

NICOLÒ PALAZZETTI

BÉLA BARTÓK IN ITALY



THE POLITICS OF MYTH-MAKING

BÉLA BARTÓK IN ITALY

Music in Society and Culture

ISSN 2047-2773

Series Editors

VANESSA AGNEW, KATHARINE ELLIS,
JONATHAN GLIXON & DAVID GRAMIT

Consulting Editor

TIM BLANNING

This series brings history and musicology together in ways that will embed social and cultural questions into the very fabric of music-history writing. *Music in Society and Culture* approaches music not as a discipline, but as a subject that can be discussed in myriad ways. Those ways are cross-disciplinary, requiring a mastery of more than one mode of enquiry. This series therefore invites research on art and popular music in the Western tradition and in cross-cultural encounters involving Western music, from the early modern period to the twenty-first century. Books in the series will demonstrate how music operates within a particular historical, social, political or institutional context; how and why society and its constituent groups choose their music; how historical, cultural and musical change interrelate; and how, for whom and why music's value undergoes critical reassessment.

*Proposals or queries should be sent in the first instance to the series editors
or Boydell & Brewer at the addresses shown below.*

Professor Vanessa Agnew, University of Duisburg-Essen,
Department of Anglophone Studies, R12 S04 H,
Universitätsstr. 12, 45141 Essen, Germany
email: vanessa.agnew@uni-due.de

Professor Katharine Ellis, Faculty of Music, University of Cambridge,
11 West Road, Cambridge, CB3 9DP, UK
email: kje32@cam.ac.uk

Professor Jonathan Glixon, School of Music, 105 Fine Arts Building,
University of Kentucky, Lexington, ky 40506-0022, USA
email: jonathan.glixon@uky.edu

Professor David Gramit, Department of Music, University of Alberta,
3-82 Fine Arts Building, Edmonton, Alberta, t6g 2c9, Canada
email: dgramit@ualberta.ca

Boydell & Brewer, PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk, ip12 3df, UK
email: editorial@boydell.co.uk

Previously published titles in the series are listed at the back of this volume.

BÉLA BARTÓK IN ITALY

THE POLITICS OF MYTH-MAKING

NICOLÒ PALAZZETTI

THE BOYDELL PRESS

© Nicolò Palazzetti 2021

All Rights Reserved. Except as permitted under current legislation no part of this work may be photocopied, stored in a retrieval system, published, performed in public, adapted, broadcast, transmitted, recorded or reproduced in any form or by any means, without the prior permission of the copyright owner

The right of Nicolò Palazzetti to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988

First published 2021
The Boydell Press, Woodbridge

ISBN 978-1-78327-620-2 (hardback)
ISBN 978-1-80010-185-2 (ePDF)

The Boydell Press is an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Ltd
PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF, UK
and of Boydell & Brewer Inc.
668 Mt. Hope Avenue, Rochester NY 14620-2731, USA
website: www.boydellandbrewer.com

The publisher has no responsibility for the continued existence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this book, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate

A CIP record for this title is available
from the British Library

Cover image: Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin*, sketch of the scenery by Enrico Prampolini (Milan, Teatro alla Scala, 1942). Courtesy of the Archivio del Museo Teatrale alla Scala and the Archivio Fotografico del Teatro alla Scala.

To the memory of Artemio and Flora Palazzetti

Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	ix
<i>List of Music Examples</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xv
Introduction	1
1 Bartók in Liberal Italy, 1911–1925	18
2 Heroism and Silence: Bartók in Mussolini's Italy, 1925–1938	46
3 Resistance and Dictatorship, 1939–1942	86
4 Resistance and Democracy, 1943–1947	116
5 Bartók's Legacy in a Divided World, 1948–1956	139
6 Bartók's Influence on Italian Composers	172
Conclusion: Bartók and the Memory of the Twentieth Century	221
<i>Bibliography</i>	233
<i>Appendix: Performances of Bartók's Works in Italy between 1911 and 1950</i>	255
<i>Index</i>	287

Illustrations

Figures

1.1	Extract taken from Alfredo Casella, ‘Problemi sonori odierni’, <i>La prora</i> 1, no. 1 (1924), pp. 5–18: 16	44
3.1	Roman Vlad, Sinfonietta for orchestra (1940), autograph manuscript, bars 48–51, ‘Colind din colecția lui Béla Bartók’	99
3.2	Roman Vlad, <i>Suite su canti di Natale della Transilvania</i> for chamber orchestra (1941), autograph manuscript, 2 nd mvt, bars 9–11, ‘Din Banat (colecția Bartók)’	100
3.3	<i>Carmina Burana</i> , <i>Il Mandarin</i> <i>meraviglioso</i> and <i>Anfione</i> , poster (Milan, Teatro alla Scala, 1942)	109
3.4	Aurel Milloss as The Mandarin, still photograph (Milan, Teatro alla Scala, 1942)	110
3.5	Bartók’s <i>The Miraculous Mandarin</i> , sets and costumes by Enrico Prampolini, sketch of the curtain (Milan, Teatro alla Scala, 1942)	111
6.1	‘Night Music’ archetypes	193
6.2	Arch form of Bartók’s String Quartet no. 4 BB 95 (1928)	197
6.3	Harmonic and melodic value of the intervals according to Paul Hindemith	207
6.4	Octatonic subsets	209
6.5	Conceptual overview of Bruno Maderna’s String Quartet no. 1	213

Tables

5.1	Italian 78 rpm discs dedicated to Bartók’s works in the 1940s	154
6.1	Examples of Bartók’s Night Music	192
6.2	Structure of the first and third movements of Maderna’s String Quartet no. 1	210

Music Examples

1.1	Alfredo Casella, <i>Nove pezzi</i> for piano, op. 24, no. 2, <i>In modo barbaro</i> , bars 1–23	29
1.2	Béla Bartók, <i>Two Romanian Dances</i> for piano op. 8a BB 56, no. 1 Allegro vivace, bars 1–4	31
1.3	Béla Bartók, <i>Two Romanian Dances</i> for piano op. 8a BB 56, no. 1 Allegro vivace: four melodic units <i>a</i> , <i>b</i> , <i>c</i> and <i>d</i>	32
1.4	Alfredo Casella, <i>Nove pezzi</i> for piano op. 24, no. 9, <i>In modo rustico</i> , bars 1–24	33
1.5	Alfredo Casella, <i>Pupazzetti</i> for piano four hands op. 27a, no. 4 <i>Notturmino</i> (1915), bars 1–8	36
1.6	Béla Bartók, <i>Bluebeard's Castle</i> , opera in one act, op. 11 BB 62 (1911), vocal score, [47]	44
3.1	Béla Bartók, <i>Romanian Christmas Songs</i> for piano BB 67 (1915), vol. 2, no. 8, theme	99
3.2	Béla Bartók, <i>Romanian Christmas Songs</i> for piano BB 67 (1915), vol. 2, no. 7, theme	100
4.1	Alfredo Casella, Concerto for Strings, Piano, Timpani and Percussion op. 69 (1943), bars 1–4	125
6.1	Aldo Clementi, <i>Tre piccoli pezzi. Omaggio a Bartók</i> for piano four hands, no. 2 Andantino (1950), bars 1–4	175
6.2	Bruno Maderna, Concerto for Two Pianos and Instruments (1947–9), 1 st version, Allegro, bars 1–2, piano I	177
6.3	Béla Bartók, <i>Cantata profana</i> , for tenor, baritone, double chorus, and orchestra BB 100 (1930), bars 5–9, flute I	177
6.4	Bruno Maderna, Concerto for Two Pianos and Instruments (1947–9), third version, third movement, bars 280–2, piano I, right hand	178
6.5	Bruno Maderna, Concerto for Two Pianos and Instruments (1947–9), third version, Grave, bars 1–11	179
6.6	Goffredo Petrassi, Concerto for Orchestra no. 4 (1954), bars 1–4, violins I	182

6.7	Béla Bartók, String Quartet no. 4 BB 95 (1928), Allegro, bars 160–1	184
6.8	Franco Donatoni, String Quartet no. 1 (1950), Allegro moderato, finale	185
6.9	Franco Donatoni, <i>Concertino</i> for strings, brass and solo timpanist (1952), Molto adagio, bars 33–44	186
6.10	Béla Bartók, <i>Fourteen Bagatelles</i> for piano op. 6 BB 50 (1908), no. 12 Rubato, bars 9–10 [archetype 1]	194
6.11	Béla Bartók, <i>Out of Doors</i> for piano BB 89 (1926), no. 4 <i>The Night's Music</i> , bars 1–5 [archetypes 2 and 5]	195
6.12	Béla Bartók, <i>Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta</i> BB 114 (1936): Adagio, bars 1–6 [archetypes 3 and 4]	196
6.13	Luigi Dallapiccola, <i>Musica per tre pianoforti (Inni)</i> (1935), Mvt. II, bars 1–17	198
6.14	Guido Turchi, <i>Concerto per archi 'alla memoria di Béla Bartók'</i> (1947–8), Mvt. I, bars 17–22	200
6.15	Bruno Maderna, String Quartet no. 1 (c. 1943), bars 69–75	206
6.16	Bruno Maderna, String Quartet no. 1 (c. 1943), bars 1–13	211
6.17	Bruno Maderna, String Quartet no. 1 (c. 1943), bars 143–52	216

Acknowledgments

I have benefited from the support of many people and institutions to write this book. I would like to thank the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales and the Centre de Recherches sur les Arts et le Langage (CRAL) for providing me with a doctoral scholarship in 2013–16 in order to study Bartók's reception in Italy. The insights and comments of my supervisor, Esteban Buch, were extremely constructive. In 2015 and 2016, I worked as a visiting research fellow at the Giorgio Cini Foundation and I was supported by a six-month research fellowship from the Vittore Branca Centre. I am very grateful to Gianmario Borio, director of the Institute of Music of the Cini Foundation, for his academic support and for being so readily available, as well as to Francisco Rocca and Angela Carone, who kindly helped me daily in my research during my stay on the island of San Giorgio Maggiore. I should also mention the staff of the Institute of Theatre and Opera and its director Maria Ida Biggi for their support with my research on Milloss, as well as the staff of the Intercultural Institute of Comparative Music Studies and its director Giovanni Giuriati. During my stay in Venice, I also carried out research at the Luigi Nono Archive, supported by research funding from the Forberg-Schneider Foundation (Munich). In March 2016, I conducted research into the collections of twentieth-century music held at the former Barber Music Library of the University of Birmingham with the support of Ben Earle. I am extremely grateful to Ben, who over the past few years has read and commented on many of my publications and drafts. More recently, I pursued further research at the Paul Sacher Foundation, supported by a scholarship. I am indebted to the valuable support I received there from all the staff members and I would like to thank in particular the director Felix Meyer and Angela Ida De Benedictis. My list of acknowledgements brings me now to Budapest and Strasbourg. At the Bartók Archives of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences I received friendly and welcome assistance from all the staff members and I am particularly thankful to László Vikárus, head of the Archives. In Strasbourg, I would like to express my thanks to the GREAM research centre for their precious financial support, and in particular to Philip Clarke for his sharp-eyed proofreading and suggestions for improving the text. I would also like to thank the GREAM director Alessandro Arbo, who has been an important point of reference for me over the past few years.

This list is far from being complete. Michael Middeke, Editorial Director, encouraged me to submit my book for the Boydell series, *Music in Society and Culture*. I am deeply grateful to him, the anonymous readers, the copy-editor, the production team, Julia Cook and Elizabeth Howard for their valuable and constant support. I am also very much beholden to the Archivio del Museo

Teatrale alla Scala, the Archivio Fotografico del Teatro alla Scala, the publishing house Suvini Zerboni and Gabriele Bonomo, the Archivio Bruno Maderna of the University of Bologna, the Archivio Storico del Teatro La Fenice and the Departement de la musique of the Bibliothèque nationale de France for their support during my archival research. My deep gratitude also goes to all the colleagues and friends, apart from those mentioned above, who provided invaluable support during my work, including Mario Baroni, Alessandro Cecchi, David Cooper, Carla Cuomo, Eric Derom, Federica Di Gasbarro, David Fanning, Francesco Fontanelli, Danielle Fosler-Lussier, Maurizio Giani, Martin Iddon, Carl Leafstedt, Erik Levi, Giovanni Matteucci, Carlo Lo Presti, Maria Grazia Sità, Jonathan Thomas and Adam Whittaker. I owe special thanks to Malcolm Gillies who introduced me to the world of Bartók in a new way. I keep a special place in my thoughts for my friends in Bologna, Paris and Strasbourg, for my family and for my parents Gianni and Giuseppina. Finally, I would like to thank Gaja Maestri, with whom I have the great pleasure of sharing my life.

This book has been financially supported by the LabEx GREAM within the framework of the Programme des Investissements d'Avenir (ref. no. ANR-10-LBX-27).

List of Abbreviations

- BB Catalogue numbering of Béla Bartók's compositions prepared by László Somfai, and updated on the website of the Bartók Archívum Budapest (zti.hu/bartok). See László Somfai, 'Appendix: List of Works and Primary Sources', in *Béla Bartók. Composition, Concepts and Autograph Sources* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 297–320.
- BBCsLev Béla Bartók, *Családi levelei*, ed. Béla Bartók Jr and Adrienne Gombocz-Konkoly (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1981).
- BBE Béla Bartók, *Essays*, ed. Benjamin Suchoff (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976).
- BBLett Béla Bartók, *Letters*, ed. Janós Demény, trans. Peter Balabán and István Farkas (Budapest and London: Corvina and Faber and Faber, 1971).
- BBLettere Béla Bartók, *Lettere scelte*, ed. Janós Demény, trans. Paolo Ruzicska (Milan: Il saggiatore, 1969).
- BBLev Béla Bartók, *Levelei*, ed. Janós Demény (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1976).

Introduction

The legacy of the Hungarian composer, ethnomusicologist and pianist Béla Bartók stretches beyond the boundaries of what is generally called classical music. Think of the *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, a masterpiece of the 1930s that is featured in Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*, or of Pina Bausch's Tanztheater landmark *Blaubart* based on the opera *Bluebeard's Castle*. However, Bartók has not only been acknowledged as a great composer of the Western canon; he is also a moral and political hero of the twentieth century. The two aspects can hardly be separated. Bartók's moral integrity is celebrated in a wide range of written and visual formats in many different countries, from educational television broadcasts to popular cultural products, such as comics and novels.¹ The writer Kjell Espmark, a member of the Swedish Academy, wrote a novel on this topic in 2004: *Béla Bartók Against the Third Reich*. His book has been translated into many different languages, including French, Italian, Romanian and Spanish. Bartók's moral stature is also a recurrent topic in illustrious academic discourse. When in 2006 Richard Taruskin derided the awkward choice of the editors of *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century Music* to 'leave Bartók out' of the volume, he was not defending Bartók's musical beauty, but his moral beauty. Without Bartók the whole history of twentieth-century music would lose any ethical sense. According to Taruskin, Bartók is 'the only redeeming exception to the dismal saga of modernist responses to barbarism' and his figure 'offers a rebuke' and 'a possible redemption' to 'the sad history whereby over the course of the twentieth century the autonomy of art has degenerated into irrelevance, and the disinterestedness of artists has degenerated into moral indifference'.² Passionate statements of this kind have some appreciable – and, it might be added, beneficial – consequences. The support and public funding gained by the *Béla Bartók Complete Critical Edition*, inaugurated in 2016 after three decades of pre-planning and painstaking permission issues, was due not only to Bartók's stature as Hungary's leading composer but also to his 'wider beacon-of-humanity, moral role'.³

¹ See Alain Goutal and Joe G. Pinelli, *Bartók. Une bande dessinée et 2 CD* (Garches: BDMusic, 2009). See also Kjell Espmark, *Béla Bartók Mot Tredje Riket* (Stockholm: Nordstedts, 2004), *Id.*, *Béla Bartók Against the Third Reich: Poems*, trans. Robin Fulton (London: Oasis, 1985) and the episode 'The Popular Age' of *Howard Goodall's The Story of Music*, a BBC Two documentary series broadcast in 2013.

² Richard Taruskin, 'Why You Cannot Leave Bartók Out', *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 47, nos 3–4, pp. 265–77: 277.

³ Malcolm Gillies, 'Composer Complete Critical Editions in the Twenty-First Century:

Bartók still emerges today as a committed composer who is judged by his political deeds: in the standard narrative, he is venerated as an anti-fascist who fought against totalitarianism through his moral coherence and then his self-imposed period of exile in the United States. Bartók's tormented last years have been used to further enrich his story with an anti-capitalist nuance: after his departure from an increasingly Nazified Europe in October 1940 because of his liberal ideals, he was neglected by an alien and consumerist society that remained too frivolous for his uncompromising stance.⁴ He suffered illness and poverty, dying prematurely at the age of sixty-four in New York City on 26 September 1945, a few weeks after the end of Second World War. Compared to other famous émigrés, such as Arnold Schoenberg, Bartók did not flee persecution on racial or religious grounds. He intentionally decided to emigrate to a foreign continent: a political choice that would cost him his life. The grandiose celebrations for the reburial of Bartók's remains in Budapest in 1988 constituted a posthumous homage to this martyrdom, which was patriotically exploited by a declining communist regime. The Italian communist newspaper *L'Unità* compared the return of Bartók's body to his native country to the 1978 restitution of the Crown of Saint Stephen from the United States: like the hal-lowed coronation crown, Bartók was perceived as an essential part of Hungarian identity.⁵ Instead of being flown directly from America to Hungary, Bartók's coffin was transported across the Atlantic by ocean liner and then through Europe by motorcade, a tangible sign of the eminent position now occupied by the greatest ever Hungarian artist. Perceived as inextricably Hungarian and European, Bartók was eulogised in the regime's newspapers and mass media as an anti-fascist, as an advocate of minority rights and the brotherhood of peoples (with reference not only to his folk music research in Transylvania but also to his transnational work) and as a posthumous victim of Stalinist policies. Bartók abandoned wartime Europe on a moral basis and if the body of such an uncompromising humanitarian was now coming back, it had to be because the continent – and Hungary in particular – had become 'a politically and ethically deserving place'.⁶ Today Bartók 'is still an untouchable icon in Hungary'⁷ and the Complete Critical Edition sanctions this 'aspiration to cultural immortality',⁸ at least on the basis of Western cultural tenets.

A Case Study of Béla Bartók', *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 50 (2019), pp. 153–71: 168.

- ⁴ See, for instance, Andor Földes, *Erinnerungen* (Frankfurt am Main and Berlin: Limes, 1993), p. 106.
- ⁵ Arturo Barioli, 'Ungheria. Tornate le spoglie di Bartók', *L'Unità*, 8 July 1988.
- ⁶ Susan Gal, 'Bartók's Funeral: Representations of Europe in Hungarian Political Rhetoric', *American Ethnologist* 18, no. 3 (1991), pp. 440–58: 452.
- ⁷ László Somfai, interview with Malcolm Gillies (4 October 2018), quoted in Gillies, 'Composer Complete Critical Editions', p. 168.
- ⁸ Gillies, 'Composer Complete Critical Editions', p. 153.

This book contends that the faith in Bartók's moral prowess is a myth of our age. The immaculate effigy of Bartók has been generally undisputed since its emergence during the 1940s, and it has largely persisted in Bartók's biographies to this day. Several articles that appeared at the turn of the twenty-first century, however, began to add nuance to this oversimplified portrait.⁹ Bartók's letters demonstrate his youthful antisemitism and chauvinism¹⁰, and some of the biographical proof deployed in favour of his outspoken anti-fascism rests on firmly held beliefs that have rarely been questioned (including a legendary letter addressed to Goebbels). As Malcolm Gillies points out, 'Bartók was certainly no Nazi, yet was equally not the stalwart figure of resistance beloved of his biographies.'¹¹ Since the early 1930s, Bartók undeniably supported certain forms of artistic internationalism: in 1931 he joined the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation and in his private letters he expressed his loathing for fascist brutalities and his belief in 'the brotherhood of peoples [...]' in spite of all wars and conflicts.¹² At the same time, until 1937 he had sought to perform in Nazi Germany and he undertook his last concert tours in fascist Italy in April and December 1939. I am not by any means suggesting that Bartók was pro-fascist or that he was deficient in basic humanity, but simply that his posthumously claimed status as an anti-fascist hero and beacon of freedom is a myth resulting from a complex cultural process of reception and politicisation. Even if many legends surround the biography of the Hungarian composer, this book argues that the 'Bartók myth' – as an allegorical and idealised set of beliefs that have been uncritically accepted and cast in the form of a narrative – should be interpreted on the basis of its historical function and meaning. The 'mythification' of Bartók as 'the musician of freedom' was not only beneficial to the universal canonisation of the composer in post-war Western democracies and, later, in socialist states; it also constituted a way of glorifying the moral strength and historical effectiveness of modernist music against the barbarity of totalitarian regimes and against the terror of war and violence. In recent decades, Bartók's music has not disappeared from view, far from it, but it has often been used as an over-signified totem, substituting for

⁹ See, for instance, David Cooper, 'Béla Bartók and the Question of Race Purity in Music', in Harry White and Michael Murphy (eds), *Musical Construction of Nationalism: Essays on the History and Ideology of European Musical Culture 1800–1945* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2001), pp. 16–32; Joan Evans, 'Stravinsky's Music in Hitler's Germany', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 56, no. 3 (2003), pp. 525–94: 585–9; Malcolm Gillies, 'Bartók in America', in Amanda Bayley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bartók* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 190–201.

¹⁰ See, for instance, the letter (in Hungarian) from Béla Bartók to Irma Jurkovics, 15 August 1905, *BBLett*, p. 50.

¹¹ Gillies, 'Bartók in America', p. 193.

¹² Letter (in German) from Béla Bartók to Octavian Beu, 10 January 1931, *BBLett*, pp. 199–205: 201.

his too rare political pronouncements, especially on the public stage. As Judit Frigyesi has observed:

Bartók is dissonant, Bartók is ugly, Bartók is brutal, Bartók is barbaric – but his dissonance, his barbarism, and his brutality all exist for the right reason. This is the only way, or so we believed, that one is able to create an art to recount the terrible history of the [twentieth century]. In this attitude, dissonance and ugliness had been elevated to the rank of a moral stance.¹³

The Bartók myth is therefore not about Bartók, but about us.¹⁴ This book will aim not merely to reconsider Bartók's moral rigour. By drawing on an evidence base broader than biographical matters alone, it undertakes a study of the complex history informing the genesis and rise of the Bartók myth as a political and moral hero.

The reception of Bartók's music in Italy during the first half of the twentieth century represents an excellent case study for addressing these issues, particularly as this context has been neglected in some of the most widely disseminated studies of the composer. In this sense, this book takes up two challenges. First, to explain the interwar success of a composer – later acknowledged as an anti-fascist hero – in a country in which fascist ideology was flourishing. Secondly, to throw light on patterns of continuity and transformation between Bartók's earlier interwar success in Italy and his post-war idolisation, paying particular attention to the often-overlooked cultural life of the wartime period. I argue that by elucidating the process of Bartókian myth-making in Italy, we can engage in broader considerations at a transnational level. As a result, while focusing primarily on the Italian field of research, this book comments upon the international politics of Bartók's reception – chiefly with reference to Germany, France, Hungary and the United States.¹⁵

¹³ Judit Frigyesi, 'How Barbaric Is Bartók's Forte? About the Performance of Bartók's Movements for Piano and Strings, with Emphasis on the First Movement of the Fifth String Quartet', in Dániel Péter Biró and Harald Krebs (eds), *The String Quartets of Béla Bartók: Tradition and Legacy in Analytical Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 200–42: 201.

¹⁴ I would like to thank Richard Taruskin for his remarks on this aspect.

¹⁵ Apart from the writings of Fosler-Lussier and Gillies, references to Bartók's reception outside Italy can be found in the following publications: Michèle Alten, 'La découverte de Béla Bartók en France après 1945: enjeux et controverses', *Le mouvement social* no. 208 (2004), pp. 145–65; János Breuer, 'Bartók im Dritten Reich', *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 36, nos 3–4 (1995), pp. 263–84; Simone Hohmaier, *Ein zweiter Pfad der Tradition. Kompositorische Bartók-Rezeption* (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 2003); Vera Lampert, 'Bartók's Music on Record: An Index of Popularity', *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 36, nos 3–4 (1995), pp. 393–412; Friedemann Sallis, 'The Reception of Béla Bartók's Music in Europe After 1945', in Felix Meyer (ed.), *Settling New Scores: Music Manuscripts from the Paul Sacher Foundation* (Mainz: Schott, 1998), pp. 255–8; László Vikárius (ed.), 'Bartók's Orbit: The

Bartók came to be appreciated in Italy from the second decade of the twentieth century onwards, especially by certain cosmopolitan musicians, such as Alfredo Casella. Furthermore, in spite of the hostility that Bartók expressed in his private correspondence to the rise of fascist violence, he performed many piano recitals around Mussolini's Italy until the late 1930s. He also developed an interest in Italian culture and baroque keyboard music, especially around the mid-1920s. In addition, his compositions were performed in prestigious festivals, broadcast by Italian radio and included in the new syllabuses of Italian conservatoires in the 1930s. Hungarian-Italian diplomatic cooperation during the interwar period supported this success, as shown by the circumstances surrounding the 1938 Italian premiere of *Bluebeard's Castle* at the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. In the early 1940s, the exiled composer then became one of the symbols of anti-Nazi cultural resistance thanks to the revanchism of the Italian intelligentsia, which aimed to reaffirm its cultural superiority and liberality within the Axis in the fading years of Mussolini's dictatorship. Indeed, at the apex of their military alliance, the cultural policies pursued by Italy and Germany began to diverge: during the late 1930s and the Second World War, many composers proscribed in Germany were increasingly performed in Italy. This is evident in the evolution of Bartók's reception, culminating in the world premiere as a ballet of *The Miraculous Mandarin* at La Scala in 1942 under the choreography of Aurel Milloss. Following the end of the war and the foundation of the new Italian Republic, the oppositional character of Bartók's music was then emphasised by Italian intellectuals in order to celebrate the cultural origins of the *Resistenza* – i.e. the Italian resistance movement against the Nazi-fascist occupation from 1943 to 1945 – and to legitimise the renewal of the nation. Any connection between Bartók and the fascist dictatorship was soon forgotten: exile and death had transformed him into a martyr of freedom, just as the *Resistenza* and the catastrophe of war had redeemed and purified the Italian people.

Bartók's consecration as a moral hero in post-war Italian culture, hypostatised by seminal publications by Luigi Rognoni and Massimo Mila, coincided with a palpable 'Bartókian Wave' in Italian composition as exemplified by the work of different generations of composers, from Alfredo Casella and Goffredo Petrassi to Bruno Maderna and Franco Donatoni. The analysis of their works leads to a reconsideration of the sometimes-heard claim that Bartók, especially with respect to Schoenberg and Stravinsky, was a composer with no heirs or followers. In the same period, Bartók's pivotal work on folk music had a substantial impact on Italian ethnomusicology. Outside Hungary, Bartók's stature as an ethnomusicologist was 'more that of a precursor than of a seminal figure'.¹⁶ For Italian post-war ethnomusicologists, however, Bartók came to

Context and Sphere of Influence of His Work', *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 47 nos 3–4 (2006), pp. 251–479 [Part 1] and 48, nos 1–2 (2007), pp. 103–243 [Part 2].

¹⁶ Malcolm Gillies, 'Bartók, Béla' (2001), in *Grove Music Online*, doi.org/10.1093/

represent an influential model for structuring new disciplinary principles and high-standing professional ethics. This is testified by the early 1955 translation of his *Writings on Folk Music* prefaced by his colleague and fellow composer Zoltán Kodály and edited by the ethnomusicologist Diego Carpitella.¹⁷

In the rich bibliography devoted to Bartók,¹⁸ there is no publication addressing the Bartók myth as a whole. However, several studies produced in the field of Bartók research have been particularly valuable in helping to define the subject under consideration. Maria Grazia Sità has undertaken investigations into Bartók's Italian reception, using archival and analytical research.¹⁹ Malcolm Gillies has debunked some enduring preconceptions informing Bartók's biography (such as the apocalyptic narrative of his American exile), also providing insights into the process of Bartók's canonisation:

As with his compatriot Ernő Donhnányi, Bartók had sometimes been inconsistent – sometimes just naïve – in his political stances. He was claimable for Communism, for instance, because of his membership of the Music Directorate under Béla Kun's short-lived Communist government in 1919, for nationalism because of his early anti-Habsburg sentiments and sometime chauvinistic statements, and for capitalistic democracy because of his decision to take refuge in America. [...]. On the other hand, he had spoken up for Toscanini when he was attacked by Italian fascists in 1931 [...]. To see him as an anti-Nazi crusader forced to carry the flickering beacon of Hungarian humanity to the New World is, however, fanciful and overlooks the more prosaic and self-interested reasons for his departure.²⁰

Much commentary about these ideological postures had already arisen during the Cold War period. Published in 2007, Danielle Fosler-Lussier's *Music Divided: Bartók's Legacy in Cold War Culture* is the first extensive research into the posthumous politicisation of the figure of Bartók and represents a landmark in addressing the topics covered in this book. Nevertheless, her approach

gmo/9781561592630.article.40686 (accessed 15 June 2020).

¹⁷ Béla Bartók, *Scritti sulla musica popolare*, ed. Diego Carpitella (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2001, orig. Turin: Einaudi, 1955).

¹⁸ See Elliott Antokoletz and Paolo Susanni (eds), *Béla Bartók: A Research and Information Guide*, 3rd ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 2011).

¹⁹ See Virág Büky and Maria Grazia Sità, 'Bartók e l'Italia. Viaggi, contatti, concerti', *Fonti musicali italiane* 18 (2013), pp. 119–75 and Maria Grazia Sità, 'Gli esordi bartókiani di Donatoni (via Guido Turchi)', in Candida Felici (ed.), *Franco Donatoni. Gravità senza peso* (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2015), pp. 91–114. See also Maria Grazia Sità, *Béla Bartók* (Palermo: L'Epos, 2008).

²⁰ Gillies, 'Bartók in America', p. 192–3. See also Malcolm Gillies, 'The Canonization of Béla Bartók', in Elliott Antokoletz, Victoria Fischer and Benjamin Suchoff (eds), *Bartók Perspectives: Man, Composer, and Ethnomusicologist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 289–302 and *Id.*, 'A Bartók-életrajz megírása', *Szabadvégt* no. 79 (2016), pp. 5–20.

risks dramatising the coupling of political dichotomies and cultural by-products during the Cold War, thereby overplaying the impact of East-West geopolitical tensions in the emergence of Bartók's political legacy. In Fosler-Lussier's book, moreover, Bartók's reception before the 1940s is generally left unnoticed and the composer's relation with Italian culture is measured only via the analysis of Maderna's Concerto for Two Pianos and Instruments (1947–9).²¹ In this monograph, I draw on a broader evidence base than post-1945 matters alone, instead embracing the cultural and political history preceding the death of the composer from a comparative perspective. Bartók's figure was exploited and misused before, during and after the Second World War by various intellectuals (even those with a fascist background), sometimes for opposing purposes. In particular, the apparent contradiction between Bartók's post-1945 heroic image and the earlier success of the composer in Mussolini's Italy is particularly perturbing, but none the less thought-provoking. Fine historical and contextual distinctions are thus inescapable. By taking into consideration the crucial difference between Bartók's private letters and his public profile and actions, it is possible to make a distinction between anti-Nazism and anti-fascism in the composer's biography and also to identify 1938 as a watershed in the evolution of his political stance.

Myth-Making

Modern (and ancient) practices of mythopoiesis (or myth-making) are associated with forms of storytelling and sacredness. Myths are not dichotomously opposed to reality, but neither do they foster historical accuracy. As the cultural sociologist Richard Howell writes in his study of *The Myth of the Titanic*, 'a myth is not necessarily a falsehood, but rather a cultural device in which abstract values are encoded in concrete form.'²² Mythopoiesis is a process of cultural encoding and its analysis can reveal information not only about its content (Bartók in our case), but also about political, social and ideological values. In the fields of anthropology and cultural semiotics, an analysis of the Bartók myth appeared as early as the 1990s. In a largely neglected essay in Bartókiana, the anthropologist Susan Gal examined the rhetorical structure of the public commemorations, political speeches and news reports that informed Bartók's 1988 reburial in Budapest. She argues that 'metaphors, decentering, allegory, suppressed premises, and myth played important roles in the rhetorical pro-

²¹ Danielle Fosler-Lussier, *Music Divided: Bartók's Legacy in Cold War Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), pp. 38–42. Fosler-Lussier also published a shorter essay on a similar theme in 2001: Danielle Fosler-Lussier, 'Bartók reception in cold war Europe', in Bayley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bartók*, pp. 202–14.

²² Richard Howells, *The Myth of the Titanic* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), p. 10. See also Robert A. Segal, *Myth. A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

cesses constructing Bartók's funeral, as much for the domestic audience as for the international one.²³ In relation to the 1988 event, she observes the relevance of Roland Barthes's now classic study of modern myth-making: Bartók's portrait was created by the 'selection and decontextualization' of facts from his life and his own written statements, taken from both his public and private writings. This distorted image corresponded 'to the symbols of Hungarian officialdom.' Following Barthes, Gal contends that 'the second-order semiological relationship between the signifier (in this case, Bartók) and the concept with which it is equated (Hungary) is thus made to seem unconstructed, natural, given.'²⁴ According to Barthes, 'in passing from history to nature, myth [...] abolishes the complexity of human acts'. In this regard, 'myth is constituted by the loss of the historical quality of things' and is a 'depoliticized speech'.²⁵ Gal's reference to Barthes' ideas on modern mythologies, albeit somewhat outdated, is an excellent starting point in approaching the Bartók cult and its embedded cultural, political and social values, especially with reference to modern political systems, institutions and mass media. Additional observations should be made, however, to refine this theoretical framework and terminology. The sociolinguist Henri Boyer has analysed the difference between stereotypes, emblems and myths, three different methods of 'semiotisation' whose main suppliers are contemporary media. In the case of *stereotypes* (e.g. Italy as the 'land of song'), the complexity of social objects is neutralised by a drastic simplification, while the *emblematisation* applies to a singular well-known person or object that is representative of a more general quality or concept.²⁶ Compared to the previous two methods of semiotisation, the *myth* acts on a different level. It operates on an extraordinary individual, whose indisputable exemplarity and almost unconditional, unanimous and positive evaluation seem to transcend questions of history and morality. The mythicised person is most often the object of an authentic and official cult. Whereas emblematisation is based on a symbolic representativeness (e.g. 'Caporetto' is emblematic of a disastrous military defeat), mythification transforms an emblematic character into a sublimated and often tragic hero (e.g. Joan of Arc).

Hero myths of this kind are, of course, not limited to Bartók. Within Western classical music, the obvious example is Beethoven. The dramatic narrative associated with Beethoven's heroic style seems to mimic and sublimate the tragic plot of the composer's life: 'something (someone) not fully formed but full of potential ventures out into complexity and ramification (adversity), reaches a *ne plus ultra* (a crisis), and then returns renewed and completed (tri-

²³ Gal, 'Bartók's Funeral', p. 453.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (New York: The Noonday Press, 1991, orig. 1957), pp. 142–3.

²⁶ Henri Boyer, 'Stéréotype, emblème, mythe. Sémiotisation médiatique et figement représentationnel', *Mots. Le langage du politique* no. 88 (2008), doi.org/10.4000/mots.14433 (accessed 15 June 2020).

umphant).²⁷ But behind the stupendous struggle and triumph of the posthumously canonised genius lies the question of the composer's relations with the social and political powers of his epoch. Esteban Buch observes that later in Beethoven's reception, 'his official music would be relegated to the periphery of his output, whereas the Ninth Symphony would be hailed as the glorification of human freedom in which any trace of the state is, by definition, absent'.²⁸ This image of the artist close to the people or nation, but distant from official power, would be appreciated both in reactionary and liberal states:

Bourgeois governments looked at the life and work of this great deaf creator, who had risen above his physical infirmity and overthrown the musical rules of the ancient regime, and saw in him a musician who answered to their ideals of struggle and progress, a positive embodiment of the individual will and of the aspiration to universal reconciliation. Indeed, it was this duality – public vocation and private communion, symbolized respectively by his final symphony and the late string quartets – that made Beethoven's entire oeuvre a political metaphor.²⁹

Beethoven provided a paragon of self-sacrifice for a higher moral or political idea and indirectly shaped Bartók's identity: the heroic, Beethovenian dimension of his 1940 exile was emphasised by the Hungarian composer himself in his private letters.³⁰ The case of Beethoven also shows that the reconstruction of the wider politics of myth-making is germane to the analysis of the Bartók myth. What is at stake in this book is not only the emergence of the Bartók cult, but the relation of this particular hero myth to the social myths of the twentieth century and the collective and national imaginaries to which they make reference. According to the sociologist and historian Gérard Bouchard, a social myth is a collective representation that is hybrid, imbued with the sacred and the emotional, and that constitutes a vehicle of meanings, values, and ideals shaped in a given social and historical environment.³¹ As opposed to lyric and literary myths entirely built on fiction, social myths propel individual and collective behaviour and interact with specific public contexts, historical facts and power relations. Social myths, especially those that structure national imaginaries, need heroes. A celebrated historical figure 'may acquire so much authority that it becomes completely merged with the social myth or takes on a life of its own'. Heroes become subjects 'of celebrations, worship, and pilgrimages that amplify the message' of the myth and 'can even result in a blur-

²⁷ Scott Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. xviii.

²⁸ Esteban Buch, *Beethoven's Ninth: A Political History*, trans. Richard Miller (London and Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 3.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ See the letter (in German) from Béla Bartók to Annie Müller-Widmann, 14 October 1940, *BBLett*, no. 225, pp. 284–5.

³¹ Gérard Bouchard, *Social Myths and Collective Imaginaries*, trans. Howard Scott (Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press, 2017), p. 25.

ring or diversion of [its] original meaning.' The pre-eminence of social myths over historical individuals is, however, of the utmost importance according to Bouchard: 'we can thus speak of the myths of Caesar, Leonardo da Vinci, Lenin, and the Kennedys, when what is actually being referred to are the values or ideals (ethos) that gave birth to these symbols.'³²

In order to understand the mythopoiesis that led to the emergence of the Bartók myth, we should reconstruct the process by which social myths and heroic figures merge, as well as its reference to collective imaginaries and rituals. As Leon Botstein has observed, 'the crass official and commercial celebration' of Bartók's 1988 reburial 'only proved to reproduce the contradictory meanings that have been associated with Bartók within Hungarian twentieth-century politics.'³³ At this time, the heroic portrait of the composer re-enacted by Hungarian officialdom was already well-established. The Italian context provides oft-forgotten evidence of this. In the aftermath of the Second World War, Bartók began to be cast as a Christ-like figure by Italian music critics and composers: the 'musician of freedom' who sacrificed himself to redeem humankind from the violence of Nazism.³⁴ This form of mythopoiesis based on patterns of heroic martyrdom and Catholic hagiographies was not unusual at that time, as shown by the post-war biographies of fallen partisans and neorealist characters. In other words, the idolisation of Bartók's figure was assured by the correlation between the composer's exile, death and legacy and the Italian *Resistenza*, i.e. the foundational social myth of the new Italian Republic. How did the Bartók myth originate? Why did Bartók become such a symbol of the Italian resistance movement? These two questions are linked to the politics of myth-making that informed Bartók's reception in Italy. By using the Italian reception as a focus, this book sets out to demonstrate that it is simplistic to consider the far-reaching development and resilience of the Bartók myth as a mere by-product of Cold War competitiveness. As such, the notion of Bartók as 'the musician of freedom' should be backdated from the post-1945 period – which saw the widespread diffusion of this label – to the later years of fascism and anti-Nazi cultural resistance.

Concepts and Methodology

Reception is an underlying concept of this book, but the term is often abused in music history. From a methodological standpoint, reception is understood

³² *Ibid.*, p. 102.

³³ Leon Botstein, 'Out of Hungary: Bartók, Modernism, and the Cultural Politics of Twentieth-Century Music', in Peter Laki (ed.), *Bartók and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 3–63: 6.

³⁴ See, for example, Massimo Mila, 'Béla Bartók. Compagno e grande musicista', *L'Unità (edizione piemontese)*, 14 December 1947 and Brunello Rondi, *Béla Bartók*, pref. Fedele D'Amico (Rome: Petrucci, 1950), p. 15.

here primarily to involve published reviews and writings by music critics, intellectuals and musicologists, but also includes private sources, such as letters and concert-related ephemera, and non-verbal evidence, chiefly musical manuscripts and scores. Archival research on textual, musical and visual sources and the study of the multifarious objects, actors, institutions and places of the reception – including theatres, festivals, but also the press and the radio – form the basis for a broader enquiry in the field of cultural history. The term ‘reception’ does not imply here a binary opposition that, as Emanuele Senici has observed, is no longer tenable: on the one hand stands the object – “come scoglio immoto” (still like a rock) amid the ravages of history like Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* – and on the other hand ‘swirls its reception, which interprets it but somehow never touches its essence, as if this essence stood outside history’.³⁵ The original proponents of reception theory in the field of aesthetics and literary criticism (e.g. Gadamer, Jauss and Ricoeur) would certainly agree with the refusal of this duality. A more flexible interpretative model of reception is implied by the term ‘discourse’, which is sometimes used in this book. Works, sources, words, events, institutions, actors and media can all be considered ‘aspects of a specific discourse, defined as a field of human exchange in continuous and complex movement’.³⁶ The emergence of the Bartók myth in Italy was a mediated phenomenon, a process of canonisation taking place within dense ideological configurations. Since the 1980s, debates about the scope and purposes of musicology as a social science have led to a new awareness of the ideological and political foundations of musical practice and cultural policies. Even if the contrasting approaches introduced by the ‘New Musicology’ in the last two decades of the twentieth century are now largely historicised, it is curious to note that a manifesto of this musicological renewal used Bartók and Balázs’s *Bluebeard’s Castle* as a potent metaphor. Susan McClary urged researchers to explore the blood-soaked topics hidden behind the forbidden doors of the ‘castle’ of musical beauty: racism, misogyny, violence, resistance, ideologies, and forms of control, oppression and power.³⁷ The canonisation of an artistic figure or repertoire is thus a contentious field of evolving political and ideological relations, informed by broader social, historical, political and diplomatic processes.

This book thus finds itself at the crossroads of musicology, cultural history and social sciences. It should now be clear that it engages not only with primary and secondary sources related to Bartók’s reception and twentieth-century music in different languages, but also with interdisciplinary literature of a more general character. In doing so, this book aims to show that musical envi-

³⁵ Emanuele Senici, *Music in the Present Tense: Rossini’s Italian Operas in Their Time* (London and Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2019), p. 10.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

³⁷ See Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2002, orig. 1991), chap. 1 ‘Introduction: A Material Girl in Bluebeard’s Castle’.

ronments are spaces of contention and resistance that can offer vantage points over specific historical trends and theories. This particular approach is not totally new in the increasingly rich historiography devoted to twentieth-century Italian music – Ben Earle's *Luigi Dallapiccola and Musical Modernism in Fascist Italy* is an example.³⁸ By drawing on the documented facts concerning Bartók's reception, this book contributes in particular to recent theories on fascist modernism and cultural resistance, and considers interstate relations. The analysis of the ambivalent political value of early twentieth-century modernist art and its compatibility with the policies of fascist regimes is a premise for understanding the success of Bartók's music in Mussolini's Italy (and, to some extent, in Nazi Germany). As the philosopher Ernst Bloch observed as early as 1937:

How dangerously blurring would it be [...] if the Nazi heart had the cheek or the hypocrisy even to beat for Franz Marc or, in another field, for Bartók [...]. The fact that it is unfortunately not wholly impossible is demonstrated in some respects by the example of Mussolini, beneath whose rotten sceptre progressive architecture, painting and music worth discussing remain unmolested.³⁹

The relation between modernism and fascism is one of the keys to grasping the discourse produced by interwar Italian intellectuals on crucial aspects of Bartók's poetics, such as the reference to Hungarian nationalism, the faith in peasant folklore and the interest in Italian baroque music. Recognised today as a precursor of transculturalism and cosmopolitanism, Bartók's fusion of art music and folk music was open to different interpretations. Well into the 1930s, his ethnomusicological endeavour was still easily interpretable in terms of chauvinism, primitivism and anti-Gypsyism, sentiments that were widely shared when he and Kodály began their collection and classification activities in the first years of the twentieth century.

In order to understand the different roles modernism played in defining German and Italian musical politics during the war years, we should also take into account their evolving diplomatic relations. The continuity between modernism and fascism explains the tolerance of, or even the support for, Bartók in both fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, but it cannot account for the differentiation in reception that took place after 1938. More compelling reasons should be sought instead in the consequences of Italian-German relations for domestic cultural policies and resulting patterns of cultural resistance: these are observable not only in the field of music, but also in the film industry. As Benjamin G. Martin has observed, the 'Italian-German relationship combined substantial collaboration with vigorous competition at every stage, even after Italy's position of autonomy vis-à-vis Germany crumbled along with Italy's

³⁸ Ben Earle, *Luigi Dallapiccola and Musical Modernism in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

³⁹ Ernst Bloch, 'Jugglers' Fair beneath the Gallows' [1937], in *Heritage of Our Times*, trans. Neville and Stephen Plaice (Cambridge: Polity, 1991), pp. 75–80: 79.

economy, its international standing, and, from 1940, its fortunes in the war' In fact, 'the decrease in Italy's ability to exercise hard power convinced key figures in the fascist regime to invest even more energy and resources in the country's soft power'.⁴⁰ In this book, I argue that performing Bartók in Italy was a way to resist Nazi political domination, especially towards the end of Mussolini's regime. A similar kind of cultural rivalry has been observed by Leslie A. Sprout in wartime France among the three forces competing for political authority, i.e. the German occupiers, the Vichy administration and the *Résistance*.⁴¹

The particular form of 'cultural competition' between Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany during the war years is just one of the different typologies of interstate cultural relations discussed in this book. These range, as it were, between two extremes: at one extreme is cultural diplomacy, intended as a recognised institutional support or instrument serving explicit programmes of political cooperation and exchange. A clear example is the sustained cultural diplomacy that occurred between Mussolini's Italy and Horthy's Hungary during the 1920s and the 1930s that favoured, among many other things, some prestigious Italian performances of Bartók's music (this is explored in Chapter 2). At the other end, there are widely known forms of (apparent) cultural polarisations, such as those that took place during the Cold War period between the two sides divided by the Iron Curtain (their impact on Bartók's legacy is discussed in Chapter 5). A reflection upon the interaction between cultural policies and international relations and its resonance in the development of the public discourse on music is also at the basis of the comparative approach pursued in this book. Bartók's Italian reception is in fact compared throughout to his reception in other countries and to that of other representative composers of the period (most notably Stravinsky, the members of the Second Viennese School, Hindemith and Kodály). In particular, Nazi Germany and Horthy's Hungary are compared to fascist Italy in the first half of the book, while France is used as a comparative benchmark, specifically for the period preceding the First World War and then in the 1940s. Throughout the book, there is also the opportunity for more diverse reflections on international cultural transfers, mobility and migrations: whereas Casella's move from Paris to Rome almost coincides with the inception of Bartók's reception in Italy, the 1940 expatriation of the Hungarian composer is a pivotal event in the posthumous narrative of resistance that characterised his biography.

'Resistance' is another recurring topic of this book. The focal historical event here is the Italian resistance movement (known as the *Resistenza*) between September 1943 and April 1945 against Nazi Germany's occupying forces and their local puppet state, the Italian Social Republic. Italian partisans were actually engaged in a civil war on three fronts: against Italian fascists, a war of national

⁴⁰ Benjamin G. Martin, *The Nazi-Fascist New Order for European Culture* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2016), p. 11.

⁴¹ Leslie A. Sprout, *The Musical Legacy of Wartime France* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2013).

liberation against German invaders, and a class war against the compromised elites.⁴² These three parallel types of warfare have become loaded with multifarious symbolic meanings and played a key role in defining Italian post-war democracy, in a similar way to other European democratic regimes. But in this book other forms of resistance that have been retrospectively associated with the 1943–5 military conflict are explored; incidentally, it is worth noting that even these included a wide range of actions, from open and guerrilla warfare to dispatch riding, patrol and non-violent support. Resistance is a term that can be usefully applied to a set of acts, gestures, attitudes or even institutional policies that do not necessarily involve the use of physical violence or are organised by a secret organisation resisting occupying authorities. On the one hand, there are liminal forms of resistance that preceded the *Resistenza*: for example the cultural resistance enacted by the Italian cultural establishment and its intellectuals against Nazi Germany during the first years of the Second World War; another is Bartók's choice of exile. On the other hand, there are all the debates and forms of legitimisation and memorialisation of the *Resistenza* that took place in Italy from the very end of the conflict onwards. In these later discussions, actual or imagined forms of cultural resistance assumed a strategic role in reinforcing the sense of national communion and spiritual superiority and in smoothing out the contradictions that had emerged during the exceptionally difficult period of transition from the fascist dictatorship to the new and purportedly spotless Italian Republic. Even Bartók's folk music research was later interpreted, especially in left-wing circles, as a form of resistance by and liberation of the dominated class.

Throughout the first five chapters, specific aspects of Bartók's output and poetics are not only analysed in terms of discursive reception (as it appears in various textual sources), but also compared in detail to the works of several Italian composers, from Casella's 1910s piano pieces to Roman Vlad's first orchestral compositions in the early 1940s. The final chapter deals more extensively with questions of compositional influence, by making reference to significant composers of the Bartókian Wave of the late 1940s and early 1950s, to the influence of Bartók's Night Music and to Maderna's String Quartet no. 1, composed at the end of the Second World War. I freely employ diverse analytical strategies developed within the rich theoretical framework of studies devoted to Bartók and to twentieth-century music as a whole, but I also make a more substantial contribution to the study of Bartók's Night Music. This network of borrowings, quotations and influences, spread over three different generations of composers, is connected to the political and ideological dimension of Bartók's reception in Italy. This approach allows us to observe the process of canonisation of the composer's masterpieces and contributes to a redefinition of the evolution of Italian musical modernism.

⁴² See Claudio Pavone, *A Civil War: A History of the Italian Resistance*, trans. Peter Levy (London and New York: Verso, 2013, orig. 1991).

Structure

The book is organised into six chapters and events are narrated in chronological order. Before outlining the chapters that follow, it is worth noting that the chronological extremes used to divide them represent turning points in the history of Bartók's reception in Italy. They may also be associated with significant events in Italian history.

1911: Fiftieth anniversary of Italian unification – Bartók's first 'official' visit to Italy

1925: Beginning of Mussolini's dictatorship – Bartók's first Italian concert tour

1939: Beginning of the Second World War – Last two concert tours by Bartók in Italy

1942: Resurgence of anti-fascist movements in Italy – Premiere of *The Miraculous Mandarin*

1947: New Italian Constitution – Mila celebrates Bartók as 'the musician of freedom'

The Bartókian Wave ends in the late 1950s, as does the main narrative of this book. Later developments of the Bartók myth are outlined in the Conclusion. The Appendix lists all the performances of Bartók's music in Italy between 1911 and 1950, including radio broadcasts.

Chapter 1 deals with the Italian liberal state and explores the first years of Bartók's reception in Italy, most notably in Rome and Turin. Bartók and Kodály's participation at the International Music Congress that was held in Rome in April 1911 during the commemorations of Italian unification coincided with a collective outpouring of nationalist enthusiasm, leading to resurgence in Italian imperialism which resulted in the invasion of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, and later, Italy's participation in the First World War. The first Italian performance of a composition by Bartók also occurred as early as 1911 – his Suite no. 1 for orchestra – but a more substantial process of reception began later, after the First World War. A pivotal role was played by the composer, pianist and concert organiser Alfredo Casella, who lived in Paris for almost twenty years at the beginning of the century and later became a leading musician and mould-breaker working under the fascist regime. Casella came to know Bartók's combination of folklore and modernism in Paris in the early 1910s and tried to import this model to his home country. In the early 1920s, the interest of other Italian musicians and music critics was fostered by Bartók's collaboration with the prestigious publishing house Universal Edition and with the Italian conductor Egitto Tango, who premiered in Budapest the ballet *The Wooden Prince* (1917) and the opera *Bluebeard's Castle* (1918).

Chapter 2 focuses on the fascist period, from the definitive collapse of the Italian liberal state in 1925 to the late 1930s. Major events include Bartók's thirteen concerts in ten different Italian cities between 1925 and 1929 and the premieres of emblematic works in major music festivals. The fortunes of Bartók's music in fascist Italy, further sustained by the ambitious policies of the regime with regard to radio broadcasting and music pedagogy, are explained