



# THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY

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## THE CASE OF *THE MIRACULOUS MANDARIN*\*

By JOHN VINTON

IT IS a paradox that *The Miraculous Mandarin* became the great failure in Béla Bartók's career, because eight years after he composed the pantomime he still considered it "the best work for orchestra that I have written up till now,"<sup>1</sup> and after another nine years he still felt enough concern for the piece to have one last revision of its final pages printed. But the disappointments and revisions that occupied the composer's mind can be a source of enlightenment to the present-day listener, for they highlight an important part of the cultural milieu in which Bartók worked as well as some of his own artistic goals.

The pantomime was conceived amid events that were as violent as those that make up its own scenario. Bartók began work on a short-score draft in October 1918, one month before the end of World War I, and finished it in May 1919,<sup>2</sup> just before he and his wife, Márta, were forced

\*The following article was made possible by the existence of the Béla Bartók Archives in New York. Under the supervision of its founder and director, Victor Bátor, the Archives' staff has prepared many time-saving indices which were of indispensable aid in the research for this article. Dr. Bátor has recently published a history and catalogue of the collection.

<sup>1</sup> Unpublished letter (in German) from Bartók to Universal Edition, Feb. 3, 1927. The Universal Edition letters and all of the MSS cited in this study are deposited at the Béla Bartók Archives.

<sup>2</sup> These dates appear at the end of the MS score of the piano four-hand version that Bartók sent to Universal Edition in 1924 (MS 49 TPPFC-1, p. 54).

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to flee from their home in Rákoskeresztúr because of the political uprisings that were boiling through Hungary. When they could return in June, Mrs. Bartók wrote to his mother explaining their situation and adding, "The new pantomime is ready. Béla is already doing the instrumentation."<sup>3</sup> And one month later, Bartók wrote to his publisher, Universal Edition, "I have lately finished the sketch of the music for a one-act pantomime by M. Lengyel, 'The Miraculous Mandarin.' . . . Unfortunately, I have had no opportunity to orchestrate the pantomime or to do any other work. Various exterior and internal obstacles, which I cannot tell you about in detail by letter, stand in the way of the possibility for work."<sup>4</sup> The discrepancy between these letters over the matter of orchestration probably results from the fact that Bartók made pencil notations about instrumentation in the margins of his short-score draft and his first piano four-hand score,<sup>5</sup> notations that would indeed be the initial steps towards instrumentation but would not constitute the actual preparation of an orchestral score.

For almost two years the *Mandarin* was pushed aside by Bartók's scholarly writing, concert activities, and editions of 18th- and 19th-century piano music. Unable to continue his folk-music collecting because of unfavorable political and economic conditions, he had begun to classify, analyze, and publish the material that was already gathered. Fourteen articles and letters by him appeared during the three years, 1919-1921,<sup>6</sup> and shortly thereafter, three large folksong collections.<sup>7</sup> In addition to teaching piano students at the Academy of Music in Budapest and editing music for them, he expanded his own concert activities and had enough time left over to compose the *Improvisations on Hungarian Peasant Songs* for piano and the Sonata No. 1 for violin and piano.

Finally, during the spring of 1921, the *Mandarin* reappeared at the top of Bartók's work pile. Hermann Scherchen had requested the piano

<sup>3</sup> The letter appears in János Demény, ed., *Bartók Béla (Levelek . . .)*, Budapest, 1948, pp. 90-92. Portions of it are translated into English and further details about the circumstances surrounding the composition of the *Mandarin* are given in Halsey Stevens, *The Life and Music of Béla Bartók*, New York, 1953, pp. 54-56.

<sup>4</sup> Bartók to Universal Edition, July 11, 1919.

<sup>5</sup> The short-score draft is MS 49 PS-1, and the piano four-hand score is MS 49 TPPS-1, pp. 1-60; the latter contains the 1919 version as well as most of the 1924 revisions.

<sup>6</sup> These writings are listed in Bence Szabolcsi, ed., *Béla Bartók: Weg und Werk, Schriften und Briefe*, Bonn, 1957, pp. 359-61. For a comprehensive survey of Bartók's folk research, see the present writer's *The Folk Music Research of Béla Bartók* in the newsletter of the U.S. National Committee of the International Folk Music Council, *Folk Music and Dance*, Vols. 2 & 3 (June and November 1963).

<sup>7</sup> Szabolcsi, p. 355.

score and was examining it in Berlin. Then the Budapest Opera inquired about performance rights and the feasibility of a première during the next season. But neither inquiry led to a definite commitment. Bartók wrote only two letters about the Budapest première to Universal Edition<sup>8</sup> and then ceased discussing the possibility. The management of the opera had evidently backed out, establishing the pattern it was to follow again and again throughout the rest of Bartók's life.

The pantomime was put aside for another two years, a full score still lacking. At the end of summer in 1923, Universal informed Bartók that his opera, *Bluebeard's Castle*, would be performed in Berlin that winter, to which Bartók replied, "It is really a pity that the 'Mandarin' lies bare in a sketch as always, for this would be the most suitable work to be performed with Bluebeard." He now resolved to make time for the final scoring of the piece and also for some revising of it: "various experiences have made me decide to abridge the music of this pantomime and thereby to adapt it so that the music can be performed without any changes when done without staging."<sup>9</sup>

Obviously, the work had not been entirely forgotten during those second two years, in spite of the press of concert and lecture tours, folk-music publications, editing, teaching, and a little composing. Bartók's remark to Universal Edition seems to indicate that among the "various experiences" he referred to was a growing awareness that the libretto and stage action, much more than the music, stood in the way of a performance. Gustav Oláh, who finally succeeded in producing the pantomime in Budapest after Bartók was dead, has explained, "Of course, the unusually daring libretto was the cause of all this trouble . . . The fundamental idea was admirably suited to the eruptive dynamism of the composer. Still, Menyhért Lengyel, the librettist, fashioned his theme perhaps somewhat too veristically."<sup>10</sup> However, the realism was not just Lengyel's, for Bartók himself stated, "This music definitely does express emotional happenings—as opposed to the current objective, reasoned, etc. tendencies."<sup>11</sup>

The story that Bartók translated into music centers on a girl whom three thieves are using as a decoy for drawing victims into their room. She entices three men in all. The first two are an old cavalier and an adolescent, both of whom prove to be penniless and are quickly thrown out. The third is a Mandarin whose desire is so greatly aroused by the

<sup>8</sup> Bartók to Universal Edition, March 22 & 26, 1921.

<sup>9</sup> Bartók to Universal Edition, Aug. 31, 1923.

<sup>10</sup> Gustav Oláh, *Bartók and the Theatre*, in *Tempo* 14 (1949-50), p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> Bartók to Universal Edition, April 11, 1927.

seductive dancing of the girl that the thieves cannot put an end to his life after they have overpowered and robbed him. Neither smothering nor stabbing nor hanging suffices to kill him, until finally, the girl lets him embrace her and, in the words of the libretto, "his desire is appeased."

In revising the work, Bartók took his piano four-hand score, together with scissors and glue, and removed about seventy percent of the scene between the girl and the adolescent. By eliminating most of the erotic passages from this scene, he automatically thrust more emphasis on the corresponding scene that occurs later with the Mandarin. Dramatic intensity in the pantomime now followed a straight line from the comic gestures of the old cavalier through the naive responses of the youth to the superhuman passion of the Mandarin. But there remained one con-

Ex. 1 1919 version, beginning of the finale (MS 49 TPCS-1, pp. 53-54)

	MIMI ("ich hab's! Schneidet mir ihn herab!")	DIE DREI STROLCHE (weigen sich graued)	MIMI (wie vorher)
	Rubato (allegro)	Tempo giusto	Rubato

I  
(quasi recit.)  
*f risoluto*

II

DIE DREI STROLCHE  
(wie vorher)  
Tempo giusto

MIMI  
(wiederholt ihren Befehl)  
Rubato

DIE DREI STROLCHE  
(schaudern zurück)  
Tempo giusto

The musical score for 'DIE DREI STROLCHE' is presented in two systems, labeled I and II. System I consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The music is in 4/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic texture with frequent triplets and sixteenth-note patterns. The dynamic marking *mf* is indicated at the beginning, and *f* appears at the end of the system. System II continues the same musical material, maintaining the intricate rhythmic patterns and dynamic range.

MIMI  
(wie vorher)  
Rubato

MIMI  
("schneidet mir ihn herab . . .")  
Tempo giusto (non troppo allegro)

The musical score for MIMI is presented in two systems, labeled I and II. System I shows a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The music is in 4/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic texture with frequent triplets and sixteenth-note patterns. The dynamic marking *mf* is indicated at the beginning, and *f* appears at the end of the system. System II continues the same musical material, maintaining the intricate rhythmic patterns and dynamic range.

spicuous break in this line—a passage at the beginning of the finale in which the girl demanded that her companions cut the Mandarin down from the rafters where he was hanging (see Example 1). With or without the appropriate stage action, the repetitiousness in the music at this point would have lessened dramatic tension. Bartók telescoped the passage to a single command, "Nehmt mir den Mandarin herab!"—which the thieves immediately obeyed.

Bartók continued to slice and trim the finale until he had one main dramatic peak where formerly there had been three of almost equal impact. All of the original climaxes had contained melodic peaks preceded by crescendos and rhythmic strettos and reinforced with a broad-

ening of the rhythmic pulse. The first peak, occurring during the long embrace of the girl and the Mandarin (Ex. 2a), did not bear a descriptive label in the 1919 version for piano four-hands. The second one was labeled "seine Lust ist gestillt," and the third, "seine Wunden fangen an zu bluten." In the first stage of his 1924 revision,<sup>12</sup> Bartók retained the first peak and lengthened the top of its curve by several measures (Ex. 2b). He also retained the second peak, but this time he weakened its impact by thinning out its texture and inserting a countermelody in the bass. The third peak he omitted altogether. On recopying the revised finale, Bartók emphasized the first climactic point by adding to and

Ex. 2

a) 1919 version, first melodic peak in the finale (MS 49 TPPS-1, pp. 57-58)

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano four-hands. The first system, labeled 'I' and 'II', shows the piano four-hand score with dynamics [cresc.] and -f. The second system, also labeled 'I' and 'II', shows the piano four-hand score with dynamics [cresc.] and -f. The score is in 4/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns and melodic lines.

<sup>12</sup> In revising the finale, Bartók first sketched out the new material (MS 49 PS-1, pp. 45-46) and then made a clean copy of it (MS 49 PS-1, pp. 39-42); the piano four-hand score that he sent to Universal Edition contains yet a third copy of this finale (MS 49 TPPFC-1, pp. 50-54).

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b) 1924 version, first draft, first melodic peak in the finale (MS 49 PS-1, p. 45)

Musical score for piano, first draft, first melodic peak in the finale. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of three systems. The first system has two staves (I and II). The second system has three staves (I, II, and III). The music features complex chords and melodic lines with various articulations and dynamics. There are some markings like '2/4' and '4/4' in boxes, possibly indicating tempo or meter changes. The score ends with a double bar line and a fermata over the final notes.

c) 1924 version, second draft, first melodic peak in the finale (MS 49 TPPFC-1, pp. 51-52)

$\text{♩} = 80-96$

Musical score for piano, second draft, first melodic peak in the finale. The score is in 2/4 time and consists of two systems. The first system has two staves (I and II). The second system has two staves (I and II). The music features complex chords and melodic lines with various articulations and dynamics. There are markings like 'cresc.' and 'mf' indicating dynamics. The score ends with a double bar line and a fermata over the final notes.

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system features piano (I and II) and orchestra (I and II) parts. The piano part (I) has a *cresc.* marking. The piano part (II) starts with *mf* and has a *cresc.* marking. The orchestra part (I) has a *rall.* marking followed by a dashed line and *Poco sostenuto*, with a tempo marking  $\text{♩} = 66-72$ . The orchestra part (II) has a *p* marking. The second system continues with piano (I and II) and orchestra (I and II) parts. The piano part (I) has a *f* marking. The piano part (II) has a *f* marking. The orchestra part (I) has a *f* marking. The orchestra part (II) has a *f* marking.

intensifying the rhythmic stretto in the passage immediately preceding it (Ex. 2c); in a similar manner, but on a smaller scale, he added emphasis to the second peak. The descriptive labels that he had applied to the second and third climactic points in the 1919 version he now combined and placed over the first peak in his orchestral score.

When Bartók reached the very end of the finale, he reworked the existing material so that it related more closely to other sections of the pantomime. Already, at the end of the scenes with the Cavalier and the Adolescent, he had replaced two cadential formulas (Exx. 3a and 4a) with two others (Exx. 3b and 4b) that would be equally commonplace did they not add cohesion to the over-all form by echoing the repeated chords in the opening measures of the piece (Ex. 5).



a) 1919 version, end of the Cavalier's scene (MS 49 TPPS-1, p. 15)

Musical score for the 1919 version, end of the Cavalier's scene. It consists of two systems, I and II. System I has a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a piano accompaniment. The treble staff begins with a *dim.* marking and ends with a *p* marking. System II has a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a piano accompaniment. The treble staff begins with a *dim.* marking and ends with a *pp* marking. The bass staff in system II has a *p* marking and a *pp* marking.

b) 1924 version, end of the Cavalier's scene (MS 49 TPPS-1, pp. 14-15)

Musical score for the 1924 version, end of the Cavalier's scene. It consists of two systems, I and II. System I has a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a piano accompaniment. The treble staff begins with a *p* marking and ends with a *dim.* marking. System II has a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a piano accompaniment. The treble staff begins with a *p* marking and ends with a *[dim.]* marking. The bass staff in system II has a *pp* marking and a *pp* marking. System I has a *pp* marking in the bass staff. System II has a *pppp* marking and a *pp* marking in the bass staff.

Ex. 4

a) 1919 version, end of the Adolescent's scene (MS 49 PS-1, p. 14)

b) 1924 version, end of the Adolescent's scene (MS 49 TFPS-1, pp. 19-20)

Ex. 5 1919 and 1924 versions, mm. 3-7

At the end of the pantomime (Ex. 6) Bartók retained and extended the repeated chords that were already there in 1919 so that they would now symbolize vividly the spasmodic movements of the dying Mandarin and also recall the ends of scenes one and two:

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Ex. 6

a) 1919 version, last 4 measures (MS 49 TPPS-1, p. 60)

[Lento]

Allegro risoluto

I

II

[pp]

[p] morendo

[pp]

f

f

ff

ff

b) 1924 version, last 6 measures (MS 49 TPPFC-1, p. 54)

poco rall. - - - - - al Più lento  
♩ = 42

I

II

I

II

mf

(quasi gliss.)

mf

dim.

p

dim.

[p]

p

The image shows a musical score for two piano parts, labeled I and II. Part I is written in treble clef and Part II in bass clef. Both parts are in 7/8 time. Part I begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic. Part II begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic, followed by a section marked *quasi gliss.* (quasi glissando), and concludes with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The score features intricate rhythmic patterns and melodic lines, with a large slur over the *quasi gliss.* section in Part II.

Obviously, the 1924 revisions added clarity and cohesion to the overall form of the pantomime. In prose as well as in music, Bartók has expressed himself on the importance of this factor. In 1921, for instance, he published an article entitled *The Relation of Folk-Song to the Development of the Art Music of Our Time*.<sup>13</sup> In it he criticized Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps*, a work with which the *Mandarin* has often been compared. The *Sacre*, he wrote, "is one of the best examples of the intensive permeation of art music by genuine peasant music." However, the work failed to be "completely satisfying" to Bartók because of Stravinsky's "mosaic-like" formal construction and his "peculiar technique, monotonous as it becomes by repetition" of combining harmonic progressions of various lengths in an arbitrary fashion without regard to the consonances or dissonances that result. "It is not the peasant-music that we must blame for this, but the composer's lack of grasp and power of organization."<sup>14</sup> Perhaps the formation of this opinion was among the "various experiences" that helped Bartók to see the weaknesses in his own *Mandarin*.

In November 1924 he finished orchestrating and copying the last set of pages and sent them off to Vienna to be engraved. With the work finally in print, inquiries were received from several cities about the possibility of performance, but they led only to more hesitations and delays. From Budapest Bartók wrote, "For years people here have been

<sup>13</sup> *The Sackbut*, June 1921, pp. 5-11.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation, page 55, from the Béla Bartók Archives (MS 49 TPPS-1). The score is for piano and is heavily annotated with handwritten notes and markings. The page is divided into three systems, each with two staves (I and II). The first system is marked "Allegro" and "Ritardando". The second system is marked "Andante". The third system is marked "Moderato" and "Accelerando". The page is crossed out with large, diagonal lines, indicating that the music was later discarded. The page number "55" is written in the top right corner. The name "Béla Bartók" and the manuscript number "49TPPS1" are printed at the bottom.

Béla Bartók Archives (New York) MS 49 TPPS-1, p. 55.

The music on this page was originally part of a long passage in the Finale (the beginning of which is given in Ex. 1). Bartók wrote the music in 1919 and crossed it out in 1924.



continually asking in the papers why the Mandarin does not appear.”<sup>15</sup> At last, in November 1926, the work was staged in Cologne, a city that Bartók had often declared unsuitable for the première. Unfortunately, his opinion proved to be completely justified:

*Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*

November 29, 1926

Uproar in the Cologne Opera House

. . . From the beginning on, the pantomime . . . roused opposition from a vast majority of the audience. The commotion, which broke out in the auditorium, and the disgusting plot caused the rows in front of the stage to be emptied out before the end. And as the curtain went down, a hasty retreat ensued from the spaces that had been profaned by this (to put it mildly) inferior work . . . The première of the Bartókian prostitute and pimp play with orchestral racket would have ended in a calm, noiseless rejection, if small groups, assigned to different sections of the house, had not tried through hand-clapping and calling for the author to twist the incontestable failure of the work into a success. This roused the indignation of the fleeing public so much that even women, from whom one normally learns what is proper, took part in the hand-clapping and calling. The mob stormed back into the hall. When persistent hisses could not overpower the clapping, shouts resounded a hundredfold for minutes: “Shame! Vulgarity! Scandal!” and the applause was nearly subdued. The noise mounted again when, in spite of the exodus, Mr. Bartók stepped onto the stage; it was now high time for the fire curtain to be rung down — which was done to the applause of the large majority . . .

The *Kölnische Volkszeitung* of the same date affected a tone of great outrage, seizing this opportunity to air what was probably a long-standing displeasure with the opera director, Jenő Szenkár:

. . . If he, as a Hungarian, should mean to show more kindness to his countrymen, Lengyel and Bartók, than concern for the feelings and needs of the Cologne citizenry . . . and if he, as a partisan of the young, radical trend in music, should be aiming to internationalize the repertory of the Cologne Opera and to drive back German romantic opera more and more . . . then the Cologne opera public . . . will hurriedly convince him of the fact that there is a surer guarantee for its cultural requirements and for the interests of a German operatic institution in the nobility of the German masters than in the machinations of an opera director whose taste is more fashionable than cultivated and artistic.

With typical restraint, Bartók left no record of his own feelings about the scandal. A week after the riot he wrote to Universal Edition, sending a list of corrections to be entered into the score and parts of the *Mandarin*, reminding his publisher to make these corrections in the Cologne

<sup>15</sup> Bartók to Universal Edition, Nov. 6, 1925.

copies “which will be returned very soon,” inquiring about a new concert manager, clarifying some performance dates of his *Dance Suite*, and adding finally: “The local papers bring the news that the Mandarin has been banned in Cologne by the authorities (one paper even writes, ‘in Cologne and in Cassel!’). Unfortunately, I still have no news from Szenkár on this; do you know something about this scandal?”<sup>16</sup> The pantomime had been withdrawn by order of Konrad Adenauer, then *Bürgermeister* of Cologne, but Universal Edition did not feel that this action or the unfavorable reviews would block performances of the work forever. Cologne, Bartók was told, is a “very clerical Catholic city in which the resistance to the libretto was certainly much stronger than in most other cities.”<sup>17</sup>

But Bartók had already decided otherwise: “we must do everything to make many concert performances of the work possible (that is, of two-thirds of the work). For in my opinion this is the best work for orchestra that I have written up till now, and it would really be a shame to let it lie buried for years. Now, after the Cologne performance, I see that a portion much larger than what I originally designated must be adapted for concert performance.”<sup>18</sup> With this letter, Bartók enclosed the specifications and ending for a concert suite as we have them today. Apparently he never really felt that the piece in its entirety was suitable for concert performance, despite his stated reason for making the 1924 revisions. As it turned out, he, rather than Universal Edition, had correctly assessed the implications of the Cologne riot because, although the suite appeared on several orchestral programs, the pantomime itself never gained a foothold.<sup>19</sup>

Bartók made one last attempt to reconcile his music with the taste of his public. In January 1936, nine years after the première, he asked that another revision of the finale be printed.<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately, the precise explanation for the change has disappeared with a conversation: “In September I spoke to you about the revision of the last pages of ‘The

<sup>16</sup> Bartók to Universal Edition, Dec. 3, 1926.

<sup>17</sup> Universal Edition to Bartók, Feb. 11, 1927.

<sup>18</sup> Bartók to Universal Edition, Feb. 3, 1927.

<sup>19</sup> The *Mandarin* enjoyed a brief success in Prague shortly after the Cologne riot, but the performances there did not decrease the prejudice that existed everywhere else.

<sup>20</sup> Denijs Dille, *Egyes Bartók-művek végleges alakjáról*, in *Muzsika* 3 (1960) No. 6 (June), pp. 10-11, states that the revision itself was made in 1931. This is quite possible because 1931 is one of the years when the *Mandarin* was to be produced in Budapest. However, Dille does not document his statement, nor does he offer any explanations for the revision.



Miraculous Mandarin.' I am sending them to you now so that you can have them copied."<sup>21</sup>

On the basis of evidence in the music itself, this last revision seems once again to have had its roots in a change of emphasis in the stage action. The main alteration was in the long embrace of the Mandarin and the girl, a scene in which the two musical climaxes of the 1924 version had been almost graphic in their sexual connotation (see Ex. 2c). The new ending did away with the rhythmic strettos of the earlier one, substituting instead an expanding web of motifs that recall earlier themes of the pantomime and gradually slacken the momentum. Now there were no subsidiary melodic peaks, and the one climactic point that Bartók retained described an experience more transcendental than physical:

Ex. 7 1936 version, melodic peak of the finale (MS 49 TPPS-1, pp. 61-62)

Meno vivo  
♩ = 70

I

II

Sostenuto  
♩ = 66

I

II

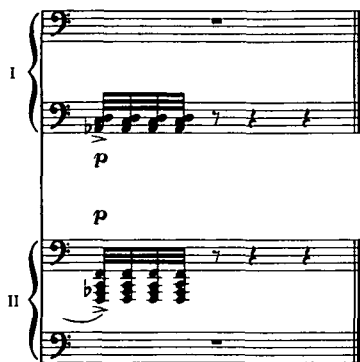
<sup>21</sup> Bartók to Universal Edition, Jan. 29, 1936.

Although the 1924 ending may have been more consistent with the over-all esthetic orientation of the pantomime, the 1936 revision affords some interesting glimpses into Bartók's later stylistic development. Most important in this respect are the final measures, where Bartók apparently wanted a greater feeling of repose. The method he used to achieve this repose can be observed in many compositions from the latter half of his life—a procedure of reference to one or more principal themes. In the new ending to the *Mandarin*, a theme first heard when the curtain rises reappears amid the last flickering of life in the *Mandarin*:

Ex. 8 1936 version, last 6 measures (MS 49 TPPS-1, pp. 62-63)

*Più lento*  
♩ = 42

The musical score is presented in two systems, each with two staves labeled I and II. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked *Più lento* with a quarter note equal to 42 beats per minute. The first system covers the first four measures of the final six. In the first measure, both hands play a complex chordal texture with accents. The second measure continues this texture. The third and fourth measures show a gradual dynamic decrease, marked *dim.*. The second system covers the final two measures. In the fifth measure, the right hand of system I plays a chord marked *pp* (pianissimo), while the left hand continues the rhythmic pattern. In the sixth measure, the right hand of system II plays a melodic line marked *sf* (sforzando), which is a reference to a theme from the beginning of the piece. The left hand continues the rhythmic pattern.



The 1924 version of this passage had contained only the repeated chords. Bartók's use of melodic recall at the cadence has direct links with older music: throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, tonality became increasingly less and melody increasingly more the source of contrast and tension, similarity and repose. Bartók merely extended this use of melody to the final cadence. If the treatment of harmony was too chromatic to give structural support to a large form, then a return of some key melody might provide the sense of fulfillment and resolution that could no longer be achieved solely through a return to the tonic.

Another aspect of motivic repetition in the revised form of the cadence involves the repeated chords that played so important a role in the 1924 revisions. In 1936, Bartók added the crowning touch—a quiet ending in which the last chord is not just one stroke but a last flutter of thirty-second notes. Furthermore, the revision gave these final chords more tonal stability, mostly through a wider re-spacing of chromatic tones. In the new version, these tones occur only in the upper registers of the orchestra, whereas before they had filtered down into the lower and more prominent registers as well. This change follows the general trend in Bartók's later music towards greater harmonic clarity and less chromatic harshness.

The time and effort spent on these changes never returned a dividend for Bartók in terms of staged productions. Had the work been first performed in Berlin as Bartók wanted, or in Paris, and had Universal Edition been more adept at publicity, *The Miraculous Mandarin* might have gained a following comparable to that of *Le Sacre du printemps*. But instead, public taste seems to have typed it as a period piece that was too blatantly grotesque for the twenties and is now too naively grotesque for the sixties.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> The author wishes to thank Professors Jan LaRue and Ivan Waldbauer for their helpful comments on the research for and writing of this paper.