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Bela Bartok's "Scherzo for Piano and Orchestra", Op. 2: An Analytical Study.

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**BÉLA BARTÓK'S SCHERZO FOR PIANO AND
ORCHESTRA, OP. 2: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY**

A Monograph

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

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vi
ABSTRACT.....	ix
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION.....	1
II THE SCHERZO, OP. 2.....	15
III SUMMARY.....	68
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	72
APPENDIX: LETTERS OF PERMISSION.....	76
VITA.....	79

LIST OF FIGURES

1.	Overall Formal Scheme of Bartók's Scherzo.....	15
2.	Orchestrations of Works Compared to the Scherzo....	17
3.	Overall Harmonic Plan of Bartók's Scherzo.....	19
4.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 1-4).....	20
5a.	Brahms, Scherzo, Op. 4 (mm. 46-49).....	21
5b.	Liszt, <i>Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-sharp minor</i> (mm. 118-21).....	21
6.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 8-17).....	22
7.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 16-26).....	22
8a.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 34-43).....	24
8b.	Brahms, <i>Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor</i> , second movement (mm. 12-18).....	25
9.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 42-57).....	25
10.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 63-70).....	27
11.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 74-88).....	28
12.	Chart of the Introduction.....	28
13.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 85-104).....	29
14.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 104-13).....	30
15a.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 142-50).....	31
15b.	Brahms, Scherzo, Op. 4 (mm. 56-65).....	32
16.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 152-66).....	32
17.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 177-92).....	33
18.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 193-203).....	34

19.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 223-52).....	34
20.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 267-83).....	36
21.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 293-302).....	38
22a.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 303-34).....	40
22b.	Liszt, <i>Hungarian Rhapsody No. 8 in F-sharp Minor</i> (mm. 41-45, 63-66, 103-5, 129-32, 139-43).....	41
23.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 340-45).....	42
24.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 441-47).....	42
25.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 463-67).....	43
26.	Chart of the "scherzo.".....	45
27.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 487-98).....	46
28.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 497-503).....	47
29.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 497-519).....	47
30.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 518-44).....	48
31.	"All Creatures of Our God and King" (mm. 1-4).....	51
32.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 543-57).....	52
33.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 564-75).....	53
34.	Chart of the trio.....	54
35.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 587-96).....	54
36.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 593-606).....	56
37.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 670-86).....	57
38.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 708-19).....	57
39.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 757-80).....	58
40.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 809-19).....	59
41.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 835-38).....	60
42.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 846-56).....	60
43.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 933-42).....	61

44.	Chart of the scherzo da capo.....	62
45.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 944-60).....	64
46.	Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 992-1003).....	65
47.	Chart of the coda.....	66

ABSTRACT

This study examines Béla Bartók's *Scherzo for Piano and Orchestra*, Op. 2 (1904), a work that was composed during a period when the composer's style was about to undergo a radical change.

Chapter One charts the course of Bartók's training as a pianist, discusses his compositional influences, and provides a brief history of the *Scherzo* and its more familiar sibling, the *Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra*, Op. 1.

Chapter Two looks at the *Scherzo* in detail, addressing the following: the overall form, the harmonic plan, the size and use of the orchestra, the idiomatic piano writing, and the use of thematic transformation (or alteration). In the course of the description, several features are pointed out--namely: Bartók's assimilation and (perhaps subconscious) imitation of certain stylistic characteristics of Brahms, Liszt, Wagner, and Strauss; the curious absence of the piano in approximately 60% of the work; the prevalent interval of the third; the numerous tempo changes; the expressive lyricism and exciting climaxes; and the use of humor in the mocking, jesting style.

Chapter Three is a brief conclusion that summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of the Scherzo, revealing details of Bartók's compositional style at the time the work was composed.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This monograph examines the *Scherzo for Piano and Orchestra* by Béla Bartók (1881-1945). It explores noteworthy features of the Scherzo's form, tonal and thematic plan, and idiomatic piano style--in particular, elements that show the influence of composers such as Johannes Brahms, Franz Liszt, Richard Wagner, and Richard Strauss. Written in 1904, the Scherzo is an early work; therefore, a brief review of Bartók's early training and influences is in order.

Bartók came from a musical family. His father, also named Béla, was an amateur pianist and cellist; he founded a music society and a community orchestra in the town of Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary. Young Bartók began piano lessons at the age of five, studying with his mother, Paula. When the senior Bartók died in 1888, Paula supported the family by giving piano lessons. In 1889, the youthful Bartók wrote his first compositions.¹

¹Vera Lampert, "Béla Bartók," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 1980), 2:197.

In 1891, Bartók continued his studies in Nagyvárad with Ferenc Kersch. However, Paula was not satisfied with the quality of Kersch's instruction, and she discontinued it after only a year. The next year, young Béla studied with Ludwig Burger, but the following year he received no formal musical training. The family moved to Pozsony in 1894, and Bartók resumed piano studies, working first with László Erkel and later with Anton Hyrtl.²

Bartók attended the Budapest Academy of Music during the years 1899-1903, studying piano with István Thomán (who had been a prominent pupil of Liszt) and composition with János Koessler. In the summer of 1903, he studied with the noted Hungarian pianist and composer Ernő Dohnányi (1877-1960).³ A letter dated 8 September 1903 to Bartók's mother reported that "the lessons go very well.-- But our views are absolutely opposed on a great number of issues. (E.g. Strauss.)"⁴ However, in another letter to his mother (dated 23 September 1903) he said about Dohnányi:

I think very highly of him both as a man and an artist. There is not a trace of malice in him. As an artist, he is too severe on his fellow artists; but that's not such a very great fault. His much worse and unforgivable sin is his lack of patriotism. This

²Ibid., 197-8.

³Ibid., 198-9.

⁴János Demény, ed., *Béla Bartók Letters*, trans. Péter Balabán and István Farkas (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1971), 31. The lessons to which Bartók referred were those with Dohnányi.

excludes the possibility that there might ever be a 'better relationship' between us.⁵

In this letter, Bartók revealed an intense and growing passion for Hungarian nationalism. As early as 1902, he was wearing the national dress and was opposed to his family's use of conversational German. It is not surprising, then, that he soon began to study and collect folk-songs--first from his native Hungary (1904), then from Slovakia (1906) and Romania (1908), and finally from Biskra (1913).⁶ His friendship and collaboration with Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967) began in 1905 after Kodály had just published his first study of folk music.⁷ Together, they published *Magyar népdalok* (*Hungarian folksongs*) in 1906. In this collection, each composer contributed ten settings for voice and piano.⁸

Before his examination of folk music, which became the strongest influence on his mature style, Bartók exhibited enthusiasm (and, by turns, mild disdain) for the works of Brahms, Dohnányi, Liszt, Wagner, and Strauss. In the aforementioned letter to his mother written on 8 September 1903, Bartók named Richard Strauss as an example of one of the "issues" on which he and Dohnányi held

⁵Ibid., 32.

⁶Lampert, 198-201. Slovakia is a region in eastern Czechoslovakia. Biskra is in northern Africa.

⁷Ibid., 199.

⁸Ibid.

opposing views. This letter records one of several musical influences that helped to shape Bartók's development as a composer/pianist. Again citing external influences in a brief autobiography in 1921, he wrote:

Before I was eighteen I had acquired a fairly thorough knowledge of music from Bach to Brahms (though in Wagner's work I did not get further than *Tannhäuser*). All this time I was also busy composing and was under the strong influence of Brahms and Dohnányi (who was four years my senior). Especially Dohnányi's youthful Opus 1 influenced me deeply.⁹

Other works that, when learned and played by Bartók, left an indelible impression on the young composer's developing style were Liszt's *Spanish Rhapsody* and *Sonata in B Minor*.¹⁰ Bartók also specifically mentioned playing a Schumann Sonata, a Chopin étude, and Dohnányi's *Passacaglia*, Op. 6 while at the academy.¹¹

Bartók was interested in the writings of Liszt and Wagner as well as in their music. He expressed this interest in a letter to János Batka (1845-1917--a Pozsony archivist and writer on music) on 7 July 1903, stating: "I have not read any of Liszt's or Wagner's writings; I

⁹Béla Bartók, "Autobiography," in *Béla Bartók Essays*, ed. Benjamin Suchoff (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976), 408. Dohnányi's Opus 1 is his *Piano Quintet No. 1 in C Minor*, which was composed and premiered in 1895.

¹⁰Lampert, 198. He learned the *Spanish Rhapsody* in 1897 and the *Sonata in B Minor* (for his Budapest début) in 1901.

¹¹Demény, 19-23.

should be very grateful if you, Sir, would have the kindness to send them to me."¹²

In the autobiography mentioned above, Bartók wrote further about his discoveries while studying at the academy:

I started studying with great enthusiasm Wagner's work, till then unknown to me--*The Ring, Tristan, The Mastersingers*--and Liszt's orchestral compositions. I got rid of the Brahmsian style, but did not succeed via Wagner and Liszt, in finding the new way so ardently desired. (I did not at that time grasp Liszt's true significance for the development of modern music and only saw the technical brilliance of his compositions.) I did no independent work for two years, and at the Academy of Music was considered only a first-class pianist.

From this stagnation I was roused as by a lightning stroke by the first performance in Budapest of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, in 1902. The work was received with real abhorrence in musical circles here, but it filled me with the greatest enthusiasm. At last there was a way of composing which seemed to hold the seeds of a new life. At once I threw myself into the study of all Strauss's scores and began again to write music myself.¹³

About Wagner, Bartók wrote to the poet Kálmán Harsányi (1876-1929) on 21 August 1904, commenting:

I am still under the spell of *Parsifal* as I write these lines. A very interesting work, though it did not make such a tremendous impression on me as *Tristan*. Anyone possessed of the slightest religious sentiment must be moved by the plot. I feel disturbed by that continual praying on the stage. Contrary to my expectations, I found many innovations in the music. It is amazing that a man of 70 could write anything so fresh as the flower-maidens' love-song in the 2nd act--and this without being repetitious.¹⁴

¹²Ibid., 25.

¹³Béla Bartók *Essays*, 408-9.

¹⁴Demény, 41-2.

On 17 March that same year, Bartók wrote to his friend Lajos Dietl (a pianist and professor at the Vienna Academy of Music): "I have been getting to know some beautiful songs by Strauss. Verily, verily, I say unto you: since Wagner there has been no composer as great as Strauss."¹⁵

Bartók mentioned a few of his own works that were composed during 1903-4 while he was studying Strauss's scores (such as *Ein Heldenleben* and *Sinfonia domestica*),¹⁶ but his earlier adoration for Strauss seems to have taken another tack:

Meanwhile the magic of Richard Strauss had evaporated. A really thorough study of Liszt's oeuvre, especially of some of his less well known works, like *Années de Pèlerinage*, *Harmonies Poétiques et Religieuses*, the *Faust* Symphony, *Totentanz*, and others had after being stripped of their mere external brilliance which I did not like, revealed to me the true essence of composing. I began to understand the significance of the composer's work. For the future development of music his oeuvre seemed to me of far greater importance than that of Strauss or even Wagner.¹⁷

Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies* also exerted a large influence upon Bartók's early works. In 1902 Bartók wrote Four Songs on texts by Lajos Pósa. According to Halsey Stevens, these songs are characteristically similar to the *Hungarian Rhapsodies* of Liszt,¹⁸ as is the "Scherzo" from

¹⁵Ibid., 38.

¹⁶Lampert, 198-9.

¹⁷*Béla Bartók Essays*, 409.

¹⁸Halsey Stevens, "Some 'Unknown' Works of Bartók," *The Musical Quarterly* 52 (January 1966): 40.

Bartók's *Four Pieces* for piano.¹⁹ Kroó observes that the influence of Liszt's late *csárdás* is found in parts of the *Scherzo*, Op. 2.²⁰

Works Bartók composed during 1903-4 included the *Symphonic Poem Kossuth*, a *Violin Sonata*, and a *Piano Quintet*, but these remained unpublished as late as 1921. He wrote further about this period: "In 1904 I composed my *Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra* (Opus 1), which I entered for the Rubinstein competition in Paris but without success."²¹ Since the composition of the *Rhapsody* is so closely entwined with that of the *Scherzo*, Op. 2, the following brief discussion is relevant.

The *Rhapsody* was published in four versions between 1904 and 1923:²² for piano solo (composed by November 1904,²³ first performed by Bartók on 4 November 1906,²⁴ and published in 1909 without its second "movement");²⁵ for

¹⁹Elliott Antokoletz, *Béla Bartók: A Guide to Research* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1988), xix.

²⁰György Kroó, *A Guide to Bartók*, trans. Ruth Pataki and Mária Steiner (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1974), 24. A *csárdás* is a Hungarian dance consisting of a slow section followed by a fast one.

²¹*Béla Bartók Essays*, 409. The Rubinstein competition was held in August 1905.

²²Colin Mason, "Bartók's Rhapsodies," *Music and Letters* 30 (January 1949): 26.

²³Antokoletz, 6.

²⁴Kroó, 16.

²⁵Mason, 26.

piano and orchestra (composed for the Rubinstein competition in 1905, first performed publicly on 15 November 1909 with Bartók as soloist, and published in 1910);²⁶ for two pianos, published in 1910; and, the final version for piano solo, published in 1923.²⁷ Bartók mentioned the Rhapsody in a letter to his mother (dated 8 August 1905), but he called it a *Concertstück*.²⁸ In this letter he bitterly described the results of the Rubinstein Competition, in which he was the soloist of his Rhapsody.²⁹ Almost four years later, he wrote the following to Etelka Freund:

A piece of news worth communicating: my quartet is to be published by Rózsavölgyi & Co. in the autumn. It seems they were greatly impressed by their having sold 40 copies of my rhapsody abroad (while only 4 or 5 have been sold at home so far); hence their courage. Actually, it is rather surprising.³⁰

Since the piano and orchestra version was not published until 1910, Bartók must have been referring to the piano solo version in the letter to Freund. There is no mention in Bartók's letters of his performance of the piano and orchestra version on 15 November 1909; however, he wrote a letter (not dated, but written after 19 March

²⁶Kroó, 16.

²⁷Mason, 26.

²⁸Demény, 45.

²⁹Ibid., 380.

³⁰Ibid., 94. The letter is dated 17 July 1909. According to Demény, Etelka Freund studied with Bartók in 1903 (Demény, 383).

1910) to Sándor Kovács in which he stated that his piano and orchestra version of Op. 1 had been accepted by the Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein to be performed at the Musikfest in Zurich.³¹ It was, in fact, performed at the music festival on 28 May 1910 with the composer as the soloist.³² In 1910 Bartók wrote an analytical essay on his Rhapsody, which may have been used as program notes for the music festival in Zurich.

Subsequent performances of the Rhapsody included one on 30-31 December 1927 in Philadelphia and another on 26 November 1930 in London.³³ Writing to his mother, on 6 December 1930, Bartók stated: "It is true that I've had a big enough success in London; but it's been a long time coming--overdue by about 24 years."³⁴ According to Demény, the London success is probably a reference to his performance on 26 November 1930.³⁵

It is unclear in Bartók's letters which piece--the Rhapsody or the Scherzo--was composed first, or if the compositions of the works overlapped. However, it is fairly certain that the piano versions of Opp. 1 and 2 were most likely written first, with orchestrations soon

³¹Ibid., 99. Kovács (1886-1918) was a piano teacher of significance in Hungary.

³²Ibid., 388.

³³Ibid., 405.

³⁴Ibid., 199.

³⁵Ibid., 410.

following. It is likely that Bartók was considering the orchestration of the work in its conceptual stage, but he had formed definite ideas when the piano scores were being penned.³⁶

This extraordinary activity--performing, teaching, composing, arranging and rearranging--has been recalled by Bartók's son, Béla, Jr., who wrote:

Giving recitals and piano lessons (he consistently refused to give lessons in composition), tired him chiefly because he always and everywhere insisted on giving his best. . . .

. . . He had no recreations in the conventional sense of the word. He never visited the cinemas, cafés, or other places of amusement, and would seldom go to concerts. His principal pastime was--work.³⁷

Although the Scherzo was apparently written during the same period as the Rhapsody, it received no mention at all in Bartók's autobiography. The first reference to the Scherzo is found in a letter (dated 21 August 1904) to Kálmán Harsányi, where Bartók stated: "I played my Scherzo to Richter who thinks it a scherzo 'von und zu Übermenschen.'"³⁸

His next and final recorded mention of the piece appears in a letter (dated 18 September 1904) to his

³⁶See Mason, 27.

³⁷Béla Bartók, Jr., "Remembering My Father, Béla Bartók," in *Bartók Studies*, ed. Todd Crow (Detroit: Information Coordinators, Inc., 1976), 149-51.

³⁸Demény, 41-2. Hans Richter (1843-1916) was a noted Hungarian conductor who conducted Bartók's Symphonic Poem *Kossuth* on 18 February 1904. *Von und zu Übermenschen* can be loosely translated as *by and for Supermen*.

former teacher, Thomán. The letter reveals that a performance of the Scherzo was planned for 15 March 1905 on a program with Liszt's *Totentanz*. Bartók projected finishing the orchestration by the first half of October, and spoke of plans to send Thomán the score:

Will you please pass it on to Mrs. Gruber after you have looked at it? If you're interested, you might play it on two pianos. I showed it to Richter in Bayreuth; he said it was '*ein gelungener musikalischer Scherz*.' The only thing he objected to was the title. He said the piece was too grandiose, too complex, too 'sparkling' for such a plain title. Then he added: 'You mustn't expect it to be generally liked, though.' And so, even though Richter liked it, the result is nil.³⁹

Judging from the letters, we can conclude that Bartók probably composed the piano version of the Scherzo in the summer of 1904. He planned to finish the orchestration by the first half of October for a scheduled performance on 15 March 1905. Bartók himself was to have been the soloist. That performance never took place. Reportedly, "Hans Richter (who was to have led the Budapest Symphony Orchestra, with Bartók at the piano) had not had time to study and annotate the master score and there were many mistakes in copied parts."⁴⁰ At the first rehearsal of the Scherzo, Bartók was "obviously embittered by the

³⁹Ibid., 43. Emma S. Gruber (1863-1958) studied piano with Bartók, and was the dedicatee of his *Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra*, Op. 1. She married Kodály in 1910. *Ein gelungener musikalischer Scherz* can be loosely translated as a successful musical joke or a capital musical jest.

⁴⁰[unsigned review], "Vintage Scherzo," *Time*, 8 March 1963, 46.

orchestra's lack of preparation and obstructive attitude, [and] became so angry that he left the rehearsal hall in protest and withdrew the performing rights from the ensemble."⁴¹ As a result, the composer's orchestral Scherzo of 1902 (a movement from a symphony) was substituted for Op. 2.⁴² Thildi Richter (daughter of Hans Richter) wrote to Bartók on 25 March 1905 and stated: "I was less than pleased that your Scherzo could not be played owing to its difficulties! Why don't you ever write something which can be played without danger to life and limb?"⁴³ Six months later he was unsuccessful with the Rhapsody Op. 1 in the Rubinstein Competition, winning neither as a pianist nor as a composer.⁴⁴

Undoubtedly, this was a difficult and disappointing time for the composer. It appears that he never again planned for the Scherzo to be performed. He never insisted upon its publication, and never mentioned it again in his letters or other writings. However, since he

⁴¹Kroó, 22. "That same year, Bartók discovered folk music, . . . There were no requests to revive his unplayed Scherzo, and Bartók set off down the long loud road of dissonance." (See [unsigned review], "Vintage Scherzo," 46.)

⁴²Colin Mason, "Bartók's Scherzo for Piano and Orchestra," *Tempo* 65 (Summer 1963): 10.

⁴³Thildi Richter to Béla Bartók, 25 March 1905, Bartók Estate collection, Budapest Bartók Archive, Budapest; quoted in Malcolm Gillies, *Bartók in Britain: A Guided Tour* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 12, n. 38.

⁴⁴Demény, 44.

did not cancel its opus number, he must have felt the piece held some merit and importance.

Commenting on Bartók's decision to "discard" the Scherzo, Colin Mason writes:

The existence of the Rhapsody . . . is no doubt one of the reasons for his discarding the Scherzo. Two works for the same medium so similar in dimensions and character, both written in the same year, could only have been in competition against each other. Bartók's choice of the Rhapsody for survival as the better of the two was no doubt right, though in some respects the Scherzo is the more characteristic of his mature style. What probably influenced him when the time came to choose between the two (which was not until some years later) was that the Scherzo showed too obvious a debt to Strauss, with whom he had by then become disillusioned, whereas the Rhapsody was nearer to Liszt, whom he increasingly admired.⁴⁵

The score of the Scherzo was discovered and edited by Denijs Dille (b.1904--a Belgian music historian and Bartók specialist), who had the work published in 1961 by Editio Musica, Budapest. The piece was first performed 28 September 1961 in Budapest in a concert that was part of a Liszt-Bartók Festival.⁴⁶ This event marked the world premiere of the Scherzo, which was performed by the Hungarian Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra, conducted by György Lehel, with Erzsébet Tusa as soloist. Also on the program was the Symphonic Poem *Kossuth* and the orchestral scherzo of 1902.⁴⁷ One review of the world premiere noted that the Scherzo was "interesting from the

⁴⁵Mason, "Bartók's Scherzo," 11.

⁴⁶Kroó, 22-3.

⁴⁷Mason, "Bartók's Scherzo," 10.

point of view of what the composer was later to achieve."⁴⁸

⁴⁸Marjorie Phillips, "Honouring Liszt and Bartók," *Music and Musicians* 10 (December 1961): 33.

CHAPTER II
THE SCHERZO, OP. 2

Like the Rhapsody, Op. 1, Bartók's Scherzo is a large-scale work for piano and orchestra in one movement. It includes an introduction, a coda,⁴⁹ and cadenza-like passages⁵⁰ (see Figure 1 for the major sections).

Section	Measures
Introduction	1-88
Scherzo	89-485
Trio	486-575
Scherzo da Capo	576-943
Coda	944-1003

Figure 1. Overall Formal Scheme of Bartók's Scherzo.

⁴⁹The autograph (and published) scores of the Scherzo bear the titles of each of the major sections (that is, *Introduzione*, *Scherzo*, *Trio*, *Scherzo da Capo*) except for the coda.

⁵⁰Most works for piano and orchestra contain cadenzas for the piano. Although the Scherzo contains passages that resemble cadenzas in one way or another, they are not written in the traditional manner; nor did Bartók label any of them as cadenzas. Instead, these brief solo passages are set apart by terms such as *rubato*, *recitativo*, or *quasi recit.* In a facsimile of the manuscript, he also uses the terms *orchester tacet*, or *orch. tacet*. Therefore, I refer to these measures as "cadenza-like passages" or simply, "solos."

Taking into account the accepted definition of a scherzo,⁵¹ the work reflects the character of a musical joke. Consider, for example, the length of the piece, as well as its unmistakable reference to Brahms's Op. 4 (which can be seen below), not to mention the humorous use of instrumentation and the mocking dialogue between the piano and the orchestra.

The size of the Scherzo is also reflected in its orchestration, which is more extensive than that of the Rhapsody. Where did Bartók get the idea for such an enormous orchestra? Although not exactly the same, the instrumentations of the following works, with which Bartók would have been familiar, may be compared to that of the Scherzo: Richard Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra* and *Ein*

⁵¹Eugene K. Wolf, "Scherzo," in *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*, ed. Don Randel (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 732-33. According to the dictionary, a scherzo "[It., joke]" is usually made up of a scherzo section (A), ranging in character from the light and playful to the sinister and macabre, that is followed by a contrasting trio (B), after which the scherzo (A) is repeated. Although the dictionary does not estimate the length of most scherzi, it does state that in the eighteenth century a scherzo was "one movement of a suite or other multi-movement work," and from "the late eighteenth century to the present, [a scherzo is] a standard movement-type introduced as a replacement for the minuet in multi-movement cycles." The dictionary further states that the "Romantic affinity for the scherzo may also be seen in the many independent or semi-independent scherzos of the period." Such works that come to mind are Chopin's four scherzi for piano and Brahms's *Scherzo* Op. 4.

Heldenleben, and Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* (see Figure 2).⁵²

<i>Scherzo</i> , Op. 2	<i>Also sprach</i> <i>Zarathustra</i>	<i>Ein</i> <i>Heldenleben</i>	<i>Tristan</i> <i>und Isolde</i>
3 Fl.	3 Fl.	3 Fl.	3 Fl.
Picc.	Picc.	Picc.	Picc.
2 Ob.	3 Ob.	3 Ob.	2 Ob.
E. Hrn.	E. Hrn.	E. Hrn.	E. Hrn.
A-flat Cl.			
E-flat Cl.	E-flat Cl.	E-flat Cl.	
2 B-flat Cl.	2 B-flat Cl.	2 B-flat Cl.	2 B-flat Cl.
	Bass Cl.	Bass Cl.	Bass Cl.
3 Bsn.	3 Bsn.	3 Bsn.	3 Bsn.
C. Bsn.	C. Bsn.	C. Bsn.	
4 Hrn.	6 Hrn.	8 Hrn.	4 Hrn.
3 Tpt.	4 Tpt.	5 Tpt.	3 Tpt.
3 Tbn.	3 Tbn.	3 Tbn.	3 Tbn.
Tuba	2 Tubas	2 Tubas	Tuba
Timpani	Timpani	Timpani	Timpani
Cymbals	Cymbals	Cymbals	Cymbals
Bass Drum	Bass Drum	Bass drum	
Triangle	Triangle	Triangle	Triangle
Glockenspiel	Glockenspiel		
Snare drum		Snare drum	
Small snare drum		Field drum	
Tam-tam		Tam-tam	
2 Harps	2 Harps	2 Harps	Harp
	Organ		
Strings	Strings	Strings	Strings

Figure 2. Orchestrations of Works Compared to the Scherzo.

As can be seen in Figure 2, the woodwind forces in the following three works are similar to those in the Scherzo; minor differences are: 1) one more oboe in both Strauss

⁵²By comparison, the orchestra of Strauss's *Burleske* is considerably smaller, consisting of a piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, four timpani, and strings.

works; 2) the absence of an A-flat clarinet⁵³ in all three works; 3) the absence of an E-flat clarinet and contrabassoon in *Tristan und Isolde*; and 4) the addition of a bass clarinet in the above three works. (For the Scherzo, Bartók preferred the smaller brass forces of *Tristan und Isolde* and the larger percussion forces of *Ein Heldenleben*.) Also, there is only one harp in *Tristan und Isolde*; and in *Also sprach Zarathustra* there is an organ, which is not used in the other works. As mentioned in Chapter One, these works had a profound effect on Bartók.

The Scherzo is in the key of E-flat major; however, the parallel minor is also used from the opening measures to the penultimate measure of the work. Bartók effectively "toys" with the tonality by not staying in a certain key for any extended length of time. As a matter of fact, some of the themes themselves begin in one key and end in another. The overall harmonic scheme is presented in Figure 3 (see p. 19). Third-related keys play an important role: the "scherzo"⁵⁴ (in E-flat major) has a secondary allegiance to G major, and the trio (in E

⁵³This is one of the rare requirements of the A-flat clarinet in an orchestral work; it is chiefly used in military bands in Hungary and Italy. See Shackleton, Nicholas, "Clarinet," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 1980), 4:430.

⁵⁴For the purpose of clarity when referring to the scherzo section of the work, I use quotation marks (that is, "scherzo"), whereas references to the overall composition are frequently abbreviated as Scherzo.

Section	Key	Secondary Key
Introduction	E-flat minor	E-flat major
Scherzo	E-flat major	G major
Trio	E major	C major
Scherzo da Capo	E-flat major E-flat minor	
Coda	E-flat minor E-flat major	

Figure 3. Overall Harmonic Plan of Bartók's Scherzo.

major) has a secondary allegiance to C major. In place of a clear secondary key in the scherzo da capo is a battle between E-flat major and E-flat minor, which continues in the coda and is finally resolved in the last two measures of the piece. Further comments regarding significant harmonic details are included in the course of the following discussion of the work.

INTRODUCTION

Marked *Adagio ma non troppo* for the first seventy-seven measures, the introduction gradually picks up speed, (*Poco Allegro* at measure 78; *Allegro vivace* at measure 89) leading to the core of the work, the "scherzo." György Kroó states that the Rhapsody and the Scherzo resemble each other in that the slow first section is a prelude that is "virtually a complete first movement, not only because of its length, but also because of the high quality of the thematics [themes?]." ⁵⁵

⁵⁵Kroó, 25.

The massive eighty-eight-measure introduction contains three of the five major thematic ideas that unify the large sections of the Scherzo. The three themes are initially presented in their purest and simplest forms and are labeled theme B, A, and E, respectively.⁵⁶

The orchestra opens the work with a somber theme (B) in E-flat minor (see Figure 4), which eventually becomes the soloist's property almost exclusively. This theme is divided into two motives, clearly showing references to

[*Adagio ma non troppo*]

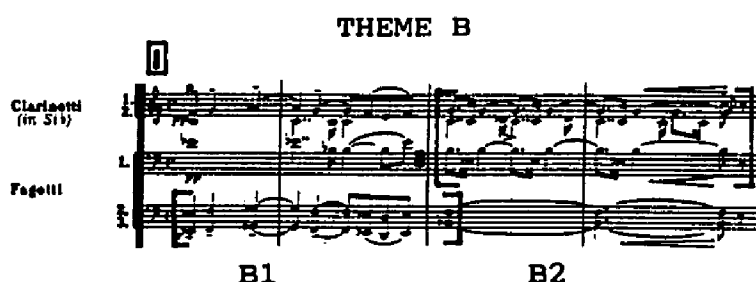


Figure 4. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 1-4).

Brahms and Liszt: in motive B1, Bartók is "quoting" Brahms's early work, even using the same key (see Figure 5a, p. 21); motive B2 uses perfect fifths, fourths, and half steps (presented in dotted rhythms), which are

⁵⁶The reason for labeling the themes in such a way is that the second theme stated in the introduction becomes the principal Scherzo theme [theme A]; the first theme stated in the introduction becomes theme B; and the third theme stated in the introduction is the fifth and last theme to be presented, becoming the trio theme [theme E]. Furthermore, in this study the themes are divided into motives, which are identified by numerals. For example, motive 1 of theme A is notated as A1; motive 2 of theme A as A2, etc.

typical of the *friss* sections in several of Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies (see Figure 5b).



Figure 5a. Brahms, Scherzo, Op. 4 (mm. 46-49).

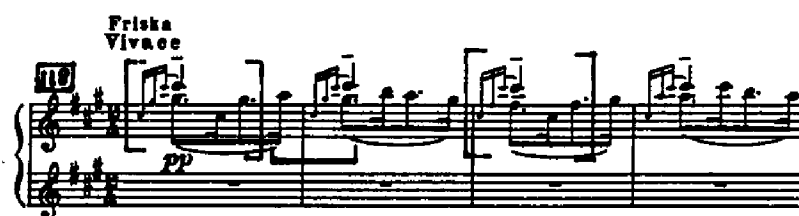


Figure 5b. Liszt, Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-sharp minor (mm. 118-21).

The measures leading to the piano's entrance contain extended and fragmented statements of B1 and brief references to B2. Beginning in C minor, this section contains some of the most dissonant and chromatic writing in the work (see Figure 6, p. 22).⁵⁷

⁵⁷To present the complete orchestral score in Figure 6 would necessitate greatly reducing its size to accommodate the limited space on the page, thereby making the notes very difficult to read. So that my analysis can be more clearly observed, I have used a piano reduction. (See the bibliography for the scores used in the figures.)

[Adagio ma non troppo] B1 extended and fragmented



Figure 6. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 8-17).

The piano enters in measure 16 (marked *più adagio*) with one of its most beautiful, imaginative, and colorful appearances (see Figure 7). The opening is based on a fragment from B1. This virtuosic cadenza-like passage is

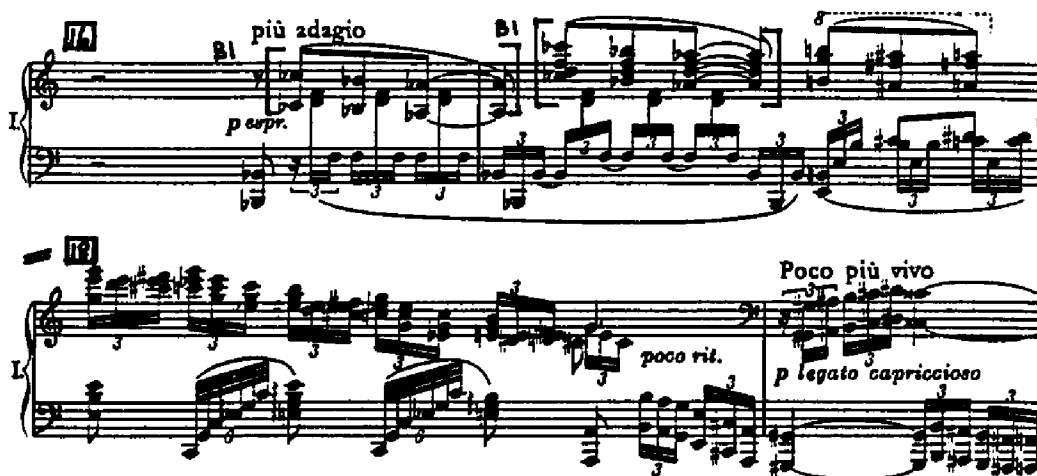


Figure 7. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 16-26). (figure con'd.)

The musical score consists of three systems of piano staves. The first system (measures 20-22) is marked 'con s...' and features dense chordal textures. The second system (measures 23-24) is marked 'a tempo' with a tempo of 43. The third system (measures 25-26) shows a climactic ascending figuration leading to a fortissimo statement of B1 in E-flat minor. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings like 'ff'.

in the style of Liszt and Brahms. One can see thick chordal and octave passages, large leaps in the left hand (m. 23) followed by climactic ascending figuration (m. 24)--all leading to the fortissimo statement of B1 (m. 26) in E-flat minor.

Theme B is given further treatment by the full orchestra and soloist until measure 34. At this point, marked *rubato*, the piano continues with material derived rhythmically from the extension of B1. A single horn freely doubles the bass line of the piano at the octave (Figure 8a).

[*Adagio ma non troppo*]

The musical score for Figure 8a consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows measures 35 to 40, with the Cor (in Fa) and Piano (P) parts. The piano part is marked 'p' and 'rubato' at measure 35. The Cor part is marked 'poco rit.' at measure 41. The second system shows measures 41 to 42, with the Cor (in Fa) and Piano (P) parts. The piano part is marked 'a tempo' at measure 42. The third system shows measures 43 to 44, with the Cor (in Fa) and Piano (P) parts. The piano part is marked 'pp' at measure 43.

Figure 8a. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 34-43).

The piano writing in this chromatic section suggests Brahms. The parallel movement in both hands, plus the parallel thirds, creates an effect not unlike the texture

of the opening statement by the piano in the second movement of Brahms's *Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor* (Figure 8b).



Figure 8b. Brahms, *Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor*, second movement (mm. 12-18).

Like Brahms, Bartók writes a lyrical, almost ethereal, passage in measures 34-43. This serves as a transition to a new theme (A), which appears in the first violins at measure 49 (see Figure 9, pp. 25-27) tonicizing C minor, and then cadencing on G major in measure 56. The orchestration and rich harmonies in this section are Straussian, while the piano states a syncopated version of theme B in stark contrast with the orchestral material (see Figure 9, mm. 54-55, p. 27).

[Adagio ma non troppo]

THEME A

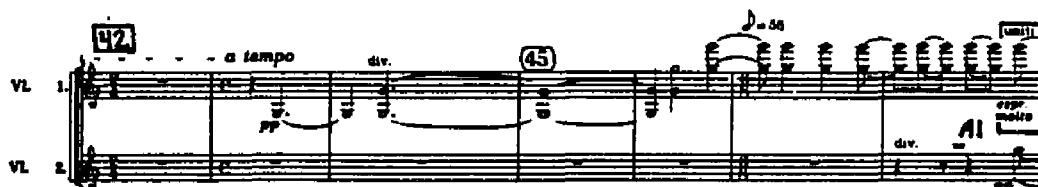


Figure 9. Bartók, *Scherzo* (mm. 42-57). (figure con'd.)

50

FL 1. *pp*

FL 2. *pp*

Arpa 1. *pp*

VL 1. *pp*

VL 2. *pp*

Vla *pp*

Vcl. *pp*

Ch. *pp*

C minor

52

FL 1.

FL 2.

Cor. (in Fa)

Arpa 1. *pp* *crec.*

Arpa 2. *pp* *crec.*

VL 1. *pp* *crec.*

VL 2. *pp* *crec.*

Vla *pp* *crec. molto*

Vcl. *pp* *crec. molto*

Ch. *pp* *crec.*

(figure con'd.)

Following a restatement of A (again by the orchestra), a new theme (E) appears at measure 63 in the strings (Figure 10), joined by the woodwinds doubling the strings in measures 65 and 67-70. This theme begins in E-flat major and cadences deceptively on C-flat major (enharmonically spelled B major).

[*Adagio ma non troppo*]

THEME E

Figure 10. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 63-70).

An abbreviated theme A played by the orchestra (mm. 71-77) leads to yet another piano solo, marked *Recitativo* (*Poco Allegro*) at measure 78 (Figure 11). Motive B1 is the predominant melodic element in these measures.

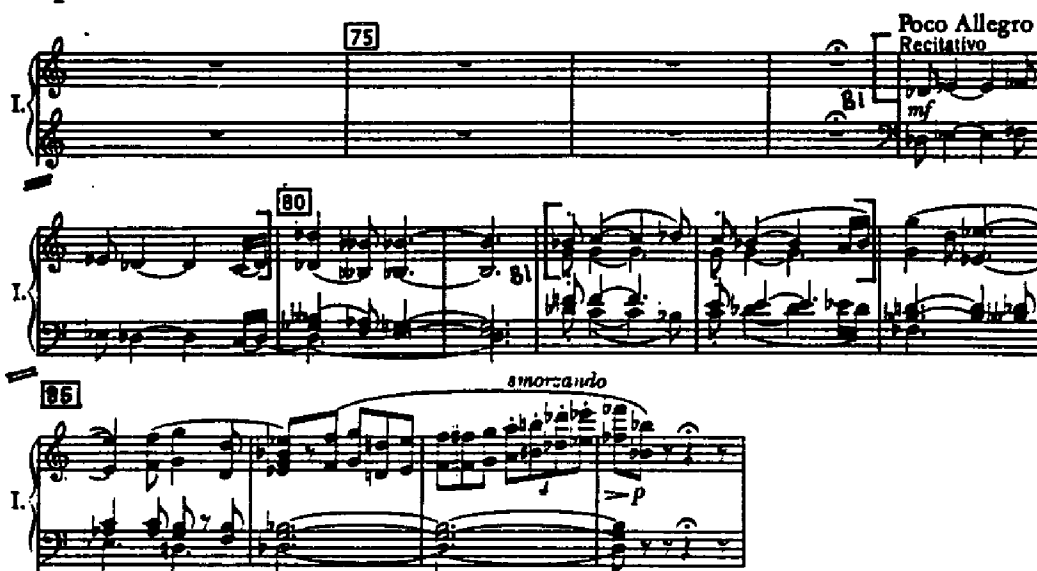


Figure 11. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 74-88).

The rather complex thematic course of the introduction may be more clearly observed in chart form (see Figure 12).

INTRODUCTION (mm. 1-88)	Measure	Theme (or Motive)	Main Key Centers
Adagio ma non troppo	1-77		
	1	B	e-flat
	49	A	
	64	E	E-flat
	72	A1	
Recitativo, Poco Allegro	78-88	B1	

Figure 12. Chart of the Introduction.

"SCHERZO"

With an abrupt tempo change occurring at measure 89 (*Allegro vivace*), the next fourteen measures serve as a transition that forecasts the beginning of the "scherzo."⁵⁸ It is during this transition that the listener first becomes aware of the scherzo-like character of the work. As shown in Figure 13, the cellos start the transition with legato descending thirds derived from A1; the woodwinds are added (*giocoso* and *staccato*) in measure 91.

The musical score for Bartók's Scherzo, measures 85-104, is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 85-90) features cellos playing a descending third pattern. The second system (measures 91-104) features woodwinds and cellos playing a staccato pattern. The tempo changes from *Allegro vivace* to *SCHERZO Allegro*.

Measure 85: *Allegro vivace* $\text{♩} = 122$
 Measure 91: *p giocoso*
 Measure 95: *cellos*
 Measure 100: *SCHERZO Allegro* $\text{♩} = 100$
 Measure 101: *ritardando*
 Measure 104: *fz grazioso*

Figure 13. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 85-104).

⁵⁸Bartók wrote in the manuscript that the "scherzo" begins at measure 104.

No doubt following the Lisztian practice of thematic transformation, Bartók uses his creative powers in varying most of the Scherzo's themes. The majority of transformations occur in the scherzo da capo; however, we encounter the first instance in the "scherzo" (mm. 104-13). Here, the first violins present the altered Scherzo theme (A)⁵⁹ as shown in Figure 14. This transformation can be seen easily by comparing A in Figure 14 with A in Figure 9 (pp. 25-27). The elements of tempo, rhythm, harmonization

THEME A

Figure 14. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 104-13).

(cadencing in G minor instead of G major), and melodic intervals are altered; but the basic shape of the line remains the same.

Following an orchestral repeat of A in measures 116-25,⁶⁰ plus an episode (mm. 125-43) based on A3, the first

⁵⁹To avoid confusion, the transformations of the various themes will retain their initial identifications; that is, theme A in its altered forms will continue to be named theme A.

⁶⁰In measure 117, this is the first time that theme A tonicizes E-flat major at the beginning of the theme. In

significant appearance of the piano in the "scherzo" occurs at measure 144. Here, a transformation of B is stated in E-flat minor. This transformation can be seen by comparing B in Figure 15a with B in Figure 4 (p. 20); obviously, the elements of tempo, rhythm, meter, and character have been changed. Also, measures 144-45 in Figure 15a disclose a reference to measures 62-65 in Brahms's *Scherzo*, Op. 4 (compare with Figure 15b, p. 32). The key is the same in both examples, and the melody and texture are clearly similar.

THEME B

The musical score for Theme B, measures 142-150 of Bartók's Scherzo, is presented in two systems. The first system, labeled 'I.', shows measures 142 and 143. Measure 142 is marked with a box containing '142' and the tempo marking 'Allegro molto' with a metronome mark of 120. The second system, labeled 'II.', shows measures 144, 145, and 150. Measure 144 is marked with a box containing '144' and the tempo marking 'Allegro molto' with a metronome mark of 120. Measure 145 is marked with a box containing '145'. Measure 150 is marked with a box containing '150'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'mf' and 'f'.

Figure 15a. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 142-50).

previous statements of A, the first phrase cadences deceptively in C minor.

[Rasch und feurig]



Figure 15b. Brahms, Scherzo, Op. 4 (mm. 56-65).

The piano continues alone in measure 152 with further alterations of theme B, specifically: in a direct statement of B1 in measures 152-53, and in inversion in measure 154. The mocking character of B1 is emphasized by the manner in which the motive alternates between the piano and the orchestra during thirteen different changes of tempo within only fifteen measures (Figure 16, pp. 32-33).

[Allegro molto]

Figure 16. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 152-66). (figure con'd.)

After an intensification of the inverted B1 in measures 157-65, a slightly altered A1, supported by scale figuration in the piano, is stated in the orchestra in measures 166-72, first in E-flat major, then in G-flat major and A-flat minor. This is followed by a new theme (C) in the key of G major (Figure 17). By giving the melody to three violins (which are accompanied mainly by pizzicato and muted strings and harps), Bartók has drastically changed the orchestral texture as well as the musical character for this new theme (marked *grazioso*).

Figure 17. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 177-92).

The piano answers immediately with the motives of C (see Figure 18). However, C1 is in diminution, C2 is rhythmically altered and repeated a whole step higher, and C3 is hardly recognizable, containing only the dotted rhythm and the direction of the line (see measure 189 in Figure 17).

[Sostenuto]

Figure 18. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 193-203).

Following an episode based on C3 (mm. 201-15) and the rhythm of the inverted B1 (mm. 216-23), theme B (in E minor) is heard again (Figure 19, mm. 224-39), stated by

[Allegro molto]

Figure 19. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 223-52). (figure con'd.)

THEME D

The musical score for Theme D spans measures 240 to 251. The top system includes Oboe 1, Flute 1 & 2, and Piano. The bottom system includes Violin 1 & 2, Viola, and Cello. Measure 240 is marked 'Quieto' and 'elision:'. Measure 245 is marked 'Vivo' and 'D2'. Measure 251 is marked 'Quieto'. The score shows various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

the piano in the broad, *appassionato* style of Liszt. The right-hand chords, supported by sweeping left-hand arpeggios in measures 224-25 and 231-34, are followed by less rhapsodic writing (the left hand essentially doubling the right hand) in measures 226-30 and 235-39.

An elision occurs at measure 243 where another new theme (D) is introduced by a solo oboe before B is completed by the piano (see Figure 19, mm. 243-46). Theme D contains two motives of decidedly different character: D1 (marked *quieto* and *espressivo*) combined with B1 outlines a half-diminished chord built on c-sharp (c-sharp, e, g, b), while D2 (marked *vivo*, and related melodically

to C3 [mm. 189-92]) tonicizes G major.⁶¹ By using the two different tempos and the dissimilar harmonic relationships, Bartók has created a humorous effect. Except for an immediate repetition a minor third higher in measures 251-54, the contrasting tempos of the two motives of theme D do not recur in subsequent appearances of the theme; however, it will be seen that Bartók does continue to exploit contrasts of character and mood.

A transition (mm. 258-72) incorporating motive D2 leads to a passage (mm. 273-302) that presents theme A (Figure 20), of which only A1 is similar to its original appearance (see Figure 9, p. 25-26, mm. 49-50), while the remainder of A is treated developmentally. The theme, stated initially by the flute in F-sharp major (mm. 273-81), is highly ornamented and is pastoral in nature.

THEME A (developmental)

— A1 —



Figure 20. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 267-83).

⁶¹It is interesting that the relationship between themes C and D involve a reversal of key relationships: theme C = G major moving to E major; theme D = e minor moving to G major.

However, the pastoral character gradually dissipates when, for the first time in the work, the E-flat clarinet is heard (coupled with the piccolo) stating theme A (mm. 281-94). When the A-flat clarinet (in its first appearance) joins the E-flat clarinet, a strident sound is created as they pierce through the orchestra with two statements of A1 just prior to a full orchestral climax, which is based on A2 in measures 299-301 (see Figure 21, pp. 38-39).

After the piano retains the same final chord that is played by the orchestra in this section (see Figure 21, p. 39, mm. 299-302), one of the most exciting parts of the Scherzo follows in measures 303-400, serving as a retransition. It begins *rubato*, *poco a poco accel.*, and is in the style of a *friss* with a tempo that gradually accelerates to measure 400. (A comparison of Figure 22a and Figure 22b [pp. 40-41] illustrates the similarity between this section of the Scherzo and a *friss* by Liszt.) Measures 303-12 employ a rhythmic alteration of B1 (see Figure 22a). Following this, the tempo increases to measure 318 (marked *Allegro*), at which point the half-steps of B1 are tossed back and forth between the piano and the orchestra (see brackets in Figure 22a, p. 40, mm. 318-327).

After a five-measure *ritardando* in measures 334-39, another build-up begins in measure 340--here without the *accelerando* of the previous passage, but with an increase in dynamics plus the addition of more and more

instruments. Figure 23 (p. 42) shows the beginning of this passage, which lasts for sixty-one measures, and reveals the simultaneous use of motive A1 and theme B.

[Comodo]

The musical score is for Bartók's Scherzo, measures 293-302. It is written for a full orchestra and includes parts for Flute 1 and 2, Oboe 1 and 2, Clarinet in G major, Clarinet in A major, Clarinet in B-flat major, Violin 1 and 2, Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass, and Piano. The tempo is marked 'Comodo'. The score shows measures 293, 295, and 296. Motive A1 is highlighted in the Clarinet in A major part. The piano part has a 'div. al' marking.

Figure 21. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 293-302). (figure con'd.)

303 *rubato, poco a poco accel.* 305 310

I. *p* *sf* *f*

311 315 **Allegro**

320 *accel.* 325 *f*

II. *f* *accel.*

327 **Allegro vivace** 330 *ff con fuoco* *dim.* *ritard.*

II. **Allegro vivace** *pp* *ritard.*

Figure 22a. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 303-34).

The image displays five systems of musical notation for Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 8. Each system is separated by a double bar line. The first system (measures 41-45) is marked 'Allegretto con grazia' and includes the instruction 'dolor'. The second system (measures 63-66) is marked 'un poco animato' and includes 'ritardando' and 'non legato'. The third system (measures 103-5) is marked 'poco a poco più animando'. The fourth system (measures 129-32) is marked 'string.' and 'piu f'. The fifth system (measures 139-43) is marked 'Presto gioioso assai' and 'sempre marcatissimo'. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Figure 22b. Liszt, *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 8 in F-sharp Minor* (mm. 41-45, 63-66, 103-5, 129-32, 139-43).

Twenty-four bars of dominant prolongation (mm. 377-400) prepare for the majestic return of A1 (m. 401) in the tonic key (stated by the flutes, piccolo, e-flat clarinet, and violins). Here, A1 is coupled with theme B (stated by

[*Allegro vivace*]

344) *Allegro* $\text{♩} = 70$

Ob. I. (345)

CL. II. (in Sib)

pp sempre slack.

p poco marc.

THEME B

Figure 23. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 340-45).

the contrabasses, low brass, low woodwinds, and piano) until measure 416, where A1 and B are repeated in F-sharp major (mm. 416-31). The piano writing in this passage contains thunderous chords, scales, and octave tremolos. The orchestra stormily takes over in measures 432-42, after which the piano states C1 (now in the tonic key) with a fuller texture and more aggressive nature than in its initial appearance (see Figure 24 and compare with Figures 17 and 18, pp. 33-34). This brief piano solo is interrupted by the full orchestra in measure 448, where an

[Sostenuto]

Sostenuto]

441

C1

444

C1

Figure 24. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 441-47).

episode based on C1 begins and continues until measure 463. At this point, C1 is combined with a transformation of D to playfully close the "scherzo" (see Figure 25).

Colin Mason has stated that the "scherzo" is in sonata form.⁶² According to Mason, the "exposition" is

The image displays a page of a musical score for Béla Bartók's Scherzo, measures 463 through 467. The score is written for a full orchestra, with staves for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in D (Cl. in D), Bassoon (Bsn.), Trumpet (Trp.), Percussion (Perc.), Violin I (Vl. I.), Violin II (Vl. II.), Viola (Vla.), and Cello (Cb.). The tempo is marked 'Allegro' and the key signature has one sharp (F#). The score shows a complex interplay of themes, with 'THEME D' and 'C1' specifically labeled. Measure numbers 463 and 465 are indicated at the top of the first and second systems respectively.

Figure 25. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 463-67).

⁶²Mason, "Bartók's Scherzo," 12.

complex: theme A serves as the first subject, and theme B is then reintroduced from the introduction; theme C serves as the second subject, and theme D is a closing theme.

Mason's analysis considers the "development" to be fantasy-like, incorporating themes A and B. The "recapitulation" begins with theme A in E-flat major. Theme C follows in E-flat major, and there is only a brief reference to theme D, also in E-flat major.⁶³ Considering the accepted definition of typical "sonata form"⁶⁴ at the time this work was written (and given Bartók's early influences), I agree that this is a reasonable analysis. Two unanticipated aspects include the following: themes A and B are combined at the beginning of the recapitulation (later, C and D are combined [mm. 463-70]); the recapitulation begins with theme A as it is stated in the development--not as it appears in the exposition; moreover, the original appearance of theme A, as heard in the introduction and exposition, never recurs in the

⁶³I assume Mason considers the three sections to be measures 104-272, 273-400, 401-85.

⁶⁴Eugene K. Wolf, "Sonata form," in *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*, ed. Don Randel (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 764-67. According to the dictionary, the "expanded tonal system of the 19th century, . . . manifested itself in sonata form." One result of the expansion was the use of remote keys for secondary key areas and theme groups. "Other attributes of Romantic sonata form include (1) more frequent omission of repeat signs; (2) in the development section, a tendency toward variation--sequential restatement, reharmonization, reorchestration--or episodic treatment"; and (3) a tendency to shorten the recapitulation.

recapitulation. (See Figure 26 for a chart of the "scherzo.")

SCHERZO (mm. 89-485)	Measure	Theme (or Motive)	Main Key Centers
Allegro vivace	89-103	A1	E-flat
[EXPOSITION]			
Allegro	104	A	
	116	A	E-flat
	144	B	e-flat
	166	A1	E-flat
Sostenuto	177	C	G
Allegro molto	197-242		
	224	B	
Quieto/Vivo	243-72	D	G
[DEVELOPMENT]			
Comodo	273-302	A	F-sharp
Rubato-Allegro	303	B1	
	340	B, A1	a
	377-400		V/E-flat
[RECAPITULATION]			
Sostenuto	401-485		
	401	A, B	E-flat
	443	C1	E-flat
	463	D, C1	E-flat

Figure 26. Chart of the "scherzo."

TRIO

Just as Bartók preceded the "scherzo" with a brief transition, he did so with the trio as well. Measures 486-98 serve as an introduction to the trio, featuring the piano (given arpeggios and trills) and strings (in bare octave doubling) in dialogue (see Figure 27).

The musical score for Figure 27 consists of three systems of two staves each, labeled I and II. The first system begins at measure 487 with the tempo marking 'ritenuto rubato'. The piano part (I) features a series of arpeggios and trills, while the string part (II) provides a bare octave doubling. The second system starts at measure 492 and continues the musical dialogue. The third system starts at measure 496 and concludes the introduction. The piano part is marked with '10' and 'tr' (trill) throughout.

Figure 27. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 487-98).

In my opinion, the trio contains some of the most pianistic writing in the entire work, especially in

measures 502-19 and 544-54. Beginning at measure 499 with theme E in E major (see Figure 28), this statement con-

The musical score for measures 497-503 of Bartók's Scherzo. It features three staves: two for Flute (Fl.) and one for Piano (Pl. S.). Measure 497 is marked with a box. Measure 500 is marked with a box and labeled 'Andante'. Measure 503 is marked with a box and labeled 'E2'. The score shows the initial statement of theme E in E major.

Figure 28. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 497-503).

sists of minor changes from the initial statement of theme E (compare with Figure 10, p. 27), such as meter, intervals, and rhythm. Virtually a piano solo, measures 502-19 contain free improvisation using previous material from measures 486-97 (see brackets in Figure 29).

The musical score for measures 497-519 of Bartók's Scherzo. It features two staves for Piano (Pl. S.). Measure 497 is marked with a box. Measure 500 is marked with a box and labeled 'Andante'. Measure 504 is marked with a box. The score shows free improvisation using previous material from measures 486-97.

Figure 29. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 497-519). (figure con'd.)

510

Pt. S.

VI. I.

513

515

Pt. S.

VI. I.

With C major being the secondary key area, measures 520-27 feature the piano and orchestra once again in dialogue (see Figure 30). A B-flat clarinet announces a [Andante]

518

520

I.

II.

"pastoral theme"

(Cl.)

p

mp espr.

pp

Figure 30. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 518-44). (figure con'd.)

523 525

I. *dolcissimo* *mf espr.*

II. "pastoral theme"

529 530

I. *espr.* 3rd 4th

II. *pp*

531

I. 3rd *pp* *morendo*

II. *morendo*

(figure con'd.)

535 sequence in 3rd

540

pp

4th 4th 4th (C. ind.) 4th 3rd

pp

pp

4th 4th Agitato 4th 3rd

emorzando woodwinds. pp p espr.

F[#] d F[#]

"pastoral theme" in measures 520-22 and 523-25, which is answered by the piano in measures 523 and 526-27. This pastoral theme occurs only twice, but it does contain the dotted rhythmic figure noted earlier as a typical feature of Hungarian rhapsodies.

The following section (mm. 528-44) is similar to free improvisation. It is based primarily on falling or rising thirds and fourths, the now familiar arpeggios and trills, and chord structures based on major and minor triads.

After the flutes present the rising fourth (mm. 541-44), accompanied by woodwinds (see Figure 30, p. 50), the piano takes over in measure 544 (see Figure 32) in a

[Agitato]

543

Pt. S.

VL. 1.

VL. 2.

Agitato

545

548

Pt. S.

VL. 1.

VL. 2.

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

550

552

Pt. S.

VL. 1.

VL. 2.

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

553

ritardando poco a poco

Figure 32. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 543-57).

passage based melodically on the material in measures 503-14. Following the entrance of the violins with the rising fourth (m. 546), the texture thickens as this rhapsodic section reaches a climax worthy of comparison with the best in post-romantic literature. A passage (mm. 559-65) similar to measures 486-98 closes the trio--this time, however, with the piano continuing alone (mm. 566-75, marked *quasi recit.*) with two statements of B1, predicting the scherzo da capo (see Figure 33).

[*ritardando poco a poco*]

The musical score for Figure 33 is for the piano solo (Pt. S.) of Bartók's Scherzo, measures 564-75. It is marked '[ritardando poco a poco]'. The first system begins at measure 565, marked 'quasi recit.' and 'B1'. The second system begins at measure 571 and ends at measure 575, marked 'morendo'.

Figure 33. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 564-75).

Compared to the "scherzo," the trio is small in scale, and in my opinion, is basically improvisatory. Nevertheless, one certainly can notice the relation of the trio to the "scherzo" from all of the elements that refer to the interval of a third (including the use of third-related keys) and the interval of a fourth, which is carried over from measures 480-487. (See Figure 34 on page 54 for a chart of the trio.)

TRIO (486-575)	Measure	Theme (or Motive)	Main Key Centers
Rubato, <i>quasi recit.</i>	486-98		
Andante	499-543		
	499	E	E
	519		C
Agitato	544-65		
	552	E	E
<i>quasi recit.</i>	566-75	B1	E

Figure 34. Chart of the trio.

SCHERZO DA CAPO

Bartók precedes the scherzo da capo (*ma poco variato*) with material (mm. 576-96) similar to, and more extended than, that which preceded the "scherzo" in measures 89-103 (see Figure 13, p. 29). The most significant difference (as can be seen in Figure 35) is the change of meter in measure 589 from compound duple to simple duple, the latter remaining for 355 measures.

[*Allegro vivace*]

The image displays a musical score for Bartók's Scherzo, measures 587-96. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system covers measures 587 to 590, with a 'poco accel.' marking above measure 590. The second system covers measures 592 to 595, with a 'ff' marking below measure 592. The music is in 2/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns with many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes.

Figure 35. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 587-96).

The composer's parenthetical description *ma poco variato* ("but a little varied") proves to be a remarkable understatement--a joke, in fact, in that there is indeed quite a bit of variation. Actually, the thematic material is radically altered with striking differences in the angular configuration of the melodic lines, plus the joking, almost grotesque mood that prevails--features that are more akin to Bartók's later style than is any other part of the work. But, probably the most puzzling change in the scherzo da capo is the almost total absence of the piano; it is inexplicably silent for all but six measures of this 368-measure section.

The scherzo da capo begins with a transformation of theme A in E-flat major, which is stated by the E-flat and A-flat clarinets in measures 597-606. (Here, these instruments produce a shrill sound, creating a mocking effect--one that is quite different from the beginning of the "scherzo" in which the violins first state the "scherzo" theme.) In this transformation (see Figure 36, p. 56) the previous elements of tempo, rhythm, harmony, intervals, and meter are altered; however, the basic shape of the line remains the same.

After A is restated in its entirety (mm. 607-15) by the contrabassoon, four horns, violas, and low strings, an episode based motivically on A3 follows in measures 615-42. In this section the strings develop A3 while the woodwinds, brass, and percussion add support with

SCHERZO DA CAPO
 (ma poco variato)
Allegro vivace

Figure 36. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 593-606).

outbursts, grace notes, and sforzandi. In a second episode (mm. 643-68) based motivically on A1, the motive is tossed around the orchestra. At measure 667, the orchestra begins a series of strong accents on the downbeats, preparing for the passionate statement of B1 by the piano in measures 673-78.⁶⁷ These are the only measures in the entire scherzo da capo that contain writing for the piano (see Figure 37, p. 57).

Sounding like laughter, the woodwinds, horns, and small snare drum suddenly interrupt and mock the *appassionato* statement of the piano with another transformation of C (see mm. 677-86 in Figure 37).

The simultaneous use of C3 and A3 in measures 693-710 serves as a transition to theme D, which is stated in A-flat major by the oboe in measures 711-14 and 715-18 (see Figure 38, p. 57). Also seen in Figure 38 is the

⁶⁷B1 and the supporting arpeggios outline an F-sharp diminished seventh chord (with an added ninth), further accentuating the unstable harmony of the scherzo da capo.

[Più vivo]

Figure 37 shows a musical score for Bartók's Scherzo, measures 670-86. The score is for two staves, I and II. Measure 670 is marked with a box. The tempo is indicated as [Più vivo]. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *dim. molto*. There are also markings for *appassionato* and *B1*. The score features complex rhythmic patterns and melodic lines, with a large section of the first staff (I) showing a dense, rapid melodic line. The second staff (II) has a more rhythmic, accompanimental role. The score ends with a measure marked 685.

Figure 37. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 670-86).

[Più vivo]

Figure 38 shows a musical score for Bartók's Scherzo, measures 708-19. The score is for two staves, I and II. Measure 708 is marked with a box. The tempo is indicated as [Più vivo]. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p* and *sf*. There are also markings for *Fl. picc.* and *Ob.*. The score features complex rhythmic patterns and melodic lines, with a large section of the first staff (I) showing a dense, rapid melodic line. The second staff (II) has a more rhythmic, accompanimental role. The score ends with a measure marked 719.

Figure 38. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 708-19).

piccolo playing a countermelody that consists of a repeated three-note figure and a rising chromatic scale, the latter assuming more importance in measures 719-23. Here, the chromatic scale is augmented, inverted, and presented in its original form, all of which precedes two fortissimo statements of D by full orchestra (mm. 724-31). The dotted rhythm of D2 is repeated in measures 732-37, leading to a small section (mm. 738-57) where the "contrast" element of theme D is used texturally and sectionally rather than between the two motives D1 and D2 (as in the "scherzo" in mm. 243-46). Measures 758-803 (see Figure 39) contain a large imitative episode based

[Più vivo]

The musical score for Bartók's Scherzo, measures 757-80, is presented in four systems. Each system consists of two staves, labeled I and II. The tempo marking "[Più vivo]" is at the beginning of the first system. Measure numbers 757, 760, 765, 770, 775, 772, and 780 are indicated above the staves. Motives D1 and D2 are labeled above the staves. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Figure 39. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 757-80).

on D, in which the intervals are changed but the rhythm and shape of the line remain the same.

Marked *Quieto*, measures 804-11 signal a sudden appearance of A1 in partial augmentation in the horns and low strings, which are answered without any rhythmic alterations by a bassoon and a B-flat clarinet. These eight measures lead to a statement of A in E-flat minor, which is played by the first flute (mm. 812-15), followed by the first bassoon (mm. 816-19)--see Figure 40. Accompanied by pizzicato strings, A now consists of quintuplets, which

[*Quieto*]

Figure 40. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 809-19).

are immediately echoed by non-thematic groups of the same rhythmic figure. The basic shape of the line remains the same; however, the rhythm, intervals, meter, harmony, and tempo that characterize theme A are all altered.

Measures 820-47 contain an episode based on the groups of quintuplets, which are passed around throughout

the woodwinds. In measures 835-43 of this episode, the accompanying pizzicato strings play a "transformation" of D; its four-measure phrase structure and its rhythm--the same as in motive D1--are easily audible (see Figure 41).

[Meno mosso]

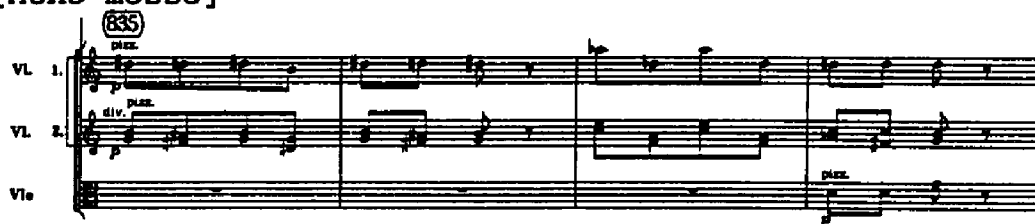


Figure 41. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 835-38).

After a fermata in measure 847, Bartók begins the next section (marked *Allegro vivace*) in E-flat minor with yet another thematic transformation of A (mm. 848-55) now heard in the first violins and the E-flat and A-flat clarinets. In this transformation, the rhythm is altered and the melody is ornamented, as can be seen in Figure 42.

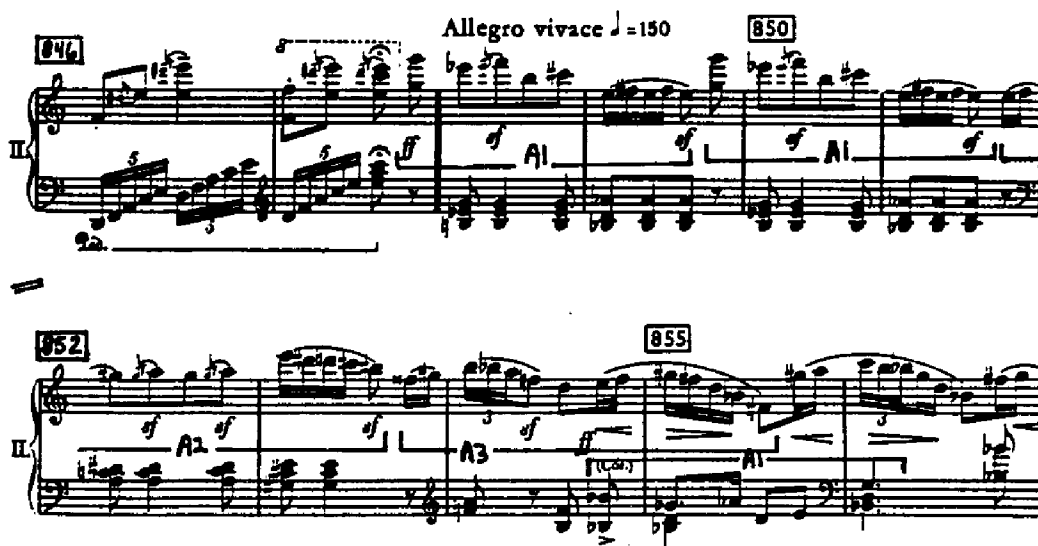


Figure 42. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 846-56).

This is the only time that this particular transformation of A appears in the work. While A3 travels through the orchestra (mm. 855-67), the horns state A1 and A2 (mm. 855-60), followed by the trumpets and second violins playing the same two motives (mm. 860-67).

Following measures 868-75 (*con fuoco*), which feature the full orchestra once again repeatedly stating a fragment of A2, the trombones blast through a whirlwind of sound with A1 and A2 heard in augmentation (mm. 876-88). After a fermata in measure 888, the trombones finish the bombastic statement of theme A with A3 in measures 889-90.

An episode (mm. 891-931) based on A3 precedes the concluding measures of the scherzo da capo (mm. 932-43). An E-flat pedal (begun in measure 922) in the low strings continues to measure 938 (see Figure 43); here, the horns

[*Allegro vivace*]

The musical score for Bartók's Scherzo, measures 933-42, is presented in two systems. The first system, labeled '933', features a horn part (II) with a melodic line and a piano part with a rhythmic accompaniment. The second system, labeled '934', features a horn part (I) with a melodic line and a piano part with a rhythmic accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Adagio' and the dynamics are 'pp'.

Figure 43. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 933-42).

and piano enter with a B pedal (mm. 938-43) that is heard simultaneously with the E-flat pedal. The harmonic element created is the major third of a B major triad, anticipating the tonality of the beginning of the coda.

The scherzo da capo is in three-part form, although the sections are not balanced numerically in terms of measures. The divisions are: "A" (mm. 576-672) = 96 measures; "B" (mm. 673-803) = 130 measures; "A" (mm. 804-937) = 133 measures. (See Figure 44 for a chart of the scherzo da capo.)

SCHERZO DA CAPO (mm. 576-943) (ma poco variato)	Measure	Theme (or Motive)	Main Key Centers
Allegro vivace	576-654		
	576	A1	E-flat
(ma poco variato)	597	A	E-flat
	616	A3	e-flat
	643	A1	
Più vivo	655-813		
	673	B1	
	677	C	
	693	C3 & A3	
	711	D	A-flat
	724		G
Quieto	804	A1	
	812	A	e-flat
	835	D	G

Figure 44. Chart of the scherzo da capo. (figure con'd.)

	Measure	Theme (or Motive)	Main Key Centers
	844	D1	
Allegro vivace	848-937		
	848	A	e-flat
	855	A1, A2, A3	
	876	A1 & A2	e-flat
	889	A3	e-flat

CODA

The opening of the coda is a high point of lyricism in the work. Beginning in B (C-flat) major, and marked *Adagio*, this section is given to the pianist, who is directed to play theme E (mm. 945-51) *pianissimo sempre* and *espressivo* (see Figure 45, p. 64). Accompanied by a muted solo violin for the first eight measures, theme E eventually cadences in G major (m. 951). Then in its final solo appearance, the piano states A1 in E-flat major (mm. 952-54).

As this section cadences, the tempo changes to *Allegro* (m. 957), where a fragment of A1 is begun in the bassoon, clarinet, and oboe. After A is stated in full in the bassoon and piccolo (mm. 965-72), the use of A3 (mm. 972-80) leads to *Vivace molto* (m. 981). At this point, the orchestra utilizes rhythmic elements from A3 (mm. 981-92), after which the piano joins the orchestra (mm. 993-1003) stating theme B in augmentation (see Figure 46)

with full chords marked *fortissimo*. The harmony of the last eleven bars is somewhat surprising. D minor is the

[Adagio]

The musical score for Bartók's Scherzo, measures 944-960, is presented in a multi-staff format. The top section, measures 944-949, is for Piano Solo (Pl. S.) and Violoncello Solo (VL solo). The tempo is Adagio, marked with 'pp sempre' and 'con sord.' (con sordina). The score includes dynamic markings like 'pp dolce' and 'ppp'. The tempo changes to Allegro at measure 954. The score is divided into sections labeled E1, E2, and A1. Measure numbers 944, 945, 949, 950, 953, 955, 956, and 960 are indicated.

Figure 45. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 944-60).

undoubted key center in measures 993-1000, but it gives way to E-flat minor in measure 1001,⁶⁸ which in turn is finally altered with the Picardy third in measure 1002,

[Vivace molto]

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system, measures 992-999, shows a piano (p) and forte (ff) dynamic. A bracket above the first staff indicates a 'Bl aug.' (B-flat augmented) chord. A 'd minor' key signature is indicated below the first staff. The second system, measures 1000-1003, features a 'Maestoso' tempo marking. A 'p' dynamic is marked below the first staff, and a 'cresc. molto' (crescendo molto) marking is present below the second staff. The key signature changes to E-flat minor in measure 1001 and back to D-flat minor in measure 1002.

Figure 46. Bartók, Scherzo (mm. 992-1003). (figure con'd.)

⁶⁸This is reminiscent of measures 78-88 in which B1 is stated in D-flat minor.

ending the coda in the tonic major. (See Figure 47 for a chart of the coda.)

CODA (944-1003)	Measure	Theme (or Motive)	Main Key Centers
Adagio	944-56		
	945	E	(C-flat)
	953	A	
Allegro	957-980		
	957	A1	e-flat
	965	A	
	972	A3	

Figure 47. Chart of the coda.

(figure con'd.)

	Measure	Theme (or Motive)	Main Key Centers
Vivace molto	981-1000		
	993	B1	d
Maestoso	1001-3	B2	e-flat/E-flat

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY

Bartók composed the *Scherzo for Piano and Orchestra*, Op. 2, in 1904; he was twenty-three years old. At that time he was strongly influenced by Johannes Brahms, Franz Liszt, Richard Wagner, and Richard Strauss. His *Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra*, Op. 1, a kindred work, was also composed in 1904, and like the *Scherzo*, it is post-romantic in style. Neither work bears much resemblance to the style that emerged as a result of Bartók's discovery and energetic investigation of authentic Hungarian folk-music. Rather, these early works display a stylized national flavor somewhat like that of Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies and Brahms's "gypsy" music.

The Rhapsody was published, and Bartók performed it on many occasions.⁶⁹ The *Scherzo*, however, was not published or performed during his lifetime; in fact, after a single but aborted effort to get it performed, it was abandoned.⁷⁰

⁶⁹See Chapter I, pp. 7-9.

⁷⁰See Chapter I, pp. 11-13. The *Scherzo* was discovered and edited by Denijs Dille, and it was published by Editio Musica, Budapest in 1961.

Perhaps Bartók felt that in the Scherzo his melodic and harmonic inspiration fell short of that of the composers mentioned above, despite his attempt to emulate their styles. It has been shown that these stylistic influences appear most clearly in the size of Bartók's orchestra, as well as in his orchestration in parts of the Scherzo. Such features bear similarities to the following: Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra* (the lush richness, the very complex and busy inner voices, the multiple divisi in the string parts [see Scherzo, mm. 49-57, 137-41, 934-37]); Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben* (the extremely high violin parts in the lyrical climaxes, the multiple divisi [see Scherzo, mm. 549-54]); Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel* (many surprising turns of harmony [see Scherzo, mm. 16-17, 272-73, 532-33, 980-1001]); Strauss's *Burleske* (capriciousness [see Scherzo, mm. 193-215]); Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" from *Die Walküre* (see Scherzo, mm. 425-40).

If Strauss and Wagner are evident in the orchestral writing of the Scherzo, it is Liszt (for example, the double octaves in mm. 389-400, the octave tremolos in mm. 412-15 and 428-31) and Brahms (see mm. 34-43 and mm. 944-51) who most frequently are echoed in the piano writing--the latter measures (944-51) being especially reminiscent of the richness and intimacy of a Brahms intermezzo.

Apparently, the Scherzo represented to its composer a work unworthy of his talent--perhaps one that seemed to

mimic, or at best assimilate, the styles of the composers mentioned above. Despite its weaknesses, the Scherzo contains some very effective moments: expressive lyricism (mm. 49-56, 63-70, 544-54), exciting climaxes (mm. 303-442, 544-54, 868-926), and several instances of humor (mm. 243-46, 677-92, 711-57). Other features include the prevalent interval of the third,⁷¹ frequent leaps within melodic lines,⁷² prolific thematic transformation (or alteration),⁷³ the rhythmic figure J J J , and its permutations,⁷⁴ and numerous tempo changes.⁷⁵

⁷¹This includes third related keys within the large sections (see pp. 18-19) and the themes (see Figure 9, pp. 25-27, theme A; Figure 10, p. 27, theme E; Figure 17, p. 33, theme C; Figure 19, p. 35, theme D), as well as the use of the interval of the third within the melodic lines (see Figure 4, p. 20, motive B1; Figure 9, pp. 25-27, theme A; Figure 10, p. 27, motive E1; Figure 17, p. 33, motive C1 [octave displacement]; Figure 19, p. 35, motive D1; Figure 30, p. 49, mm. 530-31, 537-38, 544).

⁷²See Figure 10, p. 27, theme E; Figure 14, p. 30, motive A2; Figure 17, p. 33 theme C; Figure 19, p. 35, theme D.

⁷³See the themes as they first appear in the work (B in Figure 4, p. 20; A in Figure 9, pp. 25-27; E in Figure 10, p. 27; C in Figure 17, p. 33; D in Figure 19, p. 35) and compare with the following transformations or alterations: A (see Figure 14, p. 30; Figure 20, p. 36, Figure 36, p. 56; Figure 40, p. 59; Figure 42, p. 60); B (see Figure 15a, p. 31; Figure 23, p. 42); C (see Figure 37, p. 57); D (see Figure 25, p. 43; Figure 38, p. 57); and E (see Figure 28, p. 47). The general trend in these transformations is that Bartók kept the basic shape of the melodic line, but he altered the elements of tempo, rhythm, harmonization, and melodic intervals.

⁷⁴See Figure 4, p. 20, motive B1; Figure 9, p. 26, motive A1; Figure 10, p. 27, motive E1; Figure 17, p. 33, theme C; Figure 19, p. 35, motive D1.

With his remarkable change in style (circa 1904-1905), a decision that gave him an opportunity to utilize aspects of the folk-music from Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Biskra,⁷⁶ Bartók rejected his early eclecticism. Despite this, it is fascinating to observe in the Scherzo the brilliant orchestration, the virtuosic and lyrical piano writing, and the mocking, jesting style.

In short, the Scherzo and its more fortunate sibling, the Rhapsody, served their composer well. These early compositions stand at the beginning of a magnificent career--that of a great composer who maintained a strong allegiance to his country and who broke new ground, producing many works that are counted among the masterpieces of the twentieth century.

⁷⁵There are eighty tempo changes and brief tempo alterations in this piece.

⁷⁶See Footnote 6 on page 3.

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VITA

Richard Douglas Seiler, Jr., a native of Brevard, North Carolina, began his piano studies at the age of seven. He attended the Brevard Music Center for three summers and performed with the Brevard Music Center Orchestra in 1982. He earned the Bachelor of Music degree in piano performance from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (1986), and the Master of Music degree in piano performance from Illinois State University at Normal (1988).

Having been awarded a graduate teaching assistantship at Louisiana State University, he began his work toward the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in piano performance in 1988. His major professor was Alumni Professor Jack Guerry. While at LSU, he taught group piano classes, accompanied numerous student recitals, and performed Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto with the LSU symphony orchestra, having won the annual concerto competition in 1991.

Dr. Seiler and his wife, JoAnne Harness Seiler, currently reside in Baton Rouge where he is Music Associate/Organist at First Baptist Church, Baton Rouge,

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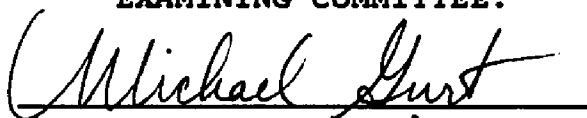
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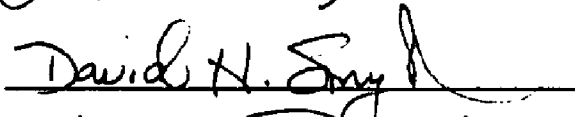
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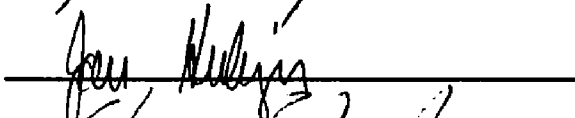

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