisting of movements more in number but shorter in length), entitled *Kodály-köszöntő*, coordinated by the Hungarian Musicians’ Association.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>102</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 144, 281.

<sup>103</sup> Dalos, Anna. “Szervánszky Endre elmaradt forradalma (The failed revolution of Endre Szervánszky).”, and “Harmincasok pályakezdése (The starting of the carrier of the Group Thirties).” Dalos, Anna. *Ajtón lakattal: Zeneszerzés a Kádár-kori Magyarországon (1956-1989)*. Budapest: Rózsavölgyi és Társa, 2020. 35-48, 105–117.

<sup>104</sup> Dalos, “Dunavölgyi...”, 38.

<sup>105</sup> H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark.

<sup>106</sup> H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark.

<sup>107</sup> Berlász, Melinda. “A “Variations on a theme of Zoltán Kodály” és a Kodály Foundation keletkezéstörténete (“Variations on a theme of Zoltán Kodály” and the history of the Kodály Foundation).” Ittész, Mihály. *Élet és mű: Zenetudományi tanulmányok. Emlékkönyv Eöszé László tiszteletére*. Budapest: Editio Musica, 2013. 99-142. 100-104.

The Kodály students living in Hungary threw themselves into the initiative with great enthusiasm. The biggest problem, of course, was how to turn the twenty-two variations into a unified work. This was finally solved by abandoning the surprise factor of the composition and asking Kodály for his help in making the work into a unified whole. Kodály, however, refused to cooperate, saying that it would be strange for him to be involved in a tribute to himself. Instead, he suggested that the editing be entrusted to Ferenc Farkas, a neutral party who was not his student.<sup>108</sup>

Farkas's editorial work was similar to that of a magazine editor. He had to agree with the other composers on the tempo, mood, and character of the variation they were going to compose. Of course, it had to be agreed that the composers would write their works for an orchestra of the same size. Farkas had the task to correspond with the authors living abroad,<sup>109</sup> and he composed the finale. All of this was accompanied by minor issues such as how to copy the materials and, finally, how to present the work to Kodály in a beautifully formatted binding.

The *Kodály-köszöntő* was completed before November 1962.<sup>110</sup> The festive work was conducted by György Lehel and performed on Hungarian Radio on December 9, 1962, and at the Academy of Music on May 2, 1963. The manuscript excerpts of the work kept in the Széchényi National Library were donated by Farkas.<sup>111</sup> Farkas presented a decorated copy of the work to the celebrant at the premiere, the *Kodály-köszöntő* was published in 1964 by the Zeneműkiadó.

Perhaps in return for the *Kodály-köszöntő*, the elderly master honored Ferenc Farkas's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday recital with his presence at the Liszt Academy on December 12, 1965.<sup>112</sup> The concert featured choral works by Farkas, performed by choirs of various status: amateur, semi-amateur, professional.

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<sup>108</sup> Csizmadia, György. "A köszöntő születése: Interjú Sárjai Tiborral (The birth of the Greeting: interview with Tibor Sárjai)." *Élet és irodalom* (6/50 (1962)): 1.; see also Farkas, op. cit., 145.

<sup>109</sup> Antal Doráti's letter of September 13, 1962, to Sándor Veress quotes Ferenc Farkas's telegram that the short variations were expected by October 20 of that year, see Berlász, op. cit., 118. See also the Doráti's letter to Farkas, dated "London, 7 October 1962" (H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark), in which he also discusses the performing rights and his "negro" variation, and in which Doráti is pleased to announce that the variations of the five foreign students are already ready and that he will help to distribute these variations abroad.

<sup>110</sup> See the letter of secretary Nándorné Szávai to Géza Frid, 5 November 1962. H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark. (In this letter the work is already referred to as completed.)

<sup>111</sup> Ms. Mus. 6.048 (Jenő Ádám), Ms. Mus. 6.049 (Gyula Dávid), Ms. Mus. 6.050 (György Ránki), Ms. Mus. 6.051 (Imre Sulyok).

<sup>112</sup> Barna, István. "Énekkari hangverseny Farkas Ferenc 60. születésnapja alkalmából (Choir concert on the occasion of the 60th birthday of Ferenc Farkas)." *Országos Filharmónia Műsorfüzet* (1966/3): 20.

It cannot be ruled out that Kodály paid special attention to this event for this reason.

### In memoriam Zoltán Kodály

Zoltán Kodály died on March 6, 1967. According to Farkas's recollection, he and his wife paid a condolence visit to the widow already on that evening.<sup>113</sup> A copy of the announcement of the funeral, together with its original envelope (postmarked March 8, 1967), is preserved in the Estate of Farkas.<sup>114</sup>

On May 22, 1967, Farkas was invited by the Austrian Society for Contemporary Music to give a lecture in Vienna entitled "Im Schatten Bartóks: Geständnis eines Komponisten" (In the Shadow of Bartók: Confessions of a Composer), which was an accompanying event to the renowned exhibition *Bartók und Wien*.<sup>115</sup> It is striking that at a Bartók-related event, with a title referring to Bartók, Farkas spoke much more about Kodály and their artistic and human relationship than about Bartók.<sup>116</sup> And while he was writing his speech in March and April 1967,<sup>117</sup> i.e., right after the death of Kodály, it was as if the sayings of his chosen master were constantly on his mind, which he quoted or paraphrased almost unchanged at several points of his lecture.

Farkas later spoke regularly about his memories of Kodály. On December 16, 1972, he was invited to give an introductory speech at a concert in Kaposvár, in which, characteristically for him, he reused the speech he had given in Kolozsvár almost thirty years earlier.<sup>118</sup> Farkas also gave a speech in Ferenc Bónis's radio series "This is how we saw Kodály", in which

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<sup>113</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 287.

<sup>114</sup> H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark.

<sup>115</sup> For the bibliographical data of the published version, see the Appendix. The Ferenc Farkas Estate preserved the original typescript version of this lecture, as well as an abridged version in German ("Geständnis eines Komponisten") and French ("Les aveux d'un compositeur"), dated August 14, 1974.

<sup>116</sup> It should be noted that in his letter of invitation (January 26, 1967), Harald Goetze, the organizer of the event suggested the only the topic, which was simply music since Bartók. On February 11, Farkas responded with the following title ideas: "Komposition, Handwerk und Unterricht / Komponist und Schüler / Komposition, Lehrer und Schüler / Komponist, Lehrer und Schüler / Erste und zweite Generation nach Bartók". In his letter of February 15, Goetze chose the last one (first and second generation after Bartók), and in his letter of February 26 he suggested the title known today. All letters in H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark.

<sup>117</sup> On April 3, he wrote to János Liebner that "I've just given birth to my presentation in Vienna"; according to his letter of May 2 to Goetze, he sent the manuscript to the Austrian capital on April 24 with a courier. Both letters in H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark.

<sup>118</sup> Date according to the original typescript: H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark. For the bibliographical data of the published version, see the Appendix.

he explained the history of his relationship with Kodály. The manuscript which he read and is preserved in his estate is dated to January 22, 1978, but it was aired only on April 18, 1980.<sup>119</sup> Farkas is known to have given a long lecture on Kodály's *Psalmus hungaricus* at the Hungarian Embassy in Bern in May 1981,<sup>120</sup> but the written version of this lecture, however, is still missing.

Farkas has also written several academic studies on Kodály.<sup>121</sup> His "Kodály Magyar rondójának első kiadásához" (On the First Edition of Kodály's Hungarian Rondo) dates from 1977, but was not published until 1992.<sup>122</sup> The subject of the article is Kodály's early orchestral piece *Alte ungarische Volksweisen*, also known *Magyar katonadalok* (Hungarian Soldiers' Songs), which was written for and first performed in Vienna on January 12, 1918 for the benefit of the widows and orphans of Austrian and Hungarian soldiers who died in World War I.<sup>123</sup> The piece was developed from the dance scenes (numbers 5 and 11) of the second act of the also unpublished *Pacsirtaszó* (The sound of a lark).<sup>124</sup> The score of the work was not published after the 1918 concert. Kodály reworked it for cello and piano in the 1920s under the title *Magyar népdalok* (Hungarian Folk Songs) and it was premiered by Miklós Zsámboki and Ottó Herz at the Academy of Music on November 4, 1927. However, this transcription has not been published either. The Hungarian Rondo is the first Kodály work in which the composer orchestrated folk music collections, and as a rondo with varied returns it can be seen as a precursor of the *Marosszéki táncok* and *Galántai táncok* that were a defining model for Farkas in the 1930s.

In the first half of his study, Farkas presents the folk music sources of Kodály's piece. As he mentions in the footnote of the article, he was assisted by Imre Olsvay: a letter from Olsvay of June 16, 1977, in which the folk music researcher sent the data Farkas had requested, is part of his estate.<sup>125</sup> The second half of the publication is also based on earlier correspondence: a letter to András Farkas dated May 26, 1977. In it, Farkas the senior lists his complaints about the first edition of Kodály's work, published a year earlier.<sup>126</sup> Farkas's comments are both music-related (erroneous notes, typos, and the

<sup>119</sup> H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark. For the bibliographical data of the published versions, see the Appendix.

<sup>120</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 320.

<sup>121</sup> For the bibliographical datas, see the Appendix.

<sup>122</sup> The original typescript, H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark, is entitled as "Egy új Kodály-kiadványról / vagy: Megjegyzések egy új Kodály-kiadványhoz / 1977" (About a new Kodály publication / or: Notes on a new Kodály publication / 1977). For the bibliographical data of the published version, see the Appendix.

<sup>123</sup> Bónis, *Life on Track*, 170.

<sup>124</sup> Bónis, Ferenc. "Kodály Zoltán és Móricz Zsigmond." *Hitel* (25/9 (2012)): 3-29. 8.

<sup>125</sup> H-Bn, FFE, without shelf marks.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

lack of distinction between the original and editorial additions, etc.) and practical (the way the bars were numbered, the lack of rehearsal marks, etc.).

Farkas's article was written with the intention of improvement, in the hope that the errors he listed would be corrected in future editions. However, the 1917 version of the Hungarian Rondo has not been reissued since, so the printed score with Farkas's pencil corrections, which he intended to send to Boosey & Hawkes<sup>127</sup> but never did, can be considered the best source for the work. Farkas was so interested in the work that in the jubilee year of 1982 he rearranged Kodály's version for violoncello and piano for cello and string orchestra (incorporating ideas from Kodály's original version from small orchestra, entitled *Magyar népdalok (Rondo)*).<sup>128</sup>

But Farkas not only critiqued the work of the anonymous publisher (who was in fact István Máriássy), but also led by example. In 1982, Kodály's centenary year, Farkas edited two previously unpublished works, which were published by Editio Musica Budapest. The first and for a long time the last performance of the *Vértanúk sírján* (Tomb of the Martyrs, originally titled *Arad*) for choir and orchestra took place on October 6, 1945, featuring the Hungarian Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by László Somogyi (a pupil of Kodály, later a close friend of Farkas).<sup>129</sup> Although, according to András Wilhelm, the edition by Farkas did not refute the rumors of the unknown work's lack of success, it is an important piece in the history of the development of Kodály's style.<sup>130</sup> The *Gavotte*, written in 1952 and edited by Farkas in 1982, is a curiosity: it is one of Kodály's few instrumental pedagogical works. It is scored for the unusual setting of three violins and cello, however, the facture of the piece is more piano-like, so according to Wilhelm it might have been better published as a piano piece and with a facsimile of the original manuscript.<sup>131</sup>

"Kodály és a magyar műdal" (Kodály and the Hungarian Lied), Farkas's later scholarly article, was originally presented at the 1992 International Conference of the Hungarian Kodály Society and was first published in

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<sup>127</sup> According to Ferenc Farkas's letter to András Farkas, April 6, 1982. H-Bn, FFE, without shelf mark. The elder Farkas enclosed with this letter the original of his 1977 letter and the pocket score in question.

<sup>128</sup> This version is unpublished, manuscripts are in the possession of the Budapesti Vonósok (Budapest Strings) and in H-Bn, FFE, FF-comp. III/12/a. The manuscript is without date.

<sup>129</sup> The original typescript of the foreword to the publication is dated simply as 1982. Another longer, more analysis-like version also survived, which remained unpublished. H-Bn, FFE, without shelf marks.

<sup>130</sup> Wilhelm, András. "Kodály Zoltán: Vértanúk sírján." *Muzsika* (26/10 (1983)): 48.

<sup>131</sup> Wilhelm, András. "Két első kiadás a Kodály-centenáriumra (Two first editions for the Kodály centenary)." *Muzsika* (25/12 (1982)): 9-10.

1997.<sup>132</sup> In it, Farkas presents Kodály as a composer of the Lied, and briefly analyzes one of Kodály's songs for voice and piano. Farkas's analyses are not primarily concerned with the poetic messages of the compositions, but focus on technical phenomena: meter, prosody, rhythm, ostinatos, harmonization, and the depiction of the text.

Farkas's presentation was also inspired by the fact that, from the 1970s onward, it was primarily in his song oeuvre that he continued to weave the Kodály experience into his music. The most striking from this period is his song cycle *Elfelejtett dallamok* (Forgotten Melodies), composed from 1973 on and published in 1980, which refers to the Kodály tradition already in its title by evoking the *Megésett melódiák*. Farkas's old-fashioned, "archaic" tone is, of course, also because the second and fourth songs are recompositions of songs from the 1920s, on which the rest of the style is based. There are several examples of recitation divided by asymmetrical groups of accents in Farkas's songs. This technique appears for the first time in Kodály's Op. 6.

### **Epilogue: Farkas and the imitation of Kodály**

Kodály is the most frequently mentioned person in the volume of selected writings and interviews by Farkas. However, the keyword "Kodály" appears very often in the context of "Kodály imitators" or "Kodály epigones". Farkas's writings in which these terms appear span a period of more than five decades. The occasions on which Farkas writes about the imitators reveal not only how he thought of his "illegitimate master" and his contemporaries, but also how he positioned himself among them. The approach of the texts from the 1930s and 1940s differs markedly from his later writings, which look back on this period from several decades later.

He stated in an interview in 1935 that he went abroad because he was not satisfied with the rewarding but not great task of creating new music based on the material of the great scholars of folk music.<sup>133</sup> However, there is no documented evidence that this happened six years earlier. In this interview, he does not mention Kodály or anyone else by name, but his words already anticipate that the main issue was how to approach the folk song considering Kodály's models. It is true, however, that most of the works he composed in Rome are different from those he wrote before and after, and that when he returned to Hungary, he initially contacted a circle of young composers who were critical of Kodály. However, he also distanced himself from them over time, one of the signs of which was his preoccupation with collecting folk songs.

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<sup>132</sup> For the bibliographical data of the published versions, see the Appendix.

<sup>133</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 20.

Farkas joined the discourse on Kodály epigonism, which flared up in the last years of the 1930s,<sup>134</sup> in a debate with Ferenc Ottó already mentioned in this study. The discussion touched on key issues that seem to have been at the center of contemporary musical discourse in the 1930s and 1940s: Whether it was permissible or necessary to create large-scale works that imitated the national-heroic tone of Kodály'; whether it is intrinsically valuable to compose in the style of Kodály; what aspects should be considered when using folk songs. It was in the last essay, "Kritika a zenekritikáról", written in the spring of 1940, in which Farkas articulated his first strong position on the question of Kodály epigonism. He accused the Hungarian music critics in general of automatically and unfairly judging the works of young composers who use folk songs as epigones; in Farkas's opinion, they only cause young composers to deviate more and more from the path of composing art music based on folk songs. In another section of his essay, Farkas argues that critics seem to be looking for the stylistic sources of composers rather than writing about whether a given work is good or not, since this is harder to judge than whether a young composer is following Kodály and Bartók or not. Towards the end of his article, he concludes: "Whose footsteps should the young Hungarian composer follow if not theirs?"<sup>135</sup>

By the middle of 1940s, Farkas was considered by his contemporaries to be among the closest followers of Kodály. A striking example of this is the fact that Bence Szabolcsi, in the 1948 Bartók issue of *Zenei szemle* (Music Review), defined the "Kodály School" to include Ferenc Farkas along with Ferenc Szabó, Endre Szervánszky and Sándor Veress.<sup>136</sup> When István Raics reviewed the concert on the occasion of Farkas's 60th birthday, he wrote: "And who is more consistent than him [Farkas] in the Kodály program, the 'delayed melodies'?"<sup>137</sup> While the first statement must have impressed Farkas in its own time, with the second he was perhaps a little more nuanced.

From the 1960s on, when Farkas looked back on his younger years as a mature composer and recalled the events of his younger days, including his attitude to the following of Kodály, his emphasis shifted. In 1965, on the occasion of his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, he said that he had felt already at the end of the 1920s that the reception of Bartók's and Kodály's works was in danger

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<sup>134</sup> Dalos, Anna. "'Nem Kodály-iskola, de magyar": Gondolatok a Kodály-iskola eszméjének kialakulásáról ("Not a Kodály-school, but a Hungarian one": reflections on the development of the idea of the Kodály-school)." Dalos, Anna. *Kodály és a történelem*. Budapest: Rózsavölgyi és Társa, 2015. 119-137. 131-132.

<sup>135</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 55.

<sup>136</sup> Szabolcsi, Bence. "Mai magyar szerzők zenekari művei (Orchestral works by contemporary Hungarian composers)." *Zenei szemle* (1948/8): 444-445.

<sup>137</sup> Raics, István. "Énekkari hangverseny Farkas Ferenc műveiből (Choral concert with works by Ferenc Farkas)." *Muzsika* (9/2 (1966)): 3.

of becoming commonplace.<sup>138</sup> In his 1967 speech "Im Schatten Bartóks", Farkas mentions the Kodály (and Bartók) imitators at two points in his speech: He declared that he was one of the Kodály imitators, who imitated the master with great enthusiasm, but without adequate knowledge, misunderstanding and even distorting his ideas. But unlike some of his unnamed contemporaries, he eventually recovered from what he called the childhood disease of his generation. He added that all those who studied folk music and were open-minded enough often unconsciously came to the same conclusion as Bartók and Kodály.<sup>139</sup> This statement by Farkas, of course, reflected the spirit of the times: while composers after 1956 criticized the excesses of the Zhdanov period, they continued to refer to the Kodály tradition, and at the same time were able to dissolve in their own assessment of their own role.<sup>140</sup>

In his later years, e.g., in the "Lellei beszélgetések" and in an interview from December 1990,<sup>141</sup> however, he defined the group of Kodály imitators even more differently than before. With term "Kodály imitators" he meant those students of Kodály who uncritically adopted the outward appearance of the new Hungarian music without following the path of Bartók and Kodály in the study of folk music. Farkas saw this as a problem because these imitators were writing their own works not based on folk music but based on Kodály and Bartók. Farkas found this neither authentic nor honest. Thus, he felt it important to emphasize that although his achievements as a folk music collector were not groundbreaking for ethnomusicology, collecting folk music was very important to him because he was able to hear folk songs live on the spot. With this observation he markedly distanced himself from the circle of Kodály imitators.

In some cases, like in his 1992 lecture on the songs of Kodály, Farkas also described the stylistic and compositional characteristics that he considered to be the hallmarks of Kodály imitators (the main issue being the overly declamatory nature of the vocal parts), and also wrote about how he tried to distance himself from them and develop his own standards.<sup>142</sup> Asked by Melinda Berlász on the occasion of Farkas's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday whether his vocal commitment was influenced by Kodály or remained independent of him, he replied diplomatically that the decisions he made reflected his own ideas.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 142, 232.; Juhász, Előd. "Beszélgetés a hatvanéves Farkas Ferencsel (Interview with sixty-year-old Ferenc Farkas)." *Muzsika* (9/2 (1966)): 1-3. 2.

<sup>139</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 83, 86.

<sup>140</sup> Dalos, "Nem Kodály-iskola...", 122.

<sup>141</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 244.; *Üzenetek a XX. századból (Messages from the 20th century)*. Budapest: Püski Kiadó, 2003. 67.

<sup>142</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 178.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

Apart from his attitude to folk music, there were a few other reasons why the elderly Farkas tried to distance himself from a circle of Kodály's students. Despite all his admiration, Farkas, unlike many of his contemporaries, did not fall under the spell of the Kodály phenomenon. In the "Lellei beszélgetések" he pointed out that he held Kodály in high esteem, considered him a great man, but sometimes criticized him; in the same section he also stressed the importance of accepting everyone, even Kodály, with his weaknesses. Then he added that if even Kodály had weaknesses, then perhaps no myths should be created around him.<sup>144</sup> According to the published version of the "Lellei beszélgetések", in Farkas's eyes the main creator of the Kodály myth was his first wife Emma.<sup>145</sup>

From the unpublished section of the "Lellei beszélgetések" one can learn more about this issue and about Farkas's opinion. In this he says that myth that had been woven around Kodály (and to a much lesser extent around Bartók) was aroused by a newer generation of Kodály students, which Farkas referred to as "dilettantes".<sup>146</sup> These students blamed the lack of "Kodály-ness" on those who had actually developed the so-called Kodály choral style par excellence, which, according to Farkas, was not invented by Kodály himself, but by some of his students in the 1920s.<sup>147</sup> According to Farkas, Kodály just incorporated this compositional style into his arts and developed further.

Farkas also notes that in the field of instrumental music, György Kósa, Miklós Radnai and Leó Weiner, who were not Kodály's students, came up with similar solutions at the same time or earlier as Kodály. In particular, he defended Jenő Ádám, who, in his opinion, is unfairly regarded as a follower of Kodály, since many of his groundbreaking works preceded similar compositions by his former teacher. Farkas also adds that it was Ádám who developed what is now called the "Kodály-method",<sup>148</sup> and in his opinion Ádám was forced by Kodály to concentrate on pedagogical works because of the older composer's jealousy of the younger Ádám.<sup>149</sup>

Anna Dalos, when reviewing the Selected Writings of Ferenc Farkas edited by László Gombos, pointed out, that Farkas's 1967 lecture "Bartók árnyékában", where he speaks much more about Kodály than Bartók despite

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<sup>144</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 287.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> At the request of his son, András Farkas, and for reasons of mercy, I am not publishing the names mentioned by Ferenc Farkas.

<sup>147</sup> Farkas named Ferenc Szabó, Lajos Bárdos and Kálmán Nadasdy as major examples.

<sup>148</sup> Cf. Emőd Oláh, "Ádám Jenő és a Kodály-módszer (Jenő Ádám and the Kodály-method)." *Módszertani közlemények* (22/5 (1982): 326-328.

<sup>149</sup> His comments on Ádám were published, see Farkas, op. cit., 315-316.

the title, is the decisive proof that Kodály served as a much more important model for Farkas than Bartók.<sup>150</sup> Dalos could not have known that in the unpublished parts of the "Lellei beszélgetések" there is also much about Bartók, about whom Farkas speaks more distantly, but perhaps more appreciatively. Farkas's respect for Kodály seems to have been amplified by the editor of the "Lellei beszélgetések".

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From the point of view of today's generations, the answer to the question of whether Farkas was a Kodály imitator is probably a no. However, it should be emphasized, that the "illegitimate master" Zoltán Kodály played an important role in the life of Ferenc Farkas and in the development of his career as a composer.

The attitude of treating Kodály's art as a public treasure, as a common language, is characteristic of Farkas's oeuvre throughout. Kodály, as an arranger of folk dances and a composer of choral works based on folk songs, was and remained a guiding star for Farkas during his whole career. Kodály set models for Farkas especially in the general aspects and dimensions of composition, the choice of texts, and in terms of national orientation and the pathetic-nationalist tone.

Without Kodály, there would have been no revitalization of the cantata genre in Farkas's workshop. On the one hand, Farkas's cantatas go back to the roots of the genre in the secular singing culture of late Renaissance and early Baroque Italy, on the other hand they are based on Kodály's masterpieces (*Psalmus hungaricus*, *Te Deum*), which were already recognized and treated as masterworks in the 1930s and 1940s.

Farkas also followed Kodály's principles in setting texts from all periods of Hungarian poetry, from Janus Pannonius to Sándor Weöres, in an attempt to fill in the missing Baroque, Classical, and Biedermeier works of Hungarian music history.<sup>151</sup> With his songs and choral works, he also paid tribute to poets who had no worthy composer in their time – at the same time, he composed the poems of his own contemporaries in a style typical of his time.

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<sup>150</sup> Dalos, "Mérföldkövek...", 38.

<sup>151</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 150, 262.

Because he reflected upon Kodály like one of the classical masters (such as Bach or Mozart), the Kodály influences in Farkas's work are often indirect, seemingly unintentional. On the other hand, some of his Kodályian allusions are not in fact the influence of the older composer: In some cases (especially in the field of instrumental music), Farkas has achieved similar results independently of Kodály. Perhaps it was on this basis that Farkas remarked in an interview with Melinda Berlász in the last years of his life that although he was not a student of Kodály, he felt that the older composer respected him in some way.<sup>152</sup>

The peak of Kodály's influence in Farkas's oeuvre can be dated to the 1940s, which was also the most important period in Farkas's life as a composer. After 1956, with the end of the Zhdanov era, in which Farkas followed Kodály partly out of obligation, his artistic ties to the older master loosened. But even in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, his choral compositions and cantatas do not deny the presence of underlying Kodály models, even if they were written using considerably different compositional techniques.

To sum up, although Hungarian music historians generally emphasize Farkas's separation from Kodály and the so-called "Kodály school",<sup>153</sup> Kodály was a reference point for Farkas throughout his life. On the other side, Farkas was not a Kodály imitator in the strictest sense; perhaps the word "follower" best describes the artistic relationship of the younger composer to the older.

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<sup>152</sup> Farkas, op. cit., 206.

<sup>153</sup> Dalos, "Dunavölgyi...", 38.

**APPENDIX:  
LIST OF FARKAS'S PUBLISHED LECTURES AND WRITINGS  
FOCUSING ON KODÁLY**

**1943**

*Farkas Ferenc bevezető beszéde az 1943. február 28-án tartott Kodály-hangversenyen* (Introductory speech by Ferenc Farkas at the Kodály concert on 28 February, 1943 in Kolozsvár)

- Contemporary publication: "Kodály". *Ellenzék - Független politikai napilap, Cluj-Kolozsvár* 24 May 1943: 11.; "Farkas Ferenc bevezető beszéde..." *A Kolozsvári Zenekonzervatórium évkönyve az 1942–43. tanévről*. Ed. Béla Kiss. Kolozsvár: [s. n.], 1943. 6-8.
- In the *Selected Writings*: No. 21 (pp. 61-62)

**1944**

*Kodály művészetének nemzeti jelentősége* (The national significance of Kodály's art)

- Contemporary publication: *Pásztortűz* (30/2 (1944)): 72-75.
- In the *Selected Writings*: No. 22 (pp. 62-66)

**1967**

*Im Schatten Bartóks: Geständnis eines Komponisten* (In the Shadow of Bartók: Confession of a Composer)

- Contemporary publication: –
- In the *Selected Writings*: No. 33 (pp. 82-93)

**1972**

*Megemlékezés Kodály Zoltánról, születése 90. évfordulóján* (Commemoration of Zoltán Kodály, on the 90th anniversary of his birth)

- Contemporary publication: –
- In the *Selected Writings*: No. 48 (pp. 118-119)

**1977**

*Kodály Magyar rondójának első kiadásához* (To the first edition of Kodály's Hungarian Rondo)

- Contemporary publication: *Kodály Zoltán és Szabolcsi Bence emlékezete*. Ed. Bónis, Ferenc. Kecskemét: Kodály Intézet, 1992. 118-134.
- In the *Selected Writings*: –

**1978**

*Így láttam Kodályt* (This is how I saw Kodály...)

- Contemporary publication: *Így láttuk Kodályt*. <sup>1</sup>Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1979. 190-195.; <sup>2</sup>ibid., 1982. 317-321.; <sup>3</sup>Budapest: Püski, 1994. 275-280.
- In the *Selected Writings*: No. 56 (pp. 141-145)

**1982**

*Kodály Zoltán: Vértanúk sírján. Kottaelőszó.* (Zoltán Kodály: On the Tomb of Martyrs. Preface)

- Contemporary publication: Kodály, Zoltán: *Vértanúk sírján*. Ed. Farkas, Ferenc. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1982.
- In the *Selected Writings*: –

*Kodály Zoltán: Gavotte. Kottaelőszó* (Kodály Zoltán: Gavotte. Preface)

- Contemporary publication: Kodály, Zoltán: *Gavotte*. Ed. Farkas, Ferenc. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1982.
- In the *Selected Writings*: –

**1992**

*Kodály és a magyar műdal* (Kodály and the Hungarian Lied)

- "On Kodály's song poetry." *IKS Bulletin* (Autumn 1996), 34-37.; "Kodály és a magyar műdal". *Kodály emlékkönyv 1997*. Ed. Bónis, Ferenc. Budapest: Püski, 1997, 60-63.
- In the *Selected Writings*: No. 69 (pp. 177-180)

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- . "Lelkes ünneplésben részesítette Kodály Zoltánt az "Éneklő Ifjúság" (An enthusiastic celebration for Zoltán Kodály at the "Singing Youth" concert)." *Keleti Ujság* 1943. May 5: 2.
- . "Megmentik Szék nagyközség értékeit (Saving the values of Szék)." *Ellenzék - Független politikai napilap, Cluj-Kolozsvár* 1943. May 27: 2.
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