ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: HUNGARIAN AND KLEZMER MUSIC: FINDING FOLK ELEMENTS WITHIN THE CONTEMPORARY VIOLIN REPERTOIRE

Zoe Alexandra Kushubar, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2026

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Classical composers often utilize stylistic elements from folk music to create unique soundscapes in their music and/or affirm their cultural identity as artists within the realm of Western music. Some composers integrate folk melodies into their pieces while others write with particular elements of folk song and dance in mind, depending on their familiarity with the musical tradition. However, classical performers with Westernized conservatory training often lack the research background to determine how to identify these unique elements in classical music and how they relate to the original music traditions. Without the proper consultation of primary sources and field recordings, we may overlook and/or over-exoticize elements that serve an entirely different function in the music's original context. And while most folk music was not originally intended to be shared in a concert hall, it is important to acknowledge the sociocultural and emotional context in which these pieces were

written, especially when we find them in modern repertoire like that of Bartók and Bloch.

For this dissertation project, I will prepare and present a series of three violin recitals featuring repertoire from Hungarian and klezmer or Jewish folk traditions. I chose these two musical idioms to examine potential geographical and cultural overlap, as these traditions have spread across central and Eastern Europe through Hungarian, Romani, and Jewish diasporas. In the first few chapters, I will provide general background on these folk musics in terms of style, general structure, and cultural function. In the later chapters, I will provide comprehensive overviews for each recital in terms of the following: 1) repertoire selection, 2) a historical, analytical, and interpretive overview of each piece, and 3) research and performance challenges.

HUNGARIAN AND KLEZMER MUSIC: FINDING FOLK ELEMENTS WITHIN THE CONTEMPORARY VIOLIN REPERTOIRE

by

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Chapter 1: Why *this* Folk Music?

Inspiration

Hungarian composer Béla Bartók once said, "Peasant-music, in the strict sense of the word, must be regarded as a natural phenomenon… It is the classical model of how to express an idea musically in the most concise form, with the greatest simplicity of means, with freshness and life, briefly yet completely and properly proportioned."[1]

I first discovered the wonders of "Gypsy" music in pieces like Sarasate's *Zigeunerweisen*, Bartók's *Romanian Folk Dances*, and Ravel's *Tzigane*. During my undergraduate studies, I had a Jewish violin teacher who introduced me to the wonderful music from *Fiddler on the Roof*, along with Jewish instrumental pieces originating from Eastern Europe. These musical idioms have always spoken to me on a deeper level, filled with a swath of charged emotions, rhythmic vitality, and rhapsodic spontaneity. As my family has roots in Czechoslovakia, I feel much of this music "hits closer to home." Yet until my doctorate, I never asked myself what distinguished these unique pieces from others in the classical milieu. A considerable amount of piano and string repertoire has been written in the *style hongrois* or in the style of "Gypsy" music, and music written by both Jewish and non-Jewish composers claim to draw inspiration from Hebrew themes and elements.[2] However, I was still not sure what

[1] Béla Bartók, "The Relation of Folk-Song to the Development of the Art Music of Our Time," trans. Brian Lunn, *The Sackbut* 2, no. 1 (June 1921): 6, https://Bartók-irasai.zti.hu/en/irasok/the-relation-of-folk-song-to-the-development-of-the-art-music-of-our-time-2/.

[2] The term "Gypsy" has been used for centuries to refer to ethnic Romanies and their musical performance traditions. While some Romani people call themselves Gypsies, it has arguably pejorative connotations, as many non-Romani populations have used the term "Gypsy" to perpetuate highly negative and false stereotypes of ethnic Romanies across Europe. As a non-Romani person myself, to avoid the baggage associated with this term, I will use the term Romani to refer to these people and their diverse musical traditions.

distinguished these popular pieces from the rural folk music of Hungary and Eastern European Jewish communities.[3] baggage

Elements of European folk music can be found throughout the classical canon, from the works of Mozart and Haydn to Liszt, Beethoven, Brahms, Weber, Berlioz, and Schubert. Many of these Western composers heard folk music or popularized folk styles through performances by professional Romani ("Gypsy") musicians that played for nobles and locals across Europe to make their living.[4] These composers would borrow elements from these performance traditions to develop contrasting, often "exotic," themes in their music, to express something their musical language could not.[5] Some composers also used folk elements in their music to assert nationalistic identity, whether the inspiration came from within or was forced from a higher establishment, like the Soviet Union in the twentieth century.[6][7]

One can find more direct adaptations of rural folk tunes in more contemporary repertoire. In terms of Hungarian music, one looks to the work of Béla Bartók and Zoltan Kodály, who traveled throughout eastern Europe and neighboring regions to record and archive a variety of

[3] It is nearly impossible to define folk music, and when it is defined, it reveals more about the definer and their musical traditions than the practitioners of such music. Scholars and performers often use the term "folk music" to categorize the musical traditions of a certain geographic/cultural region, yet there are many regional variations and styles that this umbrella term tends to overlook. For sake of clarity, I am choosing to define folk music as music that was not originally created for commercial consumption and was well recognized within a geographical and/or cultural region for an extended period. Most of the folk music discussed in this paper stems from oral tradition and was performed for community entertainment, and despite variations in performance style, the melodies have remained quite stable over time. (Carole Pegg, "Folk Music," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), accessed May 12, 2026, https://doi-org.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.09933).

[4] Jonathan Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993, 13.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Daniel Elphick, "Weinberg and the Warsaw Autumn Festival: Reactive Modernism and Nostalgia" in *Mieczysław Weinberg Between East and West* Assay, ed. Michelle and David Fanning (London: The British Academy, 2026), 128 –129.

[7] Vera Lampert, "Nationalism, Exoticism, or Concessions to the Audience? Motivations behind Bartók's Folksong Settings." *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* T. 47, Fasc. 3/4, Bartók's Orbit. The Context and Sphere of Influence of His Work. Proceedings of the International Conference Held by the Bartók Archives, Budapest (22-24 March 2006), Part I. (Sep., 2006), 338–340, https://www.jstor.org/stable/25598265.

folk music in the early twentieth century. Other composers, such as Paul Schoenfeld, Dmitri Shostakovich, Ernest Bloch, and Osvaldo Golijov drew inspiration from folk music originating from eastern European Ashkenazi Jewish communities.[8] Some eastern European Jewish composers came to form the St. Petersburg Society of Jewish Folk Music in 1908, where many of the members collected Jewish melodies, both old and new, to use in new compositions for the concert hall that captured both the rhapsodic and expressive qualities of Jewish folk music.[9]

While ethnic Hungarian (Magyar) and Jewish folk music differ in terms of structure, modality, rhythm, linguistic origin, and performance traditions, they appeal widely to western composers and performers through their distinctive soundscapes and their capacity for both dazzling virtuosity and passionate, often improvisatory, expressivity. Additionally, the violin plays a soloistic role in these genres; klezmer and ethnic Hungarian bands are most often led by fiddlers to this day.

What does this mean for classical musicians who yearn to embrace these styles in performance outside of their original context? What motivates artists who are not part of these groups to incorporate such elements into their own music-making? How can we form appropriate interpretations of folk-inspired repertoire without tokenizing or stereotyping these traditions? And how do we do this while learning the music in a Westernized manner, i.e. with notation and stricter performance expectations based on this notation?

[8] "Klezmer Influences in American Jewish Music," *YIVO Institute for Jewish Research*, program notes for Sidney Krum Young Artists Concert Series, December 2, 2014, accessed April 28, 2026, https://summerprogram.yivo.org/Klezmer-Influences-in-American-Jewish-Music#:~:text=For%20years%2C%20American%20Jewish%20composers,closing%20piano%20trio%20Caf%C3%A9%20Music..

[9] James Loeffler, "Society for Jewish Folk Music," *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. Accessed September 2, 2025. https://encyclopedia.yivo.org/article/2201.

Western classical music has a vast history of "borrowing" from different cultures to create new musical soundscapes which, without proper research and acknowledgement, can lead to the propagation of harmful cultural stereotypes. Popular examples of musical exoticism include the Turkish Style (Mozart), the *style hongrois* (Haydn, Schubert, Beethoven), the Romani style (Liszt, Brahms) and pan-Asiatic musics (Puccini, Debussy, Ravel).[10,11] Nevertheless, geographical proximity and cross–cultural exchange, especially in Europe, can encourage the development of innovative musical hybrids and fusions; the sharing of folk and popular music helps to keep the traditions alive and evolving. On the other hand, with the exponential advancements in technology and increasing globalization, the original performance traditions of folk music may fade as musical tastes evolve.

Many local communities still strive to embrace and disseminate their cultural heritage through music, and such ensembles like the Budapest Klezmer Band and Muzsikás aim to circulate these styles in performance settings. There has also been an increase in state-sponsored projects to fund folk ensembles and folk instrument programs, especially across Europe and Asia, yet these have their limitations, as they are often framed within a Western educational context. In conservatories and university programs, Western musical education generally tends to prioritize notated music, relatively uniform pitch systems (as opposed to microtonality), systems of harmony most often found in European music, Western instrumentation, and formal concert hall performances. Additionally, aural skills classes rarely include microtonality and modes outside of the diatonic system.[12] While these folk music programs and initiatives have great

[10] Lynn Hooker, "Solving the Problem of Hungarian Music: Contexts for Bartók Early Career," International Journal of Musicology, 9 (2000), 29, https://www.jstor.org/stable/43857999.

[11] Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 187–192, 229.

[12] Juniper Hill, "The Influence of Conservatory Folk Music Programmes: the Sibelius Academy in Comparative Context." Ethnomusicology Forum 18, no. 2 (Nov 2009), 211–213, https://www.jstor.org/stable/27808677.

intentions, it is important to consider the implicit biases we hold from our learning institutions. For centuries, scholars of Western classical music have also tended to view folk music as "lesser" than classical art music. Most folk music is learned by ear and is usually simpler in terms of instrumentation and texture because it is shared by rote, and most performers are self-taught. In classical music, the composer or performer has had lessons in their craft, the repertoire is written down with immense detail, and the music is performed in a large, often commercial, setting for paying audience members. As a western scholar and performer who grew up outside of these folk musical traditions, I hope to share honest and organic interpretations of the repertoire without losing sight of the music's roots.

I also would like to reiterate that music does not exist in a vacuum; it evolves and transforms with global geopolitical events. From the rise and fall of empires to cultural suppression and genocide, ethnic minorities across Europe continue to face bigotry and marginalization. Hungary is a land-locked country with a history of oppressive imperial leadership that has tried to dictate cultural and linguistic norms. Romani people constitute the largest minority in Europe, yet they continue to be ostracized and excluded from society at large, and their musical history and culture have not been shared as widely as those of European countries like Germany, Italy, France, and England. Jewish populations continue to face antisemitism across the globe. How will these events and perspectives impact these musical traditions in terms of reception and in terms of new practitioners and innovators?

As music is no stranger to censorship and politicization, we as musicians must become global citizens and advocates. We must ask questions, conduct research, and learn from others to both preserve and develop our art for future generations. The more we learn about the traditions

and styles of others, the more we can cultivate a musical interpretation that prioritizes both transparency of origin and clarity of expression.

Project Details

In this dissertation project, I explored both the sociocultural and musical implications of Hungarian and klezmer music through a series of three recitals. While there are other folk musics (Romanian, Romani/Roma, Slovak, etc.) that have interacted with these styles through migration and cultural exchange, I decided to prioritize ethnic Hungarian and klezmer music because of 1) their potential for geographical and cultural overlap, and 2) their significant role in shaping music in Western contemporary violin repertoire. Additionally, I researched and programmed two pieces based on melodies and dance tunes from Hungarian Roma communities. With these two selections, written by Hungarian scholar Daniel Sender, I wanted to highlight both the differences between ethnic Hungarian melodies and Hungarian Romani melodies and how Western classical composers interpret these two musics differently.

I presented three recitals based on the following themes: 1) pieces integrating folk music from ethnic Hungarian and Hungarian Romani sources, along with popular Hungarian styles; 2) Klezmer music, both original tunes and classical works with a variety of Jewish folk elements; and 3) a fusion recital, featuring classical repertoire that integrates elements of these folk styles in more abstracted ways.

Through these recitals and supporting scholarship, I aim to show how violinists can integrate music research findings into their practice methods to better inform stylistic interpretations of genres often over-exoticized throughout history. I begin with an introduction to both Hungarian folk (Chapter 1) and klezmer music (Chapter 2) and how these traditions played a role in cultural functions throughout history. I also briefly discuss Romani music in comparison

with these traditions, as there is considerable geographical and cross-cultural overlap. Over the last three centuries, Romanies have served as professional musicians, performing in a myriad of folk styles and adapting their set lists to cater to audiences.[13] In these introductory chapters, I also give an overview of the features of Hungarian and klezmer styles including form, function, meter, rhythm, modality, ornaments, and the integration of language into musical structure, if applicable. I will also discuss performance techniques and practices that are unique to these traditions, and how we can integrate them as modern classical violinists to better inform our interpretations of this repertoire.

For each recital, I have written a chapter that includes: 1) the list of pieces and how they were chosen and organized; 2) historical background on each piece, including folk tunes that were integrated into that repertoire; 3) research and performance discoveries made during the learning process; and 4) stylistic analyses of each piece.

[13] Petra Gelbart, "Is There Such a Thing as Romani Music?," RomArchive, accessed March 25, 2026, https://www.romarchive.eu/en/music/there-such-thing-romani-music/.

Chapter 2: Hungarian Folk Music

Historical Background

As a landlocked nation in the middle of Europe, Hungary was for centuries at the center of power struggles between the Habsburg Empire in the west and the Ottoman Turks in the East. While Hungary first achieved independence in 896, the nation remained an amalgam of different languages, ethnicities, and religions.[14] During the years of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867-1918), authorities promoted western ideals, including culture, language, and music. Aristocrats carried the arts scene, bringing musical inspiration and artists from Germany, Austria, Italy, France, and other European traditions. For centuries, most of the population lived in poverty as serfs, and their rural folk music was either disregarded or combined with Westernized forms according to the tastes of Western-trained Hungarian nobles.[15] The best way for music to travel through this region from the eighteenth through twentieth centuries was through professional musicians hired for court performances, often Romanies. Over time, especially in the nineteenth century, Hungarian aristocrats yearned to form a stronger national identity and with that a musical idiom the Hungarian people could call their own.[16] As music was often used as a measuring tool to determine cultural wealth, the Hungarian nobility wanted to establish themselves as an independent people with their own distinctive artistic traditions.

Due to Hungary's position in central Europe, it served as a melting pot for a wide variety of folk and Western European classical musics. As class structure evolved and national borders

[14] Bence Szabolcsi, *A Concise History of Hungarian Music*, trans. Sara Karig and Fred Macnicol, rev. Florence Knepler (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1974), 8–10.
[15] Ibid., 36, 43.
[16] Ibid.

changed over time well into the twentieth century, cross-cultural exchange became quite extensive, making it difficult to determine what constitutes Hungarian folk music (although this is an inherently subjective endeavor in itself). Both ancient and new music formed hybrids, and folk tunes from regions like Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, and Poland continued to add more shades of complexity to the discussion of folk music in Central and Eastern Europe.[17] Additionally, Hungarian villages were not unified in terms of the music they preserved and shared. According to Kodály, "folk tradition… varies fundamentally according to age, social and material conditions, religion, education, district, and sex."[18] Lastly, despite the evolution of Hungarian class structure through the nineteenth century, there was a large sociocultural divide between rural peasants and the upper classes. It was primarily through the work of twentieth-century collectors like Bartók and Kodály that we gained a better understanding of the folk traditions and what distinguishes them from urban popular Hungarian idioms. However, it must be noted that in these research pursuits, Bartók was aiming to collect and define a "pure" Hungarian folk music, free of urban influence and supposedly corrupting "Romani" attributes. He and Kodály were operating with strong racial biases against Romanies, which was unfortunately quite common across Europe and especially in Hungary.[19]

[17] Julie Brown, "Bartók, the Gypsies, and Hybridity in Music," in *Western Music and Its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*, ed. Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, 133 –134 (University of California Press, 2000).

[18] Zoltán Kodály, *Folk Music of Hungary*, trans. Ronald Tempest and Cynthia Jolly (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1960), 20.

[19] Ibid., 16–18.

Form, Function, and Stylistic Features

Most European listeners first came to equate Hungarian folk music with the popularized music often heard in courts, pubs, taverns, and at special parties in the 1800s. These tunes, referred to as *magyar notá*, were often written by members of the nobility that fused popular tunes with Western compositional styles.[20] However, these members of the aristocracy were not supposed to perform in public, as this was frowned upon in their social class. Instead, the performance of their music was left to local musicians and more often Romanies, who were "allowed" to pursue music professionally.[21,22] This popular Hungarian music was later frowned upon by Bartók and Kodály. To them, it was not rural folk music but rather a hodgepodge of Germanic and regional melodies performed with wild verve and virtuosic passion; again, we must consider their inherently biased views on Romanies performing this music. The tunes that were written by aristocrats often had title pages that painted nostalgic images of rural farm scenes with folk musicians but, in reality, this music represented a more "cosmopolitan" art. The tunes were often published for piano, which catered to middle- and upper-class clientele and did not coincide with folk instrumentation.[23]

While most Hungarian folk music is sung, the violin became the prominent vessel for instrumental adaptations of songs and dance tunes in both rural and urban settings. In a Hungarian or Gypsy band, the violin is usually backed by a second violin (*kontra*) and lower

[20] Lynn Hooker, "Solving the Problem of Hungarian Music: Contexts for Bartók Early Career," *International Journal of Musicology, 9* (2000), 13–15. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43857999.

[21] Jonathan Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993, 20–21.

[22] Béla Bartók, "Gypsy Music or Hungarian Music? *The Music Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (April 1947): 241, https://www.jstor.org/stable/739152.

[23] Hooker, 14.

strings like the *brácsa* and double bass.[24] The *brácsa* is like a modern viola, but with a few key differences: it is held in a more perpendicular manner, it usually has three strings, and it has a flatter bridge which is useful for playing double stops. A brácsa player usually plays drones and accompanimental rhythms in tandem with the bass.[25] The purpose of Hungarian accompaniment is to provide rhythmic percussion and to amplify the sound of the soloist, rather than providing complex harmonies underneath.[26]

Other accompanimental instruments include the zither and cimbalom. The zither was known as the poor man's instrument, consisting of a flat wooden stringed structure that can be struck with a hammer or plucked. Later in the nineteenth century, however, the cimbalom became a hallmark of Hungarian instruments. Earlier versions of the cimbalom have been associated with Gypsy bands since the middle of the eighteenth century, but the instrument became more refined by the 1800s, featuring chromatic tuning and a damper pedal.[27] The cimbalom is a hammered dulcimer with a very distinctive, "pinging" sound that can provide a very colorful texture to accompany the melody line. Most often, the cimbalom plays tremolos or arpeggiated figures.[28] Before string bands became highly popular, instruments like bagpipes, shepherd's horns, lutes, and virginals played an essential role in rural Hungarian folk music. The bagpipe itself was one of the first ways Europeans became familiar with Hungarian folk music beginning in the 1500s.[29,30]

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[24] Schneider, David E. "'Gypsies,' Verbunkos, and Bartók's Debt to the Nineteenth Century." International Journal of Musicology 9 (2000): 145, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43858005.

[25] Pete Cooper, ed, *Eastern European Fiddle Tunes*, (London: Schott, 2007), 6.

[26] Sárosi, "Gypsy Musicians and Hungarian Peasant Music," 14, *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council*, Vol. 2 (1970), 20.

[27] Ibid., 23.

[28] Ibid., 23-24.

[29] Szabolcsi, *A Concise History* 37.

[30] Sárosi, "Gypsy Musicians," 17.

Most rural Hungarian music is based on songs, poetry, and dances that reflect aspects of daily life. Common examples include bagpipe and lute songs, dances, and laments. These are most often structured in short strophes based on the number of syllables in each line of text. If the music is not based on text, it still often follows shorter, four-line strophic phrase structures.[31] Sometimes it is not known if music is based on a specific text, and on many occasions, songs from different regions may be set to Hungarian texts if the syllable count is similar, leading to several regional variations of the same melody.[32]

According to the classification methods of Bartók and Kodály, Hungarian peasant music fell into three categories. Category A constitutes the ancient style of Hungarian folk song, Category B constitutes the newer style of folk song from the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and Category C accounts for the tunes that do not fit into the above categories.[33] Category A music was based on short strophic songs with vernacular texts, most often sung in a monophonic manner. These songs, while simpler in terms of melodic range and brevity, leave composers like Bartók with a variety of tools for development and orchestration. They were most often based on eight and twelve-syllable lines, and they were most often based on the pentatonic scale, which likely harkens to the Magyar people's Eastern roots in central Asia.[34] Pentatonicism does not use semitones, and it helps to explain the frequent use of fourths in Hungarian folk-based music.[35] Despite the surface "simplicity" of these older songs on paper, they were often performed with a wide variety of ornaments, melismas, and rubato, especially in earlier

[31] Sárosi, Bálint Sárosi, "Investigation of Folkloristic Traces in Bartók's Non–Folkloristic Themes," *International Journal of Musicology 9* (2000), 120, https://www.jstor.org/stable/43858004.
[32] Béla Bartók, *Hungarian Folk Music*, trans. M. D. Calvocoressi (Westport: Hyperion Press, 1931), 36.
[33] Ibid., 11.
[34] Szabolcsi, *A Concise History*, 7.
[35] Zoltán Kodály, *Folk Music of Hungary*, trans. Ronald Tempest and Cynthia Jolly (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1960), 66-67.

centuries. Unfortunately, as tastes changed and urban styles began to prevail, this lavish singing tradition practically vanished in the last century.[36]

The *magyar notá* heard in public gatherings across the region have more in common with Category B songs, although the source materials may differ. As mentioned previously, *magyar notá* were often written by amateur aristocratic composers who were well-versed in Austro-German musical traditions. The songs in the new style (Category B) can have longer strophes containing up to 25 syllables, leading to greater rhythmic complexity. Additionally, they most often follow a 4-verse pattern like ABBA (AA^5A^5A) or AA^5BA. The "5" refers to a reiteration of the A melody at the fifth.[37][38] Category C songs might share similarities with songs from the earlier categories, but they often utilize different modes and scales, heterorhythms, and varied strophic structures that often originate from external musical influences.[39] According to Bartók, Category C songs were a favorite amongst Hungarian aristocrats because of their unfamiliar musical character.[40]

Two quintessential Hungarian dance tunes are the *verbunkos* and the *csárdás*, which could fall into Categories B or C. The *verbunkos* was a recruitment dance first used by the Habsburg army to coerce unknowing peasants to join the army. The imperial soldiers would host dance parties with live Romani bands, serving the young locals alcohol and swaying them into signing recruitment papers. The slow-fast form of the *verbunkos* dance helped to elevate the energy of these occasions, getting young recruits excited for the cause before realizing what they

[36] Ibid., 68.
[37] Bartók, *Hungarian Folk Music*, 39.
[38] Kodály, 56-57.
[39] Ibid., 78–79.
[40] Bartók, *Hungarian Folk Music*, 56.

signed up for.[41] In addition to its use for army recruitment, the *verbunkos* could also be used for funeral marches and mournful occasions, adapting a slower, more solemn tempo.[42] From the 1700s to mid-1800s, the *verbunkos* became the most popular "patriotic" dance tune with the help of Romani bands and fiddlers.[43] It also made its way into a variety of chamber music, stage songs, and piano works, many of which we associate with the *style hongrois*.[44] The fast portion of the *verbunkos* eventually evolved to help create the *csárdás* dance form in the early nineteenth century.[45] The *csárdás* is a couples' dance that begins with a slow section (*lassú*) and finishes with a very quick upbeat dance (*friss*). The term *csárdás* originates from the term *csárda*, which refers to a tavern or inn.[46] *Csárdás* were immensely popular across Europe from their inception through the twentieth century and varied widely based on local cultures and traditions. Traditionally, they are most often in duple meter and feature syncopated rhythms.[47] Like the *verbunkos*, the *csárdás* had a significant impact on the *style hongrois* and became very successful as a commercial music genre, yet for many, it is still as an essential ingredient of ethnic Hungarian folk culture.

Hungarian folk music was most often performed for personal entertainment and for special community events such as weddings and festivals. While the folk tunes themselves vary widely in origin and bear different European influences depending on the region and its exposure

[41] Jonathan Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993, 17.
[42] Bálint Sárosi, "Investigation of Folkloristic Traces," 128.
[43] Szabolsci, *A Concise History*, 54–59.
[44] Szabolsci, *A Concise History*, 61.
[45] Pete Cooper, ed., *Eastern European Fiddle Tunes* (London: Schott, 2007), 38.
[46] Jonathan Bellman, "Verbunkos," RomArchive, accessed April 17, https://www.romarchive.eu/en/music/classical-music/verbunkos/.
[47] "Czardas," *Britannica*, accessed April 28, 2026, https://www.britannica.com/art/czardas.

to other musics, there are many stylistic and performative features that link these melodies to the greater realm of ethnic Hungarian and Hungarian Romani music traditions.

One of the most important aspects of Hungarian folk music is the *parlando rubato* effect – the art of "speaking" the music in a free, almost recitative style that reflects the natural tonality and inflection of text. However, Bartok emphasized that the rubato does not always have to strictly mirror textual inflections.[48] If one has a good understanding of the language and its "flow," they may improvise around the metrical changes and emphases in a variety of ways. This tradition may have origins in Gregorian chant that was brought to Hungary through the spread of Christianity.[49] Dotted rhythms and syncopations are frequently used in Western notation, yet these do not really show the full scope of the *parlando* effect. This bowing art must be explored through variations in bow speed, articulation, bow weight, and contact point. The sound is never static but instead evolves with musical rhythm, textual gestures (if applicable), and spontaneous expressivity.[50] In terms of achieving this "speaking" quality of sound, I turned to watch recordings of folk violinists, and I observed that they primarily play in the upper half of the bow on the string. In western violin training, we learn to play crisper, off-the string strokes in the middle and lower parts of the bow. However, folk violinists, along with many concert violinists from the twentieth century, create a variety of articulations and colors like *legato*, *martelé*, and *marcato* in the upper half of the bow.

The rhythmic style that most contrasts the *parlando rubato* style is the *tempo giusto*, where songs are performed in stricter rhythm at a quicker tempo. The rhythmic gestures in these

[48] Bartók, *Hungarian Folk Music*, 33.
[49] Szabolcsi, *A Concise History*, 13.
[50] Bartók, *Hungarian Folk Music*, 14–15.

songs are believed to mimic people's motions when they dance or work.[51] The tempo giusto is found in all three categories of Bartók's system, but it is primarily affiliated with Category B, the newer style of song. With older songs from Category A, it is not always clear when a tune ought to be performed in the *parlando* or *tempo giusto* style.[52]

Most Hungarian melodies are limited in pitch range – they usually traverse an octave or less. On the violin, these tunes will usually remain in one or two positions and double stops with opens strings are frequently used for a drone effect. Regarding significant intervals, many tunes revolve around stepwise motion, fourths and fifths. In many songs from Category B, the first strophe of a tune is presented in the home key, followed by a reiteration at the fifth. The tune is presented again in the home key at the end of the "verse."[53] In Category C, songs might use more complex rhythmic structures, wider pitch ranges, and different scales. Older Hungarian tunes were primarily written using the pentatonic scale. Some tunes also follow a heptatonic modality, but certain notes can be inflected, especially the third. We refer to this as modal alteration. In Western diatonic harmony, we might perceive this as the difference between a major and minor scale. On rarer occasions, like in some Category C songs, we might hear an augmented second, which is a common feature in klezmer repertoire.[54]

The rhythm of folk melodies is deeply connected to textual inflections in Hungarian and other Uralic languages, especially the short-long cadence. The first syllable is emphasized and the second is longer with more release.[55] Furthermore, folk songs can be categorized based on their rhythmic patterns. Certain tunes like the *verbunkos* and swineherd's dance have codified

[51] Ibid., 9.
[52] Ibid., 16.
[53] Kodály, 56–57.
[54] Bartók, *Hungarian Folk Music*, 55.
[55] Ibid., 13.

rhythmic structures. The *verbunkos* is known for its distinctive dotted rhythms in the slow section and the short-short-long anapest rhythm; the swineherd's dance has the following rhythmic sequence in duple meter: three pairs of eighths, a quarter note, two groups of eighths, and two quarter notes, the last two notes forming a common "long-long cadence."[56,57] As mentioned earlier, rhythms in the *tempo giusto* style are more rigid and quick-paced, as they mimic the motion of people working or dancing. However, there can be small inflections of rubato within smaller rhythmic structures, as long as the pulse remains consistent.[58]

Prominent Composers

Bartók and Kodály are the most notable Hungarian composers who utilized folk tunes and folk elements in their compositions. They were at intellectual odds with the popular songs and dances people kept identifying as "real" Hungarian music, especially after Bartók heard rural singers for the first time in 1904.[59] A year after this epiphany, Bartók invited Kodály to travel with him across Central and Eastern Europe to collect and transcribe thousands of folk tunes from rural towns. Their work continued until World War I brought about significant border changes across Hungary, losing territory to Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia after the Treaty of Trianon in 1920.[60] By 1918, Bartók managed to collect nearly over 9,000 folk melodies, the majority of them hailing from Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia.[61] Through this prolonged research and immersion, both composers, especially Bartók, became so familiar with

[56] Bálint Sárosi, "Investigation of Folkloristic Traces," 126.
[57] Bellman, 60.
[58] Bartók, *Hungarian Folk Music*, 33
[59] Julie Brown, "Bartók, the Gypsies, and Hybridity in Music," in *Western Music and Its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*, ed. Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, 122 (University of California Press, 2000).
[60] Lujza Tari, "Bartók's Collection of Hungarian Instrumental Folk Music and Its System," *Studio Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* T. 47, Fasc. 2 (June 2006): 144.
[61] McKenney, 131.

this musical realm that they began composing pieces that were infused with folk attributes yet sounded quite avant-garde in terms of meter, textural organization, and motivic treatment. Other Hungarian-born composers include Sándor Veress, Ernő Dohnányi, Jenő Hubay, György Ligeti, György Kurtág, and Miklós Rózsa. However, not all of them prioritized or even utilized folk tunes in their writing. Dohnanyi tended to write in a more German Romantic style, but he has some pieces like *Ruralia Hungarica.* Other composers like Ligeti and Kurtág were much more on the modern front of Hungarian compositional styles.[62]

What about "Gypsy" Musicians and their Role?

Romanies are the largest ethnic minority in Europe, constituting approximately 12 million people.[63] Originating from northern India, they migrated over the course of centuries to European countries including Hungary and Romania. They were subject to slavery and massive societal and cultural oppression, and they traveled extensively due to a variety of socioeconomic pressures. Nowadays, the vast majority of Romanies are settled across Europe, but back when they moved more frequently out of necessity, wild stereotypes abounded regarding their nomadic and "lawless" nature; speaking of Romanies in such a derogatory manner reached its peak in the last few centuries through a variety of mediums including art, literature, and music.[64] However, alongside this bigotry and xenophobia existed an acknowledgement of Romani musical talent;

[62] Bence Szabolcsi, *A Concise History of Hungarian Music*, trans. Sara Karig and Fred Macnicol, rev. Florence Knepler (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1974), 81–82. _

[63] Carol Silverman, "Gypsy/Klezmer Dialectics: Jewish and Romani Traces and Erasures in Contemporary European World Music," *Ethnomusicology Forum* 24, no. 2 (2015), online, https://doi.org/10.1080/17411912.2015.1015040.

[64] Jonathan Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993, 4–5.

there were certain lineages of Romani musicians that were highly regarded for their instrumental abilities, and they were known as some of the best musicians across the continent.[65]

In Hungary, Romanies were first noticeably employed by Turks up through the late 1600s, after which they were more frequently hired by Hungarian nobles and landlords.[66] They frequently traveled for performances and helped to popularize a wide variety of Hungarian repertoire in aristocratic courts and larger towns as they catered to local musical tastes.[67] With this, however, came the *assumption* that the music people were hearing was "Gypsy" or Romani music itself, when in reality, they were playing what audiences wanted to hear: a mix of popular Hungarian and European musics performed with virtuosic flare and passion.[68,69] According to Petra Gelbart, a scholar on Romani culture, "virtuosity, rhythmic interest, tempo changes, altered scale degrees and more complex harmonic structures are among the elements that Roma and Sinti often add to existing music."[70]

There exist two broad types of Hungarian Romani music: urban/instrument-centered music, and rural/voice-centered music. In towns and villages, Romani musicians were primarily hired to provide instrumental dance accompaniment, emblematic of the urban tradition.[71] Outside of this urbanized profession, however, Romas primarily utilized their voices for musical entertainment. Someone would sing the melody, and others would accompany the tune by

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[65] Ibid.
[66] Sárosi, "Gypsy Musicians and Hungarian Peasant Music," 14, *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council*, Vol. 2 (1970), 18.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., 27.
[70] Petra Gelbart, "Is There Such a Thing as Romani Music?," RomArchive, accessed March 25, 2026, https://www.romarchive.eu/en/music/there-such-thing-romani-music/.
[70]Ibid.
[71] Sárosi, "Gypsy Musicians", 18–19.

clapping and singing percussive vocal syllables.[72] Examples of this rural vocal style will be discussed in conjunction with Dan Sender's compositions in Chapter 4.

Past and present Romani violinists include János Bihari and his descendants, Panna Czinka (1711-1772), Lajos Sárközy Jr., and Tcha Limberger.[73] Panna Czinka, while lesser known than her male counterparts, formed one of the earliest Hungarian Romani bands with the violin/kontra/cimbalom/bass instrumentation and was referred to by Hungarian scholar Sárosi as the first Romani band leader (*primás*).[74] Bihari (1764–1827) was the first reputable Romani musician to write his own tunes in this popular Hungarian style; he also played a pivotal role in concertizing the *verbunkos* form that became emblematic of Hungarian nationalism.[75] According to Kodály, Bihari "forms the only link between peasant tradition and the urban dance music which produced the *csárdás* about 1830.[76] The discussion of Romani music in detail is beyond the scope of this document, but I will continue to mention the significance that Romani musicians had in the field of musical entertainment and dissemination in both Hungarian and Jewish communities.

[72] Ibid., 22.

[73] Siv B. Lie, "Interview with Tcha Limberger, Manouche multi-instrumentalist and vocalist," RomArchive, accessed April 23, 2026, https://www.romarchive.eu/en/music/jazz/interview-tcha-limberger-manouche-multi-instrument/.

[74] Lynn Hooker, "Panna Czinka," RomArchive, accessed May 16, 2026, https://www.romarchive.eu/en/collection/p/panna-czinka/.

[75] David E. Schneider, "'Gypsies,' Verbunkos, and Bartók's Debt to the Nineteenth Century," *International Journal of Musicology* 9 (2000): 139, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43858005.

[76]Kodály, *Folk Music of Hungary*, 10.

Chapter 3: Klezmer Music and Jewish Folk Music

Historical Background

Klezmer refers to the old traditions of instrumental folk music performed originally by Ashkenazi Jews, i.e. those from the territories of Western Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, etc. The term "klezmer" comes from two different terms, *kle* and *zemer*, which roughly translates to "vessel of song" or "instrument of song." As far back as the 1500s the *klezmorim*, the musicians who performed in this style, would play primarily for weddings and special events.[77] While klezmorim rarely played in synagogues, much of their music bears deep influence from cantorial singing, liturgical melodies, and other faith-related improvisations. While these Ashkenazi musical traditions have existed and evolved over the course of a thousand years, most of the music of Eastern European Jews was not recorded or notated until the later 1800s, and most folkloristic research did not commence until the mid- to later twentieth century. Over the years, through Jewish migration and cross-cultural exchange, klezmer music would bear influences from neighboring countries, more Western concert traditions, Hasidic song and eventually Yiddish theater.[78, 79]

In the mid-1600s, klezmorim bands were usually led by a professional violinist, accompanied by instruments including the kontra violin (like the Hungarian *brácsa*), bass, wooden flute, and the tsimbl, which is a hammered dulcimer (like the cimbalom).[80] Other chordal accompaniment instruments included the harp, zither, and lute. This format of rural string bands was most common up through the 1800s. It was at the beginning of the 19th century

[77] Walter Zev Feldman, "Traditional and Instrumental Music." *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, accessed February 17, 2026, https://encyclopedia.yivo.org/article/2193.

[78] Pete Cooper, ed., *Eastern European Fiddle Tunes* (London: Schott, 2007), 28.

[79] Mark Slobin, "Music: An Overview," *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, accessed February 20, 2026, https://encyclopedia.yivo.org/article/2190.

[80] Feldman, "Traditional and Instrumental Music."

that the clarinet began to play a larger role in klezmer bands, and it was an essential part of the American revival of Klezmer music after World War II. Over time, traditional string bands have been replaced by clarinet and brass bands, especially throughout the 20th century.[81]

The klezmorim bore a similar role as performers to Romani musicians in other parts of Europe. There were professional music guilds and regional music "classes" where the klezmer tradition was passed down through the male lineage of the family.[82] Unfortunately, World War II and the Holocaust brought an end to much Jewish music-making and documentation of klezmer traditions, although certain Yiddish-speaking communities and Romanies in Europe kept the music alive.[83] Additionally, certain composers and musicians immigrated to other countries like Israel and the United States to escape the horrors of persecution. Some performers kept the musical traditions alive and made professional recordings, which eventually circulated and brought about a renewed interest in klezmer in the later twentieth century. While different in terms of style and social setting, this music is a large reason why these Jewish musical traditions are also returning to Europe as performers and scholars travel to collaborate on a global scale.[84]

New research findings, new musical transcriptions and recordings, new ensembles, and new organizations centered upon Jewish continue to bloom. But even as far back as the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, eastern European folklorists and specialists like Lazare Saminsky, Joel Engel, Avraham Idelsohn, Moisei Beregovski and Sussmann Kisselgof were collecting and transcribing Jewish folk tunes from both their homelands and other

[81] Ibid.

[82] Moshe Beregovski, *Jewish Instrumental Folk Music: The Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski*, second ed., rev. Kurt Bjorling, trans. and ed. Mark Slobin, Michael Alpert, and Robert Rothstein (Muziker, 2015), 3.

[83] Feldman, "Traditional and Instrumental Music."

[84] Mark Slobin, "Study of Jewish Music," *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, accessed February 15, 2026, https://encyclopedia.yivo.org/article/2197.

communities.[85] These helped form the foundation for written research on klezmer and other Jewish folk music.

Form, Function, and Stylistic Features

A large majority of klezmer music was first used for weddings and other special events, and it was only at weddings that instrumentalists would accompany vocal music. Klezmer was rarely ever heard in synagogues. The use of instruments in religious services was seldom allowed, partly to "commemorate the loss of the Temple and its associated music in Jerusalem."[86]

Many of these tunes are used to accompany dance forms, such as the *hora*, *freylekhs*, and *skotshne*. The *freylekhs* is a dance in duple meter with marked syncopations and rhythmic contrasts. While the *freylekhs* is not bound to set dance figures, there is more room for embellishment and hybridization with other styles of Jewish music.[87] The *hora* is an upbeat dance that is played at the wedding reception, where the bride and groom are lifted on chairs and everyone dances in a circle.[88] Some dance tunes are simple and open to embellished repetition, whereas others are more ornate and elongated, having up to three sections. These are often written by one composer and are designed for listening or virtuosic dance routines. In addition to stricter dance forms, there are more free-form improvisatory traditions in klezmer. The *doyne*, which has origins in Romania, is the freest flowing in terms of rhythm, yet it still centers around a musical mode or melody.[89]

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[85] Ibid.
[86] Mark Slobin, "Music: An Overview."
[87] Feldman, "Traditional and Instrumental Music."
[88] "The Hora," *Institut Européen des Musiques Juives*, accessed March 3, 2026, https://www.iemj.org/en/la-hora/#:~:text=The%20hora%20can%20be%20danced,the%20circle%20turn%2C%20normally%20clockwise.
[89] "Doyne," *Jewish Music Research Centre*, accessed April 15, 2026, https://jewish-music.huji.ac.il/en/content/doyne-lkt#.

I will solely focus on stylistic features of Jewish *instrumental* music. While it rarely accompanies vocal performances, this style bears many influences from both secular and sacred singing traditions. Rather than mimicking specific Hebrew or Yiddish texts, klezmer music seems to mimic the natural intonation and mechanisms of the human voice, whether that be through singing, crying, or laughing.[90]

The most frequently used scale in klezmer music is known as the Ahavah Rabbah, ("Great Love"), which is used by a cantor when singing opening prayers. Outside of the liturgical context, it is known as the *freygish* scale in Yiddish, which originates from the Phrygian mode that we discuss in Western music theory. However, the mode is altered to create an augmented second between the second and third scale degrees.[91] For example, a scale on the *freygish* mode would look like: A, Bb, C#, D, E, F, G, A. This gives klezmer music its unique modal timbre. Other modes frequently used include the Ukrainian Dorian, Aeolian, Mixolydian, and general Dorian mode.[92] Like older Hungarian tunes, pentatonicism is occasionally observed in these klezmer tunes, along with drone effects.[93]

Klezmer performances can be exceptionally improvisatory. Violinists might heavily embellish a melody using vibrato trills, pitch bending, glissandi, note repetitions and additions, and special ornaments like the krekhts. The krekhts is meant to mimic the sound of the "catch" you get in your throat when you are about to cry.[94] It is a tricky technique to master without

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[90] Moshe Beregovski, *Jewish Instrumental Folk Music: The Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski*, second ed., rev. Kurt Bjorling, trans. and ed. Mark Slobin, Michael Alpert, and Robert Rothstein (Muziker, 2015), FIND?

[91] Pete Cooper, ed., *Eastern European Fiddle Tunes* (London: Schott, 2007), 5.

[92] Barry D Goldsmith, "A style analysis of the piano compositions and two works for violin and piano by Lazare Saminsky (DMA diss., Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 1987), 27-28, https://www.proquest.com/docview/303637871?parentSessionId=c0dW6Ej0eEL6Llj0lg%2BHkEDLFf06mKmlTY5dw538SWU%3D&pq-origsite=primo&accountid=14696&sourcetype=Dissertations%20&%20Theses.

[93] Ibid., 28.

[94] Cooper, *Eastern European Fiddle Tunes*, 28.

sounding forced or inorganic. To achieve this on the violin, you begin by playing a pitch with first or second finger. Then you speed up the bow and lightly drop the fourth finger to create the "catch" in the throat sound. It should not sound like an actual pitch but more whistly and weak.

A particular form of improvisation in Jewish folk traditions is the nigun. It is a wordless song performed to "stir the soul" in religious services. Many nigunim bear influence from Hasidic nigunim. Founded in the 1700s, Hasidism is a branch of what would later be called Orthodox Judaism that more heavily emphasizes energetic devotion, piety, and mystic spirituality in addition to studying religious texts and scholarship to cement their faith. The music Hasidic Jews sing reflects this increased focus on energetic piety and fervor, with more intense highs and lows in their singing along with a stronger desire to commune with God through music.[95] More about the *nigun* genre will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Prominent Composers/Compilers

While most composers of klezmer and Yiddish tunes are not known, as the songs have been passed down by rote for centuries; a few notable examples from the 1800s include Avraham Kholodenko, Selig Itsik Lemisch, Melekh Klezmer, and Shmuel Weintraub.[96] I played one of Kholodenko's fantasies in my final undergraduate recital, which my teacher shared from her Beregovski collection. I will discuss Moisei Beregovski in greater detail in Chapter 5, but he was one of the most important Jewish instrumental folklorists in the twentieth century. In terms of Jewish art music, there were composers from the Society for Jewish Folk Music that utilized Jewish folk sources in classical repertoire in the early twentieth century. The best-known composers from this circle include Alexander Krein, Solomon Rosowsky, Joel Engel, Lazare

[95] Yaakov Mazor, "Hasidism: Music," accessed April 27, 2026, https://encyclopedia.yivo.org/article/2198.
[96] Feldman, "Traditional and Instrumental Music."

Saminsky, and Joseph Achron. There are many composers from the Western musical canon like Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Mahler, Glinka, and Mendelssohn that wrote pieces inspired by the dance forms and melodies of Jewish folk music.[97] Additionally, there are composers like Ernest Bloch and Weinberg that imbued their music with stylistic and emotive qualities found in Jewish folk and liturgical styles, especially in terms of intervals and scale usage, ornamental embellishments, improvisatory rhapsodic passages, and dance rhythms.

Connection to Romanies

While Jews were always present across the Habsburg empire, they were quite disparate in terms of geographical, cultural, and linguistic unity. Once the Ottoman Turks were expelled from Hungary at the end of the seventeenth century, some Jewish klezmorim emigrated from Poland to Hungary, where they met other musicians of Hungarian and Romani origin. Through geographical and cultural overlap, Romanies and Jewish musicians collaborated and shared sociocultural roles as performers.[98]

Until the mid-nineteenth century, Jewish people faced rampant antisemitism all over Europe and were subject to strict laws involving their domicile and socioeconomic prospects. After 1867, when Jewish people were emancipated in the Habsburg Empire and began to obtain more legal rights,[99] many settled elsewhere or pursued new careers, reducing the number of klezmorim in the regions of Hungary, Bohemia, and Moravia.[100] Romanies came to take over

[97] Barry D Goldsmith, "A style analysis of the piano compositions and two works for violin and piano by Lazare Saminsky (DMA diss., Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 1987), 23–24, https://www.proquest.com/docview/303637871?parentSessionId=c0dW6Ej0eEL6Llj0lg%2BHkEDLFf06mKmlTY5dw538SWU%3D&pq-origsite=primo&accountid=14696&sourcetype=Dissertations%20&%20Theses.

[98] Feldman, "Traditional and Instrumental Music."

99 Judith Fritz, "Jewish life in the Habsburg Empire," trans. David Wright, The First World War: Die Welt der habsburger, accessed March 25, 2026, https://ww1.habsburger.net/en/chapters/jewish-life-habsburg-empire.

100 Feldman, "Traditional and Instrumental Music."

the role of the klezmorim in this region, and hybrid Romani-Jewish ensembles became more commonplace in this area of Europe. While Jewish styles were better preserved in Moravia, the fact that there was cultural exchange between Romani and Jewish musicians supports the idea that there could have been musical overlap between klezmer and both Hungarian popular music and perhaps a bit of folk music.

Chapter 4: Program #1 – Hungarian Focus

Zenei Gyökerei – Musical Roots in Hungary

Zoe Kushubar, violin
Jessica McKee, piano

Scènes de la Csárda, "Hejre Kati," Op. 32, No. 4 — Jenő Hubay (1858–1937)

Nógrádi Verbunkos — Sándor Veress (1907–1992)

Three Souvenirs — Daniel Sender (b. 1982)
- I. Dombon Terem a Pemetefű
- II. Cigányhallgató from Érsekvadkert
- III. Cigánycsárdás

Rhapsody No. 1 — Béla Bartók (1881–1945)
- I. Prima Parte, "Lassú"
- II. Seconda Parte, "Friss"

Scènes de la Csárda, "Hullámzó Balaton," Op. 33, No. 5 — Jenő Hubay

Roma Folk Dances: Village Tunes of the Hungarian Roma — Daniel Sender
- I. Ha elvettél, tartsál (Ökörítófülpös)
- II. I canka ij Anna (Püspökladány)
- III. Hallgato (Mezőkovácsháza)
- IV. Ének (Püspökladány)
- V. Jaj, anyám, a vakaró (Csenyéte)

Second Rhapsody — Béla Bartók
- I. "Lassú"
- II. "Friss"

Selecting the Repertoire

Upon entering my doctoral program at UMD, I was serendipitously immersed in Hungarian repertoire. In addition to studying Bartók 's *Second Violin Concerto* and his *Concerto for Orchestra* in the first year of my doctorate, I also studied Dohnanyi's *Serenade for Violin,*

Viola, and Cello in my first semester of chamber music studies. While the two composers mentioned had vastly different musical upbringings and stylistic output, I wondered about other Hungarian composers and repertoire. In terms of Bartók, I had never performed anything quite like his concerto. It was both folkloric and highly modern in terms of instrumental effects, harmony, and structure. I did not even know he was utilizing Hungarian melodic fragments until Daniel Sender gave a presentation at our school a few years later on how to develop more authentic interpretations of Bartók's music.

This deep exploration of Hungarian music really piqued my interest in central and eastern European folk influences. Additionally, for my lecture recital in my second year of my doctorate, I chose George Enescu's *Impressions d'Enfance*, which begins with a fiery Romanian fiddle solo ("Menétriér"). While the rest of that work was more impressionistic and less folk-influenced, that first movement launched a series of questions in my head regarding Hungarian and Romanian folk fiddle styles.

While I chose to prioritize Hungarian repertoire in this dissertation project, I have a strong feeling I will return to learn about Enescu and other Romanian composers. Furthermore, there are many countries in that region that we rarely consider in terms of Western music, i.e., Bulgaria, Ukraine, Serbia, etc., yet composers were continually influenced by folk music they heard both in rural villages and all across Vienna, especially Brahms, Liszt, Weber, Schubert, and Haydn. While most of these composers adapted the *style hongrois* to express other emotional elements in their work, I wanted to know what repertoire integrates folk music melodies and which repertoire is merely stylized versions of the urban Hungarian music people heard in public venues like taverns and hotels.

After selecting Bartók 's rhapsodies to perform, I looked up lesser-known Hungarian composers and whether their pieces met the "folk music" criteria. I found Hubay's collection *Scenes de la Csárda* and a few of Veress's violin works.

This musical realm provides unique challenges in terms of bowing articulation and shaping via parlando, a wide variety of rhythmic activity, and textural effects harkening back to the sounds of Hungarian culture and the Uralic language.

Scènes de la Csárda, "Hejre Kati," Op. 32, No. 4 *Jenő Hubay (1858–1937)*

Hungarian violinist Jenő Hubay is best known as a performer and violin pedagogue. Having studied with Joseph Joachim, he went on to teach students like Eugene Ormandy, Joseph Szigeti, and Zoltán Székely, all three of whom worked closely with Bartók on one or more of his compositions.[101] When he was younger, he frequently performed with Liszt and became good friends with Henri Vieuxtemps, both of whom inspired his style of musical writing. Hubay eventually went on to direct violin studies at the Brussels Conservatory and the Budapest Academy of Music, both of which had remarkable reputations in terms of European violin schooling. In addition to performing and teaching, Hubay wrote over 200 violin pieces.[102] Over the course of forty years (1879–1920), he wrote a collection of fourteen pieces, titled *Scenes de la Csárda,* primarily for his students to learn and perform. [103] Inspired by both popular music "*à la Liszt*" and European folk tunes, this delightful repertoire provides a mix of technical virtuosity

[101] László Gombos, "Hubay [Huber], Jenő." *Grove Music Online* (2001), accessed April 20, 2026, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000013459.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Jane Vial Jaffe, "JENÖ HUBAY (1858-1937): Scènes de la Csárda No. 3, op. 18, "Maros vize" (The waters of Maros), *Parlance Chamber Concerts*, accessed April 29, 2026, https://www.parlancechamberconcerts.org/individual-program-notes/jen%C3%B6-hubay-(1858-1937)/sc%C3%A8nes-de-la-cs%C3%A1rda-no.-3%2C-op.-18%2C-%E2%80%9Cmaros-vize%E2%80%9D-(the-waters-of-maros).

and musical expressivity that pay homage to the unique nature of Hungarian music, from the short-long rhythmic declamations to the slow-fast accelerating forms that many Hungarian dances follow. The term *csárda* translates to "tavern" or "pub," whereas the term *csárdás* refers to the quintessential Hungarian dance.[104]

"*Hejre Kati*" translates to "Pretty Katie," and it is the most frequently performed from Hubay's collection due to its delightful melodies. Often, Hubay creates his own Hungarian-esque melodies, but in "*Hejre Kati*," he used two popular Hungarian tunes. The first is titled "*Nincsen annyi tenger csillag*" (Figure 1), which translates to "There are not enough stars in the sky."[105,106] The text refers to the speaker's infatuation with her love interest, only for the love not to be requited, as her lover is unfaithful. She bemoans how she cannot control her feelings towards him despite his behavior. This melody is used for the slow first section, which soon leads to the fast dance section that we often associate with Hungarian dance music.

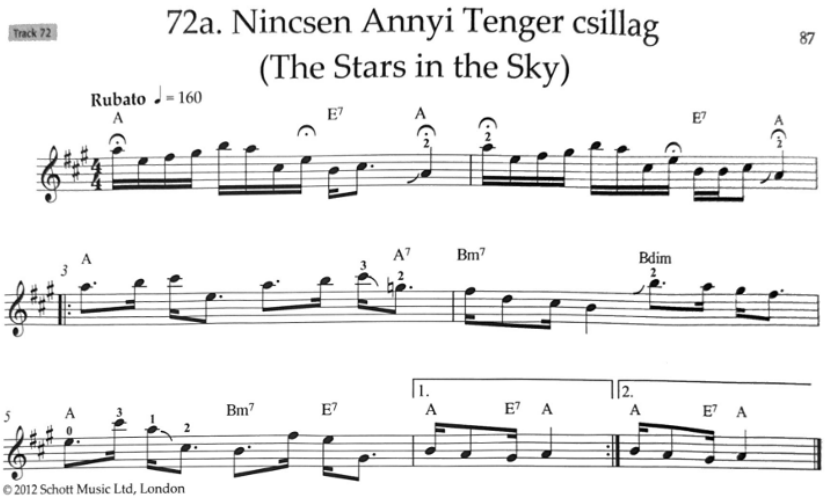


Figure 1. Popular Hungarian melody used in Hubay's "*Hejre Kati*."[107]

[104] Pete Cooper, "Eastern European Folk Tunes," 38.
[105] See Appendix 1 for Source Recording Information.
[106] "Lovay László - Nincsen annyi tenger csillag az égen," *Zeneszőveg.hu*, accessed November 1, 2025, https://www.zeneszoveg.hu/dalszoveg/98097/lovay-laszlo/nincsen-annyi-tenger-csillag-az-egen-zeneszoveg.html.
[107] Haigh, *Hungarian Fiddle Tunes*, 87.

The E minor dance section of "*Hejre Kati*" seems to follow a strophic dance-like pattern that alternates between statements of the motive at the root and at the fifth. At one point, the piano states this melody while the violin plays accompanimental arpeggios *staccato à la pointe*, paying homage to the folk fiddler's style of playing marcato in the upper half. After this, the violin becomes enveloped in a brief cadenza before reprising the "*Nincsen annyi*" melody one more time, but in a much more delicate and intimate way. This "slow" interlude is not typical of slow-fast dance forms, but it could certainly be paying homage to the emotional highs and lows of the "Gypsy" Hungarian style.

After this delicate moment, the piano brings the violinist back to the dance party by introducing the final dance melody in E major. This tune, for which I could not find a specific name, refers to a lively melody in E major that Johannes Brahms uses in the second half of his *Hungarian Dance No. 21*. Brahms most likely heard the tune performed in the style of *magyar notá* at a bar by Romani musicians.[108] Hubay directly borrows this tune from Brahms, and for good reason: it is infused with rhythmic fervor and mischievous joy. The boisterous dance melody abounds with trills and quick ascents; this tune is interpolated with a *csárdás*-like melody in the parallel minor with a classic "Hungarian" cadence that creates an agogic accent on the "and" of "1" (Figure 2). One may recall this same cadential motion in pieces like Brahms' *Hungarian Dance No. 5 in G Minor*.[109] The violin then snaps back into a final iteration of the E

[108] "The Inspiration Behind Brahms' Hungarian Dances," *California Symphony*, program notes for Brahms Fest, February 1, 2020, accessed April 28, 2026, https://www.californiasymphony.org/2019-20-season/the-inspiration-behind-brahms-hungarian-dances/.

[109] Johannes Brahms, *Ungarische Tänze für das Pianoforte zu vier Händen*, first ed. (Berlin: N. Simrock), 27. IMSLP.

major dance and feels like it accelerates to the end in a virtuosic fashion that is highly emblematic of performances given by Romani ensembles in Hungarian bars and taverns.
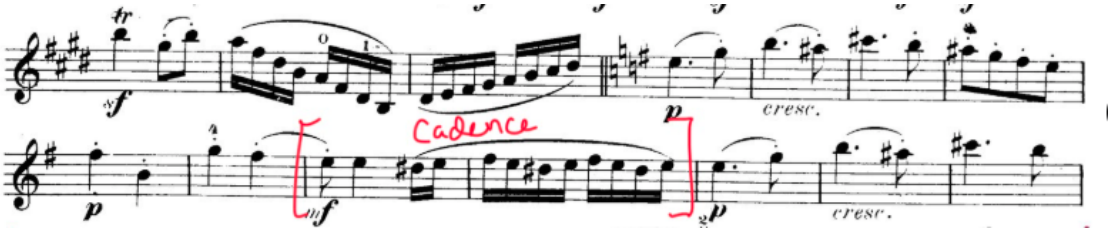


Figure 2. Agogic musical cadence in *style hongrois*, as seen in Hubay's "*Hejre Kati*."[110]

Nógrádi Verbunkos — *Sándor Veress (1907–1992)*

While lesser known amongst Western scholars, Swiss Hungarian Sándor Veress was a force to be reckoned with as a composer and educator. He studied piano with Bartók and composition with Kodály in Budapest, and he also studied folksong research under László Lajtha.[111] He produced an eclectic mix of repertoire, including a ballet, string quartets, choral works, several concerto-like pieces, and symphonies, and he eventually went on to teach at a variety of institutions including the Liszt Academy, Bern Conservatoire, and Peabody Conservatory.[112] He wrote several works for solo violin and violin/piano, including sonatas and sonatinas. I chose his *Nógrádi Verbunkos* because of its historical significance in Hungarian culture, and he uses a particular dance from the Nógrád region, which is in northern Hungary.[113] In his collection of Hungarian Fiddle Tunes from 2012, Chris Haigh identifies this tune as *Ugrós* which is a jumping dance (Figure 3). Another tune from Haigh's collection has very similar motivic patterns and cadential motion, as can be seen in Figure 4 on the next page. This is often

[110] Jenő Hubay, *"Hejre Kati:" Scènes de la Csárda, no 4, ouevre 32* (Budapest: Edition Neuma, 1994), 5.
[111] János Demény, "Sándor Veress," *Tempo* 88 (Spring 1969): 19, https://www.jstor.org/stable/943372.
[112] Ibid., 20.
[113] Nancy Jane McKenney, "The Chamber Music of Miklós Rózsa" (PhD diss., University of Kentucky, Lexington, 2002), 419, https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/chamber-music-miklós-rózsa/docview/305559290/se-2?accountid=14696.

the case with Hungarian folk music, as Kodály notes in his book *Hungarian Folk Music*. Several tunes from different regions may sound remarkably similar or have the same structural outline.[114]
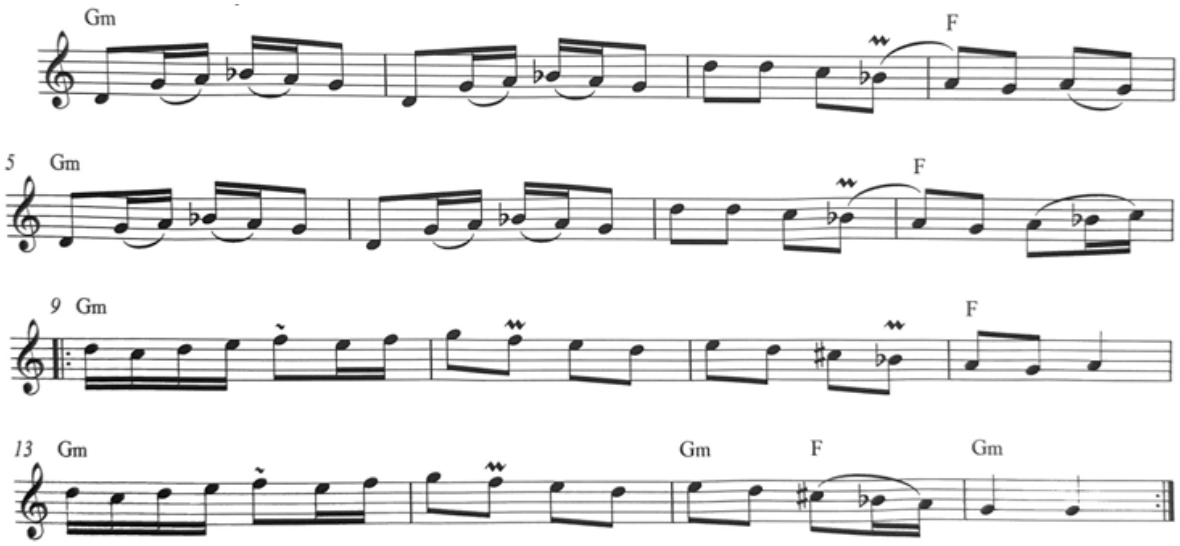


Figure 3. *Ugrós* (Jumping Dance) used as the basis for Veress's *Nógrádi Verbunkos*.[115]
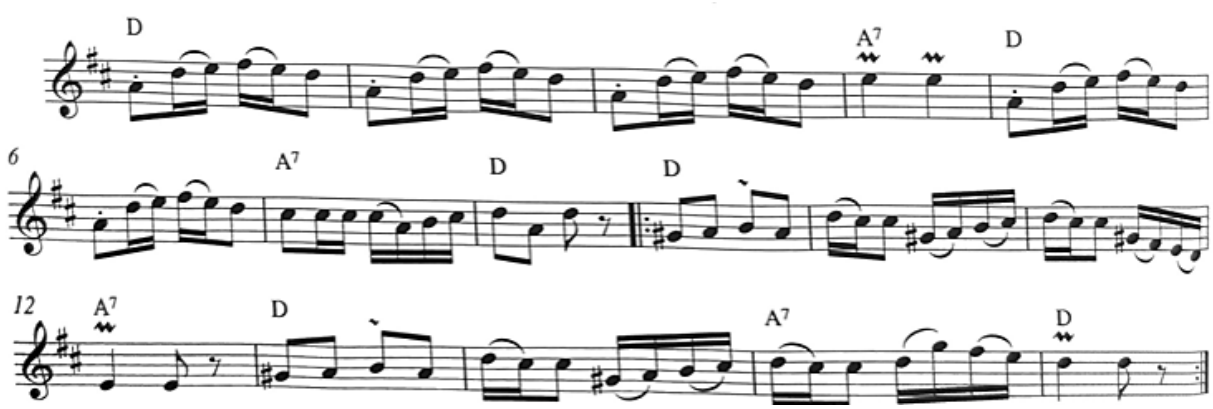


Figure 4. A *Juhoké* (Ewe's Dance) from Cleja, Moldva.[116]

In addition to field recordings from the Hungaricana archive, I found a version of the *verbunkos* tune Veress used on a CD released by Hungaroton: *Pécsi Géza Kulcs a muzsikához,*

[114] Kodály, 24.
[115] Haigh, *Hungarian Fiddle Tunes*, 17.
[116] Ibid., 28.

Táncok a Zenében. The track is titled "*Nógrádi verbunk és friss, Balassagyarmat*."[117] This particular recording differs in terms of performance style compared to Veress's setting of the tune.[118] In the folk recording, the music is upbeat in tempo, has crispier articulation, and features the sounds of a homophonic Hungarian ensemble - two fiddlers playing the melody simultaneously, accompanied by bass and *brácsa*. Additionally, the recording features a falling augmented second from G# to F natural in the third bar of the dance tune, whereas in Veress's work, he writes the descending line diatonically in D minor in measure 7 (Figure 5). However, at m. 33, when the piano states the *verbunkos* theme, the violin has a countermelody in a higher register that outlines a glorious descending augmented second (Figure 6). As mentioned in Chapter 2, *verbunkos* tunes were occasionally used for somber occasions; perhaps Veress was aiming for this more melancholy interpretation.
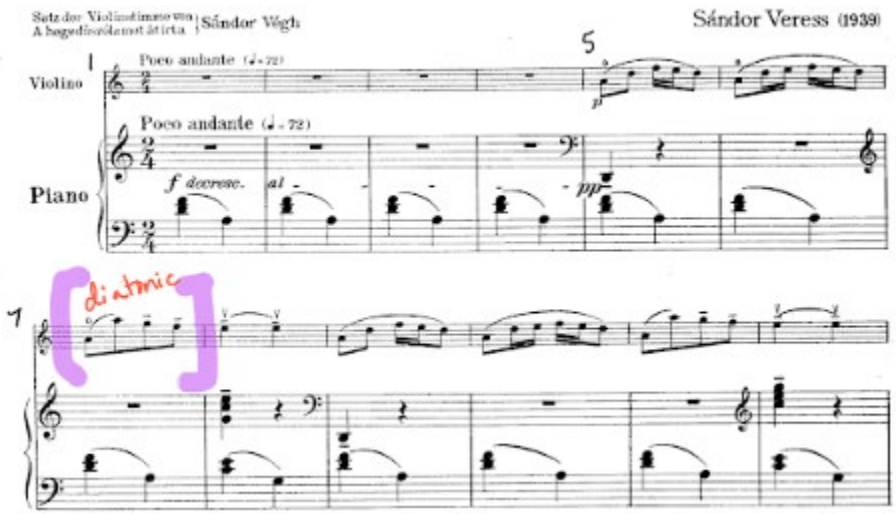


Figure 5. Diatonic descending motion in Veress's *Nógrádi Verbunkos*.[119]

[117] "2/6: Nógrádi verbunk és friss, Balassagyarmat," *Pécsi Géza Kulcs a muzsikához, Táncok a Zenében*, No. 19410, Zenei Illusztráció, June 23, 1988, online CD track, https://www.hungarotonmusic.com/en/albums/6207-music-history-educational-series-13-14-dances-in-music-history-in-hungarian.

[118] See Appendix 1 for Source Recording Information.

[119] Sándor Veress, *Ungarischer Werbetanz: Nográdi verbunkos* (Wien: Universal-Edition, 1943), 3.
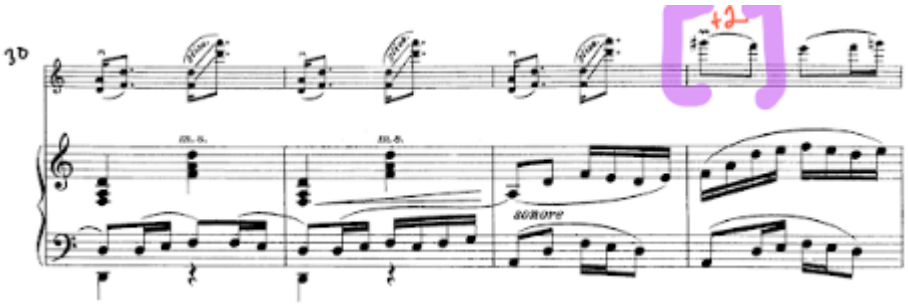


Figure 6. Augmented second motion in Veress's *Nógrádi Verbunkos*[120]

The melody follows an AABB structure in four-bar phrases. In the A phrase, the harmony moves from D minor (i) to C major (VII), which is not an uncommon progression in certain Hungarian folk songs. Veress appears to organize this piece in the form of a rondo, interspersing the theme amongst quicker, more virtuosic sections harkening to the energetic moments of the *verbunkos* dance with a *style hongrois* flare. Although the piece is only six minutes long, Veress's *Nógrádi Verbunkos* is comparable in technical difficulty to Bartók's rhapsodies. Special

[120] Ibid., 4.

effects include left hand pizzicato, back-and-forth ricochets, harmonic double stops, and rhapsodic passages in the stratospheric register of the violin (Figures 7 and 8).
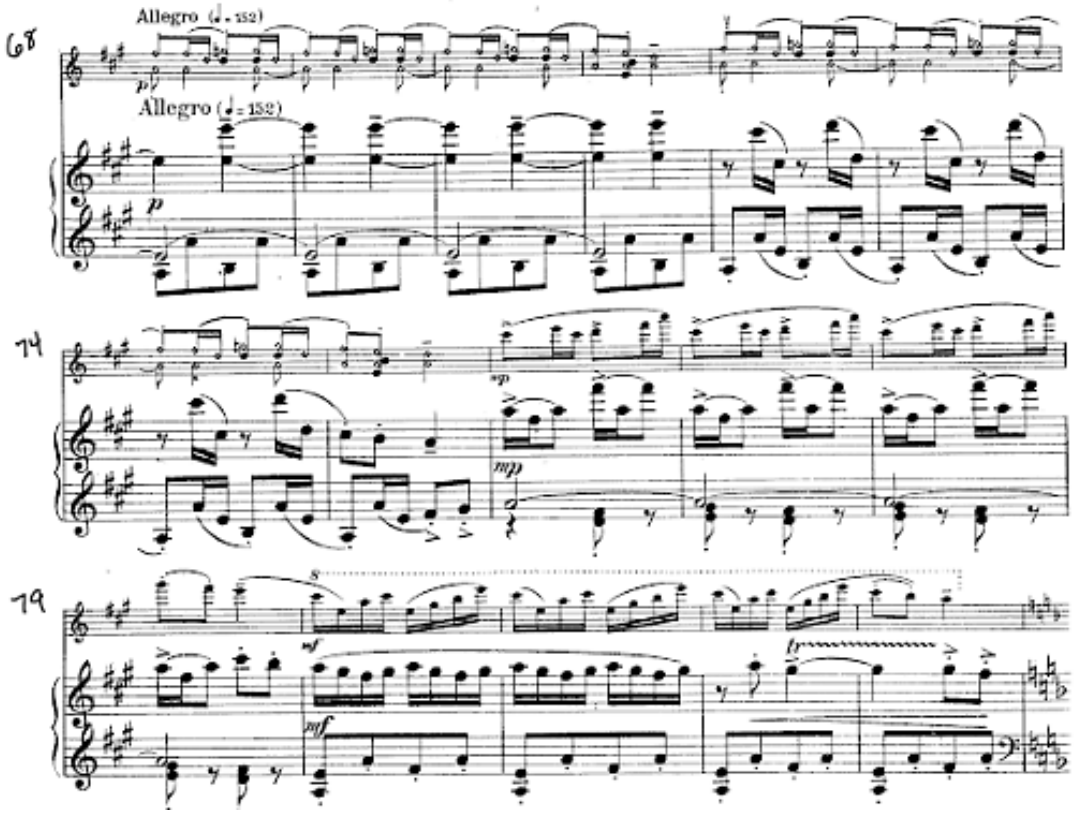


Figure 7. Virtuosic elements in Veress's *Nógrádi Verbunkos*.[121]

[121] Sándor Veress, *Ungarischer Werbetanz: Nográdi verbunkos* (Wien: Universal-Edition, 1943), 6.
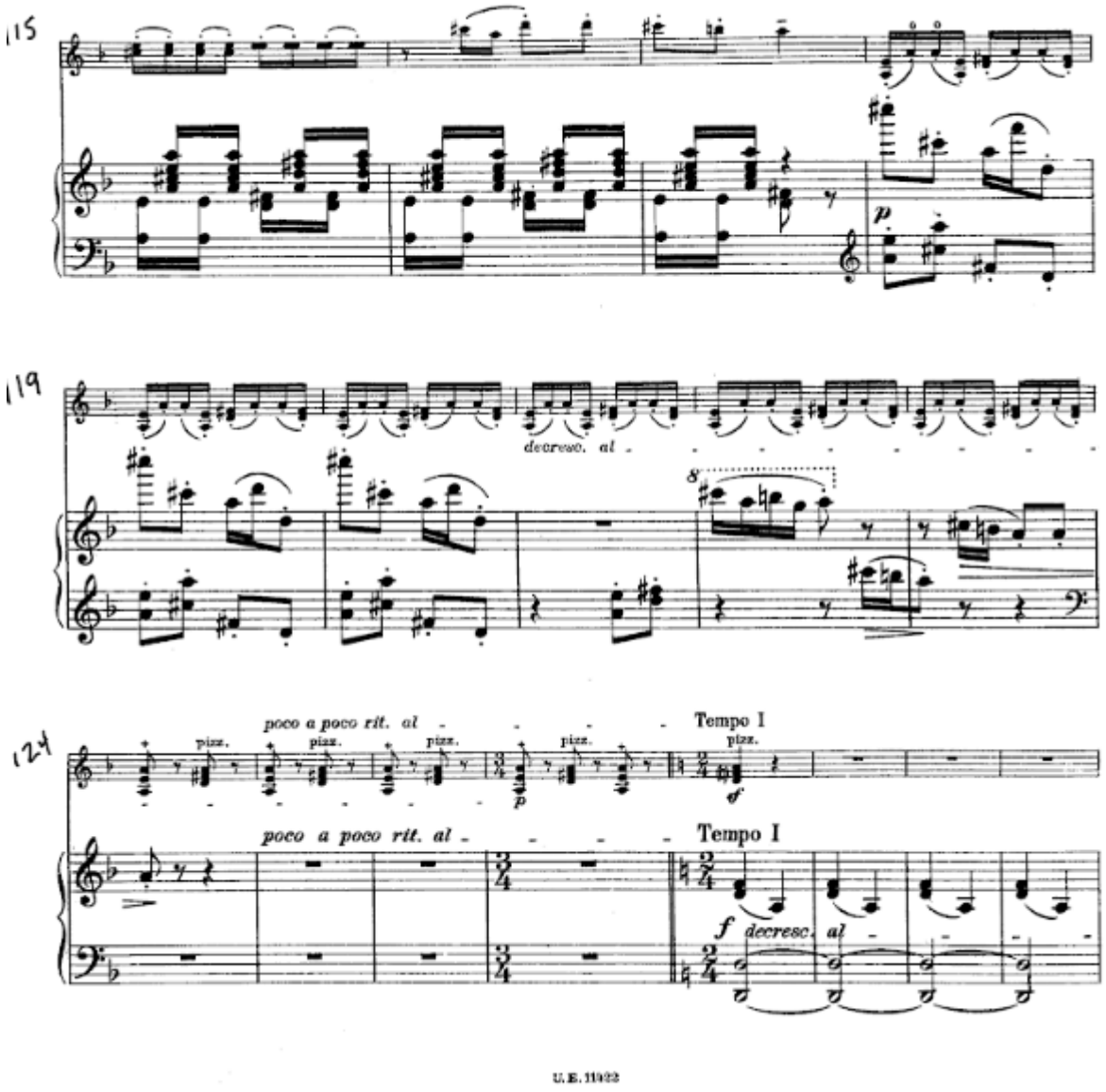


Figure 8. Additional virtuosic elements in Veress's *Nógrádi Verbunkos*.[122]

[122] Ibid., 8.

Professor Daniel Sender is a gifted violinist and composer with extensive knowledge of Hungarian folk traditions and performance practice. He studied in Budapest as a Fulbright scholar and taught at the Liszt Academy as a visiting professor. He is currently on the faculty at the University of Virginia, and he was gracious enough to send me three pieces he wrote based on Romani folk tunes. It is worth mentioning that Romani folk music was recorded as part of Kodály and Bartók's ethnomusicological research; in Transylvania, Romanies were usually the sole musicians that carried on traditional instrumental music in the rural towns.[123] However, due to heavy stigmatization and marginalization of this ethnic population, their music was rarely if ever disseminated in terms of scholarly study and commercialization.

Many Romani men were professional instrumentalists and entertainers, many descending from a patriarchal lineage of musicians.[124] Romani musicians would cater their setlists and arrangements to a variety of local audiences, which often included folk music from that community or region. As mentioned earlier, this is typical of the more urban instrumental tradition of Romani music-making. Professor Sender, however, decided to utilize field recordings comprising primarily Hungarian Romani vocal tunes from the 1950s-1980s to compose wonderful violin pieces that give us a wide sampling of Roma folk songs and dances.[125] These are more representative of the rural vocal traditions of the Hungarian Vlax Roma. Unfortunately, the database from which these field recordings came from only provides the

[123] David E. Schneider, "'Gypsies,' Verbunkos, and Bartók's Debt to the Nineteenth Century," *International Journal of Musicology* 9 (2000): 139–140, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43858005.

[124] Jonathan Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993, 16.

[125] See Appendix 1 for Source Recording Information. The Romani field recordings can be found on the *Hungaricana* database, maintained by The Folk Music Collection of the HAS–RCH Institute for Musicology.

location and year in which the music was recorded. Having information on the composers and performers would be very helpful in strengthening the representation of these Romani musicians.

The first movement is titled "*Dombon Terem a Pemetefű*," which translates to "Horehound Grows on a Hill." This movement is based on two tunes: a *csárdás* from the Szék region ("*Dombon Terem*;" Figure 9), and "*Jonnek mar a cigányok*," which translates to "The Gypsies Already Have it" (Figure 10). The second tune is much more raucous and full-throated, with the violinist climbing the G string to state the melody while the piano blunders in the lowest registers of the instrument beginning in m. 55. The tune only spans an octave and moves in two-bar phrases or "strophes."
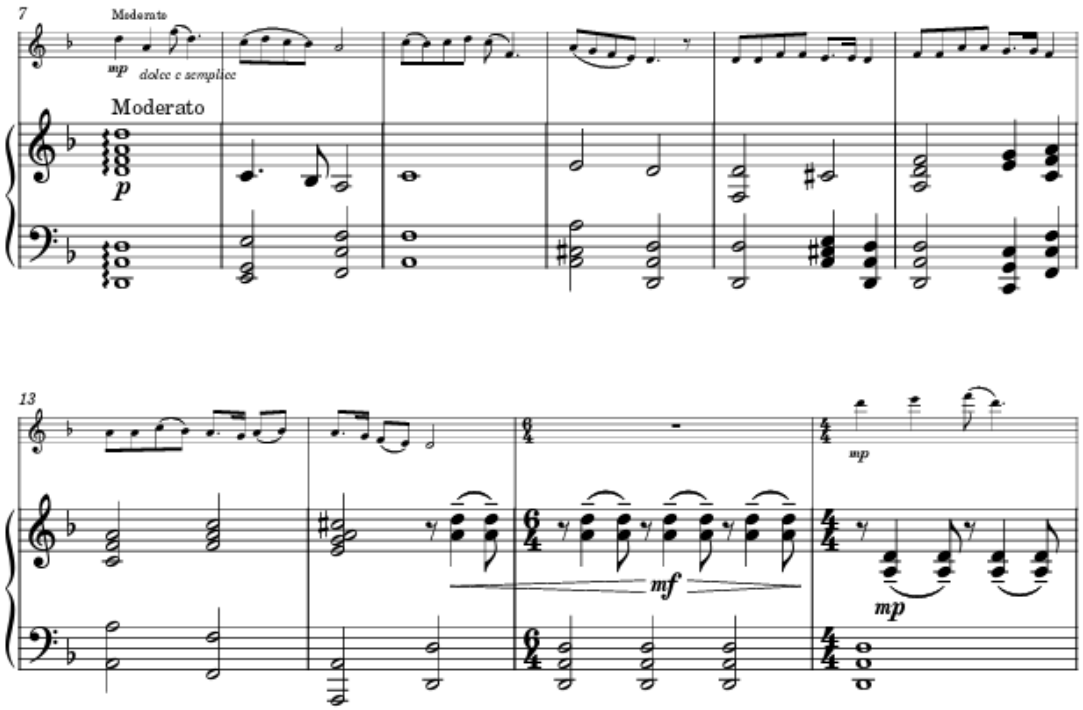


Figure 9. "*Dombon Terem a Pemetefű*", *csárdás* from the Szék region.[126]

[126] Dan Sender, *Three Souvenirs* (Dal Segno Music 2021), 3.
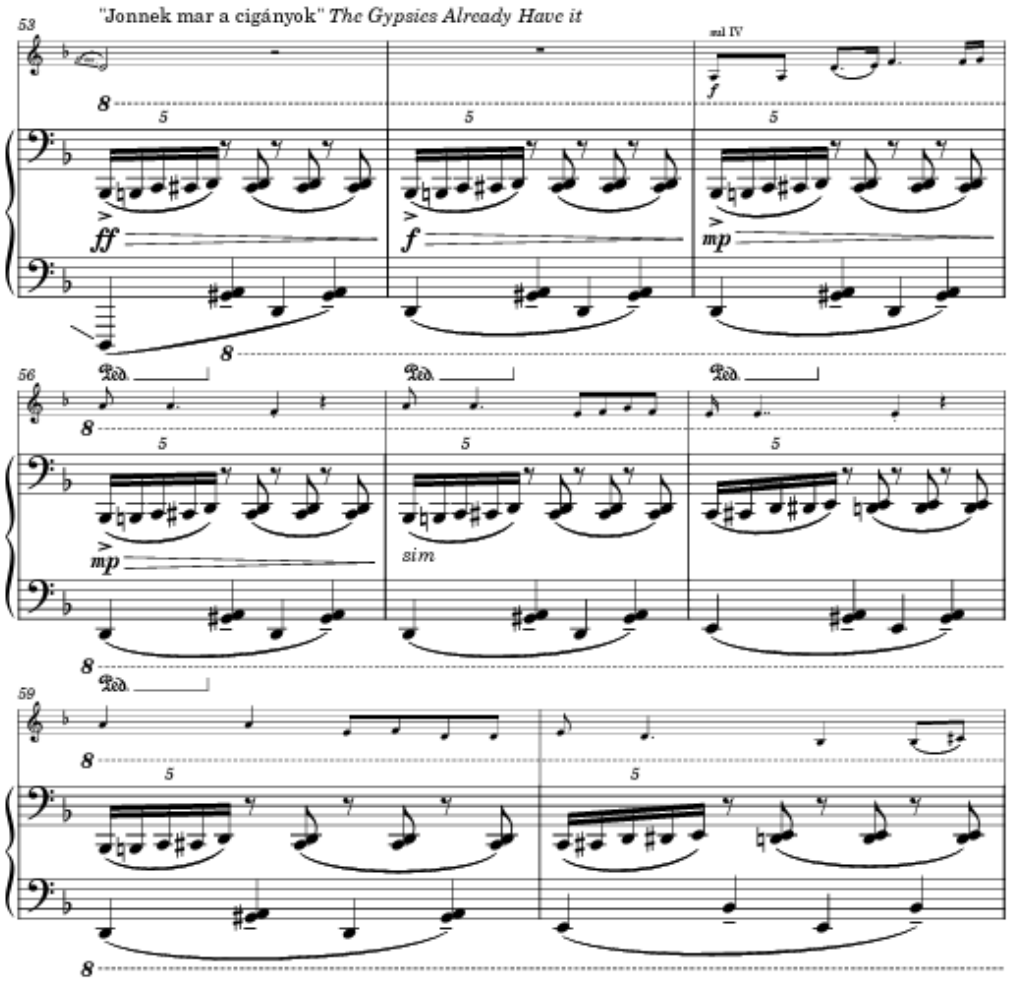


Figure 10. "*Jonnek mar a cigányok*" melody.[127]

By sheer luck, I discovered another version of the Szék *csárdás* from Muzsikás's album, *Maramoros: The Lost Jewish Music of Transylvania*. The track, titled "*Szeki zsido csárdások*," is a part of a Jewish *csárdás* series from the same region.[128] While this tune is categorized as Romani according to Professor Sender's research, this discovery made me wonder about the potential overlap between the music of Hungarian Jews and Romanies. It also begs the question, which music came first and influenced the other, if in that manner?

[127] Ibid., 4.

[128] Muzsikás, "Széki zsidó csárdások," September 11, 2019, YouTube video, 4:01, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ew3HklOuVvo&list=PLVpceVBKRJ3c1Uk_A2j7IZMTkhhhjJN7K&index=10.

Compared to the Muzsikás recording, Professor Sender takes a simpler and sweeter approach to the *csárdás* melody beginning in m. 7 (Figure 9). The first measure features the most disjunct music, falling down a fourth and leaping up a sixth for a brief moment before falling a third. We see the short-long rhythm mirroring "Terem."

The second movement, "*Cigányhallgató*," is a lament from Érsekvadkert, written for solo violin. The title refers to Romani music that is meant for listening rather than dancing.[129] Laments like these are most often sung by women – in Hungary, they carry the emotional task of singing laments and dirges.[130] The Lovari Romani term for this type of slow song is *loke gila*. The lament is often addressed to the mother or to God and is often related to poverty or loneliness.[131] According to Petr Nuska, when a *loke gila* is sung, it was "part of the music-making practice for the audience and performers to interact with each other. Through gestures, facial expressions and interjections, the soloists involved the audience and spontaneously adapted the text to the circumstances and the people present… The audience, in turn, reacted with formulaic shouts, comments and questions and sang along to the end of the lines."[132] There is unfortunately no soloist-audience interaction on the field recording, as the singer was probably following the form of a more "public" performance. It would be very insightful to hear these *loke gila* in a non-public context.

Laments from central Europe typically follow a certain melodic pattern: the music first starts in a higher register, then dissipates in both energy and range as the notes fall to a rest, or breath. The singer starts again, falling from higher to lower pitches with each iteration of the

[129] David E. Schneider, "'Gypsies,' Verbunkos, and Bartók's Debt to the Nineteenth Century," *International Journal of Musicology* 9 (2000): 142, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43858005.
[130] Kodály 76–77.
[131] Petr Nuska, "Ruža Nikolić-Lakatos (1945-2022)," *Ružake Gila*, accessed May 16, 2026, https://ruzakegila.mdw.ac.at/s/ruzakegila-en/page/willkommen.
[132] Kodály 76–77.

tune. While the music is strophic in nature, with the melody being used for different lines of text, the possibilities for color and melodic rubato are infinite. In ethnic Hungarian tradition, dirges are not metered but instead entirely improvised in pure recitative.[133] While Dan Sender wrote the lament in common time, he told me this music is highly extemporized and should be played in a spontaneously expressive manner. In my rendition, I added variations of trills, glissandi, vibrato, and rubato to shade each repetition differently. In hindsight, I am sure I could have experimented even more in terms of metrical and rhythmic freedom.

The set of souvenirs concludes with a "*Ciganycsárdás*." The field recording features a Hungarian Romani instrumental ensemble with the violinist playing the melody and two lower stringed instruments providing energetic offbeat accompaniment. In a traditional performance of this *esztam* accompaniment, two instruments alternate between the on and off beats, usually the *brácsa* and the bass.[134] In modern violin repertoire, the piano accompaniment alternates between the left and right hand, and the violin often plays the syncopated offbeats. In Sender's rendition of the *csárdás*, however, the pianist stomps on the downbeats and claps on the offbeats before jumping in later with the melody, for which the violinist switches to a *dűvő* rhythm on open string double stops. The *dűvő* is almost an onomatopoeic term resulting from the sound produced when a string player bows a tied note with a greater emphasis on the second note.[135] See Figure 11 on the next page for how Sender notates the *esztam* and *dűvő* rhythms in the "*Ciganycsárdás*." One can easily find examples of this rhythm in some of Haydn's quartets and Brahms' Hungarian dances, although our modern Western notation may not give such implied emphases away. It shows how this tradition of music making has penetrated social and cultural

[133] Ibid.
[134] Pete Cooper, ed., *Eastern European Fiddle Tunes* (London: Schott, 2007), 5–6.
[135] David E. Schneider, "'Gypsies,' Verbunkos, and Bartók's Debt to the Nineteenth Century," *International Journal of Musicology* 9 (2000): 144, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43858005.

boundaries for centuries, and despite all the advancements we have made in terms of ethnomusicological and performance research, there is always more to be learned in terms of *who*, *where*, *when*, *how*, and *why*.
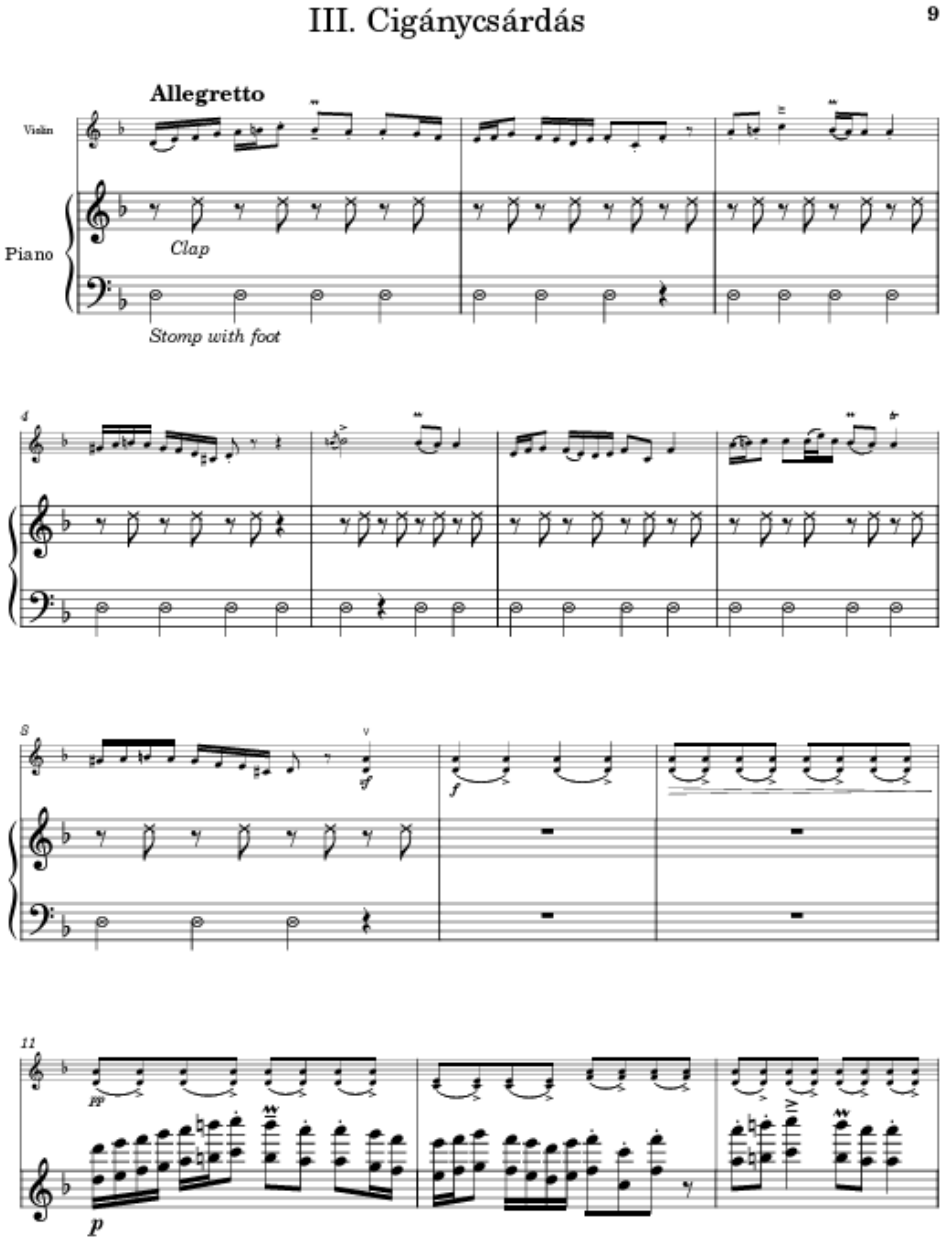


Figure 11. *Esztam* (m. 1–8) and *dűvő* (m. 9–13) in Sender's "*Ciganycsárdás*."[136]

[136] Sender, *Three Souvenirs*, 9.

While Professor Sender did an incredible job of notating ornaments and articulation markings to help me understand the flow and "diction" of the melodic embellishments, I will say nothing compares with listening to the field recordings of the Romani singers and accompaniment. Certain inflections and undulations in folk music simply cannot be notated with Western tools, why it is crucial to conduct auditory research of this music when possible.

Rhapsody No. 1 *Béla Bartók (1881–1945)*

Bartók wrote both of his violin rhapsodies in 1928. Along with his quartets, violin sonatas (solo and accompanied), and violin concerti, these are arguably amongst the most challenging violin repertoire from the twentieth century. However, compared to his more avantgarde sonatas, these rhapsodies are distinguished in their musical immediacy and what Vera Lampert refers to as listening "accessibility." Many of Bartók's earlier folk arrangements were used for pedagogical purposes or they were written on commission; however, as his reputation grew in the twenties and his folk song collection grew, he continued to explore how to adapt Hungarian songs to modern harmonization and orchestration techniques suitable for concerts. Eventually, his pieces gained greater acclaim, although they are very different compared to the likes of composers like Brahms and Dvořák.[137] Professor Sender was kind enough to share the field recordings Bartók used for these pieces, which can be found in Vera Lampert's catalogue, *Folk Music in Bartók's Compositions: A Source Catalogue*, and additionally through the Bartók Archives of Budapest's Institute of Musicology.[138]

[137] Vera Lampert, "Nationalism, Exoticism, or Concessions to the Audience? Motivations behind Bartók's Folksong Settings." *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* T. 47, Fasc. 3/4, Bartók's Orbit. The Context and Sphere of Influence of His Work. Proceedings of the International Conference Held by the Bartók Archives, Budapest (22-24 March 2006), Part I. (Sep., 2006), 340–343.. https://www.jstor.org/stable/25598265.

[138] Vera Lampert, *Folk Music in Bartók's Compositions: A Source Catalogue; Arab, Hungarian, Romanion, Ruthenian, Serbian, and Slovak Melodies* (Budapest, München: Helikon, Henle [Vertr.], 2008).

These rhapsodies are based on fiddle tunes Bartók recorded in Transylvania between 1908 and 1917.[139] In *Rhapsody No. 1*, Bartók uses six folk tunes; while he did not write the names of the tunes he utilized, Vera Lampert and other scholars have compiled the sources he used.[140] The first tune Bartók utilizes is a *Legényes*; it is a "young man's dance" from Transylvania (Figure 12), but according to Daphne Leong, it is also known as "*De Ciuit,*" which functions as a *call* to dance.[141, 142]
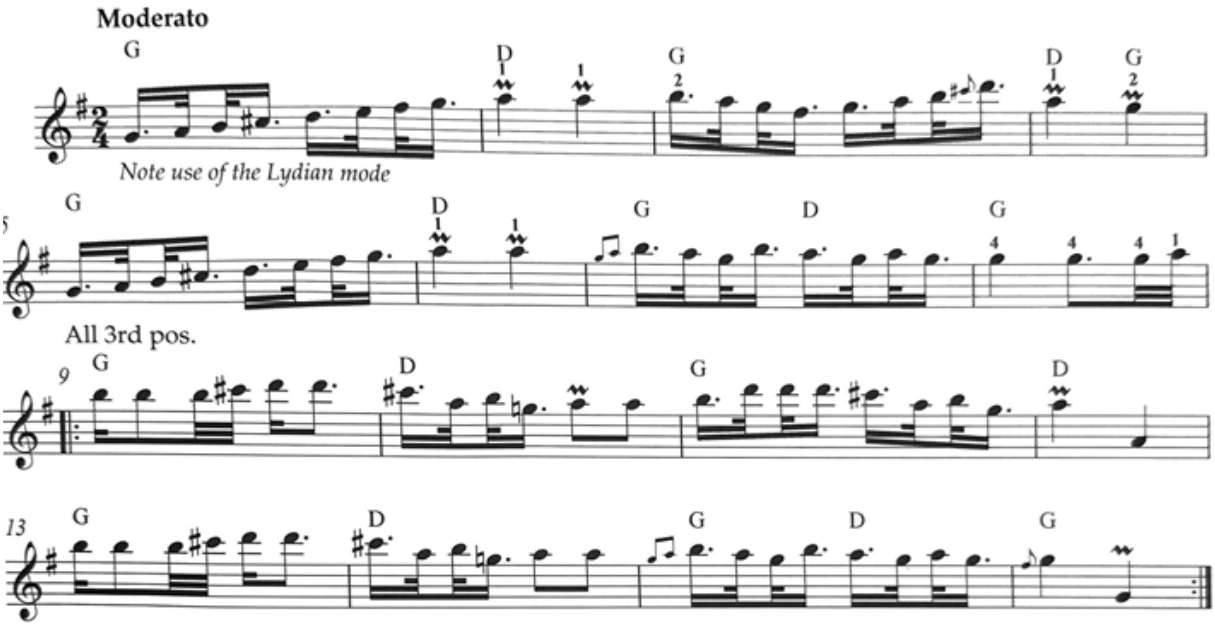


Figure 12. *Legényes* used at the beginning of Bartók's *Rhapsody No. 1*.[143]

The piano begins with an *esztam*-like accompaniment in a dignified tempo which invites the violin to boldly step in with the *verbunkos*-like melody (AAB**B**), where we hear energetic dotted rhythms and modal alterations between B natural and Bb, the third of the scale. These

[139] David E. Schneider, "'Gypsies,' Verbunkos, and Bartók's Debt to the Nineteenth Century," *International Journal of Musicology* 9 (2000): 145. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43858005.
[140] See Appendix 1 for Source Recording Information.
[141] David E. Schneider, "'Gypsies,' Verbunkos, and Bartók's Debt to the Nineteenth Century," *International Journal of Musicology* 9 (2000): 142. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43858005.
[142] Daphne Leong, "Bartók's Studies of Folk Rhythm: A Window into His Own Practice," *Acta Musicologica* 76, [Fasc.] 2 (2004): 260, https://www.jstor.org/stable/25071241.
[143] Haigh, *Hungarian Fiddle Tunes*, 29.

alterations on "B" are not heard in the original folk recording, but Bartók was well aware of chromatic alternations in folk songs. Compared to the field recording, Bartok's rendition of the melody is slower, more rhythmically punctuated, and contains many more double stops.[144] To enhance the bold qualities of the A strophe, he adds chords on structural beats. In the B strophe, the quintessential short-long Hungarian rhythm appears and modal alternation of the third continues; however, this strophe is much more cantabile compared to the bold A statements. The second B strophe of the melody (AAB**B**) begins an octave lower in a softer dynamic before the violinist shifts gears and bounces back to the second A ending. For the second tune, "*Árvàtfalvi kesergő*," Bartók transposes the triplet melody an octave higher than in the field recording.[145] The tune flows sweetly nature over a duple piano accompaniment. This tune still features the "short-long" rhythm, but in a gentler, more lilting way. Despite the passion and high energy with which we usually associate popular Hungarian music, one must always sing with the bow. The music is never truly aggressive or harsh, for there is the *parlando* effect to consider, with different inflections, articulations, and gestures, especially in slower movements. Much of this music originated from text, so one must use the bow as one's voice.

In the fast portion of the Rhapsody, the "Friss," Bartók utilizes four other tunes: 1) "*Judecata*," 2) "*Crucea*," 3) "*Pa Loc"* (Stamping Dance), and "*Cuiesdeanca"* (Lad's Dance).[146,147] Refer to Figures 13, 14, and 15.

[144] Ibid., 147-149.
[145] Ibid., 6.
[146] Haigh, *Hungarian Fiddle Tunes*, 18.
[147] Min-Hwa Kim, "Performance Guide," 7.
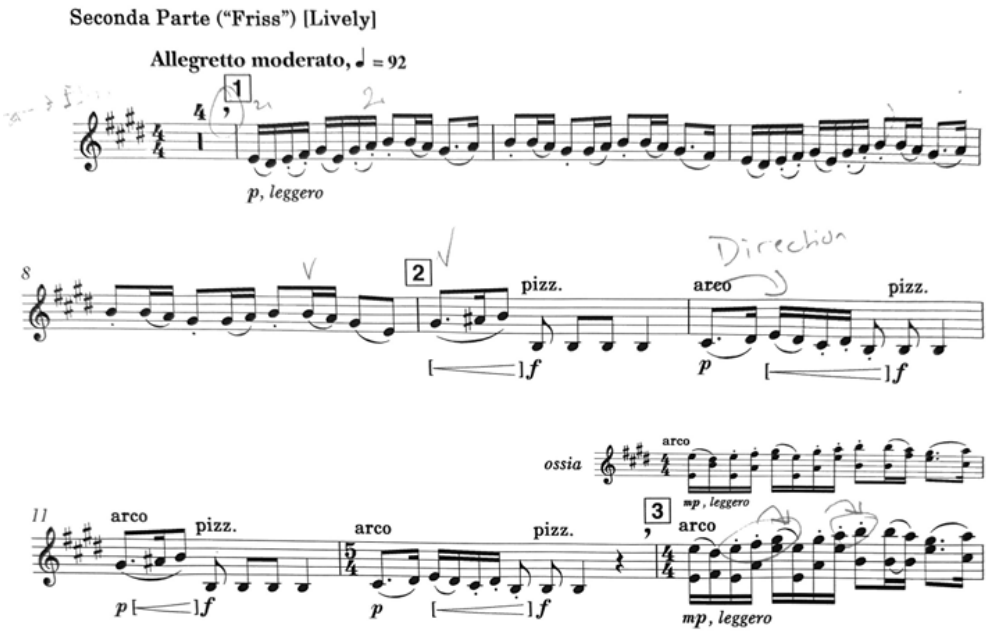


Figure 13. "*Judecata"* – first tune used in the *friss* of Bartók's *Rhapsody No. 1*.[148]
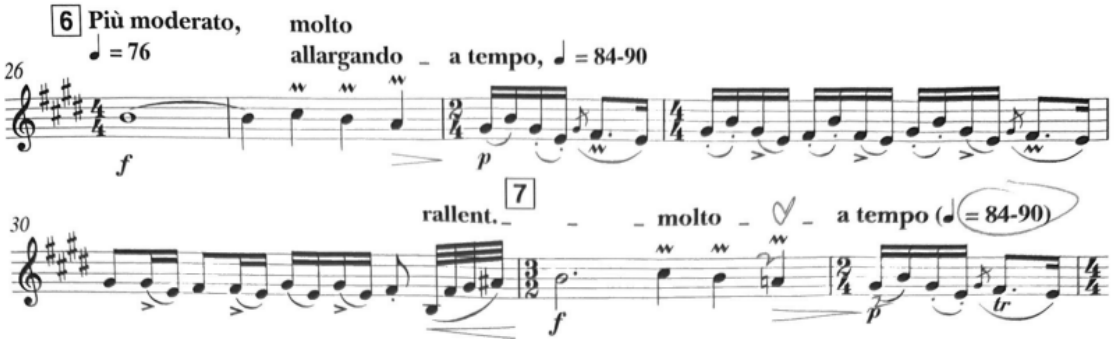


Figure 14. "*Crucea"* – second tune used in the *friss* of Bartók's *Rhapsody No. 1*.[149]

[148] Béla Bartók, *Rhapsody No. 1* (London: Hawkes & Son, 1929), 4.
[149] Ibid., 5.
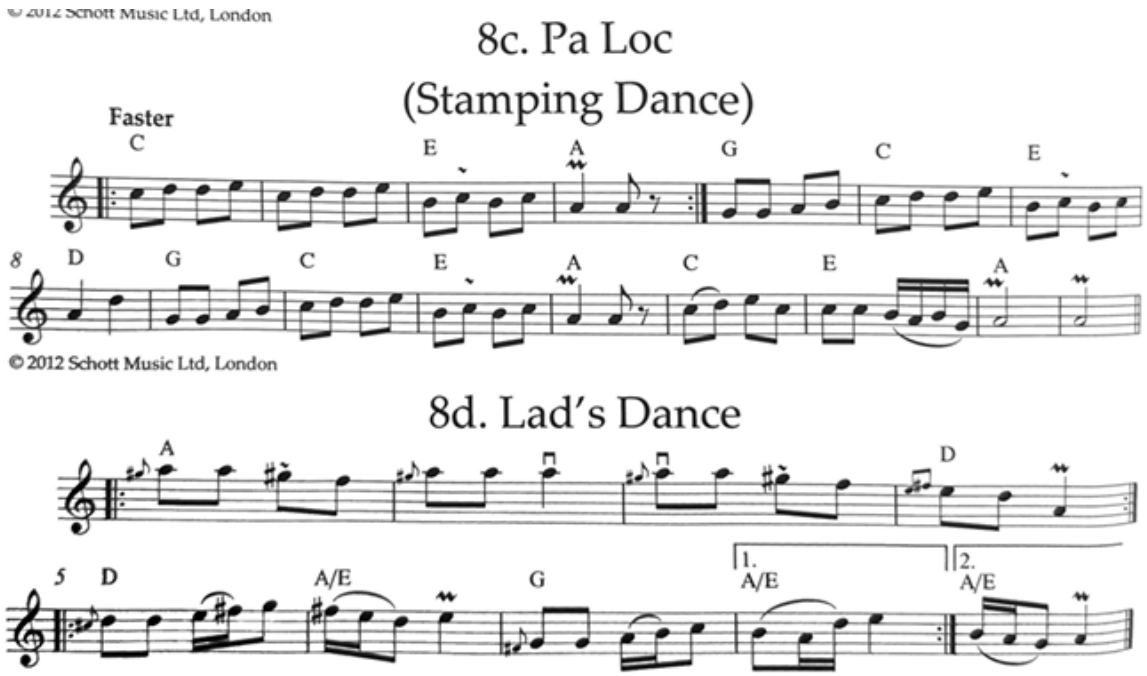


Figure 15. Hungarian folk tunes Bartók used in the *friss* movement of *Rhapsody No. 1*: *"Pa Loc"* and "*Lad's Dance*."[150]

Bartók develops the first tune ("*Judecata"*). From a simple and lighthearted tune, Bartók adds double stops and grace notes, which are then followed by an accelerando outburst. Soon after, the violinist regains their composure to attempt to play the leggiero theme again, only to get caught in a "broken record" trance where the violinist continues to climb in register with each iteration of the tune. Finally, the soloist fatigues and the pianist changes course with an *esztam* accompaniment leading the way for the "*Pa Loc*" tune (Figure 15). Bartók imagines it first in a very delicate way, asking the violinist to play *con sordino* for the first statement as the theme dances between the strings. In the second statement, the mute comes off, and Bartók writes for the violinist to play the melody amongst a sea of complex harmonics. The movement reaches its first big high point with the "*Lad's Dance*", with octaves permeating both the violin and piano

[150] Haigh, *Hungarian Fiddle Tunes*, 18.

parts as the melody descends through an augmented second to the lower octave. The second half of the melody is accompanied by open string drones in the violin part. As if the music could not get more energetic, Bartók wrote more complex, almost impossible chords for a second statement of the melody. In the second half of the melody, he opens up the bowing to allow for more soaring gestures and momentum. One defining feature of Bartók's string writing is how he utilizes slurs and bowing groupings to create forward motion amidst distinct metrical parameters.

Bartók continues to spin out the second half of the "*Lad's Dance*" until the musical morphs into undulating drones and sixteenths before reprising the "*Stamping Dance*" in an even more dramatic fashion, with "grace note slurs" across strings and octaves galore. In the original ending of the Rhapsody, Bartók continues to develop fragments of different motives and plays with metrical flow until he recapitulates the "slow" movement with a rhapsodic cadenza added to conclude the work (Figure 16). However, in the alternative ending (which I performed), Bartók gradually dissipates the energy accumulated in the fast dances before and rekindles a sweet, graceful statement of the "*Judecata*" tune. (Figure 17). The music floats to even higher registers on the E string before falling into an uncertain fate at rehearsal 26 (Figure 17). From here to the end, Bartók once more winds up the violinist for action, creating a textural blizzard of an accelerando, longer sixteenth passages, the interpolation of the *verbunkos* rhythm (short-short-long), more double stops, and larger leaps. The piece finishes almost unexpectedly with a soaring ascent to E, marking the end of the Hungarian fiddling adventure.
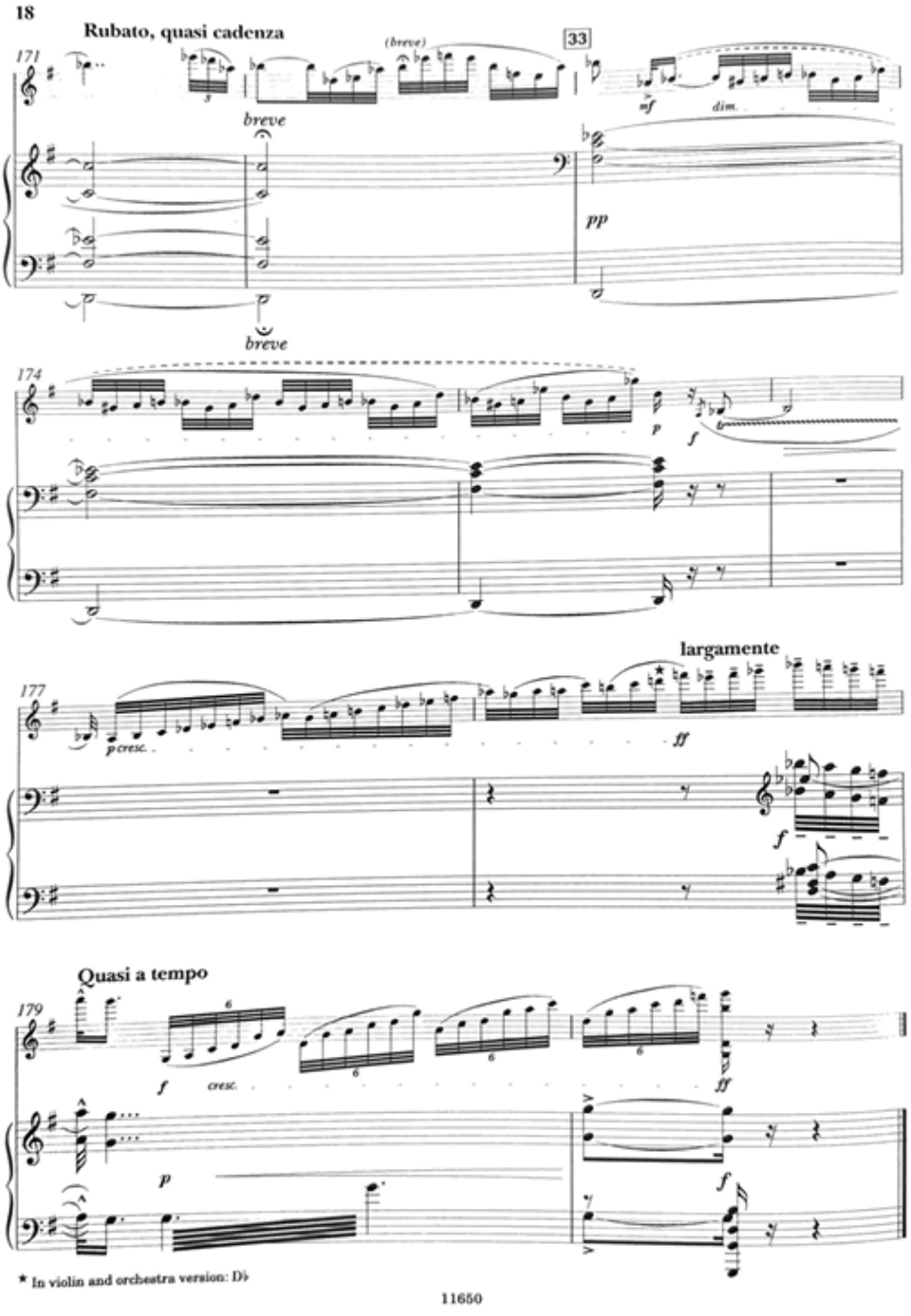


Figure 16. Original ending of *Rhapsody No. 1* after recapitulation of *lassú* ("*Legényes"*).[143]
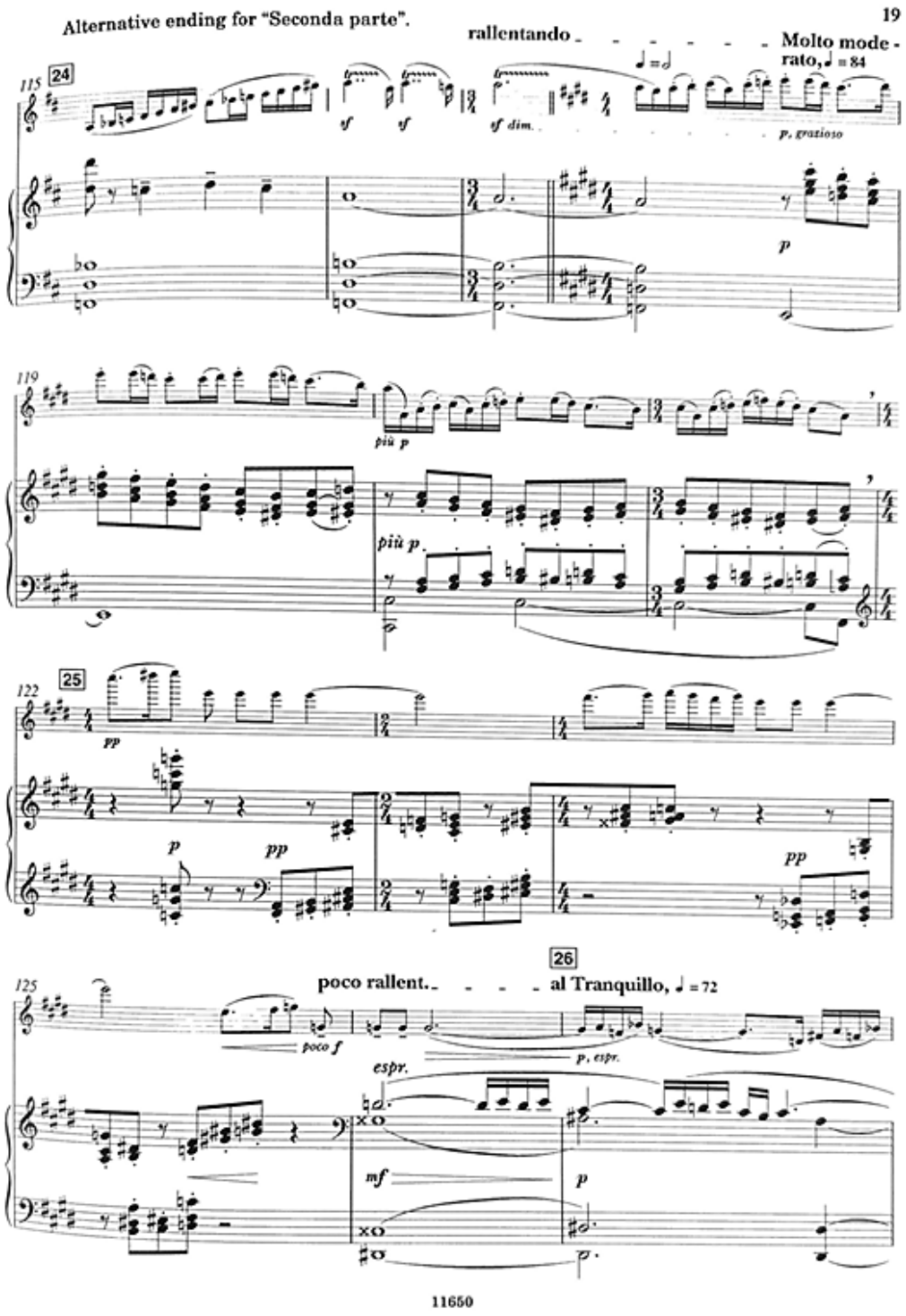


Figure 17. Beginning of alternative ending for *Rhapsody No. 1* with recapitulation of "*Judecata*" theme.[151]

[151] Ibid., 19.

It is amazing how Bartók manages to string together these disparate tunes into a cohesive concert piece. He also manages to vary the tunes through the addition of chords and the manipulation of register and key. The phonographs only feature the melodic instrument playing the tune, so it was up to the composer to imagine and realize an underlying texture that suited the music. "Despite their obvious differences, Bartók's and nineteenth-century Gypsies' arrangements of traditional music do have something in common: both alter their sources to make them better conform to a common aesthetic of their age."[152]

Scenes de la Csárda, No. 5, "Hullámzó balaton," Op. 33 — *Jenő Hubay*

This is another frequently played piece from Hubay's collection. The slow section at the beginning of this piece is based on a popular song by the same name, which translates to "The Waves of Lake Balaton," referring to the largest lake in Central Europe. The lyrics discuss the woes of a fisherman who just lost his prized fishing net in the waves of the lake.[153, 154] Hubay structures the melody around undulating fourths, rising and falling like the waves of the water while supporting the textual inflections.

Hubay's rendition for violin and piano begins with a brooding statement of the melodic motive in low octaves on the piano, wandering through different tonalities before giving way to a powerful, impassioned introduction in the violin. After the violin's outburst simmers down, we finally hear a complete statement of the tender, yearning melody. As the music builds in intensity, the piano transforms into a concert-hall cimbalom with tremolos mimicking the melody in the higher octave of the violin (Figure 18).

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[152] David E. Schneider, "'Gypsies,' Verbunkos, and Bartók's Debt to the Nineteenth Century," *International Journal of Musicology* 9 (2000), 150, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43858005.

[153] Ferenc Sárközi, "Magyar nóták - Hullámzó Balaton tetején," *Zeneszőveg.hu*, accessed October 4, 2025, https://www.zeneszoveg.hu/dalszoveg/20012/magyar-notak/hullamzo-balaton-tetejen-zeneszoveg.html.

[154] See Appendix 1 for Source Recording Information.
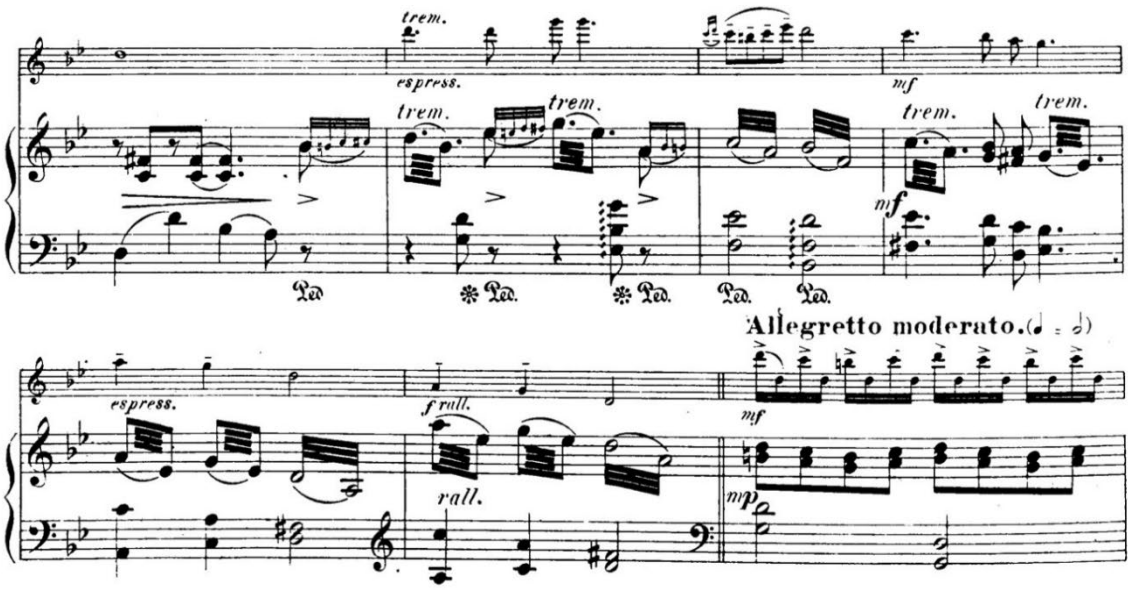


Figure 18. Piano tremolos mimicking the sounds of a Hungarian cimbalom.[155]

The second section, like many Hungarian dance tunes, is much faster and bubbly in nature. In duple meter, the violinist begins with undulating string crossings and slurs across all four strings in G major, mimicking the wave-like motions of Lake Balaton. Through short phrases, the music slides down to G minor through the harmonic progression GM-Cm-DM-Gm. In the following section, Hubay employs *esztam* pizzicato chords in alternation with the stepwise melody found amongst the "waves" of the first section (Figure 19).
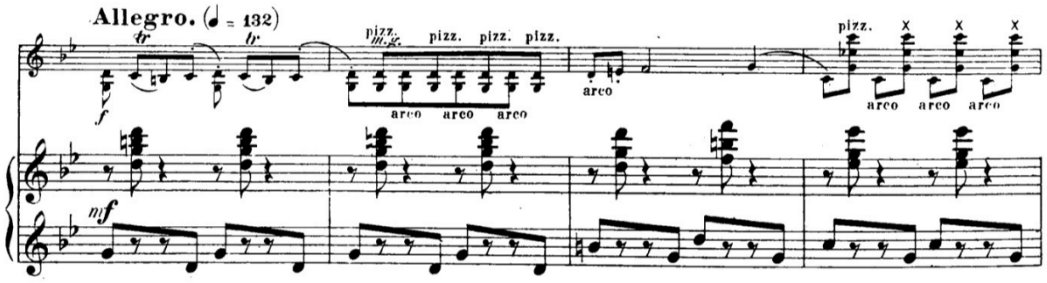


Figure 19. *Esztam* pizzicato interspersed with the melody from the second section of "*Hullámzó Balaton*."[148]

[155] Jenő Hubay, *"Hullámzó Balaton" Scènes de la Csárda, no 5, ouevre 33* (Budapest: Edition Neuma, 1999), 2.

In the final dance section, the two-bar melodic motive is punctuated by three accented quarter notes, followed by a fall of a fourth and a stepwise descent to the fifth from the top note. The motive is repeated at the fifth (D), again reinforcing the intervallic relationship often seen in strophes of Hungarian folk song. After these statements of the motive, the violinist flies through myriads of sixteenths accompanied by *esztam* in the piano. These sixteenths then lead to longer musical exclamations in the violin which punctuate the rapid changes in harmony in the piano part. After a few iterations, the violinist picks up steam and carries on with her virtuosic display through the end of the piece. These pyrotechnical fireworks are more emblematic of the energetic popular style heard in salons and clubs across the region (Figure 20).
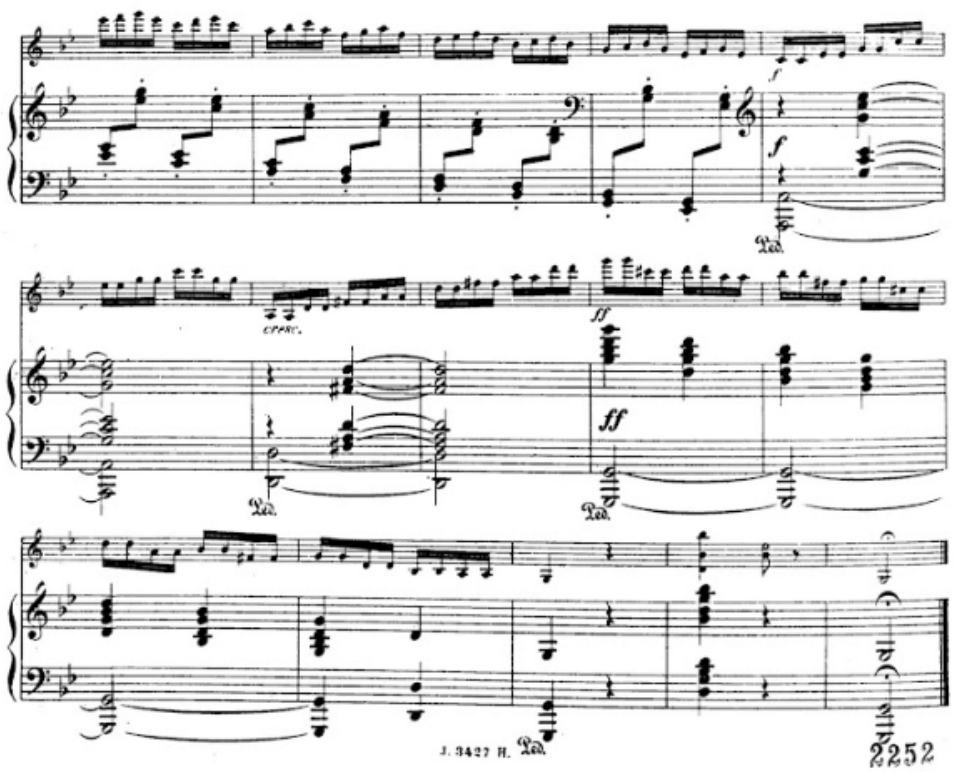


Figure 20. Excerpt from ending of "*Hullámzó Balaton*."[156]

[156] Ibid., 8.

This piece contains five different tunes, all referencing Roma songs and dances from different regions of Hungary. While more concise in terms of musical material and length, these dance "samples" give us a glimpse into a different universe of folk music that is too often overlooked or disregarded. I was grateful to have access to the field recordings so I could hear the singers' phrasing, the vocal and textual inflections, and the timbral variations amongst singers. In the faster tunes, one can hear the distinctive vocal *esztam* and *dűvő* accompaniments, sung with rhythmic nonsense syllables by background singers. This is a unique trait of Hungarian Roma music. According to Petra Gelbart:

> "[o]ne thread running through a number of Romani styles that can be traced back to the Indian subcontinent is the use of percussive vocables ('nonsense syllables'). In fact, 'oral bass' or 'oral percussion' is a hallmark of the style that is the most undeniably unique to Roma: namely, Hungarian Vlax Romani music."[157]

In the first movement ("*Ha elvettél, tartsál*"), the theme has an interesting phrase structure – 3+3+3, starting with a pickup (which is very rare in Hungarian folk music.) The interval of a fourth is essential to the undulating melodic structure, highlighting the descent from C-G and F-C. After the first statement, Sender develops the theme by adding different ornaments, changing the register of the melody, and instructing the violinist to play on the G string for special color effects (Figure 21).[158]

[157] Petra Gelbart, "Is There Such a Thing as Romani Music?," RomArchive, accessed March 25, 2026, https://www.romarchive.eu/en/music/there-such-thing-romani-music/.

[158] See Appendix 1 for Source Recording Information.
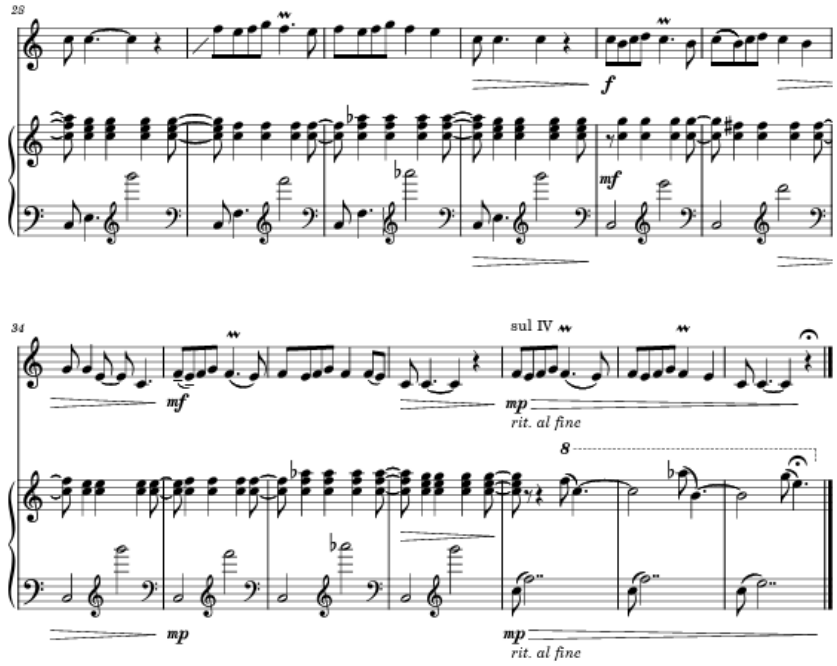


Figure 21. Variations of "*Ha elvettél, tartsál*" in Sender's *Roma Folk Dances*.[159]

The second tune ("*I canka ij Anna*") is much more noble and upbeat in nature. Following an 8-bar structure, the melody manages to ascend to a ninth on the weak beat of m. 3. Following this climb, syncopation and short-long rhythms permeate the texture. Again, Sender develops the melody through varied repetition through use of octave transposition, harmonics, and heavier melodic embellishment (Figure 22).

[159] Daniel Sender, *Roma Folk Dances: Village Tunes of the Hungarian Roma* (Dal Segno Music, 2018), 2.
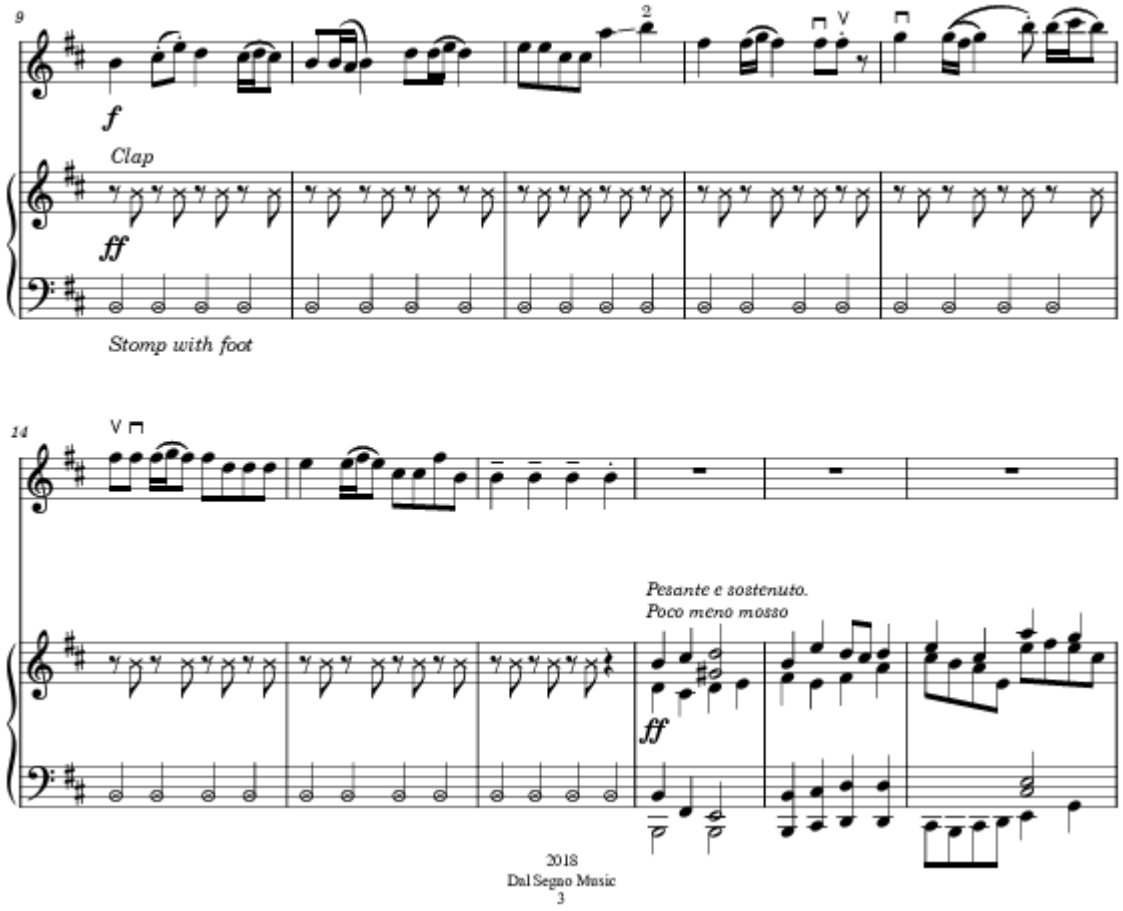


Figure 22. Variations of "*I canka ij Anna*" melody in Sender's *Roma Folk Dances*.[160]

The third movement is a lament ("*Hallgató*") for solo violin, just like the second movement in *Three Souvenirs*, and it is again sung by a woman. This lament has a slightly different melodic structure than the one previously discussed. The music first climbs a sixth from A to D, then falls a third; in the second "breath" of text, the starts a fourth higher and leaps to the high D. In the third "breath," the music climbs a fifth from D to A, then falls back down to F; in the final line of text, the music reaches for Bb before slowly falling down to the tonic of D. This lament has a larger range with greater leaps, which leaves ample room for variations in glissandi, vibrato, and shifts.

[160] Ibid., 3.

The fourth movement "*Ének*" follows the form of a fast csárdás. The melody (4+4+4+4) features an octave leap followed by meandering sixteenths in a small range with chromatic inflections. In the field recording, the singer appears to be using "vocables" for the running sixteenths. These are indecipherable syllables, similar to what jazz singers use when they "scat." In the second half of the melody, we again encounter the short-long rhythm and the *verbunkos* short-short-long rhythm. Later in the movement, the pianist gets a chance to play the *csárdás* tune and the violin plays double stop offbeats in the style of *esztam*. This movement then flows immediately into the last movement ("*Jaj, anyám, a vakaró*"), which is more "pointed" in terms of rhythmic vitality, like the *tempo giusto* tradition. Sender takes more compositional liberties in this movement, adding modulations, double stops, subito dynamic changes, and rhapsodic passagework for the soloist. The piece concludes with a fiery accelerando in Bb minor, a half step up from the original tune.

Second Rhapsody (Folk Dances) *Béla Bartók*

This piece is structured like the first rhapsody, with a slower first section, the *lassú,* followed by the fast dance section, called the *friss*. Bartók was even more ambitious in this work, as he referenced ten different folk tunes from various regions.[161] As in the first rhapsody, he strings together these many distinct melodies into a coherent masterwork.

[161] Professor Sender sent me the field recordings with the corresponding catalogue numbers from Vera Lampert's catalogue. See Appendix 1 for Source Recording Information.

The first tune is titled "*Lassú Csárdás*", as found in Chris Haigh's collection (Figure 23), but other sources call it the "*Romanie*."[162] The first section of the melody is simple in nature, stating repeated Ds with ornamentation before leaping a fourth (D-G) and falling down in step-wise motion to C, but not without while oscillating between C# and C natural, the seventh of the "scale." The second section of the tune then leaps an octave (A-A), descends a fifth (A-D), and from the higher range descends in an almost pentatonic motion (A, G, E, D, C) with extensive chromatic embellishments. Crisp short-long rhythms accentuate the octave leaps, while descending slurs and spoken Lombard rhythms support the drawn-out descent to A, concluding the melody. The second half of the tune finishes the same way as the first half (AAB-A) which is common in Hungarian folk music.
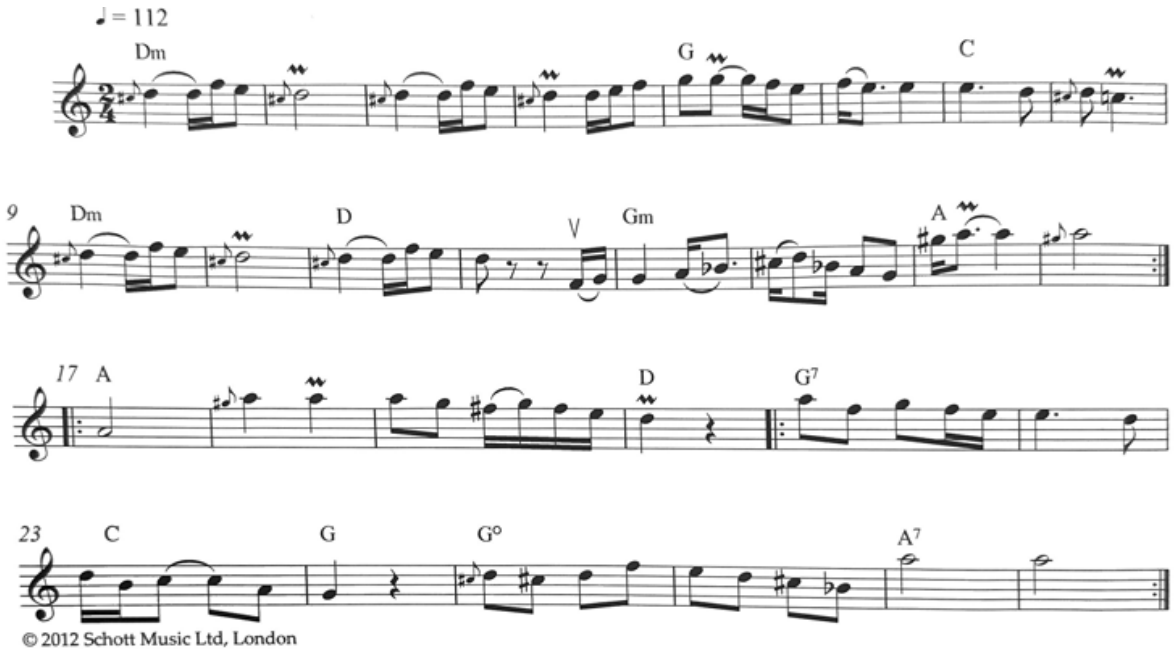


Figure 23. "*Lassú Csárdás*" melody used at the beginning of Bartók's *Second Rhapsody*.[154]

[162] Min Hwa Kim, "Performance Guide to Selected Violin Works of Béla Bartók," (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati): 8, https://etd.ohiolink.edu/acprod/odb_etd/ws/send_file/send?accession=ucin1321894138&disposition=inline.

The tunes Bartók uses next, while quite different in terms of energy and character, are decorated with a variety of grace notes, rhythmic syncopations, and flurries of neighboring tones. For example, in the bars leading up to rehearsal 4, the melody begins to undulate around the primary pitch (F) in a *parlando rubato* style (Figure 24). The tune that appears from 4 to 5 is then heavily embellished with polyphonic double stop motion, harkening to Bartók's love of Bach and contrapuntal writing. The "*Lassú*" theme reappears at 5 in a higher register with more energetic fervor, but ultimately the violinist relinquishes the end of the tune to the piano.
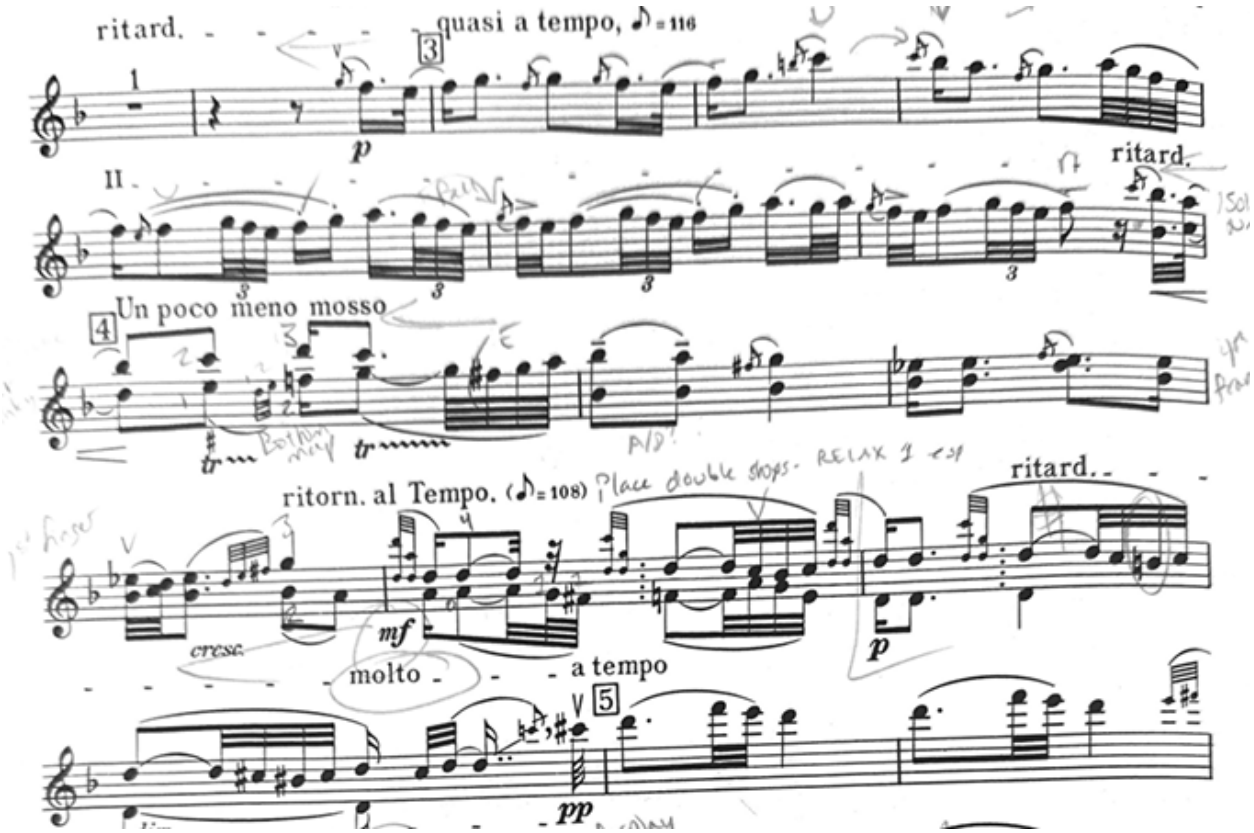


Figure 24. Thematic treatment from 3–5 in Bartók's *Second Rhapsody.*[163]

[163] Béla Bartók, *Second Rhapsody (Folk Dances)*, revised ed. (London: Hawkes & Son, 1947), 2.

Bartók uses a third folk melody, "*Dea sărită*," which is decorated with grace notes on every beat and short-long rhythms throughout.[164] The melodic compass is relatively narrow, confined to the lower guttural range of the violin, but eventually yields to more chromatic inflections and a slightly larger range. The pianist accompanies the melody with short, rolled chords, the second of each pair higher than the first. One might argue this sounds like two different instruments in a slow *esztam* accompaniment. To conclude the *lassú* section, Bartók brings back the opening tune one more time, after which the piano and violin ascend to the climax of the movement. The violin rolls through rapid scales and arpeggios reiterating the octave A from earlier statements of the tune. On the third ascent, the violinist stays in the stratosphere, wandering around "A" with chromatic neighbor tone flourishes, and on the third reiteration of the high A, she leaps a fourth above this central pitch and finally decides to wander back to earth to conclude the "slow" movement.

Bartók utilizes seven different folk tunes in the *friss* movement. Not all the tunes have names, but are very distinctive in terms of character, range, and rhythmic vitality. Rather than beginning with a softer, simpler melody, Bartók jumps into a more disjunct, marcato theme with mordents on most strong beats. The second half of the tune is more fluid, featuring undulating neighbor tones around "F" with quick interruptions of the marcato motive. Bartók then restates the tune with both double stops and mordents, continuing to build momentum and intensity through an accelerando that brings the music to a brief repose before the next theme. The key signature is particularly interesting here, featuring F# and G# but omitting the C# typically included in the sequential order of sharps. The first measure of the theme is slightly more lyrical but features a jarring tritone and *dűvő* double stops, which are immediately followed by chords

[164] Min Hwa Kim, "Performance Guide to Selected Violin Works of Béla Bartók," 9.

and dissonances in the violin and piano that emphasize the verticality of the duple meter. After this *pesante* statement, the tune is presented in a higher and lighter register, featuring playful rhythms with fewer chords, more staccato articulations, and the occasional mordent and harmonic. Afterwards, Bartók introduces a new tune amongst a sea of open string undulations, which eventually traverses to the lower strings of the instrument. This was especially challenging with the "trust" leaps to higher G string notes, marked with the Roman numeral IV in the score. As the music finds another moment to catch its breath, we find ourselves in a new tune and modality centered on B. The violin plays double stops mimicking the *dűvő* rhythm while the piano plays *esztam* offbeats.

At rehearsal 20, we first hear the tune that will carry us to the climax of the piece (Figure 25). This melody is hearty and jolly, decorated with octaves, grace notes, and chromatic neighbor tones.
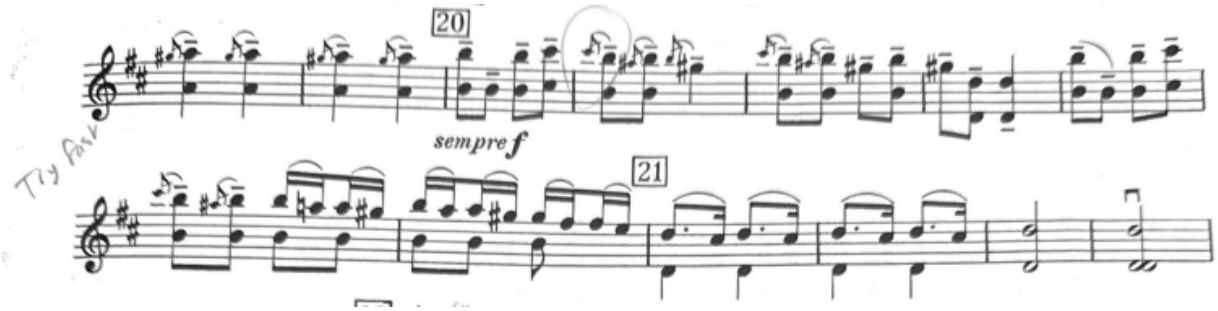


Figure 25. Frequently referenced melody in the *friss* section of Bartók's *Second Rhapsody*.[165]

The next segment of the tune features dotted rhythms and drones with open strings, adding to the folk-like qualities of the music. A new playful theme is then introduced but quickly gives way to persistent drones and grace notes that sound like note "hiccups." Immediately after this, we are introduced to yet another sweet melody, but then the pianist grows impatient and

[165] Ibid., 7.

brings back the grace note-octave drones. The violin has no other option but to reiterate the tune from 20 in shrill octaves on the A and E strings. To maintain the singing quality of the melody, one must play this with beautiful bows and a calm (yet rhythmic!) shifting mechanism, with glissandi being more than appropriate to assist with transportation.

As the music climbs down from its high, we are introduced to a scherzando theme with playful staccato piano accompaniment and trills, the occasional left hand pizzicato in the violin, and cute glissandi to high harmonics on the E string. Eventually, the violinist gets "stuck" on motivic materials from this theme and eventually breaks free, descending to the depths of the instrument and eventually gaining momentum to move to the next tune, full of chromatic inflections and rhythmic groupings perhaps heard in swineherd dances (Figure 26). Bartók then inserts a vertically dense 8-bar tune loaded with hefty double stop writing. The violinist soon after becomes a guitarist, strumming thematic chords to her heart's content while the piano hints towards the next chromatically infectious fiddle tune.
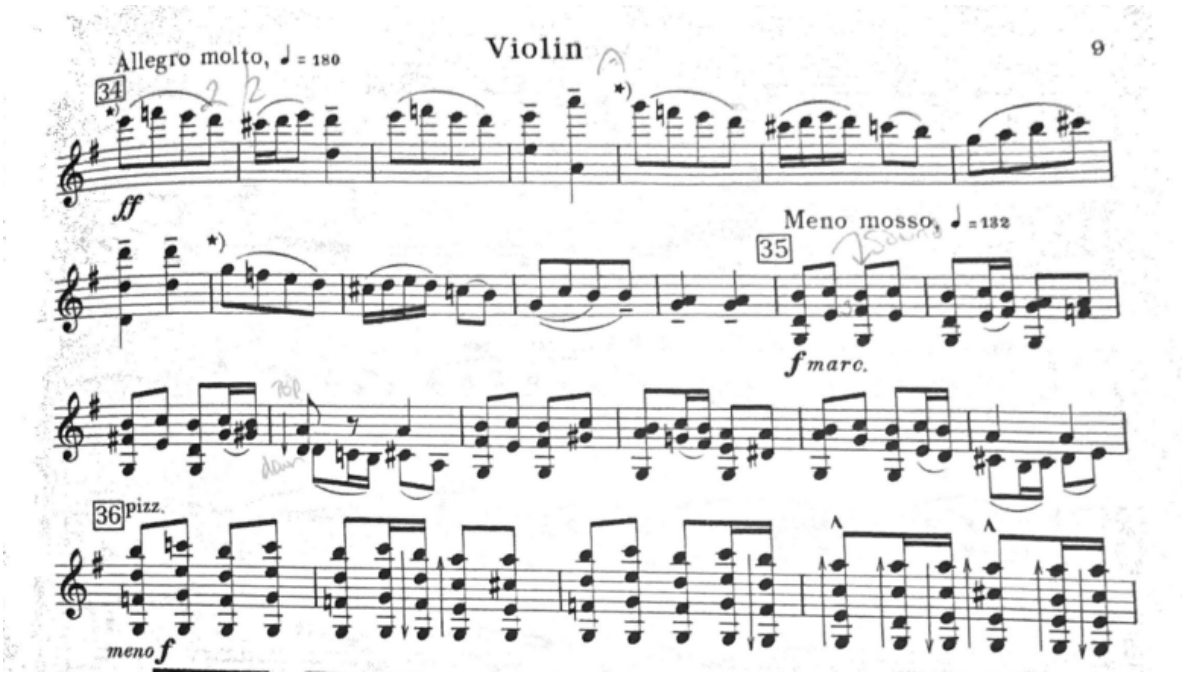


Figure 26. Theme (34) featuring rhythms emblematic of a swineherd's dance in Bartók's *Second Rhapsody*.[166]

The violinist soon spins out of control from the high to low end of the instrument, falling in a cascade of sixteenths to a low Bb before catching her breath and ascending to mark the start of the final folk tune. This hefty *verbunkos*-laden melody is short-lived, giving way to a desire to accelerate to the end of the piece in a frenzy of chromaticism and flying sixteenths. However, Bartók makes one last attempt to state the theme in a higher register with strong down beats in the piano part, but soon enough the violinist runs away with sixteenths, which eventually blossom into long trills in different octaves. At the end, the soloist is unsure of what to do after that immense musical roller coaster, so she lingers on the trill and ponders before a brief yet surprising ascent to the final note.

Of all the pieces on this recital, this work posed the most technical challenges, due to the expansive chords and drones Bartók wrote, the wide melodic range he navigated as he shifted

[166] Ibid., 9.

from one melody to the next, and the rhythmic energy that permeates each section despite the variations in tempo. This piece forced me to focus on the importance of the singing melody, no matter the increasing complexity and density of the score over time. Through this piece, I also gained a better understanding of how Bartók uses bowings to articulate beat patterns, gestures, and energy changes across the music. Once my bow arm figured out the bowing patterns and choreography and I started to grasp the music without bar lines, the musical narrative began to make more sense.

Chapter 5: Program #2 - Klezmer and Jewish Folk Focus

Chadash – Klezmer Renewal

Zoe Kushubar, Violin / Dr. Jessica McKee, Piano
Yuanju Liu, Violin / Jessica Albrecht, Cello

Cadenza and Fantasy from *Fiddler on the Roof* — John Williams (b. 1932)

"Bay di Toyern fun Beys Hamikdosh"
Abe Schwartz Orchestra, arr. Steven Greenman (b. 1966)

"Skotshne #40"
Trans. Moshe Beregovski (1892-1961), arr S. Greenman

Hebrew Melody, Op. 33 — Joseph Achron (1886–1943)

Sonata in G Minor for Solo Violin — Paul Ben-Haim (1897–1984)
- II. Lento y sotto voce
- III. Molto allegro

Hebrew Rhapsody — Lazare Saminsky (1882–1959)

Two Violin Pieces, Op. 20 — Joel Engel (1868–1927)
- I. Chabader nigun
- II. Freylekhs

Fantastischer Tanz über ein Hebräisches Thema — Solomon Rosowsky (1878–1962)

Selecting the Repertoire

When I was first trying to find repertoire for this program, the search phrase "klezmer-inspired violin repertoire" yielded very few results aside from different *Suites Hebraique*, Bloch's *Baal Shem*, and klezmer pieces for clarinet. Paul Schoenfeld has some great chamber repertoire featuring the clarinet, but I was hoping to focus on violin repertoire. I also was

conflicted on what really constituted klezmer music versus music instilled with the improvisatory and spontaneous spirit of klezmer performances. From my experience playing pieces from Moisei Beregovski's *Collection of Jewish Instrumental Folk Musi*c, I thought that was a good place to start with the legitimate folk tunes. I owe all my gratitude to Dr. Courtney LeBauer, my undergraduate violin professor, for introducing me to this collection of repertoire. Aside from being raised Jewish, she attended klezmer workshops in both Europe and the United States, one of which was led by Steven Greenman, a violin professor at Case Western University. I reached out to him for suggestions on classical repertoire with klezmer/Jewish musical influences, and he recommended I look at composers from the Society for Jewish Folk Music, which was founded in 1908 at the St. Petersburg Conservatory in Russia. After doing some research, I found a plethora of Hebrew rhapsodies and melodies, including a fantastic violin/cello/piano trio by Solomon Rosowsky. Since klezmer is most often played by a larger ensemble for weddings and other festivities, I thought it would be fitting to close the program with chamber music.

Cadenza and Fantasy from *Fiddler on the Roof* John Williams (b. 1932)

I first played this piece back in 2022 for a concert at a retirement community in Summerville, SC. Much like when I first discovered Sarasate's *Zigeunerweisen* and Kholodenko's *Fantazye* for solo violin, I was immediately drawn by the music's unique sound world - the glissandi, the grace notes and trills, the vivacious dance rhythms, the augmented intervals, the yearning melodies, and the slow-to-fast energy narrative within the music. I knew I wanted to play it again in the future and decided it would be a fun piece to kickstart my recital and the following discussion on klezmer music. I wonder if Jerry Bock's *Fiddler on the Roof* was one of the ways that non-Jewish people were introduced to klezmer through popular culture. A few years later, American film composer John Williams went on to adapt Bock's score for the

movie adaptation in 1971, and he added a violin cadenza for Issac Stern to perform at the start of the film. While Williams was already familiar with Jewish musical idioms as a composer with Jewish mentors, he took a trip to a music department in Jerusalem to immerse himself in the sound world before taking on the project. [167]

After an opening iteration of "Tradition" in the piano accompaniment, the violin jumps into a wandering, heartfelt cadenza that harkens to the improvisatory traditions of brilliant klezmer players. Williams writes a variety of sighing gestures with augmented seconds, repeated motives with ample room for rubato and acceleration, rapid ascents and descents, and chords that lead to a confident ascent to C, marking the end of the cadenza and an affirmation of the *freygish* mode in C. As the piece continues, the piano and violin state incipits from different songs throughout the film, eventually increasing in emotional intensity and speed to an exciting finish that sets the stage for the events in the film. While only three to four minutes long, this "Prelude" to *Fiddler on the Roof* is full of character and wonder, amplified by emblematic elements of the klezmer style.

Bay di Toyern fun Beys Hamikdosh Abe Schwartz Orchestra, arr. Steven Greenman (b. 1966)

This piece and the skotshne are two authentic klezmer tunes that were arranged as violin duets by Professor Steven Greenman. I owe my gratitude to my undergraduate mentor, Courtney LeBauer, for sharing these duets with me back in 2024, where we played them together in Germany.

"*Bay di Toyern fun Beys Hamikdosh*" translates roughly to "At the gates of the Temple of Jerusalem," which was first performed by the Abe Schwartz Orchestra. Abe Schwartz was a

[167] "Fiddler on the Roof," The Legacy of John Williams, accessed February 19, 2026, https://thelegacyofjohnwilliams.com/works/films/fiddler-on-the-roof/.

Romanian violinist who immigrated to the United States and played a large role in popularizing American klezmer in the 20th century.[168] He made many "big band" recordings in the early 1900s, and many of his scores are available on the Library of Congress's website.[169][170]

Professor Steven Greenman from Case Western University arranged this tune using the D *freygish* scale. The notes of the D *freygish* scale are D, Eb, F#, G, A, Bb, C, D. The first violin lays claim to the melody whereas the second accompaniment provides rhythmic duple accompaniment in double stops that accentuate the different harmonies. In terms of Western harmony, the first section sounds like it begins in G minor, but the tonal foundation is centered around D, as the section finishes on a D major chord and the second "slower" section begins and ends on D. Compared to the *skotshne* (which will be discussed in the next section), this tune has more "sitting notes" and mordents in the opening section, whereas the *skotshne* has more continuous rhythmic motion and flow as the violin explores the scalar qualities of the melody.

My colleague Yuanju and I primarily experimented with rhythmic flexibility and harmonic timbre in our performance to try and cultivate a more spontaneous interpretation of the tune. In terms of the rhythm, we first identified possibilities for flexible rhythmic iterations and rubato. For us, this meant taking varying amounts of time into cadences, accelerating repeated notes, emphasizing different repetitions on repeats, and letting sixteenth note passages flow more quickly over a longer phrase. In most classical repertoire, repeated pitches or rhythms like sixteenth notes should remain within the realm of the pulse but should never sound even or

[168] Neil Levin, "Abe Schwartz," *Milken Archive of Jewish Music*, accessed February 10, 2026, https://www.milkenarchive.org/artists/view/abe-schwartz.

[169] Abe Schwartz's Orchestra, "By di thoiern fun Beis Hamikdosh (New York: Columbia Records E4787, 1920, 78 rpm audio recording), https://search.library.wisc.edu/digital/AH5JY7SWICMCWW8K/A4BZH55QXEHECV8L#dci-item-details.

[170] Library of Congress, "Yiddish American Popular Sheet Music," accessed February 18, 2026, https://www.loc.gov/collections/yiddish-american-popular-sheet-music/?fa=contributor:schwartz,+abe.

stagnant. In klezmer music, this is even more true; the notes and rhythms are merely the vessels for musical gesture and momentum. Depending on the region where a klezmer tune is played, musicians will approach the rubato differently. According to Cookie Segelstein, a klezmer specialist trained in the Ukrainian tradition, she tends to anticipate beats a bit more often above the harmony changes.[171] However, the music must always remain grounded in the larger rhythmic pulse.

In terms of sound, I encouraged my violin partner to play with more "rawness" in her sound. We are trained as classical musicians to always sing with our bows, no matter where we are in the bow or how aggressive the music becomes. While I still wanted her double stops to resonate in the hall, I felt she could have more gritty articulation, less sustain on long notes, and less vibrato. This completely changed the character of the bassline, which helped inspire me to make my own spontaneous decisions about timbre, pacing, and the "crunch" of my trills and bowing articulation. It is challenging to play spontaneously in a new performance style without ample planning, but it was worth the risk!

Skotshne #40 *Trans. Moshe Beregovski (1892-1961), arr S. Greenman*

"*Skotshne #40*" was originally transcribed by Moisei Beregovski and is included in his collection, *Jewish Instrumental Folk Music*. Moisei Beregovski was one of the most significant Ukrainian folklorists, comparable to Bartók in the realm of Jewish folk music collection and transcription, especially in eastern Europe. His recording projects primarily took place across

[171] Go Fiddle Go, "Masterclass: Cookie Segelstein (Klezmer – Ukraine)," Go Fiddle Go, June 18, 2019, Youtube video, 38:44, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GlAZQbQRRks.

Ukraine from 1929 to 1947.[172] He collected over two thousand pieces, many of which were unknown until after World War II, where many findings were kept securely in Kiev. Beregovski also spoke on the theoretical and structural aspects of the music he collected, but he was limited in some ways due to the ideological restraints of Stalin-era Russia. As a result, he could not comment on many of the religious aspects of Jewish musical idioms, but what he contributed to the field of Jewish folk research is still tantamount in terms of the older Eastern European styles.[173]

Skotshne #40 is emblematic of the upbeat *skotshne* dance form. The term has Czech origins and refers to dances that are often longer and more virtuosic, sometimes meant for listening. It is often confused with a *freylekhs*, which is another joyful dance, but it is a general term used to refer to group circle dances.[174]

This *skotshne* duet sounds like it is in A minor, and it does not feature augmented seconds as extensively as other klezmer music I have encountered. However, it features many of the traditional features- the *krekhts*, mordents and trills, and rhapsodic mini-cadenzas for the first violin. It starts with an upbeat section in the minor mode, transitions to a slower, sweeter section in the relative major, and returns to solidify the tune in a minor modality. Klezmer is different from other folk traditions in that many of the pieces are in minor keys or modalities. Despite lacking the augmented second, we feel the moments of pain and sorrow in the music along with the moments of fleeting joy, grace, and laughter.

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[172] Lyudmila Sholokhova, "Beregovskii, Moisei Iakovlevich," *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Euope*, accessed March 24, 2026, https://encyclopedia.yivo.org/article/2202.

[173] Ibid.

[174] Walter Zev Feldman, "Skotshne and Freylekhs" in *Klezmer: Music, History, and Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), abstract, https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190244514.003.0014.

Arnold Schoenberg referred to Joseph Achron as one of the most underestimated of modern composers.[175] Throughout his life, Achron developed a musical tongue for a variety of styles ranging from Romanticism to French Impressionism and Russian nationalism. At the core of his musical being, however, was his love and appreciation of Jewish music. He felt new Hebrew music could be composed "by gradual assimilation" to existing traditions of Hebrew song and dance, despite the reality of the growing Jewish diaspora across the world.[176] Certain scholars feared the music would be less pure or authentic because of geographical separation amongst Jewish communities and the potential for hybridization with non-Jewish musics, but Achron disagreed, believing "interinfluences are not only unavoidable but desirable… such purity does not and cannot exist…"[177]

Joseph Achron was born in a town in present-day Lithuania. He studied violin with Leopold Auer and composition with Anatoly Lyadov in St. Petersburg, During his time there, he became one of the members of the Society for Jewish Folk Music three years after its founding in 1908 with the support of Rimsky-Korsakov. This society of students and composers had a greater desire to create a new Jewish art music rather than diving deep into Jewish ethnomusicological research. However, certain members collected Jewish folk music across different regions of the Russian Empire to use in their works.[178]

[175]Neil W. Levin, "About the Composer," liner notes for Joseph Achron, Achron, Elmar Oliveira, Joseph Silverstein, Gerard Schwarz, Barcelona Symphony/National Orchestra Of Catalonia, Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, recorded 1998–2000, Milken Archive of American Jewish Music, accessed February 10, 2026, https://www.milkenarchive.org/assets/CD-Liner-Notes/Achron-Liner-Notes-9408.pdf, 6.

[176] Ibid., 5.

[177] Ibid.

[178] Ibid., 4.

Hebrew Melody was the first piece Achron wrote after joining the organization in 1911. Scholars claim this melody is based on a tune he heard at a synagogue in Warsaw. Achron was no stranger to liturgical music, as his father was a cantor himself, and it was his father to whom he dedicated this piece.[179] The original tune is printed at the top of the Fischer edition I used for my recital, which is based on Achron's transcription of the melody. He treats it like a textless nigun, where the violinist attempts to reach a higher unity with God through a spiritually powerful exploration of melody.[180]

The tempo/character marking states to play the theme "with tranquil and mournful expression." The piano creates an introduction by stating the last six measures of the tune, which features a chromatic descending line highlighting G–D#–A. This is emblematic of the Ukrainian Dorian scale, which has a raised fourth: A, B, C, D#, E, F, G, A. The violin then begins the melody, which follows an eight-bar form, AABB. It proceeds solemnly in triple meter with repeated pitches in units of four, perhaps harkening to cantorial singing on a repeated pitch. It could also potentially refer to the limited range of the Jewish ram horn known as the shofar, which is used on High Holidays.[181] The melody is centered around a falling fifth from E to A (V–i). The first eight bars finish on a half cadence on "E," and the next eight bars resolve to the tonic of A. Despite the harmonic changes in the first statement, the piano continues to pedal the "A" in the lowest octave for an eerie drone effect. Along with the drone, the melody is stated again an octave higher with more whimsical, dreamy piano accompaniment. While the melody is simple in terms of pitch contour, one can utilize vibrato, glissandi, and changes in bow speed and articulation to "utter" the repeated pitches in a narrative manner. The second half of the melody

[179] Ibid., 5.
[180] Yaakov Mazor, "Hasidism: Music."
[181] Helen Deeming, "Sounding the Shofar," *Early Music* 44, no. 4 (November 2016): 642, https://doi.org/10.1093/em/caw100.

(BB) is more fluid and hopeful, ascending a fifth from A to E twice before reaching for the G and descending through an augmented second back down to A. It follows a similar cadential structure, reaching a half cadence on E before finally resolving to A.

The middle section is marked "in slightly accelerated an agitated tempo." In addition to being transposed up a third to C, the violin and piano engage in more rhythmically active dialogue, passing the moving notes between measures. The violinist continues to build momentum through faster rhythms and bubbling trills, eventually blossoming into a full-blown cadenza that reaches a high Ab before cascading down in a mirage of arpeggios. After this moment of *devekut* (spiritual union with God), the violinist gradually pulls back from these spiritual heights, singing the melody one last time in a humble exchange with the piano. Achron writes this final section in the higher third octave *con sordino*, interspersed with brief note cascades and twinkling trills. The piece ends with the violin playing the introductory material alone on the G string, creating an atmosphere of complete vulnerability that is gently concluded with the piano's final chord.

Sonata in G Minor for Solo Violin *Paul Ben-Haim (1897–1984)*

Pianist, composer, and conductor Paul Frankenburger was born in Munich and worked as an assistant opera conductor and eventually kapellmeister for the Augsburg Opera in 1924. Several years later, he was fired by his Nazi director and moved to Palestine following the rise of Nazi power. Upon moving to in British Palestine along with forty or so refugee composers, he changed his last name to Ben-Haim, which means "son of Haim."[182] These composers planned to

[182] "The Composers: Paul Ben-Haim," composer biography for conference proceedings, *Musical Dialogues of East and West*: *JMI Jewish Culture Day on the South Bank,* November 28, 2004, South Bank Centre, London, 31, https://www.jmi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Musical-Dialogues-of-East-and-West-Nov-2004.pdf.

create a musical idiom devoted to Jewish identity while encompassing influences from both the East and West. Ben-Haim's musical idol was J.S. Bach, yet his music also features influences from French composers like Debussy and Germanic composers like Strauss and Mahler.[183] After a "dead" period in terms of composing, Paul met violin superstar Yehudi Menuhin, who commissioned him to write a sonata. Within three days, the *Sonata in G Minor for Solo Violin* was finished in 1951.[184]

The second movement, "*Lento e sotto voce*" ("slowly and under voice") is the heart and soul of this piece. Ben-Haim instructs the violinist to play with a mute *senza colore*, yet the musical writing is very moving and evocative. The preface describes this music as "an expressive fantasy of Mediterranean music."[185] I feel this movement is most reminiscent of an improvisatory tune with free rhythm, perhaps like a *doyne* or *nigun*. *Doynes* are usually meant to be listened to, often heard as table music at special occasions.[186] The tune Ben-Haim writes has a lonesome and tentative character. Through a myriad of meter changes, the tune wanders and pauses every so often, reminding me of the "breaths" in the Romani laments from Dan Sender's pieces. In the score, Ben-Haim and Yehudi Menuhin wrote in very specific fingerings and ornaments, including portamenti, glissandi, mordents, and trills. These encourage the soloist to explore different timbres in higher positions, especially on the D and A string. Most of the dynamics and character markings suggest a movement with incredible intimacy, with several instances of *pianissimo*, *echo*, *leggiero*, and on a few occasion, they use the terms *dolce* and *molto espressivo e cantabile*. To me, these markings conflict a bit with the *senza colore* marking at the beginning, but perhaps Ben-Haim intended the expression to be more introspective and

[183]Ibid., 31–32.
[184] Ibid., 7.
[185] Paul Ben-Haim, *Sonata in G for Violin Solo* (Tel Aviv: Israel Music Institute, 2001), score preface.
[186] Moshe Beregovski, *Jewish Instrumental Folk Music*, 11.

subtle rather than outwardly emotional. A very challenging yet touching movement, I look forward to studying it again to explore the delicate colors this fantasy offers.

The third movement jolts the listener awake with a brightly contrasting tempo and atmosphere. The dance-like first theme features agogic syncopations and leaps decorated with written-out mordents. The 2-bar melodic motive spirals to greater heights with each agogic leap, flowing all the way up the different strings as the theme returns in each section of the rondo form. After the first ascent to the stratosphere of the E string, a new motive emerges. Marked *ritenuto e pesante*, this theme begins on beat four and moves through three pairs of two-note "sighs," although some ascend while others descend. It features large chromatic leaps down the G string and interspersed double stops of fourths and fifths. After the pesante theme concludes, we are jutted back to the dance theme on the A and E strings, reawakening the agogic groove. Some scholars say this movement's rhythms exemplify those found in a hora, which is a celebratory dance performed at Jewish wedding receptions.

The next emotional outburst takes us to the depths of the violin register, and the musical floor drops from beneath us, revealing a quiet, yet haunting melody inflected with syncopated pizzicati and slithering chromaticism. Ben-Haim eventually gives the tune a lightly polyphonic treatment as the melody climbs across the strings again. Once more, we are thrown into a higher transposition of the dance melody, which delves into a rhapsodic episode with dramatic glissandi to harmonics and emphatic chords on downbeats. We hear the *pesante* theme a third time; Ben-Haim writes grace notes to lead into the second chord of each sigh and utilizes intervals of fifths, fourths, and thirds, respectively. This theme is short-lived, rebuilding momentum to lead us to the climax of the movement: an insistent restatement of the spooky syncopated theme. The theme is now heavy and forceful, replacing the pizzicati with octaves and full chords on the third

beat of each measure. Afterwards, the music texture is reduced as the violin gets "stuck" on the syncopated rhythm in a slow evaporative descent. From this newfound silence, we soon hear the rondo dance theme for a final statement before Ben-Haim brings out full technical fireworks; he writes ascending spiccato sixteenth notes which are then doubled at the fifth, much like Bartók uses in his violin repertoire. After this momentous climb, Ben-Haim closes out the movement with chromatically dense chords in a much slower tempo, leaving no doubt that his sonata's dance has come to an end.

Hebrew Rhapsody — *Lazare Saminsky (1882–1959)*

Lazare Saminsky was born in modern-day Ukraine into a family with ancestral ties to Chasidic rabbis and scholars. He was an early and outspoken member of the Society for Jewish Folk Music, and he also led the League of Composers for twenty years beginning in 1923. He also led choral activities at the Temple Eman-uel for over thirty years, in addition to conducting, writing, and lecturing on modern music.[187]

In addition to Jewish folk influences, his music bears German, French and especially Russian elements, as he studied with such figures as Rimsky-Korsakov, Liadov, and conductor Tcherepnin. He was a collector of folk music like several other members of the society, and he prioritized collections from regions in Armenia and Georgia. Regarding his use of Jewish folk idioms, he much preferred synagogue chant and ancient liturgical song instead of popular Yiddish and Chasidic songs.[188] He believed the latter to be modern, inauthentic and laden with outside influences of "Oriental" origin. Other composers, like Joel Engel and Ernest Bloch were

[187] Neil Levin, "Lazare Saminsky," *Milken Archive*, accessed February 3, 2026, https://www.milkenarchive.org/artists/view/lazare-saminsky.

[188] Neil Levin, "Joel Engel," program notes for *Yiddish and Hebrew Song in the Weimar Republic*, performed May 7, 2024, Carnegie Hall, accessed February 10, 2026, 9–10, /https://www.yivo.org/cimages/2024-05-07_program_notes_web.pdf.

more open to receiving and learning about Yiddish folk songs, Chasidic songs, and non-sacred sources of Jewish music. Bloch did not get terribly involved in this debate about what constitutes legitimate Jewish music, but Engel and Saminsky had their literary battles over the issue, with Saminsky being the more stubborn and blunt.[189]

Saminsky wrote his *Hebrew Rhapsody* in 1911. The first section is marked "*Drammatico, ma tranquillo*;" the music recalls the style of chanting and cantillation heard in synagogues.[190] The repeated leaps of fifths and thirds in the beginning also remind me of the shofar horn calls used for High Holidays in Judaism. Under these leaps, the left hand of the piano plays a lamenting chromatic descent, ultimately ending in a cadence that solidifies the Phrygian mode, but not quite the *freygish* due to the lack of a G#. The violin then states the full melody the leaping figures followed by a theme with more rhythmic flexibility and momentum. When playing the repeated leaps, I experimented with the timing of my slides, the type of vibrato I used, and the pacing of my arrival into each leap to create forward-flowing shapes. As the first section builds in intensity, Saminsky continues to reference a short motive from mm. 6–7: a flowing line that rises a fourth from a written-out "turn" on the previous pitch (Figure 27).

[189] Joshua S. Walden, "'An Essential Expression of the People': Interpretations of Hasidic Song in the Composition and Performance History of Ernest Bloch's Baal Shem," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 65, no. 3 (Fall 2012): 790, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/jams.2012.65.3.777.

[190] Barry D. Goldsmith, "A style analysis of the piano compositions and two works for violin and piano by Lazare Saminsky (DMA diss., Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 1987), 39, https://www.proquest.com/docview/303637871?parentSessionId=c0dW6Ej0eEL6Llj0lg%2BHkEDLFf06mKmlTY5dw538SWU%3D&pq-origsite=primo&accountid=14696&sourcetype=Dissertations%20&%20Theses.
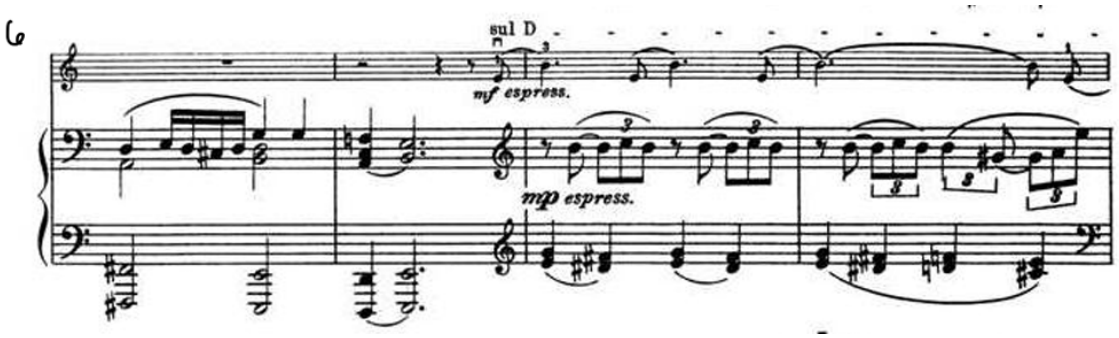


Figure 27. Motive frequently referenced in Saminsky's *Hebrew Rhapsody* featuring a written out "turn" in mm. 6–7.[191]

In addition to this "swooping" motive, Saminsky writes more elaborate piano accompaniment with cascading arpeggios in the left hand. The violin and piano trade off the swooping theme until the violinist takes a moment for a small yet passionate cadenza. After this dramatic moment, the pianist plays gently unsettling augmented sixth chords under lolling octave leaps, above which the violin plays a more rhythmically free, chromatic melody inspired by previous material.[192] The piano is then left to herself, playing the sweeping theme with more chromatic inflections and energy until the energy dissipates, leading to a resolution on an F major chord which re-emphasizes the Phrygian modality of the music (Figure 28).
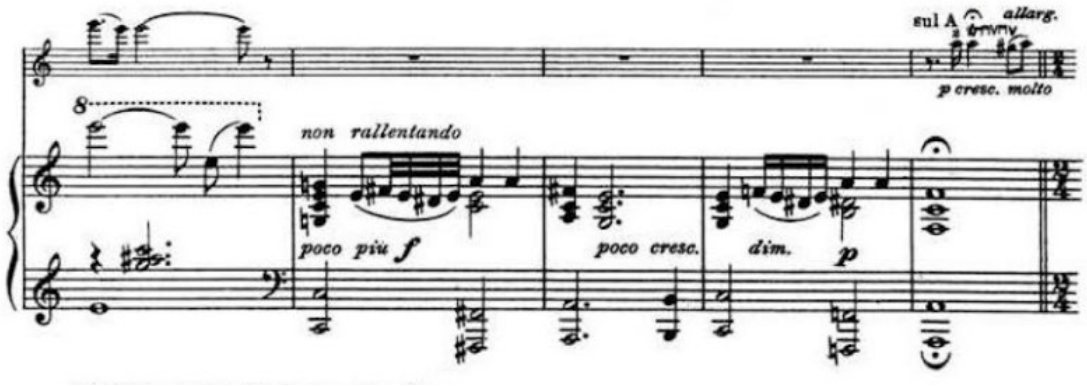


Figure 28. Confirmation of Phrygian modality in the first section of Saminsky's *Hebrew Rhapsody*, mm. 34–37.[193]

[191] Lazare Saminsky, *Hebrew Rhapsody for Violin and Piano, Op. 3, No. 2* (New York: Carl Fischer, 1924), 1.
[192] Barry D. Goldsmith, 41.
[193] Saminsky, *Hebrew Rhapsody for Violin and Piano*, 3.

The second section is based on a lively folk dance which bears many similarities to the famous Hava Nagila dance. Both dances are in duple meter, utilize the Ahavah Rabbah (or *freygish* scale), and revolve around agogic accents.[194] The eight-bar melody highlights the following pitches: E, F, G#, A, and B. After the melody is stated a second time, the piano states an altered version of it while the violin plays an outgoing, chord-heavy melody that seems more comfortable in the key of A minor. After this section, the main dance melody undergoes a series of modal, rhythmic, and textural transformations, the most memorable featuring the violin alternating between sustained trills, left hand pizzicato, and a slithering sixteenth descent over the span of two bars. Saminsky sequences this material to higher octaves until we reach the *pesante, feroce* passage (Figure 29).

[194] Goldsmith, 44.
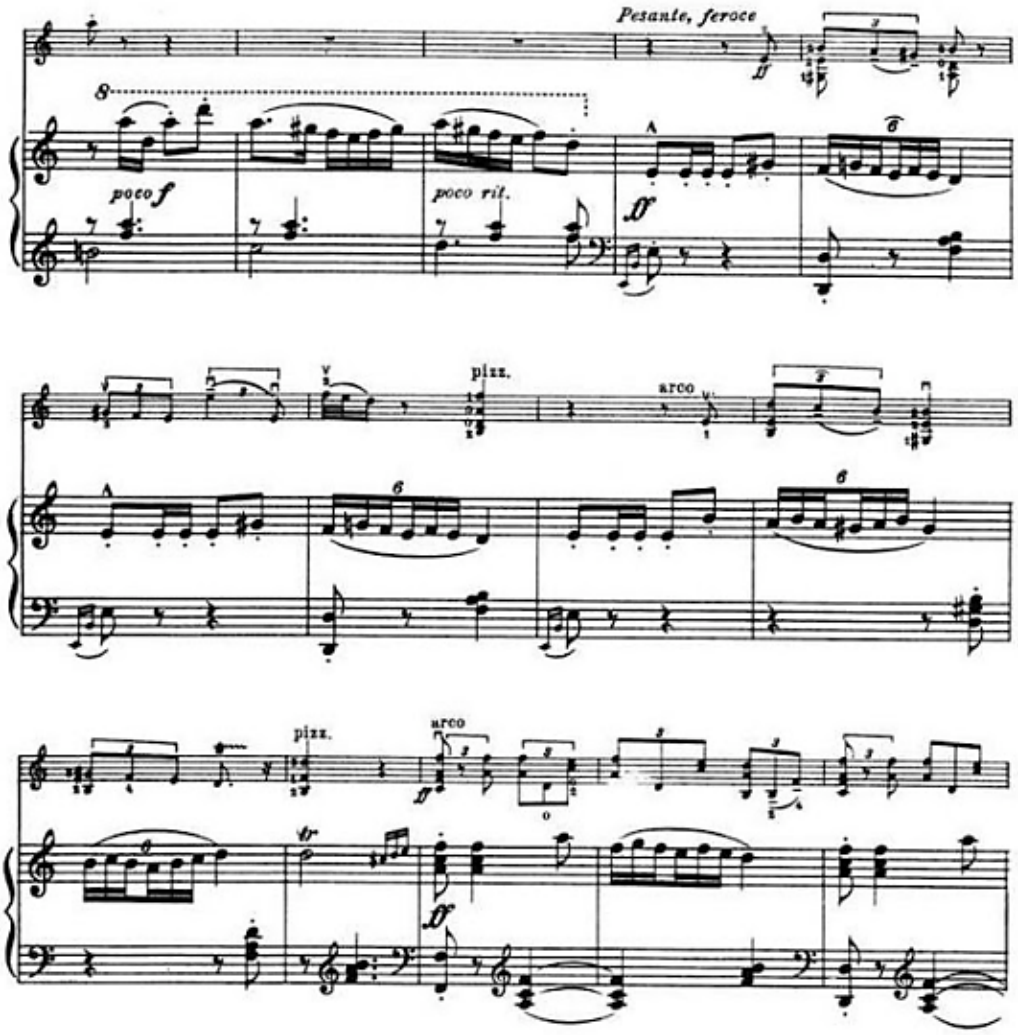


Figure 29. *Pesante, feroce* passage in Saminsky's *Hebrew Rhapsody*.[195]

Here, the piano states a rhythmic variation of the main theme hybridized with the slithering violin filigree. The violin chimes in with dignified triplets, chords, brief flourishes, and marked pizzicati on second beats. In the next section, the music grows more agitated and restless. The violin plays the dance theme in a slew of sixteenths while the piano marks the melody with agogic ornaments and alternating E-F pedals. The violin continues to accelerate and reprise flourishing sixteenth figures until the duo crashes into a half diminished seventh chord. From this

[195] Saminsky, *Hebrew Rhapsody*, 6.

crash, the violinist picks herself back up to expressively state the opening themes from the first section, this time entirely on the D string. With the G# in the fifth bar, it sounds like we are in the Ukrainian Dorian mode centered on D.[196] This section is marked *Piu lento assai (quasi cadenza, a piacere)* giving the violinist ample opportunity to sing expressively through the interwoven duplet and triplet rhythms. At the end of the cadenza, G natural returns, bringing the cadence back to the Dorian mode, but only briefly, as a surprise tempo change brings back the vivacious sixteenth-note melody in E *freygish* and accelerates the dance until the duet clamors to the *Vivacissimo* ending with a punctuated chord in both the violin and piano.

Two Violin Pieces, Op. 20 *Joel Engel (1868–1927)*

Joel Engel, another member of the Society for Jewish Folk Music, is considered by many scholars to be the father of modern Jewish music. He was more open-minded when it came to researching and defining Jewish music, including Yiddish theater, art song, popular songs, etc. Unlike his colleague Lazare Saminsky, he believed secular and sacred Jewish music, both old and new with could cohabitate and share a role in creating new modern music with an inherently Jewish spirit of expression through the use of spontaneous gestures, vocal mimicry and inflections, and klezmer modalities.[197]

Born in modern-day Ukraine outside the Pale of Settlement, Engel first pursued a law degree in Kharkov, but soon after proceeded to take music lessons. In a serendipitous manner, he happened to meet Tchaikovsky in Kharkov who took note of his musical prospects and urged him to apply to study in Moscow. He was soon accepted into the conservatory for composition

[196] Ibid., 50.

[197] Neil Levin, "Joel Engel," program notes for *Yiddish and Hebrew Song in the Weimar Republic*, performed May 7, 2024, Carnegie Hall, accessed February 10, 2026, 7-9, /https://www.yivo.org/cimages/2024-05-07_program_notes_web.pdf.

studies with Sergei Taneyev and Nikolai Kashkin.[198] After his move to Moscow, he joined a cohort of Jewish students who wanted to research and promote the study of Yiddish culture and language, including music. Coupled with the support of his conservatory mentors, he became more interested in musical analysis, musicology, and the idea of preserving and collecting Yiddish folk songs in the Russian empire. From 1911–1914, he, Saminsky, and Sussman Kisselgof led the charge to collect ethnomusicological materials across the Pale of Settlement, the territory where Jews were allowed to live within the Russian empire.[199] Over the years in the Soviet Union, he would present lectures and recitals on Jewish folk music, arguing that the "folk spirit" was essential for something to be considered Jewish folk music, even if the influences were not solely biblical in origin. In his response to a fiery article by Saminsky regarding outside cultural influences "tainting" Jewish music, Engel stated: Everything which the Jewish song gathers from its neighbors it changes to its own manner… the spirit of the people is expressed."[200] He would eventually live in Berlin for two years and in Tel Aviv (Mandatory Palestine) after 1924, where he would continue his work as a conductor, composer, educator, performer, and analyst until his death. He would just miss the arrival of the composers like Ben-Haim who emigrated to the territory to help create a modern style of classical Israeli music.[201]

Engel only wrote two works for violin and piano. His *Two Violin Pieces, Op. 20, No. 1 and 2*, include a "*Chabader nigun*" and "*Freilechs*."[202] "*Chabad*" refers to an acronym in Lubovitscher Hasidism signifying understanding, wisdom, and knowledge.[203] As mentioned

[198] Ibid., 8.
[199] Ibid., 10–11.
[200] Ibid.
[201] Ibid., 7, 11–12.
[202] There are many alternative spellings of Yiddish terms. This Germanic spelling of "freylekhs" is found in Engel's score.
[203] "About Chabad Lubavitch," *Chabad.org*, accessed February 4, 2026, https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/36226/jewish/About-Chabad-Lubavitch.htm.

earlier, a nigun is a wordless melody meant to stir the soul in a spiritual way to achieve *devekut* with God.[204] In Engel's "*Chabader nigun*," the modality alternates between Phrygian and altered Phrygian with the presence of both F#s and F naturals. The piece is less technically flashy compared to Bloch's "*Nigun*" or Achron's *Hebrew Melody*. However, the three or so melodies Engel uses are very poignant, with a wide variety of rhythmic and melodic gestures. He also employs devices like glissandi, trills, and grace notes to add to the improvisatory feeling of the violin line.

The first melody Engel writes is noble and melancholy, following a stepwise descent with occasional leaps. The second melody has more repeated notes and spoken dotted rhythms, which gradually ascend the G string in a moment of spiritual anguish before falling again. The third melody is more eerily chromatic, a tritone falling from Ab to D in an incredibly soft and *dolce* manner. This third motive is interrupted twice by more forceful iterations of previous melodic material. The concluding melodic statement is played by both the violin and piano, whereas in the beginning, the piano only played that motive to serve as an introduction to the violin's first melody. It is worth nothing that the structure of intro-themes-intro is like that found in Achron's *Hebrew Melody*, and the final measure of the nigun is remarkably similar in structure and character to the first movement of Bloch's *Baal Shem*, the "*Vidui*."

As cited previously, *freylekhs* refers to an upbeat dance in duple meter with marked syncopations. In his "*Freilechs*", Engel utilizes a longer, more elaborate A(A)BA form to allow for more melodic development and virtuosic display. In section A, the first melody is exuberant and joyful, featuring agogic octave leaps, bubbly trills, and playful rhythms that allow the notes

[204] Yaakov Mazor, "Hasidism: Music," *The Yivo Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, accessed April 27, 2026, https://encyclopedia.yivo.org/article/2198.

to flow freely from one measure to the next. We hear many augmented seconds between Bb and C#, signaling the use of the A *freygish* mode until the ascending run in the third line that takes us to a dreamy and playful melody; that run has a C natural, signaling a moment of A natural minor. In the A section, Engel also employs fun virtuosic techniques like repeating circular down bows and ricochet bounces. The A section repeats once, granting the violinist more opportunities for ornamentation, rhythmic rubato, and cadential drama. The B section is slower and more chant-like in nature, as one can see with the repeated pitches and rhythmic patterns at the *Molto meno mosso*. As the section continues, there is more free-flowing dialogue between the violin and piano, greater harmonic deviations, more moments of musical pause and cadence, and special effects including pizzicato and ascending trills. Once this section concludes with a thoughtful fermata, the violin and piano sneak back into a faster rendition of the A section with greater rhythmic energy and more double stops added to the texture. At the end, the violinist plays bariolage chords with great fervor as the music accelerates to a fiery finish and explosive pizzicato, much like the ending of Saminsky's *Hebrew Rhapsody*.

Fantastischer Tanz über ein Hebräisches Thema — *Solomon Rosowsky (1878–1962)*

Born in Riga, the capital of what is now Latvia, Solomon Rosowsky was immersed in Jewish music from a very young age. His father was a cantor, and he was an amateur singer himself. After studying law in Kiev, he ended up studying composition in St. Petersburg with Rimsky-Korsakov, Glazunov, and Lyadov; in Leipzig, he studied conducting with Artur Nikisch.[205] With the support of Rimsky-Korsakov, he helped to found the Society for Jewish

[205] "Solomon Rosowsky," *Jewish Music Research Centre*, accessed March 30, 2026, https://jewish-music.huji.ac.il/en/content/solomon-rosowsky.

Folk Music in 1908. Through his life, he served as director/composer for many theaters including the Yiddish Art Theater and the Ohel in Palestine. He also founded the First Jewish Conservatory Music in 1920 in his hometown. As he lived in Riga, Palestine, and eventually New York, he proceeded to form different societies and taught at a number of schools to educate students on Jewish folk research and biblical cantillation practice, the latter of which was his specialty.[206]

Rosowsky wrote the *Fantastischer Tanz* for violin, cello, and piano around 1907, dedicating it to his father. The dance is based on a Hebrew folksong that likely originated in the Lubavitch Hasidic sect of Judaism.[207] He found the song thanks to the research of Sussman Kisselgof, the renowned Russian Jewish folklorist who traveled with Saminsky and Engel to the Pale of Settlement to collect folk music a few years later.[208]

In the score, Rosowsky writes the transcribed dance tune at the top of the page. Before the dance begins, however, he writes an extensive opening recitative with two miniature fantasies for the strings. Marked *recitativo a piacere*, the cellist begins with a drawn-out cadenza highly emblematic of liturgical cantillation. The cello line is adorned with repeated note figures, fermatas, ornamental embellishments like grace notes and trills, and rhapsodic passagework. After a dreamlike ascent to high harmonics, the cadenza is passed off to the violin through a brief interjection from the piano. The violinist then lays claim to her cadenza, after which the piano poses a harmonic question. The violin and cello begin to call and respond to the harmonic changes on each down beat. They first move with hesitancy, through octave "lifts" followed by "spoken" sixteenths at a fifth below and a fermata that then poses the next question. As the

[206] Ibid.
[207] "Solomon Rosowsky: Piano Trio 'Fantastisher Tants,' op. 6 (1914)," *Pro Music Hebraica*, accessed April 4, 2026, https://promusicahebraica.org/the-musical-tradition/composers/solomon-rosowsky/.
[208] Ibid.

harmonies intensify, the string motives become faster, shorter, and more emphatic, preparing us for the first iteration of the dance tune.

In hindsight, the octave lifts and spoken sixteenths were in fact the opening notes of the dance tune. Now in a lively tempo, we hear full statements of the dance tune, first in the cello, followed by the violin. The dance tune is full of the klezmer style– grace notes, mordents, rhythmic vitality and rubato, repeated pitch/rhythm motives, and augmented seconds from the *freygish* scale. The form of the dance is more elaborate: ABBC. As I made the second statement of the A tune, I took the liberty of embellishing a few of the repeated notes with *krekhts* a few measures after rehearsal 4 (Figure 30).
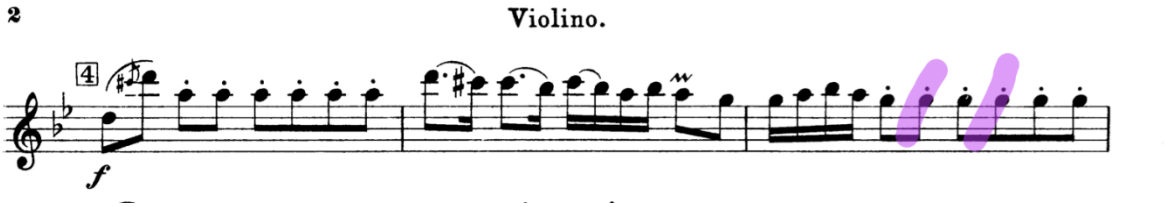


Figure 30. Highlighted portions where one can add *krekhts* on repeated notes in Rosowsky's *Fantastischer Tanz*.[209]

As the piece unfolds, a rhapsodic dialogue ensues with melodic fragments being tossed amongst the trio members. At certain musical highpoints or arrivals, the texture would change to the strings playing in octaves or unison. As the musical fragmentation intensifies, the harmonies become more complex, motivic entrances interrupt one another, dynamics change suddenly, and double stops and chords are added to the string parts to create a denser texture. This fantastical chaos culminates in a unison statement of the A melody, marked *molto resoluto*. The "back-and-forth" melody action begins again, building to the same dramatic material that led to the earlier musical pinnacle: fortissimo sixteenths in contrary motion, accelerating to an explosion before a

[209] Solomon Rosowsky, *Fantastischer Tanz über ein hebräisches Thema, Op.6* (St. Petersburg: Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik, 1914), 2, International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP).

long fermata and pause. The piano is the first to break the silence, starting the beginning of the dance theme before being interrupted by the violin ascending excitedly from G to D. After a brief pause, the piano then plays the first melodic cadence, but instead of playing an F#, she plays an F natural, which alters the modality of the tune. Without the augmented second, the music feels calmer and more absolved of its troubles and anguish. The violin and piano then switch melodic roles, with the former completing the cadence with an F natural. The cellist gets both first and final say in this music, asserting the falling cadence from F to D, which is followed by three "chimes" of pizzicato and short piano chords, signaling a peaceful resolution in G major.

As my colleague Jessica Albrecht and I worked through the string parts together, we experimented with a variety of sound factors, particularly melodic pacing and rhythmic rubato. One rhythm we altered on occasion was the figure of an eighth followed by two sixteenths and the palindromic equivalent. The sixteenths often ended in a leap, which inspired me to treat the coupling like a *krekhts*. Therefore, we would "pinch" the first sixteenth and elongate the second to create a "groaning" or "throat-catching" sound effect. We did not want the ornament to sound the same all the time, so we tried to vary them depending on the context of the phrase, the amount of bow we used, the dynamic, and the amount of dropping weight in the left-hand fingers. While this effect may have shifted the notated rhythm, I felt it appropriate and well worth it to experiment with klezmer ornaments and rubato in such a lengthy piece It was a real treat to explore this Jewish classical chamber music with my dear colleagues, Jessica Albrecht and Jessica McKee.

Chapter 6: Program #3 – Amalgam of Hungarian and Jewish Folk Influences

Amalgam
Zoe Kushubar, Violin / Mikayla Rogers, Piano
Madalyn Navis, Violin

Variations on a Hungarian Peasant Song, Op. 4 — Miklós Rózsa (1907–1995)

Violin Sonata No. 3, Op. 37 — Mieczysław Weinberg (1919–1996)

I. Allegro moderato
II. Andantino
III. Allegretto cantabile

Baal Shem (Three Pictures of Chassidic Life) — Ernest Bloch (1880–1959)

I. Vidui (Contrition)
II. Nigun (Improvisation)
III. Simchas Torah (Rejoicing)

Sonata for Two Violins, Op. 15a — Miklós Rózsa

Madalyn Navis, violin

I. Allegro risoluto
II. Lento assai
III. Vivo e giocoso

Selecting the Repertoire

For my final recital, I wanted to study repertoire that had less explicit ties to folk music yet maintained rhythmic and melodic ties to folk traditions in more abstract ways. I was confident I could find repertoire by a Hungarian composer with proper research, but I was not sure where to start in terms of repertoire with klezmer and/or cantorial influence. *Baal Shem* was the first piece that came to mind, but I was not sure to what extent Bloch borrowed directly from Jewish incantations and folk songs. Regarding Weinberg, I had never heard of him before Professor Salness mentioned him during a lesson back in 2025. That same year, I happened to serve on a search committee alongside a Ph.D. candidate who was researching Weinberg's post-

Holocaust operas. Through these chance mentions of Weinberg, I decided to learn more about him and program one of his works. He has an extensive output of violin repertoire and chamber music, so I decided on one of his sonatas for violin and piano. Regarding Miklos Rózsa, I first heard some of his viola repertoire on a recital during my graduate studies in Florida. I researched a bit about his compositional style and stumbled upon his *Variations on a Hungarian Peasant Song, Op. 4* and *Sonata for Two Violins*. There is only one dissertation from 2002 that discusses these pieces in great detail, which I will reference in my program notes. While the *Variations* is based on a specific folk melody, the compositional style has more Western/Germanic features. Additionally, the *Sonata for Two Violins* has no explicit ties to folk music, so I thought this would provide a wonderful opportunity to dive into Hungarian performance style and search for elements pertaining to folk melody and dance within a Westernized context.

Variations on a Hungarian Peasant Song, Op. 4 *Miklós Rózsa (1907–1995)*

As his autobiography title states, Hungarian American composer Miklós Rózsa led a double life as a Hollywood film composer and a composer of concert hall music. Born and raised in Budapest, he grew up hearing popular *magyar notá*, Romani music, and the music of Liszt and Jenő Hubay. However, at his family's estate north of Budapest in Nógrád county, he also heard the folk music of a group of indigenous Magyars known as the Palóc. While he was not interested in song texts like ethnomusicologists Bartók and Kodály, he wrote many of the melodies down and integrated them into his *Op. 4* and *North Hungarian Peasant Songs and Dances, Op. 5*.[210]

[210] Nancy Jane McKenney, "The Chamber Music of Miklós Rózsa" (PhD diss., University of Kentucky, Lexington, 2002), 3–4, 129–134. https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/chamber-music-miklós-rózsa/docview/305559290/se-2?accountid=14696.

He wrote *Op. 4* and *Op. 5* while he was a student in Leipzig in 1929. He was studying composition in a more Germanic style under Hermann Grabner, who was a student of Max Reger. While Rózsa did not love Reger's music, he appreciated what he learned in terms of counterpoint, as Reger was greatly inspired by the likes of Bach and Brahms. Rózsa decided to write these Hungarian folk-inspired pieces as he wanted a break from the Germanic style.[211]

Op. 4 is based on an unnamed folk song with a 2+2+2+2 phrase structure. Aside from the sixteenth notes, each phrase has seven "syllables," which would put this in category A of ancient folk songs.[212] The melody, traversing a tenth, is situated around a D minor modality with a lowered seventh (C natural). In the second and fourth bars of the tune, we hear the short-long-short limping Hungarian rhythm, yet the last eighth note does not act as a pick-up, as that is very unusual in Hungarian tunes. The piano first introduces the melody with lush romantic harmonies in a walking rubato tempo. Through the many variations, the violin and piano explore the theme in an ongoing dialogue. Like other theme and variation pieces, Rózsa alters the theme's parameters through changes in tempo, rhythm, meter, dynamic, color, and texture. In the second variation, the violin showcases the exemplary dotted and short-long rhythms of Hungarian music. In other variations, Rózsa utilizes special effects such as pizzicato, double stops and chords, harmonics, and flying up-bow staccato.

One of the most expressive variations Rózsa writes high up on the G string in a much broader tempo, showcasing the rich singing timbre of the violin. In the same variation, he writes chords preceded by grace notes on strong beats, which might mimic the sound of a guitar strumming or the initial hammerings of a cimbalom chord. It happens After this variation, the

[211] Ibid., 10, 129.
[212] Ibid., 134.

violinist gets a turn at accompanying the tune while meandering through a myriad of chromatic sixteenths, which reflects Rózsa's Germanic approach to composition.

In a later variation, Rózsa marks the tempo as *Andante quasi recitativo* which perhaps refers to the *parlando rubato* style of Hungarian folk music. The best way to determine organic pacing for this passage was to sing through the melody and pay attention to the bow groupings. Most of the violin's entrances are anticipations of the beat, but at the arrival of a George Gershwin-esque harmony and meter change at m. 174, the violin arrives on the downbeat (Figure 31).
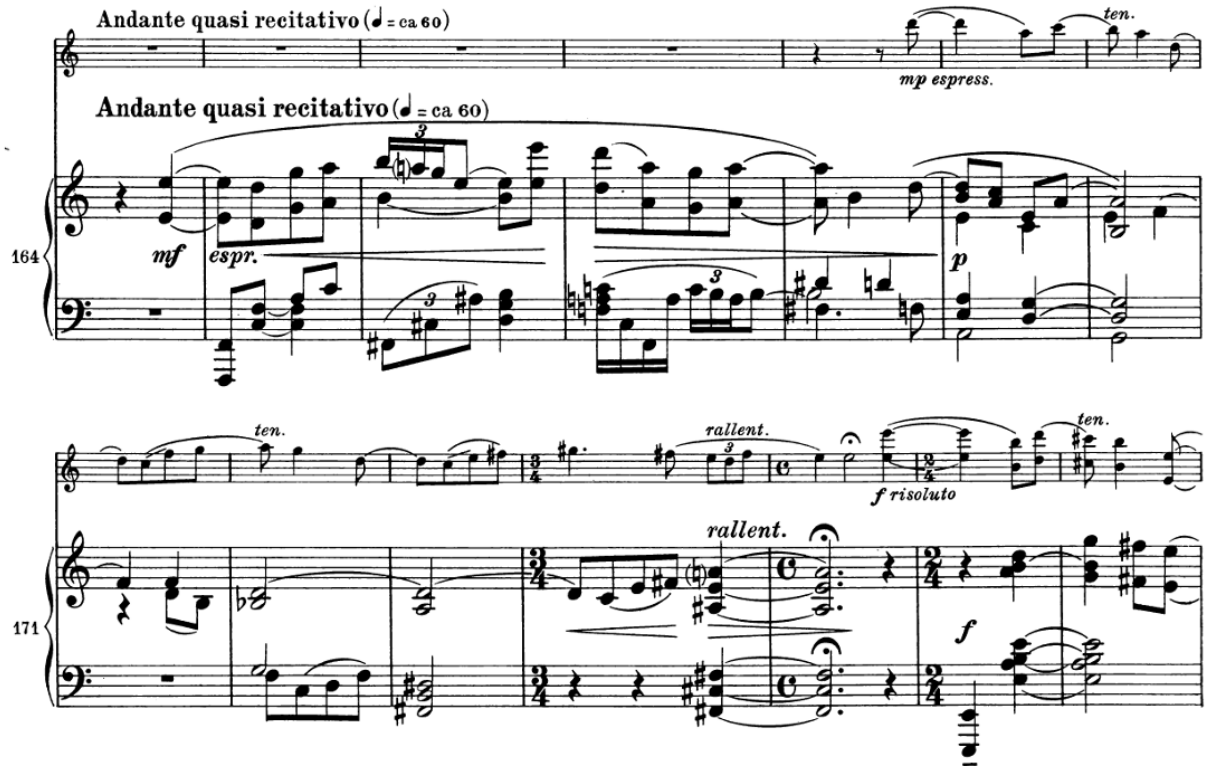


Figure 31. Harmonic and metrical changes in *Andante quasi recitativo* variation in Rózsa's *Variations on a Hungarian Peasant Song, Op. 4*.[213]

[213] Miklós Rózsa, *Variations on a Hungarian Peasant Song, Op. 4* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1930), 8, International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP).

There is only one variation written in triple meter, yet hemiolas abound in the piano part while the violinist enjoys a pizzicato rendition of the theme in E minor.[214] In older Hungarian folk music, duple and triple meters often mix to fit the number of text syllables. This brief passage is followed by a boisterous variation interspersed with rapid-fire chords and ascending sixteenths. In the second section of this variation, Rózsa writes alternating chords and harmonics, the latter of which creates an *esztam* off-beat effect due to the contrast in texture and register. This passage proved to be the most challenging in terms of bowing and left-hand coordination.

As the piece continues to gain momentum, Rózsa introduces another dance melody, first stated in the piano under a deluge of fiddling sixteenths. This melody is based on a repeated three-note motive, which the violin then takes over a few measures later. The piece reaches a climax with this new melody, but Rózsa adapts it to a more expansive and dignified tempo. At m. 335, Rózsa instructs the violinist to play the melody on the G string like a trumpet (*quasi tromba*), which requires fuller, longer bow strokes and less vibrato (Figure 32).
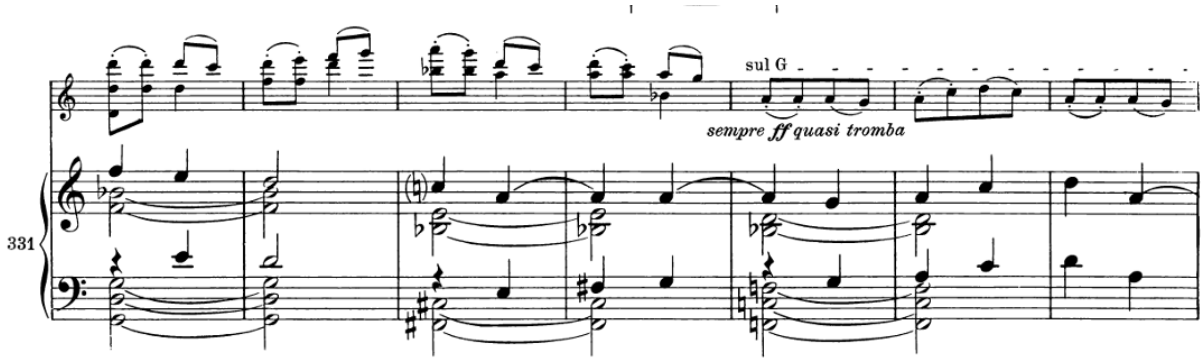


Figure 32. *Quasi tromba* indication in Rózsa's *Variations*, *Op. 4*.[215]

Just a few bars later, we reach the most intimate moment within the variations, where the violin plays the original melody in soft harmonics, mimicking a Hungarian flute. This delicate

[214] Nancy Jane McKenney, 148.
[215] Miklós Rózsa, *Variations on a Hungarian Peasant Song*, 14.

moment is one of my favorites in the piece and allows for a moment of repose before the violin and piano soar to the finish in the final Prestissimo section.

Violin Sonata No. 3, Op. 37 *Mieczysław Weinberg (1919–1996)*

There are many fragmented accounts of Weinberg's early life. He was born in Poland and was quickly thrust into the music scene. His father, Shmuel Weinberg, was a violinist, composer, conductor, and director of a Jewish theatre. By the age of ten, Weinberg was playing piano at the theater, and he eventually took lessons from Professor Turczyński at Warsaw Conservatoire. To bring in money for his family, he would compose music for circuses and theaters, and he would also play at bars and clubs throughout the week.[216,217] He was not particularly big on musical publication, perhaps in part to his Jewish identity in the years leading up to World War II. In 1939, Weinberg first fled Warsaw with his family. They eventually reached the Soviet Union, and Weinberg graduated from the Belorussian Conservatoire with a degree in composition; however, in 1941, the Nazis again invaded. This time, only Weinberg fled and survived, as he and other musicians were evacuated to Tashkent in modern day Uzbekistan.[218] In 1943, he first met Dmitri Shostakovich who helped arrange for him to live in Moscow, where the two would become close friends and musical colleagues, sharing ideas and music on a weekly basis.[219]

However, it was not all smooth sailing for Weinberg. Soviet authorities consciously eyed him, especially after he married the daughter of Jewish actor and director Solomon Mikhoels.

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[216] Verena Mogl, "Fragments of a Life Untold: Weinberg's Early Biography" in *Mieczysław Weinberg: Between East and West*, ed. Michelle Assay and David Fanning (London: The British Academy, 2026), 66-68.

[217] Silvia Suarez, "Mieczysław Weinberg: Violin and Piano Sonata No. 3 Op. 37 and No. 5 Op. 53" (DMA diss., University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, 2020), 2, https://www.proquest.com/docview/2427549145?parentSessionId=%2FJBRFALG%2BUnTMswNjNwgRmWcYIjuCf9JLdnBy4WOkfs%3D&pq-origsite=primo&accountid=14696&sourcetype=Dissertations%20&%20Theses.

[218] David Rabinovich, "Appendix 3.1: The Creative Path of Moisei Weinberg," in *Mieczysław Weinberg: Between East and West*, ed. Michelle Assay and David Fanning (London: The British Academy, 2026), 52.

[219] Daniel Elphick, "Weinberg, Shostakovich, and the influence of 'Anxiety,'" *The Musical Times* 155, no. 1929 (Winter 2014): 50, https://www.jstor.org/stable/24615657.

Several years later, Stalin had Mikhoels killed by Soviet secret police.[220] Antisemitism continued to rear its ugly head to the point that Soviet authorities believed Weinberg was a part of the Doctors' Plot, which was based on a conspiracy theory that nationalist Jewish spies were planning to kill Soviet authorities while masking as medical professionals.[221] Weinberg was arrested and jailed in 1953. Shostakovich wrote to an authority figure on his behalf defending his innocence and even proceeded to adopt Weinberg's daughter in case his wife was arrested. In serendipitous timing, Stalin died soon after, Weinberg was released, and the adoption papers burned.[222]

Despite the horrifying events in Weinberg's life, he continued to compose prolifically. He wrote six violin sonatas and three solo violin sonatas, many string quartets, symphonies, operas, and choral works. He wrote pieces to honor his loved ones lost in the Holocaust and to commemorate the war and strife that permeated his life. Many of his later works, including his operas and symphonies, have more direct ties to his Jewish and Polish roots. The works he dedicated to friends and family were always instrumental rather than vocal.[223,224]

He wrote *Sonata No. 3* in 1947 and dedicated it to Soviet violinist Mikhail Ficktengolts, who was also the dedicatee of two solo sonatas, *Op. 82* and *Op. 95*.[225] Weinberg's musical style is often compared to that of Shostakovich, and while there were certainly shared influences and an ongoing exchange of ideas, Weinberg developed his own concise yet powerful musical language. He followed classical structures, he prioritized clarity of thought and articulation over

[220] Rabinovich, "The Creative Path of Moisei Weinberg," 52.
[221] Joseph Telushkin, "Jews in Former Soviet Union: The Doctor's Plot," *Jewish Virtual Library*, excerpt from *Jewish Literacy* (NY: William Morrow and Co., 1991), https://jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-doctor-s-plot.
[222] Elphick, "Weinberg, Shostakovich, and the influence of 'Anxiety,'" 50.
[223] Suarez, "Mieczysław Weinberg: Violin and Piano Sonata No. 3 Op. 37," 1–2.
[224] Verena Mogl, "Fragments of a Life Untold," 58–59.
[225] Suarez, "Mieczysław Weinberg: Violin and Piano Sonata No. 3 Op. 37," 11.

sudden changes and bizarre extremes, and he cherished melodic expressivity above all. Other significant compositional influences include Mahler and Bartók.[226]

The first movement is written in a very brief sonata form. The first theme is a meandering waltz-like melody, which first cascades down in pitch before willing itself back up through intervallic leaps on off beats, only to fall again. The second theme is much more playful and reminiscent of a Shostakovich scherzo, entering on an offbeat, climbing to the higher range of the violin through leaps before falling again. The violin and piano are in a continuous dialogue throughout the movement, responding to and inspiring each other to move forward. The best way to understand Weinberg's writing and pacing is to make sense of the intervals he uses, along with the slur markings. While he was a pianist, he was very specific about his melodic gestures and their hypermetric placement. It is also worth experimenting with rubato to make the most out of cadences, transitions, and color changes, even if there are no marked tempo changes in the music.

The second movement's tempo marking is *Andantino*, yet the music feels suspended in thin air, detached from reality. The piano begins by stating the wandering theme, which is punctuated by three-note motives whenever the melody is "at rest," helping to propel the music forward when it is fatiguing. It was difficult for me to find elements in this theme that are explicitly connected to klezmer traditions; however, I felt the intervals Weinberg used to invoke moments of melancholy and sorrow are reminiscent of emotional qualities found in many klezmer tunes. My undergraduate teacher told me that in Jewish faith, people often challenge God in their prayers instead of merely submitting to the face of reality. In a way, this melody

[226] Levon Hakobian, "Weinberg as a 'Bronze Age' Figure," in *Mieczysław Weinberg: Between East and West*, ed. Michelle Assay and David Fanning (London: The British Academy, 2026), 158, 161.

reminds me of someone quietly asking God, “Why me?” and when the question is spoken, the left hand of the piano is the imagined response from up above. The melody first rises in fourths, then falls down a tritone and up a minor third (G-C-F-E-Bb-Dd), which could be analogous to the augmented second we recognize in the *freygish* scale. Additionally, the E and Db form an augmented second, although they are separated by the falling Bb. At one point, Weinberg writes upper-neighbor grace notes to embellish the descending line, which sound very similar to mordents or *krekhts* that clarinetists and violinists use to mimic the “catch in your throat” sound. These “catches” might represent the prayerful one slowly begging or breaking down with the weight of their emotional plea.

After this very intimate opening, the violin takes over the melody in a delicate higher register while the three-note motive in the piano left hand continues to respond during the more static long notes. Another melody soon begins, where the violinist timidly explores large leaps and falls through dotted rhythms and fleeting slurred gestures in *pianissimo*. The pianist responds on the off-beats with three-note gestures as the violinist gains her courage to explore the higher range of her instrument until she reaches her first emotional outburst. Her long notes are punctuated by syncopations in the piano after which the violin climbs up through chromatic motion to reassert her pain and anguish in not receiving an answered prayer. After the second “assertion,” the violin continues to climb to a Ab^6, only to fall back down in a rhapsodic and improvisatory fashion, much like in a soul-stirring nigun.

At the emotional climax of the movement, the violin melody is set in “syncopated” triplets over the original melody in duple meter. Occasionally, duplet and triplet rhythms are juxtaposed in Jewish folk music. The melodies are set a tritone apart, highlighting the tension and pain this moment harbors before the violin has another outburst, undulating between static

high notes and chromatic sixteenth motion. Eventually, the violin has worn herself out, and at rehearsal 6, the piano gently reintroduces the melody in its original key. The violin now plucks the three-note motives that will propel the pianist forward in her journey. Eventually, the pianist gets fixated on a chantlike repetition of C, accompanied by a slow descent in the left hand with the same rhythmic motive. In the *coda* section, the violin is marked *con sordino* and travels through an improvisatory passage of trills, perhaps mimicking a voice quivering. After this vulnerable moment, the violinist tries to reiterate the main theme one more time, floating to the higher registers before settling on a high Ab, a half step higher than the starting note of the movement.

The third movement is the most joyful of the three and the most complex to put together. We first hear a peaceful piano melody with ascending leaps (a fourth, tritone, and fifth), repeated pitches, and a gentle fall from the higher register. This then gives way to a calm accompaniment that sets up the cantabile theme in the violin. It begins with a step and octave leap in the key of A major, after which the violin enjoys sinuous chromatic inflections. This thematic exploration is then followed by a dance section in duple meter similar to a *freylekhs*. This is very similar to the dance style found in the last movement of Shostakovich's *Piano Trio No. 2 in E minor*. The piano provides punctuated quarter note accompaniment while the violin explores the dance rhythms in a drawn-out process. The short-long rhythms, like those found in Hungarian folk music, eventually propel the music to cascade downward to the next phrase. The music quickly builds in intensity and texture, with Weinberg writing more complex double stops and chords as the piano and violin begin to battle it out for the dance theme.

In the development, the violin and piano present twisted, highly energetic fragments of both the opening piano melody and the dance theme. The violin once plays pizzicato chords to

accompany the piano line in a fit of anguish, and at other times the violin plays octave trills to accompany the opening piano theme. The piano then takes on these accompanimental roles before the violin spins out into a double stop cadenza leading us to the high point of the movement – the recap of the primary theme in octaves but with much larger leaps and in a much higher register. After this explosion of expression, we are brought back into the fun dance ostinato, albeit with additional metrical beats (4+5+6+7). The music morphs again, with the violin taking over the peaceful piano melody and providing arpeggiated accompaniment in harmonics as the piano plays the main theme. The duo continues to take turns with the melody and accompaniment lines, transitioning from peaceful lyricism to more brazen dance energy that concludes with a pizzicato/piano hocket that outlines the main theme. After this, the violin soon moves into a final cadenza riddled with double stops, outlining scales and fifths. The violin swirls up through an Eb minor arpeggio to scream the short-long dance motive in tenths, after which she fixates on the octave leap that starts the primary theme. In the third statement, the octave turns into a ninth, after which the weight of the world on the violinist gradually crumbles, leaving the energy to dissipate to the end of the piece.

Baal Shem (Three Pictures of Chassidic Life) *Ernest Bloch (1880–1959)*

Swiss composer Ernest Bloch took many years to cultivate his identity as a central European Jewish composer. Unlike members of the Society of Jewish Folk Music in St. Petersburg, he was not from Eastern Europe, yet many Jewish traditions and musics originated in

the East. After his Bar Mitzvah, he was not particularly religious, although his grandfather was a lay cantor and he grew up attending synagogue.[227]

As years passed, Bloch tried to reconcile his Western musical learning with his Jewish identity by researching Jewish history and music in the Jewish Encyclopedia. He took notes of rules for chant, songs, prayers, modes, and cantillation. From this research, he did not hope to become a folklorist, but he wanted to write freely and confidently with a solidified image of his identity as a composer within the larger Jewish diaspora.[228] According to Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, Jewish compositions should embody the soul of Jews rather than fixating merely on performative traditions and ornaments.[229]

The title *Baal Shem* refers to the Baal Shem Tov, a faith healer and the founder of Hasidic Judaism in the 18th century. His original name was Israel ben Eliezer. The term "*Baal Shem*" translates to "Master of the Name," which refers to someone who used the name of God to conduct mystical acts, often miracles and cures. Tov means "good," so a Baal Shem Tov was a very good Master of the Name (of God).[230]

Bloch originally had different titles for the movements of *Baal Shem*: 1) "Meditation," 2) "Rhapsody," and 3) "*Yontef*," which is Yiddish for the festival Yom Tov. However, he eventually changed the names to 1) "*Vidui*" (Contrition), 2) "*Nigun*" (Improvisation), and 3) "*Simchas Torah*" (Rejoicing), perhaps reflecting upon his reassertion of his Jewish identity.[231] The piece is dedicated to the memory of his mother.

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[227] Joshua S. Walden, "'An Essential Expression of the People': Interpretations of Hasidic Song in the Composition and Performance History of Ernest Bloch's Baal Shem," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 65, no. 3 (Fall 2012): 779–780.

[228] Ibid., 781–782.

[229] Ibid., 779.

[230] Peretz Golding, "The Baal Shem Tov — A Brief Biography," *Chabad.org*, accessed April 8, 2026. https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/1208507/jewish/The-Baal-Shem-TovA-Brief-Biography.htm.

[231] Walden, "An Essential Expression of the People," 789.

The first movement is built around the emotions of a confession: begging to God for mercy, acknowledging our wrongdoings, feeling the overwhelming shame and guilt of such sin. The falling fifth motive seen in the violin part is often associated with a sigh or anguish across musical styles. The interweaving of duplet and triplet rhythms, the breath marks and rests, fermatas, and simpler piano accompaniment allow for ample rubato and phrase fluidity to convey the emotional weight of the music. We also find the short-long-short rhythm throughout the opening to propel the melody forward. This rhythmic feature is more typically found in dance forms like a *freylekhs* or a Hungarian dance. The long note between the eighth notes represents a moment of yearning before falling into the next gesture, highlighted by the dynamic hairpins and tenuto markings on the quarter notes (Figure 33, m. 5).

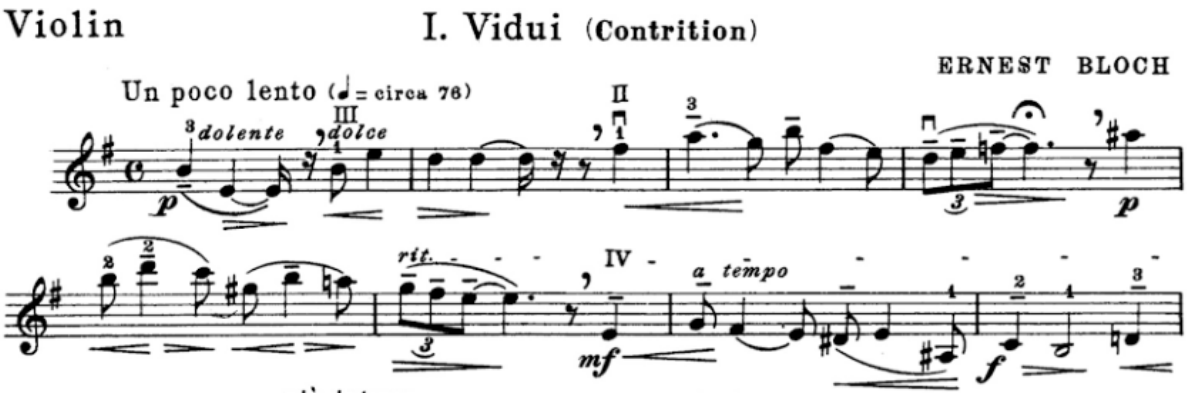


Figure 33. Rhythmic "yearning" in the opening movement of Bloch's *Baal Shem*.[232]

As the violin begins to beg and plea through the G string passage from mm. 7–10, we hear the augmented second from the *freygish* scale. As the music intensifies through these few measures, the violin releases her first cry for mercy before falling into a brief calm. The piano's soothing triplets caress the sinner's brief reprieve before reliving their mistakes and the

[232] Ernest Bloch, "Vidui," *Baal Shem: Three Pictures of Hasidic Life* (New York: Carl Fischer, 1924), 1, IMSLP.

emotional guilt that swallows them, spiraling upward and accelerating to an elongated wail on the E string. From this emotional high point, the violin then cascades down through triplets permeated with augmented seconds which inspire one more guttural outburst which is played high on the G string. The opening theme returns, marked *dolcissimo*, for a final, vulnerable plea that grows in its anguish to the violin's imploring cadenza, marked by a high C on the G string that holds on with great pain. From this C the violin falls to a G#, spinning around repetitions of neighbor tones before finally relenting in her plea, marking the conclusion of the confession with a rhythmic "Amen."

The second movement of this suite, the "*Nigun*", is most frequently played on its own. As mentioned before, a *nigun* is a wordless, improvisational melody sung in order to achieve greater communion with God, called *devekut*. As the piece gains momentum, each section brings us closer to achieving *devekut*, after which the violinist returns to consciousness.[233] Repetition of motives typically gets faster and ascends to a higher pitch until we reach the next level closer to *devekut*. The rhythms change and the tempo moves more quickly, the pitch ascends higher, and the texture becomes thicker. Much like the title and genre suggest, the tempo markings in this movement serve as guidelines, but within these the music can move in a rhapsodic, improvisatory fashion. There are many recordings of this movement, and with that a wide spread of performance interpretations in terms of portamenti/glissandi, rubato, vibrato, and overall pacing. The Jewish violinist Yehudi Menuhin, with whom Bloch was close friends, allowed shorter rhythmic values to flow from slower to faster motion to more organically lead into the next gesture.[234] While upward and downward glissandi are heard across the many recordings of

[233] Walden, "An Essential Expression of the People," 791–792.
[234] Ibid., 811–813.

his "*Nigun*," according to folk violin scholar Pete Cooper, downward slides and bends are more common in klezmer traditions.[235]

The "*Nigun*" begins with a brief yet fiery introduction in the piano, featuring accents, a variety of dynamics that grow and decay with the musical contour, the affirmation of the *freygish* scale in D, and a double dotted rhythm that is both declamatory and impetuous. The violin's opening lament is playing on the G string, harkening to the G minor mode. The piano supplements the more static moments in the melody with dignified triplets. The violin soon becomes immersed in the improvisation, slowing down and speeding up through a field of fermatas and pauses, eventually cascading higher on the violin through several cadenzas. Bloch writes quicker note values and more double stops atop the piano's brooding tremolos. The first stage of *devekut* is achieved through powerful octaves in the violin and assertive dotted rhythms in the piano. The piano then introduces a new melody, with meandering chromaticism, augmented seconds, and decorative grace notes. According to Josh Walden, the end of this melody closely mirrors the ending notes of a Sabbath Introit, titled "Shoken Ad," that Bloch likely found in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*.[236] As the violin and piano continue to exchange this melody, the music builds in intensity, reaching a climax at a key change, where Bloch employs octaves in the violin and rolled chords in the piano. As the violin plays the falling triplets from the "*Shoken Ad*," the piano plays accentuated duplet figures, creating a juxtaposition of duple and triple meter (Figure 34).

[235] Pete Cooper, ed., *Eastern European Fiddle Tunes* (London: Schott, 2007), 28.
[236] Walden, "An Essential Expression of the People," 802–805.

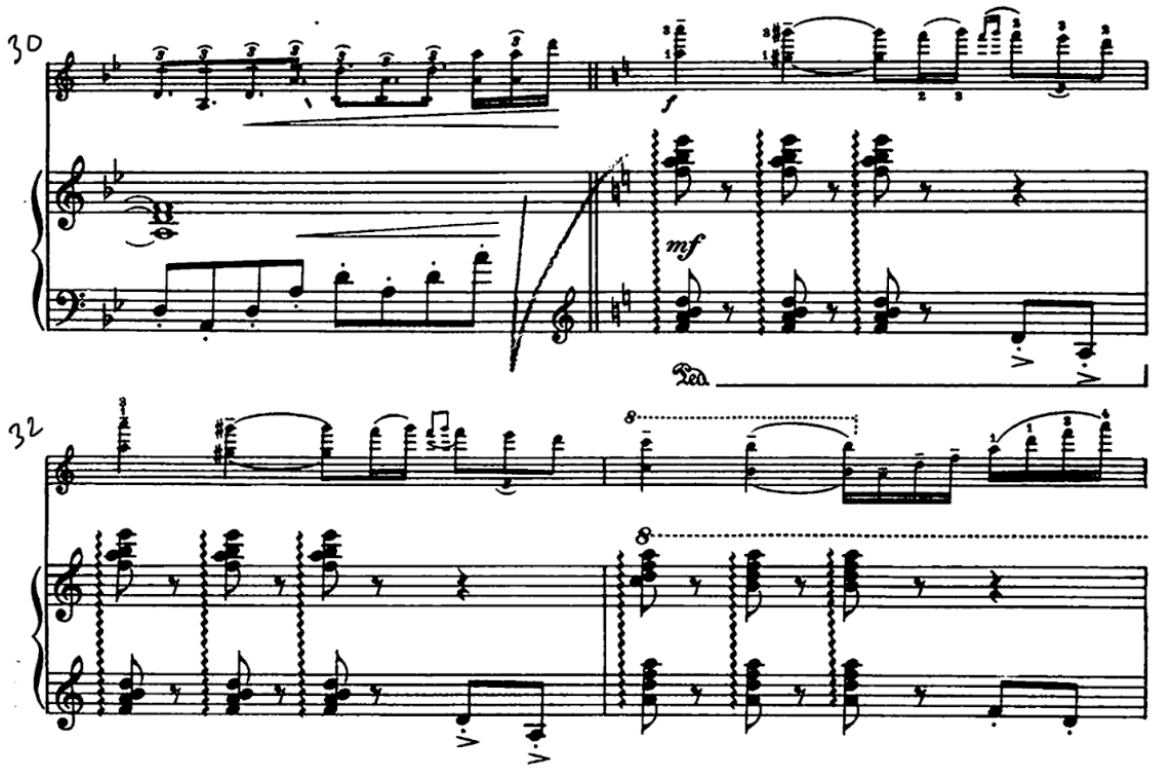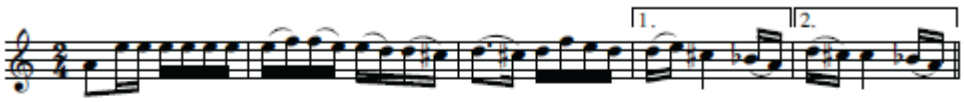


Figure 34. Melody featuring elements of "*Shoken Ad*" Sabbath Introit in Bloch's "*Nigun*" from *Baal Shem*.[237]

In the third section, Josh Walden observes that Bloch broadly references a Hasidic melody in the form of a *freylekhs*, which is found in Moishe Beregovki's collection, *Old Jewish Folk Music*. Both melodies feature an ascending fifth, repeated pitches, undulated stepwise motion, and augmented seconds (Figure 35).[238]

[237] Bloch, "Nigun," *Baal Shem*, 5.
[238] Walden, "An Essential Expression of the People, 799–803.

Example 7a Freylekhs, reprinted in Beregovski, *Old Jewish Folk Music*, p. 439



Example 7b Bloch, "Nigun," mm. 42–45
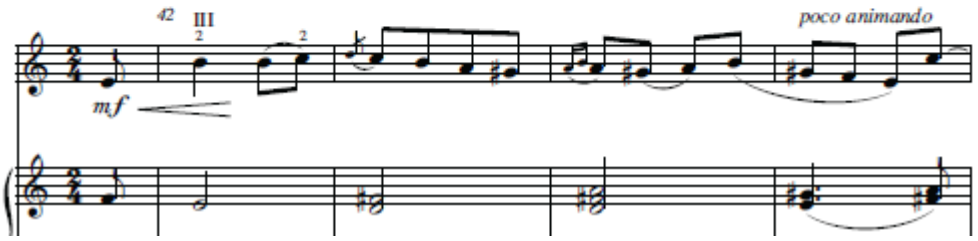


Figure 35. Walden's comparison of a *freylekhs* to a melody Bloch uses in his "*Nigun*."[239]

The melody becomes more vivacious and rhythmic at the *poco sostenuto* with accentuated chords in both parts, and this liveliness continues to build until the violin's heart-wrenching iteration of the melody high on the E string. The violin begins to fatigue, falling down in pitch in a series of double stops that soon spin out to a recapitulation of the opening melody, serving as the recap of the movement. This iteration of the melody features more double stops in the form of slimy thirds. Soon again, the violinist proceeds *ad libitum* to more rhapsodic cadential material, reaching another stage of *devekut* with the strong arrival on Bb and fervent dotted rhythmic accompaniment. The moment of spiritual ascension continues with a rapid descent and even faster ascent to the top of the G string, where Bloch writes the three most intense fermatas of the entire piece based on the "*Shoken Ad*" incipit. After the third iteration, the violin and piano have reached their breaking point. The violinist meanders through ascending triplets followed by a held D, which is punctuated by the pianist's double dotted rhythms in the

[239] Ibid., 804.

moments of stasis. The violin eventually settles on a delicate "D" harmonic as the pianist gives the final "Amen" in a quiet yet solemn fashion.

The title of the last movement, "*Simchas Torah*" refers to the celebration of the Pentateuchal cycle where the weekly readings of the Torah are complete and will soon restart at Genesis.[240] This movement has become my favorite from the suite due in large part to its infectious joy, lush harmonies, and variety of melodic characters. While I could not find folk sources for the primary and secondary melodies, I learned from Steven Greenman that Bloch used the melody from the Yiddish song "*Di Mezinke Oysgegebn*" (The Youngest Daughter Getting Married) in the D minor "dance" section. This tune was written by Yiddish songwriter Mark Warshawski and is included in folklorist Sussmann Kisselgof's collection of Yiddish songs.[241] This tune does not appear until m. 67 in a minor modality, decorated with quick melodic flourishes in the violin and ample grace notes in the piano part (Figure 36).

[240] Ibid., 789.
[241] Ibid., 800.
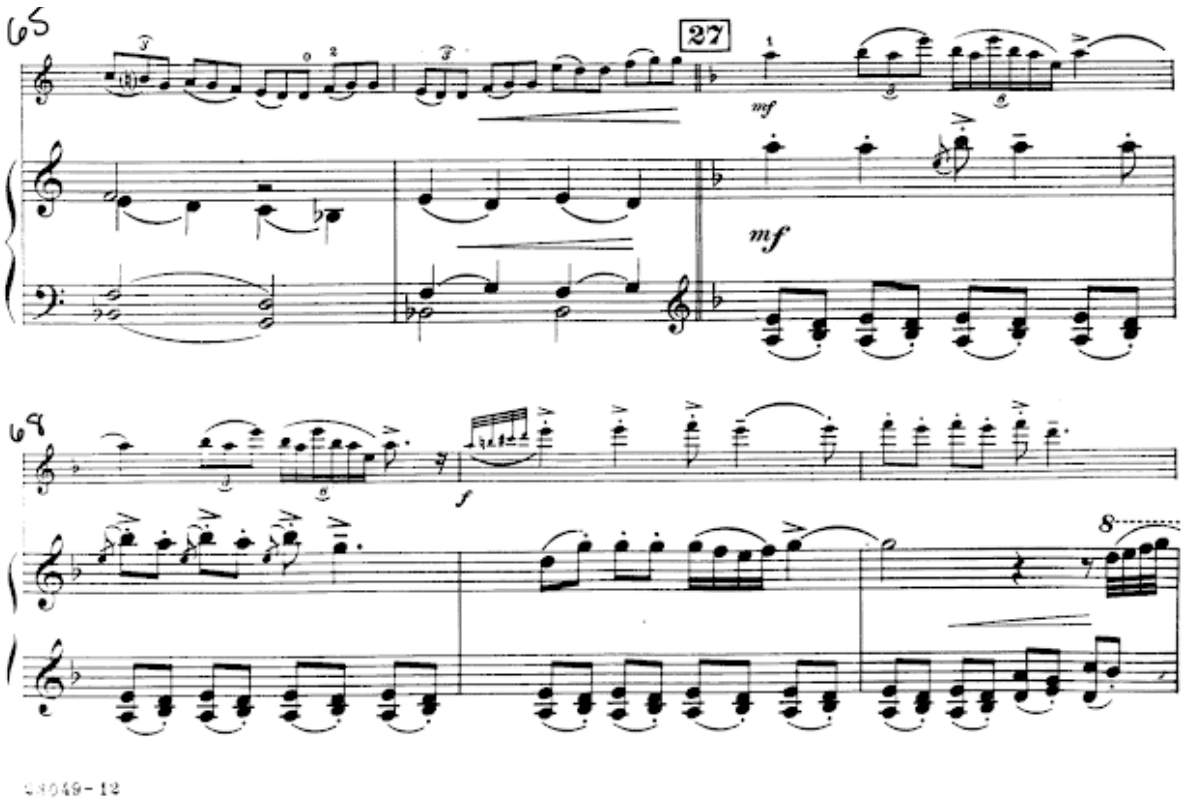


Figure 36. "*Di Mezinke Oysgegebn*" melody in the third movement ("*Simchas Torah*") of Bloch's *Baal Shem*.[242]

To me, this movement beautifully represents Bloch's range as a Jewish composer bridging eastern and western traditions. He explores a variety of keys and characters through the three melodies. From the first melody, we hear exuberant joy in the form of leaps, playful duple-triple interplay, and the bright key of E major. The secondary melody brings a feeling of nostalgia and bittersweetness, first with a *sostenuto* theme written in octaves with repeated pitches and a lower, more *pesante* piano accompaniment. Again, duple and triple rhythms are at play, but they are broader and less resistant to move forward, like when we try to hold onto good memories. In accordance with the upcoming "*Di Mizenke*" melody, perhaps the father is feeling nostalgic about his little girl getting married. The second part of this melody is marked by a

[242] Bloch, "Simchas Torah," *Baal Shem*, 5.

gently descending line that tries to leap upward, first by a fifth, then a few bars later by a major seventh. In this moment of musical ascension, Bloch employs lush, powerful romantic harmonies and savors the musical moment by writing *allargando* and a *molto ritardando*. The parallel music in the second half of the movement is even more moving, transposed a whole step higher to fit the home key of E major. I immediately thought of Romantic composers like Amy Beach when I first played these measures with my colleague. What sincere writing!

From the third melody ("*Di Mezinke*"), we experience a moment of good-humored playfulness. The theme is tossed between the two instruments in the form of musical banter, with the piano enjoying the more heavily embellished version of the theme. The repeated grace notes outlining a tritone are heavily symbolic of the *krekhts* ornament discussed throughout this paper. After the emotional climax of the movement, the music gradually becomes more fragmented and animated. Melodic iterations become shorter and the violin part becomes more virtuosic, with a wealth of double stops, waves of accelerating sextuplets, and bubbling trills that lead us to the final statement of the second melodic motive at the *Largamente*. From here, the violinist cascades upward to the violin's stratosphere, concluding with a powerful E major cadence that resolves this glorious movement and suite.

Sonata for Two Violins, Op. 15a — *Miklós Rózsa*

According to Nancy Jane McKenny, this sonata is one of three string chamber pieces that Rózsa does not discuss in his autobiography. He wrote the first version in Paris in 1933 and dedicated it to Eugene Ormandy, the Hungarian American violinist who went on to conduct the

Philadelphia Orchestra. However, it was not published until 1942, and a revised version would not be published by Breitkopf & Härtel until at least three decades later.[243]

My colleague and I played off the original 1942 edition, as that was the version loaned to us through the library. While consulting audio sources for this piece, my colleague and I noticed many pitch discrepancies between the score and performance recordings, especially in the second movement. I am assuming these recordings were based on the revised edition. Soon, I plan to purchase the edition from the 1970s to compare the incongruities. Perhaps my colleague and I could give another performance based on that edition to determine whether the revisions improved the music in a significant way. According to McKenny, the revisions did not alter the structure of the music, but merely the accompanying harmonies.[244] We made a few pitch alterations based on the recordings we heard, which will be discussed with each movement's overview.

The piece follows a three-movement, fast-slow-fast form. Many of the melodies and rhythms are folk-like in nature, and the violin parts are highly dialogical. I will refer to the parts as Violin I and Violin II out of convenience, but they play equivalent roles in the music in terms of melody and accompaniment.[245]

The first movement begins in a syncopated and agogic manner, messing with the listener's sense of meter. The first chords begin homophonically on the offbeat, and the primary theme in violin I begins on the downbeat, although it sounds like it should be pickup. The odd metrical impulses are best considered in the context of the slurs and bowing gestures Rózsa uses,

[243] Nancy Jane McKenney, "The Chamber Music of Miklós Rózsa" (PhD diss., University of Kentucky, Lexington, 2002), 236–239, https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/chamber-music-miklós-rózsa/docview/305559290/se-2?accountid=14696.

[244] Ibid., 239.

[245] Ibid., 248.

rather than text syllables like most folk music. It is also interesting to note the textural change from the syncopated chords to the melody-accompaniment format when violin I begins the primary theme. He will continue to use texture as a demarcating structural device throughout the movement.

The opening chords outline two descending fourths, and the primary theme starts with leaps of fifths and fourths. The modality is a bit ambiguous; there is no sixth in the theme but there are chromatic inflections of F in the preceding chords and subsequent accompaniment, making it sound like a hybrid of Aeolian and Dorian (Figure 37).[246]
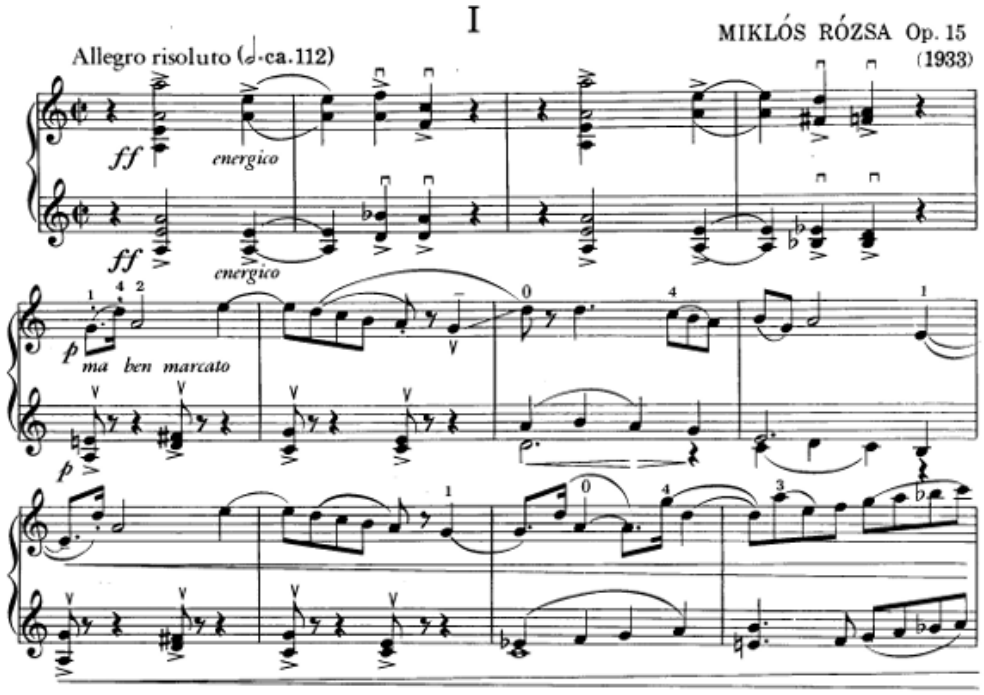


Figure 37. Opening chords and primary theme of Rózsa's *Sonata for Two Violins*, first movement.[247]

Violin II proceeds to state the theme a fourth above the original pitch, which is an interesting intervallic relationship considering strophic folk songs are often repeated at the fifth.

[246] Ibid., 243.
[247] Miklós Rózsa, *Sonata for Two Violins, Op. 15* (New York: Associated Music Publishers, 1942), 1.

The secondary theme is even more ambiguous in terms of material and modality. There is no third, and it starts on G#, which is far removed from the assumed modality of A. This theme is both more disjunct and more lyrical in nature, and like the primary theme, it ascends a fifth and a fourth (Figure 38).[248] The accompaniment provides a rhythmic drone starting in fifths, which gradually becomes more dissonant through larger chromatic double stops.
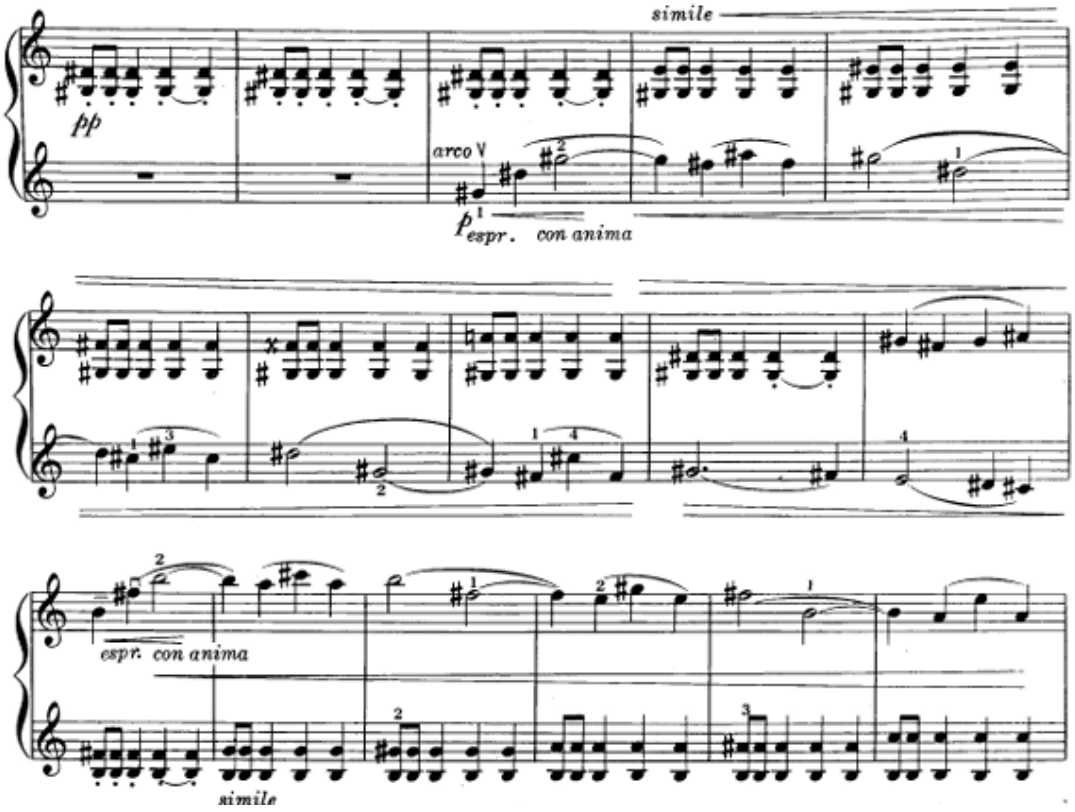


Figure 38. Secondary theme and rhythmic drone accompaniment in Rózsa's *Sonata for Two Violins*, first movement.[249]

One interesting facet of this movement is the lack of cadential resolutions and pauses; the music flows forward continuously as the themes are passed between the two violins in different keys and different textures. The texture becomes more polyphonic as we reach the *piu mosso*,

[248] McKenney, 243.
[249] Rózsa, *Sonata for Two Violins*, 3.

which mimics the homophonic chord texture from the beginning. From this punctuated material, the opening chordal motion is lyricized a few bars later as the violins transition into the next section, which could be seen as the start of the development. Rózsa continues to explore different tonalities, textures, and realizations of the opening chordal material until the next musical arrival. This section fizzles out to a recap of the secondary theme a half step lower than the first statement, but the "true" recap is not actually heard until later, with both chords and primary theme in the original modality. Perhaps he reversed the themes through a subtle recapitulation? The coda beginsat the *Vivo ed agitato*, which alternates between fifths and running eighths that remind me of the motives found in Bartók 's *Second Violin Concerto*. The music continues to accelerate to the end, and the texture finally reunites the violins together again in affirmative chordal punctuations in some sort of A minor modality.

The second movement, *Lento assai*, follows an ABA form, and it is remarkably beautiful. Both violins begin muted, lending to the calmer, more dreamlike state of this music aside from a few arrival points. Violin II begins with an ostinato accompaniment with D drones, hearkening to the sound of open string drones or bagpipes in folk music. Violin I then plays an expressive cantabile theme with a 2+2+2+2 (or 4+4) phrase structure, outlining what appears to be D dorian. The theme features the accented short-long Lombard rhythm, and the range is small, only traversing a sixth through the melodic descent.[250] The next statement of the theme in Violin II begins a fifth above, and Violin I takes over the double-stop ostinato line. In the B section, the tempo is marked *Molto animato* and the violins remove their mutes, yet the music is to be played softly and very expressively. The 4/4 meter now becomes tripletized for most of the section, imbuing the music with the qualities of an off-kilter waltz. At the start of the waltz section, we

[250] McKenney, 252–254.

altered the pitches of Violin II's downbeats to follow the chromatic descent we heard in recordings which are consistent with the revised edition. Instead of low Bbs through those four measures, Violin II moves through Bb-A-Ab-G as the Violin I melody explores the sentimental qualities of the Bb Dorian mode (Figure 39).[251]
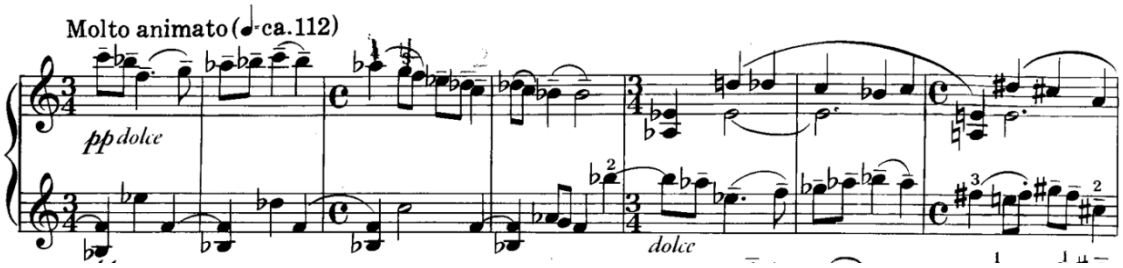


Figure 39. Original Violin II accompaniment (with Bb/F drones) in the second movement of Rózsa's *Sonata for Two Violins*.[252]

The rest of the section flows in a polyphonic and lyrical fashion, growing in energy and range until the climax of the movement is reached. Here, the violin theme (a descending second followed by a descending fourth) recalls the opening waltz motive, and the second violin marks the downbeats with stunning major seventh Bb chords. The climax gradually gives way to the recapitulation of the A section, where the violins are encouraged to play higher on the G and D strings for enhanced timbral effects as the movement draws to a close. The last four bars are the most magical of the movement; Rózsa expresses the A theme in Violin I in eerie harmonics while Violin II provides harmonic drone accompaniment. The piece evaporates to the softest dynamic possible, giving the listener time to process the moment before the last movement.

The third movement, *Vivo e giocoso*, brings us back to the rhythmic vitality of Hungarian folk dance. One pitch alteration we made in accordance with the revised edition is in the first

[251] Ibid., 254–255.
[252] Rózsa, *Sonata for Two Violins*, 14.

four bars of the violin II pizzicato chords – instead of a chord with A and E, we added a D to create a seventh chord. It seems many of the alterations Rózsa made in the 1973 edition were meant to create crunchier dissonances.[253] This piece is a marathon in terms of stamina and technical endurance, but it is full of so many fun characters, timbres, and instrumental techniques that speak to qualities variably found in Hungarian folk music. It appears to be in a freer rondo form, with the opening theme returning throughout amidst contrapuntal chaos.

The pizzicato accompaniment in violin II reminds me of the *esztam* off-beat rhythms found in many folk dances, with the chords being plucked on off beats versus single notes on down beats. The chords sequence through a range of harmonies, punctuated with occasional sevenths and seconds. The eight-bar melody in Violin I is written in the A Dorian mode; it features a wide variety of rhythmic patterns, including the Lombard rhythm and the long-long quarter note motive often found at phrase endings in Hungarian tunes.[254] Violin 2 then states the theme only a second below the tune (G), which is odd, and the next melody Rózsa writes begins on F. Despite the lighthearted dance qualities of this movement, it is very dense in terms of chordal writing and contrapuntal interplay between the two violins.

The next "theme" begins in in what appears to be C Mixolydian mode with the lowered seventh, the latter of which is not uncommon in Hungarian folk song.[255] The accented fifths in Violin II are meant to mimic a bagpipe, *quasi cornemuse*. Violin I plays a cutesy pizzicato melody (ABAB') mirroring the rhythm of a swineherd's dance, punctuated by long-long rhythms at the end of each B phrase. The next theme we hear immediately follows in Violin II, which is played with the bow and features fun glissandi, staccato articulation, and snappy Lombard

[253] McKenney, 239.
[254] Ibid., 260.
[255] Ibid., 263.

rhythms.[256,257] As this second theme is developed, the accompanimental line becomes more fluid and *leggiero*, cascading through a sea of sixteenth scalar passages. Over time, the music reaches a sneaky low point, punctuated by sixteenths across strings in Violin II and playful harmonics in Violin I. The string crossings in Violin II almost remind me of cimbalom tremolos.

The music gains momentum and reaches a climax that plays a similar role to the opening chords of the first movement. The texture immediately becomes homophonic, and between chordal punctuations, the violins play fragments of the theme in *unison* for the first time. As the music proceeds, Rózsa explores even more snaky chromatic lines. The music traverses through a series of energetic highs and lows until we hear the rondo theme emerge for a moment. The theme is then developed in fragmentation, with occasional *esztam* accompaniment in Violin II. We hear the climax of this section soon after, with a descending motive (E-C-D-A) that is quite similar to the falling fourth motive in the opening chords from the first movement (E-A-F-C).

After this outburst, Violin I embraces the bagpipe accompaniment and Violin II plays the cutesy pizzicato theme, now a fifth away from the original statement. The music again develops into a mirage of flowing, almost flute-like sixteenth runs interpolated with the theme. This sixteenth section does not explode like the first, however; instead, it loses momentum over time and fades away through a held drone in Violin II and descending pizzicato in Violin I. We *finally* have a rest in the music, giving players and listeners a brief reprieve before the recapitulation of the rondo theme for the last time. However, the theme is in the wrong modality and the texture is different. Instead of pizzicato, Violin II has offbeat *esztam* double stops during the melody, and when Violin I provides accompaniment, Rózsa writes the "limping" rhythm (short-long-short)

[256] Ibid.
[257] Bellman, 62.

that is commonly found in ethnic Hungarian folk tunes (Figure 40).[258] Soon enough, Rózsa brings us back to the modality in the *middle* of the rondo material that starts on "F."
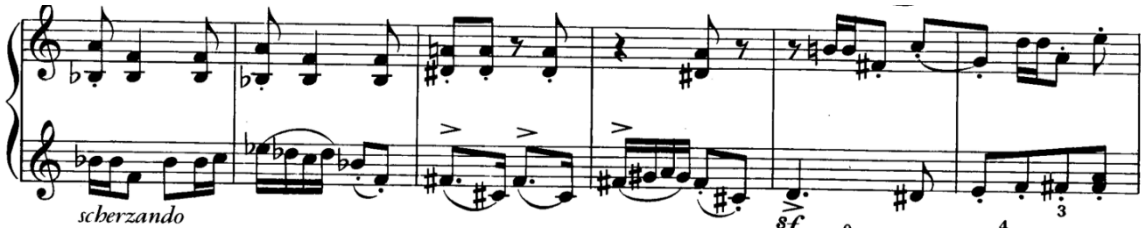


Figure 40. Limping rhythm in Violin I in the third movement of the *Sonata for Two Violins*.[259]

From here, the violins must prepare themselves for the ascent to the zenith of the movement: the restatement of the primary theme in the correct key. As Violin I states the theme in emphatic double stops on an A drone, Violin II plays double stop drones with chromatic alterations and fiery bariolage ornaments on the downbeats, perhaps mimicking rapid cimbalom hammering or guitar strumming. After this electric moment, the music becomes more rhythmically vigorous and between iterations of the sixteenth-sixteenth-eighth motive from the rondo theme, the violins begin to ascend in fourths in octave unisons. While the duo gets "stuck" on this pattern twice, they manage to accelerate and ultimately climb to the arrival at the *Vivace*, crashing towards the end with fire and bravura; however, Rózsa leaves enough room for a declamatory *allargando* that helps the piece to conclude on the second beat of the final measure, yet another metrical blow to listeners (and performers). The acceleration in terms of rhythmic energy and tempo most definitely encapsulates the growing energy of Hungarian dances as they near their fiery conclusion.

[258] Ibid., 248.
[259] Rózsa, *Sonata for Two Violins*, 26.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

As someone who grew up with music in the form of nursery rhymes and British rock from the sixties, conducting a research project on ethnic folk music was challenging and humbling, yet incredibly rewarding. As a result of this research, I am more self-aware as a musician and scholar, and I am much more eager to conduct research on the variety of repertoire and composers I study. While I want to be free to create my own musical interpretations as a violinist in the 21st century, I must remember that *all* music, both folk and classical, was written in the context of specific historical and sociocultural circumstance. Without this context, we may develop misguided analyses or interpretations of the music.

Of course, we can never *duplicate* the original music or its function, as our instrumentation, technology, and performance venues have changed. Additionally, our listening experiences as musicians and music lovers have evolved to appreciate different sounds over the centuries and across cultures. As both a modern and (budding) historical string player, it is interesting to see how my passion for researching early music and folk music go hand in hand. Outside of the composers we know about like Haydn and Schubert, I am positive that lesser-known composers and performers of early music were exposed to a large variety of folk music and perhaps integrated elements into their works. Another can of research worms for a future project!

In addition to the research aspects, this project required me to become more intentional with my music making while worrying less about sounding perfect, if that is even possible. Watching folk musicians perform inspired me to prioritize soulful spontaneity in support of technical nuance, and I believe classical musicians would benefit from embracing this concept. Western notation and theoretical rules make it difficult for us to step outside of our comfort

zones and question the ink on the page in terms of performance style. Through ample auditory research, I learned to be more spontaneous in performance, focusing on the musical character and energy arcs rather than perfectly planned sound. However, to learn to play with more "folk spirit," I had to *relearn* a lot of what I learned in terms of bow and left-hand technique, which took planning and experimentation! What joyful cognitive dissonance, indeed.

My passion for violin folk music has grown exponentially, and it goes without saying that Hungarian and klezmer are two of the *more* frequently researched musical styles, at least in the last century. I would be very curious to research traditions specific to eastern European countries like Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and Romania. I would also love to explore musical traditions of the Romani people in these regions. In tandem with this research on Romani culture, it would be very interesting to explore the fiddling traditions along the migratory corridor through which Romanies first traveled to Europe, including countries like India, Turkey, Greece, and Bulgaria.

In the future, I am hoping to record a few albums featuring repertoire from my dissertation recitals along with selections I was unable to program due to time constraints. Some pieces that come to mind include Weinberg's *Sonata No. 5*, Bloch's *Abodah*, andSzékely's *Solo Violin Sonata*. While I focused on Hungarian and Jewish composers in their distinct realms, I would also love to research the works of Hungarian Jewish composers like Kurtág and Ligeti to observe whether there are Hungarian *and* Jewish folk influences in their music, despite their modernist approaches to composition. And of course, these are the Hungarian Jewish composers I know about. Before this project, I did not know anything about Veress, Rózsa, or Weinberg, and I am sure these composers form the tip of the classical-folk iceberg.

I would like to conclude with a short anecdote about a concert I played back in February. Around Valentine's day, I performed a "Love Songs" concert in Tyson's Corner at a retirement

community's satellite activity center. I only had two attendees, but I found that to be a wonderful opportunity to get to know the ladies and ask about their musical interests. One was Ukrainian and the other was Syrian; when I mentioned to them that I was researching folk music for my dissertation, they proceeded to show me audio of music from their home countries. In a moment of spontaneity, I tried to play the tunes they showed me, both by ear and by looking up music on Google. Their sincere reactions to the music affirmed my beliefs that the work I am doing is valuable, no matter how small the performance setting and no matter how impromptu or "imperfect." Cultural representation is crucial in our shifting geopolitical landscape in a world heavily divided in its values. I want to avoid assumptions about others' musical cultures, instead reaching out to learn more. With open ears and an open mind, we will find amongst diversity that we share more in common than we realize, and that is worth searching for and celebrating.

Appendix – Audio Source Recordings

Hungarian Recital #1

Hubay, Hejre Kati

1. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/16328/#record-103751 – Nincsen annyi tenger csillag az égen / Szék [Szolnok-Doboka], 1978. start at 12:35
2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RgTQ4o0fnfA&list=RDRgTQ4o0fnfA&start_radio=1 – Brahms Hungarian Dance

Veress, Nográdi Verbunkos

1. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/6543/?t=00%3A28%3A20#record-66033 – singing. Nógrádi verbunk / Szabolcs [Szabolcs], 1956.
2. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/6497/?t=00%3A00%3A13#record-48888 – violin. **1.** Nógrádi verbunk / Mosonszentjános [Moson], 1956
3. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/10841/?t=00%3A08%3A11#record-150204 - Nógrádi verbunk / Csenger [Szatmár], 1989
4. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=im-xZmYkY1s – YouTube reference – Hungaraton.
5. https://www.hungarotonmusic.com/en/albums/6207-music-history-educational-series-13-14-dances-in-music-history-in-hungarian

Daniel Sender, *Three Souvenirs*

1. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/6535/?t=00%3A16%3A49#record-83419 -Dombon terem a pemetefű / Jászfényszaru - #23 -1962
2. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/16585/?t=00%3A37%3A43#record-105723 - Jönnek már a cigányok / Tarpa #14 – 1980

3. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/6513/#record-83029 – cigányhallgató / Érsekvadkert [Nógrád], 1957 – start at 12:37
4. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/16307/#record-106715 Cigány csárdások / Szék [Szolnok-Doboka], 1978 – start at 24:53

Bartók, Rhapsody No. 1

- L 222 Prima parte ("Lassú") (1)
- L 223 Prima parte ("Lassú") (2)
- L 224 Seconda parte ("Friss") (1)
- L 225 Seconda parte ("Friss") (2)
- L 226 Seconda parte ("Friss") (3)
- L 227 Seconda parte ("Friss") (4)

Hubay, Hullámzó Balaton

1. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/5885/?t=00%3A14%3A23#record-32969 – 14:23. Zombor [Bács-Bodrog], 1962
2. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/6373/?t=00%3A04%3A15#record-39909- Hullámzó Balaton tetején / Berhida [Veszprém], 1965
3. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/5567/?t=00%3A14%3A17#record-25375 - Hullámzó Balaton tetején / Várpalota [Veszprém], 1960

Daniel Sender's *Roma Folk Dances*

1. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/8349/?t=00%3A01%3A06#record-52606 - (Ha elvettél, tartsál)- #2 – date unknown
2. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/5078/ - I canka ij Anna, #14 -1959

3. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/5686/ woman singing lament - [cigány] / Mezőkovácsháza [Csanád], 1961
4. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/5078/ enek #18 -1959
5. https://zti.hungaricana.hu/en/audio/6524/?t=00%3A19%3A27#record-83254 (Jaj, anyám, a vakaró) - 1957

Bartók, Rhapsody No. 2

- L 228 Prima parte ("Lassú") (1)
- L 229 Prima parte ("Lassú") (2)
- L 230 Prima parte ("Lassú") (3)
- L 231 Seconda parte ("Friss") (1)
- L 232 Seconda parte ("Friss") (2)
- L 233 Seconda parte ("Friss") (3)
- L 234 Seconda parte ("Friss") (4)
- L 235 Seconda parte ("Friss") (5)
- L 236 Seconda parte ("Friss") (6)
- L 237 Seconda parte ("Friss") (7)

Sources on Klezmer Performance Practice

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DTycxQMX3iU – Krekhts, Chris Haigh

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GlAZQbQRRks – Masterclass with Cookie Segelstein

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wyz0Dg-_ssU – Krekhts, Alicia Svigals

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGnePeqN9RE&t=1594s – House concert, Alicia Svigals

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkV7TiF6Ugg&list=RDnkV7TiF6Ugg&start_radio=1 – Engel Two Pieces, Steven Grenman and Byron Schenkman

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFVr2m_-Nh8&list=RDEFVr2m_-Nh8&start_radio=1 – Hebrew Rhapsody, Steven Greenman and Byron Schenkman

https://search.library.wisc.edu/digital/AH5JY7SWICMCWW8K/A4BZH55QXEHECV8L - Bay di Toyern fun Beys Hamikdosh – Abe Schwartz Orchestra Recording from 1920.

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