

Analysis of Béla Bartók, Rondo No. 3 on a Slovak Folk Tune for Piano

Listen to the piece several times without the score. Listen for the recurrence of this distinctive A material:

Try to hear the alternation of this music with contrasting ideas to produce this formal scheme: ABABACABA. The sections are short; the entire form is completed in around two minutes and twenty seconds.

1. After you're familiar with the music of each section, listen while following the score. Make a chart showing the measure number where each main section begins.
2. What are the two alternating trichords in the right hand of the A section (normal/prime form)? How do the notes in the left hand interact with the pitch-class contents of the right hand?
3. Which recurrence of the A material is most different from the original (give measure numbers)? Describe the differences.
4. What source set is most strongly expressed when the B material first occurs? What notes are not within this source set?

5. Look at the second occurrence of B alongside the first one. What tonal pattern emerges in the progression from the first occurrence of B to the second?
6. With respect to this pattern, how does the last occurrence of B relate to the first two? How does this pattern help to achieve tonal closure?

