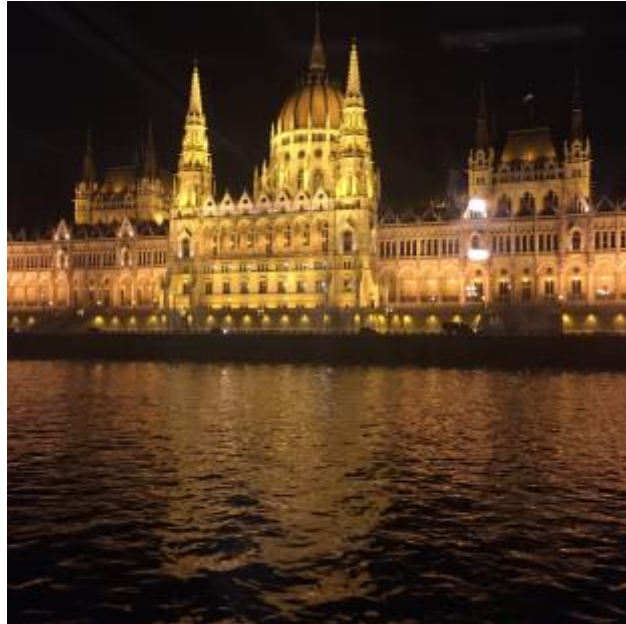


Kodály's Sonata for Solo Cello Op.8 and
Hungarian Nationalism

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ABSTRACT



Zoltán Kodály's *Sonata for Solo Cello Op.8* (1915), a landmark of the cello repertoire, grew out of an environment that was artistically progressive and culturally nationalistic. It is a remarkably innovative work in several respects. While not an explicitly nationalistic work (title, programme, etc.), an extensive web of connections links it deeply to Kodály's activities in folksong research and folk instrument performance and his particular brand of Hungarian nationalism. Most writings on the *Solo Sonata* neglect this aspect of the composition, but this thesis argues that it is essential for its understanding and, above all, for its performance. The Hungarian nationalist dimension of the work may be realised in performance more or less clearly, or not at all. A Hungarian tradition of playing, represented principally by the cellists Janos Starker (1924–2013) and Miklós Perényi (born 1948), do realise this dimension, although many other performances and recordings do not, reducing it to a bland, 'international modernism'. The thesis reconstructs the *Solo Sonata's* links to its progressive/nationalistic world and the recital provides a 'Hungarian' interpretation.

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