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## The Integration of the Style Hongrois into Brahms's Musical Language in His Chamber Works

Raymond D. Truong, *The University of Western Ontario*

Supervisor: Franck, Peter, *The University of Western Ontario*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Music

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## Abstract

The *style hongrois* is a musical language that Western European composers used to evoke the style of the Hungarian music performed by Romani musicians. This monograph explores the use of the *style hongrois* in the chamber works of Johannes Brahms. He uses this style often, to the point where it is integrated into his musical language. To understand where this language came from, this monograph provides a historical context of Hungary (the country of origin), the Roma who resided there and migrated westwards, and their musicians.

The second part of this monograph explores the integration of the *style hongrois* into Brahms's musical language by analyzing two movements of his chamber music. The analysis explores different concepts that are pervasive throughout the movement, and how Brahms uses the *style hongrois* to intersect these concepts. Additionally, this monograph offers a comparison between Brahms's overt and covert application of the *style hongrois*. I will demonstrate his overt application of the *style hongrois* in the fourth movement of the Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, titled 'rondo alla zingarese', and how he uses it covertly by integrating it into his own musical language, as seen in the fourth movement of the Piano Quintet, Op. 34.

## Summary for Lay Audience

The *style hongrois* is a musical language that Western European composers used to evoke the style of the Hungarian music performed by Romani musicians. Johannes Brahms uses this style often, to the point where it is integrated into his musical language. This monograph first lays out the context in which the *style hongrois* was developed, and then explores the integration of this style into Brahms's musical language by analyzing two movements of his chamber music. The analysis explores different concepts that are pervasive throughout the movement, and how Brahms uses the *style hongrois* to intersect these concepts.

## Acknowledgements

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## Chapter 1

### Origins of the *Style Hongrois*: The Roma

#### Prologue

In the nineteenth century, there was a group of people who took the popular musical scene of Western Europe by storm. This group of people are known as Roma. Their musical performances attracted many, including renowned composers such as Franz Liszt, Franz Schubert, and Johannes Brahms. Composers, such as the aforementioned, wrote pieces where they tried to capture the style of the musical performances they heard from the Roma. Compositions such as Schubert's Hungarian Melody D. 817, Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies, and Brahms's Hungarian Dances were the results of such endeavours. The integration of Romani-band musical characteristics into Western European musical works brought forth a unique style and flavor that Jonathan Bellman calls the *style hongrois*. Bellman coined this term and describes it as such:

“The *style hongrois* (literally, “Hungarian style”) refers to the specific musical language used by Western composers from the mid-eighteenth to the twentieth centuries to evoke the performances of Hungarian Gypsies.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993), 11.

This monograph endeavours to explore the *style hongrois*—in particular, the origin, style, and its influences in Brahms’s music. The Roma inspired the style, so in this chapter, I will explore the history of the Roma and Hungary—in particular, where the Roma came from, the identity they developed, the persecution they suffered, the circumstances that led to their migration towards Western Europe, and the popularity the Romani musicians gained during their migration. In Chapter 2, I will illustrate how the *style hongrois* is used in compositions by renowned composers such as Liszt and Schubert and demonstrate, through musical examples, the different popular traits that the *style hongrois* affords. This chapter will also include a comparison of a composition by the Hungarian composer János Bihari (1764–1827) to select works of Liszt and Schubert, who both had their musical education in Vienna. In Chapter 3, I will discuss the important influential figures that played a role in Brahms’s development of the *style hongrois*. Chapter 4 involves the analysis of a composition that is overtly Hungarian: the fourth movement of the Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, titled ‘rondo alla zingarese’. In this analysis, I will discuss how an “idea of three” i.e., a triple metrical grouping—is expressed in all structural levels of the movement. Furthermore, I will demonstrate how Brahms uses the *style hongrois* to express this idea. Chapter 5 involves the analysis of a composition that is more covertly Hungarian: the fourth movement of the Piano Quartet, Op. 34. In this analysis, I will discuss how Brahms uses a Hungarian melody and rhythms to permeate the entire movement through various means (fragmentation, inversion, augmentation, among others). Additionally, I will demonstrate how

Brahms covertly expresses Hungarian rhythms by integrating them into his own rhythmic language. The idea of overt and covert expressions of the *style hongrois* will be discussed in further detail in these last two chapters. With this monograph, I hope to educate the reader in understanding the *style hongrois* and the circumstances that led to the development of this style, to what capacity Brahms uses it in his compositions, and how it is integrated into his compositional style.

In order to begin to understand the music and performance practice of the Roma, it is necessary to have some knowledge of their background—in particular, the social, political, and cultural circumstances that surrounded them. The Roma, who lived a nomadic lifestyle, journeyed from Asia to Europe and were able to visit many European cities. How did they end up situated next to the musically-thriving Viennese capital? What conditions set the Roma up for their rise to musical fame? Part I of this chapter endeavors to explore the history of the Roma, in particular, the origin, lifestyle, identity, and the persecution of the Roma, starting from the fourteenth century and leading up to the nineteenth century. Since it is the Hungarian Roma who are the focus of this monograph, there will be a brief section on the history of Hungary, its native people (the *Magyars*), and the Roma who migrated there. Part II of this chapter explores the Romani band, its origin, and its rise to fame in Western Europe.

## Part I: History of the Roma

### The Origin of the Roma

The history of the Roma is complicated; even in the twenty-first century, there is still much controversy surrounding the Roma and their specific ancestors. Based on linguistic, cultural, and genetic evidence, the Roma are assumed to have originally come from Rajasthan (Northwest India).<sup>2</sup> Chaman Lal, in his book *Gipsies: Forgotten Children of India*, provides various accounts of his meetings and conversations with the Roma.<sup>3</sup> In every one of those conversations, whether it took place in Hungary, Yugoslavia, or even America, Lal found that there were many similarities between his native language, Hindi, and the Romani language. Words like ‘head’, ‘eyes’, ‘mouth’, ‘horse’, ‘meat’, and ‘water’, among others, are identical between the Romani language and Hindi (one of the national languages of India). One of the Hungarian musicians Lal spoke with told him enthusiastically: “We have the same blood, the same language and even the same numerals.”<sup>4</sup>

In addition to the similarities of the languages, the Roma also follow many Indian cultural customs.<sup>5</sup> For instance, during wedding ceremonies, rice is thrown on the groom’s head. Additionally, the Roma have dances similar to Indian dances, such as the dance of *Krishna* and *Gopis*—dances named after the Gods

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<sup>2</sup> Alan Ashton-Smith, *Gypsy Music: The Balkans and Beyond* (London, UK: Reaktion Books, 2017), 28.

<sup>3</sup> Chaman Lal, *Gipsies: Forgotten Children of India* (Delhi: Min. of Information, 1962).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 4

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 8

within the Hindu religion. Finally, when someone dies, the community of the deceased sends a young girl to a river with a candle thirty-two days following the death of the person. These are just some of the many customs that both Roma and Indians share.

There are many legends and theories surrounding the reason of the first exodus of the Roma. A popular hypothesis about what prompted the migration of the Roma towards Europe in the eleventh century is their enlistment as mercenaries in the wars against the Ghaznavid Empire.<sup>6</sup> These battles brought them further West. During battles where the Roma had lost, the Ghaznavid Empire would assimilate them to serve the Empire, resulting in the displacement of the Romani soldiers. British scholars also agree with this hypothesis and further add that the Ghaznavid Empire took several hundreds of thousands of slaves from the different states of India, including Punjab, Sind, Gujarat, and Rajputana.<sup>7</sup> The Diaspora of the Roma eventually brought them to the *Balkans* (the name of a group of countries in southeastern Europe). The question as to which countries make up the Balkans is controversial to this day but there is a consensus that Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania belong to this area.<sup>8</sup> Despite this controversy, the Roma continue to have a large presence in this geographical area. Other cities and countries where they migrated to include Hamburg, Bologna,

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<sup>6</sup> Ashton-Smith, *Gypsy Music: The Balkans and Beyond*, 28.

The Ghaznavid Empire existed around 977–1186 A.D. They had Turkish origins but adapted Persian culture. They ruled over a large part of the Middle-Eastern area and even parts of North-Western India. Their territories later became modern-day Afghanistan and Pakistan.

<sup>7</sup> Lal, *Gipsies: Forgotten Children of India*, 6.

<sup>8</sup> Ashton-Smith, *Gypsy Music: The Balkans and Beyond*, 11.

Paris, England, Sweden, and Hungary, among others. Sources reveal that the Roma were in Hamburg in 1418, Bologna in 1422, and Paris in 1527.<sup>9</sup>

## Lifestyle

The Roma camped outside of cities in their caravans and tents. A passage from *A gipsy Diary of Five Weeks and a day – 1911* describes the Romani camps:

“A new encampment has been made further along the Downs to the east than Newlands Corner. It consists of two tents and a small cart, the bushes near-by are absolutely covered with clothes, or rather pieces of stuff apparently hung there to dry, and the gipsies have lighted a large fire.”<sup>10</sup>

The clothing of the Roma matched their minimalistic living environment. Adults were often seen wearing big sheets of cloth and children up to ten years old were commonly naked (which resulted in future clothing-related decrees).<sup>11</sup>

The Roma were mostly self-employed.<sup>12</sup> According to Judith Okely, the employment of the Roma is listed in four categories: the sale of goods (horses, vegetables, pans, needles), seasonal labour (mostly agricultural), the sale of services such as tinkering, knife grinding, umbrella repairing, and the sale of

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<sup>9</sup> Bálint Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, trans. Fred Macnicol (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1978), 13.

<sup>10</sup> David Mayall, *Gypsy-Travellers in Nineteenth-Century Society* (New York; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 194.

<sup>11</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 97.

<sup>12</sup> Mayall, *Gypsy-Travellers in Nineteenth-Century Society*, 14.

services that are exclusive to the Roma (fortune-telling).<sup>13</sup> They were very capable at adopting and adapting; since the Roma, including showmen and musicians, could not depend solely on income from entertainment, they developed a set of artisanal skills. Metalworking was one of the strong points known about the Roma; they were known for their ability to make small items such as spoons, knives, seals, needles, and rings.<sup>14</sup> The Roma also established themselves as peddlers, fortune tellers, palm readers, horse-traders, showmen entrepreneurs, musicians, and blacksmiths. Many stole goods or begged as a means for survival.

## Identity

During much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the *Roma* were known as *Gypsy*: a word that first appeared in the sixteenth century from the word *gipcyan*, which means “Egyptian,” meant to classify a certain group of people in Europe living a nomadic lifestyle.<sup>15</sup> They call themselves *Roma*, derived from the word *Roms*, which means ‘man’ in their language as well as in Hindi. The Roma also had different names in different geographical locations: in Armenia they were called *Bosa*, in France they were called *Bohémians*, in Germany they were called *Zigeuner*, and in America they were sometimes called Hungarians. The many names associated with the Roma reflect how complicated and misunderstood their identity was. They were understood as free-spirited in nature

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<sup>13</sup> Judith Okely, *The Traveller-Gypsies* (Cambridge, 1983), quoted in Mayall, *Gypsy-Travellers in Nineteenth-Century Society*, 47.

<sup>14</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 17.

<sup>15</sup> Nancy Handrigan, “On the ‘Hungarian’ in Works of Brahms: A Critical Study” (Master of Arts thesis, McMaster University, 1995), 61.

because, unlike the rest of society, they lived outdoors in tents and caravans, and often moved from city to city. Their lifestyle was romanticized within society—the Roma were not shackled by the norms of society but instead, were free people who pursued whatever hopes and desires they had. They were recognized for their affinity with the occult, as they provided services such as fortune-telling and palm-reading. Their reputation for being able to read the future was so popular that “By the mid-eighteenth-century Norwood Common had become the focus for the gypsies, and people from all levels of society flocked there to have their fortunes told.”<sup>16</sup> The romanticised idea of the Roma spread throughout Europe, where its influence can be seen in art and literature such as *Carmen*, a novel by Prosper Mérimée, which was later adapted as an opera by Bizet.

However, in addition to all the romanticizing of the Roma, the term *Gypsy* also summons negative attributes, such as dirty, criminal, and crooked, among others. The Roma were persecuted and viewed with disdain as a marginalized group of people. Ironically, the great interest in the Romani lifestyle and ideology did not actually help the Roma’s image in the real world; society in general was only interested in the fantasy-like side of the Roma and did nothing to stop the persecution and suffering inflicted upon them. William Cowper, a popular and influential poet of the eighteenth century, wrote a poem called *The Task* which

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<sup>16</sup> Owen Davies, *Witchcraft, Magic and Culture* (Vancouver; Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1999), 55.



served as a commentary of the Roma and their lifestyle. Excerpts from this poem demonstrate Cowper's view of the Roma as a lazy group of people.<sup>17</sup>

I see a column of slow-rising smoke  
O'ertop the lofty wood that skirts the wild.  
A vagabond and useless tribe there eat  
Their miserable meal.

His views of the Roma reflected society's views, and even if people did not think the Roma as a lazy group, Cowper's poem certainly disseminated this perception.

An event which further worsened the Roma's image in Europe is the 1753 trial in England where a woman by the name of Elizabeth Canning accused a Roma of abducting her and holding her captive in a 'bawdy house' for almost an entire month.<sup>18</sup> There were also upper-class people providing false testimonies to support Canning's claim. Fortunately, after a lengthy trial period, Canning was judged to have made up the story and was sentenced to a month in prison. However, as a result of this case, the damage to the Roma's image was already done; the newspaper and pamphlets that were released at the time of the trial propagated fears of abduction by the Roma among the people.

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<sup>17</sup> Sarah Houghton-Walker, *Representations of the Gypsy in the Romantic Period* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), 74.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

## Persecution

The lifestyle of the Roma was unconventional, and this led to persecution; their way of life set them apart from the rest of society and so the ideals of the Romani minority were inevitably rejected. David Mayall summarizes the ideals of the Roma in this quote:

“Hereditry, cultural continuity, economic practicality, and ideological rejection were the chief determinants to the gypsy life-style.”<sup>19</sup>

Their way of life caused many problems and was interpreted as inconvenient and thus, action was taken to deal with the Roma. Many countries decided to banish or outlaw the Roma entirely.<sup>20</sup> In 1492, the Roma were banished from Spain. In 1498, the Freiburg parliament outlawed them, and in 1531, the Roma were banished from England. Other countries that banished the Roma include France, Germany, Denmark, and Sweden. However, because of their large population, the Roma’s banishment was not successful; additionally, they would go into hiding in uninhabited areas until it was safe to live out in the open again. Even without banishment, society was far from friendly towards the Roma. In Moldavia, Wallachia, and Romania, the Roma were legal slaves until the last quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps one of the most discriminating decrees is England’s *Egyptian Act*.<sup>22</sup> This act states the following:

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<sup>19</sup> Mayall, *Gypsy-Travellers in Nineteenth-Century Society*, 16.

<sup>20</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 16.

<sup>21</sup> Bellman, *The Style-Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, 88.

<sup>22</sup> Houghton-Walker, *Representations of the Gypsy in the Romantic Period*, 14.

“All and every person which . . . shall be seen or found within the Realm of England or Wales in any company or fellowship of vagabonds commonly called or calling themselves Egyptians . . . by virtue of this Act be deemed and judged a Felon and Felons, and shall therefore suffer pains of death loss of lands and goods as in cases of felony . . .”<sup>23</sup>

This meant that just being Roma alone is a crime worthy of death. This act lasted in England until 1783. Similarly, in 1728, Frederick William I of Prussia ordered all Roma above the age of eighteen to be hung at the gallows.<sup>24</sup> Some of the gallows were placed at the borders of the country with a sign on it stating, “for thieves and gypsies”. In Germany, *Gypsy hunts* existed until as late as the early-nineteenth century.<sup>25</sup> However, even in the face of such persecution, the Roma endured it all and refused to submit. Even after having their ears cut off, the Roma would be singing and dancing; they would laugh as they went to the gallows.<sup>26</sup> Including exile and capital punishment, other efforts were made to address the Roma. For instance, one of the well-known efforts was that of Maria Theresa and Joseph II demanding that Roma be brought to heel; that children be properly clothed; that horses not be trafficked; that Romani language not be spoken; that everyone dress like peasants; that Roma not marry unless they prove their ability to support future children; and that Roma refer to themselves, not as Gypsies, but rather, ‘new peasants’ or ‘new Hungarians’. Without surprise, this decree failed.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>24</sup> Lal, *Gypsies: Forgotten Children of India*, 54.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 55.

The Roma had no interest in changing their lifestyle and the Hungarian peasants had no interest in enforcing this decree upon their Romani neighbours. Another attempt at a decree to address the Roma was made in 1782 by Joseph II which met the same result. Banishment and harsh decrees only lasted until the mid-eighteenth century. The final event that marked the end of the series of excessively severe decrees was the hanging of young Roma in 1780 in Northampton.<sup>27</sup>

## Hungary

The socio-political environment of Hungary is discussed further here because the *style hongrois* originated from the Romani musicians coming from Hungary. At the end of the ninth century, the first settlers arrived in the Hungary that we know today.<sup>28</sup> These settlers, also known as *Magyars*, are believed by historians and linguists to have come from the Ural Mountains. It was also the music of the *Magyars* that the Roma would become exposed to and adopt as part of their staple repertoire. The Roma arrived in Hungary a few centuries later. Romani settlement in Hungary was recorded as early as 1381; this record shows a village named 'Cigany,' named after the people who inhabited it.<sup>29</sup>

The Roma who lived in Hungary were divided into two groups: those who settled down, known as the *magyarcigány*, and those who still led the nomadic

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<sup>27</sup> Mayall, *Gypsy-Travellers in Nineteenth-Century Society*, 97.

<sup>28</sup> Bence Szabolcsi, *A Concise History of Hungarian Music* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1964), 7.

<sup>29</sup> Lal, *Gipsies: Forgotten Children of India*, 86.

way of life, the *oláh cigány*. Apart from some linguistic differences between the two groups, the main contrast is how the groups were organized socially. The group who settled down started abandoning their social organization. The nomadic group preserved their native language and traditions, so they still followed the ancient tribal and clan system. Various tribes, led by their own tribal chiefs, were part of a clan, which was led by a clan chief.<sup>30</sup> Their self-dependence and discipline, developed through living a nomadic life and coupled with the tribal-clan system, created unity within their community.

Hungary is a country that has been plagued by wars from the fourteenth century to the twentieth century. Throughout this long period, the Turks attacked from the east, the Ottoman Empire from the south, and the Hapsburg empire colonized them from the west. Part of the reason why Hungary's musical culture could not develop its own identity was because of the constant strife between the peasants and the ruling power structures.<sup>31</sup> One of the most important wars was the Hungarian Revolution of 1848. During this time, there was a growing desire from the people of Hungary to obtain freedom from the Habsburg dynasty, which eventually led to a revolution. Austria almost lost the war, but with reinforcements coming from Russia, the Kingdom of Hungary was ultimately defeated, resulting in the reincorporation of Hungary into the Austrian Empire. The revolution caused many, both Hungarians and the Roma, to flee towards Western Europe. As a result, significant musicians like Ede Reményi made names

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 97.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 22.

for themselves in Western Europe and so did Romani bands, propelling Hungarian music to rise to its peak in fame.

## **Part II: The Romani Band**

When Brahms frequented the taverns of Germany, he would have had the opportunity to see Romani musicians performing. Liszt and Schubert were also very much exposed to the Roma's performances. In fact, anyone in Europe in the nineteenth century could have had the chance to hear Romani musicians. However, this was not always the case. Prior to the nineteenth century, the Romani musicians did not have a prominent presence within the musical centers of Europe. In Part II, I will explore the origin of the Romani band, how it achieved popularity in the nineteenth century, and the influential figures who played a key role in the popularizing of the Romani band in Europe. In this monograph, the Romani music and musicians that will be discussed are specifically from Hungary. Thus, I will be using the term 'Hungarian-Romani' in place of 'Gypsy'—a term that has been widely used in past literature, including many of the sources consulted in this monograph, but is now offensive as the term comes with history of negative connotations.

## The Origin of the Romani Band

Music comes hand-in-hand with the Roma; due to their nomadic inclination, music playing, a skill that can be used anywhere, proved to be very useful and practical. Documented evidence from the Ottoman empire in the sixteenth century shows that most Roma could play music.<sup>32</sup> However, even though musicians were commonplace in Romani tribes, the Hungarian-Romani musicians were relatively obscure until the turn of the eighteenth century. As a testament to their obscurity, the first literature about Hungarian-Romani music, titled *The Gipsy in Music*, was published as late as 1856 by Franz Liszt.<sup>33</sup> In 1896, another book concerning Hungarian-Romani music, titled *Ciganyzeneszek Albuma*, was published by Miklos Marko.<sup>34</sup> There is documentation of only a few notable Hungarian-Romani musicians in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. An ensemble existed in 1683 but out of the twenty-nine members, only one member, a violinist named György, was truly of Roma decent.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, the court for which this resident ensemble played did not dance to Hungarian-Romani music but rather, Western European music. Throughout the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, there is scant evidence of Hungarian-Romani music being played in Hungary. Apart from the ensemble of György, there is only enough evidence to prove the existence of two more groups that involved Romani musicians during that period.

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<sup>32</sup> Ashton-Smith, *Gypsy Music: the Balkans and beyond*, 37.

<sup>33</sup> Franz Liszt, *The Gipsy in Music*, trans. Edwin Evans (London: W. Reeves, 1926).

<sup>34</sup> Miklos Marko, *Ciganyzeneszek Albuma* (Budapest, 1896).

<sup>35</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 52.

In their own language, professional Romani musicians refer to themselves as *lăutarii*.<sup>36</sup> In the Romani tribes, music was primarily learned by the passing of knowledge from one generation to the next. Rarely would a Roma be able to have a formal education given by a non-Roma instructor. The Roma would be born into the profession and that would be his advantage, having the opportunity to study their instrument from an early age.<sup>37</sup> The period from the fifteenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century was used to learn and adapt to the European and Hungarian music traditions. During this time, the Romani musician did not acquire the fame they would later have in the nineteenth century, but nonetheless, they existed and were gradually increasing in number. As they learned the traditions of Hungarian art songs and the music of Western Europe, they eventually developed their unique “Hungarian Gypsy” voice that eventually becomes popularized in the nineteenth century.

The standard nineteenth-century Romani band comprises primarily strings and a cimbalom.<sup>38</sup> The strings are usually a duo with one playing the melody and the second, the *kontra*, doubling the melody an octave below. Later in the nineteenth century, the *kontra* also started playing in counterpoint. The cimbalom is a unique instrument to the Romani band. According to Encyclopedia Britannica, the cimbalom is “an elaborate stringed instrument of the dulcimer family used in small music ensembles by central European Roma. The instrument

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<sup>36</sup> Handrigan, “On the ‘Hungarian’ in Works of Brahms: A Critical Study”, 73.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 61

<sup>38</sup> Ashton-Smith, *Gypsy Music: the Balkans and beyond*, 46.



has a trapezoidal body that stands on four legs. It has a chromatic range of four octaves and, unlike other dulcimers, a pedal mechanism for damping the string.”<sup>39</sup>

## Popularity

In the nineteenth century, the Romani musicians dramatically rose to fame. There were several factors that contributed to this surge in fame. The 1848–1849 Hungarian revolution was a major catalyst for the increasing popularity of the Romani musicians. The mysterious Roma coming from the East to avoid the war, bringing along with them virtuosic performances seasoned with an ‘exotic’ style, captivated the people of Western Europe. The following excerpt depicts how commonplace Romani bands came to be in restaurants:

“Gypsy music has come into fashion so much in our capital that at present even three ensembles can scarcely cope with carrying out the demands of the restaurant keepers.”<sup>40</sup>

Even the musicians who stayed in Hungary reaped benefits from the war as their *verbunkos* (recruiting) music was sought after in order to encourage the armies and console the depressed. Amidst the defeat of the Hungarian people in the revolution, the music that the Romani bands performed everywhere, especially music of the *verbunkos* style, brought a sense of nationalism and pride back to the

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<sup>39</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica, “cimbalom”, March 26, 2014.  
<https://www.britannica.com/art/cimbalom>

<sup>40</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 75.

people of Hungary.<sup>41</sup> As the Romani musicians travelled and performed throughout Europe, they carried with them the identity of Hungary and showcased it to all who listened.

Pest became a major destination for all Romani musicians wishing to find success in performing. Following the war, a few talented Romani musicians in Pest reaped the benefits of their popularity by gaining support from the public for their studies and in building their careers.<sup>42</sup> There was so much momentum that the musicians were giving national tours and for some, international tours to places such as America and North Africa. Sárosi describes the craze of their popularity in this quote:

“From this time onwards, no ensemble counted as being worth anything unless it could boast of some triumphant foreign tours.”<sup>43</sup>

A factor that aided the Roma’s rise to fame was their ability to perform without reading music. That is not to say the Roma could not read music. Those who were able to read music would be able to learn and assimilate the scores of Western Europe more easily. However, reading music was only a means to learning a required piece. After the Romani musicians were done learning the piece, they would retire the score.<sup>44</sup> It was a lot more sensational to perform without the music than with the music.

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<sup>41</sup> Handrigan, “On the ‘Hungarian’ in Works of Brahms: A Critical Study”, 73.

<sup>42</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 135.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

Hungary was one of the countries that was more tolerant of the Roma. In such an environment, the Roma had fewer worries about expulsion or poor treatment and had more time to cultivate their art. Liszt writes in his book:

“It is clearly therefore to the Hungarian’s sympathetic intuition of the value of their art that the Bohemians owe the opportunity of carrying it amongst them to its most flourishing condition.”<sup>45</sup>

Additionally, for a country like Hungary where there was a lack of musical presence (for example, no well-known composers came from Hungary except for Liszt, who was more Germanic in compositional style), they welcomed the increasing popularity of the Romani musicians.

“The Hungarian has a musical score which can compete with that of any nation with regard to perfection . . . This score lives and travels in the form of the Hungarian gypsy.”<sup>46</sup>

The passage above demonstrates the pride that the Hungarian people have in their native musicians. Although they have no reputable symphonies attributed to their country, the Roma achieved for Hungary some of the musical recognition that has been commonplace in Western Europe. News of the virtuoso Romani musicians who played effortlessly without music were further spread across the continent by

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<sup>45</sup> Liszt, *The Gipsy in Music*, 208.

<sup>46</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 70.

Hungarian and Western European news reporters; there was news that the Romani musicians from Hungary were born with natural ability and originality, and that talent was abundant in the land of Hungary.

There is little doubt that the identity of the Roma, along with all their stereotypes and exoticism, had a role in the rise to fame. Throughout history, Western Europe has been fascinated with foreign music and culture. We can see these influences in compositions such as Mozart's Piano Sonata no. 11 'rondo alla turca', Haydn's Piano Trio no. 39 'Rondo all'Ongarese', and later on, Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies and Brahms's Hungarian Dances. Bellman explains the curiosity regarding the Romani musicians as follows:

“Since the Gypsies were outsiders, European society's fears and desires could easily be pinned on them, and it was only natural that the Gypsies' music in turn came to suggest these fears and desires to the European Mind.”<sup>47</sup>

Furthermore, society at the time did not value entertainment as a profession with dignity.<sup>48</sup> The Roma, who are already a marginalized group of people, took this profession with ease and little competition. Along with all the circumstances happening in eighteenth-century Europe, the Romani band successfully rose to unprecedented fame.

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<sup>47</sup> Bellman, *The Style-Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, 22.

<sup>48</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 60.

## **Conclusion**

The Roma embarked on a nomadic journey for a few hundred years that brought them from India to the Balkans, then to Hungary, and finally to Western Europe. During their journey, they suffered through many tribulations, including persecution, expulsion, and even execution. However, the Roma had a great talent for adapting to all kinds of situations; they created a legend for themselves to garner sympathy from countries, developed skills such as tinkering to meet the demands of society, and learned to perform music that would be popular amongst the citizens of each country. All these ordeals, their adaptability, coupled with the Hungarian revolution that sparked their migration towards Western Europe, eventually created a situation where the Roma would be transformed from unwanted people to the most sought-after entertainers of the middle class and nobility in Europe. As one begins to appreciate the nomadic ideology, social persecution, and the romanticising of the Roma, one can begin to understand the style of Romani music and how it spread throughout Western Europe.

## Chapter 2

### The *Verbunkos* and *Style Hongrois*: A Study of Their Origin and Characteristics

Works such as Brahms's Hungarian Dances WoO 1 or Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies S.244 have a very distinct sound. This distinct sound comes from the *style hongrois*. The style Western composers tried to evoke comes primarily from the *verbunkos* (a style of music originating from a Hungarian recruiting dance). Sárosi defines the *verbunkos* as "the characteristic genre of the gypsy musician in Hungary."<sup>49</sup> This chapter will address the origin and characteristics of the Hungarian *verbunkos*, and the characteristics of the *style hongrois* which developed from it, using musical examples from Bihari, Schubert, and Liszt to demonstrate these characteristics.

The music performed by the Roma is generally thought of as 'Hungarian Romani music', even though the style itself varies greatly from one region to the next without any universal characteristic that may define this broad category.<sup>50</sup> Authors like Balint Sárosi uses the term 'gypsy music', but because of a modern awareness of the stigma that that term brings, 'Hungarian Romani music' is used in its place. Sárosi describes the confusion of the term 'gypsy music' in the following passage:

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<sup>49</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 85.

<sup>50</sup> Ashton-Smith, *Gypsy Music: The Balkans and Beyond*, 56.

“In Hungary and throughout the world, *gypsy music* is the name given to the music represented by the romani musicians of Hungary, and this very name is already misleading; for here, too, the gypsies’ own music, gypsy folk music, is completely different, and elsewhere—in the Balkans, the Soviet Union, Spain—the style and repertoire of the musician gypsies differ significantly from those of the gypsies in Hungary.”<sup>51</sup>

It is important to clarify that the Romani music we know today is performed by many other people other than the Roma. However, the music that Brahms and the rest of nineteenth-century Europe heard was performed by the Hungarian Roma. Furthermore, the *style hongrois* discussed in this monograph pertains to a specific origin—Hungarian music played by the Roma who came from Hungary.

### **Origin of the *Verbunkos***

What makes Hungarian-Romani music so distinct? What is ‘Hungarian-Romani music’ exactly? The music that comes to mind when discussing Romani performances is Hungarian art music. Hungarian art music, most predominantly led by the *verbunkos*, did not come about until around 1760.<sup>52</sup> Before then, Hungarian music was dominated by German composers such as Joseph and

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<sup>51</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 7.

<sup>52</sup> Szabolcsi, *A Concise History of Hungarian Music*, 53.

Michael Haydn. At the same time during the early eighteenth century, the Hapsburg empire was trying to recruit young men to join their army. Music and celebration started being used during those recruitments and around the year 1760, the music and the dance choreography, which is later named *verbunkos*, was developed.<sup>53</sup> In order to persuade the young men to join, the empire introduced a dance during the recruitment process. The dance developed into an elaborate ceremonial function in hopes of successful recruitment. Gergely Czuczor, a poet and linguist, describes this recruitment ceremony in great detail:

“We are standing on a small town’s marketsquare where it is usually the peasant population of the area who crowd together. From among the varied noises and hummings the harsh music of the *tárogató* strikes our ears amid occasional blaring shouts, and the bobbing guardians of the peace come into sight, and then, behold, there come the recruiters accompanied by a crowd of people, mostly village youngsters. First of all with well-built military uprightness steps the sergeant with most manly seriousness. He doesn’t slope around, he doesn’t jump, he doesn’t click his heels, he doesn’t shout, but his every step marks out the rhythm of the music . . . Three or four steps after him comes a recruiting company among whom the corporal straight away stands out with his bearing . . . while the young lads beside and behind him with dashing lightness, clicking their

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<sup>53</sup> Szabolcsi, *A Concise History of Hungarian Music*, 54.



ankles and clapping, ornament and sharpen their steps. Then follow a largely determined series of slow figures . . . It is a characteristic of this part of the dance that it is made up only of systematic and less ornamental steps . . . After they have danced five or six slow verses like this, it is time for something more showy, which is faster and more fiery than what precedes it because here they are at moving here and there and bobbing about . . .”<sup>54</sup>

This dance, *verbunkos*, was named after the German word *werbung*, meaning ‘to recruit’.<sup>55</sup> The reason why the name derives from the German word is because the armies were primarily German-speaking. Sensational dance appealed not only to peasants and civilians, but to officers and higher ranks too. A German officer describes the dance in 1792:

“I saw the dance for the first time and I cannot describe what an effect it had on me. It expresses the character of the nation in an extraordinary way.”<sup>56</sup>

Dance played an integral role in both Hungarian and Romani society. Even though the *verbunkos* was used primarily for recruitment, the dance itself evolved into the national dance of Hungary, as it was something that peasants and Roma were able to do. Although Hungary is a country that suffered from cultural

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<sup>54</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 87–88.

<sup>55</sup> György Martin, *Hungarian Folk Dances*, trans. Rudolf Fischer (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1974), 38.

<sup>56</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 89.

oppression, there was still a strong sense of nationalism within its people. Dance was a way to express their culture and national identity. Bellman underlines the importance of dancing in Hungarian culture:

“Dancing as a ritual, as a form of expression, and as a crucial aspect of living seems always to have been an extremely strong element in Magyar culture.”<sup>57</sup>

The dance was based on traditional Hungarian dance steps since the army needed the dance to appeal to the population by making it accessible enough that others could learn the dance without too much difficulty. The early *verbunkos* dance had many similarities with those traditional dances, including one dance named *Leaping and Lads' Dance*. Parts of Hungary even called the dance the *Swineherds', Lads', or Leaping Dance* instead of *verbunkos*.<sup>58</sup> There were changes to the dances, of which one of the most significant was the shift from a fast 8 meter to a slower, more dignified, meter of 4/4.

### ***Style Hongrois***

Prior to 1859 when Liszt published his book *Des Bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie*, there was no literature available concerning the *style hongrois*. However, publications of *verbunkos* music scores were abundant and very much accessible because of the growing interest in folklore stemming from

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<sup>57</sup> Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, 18.

<sup>58</sup> Martin, *Hungarian Folk Dances*, 40.

an increasing sense of nationalism. Composers such as Weber and Schubert used existing *verbunkos* music scores as source material and integrated features of the music into their compositions which resulted in the initial development of the *style hongrois*.

### **Analysis of Three Works**

The second section of this chapter aims to give an overview of the *verbunkos* style and the *style hongrois* by way of an analysis of three musical works. I will be analyzing four categories: melody, rhythm, harmony, and instrumentation (if applicable). This is a surface-level analysis that aims to show the reader the musical language of the *style hongrois* and familiarize them with the terminology associated with the style. A much more in-depth analysis of music integrating the *style hongrois* will be shown in Chapters 4 and 5.

Bihari, *Primatialis Magyarja*

HALLGATÓ. Zsadányi Armand.

Adagio.

VIOLON. Adagio.

PIANO. mf

I (A): I    (IV)<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup> I    V (E): vii<sup>0</sup> 7 V    I PAC    I (A): vi

IV ii    IV    V    I    V<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup> ii<sub>6</sub>    V7    I PAC

Figure 2.1. Bihari, *Primatialis Magyarja*, mm. 1–8

Bihari's *Primatialis Magyarja* for violin and piano will be used as a model to discuss the *verbunkos* style. The *verbunkos* is typically in a ternary form that is further divided into a variety of subsections.<sup>59</sup> The form always alternates between slow (*lassu*) and faster (*friss*) sections. For example, this piece is divided into many sections, starting in a slow tempo and gradually increasing in tempo, and finally finishing in a fast *presto*. The sections are labelled *Hallgató-Adagio*, *Trio-Andantino*, *Változat-piu mosso*, *Maestoso*, *Ábránd-Andante*, *Palotás-Andante affetuoso*, *Bokázó-piu mosso*, *Friss. Csárdás Változatok-Allegro*, *Finale-*

<sup>59</sup> Handrigan, "On the 'Hungarian' in Works of Brahms: A Critical Study", 52.

*Presto*. Here in Figure 2.1, the piece starts off with the slow *Hallgató* section. The *Hallgató* developed from the *nóta*,<sup>60</sup> so it has characteristics such as the widely arched and free rhapsodic melodies performed with expressive rubato.

## Melody

Melody writing of the *style hongrois* has a focus on technical facility of the instrument as well as an improvisatory manner. Stepwise lyrical melodies of Western Europe are replaced with ones containing wide leaps and an abundance of ornamentations consisting of long scalar passages, trills, mordents, grace notes, and arpeggios. Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2 show these traits concerning melody.

Referring to Figure 2.1, the piece starts off with a grace note that leaps an interval of a sixth. Right away, this grace-note ornament sets up this *Hallgató* section for declamatory and rhapsodic potential; it also foreshadows the many ornamentations to come. In mm. 1–8, the melody contains extensive ornamentations, which often appear more abundantly in slower sections like the *Hallgató*. In m. 1, the time it takes to complete the first motive that is just four notes (3–2–1–6) is prolonged with ornamentation. After the second note of the motive, the violinist plays ten more notes before arriving at the third note of the motive. In m. 2, the motive is repeated down a sixth and is initiated again by a grace note, but this time with only two grace notes between the second and third

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<sup>60</sup> *Nóta* is the term for the Hungarian popular song that was developed by minor nobles in the nineteenth century. It is rhapsodic and the style is varied.

notes of the motive. Another example of ornamentation being applied generously is in the following two measures, mm. 3–4. Here, the main notes are 5–7–1 to complete the perfect authentic cadence (PAC) but the violinist first plays an ascending arpeggio in beats 1 and 2, followed by a written-out mordent-trill on beat 3 to finally reach 5 on beat 4. As seen in just the examples of the first four measures, ornaments initiate the phrase as well as infiltrate the phrase extensively, prolonging the time it takes to move between the structural notes of the melody. In this sense, it is more akin to improvisation using different ornamentations and cadenza-like figurations than an attempt at formal melodic writing.

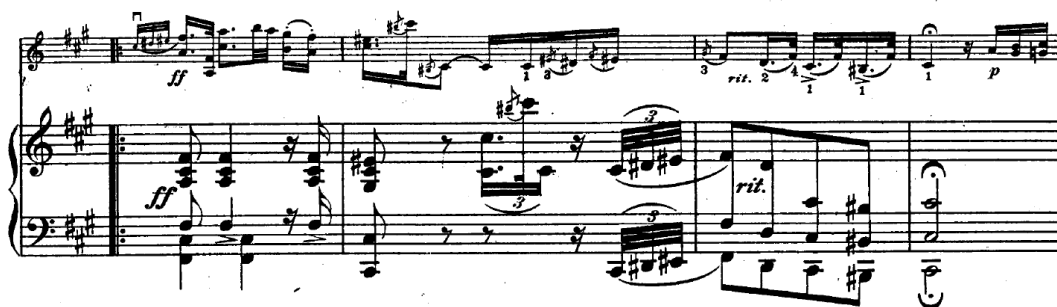


Figure 2.2. Bihari, *Primatialis Magyarja*, mm. 9–12

The melody in mm. 9–12 (Figure 2.2) further shows how unique it is when compared to the European style of the time. Instead of smooth, stepwise motion that is taught in contrapuntal treatises, beats 1 and 2 in m. 9 has the melody dropping down an octave and then climbing back up a tenth. In m. 10, the melody jumps up a sixth and then proceeds to drop down two octaves in the span of a thirty-second note. These register shifts are much more technically demanding

than if one were to play a melody that has stepwise motion. Thus, a display of technical facility holds more importance in this passage.

## Rhythm

There are a few rhythmic patterns that are widespread in Hungarian music. One of them is a short-long rhythm with an accent on the downbeat.<sup>61</sup> The short-long rhythm consists of a sixteenth note or a thirty-second note followed by a dotted eighth or sixteenth note. An example of this rhythm is shown in the pink boxes in Figure 2.3, mm. 41–46.

Another rhythmic technique that derives from the short-long is termed *alla zoppa* (meaning “limping” in Italian). This rhythm is a syncopation that consists of a quarter note between two eighth notes, or a half note between two quarter notes. What sets this apart from the syncopation found in Western composers is that it is used often enough in Hungarian music to be recognized as one of its stylistic features. To clarify, traits of the *style hongrois* such as the *alla zoppa* rhythm or ornamentation is not new to Western European music. However, it is the ubiquitous usage of these traits in Hungarian pieces that allows it to be deemed a stylistic character of the *style hongrois*. This *alla zoppa* rhythmic gesture can be found in multiple instances within this piece. An example of the *alla zoppa* rhythm is shown in Figure 2.4 in the left hand as well as the inner line of the right hand indicated by the pink boxes.

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<sup>61</sup> Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, 114.

ÁBRÁND. (Mariskám, Mariskám eszem a szentedet.)  
Andante.

*p con sordino dolce* *glissée*

2 Corda

Andante.

*p*

short-long rhythm

Figure 2.3. Bihari, *Primatialis Magyarja*, mm. 41–46

Maestoso.

Maestoso.

*ff*

alla zoppa rhythm

Figure 2.4. Bihari, *Primatialis Magyarja*, mm. 33–36

## Harmony

The harmonies in this piece revolve mainly around I, ii, IV and V. There are the occasional secondary dominants but the overall harmonies are not nearly as chromatic as some of the other repertoire of the same century. In Figure 2.1, mm. 1–2, there is a I–(IV6/4)–I progression. In mm. 3–4, the harmonic progression is V8/6/4–7/5/3–I. In both cases, either the tonic harmony or the dominant harmony is prolonged. This prolongation, which results in a slow



harmonic rhythm, makes it possible for the violin to move freely and insert many neighbour notes and passing tones as ornaments.

FRISS. CSÁRDÁS VÁLTOZATOK  
Allegro.

Allegro. *p riten.* *accel.* *tempo*

Allegro. *p riten.* *accel.* *tempo*

I(A): I V 7 vi V7 V V7 V

I V 7 vi V7 V V7 V

Figure 2.5. Bihari, *Primatialis Magyarja*, mm. 91–106

After discussing the harmonies of the *Hallgató-Adagio* section, a brief analysis of the *Friss* would suffice to represent the rest of the piece (shown in Figure 2.5). The harmonies mainly shift between I and V and have the same progression for both eight-bar phrases. The harmonic language in this *Friss* section is conventional and nowhere near as chromatic as contemporaneous early romantic pieces. It is more classical if anything. This simple harmonic structure is applied throughout the rest of the piece. This harmonic simplicity is also prevalent in the next piece that I will analyze: Schubert's *Moments Musicaux* no. 3, D. 780.

### Schubert, *Moments Musicaux* No. 3, D. 780

In the beginning of the romantic period, one of the earliest composers to incorporate the *style hongrois* explicitly into his compositions was Schubert. In his *Moments Musicaux* no. 3, D.780, it is clear the style Schubert is portraying. Many compositional characteristics evoke the style making it undeniably Hungarian-like. Unlike Bihari's example, this is not set in the structure of a *verbunkos*; there is no alternation between slow and fast sections. Instead, the structure is in an ordinary ternary form. Although the tonality is that of a minor mode, the composition suggests a more light-hearted mood as opposed to the common extreme emotional melancholy associated with Hungarian music.

Allegro moderato.

3. *p*

spondee

*F pedal*

i (Fm): i V i V i VI V<sup>4</sup><sub>3</sub>

iv i V 8-7 6-5 i  
4-3 PAC

Figure 2.6. Schubert, *Moments Musicaux* no. 3, D.780, mm. 1–14

## Melody

Schubert's *Moments Musicaux* no. 3, D.780 exhibits many melodic traits of the *style hongrois*. Upon the first listen, it is apparent already that it has a different flavor than that of pieces like his sonatas or impromptus. This is attributed to the various elements of the *style hongrois* working together to conjure up this flavor. For example, the melody is often written in harmonic thirds and sixths. Although thirds and sixths are also frequently used in pieces that are not trying to replicate the Hungarian style, when placed along other traits, such as an extensive use of grace-note ornaments within a minor key, the *style hongrois* is evoked. Furthermore, the *kontra*<sup>62</sup> often either doubles Violin I or plays a third or a sixth underneath the melody. Thus, the thirds and sixths Schubert writes throughout this piece are characteristic of the *style hongrois*. When comparing Schubert's *Moment Musicaux* with Bihari's *Primatalis Magyarja*, it is evident that Schubert's piece is much more simplistic in terms of ornamentations. *Moments Musicaux* no. 3 appears to be more of a whimsical classical piece with elements of the *style hongrois* applied almost like a compositional exercise. Within the first eight measures, almost every measure is ornamented with grace notes. This abundance of grace notes not seen in the typical pieces of Schubert's period further emphasizes the exotic nature of this piece.

Schubert omits two iconic melodic traits of the *style hongrois*: the raised fourth degree and the *gypsy cadence*. The piece is set in F minor, so the

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<sup>62</sup> The *kontra* is the second violin of a Romani ensemble. It doubles Violin I, or plays a third or sixth below Violin I. A typical Romani ensemble consists of the violin, the *kontra*, and the cimbalom.

dissonance between the flat 6 and raised 7<sup>th</sup>, along with the other *style hongrois* traits, already conjures a Hungarian feeling. However, it is missing a raised fourth degree, which is almost never missed in Hungarian melodies.



Figure 2.7. Bihari, *Primatialis Magyarja*, mm. 61–65



Figure 2.8. Schubert, *Moments Musicaux* no. 3, D.780, mm. 49–50

An example of the *gypsy cadence* is shown in m. 65, Figure 2.7. In the cadence, the arrival of the tonic is delayed in the melody and the way in which it is delayed is always through a 2–1–1–7–1 motive. This cadence is ubiquitous in the phrase endings of all Hungarian pieces. In Schubert's cadential example (Figure 2.8), he does not follow this pattern, but he does move around the tonic using 1–1–1–2–3–2–1, which resembles the *gypsy cadence*.

## Rhythm

This piece is set in duple time 2/4, which is one of the most common time signatures found in the Hungarian style for fast sections like the *friss*. The main rhythmic gesture of the *style hongrois* used here is the *spondee*. Bellman, who uses this term for this rhythmic gesture, defines it in this passage:

“The *spondee*, a metric foot consisting of two longs, is a common Hungarian reference . . . This rhythm can either begin a phrase or end one, but its sudden accented suspension of quicker motion has an unmistakable punctuating effect.”<sup>63</sup>

Examples of the *spondee* used in this piece are shown in the pink boxes in Figure 2.6, mm. 4 and 6. The *spondee* has a concluding function in the two-measure basic idea in mm. 3–4 and 5–6. However, in the B section, it has an initiating function within the two four-measure phrases found in mm. 19–22 and 23–26 (see Figure 2.9). This is the only rhythmic device of the *style hongrois* that Schubert uses in this piece, but it is sufficient to evoke the style as it is such a defining feature of that style.

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<sup>63</sup> Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, 112.

## Harmony

This piece employs a melody over a harmonic structure that has an air of simplicity. One of the reasons for this simplicity is the F pedal. Like pastoral music and folk music, Hungarian music often uses drones that evoke a rustic feeling. The simplicity is further reinforced with a simple harmonic language. In the A section, the harmonies alternate between I and V; the section then ends with a standard cadential progression of VI – V7/iv – iv – V8/6/4 – V7/5/3 – i.

Figure 2.9. Schubert, *Moments Musicaux* no. 3, D.780, mm. 15–28

The key changes to Ab major in the B section, starting in m. 19 (Figure 2.9). In this new key, the harmonic progression is I – V7 – I – IV – V7 – I. This conventional harmonic structure is typical of not only music from the Classical period, but also Hungarian art music, which was very much influenced by the Classical style of Western Europe.

## Liszt, Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1

Liszt himself enjoyed Schubert's compositions that featured the *style hongrois* so much that he edited and transcribed them.<sup>64</sup> These works include the *Moments Musicaux* no. 3 discussed above, the Impromptu Op. 90 no. 2, and *Divertissement à l'Hongroise*. He even provided an alternate version to the second theme of the Impromptu Op. 90 no. 2. Therefore, it is not surprising that Liszt was captivated by the source of this style: the music of the Roma—especially its virtuosity and pathos. In his Hungarian Rhapsody no. 7, he marks “À exécuter à la façon hautaine et mélancolique des Tziganes,” which means to be played in the haughty and melancholy style of the Gypsies. This melancholic drama to Liszt was important in capturing the style and one can hear it clearly in his Hungarian Rhapsodies.

Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody no. 1 follows the traditional structure of the *verbunkos*. The introduction is marked *lento quasi recitativo*. There is an alternation between the *lento quasi recitativo* and *andante con moto*. Although it is not explicitly marked *Hallgató* as in the case of Bihari's example, this introduction is clearly in that style. As shown in Bihari's example, the *verbunkos* alternates between slow and fast, and that is very much evident here.

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<sup>64</sup> Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, 175.

**Lento quasi Recitativo.** raised fourth of the gypsy scale

**Andante con moto.** *p* *cresc.*

**Recitativo.** *ff*

Figure 2.10. Liszt, Hungarian Rhapsody no. 1, mm. 1–10

## Melody

In Figure 2.10, m. 3, the cadenza embeds #4 (B#) into the F# minor scale. Bellman classifies a minor scale with #4 as the ‘Gypsy Scale’.<sup>65</sup> The fourth degree in this scale may be raised or kept the same depending on the mode it is in—major or minor. When this cadenza is played, this raised fourth brings about a distinctively Hungarian flavor not found in Western European melodies.

Again, there are a lot of ornaments and cadenza passages. In Figure 2.10, m. 1, the piece is initiated by a grace note. In m. 3, there are three grace notes

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 121.



followed by a trill, which leads into a mini-cadenza that ends the introduction and transitions into the main theme. In these cadenza passages, there are long stretches of rapid sixteenth notes, as in the case of Figure 2.12. For instance, m. 76 is meant to be an unmeasured cadenza interjection. Even though the virtuosic cadenza interjection is a stylistic feature common to Liszt, it works well in the Hungarian style, where it imitates the improvisatory cadenza passages that a Romani violinist would add into their performances all too often.

Finally, Liszt uses the most conspicuous melodic trait of the *style hongrois*, which is the *Gypsy Cadence*. In the left-hand melody indicated by the pink box shown in Figure 2.11, m. 36, there is an example of one of the places where he uses it. This is just one of the many instances that can be found in this Hungarian Rhapsody. Liszt ends a lot of his phrases with this cadence, similar to a Hungarian composition, such as Bihari's *Primatialis Magyarja*.

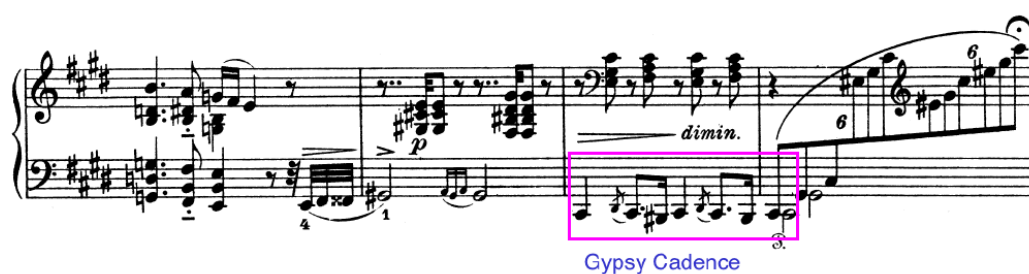


Figure 2.11. Liszt, Hungarian Rhapsody no. 1, mm. 36–39

The image displays three systems of musical notation for Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody no. 1, measures 76-77. The first system is in treble clef, featuring a trill (tr) and a crescendo (cresc.) marking. The second system is in bass clef, marked 'leggierissimo', and includes fingerings (1, 2, 4, 3, 5) for a sequence of notes. The third system shows a final measure with a 'rit.' marking and a 2/4 time signature.

Figure 2.12. Liszt, Hungarian Rhapsody no. 1, mm. 76–77

## Rhythm

Among some of the *style hongrois* rhythms used in this piece, the short-long rhythm plays an especially important role. The short-long rhythm, a combination of a sixteenth followed by a dotted eighth, or a thirty-second followed by a double-dotted eighth, is present throughout the entire piece, as it is used as part of the recurring motive. This motive is introduced immediately in m. 1, with the short-long rhythm—expressed by a sixteenth note followed by an eighth note—falling on the third beat of the same measure and concluding the first phrase (Figure 2.10). Right after, in m. 2, the short-long rhythm is expressed by a thirty-second note and a double-dotted eighth in beat 3 again. Then, in m. 3, there are two short-long rhythms played consecutively. This short-long rhythm used in the opening *lento quasi recitativo* articulates a declamatory gesture

because of the recitative style and its concluding function of each short phrase through a weak-strong emphasis.

The image shows a musical score for Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody no. 1, measures 23-31. The score is in E major and 2/4 time, marked "Andante (assai moderato)". It features a piano introduction with expressive markings like "p sempre cantando espressivo" and "rit.". The score is annotated with Roman numerals: I (E): I, V7, I, V7, I, V7, IV in red above the staff, and ii, vii° 7, ii, vii° 7, ii, bVII in red below the staff. Pedal markings "E Pedal" and "F# Pedal" are in blue. Dynamics include "cresc." and "dolente".

Figure 2.13. Liszt, Hungarian Rhapsody no. 1, mm. 23–31

## Harmony

Liszt started composing this set of Hungarian Rhapsodies in the year 1846 when he was 36 years old. At that time, the harmony used by Liszt and his colleagues was much more chromatic and advanced than that of his predecessors, Mozart, Beethoven, and Haydn. While Liszt uses more complex romantic harmonies akin to his contemporaneous Western romantic composers, the harmonic progressions in this piece have an air of simplicity akin to the composers from Hungary. To demonstrate this, I will provide a brief harmonic analysis of an eight-bar phrase shown in Figure 2.13. In the first four-bar phrase, Liszt moves between I and V4/3 until m. 25 when he uses V4/3 of IV to bring him to IV. All that happens is tonic being prolonged and eventually moving to the

subdominant. This lack of harmonic motion immediately evokes a feeling of simplicity. The next four-bar phrase starts with ii followed by a neighbor chord  $vii^{\circ}6/5$  of ii. This happens for three measures until m. 30, when it modulates temporarily to  $bVII$ . The harmonic destination of  $bVII$  is chromatic but the journey getting there is not chromatically adventurous. The next section, marked *quasi improvisato* (Figure 2.14), uses the same harmonic structure, but Liszt embellishes the melody with many chromatic notes in his Lisztian style. Overall, most of the phrases follow this pattern of a prolongation of a particular harmony before moving to a different harmony, which results in little harmonic motion. This simplicity in harmonic motion is characteristic of Hungarian music.

**Quasi improvisato.**  
*la melodia sempre cantando*

The musical score shows two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower in bass clef. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The right hand plays a melodic line with a fermata over a note marked '5'. The left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment with 'rit.' markings and '1 1' below notes. There are asterisks and a '3 simile' marking below the bass line.

Figure 2.14. Liszt, Hungarian Rhapsody no. 1, mm. 40–42

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The musical score shows two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower in bass clef. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The right hand plays a melodic line with 'tre corde' and 'mf' markings. The left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment with 'rinforz.' markings and '3' below notes. There are asterisks and a '3' marking below the bass line.

Figure 2.15. Liszt, Hungarian Rhapsody no. 1, mm. 153–156

## Instrumentation

Although written for the piano, the opening passage of this rhapsody harkens the declamation of the violinist, blending in *style hongrois* traits with pianistic gestures. For example, in Figure 2.10, m. 8, there are grace notes leaping three octaves, which are executed much easier on the piano. The right-hand melody of the *andante con moto* section takes advantage of the thick harmonies a piano can produce. Other sections of the piece, such as the *quasi improvisato* shown in Figure 2.13, uses chordal arpeggiation. This type of arpeggiation would not be played by any of the instrumentalists in a Romani band. However, in Figure 2.15, the quickly repeated chords are a definite reference to the *cimbalom* doing a tremolando to provide a cushion of harmony for the violinists to play their melodies above.

## Conclusion

It is apparent that there are many similarities in melody, rhythm, and harmony between the compositions of Schubert and Liszt, and that of Bihari's. It is because the *style hongrois* of the Western composers (Schubert and Liszt) is an imitation of the musical traits found in the *verbunkos* (Bihari). These traits—including abundant ornamentation, the *gypsy cadence*, a slow introduction and a fast coda, harmonic simplicity, and accented short-long rhythms—are what make Hungarian music sound Hungarian. It comes from a mixture of the dance used for recruitment during the reign of the Hapsburg Empire, as well as Romani

performance practice (using ornamentation as tools for improvising for example).

Brahms would later become enamored of this style and incorporate it into his own compositional style.

## Chapter 3

### Brahms's Introduction to the *Style Hongrois*

Brahms had a love for the vernacular. This is apparent through the many waltzes and folk songs he composed. One of the vernacular modes Brahms especially enjoyed was the *style hongrois*. Brahms employs this style in many of his pieces. Bellman provides a great description of Brahms's love for the style:

“. . . the *style hongrois* would become one of Brahms's most beloved modes of expression, used throughout his life with greater nonchalance than either Schubert or Liszt had been able to achieve.”<sup>66</sup>

Sometimes the presence of the *style hongrois* is subtle as in the slow movement of his Violin Sonata no. 3, op. 108, or explicit, as in his fourth movement of the Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, entitled 'Rondo alla Zingarese'. Either way, he displays a thorough command of the style. This chapter explores the people who played a role in introducing the *style hongrois* to Brahms and helping him develop his mastery of this style.

His comfort with the style comes as no surprise considering the life he led. Brahms grew up and worked in Germany for half his life, and then in Vienna for the remaining twenty-five years of his life. He was also able to travel to many different countries, including Hungary. During a period when the Romani

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<sup>66</sup> Bellman, *The Style-Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, 202.

musicians were already performing everywhere across Western Europe, Brahms would have been able to hear the musicians perform when he drank in restaurants and taverns with his colleagues.<sup>67</sup> He was also very engaged in watching various live performances. He would spend his time at the Viennese amusement parks just to see the Romani musicians.<sup>68</sup> Every year, Brahms visited multiple cities to attend music festivals.<sup>69</sup> Most importantly, his travels and growing fame allowed him to meet some influential people who were well-versed in Hungarian music and would inevitably influence Brahms in his development of using the *style hongrois*. Of these people, the greatest influence was Ede Remenyi.

### **Ede Remenyi**

To Brahms, the person who influenced him the most in the Hungarian style was, without a doubt, Ede Remenyi, who was born in Miskolc, Hungary, January 27, 1830. After studying in Hungary, Remenyi moved to Vienna to study with Joseph Böhm, the teacher who had also taught Joseph Joachim. Remenyi had much more pride towards his native country than had Liszt or Joachim. He took part in the Hungarian revolution where, instead of going to battle, he played music on his violin to inspire the Hungarian soldiers. Serving the same purpose as the *verbunkos*, Remenyi went from village to village playing czardas tunes on his

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 202.

<sup>68</sup> Luca S. Ciarla, "Maurice Ravel's Tzigane: A Link Between the Classical and the Hungarian-Gypsy Traditions" (Doctor of Musical Arts with a Major in Music thesis, The University of Arizona, 2002), 50.

<sup>69</sup> Karl Geiringer and H. B. Weiner, *Brahms: His Life and Work* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1948), 66.



violin in hopes of recruiting more men to join the revolutionary cause. The army recognized his valuable musical service and regarded him as their primary camp violinist.<sup>70</sup> The uprising of the Hungarian people against the existing empire resulted in the defeat of the Hungarian people; Remenyi, who was part of the people's uprising, was consequently exiled from the country.<sup>71</sup> He left for America after his exile, where he resumed his career as a touring artist. Even after his exile, he remained patriotic. E. Heron-Allen describes Remenyi's love for his homeland as such:

“To the end of his adventurous life, though always a restless wanderer, appearing and disappearing in the strangest manner, he was an ardent Hungarian, and his national sentiment was reflected alike in his life and in his music.”<sup>72</sup>

When Remenyi returned to Europe after his time in America, he gave tours in Hamburg. When his accompanist became ill one day, fate led him to meet Brahms. Remenyi instantly took a liking to Brahms's intellect and piano prowess, and so they embarked on a European tour. During their time together, Brahms was able to hear Remenyi's Romani-styled playing. Some of Remenyi's characteristics included technical mastery of the instrument, a bright and penetrating tone, and a performance practice that is almost in a selfish manner that

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<sup>70</sup> Gwedoly D. Kelley and George P. Upton, *Edouard Remenyi: Musician, Litterateur, and Man: An Appreciation* (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2000), 10.

<sup>71</sup> Grove Music Online, *Reményi [Hoffmann], Ede*, January 20, 2001, <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/0-mo-9781561592630-e-0000023179>

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

prioritizes the virtuosity and extravagance in the performer. Gwedoly D. Kelly and George P. Upton describe Remenyi's playing in the following passage:

“He was not a severely correct and intellectual player like César Thompson or Wilhelmj, for instance, both of whom he greatly admired, by way of contrast to his own style, which was emotional, impulsive, passionate, and altogether temperamental; now vigorous and virile, again poetical and dreamy, according to the mood of the moment.”<sup>73</sup>

In addition to the opportunity of being able to hear a Hungarian perform, Brahms was also able to hear many Hungarian tunes played by Remenyi. Brahms himself would improvise an accompaniment to fit the charming melodies. Bellman goes as far as crediting this experience of playing Hungarian tunes with Remenyi as being the most integral education leading to Brahms's mastery of the *style hongrois*.<sup>74</sup> Having this experience in his early years of composition was invaluable to developing his command of the *style hongrois*. According to Remenyi, some of the melodies used in Brahms's Hungarian Dances for Piano Four Hands were taken from Remenyi when they were improvising before concerts. Kelly and Upton state in their book:

“It can hardly be doubted that the latter's [Brahms] association with Remenyi inspired the “Ungarische Tanze.”  
To be convinced of this it is only necessary to recall the

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<sup>73</sup> Kelley and Upton, *Edouard Remenyi: Musician, Litterateur, and Man: An Appreciation*, 23.

<sup>74</sup> Bellman, *The Style-Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, 203.

spirited controversy twenty-five years ago, when Brahms was accused of plagiarism by Remenyi and his friends, who alleged, not merely that he had published Magyar folk songs as his own, but had appropriated some of Remenyi's own melodies."<sup>75</sup>

Remenyi embodied the Roma lifestyle even though he was a native Hungarian and not a Roma. He travelled the world, never staying in one place for too long, giving performances. His travels included trips to many countries within North America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. Kelly and Upton further describes Remenyi's vagrant lifestyle in the following quote:

“One month in Parisian Salons, the next found him among strange peoples in the Orient. The only certain thing in Remenyi's musical life was that he would not be where he ought to be at a given time, and that he was just where he wished to be.”<sup>76</sup>

In his lifetime, he contributed a lot to the Hungarian musical repertoire, including three books of Hungarian melodies and *csárdás* for piano. Another well-known musician who made significant contributions to the Hungarian musical repertoire as well as Romani literature was Franz Liszt.

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<sup>75</sup> Kelley and Upton, *Edouard Remenyi: Musician, Litterateur, and Man: An Appreciation*, 17.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

## Franz Liszt

Franz Liszt was born in October 22, 1811, in the village of Doborjan, Hungary. When he was nine, he moved to Vienna to study with Czerny and would later establish his reputation as one of Europe's best pianists. Although Liszt rarely visited Hungary since having moved away, he retained a sense of nationalistic pride towards his people, and especially towards the music of the Roma. This is apparent in his set of nineteen Hungarian Rhapsodies and his book, *Des Bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie*,<sup>77</sup> that was published after the Rhapsodies to serve as a commentary to the collection. In 1853, when the twenty-year-old Brahms was touring with Remenyi, they stopped at Weimar where Liszt was currently living in his residence, 'the Altenburg'.<sup>78</sup> Remenyi, being good friends with Liszt at the time, thought this would be a good opportunity to connect Brahms with one of the most influential musicians of Germany. During their stay, Brahms attended evening performances of Liszt performing his own works. Even though Brahms did not completely agree with the great virtuoso's playing and musical philosophy, he became acquainted with Liszt's repertoire, which probably included his famous Hungarian Rhapsodies.

His stay at Liszt's residence did not last long. Brahms was not interested in Liszt and was also opposed to the musical philosophy of the 'New German School' championed by Liszt. Liszt could clearly tell that Brahms had no interest in him, so he kept his distance from Brahms. Remenyi was angry at Brahms for

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<sup>77</sup> Franz Liszt, *Des Bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1881).

<sup>78</sup> Geiringer and Weiner, *Brahms: His Life and Work*, 30.

wasting his efforts to connect the young musician with his good friend, Liszt. There was already tension building between the two musicians during their tour together, so Remenyi used the conflict between Brahms and Liszt as the reason to end their tour and collaboration altogether. Because of this sudden cancellation, Brahms, with nowhere left to go but home, decided to call upon Joseph Joachim, who had earlier offered to help Brahms whenever he was in need.

### **Joseph Joachim**

Brahms's next destination was Göttingen, where the famous violinist, Joseph Joachim, resided. While on tour together, Remenyi introduced Brahms to Joachim, who instantly recognized Brahms's talent and potential. Joachim would become an important friend of Brahms's for most of his life. Whereas Joachim was already regarded as one of the best violinists in Germany, Brahms was still an unknown composer. Despite this disparity, Joachim promoted Brahms's works throughout his life; in this way, Brahms's success was due in part to Joachim's efforts. It is also thanks to Joachim that Brahms was able to meet Robert and Clara Schumann, who became his friends and mentors. Joachim also helped Brahms refine his compositional skills by doing counterpoint exercises with him during Joachim's compositional years.

Joseph Joachim was born in Hungary on June 28, 1831. When his family moved to Pest in 1833, he studied violin under Stanisław Serwaczyński, who also taught Wieniawski, until 1839. As discussed in Chapter 1, Pest was the musical

center of Hungary during the nineteenth century. Romani musicians achieved much success performing in this city. Therefore, Joachim, along with his teacher Serwaczyński, would have undoubtedly been impacted by the Romani sensation. Andreas Moser, the biographer of Joachim, stated that Joachim recalls hearing Romani melodies throughout his childhood.<sup>79</sup> A review for a concert performed by Joachim in 1844 heralded him as ‘The Hungarian Boy’.<sup>80</sup> Although Joachim subsequently spent the rest of his life in Germany and was also brought up in the German culture and language, he did not forsake his Jewish and Hungarian origin. Many of his compositions are of the German and Viennese style, but some compositions, such as the ‘Hungarian Fantasie’ and the ‘Hungarian Concerto,’ reflect his connection to his roots. Joachim’s Violin Concerto (“Hungarian”) is a testament to not only his technical mastery of the instrument, but also his understanding of the musical style of his birthplace. The concerto is full of passages that are acknowledged by many violinists to be very technically demanding. There are also many traits of the *style hongrois* found within the concerto. Uhde describes the concerto:

“Just as Joachim’s Hebrew Melodys was ‘tinged with all the melancholy of an oppressed race, yet with a fiery energy in all the numbers’, so his Hungarian pieces above all the Hungarian Concerto Op. 11, evoked the Hungarian manner

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<sup>79</sup> Andreas Moser, *Joseph Joachim: A Biography* (1831–1899), trans. Lilla Durham (London, 1906), 180.

<sup>80</sup> Katharina Uhde, *The Music of Joseph Joachim / Katharina Uhde* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: The Boydell Press, 2018), 10.

through uninhibited freedom, nostalgic melancholy, and passionate abandon native to the style.”<sup>81</sup>

Like Joachim’s Hungarian Concerto Op. 11, the finale of Brahms’s Violin Concerto Op. 77 features many traits of the *style hongrois*. By this time, Brahms could already comfortably compose in the *style hongrois*. According to Joachim, Brahms, in his Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, wrote in a more convincing ‘Hungarian’ style than Joachim himself, whose ‘Hungarian’ concerto was more German-like when compared to Brahms’s Quartet. Brahms dedicated his Violin Concerto Op. 77 to Joachim and thought of Joachim as the intended soloist while composing it. Geiringer describes the final movement of the concerto in this passage:

“The fiery, rondo-like Finale, which is influenced by gypsy music, seems to pay a special compliment to the dedicatee, a native of Hungary, and it is significant that in this movement the piquant main subject is intoned at first by the solo violin.”<sup>82</sup>

In fact, the violin part in many of his chamber music compositions were inspired and informed by listening to Joachim’s violin-playing.<sup>83</sup> In this concerto, Brahms needed to tackle many of the challenges of writing a virtuosic violin part with his limited knowledge of the instrument (much of which was gained through watching Joachim perform chamber music). He would often consult Joachim

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>82</sup> Geiringer, *On Brahms and His Circle: Essays and Documentary Studies*, 103.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 102.

about the violin solo part in this concerto. Evidence of his consultations with Joachim can be seen through the many notes written by Joachim on the manuscript of the concerto, suggesting better idiomatic alternatives to the solo violin part.<sup>84</sup> Joachim evidently played an integral role in Brahms's development, of both the *style hongrois* and composition.

## Conclusion

Whether it was Remenyi playing Hungarian melodies for Brahms to improvise an accompaniment, or Joachim sending Brahms encouragements about Brahms's proficiency in the *style hongrois*, the people addressed in this chapter played a key role to helping Brahms develop his mastery of the *style hongrois* by introducing the style to him in some capacity. Brahms as a composer relied often on his fellow musician colleagues. He would never submit a score for publication before acquiring opinions from several colleagues. Thus, his love and proficiency of the style not only developed because of the environment of Europe—where Romani performances were widespread—in which he grew up, but also very much by the people around him. The extent of his proficiency in this style will be explored in the final two chapters of this monograph.

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 103.



## Chapter 4

### The Idea of Three

The fourth movement of Brahms's Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25 is titled 'alla zingarese' (in the style of the Gypsy). While there are obvious uses of the *style hongrois* in many of Brahms's chamber works, this fourth movement is the only movement of his chamber works that he explicitly announces to the public that it is in the style of the Gypsy—hence why I think the exploration of this movement is necessary to this monograph. Underneath all the surface-level *style hongrois* traits that Brahms uses to evoke the 'alla zingarese', he sets out to establish a grouping of three that permeates all structural levels. Through the analysis of this movement, I will highlight the different traits of the *style hongrois*, with a section focusing solely on rhythm, and demonstrating how these traits intersect with the groupings of three that Brahms lays out. Furthermore, I will demonstrate how inversion plays a role in expressing Brahms's rhythmic, harmonic, and melodic ideas differently in each formal section. Finally, I will discuss how some of these ideas are manifested through a dialogue between the piano and the strings. Located at the beginning of each of these chapters is a form chart for the reader to follow along as each major section and sub-sections are discussed.

## Brahms Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25 mvt. IV

## Form Chart

Section		A1		B1			A2
Measures	1–30	31–60	61–79	80–91	92–103	104–115	116–154
Sub-Sections	a	b	a1	a	b	a1	a
		balanced binary		rounded binary			
Key		i (Gm)		III (Bb)			i (Gm)

Section		C1		D		
Measures	155–160	161–166	167–172	173–188	189–197	198–205
Sub-Sections	a	b	a1	a	b	a1
		rounded binary		rounded binary		
Key		I (G)		#vi (Em)		

Section	B2	C2			A3
Measures	206–237	238–243	244–249	250–25	256–292
Sub-Sections	a	a	b	a1	b
		rounded binary			
Key	I (G)	I (G)			i (Gm)

Section	Cadenza				A4	Coda
Measures	293–302	303–312	313–334	335–362	363–383	384–end
Sub-Sections	D theme	B theme	C theme	B theme	a	
Key	Various				i (Gm)	i (Gm)

## Groupings of Three

This fourth movement is interesting in how it is structured. Each major section is divided into three smaller sub-sections which results in a combination of rounded-binary and balanced-binary structures within the large-scale sections (i.e., A1, B1, etc.). Furthermore, in the A sections, the basic ideas are three measures long (as shown in Figure 4.2), and the antecedent is repeated twice, making each antecedent repetition six measures long. A chart illustrating these groupings can be seen in Figure 4.1.<sup>85</sup>

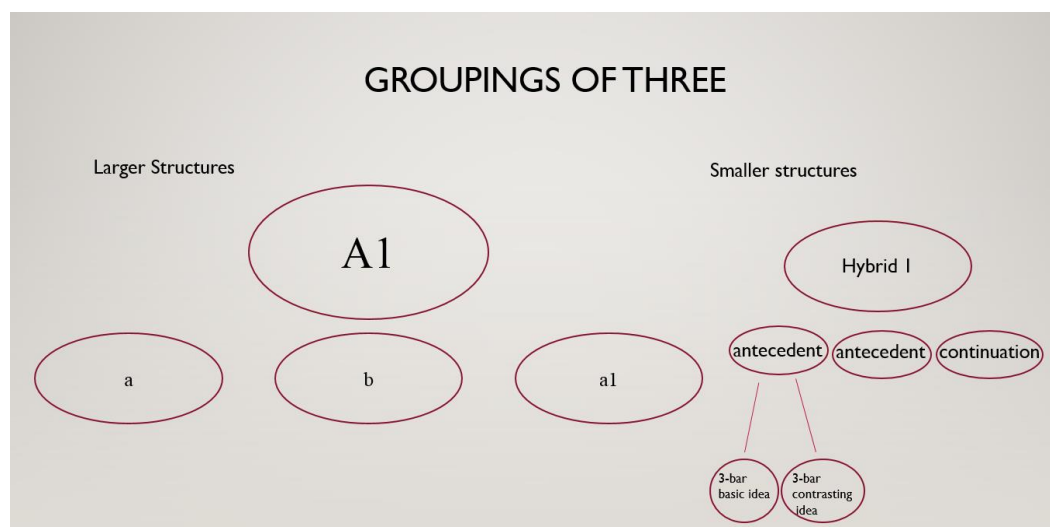


Figure 4.1. Brahms, Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, iv, Grouping Chart of A1

<sup>85</sup> The Hybrid I, discussed by William Caplin, is normally an eight-measure unit that is a combination of a period and a sentence. He writes, "Many hybrid themes begin like a period but end like a sentence; that is, they are composed of a four-measure antecedent followed by a four-measure continuation." See William E. Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 59.

This contrasts with typical two and four-measure groupings that occur within normative theme-types, such as periods and sentences within the Classical style.<sup>86</sup> It also contrasts with the preceding three movements, which use standard four-measure groupings. Thus, this movement exhibits an idea of three that is presented in various levels of structure. The idea of three first introduced in the A section will become instrumental to the rest of this movement. In each section of this movement, Brahms uses a different way to express the grouping of three. Each unique expression of the groupings of three helps make each formal section distinct from one another.

**Rondo alla Zingarese**

The image shows the first six measures of the Rondo alla Zingarese movement. The score is for Violine, Bratsche, Violoncell, and Pianoforte. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked 'Presto'. The first measure is marked 'a' and 'G pedal'. The second measure is marked 'i (Gm): i'. The third measure is marked 'V'. The fourth measure is marked 'i'. The fifth measure is marked 'V'. The sixth measure is marked 'V'. The score includes annotations for 'spondee' in the violin part and '3-measure basic idea' and '3-measure contrasting idea' in the piano part. The piano part also includes a 'G pedal' marking and a 'V' marking.

Figure 4.2. Brahms, Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, iv, mm. 1–6

Following the A section, the B section expresses the idea of three through other means. Here, Brahms changes the grouping from four groups of three measures (used in the refrain) to three groups of four measures. In other words, in the B section, the group of three expands from smaller units to bigger units. The C

<sup>86</sup> See Caplin, *Classical Form*.

section returns to three-measure groupings but this time, there are only two groups of three measures in each sub-section (i.e., a, b, and a1 of C). In the D section, the larger groups of three are eliminated. Instead, there are four groups of four-measure phrases, expressed through two groups of eight-measure periods (refer to Figure 4.4). However, within the absence of the large groupings of three, a smaller grouping of three arises: the triplet eighths. Here in the D section, the idea of three is expressed in the smallest value, that is the individual note value itself. The final iteration of the idea of three is expressed in the post-cadential section of the coda. In Figure 4.12, starting in m. 392, the entire ensemble is playing ascending three eighth-note groupings in unison. The groups consist of an alternation between  $b\flat$ – $\#4$ –5 and 2–7–1. Brahms writes out the three-note groupings by way of a hemiola, having two groups of three eighth notes go across bar lines and expressing a  $6/8$  time over the existing  $2/4$  time.

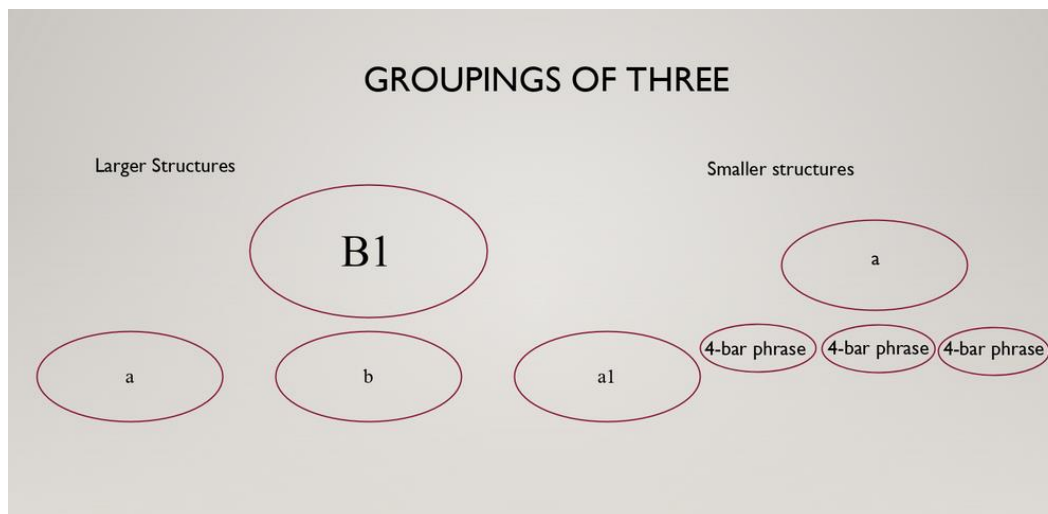


Figure 4.3. Brahms, Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, iv, Grouping Chart of B1

In conclusion, Brahms expresses the idea of three in each section through different means; each section is characterized by a way of expressing the idea of three that is unique from the other sections. He does this by altering the phrase, measure, and beat; he also expresses it through altering the meter itself by superimposing a different meter, as seen in the coda. The result is the idea of three being pervasive in the entire movement through all structural levels.

### **Rhythms of the *Style Hongrois***

To express the idea of three, Brahms incorporates rhythms that are ubiquitous in the *style hongrois*—namely the *spondee*, the short-short-long, the short-long, and the triplet. The first of these rhythms that will be discussed is the *spondee*.<sup>87</sup> Brahms highlights triple groupings by incorporating *spondees* in the opening theme shown in Figure 4.2 (the *spondees* help demarcate the beginning and end of the three-measure basic idea, which is further reinforced by the accents). Moreover, the *spondee* articulates an interesting duple and triple juxtaposition. The main feature of the *spondee* is that it is two accented notes. The three-measure groupings produce a strong feeling of three while within the three-measure groupings, the strong accented two notes are expressed which contrasts the feeling of three and are juxtaposed against it. Also, the accents of the *spondee* declaim the tonic harmony in the first bar and the dominant harmony in the third bar of the group. Therefore, the *spondee* of the main theme has immense

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<sup>87</sup> Refer to Chapter 2 for the explanation of the *spondee*.

importance in that it has three functions: to highlight the three-measure groupings by accenting the first and third measure, to articulate the duple/triple juxtaposition, and to express the constant shifts between the tonic and dominant harmony. When performing, the initial two accents in m. 1 can be emphasized more to demonstrate this rhythmic and harmonic importance. After understanding the purposes of these *spondees*, the performer may choose to play each set of accents differently. The two accents that appear suddenly after the four eighth notes of m. 2 surprise the listener and bring to their attention the end of the group which only lasts three measures. Thus, placing more of an emphasis on the third bar of the group will highlight the three-measure grouping. Whichever way the performer chooses, neither *spondees* should be underplayed.

The continuation of the ‘a’ sub-section uses another rhythmic device of the *style hongrois*: the short-short-long rhythm.<sup>88</sup> This is shown in mm. 13, 15–16, and 18 in Figure 4.4. This rhythm appears exclusively in this continuation that happens throughout all the A sections, ultimately defining this section. Throughout the movement, this continuation will appear by itself later without the preceding presentation and it is this short-short-long rhythm that helps announce the appearance of this continuation immediately. Brahms also uses this three-note short-short-long grouping as ornamentation. The main progression of mm. 13–15 is 1–b7–b6–5–4–3, with this rhythm ornamenting b7 and 4 with an upper

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<sup>88</sup> Continuation is a form-functional unit that comprises the latter four bars of an eight-measure sentence, a theme type discussed by William Caplin. Typically, a continuation occurs after a four-bar presentation, which contains two statements of a basic idea. In describing a continuation, Caplin writes, “The formal function of continuation has two outstanding characteristics: fragmentation, a reduction in the size of units; and harmonic acceleration, an increase in the rate of harmonic change.” See Caplin, *Classical Form*, 10.

neighbor note. The progression in mm. 16–18 uses the same scale degrees, though altered to prepare for the half cadence. The placement of this rhythm right before the *spondee* provides a contrast between these two Hungarian rhythmic devices; the short-short-long happens quickly and is fleeting compared to the *spondee* (two long quarter notes) that is presented in between the two short-short-long expressions. Additionally, the short-short-long rhythm appears in the first and third measure of each three-measure grouping, mirroring the *spondee*'s location in the presentation. Here, this rhythm appears on the second beat of the first measure (m. 13) and on the first beat of the third measure (m. 15) which highlights the three-measure grouping. One more way that this short-short-long rhythm expresses the idea of three is where it bisects the three-measure group into two groups of three quarter beats where the short-short-long rhythm appears in the second quarter beat of each group, creating an additional group of three through a hemiola.

Figure 4.4. Brahms, Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, iv, mm. 13–18



The C section changes pace through the direction of the marking *meno presto*.<sup>89</sup> Here, Brahms slows down the tempo as well as the rhythm using eighth notes, quarter notes, and triplet eighths instead of the continuous sixteenths found in the B section. He employs another one of the rhythms of the *style hongrois*: the short-long rhythm that is placed on the strong beat indicated in Figure 4.5.<sup>90</sup> The duple and triple groupings between the measure and the phrase that were juxtaposed in the A section also appears here in the C section. Here, the short-long rhythm aids this juxtaposition by further reducing the duple grouping into the beat. So here, there is a juxtaposition happening on three different levels: the phrase (in three), the measure (in two), and the beat (in two).

The image shows a musical score for Brahms' Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, iv, mm. 152-160. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a 'Meno Presto' marking and a 'short-long rhythm' highlighted in pink. The score includes a piano part (mm. 152-160) and a string quartet part. The piano part has a 'C' section starting at m. 152, marked 'a ff'. The string quartet part has a 'short-long rhythm' highlighted in pink. The score includes harmonic analysis: I(G): I, IV I, V7 I, and a sequence of chords: 6 ii5 i6 V3 4 V.

Figure 4.5. Brahms, Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, iv, mm. 152–160

<sup>89</sup> The B section does not contain any rhythms of the *style hongrois*, thus the reason for not discussing it here.

<sup>90</sup> Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, 114.

vi (Em): i V7 III bII6 V 4-3 Bm: i V7 III bII6 V7 I Em: V PAC

Figure 4.6. Brahms, Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, iv, mm. 173–180

In the D section, Brahms continues this slower tempo. Furthermore, he switches gears to slower continuous triplets (Figure 4.6). The use of triplets is the final rhythmic trait of the *style hongrois* to be discussed. Jonathan Bellman states how triplets are also very common within Hungarian music in the following passage:

“Another rhythm by no means unique to the *style hongrois* but ubiquitous within it is the simple decorative triplet. For this I have no particular explanation except to say that Gypsy fiddlers must have used it constantly, to judge by its use in Hungarian-influenced pieces.”<sup>91</sup>

These triplets help bring out the melancholic atmosphere that has been lacking in this movement. There is a lot of fire and virtuosity leading up to this D section,

<sup>91</sup> Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*, 116.

but there has yet to be any melancholy of the Roma. The ‘a’ sub-section of this D section is marked *poco forte espressivo*, so this sadness is still subdued, but when this theme comes back in a1 of the D section, it is marked *forte espressivo* with all the strings playing in unison, which expresses an outburst of lament.

### **Inversion**

The groupings of three and the rhythms of the *style hongrois* that Brahms uses to present these groupings in each section are different from each other. One of the techniques he uses to present these groupings and rhythms is inversion. As discussed in the ‘Groups of Three’ portion of this chapter, there is a juxtaposition of duple and triple groupings throughout the movement—each section featuring a different juxtaposition. In the A section, Brahms writes three-measures of duplets. But in the D section, he writes four measures of triplets. Thus, in the D section, Brahms inverts the duple-triple relationship originally established in the A section.

i (Gm):V6 i V7 i J. B. 26 Bb:V6 I V7 I Dm: V6 i

Figure 4.7. Brahms, Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, iv, mm. 31–37

i (Gm):  $\frac{V7}{VII} V$  V7  $\frac{V}{VII}$  i V  $\frac{V7}{VII}$

V i V V7 i V7 i Bb:V7 I V7 I

PAC

Figure 4.8. Brahms, Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, iv, mm. 38–51

An instance of Brahms inverting the function of the *spondee* is seen in mm. 31 and 46 (Figures 4.7 and 4.8). The sixteenth-note runs are preceded by a *spondee* that articulates V6–I in m. 31. The runs that follow the *spondee* echo the dominant to tonic progression, expanding it by two measures, in mm. 32–33. In the same manner, mm. 34–36 start off with V6–I in Bb major and the run echoes the dominant-tonic progression once again. With each new tonicization, the register of the runs rises higher. When the piano takes over the sixteenth-note runs, the dynamic indication finally reaches *forte* for the entire ensemble. The final *spondee* in m. 46 (not shown) completes what the initial *spondee* sets out to do: resolve the dominant harmony to tonic with a PAC. The initial *spondee* in m. 31 uses a V6–I progression, so the resolution is not as powerful as the final V–I. Furthermore, the two notes of the initial *spondee*—F# and G—are played in the bass but the final *spondee* has it in the highest voice in the melody. These two notes begin this section without the feeling of resolution, resulting from the first-inversion dominant; however, Brahms uses these same two notes to resolve this section, by having them participate within a PAC. While the F# and G have a harmonic function by expressing the PAC, their original placement in the bass is changed to the soprano, which gives the two notes greater melodic importance. Therefore, not only does he invert the initial role of the *spondee*—that is, an initiating function to a role of concluding function (through a PAC)—he also inverts the role of the F# and G from harmonic function to melodic function.

## Dialogue Between the Instruments

In this movement, the piano and strings seemingly perform the same melodic and rhythmic material, but upon closer inspection, each of these forces plays different roles in expressing the *style hongrois* and the idea of three. Thus, a dialogue is created between the two forces. There is something to be said about all the instruments playing in unison for this main theme. First, the texture is similar to that of the Romani band instrumental forces in that the Romani bands also have a lot of unison playing, and the polyphony and counterpoint is not as complicated as that within works of many Western European composers. The Romani band typically consists of two violins—one playing the melody and one playing the *kontra*<sup>92</sup>—and a cimbalom. The cimbalom would often play a drone while the two violinists play the melody. In this case, the violin and the viola play the melody and *kontra*. Second, the unison texture between the entire ensemble really emphasizes the *spondees* that start off the movement and persist throughout the rest of the movement. The *spondee* is further accented by all the instruments of the piano quartet playing at the same time. Because the *spondee* placed at the first and third measure of each three-measure group essentially drives the three-measure groupings of the A section, Brahms leaves no reservations with making sure there is enough force behind the *spondees*. While the strings participate in some of the *spondees*, the piano in particular takes part in almost all the *spondees* throughout the movement. With its bigger size and sound, Brahms gives the piano the main role of articulating the *spondee* for most of the movement. Thus, the

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<sup>92</sup> Refer to Chapter 1 for the definition of *Kontra*.

piano has the important task of articulating the three-measure grouping of this piece rhythmically. In the D section, Brahms gives the task of articulating the triplets to the strings. In this section, the three-note grouping takes a much more melodic role while the piano plays duple rhythms underneath. Thus, the strings are charged with the task of articulating the idea of three melodically. The dynamic of the piano against the strings can be understood in the following way: the piano is in charge of larger structural groupings of three that are articulated rhythmically while the strings present the smaller structural groupings of three that are articulated melodically.

In the opening measures, the piano part is more akin to the cimbalom; the right hand of the piano part is merely doubling the violin and viola so the true accompaniment that sounds like the cimbalom is in the left hand which is repeating a drone. Figure 4.9, taken from the same piano quartet in the first movement, shows a typical piano part in Brahms's music. Here, the piano provides harmonic support to the strings by playing solid chords in succession. Other pianistic figures include broken chords or an arpeggiation of the chords. It is quite different when compared to the piano part in Figure 4.2. The piano part in Figure 4.2 is playing a repeated drone, while in Figure 4.9, it is holding long whole and half notes in the left hand and establishing harmonies with quarter-note right-hand chords. An example of cimbalom figurations written by Hungarian Composer András Derecskei is shown in Figure 4.10. The repetition of the left-hand part of the piano in Figure 4.2 is much like the cimbalom parts from Figure 4.10. Thus, it is clear that Brahms has opted to write the piano part following the

figurations that resemble more of a cimbalom's part than his typical piano figurations in order to best present the style of 'alla zingarese'.

The image shows a musical score for the first movement of Brahms' Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, i, measures 1-7. The score is arranged in four staves: Violine (Violin), Bratsche (Viola), Violoncell (Cello), and Pianoforte (Piano). The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The piano part is marked 'p espress.' (piano, expressive). The violin and viola parts are mostly rests, while the cello and piano parts have some activity. The piano part features a series of sixteenth-note runs and chords.

Figure 4.9. Brahms, Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, i, mm. 1–7

The image shows a musical score for Derecskei's Toccata for Two Cimbaloms, measures 10-14. The score is arranged in two staves, both in bass clef. The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The score features a series of sixteenth-note runs and chords, with dynamic markings of *p* (piano) and *f* (forte). The first measure is marked with a box containing the number 10.

Figure 4.10. Derecskei, Toccata for Two Cimbaloms, mm. 10–14

In the 'b' sub-section of A1, the theme shifts into a series of alternations between quarter-note *spondees* and sixteenth-note runs (Figure 4.7). A piece that is written in the style of the Roma typically includes material that showcases the agility and technical mastery of the instrumentalists. This showcase of agility is done so by the strings at the beginning of this sub-section. After a brief moment of technical display, Brahms uses the *spondees* as a device to interrupt the strings'



motivic material. This happens twice, interrupting the strings' display of technical facility after two measures, before finally allowing the piano to play six measures of sixteenth-note runs. It is as if the ensemble is trying to stop the strings from getting carried away with their virtuosity. Performing these *spondees* abruptly at the front of the beat will highlight the battle between the ensemble and the solo instrumentalist. Finally, this 'b' sub-section of the A1 section sets itself up in a way so as to create a climax at its conclusion. That is, each run within it outshines the previous one by attaining ever higher registers and louder dynamics. Although the first two runs are marked *forte*, the battle between the ensemble (*spondees*) and the soloist (the sixteenth-note runs) portrays a competition, of sorts, between these musical forces.

The piano assumes the role of the violinist for the entire thirty-five measures of the B1 section (Figure 4.11). That is, it articulates virtuosic passagework while the strings provide supporting harmonies. This lengthy passage of non-stop sixteenth-note runs is quite common in Hungarian music. In this sense, the melody of this passage is similar to the *czardas* section of Bihari's *Primatialis Magyarja*, shown in Figure 4.12. The melody from Brahms's B1 section uses 5–6–5–4–3–2–3–2–3 whereas the melody from the Bihari uses 1–3–#2–3–4–3–#2–3. Both these runs focus on neighboring motions, rather than scalar passages. This produces an effect like Rimsky-Korsakov's 'Flight of the Bumblebee,' where the melody is more of a frantic and virtuosic display that focuses on many sixteenth notes rather than an expression of a beautiful melodic line. The marking *piano* and *molto leggiero* which suggests an 'under-the-breath'

murmur of notes further reinforces the notion that all these busy notes create an effect of business and technical virtuosity.

III (Bb): I vi V7 iii V<sub>2</sub> Gm: i vii V

Figure 4.11. Brahms, Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, iv, mm. 80–85

FRISS. CSÁRDÁS VÁLTOZATOK. 7

Allegro. *p riten. accel. tempo*

Allegro. *p riten. accel. tempo*

*f*

Figure 4.12. Bihari, Primatialis Magyarja, mm. 25-30

### Other Characteristics of the *Style Hongrois*

After having discussed a couple of the rhythmic traits of the *style hongrois*, there are a few other non-rhythmic characteristics left to be mentioned. A trait that starts immediately alongside the *spondee* is the grace-note ornamentation. The grace notes initiate the first *spondees* of each three-measure group in the A sections. Having both the grace notes and *spondee* start off the piece allows the character of the *style hongrois* to be presented immediately. Even without the title ‘*alla zingarese*’, there is no doubt this movement is exemplifying a Hungarian style. It is interesting that apart from the C section, Brahms mainly uses ornamentation for the theme in the A sections. This movement is different from a Hungarian piece in this regard; that unlike a piece such as Bihari’s *Primalialis Magyarja*, where ornamentation is used in overabundance, Brahms reserves it primarily for the A sections. Even though this is a movement set in the Hungarian style, Brahms would not add a plethora of ornamentation as would occur in a common Hungarian composition.

The final return of the main theme in A4 is a spectacular finale to the movement that follows the traditional ending of most Hungarian pieces. In a *verbunkos*, the tempo increases through each main section until the very end, which is played at the fastest tempo. In many of Liszt’s *Hungarian Rhapsodies*, the ending is in a fast tempo, and there is a *stringendo* or *accelerando* that brings it to an even faster tempo. In many recordings, even without a *stringendo* marked in the eight bars of the dominant pedal leading up to the *molto presto*, performers

add in a *stringendo* of their own.<sup>93</sup> This increase of tempo happens once more in the coda. Brahms sets the A theme in a *molto presto* and ends with a coda that has the entire ensemble climbing upwards through a monophonic line in complete unison, as shown in Figure 4.13. This coda is often played in recordings in a faster tempo and this tempo is achieved via a *stringendo* transition from mm. 384–390. These two *stringendi* added in by the performer are very much aligned with Hungarian music performance practice. Based on this practice that is often written out in Hungarian works or works in the Hungarian style both by Hungarian and non-Hungarian composers, I would argue that this *molto presto* and coda section requires these two *stringendo* transitions.

post-cadential section

unison homophonic playing until the end

8... 8...

390 *ff* PAC

Figure 4.13. Brahms, Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, iv, mm. 390–396

<sup>93</sup> Brahms: Klavierquartett Op.25; Schumann: Fantasiestücke Op.88. Deutsche Grammophon, 2002, compact disc; Brahms, Schumann, Mahler Piano Quartets. Deutsche Grammophon, 2015, compact disc.

## Conclusion

This fourth movement of Brahms's Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25 captures well the *style hongrois*. On the surface level, it appears as though Brahms is using many traits of the *style hongrois*—the grace note ornamentations or the tempo relationships similar to the *verbunkos*—to portray the ‘*alla zingarese*’ instruction he has written for this movement. Upon closer inspection, he uses traits like the *spondees* to also articulate the formal sections and a deeper idea such as the groupings of three. This idea of three is prevalent throughout the entire movement in all structural levels—whether it is in the note, the measure, or the formal subsections. Furthermore, he uses inversions to not only play with motivic ideas, but to express the groupings of three differently in each formal section. Much like the constant competition between the piano and the strings, there is a constant juxtaposition between the duple against the triple. Through the instruments, he captures the folk-nature of Hungarian music with the homophonic texture, the flare and virtuosity of the Romani musicians through the unending sixteenth notes, and the sorrowful lament of the Romani culture through slower triplets, ending it all with an exciting finale set in *molto presto*. Joseph Joachim, a master of the Hungarian musical language, wrote to Brahms about op. 25: “You have outstripped me on my own territory by a considerable track.”<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Leon Botstein, *The Complete Brahms: a guide to the musical works of Johannes Brahms* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999), 118.

## Chapter 5

### The Permeating Motive and Rhythm

Unlike the fourth movement of the Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, the fourth movement of the Piano Quintet no.1, op. 34—the movement that is being analyzed in this chapter—has no designated marking like ‘rondo alla zingarese’ (in the style of the Gypsy). Furthermore, in this movement, there are only a few paradigms of the *style hongrois* compared to the ‘rondo alla zingarese’. However, there are many indicators in this movement that show that the *style hongrois* is not only present, but that it permeates almost all the sections of this movement. In this chapter, I will analyze how Brahms uses motives and rhythms to overtly and covertly express the *style hongrois*. This chapter will be divided into two sections: motive and rhythm. The first section explores all the ways in which Brahms uses and transforms a three-note motive—which is part of the main *style hongrois* theme—to demarcate, link, and close formal sections. The second section explores Brahms’s use of the short-long rhythm from the *style hongrois* in different structural levels, and how he succeeds in inverting the normative metrical emphases from strong-weak to weak-strong.

## Brahms Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34 mvt. iv

## Form Chart

Section	Intro	Exposition			
Measures	1–40	41–79 (beat 1)	79 (beat 2)–92	93–161	161–183
Sub-Sections		main theme	transition	sub. theme	closing section
Key	i (Fm)	i (Fm)	v (Cm)	v (Cm)	v (Cm)
Section	Development				
Measures	84–191 (beat 1)		191 (beat 2)–237 (beat 1)		
Sub-Sections	main theme		sequences		
Key	i (Fm)		v (Cm), VI (Db), V (C)		
Section	Recapitulation				
Measures	237 (beat 2)–250	251–321	321–341		
Sub-Sections	transition	sub. theme	closing section		
Key	i (Fm)	i (Fm)	i (Fm)		
Section	Coda				
Measures	342–394 (beat 1)	394 (beat 2)–467 (beat 1)	467–end		
Sub-Sections	new coda theme	sub. theme + coda theme	closing section		
Key	bvi (C#m)	i (Fm)	i (Fm)		

## Part I: The Permeating Motive

### The Three-Note Motive as Part of the *Style Hongrois*

In terms of melody, only two themes immediately resemble a Hungarian melody: the main theme and the closing section of the exposition. Thus, Brahms uses the *style hongrois* overtly to demarcate formal sections. In this movement, Brahms does not overtly present the *style hongrois* through all the sections, unlike the ‘rondo alla zingarese’ movement of his Piano Quartet op. 25, no. 1. Instead, he reserves the surface-level presentation of the *style hongrois* exclusively for the main theme and the closing section, which are also the external sections of the exposition and recapitulation. By doing this, he uses the *style hongrois* to frame, not only, the exposition and recapitulation, but also the entire movement. (N.B., the closing section is modified significantly in the recapitulation.) Overall, the instantly-recognizable usage of the *style hongrois* as a framing device of the exposition, recapitulation, and movement as a whole—an overt application of the *style hongrois*—is contrasted with its covert, or internal, application within the internal sections of movement. (This will be discussed further in Part II.)



## Exposition

**Allegro non troppo** (♩ = ♩)

**main theme**

basic idea      basic idea      continuation

3-note motive

*p tranquillo*

**Allegro non troppo** (♩ = ♩)

41 *sempre p non legato*

J. B. 25

i (f): V i V7 i V i V7 III  
 v (Cm) VI vii<sup>o</sup><sub>3</sub><sup>4</sup> III vii<sup>o</sup><sub>3</sub><sup>4</sup>

Figure 5.1. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 41–46

The main theme that starts off the exposition is undeniably Hungarian for a number of reasons: it is set in the minor mode, the piano plays off-beats as rhythmic support, and the melody is decorated with ornamentation. The main theme starts off with the three-note motive in the cello part. This three-note motive is further expanded into a two-measure basic idea. The three-note motive can be seen again in Figure 5.1, mm. 45–46, a third up and played in thirds by the cello and viola. Brahms writes this motive in thirds and adds a little grace-note to the third note. With such a simple technique, Brahms almost effortlessly evokes the color of the *style hongrois*. Although ornamentation is ubiquitous in Hungarian pieces as well as Romani performance practice, this movement only has ornaments in three sections: the main theme, the closing section of the exposition, and the subordinate theme that returns in the coda. Recalling Chapter 4, in the fourth movement of his Piano Quartet no.1, op. 25, he reserves these

ornaments almost exclusively for the main refrain. Similarly, in this movement, apart from the coda, which will be discussed later, Brahms reserves the ornaments strictly for the main theme and the closing section. Therefore, it appears that Brahms uses ornamentation as a device to present the *style hongrois* within a movement strictly to demarcate certain formal sections (the main theme and the closing theme) but refrains from using it with liberty.

In the short closing section, one can truly see Brahms's understanding of writing a melody that is in the Hungarian style. He does not require the entire main theme or even the basic idea of the sentence to evoke a rustic feeling associated with the *style hongrois*. He uses the three-note motive, harmonizes it with its inversion, adds a grace-note to accompany the third note of each motive, and to complete this Hungarian closing section, he adds the iconic #4 of the *style hongrois* to the piano part in mm. 161–163 (Figure 5.7).

The techniques Brahms uses to modify the three-note motive includes: fragmentation, inversion, augmentation, modal mixture, creating a new coda theme based upon it, or a combination of these methods. As a result, the three-note motive that is the link to the *style hongrois* melody allows the style to permeate the piece—conspicuously (i.e., the coda theme) and at many times, inconspicuously (i.e., the final three notes of the movement).

The image shows a musical score for Brahms' Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 25–41. The score is in F major, 4/4 time, and consists of five staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and Piano. The piano part is highlighted with pink boxes and annotations. Annotations include 'incomplete motive' in blue text above the piano staff at mm. 31-32 and 33-34, and 'main motive with appoggiatura' in blue text above the piano staff at mm. 35-36. Dynamic markings include *f*, *fs*, *cresc.*, *p*, *p espress.*, and *p dimin.* Chord symbols *V*, *iv6*, and *HC* are written below the piano staff. A red annotation *i (Fm): iv6* is placed below the piano staff at mm. 25-26.

Figure 5.2. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 25–41

## Anticipation

The motive that permeates the entire movement is 1–2–3 (refer to Figure 5.1, mm. 41–42 in the cello part). It is done so through different techniques and the first technique that will be discussed is the motive being used as an anticipation. The ending of the introduction foreshadows this motive that will be used throughout the rest of the movement. It first appears in an incomplete form—only going from 1–2—in Figure 5.2, mm. 31–33 in the piano part. The

incomplete form anticipates what is to come: the completion of the motive found at the beginning of the exposition. In mm. 34–35, it appears again incompletely as 1–2, but this time comprising only four beats, not seven beats, as in the previous instance. The three-note motive finally appears with 3 in mm. 36–37, but with a slight alteration: an added lower-neighbour-note appoggiatura (1–2–2–3 as opposed to 1–2–3). Interestingly, the following half cadence and the repetition of the V chord in mm. 39–40 also project the incomplete motive 1–2, anticipating the complete motive with the addition of 3 once the exposition starts. In addition, the underlying harmonies are pre-dominant to dominant in function, which results in a series of half cadences. This series of half cadences further reinforces the feeling of anticipation and something missing—specifically 3 of the motive as well as the tonic harmony. Finally, Brahms writes hairpins underneath 1–2 in mm. 31–33 and mm. 34–35. This is a marking indicating expressivity and use of rubato. In doing so, he highlights the first two notes of this motive with the third note missing. In this way, Brahms teases this motive for eleven measures before finally announcing it in the cello part in m. 41. Thus, anticipation as a technique is used in the introduction to set up the next formal section, which is the exposition.

Another instance of Brahms using the three-note motive as an anticipation is in the transition (see Figure 5.3), this time with a completely contrasting character. He first has the incomplete motive played twice in the piano part in mm. 76–78. It is suddenly played in *tutti* with a *forzando* at the beginning of each two-note grouping. This gives it a more aggressive character compared to the introduction. The final iteration in the second beat of m. 80 is played in the

highest register, which also completes the motive by the downbeat of m. 81. The incomplete motives that anticipate the completion once again serve as a transition between two formal sections: the main theme and the transition of the exposition.

The image shows a musical score for Brahms' Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 75-85. The score is in G minor and 3/4 time. It features five staves: four for the string quartet (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello/Double Bass) and one for the piano. The music is marked "sempre dimin" and "f". Harmonic analysis above the staves includes "I (F):V", "I", "I (F): I", "V7", "I", and "V7". A blue box highlights a "completed 3-note motive" starting at m. 75. A pink box highlights an "incomplete 3-note motive" starting at m. 81. A red box highlights the final note of the incomplete motive at m. 81. The piano part is marked "i" and "J. B. 25".

Figure 5.3. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 75–85

In the list of ways that Brahms uses to tease the 1–2–3 motive, the final one is found in Figure 5.4, mm. 182–183. The cello plays the motive twice, playing 1 and 2 over iv6 chord and 3 over a cadential 6/4, before arriving at a half cadence. What appears to be a simple half cadence is also an augmentation of the 1–2–3 motive. Brahms obsessively applies this motive throughout the entire piece

in various ways, and augmentation is one of them. The augmentation used here in Figure 5.4 has the same function as the example found in Figure 5.3 in that it is used as a transition into another formal section. In the case of Figure 5.4, it performs two roles simultaneously: to end the closing section, which spans mm. 161–181, as well as transition into the development.

The image shows a musical score for Brahms' Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 176–189. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a piano quintet with violin I, violin II, viola, cello, and double bass. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (mm. 176-181) is labeled "Development" and shows a transition from a closing section to a new section. The second system (mm. 184-189) is labeled "main theme" and shows the beginning of a new section. Annotations include "augmentation of the 3-note motive" in blue, "p dimin." in black, "p semplice" in black, and "p non legato" in black. Roman numerals "i (f): iv6 V" and "i" are also present.

Figure 5.4. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 176–189

## **Inversion**

Brahms uses the three-note motive to create a Hungarian melody and modifies it in diverse ways—one of the most prevalent ways being melodic inversion. Melodic inversion is a technique we see Brahms use frequently. After the statement of the basic idea in the beginning of the exposition, the basic idea returns in its inversion, as seen in Figure 5.5, mm. 53–57. Here he uses inversion as a means to reconcile the basic idea with the dominant harmony that is preparing for the return of the basic idea in the tonic harmony. Without inversion, it would be impossible to use the basic idea because it would result in using 5–6–b7, and b7 would compromise the dominant harmony. Therefore, by way of inversion, Brahms is able to write the basic idea over dominant harmony. Then later in mm. 71–73 (Figure 5.6) in the violin parts, the basic idea transforms again, this time still in the inversion but in the major mode. Having started the main theme in the home key, Brahms uses the tonic major to conjure up a moment of contrast from the dark F minor and to create a sense of repose to end this section before the thunderous transition.

three-note motive with an appoggiatura

inversion of the basic idea v (Cm): VI III VI III VI i (f): V

7 i

Figure 5.5. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 47–60

inversion of the basic idea in the major mode

*p dolce* *dimin*

*p dolce* *dimin*

*p dolce* *dimin*

*p dolce* *dimin*

*p dolce* *dimin*

I (F):V I fragment of the basic idea in the major mode

Figure 5.6. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 70–73



Another example of how Brahms applies the inversions of his three-note motive can be found in the closing section of the exposition (shown in Figure 5.7). Here, he writes this inversion in the piano part as counterpoint to the three-note motive that is played in the violin. This inversion first appears in the final measure of the subordinate theme (m. 160) with 1 landing on the downbeat of m. 161 completing the PAC. 3–2–1 are regularly found in tandem with perfect authentic cadences and Brahms uses these scale degrees immediately as a contrapuntal inversion to the *recto* version played by violin I. Thus, as he has done before in the transition, Brahms uses the three-note motive to serve two functions: ending a formal section (the subordinate theme) and beginning the next formal section (the closing section).

3-note motive with grace-note ornaments

Tempo I

*p dolce* *espress*

inversion of the 3-note motive with ornaments

Tempo I

*p dolce* *espress*

161

v (Cm): i 6-5 V4-3 i 6-5 V4-3 i VI bVII 6-5 iv6 III6 ii<sup>o</sup>6 4-3

Figure 5.7. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 161–167

One of the most significant examples of Brahms's use of inversion in this piece is found at the end. The last three notes of the piece (3–2–1) are the

inversion of the first three notes of the main theme (1–2–3) that appear at the beginning of the exposition—although the character of these last three notes is much more intensely passionate than the first three notes. Figure 5.8 shows this inversion. The ending of the movement is abrupt since it ends, not on the downbeat, but the third eighth-note beat. However, the abruptness highlights the final three notes, bringing to our attention his clever use of inversion to finish the piece. In doing so, he also inverts our understanding of how a piece should end. Usually, there is an expectation for a piece or a movement to end on the down beat, or at least, a strong beat. When Brahms ends this piece abruptly on a weak beat, the final three notes, which are an inversion of the three-note motive, also serve as an inversion of our expectation of a downbeat ending.

Figure 5.8. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 487–493

## Part II: The Permeating Rhythm

### Tempo

One of the main features of this movement that makes it similar to a Hungarian piece is its tempo structure that resembles the *verbunkos*. The *verbunkos* starts off with a slow *Hallgató* introduction, then moves into a series of alternating fast and slow sections, increasingly getting faster, and finally ending with a fast tempo. Similarly, this fourth movement starts off with an eerie slow introduction, moves into a faster *allegro non troppo* that alternates with *un pochettino più animato*, and then finally moves into a coda marked *presto, non troppo*.

### Short-long

As discussed in Chapter 2, the short-long rhythm is a common trait of the *style hongrois*. The accented short-long rhythm appears for the first time in this theme. Brahms uses this short-long rhythm in the two movements that are being analyzed in this monograph. The subordinate theme that first appears in m. 93 (Figure 5.10) recalls the eerie and harmonically ambiguous nature of the introduction. However, this time, it is set in a slightly faster tempo: *un pochettino più animato*. In the fourth movement of his Piano Quartet no.1, op. 25, this rhythm appears momentarily in the C section whereas in the fourth movement of his Piano Quartet no. 2, op. 26, this rhythm has much more importance as he uses it for his recurring main theme. When recalling the second movement of his Piano

Quintet op. 34 (Figure 5.9), the short-long rhythm is engrained into the listener's memory. Thus, the short-long rhythm is a staple tool that Brahms relies on and uses in varying capacity when evoking the *style hongrois*.<sup>95</sup> In this movement, however, Brahms presents this short-long rhythm exclusively for the subordinate theme which is also the inner section of the exposition and recapitulation.

Furthermore, it is much more covert than the overt main theme since the only trait of this subordinate theme linking to the *style hongrois* is this rhythm. Therefore, the overt *style hongrois* is presented in the external sections, whereas the covert *style hongrois* is presented in the internal sections.

A clever use of this rhythmic device can be seen in Figure 5.11, mm. 137–140. Here, the short-long rhythm in this case is expressed through a syncopated triplet—an eighth note followed by a quarter note within a group of three. The use of triplets is prevalent in this movement. They are used in the second half of the subordinate theme and all throughout the coda. The triplets serve two functions: increasing rhythmic activity, driving a forward momentum with their unceasing presence, and serving as a platform for the short-long syncopated rhythm. In Figure 5.10, the short-long rhythm is expressed with a sixteenth note and a dotted eighth while accompanied by a simple G pedal. This same rhythmic device can be seen in the closing section of the coda that will be discussed later in the 'Metric Shift' portion of this chapter. In Figure 5.11, the short-long triplets create more rhythmic activity through the rest of the instruments (the continuous underlying

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<sup>95</sup> While the use of the short-long rhythm does not immediately imply the application of the *style hongrois*, this monograph seeks to illustrate the inspiration within Brahms's compositions drawn from aspects of the *style hongrois*

triplet scalar figures). Brahms keeps the essence of the short-long rhythm while changing the feeling of the meter into which it is placed. In other words, the continuous triplets allude to a duple meter with triplet subdivisions that expresses a feeling of 6/8 meter over the original 2/4.

Andante, un poco Adagio

1. Violine *pp*

2. Violine

Bratsche *pizz. pp*

Violoncell *pp*

Pianoforte *p espress. sotto voce*

accented short-long rhythm as the main feature of this theme

Figure 5.9. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, ii, mm. 1–4

un pochettino più animato *short-long rhythm*

1. Violine *fs* *p espress.*

2. Violine *fs* *p espress.*

Bratsche *fs* *p espress.*

Violoncell *fs* *p espress.*

Pianoforte *fs* *fp.*

subordinate theme

v (Cm): V

Figure 5.10. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 92–101

137

short-long rhythm

*f* *ben marcato*

v (Cm): V6 VI bII6

Figure 5.11. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 137–142

### Metric shift

Brahms often uses hemiolas and other rhythmic devices that challenge our sense of meter and the downbeat. To be clear, this is not a trait of the *style hongrois*. However, it is an aspect of Brahms internalizing the *style hongrois*. For example, in the third movement of this piano quintet, he has the main theme of the Scherzo start on beat 6 as opposed to the downbeat (as seen in Figure 5.12). Thus, beat 1 of the phrase as we perceive it is actually on beat 6.

**Scherzo**  
**Allegro**

1. Violine *sempre pp*

2. Violine

Bratsche *pizz. sempre pp*

Violoncell *pp*

Pianoforte *Allegro sempre pp*

phrase starts on the 6th beat

Figure 5.12. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iii, mm. 1–7

Similarly, in the subordinate theme of the fourth movement, the melody starts on the anacrusis. However, with respect to Figure 5.10, m. 94, instead of the first note G functioning as a pick-up, the downbeat is displaced and so the perceived downbeat of the phrase actually begins on beat 2 of m. 94. This is supported by the fact that the phrases are four-beats long with each new phrase starting on another anacrusis. Furthermore, in m. 96, he begins the second phrase with a short-long rhythm. Brahms already shifts our sense of a downbeat-driven rhythm by starting the phrase on the anacrusis, but he also starts the phrase with a short-long rhythm, further exacerbating the unusual rhythmic feeling. In this way, one can see Brahms shifting metrical emphases on different structural levels: within the beat (short-long rhythm) and within the measure (starting the downbeat on the anacrusis). Part I of this chapter talks about the inversion of melody and hinted at how Brahms inverts our expectations. This shift of metrical emphases is contrary to the normative metrical emphases of strong-weak, so he is not only inverting melodically, but rhythmically as well. In other words, Brahms is inverting our

established sense of rhythm, that is, starting phrases on the downbeat with strong-weak emphases.

Perhaps one of the best examples of Brahms integrating the *style hongrois* into part of his musical vocabulary is in the closing section of the coda within this fourth movement. As discussed before, the short-long rhythm plays an important role in this movement. In the closing section of the coda (as shown in Figure 5.13), he does not use the conventional sixteenth note followed by an eighth note that appears in the subordinate theme as well as the main theme of the second movement. Instead, Brahms once again shifts the downbeat to the anacrusis starting with an eighth note, followed by a quarter note in the piano. The eighth note should sound like a pick-up to the quarter note, but because Brahms shifts the start of the phrase to begin on the anacrusis, it sounds like a syncopated strong-weak rhythm—indicated by the pink boxes in Figure 5.13—starting on the downbeat instead. In this way, not only does he employ the strong-weak character of the *style hongrois* short-long rhythm, he integrates it into his rhythmic language (shifting the downbeat by having the phrase begin on the anacrusis instead of the downbeat). What was an external usage of the short-long rhythm (found in the subordinate theme for example) has become internalized. In other words, when the short-long rhythm appears in the subordinate theme as a sixteenth note followed by a dotted eighth—the common note combination used to express the short-long rhythm—it is an external expression of this rhythmic trait of the *style hongrois* because of how immediately recognizable it is. Brahms later expresses the short-long rhythm by shifting the start of the phrase to begin on



the anacrusis—a common technique of his—and by doing so, he internalizes the short-long rhythm of the *style hongrois*.

The image displays a musical score for Brahms' Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 476–481. The score consists of five staves. The top four staves are for the string quartet (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass), and the bottom staff is for the piano. The piano part is marked *f agitato* and features a "shifted downbeat" indicated by a blue box. The harmonic analysis below the piano staff shows the following chords:  $i (f)$ ,  $V7$ ,  $V$ ,  $vii^{\circ 7}$ ,  $IV$ ,  $vii^{\circ 7}$ ,  $vii^{\circ 4/3}$ ,  $V$ , and  $i$ .

Figure 5.13. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 476–481

### Synthesis of Themes, Tempo, and Rhythm

Throughout this chapter, there have been many examples of the three-note motive demonstrating its importance in this movement. However, the subordinate theme also has great importance in this movement. Throughout the movement, Brahms has been primarily switching between the home key of F minor and the dominant key in the minor mode (C minor). After the closing theme of the recapitulation, the coda enters in an entirely different key:  $bvi$ , C# minor. The subordinate theme is announced within the coda by three thunderous chords played in *tutti* and succeeds in bringing the movement back to the home key (Figure 5.14).

Figure 5.14. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 392–397

Brahms decides to unite and complete this movement altogether with the subordinate theme, but he does not bring it back in the same way. In Figure 5.14, he merges the subordinate theme with fragments of the coda theme, having both the piano and the strings play the subordinate theme with a *piu forte sempre ed agitato* dynamic (instead of *piano espressivo*, which is the marking during the exposition and recapitulation).

In this movement, the motives and rhythms discussed have an important relationship with each other. Up until the coda, the 1–2–3 motive appears exclusively without any syncopated rhythms. Similarly, the triplets appear only in the second half of the subordinate theme (mm. 125–158) while the short-long rhythm using the sixteenth-dotted-eighth are reserved for the first half of the subordinate theme (mm. 93–124). But finally, in the coda, Brahms, as if breaking free from the restraints he set upon himself, goes against these melody-rhythm pairings and combines the 1–2–3 motive —originally written as duplets—with the

triplet rhythms to create the new coda theme. The triplets, which recall the subordinate theme, are now used as the primary rhythm for the three-note motive. The subordinate theme joins the coda theme, but this time the short-long syncopations have to be modified to translate the rhythm into a 6/8 meter. He does this by changing the sixteenth note of the short-long rhythm into a grace note. This coda is an expression of Brahms's synthesis of motivic ideas and rhythms—just as he synthesized rhythm and meter to internalize the *style hongrois*.

The subordinate theme, although in a different time signature (6/8 instead of 2/4), remains almost unchanged (apart from the sixteenth notes turning into grace notes). Brahms starts this theme on the anacrusis and goes over bar lines, as he does in the exposition and recapitulation, to create a group of four beats (as seen in mm. 431–438 in Figure 5.15). Prior to the coda in the subordinate theme, Brahms writes triplets to create an increase in surface-rhythm activity and overall momentum. However, the coda does the opposite. By having a large group of four going past bar lines, he succeeds in slowing down the feeling of the momentum set forth by the unrelenting eighth notes in this 6/8 time. The beginning of the coda is a fast *presto, non troppo* and when the subordinate theme enters, the metric feeling slows down. Finally, the closing section of the coda is back into the tempo of the coda but with the marking *agitato*, which makes the ending of the movement even faster. This alternation between fast and slow is characteristic of the *verbunkos* mentioned in the 'Tempo' portion of the chapter. Thus, Brahms uses meter, tempo, and theme to realize the *style hongrois*. All that was set in

place during the introduction, exposition, development, and recapitulation, has been transformed, merged, and synthesized in the coda.

Figure 5.15. Brahms, Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, iv, mm. 430–438

## Conclusion

The fourth movement of the Piano Quintet no. 1, op. 34, is unlike the Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, iv, or Brahms's Hungarian Dances WoO1, or the Variations on a Hungarian Song no. 2, op. 21. What sets it apart is the lack of an explicit label that formally declares it as of the Hungarian style. In addition, in the Piano Quintet, he does not apply the traits of the *style hongrois* with liberty as he did with the aforementioned works. Instead, he writes a Hungarian melody, takes the motive upon which the melody is based, and transforms it in many ways so that it permeates almost all the sections of the movement. In addition, Brahms takes a trait of the *style hongrois*—the accented short-long rhythm, for example—

and combines it with his own rhythmic language so that he may reconcile the different meters of the sections and weave it together; he takes the strong-weak emphases of the short-long rhythm and applies it to the measure. What was external (the short-long rhythm of the *style hongrois*) becomes internal (turning the anacrusis into a strong downbeat). Likewise, the immediately recognizable traits of the *style hongrois* are found in the external sections (main theme and closing theme) of the exposition and recapitulation while the more subtle usage of the *style hongrois* is found in the internal section (subordinate theme). In the fourth movement of this piano quintet, the *style hongrois* is not as conspicuous as the ‘rondo alla zingarese’ discussed in Chapter 4. However, the style is most definitely present in the entire piece in different capacities and Brahms achieves this by infusing this style and internalizing it into his own compositional language.

## Epilogue

The Hungarian Romani musicians and their musical performances became incredibly popular in Western Europe and the rest of the world. The Roma’s nomadic way of life, the struggles and persecution they had to endure, and their inclination towards music performance were all factors that led to their identity and success. It required a long time before their performances reached the ears of Brahms. Several battles throughout history resulted in their migration towards Western Europe. The Roma created a distinct and captivating style through applying their performance practice to Hungarian art music. Their style piqued the

interests of composers such as Brahms, which, through an effort to imitate the Hungarian Romani style, resulted in the development of the *style hongrois*.

Through an analysis of the fourth movement of Brahms's Piano Quartet no. 1, op. 25, and the fourth movement of his Piano Quintet op. 34, one can see his application of the *style hongrois*. Upon a more thorough look at Brahms's music, the manifestation of this style can be seen in two ways: when traits of the *style hongrois* are immediately recognizable, and when they are much subtler. Within the subtler usage of these traits, the *style hongrois* is incorporated into his own musical language. Although Brahms may not have intended every *spondee* or short-long rhythm to express the *style hongrois*, it is very probable that he drew inspirations from this style. This monograph provides the reader with an awareness of this style and in doing so, equips them with additional options for artistic interpretation of Brahms's music.

Finally, this monograph examines only two movements out of the wealth of chamber repertoire Brahms has composed. Future research can take the ideas from this monograph and apply them to other chamber works by Brahms. Perhaps there are other ways in which the *style hongrois* manifests itself within the works of Brahms that have not been discussed in this monograph.

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## Vita

**Name:** Raymond Truong

**Post-secondary Education and Degrees:** Wilfrid Laurier University  
Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, Canada  
2010–2014 B.Mus

Western University  
London, Ontario, Canada  
2014–2016 M.Mus

Western University  
London, Ontario, Canada  
2016–2021 DMA

**Related Work Experience:** Teaching Assistant  
Western University  
2014–2020