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RECENSIONES

CORPUS MUSICAE POPULARIS HUNGARICAE IV. MATCH-MAKING SONGS

Edited by BÉLA BARTÓK and ZOLTÁN KODÁLY. Prepared for the press by GY. KERÉNYI, Budapest 1959. 906 pages, 16 plates, 3 maps

The latest volume of the series assembles songs in which two lovers are "song together". Such songs are sometimes associated with a special game the point of which is to couple in a jocular manner a young man and a young girl who are commonly known to be attached to each other, and occasionally even two hitherto unattached young people. Melodic material is thus arranged according to the accompanying *text* also in this volume of the Corpus. The unity of the material is better preserved in the present than in previous volumes, for all the texts belong to a definite type, while the melodies contained in the preceding volume ("Wedding") found access to the nuptial ceremony from lyric and other types just because their text happened to include the word or a reference to "wedding", "bride", "farewell" or the like.

The introduction to the musical part of the volume contains the following passage concerning match-making songs (p. 37): "... *musical* considerations, too, justify the separation of the typical match-making songs from the main body of Hungarian folk music." KODÁLY makes a similar statement (p. 7): "... both its text and melody distinguish it from other songs and demanded its inclusion in a separate volume". What a task it meant to arrange the material and to separate it from other folk songs is revealed by the sequence of the melodies and its explanation in the introduction: the volume makes a sharp distinction between *typical* and *non-typical* match-making songs. To the former category belong melodies *most* variants of which are accompanied by texts of the match-making type, while the latter category comprises songs of which only a few variants are associated with match-making words. The musical material of the volume, arranged in a musical sequence, consists of songs of the first category while pieces of the second (*i. e.* non-typical) group are presented only textually, with a reference to the corresponding melodies. (It so happens that references have to be made to a number of hitherto unpublished melodies.) The introduction presents the following numerical data: the volume includes 280 melodies (with 1800 variants) which are accompanied by match-making texts *also*; of these, 51 melody-families (*i. e.* melodies and their 884 variants) are "typical". We find a further division within the "typical" category: Nos. 1—707 are folk songs proper, and Nos. 708—884 are other than folk songs, *i. e.* various tunes derived from art music, mostly light urban airs that have been carried to the countryside on the wings of various fashions. Events of a social nature (wedding, games, etc.) were always most susceptible to the influence of urban fashions. Having been collected according to texts and customs, the melodies contain a great many fashionable tunes of urban origin which are represented in the volume by small notes or solmization.

Arrangement, as governed by texts, gave rise to further trouble. Chapter II is, according to the introduction, just an "accessory". Songs contained therein (*i. e.* "non-typical" match-making songs) will appear — together with their variants accompanied by "non-match-making" texts — in other volumes of the Corpus. On the other hand, also the variants of those melodies of Chapter I ("typical" match-making songs) which are associated with *non-match making texts* have been assembled in the present volume. "This has helped us to prevent melody-families from being scattered to different volumes of the Corpus". This leads to the difficulty that certain variants of a given melody are of the match-making type and others not (we encounter this same phenomenon in Volume III where some variants belong to nuptial ceremonies, others not, and again in Volume II where some of the variants represent harvest songs, St. Stephen's Day greetings, others not, etc.). It follows that also variants associated with *other than match-making words* are contained in the volume under review provided they belong to melodies *most* variants of which are accompanied by match-making texts. This is why we encounter quite a number of ballads in the volume, some of them sometimes definitely attached

to the same melody group. In these cases, variants of a given area belong to the category of match-making songs, those of another area to a certain ballad.

Not even such compromise was sufficient to prevent the disruption of several melody families. Three of the "typical" match-making songs — those with the greatest number of variants at that — have already appeared in the previous volumes of the Corpus with 157 variants (there are among them 14 variants of which the text too is of the match-making type; it must have been owing to the uncertainty of the dividing line between the genres that they gained access to the previous volumes; there are, for example, match-making songs also among the Midsummer-Night's songs). The variants of these three melodies, as published in the various volumes of the Corpus, make it clear that the melodies belong actually to the *non-typical* category of match-making songs since the major part of their variants are accompanied by other than match-making texts. That they are now included in the present volume must be due to the fact that, all their non-match making variants having already been published in previous volumes, the rest belongs to the match-making type. They are described as melodies associated with various calendar customs brought before the public in all the hitherto published four volumes of the Corpus.

All these considerations go to prove that the match-making text or custom cannot serve as basis for melodic classification. We want to go further and affirm that no custom can be used for such purpose to which no separate melodic type is attached. There exist only three categories which satisfy this requirement: songs of children's games, "regös" = New Year's songs (together with a few customs surviving in one or two circumscribed areas, e. g. *Kisze* = removal of Winter, *villő* = idem, *kotyolás* = fertility magic on St. Lucia's day, the 13th of December) and, finally, dirges. Each of these categories represents a special melodic style not used in other connections.

The volume under review has not even succeeded in completely representing the text-type itself. The (correct and important) governing principle being a representation of possibly complete melody families, quite a number of match-making songs — the variants of which are mostly associated with non-match making texts — had to be left out and relegated to future volumes. Such texts are included in the present volume, but without the accompanying melody to which only references are made. The editors were obliged to make compromises which upset the unity of both this volume and the whole series at several points.

It is, of course, not in the volume under review that the problems which these compromises attempt to solve have arisen for the first time. It is due to the system established in the preceding volumes, to the principle underlying it, to the method of collection based on that principle and to the predetermined contents of the present volume that it has become necessary to resort to compromises which have the object to keep the material more or less within musical frames determined by Hungarian folk-music research and the original plan of the Corpus. Nothing but gratitude is due to the musical editor who — faced with the task of preparing the volume and arranging the material under review — has at least succeeded in saving fundamental principles by such half-measures and has put a stop to the massive irruption of urban composed music and to a further disruption of closely related variants on the strength of their texts. It has nevertheless become perfectly obvious that calendar customs can no longer serve as a basis of classification irrespective of musical style. With the sole exception of dirges which form an integrated whole and have to find place in a separate volume to be published, all other songs will have to be arranged solely according to musical principles, and an arrangement of this kind will make it possible to remedy the obscurities of volumes III and IV (and, to some extent, those of volume II) by means of suitable references and indexes.

Concerning typical match-making songs we find also the following passage in the musical introduction: "Most of the typical match-making melody-families represent an individual type: they do not, or do hardly, resemble other melodies." This would mean that there exists no match-making style. These are individual pieces which seem to have once found their way to the people as concomitants of some fashion and were mostly taken up by the match-making game. They reveal the traces of very ancient *fashions* in some cases. Nos. 1 to 17, for instance, represent a mediaeval Gagliarda or a 16th century Volta tune. Again, Nos. 480 to 578 are the descendants of the metric variety of the Sapphic strophe and so likewise vestiges of a fashion from the 16th century. It is only No. 489 which has preserved the ancient bar with 3+2 syllables, while all others have changed into 2/4 rhythms with 4+1 syllables. (See Vargyas: *A magyar vers ritmusa* = Rhythm of the Hungarian verse, p. 145 and notes on pp. 241—243.) Nos. 708 to 884 show recent influences of adjacent peoples and urban music.

As far as the material instanced by these examples goes, the volume will interest investigators of comparative history of folk music and those concerned with folk music-sociography. JÁRDÁNYI, the musical editor, analyzes the material with great care and points to its principal features: its overwhelmingly heterometric structure, the numerous plagial melodies

the evolution from major to minor key, the many polymodal groups of melodies (which latter may be, we think, due to a feeling of foreignness); he emphasizes that the material consists almost entirely of the types belonging to Bartók's group C so that the old style is lacking, and only recently has the new style begun to find access to these text-categories; he describes moreover the geographical distribution of particular melody-families.

There are only two respects in which we may object to the work of the musical editor. The notes which accompany the melodies contain references to earlier publications; these references seem to us to lack uniformity: sometimes even insignificant popular booklets are quoted (Rezeda, 659), while sometimes even works such as Bartók's book or Kodály's "A magyar népzene" példatára (Anthology to Kodály's Hungarian Folk Music) (259) remain unmentioned; see also the examples on p. 47, No. 280/a and its comparisons. Our other objection is that certain types, foreign to Hungarian folk music, are excluded from the category of folk songs although they form part of the Slovak or German folk music (e. g. Nos. 708—729). True they are non-Hungarian melodies but cannot be said to lie outside the sphere of folk melodies even if, looked at from the angle of Hungarian folk melodies, they appear as being of urban origin.

The volume under review contains furthermore 15 such groups of melodies as are always sung in close chronological sequence, and also a *textual grouping*, made by KERÉNYI, which arranges the texts according to small differences of match-making. (Such differences facilitate rather survey than typology). Games too are grouped by him according to the same principle. Three complete games are presented with all their melodies and the full description of the games in the alphabetical order of the villages. Indexes of cadences and syllabic numbers, an alphabetic index, a summary in the English language and photographic illustrations contribute to the richness of the volume.

L. Vargyas.

LINDA DÉGH: *FOLK-TALES FROM KAKASD*. I. Tales of Mrs. Palkó. II. Tales of Mrs. Palkó, Gy. Andrásfalvi, Mrs. Sebestyén and M. László. Új Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény ("New Anthology of Hungarian Folk Poetry"). Edited by Gy. Ortutay, vols. VIII—IX. Publishing House of the Academy. Budapest, 1955 and 1960. (509 and 399 pages, respectively).

Ever since the collection of Hungarian folk tales began, has the language area of the Szeklers proved to be a veritable gold mine for collectors. It was J. KRIZA's "Vadrózsák, ("Wild Roses")¹ which first drew the attention of Hungarian and foreign scientific circles to the poetical beauty of Hungarian folk poetry, while E. BENEDEK's large work of five volumes² — besides captivating with its folk tales the young readers of the nurseries — supplied popular story-tellers with an excellent selection of narrative material written in a beautiful Szekler-Hungarian language which replaced the earlier cheap trash of low literary value. Besides these two collections of national significance, worthy of mention are the collections of B. ORBÁN, O. MAJLAND, A. HORGER and J. ÓSZ, as also the recent compilations of Gy. BÖZÖDI and S. KONSZA,³ all of which bear witness to the inexhaustible abundance of Szekler folk poetry.

The Szeklers, an ethnic group inhabiting the inner slope of the East Carpathians, engaged in animal husbandry and forestry, used to enjoy exemption from taxation in return

¹ J. KRIZA: *Vadrózsák* (Wild Roses). Székely népköltési gyűjtemény (Collection of Szekler Folk Poetry). Vol. I, Kolozsvár, 1863. The collection has so far had four editions. The tales contained therein were, with one exception, published in KROPP—JONES's English collection: *The Folk Tales of the Magyars*, London, 1889 (Folklore Society, Vol. XIII).

J. KRIZA: *Collection of Szekler Folk Poetry*. Budapest, 1956. I—II. Prepared for the press from J. KRIZA's manuscripts (Wild Roses II) by P. GERGELY and Á. KOVÁCS.

² E. BENEDEK: *World of Hungarian Tales and Legends*. Vols. I—V. Budapest 1894—96. The collection contains texts of Szekler folk tales collected by the author, further the literary versions of tale texts borrowed from earlier Hungarian folk-tale collections, together with precise references to sources. The entire collection has so far had seven editions, while the stories contained therein have — in various arrangements and under various titles — appeared in numberless editions in many hundred thousands of copies.

³ *Collection from the Land of Szeklers*. Compiled by J. KRIZA, B. ORBÁN, E. BENEDEK and J. SEBESI. Budapest, 1882. Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény ("Anthology of Hungarian Folk Poetry", in the following: MNGy.) III. Edited by L. ARANY and P. GYULAI. — O. MAJLAND: *Collection from the Land of Szeklers*. Budapest, 1905. MNGy. VII. — A. HORGER: *Hétfalusi csángó népmesék*. ("Tshango Folk Tales from Hétfalu"). Budapest, 1911. MNGy. X. — J. ÓSZ: *Csudatáska. Eredeti székely népmesék* ("Miraculous Bag. Original Szekler Folk Tales"). Budapest, 1941. — Gy. BÖZÖDI: *A tréfás farkas. Bágyi János meséi* ("The Funny Wolf. Tales of J. Bágyi"). Budapest, 1943. — Gy. BÖZÖDI: *Az eszős gyermek. Bözödi népmesék* ("The Clever Child. Folk Tales from Bözöd"). Bucharest, 1958. — S. KONSZA: *Háromszéki magyar népköltészet* ("Hungarian Folk Poetry in Háromszék"). Edited and prefaced by J. FARAGÓ. Marosvásárhely, 1957.