

STYLISTIC PRINCIPLES IN THREE CHAMBER WORKS BY BÉLA BARTÓK  
WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE ROLE OF THE PIANO

NELLIE BOWEN

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The content of this thesis, except whom specifically indicated in the text, is my own original work.

## ABSTRACT

The thesis discusses the following three works composed by Bartók between 1922 and 1938 : Sonata no. 2 for Violin and Piano, Rhapsody no. 1 for Violin and Piano and "Contrasts" for Violin, Clarinet and Piano.

Details relating to Bartok's compositional style in the three chamber works are investigated, with particular reference to the role of the piano. The piano writing is not innovative, but the traditional boundaries are extended by means of the melodic idiom, harmonies and rhythms. The thesis considers traceable musical influences viz. folk music and the influence of other composers; form and the tonal-contrapuntal fabric, rhythm and meter, and performance considerations. The value of Bartók's own recordings is addressed with regard to a critical evaluation of Bartók's own interpretation, the importance of the precisely notated scores, the controversial Bartók tempi, the application of rubato and broken chord figurations and Bartok's views on pedalling, articulation and ornamentation. Examples of all the above-mentioned aspects are traced in the three works concerned, and the pianistic style and dynamics and the interaction between the piano and the other instruments are discussed.

The three works are compared and Bartók's development as composer of chamber music is traced through this comparison.

The existence of Bartók's own interpretation of the Sonata, Rhapsody and "Contrasts", is of particular value to the study and serves as a main point of reference regarding the performance aspect. Using these recordings as a basis, the thesis considers the works from a pianist's point of view and insights are offered into possible problematic areas in performance, in relation to the piano part as well as the ensemble. The knowledge acquired through the preceding analysis of the works assists in a better understanding of the works and ensures an ultimately more successful performance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>	
CHAPTER I	INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER II	SONATA NO. 2 FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO	25
	Form and the Tonal-contrapuntal Fabric	25
	Rhythm and Meter	38
CHAPTER III	RHAPSODY NO. 1 FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO	42
	Form and the Tonal-contrapuntal Fabric	42
	Rhythm and Meter	47
CHAPTER IV	"CONTRASTS" FOR VIOLIN, CLARINET AND PIANO	51
	General Description	51
	Verbunkos	52
	Pihenö	56
	Sebes	58
CHAPTER V	PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS	63
	General Performance Considerations	63
	Pianistic style and Dynamics in the Sonata, Phapsody and "Contrasts"	75
CHAPTER VI	CONCLUSION	88
APPENDIX	ERRORS IN THE SCORE OF SONATA NO. 2	95

BIBLIOGRAPHY

100

DISCOGRAPHY

112

SCORES

## CHAPTER I      INTRODUCTION

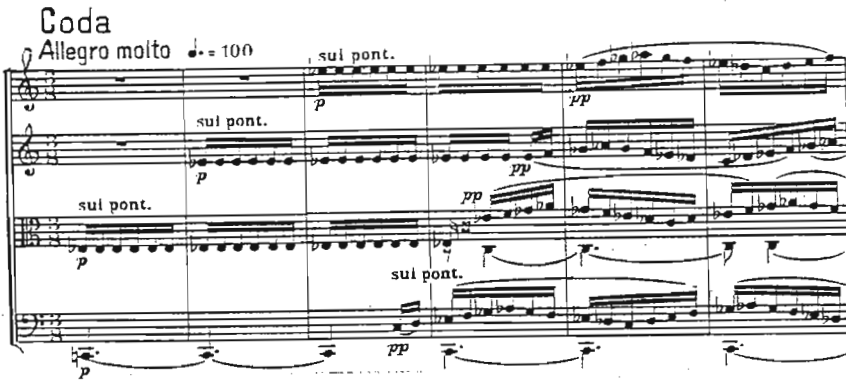
It is arguable that no other composer in the first half of the twentieth century made such an impressive contribution to the field of chamber music, as Béla Bartók. The six string quartets, two sonatas for violin and piano, the Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion and "Contrasts" constitute a body of music which will ensure Bartók a position of enduring significance.

The three chamber works under discussion are the Sonata no. 2 for violin and piano, the Rhapsody no. 1 for violin and piano, and "Contrasts" for violin, clarinet and piano. These works represent three different stages in Bartók's compositional style and illustrate the composer's versatility in the field of chamber music. Although vastly different in character, a certain kinship, betraying a common ancestry, exists between the works.

The stylistic influence of various composers is noticeable in the three works. For example, Bartók's predilection of scales and arpeggios in a codetta or coda section shows the influence of earlier composers like Beethoven (Monelle, 1970:71).



Beethoven:  
Symphony No. 1



Bartók: Third  
string quartet  
Coda



Bartók:  
Rhapsody  
(II) bars  
128-130



"Contrasts"  
(III) bars  
312-313

The extensive development of relatively short motives in the three works, can also be traced back to Beethoven, e.g.



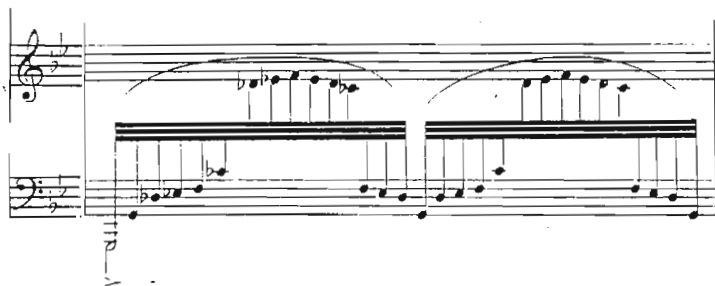


Beethoven:  
Sonata op.  
109



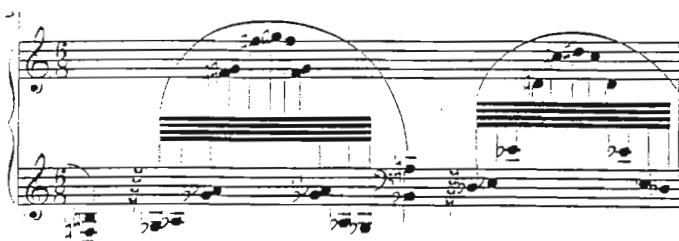
"Contrasts"  
(I) bar 72  
piano part

Debussy's style of writing also had an influence on Bartók, noticeable in passages of the piano part in the Sonata, Rhapsody and "Contrasts". These examples are reminiscent of the pianistic style in the Debussy preludes, e.g.

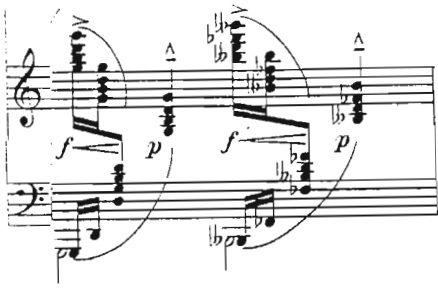


Debussy:  
Feux d'  
Artifice,  
Prelude no.12  
book 2

and



Bartók:  
Sonata (I)  
bar 65



Debussy:  
La Vent dans  
la plaine,  
Prelude no. 3,  
book I

and



Bartók:  
Sonata: (I)  
bars 47-50



Debussy:  
Danseuses de  
Delphes  
Prelude no. 1,  
book 1

and

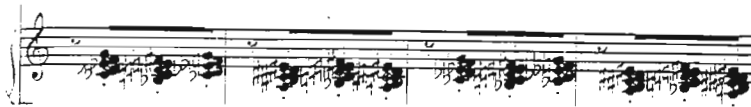


Bartók:  
Rhapsody  
(II) bars  
20-23

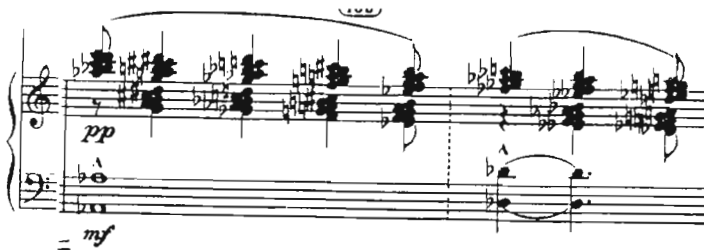
Debussy explored the use of simultaneously sounding whole tone scales built a semitone apart (Jackson, 1980:31). Bartók uses this technique in the second movement of the Sonata. Debussy's music also includes appearances of the whole tone scale as a chord most significantly in the ballet "Jeux" (Harris, 1980:41). This technique is used by Bartók in the Sonata and "Contrasts".



Debussy:  
"Jeux"



Bartók:  
Sonata (II)  
bars 201-204

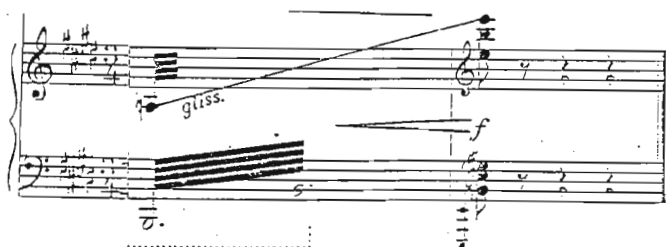


Bartók:  
"Contrasts"  
(III) bar 165

Bartók was also influenced by Liszt in his pianistic style of writing as the use of the glissandi indicates.



Liszt:  
"Totentanz"  
Variation II



Bartók:  
Rhapsody (II)  
bars 150-151



Bartók:  
"Contrasts":  
(I) bar 45-46



Bartók:  
"Contrasts":  
(III) bars  
234-237

The role the piano plays in the determination and formation of themes has a direct bearing on the formal structure of each work. The piano is used to introduce thematic and/or rhythmic material, and also often forms the introduction to a new section or movement by the playing of introductory chords. Examples of these can be found in:

Sonata (II) bars 61-64  
Rhapsody (I) bars 36-38  
Rhapsody (II) bars 49-52  
"Contrasts" (III) bars 132-133

The piano also often supplies different thematic material or accompaniment to recurring themes, thereby providing new interest in the presentation of previously heard material e.g.

Sonata (II) bars 106-109 and 115-118  
Rhapsody (I) bars 1-6 and 76-83  
"Contrasts" (I) bars 30-33 and 45-48 ; etc.  
(III) bars 35-42 and 59-62.

The Sonata no. 2 for violin and piano was written in 1922 and dedicated to the violinist Jélyly d'Arányi. It was composed early in the period Deri (1968:242) called the "rhythmic-polyphonic" period. Emotional depth alternates with simplicity in a work found to be controversial and obscure by

audiences world wide. It represents the extreme point of Bartok's experimentation with logical dissonance and brings it into closer proximity with the second Viennese School of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern, than ever before (Milner, 1982:61). Composed during a period of research and experimentation by Bartók, this work represents a significant stage in the process of synthesis - the incorporation of folk song arrangements into a committed personal style.

The Sonata was written at a time of political upheavals in Hungary, where an uneasy atmosphere prevailed after the Treaty of Trianon (1920) allowed for the annexation of parts of Hungary into Czechoslovakia and Rumania (Lampert, 1980:202). The political events altered the course of Bartok's life which in turn affected his creative work, and the 1920 to 1923 compositions show indications of the coming transformation of his artistic outlook.

There is evidence in the Sonata of Bartók's admiration for the polish composer Szymanowski (Wightman, 1981:161). Devices for the violin, like double stopped seconds, sevenths and harmonics occur in the Sonata. Szymanowski fused the violin and piano parts in a new colouristic entity and the piano is no longer an accompaniment or even part of a dialogue. This style had a considerable influence on Bartók and it is known that Bartók was studying Szymanowski's violin and piano works at the time of composing his first violin sonata (1921). In

the keyboard part of Bartók's Sonata, colouristic tremolos and broken chord figurations clearly show Szymanowski's influence (Wightman, 1981:161).



Bartók  
(I) bar 20



Bartók  
(II) bars  
383-386

A striking resemblance also exists between the opening motive of the Sonata and the Sabah folk motive from the music of the Tatra highlands, used by Szymanowski in his 1921 song cycle *Słowieńskie* (Wightman, 1981:163).

The influence of Schoenberg can be seen clearly in the two violin sonatas as well as the pantomime, "The Miraculous Mandarin". In these works Bartók availed himself of such expressionistic means as melodic lines with longer intervals and dissonant harmony. Although he went to the farthest reaches of atonality, Bartók did not pursue the way that led

to Schoenberg's twelve-tone work. He did, however, make full use of the possibilities inherent in the twelve-tone system, by freely using all twelve tones of the chromatic system (Kárpáti, 1966:95). The use of all twelve chromatic tones can be seen in the opening theme of the Sonata. Another feature which shows Schoenberg's influence is the aspect of octave displacements. By placing successive notes of a melody in different registers, Bartók conforms to the expressionistic type of melody which incorporates note leaps.

Before Stravinsky wrote the "Rite of Spring" which shocked audiences with its "oriental dynamism", Bartók had already formulated a musical expression full of energy and force. He could not, however, escape Stravinsky's influence and drew upon the Russian composer's works to enrich his own musical language. This influence became more marked in the twenties (Kárpáti, 1966:96). In the Sonata this influence can be traced in the driving, yet controlled rhythms and ostinato patterns which abound in the second movement, e.g.



Stravinsky:  
"Petrouchka"  
piano part





Bartók:  
Sonata (II)  
bars 363-364

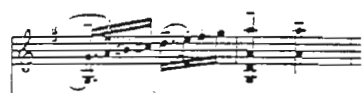
The Rhapsody no. 1 for violin and piano, written in 1928 and dedicated to the violinist Jozsef Szigeti, belongs to a period of change in Bartók's idiom and style and actually goes back to a "folklorist" style aimed at a wider audience. Bartók, however, did not write the Rhapsody to gain popular approval. The work indicates his acknowledgement of folk music as part of his musical culture, a part which he integrated with his individual compositional style. The Rhapsody was originally written for violin and piano and later transcribed for 'cello and piano (Demény, 1971:207). It was written against a background of political struggle for national liberation. The alliance with German fascism ensured the continuation of national oppression and Hungarian peasant music played a significant role in the movement for national freedom (Ujfalussy, 1971:271). The political circumstances even contributed to a poorly attended first recital of the Rhapsody by Szigeti in Frankfurt, due to the fact that Adolf Hitler was giving a speech in Frankfurt on the same day (Breuer, 1981:34).

Influences of other composers' styles as well as a similarities with some of Bartók's other work are found in the Rhapsody. For example, definite links exist between the Rhapsody and Bartók's third string quartet.


- a) The opening theme of the Rhapsody shows similarities with material used in the Coda of the quartet (fig. 10)



Bartók:  
Third quartet  
Coda fig. 10



Bartók:  
Rhapsody: (I)  
bars 3-4

- b) The distinctive use of the  rhythm is present in both works.



Bartók:  
Third quartet  
Prima Parte  
fig. 5



Bartók  
Rhapsody: (I)  
bars 11-12

The main accompanying figure in the piano part of the lassú shows strong similarities to Bartók's Fifth Rumanian Folk Dance (Suchoff, 1976:351).



Bartók:  
Rumanian  
"Polka" from  
"Rumanian  
Folk Dances"

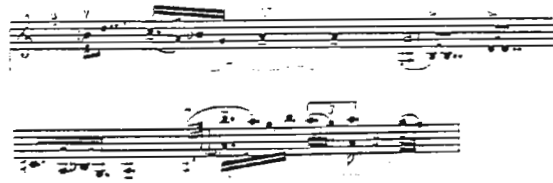


Bartók:  
Rhapsody: (I)  
bars 1-5

Similarities also exist between the Rhapsody and Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody no. 2. The "Verbunkos" is used in stylised fashion, and strongly rhythmic dotted notes are evident in both works.



Liszt:  
Hungarian  
Rhapsody  
no.2 - third  
theme



Bartók:  
Rhapsody: (I)  
bars 94-98

The influence of Kodály's "Háry János" Suite (1923) can also be seen in the abundant use of dotted rhythms.



Kodály: "Háry  
János" Suite:  
Toborzó

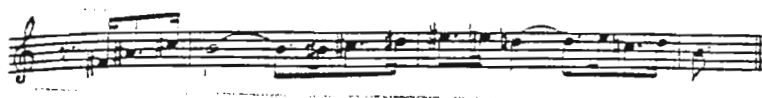
"Contrasts", written in 1938, is the only work among Bartók's chamber music to include a wind instrument. At Szigeti's suggestion, the jazz clarinettist, Benny Goodman, commissioned a slow-fast dance like the Rhapsodies. It was first performed on January 9th, 1939, under the title: Rhapsody for clarinet and violin, Two Dances: a) Verbunkos, b) Sebes. Bartók did not care for the title "Rhapsody" and requested the subtitle "Two Dances". He also felt the work, consisting of two dances, to be incomplete, and wrote a slower middle dance to be included. Szigeti attributed this addition to Bartók's unfailing sense

of form. The three-movement work, finally entitled "Contrasts" was recorded by Szigeti, Goodman and Bartók in April 1940. Although Bartók had plans for an orchestrated version, this never materialised (Ujfalussy, 1971:345).

In the three movements of "Contrasts", Bartók ignores the possibilities of blending these sonorities of the three instruments and rather emphasizes their disparities (contrasts). The title refers more to the contrasts of timbre and treatment of the instruments, rather than a clash of ideas as found in the Sonata (Walsh, 1982:78). "Contrasts" was written in Bartók's later period of composition. In this period which Deri calls Bartók's "synthesis" period, (Deri, 1968:242) the fusion of new and old, embodied in a clear formal design, strove to find its most consummate expression. The prevalence of strict polyphonic writing and preoccupation with design, mark this period of highly individual writing (Weissmann, 1946:234). "Contrasts" was written during Bartók's last years in his native country, in an atmosphere made unbearable by the ever-increasing menace of fascism and the growing reality of war. After Hitler's occupation of Austria, on March 11, 1938, Bartók, as a safeguard began sending his works to Switzerland and England. Along with many other Hungarian composers, he protested against the racist regulations of the German Copyright Association and transferred to the English Association (Ujfalussy, 1971:393).

His animosity towards the oppressors is evident in his refusal to allow the Hungarian radio transmission of his public performances to Germany and Italy (Demény, 1971:425).

Similarities exist between "Contrasts" and Bartók's Sixth Quartet. The themes of the Marcia and Burletta are found in essence in the Verbunkos and Sebes.



Bartók:  
Sixth Quartet:  
Marcia



Bartók:  
"Contrasts":  
(I) bars 3-5

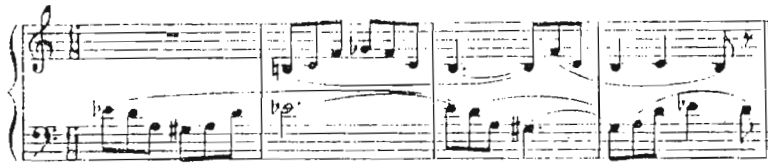


Bartók:  
Sixth Quartet:  
Burletta



Bartók:  
"Contrasts":  
(III) bars  
190-195

No. 109 of the Mikrokosmos, "From the Island of Bali", may serve as a study for (II) bars 41-43, tracing the influence of Gamelan music in "Contrasts" (Stevens, 1964:219).



Bartók:

Island of  
Bali



Bartók:

"Contrasts"  
(II) bars 41 -  
43 piano part

The influence of folk music shows itself most clearly in the rhythmic characteristics of Bartók's music - the dotted rhythms, decisive first beats and the avoidance of an upbeat (Mackeson 1973:470)



Lassú: bars

23-26

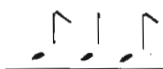
The Auftakt (upbeat) never occurs in Hungarian folk music, because the first syllable of every word in the Hungarian language is accented, thus opposing the use of an upbeat (Bartók, 1933:273,274), e.g.

4. *Parlando*  $\text{♩} = 120$

El - her - vad - t cíd - rus - (a A - ma - gos hegy - te - tön,  
 - Én is el - her - vad - tam A bór - tön fe - ne - kén.

(Bartók,  
 1933:274)

Although this principle is generally adhered to in the Sonata (I) bars 100-101 - (violin melody) and "Contrasts" (III) bars 75-80 (clarinet melody), it is most noticeable in the Rhapsody.

The  rhythm, occurs frequently in the Sonata and Rhapsody. This rhythm is characteristic of Hungarian folk music, as illustrated in the following examples.

*Tempo giusto*,  $\text{♩} = 98$

Vi - rá - gos ken - dé - rem Ki - á - zott a tó - ba, —  
 Ha ha - rag - szol ba - bám, Ne jöjj a — fő - nő - ba.

(Suchoff,  
 1976:388)

15. *Tempo giusto*

A tá - má - si fa - lu - vé - gen, Csú - já - ri rom,  
 Zsi - ros ban - da lóg a sze - gen, Csú - já - ri, csú - já - ri rom.

(Bartók,  
 1933:280)

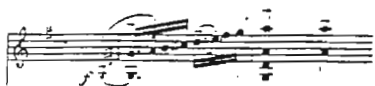
The friss is related to what Bartók called the second type of rhythm, in Eastern European folk music. (Suchoff, 1976:383). He identified it as a more or less rigid rhythm with regularly set bars which generally falls into 2/4 time, although changes in meter sometimes occur, leading to seemingly complicated



rhythms (Suchoff, 1976:383,386). Although set in 4/4 time, and not the frequently used 2/4 time, the changes in meter and the characteristic use of  $\downarrow\downarrow$  or  $\downarrow\downarrow$  or  $\downarrow\downarrow$  rhythms (Suchoff, 1976:387) all indicate Bartók's adherence in this section to this type of rhythm. The second movement of the Sonata and the "Sebes" of "Contrasts" both fall in this rhythmic category. Although in varied form, strong rhythmic patterns, based on the rigid rhythm type occur in mainly the piano part, e.g. Sonata (II) bars 124-129, "Contrasts" (III) bars 214-224.

The rhythms of the lassú correspond quite closely to what Bartók called the third type of rhythm in Eastern European rural music, especially characteristic of certain types of Hungarian music (Suchoff, 1976:384). The dotted rhythm is a combination of three rhythmic patterns:  $\downarrow\downarrow$   $\downarrow\downarrow$   $\downarrow\downarrow$

The first one with an accentuated short value and non-accentuated long value is the most important (Suchoff, 1976:384). Rhythmic patterns such as the above, but written in half the time value, occur frequently in the lassú.



(I) bars 3-5



(I) bars 43-46

In his article on Hungarian peasant music (Bartók, 1933:275) Bartók points out the rhythm, 2/4  $\overline{\text{|||}}\overline{\text{|||}}|\overline{\text{|||}}|\overline{\text{|||}}$  as an international rhythm in primitive music. In both the Sonata (II) and "Contrasts" (III) the first part of this rhythm,  $\overline{\text{|||}}\overline{\text{|||}}$  forms the basis of the piano accompaniment. This could be seen as being based on the above-mentioned rhythm. The entire rhythmic motive is heard in the Sonata (II) bars 170-171. Examples loosely based on the "primitive rhythm" are also found in the Rhapsody (II) bars 71-73. Although written in 4/4, the same strong rhythmic beat comes to the fore.

Bartók identified three chief categories regarding melodies in Hungarian folk music:

1. Melodies in the ancient style.
2. Melodies exhibiting no unity of style.
3. Melodies in the Neo-Hungarian peasant music style  
(Bartók, 1933:272).

Musical examples indicate that although each type exhibits different melodic characteristics, the phrase divisions, marked "", are all relatively regular, like the phrase lengths in the Rhapsody. In the Sonata & "Contrasts", the phrase lengths are more irregular.

6. Tempo giusto

Az én lo - vam Szaj - kó, Ma - gam pe - dig Jan - kó;  
Mind a négy lá - bá - ról Le - a - sott a pat - kó.

1. First type  
2+2 bars  
(Bartók, 1933:  
275)

18. Tempo giusto  $\text{♩} = 66$

Nám megmond - tam, kis lő - ány, ne menj el az er - dő - ho,  
Ott a já - ger, maj meg - fog, be - le - tész a szob - jó - be.  
Be - le - le, be - le - le, be - le - tész a zseb - jó - be:

2. Second type  
4+4 bars  
(Bartók, 1933:  
281)

25. Tempo giusto

Beg - gel ko - rán ki - me - gyek a kút - ra, Le - to - szem a  
Ar ra ment a  
zsaj - tá - rom az út - ra; Be - le - lé - pott, el - tő - rött a - lat - ta.  
vár - me - gye haj - du - ja,

3. Third type  
(Bartók, 1933:  
284)

Linked to the length of musical phrases is Bartók's use of short motives, rather than long melodies. The folk melody by its very nature, consists of short motives which can later be varied or repeated. For example:

26. Tempo giusto

Toll - fozs - tó - ba vol - tam az es - to, Az én ró - szám  
Min - dig csak azt  
1. azt is ki - les - te; 2. Hi - vel be - szél - got - tem az es - to.  
hány ja - vo - ti sze - mem - re:

- (Bartók, 1933:  
284)

The themes in all three works consist of motives that are heard in various guises throughout the respective movements and even in later movements e.g. Sonata (I) bar 85; (II) bar 255 (violin melody). Rhapsody (I) bars 28 (violin), 59 (piano). "Contrasts" (I) bar 3 (clarinet), 72-79 (piano).

The characteristic use of centering a melody around a single note can be traced directly to folk music. "...the single tones having no interrelation between each other. There is in each specimen, however, a decidedly fixed fundamental tone, to which the other tones resolve in the end. The main difference between the chromatic folk melodies and my own chromatic melodies is to be found in their range" (Suchoff, 1976:381).

17. Tempo giusto



Po - tó Bo - ris - ká - nak nincs ba - bá - ja,

(Bartók, 1933: 281)

This fact is again apparent in all three works concerned.

The folk music influence is also apparent in the use of modes and the lavish use of ornamental grace notes (Mackeson, 1973:470).

Pariando,  $\text{♩} = 150$



Gyu - la - i - né é - des - a - nyám! En -  
 - - ged - je meg azt az c - gyet, Hogy -  
 - - kér - jem meg Ká - dár Ka - tát,

(Suchoff, 1976: 334)

In the Sonata and Rhapsody the grace notes occur mainly in the first movement embellishing the melodic line played by the violin. In the piano part grace notes are used as a means of providing variation of the same accompaniment. The use of grace notes is limited in "Contrasts", where ornamentation is chiefly to be found as arpeggiandos ( } ) in the piano part.

The perfect fourth interval also shows the folk music influence clearly, as this is "the most prominent interval in Hungarian pentatonic music..." (Nelson, 1987:86). The frequent skips of perfect fourths is a characteristic of the old Hungarian melodies, illustrated in this example:

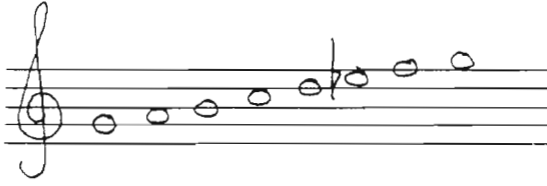
Pa - na - szo - lom a tisz - tem - nek: Nincs e - re - je  
 a tes - tem - nek. Mér - ges szá - ját rám - for - dít - ja,  
 Jé - zus - Krisz - tu - so - mat szid - ja.

(Suchoff, 1976:  
 336)

The tritone is another characteristic in Rumanian and Slovak folk songs, and often treated in an interesting way by incorporating it in a mode, as indicated by this example:

Pariando, ♩ = 126  
 Ho - re - știți, fă - ră, ho - ri - le,  
 Ho - re - știți, fă - ră, Ho - ri - le,  
 Pă - nă ești cu su - ro - ri - le.

(Suchoff, 1976:  
 336, 337)



Mixolydian mode  
with a minor  
sixth

These intervals appear with great frequency in the Sonata, Rhapsody and "Contrasts". In the Sonata, however, the intervals are seldom organised in patterns that suggest a Hungarian origin, emphasizing the more "international" character of the Sonata (Stevens, 1964:208).

## CHAPTER II SONATA NO. 2 FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO

### Form and the Tonal-contrapuntal Fabric

This Sonata, together with the first, is further from traditional standards of tonality than any of Bartók's works. There is an avoidance of anything which can indisputably be called a key and Bartók came closer than in any other works to the atonal chromaticism and harmonic serialisation found in the expressionistic works of the Schoenberg school. This type of tonal thinking, called pantonality by Rudolph Reti, suggests a composition on rather than in a key. The Sonata, as well as the other chamber works of the 1920s, is dependent on a kind of assertive tonality-in-the-small, but is organised in the larger structure according to other principles. The movements are permeated with particular kinds of sound - characteristic harmonies, melodies and articulations - a method halfway between certain tonal techniques of Stravinsky and the highly ordered serial construction of Schoenberg. According to Stevens (1964:205) and Walsh (1982:30), Bartók considered the Sonata to be in C major, but Gillies (1982:223) suggests a tonal base of A with a strong dominant E in the first movement theme. Szentkányi (1976:49) on the other hand, explains the tonality according to the axis system, and maintains that the three axes, tonic, dominant and subdominant, are represented by the same pitch classes. One can assume that an inference was drawn from a statement of

Bartók regarding the C major tonality (Gillies, 1983:223), and that no set key was intended. The very nature of the opening theme suggests a whole tone scale basis - C D E F# G#.

Key designations can only be considered as points of reference and of final cadence in dealing with the complex tonalities in this Sonata, while the terms "major" and "minor" are hardly relevant. Countless questions and difficulties arise when an attempt is made to pinpoint specific keys, while the use of certain harmonic devices lends an ambiguous quality to the work, e.g. semitone displacements (I) bar 29 piano part; polychords (II) bars 394-396 piano part; whole tone scale (II) bars 189-212, 228-253 piano part; false relation (I) bars 55-60 piano part.

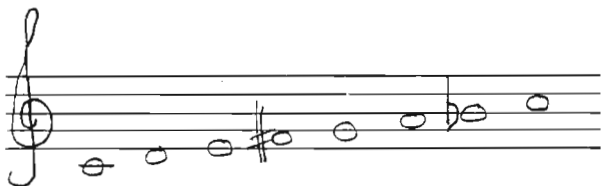
Furthermore the piano part in places seems to be rooted in two tonalities with the violin part in another tonality altogether, lending an atonal perception to the music (I), bar 47. Due to the complexities in polychords the notes are frequently spread apart. The placing of added chord notes outside the octave range produces greater freedom of harmonic movement and clearer focussing of the dissonant tones (Persichetti, 1978:116).

While tonality can be established by the relation of other tones to a central tone, modality is produced by the manner in which these tones are placed around the central tone. Modal influences can be found in the folk music of Eastern Europe



viz. the use of the old church modes, tonal modes that are oriental in colouring due to the augmented second, and a kind of pentatonic mode.

Recognising the influence of folk music on Bartók's style, one also has to recognise the existence of the modal influences. These modes, however, have been adapted and are not always easily traceable in the music. A scale devised by Bartók includes the raised fourth and lowered seventh, e.g.



When only five tones of a mode are present, one can simply assume the absence of the other two, but the trouble lies in proving which two are lacking, e.g. the scale A C D E G could be considered either Aeolian or minor if the tones lacking were B and F, but it would have to be called Phrygian if the missing tones were B<sup>b</sup> and F (Nettl, 1973:94).

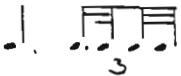
An in-depth discussion of this complex matter does not fall within the scope of this dissertation. Suffice it to recognise the presence of modal influences in Bartók's music and the necessity to proceed with caution in identifying specific modes where only parts of the scales are present.

In the principal themes of both movements the occurrence of the augmented fourth is suggestive of a Magyar scale, where the perfect and augmented fourths play prominent parts. These intervals, although omnipresent, are seldom organised in patterns that suggest a Hungarian origin, emphasizing the more "international" character of the Sonata (Stevens, 1964:208). The themes more significantly show the influence of the Hungarian folk melody based on the pentatonic scale in which major seconds and minor thirds predominate.

Bartók's insistent use of certain intervals, especially major seconds and perfect fifths in works of the 1920s, is characteristic of his musical style, as is the combination of major and minor thirds (Mackeson, 1973:468,469). In the Sonata the use of seconds (major and minor) features strongly especially in the piano part but also occurring in the violin melodies. The use of added seconds lends an extraordinary force to the rhythmic patterns in the piano accompaniment in especially the second movement. Successive perfect fifths, unless used imaginatively, can become tiresome. Because this interval does not dominate the general texture, Bartók uses a

succession of fifths as an ostinato, emphasizing the more important melodic lines played by the violin, e.g. (II) bars 110-115.

The technique of octave displacements also occurs in the Sonata. This Schoenbergian technique, where successive notes of the melody are placed in different octaves is not used as extensively in this sonata as in other works. It nevertheless plays an important part in the melodic lines of both the violin and piano and lends an openness and unique character to the music which is quite unlike conventional melody lines. This procedure is not unrelated to disjunct chromaticism (Stevens, 1964:126). Examples of octave displacements are, e.g., found in (I) bars 76-79 (piano part).

Bartók's interest was almost entirely in the symmetry and sequence of the melodic shapes which dictated the harmony. Hence his fondness for all forms of imitation (Mackeson, 1973:470). Although sharing of motivic ideas between the two instruments does not take place, repetition and imitation occur in the part of one instrument, e.g. in the (I) bars 5-8 a rhythmic motive  is imitated in the piano part between the two hands.

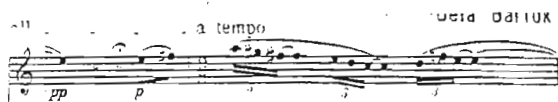
In keeping with the impression of unrelated material to be found in the violin and piano parts of the Sonata, the horizontal texture is stressed and motivic material developed separately in each instrument. Repetition and imitation of

motivic ideas occur in the individual instrumental parts and the melodic and rhythmic lines, although independent, complement one another at every turn, resulting in a coherent structure.

Bartók's habit of returning to a central note or notes within a melody is well illustrated in all three works. All the principal themes centre around key notes. Two reasons could be offered for this practice. Firstly, this assists in the establishing of tonal centres in the absence of definite keys. Secondly, since Bartók's themes are more in the nature of shorter motives than long melodious lines, they are less likely to stray far from the principal note(s), especially seen in the light of Bartók's preference for smaller intervals (Mackeson, 1973:470).

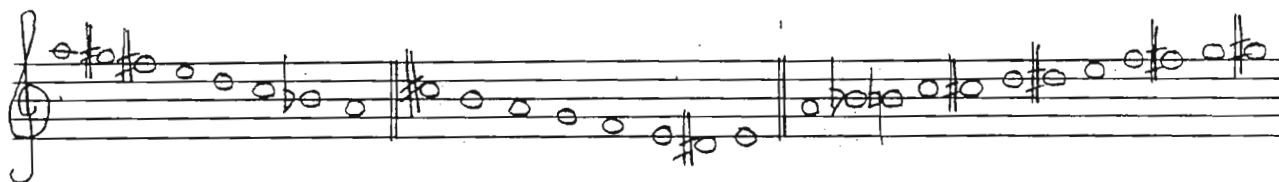
Bartók has extended the rhapsodic type of melody in the Sonata. The variety of melody is derived from the fantastic improvisations on flute or fiddle, of East European musicians. Characteristic traits are the ornamental arabesques, rapid passages, trills, leaps into strange intervals asymmetric construction and frequent meter and tempo changes (Leichentritt, 1929:8). The violin melody in the Sonata clearly reflects this melodic type in its rhapsodic character, especially in the first movement. In the second movement, the basic material is not the folk song, but rather a creation of melody in the spirit of folk music and peasant dances.

In the first movement, the construction of the melodic line in the violin part works on the abovementioned principle of encircling important central notes by auxiliary and ornamental notes above and below, e.g.



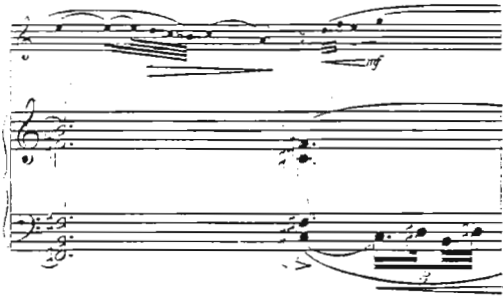
(I) bars 4-5

Leichentritt (1929:10) and Browne (1939:39) recognise two scales in the first fourteen bars (main theme) of the first movement - the combination of which results in a mixed tonality embracing all twelve chromatic tones, e.g.



Leichentritt (1929:10)

Notes A and E are common to both scales and can therefore be considered to be the two principal tones. The mixed scale construction also clarifies the use of seemingly dissonant sounds in the violin and piano parts, e.g.



bar 6

The piano part in bars 1-14 consists of essentially one motive varied six times (Leichentritt, 1929:9).



The Sonata is written in two movements with tightly organised materials. The inter-relationship of the materials used brings about an integration of the two movements to such a degree that one can say there is essentially one movement and the separation is only one of convenience. In spirit, however, the parts relate to the "lassú-friss" sequence of the "verbunkos"\* style (Stevens, 1964:210). "Verbunkos" is a characteristic Hungarian dance which gave rise to a pseudo-national musical style, consisting of two or more parts. The general principle is that of a slow introduction (lassú) alternating with a fast one (friss). The melodic contour in the lassú shows profuse ornamentation. The "verbunkos" became the representative Hungarian idiom, invading opera, symphonic and chamber music (Weissmann, 1973:723,724)

Bartók's use of the lassú-friss (slow-fast) sequence in the Sonata, paves the way for several other works in this form like, the Rhapsody no. 1 for violin and piano.

#### First Movement (I)

The organization of melodic material is quite complex, and the form of the first movement has been seen in different ways by different analysts. Walsh highlights its thematic returns by seeing it as a rondo (1982:34), and Stevens and Szentkirályi prefer to relate to the sonata principle; Stevens calls it a sonatina (1964:210) and Szentkirályi a "sonata without

development" (1976:196). Regardless of the term one chooses, the form can be represented by an Exposition, Recapitulation and Coda.

Distribution of Main Thematic Material

Bars

1-4' Introduction

4<sup>5</sup>-20 A' Theme in violin -  
Principal notes A & E

21-33 B' Theme in piano -  
Principal note F#

34-60 C' Theme in violin and piano -  
whole tone scale in piano,  
scale-based theme in violin  
including octave displacements

Exposition

61-63 Varied introduction to Recapitulation



63 <sup>5</sup> -72	A <sup>2</sup>	Theme in violin - Principal notes A & E	] Recapitulation
73-84	C <sup>2</sup>	Theme in piano - Octave displacements in theme. Related to bb.34-42	
85-105 <sup>4</sup>	C <sup>3</sup> +B	Development of thematic materials Related to b.25- piano. Related to b.83	
105 <sup>5</sup> -125	Coda		

The main criteria for sonata form are present, albeit in an altered guise, viz. Exposition, Recapitulation (with development built in) and Coda. Since the thematic material is developed in the Recapitulation, there is no need for a separate development section. This recapitulatory development is illustrated, e.g., by comparing bars 24 to 25 with bar 85, and bar 51 with bar 100.

### Second Movement (II)

The form of the second movement is complex and not easily defined. Although this movement resembles an extended rondo form, the principles of rondo (sonata rondo) form are only present in the frequent occurrence of the two main themes.

Three main sections can be distinguished, with the middle section offering new material and the two outer sections resembling an exposition and a recapitulation.

Bartók's ability to develop and integrate thematic materials is responsible for the unity to be found in this complex work. Thematic links exist between the two movements, further emphasizing the sense of integration and unity e.g. first movement themes appear in the second movement in bars 254-260; 274-279; 299-300; 517-535.

The main theme of the second movement is derived from the first six notes, of the first movement theme played backwards, e.g.



(I) bar 5



(II) bars 5-6

Distribution of Main Thematic Material

Bars

1-33	A <sup>1</sup>	Theme in violin Principal notes C & F#(tritone)	] A+B
33-60	B <sup>1</sup>	Theme in piano Principal note A <sup>b</sup>	
61-144	A <sup>2</sup>	Theme in violin Principal notes G & C#(tritone)	
(sub-sections: 61-86; 87-105; 106-123; 124-144)			
145-164	B <sup>2</sup>	Theme in piano Related to b 34	
165-182	B <sup>3</sup>	Theme in piano	
183-227	C <sup>1</sup>	New material in violin and piano Based on whole tone scale	] C
228-253	C <sup>2</sup>	Varied C <sup>1</sup> material Based on whole tone scale	
254-260	(I)	Material from (I) e.g. related to bb 85-90	
261-273	C <sup>3</sup>	Violin Related to b 234 piano - new material	
274-279	(I)	Material from (I) violin and piano, e.g. related to bb 85-87	
280-298 <sup>1</sup>	C <sup>4</sup>	Varied C <sup>3</sup> material - Related to b 234	
298 <sup>2</sup> -300	(I)	Material from (I) e.g. related to b 5	

301-390	A <sup>3</sup>	Theme in violin Principal notes G & C# (tritone) at level used for A <sup>2</sup>	A+B
391-418	B <sup>4</sup>	Theme in violin and piano, e.g. related to bb 34-58	
419-427	B <sup>5</sup>	Theme in piano Related to bb 34-58	
428-447	A <sup>4</sup> +B <sup>6</sup>	Violin based on 1st theme, piano based on 2nd theme	
448-516 <sup>2</sup>	A <sup>5</sup>	Theme in violin Principal notes B <sup>b</sup> & E (tritone)	
516 <sup>3</sup> -535	(I)	Material from (I) Related to bb 5-6	

### Rhythm and Meter


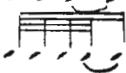
The different rhythmic patterns in this sonata reflect folk dance characteristics and also the variety of rhythms found in Bartók's stage work, "The Miraculous Mandarin" (Walsh, 1982:33).

#### First Movement

By its very nature, this movement does not contain any driving rhythms like those found in the second movement. The tempi and metronome indications are generally also more moderato.

The rhapsodic character of the movement is manifested by frequent meter and tempo changes and intricate rhythmic passages. The violin melody abounds with dotted rhythms, tied notes, rubatos and appoggiaturas, and is played against the more regular rhythmic patterns in the piano part which, although an independent part, provides a strong rhythmical base, e.g. bars 113-115.

The rhythmic intricacies notwithstanding, certain rhythmic motives appear frequently to give musical coherence to a movement that fails to impress on first hearing with clear-cut melodic and rhythmic patterns. An awareness of Bartók's use of these motives will add to a better understanding of the formal design of the work as a whole, and the first movement in particular. The different sections in the formal structure are clearly indicated by the introduction of new rhythmic ideas, e.g.

bar 5 - 1st theme violin  etc.  
 bar 21 - 2nd theme piano  etc.

The development of rhythmic motives and the use thereof throughout the movement, indicate Bartók's awareness regarding rhythmic, melodic and formal structure e.g. bars 85-89; 100-105; repetition of bars 51-61 in violin.

## Second Movement

This movement, in keeping with the "friss" character, contains more regular rhythmic patterns than the first. The time signature 2/4 is used most frequently and enduringly throughout the movement, although the 5/8 time signature also appears for bars on end. The result of the above, is a far more consistent rhythmic structure than that of the first movement with its frequent meter changes.

A prominent feature of this movement is the use of ostinato patterns, mainly in the piano part, but also occurring in the violin part. Off-beat accents occur frequently and Bartók noticeably uses the syncopated accentuation in faster passages, e.g.

bars 65-74 piu mosso - syncopated accents piano part.

bars 91-97 " " " " " "

In contrast, the meno mosso chords in bars 87-90 are marked to be played strongly on the beat  $\underline{\quad} \underline{\quad}$ . Since the procedure of syncopation creates an imbalance in the listener's feeling of rhythmic security (Orrego-Salas, 1969:828), Bartók obviously uses the rhythmic disturbance to draw the listener's attention to something of importance (in the above cited examples the occurrence of the theme in diminution), while at the same time instilling a sense of urgency in the music.

Before pauses indicated by a fermata  $\frown$  or comma  $\smile$ , Bartók often changes the time signature, creating a greater flexibility and looseness of metric structure in a type of cadential passage, e.g. bars 114-116; 279-281.

Time signatures are also frequently varied in the immediate bars preceding tempo and metronome changes, effectively preparing for a smooth transition to another tempo, e.g. bars 409-411.

The distinctive use of the  $\text{♩} \cdot \text{♩}$  pattern that occurs characteristically in Hungarian music is another rhythmic feature of this movement, e.g.

(II) bars 435-438

By virtue of the fact that the two movements share thematic material, the rhythmic motives used in the themes also form a rhythmic link between the movements, manifested strongly by the use of the rhythmic pattern,  $\text{♩} \cdot \text{♩}$

CHAPTER III RHAPSODY NO. 1 FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO

Form and the Tonal-contrapuntal Fabric

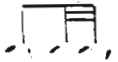

The lassú cannot be identified as being in a certain key. Although the key of G major is indicated by the key signature, no specific key can be established and reference is made to tonal centres rather than keys. The single overall tonic structure is usually felt from the bass in this case strongly heard in the left hand chords of the piano part, e.g. bars 1-16. The introduction of the tritone in the right hand chords, however, immediately establishes a bitonal or polytonal character. This tonal ambiguity is further emphasized by the resemblance of the first violin theme to the Ionian mode with a raised fourth. Due to the repeated chords in the piano, the harmonic rhythm does not move quickly, and is rather static. With the return of the main theme, again including the tritone in bar 76, the tonal centre of C is indicated in the violin part, while the strong presence of the E<sup>b</sup> in the piano part indicates the tonal centre of E<sup>b</sup>, lending a bitonal character to bars 76-91. The increase in added notes in the piano part heightens the feeling of harmonic intensity while at the same time emphasizing the ambiguity in tonality. The B section is introduced by a repeated B<sup>b</sup> in the piano part in bar 37, preparing the way for the E<sup>b</sup> G B<sup>b</sup> chord in bars 38-39.



The friss has E as tonal centre. When the work is played with the second ending, the Rhapsody ends on E. With the first ending as conclusion, the work ends on G, like the lassú. This indicates Bartók's original intention of playing the first ending when the lassú and friss are performed, thereby presenting the Rhapsody as a unified work, starting and concluding in the tonal centre of G. The lassú and friss are virtually joined together by the attacca indication and the use of the B note which is common to both the G and E tonal centres. The B forms a dominant pedal point (with its restless quality) in the introductory bars, followed by a tonic pedal point (with its quality of repose) on E at the start of the main violin theme.

As in the case of the Sonata, certain intervals are used insistently. The predominance of major seconds in the thematic material is indicative of the music's Hungarian origin. This is further emphasized by the occurrence of perfect and augmented fourths. The use of perfect fifths and octaves in the piano part provides significant textural contrast with the melodic lines played by the violin.

Although the piano often functions in an accompanying capacity through the playing of chords in the lassú and friss, the aspect of counterpoint comes strongly to the fore in the Rhapsody, and the inventive interplay of thematic and rhythmic motives and a wealth of contrapuntal techniques are evident. Bartók's treatment of the individual horizontal lines with the

resultant vertical texture that is created, represents a well thought out and balanced structure. The entire B section in the lassú is fashioned along contrapuntal lines. In the beginning of this section, the piano engages upon a rhythmic motive , against the dotted  rhythm. In the friss, melodic and rhythmic phrases are constantly shared, varied and imitated by the violin and piano e.g. strict imitation in bars 71-78, stretto in bars 107-114 and the first ending bars 124-142.

The main themes in the Rhapsody all revolve around principal notes resulting in the establishment of tonal centres. Characteristically, conjunct motion and scale passages prevail in the themes, played mainly by the violin. Although the lassú theme appears at the end of the friss, there is very little overlapping and hardly any transfigurations of themes between the two parts i.e. quite different themes are heard. The development of the themes is of the most rhapsodic kind, adding to which is the inclusion of a violin cadenza in the first ending. The melodic lines contain the mixture of melancholy and gaiety associated with Hungarian folk music. The subtle inflections of tempo and wealth of ornamentation are derived partly from the folk music itself and partly from Bartók's personal idiom (Mason, 1949:35). The lyrical qualities in the melodies are in part responsible for the Rhapsody's popularity among a wider public.

## Lassú

The lassú is comparatively simply organised in a basic ternary form. The length of the different sections in the formal scheme is:

A<sup>1</sup>: 37 bars; B: 37 bars; A<sup>2</sup>: 30 bars.

### Distribution of Main Thematic Material

Bars		
1-2	Introduction in piano	A <sup>1</sup>
	Tonal centre G with raised 4th	
3-10	a <sup>1</sup> Theme in violin	
	Resemblance to Ionian mode	
11-18	a <sup>2</sup>	
19-26	a <sup>1</sup>	
27-34	a <sup>2</sup>	
35-37	Link to B	
38-75	Theme in violin and piano	B <sup>1</sup>
	Tonal centre E <sup>♯</sup>	
76-83	Theme in violin	A <sup>2</sup>
	Tonal centre C	
84-91	a <sup>2</sup> Slightly varied	
92-100	a <sup>2</sup> Extra entry	
101-104	Reference to B	

## Friss

The second part of the Rhapsody (friss) contains two different endings. The first ending is to be played when the whole Rhapsody (lassú and friss) is performed. The second and shorter version is to be used when the friss alone is performed. Bartók, in his own performances and recordings, however, always used the revised (second) ending, and this has become a normal practice.

The organisation of musical materials is, in comparison with the lassú, more complex in the friss, due to the inclusion of more themes and the resultant longer length of this part. The form that emerges is that of a free rondo, although similarities to the "bridge" or "arch" form, as used in the quartets, also exist when the second ending is played.

With the first ending the form appears as:

### Distribution of Main Thematic Materials

#### Bars

1-4	Introduction in piano	Tonal centre E
5-20	A <sup>1</sup> Theme in violin	
21-25	Link to B	
26-48	B Theme in violin and piano	Tonal centre E

49-52	Link to C
53-70	C <sup>1</sup> Theme in violin and piano Tonal centre E
71-97	D New thematic material in violin and piano Principal note E
98-100	Link to C
101-114	C <sup>2</sup> Theme in piano Related to b 54 (violin) Principal notes E & B
115-150	Development of motivic material
151-170	(I) Material from (I) in violin Related to bb 3-6 Tonal centre G
171-180	Coda Tonal centre G

The second ending alters the above scheme from bar 115, thereafter as follows:

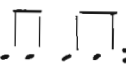
115-117	Link to A
118-130	A <sup>1</sup> Tonal centre E
131-151	Coda Tonal centre E

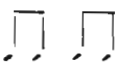
#### Rhythm and Meter


##### Lassú

No meter changes take place in the lassu, which is written throughout in 4/8.



Certain rhythmic patterns are used with great frequency and these unite the whole section.


- a) : This rhythmic motive forms the basis of the piano accompaniment throughout the lassú, and is responsible, together with the 4/8 meter used, for the consistent rhythmical structure of the lassú. The only new rhythmical motive occurring in the piano part is heard in the B section.

The  rhythmic pattern also occurs in the friss, thereby establishing a rhythmic link between the lassú and friss, e.g. (I) bars 1-5 piano part  
(II) bars 32-40 piano part

- b) : These two rhythms play an important part in the melodic lines supplied by the violin. With slight variations, they feature throughout the lassú.

e.g. original form  bars 3-6  
 bar 11

varied forms  bars 49-52  
*più dolce*  
 bars 38-39  
*p*

- c) : This characteristic Hungarian rhythm features prominently in the piano part, e.g. bars 18-21.

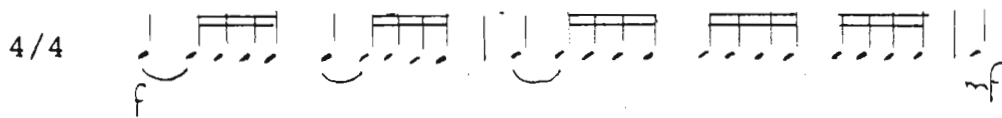
## Friss

In contrast to the lassú, the friss makes use of several different meters. It starts in 4/4 time which remains the predominant meter throughout, but ends in 3/4 time with the second ending. The first ending is in 4/8 time like the lassú upon which it is based. Time signature changes occur mainly in accordance with expression and tempo variations, as well as in bars that act as a bridge to another section.


An interesting phenomenon occurs in bars 99-102, where the score indicates different time signatures for the violin and piano.


The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Friss'. At the top left, there is a tempo marking 'a tempo' with a quarter note equal to 168 (♩ = 168). The score consists of three staves: a top staff for the violin, a middle staff for the piano, and a bottom staff for the piano. The violin part is in 4/4 time, while the piano part changes to 3/4 time starting in bar 101. The piano part includes the instruction 'non troppo f, ma ben marc.' in bar 101. The score shows various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

The piano part changes to 3/4, providing rhythmic flexibility and acting as an introduction to the important melodic material heard in the piano part, bar 101. The violin keeps on playing in 4/4 time to accommodate the four extra semiquavers in bar 101. This results in a symmetrical and regular pattern as follows:



As in the case of the lassú, certain rhythmic motives are employed in the friss.

- a)  e.g. bar 6 - 1st theme  
 bar 28 - 2nd theme  
 bar 53 - 3rd theme - augmented form of rhythm

- b)  e.g. bar 5 - 1st theme  
 bar 30 - 2nd theme  
 bar 75 - 3rd theme - retrograde form of rhythm



## CHAPTER IV "CONTRASTS" FOR VIOLIN, CLARINET AND PIANO

### General Description

The tonal organisation in "Contrasts" is subtle and vague. The expanded tonalities and frequent modulations lend an ambiguous tonal structure to the work. The limits of traditional tonalities are left behind and keys are not stated but merely implied. The overall impression of a free tonal structure is enforced by the fact that the first movement is centered around A, yet the work ends a semitone higher in B<sup>b</sup>.

As in the case of the Sonata and Rhapsody, the use of smaller intervals and the insistent use of particular intervals play an important part in the melodic material. The tritone occurs most prominently in the harmonic and melodic aspects of the work. In the middle section of the Sebes chromatic movement in tritones occurs, bars 152-154, producing a restless quality in the piano part as a perfect foil against the single melodic notes in the violin and clarinet parts. A similar restless quality is felt in chords containing a tritone e.g. (III) bars 97-102, piano part.

The use of contrapuntal devices become increasingly significant to Bartók the further he departed from the limits of traditional tonality. In "Contrasts", Bartók leans heavily on such techniques as imitation, inversion, retrograde and mirror forms. Imitative writing approaches a strict canonic style and the compact, distinguishable designs indicate Bartók's awareness of the polyphonic texture. These contrapuntal principles become a component of the formal structure and constitute a form-generating element. The whole work relies heavily on the contrapuntal idiom and it is indeed the most constant principle adhered to in "Contrasts".

#### Verbunkos

The tonal centre is A, but the tonal ambiguity of the movement is manifested from the start by the four conjunct moving major chords in the piano starting on D<sup>#</sup> (tritone from A) and the inclusion of the tritone at the beginning of the clarinet theme. The parlando style melodies with dotted rhythms and fanciful ornamentation, heard mainly in the violin and clarinet, bring the character of this recruiting dance to the fore.

The horizontal lines in the violin and clarinet are exploited to the utmost in the Verbunkos. The piano occasionally joins in the imitative process e.g. bars 57-68, but the motivic material is mainly heard and expanded in the violin and clarinet parts.

This movement is parlando in character and suggestive of the lassú of the czardas\* style. The formal aspect in this march-like dance is quite elusive and not easily categorised. By the inclusion of first theme material in the B and C sections, an integration of formal materials takes place.

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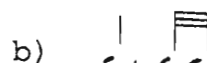
\* A Hungarian dance of the early 19th century in rapid 2/4 time. It probably represents a ballroom variant of the old verbunkos , though it claimed to be rustic in origin (Orrego-Salas, 1969:215).

## Distribution of Main Thematic Material

### Bars

- 1-2<sup>1</sup> Introduction in violin and piano  
Tonal centre A - includes tritone A-D<sup>#</sup>
- 3<sup>3</sup>-29 A<sup>1</sup> Theme in clarinet and violin
- 30-44 B<sup>1</sup> Theme in violin and clarinet  
Principal tones F<sup>#</sup> & B (perfect 4th)
- 45-54 B<sup>2</sup> Theme in clarinet and violin  
Principal tones C<sup>#</sup> & F<sup>#</sup> (perfect 4th)
- 55-57<sup>1</sup> Link to A<sup>2</sup>
- 57<sup>3</sup>-71 A<sup>2</sup> Development of 1st motive  
Built on tritone
- 72-84 C + A New material in violin and clarinet,  
Tonal centre A piano expands on 1st motive
- 85-93 Coda Built on A<sup>1</sup> material. Includes clarinet cadenza  
Tonal centre A

This dance relies heavily on dotted rhythmic patterns, emphasizing its strong rhythmic, parlando character. Two rhythmic motives feature most consistently:




e.g.

- a) bars 65-68 - all three instruments
- b) bar 6 - clarinet part
- a) and b) 7<sup>4</sup>-8 - clarinet part

These rhythms also occur in varied forms, e.g.

- a) bar 11 - clarinet part
- b) bars 26-27 - piano part

A new rhythmic motive, , is only introduced in the B section, even then being coupled with the b rhythm, e.g.

- bars 30-32 - violin and clarinet parts
- bars 38-39 - violin and clarinet parts

With a rather complex formal structure, the use and development of these rhythmic motives lend a sense of unity to the dance.

In keeping with the character of the "Verbunkos" (Recruiting dance) the meter is in 4/4 most of the time, only changing to 3/2 when elasticity is required in tempo and in the development of rhythmic lines, e.g. bars 72-82. It is interesting to note that these meter changes occur when the piano sheds its role as a mere accompanying instrument by getting more involved in the playing of thematic material. By

diverting from the 4/4 time, more prominence is given to the instrument involved in the playing of the extended rhythmic motives.

Apart from the above mentioned instances, the piano part is used as accompaniment by providing a steady beat in crotchets. Strong accents, > placed on the second and fourth beats, lend a syncopated effect to the otherwise staid playing of crotchets, increasing tension and dynamic levels and emphasizing striking dissonances, e.g. bars 20-23.

#### Pihenö

The tonalities are tenuous in the Pihenö, which seems to start on the tonal centre of A, but ends with the chord, B D<sup>#</sup> F<sup>#</sup> A. The successive perfect fourths in the piano part, bar 49, and diminished fifths in the violin and clarinet parts, bar 19-20, increase the impression of tonal ambiguity.

The languid melodies in the violin and clarinet, consisting of longer note values, tied notes and longer phrases, emphasize the atmosphere of relaxation in this dance.

The opening phrase in the violin and clarinet parts are mirrorwise opposed. At the close of the movement the piano plays the mirrored opening phrase mainly in thirds, succeeding in amalgamating the whole movement.

The meaning of Pihenő, literally translated as "Relaxation", finds expression in the loose formal structure of this section. The formal design is difficult to determine, but does seem to conform to the basic characteristics present in "arch" form. The formal materials are used in a more sophisticated way than those in the quartets, and some resemblance to the structure of Bartók's Third Piano Concerto, second movement, is also evident. The indicated metronome markings and time durations also play a role in determining the various formal sections.

#### Distribution of Main Thematic Material

##### Bars

1-28	A	Theme in violin and clarinet	Tonal centre A
29-32	B	Theme in clarinet and piano	Principal note C <sup>#</sup>
33-40	C	Theme in clarinet and piano	Tonal centre A
41-44	B	Theme in piano, clarinet and violin	Tonal centre C
45-51	A	Theme in piano	Tonal centre A Last chord BD <sup>#</sup> F <sup>#</sup> A

In keeping with the character of this slower, more relaxed dance, the metric structure is less tight with frequent meter changes (for greater rhythmic elasticity), longer note values (to accommodate the longer melodious lines), and the notable absence of dotted notes (to preserve the feeling of tranquility).

## Sebes

This dance starts in the tonal centre of E<sup>b</sup> with the piano melody moving to the tonal centre of B<sup>b</sup> in bar 18. Moving through a series of transitory tonalities, manifested mainly by the encircling of prominent melodic tones by auxiliary tones, the first A section ends in B<sup>b</sup>.

The contrasting B section starts in the Aeolian mode, changing to the Lydian mode in bar 148. The prominence of chromatic movement of tritones and whole tone clusters further add to the contrasting tonal texture of this section. The second A section starts again with the ambiguous sounding tritone. A series of modulatory motives evade the issue of fixed tonalities, but the problem of key is resolved in the final five bars with the strong presence of the B<sup>b</sup> chord.

The tonal ambiguity of the perfect fourth, because of its ability to function either as a consonant interval or as dissonant one (Persichetti, 1978:14) is illustrated in (III) bars 36-42, where the piano part sounds more consonant because of the more dissonant sounding violin and clarinet melodies. The respective qualities of restlessness and repose in the diminished and perfect fifths, lend an interesting tonal colouring to the introduction of the Sebes. The forward moving motion is kept at bay by the element of repose in the open consonant. The perfect fifths in conjunct motion in the



bass of the piano part in the Verbunkos bars 1-2 form a supportive basis for the introductory line played by the violin. The use of added seconds in the lower register of the piano ensures a percussive effect e.g. (III) bars 103-111.

The common chord with simultaneously sounding major and minor thirds is also favoured by Bartók, and a characteristic example can be found in (III) bars 53-64, piano part.




The moto perpetuo figurations form the basis of the thematic materials of the Sebes. It is imitated throughout the two outer sections of the dance. Strict imitative principles are adhered to, interspersed with inversions e.g. bars 124-125 violin and clarinet. In the contrasting middle section the melodies are fashioned on the Bulgarian rhythmic patterns with the resultant syncopated effect. The piano provides a continuous accompaniment of chordal progressions in the Bulgarian rhythmic pattern, sometimes participating in the sharing of thematic materials e.g. bars 149-151 (mirrorwise). The violin and clarinet lines are somewhat freer. The use of stretto in an ascending pattern, bars 241-247 in the clarinet and violin parts and the respective hands in the piano part, lends an increase in tension, forcefully culminated in the Coda.

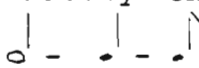
This Fast Dance is patterned after the friss of the czardas style in "tempo giusto" and consists of a succession of dance-like sections of varying moods. This movement is in ternary form.

Distribution of Main Thematic Material


Bars			
1-10 <sup>1</sup>	Introduction in violin	Tonal centre E <sup>b</sup>	A <sup>1</sup>
10 <sup>2</sup> -49	a <sup>1</sup> +a <sup>2</sup>	(see score)	
50-58	Link to a <sup>3</sup>		
59-102	a <sup>3</sup>	Principal note E <sup>b</sup>	
103-131	a <sup>2</sup>	Built on 1st theme Tonal centre B <sup>b</sup>	
132-168	Aeolian Mode & Lydian Mode	b 148	B
	Whole tone scale	bb 164-168	
169-185	a <sup>4</sup> (derived from a <sup>2</sup> )	Tritone intervals in piano	A <sup>2</sup>
186-213	a <sup>5</sup>	Violin b 188, clarinet b 200 (derived from bb 50-58. Includes violin cadenza Principal note A	
214-229	a <sup>6</sup>	Theme in clarinet and violin Tonal centre B <sup>b</sup>	
230-247	a <sup>7</sup>	Theme in clarinet and violin (derived from a <sup>1</sup> ) Tonal centre D	
248-286	a <sup>2</sup> +a <sup>6</sup>	Theme in violin and clarinet e.g. bb 103;214 Tonal centre B <sup>b</sup>	
287-318	Coda	Built on a <sup>2</sup> +a <sup>5</sup> Tonal centre B <sup>b</sup>	


The metric structure of the dance corresponds to its formal structure. The two A Sections are in strict 2/4 time (emphasizing the robust character of the dance) with the B section in  $\frac{8+5}{8}$  time (providing rhythmic contrast).

Three rhythmic patterns form the nucleus of the A section, viz. a)  b)  c) 

a) The introductory chords in the violin are heard in diminution: . The resultant pattern forms the basis of the accompaniment in the violin part (30 bars) and in the piano part for the remainder of the two A sections.

b) and c) The other two rhythms occur in the main theme, and are used singly and in combination, throughout, e.g. bars 11-13 (combination of rhythms in clarinet part).

bars 14-35 (single use of  pattern in clarinet part)

bars 62-65 (single use of  rhythm in violin part)

The B section is written in Bulgarian rhythm. Two types of grouping are used within the  $\frac{8+5}{8}$  structure viz



This is strictly adhered to in the piano part, with the other two instruments indulging in slightly freer rhythmic combinations, e.g. bars 139-145. The use of the Bulgarian rhythmic patterns ensures a complete contrast between the middle and the two outer sections.

## CHAPTER V PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS

### General Considerations

Before discussing aspects of performance in the Sonata, Rhapsody and "Contrasts", five questions concerning the value of the composer's performances, in general, have to be addressed:

1. How accurate and authentic is the composer's own interpretation of the work concerned, and how much importance should be attached to the score and Bartók's own recording/performance?
2. Can the controversial problem of authentic Bartók tempi be solved by listening to Bartók's own recordings?
3. How should the key issue of rubato in Bartók's works be approached and how did Bartók deal with this question?
4. Is Bartók's arbitrary playing of broken chords justified?
5. What are Bartók's views on pedalling and other performance aspects such as articulation and ornamentation?

Of particular value in this regard, is the existence of recordings of the Sonata, Rhapsody and "Contrasts" with Bartók's own interpretation of these pieces.

### Bartók's Recordings and Scores

The existence of Bartók's own recorded performances is of great value to performing artists. A close study of the scores reveals that Bartók's notation is uncommonly precise and it has been argued that by studying the scores only, Bartók's authentic style can be perceived. It should be noted however, that Bartók's notation is far more detailed in works that have an educational purpose than in works that were written for performance by himself. Although even in the latter case, the notation is more precise in some works than in others.

The question to be answered is: which of the numerous indications are compulsory and where are the limits of the performer's freedom (Somfai, 1981:27)? Part of the answer lies in the choice of edition used. Bartók almost always used revised editions, and numerous Bartók recordings confirm the score on the most essential issues in performance, such as notes, prescribed tempi and dynamics. Where Bartók's playing differs from the score, it can no doubt be attributed to the fact that he was not always given the opportunity by his

publishers for a final revision of the score. In performance therefore, he changed aspects to be amended later in the score (Somfai, 1981:28) >

According to Garst (1985:15) disagreement regarding Bartók's philosophy on the performer's relationship to the score exists among writers. The view of Suchoff and Vinton that Bartók desires total commitment to the score, is certainly supported by the precision he demands in the editions of his music. Dorati, however, maintains that Bartók readily accepted liberties in performance and allowed freedom and improvisation in musical interpretation, despite the meticulous markings in his scores.

In the recordings of the Sonata, Rhapsody and "Contrasts", Bartók generally adheres closely to the score regarding the issue of notes, tempi and dynamics, but he still performs with artistic freedom in areas such as pedalling and rubato.

### Tempo

The problem concerning authentic Bartók tempi is well known. The metronome indications and the time duration given at the end of movements or complete works, do not always correspond. The duration of a piece performed is generally either longer or shorter than the time allocated by Bartók. The

contradiction, as admitted by Bartók, could have been caused by an inaccurate metronome or that he added metronome indications in haste.

Bartók discovered that he played a piece at the same tempo even twenty years after having played it for the first time. But he played by ear, and not according to the MM number. This fact can be substantiated by his own performance of his best-known work, "Allegro Barabaro". After having played it for a decade at a certain tempo, he noticed that the score had been printed with an altogether different MM number. The result being, that from 1950 onwards he started allocating a time duration for his works.

Although his later works have set time durations, Bartók's own tempi in performance generally exceeded the recommended tempi on the score. His inclination to play his own music faster than the MM indications is particularly true of recordings made in the 1920's and 30's. Examples of the opposite also exist. In contrast to the faster tempi, he used ritardandi in an extreme manner.



Two aspects concerning Bartók's scoring and playing of tempi are subsequently made clear, namely:

- a) that these instructions in the score do not cover subtle areas in performance like the differentiation of tempi in the playing of different thematic ideas (Bartók injects subtle tempo changes in his own playing of different subjects).
- b) that he did not favour or practise mechanically uniform tempi in a work, unless the piece by nature of its rhythm, or a special title etc., demanded this, e.g. no. 147, March, from Mikrokosmos, vol. VI.

### Rubato

Rubato is the key issue in the performance of Bartók's works, and is also an area in which we can be guided by his own performances. Terms like "poco rubato" and "parlando rubato" are used:

- a) as independent, tempo-related instructions, e.g. Sixth Quartet (II) fig. 83;
- b) to supplement terms like "Allegretto" or "Andante";

c) as additional instructions for performance. The term "rubato" is never used in the three works under discussion. The effect of rubato is often achieved by precise tempi and metronome indications, e.g.

Sonata (I) bars 61-64, 67-73

Rhapsody (II) bars 26-28

"Contrasts" (I) bars 38-41

Where rhythmic flexibility is demanded, over and above the indicated "rubatos", Bartók performs with noticeable rubato

e.g. Sonata (II) bars 255-260

Rhapsody (I) bars 92-97

"Contrasts" (III) bars 208-211

Bartók was heir to the romantic, declamatory type of rubato as used by Liszt, and also to the "parlando rubato" practice of speech rhythms in peasant music, where the rhythm complies with the text. In his later original works, i.e. not folksong arrangements, his rubato instructions become more rare and terms like "espressivo" and "dolce" were used instead. The crux of the matter is that Bartók's scores demand rubato, whether it is marked as such, or not. Unmarked rubatos abound in his works and his performances thereof, and form the essence of his musical ideas.

## Broken Chords

Bartók plays broken chord figures not indicated in the score, in a style that is reminiscent of the romantic virtuosi like Paderewski and Sauer who produced a more dense sound by anticipating with the left hand. Bartók apparently favoured this practice, not as an *espressivo* style performance, but to better outline the linearity of the parts and to afford a closer look at the dissonances within a chord. Numerous examples indicate that the greater the dissonance of the chord, the longer the break between the notes.


Bartók seemingly used this method of playing as a way of dealing with unsolved problems in notation and the broken chords (arpeggios) are not merely affective performer's mannerisms (Somfai, 1981:31). When a specific timbre is required, but the chords are physically impossible to play together, the only option is the arpeggiation of the chords. This occurs for example in the Sonata (I) bars 47-48; 61-62. As a rule Bartók plays the arpeggiated chord from the bottom to the top, unless otherwise indicated in the score (Garst, 1985:18). Examples of the latter are found in the Sonata (II) bars 170-172 and "Contrasts" (I) bar 37.

Careful study of Bartók's performances of the three works, indicates a decline in the random playing of broken chords in "Contrasts". Instead of arpeggiated chords, in the style of

improvisation, the score indicates precisely notated arpeggiandos, e.g. "Contrasts" (I) bars 23-25, 37-38, 41-42, 85. This is indicative of an even greater commitment to precision in the score and is characteristic of Bartók's mature works in general. In all three works the use of broken chords is also more obvious in slower, more expressive passages.

### Other Performance Aspects

#### Pedalling

In Bartók's view, the damper pedal was to be used with discretion. He often used the Una Corda in performance and the  $\frac{1}{2}$  pedal was used for misty effects, e.g. "Contrasts" (II) bars 19-23. Pedal signs were written when a certain tone colour was required and wherever there could be doubt concerning pedal application. Pedal indications that appear in Bartók's scores are  ; Ped .....\*  $\frac{1}{2}$  Ped.; Senza ped; (Ped.); (Prol.Ped). The latter indication means that the performer should use a sostenuto pedal if available, otherwise the damper pedal could be used with some discretion. Pedal signs in parentheses indicate the optional use of the Pedal. These signs could also indicate that Bartók regarded the use of the pedal as obvious, and the pedal indications merely serve as a reminder to the pianist.

In his performances Bartók invariably used the pedal at the (Ped) indication. Such instances occur in e.g.

Sonata (II) bar 451 (use of pedal to ensure a legato effect in passages and to emphasize the rhythmic structure).

Rhapsody (II) bar 159 first ending (to join notes separated by big leaps, and to emphasize top melodic notes in the right hand part).

"Contrasts" (III) bars 248-256 (use of pedal in staccato passages to add more resonance and to emphasize ostinato patterns - pedalling should not be too dry).

Bartók also uses more pedalling than indicated in the score, e.g. Sonata (I) bars 73-79 (pedalling is necessary because of the wide stretches).

Rhapsody (I) bars 98-104 (pedalling is necessary because of leaps and octaves and to emphasize ascending melodic notes in the right hand).

"Contrasts" (II) bars 30-32 (pedalling is used with caution to avoid obscuring the trills in the left hand, yet assisting with the legato octaves).

## Articulation

This aspect of the performance is defined in Grove's Dictionary (1973:35) as "a feature of musical performance which includes all these more or less minute breaks in the continuity of sound that contribute, together with accent, to give shape and to render it intelligible". Two main aspects may be distinguished viz. phrasing and punctuation (this also includes various signs and accents).

Bartók's attention to detail in the score also extends to the precise notation of accents in musical phrases, in order to make his intentions, regarding performance, as clear as possible.

Signs occurring in the three works are e.g. - agogic accent; > stressed (attack) sign; - stressed but shorter sound; ^ emphasized sound; ▼ staccatissimos. The use of these signs cannot be discussed in detail as that would entail a separate study altogether. A few examples, however, will illustrate Bartók's use of these various accents, e.g. Sonata (I) bar 3 (violin); the use of the - accent, together with a rallentando indication, effectively separates the introductory notes in the violin part, creating a feeling of anticipation, intensified by the use of the fermata, before the sounding of the first theme.

Rhapsody (I) 3-5; the - accent is coupled with a short slur for greater dynamic emphasis on the dotted rhythm and the melodic key notes. Sonata (II) bars 1-4; Rhapsody (II) bars 28-30; "Contrasts" (III) bars 53-57; 214-222; a rhythmically syncopated effect is created by the use of the accent in the piano part. By disturbing the normal beat, a feeling of excitement is created.

Rhapsody (II) bars 46-48; the use of the ^ accent creates an interesting rhythmic pattern in the violin part.

Rhapsody (II) bars 46-48



Certain general principles regarding Bartók's execution of the phrase endings (slurs) can be deduced despite conflicting statements and performances by Bartók (Garst, 1985:17-18).

1. Legato phrase endings in expressive passages are not articulated with silences afterwards, i.e. the last note does not sound shorter in any way. e.g.

Sonata (I) bars 88-91, (II) bars 419-427 (piano)

Rhapsody (I) bar 58 (piano)

"Contrasts" (II) bars 46-49 (piano)

2. Sections containing many long tied notes are not played with short phrasing e.g.

Rhapsody (II) bars 126-130 (second ending)

3. In lively passages, Bartók articulates the endings of slurs with staccatos for greater rhythmic emphasis e.g.

Sonata (II) bars 50-58, 262-272 (piano)

Rhapsody (II) bars 99-100 (piano)

"Contrasts" (III) 71-74, 169-178 (piano)

#### Ornamentation

The performance of grace notes depends largely on the tempo and character of the piece, although Bartók is not always consistent in his performance of ornamental notes (Garst, 1985:18). In general, grace notes are placed (i) on the beat in fast pieces and (ii) before the beat in more sustained passages (for greater emphasis of a specific note) e.g.

Sonata (I) bar 13 (ii) (violin); (II) bars 120-123 (i) (piano). Rhapsody (II) bars 17-18 (i) (sounding almost simultaneously) (violin and Piano)

"Contrasts" (II) bars 9-10 (ii) (clarinet and violin parts); 11-12 (ii) (piano); (iii) bars 75-81 (piano), 303-308 (i) (violin, clarinet and piano).



Bartók also added ornaments not indicated in the score, e.g. Rumanian Folk Dance no. 1 (Garst, 1985:18) although this does not apply to the three works in question.

The study of the performance aspect at the hand of the composer's own interpretation of the Sonata, Rhapsody and "Contrasts", indicates that although careful attention should be paid to the score, the performer has the right to exercise artistic freedom in his/her interpretation.

#### Pianistic Style and Dynamics in the Sonata, Rhapsody and "Contrasts"

##### Sonata



There is a lack of explicit sharing of materials between the two instruments and both parts are considerably independent of each other. Although the piano part is intricate, the violin has the leading melodic role in all but a few bars. The function of the piano is to underline and elucidate and in so doing a unique ensemble is achieved with the violin. (Stevens, 1964:211). The piano is nevertheless treated as an independent melodic and rhythmic instrument, with predominating horizontal lines. A strong feature of the

pianistic style in this technically demanding work, is the playing of widely spaced chords and the pianist has to cope with wide leaps and stretches. The previously mentioned technique of octave displacements illustrates this fact.

The solution, as adopted by Bartók, is to play such chords as an arpeggio figure, in addition to his random playing of arpeggio figurations. Most pianists today will no doubt only resort to the playing of broken chord figurations where a chord is impossible to play as one. Numerous examples of such chords occur in, especially the first movement e.g. bars 46-48, 55-60. In the second movement, due to faster tempi and a more rigid rhythmic structure, Bartók realistically avoided the excessive use of big leaps and stretches, in the piano part.

Even in the exact score with its meticulously indicated tempo fluctuations and painstaking metronome markings, unmarked rubatos are demanded in many of the rhapsodic passages, in especially the first movement. The violin performs most of these passages, done in the style of improvisation, and the pianist has the difficult task of supporting the violinist in the execution of these free melodic lines, while at the same time maintaining the independence of its own intricate lines. A deep understanding of the character of the music, as well as a close rapport between the two players is necessary to

achieve a successful ensemble. The result, in performance, of the free treatment of the melodic lines in a meticulous score, is one of flexibility.

Dynamically, the range is wide - from ppp to ff. In the first movement a shimmering effect is created in the piano part by the pp and ppp playing of  and  notes. This should be performed with the utmost control to avoid overpowering the violin in its playing of harmonics e.g. bars 21-28 (although the main emphasis lies with the piano) or its presentation of the theme e.g. bars 63-65. The dynamics in the second movement are generally more forceful in keeping with the more robust character of the dance, and although the independence of the two instruments is maintained, the piano is also used in accompanying patterns e.g. bars 65-86. These passages are generally marked to be played piano, staccato or leggiero, in order not to disturb the instrumental balance.

Throughout the Sonata, changes in dynamics often coincide with changes in tempi and / or expression e.g. (I) bars 8-12, 31, 34, 85-88, (II) 61-65, 396-397. Dynamics are utilised in bringing about a different mood in performance and to affect a marked contrast in tempo fluctuations. Louder dynamics are generally allocated to the violin part than to the piano part with its fuller texture e.g. bars 33-43: violin plays piano, and the piano plays pianissimo.

Sforzando indications and strong accents are often staggered between the two parts, to provide rhythmic interest in the respective parts and to maintain a forceful dynamic throughout the passage e.g. (II) bars 15-17: 488, 490. Rapid changes in dynamics as in e.g. the piano part bar 180, add prominence and interest to the piano part while the violin is engaged upon declamatory lines.

### Rhapsody

#### Lassú

In this first section, the piano mainly fulfils the role of accompanying instrument, while the melodic material is supplied by the violin. A consistent rhythmic pattern forms the basis of the B section where new rhythmical material is introduced. Dynamically the range of intensity is small. Few dynamic indications and slight dynamic variations are found in the score. Only one crescendo for example, is indicated in the B section. The simple notated dynamic scheme can be summarised as follows:

A <sup>1</sup>	B	A <sup>2</sup>	Coda		
f	mf	p-mp	f	p	mf
		mf			

Notwithstanding the above scheme, dynamic fluctuations occur in performance, depending on the melodic or rhythmic content e.g. in bars 27-30 (piano) tension is increased by the ascending melodic notes in the right hand and a crescendo is suggested, although no dynamic changes are involved. Due to the lack of dynamic subtleties, like subito pianos, or small crescendi, the character of the Lassú comes across as strong and forceful in the two A sections, with contrast being provided by the middle section, marked p - mp. This dynamic contrast is also linked to the changes in tempo. The two forte sections are marked ♩ = 108 while the softer middle section is played at a faster ♩ = 112.

Although the piano part is marked forte, for instance in section A, the balance between the two instruments has to be taken into account. The piano, in its accompanying role, always bearing in mind the predominance of the violin melody, obviously has to observe a controlled forte, relative to the forte played by the violin. This should not be difficult to achieve since the texture of writing for the piano in most cases accommodates this. Very often the piano fulfils the role of the cimbalom with the playing of ornamented, or arpeggiated chords, providing melodic interest in spaces left in the violin melodic lines and lending a unique texture to the music e.g. bars 11-16, 27-32, 92-97.

Friss

The piano appears as a more independent instrument in this section and although its function is still chiefly to accompany the violin, greater participation in the thematic material and closer interaction between the instruments take place. In combining the two instruments in performance, the most problematic aspect lies in the rhythmic interaction between the violin and piano, e.g. bars 101-150. Total agreement between the performers regarding the execution of the numerous and subtle variations is also essential.

The pianist is faced with a part that, although not necessarily innovative, is nevertheless demanding. The pianistic style varies from a leggiero touch to forceful octaves and chords; from purely accompanying figures to the playing of intricate contrapuntal lines in imitation with the violin ; and from passages in conjunct motion to passages containing big leaps, in especially the left hand.

Precise and subtle dynamic indications appear in the score e.g. bars 24-25, where the important piano melodic motive, echoed in the violin part, is played mezzo forte, and the following, less important, accompanying motive is played piano. Accompanying patterns in the piano part are virtually all marked to be played leggiero, piano or staccato, confirming the solo status of the violin. Always allowing for

the greater resonance of the piano and in order not to disturb the instrumental balance, Bartók indicates softer dynamics in the piano part, even in the passages where the two instruments engage in the imitation of the theme



e.g. bars 71-74. Changes in the dynamics are again linked to changes in tempo and metronome markings as in the case of the Lassú e.g. the first section up to bar 25 is marked to be played piano in an essentially light manner at  $\text{♩} = 92$ . In bars 26-27, a change in tempo,  $\text{♩} = 76$  as well as dynamics (forte) is indicated. Other examples linking dynamics and tempo significantly illustrate Bartók's employment of all available musical materials, in order to achieve the desired result in performance.

### "Contrasts"

Bartók emphasizes the disparities between the instruments and does not attempt to blend the sonorities. The violin and clarinet are exploited in soloistic fashion while the piano acts as accompanying instrument most of the time, with a strong focus on its percussive abilities. The piano punctuates the melodic material supplied by the violin and clarinet and only rarely partakes in the sharing of thematic material. The role of the piano in the ensemble is nevertheless an important one, as it serves as a frame around

the parts played by the other two instruments. Through its unobtrusiveness it intensifies the more obvious, important melodic materials.

### Verbunkos

Although thematic materials are shared between the violin and clarinet, the clarinet subtly dominates the movement and a clarinet cadenza is also included. The clarinet in A is used to facilitate the reading of the printed score, and its slightly fuller tone quality adds resonance to the frequently occurring arpeggio and scale passages in  and . The written E at fig. 55 will also be impossible to play on the B<sup>b</sup> clarinet. The piano provides a rhythmic bass line for the most part, although it occasionally shares in the playing of rhythmic materials. e.g. bars 57-59. The accompaniment varies with the playing of the same thematic materials by the two solo instruments e.g. the piano provides pp chords with the first introduction of the B theme in bars 30-43. With the second hearing of the theme, bars 45-54, the piano accompaniment in glissandi add to the heightened sense of tension and also provides contrast to the previously heard theme.



Whereas the idiomatic possibilities of especially the clarinet, and also the violin are explored, the pianistic skills are not fully utilised, and the piano plays a supportive role. In bars 72-84 however, the violin and clarinet support the piano playing an extended rhythmic pattern, first in dotted note values and then in semiquavers. Within the pianissimo framework a gathering and subsiding feeling of tension is experienced by first the ascending and then descending rhythmic patterns in long phrases.

The dynamic variations generally occur in accordance with the character of the various thematic sections - more forceful in the piu mosso passages and more subdued in the meno mosso and dolce passages. The exception to this occurs in the previously mentioned bars where a suppressed feeling of excitement is created by the forward moving piano lines played pianissimo.

Pihenö

The clarinet in A is used to facilitate the playing of sharps, and the roundness of its tone is suited to the long melodic lines. The violin and clarinet play languid phrases, interspersed with the rippling sounds in the piano. The short piano and pianissimo interjections serve to underline the long

phrases in the violin and clarinet. The piano then proceeds with gamelan-like passages, adding to the element of gracefulness and relaxation in a heterophonic unison style.

An increase in tension is achieved by the playing of triplet figures. The pianistic style in this movement is reminiscent of the so-called Impressionistic style.

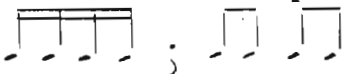
The dynamics underline the feeling of relaxation. It varies from p - ppp, then intensifies dramatically to forte in the agitato section and provides contrast, before subsiding again. This rise and fall in dynamics occurs once more in bars 33-35. These dynamic variations add tension and in so doing emphasize even more the feeling of relaxation, by way of contrast.


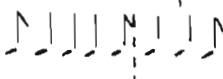
As in the case of the Verbunkos, the piano concludes the movement with the opening statement, heard originally in the violin and clarinet.

### Sebes

Whereas the clarinet had played a more important solo role in the first dance, the violin comes more strongly to the fore in the last dance, and is also given a demanding cadenza. At the beginning of the Sebes, the violin is tuned to G# D A

E<sup>b</sup> (scordatura) which allows two possible tritones on the open strings and also forms a symmetrical chord. From bar 30 onwards, a conventionally tuned violin is used. Various other string techniques are also explored. The clarinet in B<sup>b</sup> is used to facilitate the reading of the score, and to add a touch of brilliance to the rapidly moving melodic lines.

In the two A sections of the dance, the piano provides a rhythmic ostinato accompaniment with two distinguishing patterns: 

Off-beat accents in certain passages add excitement to the ostinato patterns and provides an interesting rhythmic punctuation to the violin and clarinet melodic lines e.g. bars 59-61 ; 94-102. Accented piano chords are sometimes used to fill the gaps in moments of rest in the violin and clarinet parts, and to introduce important melodic figurations or to separate sequential figures e.g. bars 44-51. In the contrasting B section, the piano supplies a continuous accompaniment built on the Bulgarian rhythmic pattern. This is presented in two forms: in chords on a  pattern, and in scales and chords on a  pattern. The ascending piano lines add tension which is relaxed by the descending patterns. Against this rhythmic framework, the violin and clarinet play rhythmically contrasting melody lines, sometimes resulting in the unison presentation of the lines, involving all three instruments, and providing important textural contrast.

The piano part, although not as virtuosic as the violin and clarinet parts, is technically demanding and a keen rhythmic sense is required to master the often intricate rhythmic patterns and phrasings e.g. bars 260-268. Apart from the play of ostinato figures, the pianist is expected to play glissandi, sliding chromatic passages and tremolo figures. The pianist has to keep control in the playing of the often percussive passages, to avoid dominating the other two parts.

Dynamically, the range varies from p - ff, including sudden crescendi and decrescendi e.g. bars 92-94. Great control has to be exercised in the playing of the accompaniment patterns at the beginning of the Sebes with the indicated piano dynamic. The instrumental balance should also be rigorously observed in passages like bars 230-233. Bartók often allocates softer dynamics in faster passages and vice versa, providing dynamic and tempo contrast and allowing the fast ostinato patterns to rapidly move ahead. The dynamics increase in intensity in the last bars, allowing all three instruments to end the dance on a triumphant note. The pianistic style varies in each work. In the Sonata the pianist is expected to cope with big leaps and stretches and the pianistic style is uncompromising. The piano writing has a thick texture due to the frequent inclusion of polychords. In the Rhapsody the writing is more "conventional" although

big leaps still occur in the left hand and the lines are more thinly spaced with a less thick texture. In "Contrasts", the piano is used mainly as a percussive instrument, and although no innovative techniques are used, highly developed musical and technical skills are required.

The role the piano plays in the ensemble in all three works, is an interesting one. Although often treated as an accompanying instrument, its independence is maintained by its intricate individual lines. The pianist has to observe a balance between being supportive of the other instruments, yet still has to make his presence felt as an individual participant in the ensemble. A sound knowledge of the formal aspects of the works and complete familiarity with the piano, and other instrumental parts, will add greatly to a successful performance.

Another common feature in all three works is the playing of ostinato patterns, emphasizing the percussive aspects of the piano. All three works show Bartók's complete familiarity with the piano and sound knowledge of its capabilities. Although these capabilities are not extensively explored, the respective piano parts remain a challenge not lightly undertaken.

## CHAPTER VI CONCLUSION

According to the standard division of the three periods in Bartók's compositional style (Deri, 1968:242), the Sonata and Rhapsody belong to the same category viz. the rhythmic-polyphonic period. The assumption is therefore that these two works should exhibit the same characteristics. As the discussion and analysis has indicated, this clearly is not the case. Certain characteristics are shared by the two works in question and also by "Contrasts", but each work shows different aspects of Bartók's style and developments in certain areas that coincide with his growth as a composer.

In the Sonata the principles of harmonic extension come close to breaking point and the various elements are tightly knit by motivic concentration. In spite of the polytonal texture where each line has its own individuality, the harmonic total has textural consistency. It is representative of Bartók's rhythmic-polyphonic period, indicated by a growing awareness on Bartók's part of the formal symmetry of contrapuntal devices and the use of ever extending tonalities. In the Rhapsody, a return to simpler materials is indicated. A strong feature is Bartók's ever-increasing preoccupation with motivic conception, both horizontally and vertically. The strong folk music influence, heard in the rhythms and melodies of the Rhapsody, also add to this work's greater

accessibility. "Contrasts" is a typical example of works written during the "synthesis" period in which Bartók's musical expression was enlarged by the assimilation of contrapuntal techniques. An outstanding feature in this work with its ambiguous tonalities is the highly individual polyphonic writing, embodied in a clear design.

The three works reflect in the arrangement of their formal materials different stages in Bartók's compositional thought. In the Sonata he sought some kind of formal synthesis through experimentation that had its origins in the first sonata for violin and piano. The complexity of the form reflects the evolution and extension in his compositional style. In the Rhapsody inventively simplified structures are carried to their logical extremes and folk music is interwoven with his own original music. This return to the use of simpler musical materials is also responsible for the accessibility of the Rhapsody to a wider audience. With the writing of "Contrasts" in his later period, the combination of jazz with traditional formal elements results in a unique mixture of freedom and restraint.

Despite the seemingly free forms employed by Bartók, the underlying formal structure is one of unity, due to Bartók's ability to synthesize diverse elements and thematic materials. Within a free formal structure systematic relations extend to the smallest detail. As no form is really free, any plan which gives coherence to a musical structure must incorporate


many of the principles which are at the roots of the traditional forms of music (Berry, 1986:404). The element of integration and unity is achieved by the use of principles inherent in cyclic form, in which related material is used in different movements, e.g. Sonata (II) bars 299 and 500 - use of first movement material; Rhapsody (II) played with first ending - use of first movement material. Closely linked to this aspect of unity, is the use of "arch" form, as it occurs in the Rhapsody (II), played with a second ending, and in "Contrasts" (II).

When Bartók chooses to use forms such as sonata and ternary form, they do not conform to the expected norm. The "sonata" form in the Sonata (I) contains no separate development section, and the thematic materials are actually developed in the Recapitulation section. And instead of the frequent arrangement of three or four movements which one has come to associate with a work termed "Sonata", an unusual arrangement of a slow-fast movement takes place. Bartók's treatment of ternary form is equally free, e.g. the inclusion of an extra  $a^2$  theme in the Rhapsody (I) and the free treatment of thematic material in the  $A^2$  section of "Contrasts" (III).

In performance this lends an elasticity to the music within the confines of a strict form. The inclusion of cadenzas in "Contrasts" and cadenza-like passages in both the Sonata and Rhapsody, reinforces the impression of freedom in the formal structure.



Certain general principles regarding Bartók's use of rhythm and meter in the three works are also made clear. The most important trait is the use and development of rhythmic motives. Bartók uses these motives as unifying factors within a movement or complete work. His skill in developing motivic material is illustrated by the presentation of motives in various guises. These development techniques include: diminution; augmentation; retrograde form; presentation of motivic materials in different instruments at different times; use of rhythmic motives to indicate different sections within the formal structure; rhythmic variants of the original motives by extensions and transformations. An integral, unified work is the result of the applied motivic technique.

Other general rhythmic characteristics in the three works include: frequent use of ostinato patterns, especially in the piano part, the relatively simple structure of the ostinato provides a foil for developments in the other instruments; abundant use of dotted rhythms; syncopated effects through the use of accents and the writing of  patterns, changing meters where flexibility is demanded in the music; the use of one meter when a more rigid metric structure is required.

The Sonata stands as a symbol of experimentation. Its unique tonal textures and the combination of violin and piano in an unusual manner, unlike any other duo-sonatas before, resulted in an incredulous response from the public. The expressive qualities of the violin melodies, and the more percussive

qualities of the piano part, are compacted into a two-movement form. Yet closer inspection reveals a work of systematic proportions with great attention to detail and an interrelationship between the materials of the violin and piano not obvious at first hearing. The traditional media of the violin and the piano is used in a non-traditional way. The incorporation of the folk-song into his own still-developing style is responsible for a work that is unique in every respect.

In the Rhapsody, Bartók reverted back to a more "folkloristic" style, fully acknowledging his Hungarian roots, with the use of more popular Hungarian material. His textural treatment of the two instruments approaches the more conventional and the work is therefore more accessible to the average listener. His growing awareness of contrapuntal procedures comes strongly to the fore, and the violin and piano are exploited in this area. The freer form employed in the Rhapsody proves a suitable vehicle for the motivic development that takes place and both instruments participate more fully in this process.

In "Contrasts" Bartók had already established his own personal style through synthesis of the new and old materials, and with the assurance of a true master, felt free to break away from the well-trodden path and attempt a new direction. The inclusion of jazz elements within the formal structure opened

the way to new possibilities. Since the blending of the three different instruments' sonorities proved difficult, he approached the problem from another angle and deliberately emphasized the contrasting textures. The end result is a combination of diverse elements, blended into a comprehensive whole.

Although the Sonata, Rhapsody and "Contrasts" are vastly different in character, they all share certain common characteristics. Bartók's preoccupation with formal unity and coherence comes to the fore in all three works. Diverse elements e.g. tonality and polytonality, folk music and twentieth century techniques, lyricism and dynamic elements, are incorporated to form balanced compositions. The three works indicate the use of motives as form generating principles, melodic and contrapuntal inventiveness, proportional harmonic structures, inventive use of the inherent qualities in intervals and chords and the achievement of textural consistency despite ambiguous tonal relationships and polytonal textures.

Percussive rhythms and ostinato patterns prevail in especially the piano parts, and the piano is utilised as a percussive as well as melodic instrument. The Hungarian character is omnipresent and folk elements are stylised and incorporated into his own personal idiom. Although Bartók invariably

absorbed musical influences from other composers, his own characteristic style is evident and remains the most consistent and predominant feature in all three works.

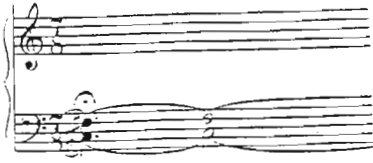
## APPENDIX

Bartók was very precise in his instructions to his publishers. In general, nothing should be changed. Namely..Con sord. Senza sord. should only be put in ( ) if they are also in ( ) in the score. (Vinton 1968:225). But despite his instructions to Universal Edition and later to Boosey and Hawkes, mistakes occur and certain Universal Editions remain uncorrected (Vinton, 1968:230). Errors exist in the score of the Sonata no. 2 for violin and piano, due to the editor or inaccuracies on the part of Bartók. By comparing a printed score with two manuscripts, one an autographic sketch, the other a clean copy made by a manuscript copyist with Bartók's corrections and signature, these errors can be traced : (Szentkirályi, 1976:xvi-xx).

1. In (I) bar 17 the lower system of the piano part is short by a quaver. This seems to be Bartók's error as it appears in this form in the original score. By comparing e.g. bar 17 with (I) bars 70 and 99 it is clear that the omission is a mistake.



(I) bar 17

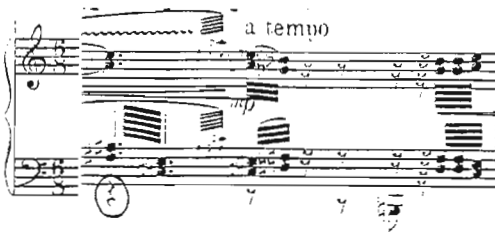


(I) bar 70



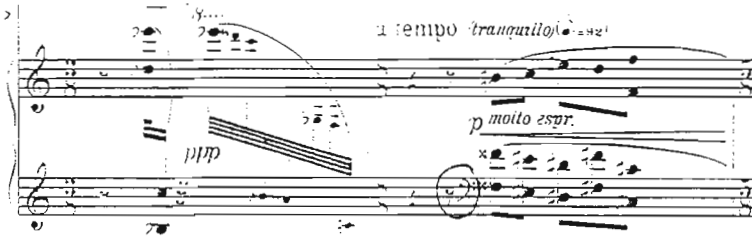
(I) bar 99

2. In bar 27 the crotchet rest should be dotted. This is Bartók's error.



(I) bar 27

3. An editor's mistake appears in (I) bar 85. The bass clef should be moved to the preceding bar. Bartók plays the bar according to this correction.



(I) bars 84-85

4. An editor's mistake occurs in (II) bar 105. The sf does not appear in the original score.



(II) bar 105

5. In (II) bar 132, the editor mistakenly printed the chord in the right hand as A E# F G# A, instead of A E F# G# A as it occurs in the preceding bar.



(II) bars 130- 132

6. Bartók mistakenly left out the bass clef in bar 335 in the second movement. Bar 336 should have bass clef and then the clef in bar 337 is superfluous.



(II) bars 333-337



7. In the lower violin part, (II) bar 389, an A instead of a G was erroneously printed.



(II) bar 389

8. In the 2 nd movement, bar 414, sostenuto (♩ = 62 ) is followed in bar 415 by Piu sostenuto (♩ = 66 ). The MM indication for bar 414 should have read ♩ = 72, as it appears in the original score.

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The first staff is the upper voice, starting with a tempo marking of *sostenuto* (♩ = 62) and a dynamic of *f*. A box containing the number 46 is placed above the staff. The second staff is the middle voice, starting with a tempo marking of *Piu sostenuto* (♩ = 66) and a dynamic of *p cresc.*. The third staff is the lower voice, starting with a tempo marking of *sostenuto* (♩ = 62) and a dynamic of *mp*. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

(II) bars 414-416

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