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**AN INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS
OF
BÉLA BARTÓK'S PERFORMANCE
OF
HIS OWN MUSIC**

by

SHU-YUAN YANG

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts, The City University of New York.

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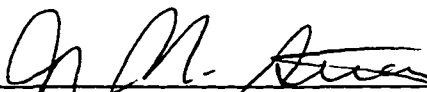
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ABSTRACT

An Interpretive Analysis of Béla Bartók's Performance of His Own Music

by

Shu-Yuan Yang

Advisor: Professor Philip Lambert

Bartók's recordings made between 1912 and 1945 are considered valuable sources to Bartók interpreters. These recordings provide us with a wealth of information about the composer's intentions and helpful interpretive ideas. This study shows that Bartók performs with great freedom that expresses what goes beyond the scores.

The pieces selected in this study include Bagatelle Op. 6 No. 2, *Evening in Transylvania* from Ten Easy Piano Pieces, the first movement of Suite Op. 14, and *Allegro Barbaro*. By analyzing Bartók's recordings on these

four pieces, this thesis explores that Bartók's interpretive decisions are related to stylistic and structural characteristics. His different use of tempo, dynamics, touch etc., results in varied perception of the form by the listener (*Bagatelle*); his free rubato playing articulates human language (*Evening in Transylvania*); his improvisatory performance brings out the essential character of folk dance (*Suite, first movement*); and his thoughtful articulation prevents a primitive piece from being too boisterous (*Allegro Barbaro*).

This study also discusses György Sándor's recordings for comparison. Mr. Sándor was one of Bartók's most successful pupils and won a *Grand Prix du Disque* for his recording of the entire piano music of Bartók. It is proved that Sándor's playing of the same pieces is much more "Classical" and conservative than Bartók's, because of Sándor's more controlled touch and less various tempo, rhythmic variations.

The author prepared the performance editions in the Appendix which illustrate precisely what has been played on the recordings. These examples provide the direct and

reliable information, showing Bartók's intentions on playing his own music.

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INTRODUCTION

Béla Bartók was not only one of the twentieth century's most important composers, but also a virtuoso pianist and an influential piano teacher who recorded many of his own compositions. Bartók used the recording opportunities not merely to present himself as a performing artist, but also to explore important musical issues.¹ His recordings, made between 1912 and 1945 and containing over one hundred works, offer a rare, valuable opportunity to experience how the composer performed his own music.

Much of the role of the modern instrumental musician is that of an interpreter. An understanding of how

¹ László Somfai, "The Centenary Edition of Bartók's Records" (liner notes to Hungaroton LPX 12326-12333), 25.

the composer interpreted and played his own music will therefore aid the performer. However, much of the so-called standard repertoire performed in recital halls was composed by earlier composers such as J. S. Bach, Beethoven or Chopin. Obviously, the technology did not exist at that time to enable these composers to record their compositions. Performers today can get interpretive ideas only from the written documentary sources contemporary with those composers. By contrast, recordings made by composers from the late nineteenth century onward offer a wealth of interpretive information.

In this dissertation I analyze Bartók's performances of his own music, comparing them with the musical notation. I also consult pertinent literature in order to discover what the composer's intentions are and how he expresses such intentions in his performances.

The four works selected for this study are: (1) Bagatelle, Op. 6 No. 2, *Allegro Giocoso*; (2) *Evening in Transylvania* from *Ten Easy Piano Pieces*; (3) Suite Op. 14, first movement; and (4) *Allegro Barbaro*. Through interpretive analysis of these pieces, I will mainly discuss the following three issues: (1) Bartók's various

interpretations, (2) the folk influence in the recordings, and (3) the role of interpretation in the determination of form. The first issue stems from Bartók's belief that no music should be heard in only one performance.² He implies that a piece of music deserves various interpretations. Accordingly, he recorded a few pieces more than once and interpreted them differently. The relevant examples selected in my study are Bartók's two performances of Bagatelle and three of *Evening in Transylvania*. I will discuss how Bartók varied his performances and how the changes reveal analytical and stylistic conceptions.

Second, it is well known that many of Bartók's compositions are closely related to folk idioms. The unique character of his folk-related works is usually associated with a free, rubato-style playing. *Evening in Transylvania* is an original composition containing two main characteristics of Hungarian folk music, and the first movement of Suite Op. 14 is dance music in Romanian folk style. Bartók's rubato playing in *Evening in Transylvania* shows great rhythmic freedom, and in the dance movement of Suite his free use of tempo contrasts considerably with his

² Ibid., 27.

own written tempo indications. I will illustrate his different ways of free-style playing and describe how Bartók absorbed the spirit of folk music into the performance.

Third, the formal structure of a piece of music may be shaped by interpretive nuance. A performer has some control over the perception of a work's tonality, harmony, rhythm, texture and so on. In the Bagatelle chapter, three possible formal structures are proposed: an a-b-a structure as identified by Elliott Antokoletz, the Golden Section proportion, and my own observation of an a-b-c-b-a structure. The form of *Allegro Barbaro*, however, is hardly compatible with the rules of any classical forms. Ernő Lendvai provides a seven-step analysis that will be discussed in detail. The chapters on the Bagatelle and *Allegro Barbaro* address the issue of how Bartók's performances suggest a particular view of form and other aspects of structure. What analytical perspectives might Bartók have intended to express in his performances? Does a performance in any way influence an analysis?

Bartók's ideas about interpretation of his music not only exist in various written documents and sound recordings, but they also live on through what he

transmitted through his teaching. Throughout his life, it was necessary for Bartók to teach piano to earn his livelihood. His profound influence on his students has been recorded in many of their writings and is reflected in some of their recordings. One of his most prominent students was György Sándor. Sándor was a pupil of Bartók's at the Budapest Academy of Music from 1931 to 1935, and he performed extensively in Western Europe before moving to the United States in 1939, where he kept in contact with Bartók until the composer's death.³ Sándor, who won a *Grand Prix du Disque* for his recording of the entire piano music of Bartók, has claimed that he has always performed Bartók's music in accordance with the composer's teachings.

Following the discussions of Bartók's recordings, Sándor's recordings will be discussed in comparison. As one of Bartók's most successful students, does Sándor in fact play Bartók's works as the composer advised? To what degree do Bartók's musical ideas influence Sándor's playing? Does Sándor play the same way as Bartók does? If not, what sorts of interpretive decisions that are different from Bartók's

³ Malcolm Gillies, *Bartók Remembered* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991), 144.

does he make? By exploring such issues, we may gain more interpretive ideas about Bartók's piano music.

This study draws from two collections of recordings. "Bartók at the Piano," which was released on compact disc in 1991 by Hungaroton (Hungaroton HCD 12326-12333), contains all of the good quality recordings that were previously available on LP. "Béla Bartók Solo Piano Works," released by Sony Classical on compact disc in 1995 (Sony Classical SX4K 68275), is a completely new recording of Bartók's piano music by Sándor.

The edition of the score used for the *Bagatelle* and *Evening in Transylvania* is the Archive edition published by Dover Publication and edited by Benjamin Suchoff. This edition provides the authentic performing version of Bartók's early compositions, and the editorial annotations reflect musicological scholarship based on primary source materials. I chose the Boosey & Hawkes edition for both the *Suite* and *Allegro Barbaro*. Boosey & Hawkes has published all of Bartók's piano music, and a new edition of the *Suite* which is used in this study was published in 1992 and revised by Peter Bartók. This new edition was prepared with reference to all manuscript sources, including the sketch,

final (engraving) copy, a corrected proof of the first printed edition and some communications between the composer and his publisher.

In the Appendix, performance editions are provided based on the recordings of the four pieces that are discussed in this study. These musical examples illustrate precisely what has been played on those recordings, and summarize all of the analytical comments.

CHAPTER I

THE BAGATELLE, OP. 6 NO. 2, *ALLEGRO GIOCO*

Bartók wrote the Fourteen Bagatelles, Op. 6, in 1908, shortly after his initial exposure to Hungarian folk music and the music of Debussy. The Bagatelles bear the first evidence of his ability to synthesize his dual experience of folk and art music. These fourteen pieces were first considered too modern to be published.¹ Antokoletz notes,

¹ Elliott Antokoletz, "With His Publishers," in *The Bartók Companion*, ed. by Malcolm Gillies (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1994), 97.

The so-called 'modernism' of this work seems. . . . to lie largely in the tendency toward the isolation of traditional harmonic construction and tonal functions, a tendency which gave rise to a new kind of tonal system based on the free and equal treatment of the twelve semitones.²

Thus the Bagatelles not only exemplify the evolution of Bartók's musical language, but also foreshadow the new music of other composers such as Schoenberg and Webern.

Each of the fourteen Bagatelles engages a particular problem of post-tonal composition. Bagatelle number 2, marked "Allegro Giocoso," is a study of tonal centrality based on symmetry.³ Such concept of symmetry exists not only in theoretical analyses; it is also expressed by Bartók in his own performances, as I will discuss below. The focus now will be to summarize the analytical issues related to the formal structure and symmetrical design of the piece. Later on in this chapter, I will discuss how these theoretical sources relate to the possible performances.

² Elliott Antokoletz, "'At Last Something Truly New': Bagatelles," in *The Bartók Companion*, ed. by Malcolm Gillies (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1994), 110-111.

³ Elliott Antokoletz, "The Musical Language of Bartók's Fourteen Bagatelles for Piano," *Tempo* 137 (June 1981), 15.

The piece is thirty measures long, in ternary form, and the metronome marking is $\text{♩} = 84$. Antokoletz observes that the middle section opens at the second quarter of m. 7 and ends at m. 17,⁴ and "the recapitulation is introduced (at bar 17) by the return of the repeated major second at the tritonal transposition, D-E."⁵

Antokoletz's identification of the end of the first section at the first quarter of m. 7, marked *pp*, is clear. Immediately after this *pp*, the performance markings of a *tempo*, *p* and accent on the second quarter indicate the beginning of the middle section. However, although Antokoletz asserts that when "the recapitulation is introduced at m. 17," the formal demarcation is less clear. Where exactly does the recapitulation begin? Is it with the introduction of the repeated broken major second dyad (D-E)? Bartók's performance indications, *sf* on the downbeat and *p* on the third quarter of m. 18, seem to create confusion. Even though the *sf* downbeat appearing after a *crescendo* could serve perfectly as the beginning of a new section, the

⁴ Elliott Antokoletz, *The Music of Béla Bartók: A Study of Tonality and Progression in Twentieth-Century Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 141

⁵ Antokoletz, "At Last Something Truly New," 116.

return of the original figure, the major-second dyad sounding together marked *p* on the third quarter, could also be a proper place to begin the recapitulation. Therefore, it might be an interesting task for the interpreter to decide how to solve this particular structural problem in performance.

The music begins with two measures of right-hand major seconds, marked *p*. According to Antokoletz, this opening eighth-note pattern "establishes the priority of a major second (A^b-B^b), which is symmetrical around an implied axis A-A."⁶ Since this axis A does not appear at all in the opening section, it might be helpful for the performer to interpret the section if he or she understands the importance of this axis. Because when the left hand comes in at m. 3, the melody symmetrically expands the interval based on the axis A. These scattered melodic notes therefore become meaningful and organized to the performer.

In the opening section, Bartók places a *marcatissimo* sign (\wedge), the strongest accentuation so far, on the longest note E^{bb} of each of mm. 5 and 6. Next the A-A axis "is locally disrupted by the first occurrence of the D^b

⁶ Antokoletz, *The Music of Béla Bartók*, 141.

chromatic figure (bar 5)."⁷ Antokoletz analyzes this D^b as the tonic of the piece. He states,

The tonality is established primarily by linear motions to D^b (first cadence, bar 5, and final one) and by the prevalence of the "dominant" degree, A^b, throughout the opening section and last part of the recapitulation.⁸

However, this tonic D^b does not give the listener the sense of stability, because it finally extends to the main cadence at the downbeat of m. 7. After the *molto ritardando* at m. 6, Bartók's *smorzando* marking brings the section to *pp* and to the first musical halt at first quarter of m. 7, where the right hand's major third dyad (G/B) serves as a resolution to the major seconds and "re-establishes the A-A axis."⁹ As a result, the important role of the tonality that used to be one of the most prominent elements in traditional tonal music is now replaced with something else, the axis, in this "modern" piece by Bartók.

The next section (mm. 7-17) begins a *tempo* on the second quarter of m. 7. This section consists of three

⁷ Antokoletz, "At Last Something Truly New," 116.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

important figures: (1) motive x: six staccato eighth-notes followed by a tenuto quarter-note, appearing first in m. 7 and in canon at mm. 14-16; (2) motive y: four sixteenth-notes followed by a quarter-note, appearing as a descending figure for the first time at m. 8 and in inversion at m. 10; and (3) repeated chords recalling the A axis in the top voice (mm. 11-12), reaching the piece's highest note, C⁶, through triplet figures. This third motive has the thickest texture and the strongest dynamic, *poco f*.

Bartók produces a sense of metric instability within the first four measures of the middle section, mm. 7-10. He puts accents on each entry of motives x and y, both of which are placed on weak beats in the measures. Then he changes the meter from 2/2 to 3/2 at m. 10. At m. 11, the meter reverts to 2/2 and the regular metric pulse, with the *sf* on the downbeat, returns. The music reaches a climax at m. 11, and the momentum grows with the *crescendo* at m. 13 and the rhythmic pattern shortening from one measure (mm. 11-12) to a half measure (mm. 13-14). As motive x reappears on the last quarter of m. 14 in canon, the regular metric pulse destabilizes again due to the accents on the weak beats.

Bartók again changes the meter to 3/2 at m. 17, introducing the recapitulation by the return of the repeated major second at the tritone transposition, D-E. The implied axis is now E^b .¹⁰ The original symmetrical expansion of the left-hand melody at mm. 3-4 reappears in the right hand (mm. 19-20); then the opening material returns one more time at m. 24, at its original pitch classes but an octave lower.

Antokoletz reconfirms the ternary design of the piece by stating,

The final return of the first phrase (mm. 24ff.) is based on the original symmetrical expansion around the major-second A^b-B^b (or implied axis A-A). Thus, in the outer sections of this piece, a new concept of tonal centricity is established by means of a single axis of symmetry (A-A or E^b-E^b). . . . The rounded form of the piece is supported by the return of the original axis of symmetry.¹¹

I divide the piece, however, into five sections symmetrically organized by several distinguishable figures in an a-b-c-b-a format (see Example 1). This organization is similar to Antokoletz's a-b-a, because my "b-c-b" subdivides his "b". The five-section structural

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Antokoletz, *The Music of Béla Bartók*, 141-142.

interpretation might better point up the colorful character of some of the motives.

Example 1: the a-b-a-c-a structure of Bagatelle Op. 6 No. 2

section a

mm. 1 major second dyads with melody in L.H.
6 *ritardando*

section b

mm. 7 *a tempo*; motives x & y
10 meter changes to 3/2

section c

mm. 11-14 *sf*; climax

section b

mm. 15 motive x
17 meter changes to 3/2

section a

mm. 18 *sf*; major second dyads
19 melody in the right hand
24 melody in the left hand

Another possible formal interpretation of the piece derives from the concept of the Golden Section. Ernő Lendvai observes that there are numerous examples in Bartók's music where the Golden Section is used as a structural foundation. He explains,

Golden Section ("sectio aurea") means the division of a distance in such a way that the proportion of

the whole length to the larger part corresponds geometrically to the proportion of the larger to the smaller part, A simple calculation shows that if the whole length is taken as unity, the value of the larger section is 0.618, and hence the smaller part is 0.381.¹²

This ratio is associated with the Fibonacci numerical sequence (1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, etc.).¹³

The ratio of any two consecutive numbers in the sequence (starting with 2:3) approximates a Golden Section proportion, with the ratio becoming more precise as the sequence progresses.

The most important formal turning-point in a work or unit may articulate a Golden Section. In the Bagatelle No. 2 the climax and the recapitulation do just that. The piece consists of 30 measures, and $30 \times 0.618 = 18$; the recapitulation sets in approximately at m. 18. In addition, $18 \times 0.618 = 11$; the

↑
Professor Graziano said that : measure
it is fine to keep the "Golden" unges the
section division by changing
the word "proportion" to
"approximate."

¹² Ernő Lendvai, *Béla Bartók's Music* (London: Kahn & Averill, 1971), 17.

¹³ Tibor Bachmann and Peter J. Bachmann, "An Analysis of Béla Bartók's Music Through Fibonacci Numbers and The Golden Mean," *Musical Quarterly* 65 (1979), 72.

meter from 2/2 to 3/2; each of the 3/2 measures, therefore, serves as a transitional area.

I will next discuss three recordings of the Bagatelle. The first two are Bartók's recordings of 1929 and 1942 (Hungaroton HCD 12326 and 12331). Bartók makes quite a few changes in the later performance. The third is a recording by Sándor from 1994 (Sony Classical SK 68278).

Bartók's 1929 Recording

(For actual performing version of this recording, see Example 1 in Appendix [pp. 125-126])

Bartók's 1929 recording suggests an a-b-a structure in his projection of three distinct musical moods. As he plays the opening repeated eighth-note dyad, his style is deliberate and controlled, nearly mechanical. When the left hand comes in at m. 3, his carefully accented first note steadies the pulse. He repeats this in m. 4 with an unwritten accent. Bartók maintains a calm feeling throughout the entire section with a constant softness in the right hand, even though the left hand's *marcatissimo* on the first notes of mm. 5 and 6 and its extended melodic line might lead one naturally toward a *crescendo*. With the *molto ritardando* and the *smorzando/decrescendo* at m. 6, Bartók brings the music to a quiet and smooth ending.

Bartók plays the next section with an unsteadiness and excitement that contrasts with the early section. At

mm. 7-9, he maintains the regular metric pulse by emphasizing the strong beats, the first and third quarters of mm. 8 and 9, which are mostly marked *tenuto*. These strong beats sound heavy, more like *sf* than the end of *crescendo* with *tenuto*. He also ignores the written accents on the weak beats, the second and fourth quarter of m. 8, thereby avoiding a possible contradiction of the regular pulse. It is natural, however, for the listener to feel this twelve-quarter passage (mm. 7:2 - 10:1) as 4 + 2 + 2 + 4 even without observing the accents on the first attacks of the first three subdivisions. At m. 9, the left hand chord occurs on the third quarter, instead of on the second quarter which is the first attack of the last subdivision. And the articulation in the right hand is two-note slur rather than staccato. As a result, the regular pulse seems to return, yet it lasts only until the downbeat of m. 10 where the meter changes to 3/2. The unsteadiness of the pulse within these four measures, mm. 7-10, creates an excitement that continues to grow thereafter.

On the sixteenth-notes of m. 10, Bartók plays a long *crescendo* and ignores all the written accents. He also rushes the tempo at the end of the measure, so that the listener easily loses the pulse. Although the *decrescendo*

in the second half of m. 9 cools the musical mood and would seem to mark a separation at the downbeat of m. 10, Bartók uses the entire m. 10 to escalate the excitement.

Bartók continues this intensification throughout the entire middle section, mm. 11-17, even though the climactic figure, the repeated chords, stops abruptly at the end of m. 14, when motive x recurs in canon. In spite of the written *diminuendo* at the beginning of the canon that seems to calm the mood, Bartók plays a faster tempo at mm. 15-17 to maintain the excitement. The tempo in mm. 1-10 was approximately $\text{♩} = 96$. He hovers around 100 during the climax (mm. 11-14), then reaches 104 during the canon (mm. 15-17). The momentum grows as the tempo becomes faster. In addition, Bartók plays a *crescendo* at the end of each motive x and emphasizes the written accents on the first attacks of the entries to create a waviness that maintains the excitement.

Bartók ends the middle section and begins the recapitulation dramatically in m. 18 by emphasizing the first two quarters and playing *subito p* at the return of the opening dyad on the third quarter. Bartók makes the *marcatissimo* (second quarter of m. 18) sound like *sf*, exactly like the sound of the first quarter (m. 18). Such emphasis

serves as both the ending of the previous excitement and as the announcement of the beginning of the recapitulation. When the opening major second dyad returns at the third quarter of m. 18, Bartók immediately shifts to a calmer and smoother style, in contrast with the exciting middle section.

During the recapitulation (mm. 18-30), the opening material reappears twice. Though both passages are marked *piano*, Bartók plays the second return (mm. 24-30) as an echo of the first (mm. 18-23).

Bartók's 1942 Recording

(For actual performing version of this recording, see Example 2 in Appendix [pp. 127-128])

It is fascinating to observe how differently Bartók plays the same piece more than ten years later. Whereas the 1929 interpretation suggests an a-b-a form, the 1942 version seems to divide the middle section into three subdivisions, corresponding to my a-b-c-b-a form.

Antokoletz claims that during the opening section the D^b is the tonality of the piece and disrupts the left-hand symmetrical expansion.¹⁴ The E^{bb} s that precede the D^b s are not only unique because they are the longest and loudest notes of the section; actually it is the E^{bb} s that end the symmetrical expansion. Bartók's 1942 performance emphasizes this fact by making a tiny break before each E^{bb} (in mm. 5 and 6). Moreover, he slows down the tempo a few beats

¹⁴ Antokoletz, "At Last Something Truly New," 116.

earlier than the indicated *ritardando* (m. 6), on the first arrival of the D^b tonic in m. 5. Bartók's interpretation, therefore, makes m. 5 a turning point where the two most important notes, E^{bb} and D^b , appear for the first time.

The next four measures (mm. 7-10) are the first "b" in the a-b-c-b-a structure. Whereas in the 1929 recording, Bartók ignores the written accents on the weak beats but emphasizes the strong *tenuto* beats, in the later version he plays the section smoothly by ignoring the *crescendo* markings and avoiding dynamic extremes during mm. 7-9. In the 1942 recording the accents and *crescendos* of mm. 7-9 seem not to exist at all, making the passage sound calmer and quieter than in the 1929 performance. Then Bartók accents the third and fifth quarters as written in m. 10, so that the listener can clearly feel the pulse. After the previous quiet passage (mm. 7-9), this steady pulse in m. 10 sounds impulsive, but not too brusque. Bartók seems to include this measure within the quiet "b" (mm. 7-10) section, while at the same time using it as impetus in the approach to the climax.

Bartók articulates mm. 11-14 as a unique section in two ways. First, he slightly slows down the tempo to

make the entire section sound "heavy." Second, at the end of the section, before motive x recurs at the last quarter of m. 14, he plays an unwritten *ritardando*. Regarding Bartók's sense of rhythm in the performances of his own music, Marilyn Garst says,

Rigid driving rhythms are often heard in pieces of perpetual motion which contain numerous repeated notes and some changing or uneven meters.¹⁵

In this passage, Bartók keeps the tempo constant (around $\downarrow = 100$) in the 1929 recording, but plays a slower tempo (around $\downarrow = 88-92$) in 1942.

The most prominent note in this climax is the upper A⁵ -- the axis of the piece. Joseph N. Straus describes this axis as "a kind of silent center around which everything balances."¹⁶ Even though the axis note does not appear at all in the first section, Bartók makes this A-A axis cry aloud in the structural center of the piece.

Bartók's unwritten *ritardando* at the end of m. 14 ends the "c" section and effects a severance from the next section. He also plays a striking accent, approximating *sf*,

¹⁵ Marilyn M. Garst, "How Bartók Performed His Own Compositions," *Tempo* 155 (September 1985), 16.

¹⁶ Joseph N. Straus, *Introduction to Post-Tonal Theory* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990), 106.

on the very first note of the motive x (the last quarter of m. 14) to announce the beginning of the next section.

Unlike the tempo rush in the 1929 recording, Bartók keeps the opening tempo, $\text{♩} = 96$, in the second "b" section (mm. 15-17) in 1942. Although this tempo is faster than that in the "c" section, it does not sound rushed at all. Because Bartók ignores the written accents on the first note of each entry (except for the first attack) to cool the excitement. Such coolness corresponds to the first "b" section of this performance where Bartók similarly ignores the accents.

As previously mentioned, the note E^{bb} was delayed slightly for emphasis in the opening section of this performance. In the recapitulation, Bartók similarly delays the notes B^{bb} (transposed in the first return, mm. 21-22) and E^{bb} (original in the second return, mm. 26-27). In his 1942 recording he interprets this symmetrical piece in a symmetrical manner, making it sound well-organized and more colorful.

In brief, Bartók's 1942 performance affirms what Cone says in "Musical Form and Musical Performance":

There can be no such thing as an ideal interpretation. For if there were, we might long ago have ceased listening to Mozart and Beethoven.

It is the renewed vitality of each performance that keeps them alive.¹⁷

¹⁷ Edward Cone, *Musical Form and Musical Performance* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1968), 56.

Sándor's 1994 Recording

(For actual performing version of this recording, see Example 3 in Appendix [pp. 129-130])

Sándor's interpretation of "Allegro Giocoso" expresses a three-section structure that helps articulate the Golden Section. As discussed earlier, the sections of the piece, divided according to the rule of Golden Section, are the recapitulation at m. 18 and the climax at m. 11. Each of these dividing points is preceded by a 3/2 measure. In addition, these sections can be distinguished by their use of axes. The first section (mm. 1-10:1) projects the "silent" axis A (mm. 1-7), followed by a developmental, modulatory area (mm. 7-10) with no clear axis. The second section (mm. 10-17) is also based on the axis A, which is emphasized this time in the top voice (mm. 10-14), and followed by canon (mm. 14-17) without axis. The last section (mm. 18-30) contains two axes: E^b in mm. 18-21 and A thereafter.

In both of his recorded performances, Bartók makes a clear musical stop at the first quarter of m. 7 by slowing down the tempo and pausing before he continues. Thus, the "b" section is separated from "a." Sándor, however, tries to connect "a" and "b" in several ways. First, even though he plays the written *ritardando* at m. 6, he avoids the pause before the "b" section by playing a *tempo* on the first quarter of m. 7, one quarter earlier than indicated. Second, he plays *tenuto* on the first quarter of m. 7 and ignores the accent on the first attack of motive x, so that motive x does not sound like a new beginning. Antokoletz connects the first five notes of m. 7 as members of "the symmetrical whole-tone collection F-G-A-B-D^b, which locally reaffirms the A-A axis."¹⁸ Thus Sándor's interpretation here corresponds to Antokoletz's theory, and convincingly connects the first "a" and "b" sections, defining the first Golden Section. In addition, he concludes the section with an unwritten *ritardando* at the end of m. 9.

In general, Sándor's interpretation of this passage is very personal, in that he adds several affective touches that appear neither in the score nor in Bartók's

¹⁸ Antokoletz, *The Music of Béla Bartók*, 141.

performances. First, during the "a" section, Sándor plays an unwritten *crescendo* along with the left hand melody leading to the E^{bb} . While Antokoletz describes this left hand melody as "symmetrical expansion," Sándor "expands" the melody by gradually getting louder. Second, during the "b" section, he avoids the sharpness of the written accents and plays with a tender style. With the *ritardando* he adds at the end, this first Golden Section sounds gentle and feminine.

In the next section, however, Sándor creates a totally different, impulsive mood. After the first Golden Section at the first quarter of m. 10, Sándor speeds up in m. 10 and makes this measure sound like the upbeat to the climax. During the climax, he plays the triplets (mm. 12-14), B^b -B-C, so fast that the two sixteenth notes, B^b and B, sound like grace notes to the quarter note C. This kind of fast action makes the climactic section sound very powerful. As the excitement grows, Sándor accelerates starting in m. 13. Then he ignores the written *diminuendo* at the end of m. 14 and the written *p* at m. 16, maintaining the same high dynamic level until the return of the opening major-second dyad at the third quarter of m. 18. As a result, Sándor

creates a powerful and penetrating sound in the entire section (mm. 11-17). Sándor's dynamic plan together with the excitement caused by the *accelerando* from m. 13, therefore, become important factors associating the "c" and "b" sections to define the second Golden Section. Also, this impulsive style contrasts well with the romantic style of the previous one.

Whereas Bartók emphasized the *marcatissimo* on the second quarter of m. 18 in both of his performances, Sándor completely ignores this marking. Instead, he adds an accent on the third quarter of the same measure where the opening dyad returns, and immediately thereafter decreases the dynamic level to *p*. Sándor thus locates the beginning of the third Golden Section at the third quarter of m. 18. He plays unwritten *crescendos* within each of the returning "a" sections, echoing his interpretation of the opening. His *crescendo* in the second return, however, is more obvious than that of the first one, almost reaching the level of *f*. This more pronounced articulation on the second return reaffirms the return of the opening A-A axis. Compared with Bartók's interpretation in which Bartók ends the piece

softly, Sándor creates a totally different effect that makes the piece end soundly.

Chapter Summary

It was Bartók's recordings that inspired me to investigate how this short but interesting piece relates to possible formal structures. Bartók's two recordings of the Bagatelle No. 2 demonstrate that by changing the musical mood and altering the articulation, tempo and dynamic level, a piece of music may become more colorful to the listener. Meanwhile, the listener might wonder what makes Bartók play the same piece differently. As an interpreter of his own music, Bartók does not always perform the work exactly the same way, because, as he himself explained, "perpetual variability is a trait of a living creature's character."¹⁹ Such variability in performances, however, does not just happen without any reason. In other words, even if the variability arises naturally from the performer's instincts,

¹⁹ László Somfai, *Béla Bartok: Composition, Concepts, and Autograph Sources* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 280.

the listener should be able to find understandable connections between performances and theoretical analyses.

In this chapter, Bartók's two different recordings have been explored and compared with Sándor's recording. Such studies reveal the fascinating fact that the performer's interpretation may result in varied perception of the form by the listener. In the 1929 recording, Bartók creates an a-b-a structure by setting contrasts in musical mood between "a" and "b" sections: the outer "a" sections are calm and quiet, and the middle "b" section is unstable and exciting. This kind of symmetrical setting of musical mood corresponds to Antokoletz's analysis of ternary design of the piece. In the 1942 recording, Bartók makes many changes which turn the piece into a form of a-b-c-b-a. This five-section form is symmetrically organized by distinguished figures which I discussed above, and Bartók's 1942 performance gives each section its own character that makes the piece more colorful. In both of his recordings, Bartók does not exactly follow his own performance indications in the score. He ignores the written accents, for instance, to create a smoother mood; he even slows down the tempo in order to highlight the climatic "c" section.

Regarding Bartók's philosophy on the performer's relationship to the musical score, Benjamin Suchoff claims that "Bartók desired that the performer neither add nor subtract from the composer's intentions as expressed in the written score."²⁰ In this particular piece, however, Antal Doráti's statement might be more appropriate:

Bartók was very liberal in accepting liberties dictated by the performer's temperament and never expected great consistency in tempi, dynamics, etc. . . . [He] allowed improvisation in musical interpretation, even though he was meticulous in marking his scores.²¹

Whereas Bartók's two performances express the two different versions of the symmetrical design of the piece, Sándor's interpretation articulates the Golden Section. Similar to what Bartók does in his two performances, Sándor articulates the first two Golden Sections by giving each of both sections a distinctive musical mood: the first one feminine and the second one impulsive. However, it is the clear separations between sections that successfully articulate the form of Golden Section. In other words, the unwritten *ritardando* at the end of the first Golden Section

²⁰ Garst, "How Bartók Performed His Own Compositions," 15.

²¹ Ibid.

(m. 9) and the unwritten accent on the return of opening dyad, the third quarter of m. 18, are probably the important decisions that Sándor makes in order to show how the Golden Section of the piece should be expressed.

In general, Sándor's interpretation is freer than Bartók's in terms of dynamic arrangement and rhythmic fluctuation. For instance, Sándor plays an unwritten *crescendo* along with the opening left-hand melody in order to "expand" the "symmetrical expansion." In addition, with regard to the rhythmic execution, his fast action on the triplets in mm. 12-14 and the *accelerando* beginning from m. 13 excite the musical mood into a climactic, impulsive style. From this it might be concluded that Bartók gave his students freedom to express how they felt about the music. Probably Bartók might realize what Cone states,

Composers may on occasion prove to be the best performers of their own music, but it is by no means logically necessary that they always must be. Because of their intimate association with their own works, composers often fail to appreciate the way these will sound to those less familiar with them; hence they are by no means ideal judges of performances of these works -- whether by others or by themselves.²²

²² Cone, *Musical Form and Musical Performance*, 36.

CHAPTER II

EVENING IN TRANSYLVANIA FROM TEN EASY PIANO PIECES

Bartók intended his Ten Easy Piano Pieces to be a complementary set to the Fourteen Bagatelles. His pedagogical intention was to supply piano students with easy contemporary pieces in a variety of musical styles. Not all of them are "easy;" in fact, the levels of difficulty vary considerably from piece to piece.

Evening in Transylvania, the fifth piece of the set, is an original composition with strong links to folk music. It is well known that as a result of his famous folk music expeditions, beginning in 1905 with Kodály, Bartók

completely assimilated the folk idiom as his musical "mother tongue."¹ He wrote,

This whole study of folk music was of capital importance in enabling me to free myself from the tyranny, which I had up to then accepted, of the major and minor modal systems. In fact, the largest and most valuable part of this treasure-house of collected folk melodies was based on the old liturgical modes, on the archaic Greek mode, or on one more primitive still (the so-called pentatonic). In addition, all this music abounded in rhythmic devices and the most free and varied changes of measure, demanding now a strict *tempo giusto* and now *rubato* treatment. It thus became clear that in this early Hungarian music, there were scales which, though no longer used, had lost none of their vital force. By reviving them, one might create new harmonic combinations. By using the diatonic scale, I was able to free myself from the fixed "major-minor" convention: and the final result has been that, to-day, one may employ freely and in isolation all the sounds of the dodecaphonic chromatic system.²

Bartók succeeded in creating a unique style by integrating the folk idiom with other elements of contemporary European music. *Evening in Transylvania* is an excellent example of how Bartók freely blends the Hungarian folk idiom with diatonic harmony. The piece is in a five

¹ Otto Deri, "Béla Bartók: 'A Portrait of His Personality Drawn from His Letters,'" *Current Musicology* 13 (1972), 96.

² Serge Moreux, *Béla Bartók* (London: Harvill Press, 1953), 60-61.

part, rondo-like form (A-B-A-B-A), with repetitions subject to variation. The piece employs free use of triadic harmony. In the A sections, marked "Lento, rubato," the recitative style right-hand melody is based on the pentatonic scale, while the left-hand chords provide harmony from the Aeolian mode. In a letter to his friend László Pollatsek, Bartók explains,

The *Evening in Transylvania* cannot be considered anything but Aeolian, with the F sharp figuring everywhere in the accompaniment.³

During the B sections, marked "Vivo, non rubato," the right hand *scherzando* dance melody also derives from a pentatonic scale, whereas the left hand begins with the harmony from the Aeolian mode, and ends on a III chord of A major.

Regarding the characteristics of Hungarian folk music, three categories are suggested: (1) Old Style: slow tempo, *parlando-rubato* (declamatory, free) interpretation; (2) New Style: fast tempo, *tempo-giusto* (strict tempo) interpretation; (3) Mixed Style: a variety of melodic types

³ János Demény, ed., *Béla Bartók Letters*, transl. by Peter Balabán and István Farkas (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1971), 207.

with no unity of style.⁴ *Evening in Transylvania* engages two main characteristics of the Hungarian folk music: the free, narrative *parlando-rubato*, or Old Style A sections, and the strict, dance-like *tempo giusto*, or New Style B sections. These two styles, appearing alternatively in the piece, contrast well with each other.

Moreover, the following comments provide insight into the sources of these styles. With respect to the *parlando-rubato* style, Bartók says,

As for the *parlando-rubato* rhythm, it could mostly be used in vocal-solo works. This kind of musical recitation is in a certain relation to that created by Debussy in his *Pelléas et Mélisande* and in some of his songs. Debussy again based it on the old-French *recitativo*.⁵

Also, according to János Demény, Bartók's rubato style "is actually founded upon conversational features; a correct perception of both the music and mode of playing lies in the articulation of the Hungarian language."⁶ The rubato style

⁴ David Yeomans, *Bartók for Piano* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 10.

⁵ John Vinton, "Bartók on His Own Music," *Journal of American Musicological Society* 19 (1966), 236.

⁶ János Demény, "The Pianist," in *Bartók Companion*, ed. by Malcolm Gillies (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1994), 74.

in this piece, therefore, is basically related to human language. There is "a characteristic declamation, often quite agitated, as if there were a text behind the themes."⁷

Concerning the strict dance style of the B sections, the rhythmic pattern derives basically from a vigorous Hungarian peasant dance.⁸ Bartók explains,

Perhaps the most important rhythmic source is the dotted rhythm: $\downarrow \cdot \uparrow \uparrow \downarrow$ or $\uparrow \downarrow \cdot \downarrow \uparrow$. This, although of vocal origin, can be transferred into purely instrumental music and is amply used there by us.⁹

Evening in Transylvania was one of Bartók's favorite pieces; he frequently performed it, and recorded it four times.¹⁰ In these recordings, Bartók plays the piece with great rhythmic freedom. His metronome marking in the A sections is $\downarrow = 80$, and in the B sections it is $\downarrow = 144$.

⁷ Somfai, *Béla Bartok: Composition, Concepts, and Autograph Sources* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 264.

⁸ Béla Bartók, "Hungarian Peasant Music," *Musical Quarterly* 19 (1933), 276.

⁹ Vinton, "Bartók on His Own Music," 236-237.

¹⁰ László Somfai, "The Centenary Edition of Bartók's Records" (liner notes to Hungaroton LPX 12326-12338), 30.

However, in his own performances, he plays the overall tempo in the A sections slower than the written metronome marking, and the B sections faster. Probably because of the free folk style of the piece, Bartók's metronome markings merely give an approximate idea of the appropriate tempi.

There is some disagreement among writers regarding Bartók's performing style on rubato playing. According to Todd Crow, Bartók disliked excessive rubato because "it will prevent the continuous, undisturbed flow of the music."¹¹ However, Marilyn Garst states,

Bartók performs with noticeable rubato in pieces where rubato is verbally indicated and where the character clearly demands rhythmic flexibility. An example of Bartók's rubato can be heard in the three "Lento, rubato" sections which enclose the two contrasting Vivo, non rubato sections in *Evening in Transylvania*.¹²

When Bartók plays "noticeable rubato" in this piece, is it excessive? If Bartók avoids excessive rubato, why would it be so? In other words, what does "rhythmic flexibility" mean in Bartók's performances? Moreover, how does he express the concept of the "human declamation" in his rubato

¹¹ Yeomans, *Bartók for Piano*, 5.

¹² Marilyn M. Garst, "How Bartók Performed His Own Compositions," *Tempo* 155 (December 1985), 16.

playing? Does he follow certain patterns? Or, does he just play it freely without any concern?

Whereas the "non rubato" B sections are considered to be in a strict-tempo style, Demény claims that it is "tightly rhythmic, but is not interpreted in a machine-like way."¹³ Then, how does Bartók perform such "tightly rhythmic" but not "machine-like" dance music?

In the remainder of this chapter, I will discuss the above issues by comparing four different recordings. The first three recordings were made by Bartók himself in 1920, 1929, and 1945 (Hungaroton HCD 12326, 12326 and 12331). The fourth recording is by Sándor (Sony Classical SK 68278).

¹³ Demény, "The Pianist," 74.

Bartók's Three Recordings (1920, 1929, and 1945)

The first printing of *Evening in Transylvania* concurs note for note with Bartók's original autograph from the summer of 1908. It was published by the Rozanyai company in the same year as part of "Ten Easy Piano Pieces." The Rozsavolgyi company published "Ten Easy Piano Pieces" in 1936, after Bartók had made many changes to the score, particularly in the "Lento, rubato" sections.¹⁴ One important change noted by László Somfai is the metronome marking.¹⁵ Bartók's original marking, printed in Rozanyai's version, is ♩ = 110-120; in the Rozsavolgyi's version, the marking is ♩ = 80. In addition, *ritardando* markings were added to the end of the "Lento, rubato" sections.

¹⁴ Marta Conrad, "Eine dritte Autorenaufnahme von 'Abend am Lande,'" *Studia Musicologica* 24 (1982), 296.

¹⁵ László Somfai, "Über Bartóks Rubato-Stil / Vergleichende Studie der zwei Aufnahmen 'Abend am Lande' des Komponisten," in *Documenta Bartókiana* vol. 5 (1977), 196.

Each of the "Lento, rubato" sections consists of four phrases; each phrase is isorhythmic and has eight syllables, consisting of a long introductory note, a long closing note, and two groups of eighth notes in between. With regard to the rhythmic design of the melody, Bartók explains,



As for the rhythm of these folk melodies, one notices immediately that the musical phrase never begins on a weak beat. . . . which is directly related to one of the chief phonetic rules of the Hungarian language, in which it is always the first syllable of the word that carries the stress or tonic accent. It should also be noted, in relation to this *parlando-rubato* rhythm, that the final notes of any melodic line prolong themselves in a perceptible manner.¹⁶

In the middle "Lento, rubato" section (mm. 21-29), however, the meter changes from the original 4/4 to 3/4, and the initial and final half notes are replaced by quarter notes. In addition, a *fermata* marking is added to the last long note of each phrase. What is interesting is that during the last phrase of this section (mm. 27-29), Bartók adds another left-hand chord in the 1929 and 1945 recordings (see Example

¹⁶ Moreux, *Bela Bartok*, 64.

1). The altered version, however, is only authenticated by the composer's recorded performance.¹⁷

Example 1: two different performance versions of mm. 27-29

<u>1920 version</u>	<u>1929 and 1945 version</u>
	

As for the last "Lento, rubato" section (mm. 42-55), with the exception of the last phrase, each phrase stretches to three measures, and the prolonged closing note of each phrase is accompanied by left-hand syncopated chords.

Examples 2-4 illustrate Bartók's performances of the three "Lento, rubato" sections. In these performance examples, I divide the melody into four phrases by the different use of tempo. The metronome markings are based on the pulse between the first note of the right hand and the first chord of the left hand. Because of the free style of rubato playing, it is impossible to notate the performances with absolute precision. I therefore omit the barlines in

¹⁷ László Somfai, "The Centenary Edition of Bartók's Records," 29.

Example 2: Bartók's performances of the first "Lento, rubato" section (mm. 1-13)

1920 version

Musical score for the 1920 version, measures 1-13. The score consists of four staves. The first staff is labeled J. 72 and contains a triplet of eighth notes. The second staff is labeled J. 80 and contains a triplet of eighth notes. The third staff is labeled J. 96 and contains a triplet of eighth notes. The fourth staff is labeled J. 63 and contains a triplet of eighth notes. The tempo is marked 'Lento, rubato'.

1929 version

Musical score for the 1929 version, measures 1-13. The score consists of four staves. The first staff is labeled J. 80 and contains a triplet of eighth notes. The second staff is labeled J. 92 and contains a triplet of eighth notes. The third staff is labeled J. 96 and contains a triplet of eighth notes. The fourth staff is labeled J. 56 and contains a triplet of eighth notes. The tempo is marked 'Lento, rubato'.

1945 version

Musical score for the 1945 version, measures 1-13. The score consists of four staves. The first staff is labeled J. 72 and contains a triplet of eighth notes with the word 'rush' above it. The second staff is labeled J. 72 and contains a triplet of eighth notes with the word 'rush' above it. The third staff is labeled J. 76 and contains a triplet of eighth notes with the word 'rush' above it. The fourth staff is labeled J. 66 and contains a triplet of eighth notes. The tempo is marked 'Lento, rubato'.

Example 3: Bartók's performances of the middle "Lento, rubato" section, Tempo I (mm. 21-29)

1920 version

Musical score for the 1920 version, showing four staves of music. The first staff is marked J. 60, the second J. 52, the third J. 76, and the fourth J. 56. The notation includes various rhythmic values and a four-measure rest in the second staff.

1929 version

Musical score for the 1929 version, showing four staves of music. The first staff is marked J. 56, the second J. 50, the third J. 60, and the fourth J. 54. The notation includes various rhythmic values and a four-measure rest in the second staff.

1945 version

Musical score for the 1945 version, showing four staves of music. The first staff is marked J. 48, the second J. 63, the third J. 52, and the fourth J. 56. The notation includes various rhythmic values and a four-measure rest in the second staff.

Example 4: Bartók's performances of the last "Lento, rubato" section, Tempo I (mm. 42-55)

1920 version

J. 80 syncopated chords J. 104
 J. 63 syncopated chords J. 80
 J. 69 syncopated chords J. 88
 J. 50 syncopated chords J. 72

1929 version

J. 72 syncopated chords J. 92
 J. 50 syncopated chords J. 88
 J. 50 syncopated chords J. 76
 J. 44 syncopated chords J. 66

1945 version

J. 72 syncopated chords J. 72
 J. 52 syncopated chords J. 63
 J. 52 syncopated chords J. 60
 J. 40 syncopated chords J. 56

my illustration because it is easier to view each phrase as a whole and to understand how Bartók changes the rhythmic pace in the performances.

As demonstrated in Example 2, Bartók's three performances of the first A section share several common features. First, Bartók's tempo tends to get faster from the first to the third phrase, so that the third phrase has the fastest tempo. Second, with the exception of the 1945 version, he replaces the beginning half note in the last phrase with a quarter note. Therefore, it sounds as if the written $3/4$ on the top of m. 8 should be moved one measure earlier to m. 7. Third, the last phrase has the slowest tempo, and the eighth notes in the first measure are the only notes whose rhythm is played as written. Fourth, in the second half of the last phrase, Bartók doubles the value of each note.

Bartók's tendency to play the third phrase faster suggests that this phrase is a turning point in the melody. While the first two phrases share a stable, calm melodic direction, the third phrase spans the widest interval range, an octave from E^4 to E^5 , and expresses a more emotional style. Thus it is natural to play this more expressive passage with a faster tempo. The fourth melody is the only

one lacking the note E⁵, the highest note in the section. With the written *ritardando* at the end as well, the mood of this last melody is calmer and deserves a slower tempo.

Bartók's use of rubato differs in each of the three recordings. In the first recording (1920), Bartók is more aware of the barline between the measures in each phrase. Even though he prolongs the opening note and plays the eighth notes impatiently, the left-hand chords still appear on the written beats. In other words, the left-hand accompaniment keeps the regular pulse while the right-hand melody plays rubato. The 1929 recording, however, shows that Bartók's sense of barline is no longer clear. The first long notes remain prolonged, but the eighth notes are calmer, in other words, slower, and the left-hand chords do not appear on time. Interestingly, in the last recording (1945), Bartók seems to divide the phrases by the articulation markings, *legato* and *tenuto*: he rushes the eighth notes under the *legato*, but emphasizes the *tenuto* notes as if they were on the downbeats. As a result, each phrase divides into three groups: the opening long note, the middle running notes, and the ending emphasized notes.

In my own view, among these three performances of the first "Lento, rubato" section, the 1920 version is

probably the closest to the written score. Although its widely ranging tempo (from ♩ = 63 to ♩ = 96) might seem to be emotional, in this 1920 performance the overall pace of each phrase is the most compatible with the original score. On the other hand, the 1929 version expresses the freest rubato style. As discussed above, in the 1929 performance the sense of barline is absent, which destroys the original pulses completely, especially in the first two phrases.

Example 3 shows Bartók's three performances of the middle "Lento, rubato" section (mm. 21-29). From these performance versions one should be able to tell that Bartók's rubato playing of this middle section is freer than the opening section. First of all, as mentioned earlier, the metronome marking of each phrase derives from the pulse between the first attack of right hand and the first chord of left hand; thus the much slower metronome markings in this section indicate that Bartók intends to delay the first left-hand chords and that the initial long notes are prolonged. As a result, the middle short notes become relatively faster, making the phrases sound uneven. Secondly, most of these phrases lack the sense of barline and traceable original pulse, so that the rhythmic pace within each phrase differs greatly from one to the other.

This probably has something to do with the written score. According to the score, in each of the first two phrases, the second left-hand chord appears after the last attack of the right-hand melody. Bartók therefore might play the melodies more freely without the "interruption" of the left-hand chord.

Finally, and most interestingly, Bartók plays the last phrase the same way in both the opening and middle "Lento, rubato" sections even though they are notated differently. As discussed above, with the exception of the 1945 version, in the first "Lento, rubato" section, Bartók plays the first half note of the last phrase as a quarter note, so that the 4/4 measure (m. 7) becomes 3/4. (Notice that Bartók writes a 3/4 in the following measure (m. 8), and the phrase ends in 3/4.) He plays the phrase in the middle "Lento, rubato" section in exactly the same manner. The question then arises, why did Bartók put 3/4 in m. 8 instead of m. 7 in the first "Lento, rubato" section? In other words, if he intends to play this phrase the same way in both sections, why does he notate them differently? In my opinion, since this ending phrase has the calmest mood with the least rubato movement, Bartók plays it naturally without thinking about the notation. Its folk style is so

artless that he frees himself completely from the written score.

Bartók's three performances on the last "Lento, rubato" section are illustrated in Example 4, in which several similar interpretations can be found. Firstly, most of the first two 4/4 and 3/4 measures of the phrases sound like 3/4 and 2/4 because Bartók rushes the eighth notes, which shortens the measures. Secondly, the first phrase has the fastest tempo. This is probably because the first phrase is the only one without the left-hand chord on the second beat, making the first long note sound impatient. Thirdly, within each phrase (except the first phrase of the 1945 version), Bartók plays the accompanying syncopated chords in the third measure at a faster tempo. From these similarities one might conclude that although the written score is as usual altered greatly in his performances, Bartók tends to express a stable, calm rubato style in this final section. Because by following certain patterns, Bartók shows his consistency throughout each performance, the pace within each phrase becomes more predictable.

I now turn the discussion to the dance style B sections, marked "Vivo, non rubato." Although the "Vivo, non rubato" section is considered in a strict-tempo style,

Bartók interprets it quite freely. He essentially divides the section into three parts by employing different tempi, which is illustrated in Example 5 (see also Examples 4-6 in Appendix, pp. 131-136).

Example 5: Bartók's tempo variations in "Vivo, non rubato" sections

First "Vivo, non rubato" Section (mm. 10-20)

m. #:	10-13	14-17	18ff.
1920:	160 (stable)	192 (gradually)	96 (abruptly)
1929:	152 (s-f-s)*	176/160 (s-f-s)*	92 (abruptly)
1945:	144 (stable)	152 (stable)	100 (abruptly)

Second "Vivo, non rubato" Section (mm. 30-41)

m. #:	30-33	34-37	38ff. (rit.)
1920:	144 (gradually)	160 (gradually)	116 (abruptly)
1929:	138 (gradually)	152 (gradually)	132 (abruptly)
1945:	132 (stable)	152 (gradually)	126 (abruptly)

Note (*):

"s-f-s" indicates that within each two-measure melody Bartók begins slowly, gets faster in the middle, and slows down at the end.

From this example, it is clear that although Bartók changes the tempo frequently, there are some "hidden rules" that he intends to follow. First of all, Bartók begins the section with a tempo that is close to the written ♩ = 144 and gradually gets faster when the second part begins. This is probably because the dance tune in the

second part reaches the higher register that might excite the mood. Secondly, Bartók employs different tempi in the first and second parts, but he does so progressively. Only at the last part, where the pedal sign appears and the harmony changes, does he make a dramatic shift to a much slower tempo. Bartók's principle of tempo change in the dance style sections, therefore, basically follows the melodic linear direction. In other words, the tempo gets faster when the dance tune reaches the higher register, and when the motion stops at the end of the section the tempo gets slower abruptly.

Among Bartók's three recordings of the "Vivo, non rubato" sections, the 1945 version is the most metrically stable. The tempo range for the 1920 recording is ♩ = 96-192; the 1929 recording's is ♩ = 92-176. The 1945 recording, however, ranges from ♩ = 100 to ♩ = 152, which is not only the least variance, but also the closest to the composer's written metronome marking.

Sándor's 1995 Recording

Compared to Bartók's performances, Sándor's playing is much more metrically consistent and simpler in terms of rhythmic variations and tempo arrangement (see Example 6). It can be recalled that Bartók's rubato playing usually produces different rhythms from phrase to phrase, and sometimes the rhythms become complicated; Sándor's rubato playing, however, often follows a pattern. Taking the first "Lento, rubato" sections as an example, Sándor's rubato playing is actually not much different from the written score. The fourth beat of each phrase is the place that Sándor begins to alter the written rhythm; in other words, he plays the opening three beats of each phrase as written. (The last phrase is an exception; it is stretched due to the engagement of *ritardando*) Moreover, Sándor's stable metronome markings, ♩ = 72 for all four phrases, show the metrical consistency of his playing.

Example 6: Sándor's performance of the three "Lento, rubato" sections

Lento, rubato (mm. 1-13)

Tempo I (mm. 21-29)

Tempo I (mm. 42-55)

Regarding the middle "Lento, rubato" section, it sounds as if Sándor expresses a freer rubato style. As mentioned before, Bartók does a similar thing in his three recordings. Sándor's rhythmic variation in this section, however, is not as complicated as Bartók's. For the first two phrases Sándor tends to disregard the change of meter in the written score and plays the opening long notes as half notes instead of quarter notes. Other than this, he still keeps what he does in the first "Lento, rubato" section, in which he rushes on the fourth beat of each phrase.

One interesting thing regarding the last "Lento, rubato" section in Sándor's performance is that the written meter for each phrase is changed from $4/4 + 3/4$ to $3/4 + 2/4$ -- exactly the same metric organization that Bartók uses in his three recordings. What is different between two pianists' performances is that Sándor tends to be more aware of the existence of the barline between the first two measures of each phrase. But one interpretive detail that is shared by Sándor and Bartók is that within each phrase the syncopated chords get faster tempo.

Example 7 illustrates Sándor's use of tempo in both of "Vivo, non rubato" sections. Sándor's tempo variation is much simpler than that of Bartók's. As

discussed above, Bartók basically divides the section into three parts and gives each part a different tempo; sometimes he even accelerates and slows the tempo within each two-measure dance tune, making the entire section sound very rubato. On the contrary, Sándor plays the entire section with a stable tempo, not rubato at all. Although Sándor slows down a little bit when the harmony changes at the end of the section, he keeps the tempo around the written ♩ = 144. At the same place, however, Bartók dramatically slows the tempo.

Example 7: Sándor's tempo variations in "Vivo, non rubato" sections

mm. 10-20

m. #:	10-17	18ff.
tempo:	168	144

mm. 30-41

m. #:	30-37	38ff. (rit.)
tempo:	160	152

Chapter Summary

Evening in Transylvania is an original composition that consists of two contrasting characteristics of Hungarian folk music: the free "Lento, rubato" sections and the strict "Vivo, non rubato" sections. Among Bartók's recordings of the piece, he plays both "Lento, rubato" and "Vivo, non rubato" sections with great freedom in terms of rhythmic and tempo variations. As Somfai states, Bartók's folk-related composition "is rich in rhythmic styles that he thought either impossible and impractical to note exactly."¹⁸ Thus Bartók's recordings of the piece become especially valuable because by studying these recordings, we can truly understand the relationship between the written score and the actual performing style of his folk-related music.

¹⁸ Somfai, *Béla Bartok: Composition, Concepts, and Autograph Sources*, 289.

In the "Lento, rubato" sections, Bartók's rubato playing expresses what he claims are the "rules of Hungarian language." According to Bartók's explanation, for instance, the folk melodies are directly related to Hungarian language, in which the first syllable of the word always carries the stress accent. Correspondingly, in his performances Bartók constantly prolongs the first long note of each phrase to emphasize such accent. Moreover, with regard to Bartók's rhythmic pace of each phrase that differs greatly from one to the other, such interpretation reaffirms that the folk style of rubato playing draws its inspiration from human conversation. In other words, just as ordinary conversations vary with the time, place and people involved, folk melody enjoys a rich variety of interpretation.

As compared with Sándor's more metrically consistent performance, Bartók's freer interpretations are probably more admirable, and make this "easy" piece very artistic. Just as Somfai states,

With minimum rubato [*Evening in Transylvania*] is a lovely piece for a child, no more and no less. With Bartók's rubato it is a great piece of music: confession about his musico-national identity, about his immense respect for the creative world of his beloved peasants, a transfiguration in which he becomes one with the people, with

accumulated experiences of generations and centuries.¹⁹

One might conclude that because Bartók is so acquainted with this sort of music, his unique quality of free style playing is probably the best guide for players who would like to interpret Bartók's folk-related music.

¹⁹ Ibid.

CHAPTER III

SUITE OP. 14, FIRST MOVEMENT

The Suite for piano is one of the most significant in Bartók's piano works and is a companion to his Piano Sonata of 1926. Both refer to a Classical structural pattern in their titles. It has recently been discovered that the four-movement Suite was originally conceived in five movements. The extra movement, an "Andante," was to appear between what became the first and second movements, but Bartók ultimately withdrew it.¹ In the Suite, Bartók sought to refine the piano technique into a simpler and more

¹ David Yeoman, *Bartók for Piano* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 83.

straightforward style and to avoid the excesses of his earlier post-Romantic piano compositions.² With regard to the overall design of the composition, János Kárpáti observes,

[Bartók] paid particular attention in this work to the order of the movements and to questions of larger-scale structure in general. . . . Even the progression of the tempos from movement to movement reveals a deliberate artistic intention. The first movement is a moderately quick, dance-like *Allegretto*; it is followed by a faster Scherzo and an even quicker, impetuous *Allegro molto*. This gradual acceleration suddenly breaks with the astonishingly slow, painful and dejected fourth movement.³

The first movement, this chapter's focus, is in ABA form. The character is in that of a Romanian folk dance,⁴ and the tonality suggests a modified B^b major.⁵ In the A section a melody is presented with offbeat accompaniment patterns. The B section retains basically the same texture, with various melodic and rhythmic contrasts. Then the A section returns with fragments and rhythmic

² Ibid.

³ János Kárpáti, "Piano Works of the War Years," in *The Bartók Companion*, ed. by Malcolm Gillies (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1994), 156.

⁴ Yeomans, *Bartók for Piano*, 83-84.

⁵ Halsey Stevens, *The Life and Music of Béla Bartók* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), 121.

variants of the original melody. The metronome marking in the beginning of the piece is ♩ = 120.

There is much emphasis on tritone relationships in the movement. According to Kárpáti,

[The first movement] starts as if it were a Romanian folk dance, at least as regards the stress of the tune on the Lydian fourth degree and the flexible dactylic-anapaestic rhythm.⁶

The interval between the fourth degree and the *final* note in the Lydian mode is the tritone. Moreover, in the first double period of the opening section (mm. 5-20, *sempre p*), the tritone appears prominently in the left hand. The *pochissimo ritardando* mark appearing in mm. 19-20, in Siki's words, "limits the *ritardando* to the smallest proportions in order to avoid a possible sentimental mollifying of the phrase ending."⁷

When the opening dance tune appears again in the second double period (mm. 21-36, *mf*), the tritone relation is replaced by the traditional perfect fifth in the bass. The big difference between the first and second double

⁶ Kárpáti, "Piano Works of the War Years," 156.

⁷ Béla Siki, *Piano Repertoire / A Guide to Interpretation and Performance* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1981), 317.

periods is that most of the downbeats are absent in the first double period but are present in the second double period. With the harmonic changes in the bass, the downbeat arrangement gives these two periods different moods, even though the second double period is simply a melodic restatement of the first.

The B section consists of three passages in varying tempi (m. 37, *quasi a tempo*, ♩ = 106; m. 55, Tempo I; and m. 65, Tempo I), and emphasizes the small intervals from minor second to tritone, appearing both melodically and chordally. At the end of the A section (mm. 35-36), the *ritardando* leads to a new, flexible tempo, *quasi a tempo*, that fits the improvisatory character of the first passage of the B section, mm. 37-52. The left hand has an essential role in this passage. According to Siki, "the inconsistent, quasi-syncopated *staccato* and *tenuto* articulation markings suggest the unsteady steps of a tipsy visitor."⁸ Within this passage, the right hand introduces the upward-turning motive three times in an *espressivo* manner, and with the third upturn in m. 47, the right hand regains its leading role. Through the *ritardando* beginning from m. 49 and the *molto* in m. 51, the music leads to the *sf* downbeat in m. 52.

⁸ Ibid.

The *poco a poco accel.* introduces the second passage of the B section, mm. 55-62, marked Tempo I.

From m. 55 on, the left hand takes the leading role with a distinct accent on the downbeat of each measure. In m. 58, the right hand answers with an accent on the second beat, then appears off the beat in mm. 60-61. Meanwhile, the left hand's continuous sixteenth notes drive to the *sf* downbeat of m. 62, E⁴, with a *crescendo*. The *ritenuto* in m. 62, indicating an immediate reduction of speed, introduces the last passage of the B section, where the *poco a poco accel.* leads to Tempo I in m. 65.

The last passage of the B section, mm. 65-78, is actually a variation of the second part of the B section that appears a perfect fourth higher. During mm. 70-76, which is considered the most difficult part of the movement, the hands need to interlock frequently. The music continues to develop and reaches its climax, where unexpected accents are placed on the weak beats in mm. 74-76 and the section's highest note, E⁶.

After the climax reaches the *sf* downbeat of m. 78, the A section returns at mm. 78-117. This A section is based on fragments of the opening melodic material but wanders over different tone centers. From m. 100-106, the

fragments appear in dialogue and recall the tritone relationship of the opening section: the left hand is centered and accented on E, the right hand on B^b. Starting at the final Tempo I (m. 106), Bartók incorporates a complete whole-tone scale ascending more than three octaves. With the exception of the G's in mm. 110 and 114, all of the notes in the final eight measures are from one whole-tone scale, and the music ends on B^b, the key-center of the movement.

As mentioned above, this movement is in a style of folk-dance music, which is usually interpreted with a certain degree of freedom. The formal and phrase structures, however, refer to a Classical pattern, which is in a more strict style. Throughout the entire piece, for example, most of the phrases are based on the regular four-measure unit.

How do Bartók and Sándor interpret this dual-style movement? Do they play it with great freedom, or is it treated as a Classical work? Bartók recorded the piece twice in 1929: the first one is a test recording, while the second one, which I discuss in this study, was formally released (Hungaroton HCD 12326). In Yeomans's view these Bartók recordings "have been well preserved over the years

and are performed with dazzling brilliance."⁹ Sándor's 1995 recording (Sony Classical SK 68277), on the other hand, provides us an interesting opportunity to view the piece from a different angle.

This study uses the score published in Boosey and Hawkes's new edition of 1992, which was revised by Peter Bartók. Peter Bartók explains at the end of the edition that this new edition provides corrections of the earlier editions. There are also changes, which include dynamics, accents, and precise endings of *crescendos*.

⁹ Yeomans, *Bartók for Piano*, 85.

Bartók's 1929 Recording

(For actual performing version of this recording, see Example 8 in Appendix [pp. 139-142])

Bartók's desire to express a flexible dance style can be heard in the beginning four-measure introduction, where he applies an *accelerando*. His opening tempo approximates the written tempo, ♩ = 120. With the gradual *accelerando*, when the main tune comes in at m. 5, he reaches around ♩ = 138. Although the tick-tock rhythm in this four-measure introduction could be played in a dull, even rhythm, Bartók's *accelerando* brings to the introduction a style which, as Béla Siki comments, "determines the character of the entire performance."¹⁰ After he reaches the faster tempo at m. 5, Bartók keeps this tempo throughout the first double period. The tempo seems to be steady here, though the sixteenth notes marked *legato* in the right-hand melody are rushed. This sweeping arrangement makes the

¹⁰ Siki, *Piano Repertoire*, 317.


dance more lively; however, a mysterious mood remains, which can be attributed to two main factors. First, as mentioned earlier, the relationship based on a tritone or whole-step between bass notes naturally creates a special sound. Even though Bartók does not make obvious dynamic changes, maintaining the *piano* level throughout the entire period, each phrase projects its own harmonic color. In other words, Bartók uses harmony to "create tension and bring about an entirely new type of sound."¹¹ Second, with the exception of mm. 5 and 9, all of the downbeats in the bass are absent. Even though these downbeats "carry sizable accents,"¹² these silent accents give some imaginary space to the listener.

Within the second double period (mm. 21-36), Bartók rushes the sixteenth notes of the dance tune again. The mood is now lighter, however, because in this second period the tritone relation between the basses in the first period changes to a perfect fifth, and most of the downbeats that were absent in the previous periods are now present. Bartók's *a tempo* (m. 21) in the second period, which reaches

¹¹ Kárpáti, "Piano Works of the War Years," 156.

¹² Siki, *Piano Repertoire*, 317.

♩ = 152, is actually faster than the *a tempo* in the first period, where he hovers around ♩ = 138. This faster tempo, plus the use of the pedal and the higher dynamic level, *mf*, give rise to a more cheerful mood.

Several methods of indicating pedaling can be found in Bartók's piano music: (1) , (2) Ped. . . . *, (3) 1/2 Ped., (4) Senza ped., (5) (Ped.), (6) (Prol. Ped.).¹³ This movement contains "(Pedal)", but it appears only once, at m. 21, indicating "that use of pedal is optional with the performer."¹⁴ In the 1929 recording, Bartók does use the pedal within the second period. In the first phrase, marked *mf* in mm. 21-28, he uses the pedal on every downbeat where a bass note is present (mm. 21-26). In the second phrase, the *mp* phrase in mm. 29-36, he uses the pedal in every other measure, at mm. 32, 34, and 36. He seems to decrease his use of the pedal to accompany the lower dynamic level, *mp*. Bartók plays an unwritten *ritardando* at the end of the first phrase and reduces the tempo to ♩ = 144 in the second phrase. His tempo seems to change along with the level of the dynamic: the softer the

¹³ Marilyn M. Garst, "How Bartók Performed His Own Compositions," *Tempo* 155 (September 1985), 19.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

volume gets, the slower the tempo, and the louder, the faster.

The most interesting aspect of Bartók's performance of the B section is his flexible use of tempo. The *quasi a tempo* (♩ = 106) that appears in the beginning of the B section indicates a slower tempo. In fact, Bartók begins the passage in a slightly "intoxicated" style at around ♩ = 126, and tends to accelerate throughout the entire passage. He slows down somewhat with the *espressivo* right-hand motives, but after each of these, the tempo grows faster and faster. After the first right hand motive in m. 40, Bartók hovers around ♩ = 132 in mm. 41-43, then around ♩ = 138 in mm. 45-46. Finally he completely ignores the written *ritardando* and the right-hand *decrescendo* marks and reaches ♩ = 144 in mm. 49-50. He makes a dramatic *ritardando* in m. 51 that leads the passage to its final *sf* downbeat in m. 52 and introduces the new passage. As the passage accelerates, the volume grows. He even uses the pedal for each of measures 49, 50 and 51, to augment the sound at the end of the passage, even though there is no pedal indication at all.

The second part, beginning from m. 55, is marked Tempo I, and has the same rhythmic figure as the opening

four-measure introduction. Bartók's tempo here is approximately ♩ = 138, the same speed he uses in the first period of the A section. From m. 59, however, along with the continuous left-hand running sixteenth notes, he makes an obvious *accelerando* to ♩ = 152 by the end of the passage, driving to the *sf* downbeat in m. 62. The music suddenly slows down with the written *ritenuto* at m. 62, and gradually accelerates to Tempo I in m. 65, where the last passage begins. Similarly, Bartók begins the last passage with the tempo around ♩ = 132, and accelerates along with the running sixteenth notes to around ♩ = 152 by mm. 74-75, the climax of the movement. Even though this passage is technically the most difficult of the movement, in Bartók's performance it does not sound difficult at all. The virtuosity required here, in Siki's words, "does not allow interruptions of the continuous sixteenth-note motion at points where the hands cross and exchange positions."¹⁵ Bartók not only plays a long, difficult line without any interruption, he also accelerates, displaying his brilliant virtuosity.

¹⁵ Siki, *Piano Repertoire*, 318.

At m. 76, the end of the climax, when the hands disentangle and the movement reaches its highest register so far, Bartók plays an unwritten *ritardando*. Immediately thereafter, in m. 77, he plays a *tempo*. Obviously, using this *ritardando* for emphasis, Bartók intends this and only this measure to be the peak of the movement. He could have continued the *ritardando* for a few measures more and led the passage to an end. Instead, he plays a *tempo* at approximately $\downarrow = 138$ in m. 77, and plays the sixteenth notes driving to the *sf* downbeat in m. 78, in a manner similar to the one he employs at the end of the previous passage (mm. 61-62).

The A section returns in shattered fragments of the opening dance material. In the first *Meno mosso* section (mm. 79-86), the tonic B^b returns in the left hand, but on weak beats. Bartók plays unwritten accents on these B^b 's, making them sound as if they are written on the downbeats. This "false" metric pulse is further emphasized by the written accents on the first notes of the right-hand motives that appear on offbeats in mm. 82-84. The actual pulse is asserted in m. 85, where the two *tenuto* quarter notes appear on the strong beats. Even though the *stringendo* appears at the end of this *Meno mosso* section, indicating an

acceleration, Bartók keeps the same tempo throughout ($\downarrow = 144$). After Tempo I in m. 87, he hovers around $\downarrow = 152$ in the arch-like motives centered on the pitch-class E. Then he makes an unwritten *ritardando* on the D major chords in m. 93 and plays a slower tempo (around $\downarrow = 132$) in the following arch-like motives centered on the pitch-class G. Bartók probably plays the tempo slower to accompany the softer dynamic level, *pp*; just as mentioned earlier, Bartók is linking tempo with dynamic level in his performance of the movement.

One interesting event occurs in m. 98, where the longest silence in the entire movement occurs, a one-and-one-half-beat rest. Bartók is so impatient to continue that he misses almost one full quarter rest here.

Another *Meno mosso* section appears in m. 100, where the motive used in the previous *Meno mosso* section is now presented in dialogue. Along with the *accel.* mark, Bartók begins this section with the tempo around $\downarrow = 138$, accelerates to $\downarrow = 152$ by Tempo I in m. 106, and maintains this tempo to the end. Bartók accents every B^b on the downbeat in the series of whole-tone scales to emphasize the return of the tonic.

Finally, a summary of the tempi used by Bartók through the entire movement (Example 1) shows that the composer varies the tempo frequently, and his performing tempi are generally faster than his written markings. The middle section of the ternary form is distinguished by the freer style of tempo arrangement. Bartók's comfortable change of pace in his performance successfully illuminates the spirit of this folk style dance movement.

Example 1: Bartók's use of tempo in the first movement of Suite

Written Tempo Markings	Bartók's Performing Tempo
Allegretto, ♩ = 120	
A section (mm. 1-36)	
mm. 1-4, introduction	♩ = 120, accelerating to ♩ = 138
mm. 5-20, <i>sempre p</i>	♩ = 138
mm. 21-28, <i>a tempo, mf</i>	♩ = 152, <i>ritardando</i> at m. 28
mm. 29-36, <i>mp</i>	♩ = 144
B section (mm. 37-78)	
mm. 37-54, <i>quasi a tempo</i> (♩ = 106)	from ♩ = 126 to ♩ = 144, <i>ritardando</i> at m. 51
mm. 55-64, Tempo I	from ♩ = 138 to ♩ = 152
mm. 65-78, Tempo I	from ♩ = 132 to ♩ = 152, <i>ritardando</i> at m. 76 and <i>a tempo</i> at m. 77 (♩ = 138)
Return A section (mm. 79-117)	

mm. 79-86, <i>Meno mosso</i>	♩ = 144
mm. 87-99, <i>Tempo I</i>	♩ = 152, <i>ritardando</i> at m. 93 and <i>a tempo</i> at m. 94 (♩ = 132)
mm. 100-105, <i>Meno mosso</i>	♩ = 138
mm. 106-117, <i>Tempo I</i>	♩ = 152

Sándor's 1995 Recording

(For actual performing version of this recording, see Example 9 in Appendix [pp. 143-146])

Sándor interprets this dance movement in a more "serious," calmer style. Whereas Bartók freely changes tempi from phrase to phrase, Sándor maintains a relatively stable tempo. For example, he plays the opening four-measure introduction, which Bartók had accelerated, in an extremely symmetrical manner. With his cautious emphasis on the very first bass note, Sándor's execution exemplifies Siki's interpretation:

Rhythmic angularity and evenness of tone are of great importance in the first four measures; the opening bass note is a possible exception and may have a slight accent.¹⁶

Throughout the first period (mm. 1-20) Sándor's tempo is stable at ♩ = 132. Even though this tempo is only one metronome degree slower than Bartók's tempo, ♩ = 138,

¹⁶ Ibid., 317.

Sándor's dance tune sounds much slower than Bartók's. Bartók's sweeping style on the sixteenth notes is more lively, whereas Sándor's stability in rhythm and evenness between notes express an entirely different style.

Sándor's tempo in the second double period is around ♩ = 138. This tempo is only one metronome degree faster than the previous period (♩ = 132), so that the listener might not be able to detect his tempo change here. Sándor also omits the pedaling that Bartók had used frequently during this period. As a result, whereas Bartók intended to make the second period more exciting than the previous period by employing the much faster tempo and by using the pedal, both periods sound alike in Sándor's performance.

During the B section, where Bartók uses the tempi flexibly, Sándor's tempo arrangement is more controlled. At some points, Sándor even ignores the written tempo indications, such as *poco a poco accelerando* and *ritenuto*, so that the section sounds less emotional and improvisatory. Taking the first passage (mm. 37-52) as an example, Sándor plays *accelerando* from ♩ = 120 (in the beginning) to ♩ = 132 (by m. 47), but the spirit of the tipsiness in the left hand does not last long. The left-hand tipsy figure,

emphasized by *tenuto*, is interrupted twice by the right-hand *espressivo* motives. Before the first interruption in m. 40, Sándor strongly articulates the figure. The *tenuto* notes are longer and the figure sounds slightly intoxicated. However, from m. 41 onward, after the first interruptive right hand figure, instead of playing *tenuto*, Sándor articulates these *tenuto* notes with staccatos. Thus, the left-hand figure now sounds more like the accompaniment than the leading melody. Like Bartók, on the right-hand *espressivo* motives, Sándor slows down to make the motives expressive. After the first right-hand motive, Sándor may intend the right hand to take the leading role. Thereafter, he de-emphasizes the left hand by ignoring the detailed articulations.

As discussed above, the second passage begins with the return of Tempo I in m. 55. Bartók treats mm. 52-54 as an introduction to the second passage by playing it with *accelerando*. However, Sándor begins the second passage right on the *sf* downbeat in m. 52. After the *ritardando* at the end of the previous passage, Sándor quite obviously delays the *sf* downbeat in m. 52, the note B³. More importantly, Sándor plays a tempo at around ♩ = 132 from m. 52 and ignores the written *poco a poco accelerando*, so that

the delayed and accentuated B³ sounds like the a beginning note for a new passage. Sándor keeps this tempo (♩ = 132) from m. 52 until m. 69, the middle of the third passage, where he gradually begins to accelerate. The stable tempo here indicates that he views the second and third passages as a unit. As mentioned above, the third passage is a variation of the second at a perfect fourth higher, and is extended to reach the climax. Sándor connects these two similar passages by disregarding the markings that might create musical hesitations, such as the *ritenuto* in m. 62 and the *poco a poco accel.* in m. 63. Bartók uses the same markings as a dividing point. In addition, whereas Bartók plays *accelerando* at those sixteenth notes driving to the *sf* downbeat in both passages, Sándor keeps the tempo calm and constant in the second passage and saves the *accelerando* for the climax. Sándor begins *accelerando* at around m. 69; during the continuous left-hand sixteenth notes beginning from m. 70, he hovers around ♩ = 138, and reaches ♩ = 144 by m. 75. It might be recalled that Bartók plays *ritardando* in m. 76 and plays a *tempo* immediately in m. 77. Sándor interprets the same passage quite differently. When he reaches ♩ = 144 in m. 75, Sándor continues this excitement through m. 76 without slowing down, and plays *ritardando* at

the end of m. 77. The *ritardando* is not too obvious, but the listener can clearly feel that the music leads to the *sf* note C⁴, the ending note of the passage.

Siki considers the passage from the *Meno mosso* at m. 80 to Tempo I at m. 87 to be a transitional area.¹⁷ Sándor's interpretation suggests a similar interpretation. He plays an obvious *accelerando* throughout this transitional area. In addition, even though he accents the F³s on the downbeats, when the right-hand motive enters in m. 82, he articulates all the accent and tenuto notes with equally light *staccatos*. He cannot avoid the confusion of the pulse, and this whole passage sounds very unstable. This instability does not end until Tempo I in m. 87, where Sándor begins the stable tempo at ♩ = 132.

From this point on, with the exception of the last eight measures, Sándor's tempo changes only where the tempo-related marking appears. He plays ♩ = 126 at the second *Meno mosso* passage (mm. 100-105) and returns to ♩ = 132 at Tempo I in m. 106. After the whole-tone scale, he slows down and hovers around ♩ = 126. Because the tempi between passages differ from each other by only one metronome

¹⁷ Ibid., 319.

degree, the listener would probably not even notice the change of tempo at all. For example, even though I have measured Sándor's tempo in the second *Meno mosso* (m. 100) at $\text{♩} = 126$, and have observed that with the written *accel.* marking he reaches $\text{♩} = 132$ at Tempo I (m. 106), I hardly feel the *accelerando* within this six-measure passage.

Despite the many differences in Bartók's and Sándor's interpretations, they share one common interpretive gesture. In m. 98, where Bartók misses a full quarter rest, Sándor does exactly the same thing. Whether and why they both make the same mistake, or miss the rest intentionally is an issue open to question.

Example 2 shows Sándor's tempo variation over the entire movement. Sándor basically follows the tempo indications written on the score, although his general tempo is faster than the written $\text{♩} = 120$. Compared to Bartók's version, Sándor's performance is in a more tempo-controlled style, which makes this dance movement sound more serious and strict.

Example 2: Sándor's use of tempo in the first movement of Suite

Written Tempo Markings	Sándor's Performing Tempo
Allegretto, ♩ = 120	
A section (mm. 1-36)	
mm. 1-20	♩ = 132
mm. 21-36	♩ = 138
B section (mm. 37-78)	
mm. 37-54, <i>quasi a tempo</i> (♩ = 106)	from ♩ = 120 to ♩ = 132, <i>ritardando</i> at m. 51
mm. 55-64, <i>Tempo I</i>	♩ = 132
mm. 65-78, <i>Tempo I</i>	from ♩ = 132 to ♩ = 144, <i>ritardando</i> at m. 77
Return A section (mm. 79-117)	
mm. 79-86, <i>Meno mosso</i>	♩ = 144
mm. 87-99, <i>Tempo I</i>	♩ = 132
mm. 100-105, <i>Meno mosso</i>	♩ = 126
mm. 106-109, <i>Tempo I</i>	♩ = 132
mm. 110-117	♩ = 126

Chapter Summary

This chapter basically discusses the differences between Bartók's and Sándor's tempi in the first movement of the Suite, and how the style of this dance movement changes according to the tempo variations. The piece is in ternary form and the character is in a folk-dance style. Bartók's performance expresses a flexible, improvisatory character, while Sándor's interpretation renders a more strict, serious style.

Without listening to Bartók's recording I myself would probably interpret the piece in a way that is similar to what Sándor does, a more tempo-stable style. This is because the piece carries several elements that are commonly seen in Classical pieces, such as the regular phrases based on four-measure units, and the constant figure of the left-hand accompaniment. But the composer himself emphasizes the folk aspect of the piece by flexibly employing different tempi in his performance.

Although Bartók meticulously gives tempo indications on the score, such as *pochissimo ritardando* (m. 19) and *poco a poco accelerando al Tempo I* (mm. 52-55), his actual performing tempo is much more complex. For example, during the opening four-measure introduction, which employs an even tick-tock rhythm without any written tempo indication, Bartók makes an *accelerando* that immediately gives an impression of free, improvisatory character. Moreover, during the middle section his tempo is so unstable that it is almost impossible to precisely notate such improvisatory performance. This is probably the reason why Bartók complained about the traditional notation system and claims the importance of the performance recordings:

It is well-known fact that our notation records on music paper, more or less inadequately, the idea of the composer; hence the existence of contrivances with which one can record precisely every intention and idea of the composer is indeed of great importance.¹⁸

This dance movement is a fine way for piano students to experience a style that combines elements from Classical and twentieth-century music. However, with more

¹⁸ László Somfai, "The Centenary Edition of Bartók's Records" (liner notes to Hungaroton LPX 12326-12338), 19.

freedom in the use of tempo, the dance becomes more lively and human. That is possibly what Bartók wants most to convey through his music.

CHAPTER IV

ALLEGRO BARBARO

Allegro Barbaro, perhaps Bartók's most famous and frequently performed piano work, was composed in 1911 but not published until 1918 (by his new publisher, Universal Edition of Vienna).¹ As one of his few single-movement works for piano, the *Allegro Barbaro* represents a milestone in Bartók's compositional development. The title and the elemental rhythmic force of the piece suggest a strong kinship with *The Rite of Spring*, which Stravinsky began

¹ Benjamin Suchoff, "Fusion of National Styles: Piano Literature, 1908-1911," in *The Bartók Companion*, ed. by Malcolm Gillies (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1994), 142-143.

composing in the same year.² As John Gillespie asserts, in this virtuoso work "Bartók blends passages of Phrygian and Lydian modes with primitive, pervasive rhythms, molding them into a beautifully concentrated whole."³

Although the piece preserves the quality of folk-music styles, it is in fact entirely original.⁴ Yeomans comments:

The composer established a truly individual style, devoid of the influences of Romanticism and Impressionism that had previously taken hold in his creative efforts. One senses a forecast of the primeval forces of his 1926 piano works, in which the *martellato* technique of piano writing would be used, exploiting fully the percussive properties of the instrument.⁵

John Weissmann, in a similar vein, states,

[The *Allegro Barbaro*] is Bartók's first large-scale independent composition for the piano in which the spell of folk music, determining his style in regard to both its technical apparatus and intellectual values, becomes consistently recognizable. It is obvious therefore that the

² Robert P. Morgan, *Twentieth-Century Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991), 108.

³ John Gillespie, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music* (New York: Dover Publications, 1965), 375.

⁴ Morgan, *Twentieth-Century Music*, 108.

⁵ Yeomans, *Bartók for Piano* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 66.

piece represents a momentous stage in Bartók's evolution.⁶

Much of the critical literature pertaining to the *Allegro Barbaro* focuses on its boisterous power and primitive rhythmic force. Few scholars, however, address in detail the musical structure. Whereas Suchoff observes that "the arrangement of sections is quite unusual: ABCADEF, with a prelude, a postlude and several interludes,"⁷ Haraszti states that the form is ternary.⁸ These descriptions are reasonable, but too broad to lend any real insight into the music.

Lendvai offers a more detailed analysis of the piece. He argues that the *Allegro Barbaro* is a brave step in the process of modernization, that its setting and formal appearance are hardly compatible with the conventions of classical form. He explains,

In contrast to the A-B-A symmetry of classical form resting on recapitulation Bartók in *Allegro Barbaro* hits upon a structural type which -- on the basis of dialectical chain-reactions -- might

⁶ John Weissmann, "Bartók's Piano Music," in *Béla Bartók - A Memorial Review* (New York: Boosey and Hawkes, 1950), 65.

⁷ Suchoff, "Fusion of National Styles," 142.

⁸ Emil Haraszti, *Béla Bartók: His Life and Music* (Paris: Lyrebird, 1938), 37.

be called *dynamic form*. And referring to the most powerful impression: in place of post-romantic pathos, Bartók succeeded in creating a harder, more steely structure and (in some respect preceding his Western contemporaries) in accomplishing the constructive unity of the material.⁹

Lendvai's notion of "dialectical chain-reactions" is an interesting one. He feels that "the form is achieved on newer and newer levels," and describes seven steps in the transformation of the material:

1. Thesis: Introduction of the basic idea (mm. 5ff.)
2. Antithesis: Inversion of the basic idea (mm. 34ff.)
3. Synthesis: Unification of the elements of the thesis and antithesis (mm. 58ff.)
4. As opposed to the synthesis: *annihilation* -- the elements of the synthesis disintegrate, they fall apart and start living an independent life (mm. 101ff.)
5. Accumulation of opposing charges out of the separated elements -- and *explosions*. (mm. 131ff.)
6. Subsequent upon the explosions: qualitative transformation of the material, actually a "recapitulation" -- in which the dynamic material of the exposition recapitulates transformed into static color effects and acoustic elements (mm. 152ff.)
7. Closing: *Quasi stretta* and summary (mm. 180ff.)¹⁰

⁹ Ernő Lendvai, *The Workshop of Bartók and Kodály* (Budapest: Editio Musica, 1983), 247.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 248.

Lendvai's twenty-two page analysis while highly technical, provides some interpretive ideas that illuminate the piece's aesthetic values. In the very beginning of his analysis, Lendvai claims that he was inspired by Bartók's own recording when he began to analyze the piece. He continues:

Indeed, a really great performer may always reveal more about the secrets of workshop and creative process than the most thorough musicological or aesthetic analysis.¹¹

Because of the primitive rhythmic force throughout the entire piece, it is natural to interpret the piece in a "barbaric" style, especially when Bartók, in Sándor's words, "intends to bring out the piece's pounding dynamism."¹² Then, the issue of how Bartók makes this primitive conception work with a modern aesthetic analysis will be a very interesting topic that I will discuss in detail.

Bartók recorded the piece twice, first in 1922 and again in 1929. I have chosen to discuss the latter (Hungaroton HCD 12326) because of its better sound quality

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² György Sándor, *Versatility As A Stylistic Principle -- The Piano Music of Béla Bartók* (liner notes to Sony Classical SK 68279), 6.

and because the sound of the 1922 recording has been damaged at certain points. As before, Sándor's 1995 recording (Sony Classical SK 68279) will be discussed and compared.

Bartók's 1929 Recording

(For actual performing version of this recording, see Example 10 in Appendix [pp. 147-152])

Bartók's performance of *Allegro Barbaro* suggests a division of the form into seven sections, the same sections as in Lendvai's seven-step analysis. This organization is difficult to describe as a traditional form. As previously mentioned, Lendvai claims that the piece is representative of the process of modernization. What interests me are the ways that Bartók expresses such process in his performance. In my own view, Bartók's performance seems to tell a story that really turns this primitivistic piece into a philosophical exercise, which I consider a "dramatic progression." In other words, from the title of the piece one might think of a forceful, barbaric character; Bartók, however, tries to make the piece sound narrative rather than merely percussive.

Each of the seven sections has a distinctive character derived from Bartók's various use of tempo and articulations. The first section (Section I), Lendvai's Thesis section (mm. 5-33), states the first theme twice, first centered on A (mm. 5-19) and then on E (mm. 19-33). In order to single out the tonal centers A and E, Bartók articulates the accented notes of the theme with different touches. Within the first statement of the theme, for example, as Lendvai observes, "the A notes are sounded with a well-articulated tenuto touch; C and G, however, with a percussion-like rhythmic character."¹³ Additionally, Bartók tries to bring out the main theme by rushing the continuous eighth notes and disregarding all the written accents during mm. 13-16. Thus the *sff* E (m. 17) sounds a majestic point of arrival. This E is important for two reasons. First, as mentioned above, it is the tonal center of the second statement of the theme. Second, its perfect-fifth relationship with the first tonal center, A, recalls the traditional Tonic-Dominant relationship.

In addition to the theme and the tonal centers, Bartók also emphasizes the very first chord in the

¹³ Lendvai, *The Workshop of Bartók and Kodály*, 250.

beginning, an $f^\#$ minor triad, with a boisterous touch, presenting what Yeomans considers the key center of the piece.¹⁴ This key center is further emphasized by Bartók in the next section (Section II), Lendvai's Antithesis section (mm. 34-57). Against the second theme in the right hand, appearing twice centered on A, the *sff* $f^\#$ chords in the left hand fight back from time to time to remind the listener of the importance of $f^\#$.

At the end of Section I, Bartók employs an unwritten *ritardando* in m. 33 to usher in Section II. Then Section II is slower than Section I. The tempo in Section I is around $\text{♩} = 100$; in Section II, however, the tempo becomes $\text{♩} = 92$. The slower tempo makes the entire Section II sound more *pesante*, as marked. Even though the *ritardando* at the end of Section I and the slower tempo in Section II seem to form two individual sections, the similar touches of emphasizing the themes and the constant appearance of the $f^\#$ minor chord imply that these two sections can be unified as a large section that includes two main themes.

¹⁴ Yeomans, *Bartók for Piano*, 66.

The third section (Section III) begins in m. 50. This section contains four phrases separated by *f*[#] minor chordal ostinato passages. When Bartók plays each of the ostinato passages, he makes an *accelerando* that destroys the sense of barline, and applies a long pedal that creates a blurred sound.

Lendvai observes that the lengths of the ostinatos are based on Fibonacci numbers: the first has eight measures (mm. 50-57), the second has five (mm. 62-66), then five (mm. 71-75), then three (mm. 81-83) and finally thirteen (mm. 88-100).¹⁵ However, in his performance, Bartók shortens the eight- and thirteen-measure passages. The eight-measure ostinato (mm. 50-57) contains sixteen beats, of which Bartók plays only thirteen, and as for the thirteen-measure ostinato (mm. 88-100), Bartók cuts one entire measure off. Sándor remembers that

[Bartók] advised me to extend the *diminuendo* in bars 89-100, in which the same murmured chords, constantly repeated, die away into nothingness and, if necessary, make it a few bars longer so that I would have enough time to reduce the dynamic level to the required *quadruple piano*.¹⁶

¹⁵ Lendvai, *The Workshop of Bartók and Kodály*, 253.

¹⁶ Sándor, "Versatility As A Stylistic Principle", 6.

So Bartók taught his student to extend the passages in order to make a good *diminuendo*, yet he himself shortens them. He is probably concerned more about style and character than about interpretive precision.

Bartók emphasizes the very last attack, marked *fff*, of each of the four phrases in Section III (mm. 61, 70, 80 and 87). These emphasized chords are important because when the phrases seem to wander (or modulate) away harmonically, these chords bring them back to the home key of f[#] minor. The intermediary phrases could be thought of as interruptions of the ostinato. This persistent key center, however, finally dies away through the *diminuendo* to *pppp* in m. 101, the end of the section.

The opening theme returns in Section IV, but this time many aspects are different. The texture is thinner, the dynamic level is much softer, the style is much freer because of the markings of *poco sostenuto* *a tempo*, and the key center moves to F major. Bartók's playing here suggests a search for a new path. He carefully articulates the *tenuto* notes, almost making them sound in a style of *rubato* playing, and suddenly shifts to a *tempo* with an eruptive accent on the downbeat. In fact, Bartók starts

this kind of variability in Section III when he makes *accelerandos* on the ostinato passages. In other words, the idea of a freer style is prepared in Section III and fully realized in Section IV.

Suddenly the previous powerful, boisterous touch comes back in m. 131, the beginning of Section V. In this section, Bartók uses this forceful energy to highlight the return of the original key center, f[#] minor. The listener is reminded that in Section III, the key center, f[#] minor, is constantly emphasized. In this section Bartók ignores the *sff* notes in mm. 132 and 136 that are not tonic-related, and emphasizes the f[#] minor chords. In addition, he makes a *diminuendo* on each of the quasi-ostinato passages as he did in Section III, and makes the last passage die away, ending up softly on a diminished-seventh chord. This beautiful ending seems to leave a question mark, asking where the music is going next. Bartók gives a strong impression that by the end of this section, the music has lost its direction. Even though the original melodic tone center A survives at the very end, this A is built on the unstable diminished-seventh chord.

The next section, Section VI (mm. 152-179), is the only one that does not have the presence of the main key center, $f^\#$ minor, or the two main themes. This section seems to come from nowhere. Its materials are new, and its tonality shifts around. But if we listen carefully to Bartók's recording, we may note several instances when he brings out elements that are closely related to previous sections. First, in the first measure of the section (m. 152), Bartók emphasizes slightly the three-note motive by playing an unwritten accent on the first note. This motive is derived from Section V in m. 132 and was weakened by Bartók's avoidance of the *sff*. Second, during mm. 156-163 and mm. 168-175, two phrases containing the same materials but different tone centers, Bartók's articulation emphasizes two intervals, the minor third and major second, both derived directly from the opening theme (see Example 1).

Example 1: two main intervals of the opening theme of *Allegro Barbaro*



During the first phrase (mm. 156-163), for example, Bartók plays unwritten accents on the notes C (m. 157) and E^b (m.159). Therefore, with the central note A, he brings out a triad based on the minor-third, A-C-E^b. This diminished triad appears melodically (horizontally in the right hand) and is accompanied by another diminished triad a perfect fifth lower, D-F-A^b(G[#]), which appears chordally (vertically in the left hand). Where Bartók uses a lighter, staccato touch to express the diminished triad, he plays the major-second with a relatively heavier, legato touch in order to make these two intervals contrast with each other.

Finally, the *ritardando* appears in the score at m. 178, but Bartók begins to slow down a few measure earlier in m. 175, right before the appearance of the tonal center A, and gets slower and slower to make the A's sound settled. Therefore, after wandering and searching around for such a long time (almost the entire section), the music finds its way back at the end of the section.

In the seventh and final section (mm. 180-224), where the second theme returns at its original pitch level. Bartók begins the section slowly and softly, and the tempo gets faster and faster heading to the climax. In his performance Bartók clearly emphasizes the A's in mm. 181 and

185 by putting more weight on them. Thus the A's from the end of the preceding section are confirmed. The performance here shows that after finding the "right path" back home, the music now confidently builds towards the magnificent ending.

At the point where the music reaches its highest register and greatest tension, Bartók isolates m. 212 somewhat by taking a brief break just before the measure, and by delaying the *sff* downbeat on the f[#] minor chord, of the next measure (m. 213). As a result, the three *sff* notes in m. 212, B[#]-B-A, sound emphasized and prominent. This B[#]-B-A motive is actually derived from Section V (m. 132), where it was first emphasized by Bartók, but ended up with a lyrical and soft touch on a diminished-seventh chord. What Bartók does in m. 212 seems to be the "remedy" for the "beautiful mistake" at the end of Section V which does not belong to the style of "Barbaro."

In conclusion, this seven-section organization of the piece can also be divided into three larger divisions with a conclusion. This organization is divided based on Bartók's performing styles, the way he articulates the important materials in the music, and is illustrated in Example 2. I consider Bartók's performance a dramatic

progression because the style of each division progresses "dramatically." Division I is in a powerful, confident style that is basically generated by Bartók's forceful touch on the themes and tonal centers. However, Sections III and IV are connected as a new division by Bartók's freer playing, which contrasts considerably with its previous division. The acceleration of the ostinato passages in Section III acts as a preparation for the next free style section, Section IV. It is obvious that Section IV is the freest because of Bartók's constant shift of tempo between *poco sostenuto* and a *tempo* throughout on the score. I describe Division III as a "puzzling period" because Bartók's performance allows the music die away at the end of Section V, implying "lost direction." In Section VI he tries to "search for the way back," by wandering around harmonically on the motive taken from Section V (m. 132). Finally, in the Conclusion section (Section VII), Bartók "returns" to the home tonal center by emphasizing the A's. The opening powerful touch also returns, and this time reaches its climax.

Example 2: the "dramatic progression" (generated from the performing styles) in Bartók's performance of Allegro Barbaro.

Division I: Confident, powerful style (mm. 1-50)	
Section I (mm. 1-33)	Section II (mm. 34-50)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme I (fast, ♩ = 100) • emphasized tonal centers A & E • emphasized key center f[#] minor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme II (slow, ♩ = 92) • emphasized tonal center A • emphasized key center f[#] minor
Division II: Free style, searching for change (mm. 50-130)	
Section III (mm. 50-101)	Section IV (mm. 101-130)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparation of free style • key center (f[#] minor) dying away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free style • new key center (F major)
Division III: Puzzling period (mm. 131-187)	
Section V (mm. 131-151)	Section VI (mm. 152-187)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • powerful beginning on the key center f[#] minor chords --> soft ending on unstable diminished-seventh chord (lost direction) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • soft beginning, wandering around --> return of tonal center A
Conclusion: Return of Confidence and Power (mm. 188-224)	
Section VII (mm. 188-224)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • return of theme II on original tonal center A • emphasized tonal center 	

Sándor's 1995 Recording

(For actual performing version of this recording, see Example 11 in Appendix [pp. 153-158])

After listening to Bartók's exciting performance in a "dramatic" style, Sándor's interpretation sounds very conservative. His steady tempo and well-controlled articulation (especially on the *sff* notes) make the piece sound less impetuous. With regard to the formal structure of the piece, Sándor's performance can be illustrated as: Exposition (mm. 1-101) with an interlude (mm. 58-101) - Development (mm. 101-179) with a preparation for Recapitulation (mm. 152-179) - Recapitulation (mm. 180-224).

Whereas Bartók takes different tempi for the Thesis (Section I, $\text{♩} = 100$) and Antithesis (Section II, $\text{♩} = 92$) sections, Sándor keeps the same steady tempo, $\text{♩} = 92$, throughout to make these two sections a unity. This large first section thus constitutes the Exposition with two main themes, Theme I and Theme II. For Sándor, every single note

in this section is important and clearly articulated. Unlike Bartók, he does not rush the tempo at places where the theme is not present. He does not miss any of the accents that Bartók ignores. During mm. 28-33, for example, Sándor places an accent on every downbeat as written, and keeps a steady tempo, whereas Bartók rushes all the eighth notes and disregards all the accents. Sándor's consistency makes this section sound more like a military march.

The Interlude section, beginning at m. 58, is closely connected to the Exposition by the F[#] minor chords. During this Interlude, Sándor persistently keeps the same tempo, $\text{♩} = 92$. It may be recalled that Bartók makes an *accelerando* and uses a long pedal in each of the ostinato passages to create a blurred effect of sound. He also cuts some of the longer ostinato passages a bit shorter. Sándor, however, not only keeps the tempo constant in the ostinato passages, but also makes the shortest one (mm. 81-83) one measure longer. Interestingly, Sándor plays an unwritten *sff* on the downbeat of m. 88, the first attack of the longest ostinato passage, apparently so that he can make a clearer *diminuendo* to *pppp* within such a long passage.

In the middle of m. 101, a separating sign, ' (comma), appears to indicate a "slight, almost

unnoticeable"¹⁷ break between the Exposition and Development sections. What Bartók does to this sign is absolutely "unnoticeable." When I follow the score while listening to Bartók's recording, I do not hear anything to suggest such a break. Sándor, on the contrary, makes an obvious break, almost a quarter-rest in length, to announce this separation.

The Development section begins with the first theme but on an F major chord, indicating that the modulation starts right from the beginning of the section. When the new motive appears in m. 131, where Bartók plays with a forceful touch to reinforce those accented notes, Sándor does not make any clear change in touch. Bartók makes the new motive so distinctive that it sounds like a beginning of a new section. By contrast, Sándor avoids the distinction in tone color and continues the music with the constant touch. Sándor's interpretation is convincing because the new motive (mm. 131-132) is actually developed from the motive in m. 127, a figure in turn derived from the development of the first theme. In other words, in Sándor's

¹⁷ Benjamin Suchoff, *Guide to Bartók's Mikrokosmos* (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1971), 15.

performance, the music from m. 131 on is still a part of the Development.

After the C-A musical halt in mm. 150-151, the Development section continues in m. 152 with the figure of m. 127. Sándor seems to treat this new passage (mm. 152-179) as a preparation for the Recapitulation (mm. 180ff.). He disregards Bartók's dynamic markings and plays the passage with a *crescendo*. Bartók marks the first two phrases (mm. 156-167 and 168-175) with the same dynamic markings, *crescendo* - *mf* - *decrescendo*, and puts *p* - *ritardando molto* in the last phrase (mm. 176-179). Sándor, however, begins the first phrase at a softer dynamic level and gets louder and louder thereafter. Moreover, he even ignores the *pp* in m. 180 and plays with a dynamic level that continues from the preceding *crescendo*, sounding almost like *ff*. It is evident that Sándor wants the Recapitulation to sound positive and confirming, since that is the only time in the piece that the theme of the Exposition returns at its original pitch level.

Chapter Summary

Just as its title suggests, *Allegro Barbaro* is usually considered to be a piece written in primitive style with much percussive sound. This is how I felt when I first heard the performance of the piece many years ago. However, the boisterous power of the piece is often over-emphasized by performers. Yeomans once states,

[*Allegro Barbaro*] is one of the most popular and widely played of [Bartók's] works, but also one of the most abused -- by excessively impetuous interpretation.¹⁸

Indeed, its loudness notwithstanding, there is probably something else that Bartók wishes to convey in the piece. Therefore, a proper interpretation needs a careful analytical study of the piece.

The form of the piece is unusual, and is hardly compatible with any of the traditional forms. After listening to Bartók's performance of the piece, Lendvai

¹⁸ David Yeomans, *Bartók for Piano*, 66.

proposes an analysis of seven-step structure. Although this complicated seven-step analysis is very complex, it does provide inspiring ideas for one to appreciate the piece in an aesthetic way.

Lendvai's seven-step form, in his own words, is achieved on newer and newer levels, which implies that the piece is in a form of progression. Whereas Lendvai explains that the progression in Bartók's performance refers to the notion of "dialectical chain-reaction," I view Bartók's interpretation differently. It seems to me that Bartók's performance is in a dramatic progression that expresses a strong sense of humanity.

In addition, by employing various tempi and articulations, Bartók's *Allegro Barbaro* is no longer merely an exciting piece full of loud chords. The way he articulates the important elements, such as the main themes and tonal centers, and the way he changes the styles from section to section, make the entire piece not only exciting, but also colorful.

Sándor, on the other hand, seems to prevent *Allegro Barbaro* from being too impetuous by interpreting the piece in a more conservative style. His well-controlled tempo and touch give this piece a more "peaceful" character,

that somehow reduces the excitement of the piece. The formal structure expressed in Sándor's performance, Exposition - Development - Recapitulation, brings out the Classical aspect of the piece, that is totally absent in Bartók's interpretation. After all, Bartók himself, in Sándor's words, "would take the most incredible liberties when interpreting his own works in order to bring out the structure and essence of the music."¹⁹

¹⁹ Sándor, "Versatility As A Stylistic Principle", 6.

CONCLUSIONS

Many believe that Bartók was the greatest interpreter of his own music. I propose, more modestly, that Bartók interpreted his music in a unique way that no one else can duplicate. As a result of my study, I am convinced that there is no such thing as a best interpretation of a piece of music, and that composers themselves are not necessarily the best interpreters of their own music. As demonstrated herein, a composer himself does not necessarily interpret a piece of music exactly the same way each time. Moreover, using Sándor's recordings as comparison, it becomes clear that although Sándor's performances may differ from Bartók's, they are as interesting as Bartók's in different ways. The two pianists

interesting as Bartók's in different ways. The two pianists express distinct analytical and stylistic concepts that not only bring out the structural multiplicity of a piece, but also provide us many useful interpretive ideas.

Bartók's two performances of the Bagatelle Op. 6 No. 2 are excellent examples of how differently even the composer can interpret the same piece. Each of the two performances suggests a distinctive formal structure. Although Somfai posits that the later 1942 recording is less reliable due to Bartók's deteriorated health condition,¹ I consider it to be more colorful, lively and organized than Bartók's 1929 recording. In the 1942 performance, Bartók slowed down in the middle climax section and played an unwritten *ritardando* at the end of this climax. He thus created a "c" section and an a-b-c-b-a structure, or arch form (Bartók's favorite form) in contrast with the a-b-a structure of the 1929 recording. Bartók's two structural interpretations serve as a reminder that fresh ideas in performance are what keep the music alive. Sándor affirms this notion in yet a third interpretation of the Bagatelle, which projects Golden Section proportions.

¹ László Somfai, "The Centenary Edition of Bartók's Records" (liner notes to Hungaroton LPX 12326-12333), 25.

These three different formal interpretations are, in my opinion, equally valuable. Both pianists were well-trained musicians. Bartók knew of course what he wanted to convey in his own music. Sándor, on the other hand, might have been acquainted with the concept of Golden Section, and may have intentionally expressed it in his performance. These different interpretive results did not just happen randomly; each one is meaningful in its own way, and transmits the interpreters' sensitivity and knowledge about the music.

The study of different recordings of the Bagatelle reveals the close relationship between a proper interpretation and a careful analysis of the piece. The reason that a piece of music can be interpreted differently is partly that it can be analyzed in different ways. A short, simple piece like the Bagatelle could have been analyzed and interpreted in three different ways; other great pieces, say, J. S. Bach's Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue or Beethoven's five late Piano Sonatas, can support a multitude of interpretations. The study of theoretical documents will provide useful and inspiring ideas for performers that will enable them to enhance their

understanding about the music they are going to play. It is the responsibility of the performer to make interpretive decisions based on these valuable sources.

Another example of the close relationship between theoretical analyses and interpretive decisions is demonstrated in the *Allegro Barbaro* chapter. Bartók's recording of *Allegro Barbaro* provides a rare opportunity to experience the excitement of modernization in terms of a formal structure that is hardly compatible with any of the traditional forms. This modernization, as Lendvai describes, is a form of progression that is achieved on newer and newer levels based on the notion of "dialectical chain-reactions." He analyzes the piece by a seven-step division, and claims that his analysis is derived from listening to Bartók's performance. Whereas many believe that good interpretive decisions are based on understanding the theoretical analyses of the work, Lendvai tries to give an example of how an excellent performance affects an analytical work. Although I view Bartók's performance as a "dramatic progression" that is different from Lendvai's "dialectical progression," Lendvai's seven-step analysis helped me organize the piece, and changes the way I now view

the piece. I believe the relationship between theoretical analyses and interpretive decisions to be interactive, rather than one depending on the other.

In his folk-related music, Bartók's expression is surprisingly free. The most obvious appearances of his flexible playing style in this study include the rhythmic variations in *Evening in Transylvania* that contrast considerably with the score, and the tempo arrangement in the first movement of the Suite that is much more flexible than his written indications. Such improvisatory executions are even more obvious when compared with Sándor's recordings. These examples of Bartók's free playing style suggest that he had absorbed the folk idiom and incorporated it into his playing.

Bartók's three recordings of *Evening in Transylvania*, an original composition in folk style show that he plays the piece with great freedom in terms of rhythmic and tempo variations. However, he simply uses "Lento, rubato" and "Vivo, non rubato" to express the desired styles of the music. Although Bartók varies the rhythm of the melody each time in his three recordings, he does follow certain patterns. For example, in the "Lento,

rubato" sections, he constantly prolongs the beginning long notes of the phrases because these long notes are important stress accents of Hungarian language. His folk style of rubato playing thus draws its inspiration from human conversation.

The discussion of the first movement of the Suite in Chapter III shows how Bartók flexibly uses different tempi to express the folk style in this dance movement. In this instance Bartók writes lots of tempo indications on the score; however, those markings seem still not precise enough to satisfy Bartók's requirement. The tempo variation in his own performance is more complicated than the score indicates. Especially in the middle section of the piece Bartók's quasi-intoxicated playing expresses an improvisatory dance style that is almost impossible to notate.

Bartók has complained about the limitation of the notation system, and thought that people would not fully understand the free style which he imagined.² Therefore, his recordings on free style of folk-related music become that much more valuable. Anyone who is interested in

² Ibid., 30.

interpreting Bartók's folk-related music would probably wish to consult Bartók's recordings in order to gain real insight into the music. As Somfai says,

There is no way and perhaps no need to be familiar with all the folk music Bartók ever knew, but we must pay attention to the likely sources of his characters. Otherwise our understanding of Bartók will be sterile.³

It is interesting that in all of the four pieces discussed in this study Bartók's performing tempi are always faster than his own metronome markings. For instance, in the Suite, no matter how meticulously he marked tempo indications on the score, Bartók's performing tempi are at least two or three metronome degrees faster than his written markings. Where his free use of tempo is a result of the influence of folk idiom, his faster performing tempo has another explanation. The following statement by Bartók himself probably gives the best answer. He says,

In my earlier works MM signs are very often inexact, or rather they do not correspond to the correct tempo. The only explanation I can think of is that I metronomized too hastily at that

³ Somfai, *Béla Bartok: Composition, Concepts, and Autograph Sources* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 295.

time, and perhaps my metronome was working imperfectly.⁴

In general, Bartók proves in his own interpretation that finding the right character and style of a piece of music is more important than playing the music "correctly." For example, in his two Bagatelle performances, he frequently alters his written performance indications, such as dynamic and articulation markings, in order to create a different musical mood. He even shortens the length of the ostinato passages in the *Allegro Barbaro* that disrupts the presentation of Fibonacci Numbers that is hidden within the score. His tendency to express his own music in free, lively motion, with many unwritten markings, is shown in all of his recordings in this study, and is probably an integral part of his musicianship. With regard to Bartók's free use of tempo, Somfai states,

[Bartók's] education encouraged a natural way of articulation and differentiation of the tempo of individual phrases, sentences, themes, modulations, transitions; even without written instructions, these elements belonged to musical conventions, to good taste.⁵

⁴ László Somfai, "The Centenary Edition of Bartók's Records," 29.

⁵ Somfai, *Béla Bartok: Composition, Concepts, and Autograph Sources*, 288.

This good taste applies, I believe, not only to Bartók's choice of tempo, but also to all of his interpretive decisions.

I conclude that the composer's recordings are extremely valuable and important to interpreters. A performing artist does not listen to and study recordings merely for pure enjoyment; what he or she wants to discover is what the composer intended. Bartók's entire music, in his own words, "is determined by instinct and sensibility."⁶ He continues,

Useless to ask me why did I write this or that, why so and why not so. I could not give an explanation, except that I felt this way, I wrote it down this way.⁷

Since he knew well enough the limits of musical notation, he used recordings as supplementary documents for his compositions to convey his natural feelings. According to Somfai, "Bartók firmly believed that his own recordings formed an essential part of authentic transmission of his

⁶ Ibid., 10.

⁷ Ibid.

work."⁸ Thus, when the actual performances differ from the published scores, Bartók's recordings become the "authentic Bartók" to us, because his playing expresses what that goes beyond the score.

With regard to Bartók's influence on Sándor as a teacher, Sándor's recordings of the four pieces discussed in this study have proved that although Sándor studies these pieces with the composer, he in fact expresses his personal interpretive ideas in the music. In other words, Bartók probably did not insist his students to play his music in the same way as he himself does. Bartók, in Sándor's words, "was a man of few words."⁹ Sándor remembers,

Bartók virtually never commented on my playing or made any attempt to analyze it. Instead, he would always respond with a polite and restrained "Good, good, Mr. Sándor," whereupon he would sit down at the piano himself and play me his own, often complete different interpretation.¹⁰

As discussed through this study, Bartók played his music with great freedom in order to bring out its structure and

⁸ Ibid., 279.

⁹ György Sándor, "Béla Bartók As A Piano Teacher" (liner notes to Sony Classical SK 68276), 11.

¹⁰ Ibid.

character; he would probably encourage his pupils a creative approach to music.

Alfred Cortot states that "if music lives through interpretation, then true interpretation can live only through the genuine style."¹¹ Through the act of the interpretive analysis I have learned that the power of a piece of music will last if the performance possesses variety and contrasts in a proper style. Listening to recordings is enjoyable; analyzing them requires understanding of that particular music and, indeed, much patience, because the sound records are somehow much more complicated than the written records. The more I analyzed the recording of a piece of music, the more interpretive ideas I found. Finally, it is my hope that this dissertation has shown the value of the study of the composer's recordings, and that Bartók lovers, including professional musicians and amateurs, will gain some interpretive ideas and enhance their understanding of Bartók's music.

¹¹ Alfred Cortot, *Studies in Musical Interpretation*, transl. by Robert Jacques (New York: Da Capo Press, 1989), 32.

APPENDIX

PERFORMANCE EXAMPLES

The following musical examples are based on the recordings discussed in this dissertation. The handwritten and circled markings indicate what has been performed but not notated.

Example 1: Bagatelle Op. 6 No. 2 (Bartók - 1929)

"a" section : calm, soft.

d=96 Allegro giocoso $\frac{4}{4}$ R.H. sempre p, mechanical without any accent

quiet smooth a tempo

"b" section : exciting

escalate excitement rush

d=100

$\text{♩} = 104$

Musical notation for measures 13-15. Measure 13 starts with a piano part marked *cresc.* and a treble part with a melodic line. Measure 14 continues the melodic line. Measure 15 ends with a piano part marked *dim.*

Musical notation for measures 16-18. Measure 16 starts with a piano part marked *p* and a treble part with a melodic line. Measure 17 continues the melodic line. Measure 18 ends with a piano part marked *sf* and a treble part with a melodic line. Handwritten notes include "A" section: calm. soft" and "Subito *p*" circled.

Musical notation for measures 19-21. Measure 19 starts with a piano part marked *p* and a treble part with a melodic line. Measure 20 continues the melodic line. Measure 21 ends with a piano part marked *p* and a treble part with a melodic line.

Musical notation for measures 22-25. Measure 22 starts with a piano part marked *p* and a treble part with a melodic line. Measure 23 continues the melodic line. Measure 24 continues the melodic line. Measure 25 ends with a piano part marked *pp* and a treble part with a melodic line. Handwritten notes include "sempre *pp*" and "pp" circled.

Musical notation for measures 26-30. Measure 26 starts with a piano part marked *p* and a treble part with a melodic line. Measure 27 continues the melodic line. Measure 28 continues the melodic line. Measure 29 continues the melodic line. Measure 30 ends with a piano part marked *p* and a treble part with a melodic line.

Example 2: Bagatelle Op. 6 No. 2 (Bartók - 1942)

$d=96$ Allegro giocoso $\frac{3}{2}$ "a" section

1 2 3

"b" section: quiet first arrival of tonic

5 delay rit... 6 delay molto rit. smorzando

tempo

pp *p*

$d=88-92$ "c" section heavy A's

$\frac{3}{2}$ *poco cresc.* *poco f*

10 11 12

$d=96$

"b" section: quiet

rit.::

13 *cresc.* 14 15

16 17 18 "a" section *sf dim.* *p*

19 *p* 20 21 delay

22 23 *sempre p* 24 25

26 delay 27 28 29 30

The image shows a handwritten musical score for piano, consisting of five systems of two staves each. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Handwritten annotations in black ink are present throughout the score, including a tempo marking 'd=96' in a box at the top, section labels '"b" section: quiet' and '"a" section', and several 'delay' annotations with arrows pointing to specific notes. Dynamics include 'cresc.', 'p', 'sf', 'dim.', and 'sempre p'. There are also tempo markings like 'rit.::' and '9/2'. Measure numbers 13 through 30 are clearly marked. The score concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign at the end of the fifth system.

Example 3: Bagatelle Op. 6 No. 2 (Sándor - 1994)

Allegro giocoso $\frac{3}{2}$

1 2 3

4 5 6 *molto rit. smorzando*

← *a tempo* ← *not too heavy on accents*

ten. *pp p* *rit.*

speed up → *lead to climax* *rush*

10 *poco cresc.* 11 *poco f* 12

Handwritten musical score for measures 13-15. Measure 13 is marked 'cresc'. Measures 14 and 15 have 'rush' circled above them. Measure 15 has a circled 'f'.

Handwritten musical score for measures 16-18. Measure 16 has a circled 'f'. Measure 17 has a circled 'X'. Measure 18 has a circled 'fp'.

Handwritten musical score for measures 19-21. Measure 19 is marked 'p'. Measure 21 has a circled '3'.

Handwritten musical score for measures 22-25. Measure 24 has a circled 'f' and 'sfz'.

Handwritten musical score for measures 26-30. Measure 27 has a circled 'f'.

Example 4: Evening in Transylvania (Bartók - 1920)

For the actual rhythmic performance of the "Lento, rubato" sections, see Examples 2-4 in Chapter II (pp. 46-48)

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piece by Bartók. The first system is marked "Lento, rubato" with a tempo of $\text{♩} = 60$ and a dynamic of *mf* *espressivo*. It features a treble clef and a 6/8 time signature. The second system is marked "Vivo, non rubato" with a tempo of $\text{♩} = 160$ and a dynamic of *pp* *richiando*. It features a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. Handwritten annotations include "stabile" and "accelerate to $\text{♩} = 172$ " with a box around the tempo change, and another box with $\text{♩} = 96$. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like *cresc.* and *rit.*

Tempo I

Musical score for measures 21-29. The piece is in 3/4 time. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment. Measure numbers 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29 are indicated below the staff.

accelerate to $\text{♩} = 144$

continue to accelerate - - -

Vivo, non rubato

Musical score for measures 30-34. The tempo is marked 'Vivo, non rubato' and the time signature is 4/4. The right hand has a more active melodic line. The left hand accompaniment is marked 'pscherando' and 'pp'. Measure numbers 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34 are indicated below the staff.

up to $\text{♩} = 160$

$\text{♩} = 116$

Musical score for measures 35-41. The right hand continues with a melodic line, and the left hand accompaniment is marked 'mp', 'dim.', and 'pp'. Measure numbers 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, and 41 are indicated below the staff.

Tempo I

Musical score for measures 42-47. The tempo is marked 'Tempo I' and the time signature is 4/4. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs. The left hand accompaniment is marked 'mf'. Measure numbers 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, and 47 are indicated below the staff.

Musical score for measures 48-55. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and accents. The left hand accompaniment is marked 'pp' and 'PPP'. Measure numbers 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, and 55 are indicated below the staff.

Example 5: Evening in Transylvania (Bartók - 1929)

For the actual rhythmic performance of the "Lento, rubato" sections, see Examples 2-4 in Chapter II (pp. 46-48)

The image shows a handwritten musical score for two staves. The top staff is in 6/4 time and begins with the tempo marking "Lento, rubato $\text{♩} = 60$ ". It includes markings for "mf espressivo" and "rit." with a 3/4 time signature. The bottom staff is in 2/4 time and begins with "Vivo, non rubato $\text{♩} = 144$ ". It includes markings for "pizzicando", "pp", "rit.", "cresc.", and "rit." with a 3/4 time signature. Handwritten annotations in boxes specify tempo changes: "accelerato to $\text{♩} = 152$ ", "accelerato to $\text{♩} = 176$ ", and "to $\text{♩} = 92$ ".

Tempo I

Musical score for measures 21-29. The piece is in 3/4 time and marked 'Tempo I'. The music features a melodic line in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. Measure numbers 21 through 29 are indicated below the notes.

accelerate to $\text{♩} = 138$ continue to accelerate

Vivo, non rubato

schierando

Musical score for measures 30-34. The tempo is marked 'Vivo, non rubato' and the dynamic is 'pp'. The instruction 'accelerate to $\text{♩} = 138$ continue to accelerate' is written above the staff. The word 'schierando' is written below the staff. Measure numbers 30 through 34 are indicated below the notes.

up to $\text{♩} = 152$ $\text{♩} = 132$

Musical score for measures 35-41. The tempo is marked 'Tempo I'. The dynamic is 'mp'. The instruction 'up to $\text{♩} = 152$ $\text{♩} = 132$ ' is written above the staff. The word 'dim.' is written below the staff. Measure numbers 35 through 41 are indicated below the notes.

Tempo I

Musical score for measures 42-47. The piece is in 4/4 time and marked 'Tempo I'. The music features a melodic line in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. Measure numbers 42 through 47 are indicated below the notes.

Musical score for measures 48-55. The piece is in 4/4 time. The music features a melodic line in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. Measure numbers 48 through 55 are indicated below the notes. Dynamics 'pp' and 'PPP' are marked at the end of the section.

Example 6: Evening in Transylvania (Bartók - 1945)

For the actual rhythmic performance of the "Lento, rubato" sections, see Examples 2-4 in Chapter II (pp. 46-48)

The image shows a handwritten musical score for two systems. The first system (measures 1-9) is in 4/4 time, marked "Lento, rubato" with a tempo of 1/80. The notation includes slurs, accents, and dynamic markings such as "mf" and "espressivo". The second system (measures 10-19) is marked "Vivo, non rubato" with a tempo of 1/160. It includes performance instructions like "pscherzando", "pp", "cresc.", and "stabile". A box labeled "A" indicates a tempo of 100. The score is annotated with various performance notes and measure numbers.

Tempo I

21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29

$\text{♩} = 132$ stable accelerate to ---

Vivo, non rubato

pscherzando

30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41

$\text{♩} = 152$ $\text{♩} = 126$ rit. pp

Tempo I

42 43 44 45 46 47

48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55

ppp ppp

Example 7: Evening in Transylvania (Sándor - 1995)

For the actual rhythmic performance of the "Lento, rubato" sections, see Example 6 in Chapter II (p. 57)

The image shows a handwritten musical score for two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. It begins with the tempo marking "Lento. rubato $\text{♩} = 60$ " and the dynamic marking "mf *espressivo*". The music consists of a melodic line with various ornaments and slurs, numbered 1 through 9. The bottom staff is in bass clef and begins with the tempo marking "Vivo. *molto* rubato *di* *res* *stabile*" and the dynamic marking "pp". It contains a complex rhythmic accompaniment with many sixteenth notes, numbered 10 through 19. A dynamic marking "p *espresso*" is present. Handwritten annotations include "♩ = 168" above the first few measures and "♩ = 144" above the last few measures.

Tempo I

Musical score for measures 21-27. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The music is written for piano with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. Measure numbers 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27 are indicated below the notes.

$\text{♩} = 160$ stable

Vivo, non rubato

pscherzando

Musical score for measures 30-34. The key signature has one flat and the time signature is 4/8. The music is written for piano with a pianissimo (pp) dynamic. Measure numbers 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34 are indicated below the notes.

$\text{♩} = 152$

Musical score for measures 35-41. The key signature has one flat and the time signature is 4/8. The music is written for piano with dynamics including mezzo-piano (mp), diminuendo (dim.), and pianissimo (pp). Measure numbers 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, and 41 are indicated below the notes.

Tempo I

Musical score for measures 42-47. The key signature has one flat and the time signature is 4/4. The music is written for piano with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. Measure numbers 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, and 47 are indicated below the notes.

Musical score for measures 48-55. The key signature has one flat and the time signature is 4/4. The music is written for piano with dynamics including piano (p), mezzo-forte (mf), and pianissimo (ppp). Measure numbers 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, and 55 are indicated below the notes.

Example 8: Suite, First Movement (Bartók - 1929)

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the first movement of Bartók's Suite. The score is written for piano and includes several systems of music. Key annotations include:

- Tempo and Meter:** The piece is marked "Allegretto, $\text{♩} = 120$ ".
- Performance Instructions:** "Accelerando" is written in a circle above measures 2-4. "rushing" is written above measures 5-6, 7-10, 13-15, and 17-18. "pochissimo rit." is written above measure 19. "rit:" is written above measure 28.
- Tempo Changes:** Handwritten boxes indicate tempo changes to $\text{♩} = 138$ (measures 5-6), $\text{♩} = 152$ (measures 19-24), and $\text{♩} = 144$ (measures 29-32).
- Dynamic Markings:** "Piano" is written at the beginning. "sempre p" is written above measure 5. "mf" is written above measure 21. "mp" is written above measure 29.
- Other Annotations:** "Pedal" and "Ped" are written below the bass staff at measures 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, and 29. A circled "A" is above measure 26.

Handwritten musical score with annotations. The score is divided into five systems, each with a system number in the top left corner: 31, 37, 44, 51, and 57. The annotations include:

- System 31:** *rit.* (ritardando), $\text{♩} = 126$, *quasi a tempo* ($\text{♩} = 100$), *espr.* (espressivo), $\text{♩} = 132$.
- System 37:** *p poco marcato* (piano poco marcato), *take time*, *cresc.* (crescendo), $\text{♩} = 144$.
- System 44:** *take time*, $\text{♩} = 138$, *Ped* (pedal).
- System 51:** *molto*, *poco a poco accel. al* (poco a poco accelerando al), *Tempo I*, *rit.* (ritardando), *Ped* (pedal).
- System 57:** $\text{♩} = 152$, *accelerando*, *ritenuto*, *cresc.* (crescendo).

Additional notes include "L.H. in intoxicated style" written below the second system. The score features complex rhythmic patterns with many beamed notes and rests.

$\text{♩} = 132$

poco a poco accel al . . . Tempo I

poco a poco cresc. . . accelerando

$\text{♩} = 152$

a tempo
 $\text{♩} = 138$

Meno mosso

rit. . . dim.

$\text{♩} = 144$

82 poco f, dim. 83 84 ritardando . 85 . 86

Handwritten musical score with five systems of piano music. The score includes tempo markings such as "Tempo I" and "Meno mosso", and dynamic markings like "p", "pp", "mp", and "ppp". It also features tempo changes indicated by handwritten boxes with values like "♩ = 152" and "♩ = 132". The score is annotated with various performance instructions and handwritten notes.

System 1 (Measures 87-92): Tempo I, $\text{♩} = 152$, *p leggiero*, *ppp*. Measure numbers: 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92.

System 2 (Measures 93-98): *pp*, *p*, $\text{♩} = 132$. Measure numbers: 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98.

System 3 (Measures 99-104): *Meno mosso*, *mp*, *accel.*, *al.*, *poco cresc.*, $\text{♩} = 138$. Measure numbers: 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104.

System 4 (Measures 105-109): Tempo I, $\text{♩} = 152$, *non legato*, *più cresc.*. Measure numbers: 105, 106, 107, 108, 109.

System 5 (Measures 110-117): *mf*, *p*, *mf*. Measure numbers: 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117.

At the bottom right of the page, there is a small note: "Dacă funcționează ca 2'".

Example 9: Suite, First Movement (Sándor - 1995)

Allegretto, $\text{♩} = 132$

Piano

sempre p

pochissimo rit. tempo

$\text{♩} = 138$

mp

(Pedal)

mp

31

35 rit.

Handwritten annotations: *rit.*

37 quasi a tempo (♩=100)

40 *espr.*

41 42 43

44 *p poco marcato*

45 *take time*

46 *cresc.*

Handwritten annotations: *take time*, *cresc.*

44

45 46 47 48 49 50

51 *rit.*

Handwritten annotations: *rit.*

51 *molto*

52 *a tempo*

53 *poco a poco accel.*

54 *Tempo I*

55 *steady tempo*

56

Handwritten annotations: *steady tempo*

57 58 59 60 61

62 *ritornello*

Handwritten annotations: *ritornello*

cresc. - - - - *sf*

~~poco a poco accel. et.~~ - Tempo I

63 64 65 66 67

Steady tempo

$\text{♩} = 138$

68 69 70 71

accelerando poco a poco cresc. ... - accelerando

$\text{♩} = 144$

72 73 74 75

Meno mosso

76 77 78 79 80

rit. accelerando dim.

81 82 poco f, dim. 83 84 stringendo 85 86 al

Handwritten musical score with annotations and performance instructions. The score is divided into five systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The first system (measures 87-92) is marked "Tempo I" with a tempo of $\text{♩} = 132$ and includes the instruction "p leggiero". The second system (measures 93-98) includes dynamic markings "pp" and "p". The third system (measures 99-104) is marked "Meno mosso" with a tempo of $\text{♩} = 126$ and includes "accel." and "poco cresc." markings. The fourth system (measures 105-109) is marked "Tempo I" with a tempo of $\text{♩} = 132$ and includes "non legato" and "più cresc." markings. The fifth system (measures 110-117) includes a tempo of $\text{♩} = 126$ and dynamic markings "mf" and "p". At the end of the fifth system, there is a handwritten note: "Darete frasielles ca 2'".

Example 10: *Allegro Barbaro* (Bartók - 1929)

Section I $\boxed{d=100}$ in confident, powerful style
 Tempo giusto. ($d = 100$)

Piano.

Section II

$\text{♩} = 92$

34 *pesante*
35 *più f.*

41 42 43 44 45 46

Section II *accelerando*
48 49 50 51 *dimin.* 52 53 54

55 56 57 58 59 60 61

62 63 64 65 66 67 68

69 70 71 72 73 74 75

Handwritten musical score for piano, consisting of six systems of staves. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The score is heavily annotated with handwritten notes and corrections.

- System 1:** Measures 76-80. Includes a fermata over measure 77.
- System 2:** Measures 81-86. Includes the handwritten instruction *accelerando* written across the first two measures.
- System 3:** Measures 87-92. Includes the instruction *sempre* at the end of the system.
- System 4:** Measures 93-98. Includes the instruction *sempre* at the end of the system.
- System 5:** Measures 99-104. Includes the instruction *Section hasten.* above measure 100, *pppp* above measure 101, *in rubato style* written across measures 102-104, and *a tempo* above measure 103.
- System 6:** Measures 105-111. Includes the instruction *poco rallent.* above measure 105, *a tempo* above measure 106, and *rubato* written across measures 105-106.

112 *poco sosten.* *a tempo*
p rubato 117

118 *poco sosten.* *a tempo*
cresc. 119 120 121 122 123

124 125 126 127 128 129 130

Section V

131 *sff* 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139

138 139 140 141 142 143 144 *poco sosten.* *dim.*

145 146 147 148 149 *poco a poco* *più sosten.* *p dolce* 150 151

Section VI

meno cresc. *accel. al.* *Tempo I.*

152 *mf marc.* 153 *p* 154 *mf* 155 *p* 156 157 158 159

160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167

dim.

168 169 170 171 172 173 174

rit. *ten.* *ten.* *ritard.* *molto* *poco a poco* *poco*

175 176 177 178 179 180 181

accel. *al.* *Tempo I.*

182 *poco a poco cresc.* 183 184 185 186 187 188

189 *sempre cresc.* 190 191 192 193 194 195

196 *sempre cresc.* 197 198 199 200 201 *cresc.* 202
(Ped.)

203 204 205 206 207 208 209 *cresc.*

210 211 212 213 214 215 216
sosten. *a tempo*

217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224
senza Ped.

Example 11: Allegro Barbaro (Sándor - 1995)

Exposition $\text{♩} = 92$ steady tempo First theme
 Tempo giusto. ($\text{♩} = 70 - 80$)

Piano.

1 2 3 4 5 6

7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27

28 29 30 31 32 33

Second theme

poco più f

dimin.

Interlude

34 35 36 37 38 39 40

41 42 43 44 45 46

48 49 50 51 52 53 54

55 56 57 58 59 60 61

62 63 64 65 66 67 68

69 70 71 72 73 74 75

Musical score for piano, measures 76-111. The score is written for both hands on grand staves. Measures 76-80 are in the right hand, and measures 81-86 are in the left hand. Measures 87-92 are in the right hand, and measures 93-98 are in the left hand. Measures 99-104 are in the right hand, and measures 105-111 are in the left hand. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Handwritten annotations include "Development" and "one measure more" with arrows pointing to specific measures. Performance instructions include "poco sosten.", "a tempo", "dim.", and "sempre". A circled "sf" is present in measure 88.

76 77 78 79 80

81 82 83 84 85 86

87 88 89 90 91 92

93 94 95 96 97 98

99 100 101 102 103 104

105 106 107 108 109 110 111

sf

Development

one measure more

poco sosten.

a tempo

dim.

sempre

poco sosten. a tempo
 112 114 115 116 117

poco sosten. a tempo
 118 119 120 121 122 *credo.* 123

124 125 126 127 128 129 130

131 132 133 134 135 136 137

poco sosten.
 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 *dim.*

poco a poco - più sosten.
 145 146 147 148 149 150 *p dolce* 151

Preparation for Recapitulation

meno cresc. *accol. al. - Tempo I.*

152 *mf marc.* 153 *p* 154 *mf* 155 *p* 156 157 158 159

160 *mf* 161 162 163 164 165 166 167

dim.

168 *p* 169 170 171 172 *mf* 173 *b* 174 *b*

Recapitulation

ritard. . . mollo . . . poco a poco

175 176 *p* 177 178 179 180 *ff* 181

accol. . . al . . . Tempo I.

182 183 *poco a poco cresc.* 184 185 186 187 188 *mf*

189 *sempre cresc.* 7° 191 192 193 194 195

196 *sempre cresc.* 197 198 199 200 201 *cresc.* 202
(Ped.)

210 211 212 213 214 215 216
sosten. *a tempo* *dim.*

217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224
senza Ped.

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