

**VI. MİLLETLERARASI TÜRK HALK  
KÜLTÜRÜ KONGRESİ**

**SON ELLİ YILDA TÜRKİYE DIŞINDAKİ  
TÜRK HALK KÜLTÜRÜ ÇALIŞMALARI  
SEKSYON BİLDİRİLERİ**



**T.C. KÜLTÜR BAKANLIĞI**

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*Turkish Folk Culture Studies that Took Place in Cyprus in the last Quaaarter of a Century*

### Tartışma / Discussion

## HUNGARIAN FOLK MUSIC RESEARCHES AMONGST TÜRKİCH PEOPLES – ABSTRACT

János SÍPOS  
(Macaristan)

The acquaintance with the old strata of Türkic folk musics is especially important for Hungarian ethnomusicology. It is well known that various Türkic groups played a great role in the development of the Hungarian people, Hungarian culture and folk music. It is not accidental therefore that Hungarian researchers have played a salient role in the comparative research of the folk music of Türkic and Hungarian peoples.

Béla Bartók drew conclusions of lasting validity from a limited collection concerning the music of the Volga-Kama region and Anatolia,<sup>17</sup> while Zoltán Kodály primarily examined the music of Cheremiss and Chuvash people, largely extending the group of analogies between Hungarian and Volga-region tunes.<sup>18</sup> After field researches of several decades, László Vikár has contributed to a deeper knowledge of Cheremiss, Chuvash, Mordvin, Tatar and Bashkir folk music.<sup>19</sup> Lajos Vargyas has made a broad historical survey of the folk music in the Volga region by studying a large amount of publications.<sup>20</sup> Bence Szabolcsi pointed out even broader international musical connections after having studied an immense multitude of tunes.<sup>21</sup> László Dobszay and Janka Szendrei approached the Hungarian material from a novel viewpoint, examining the Hungarian lament and psalmodic styles in a broad international ethnomusicological context.<sup>22</sup>

My six-year collection in Anatolia in 1988-93 and a subsequent research trip, as well as my field work in Kazakh, Azeri, Caucasian and Thracian areas and the following publications also belong to this branch of research.

### Research in Anatolia

Are there similar Hungarian and Anatolian tune types, and if there are, to what extent are they similar, and what can this correspondence be ascribed to? The answer to these questions was first sought by Béla Bartók who collected folk music in Turkey in 1938. During the collecting work, he sometimes enthused: "I could hardly believe my ears: Lord, that's like a variant of an old Hungarian tune! Overjoyed, I immediately recorded the

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<sup>17</sup> Bartók (1931, 1976)

<sup>18</sup> Kodály (1937-76)

<sup>19</sup> Vikár-Berezki (1971, 1979, 1999)

<sup>20</sup> Vargyas (1953, 1980, 1981)

<sup>21</sup> Szabolcsi (1934, 1936, 1940)

<sup>22</sup> Szendrei - Dobszay (1988), Dobszay (1983)

singing and playing of old Bekir on two complete cylinders... The second tune of Bekir was again a relative of a Hungarian tune: this is flabbergasting. I thought to myself..."<sup>23</sup>

In his study, one can read that 43% or 33 tunes of the 78 belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> melody classes. Bartók lists the characteristics of these tunes, then adds: "If we compare these characteristics with those of the Old-Hungarian melodies with 8-syllabic sections, we will see that they are literally identical... Besides this striking similarity in the characteristic features of the Turkish and Hungarian parlando melodies with 8-syllabic sections, it can be said, moreover, that most of the nine Turkish melodies or variant groups of Class I have decided variants in the Hungarian material... Even these afford a sufficient evidence for the closest relationship, or as I would put it, for the identity of booth materials."<sup>24</sup>

Bartók's Turkish collection, however, shared the ill fate of his other ethnomusicological collections, being published as late as 1976, long after his death, simultaneously in Hungarian and America, and in 1991 in Turkey, while in Hungarian, it is still awaiting publication.<sup>25</sup> None of the publications made any stir, although the work is not "merely" a basic reading in Hungarian and Turkish prehistory and Hungarian-Turkish musical contact, but also a main asset of ethnomusicology in general. It is also known that Bartók ascribed great importance to the work. That was his first - and last - collecting trip after a long break, and he was so deeply interested in Turkish music that before emigrating to America, he was seriously considering settling in Turkey.<sup>26</sup>

What can be behind this indifference? Disregarding all other explanations, one still remains with a weighty argument: Bartók's Anatolian collection contained so few tunes that only with utmost caution and reservation can conclusions be drawn from it with validity to a people of sixty millions today. Until most recently, there was no comprehensive analysis of Turkish folk music that could provide an interpretive frame of reference to Bartók's collection.

I lived in Turkey for six years in 1988-1993. I taught at the department of Hungarian Studies in Ankara University and collected some 1500 tunes in the meantime. I began collecting in areas where Bartók stopped his research and with the decrease of new tunes, I moved gradually westward. Besides, I took notes of all available Turkish music publications, from which I added another 3000 critically analyzed tunes to my collection. Six years on location, the knowledge of the Turkish language, consultations with Turkish

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<sup>23</sup> Bartók (1937: 173-181). In: BÖI: 509-10

<sup>24</sup> Saygun (1976: V-VII)

<sup>25</sup> Saygun (1936), Bartók (1976), Bartók (1991b)

<sup>26</sup> Saygun's letter (19 March, 1939, Saygun (1976: 417)

ethnomusicologists and first and foremost, regular collecting, transcribing, analyzing work enabled me to prepare a large systematized Turkish folk music collection for publication.

My books *Turkish Folk Music - 1* and *Turkish Folk Music - 2* published by the Institute for Musicology were primarily meant to be a well-arranged source of data. In the former, I presented similar Hungarian and Turkish tune layers, in the latter, I attempted a musical typology of the rest of the Anatolian tune styles.<sup>27</sup>

What lends some significance to these volumes is the fact that after an analysis of some 5000 tunes, I wrote the so-far most comprehensive study of Anatolian folk music.<sup>28</sup> Another significance of this large material was to shed light on Bartók's small but ingenious collection.<sup>29</sup> I launched a series of CDs based on my collections among Türkic peoples. The first - entitled *In the Wake of Bartók in Anatolia - Folksongs from the Neighbourhood of Adana* - was released by Etnofon, and contains tunes from the area Bartók also collected in in 1936.<sup>30</sup>

The second disk of the series carries similar Hungarian and Anatolian tunes.<sup>31</sup> It was published parallel with my book *In the Wake of Bartók in Anatolia - Similar Anatolian and Hungarian Tunes* by the European Folklore Institute.<sup>32</sup> In the first part of this book I described Bartók's collection in Anatolia, followed by an account of my research trips. Then comes a survey of the major Anatolian music styles that have equivalents in Hungarian folk music, e.g. songs of children's games, laments, the "psalmodic" style, before touching on other, more peripheral types. I also added tunes of other ethnic groups for comparison, placing the Anatolian-Hungarian similarities into a broader international context. Besides presenting the analogous melodies, I also tried to explain the causes of the similarity between each Hungarian and Anatolian pairs of tune types: whether they could be ascribed to general human situations, to areal or genetic connections.

It is worth noting the similarity between Hungarian and Turkish children's songs using the *mi-re-do* trichord and closing on *re*. However, it must be remembered that Slovakian

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<sup>27</sup> Sipos (1994, 1995)

<sup>28</sup> Laurence Picken wrote about my books that they are "the first comprehensive survey of Anatolian folksongs". See *Music from the Tang Court*, Cambridge University Press, p. 109

<sup>29</sup> Sipos (1997a)

<sup>30</sup> Sipos (CD-2000a)

<sup>31</sup> Sipos (CD-2000b)

<sup>32</sup> Sipos (2000)

and West European children's songs are also of this kind, and similar musical forms can be come across in Iran or among Türkmenians as well.<sup>33</sup>

a) 

b) 

c) 

d) 

*Ex. 1 Similar Hungarian and Anatolian children's songs. The tunes are on tracks 1, 2, 3 and 4 of In the wake of Bartók in Anatolia CD.*

The most important discovery I made was that the widest spread Anatolian lament type was identical with the central form of the Hungarian lament. Interestingly, Bartók also collected such a lament, but he heard it in the capital city of Ankara and only had a single tune, so he did not seriously deliberate it.

Finally, I have added several Anatolian and Hungarian tune pairs to the psalmodic and descending styles Bartók discovered as being similar between the two peoples. Let us see an example of the psalmodic tunes, as this tune type will feature a lot later.

<sup>33</sup> Yönetken (1966), Sipos (1994: 51), Vargyas (1981), Beliaev (1975: 136) and Kapronyi (1981)



a)

A mé - ra - i nagy hegy a - latt

Há - rom kis - lány za - bot a - rat.

Hej, haj, za - bot a - rat a lo - vá - nak,

Sze - re - tőt ke - res ma - gá - nak.

b)

Şu kiş - la - nın ka - pı - sı - na

Na - il ol - dum ya - pı - sı - na.

Üç - beş ha - in öl - dü - re - yim,

Ki - lit vu - run ka - pı - sı - na.

Ex.2. Psalmodic tunes a) Anatolian, b) Hungarian. From tracks 33 and 34 of the CD  
In the wake of Bartók in Anatolia.

## **The extension of research to ethnic groups living between the rivers Volga and Kama**

The question is what all these similarities may imply. I myself pronounced more cautiously about the causes of the similarity than Bartók. Just think of the variety of most diverse ethnic groups from which the Hungarians evolved: Finno-Ugrians, Türkic groups, Mongols, Slavs and many others. When speaking of Anatolia, we tend to forget that the area corresponds to one-time Byzantium which was Türkified by various Türkic peoples through a phase of bilinguality.

Owing to the complex ethnogenesis of the Anatolian Turks and the Hungarians, it is no wonder that both Hungarian and Anatolian folk music includes many different layers. As no direct genetic connection could be thought of, it appeared worthwhile, even imperative to extend the researches to a broader context.

As has been mentioned above, in addition to Bartók's collection in Turkey, and my six-year endeavour added to it, László Vikár and Gábor Bereczki collected folk music from Finno-Ugric and Türkic peoples in the Volga-Kama region: Chuvash, Tatar and Bashkir groups.

However, there are Türkic peoples between the Volga-Kama region and Anatolia as well. To list the major groups going from north to south: Kazakhs, Türkmenians, Azeris; in the Caucasus Karachays, Balkars, Kumuks and Nogays. More to the west, in the Balkans, the Türks and Tatars in Romania and Bulgaria can be named. As my distant goal, I have set to myself the mapping of the music of this vast area. The first steps have been taken with my Anatolian, West-Kazakh, West-Mongolian Azeri, Karachay and Balkar collections.

There is no space here to go into detail about these collections. Let me just briefly outline them and touch on the related publications and findings.

### **The Azeri expedition**

Azeris are close kins of the Anatolian Türks by language, but the ethnogenesis of the two peoples are widely different. It appeared most advisable to examine how Azeri folk music related to the music of other ethnic groups living in the same area and to Anatolian music, and what connections could be found between the local musical strata and the folk music layers of other Türkic peoples and the Hungarians. I set out on my Azeri expedition in search of the answers to these questions in 1999.

I picked four bases for collecting: Baku, Samahi, Kuba and Zakatala and a sizeable stock was also collected from Azeris who had fled from Karabakh. Apart from Azeri

material, we recorded many tunes from Tat people (aborigins of Iran) and various Caucasian groups including the Avars. Altogether some 600 tunes were collected by us in 35 places, from 100 singers. In the knowledge of the state of Azeri archives, I can safely say that this collection, with the supplementary video material of some 24 hours and the photo collection, is among the significant Azeri collections.

The majority of the tunes in the area are characterized by conjunct melody lines without characteristic movements, as well as the following: a) construction built on two musical ideas (2-core tunes), b) a fourth or fifth compass, c) hepta- or octosyllabic lines, d) low line-ending notes, e) 6/8 rhythm or a similar rhythmic pattern, rarely 2/4 or *parlando-rubato*.

This simple layout is in contrast with the highly complex Hungarian or Anatolian musical scene, and offers few analogies between Hungarian and Azeri tunes. It was in the Avar material that one could discern similar elements to certain strata of Hungarian folk music. To improve on these findings, it would be indispensable to have a deeper insight into folk musics in Iran.

At any rate, there is a noteworthy wide-spread Azeri tune group which moves on the notes *(so)-mi-re-do* and ends one line on *re*, the other on *do*, displaying at least that much similarity with the central form of the Hungarian and Anatolian laments.

### **Expedition to Thrace**

I collected music in Thrace in 1999, mainly among Bektashi Turks who moved here from Bulgaria over the past two centuries. Instead of analyzing in detail the 200 tunes or so I collected, let me point out but one phenomenon. It is not rare to hear from those studying Bektashis and Alevi that the religious culture of these communities might preserve primitive, even shamanistic elements. Indeed, it appears confirmed by the collected material that there is a close connection between the religious and folk tunes of the Bektashi in Thrace. The connection often only affects structure or tonality, but in several tune types analogous melodies can also be found. The simplest folk music motifs are preserved and passed down by the tunes of folk religion. I think it is an important topic of research which I am also currently preoccupied by.

On the other side, there is only sporadic similarity between Thracian and Hungarian tunes. No representatives of the psalmodic style so prevalent in Turkey was found here, and the lament also widely differs from the predominant Inner Anatolian and Hungarian laments.

### Karachay-Balkar expedition

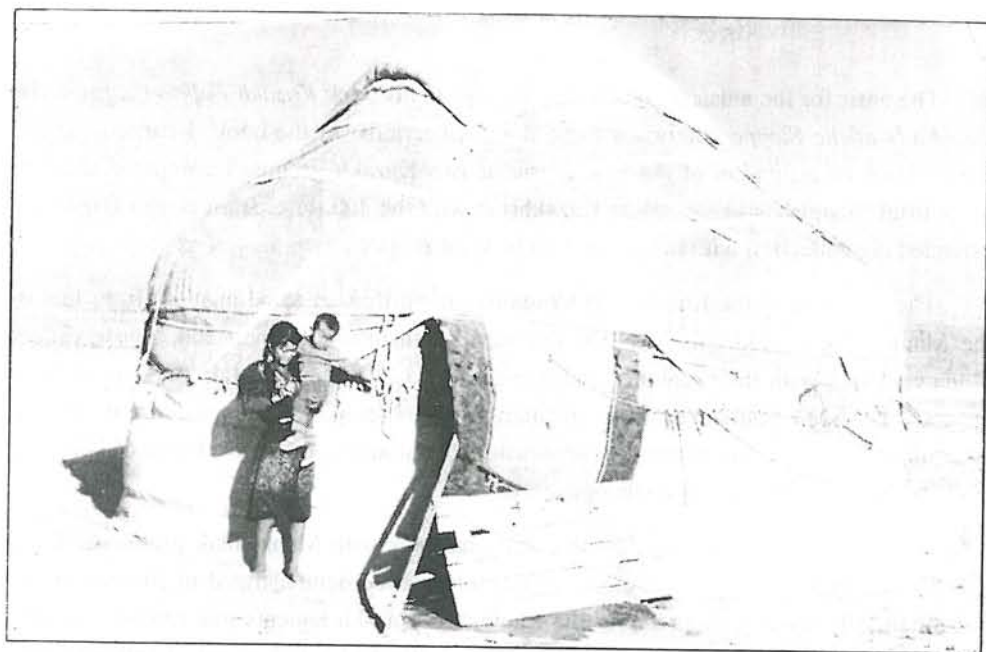
In September-October 2000, I collected some 250 tunes in the Caucasus, first of all among Karachay and Balkar people living there. I also recorded some Kabard, Kumuk and Chechen songs.

The foothills of the Caucasus is a significant place for Hungarian prehistory. The Huns and Avars passed here during the great westward migrations. That is the place along the Don-Kuban where Hungarians arrived fleeing the Sabirs in the 5<sup>th</sup> century and here, in the Kazar Empire, in the foreground of the Caucasus they changed more thoroughly to intensive livestock breeding and agriculture. Here they communicated, and mixed, with other - mainly Bulgar - Turks. The Hungarian-Bulgar coexistence must have been tight because when the Bulgars moved upwards along the Volga because of an Arab attack, a group of Hungarians went with them. The majority of Hungarians moved from here to the west (Etelköz), and from there to the Carpathian Basin in 895, following a Pecheneg onslaught.

The ancestors of the Karachay and Balkar peoples also lived in this area when the Hungarians sojourned here and also later. It is also known that a Hungarian monk called Otto set out with a few companions and the support of King Béla to find these groups around 1232. He did reach his goal and most probably met the Hungarians who Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus (959) also mentioned claiming that they communicated with the Hungarians from the Carpathian Basin through envoys.

All this notwithstanding, apparently there is little similarity between the Karachay-Balkar and Hungarian folk musics, and what there is is restricted to a few formal analogies. Some traces, such as the importance of the pentatonic lament and the fifth-shifting structure suggest that earlier these peoples did have other musical patterns that must have been repressed or lost during their intricate ethnogenesis. It is imperative to know the folk music of Ossets, Kabards and Cherkeses to be able to draw more accurate conclusions. At this point it is thought-provoking that certain elementary forms, e.g. the twin-bar structure of *mi-re-do* core that is so important in Hungarian folk music or psalmodic tunes also appear in religion-related songs and lullabies in the music of Turkic peoples.

Tunes of the psalmodic style can be found galore in Kazakh, Anatolian and Hungarian folk music. Among the Karachays and Balkars only its small-form variant is detectable, with a single tune suggesting some more developed variants whose lines descend to the final *la* through 5(b3)4 cadences. I am still working on the analysis of the Karachay-Balkar material, which I should like to compare with the music of Karachays who had escaped to Turkey.



*Picture Collection in Mangishak in south-western Kazakhstan*

### **The Kazakh collection**

As the first step of my Kazakh researches, I travelled to Almati in the summer of 1995 to take part in a commemorative meeting in honour of Abay Kunanbayev, the great poet of the Kazakh people. I only did some limited collection around the that-time capital and acquired some basic publications on folk music.

Then, in 1997, I collected 300 tunes in south-western Kazakhstan, in Mangishak. In the same year my wife Éva Csáki collected music among the Môngolian Kazakhs in Nalayh near Ulan Bator. I have also used Dávid Somfai Kara's material he collected among the Kazakhs in Bayan Ölgii province in western Mongolia in 1996.

With the Kazakhs, research has shifted towards Central Asia on the one hand, and on the other, the investigation of the music of Kazakhs living between the relatively well explored Volga-Kama region and Anatolia has laid the foundations for a large-scale areal comparative research. Besides, the Kazakhs are of special importance for Hungarians, since some of the Comans settled in Hungary after 1239, while those who remained in the area contributed to the ethnogenesis of the Kazakh people, mixed with Turkic and Mongolian ethnic groups. In the Middle Ages, Comans moved to Hungary in several waves from the area of the Golden Horde. Researches suggest that these Comans preserved their customs and language until as late as the early 17<sup>th</sup> century when, however, the signs of Magyarization were already increasing.

The basis for the musical and textual analyses in my book *Kazakh Folksongs From the Two Ends of the Steppe* comprises these three collections. In the book, I carried out the comparative investigation of the folk music of two Kazakh groups. I compared the 250 tunes from Mangishak in southwest Kazakhstan with the 200 tunes from Bayan Ölgii and extended my collection with tunes gathered by local researchers.

The language of the Kazakhs in Mongolia only differs in some nuances from that of the Mangishlak Kazakhs living 3000 km west of them, while their folk music differs fundamentally. With their diatonic scales ending on *la*, the Mangishlak tunes are polarly opposed to the Mongolian Kazakhs' predominantly *do*-pentatonic tunes. This is also an indication that great caution must be administered to studying the interrelation of language and ethnicity and language and ethnogenesis.

A survey of the tunes has revealed that analogies with Mangishlak psalmodic tunes and the pentatonic laments of Mongolian Kazakhs can be demonstrated in Hungarian and Anatolian folk music. It is precisely the Mongolian Kazakh laments that resemble simple Hungarian and Anatolian laments most closely. I attached a CD to my Kazakh volume which allows for a study of the similarities between the Hungarian and Anatolian, as well as southern Kazakh and Mongolian Kazakh laments.

My next plan is to do fieldwork among the Türkménians, to round off the investigation in the area between the Volga-Kama region and Anatolia, which will naturally require further efforts for improvement. Then, in 2001, I am planning a Kirgiz expedition.

It is well known that the tree of the Hungarians - like those of so many other peoples - has many roots, as in the ethnogenesis of the Hungarians various ethnic groups played important roles apart from the Finno-Ugrians, such as Türkic peoples, Mongols, Slavic, German and other groups. I am especially interested in exploring the Türkic and Mongolian constituents of the Hungarian folk music.

In my view, the moot question is not whether Hungarians are of Türkic or Finno-Ugric origin, nor is it the point in a study of Anatolian music to see whether it is homogeneously of Türkic or of some other origin. It is far more essential to devote untiring research to explore which strata of these folk musics have similarities in which areas, in the music of which ethnic groups. That, however, is only the beginning of the road, for the extent of similarity and the explanation of its causes is the longer stretch before reaching the goal.

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