Národní knihovna
České republiky
National Library
of the Czech Republic

“I cannot write when I play, I cannot play when I write …”

Compositional Estate of World-renowned 20th-century Pianist Josef Páleníček in the Music Departement of the National Library of the Czech Republic

Ludmila Šmídová (National Library of the Czech Republic, Prague)

IAML ONLINE 2021, 26-30 JULY 2021

Josef Páleníček (1914-1991)

pianist

chamber musician

composer



Josef Páleníček plays Janáček, 1970



Czech trio, 1970 – Josef Páleníček (piano), Ivan Štraus (violin), Saša Večtomov (violoncello)

teacher

official
at several music institutions

Páleníček as a pianist



Páleníček as a teacher

Zuzana Růžičková, famous harpsichordist, recalls:



The student started playing.

- "Enough. That's wrong! You played a chord!"

- "But there's a chord, Professor"

- "Yes, but you can't play a chord, you have to play *death*!"

Páleníček and Bohuslav Martinů

acquaintance in 1937



Karel Šebánek, B. Martinů, Rudolf Firkušný, J. Páleníček, 1938

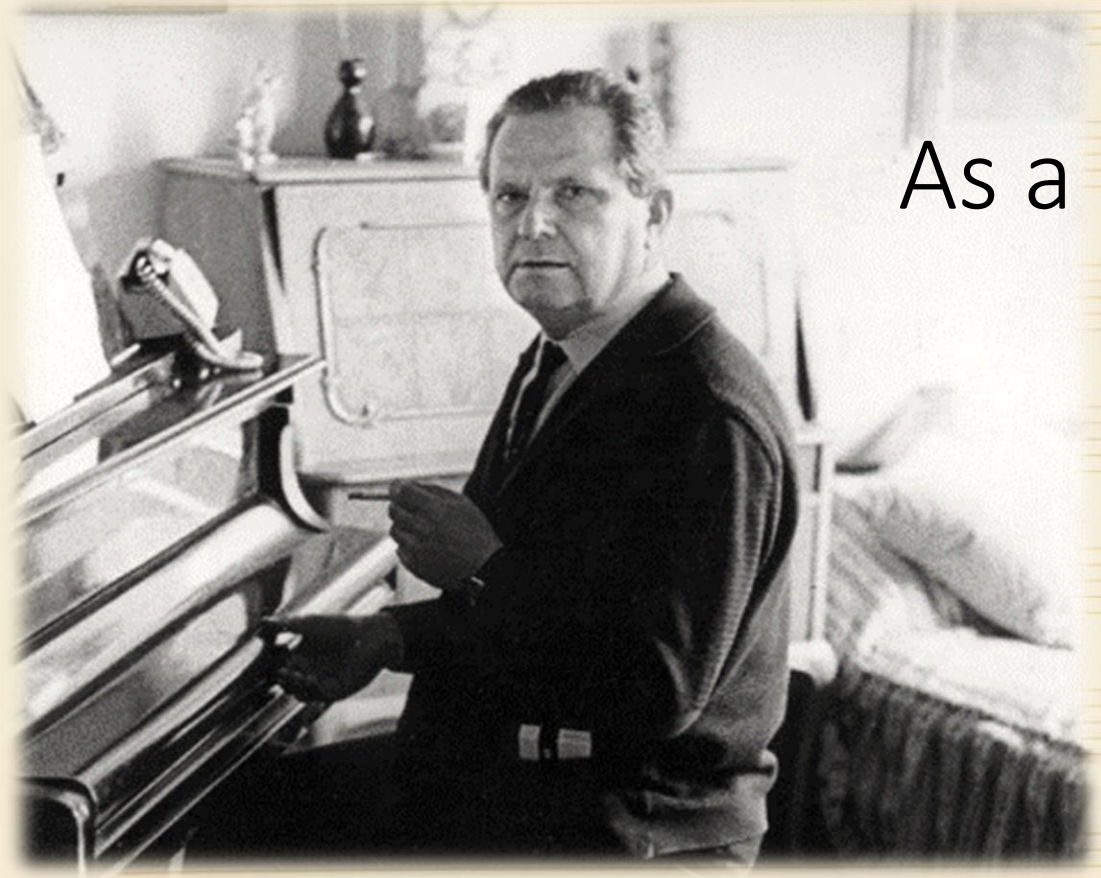


J. Páleníček, B. Martinů, Rudolf Firkušný, Jiří Mucha, 1938



J. Páleníček, Rudolf Firkušný, B. Martinů, Karel Šebánek, 1938

Pictures © Bohuslav Martinů Center Polička



As a composer

"When I'm composing, I'm happy, but I can't play. Often these feelings of joy are suppressed by a sudden uncertainty that I may have forgotten to play. At that moment, I have to go to the piano." (1982)

"I'm a prisoner of terms: I can't write when I play, I can't play when I write.“ (1989)

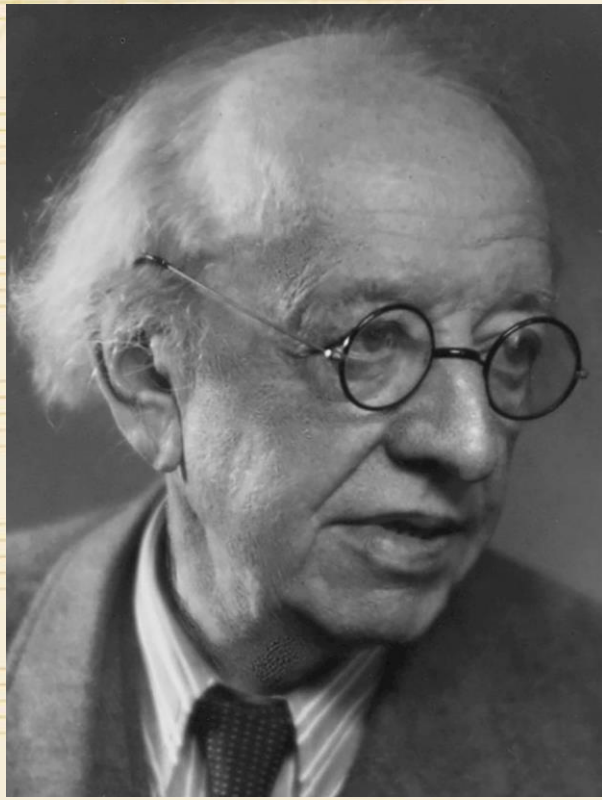
"To compose means to close the piano. Playing the piano means closing the score. Turning this knob, which allows you to swap these worlds, can be quite painful." (1984)

Páleníček's music education

Born: in Travnik in Bosnia and Herzegovina, July 19, 1914



Otakar Šín 1881-1943



Vítězslav Novák 1870-1949

Musical beginnings:

- 1918-9 Sarajevo, with František Matějovský
- 1920-6 Olomouc, with Jaroslav Svoboda

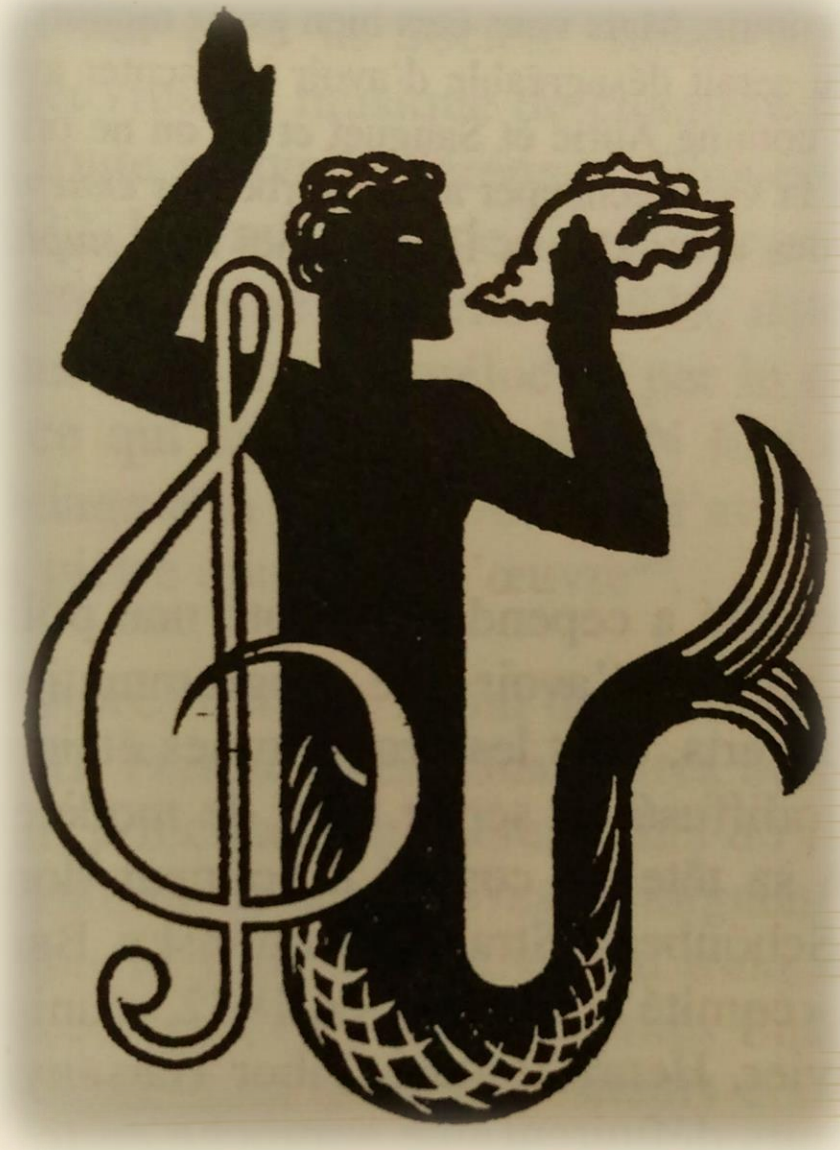


Karel Hoffmeister 1868-1952

Studies in Prague:

- 1926-33, with **Otakar Šín** (privately, from 1930 at Prague Conservatory) – harmony, counterpoint, composition
- 1927-38, with **Karel Hoffmeister** (privately, from 1933 at Prague Conservatory) – piano
- 1933-6, with **Vítězslav Novák** (at Prague Conservatory) – composition

Studies in Paris 1936-1938



logo of the Triton society

Composition privately with
Albert Roussel



Albert Roussel 1869-1937

Chamber music at École normale de musique
Diran Alexanian
Pierre Fournier
Alfred Cortot



Alfred Cortot 1877-1962

Published works

Piano concertos, no. 1 - 3
Concertino for orchestra
Concerto for flute and orchestra

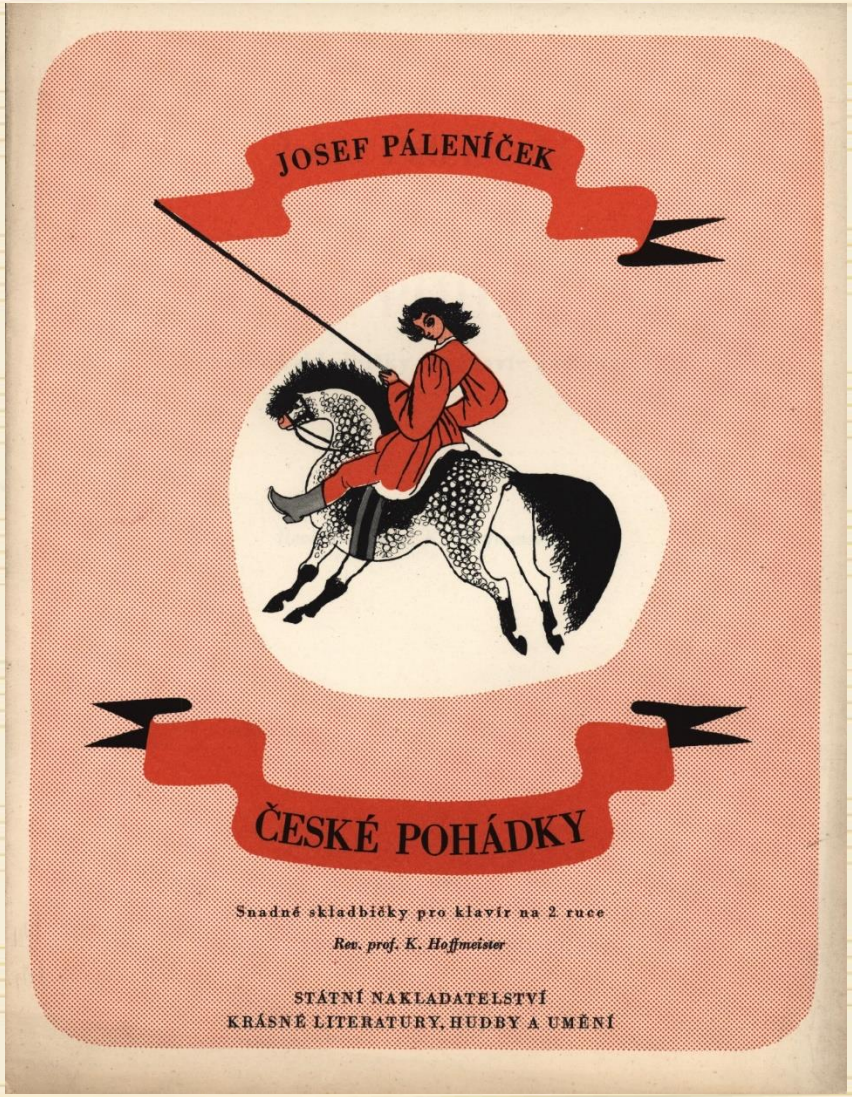
Symponic variations

Klavírní skicář (D'un cahier d'esquisses) for piano
Piano sonata
České pohádky (Czech Fairy-Tales) for piano

Partita piccola for clarinet and piano

Suita piccola for violin and piano

Choral variations for violoncello and piano
Ze zápisníku malého chlapce (From a diary of a little boy), seven short pieces for violoncello and piano



Works reproduced as manuscripts

not for sale

Český hudební fond - Czech Music Fund

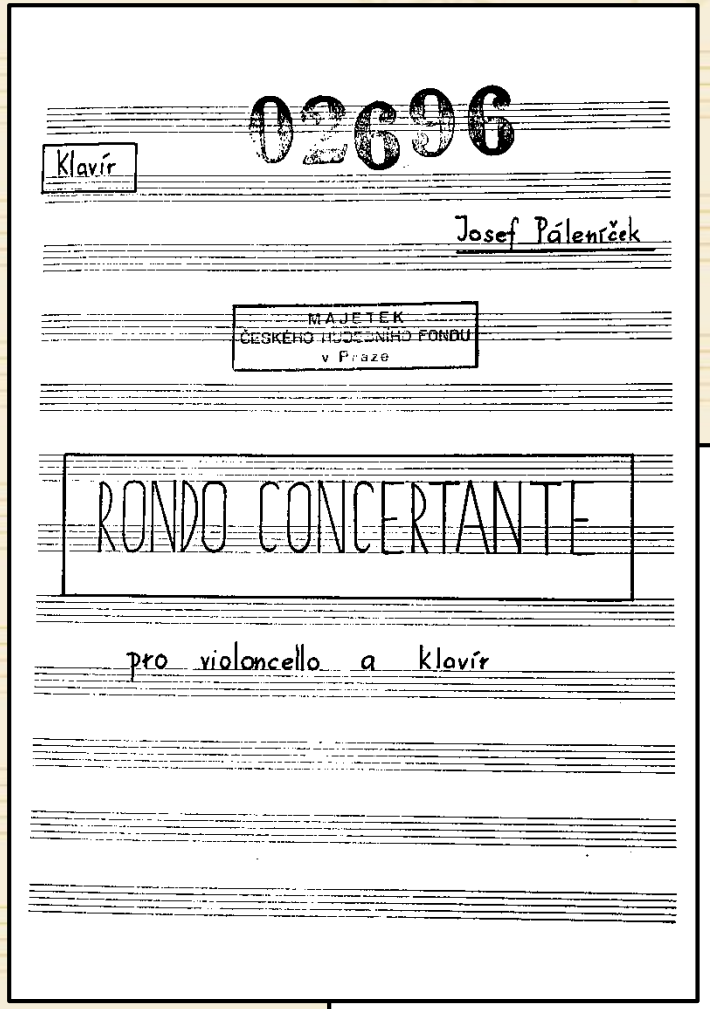
- Rondo concertante for cello and piano
- Tre concertini for clarinet and piano
- Concert etudes for double bass and piano

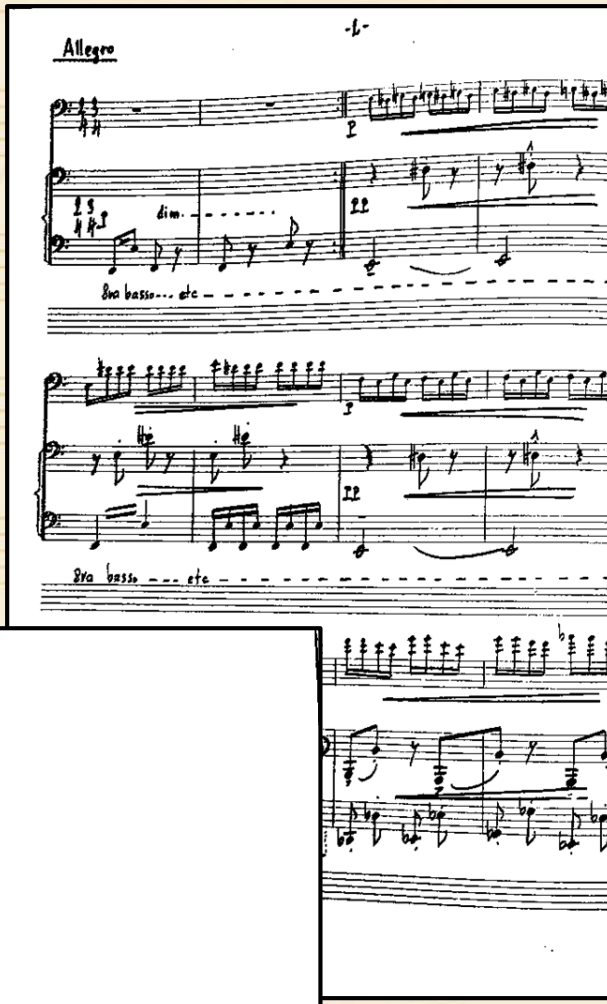
- Piano concerto no. 1
- Concertino for orchestra

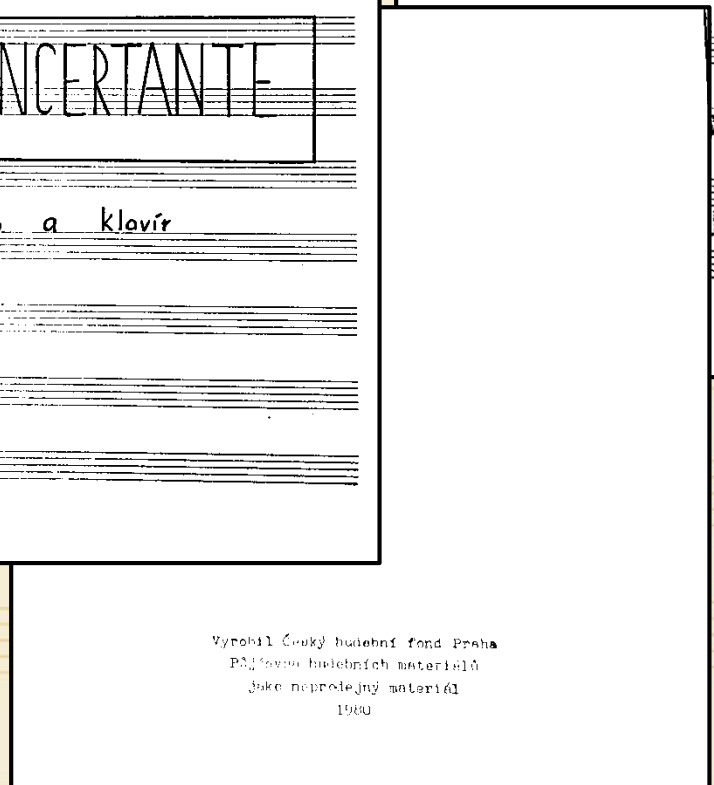
- Poema o člověku [Poem about man]. Partial material
- Zdravice únoru [Greetings February]. Partial material
- Rybník u dvou sluncí [Pond at two suns]. Partial material

Dilia - Theater, Literary, Audiovisual Agency

- Ballet Kytice [Bouquet]







Acquisition of Páleníček's manuscript estate

- the donation agreement with National library of the Czech Republic signed in 2019

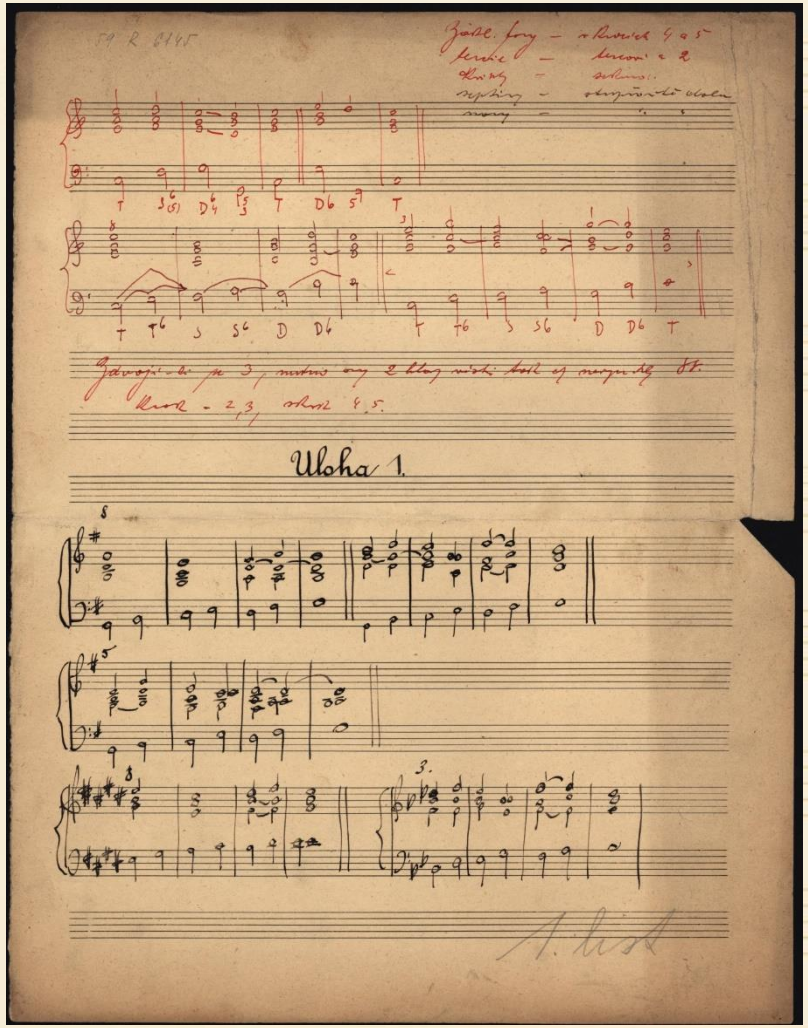


Zdeněk Páleníček showing family photos (February 2020)



Jan Páleníček with his wife pianist Jitka Čechová

Manuscripts in the estate - an overview

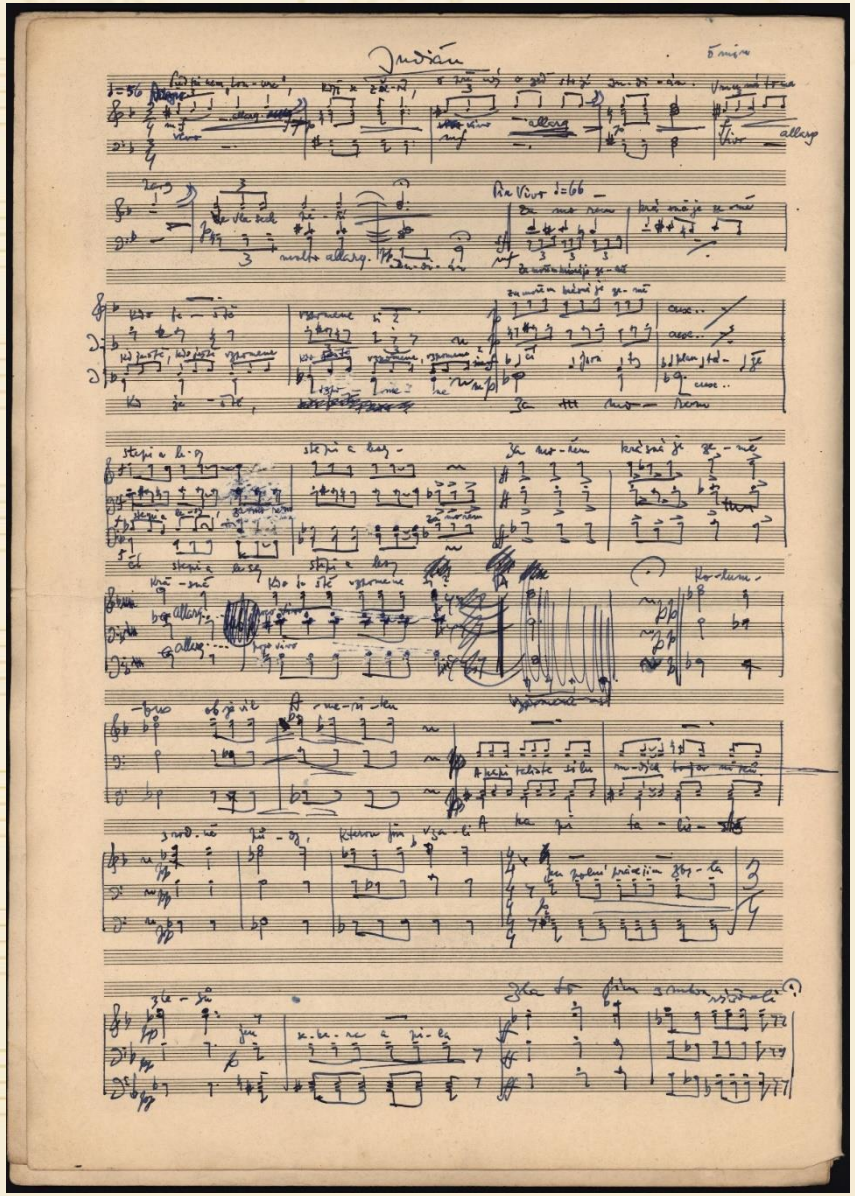


Páleníček's works in harmony with O. Šín, 1926, CZ-Pu 59 R 6145

- 227 library units
- Study materials from Páleníček's childhood and youth (accompaniments for folk songs, works in harmony, counterpoint)
- Manuscript sheet music materials for 64 Páleníček's completed compositions
- Incomplete manuscript sheet music materials for 3 Páleníček's obviously completed compositions (lost or stored with an unknown private owner)
- 20 unfinished Páleníček's compositions, in sketches or short drafts
- 3 cadences by Páleníček for concertos by other authors
- 5 manuscripts of compositions by other authors
- 10 letters embedded in sheet music
- Other accompanying materials (text templates, proofreading lists, word schedules of compositions)

Unique compositions in the estate

- Manuscripts of 29 Páleníček's completed compositions, which are not yet documented anywhere else
- Sketches of 20 Páleníček's unfinished compositions
- 1 piece by another author, which was not yet known (Danza barbara by Ilja Hurník)
  - On the contrary, 1 Páleníček's composition, already known from the copy stored in the Czech Music Fund, is not preserved in the manuscript estate (In modo antiquo for violoncello and guitar)



Zaváté stopy [Blurred tracks], male choirs by Páleníček, autograph, 1958
CZ-Pu 59 R 6149

Types of manuscript sheet music in the estate

- **Autographs** - short sketches, drafts, working manuscripts, clean copies, clean copies with later additional corrections and revisions

  - scores, parts, piano reductions

- **Manuscript copies** - clean copies, clean copies with autograph entries

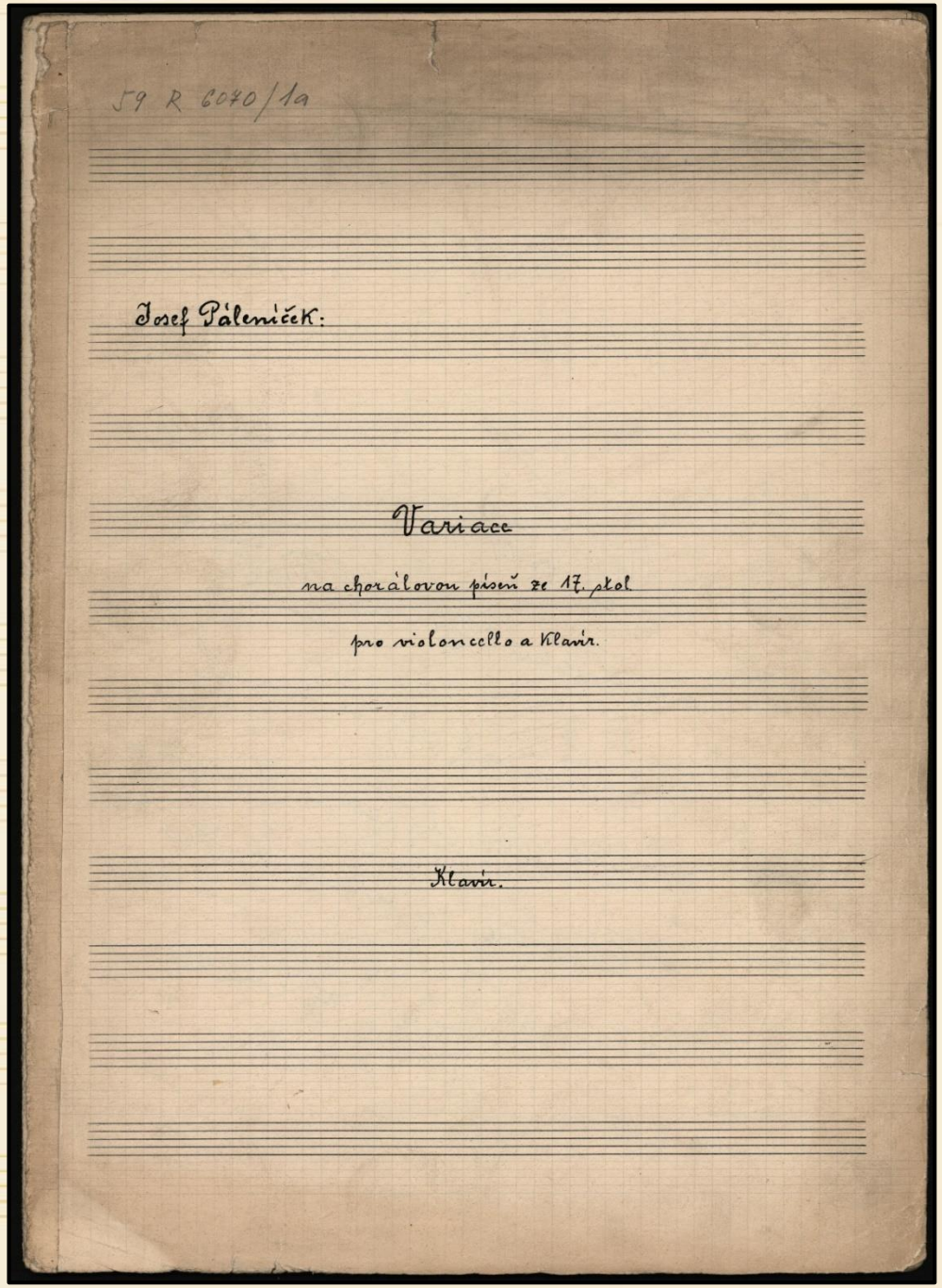
  - scores, parts

  - hands of unknown specialized copyists, performing artists, e.g. cellist Miloš Sádlo

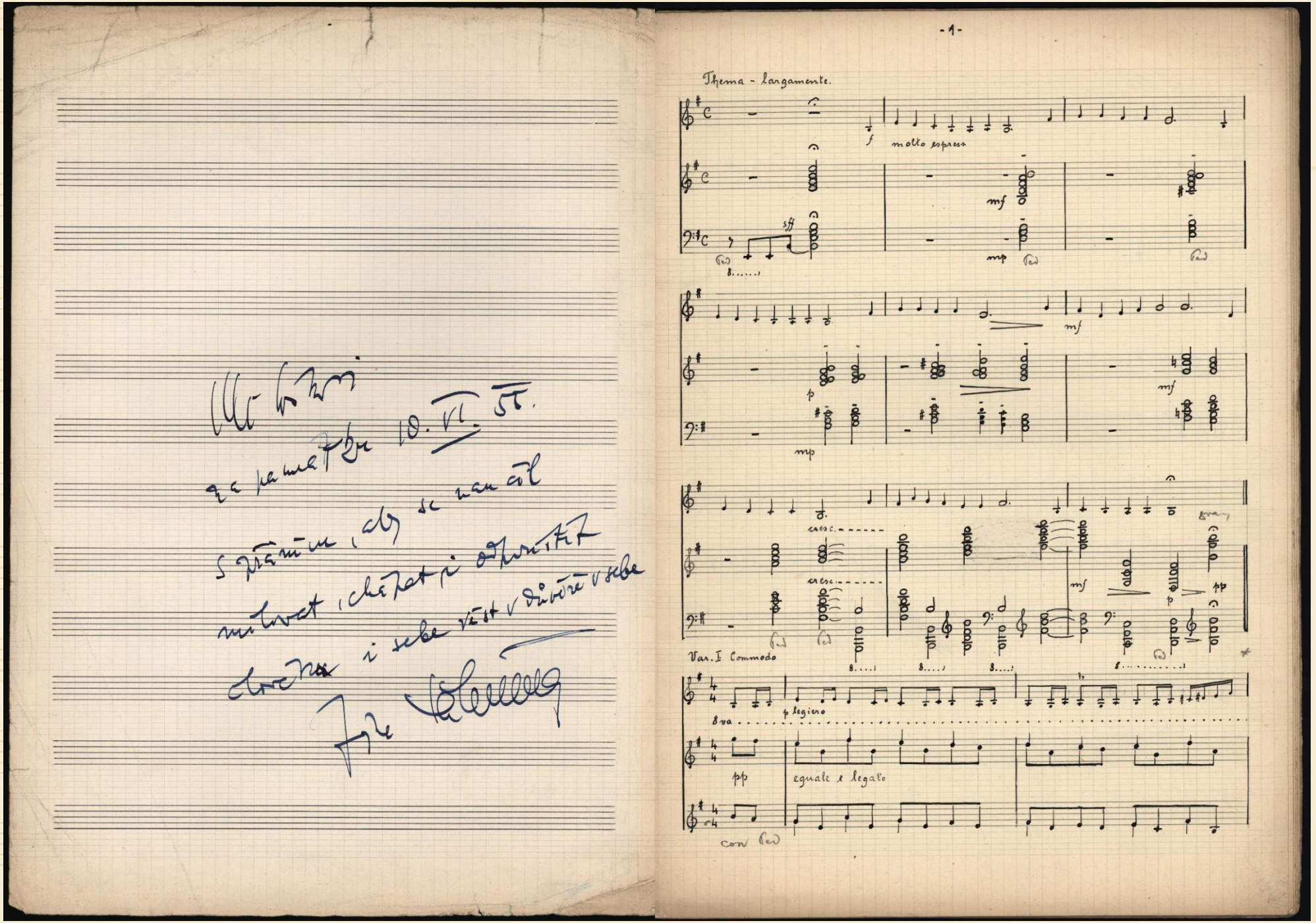
- **Xerox copies of the manuscripts**, with autograph changes

Choral variations for violoncello and piano

- Composed on 1942 for Miloš Sádlo
- Theme by Hans Leo Hassler 1601, and nine variations
- Extremely demanding violoncello part
- Published in 1973



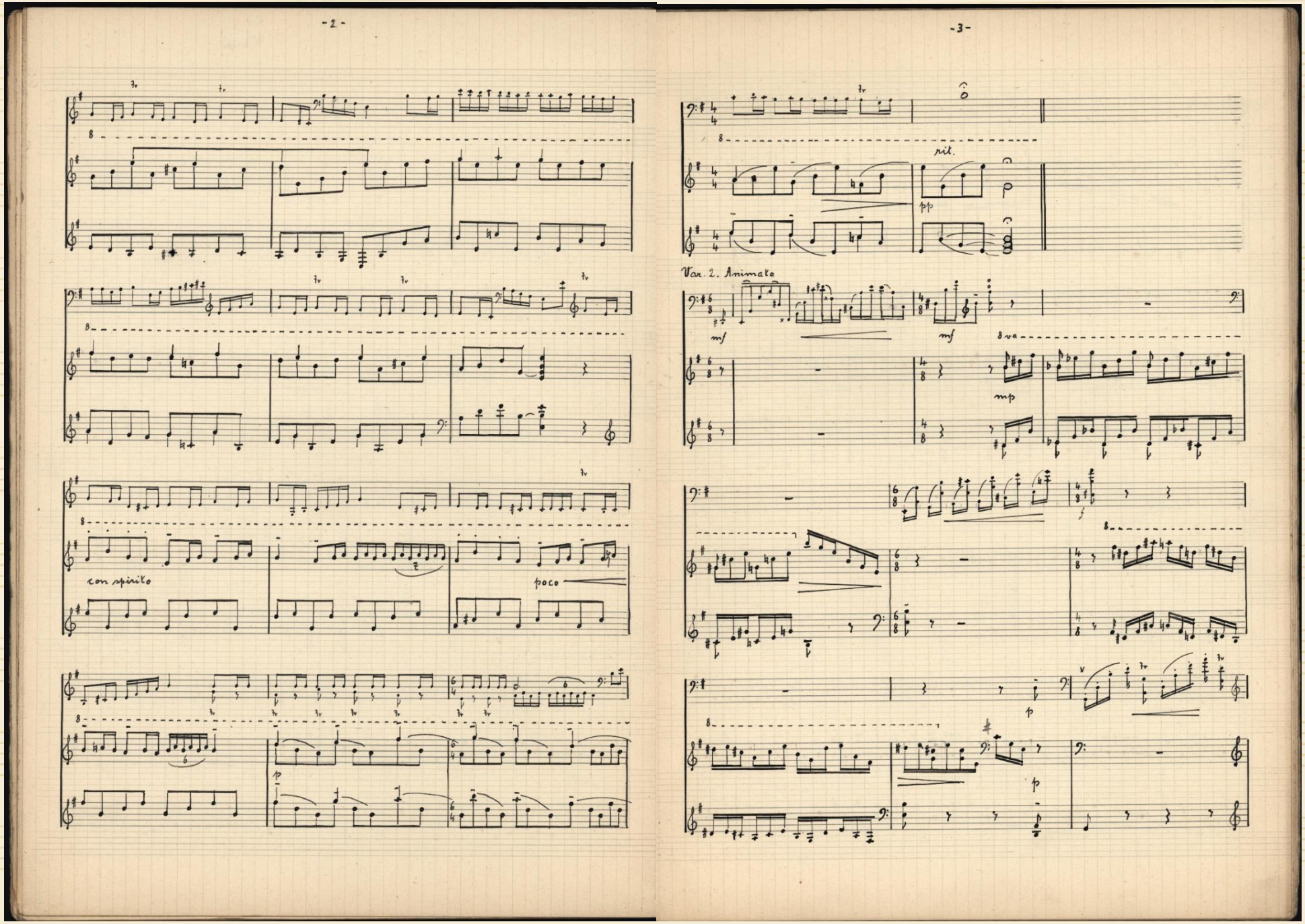
Manuscript copy [1952?]
CZ-Pu 59 R 6070/1a



Manuscript copy, [1952?]

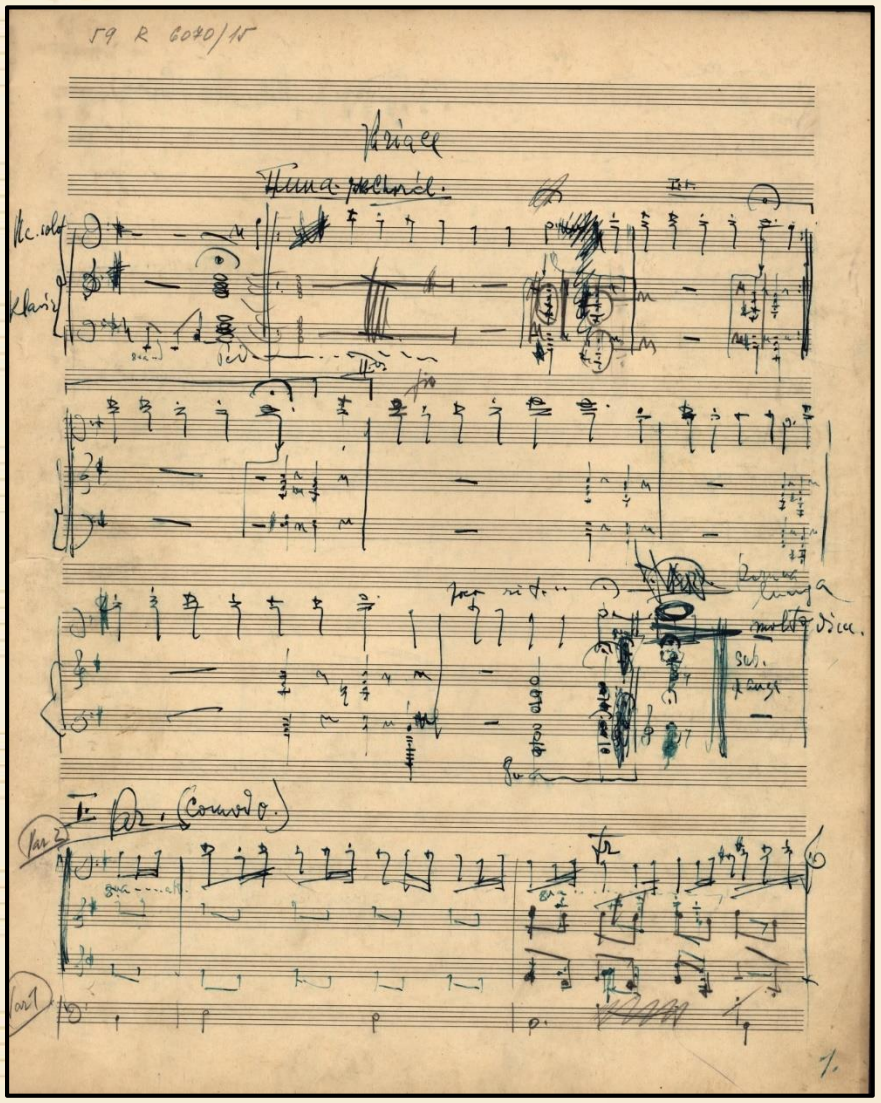
with author's dedication
to Miloš Sádlo from 1955

CZ-Pu 59 R 6070/1a

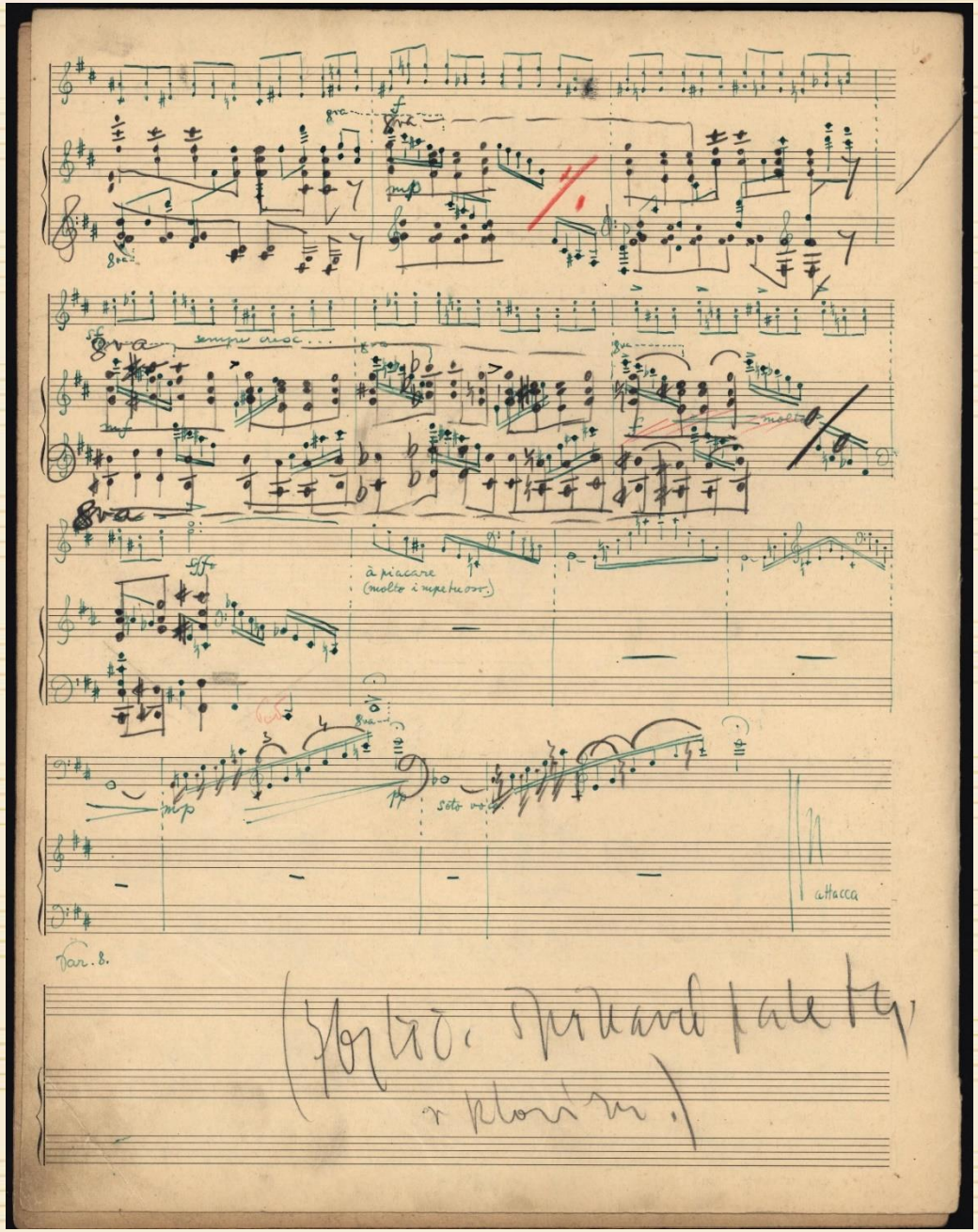

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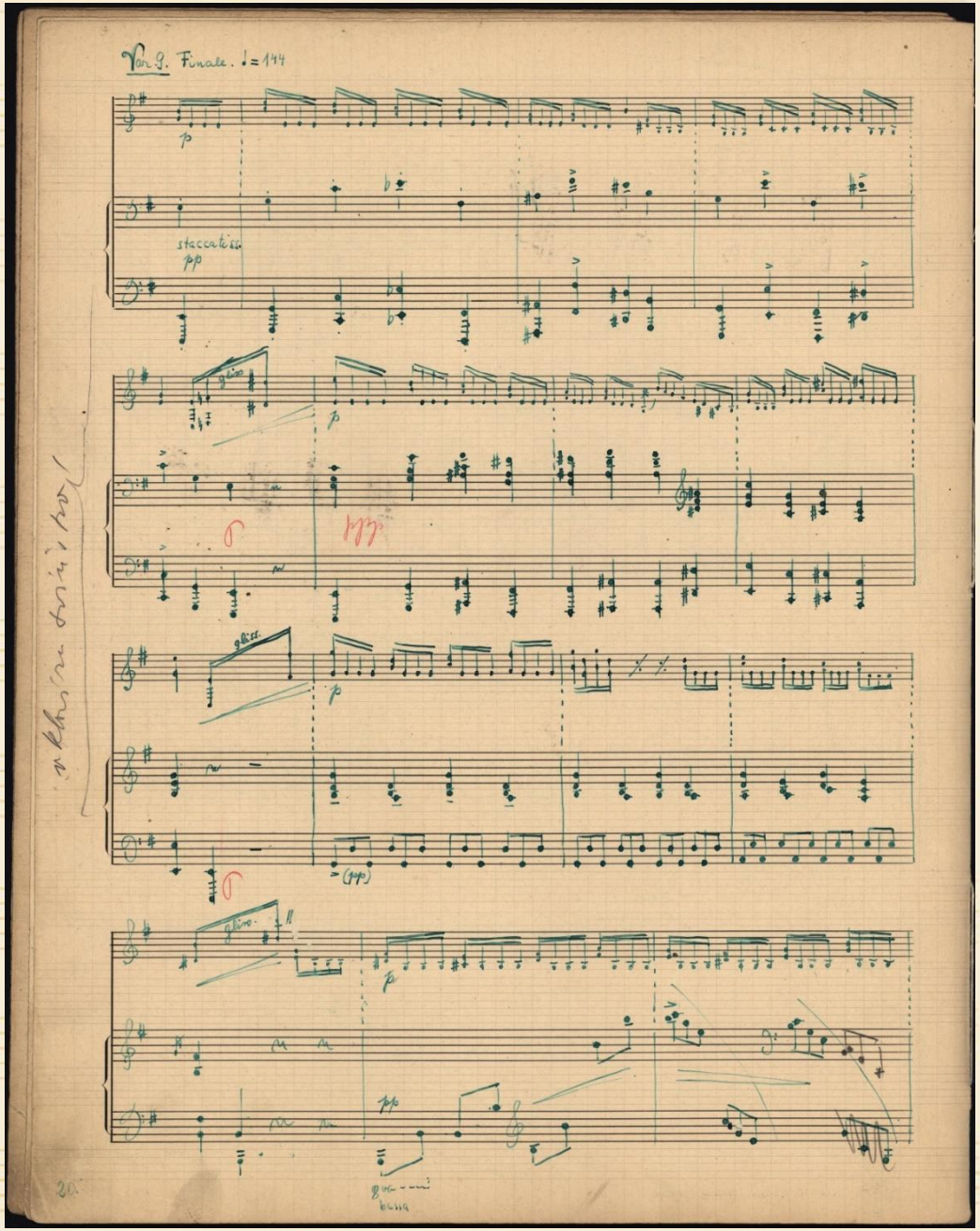
Choral variations in Paleníček's estate

- Sketches from 1942, 1946, 1949, 1950
- Sketch of a cadence by Miloš Sádlo [1942?]
- 4 autograph scores with later revisions from 1942, 1946, 1949-1950, 1951
- Autograph score clean copy [1946]
- Autograph part of the cello with subsequent revisions [1952]
- 4 manuscript copies of the cello part from 1942, 1946, 1952, [1952]
- Manuscript copy of the score and part with an autograph dedication to Miloš Sádlo [1952-1955]

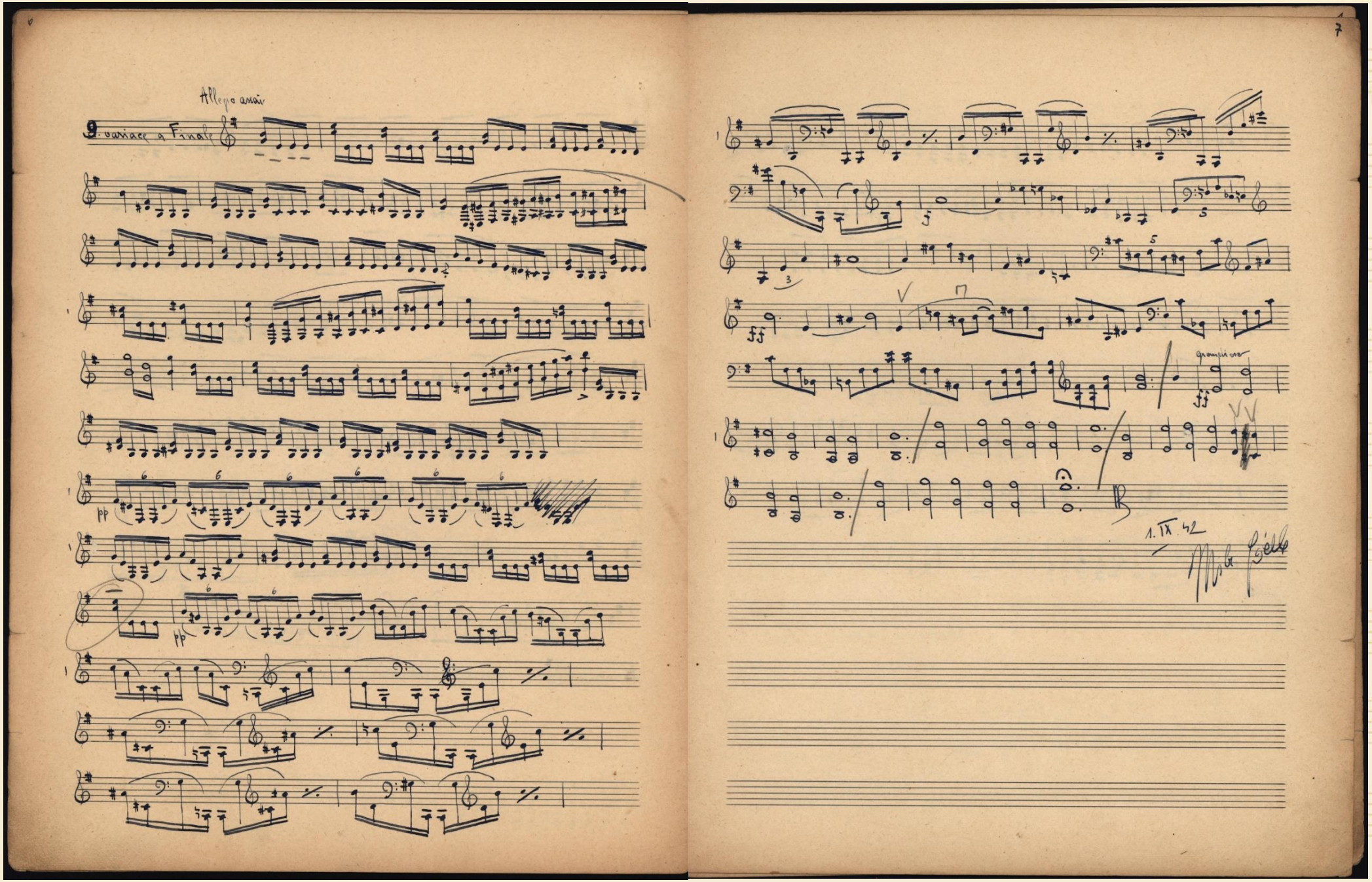


Sketch, 1942
CZ-Pu 59 R 6070/15





Autograph score, 1942, p. 19 – 20 with later comments on the piano part, and revisions, CZ-Pu 59 R 6070/14



Manuscript copy
of the violoncello part,
1942

hand Miloš Sádlo

CZ-Pu 59 R 6070/13

CZ-Pu 59 R 6101/1, 6065/8, 6073/2, 6141/1

Related compositions

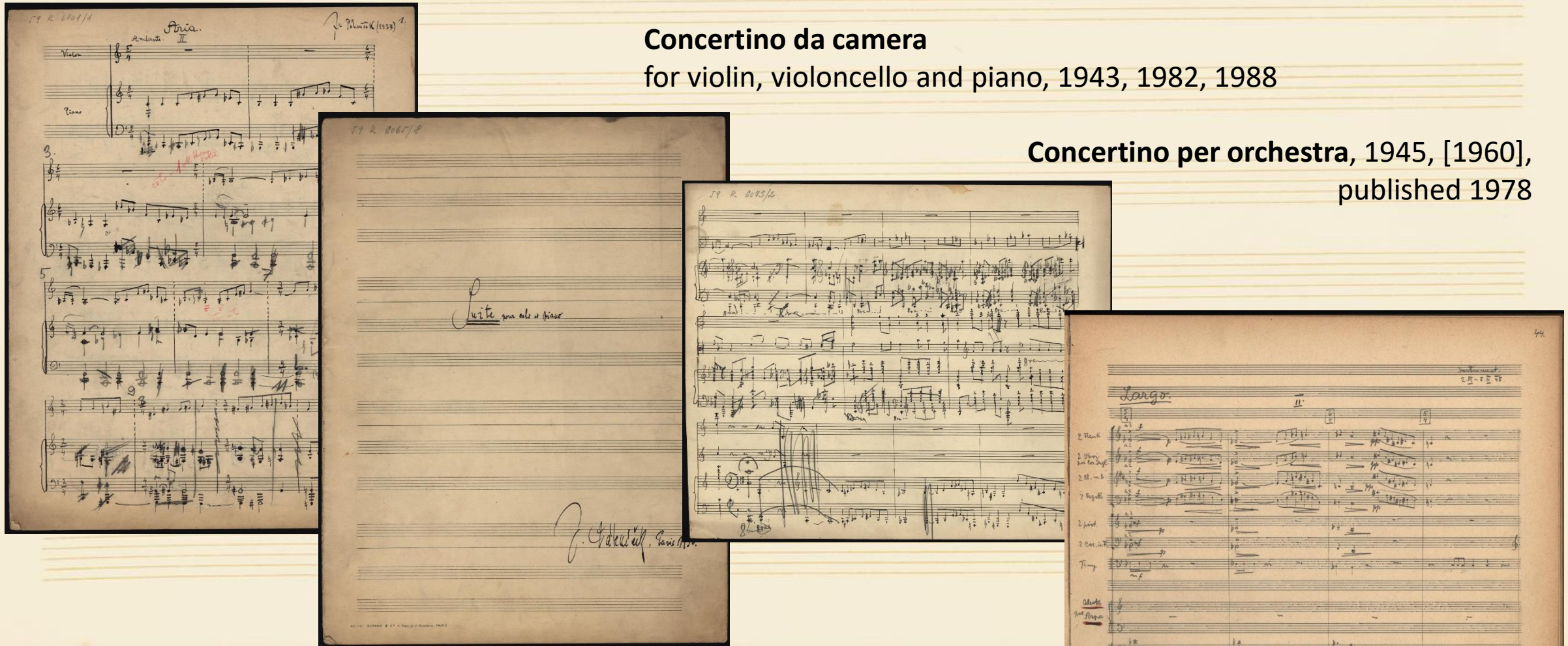
Aria for violin and piano, 1937

27 library units together

Suite for violoncello and piano, 1938, 1948

Concertino da camera
for violin, violoncello and piano, 1943, 1982, 1988

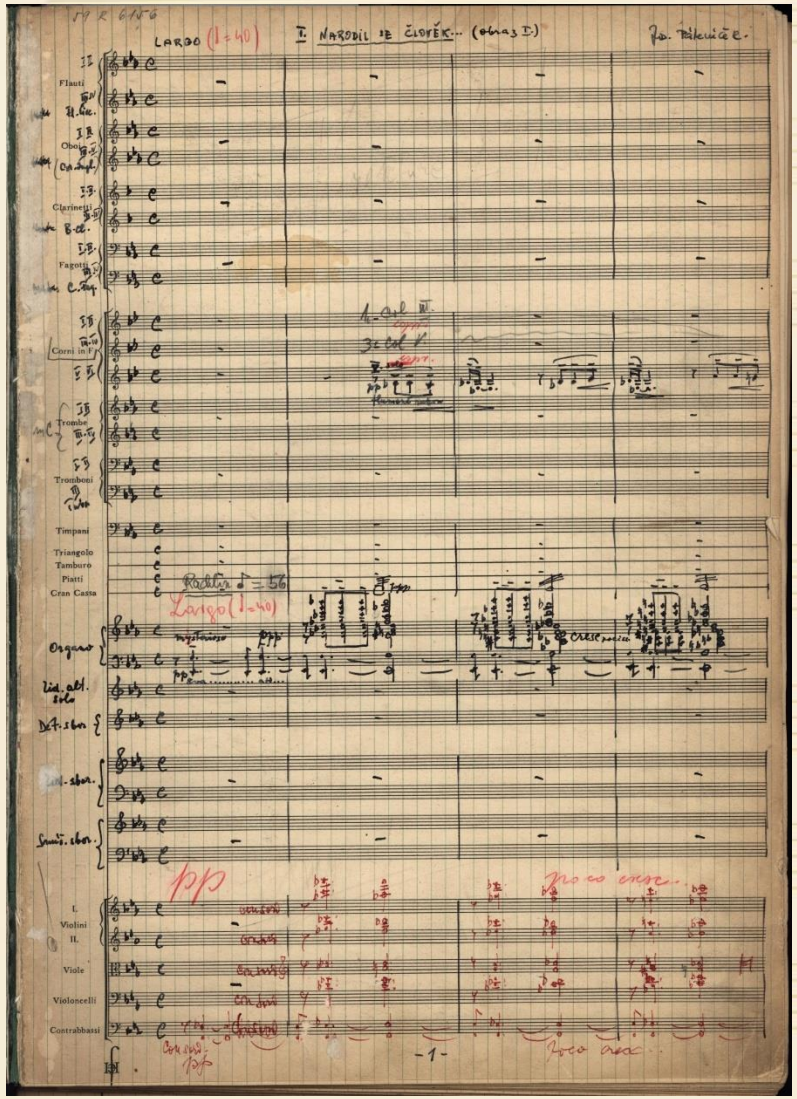
Concertino per orchestra, 1945, [1960], published 1978



CZ-Pu 59 R 6156, 6074/6, 6074/18

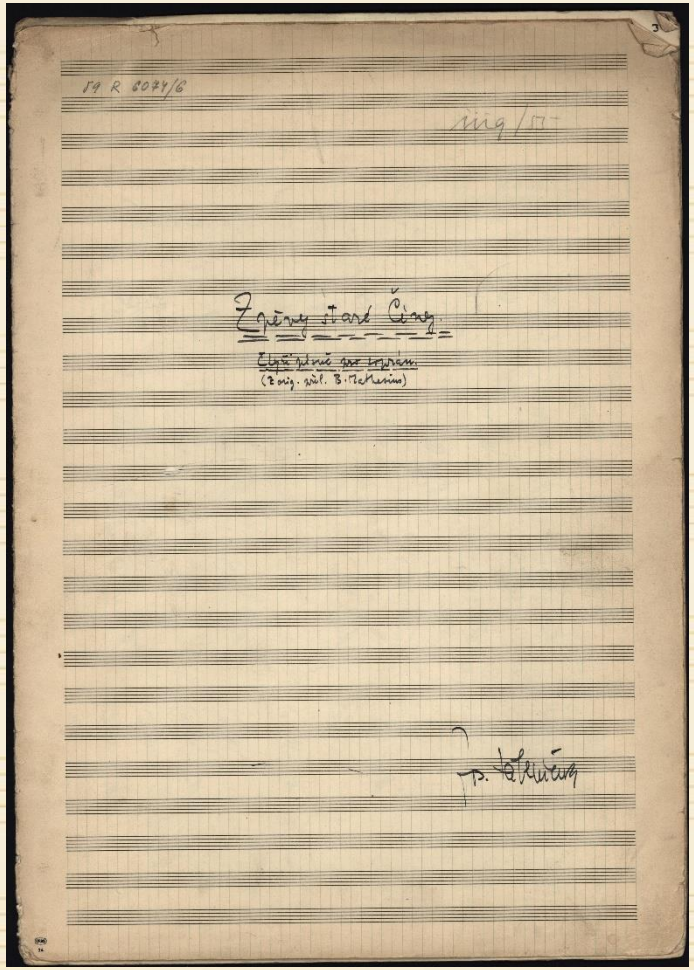
Poema o člověku [Poem about man], 1944, 1951, 1952, 1955, 1958-9

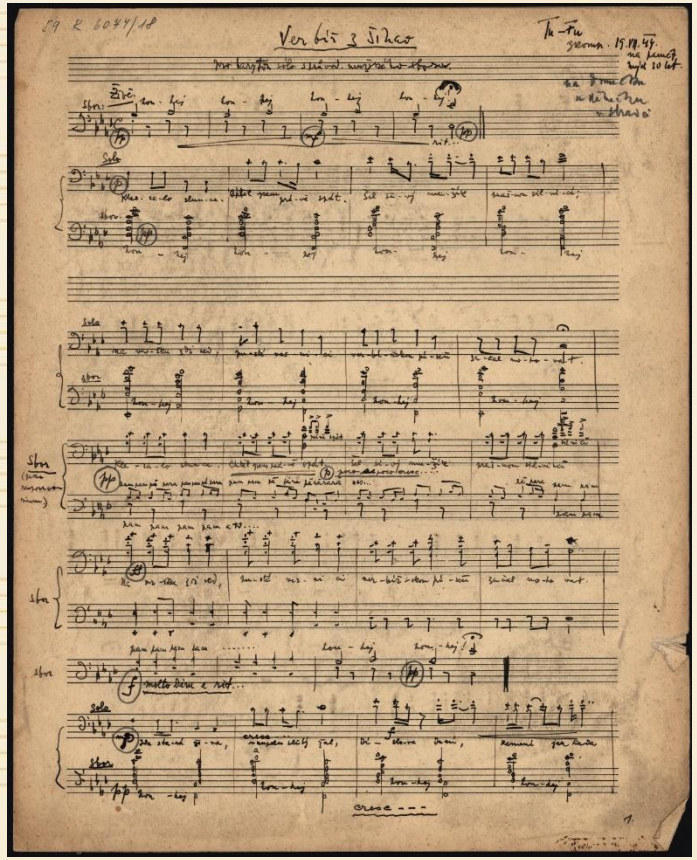
16 library units



Zpěvy staré Číny [Songs of ancient China], 1944, 1945, 1947, 1952 1954, 1955, 1985

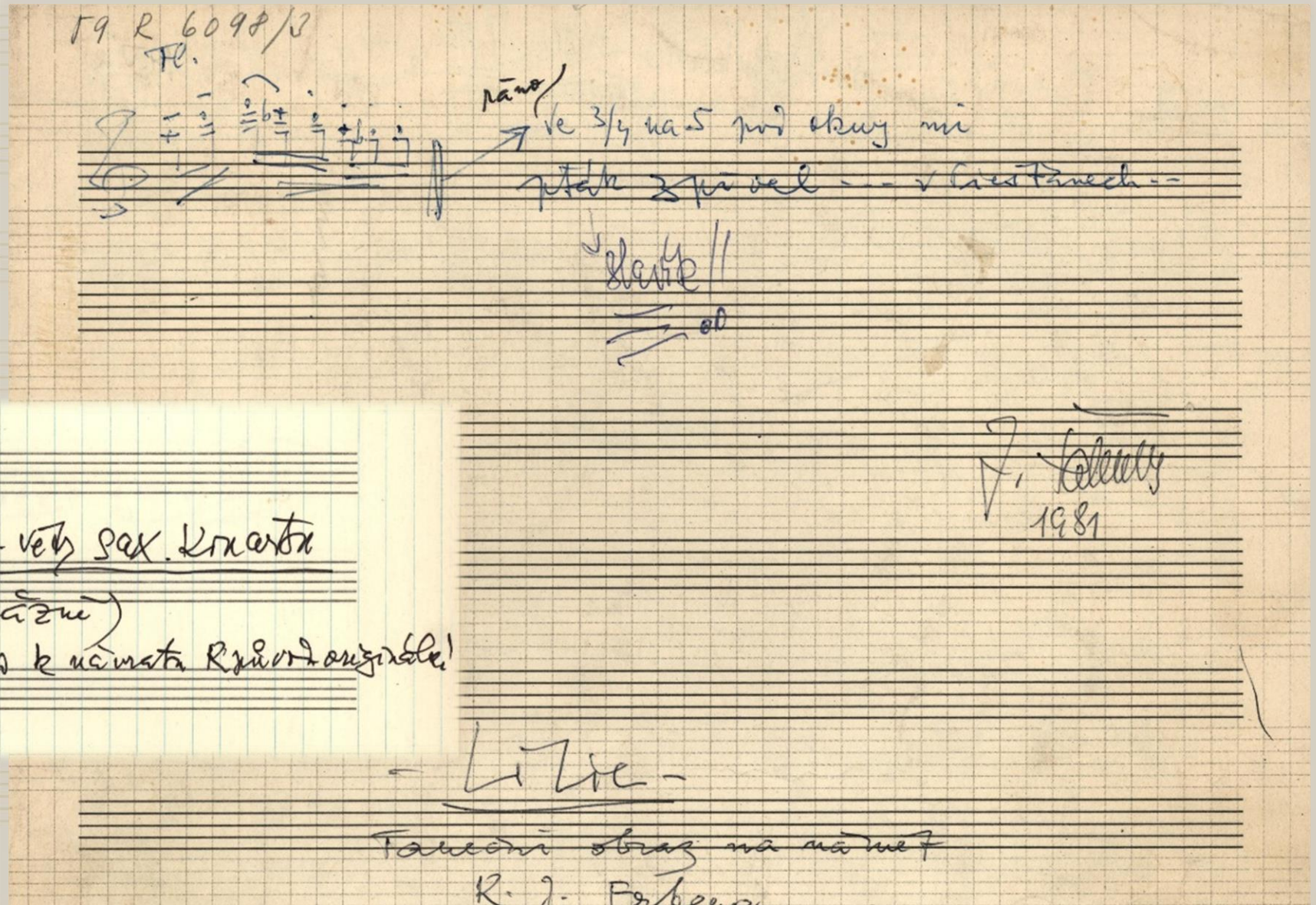
20 library units



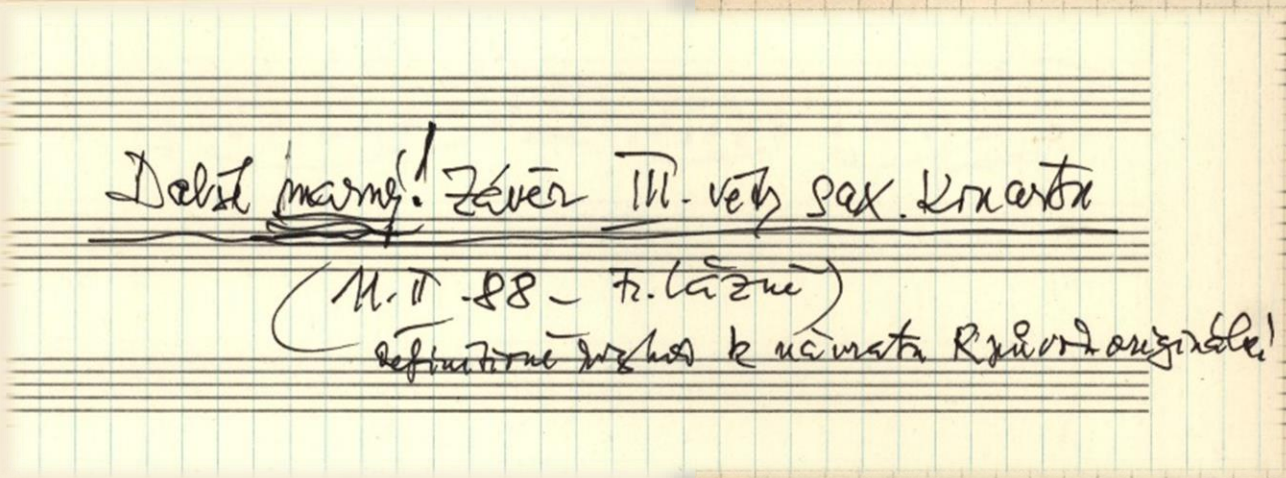


Páleníček's notes in sheet music

CZ-Pu 59 R 6098/3



CZ-Pu 59 R 6072/4



People in manuscripts

dedicatees

- **Family and friends** – e.g. wife, sons, Jeroným Colloredo Manfeld, Lubomír Kostecký
- **Teachers** – e.g. Karel Hoffmeister, Vítězslav Novák
- **Performing artists** – e.g. clarinetist Milan Kostohryz, saxophonist Karel Krautgartner, pianist Rudolf Firkušný, flutist Oldřich Slavíček, violoncellists Miloš Sádlo, Bohuš Heran, double bass player František Hertl, bassoon player Karel Pivoňka, Sonatori de Praga

consultants

friends

- **Composers** – e.g. Ivan Řezáč
- **Authors of texts** – e.g. Konstantin Biebl, Ivan Skála, Josef Kainar, Vladimír Šefl, Sergej A. Jesenin
- **Inspiring visual artists** – e.g. František Jiroudek, Ota Janeček, Alois Fišárek, Rembrandt van Rijn, Mathias Grünewald

editors

- **Writers of the manuscript copies** – e.g. Ema Šimandlová, Karel Unterstab

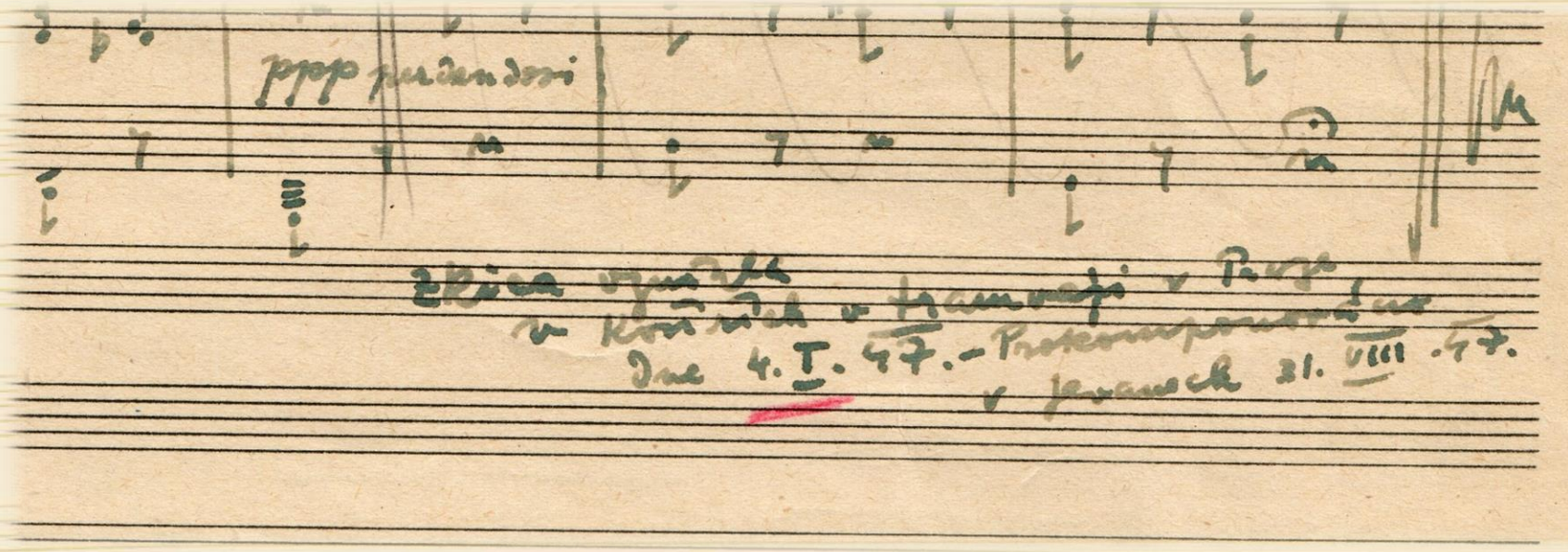


František Jiroudek, illustration for the programme for the cantate Poema o člověku, 1966

Places mentioned in manuscripts

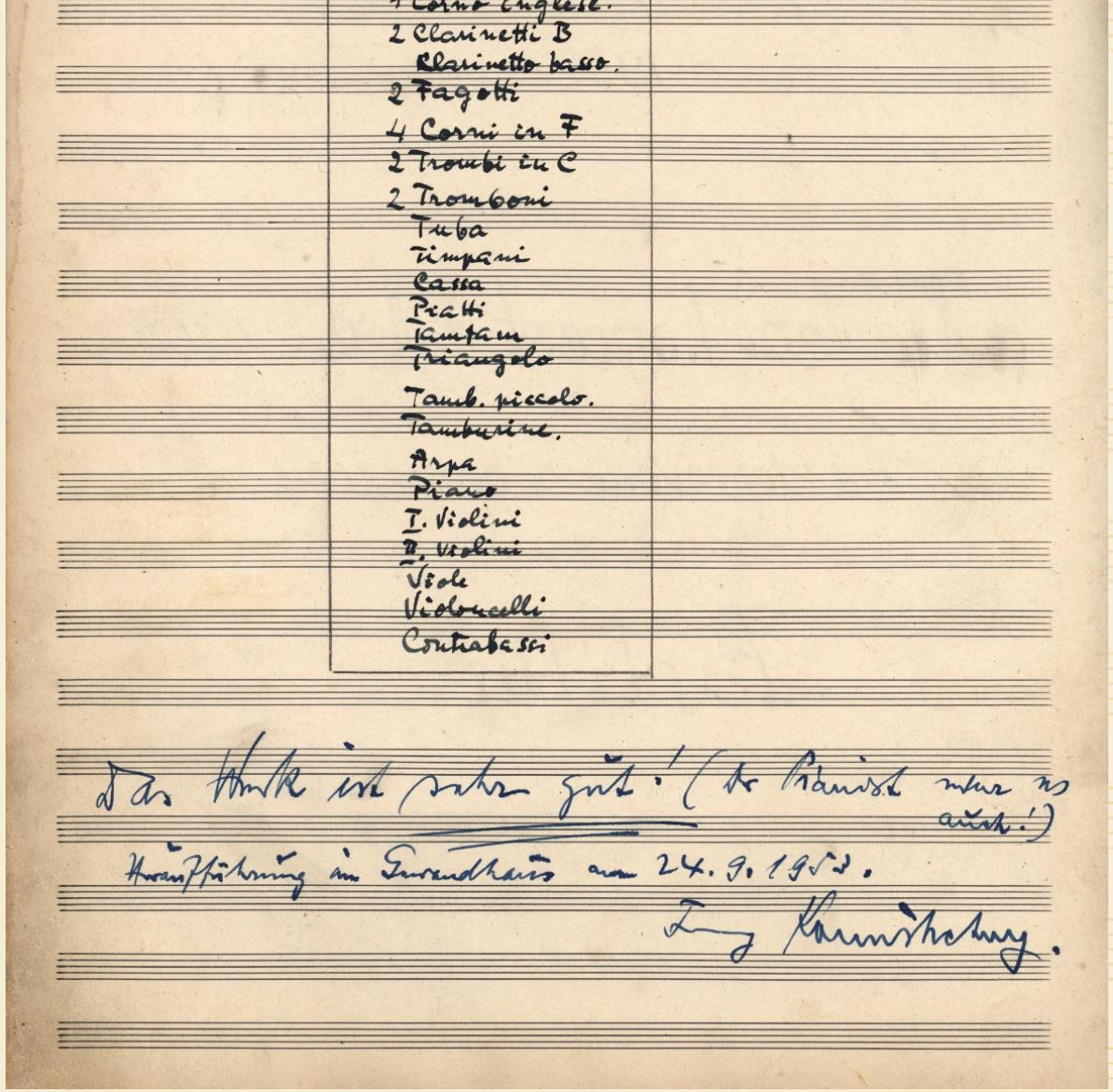
- Where Páleníček composed
  - eg. Praha, Lučany v Jizerských horách, Paris, Dobříš, Opočno, ship Aksu, Suchumi, Kyšiněv, Mariánské Lázně

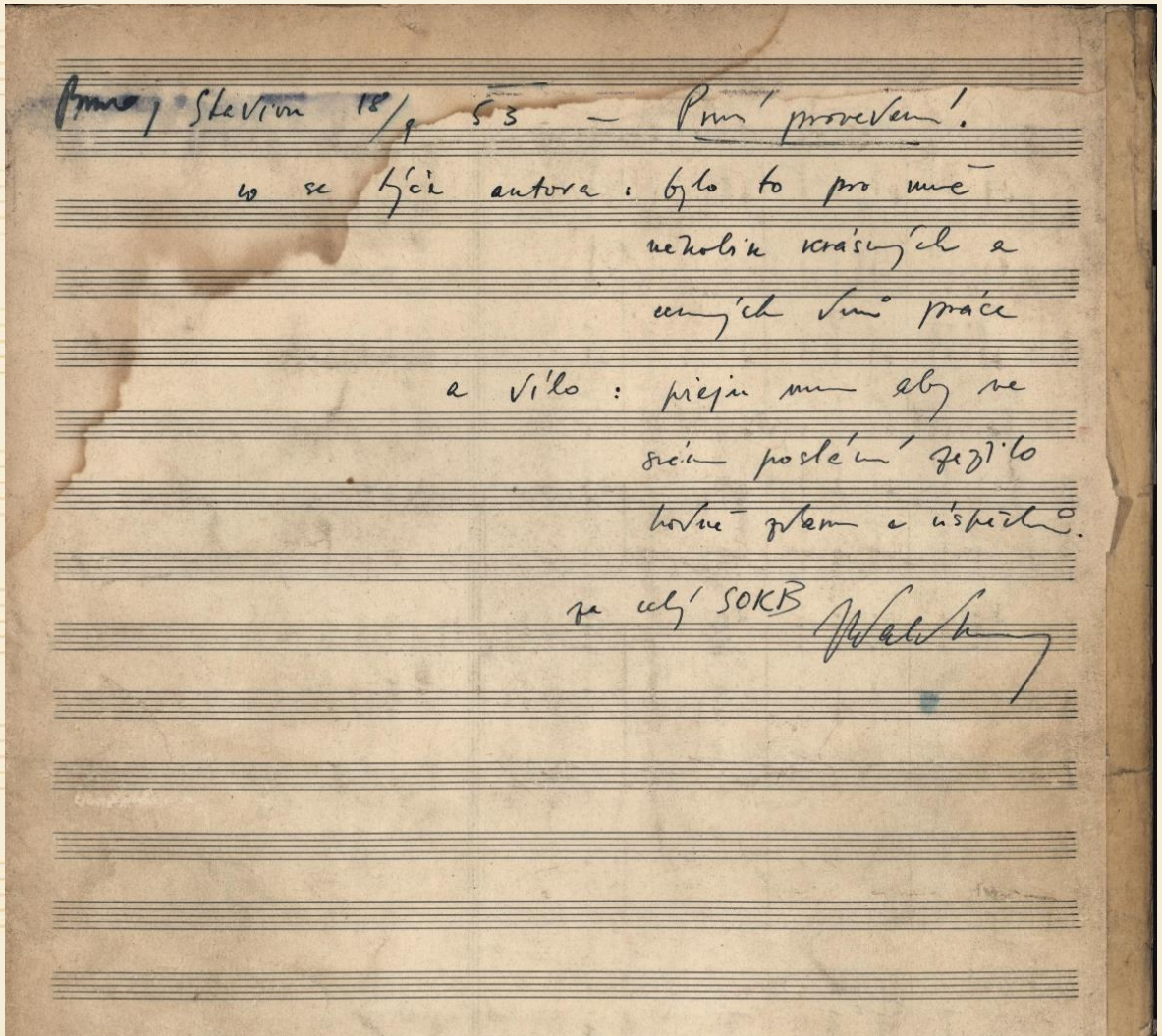
- Where the premiere took place
  - eg. Praha, Brno, Leipzig



A note at the end of the song Silver Heron from the opus Songs of Ancient China: "The sketch was created in Košíře in a tram in Prague on January 4, 1947 - composed in full in Jevany on August 21, 1947“

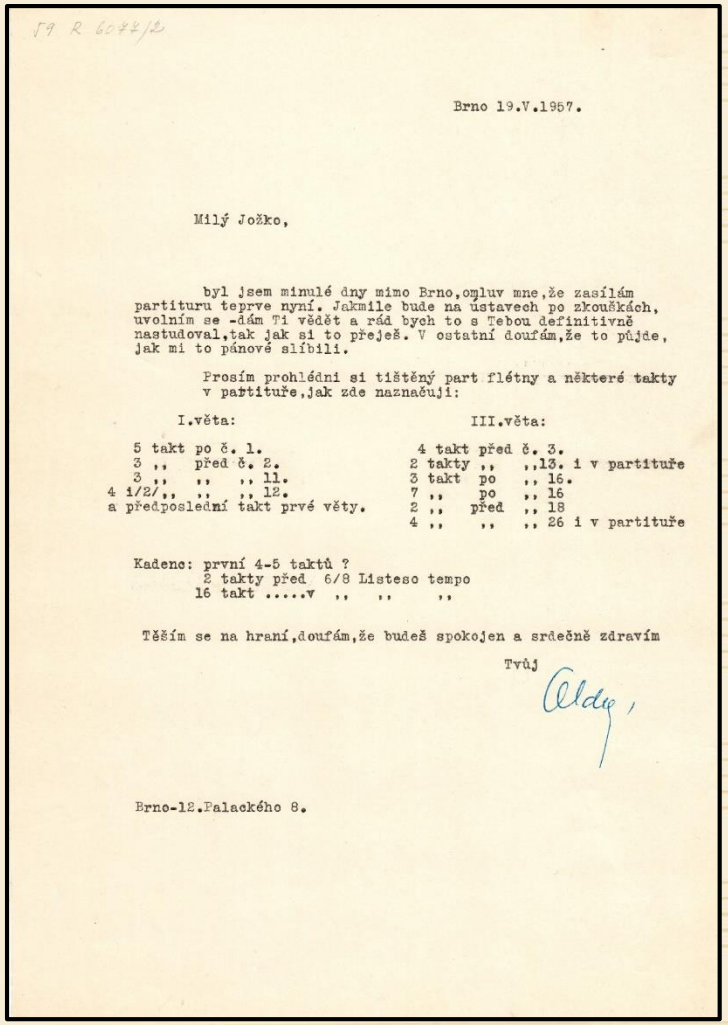
Songs of Ancient China, autograph, 1947, CZ-Pu 6074/8





Notes at the beginning and the end of a manuscript by conductors Franz Konwitschny and Jiří Waldhans
Josef Páleníček: Piano Concerto, no. 2, [1953?], manuscript copy, CZ-Pu 6075/7

Letters embedded in sheet music



59 R 6077/2

Brno 19.V.1957.

Milý Jožko,

byl jsem minulé dny mimo Brno, omluv mne, že zasílám partituru teprve nyní. Jakmile bude na ústavech po zkouškách, uvolním se -dám Ti vědět a rád bych to s Tebou definitivně nastudoval, tak jak si to přeješ. V ostatní doufám, že to půjde, jak mi to pánové slíbili.

Prosím prohlédni si tištěný part flétny a některé takty v partituře, jak zde naznačuji:

I.věta:

5 takt po č. 1.
3 ,, před č. 2.
3 ,, ,, ,, 11.
4 i/2/,, ,, ,, 12.
a předposlední takt prvé věty.

III.věta:

4 takt před č. 3.
2 takty ,, ,,13. i v partituře
3 takt po ,, 16.
7 ,, po ,, 16
2 ,, před ,, 18
4 ,, ,, ,, 26 i v partituře

Kadenc: první 4-5 taktů ?
2 takty před 6/8 Listeso tempo
16 takt .....v ,, ,, ,,

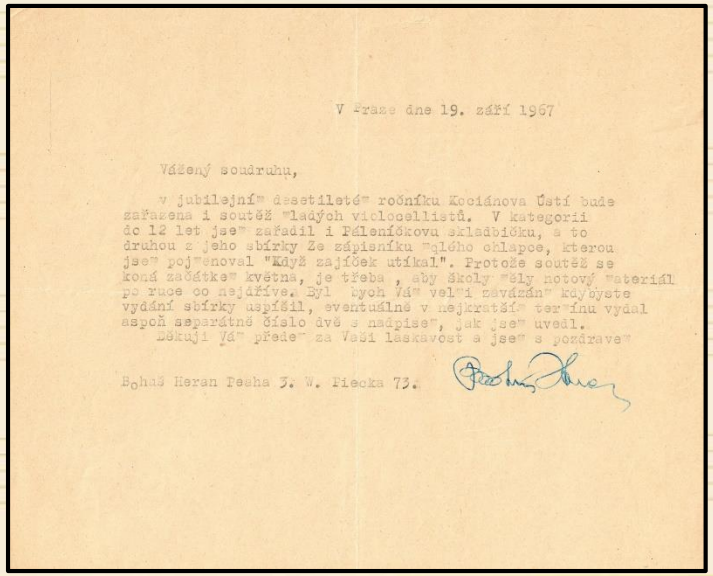
Těším se na hraní, doufám, že budeš spokojen a srdečně zdravím

Tvůj

Oldy,

Brno-12.Palackého 8.

Oldřich Slavíček > Páleníček, 1957
CZ-Pu 59 R 6077/2



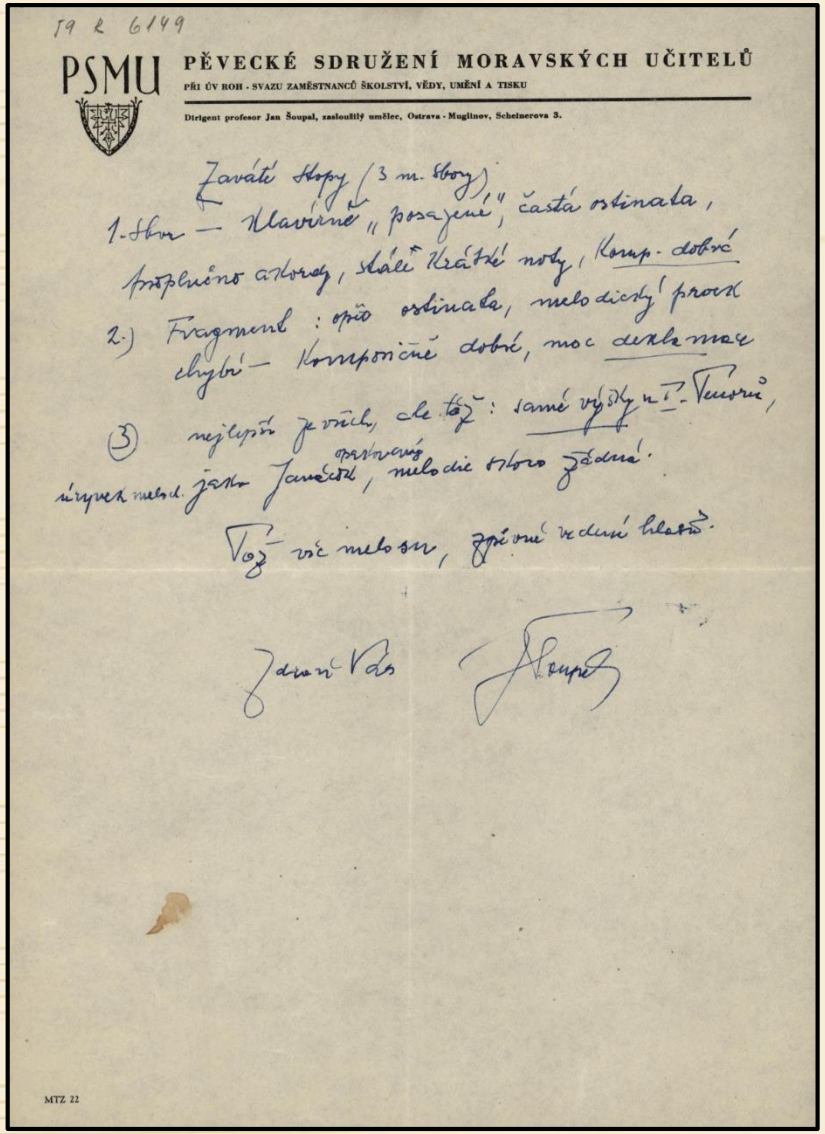
V Praze dne 19. září 1967

Vážený soudruhu,

v jubilejním desátém ročníku Kociánova Ústí bude zařazena i soutěž ladých violoncellistů. V kategorii do 12 let jsem zařadil i Páleníčkovu skladbičku, a to druhou z jeho sbírky Ze zápisníku malého chlapce, kterou jsem pojmenoval "Když zajíček utíkal". Protože soutěž se koná začátkem května, je třeba, aby školy měly notový materiál po ruce co nejdříve. Byl bych vám velmi zavázán, kdybyste vydání sbírky uspíšil, eventuálně v nejkratším termínu vydal aspoň separátně číslo dvě s nadpisem, jak jsem uvedl.
Děkuji předem za Vaši laskavost a jsem s pozdravem

Bohuš Heran Praha 3. V. Piecka 73.

Bohuš Heran > Páleníček, 1967
CZ-Pu 59 R 6088/2



59 R 6149

PSMU

PĚVECKÉ SDRUŽENÍ MORAVSKÝCH UČITELŮ

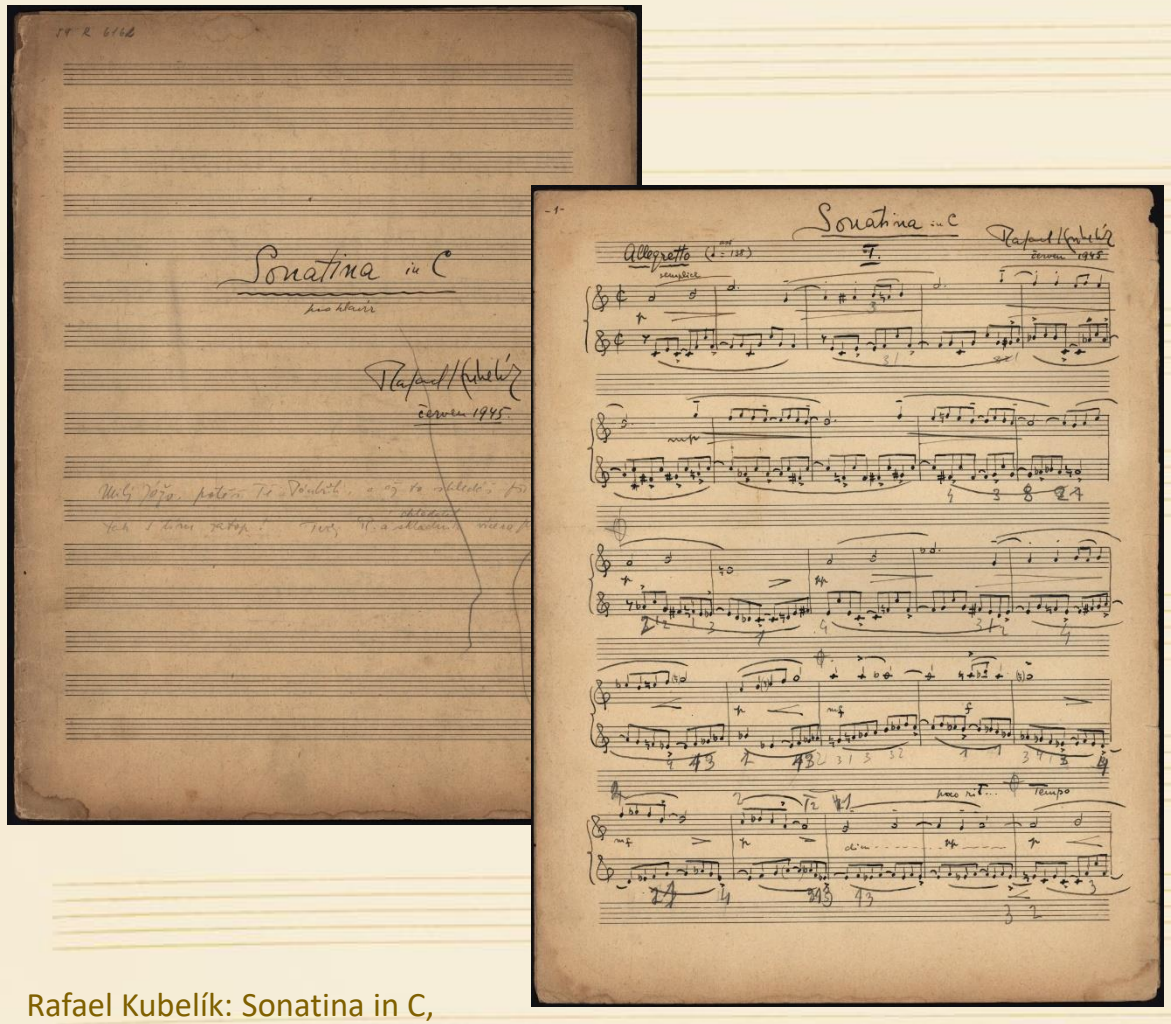
PŘI ÚV ROH - SVAZU ZAMĚSTNANCŮ ŠKOLSTVÍ, VĚDY, UMĚNÍ A TISKU

Dirigent profesor Jan Šoupal, zasloužilý umělec, Ostrava - Muglinov, Scheinerova 3.

MTZ 22

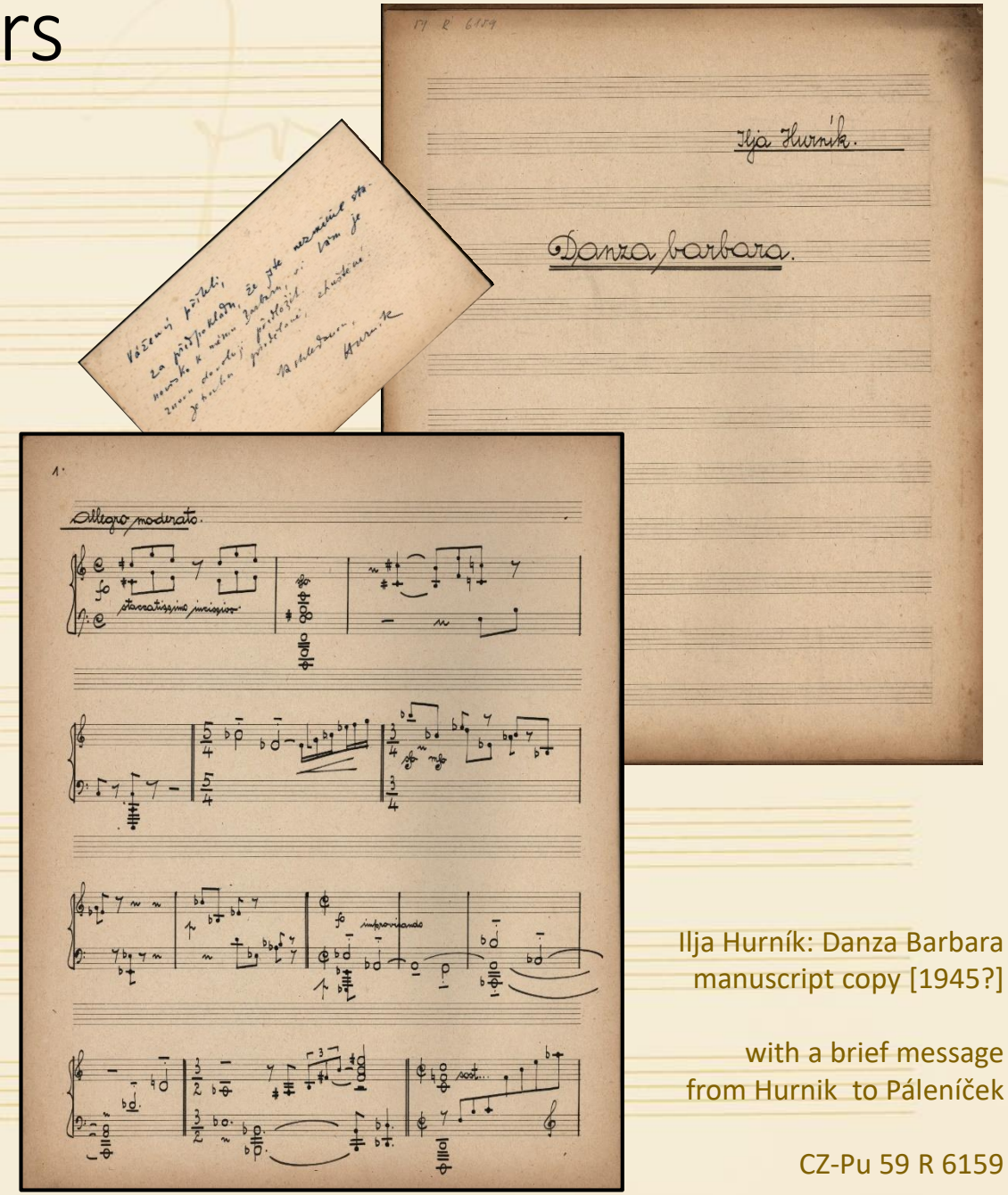
Jan Šoupal > Páleníček, [1958?]
CZ-Pu 59 R 6149

Compositons by other authors



Rafael Kubelík: Sonatina in C,
manuscript copy, 1945

CZ-Pu 59 R 6162



Ilja Hurník: Danza Barbara
manuscript copy [1945?]

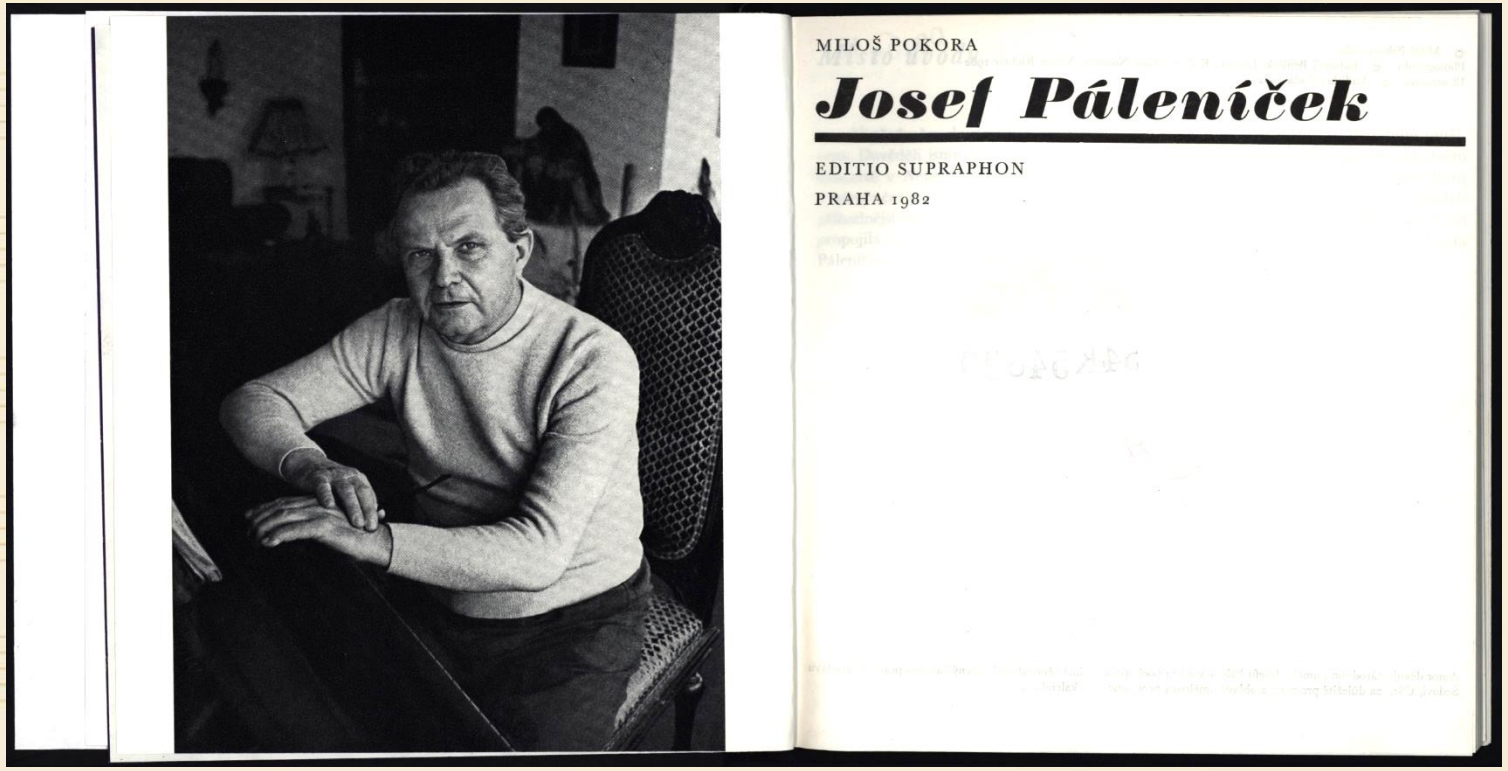
with a brief message
from Hurnik to Páleníček

CZ-Pu 59 R 6159

Páleníček's estate - rich source

- to create a more accurate image of Páleníček's overall compositional work (to supplement existing inventories of his work, to correct the dates of origin)
- for research of Páleníček's compositional methods
- to investigate the origin of specific opuses, for exploring stimuli and inspiration
- for reception research
- to get to know the social relations between artists of the period
- to contribute to the knowledge of the musical culture of the period etc.

The only monograph on Páleníček, author Miloš Pokora, containing valuable information, but published nine years before Páleníček's death

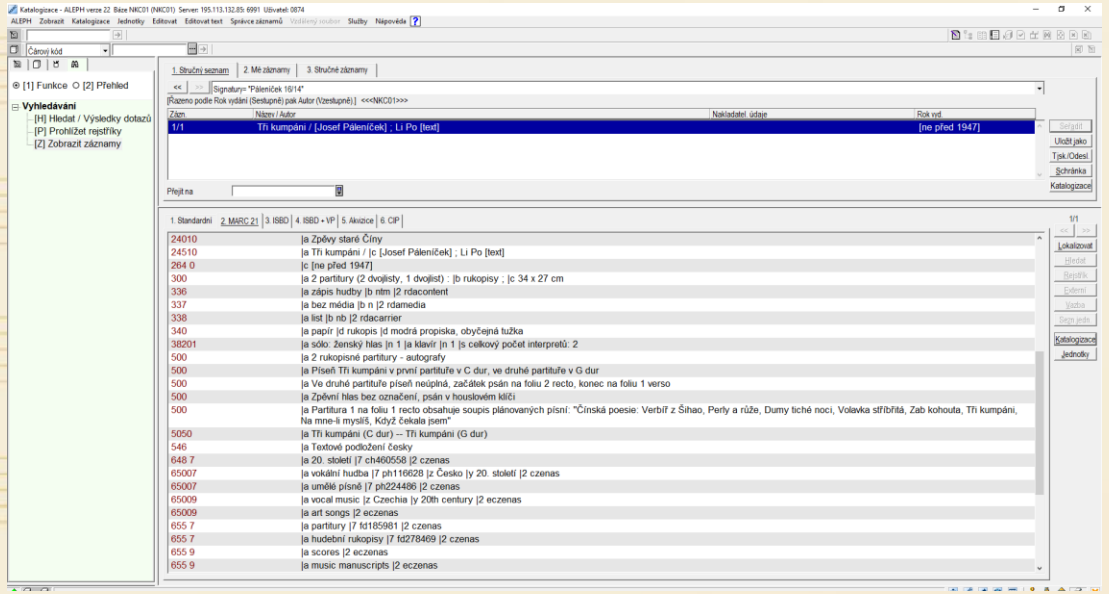


Problems in processing and cataloging the estate

- put into correct place incomplete materials or non dated materials
- not always sufficient processing of Páleníček's work in other institutions, in which Páleníček's work is stored

The current state of processing of the estate

- sorted and stored in archive boxes made of non-acid paper
- it is necessary to fine-tune the most gentle, safe storage (separation of materials in boxes with non-acidic paper), to clean the documents
- already described in the Aleph system
- cataloging in RISM is planned in the near future



Thank you for your attention



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