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Response to a *Salonstück*: The Question of Szymanowski's Influence on Bartók's Sonata for Violin and Piano no. 2

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ABSTRACT

Almost every analysis written on Bartók's two violin sonatas (BB 84 – 1921, BB 85 – 1922) discusses the question of Szymanowski's possible influence. Although most scholars accept that the music of the violin parts, jointly worked out by Szymanowski and the violinist Paweł Kochański, in the Polish composer's works exerted some influence on Bartók's violin compositions, opinions differ as to how significant this influence was, which components of Bartók's music it may have affected, and how great a share, if any, Jelly d'Arányi may have had in this influence, given that it was with her that Bartók first encountered Szymanowski's *Myths,* op. 11 (1915) and the *Notturno e Tarantella* op. 28 (1915), that are most often mentioned in connection with the sonatas.

It is usually Bartók's Violin Sonata no. 1 that is examined in this connection, because it is the earlier work that seems to show more obvious traces of Szymanowski's supposed influence. The present study, however, focuses on Violin Sonata no. 2, rarely mentioned in this respect.

KEYWORDS

Bartók, Szymanowski, Violin Sonata no. 2, *Myths*, *Notturno e Tarantella*

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When writing about a Central European issue, we are almost always confronted with the problem of what exactly Central Europe (and Central European identity) is in a cultural or even in a political context, because its borders are not as easy to draw as they are when we speak of it in geographical terms. Sometimes it is probably easier to approach a concept as elusive as a Central European identity through the activities of individuals belonging to this community. Bartók's and Szymanowski's careers were full of the controversial twists and turns so typical of artists from this part of Europe. Both were born in Central Eastern Europe, and both drew inspiration from their own folk music – even though in Szymanowski's case this influence came considerably later, in the second half of the 1920s.[1] Whereas both wanted to create, in their own way, a style of national composition based on folk music, their musical education, at the same time, followed Western European models, their composing and performing activities took place mainly in Western European countries, and, as composers, they eagerly followed the latest Western European trends throughout their careers. It is no coincidence that their only memorable encounter took place in Paris (at the Paris premiere of Bartók's Violin Sonata no. 1),[2] and it is not surprising, therefore, that Bartók wanted so keenly to return to European concert life after the end of the Great War. He was curious about the latest works of his colleagues, which he had not had the chance to get to know in his wartime isolation.[3] Nevertheless, it was not the only reason for his return. Dissatisfied with the political changes inside and outside his own country, he also sought new opportunities abroad. In addition, the war and the ensuing revolution of 1919 had left him in financial difficulties. Bartók complained to his Romanian friend Ion Buşiţia about this situation:

> … living expenses for the three of us are twice my year's salary. So, I have to devote all my spare time to money-making. I play the piano at concerts, write articles for foreign periodicals, and I'm writing books about the folk-music of Hungary and other countries. It is obvious that, in these circumstances, I have no time for composing, even if I were in the right mood for it.[4]

He desperately needed the income from his concerts. In 1920, he gave concerts in Berlin, then in 1921 in England. It seems that financial considerations actually played a part in this English tour as well. The idea of the tour probably came from Adila Arányi (Mrs. Fachiri),

[1]For this last stylistic period, see the final chapters of Alistair Wightman's book. WIGHTMAN, *Karol Szymanowski*, 289–408; furthermore see SAMSON, "Karol Szymanowski."

[2]Paris, April 8, 1922. Regarding the premiere, see BARTÓK Jr., *Apám életének krónikája*, 201; as well as Bartók's letter to Márta Ziegler Bartók of April 11, 1922, published in BARTÓK Jr., *Bartók Béla családi levelei*, 330–332. For the program bill of the concert, see Bartók Archives, BAN: 249.

[3]On the other hand, there was also a growing interest in his compositions on the part of his Western European colleagues. In 1920 Philip Heseltine published an extensive study of Bartók's music; see Cecil GRAY, "Béla Bartók," *Sackbut* 1/7 (1920), 301–312. The following year, two remarkable music journals commemorated his fortieth birthday. The article published in the Bartók issue of the Vienna *Musikblätter des Anbruch* was the German translation of Gray's study published in *Sackbut*; see Cecil GRAY, "Béla Bartók," *Musikblätter des Anbruch* 2/3 (1921), 91–96. The article published in the *Revue Musicale* was written by Zoltán Kodály; see Zoltán KODÁLY, "Béla Bartók," *La Revue Musicale* 2/3 (1921), 205–217.

[4]See Bartók's letter to Ion Buşiţia of May 8, 1921, in DEMÉNY (ed.), *Béla Bartók Letters*, 153.

a Hungarian violinist living in London. Seeing Bartók's poor financial condition, she proposed to her friends to help him in this way.[5] Bartók had become acquainted with the Arányi family during his years at the Budapest Academy, when he gave piano lessons to Hortense, the second of the three sisters. At that time, he was on friendly terms with Adila, the eldest of the three, to whom he even dedicated two compositions, a Duo for two Violins and an *Andante* for violin and piano (BB26a, BB26b, 1902). His relationship with the family loosened considerably over time, especially after the Arányi sisters moved to London, but it was never completely severed.[6]

The idea that Bartók could perform not only with Adila but also with her younger sister, Jelly (likewise a violinist), probably came up while discussing the details of the tour. In any case, when Jelly was in Budapest in the autumn of 1921, she visited Bartók for this very reason. Her visit was finally an opportunity for them to play together, and Bartók was so impressed by her performance and her personality that he started writing a new composition for her.[7] This was a big deal at that time, because Bartók had admittedly composed "nothing" for "two long years."[8] He even doubted whether he would be able to write anything at all. Needless to say, this "nothing" was only "nothing" by Bartók's standards, for he had only recently completed his *Improvisations on Hungarian Peasant Songs*,[9] and his pantomime *The Miraculous Mandarin*[10] had been completed, albeit in draft form, the previous year. Nevertheless, it was true that it had been some time since he had written such a large-scale original composition that he might have considered "something."[11] No wonder, then, that his wife, Márta Ziegler, wrote enthusiastically to his mother-in-law that he was composing again:

> Béla took me by surprise with the news – he is composing! Again at long last, – I hardly contained myself this morning when, as a birthday present, he showed me the violin sonata on which he is working. … I am so happy. How afraid I was that all the deprivations of recent years would finally enfeeble Béla's ability to work – and how grateful I am to Jelly Arányi, whose wonderful playing has drawn out of Béla this (as he calls) long-dormant plan … .[12]

[5]See Philip Heseltine's letter to Frederick Delius, November 20, 1920, in SMITH (ed.), *The Collected Letters*, vol. 3, 334, cited by COOPER, "Bartók, Biography, and the Violin," 9.

[6]Bartók first mentioned the Arányi family in his letter to his mother written in about March, 1902. See BARTÓK Jr. (ed.), *Bartók Béla családi levelei*, 52–53. About the Arányi family members and their connection with Bartók, see MACLEOD, *The Sisters d'Arányi*, 135–142, and GILLIES, *Bartók in Britain*, 131–144.

[7]The work was written explicitly at Jelly's request. In his letter to Jelly of November 9, 1921, Bartók recalled that she had told him that, if necessary, she would "mesmerize" him to write something for her. An English translation of part of the letter, originally written in Hungarian, was published in a Sotheby's catalogue for an auction held on May 15–16, 1967. See *Sotheby and Co: Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books, Music Autograph Letters and Historical Documents*, May 15–16, 1967, 112.

[8]Bartók's letter to Jelly Arányi, November 9, 1921; see Ibid.

[9]Op. 20 (BB83, 1920).

[10]Op. 19 (BB82 1918–1919, orchestration 1924).

[11]See the letter to Arányi, quoted above.

[12]See Márta Ziegler Bartók's letter to Paula Voit Bartók of October 19, 1921, in GILLIES, *Bartók in Britain*, 137.

By December he had completed the Sonata for Violin and Piano no. 1,[13] and a year later he finished the second sonata.[14] Bartók dedicated both works to Jelly Arányi.

It seems obvious that Jelly had a crucial role in the creation of the two violin sonatas. However, some scholars are rather sceptical that Jelly's performance and personality alone could have been enough inspiration for the two sonatas. According to them (for example, Malcolm Gillies) the new works they played together, and especially some of the latest works by Karol Szymanowski, must have had a far greater impact on Bartók than Jelly's suggestive violin-playing.[15] Although there is no information about which pieces they played together, it is almost certain that *Myths*, op. 11 (1915) and *Notturno e tarantella*, op. 28 (1915) were among them, as is the fact that these works really caught Bartók's attention. The very day Jelly left Budapest, he wrote to his publisher, asking for copies of these two compositions with the intention of performing them.[16] A month later, *Myths* was indeed on the program of Bartók's and Zoltán Székely's concert on November 12.[17]

What was it about Szymanowski's works that could have had such a significant impact on Bartók? Malcolm Gillies and Alistair Wightman explained Bartók's growing interest in Szymanowski's violin pieces with the new violin technique that Szymanowski developed in collaboration with his friend, the violinist Paweł Kochański. In their opinion, most of the virtuoso solutions of the two violin sonatas were directly influenced by Szymanowski's violin pieces.[18]

The view expressed by Gillies and Wightman was not shared by every scholar. Studying the compositional sources regarding the genesis of the Violin Sonata no. 1, László Somfai concluded that Bartók could have begun composing the work long before he met Jelly and, through her, Szymanowski's violin works; and by the time Jelly arrived, a significant part of the first movement was already completed, even if in a draft form. At the same time, he does not exclude the possibility that in passages that, as he assumes, were composed later, some technical solutions may have been derived from Szymanowski's violin pieces.[19]

As for the technical elements attributed to Szymanowski, many of these, in László Vikárius' opinion, were already present in Bartók's works, although it was not the final form and technique (as written for the violin), but its characteristic sound that, by the time the two violin sonatas were composed, had already been an integral part of Bartók's music. In short, even if

[13]BB 84, 1921.

[14]BB 85, 1922.

[15]GILLIES, "Stylistic Integrity," 139–160.

[16]Bartók's letter to Universal Edition, October 6, 1921; see Bartók's correspondence with Universal Edition, all sources available in photocopy in the Budapest Bartók Archives, BAN: 10152. Regarding Arányi's Budapest visit see GILLIES "Stylistic Integrity," 150, and MACLEOD, *The Sisters d'Arányi*, 137. For the date of Jelly's departure ("When we said goodbye on Thursday"), see Bartók's letter to Jelly of November 9, 1921, mentioned above. His meticulous study of these violin works can be seen in his letter of November 5 to Universal Edition, in which he asks where the *sordino* section ends in the violin part of *Myth* no. 3, as it was omitted from that edition; see Bartók's letter to Universal Edition of November 5, 1921, in BAN: 10156.

[17]Budapest, Vigadó, November 12, 1921. See BARTÓK Béla Jr., *Apám életének krónikája*, 93. For the program bill of the concert, see Bartók Archives, BAN: 2049/84.

[18]GILLIES, "Stylistic Integrity," 153–154, WIGHTMAN, "Szymanowki, Bartók," 161.

[19]SOMFAI, "Written between the Desk," 114–130.

Bartók used some of the technical solutions seen in Szymanowski's works, he ultimately composed according to his own way of hearing and musical thinking.[20]

What Gillies and Wightman write – they speak more of borrowings – does not provide enough evidence to regard these similarities as evidence of the influence of Szymanowski, not even in the case of the Violin Sonata no. 1.[21] As far as the Violin Sonata no. 2 is concerned, even Gillies recognizes that when composing this work Bartók had already "assimilated" these "recently-learned techniques" into his own compositional style much more successfully.[22] It is not surprising, then, that most of Wightman's and Gillies' examples come from the Violin Sonata no. 1, and almost exclusively from its first movement, while there are only a few words about the Violin Sonata no. 2 in this respect. They mention only two technical elements which they attribute to Szymanowski's influence. The first of these is the use of tunes entirely in harmonics – Gillies[23] thought of a section (fig. 34–34^{+2}) in the second movement of the Violin Sonata recalling what Tibor Tallián[24] identifies as the *ritornell* theme.[25] The second element consists of those double-stops of seconds and sevenths which appear in the second half of the development section of the first, slow movement, that is, in a passage that Somfai[26] describes as the second "lament episode" (fig. 13–14)[27] (Example 1). They regarded the panpipe imitation in the *Dryades et Pan* (from *Myths*, at fig. 5) as the model of the tune in harmonics, and the double-stop chain preceding the panpipe imitation as that of the second and seventh parallel double-stops (fig. 4).[28] There is no doubt that in these two sections Bartók and Szymanowski used the same technical solution. And yet, among the works by Szymanowski that Bartók came to know through Jelly, there is one, the *Notturno e Tarantella*, that also resembles the Violin Sonata no. 2.

Notturno e Tarantella belongs to the lighter current of Szymanowski's compositions, it has a distinctly exotic–oriental tone and, if we are to believe the anecdotal story of its genesis, it was composed during a cheerful gathering of friends; after a certain amount of cognac had been consumed, it may indeed, as Anna Iwanicka-Nijakowska suggests,[29] have been intended by its composer as a parody of the then very popular nineteenth-century virtuoso violin music. This is a feature of the work that must be taken into consideration when comparing it with Bartók's Violin Sonata no. 2.

The most conspicuous similarity between these two works can already be seen at first glance. Both consist of two movements: a slow, improvisatory first, and a fast, dance-like second. Of course, Bartók had no need of Szymanowski's example to compose a two-movement,

[20]VIKÁRIUS, *Modell és inspiráció*, 116–124, 130, and 117, note 104.

[21]GILLIES, "Stylistic Integrity," 147.

[22]Ibid., 157.

[23]Ibid.; WIGHTMAN, "Szymanowski, Bartók," 161.

[24]TALLIÁN, *Bartók Béla*, 203–206.

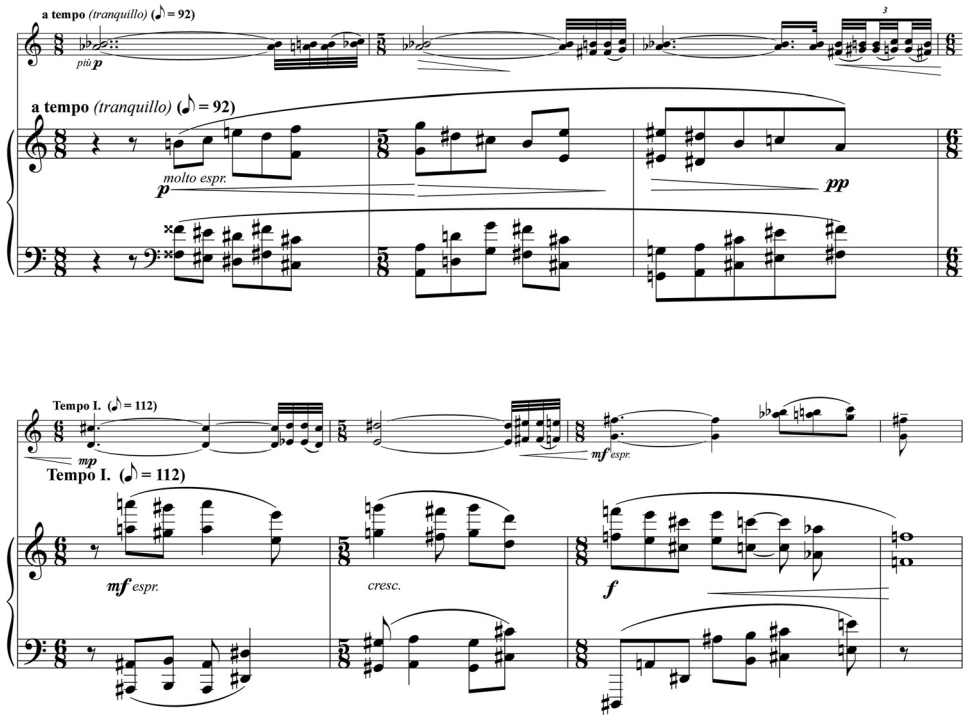
[25]In fact, the Violin Sonata no. 2 has a very original and unusual form in which the first theme of the first movement also returns, in a constantly changing form, in the second movement, thus creating a larger form from the two-movement rhapsody-like structure.

[26]SOMFAI, "Bartók Béla: 2. hegedű-zongora szonáta," 52.

[27]GILLIES, "Stylistic Integrity," 157–158, WIGHTMAN, "Szymanowski, Bartók," 161.

[28]Ibid.

[29]IWANICKA-NIJAKOWSKA, "Nocturne and Tarantella."

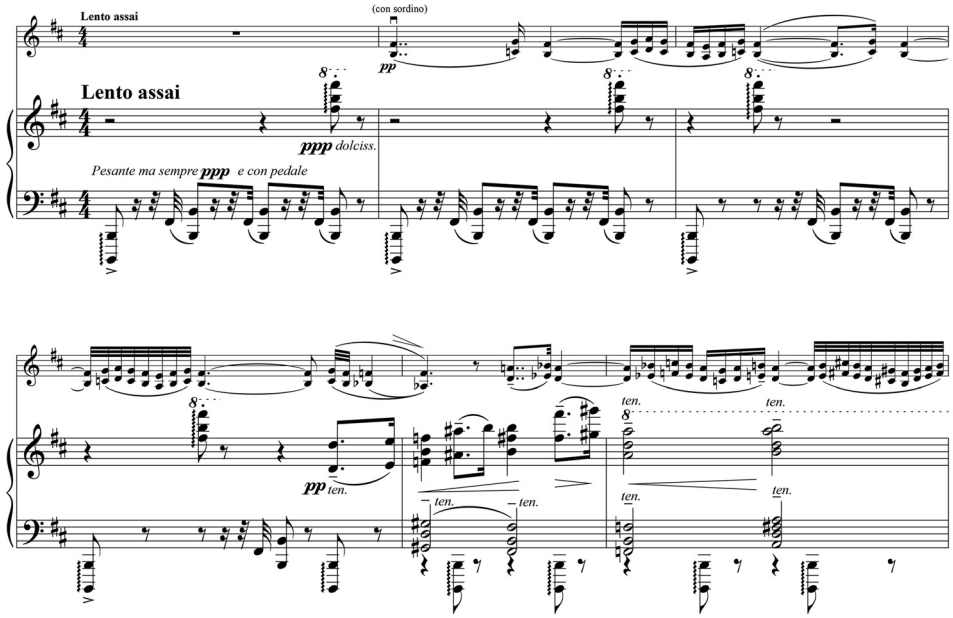


Example 1. Bartók, Sonata for Violin and Piano no. 1, mov. I, fig. 13^{+1}–13^{+5}

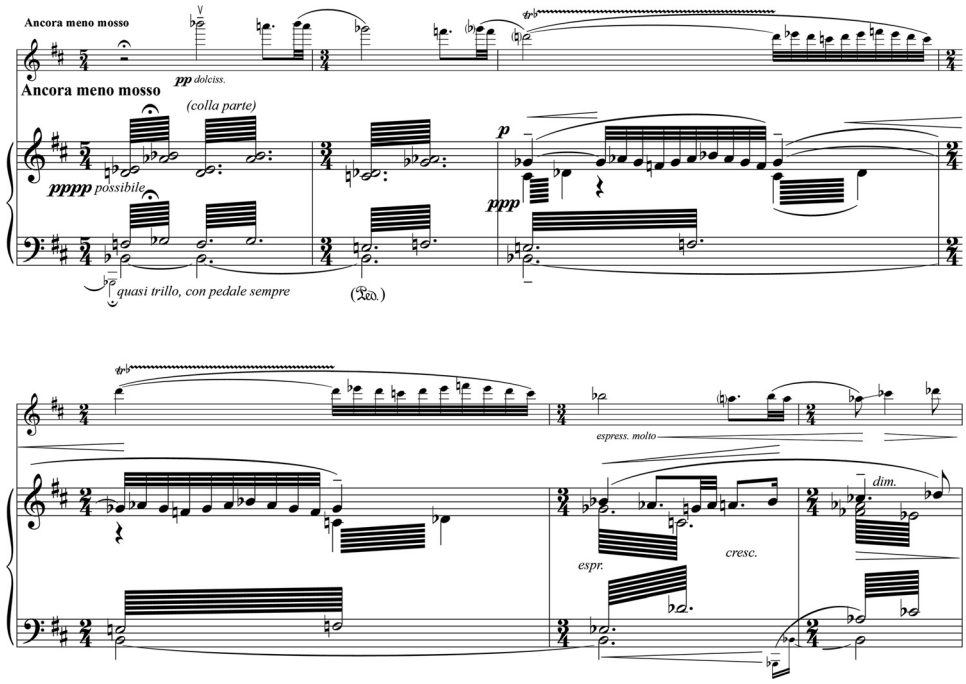
rhapsody-like form, but there are far more similarities between them to regard this correspondence a mere coincidence.

The double-stop chain, one of the technical elements mentioned above and one which also appears in the "lament episode" of the Violin Sonata no. 2, is not only comparable to the double-stop chain in the *Myth* no. 3, but this passage is also reminiscent of the introductory measures of *Nocturne* (Example 2). Although, in this case the two composers did not use entirely the same solution – Bartók, as we have already seen, used dissonant second and seventh double-stops while Szymanowski used open fifth double stops – the intonation and even the melodic structure of these two passages are similar. We encounter a similar situation in the case of the second theme of the *Nocturne* (Example 3), which resembles the *ritornell* theme of the Violin Sonata no. 2 (Example 4a and 4b). They have a similar tone and texture, and both themes are in the same high register.

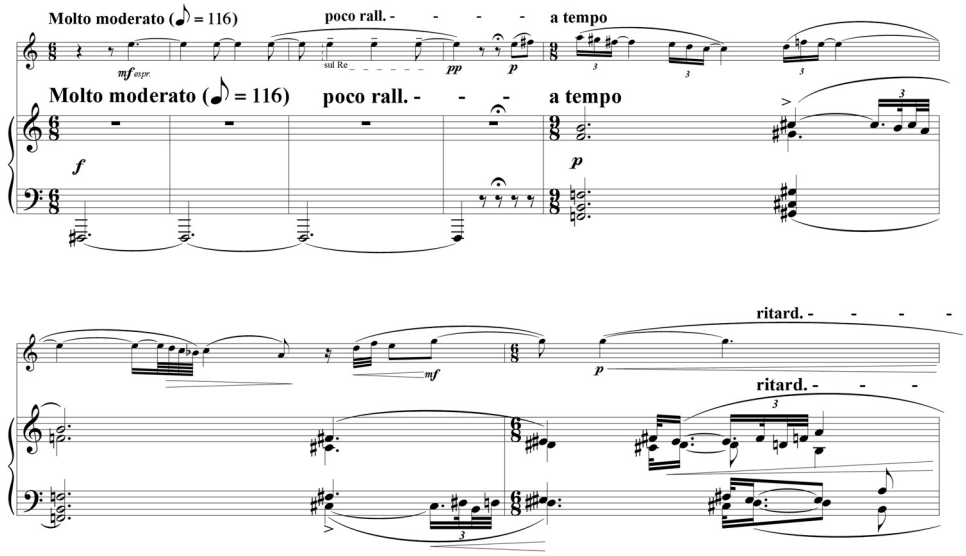
Beyond the abovementioned similarities, we find a good deal more correspondences between these two first movements. Some of them refer only to a specific moment or gesture, such as the *quasi-trillo tremolos* in the piano accompaniment, or the spectacular contrasts resulting from the juxtaposition of very high and very low registers. Such correspondences are not limited to the first movements; we can find similarly matching details in the fast second movements as well. One of the *Tarantella's* themes, consisting of ascending and descending scales



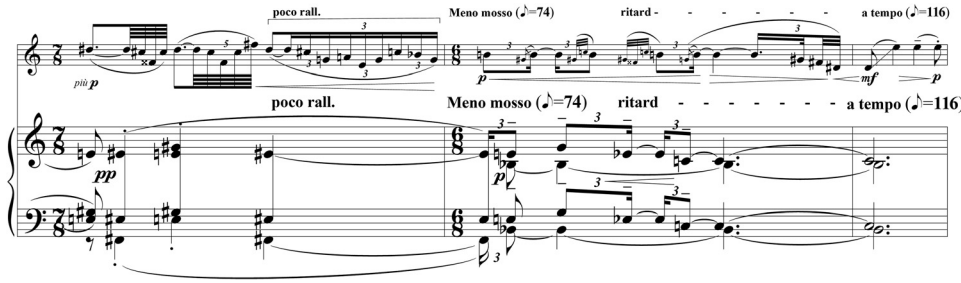
Example 2. Szymanowski, *Notturno e tarantella*, mov. I, mm. 1–6



Example 3. Szymanowski, *Notturno e tarantella*, mov. I, mm. 7–10



Example 4a. Bartók, Sonata for Violin and Piano, mov. I, mm. 1–7



Example 4b. Bartók, Sonata for Violin and Piano, mov. I, fig. 1^{+4}–1^{+6}

(mm. 49–58), resembles the first theme and its variant[30] in the Violin Sonata's fast movement, and some shared aspects can be perceived even in their *ostinato*-like accompaniments.

Yet, in the case of the Violin Sonata no. 2 Szymanowski's influence (if it can be regarded an influence at all) appears in a different way. While in the Violin Sonata no. 1 Szymanowski's music elicited from Bartók such features of his own style that were somehow related to Szymanowski's, in Violin Sonata no. 2 these characteristic features of Szymanowski's music were only a starting-point for him to "rethink" and reformulate them in his own style. Take, for example, the *ostinato* accompaniment of the scale theme mentioned above. In the Violin Sonata, it is only the

[30]For all the variants of the first theme of the second movement of the Violin Sonata no. 2, see SOMFAI, "Bartók Béla: 2. hegedű-zongora szonáta," 52.

continuous movement that recalls the accompaniment of the corresponding section in the *Tarantella*. Instead of the steady pulsation seen in the Szymanowski work, this passage from the Violin Sonata contains Bartók's characteristic asymmetrical rhythms, and a few other, typical Bartókian solutions, for instance an early form of those percussion-like textures which would appear a few years later in Bartók's piano music, and has no precedent in Szymanowski's music (see, for example, the accompaniment to one of the variants of the scale theme, between figs. 9 and 10).

Such correspondences can be found between almost every important part of the two compositions. As a result, it is as if the outlines of the *Notturno e Tarantella* become visible in the background of the Violin Sonata no. 2, albeit vaguely, as if through a veil. Bartók's approach therefore appears to be a conscious response, which instead of similarities, emphasizes the differences between the corresponding details. As an illustration, consider the differences between the *ritornell* theme of the Violin Sonata no. 2 and its "counterpart," that is the second theme of the *Notturno*.

Based on its structure – the alternation of long sustained notes and short ornamental ones – the *ritornell* theme can be related to different musical genres, among others the slow *verbunkos (Hallgató)*. The *verbunkos,* was originally a type of dance music written in a style that, already in the eighteenth and especially from the nineteenth-century, was considered characteristically Hungarian. Later the word also came to refer to a series of instrumental pieces arranged in order of increasing tempo. The highly ornamented *Hallgató* (literally "Listening," i.e. music for listening) with its improvisatory character was the first piece of this suite.[31] László Somfai, on the other hand, was reminded by this melodic structure of the Romanian *hora lungă*, a genre of folk music Bartók discovered during his Romanian folksong collecting trips. In Somfai's view, every part of the *ritornell* theme – the sustained note at the beginning of the phrases, the middle part rich in *fioritura*s, and the recitative-like closing section – corresponds to the descriptions Bartók provided of the structure of the *hora lungă*.[32]

As is well known among Bartók scholars, this genre was extremely important to him for several reasons. He considered these melodies (which have no fixed form and are not bound to any specific occasion) a kind of "primeval" music, one of the oldest genres of folk music known to him, and the wide geographical distribution of this kind of melody – in addition to the Romanian *hora lungă*, he knew Arabic, Ukrainian, and Turkish examples, as well – confirmed this hypothesis.[33]

Actually, almost everything regarding the *hora lungă* was interesting for him, but he was particularly fascinated by features that might have seemed "exotic" even to him: the primitive melodies characterized by a very narrow range of six, five or even four notes, the chromaticism, and, above all, the performance requiring unusual vocal technique: "sobbing elongations," and "hiccup-like *Vorschlag*s." He wrote about all of these features in his study about his Romanian folk music collection from Maramureș County.[34]

[31]SCHNEIDER, "Tradition Rejected," 17–18.

[32]SOMFAI, "Bartók Béla: 2. hegedű-zongora szonáta," 49.

[33]Persian melodies may have come to his attention through Erich von Hornbostel's album *Die Musik des Orients*, Iraqi examples at the Cairo Folk Music Congress in 1932, and Ukrainian dumy melodies through the works of Filaret Kolessa. For these and other later discoveries of this melodic type, see LAKI, "Der lange Gesang," 393; see also note 2.

[34]Béla BARTÓK, *Volksmusik der Rumänen von Maramureş*. *Ethnomusikologische Schriften Faksimile-Nachdrucke*, vol. 2 (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1966), 240.

The *hora lungă*-like features of the *ritornell* theme are usually explained by the fact that at the time Bartók was arranging his Romanian folk song collection and preparing the *Maramureş* volume, a source especially important for the *hora lungă*, for publication. Yet, seeing the highly ornamented, improvisatory second theme of Szymanowski's *Notturno* (the alternation of the sustained notes and the ornamentation-like short values), it does not seem entirely inconceivable that these features of the *Notturno* (which are structurally similar to the *hora lungă*) also had some part in the formation of the *ritornell* theme. In fact, in this light, it seems as if Bartók had deliberately placed an authentic folk music theme *(hora lungă)* against the exotic themes of *Notturno*. It could be regarded even as a (Bartókian) parable of what "real folk music" is, and how folk melodies should be "treated."[35] In any case, Szymanowski's violin piece was a very good "target" in this respect. It was in fact an exotic *Salonstück* containing every feature Bartók had criticized regarding the "folk, nationalistic or exotic" works of nineteenth-century composers. Even the "exoticism" of the piece is a kind of "salon" exoticism of Spanish, Italian and perhaps, to some extent, Arabic clichés mixed according to Parisian taste. This gesture, that is the way Bartók juxtaposed Szymanowski's exotic themes with exotic, but at the same time authentic, Eastern European folk melodies of a similar character, can even be interpreted as Bartók contrasting Szymanowski's Western European exoticism with his own Eastern European one.

The argument seems convincing, and yet one question remains. If, as we mentioned above, *Notturno e Tarantella* belongs to the lighter stream of Szymanowski's works, why then would Bartók have chosen a work which was obviously intended to entertain, to contrast with his own work of a very different weight and written (in all probability) for a different purpose? At that time, he could not have been familiar with Szymanowski's later "Polish" compositions, but he had already known some of his other more representative works.[36] Or perhaps the answer lies at another, more personal level?

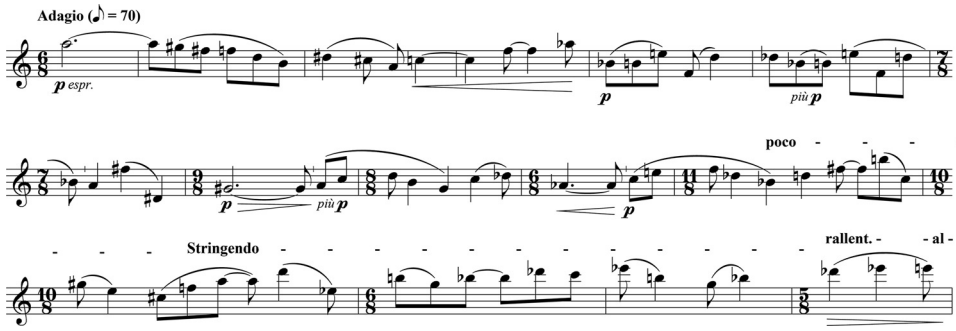
Regarding the Violin Sonata no. 1 several scholars had already called attention to musical allusions with deep personal relevance. The most conspicuous of them, as János Kárpáti has pointed out, is the similarity, in tone and texture, between the "A" part of the second, slow movement of the Violin Sonata no. 1 and the first movement of the early Violin Concerto,[37] dedicated to a violinist, Stefi Geyer; even the theme of the Violin Sonata (Example 5a), is a variant of the Stefi Geyer *Leitmotiv*, although, as Kárpáti has remarked, it is already not the original ascending form (Example 5b), but the mournful, descending one.[38] This mournful mood is further heightened by the characteristic theme of the middle section of the second movement *(Sostenuto)*, which is reminiscent of a funeral march (See figs. 4 and 6).

[35]See, among others, BARTÓK, "The Relation of Folk-Song to the Development of Art Music of Our Time," in SUCHOFF (ed.), *Essays*, 321; furthermore BARTÓK, "Some Problems of Folk Music Research in East Europe," in SUCHOFF (ed.), *Essays*, 173.

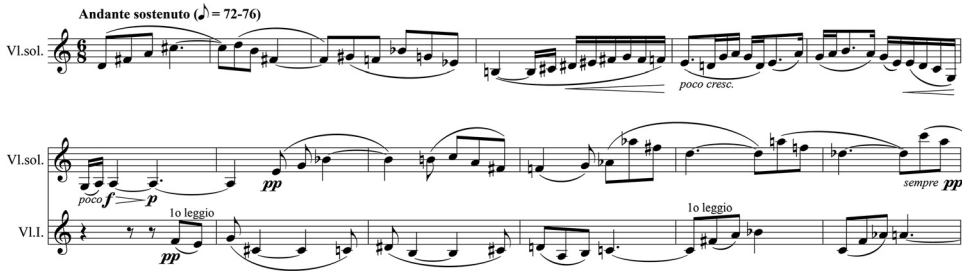
[36]According to Gillies, at the time of composing the Violin Sonata no. 1, Bartók had six Szymanowski scores at his disposal. Apart from an earlier work, the *Hagith*, which was sent to him unsolicited by UE, Universal Edition sent all the wartime works requested by him: in addition to the *Myths* and *Notturno e Tarantella*, the *Masques*, op. 34 (1915–16), Piano Sonata op. 36 no. 3, (1917), and *Four "Tagore" Songs* op. 41 (1918). See Emil Hertzka's letter to Bartók of October 10, 1921. BAN: 10153, and GILLIES, "Stylistic Integrity," 150–151.

[37]BB 48a, 1907–1918, i. e., the later "Ideal Portrait"; see *Two Portraits* op. 5, for orchestra, BB48b, 1907–1911.

[38]KÁRPÁTI, *Bartók's Chamber Music*, 300.



Example 5a. Bartók, Sonata for Violin and Piano, mov. II, beginning



Example 5b. Bartók, Violin Concerto, "op. posth. 1," mov. I, beginning

This descending, mourning version of the *Leitmotiv* was also detected by David Cooper in the first movement of the Violin Sonata no. 1. It appears in the development section with a characteristic (and rather unusual) Italian inscription, *risvegliandosi* (reawakening), amid other descending seventh chords (fig. 14).[39] This Italian word, placed next to the descending version of the *Leitmotiv*, is revealing in itself. However, it offers further possibilities for interpretation if we know that this inscription most probably comes from *Myth* no. 3 *(Dryads et Pan)*. In that work, this instruction appears several times. It first appears at fig. 10, *risvegliando*, then at fig. 12^{+2}, once again in this form of the verb, i.e. *risvegliando*.[40]

Speaking about the possible program of the *Myths*, Szymanowski said that his intention was not to follow the mythological story, but to recall the mood that the story had evoked in him.[41] In the case of *Dryads*, in addition to several programmatic instructions, Szymanowski himself sketched out a possible program in his answer to the American violinist, Robert Imandt, The beginning of the work:

[39]COOPER, *Béla Bartók*, 184.

[40]We can also find this verb, shortened to, "*risvegl.*," in the *Notturno e Tarantella* at measure 165.

[41]CHYLIŃSKA, *Szymanowski*, 94–95. Cited by HO, *The Violin Music*, 51–52. See also in CHYLIŃSKA, *Karol Szymanowski Korespondencja*, vol. 2, 672. Szymanowski's answer (without date) to Robert Imandt's letter of October 25, 1923 is cited by WIGHTMAN, *Karol Szymanowski*, 144; see also note 24, 453.

> … a murmuring forest on a hot summer night, thousands of mysterious voices intermingled in the darkness, merrymaking and dancing Dryads. Suddenly the sound of Pan's flute. Calm and unrest followed by a suggestive languorous melody. Pan appears. The amorous glances of the Dryads, and the indescribable fright in their eyes. Pan leaps backwards – the dance is resumed – then everything calms down in the freshness and calmness of the rising sun.[42]

Based on the performance instructions given in the score, the scene can be followed even without Szymanowski's explanation, and, what's more, even the gestures of some of the characters are almost animated by them. The instructions after the first panflute imitation (at figs. 5–6) are particularly telling: *lento amoroso* (slowly, amorously; at fig. 6), *molto affettuoso languido* (very emotionally, longingly; fig. 6^{+3}). Occasionally, these instructions create smaller scenes. Around fig. 10, for example, the following instructions can be seen in quick succession: *risvegliando*, next to it *più mosso, scherzando* (even faster, jokingly), then *energico*, *accelerando* (energetic, accelerating), then for the piano *staccato (scherzando)*, and finally, at the end of the section in harmonics – another imitation of the panpipes? –, *adirato* (angrily).

It was probably the word itself, *risvegliando* (reawakening), that caught Bartók's attention, given the situation in his life, namely his infatuation with Jelly. At the same time, if we accept the hypothesis that he took the term *risvegliarsi* explicitly from the score of *Dryads et Pan*, we cannot help wondering whether he might also have identified in some way with the scene depicted in the work, i.e., Pan's failed attempts at courtship.[43]

Nevertheless, this descending variant is also found in the Violin Sonata no. 2. What is more, it appears right at the beginning of the work, albeit in a hidden form. In fact, the descending *ritornell* theme reminds us not only of the first theme of Szymanowski's *Nocturne*, but also of the descending *Leitmotiv* variant in the slow, second movement of Violin Sonata no. 1; even their intonation is similar.

It would also be useful to say a few words about this particular tone of the theme. Among its most conspicuous features are that it is often located in a very high register and that it has a certain indescribable sweetness, due, perhaps, to its relatively consonant accompaniment. The yearning gestures in the melody are also among its most striking characteristics, as is the almost transparent texture.

Reading this description, we can easily identify the most typical features of the first movement (the later "Ideal" movement of the two Portraits, 1907–1911) of the early Violin Concerto, and over time this sound has indeed become organically intertwined with the Stefi Geyer *Leitmotiv*, especially in its original ascending form. At the same time, we can also discover this sound in some of Szymanowski's wartime compositions, namely in his *Myths*. Yet, in his study of Szymanowski's influence on Bartók, only Wightman noticed some similarities in the intonation of their works.[44] He mentioned the night music-like tone of the middle section of the first

[42]HO, *The Violin Music,* 66.

[43]The *Myth* no. 3 may have been particularly important to him, since it contains (right at the beginning of the work) quarter tones that Bartók, admittedly, first noticed in Szymanowski's works. For Bartók's thorough study of this Szymanowski score, see note 12.

[44]WIGHTMAN, "Szymanowski, Bartók," 161.

movement of Bartók's Violin Sonata no. 1, which reminded him of the general mood of the *Myths*. But this ethereal tone of the "Ideal" also permeates the individual pieces of the *Myths* so deeply, that, along with other features of the work, this sound, so important and so familiar to him, may have caught Bartók's attention.

In any case, this sound plays a prominent role in both sonatas, and its recurrences in all the movements (except the third movement of the Violin Sonata no. 1), creates a link between them, highlighting in this way probably the most important message of the work. Because, seeing that together with this special tone, the most important theme of Violin Sonata no. 2 might even contain the Stefi Geyer *Leitmotiv* – which in time became the symbol of Bartók's deepest feelings – we are left to wonder whether the parallels between the two works, the similar characters and the similarities in tone, might not have served as a reminder to the composer of Jelly, or of Jelly's violin playing (or even of her playing Szymanowski).

Nevertheless, the gesture of response or the process of rethinking (rather than being under somebody else's influence) can also be recognized at an even larger, structural level, at the level of the two-movement large-scale form created by the recurring *ritornell* theme. The *Notturno* has a classical ABA_v form. Section A contains two thematic ideas: the introductory measures with open fifth parallels in the middle register, and a descending scale theme followed by a highly ornamented, improvisatory section in the high register (the descending theme begins on $B\flat^3$. Section B consists mainly of more rhythmic, dance-like music with a Spanish character, but at one point in this section (at m. 35) the ornamented part of the descending scale theme returns in both the violin and piano parts. Section A_v begins with the descending scale theme, which appears twice. Following this theme, Szymanowski recalls all the themes of the *Notturno* in a shortened form: first a few measures from section B, then the open fifth parallels from the beginning of the movement, then again the descending scale theme, but this time placed in the middle register.

Given this structure of Szymanowski's work, the question arises as to whether the repeatedly recurring material belonging to the scale theme, usually placed in the high register, might not have provided a model for the structure of the slow movement, or even for the overall form of Violin Sonata no 2.

This hypothesis is supported by the way in which Bartók uses the musical material and the different registers in the case of the repeated appearances of the *ritornell* theme. Whereas Szymanowski places the recurring themes (or their fragments) mainly in the same, high register, and the thematic material is almost unchangeable, in Bartók's composition the *ritornell* theme first appears in the middle register, then gradually rises higher and higher until it reaches its highest point at the end of the second movement. As for the continuous transformation of the *ritornell* theme, László Somfai has already addressed the issue in a detailed analysis.[45] However, all these phenomena suggest a conscious response, and a rethinking of the form on Bartók's part.

[45]SOMFAI, "Bartók Béla: 2. hegedű-zongora szonáta," 49–50.

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