

TWO PIANO EDITIONS OF THE THIRD AND FIFTH MOVEMENTS OF BARTÓK'S
CONCERTO FOR ORCHESTRA: THEIR TEXTUAL FIDELITY
AND TECHNICAL ACCESSIBILITY

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In the case of *Concerto for Orchestra*, Béla Bartók transcribed one of his most emblematic orchestral compositions to his own solo instrument, the piano. This transcription's primary function was to suffice for ballet rehearsal accompaniment for the choreography to be introduced alongside a performance of the orchestral work. György Sándor, Bartók's pupil and pianist, prepared the original manuscript for publication. Logan Skelton, pianist-composer, used this published edition as a point of departure for his own piano arrangement of the same work. György Sándor took an editorial approach to the score and followed the manuscript as literally as possible. On the other hand, Logan Skelton treated the same musical material daringly, striving for technical simplicity and a richer orchestral sound. The purpose of this study is to examine and identify the contrasting treatments pertaining to playability, text, and texture in the Bartók-Sándor edition and Skelton arrangement of the two movements, *Elegia* and *Finale*, of the *Concerto for Orchestra* piano arrangement.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Concerto for Orchestra is one of Béla Bartók's rare symphonic compositions that the composer transcribed for piano. Because Bartók's aim in making the transcription was purely practical (see below) and not to produce a solo concert piece, the piano reduction required revision in order to make it ready for performance. György Sándor, Bartók's pupil and pianist, edited and prepared the original manuscript for publication.¹ Logan Skelton (b.1961), pianist, composer, and piano professor at the University of Michigan, used this published edition as a point of departure for his own piano arrangement of the same work.² His approach to *Concerto for Orchestra* exceeded Sándor's modification of the same work. While Sándor strove to faithfully follow Bartók's reduction, Skelton frequently made deliberate choices to better adapt the orchestral texture and timbre to a pianistic setting.

Bartók's original piano version was commissioned by the New York Ballet Theater. The piano score, completed in January 1944, was to be recorded, and the recording used in rehearsals for a ballet production in conjunction with the performance of the original orchestral work. In 1985 the composer's son, Peter Bartók, commissioned György Sándor to prepare Bartók's manuscript for publication and thus make it available to pianists. Besides correcting errors, Sándor combined the editorial process with arranging unpianistic passages and reducing or eliminating filler notes that covered important voices in the piano score. To provide a more complete understanding of the composition, Bartók expanded the grand staff to three and even four staves in sections involving a dense orchestral texture. Because of this, the composer

¹ György Sándor (1912-2005), one of the most eminent pianists of the twentieth century, studied piano with Bartók and composition with Kodály at the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest. He recorded all of Bartók's solo piano pieces and premiered *Piano Concerto No.3.*; Béla Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra*, ed. György Sándor, piano score (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2001)

² Skelton revised Sándor's edition in 2011.

advised to have two pianists record these parts.³ Sándor eliminated the auxiliary lines from the published piano score and made critical passages that originally required two players technically suitable for one performer.

Sándor's studio recording of *Concerto for Orchestra* piano version reveals that numerous passages of the printed edition are performed in simplified version, not following Sándor's own arrangement.⁴ Besides offering solutions to Sándor's performance inconsistencies, Skelton offers alternative readings of the technically challenging parts. Sándor's and Skelton's sonic and technical considerations vary throughout the composition.⁵ Beyond examples of renotating pianistically problematic sections, their changes in the piano score allow for important voices or the character of the piece to be illuminated.

A careful investigation of the score shows that Sándor's edition of *Concerto for Orchestra* piano transcription is more faithful to the original manuscript. Skelton addressed the text with greater liberty in order to achieve orchestral effects on the piano, as well as offered differing solutions from those of Sándor in highly difficult passages. The most significant disparities appear in the movements *Elegia* and *Finale*. The purpose of this study is to examine and identify the contrasting treatments pertaining to playability, text, and texture in the Bartók-Sándor edition and Skelton arrangement of these individual movements.

³ Béla Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra*, ed. György Sándor, piano score (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2001), iv.

⁴ Béla Bartók, "Concerto for Orchestra," by György Sándor, recorded 1988 on *Piano versions: Concerto for Orchestra, Dance Suite, Petite Suite*, New York, N.Y.: CBS Records Masterworks MK 44526, 1988, CD.

⁵ The most striking differences between Sándor's and Skelton's handling of Bartók's piano reduction occur in measures 482 and 556 of the final movement. Sándor's and Skelton's readings of this section demonstrate an entirely different notation.

CHAPTER 2

THE EVOLUTION OF *CONCERTO FOR ORCHESTRA* PIANO SCORE

The scholarly literature is extensive in discourses relevant to the present research. Kristian Iver Klefstad in his dissertation (2002) determines three essential factors in the arranging process: textual fidelity, aural stimulation, and technical feasibility.⁶ These three principles pervade the countless piano transcriptions produced over the centuries and are true features of Sándor and Skelton's artistic contribution in the field. The ideology, purpose, and trait of orchestral compositions' piano adaptation has created stimulating discourses on the subject.

Besides researchers of the twenty-first century, exceptional musical minds of the preceding era such as Ferruccio Busoni and Arnold Schoenberg also contemplated the objectives of piano transcriptions.⁷ Busoni's thoughts on the topic might be as philosophical as "notation is itself the transcription of an abstract idea."⁸ On the other hand, Schoenberg approached the questions from the practical point of view, whether "a piano reduction [is] to be used for reading, or for playing?"⁹ Hence, does it serve educational or concert purposes? In the nineteenth century, the intent of a piano transcription was to disseminate this very literature among larger audiences.

Keyboard arrangements enjoyed widespread popularity in musical communities, bourgeois households, and aristocratic venues in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Franz Liszt, a pioneer of piano transcriptions, took a leading role in disseminating his

⁶ Kristian Iver Klefstad, "Style and Technique in Two-Piano Arrangements of Orchestral Music, 1850-1930," DMA diss. (University of Texas at Austin, 2002).

⁷ Ferruccio Busoni, *The Essence of Music and Other Papers* (New York: Dover Publications, 1965); Arnold Schoenberg, *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. Leonard Stein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

⁸ Busoni, 87.

⁹ Schoenberg, p.349

predecessors and fellow musicians' operatic, song, and orchestral piano output. Robert Schumann summarized Liszt's art as follows:

Everything seems to me conceived and worked out so completely in orchestral terms, with each instrument so exactly placed and exploited, so to speak, with regard for its basic sonorous quality, that a good musician could prepare a passable score from the arrangement.¹⁰

Although the above commentary addressed Liszt's piano transcription of *Symphonie Fantastique* by Berlioz, it was common for composers to rework their own orchestral pieces or orchestral accompaniments for the piano as well.

The evolution of the nineteenth century orchestral piano reduction continued with the art of prominent composers such as Ravel and Bartók. Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in D Major* is an apt case study because the author reduced the orchestral part himself.¹¹ Similar to Bartók's piano manuscript of *Concerto for Orchestra*, Ravel incorporates three staves in the piano accompaniment of the concerto in order to provide a wider spectrum of the musical fabric, even though these sections cannot be fully performed by one pianist. As opposed to Ravel, Sándor's placing of the entire orchestration of Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* on two staves promotes the readability of the composer's piano transcription.

During Bartók's last years, between 1940 and 1945, Sándor maintained a strong collegial relationship and friendship with his former piano teacher in New York City. Just four days before his death, Bartók handed the orchestral score of *Concerto for Orchestra* to Sándor for a final proofreading before the publishing deadline.¹² Four decades after his father's death, Peter Bartók approached Sándor with a request to edit and revise the piano score of this work. As Sándor recalls in his *Editorial Note* of the printed score:

¹⁰ Hector Berlioz, *Fantastic Symphony*, ed. Edward T. Cone (New York: Norton, 1971), 233.

¹¹ Maurice Ravel, *Concerto pour la main gauche pour piano et orchestre* (Paris: Durand, 1937)

¹² Bálint András Varga, *From Boulanger to Stockhausen: Interviews and a Memoir* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2013), 258.

[It] was agreed that the primary goal would not be to make the piano score easier to play but to make it playable at all. Furthermore, since Bartók's piano score contains only the first ending of the last movement my role was to provide a reading of the second (alternative) ending.¹³

Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers Ltd published the first edition of *Concerto for Orchestra* piano score including the facsimile of Bartók's manuscript in 2001.

Skelton's first encounter with the *Concerto for Orchestra* piano transcription was hearing Sándor's studio recording. After comparing the recording and the published score, Skelton realized that, although Sándor edited the music, in certain parts he deviated from the score image in his performance. Skelton argues that Sándor was inconsistent in adjusting all pianistically ambiguous parts in the publication. Based on his observation, Sándor's solution to modify inefficiently distributed voices and elusive passages containing too many notes, manifests in leaving notes out from the transcription. In Skelton's opinion, "he did that too much, [and] with a redistribution of notes, it would be possible to play more than was provided."¹⁴ In his attempt to present a satisfying solution that also promotes playability, Skelton consulted the orchestral score as well.

Skelton examined the orchestral score in great detail and discovered subtleties in the orchestral text that were either not adapted into the piano score or were not properly highlighted in it. Skelton experienced a lack of drama and artistic arc in the Bartók-Sándor edition of the piece due to these deficiencies. In order to convey the orchestration on the piano, he experimented with register shifts, incorporated counter material, and eliminated filling notes that suppressed crucial musical elements. Skelton believes that his piano arrangement of *Concerto for Orchestra* communicates "the dramatic shape of the piece more efficiently, especially toward the

¹³ Béla Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra*, ed. György Sándor, piano score (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2001), v.

¹⁴ Logan Skelton, e-mail message to author, February 14, 2016.

end.”¹⁵ He acknowledges that out of the three sources he consulted, the most important was the orchestral score. The subsequent chapters discover the means Sándor and Skelton utilize to enhance the orchestral effects and sonorities of the keyboard. Chapters three and four also explore the textual fidelity and technical feasibility of Sándor’s and Skelton’s musical and practical solutions affecting the third and fifth movements of the *Concerto for Orchestra* piano score.

¹⁵ Logan Skelton, e-mail message to author, February 14, 2016.

CHAPTER 3

ELEGIA

The third movement of *Concerto for Orchestra*, characterized by Bartók as a “lugubrious death-song,” has a chain-like structure of successively appearing themes.¹⁶ As the composer briefly describes the movement in the *Composer’s Note* of the orchestral score, the three themes that construct the core of the movement are embedded in a “misty texture of rudimentary motifs.”¹⁷ Scholars such as David Cooper and Benjamin Suchoff refer to this misty texture as ‘night music,’ which together with a prelude and postlude frame the succession of themes.¹⁸

In order to support the understanding of how Sándor and Skelton treated Bartók’s piano arrangement of *Elegia*, the author will follow the movement’s segmentation provided by David Cooper in his book, *Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra*.¹⁹

Table 1: Third Movement, *Elegia*

Measures	Sections
mm. 1-21	‘Night music’ 1 (prelude, mm.1-9)
mm. 22-33	Transition
mm. 34-44	Chain link 1
mm. 45-61	Transition
mm. 62-85	Chain link 2
mm. 86-100	Chain link 3
mm. 101-111	‘Night music’ 2
mm. 112-128	Coda (postlude)

Beyond examples of renotating pianistically problematic passages, chapter three will also include a selection of instances that demonstrate Sándor’s and Skelton’s changes in the piano score to allow for important voices or the character of the piece to be illuminated.

¹⁶ Béla Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2001), 148.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

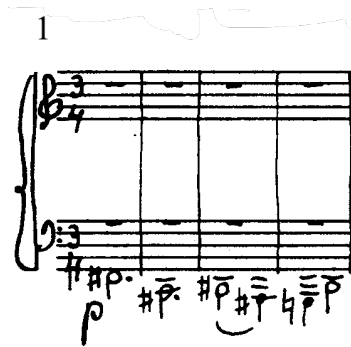
¹⁸ David Cooper, *Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 50.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Night Music I

The orchestra movement begins with a motif of interlocking and descending intervals of fourths in the double basses (measures 1-4). Benjamin Suchoff refers to this chain of intervals as ‘darkness’ motif, which Bartók notated in the piano arrangement in a single line (Example 1a).²⁰ In order to emphasize the dark tone color of the double basses, Sándor tripled this single voice by adding two lower octaves (Example 1b). In his version of the opening measures, Skelton follows Sándor’s three octave parallel motion notation.

Example 1a: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, Piano Score, mm. 1-4



Example 1b: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 1-4

Andante, non troppo, ♩ = 73

Upon arriving in measure 10, the texture of *pianissimo* trills, tremolos, and arpeggios in the orchestra are not represented in Bartók’s own piano adaptation. Instead, he holds a chord for nine measures under the oboe solo line (Example 2a).

²⁰ Benjamin Suchoff, *Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra: Understanding Bartók’s World* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1995), 148.

Example 2a: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, Piano Score, mm. 1-18

In his editorial notes in the *Concerto for Orchestra* piano score, Sándor describes his changes to this part as follows:

“At the beginning of the third movement I have added from the orchestra score some harp passages that were essential to produce the background to the extremely high and low instruments, omitted by Bartók apparently because of lack of time.”²¹

The score sample with the added harp passages by Sándor is shown in Example 2b.

Example 2b: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 10-13

²¹ Béla Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra*, ed. György Sándor, piano score (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2001), v.

Skelton further embellishes this section by octave doubling the bass note in the left hand arpeggio chords in every second measure to maintain the orchestral timbre on the piano.

Chain Link 1

Passing through the *Transition* (measures 22-33), the next significant changes occur in the first chain link affecting the keyboard notation of the descending sixteenth-note septuplets played by the flutes, oboes, violas, and cellos. Bartók's notation of this passage appears to be the most economic. The composer precisely marks the starting notes of the one-hand glissandos, which, in the complete orchestral phrase outline an ascending scale in the flutes and oboes (Example 3a and 3b). This is an excellent score example to illustrate instances of Bartók's three and four staves notation. In this case, not all of the dotted rhythms appearing in the auxiliary line can be played by the right hand alone due to the large intervallic leaps. Bartók includes auxiliary lines in the piano score to provide a more complete image of the orchestral text. His recommendation concerning the use of the piano transcription is to have a second pianist play the parts written in a smaller size in the recording session and ballet rehearsals. As seen in Example 3c below, Sándor and Skelton provide a solution to include these trumpet signals in their arrangements.

Example 3a: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, Piano Score, mm. 34-36

Handwritten musical score for Example 3a, showing measures 33-36. The score is in 4/4 time and features a descending sixteenth-note septuplet in the right hand and arpeggiated chords in the left hand. The tempo is marked "a tempo" with a circled "34" and a note value of "♩ = 64-62". The dynamics are marked "f" and "sf". The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is annotated with "co rallant..." and "sempre un.". The notes E, F, and G are circled in the right hand, and the left hand has "of" written below it. The score is written on three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a single treble clef staff above it.

Example 3b: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 34-36

The image shows a musical score for measures 34-36 of Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*. It features two staves: Flutes I, II, III (top) and Oboes I, II, III (bottom). Both parts play septuplets (groups of seven notes) in a 4/4 time signature. The notes are marked with an 'a' and a '3', indicating an ascending triplet. The dynamics are marked with a forte 'f' and a hairpin crescendo. The notes are circled in the original image to highlight the glissandi effect.

Besides embedding the trumpet motives in the treble clef staff, Sándor enhances the dramatic falling effect in the above-mentioned orchestral instruments by marking two-handed white-key glissandi in measures 34-41. However, he does not maintain Bartók's rising initial notes of each glissando (Example 3c).

Example 3c: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 34-36

The image shows the piano accompaniment for measures 34-36 of Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*. The tempo is marked 'a tempo' with a quarter note equal to 64-62. The score is in 4/4 time and features a right-hand (R.H.) part with a rubato marking and a left-hand (L.H.) part. The right hand plays a series of chords and single notes, with dynamics ranging from forte (f) to mezzo-forte (mf). The left hand plays a series of chords, with dynamics ranging from sf (sforzando) to mf. The score includes markings for glissando (gliss.) and simile (sim.).

Skelton, instead of using glissandi, notates each note of the flute and oboe septuplets in the right hand passages and extends them by an octave to support their falling effect. Furthermore, he reincorporates the escalation of the starting notes of each group (E-F-G-G sharp-A-B-C, etc.), thus supporting the increase of tension in this section (Examples 3d).

Example 3d: Bartók, ed. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 34-36

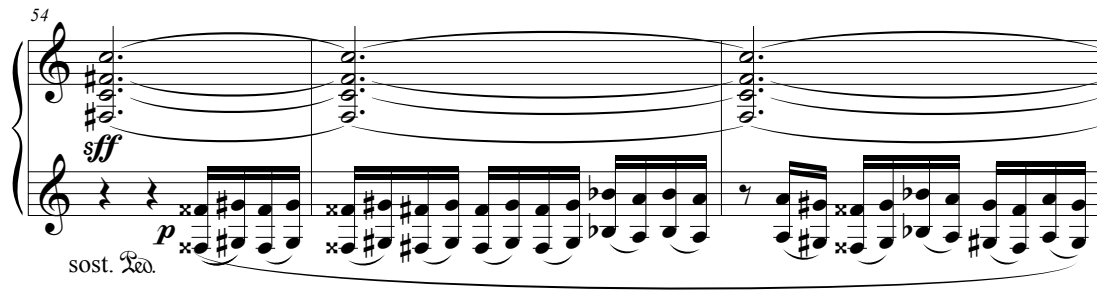
Transition

In the following two sections of the movement, *Transition* and *Chain Link 2*, Skelton shows a tendency for fidelity and Sándor for independence in relation to Bartók's piano score. Measures 54-60 represent an example in which Skelton, following Bartók's notation more closely, omits every second note of the octave parallel sixteenth-note figuration to better facilitate the technical execution of the left hand passage (Example 4a).

Example 4a: Bartók, ed. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 54-56

Besides ease of playing, Skelton's choice of keeping the octave for the first and third notes of the sixteenth-note groups also suggests to the performer a perception of musical delivery of the paired slur-articulation in measures 54-56. In contrast, Sándor's aim in this area is to highlight the parallel octave motion of the oboes and clarinets, which he maintains throughout the designated measures (Example 4b).

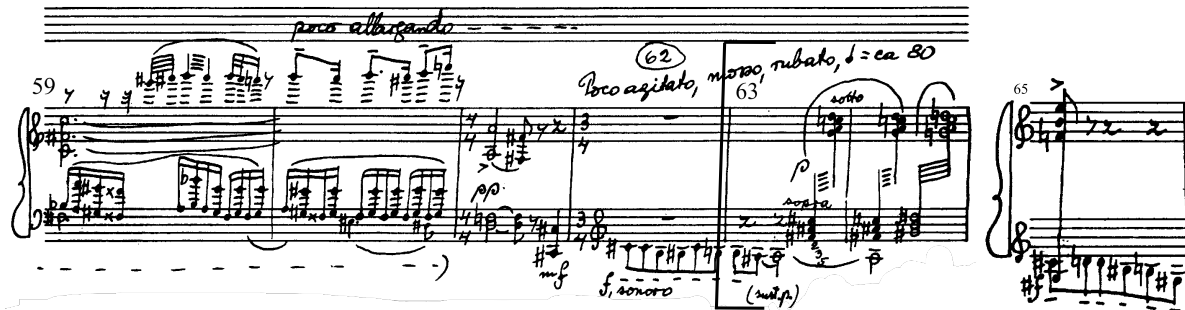
Example 4b: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 54-56



Chain Link 2

Chain Link 2 is an outstanding source of discovering the distinct treatments of the original piano material in Sándor’s and Skelton’s reading. The following alterations primarily concern the text and texture of the Bartók piano arrangement. The composer’s tremolo markings in measures 63-68 in the piano manuscript resemble the tremolos of the first and second violin parts in the orchestral score (Examples 5a and 5b).

Example 5a: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, Piano Score, mm. 59-65²²



²² The following score examples provide only a sample of the entire section, mm.63-68, in which tremolo markings appear in Bartók’s manuscript.

Example 5b: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 63-65

The score for Example 5b consists of four staves. Harp I and Harp II play a tremolo pattern in the right hand and a two-note tremolo in the left hand. Vlns. I and Vlns. II play a tremolo in the right hand and a two-note tremolo in the left hand. The score includes dynamics like 'p' and performance instructions like 'ordin. con sord.'

While Sándor decides to follow the intervallic advancement of the first harp (top line) in the right hand and imitate the tremolos in the first violin (bottom line) with only a two-note tremolo in the left hand, Skelton re-establishes Bartók's string chord tremolos in his arrangement (Examples 5c and 5d).

Example 5c: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 63-65

The score for Example 5c shows a piano arrangement of measures 63-65. The right hand plays a tremolo pattern, and the left hand plays a two-note tremolo. The score includes dynamics like 'p' and performance instructions like 'ordin. con sord.'

Example 5d: Bartók, ed. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 63-65

The score for Example 5d shows a piano arrangement of measures 63-65. The right hand plays a tremolo pattern, and the left hand plays a two-note tremolo. The score includes dynamics like 'p' and performance instructions like 'ordin. con sord.'

Sándor's choice links the succeeding musical elements more coherently together as the orchestra proceeds from *Transition* to *Chain Link 2* and the sixteenth-note motion moves from the oboes, clarinets, and cellos to the harp. However, tremolos play a significant role in creating timbre, thus striving for the orchestral effect on the piano validates Bartók's solution which Skelton followed note for note.

The sorrowful folk-like melody played by the violas beginning in measure 62 returns in a determined character in the woodwind section (measure 73). Similarly to the original presentation, the melody is constantly interrupted by measures of subordinate musical material: in contrast to the subtle tremolos of the previous part, the harp and viola upward glissandos burst into forceful chords and *pizzicati* joined by the brasses and strings. These climactic moments are best captured in Skelton's piano arrangement. Besides the added left hand tremolos in the piano's low register that increase the strength of the right hand E-flat major scale (measure 74) and glissandi (measures 76, 78, and 80-82), he drops the left hand ending chords an octave lower than initially placed by Bartók and Sándor (Examples 6a, 6b, and 6c). Although Sándor modifies the score image, he preserves Bartók's glissandi without exception in the discussed measures.

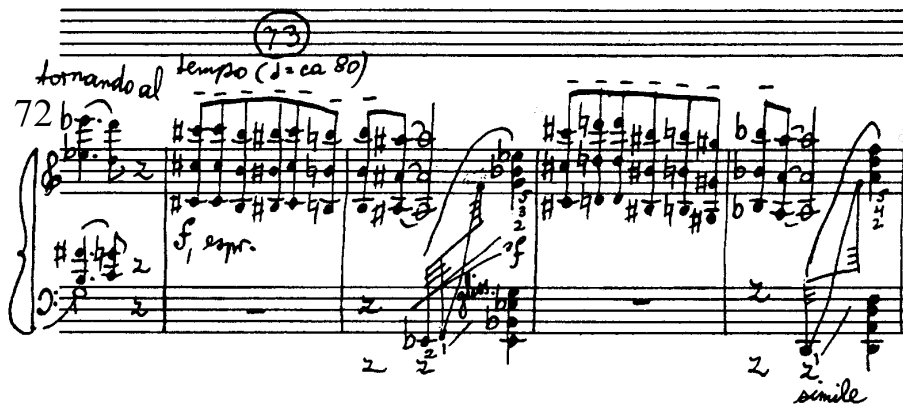
Example 6a: Bartók, ed. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 73-76

The image shows a musical score for piano, measures 73-76. The key signature is E-flat major. Measure 73 begins with a right-hand melody of sixteenth-note tremolos, marked *f* and *espressivo*. The left hand has a whole rest. In measure 74, the right hand continues with a melodic line, and the left hand enters with a tremolo accompaniment. A label 'E flat major scale' points to the right-hand melody. Measure 75 shows a dynamic shift to *sf*. Measure 76 features a right-hand glissando marked *sf* and *gliss.*, with the left hand playing chords. The score concludes in measure 76 with a final chord in the right hand and a low register chord in the left hand.

Example 6b: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 73-76



Example 6c: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, Piano Score, mm. 72-76



Chain Link 3

Comparing Sándor’s CD recording with his edition of the *Concerto for Orchestra* piano score, the listener can discover performance inconsistencies.²³ The following section, measures 86-92, of *Elegia* exemplifies such disparities. Comparing Bartók’s piano manuscript and Sándor’s edition, no change occurs in the right hand notation between the two scores. However, Sándor omits the inner voices of the right hand chords in performance, resulting in a thinner texture that stray from the actual score image. From Skelton’s unpublished version, it is evident that the latter pianist-composer eliminates the inner contrapuntal voices from the right hand motifs both in visual and aural interpretation (Examples 7a and 7b).

²³ Béla Bartók, “Concerto for Orchestra,” by György Sándor, recorded 1988 on *Piano versions: Concerto for Orchestra, Dance Suite, Petite Suite*, New York, N.Y.: CBS Records Masterworks MK 44526, 1988, CD.

Example 7a: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 86-91

Example 7a shows two systems of piano accompaniment for measures 86-91. The first system (measures 86-88) features a right hand with chords and a left hand with a melodic line, both marked 'f'. The second system (measures 89-91) features a right hand with chords and a left hand with a melodic line, both marked 'crescendo'. The right hand part is marked '8va'.

Example 7b: Bartók, ed. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 86-91

Example 7b shows two systems of piano accompaniment for measures 86-91. The first system (measures 86-88) features a right hand with chords and a left hand with a melodic line, both marked 'f'. The second system (measures 89-91) features a right hand with chords and a left hand with a melodic line, both marked 'crescendo'. The right hand part is marked '8va'.

These voices represent the oboes and violins from the instrumentation. However, due to their positions within the chords, they feel uncomfortable on the keyboard and cause trouble for the performer in maintaining clarity and tempo at the same time. To emphasize the octave melody of the right hand, Sándor and Skelton share their conception of adding a unison voice to the left hand, which initially is missing from the original source.

Coda

The *Coda* reveals important notational differences between the three piano scores, including the manuscript, that affect the orchestra's nature evoking soundscape. One of the most intriguing changes Skelton implements in opposition to Bartók and Sándor is eliminating the eighth notes tied to the previous measures' half notes in the treble staff in measures 112-115 (Examples 8a and 8b).

Example 8a: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 112-117²⁴

(Calmo, ♩ = sempre 64)

112 *pp*

p, semplice

Example 8b: Bartók, ed. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 112-117

(Calmo, ♩ = sempre 64)

112 *pp*

p, semplice

These sustained notes represent the oboes and clarinets in the orchestra. Skelton evidently makes this choice based on his knowledge of woodwind instruments' nature. In his aim to end the resonating note in the piano at the same time as the wind section cuts the pitch in the orchestra, he omits the tied eighth notes from each measure. In composer Kent Wheeler Kennan's words, "When a sustained tone [is] being tied into the beginning of the next beat...the notation gives an

²⁴ Sándor's published edition reflects exactly Bartók's manuscript in these measures.

easier and more definite cut-off point and leads to a cleaner, more unified release.”²⁵ Thus, Skelton’s approach captures the timing of the oboes and clarinets releasing the held notes with precision. In Sándor’s audio recording, the sustained right hand chords create continuity in sound as if they were an independent entity from the left hand counterpoint. In Skelton’s concert recording, the end of the right hand chords are clearly articulated. In his performance, the chords integrate with the bass notes into coherent harmonies. Orchestral recordings also differ in interpretation, thus it is up to the performer’s evaluation, which musical translation is favored.

Finally, beginning in measure 122, Bartók uses the *sostenuto* pedal of the piano to promote isolation of the sustained chord in the left hand from the solitary bird song motif in the right hand top layer (Example 9a).

Example 9a: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, piano score, mm. 119-128



While Sándor suggests to use half pedal, Skelton organizes the A major chord originally shared between two hands, now occupying the left hand alone. By sustaining the chord with his left hand, he enables the motive in the keyboard’s upper register to remain articulate over the resonance of the bass register. Besides the pedal use, Skelton employs one difference in notation compared to the other two scores. That is, he maintains the A in the left hand from measure 122 through 125, together with the rest of the open A major chord. Bartók and Sándor release this

²⁵ Kent Wheeler Kennan, *The Technique of Orchestration* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall International, Inc., 1952), 108.

note, which in the cello part leaps up to E. This minor adjustment does not affect the overall sonic color. Thus, Skelton's technique corresponds more convincingly with Bartók's intentions of achieving orchestral color (Example 9b and 9c).

Example 9b: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 122-128

122

p *più p* *pp* *pp* *ppp*

1/2 *celo.* *8va-1*

Example 9c: Bartók, ed. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Elegia*, mm. 122-128

122

p *più p* *pp* *pp* *ppp*

R.H. L.H. *1/2 celo.* *8va-1*

CHAPTER 4

FINALE

The third movement, *Elegia*, and the fifth movement, *Finale*, portray the lows and highs in the overall character of the *Concerto for Orchestra*. In Bartók's words, "the general mood of the work represents a gradual transition from the sternness of the first movement and the lugubrious death-song of the third movement to the life assertion of the last one."²⁶ The fifth movement is composed in an irregular sonata form. The exposition mostly consists of Rumanian instrumental dance music and the fugue of the development section evolves from the last theme of the preceding unit. The *perpetuum mobile* sixteenth-note passages in the exposition and recapitulation exemplify Bartók's virtuoso treatment of the various instrumental groups in the orchestra. Because of the virtuoso aspect and textural complexity of the orchestral movement, Bartók often splits the musical material between three or four staves in the piano score. This led Sándor and Skelton to approach the *Finale* from a primarily technical point of view.

The most significant changes and differences between Sándor's edition and Skelton's reading of the score affect measures 482-556 along with the ending of the movement. Bartók refers to the former part as a "portion [that] is impossible to transcribe adequately for the piano."²⁷ Regarding the conclusion of the *Finale*, neither pianist-composers' ending is identical to Bartók's, as he only adapted the first orchestral ending to the piano. Because the first ending appeared to be rather abrupt, Bartók produced a more extensive second ending to the *Finale* on Koussevitzky's recommendation. Sándor and Skelton finish their versions of the score with this alternate ending of the movement, which has become the standard practice for orchestras in concert performances and recordings of *Concerto for Orchestra*. The above mentioned sections,

²⁶ Béla Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2001), 148.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

measures 482-556 and the alternate ending, will gain closer attention further in the paper. As in the case of *Elegia*, the author of the present treatise will guide the reader through the comparative study of the *Finale* by following David Cooper's outline of the movement.²⁸

Table 2: Fifth Movement, *Finale*

Measures	Sections	Sub-sections
mm. 1-49	Exposition	First-subject group part 1; First horn call and <i>horă</i>
mm. 50-95		First-subject group part 2
mm. 96-118		First-subject group part 3
mm. 119-147		First-subject group part 4
mm. 148-187		Transition – horn call theme
mm. 188-255		Second-subject group; Second horn call
mm. 256-316	Development	Part 1
mm. 317-383		Part 2
mm. 384-417	Recapitulation	First-subject group part 1
mm. 418-448		First-subject group part 2
mm. 449-481		Transition
mm. 482-555		Horn call
mm. 556-625		Second-subject group; Second horn call

Exposition — First-Subject Group Part 1

It is particularly true for the last movement of *Concerto for Orchestra* that adjustments in Sándor's and Skelton's interpretations promote playability, which, in some instances, will be combined with choices to support voice projection and orchestral effects and timbre. In the opening of the movement, in measure 21, Bartók switches from two staves to three, out of which the third line contains the double bass line of the orchestra, marked *ad libitum* (Example 10a). By moving the double bass motives an octave higher and eliminating the upper octave notes from the second staff's eighth-note accompaniment, Sándor is able to add the double bass motive to the left hand texture, although in a different register (Example 10b). Yet in the designated tempo of quarter note equals M.M. 146, the expectation of reaching a tenth at such a speed becomes

²⁸ Cooper, 58.

unrealistic for most pianists. Skelton chooses to further simplify the left hand part, at the same time successfully maintaining the characteristic double bass line as the lowest layer (Example 10c).

Example 10a: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, Piano Score, mm. 20-23

(21)

Example 10b: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 21-23

Example 10c: Bartók, arr. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 21-23

Close to the climax of the first part of the first-subject group (measures 44-46) Skelton alters the piano texture to support the sonic effect of the orchestra. By adding notes to Sándor's notation of these measures, thus following Bartók's score more closely than Sándor, he manages

to maintain the tone color of the orchestral harmonies (Examples 11a and 11b).

Example 11a: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 44-50

Example 11b: Bartók, arr. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 44-50

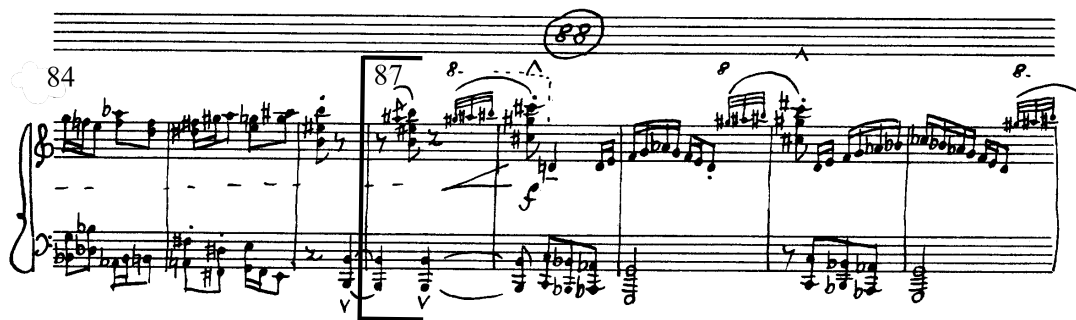
Furthermore, he offers a hand distribution that assists the performer in overcoming the technical difficulties of playing the parallel chords while maintaining tempo, voicing, and musical shaping. In his piano setting of the following two measures, he also includes the syncopated rhythmic element of the bassoons and horns to illuminate an essential component from the orchestral score (measures 47-49, see Examples 11a and 11b).

Exposition — First-Subject Group Part 2

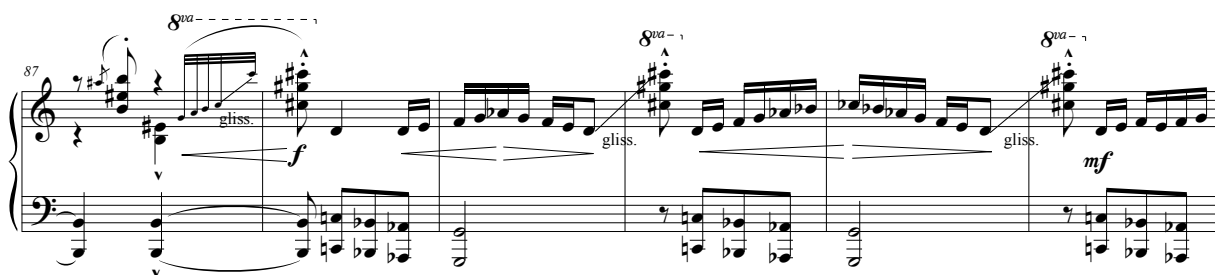
In the subsequent part, unlike Sándor, Skelton does not contribute to the playability of Bartók's piano reduction of the final movement. Two noticeable changes occur in Sándor's edition of the manuscript. Bartók includes the bassoon and double bass lines with smaller note heads in his original piano score (measures 66-73), which alternate between F and C, establishing a Tonic – Dominant relationship under the *horǎ* melody played by the violins and

the two flutes.²⁹ Sándor’s choice to omit the bassoon and double bass line from this section coincides with Bartók’s instructions in the piano score, in which he states that small-head notes complete the picture of the composition. However, if only one pianist is available to play from the score, “parts with big-head notes give also a sufficient idea of the music.”³⁰ The other adjustment creates a desired orchestral effect in the piano between measures 87 and 92. The lashing grace notes that explode in a shriek every second measure in the woodwind section sound more powerful on the piano if the performer sweeps up the keyboard with a *glissando*, demonstrated in Sándor’s edition (Examples 12a and 12b).

Example 12a: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, Piano Score, mm. 84-91



Example 12b: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 87-92



Passing through part three of the first-subject group in the exposition, no remarkable modifications take place in the three piano scores in relation to one another. Besides a few added expression markings, the one noteworthy inclusion is a series of white-note clusters in part four

²⁹ *Horă* is a Romanian dance in which rhythm and varied melodies pervade the Finale. See Cooper, pp.59-60.

³⁰ Béla Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra*, ed. György Sándor, piano score (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2001), iv.

of the first-subject group in Skelton’s adaptation. The clusters in the low register of the piano are supposed to imitate the forceful sonic effect of timpani attacks that interrupt the rhythmic elements of the brass section in measures 138 to 144 of the orchestral score (Examples 13a and 13b). Skelton’s solution significantly contributes to the chase-like character of this thematic material preceding the transition that links to the second-subject group. These timpani strokes are missing from the original and the published piano arrangement as well.

Example 13a: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 137-140

Example 13b: Bartók, arr. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 137-140

Exposition — Second-Subject Group

The challenge of adapting the second-subject group to a pianistic setting lies in its multilayered orchestral texture. This part, lasting from measures 188 to 256, consists of three staves in Bartók’s facsimile piano score (Example 14a). As in similar instances, small-head notes, generally appearing in the auxiliary staff, serve the purpose of providing an accurate sound image of the orchestra. Sándor compressed the three staves to two and captured the essence of the musical material by eliminating certain voices and changing the register of others. For

instance, in order to include the double bass line in the left hand, initially written in smaller notation, he moves its range an octave higher in the bass clef staff. On the other hand, the notation of the first violin line in measures 204-210 is questionable. This short passage sounds different on Sándor’s audio recording than what his edition suggests. In his performance, he abandons the violin part in this section, possibly to allow the “second horn call” motive to better project (Example 14b).³¹ The other reason for excluding the sixteenth notes from the right hand may have been pianistic. In the rapid tempo of quarter note equals M.M. 134, executing the horn call motive and the first violin line simultaneously with one hand borders on the impossible. Skelton’s score adopts this exclusion. To secure the most perfect representation of the horn call motive, Skelton also omits the first notes of the sixteenth-note figures on the downbeats of measures 201 and 202, as they would tend to cover the first two half notes of the trumpet entrance (Example 14c).

Example 14a: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, Piano Score, mm. 194-212

³¹ Cooper refers to the trumpet motive beginning in measure 201 as second horn call. See Cooper, pp.59-60.

Example 14b: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 201-211³²

201 *ben marcato*

206 (L.H.) 3 L.H.

Examples 14c: Bartók, arr. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 201-211

201 > *ben marcato*

206 3

In the following measures (measures 213-243), the repeating first violin line is entirely omitted from both Sándor's and Skelton's interpretations to allow other fundamental motives to shine through in the keyboard setting.

Close to the climax of the exposition (measures 249-254), Skelton makes a choice to increase the orchestral sound of the piano. Instead of alternating the sixteenth note figures between the left and right hand, as seen in Bartók's and Sándor's versions, he repeats them in the

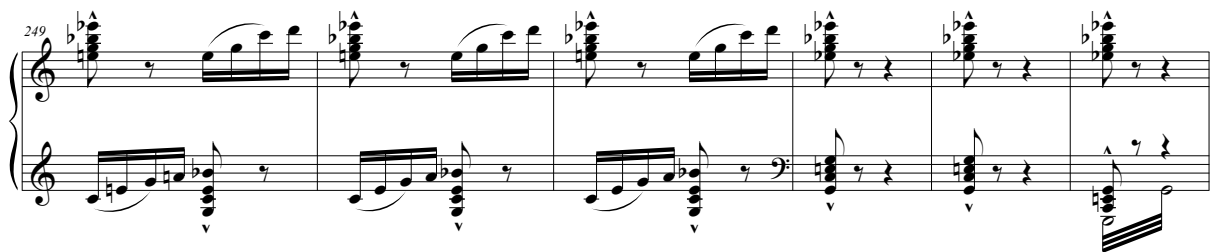
³² Sixteenth-note figures between measures 204 and 211 are not audible on Sándor's audio recording.

right hand exclusively. Besides the change affecting the right hand, he moves the left hand chords to the lower range on the bass staff (Examples 15a and 15b). This sonic expansion empowers the keyboard with a resonance that is capable of competing with the grandeur of the orchestral closure of the exposition.

Example 15a: Bartók, arr. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 249-254



Example 15b: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 249-254



Development

The transparent texture of the development evolves into a fugato, which, in Cooper's opinion is "bizarre, for Bartók combines high-art contrapuntal techniques with the slightly tipsy performance style of a village band."³³ The fugal exposition is based on the second horn call theme, which well preserves its distinct character in the piano setting. Beyond a few suggestions of hand distribution and fingering recommendations to improve the flow of the music, Skelton does not alter Bartók's piano writing. It is apparent from the facsimile edition of the score that this section does not require revision. Sándor faithfully reflects the manuscript in the published

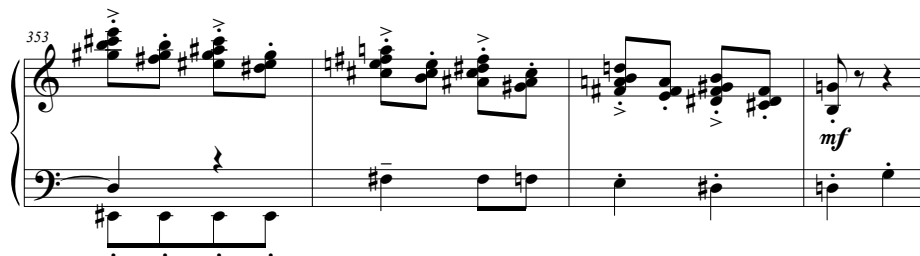
³³ Cooper, 62.

version with one subtle exception. To enhance the dissonant nature of the descending woodwind harmonies in measures 353 through 355, he inserts more notes from the divided flutes and oboes in the chords than Bartók does. In Bartók's original piano score, reducing the orchestral timbre, these chords appear as simplified triad inversions.

Example 16a: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, Piano Score, mm. 348-358



Example 16b: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 353-356



Recapitulation — First-Subject Group Part 1

The sectional arrangement of the exposition with its Rumanian instrumental melodies, horn calls, and motivic structure recur in the recapitulation. Bartók reinstates the *horă* melody first (measures 384-412), which he arranges in the piano score on three staves similarly to the first instance in the exposition. The horn motives appear in the auxiliary line and the string section's fabric is placed in the two main staves. The treble clef staff carries the folk dance melody of violin I and II, while the bass clef staff presents the counterpoint of the violas and

cellos. In his edition, Sándor abandons the horn line from the first part of the first subject group and focuses entirely on the string instruments. Skelton adopts this solution into his own version of the movement with one exception at the arrival point, measures 411 and 412. Neither Bartók nor Sándor include the descending A-G-E-flat eight-notes of the third trombone and the tuba in measure 411 preceding the arrival on two triumphant C-sharp major chords. Skelton, however, instead of continuing the ascending scale in both hands moving in parallel octaves, as introduced in the two other arrangements, replaces the sixteenth-note scale in the left hand with the descending notes in the tuba and trombone parts. This replacement supports the cadential brass counterpoint, leading into the succeeding chords in measure 411.

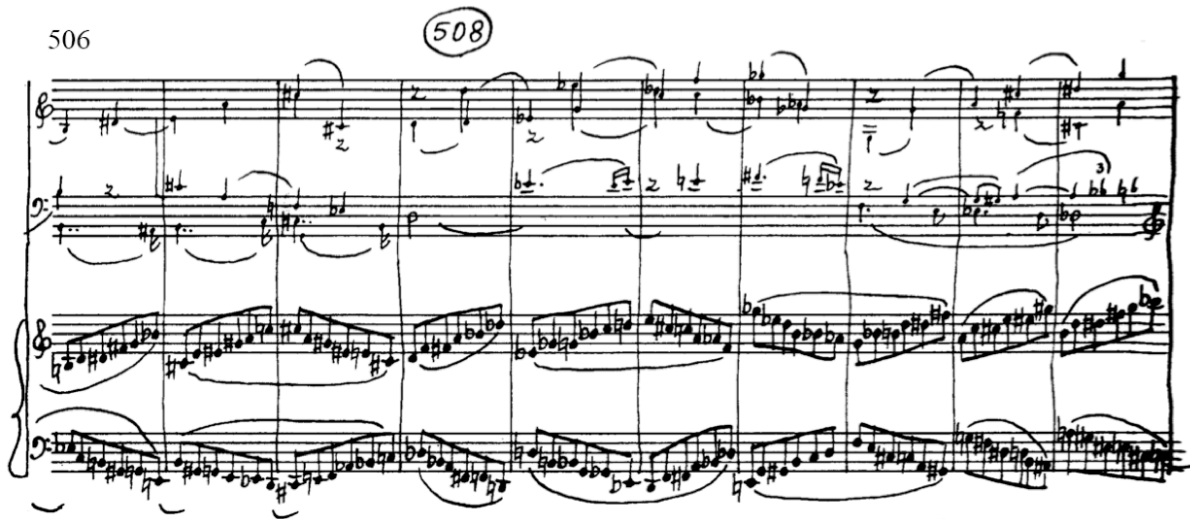
Recapitulation — First Subject-Group Part 2

In measures 418-425 of the orchestral score, Bartók divides the orchestra into three instrumental groups: 1) upper woodwinds and strings that carry melodic and rhythmic material identical to the Rumanian folk dance, *Mărunțel*, 2) lower woodwinds and strings, and 3) trumpets and horns. This triple counterpoint in Bartók's piano transcription includes troublesome hand positions that disrupt the tempo flow. Although Sándor does not take an initiative to retouch these measures, his audio recording proves yet again, that occasionally he himself deviates in performance from his own edition of the piano score. In contrast, Skelton lightens the right hand chords in this passage by eliminating filler notes and preserving essential notes, allowing effortless technical execution for the keyboard player. This example reflects the problem solving Skelton employed in the third movement in measures 86-91.

Recapitulation — Horn Call

The transition (measures 449-481) has relatively little material in common with the exposition and it quietly dissolves through a chain of augmented triads in the woodwind section and horns. The subsequent part, dominated by the horn call motives, organically emerges from this vanishing atmosphere. The tempo instantly turns from *tranquillo* to *più presto*, and the instrumentation rapidly develops into a dense *tutti* orchestral texture. As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, this part (measure 482-555) is the most challenging in terms of adapting the orchestral score to the piano. This portion of the original piano score, notated up to four staves at the most, is unperformable with two hands (Example 17).

Example 17: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, Piano Score, mm. 506-514



Bartók in his explanatory notes in the manuscript provides the following performance instruction:

- a) If two players are available, then the 1st player may play the main part, as it is written, if he can manage to do so. If not, he may leave out the lower part in triplets, and play instead of it the almost ostinato bass-part where it is indicated.
- b) If there is only one player, then it would be better to let him play the small-head parts instead of the triplet-groups.³⁴

³⁴ Béla Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra*, ed. György Sándor, piano score (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2001), iv.

Sándor, in his editorial and arranging process of this section, combines materials from both the *Concerto for Orchestra* original score and piano manuscript. In his own words, he “followed the orchestra score but suppressed some inner voices, while trying to stay as close as possible to Bartók’s indications.”³⁵ Skelton uses three sources in his approach, the former two completed by the published piano score edited by Sándor. In his email correspondence with the author, Skelton acknowledges that listening to numerous audio recordings of the orchestral piece also influenced him in his choices in rewriting significant parts of the *Finale*. Measures 482-555 exemplify Skelton’s endeavor in this regard: his goal was to find solutions that “represent the [orchestral] score the best.”³⁶ Thus, he often decides to take a larger view of the orchestral material in order to convey character and timbre rather than insisting on being faithful to Bartók’s keyboard notation, like Sándor does.

In the “unplayable” section, as Sándor refers to it, Bartók divides the orchestra into two parts in the piano score, placing woodwind and brass instruments in the auxiliary staves and string instruments in the main staves until measure 535. In this particular measure, he switches the instrumental groups into the opposite staves, presumably to stress the importance of the horn call entries in trumpets I and II. In measures 482-497 Sándor distributes the voices so that the waving string accompaniment appears in the right hand and the first horn call motive in the left hand. As a result of this adjustment, the horn call motive originally located in the auxiliary line becomes a building block for the coming sequence of fragmentary motives. Major differences between Sándor’s and Skelton’s scores begin in measure 498. For instance, measures 508-514 exemplify the

³⁵ Béla Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra*, ed. György Sándor, piano score (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2001), iv.

³⁶ Logan Skelton, e-mail message to author, February 14, 2016.

most striking deviations that pervade this unit until the second subject group. Although Sándor manages to incorporate rhythmic and melodic elements from the woodwind section in the piano arrangement, they are unable to project sufficiently due to the string eighth-note triplet motion; as a result, they are either played in unison and become part of the string eighth notes or they are placed in the middle register of the keyboard covered by the outer voices (Example 18a). Skelton solves this issue by playing the string waves entirely with the left hand and reorganizing the woodwind lines in the right hand (Example 18b).

Example 18a: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 508-514

Example 18b: Bartók, arr. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 508-514

As the dynamic increases and the music drives toward a climactic moment in measure 555, Skelton rearranges the strings in the right hand (measures 533-550) and the woodwinds (and eventually basses) in the left hand. This represents a reversal of the placement of orchestral forces as compared to Sándor's version (measures 533-541), which places strings in the left hand and woodwinds in the right hand.

Related to the string parts, a highly pronounced sonic effect of acceleration distinguishes Sándor's and Skelton's arrangements from one another in the section between measures 482 and 555 of the recapitulation. That is, Skelton gradually alters the rhythm of the eighth-note triplets to groups of four sixteenth notes, then to sixteenth-note sextuplets to support the aural perception of the rising and falling stream of the string section (Example 19).

Example 19: Bartók, arr. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm.492-495, 502-505, 535-538

The image displays a musical score for a piano reduction of Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra, Finale, arranged by Logan Skelton. The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 492 to 505. It begins with a tempo marking of 'Più presto' and a metronome marking of a quarter note equal to 184 (♩ = 184). The music is in G minor (one flat) and 3/4 time. The left hand features a series of eighth-note triplets, while the right hand has a more complex rhythmic pattern. The second system covers measures 535 to 538. This section is characterized by a 'swirling figuration' in the right hand, consisting of sixteenth-note sextuplets. The left hand continues with eighth-note triplets. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like 'ppp'.

As he describes, “there is such a cataclysmic effect produced by the swirling figuration, a building, a dramatic and artistic arc that was just lost in the piano reduction. I started experimenting with rewriting significant portions of the last movement with these larger effects in mind.”³⁷

³⁷ Logan Skelton, e-mail message to author, February 14, 2016.

Recapitulation — Second-Subject Group

The aforementioned brilliant string scales continue in the second-subject group (measures 556-625), this time doubled by the woodwinds and surrounding the second horn call in its augmented and triumphant form. Previous instances of Skelton increasing the speed, density, and interval range of these waves by diminishing the note values reach their peak in this section. While Sándor returns to Bartók's manuscript with minor deviations—such as eliminating filler notes, excluding Bartók's 'octave lower' *ad libitum* marking in the bass in measure 558, and expanding some of the upward scales—Skelton underlines the orchestral sound by added bass tremolos (Examples 19a, b, and c). These tremolos evoke the trembling timpani trill effect from the orchestral version.

Example 20a: Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, Piano Score, mm. 556-559

Example 20a shows the musical score for measures 556-559. The score is in 2/2 time and features a key signature of two flats. The tempo marking is "Lo stesso tempo, ma pesante". The score includes a piano part with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a woodwind part. The piano part features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and a tremolo in the bass line. The woodwind part features a melodic line with a triplet in measure 558. The score is marked with a circled "556" at the beginning and "(8. ad lib.)" at the end of the woodwind part.

Example 20b: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 556-559

Example 20b shows the musical score for measures 556-559, edited by Sándor. The score is in 2/2 time and features a key signature of two flats. The tempo marking is "Lo stesso tempo, ma pesante". The score includes a piano part with a forte (*ff*) dynamic. The piano part features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and a tremolo in the bass line. The score is marked with a circled "556" at the beginning and "(8. ad lib.)" at the end of the woodwind part.

Example 20c: Bartók, arr. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 556-559

The image shows a musical score for measures 556-559. The tempo/mood is marked "Lo stesso tempo, ma pesante". The score is in 2/2 time. The right hand features a complex, chromatic melody with many accidentals. The left hand features a tremolo accompaniment. Measure 559 shows a trill in the right hand and a tremolo in the left hand.

Both Sándor's and Skelton's scores are close to identical to Bartók's piano transcription from measure 573 until the alternate ending. Measures 600-606 in the piano manuscript reflect the original ending of the fifth movement. On the other hand, Sándor and Skelton finish the *Finale* with the second ending that Bartók composed based on Koussevitzky's recommendation. Skelton barely changes the closing part from how it appears in Sándor's edition. The one striking adjustment affects the last five bars of the movement. Sándor's virtuosic conclusion, with its glissando and contrary motion effect, creates a remarkable impression for the listener (Example 20a). Yet Skelton's recurring tremolo technique, as reminiscent of the shivering timpani trills in the left hand and the impassioned thirty-second figures in the right hand, virtually transform the piano into a symphony orchestra (Example 20b). Beyond a fulfilling sonic closure, Skelton uniquely captures Bartók's concept, the life asserting character of the final movement.

Example 21a: Bartók, ed. Sándor, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 621-125

Musical score for Example 21a, Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, measures 621-125. The score is in 2/4 time and features a piano accompaniment. The right hand (treble clef) begins at measure 619 with a *ff* dynamic and a *rit.* marking. It includes a triplet of eighth notes, a *cresc.* marking, and a 10-measure phrase. The left hand (bass clef) starts with a *ff* dynamic and a *rit.* marking, featuring a triplet of eighth notes and a *cresc.* marking. The piece concludes with a *ff* dynamic and a *rit.* marking. A dashed line with a double asterisk and the word *rit.* is positioned below the bass staff.

Example 21b: Bartók, arr. Skelton, *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, mm. 621-625

Musical score for Example 21b, Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra, Finale*, measures 621-625. The score is in 2/4 time and features a piano accompaniment. The right hand (treble clef) begins at measure 619 with a *ff* dynamic and a *rit.* marking, including a 15-measure phrase. The left hand (bass clef) starts with a *ff* dynamic and a *rit.* marking, featuring a 7-measure phrase. The piece concludes with a *ff* dynamic and a *rit.* marking. A dashed line with a double asterisk and the word *rit.* is positioned below the bass staff.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Refining Béla Bartók's piano reduction of *Concerto for Orchestra* into a concert piano arrangement is invaluable in light of the resurgent interest of contemporary pianists in the piano arrangement literature. To substantiate Bartók's concept about arrangements, Sándor states in a journal interview that according to the composer, "realization of an instrumental work is never definitive. He took it for granted that a piece could be transcribed for a different instrument or a solo work could be arranged for an ensemble."³⁸ In the case of *Concerto for Orchestra*, Bartók transcribed one of his most emblematic orchestral compositions to his own solo instrument, the piano. Skelton speculates that if Bartók had predicted the desire of future pianists to program this monumental piece in recitals, he would have undoubtedly created an exquisite concert arrangement of the original score.

The performance issues in Bartók's piano manuscript resulted from its practical purpose. This transcription's primary function was to suffice for ballet rehearsal accompaniment for the choreography to be introduced alongside a performance of the orchestral work. György Sándor took an editorial approach to the score and followed the manuscript as literally as possible. On the other hand, Skelton treated the same musical material daringly, striving for technical simplicity and a richer orchestral sound. The significance of Sándor's edition rests in its fidelity to the original piano adaptation. Nevertheless, Skelton's yet unpublished piano arrangement is a substantial contribution to transforming the piano version into a notable performance piece. It is the hope of the author that Logan Skelton's reading of *Concerto for Orchestra* will be published and performed extensively as an independent composition for the piano.

³⁸ Bálint András Varga, 258.

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