

# THEME AND RHYTHM SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN “ARIAS WITH ROMANIAN FOLKLORE FEATURES FOR THE SOLO VIOLIN” BY GEORGE ENESCU

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**Abstract.** *After studying each aria separately, we can conclude that they form a whole, even though each has a different feature. What unites them all is the deep Romanian folk influence, the popular traits, the improvised character, but perfectly adapted in a bar, and, what is very important, the continuous melody that he seems to have taken with great craftsmanship and good taste from the one who inspired it - Wagner. This continuous melody is a permanent presence for Enescu, which is to be found in each of his creations, so that most times it is very difficult, if not impossible, to make a judicious division of the text in formal terms. Enescu's merit is even greater as he manages to make from the same topic (which he repeats again and again, through the processes color -melodic-rhythmic change) a new melodic line, which is always fresh, full of inspiration and suggestion. It is remarkable that these arias, different in appearance, are essentially built around the same melodic and rhythmic features. Thus, at a more detailed analysis, we can see the thematic and rhythmic similarities among the four arias.*

**Keywords:** *solo violin, rhythm, rhythmic combinations.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Șerban Lupu has found these writings on a page on whose back there was another work dated 1926. It can be assumed that, being written down on paper in the same year as the Sonata III op. 25, it is a preparatory exercise for this masterpiece. Initially, George Enescu had named them *Airs Romains*, but later he cut the word *Romains* word and replaced it with *dans le genre roumain* (with a Romanian folk feature), where it can be concluded that the pieces are composed, and not collected).

As a result of a thorough review of the writings, which are otherwise unfinished, Șerban Lupu has divided the suite into four distinct parts. That Enescu specific blast that writing that makes all the work form a whole, with the strong feeling of crossing the barriers of time should be noted. We cannot fit all these arias in clear forms, according to known patterns, given their deep improvisation and folklore feature.

## 2. FORMAL ANALYSIS

During a working meeting with Șerban Lupu, I asked the master for more details about these arias of George Enescu. I found out that they were originally recorded as a very concise sketch that covered one page, as a working draft. The notation was written in so small

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letters, with many cuts, almost illegible, that it took a titanic reconstruction work, which led to the increase of the entire score and its subsequent reading by means of the magnifying glass. Thus, there were discovered three initial arias, the former being further divided into two by Șerban Lupu [1]. It should be noted that after about 33 bars, George Enescu wrote the melody on two staves, which could mean that he thought of two instruments which could alternate for 8 bars. After these bars where the superior voice represents the ending of the phrase on the sound re, preceded by a triple appoggiatura, the theme of the second aria is introduced at the same voice [2, 3].

It seems that George Enescu thought this theme to be included in the first aria, perhaps representing the second theme. Nevertheless, Șerban Lupu took it and used it as material for the second aria. The first two arias were separated because of the different feature: the first one is slow, with fiddler traits, very rubato and quiet, while the second is danceable and lively.

In the brief sketch made by Șerban Lupu [1], it can be noted that for the second aria George Enescu mainly wrote all the melodic and rhythmic material, from the beginning to end which he marked very clearly by a double bar. Of course, deciphering and evaluating each bar and note was extremely difficult because of the precarious state of the manuscript.

The third aria coincides with the second aria noted in George Enescu's manuscript, being a sad and resigned Romanian melancholy song. It is reproduced exactly by Șerban Lupu, thus having an Andante for 9 bars, like in the original score, followed by a Piu Mosso (Tempo di Hora) for 24 bars. After that, for colour diversification, Șerban Lupu took the Andante theme, enriching it with flageolets, for 9 bars, like in the beginning of the aria.

The final aria is marked with an Allegro and it represents a very lively conclusion of the Suite, with many virtuosity effects and difficult technical passages. At one point, the composer's note ends abruptly, without ending the aria, and without any other indication regarding the composer's intention to continue the area. Here, master Șerban Lupu master steps in again, choosing a strong ending, in Enescu's style, with the same tones as the ones used in other areas of the Suite.

All the notes of dynamic expression throughout the four arias belong to Șerban Lupu, who thus managed to complete these music sheets for the solo violin, "... finishing Enescu's thought, ramifying and whirling, with science and talent, the existing essence, often so cryptic" [1].

It's amazing how master Șerban Lupu has managed to merge with George Enescu and to express so well his intentions, without feeling any difference in the composition order. Thus, we must realize that without his intervention, we would not be able to enjoy today all these wonderful music sheets devoted to the violin.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS 1

- First Aria I (meas. 3) = Second Aria (meas. 4, 5) – in terms of sound material;



Ex. 37a (First Aria, meas. 3)



Ex. 37b (Second Aria, meas. 4,5)

- First Aria (meas. 3) = Third Aria (meas. 5) - in terms of rhythm;



Ex. 38a (First Aria, meas. 3)



Ex. 38b (Third Aria, meas. 5)

- First Aria (meas. 19) = Third Aria (meas. 8,9) = Second Aria (meas. 46 și 65) - the rhythm + the descending chromatic pace;



Ex. 39a (First Aria, meas. 19)



Ex. 39b (Third Aria, meas. 8, 9)



Ex. 39c (Second Aria, meas. 46, 65)

- First Aria (meas. 15 – second beat + meas. 16) = Second Aria (meas. 1 and 2) = Third Aria (meas. 2 + meas. 24) – in terms of thematic material;



Ex. 40a (First Aria, meas. 15 + meas. 16)



Ex. 40b (Second Aria, meas. 1, 2)

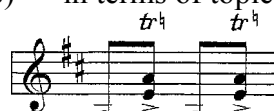


Ex. 40c (Third Aria, meas. 2, 24)

- Second Aria (meas. 11) = Forth Aria (meas. 48) – in terms of topic;



Ex. 41a (Second Aria, meas. 11)



Ex. 41b (Forth Aria, meas. 48)

- Second Aria (meas. 13) = Forth Aria (meas. 49) – in terms of range;



Ex. 42a (Second Aria, meas. 13)

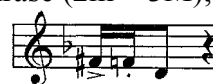


Ex. 42b (Forth Aria, meas. 49)

- First Aria (meas. 16) = Second Aria (meas. 26) = Third Aria (meas. 13) = Forth Aria (meas. 14) – In terms of concluding formula for the phrase (2m + 3M);



Ex. 43a (First Aria, meas. 16)



Ex. 43b (Second Aria, meas. 26)



Ex. 43c (Third Aria, meas. 13)



Ex. 43d (Forth Aria, meas. 14)

- Second Aria (the last measure) = Forth Aria (the last measure) – the feature of f + octave + the sound re solo + accent + a quarter pause + ascending chromatic pace;



Ex. 44a (Second Aria, the last measure)

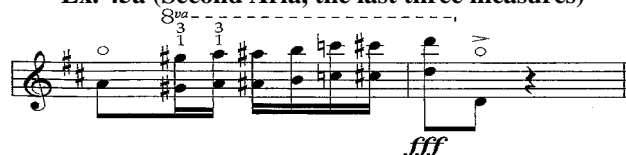


Ex. 44b (Forth Aria, the last measure)

All endings of the four arias end with sixteenths, on ascending (Second and Forth Aria) or descending chromatic paces (Third Aria) [4].



Ex. 45a (Second Aria, the last three measures)



Ex. 45b (Forth Aria, the last two measures)



Ex. 45c (Aria III, the last two measures)

## 4. CONCLUSIONS 2

In analyzing these areas, we also have to note a very important thing, namely, that even in the happiest moments and dances, a hidden suffering transpires. This man has loved art more than himself, and in his attempt to leave something special behind, he worked incessantly and composed with his soul full of feelings for all which is Romanian. The pain felt during each piece composed by him, is that he could not do more to make the music and the traditional art of his country more famous, to make it more universal.

George Enescu was probably very aware of the difficulty of his approach in this respect, so that he was very demanding with himself, with all his compositions. This is why, maybe, many works, although completed, did not receive an opus number, because he did not compose anything at random, he corrected and re-corrected each score, until he was sure that he expressed all his feelings and concerns, and if at one point he considered that it did not match the level expected by him, then the work was put aside, awaiting for the moment when he had more inspiration. Sometimes, from Enescu's point of view, that moment did not come, and the scores remained unfinished.

These arias have been finished by Șerban Lupu, because it seems that Enescu never got to finish them, so Șerban Lupu tried to continue in the same spirit what Enescu had begun, and after a thorough analysis of the arias, we consider that he successfully managed to maintain the feature desired by the composer. Therefore, we strongly believe that it is very important for us, as Romanians, to have this series of four arias in our repertoire.

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