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## **Children, Music, Arts: Hungary and Japan**

**The Relationship of Katalin Forrai, Mária Vida Székácsné and Kyōko Hani**

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### **Foreword**

When Anna Székács and I dreamt up the idea of paying a mutual tribute to the close personal relationship and professional work of our mothers, Katalin Forrai and Mária Vida Székácsné, and to Kyōko Hani, who had strong ties with both of them, we did not know exactly but felt that we would be doing an uplifting and incredibly interesting research.

In the 'Japanese box' of Katalin Forrai's legacy, kept in the Archives of the Zoltán Kodály Pedagogical Institute of Music in Kecskemét, Hungary, we found a collection of almost 30 letters, written by Kyōko Hani to Katalin Forrai, revealing the depths of their budding professional relationship in detail. Japan was the first country where, as early as in 1968, Katalin Forrai not only gave lectures to large audiences but also demonstrated the practice of early childhood music education, based on Kodály's principles, to kindergarten and music teachers. For realising the importance of such a visit, the eternal credit goes to Kyōko Hani. Her excellent command of the Hungarian language made it much easier for the educators to think together and make thorough preparations for the Japanese trip.

Kyōko Hani had already known the Székács family when they arrived in Japan on a diplomatic mission in 1960. Their posting allowed them to soak up the Japanese culture, art and language, and Mrs. Székács neé Mária Vida, being true to her expertise, began to study Japanese children's drawings.

Our research work took us back to our childhood, to the wonderful intellectual atmosphere where we were brought up and could see our parents thinking together with each other, intertwining both of their expertise, and edifying each other for a universal goal.

Therefore, in this publication we drew on a 'pure source'—our family legacy and personal memories. Our intention was to shed light upon the beginnings, the Japanese trips and the origins of the relationships, to make some of the most important moments be known. (Katalin Vikár and Anna Székács)

The research was launched by Katalin Vikár, Katalin Forrai's daughter with the help of Dr. Anna Székács, Mária Vida Székácsné's daughter, and Ildikó Koós Csányiné, Head of the Library of the Kodály Institute in Kecskemét, Hungary, based on the documents in the 'Japanese box' of Katalin Forrai's legacy, found today in the Archives of the Institute, which were organised into a searchable format by Betsy Moll, then also the available and researched Japanese literature, and the legacy of Mária Vida Székácsné. Their team was joined by Zsuzsanna Tóth Hegedűsné, solfège teacher, choir conductor, kindergarten educator, Master Teacher at Eötvös Loránd University, Faculty of Primary and Pre-School Education (ELTE TÓK); Márta Oláh dr. Gordánné, Master Teacher of kindergarten education and specialist consultant in talent development, who received the Teréz Brunszvik Award, the Hungarian state accolade for pre-school pedagogical work; Naomi Chinen, International Katalin Forrai Awardee music teacher; Naomi Ito, music teacher, musicologist, translator specialised in music, who won the KÓTA Award of the Hungarian Association of Choirs, Orchestras and Folk Ensembles; and music therapist Orsolya Csoma, Mária Vida Székácsné's granddaughter.

The task of publishing the research findings about the early internationalisation of the Kodály concept and the cultural links between Hungary and Japan was assumed by Anita Nagy, Director of the Liszt Institute – Hungarian Cultural Center Tokyo. In collaboration with the Cultural Center, a special series of online presentations was already broadcast during spring 2021, providing a unique perspective on the topic.

This written extract of those online lectures presents the reciprocal influence of the Japanese and Hungarian culture from the 1960s, through the relationship of Katalin Forrai, the creator and first practitioner of the methodology of early childhood music education, Mária Vida Székácsné, the expert of early childhood arts education, and Kyōko Hani, who, with the help of Katalin Forrai, adapted the Kodály concept for Japanese music education, based on letters, diary entries and other, previously unpublished documents.

## Introduction of Katalin Forrai, Mária Vida Székácsné and Kyōko Hani

Katalin Forrai (1926–2004)



Katalin Forrai is the most prominent representative of early childhood music education in Hungary, Zoltán Kodály's student, who travelled all over the world for decades as an ambassador of Hungarian music pedagogy. She became well-known throughout the whole country early on, and generations of Hungarians grew up listening to her sweet and tinkling voice every Saturday in the radio programme 'For Pre-schoolers' broadcast by the Hungarian Radio nationwide. As early as from 1947, her music kindergarten classes were attended by hundreds of professionals interested in music pedagogy in her famous Csobánc Street kindergarten. As a senior expert of the Hungarian National Pedagogical Institute, she regularly visited kindergartens all over Hungary to help local kindergarten teachers with presentations, demonstration workshops and further training. She preached that the most efficient means of character development is through singing and music. In the then National Methodological Institute for Crèches (BOMI) she was involved in a research on the musical development of young children and the possibilities of improving their musical skills. She is the author of several methodological books and compilations of songs and singing games for children (*Európai gyermekdalok* [European Children's Songs], *Jár a baba, jár* [Walk, Baby, Walk]). Out of these, her handbook *Ének az óvodában* [Singing in the Kindergarten] has been published in twenty-three editions since 1974. This book has attracted major international interest, which resulted in several adaptations. Among them, the world-renowned and globally sought-after publication titled *Music in Preschool* stands out. This Katalin Forrai book is the single most important methodological guide and collection of children's songs in the area of kindergarten music education still in use today.

In addition to her wide-ranging pedagogical activities in Hungary, she was invited to many foreign countries (Japan, USA, Canada, Australia, and almost all countries in Europe) to give seminars, courses, lectures and demonstration classes. She undertook important roles in several Hungarian and international professional organisations: she was the Secretary of the ISME Commission for Music Education, and then, for several years, the President of the International Society for Music Education (ISME), where she founded and co-chaired the Early Childhood Commission; she was a Board Member of the Association of Hungarian Musicians; Vice-President of the Hungarian Kodály Society and the International Kodály Society (IKS); and President of the Hungarian Music Council. In 2011, her colleagues and

students from the UK, the USA, Australia, Canada and Hungary established the International Katalin Forrai Award, which pays tribute to Katalin Forrai's pedagogical work in the field of early childhood education. The Award is also an encouragement for teachers who are working on implementing quality music education.

Mária Vida Székácsné (1916–2000)



Mária Vida Székácsné was a trailblazer in early childhood complex arts education. Her experiments in arts pedagogy and psychology proved not only the significance of arts education but also its transfer effects.

Mária Vida became acquainted with the work of Zoltán Kodály in the late 1930s at meetings organised by Sándor Karácsony (1), the innovator of Hungarian school pedagogy. She graduated from the College of Fine Arts, Budapest in 1941 as a drawing teacher and graphic designer, and in the meantime she produced children's books. Zoltán Kodály personally gave her permission to compile and illustrate books of singing games for children from his folk music collections. Kodály's collection in Nagyszalonta (today's Salonta in the territory of Romania) was also used for a book of children's rhymes. In 1951, Mária Vida earned a degree of Candidate of Arts Sciences in Tbilisi. She taught in the College of Kindergartened Educators, the College of Pedagogy, and later on at the Pedagogy Department and then at the Psychology Department of Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE). Her main area of research was early childhood arts education. In the early 1960s, Mária Vida Székácsné spent five years in Japan, where she studied the situation of early childhood arts education. She visited rural schools, attended conferences and wrote articles. Her observations and the lessons she had learnt from them were later incorporated into her educational and experimental work in Hungary. She summarized her Japanese experiences in a book titled *Gyermekművészet Japánban* [Children's Art in Japan]. After returning to Hungary, she conducted experiments in the area of complex arts education, first in kindergartens, then in elementary schools.

From 1966, she developed an experimental programme in visual representation for junior (3-year-old) kindergarten children. She taught kindergarten teacher training courses in



Budapest and all over the country. She gave a highly successful series of seminars at Eötvös Loránd University about complex arts education and the developmental psychology of young children. She delivered lectures at various conferences on the transfer effects of arts education, and she published her research findings in the field in several languages. As an invited expert, she was involved in the Barkóczy and Pléh (2) psychological impact assessment of Kodály's method of music education, and she contributed with her own experiment, done in Kecskemét, to the impact assessment (3).

Kyōko Hani (1929–2015)



Kyōko Hani was raised in Japan, in the free-spirited Jiyū Gakuen School, where she studied the violin and conducted the school's orchestra. She attended Hideo Saitō's conducting classes. After graduating, she studied music first in Vienna, then in Leipzig, before moving to Hungary in 1958. She met Zoltán Kodály through her father, historian Gorō Hani. For a year, she studied from musicologist Lajos Vargyas, and then began teaching Japanese at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE). She was the native Japanese lecturer of ELTE until 1967. In the meantime, she learnt Hungarian excellently and started translating literature. She translated contemporary literature from Japanese into Hungarian and from Hungarian into Japanese, thus familiarizing both countries with current literary trends. She compiled an anthology of modern Japanese short stories.

From the 1960s, she worked as a guide and interpreter for Japanese musicologists and music teachers visiting Hungary. She interpreted for and guided the famous Hungarian composer and music teacher Erzsébet Szőnyi at the 1963 ISME meeting in Tokyo, and in 1964 she actively participated in and interpreted at the ISME Conference in Budapest. In 1967, she returned to Japan permanently, where she was asked to translate materials on music education. She decided to introduce and disseminate the concepts of Kodály-based early childhood music education in Japan. For this, she asked and received help from Katalin Forrai.

Kyōko Hani founded the Kodaly Institute for Aesthetic Education, and sent young kindergarten educators and music teachers to Hungary for individual and group trainings. She translated numerous Hungarian writings on music pedagogy into Japanese to help make the

method better known in her home country. She founded a kindergarten which promoted the Kodály spirit. By making a compilation of traditional Japanese folk songs and translating specialist books, she laid the foundations of pre-school music education in Japan based on Kodály's vision.

### **Their relationships**

#### **Katalin Forrai and Mária Vida**

Katalin Forrai and Mária Vida met at a young age, and thanks to mutual acquaintances and a shared field of work, they developed a lifelong friendship. Katalin Forrai's diary contains several entries about the points of connection between what Mária Vida spoke about in her seminar lectures and what Katalin Forrai found important for her research on children's personal development. Their observations in the field of arts education resonated with each other, and they even co-authored a book about their experiments in kindergartens.

#### **Mária Vida and Kyōko Hani**

It was late 1959, when Mária Vida met Kyōko Hani, who was her colleague at Eötvös Lóránd University at the time. When Mária Vida and her family moved to Japan for years, Kyōko Hani helped them with advice and, after their arrival, introduced them to her own family and, through them, to their progressive-minded acquaintances. Their relationship remained an ongoing friendship even after Kyōko Hani returned to Japan and Mária Vida returned to Hungary.

#### **Katalin Forrai and Kyōko Hani**

It was Kyōko Hani who translated Mária Vida's article about Hungarian music education into Japanese in 1961 in which Vida highlighted Katalin Forrai's significant role in early childhood music education. Kyōko Hani personally saw Katalin Forrai's demonstration class at the 1964 ISME Conference, and in 1966 she also visited the Csobánc Street kindergarten. Their correspondence revealed that when Kyōko Hani started to translate music education methodology, she asked the professional help of Katalin Forrai in selecting and adapting the songs. Katalin Forrai's legacy includes many of Kyōko Hani's letters with the questions she asked from Katalin Forrai that she never left unanswered. Hani made several references as to how she drew new conclusions acting on Katalin Forrai's advice. She wanted to faithfully follow every aspect of Katalin Forrai's methodological ideas.

### **The beginnings of kindergarten music education in Hungary, and the start and evolution of Katalin Forrai's career path**

In Hungary, the state first regulated the operation of kindergartens in 1891. (1) The relevant national law set out that all towns and villages were required to establish their own infant care centres, where only qualified and Hungarian-speaking nursery teachers were allowed to be employed. The state attached great importance to these institutions and their role of preparing children for school. In order to counterbalance the growing German influence in the country from the 1930s, preservation of folk traditions and the idea of

increasing national self-awareness to unite people into one nation played an increasingly important role in education. Zoltán Kodály, the prominent composer and music educator highly respected in the Hungarian and international cultural life of the time, explained his ideas on kindergarten music education in a lecture entitled *Music in the Kindergarten* in 1940, which was later published as a study (2).

*'Culture cannot be inherited. Ancestral traditions evaporate rapidly unless each generation reacquires them for itself.'* (3)

Children should only be taught Hungarian children's folk songs originating from a 'pure source' and being appropriate to their age, instead of contrived and didactic songs. National and cultural endeavours were thwarted by World War II, and then by the growing political and cultural impact of the Soviet Union. The influence of the Soviet pedagogy set the direction of Hungarian public education for many decades. In 1948, kindergartens and schools were nationalised, and in 1953 a new kindergarten education act was passed. (4) Kindergartens were categorised as 'public education institutions', and their function of preparing children for school was strengthened. Zoltán Kodály's notion of education based on Hungarian folk music and early acquisition of the mother tongue of music became accepted in these public education institutions operating according to uniform guidelines. This is how Katalin Forrai's music education methodology for crèche and kindergarten children, based on Kodály's principles, gained ground and took root.

From a very early age, Katalin Forrai had a clear ambition to devote her career to early childhood music education. In a book entitled *Így láttuk Kodályt* [This is How We Saw Kodály], she recalled the start of her career:

*'I wanted to be involved in the music education of young children, and I needed advice as to how start doing it. [...] he said I would need at least two more diplomas if I took the responsibility of early music education of the little ones. I would have to visit kindergartens to be among children and try in practice what it means to educate them.'* (5)

In 1947, on the advice of his master, Zoltán Kodály, she started her 'music kindergarten' classes in a kindergarten in Budapest. The word about Katalin Forrai's music kindergarten on Csobánc Street spread quickly among music professionals both in and outside Hungary.



Those who travelled to Hungary to gain an insight into singing and music education based on Kodály's concept, almost without exception, visited her at the Csobánc Street kindergarten.

## **The situation of visual arts education in kindergartens, the start of Mária Vida's career path**

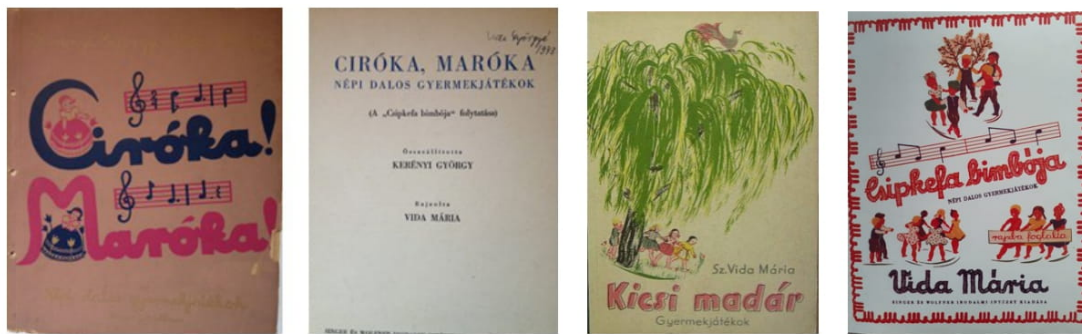
After World War II, the Hungarian system of crèches, kindergartens and schools changed in many aspects, and so did the general aim of public education. The institutions were nationalised, and a uniform curriculum with a uniform ideological background was created. This ideology was defined by the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. After the war, most women started to work while raising children, so there was a need for crèches (for children aged 0-3) and kindergartens (for children aged 3-6) open on weekdays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Schools established a system of after-school care. Educational objectives were centred around the pursuit of the socialist ideal of man, based on the Soviet model. In kindergarten education, visual representation primarily meant copying and imitating patterns and schemas.

Some of the great pedagogues of the pre-war era could, by virtue of their prestige, remain leading figures in education (Zoltán Kodály, for example, in the area of music education), while others were treated differently, such as Sándor Karácsony, who had been a nationally acclaimed professor of education before World War II, but was sidelined after 1948. Sándor Karácsony was a proponent of folk culture-based arts education, combined literary education with Kodály's folk-based music education, and emphasised in his university lectures and writings that arts education should be complex. After his death in 1952, the legacy of his work was carried on through the work of his students.

One of them was Mária Vida. It was in 1936 when the 20-year-old Vida started to attend Sándor Karácsony's seminars in Budapest where the professor spoke about development, creation, the social psychology of adolescents, literature, film and theatre. Listening to Sándor Karácsony's views on the process of learning and teaching was a life-changing experience for Mária Vida. Not only did Professor Karácsony provide these young learners around him with materials to read, think about or debate over, but also with a mission, a purpose, and created a real community for them. This was the group where Vida got acquainted with Kodály's works. She described it later in her autobiography in the following way:

*'Singing folk songs is the lifeblood of our community; I am an enthusiast of Kodály's lecture and writing entitled Music in the Kindergarten. Great intellectual impact: Kodály's and Bartók's music. Karácsony's teaching: folk culture and classics for children! In language, in music. This is how I produce, with Kodály's approval, my books of children's games (Csipkefa bimbója; Círóka! Maróka!) Later on, my book of rhymes selected from the Nagyszalonta collection (Keringeli borsó).'* (1)





Mária Vida was a student of painter István Szőnyi at the College of Fine Arts in Budapest, and her graphic design teacher was Lajos N. Varga from whom she learnt wood engraving and copper etching. As a graphic artist and illustrator, she had published picture books already before her studies at the college. She obtained her drawing teacher diploma in 1941. In 1945, she started to teach at the College of Kindergarten Education. In 1946, she moved to the Soviet Union—to present-day Georgia—for further education, where she studied early childhood arts education, which was the subject of her doctoral, or—as it was called at the time in that part of the world—her candidate’s thesis.

### **Music and visual arts education in Japan until the mid-1960s**

#### **The situation of music education**

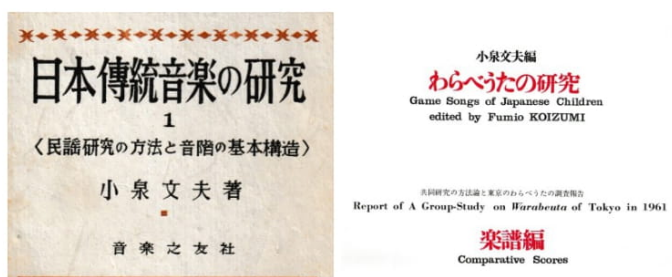
According to available data, it was musicologist and music critic Saburō Sonobe, who first introduced Zoltán Kodály as a folk music researcher in Japan. In 1956, Sonobe travelled through Eastern Europe for eight months, visiting Hungary as well. He met Zoltán Kodály at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He reported on his journey in his book *Travel Diary of Eastern Europe 1956* (1). In this, he also wrote about his meeting with Kodály, to whom he introduced himself by saying that ‘I am probably the first person to present your and Bartók’s research findings in the area folk music in Japan’, then he added ‘and it happened twenty years ago’. It means that Sonobe had already introduced Kodály’s and Bartók’s research work as early as the 1930s. The travel diary reveals that he visited music schools in Hungary, but made no specific mention of music education. Sonobe was receptive to new educational methods and was fond of Kodály’s theory which regarded folk songs as the fundamental starting points of music education.

Between 1955 and 1965, Sonobe was a teacher at the Teacher Training Group of the Japan Teachers Union (JTU). At the 1956 JTU Educational Summit, one of the items on the agenda was the topic of *Warabe Uta*, the traditional Japanese children’s songs, but at the time it was treated only as a theoretical issue in education. In the same year, the Japanese Society for the Development of Musical Skills was founded, and Japanese children’s songs were given prominence in music education for the first time.

Next year, in 1957, Sonobe established the Japanese Society for Music Education. The Teacher Training Group of the Japan Teachers Union and the Society for Music Education joined forces to emphasise the need to use *Warabe Uta*, the traditional Japanese children’s songs in education. In other words, the topic of *Warabe Uta* moved away from being merely a theoretical question to becoming an issue of practical application.

In 1960, ethnomusicologist Fumio Koizumi published his book *Research on Japanese Traditional Music* (2), which provided a clear understanding of the sound scale structure of Japanese folk songs. As a result, Japanese educators became enthusiastic about music education based on *Warabe Uta*, the folk songs of their native land.

In 1961, attendees of Fumio Koizumi's folk music seminars at the Tokyo University of the Arts started to collect and research the children's songs still available and actively sung at the time in the capital city, Tokyo. The findings were published in two volumes much later, in 1969, under the title *The Warabe Uta Research*—one volume described the research process, the other contained the scores (3). Traditional children's songs, games, and *Warabe Uta* sung and played by schoolchildren at the time were all collected. This was proof that for schoolchildren these songs and games did not belong to the past, but they were still alive, and had to be used as the fundamental starting points for music education.



Fumio Koizumi *The Warabe Uta Research*

Mária Vida Székácsné, who arrived in Japan in late 1960, got acquainted with musicologist Saburō Sonobe through the personal relationships of the Hani family. As an expert of arts education, Mária Vida felt the duty to help the work of Saburō Sonobe and his group.

### **The situation of visual arts education in Japan from a Hungarian perspective**

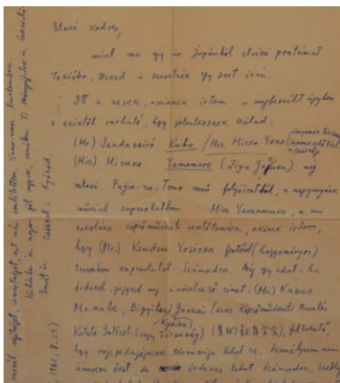
In 1960, Mária Vida arrived in Japan with the intention that, besides standing ground as a mother and a diplomatic wife, she would also try to gain insights into the issues of teaching drawing and arts education as such in Japan. She was greatly helped in her work by Hiroko Kobayashi, who acquired a good command of Hungarian within a year, therefore, from the second year onwards, she could help Vida in her research, either by providing an interpretation to certain materials, or translating them.

At first, Vida only observed her own children's drawing classes at school (at Kōgai shōgakkō, Tokyo) and made notes and sketches. She saw that drawing classes had a workshop character. While students in Hungary had 45-minute drawing classes where they painted and drew individually, Japanese schools had several-hours-long classes where students worked mostly collectively and could also learn wood engraving, for example. The name of the class was different as well: In Hungary, they called it a 'drawing class', while in Japan its name was 'drawing and handicrafts class'. Vida particularly appreciated the large number of experiments, observations and their recording in drawings in the area of teaching environmental studies and natural science.



A drawing and handicrafts class at Kōgai shōgakkō, Mária Vida's drawing

Later on, she found professional helpers—on one hand, with the assistance of her friend and author of children's books, Mieko Suzuki, and on the other, through Kyōko Hani, who mobilised her contacts. Hani helped by connecting Mária Vida with painter Kenji Yoshioka, who was a teacher at Jiyū Gakuen. In her letter dated 23 August 1962, Hani suggested Vida contacting the Japanese Society for Art Education (Bijutsu Kyōiku Gakkai), and also mentioned several people by name to get in touch with. As a result, Vida got to know about the magazine *Hanga* (Prints), for which she subscribed. Also, she began to study the literature on Japanese arts education. At her request, teachers of drawing sent her prints of engravings (wood and paper engravings) from several parts of Japan, and Vida organised them into a system, and also sent some of them back to Hungary for the university.



Hani's 1962 letter to Vida written in Hungarian

Vida wrote the following about what she learnt from *Hanga* magazine:

*'In one issue I find sheet music with poems and engravings. Yes, this is what I have been intrigued by for so long. Various forms of expression together: music, poems and visuals at school. Is this a coincidental combination, I wonder, or the result of conscious pedagogical work?' (1)*

To answer this question, she tried to contact schools directly and gain experience by visiting them. By 1963, she was more familiar with Japanese specialised terminology and her contacts were more extensive. She consulted Norio Ide and Gorō Suzuki, who both worked on



renewing the teaching of drawing, and wrote articles on the subject. Norio Ide was a sculptor and a professor of developmental psychology of children's drawing and visual representation at the University of Education. She invited Maria Vida to attend and make a presentation at the fourth national conference of the 'New Drawing Association' (Atarashii E no Kai).

### **The background to Katalin Forrai's trip to Japan, based on her correspondence with Hani**

When Kyōko Hani arrived in Hungary, she had already heard of Zoltán Kodály, and it was on his advice that she joined the Folk Music Research Group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, where she spent a year studying Hungarian folk music and Hungarian children's songs with pentatonic melodies. (1). As she mentioned later in one of her lectures, her first reading in Hungarian was Zoltán Kodály's study *Music in the Kindergarten*. However, after one year at the Academy, she undertook a position as Japanese language lecturer at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. She was living in Hungary for 9 years. In the meantime, she did not lose touch with the world of music, and helped Kodály's ideas to spread both in Japan and Hungary. She translated Mária Vida's article about music education which was published in Japan, and worked as an interpreter for Japanese musicologists who visited Hungary, and Japanese guests who arrived in the Hungarian capital for the 1964 ISME Conference. Yet, it was not until she returned to her home country (in 1967) that she realised the significance of early childhood music education based on Kodály's principles. As she wrote in one of her letters addressed to Katalin Forrai:

*'It is certainly somewhat fateful that I only began to truly engage with the ideas and the system of Teacher Kodály when he had already passed away. I don't know why it happened this way, although I had been living there for 9 years [...] He could have helped Japanese children so much, so very much!'* (2)

Kyōko Hani started to work on translating and adapting Hungarian methodological books, collect Japanese folk children's songs, and in a model kindergarten she introduced kindergarten music education based on the Hungarian model. She maintained an intensive correspondence with his Hungarian friends and acquaintances in Hungarian(!). In the field of kindergarten music education, her main helper and role model was Katalin Forrai.

Katalin Forrai's legacy contains many letters from Kyōko Hani. Unfortunately, we do not have access to the letters of reply, but it is clear from Hani's letters that Katalin Forrai never failed to answer her questions. She made several references as to how she came to different conclusions after following Katalin Forrai's advice, how their exchange of thoughts shaped her work on collecting *Warabe Uta* songs for the three kindergarten age groups. As she was adapting the Hungarian methodology to the Japanese curricula, Kyōko Hani felt more and more that she could not authentically transfer all the knowledge she had received from Katalin Forrai, thus came the idea of inviting her to Japan. She was encouraged to make the invitation by her colleagues who had already seen Katalin Forrai's 'music kindergarten' in Budapest on Csobánc Street.



May 23, 1967

Dear Mrs. Forrai Katalin,

As you may recall, around 20 days have passed since we returned to Japan, after having made a study of the musical education in Hungary. We want to express our hearty thanks for your friendly co-operation during our stay there.

Here in Japan, both the children and their parents have been paying much attention to our activities. In response to their expectation, we think it our duty to create means and contents, based upon the fruit gathered in from the Hungarian trip. No doubt, your musical education, based upon your folk music, will be helpful. We'll be grateful if you would help us with our further activities, exchanging the results of our future study.

Madam FORRAI KATALIN

I had a deep impression to talk with you and see your music lesson at Ovada even in a short time. As soon as I returned, I printed news about your music education and a photo. I think, to give music lesson to 3 ages children is still rare in the world.

The summer of 1967, Kōichiro Nakagawa, 29 September 1967. Kyōko Hani's letter from the Archives of the Kodály Institute of the Liszt Academy of Music.

1967. 9. 20. 日本国 近藤 邦雄 Hiroko Kondo  
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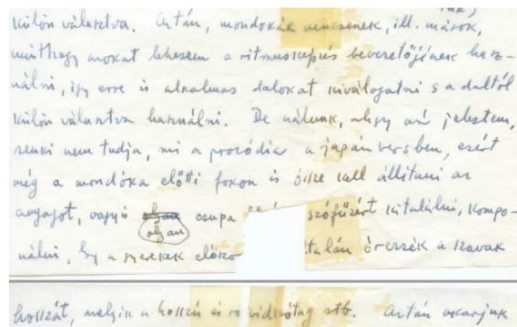
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 rövidített idővel nem: időmenny nem lenne kifizető.

23 May 1967 – a visit paid by a Japanese group – a letter of thank you (Masao Honma)

Kyōko Hani's letter from the Archives of the Kodály Institute of the Liszt Academy of Music.

Katalin Forrai's one-month-long visit must have been particularly important for Kyōko Hani, who wanted to follow Katalin Forrai's methodological vision in every respect. Prior to Katalin Forrai's trip, Kyōko Hani fully immersed in adapting Forrai's book *Ének az óvodában* [Singing in the Kindergarten]. What she did was not translating the Hungarian songs, but explored the Japanese *Warabe Uta* and, with the help of Katalin Forrai, selected the Japanese melodies that fit best with the Hungarian concept. With the professional assistance of Katalin Forrai, she compiled a collection Japanese folk children's songs for first- and second-year (3- and 4-year-old) kindergarten children. In one of her letters, Hani wrote:

*'[...] our present reality is that the material for the group of 3-year-olds is being used, for the time being, by other age groups as well. [...] I have made a compilation for myself up to the third-year in the kindergarten, and the conclusion is: there are too few similar songs with the same scale degree, and we swift way too fast from one degree to another, although from the existing material [...] I have exhausted all the useful songs. We have to collect for ourselves, because now specialist collectors can provide only very little of what we need for our work.'* (3)



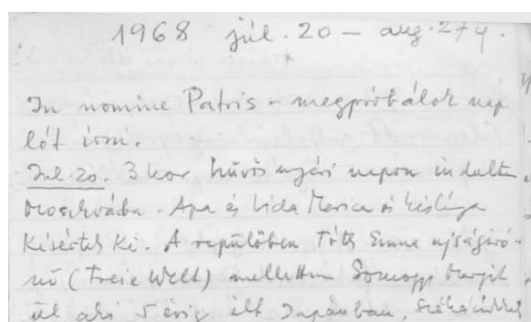
The letters of 1967 and 1968 were partly about methodological issues, and partly about the preparation of Katalin Forrai's Japanese trip and the prior arrangements at Japanese kindergartens.

### **Katalin Forrai's 1968 trip to Japan, based on her diary entries**

At the invitation of Kyōko Hani, Katalin Forrai spent one month in Japan in 1968, which was followed by longer study visits in 1974, 1989 and 1992. She kept a diary for each of these trips, recording the daily events important to her. Beyond the busy professional programmes, her diary entries provide a valuable insight into the customs, moods and relationships of local people, and contain fascinating travelogues. Her diary manuscript is also an example of how to transfer knowledge by maintaining the symbiotic relationship between theory and practice.

*'It is our firm conviction that mankind will live the happier when it has learned to live with music more worthily. Whoever works to promote this end, in one way or another, has not lived in vain.'* (1)

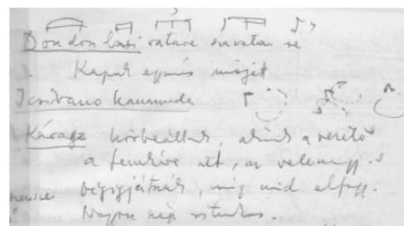
### ***'In nomine Patris – I am trying to write a diary'* (2)**



Katalin Forrai left Budapest for Moscow first on 20 July 1968. *'Father and Marica Vida and her little daughter escorted me to the station.'* (3) The journey to Tokyo took six days by train, plane and ship through the then Soviet Union.







Katalin Forrai saw well-structured activity sessions, with a sufficient number of songs and rhymes, implementing thoroughly elaborated and meaningful development tasks. The diary also contains words of praise: nice rhythm; subtle movements; great pedagogical solution to comfort the crying child; playful correction; children obviously enjoy the game; correct pitch changes; good support for the weaker ones; the educator enjoys the play; everyone is involved in the game; children sing clearly and brightly.

## Personal recollections

### Naomi Ito and Katalin Forrai

I first encountered Kodály's idea of music education in 1968, listening to a lecture by Katalin Forrai. Katalin Forrai came to Japan at the Kyōko Hani's invitation. I saw a lady from a far-away country, teaching Japanese children's songs to Japanese children, playing with them singing Japanese lyrics. I was still a secondary school student at the time, so unfortunately I did not really understand what it all meant, but it certainly made a deep impression on me. I attended Katalin Forrai's lecture with my father who was a primary school music teacher. Back then he bought books that were about Hungarian music pedagogy: *Zenei nevelés Magyarországon* [Music Education in Hungary], edited by Frigyes Sándor and translated into Japanese by Kyōko Hani, Katalin Forrai's *Ének az óvodában* [Singing in the Kindergarten], edited by Hani, and *Child and Music*, written by Kyōko Hani herself. These three books gave me the motivation later on to teach music with the Kodály Method.

### Naomi Chinen: My encounter with the great pedagogue, Katalin Forrai—what I have learnt, and what I am grateful for

For me 1968 was a year of multiple coincidences. In April that year I started to teach in my alma mater, the Jiyū Gakuen, in the lower division of its elementary school. Many times while teaching my classes I was unsure if I was doing it right. That was when my solfège and piano teacher introduced me to Kyōko Hani. In the same year, Katalin Forrai visited Japan at the invitation of Kyōko Hani. I attended her lectures, the open singing demonstration class at the Inogashira Nursery and Kindergarten, the open class at the Myojo Gakuen Elementary School and the HanOnKen teacher training session. What she presented was completely new for me.

At the Inogashira Nursery and Kindergarten at that time, children were grouped according to their age, and as far as I remember, the children's game (*Warabe Uta*) session was held in two groups. One was led by music teacher Mrs. Kinoshita, who was older than me, and the other was led by a kindergarten pedagogue (or carer, as we called it back then). Unfortunately, I do not remember exactly, but the session was structured like a story.



There was an introductory phase (to arouse the children's interest with a certain motivation), a main phase (children's games), an instructional phase (to practice the musical objective set for the day through play) and a concluding phase (when the educator sang a Japanese folk song to the children as a listening activity). In other words, the session had an introduction, a climax, and a reassuring ending, just like in a fairy tale.

I really like this structure and I have been using it very often in my classes to this day. Of course, I often change this structure depending on the actual circumstances of the children.

Back in 1968, the open class at Myojo Gakuen was taught by Keiichi Fujita. They say that the Kodály Method is not merely about the use of hand signs, but this particular class where all those signs were used made a deep impression on me.

I also participated at the HanOnKen teacher training course conducted by Katalin Forrai. This was my first encounter with Kodály's musical compositions. Led by Katalin Forrai's pleasant but powerful voice and guided by her gentle eyes, we all sang Kodály's instructional melodies together (333 Elementary Exercises in Sight Singing, 77 Two-Part Exercises, 15 Two-Part Exercises, *Bicinia Hungarica*, *Tricinia*). Of course, we also sang Japanese children's songs and played games together, all the participants. As a fledgling teacher, I was very nervous, but I remember that I had a really good time.

'I'm looking forward to seeing you next year', these were the words we parted with, and indeed, the next time I met Katalin Forrai was in September 1969.

The journey to Hungary was by sea from Yokohama to Nahodka (in the then Soviet Union), then by train to Khabarovsk, and by plane from Khabarovsk to Moscow, then two nights in Moscow, and finally to Budapest by train again. It is unbelievable today, but back then many scholarship winners chose this route, not just students, but Katalin Forrai herself made the same trip from Budapest to Japan and back. (Although, I think she travelled by plane between Budapest and Moscow.)

In Hungary, Katalin Forrai was my teacher, my guardian, my mother.

In the first couple of days I stayed at the place of Anikó Hamvas, then I moved to an apartment previously rented by Betsy Moll, who had come from the USA to study in Hungary. This is how I started my life in Budapest. As Betsy had already gone back to America when I arrived, I did not get to meet her in person until much later. But because Katalin Forrai talked about Betsy every day, it was as if we were sisters.

The rental, the study programme, and basically everything was prepared for me by Katalin Forrai. I observed her music classes twice a week at the Csobánc Street Music Kindergarten and once a week at the Kindergarten of the Hungarian Radio, and I learnt a lot.

## Notes

### Introduction of Katalin Forrai, Mária Vida Székácsné and Kyōko Hani

(1) About Sándor Karácsony in more detail: Kontra, György (2009). *Karácsony Sándor, a nagyhírű professzor* [Sándor Karácsony, the famous professor]. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó; Viktória, Tamusné Molnár. *A művészeti nevelés kérdései Karácsony Sándor életművében* (The issues of arts education in the oeuvre of Sándor Karácsony), PDF download, docplayer.hu. Downloaded on 28 September 2021.

(2) Barkóczi, Ilona & Pléh, Csaba (1977). *Kodály zenei nevelési módszerének pszichológiai hatásvizsgálata* [Psychological impact assessment of Kodály's method of music education]. Kecskemét: Kodály Institute.

(3) 'The initial plan was to include not only psychological evaluation, but also assessments in the areas of linguistics, mathematics and drawing-painting. The evaluation of paintings was undertaken and followed through by Mária Vida Székácsné, who also wrote a book about the results.' (from Ilona Barkóczi's *Kodály zenei nevelési módszerének pszichológiai hatásvizsgálata, visszaemlékezés egy régi vizsgálatra* [Psychological impact assessment of Kodály's method of music education, recollections of an old research study]. *neveles\_belivek* (tankonyvtar.hu). Downloaded on 28 September 2021

### **The beginnings of kindergarten music education in Hungary, and the start and evolution of Katalin Forrai's career path**

(1) Act XV of 1891 on Infant Care

(2) Kodály, Z. (1964). *Visszatekintés* [In retrospect], Vol. 1. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó. pp. 92-116.

(3) Kodály, Z. (1964). *Visszatekintés* [In retrospect], Vol. 1. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó. pp. 156.

(4) Act III of 1953 on Infant Care

(5) Bónis, F. (Ed.) (1979). *Így láttuk Kodályt* [This is how we saw Kodály]. Budapest: Püski Kiadó Kft. pp. 205-213.

### **The situation of visual arts education in kindergartens, the start of Mária Vida's career path**

(1) Székácsné Vida, Mária. *Önarckép – határterületen* [Self-portrait – On a border area]. In: Bodor, P., Pléh, Cs. & Lányi, G. (Eds.) (1998). *Önarckép háttérrel. Magyar pszichológusok önéletrajzi írásai* [Self-portrait with a background. Autobiographical writings of Hungarian psychologists]. Budapest: Pólya Kiadó. pp. 269.

(2) The title of the thesis: *A gyermekek alkotó folyamatainak grafikai fixációja. A művészeti nevelés kérdései* [Graphic recording of children's creative processes. The issues of arts education], 1948, Tbilisi. Opponent: Professor Dito Uznadze, Head of the Psychological Institute.

### **Music and visual arts education in Japan until the mid-1960s**

#### **The situation of music education**

(1) Sonobe, Saburo. *Travel Diary of Eastern Europe 1956*

(2) Koizumi, Fumio. *Research on Japanese Traditional Music*

(3) Koizumi, Fumio. *The Warabe Uta Research*

#### **The situation of visual arts education in Japan from a Hungarian perspective**

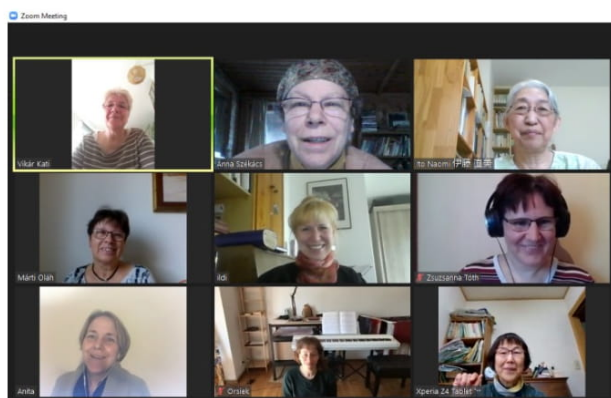
(1) Székácsné Vida, Mária (1971). *Gyermekművészet Japánban* [Children's art in Japan]. Budapest: Corvina Kiadó. pp. 28.

## **The background to Katalin Forrai's trip to Japan, based on her correspondence with Hani**

- (1) On Zoltán Kodály's advice, Kyōko Hani attended the Folk Music Research Group of the Hungarian Academy of Science (MTA) from 1958 for a year led by folk music researcher Lajos Vargyas (1914–2007)
- (2) Kyōko Hani's letter from the Archives of the Kodály Institute of the Liszt Academy of Music.
- (3) Kyōko Hani's letter from the Archives of the Kodály Institute of the Liszt Academy of Music.

## **Katalin Forrai's 1968 trip to Japan, based on her diary entries**

- (1) Kodály, Z. (1989). *Visszatekintés* [In retrospect] Vol. 3.; Music Education in Hungary. Foreword. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó. pp. 5.
- (2) Forrai, Katalin. *Napló 1968* [Diary 1968], manuscript.
- (3) Forrai, Katalin. *Napló 1968* [Diary 1968], manuscript; the little girl mentioned in the diary entry is Mária Vida's daughter, and member of our research group, Anna Székács.



**Members of our research group:** Katalin Vikár, Anna Székács, Naomi Ito, Márta Oláh, Ildikó Koós Csányiné, Zsuzsanna Tóth Hegedűsné, Anita Nagy, Orsolya Csoma, Naomi Chinen (from left to right, starting from the top row).