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BARTÓK AND FOLK MUSIC RESEARCH

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Ever since Ernő Lendvai's research\* it has been common knowledge that Bartók's music has a strict sound and formal structure. However, this is not some kind of abstract model or principle invented by speculation, but a sphere of the possibilities of living music—music living in the human power of comprehension and the acoustical laws of physical sound—which it is possible to attain by the expansion, and not the denial of the existing scale system. By simultaneously sounding the notes of the pentatonic scale, by acquainting himself with the characteristic Lydian fourth of Slovak folk music, with the frequent tritone passages of Hungarian and Rumanian folk music, and with the so-called acoustical scale of Hungarian, Moravian, and Rumanian folk music, and other passages of long forgotten, and previously unfamiliar, scales he gradually expanded the sound possibilities. Step by step those laws became delineated before him which made their appearance completely crystallized in his late works, and in which he arrived at the final conclusion to be drawn from the circle of fifths and the system of overtones. In other words, it was the "system" that became conscious in him, step by step, always the existing and humanly apprehensible elements, in fact, those already used and authenticated by the community. According to his own words he saw the difference between his own music and that of his associates abroad in the fact that "I worked in the footsteps of nature, because peasant music is a natural phenomenon."<sup>1</sup> In other words, while his associates travelled the path of the twentieth century on which the musicians of today have been advancing ever further: the road of individualism, which is undoubtedly one of the characteristic attitudes of the century, he and his ethnomusicological

\* See *NHQ* 7. (The Ed.)

<sup>1</sup> András Szöllősy (editor): *Bartók Béla összegyűjtött írásai* (Béla Bartók's Collected Writings) Vol. 1. Budapest, 1966, p. 756.

associates chose the other road, which is a no less characteristic twentieth-century mode of expression.

This other road, proceeding from folk music, liberated Bartók from the restrictions of existing music, and led him to new harmonic possibilities, a new musical idiom, and then to the complete 12-tone system, in the same way that pure speculation did his contemporaries. And later, precisely that which liberated him, restrained him from following roads that led further, but not from a system evolved on the basis of human experience. It was at one and the same time a liberating and preserving influence for him. He found a quite sufficient amount of the new, the elementary, and the ancient, suitable for the modern expression of melody, rhythm, sound, and form, from Hungarian all the way to Arabic folk music, not to be compelled to seek expressive possibilities for himself in theories and speculation. The various types of folk music were sufficient in themselves to provide a modern œuvre with the nourishment it needed.

But beyond an acquaintance with musical means, the evolving of an order of sounds, there was something more that kept Bartók within the sphere of attraction of folk music: and that was the human world of which folk music is an artistic expression. He who sought a possibility of manifestation for all of humanity, found such a specific, profound form of the human element in the course of folk-song collecting, which he felt to be close to him, and which he recognized to be related to his innermost being. The manifestation of a profoundly human world through a new, unconsumed musical world, the encounter with the people and with folk music, was an experience that endured to his death, and became an influence that determined his whole musical thinking. "According to my belief each of our true . . . folk melodies is a veritable model of artistic perfection of the highest order. I consider it to be in miniature just as much a masterpiece, as are in the world of the larger forms, a Bach fugue or a Mozart sonata . . . Thus, leaving all else out of consideration, we could learn from this music unparalleled conciseness of expression, the most severe elimination of all inessentials—and this was exactly what we yearned for above all after the diffuse loquacity of the Romantic Age".<sup>2</sup> He writes with similar enthusiasm about the Rumanian songs in Bihar to his assistant, a Rumanian music teacher in the small town of Belényes: "Here I again examined the collected material, and I can tell you that there are things of unprecedented interest in them (i.e. exactly what does not appeal to middle class audiences).

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p. 752.

And it is unbelievable . . . what marvellous rhythmical variety there is in the musical structure."<sup>3</sup>

These avowals, as well as many like them, reveal that here we may indeed speak of an encounter, the liberation of his own self. And it follows naturally that Bartók, feeling this attraction of the "elemental human" turned with interest to the music of several peoples in succession. His search for the true "national" in itself already led more and more towards the "general," the "human." His Rumanian friend, the ethnomusicologist Brăiloiu, formulated it subtly, that the more deeply Bartók dug into his own people's musical heritage, the more he arrived at general human characteristics.<sup>4</sup>

But can anyone who is interested in the profoundly human indifferently pass by the profoundly human manifestations of other peoples? And yet Bartók, in the Hungary of his time, could hardly help but encounter such manifestations. He himself wrote about this in 1943: "It was not chance that folk-song research and a higher art conceived in the folk song flowered in such a prodigious manner precisely in Hungary. Geographically Hungary is the centre, as it were, of Eastern Europe, and with the many nations that lived there before the Great War it was a veritable microcosm of the national diversity of Eastern Europe. This national diversity, as a consequence of the constant contact between the peoples, led to the emergence of the most diversified and most varied forms of folk music; this explains that the folk music of Eastern Europe is so amazingly rich in folk-song types and in the final analysis, in folk songs. No wonder that it was just the musicians of Hungary at the centre of these crossroads, who turned with such interest towards this amazing wealth of music. This interest bore two kinds of fruit. One was scholarly research, notation, the systematic arrangement and the comparison of the varieties of East European folk songs; and this ultimately led to the establishment of an entirely new discipline, comparative ethnomusicology . . . The other . . . result was the establishment of an autochthonous Hungarian musical art under the influence of this folk-music material of incomparable worth. The rejuvenation of musical art on the basis of a wealth of unfamiliar, unconsumed, entirely fresh folk music: this has already virtually become a new world outlook in Hungary. Those Western Europeans who pigeonhole the manifestation of this world outlook in music as a 'folkloristic' trend, with a certain disparaging emphasis, completely misjudge the situation. This is not a

<sup>3</sup> János Demény (editor): *Bartók Béla levelei* (Béla Bartók's Letters). Budapest, 1976, p. 152.

<sup>4</sup> *Journal de Genève* 1945 X. = *Schweizerische Musikzeitung*, March 1948, 92-94.

matter of grafting 'folkloristic' music pieces onto alien material, but far more than that: the emergence of a new musical spirit on the basis of musical forces which sprang from the soil."<sup>5</sup>

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He had hardly started out in search of Hungarian folk songs in 1906, when that year already he also collected among Slovaks, and in 1908 he began Rumanian folk-song collecting in Bihar. He gathered more from each of these two nations than from his own: alongside his 2,721 Hungarian folk songs, his Slovak collection amounted to 3,223 songs, and his Rumanian collection, in Bihar, Transylvania, and Máramaros to 3,404. In the past his ethnomusicology was branded nationalism (and sometimes it is even today). But which people's nationalism can be mentioned in connection with Bartók, who studied the music of five nations, and—if we add the Bulgarians—absorbed the music of six in his works; and let me add, in spite of the nationalism of three which excluded one another? Can it be called nationalism when somebody, not sparing time and effort, not recoiling in the face of attacks, collects, writes down, compares, and publishes the music of different nations, partly at his own expense? He laid the foundations for ethnomusicology in Eastern Europe precisely above these nationalisms, and caught between two fires, he arrived at the consistent proclamation of the brotherhood of nations.

If we add to the collecting he did among the three nations mentioned his Turkish, Arabic, and sporadic other collecting we get to nearly 10,000 songs. At the same time he made a study of the songs of nations by the thousands that had been collected earlier: the *Slovenské Spevy* of the Slovaks, the *dumy* songs of the Ukrainians in Kolessa's volumes, and the nineteenth-century publications of the Czechs of Moravia and Bohemia. He not only made a study of these, but also worked their material into his own collection.

His all-receptive spirit did not rest satisfied even with this much. It took him to Algeria beside the Sahara, to the Jelfa Oasis where, to his surprise, he found a type of tune with which he was familiar from the Rumanians in Máramaros, the so-called "long dance" (*bora lungă*); and he got to Anatolia as well, to the Turks, where he found types of songs related to Hungarian eight-syllable pentatonic tunes with descending melodic lines. At the end of his life, in the United States, he put into notation the Serbian songs of the Parry collection, being commissioned by Columba

<sup>5</sup> Szöllösy, p. 604.

University to do so. Only illness and death prevented him from accepting a newer undertaking: the notation of the Seattle University collection of Indian melodies.

Such a widespread knowledge of material in itself already meant comparisons. Throughout his life Bartók accomplished an enormous amount of comparative and processing work. If his early death had not intervened, he would very likely have given us a comparative summary of the folk music of Eastern Europe. As it was he accomplished a large part of this work in his short paper "Our folk music and that of our neighbours," in which, although he proceeded from the correspondences of his Hungarian material, he gave valuable definitions and comparative conclusions regarding the musical material of the Rumanians, Slovaks, and Ukrainians. He further developed his results in his book on Serbian folk music, where he pointed out further correspondences in the folk music of all of Eastern Europe.

Strict impartiality characterized him in these conclusions. It was from the time of his first collecting tour in Bihar that the already cited letter dates in which, after his enthusiastic lines to his assistant about the value of the songs, he wrote: "After these perhaps you will not take it amiss if I describe about 20–25 tunes in the collection as having been adopted from the Hungarians in olden times. Such song adoptions and interrelationships are inevitable among neighbouring peoples. Of course, only he can find his way in this chaos who has made a study of the folk music of both. For this very reason my current opinion is only a temporary one, and this question can only be decided when I have collected in many other regions." This is why he did not yet include his relevant observations in his first book concerning the Bihar collecting work (1913). He only made them public much later, in 1934, in his Eastern European comparative study.

He wanted to acquaint himself with the material of other nations from direct experience. For he sought not only songs, but the people as well, studying social living. According to his frequently expressed opinion not only the beauty of the folk songs, but the spirit of the folk also caught him. He felt a necessity for contact with the people, and the men and women who made it up. "...in my view it is not sufficient if we concern ourselves with peasant music stored away in museums only. The essence is that we should convey the inner character of peasant music which cannot even be expressed in words in art music, and suffuse it with the atmosphere of peasant music-making." "So that this music should grasp us with all its force—which we need if we wish it to have guiding force in our creative work—...it is important that we see and become familiar with the environment, too, in which these melodies live. We must see the facial ex-



pression of singing peasants, take part in their dances, their weddings and Christmas celebrations. . . . The task was to feel the spirit of this so far unfamiliar music, and proceeding from this spirit, difficult to express verbally, to create a musical style. And precisely so that I might soundly familiarize myself with the spirit of this music, it was important for me to do the collecting work myself, on the spot."<sup>6</sup>

It hardly needs to be said that all this is necessary, and to the advantage, not only of the composer, but also the ethnomusicologist. He wrote one account of experiences of this nature, to his future wife, from a Slovak village. "The gentle, the naive, the pristine people! I have been celebrating with them now for the second day. As they stand around my phonograph, as they exert themselves so that more and more songs accumulate in the machine. . . . And how inexhaustible they are in song; in two afternoons they presented 60, a year and a half ago in the same way, 50. Yet Darázs is quite a small village, with some 1,000 inhabitants. I have stopped here, I am collecting here in a peasant house. Tuesday was a holiday, around four o'clock they began to stream in to me, and before long the room was filled with young and old, and the songs poured out. From time to time charming episodes occurred. A fine, strapping man, when I stood him before the phonograph's horn, was so moved he took off his hat. Great laughter! A girl (she was very comely) sang a love song about 'Hanzinka'. I did not understand this name well, so the rest began to shout 'Martinka, let the name in the song be Martinka'. The lass protested against this in shy embarrassment—it turned out her sweetheart was called Martinka; and this was the source of all the teasing."<sup>7</sup>

For such an atmosphere, for this kind of company, informal human contact, a knowledge of the language is indispensable. Bartók took this seriously, and although for his collecting both among the Slovaks and the Rumanians, he availed himself of the assistance of local professional men, from the very start he learnt both languages, and he was able to communicate with his singers in their own idiom. The learning of languages became a second passion with him. He wrote to his assistant in the Slovak publication that he could write to him in German, Hungarian, French, English, Italian, or Rumanian, as he chose. "Unfortunately I have no command of the Slovak written language (I understand only the folk texts)".<sup>8</sup> He was the same way with the Southern Slavs. At the end of a letter to Žganec he wrote: "Unfortunately in Croat I understand only the folk texts, and the

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 675, 751–752.

<sup>7</sup> Demény, pp. 146–147.

<sup>8</sup> Demény, p. 443.

literary expressions only with difficulty!"<sup>9</sup> In still another letter he wrote these lines: "Next summer. . . I shall go there and specifically to the Kabyles. This is a Berber tribe in the mountainous region of the coast. I have already bought a Kabyl grammar!"<sup>10</sup> He wrote to Ankara about his preparations for collecting: "In the meantime I have already started on learning Turkish, which is very important for somebody who wants to collect Turkish folk music."<sup>11</sup>

To learn the language of a (small) people is the most distinguished way to approach them. To grow familiar with a people's art is to grow fond of the given people. Bartók loved not only his own people, but also all of those among whom he went to gather folk songs. Not even simple living conditions could spoil the effect of a pleasant human atmosphere. In the letter just quoted he also wrote about this: "At half past nine they leave. Now what will there be for supper? There are three eggs, some milk—I am told. But the fire has gone out, I shall have to light one. They bring me some fuel—it does not seem to want to kindle. As I gaze around the wooden floor, it is all wet, as if it had just been scrubbed—the great mass of people had brought in all this water with their feet. They make my bed—I happened to touch the wall: the water is streaming from it. Damn it all: what's this from? It is bitter cold outside, inside the exhalation of 30 people for six hours: *voilà tout*. (During the evening the lamp wanted to go out several times; it could be revived only by opening the door.) So we quickly pushed the bed away from the wall. Yes, but it is too late, the bedding has grown damp throughout.—I begin to congratulate myself: a chilly room, a soaked floor, damp walls, and a wet bed to boot!

"At last the flames begin to flicker and the people of the house retire, leaving me to nurse the fire back to life, to boil the eggs and to warm the milk. My first task is to examine the fuel. It too is wet. I spread some of it around on top of the cooking range to dry, and in the meantime I will make a count of the day's collecting.—Suddenly a whiff of smoke reaches my nose (this is all I need); I take a glance, the scattered pieces of wood have begun to roast on top of the range. I take them away, meanwhile burning my hand, and I almost drop the rings of the top of the range into the fire—at long last my supper, in noble simplicity, is ready, and the fire is blazing merrily. Of course, in such a wet room this is not even a drop in a bucket. But I can say that not in a long time has anything tasted so

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p. 490.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, p. 210.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p. 530.

good as this milk with black bread! Undressing is out of the question; I spread my overcoat on the bed, lie down on it in my clothes, and cover myself with my own blanket. This is how the first day ends in the village of Darázs."

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This great intellect, who exists, first of all, as one of the world's top creative artists in the minds of people, and who was also a great pianist not unworthy of his works—we know how much practicing this means, and at the same time how many captivating experiences it has to offer—and how much self-denial and physical efforts his folk-song research demanded, recalls his collecting trips, nevertheless, as follows: "It is hard to imagine what a tremendous amount of work and exertion this collecting entailed. . . we had to live in the most wretched villages, amidst the most primitive circumstances, and we had to turn our efforts to winning the friendship and confidence of the peasants. Particularly the last of this was difficult. . . Yet I can say that our exhausting work in this sphere gave me greater pleasure than anything else. The happiest days of my life were those which I spent in the villages amidst peasants."<sup>12</sup> Later he even forgot the exhaustion and privations: "Similarly mistaken are those who believe that the study of these forces proliferating from the soil, on the site itself, in plain words: folk-song collecting, was some kind of dreadfully exhausting work attended by self-denial and sacrifice. As far as I am concerned I can only say that the time I spent on this kind of work was the finest part of my life; and I would not trade it for any other. The finest in the noblest sense of the term, because I could thus be a direct observer of the artistic manifestation of a still organic but already vanishing social structure. Lovely to the ear, and lovely to the eye!"<sup>13</sup>

Every encounter with peasants was a joy for him. In 1938 he wrote to an acquaintance in Switzerland: "Yesterday and the day before I had two fine days: two 'Csángó' women were here from Moldavia; the Csángós are the easternmost living Hungarians, who never lived within the frontiers of Hungary. . . The two women (illiterates) sang songs, related tales, and with their peculiar dialect and archaic dress they were enchanting."<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, he had to add to the fascinating experience: ". . . they are dreadfully oppressed (linguistically and politically, too). . . Just because

<sup>12</sup> Széllősy, p. 751.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 604–605.

<sup>14</sup> Demény, p. 590.

of this unbelievable political oppression by the Rumanians it is impossible to bring them to Budapest; even now it was only possible on the occasion of the World Eucharistic Congress. Here splendid phonograph disc recordings were made of them. For the time being, however, the story must be kept secret, and even later they will have to be made public without the use of their names, otherwise it could happen that the Rumanian gendarmerie might lock up these poor innocent souls in gaol because they presented songs and stories here in their native language. The world is a lovely place, isn't it?"<sup>15</sup>

And with this we are already at Bartók's foremost problem as an ethnomusicologist, his constant fight against chauvinism, which he had to wage on two fronts: against his own countrymen, just as much as against chauvinists in neighbouring countries. In this fight—as throughout his scholarly work—his supra-national attitude, his respect and love for other nations, generally for common folk, and his struggle for the idea of the peaceful coexistence of nations, constantly manifested itself. At the time of the outbreak of the Great War he wrote to Bianu, in Rumania: "I have long wanted to write to you, but the events evoked such excitement within me that I was fairly paralysed. What I would desire most of all is that peace be maintained at least between us and Rumania. But whatever does happen, I shall remain faithful to the work I have begun; I consider it the aim of my life to continue and conclude my studies of Rumanian folk music, at least in Transylvania."<sup>16</sup> And when the Rumanian war also broke out he wrote to his Rumanian friend: ". . . I thought about you very much, precisely in connection with the sad events of last autumn. . . This incessantly growing cataclysm, which—it appears—has broken my career in two (I mean my research in folk music), because the loveliest territories—precisely Eastern Europe and the Balkans—are the most completely devastated, has shaken me. How my heart ached when I heard that the (Rumanian) people of all of Fogaras. . . left their homes with the Rumanian army. Will they ever return there, and if they do, under what condition? Will I be able to collect there anymore? How I pitied the Csík, the Gyergyó Székelys—for I had also roamed throughout that land. . . I long so much for a bit of Rumanian singing or speech: I wonder if it might be possible in the summer to go down to somewhere in Bihar, for a few weeks. . . ?"<sup>17</sup>

Bihar was perhaps his most favoured place to collect: it boasted the most

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Demény, p. 227.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 238–239.

archaic conditions, and consequently the most natural manifestations on the part of the people, the most pristine beauty. He also took there Egisto Tango, the Italian conductor of the Budapest Opera House, who had introduced two of his stage works.

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This impartiality which knew no national differences and antagonisms often met with the opposition of the authorities. At the time of the Great War Army authorities had him organize concerts of soldiers' songs in Vienna and in Budapest. Bartók wanted to present all of the nations. "Of course the generals managing the affair produced a good many odd things. For example, instead of 'Elhervaszt Ferenc Jóska' (Francis Joseph will make me wither away) they had to sing 'Elhervadok a bánatba' (I shall wither away in sorrow) [!!]; and then: only the German and Hungarian languages were allowed (dualism): this was the reason the Slovak songs had to be sung in a German translation which, as a matter of fact, was a violation of our constitution, wasn't it, because the Slovaks live in Hungary, and not in Austria, therefore—if in translation—their songs should have been presented in a Hungarian translation. Further: only the names 'österreichische' and 'ungarische' Lieder were allowed in the programme. Thus the Slovak songs (if there had been any Rumanians, then the Rumanians as well) would have figured as 'ungarische' Lieder, and only at the end of the published text could one read: 'deutsche Übersetzung aus dem Slovakischen.' In other words, bureaucracy and higher military brains were rampant. . . . In Budapest the Ministry of War wanted to repeat that Viennese gala concert. 'Authoritative' circles of Budapest proclaimed that here *only* Hungarian songs would be allowed to be sung. At this the Ministry of War, which had commissioned me to direct the artistic section of the concert in Budapest, was scandalized. In Vienna . . . I declared that indeed a few Austrian songs could be presented—if only for the sake of reciprocity—and on the part of Hungary some Slovak, Rumanian, and possibly Croatian songs could figure in the programme along with the Hungarian ones. If the authorities in Budapest do not accept the recommended programme, I prefer to withdraw from the whole thing. Let the Budapesters do it themselves, if they can. This is a matter of presenting the soldiers' songs of the Army, this is also the title of the concert, therefore the national minorities cannot be passed over in silence, as this would be contrary to the facts. Well, this is how things stand in Hungary!

—I am startled to read about newer and newer regulations in the newspapers! Fine things indeed, I must say."<sup>18</sup>

Because of his work which knew no national bias he was the target of attacks both at home and abroad. He wrote in 1920 in connection with a lecture he was not able to give in Slovakia: "Anyway, at that time no passports were issued in our country (on account of the boycott); . . . and particularly no export permits for the taking of 10–15 specimen cylinders and a phonograph. In May the newspapers here attacked me most savagely because one of my (strictly scholarly) articles on the folk music of the Transylvanian Rumanians which appeared in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* in Munich. Although I received a public apology on behalf of our 'Ethnographical Society' other official circles identified themselves with the attack. Thus there would have been only a greater scandal if I had now applied for an export licence for cylinders. . . ."<sup>19</sup>

The Rumanians referred to this very same German article when they attacked Bartók for a comparative study he published in 1934. They interpreted the German article also as a manifestation of Hungarian revisionism. Bartók pointed out: "Professor Petranu is very much mistaken, because this article is a literal translation of an article which appeared in the April 1914 issue of *Ethnographia* published in Budapest. This simple fact refutes P's allegation that my article could have been suggested by the idea of Hungarian revisionism which arose after 1918. This accusation is made even more grotesque by the circumstance that in May 1920 in Budapest, Hungarian extremists, who again were not aware that the German publication was a translation of an article which had appeared in 1914, denounced it as an attack against the Hungarians and accused me of treason. A comparison of the Rumanian and Hungarian charges serves as verification that my article was completely objective and unbiassed."<sup>20</sup> Then, after refuting every single argument of the attack in a long article which virtually amounted to a scholarly paper, by way of conclusion he once again took an oath in support of East European folk-music research: ". . . to the many thousands and thousands of hours I have devoted to the collection of Rumanian folk music, its notation (let us note well: the notation of a single more complicated peasant song requires several hours of work), its arrangement in systematic order, and its study, I shall add further thousands and thousands of continued research, not in order to reap thanks and rewards (how right I was, when I disregarded such standpoints in advance!), but

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 244–245.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 259–260.

<sup>20</sup> Szöllösy, p. 653.

to advance the cause of East European folk-music research, the international discipline to which I dedicated the better part of my life, and to which I shall devote the future."<sup>21</sup>

Neither these nor even more violent controversies were able to shake his faith in international cooperation. Folk-music research on an international scale—this was the most cherished passion of his life. At the League of Nations, at international congresses, in lectures delivered abroad, and in articles he always proposed the cooperation of institutions of the different countries in the sending of copies of wax cylinders and later the exchange of phonograph discs. He calculated estimates on how much it would cost to introduce the making of such copies as a standard practice; he made proposals for the international use of a uniform key in notations, he suggested the joint systematization of folk-music material of the various nations that had already appeared in print; he denounced the recycling of the matrices of a series of Javanese records—as they had not paid their way—as “the kind of vandalism which ought to be prevented by legislation.” In Turkey he had discussions with the head of a department in the Ministry of Education on the organization of Turkish folk-song collecting. And at the time when preparations were being made for war he sighed at the end of one of his articles: “if only that money were devoted to folk-song research which is spent all over the world on war preparations in one year, then using this money the folk music of the entire world could be collected.”<sup>22</sup>

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At the end of his life the cause of ethnomusicology occupied him to an increasing degree. In 1935 the greatest news to him was that he no longer had to teach, instead he could work on the preparation for the printers of the large folk-music collection at the Academy. Up to his departure from Hungary he worked on the material for 10 hours almost every day, and not even this was enough for him, he would have liked to spend 20 hours a day on it, he wrote. In the United States he did not accept a professorship teaching the piano, but undertook to put the Serbian collection into notation. Two years later, when the possibility of this work ceased, and he had to leave it unfinished, he wrote bitterly, in a letter, that he “hated something unfinished.” Yet this appeared to follow his folk-music research

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, p. 661.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, p. 596.

activities almost like fate. Even mortally ill he worked untiringly on the complete processing of his Rumanian folk-music collection: on the text and dance typology of 2,500 songs. But unfortunately he was not able to see the end of this either: this great work could only appear after his death. He fared even worse with his Slovak collection. Although he had handed over the song collection in 1923, he did not live to see even the first volume published (which appeared only in 1959), and the whole work remains incomplete to this day.

The labour that Bartók dedicated to folk-music research would have been a superhuman accomplishment if that had been the only thing he had done all his life. But we know he did this besides composing music and being a concert pianist. Only a man, who—as he described himself with a slip of the tongue—was a “fanatic” as a student of folk music, was capable of this. But in contrast to other kinds of fanatics, he was fanatical about work, and was a fanatical supporter of peace between the nations.

As a composer he had no followers. His style was so non-recurrent, he exhausted the tonal system he created so completely, he made it so individual, that whoever follows him on this road irremediably turns into an epigone. All the more reason why he should be followed in scholarship. Here he must not remain alone, as an admired idol, set apart on a pedestal. Let him be a guide instead, whom many will follow, an example: a scholar who identified completely with his subject, a true democrat who was one with the people; and not just with one people, but every people; a man of rare character whom not even a barrage of attacks could move from his convictions and his love of the nations. Beyond his pioneering research, his enormous accomplishments, and alongside his revelation of new kinds of material and even newer summarizing results Bartók the ethnomusicologist means this most of all to us. And he means this not only to Hungarians, but to mankind. He deserves that we bow before him on the centenary of his birth with the words of appreciation of his Rumanian friend, the great ethnomusicologist, Constantin Brăiloiu: “Art lost a master in him, scholarship a star, and the world of moral progress a man, a true and unimpeachable man in the deepest sense of the term, a real man.”<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See note No. 4.