

JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL FOLK MUSIC COUNCIL

LÁSZLÓ LAJTHA†

1892-1963

As we go to press, the grievous news has reached us of the death in Budapest of László Lajtha. Through his many musical works Lajtha has won international fame and in his own country his reputation as a teacher and conductor stands high. It is however with his work as a collector and scholar of folk music that we are chiefly concerned.

He was collecting folk music as long ago as 1910 when he undertook field-work in association with Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály. He has been an active collector ever since except for periods of interruption due to the World Wars and absences abroad. His principal collections are published in the series *Népzenei Monográfiák*, of which five large volumes have so far appeared and the sixth and seventh are in preparation. Until shortly before his death he was engaged in collecting instrumental gypsy music.

His folk music studies embraced a wide field of interests and covered such aspects as notation, classification, analysis and styles of performance. He had also made a close study of the folk dance. Lajtha was widely known and esteemed as a musical folklorist outside his own country. He was associated since its inception in 1928 with the Commission International des Arts et Traditions Populaires (CIAP) which operated within the framework of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, a department of the League of Nations. In 1930 he became president of the music department of CIAP and under his editorship were published the two volumes of folk music bibliography, *Musique et Chansons populaires* (1934) and *Folklore Musical* (1939), which may be regarded as pioneer work of capital importance.

László Lajtha was interested in the formation of the International Folk Music Council and had been a member of its executive board since its inception in 1947. He participated in the annual conference held in Czechoslovakia in July 1962 where he enriched the discussions with his trenchant comments.

There was in Lajtha an honesty of purpose which made him at times uncompromising and dogmatic. Yet even in his most argumentative moods he endeared himself to his fellows by his warm humanity. Through his tendency to over-theorize he might create the illusion that his was a complicated personality, but the very reverse was true. He had an almost childlike simplicity and a sense of humour which never failed to rise to the occasion. As a musician, as a scholar and, above all, as a man of rare nobility of character he will be sadly missed.

MAUD KARPELES

CARLOS LAVÍN†

Carlos Lavín Acevedo was born in Santiago, Chile, on August 10th, 1883. From an early age, he followed two roads with equal enthusiasm: those of composition and of musical research, the latter especially in the fields of folk music and ethnography.