

A Historical Overview and Analysis of the Use of Hungarian Folk Music in
Zoltán Kodály's *Háry János Suite*, *Dances of Marosszék*, and *Dances of Galánta*

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Abstract

At the beginning of the twentieth century, many composers looked towards the music of their own heritage as source material for their original compositions. In Hungary, one composer who dedicated a significant portion of his life to the research, study, and transcription of folk music is Zoltán Kodály. Three of his orchestral works dating from 1926 to 1933 make imaginative use of various Hungarian folk melodies within orchestral textures that also include the traditional idioms of concert music. These three works are the *Háry János Suite*, *Dances of Marosszék*, and *Dances of Galánta*. These three pieces are closely examined for their adherence to the customs of Hungarian folk music, influence of Western practices within the work, and how Kodály combines the two elements to form original ideas. A brief history of Hungary is also included, as is the evolution of the Hungarian folk music style. Important folk instruments, and noteworthy cultural influences, particularly the traditions of the Roma culture, that directly impact the genre are also examined.

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Chapter One: Introduction

In the beginning of the 20th century, the transcription of Hungarian folk music grew in scope and gained exposure in Europe. The extensive research completed is due in large part to Zoltán Kodály and Béla Bartók. Both of these composers researched and transcribed music from their local communities and wrote a number of pieces that paid homage to the melodies they grew up with. Their extensive field research led to a wide production of works using folk music as its basis, and it has laid ground for other composers in the field of folk music revival.

In terms of scholarly research on Kodály, the central focus has primarily been on Kodály's solo cello works, as well as several of his choral pieces. Ironically, little research has been done on his orchestral works, which have remained some his best-known and popular works to date. These works display Kodály's distinctive style, yet each focuses on a different aspect of folk music origin.

Amongst the various instrumental pieces based on folk melodies, three large-scale works represent Kodály's fascination with Hungarian folk music in a western medium. These are: *Háry János Suite* (1926-27), *Marosszéki Tancok* (Dances of Marosszék (1929), and *Galantai Tancok* (Dances of Galánta (1930). Each of these three works was composed during Kodály's creative period, and each has its own distinct identity.

This thesis has two purposes. The first is to describe the history and study of Hungarian folk music, reveal insights into the different styles of folk music, and identify what aspects of the music remain distinctly Hungarian. A quotation from Kodály's selected writings summarizes his view on what must be considered in order for music to become part of the folk tradition: "Three things are essential for a national literature of music to come into being: first traditions; second individual talent, and third, a spiritual community of many people that accept the manifestation of individual talent as its own."¹

This section also includes a brief biography of Kodály, a short history of Hungary from its early colonization to the Habsburg monarchy and ending around the conclusion to the Second World War. Additionally, a summary of various instrumental techniques and instruments will be included to give insight on the relations between instruments considered "folk instruments" and their conventional counterparts.

The second goal is to determine the relationship between the original folk melodies that Kodály researched and the three orchestral works. Specifically, this aspect of the thesis will identify the areas where each orchestral work is based on Hungarian folk music. This goal also includes an analysis of what aspects of the original folk melodies have remained intact, and which melodies, harmonies, and instrumentation have been manipulated to fit western forms.

¹ Zoltán Kodály and Ferenc Bónis *The Selected Writings of Zoltán Kodály* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1974), 30.

Ultimately the goal of this thesis is to enhance the knowledge of these works for both scholars and performers. Though these pieces are frequently performed, there is little extant research on their historical background, origins in folk element, and cultural significance. There is also a dearth of analysis on these specific works. By exploring the background influences of these works, they can be more fully appreciated.

Each of the three pieces included in this analysis use a variety of folk melodies, yet each has its own distinct characteristics and they still adhere to classical forms and techniques. What remains to be seen is how much of the original folk song remains present in the works and what has been changed to fit modern music.

Chapter Two: Biography of Zoltán Kodály

Zoltán Kodály, was born on 16 December 1886 in Kecskemét, Hungary. His father, Frigyes, was a stationmaster for the Hungarian State Railway Company and an accomplished amateur violinist. His mother, Paulina Jaloveczky, was a singer and pianist. His father's work as an administrator required frequent travelling, and as a result, his family lived in various areas of the Hungarian countryside.

Among the earliest residencies for the Kodály family was the village of Galánta, situated between Budapest and Bratislava in Slovakia. The village has gone through much political and cultural turmoil, including cession to Czechoslovakia in 1920, followed briefly by its return to the Hungarian domain after Hitler dismembered the Czech nation.² It is home to a variety of people from various backgrounds, including Hungarians, Slovaks, and Germans.

Growing up in the countryside of Galánta would become a place of compositional inspiration, as Kodály would write one of his best known pieces, *Dances of Galánta*, based on the melodies he grew up listening to as a child. Galánta is also a significant childhood home for Kodály for he learned to teach himself the cello after learning violin and piano.

Other important childhood residencies for Kodály include Nagyszombat, where Kodály received his first formal education at the local grammar school,

² Percy Young. *Zoltán Kodály: A Hungarian Musician* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1964), 24.

where he played in the school orchestra and even composed a short overture. He also spent much of his time at the cathedral, where he learned to study scores, analyze the masses of Beethoven's *Mass in C Major* and Liszt's *Esztergom Mass*.³ The intense study of these classical masterworks may be one of the main reasons Kodály had such an affinity for vocal music.

In 1900, Kodály traveled to Budapest and enrolled in the Academy of Music. His primary composition instructor was Hans Koessler (1853-1926). Koessler, like his predecessor Robert Vokmann (1815-83), was an ardent Brahms scholar, and he felt compelled to instill the hegemony of German music among his pupils. This proved a difficult sentiment for Kodály to adopt, because it conflicted with his growing view that folk music could serve as the stylistic basis for a compositional style.⁴ Despite their differences in stylistic preference, Koessler saw promise in Kodály. Seeing that Kodály had a keen understanding of harmony and counterpoint (two of Koessler's exacting standards), he wanted to advance Kodály to the second year of classes. Ever humble, Kodály decided to start his studies in the first year class, so that he might further strengthen his knowledge.

Following his four years of study at the Academy, Kodály continued his advanced education at Eötvös College, studying pedagogy and supplementing his education with courses in English, French, German, as well as conducting the student orchestra and composing on occasion. He obtained his doctoral diploma in

³ Ibid., 27.

⁴ Ibid., 29.

1905 and immediately started working on establishing himself as a Hungarian composer. In order to do so, Kodály knew that he would have to master the music of his own people in order to build a solid foundation as a composer.

Up until that point, any research and transcription of Hungarian folk music had been limited, and much of the music that was recorded and notated had significant issues regarding transcription and accuracy. Wanting to solve this issue, Kodály started the arduous task of recording and transcription by returning to his childhood home of Galánta and transcribing around 150 melodies in the summer of 1905.⁵ Following this initial collection, he premiered *Nyári este* (Summer Evening) on 22 October 1906, after which he received a travel scholarship resulting in travels to Berlin in December of 1906, followed by a trip to Paris in 1907. During these brief international visits, Kodály encountered one of his first major compositional influences: the music of Claude Debussy.

When he first declared an interest in transcribing Hungarian folk melodies, Kodály learned that another of Koessler's students, Béla Bartók, was also interested in a similar project. Despite the fact that the two studied with the same teacher and attended the Academy at the same time, they had never met during their years of scholastic study. Thanks to various musical gatherings at the home of Emma Gruber, Kodály and Bartók formed a friendship and professional relationship that would help drive their desire to collect and record folk music. At

⁵ Ibid., 34.

this time, Kodály earned his Ph.D. following the completion of his thesis, *The Stanzaic Structure of Hungarian Folksong* (1906).

In the same year, Kodály and Bartók together had put together a collection of twenty folk songs they had published as a book; the first ten were harmonized by Bartók and the remainder by Kodály. Both composers were adamant about preserving the integrity and originality of their research. Kodály's preface to the collection reiterated their joint philosophy that the peasant music they had collected was the true folk music of Hungary. Percy Young summarizes Kodály's statements in his biography:⁶

Hungarian folk-songs should take their place beside the great works of music of the world and, of course, beside the music of other lands. But this could only be done when mass-produced and fabricated songs masquerading as Hungarian were driven out of circulation. In respect of performance, it was boldly stated that no one could make mistakes if they knew the peasant manner of singing, or if they spoke Hungarian properly. Speech-rhythm was the unfailing guide, and on no account should extraneous rhythmic habits be imposed on those which were indigenous.

Following his return to Hungary in 1908, Kodály was appointed professor at the Academy of Music. In addition to teaching the first-year composition students, Kodály also taught harmony, counterpoint, form, orchestration, and score-reading. Following his appointment, Kodály had a profound influence on future generations of Hungarian composers. Young summarizes the composer's influence on young Hungarian composers as "clear, logical, and unambiguous."⁷ He further claims that, in some ways, Kodály's style is analogous of Palestrina's

⁶ Ibid, 36.

⁷ Ibid, 40.

because it is a testament to time and remains true, despite changing tastes of his contemporaries.

In 1910, Kodály's first public performances of his compositions were presented in Budapest (String Quartet Op. 2, *Zongoramuzsika* [Music for Piano], and Cello Sonata Op. 4), Paris and Zürich (String Quartet No. 1). That same year, he met his wife Emma, who was also a talented composer, pianist, poet, and translator.⁸

By 1913, Kodály and Bartók had collected close to 3000 folk songs, but the reception of their efforts was cold, at best. For the next few years, they continued their research, attempting several times to have their efforts published by the Kisfaludy Society, the leading literary and folk song publication society in Hungary, and were turned down repeatedly. The society had a difficult time accepting the rhythmic and melodic structure of peasant music and soon Kodály turned his attention to composing. Among his influences, Debussy served as inspiration for his *Méditation sur un motif de Claude Debussy* for piano.

After the fall of the Hungarian republic in 1919, Kodály was forced to leave his position as deputy director of the Academy of Music. Furthermore, he was barred from traveling internationally as a result of the recently concluded World War. His luck would begin to turn when Universal Edition started publishing his works in 1921, and the premiere of his *Psalmus Hungaricus* (which

⁸ László Eősze et al. "Kodály, Zoltán." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/subscriber/article/grove/music/15246> (accessed 13 February 2011).

took Kodály only weeks to write) in Budapest on 19 November 1923 gave Kodály international recognition and success for the first time in his career.

During the next few years, Kodály would resume his travels abroad, while producing a number of critical works dedicated to music education at the elementary school level. During this time he continued his study and transcription of Hungarian folk music. Between 1924 and 1932 he published arrangements of 57 folksongs and ballads for piano and voice in 11 books titled *Magyar népzene* (Folk Music of Hungary). In 1927, he composed his singspiel *Háry János*, followed by a six-movement orchestral suite of the same name.

His revision of Hungarian art music was not well received by all. His artistic vision and the compositional integrity of his students were denounced by Béla Diósy in the German periodical *Jeues Pester Journal*.⁹ Kodály responded to the conservative sentiments made by Diósy by writing a reply entitled “Tizenháron Fiatal Zeneszerzo” (Thirteen Young Composers). Kodály states that he “opposes a Hungarian conservatism, nominated by a universal culture. . . . We refuse to be a musical colony any longer. . . . We have our own musical message, and the world is beginning to listen to it attentively.”¹⁰ At the request of Toscanini, Kodály reworked the music for *Summer Evening* (1906) and would end the decade by writing the *Dances of Marosszék* in 1929.

Kodály’s primary focus for the next ten years would be composing for commissions. The first would be the *Dances of Galánta* in 1933, commissioned

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Young, 82.

for the 80th anniversary of the Budapest Philharmonic Society, followed by the *Budavári Te Deum* (1936), celebrating the 250th anniversary of the recapture of Buda from the Turks. Kodály would close out the with the orchestral variations on *Feszálott a páva* (The Peacock) in 1939, for the 50th anniversary of the Concertgebouw and the *Concerto for Orchestra* for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1940. This series of masterworks would serve as the bulk of Kodály's orchestral output and would be some of the last major compositions for orchestra Kodály would write before returning his focus to choral compositions.

With war imminent in Europe, Hungary was in a difficult position regarding allegiances between the Allied forces and the Third Reich. As a result, Kodály and many of his countrymen were forced to hide in various basements and cellars in Hungary. One of the shelters was the air-raid shelter of a Convent School in Propheta Road, where Kodály composed *For St. Agnes's Day* and worked on the score for *Missa Brevis*. Kodály remained in Hungary throughout the war.

Following the premiere of *Missa Brevis* in 1948, at Worcester Cathedral, and the fall of the German Reich, Kodály was honored by several institutions for his contributions to Hungary. He was elected a deputy in the national assembly and chairman of the board of directors for the Academy of Music; he was made president of the Hungarian Art Council and of the Free Organization of Musicians, and he was elected to full membership and then honorary membership

in the Academy of Sciences, which issued commemorative volumes for his 70th, 75th and 80th birthdays.¹¹

Kodály also traveled on an extensive concert tour from September 1946 to June 1947, where he conducted his own works in the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union. He followed this tour with one in Western Europe in 1948 and 1949. He received three Kossuth Prizes in 1948, 1952, and 1957 and he was awarded honorary doctorates by the universities of Budapest (1957), Oxford (1960), East Berlin (1964) and Toronto (1966).

After Kodály's wife passed away on 22 November 1958, he married Sarolta Péczeli, a nineteen-year old student at the Academy of Music. He made another venture to England, where he conducted several works and delivered the Philip Maurice Deneke lecture on 3 May 1960. The title of his lecture was "Folk Music and Art Music in Hungary," and Kodály established his philosophies that art music evolved from folk music and also referenced the melodic and rhythmic structures of Hungarian music.

His final compositions included the *Zrinyi szózata* (Hymn of Zrinyi) for baritone and chorus (1954), the *Symphony in C* (1961), *Mohács* for chorus (1965) and the *Laudes organi* for chorus and organ (1966), which would be his final composition before his death on 6 March 1967 in Budapest.

¹¹ László Eösze "Kodály, Zoltán." *Grove Music Online*.

Chapter Three: Introduction to Hungary and Its Music

Understanding the current use of Hungarian folk song is almost meaningless if the history and tradition of that music is not addressed. Compared to the original compositions of Western nations, the “peasant” music of Hungary has only recently been included in scholastic study and its implementation and use in modern music has not been as plentiful. The first step when considering the history of Hungarian folk music is to look at the history of Hungary itself.

In the edited version of Béla Bartók’s *The Hungarian Folk Song*, Benjamin Suchoff summarizes, from a variety of sources, the ethnomusicological study of the Hungarian people.¹² According to Suchoff, the early linguistic clues to the ancestry of the Hungarian people stem from a prehistoric community of Finno-Ugrian tribes. These tribes lived close to the Karma River, midway between the upper half of the Volga River and the Ural Mountains. Around 500 B.C., the two tribes split into several branches, including the Ostyaks, Voguls, and the Magyars, ancestors of the Hungarians.

The Magyar tribe would fall under the influence of the Bulgar race. The Bulgars would help advance the Magyars in areas of politics, martial arts, and social organization. Around 830 A.D., the Bulgar-Magyars came under the

¹² Béla Bartók. *The Hungarian Folk Song*. Ed. By Benjamin Suchoff, trans. by M.D. Calvocoressi, annotations by Zoltán Kodály. New York Bartók Archive studies in musicology, no. 13. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981), ix-xiv. According to the Editor’s preface, the compilation of this historic background came from a number of sources, including *An Encyclopedia of World History*, ed. W.A. Langer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948), *A History of Hungary*, ed. Ervin Pamlényi (London: Collet’s, 1975), and C.A. Macartney, *Hungary* (London: Ernest Benn, 1934).

influence of the Khazars, another Turkish race. This reign was fairly short because of a revolution. The Khazars then enlisted the aid of the Petchenegs, who forced the Hungarians (Magyars, Bulgars, and Avars) westward into Slavic territory. This “Great Moravia” region is where the Hungarians would establish dominance.

The Árpád dynasty would become the first major monarchy in Hungary. Essentially, it was a loose organization of clans and tribes, headed by forty to fifty chiefs.¹³ Stephen I, crowned the first Christian king in 1000, implemented a county system of organization. Clan chiefs were awarded large grants of land, which would cause a mixing of different races. This would include blending of Magyar and Slavic freeman, as well as serfs and slaves from conquered people. Amongst his other accomplishments, Stephen would consequently form a feudal society, castle-centered and agriculturally based.

After two hundred years of feudal rule, a growth in the crafting and trade industries would cause an influx of workers from the South Slavic territories. This, in addition to north and eastern expansion into Slovak, Ruthenian, and Romanian regions, would result in a large Hungarian population of about two million.

In 1241, Mongols invaded and diminished the Hungarian border to the Danube River. King Béla IV was forced to share his land with Hungarian barons. At this time, the castle-centered way of life was replaced by urban developments

¹³ Ibid., x.

in the form of chartered towns free from feudal obligations.¹⁴ In 1301, Andrew III, last king of the Árpád Dynasty, died, succeeded by Charles I of Anjou. By 1321, thanks to the efforts of the current king, slavery and serfdom ended.

In 1437, Albert of Habsburg–Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia–became the first Habsburg to wear the Hungarian crown. In order to gain the crown, however, Albert gave up certain special rights in return for favor of the Hungarian barons. This would prove advantageous in the following years, as Hungary was able to successfully resist Turkish and Serbian invasions. After a period of civil dissension over land between the peasants and nobles in 1514, Turkish forces destroyed weakened Hungarian forces and occupied Budapest. Additionally Transylvania became a principality under Turkish control and the western (Transdanubia) and northwestern portion of the country was made part of the Habsburg Empire as the “Kingdom of Hungary.”¹⁵

Following Turkish conquest, many Hungarian barons took residence in Vienna. They adopted Austrian customs, became a half-Germanized class of aristocrats, and were granted various government positions and offices in the Hungarian army. Protestantism in various forms replaced the Catholic Church as the dominant religion, with many reformers preaching in the Hungarian vernacular. This awakened a sense of nationality among the German-dominated western lands and led to a development of Hungarian patriotic verse and lyrical poetry.

¹⁴ Ibid, xi.

¹⁵ Ibid, xii.

In 1685, the Turks began to retreat from the central and eastern territories, which would be recovered by Emperor Leopold I. Colonization of the Magyar districts by various nationalities brought in a more diverse social climate. Of the various insurgencies, the most important would be the German influx into the western countries, which reinforced the German character. Other notable movements would include the Slovak colonization of central and south Hungary, Ruthenian entry from the Northeast, and Romanian entry into Transylvanian areas. By 1740, the Magyar population was 45 percent, and was diminished to 39 percent by 1800.¹⁶

Following the defeat of the Rákóczi Rebellion in 1711, the Habsburg monarchy established a period of peace.¹⁷ There would not be another disturbance in the civility of the nation for almost a century, until a brief interruption by Napoleon's forces in 1809. This allowed for an almost complete reconstruction in areas of literacy and education, with a revival of teaching in Latin. Many Protestant reformers also sought to collect and publish numerous historical documents.

After the Magyar barons were fully assimilated into the Austrian population, emperors of the empire wanted to introduce German customs to the Hungarian nation. This would eventually develop into the most influential cultural reformation in Hungary. Nobility, specifically Prince Nikolaus I of Esterházy, and

¹⁶ Ibid., xiii.

¹⁷ István Deák, "Hungary," *The American Historical Review* Vol. 97, No. 4 (Oct., 1992), pp. 1045. (The University of Chicago Press on behalf of the American Historical Association) Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2165492>.

composers outside the Hungarian sphere became acquainted with Hungarian music and customs. In addition, the founding of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1825 would become one of the first academic institutions founded by native Hungarians and not the Habsburg monarchy.

The late nineteenth century caused a reform of music identified as distinctly Hungarian. In particular, the *verbunkos* style that had been closely associated with Roma culture emerged and would eventually be incorporated into the Hungarian national anthem, along with the *czárdás* dance-style and Italian and Viennese influence as well. Historically, the Roma people were commonly referred to as Gypsies. For the purpose of this paper, the more correct association of Roma will be used, except when cited directly by another scholar.

Throughout the middle of the 19th century, several notable composers made ventures to Hungary, including Wagner and Mahler, who served as music director for the Royal Hungarian Opera House in 1884.¹⁸ Liszt was a native Hungarian, but did not speak the native language. However, his contributions to the advancement of Hungarian music, particularly instrumental music, are nonetheless critical in driving its development. Brahms also contributed to establishing a folkloric identity, thanks to his *Hungarian Dances*.

With the development of a national identity in the middle of the century, many aristocrats, untitled nobility, and lower class intellectuals began to bring reform ideas into the political circles and talks of turning Hungary into a

¹⁸ László Eősze “Zoltán Kodály,” *New Grove Online, Oxford Music Online*.

sovereign, centralized, Magyar-dominated nation began to surface.¹⁹ An attempted revolution in 1848 failed and, after much debate, a creation of a Dual Austrian/Hungarian Monarchy served as a compromise.²⁰ The separate metropolises of Buda and Pest were united in 1873 and would become the Hungary's capital city.

At the turn of the century, efforts fronted by Bishop Mikály Horváth and other noted scholars led to an enormous output of documentary collections. By the onset of World War I, over 120 volumes were already published, and historians were finally able to produce historical documents identifiable as uniquely Hungarian. This increase in historiography would spark a dualistic nation, with reformers and liberals on one side, and on the other, more conservative, "old-fashioned chauvinists."²¹

After devastating losses of territory and citizens in World War I, Hungary suffered numerous power shifts and reorganization of its political system. Changes included a loss of two-thirds of its pre-war territory and nearly sixty percent of its pre-war population.²² As refugees and immigrants from Germany, Slavic and Jewish populations flooded into the country, Hungarians needed a cultural revival, with national traditions and customs being placed above cultures of the many immigrants.

¹⁹ Deák, "Hungary," 1046.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 1048.

²² Ibid., 1050.

This is not to be mistaken for an elimination of extra-cultural activities, but a reinforcement of ideals that were being oppressed. Whether this revival of Hungarian heritage is what sparked the interests of Kodály and Bartók is unknown, but it most likely had implications regarding their desire to research the music of their native homeland. The next few decades became the critical years in which Bartók and Kodály completed the bulk of their folk music research. Additionally, the inter-war period historians produced a massive, five-volume history of Hungary, four of which were completed by Gyula Szekfű (1883-1955).²³ As Szekfű stressed the importance of Western influence, other historians called for the restoration of Hungarian values. Amongst their chief criticisms of the past few hundred years of Hungarian history, many claimed that the Habsburg dynasty wanted little else other than the exploitation of the Hungarian nation.

At the onset of World War II, Hungary was initially a neutral country. However, German occupation in 1944 caused a massive upheaval in Hungarian society, and the nation was forced to participate in the anti-Soviet war, and over half a million of the hitherto-protected Jews were deported to Auschwitz.²⁴ The war also resulted in massive losses in several major libraries and archives.

The years following the war saw several local parties supporting a number of different ideologies, including Stalinism and Marxism. The USSR occupied the country after World War II, led by Mátyás Rákosi. The Communist party became the official governing party, and a number of liberals and free-thinkers fled the

²³ Ibid., 1049.

²⁴ Ibid., 1053.

country in the following years. In 1989, the socialist and communist leaders were overthrown and Hungary essentially became a “national liberal” nation, similar to moderate Republicans in the United States.²⁵

²⁵ Ibid, 1063.

Previous Scholarship on Hungarian Folk Music

If studying the history of a nation's people gives us insight as to what influences, traditions, and customs help form a sense of national identity, the next logical step is to evaluate the material at hand. In order to understand the importance and validity of Kodály's research, one essential question must be answered. What forms and constitutes folk music? Bartók aptly summarizes the meaning of folk music in the introduction to his book. He states "the term 'peasant music' connotes, broadly speaking, all the tunes which endure among the peasant class of any nation, in a more or less wide area and for a more or less long period, and constitute a spontaneous expression of the musical feeling of that class."²⁶

While this question seems to be quite daunting and challenging to answer, several criteria help define and polish one's description of folk music. One of the most important identifiers of folk music is there must be a sense of *community*. This association has many facets that make it a vital and meaningful function in understanding folk music. It helps develop a sense of belonging, is critical in preserving the notes and text within folk-based melodies, distributes localized music past the limited boundaries of a few individuals, and distinguishes the music of a specific group population or group of people from another.

²⁶ Bartók, *The Hungarian Folk Song*, 1. Bartók further defines the peasant class: "It is that part of the population engaged in producing prime requisites and materials, whose need for expression, physical and mental, is more or less satisfied either with forms of expression corresponding to its own tradition, or with forms which, although originating in a higher (urban) culture, have been instinctively altered so as to suit its own outlook and disposition."

The first criterion that should be addressed is the sense of belonging to an identified group of people. In his introduction to the *Catalogue of Hungarian Folksong Types*, László Dobszay speaks at length about how a *sense of community as a whole is more significant than simply labeling individuals as part of a “fundamental strata.”*²⁷ The definition of a “fundamental strata” can be construed as the basic identifier that describes a number of individuals with a specific culture, social class, or other sociological association. Dobszay further explains his views on the role of community as it relates to folksong claiming music that can be considered as such is not simply music of the individuals within the fundamental strata.

He reinforces his point using a quotation from Bartók: “Folksong, as Bartók puts it, is the music that ‘many sing for a long time’. So folksong becomes the song of the folk through longstanding use in the community. It expresses the people’s tastes, the realm of their emotions, and their inward attitudes.”²⁸ Dobszay’s principal argument regarding this issue is that the word “community” means more than a group of people with an overall commonality; it is a sense of belonging which evokes a sense of pride in the product by which they themselves create, in this case, music.

The next issue is the preservation and retention of “peasant music” in relation to modern music. Bartók’s article on the influence of said “peasant

²⁷ László Dobszay and Janka Szendrei. *Catalogue of Hungarian Folksongs Types, Arranged According to Styles, I*. Translated by Mária Steiner. Translation revised by Brian McLean. (Budapest: Nyomkaipari Kft., 1992), 8.

²⁸ Ibid.

music” on modern music sheds light on the difficulties that arise when preserving folk music. His first point is that, unlike original melodies, using folk music binds the composer to the individual characteristics of that melody and that folk music must be penetrated and felt in order to bring out its best properties.

Kodály further supports this claim in his selected writings on what is Hungarian in music. He crafts a more concise argument, as he distinguishes the differences between preferences in Hungarian music and that of the more modern German and Western European styles.²⁹ While Hungarians are not blind or ignorant of the musical tastes of its surrounding countries, they have certain preferences in classical music pieces that conflict with more popular compositional styles of contemporary composers such as Bruckner and Mahler.

In general, Hungarians prefer music that resembles the Roma style, where string and woodwind textures are favored over loud, brass textures. Most pieces, even on a larger scale, are significantly shorter than much of the German and Post-Romantic output. This is not to be interpreted as a nationalistic quality that defines Hungarians as uneducated or ignorant of the modern trends occurring in Europe. Rather, Kodály believed that the Hungarian population needed to be introduced to other styles of classical music in a more sophisticated manner, rather than imposing other customs on Hungarian music. This path should be followed so that Hungarian music can be elevated to the same strata as other musical cultures.

²⁹ Kodály, *Selected Writings*, 31.

Another critical element of folk music tradition is means by which it is retained. In the case of Hungarian folk music, oral tradition has a much more prominent role than written tradition. Kodály notes that, “while most Hungarians are proficient in literary understanding, *all* Hungarians, including the middle classes, were musically illiterate until the end of the nineteenth century.”³⁰ This might have been a controversial argument since he included those above the “peasant class” in his analytical spectrum.

He supports his claim by stating that, while many participated in music making, the notation of music was only used in exceptional circumstances. He also claims that unaccompanied solo songs, both old and newer styles, were historically passed by oral tradition, and not through notation. Dobszay does point out one pertinent issue regarding oral tradition. By its very nature, oral tradition has a higher likelihood of developing variations of the melody as it is being taught. This is to be expected, as universal interpretation is an incredibly difficult tradition to maintain, especially when learning music. Dobszay does distinguish that variation in folk music is not a result of ignorance or forgetfulness. Instead he states, “It is an assertion on the melody of the musical tastes of a particular community.”³¹ As a result, alterations are not a consequence of poor teaching or lack of understanding; rather, they are a product of specific cultures that develop nuances specific to their tastes and needs.

³⁰ Zoltán Kodály. *Folk Music of Hungary*. (New York: Macmillan Company, 1960), 13.

³¹ Dobszay, 9.

Thanks to the exhaustive efforts of Kodály and Bartók, scholarly study on the history of Hungarian folk music has advanced greatly since the early nineteenth century. Once passed down almost exclusively through oral tradition, the collected transcriptions of these two composers provide a more detailed historical account of the music of Hungary's past.

Music needs a sense of communal significance in order for it to be classified as folk music. While many pieces of music may be important to a certain nation or group of people, folk music specifically demands a sense of pride and national identity in order for it be placed within the scope of folk music. While folk music is being increasingly incorporated into modern mediums, and while music of this genre may not be an original creation of the composer, it presents its own challenges when being used in contemporary works.

Classification of Folk Music

The collection and classification of Hungarian folk music has undergone several stages throughout history. The study of the subject does not have an exact timeline, but the earliest research seems to have been completed in 1782, when Miklós Révai sent a request for submission of folk songs. At that time, there was a fascination with the general concept of folk music collection and not the specific preservation of Hungarian “peasant music.”

A newfound stimulation for research on Hungarian melodies arose in the nineteenth century. Composer-poets such as Ferenc Kazinczy and Kálmán Simonffy served as early pioneers of interest, although their fascination with folk music appeared to be peripheral in nature. Subsequent materials from other scholars include collections by Károly Színi, István Baralus, János Arany, and Áron Kiss.³²

Following this collection, the turn of the century produced a larger number of tunes recorded on phonographs. The primary source for these collections is Béla Vikár, who recorded 1492 tunes on wax cylinders that are currently stored in the Ethnographical Section of the Hungarian National Museum. Shortly thereafter, Ákos Garay recorded another 47 melodies, which were notated by Kodály and Bartók. The remaining tunes were collected by Kodály and would eventually form the *A Magyar Népzene* (1937).

³² Sárosi, *Folk Music*, 12-13.

The next process following the recording of these numerous collections would be the classification. Kodály and Bartók would use the strophic nature of folk music as their primary consideration, and each would develop different sets of classifications. Kodály's system organizes melodies by rhythmic properties. He divides vocal music into two types, music in the old style and new style. It is further revealed that the old style contains far fewer melodies and the new style, and the old traditions are gradually dying out. Both traditions use strophic-based forms as standard construction, and both utilize the characteristic pentatonic scale.

Kodály's two styles do contain a few differences. These differences can most likely be attributed to the Austrian and Germanic influence that dominated the nineteenth century. Often, folk songs written in the new style include more varied directions in the melody, greater flexibility in rhythm, expanded harmonies beyond the pentatonic scale (specifically the Aeolian and Dorian scales), and more variations from the original melody. It is also noted that songs written in the new style, while not considered melismatic, place more importance on certain syllables than others, a practice not commonly found in the old style.

Kodály would later expand his two-part division to include additional sections on dirges, children's songs, and an additional section on instrumental music and the relationship of Hungarian folk music and popular art song. His *Magyar Népzene* (Folk Music of Hungary) represented the culmination of this additional research. Bartók approached folk song with a slightly different angle and classification system than Kodály.

Bartók's system divides "Hungarian Peasant Music" into three categories: the old style, new style, and other tunes of a mixed class. Like Kodály, he places tunes that primarily use a pentatonic scale in the old style, whereas new tunes use modal scales. He further expands strophic analysis by categorizing old style music into six sections: eight or twelve syllable text lines, six syllables, seven syllables, eleven syllables, ten syllables, and nine syllables. New music is categorized similarly, but adds the extra dimension of isorhythmic, heterorhythmic (while still isometric), and heterometric.³³

Music that does not fit within the previously written categories, or is of "alien origin," is placed in a third category. This category differs in content from Kodály's in that it is based on the musical properties of the music at hand, rather than the purpose or common usage to which it applies. One example is the use of the augmented second. Bartók emphasizes that the augmented second is of Roma origin, rather than specifically Hungarian. While never stated explicitly in his own book, Kodály did agree that, while the augmented second is not deeply rooted in Hungarian origin, it is a significant part of the musical tradition.³⁴

³³ Bartók, *Folk Music of Hungary*, 46.

³⁴ Sárosi, *Instrumental Folk Music*, 32.

Old Style: Pandiatonicism

In the old folk music style, there are a few characteristics that have been identified as specific to Hungary. One of the most prominent features of the old style is the pentatonic scale. Kodály stresses that while it is an identifying feature, it is not the only characteristic element. While it is commonly found in music throughout the country, it has widespread use in the Székely region, among the Bucovina Csángószylys, and it is also found in Transdanubia and the Uplands.³⁵

The Hungarian pentatonic scale is similar to the natural minor scale, but with the second and sixth scale degrees removed. In the key of A, the scale is: A-C-D-E-G. Kodály also mentions that the seventh scale degree (in this case, G) below tonic and the second pitch above tonic (in this case C) are often included in some melodies, creating a scale resembling G-A-C-D-F-G-A-C. In others, the seventh scale degree is omitted completely, resulting in A-C-D-E:

Ex. 1 Typical Hungarian Scale as described by Kodály³⁶



Kodály further explains this tetratonic scale as “anemitonic-type pentatony.”³⁷

Omitting the second and sixth scale degree, while common, is not a fundamental factor in the melodic structure of folk music. Often, the second and sixth degrees

³⁵ Kodály, *Selected Writings*, 11.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

are included, but usually only in passing, and modal scales such as Dorian, Aeolian, or Phrygian are created.³⁸

Further insights into this expansion from a pentatonic scale to a modal scale reveal that oral tradition and use of non-chord tones eventually transform a pentatonic scale into a modal one. Andrew Alan Smith's dissertation on Kodály's Cello Sonata, Op. 8 further explains that subtle changes in intonation may be made in performance, leading to an alteration of pitches.³⁹ Both Bartók and Kodály emphasize that, while modal scales are a common factor in folk melodies, the pentatonic scale is the primary tonal system by which Hungarian folk music is based. Kodály further states that:⁴⁰

In view of the facet that even our villages have long been overwhelmed with music in major and minor keys, it is surprising that the pentatonic system survived in a completely pure state, even if only in a dozen or so examples. The pentatonic foundation has remained unaffected, however, even in songs influenced by the seven-note scale. In turn, songs based on heptatony have adopted some pentatonicisms.

Kodály believed that a tune is identifiable as modal only if there is a strong relationship between dominant and tonic, which would bring it closer to a Western tonal structure. Essentially, Hungarian folk music, while influenced by

³⁸ Bartók, *Folk Music of Hungary*, 18.

³⁹ Alan Andrew Smith. "Aspects of Hungarian folk music in Zoltán Kodály's Sonata for Unaccompanied Violoncello, Opus 8." (D.M.A. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1998), in *Dissertations & Theses: Full Text* [database on-line]; available from <http://www.proquest.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048> (publication number AAT 9840813; accessed 13 February 2011), 6.

⁴⁰ Kodály, *Select Writings*, 20.

other European cultures, remains distinctly Hungarian thanks to its use of the pentatonic scale.

Old Style: *Parlando-Rubato Rhythm, Tempo Giusto*

Another important aspect of old style Hungarian music classification is the meter and rhythm used. There are two primary types of meter, *parlando-rubato* rhythm and *tempo giusto*. Each is associated with specific types of melodies, but neither is strictly confined to those types. Instead, they serve as guiding principles, indicating which category a folk song falls under, whether it is an upbeat dance tune, or an emotional song reminiscent of sadness and grief. *Parlando-rubato* is often associated with slower sung melodies with connotations of sadness. As its name implies, this tempo type utilizes slower, more drawn-out rhythms and syllables that are suspended in length. Also, dance rhythms are avoided, as required by the text.

While free rhythm is a typical feature of the *parlando* style, it does not mean that all free rhythm songs are classified as such. Compared to pieces considered *hallgató* (music for listening), *parlando* style pieces give a different treatment of the melody. In most cases, “the melody respects the requirements of speech as far as possible, at the same time asserting its own laws as well.”⁴¹ While the significance of text over melody is not an exclusive device in Hungarian music, its use in folk music means stylistic devices are not easily learned by the

⁴¹ Bálint Sárosi. *Folk Music: Hungarian Music Idiom*, trans. Maria Steiner, Laura Schiff and J.E. Solloway (Corvina: Franklin Publishing House, 1986), 37.

untrained ear. Instead, they must be practiced, understood, and felt in order to correctly interpret the meaning of the music.

Tempo giusto typically translates into “strict” tempo. It is commonly attributed to fast dance pieces and is more commonly found in both the old and new styles. As its name implies, there is far less rhythmic freedom found in *tempo giusto*, although it is not completely void of rubato placements. Furthermore, it uses far less ornamentation than *parlando-rubato*. It is not a defining and exclusive characteristic of Hungarian folk music, as it is more often found in Roma and Bulgarian music. Perhaps this is why *tempo giusto* is not discussed in as much detail as *parlando* style. While it is a common feature, its lack of exclusivity makes it a common practice in classical music as a whole, relieving it of its identifier status in Hungarian music.

New Style

In the nineteenth century, the influence of the Viennese tradition (specifically the *Singspiel*) and other European devices led to a change in the folk music of Hungary. With Liszt gaining notoriety as the pioneering figure interested in Hungarian music, along with Brahms and other noted composers, folk music saw a change and revival of music that was once only intimately known within the borders of Hungary.

Amongst its innovations in vocal style, the new wave of Hungarian music saw a change from pentatonic tonality to more modal usage. The pentatonic scale still remained vital to the genre, but its lack of a leading tone made it less popular in the Viennese/Hungarian pieces being produced. Additionally, the advancement of instruments, along with a fascination with Roma and *verbunkos* customs, led to the creation of new idioms and styles of “peasant music.”

***Verbunkos* and Roma Traditions**

One of the most important advancements in Hungarian folk music in the nineteenth century is the rise in popularity of the *verbunkos* style. Early appearances occurred in the middle of the eighteenth century, when it was incorporated into the recruiting ceremony of military figures. Its origin and sources are not completely known. In his *Concise History of Hungarian Music*, Bence Szabolcsi traces several sources of the *verbunkos* style to the traditions of

the old Hungarian popular music, certain Levantine, Balkan and Slavic elements, as well as Roma and Viennese-Italian traditions.

In 1848, the Hungarian insurgency led by Lajos Kossuth changed the role of the *verbunkos* from a military musical custom to the widely popular dance tradition that remains extant.⁴² It was also popularized thanks in part to the efforts of violinist Márk Rósavölgyi, whose dance compositions helped develop the genre. Rósavölgyi expanded on the dance elements of the style, transforming the style into two parts, *lassu* (slow) and *friss* (fast) patterns. These two dances became vehicles to showcase the instrumental talents of Roma performers, who helped make it synonymous with the new Hungarian style.⁴³

As the popularity of instrumental music increased, the need for professional musicians increased accordingly.⁴⁴ This, coupled with an increased level of difficulty of performance, led to an influx of Roma performers into Hungary. Their impact on Hungarian music remains controversial, but is essential when discussing the development of the *verbunkos* style.

The earliest, direct associations tying *verbunkos* with Roma traditions began shortly following the newly favored “Hungarian style” compositions such as Schubert’s *Divertissement*, various Hungarian rondos by Haydn and Weber, and Brahms’s *Three Hungarian Dances*.⁴⁵ The style took on a new role, developing a new more advanced set of characteristics. Some of these include the

⁴² Suchoff, *Hungarian Folk Song*, xvi.

⁴³ Smith, 13.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Bence Szabolcsi, *A Concise History of Hungarian Music* (London, Corvina, 1964), 56.

use of the augmented second, running sets of triplets, alternating “slow” and “fresh” tempi, widely arched, free melodies without words (*halltató*), and fiery (*cifra*) rhythms.⁴⁶ These characteristics, along with a developed sense of performance and creativity, made the *verbunkos* style an ideal medium for the Roma performer.

Perhaps the most pertinent issue of the Roma/Hungarian tradition is the association of Roma music with Hungarian national style in the 19th century. As the popularity of Roma music grew, their widespread presence throughout Europe led many to believe that the musical stylings of the Roma people were also the national folk music traditions of Hungary. While this question requires an extensive and in-depth answer, it is the goal of this section not to clarify this subject in full, but to merely shed light on its presence in the writings of Kodály and Bartók.

Neither Bartók nor Kodály were ignorant of the importance Roma music had on Hungarian folk music. Their main objection was that they felt the general public automatically assumed “so-called gypsy music” was the distinguishing characteristic of Hungarian music. Bartók’s commentary on the presence of “Gypsy music” is summarized in an appendix in his *Folk Music of Hungary*.⁴⁷ In this one-page summary, Bartók asks, “What do Gipsy musicians play in Hungary?”⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Smith, 14.

⁴⁸ Bartók, *Folk Music of Hungary*, 99.

His answer to this question is that Roma people generally perform popular Hungarian art tunes, an occasional folk melody, and art music from Western Europe (waltzes, etc.). They would often adjust the content of their programs to fit the needs of the classes they were entertaining, which required a very diverse repertory on their part. The need for a wide variety of music, paired with localized performance contexts, could explain why many thought the music of the Roma people was Hungarian.

Another problematic element of the Roma presence in Hungary is the fact that the music they often play cannot truly be considered “folk music.” In his dissertation, Andrew Alan Smith makes the distinction that “to consider the urban popular music that gypsies played to be ‘folk music’ was to disregard the enormous tradition of old style folk music that had existed for centuries before the gypsies inherited the professional musical tradition.”⁴⁹ He supports his claim with a quotation from Bartók, where he states that “The [gypsy orchestras] distorted the *parlando-rubato* melodies, with excessive *rubato* and with florid and exaggerated embellishment, until they made them unrecognizable.”⁵⁰

This quotation, while strongly critical, was not meant to be derogatory towards the Roma musician. Instead, it was meant to emphasize the distinction that, while Roma musicians were the dominant presence in Hungarian music at the time, certain fundamentals were not inherent in their music, which prevented

⁴⁹ Smith, 15.

⁵⁰ Judit Frigyesi, “Béla Bartók and the Concept of Nation and 'Volk' in Modern Hungary,” *The Musical Quarterly* 78, no. 2 (Summer 1994): 255-87, <http://www.jstor.org/www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/stable/742543> (accessed 17 April 2011), 271.

it from truly being identified as Hungarian. In fact, both Bartók and Kodály used musical idioms of the Roma people in their later works, as is the case in Kodály's *Dances of Galánta* and Bartók's *Contrasts for Clarinet, Violin and Piano*.

Instrumental Music and Traditional Instruments

While the main content of folk music is dedicated to vocal music, instrumental music has gained popularity, following the increase in its output in the nineteenth century. The study of instrumental music comprises a significantly smaller portion of folk melodies. When Bartók and Kodály planned on publishing the *Corpus Musicae Popularis Hungaricae* in 1913, they had collected around 3,000 vocal melodies and only 100 instrumental melodies.⁵¹ As this paper focuses on three instrumental works by Kodály, it is necessary to have an understanding on the basic elements of instrumental folk music.

The traditions of instrumental folk music differ slightly from those of vocal music. Since instrumental music is not as well known as the vocal melodies, fewer performers are able to participate at one time. It is also difficult to please the various listeners who surround the instrumental performer. Kodály states that instrumental music is difficult to perform because the audience is critical and discriminating.⁵² He includes a story of a young village Roma in Transylvania

⁵¹ Bálint Sárosi, "Instrumental Folk Music in Kodály's Works: The Galánta and Marosszék Dances," *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* T. 25, Fasc. 1/4 (1983), 23

⁵² Kodály, *Folk Music of Hungary*, 112.

who said it was the most difficult to perform in front of elderly Hungarians because they could never perform as they really wanted.

Identifying and describing common instruments found in Hungarian folk music is also a critical element. The instruments that will become the focus of this paper are the bagpipe, clarinet (both gypsy and *tarogatő* styles), and the violin. There are other instruments significant to the history and repertoire of Hungarian music, including various types of flutes, the zither, and the hurdy-gurdy.

The bagpipe is one of the central instruments in Hungarian folk music. It has a long history, dating back to at least the fourteenth century. Its usage varied from aristocratic orchestras in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to use in the church during pastoral Christmas services.⁵³ It is the only folk instrument that has its own exclusive repertory. Eventually the violin, vocal, and other instrumental genres were included in performances.

Bagpipe music and its offspring often employ dance-like rhythms, piquant texts and major hexachord and octave scales.⁵⁴ They are made from a variety of materials, usually leather or animal skin and can be played using either a mouth-blown pipe or a bellow pipe. In some Eastern populations, performers can actually learn to circular breathe in order to play the bagpipe without filling the bag. This performance technique is diminishing, but still remains extant. Unlike the bagpipes used in Scotland and other Highland regions, the Hungarian bagpipe is not a principal instrument in the military tradition. Instead it is most widely used

⁵³ Lajos Vargyas. *Folk Music of the Hungarians* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2005), 179.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 183.

by lower class citizens, usually shepherds. It is closely related to the clarinet and oboe, and most of the pipes are fitted with reeds that resemble either one of these instruments.

The next instrument that is widely used in Hungarian music is the clarinet. Some sources, such as Balint Sárosi, mention a specific type of clarinet, called the *Gypsy clarinet*. Its presence in Hungary is relatively new, as it was transplanted from Western Europe beginning at the end of the eighteenth century. Its initial role was not as a featured soloist; instead, it served as a novelty instrument. Even as it gained popularity in the peasant music scene, the clarinet was not considered as virtuosic as the violin. However, in the Roma tradition, the clarinet did become a more virtuosic instrument, as these performers were able to draw out the more technical aspects of the instrument.

Related to the clarinet is the *tárogató*. Its construction varies. Its early versions resemble the oboe, although the reed is shorter, and the root of the reed was covered by a disk that resembled a mouthpiece on a trumpet. This version was popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and has since become extinct. The newer style of *tárogató* is a single reed instrument, similar to the modern clarinet. This *tárogató* is often called the *Schunda tárogató*, named after developers József V. Schunda and János Stowasser, in order to distinguish it from its original predecessor.⁵⁵ It has a new role in modern Hungarian music; it

⁵⁵ Sárosi, *Folk Music: The Hungarian Idiom*, 132.

has become synonymous with the Kuruc movement in the war of freedom against the Habsburg monarchy.⁵⁶

Another prominent folk instrument in Hungary is the violin. While it is not exclusive to Hungarian music, it has significant use in the history of Hungarian folk music and should be mentioned. Its exact origin in Hungary is difficult to place, as only one word (*hegedű*) was used to describe several bowed instruments. The “Hungarian fiddle” differs from the “Italian” or “German” fiddle in that it has a smaller body and has sharper angles. It is held in a manner similar to older European styles: loosely against the shoulder or chest, hanging down and slanting forward.⁵⁷ This is done so the performer is less strained in performance, enabling him or her to play for longer periods of time. It also produced a reedier sound, which was necessary in order to hear the sound of the instrument in loud performance settings.

The violin’s use in history varies. Its predecessor was the medieval fiddle, which was initially used as accompaniment for minstrel songs. The fiddle would eventually develop into a more modern style and was incorporated into dance music after the seventeenth century. It replaced the bagpipe in several regions, although the Northern regions still incorporate a bagpipe and violin ensemble tradition. At one point, Puritan moralists declared playing the violin in dance music to be offensive, and a decree was issued in 1649, stating that “Whoever plays the fiddle, the cimbalom, the *koboz* [a short-necked version of the lute] the

⁵⁶ Smith, 12.

⁵⁷ Vargyas, 190.

lute or the pipe either at houses or in taverns on a Sunday, and is caught at it, will have the fiddle taken away from him and thrown to the ground, and he himself be put to the pillory.”⁵⁸

Other moralists demanded that fiddlers and bagpipers be banished from wedding ceremonies. As a result, many instrumental musicians, especially fiddlers, were ostracized. This backlash against Hungarian musicians is the principal reason why Roma performers rose as the primary performers of violin music in Hungary.

⁵⁸ Sárosi, *Folk Music: The Hungarian Idiom*, 137.

Chapter Four: Analysis of Three Orchestral Works

Almost immediately following his primary research on Hungarian folk music, Kodály wrote a series of works that merge the music of his countrymen and western idioms. Included in this series are three orchestral works that have since become masterworks of the orchestral genre. The *Háry János Suite*, *Dances of Marosszék*, and the *Dances of Galánta* incorporate a variety of folk music, and each has its own challenges and nuances for performance contexts that set them apart, not only from each other, but from other orchestral works of the same time period.

All three of these are special in terms of their form and treatment of melody, and Kodály is fluidly able to produce works that pay homage to his native country. He is able to integrate distinct Hungarian folk music elements in each work, while making the music accessible to performers unfamiliar with these elements. They are prime examples of works that fuse together internal, nationalistic qualities with exterior resources and each work uses a different type of folk music as its foundation.

Háry János Suite

Composed in 1926-27, the *Háry János Suite* is Kodály's first major work for orchestra, based on the opera of the same name. János Breuer attributes that the idea for the suite actually came from Bartók, who was pleased with the comic opera. In fact, the suite is so similar to the music in the opera that Kodály made only a few changes to the music.⁵⁹

Kodály's opera *Háry János* was a source of frustration for the composer. A number of scores and librettos were handed to Kodály as possibilities for art music, but he found that none accurately portrayed the lifestyle of the Hungarian people. In 1924, the Hungarian press announced that the country first prose theatre, the National, was to stage a *népszínmű*⁶⁰ entitled *Háry János*, adapted by the journalist and cabaret writer Béla Paulini and Zsolt Harsányi.⁶¹

There were several problems throughout its development. Kodály was constantly submitting revisions and additional interludes at the request of director Sándor Hevesi and composer Miklós Radnai. Despite Kodály's assurance that the piece had been complete, Radnai requested several times that Kodály submit the piano score so that parts could be written.

Kodály also seemed to have problems submitting the requested interludes. One in particular, the *Intermezzo*, was not submitted until just before the opera's

⁵⁹ János Breuer, *A Guide to Kodály* (Budapest, Hungary: Corvina, 1990), 103.

⁶⁰ A *népszínmű* translates into a play about Hungarian village life with popular art-music interludes.

⁶¹ Breuer, 93.

scheduled premiere in October 1926. Breuer further states that “No one knows today which sections of the music, apart from the *Intermezzo*, were completed at the last minute, and which sections were even then not complete.”⁶² Even after its premiere, Kodaly was still submitting and composing sections that would take him over a year to complete. The opera was performed for the first time in its entirety on 10 January 1928, at the Opera House, along with the *Theatre Overture* and three new vocal pieces. Even after this premiere, it has been said that new abbreviations and revisions appeared up until 1963.⁶³

Its premiere and following performances had mixed reactions. Often times, producers outside the Hungarian sphere made alterations to the plot in order to make it more applicable to an international audience. By December 1930, the opera had 25 performances, including successful performances in Cologne, Aachen, and throughout Budapest. At the time, performances in other major German cities were non-existent, thanks to the ban Hitler ordered on international works. Following the Second World War, it was performed in Berlin, and finally New York in 1960, and Britain in 1982.

The story of *Háry János* is based on an actual historical figure of the nineteenth century. Aside from this statement, little is known about the true background of the title character. Kodály summarizes his sentiments about the opera:⁶⁴

⁶² Ibid., 95.

⁶³ Ibid., 96.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 98.

He is much more than a jovial character, a Hungarian *miles gloriosus* (a swashbuckling soldier): he is the incarnation of the Hungarian story-telling imagination. He does not lie, he creates a tale; he is a poet. What he relates has never happened, but he has lived it through, and so it is truer than reality.

In the music too something similar was needed for the play; I do not know how far I have succeeded. But I know that the songs of the actors are good. Each and every one of them comes from folk traditions, and at the cost of an hour or two's travel they can still be heard in the village. They are more suitable than any personal lyricism for giving the effect of "lyrical authenticity" on the lips of the actors. They are pearls, whose setting alone comes from me. I have tried to be worthy of them.

The opera is a tale of the adventures of Háy János during the Napoleonic wars. It is divided into four parts, with a prologue and epilogue. It concerns the tales of Háy János, an elderly soldier who fought for this country during the Napoleonic wars. The opera is saturated with Hungarian lore and idioms that make it very specialized in terms of its performances. The opera as Kodály wrote it is rarely seen: most performances are adaptations, with several of the more nationalistic elements removed.

The first act, titled *I. Adventure*, is the story of how Háy helped several members of the Austrian nobility, including Marie-Louise, the daughter of Emperor Franz of Austria, to cross the Austrian/Prussian border. As a reward, Háy and his betrothed, Örzse, are escorted to Vienna. In the second act, Háy tames Lucifer, the most unbridled of horses in the imperial guard, and he is thus favored by Marie-Louise. The jealous Knight Ebelastin uses his connection with Napoleon to declare war on Austria.

In Act III, Hány is taken prisoner. Marie-Louise asks him to marry her. Örzse does not approve of this, but it appears she has no say in the matter. Act IV concludes with preparations for Marie-Louise and Hány's wedding. After much debate and the realization that it would be an ill-favored match, Hány is released from his obligations and is allowed to return to his hometown of Nagyabony with Örzse.

The *Hány János Suite* was completed shortly after the opera. Almost all of the movements of the suite are derived directly from the instrumental interludes of the opera. In fact, only two of the movements of the suite, the "Intermezzo" and the "Battle and Defeat of Napoleon," differ from the original version in the opera, and most of these differences are simply a varied ordering of the melodies from a different interlude.

Comprised of six movements, the suite represents some of the best orchestral music from the opera. At times, the music seems representative of the traditional Hungarian style, while others rely on conventional Western techniques such as the *rondeau* forms favored by François Couperin. The most evident uses of Hungarian idioms are in the "Intermezzo," and the second movement, "The Viennese Musical Clock." The "Intermezzo" often interchanges between sections that use *verbunkos* style rhythms, alternating with standard triadic harmonies and melodic lines. "The Viennese Musical Clock" is the only movement in which Bálint Sárosi references a Hungarian instrumental melody. The melody was

originally part of a natural trumpet melody recorded and transcribed by Kodaly in 1912:

Ex. 1 Zoltán Kodály, unnamed Hungarian melody performed by Székely shepherd (Source:⁶⁵)



Ex. 2 Zoltán Kodály, *Háry János Suite*, “Viennese Musical Clock,” mm. 5-8

Allegretto ♩ = 116

The opening of the first movement, *Prelude: The Fairy Tale Begins*, opens in a very unusual manner. The *tutti* orchestra opens with a French augmented sixth chord, spelled with the enharmonic tritone, spelled C-E-G-flat-B-flat. It is played pizzicato in the strings and sustained through a trill in the woodwinds. However, this chord never resolves to the dominant. In fact, the orchestra instead plays an ascending chromatic scale, ending on yet another French augmented

⁶⁵ Sárosi, “Instrumental Music,” 25.

sixth chord. Additionally puzzling is the fact that the movement is written in a major tonality.

Another way to analyze this chord is to consider it part of the whole-tone scale. This analysis is perhaps more appropriate since spelling the chord as an augmented sixth chord often implies a minor tonality, which is never satisfied in the movement. After the energetic entrance, the cellos enter softly with the principal theme, written in a traditional Hungarian pentatonic scale with an added sixth. The theme is presented in a strophic-like fashion, passing from the lower strings into the upper strings, and finally incorporating the upper woodwinds.

Throughout the movement, there are only a handful of defined harmonic progressions. One of particular note is where the contrabasses play a rising and falling harmonic line that is essentially a juxtaposition of two non-traditional pentatonic scales. With the exception of this progression, the harmonies remain strictly tertian throughout the rest of the movement, an unlikely characteristic for a nationalistic, Hungarian melody-based piece.

If Kodály followed the order of the acts of the opera, the next movement in the suite would be the “Song.” However, this movement is actually an interlude found halfway through the second act, the “Viennese Musical Clock.” It opens with solo bells playing on a repeated phrase built on tonic, dominant, supertonic, and returning back to dominant (see example 2). Also set in strophic form, this movement closely emulates its title. It remains in the tonic key of E-flat throughout most of the movement, except for brief modulations into the

neighboring keys of F major and B-flat major. There are almost no distinct Hungarian elements throughout the movement, which is perhaps appropriate since it is written in the Viennese style.

The third movement, “Song,” is derived from the opera’s second scene of the first act, “A Hussar is Playing the Pipe.” In the opera, the flute plays the principal line, accompanied by the cimbalom.⁶⁶ In the suite, the solo viola plays the opening line, followed by a melismatic clarinet line that is similar to melodies found in Kodály’s later works:

Ex. 3, Zoltán Kodály, *Háry János Suite*, “Song” mm. 1-15

Andante, poco rubato $\text{♩} = 80$

Viola p espr. cresc. f

7 f accel. cresc. ff

12 Clarinet in B \flat p pp

This movement is slightly different from its opera counterpart. It is significantly longer in length, six minutes compared to just over two minutes in the opera. Kodály achieves this extra length by writing several additional strains of both the viola and clarinet melody. This movement is only one of two that actually feature the cimbalom, rather than using the piano. Another unique aspect

⁶⁶ The cimbalom is a Hungarian dulcimer. The cimbalom used in *Háry János* was developed by József V. Schunda. Its strings are divided by one or two bridges, in the ratio 3:2 and its range is typically D to e^{'''}. "Cimbalom" In *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/subscriber/article/grove/music/05788> (accessed 4 May 2011).

of this movement is the fluidity between modes. The first strain of the viola melody is written in A Aeolian mode, the second strain is written in E Aeolian mode, and the clarinet line written in D Aeolian mode.⁶⁷

Out of the entire suite, the fourth movement, “The Battle and Defeat of Napoleon,” is more peculiar in terms of its construction. Rather than copying just one scene from the opera, Kodály chose to take three successive scenes, “The Entrance of French Grenadiers,” “Entrance of Napoleon,” and the “Funeral March,” and combine them into one movement in the suite.⁶⁸ As with the other movements in the suite, the music is literally duplicated directly from the scenes in the opera.

As one would expect from a movement inspired by military music, this piece features the brass and percussion sections and makes heavy use of dotted, staccato rhythms. The “battle” motive is clearly represented in the rowdy tremolo/descending chromatic scale passages that follow the March theme. The battle section is immediately followed by a grand fanfare, once again featuring the brass. The movement is concluded with a somber, melancholy soprano saxophone solo, marked *Tempo di Marcia funebre*. In the opera, this solemn processional is part of a recitative depicting Napoleon’s surrender. However, only the introductory material in the opera is used in the suite. Further analysis shows this movement is generally devoid of Hungarian folk music influences. Some of the

⁶⁷ The clarinet line has been transposed to concert pitch.

⁶⁸ Zoltán Kodály. *Háry János Suite*. Translated by Olda Latham and Tony Butterfield (London: Universal, 1983), 64, 67.

only instances of folk idioms occur during the saxophone solo, where grace notes and trills suggest an embellished line typical of the folk style.

The fifth movement, “Intermezzo,” is the most popular instrumental interlude of the opera. The tonal structure of this movement is more difficult to decipher than many of the other movements. It could best be interpreted as the A harmonic minor scale, but the scale as it is traditionally written does not appear until the second half of the theme. Instead, the movement begins on D and consistently uses a C-sharp in the melody. One must look at the chords played by the horns and contrabasses to see that the C-sharp actually functions as a non-chord tone.

After several strophes of the principal material, the movement changes mood, and modulates between several keys and modes, including F Lydian, A major, and D major. Its form is best described as a ternary ABA form, where the A section is considerably longer than the B section. One other notable feature of this movement is the reappearance of the first movement’s augmented sixth chord in measure 47.

The final movement, the triumphant “Grand Entrance of the Emperor,” has a few musical features that are worth noting. While the piece seems to be solidly written in E-flat major, it shifts tonality fairly quickly. It first changes to A-flat major and concludes the first phrase on a V/IV, resolving to the subdominant in the home key of E-flat. Its form can best be described as a five-

part rondo with a coda. However, the A and B sections are repeated at the beginning of the movement.

Other contentions with this form include the fact that, while the A and B sections dominate the first half of the movement, they become significantly diminished in length by the second half of the piece. Additionally, the C section is only five bars long, but in regards to the overall short length of the movement, this could be deemed an appropriate length.

Overall, while the *Háry János Suite* is not innovative in terms of its incorporation of folk song into a large-scale symphonic work, it is an important piece for study when tracking Kodály's compositional style during the period of his folk song compilation. As with many orchestral works derived from operatic material, the meaning of each section or movement is somewhat veiled since the narrative from the text is excluded from the suite.

Since it is a small extraction of a larger whole, fully comprehending each section's meaning is a difficult task, as the programmatic elements that shape the music are omitted. This is especially true in the case of the *Háry János Suite*. Its Hungarian nature and folk-based idioms make it a much more specialized work, and removing those nationalistic elements, as is often done in English translations, diminishes its original identity. Nonetheless, it is a prime example of a piece that educates the listener on the customs and distinctive features of Hungarian music.

Dances of Marosszék

The next piece for consideration is one of Kodály's masterworks for the orchestral genre, the *Dances of Marosszék*. Its original concept is difficult to pin down, because Kodály worked on the piece for several years in between 1923 and 1927. Another problematic element is the fact that there exists a piano version written within the same time frame. Ultimately, it is believed that the piano version may have been written first, with the orchestral version becoming the last goal.

The Sachsische Staatskapelle in the Dresden Opera House premiered it on 28 November 1930; however, it was thought for many years that the work was premiered by the New York Philharmonic under the direction of Toscanini in 11 December 1930. Following its successful performance in New York, the *Dances of Marosszék* was performed 42 times both in Europe and overseas.

Kodály summarizes the origin and regional basis for the *Dances of Marosszék* in the preface to the work. He attributes the melodic material for the dances to several sources. Some melodies are strictly instrumental dance music entitled "Marosszeki" and may not entirely originate from the Marosszék region. Other melodies are attributed to vocal melodies, with a few melodies with text included. The source attributed to the origin of some of these vocal melodies is the *Vietorisz Virginal Book*, a manuscript dating back to 1680. Kodály then finishes his preface with a statement iterating that the music of his *Dances of*

Marosszék represent an older continuum of folk music than the more well-known Hungarian works by Brahms and Liszt.⁶⁹

The famous “Hungarian Dances” from Brahms’s time are the expression of the spirit of the Hungarian city about 1860, being mostly composed by native musicians of this epoch. The *Marosszék* dances are of a former period, suggestive of the image of Transylvania, once called “Fairylan.”

The principal melodies used in the piece come from a variety of sources. Some melodies are transcribed from the region of *Marosszék* (now located in Romania), while others are based on melodies from the Transylvanian area. In his article *Instrumental Folk Music in Kodály’s Works*, Bálint Sárosi discusses the origins of the melodies in *Dances of Marosszék* along with any alterations to their form or instrumentation.⁷⁰

The form of *Dances of Marosszék* is a seven-part rondo with an extensive coda. The melody of the principal section is difficult to trace, but it is probably linked to two sources. The melody appears to be a hybrid of two melodies: one is a folksong from the *Zenei Lexikon* (Encyclopedia of Music), and the previously mentioned *Vietorisz Virginal Book*. The theme is introduced by the violas, cello, and first clarinet. Kodály copies the original melody almost exactly, but with a few slight alterations:

⁶⁹ Zoltán Kodály, *Marosszéki táncok = Marosszéker Tánze = Dances of Marosszék* (Wien: Universal-Edition, 1930), 1.

⁷⁰ Sárosi, *Instrumental Folk Music*, 30-38.

Ex. 4 original melody collected by Kodaly in Csík Country in 1910

(Source:⁷¹)

Ex. 5 Zoltán Kodály, *Dances of Marosszék*, mm 1-4⁷²

Maestoso, poco rubato $\text{♩} = 76-80$

Clarinet in A
Viola
Violoncello

f *sonoro cantabile espr.*

Kodály writes the melody in 4/4 meter, instead of the 2/4 time signature of the collected example. He also initially leaves out an embellishment in the third measure of the first melodic statement, but reintroduces it when the melody is repeated. The inclusion of embellishments does not have a distinct correlation throughout the piece. It could be suggested that, while embellishments are a common characteristic found in folk music, they do not have to be observed as accurately as the primary portion of the tune.

When determining which embellishments are appropriate to specific parts of the melody, there are two considerations that must be made. The first regards the varying nature of folk music. Since variation of melody and meaning occurs frequently with folk music, it is also reasonable to justify an alteration or

⁷¹ Sárosi, "Instrumental Music," 31.

⁷² Kodály, *Marosszék*, 3-4.

exclusion of certain embellishments. The second consideration is performance context. Not every performer uses ornaments in the same way. This is particularly evident with folk music specialists. While certain norms are considered in performance, there are always exceptions as each musician may be accustomed to different placements of embellishments.

The most notable difference in the principal theme is how Kodály orchestrates the melody. In the original melody, one instrument plays the melody in a comfortable range, no doubt to preserve the simplistic nature of the folk melody. In the *Dances of Marosszék*, however, Kodály places various bits of the melody in different instruments, as he does the ending of the first phrase. The strings and clarinet section, in the lowest register of the instrument, play the melody in unison until measure 5, where he reduces the melody in the strings to the celli and changes voices in the woodwinds from the clarinet to the bassoon. Kodály's possible reasoning for this must be to maintain the contour of the melody without requiring performers to change registers.⁷³

There is one perplexing aspect of this choice of voicing. Why did Kodály write the melody in the bassoon part at the beginning, rather than placing it in the low clarinet and changing instruments for just three notes? His justification for this may be that this particular beat in the dance pattern functions is weak, rather than an accented strong beat as reflected in the scoring. This scoring change continues to be problematic, as it is the only time during the first section that

⁷³ Ibid.

Kodály changes voices in the middle of the melody. Most of his other orchestrational changes are often solo woodwind passages alternating with tutti orchestral passages.

The key structure of the first section is characteristic of both the Hungarian scale and more modern scale structures. The piece is rooted in D major, but modulates briefly to D harmonic minor in the fourth bar. This measure is unique because of the inclusion of a borrowed German augmented sixth chord in the key of A minor, which immediately resolves to the dominant in the tonic key of D major. Sárosi suggests that the piece is written in F major, with an augmented second. This proves problematic, however, as the constant pedal in the bass line indicates that D is the tonal center.

The first episode uses a melody collected by Béla Vikár, Kodály's predecessor in the field of folk music collection.⁷⁴ Vikár's early collection of folk music, recorded on wax cylinders, was some of Kodály's earliest reference material for his own research, as well as some of his own compositions. The melody was first played on a sopranino D clarinet, by Roma clarinetist Pisat Gálfi.⁷⁵ Written in G major in concert pitch (F major on the D clarinet), the melody in *Dances of Marosszék* preserves the line of the original clarinet melody, but does so in an unconventional manner.

⁷⁴ The melody, while collected by Vikár, was actually transcribed by Kodály from the cylinder that exists in the Ethnographical Museum in Budapest.

⁷⁵ Sárosi, "Instrumental Music," 33.

Instead of using the main melody Vikár transcribed in its entirety, Kodály made variations of different parts of the melody. These variations were originally conceived as improvisations by the performer, but were later discovered to be alterations that Kodály transcribed from later parts of the original performance.⁷⁶ This alteration of the melody can best be represented by a visual comparison of the original melody on the clarinet, and the melody used in the *Dances of Marosszék*:

Ex. 6 original melody, first recorded by Béla Vikár, transcribed by Kodaly (Source:⁷⁷)

Clarinet
Bute high D

$\text{♩} = \text{between } 116-120$

1) 2) 3) 4) 5) 6) 7) 8) 9) 10) 11) rather: 12) 13) 14) 15) 16) 17) 18) 19) 20) 21) 22) 23) 24) 25) 26) 27) 28) 29) 30) 31) 32) 33) 34) 35) 36) 37) 38) 39) 40) 41) 42) 43) 44) 45) 46) 47) 48) 49) 50) 51) 52) 53) 54) 55) 56) 57) 58) 59) 60) 61) 62) 63) 64) 65) 66) 67) 68) 69) 70) 71) 72) 73) 74) 75) 76) 77) 78) 79) 80) 81) 82) 83) 84) 85) 86) 87) 88) 89) 90) 91) 92) 93) 94) 95) 96) 97) 98) 99) 100) 101) 102) 103) 104) 105) 106) 107) 108) 109) 110) 111) 112) 113) 114) 115) 116) 117) 118) 119) 120)

on the record, first (defectively?):

etc. the end:

Ex. 7 Zoltán Kodály, *Dances of Marosszék*, mm. 29-36

Con moto $\text{♩} = 120$ (clarinet in B \flat 8va)

pp *p cresc.* *mf*

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Ex 8 Zoltán Kodály, *Dances of Marosszék*, mm. 36-47

Compared to the principal section, Kodály chooses to write the melody in the bassoon, contrabassoon, and cello sections. The clarinet joins in the second half of the phrase, followed by a direct imitation in the upper tessitura of the flute. At no point during this section is the clarinet a featured instrument, as it was in Vikár's original recording. At most, it plays the melody in *tutti* sections with the strings and bassoons.

Kodály's choice for melodic representation at the beginning of the first episode is also noteworthy. In choosing the bassoon, contrabassoon, and cellos to introduce the melody, followed by an answer in the high pitched register of the flute, it almost seems like the composer is alternating between a masculine texture and feminine voice timbre, which could possibly correlate to the turning aspect of the Marosszék dance.

According to Sárosi, the '*Marosszéki*' (Marosszék dance) is a pair dance widespread in the area of Maros-Torda (today Mures, Romania) County. It is also called *korcsos* (crossbred) a *forgató*s (turning), *vetélős* (shuttling) and a *vármegye* (county). During the dance the man keeps passing the woman from one of his arm

to the other turning her around in front of him (which explains the expressions *turning* or *shuttling*.)⁷⁸

Kodály often alternates between *tutti* string sections with solo woodwind voices. This once again reflects the “turning dance” aspect of the piece. Furthermore, the first full phrase of the transcribed melody (the first eight bars) are always scored as the *tutti* passages, with the second eight-bar phrase scored as the solo passages in the flute and oboe. At the end of this section, Kodály chooses to score the last eight bars of the melody in the bassoon, violas and cellos. Kodály’s probable reasoning for changing the scoring of the last iteration of the consequent phrase would be to give the section a sense of finality before the principal section returns.

The return of the principal melody begins in the same key and uses similar instrumentation as the opening of the piece. Kodály uses the same instrumentation as the opening, with the addition of the contrabasses to the melody. This section also adds a sequence of virtuosic arpeggios in the flute, clarinet, oboe and violin sections. This, in combination with a repeated augmentation of the principal melody in the low woodwinds, strings, and horns, builds to a climactic and broad statement of the second half of the melody by the full orchestra. The climax is quickly succeeded by a softer and more subtle gesture of the first half of the melody in the violins. These two phrases are repeated before pausing on a fermata, leading into the next section.

⁷⁸ Sárosi, “Instrumental Music,” 30.

The second episode, beginning in measure 108, is the longest of the sections heard thus far, and is simply a single melody written over syncopated quarter notes in the string family. According to László Eősze, this melody is an example of the *parlando style*, “in which popular, improvised music of the shepherd’s pipe is transformed into art music of the highest quality.”⁷⁹ Eősze was clearly indicating that the free, endless melodic line combined with the virtuosic performance created a melody perfectly suited for this passage.

The melody is heard first by the solo oboe (in D major), followed by the flute (written in E major), piccolo (A-flat major), and finally *con sordino* solo violin (also A-flat major). This is another melody collected by Vikár and transcribed by Kodály. It is also another melody that, in the original version, features the soprano clarinet, and, just like other sections of the piece, the solo clarinet is replaced by other woodwind and string textures:

⁷⁹ László Eősze, *Kodály, His Life and Work*, translated by Istvan Farkas and Gyula Gulyas (London: Collet’s Holdings Ltd., 1962), 116.

Ex. 10 Original melody transcribed by Kodály (Source:⁸⁰)

Clarinet (D or E Flat) $\text{♩} = 69$ (150 r. p. m.)

The musical score is written on eight staves. It begins with a tempo marking of 69 beats per minute. The notation includes numerous ornaments, such as grace notes and slurs, and performance markings like "mistake" and "2. time:". The melody is characterized by its rhythmic complexity and frequent embellishments.

Of all of the melodies transcribed into the *Dances of Marosszék*, this melody must have been the most difficult to transcribe, as it has a relatively free pulse, numerous embellishments, and, most importantly, the original version is not easily sung. While each phrase of the melody does remain tonal, it relies on a drone accompaniment throughout, and avoids conventional harmonic progressions where tonic and dominant are the main focus.

⁸⁰ Sárosi, "Instrumental Music," 35.

This section of the dance is reminiscent of the old style of folk music, where the pentatonic scale and quartal harmonies are favored over the more popular modal and triadic textures of the nineteenth century. However, ties to Western influences are not completely devoid in this section. The melody focuses around a D tonic, occasionally moving to dominant halfway through the melody, and ending on a deceptive cadence in measure 119. The syncopated quarter notes in the string section are our only clue as to what the harmonic progression may be.

The issue of tonality is also complicated because neither the original melody nor Kodály's version in *Dances of Marosszék* have a clear harmonic structure that helps define the underlying harmonies. The performer of the original melody never plays a simplified version, where the harmonic structure becomes clear. In the *Dances of Marosszék*, there is no identifiable melodic line until the last eight bars of the section, where the contrabasses play the simplified, singable version that Kodály himself derived from Vikár's recording:

Ex. 10 Zoltán Kodály, *Dances of Marosszék*, mm. 148-154



The placement of the melody in the contrabasses, combined with the overpowering pedal in the strings and woodwinds gives the impression that this episode of the piece is like a free dance section. At times, it seems reminiscent of the second movement of Bartók's *Román népi táncok* (*Romanian Folk Dances*), where the solo piccolo plays an extensive, embellished melody over a constant

drone texture. This episode also repeatedly uses a figure not yet heard in the piece. This figure ending each solo melody is a dotted rhythm that is essentially identifiable in Hungarian music and becomes an integral part of the later composed *Dances of Galánta*.

The return of the principal section has many similarities to previous sections. The melody is once again played by the bassoon and cello sections, with syncopations in the upper woodwinds and strings. The main change is the switch from D minor to E minor. Once the bassoon and cellos play the first half of the principal melody, it is taken over by the upper woodwinds and strings and the bassoon and cellos play a countermelody. After a few short *solo/tutti* melodic shifts, the entire orchestra plays the last two measures of the principal melody in a cascading manner. The first statement is by the entire orchestra, and with each iteration, the topmost voice is removed, until the last statement is made only by the clarinets, bassoon, contrabassoon, horn, violas, cellos, and basses. As each phrase is stated, a *stringendo* builds momentum to the next section.

Written in duple meter, the third episode is considered a *sebes* dance (or fast dance). The melody was collected by Kodály firsthand in 1912 by a flute player in Csík County, Hungary:⁸¹

⁸¹ Sárosi, "Instrumental Music," 36.

Ex. 11 Original melody collected and recorded by Kodály in 1912 (Source:⁸²)

Flute

♩ = ca. 120

Out of all of the folk melodies implemented into *Dances of Marosszék*, this melody has the most alterations from the original melody. Many are justifiable because they are more appropriate to the orchestral genre.

A specific example is the transposing of several notes in the original melody up an octave to better fit the overarching contour of the melody, rather than required shifts in register. Other alterations include the elimination of some of the more complicated rhythms, as this particular section of the piece is much faster (quarter note=160-168, compared to the original melody where a quarter note=120). At times, it seems as if Kodály substituted compound meters with grace notes embellishing longer note values. This is most likely done so that the piece correlates with the other melodies that have singable core melodies with improvisatory embellishments.

⁸² Sárosi, "Instrumental Music," 35.

The melody is first accompanied by pizzicato eighth notes in the strings. After a single statement of the entire melody is made by the flute (first eight bars), oboe (second eight bars), followed by the upper woodwind family (last sixteen bars), a short interlude of high woodwind flourishes transitions the melody to the violin section. The violin presentation of the melody as a *solí* section is brief, as the rest of the orchestra joins in after eight bars.

The texture becomes significantly thicker when the orchestra comes back in, and a shortened version of the melody in the first violin section and first clarinet is all but lost in the dense texture of running thirty-second notes in the woodwinds, sixteenth-note triplets in the brass, pizzicato eighth notes in the second violins, and continuous eighth notes in the violas and cellos. The violins play only three phrases of the melody during this polyphonic section, as the action propels forward in a four-measure phrase extension. The propulsion abruptly comes to a halt as the orchestra plays another four-measure transition to the next variation of the A section (see example 12).

Ex. 12 Zoltán Kodály, *Dances of Marosszék*, mm. 247-250

Clarinet in B-flat
Bassoon
Contrabassoon
Viola
Cello
Contrabass

Clarinet, Viola, Cello^{8va} *dim e. rallent.*

sf *sf*

This transition, while necessary to smoothly move onto the next section, seems musically uncharacteristic for one specific reason: there is no *rallentando* written at the start of the transition. Instead, it is written at the beginning of the

second measure. Furthermore, it seems that the written *rallentando* is more of an immediate tempo change, as the tempo of the transition is almost half of that of the rest of the section.

It is very possible that this was an error on Kodály's behalf, as the context of the transition demands a much slower tempo than the tempo of the *sebes* dance. This transition also proves to be more effective than previous transitions, as the last measure first changes keys to A major, then resolves back to D major.

The final statement of the principal theme in measure 251 begins with the melody in the solo horn, written in the original key of D major. After the clarinet joins the horn on the melody, the second full phrase of the melody is played by alternating the horn and clarinet line with *con sordino* violins and cellos. At one point, Kodály scores some unusual harmonies in measure 263, where he writes a borrowed subdominant chord in the key of B minor, followed by a dominant chord, returning to the dominant in the home key of D major in measure 264. The section concludes with a fermata on the last note of the third measure of the principal melody before finishing the piece with the longest section of the piece, the coda.

The coda is almost paradoxical in its function, for it contains its own independent melody, but does not have a full enough context to be considered a full section. The melody used in the coda is another transcribed from Vikár's collection, and it too, was originally written for soprano clarinet. Additionally, it is another dance melody collected from the rural regions of Hungary.

Essentially, the coda repeats the same melody in several instrumental families. Kodaly builds the climax using several classic techniques. At times he adds volume using traditional crescendos, while at other times, he builds a “Rossini crescendo” by adding voices to the texture. This is also the only point in the piece where Kodály uses all instruments in the orchestra simultaneously.

In conclusion, the *Dances of Marosszék* is a prime example of Kodály’s emerging style of pieces based on folk music. While many of the melodies used in this work were derived in exact detail from their original counterparts, the harmonic language and choice of voicing gives each section a more complex identity. Rather than directly copying folk music idioms, Kodály alters the melody to fit within modern music standards, while at the same time, retaining the core identity of the folk melody. He does not simply present a long stream of folk melodies with an orchestral accompaniment; he blends the two styles into one cohesive work that serves as bridge between his folk music research and his role as a composer.

Dances of Galánta

Kodály always revered the region of Galánta as one of his most memorable childhood homes. It was a place in his early life where he was first exposed to classical, instrumental music. More importantly it is the place where he learned to play the cello, which he considered an instrument of great personal significance. The music found in much of the *Dances of Galánta* was not originally discovered by Kodály. According to Breuer, “it was Ervin Major who, in the spring of 1927 first discovered a set of Viennese published scores that included the dance music of the Galánta gypsies.”⁸³

Sárosi further defines their origin by tracing the bulk of the melodies to nineteenth-century piano versions of notated sketches of Hungarian dance melodies played by eighteenth-century Roma musicians.⁸⁴ He further states that the melodies had stereotypical harmonizations, but these accompaniments were omitted in both Kodály’s arrangement and the *Dances of Galánta*.

The instrumentation of *Dances of Galánta* is very similar to that of the *Dances of Marosszék*. Kodály replaces the trombones with two trumpets in C and he adds several auxiliary percussion instruments. It is also clear that Kodály was influenced by instruments preferred by Roma musicians, as many of the dances in *Galánta* are based on melodies performed on their favored instruments. Of particular note is the clarinet, which, while present in the *Dances of Marosszék*,

⁸³ Breuer, 133.

⁸⁴ Sárosi, “Instrumental Music,” 26.

has a much more prominent role in *Galánta*. Other instruments that hold a significant role are the solo horn, cello section, and the piccolo.

The opening material for *Dances of Galánta* is based on a simple four-measure melody collected from the piano sketches. The melodic material of the introduction is one of the shortest transcriptions in form, and it is also the only melody to be transcribed in its original state from the piano version:

Ex. 13 Original melody derived from the piano transcription (Source:⁸⁵)



The introductory theme is presented first in the cello section, written in the piano version's original key and register. The melody is saturated with elements traditional of Hungarian folk music. A heavy reliance on a double-dotted rhythm is central to Hungarian dances, particularly the *verbunkos* style.

The theme is immediately followed by a vigorous thirty-second note scalar passage building in the *tutti* orchestra. When deciphering this scalar passage, it can be analyzed as a sequential scale written in A melodic minor. Another possibility is to visualize it as a spelled out, compound augmented sixth chord (due to the consistent use of D-sharp):

⁸⁵ Ibid.

of *Marosszék*, he most likely would have transposed the horn line to fit concert pitch. Instead, he does not transpose the melody and writes the same notes in the horn line as were present in the original piano melody. This results in a modulation to D harmonic minor, which demonstrates an early departure from his standard methods of formal writing.

Following these two statements, Kodály begins to manipulate the material by intertwining the melody within several instruments in the orchestra, passing the theme down in score order, with a short flourish following each measure of the theme. The last sections to play the theme are the violins, joined by the solo clarinet in the second phrase, leading into two brief clarinet cadenzas. The theme is then restated in the clarinet immediately following the cadenzas (returned to the original key of A minor), and the motion of the piece propels forward as the orchestra builds suspense by playing a sequence of flourishing arpeggios in the midst of a *poco stringendo*.

The introductory material displays Kodály's maturity as a composer. The thematic development in *Galánta's* introduction shows more depth than the *Dances of Marosszék*, as his scoring for the theme with a dense orchestral accompaniment seems to contradict the principle of melody superceding accompaniment, which was a key factor throughout *Marosszék*. Kodály is able to maintain importance of the melody by presenting it in an instrument that is able to easily carry the melody over the rest of the orchestra. The accompaniment is also scored thinly enough such as it does not cover the melody, yet it is more insistent

than a simple, homophonic progression (which is a common occurrence in *Marosszék*).

The combination of a simple melody, surrounded by complex harmonies and countermelodies, all allude to Kodály's growth as a composer. Compared to the *Dances of Marosszék*, this introductory material is proof that he is able to expand the boundaries of folk music to fit the trends of current concert music, while at the same time cementing his Hungarian heritage.

Immediately following the boisterous conclusion to the introduction, the clarinet continues to accelerate into an extended cadenza. Like the double-dotted rhythms in the introduction, the cadenza also contains idioms commonly associated with Hungarian folk music:

Ex. 15 Zoltán Kodály, *Dances of Galánta*, mm. 44-50

The image shows a musical score for three Clarinet parts in A. The top staff is labeled 'Clarinet in A' and begins with a dynamic marking of *ff*. The middle staff is labeled 'Cl.' and includes a section titled 'Cadenza' with a dynamic marking of *p* and the instruction *cresc. poco a poco*. The bottom staff is also labeled 'Cl.' and starts with a dynamic marking of *f* and includes the instruction *p espr.* at the end. The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs, and is marked with *rall.* in the final measures.

Essentially, the cadenza is a series of linked thirty-second notes held together by common tone G. The first measure of the cadenza can be approached as a set of cascading arpeggios used as transitional material from the introductions

key of A minor, to the distantly related key of G minor. Within this one measure, two chords alternate, so that the transition from the introduction, leading into the cadenza, and back out to the next section can be made as smoothly as possible.

What complicates this manner is identifying the quality of the two chords that are used. In the key of G minor, the alternating chords can be analyzed as a $VII^{\text{flat } 7}/iv$. Alternatively, these two chords can be analyzed in B-flat major as $V^{\text{flat } 7}/ii$. In light of Kodály's former harmonic preferences, using the B-flat major analysis proves a more worthy candidate for the first measure of the cadenza. From that point, the cadenza modulates once again, this time clearly set in E-flat major.

Kodály once again blends conventional Western harmonies with traditional Hungarian elements. While the key is firmly identified as E-flat major in a Western perspective, it can otherwise fit within the pentatonic scale, which is frequently associated with Hungarian music. The embellished section of the clarinet cadenza is simply a sequence of this pentatonic scale, alternating from a C pentatonic scale, to an F pentatonic scale. The cadenza concludes with a simple statement of a G pentatonic scale, and the clarinet leads into the principal thematic section of the rondo.

The principal thematic material of the five-part rondo is another melody derived from the 1800 set of piano transcriptions. Its treatment in the *Dances of Galánta*, however, differs from the introduction. The skeletal framework remains

the same, but, aside from the main melodic material, the melody is not exactly the same as the original transcription.

Sárosi describes the implications of altering folk melodies in his article. He states “In the process of reviving them, even the tiny additions to the theme made by the composer have their significance, as they bear out an *adherence* to tradition, at least to the same extent as they bear out a *knowledge* of tradition.”⁸⁶

The original piano version sets the melody in a simple, strict duple framework. It is laid out as such that there are no written grace notes or double dotted rhythms. In fact, the only indication of a dotted rhythm occurs when the last note of a measure is tied into the first sixteenth of the second, creating a sense of suspension.

Ex. 16 Original melody derived from the piano transcription (Source:⁸⁷)



Kodály’s treatment in *Dances of Galánta* changes the melody so that the first note of each measure is emphasized, and the consequent sixteenth notes from the piano melody are compressed into a sixteenth-note triplet figure, followed by a sixteenth-note/dotted eighth-note sequence:

⁸⁶ Sárosi, “Instrumental Music,” 26, emphasis in source.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

Ex. 17 Zoltán Kodály, *Dances of Galánta*, mm. 50-65

Andante maestoso $\text{♩} = 76$

Clarinet in A

Cl.

Cl.

poco cresc.

dim.

p

[*pochiss. sosten.*]

Kodály's choice to manipulate the original figure may be for several reasons. His main justification might be to change the rhythm to emphasize a dance pattern in the *verbunkos* style, as the third beat of the *Galánta* melody has an accent on the third beat, whereas the original version has no accents or specific articulations. He may have also wanted to accentuate and develop a more complex harmonic language so that the melody transforms and goes beyond its purpose as a simple folk melody.

The third and perhaps most subliminal aspect is that the composer wanted to maintain the contour of the original melody, but allowed for a wider range of harmonic and countermelodic possibilities. This breadth of choices is one best suited for the symphonic medium, and Kodály probably wanted to give the Hungarian melody more depth.

The first episode of *Galánta* is another melody transcribed from the 1800 piano collection. Composed of two phrases, the first is a straightforward scalar

passage set in A minor. Only the first note of the melody is dotted, and the only other syncopation occurs in measure three. The second phrase has slightly more dotted eighth rhythms, and it has two different endings, similar to melodies used in *Dances of Marosszék*.

Like the principal theme, Kodály manipulates the rhythm of the original tune. Additionally, this particular melody has more alterations made to its melodic contour than ones made to the principal melody. The original piano tune uses seven out of the eight pitches of the melodic minor scale, whereas the melody in *Galánta* uses only four. Furthermore, the straight sixteenth-note passages from the piano melody are dotted and often rearticulated, as is the case in the first beat of the second measure:

Ex. 18 Original melody derived from the piano transcription (Source:⁸⁸)

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff is a single line of music. The second staff is a single line of music with two endings, labeled '1.' and '2.', and a 'the second time:' instruction above it.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 27.

Ex. 19 Zoltán Kodály, *Dances of Galánta*, mm. 96-112

Allegro moderato ♩ = 84

Flute

8

Fl.

13

Vln I, Clarinet I. II., Vla

f p

f p

Kodály's choice for key signature is also peculiar. His choice of A-flat minor is not related to the preceding section of the rondo, or the key signature of the original piano melody. Perhaps his main reason for avoiding a traditional modulation to the dominant is that he was thinking more in terms of a chromatic relationship between keys, rather than a classic Western tonal progression.

The consequent phrase of the melody takes on a more assertive role, as it is first played in a broad spectrum of instruments, the clarinet family, first violins, and cellos. The forte dynamic, accents, and legato style provides a timbral and mood contradiction compared to the light and delicately separated style of the first phrase. Even when the consequent phrase is played at a softer dynamic by a solo voice, like in the flute in measures 113-119, it has more weight to it than the antecedent phrase.

As the section continues, there are other compositional aspects about this section that demonstrate a more conventional blending of "peasant" and modern

techniques. Of particular note is the accompaniment throughout this section. While it remains in a steady duple pattern, at times the accompaniment appears to mimic a sequence of dance steps, alternating within the downbeats and upbeats in the pizzicato strings. The placement of the accents suggests that the dance step pattern would most likely be four broad steps on the strong beats, followed by four lighter, quick steps on the offbeats. Whether this was the composer's true intention remains unclear, but the pattern suggests yet another link between folk idioms (dance music) and contemporary performance contexts (concert stage).

Another performance aspect of note in this section is the progression of the melody from the simple to more ornate. It is first stated in its simplest form by the flute. As the section progresses further, however, the melodic line becomes more embellished, as does the matching accompaniment. As it builds towards its climactic peak, the antecedent phrase becomes increasingly ornate, adding trills and compact thirty-second note flourishes, and Kodály adds grace notes in the accompaniment to further embellish the statement of the phrase. By adding ornaments throughout the melody and accompaniment, Kodály displays a more developed compositional style and is able to transcend the folk tune to a more virtuosic context.

The reappearance of the principal material returns the key to its tonal center of A-minor, placing emphasis on quartal harmonies. The only significant change made to the melody occurs in the second strain, beginning in the fourth measure, where more ornaments and the once syncopated rhythm first heard in

the clarinet is significantly embellished throughout the orchestra. For example, in the fourth measure of the excerpt, Kodály changes the rhythm of the original statement from a series of straight eighth-notes to a dotted quarter followed by triplet sixteenth-notes. The melody is further altered when the sixteenth-note—double-dotted quarter note—dotted quarter note—eighth note pattern is delayed by two measures and the once ascending final eighth note sequence in the original clarinet melody is replaced by a full measure of descending sixteenth notes.⁸⁹

Ex. 20 Zoltán Kodály, *Dances of Galánta*, mm. 159-166

The musical score for Ex. 20, Zoltán Kodály's *Dances of Galánta*, measures 159-166, is presented in 4/4 time. It features five staves: Flute/Vln. I, Piccolo/Oboe/Vln. II/Clarinet I in A, Clarinet II in A/Oboe II, and Violoncello. The first four measures show a rhythmic change from straight eighth notes to a dotted quarter followed by triplet sixteenth notes. Dynamics include *f cresc.* and *ff espr.* with triplet markings. The fifth measure shows a further rhythmic change to a dotted quarter note followed by eighth notes, with a *Suo* marking above the staff.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 18.

Kodály further alters the melody by changing the line of the harmonic progression. In its first statement, the measure in question begins on a BMm⁷ and changes to an EmM⁷ chord. When it reappears in measure 163, it changes to a C minor triad, switching to first inversion.

While this seems like a small change on a grand scale, it becomes much more significant in retrospect, especially if one recalls Sárosi's assertion that even the smallest change in a folk melody has significant connotations regarding the revival of folk music. Ultimately, Kodály might have chosen to alter the melody in order to create a more exciting melodic line, as the vibrant texture of the piece demands more than what the original melody could provide. Kodály also chooses to end this sequence of the principal material using the altered figure, with its purpose being a phrase extension of the melodic statement recently heard.

The second episode of *Galánta* uses a fairly straightforward version of the piano transcription. Both melodies are written in D major, and the rhythm of the piano melody is duplicated in the oboe line in *Galánta*. The aspect of this section that deserves special attention is the accompaniment. Compared to other sections of the dances, which often used homophonic chordal accompaniments, the second episode adds depth to the texture by adding harmonics in the violin section and a very difficult sixteenth-note ostinato in the clarinet line. These effects, plus the addition of the *campanelle* (tubular bells) gives this section a shimmering effect that helps move the original folk melody beyond its rustic beginnings and reinforces its position in the more modern orchestral genre.

Each section of the rondo is less sectionalized than in the *Dances of Marosszék*. For example, the principal section is transitioned to directly from the clarinet cadenza, whereas most of the sections in *Marosszék* include clean separations between each of the major sections, usually by means of a fermata. Rather than simply placing fermatas in between the dances, Kodály elegantly uses transitional material to move from one dance to the next.

If the form of the *Dances of Marosszék* was an unconventional version of a standard rondo, the *Dances of Galánta* is even more enigmatic. Both Sárosi and Breuer describe the form as a rondo with a finale (or coda in Breuer's case) that contains six dance melodies.⁹⁰ Both authors comment that the length of the coda is actually longer than the main rondo. Sárosi gives a clear starting point, stating that it begins in measure 236, but he makes little effort to define the sections of the finale, aside from stating that the performers "...go on playing the last dance of the dance cycle at length, stringing various melodies together in a capricious, virtuoso manner, using variations and alterations."⁹¹

The only clue as to when Breuer's coda begins is that he states that "it is twice separated by slower sections, each resembling a trio, and a third time by the memory of a fragment of the rondo theme..."⁹² This statement proves to be extremely problematic as Breuer gives no indication as to what the fast or slower

⁹⁰ Breuer, 137.

⁹¹ Sárosi, "Instrumental Music," 30.

⁹² Breuer, 137.

sections are. If the coda begins where Breuer suggests, its most likely beginning would be in measure 236.

The first section Breuer references could be the *Poco meno mosso* beginning in measure 334. Calling this section a “slow section” is somewhat erroneous because of the tempo marking. If the section was marked *molto meno mosso*, or a tempo with an identifiably slower tempo, Breuer’s labeling of form would be applicable. However, it is not much slower than some of its surrounding sections. Breuer’s justification for calling this a “slow section” may be that the section preceding ends with a *stringendo*, only to be followed by the slower *poco meno mosso*.

The second slow section is much more difficult to identify, as it is not easily distinguished, if at all. Its most likely placement would be immediately after the first strain of the *poco meno mosso*, specifically measure 394. The only reason this might work as a second slow section is the following material is clearly a drawn out *accelerando* leading into the finale. However, this is highly unlikely as this second slow section is actually part of the earlier *poco meno mosso* and does not actually break any continuity in the flow of the piece. Instead, this section of the piece may function more appropriately as a bridge between the last dance section, and the following *Allegro vivace* section that truly leads to the finale.

The third suggested slow section is undoubtedly the return of the principal theme material in measure 566, where the furiously accelerating mood of the

piece is abruptly halted and the principal material returns, first played by the flute, then the oboe, and finally the clarinet, who plays one final cadenza before leading into the furious and quick finale. Instead of confining this section within the coda, it is suggested that this short *Andante maestoso* functions as linking material between the finale and the principal material that has been absent for much of the second half of the piece. While this section is one of the shortest in the piece, its function is clear; it helps the listener recollect melodies previously heard, almost like a memory of music past.

Ultimately, confirming Breuer's suggestion for the form of *Dances of Galánta* must be appropriate in that it fits no other conventional forms of the time. While the coda seems substantially longer than the majority of the rondo, its components are not as developed as much as the episodes of the rondo. Furthermore, the dances within the coda, while suspenseful nonetheless, often lack an important detail; they are not melodies that are as memorable or singable as that of the rondo. The one exception may be the second of the six dances, beginning in measure 346, where the clarinet plays a lilting dance melody using one of the sketched Roma melodies collected in 1800.

Within itself, the coda is a hybrid of several large scale forms. It contains elements of a rondo, particularly the return of the coda's own separate principal material. In addition to returning to its own melodic devices, the coda links itself to the main rondo in the last 42 bars, where the principal material is presented one final time. The flute enters with the first half of the main theme, followed by the

oboe on the second phrase, and closing with the solo clarinet, who plays the remainder of the principal theme, followed by a final cadenza, leading into the last *Allegro molto vivace*. This cadenza's melodic line is written in a very clever manner, at times it embellishes a German augmented 6th chord, and at other times, a pentatonic scale:

Ex. 21 Scalar pattern of clarinet cadenza

Clarinet in A

Ex. 22 Zoltán Kodály, *Dances of Galánta*, mm. 566-578

Clarinet in A

In a larger context, the coda also somewhat resembles a large ternary form, with a developed A section, a B section containing two dances, a brief return of the A section, and lastly, a small coda within the coda itself. The coda also seems to contain elements of a dance suite, although this form has not been fully explored as previously described forms.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

The beginnings of the twentieth century saw a new fascination with Hungarian nationalistic ideas that were previously understated or assumed. The revival of research in the music of Hungary is no exception. Following nineteenth century trends in its popularity, combined with an intellectual desire to revitalize the music of the common man, folk music finally received the attention and longevity it deserved.

In researching the history and study of Hungary's past, it can be said that Hungary is a diverse nation with a wide array of influences and cultural associations. While it has a rich history within its own borders, several extra-national influences helped shape its musical and cultural traditions. Some of the most significant of these influences would include the Habsburg monarchy of Austria, and the Roma influx of the nineteenth century. These outside sources combined with local customs to form national musical traditions that make Hungary a unique society in Europe.

The instrumental styles and various native instruments found in Hungary also have a significant impact on the musical strata. Deeply rooted traditions like the *parlando-rubato* style and the *verbunkos* tradition remain some of the most widely used idioms in Hungarian folk music. Instruments like the bagpipe, violin, and *Gypsy clarinet* are some of the most popular instruments to write for, and many pieces and folk songs try to emulate the sound and idioms that emanate from these instruments. Their contribution to Hungarian folk music is an

important aspect of tradition that is both unique and well-known throughout the nation.

Lastly, the influence of the Roma people on Hungarian music is one of the more debatable topics in the history of Hungarian music. Their technical virtuosity and favorability of instruments such as the clarinet and violin make them an important influence on Hungarian folk music culture. The incorporation of the *verbunkos* style is due in large part to the Roma influence. Their high level of performance and musicianship make them a contentious yet dominant presence in the context of folk music.

Each of the three works analyzed in this thesis has its own idiosyncratic properties, yet each displays common themes and characteristics that represent a blending of Hungarian and modern styles. Each piece uses folk music differently, and the content level of such music varies, from direct imitation from an original source, to altering rhythms and instrumentation. The *Dances of Marosszék*, uses Hungarian folk music in its purist form, while the *Háry János Suite* has more influences from modern music. Since Kodály was a native of the Galánta region of Hungary, he probably had a great sense of nostalgia and a personal connection with the *Dances of Galánta*, a piece rich with Hungarian folk song and Roma style techniques.

They all display Kodály's unique style of conventional forms meeting contemporary elements such as quartal harmonies and extended codas. Each has its own level of technical difficulty and ensemble challenges that make them fine

specimens for the orchestral genre. They are a true testament to both Kodály's growth as a composer as well as his intense desire to keep the Hungarian tradition alive.

Without the dedication and continued efforts of scholars like Kodály and Bartók, the true identity of the Hungarian's music would have remained a great, mystical secret. They took it upon themselves as Hungary's own sons to collect transcribe and utilize the music they grew up with. They gave it a new identity and revealed a genre that has much more sophistication and depth than previously known.

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