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**Romanian Folkloric Influences on George Enescu's Artistic and Musical
Development as Exemplified by His Third Violin Sonata.**

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**Romanian Folkloric Influences on George Enescu's Artistic and Musical
Development as Exemplified by His Third Violin Sonata.**

by

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Chapter 1

Introduction

“The aim of arts is to lead people forward on the way to the better.”

George Enescu

The fall of the Ceașescu regime in the winter of 1989 came just in time. For a long time Romania was culturally and politically isolated and the country's borders would have been closed to all but a trickle of closely monitored official delegations. Now the cultural life of Romania is flourishing once again and the rest of the world is discovering the riches it contains. Among those riches is a shining priceless diamond, an unjustly neglected treasure in the inheritance not only of Romania, but of Europe too – the music of George Enescu. Here is someone whose mature compositions stand comparison with Ravel and Bartók, and yet these works remain mostly unknown in the West. Some of reasons for this neglect are of practical nature and easy to understand. The Romanian Communist regime was very inefficient in producing scores and recordings. (At the same time the rest of the Eastern block was publishing and producing and the record shops

of Western Europe were full of Czech, Polish, Hungarian and Soviet recordings; this has helped tremendously to establish the reputations of composers such as Schnittke, Martinu and Szymanowski). In the early 1980's (my first visit to Romania was in the summer of 1981), at the biggest music shop in Bucharest the only available scores of music by Enescu were the two *Romanian Rhapsodies* and Enescu's cadenza to the Violin Concerto of Brahms. Even in his native country, the great composer was a victim of Ceaușescu's cultural policy that had the effect of narrowing Enescu's reputation at home and diminishing the value of his works in the eyes of the world. This policy presented him as a nationalistic, 'folkloric' composer and strengthened the impression that his music must be only of provincial significance in European terms.

The truth is that Enescu is one of the most universal musicians (violinist, pianist, conductor and composer) of the twentieth century, and it is disappointing and frustrating to find that he is still best known in the West for his two early Romanian Rhapsodies. Judging Enescu by these works alone is like trying to form one's opinion of Beethoven when one has heard only the "Moonlight Sonata". It is easy to assume that if any past's composer's works are good enough, they would have somehow found their own way into concert programs by now. Every artist will know how misguided this assumption is. Enescu has suffered badly from the vagaries of publishing. He was solely dependant on his own self-advertisement and the efforts of his sponsors and supporters. Only a small number

of pieces have been played and recorded by some of the most distinguished musicians of our time (Menuhin, Lipatti, Silvestri). Outside Romania there has never been any thorough-going campaign promoting Enescu's works. Enescu himself was a man of genuine modesty and selflessness, and the whole business of self-promotion was very foreign to him. Enescu's own nature offers another reason for his obscurity as a composer: he was best known to the public either as a violinist or a conductor. His performance career overshadowed his compositions and the public was reluctant to accept him as a fine composer as well. Enescu was an extraordinary gifted musician: violinist, conductor, pianist and teacher. But what matters most about all these talents is that they were simply the expression of a single, total musicality of mind. Nadia Boulanger, who knew Enescu well once said about him: "Deep down, only composing mattered to him. I think no one met Enescu without revering him; he was a very great person, totally disinterested. Enescu was a person of such great stature, such great significance. For all of us he remained an emblem of generosity, of profound musical knowledge, in his innermost soul."¹

Enescu's emotional and moral character deserves to be especially acknowledged. The people that knew him personally describe him as a man of extraordinary integrity and warmth: kind, patient, generous, always courteous, but

¹ Bruno Monsaingeon, *Mademoiselle: Conversations with Nadia Boulanger* (trans. R. Marsack), Carcanet Press, London, 1985, p. 104.

also capable of mischievous humor. Enescu was a very passionate musician and yet there was an inner burning emotion, which was expressed in his music only.

Whether in the field of composition or of concert playing, his activity was prompted by a single determination to promote beauty – determination brought about by an overwhelming inner quest for self-expression in art (according to Yehudi Menuhin Enescu was a very sophisticated, refined musician, extremely interested in every aspect of the term beauty – art, music, lifestyle, etc.). This quest manifested itself in different forms but it was always inspired by great humanistic ideals (promoting music to the mass). Enescu was a devoted servant of these ideals for more than half a century; he served them by playing the violin in small, poor provincial towns and in the world's greatest concert halls, on stage as an orchestra conductor, and at his desk, composing music. An especially important part in his complex formation was the interdependence of composition and performance, which were so closely linked that it is difficult to separate them without damaging their internal entity. Enescu passionately wanted to see his art recognized equally in all his manifestations.

It is true though, that Enescu, with regard to his violin, would not repeat what Franz Liszt has said about his piano, namely, that he was attached to his instrument as much as a sailor to his ship. Even at the start of his career in composition Enescu was attracted not by a solo violin virtuoso piece, but by large-scale symphonic and chamber music works. It is significant that among

several orchestral overtures, cantatas and symphonies he wrote as a teen-ager, only one manuscript containing two movements of a violin concerto (1895) was found.²

The integration of concert playing with composition had a very positive effect on the development of Enescu's talent. It was especially due to the fact that interpretation for him was not only a mechanical reproduction of a given musical text, but required a truly artistic understanding of its contents, and this could be achieved only when both the author's and the performer's personalities were welded together into a single concept. He felt that only then could performance become a creative process deserving to be called the art of interpretation.

The fact that Enescu as a youngster was attracted by the best examples of classical music –especially in his detailed study of J. S. Bach's masterpieces – helped him to develop the rare ability to hear harmonic and voice progressions. The Romanian musician possessed this quality in an equal degree as a performer and as a composer. This was fully revealed in his interpretation of Bach's *Chaconne* as well as in the character of his polyphony, which he considered to be not an artificial display of contrapuntal technique, but a living tissue made up of several melodic lines, each of which preserved its expressive quality.³ He had the advantage of combining a composer's knowledge of viewing a musical text as a whole with the complete command of all the resources of a bowed instrument.

² This score was founded in the Enescu's Museum in Bucharest by musicologist Noel Malcolm.

³ Ida Haendel, *Woman with Violin, An Autobiography*, Gollancz, London, 1970.

This enabled him to achieve amazing results in cases that at first glance might seem quite unrelated to one another. The same is found in the unison prelude from his first orchestral prelude, whose melodic texture seems to unfold itself as if from within, very similar to the conception of the *Chaconne* written by Bach for solo violin.

As a composer Enescu was deeply influenced by César Frank whose music made a strong impact on his way of thinking. The character of his monothematic writing, despite the difference in personalities of the two musicians, bears a clear resemblance to the monothematic technique of Frank. Another common feature with Frank is the fact that neither of them depended on a literary text or a scenario to express the programmatic contents of their works. Symphonism, manifested itself in his works of various kinds. Enescu's symphonic conception, closely linked with his monothematic principles, grew in contact with the classical symphonism of Beethoven and Brahms, having assimilated the mentioned above features of Frank's art.

Music for Enescu represented something much greater than and artistic occupation. He was an artist who felt himself to be at the same time a missionary. For him to have a belief meant to profess it. "Music for me is not a state of mind, but action."⁴

⁴ Bernard Gavoty, *Les souvenirs de G. Enescu*, Paris, 1955, p. 84 (trans. In Russian, 1966).

Enescu was aware of the tremendous emotional impact music could have, of its power to provoke an echo in people's souls. For him, direct contact with the audience was an effective way of communication with people. Reaching people's hearts and minds through music was Enescu's lofty life-long goal.

Chapter 2

Life and Works⁵

George Enescu was born in Liveni, Moldavia on August 19, 1881. His birth certificate gives him the name ‘Gheorghe’ and according to some of his correspondence, he have used both forms of his name in his youth; later in his life he preferred “George”, influenced by the frequent use in print of the French form “Georges Enesco”. As the youngest son, and the only one to survive in a family of eight children, he grew up in seclusion without companions of his own age. Deprived of an outlet, his energy took an inward course. This made him concentrate on himself and become thoughtful from his early days. Emotion and the church were closely linked in the person of Enescu’s mother, a hyper-emotional woman who adored her son to an almost suffocating degree. During his infancy she took him on frequent pilgrimages to the monastery at Suceava to pray for his health. In later years Enescu said that he had acquired from her an

⁵ The biographical facts I have taken from the following sources: Bernard Gavoty, *Les souvenirs de G. Enescu*, edition “Flammarion”, Paris, 1955, (trans. In Russian, 1966); J. M. Corredor, *Conversations with Pablo Casals*, (trans. Andre Mangeot), Hutchison, London, 1956; Margaret Campbell, *The Great Violinists*, Granada Publishing, London, 1980; Noel Malcolm, “Enescu”, in Stanley Sadie (ed.) *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 29 vols., Macmillan, London, 2001, Vol. 8, p. 199-202.

emotionally hypersensitive character, which he ad tried to counteract by following the example set by his outward-going father. Enescu's mother was the reason for the young boy to develop strong religious faith. Until the last day of his life he believed fervently on God.

There was some music making in Enescu's childhood home. His grandfather was well known in the neighborhood as a good singer and his father sang, conducted a choir and played the violin. Strolling fiddlers were welcome guests at Enescu's house, and the boy was deeply impressed by their exotic appearance and the way they played. There was no line of demarcation between life and music. The desire to compose became Enescu's sole dream.

At the age of four he was given a violin, and his first lesson came from a gypsy "lăutar" called Lae Chioru (his real name was Nicolae Filip). Chioru could not read music, and taught by getting his students to imitate him by ear. The young Enescu learned from him many folk tunes and he used some of them in his later compositions ("Am un leu" and "Pe o stîncă neagră" are quoted in the *Romanian Rhapsodies*). The little boy quickly showed such promise that he was taken to Eduard Caudella, the violin professor and Director of the Conservatory at Iași (the capital of Moldavia). Caudella was a very kind and a patient teacher and he recommended that Enescu be taught how to read music first and then brought back to him. The parents followed the advice and at the same time they started their son at the piano. Learning notation and playing the piano opened the gates to

another world for him. Enescu began to compose. The fact that he was writing in classical forms assures us that the young boy was exposed to major forms and genres very early in his musical development. Enescu composed a *Pièce d'Église* (a hymn tune with an arpeggio-chordal accompaniment), a waltz and an “opera” for violin and piano, 24 bars of length.

At the age of seven he was taken back to Caudella. The violin professor was impressed with Enescu’s rapid progress and he immediately recommended sending the young student to the Vienna Conservatory. At that time Romania was one of the important musical centers of Central Europe. Bucharest had a Philharmonic Society, a Conservatory (founded in 1864), and an orchestra (the “Concerts Symphoniques de Bucarest”, later to become the Philharmonia under Gorge Georgescu). Iași had strong national traditions and its Conservatory was founded even earlier than that of Bucharest. Caudella was a devoted supporter of the idea of developing a national musical tradition, but the violin professor who studied with in Berlin and Paris (among his teachers were the names of Ries and Vieuxtemps) decided that Enescu should get the best international training possible.

Vienna captured the boy’s imagination immediately. Everything seemed strange to him in this huge town on the Danube. In this cultural metropolis, (an enormous mixture of different cultures and languages), situated at the crossroads of the Adriatic and the Baltic seas, were strangely mingled together oriental and

western influences. Enescu grew fond of this brilliant European capital. To him, Vienna seemed a sanctuary whose atmosphere could be described by the German word *Gemütlichkeit* (coziness, tranquility, good heartedness). Places made famous by so many geniuses were sacred to Enescu. In Vienna he could see the cozy bar where Schubert, already fatally ill, had played at a friendly party his *Die Winterreise* only a year before his death. Beethoven, whose majestic and tragic image struck him as vividly as if he had seen the composer alive, became his idol. Beethoven's music satisfied his longing for harmonic tension. It seemed to him that Beethoven was still living, if not actually in the flesh, at least in the memory of those who had had contact with him. There still were such men at the Vienna Musical Academy where Enescu studied. Its director, Joseph Hellmesberger, was one of them. He would often tell his pupils how his father, who had been a friend of Beethoven, played in the presence of the master. The time gap between the two musicians lessened also because the student orchestra played many of Beethoven's works from old hand-written copies.

Brahms, another giant of musical Vienna had even a greater impact on Enescu. He saw him very often between 1888 and 1892 when Brahms used to come to the Musical Academy to supervise the student orchestra. Sitting next to the principal of the orchestra, the young musician had the honor to accompany him in his *First Piano Concerto* and to perform under the composer's direction his *C-minor Symphony*. Brahms' music and piano playing fascinated Enescu. It

was not brilliancy but profundity that he admired in Brahms. There was yet something else that Brahms' music particularly dear to him: it was the Hungarian flavor present in a number of his works.

It was in Vienna that Enescu first became acquainted with Wagner's music. This happened thanks to Joseph Hellmesberger Junior, who was not only his violin teacher, but also one of the conductors at the opera theater. This excellent musician took complete care of the boy who was staying in his house, which was one of Vienna's centers of musical life. Besides giving him violin lessons, Hellmesberger took his young pupil regularly to his quartet and orchestral rehearsals. This gave the boy an excellent opportunity to enlarge his musical interest. Under his teacher's paternal guidance, Enescu grew very fond of symphonic music, and the orchestra helped him discover new dimensions of diversity and magnitude of sound. Later in his letters, Enescu would talk about the concerts given by Hans Richter, who was a well-known conductor of Wagner's operas. Enescu heard him direct *Der Fliegende Hollander*, *Tannhauser*, *Lohengrin* and the tetralogy, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. For Enescu Wagner was "...an artist who, speaking about God, was addressing himself to people and appealing to what was most intimate in them."⁶ Wagner's influence can be seen in the early works by Enescu. These show a tendency towards elaborate forms, large proportions and intense sonority.

⁶ B. Gavoty, *ibid.* p. 117.

The four years spent at the Vienna Musical Academy, from which Enescu graduated with a distinction diploma in 1892, gave the young musician a solid professional basis. As much as he was fascinated by composition, he devoted a great deal of his time to the violin. He was trained by teachers who belonged to the Viennese violin school. Enescu's concert career had begun in his first summer holiday from Vienna, when he took part in a charity concert in the small Moldavian spa town of Slănic. From October 1891 onwards he gave nine public performances in Vienna, playing virtuosic showpieces by composers such as Vieuxtemps, Wieniawski and Sarasate. Enescu was an extraordinarily diligent pupil. Gradually he developed a special attitude toward work, which became a natural habit of him, and even more – an inner necessity. During his stay in Vienna he acquired, by switching from one kind of work to another (practicing, observing master classes given by the most famous European pedagogues and performers, attending the concerts of the Vienna Philharmonic) a substantial amount of knowledge, which enlarged his artistic horizon. He was attracted more and more by large-scale works and complicated genres. Now in Vienna the eleven-year old composer was writing variations, rondos, sonatas, and especially symphonic overtures in Wagner's spirit.

In the beginning of 1895 Enescu moved to Paris. The desire to study composition was the most important reason for him to enter the Paris Conservatory. At the audition he was asked if he could play anything and he took

out his violin and started to play the Brahms Concerto. Taken to the piano, he sat down and performed the first movement of Beethoven's "Waldstein" Sonata. It is true that in previous years a tradition had grown up of violinists passing from Vienna to Paris on order to complete their technical studies; both Fritz Kreisler and Carl Flesch had done this. But in Enescu's case it was Massenet, professor of composition at the Conservatoire, who was the strongest attraction. After looking through Enescu's portfolio of manuscripts, the great French composer accepted the young musician in his composition class. He was already working on his first full-scale symphony; but according to the regulations he was too young to be admitted to the class and had to attend as an auditing student until the beginning of the new academic year in September. Massenet seems to have treated him from the start as a full member of his class, discussing his exercises just as he did those of his other pupils.

On 19 March 1895 the young composer presented the first movement of his Symphony in D minor. This was a work for which Enescu always retained special affection. He conducted it in Bucharest nearly forty years later. Massenet commented that Enescu Symphony was much more 'modern' in its harmonies than the compositions from the previous year. What seemed 'modern' to Massenet was probably the amalgam of Wagner and Brahms, which still dominated in Enescu's harmonic thinking. Brahms' music was not well known in Paris. Some of the hostility toward Brahms arose from musicians taking sides, as Saint-Saëns

did, on the Brahms-Wagner debate. Wagner's music was becoming increasingly well known to French musicians: a number of French composers, including the names of Debussy, Massenet, Delibes, Saint-Saëns and Chausson, went to Bayreuth. But the cult of Wagner gained its original support in France from poets and writers. Wagner's music was gradually promoted by two devoted Wagnerian pianists, Cortot and Edouard Risler, who began in 1895 a famous series of performances of their own transcriptions of the operas.

In 1895 Enescu began working on a violin concerto. The orchestral introduction is strongly influenced by Brahms (a dominant seventh leading to a dramatic solo entry, a series of rising A minor arpeggios). The first movement was finished at the end of the year, and Enescu performed it with a students' orchestra at the Salle Pleyel in March 1896. The second movement (a beautiful Andante with a vigorously Brahmsian middle section in dotted rhythms) was written in the summer of 1896; but Enescu never added a last movement. Thereafter, unlike almost every other composer who was also a great violinist, he never wrote a violin concerto. Enescu's early Paris compositions include several works for the violin, all of them written in 1895 and dedicated to Éva Rolland, a talented violinist who was the daughter of his landlady. Among them is a violin sonata written in a rather Viennese style but as some very characteristic Enescian features (such as the dramatic opening statement with the piano in octaves below the violin).

For the next three years, Enescu continued his studies with Gabriel Fauré, who succeeded Massenet as professor of composition. The young pupil studied Fauré's works not only as a composer, but also as a performer, being a partner in playing together his sonata for violin and piano as well as his two quartets. These performances brought them closer together. Paying tribute to his master, Enescu composed *Dedication to Gabriel Fauré*, which was performed at the celebrations held in honor of the old maestro in 1922.

Enescu's early success as a composer came with the performance of his *Poème Roumain* in January 1898. This work became Opus 1 in his mature series of opus numbers. It is a symphonic suit with a Romanian program, employing some folk material in a classical harmonic language. The first sketches of the *Poème* are dated from 1896. The second draft of this work (January 1897) contains some of the material later used in the *Romanian Rhapsodies*. The *Poème Roumain* in its final form was completed in 1897. Of the earlier sketches only a flute *doină* was incorporated into the *Poème*'s program. The program is in two parts. The first evokes a summer evening: church bells are heard in the distance, night falls and the shepherd plays his *doină*. In the second part a storm breaks and passes away, a cock crows, and a country festival begins with a succession of dances. As a grand finale Enescu included the Romanian national anthem.

Four years later Enescu wrote his *Romanian Rhapsodies*. The brightness and freshness of the Rhapsodies lie in the spontaneity with which different

contrasting dance-tunes and songs succeed one another, without any thematic connections. As I have mentioned before, two of the tunes may have been learned from the gypsy 'lăutar' Chioru: the opening theme of the *First Rhapsody* ("Am un leu și vreau să-l beau" – "I want to spend my shilling on drink") and the main theme which follows the introductory statement in the *Second Rhapsody* ("Pe o stîncă neagră, într-un vechi castel" – "on a dark rock, in an old castle"). The later melody was associated with a popular nineteenth-century ballad and was available in several published versions. The two Romanian Rhapsodies were for a number of years far better known and loved by the public than any other work by Enescu. This was due to the originality and freshness of their musical material as well as to the brilliant manner in which it was presented. Both rhapsodies are based on authentic folk tunes; but, although the principle of selecting them remains the same, the two works are different in many respects. In the first rhapsody the theme of the native land is presented on the basis of popular dance music. The rhapsody consists of a series of colorful episodes portraying festive scenes from rural life. Each of them has its own character, but despite their contrasting nature they are united into a single whole, thanks to a brilliant colorful scoring. The second rhapsody takes us from the atmosphere of general festivity to a totally different world. In this work the folk theme is rendered in a dramatic manner. Instead of dance tunes, which predominated in the first rhapsody, here

we find ourselves in the realm of song only periodically interrupted by dance rhythms.

The *Poème* and the two *Rhapsodies* are often touched with an exotic modal coloring. Of the most common scales some are simple chromatic modes but others have ‘mobile’ thirds, sixths or sevenths, creating a shifting major/minor atmosphere, which is one of the characteristics of Romanian music. It was Enescu’s sensitivity to the modal character of folk melodies that made him reluctant to apply the full weight of Western harmony and counterpoint to them. In an interview in 1928 he said that “and essential feature of folk song is the way it distances itself from harmony: the lightest harmonizing is the most authentic.”⁷ In another interview he remarked that the only thing one could properly do with folk music was to rhapsodize it, with repetitions and juxtapositions.

Although it seems an ordinary work by comparison with his later compositions it was the *Poème* that had launched Enescu as a composer. The young Romanian composer quickly made contacts with Parisian aristocratic circles, and in result he was brought to the attention and the patronage of the Romanian princess Elena Bibescu. She was herself a brilliant pianist; when the Polish composer Paderewski visited Paris, she and Enescu gave a performance of his Violin Sonata in his honor, and she sometimes played the Frank sonata with Enescu at her salon. Enescu met many of the stars of Elena Bibescu’s salon: the

⁷ B. Gavoty, *ibid.*, p. 226.

writers Colette and the Comtesse de Noailles, the painters Vuillard and Bonnard, and the politician Léon Blum. He also met d'Indy and Saint-Saëns there, and, most importantly, Edouard Colonne, conductor of the famous Colonne orchestral concerts. Shortly after Enescu was introduced to Edouard Colonne, his *Poème* was accepted for one of Colonne's Sunday concerts. The concert was a success, attracting glowing reviews – among them two by Paul Dukas, commenting on the skilful instrumentation and rhythmical effects and contrast of timbre. Its reception in Bucharest was even more enthusiastic, where the *Poème* brought Enescu sudden national fame.

Despite the early fame of the *Poème*, folk music gained its real importance in Enescu's work much later in his career, when he began to develop his own Western musical language. The First Violin Sonata, Op. 2 (written in 1897 and dedicated to Joseph Hellmesberger junior), shows a debt to Beethoven, Schumann and Saint-Saëns in its outer movements, and in its slow movement the influence of the 'quasi una fantasia' slow movement in César Franck's Violin Sonata. It is not a showpiece for the violinist. The violin often plays a secondary role to the piano, and there is frequent use of the tremolo bow stroke, normally associated more with orchestral writing than with music in the solo repertoire.

The First Cello Sonata (Op. 26, No. 1) was completed in November 1898. It is in a similar language to the First Violin Sonata. It is a large four-movement work, lasting at least 36 minutes in performance. The most attractive movement is

the Scherzo, which begins with a contrapuntally developed Germanic thematic material, but then evolves into a delicate and light-hearted Trio that has all the sophistication and playfulness of Saint-Saëns.

In Paris, Enescu's lifelong dream to be a composer had come true, but the violin though pushed aside by composition, had not been forgotten. His strong will and endurance were as remarkable as ever, but he was not satisfied. Self-conscious and very critical to himself, Enescu confesses that in the attempt to worship two gods at a time, he sacrificed the violin. The neglected instrument was taking its revenge, and this resulted in Enescu's winning only the second prize at the 1898 final examinations. This made him question himself as to whether it was worthwhile to go on with the violin studies. He turned to Saint-Saëns for advice. The old master gave him his moral backing, and encouraged by Saint-Saëns' support, Enescu overcame his hesitations. He decided to work even harder and soon the situation changed. In 1899 the young violinist graduated from the Paris Conservatoire having been unanimously awarded the first prize at the final examination, particularly for his interpretation of the first movement of Saint-Saëns' *B minor Violin Concerto*. Enescu expressed his gratitude to Saint-Saëns by dedicating to him his *First Orchestral Suite*.

Paris, even more than Vienna, helped Enescu to assimilate the artistic culture of the world. In addition, his studies at the Conservatoire contributed to his links with many outstanding musicians. His schoolmates were Maurice Ravel,

Roger-Ducasse, Charles Koechlin, Alfred Cortot and Jacques Thibaud. Enescu often played with Eugene Ysaÿe, Pablo Casals and Fritz Kreisler with whom he studied in Vienna. With many of them, and especially with Cortot and Casals, he maintained a life-long friendship.

Enescu's school years were coming to an end; but he, who never felt satisfied with what he achieved, continued to learn as long as he lived. Any new achievement immediately transformed itself into a new starting point, one step forward was followed by another. This rapid pace in his development enabled him to compose, shortly after completing his studies in the Conservatoire, the *Second Sonata for Violin and Piano*, Op. 6 (1899) and the *Octet*, Op. 7 (1900). In these pieces Enescu managed to combine the assimilated various influences as well as to affirm his own individuality. Enescu owed much to his Viennese and Parisian teachers, who had laid the foundation for such rapid progress, but it was also due to his own original gift. Casals said: "Pupils like Georges Enescu and Florent Schmitt, in whom there had already been a spark of genius, were not shaped by their teacher no matter how outstanding he might have been. A genius is "shaped" by himself, and his teachers, irrespective their qualities, contribute to his development only in a very modest way."⁸

The *Second Sonata for Violin and Piano* represents the way Enescu's personality was asserting itself. This work shows not only progress in acquiring

⁸ J. M. Corredor, *Conversations with Pablo Casals*, (trans. Andre Mangeot), Hutchison, London, 1956, p.31.

technical compositional skills but also the great emotional power its author has already possessed. The theme of the first movement has a pronounced national character owing to its structure as well as to specific modal and rhythmic features (Aeolian mode, Phrygian semi-tones occurring due to lowered II degree, changeable duple and triple measurements). These features, in a work which Enescu considered to be his first original composition, are very symptomatic of his entire orientation. Unlike the Romanian Poem and Rhapsodies, here he did not follow the easier way of quoting existing folk tunes, but created an original theme of his own, closely linked in its character with Romanian folk music. The character of music determines the means of expression used in the second sonata. The composer indicates certain interpretive effects, which in this sonata have much in common with the art of *lăutars*.⁹ An example of this occurs at the end of the second movement where Enescu uses a very fast bow tremolo, which in pianissimo makes the violin sound like a cobza (a separate chapter will be dedicated to the art of the *lăutars* and the Romanian folk stringed instruments). Other instances will be found if we examine the recording made by Enescu and Dinu Lipatti. It shows how the violinist uses portamenti to stress in a typically *lăutar*-like manner the expressive glissando effect. The second sonata also provides many examples of Enescu's monothematic method that very early developed into a leading principle of his musical thinking. This sonata is an

⁹ Lăutar – a professional folk musician.

example of how different influences could so originally integrate in a work with Enescu's individuality. The texture of the piano solo that occurs in the middle of the second movement as well as its polyphonic writing reminds us of Franck. The beginning of the closing section from the first movement points to the *Third Sonata in C minor for Violin and Piano* by Grieg, while certain features of the passage-work, especially in the development section of the same movement, are reminiscent of Brahms' violin sonatas. But the Romanian composer absorbed these influences in such a personal way that their presence in his music does not make his style eclectic or artificial.

Soon after Enescu completed this sonata he began working on another major work, which shows equal assurance in his unique gift, but is significantly different in musical character: the massively contrapuntal *Octet for Strings*. Written for four violins, two violas and two cellos, the *Octet* attracts by the magnitude of its proportions. Compared with the *Second Sonata*, the *Octet* contains a much larger range of lyrical emotions, which result in a considerable dramatic intensity in the course of the further development. The four movements certainly differ widely in character. The first, "très modéré", is a grand, spacious exposition of themes and counter-themes in 3/2 time; the second is an explosive fugato, and the third has a nostalgic nocturne-like character. It leads without stopping into the last movement, which is written in the tempo, and to some extent the character, of a waltz. The melodies of the *Octet* have a modal character,

and this is not mere coloring. The use of complex modes with shifting seconds, thirds, sixths and sevenths dissolves the listener's diatonic expectations and it makes possible the fusion of the techniques of chromaticism with those of counterpoint, which gives the work its original character.

The *Second Violin Sonata* and the *Octet* marked a turning point. In the years between the completion of these pieces and the outbreak of the First World War Enescu rapidly developed as a composer. Composition became his consuming interest. But his reputation as a performer was growing quickly; the time he could devote to composition was increasingly interrupted by concert tours and other forms of music making. But he always found the needed energies and powers of concentration for the task of composition, even in a middle of a busy concert tour. However, there was one thing for which who could never summon up the energy: the business of promoting his works and getting others to perform them. He did not succeed in persuading members of the Colonne Orchestra to perform his *Octet*. They found the piece incomprehensibly modernistic. Enescu had to wait until 1909 for its premiere. Another reason for Enescu's difficulties to promote his works was the growing popularity of the Romanian Rhapsodies, which were already starting to overshadow the rest of Enescu's works. In the field of chamber music the *Second Violin Sonata* did enjoy some initial success, and a few of Enescu's piano works were much appreciated in Parisian musical circles. In 1901 Enescu formed a Trio with the cellist Andre Bloch and the pianist Louis

Abbate (a composer himself). In a series of concerts they performed works by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Schumann, Brahms and Saint-Saëns. Enescu also appeared as a pianist, playing two-piano music with Fauré, or accompanying other violinists; in 1907 he was the pianist in a performance of his *First Cello Sonata* with Casals.

Much of the Parisian music making of the period between 1900 and 1914 was semi-public, in the form of performances at salons and receptions. Besides these semi-public concerts there were many occasions on which Enescu joined his friends for long sessions of chamber music. During a concert tour in England in 1903, Enescu met his old classmate and friend Kreisler. He often played Kreisler's so-called 'arrangements' of miniatures by early composers. Ysaÿe was the 'god' of the violinists of this period. Enescu had a few brief interactions with the great Belgian violinist. Ysaÿe's musical testament was his remarkable series of *Six Sonatas for Solo Violin*, Op. 27. Each was dedicated to a young violinist, and was designed to bring out the characteristic qualities of the dedicatee's style of playing. The third, a passionate *Sonate-Ballade*, was dedicated to Enescu. It has become the most popular of the six.

Enescu's international career as a violinist was gaining popularity. In 1909 he went to Russia and played under the batons of Alexander Siloti and Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov; in 1910 and 1911 he gave several concerts in Holland, where he not only played concertos but also conducted the Berlin Symphony Orchestra and

the Concertgebouw performing some of his own works. In 1912 he visited Budapest and took part in an extraordinary concert with the following program: Schumann's Cello Concerto (Casals); Brahms' Double Concerto (Casals and Enescu) and Beethoven's Triple Concerto (Casals, Enescu and Donald Tovey). Enescu was also well known for his interpretation of the Beethoven Concerto.

Enescu was not without honor in his own country however. Although the main purpose of his long stays in Romania was to devote himself to composition, he became closely involved in the musical life of Bucharest and gave frequent performances as a violinist and as a conductor. Enescu was not lacking in patriotism. Much of his concerts in Sinaia and in Bucharest organized for charitable purposes or out of his sense of duty to help raise musical standards. He was named an "honorary director" of the Romanian Musical Association, and he gave large donations to the Association to pay for grants to musicians. In 1912 he went on a concert tour of Romania to raise money for national prize of composers.

The search for a more significant and all-embracing music brought Enescu to the symphonic art. It took him considerable time to fully realize that to writing a symphony had become for him an imperative necessity. In 1905 Enescu composed his *E-flat Major Symphony Number One*, Op. 13. The optimistic spirit of the symphony reflects the vitality of the 24-year-old musician encouraged by the success of his concert career. By its orientation, the *First Symphony* occupies

a special place among other West European symphonic works of the beginning of the century. From the start of his symphony, the Romanian composer creates a feeling of an intense emotional drive in which romantic impulsiveness acquires a heroic character. Of the three movements that make up the *E-flat Major Symphony*, the first in the dramaturgic layout of the work is most important, representing a complete phase in the development of its idea. The slow movement with its poetic dispositions introduces a moment of relaxation and contrast into the symphony. The finale with its joyful atmosphere is a logical outcome of the entire work, the end of which turns into an outburst of happiness and joy, forming an element of life itself.

In 1919 Enescu finished his third, *C-Major Symphony*, Op. 21. This work, which took him three years to complete, came as a result of reflections caused by witnessing the sufferings of mankind during the First World War. He returned home from abroad when the war broke out, for he wanted to be close to his people in those years of hardship. This was not a hypocritical gesture. As usual he turned his sympathy to action. He gave numerous concerts for the wounded, prisoners of war and students, performing as soloist and conducting the symphony orchestra he had formed in the town of Iași. The funds from these concerts went to charities. He saw all the misery and distress the war had brought to man and women; this made him revolt against the forces of destruction, against the absurdity of war, and as an artist he condemned it in his *Third Symphony*.

It is a monumental work, consisting of three large movements, written for orchestra, chorus (singing without words), organ and piano. At the beginning of the theme of the first movement, kettle-drums, by their regular pulsation on the tonic, mark every beat of the bar, accenting the length of the long notes in the melodic voice. In this we find an obvious analogy with the beginning of Brahms' *First Symphony* witnessing once again his influence on the Romanian composer. But Enescu keeps his own personality and gives his music an individual touch, which reveals the national background of his art. Unlike Brahms, Enescu uses here not C minor, but C-Mixolydian intensified by the raised fourth degree as it often is in Romanian folk music. The thematic material of the first movement is subject to active development from the very start of the exposition, which in general is typical of the mature composer's style.

The thematic process in Enescu's music is very complex, showing a quite impressive craftsmanship in leading and assigning its right place. In Enescu's creation the thematic principle, i.e., the net of the melodic lines, crossing the texture of the musical composition, is always expressed even from the initial idea in the formula of the intervals of the first bar. Neither anticipation, nor introduction can be found. Enescu chooses to establish the basic thematic cell from the very first. Every theme once worked out as such surely includes tremendous potentialities. Before putting the final touches to it, the composer has examined closely its symphonic resources and has set its functions in the

dramaturgy of the work. In Enescu's own way of speaking, such a theme is not only a starting point but also a result.¹⁰

No less characteristic is the approach of the sonata form in which the first movement of the *Third Symphony* is cast. His treatment of the form is very carefully thought out and applied with great consistency, but is not at all schematic. The generating (main) theme acts directly upon the configuration of the second one. This second theme gets a fully individualized aspect, different from the main theme, but which, however, will derive its shape also from the substance of the main one. These compositional characteristics are applied in Enescu's most performed work – the *Third Sonata for Violin and Piano*, Op. 25 (1926).

¹⁰ Octavian – Lazar Cosma, *The Thematic Process in Enescu's Creation*, Bucharest, 1976, p. 20.

Chapter 3

Formal and Stylistic Analysis of Enescu's Third Sonata for Violin and Piano.

With its exotic, explicitly Romanian character the Third Sonata for Violin and Piano has become Enescu's best-known work apart from the Rhapsodies. This work, subtitled by the author "In the Romanian popular character" (dans le caractère populaire roumain), is a remarkable example of how a popular atmosphere, painted in national color, is brought about as a result of a creative re-evaluation of the idiomatic intonational features of Romanian music. Here the composer does not quote folkloric melodies as he did, for instance, in his *Poème* or both *Romanian Rhapsodies*. In its attitude to the use of folk music, this sonata goes far beyond those yearly works. Enescu's was dissatisfied with the idea of subjecting simple folk tunes to complicated musical development. In this piece there is no quotation, no arrangement. Instead, he has invented not only folk-like material of his own but also an entire folk language, in which all the atmosphere and melodic coloring is deeply Romanian, but the themes are

incorporated from the start into his own individual processes of melodic and harmonic development. Enescu has here distilled the quintessence of Romanian folk music, with its modes, its rhythms and its treatment of ornamentation.

The emotional content of the sonata is specifically national in character and at the same time has a profound human meaning. This determines the significance of the poetic idea embodied in the thematic material of the sonata. That material, being fully original and of genuinely national character, is cast and developed in popular style. This work was inspired by the theme of his native land expressed in an elegiac tone and a pastoral atmosphere. It serves as a background for a series of colorful scenes of a popular character echoing rhythms of folk dances.

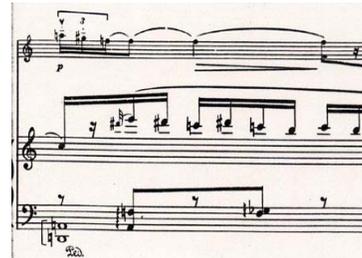
This sonata shows very convincingly how musical material of a national character can be treated in accordance with the sonata genre . Its three movements not only contrast one with the other, but also each of them consists of contrasting sections developed from a single source.

The first movement is a very good example of that technique. Its main subject is made up of several short contrasting sections, the most important of which are the following four:

Example 1 a:



Example 1 b:



Example 1 c:



Example 1 d:



The first of them consists of a short motive that has something of a painful reproach in it, the second is rather categorically exacting, while the third carries an expression of considerable inner power; it has a wider melodic range which includes the Dorian sixth, giving the music a touch of uprightness. The fourth section introduces an animated, noble feeling, which inflames the whole theme. These distinct sections or motives represent various phases of the development of the main poetic idea of the work. They all sound against a common background

characterized by a steady streaming figuration in the piano part, which establishes itself from the very beginning of the sonata.

The second subject with its dashing dance rhythms introduces a new contrasting element.

Example 2:

The image displays two systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a violin part on a single staff and a piano part on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The piano part features a continuous, rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The violin part plays a melodic line with various articulations, including slurs and accents. The first system concludes with a fermata over the final notes. The second system begins with the instruction *mf stacc. al talono* and ends with a fermata and a final chord marked with an asterisk.



This theme is so swift that it scarcely has time to materialize in full; it soon yields place to the closing section which sounds like a passionate love song. It provides another example showing how the thematic material is a subject to a continuous transformation typical of the composer's style. The closing section with its new character preserves intonational links with certain elements of the principal and second subjects.

Example 3:

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is for the violin, starting with a measure number '6' in a box. It features a melodic line with a vibrato marking and dynamics of *ff* (fortissimo) and *dim.* (diminuendo). The lower staff is for the piano, with a tempo marking of *♩ = 63*. It contains a complex accompaniment with dynamics of *ff* and *dim.*, and a marking *(sempre scd.)* indicating a second ending.

The second system of the musical score continues the two-staff arrangement. The upper staff (violin) includes markings for *mf* (mezzo-forte), *f* (forte), *pianissimo*, and *vibr.* (vibrato). The lower staff (piano) includes markings for *mf*, *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *f*. The system concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

A reminder of the initial thought in the violin and piano part marks the start of the development section. This portion of the work is not large, but very concentrated. The composer here makes extensive use of the elements of the principal subject, which appears now with an increasing dramatic insistence. Gradually they become more and more somber, especially when they are taken up

by the piano bass. At this point there appears a new ascending strain of melody in the violin part. This new element adds a stern and passionate feeling to the already animated music. This is due to the specific color of the Dorian G-sharp minor that predominates in the first part of the development section. But there is a sudden change of the mood that is caused by the appearance of a long C-sharp major chord which sounds all the more brightly after the somber atmosphere of the previous bars. By using the G-sharp minor and the C-sharp major chords side by side, Enescu reproduces one of the characteristic features of the music of his native land – the specific emotional effect caused by a major subdominant in a minor mode like the Dorian.

In the second phase of the development section, the emotional build-up is taken to a higher level. This is achieved by exploiting even more dramatically than before the most active elements of the principal subject. They succeed one another with an increasing pace, leading to a point of culmination. To heighten the pressure Enescu returns to dissonant harmonies involving frequent use of unresolved seconds, which produce a string ‘friction’ effect. The tension rises to a point when an explosion seems inevitable. Enescu emphasizes its dramatic effect by resolving the strained harmonies in G major, but not simultaneously in the parts of the two instruments. As a result, this new key sets in first in the violin part and then, two beats later, in that of the piano making the tonic and dominant harmonies overlap.

The recapitulation begins with a new theme, which combines the principal and the second subject of the exposition. The first is represented by its intonational elements (in the violin part) and the second by its rhythmic design (the left hand chords of the piano part).

Example 4:

The image displays a musical score for a violin and piano duo. The top system features the violin part, starting with a measure number of 12. The notation includes slurs, accents, and dynamic markings such as *pp* and *ben ritmato alla punta del arco*. Below the violin part, the piano part is shown with a tempo instruction: *L'istesso tempo (♩ = ♩ = 50)*. The piano part includes dynamic markings like *ppp staccatiss. ben ritmato* and *pp*. The bottom system continues the violin part with markings like *mp*, *ben ritmato*, and *ppp*, and the piano part with *ppp*. Additional performance instructions include *saltando alla punta del arco*, *lusingando*, and *poco*. The score is written in a key with two sharps (D major or F# minor) and a 12/8 time signature.

Another deviation from the generally established sonata form is the introduction of an episode that compensates for the lack of the second subject in the recapitulation.

Example 5:

The image displays a musical score for Example 5, consisting of two systems of piano and violin parts. The first system includes a violin part with a tempo marking of *pp* and a dynamic of *pp*, and a piano part with a tempo marking of *pp* and a dynamic of *pp*. The second system includes a violin part with a tempo marking of *espress. mesto* and a dynamic of *pp*, and a piano part with a tempo marking of *pp* and a dynamic of *pp*. The third system includes a violin part with a tempo marking of *pp* and a dynamic of *pp*, and a piano part with a tempo marking of *pp* and a dynamic of *pp*. The fourth system includes a violin part with a tempo marking of *mf sost. lamentoso* and a dynamic of *mp*, and a piano part with a tempo marking of *pp* and a dynamic of *pp*. The score is written in 4/4 time and features various musical notations, including slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

This episode represents an important contrasting factor in the recapitulation. It is preceded by a stretch of music founded upon the idea of the

second section of the principal subject vigorously developed by using imitative counterpoint in the piano part. Coming as a contrast after this new wave of development, the episode does not defuse the atmosphere, but merely alters its previous mood. This is due to the complex nature of the episode consisting of a very expressive melodic line in the violin part accented by repeated staccato chords of the piano. These chords reproduce the rhythmic figure of the second subject. They are composed of the root note struck together with its fifth and an augmented fourth, thus representing a vertical version of a figure used horizontally by *lăutars*, mainly in rapid dance music where it consists of a swift succession of the tonic and the dominant.

The episode leads directly into the closing section, which preserves its former emotional character. Calming down, it passes into a short coda in which the violin carries the main thought of the movement upward from one octave to another until it fades away completely.

Coming from far, far away, a sad song is heard over the silent steppe. It seems that a shepherd is complaining about his unhappy life. This is the immediate impression at the beginning of the second movement. This impression is due to a very sad and seemingly simple melody played by the violin in harmonics against the background of a single note “B” monotonously repeated by the piano. This ostinato background gives it a touch of weariness and, at the same

time, disquiet. Here, the composer is opposing two important factors: motion versus immobility.

Example 6:



The rustic character of this melody comes from the use of ‘cold’ violin harmonics (Enescu specifically requires *non vibrato* in order to achieve this quality of the sound), which imitate the sound of a *fluior* (see Chapter “*Romanian Folk Music – Musical Instruments*”). Combined with a slow tempo (*Andante sostenuto e misterioso*), all this creates a sense of frustration and endless sorrow.

But suddenly the scenery changes: the sunbeams over the horizon, the wind sweeps across the steppe, and the shepherd pulls himself together. Passing now through a brief glimpse of hope (rehearsal 23) and then through mounting indignation (rehearsals 24 - 27), his sad complaint eventually grows into an

outburst of violent anger. The piano and the violin play octaves in unison in order to achieve a sound of maximum power.

Example 7:

The image displays a musical score for Example 7, consisting of two systems of staves. The top system features a violin staff and a piano staff. The violin part begins with a *meno f* dynamic and a *Y* marking. The piano part also starts with *meno f* and includes a tempo marking of $(\text{♩} = \text{♩})$. The bottom system continues the piano part, showing a *sost.* (sostenuto) section followed by a return to *a tempo* with the same tempo marking. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

This example represents a new and dramatized version of the initial phrase from the second movement. Such modification shows how Enescu transforms a given motive through his monothematic method, which enables him to produce an unlimited number of musical ideas. The second movement also contains some

moments of relief. Brief as they are, they play an important role, from the point of view of the general conception of the sonata. One of them, and perhaps the most elevated one, comes immediately after an angry outburst, which is what makes it especially striking.

Example 8:

The image displays a musical score for Example 8, consisting of two systems of staves. The top system features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with the instruction "più sost., senza rigore" and "cant." followed by a melodic phrase. The piano accompaniment starts with "mf molto" and includes a fermata. A double bar line separates the two sections. The second section is marked "a tempo I molto tranquillo (♩. 44)" and "dolciss. teneramente". The piano accompaniment in this section includes a fermata and a sequence of chords marked with "5" and "10". The bottom system continues the piano accompaniment with a fermata and a sequence of chords marked with "10", "5", and "5". The instruction "con intimitissimo sentimento" is placed above the first measure of this system. The piano accompaniment concludes with a fermata and a sequence of chords marked with "10", "5", and "5". The instruction "ppp" is placed below the final measure of the bottom system.

With its rapid and frequent shift of mood and improvisational character, the second movement of this sonata is close to the free framework of a poem-fantasia. Here we find Franck's influence at its strongest.

The last movement comes as a conclusion of the whole sonata, generalizing its main poetic idea. In spite of its rhapsodical framework, the finale represents a well-knit pattern, thanks to its main theme, which, from the intonational point of view, has much in common with other themes of the sonata. This theme is very similar to the initial melodic figure of the Andante, but of course the main theme of the finale has a different character. It is in the style of the Romanian folk dance 'hora' (see Chapter 'Romanian folk Music – The Dances').

Example 9:

The image shows a musical score for Example 9, consisting of a piano and violin part. The score is written in 2/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'Allegro con brio, ma non troppo mosso' with a metronome marking of quarter note = 132. The piano part is marked 'mp ben ritmato' and the violin part is marked 'mp v. ma rustico, non stacc.' and 'simile'. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingering numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) for both hands. The piano part has a bass clef and the violin part has a treble clef. The score is presented on a single page with a light beige background.

A remarkable example of the same technique is provided by the episode, which occurs in the finale. Emotionally it is a new theme (Ex. 10); by its passionate drive it exceeds any previous thematic formation, but so far as its intonational basis is concerned, it is composed together from several elements that have already been used before (particularly in the episode in the first movement).

Example 10:

The image displays a musical score for Example 10, consisting of three systems of music. The first system features a piano accompaniment with a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The piano part includes dynamics such as *p*, *pp*, and *ppp*. Above the piano part, there are markings for *S* (Sforzando), *proprio*, and *sost.* (sostenuto). A measure number 40 is indicated in a box. The second system shows a violin part with a treble clef staff and a piano part with a bass clef staff. The violin part has dynamics *p* and *ff pes.* (forzando pesante). The piano part has dynamics *p s. v.* and *sost.*. The tempo marking is **Un poco meno mosso** ($\text{♩} = 88$) and **Tempo I** ($\text{♩} = 138$) ($\text{♩} = \text{♩}$). The third system is similar to the second, with a violin part and a piano part. The piano part has dynamics *pp* and *sost.*. The tempo marking is **Un poco meno mosso** ($\text{♩} = 88$) and **Tempo I** ($\text{♩} = 138$) ($\text{♩} = \text{♩}$).

The image displays two pages of musical notation. The top page features a vocal line in treble clef with markings such as *sensa rigore, mp* and *dolente*, and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The tempo is marked **Un poco meno mosso** and **Tempo I** with a quarter note equal to 138 (♩ = 138). Dynamic markings include *pp* and *ppp*. The bottom page continues the vocal line with markings like *mf per.* and *p*, and the piano accompaniment with *sost.* and **Un poco meno mosso Tempo I** (♩ = 138). The piano part includes a *pp* marking. Both pages show staccato chords and melodic lines.

The affinity between the two episodes is underlined by the use of the same staccato coloristic harmonies. Similarities abound in almost every succeeding portion of the finale. They are subjected to a very intense development that carries the dramatic build-up to a climax. At this point a completely new theme appears, representing an outstanding specimen of intonational generalization.

Example 11:

The image displays three systems of musical notation, each featuring a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system includes the instruction *sempre con suono* and dynamic markings *ff* and *3 sfz*. The second system contains the tempo marking *ten.*, the measure number **57**, and dynamics *mol. ff* and *poco*. The third system starts with *ben vibr.*, followed by *ff non vibr.* (marked *(♩ = 60)*), and concludes with *ff con suono*. The piano accompaniment in all systems consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the bass clef.

The image displays three systems of a musical score, likely for a piano sonata. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, a grand staff, and various musical markings. The first system features a treble clef staff with a vibrato marking and a forte dynamic, followed by a piano staff with a 'con anima (♩ = 69)' marking and a 'crescendo' instruction. The second system shows a piano staff with 'poco a poco' and '12' markings, indicating a gradual change and a specific rhythmic pattern. The third system includes 'pochiss. allarg.' (very little ad libitum), 'molto', and 'a tº (♩ = 59)', suggesting a significant tempo change. The score is characterized by intricate rhythmic patterns and dynamic contrasts.

This new final theme comes as a reply to the question, which remained unanswered at the undecided end of the Andante.

Enescu was working on this sonata with devotion for a long time, carefully selecting his musical material and polishing up every detail. The same care is seen in the way he sorted out the interpretative techniques that to a large

extent reproduce the specific performance characteristics of the *lăutars'* art. That is why the sonata abounds in chromaticisms and all sorts of ornaments combined with the sharp bow strokes so typical of the *lăutar* way of playing (Ex. 2). There are many cases in the sonata when the violin and piano imitate the sound of popular instruments, such as *fluier* (Ex. 6) and *țambal* (Ex. 7). (see Chapter 'Romanian Folk Music – Musical Instruments'). Example 12 shows how Enescu uses the violin and the piano in the style of popular orchestra – *taraf* (Ex. 12). By the way, this excerpt from the finale represents an entirely version of the opening bars of the Andante.

Example 12:

The image displays a musical score for two systems. The first system consists of a violin part (top staff) and a piano part (bottom two staves). The violin part begins with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a hairpin indicating a crescendo to *sub. f*. The piano part starts with a dynamic marking of *f* and includes a section marked *ff con suono*. The second system continues the violin part with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a hairpin to *sub. f*. It includes markings for *pizz. arco*, *f*, *pp*, and *mf*. The piano part in the second system features markings for *arpeggio lento* and *senza rigore*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic hairpins.

Enescu's knowledge of his people's music enables him to make the violin imitate the sound of plucked instrument in a masterly manner.

Example 13:

The image displays a musical score for a violin and piano. The violin part is written on a single staff with a treble clef. It begins with a measure marked [42] and the instruction "gettando l'arco" above the staff, with a forte dynamic "ff" below. The violin then plays a series of notes with a portamento. A measure later, the instruction "pizz." is written above the staff, with "ff" below. The tempo is marked "Tempo I" with a quarter note equal to 120 (♩ = 120). The violin part continues with a five-measure phrase marked "5" above, followed by a "staccatissimo" section. The piano accompaniment is written on two staves (treble and bass clefs). It features a "molto" marking and a forte dynamic "ff". The piano part includes various rhythmic patterns and dynamics, with some measures marked with asterisks and "pizz." in parentheses.

In this sonata, Enescu as an expert violinist with fine artistic taste and great ingenuity, also makes extensive use of other characteristic features of the popular interpretative tradition, such as placing the bow in various sections of a string, an expressive portamento, notes without vibrato and, finally, an increase of

intonational intensity as a result of a given note being heightened or lowered in accordance with the modal structure of the music.¹¹

Enescu's melodic patterns are characterized by the fact that they combine placidity with great intonational tension. They portray an affinity with the even-flowing phrases typical of a folk song, as well as with the active intervallic motion characteristic of the folkloric instrumental tunes. Their intonational tension is largely due to an active shift of basic modal sounds coupled with their frequent alteration, which gives the composer an opportunity to produce, on a diatonic basis, chromatic scales similar to those that exist in Romanian folk music. As a result of chromaticization of the II, IV, VI, VII and even III degree, Enescu obtains various scales consisting of anything from seven up to twelve notes. In a number of cases a scale, including the twelve-tone one, is enriched by the introduction of quarter-tones. Such quarter-tones emerge due to maximum use of modal gravitations that make the intonation more acute, owing to the heightening or lowering of a given note. As a result, such a note, acquires new expressive qualities. Quarter-tones are usually employed by Enescu while approaching a basic modal sound which in his works, just as in Romanian folk music, may be represented by the II degree of the prevailing mode (for instance,

¹¹ In a number of cases Enescu employs intervals that cannot be fixed on paper within the limits of present musical notation. Although he introduced specific signs, indicating one quarter or three quarters of a tone, these by no means account for all the variety of his intonational deviations.

the principal subject of the first movement of the sonata – the lowered E in the violin part in the measure before rehearsal 1).

In the chapter to follow I will examine the fundamental elements of Romanian folklore (songs, dances, rhythmic-metric-melodic characteristics, and musical instruments) in order to help the performer of the Sonata to come to a better understanding of the *caractère populaire roumain* of this Enescu's most original work.

Chapter 4

Romanian Folk Music

Romanian folklore, world famous through the performances of its most gifted representatives, impresses by its originality, richness and variety. The people gave it birth during their turbulent existence (Romania was under Turkey for five centuries), to adorn their daily lives, to relieve their sufferings, to help and encourage them during the ordeals they have had to undergo, to act as adviser and support to them in their ceaseless struggle for a better life. Folklore – the spiritual artistic creation of the people – is interwoven at every turn with daily life and its events, from the cradle to the grave. The gentle lines of the lullaby help the mother to sing her baby to sleep; the children grow up in a world of their own, with specific sonorous toys, and songs and games; the seasonal festivals of the year are embellished with their special songs and dances; the shepherd accompanies his everyday work with prescribed melodies, and other specific songs have been conceived in direct connection with work in the fields; it is well known that no wedding can take place without *lăutari* (occupational folk

musicians) – without songs and dances, some of which are occasional, either ritual or ceremonial; death, in its turn, has given rise to several heartrending songs, melodic and poetical outpourings of grief; in the ballads, the deeds of ancient heroes are glorified; the songs and the *doinās* praise the beauty of nature, love, *dor* (longing), yearning, sorrow, grief – the whole range of human feelings, while the dances with their characteristic sonorous ambience (the *chiuituri* = “yelled” song during a dance, and *strigături* = dance cries, i.e. humorous-satirical verse or song declaimed during a dance) testify to the people’s exuberant love of life.

Pastoral Music

Many of the spiritual creations of the Romanian people are inspired by pastoral life. A number of ballads, songs and dances commemorate shepherds and shepherding. In the world of shepherds an interesting and valuable occupational instrumental repertoire has come into being. It is a particular instrumental music, quite independent, sometimes determined by the very structure of the instruments. For instance, the *bucium* (alphorn) and the *tilinca* (a rim-blown flute without fingerholes) can only give a more or less extended series of harmonics – natural resonances of the basic note, the fundamental, according to the length and the thickness of the respective pipes. Melodies based on these

sounds, which are the only ones the blower can reproduce, may be richer or poorer, in other words, made up of more or fewer harmonics, according to the construction of the instrument and the musical skill of the blower.

Created in direct connection with the shepherd's everyday work, their musical repertoire comprises a number of pieces varying according to the purpose for which they are intended. Blown on the *fluier* (shepherd flute) or *bucium*, they bear various names: *Cînd mulge oile* (When the sheep are milked), *La măsurat* (At the measuring of the milk), *La închegatul laptelui* (At the curdling of the milk), *A caşului* (The making of the whey cheese). These tunes are usually simple, made up out of persistently repeated melodic motifs.

An important category of shepherd pieces is called *ale drumului* (of the road). They accompany the flocks of sheep in their trips from mountain to meadow and meadow to mountain, or from sheepfold to pasture and back again, *Porneala* (The start) is the tune played when the flock takes to the road. A whole series of *Şireaguri* (droving tunes) guide its way. These droving tunes are generally variants of *doinas*, with free rhythm and motion, richly ornamented. They are characterized by their long-winded phrases and frequent repetitions of the melodic formulas on which they are built.

To these tunes, characterized by developed form and wide compass, a series of signal tunes might be added; *Adunatul oilor la stîină* (The muster of the sheep to the fold), *Cînd adună oile de pe minte* (When they muster the sheep on

the mountain), *Adunarea oilor* (The mustering of the sheep) and so on. They are mostly blown on the *bucium*. On the basis of conditioned reflexes, the shepherds accustom their sheep to respond to certain musical calls. For the return of the sheep, for instance, they use a specific signal – merely a whistle. Upon hearing it the scattered sheep hurriedly gather around the shepherd. Similar tulnic signals are to be found also in the great collection *Romanian Folk Music*, by Béla Bartók, issued posthumously at The Hague in 1967 – 1975 by The Béla Bartók Archives in New York.¹²

The Doină

According to the New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians the *doină* is "a lyric song, defined musically by its flexible structure, rubato rhythm and dense, complex ornamentation."¹³ Tiberiu Alexandru states that in several early descriptions of Moldavian folk music the word "doină" was used at the start of every song recalling the deeds of battle-heroes and every introduction with which the Moldavians are accustomed to begin to intone a song.¹⁴ As a technical folkloric term, the word "doină" has been assigned to a particular kind of songs.

¹² Bela Bartok, *Rumanian Folk Music*, five vols., Nijhoff, The Hague, 1967-75.

¹³ Anca Giurchescu, "Romania", in Stanley Sadie (ed.) *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 29 vols., Macmillan, London, 2001, Vol. 21, p. 588.

¹⁴ Tiberiu Alexandru, *Romanian Folk Music*, Bucharest, 1980, p. 89.

From some descriptions and references to its various names in other Romanian provinces this type of song is similar to that which we call today, following Constantin Brăiloiu's example the *doină proper*.¹⁵ This term has gained wide popularity, becoming the symbol of the most authentic ancestral poetry and music of the Romanians. Béla Bartók was the first to define the elements making up the *doină proper*.

By *doină proper*, researchers of Romanian folk music understand a certain kind of song, essentially lyrical, of free form based on extemporization, using for that purpose a number of typical melodic elements. It is an "infinite melody", whose architecture is ceaselessly re-created by the performer. The singer repeats the variable length stanza or strophe, omitting or including phrases at will. These are subject to intense variation of rhythm and melody. However, these modifications may not affect the strict order of the *doină's* components: the introduction; the initial section; the melodic recitative; the final section (melodic recitative based on the tonic). The dominant features of the *doină* are love, sorrow and the invocation of nature.

In musical terminology the *doinăs* use a diatonic "nonmodulating (unitonal)" scale. In general a Re (D) mode is preferred, but with a fluctuating fourth step, either natural or sharpened. In *doinăs* from Northern Romania where the augmented second is rare (due to the influence of Polish music), within the

¹⁵ Constantin Brăiloiu is the founder of Romanian Ethnomusicology.

context of the ornamental formulas, one finds the characteristic so-called *noduri* (knots), sounds that are somewhat hiccupped, obtained by a sudden glottal gulp. These strange adornments of vocal singing, doubtless ancient, are very rare nowadays. They are inserted as a kind of interjection among the verse-lines interrupting their succession, between two words of the same line, or dividing up single words. From this ample extension of the musical phrase results the instrumental appearance of some of the *doină*s.

The free rhythm of the *doină*s (parlando) and their movement (rubato), correspond somewhat to singing according to the taste of the performer who, in singing, lengthens or shortens the notes, speeding or slowing down the performance according to individual artistic mastery.

Unlike the vocal *doină*s, the instrumental ones – as already suggested – have more developed forms, with wide compass and richer ornamentation, according to the technical possibilities offered by the musical instruments on which they are played. All these qualities grant the *doină* a character that is par excellence soloistic. They cannot be performed by groups as in this instance they would be deprived of their supreme qualities, arising from the creative contribution of the performer in the very moment of utterance.

In the past the *doină* was found throughout Romania. Today it survives in Muntenia, Oltenia and to a lesser extent in Bukovina, Moldavia and the north of Transylvania. In the rest of the country its elements have been incorporated into

the structure of some lyric songs. Most provinces of Romania preserve only one or two *doină* types of stanza. The verses of the lyric songs of a region were versions and variations of a single melody and were known to all the performers of that region.

Without thorough knowledge of the *doină* proper, some researchers have declared that it is a song possessed by no other people, not found in the folklore of any other people in the world. One cannot deny the specific national character of the Romanian *doină*, but investigations have shown the existence of similar kinds of melody among the Ukrainians, the Galician Jews, throughout the whole Balkan Peninsula (including Bulgaria and Greece), in the Turkish-Persian-Arabic East, in India, Indo-China, Indonesia, Tibet, in some regions of China, in Mongolia, and so forth.

The Ballads

Some of the oldest accounts of Romanian folk epic are found in the early sixteenth century. These *Cîntece bătrînești* (“old time songs”) as they are called by the common people, or *balade* (“ballads”) as the modern Romanians have

become accustomed to call them, flourished particularly up to the nineteenth century. However, they are much older; their origin is lost in the mists of time.

In southern Moldavia, Dobrudja, Muntenia, Oltenia and the Banat, the ballads have a melodic structure of their own. Destined for a receptive medium – a few listeners – they belong almost exclusively to the expertise of the *lăutari*. The epic texts are sung either to *doină* melodies, or to song-proper tunes. Formerly the ballads were also sung by other folk bards (singers of epic songs): peasants (mainly men) who sometimes accompanied their voices with shepherd pipe or bagpipe – also blind musicians who sang them at fairs. The ballads were to be heard wherever there was an audience ready to listen: at the mill, at halting places on long journeys, at the inns and taverns, at the working bees and all kinds of festivities. Today they are sung by the *lăutari* mainly at the ‘big table’ at peasant weddings, at the guests’ request.

The principal musical instrument used by present-day *lăutari* is the violin. It is accompanied by the other instruments in the *taraf* (folk band). The fiddle of the *primas* (leader) plays the preludes and the interludes, and sometimes doubles the voice, accompanied by other instruments (second violins, cobzas, cimbalom, accordion – more and more frequently used – and double-bass). By playing running rhythmic figurations of the basic chords, they provide a continuous accompaniment to the singing.

The ballads are sometimes preceded by an instrumental prelude with its own themes, with the goal to create the appropriate atmosphere for the narrative. Gradually, the *lăutar* passes on to the instrumental introduction proper, extracted from the musical substance of the ballad he is performing. When the prelude is missing, the ballads begin directly with this kind of introduction. The singing is interrupted here and there by instrumental interludes, made up either by the instrument resuming a phrase or two from the melody, or by restating some motifs borrowed from the musical content of the ballad. The interludes are not inserted at random, but in those moments when the logic of the text really allows it. Thus their expressive role in emphasizing the action, in ending some part or episode and preparing of an atmosphere suitable for what is to come is achieved. At the same time these interludes allow the performer to rest his voice and collect his thoughts.

The freedom that the practice of this genre lives to the performer-creator is remarkable. Interweaving the sung with the instrumental parts, and here and there with passages uttered in the narrational manner proper to the genre, the interpreter moulds each musical section according to the sense of the poem it enlivens.

Today the ballads are on the way towards a gradual disappearance. Their passing does not implicitly show a weakening of folk artistic creation but is an evidence of the natural evolution of folklore. The functions of the ballads are on

the point of being taken over by other genres, following the social-historical development of the people.

The Songs Proper

Songs proper form the richest and most viable part of Romanian folk music. Unlike the *doină*s and the ballads, whose form is free and improvisatory, the songs have a regular form. The number of the melodic lines or sections that make them up, and the way in which they follow each other, is always the same. The result is a form of musical strophe, constantly repeating itself, with melodic-rhythmic variations inherent in authentic folk performances each time the tune is repeated.

The songs differ considerably, both among themselves and from one region to another, both in structure and style. In his study of Romanian and Hungarian folk music, Béla Bartók established for first time the features of the song-proper dividing them into regional musical idioms, “musical dialects”, as this true friend of Romanian folk music called them. The number of melodic lines, the notes employed for the principal cadence, the musical scale, the type of melody (syllabic or melismatic) and the character of ornamentation, the specific

melodic formulas, the rhythm and the movement, the existence or absence of a refrain, are elements that define these ‘musical idioms’ and differentiate them.

The following presents the regional aspects of the best known ‘music idioms’. The most original songs of Transylvania are those from the south and the west. Usually they have three melodic lines with the main cadence after the second line on the note a tone below the tonic of the scale (subtonic). The cadence of the previous melodic line is on the same note. As for the content of the three melodic lines, the most typical conform to the scheme: AAB, ABB and ABA. The scale is either purely pentatonic or with a strong pentatonic substratum. The rhythm is free: parlando-rubato. The tune develops for a long time within a “major tonality”, but ends in the “minor relative”.

In the northern half of Transylvania, *cîntecele moroșănești* (the songs from Maramures) are highly esteemed. They have four melodic lines, with the cadence after the second one, usually on the tonic. Their most characteristic forms follow the schemes: AABB, AAcBB, AABBc and AAcBBc (as *c* is an optional refrain). The rhythm is regular, somewhat swinging. The movement – likewise regular – varies quite considerably. The scales are also varied; however, pentatonic melodies or those with an obvious pentatonic substratum are rather frequent.

Songs with rather developed forms are found in Bucovina. Extemporization plays a great role. Melodic lines can be omitted or new ones

introduced. This freedom in the handling of the form is probably an influence of the *doină proper*, which is still alive in the zone. The Bucovinean songs – like many in Moldavia – are characterized by the very typical Phrygian final cadence.

A particularly viable musical idiom is that of the Banat. Here the songs have four melodic lines, with the main cadence after the second, on the subtonic. Their characteristic shapes conform to the schemes AABC and ABBC. The scales are diatonic with predominant Sol- and Re-modes. Here too we find pentatonic tunes or tunes with pentatonic substratum, as well as chromatic melodies. The last one is based on Re-mode with augmented fourth. Often, in this region, particularly in the northwest of the province, the last two lines may carry refrains with texts of their own. Their frequency in the Banat led Béla Bartók to call the Banat musical idioms “the dialect of the refrain”.

In sub-Carpatian Oltenia and Muntenia it is possible to hear songs belonging to the musical idiom of southern Transylvania. They have been brought by inhabitants of Transylvanian origin, whose hard life in the past impelled them to cross the mountains and to settle down in the warm country. The poetic texts of the songs embrace the whole range of human feelings. Some of them are sung also to *doină* tunes. Here and there, particularly in Transylvania, Bucovina and northern Moldavia, epic ballad texts are sung to song tunes.

The regional musical idioms that have seemingly appeared within the historical conditions of feudal times are now on the way to merging gradually into

a modern style of unitary character. This new style began to develop since the second half of the nineteenth century in Muntenia, along with the emancipation of the peasants, freed from serfdom. They resulted from the contact between the songs of southern Transylvanian type and the local ones. The new style songs are notable for an exuberant vitality, which is contributed to by their regular (*giusto*) movement that has replaced the free (*rubato*) movement of most of the old-style songs. This is achieved by renouncing free (*parlando*) rhythm in favor of a regular rhythm corresponding in most instances to the modern measures. The range of the tunes becomes wider, reaching or exceeding the octave, while the melodic elements are simplified to a minimum. The old model structures are being abandoned in favor of the modern major and minor. The form is often well-developed, especially by the repetition of the last two melodic lines or by the addition of some new lines.

The texts of the new style songs are lyrical especially love poems. The poems tell of various events, for instance an accident at work, some of them very moving in their epico-lyrical fashion. The new style melodies are prevalent carriers of texts inspired by the Second World War. Similarly, most contemporary poetic creations, echoes of a new social conscience, are sung to such tunes.

The new style songs have been widely spread by professional singers who perform them with instrumental accompaniment. Radio and television broadcasts and disc recordings contribute to their wide diffusion. The repertoire of this kind

of songs is enriched by tunes with regular rhythm, formerly dance songs, or instrumental dances to which words have been fitted.

The Dances

Romanian folk dances, like the songs, differ from region to region, and their repertoire is particularly rich and varied. In the southern and southwestern zones of the country in a single village one may find 40–50 or even more dances, differing both in their music and in their dance-movement.

Opportunities for dancing are numerous. Formerly the people danced on Sundays and on other free days in the year; during and at the end of midwinter caroling; during the masked dances at New Year; at the end of harvest' during the vintage; at weddings, even at funerals; at the working bees; at the recruitment of youths and so on. Dancing ceased only during the periods of fast. Today several changes are observable in these occasions for dancing. The fasts no longer imply an interdiction, the Saturday evening balls begin to spread more and more, sometimes to the detriment of the Sunday *horas*, and so on.

Romanian dances are of closed or open circle, semicircle, straight line, winding line, or for couples. Dances for a solo performer or small groups of

dancers are rather rare. In the round dances, the performers hold each other by the hand (*Hora*) or – as in some men’s dances from Transylvania and Moldavia – they dance in organized fashion without holding each other. In the column dances they hold each other by the girdle (*Brîul*), by the shoulders (*Sîirba or Brîiul*) or by the hands crossed behind them (*Rustemul*). In the mixed dances for couples (*De doi*) the dancers hold each other by the hand standing side by side (*Purtata*), or face to face (*Ardeleana*), with the hands crossed behind them, or the youth holds the girl by the waist, while the girl puts her hands on his shoulders (*Invîrtita* – the whirled dance). The couple dances are undoubtedly more recent than the others. In some cases it can clearly be seen how these have developed from older round or line dances. One may often see, besides the main group of dancers who move in a round or column, isolated couples dancing to the same music, sometimes with the same steps.

The dances are performed exclusively to music. Dances supported only by the rhythm of some percussion instruments – in some parts of Bulgaria and Turkey – are unknown in Romania.

The sung dances, in which the dancers themselves sing unaccompanied, are nowadays rare. They seem to be old and probably the vestiges of some ancient ritual dances. In central Transylvania such dances are performed by girls, while in Bucovina they are dances by women. In Aromanian, Macedo-Romanian folklore, dances accompanied solely by songs are particularly common. It seems that

formerly such dances were scattered all over the country. The dance-songs have survived as songs-proper.

In Transylvania and Bucovina the instrumental dance tunes are accompanied by short poems, usually of humorous-satirical content, generally improvised on the spot, called *strigături*. They represent the moment when the musical instruments have joined the dancer's voices, doubling their singing. The *strigături* are uttered mostly by men, but in many instances the girls and wives show themselves not at all inferior.

The *strigături* are one of the most viable folk categories, with countless possibilities for renewal. Often their content is enriched with contemporary creations, an echo of the present-day life of the people.

The predominant rhythm of Romanian folk dances is binary (with the second beat prolonged). Dances in ternary rhythm (with the third beat prolonged) are not typical. They are either foreign dances or a result of the blunting of some formulas of aksak rhythm (a term borrowed from oriental music). Dances constructed on this interesting rhythmic system with "asymmetrical" beats are encountered quite frequently in all provinces of the country. From the simplification of rather complex aksak measures has arisen the interesting alternation of certain 5- and 7-time measures, met with in some dances from Oltenia and the Banat.

Concerning the forms of the music of Romanian folk dances, it should be said that besides those dances of fixed-form structure, in which the four-bar phrase is common, there are also dances of free form. While the fixed-form dances usually comprise two or three distinct sections (AB or ABC), the free-form dances show great diversity. In general they are based on the varied repetition of a single motif, or on the combination and the variation of two or more motifs.

The diversity of the choreographic repertoire from district to district corresponds only in part to the specific musical idioms of the song proper or to the zones of the folk costume. In general the choreographic zones appear to be more extensive than those of the song proper. This is because the dances and the songs are distinct folkloristic categories, developed in different conditions.

Whereas Oltenia, Muntenia and to some extent the Banat are characterized by the existence of a great number of dances in the same locality, in Transylvania the number of the dances is generally small. *Hora* and *Sîrba* are the two main dances of the province of Oltenia. The *Sîrbe* are often vocal; however others are purely instrumental in their make-up. The *Sîrba* is the dance that has spread most widely to the other provinces of the country. In Muntenia the most important dances are the *Hora*, *Sîrba* and *Brîu*. Here most dances are performed by mixed groups, in a circle or semicircle, holding each other by the hand or by the shoulder. The movements are rapid, with many stamping steps, with beats in

counter-rhythm, powerful and subtle. The typical men's dance of Muntenia is the *Brîu*. It gets its name from the bearing of the dancers, who, arranged in a line or a semicircle, hold each other by the girdle (*brîu* means girdle). The main characteristic of the *hora* is the duple meter and the two sixteenth and an eight note structure of the beats.

In the Dobrudja the dance repertoire is heterogeneous. It reflects the mixture of natives with people from other provinces of the country. In the course of time the Dobrudja dances have undergone many transformations, interpretations and fusions.

The dances from Moldavia are very lively, with small steps, pervaded with counter-time beats. Here we find dances performed in large or small circles, wheeling round in a whirl, but also in couples. Couple-dances have spread under the influence of Polish and Russian dances. Many of the couple-dances are of polka-type, both in music and in steps.

In central Transylvania, couple-dances predominate, alongside the virtuoso men's dances. The mixed round dances are rare. They maybe found in northern Transylvania, in the neighborhood of Sibiu. The number of dances is generally small, compared with the other provinces in the country.

The dances from the Banat are most varied. Alongside the men's dances the *hora* is also danced (particularly in the south of the province), and various couple-dances: *De doi*, *Ardeleana*. A strong connection exists between the music

and the dance. Sorocul, a men's dance from the north of the province, connects with the youths' dances from Transylvania. In this part of the Banat, as in Transylvania, the mixed dances succeed each other cyclically, a proof of the contact between Transylvanian dance and that of the Banat.

The rich Romanian choreographic repertoire is nowadays turned to a good account on a wide scale by the amateur artistic movement. To fit the requirements of the stage, the dances undergo many transformations: autonomous dances are grouped together into suites, closed circle formations are re-made into semicircles or even into straight lines, women's and men's dances are turned into mixed ones, etc.

Within the latest fifty years, Romanian folk dances have enjoyed great success in many international competitions and in stage performances. Nowadays they have great prestige all over the world, through their variety and richness, as their artistic qualities.

Meter, Rhythm, Melody

For their songs, the Romanians use two different verse-lines in respect of the number of syllables: a *hexasyllabic* and an *octosyllabic* line. Romanian folk verse has no stanza, while the rhyme is made in succession.

The syllables of sung folk verse are arranged in pairs by the metric accent, which falls invariably on each pair of syllables, according to the following scheme:

Ú U / Ú U / Ú U / (in the case of hexasyllable)

and

Ú U / Ú U / Ú U Ú U / (in the case of the octosyllable)

The metric accent predominates, so that some words may be stressed otherwise in verse than in common speech. However, in the last pair of syllables, with a few exceptions, the metric accent must coincide with the tonic accent.

Regarding the relation of poetic text to music, we should mention a peculiarity of Romanian folk music, especially in the case of *doină*s and old-style songs, namely that any poem with eight-syllable lines may be sung, in principle, to any melody constructed on the measure of the meter, and vice versa, a given text may be sung, in principle, to any melody fitted to the measure of the verse-line. In other words, a melody may have several different texts and a text may be sung to several different melodies. The process of fitting a certain text to a certain melody, or the choice of a melody for a given text usually happens spontaneously, at the very moment of singing. The emotional atmosphere created by the melody attracts the choice of a poetic text of related content suited to that of the music.

The two elements, poetic text on one hand and melody on the other, are blended into an artistic whole, into a song created orally at the very moment.

Between rhythm and meter often exists a casual interdependence. An important rhythmic system, proper to Romanian folk music, undoubtedly has its origin in metrics. It is a bichronal rhythmic system with two units of duration, a short and a long, the value of the short being a half of the long, while the value of the long is, of course, twice the value of the short. In other words, the ratio between them is 2:1 and 1:2 respectively. They are autonomous: the smaller one does not come from a division of the larger, nor does the larger result from the merging of two small durations. Each of these two units of duration corresponds to a syllable of the poetry: six durations arranged in three pairs corresponding to the six syllables of hexasyllabic verse, and eight durations arranged in four pairs, corresponding to the eight syllables of octosyllabic verse. In both cases, the pairs are grouped by the accents, as in the example given above.

A good part of the melodies belonging to several genres of Romanian folk music, particularly the *doină*s, ballads and old-style songs, have a free, declamatory, ever-changing rhythm. Béla Bartók has called in *parlando* – *parlando-rubato*, as its utterance is somewhat similar to that of common speech.

The melodies use a large number of scales. Some of them are particularly simple, made up of two, three or four successive notes (“bichords”, “trichords”, “tetrachords”) or of two, three or four note sets at a distance greater than a tone

from one another (“bitones”, “tritons”, “tetratones”). The last organized within the frame of the interval of a third (usually minor) are the so-called “prepentatonic scales”. The “pentatonic scales” are formed of five steps grouped around a third. When this third is minor and stands at the distance of a tone from the other degrees, the pentatonic scales are “anemitonic” (without semitones); when the third is major, and the distances between the degrees are also semitones, the pentatonic scales are “emitonic” (with semitones). The pentatonic scales most used in Romanian folk music are anemitonic. The bichords and trichords, the bitones, tritons and tetratones, as well as the prepentatonic and pentatonic scales are ancient musical system. We meet them mainly in the folklore of customs. All over the world they characterize an archaic music belonging to a primordial stage in the development of musical culture. Old too are melodies whose scales do not exceed four, five or six adjacent notes arranged stepwise, at a distance of a tone or semitone from each other: the tetrachord, pentachord and hexachord.

Among the scales one often encounters the Re-mode, sometimes with its fourth degree unstable (as in some *doină*s), also the La and Mi modes, and among the major modes the Sol and Fa modes, the latter with its seventh degree flattened and with its final cadence on the second step. Similar “semicadences” may be found also in other scales. Diatonic modes are prevalent. Among the chromatic modes we should mention a Re-mode with its fourth degree sharpened and its seventh flattened (with an augmented second between degrees 3 and 4), a Fa-

mode with its second degree sharpened and its seventh flattened (with an augmented second between degrees 1 and 2), and a Sol-mode with its second and sixth degrees flattened (with an augmented second between degrees 2 and 3).

The forms used by Romanian folk tunes are similarly varied. On one hand there are free-form melodies in which extemporization plays a leading role (some laments, *doină*s, ballads), while on the other hand there are melodies with fixed formal structure, with a constant number of melodic lines, arranged in identical fashion in “melodic strophes”. Most of the fixed-form melodies are constructed in three or four melodic lines – usually with the main caesura after the second line.

Musical Instruments

We have several times remarked that the richness and variety of Romanian folk music is incomparable. Bearing in mind that this is the heritage of a single people, and the number of souls and the extent of the territory they inhabit, the treasury of their instruments appears extraordinarily substantial – a number of different kinds of alphorn, six types of bagpipes, a large family of flutes, and a host of other folk musical instruments in current use.

Some of these instruments are remarkably simple. A leaf, a blade of grass, a sliver or birch bark, the scale of a fish and so on. The mountainous uplands still echo with the powerful sound of the *bacium* (alphorn), an ancient pastoral instrument. It is one- to two-meter conical tube with a bell of varying size. The shepherds call it *bucium*, *bucin*, *trîmbiță*, *tulnic*, etc. and make it of long staves of deal, maple, ash, lime or hazel wood.

The *bucium* is a natural wind instrument. Its sounds, a series of harmonics on the fundamental note, differ according to the length and shape of the tube, according to the skills of the player, and also according to the signals in local use. Formerly also used for military calls – the sound of *baciums* used to announce the outbreak of war – nowadays, the *bacium* is almost exclusively played by shepherds.

The *corn* (horn), made of wood, ox-horn or galvanized iron, is also a natural instrument. Because of its short tube, it can only produce a few notes.

The most widespread of all folk instruments used by the Romanians is the *fluier* (flute). There is hardly a village where its sound is not heard. Old legends attribute a divine origin to it, and invest it with miraculous qualities. Small, medium or large, the many different kinds of *fluier* form a rich family. Romanian flutes may be of a type with the tube fully closed at the lower end (*fiță*, *nai*), or completely open at both ends (*fluier moldovenesc*), or with a lateral blowhole (*flaut*); they may be without fingerholes (*tilincă*), or with five (*caval*),

six (*the common fluier*), even seven or eight fingerholes, etc. They are made by the players themselves or by peasant instrument-makers scattered all over the country.

Most widespread of all is the *common fluier* with an airduct and six fingerholes. It is known everywhere under a variety of names: *fluier*, *fluieră*, *fluieroi*, etc. The lower aperture of the tube is made smaller by introducing a stopper with a perforated center.

Another instrument related to the family of *fluiere* is the *ocarina*. It is related mainly to through its sound producing mechanism: the splitting of the air blown through a slit. The ocarina was invented at the end of the nineteenth century in the Italian town of Budrio. Made from ceramic in the shape of an egg or a carrot, it has eight fingerholes grouped in two rows of four.

In fluier-playing a curious polyphony is known: a vocal drone, something like a moan, with which the player accompanies his performance. The pitch of the so-called shepherd style kind of drone is generally variable, without relating to the melody it accompanies. In other instances it may be perfectly attuned to it, notably in bagpipe-like types of melodies. Sometimes it changes pitch in the course of the same piece, when the melody demands another harmonic background.

The Romanian people have been using *cimpoi* (bagpipe) since remote times. Despite the erosion and the transformations wrought by time, the bagpipe

is still to be found here and there, usually in the hands of elderly people, in northern Oltenia, Muntenia, the Dobrudja, Moldavia, western Transylvania and the Banat.

The *cimpoi* is played by shepherds and by farmers. Until quite recently it was customarily heard at weddings. Formerly, at the time the *lăutari* were rare, the people everywhere danced to *cimpoi* or *fluier*. The Romanian bagpipe consists of a large goatskin bag serving as an air reservoir. The air is blown through a tube, which has a leather valve at its lower end to prevent the air from escaping back through the blow-pipe. By its construction, the bagpipe is an instrument on which two or three sounds may be produced simultaneously. The capacity of the bagpipe for playing in two or three parts has contributed over a long course of time to the development of the harmonic thinking of the Romanian people.

The wind instruments, *aerophones*, are most numerous in the domain of Romanian folk music. The folk instruments proper are generally used without any lucrative aim by shepherds and peasants. In recent years, however, certain wind instruments such as the *fluier*, *caval* and *cimpoi* have been used by some folk soloists who have turned professional, due to the growth of interest in folk music.

Among the *chordophones*, instruments whose sounds are produced with the aid of strings, the oldest is the *cobza*. The present-day *cobza* consists of a half-pearshaped resonance box made up of five or seven ribs of walnut and maple, with a belly made of thin spruce and a short broad neck of strong wood, whose

pegbox is bent back slightly to the right. The strings are stopped with all the fingers of the left hand and plucked with a goose-quill held in the right hand. The *cobza* has 8-12 strings grouped in four courses of two or three strings each. *Cobza*-tunings differ from region to region, even from one player to another (the most common is in fifths and fourths: d – a – d – g). The *cobza* is above all an accompanying instrument for the *lăutari*. Its soft, rather angry-sounding tone accompanies the violin either alone or with other instruments.

Another plucked-string instrument is the *țitera* (zither), used only by amateurs. It consists of a rectangular resonance box with open back. The belly is fitted with a few strings tuned in unison, set over a fingerboard divided by metal frets, arranged so as to give a diatonic major scale.

The earliest mention of the presence of the *țambal* (cimbalom or dulcimer) in Romania dates from 1546. It was the period when this ancient instrument entered the castles of the nobility. It was the favorite instrument of the aristocracy, praised by the poets, depicted by the painters. Later it passed into the hands of the *lăutari*. At the end of the nineteenth century it became widespread when a Bucharest instrument-maker began to manufacture *țambals*. Since then, the large *țambal* has become an essential instrument in the prestigious *lăutar* orchestras of the towns. The *țambal* is specifically a ‘lautaresque’ instrument, used nearly always for accompaniment. It comprises a trapeze-shaped soundboard with 20-25 courses of strings in the small *țambal* (used in the villages of Oltenia, Muntenia

and Moldavia) and 35 courses in the larger, perfected model (used all over the country, but mainly in the towns).

As it spread, the *țambal* replaced the *cobza*. In turn, today it is being replaced by the accordion, which has come increasingly into use in bands in the villages and towns.

Among the borrowed musical instruments that have enriched the Romanian folk music, the *violin* enjoys by far the greatest popularity. From the eighteenth century onwards, it has hardly ever been missing from the hands of occupational musicians. In various regions, the people know it under different names: *ceteră*, *lăută*, *diblă*, *scripcă*, etc. These regional terms are now replaced by the word *vioară* (or more rarely, *violină*).

In Muntenia and Oltenia, the usual tuning of the violin is sometimes “broken” (scordatura), to facilitate the fingering when playing certain fast dances, or with a view to obtaining some special sound effects. More than thirty different tunings have been identified in Romanian folk music. Unfortunately this interesting technique – a sign of virtuosity – has been abandoned, and fewer and fewer *lăutari* know and use it.

Another member of the violin family is the accompanying violin, called *brace*, *braci* or *contră*. It has three strings only, stretched over a cut-down bridge. The player attacks them simultaneously with the fingers and the bow, producing a

chord of three notes. The strings are tuned in such a way as to facilitate the fingering in obtaining chords.

Since the nineteenth century, at the same time when a harmonic language in the Romanian folk music was developing, the *lăutar* bands have been supplemented with a *violoncello* or *double bass*.

Since the latter half of the nineteenth century the *lăutari* have introduced into the inventory of Romanian folk instruments several ***brass wind instruments***: trumpets, flugelhorn, euphoniums, helicons, tubas, etc. They learned to blow them during military service, which in most instances they spent as army bandmen. All these instruments are blown in a characteristic fashion suited to folk intonations, particularly in Moldavia.

Occupational players, full-time or part-time professionals, called *lăutari*, play an important role in the musical life of the folk. As we have seen, they play at weddings, at weekend village dances, at various feasts and on other occasions. Ballads, wedding songs and particularly dances are performed by them in most parts of the country. The *lăutari* change both their repertoire and their performance manner, also the instruments they handle, according to the tastes of their listeners.

The most typical *lăutar* formations are comprised of violin and *cobza*; violin and portable cimbalom; violins and double bass; violins, cimbalom and double-bass; violin, accompanying violin and double-bass, etc. Nowadays the

accordion is making its presence more and more evident in *lăutar* formations, displacing other instruments. The conditions of life under Socialist rule have facilitated the organization of a number of large concert folk orchestra. Unfortunately through force of this circumstance, the pieces in their repertoire have been petrified, stereotyped, while their performance – always the same – has sacrificed the variability and spontaneity of genuine folk music.

Chapter 5

The caractère populaire roumain of Enescu's Third Violin Sonata.

Enescu often stressed that the culture to be promoted among the broad masses should be of the highest class, which would require prolonged educational work. He said: “The art for the people must precede popular art.”¹⁶ Enescu’s attitude to folklore in general and his way to use it are very well characterized by his words addressed to the young composers: “I will repeat what I have so frequently said to my Romanian colleagues: folklore itself is perfect and should not be dressed in unsuitable garments. To combine folkloric material with an unsuitable scoring is vandalism! Folklore as a motive for inspiration – yes, but its treatment must be original, free of school dogmas and far-fetched complications. The simpler a popular melody is presented, the more strikingly it shines in all its beauty. An original artistic process must tend to create music in popular spirit.”¹⁷

¹⁶ B. Gavoty , *ibid.*, p 229.

¹⁷ B. Gavoty, *ibid.*, p. 301

Enescu 's Third Violin Sonata is a shining proof of this credo. He did not quote already existing folk tunes. The melodic themes he created represent an amalgamation of folk intonations generalized in his own individual manner.

Enescu chose three main elements of the Romanian folklore discussed in Chapter 4, and composed a unique, original work, that combined the rhythmical and intonational characteristics of the Romanian folk music with the structural features of the genre sonata. These elements are: the *doină*, the pastoral *shepherd's song*, and the dance *hora*.

The melodic material of the first movement of the sonata is a clear example of *doină*. According to Béla Bartók the origin of the term *doină* is the word "duin", which means "long song".¹⁸ The main subject of this movement gives the impression of an endless, broken-heartedly cried out song. The rhythmic structure is purposely "unclear", with no exact sense of beat. Here, the composer very masterfully achieved an original presentation of the free of form, unmeasured *doină*. (I find a very close connection between the Romanian *doină* and the mourning song popular in the region located in the mountain Rodopi, the borderline between Turkey and Bulgaria).

The violinist should approach this theme with a very well established concept of the quality of the sound needed to convey the particular character of the melody (sad and very gentle). The bow should be placed closer to the

¹⁸ Béla Bartók, *Studies in Ethnomusicology*, Lincoln and London, 1997.

fingerboard and the player will achieve a beautiful, gentle sound by using the entire length of the bow but without applying too much pressure. The composer has given us a tremendous amount of instructions, and if the performers follow them faithfully, the original pictures and sounds Enescu had in mind, would be recreated to perfection. Very frequently he instructs the players to interpret the first section of the opening theme (Ex. 1 a) *senza rigore*. This requires the two performers to communicate with very clear gestures in order to achieve perfect ensemble. The ensemble issue throughout the entire piece is to my personal experience the most difficult part of the process of learning the sonata. Both, the pianist and the violinist must know each other's parts with a detailed precision to be able to move, phrase and breathe together. At the same time, having a sense of pulse is absolutely necessary. I would advise the players to acquire the excellent recording of the sonata presented by Enescu's student Ida Haendel, accompanied by the pianist Vladimir Ashkenazy. Every musician has heard the common advise that listening to others interpretations of a given piece would take away a part of the unique approach to the work. Generally this is true, however in this case I will dare to recommend that the performers become acquainted with the sonata before they begin the learning process. The metronome markings change quite frequently but if the players observe them strictly the stylistic characteristic of the *doină*, discussed in the previous chapter, will be portrayed according to Enescu's vision. Yehudi Menuhin shares that this particular sonata is the only piece he had played

in his life, “that punishes” the performers if the metronome markings are not observed pedantically.¹⁹

As I stated in the analysis of the sonata (chapter 3), the second movement is based on the pastoral character of the shepherd’s song. The instrument imitated here is the *fluier*. The “dreamy”, airy sound of this wind instrument is presented by the use of harmonics in the violin part. Enescu indicates the phrases that should be played with *vibrato* or *non vibrato*. I would recommend listening to recordings of the original *fluier* in order to understand the quality of the sound required throughout the second movement of the sonata. A good number of recordings of authentic Romanian instruments played by *lăutari* are available in the majority of libraries in the US. In this movement the ensemble issue is of even greater difficulty (frequent change of meter and tempo; quadruple versus triple rhythm; chains of syncopations; held octaves in the violin while the piano is performing cimbalom-like passages). The slow speed creates a danger of losing the sense of pulse. In cases where the tempo marking is quarter-note = 48, I usually prefer subdividing, however the character of this movement requires thinking in “big”, slow-paced but yet, perfectly in time, beats.

The theme of the finale is based on the structure of the dance *hora*. Enescu created this theme by using the mentioned above octosyllabic scheme:

Ú U/ Ú U/ Ú U Ú U - (bars 1-3).

¹⁹ Yehudi Menuhin, *Unfinished Journey*, London, 1976.

However, the movement is in 2/2 meter and the theme, presented by the piano first, does not begin on the downbeat of the first bar. It starts on the second beat of the first bar and end on the first beat of the third bar. Thus, the performers should be aware of the rhythmical risk of this phrase. An excellent mental concentration is required throughout the entire movement. Here again, achieving a perfect ensemble is the most difficult issue due to the many and frequent tempo and meter changes (particularly in this fast tempo).

This movement adds a new character to the colors presented in the preceding movements. Here the players are finally free to express the most passionate and intense sound the two instruments are able to produce. This finale is an apotheosis of life full of joy and hope. But not for long - the final theme (Ex. 11), with a tremolo fortissimo, thundered out with terrific force in the bass, forms a roaring background against which is heard an inspired melody of the violin, proudly flouting high up in the air like a bird over a whirling sea. It is a song of wrath and regret, of joy and sorrow, of challenge and victory. This constant battle between happiness and sorrow is typical for the gypsy soul. It is this very mentality of the gypsy musicians that Enescu conveyed so masterfully in this sonata. In this connection it would be interesting to see how he himself understood his own work. Luckily, this can be done by quoting the fine American violinist, Benno Rabinoff, who studied the *Third Sonata* with the master. Before playing this work at an evening musical party given in 1972, a few years before

his death, Rabinoff recalled that “the sonata had been analyzed for him by the composer as a fantasy on the life and soul of the gypsy fiddler, the kind of musical vagabond who roamed about Europe in the old days, playing at campfires, imitating not only the sounds of nature but also the techniques and stunts of other gypsy players.”²⁰

* * *

Although Enescu severed relations with his Communist homeland, the Romanian government and the Romanian people have been highly appreciative of the merits of their most celebrated musician, who, as one of the founders of the National Academy of Sciences and a member of the Grand People’s Assembly, had contributed so much to the development of Romanian as well as international musical art. To perpetuate his memory, an international competition and a festival bearing his name are held every three years in Bucharest. His native village Liveni, a street in Bucharest, and the State Philharmonic of Bucharest were named in his honor. A number of “George Enescu” scholarships have been regularly granted to the best students of the Bucharest Conservatoire. His native home has been transformed into a memorial museum; a George Enescu museum has been established in the capital and also in the town of Dorohoi.

²⁰ Samuel and Sada Appelbaum, *The Way They Paly*, Book 2, Neptune City, N. J., 1973, p. 74.

Enescu's activities were so manifold and intense on all its manifestations that one can only marvel at his inexhaustible energy and endurance. He always found in creative labor a source of happiness and moral satisfaction. His various engagements did not prevent him from taking a most active part in the setting up of the Union of Romanian Composers. As the Union's Chairman, he laid the foundation of a folkloric department, which grew with time into one of the largest folkloric institutes in the world.

He realized the need to gather and study popular music not as a result of pure scientific curiosity, but in direct consequence of the essence of his activities. Enescu was convinced that a thorough knowledge of the artistic wealth accumulated by the people was essential for the development of a progressive professional art. He saw in folklore, and particularly in its rural specimens, a force, which could counteract the growing commercialization of the Romanian bourgeois art in the thirties. With this problem in mind, Enescu wrote in 1934: "While the middle class public has fallen under the influence of dubious taste, the village is unequivocally remaining an unlimited source of pure and original popular art. It is necessary to save the village from the mechanized forms of art." ("Muzika", Moscow, 1955, No. 5, p. 14).

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