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Zoltán Kodály's Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello, Op. 8 : one cellist's path to performance

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ZOLTÁN KODÁLY'S *SONATA FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO*, OP. 8:
ONE CELLIST'S PATH TO PERFORMANCE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts

in

The School of Music

by

Celeste Power

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Abstract

My purpose in writing this document is to simply present my experience in learning and performing Zoltán Kodály's *Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello*, Op. 8. My intent is not to instruct cellists on the interpretation of this piece. Each musician must decide how to play it in a way that suits his or her own conception of the piece. Rather I intend to go through each movement and discuss the problems I faced and how I endeavored to solved them, why some solutions worked and others did not, how I prepared for a recital performance of the piece, and what I learned in the process.

I have also included theoretical analysis at the opening of each chapter. I have always felt that by understanding the structure of a piece of music, and by acknowledging a logical flow to the sequence of musical events, that my relationship with the piece will deepen and my performance will be more meaningful as a result. Exploring this aspect of the piece also provides another outlet for practice away from the instrument for the performer. However, this analysis will also be beneficial to the reader because I have arranged the technical issues in terms of formal structure by grouping problematic phrases based on thematic groups or formal sections.

In addition to the technical and theoretical aspects of the piece, I have included some historical information on Kodály's life leading up to the composition and publication of the piece, as well as a chapter on *scordatura* which offers some historical background and discusses some of the logistical problems faced by the cellist. While incorporating background information about a piece may or may not truly affect one's enjoyment in learning the piece, it adds another important dimension to a cellist's understanding of the piece and any impact it had on the cello repertoire.

Introduction

Zoltán Kodály's *Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello*, op. 8 has stood for decades as a pillar in the repertoire for cello. Many cellists aspire to learn the piece, and a performance of the piece is considered by many to be a major milestone in a cellist's development. This was certainly the case for me. I first heard the piece as an undergraduate and was immediately drawn to the unusual sound palette, unique harmonies, and sheer power of Kodály's *Sonata*. Playing it, however, was simply not within my technical grasp at that time.

I attempted to read through the first movement while a master's student with little success. Often times we attempt to play a piece and, for a variety of reasons, whether it be technical, mental, or perhaps even emotional, cannot seem to make any headway. Months or even years later we try again with the same piece and it works. At the end of the first year of my doctoral studies at LSU I approached my teacher, Dennis Parker, about learning the piece. After citing issues of usefulness in terms of the cello, difficulties with *scordatura*, and the seemingly never-ending third movement, we agreed that it was not the right time to play this piece. In lieu of the *Sonata*, I started learning Samuel Barber's *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra*, an extremely difficult piece. I performed this piece at LSU in the fall of 2011 and it still stands as one of the most challenging pieces I have ever learned and performed.

Following this recital, I still had to play another solo recital. In the preceding months I had begun listening to the *Sonata*, and decided that I would again approach Dennis about learning the piece. After getting the go-ahead, I decided that I would perform the piece on my next recital only a few months away. It was during the time in which I prepared for this recital that I started thinking about writing my final document on the piece. The question then became "what aspect of the piece do I write about?" Surprisingly, there is relatively little written about

the *Sonata*. There are a few dissertations written regarding the influence of folk music on the piece, as well as Kodály's writing for the cello. I had originally envisioned writing something in a more pedagogical vein, a subject that I had not encountered in any of my research. I also felt that pedagogy and the process of learning cello systematically and methodically has been an overriding theme in my lessons with Dennis and an important part of my approach to the cello in recent years.

My initial idea was to write a "how-to" or "do-it-yourself" manual for Kodály's *Sonata*. Unfortunately, this approach might appear somewhat presumptuous in the sense that it may imply that my way to play is *the* way to play it. However, one aspect of this *Sonata* that I can write about with conviction is how I learned the piece: the difficulties I encountered and the various solutions I worked through to solve these problems.

I have chosen the parts of each movement that gave me the most trouble and/or are thematically and musically salient. I discuss the nature of the technical difficulty and how I worked through the problem. In preparing my lecture recital and writing this paper I have changed my mind with regard to fingerings and bowings on more than one occasion. I am certain that in another six months or another decade I will change my approach to certain aspects this piece. But that is the nature of music, and the fun of live performance. It is subject to human interpretation, whims, moods, and a variety of external factors. It is always (or should always strive to be) dynamic. These solutions also represent what I am capable of at this moment in my development as a cellist. Perhaps in another year I will make changes that reflect improvement in my use of the bow or greater comfort in thumb position. In another decade, multiple performances of the piece will have undoubtedly changed my perspective on tempos, phrasing, fingerings, and bowings.

Chapter 1 A Select Biography of Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967)

My intention in this chapter is not provide a comprehensive biography of Zoltán Kodály, but rather to provide some insight into his life leading up to and during the composition of the *Sonata*, including the years between the premiere of the work and its publication (1918-1922). This is not to say that his life following this period is insignificant. However, the trajectory of his career and his musical interests changed to such a degree following the period in which the *Sonata* was written that it is not within the scope of this document to cover it. Once Kodály was able to break free of the oppressive political structure at the Liszt Academy (described in more detail below), he was able to focus on his passion for establishing a musical education system in Hungary. Kodály continued to use traditional Hungarian folk music as the foundation for his later compositions, but concentrated on works for larger ensembles and opera for the remainder of his career, whereas his earlier works were geared toward chamber music. So although the early years of his life had a strong influence on his later life, the two periods are not related enough to the topic of this document to warrant discussion. What is more relevant to this study is an examination of his life leading up to the composition of the *Sonata* and the circumstances surrounding its composition, performances, and publication. Kodály was at this time a young and talented composer with many interests and ambitions, but faced opposition from music critics and the large majority of the musical establishment in Hungary. This led (directly and indirectly) to the suppression of the publication and performance of music written in this period, much of which is considered some of his best work.

Kodály's name is for many, synonymous with music education which became his focus from the mid 1920s onward. However, Kodály was truly an interdisciplinary artist in the sense that he was able to synthesize several competing interests successfully. He showed musical

promise early in his childhood learning piano, violin, viola, and cello, and as a student in grammar school he played in the school orchestra and began to compose. The study of language was to be one of Kodály's early interests and while a university student in Budapest he took courses in Hungarian and German. He later earned diplomas in composition and teaching in 1904 and 1905. It was this dual interest in music and language that inspired his first foray into ethnomusicology when in 1905 Kodály began collecting folk songs in order to write his doctoral thesis titled *The Stanzaic Structure of Hungarian Folk Song* in 1906.¹

Following the end of his formal education Kodály spent 1906 and 1907 in Paris and was exposed to the music of Debussy for the first time, and would later cite the importance of Debussy's music in his life. Debussy's use of pentatonicism, non-Western musical idioms, innovative use of sound colors, and his challenge to the perceived superiority of German music was to have a deep impact on Kodály's musical style and personal ethos.² Furthermore, Kodály's appreciation for French music would be reciprocated by the French, as Kodály's music gained a following in France before it did in any other country. In 1910 Kodály's *Sonata for Cello and Piano*, Op. 4 was premiered at the Festival Hongrois in Paris with Belá Bartók on piano and Janos Mihalkovics playing cello.³ This was not only the premier of this piece but the first performance of Kodály's work outside Hungary. The *Sonata for Cello and Piano* was also the

¹ Janka Szendrei, et al. "Hungary." *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/13562> (accessed February 26, 2013).

² Zoltán Kodály, "Claude Debussy," in *The Selected Writings of Zoltán Kodály*, ed. Ferenc Bónis, trans. Lili Halápy and Fred Macnicol (London: Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers Limited, 1964), 67-68.

³ Janos Breuer, *A Guide to Kodály*, trans. Maria Steiner (Budapest: Corvina Books, 1990), 28.

first work of Kodály's to be performed in the United Kingdom.⁴ Although it seems that French critics could not come to a consensus on his music, Kodály had a considerable amount of support for his music in France. This was also true for Kodály in other parts of Europe and the United States as his *First String Quartet* (1908-1909) was performed in the United States in 1915, which may have been the first performance of his music overseas.⁵ In 1910 Kodály arranged a concert featuring his newest compositions that included the *Sonata for Cello and Piano* and the *First String Quartet*. Although this concert was a success and he earned a contract with a publisher, Kodály's music would not be published anywhere until 1921. Furthermore, between 1912 and 1917 none of Kodály's works would be performed in Hungary, despite performances in other parts of Europe and the United States.⁶ This was to be the trend for the period of his life between 1910 and 1921: Disparaged by Hungarian critics and opposed by many in the musical establishment, yet lauded outside his native country.

Upon his return from Paris in 1907, Kodály embarked on another tour to collect Hungarian folk songs, and in 1908 was appointed professor of music theory at the Liszt Academy in Budapest. It was at the Academy that Kodály began his collaboration in several areas with fellow composer Belá Bartók. The two composers shared an affinity for the native music of Hungary but were also both interested in encouraging the performance of new music. To that end they formed the New Hungarian Music Society in 1911. The aim of this group was not only to perform new music, but to thoroughly prepare for the premieres of new works with

⁴ Ibid., 29-31.

⁵ Ibid., 22.

⁶ Ibid., 37.

the intent of performing new music at the highest level. The group consisted of Kodály's performing colleagues at the Academy, including Bartók and members of the Waldbauer Quartet. Some of these same musicians were responsible for the premieres of many of Kodály's and Bartók's works even after the dissolution of the New Hungarian Music Society. Concerts were often programmed with a combination of Classical works mixed with Kodály's and Bartók's arrangements of folk songs. The Society organized only a few concerts in 1911, with audiences steadily losing interest, forcing Kodály and Bartók to disband the Society in early 1912.⁷ The National Musical Society of Hungary was formed concurrently with the express intent to derail the New Hungarian Music Society as well as the professional careers of Kodály and Bartók.⁸ Although undoubtedly dismayed by the lack of interest in their work, Kodály and Bartók continued their collaboration in the systematic collection and publication of Hungarian folk songs in 1913 writing a proposal titled "Project for a New Complete Collection of Folk Songs." However, lack of financial backing and interest in the project put it on hold for several decades.⁹

In addition to the logistical, financial, and bureaucratic obstacles in Kodály's life, World War I erupted in 1914, disrupting everyday life and putting an end to most travel outside Hungary. Although Kodály was not a member of the armed forces, he, like many other civilians, was required to help in the war effort in some way. This, in addition to his growing cadre of students at the Academy was more than enough to keep him occupied for the next several years.

⁷ Percy Young, *Zoltán Kodály: A Hungarian Musician* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1964), 59.

⁸ László Eöszé, *Zoltán Kodály: His Life and Work*, trans. István Farkas and Gyula Gulyás (Boston: Crescendo Publishing Company, 1962), 21.

⁹ Breuer., 37-38.

Despite the disappointments of his previous attempts at concertizing, this turbulent period was to be quite productive for Kodály as a composer, writing several of his most well-known works (which are discussed in the following chapter). Kodály also wrote music criticism and published analyses of Bartók's music for two left-leaning periodicals during this period. His affiliation with these two periodicals and the political climate in Hungary would complicate matters in his professional life toward the end of World War I.

Following the conclusion of the First World War the fate of Hungary was uncertain as the Hapsburg Monarchy had collapsed and parts of the country were being divided among neighboring countries. In 1919 a new government was implemented in Hungary following an overthrow. The so-called Hungarian Republic of Councils meant that a new political structure was implemented at the Academy when many of the older faculty members representative of the *status quo*, were replaced with younger faculty. Ernő von Dohnányi was named as director of the Academy and Kodály was named the deputy director. Bartók was also given a position of power at the Academy. One of the ideas that Kodály and Bartók wanted to implement was a systematic way of teaching music to children and making music an integral part of the education system in Hungary. However, the new Hungarian government lasted only 133 days and after its collapse the old guard resumed its position of power. These individuals sought retribution against the young agitators that had ousted them from power and dared to challenge the establishment. Not only was Kodály's compositional style counter to the firmly established German Romantic style, but his ideas about systematic music education were considered far too left-wing.¹⁰

¹⁰László Eőse, et al. "Kodály, Zoltán," *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/15246> (accessed February 26, 2013).

Upon the collapse of the Hungarian Republic of Councils in 1919, all individuals that participated in any leadership role (real or imagined) were thoroughly investigated by members of the restored government, many of whom were still bitter for being dismissed. Dohnányi was cleared of wrongdoing rather quickly despite his role as Director of the Academy, while Kodály, was intensely scrutinized and punished for his role at the Academy as deputy director. He was suspended from his teaching position during the inquiry and was forced to withstand multiple trials, accused of being an agitator and described as an “ultra-modernist” and thus a negative influence on the young generation of composers under his tutelage.¹¹ Both Dohnányi and Bartók wrote letters protesting the prosecution of Kodály, imploring the investigating committee to hold them accountable for their actions, and citing Kodály’s dedication to the discovery of Hungarian culture and music as anything but subversive.¹² Ultimately Kodály was stripped of his position as deputy director, returned to his previous status as professor, and was put on administrative leave for the first term of the academic year 1920-1921 during which some in the administration attempted to contrive other means by which they could permanently dismiss Kodály from the Academy.¹³

Kodály continued to see his students covertly at his home, resumed his musicological activities, and continued composing. Outside of Hungary there was little attention paid to his political troubles and Kodály’s reputation as a composer continued to grow. Universal Edition secured the rights to publish his music in 1921, allowing his music to be published outside

¹¹ Eősze, 23-24.

¹² Ibid., 24-25.

¹³ Ibid., 25.

Hungary for the first time. Kodály was able to use his growing international profile as leverage to advance his professional position in Hungary and was subsequently reinstated at the Academy in the same year.¹⁴ It was in the next few years that both Kodály and Bartók became recognized in Hungary as not only composers of the highest caliber, but as composers whose work was considered quintessentially Hungarian. Commissions for occasional music for national holidays and festivities was the confirmation that Kodály was no longer considered an outlier in the Hungarian musical world, and set the trajectory for the remainder of his career.

Although many scholars focus on Kodály's life and work after the early 1920s, I find this early period equally significant not only because he wrote the *Sonata* at this time, but because of the paradoxical nature of the attitudes with which his music was met both inside and outside of Hungary. The world outside of Hungary was largely accepting of and excited by his music, but inside Hungary Kodály was silenced for nearly a decade by those opposed to his unorthodox musical idiom. While fighting the opposition to his music and his philosophies regarding music education in his own country, his profile was becoming more visible and his musical style more embraced abroad. Even under conditions which in all likelihood did not foster a healthy environment in which to compose or work, Kodály remained productive and innovative in the compositions of this period. With the help of supporters of new music elsewhere in Europe, his music was delivered out of Hungary and rescued by willing composers and performers.

¹⁴ Ibid., 21.

Chapter 2 Historical Aspects of Op. 8

Although Kodály's *Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello*, op. 8 is now considered one of the most important pieces in the repertoire for cello, it was not immediately popular with audiences or critics, especially those in Hungary, and was not performed outside the country until 1920. Part of this belated recognition was likely due to the difficulty of the piece, there being perhaps only a handful of cellists willing or able to undertake such a challenging piece at the time of its composition. More importantly though was the fact that Kodály's career as a composer had been stifled in the years around the composition of the piece as described in the previous chapter. The *Sonata* was in many ways the key to his reemergence as a composer on an international scale. The period between 1910 and 1921 was a time in which none of Kodály's music was published in Hungary or abroad, but not for lack of material. In fact, it was during this period that Kodály wrote some of his most enduring and groundbreaking works for strings: in addition to the *Sonata*, he also wrote the *Duo for Violin and Cello*, op. 7, the *Second String Quartet*, op. 10, and the *Serenade for Two Violins and Viola*, op. 12.¹⁵ Additionally, the fact that Kodály's music was confined to Hungary resulted in some interesting relationships between Kodály and the performers resulting in a uniquely Hungarian lineage associated with the piece. The composition of the *Sonata* was to have lasting effects on the repertoire for the cello and would have a strong influence on the performing career of cellist Janos Starker (b. 1924), arguably one of the greatest modern cellists.

Kodály's *Sonata* was composed in 1915 and was one of the first pieces written for unaccompanied cello since J.S. Bach's six suites were completed in approximately 1723. The

¹⁵ Janos Breuer, *A Guide to Kodály*, trans. Maria Steiner (Budapest: Corvina Books, 1990).

only other piece written for unaccompanied cello at the time was *Three Suites for Solo Cello*, Op. 131c by German composer Max Reger, also written in 1915. Reger's *Suites* were written in a more explicitly Baroque vein, as the movements are in the style of Baroque dances but infused with late romantic harmony. According to Breuer, it is unlikely that Kodály ever saw Reger's scores of the suites, but Kodály was aware of Reger. In a 1907 letter to Bartok, Kodály made it quite clear that he was not interested in Reger's music writing, "I did not really feel tempted to read him."¹⁶ Furthermore, in a 1921 article titled *The New Music of Hungary*, Bartok pointed out the lack of similarity between Reger's piece and Kodály's *Sonata* saying, "no other composer has written music that is at all similar to this type of work---least of all Reger, with his pale imitations of Bach."¹⁷ So while Reger and Kodály were using the same basic platform to compose, Kodály's finished product was arguably the more innovative of the two. Kodály also wrote another piece for unaccompanied cello in 1915 titled *Capriccio*. This work also uses a *scordatura* tuning with the C string tuned down to a B, and uses as its basis a Hungarian folk song titled "Hej, a mohi hegy borának" (Hey, the Wine of Mohi Hill).¹⁸ Kodály arranged the same song for voice and piano in his *Hungarian Folk Music* cycle. *Capriccio* did not appear in print until 1969.¹⁹

Despite the fact that the *Sonata* is built on unique harmonies and unusual folk idiosyncrasies, Kodály incorporates more traditional compositional techniques than one might

¹⁶ Ibid., 47.

¹⁷ Eősze, 109.

¹⁸ Breuer, 48.

¹⁹ Ibid., 48.

realize. First, the use of *scordatura* tuning was a common practice during the Baroque period. In Bach's *Fifth Suite for Unaccompanied Cello*, cellists have the option of tuning the A string down a whole step to G, allowing for chords and effects not possible in standard tuning. Kodály also used traditional musical forms as the foundation for each movement. The first movement is in sonata form albeit with an unorthodox tonal organization that will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. The second movement is in an arch form (ABA), and the third movement is an expansive sonata form. Kodály's use of traditional forms in conjunction with Hungarian music is a hallmark of his compositional style. His knowledge and understanding of the foundations of composition such as harmony and counterpoint were thorough. As a first year composition student at the Liszt Academy Kodály passed his entrance exams and was allowed to enter the second year class, but instead requested to take the first year composition and theory classes. Since Kodály was largely self-taught before entering the Academy, he wanted to ensure that he had a complete understanding of the fundamentals before advancing.²⁰ As a result, the vast majority of his music combines classical and Hungarian elements.

The uniqueness in the piece is found in the writing for the cello. The use of *scordatura* not only affects the timbre and the color of the cello, but creates new possibilities for chords and expands the range of the cello. Kodály evokes the human voice, seeking to imitate specific styles of folk song, various instruments, sounds and techniques associated with those instruments, styles of Hungarian music popular music originating from an 18th century revolution, and 19th century military music influenced by gypsy bands. The piece is also highly virtuosic, technically

²⁰ Eőse, 14-15.

challenging, and incorporates a wide variety of unique sound colors by using different bow techniques, and writing treble melodies on the B and F# strings.

The *Sonata* would eventually become standard in the repertoire for the cello, but the piece had to overcome obscurity in Hungary before reaching larger, more receptive audiences in Europe and the United States. In fact, Kodály was certain that his *Sonata* would become a requirement for any cellist that wished to be taken seriously, explaining to cello professor Adolph Schiffer that “in twenty-five years no cellist will be accepted into the world of cellists who does not play my piece.”²¹ The other pieces that Kodály composed in the same period between 1910 and 1921 also had an equally arduous path out of Hungary. Kodály’s *Duo for Violin and Cello*, Op. 7 was written in 1914, shares many musical attributes with the *Sonata* and came into the public eye under similar circumstances. The two pieces were premiered along with Kodály’s *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10 in 1918 at a concert organized by Kodály to showcase his new compositions. The *Duo* and the *Sonata* were performed by members of the Waldbauer Quartet: violinist Imre Waldbauer and cellist Jenő Kerpely, to whom the *Sonata* is dedicated. According to Breuer, “the recollections of the rapidly dwindling number of eye and ear-witnesses, Kerpely, an extremely sensitive and refined musician, lacked the technique necessary for an accurate performance.”²² The concert as a whole was disparaged by critics as well, although the motivations of the critics may have had as much to do with a collective desire to hinder Kodály’s career as it did with the performance. Whether it was the performance, the

²¹ Joyce Geeting, *Janos Starker “King of Cellists:” The Making of an Artist*, (Los Angeles: Chamber Music Plus Publishing, 2008), 4.

²² Breuer, 48-49. Although it is impossible to know how well Kerpely actually played the piece, he premiered other works by Kodály and was a member of the Waldbauer Quartet for many years. It seems unlikely that Kodály would have continually asked Kerpely to play his music if his playing was not adequate.

critical reception of the concert, or a combination of the two factors, the *Sonata* was not performed again until 1920, and the *Duo* was not performed again until 1922.

Coincidentally, both of the second performances of the *Sonata* and the *Duo* occurred at Arnold Schoenberg's Society for Private Performance of Music gatherings in Vienna and Prague, respectively. A Liszt Academy student named Paul Hermann, a student of cello professor Adolf Schiffer, and a composition student of Kodály's, performed the *Sonata* at this gathering. From all accounts, Hermann's performance was of a higher standard than Kerpely's, but it is entirely possible that the audience at this gathering was more open to new music than the audience at the first performance in Hungary. After all, it was at Schoenberg's gatherings that some of the most avant-garde music of the time was first heard (not to mention in the absence of critics). Kodály's unique musical language was in all likelihood less difficult to digest for a more musically adventurous audience. The *Sonata* and many other works of Kodály was published one year later in 1921 by Universal.

Following the performance of the *Sonata* in Vienna a few other cellists began to perform the piece. Dutch cellist Mauritz Frank performed it in 1922 in Rotterdam and was the first non-Hungarian performer of the work. Hermann performed the piece again in 1923 at the International Society of Contemporary Music Festival (ISCM) in Salzburg. The aforementioned *Duo* was also performed at the ISCM Festival in 1924, and like the *Sonata* is now standard in the chamber music repertoire. The British premiere of the *Sonata* was performed by Beatrice Harrison in 1924, the dedicatee of Elgar's cello concerto, who also performed Kodály's *Sonata* in the United States.²³ These early performances of the work helped bring it to a wider audience,

²³ Ibid., 51.

but it was the performance by Hungarian cellist Janos Starker in 1939 that gave the piece the notoriety it has today. Although Starker played an important role in the discovery of the *Sonata*, the piece had an equally significant impact in launching his career as a performer. Starker openly acknowledged the importance of the *Sonata* in his life when he placed a sign over the pool in his house that reads, “The Pool That Kodály Built.”²⁴

Starker’s association with Kodály’s *Sonata* extends the long line of Hungarians also associated with the piece and its performers dating back to cellist David Popper (1843-1913). David Popper was the cello professor at the Franz Liszt Academy beginning in 1886 and is considered by many to be the father of modern cello playing. Although he died before the piece was written his students were the first cellists to play Kodály’s *Sonata*.²⁵ One of Popper’s students was Jenő Kerpely, the dedicatee and premiere performer of Kodály’s *Sonata*. Popper also taught Adolph Schiffer, who served as his assistant at the Academy until Popper’s death in 1913, and was then promoted to professor thereafter. Schiffer taught Paul Hermann who played the *Sonata* for the second time, as well as a young Starker beginning in 1930. Starker began his lessons with Schiffer at the age of six and by 1939 had performed Kodály’s *Sonata* in private for Kodály himself, and then shortly thereafter in a recital.²⁶ The recital performance was his introduction to the musical world. Starker recorded the *Sonata* for the first time in 1947 and was awarded the *Grand Prix du Disque* which furthered his performing career.²⁷ Although Kodály

²⁴ Geeting, 4.

²⁵ Marc Moskovitz. "Popper, David." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/22113> (February 19, 2013).

²⁶ Geeting, 3-7.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 54.

reportedly had only a few words to say to Starker about his performance of the *Sonata*, it may be Starker's personal association with Kodály, or simply the fact that Starker is Hungarian, that gave his performances of the piece a certain level of authenticity. Starker explained the special relationship he has with Kodály and the *Sonata* in an interview saying, "I like to think that I'm relatively 'authentic' when I play Kodály's cello works because I knew the composer, he listened to my performances, and we talked about them and so on."²⁸ Thus a direct Hungarian line can be traced from Starker back to Kodály and Popper, two of the most important names in composition and cello playing.

Kodály's *Sonata* reintroduced the cello as a solo instrument; an instrument that could be full and expressive if the music written for it took advantage of the possibilities available. The technical brilliance and difficulty of the piece most certainly raised the bar, forcing cellists to expand their technical horizons. Cellist Janos Starker may have been the first cellist capable of performing the *Sonata* at a level of technical and musical brilliance high enough to make audiences and critics fully appreciate the piece in addition to his own playing. Realizing the previously unexplored expressive possibilities of the cello and the growing technical prowess of modern cellists, many new and challenging works for unaccompanied cello were written throughout the twentieth century.

²⁸ Janos Starker, interview by Tim Janof, *Conversation with Janos Starker*, June 10, 1996, <http://www.cello.org/newsletter/articles/starker.html> (accessed February 22, 2013).

Chapter 3 Guiding Principles of Cello Playing

Since the bulk of this paper is a study of how I apply technical principles of cello playing to Kodály's *Sonata*, it is necessary to explain some of these technical principles. These principles are applicable not only to this piece but to all cello playing. In this chapter I will cover shifting and its implications for the left hand, as well as other left hand issues, the use of the bow, and physical aspects of cello playing that will be important in discussing the *Sonata*.

3.1 Anticipated and Delayed Shifts

In the grand scheme of cello playing there are dozens ways for a cellist to move the left hand along the fingerboard, but the delayed shift and the anticipated shift are the two basic types of shifts from which many other kinds of shifts derive. The difference between these two shifts is based on the coordination between the right arm and left hand. A delayed shift is one in which the left hand arrives on the desired note after the bow has changed direction. In an anticipated shift the left hand arrives before the change in bow direction.²⁹ Since I find the anticipated shift to be more conducive to good intonation and the implementation of a plan for the left hand, I use it more often than the delayed shift, and thus I will focus on it in this discussion.

The mechanics of the anticipated shift involve several important steps. First is establishing a target note which will serve as the point of arrival for both the left hand and a point of reference for the ear. My anticipated shifts use the finger already “in use” (also referred to as the “old finger”) as the mode of transport by finding a target note within the new position that will allow the desired finger to drop onto the correct place on the fingerboard. It is in the

²⁹ Tim Janof, *Master class Report: Janos Starker*, Seattle, Washington, February 29, 2001, <http://www.cello.org/Newsletter/Articles/starkermcl.htm> (accessed February 20, 2013). Starker uses the word “slide” when describing the action of the left hand, but the principle of motion before or after the bow change is the same.

process of finding the target note that involves the auditory component. In order for any change of position to be in tune I have to be able to hear the target note before I articulate the printed pitch. If I hear the target note first I am better able to establish the new position both geographically and harmonically. This is accomplished by not only shifting to the target note on the previous bow, but ensuring that there is enough residual bow pressure to make the target note sound only slightly. In his book titled *Cello Technique: Principles and Forms of Movement*, Gerhard Mantel explains the precision required of the left hand in position changes leaves little time for adjustment, thus “the less-exposed right hand supports the precision of the left.”³⁰ Hearing the target note and adjusting as necessary before the bow change will make the left hand more secure.

For example, consider mm. 10-11 in the first movement of the *Sonata*. There are two successive position changes in which I use an anticipated shift. Figure 1 below shows that from beat two of m. 10 I go from second finger on B and first finger on A to a new position in m. 11 with second finger on F#.

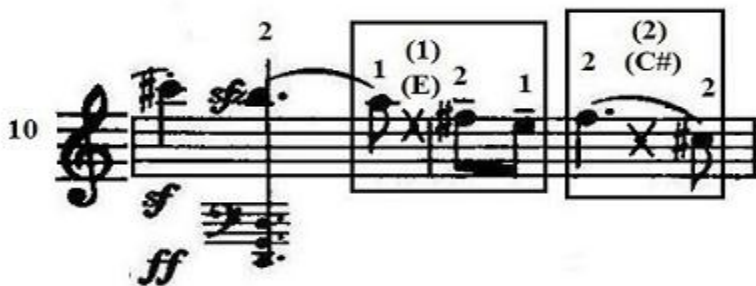


Figure 1: mm. 10-11. Establishing a new position with an anticipated shift.

³⁰ Gerhard Mantel, *Cello Technique: Principles of Movement and Form*, trans. Barbara Heimberger Thiem, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 33.

The target note will be E using the first finger that played that last note (A) in the original position, and I shift to E on the “old” down bow of beat two ensuring that I can hear the arrival on the E. The first note of the new position is F# played with second finger. By establishing the new position using first finger on E, the second finger will have a natural connection to F# making it relatively easy to locate. The same is true for the next position change in m. 11 from F# to C#. Here the target note is also the desired note, C#, and the old finger will also be the new finger in the next position. Again, finding the new position is dependent on shifting to and hearing the target note before articulating the C# with the bow. During the learning stages the target note can be articulated as loudly as necessary in order to be effective. As the connection between the positions becomes more fluid the target note should become less audible, but I have found that left hand should continue to hit the target note at every stage of practice and performance to ensure consistency.

Preparation of the position change is also an important technical consideration. The motion of the left arm and hand has to begin before the finger actually leaves the position. The preparatory motion accomplishes two basic tasks: 1) releases the weight of the hand and arm allowing for a cleaner and smoother transition between positions; 2) Increases the odds that the arm and/or hand will actually travel the required distance (i.e. go far enough). This scenario is analogous to the difference between shuffling and picking your feet up off the ground when walking. Shuffling your feet makes walking laborious, slow, and dangerous, whereas lifting your feet off the ground releases the weight off of the legs, allowing for a faster and more efficient gait. The driving idea behind an anticipated shift is to get to the new position before articulating the first note in the new position. In my own playing, preparation of the left arm can be a large gesture that involves the whole arm, or it can take place on a much smaller scale, involving only

the left hand. In either case, the physical gesture is the same: a circular motion of the left arm initiated by the elbow that will release the weight of the left hand, and will “lengthen the time devoted to the shift and thereby provides better control of the total movement.”³¹ Not only does preparation of the left arm have to take place, but it has to happen far in advance of the actual position change. The earlier the preparation begins, the less rapid the shift regardless of the distance. While these two components are important to conceptualize individually, they are both rendered useless if not coordinated and integrated as one movement. Mantel describes the importance of the combination of the concepts in the following way: “the anticipatory movement is meaningless only if it connects neatly with the final (audible) phase of the sliding motion.”³²

These ideas apply to position changes of any distance, whether a semitone or two octaves apart, with chords, double stops, position changes within a single bow (i.e., under a slur), and position changes that involve string crossings. Both of these types of shifts have benefits and drawbacks. Choosing one over the other is a matter of personal preference and the style of music being played since each type of shift has certain characteristics that may prove more effective in specific situations. Because the motion to the new position occurs before the change of bow, the anticipated shift is cleaner. The opposite is true of the delayed shift because the left hand arrives in the new position after the change of bow. There is an audible arrival of the left hand which although less clean, is often more expressive than the anticipated shift. I believe that the anticipated shift helps my intonation since I can use the target note to quickly adjust my intonation before articulating the bow change. The anticipated shift also appeals to my

³¹ Ibid., 56.

³² Ibid., 55.

propensity for planning ahead and desire for security in the left hand. However, what the delayed shift lacks in left hand security it makes up for in its linear simplicity and smoothness. A delayed shift is a point-to-point connection in the left hand that allows for more *legato* playing and the possibility for more continuous and even vibrato. These are the basic characteristics of anticipated and delayed shifts which other cellists may take issue with, but are those that I have discovered in my own playing and that I find to be the most relevant.

3.2 The Bow

There are more technical issues related to the bow than I have space in this paper to cover. Fortunately, there are a limited number of bow related problems that the cellist will encounter when playing Kodály's *Sonata*. I will cover the balance between bow speed and pressure, the motion of the arm in the bow stroke, and bow angle. Although there are a couple of instances in the *Sonata* in which a specific bow stroke is required, I will cover specific strokes when dealing with a particular passage in later chapters.

There are a variety of factors that go into determining the correct bow speed and pressure: 1) the thickness of the string; 2) the placement of the bow on the string relative to the bridge and fingerboard; 3) the duration of the note or notes; and 4) the dynamic level.

Each string has its own unique thickness, and therefore each string requires a different amount of weight from the arm in order to create enough friction to make the string vibrate. As the thickness of the strings increase, more weight has to be applied to the string. However, there is a delicate balance when applying weight into the string. Too much and the string is choked; too little and the bow skates over the surface of the string. When I play I generally use the elbow to help distribute the weight of the right arm. For more weight I lower my elbow, and to release weight I lift the elbow. This is where the placement of the bow on the string relative to the bridge

comes into play. The degree to which weight can be applied to any string is affected by the proximity of the bow to the bridge or fingerboard. The tension of the string increases as the bow approaches the bridge, and decreases closer to the fingerboard. As the bow moves away from the bridge less weight will be required to make the string vibrate.

However, there is now another variable we have to consider in addition to weight and placement: bow speed. The bow speed can help or hurt the sound just as weight can. Since less weight is needed as the bow moves toward the fingerboard, the speed of the bow must also increase otherwise a slow, heavy bow near the fingerboard will choke the string. Conversely, a fast, light bow near the bridge will keep the bow from gripping the string. Here is where the duration of the note will come into the equation. If the note's duration is longer (i.e. sustained) the bow has to travel slower so as not to run out of bow. The dynamics will generally determine where the bow should be placed relative to the bridge, and thus the appropriate speed and weight.

Just as a preparatory motion in the left arm must occur prior to a position change, changes in bow speed must also be prepared. This is a matter of judging what the speed after the bow change will need to be, and then either decreasing or increasing the bow speed to match the new speed. If shifting is analogous to walking, then bow changes are analogous to driving with a manual transmission. The car will drive more efficiently when in the correct gear. For example, if the note after a bow change needs a faster bow speed, I have to increase the bow speed on the previous bow just as I have to accelerate in second gear before shifting to third gear. Conversely, if the note after a bow change needs a slower speed, I have to slow the bow before the change in direction.

Lastly, I will address bow angle. In order for any sound produced by the bow to be clear and full the bow has to maintain a consistent contact point with the string. This also means that

the bow has to travel in a straight line from frog to tip. If not, the contact point is lost and so is the sound. Unfortunately a straight line in string playing is not what one might necessarily think of as straight. Because the bridge is curved and each string lies on a different point on that curve, a series of tangents are created when the bow is drawn across each string. Although each tangent creates a line, it is the angle of the arm that will determine whether or not the line is straight relative to the curve of the bridge. As the bow crosses from one string to the next or skips strings, the angle of the bow and arm have to accommodate the curvature of the bridge.

More often than not the body has to help keep the bow straight. This is especially true on the A and C strings which meet the bridge at its outermost points. One way to mitigate the extreme angles on these two strings is to turn the cello to the right when playing on the A string or to the left when playing on the C string for extended periods of time. Turning the cello when playing on the A string keeps the right arm from having to reach and is especially beneficial when playing at the tip. Turning the cello when playing on the C string keeps the right arm from having to position itself behind the cello, prevents the wrist from breaking when playing at the frog (because the arm is in position over the string instead of underneath it), and for some cellists (usually tall cellists) prevents the right hand from hitting the right leg. There are other changes the cellist can make physically to accommodate bow angle that I will discuss in the next section.

3.3 Physical Aspects

There are several physical aspects to my playing that I believe are worth mentioning. With regard to the left hand I release any and all fingers that are not actually in use. Recall the walking analogy. Walking is virtually impossible if both feet remain on the ground. The same is true of the left hand. Multiple fingers on the fingerboard create excess tension, making it more difficult to vibrate and shift efficiently. Furthermore, the released fingers should remain relaxed

with some space in between them rather than bunched together. Released fingers and the thumb should not point if at all possible. When playing in thumb position, the thumb should simply maintain contact with the strings to preserve the balance of the hand when not being used.

Generally, I use my body to help pull the bow in a straight line, and to make sure that the bow is at the correct angle for each string. I accomplish this by turning at the waist slightly. This does two things: 1) helps the arm get over to the A string or C string, and 2) ensures that string changes are made by the upper arm not the wrist. I also try to use the larger units of the right arm whenever possible rather than allowing the stroke to be executed by the wrist or the fingers. String crossings, whether the stroke is separate or slurred, should be executed with the whole arm. If string crossings are made by flexing the wrist the bow angle and contact point cannot be maintained.

In more general terms, breathing and maintaining balance of the body are important in my playing. Breathing is another aspect of preparation for both the right and left hands. More specifically I incorporate breathing into the rhythm of a shift and the timing of a bow change. Breathing is also important in maintaining the pulse. Starker often advises his students to use the word “and” before beginning a phrase or to separate units of music.³³ Maintaining balance of the body depends on rotating the body or parts of the body around an axis (e.g. turning at the waist around the axis of the spine) rather than bending forward or backward. Similarly, moving the body side-to-side using the feet and legs to initiate the movement rather than bending at the spine is more conducive to maintaining the balanced relationship between the body and the cello

³³ Tim Finholt, *Janos Starker Master class Report*, University of Washington, December 2, 4, and 8, 1999., <http://www.cello.org/Newsletter/Articles/starkmc.htm> (accessed February 21, 2013).

because although the body is moving it is still aligned. One specific example is the alignment of the head with the body, especially as the left hand progress up the fingerboard. A tendency for many cellists as they move higher and higher on the fingerboard is to lean over the cello and to move their head forward or down. However, moving the head, neck, and shoulders forward creates unwanted tension and prevents the weight of the body from being transferred from above. Balance can be disrupted when a cellist thrusts his or her body forward when executing a large shift into a higher position. Balance is maintained if the head is up when going into the higher positions.

These are the core principles that I follow in my playing and those that I will cite most frequently in my discussion of Kodály's *Sonata*. Not all cellists or string players share the same philosophy when it comes to technique, but I found these ideas to be the most successful in not only my own playing, but in the playing of my colleagues and professor.

Chapter 4 *Scordatura*

Kodály's *Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello*, Op. 8 bears many striking features, the most prominent of which is the use of *scordatura* tuning. The word *scordatura* comes from the Italian word *scordare*, which means "to mistune."³⁴ Kodály has altered the standard tuning of the cello's open strings in perfect fifths (C-G-D-A) by lowering the C and G strings by a semitone to B and F#. The open strings thus spell B-F#-D-A, a B minor seventh chord. The mistuning not only changes the pitches of the open strings but it also changes the timbre of the instrument, alters the pitches that naturally resonate, changes the distribution of the tension over the cello, changes the configuration of the left hand, and the way the bow must deal with the lowered strings. The use of *scordatura* tuning presents a few other unique challenges not found in the vast majority of the cello repertoire, but as I will discuss in the next section, is not necessarily an avant-garde practice.

4.1 Historical Perspective

Although the *Sonata* features characteristics of a 20th century work, Kodály employs many traditional compositional techniques, one of which is *scordatura*. In fact, *scordatura* may be the oldest technique in the entire work. According to Oxford Music Online, "*scordatura* was first introduced early in the 16th century and enjoyed a particular vogue between 1600 and 1750."³⁵ Furthermore, *scordatura* changes the timbre of the instrument and allows for the use of various "alternative harmonic possibilities and, in some cases, extension of an instrument's

³⁴David D. Boyden, et al. "Scordatura." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/41698> (accessed February 22, 2013).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

range.”³⁶ This is certainly the case with Kodály’s *Sonata*. The cello in his piece ranges from the open B string to B on the A string five octaves higher. Kodály also seeks to imitate traditional Hungarian instruments and the musical styles associated with those instruments with the use of a drone or pedal tone. The drones or pedals are not necessarily the result of *scordatura*, but the drones are often combinations of open strings and stopped pitches that would not otherwise be possible in standard tuning. Finally, the specific *scordatura* tuning that Kodály uses in this piece allows him to use the B pentatonic scale as the basis of many themes throughout the piece, and have available the sonorous open strings to provide harmonic support. By mistuning the open strings, Kodály is actually making the piece more playable for the cellist in the key area or mode that he desires. The open strings contain the majority of the pitches in the pentatonic scale he uses for his melodies. This allows for many chords that use open strings and harmonics, and the piece is more playable and resonant as a result.

At its height, the practice of *scordatura* was common in solo music for violin. German composer Heinrich Biber (1644-1704) was the most prolific composer to have used *scordatura* in his works for violin. Among his many compositions he wrote 14 sonatas for violin known as the “Mystery” or “Rosary” sonatas, all of which incorporated different combinations of *scordatura* tunings.³⁷ *Scordatura* became more popular in Italy in the 18th century and Vivaldi and Tartini also wrote compositions for violin with alternate tunings. A few 19th century virtuosi-composers such as Paganini, Spohr, Vieuxtemps, and Beriot used *scordatura*, as did later 19th and early 20th century composers such as Schumann, Respighi, Saint-Saens, Mahler,

³⁶ Ibid., 1.

³⁷ Ibid., 1.

Richard Strauss, and Igor Stravinsky. The latter composers wrote *scordatura* for cello and violin in chamber music and orchestral settings. Robert Schumann wrote *scordatura* for the cello in his *Piano Quartet in E♭ major*, Op. 47, and Italian composer Ottorino Respighi wrote for the entire cello section to tune the C string down to B in his tone poem *The Pines of Rome*. In these two pieces the *scordatura* is not indicated for the cello throughout the piece, but rather at the end of the third movement in the case of Schumann, and toward the end of the third movement of *The Pines of Rome*. Saint-Saens' tone poem *Danse Macabre* features a solo violin written in *scordatura* with the E string tuned down a semitone to E♭. Richard Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben* requires that the second violins tune the G string down to G♭ at rehearsal 40, with a subsequent return to G♮ around rehearsal 45. The solo viola in Strauss' *Don Quixote* features a *scordatura* tuning in which the C string is tuned down a semitone to B during the course of the piece.³⁸ Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite* indicates that the violins tune the E string down a whole tone to D to play the harmonics in the Introduction. Stravinsky also wrote *scordatura* passages for the cello section in his *Rite of Spring*.³⁹ Finally, the second movement of Gustav Mahler's *Symphony No. 4* features a solo violin part written entirely in a *scordatura* tuning a whole tone above standard tuning. To make life slightly easier for the violinist, Mahler indicates that the concertmaster is to have two violins, one in standard tuning and the other in *scordatura*, to avoid tuning and retuning during the performance. Transcription *scordatura* is a variation of the practice in which the entire instrument was retuned either a whole tone or semitone higher in order to achieve greater

³⁸ Ibid., 4.

³⁹ It should be noted that while many of these *scordatura* tunings are written in the score, it is not always practical to actually execute them in performance, particularly in orchestral settings or in situations in which it might be difficult to tune and retune accurately, and thus not all of these *scordatura* tunings are used in performance.

brilliance. This was typically done with the viola, most notably in Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola*.⁴⁰

The role of cello, especially early cello, as an accompanimental and supporting voice means that the use of *scordatura* tunings throughout its history is slightly different than the violin. The early cello had more than one standard tuning. One common configuration known as the "Italian" featured the A string tuned down to a G.⁴¹ Because there was more than one established tuning for the cello, any deviation from the standard C-G-D-A was not necessarily considered *scordatura*.⁴² For the cello as solo instrument, *scordatura* was not nearly as common as it was for violin. The fifth *Suite for Solo Cello* by J.S. Bach can be played with the A string lowered to a G, but other than the few examples mentioned above, *scordatura* was not a popular choice for composers in the 19th century.

Kodály's *Sonata* was (along with Reger's *Three Suites for Solo Cello*, Op. 131c) the first piece written for unaccompanied cello since J.S. Bach's six suites. Following the emergence of Kodály's *Sonata* the 20th century saw numerous pieces written for unaccompanied cello. Although most are written in standard tuning, there are a handful of 20th century works for cello (solo and chamber) that are written in a *scordatura* tuning. Kodály himself wrote another piece in the same year as the sonata titled *Capriccio* for unaccompanied cello that again used a B string instead of a C string. It is difficult to say with any certainty that Kodály was responsible for the

⁴⁰ Ibid., 3.

⁴¹ Ibid., 4.

⁴² Although this may have been true during the Baroque period, it is safe to say that modern cellists consider any tuning other than C-G-D-A to be *scordatura*.

newly found interest in the cello as a solo instrument, but the *Sonata* pushed the limits of technical virtuosity in so many new ways that it had to have played some part.

4.2 *Scordatura* in Kodály's *Sonata*

As mentioned above, Kodály's *Sonata* requires the cellist to lower the C and G strings by a semitone to B and F#. There are number of implications inherent in this new arrangement of open strings. First, the spaces between the intervals on the B and F# string will be different than what we are normally accustomed to on the C and G strings, and the left hand will have to readjust in order to play in tune. The cellist cannot take for granted that if he or she puts first finger down in first position on the B string that the sounding C# will be in tune, or that the distance between the pitches in first position will be the same as standard tuning. Secondly, the instrument will feel different and will react differently to the bow. The tension on one side of the bridge is now lower and it will affect the way the entire instrument feels, and the way that the bow interacts with the lower strings. Additionally, the types of harmonics that are now available have changed. Pitches that used to resonate with open strings no longer have the same sound quality, and pitches that never before had any natural resonance are now harmonics that can be used to tune open strings.

Third, the cello itself is going to have to constantly adjust and readjust to being tuned and retuned. Each cellist will discover how long it will take for his or her cello to adjust every time they have to get in and out of *scordatura*. What is perhaps more important is planning practice time in advance so that time is not wasted tuning and retuning. If, for example, you have orchestra rehearsal after your Kodály practice session, do not wait until five minutes before the rehearsal to tune. There is nothing more annoying than taking out your cello for orchestra rehearsal and remembering that you are not in tune, especially if you are late.

There are other intangibles at play as well: the age of the strings, the weather conditions, humidity, etc. will all have an effect on the way that each cello reacts to being manipulated so frequently. During the time in which I prepared for my recital, I discovered that the best way to deal with tuning was to lower the C and G strings with the pegs as close to B and F# as I could get and then let the cello sit for a few minutes. If I tried to go from standard tuning to *scordatura* all at once it would take much longer because the strings were constantly stretching.

4.2.1 Reading a Transposed Part

Other issues inherent in playing in a *scordatura* tuning have to do with reading a transposed part and difficulties with intonation. In any music with a *scordatura* tuning, the part will be transposed such that it appears as though the instrument remains in standard tuning. The pitches in the part will be arranged for the left hand, and in the case of Kodály's *Sonata*, will sound a semitone lower than written. There are a few problems that can arise in this situation. First, it takes some time to get used to not hearing what is written on the page. This is a potentially bigger problem for individuals who have perfect pitch, but even for those who do not, the ear has certain expectations in terms of timbre and pitch when the eyes see certain pitches. Second, the transposed pitches may have accidentals that have nothing to do with true key of the sounded pitches. For example, the opening of the second movement is written as if it were in a flat key, but if the part is written in C there are actually no accidentals through the majority of the melody. With passages that were transposed from beginning to end, I rewrote the part in C so that I understood the actual tonality of the melody. This is also true for printed four note chords. The bottom half of the chord may be in a different key than the top half. There are many situations in which either writing out the sounded pitches or labeling notes or chords in the music will help train the ear to ignore what the eyes see.

4.2.2 Implications for Intonation

With regard to intonation, the discrepancy caused by the transposed part can also cause a few problems. A prime example occurs in the first movement at the beginning of the second theme group at m. 81. The second theme group begins in E \flat but the transposed part reads with E \sharp and B \sharp , causing a sort of juxtaposition of two unrelated keys. The cellist cannot put fingers down where E \sharp and B \sharp are in standard tuning and hope for the pitches to be in tune in E \flat . The cellist must remember not to let the transpositions determine how any passage is tuned. In this particular case, G \sharp has to be the pitch around which this chord is tuned, rather than relying on the position of the left hand alone.

Scordatura in Kodály's *Sonata* results in a unique sound not heard in any music previously written for the cello. The use of *scordatura* requires the cellist to make a number of adjustments to some specific aspects of cello technique, and it requires the cellist to change his or her approach to intonation. Reading a transposed part will require some readjustment both mentally and physically. The location of pitches on the fingerboard cannot be taken for granted, nor can the printed pitches if intonation is to be accurate. I found that writing out some portions of the piece in C made it easier for me to understand the composition of the passage and to play it in tune. Every cellist will find playing with a *scordatura* tuning challenging in some regard at first. These were the difficulties that I encountered and spent the most time overcoming. The ideas that I have presented in this chapter may not apply to every cellist or every variation of *scordatura* tuning, but these solutions worked with not only my approach to the cello but the cello itself.

Chapter 5 Movement I: *Allegro maestoso ma appassionato*

Compared to the other two movements of the *Sonata*, the first movement is the shortest and the most straightforward in terms of musical material. Kodály uses much of the same material throughout the movement, with some elaboration, and therefore many of the same technical issues come up more than once. Because of this structure I will treat similar passages side-by-side, rather than go through the movement as it unfolds. For example, the return of the first theme at the start of the development in m. 80 presents similar technical issues seen in the exposition. Similarly, the second theme (which begins in m. 32) and its return in the recapitulation at m. 152 share the same intervals, and the technical issues of the two themes can be discussed simultaneously. Therefore, I have arranged the content of this chapter in the following manner: I will discuss issues found in the first theme group, followed by the second theme group, and finally the development which incorporates musical material from both the first and second theme groups.

5. 1 Formal Analysis

In this *Sonata* Kodály lays the foundation of a new musical style with traditional compositional and formal techniques. In the case of the first movement he has constructed a well-balanced sonata form, albeit with some modifications that stem from the use of scales and harmonies common in folk music. In a sonata form typical of the 18th or 19th century the objectives are: 1) the establishment of tonic, 2) movement away from tonic, and 3) the return of tonic. The delineations of the formal sections (i.e. exposition, development, recapitulation) are based on harmonic relationships between the sections. Functional harmony is largely absent in Kodály's use of sonata form.

Kodály uses pentatonicism, a lowered second scale degree as an upper leading tone, and modal mixture such that he creates a harmonic fluidity which enables him to go between major and minor modes, and to establish key areas instead of actual keys. For example, the main key areas in the first movement are as follows: B, E \flat (followed by the development), D \sharp , F \sharp , and B. The exposition is in the key area of B rather than B major or minor, even though it may sound like a minor mode. Kodály creates this sense of harmonic ambiguity by using an anhemitonic pentatonic scale (B-D-E-F \sharp -A-B) that emphasizes the minor third interval.⁴³ Similarly, the key area of F \sharp in the recapitulation moves easily between the major and minor mode, using both raised third and a lowered second scale degrees in such a way that labeling the section as major or minor would not make any sense. So while there are easily identifiable sonata form elements (first and second theme groups, development, and recapitulation), the relationship between these elements is not necessarily defined harmonically (i.e., a modulation from tonic to dominant in the exposition).

The first theme group occurs in mm. 1-31 and is in the key area of B. A diagram of the first theme group is shown below (Figure 2). The opening theme is a perfect example of the way Kodály uses pentatonicism and upper leading tones. Measures 1-14 (Figure 3) is based on an anhemitonic pentatonic scale (B-D-E-F \sharp -A-B).⁴⁴ The only two pitches in mm. 1-14 that do not belong in that pentatonic collection are the C \sharp and the E \sharp that occur in m. 8. In addition to the two minor thirds that are contained in the anhemitonic scale, the presence of a C \sharp also gives this

⁴³ Andrew Allen Smith, “*Aspects of Hungarian Folk Music in Zoltán Kodály’s Sonata for Unaccompanied Violoncello, Op. 8*” (a supporting document submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1997), 17-19.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

phrase a B minor flavor. In his dissertation on the folk influences on the *Sonata*, Alan Smith believes that Kodály alternates between C# and C♭ in order to change the mode of a given phrase.⁴⁵

Theme Group	Measure Nos.	Key Area(s)	Characteristics
First Theme Group	1-31	B	
1a)	1-14.1	B	Anhemitonic pentatonic scale
1b)	14.2-20.2	F#	
1c)	20.2-25; 25.3-31	F#-C; C(minor)-B	
Second Theme Group	32-79	E♭	
2a)	32-43.1	E♭	Tonal center unclear until m. 39
2b)	43.2-63	B♭, D♭, E♭, A♭	“deceptive cadence” in m. 63
2c)	64-79	E♭	Lowered second scale degree reinforces E♭.

Figure 2: Form diagram of the exposition.



Figure 3: mm. 1-14.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 20.

The first theme group also contains several cadences that have a descending semitone motion in lieu of dominant-tonic cadences (Figure 4). The first occurs in mm. 13-14 from G to F# which leads to the conclusion of the first section of the theme group. The same motion is repeated with octave displacement in both mm. 15-16 and mm. 17-18 on D to C#. However, as this second section approaches its conclusion the semitone motion changes from descending to ascending in mm. 18-19 (B-C) and in mm. 19-20 (D#-E). It would appear that the use of descending semitone motion serves as a vehicle for continuation of the phrase, whereas ascending semitone motion signifies an approaching arrival, as illustrated by the first real point of arrival on the F# octave in m. 20 after two strong ascending semitone cadences.

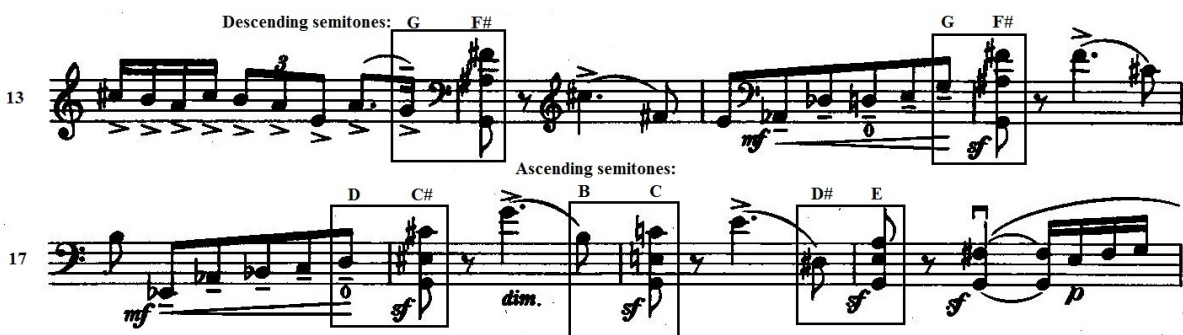


Figure 4: mm. 13-20. Descending and ascending semitone motion.

The same phenomenon happens in the final section of the first theme group in mm. 20-31 (Figure 5). There is another descending semitone motion in mm. 26-27 from B \flat to A in the top voice of the chords on the fourth beat of m. 26 and the first beat of m. 27. Instead of the phrase concluding, it continues immediately on the second beat of m. 27. The descent that follows finally leads to the end of the first theme group in m. 31. Even here, where the feeling of conclusion is quite strong, the presence of C \sharp and D \sharp is tonally ambiguous, hinting at B major and B minor (with a lowered second scale degree) simultaneously.

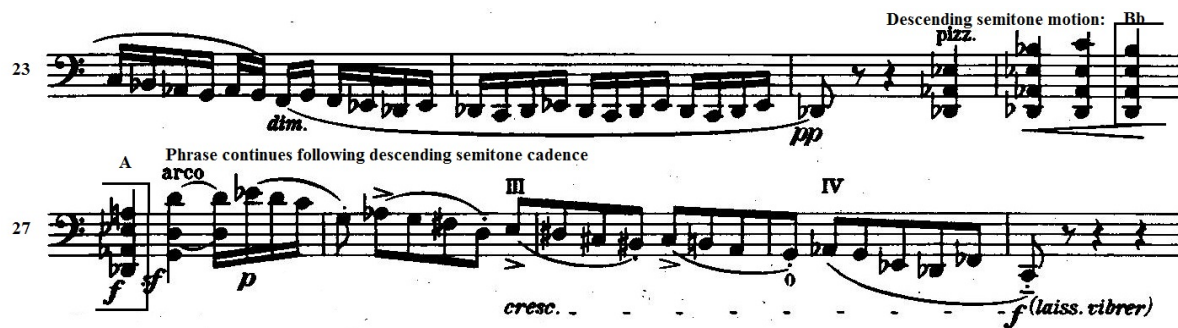


Figure 5: mm. 23-31. Descending semitone cadence in mm. 26-27 followed by a continuation of the phrase in mm. 27-31.

Finally, the arrival on B in m. 31 means that unlike a traditional sonata form, the first theme group begins and ends in the same key area, where we would normally expect a modulation to the either the dominant key of F# major or to the relative major key of D.⁴⁶

The second theme group occurs in mm. 32-79. The abrupt change in character between the first and second theme groups is a perfect example of the thematic material delineating the formal sections of the movement. Rather than a modulation to a related key in the first theme group, it ends in B (as it began), forming a closed section. Three beats of rest further emphasize the separation of these two sections. As the second thematic group begins in m. 32 (Figure 6), the new key area of E \flat does not become clear until m. 39. The second theme group can be further broken into two parts: mm. 32-43.1 in which the initial theme is heard three times sequentially, and mm. 43.2-63 which begins in B \flat and eventually moves to A \flat via D \flat and E \flat . In both of

⁴⁶ James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, "The Medial Caesura and Its Role in the Eighteenth-Century Sonata Exposition," *Music Theory Spectrum*, 19, no. 2 (Autumn 1997): 115-154. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/745751> (accessed February 25, 2013). In Hepokoski and Darcy's research on the so-called *Sonata Theory* they explain that although a non-modulating exposition is possible, it is less frequently encountered than an exposition that modulates to the dominant, relative minor, or relative major key. Although I do not use the tenets of *Sonata Theory* to analyze this piece, I am using the theory as a way to compare and contrast Kodály's use of sonata form and as point of reference for the reader.

these key areas the lowered second and third scale degrees allow for the easy movement between the major and minor mode.

Figure 6: Excerpt of Second Theme Group, mm. 32-57

At m. 63 there is an arrival on $A\sharp$ which I have labeled as a “deceptive cadence” (Figure 7). This is not a deceptive cadence in the sense that there is harmonic motion from a V chord to a vi chord, but rather an arrival has occurred somewhere other than the expected pitch or key area. Looking at m. 61-62, $A\flat$ appears to be the tonal center and the pitch on which the listener might expect an arrival. The arrival on $A\sharp$ instead of $A\flat$ is certainly unexpected and thus deceptive. The *fermata* in m. 63 on the $A\sharp$ forces Kodály to find a way to get to an actual cadence, and after two attempts there is an arrival on $E\flat$ at m. 70. Despite this arrival the mode is still ambiguous because of the lack of tonal definition. The lowered second scale degree appears again and continues to pull the tonal center of gravity to $E\flat$ indicating an approach to the end of something.

In mm. 78-79 there is a sudden revitalization and a subsequent restatement of the first theme group (now in Eb) to begin the development.

58

63

70

76

Key Area: Eb

"Deceptive Cadence" on A natural

f *pp* *f* *ppp*

cresc. *rit.* *a tempo*

sul ponticello *pos. ord.* *III* *f espr.*

Development begins in Eb Major with first theme material

Figure 7: mm. 58-81. "Deceptive cadence" in m. 63 and transition into the development.

The development (mm. 80-151) is based material from the first theme group. The diagram below shows the layout of the development (Figure 8).

Measure Nos.	Key Area(s)	Characteristics
80-135	Eb, Cb(M), Eb(m), C(m), C#(M), E(m), B, GM (dc),	First theme material used exclusively in development
136-151	F#, C#M (upper leading tone), D#M	False recap in mm. 146 using all major chords and ending on a D#M chord.

Figure 8: Form diagram of the development.

Rather than develop any other related key areas or go through the circle of fifths, Kodály arrives on chords that suggest other key areas that are not necessarily related: Eb, Cb(M), Eb(m), C(m), C#(M), E(m), B, and finally the G major chord in m. 132.2 is another example of a "deceptive cadence" (Figure 9). In this case the expected chord here is most likely a B minor chord because prior to this chord, a variation on the first theme is heard in its original tonality in mm. 125-132.1.

Figure 9: mm. 125-132. Variation on first theme group leading to a G major “deceptive cadence.”

Dominant Retransition

137

Key Area: F#

142

allargando

rubato

sempre ff

*) *tr ad lib.*

F# Major

U. E. 6650.

False Recapitulation

Tempo. (*poco meno*)

146

pesante

First Theme Material

Key Area: C#/D#

The image shows a musical score for the False Recapitulation section of the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 29. The score is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins at measure 146 with a tempo marking 'Tempo. (poco meno)' and a dynamic marking 'pesante'. The music features a series of chords and single notes, with a prominent tritone (F# and C) in the right hand. The section ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

40

The recapitulation thus begins at the restatement of the second theme group in mm. 152

(Figure 11).

Recapitulation of Second Theme Group

Tempo I.

151 *pp* *mf* *p* *f* *pizz.*

157 *p* *p subito* *3* *3*

161 *ff* *sostenuto* *tempo* *sf* *p* *(pp) espi.*

165 *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3*

170 *rit.* *f* *3* *a tempo* *3*

Figure 11: mm. 152-173. Excerpt of Recapitulation of Second Theme Group.

The recapitulation closely follows the exposition of the second theme group with the exception of the recap being in the key areas of mostly B and F# as shown in the form diagram below (Figure 12).

Theme Group	Measure Nos.	Key Area(s)	Characteristics
Second Theme Group	152-198	F#, B	Second theme is recapped first
1a)	152-163.1	B	
2a)	163.2-183	F#, B	"deceptive cadence" on F in m. 183
3a)	183-198	B	
Coda	199	B	

Figure 12: Form diagram of the recapitulation.

The location of the coda however, is slightly more ambiguous. The conclusion of the second theme occurs in mm. 190-198 after the arrival on B in m. 190, just as it does in the exposition before it leads into the development (Figure 13). There is a gradual decrescendo,

repeated $b6-5$ motives from the second theme group in mm. 191-195, and $b2-1$ motion in mm. 193 and 197. Following this is a restatement of the two opening chords in m. 199 to finally end the movement.

Second Theme Ends, 190
Closing Begins

f sonoro dim. poco a poco

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

ff

perendosi

U. E. 6650.

m. 199: Coda

Figure 13: mm. 190-199. Closing and Coda.

In his analysis Smith labels the final measure as the coda explaining that because the development was so heavily weighted toward the first theme, there was no need for Kodály to recap the entire first theme in tonic. He instead provides a sense or recollection of the first theme when it is falsely recapped at the end of the development. The final two chords in tonic provide a sort of counterbalance both harmonically and thematically.⁴⁷ In terms of Sonata Theory, this idea is viable because the structural and rhetorical end of the movement (Essential Sonata Closure or ESC) is defined by an arrival on a perfect authentic cadence.⁴⁸ The arrival in m. 190 on B certainly feels like the end of something and an indication of a closing, but the last two chords are closer to a true perfect authentic cadence.

Kodály has combined a sophisticated and nuanced understanding of a traditional sonata form with his unique harmonic language. Although the harmonic structure of the movement is a departure from the typical tonic-dominant-tonic trajectory established in the 18th and 19th

⁴⁷ Smith, 20.

⁴⁸ Hepokoski and Darcy, 119.

centuries, his unorthodox treatment of sonata form is understandable because of the coherence of each theme and the clear delineation between formal sections.

5.2 First Theme Group Material

One of the defining characteristics of the first theme group is three and four note chords. The return of first theme material throughout the movement is easily identified by multi-stop chords and the rhythm found in the opening of the movement. These chords present a certain amount of technical difficulty for the bow. The speed and placement of the bow, weight of the arm, flatness of the hair, thickness of the string(s), etc. are all variables in the equation of the bow in any passage. Understanding how the bow will react to the C string versus the A string, what bow speed is appropriate given the placement of the bow, the duration of the note, the dynamics, and the musical gesture and style are all essential to string playing. There are also several position changes in the first theme group that were particularly problematic for me. In general, when solving problems for the left hand one has to consider ease of execution and comfort for the left hand, as well as how the musical style might influence the choice of shift (anticipated or delayed), and how the harmonic language may change the way we approach the left hand.

My goal in playing the chords in this movement was to find a way of using the bow that would treat the lower strings equally and allow for the use of more bow on the A string in order to emphasize the melody. Ultimately I discovered that rolling the chord, rather than breaking it, was the best way to deal with chords throughout the movement because: 1) the chords cover a wide intervallic range, 2) the chords occur consecutively, and 3) the inherent metric displacement of the melody requires specific bow speeds and placement to accommodate all of these characteristics.

The fact that the chords cover a wide intervallic range (the largest is four octaves) means that the bow has to accommodate both the lower, thicker strings and the increasingly shorter, thinner A string. To draw a thicker, heavier string the bow has to move at a slower speed and more weight from the arm must be transferred into the bow, whereas on a thinner string the bow can generally be lighter and travel at a faster speed to initiate vibration in the string. I cannot use the bow on the lower strings in the same manner as I do on the A string, especially as the melody increases in register. Additionally, we have to realize that the melody itself is only on the A string and that the bottom of the chord functions as harmonic support. The melodic line also has a rhythm, albeit metrically displaced, which should not be disturbed by the bow breaking a big chord. Therefore, the bow must be focused on the A string to effectively play the melody. All of these elements were reasons that breaking the chords was never successful.

Breaking the chords into a distinct bottom and top naturally places emphasis on the bottom of the chord, and has the potential to make it sound as though the downbeat occurs at the bottom of the chord. Furthermore, the chords often occur consecutively or on every other beat. In a situation like this the danger is that by emphasizing the bottom of each chord that the phrase will sound vertical, again taking away from the melody and its rhythm. Rolling these chords ensures that the lower strings are set into motion by the bow, but released quickly so that they will continue to ring and support the melody. By releasing the lower strings quickly, the cellist will also be able to not only get to the A string sooner, but will have more bow to spend on the melody.

Rolling becomes especially necessary when the opening theme is heard for the final time just before the recapitulation in mm. 146.2-149.2 (see Figure 10a). In this passage the whole theme is composed entirely of four note chords. Instead of one or two consecutive chords there

are 14 consecutive chords. Breaking each chord became quite laborious and robbed the phrase of direction. Kodály has indicated that the phrase should be played *pesante*, which in my mind means that it should be broadened slightly. The time that it naturally takes to play this many chords in a row will naturally broaden this passage.

Although the first movement does not feature the intricate juggling act of the second movement or the pyrotechnics of the third movement, there were several moments in the first theme group that I had to decide on fingerings, as well as several position changes that I had to negotiate. There are a few factors that go into determining a fingering. The most obvious is what ends up being the most comfortable for each person's hand. I have relatively small hands and short fingers, so a compact arrangement of the hand that avoids stretching or shifting is often more comfortable for me, but might be less so for a person with larger hands. The musical style may also dictate the kinds of left hand configurations that will be used. In this sonata the non-diatonic harmonies and large intervals mean that the left hand will not be able to play in the major and minor mode arrangement in which the left hand usually finds itself. Finally, in my discussion of left hand solutions I have provided not only the solution that I ultimately chose, but also those solutions that are playable but that did not feel the most comfortable for me. I believe that part of learning any piece of music is trying to work through as many solutions as practicable, not only because it will lead to the best possible solution, but it may also come in handy to have multiple fingerings should a memory lapse occur.

Measures 5-11 (Figure 14) present the first instance in which I had to make a decision about a fingering. There are few options when it comes to picking a fingering in these measures. I begin m. 5 with first finger having played the preceding A harmonic with my thumb. At first I attempted to keep first finger on B until measure 7, shifting to and from the F# and E# in the

mm. 7-9, but in the end, this fingering is not possible given the tempo. For the sake of convenience and accuracy of intonation, I find it best to choose a fingering that requires the least amount of shifting, or at the very least, shifts of smaller intervals such as semitones. Instead of using first finger throughout the passage, it is much simpler to shift to C# in m. 6 with first finger and keep the thumb fixed on B for the remainder of the passage. The only caveat is that arrival on the F# (m. 7) and E# (m. 8) occur via a stretch of the hand rather than a shift. The distance of a fifth in this position is not difficult to reach, and it is only one whole step higher than the span of the left hand in thumb position. This is one such example of a non-diatonic arrangement of the left hand that although idiosyncratic, works well.



Figure 14: mm. 5-9. Fix thumb on B and reach for F# and E#.

The first position change in thumb position occurs between the pickup to m. 9 and the downbeat of m. 10 from B to C#, the most intense point of this phrase. I experimented with several possible solutions all of which involved an anticipated shift with the thumb to a note from which the hand will open in order to arrive on the C#. The most effective solution for each individual will likely depend on which one is most comfortable for the left hand. The first solution (and the one that works best for my hand) is to shift from B to E with thumb and open the hand and reach for C# (Figure 15).

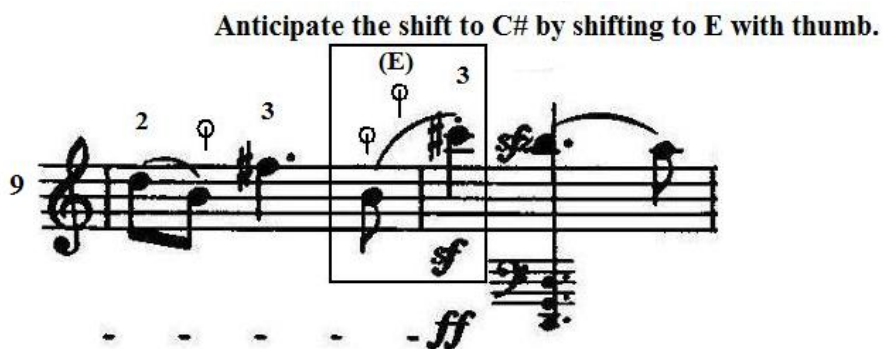


Figure 15: mm. 9-10. Shifting from B to C# via thumb on E.

Although I have small hands and this solution requires me to reach the distance of a major sixth, it is easier for me to vibrate the third finger when my hand is open. The last joint of my third finger does not bend easily and when my hand is in a more closed position (as it would be if I shifted to F# with thumb) my third finger tends to feel a bit stiff.

The second solution is to shift from B to F# with the thumb. The distance to C# is reduced and the hand (now in a more closed position) is perhaps in a better position to play the descending passage that follows. I could certainly adapt to this solution, but I prefer my hand to be more open in this situation, and I feel my left hand is a bit cramped in this position. The third solution is to shift from B to C# with thumb and reach for the C# harmonic an octave above. This option is playable for me, but a stretch of that distance is not terribly comfortable for my hand or my thumb, especially when playing at a faster tempo. However, it does leave the option for using the harmonic C# which is usually a good backup plan. All of these solutions are playable and should be experimented with during practice. The most comfortable option will likely depend on hand size.

In mm. 10-11 (Figure 16) the descent from C# was always a bit precarious. Here the difficulty is not the distance between notes, as A to F# is only a minor third, but the fact that I

have to establish a new position. The only real solution I felt was viable was to shift with my first finger on A to E using an anticipated shift. This will put first and second fingers in position to play E and F# in m. 11. For the shift from F# to C#, I use the second finger playing F# to make an anticipated shift down to C# on second finger in m. 11. Of course, the most important part of the process is building the anticipation into the actual phrase rather than it being limited to a practice technique.

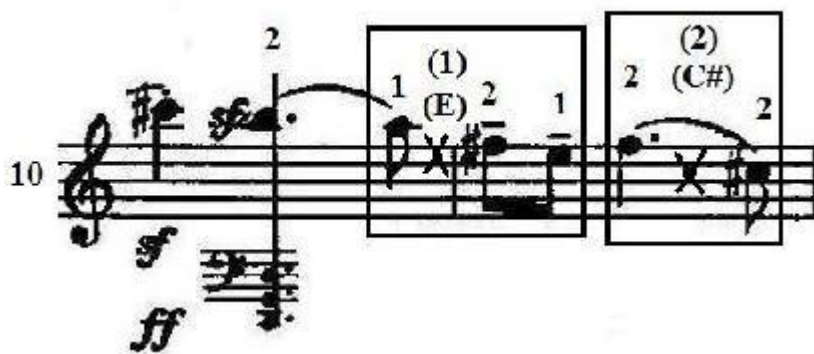


Figure 16: mm. 10-11. Establishing new positions with anticipated shifts. Target pitches E and C# are marked with an “x.”

In addition to hearing the target notes of E and C#, I also practiced integrating the preparatory motion of my left arm into the process. This requires that I release the weight of my left arm and raise it from the elbow while still playing the A. The same motion has to take place when shifting from F# to C# in m. 11. Figuring out which finger should go where was almost always the easiest part of the process. It was building the physical motions of preparing and shifting into the phrase that took the longest for me to learn.

With regard to the use of the bow in this passage, the rule of higher note getting the most bow will apply. For the shift from B to C#, starting at the tip and using the least amount of bow possible for the B will allow me to use nearly the entire bow for the C#. The bow will need to be

slow for the B and the shift with the thumb, but will immediately accelerate on the arrival of the C#. This will ensure that the relative bow speeds for the B to C# shift will match the musical gesture (i.e., a tossing off of the C#).

A descending sequence occurs in mm. 14-20. Measure 14 (Figure 17) presented a problem immediately for my left hand when on beat two I had to go from fourth position to thumb position. The most viable option is to find the harmonic A with thumb and then find C# with second finger. I prefer this option because this particular hand shape feels more comfortable. The thumb-second finger configuration felt more secure perhaps because there is always an audible articulation when I find second finger via the thumb. The security may simply be psychological, but the result is more often in tune for me.



Figure 17: m. 14. Find second finger in thumb position via an anticipated shift with thumb on the A harmonic.

Scenarios in which the choice of one fingering feels better than others, often boils down to that fact that some connections in the left hand are simply more comfortable or natural than others. Once a cellist becomes familiar with the geography of the instrument certain left hand decisions become almost instinctual. The relationship between my thumb and second finger is one such example. The distance between thumb and second finger in thumb position fits the diatonic arrangement of the pitches, and my left hand feels the most balanced between these two fingers. There is a similar relationship between thumb and third finger when framing an octave.

5.3 Second Theme Group Material

The second theme group begins in m. 32 and provides a drastic contrast to the first theme group. This section presented me with more difficulties for the bow in the sense that the phrases are now much more lyrical, but with a large dynamic range that requires sensitivity to bow speed, pressure, and distribution. The challenges in this section have to do with not only finding the right bow speed at the beginning of a phrase, but also matching bow speeds so that bow changes are smooth and the musical gestures are effectively expressed. Much in the same way that we prepare for position changes by preparing the left arm and hand, changes in bow speeds must be prepared as well. In a position change that uses an anticipated shift, the left hand should arrive before the change of bow. Similarly, the bow will need to accelerate or decelerate (whichever is appropriate given the situation) prior to the change in bow so that the speed at the end of the previous bow matches the speed of the new bow.

The second theme group can be broken into three parts: mm. 32-43.1, mm. 43.2-63, and mm. 64-79 and each section has its own set of difficulties. The first section begins *pianissimo* on an up bow with a crescendo to *forte* in m. 34 on the B \flat , and is sustained into m. 35 on the arrival of the C. Determining the bow distribution and ideal bow speed is essential as soon as the second theme group begins. In order to go from *pianissimo* at the tip of the bow to *forte* the bow must travel slowly so as not to run out of bow, then accelerate gradually over the course of the G in mm. 32-33 and reach a speed at which at least half of the bow can play each group of notes in m. 34. Not only does the bow have to travel slowly enough to not run out of bow, but the speed of the bow has to be comfortable enough to sustain at *pianissimo*. The same must happen when the phrase repeats itself in m. 36 (Figure 18).

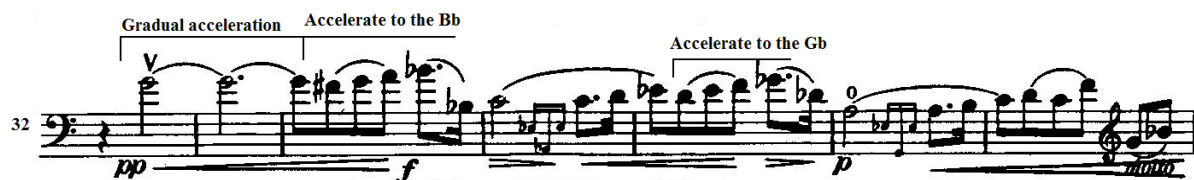


Figure 18: mm. 32-38. Second Theme Group, 1a. Breakdown of bow speeds.

As for the ornamental arpeggios in mm. 35 and 37, the problem I faced here was the series of rapid string crossings. String crossings should be executed with the whole arm rather than with the wrist or fingers in order to maintain a consistent contact point and thus a consistent sound. String crossings that are initiated by the wrist and fingers will cause the contact point to change and the sound will suffer as a result. The extent to which the entire right arm moves will depend on how close to the frog or tip the string crossing occurs. If the string crossing is nearer to the frog, the motion of the arm will be less visible and will be assisted by turning at the waist. The further away from the frog, the motion of the arm will be more visible. In the case of mm. 35 and 37 these arpeggios were easier to play and sounded cleaner at a point in the bow further from the frog. I got the best results when I used the entire arm and when I turned at the waist when executing the string crossings despite the fact that I was already in the upper half of the bow. In going from m. 34 to m. 35 the bow speed will have to be maintained in order to get to at least the middle point of the bow for the first arpeggio. The opposite is true for the arpeggio in m. 37 since it starts on an up bow (i.e., the tip). The bow will need to have enough speed on the last beat of m. 36 to get to the tip, but slow down on the D \flat sixteenth note so that the bow can be saved while at the tip and remain in the upper half in m. 37.

The next point of difficulty I found was getting to the B \flat major chord in m. 43 and adjusting the bow speed and left hand position as it leads into the second section this group. In this *scordatura* configuration major chords are actually somewhat easier to play with the left

hand because it is in a more closed position. However, this particular chord is in a rather awkward position on the fingerboard: not in fourth position, but not in thumb position either. Unlike the chords in the first theme group that are more effective when rolled, this chord works best when broken not only because the bottom of the chord is not sustained, but because of the way the chord has to be played by the left hand. Because of its location on the fingerboard and its shape, this chord is not comfortable for my hand to find all at once. I have to play the bottom and top notes as separate sets of double stops. Playing the chord this way ends up making more sense in the long run since only the top note (B♭) is sustained.

In m. 42 (Figure 19) there is a *fermata* on E♭ on beat three which I play with second finger. This is followed by a shift down an octave to E♭ using the same finger and an arrival on D on the down beat of m. 43. It is at this point I have to figure out how to get from first finger on D to first finger on B♭ and F on the two lower strings. The best solution to this problem was to find the D harmonic on the D string with second finger in order to help me find B♭ and F. The benefit to this is that the two lower notes of the chord are only one semitone behind my second finger, and by finding the D with second finger, the B♭ on the A string is all I have to find for the two upper notes of the chord. Once the D harmonic is located the left hand and arm have to come around the upper bout of the cello in order to get the first finger in the optimal position to bar the B♭ and F. This double stop should be released rather quickly and the left arm should then return to its previous position which will place second and third fingers at a better angle to play the D and B♭ on the upper half of the chord.

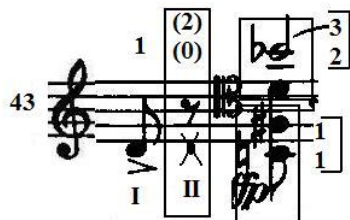


Figure 19: m. 43. Finding a B \flat major chord with D harmonic marked with an “x”

Alternately, the cellist could find the D harmonic between the E \flat fermata and the octave shift and play the low E \flat and D on the D string. One potential problem with this solution is that the intensity of the phrase is heightened by the brighter color of the A string and concluding this statement on the significantly duller D string might result in a weak or muffled ending to the phrase.

For the remainder of the second theme group the bow has to alternate between sustained notes and a moving line, the first two statements of which presented problems simultaneously for both my left hand and the bow. Following the chord in m. 43 there is a B \flat above harmonic A that is sustained for two measures (Figure 20). The best option here is to slow the bow immediately following the initial attack of the chord, and allow the B \flat to settle while simultaneously preparing the left hand for m. 44.

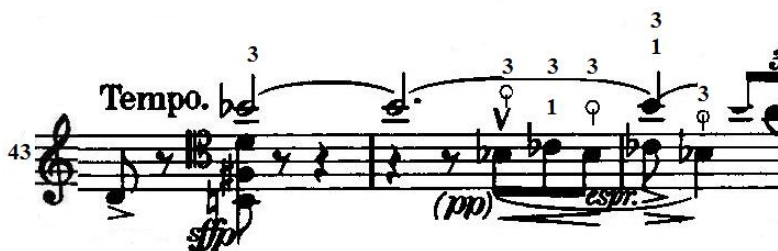


Figure 20: mm. 43-45. Transition in left hand from B \flat major chord to B \flat octave. The C \flat creates a non-diatonic arrangement of the left hand.

The tricky part is maintaining the correct spacing between thumb and third finger while playing C \flat with first finger. The typical configuration of the left hand when the thumb and third

finger frame an octave will generally have the spacing of a whole tone between thumb and first finger, and a semitone between either second and third fingers, or third and fourth fingers.

Kodály's frequent use of a lowered second scale degree changes the normally diatonic relationship within the left hand. Like the B \flat major chord in the previous measure, the left arm has to come around the cello to essentially make the fingers longer. The degree to which each individual person has to adjust the left arm will depend on hand size and finger length. I have relatively small hands so I have to move my shoulder forward somewhat, bring my elbow up, and then play the C \flat with the tip of my first finger.

The role of the bow is also important here. In this instance we go from a single note on the A string to a double stop on the A and D string with a hairpin dynamic marking. As the phrase continues, the moving line moves to the D string while the F \sharp string sustains and vice versa. Toward the end of the exposition, the same configuration occurs on the B and F \sharp strings. The problem I encountered in these situations was adjusting the speed and weight of the bow to accommodate two different strings. It was often difficult to sustain the A string while still making the D string clear. Ideally, the bow would have a different weight and speed for the two different strings, but since this is not possible the bow has to focus on the moving line.

I found that if I tried to treat both strings equally the string with the sustained note would usually be choked by the arm weight needed to support the string with the moving notes. I also realized that it took far less from the bow in order to make the sustained note heard. The solution here is simply to concentrate the bow on the string with the moving line. In the first instance in mm. 44-45 it is a matter of watching the way the bow hits both strings and focusing the weight of the right arm toward the D string. I found that this also somehow helped to overcome the awkwardness of the left hand in this measure.

5.4 The Development

The development (mm. 80-151) is based on material from the first theme group, although the original theme never reappears. Of course, all of the chords in the development should be dealt with in a similar manner as the chords in the exposition. The development has two prominent features that I found difficult: sixteenth note passages and a series of single note and double stop trills. The sixteenth note passages begin in m. 116. The entire passage is essentially a sequence that leads in to the trill section and the climax of the movement.

The sixteenth note passages are challenging not necessarily because they are fast but because of the rapid position changes that occur in each group of four sixteenth notes. The strategy in these passages is to coordinate the preparation of the left arm with the bow changes, and keep this motion constant. The regularity of the position change also works in our favor because it allows for the motion of the left arm to be rhythmic. In each group of four sixteenth notes in mm. 117-120 the position change occurs on the fourth sixteenth note (with the exception of the first beat of m. 118 in which there is a string change, and the first beat of m. 120 where the position changes on the third sixteenth note of the group). The same follows for the two following sequences in mm. 124-128 and mm. 132-134.

All three passages are essentially the same in terms of the coordination that has to happen between the left arm and bow, but I will use mm. 117-120 (Figure 21) as an example. The second beat of m. 118 is where the coordination begins in earnest. As the example shows, the position change occurs on the fourth sixteenth note of each group and I shift with my first finger from the old position into the new position, and the beginning of each new position is played with first finger.



Figure 21: mm. 117-120. Continuous, rhythmic position changes.

Because I am using anticipated shifts in this passage, the left hand has to arrive in each new position before the bow change. While the change from position to position might be determined by the direction of the bow (i.e. whether the position change happens on an up or down bow), the left arm has to be in motion preparing for each new position constantly. This preparatory motion is essentially a clockwise motion initiated from the elbow that lifts the left arm and the hand, releasing the weight of the arm and hand before the shift. Rather than occurring on any specific sixteenth note, this motion should begin as far in advance of the position change as is practicable and continue throughout the passage. In these three passages, the position changes are continuous (but regular) so the circular motion of the arm should be continuous.

The trill section in mm. 138-144 (Figure 22) was among the most difficult passages in the movement and certainly one of the most difficult in the entire piece. The first group of trills in mm. 138-139 is made up of single notes, and the second group in mm. 142-143 is composed of the same pitches an octave lower that are harmonized in sixths on the D string. This section presents a few unique difficulties for the left hand and the bow. The first group is difficult for a few reasons: 1) these pitches are above the fingerboard placing the fingers in rosin, 2) all of the principal notes are played with the first finger, and 3) the extreme register places these pitches quite close to one another.

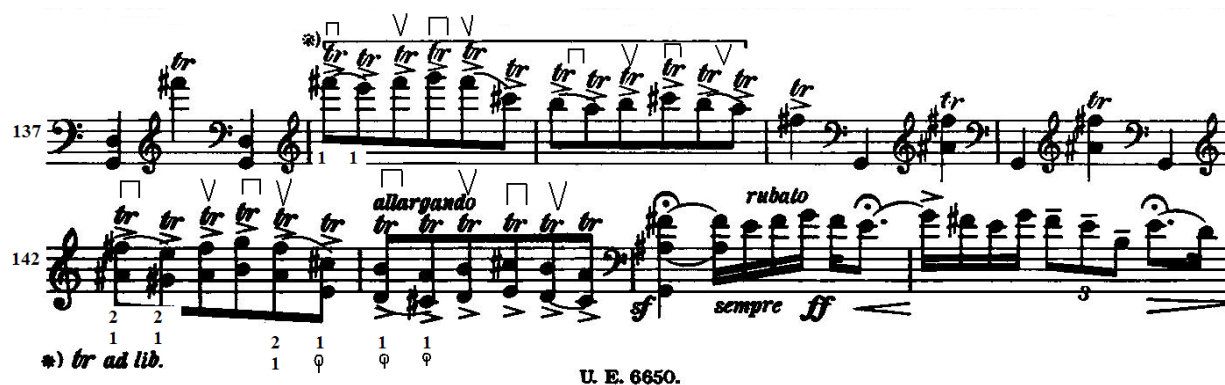


Figure 22: mm. 137-145.

There are a few things that I found helpful in trying to play this passage. First, this passage has to be played in the upper half of the bow (if not the tip). The left hand is so close to the bridge during this section that if played anywhere in the bow below the middle, the right and left hands will essentially run into one another disrupting the physical balance between the hands. In order to get to the tip at the start of this passage I have altered the bowing such that the first two and last two eighth notes of each measure are slurred, while the middle two are separate. The first down bow slur will get the bow out the tip initially.

As far as the left hand goes, there is no way to avoid getting rosin on your fingers. The stickiness of the rosin is compounded by the fact that all of the notes in mm. 138-139 are played with first finger, thus we do not have the luxury of releasing one finger when another goes down. Instead, the left arm and hand are responsible for releasing the weight between each note. Without releasing the weight of the left arm, I found it extremely difficult to move from note to note. Not only does the first finger get stuck in rosin, but it is weighed down by the arm. The same principal of lifting has to be applied to the second group of trills in mm. 142-143 as well. I found it to be even more crucial in this passage because the arm is applying even more weight in order to play the double stops.

5.5 Thoughts on Performance

Finally, I have included some of my performance experiences for this movement. There were always a few strategies that I used when I performed this movement that were often helpful. As in any performance some things do not always go as planned, but these ideas can be implemented during the practice phase in the hope that they will become a natural part of how the movement is played. First, I found breathing to be crucial to the pacing of the movement on both small and large scales. For example, breathing during all of the dotted rhythms was extremely helpful in keeping the pulse steady and helped in the preparation for the shifts in the opening. On a larger scale, breathing between the end of the first theme group and the beginning of the second theme group was beneficial because it allowed any residual tension to be released before beginning the next section. In a video production of a master class given by Janos Starker at Indiana University, he instructed his student to “go limp” after playing the final note of the first theme group and to take a big breath before beginning the next theme.⁴⁹ Having a feeling of relaxation at the end of the first theme group is not only helpful for the body, but it also suits the musical gesture since this moment is the first real point of arrival in the movement. At the trill section in the development my tendency was always to rush through it, perhaps thinking unconsciously, that if I played it faster it would be over much sooner. Instead I discovered that playing the passage deliberately made the section slightly easier. In general I found that because Kodály wrote rhapsodically that my tendency was to play rhapsodically by stretching rhythmic durations, when the printed rhythms actually serve this function. Technically speaking, I found

⁴⁹ Janos Starker. *Janos Starker Teaches and Performs Zoltán Kodály, Sonata for Cello Solo, Op. 8.* Volumes 1-3. Produced by Nancy Calloway. Bloomington, IN: WTIU Indiana University Television in Conjunction with the Eva Janzer Memorial Cello Center, 1999.

that my intonation and sound improved by playing many of these passages in strict time.

Adherence to the written rhythms not only helps the metric displacement come out of the texture, but I found it much easier to play some of the most difficult sections of this movement. One final suggestion I would make to any cellist performing the piece would be to take the time to wipe the rosin from the strings and fingers, and to check the tuning of the cello before moving on to the second movement. Both ideas seem simple, but in during a performance the simple things are often easily overlooked. In a piece that is at least 30 minutes long, the strings will be caked in rosin by the beginning of the third movement, and I had better results when there was less rosin on the strings. The cello can also go out of tune by the end of the first movement. The temperature or humidity in the performance venue can be different from backstage and cause the strings to stretch, and it is worth taking the time to check.

Chapter 6 Movement II: *Adagio (con grand' espressione)*

The second movement of this *Sonata* is a remarkable example of how a complex piece of music can be created from economical means. This movement more than any other in the *Sonata*, evokes the human voice and is modeled on specific aspects of Hungarian folk songs. Kodály uses elements of traditional laments, typically sung by women at funerals and during periods of mourning, and military tunes as the basis for his thematic material.⁵⁰ In addition to the strophic construction of Hungarian folk songs, folk songs were classified according to style (old or new) each with its own specific characteristics. Kodály and his colleague at the Franz Liszt Academy, Béla Bartók were among the first scholars to collect and record Hungarian folk songs. Kodály and Bartók observed that most songs sung in the old style use pentatonic scales and harmonies, and have one of two tempos: *tempo giusto* and *parlando-rubato*.⁵¹ The *tempo giusto* songs are characterized by a strict and steady tempo, where as songs written with a *parlando-rubato* tempo are more rhythmically free and are typically found in slower songs such as laments. These songs also often feature music that is adapted to the text, and thus language.⁵² The second movement contains virtually all of these characteristics.

6.1 Formal Analysis

The second movement is in an ABA form in which each larger section is constructed of smaller components. In the first large A section (mm. 1-52) there are two distinct themes which

⁵⁰Smith, 10.

⁵¹ The terms *tempo giusto* and *parlando-rubato* were terms applied to these songs by Bartók and Kodály and are a product of the Western art tradition rather than the oral tradition from which they originate.

⁵² Ibid., 7-8.

will become integrated in the recapitulation of the A section in mm. 117-132. Thematically speaking, the B section is totally independent of the outer sections.

The A section initially features two themes which I have labeled the *Bass Theme (a)*, and the *Soprano Theme (b)* as outlined in the diagram below (Figure 23).

Theme Group	Measure Nos.	Key Areas	Characteristics
<i>Bass Theme (a)</i>	1-6	Undefined	C#-E-C \sharp motive introduced
<i>Soprano Theme (b)</i>	7-17	B	
<i>Bass Theme (a1)</i>	18-29	C-B	Continuation and conclusion of (a)
<i>Soprano Theme (b1)</i>	30-38; 39-52	B, G,C D, C#	Concludes with a variation of the C#-E-C \sharp motive

Figure 23: Form diagram of the A section.

Not only do these labels reflect the register of each theme, but it is appropriate given the vocal nature of the movement. The initial *Bass Theme (a)* in mm. 1-6 is tonally ambiguous (Figure 24). The first measure is simply an open B with a *fermata* and provides no indication as to the direction of the melody. The melody then appears to gravitate toward D after two solid arrivals in mm. 3 and 4, only to land on C# in m. 5. A potential cadence on B in the following measure is anticipated, but the cadence occurs somewhat unexpectedly on C \sharp instead. Kodály consistently uses the E-C \sharp connection at the conclusions of larger sections of music, using it no fewer than four times. This melodic connection also appears in the form of C#-E-C \sharp , and is used to create a situation in which a final cadence has been averted and harmonic ambiguity is maintained. For example, it first appears at the conclusion of the first *Bass Theme* in mm. 5-6 (Figure 24). It appears again at the conclusion of the A section in mm. 50-51 (Figure 25), at the conclusion of the B section in mm. 94-95 (Figure 26), and finally at the conclusion of the second A section just before the coda in mm. 130-131 (Figure 27). Not only does each occurrence of this gesture occur near the end of a phrase or section, it also subverts our expectations and forces the

phrase to either continue or try again to reach a resolution. Harmonically it may also function to intensify descending semitone motion to B on a deeper structural level.

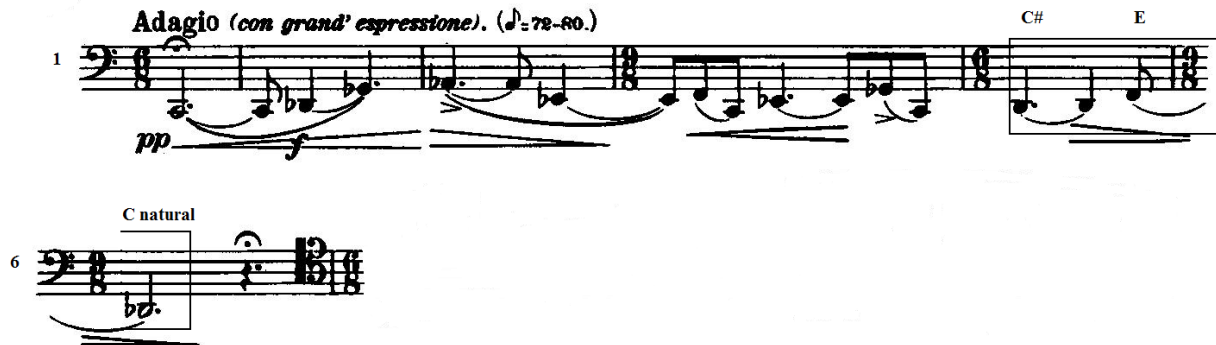


Figure 24: mm. 1-6. First presentation of the *Bass Theme* (a) and C#-E-C♭ motive in mm. 5-6.



Figure 25: mm. 50-51. E-C♭ motive occurs at conclusion of the large A section.



Figure 26: mm. 94-95. C#-E-C♭ motive occurs at the conclusion of the large B section.

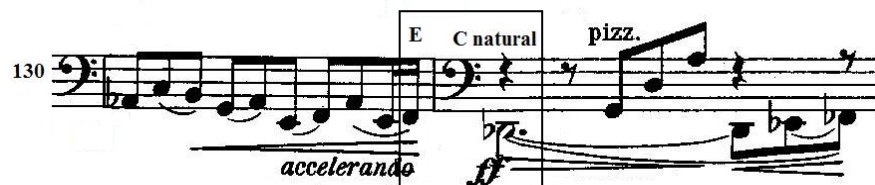


Figure 27: mm. 130-131. E-C♭ motive occurs at the conclusion of return of the large A section before the Coda.

A key area is not established in the opening phrase, but it is significant that the first and last pitches are B and C♭. The second *Bass Theme* (a1) in mm. 18-29 (Figure 28), is interrupted

by the first *Soprano Theme* (*b*), but begins on C \sharp , exactly where (*a*) left off. The (*a1*) theme is more coherent harmonically speaking, and at nearly twice the length of (*a*) is a more complete theme, essentially finishing what (*a*) started.

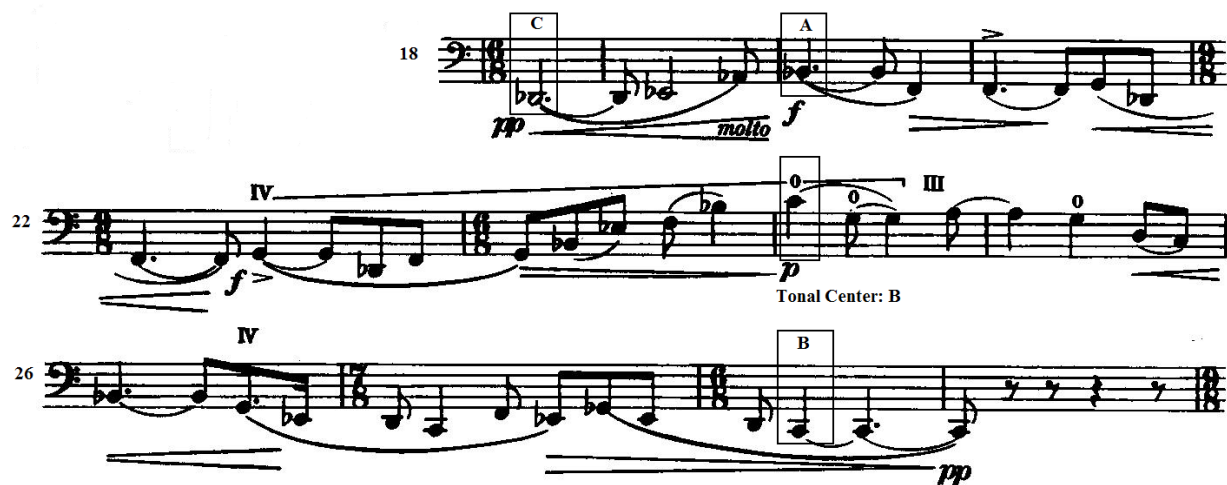


Figure 28: mm. 18-29, *Bass Theme* (*a1*).

The pitches that form the framework of (*a*) and (*a1*) are B-C-C-B, again highlighting the lowered second scale degree relationship between B and C. The (*a1*) theme gravitates toward A as its tonal center in mm. 18-20, but the C \sharp on the last beat of m. 21 and the rising fourths in m. 23 lead to B in m. 24. The remainder of the phrase in mm. 24-29 confirms the tonal center as B.

The *Soprano Theme* (*b*) is first heard in mm. 7-17 and is sandwiched in between the two *Bass Themes* (Figure 29). The tonal center in the *Soprano Theme* is B (pentatonic), and has two voices: a lyrical soprano and a bass accompaniment played with left hand pizzicato. Like the *Bass Themes* (*a*) and (*a1*), the *Soprano Theme* will gradually become more complex as the sonata progresses: the range will expand and the pizzicato accompaniment will become more rhythmically active.



Figure 29: mm. 7-17. *Soprano Theme (b)*.

In the first presentation of (b) the range of the melodic line stays essentially within two octaves (between E below middle C and C# an octave above middle C), and the accompaniment repeats the open F# string.

The second presentation the *Soprano Theme (b1)* in mm. 30-52, features a wider range of the melody and more intricate accompanimental pizzicato, also with a wider range (Figure 30).

Key Area: A major/A minor

D# suggests E major or E minor

Key Area: G

30 *p*

sempre pizz.

Eb suggests G minor

Key Area: C Major

34 *dim.* *f*

Key Area: D major/minor

38 *rit.* *pp* *pizz.* *p sub.* *p*

42 *p* *f* *arco*

47 *I.* *III.* *pizz.* *poco sosten.* *f* *dim.* *pp sub.*

52 *p*

Figure 30: 30-52. *Soprano Theme (b1)*. Modal mixture.

It is possible to consider this phrase as the continuation and conclusion of (b) despite the fact that (b1) begins a minor third higher (A above middle C). The tonal center changes throughout the progression of this phrase. One aspect of this theme that makes the tonal center difficult to define is that although there is a B pedal in the accompanimental pizzicato, the

accidentals in the melodic line change frequently. The melodic line in mm. 30-31 mix A major and minor, and with the D# in m. 32 hint at a transition to E major. However, mm. 33-36 is centered on G, and again modal mixture is a result of the pizzicato B and the E \flat in m. 35. Measures 37-38 arpeggiate a C major chord, but instead of going back to G, mm. 39-42 appear to alternate between D major and D minor. The (*b1*) phrase finally comes to a close in m. 48 on D. Like the opening, the sustained D in mm. 48-50 leaves the harmonic direction open. Similar to the opening phrase, the section in m. 51-52 ends on C# with the C#-E-C \sharp motive first heard in mm. 5-6, creating another open ended conclusion to a phrase. The B section is shown in a diagram below (Figure 31).

Theme	Measure Nos.	Key Areas	Characteristics
<i>Theme 1</i>	53-60	A(minor)	
<i>Theme 2</i>	61-67	C (minor)	Transposition of original
<i>Theme 3</i>	68-76	G#-B	Transposition of original
Recitative Transition	77-88	Cadences: E \flat -D; A-G#; B-A#	Upper leading tone cadences
Recollection of <i>Bass Theme (a1)</i>	90-96	B-C#	Concludes with C#-E-C \sharp motive

Figure 31: Form diagram of the B section.

The large B section, *con moto*, begins abruptly in m. 53 (*Figure 32*). This section (mm. 53-96) is based on military songs that were popular in Hungary during a popular uprising in the 17th century.⁵³ The motive in mm. 53-54 is the basis for this section, and is repeated in sequence two more times in mm. 61-62 and 68-69. *Theme 1* (mm. 53-60) is in A minor, *Theme 2* (mm. 61-67) is in C minor, and *Theme 3* (mm. 68-75) begins in G# minor but ends with a descending motion from an E minor chord to a B major chord.⁵⁴

⁵³Ibid., 30.

⁵⁴Ibid., 26. Smith refers as these themes as *Kuruc Themes 1-3*.

Con moto. (♩₂ 108-112.)

Theme 1 A minor

53 *f feroce*

58 *cresc.* *ff* *più f*

Theme 2 C minor

62

Theme 3 G# minor

67 *ff* *con fuoco* *f*

71

74 *lunga* *Em BM* *ff* *laiss. vibrer*

Descending semitone motion

Figure 32: mm. 53-75. Excerpt of large B section, *Con moto*.

The descending semitone motion (heard in the top two voices of these chords) will occur three more times in a series of recitative-like gestures in mm. 77-88 (Figure 33). Kodály has to drastically reduce the energy level and return to a lower register for the return of the A section in m. 97. The recitative gestures all begin with an ascending line and end with a dramatic falling gesture followed by two descending chords related by a semitone. The falling semitone is generally acknowledged to signify a sigh or something coming to a rest. In this case, the successive falling semitones function to lower the energy level with each statement. Each

recitative passage is also successively lower in register allowing for the return of the bass melody reminiscent of (a) in mm. 90.

The musical score for measures 74-98 is presented in four systems. The first system (measures 74-81) features a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/8 time signature. It includes markings for *lunga*, *stff*, *ff*, *laiss. vibrer*, and *p*. A box labeled "Recitative 1" spans measures 77-81, with a second ending marked "II." and notes Eb and D. The second system (measures 82-87) features a bass clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/8 time signature. It includes markings for *p*, *ff*, *pizz.*, and *p*. A box labeled "Recitative 2" spans measures 82-87, with a second ending marked "II." and notes A and G#. The third system (measures 88-95) features a bass clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/8 time signature. It includes markings for *B A#*, *arco*, *Recollection of bass theme*, *dim. rall.*, *IV.*, *f*, and *Tempo I.*. The fourth system (measures 96-98) features a bass clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/8 time signature. It includes markings for *pizz.*, *lunga*, *pp*, *p*, *cresc.*, and *Recapitulation of Soprano Theme and large A section*.

Figure 33: mm. 74-98. Three recitative gestures beginning in m. 77.

Similar to the recapitulation in the first movement, Kodály does not recapitulate the entire *Bass Theme* (a), nor do the themes return in the order of the exposition. The recapitulation of the A section is shown below (Figure 34).

Theme Group	Measure Nos.	Key Areas	Characteristics
<i>Soprano Theme</i> (b)	97-116	F#-C; B-F#	Recap of first soprano theme with elaboration; similar to first movement in which the second theme is recapped first.
<i>Bass Theme</i> (a1) + <i>Soprano</i> (b1) <i>Theme</i>	117-132	B-C	Two opening themes are now integrated; Section concludes with a variation of the C#-E-C# motive
Coda	135-147	F#	

Figure 34: Form diagram of the recapitulation of the A section.

Instead, a version or recollection of the *Bass Theme* (a) returns in mm. 89-96 that is not in tonic, and therefore cannot be considered to be the true recapitulation of the (a) theme. This version of the *Bass Theme* functions more as a bridge to the recapitulation of the first *Soprano*

Theme (b) in m. 97 which is tonally centered on B. The transition from the large B section to the return of the A section is strengthened by the fact that the last bowed pitch of the B section in m. 96 is a C \sharp which makes the descending semitone relationship to B in m. 97 quite strong (Figure 33).

The return of the A section and the unfolding of events closely follows the framework of the first A section. However, the recapitulation of the A section is more elaborate and virtuosic, and the rhythms are meant to sound as if the material is being improvised as it might have been if sung. Measures 97-105 are equivalent to mm. 7-11 (see Figure 33), and the passage beginning at m. 106 is based on the passage beginning in m. 12 (Figure 35), now with a cimbalom-like elaboration between the original components of the *Soprano Theme (b)*.

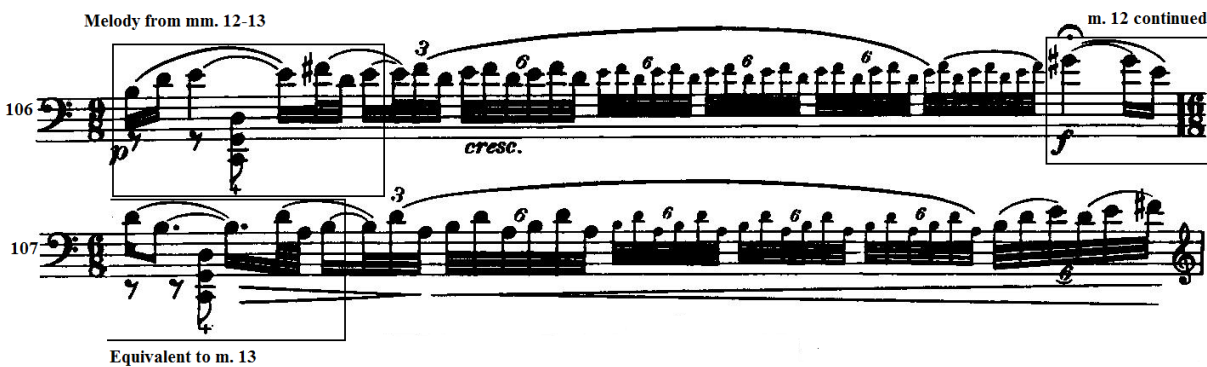


Figure 35: mm. 106-107, excerpt of the return of *Soprano Theme (b)*.

The *Bass Theme (a)* and *Soprano Theme (b)* are fully integrated in the passage beginning in m. 117. Here, the *Bass Theme* spans the full range of the cello, and the pizzicato accompaniment is more rhythmically active (Figure 36).

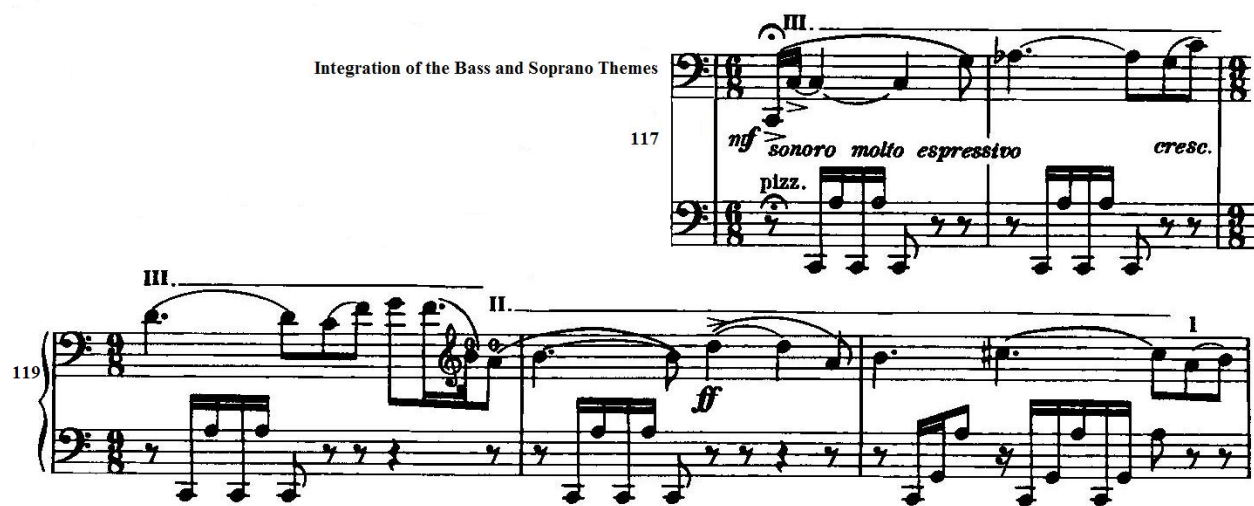


Figure 36: mm. 117-121. Integration of *Bass Theme (a)* and *Soprano Theme (b)*.

After a cadenza-like passage in m. 122, the melodic line makes its way back down to the lowest register of the cello, and the pizzicato eventually returns to an arpeggiated figure in m. 123. This section concludes with another E-C \sharp motion in mm. 130-131 (Figure 27), reminiscent of the original C \sharp -E-C \sharp motive in mm. 5-6. This is followed by a final flourish in mm. 135-138 to begin the coda (Figure 37).

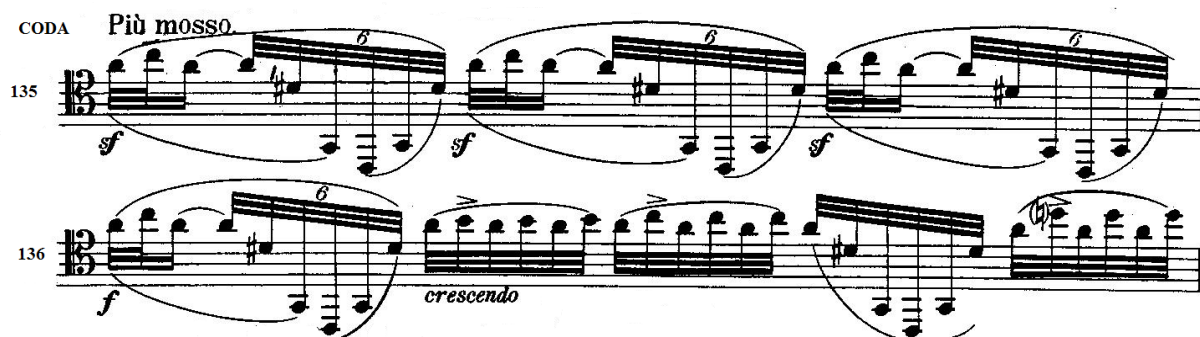


Figure 37: mm. 135-136. Beginning of the Coda.

6.2 *Bass Theme (a)*, (a1)

There were three basic hurdles that I had to overcome in this movement: The *Bass Theme (a)* in all of its incarnations presented bow speed, pressure, and placement issues; the *Soprano*

Theme (b) is unique because there are separate issues for the bow and the left hand, both of which can negatively influence the other; the virtuosic passages in the large B section require a certain amount of coordination between the right arm and left hand in order for it to be successful. Finally, there were a few isolated passages or issues that returned throughout the piece that were problematic.

There are a few things to take note of in the *Bass Theme* in all of its forms. 1) There is often a wide dynamic range. The opening goes from *pianissimo* to *forte* in little more than one measure. Subsequent iterations do the same, but also feature several hairpin dynamic changes. 2) The range of pitches in the *Bass Theme* can vary greatly. While the theme begins in a low register, it gradually expands with each presentation. Almost all forms of this theme span at least two octaves. 3) Kodály often indicates that the *Bass Themes* should be played on either the B or F# string while simultaneously expanding into the treble register, creating additional difficulties for the bow. Playing the span of two octaves is not something that would cause problems for even an inexperienced cellist. However, cellists do not typically play on the lower strings what could just as easily be played on the A string, but in his desire to create a specific kind of sound color (perhaps strained, muffled, gray, or distant), Kodály keeps the rising melodic line confined to the lower strings for as long as possible.

With regard to the *Bass Themes* throughout the movement, they all tend to have one or two long phrase or slur markings. One of the first decisions I made was to split any slurs that were longer than two measures. Changing the direction of the bow every measure or half measure was more amenable to playing a wider dynamic range, and aligned accents with stronger down bows (Figure 38).

Adagio (con grand' espressione). (♩ = 72-80.)

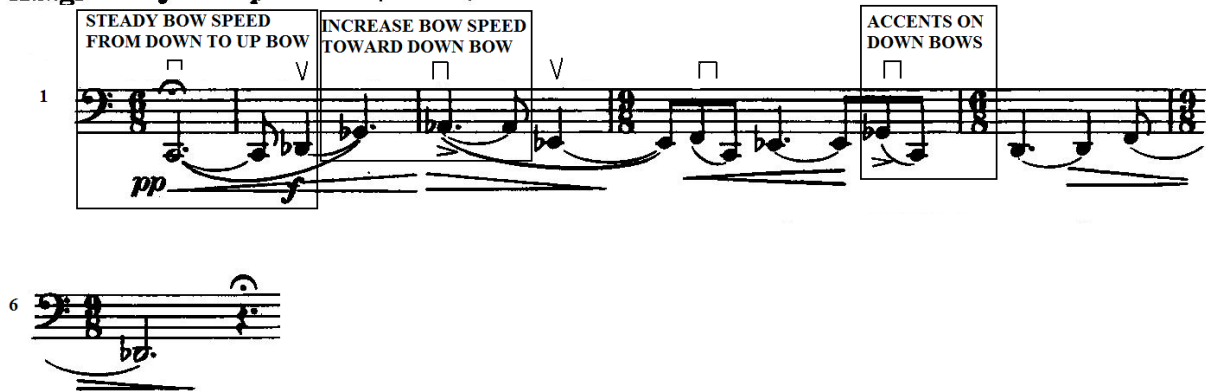


Figure 38: mm. 1-6, First presentation of the *Bass Theme (a)*. Original slur markings have been altered, and show where the change in bow speeds should occur.

At first I tried to play the printed bowings on the first page, but I found it difficult to save enough bow while making a crescendo, and in the end it was more trouble than it was worth. As a result of splitting the slurs (or phrase markings), I created more bow changes, thus more instances in which the changes had to be smooth. Often times during a *crescendo* the bow would actually get stuck in the string effectively disrupting the line. I constantly adjusted bow speed and bow pressure and changed the points at which I would increase or decrease the speed, but regardless of when I changed speed the bow changes were never as smooth as I wanted them. After a period of experimentation I realized that it was actually the change in speed that was causing the problem.

Although the *Bass Theme* features a wide range of dynamic levels, the slower tempo and longer durations of each note mean that the changes in dynamics will occur more gradually. There are no *subito forte* or *subito piano* markings and thus no need for the bow to suddenly speed up or slow down. Instead the changes in speed will happen as the note is played rather than at or near the bow change. Take for example the opening two measures, a place that always gave me difficulty and still causes apprehension in performance (Figure 38). My goal in any of these

long lines is make them as smooth as possible, and to make the bow changes as imperceptible as possible. The bow in the long *pianissimo* B in m. 1 should start at a moderate speed not only because of the dynamic, but because the bow will likely be closer to the fingerboard than the bridge. If the bow travels too slowly the sound quality will suffer, and if the bow travels too quickly I run the risk of running out of bow. As the dynamic level grows, the bow will move toward the bridge, necessitating more arm weight, and a slightly slower bow speed. As I approach the change of bow in m. 2, the bow speed should be maintained or changed only slightly. Changes in bow speed at the bow change will cause a disruption in the sound. The bow speed should increase gradually in m. 2 to prepare for the arrival and accent on the downbeat of m. 3. The same principal holds true at the start of the second *Bass Theme (a1)* in m. 18.

In addition to the subtle variations in bow speed, I made some physical changes in my approach to these passages. The first is perhaps less tangible, but it made a difference nonetheless. It was simply a matter of feeling my weight being transferred from my arm into the string and feeling sunk into the string, especially in the opening passage. This passage (and those like it) is in no way agitated or nervous, but my nervousness has a tendency to affect my playing of a delicate passage. The opening of the second movement of Kodály's *Duo for Violin and Cello*, Op. 7 is quite similar, and I used the same tactic in both cases.⁵⁵ Instead of sitting "at attention" and on the edge of my seat at the opening, I sat slightly back in the chair so that my body would feel less suspended over the instrument. I wanted my arms to feel heavy, as though my left hand was hanging off of the instrument and as though my right arm was not suspended in

⁵⁵The opening of the second movement of Kodály's *Duo for Violin and Cello*, features the cello alone, playing in the treble register on the G string, in a *piano* dynamic. The combination of the delicate opening, soft dynamics, and awkward register can result in nervous moments for the cellist as I discovered in preparation for performance in 2010.

any way. Exhaling before playing was an important part of achieving a feeling of weightiness. When air is inhaled the upper body naturally rises to accommodate the expansion of the lungs, and the subsequent suspension of the shoulders may hinder the natural weight of the arm from being fully applied to the bow. The *piano* dynamic and the sustained notes combined with the suspension of the upper body above the string will work against playing with a full sound regardless of dynamic. I also find this technique to be effective when playing the opening of the second movement in Brahms' Second Symphony, an excerpt on every orchestra audition list. Exhaling prior to playing allows my whole upper body to relax making playing in the string and sustaining with the bow much easier and more effective than inhaling before starting.

The second physical change was made more to the cello than to my body. Since the *Bass Themes* are played on the lower strings for extended periods, the right arm is much lower and the angles created by the bridge and string crossings are somewhat severe when the cello is held in the academically correct way. To counteract this I simply turned the cello to my left in order to bring the lower strings more toward the middle. I have found this good practice in any situation in which the bow is going to be on either the A or C string for longer period of time. The only caveat here is that the angles that once made the bow travel in a straight line no longer apply when the cello is turned. It took some time for me to reorient myself to the new set up, but practicing in front of a mirror fixed many of these problems.

6.3 Soprano Theme (b), (b1)

The *Soprano Theme* is essentially a juggling act for the cellist. The right arm and left hand are still busy with the usual tasks but Kodály has incorporated accompanimental left hand pizzicato into the equation. The pizzicato is not terribly difficult by itself and it is always done

with open strings, but when played with the *arco* melodic line it has a tendency to disrupt the balance of the left hand, which can influence the steadiness of the bow and intonation.

While the bow has to remain fairly steady when playing the *Bass Theme*, the *Soprano Theme* is much more volatile requiring the bow to change speed more quickly. However, in between these turn-on-a-dime changes, there are often sustained pitches that are accompanied by the pizzicato. Here the bow has to become somewhat static, not only to sustain the note, but to act as a counterbalance to the highly active left hand. The steadiness of the bow becomes especially important as the left hand ascends the fingerboard not only for sound quality but because of the disruptive tendencies of the left hand pizzicato. For the left hand, choosing the finger that executes the pizzicato will end up being a personal choice for each cellist. I have relatively short fingers so I generally use my second and third fingers, although in one or two places I use my thumb. By using second or third finger I found that there was less of a possibility that the finger on the fingerboard would be pulled out of position, thus affecting the intonation. Sometimes the left arm has to move forward, up, or over in order to get the pizzicato finger in place. Cellists with bigger hands or longer fingers may find it easier to use fourth finger for left hand pizzicato.

The first presentation of (b) in mm. 7-17 is relatively straightforward (Figure 29). The pizzicato only occurs when the bow is sustaining a note making it easier to multitask. The ornamental figures on the downbeats of mm. 7-8 will use the most bow in each measure. Once these figures are played the bow has to slow down, and despite the *pianissimo* dynamic marking, and play closer to the bridge. In general, the bow should stick to this pattern: moving faster for the moving notes and slower for the sustained notes. When the bow is sustaining a note and closer to the bridge, the right arm should also apply more weight into the string, not only because

the bow is moving at a slower speed but because it will cut down on interference caused by the left hand pizzicato. On the other hand, if the bow is not firmly in its groove on the string, the left hand pizzicato can cause the bow to bounce or the plucked string can vibrate against the bow hair and cause extra noise.

The slow, heavy bow becomes more important in the next *Soprano Theme (b1)* in mm. 30-47 where the melodic line and the pizzicato figures are more complex (Figure 30). In measures 30-34 the left hand is now in thumb position and the pizzicato begins on the open B string, and by mm. 33-34 is on the B and D strings. In order to execute this passage the left hand has to remain in place over the A string to play the phrase in tune while simultaneously reaching across the fingerboard to reach the B string. I found that this kind of movement can cause the balance of the left hand to become disrupted, which can in turn cause the intonation to suffer and the bow to lose the contact with the string. However, if I kept the bow close to the bridge it made it easier to play these passages.

The most difficult passage by far for me is mm. 117-127. The range of the melodic line begins in the bass, expands into the treble range and the pizzicato figures are the most rhythmically active in this section (Figure 39). Furthermore, the melodic line begins on the F# string and continues to ascend on the D string where it will remain until m. 126 (with the exception of the cadenza in m. 122), while the pizzicato occurs on the open B, F#, and A strings (Figure 39). Not only is the left hand going back and forth between three open strings, but it is also playing a soprano line high on the D string. If played on the A string this melody would not pose too many obstacles for either the bow or the left hand.

117 *mf* *pizz.* *cresc.*

119 *SLOW/HEAVY BOW* *ff*

122 *dim.* *p* *anga*

123 *ff espress.* *pizz.* *SLOW/HEAVY BOW*

Figure 39: mm. 117-126. The bow has to be slow and heavy over the sustained notes to prevent left hand interference.

However there are now two primary issues that need attention: 1) the D string is now quite short requiring the bow to be as close to the bridge as possible; and 2) when the notes are stopped by the left hand the D string actually falls below the level of the adjacent strings causing the D string to disappear. The D string only resurfaces near the bridge making it impossible to play this passage near the fingerboard.

Since the bow has to be near the bridge, the bow speed and arm weight have to be adjusted to accommodate the placement of the bow. Again, I found a slow, heavy bow to be

more successful. The D string may sound somewhat strained, but Kodály was actually trying to achieve that kind of sound. The pizzicato also complicates matters because multiple fingers are required to play the pizzicato figures while one finger is sustaining the melodic line. I change the fingers that I use to play pizzicato as the passage progresses. For example, in m. 117 I use my second and third fingers, and in mm. 118-119 I use my first and third fingers. For the remainder of the passage (mm. 120-121 and mm. 123-126) I use either my first or second finger to play the B and F# string, and my thumb to play the open A string. It may seem odd at first to use the thumb in this situation, but I find that if I use my third finger, it leaves my thumb in the air and disconnected from the cello. Using my thumb for the A string pizzicato keeps it closer to the string and fingerboard. Maintaining some contact between thumb and fingerboard in thumb position is another important part of keeping the hand balanced. If the thumb hovers over the fingerboard like a helicopter or sticks out like hitchhiker, it is difficult to orient the hand geographically. There is also an important physical component to keeping the thumb involved. Without the thumb in contact with the fingerboard, all of the arm weight is being transferred into one finger. Although the thumb should never apply pressure to the string when not in use, its contact with the cello will divert some of the arm weight from being shunted to a single finger.

6.4 The B Section: *Con moto*

The B section of this movement is based on new material and features the most energetic music in the movement. Like earlier parts of the movement Kodály has used elements of folk music as the basis for his themes in this section. Kodály has drawn on his knowledge of military tunes from a popular uprising in Hungary in the 17th and 18th century. These songs were a product of the Hungarian War of Independence which was led by Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II (1676-1735) against the Hapsburg Empire. In his dissertation on the influence of folk music in

Kodály's *Sonata*, Smith refers to these songs as *Kuruc* songs.⁵⁶ The term *Kuruc* is used to describe the group of people united with Prince Rákóczi II. Folk songs written during the revolution were often performed on a wind instrument called a *tarogato* which was commonly accompanied by a drum. The rhythmically firm and more aggressive *con moto* section has the feel of a march of some kind. Smith's so-called "*Kuruc* Themes" are derived from the first two measures of the *con moto* section and then repeated twice in sequence between mm. 53-75.⁵⁷

Technically speaking, there are a few moments in this relatively brief section that I always found difficult to coordinate between the left hand and the bow, and some places in which I had to make decisions with regard to the direction of the bow. The first decision I had to make with regard to the bowing occurs in mm. 53 when the first so-called *Kuruc Theme* is heard (Figure 40). The printed edition begins on an up bow which may seem counterintuitive as string players are more accustomed to beginning on a down bow on the first beat of a phrase, especially when the beginning of the phrase is as strong as it is here. When I tried reversing the bowing I discovered that the original "backwards" bowing made the measures following the *Kuruc Theme* easier to play. If I began on an up bow in m. 53 the triplet arpeggios that begin on the C string beginning in m. 55 started on a down bow. It is much easier to play an ascending arpeggio that starts from the C string on a down bow because the weight of the arm can be used more effectively at the frog than at the tip. The passage between mm. 57-59 is also an example of a seemingly backwards bowing that ends up being more playable than one might think (Figure 40).

⁵⁶ Smith, 11.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 26.



Figure 40: mm. 53-62. This section starts up bow, which works to the cellist's advantage in several places.

Again there is a series of repeated string crossings that go back and forth between the A and B string. The series begins in m. 57 on a down bow with the first two sixteenths slurred. My original instinct was to begin this passage on an up bow so that I would be closer to the frog for the open B and F# strings. However, once the ascending tritones began in m. 59 this bowing pattern became too cumbersome for my right arm. Kodály has slurred the tritone grace notes to the open B and F# strings on the final sixteenth of the first beat of m. 59. I found it difficult to begin the lower notes on an up bow and play the higher notes on a down bow. So in this instance I simply followed the printed bowing and began on a down bow on the second beat of m. 57. Following this bowing also works for the transition into and the next *Kuruc Theme* in mm. 60-62.

The final *Kuruc Theme* begins in m. 68 and leads into a brilliant flourish that ends at the climax of this section in m. 75. In this section the difficulties I faced had more to do with the coordination between the left hand and the bow, as well as deciding on a few fingerings. With regard to fingerings I try to minimize the distance between position changes by shifting between

smaller intervals, and to make position changes when I have the most time. For example, in a passage of dotted-eighth-sixteenths, I shift on the dotted-eighth which gives me more time than if I shift on the relatively faster sixteenth note. This rule can be applied to any duration. There are a couple of examples in the third *Kuruc Theme* of the B section.

The coordination issues in this section arise in mm. 72-75 (Figure 41). This passage begins in the lower register of the cello and gradually ascends over two octaves, ending high on the A string on an up bow. The wide range of this passage means that the bow will have to begin in the lower half and make its way out to the tip in order to play the B on the second beat in m. 74.

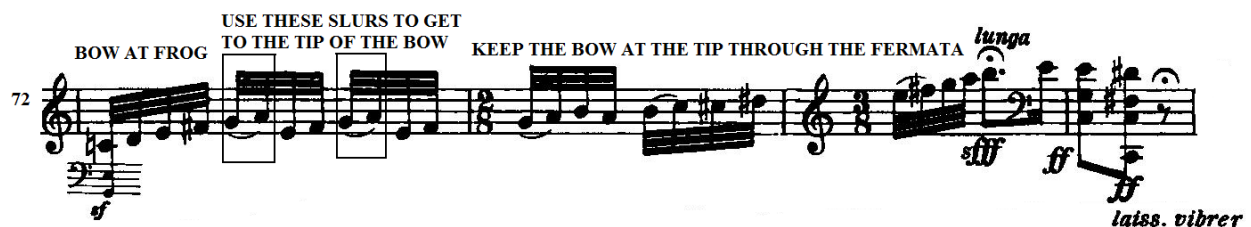


Figure 41: mm. 72-75. Use the slurs to begin at the frog and get to the tip.

After many unsuccessful attempts to get from the lower to the upper half of my bow, I realized that there was a small window of opportunity in which I could make the bow travel. In m. 72 the thirty-second note figure on the second beat is played twice and the first beat of m. 73 is simply an elaboration of this pattern, while the left hand plays a relatively simple pattern. From the second beat of m. 73 until the conclusion of m. 75 matters for the left hand become much more complex.

As I continued to experiment with the distribution of the bow I realized that the best way to get to the tip was to use the slurs that occur on the first half of each group of thirty-second notes. Using more bow on the down bow slurs was more effective since a down bow travels in the direction of the tip. On the alternate up bows I would simply use less bow. I tried making the

distribution of the bow even over the course of the passage, but this was never successful because I have to be at or near the tip by the time I get to the second beat of 73, otherwise the right and left hands are to each other. At the same time I realized that the bow should do all of its traveling before the left hand has made its way up the fingerboard. Beginning on the second beat of m. 73 the left hand makes a series of semitone position changes, which while not necessarily difficult by themselves, can be troublesome to execute while the right arm is busy making rather large movements to get the tip of the bow. If the bow is in its ideal position by the time I need to focus on the left hand I have one less thing to worry about.

The middle section concludes with a series of recitative-like gestures that serve to lower the energy level and bring the cello back to the register of the *Bass Theme* which is recapitulated in m. 90. Unlike the previous passage in mm. 73-75 in which I had to make a conscious effort to get to the tip of the bow, the bow can start exactly where it needs to and through proper distribution can be in the right place to finish the phrase. For example, the passage in mm. 77-79 is marked *piano* and crescendos to *forte* quickly on the second and third beats of m. 78 that lead into the two *forte* chords in m. 79. It makes the most sense to begin the crescendo on the B \flat on an up bow, which means that the ascending scale should begin on a down bow. Since there are no slurs in the scale to help the bow travel to the tip, the scale should begin at the tip and use relatively little bow (Figure 42). The next passage in mm. 82-83 is similar in the sense that the second and third beats should begin on an up bow so that the chords in m. 84 can be played on a down bow (Figure 43). The scale is all under one slur which will require that it begin at the frog on a down bow, gradually increasing in speed as the scale ascends.

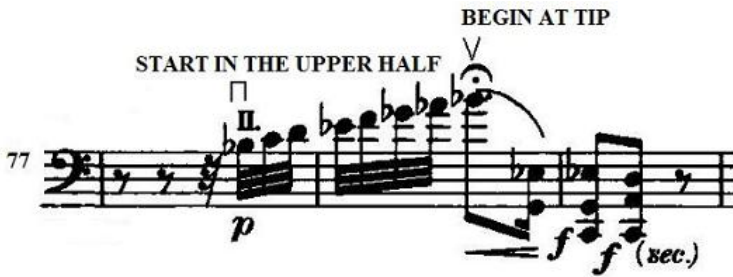


Figure 42: mm. 77-79.



Figure 43: mm. 81-84. Speeding up through a down bow to get to the tip.

6.5 Thoughts on Performance

With regard to performance there are a few strategies I used to help maintain the pulse in both the A and B sections. The rhythm and the pulse in this movement must remain steady and in sections with left hand pizzicato there is no room for interpretation. Establishing a pulse in the opening was an important part of getting off to a good start in the second movement. I decided to use the start of the *Soprano Theme* as my point of reference for the pulse of the *Bass Theme*. I also discovered that breathing before each change and thinking or saying the word “and” before each change prevented me from cutting a tie or dotted rhythm short. This in conjunction with varying the bow speed correctly helps make the bow changes smoother. The concept of the word “and” as a sort of musical place marker was explained by Janos Starker in a master class on the second movement of the *Sonata*.⁵⁸ I found that it also helped to simply count the eighth notes particularly in the *Soprano Theme* when the left hand pizzicato notes have to line up correctly

⁵⁸ Starker, volume 2.

against the melody. The B section is faster but should be approached with the same amount of control (Starker used the phrase “controlled fury” and often quotes Gyorgy Sebok who said, “don’t get excited, create excitement.”).⁵⁹ It is a similar approach to the trill section in the first movement. My tendency was to hurry through the technical passages, but maintaining a firm tempo greatly increased my chances of making it through this section successfully. The virtuosity is already written into the music, so it makes little sense for me to speed up or slow down where it is not written.

The second movement illustrates a clear dichotomy in the variety of playing styles required. On one hand, there are expansive lyrical passages that necessitate micromanagement of the changing bow speeds, and on the other there are passages in the B section that are short and intense that require quick adjustments in the placement of the bow. I found that I had to make a number of choices with regard to my left hand to manage the left hand pizzicato as well as the melody. My choices were based primarily on the size of my left hand, what felt the most comfortable, and what resulted in the best sound.

⁵⁹ Ibid., volume 2.

Chapter 7 Movement III: *Allegro molto vivace*

The third movement of Op. 8 is firmly rooted in Hungarian dance and instrumental folk music. At nearly eleven minutes, the third movement is a test of endurance, technical prowess, and memorization skills for the performer. Kodály expanded the range of the cello to five octaves, included unique pizzicato techniques, unusual left hand techniques, and bowing techniques such as *saltato*, *ricochet*, *sul ponticello*, and *sul tasto*. Although composers had used many of these techniques individually, it is likely that Kodály was the first composer to combine these techniques in one composition creating a variety of sound colors.

Whereas the second movement has a distinct vocal quality, striving to bridge the gap between the voice and the cello, the third movement essentially turns the cello into a one-man-band, as Kodály incorporates techniques, rhythms, and sounds associated with Hungarian folk instruments, and uses folk dance music and children's songs as the thematic basis for the movement. One of the genres that Kodály uses to great effect is a kind of Hungarian music known as *verbunkos*.⁶⁰ According to Oxford Music Online, the word *verbunkos* comes from the German word *werbung* which means "recruiting."⁶¹ *Verbunkos* music reached the height of its popularity in the mid-19th century and was used to accompany dancers that helped recruit Hungarians into the army. Gypsy musicians would accompany dancing Hungarian soldiers and frequently took liberties with the music, improvising, showcasing their virtuosity, and adding their own musical flavor to the performance. Once conscription began in 1849, recruitment fairs

⁶⁰ Smith, 37.

⁶¹ Jonathan Bellman, "Verbunkos," *Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/29184> (accessed February 25, 2013).

ended and so did performances of this music for that purpose.⁶² However, the music remained popular and Gypsy bands had a hand in allowing this music to develop beyond its original function. In Kodály's use of *verbunkos* music, he used traditional characteristics such as dotted rhythms, as well as some of the Gypsy inflections such as flashy passage work and melodic augmented seconds.

7.1 Formal Analysis

Like the two previous movements Kodály continues to merge classical traditions into his uniquely Hungarian music. The third movement is an expanded sonata form with themes that are based on motives found in the first eight bars.⁶³ Kodály has again managed to use rather economical means to compose a piece that while lengthy, is fully conceived and well balanced. The exposition is composed of two theme groups, each of which contains multiple variations or elaborations on some component of the opening eight bars. As the movement progresses these individual components are elaborated and some develop specific functions, such as a transition. The *verbunkos* style is found mostly in the first theme group and is used in transitional passages between thematic variations. Interestingly, the exposition seems to contain the bulk of music in the *verbunkos* style in that there are more improvisatory virtuosic passages that connect larger sections of music than there are elsewhere in the movement. The second theme group uses characteristics commonly found in children's songs such as duple meter and a simple melodic contour. Although the recapitulation closely follows the unfolding of the exposition, Kodály juxtaposes the first and second theme groups without using as much *verbunkos* music in

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Smith, 33-34.

transitional passages. With regard to harmony, Kodály uses functional key relationships and major and minor modes as opposed to the key areas and pentatonic scales found in the first movement.

7.2 Exposition

According to Smith's analysis, the thematic material in the third movement is based on motivic cells in the first eight measures.⁶⁴ First are the constant eighth notes that begin in m. 1. This particular motive pervades the entire movement and can be seen at various points in both augmented and diminuted forms. The second motive is m. 4 whose melodic contour can be seen in several forms. The third motive is m. 5 which is also varied throughout the movement and used as the basis for the second theme group. The fourth motive is m. 8 which is consistently used in conjunction with virtuosic passage work in the *verbunkos* style in transitional phrases (Figure 44). Although this motive first appears as a monotone, one bar motive, it will be constantly elaborated as the movement progresses.

Allegro molto vivace. (♩=160.)



Figure 44: mm. 1-8. Motives 1, 2, 3, and 4 are used as the thematic basis for the movement.

The exposition is composed of two theme groups as shown in the form diagram below (Figure 45). The first theme group occurs in mm. 1-61 and contains two subsections: (1a) in mm. 1-38, (shown in Figure 44) and (1b) in mm. 39-61 (Figure 46).

⁶⁴ Ibid., 34.

Theme Group	Measure Nos.	Key Area(s)	Characteristics
First Theme Group	1-57.1	Bm, DM	Two subgroups, 1a, 1b
Second Theme Group	57.2-173	DM, F#m, DM	Four subgroups, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d

Figure 45: Form diagram of the exposition.

Figure 46: mm. 39-61. Section (1b) in first theme group.

The first theme group is characterized by the use of the *verbunkos* style which features virtuosic passage work such as in mm. 20-24, mm. 34-38, mm. 41-44, and mm. 54.2-57.1 (Figure 47). Within each subsection there are repetitions that are linked via the transitional motive found in m. 8. This is followed by two measures of double stops and the second transition motive in m. 11 which is slightly varied in terms of pitch content and rhythm (Figure 48). The transitional motive is then followed by a virtuosic passage which leads to either the next subsection of the first theme group. The pattern of the transitional motive followed by florid passage work leading to a new subsection or theme group is consistent throughout the movement.



Figure 47: mm. 20-24, mm. 34-38, mm. 41-44, mm. 54-57. *Verbunkos* passages in the first theme group.

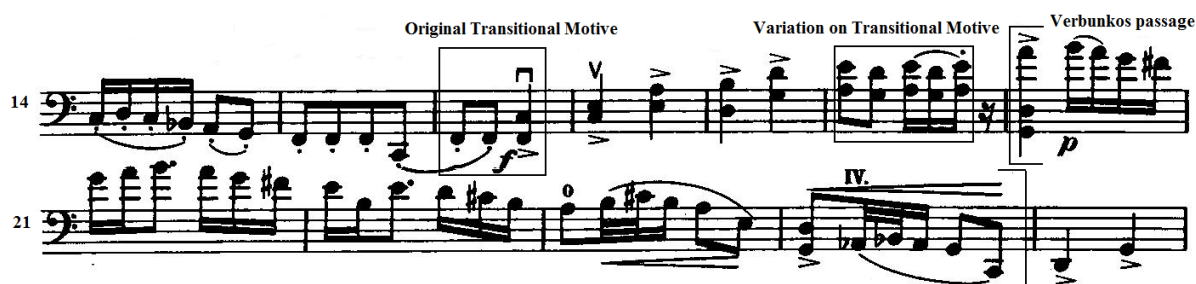


Figure 48: mm. 14-25. Original transitional motive in m. 16 followed by the first variation in m. 19 that leads into a *verbunkos* passage in mm. 20-24.

The first theme group begins in B minor and modulates to the relative major key, D major, during the transitional passage in mm. 49-52 with the use of a single pitch that functions as a pivot (Figure 49). The C# in m. 49 is the pivot that transforms from the root of the C# major chord into the leading tone of the next key. The root and seventh of an A7 chord in m. 52

provides the dominant chord of the next key and allows the C# to be understood retrospectively as the leading tone to D major. Kodály uses this strategy consistently throughout the movement.



Figure 49: Modulation from B minor to D major via C#.

The second theme group occurs in mm. 62-173 and is composed of five subsections: (2a) mm. 62-74, (2b) 75-96, (2c) mm. 97-118, and (2d) 119-173. The second theme group uses children's songs as the basis for the theme. This theme does not quote any specific children's song but rather imitates the typical features such as a narrow range, simple contour, and duple meter with accents on the main beats of the measure (Figure 50).



Figure 50: Excerpts of subgroups in the second theme group.

The rhythmic pattern that characterizes subsections (2a) and (2c) is a variation of the rhythm found in m. 5. The melodic contour in subsection (2a) is slightly different than the motive in m. 5, while subsection (2c) retains the melodic contour of the original motive. These two subsections are bridged by subsection (2b) which is rhythmically related to the opening with its constant eighth notes, and harmonically with a persistent open F# string. Rather than use the transitional motive found in m. 8 and the first theme group, Kodály has used material from mm. 9-10 to link repetitions in the second theme group. The four chords are varied and elaborated in the case of mm. 66-69 and mm. 74-77, in which the two chords are played and repeated while accompanied by left hand pizzicato on the offbeats, whereas in mm. 100-101, mm. 104-105, and m. 108 these chords are presented in their original form (Figure 51).

66

TWO CHORDS EXPANDED

74

TWO CHORDS EXPANDED

CHORDS IN ORIGINAL FORM

100

104

108

Figure 51: mm. 66-69, mm. 74-77, mm. 100-101, mm. 104-105, and m. 108. Transitional chords in expanded and original forms in the second theme group.

Kodály incorporates a virtuosic *verbunkos* style passage in mm. 109-118 to conclude the transition and lead into subsection (2d) that begins in mm. 119. This section between mm. 119-

173 is in D major and features an interesting technique by which the melody alternates with a D pedal in mm. 119-136. This is repeated in mm. 137-157 with the thumb beginning a perfect fourth lower on the A and D harmonics. The effect of the sixteenth note double stops seems to me as though Kodály may have been trying to imitate a cimbalom. The cimbalom effect continues through the conclusion of this section at m. 173, and into the first part of the development in mm. 174-187.

7.3 Development

The development section is expansive, spanning 245 measures between mm. 174 and 419, and in addition to developing previously used material, Kodály also manages to introduce some new material as well. The diagram below shows the organization of the development (Figure 52).

Theme Group/Material	Measures	Key Area	Characteristics
First Theme Material	174-189	B	
First Theme Material	190-238	FM, Eb, E	Upper leading tone motion at ends of phrases or at arrivals
First theme material	239-271	B	
Cadenza	272-325	Section framed by C natural	Chromatic arpeggios
Dominant Retransition	326-419	F#	Quasi-chromatic motive presented in tremolo and trills

Figure 52: Form diagram of the development.

Harmonically speaking Kodály does not stray too far from home, making forays into F major, Eb, E, and B before beginning the dominant retransition and a heavy emphasis on F#. Although the key relationships are more typical, it is in the development that Kodály reverts to the use of harmonically ambiguous key areas. The lowered second scale degree that was so prevalent in the first movement can be seen frequently in the development, and there are many instances in which there is no way to determine whether the mode is major or minor. There is

also a lengthy section in mm. 272-325 which contains harmonically ambiguous, highly chromatic arpeggios, and has a fantasia-like quality.⁶⁵

The development can be divided into several sections: mm. 174-189, mm. 190-238, mm. 239-271, mm. 272-325, and mm. 326-419. Each section is marked by the use of a particular thematic or motivic element. The first section in mm. 174-189 continues the cimbalom effect and incorporates left hand pizzicato on the open B and F# strings to provide support from the bass (Figure 53).

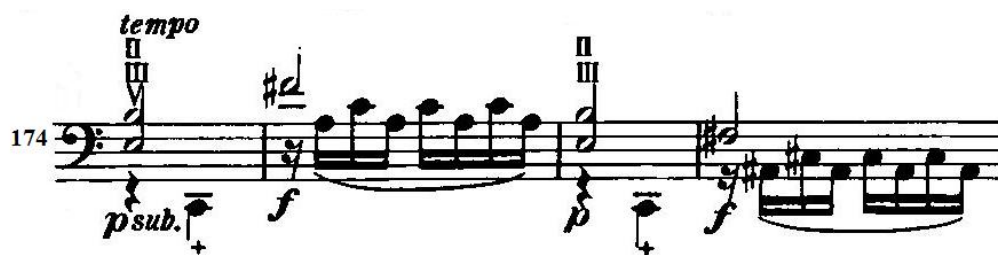


Figure 53: mm. 174-177. Opening measures of the first section of the development.

The second section in mm. 190-238 sees a return to the improvisatory sounding *verbunkos* style. The section begins with pizzicato that alternates between the bass and upper voices and accelerates toward the end of the passage. Breuer describes this particular pizzicato passage as having a *dúvő* effect.⁶⁶ The *accelerandi* are followed by sudden virtuosic outbursts, such as in mm. 205-207 and mm. 210-216 (Figure 54).

⁶⁵ In his analysis Smith labels Cadenza 1 as mm. 272-325, and Cadenza 2 as mm. 326-419. I believe that it is appropriate to label the material in the first cadenza as such, since it has not been heard before and because the section as a whole has an improvisatory feel to it. However, I disagree with calling mm. 326-419 a cadenza because it so clearly functions as the dominant retransition that leads into the recapitulation.

⁶⁶ Breuer, 55. The *dúvő* effect is described as being “a characteristic accompanying rhythm of Hungarian folk music and gypsy music, with the accent on the weak beats.”



Figure 54: mm. 202-207. Excerpt from second section of development. Note the accelerando that leads into a *verbunkos* passage in mm. 204-207.

There is a return of the transitional motive found in the first theme group in mm. 226-238 which leads to the next large section in mm. 239-271. In addition to the prevalence of the lowered second scale degree in this section, the influence of the melodic contour from mm. 5-6 can be seen in the bass driven melody in mm. 239-246 and again in mm. 253-263 (Figure 55).

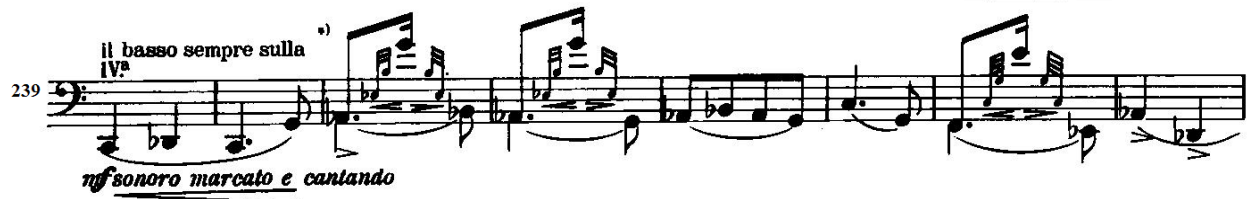


Figure 55: mm. 239-246. Opening of the third section of the development.

The *cadenza* in mm. 272-325 features a series of arpeggios that are framed by two octaves, have no tonal center, and move in a mostly chromatic fashion. The opening arpeggio, C-G#-D-C, provides the framework for all of the following arpeggios until the configuration of the left changes in m. 301 (Figure 56).

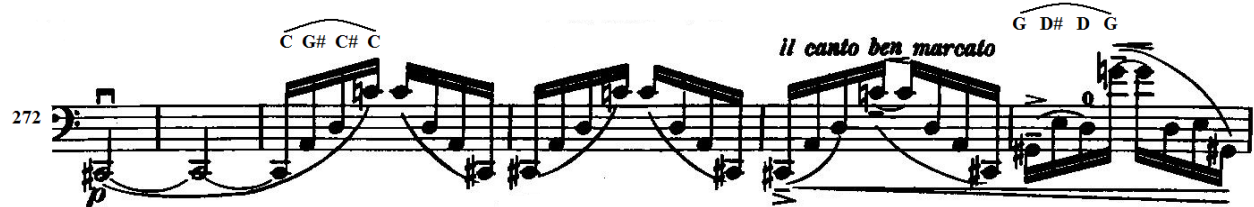


Figure 56: mm. 272-277. Opening of the cadenza showing the pitch content of the arpeggios.

Up to this point the arpeggios consist (from the bass) of an augmented fifth, a diminished fourth, and a minor seventh. In m. 300 the pitches on the F# and A string begin to ascend, and the pitch on the A string toggles back and forth between B and C in mm. 303-307, before the left

hand descends to frame B \flat to begin a chromatic ascent to C \sharp in mm. 308-311. The section concludes with yet another *verbunkos* passage in mm. 312-325, as there is a *stringendo* over the repeated arpeggios that lead into an increasingly frenetic build-up in mm. 315-317 which is followed by a virtuosic descending passage (Figure 57).

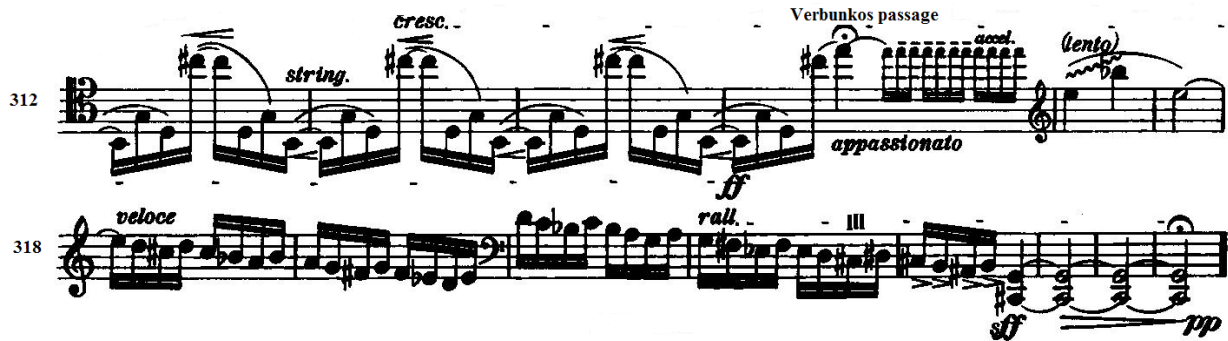


Figure 57: mm. 312-325. Conclusion of the cadenza with a gypsy-inspired flourish.

The dominant retransition begins in m. 326 and is built on the quasi-chromatic motive found in mm. 326-328, which is a variation on the motives found in mm. 1 and 4 (Figure 58).

Tempo I.

sul Ponticello. QUASI-CHROMATIC MOTIVE



Figure 58: mm. 326-332. Opening of the dominant retransition.

The motive found in the opening measures of this section are not only restated throughout the dominant retransition, but continually expanded until m. 374 at which point the motive is heard in an augmented form along with the augmented form of the motive from m.1 that is played with left hand pizzicato in mm. 381-383 (Figure 58). The fifth scale degree, F \sharp , is heard throughout this section, and sets up the grandiose recapitulation in B major in mm. 420-617.



Figure 59: mm. 381-397. Augmented version of opening motive.

7.4 Recapitulation

The recapitulation closely follows the unfolding of events in the exposition, albeit with some interesting alterations and additions. The diagram below illustrates the organization of the recapitulation (Figure 60).

Theme Group/Material	Measures	Key Area	Characteristics
First Theme	420-445.1	BM	All subgroups included
Second Theme	445.2-564	CM, BM, EbM, BM	All subgroups included
Development Material in Recap	565-617	C#M; CM; F#	Develops pizzicato
Coda	618-673	BM	

Figure 60: Form diagram of the recapitulation.

One of the major alterations that Kodály makes in the recapitulation is the subtraction of multiple extended transitional phrases, particularly the virtuosic *verbunkos* passages, between material from the first and section theme groups. In the recapitulation the thematic material is juxtaposed with minimal transitional material. However, the larger subsections of the recapitulation are bridged with longer, more elaborate transitional passages. For example, the recapitulation begins with two statements of the first theme in mm. 420-435, and is followed by a transition in mm. 436-445 that is a variation on the original transitional motive first seen in m. 8. This sequential passage ends with a fermata which is followed by second theme group material in mm. 446-476 (Figure 61).

CONCLUSION OF FIRST THEME

432

437

442

ritard.

piu agitato

meno f cresc.

Tempo I

pp subito

RECAPITULATION OF SECOND THEME GROUP

Figure 61: mm. 432-447. Conclusion of the recapitulation of the first theme leading into the variation on the transitional motive in mm. 436-445. The beginning of the recapitulation of the second theme group is shown in mm. 445-447.

The second theme group in the recapitulation is characterized by four repetitions of this theme first in C major, and followed by two repetitions in B that modulate to E \flat major in m. 471. The next large section is the recapitulation of subsections (2b) in the second theme group marked by strummed pizzicato in mm. 477-493, and subsection (2c) in mm. 494-504 with an elaboration of this theme that culminates in a transitional passage in mm. 505-516 that modulates back to B major. Subsection (2d) is recapitulated in mm. 517 in B major with the same cimbalom imitation that continues with pizzicato material from the development in mm. 567-582. This material, which was first heard in the development, is repeated twice in C \sharp major and C major before a sequence that features *glissando pizzicato* in mm. 582-594, a new variation on this idea (Figure 62). Kodály's use of this technique was certainly one of the earliest (if not the earliest) in the repertoire for cello. A chromatic, ascending pizzicato passage continues in mm. 595-604 and intensifies the approach to the coda.

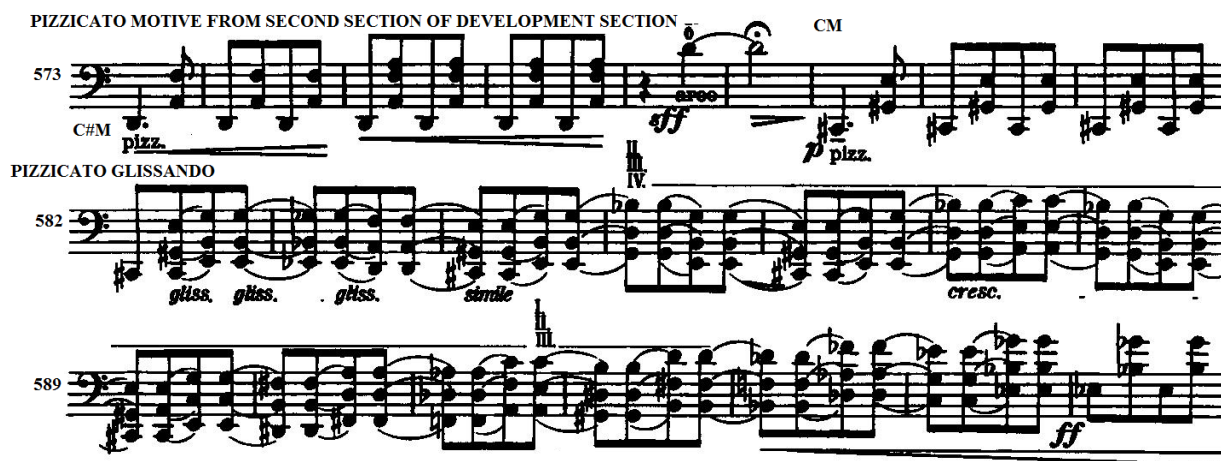


Figure 62: mm. 573-595. Kodály mixes pizzicato from the development and introduces a new form of pizzicato with the *glissando* figures in mm. 582-594.

The coda begins in m. 618 and includes some development of previously heard material. For example, the transitional motive heard throughout the movement is prominently featured in the coda both in its original form and in an elaborated form first heard in m. 620. The elaborated form features a variation in the rhythm that is subsequently syncopated in mm. 624-637. Harmonically, the motive is used in sequence beginning in B major and nearly outlines the pitches found in the anhemitonic pentatonic scale first heard in the first movement: B-D-(E)F#-A-B (Figure 63). The next large section is a series of arpeggios that first alternates between B major and B minor in mm. 642-653, before arriving on a B major arpeggio and beginning a series of rhythmic variations in mm. 654-658. The rhythmic variation begins with sixteenth notes, becomes a quintuplet and sextuplet in mm. 654-656, before reverting to sixteenths with a change in articulation in mm. 657-658. The rhythmic variation in mm. 654-656 could be considered a literal translation of the mordents found in mm. 648-653. The last rhythmic variation in mm. 657-658 contains a diminution of the eight note motive found in m. 1 on the second beat of the measure. The final section of the coda features an ascending passage that

builds on a B major chord, and includes a BM7 chord, an F# minor chord, and alternates each measure between B major and B minor in mm. 666-670 by using both D# and D natural.

Figure 63: mm. 618-641. Opening of the coda based on the original transitional motive and a new variation of that motive.

7.5 *Saltato* and *Ricochet* Bow Strokes

The opening eight bars of the third movement feature two types of bow strokes: *saltato* in mm. 1-4, and *ricochet* in mm. 5-6, each of which requires specific physical motions to execute. The word *saltato* comes from the Italian word *saltare* which means “to jump.” *Saltato* is not necessarily considered a part of the taxonomy of bow strokes, but is more akin to a style or desired sound. In this case, Kodály has indicated that mm. 1-4 be played in the jumping *saltato* style. Either way, a particular kind of stroke has to be used to achieve the desired effect and for the sake of simplicity I will refer to it as *saltato*. In a *saltato* stroke each note is played with a single bow stroke at a place in the bow that will cause it to bounce. *Ricochet* is a stroke in which

a series of notes are played in one direction with a single impulse from the bow that results in a bounce that articulates the remaining notes. The term *jeté* (from the French for “throw”) could also be used to describe this particular stroke because in this case the cellist has to throw the bow somewhat on the down bows on the downbeats of mm. 5 and 6. The point at which the bow will bounce depends on the placement of the bow which in turn will depend on the location of the balance point. The balance point varies in every bow because of variables in the weight of the frog, the type and density of the wood (or carbon fiber) used for the stick, and thickness of the hair. On my bow the balance point is approximately seven inches from the frog, not too far from the middle of the bow.

Although the *saltato* and *ricochet* strokes produce different effects, the physical motions required to play each stroke are related. There are two basic physical factors at work in the *saltato* stroke: the horizontal motion of the right arm, and the vertical motion that begins by dropping the bow from the air and results in the bouncing of the bow. The motion of the bow should come from the shoulder and the whole arm should move rather than using the smaller units of the arm (forearm, wrist, fingers). In mm. 1-4 the stroke is a simple “down bow-up bow” stroke on the B and F# strings. It is easy to overlook the importance of producing the right kind of physical motion for this stroke, but getting the right feeling in the right arm in these measures is critical to initiating the *ricochet* stroke in mm. 5-6. I found it difficult in mm. 5-6 (and at the repetition in mm. 13-14) to make the *ricochet* stroke bounce evenly, thus clearly articulating all the notes under each slur. The bow would often bounce on the first two sixteenths, but ran out of bounce on the third and fourth notes. My initial solution was to focus on the vertical aspect of the stroke. I tried a combination of lifting my arm higher, tightening the bow, and rolling the bow forward to play with flatter hair. I also experimented with the placement of the bow thinking that

if I played closer to the bridge, the higher string tension would help the bow bounce.

Unfortunately, none of these things individually or in concert completely solved the problem. I experimented with playing the figure without the *ricochet* stroke and realized I had to incorporate more horizontal motion in my right arm to make the stroke work.

Once I figured out that the success of the stroke is reliant a combination of motions, I had to find the right balance between the vertical and horizontal motions. An excess of horizontal motion will put the bow in a less than ideal place for the two up bow eighth notes, and too much vertical motion will result in a loss of articulation and clarity. The addition of more horizontal motion certainly improved the quality of the stroke, but it lacked consistency. In my practice I decided to play the pattern on open strings to rule out any interference from the left hand and to concentrate fully on the physical aspects of the right arm. One of the things that I experimented with was simply dropping the bow on the string and seeing whether or not the bow would continue to bounce on its own. I discovered that the bow will bounce quite easily but only if the right hand is completely relaxed. If the right hand grips the bow even slightly, this tension will dampen the natural bounce in the bow. With regard to the passage in mm. 5-6 there are now three basic parts to the *ricochet* equation: 1) horizontal motion from the shoulder, 2) vertical motion, and 3) a total relaxation of the right hand when the bow hits the string. The relaxation of the right hand should occur between the last note in m. 4 (and m. 12) and the vertical drop on the down beat of m. 5 (and m. 13). All of these elements produced the most consistent *ricochet* stroke.

7.6 Drones

One of the most prevalent features of this movement is the use of a drone or pedal tone. In his efforts to turn the cello into a Hungarian folk instrument such as a hurdy-gurdy or bagpipe,

Kodály has added a drone pitch to accompany the melody. In many cases the drone is an open string, and at other times the drone is simply a repeated or alternated pitch. For my own purposes, I classify the drone as an open string or another pitch that is sustained while the melody is played, and a pedal tone as a pitch that is repeated throughout a particular passage. Although the effect is striking and unique, drones can drown out the melody, especially when the drone is an open string. Furthermore, I found that in my own playing of the movement there was a tendency to get carried away and play everything loud and intensely even though it was not necessarily appropriate to do so. There are moments when turning down the volume is important for the pacing and clarity of the movement as well as for the energy of the performer. The drones can add bombast and noise where there should be none and lowering the intensity level not only makes them more playable but helps the cellist shape the movement musically.

Alleviating the drone problem boils down to the vertical distribution of the bow over two (or three) strings. When playing two strings simultaneously the bow can apply equal weight to both strings or it can give more weight to one of the strings. There are several examples in the third movement when the cellist can give more emphasis to one of the strings to help balance the drone and the melodic line. The melodic line will almost always be of greater importance than the drone that provides harmonic support or color of some kind. What I realized about playing many of these drones is that the open strings, whether above or below the melodic line, will always resonate more easily thus making it easier to drown out the moving line. For example, the figure in mm. 42-44 (including the pickup to m. 42) has a meandering improvisatory line in sixteenth notes above repeated eighth notes on the open D string below (Figure 64).

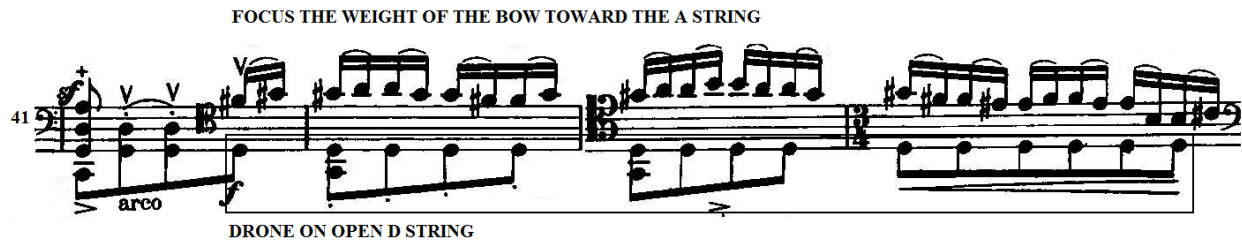


Figure 64: mm. 41-44. Drone vs. melodic line.

I found it easy to simply saw away with the bow and not pay any attention to the balance between the drone and melodic line. However, more often than not, the open string completely obscured the moving line. To mitigate this I focused the weight of the bow toward the A string and released the weight from the D string as quickly as possible knowing that the open string will ring without much help from the bow. The first subsection of the second theme group in mm. 62-65 and the transposed version in mm. 458-461 pose similar problems for the bow (Figure 65). In these two instances the melodic lines are both in the lower range of the cello, on the less brilliant F# string, and are easily overpowered by the adjacent open strings.

RELEASE THE BOW AFTER EACH ACCENT

FOCUS THE WEIGHT OF THE BOW ON THE MELODIC LINE

Tempo. (*meno mosso, ritornando* *poco a poco al Tempo I.*)

Figure 65: mm. 62-65, mm. 458-461.

Again, I concentrated the bow and my arm weight on the F# string to bring out the melodic line and released the open string drone after playing the accent on each beat. The figure

in mm. 98-103 is another variation on the two examples above in which the same principles apply. Additionally, I would suggest playing these figures somewhat closer to the bridge because the string with the moving line will be on more equal terms with the adjacent string with regard to height. Stopping any string with the left hand lowers the height of the string relative to the adjacent open string but playing near the bridge where the tension keeps the string higher may help even things out for the bow.

The strummed pizzicato figures in the (2b) section of the second theme group in the exposition also have a drone that can become problematic. The first occurrence of strummed pizzicato in mm. 78-96 has a persistent open F# that depending on the way the strumming is executed can become unnecessarily loud (Figure 66).

The musical score for Figure 66 is written in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of four systems of staves. The first system (measures 78-79) is marked 'pizz.' and 'simile'. The second system (measures 80-87) is marked 'LESS CONTACT WITH OPEN F#' and 'sempre'. The third system (measures 88-94) is marked 'p dolce, marcato il tema'. The fourth system (measures 95-96) is marked '95'. The score shows a series of chords and single notes, with the open F# string being a constant presence.

Figure 66: mm. 78-96. Subsection 2b of the second theme group. F# drone in pizzicato passage.

Lessening the impact of the open string can be accomplished through changing the direction of the strum and the angle at which the fingers of the right hand hit the strings. Kodály

specifies that the cellist strum in a back and forth motion in mm. 78-80, and then continue strumming the chords from the top in mm. 81-96. The volume of the open string is not as critical in mm. 78-80 since the chord is repeated for two measures. However, as the chords begin to take on a more melodic character in mm. 81-96, it is important that those changes come out of the texture. I did not change the direction of the strumming in this passage, rather the angle at which my right hand approached the chords. I began playing this passage by approaching the strings at a more perpendicular angle, making it possible to make equal contact with all three strings. At this angle the naturally higher F# string made it easy for my fingers to make the most contact and thus play it louder. When I changed the angle of approach from perpendicular to a more diagonal angle to the strings my fingers made direct contact with the top notes of the chord and only glanced the F# string. Despite the almost accidental contact with the F# string, there was still enough resonance to provide harmonic support.

7.7 Pizzicato Pitfalls

Pizzicato is often overlooked by many string players who take for granted the seemingly easy task of plucking a string. One lesson that I have taken away from this piece is the variety with which a string player can play pizzicato. The point on the string at which it is plucked, the part of the finger used, or whether it is plucked or strummed with the right or left hand are all variables in the equation of sound. Since this piece incorporates a variety of pizzicato techniques and options for different kinds of sound, the cellist does not have the option of overlooking any of these passages. That being said, not all of the pizzicato passages in the third movement were of equal difficulty. In some passages the configuration of the left hand was more of an issue, and in other cases coordinating the motions of the right and left hands was problematic.

The first instance of difficulty with pizzicato occurs in the second theme group in mm. 66-69, mm. 75-77, and again in the recapitulation in mm. 471-473. In this passage the bow is playing quarter notes using a kind of accented *portato* stroke while the left hand plays pizzicato on the offbeats of each quarter note (Figure 67). This type of rhythm is known as an *estam* rhythm and is common in Hungarian folk music.⁶⁷



Figure 67: mm. 66-69, mm. 75-77, mm. 471-473. Examples of the *estam* rhythm.

Although these passages are in different keys and thus have different left hand challenges, the coordination between the right and left hands was difficult for me in the early stages of learning this movement. I found that it was a matter of isolating each phenomenon (the

⁶⁷ Smith, 37-38, as quoted in Bálint Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, Translated by Fred Macnicol, *Gypsy Music* (Budapest, Corvina Press, 1978). The *estam* rhythm is one in which an accompanying instrument known as the *kontra* plays the offbeat eighth notes.

bow and the pizzicato) and simply practicing the pizzicato as if it were a reflex of the accented *arco* notes. Once this reflexive way of playing the figure became smooth, I was able to play it rhythmically and gradually increase the tempo. Measures 471-473 were by far the most difficult transposition of this passage for me because the configuration of the left hand made it nearly impossible for me to play the left hand pizzicato notes. The left hand has to play an E \flat major chord with the first, second, and third fingers, so that the bow can play the bottom note of the chord and the fourth finger can pluck the top three notes of the chord. What I found difficult was maintaining the shape of my left hand and thus, the intonation of the chord while reaching with my fourth finger for the pizzicato, since repositioning the hand happens automatically as the fourth finger attempts to reach. Unfortunately, I have never been able to completely solve this problem since it may be an issue of hand size more than anything else. Perhaps if I had a much longer third or fourth finger, this passage would be less problematic. I did, however, find a few ways to help the problem. First, I tried positioning my left thumb behind my third finger rather than behind my first or second finger which prevented my fingers from pulling back to go with my thumb. Second, I tried moving my left arm forward and around the cello to shorten the distance that my fourth finger had to reach to play the pizzicato. These two ideas helped somewhat but have never completely solved the problem.

Measures 78-96 are less complicated for the left hand than the parallel passage in mm. 477-493, but both require the cellist to use first and fourth finger to bar a fifth, first in mm. 94-96, and again in mm. 488-490 (Figure 68). These two passages also require the cellist to alternate between the barred first and fourth fingers while covering the distance of both a minor and major third. Using fourth finger to bar any two pitches is never entirely comfortable but there are few ways to make it less strenuous. The solution that worked for me was to release my hand between

each set of fifths. Not only does this prevent the build-up of unwanted, fatigue inducing tension, but it allowed my relatively small hand to better preserve the intonation. If, on the other hand, I tried to keep my first finger in place while reaching with my fourth finger, my first finger ended up pulling sharp. My hand also became tight and tired quickly. Releasing the left hand was absolutely necessary in mm. 488-490 due to the passage occurring in half position and because of the much larger interval spacing between double stops.

1 4
1 4
0 0

RELEASE LEFT HAND BETWEEN CHORDS

94

1 4
1 4
1 0
1 4

488

cresc.

Figure 68: mm. 94-96, mm. 488-490.

The passage in the recapitulation in mm. 477-492 presents less of a problem in terms of balancing the sound than mm. 78-96 (whose problematic drone I discussed in section 7.3) since there are no open strings to strum repeatedly. However, I did modify the method of strumming in this passage in order to get a fuller sound from the chords. Rather than strum all of the chords from the top down as Kodály has indicated, I reverted to the back and forth strumming pattern from mm. 78-80. I felt that these chords were more harmonically complex than those from the exposition and needed more sound to make the harmonic changes clear, and that I could get the most sound from strumming back and forth rather than strumming in one particular direction.

Furthermore, because mm. 477-493 is in E \flat , the cellist has to use awkward left hand configurations throughout the passage as there are few options to use open strings. Again, I found that releasing my left hand at every opportunity made the passage less difficult and less tiring. Measures 491-492 were particularly difficult for my left hand because of the spacing required by the chords (Figure 69).

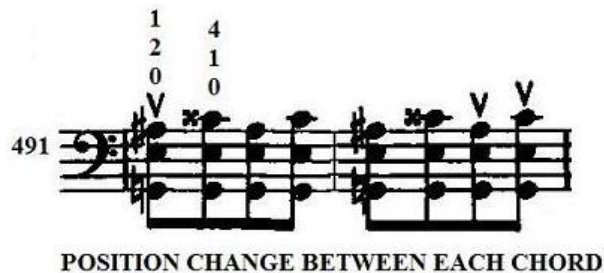


Figure 69: mm. 491-492.

Here the left hand has to alternate between E and A \sharp , and E and C \times . Although releasing the left hand between chords was still imperative, I realized that it was my fingering that I had to change to make this passage successful. I began playing this passage by going back and forth between second finger and first finger on the E-A \sharp , and second finger and fourth finger on the E-C \times which meant that I was keeping second finger down while trying to reach a minor seventh with my fourth finger. Despite changing the angle of my hand to reduce the reach, the intonation suffered, and I changed my fingering on the E-C \times to first finger and fourth finger to prevent this. Although this meant that I had to make a position change on every eighth note, I felt I was able to justify a reduced tempo in these two bars since it made sense to slow down as the material from the second theme group is about to arrive for the final time.

7.8 *Restez* Theme

One of the most problematic passages in the entire piece is that which makes up subsection (2d) in mm. 119-173 in the exposition and in mm. 517-564 in the recapitulation. Each of these subsections can be divided into two parts: 1) a single melodic line in mm. 119-136, and 2) a repetition of the same phrase with double stops in mm. 137-173. The requirements for the left hand are unique in the cello repertoire as the thumb is fixed on a pitch, while the left hand reaches for the pitches in the melodic line (or double stops) that alternate with the pedal tone created by the thumb. The fixed nature of the thumb is where the term *restez* comes into the picture, as the word translates from the French to mean “remain.”⁶⁸ The word is generally used in string playing to instruct a player to remain on a particular string or finger. What makes these two phrases difficult for the left hand is, 1) the fact that there is little in the way of a reference point for the fingers as the normal diatonic configuration of the hand does not apply, and 2) the fixed thumb limits the ability of the left hand to effectively reach some of the larger intervals. The speed, placement, and distribution of the bow is also critical in the success of these phrases.

The first time this phrase occurs in mm. 119-173, it is in D major. In mm. 119-136 the thumb will remain on D (above the A harmonic) and the first, second, and third fingers will reach for the alternating notes (Figure 70). As the phrase progresses the melodic range expands, beginning with the range of a fourth (to G), moving on to a fifth (to A), and reaching its maximum range of a minor seventh (to C) in m. 127. For the size of my hand and the length of my fingers, using first and third fingers for A and F# in m. 122, and using third finger for any pitch above F# was the most comfortable.

⁶⁸ Christine Ammer, *The A to Z of Foreign Musical Terms*, (Boston: ECS Publishing, 1989), s.v. “*restez*.”



Figure 70: mm. 119-128, mm. 133-147. Excerpts from the *Restez* Theme.

Given the shorter distance between notes in this register of the cello, reaching a minor seventh was not terribly uncomfortable once I became accustomed to the sensation of having my thumb function as the pivot point in my left hand. The distance between notes became more problematic for me in the following double stop phrase, as it is positioned a perfect fourth lower on the A and D harmonics in thumb position. This portion of the phrase is also made more difficult in terms of reach because of the double stops, particularly in the case of a minor sixth in which the second and third fingers must be further apart. Here I tried to turn my body to the right in such a way that my left arm could come around the cello thereby reducing the amount reaching I had to do with the left hand.

The parallel passage in B major in mm. 517-564 was always far more problematic for my left hand because of the larger distances between notes, particularly in the double stop section of the phrase. Again, turning my body to the right helped to some degree, but in the case of the double stops in mm. 535-545 I am not able to truly reach the G-E double stops if my thumb remains in place on the B and F#. Not only does this make it difficult to perform the passage, but the super stretch that I have to make limits the amount of time I can practice the passage before my hand and forearm begin to hurt. I attempted to solve this problem by not lifting my second and third fingers, therefore not actually playing the notes stopped by my thumb. I was able to make it sound as though I was lifting my fingers by articulating the bow using a *portato* stroke as I played the moving sixteenth notes. In doing this I found that in both passages, although it seems necessary to do so, lifting the second and third fingers higher makes it more difficult to play. The higher the fingers are from the fingerboard, the greater the chances are for losing sight of the next target. Furthermore, I discovered that in all of these phrases, the speed, placement, and distribution of the bow became just as important as anything I tried with my left hand, and one of the first alterations I made was the number of measures under a single slur. Kodály has written long slurs (or phrase markings), many of which are over four measures. This distribution of the bow was never comfortable for me because not only does the bow have to be in the upper half, but because I had to carefully budget the amount of bow used down to the last sixteenth note. By altering the slurs to one or two bars per slur, it became much easier to use an effective and comfortable amount of bow in the upper half while negotiating a difficult left hand passage. As I mentioned above, I also found it useful to articulate the bow when playing the moving line in order to make up for the loss of articulation made by the left hand, as I decided not to lift it as much to preserve intonation.

While some might consider my approach in this passage to be cheating, I felt justified in doing it because ultimately the moving line would be heard and it stood a better chance of being in tune. There are many instances in the cello repertoire in which we have to make a decision between doing what is written and doing what is playable. At this point in my life, that passage is unplayable as written, so I have to alter it. Perhaps later in my life I will not find it necessary to make these changes, but until then, this is what works.

7.9 Cadenza

The page of bizarre arpeggios in mm. 272-325 is difficult primarily because of the odd configuration of the left hand, syncopated rhythm, and the fact that the bow has to repeatedly traverse all four strings (Figures 56-57). I found that most of the difficulty in this section was superficial in the sense that it looks more difficult than it actually is once all of the bowing and fingering patterns are figured out. The first step for me was to figure out the make-up of the chords. These chords are dissonant, made up of augmented fifths, diminished fourths, and minor sevenths all framed by an octave, but the configuration of the left hand remains the same between mm. 272-300 making it relatively easy to go from chord to chord. It is between mm. 301-315 that matters for the left hand become somewhat complicated because the shape of the left hand does not resemble anything that cellists are accustomed to using in Classical and Romantic music. In terms of the bow, I found it helpful to make a few of adjustments when playing these arpeggios: 1) Use more bow as the arpeggio rises and less bow as it falls. Not only is this a general rule that applies to cello playing in general, but it will also help the cellist execute the *crescendi* that Kodály has marked over almost all of the notes played on the A string; 2) Turning at the waist to accommodate the curvature of the bridge helped keep the bow straight, maintain contact point, and thus improve sound quality; 3) In addition to turning at the waist, I

also found that over-preparing the string crossings made them more smooth. To do this I imagined that my elbow was actually leading my right arm.

7.10 Coda

The arrival at the coda is a satisfying moment both musically and psychologically (it is truly the light at the end of the tunnel). B major has finally arrived and after playing for over 30 minutes it is nice to know that the end is near. However, there are a few hurdles yet to clear before reaching the finish line. There are two sequences in mm. 618-641 and mm. 659-673 that are separated by four-string B major arpeggios in mm. 642-658. The first sequence almost outlines an anhemitonic pentatonic scale (B-D-(E)-F \sharp -A-B) that was so prevalent in the first movement, and the second sequence is an arpeggiation of a B major chord using sixths and thirds that covers 5 octaves. Both of these sequences posed problems for my left hand and required a few adjustments in the bow, although for different reasons. The B major arpeggiation in mm. 642-658 was mostly an issue of executing string crossings, because the left hand essentially remains in place.

The first adjustment in the bowing I made in the first section was to retake the bow in m. 619 and in m. 622 so that m. 620 and m. 623 would start on a down bow (Figure 71).



Figure 71: Retaking bows in mm. 620 and 623.

Without making this change the eighth notes on the lower strings would start on an up bow and the rhythmic variation in the remainder of these measures would be on a down bow, making the string crossings more difficult and the down beats weaker. I found it much easier to play the

notes on the lower strings at the frog, and playing the slurred notes on the A and D strings on an up bow made it easier to crescendo into the next down bow. I retake the bow again in m. 631 so that I can play the triplet-sixteenth note figure (now in separate bows) on a down bow. This will set up the desired bowing in the next section which is composed of string crossings over three and four strings in mm. 638-658 (Figure 72).

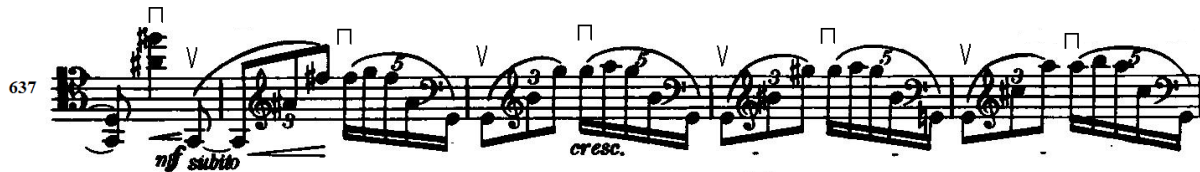


Figure 72: mm. 637-641. Earlier retakes allow the arpeggios to begin up bow.

The arpeggios in this section begin on the lower strings, go toward the A string, and come back down again. Originally, I played this passage beginning on a down bow so that by the time I reached the A string I would be further out on the bow. Changing the bow direction made these arpeggios easier to play because by starting on an up bow it is naturally traveling in the direction of the string on which the bow change occurs. The same is true as the bow is moving in the down bow direction toward the B string. I retake the bow again to begin the next section in m. 659 (Figure 73). Beginning this passage on a down bow ensures that the bow will be at or near the frog to play the notes on the lowest strings, and that the notes in the higher register will be played in the upper half of the bow. The final section in mm. 659-673 (Figure 73) I found difficult because of the constantly changing shape of the left hand. The passage is a series of sixths and thirds, and concludes with tenths and thirteenths (a compound sixth). Although I anticipated each shift, I had a choice of using either the thumb or second finger to use as my point of reference. Both options are viable but the most comfortable option for me was to use my thumb to anticipate each position change.



Figure 73: mm. 657-673. Using the thumb to anticipate shifts in mm. 668-670.

The choice of the thumb became more of a practical matter in mm. 668-670. In m. 668 I play the D#-B minor sixth with my first and second fingers so that in mm. 669-670 I can go back and forth between the D# and D \flat with my thumb. Using second finger to anticipate each position change in these measures did not feel as comfortable because the intervals are much larger going between B-F#-B. I felt it was much easier to use the semitones and thus the smaller spaces to orient my left hand. I also found it easier to find the pitches on the A string relative to my thumb, rather than finding the pitches on the D string relative to my second and third fingers.

7.11 Thoughts on Performance

Most of the performance strategies that I employ in this movement have to do with endurance and saving energy. I often compare playing the third movement to competing in a long distance endurance event such as a marathon. Pacing can make the difference between finishing with a good time or hitting the wall half way through and crawling on hands and knees to the finish. In a complete performance of the piece fatigue can easily become a problem as the

third movement progresses, making it more difficult to continue to play at a high level. My solution to this problem was to find as many opportunities in the third movement to rest or recover, and to then use what energy I had in reserve at the bigger moments.

Energy conservation begins immediately in the third movement. I found that if I kept the tempo on the conservative side (perhaps a little less *molto vivace*) I was able to expend less physical energy without losing any of the musical energy. Starting with too brisk a tempo increased the possibility for more technical problems in the fast passages in mm. 35-38 and mm. 41-44. Even Starker suggested beginning the third movement with a tempo that can handle what is coming, and to begin with a tempo that is “not the youthful one.”⁶⁹ As the movement continued I tried to find places in which I could use less energy or take time to recover slightly. The opening of the dominant transition was a place that I could reserve some energy for the upcoming recapitulation. The dynamics remain at *pianissimo* between mm. 326-346 when the crescendo begins. I used the tremolo at the beginning of this section to rest my right arm and the simple left hand passage to recover from the awkwardly shaped arpeggios of the cadenza on the previous page. The transitional passage following the recapitulation in mm. 436-445 (Figure 61), as counterintuitive as it may seem, is another place where I felt as though I could bring the energy level down. The recapitulation of the first theme group that immediately precedes this passage is marked *fortissimo marcatissimo* and is a generally boisterous passage. However, the transition is marked only *forte* and there is no need to use the same amount of energy in this passage. In this section I not only used a lower dynamic level, but I used a lighter bow on the chords. This not only helped physically but there was also greater clarity in the sound in a

⁶⁹ Starker, volume 3.

passage that can otherwise sound loud and messy. The return of the second theme group in mm. 458-469 was also an ideal spot to let the body relax. The theme is now in tonic and there are plenty of open strings and simple left hand configurations to take advantage of. In general, any place that uses more than two open strings at once is a place in which the cellist can do less work without being any less musical or expressive. As with any practice technique such as shifting or learning a fingering or bowing pattern, these energy saving measures have to be implemented in practice so that they become a natural part of the way the piece is played. The nervousness that performers experience often has the effect of amnesia: we forget to do things that are second nature in otherwise normal situations. In my own experience with performing this movement, the tempo was the first casualty and the faster tempo resulted in mistakes that would not have occurred had I pulled back ever so slightly. Although it seems easy enough to implement these energy conserving measures at any point during the learning process, it is advisable to employ them early on and strive to make them an integral part of the performance.

Conclusion

My discussion of Kodály's *Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello, Op. 8* has focused on the difficulties I faced in playing the piece and the solutions that I worked through to attempt to solve these difficulties. I have also offered some historical insight into various aspects of the piece, and formally analyzed each movement because I have always found that my connection with and understanding of any piece I play is strengthened when I explore it away from the cello. The use of a *scordatura* tuning, unique writing for the cello, and the technical challenges in the *Sonata* were also determining factors in many of the decisions that I made with regard to technical execution of certain passages. These solutions stem from how I approach the cello from a technical standpoint. My solutions will not work for every cellist, because many of the choices I made were determined by the size my left hand, the length of my fingers, and what bowing or fingering felt the most comfortable for me. Every cellist must decide what produces the best results physically and musically. Furthermore, these solutions represent what I am capable of at this moment in my life as a cellist, and as I progress musically and technically my solutions may change. However, I believe that most, if not all, of the solutions I have offered in this document are applicable to cello playing regardless of style or genre. The guiding principles outlined in Chapter 3 are applicable to every aspect of my playing, from chamber music and concertos, to orchestral repertoire. Ultimately, my objective is not to convince other cellists to play the way that I play. Instead I offer another perspective on the process of learning a piece and solving some of the problems of cello playing with strategies and principles that allowed me to learn a piece that I treasure and for which the world of cello playing is better.

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Vita

Celeste Power, cellist, is a native of Albuquerque, New Mexico. She earned a Bachelor of Music from the University of New Mexico in 2005, and a Master of Music from the University of Oklahoma in 2007. Celeste began her doctoral studies at Louisiana State University in 2009, and earning her DMA in May of 2013. Celeste has studied cello with Dr. David Schepps at the University of New Mexico, Dr. Jonathan Ruck at the University of Oklahoma, and Professor Dennis Parker at Louisiana State University. Celeste has toured with orchestras in Mexico and the United States, and performed in Europe and United States as a chamber musician. Celeste has been a member of the Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra since 2011. Outside her musical life, Celeste is a competitive cyclist and races on both the road and the velodrome. Celeste has been a member of the LSU Cycling Team since 2010 and has participated in collegiate road and track races in Texas and Louisiana. Celeste also races for Raising Cane's Racing, and placed in state championship races and won titles on the track in 2012.