

The object of the thesis is a collection of recordings made in the first half of the 20th century by Phonographic commission of the Czech Academy. The aim is to reconstruct the history of the project and to analyze the folk music included in the collection, so it is possible to tell to what extent it can be taken as a representative sample of folk musical culture of Czechoslovakia in the first half of the 20th century.

In 1928 the Phonographic Commission was established at the Czech Academy. Although the idea was originally suggested by linguists, it was decided that all acoustic manifestations of the nations living in the republic would be recorded: i.e. folk and artificial music, narrations in dialects, speeches by theatre actors and important personalities of the public life. Folk music comprised in the end an important part of the outcome of Commission's efforts. The recordings took place in 1929, 1933, 1934, and 1937, first in cooperation with the French company Pathé, later with the Czech company Esta. The outcome of the activities of the Phonographic commission includes a total number of 291 sides contain the recordings of folk music from Slovakia, Carpathian Ruthenia, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatian Sorbia. Singing and spoken word are sometimes combined in individual recordings. Excluded from the collection were non-Slavic nationalities living in the republic (e.g. Germans, Gypsies, and Jews) as well as the urban types of folk music.

The first part of the thesis reconstructs the history of the commission's activities; the second part is based on analysis of the recordings. In the first section it is the analysis of repertoire, localities from which the performers were selected, genres they perform, instruments they use. In the second part the analysis concentrates on particular performances and their style.