

Teaching guide: Area of study 4

Western classical tradition since 1910

Contents

You can use the title links to jump directly to the different sections of this teaching guide.

| Section | Page |
|--|------|
| Introduction | 2 |
| 1. 'Este A Svékelyeknél – An Evening in the Village' | 5 |
| 2. 'Medvetánc – Bear Dance' | 9 |
| 4. 'Kicsit Ázottan – Slightly Tipsy' | 13 |
| 5. 'Ürögi Kanásztánc – Swineherd's Dance' | 17 |
| Swineherd's dance score | 22 |

Introduction

These guides have been produced to support you with the planning and delivery of the new study pieces for Areas of study 1 to 4 (first teaching from September 2024, with the first exam in Summer 2026).

In the guides, we have provided key contextual and background information, and highlight how a range of musical elements are employed within the pieces. The content provided in these guides is not exhaustive, and there may be other interpretations or details which are also valid. Please ensure that you are aware of the full requirements for Component 1 as detailed in the current specification. You may wish to share some or all of this guide with your students.

This guide looks at the following for each piece of music:

- Context
- Structure
- Tonality
- Harmony
- Melody
- Texture
- Tempo
- Metre
- Rhythm
- Articulation
- Dynamics
- Sonority (Timbre).

Study pieces

The study pieces for Area of study 4 are Béla Bartók – *‘Magyar Kepek, Hungarian Sketches, Movements 1, 2, 4 and 5’*.

1. ‘Este A Svékelyeknél – An Evening in the Village’
2. ‘Medvetánc – Bear Dance’
4. ‘Kicsit Ázottan – Slightly Topsy’
5. ‘Ürögi Kanásztánc – Swineherd’s Dance’

Please note Movement 3 is **not** set for study and is **not** included in this study guide.

Set recording

Concerto Budapest conducted by András Keller, 2023, Tacet recordings.

Youtube links:

[‘An Evening in the Village’](#)

[‘Bear Dance’](#)

[‘Slightly Topsy’](#)

[‘Swineherd’s Dance’](#)

This recording is also available on [Amazon](#) and on [Spotify](#).

Score

Students are not required to study the score of this set work, nor to know bar numbers for the exam. However, for ease of reference in teaching, some bar references are included in this study guide and refer to the ‘Editio Musica Budapest’. Similarly, although there are many suitable recordings of these four movements available, the author has used and recommends the recordings indicated above, and it is to these which exam questions will refer, if there is any discrepancy between them and other available recorded versions.

A public domain score can be found on [IMSLP](#).

In the exam, although the Hungarian titles of the music are given above in italics for completeness, movements will be referred to using their English titles.

Background information

This knowledge is not assessed.

Bartók’s *Hungarian Sketches*, or sometimes translated as *Hungarian Pictures*, is a set of orchestrations by him, made in 1931, of pieces originally composed for the piano. Numbers 1 and 2 were written in 1908 and published as part of *10 Easy pieces for the piano*, number 4 was one of three Burlesques from 1911, and number five from *For Children*, written in 1909.

Béla Bartók (1881–1945) was a Hungarian composer who had a particular interest in the folk music of his native country. He recorded and transcribed a considerable amount of this music. He was a highly skilled pianist and composer.

Further general biographical information on Bartók is readily available online.

Context

Information in this section is intended to help students consider the moods and other contexts which the movements and the musical elements portray.

Bartók’s interest in folk music means that, in these pieces, we can hear:

- The influence of Hungarian folk music styles on the different elements of music, for example in the scales/modes used in the melodies, the melodic shapes and in the rhythm patterns.

- An actual folk tune (the main melody of 'Swineherd's Dance'). Bartók collected and recorded this tune in Tolna County in 1907 and commented that it was 'how Felsőireghs last piper performed the tune of the song with the text 'The cricket wants to marry'. The music for this is at the end of the study guide.

Bartók was also keen to explore modernist music styles, although this comes across more strongly in some movements than others. We can hear though:

- some avoidance of functional harmony and functional tonality
- detailed compositional instruction around sonority and dynamics.

Bartók was also known for liking symmetry in his composing. We can see this in:

- the structures of each movement
- the way in which he phrases the melodies.

The four movements capture different moods, as suggested by their titles, and students should consider how the musical elements depict the scenes/moods in each. All four movements seem to be telling a story as they go on, and, as Bartók has not given a specific indication beyond the title as to what this story is, students can use their imagination to consider what might be happening. The music is **programmatic**. There is humour to be found in his music too, if you look for it!

In 'An Evening in the Village', Bartók has used the musical elements to paint a picture of the two contrasting moods, one rather relaxed, and the other lively and dance-like.

'Bear Dance' sees Bartók use the different musical elements to portray the sense of the energy of the dance and the way the bear seems almost to get 'tired' in the final section. Think about both the clumsiness of the animal but also a sense of the power and ferociousness which is also communicated.

'Slightly Tipsy' captures the swaying, staggering and clumsiness of the drunkard. There are hiccups and burps, and possibly even falling over. The confusion and fragmentation of the music seems to capture the muddled mind of someone who has had one drink too many!

'Swineherd's Dance' seems to take a journey from a fairly calm dance at the start, through an energetic central section, before a rather calmer ending where the dancer is, perhaps, tired from the exertions of the dance.

Students might come up with other interpretations of the 'stories' of these movements; what is important is always to think about justifying those interpretations with how the music achieves the effect.

The following notes contain musical elements and terms that students should know and understand to answer questions on this study piece in Section B of the exam. **Bold** type is used to draw attention to musical terms. Marks will be awarded for knowledge of other terms if relevant to this area of study/study piece.

1. 'Este A Svékelyeknél – An Evening in the Village'

Structure

The structure consists of two sections, each repeated to give an overall form of A B A1 B1 A2. This form has a symmetry to it, which is a feature of Bartók's composing.

- Each section has its own tempo and a distinct melody/motif which is developed in the subsequent repetition(s).
- Other developments are found in the textures, the instrumentation, the tonality/harmony and the rhythms.

| Section | Tempo marking | Time on recording | Bar number (for reference only) |
|---------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| A | Lento Rubato | 00:00 | 1 |
| B | Allegretto | 00:38 | 10 |
| A1 | Tempo I (Lento Rubato) | 00:59 | 21 |
| B1 | Allegretto | 01:31 | 30 |
| A2 | Tempo I (Lento Rubato) | 01:53 | 42 |

Tonality

- Bartók's avoidance of conventional cadences and harmonic progressions means that the main indicator of what the key is often comes only from the sense of which chord or note is most frequently or prominently used in each section.
- **Pedal notes** sometimes also help establish a sense of **tonal centre**.
- The first A section feels as though it is in **F# minor**.
- Both B sections begin with a feeling of **F# minor**, but the mood brightens to **A major** after 4 bars. The ending of this section moves unexpectedly to a chord of **D# minor**, but this does not feel like a key change so much as Bartók surprising the listener with an unexpected chord (harmony).
- The A1 section begins in **D major**, but ends in **F# minor**.
- The A2 section begins ambiguously. The **octaves texture** for the first two bars of the section, followed by an accompaniment chord in the strings (bars 44/45) containing only two notes, A and F#, leaves the listener unsure as to whether the music is in D major or F# minor. In bar 47, the strings do play a chord of **F# minor**, and this leads to a conclusion which comes to rest in that key.

Harmony

- The lowest notes of the chords of the A section descend through the section through a scale of the **Aeolian mode** on F#. This mode includes a flattened leading note (the E).



- The last chord of each A section is a chord of F# minor with an added minor 7th (the note E). This **dissonance** is unexpected, especially for a final chord.
- Bartók avoids conventional cadences, however, the A1 section ends with a **modal perfect cadence**. This means that the chord V has a minor third in it.
- The accompaniment of the B section and the B1 section both begin with **alternating chords**.
- In the B1 section the **harmonic rhythm** of these chords doubles. This means that they change every beat, rather than every two beats.
- Often the melody notes provide **dissonance** with the chords which accompany them.
- At the start of the B section there is a **tonic pedal** in the clarinet (F#). As the tonality changes after 4 bars, this pedal moves to the note A in the French Horns.

Melody

- The melodies in both A and B sections are **Pentatonic** – based on a 5 note scale. Specifically this is the minor pentatonic scale on F#.



- The motif of each A section has a generally **descending** shape, and each phrase moves lower in pitch. It is constructed in 2 bar phrases, but with the long note at the end of the phrase extending it by one bar.
- The motif of the B section begins with a 2 bar phrase which is repeated. Bartók then extends the dotted rhythm pattern to develop and extend the final phrase of the section.
- The A1 and A2 sections' melodies are identical for pitch to the original A section melody.
- Ornaments are found in the B1 section, notably numerous **trills** in the clarinet, oboe and flute parts.

Texture

- The overall texture is that of **melody and accompaniment**. The woodwind instruments have the melodic line throughout, whilst the strings and French horns accompany.
- The string accompaniment is always **chordal**. Sometimes the chords are presented as long held notes, other times, as crotchets.
- The clarinet sustains a **pedal note** at the start of the B section. This moves to the French horn after four bars.
- At the start of the B1 section, the horns sustain a **double pedal**, playing the notes C# and A **a third apart**.
- The texture becomes more complex in the B1 section, with the trills and flourishes in the woodwind giving an impression of more movement in the musical texture and some sense of **polyphony** as a result.
- The melody is presented in **octaves** in the final, A2, section. The start of each phrase is **unaccompanied**, with the string chords coming in only with the last, long note of each phrase.

Tempo

- **Lento Rubato** – slowly and freely in the A sections contrasts with
- **Allegretto** – fairly quickly, or moderately quickly, in the B sections.
- The metronome markings in the score suggest that the B section should be nearly twice as fast as the A section.
- The end of each A section has a **pochissimo rit** – a little slowing down, and there is a similar slowing at the end of the B1 section.

Metre

- The music is almost entirely in 4/4. The final, A2 section introduces some bars of 3/4 and one bar of 2/4. This is done in conjunction with the lengthening of phrases in that section: Bartók is effectively writing out a sense of winding down in the music, perhaps as the village falls asleep.

Rhythm

- The **general pause** (a bar of complete silence) just before the final section is dramatic.
- Compare the rhythm of the main melodic line of the A sections. The A1 section changes the length of the first note of the melody so that the remainder sits in a different place in the bar.
- There is **syncopation** in the A section melody, at the end of each of the first three phrases. This can also be heard, rather slowly, in the accompaniment of the final section.
- The B section melody features a **scotch snap** rhythm, sometimes known as a Lombardic rhythm. This is where a dotted rhythm is presented with the shorter note first, in this case a quaver followed by a dotted crotchet.

- The accompaniment patterns of the B section are on the **off beats**. In the B1 section these become regular crotchets on each beat.
- The B1 introduces rhythmic developments of the main melody, including **semiquavers** and **semiquaver triplets**.
- In this section the Flute part includes **quintuplets**, and there is a **sextuplet** in the clarinet part. These are part of the lively development this section shows.

Articulation

- Bartók gives very precise instructions to his woodwind players on almost every note of the score. This is so that the performers shape the melodies with detail as he wants.
- The opening melody is mainly **legato**. There are also **accent** and **tenuto** markings on some notes for emphasis
- The flute melody of the B section is mainly **staccato**. There are similar accent and marcato markings.

Dynamics

Bartók provides considerable detail in his score, indicating the level he would like each phrase.

- The music explores a range of dynamics, from **ppp** to **f**, which is the loudest marking.
- Bartók indicates **diminuendos** and **crescendos**.
- Sometimes the dynamic changes suddenly from one level to another; at other times the change is gradual.
- The opening Clarinet solo is marked **espressivo** (expressively), indicating to the performer that he wants lots of musical shape and emotion, achieved through dynamic shape.

Sonority (Timbre)

- The melody line is shared around the **woodwind** section of the orchestra, with the tune taken by a solo **clarinet** to begin. The clarinets in this movement are **A clarinets**. This means they are transposing instruments.
- This is followed by a solo **flute** in the B section.
- The A1 section introduces the **oboe**.
- The **piccolo** is the main melodic instrument in the B1 section, but there are notable prominent flourishes in the **flute**, **oboe** and **clarinet**.
- The A2 section presents the melody in **flute**, **oboes** and **clarinets**.
- The string section of the orchestra are confined to the role of **accompaniment** in this movement.
- The strings use a number of different timbres including **arco**, **pizzicato**, **con sord** (with a mute), **senza sord** (without a mute).
- The only other instruments to play in this movement are two **French horns**. These are also transposing instruments, in F. They also play **con sord** and **senza sord**.

2. 'Medvetánc – Bear Dance'

This movement is, in Bartók's own words, "the impression of a bear dancing to the song of his leader and growling to the accompaniment of a drum". A folk tradition which began in the Middle Ages in Eastern Europe was that a chained bear would be trained to dance for entertainment and these were popular attractions. It is now outlawed throughout Europe. From some programme notes of 1922, we learn that this movement is meant to portray something of a comic effect, as well as capturing the energy and power of the bear.

Structure

The structure is a combination of **varied strophic** form and a **symmetrical**, but heavily developed, **5 section form**. The easiest way to identify sections is to look for the note which the pedal is played on. Bartók wrote that he originally intended the piece to be in ternary form, but, following advice from his friend, the composer Zoltán Kodály, he added the last two sections to the original. In structure it is therefore quite like an 'Evening in the Village'. The melodic motif of the B section is, though, very similar to that of the A section, and the development of motif, particularly in the final A2 section is quite significant.

| Section | Time on recording | Bar number (for reference only) | Pedal note pitch |
|---------|-------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| A | 00:00 | 1 | Pedal on D |
| B | 00:16 | 18 | Pedal on Ab |
| A1 | 00:33 | 34 | Pedal on D |
| B1 | 00:52 | 57 | Pedal on Ab |
| A2 | 01:12 | 78 | Pedal on D |

Tonality

- The strong dissonance of this piece, and the avoidance of conventional harmonies makes discerning a clear tonality difficult.
- The movement ends on a chord of **D major**, and the use of prominent pedal notes on D, notably at the opening suggest that Bartók envisages this movement to have an overall **tonal centre of D**.
- The prominence of other pedal notes suggests that, for those sections, the tonal centre has moved.
- Notice how the opening pedal on D moves by a **tritone** (an augmented 4th/diminished 5th) to sound on an Ab at the second section (bar 18). This relationship is particularly strongly dissonant.

Harmony

- The harmony of this movement is strongly **dissonant**. In this piece, although there are clear influences from the folk music tradition, in the harmony we can hear Bartók's **modernism** in the largely **non-functional** harmony.
- A good example of Bartók's love of **semitone dissonance** can be heard at the start of the A1 section, where the **pedal** note D in the violins and viola's is contrasted with the minim Eb in the timpani and Tuba.
- The **pedal** notes are often contradictory and dissonant alongside the melodies they accompany. Another example is at the beginning, the pedal note D in the 'cellos/double basses is very strongly set against the melody which is based around D#.
- There is much **parallel movement** in the harmony, including some unusual **parallel 7ths** between melody and bass (for example at bar 12).

Melody

- The main melody of the A section is mainly based on the **Aeolian mode** on D#.



- Bartók introduces some **chromatic** changes to this mode, though. For example, the F naturals and E naturals at the end of the first section.
- There is a prominent **falling perfect 4th** featured in the melody.
- Most of the melodies are in **4 bar phrases**.
- The melody of the B section begins with a **stepwise** shape in the oboes, clarinets and bassoon 1, and then the bassoons and horns bring back the melody of the A section.
- Most of the B section melody is based on **the acoustic scale**, sometimes known as the **Lydian dominant** scale. It includes a raised 4th (the G#) and a flat 7th (the C natural).



- There are frequent ornaments, particularly **acciaccaturas**.
- There is a **tritone** used in the final bassoon melody at the end of the piece.

Texture

- The movement is **chordal** with **pedal notes** used to provide a rhythmic drone underneath the chordal movement.
- Although most of the pedal notes are found at the bottom of the texture, as the lowest sounding pitches, when the violins play the pedal it sits at a higher pitch, largely above the melodic line. This is an **inverted pedal**.
- The melodic line is doubled by other instruments to form **parallel chords**.
- Within that texture, particular pairs of instruments sometimes play in **3rds, octaves or 6ths**. The flutes often play in thirds for example.

Metre

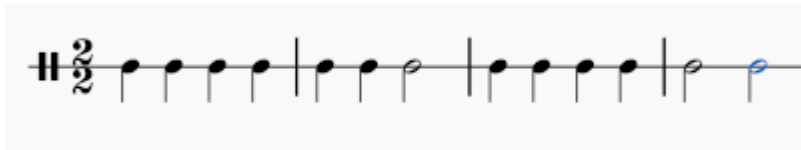
- The music is in 2/2 time almost throughout.
- Bartók introduces occasional bars of 3/2 time which give some irregularity to phrase lengths.

Tempo

- The tempo marking is **Allegro Vivace** – Fast and lively.
- There is a poco **allargando** (a little broadening – much the same as a *ritenuto*) just before the return of the A1 section, followed by an *a tempo*. Similar tempo changes occur towards the end of the piece.

Rhythm

- The rhythmic pattern of crotchet-crotchet- minim characterises the main melody.
- The melodic line is, otherwise, often in **crotchets**.
- Bartók derives the rhythm shown below from the Hungarian *kanász* (a type of folk dance)



- There is a near constant quaver **ostinato** rhythm in, mostly, the string parts and often in the side drum. (Note to those looking at the score: the notation used in, for example, the cellos and side drum at the opening is **NOT** a tremolo. This 'shorthand' notation is used to indicate each minim should be played as four equal quavers, which is what we hear on the recording.)
- Other than some longer note values (**semibreves** and **tied semibreves** towards the end of the piece), there are no dotted rhythms or other note groupings. This helps drive the music forward and gives a strong sense of energy.
- There is a **general pause** bar just before the return of the A2 section.

Articulation

- This movement includes a lot of **staccato** playing. There is almost no legato, with just some **slurs** in the first beat of some bars where there is an ornament preceding the first beat and, occasionally, slurred pairs of crotchets.
- There are also **marcato** and **tenuto** frequently used, and some **accents**.

Dynamics

- There are a range of dynamic levels, from ***p*** to ***ff***.
- There are some ***sf*** (*sforzando*).
- There are not many gradual changes of dynamics (there are some **diminuendos** towards the end); most dynamic changes happen quite abruptly.
- Bartók gives careful consideration to the relative loudness of instruments. For example, instructing the opening side drum to play ***p***, whilst the cellos and double basses play ***f*** at the same time.
- The movement ends quietly, in contrast with much of the rest of the movement.

Sonority(Timbre)

- In addition to the strings, French horn and woodwind used in the first movement, Bartók introduces two **trumpets**, two **trombones**, a **tuba**, **contrabassoon** (used only at the very end of the movement), **timpani** and two **side drums**. One side drum is played **senza corda** (for example at the start), which means without the snares. The other is played **con corda** (at the start of the B section) which means with the snares.
- The trumpets and French horns play both **con sord** (with mute) and **senza sord** (without mute).
- He sometimes uses the marking **ruvido** (coarsely) in the string parts, for example for the cellos at the start – he wants a rather rustic and unrefined sound.
- Strings also play both **arco** and **pizzicato**.
- A **triangle** is used in the A1 section, and the instruction is given to play it with a metal stick.

4. 'Kicsit Ázottan – Slightly Topsy'

Structure

The music is in **Ternary form**, but with the return of the A section considerably developed. The B section consists initially of two motifs – an off-beat accompaniment pattern which alternates with a legato melodic phrase.

| Section | Time on recording | Bar number (for reference only) |
|---------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| A | 00:00 | 1 |
| B | 00:39 | 16 |
| A1 | 01:37 | 42 |

Tonality

- The tonality is **ambiguous**. It is never wholly clear what key Bartók intends. Perhaps this is some humour drawn out from the title.
- The music begins in a **major** tonality.
- The four flats of the key signature might suggest Ab major, however the use of Gbs suggests Db major, particularly as the Gbs almost always occur in an Ab7 chord, which is the dominant of that key. The music never settles to Db, though, and the music moves chromatically towards the B section.
- There is an initial move to a darker **minor** tonality in the B section, with an opening chord of G minor.
- The B section remains tonally **ambiguous** with chromatic harmony and tonal movement away from the initial G minor.
- The return of the A1 section returns to the **major** tonality but with similar ambiguity to before.
- The final chord of the piece comes to rest rather dramatically on a bare fifths chord of **F**, although, as the third of the chord is not sounded, it remains ambiguous.

Harmony

- Much of the harmony moves in **parallel motion**.
- There is **chromatic** harmony throughout the movement and **dissonance** through the use of chords with **added notes**.
- The opening phrase includes **non-functional 7th chords**. The first chord is Db7 and the second, Ab7.
- The last chord of the piece is a **bare fifth** chord. This means that the root and 5th of the chord are played, but there is no third. This makes the tonality **ambiguous** as we cannot hear whether the chord is major or minor.

Melody

- There are many **acciaccaturas**. Almost every note of the opening melody in the string parts is decorated with one.
- The opening motif is characterised by the interval of a **perfect 4th**, with almost every interval being that one.
- The second motif (bar 5) introduces **descending conjunct** motion and then **descending triads**.
- In bar 7, Bartók introduces an ascending **diminished 5th** interval after three **repeated notes** which he places on the 4th and 8th quaver beats of the bar – the weakest beats. Is this a tipsy hiccup?
- Sometimes the melodic line is **chromatic** (for example the section which begins with the clarinet melody at bar 28).
- Another important motif is the **conjunct ascent and descent** in the melody which is heard at the end of the A section, and in the B section where it alternates with the off beat accompaniment pattern.
- Notice how, at times, the music descends to a **lower range** (at the end of the A section, and the end of the piece).
- The phrasing of the melody is **fragmentary** throughout the movement.
- There is a descending **whole tone scale** at the end of the A section (bars 14/15).

Texture

- The texture of this music is mainly **chordal**.
- The highest sounding part tends to carry the main melody, but the parallel movement of the harmony means the other instruments shadow this in **parallel chords**.
- There is some movement in **parallel 3rds** (in the violins at the meno mosso of bar 18).
- There is a short **monophonic** section at the end of the B section.
- The final bar of the piece sees the strings play in **octaves**.

Metre

- The music is in 4/4.
- Bartók introduces some bars of 2/4, and there is also a bar of 5/4. These are used to make the phrasing less regular.

Tempo

- The tempo is **Allegretto rubato** – quite quickly and freely. The amount of rubato used varies in different recordings of this piece.
- The mood of this movement is much captured with many changes of tempo.
- In addition to the rubato, **accelerando** and **rallentando** are used frequently.

- The piece speeds up as it comes to the middle of the movement, with markings of **un poco piu mosso** and **Ancora piu mosso**.
- As it comes to the end, the music alternates faster and slower sections with tempo markings of **piu mosso** alternating with **meno mosso**.
- The last few seconds of the piece begin **vivace**, but a **rallentando molto** leads to the last string flourish being rather slow, **largo**.

Rhythm

- Most of the melodic movement is in **quavers**.
- Bartók's opening motif uses a similar rhythm consisting of 7 notes to that of 'Bear Dance', but the notation is now in quavers (and the rubato used gives this rhythm a rather different 'flavour' when compared to 'Bear Dance').



- Bartók uses the longer final note of the bar (the crotchet) to appear to interrupt the flow of the quavers. This might be a tipsy stumble!
- The second motif of the A section introduces **crotchets** and a **dotted rhythm**. The dotted rhythm is used later in the music in cellos and double basses as an accompaniment pattern.
- This second motif also uses an **anacrusis**. For example, the last note of bar four, leading into the second, descending crotchet motif.
- The pizzicato chords in the accompaniment at the start are played on the **off beat**. This feature can be heard at other points in the music, notably in the B section where it alternates with the melodic pattern of ascent and descent
- The final string melody includes **demi-semi quavers** (in the descending anacrusis to the dramatic final bar).

Articulation

- The articulation across the beat of a **slur** to a **staccato** note establishes the almost 'swaying' character of the music.



- The music includes many **tenuto** markings.
- The B section includes a **legato** melody (usually played in the violins).

Dynamics

- The music begins quietly. The strings play **pp**, but the oboe (which has the main melody) is marked **mf**.
- There are some **sf** markings, often used on unexpected beats of the bar for surprising emphasis.
- As the music goes on the dynamic changes tend to be sudden and often unexpected, sometimes from the extreme of **pp** to the louder level of **f**.

Sonority (Timbre)

- The **woodwind** and **strings** are the main sections of the orchestra used in this movement.
- **Brass** is used sparingly, often to punctuate important notes (for example, the **horn** and **trumpet** sound on the weak beats of the 'hiccup' mentioned previously).
- A **bass drum** is the only percussion used until the very last bars when it is replaced by **Timpani**. As with the brass, the role of the percussion is to punctuate important rhythmic moments.
- The opening direction to the violins is **con sord punta d'arco**. This means play muted, and at the tip of the bow. This gives a distant and 'thin' sound to the string parts.
- The strings also play both **arco** and **pizzicato**.
- In this movement the clarinets play their Bb instruments (rather than the A clarinets of the first two).
- The trumpets and French horns play **con sord** (muted) to begin and then **senza sord** (unmuted).
- Bartók asks for some other string techniques including **col legno**, (with the wood of the bow) and **molto espressivo e molto vibrato**.

5. 'Ürögi Kanásztánc – Swineherd's Dance'

Structure

The structure of the movement is **Introduction, A B B1 A1 B2 Coda**. However this might make the music seem more complex than it is, and relating the structure to an imagined programme makes Bartók's structure clearer. As with all the movements, there is humour to be found in this piece.

- The introduction sets the scene. The drone accompaniment is established and we hear snippets of the folk song on which the movement is based. Perhaps this is Bartók hearing the dance in the distance.
- Section A and B are the folk song played in its entirety. We are there listening to the music and, metaphorically, watching the dance.
- Bartók then repeats the B section (B1) with changes to the accompaniment to make the music more dramatic, louder and lively. The folk melody itself is left almost unchanged. The dance becomes more vigorous.
- The first, 4 bar, link section seems to be bringing the dramatic section to an end (notice how it features the perfect 4th interval found in the second half of the folk song).
- The A1 section is marked **calmo**, and is at a slower tempo. The dance is coming winding down
- The B1 section has some of the folk song melody changed and the final two bars of this section are just a **pp** chord sustained, with the melody absent. The dancers are tired, perhaps!
- A final coda is added, where the semiquaver motif in the folk song appears to try to get the dance going again, before the final loud chord ends it properly.

The music of the original folk song is at the end of these notes.

| Section | Time on recording | Bar number in the score (for reference only) | Relationship to the folk song (bar numbers refer to the folk song) |
|--------------|-------------------|--|---|
| Introduction | 00:00 | 1–17 | Initial drone, then fragmented version of bars 18 to 21. Developed version of 18–21 |
| A | 00:12 | 23 | Bars 1 to 16 (first half of the folk melody) |
| B | 00:32 | 39 | Bars 17 to 33, including the initial bar's rest and the rit. in bar 26 (second half of the folk melody) |
| B1 | 00:48 | 56 | Bars 17 to 33, but with small changes |
| 4 bar link | | 73 | |
| A1 | 01:08 | 77 | Bars 1 to 16 |
| 3 bar link | | 93 | |
| B2 | 01:26 | 96 | Bars 17 to 29 with much fragmentation and development and the final two bars omitted |
| Coda | | 111 | Based on the last two bars of the song |

Tonality

- Correctly, the tonality of this music is best described overall as being **mixolydian on A**.
- The A section is played over a drone on the note A, which gives a **tonal centre** of **A**. As the music is in the mixolydian mode, it would be incorrect to describe this as A major, although the mode itself has a bright major character to it due to the major third in the mode.
- The B section begins by moving the drone to the note D, which gives a sense of the tonality moving to that centre, however, it returns to the note A for the second half of the B section.
- In this second half of the B section, the ascending countermelody in the horns introduces the raised leading note, G sharp, which gives a stronger sense of **A major**.
- The B1 section has a similar tonal structure to the B section.
- The A1 and B2 sections see Bartók introduce **ambiguity** into the tonality, as his chromatic harmony and unexpected and often non-functional chord choices undermine the strong sense of A mixolydian which has characterised the tonality to this point, although the melody remains in that mode. The bass line takes the harmony initially down by step to F# for the second phrase of this section, with a brief sense of **minor** as a result, for example.
- The music ends with a strong perfect cadence confirming **A major** in the final bars.

Harmony

- The first part of the movement (up to the end of the B1 section) is played over **drones**. The harmony remains **static** and unchanged as a result.
- From the A1, **calmo**, section onwards, Bartók changes the chords more frequently, introducing both **chromaticism** and **dissonance**. He reharmonises the folk melody with some unexpected chords, and the harmony, whilst **tonal**, is mainly **non-functional** and unconventional.
- There are some **non-functional 7th chords** in the last 2 sections. For example, an unexpectedly loud chord of D7 (bar 84) surprises the listener but doesn't take the music to G.
- The end of the movement does feature a **perfect cadence**. The penultimate, pizzicato, chord, though is a dominant 7th with a flattened 9th – even here Bartók introduces a stronger dissonance to the chord.

Melody

- The melody is based on the **Mixolydian mode** on A. The main characteristic of this mode is that it sounds like a major scale, but with a flattened leading note (the G).



- The melody contains prominent intervals of the **perfect 4th** and **perfect 5th**.
- It is largely in **4 bar phrases**.
- The flute often plays the melody at a **very high pitch range**.
- The horns and trumpets play an **ascending scalar countermelody** (first heard in the second half of the B section).
- There are some **acciaccaturas**, for example, at the beginning where they **glissando** to the main note.
- The melodic line is ornamented with **upper auxiliary notes** on the semiquaver triplets.

Texture

- The texture is **melody and accompaniment**.
- The accompaniment often consists of rhythmic ostinato patterns.
- The texture is varied by the number of instruments playing, with louder sections including more of the orchestra.
- The prominent brass syncopated **countermelody** provides another aspect of variety.
- Sometimes the melody is played in **octaves**, for example between the flute and clarinet.
- There is some **monophony** (the horn at the start, then the clarinet just before the A section).

Metre

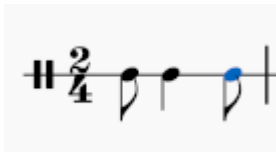
- The music is in 2/4 throughout.

Tempo

- The tempo marking is **Allegro molto**.
- There are some **ritenutos**, including a **ritenuto molto**, but these usually last only one bar, and are followed by an **a tempo**.
- The music slows to **calmo**, and then **sempre piu calmo** in the final section, which comes towards the end with a **poco a poco rallentando**, before a surprising return to **tempo I**, for the final 5 bars.

Rhythm

- A rhythmic **ostinato** is used in the accompaniment in many sections of the music. The middle note of this ostinato is **syncopated**.



- Other rhythmic **ostinato** patterns are used as the music builds to the loudest point.
- The horn and trumpet countermelodies are entirely **syncopated**.
- There are **semiquaver triplets** in the melody.
- The melody contains many **semiquavers**; longer note values are found only in some of the accompaniment parts in the outer sections of the music.

Articulation

- The trumpets play **marcato**.
- The movement contains much detail of **legato** (slurs) and **staccato**, as well as **tenuto** and **accent** markings.

Dynamics

- The movement begins **pp**.
- As it goes on the dynamic increases with **crescendos**, building to a climax which is **ff**. Following this it becomes quieter quite quickly, reaching **pp** again, but with a **molto crescendo** to **ff** over just one bar in a surprising ending.
- There are a few dramatic changes of dynamic, from quiet to suddenly loud. Sometimes Bartók indicates these as **sf**.

Sonority (Timbre)

- The main melodic lines are mainly taken by the **woodwind**, including **piccolo**, **flute**, **oboe** and **clarinet**.
- The strings play both **con sord** and **senza sord**, as well as **arco** and **pizzicato**.
- At the end of the piece, two solo violins play **harmonics**. This gives a rather glassy sound to their playing.
- Sometimes Bartók indicates that the violins should play on the 4th string. This indication means that he wants the richer sonority of that lowest string.
- The strings play **tremolando** (the rapid alternation of 2 different pitches) (fig 8).
- There is some **double** and **triple stopping** in the string parts.
- The movement includes a **bass clarinet**, although it is used to play only one long sustained note in the entire piece!
- A **triangle** is used, played with a wooden stick. There are also **timpani**, **clash cymbals** and a **bass drum**.

The music, collected and notated by Bartók, of the traditional folk song used in 'Swineherd's Dance'

The music has been transposed up one tone from Bartók's original notation to facilitate comparison to the movement being studied.

Allegro Vivace

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in treble clef, 2/4 time, and the key of D major (indicated by two sharps). The tempo is marked 'Allegro Vivace'. The score consists of five staves of music, with measure numbers 1, 7, 14, 22, and 28 indicated at the start of each line. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and includes triplet markings (3) in measures 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, and 29. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) at the beginning, *cresc.* (crescendo) in measures 7-13, 14-21, and 28-34, *mf* (mezzo-forte) in measure 15, and *f* (forte) in measure 23. Articulation includes accents (^) in measures 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, and 31. Performance instructions include *rit.* (ritardando) in measure 22, *A tempo* in measure 23, and a blue dot in measure 23. The score ends with a double bar line in measure 34.