

A MASTER'S PIANO RECITAL
AND PROGRAM NOTES

by

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B.M.E., The University of Dayton, 1980

A MASTER'S REPORT

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requirements for the degree

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Department of Music

Graduate Recital #110
Season 1981-82

presents

RUDY MARCOZZI, Pianist
B.M.E. The University of Dayton, 1980

Wednesday, March 31, 1982

All Faiths Chapel Auditorium

8:00 p.m.

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Music

PROGRAM

Sonata in E Major, Op. 109 *Ludwig van Beethoven*
Vivace, ma non troppo (1770-1827)
Prestissimo
Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo

Variationen für Klavier, Op. 27 *Anton Webern*
Sehr mäßig (1883-1945)
Sehr schnell
Ruhig fließend

INTERMISSION

Années de Pèlerinage, 2^{me} Année: Italie *Franz Liszt*
IV. Sonetto 47 del Petrarca (1811-1886)
V. Sonetto 104 del Petrarca
VI. Sonetto 123 del Petrarca

Improvisations, Op. 20 *Béla Bartók*
(1881-1945)

This report is written to bring the reader to a fuller understanding of the compositions that were performed on the recital. The historic background of each piece is examined followed by analytic information illustrating the composer's stylistic tendencies.

Ludwig van Beethoven
Piano Sonata in E Major, Opus 109

Beethoven's thirty-two piano sonatas occupy a central position in the sonata literature of the instrument, as well as in the total creative output of the composer. In his monumental study of the sonata idea, William Newman notes that, "More than any other category of his [Beethoven's] music, they [the piano sonatas] give a rounded view of his styles and forms throughout his creative periods."¹ Moreover, Beethoven's unparalleled contributions and innovations with respect to the sonata edifice are most readily understood through an examination of the piano sonatas.

The Piano Sonata in E Major, Opus 109, composed at Molding in 1820, is the middle sonata of the five from his last period.² Like the other late works (most notably the Missa Solemnis, Ninth Symphony, and late quartets), the last piano sonatas show Beethoven at the height of his creative powers. Newman states that "these works were. . . of relatively greater magnitude in both size and emotional scope. . . and. . . continued to lead further and further into the obscurities of uncharted styles, techniques, and forms."³

The drafts for Opus 109 appear in four sketchbooks. Five pages of sketches for the first movement are contained in a sketchbook designated "Grasnick 20b" (located in the Deutsch Staatsbibliothek); all sketches

¹William Newman, The Sonata in the Classical Period (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1963), p. 507.

²The three common style divisions of Beethoven's career (as proposed by Lenz) are: the period of imitation or assimilation, youthful works up to 1802; the period of realization from 1802 to 1816; and the period of contemplation from 1816-1827. Fifteen piano sonatas were composed in the first period, twelve in the second, and five in the third.

³Newman, Sonata in the Classical Period, p. 527.

for the second movement and most of those for the third are found concurrently with those of the Missa in a sketchbook entitled "Artaria 195" (Universalstaabibliothek, Tübingen); and drafts for the second and third variations are found in a sketchbook belonging to the Gessellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna.⁴

The work was published by Schlesinger in 1821 and is dedicated to Maximilliamme Bretano, the daughter of Franz and Antonio Bretano, long-time friends of the composer. Emily Anderson relates that "Maximilliamme was very musical, and Beethoven had already composed for her in 1812 his little pianoforte trio, Woo 39."⁵

The remainder of this chapter will deal with a structural and stylistic analysis of each movement in an attempt to illustrate the following aspects of the composer's last style period: 1) the use of brief motivic materials as the bases of an entire multi-movement work, 2) innovations made to conventional formal procedures, 3) a highly refined use of counterpoint, 4) experimentation with pianistic figuration and keyboard timbres through atypical registral exploitation, and 5) a wide range of emotion densely compacted into brief spans of music.

The E-major sonata is a three-movement work, marked throughout by unified use of extremely economical thematic materials. The first movement, marked Vivace, is in sonata form and presents, at the outset, materials which will be used throughout the entire work. The first theme group occupies only eight brief measures:

⁴A detailed analysis of these sketches and their relation to the final form of the piece is found in Allen Forte, The Compositional Matrix (Baldwin, NY: Music Teachers National Association, 1961), p. 11.

⁵The Letters of Beethoven, collected, transcribed and edited with an introduction, appendixes, notes, and indexes by Emily Anderson (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961), v. 2, p. 931, n. 3.

Example 1: Ludwig van Beethoven,
Opus 109, I, m. 1-8.⁶

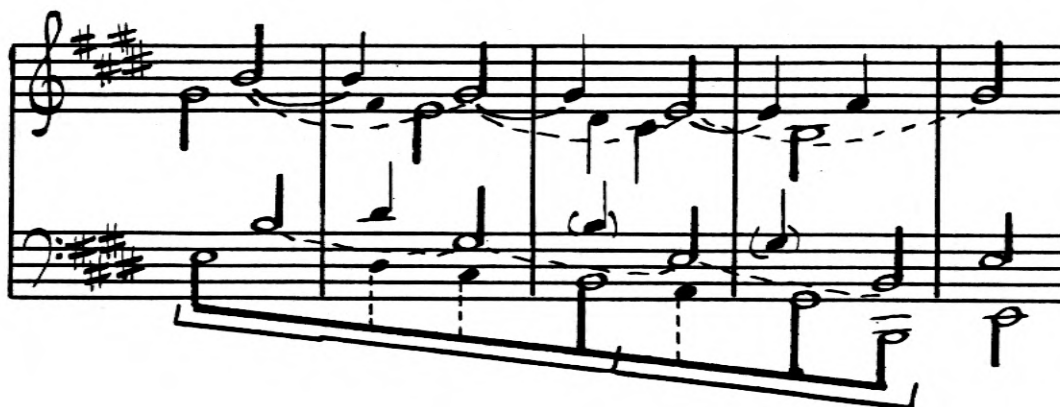


The melodic materials are triadically oriented, set in the recurring figuration of two groups of two sixteenth notes shared between the hands. The theme begins on an anacrusis and the "Scottish snap" figure prevails throughout, creating emphasis on the upbeat. The eight-measure period is comprised of two four-measure parallel phrases. The first employs a straight-forward harmonic progression to the dominant for the half cadence at measure 4, while the second moves through the secondary dominant of V to a b sharp diminished seventh chord for the beginning of the second theme group.

⁶In this chapter, examples 11-13, 18-20, and 28 are reproduced from Ludwig van Beethoven, Complete Piano Sonatas, ed. Heinrich Schenker (New York: Dover Publications, 1975). All other examples are reproduced from Ludwig van Beethoven, Sämtliche Klaviersonaten (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1952).

Of particular significance are the voice leading considerations inherent in the first phrase. Example two provides an extraction of the voices.

Example 2



The upper voice is a simple descending arpeggiation of the tonic triad, giving emphasis to the melodic interval of a third. The repetition of the upper voice notes on alternating weak and strong beats creates a recurring series of harmonic anticipations as the alto and bass voices move in stepwise motion to the structural dominant. The tenor voice is particularly interesting since it reinforces characteristics of the other three voices. The melodic third (ascending in this case) becomes prominent as it is sequentially repeated. The interval of sequence is also a third and the initial notes of the sequenced two-note figure form a descending arpeggiation of the tonic triad which is directed toward the structural dominant in measure 3. The scalar nature of the bass line is of great consequence. Notice the tetrachords (brackets in Example 2) formed by the voice in each phrase.

An extraction of the voices in the second phrase (Ex. 3) reveals that the prevalence of the melodic third is diminished as the harmonic motion to the second theme group begins. The alto and bass voices begin

with descending parallel stepwise motion, but the pattern breaks down after only one measure. No sequential pattern of repetition exists in the tenor. The bass tetrachord is present in the first phrase, but not in the second.

Example 3



The second theme group begins in measure 9, marked adagio espressivo with an accompanying meter change from 2/4 to 3/4 (Ex. 4).

Example 4: Ludwig van Beethoven, Opus 109, I, m. 9-15

Adagio espressivo

Though the f-sharp major triad (V/V in E) in measure 8 implies movement to 3 major, the resolution to the dominant is delayed until measure 14, where it is approached through the mediant d sharp in measure 13. The thematic material occurs over harmonic motion to the dominant, and is primarily conjunct. The frugal melodic materials are accompanied by an abundance of dynamic contrast: in the brief span of the initial three measures, the performer is confronted with no fewer than eight dynamic changes. Another salient feature of the section is the pianistic figuration in measures 12-15. Characteristic of such extended figuration is the accompanying retardation of the harmonic rhythm.

The development (m. 16-46) uses only material from the first theme group. The meter returns to 2/4. The exchange of invertible counterpoint between the hands occurs extensively in the development and the remainder of the sonata. (Ex. 5)

Example 5: Ludwig van Beethoven,
Opus 109, I, m. 16-25



The left hand material in measures 15-16 (bracketed in example 5) originally appeared in the right hand of measures 1-3. A more illustrative and extended example of immediate "exchange" technique is seen in measures 17-25. The descending line from f sharp to g sharp in the left hand

(circled notes, m. 17-20) is immediately imitated in the right hand (m. 20-25) at the interval of a sixth. In both cases, the line is accompanied by another voice moving in contrary motion. The importance of these voices is amplified by the composer's indication of sempre legato as they occur in each hand. Harmonic movement is from B major to C-sharp minor (half cadence m. 20) to G-sharp major (authentic cadence m. 25). All activity within the development occurs in the context of the initial rhythmic figuration.

Measures 25-37 (Ex. 6) are marked by sequential treatment of two brief motives.

Example 6: Ludwig van Beethoven,
Opus 109, I, m. 25-37



The first, an ascending tetrachord, occurs in measure 24 (2nd beat) through the downbeat of measure 26 and is followed by two sequential repetitions at the interval of a major second. The second motive occurs

in measures 32-35 and is repeated sequentially at the interval of a sixth in measures 35-37. These melodic sequences are supported by harmonic sequences moving tonal centers from G sharp to D sharp to F sharp to B at measure 35 where a four measure dominant pedal occurs (m. 35-37) in preparation for the recapitulation.

The remaining portion of the development consists of an embellished extension of the dominant tonality. At measure 38, the outer voices move in stepwise contrary motion, arriving at the dominant in measure 41. At this point, the dominant pedal reappears in the upper and lowest voice of the right hand while the remaining voices move in canon at the interval of a third to create the progression vii^{o7}/V (Vsus) v (m. 41, 2nd beat--m. 43, 1st beat). A literal repetition of the pattern (m. 43, 2nd beat--m. 45, 1st beat), is followed by a modified restatement (m. 45, 2nd beat--m. 47, 1st beat) which alters the prolonging progression to $vii^{o7}/B_7 - vi^9 - V$, leading directly to the recapitulation.

The recapitulation begins in measure 48 where the first-theme group appears two octaves higher than it did in the exposition (Ex. 7).

Example 7: Ludwig van Beethoven,
Opus 109, I, m. 48-56



The texture has been thinned to essentially three voices, though the

basic voice-leading of the exposition remains the same. The drama of the recapitulation is heightened by extreme contrast of register between the hands as the lower voice descends scalewise in broken octaves to the cadence, while the right hand ascends to the upper limit of the movement's range. In the second phrase, the hands exchange roles with accompanimental figuration in the right hand and the melody in the left hand appearing one octave lower than in the exposition. The first phrase retains the harmonic progression of the exposition, and although the secondary dominant of V appears in the second phrase, the a sharp is lowered to a natural in measure 53 and diatonic subdominant harmony is utilized in the cadential progression in measures 53-56.

Rather than the expected resolution to tonic, the dominant harmony in measure 56 moves instead to an e-sharp fully diminished seventh chord for the beginning of the second theme group. The second theme group in the recapitulation occurs in measures 57-65 (Ex. 8).

Example 8: Ludwig van Beethoven,
Opus 109, I, m. 57-65

The musical score is for the first movement of Beethoven's Opus 109, measures 57-65. It is in 2/4 time and marked 'Adagio espressivo'. The score is written for piano and includes a variety of dynamics and articulations. The first system (measures 57-60) features a piano (p) dynamic and a crescendo (cresc.) leading to a forte (f) dynamic. The second system (measures 61-64) includes a piano (p) dynamic, a crescendo (cresc.), a decrescendo (dim.), and a crescendo (cresc.) leading to a forte (f) dynamic. The third system (measures 65-68) includes a piano (p) dynamic, a crescendo (cresc.), and a decrescendo (dim.). The fourth system (measures 69-72) includes a piano (p) dynamic, a decrescendo (dim.), a ritardando, and a tempo legato. The score is written for piano and includes fingerings and articulations.

The meter is again altered to 2/4 as melodic materials appear in a region of harmonic ambiguity which ends with the appearance of E major in measure 63. As in the development, an extended pianistic figuration provides the transition, in this case, to the coda. The figuration is again accompanied by a retardation of the harmonic rhythm, while the metrical value of the figuration is diminished, now including a grouping of 64th notes (m. 61). The dense forte chords in the instrument's lower register are examples of the composer's experimentation with sound. The scalar figuration in measures 63-64 illustrates extensive use of melodic thirds as embellishment. An arpeggiated tonic triad leads to the coda.

The coda makes use of contrapuntal materials exchanged between the hands. Example 9 illustrates two such exchanges.

Example 9: Ludwig van Beethoven,
Opus 109, I, m. 66-74



In measures 67 (2nd beat) to 69 (1st beat) the material that first appeared in the right hand is restated one octave lower in the left hand. Similarly, the accompanimental figuration moves from the left hand to the right hand. A similar exchange is also seen in measures 71-73. A more complex use of the imitative technique leads to the cadence in measures 75-76. Beginning with the second beat of measure 73, the retrograde of the ascending line in the right hand is found in the left hand stated in *stretto*. Throughout the initial section of the coda, the harmonic idiom is restricted to primary triads, with each point of exchange or imitation set off by an authentic cadence.

Material which first appeared in the development (m. 16-24) is restated in measures 75-84 in a quiet chorale setting. The slower quarter notes used for this reference to the development interrupt the thematic rhythmic figuration used at the onset of the coda. The harmonization of the material includes a number of secondary diminished seventh and secondary dominants.

With the authentic cadence at measure 85, the original rhythmic

figuration returns, set over a tonic pedal which lasts for the remainder of the movement. Melodic material in measures 85-87 resembles measures 35-37. In measures 88-91, a two-note appoggiatura motive falling on b (first from c natural, then from c sharp) is stated twice (piano, then pianissimo). The figure is then sequentially repeated in successively higher octaves leading to a final statement of the tonic triad. The structural tones of this repetition (circled notes, example 10) reinforce the triadic orientation of the movement.

Example 10: Ludwig van Beethoven,
Opus 109, I, m. 85-98



Of special significance are Beethoven's pedalling directions which clearly indicate that the second movement is to follow directly from the first.

The tempestuous second movement is also in sonata form and is marked Prestissimo. Figure 1 illustrates the formal division and key scheme.

Figure 1: Formal Division in Prestissimo movement

	Exposition			Development	Recapitulation		
<u>Formal Division</u>	T ¹	trans.	T ²		T ¹	trans.	T ² Coda
<u>Measure #</u>	1	- 24	33	66	105	119	132 168
<u>Key Center</u>	Em		Bm		Em		Em Em

The second movement is nearly twice as long as the first. A chart of formal features and proportions (figure 2) reveals striking differences between the two movements, differences that illustrate Beethoven's complete freedom within established formal procedures

Figure 2:
Proportional comparison of first and second movement features

<u>Formal Division</u>	<u>First Movement</u>							
	τ^1	trans.	τ^2	Development	τ^1	trans.	τ^2	Coda
<u>Total Measures</u>	8	0	7	33	9	0	9	32
<u>Proportion (%) to the whole</u>	8%	0%	7%	34%	9%		9%	33%
<u>Formal Division</u>	<u>Second Movement</u>							
	τ^1	trans.	τ^2	Development	τ^1	trans.	τ^2	Coda
<u>Total Measures</u>	24	8	33	39	15	12	38	8
<u>Proportion (%) to the whole</u>	13%	4%	22%	22%	8%	6%	22%	4%

In the second movement, the exposition and recapitulation are proportionally lengthened by means of transitional material between first and second theme groups, a feature that is non-existent in the first movement. The developments of both movements are the shortest sections. Both make use of only the first theme group. The lengths of the codas in each movement seem to compensate for the differences in size in thematic areas. The extended first-movement coda is nearly eight times the proportional length of the brief second-movement coda. In contrast to the codas of the two movements, the thematic and transitional material of the second movement is nearly twice the proportional length than that of the first movement. Tonal centers for both movements are conventional.

Other differences include the constant $\frac{6}{8}$ meter in the second move-

ment and the division of the first theme group into two distinct periods.

Despite the variance in form, the two sonata-form movements of Opus 109 exhibit a number of striking similarities. Like the opening thematic material of the first movement, the initial melodic material in the second movement (Ex. 12) is presented in an eight-bar period consisting of two parallel phrases.

Example 11: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, II, m. 1-8



The triadic orientation of the theme and emphasis of the third and fifth factors of the tonic triad through metric placement and repetition are melodic features common to both movements. Note also the contrapuntal implications of the bass line and its distinct tetrachordal orientation.

The first theme group of the second movement is distinguished from its counterpart in the first movement by the presence of a second eight-bar period. (Ex. 12)

Example 12: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, II, m. 9-23

Here, the contrapuntal nature of the movement can be seen. In the initial statement (m. 9-15) the middle voice is marked by retrograde fragments of material that appears in the top voice. At the repetition of the period (m. 16-23), the contrapuntal texture is thickened with an additional inner voice (left hand) moving in contrary motion to the original one (right hand). The additional voice in the left hand is reminiscent of the "exchange" technique used in the first movement. As in the first movement, the added motive is an inversion of the original idea.

Both initial theme groups make use of simple harmonic materials. Primary harmony is most prevalent, used in very direct and concise progressions. The transitions between first and second theme groups in both movements utilize the mediant key area.

The second theme group is of interest because of its similarity to the first, its key center, and its contrapuntal texture. (Ex. 13)

Example 13: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, II, m. 8-23

The rhythmic figuration clearly recalls the second period of the first theme group, as does the imitative middle voice which is used with its inversion when the phrase is repeated (m. 36). The overall tonality is B minor (rather than the more conventional B major), a fact that is

obscured by the opening dominant harmony and the avoidance of a strong authentic cadence.

The development is preceded by sequential harmonic movement which moves key centers in descending stepwise motion from c sharp to g. Perhaps the most significant feature of this transition occurs in measures 57-65. Here, Beethoven uses invertible counterpoint shared between the hands, a prominent feature of the first movement. (Ex. 14)

Example 14: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, II, m. 57-65



The brief development opens with a varied fragment of the first theme which leads to a canonic section featuring the countermotive found originally in the lowest voice in measure 4. (Ex. 15)

Example 15: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, II, m. 70-81



The motive is first stated in the inner voice, with two sequential statements at the interval of a descending perfect fifth.

The follower voice of the canon begins two measures later at the interval of a perfect fourth. All canonic activity occurs over a pedal point B (m. 69-77) or a pedal point C (m. 78-81).

The final section of the development makes extensive use of this same five-note motive (Ex. 16).

Example 16: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, II, m. 89-102



Beethoven's contrapuntal prowess is exhibited as the inverted motive appears first in the bass (all motives are bracketed in example 16) answered with a restatement of the inversion in the tenor. Finally, the motive and its inversion are simultaneously stated by the upper and lower voices (m. 88-91). Non-literal restatements of the motive lead to an f-sharp major chord in measure 95. This harmonic entity is prolonged through measure 103 with more material derived from the five-note motive. The development thus begins and ends with dominant harmony.

The significance of the previously discussed motivic material as a unifying factor of the second movement is evident. But of even greater significance is the role played by the motive as a unifying force in the

entire work. Note that if the fourth note of the figure is viewed as a lower neighbor to the goal note, the five-note figure becomes a descending tetrachord whose origin is tonic and whose destination is dominant. Recall the use of such a figure in the first movement. The final f-sharp major chord of the development (m. 103) is followed immediately by the recapitulation. The first period of the opening theme group is literally repeated from the exposition, but the second period is replaced by a restatement of the first in the lower register of the keyboard. The omnipresent five-note countermotive appears in inversion in the right hand. (Ex. 17)

Example 17: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, II, m. 112-119



Transitional material is similar to its counterpart in the exposition. A stepwise descending bass line leads to the dominant of E minor, the expected key of the second theme in the recapitulation. Melodic materials in the remainder of the recapitulation are nearly identical with respect to length and placement as those of the exposition. A notable deviation is the four-bar extension of the second theme in measures 135-138.

The movement is brought to a terse close with a concise eight bar coda marked by contrary motion from the dominant to the ii^{o7} chord (m. 175) which becomes part of the final cadence.

The final movement of Opus 109 is in the form of a theme with six variations. Prior to this work, Beethoven had never used this form

for the concluding movement of a piano sonata. Marked bilingually in both German and Italian (Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung; Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo), the thematic material is presented in two eight-bar periods, each marked with repeat signs. (Ex. 18)

Example 18: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, III, m. 1-16

Gesangvoll. mit innigster Empfindung.
Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo.

A strong relationship can be seen among the thematic ideas of three movements. Like the second movement, the theme of the third movement uses two eight-bar periods marked by parallel phrase construction (the first movement uses only one such period). The triadic orientation of the opening thematic material of the earlier movements can also be found in this one. The circled structural notes of the first phrase (refer to example 18) are all factors in either the tonic or dominant triads.

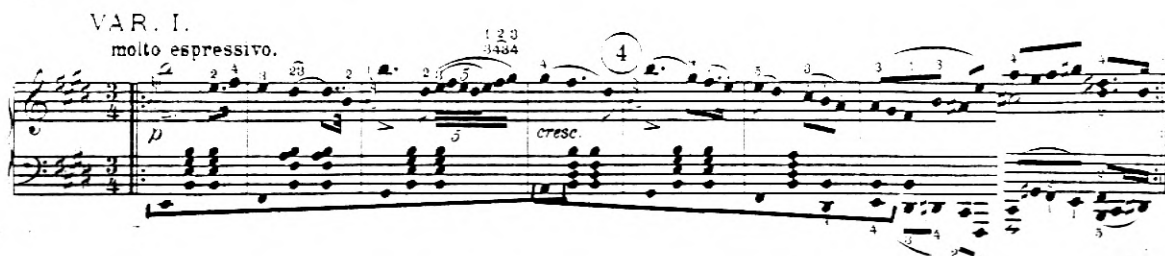
The third movement features the harmonic conciseness of the preceding movements. Notable harmonic aspects of the theme include the secondary dominant used to approach the half cadence in measure 4 (a sonority that was used in the first movement), and the German augmented sixth chord in measure 8.

Overall, the texture of the thematic material is homophonic, though

there are clear contrapuntal implications. Note the contrary motion of the outside voices in the opening portion of the first period. The presence of an inner voice contributes further to the contrapuntal nature of the writing.

The second variation maintains the basic harmonic movement of the theme as the melodic aspect of the theme is greatly varied. Marked molto espressivo, the new melody (clearly related to the original) appears in a higher keyboard register than the original theme, laden with poignant grace notes. The emotional content of the second period is further heightened by chromatic variants. These changes are illustrated in Example 19.⁷

Example 19: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, III, m. 1-8



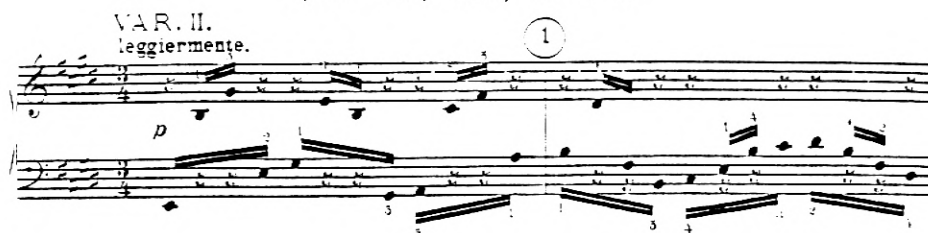
Of special interest are the textural changes of the variation. For the initial six bars, a distinct homophonic texture is apparent. The bass line that emerges as a result of the textural simplification is of utmost significance, for the tetrachordal orientation (see brackets, Ex. 20) which was hidden in the original theme is now obvious.

In the third variation, the repeat signs used in the theme and first variation are abandoned. The construction is that of a double variation.

⁷Measure numbers begin again at 1 for each variation.

Measures 1 through 8 of this variation correspond to the initial statement of the first period. The chief element that is varied is texture. An arpeggiated figuration shared between the hand permeates the entire period. (Ex. 20)

Example 20: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, III, m. 1-2



The harmonic and melodic materials are essentially the same as the original thematic material, although Beethoven chooses to use the enharmonic spelling of the German augmented sixth, creating a written major-minor seventh chord.

The next eight bars (9-16) correspond to the repeated statement of the first period. Marked teneramente and set over a repetitive chordal accompaniment, the first prominent melodic idea of the phrase is a falling third (recalling the opening of the theme) followed by four sequential repetitions at the interval of an ascending major second. Recurring trills leading to 2-3 suspensions are incorporated into the sequential repetitions.

Example 21: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, III, m. 9-16

Musical score for 'L'Espresso' by Franz Liszt, measures 11-13. The score is in 3/4 time and features a treble and bass staff. Measure 11 is marked 'teneramente' and includes fingerings 1, 2, 17, 2, 15, 3, and 13. Measure 12 includes fingerings 1, 15, and 1. Measure 13 includes fingerings 1, 1, 15, and 1, and is marked 'cresc.'. The score concludes with the instruction 'dimin. p'.

In the second phrase of the first period (repeated statement), the structural melodic notes occur as the upper tones in rhythmically displaced chords that alternate with the accompanimental chords of the left hand. The major-minor seventh spelling has reverted to that of an augmented sixth.

The remainder of the second variation, based on two statements of the theme's second period, parallel the opening portion of the variation with respect to melodic settings and textural contrasts.

The invertible counterpoint of the first two movements comes to the fore in the third variation. Structural melodic notes are found in the perpetuo moto sixteenth notes of the left hand, while the right hand states a simple triadically based counterpoint of isolated eighth notes. In the consequent phrase, the hands simply exchange materials.

Example 22: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, III, m. 1-8



This process is repeated three times: measures 9-16, corresponding to the repeated statement of the theme's initial period; measures 17-24, related to the second period of theme; and measures 25-32, analogous to the repeat of the second period. Using the "written out" repeats, Beethoven has maintained the double variation format of the preceeding variation.

In the fourth variation, also marked bilingually (Etwas langsamer al das Thema; un poco meno andante cio a un poco piu adagio come il tema), the repeat signs reappear. Free imitative techniques are used throughout the first-period material to create a distinctly contrapuntal texture. The $\frac{9}{8}$ meter marks the first occurence of a compound subdivision of the beat in the third movement.

Example 23: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, III, m. 1-4

Var. IV
Etwas langsamer als das Thema
Un poco meno andante cioè è un poco più adagio come il tema

piacevole

cresc. poco a poco

first appears in the tenor voice and is clearly derived from the theme.

(Ex. 25)

Example 25: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, III, m. 1-6



The subject is repeated in stretto in each of the first six measures (arrows in example 25 indicate subject entrances); measures 7 and 8 complete the period of the theme. Once again, Beethoven has chosen to write out the repeats, so that measures 9-16 correspond to the restatement of the first thematic period. This section employs the subject with a new countersubject of running eighths in sequential repetitions which lead upward to the second thematic period.

The subject maintains its rhythmic identity and general melodic contour, but the initial interval is altered in each of the four statements that occur in measures 17-24. The stretto treatment found in the first period material is lacking in these measures, but the running eighth countersubject figuration is used extensively.

For the repetition of the second thematic period (measures 25-32), the stretto treatment returns as the subject is stated in the two voices played with the right hand and the eighth note countersubject is maintained in the left hand. In an unprecedented variance from the $8 + 8 + 8 + 8$ phrase construction of every preceding variation, Beethoven literally repeats bars 25-32 (now marked *sempre piano*) to create an eight-bar extension to end the variation.

Certainly the most striking feature of the final variation is the continuous dominant and tonic pedal points which run continuously for thirty-five measures. This figure, along with the considerable variety of figuration unique to late Beethoven's pianism combine to make the final variation a formidable challenge to the performer.

Marked tempo primo del tema, the variation begins with the theme in the alto voice against its inversion in the bass voice and the dominant pedal point in the soprano and tenor voices. (Ex. 26)

Example 26: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, III, m. 1-4



As each phrase is stated, the theme and pedal points move to different voices. At the same time, the intensity of the variation is increased by a diminution of the basic rhythmic unit in each phrase.

In the second phrase, the meter changes from $\frac{3}{4}$ to $\frac{9}{8}$ as the melodic elements shift to the soprano and bass voices. (Ex. 27)

Example 27: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, III, m. 5-13

Note the intensification of the rhythmic unit of the pedal point increasing from three (m. 5) to six (m. 6-7) and finally eight (m. 8) notes per beat. At the same time, the lower neighbor ornamentation of the pedal point metamorphoses into what is essentially a measured trill. Heightened intensification occurs at measure 13, where the trill becomes a free one and the basic rhythmic units of the melody change from couplets

to triplets. These features continue until measure 16.

Measures 16 through 25 (analogous to the first statement of the theme's second period) exploit bravura arpeggios over the unmeasured pedal point trill which has moved to the lower keyboard register. This writing provides yet another example of Beethoven's predilection for simultaneous use of extreme keyboard registers with a large void in between.

The climax of the variation takes place in measures 16 to 24. An ascending b-major scale shifts the dominant pedal point trill to the alto voice surrounded by rapid thirty-second note scalar figuration in the left hand and a bell-like motive derived from the theme played by the outer portion of the right hand. (Ex. 28)

Example 28: Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 109, III, m. 16-24



This figuration clearly shows Beethoven's progressive experimentation with the timbral potentials of the piano. Martin Cooper feels that this writing "... seems to look forward. . . to the imitation of gamelan sonorities that are found in the piano music of Debussy's middle period."⁷ Cooper also notes that the writing "has no parallel in any earlier work

⁷Martin Cooper, *Beethoven: The Last Decade* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 185.

of Beethoven's, not even in Opus 106."⁸

As the trill continues, the scalar figuration descends to e where it is transformed into a ostinato and the right hand melodic materials become a simple downward arpeggiation of the dominant seventh chord. The dynamic indication in these measures is a long diminuendo. The prolonged dominant harmony finally resolves as the now quiet trill leads into a restatement of the thematic materials in their original setting.

The final return of the theme differs from measures 1-16 in only one small aspect: the doubling of the bass line at the lower octave in the first two bars of the third phrase. Charles Rosen observes that such a return to the original thematic setting was used as a means of unification in this sonata as well as in Opus 111.⁹

Throughout the entire third movement, melodic materials become simpler as the texture grows more complex while harmonic procedures remain nearly the same. For this reason the final statement of the theme after the great mass of sound in the final variation is strikingly effective.

In the entire sonata, the composer's deep concern with unity is apparent. Analysis reveals a considerable motivic relationship among the movements, a relationship that was apparently carefully and purposefully controlled by the composer. Allen Forte states emphatically that "sketches and autograph revisions suggest that he [Beethoven] had in mind a plan for the entire work, a plan which. . . was amplified and refined until all elements had been coordinated to form a cogent totality."¹⁰

⁸Cooper, Last Decade, p. 186.

⁹Charles Rosen, The Classical Style (New York: Viking Press, 1971), p. 225.

¹⁰Allen Forte, The Compositional Matrix (Baldwin, NY: Music Teachers National Association, 1961), p. 85.

Beethoven's skill as a contrapuntalist--a skill that he constantly sought to refine from the very beginning of his career--is readily apparent in Opus 109. Moreover, the contrapuntal complexities of the writing provide Beethoven with yet another means of unification. An examination of the work's pianistic features makes it clear the composer was a gifted pianist with a remarkably keen concept of his instrument's sound potentials. Non-traditional use of registers; extensive passages of taxing arpeggiation, trills and scalar figuration; and abrupt dynamic contrasts suggest that the composer's inner ear was a much more valuable asset to his art than the sense of hearing which he lacked.

Finally, the all-encompassing emotional scope of the work stands as the ultimate manifestation of its greatness.. From the light opening theme of the first movement through the controlled agitation of the second and the quiet serenity of the thematic material in the final movement, the composer reveals the many facets of his creative personality in a remarkably unified whole.

Anton Webern

Variations For Piano, Opus 27

The music of Anton Webern--thirty-one numbered works comprising less than four hour's playing time--has had a profound impact on the music of the twentieth century. After presenting a brief biography of the composer, this chapter will examine Webern's progressive position in the New Viennese School through a discussion of his musical style and esthetic principles, especially as seen in the Variations for Piano, Opus 27.

The concluding portion of the chapter will focus on the wealth of problems that are inherent in the performance preparation of the piece.

Webern was born in Vienna on 3 December 1883, the son of a middle-class mining engineer. After primary education in Graz and secondary education in Klagenfurt (where he began musical studies in violincello, and piano), Webern returned to Vienna in 1902 to begin advanced studies in musicology with Guido Adler, the eminent historian at the University of Vienna's Musicological Institute. Webern's studies culminated in a doctoral dissertation on the Choralis Constantinus of Heinrich Issac¹ and the musicological endeavors of his university years are highly respected. No less a musicologist than Adler himself entrusted the young Webern with editorship of the sixteenth volume of the scholarly Denkmaler der Tonkunst in Österreich.²

¹Heinrich Issac (c. 1450-1517) was a Netherlands composer who lived and worked at various European musical centers including Florence (in the service of Lorenzo de Medici and later the Emperor Maximilian), Innsbruck, Constance, and Ferrara. The Choralis Constantinus (posthumously published in Nuremberg, 1950-5) contains polyphonic settings of the Graduale for the entire ecclesiastical year and is recognized as Issac's greatest work.

²Many of Webern's transcriptions of early music masterpieces (from mensural notation) also appear in DTÖ, most notably Jean Brassart's Sacris Solemnis in volume II.

Yet it was Arnold Schoenberg who would become Webern's most influential teacher. Webern's first meeting with the master took place in 1904, prior to the completion of Webern's doctorate. Formal studies with Schoenberg began in autumn of the same year and continued until 1908. Kolneder relates that "the teacher-pupil relationship. . . developed into a deep lifelong friendship that was as important for Schoenberg as it was for Webern."³

Between 1908 and 1937, Webern held numerous conducting positions throughout Europe including work with both amateur groups (including the Vienna Workers' Symphony and Chorus) and professional ensembles of considerable stature (most notably the Austrian Radio Symphony). His conducting career was also distinguished by a large number of engagements abroad. From 1937 until his death in 1945⁴, Webern withdrew totally from public life, barely supporting himself and his family with meager income from private lessons.

These final years of unobtrusive isolation seem fitting for a composer whose art was generally unnoticed by his contemporaries. Henri Eimert, in likening Webern's compositions to "strange precious stones from unknown regions [that] lay in the ground, not, as it were, ignored or neglected, but simply hidden from view", notes that "none of them [Webern's works] imprinted itself on the musical consciousness of the times in either a

³Walter Kolneder, Anton Webern, An Introduction to His Works, translated from the German by Humphrey Searle (Berkeley CA: The University of California Press, 1968), p. 15.

⁴Webern was accidentally killed by a member of the American occupational forces in Mitterstill, Austria where he was visiting his daughter. A complete account of the tragic shooting along with exhaustive documentation can be found in Hans Moldenhauer's The Death of Anton Webern (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1962).

good or bad way."⁵

This failure of Webern's music to elicit response is a phenomenon that exists even today. Otto Deri acutely observes that "to the majority of listeners, it [Webern's music] remains as inaccessible as ever."⁶ Ultimately, while the new techniques manifested in the music of Schoenberg evoked rage and, indeed, even provoked riots, Webern's transcendental assimilation of the dodecaphonic idiom was simultaneously being met with neutral neglect. This seems to be due to the stark brevity of Webern's concentrated musical thought and the rarified cohesiveness of his musical language.

Melodically, Webern's music is frequently described as athematic. Unlike Schoenberg or Berg, who treat the row in a manner closer to traditional motivic procedures, Webern's tone rows are often pulverized by extensive use of Klangfarbenmelodie⁷ and pointillistic silence. Harmonically, Webern's music lacks even the subtle tonal implications which can be found in late Schoenberg and a large portion of Berg's mature works. These features, along with a consistently complex texture usually employing strict canonic writing (often mirror and/or cranzicrans), combine to make Webern's aesthetic ideals extremely elusive. Moreover, Deri notes that "in terms of overall expressiveness, Webern's music is devoid of nineteenth-century romanticism. . . it is a universe of its own where calm and purity reign."⁸

⁵Herbert Eimert, "A Change of Focus", die Reihe, 2 (1959), 29-30.

⁶Otto Deri, Exploring Twentieth-Century Music (New York: Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston, 1968), p. 357.

⁷A term first used by Schoenberg to refer to fragmentation of a motivic line through use of contrasting timbre.

⁸Deri, Exploring Twentieth-Century Music, p. 359.

Opus 27 is among three of Webern's final instrumental works and is highly exemplary of his mature serial style. Wildgans has called the piece "probably the most concentrated work of the later Webern,"⁹ while Leibowitz notes that "purification, utmost economy of means, precision and laconism of musical speech. . . find their most perfect embodiment . . . in his [Webern's] piano variations."¹⁰ Written in 1936, the piece is Webern's only mature work for solo piano.¹¹ The brief three-movement work took nearly a year to complete and underwent complete revision by the composer before being published by Universal Edition in May of 1937. The work was dedicated to Eduard Steuermann¹², but was premiered by Peter Stadlen, a young pianist whom Webern himself described as "very talented."

Webern's sketchbook IV provides a complete chronology of the compositional growth of Opus 27. The title "Klavier Variation" along with initial drafts of the tone row are dated 14 October 1935. Eight months later, after no less than seven separate beginnings, Webern completed a draft for a theme with seven variations. The eighty-eight measure score is dated 8 July 1936, and represents Webern's victory over an inability to concentrate that plagued him as he worked. Preoccupied with Berg's

⁹Friedrich Wildgans, Anton Webern, translated by E. T. Roberts and H. Searle (New York: October House Inc., 1967), p. 148.

¹⁰Rene Leibowitz, Schoenberg and His School, translated from the French by Dika Newlin (New York: Da Capo Press, 1970), p. 226.

¹¹Many solo piano compositions were written during Webern's formative years. The composer chose not to give them opus numbers. A complete listing may be found in Hans Moldenhauer, Anton Webern, A Chronicle of His Life and Work (London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd. 1978).

¹²Steuermann, an eminent pianist of the day, was a close associate of Webern's in their formative years. Due to Webern's unshaken faith in Nazi ideals, he became estranged from Steuermann, who cited "personal reasons" for not publicly performing the work.

death and his own financial insecurity, Webern writes to Hildegard Jone (12 June 1936) that ". . . ever renewed upsets of a professional sort . . . do not allow me any peace. . . I can not get down to work properly."¹³

A subsequent letter to Jone and her husband, dated 18 July 1936, suggests that continued work on Opus 27 was progressing much better and reveals the composer's concept of the work as a whole:

A good time for working. I have already finished one part of my new work. I told you it was something for piano. The completed part is a variations movement; the whole will be a kind of "Suite". In the variations, I believe I have realized something I have envisioned for years.¹⁴

First sketches for this new movement are dated 18 July 1936; the completed draft was finished on 19 August 1936. The movement is in ternary form with a quasi-developmental contrasting section.

On 23 August Webern wrote to Hildegard Jone ". . . I have finished another part of my new work. Now comes the third and final part."¹⁵ Initial drafts for this portion of the work are dated 25 August 1936. Only eleven brief days intervened between the final movement's conception and its completed sketch. The fastest and briefest of the three movements, it is a two-part form with repeated sections.

Shortly before publication, Webern reworked the three movements into what we know today as Opus 27. The variation movement was placed at the end of the "suite" with complete deletion of variations IV and VI. The tempo indication was altered to Ruhig Fliessend from simply fliessend with a meter change from $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{2}$. All note values were augmented accordingly to maintain their original proportions. The biparte scherzo-like

¹³Anton Webern, Letters to Hildegard Jone and Josef Humplik, edited by Josef Polnauer, translated by Cornelius Cardew (Bryn Mawr, PA: Theodore Presser Co., 1967), p. 32.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 33.

movement became the middle movement and underwent similar rhythmic changes: the original designation of Rasch became Sehr schnell with a meter change from $\frac{2}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{4}$ and the original quarter notes were diminished to eighths. The movement composed intermediately became the first movement of Opus 27.

The diversity of formal procedures in Opus 27 is indicative of Webern's intimate familiarity with the musical tradition of the past. He himself compared the ternary movement of the work to a Brahms intermezzo and likened the second movement of the piece to the Badinerie movement of J. S. Bach's B-Minor Orchestra Suite (BWV 1067). On the other hand, Webern's unique adaptation of serial procedures in the work form a basis for his advanced position in the new Viennese school.

The monophonic line that is found at the beginning of the third movement (recall that this movement was actually written first) states the row that is used as the basis of the piano variations. (Ex. 1)¹⁶

Example 1: A. Webern
Variationen für Piano, III, m. 1-5



¹⁶Other analysts (Leibowitz, Ogden, Hanson, Westergaard) consider other permutations of the row to be prime for the first and second movements. Throughout this paper, this row will be considered prime for all movements since the sketchbook contains only one row (this one) composed prior to what is now the third movement.

¹⁷All musical examples in this chapter were reproduced from the Universal Edition of Variationen für Klavier Opus 27, UE 10881, copyright 1937, 1965.

In figure 1, the complete matrix for the piece is given in both pitch and integer formats.

Figure 1: A. Webern
Variations for Piano, Row Matrices

0	8	7	11	10	9	3	1	4	2	6	5	D#	B	A#	D	C#	C	F#	E	G	F	A	G#
4	0	11	3	2	1	7	5	8	6	10	9	G	D#	D	F#	F	E	A#	G#	B	A	C#	C
5	1	0	4	3	2	8	6	9	7	11	10	G#	E	D#	G	F#	F	B	A	C	A#	D	C#
1	9	8	0	11	10	4	2	5	3	7	6	E	C	B	D#	D	C#	G	F	G#	F#	A#	A
2	10	9	1	0	11	5	3	6	4	8	7	F	C#	C	E	D#	D	G#	F#	A	G	B	A#
3	11	10	2	1	0	6	4	7	5	9	8	F#	D	C#	F	E	D#	A	G	A#	G#	C	B
9	5	4	8	7	6	0	10	1	11	3	2	C	G#	G	B	A#	A	D#	C#	E	D	F#	F
11	7	6	10	9	8	2	0	3	1	5	4	D	A#	A	C#	C	B	F	D#	F#	E	G#	G
8	4	3	7	6	5	11	9	0	10	2	1	B	G	F#	A#	A	G#	D	C	D#	C#	F	E
10	6	5	9	8	7	1	11	2	0	4	3	C#	A	G#	C	B	A#	E	D	F	D#	G	F#
6	2	1	5	4	3	9	7	10	8	0	11	A	F	E	G#	G	F#	C	A#	C#	B	D#	D
7	3	2	6	5	4	10	8	11	9	1	0	A#	F#	F	A	G#	G	C#	B	D	C	E	D#

The first seven bars of the piece illustrate a row manipulation used throughout the entire movement. The small numbers used in this example are row order numbers and designate simultaneous use of the P^8 and R^1 (boldface numbers) forms of the row (Ex. 2).

Example 2: A. Webern
Variations for Piano, III, m. 1-7

Sehr mäßig ♩. = ca 40

The R^1 permutation begins in the treble clef while the P^8 row appears in the bass clef. At measure 4, R^1 moves to the bass clef as P^8 moves to the treble clef. At this point, since a prime and its retrograde were used, the initial four measures mirror themselves. The Gs of measure 4 function as a point of reflection. This predilection for palindromic symmetry is an essential feature of late Webern works. By maintaining the repetition of the reflection point (g#) in the same clef (i.e. played

with the same hand), the distribution of notes with respect to staves (and hands) is also made palindromic.

Further examination reveals that rhythmic values as well as register have also been serialized and are also palindromic. This serialization of musical parameters other than pitch is indicative of Webern's innovative genius, a genius that found its logical continuance in the post World War II avant-garde.

The example also illustrates Webern's predilection for pointillistic silence. Allowing for two voices, one in the treble and bass staves, seven measures of $1\frac{3}{6}$ meter provide the composer with a maximum of 42 potential attacks (recognizing that Webern never subdivides the sixteenth notes). The composer uses rests for 22 of these, clearly evidence that the lack of sound is as essential to the music as sound is itself. The role of the silence is also significant. Total silence (m. 2, 4, and 6) is used to set off complete figures or "gestures" whose identity is defined by the beaming and slurring used by Webern. In effect, the silence becomes punctuation in the dialogue that occurs among the four groups. It is also interesting to note that these groupings are further defined by internal palindromic hand distribution.

Palindromic construction is also apparent in the remaining eleven bars of the first section. (Ex. 3)

Example 3: A. Webern
Variations for Piano, III, M. 8-18

A notable difference in these measures is the lack of palindromic hand distribution that occurred in measures 1-7. Since the repetition of the major ninth at the point of reflection (m. 13) is given to the right hand, the role of each hand is reversed as the retrograde continues.

Examples 2 and 3 also show the very compressed dynamic palette which is often a part of Webern's timbral procedures. Piano is the prevailing dynamic level, interrupted only once by a two-measure forte (m. 11) which immediately diminishes to the original piano level in measure 15.

In the eighteen-bar middle section, palindromic row manipulations are similar to those in the first portion of the movement, while the timbral and rhythmic procedures provide contrast.

Example 4: A. Webern
Variations for Piano, III, m. 19-22

Once again, a simultaneous statement of a permutation (I^{11}) and its retro-






grade (RI⁸) are utilized in a palindrome with the point of reflection at measure 21 (g). In this section, each permutation is freely woven between the staves in a series of hand crossings. Also absent is the symmetry of hand distribution that was seen in the previous section. Note that the repeated g s (m. 20-21) are played by opposite hands, thus creating an exactly opposite arrangement of distribution in the reflection of measures 19-20.

The immense expansion of the dynamic range is accompanied by a widening of the register to encompass nearly four octaves. Note the striking effect created by the juxtaposition of extremely opposite sound levels.

The rhythm of this section, unlike that of the first, is marked by frequent retardandi and a tempi which are used as punctuation in the dialogue among the various "phrases". Since the element of silence is nearly non-existent, it would seem that Webern is now using rubati to fulfill the function of the rests in examples 2 and 3.

The remaining portion of the contrasting section can be divided into five units, each closely allied to the material in example 4 with respect to contour, range, and palindromic organization of pitch, metric value, and dynamic levels. Distinguishing features of each unit can be seen in figure 2.

Figure 2

Section #	m.	Permutations	Point of Reflection		Palindromic with respect to			Rhythmic unit
			m. #	pitch	Hand dist.	Rhythm	Dyn.	
1	23-6	P ² R ¹	24	D	No	Yes	Yes	
2	26-9	I ⁸ RI ⁸	28	C	No	Yes	Yes	
3	30-2	P ⁷ R ⁰	31	G	Yes	Yes	Yes	
4	33-4	I ¹¹ RI ⁶	33	F	Yes	Yes	Yes	
5	35-6	P ⁰ R ⁵	36	C	Yes	Yes	Yes	

Sections 3, 4, and 5 comprise the climax of the entire movement. By diminishing the basic rhythmic unit, the same amount of material is compressed into about half as many measures. Palindromic hand distribution returns as the dynamic range expands.

With the exception of actual permutations used, the final section of the piece is identical to the first (examples 2 and 3). Figure 3 compares the outer sections of the movement.

Figure 3: A. Webern

1st Section		Analogous to	3rd Section	
m.	Permutation		m.	Permutation
1-7	$P^8 R^8$		37-43	$P^8 R^5$
8-18	$RI^3 I^8$		44-54	$R^4 P^{11}$

Webern's predilection for canonic imitation is immediately apparent in both portions of the second movement. In the first part, the RI^7 permutation is found in the lower staff and acts as the leader of a strict two-voice canon. The follower enters at the time interval of an eighth note and utilizes the R^5 permutation (refer to example 5).

Example 5: A. Webern
Variations for Piano, II, m. 1-11

Sehr schnell ♩ = ca 160

The musical score for Example 5, A. Webern's *Variations for Piano, II, m. 1-11*, is presented in two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 9, and the second system contains measures 10 and 11. The tempo is marked 'Sehr schnell' with a metronome indication of approximately 160 beats per minute. The music is written for piano in 2/4 time. It features a strict two-voice canon, with the lower staff acting as the leader and the upper staff as the follower. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings (p, f, ff). The first system shows measures 1-9, and the second system shows measures 10-11. The music is characterized by its brevity and the precise rhythmic relationships between the two voices.

Since the permutations used are inversions of each other, the canonic imitation proceeds in contrary motion. At measures 5-6, the voices cross before the final three notes of each row are stated.

The final note of each permutation becomes the first pitch of its retrograde, creating a strict cranzicran in contrary motion. The voices return (cross) to their original staves at measure 8 and the retrograde forms of the row conclude on the pitches that began the movement for a repetition of the entire section. The second section of the movement is also an inverted cranzicran, but utilizes the R^7 and RI^5 permutations.

The concept of total organization is also evident in the second movement. By grouping respective notes of each voice together (via beams, slurs) the inverted cranzicran orientation of the pitches is also given to metric values, dynamic levels, and articulations.

The third movement is the longest of the piece, consisting of a theme with four variations and a coda (actually a variation itself). Figure 4 provides an overview of the movement's formal design.

Figure 4

Part	M.	# of Permutations	Permutations
Theme	1-12	3	P^0, I^0, R^0
Var. 1	12-23	7	$P^1, RI^0, P^0, RI^1, RI^7, RI^1, RI^6$
Var. 2	23-33	5	$R^{11}, R^6, R^1, RI^6, R^6$
Var. 3	33-44	5	$I^9, RI^9, I^8, RI^8, P^0$
Var. 4	45-55	7	$RI^{11}, P^3, RI^2, P^6, RI^5, P^9, RI^8$
Coda	56-66	6	$P^0, R^0, I^1, RI^1, R^0, I^0$

Through vertical use of the row, Webern is able to use as many as seven permutations in the same number of measures. Within each section,

the end of one permutation frequently overlaps the beginning of the next. This overlapping process occurs between variations 2 and 3, 3 and 4, and 4 and 5.

As in the preceding movements, the final one exhibits many characteristics that typify Webern's mature style. These include 1) the use of palindromic construction as seen in the third variation and coda, 2) fragmentation of the line through extreme registral contrast, especially prominent in all but the second variation and the coda, 3) serialization of parameters other than pitch including rhythm and hand distribution in the theme, and 4) the use of silence and understated dynamics as seen in the coda.

Though it is Webern's only contribution to the solo piano literature and generally recognized as a finely crafted hallmark of his mature style, Opus 27 is infrequently performed. While this is certainly due to the highly concentrated thought contained in the piece, this writer maintains that a more significant cause for neglect is the myriad of difficulties involved in preparing the score for performance.

Mere reading of the score is a formidable task due to the numerous clef changes and hand crossings which seem to occur in areas of greatest rhythmic activity and/or textural complexity. For example, in the contrasting section of the opening movement, 39 clef alterations are used in conjunction with more than 20 hand crossings--all compressed into a brief 18 measures of music.

Adding to the difficulty of the reading are the multifarious dynamic and articulation markings (of utmost importance if the performer is to portray the timbral manipulation that is such an intrinsic part of the style) and profuse indications for tempo alterations throughout the score.

Once past the reading, the performer is next confronted with memorization of the score, a process that is dependent first and foremost upon one's ability to internally auralize the music. It is obvious that the fragmented lines, expansive range, and strident contrasts of the work do not readily lend themselves to internal auralization. If the ear is to assimilate the score, the angular arrangement of pitches must be organized into "lines" or ideas. In addition, the performer must train his inner ear to "hear the silence" a task which was especially difficult for this performer because of a learning process that often included impatient enthusiasm or hurried anxiety.

This writer-performer has found analytic knowledge of the score to be an essential aid in memorization. However, in actual performance, such knowledge must be relegated to the subconscious thought process. In short, though the analytic process may be a stimulating and helpful experience, it must not interfere with the music. Peter Stadlen, the pianist who premiered Opus 27 recalls that

"throughout all those weeks of instruction and preparation, Webern never once touched on the serial aspect of his Piano Variations. Even when I asked him, he declined to go into it with me--because, he said, it was important that I know how the work should be played, not how it was made."¹⁸

Stadlen also remembers the many pianistic challenges of the variations: the frequent hand crossing, uneven distribution of the melody between the hands, unpredictable accents, and frequent rubati. Having dealt with these problems, this writer has found that Webern's pianism albeit uncomparably challenging, has been carefully conceived with both

¹⁸Hans Moldenhauer with Rosaleen Moldenhauer, Anton von Webern, A Chronicle of His Life and Work (London: Victor Gollancz, 1978), p. 483.

the performer and instrument in mind. If one has paid close attention to the composer's directions, the difficulties of the initial learning process take care of themselves. A remark made by Webern as he coached Stadlen through the second movement seems relevant to the entire piece: ". . . the inevitable difficulty in bringing it off will invest it with just the right kind of phrasing."¹⁹

Though the challenges presented by the score may be new, the time-tested solution of slow scrupulous practice is still effective. This performer has found that it was essential to work with the score every day, though not necessarily at the keyboard. Daily work often consisted of listening to a recorded performance, or examining and auralizing the score in terms of musical sentences and paragraphs. In the post-memorization phase of preparation, practicing in the dark was a means used to assure that kinesthetic memory of the "pianistic choreography" was secure.

In conclusion, Webern's Variations for Piano form a compendium of techniques inherent in the composer's mature serial style. The composition foreshadows the "total control" of the post-war avant-garde, but it is also convincing evidence of Webern's thorough knowledge of history and deep respect for the musical tradition that preceded him. The highly concentrated musical thought and cohesive organization that are embodied by Opus 27 form the essence of Webern's aesthetic.

While presenting difficulties to both performer and listener, these variations are among the brightest of the jewels that Webern carved, jewels that deserve our study as musicians and educators. Granted, it may take ardent hours of buffing and polishing with our mental faculties before the jewels attain any lustre for us, but it is this writer's strong

¹⁹Moldenhauer, Webern, p. 482.

contention that no intelligent and literate musician can dismiss Webern's art as merely "cerebral". Indeed, I have found the Opus 27 Variations to be an unquestionable argument to the contrary.

story

Franz Liszt
Three Petrarch Sonnets

The Industrial Revolution and Romantic ideals of nineteenth-century European thought provide the setting for the greatest chapter in the history of piano music, while Franz Liszt emerges as perhaps the most famous and flamboyant character of the saga. Born in a manufacturing age that witnessed remarkable advances in piano design and manufacture, Liszt rose to a position of undisputed superiority in the virtuoso school of piano playing that the newly refined instrument seemed to precipitate. Arthur Loesser, in his delightful Men, Women, and Pianos, relates that

"In Liszt, the human ideal of the age--the Romantic hero--was married to the musical instrument, newly perfected, that best mirrored the age's mechanical and commercial applications."¹

Harold Schoenberg observes the complexity of the artist, calling Liszt ". . . a mixture of genius, vanity, generosity, lust, religion, snobbery, democracy, literary desires and visions: part Byron, part Cassanova, part Mephistopheles, part St. Francis."²

This chapter will examine the three Petrarch Sonnets with regard to their historical position in Liszt's piano works and their relationship to the original Liszt songs from which the composer transcribed them. Prior to focusing on the actual Sonnets, a compositional chronology of the large collection from which they are extracted is presented. A brief discussion of the typically Lisztian devices that are seen in the pieces forms the final portion of the chapter.

¹ Arthur Loesser, Men, Women, and Pianos, a Social History (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), p. 367.

² Harold C. Schoenberg, The Great Pianists From Mozart to the Present (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963), p. 163.

The Petrarch Sonnets are found in the second volume of a group of works that Liszt collectively entitled Années de Pèlerinage (Years of Pilgrimage). Written over a long span of years (1836-77), the collection is representative of music written very early as well as very late in Liszt's career. The set is divided into four large segments: 1) Première Année: Suisse (First Year: Switzerland) consisting of nine pieces inspired by the grandeur of Switzerland, the country where Liszt and Marie D' Agoult³, his mistress of six years, lived between 1835-7; 2) Deuxième Année: Italie (Second Year: Italy), a series of seven pieces that recall various masterpieces of art and literature that Liszt and D' Agoult saw as they travelled through Italy; 3) a supplement to the second year comprised of three large pieces depicting Liszt's impressions of Venice and Naples; and a 4) Troisième Année (Third Year) written at Tivoli in 1877 after Liszt had received the minor orders of the Roman Catholic Church. The writing in the final volume suggests that Liszt had found a deep inner peace in the most intensely religious period of his life.

Claude Rostund has called the Years of Pilgrimage "one of the most remarkable monuments of Romantic keyboard composition" and points out that ". . . is the last stage in Liszt's development before he extended his art into the symphonic poem."^{4,5}

³Marie D' Agoult was a countess who left her family to live with Liszt in Geneve (1835-9). Liszt had three children by D' Agoult.

⁴Claude Rostand, Liszt, translated from the French by John Victor (New York: Grossman Publishers), p. 118.

⁵Rostand conveniently organizes Liszt's piano works into five categories: etudes, transcriptions, folk music (e.g. the Hungarian rhapsodies), program music (e.g. Années de Pèlerinage) and pure music (e.g. B-Minor Sonata).

Perhaps more significantly, the diversity of the writing in the Années shows Liszt--frequently accused of being vulgar and exceedingly shallow--to be a literate artist with a deep love and instinctive understanding of true greatness as manifested in art and nature.

Before being published in their final forms, nearly all of the pieces in Années were subject to revision by the composer. For example, the pieces in the Swiss volume are revisions made between 1836-59 to pieces originally published in a collection called Album d'un voyageur (1835-36), while the entire supplement to the second year (written in 1840) underwent complete revision in 1859.

In particular, the three sonnets are striking examples of self-critical revision. Originally written as songs for high voice and piano, between 1838-39, Liszt concurrently transcribed the songs for solo piano. However, the solo piano versions that appear in the Deuxieme Année are revisions of the original transcriptions that Liszt completed in 1846. Finally, in 1861, the original songs themselves were subjected to complete revision.

The texts of the songs, are taken from Sonnet numbers 47, 104, and 123 of Francesco Petrarch (1304-1374), poet, philosopher and author who is recognized as the leading literary figure of his time. The sonnets are found in a collection of Italian lyrics known as Petrarch's Canzoniere⁶, and deal with the poet's intense love of a woman known as Laura.

Sonnet number 47 is the first piece in the Petrarch trilogy of the Deuxieme Année, though it was placed second in the group of songs from which it was transcribed. Both the vocal and piano versions of Sonnet 47

⁶Poetry in the collection was written as early as 1327, though it was not until 1342 that Petrarch conceived the idea of compiling these Italian poems in a single volume. A detailed account of the compilation can be found in Ernest Wilkens, The Making of the "Canzoniere" and Other Petrarchan Studies, Rome: 1959.

consist of three principal sections (clearly delineated by double bars) that correspond to textual divisions in the poem. A comparative table of formal division in both the original song and the piano transcription are found in figure 1.

Figure 1

Line of Text	1 thru 8	9-11	12-14
Meas. # (Song)	1-32	33-62	63-96
Meas. # (Transcription)	1-31	32-69	69-

Though formal layout is quite similar, a comparison of the introductory material of the two works (examples 1a and 1b) reveals obvious differences.

Example 1a: Introduction from
Petrarch Sonnet No. 47 (vocal version)⁷



Example 1b: Introduction from
Petrarch Sonnet No. 47 (piano transcription)




The arpeggiated figuration of the song is replaced immediately by chordal figuration in the piano version. In the transcription the intro-

⁷ All musical examples are reproduced from Franz Liszt, Musikalische Werke, Herausgegeben von der Franz Liszt-Stiftung (Liepzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1908-26; reprinted by Gregg Press 1966) II/6 Années de Pèlerinage and VII/2 Songs.

duction is clearly separated from the melodic material by a double bar and a meter change.

The transcription has been transposed from A-flat major of the original song to D-flat major. Modulations occur at analogous points of the transcription and the song, while the interval of transposition (P4) established at the beginning remains constant.

Rhythmic settings of melodic and accompanimental materials are also contrasting. In example 2, note that syncopation in the accompaniment of the song (created by duple orientation of the bass and the recurring  figuration of the treble) is absent in the berceuse accompaniment of the transcription. Furthermore, the melody which was unsyncopated in the original song is now syncopated in the transcription.

Example 2a: Initial Melodic Materials
Petrarch Sonnet No. 47 (song)



Example 2b: Initial Melodic Materials
Petrarch Sonnet No. 47 (piano transcription)



Other significant differences include the expanded range of the transcription (AA to \underline{e}^4 as compared to AA to \underline{a}^3 in the song) which allows Liszt to employ register contrast, an effect that is noticeably lacking

in the accompaniment of the song, and the highly specific performance directions in the transcription that are not found in the source.

Unlike the transcription of Sonnet 47, the transcription of Sonnet 104 does not retain the formal outline of its source. Found as the first song of the Petrarch group, it appears as the middle piano transcription. In the song, an extensive recitative (preceded by a brief introduction) leads to a dramatic aria. However, the piano version begins with the aria melody in a quasi-recitative setting as the initial strophe of a three-strophe formal design. The second and third strophes (both using the aria melody) are marked by progressive thickening of texture and pianistic figuration. The recitative material of the song is abandoned, though the opening character of the section is retained. In this way, Liszt presents a tighter, more concise statement of materials in the piano transcription of Sonnet 104 than in its original song form.

Of all the Petrarch transcriptions, Sonnet 123 bears closest resemblance to its source. Key relationships and melodic materials are essentially unchanged as are the 12 measure introduction and strophic construction. In the transcription Liszt varies the incessant triplets of the song's monotonous accompaniment, often using harp-like broken chords as simple accompaniment to the declamatory melody. As in Sonnet 104, each strophic statement is marked by differing accompanimental writing.

The Petrarch Sonnets abound in pianistic devices which are uniquely Liszt's. One such device can be seen in the following example.

Example 3: Sonnet 123, m. 45-48



Here, the melodic material (played with the thumb of the left hand) appears between the bass line below and accompaniment above. This Lisztian "thumb melody" also occurs in Sonnet 47 (m. 68-83) and Sonnet 104 (m. 15-20).

The orchestral nature of Liszt's keyboard writing can be seen in such devices as rolled chords for harp effects or quasi-cello-like melodies (see Ex. 3) in the instrument's warm middle register. Such passages point to Liszt's marvelous flair for transcription.

Also characteristic of Liszt are the harmonic procedures found in the Petrarch Sonnets. Frequent use of the fully diminished-seventh sonority and augmented triads allow for a considerable variety of modulations, while these modulations and a predilection for mediant root movement combine to thwart strong dominant-tonic relationships. The syntax of Liszt's chromatic harmony foreshadows that of Wagner and is demonstrative of Liszt's progressive nature.

In short, the Petrarch Sonnets are highly successful examples of Liszt's unique talents as a transcriber. Robert Edwards notes that "the fact that their [the Petrarch Sonnets] origin as songs is usually overlooked testifies to their remarkable qualities as transcriptions."⁸ Moreover, as the strongest of the pieces in the second book of Années de Pélerinage, they are striking examples of Liszt's piano style and extremely effective programmatic pieces which embody a Romantic synthesis of the arts.

⁸Robert Edwards, A Study of Selected Song Transcriptions of Franz Liszt, unpublished DMA dissertation, the University of Oregon, 1972.

Béla Bartók

Improvisations, Opus 20

Béla Bartók is recognized as the last of the master composers in the first half of this century. An outspoken nationalist, his career as a composer, pianist, and ethnomusicologist (one of the first ever) is pervaded by the influence of Hungarian folk music. Deri observes that Bartók's music represents "a unique synthesis of European folk music and contemporary Western musical thought."¹

This chapter will focus on the Hungarian element in Bartók's musical style as seen in the Improvisations, Opus 20. A brief biography of the composer is presented followed by a discussion of the historical significance of Opus 20. Finally, various aspects of the composition that illustrate stylistic elements of Bartók's writing will be examined.

Belá Bartók was born on 25 March 1881 in the town of Nagyszenmiklos Hungary, part of present-day Rumania. After early musical instruction which began at the age of five², Bartok completed his musical training at the Budapest Conservatory (1898-1903) studying composition with Hans Koessler and piano under Istvan Thoman. Unsatisfied with his early compositions, Bartók devoted most of his energies to the piano, becoming an eminent virtuoso-teacher. In 1905, Bartók, along with fellow Hungarian composer Zoltan Kodály, embarked on two years of field research collecting and transcribing folk music from remote regions of Hungary. Bartók returned to Budapest to accept a position on the faculty at the

¹Otto Deri, Exploring Twentieth-Century Music (New York: Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston, 1968), p. 260.

²His earliest piano lessons were with his mother. Later teachers included Ferenc Kersch and Laszlo Erkel.

Conservatory, where he taught piano and, later, composition. In the years from 1934-1940, Bartók abandoned teaching in favor of composition and further ethnomusicological research. From 1940 until his death in 1945, Bartók lived in the United States, voluntarily exiled from his beloved Hungary, where the conditions of Nazi occupation became intolerable for the aging composer.

As a piano virtuoso himself, piano music is basic to Bartók's career as a composer. John Weismann comments that since Bartók "confided. . . many definitive statements of his musical problems to the keyboard, . . . his body of works for the piano. . . affords insight into the development of his idiom. . ."³ Others such as Moreaux⁴ have indicated that Bartók's writing in other media is governed by essentially pianistic procedures.⁵

The Opus 20 Improvisations date from 1920 and are among the most refined and representative works of Bartók's first style period (ca. 1905-1920)⁶. Like the other compositions from the period (including Bluebeard's Castle, the first and second quartets, and the Allegro Barbaro for solo piano), the Improvisations embody a successful assimilation distinguished by innovative harmonic and melodic procedures. Colin Mason refers to Opus 20 as "the most advanced instrumental work based on folk music that

³John Weissman "Bartók's Piano Music" in Béla Bartók: A Memorial Review (New York: Boosey and Hawkes, 1950), reprinted from Tempo, p. 60.

⁴Serge Moreaux, Béla Bartók: sa vie, ses œuvres, son langage (Paris: Richard Masse, 1949).

⁵See also Frank Kirby, A Short History of Keyboard Music (New York: The Free Press, 1966), p. 416.

⁶Bartók's career is divided into three style periods: 1) 1905-1920, the melodic-harmonic period of folk assimilation, 2) 1920-30, the rhythmic-polyphonic period, and 3) 1930-40, synthesis, generally recognized as the greatest of the three.

he [Bartók] ever wrote."⁷ Of further significance are certain of the Improvisations which look ahead to the motor-rhythms and martellato piano style of the second style period. Bartók regarded Opus 20 as "the extreme limit in adding the most daring accompaniments to simple folk tunes."⁸ Bartók's frequent performance of the piece⁹ seems to indicate that he believed the extremes found in the work to be musically effective.

Opus 20 consists of eight distinct sections, each headed by a separate Roman numeral and concluding with a double bar. A different folk tune is used as the basis of each section. As a further means of organization, Bartók has indicated attaca between segments I and II, III, IV, and V, as well as between VII and VIII. Each of these large groupings (where no unmeasured time elapses between segments) exhibits an increase in tempo from section to section.

With respect to internal organization, the folk song material in each section is varied or altered in a series of strophic repetitions (usually 3 or 4). In general, one or more elements of the writing becomes more intense with each repetition. In some instances, the range of the accompanimental material is expanded as the overall texture is made more dense (e.g. I, II, VIII), while in others, a constantly increasing tempo provides rhythmic impetus and sustains interest through the strophic

⁷Colin Mason in "Hungary" (chapter 9) of The Praeger History of Western Music V: Music in the Modern Age, ed. F. W. Sternfeld (New York: Praeger, 1973), p. 346.

⁸Béla Bartók, Essays, selected and edited by Benjamin Suchoff (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976), p. 375.

⁹See Béla Bartók, Letters, collected, selected, edited and annotated by Janos Demy, translated by Balaban and Farkas with translation revision by West and Mason (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), pp. 156, 160, and 217.

repetitions (e.g. IV or V). Occasionally, a coda derived from the folk source is used to conclude a improvisation (e.g. V, or VIII).

Like most of Bartók's other folk-based music, each of the eight improvisations in Opus 20 can be classified in one of two stylistic categories: 1) "parlando rubato", where melodic materials are declamatory (following inflection of the spoken word) and free from constancy of tempo, meter, and regular metrical groupings, and 2) "tempo giusto", marked by a constant driving tempo inspired by dance patterns. The first, third, and seventh improvisations are written in the former style, while the remaining sections of the work are written in the latter.

The folk songs used as the bases for Opus 20 originate from the regions of Tolna, Zala, Szerém, Csík Udvarhely, and Szilágy, and were first heard by the composer during his extensive ethnomusicological field research. The originals of improvisations I, III, IV, and VII can be seen in Bartók's Hungarian Folk Music (1931) as numbers 37, 40, 244, 64, and 46 respectively.¹⁰

Consistent with their folk origins, the melodic materials of Opus 20 are frequently based on scales other than conventional major and minor ones. The first improvisation employs the C Dorian mode (Example 1).

¹⁰Halsey Stevens, The Life and Music of Béla Bartók, revised edition (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 130, and n. 32, chapter II.

Example 1: Béla Bartók
Improvisations, I, m. 1-8¹¹



In example 2, Bartók's fondness for the pentatonic scale can be seen. The pentatonic melody occurs in the bass clef, utilizing the black keys of the instrument, while the accompaniment above is mainly on the white keys. Thus, the example also illustrates a tendency toward bitonality that is often found in Bartók's early writing.

Example 2: Béla Bartók
Improvisations, IV, m. 1-5



Also characteristic of the Hungarian folk melodies is the prevalence of the perfect fourth, readily apparent in the fifth improvisation (Ex. 3).

¹¹ All musical examples in this chapter are reproduced from Béla Bartók Improvisations sur des chansons paysannes hongroises, Opus 20, copyright 1922, Universal Edition, assigned to Boosey and Hawkes (1939) for the U.S.A.

Example 3: Béla Bartók
Improvisations, V, m. 1-8



The interval of the fourth is also exploited harmonically. This practice can be seen in the opening of the third improvisation (Ex. 4)

Example 4: Béla Bartók
Improvisations, III, m. 1-5



The initial figure is constructed of two perfect fourths (c#-f#, d-q) that are a minor second apart. The eerie accompaniment permeates the improvisation. The prevalence of the vertical fourth can also be seen in the off-beat accompaniment chords of the final improvisation's coda (Ex. 5).

Example 5 : Béla Bartók
Improvisations, VIII, m. 69-74



Note that in this case, the perfect fourths are superimposed at the tri-tone, another of Bartók's most frequently exploited intervals. The boisterous accompaniment seems particularly appropriate for the text of

the original song: "In the winter. . . better to remain in bed, to frolic with a bride."¹²

From the two preceding examples, it can be seen that Bartók often used certain intervals for timbral rather than harmonic purposes. The procedure can also be seen in the opening of the fifth improvisation where a recurring minor second is used as accompaniment. (Example 6)

Example 6: Béla Bartók
Improvisations, V, m. 1-7



Also apparent is the secco-martellato quality of the rhythmic ostinato, a piano sound that is typically Bartokian.

In addition to rhythmic ostinati frequently found in the tempo giusto style, Bartók's music abounds with numerous meter changes, usually found in the parlando-rubato style. For instance, in the thirty-three measures of the seventh improvisation, twenty-three meter changes occur. Other notable rhythmic devices of Opus 20 include frequent syncopations (most apparent in the second or eighth improvisations), and abundant use of accelerandi and allargandi (improvisation V, VI, VIII).

Opus 20 also exhibits many of Bartók's organizational devices. In the fourth variation, the accompaniment figuration of the first strophe is intervallically expanded in the second strophe (see example 7)

¹²Halsey Stevens, Life and Music of Bartók, n. 35, chapter II.

¹³Halsey Stav

Example 7: Béla Bartók
Improvisations, IV

seen as a summary of Bartók's earliest style that foreshadows features of his later writing. From the elegant parlando rubato sections to the rowdy excited tempo giusto portions, the work reflects Bartók's comprehensive understanding of folk music and his unequalled ability to incorporate this element into a highly sophisticated and deeply personal musical language.

...ans, Opus 20, n. p.
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A MASTER'S PIANO RECITAL
AND PROGRAM NOTES

portion consists by
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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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ABSTRACT

The Master's Report is divided into two broad sections. The first is a tape recording of a graduate recital performed on 31 March 1982, and the second portion consists of detailed program notes for each of the works performed on the recital.

The first chapter of the paper deals with the Piano Sonata in E Major, Opus 109, by Ludwig van Beethoven. After a brief discussion of this work's historical position in the composer's output of piano sonatas, a detailed analysis of each movement of the composition is presented. The analysis focuses on specific features of the work that are inherent in the composer's late style period.

In the second chapter, the Opus 27 Variations for Piano of Anton Webern are discussed. First, a brief biography of the composer is presented, followed by a discussion of the composition's historical background. The remaining portion of the chapter consists of a stylistic analysis of the piece and an examination of the problems involved in the performance preparation of the work.

The three Petrarch Sonnets of Franz Liszt are the subject of the third chapter. Their position in the large collection Années de Pèlerinage is described as well as their relationship to the original songs from which they were transcribed. The concluding segment of the chapter presents elements of the works that are unique to Liszt's piano compositions.

Finally, the fourth chapter of the paper consists of a discussion of Béla Bartók's Improvisations, Opus 20. The historical background of the piece is included as well as a brief biographic sketch of the composer. In the style analysis that follows, the composer's unique incorporation of Hungarian folk music into the piece is examined in detail.