

# BARTÓK

ROMANIAN FOLK DANCES Sz. 56  
FOR THE PIANO

Maurice Hinson, **Editor**

---

---

## CONTENTS

<b>About the Music</b> .....	4
Performance Suggestions .....	4
<b>About This Edition</b> .....	5
 ROMANIAN FOLK DANCES, Sz. 56	
1. <i>Joc cu Bătă</i> (Stick Dance) .....	6
2. <i>Brâul</i> (Waistband Dance) .....	8
3. <i>Pe loc</i> (On the Spot) .....	9
4. <i>Buciumeana</i> (Dance of Butschum) .....	11
5. <i>Poargă Românească</i> (Romanian Polka) .....	12
6. <i>Măruntelul</i> (Lively Dance) .....	14

---

This edition is dedicated to  
Rexford Whiddon with  
appreciation and admiration.

*Maurice Hinson*

---

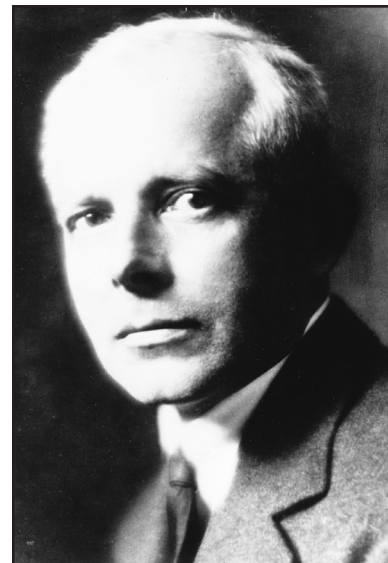
---

---

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

---

This set of six pieces was composed in 1915 under the title *Romanian Folk Dances from Hungary*. After Transylvania (part of Hungary) was annexed to Romania by the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, Bartók changed the name to *Romanian Folk Dances*. He dedicated the set to Ion Busitia who arranged Bartók's folk song collecting tours beginning in 1909. Bartók used seven original folk-song melodies "representing six different dance forms from four different regions in Transylvania"<sup>1</sup> but the unusual harmonies are original with the composer. These contrasting melodies were originally for violin or shepherd's flute. The first public performance was given by Bartók's student Piroska Hevesi on January 16, 1920, in Kolozsvár, Hungary under the title *Transylvanian Romanian Folk Dances*.



### PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS


#### 1. *Joc cu Bătă* (Stick Dance) ..... 6

According to Bartók, this dance is a "young men's solo dance, with various figures, the last of which—as a consummation—consists of kicking the room's ceiling."<sup>2</sup> The key centers around A with both Dorian and Aeolian modes used. The left-hand part contains numerous leaps with varied accents, slurs and staccatos. Bartók has indicated several pedal markings but the piece is effective when performed without pedal. Notice the different types of accent marks: (–) marks occur throughout and are Bartók's weakest accent. They are played with a nonlegato touch in which the gap between two tones is hardly perceptible (the key should be pressed rather than struck); (Λ) marks in measures 12–13 are medium-strong accents; (▼) marks in measures 29–30 and 45–46 indicate to play these notes as short as possible with a percussive touch, striking the key from a height. The right hand should be above the left hand in measures 8, 16, 32 and 48. Performance time is approximately 57 seconds.

#### 2. *Brâul* (Waistband Dance) ..... 8

This melody was originally a flute solo and centers around D in Dorian mode. "This dance is performed at gatherings in the spinning house, generally only by girls, sometimes by young men and girls. They hold each other, their arms tightly clasped around each other's [waists], and form a circle ..."<sup>3</sup> Delicate, graceful and poignant, this charming miniature requires careful phrasing and poetic feeling. It is effective without pedal. This editor has suggested a change of dynamics on the repeat in the score. Performance time is approximately 25 seconds.

#### 3. *Pe loc* (On the Spot) ..... 9

This melody was originally for flute and centers around B. The presence of its melodic augmented second such as the D to E-sharp in measure 4 suggests Arabic influence. In the original folk setting the dancers remained in one location; the static drone accompaniment and narrow-ranged melody support the idea of nonmoving dancers. Bartók's pedal indications are much more effective here than in the first two dances. Begin the short trills on the beat as , slightly accenting the first note. *Smorzando* in measure 38 refers to dynamics only, fading away, getting quieter. The final measure of rest allows the performers to hold the mood for that complete measure. Performance time is approximately 45 seconds.

---

<sup>1</sup>David Yeomens, *Bartók for Piano* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988), 75.

<sup>2</sup>Béla Bartók, *Rumanian Folk Music*, Benjamin Suchoff, ed., Vol. I: *Instrumental Melodies* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), 40.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 39.

---

---

4. *Buciumeana* (Dance of Butschum) ..... 11

Butschum is located in Transylvania. This sensitive piece centers around A with influences from Mixolydian and Arabic modes. The melody was originally for violin solo. The left-hand tied notes in measures 1–2 and 2–3 make it difficult to feel the meter until the right hand enters at measure 3. Skips in the left hand (measures 11–18) plus varied voicings require careful listening and a good feel for distance on the keyboard. Pedal is especially helpful with maintaining the legato left hand. Referring to three categories of transcribed folk music, Bartók singles out this piece as an example of category 1 where “the used folk melody is the more important part of the work. The added accompaniment and eventual preludes and postludes may only be considered as the mounting of a jewel.”<sup>4</sup> Performance time is approximately 35 seconds.

5. *Poargă Românească* (Romanian Polka)..... 12

The key centers around D with a G-sharp, suggesting Lydian mode. This sprightly dance contains some tricky left-hand skips (measures 11–16) and hand-crossing challenges (measures 20–22 and 26–28). The acciaccaturas (grace notes) and principal note combinations should be played almost simultaneously. Even though Bartók has not indicated it, the editor suggests a pedal change at measure 5. Performance time is approximately 31 seconds.

6. *Măruntelul* (Lively Dance) ..... 14

Like *Poargă Românească*, the key in this dance also centers around D with a suggestion (G-sharp) of Lydian mode in measures 1–4. This is a “Dance (en deux), performed by many couples, similar to a courting dance.”<sup>5</sup> Strong fingers and endurance plus facility in handling complex rhythms (syncopation) are required. The *Più allegro* section beginning in measure 17 is only a little faster than the opening *Allegro*. The *Ossia* section (measures 49–52) slightly thickens the sonorities. Performance time is approximately 36 seconds.

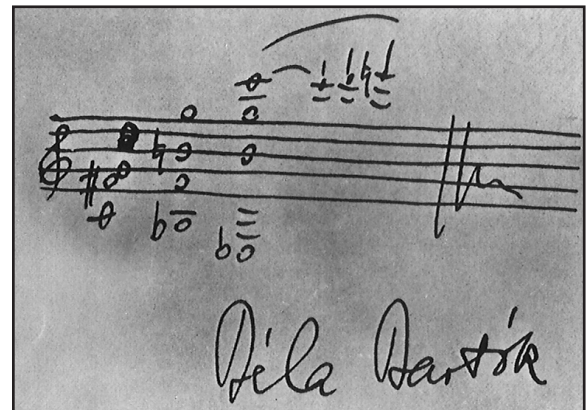
---

**ABOUT THIS  
EDITION**

---

Pedal and metronome indications are Bartók’s. All of Bartók’s fingerings have been retained; other minimal fingerings have been added where deemed appropriate by the editor. Material in parentheses is editorial. Performance time for the complete set is approximately 4 minutes, 15 seconds.

This edition is based on the first edition, Universal Edition, Vienna, 1918. The Sz. number comes from the thematic catalog of Bartók’s works by András Szöllösy entitled *Bibliography of Musical Works and Musicological Writings of Béla Bartók*, 1957. This numbering system is also used in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 1980.



<sup>4</sup>Béla Bartók, *Essays*, Benjamin Suchoff, ed. (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1976), 351.

<sup>5</sup>Béla Bartók, *Rumanian Folk Music*, 40.

# Pe loc (On the Spot)

Andante ♩ = 116

*p*

3.

*pp*  $\frac{2}{5}$

(a)

6

11

16

*più p*

(a)

(b)

(c) Play grace notes before the beat.