

“Là où vous êtes, je sens toujours Bartók parmi nous”
‘Wherever you are, I always feel Bartók among us’
Dille’s Reflections on the Relationship between Bartók and Kodály

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‘Wherever you are, I always feel Bartók among us’

With this sentence - which takes on an almost religious connotation - Denijs Dille personally addressed Zoltán Kodály. This happened at the end of a lecture he gave on December 12, 1962, in the great hall of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (*Magyar Tudományos Akadémia*). The lecture was part of the celebration of Kodály’s 80th birthday (1882-1967). In this lecture, entitled *Bartók et Kodály* (Bartók and Kodály), Dille went deeper into the relationship between what he would refer to a few years later as ‘the most amazing duo of the then European music.’¹

Dille was clearly impressed by the select audience and in particular the presence of Kodály, who formed the subject of his lecture:

C’est un sujet bien redoutable que de parler de Bartók et de Kodály devant un auditoire de choix tel que se présente votre assemblée, redoutable de surcroît par la présence du maître illustre en l’honneur duquel nous nous sommes réunis et qui forme lui-même le sujet de mes propos.²

As a subject, it is very daunting to talk about Bartók and Kodály to an audience of choice such as you, formidable moreover by the presence of the illustrious master in whose honour we have gathered and who himself is the subject of my comments.

In his lecture, Dille intended to elaborate on (1) his perspective on the relationship between Bartók and Kodály and (2) their individuality. He did this by reflecting both on their activities and their oeuvre. In this way, he also intended to understand the nature (character) of their personality that manifested itself through these aspects. Dille, who applied in his research the methods of philology (see my lecture at the Bartók Symposium in 2014), saw this as a complex problem because he only wanted to consider insights that were based on facts. ‘Il ne s’agit jamais d’un jugement de valeur (...) il importe de définir, et rien de plus’³ (It is never a value judgment (...) it is a matter of defining, and nothing more.). At a lecture given in 1970 in Deurne, quite similar to his lecture of 1962, he poses the question: ‘What is the reality that lies behind the connection between these two names?’⁴

¹ Denijs Dille, *Béla Bartók*, 1974, p. 32.

² Denijs Dille, *Regard sur le passé*, p. 305.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 306.

⁴ Denijs Dille, *Bartók en Kodály*, lecture, Deurne, 1970.

And he continues:

Verwacht nu niet dat ik dit in een handomdraai kan bepalen of verklaren, want bij nader overzicht staat men hier voor een zeer complex probleem. (...). Toen ik voor meer dan twintig jaren met de Hongaarse toestanden direct contact nam, is dit complexe probleem mij dadelijk opgevallen, en het verbaasde me dat niemand zich daarmee bezig hield. Integendeel, zodra ik het vertrouwen van de mensen wat kon winnen, moest ik vaststellen dat een deel Bartók als de enige god vereerde, terwijl een groter aantal anderen hetzelfde met Kodály deden, dit immer met een volkomen negering van de andere. Ik stootte voortdurend op tegenspraak in feiten van historische, esthetische en wetenschappelijke aard, die me een zeer onbehaaglijk gevoel verwekten.⁵

Do not expect me to explain or define this in an instant, because a closer overview confronts one with a very complex problem. (...). When I took direct contact after twenty years of Hungarian to-do, this complex problem immediately struck me, and I was surprised that nobody was taking notice. On the contrary, once I managed to win the trust of the people, I noted that some revered Bartók as the only god, while a greater number of others did the same with Kodály, and this always with a complete disregard of the other. I was constantly confronted with contradicting facts of a historical, aesthetic and scientific nature, which provoked a very uncomfortable feeling in me.

In his lecture of 1962, he already clarified why the problem is so complex:

(...) il faudrait disposer d'une documentation plus importante afin qu'un examen plus systématique et plus compréhensif des données nous permettent d'arriver à un résultat, à une conclusion qui satisfassent aux exigences de la matière.

(...) it would require more extensive documentation so that a more systematic and comprehensive examination of the data would allow us to achieve a result, a conclusion that meets the requirements of the subject.

Dille saw himself as the one who, in his lecture of 1962, had at least posed the problem. He explicitly refers to it in 1972:

Ik heb beproefd het probleem tenminste aan te snijden met een publieke rede in 1962 toen Kodály als tachtigjarige werd gevierd. Het heeft me veel vijandschap bezorgd, maar tevens de instemming van Kodály die publiek zijn

⁵ *Ibidem.*

tevredenheid uitsprak dat iemand de grondslagen legde van een toekomstig onderzoek.⁶

I have tried to at least approach the problem with a public speech in 1962 on the occasion of Kodály's 80th birthday. It has brought me a lot of hostility, but also the approval of Kodály who publicly expressed his satisfaction over the fact that someone was laying the foundations for future research.

On the subject of this future research, Dille will state in 1962;

Ce sera l'oeuvre de quelque jeune chercheur futur que je souhaite Hongrois, car c'est seulement une connaissance approfondie de certains caractères et faits hongrois qui permettra de percevoir l'étendue des rapports Bartók-Kodály (...).⁷

This will be the work of a future, hopefully Hungarian, young researcher, because it is only through a thorough knowledge of a number of Hungarian characters and facts that it will become possible to perceive the extent of the rapport between Bartók and Kodály (...).

For Dille, this was a logical conclusion given the fact that, right up to Bartók's departure to the USA in 1940, Bartók and Kodály had worked together and done everything necessary to achieve their dual goal: 'the restoration of the authentic Hungarian folk song and the instauration (establishment) of an authentic Hungarian musical culture.'

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Dille on Kodály

It is well known how Dille met Bartók for the first time in Brussels (in 1937) and later a few more times over the course of 1938, which resulted in several interviews and some letters (which are kept here in the Bartók Archives of the Royal Library of Belgium). Dille first came into contact with Kodály in 1946 by letter. On May 9, 1946 he asks him a few questions with respect to his research on Bartók. He closes the letter with: 'Réponse en français, allemand, anglais, hongrois, comme vous voulez' (Reply in French, German, English, Hungarian, however you want). In the following years, a warm friendship with deep mutual respect developed between the two 'philologists'.

Dille, for instance, writes a letter to Kodály on December 15, 1962, on the occasion of his 80th birthday on December 16:

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ Denijs Dille, *Regard sur le passé*, p. 305.

⁸ Denijs Dille, *Bartók en Kodály*, lecture, Deurne, 1970.

En ce jour de votre quatre-vingtième anniversaire je vous présente mes voeux les plus sincères de bonheur et de longue vie; et je vous dis, à vous qui étiez si souvent mon directeur de conscience et mon soutien dans les difficultés, ma reconnaissance infinie, mon affection fidèle et profonde.⁹

On this day of your eightieth birthday, I offer you my best wishes for happiness and a long life; and I express to you, you who were so often my director of conscience and my support in difficult times, my infinite gratitude, my faithful and deep affection.

On December 15, 1966, Dille expresses in a letter to Kodály, how important he considers him to be, particularly with respect to Bartók and Hungarian culture:

Ce n'est pas seulement en ce jour que je me rappelle la parole des psaumes:

Vitam petiit a te
Et tribuisti ei longitudinem dierum
Magna est gloria eius in salutari tuo
Gloriam et magnum decorem impones super eum
Et erit tanquam lignum quod plantatum est secus decursum aquarum
Et folium eius non defluet
Et omnia quaecumque faciet prosperabuntur

mais chaque fois que je médite sur votre destin et celui de la culture hongroise; car sans vous Bartók et la Hongrie ne seraient pas ce qu'ils sont à présent.

It is not only on this day that I remember the words of the Psalms:

Vitam petiit a te
Et tribuisti ei longitudinem dierum
Magna est gloria eius in salutari tuo
Gloriam et magnum decorem impones super eum
Et erit tanquam lignum quod plantatum est secus decursum aquarum
Et folium eius non defluet
Et omnia quaecumque faciet prosperabuntur

but every time I ponder your fate and the fate of Hungarian culture; because without you, Bartók and Hungary would not be what they are now.

(Psalm 20)
He has sought life from you, and you gave him length of days
Great is his renown in your safety: splendour and great elegance you confer upon him.
(Psalm 1)
And he shall be like a tree which is planted near the running waters
And his leaf shall not fall off:
and all whatsoever he shall do shall prosper.

In 1998 – Dille is 94 at the time and Kodály has been dead for 31 years – Dille writes in his (unpublished) memoirs of Kodály:

⁹ Letter from Denijs Dille to Kodály, d.d. 15 December 1962. KBR: dossier Kodály BBA I/20.

Er is geen mens waarover ik liever schrijf dan over Kodály. Zijn superieur verstand, zijn buitengewone, universele cultuur, zijn wetenschappelijk vernuft, zijn goed hart, zijn liefthalligheid tegenover mij, zijn nooit versagende hulp in een goede zaak --- hij is iets enigs geweest in mijn leven.¹⁰

There is no man about whom I would rather write than Kodály. His superior intellect, his exceptional, universal culturedness, his scientific ingenuity, his good heart, his sweetness toward me, his tireless help to any good cause --- he has been unique in my life.

This is, within the scope of this lecture, sufficient to outline the relationship between Dille and Kodály. I will now go deeper into Dille's reflections on the relationship between Bartók and Kodály.

Dille's reflections on the relationship between Bartók and Kodály

History

The essence of Dille's reflections on Bartók and Kodály can be found in the lecture of 1962. This lecture, held in French, was published a year later, in 1963, in a Hungarian translation by Ani Gleiman as *Bartók és Kodály*.¹¹

In 1963, Dille gives a three-month-long series of lectures on Bartók and Kodály on the Belgian French-speaking radio (R.T.B = Radiodiffusion-Télévision Belge). (He had already devoted a broadcast to Bartók and Kodály in 1959 but this was in the context of the series *The Modern Song after Debussy*). For the broadcasts Dille made for the R.T.B. show *Troisième programme*, he made three interviews with Kodály in April, June and July of 1963. These were published as *Souvenirs par Z. Kodály* in *Studia Musicologica*.¹² Later, a Hungarian translation was published as well.¹³ Dille will repeat the lecture on Bartók and Kodály a few times in 1970/71.

Reflections

In the lengthy introduction ('Verantwoording en standpunten') (Justification and views) to his book *Béla Bartók* (Antwerp, 1974) Dille dedicates as many as 11 of the 27 pages on a detailed comparison between Bartók and Kodály. Here, he broadly follows the structure of his lecture of 1962, and he addresses what he describes as 'differences between the two personalities (...) that can just as easily be seen as connecting links'.¹⁴ When Dille reflects on the relationship between Bartók and Kodály, he always

¹⁰ Denijs Dille, *Kodály*, (memoirs), 25 March 1998. Private ownership CVE.

¹¹ Denijs Dille, Ani Gleiman (trad.), "Bartók es Kodály", *A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Nyelv- és Irodalomtudományi Osztályának Közleményei*, vol. XX, n°. 1-4, 1963, p. 178-184.

¹² *Studia Musicologica*, vol. IX, n° 3-4, 1967, p 255-263.

¹³ *Kodály Zoltán emlékezési*, in: *Mosonyi Mihály és Bartók Béla emlékére*, Magyar Zenetörténeti Tanulmányok, Budapest, 1973, p. 299-305.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

emphatically refers to this idea of 'different and similar'. In his lecture of 1962 he puts it as follows:

Nous pouvons considérer les rapports entre Bartók et Kodály comme des rapports de différence et de parenté, c'est à dire ce qui sépare et ce qui unit. ¹⁵

We can consider the relationship between Bartók and Kodály as a relationship of difference and affinity, that is, that which separates and that which unites.

Dille sees Bartók and Kodály as two inseparable personalities that have completed each other.

Dille approaches the relationship between Bartók and Kodály on the basis of three themes:

1. The personal character
2. The scientific work
3. The composition

It is not the intention of this lecture to repeat in detail Dille's analysis of this relationship. I do want to briefly consider each of the three themes to better situate the essence of Dille's reflections.

Personal character

Dille notes that Bartók's intelligence is in essence very different from Kodály's:

(Bartók) ne possédait pas cet intellect de ratiocination, de démonstration, de planification et de logique qui caractérise fortement la pensée lucide de Kodály et qui assure à ce dernier cette netteté dans la conception des idées et cette sûreté, cette aisance mesurée et classique dans l'énoncé de la pensée. Bartók au contraire eut l'intelligence de sa sensibilité, une sensibilité nourrie par un immense appétit de savoir et de connaître, une sensibilité qui se développait avec l'âge, qui évoluait parfois brusquement vers la découverte d'un domaine inconnu, une sensibilité qui fut en même temps le stimulant le plus puissant de l'intuition et de l'invention. ¹⁶

(Bartók) did not have this ratiocinative, demonstrative, devising and logical intellect that strongly characterizes the lucid thought of Kodály which gives the latter this clearness in the conception of ideas and this certainty, this measured and classical ease in the expression of thought. Bartók instead had the intelligence of his sensitivity, a sensitivity nurtured by a huge appetite for

¹⁵ Denijs Dille, *Regard sur le passé*, 1990, p. 306.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

knowledge and experience, a sensitivity that was developing with age, that sometimes abruptly evolved toward the discovery of an unknown field, a sensitivity that was also the most powerful stimulant of intuition and invention.¹⁷

It implied that Kodály was able to determine the path he had to follow, while Bartók lacked the ability to look ahead:

(...) il lui (= Bartók) fallait se heurter à des inconséquences, à des absurdités, pour que sa sensibilité réveillât son intuition et lui ouvrît (...) les chemins de la vérité et de la réalité.¹⁸

(...) he (= Bartók) had to run into consequences, absurdities, for his sensitivity to awaken his intuition and open (...) the paths of truth and reality.

Bartók was hoofdzakelijk een man van intuïtie en stelde zich de idee niet voor buiten een moreel nut of een directe activiteit. Dit verklaart zijn proselytisme. Kodály heeft over hem ergens verklaard: *Bartók behoorde tot die mannen die, door een voortdurende onvoldaanheid gedreven, alles wilden veranderen, alles wat ze op de wereld ontmoeten schoner en beter wilden maken.* Dat schreef hij, maar in een privé gesprek ging hij verder en vatte aldus samen: *hij wilde alles veranderen en is alleen geslaagd in de muziek.*¹⁹

Bartók was essentially a man of intuition, unable to conceive the idea beyond moral utility or direct activity. This explains his proselytism. Kodály at one point said about him: *Bartók was one of those men who, driven by a constant dissatisfaction, wanted to change everything, wanted to make everything they encountered in the world cleaner and better.* This is what he wrote, but in a private conversation he continued on the subject and summarised as follows: *he wanted to change everything and only succeeded in music.*

Dille also points to a fundamentally different position on culture, 'for Kodály, the humane was expressed in the traditional humanistic culture; for Bartók, conversely, the humanist culture was reduced to the humane.'²⁰

Dille explains the latter by pointing to the different position they take on literature. Bartók aimed to find in literature and the other arts an ethical or moral given, a pragmatic idea. He did not search for beauty in itself, but rather what he as a person could learn. This also determines – according to Dille – his choice of song lyrics, such

¹⁷ *Ibidem.*

¹⁸ *Idem.*

¹⁹ Denijs Dille, *Béla Bartók*, 1974, p. 13

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 28.

as for instance Ady: 'gloomy, hopeless verses about a lost love, something that man experiences as an immediate given.'

The poems by Ady used by Kodály, on the other hand, are texts with a profound ideological background, which transcend the purely personal and are rooted in the soil of the general Western culture.

Dille also compares Bartók's *Cantata profana* with Kodály's *Psalmus Hungaricus*:

De tekst van *Cantata profana* ontleent de tekst aan de Roemeense folklore; het is een tekst waarin literatuur en cultuur volkomen uitgeschakeld zijn; alleen vindt men er een ethisch gegeven, een hulde aan het begrip: vrijheid. Het grootste vocale werk van Kodály, zijn *Psalmus Hungaricus*, heeft als tekst een monument van de Hongaarse literatuur en als inhoud een monument van het menselijk denken en voelen. Zoals Kodály die tekst gebruikt legt hij een verband tussen leven en lijden van zijn volk en het cultuurdomein van de beschaafde mensheid.

The lyrics of *Cantata profana* derive from Romanian folklore; it is a text in which literature and culture are entirely subdued; what remains is an ethical given, a tribute to the concept of freedom. The greatest vocal work by Kodály, his *Psalmus Hungaricus*, has lyrics that derive from a monument in Hungarian literature and a content that derives from a monument of human thought and feeling. In the way Kodály uses the text, he creates a connection between the life and suffering of his people and the cultural realm of civilized mankind.

The choice of lyrics clearly reveals the differences in Bartók and Kodály's personalities. When it comes to the purely musical value of these monumental works, irrespective of the text selection, it is, for Dille, impossible to make a comparison within one particular frame of reference:

Daar merkt men eens te meer hoe groot Bartók's genie is geweest; want als het gaat om de absolute muzikale waarde, dan kunnen *Psalmus Hungaricus* en *Cantata Profana* met dezelfde maat niet meer gemeten worden.²¹

Here it becomes clear, once again, how great Bartók's genius was; because when it comes to the absolute musical value, *Psalmus Hungaricus* and *Cantata profana* cannot be measured by the same yardstick.

Scientific work

In October 1905, Kodály published in the journal *Ethnographia* a number of folk songs that he had collected in a scientific manner. This publication attracted Bartók's attention and marks the beginning of his collaboration with Kodály in terms of folk song research.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 29-30.

This resulted, already in 1906, in the publication of 20 Hungarian folk songs, a collection in which each had provided an accompaniment to ten different songs. The folk song research will also largely define the path they, as composers, and each according to the nature of his personality, will follow. In the 1963 interview with Dille, Kodály points out:

En composition chacun de nous a réagi selon sa personnalité. Il s'agissait de s'attacher à la vieille tradition en la développant comme l'individualité de chaque personne le permet. La curiosité de Bartók l'entraîna, comme c'est connu, vers la musique populaire de plusieurs différents peuples et pays. Toujours à la recherche du nouveau et de quelque autre chose, il est allé bien loin; tandis que moi, restant surplace, j'étais poussé plutôt à creuser les profondeurs, éclairer les couches géologiques de notre chanson. C'est la différence des résultats publiés aussi de nos travaux; ici comme dans la composition, chacun est procédé selon ses dispositions individuelles.²²

In terms of composition, each of us reacted according to his personality. It was a matter of focussing on the ancient tradition by developing it as the individuality of each person allows. Bartók's curiosity led him, as is known, to the popular music of several different peoples and countries. Always in search of something new and different, he went very far; while I, still treading water, I was rather pushed to dig deep, to illuminate the geological strata of our song. Hence the difference of the published results of our work; here as well as in the composition, each has proceeded according to his own individual dispositions.²³

But it is also Kodály who, according to Dille, assists 'him' (= Bartók) in developing a working method – which he greatly needed – and who, as a counsellor, gives him clearer insights'.²⁴

Overall, Dille notes that, in his research, Kodály adopts the attitude of a researching and organizing intellect. Bartók's research, on the other hand, is mainly aided by an extraordinary intuition. It is, however, Kodály who initiated Bartók in the knowledge of the authentic folk song and the methods to be followed in collecting and studying folk songs. Kodály has proofread all of Bartók's important scientific publications and suggested a number of changes, which Bartók has always accepted.

Composition

²² Memoirs of Zoltán Kodály, *Regard sur le passé*, p. 366-67

²³ Memoirs of Zoltán Kodály, *Regard sur le passé*, p. 366-67

²⁴ Denijs Dille, *Het werk van Béla Bartók*, 1979, p.35.

In his lecture of 1970, Dille mentions that, regarding composition, Bartók 'no matter how strange it may seem to you', repeatedly sought Kodály's advice to bring balance into the composition.

Daar ik dit lang vermoedde, vroeg ik Kodály eens of het niet op zijn raad was geweest dat Bartók zijn ballet: *De wonderbare mandarijn* had ingekort en menige bladzijde had geschrapt alvorens met de orkestratie te beginnen, en ten dele zolang met de orkestratie had gewacht daar hij met het evenwicht in de compositie niet tevreden was. Kodály glimlachte en zei: «U zijt niet ver van de waarheid.»

Since I had suspected this for long, I once asked Kodály if it had not been upon his advice that Bartók had shortened his ballet *The Miraculous Mandarin* and had removed many pages before starting work on the orchestration, and had waited so long with the orchestration, partly because he was not satisfied with the balance of the composition. Kodály smiled and said: 'You are not far from the truth.'

Turning the focus on the 'man' as he emerges through the work, he notes:

Bartók, c'est le renoncement, la souffrance, la méditation profonde, l'esprit de révolte, l'action indirecte, -- en un mot: le solitaire, avec toute la grandeur que confère l'isolement à cette position unique; car ce solitaire sent battre en lui le coeur de l'univers. Kodály, c'est la confiance, la clairvoyance, la volonté d'emprise, l'action directe; en un mot: le maître, avec toute la dignité, toute l'autorité que comporte ce mot.²⁵

Bartók is renunciation, suffering, deep meditation, the spirit of revolt, the indirect action, -- in a word: the solitary being, with all the grandeur that isolation bestows upon this unique position; because this solitary being feels beating within itself the heart of the universe. Kodály is confidence, foresight, the desire to control, the direct action; in a word: the master, with all the dignity, all the authority contained in the word.

For Dille it is clear that the mature compositions by Bartók, even the late, serene works, express 'a painful, lonely feeling, a dark pessimism, that characterizes both his mental state and his psychological personality.'

Daar tegenover staat het gevoel van vertrouwen, het optimisme, het geestelijk en sentimenteel evenwicht dat Kodály in elke bladzijde wist te leggen.

²⁵ Denijs Dille, *Bartók et Kodály*, Regard sur le passé, p. 309.

Nooit heeft hij het domein der lyriek verlaten, hoogstens even in een episch moment; Bartók's lyriek, integendeel, staat voortdurend op de rand van het dramatische of verenigt lyriek en dramatiek in één expressionistische uiting, wat samenging met een oriëntatie naar binnen, naar meditatie en concentratie. Kodály ging integendeel voort in de lijn van de volksmuziek en van het Hongaarse volkskarakter: hij was expansief, actief en overtuigend. Het werk van Kodály was af toen hij stierf; dat van Bartók daarentegen, liet nog heel wat verwachtingen onvervuld: het was een onvoltooide symfonie zoals zijn te vroeg afgebroken leven zelf. Kodály leefde tot de laatste dag in direct contact met de natie en bood haar het beeld van een persoonlijkheid die omschreven was als een programma; hij was de meester, de leraar, het symbool van beleid en autoriteit; Bartók was de eenzaam die in stilte de hartslag van de natie beluistert, die in stilte lijdt en werkt en denkt; hij was en is gebleven het symbool der geestelijke grootheid zowel van de kunstenaar als van zijn volk. Hij was de idealist, zoals Kodály de realist, in het nastreven van hetzelfde ideaal.²⁶

In contrast, there is the feeling of confidence, the optimism, the mental and sentimental balance that Kodály managed to put into each page. He never left the realm of poetry, at most briefly in an epic moment; Bartók's lyricism, on the contrary, constantly balances on the verge of the dramatic or combines lyricism and drama in one expressionist expression, which coincides with a turning inward, toward meditation and concentration. Kodály on the contrary, continued in the line of folk music and the Hungarian national character: he was expansive, active and convincing. Kodály's work was finished when he died; Bartók's on the other hand, left a lot of unfulfilled expectations: it was an unfinished symphony, like his life that had ended too early. Kodály lived until the last day in direct contact with the nation and offered her the image of a personality that was construed like a programme; he was the master, the teacher, the symbol of guidance and authority; Bartók was the loner who listened to the heartbeat of the nation in silence, who suffers and works and thinks in silence; he was and remained the symbol of the spiritual greatness of both the artist and his people. He was the idealist, just as Kodály was the realist, in pursuit of a same ideal.²⁷

Reflections on Bartók by Kodály

In a lecture to the *Hungarian Musician's Trade Union* held in 1946 – one year after the death of Bartók – Kodály expresses what a particularly difficult task it is to bring Bartók's life into words. The image he uses nicely expresses the nature of his collaboration and relationship with Bartók:

²⁶ Denijs Dille, *Béla Bartók*, 1974, p. 30.

²⁷ Denijs Dille, *Béla Bartók*, 1974, p. 30.

(...) for in the course of forty years' joint work with another man one grows into a kind of bridge with two pillars, and if one of the pillars collapses, then the whole structure will stagger and it takes a long time for the balance to be restored.²⁸

In the interview with Denijs Dille (1963), Kodály very clearly expresses the nature of his relationships with Bartók:

Quant à mes relations avec Bartók, je ne peux dire autre chose que, partant de ce moment que j'ai reconnu son génie, j'ai senti le devoir de faire tout qui peut frayer son chemin et éloigner tous les obstacles. Ainsi j'ai évité toujours être en concours avec lui; j'ai tâché toujours faire autre chose que lui a fait.²⁹

As for my relations with Bartók, I cannot say anything other than, starting from that moment I recognized his genius, I felt the duty to do everything to clear his path and remove all the obstacles. As such, I have always tried to avoid competing with him; I always tried to do something different from what he was doing.³⁰

It was also Bartók's 'genius' and the question of the origin of genius in general, that held Dille's lifelong fascination. I explored this already in depth in my lecture of 2014. Suffice to recall that, for Dille, the 'genius' is not an exceptional intellectual power, but an exceptional creative force driven by intuition.

He mentions this in his lecture of 1970 (*Bartók en Kodály*), in which he refers to the lecture of 1962:

Het zou natuurlijk onhoffelijk geweest zijn in zijn (= Kodály) aanwezigheid te beklemtonen dat Bartók's genie veel hoger stond dan het zijne; maar hij zelf bekende die ondergeschiktheid, toen hij me eens verklaarde: «van zodra ik Bartók's genie heb erkend, heb ik nooit gedaan wat hij deed om niet in zijn weg te staan»—want hij wist dat zijn muziek gemakkelijker was te begrijpen dan die van Bartók en het Hongaarse publiek hem daarom nog immer verkiest.³¹

It would have been discourteous, obviously, to emphasize, in his (= Kodály's) presence, that Bartók's genius was much greater than his; but he himself acknowledged this subordination, when he said to me: 'as soon as I recognized Bartók's genius, I never did what he did so as to not stand in his way' – for he knew his music was easier to understand than Bartók's, and that this was why the Hungarian public still preferred him.

²⁸ Zoltán Kodály, "Béla Bartók the Man" in: *The Selected Writings of Zoltán Kodály*, 1974, p. 97.

²⁹ Memoirs, *Regard sur le passé*, p. 370.

³⁰ Memoirs, *Regard sur le passé*, p. 370.

³¹ Denijs Dille, *Bartók en Kodály*, lecture, 1970.

In that sense, Dille considered Bartók's (musical) genius to be much greater than Kodály's, but, conversely, considered Kodály's intellect to be much greater than Bartók's.

Conclusion

Upon reading Dille's reflections (lectures, articles, ...) on the relationship between Bartók and Kodály, one can conclude, together with him, that although Bartók and Kodály were almost fundamentally different in both character and aptitude, they nonetheless marvellously complemented each other: 'from their collaboration the new situation was born.'³²

With the 'new situation', Dille refers to the restoration of the authentic Hungarian folk song and the instauration (establishment) of an authentic Hungarian musical culture (see above).

He believes Kodály to be of great importance. An importance that is, according to him, (still) not recognized enough:

Voor mij staat het vast dat in de toekomst de betekenis van Kodály zowel voor Hongarije als voor Bartók beter zal belicht worden en dat men hem meer recht zal laten wedervaren dan thans geschiedt.

For me, it is certain that, in the future, Kodály's significance – both for Hungary and for Bartók – will become clearer and that he will be given more recognition than is presently the case.

To conclude, in the manner of Dille:

Wat er ook van zij, Bartók en Kodály vormden gewis het meest verbazende duo van de toenmalige Europese muziek en blijven voor altijd het schoonste sieraad aan de Hongaarse kroon.³³

In any case, Bartók and Kodály were surely the most amazing duo of the then European music and remain forever the most beautiful jewel in the Hungarian crown.

³² *Ibidem.*

³³ Denijs Dille, *Béla Bartók*, 1974, p. 32.