

**Final Thoughts? Interpretation of the First
Movements of Beethoven's and Schubert's Last
Three Piano Sonatas**

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Table of contents

List of musical examples	v
List of tables	vii
Abstract	viii
Foreword	x
Acknowledgments	xi
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the study	1
1.1.1 The piano sonata at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries	
1.1.2 The last three piano sonatas	
1.1.3 Current popularity of Beethoven's and Schubert's piano sonatas	
1.2 Delimitation of the study	5
1.3 Aims of the study	6
1.4 Research questions	8
1.5 Methodology	8
1.6 Literature overview	10
1.6.1 The concision in Beethoven's late style	
1.6.2 Schubert's critics and their reassessments	
1.7 Conclusion	14
2. Background to Beethoven's and Schubert's final piano sonatas	15
2.1 Context of the composition of the last sonatas	15
2.2 Beethoven: an overview of his influences and image	17
2.3 Schubert in the shadow of Beethoven; his liberation	19
2.4 Recent changes of perspective in Schubert's critics	22
2.4.1 Re-evaluation of sonata form theory in Schubert studies	
2.4.2 Re-evaluation of length in Schubert's music	
2.5 Late style	25
2.5.1 Late style: Beethoven	
2.5.2 Late style: Schubert	
2.6 Importance of the interpretation and role of the performer	28

2.7 Conclusion	30
3. Performative analysis, particularities and interpretation	32
3.1 Introduction and explanation of the techniques identified for the analysis	32
3.2 First movement sonata form in Beethoven's last three piano sonatas	37
3.2.1 Beethoven, Sonata no. 30 in E major, Op. 109, first movement	37
3.2.1.1 Contrast and rupture between the themes	37
3.2.1.2 The G#-B interval and its deferred realisation	40
3.2.1.3 The second theme: overlapping of formal functions, variation, implication technique, and reductive technique	41
3.2.1.4 The trajectory of intensity in the development and importance of the G#-B melodic interval	43
3.2.1.5 The arrival of the recapitulation and lowered sixth degree	45
3.2.1.6 Coda: thematic integration and importance of the G#-B interval	48
3.2.1.7 Impacts on the interpretation	50
3.2.2 Beethoven, Sonata no. 31 in <i>Ab</i> major, Op. 110, first movement	53
3.2.2.1 Homogeneity of the exposition: similarity between the themes	53
3.2.2.2 The reductive technique as transition between the exposition and development	55
3.2.2.3 The modulation to E major and the return to <i>Ab</i> major	57
3.2.2.4 The harmonic interval of tenth as unifying element	60
3.2.2.5 Impacts on the interpretation	61
3.2.3 Beethoven, Sonata no. 32 in C minor, Op. 111, first movement	64
3.2.3.1 Continuous intensity and unifying rhythm, with exception of the second theme	64
3.2.3.2 The second theme and its tonalities	71
3.2.3.3 The reductive technique as transition to the development	75
3.2.3.4 Impacts on the interpretation	76
3.3 First movement sonata form in Schubert's last three piano sonatas	79
3.3.1 Schubert, Sonata no. 19 in C minor, D. 958, first movement	79
3.3.1.1 Importance of the <i>Ab</i> major tonality	79

3.3.1.2 Sub-process of the ABA' form and appearance of the <i>Eb</i> tonality	82
3.3.1.3 Process of variation in the second theme	84
3.3.1.4 Impacts of the <i>Ab</i> tonicisation and chromaticism in the development and coda	86
3.3.1.5 Impacts on the interpretation	90
3.3.2 Schubert, Sonata no. 20 in A major, D. 959, first movement	93
3.3.2.1 Unifying rhythmical motifs and their variants	93
3.3.2.2 The two contrasting ideas of the beginning	95
3.3.2.3 Variation and technique of deferred realisation in the first theme	96
3.3.2.4 Harmonic construction of the first and second themes' beginnings	98
3.3.2.5 Sub-process of the ABA' form in the second theme	99
3.3.2.6 Motifs versus gesture	102
3.3.2.7 Chromaticism and unexpected character of the development	103
3.3.2.8 Similarity with op. 110's first movement	108
3.3.2.9 Variation and lowered sixth degree in the recapitulation	109
3.3.2.10 Ethereal character of the coda	110
3.3.2.11 Impacts on the interpretation	111
3.3.3 Schubert, Sonata no. 21 in <i>Bb</i> major, D. 960, first movement	116
3.3.3.1 The trill and the foreshadowing technique for the <i>Gb</i> major modulation	116
3.3.3.2 The sub-process of the ABA' form and overlapping of formal functions	117
3.3.3.3 Three-key exposition and the first example of the technique of expansion	119
3.3.3.4 Second example of the technique of expansion	124
3.3.3.5 Third example of the technique of expansion	125
3.3.3.6 The deferred realisation of the first trill	128
3.3.3.7 Impacts on the interpretation	129
3.4 Conclusion	133

4. Beethoven, ‘the architect’; Schubert, ‘the colourist’	135
4.1 Beethoven, ‘the architect’: concision, coherence, unity	135
4.1.1 Concision	135
4.1.2 Coherence and unity	136
4.2 Rethinking and challenging the aspect of the length in Schubert’s first movements	139
4.2.1 The purposes of the length	139
4.2.1.1 Coherence and unity	139
4.2.1.2 Lyricism and parataxis	141
4.2.1.3 Schubert, ‘the colourist’	146
4.2.2 Positives impacts of the length on the interpretation	149
4.2.2.1 References	149
4.2.2.2 Memory; other landscapes or musical environments	150
4.2.2.3 The diversity of experiences	151
4.2.3 Difficulties	152
4.3 Performing the six first movements: a comparison of the interpretation between Schubert’s and Beethoven’s movements	154
4.3.1 Principal characteristics	154
4.3.2 Reaching the same technique by different means	156
4.4 Conclusion	157
5. Conclusion	160
 Bibliography	 165

List of musical examples

Chapter three

Example 3.1: Sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 1-15	38
Example 3.2: Facsimile of the first edition of the sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 9-13	42
Example 3.3: Sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 16-49	43
Example 3.4: Sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 48-52	45
Example 3.5: Sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 56-65	46
Example 3.6: Facsimile of the first edition of the sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 51-64	48
Example 3.7: Sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 65-86	49
Example 3.8: Sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 86-99	50
Example 3.9: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 1-12	53
Example 3.10: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 17-23	54
Example 3.11: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 25-31	55
Example 3.12: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 35-40	56
Example 3.13: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 60-82	57
Example 3.14: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 44-55	60
Example 3.15: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 105-116	63
Example 3.16: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 1-16	64
Example 3.17: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 19-35	66
Example 3.18: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 72-77	67
Example 3.19: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 35-47	67
Example 3.20: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 76-81	69
Example 3.21: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 124-135	69
Example 3.22: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 145-158	70
Example 3.23: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 48-58	72
Example 3.24: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 112-127	74
Example 3.25: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 67-72	75
Example 3.26: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 17-19	76

Example 3.27: Facsimile of the second edition of the sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 22-25	77
Example 3.28: Sonata D. 958, first movement, bars 1-16	80
Example 3.29: Sonata D. 958, first movement, bars 17-32	83
Example 3.30: Sonata D. 958, first movement, bars 39-77	84
Example 3.31: Sonata D. 958, first movement, bars 98-117	86
Example 3.32: Sonata D. 958, first movement, bars 117-141	88
Example 3.33: Sonata D. 958, first movement, bars 244-274	89
Example 3.34: Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 1-30	97
Example 3.35: Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 51-130	100
Example 3.36: Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 130-160	105
Example 3.37: Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 160-187	107
Example 3.38: Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 213-226	110
Example 3.39: Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 331-357	111
Example 3.40: Sonata D. 960, first movement, bars 1-45	118
Example 3.41: Sonata D. 960, first movement, bars 45-80	122
Example 3.42: Sonata D. 960, first movement, bars 99-117b	124
Example 3.43: Sonata D. 960, first movement, bars 173-215	127
Example 3.44: Sonata D. 960, first movement, bars 345-357	129

List of tables

Chapter three

Table 3.1: Overview of the contrasting aspects between the first and second themes in the first movement of op. 109	38
Table 3.2: Harmonic construction of parts 1 and 2 of the first theme in the first movement of op. 110	53
Table 3.3: Harmonic construction of the first and second themes' beginnings in the first movement of D. 959	98

Abstract

Considered as the apex of the literature for piano sonatas in the classical period, Beethoven's last three piano sonatas, Opp. 109, 110, 111, and Schubert's last three piano sonatas, D. 958, 959, and 960, are still well appreciated by pianists and are often played in concert. Much has been written about these pieces but this thesis examines the interpretation of the first movements of these works, by highlighting their particularities, explaining the impact of these on the interpretation, and, therefore, helping the understanding of the music for the performing process. These six first movements contain fascinating and striking particularities, typical to each composer's style, which strongly influence their interpretation. The thesis identifies the techniques that are responsible for these particularities in the music. It demonstrates why Beethoven's three first movements are concise, driven by an inner energy, always moving forward, and it examines the purpose of the length in Schubert's three first movements. This research also shows that all six first movements possess elements of unity and coherence, and that these are reached through very different means, depending on whether it is a movement by Beethoven or by Schubert.

It is a special and tremendous experience to perform these sonatas. It is the role of the pianist in his/her interpretation of these movements to underline and point out their particularities, as these represent the essence and hallmarks of Beethoven's and Schubert's musical discourse. This thesis gives answers inasmuch as it explains what performers have to be aware of, what they have to emphasise in their interpretation, and why they have to emphasise it. Thereafter, it is easier to give an eloquent

interpretation of these movements, where their particularities are then clearly understandable.

Foreword

The original idea behind this thesis is that I had the chance to study with a piano teacher that, as long as I know him, keeps repeating to his students: ‘do not ask yourself what is in the score, but why it is in the score.’ It is an essential question and I am not sure to what extent performers use it. While I was learning the last three piano sonatas of Beethoven and Schubert with him, I tried to keep this question in mind but realised that often, my answers were not always one hundred percent clear and I was figuring them out sometimes approximately. Thus, I felt the desire to investigate this ‘not what but why’ question more profoundly and try to define in what capacities and how precisely performers are able to answer it.

The title ‘Final Thoughts’ was chosen for two reasons. First of all, these are the last piano sonatas of both composers, therefore, the last thoughts they set in this genre to the music. Secondly, this thesis contains my final thoughts concerning the interpretation of the first movements. However, my thoughts evolved while writing the thesis, and they will certainly keep evolving, hence the question mark found in the title.

Almost every pianist wants in his/her life to play at least one of the last three piano sonatas by Beethoven and one of the last three piano sonatas of Schubert. These pieces have an incredibly appealing effect on pianists. This thesis adds a supplementary light to the already abundant writings that try to explain and understand what makes these last six sonatas so attractive.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the study

1.1.1 The piano sonata at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries

At the end of the eighteenth century, composers such as Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, Joseph Haydn, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, were writing piano sonatas mainly for pedagogical and domestic purposes. Learned and played by a female clientele belonging to upper classes and sometimes pupils of the composer, the genre of piano sonata was performed in aristocratic salons and parlours.¹

Through the composition of their thirty-two and twenty-one piano sonatas, Ludwig van Beethoven and Franz Schubert made a contribution to the genre that revolutionised its place in the society and the musical life of that time. In the 1800s the piano sonata started to transition from the domestic domain into the public area. There were two main reasons for this change. Firstly, the sonatas were acquiring a new level of technical difficulty, therefore requiring greater competence from the performer. John Gingerich writes:

Beethoven had introduced ... into the piano sonata, a widening fissure between its performers and its technical demands ... Beethoven had added to the genteel personality of the piano sonata an element of virtuosity that had previously been confined to the public stage ...²

Secondly, their new format of four movements, given by Beethoven in his first four sonatas, and carried on by Schubert, was placing them in the same category and at the same level as the symphony and string quartet.

¹ John Irving, 'Sonata (2) Classical', *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/26191> [Accessed 16 January 2017].

² John Gingerich, *Schubert's Beethoven Project* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 23.

His [Schubert's] decision to write piano sonatas exclusively in four movements marks a watershed: after Schubert four-movement sonatas were the norm, at least in the 'conservative' Mendelssohn-Schumann-Brahms line. With his last six sonatas Schubert became the first composer to standardize the affiliation, pioneered by Beethoven, of the piano sonata with the publicly performed large instrumental genres.³

John Irving observes: 'The rise of the 'concert' sonata is to some degree linked with increasing length and advancing technical difficulty'.⁴

Nonetheless, this 'rise' to reach concert stages was made slowly and not without difficulties. Gingerich acknowledges:

By the time Schubert began writing in the large instrumental genres, the aristocratic patronage that had given birth to these genres, nurtured and sustained them, was a moribund as wigs and knee-breeches. At the same time the public institutions that we take for granted as carriers of these genres had not yet been born, or had begun only in an almost unrecognizable embryonic form.⁵

And later on he adds: 'During Schubert's lifetime ... the transition from aristocratic-patronage to 'public and commercial' remained far from complete'.⁶

Therefore, it was only around the 1830s and through composers and pianists such as Ignaz Moscheles, Franz Liszt, and Clara Wieck, that the genre of piano sonata started to appear regularly in piano recitals.⁷

³ Ibid., 35.

⁴ John Irving, 'Sonata (2) Classical', *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/26191>> [Accessed 16 January 2017].

⁵ Gingerich, *Schubert's Beethoven Project*, 15.

⁶ Ibid., 22.

⁷ John Rink, 'Sonata: (3) 19th Century, after Beethoven', *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/26191>> [Accessed 16 January 2017].

1.1.2 The last three piano sonatas

Ludwig van Beethoven's piano sonatas in E major, op. 109, in *Ab*, op. 110, in C minor, op. 111, and Franz Schubert's piano sonatas in C minor, D. 958, in A major, D. 959, and in *Bb* major, D. 960 are at the peak of what both composers achieved in this genre. As Martin Cooper argues:

It is in his last piano works that Beethoven most clearly anticipates the aesthetic of the nineteenth century; for even when he continues to use traditional forms, he uses them in so personal a manner and in such unusual combinations that the effect is entirely new.⁸

Maurice Brown celebrates Schubert's last sonatas and writes:

[Schubert's] greatest achievements are in the last three sonatas, which were finally written down a few weeks before he died. Every writer on Schubert has remarked on the wonder of these sonatas – the productions of a young genius who is still developing, still at the height of his powers, and who reveals in these three works even more striking manifestations of the very aspects which are so endearing to the listener in earlier sonatas. His melodies are as fresh as ever and have even greater depth and serenity; his modulations, which were daring enough in the past, now show an even greater range until, in the slow movement of the Sonata in *Bb*, we have modulations among the most marvellous in all music.⁹

For András Schiff, Schubert's piano sonatas: 'are unquestionably among the most sublime works ever written for the instrument'.¹⁰

1.1.3 Current popularity of Beethoven's and Schubert's piano sonatas

Regarded as the finest of the repertoire for piano solo, Beethoven's and Schubert's piano sonatas are really appreciated and often played in concert. Alfred Brendel writes:

⁸ Martin Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade 1817-1827* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 146.

⁹ Maurice Brown, 'Schubert's Piano Sonatas', *The Musical Times*, 116 (1975), 874.

¹⁰ András Schiff, 'Schubert's Piano Sonatas: Thoughts about Interpretation and Performance', in Brian Newbould (ed.), *Schubert Studies* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1998), 191.

Beethoven's piano sonatas are unique in three respects. First, they represent the whole development of a genius, from his beginnings to the threshold of the late quartets. Secondly, there is not an inferior work among them. Thirdly, Beethoven does not repeat himself in his sonatas; each work, each movement is a new organism.¹¹

As for Schubert's piano sonatas, Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen states that they 'are now part of the repertoire of every demanding pianist'.¹²

Notwithstanding their current popularity, Schubert's D. 958, 959, and 960, are in a position of disequilibrium compared to the frequency with which the Opp. 109, 110, 111 are played or taught. In piano competitions, in conservatories, in university exams, it is mostly a piano sonata of Beethoven that is found on the program, not one of Schubert's.¹³ Schubert's last three piano sonatas are still today neglected. A criticism expressed by Maurice Brown in 1975 is hitherto valid:

Piano teachers have been known to dismiss Schubert sonatas as of little use as teaching material – in the words of the late Colin Mason: 'the sonatas are not sufficiently specific to the pianoforte in conception to win themselves a place in the indispensable literature of the instrument.'¹⁴

For András Schiff, 'it is quite astonishing how much nonsense has been said and written about them – hence their relative unfamiliarity and neglect'.¹⁵ Despite the new inputs and perspectives in research on Schubert's music in the recent decades, there is, nonetheless, an opinion that gives Beethoven's last three piano sonatas pride of place.

¹¹ Alfred Brendel, *Musical thoughts and afterthoughts*, trans. Eugene Hartzell and Paul Hamburger (London: Robson Books, 1998), 38.

¹² '...Schuberts Klaviersonaten, die heute ins Repertoire jedes anspruchsvollen Pianisten gehören...' Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, *Franz Schubert* (Munich: C.H.Beck, 2011), 122.

¹³ 'The history of performing Beethoven is in essence the history of our entire Western culture of musical performance as it has evolved since the end of the eighteenth century. One is even tempted to write 'Western culture' *tout court*.' Alain Frogley, 'Beethoven's music in performance: historical perspectives', in Glenn Stanley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 255.

¹⁴ Brown, 'Schubert's Piano Sonatas', 873.

¹⁵ Schiff, 'Schubert's Piano Sonatas', 191.

1.2 Delimitation of the study

Considering the immense amount of writings on both composers' lives and achievements, this work had to limit and focus on the literature relevant for its objectives: the last three piano sonatas of Beethoven and Schubert, their interpretation, both composers' late style, older and recent opinions of scholars on Schubert's music. Furthermore, the thesis concentrates only on the first movement of all six piano sonatas. This decision is supported by the fact that each first movement is in a sonata-form framework.

Sonata form is the most important large-scale formal type in instrumental music of the classical period. Many historians and theorists consider it to be the period's most highly developed and complex compositional design, the one in which composers reveal their greatest technical skill and expressive potential.¹⁶

Thus all six movements may be expected to follow certain formal constraints, which make comparisons easier.¹⁷ Charles Rosen explains the first-movement sonata form as follows:

This may be the most complex and tightly organized series of forms because of the tendency of the late eighteenth century to concentrate the greatest weight in the opening movement, which in consequence needed the most elaborate and most dramatic structure. This is the scheme which magnifies, beyond any other, the polarization of harmony, thematic material, and texture.¹⁸

One of the main goals of the thesis was to point out the particularities of the movements and therefore show and explain the impact that these particularities have on the interpretation. In order to reach this, a critical analysis was necessary. In his

¹⁶ William E. Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 195.

¹⁷ 'A sonata form required that certain audible goals be successively articulated and secured, even though the individual details of each sonata journey could differ remarkably.' James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 9.

¹⁸ Charles Rosen, *Sonata Forms* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1980), 96.

book *Explaining Music*, Leonard B. Meyer describes the difference between style analysis and critical analysis:

Criticism (or critical analysis) must be distinguished from style analysis ... Critical analysis seeks to understand and explain what is idiosyncratic about a particular composition ... Style analysis, on the other hand, is normative. It is concerned with discovering and describing those attributes of a composition which are common to a group of works ... Style analysis, in its pure form, ignores the idiosyncratic in favor of generalization and typology.¹⁹

Nevertheless, a style analysis, even though succinct (style analyses on these movements were done abundantly and successfully by specialists), was done here too as it was a necessary foundation for the critical analysis relevant for this work. As Meyer explains ‘knowledge about the theory and history of music are not a prerequisite for sensitive understanding, they are necessary basis for explanation’.²⁰ Through the critical analysis, this research was able to identify some major idiosyncrasies happening in the movements, and at the same time, was able to undertake a performative analysis. This latter explained to what extent these idiosyncrasies were influencing the interpretation and which impact they have on the comprehension of the movement for the performing action.

The primary goal of criticism is *explanation* for its own sake. Because music fascinates, excites, and moves us, we want to explain, if only imperfectly, in what ways the events within a particular composition are related to one another and how such relationships shape musical experience.²¹

1.3 Aims of the study

The aims of this work cover three different categories. The first category concerns the particularities of the six first movements and what impact these have on the

¹⁹ Leonard B. Meyer, *Explaining Music* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973), 6-7.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

interpretation; the second points out elements of coherence and unity that appear in the movements; the third scrutinises the length in Schubert's movements, its purposes and impacts on the interpretation.

These movements are among the jewels of the literature for solo piano. Firstly, in order to understand what makes them so special, and with help of the analysis, the thesis aims to show some characteristics of composition that are specific to Beethoven's and/or Schubert's style and where they happen. It intends to demonstrate how these characteristics influence the interpretation; how a full consciousness of these might give a new light on the interpretative paths that are taken; how the comprehension of a movement gets easier, while knowing and understanding the role of these particularities, therefore facilitating the interpretation. Secondly, the thesis seeks to explain how some of these particularities of composition are sources for coherence and unity in the movements. Thirdly, the thesis aims to point out the purposes of the length in the three first movements of Schubert and their positive interpretative impacts in the context of recent thinking that has been done on Schubert's music. Thence, while taking the first movement as example, this work demonstrates that Beethoven's and Schubert's last three piano sonatas require a similar amount of abilities from the performers. Although these abilities are very different, whether it is a movement of Beethoven or of Schubert, they show that Schubert's first movements have no shortcomings.

1.4 Research questions

This thesis will investigate the following questions:

1.4.1 In the first movements of their last three piano sonatas, what are the particularities of composition specific to Beethoven or/and Schubert? What impact do they have on the interpretation?

1.4.2 Do these six first movements show elements of coherence and unity, and if so how and where?

1.4.3 Does the length have a purpose? What are the positive impacts of the length on the interpretation? Is the length serving the music?

1.4.4 To what extent do these investigations change or influence the comprehension of the interpretation of these six last movements?

1.5 Methodology

Because the first goal of this work is to explain and describe the impact of some of Beethoven's and Schubert's particularities of composition on the interpretation of the movements, and to demonstrate that the aspect of length in Schubert's movements has its purposes, an analysis was necessary. Through the analysis techniques of composition intrinsic to each composer were identified. While this process was achieved for all six first movements, this work was also able to point out techniques that are used by both composers. The techniques are explained in chapter three, and proceeding through each first movement, the thesis shows where they happen, and gives information on the impact they have on the interpretation. While working on Schubert's first movements it appeared evident that purposes were justifying the length. Being aware of this changes the comprehension of the movements and therefore their interpretation. Thus, chapter four is dedicated to the aspect of length in Schubert's three first movements, its purposes and impacts on the interpretation.

This chapter looks also into the aspect of concision in Beethoven's three first movements, and indicates elements of coherence and unity found in the six movements.

Each first movement was performed before, and during, the writing of the thesis. It was therefore possible to evaluate the impact of this research on the interpretation and to explain the evolution the interpretation had undergone under the awareness of some particularities found in the movements. It was also very important, for the fulfilment of this dissertation, to be well aware of the latest reassessment of Schubert's particularities of composition. Furthermore, the editions of both Beethoven's and Schubert's last piano sonatas, that are used, were chosen with care. On the advice of William Kinderman, the reprints by Tecla, of the first and early editions of the thirty-two piano sonatas of Beethoven, were studied.²² According to Kinderman, there is no best edition of Beethoven's piano sonatas. It is therefore worth comparing any edition with the sonata's first and early editions.²³ On the recommendation of Lorraine Byrne Bodley,²⁴ the latest Bärenreiter Urtext edition of Schubert's last three piano sonatas, edited by Walburga Litschauer, was studied.²⁵ This edition was also compared with Schubert's drafts that are available on the

²² William Kinderman: email correspondence 27 April 2016.

²³ The other edition used for this thesis, which was also compared with the Tecla's first and early editions of the sonatas, is the 'Wiener Urtext' edition of 2001: Ludwig van Beethoven, Peter Hauschild ed., *Sonaten für Klavier Band 3* (Vienna: Wiener Urtext Edition, Schott/Universal Edition, 2001).

²⁴ Lorraine Byrne Bodley: meeting in Dublin on 20 April 2016.

²⁵ Franz Schubert, Walburga Litschauer ed., *Sonata in C minor D. 958* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, Urtext of the New Schubert Edition, 2015); Franz Schubert, Walburga Litschauer ed., *Sonata in A major D. 959* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, Urtext of the New Schubert Edition, 2014); Franz Schubert, Walburga Litschauer ed., *Sonata in Bb major D. 960* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, Urtext of the New Schubert Edition, 2013).

Bärenreiter homepage.²⁶ Both resources are performative editions especially prepared from the *Neue Schubert Ausgabe*.

1.6 Literature overview

This work had to engage with literature on Ludwig van Beethoven's piano sonatas Opp. 109, 110, and 111, on Franz Schubert's piano sonatas D. 958, 959, and 960, and therefore with literature on both composers' late styles or last period of composition. Moreover, it had also to engage with literature on Schubert's critics – the old and new musicology on Schubertian literature –, and also with literature related to Schubert in the shadow of Beethoven. The topics of late style in Schubert's music, Schubert in Beethoven's shadow, as well as the new assertion on the concepts of form and length in Schubert's sonata forms, require an in-depth investigation and will be covered in chapter two.

1.6.1 The concision in Beethoven's late style

In its fourth chapter, the thesis concentrates, inter alia, on concision as found in Beethoven's last three first movements. Concision, or conciseness, means in this case that a compositional trajectory achieves its aims and objectives with little material and without anything that could be superfluous.²⁷

²⁶ The draft for the first movement of Schubert's Sonata no. 19 in C minor, D. 958 is found on *Bärenreiter* <<https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/BA10869>> [Accessed 22 September 2016], under 'Extras', 'Digital chapter'; the draft for the first movement of Schubert's Sonata no. 20 in A major, D. 959 is found on *Bärenreiter* <<https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/BA10861>> [Accessed 22 September 2016], under 'Extras', 'Digital chapter'; the draft for the first movement of Schubert's Sonata no. 21 in Bb major, D. 960 is found on *Bärenreiter* <<https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/BA10860>> [Accessed 22 September 2016], under 'Extras', 'Digital chapter'.

²⁷ The *Cambridge Dictionary Online* proposes for the word concise, adjective of concision, the following definition: short and clear, expressing what needs to be said without unnecessary words. *Cambridge Dictionary Online* <<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/concise>> [Accessed 6 July 2016].

The literature on Beethoven's last period of composition show a parallelism between concision and 'late style'. With different words, authors describe bareness and introspection in Beethoven's last period of composition. In his *Essays on Music*, Theodor Adorno characterises Beethoven's late style as being 'bald, undisguised', where 'conventions find expression as the naked representation of themselves'.²⁸ While Charles Rosen, in *The Classical Style*, explains that Beethoven's music in his late style 'becomes more and more contemplative',²⁹ Martin Cooper in his book *Beethoven, the Last Decade*, states that in his last compositions, Beethoven 'distilled the essence of his musical nature'.³⁰ For Cooper, in this late style, 'nothing is conceded to the listener'; instead, Beethoven followed respectfully 'the pure essence of his own thoughts'.³¹ Robert S. Hatten, in his book *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation*, characterises the first movement of Op. 110 as being 'transcendent',³² and Christopher H. Gibbs in *The life of Schubert*, mentions that 'Beethoven's late style reveals an unprecedented interiority quite different from the 'heroic' affirmations of his middle period'.³³

1.6.2 Schubert's critics and their reassessments

The evolution of classical music in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been profoundly influenced by Beethoven and his music. Scholars took it as model. Scott Burnham even states: 'Because of the position and influence of Beethoven's heroic

²⁸ Theodor Adorno, *Essays on Music*, trans. Susan H. Gillespie, ed. Richard Leppert (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 565-566.

²⁹ 'Son art ... n'en devient pas moins de plus en plus méditatif.' Charles Rosen, 'Le style classique', trans. Marc Vignal and Jean-Pierre Cerquant, (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), 561.

³⁰ Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade*, v.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

³² Robert S. Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 84.

³³ Christopher H. Gibbs, *The Life of Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 153.

style in subsequent musical history, we have never since fundamentally changed our view of music'.³⁴ Similarly, Christopher H. Gibbs, citing Rosen, explains:

Rosen has argued recently that 'the music of Beethoven is literally the origin of our conception of musical analysis, and this has unnaturally restricted analysis by limiting it almost entirely to methods of examination relevant to his music.'³⁵

It is only recently that opinions on Schubert's qualities of composition, seen in the past as imperfection, have been challenged and started to change. Statements from Vincent d'Indy who declared that 'all those [Schubert's] works in a form that absolutely requires a vital construction, are very uneven, if not totally defective',³⁶ Hans Költzsch, in his book of 1927, who wrote that 'Schubert's inner constellation to sonata form seems quite problematic',³⁷ or Theodor W. Adorno 'who once described Schubert's thematic structure as a "pot-pourri"',³⁸ are nowadays obsolescent and have been successfully reassessed by scholars.

Already in 1975, in his article on Schubert's piano sonatas, Maurice Brown states that Schubert achieves 'a glorious synthesis of musical elements', found 'nowhere else outside Beethoven'.³⁹ *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, published in 1997, provides a great contribution to this new assessment of Schubert's music by

³⁴ Scott Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 28.

³⁵ Christopher H. Gibbs, 'Introduction: the elusive Schubert', in Christopher H. Gibbs (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 7-8.

³⁶ 'toutes celles de ses œuvres [Schubert] qui appartiennent aux formes où la nécessité du plan est impérieuse sont très inégales, sinon tout à fait défectueuses.' Vincent d'Indy, *Cours de composition musicale*, 2ième livre, vol. I (Paris: Durand, 1912), 402; quoted in Xavier Hascher, 'Introduction', in Xavier Hascher (ed.), *Le Style Instrumental de Schubert: Sources, analyse, évolution* (Paris: Publication de la Sorbonne, 2007), 9.

³⁷ 'Schuberts innere Konstellation zur Sonatenform [erscheint] durchaus als problematisch', Hans Költzsch, *Franz Schubert in seinen Klaviersonaten* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1927), 77; quoted in Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, 'Die Sonatenform im Spätwerk Franz Schuberts', *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 45 (1988), 16.

³⁸ William Kinderman, 'Schubert's piano music: probing the human condition', in Christopher H. Gibbs (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 155.

³⁹ Brown, 'Schubert's Piano Sonatas', 873.

explaining, among others, ‘how Schubert’s compositional strategies and musical values differed from Beethoven’s’.⁴⁰ In this book, Charles Rosen praises Schubert’s innovation by mentioning that he ‘was able to combine his un-Classical sensibility with an extraordinary skilful manipulation of Classical conventions’,⁴¹ and William Kinderman affirms that ‘Long underestimated, Schubert’s compositions for piano have recently begun to assume their rightful place beside Beethoven’s legacy as works of almost unparalleled expressive range and depth’.⁴² For David Montgomery, in his article ‘Modern Schubert interpretation in the light of the pedagogical sources of his day’, it is Schubert’s ‘new harmonic sense, compelling melodic invention, dramatic capacity, and length’ that launches his music out of the past.⁴³ Charles Fisk, in *Returning Cycles*, responds to an early critic on Schubert’s music by adding to it: ‘Schubert did not simply pour his musical ideas into formal molds; he made these ideas struggle to find their own full voice and autonomy within them’.⁴⁴ For Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, it is clear that ‘Franz Schubert is undoubtedly one of the most important composers of music history’,⁴⁵ and John Gingerich, in his recent book *Schubert’s Beethoven Project* demonstrates that ‘Schubert was using the genres and forms of Beethoven’s legacy to write music expressive of values quite different from those of Beethoven, music that therefore not only could stand comparison with Beethoven’s, but gained in resonance from the contrast’.⁴⁶ In one of the most recent contributions, Lorraine Byrne Bodley asserts that the music Schubert composed in his final years ‘has proved pivotal for the development of diverse fields of musical

⁴⁰ Gibbs, ‘Introduction: the elusive Schubert’, 8.

⁴¹ Charles Rosen, ‘Schubert’s inflection of Classical form’, in Christopher H. Gibbs (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 90.

⁴² William Kinderman, ‘Schubert’s piano music: probing the human condition’, 155.

⁴³ David Montgomery, ‘Modern Schubert interpretation in the light of the pedagogical sources of his day’, *Early Music* 25 (1997), 111.

⁴⁴ Charles Fisk, *Returning Cycles: Contexts for the Interpretation of Schubert’s Impromptus and Last Sonatas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

⁴⁵ ‘Franz Schubert gehört zweifellos zu den bedeutendsten Komponisten der Musikgeschichte.’ Hinrichsen, *Franz Schubert*, 7.

⁴⁶ Gingerich, *Schubert’s Beethoven Project*, 8.

scholarship'.⁴⁷ In the same book, Robert S. Hatten declares: 'Schubert heightens the inherited dramatic schemes of the classical style and transfigures their intricate surfaces in order to lead the listener to more profound spiritual depths'.⁴⁸

1.7 Conclusion

In this present chapter, the frame of this work has been explained. The next chapter will examine in more detail the topics of late style, Schubert in the shadow of Beethoven, and the reassessment of Schubert's critics in the last decades.

⁴⁷ Lorraine Byrne Bodley, 'Introduction: Schubert's late style and current musical scholarship', in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert's Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 11.

⁴⁸ Robert S. Hatten, 'Schubert's alchemy: transformative surfaces, transfiguring depths', in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert's Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 110.

2. Background to Beethoven's and Schubert's final piano sonatas

2.1 Context of the composition of the last sonatas

On 19 November 1828, the Austrian composer Franz Schubert died in Vienna preceded the year before by the German composer, Ludwig van Beethoven, both leaving behind them a tremendous contribution to the classical music world.

Beethoven's and Schubert's final three piano sonatas, monuments of the literature for piano solo, were created only a few years apart.

Ludwig van Beethoven started the composition of his piano sonata in E major, Op. 109, at the beginning of 1820, while he was also working on the *Missa Solemnis* and the *Diabelli Variations*.¹ Dedicated to Maximiliane Brentano, the Op. 109 was thought of as the first of a group of three piano sonatas² that Beethoven proposed to the editor Adolph Martin Schlesinger. Quoting Beethoven, Martin Cooper relates that in a letter to Schlesinger, in April 1820, Beethoven mentioned the project of the composition of Opp. 109, 110, and 111: 'I shall be willing to hand over to you new sonatas – but only at 40 ducats a piece, a sort of undertaking to consist of three sonatas for 120 ducats.'³ Op. 111 was finished at the beginning of 1822, a few weeks after the completion of Op. 110 – the autograph for Op. 110 indicates the date of 25 December 1821.⁴ Beethoven dedicated Op. 111 to the Archduke Rudolph, but the London edition of 1823, published by Clementi, indicated the name Antonia

¹ Elisabeth Brisson, *Guide de la Musique de Beethoven* (Paris: Éditions Fayard, 2005), 707.

² John Gingerich, *Schubert's Beethoven Project* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 246.

³ Ludwig van Beethoven, quoted in: Martin Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade 1817-1827* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2nd edn., 1985), 40.

⁴ Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade*, 187.

Brentano.⁵ All three sonatas were first published by Schlesinger the year following their composition.⁶

In the spring of 1828, after completing his final chamber work, the String Quintet D. 956, and while he was correcting the second edition of *Winterreise*, Schubert started to work on his last three piano sonatas, the sonatas in C minor D. 958, in A major D. 959, and in Bb major D. 960. In a letter of 2 October 1828, to Heinrich Albert Probst, his publisher at that time, Schubert wrote: ‘Among others, I have composed three sonatas for pianoforte that I would like to dedicate to Hummel’.⁷ However, by the time the sonatas were published by Anton Diabelli, in 1838, Johann Nepomuk Hummel was dead. Therefore, Diabelli dedicated the three pieces to Robert Schumann.⁸ Like Beethoven a few years before, Schubert thought of these three last sonatas as a group and they were published as a group. The manuscript of the last piano sonata carries the date of 26 September 1828, considered to be the date when the last sonata was completed.⁹ Schubert died less than two months later on 19 November 1828.

⁵ ‘Concerned about his editorial politics, he [Beethoven] first leaves to his new publisher, the choice of a dedicatee, before imposing, on August 31, 1822, a name that could bring him some advantages in Vienna: the Archduke Rudolph, his patron and student. The composer did not remember his choice in February 1823 and wrote to his publisher that the Sonata op. 111 was dedicated to Antonie Brentano... name that will appear on the London edition of April 1823.’; ‘Soucieux de sa politique éditoriale, il [Beethoven] laisse d’abord à son nouvel éditeur le choix du dédicataire, avant d’imposer, le 31 août 1822, un nom, qui pouvait lui valoir à Vienne des avantages: l’archiduc Rodolphe, son mécène et son élève. Le compositeur ne se souvenait plus de ce choix en février 1823, et il écrivait à son éditeur que la Sonate op. 111 était dédiée à Antonie Brentano... nom qui figurera sur l’édition de Londres en avril 1823.’ Brisson, *Guide de la Musique de Beethoven*, 722.

⁶ Brisson, *Guide de la Musique de Beethoven*, 709, 720, 724.

⁷ ‘J’ai composé entre autres trois sonates pour pianoforte seul, que je voudrais dédier à Hummel’, Franz Schubert, quoted in: Brigitte Massin, *Franz Schubert* (Paris: Éditions Fayard, 2nd edn. 1997), 1275.

⁸ Massin, *Franz Schubert*, 1275-1276.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1275.

2.2 Beethoven: an overview of his influences and image

When Beethoven left Bonn for Vienna in 1792, Count Waldstein expressed: ‘You will receive the spirit of Mozart from the hands of Haydn’.¹⁰ Indeed, Beethoven pursued the traditions established by Haydn and Mozart. His early works, as Charles Rosen explains, ‘were frequently based on Mozartean models’.¹¹

Nevertheless, his treatment of the sonata form in the symphony, the string quartet, and the piano sonata, especially in his second period, called ‘heroic’, reveals new directions:

...having assimilated the Classical style, Beethoven forges his own more dramatic and monumental one, while concentrating more on the symphony and concerto, and large scale choral and dramatic works. Even the works for piano and chamber ensemble reflect the new expressive and structural emphases.¹²

His sense of resolution, his handling of the tonic-dominant polarity, of a compelling inner forward drive, and of a processual and organic structure of the form, have led his sonata-form movements to become epitomes for the following generations. Adolf Bernhard Marx, contemporary of Beethoven, and, ‘the theorist who codified sonata form’,¹³ took Beethoven’s sonata form as model for his treatise on musical composition,¹⁴ thus helping them immeasurably to become the model for how sonata-form has to be built: ‘Marx championed Beethoven even during the composer’s lifetime, and his theoretical conception of sonata form, perhaps his best-

¹⁰ Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 19.

¹¹ ‘It seems to me that the structure and style of Beethoven’s music are best understood as an extension of Haydn and Mozart.’ Charles Rosen, *Sonata Forms* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1980), 282.

¹² Glenn Stanley, ‘Some thoughts on biography and a chronology of Beethoven’s life and music’, in Glenn Stanley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 4.

¹³ Scott Burnham, ‘The four ages of Beethoven: critical reception and the canonic composer’, in Glenn Stanley, (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 277.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 277.

known achievement, is inextricably tied up with Beethoven's music'.¹⁵ Similarly

Charles Rosen acknowledges:

A. B. Marx devoted his life to the deification of Beethoven, and was indeed, one of the most important agents in the creation of that indispensable myth, the supremacy of Beethoven.

This is why sonata form as it is generally known is more or less those compositional procedures of Beethoven which were most useful to the nineteenth century, which could be imitated most comfortably and with the smallest risk of disaster.¹⁶

Furthermore, Beethoven's heroic period, as well as the man itself, became and are still nowadays, paradigms:

Beethoven has been idolized by persons of all walks of life, and many nationalities, as a 'role model' or an 'educator'. His triumphs over deafness and loneliness fixed his reputation as a paradigm of the 'artist'. Inspired by this heroic image and the élan of his most popular works, musicians, writers, visual artists, politicians, and a host of others have attempted to imitate aspects of his personality, and convince others to do likewise.¹⁷

As Alain Frogley states: 'After his death, Beethoven's music went on to become the core of the canonic performance culture that emerged in the mid-nineteenth century: the 'imaginary museum of musical works' which is still with us today'.¹⁸ For Scott Burnham:

Tonal theory has been listening almost exclusively to Beethoven, and more specifically, to his heroic style. The musical values of the heroic style – thematic/motivic development, end-orientation and unequivocal closure, form as process, and the inexorable presence of line – are preserved in the axioms of the leading theoretical models of the last two centuries.¹⁹

¹⁵ Scott Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 68.

¹⁶ Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, 3.

¹⁷ David B. Dennis, 'Beethoven at large: reception in literature, the arts, philosophy, and politics', in Glenn Stanley, (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 292.

¹⁸ Alain Frogley, 'Beethoven's music in performance: historical perspectives', in Glenn Stanley, (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 261.

¹⁹ Burnham, *Beethoven Hero*, 110.

Burnham also remarks: ‘Beethoven’s music instantiates something felt to be fundamental to music itself; indeed, Beethoven is treated as the embodiment of music, the indispensable authority on the question of how music ought to go’.²⁰

Beethoven’s last period of composition is known for showing a return to traditions marked by an economy of compositional resources, and Charles Rosen notices a ‘contraction or even a distillation of classical procedure’.²¹ Rosen also states: ‘For Beethoven the sonata was an *almost* established pattern that he could extraordinarily recreate. That is the paradox of his late style: it appears to be completely free and is closer in most important ways to late eighteenth-century principles than the works of his middle period’.²² Martin Cooper observes:

It is true that the last decade of his life is not the period during which he wrote the works which have won him the reputation reflected in the common equation of his name with ‘composer’. But it was during those ten years that Beethoven finally came to realize the potentialities of both his art and his nature.²³

2.3 Schubert in the shadow of Beethoven; his liberation

Even though Schubert’s contemporaneity to Beethoven might have been an advantage: ‘Schubert’s late style is unthinkable without the existence of Beethoven’s late style, in the sense of a model he moved beyond’,²⁴ it definitely handicapped his image and reception as composer.

²⁰ Ibid., xvi.

²¹ Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, 283.

²² Ibid., 315.

²³ Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade*, 1.

²⁴ Lorraine Byrne Bodley, ‘Introduction: Schubert’s late style and current musical scholarship’, in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert’s Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 16.

Schubert felt the weight caused by the presence of Beethoven in Vienna and the popularity of the German composer.²⁵ ‘Schubert faced in the large instrumental genres a tradition of daunting quality and renown. The symphony, string quartet, and piano sonata were the cornerstones of Beethoven’s immense prestige, and Beethoven was still alive’.²⁶ But by the end of his life, Schubert also liberated himself from this burden, referred to as ‘Beethoven’s shadow’. The year 1824 marks a watershed in Schubert’s career. Hinrichsen comments: ‘Since the decisive spring of 1824 Schubert’s musical thinking had reached an unsurpassed level and at the same time a creative continuity ...’²⁷ Similarly, Charles Rosen writing about Schubert’s the Grand Duo for piano four hands (D. 812) which was composed in 1824, and about the String Quintet (D. 956), composed in 1828, mentions: ‘In spite of all of Schubert’s enormous debt to Mozart and Beethoven, we can see that his forms are no longer theirs’.²⁸ Christopher H. Gibbs observes: ‘Professionally and compositionally, Schubert entered a new stage during the final two years of his life ... Now thirty years old, and at the peak of his creative powers, Schubert surpassed even what Beethoven had accomplished at the same age’.²⁹ And John Gingerich also explains:

Schubert’s activities in 1828 show us a composer for whom composition in the most ambitious genres had become a creative and existential necessity. What Schubert wrought in

²⁵ Joseph von Spaun, who is regarded as a serious and reliable witness, handed down a now famous remark of the young Franz Schubert, which is not precisely datable, but probably must originate from the early years at the seminary: “Secretly of course I hope to be able to make something out of myself, but who is able to achieve anything after Beethoven”; ‘Durch Joseph von Spaun, der als seriöser und verlässlicher Zeuge gilt, ist ein berühmt gewordener Ausspruch des jungen Franz Schubert überliefert, der zwar nicht exakt datierbar ist, aber aus der frühen Konviktszeit stammen muss: “heimlich im stillen hoffe ich wohl selbst noch etwas aus mir machen zu können, aber wer vermag nach Beethoven noch etwas zu machen?”’. Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, *Franz Schubert* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2011), 49.

²⁶ Gingerich, *Schubert’s Beethoven Project*, 29.

²⁷ ‘Spätestens seit dem entscheidenden Frühjahr 1824 befand sich Schuberts musikalisches Denken auf einer inkommensurablen Höhe und zugleich in einer kreativen Kontinuität ...’ Hinrichsen, *Franz Schubert*, 105.

²⁸ Charles Rosen, ‘Schubert’s inflections of classical form’, in Christopher H. Gibbs (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 88.

²⁹ Christopher H. Gibbs, “‘Poor Schubert’: Images and Legends of the composer”, in Christopher H. Gibbs (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 44.

the last months of his life seems miraculous not only for the quantity of his creations, but for the range of emotions and depth of feeling he expressed.³⁰

However, Schubert's contemporaneity to the German composer led unfortunately to an automatic comparison of his life and work with Beethoven's, and helped relegate his compositions too often to a kind of second place. Christopher H. Gibbs acknowledges:

Much of Schubert's image was created in counterpoint to Beethoven's. While in the literature on Beethoven, Schubert is usually referred to only in passing, or goes entirely unmentioned, there is no biographical study of Schubert in which Beethoven does not play a role.³¹

In the same book, Gibbs again explains: 'Especially when set against Beethovenian paradigms, Schubert's formal structures were often judged lacking'.³² Similarly, James William Sobaskie expresses: 'Forever compared – either implicitly or explicitly – with the supposed ideal established by Beethoven, Schubert's composition has been found to be formally lax, technically weak, and stylistically inconsistent'.³³ Even at the beginning of the twentieth century, Schubert's music was still seen as inferior to Beethoven's: 'Even at the time of the celebration of Beethoven and Schubert's centenary, 1927/1928, the opinion was still that Schubert's achievements in instrumental music were only epigonic compared to Beethoven's'.³⁴

³⁰ John Gingerich, *Schubert's Beethoven Project*, 306, 308.

³¹ Gibbs, "Poor Schubert": Images and Legends of the composer', 50.

³² Christopher H. Gibbs, 'Introduction: the elusive Schubert', in Christopher H. Gibbs (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 8.

³³ James William Sobaskie, 'A Balance Struck: Gesture, Form, and Drama in Schubert's E-flat-Major Piano Trio', in Xavier Hascher (ed.), *Le Style Instrumental de Schubert: Sources, analyse, évolution* (Paris: Publication de la Sorbonne, 2007), 118-119.

³⁴ 'Noch im Umkreis der Beethoven- und Schubert-Zentenarfeiern 1927/1928 galt die Auffassung, Schubert habe in der Instrumentalmusik neben Beethoven nur Epigonales geleistet.' Hinrichsen, *Franz Schubert*, 122.

2.4 Recent changes of perspective in Schubert's critics

It is only recently that scholars started to look into positive aspects of Schubert's music that have long been pejoratively criticised.

Against Beethoven's powerful ascending fame, Schubert's instrumental legacy was put aside ... What was already taken for granted, by composers like Schumann or Brahms, namely that Schubert's great instrumental forms were the only historically significant models of structure that have in fact developed beside Beethoven's, is a general perception that is little more than a few decades old.³⁵

Similarly, Xavier Hascher explains:

One could almost say, not only regarding his instrumental music, but also the overall perception of his work and image, that the thirty years preceding Schubert's bicentennial in 1997 saw deeper changes than the long century and a half that followed his death.³⁶

Thanks to scholars that have reassessed Schubert's older critics, the reception of the man and his music has started to change:

Fortunately, the newly emerging view of Schubert provides a better perspective on his creative process. We are now well placed to see that Schubert was among the first to fully comprehend Beethoven's tremendous musical achievement and certainly the first to offer a worthy response. Recognizing the futility of duplicating Beethoven's methods, and convinced of the need for a personal style, Schubert explored and extended compositional techniques that Beethoven had not yet exhausted. In addition, he combined seemingly disparate genres and structural principles to reinvigorate familiar forms. Finally, Schubert's

³⁵ 'Gegen den mächtig aufsteigenden Nachruhm Beethovens geriet Schuberts instrumentale Hinterlassenschaft in Abseits ... Was für Komponisten wie Schumann oder Brahms bereits als selbstverständlich galt, dass sich nämlich in Schuberts großen Instrumentalformen das einzige geschichts-wirksame Strukturmodell neben Beethoven entwickelt hat, ist als generelle Einsicht kaum mehr als wenige Jahrzehnte alt.' Hinrichsen, *Franz Schubert*, 120, 122.

³⁶ 'On pourrait presque dire, non seulement en ce qui concerne sa musique instrumentale, mais aussi la perception globale de son œuvre et la représentation de son personnage humain, que les quelques trente années qui ont précédé le bicentenaire de Schubert, en 1997, ont vu une évolution plus profonde que le large siècle et demi qui a suivi la mort du compositeur.' Xavier Hascher, 'Introduction', in Xavier Hascher (ed.), *Le Style Instrumental de Schubert: Sources, analyse, évolution* (Paris: Publication de la Sorbonne, 2007), 9.

search for originality and innovation led him to develop entirely new methods of musical organisation.³⁷

2.4.1 Re-evaluation of sonata form theory in Schubert studies

Scholars have reproached Schubert's sonata-form for a lack of inner organisation, a strange or almost non-existent exploitation of the relation tonic-dominant, and an attempt to abundantly expand the form. These critics have been positively re-examined. Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, for example, explains how Schubert re-evaluated the relation tonic-dominant:

The fact that sonata-form draws its inner tension from the tonic-dominant relationship is re-evaluated by Schubert to a tonally graduated and vastly differentiated system of the whole movement. This logic does not lie in the 'tonal centring' and palpable dramatic escalation of the exposition and development as well as in the tonal resolution of the subsequent recapitulation, but much more in the preparation of correspondence, analogy and balance of harmonic emphasis.³⁸

For Hali Fieldman:

Schubert was in fact deeply involved in such work [sonata form], and his innovative treatment of sonata form was not due to an attempt to expand the form, as is often suggested, but was rather a necessary formal consequence of the profoundly abstract compositional issues with which he was engaged.³⁹

Again, Hinrichsen disputes that 'Schubert's supposed disregard for the natural function in the organism of sonata-form is, in fact, the result of a well thought out

³⁷ Sobaskie, 'A Balance Struck: Gesture, Form, and Drama in Schubert's E-flat-Major Piano Trio', 119.

³⁸ 'Der Umstand, daß der Sonatenhauptsatz seine Innenspannung aus dem Tonika-Dominant-Verhältnis bezieht, wird von Schubert umgewertet zu einer tonartlich gestaffelten und ungeheuer differenzierten Anlage des ganzen Satzes, deren Logik nicht in 'tonaler Zentrierung' und in handgreiflicher dramatischer Zuspitzung in Exposition und Durchführung sowie anschließender Lösung in der tonal ausgeglichenen Reprise besteht, sondern weit eher in der Herstellung von Korrespondenz, Analogie und Balance der harmonischen Gewichte.' Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, 'Die Sonatenform im Spätwerk Franz Schuberts', *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 45 (1988), 19.

³⁹ Hali Fieldman, 'Schubert's Sonata Form: The Case of the C-Minor *Quartettsatz*', in Xavier Hascher (ed.), *Le Style Instrumental de Schubert: Sources, analyse, évolution* (Paris: Publication de la Sorbonne, 2007), 84.

compositional plan ... The idea of the goal-oriented development has not disappeared from Schubert's forms; it simply changed from the level of motivic-thematic work to the far more discreet area of harmonic dispositions.⁴⁰ And he resumes by stating that 'the movements in sonata-form of Schubert's late style result from a common root: from the intention to render meaningful and justified Schubert's very characteristic 'epic-lyrical' concept of sonata form.'⁴¹

2.4.2 Re-evaluation of length in Schubert's music

The aspect of length was long considered as an unfavourable hallmark showing lack and deficit in the construction of Schubert's pieces. The composer Gustav Mahler once mentioned on Schubert's compositions: 'No elaboration, no artistically finished development of his original idea! Instead, he repeats himself so much that you could cut out half the piece without doing it any harm.'⁴² As Gibbs remarks: 'What the enthusiastic Schumann perceived (or perhaps excused) as 'heavenly length' in Schubert, others dismissed as tedious repetition.'⁴³ More recently, scholars have come to use other words to describe the length: words that now transform it into a brilliant quality of Schubert's music. John Gingerich, for example, states: 'Schubert's music circles back, again and again, to reconsider already familiar elements in new contexts: the interplay of textural, motivic, harmonic, and registral reference creates

⁴⁰ 'Schuberts angebliche „Missachtung der natürlichen Funktionen im Organismus der Sonatenform“ ist in Wirklichkeit das Ergebnis eines wohldurchdachten kompositorischen Plans ... der Gedanke zielgerichteter Entwicklung aus Schuberts Formen keineswegs verschwunden ist; er ist lediglich von der Ebene der motivisch-thematischen Arbeit in den weitaus unauffälligeren Bereich der harmonischen Disposition übergegangen.' Hinrichsen, 'Die Sonatenform im Spätwerk Franz Schuberts', 24-25.

⁴¹ '...die Sonatensätze aus Schuberts Spätzeit aus einer gemeinsamen Wurzel hervorgehen: aus der Absicht, die für Schubert überaus charakteristische ‚episch-lyrische‘ Anlage des Sonatenhauptsatzes überhaupt erst als eine sinnvolle und in sich begründete zu ermöglichen.' Hinrichsen, 'Die Sonatenform im Spätwerk Franz Schuberts', 20.

⁴² Natalie Bauer-Lechner, *Recollections of Gustav Mahler*, trans. Dika Newlin, Peter Frankl (ed) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 147.

⁴³ Gibbs, 'Introduction: the elusive Schubert', 7-8.

a highly discursive, multi-layered field of memory.’⁴⁴ James M. Baker offers a further perspective of this length:

Franz Schubert’s music has always been prized for what Robert Schumann called its heavenly lengths - by which Schumann meant not only the breadth of Schubert's beautiful melodies, but also the wealth of thematic materials, the myriad harmonic nuances, and the breathtaking scope of design exhibited in Schubert's compositions.⁴⁵

And Xavier Hascher asserts: ‘Schubert would not entirely be Schubert without the temporal expansion of his music; yet, the explanation of its specificity cannot be merely quantitative – it has to be qualitative too.’⁴⁶ Embracing this new school of thought, this work gives a supplementary interpretative approach to the aspect of length in Schubert’s music.

2.5 Late style

The composition of Beethoven’s opp. 109, 110, 111, and Schubert’s D. 958, 959, 960, happened in both composers’ period of late style.

2.5.1 Late style: Beethoven

Ludwig van Beethoven’s compositions are commonly divided into three periods. Nevertheless, this division was disputed by scholars. Therefore, as Glenn Stanley explains these ‘three periods are recommended – *cum grano salis.*’, but as he also remarks ‘the necessity of imposing some kind of narrative structure was self-evident, and, while some twentieth-century authors have advanced four-part and even five-

⁴⁴ John M. Gingerich, ‘Schubert’s Beethoven Project: The Chamber Music, 1824-1828’ (PhD diss., Yale University, 1996), 9.

⁴⁵ James M. Baker, ‘Skirting the Structural Tonic’, in Xavier Hascher (ed.), *Le Style Instrumental de Schubert: Sources, analyse, évolution* (Paris: Publication de la Sorbonne, 2007), 216.

⁴⁶ Xavier Hascher, ‘Detours, wrong tracks and dead ends: the Wanderer in the labyrinth of Schubert’s late instrumental music’, in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert’s Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 264.

part divisions, the original ternary one has proved to be remarkably strong'.⁴⁷ Martin Cooper also acknowledges: 'Wilhelm von Lenz's division of the composer's life into three creative 'periods' was founded on real and demonstrable stylistic differences; and it is valuable so long as the divisions between the three periods are not regarded as rigid.'⁴⁸ By scrutinising Beethoven's sketches, it is possible to see changes in his notation, approximatively at the same time where he entered his third period:

It is also interesting to observe that the character of Beethoven's autographs changed at exactly the same time as we shall find his music beginning to take on the characteristic colour and consistency that we associate with this last, third period of his creative development .⁴⁹

Unlike in his second period, which is known for its 'heroic' character, the works in Beethoven's third period display introspective and intimate aspects.⁵⁰ Glenn Stanley states: 'This period is marked by intense formal and stylistic innovation and an increasing emphasis on personal subjectivity in contrast to the more objective character of the heroic music'.⁵¹ As for Martin Cooper, he notices:

The piano sonatas opp. 101, 106, 109, 110, and 111, the Diabelli Variations op. 120, and the string quartets opp. 127, 130, 131, 132, and 135 all reveal, ... the characteristic marks of a late style, in which nothing is conceded to the listener, no attempt is made to capture his attention or hold his interest. Instead the composer communes with himself or contemplates his vision of reality, thinking (as it were) aloud and concerned only with the pure essence of his own thoughts and with the musical processes from which that thought itself is often indistinguishable.⁵²

⁴⁷ Stanley, 'Some thoughts on biography and a chronology of Beethoven's life and music', 3, 6.

⁴⁸ Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade*, 8.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 129.

⁵⁰ Kerman, Joseph, *et al.*, 'Beethoven, Ludwig van', *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press)

<<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40026pg20>> [Accessed 4 August 2016].

⁵¹ Stanley, 'Some thoughts on biography and a chronology of Beethoven's life and music', 4.

⁵² Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade*, 10-11.

2.5.2 Late style: Schubert

The question of late style in Schubert's compositional process has challenged scholars. He was thirty-one years old when he composed his last three piano sonatas and it might be unsuitable to define a period of composition as 'late' with such a young age. Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen explains:

To speak of Schubert's 'late work' with the same emphatic meaning, as it has been discussed about Bach or Beethoven, is, of course, not possible; 'late' are the last works of this early deceased composer only in a purely chronological sense. And yet they achieve a kind of valid expression, which may be referred to as the result of a long experimental maturity, and reveal a completely new compositional level of consciousness.⁵³

Yet at thirty-one, Schubert knew that he would soon die: he had contracted syphilis in 1822, and as Lorraine Byrne Bodley observes, had the 'awareness of living beneath the Damoclesian sword since 1822-23.'⁵⁴

Joseph N. Straus emphasises that in designating a composer's style as being 'late', the main factor that has to be considered is the health condition that predominates in the composer's specific period of life:

A contextual factor more consistently correlated with late style than chronological age, proximity to death, or authorial or historical belatedness is the physical and mental condition of the composer. Composers who write in what is recognized as a late style often have shared experiences of nonnormative bodily or mental function, of disability, or of impairments

⁵³ 'Von einem „Spätwerk“ Schuberts mit derselben emphatischen Bedeutung zu sprechen, wie sie etwa für Bach oder für Beethoven diskutiert worden ist, geht natürlich nicht an; „spät“ sind die letzten Werke dieses früh Verstorbenen nur in einem rein chronologischen Sinn. Und doch gelangt in ihnen etwas zu gültiger Ausprägung, was als Resultat langen experimentierenden Reifens bezeichnet werden kann und ein völlig neues kompositorisches Bewusstseinsniveau erkennen lässt.' Hinrichsen, *Franz Schubert*, 105.

⁵⁴ Lorraine Byrne Bodley, 'A place at the edge: reflections on Schubert's late style', *Oxford German Studies* 44 (2015), 23.

resulting from disease or other causes. Examples include Bach (blindness), Beethoven (deafness), Schubert (syphilis).⁵⁵

Similarly, Julian Horton explains:

... not all last music is late music, and not all late music is necessarily last music, because last music is not always critically self-reflective or written in awareness of mortality, nor is music which engages in stylistic self-critique always written at the end of a composer's life ...⁵⁶

Furthermore, Horton later adds: 'Wherever we locate the origins of Schubert's late style, the music written in 1828 supplies a compelling instance of the convergence of these two categories.'⁵⁷

However, as Lorraine Byrne Bodley acknowledges: the question of determining Schubert's last years of composition as 'late style' is less important than to be aware that 'there is something in Schubert's last works that communicates a sense of his life as being unfinished. The final works suggest the triumph of artistic achievement over the degradation of death and disease.'⁵⁸

2.6 Importance of the interpretation and role of the performer

It is through the work done of performers that these sonatas, composed almost two hundred years ago, are still parts of the present cultural life.

Only the performer has control over the sounding aspect of music, and critical, historical, or analytical judgments may bear little or no relation to music's process. That does not of course deny their value: but it serves to highlight the special powers that performance has to

⁵⁵ Joseph N. Straus, 'Disability and 'Late Style' in Music', *The Journal of Musicology* 25 (2008), 6.

⁵⁶ Julian Horton, 'Stasis and Continuity in Schubert's String Quintet: Responses to Nathan Martin, Steven Vande Moortele, Scott Burnham and John Koslovsky', *Music Analysis* 33 (2014), 210.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 210.

⁵⁸ Byrne Bodley, 'Introduction: Schubert's late style and current musical scholarship', 9.

communicate musical meaning, to embody the narrative that recounts an emotional destiny almost beyond human comprehension.⁵⁹

Nonetheless, interpretation and analysis should solidly work together. Robert S. Hatten explains: ‘... theorists can learn to appreciate the structural role of performers’ expressive nuances, and performers can learn to recognize the expressive significance of the structures analysed by theorists.’⁶⁰ It is something to see what is written in the score; it is something else to understand why it was written like that. A good pianist might still play well by simply feeling the music accurately. But when the reasons supporting interpretative decisions are understood, the music obtains its whole meaning and the interpretation becomes fully convincing. Unfortunately, as Julian Horton has remarked, these two fields, which should be tightly related to each other, are often considered separately:

Less constructive still, is a dismissive mentality among performers towards theory and analysis. Such an attitude disables any meaningful dialogue between scholarship and performance before it has a chance to develop, and ultimately disbars performers from a rich encounter with the reception history of the music they perform.⁶¹

Differently, Nicholas Cook observes:

Performers, it seems, have a great deal to learn from analysis: the possibility of a reciprocal process of learning is apparently not considered. My central proposition is that a theory which does justice to performance will be at the same time a theory aware of its own performative qualities.⁶²

⁵⁹ John Rink, ‘Translating Musical Meaning: The Nineteenth-Century Performer as Narrator’, in Nicholas Cook and Mark Eversit (eds.), *Rethinking Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 3rd edn, 2001), 238.

⁶⁰ Robert S. Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 9.

⁶¹ Julian Horton, ‘The first movement of Schubert’s Piano Sonata D. 959 and the performance of analysis’, in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert’s Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 188.

⁶² Nicholas Cook, ‘Analysing Performance and Performing Analysis’, in Nicholas Cook and Mark Eversit (eds.), *Rethinking Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 3rd edn, 2001), 240, 242.

Luckily, it seems that this is about to change and that the gap between these two important musical fields is shrinking: ‘Signs of a corresponding reorientation can be detected in some current writing on analysis and performance; there is a new emphasis on the mutuality of the analyst/performer relationship.’⁶³ A good engagement of both fields with one another would be to have a kind of ‘dialogue’, as Joel Lester explains: ‘Performers could enter analytical dialogue *as performers* – as artistic/intellectual equals, not as intellectual inferiors who needed to learn from theorists.’⁶⁴ Similarly, Cook describes:

Instead of assigning either work or performance priority over the other, then, the best course is to see them as having a relationship of dialogue with one another ... Analysis contributes as process, not as product ... what matters about analysis is not so much what it represents but what it does, or more precisely what it leads *you* to do.⁶⁵

2.7 Conclusion

These six sonatas belong today to the very best of the classical literature for solo piano. In recent years in particular there has been an impressive revision of Schubert’s late style, Schubert’s and Beethoven’s last piano sonatas and Schubert in Beethoven’s shadow. The magic of the music is that it is evolving again and again through the changes of the human perception. This thesis is not proposing an interpretation and supposing it is the only one. It aims to help re-discovering elements particular to the composers’ styles in order to facilitate the understanding of the movement for the interpretation. As Robert S. Hatten wrote: ‘Interpretation is the

⁶³ Ibid., 245.

⁶⁴ Joel Lester, ‘Performance and Analysis: Interaction and Interpretation’, in John Rink (ed.), *The Practice of Performance Studies in Musical Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 197-216; quoted in Cook, ‘Analysing Performance and Performing Analysis’, 245.

⁶⁵ Nicholas Cook, ‘Analysing Performance and Performing Analysis’, 245, 249.

beginning and the end of all musical understanding'.⁶⁶ The following chapter looks into these particularities and describes their impact on interpretation.

⁶⁶ Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven*, 9.

3. Performative analysis, particularities and interpretation

3.1 Introduction and explanation of the techniques identified for the analysis

In her article ‘Schubert’s Sonata Form and the Poetics of the Lyric’, Su Yin Mak draws a parallel between sonata form with the syntactic concept of hypotaxis, and the realm of the lyric found in Schubert’s movements with the technique of parataxis.¹

Carl Dahlhaus expressed a similar thought, by making a comparison between ‘Beethoven’s dramatic-dialectic form’ and ‘Schubert’s lyric-epic sonata form’.² Beethoven’s music is recognised for its directness, its compelling forward drive,³ and in his late style, for its bareness.⁴ Schubert is known as a ‘wanderer’, playing with time and expanding it, allowing the performer to enter a world outside the reality.⁵ It is clear that both composers’ styles have to be approached differently. In order to demonstrate this, techniques as well as more general particularities that are

¹ Su Yin, Mak, ‘Schubert’s Sonata Form and the Poetics of the Lyric’, *The Journal of Musicology*, 23 (2006), 263-306.

² Carl Dahlhaus, ‘Sonata Form in Schubert: The First Movement of the G-Major String Quartet, op. 161 (D. 887)’, trans. Thilo Reinhard, in Walter Frisch (ed.), *Schubert: Critical and Analytical Studies* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 1.

³ Scott Burnham observes: ‘The melodic dimension in Beethoven’s music is heard as processive self-structuring rather than thematic exposition – melody is that which must continue, and that which seems spontaneously generated. Formal articulations and arrivals thus seem internally generated, as opposed to appearing as the assignations of convention. Beethoven’s treatment of thematic material keeps this overriding sense of line, of presence, alive.’ Scott Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 61.

⁴ ‘The controlled violence of Beethoven’s style comes from his ability to cut away anything superfluous from the structure of the musical language and then demonstrate what power it has when it functions unimpeded by the constraints of decorum.’ Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 483.

⁵ ‘What I find revelatory and new in Schubert’s music is his manipulation of our experience of time, and of the states of consciousness and self-consciousness that are inseparable from our experience of time. Memory, reminiscence, nostalgia, regret, hedonism, dreams, daydreams, contemplation, reverie, meditation, repose, alienation, exile, banishment – all of these require various degrees of relaxation of time. We meet all of these in Schubert’s music, and none are really possible in the action drama in which thematic/motivic development moves in an inexorable line toward an ending of unequivocal closure.’ John Gingerich, *Schubert’s Beethoven Project* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 110.

idiosyncratic of each composer are identified in this chapter.⁶ Nevertheless, both this chapter and the fourth chapter are necessary to understand the impact of these compositional particularities on the interpretation, because this chapter serves as foundation for the next one.

In what follows, the techniques are firstly explained, secondly musical examples are shown to demonstrate where in the movements, these particularities of composition happen, and finally, for each movement a brief explanation is given of the impacts these particularities of composition have on the interpretation.

The techniques

The reductive technique

Idiosyncratic of Beethoven's late style, this technique is a total reduction to bare essentials and happens when an action (harmonic or thematic) that is mostly processual, is summarised within a very short amount of time (bars, beats). Charles Rosen has highlighted Beethoven's:

... continuous attempt to strip away, at some point in each large work, all decorative and even expressive elements from the musical material – so that part of the structure of tonality is made to appear for a moment naked and immediate, and its presence in the rest of the work as a dynamic and temporal force suddenly becomes radiant – this ever greater use of the simplest blocks and elements of the tonal language gives his development, seen as a whole, an undeniable consistency.⁷

Martin Cooper describes this technique as following:

If the harmonic side-slips are partly manual in origin these suspensions and anticipations suggest rather the reserving of psychic energy, the savouring of contrast and tension before

⁶ Even with the techniques that are common to both, and that are pointed out in this chapter, it is explained in chapter four how they are reached by very different means whether it is a movement of Schubert or of Beethoven.

⁷ Rosen, *The Classical Style*, 435.

its solution and possibly an emphasis on the syntax of music – its intellectual structure – at the expense of its purely sensuous pleasingness.⁸

Comparable with using the least number of words possible to tell something, it is akin to a link joining two sections, where the music gets straight to the point, in a very short time and with little material, often with help of chromaticism.

The implication technique

This is when an action in the music implicates an impact on the dynamics. For example, in the exposition of op. 109, the modification of dynamics found inside the variation is caused by the transformation of the Fx passing note into a chord.⁹

The foreshadowing technique

It is when a note or group of notes foreshadow a musical element or action that is happening later on, as for example the trill at bar 8 in the first movement of D. 960, that announces the upcoming modulation to *Gb*.¹⁰

The technique of expansion

When Schubert expands his music it means that a chord could hypothetically be the link to a section, musical idea or phrase that does not directly follow, but comes later on in the movement, as for example in the D.960's first movement, bars 115-116 could directly follow bar 100.¹¹ William Kinderman explains:

Schubert's music is less deterministic than Beethoven's in that it does not present a self-sufficient sequence of events; it seems that the music could have taken a different turn at

⁸ Martin Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade 1817-1827* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2nd edn. 1985), 178-179.

⁹ See chapter three, p. 42.

¹⁰ See chapter three, pp. 116-117.

¹¹ See chapter three, p. 124.

many points. Yet these very shifts in perspective are often exploited by Schubert as structural elements in the musical form.¹²

The deferred realisation

This technique is the result of the foreshadowing technique – for example when the musical idea that was previously foreshadowed happens – or is sometimes the result of the expansion technique – for example when the section that is expanded achieves its resolution. But it also finds place when a melodic line that is left uncompleted is resolved later on in the movement, as for example in the exposition of op. 109's first movement.¹³

The chromaticism

Although chromaticism does not need explanation, it is important here to mention that this work makes a difference between a structural and a non-structural chromaticism. More often seen in Schubert's movement, the non-structural chromaticism has an impact on the length of the movement, can help the music to reach a distant key and therefore create a particular harmonic colour. 'Schubert was fond of daring tensions between distant keys; his predilection for chromatic neighbouring keys is notorious. It often happens that chromatic neighbours appear next to one another abruptly and glaringly.'¹⁴ Generally, Beethoven uses less chromaticism in his three last first movements and when it happens, it mostly belongs to the category of structural chromaticism: 'In Beethoven a new movement or theme in a chromatic neighbouring key is unthinkable. When Beethoven does

¹² William Kinderman, 'Schubert's piano music: probing the human condition', in Christopher H. Gibbs (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 155.

¹³ See chapter three, pp. 40-41.

¹⁴ Alfred Brendel, *Musical thoughts and afterthoughts*, trans. Eugene Hartzell and Paul Hamburger (London: Robson Books, 1998), 43.

make his way to a distant key – which happens only rarely, and then with logical preparation – there are far-reaching consequences for the whole work.’¹⁵ Charles Rosen also explains: ‘Beethoven stood almost alone in his time: as the underlying material in the work of all his contemporaries grew more complex and more chromatic, the basic motifs of Beethoven’s music became simpler and more diatonic, very often the fundamental elements of the tonal language itself’.¹⁶

The sub-process of the ABA’ form

Considering that sonata form is itself an ABA’ form (exposition, development, recapitulation) the word sub-process is used here to define any ABA’ form inserted in the sonata form, for instance an ABA’ form in the exposition, or in the recapitulation. Schubert made common use of it, not only in his piano sonatas. For example, in the recapitulation of the last movement of his C major Symphony, D. 944, the second theme is in an ABA’ form.¹⁷ James Webster explains: ‘Associated with the lyric impulse we find a tendency towards symmetrical periods or closed forms such as ABA’, often alternating with long modulating transitions.’¹⁸ Similarly, Xavier Hascher writes: ‘a strong propensity for ABA’ scheme’, is one of Schubert’s ‘specific characteristics.’¹⁹

Two other techniques that do not need explanation appear in the movements and will also be underlined: the process of variation and the unifying element.

¹⁵ Ibid., 43-44.

¹⁶ Charles Rosen, *Sonata Forms* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1980), 284.

¹⁷ Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, ‘Die Sonatenform im Spätwerk Franz Schuberts’, *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 45 (1988), 42.

¹⁸ James Webster, ‘Schubert’s Sonata Form and Brahms’s First Maturity’, *19th-Century Music* 2 (1978), 20.

¹⁹ ‘En outre, une tentative de typologie de la forme sonate chez Schubert laissera apparaître un certain nombre de traits spécifiques... une forte propension au schéma ABA’.’ Xavier Hascher, *Schubert, la forme sonate et son évolution* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1996), 10.

3.2 First movement sonata form in Beethoven's last three piano sonatas

3.2.1 Beethoven, Sonata no. 30 in E major, Op. 109, first movement

3.2.1.1 Contrast and rupture between the themes

Described by William Kinderman as suggesting 'a bagatelle interrupted by two fantasy-like episodes',²⁰ this very short first movement starts, as Robert S. Hatten notes, with 'a deceptive sequence', which is interrupted by the perfect cadence of bars 3 and 4: 'The first theme ... opens with what I call the deceptive sequence in alternating the first inversions (I-V⁶-vi-iii⁶-IV-I6).'²¹ Both themes, the first, from bars 1 to 8, and the second, from bars 9 to 15, are radically opposed to each other (Example 3.1). Hatten writes:

After beginning with an unmarked theme in continuous sixteenths, a quick modulation in the second phrase implies an arrival in the dominant in m. 9. Instead, tempo, meter, rhythm, texture, voice-leading, and harmony all shift in a gesture of radical annihilation.²²

Table 3.1 shows an overview of the striking differences between the themes.

²⁰ William Kinderman, *Beethoven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 218.

²¹ Robert S. Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 173.

²² *Ibid.*, 169.

Table 3.1: Overview of the contrasting aspects between the first and second themes

	First theme	Second theme
Tempo indication:	<i>Vivace</i>	<i>adagio espressivo</i>
Time signature:	$\frac{2}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$
Character:	lyric	dramatic
Range:	four octaves	six octaves ²³
Dynamics:	<i>p</i> with later a <i>cresc.</i>	frequent changes from one extreme (<i>p</i>) to the other (<i>f</i> or <i>cresc.</i>)
Rhythm:	the rhythm – dotted-quaver followed by a semiquaver – unifying element in the first theme, is completely absent from the second theme	

Example 3.1: Sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 1-15

The musical score for Example 3.1 consists of three systems of piano music. The first system (bars 1-5) is marked 'Vivace ma non troppo' and 'p dolce'. It features a rhythmic pattern of a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note. The second system (bars 6-15) is marked 'Adagio espressivo' and features a variety of dynamics including 'f', 'p', and 'cresc.'. The score includes fingering numbers (5, 6) and performance markings like 'sempre legato' and 'Adagio espressivo'.

²³ These six octaves are covered frequently through the arpeggios.

There is no transition connecting the themes, instead, an unexpected diminished seventh chord, bar 9, breaks the melodic line of the first theme, and replaces the awaited arrival on the dominant. This diminished seventh chord disturbs.²⁴

Beethoven writes it in the right hand alone – therefore continuing the pattern of the quaver-break on the first beat in the left hand – but broken, as to make sure that each single note is heard. Consequently, the pianist has to take care that every note of the arpeggio is played clearly and not too fast. This decision is also justified by the unexpected presence and colour of the chord, which has to be underlined, and by the new indication of tempo.

²⁴ ‘The syntactic (voice-leading and harmonic) shock is created by the reversal of expected voice-leading, as the new leading tone A#, which should have resolved to B, is instead pulled down to A and harmonized by a dissonant diminished-seventh chord.’ Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes*, 169.

3.2.1.2 The G#-B interval and its deferred realisation

As will be seen in the following paragraphs, the melodic interval G#-B, which starts the sonata, plays a major role in this movement. The sketches for the first movement show, as Nicholas Marston acknowledges, that Beethoven ‘decided to use the triadic third and fifth of E major as the upbeat figure of the first movement at a very early stage in its evolution’, and that ‘he explored ways of using the upbeat figure to structure longer spans of music.’²⁵ A similar argument was made years before by Heinrich Schenker who asserts: ‘[Beethoven’s] innate improvisatory powers fix upon the two notes of the upbeat figure in the development and the coda! They compel him; simply by themselves they represent a motive for him, the key to a world of unity and coherence.’²⁶ Likewise, Allen Forte in his book *The Compositional Matrix* writes: ‘To a considerable extent the melodic development of the movement resides in the composing-out of relationships which are inherent in the upper third of the [tonic] triad, where A plays a primal role’.²⁷

The first example of the importance this G#-B interval has in the movement is already found in the exposition. Because the top-motion of the melody at the end of the first theme, bar 8, is suddenly interrupted by the diminished seventh starting the second theme, the awaited B is missing (Example 3.1). Idiosyncratic of the technique of deferred realisation, this incomplete fulfilment of the G#-B interval is only realised at the end of the exposition. Michael Spitzer and Robert S. Hatten remark that the deferred realisation of the previous aborted melodic line is at the latest

²⁵ Nicholas Marston, ‘Schenker and Forte Reconsidered: Beethoven’s Sketches for the Piano Sonata in E, Op. 109’, *19th-Century Music* 10 (1986), 27.

²⁶ Heinrich Schenker, ‘Vom Organischen der Sonatenform’, in *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik 2* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2nd edn, 1974), 51, trans. Nicholas Marston; quoted in Marston, ‘Schenker and Forte Reconsidered’, 25.

²⁷ Allen Forte, *The Compositional Matrix* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2nd edn 1974), 19; quoted in Marston, ‘Schenker und Forte Reconsidered’, 25.

realised at the beginning of the development, where the right hand reaches the B in order to start the development²⁸ (Example 3.3, bar 16). But it is obviously preceded, end of bar 14-beginning of 15, firstly, by the A#-B in the right hand which is in the same register as bar 8, and secondly by the motion F#-G#-A#-B in the left hand, bar 15, where the reiteration of the B is punctuated by a *sf* (Example 3.1). This last B in the left hand has thus to be played with much conviction. The uneasy atmosphere created previously through the arrival of the second theme starts to release, at first when the music attains the B major of bar 14. It then disappears entirely when the left hand, marked *staccatissimo*, finally concludes the melodic gesture F#-G#-A#-B.

3.2.1.3 The second theme: overlapping of formal functions, variation, implication technique, and reductive technique

As mentioned previously,²⁹ there is no visible transition between the first and second themes as this latter, through a diminished seventh chord, abruptly interrupts the attempt of the previous melody to reach the B. Nevertheless, the tonality of B major, main tonality of this second theme is reached only at bar 11, while bars 9 and 10, which use the C# minor tonality to get to B major, are transitional in nature (Example 3.1). With these two transitional bars, Beethoven is absorbing the expected transition into the second theme, and therefore, achieves an overlapping of formal functions.

²⁸ 'The first movement rises from its opening G# to an A# at m. 8, on the way to the B of the dominant key. This B is interrupted by the cadenza-like 'parenthetical enclosure' of the Adagio espressivo, before being realized at m. 16 with the resumption of the Vivace material.' Michael Spitzer, *Music as Philosophy: Adorno and Beethoven's Late Style* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 79-80; 'Registrally (if not metrically) the development picks up precisely where the first theme is cut off.' Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes*, 174.

²⁹ See chapter three, p. 39.

The variation of bars 9-11 at 12-14 has a structural function since it transforms the passing tone Fx of bar 10 to a full harmony of D#, third degree of B major, at bar 13. Furthermore, this variation is combined to the implication technique. A comparison in the dynamics between bars 9 and 12 shows that the transformation of this passing note, Fx, into a chord implicates a change in the dynamics. As seen in the facsimile of the first draft (Example 3.2),³⁰ bar 12 – varied repetition of bar 9 – repeats the exact dynamics of bar 9, apart from the *p* at the end of the bar which is non-existent in bar 9. The surprise of the *p* on the parallel octaves there enables a great accentuation and emphasis on the following chord so that its arrival is even more surprising and convincing. Moreover, the *f* of bar 10 is placed just after the first quaver, as if Beethoven wants to underline the fact that Fx is just a simple passing note.

Example 3.2: Facsimile of the first edition of sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 9-13



Furthermore in this second theme, the reductive technique happens at two important places (Example 3.1). A sudden bareness in the musical material appears at the end

³⁰ Reprints by Tecla of the first edition.

of bar 12, where two unfilled octaves serve as transitional material in order to reach the D# chord of bar 13, therefore helping mark its presence by reducing the musical material just before its arrival. The same process is similarly used at the end of bar 13, where the music, again through octaves, returns to the B major tonality. Martin Cooper describes this technique as ‘two of the harmonic side-slips that are characteristic of Beethoven’s latest style’.³¹

3.2.1.4 The trajectory of intensity in the development and importance of the G#-B melodic interval

This very brief development is unified by the rhythm starting the movement. The increase in its intensity, in such a short time, is immensely powerful. This is strongly influenced by the organisation and building of the melodic line, which, from bar 25 to 42, climbs more than two octaves range (Example 3.3).

Example 3.3: Sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 16-49

The musical score for Example 3.3 consists of three systems of music. The first system (bars 16-19) is marked 'Tempo I' and 'dolce'. The right hand has a melodic line with eighth notes and quarter notes, while the left hand has a bass line with quarter notes. The second system (bars 20-24) features a long melodic line in the right hand marked 'sempre legato' and a bass line marked 'cresc.'. The third system (bars 25-29) continues the melodic line in the right hand, marked 'p' and 'cresc.', with a bass line marked 'cresc.'.

³¹ Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade*, 177.

The very last level of tension is reached at bar 42 through the chromatic filling of the melodic interval G#-B (bars 40-42, Example 3.3). Even though they both belong to different chords, it is interesting to notice that the G# in the right hand of bar 40 is in the exact same register as the G# of bar 21, which catapults down the melodic line to more than a lower octave. The motion G-A-A#-B of bars 40-42, after an emphatic succession of Bs in the right hand, and a dominant pedal in E major, leads finally to the G#-B interval starting the recapitulation. The insistence of the B notes, from bars 42 to 48, is released from its tension at the arrival of the recapitulation, which feels like a complete liberation.

3.2.1.5 The arrival of the recapitulation and lowered sixth degree

After such an accumulation of tension and such an impressive outline of growing intensity, the return of the first theme has to be as intense as the bars preceding it. The important distance between both hands, the dynamic *f* appearing for the first time since the beginning of the development, and the left hand written in a different rhythm than in the exposition, are several elements underlying this intensity (Example 3.4). Furthermore, the sequence found at the beginning of the movement, achieves this time a full descending scale in E major in the bass line: ‘it is also at bar 48 ... that the bass is finally permitted to let us hear the simple descending scale from E to E which is its true line’.³²

Example 3.4: Sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 48-52

As in the exposition, but now in the main tonality of the piece, the technique of deferred realisation appears here too: the diminished seventh chord of bar 58 interrupts the previous melodic line. The awaited but missing note, E, is heard for the first time distinctly on the first beat of bar 65, where the music moves to the coda (Example 3.5).

³² Charles Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: A Short Companion* (London: Yale University Press, 2001), 230.

The reductive technique is present too, and is combined with the appearance of the lowered sixth degree: unlike the exposition, there is no variation process in the second theme. As Charles Rosen writes:

If one wishes to see the difference between Beethoven's ideas of exposition and recapitulation, one could not do better than to compare the way bars 9 to 11 are resumed in 12 to 14, with the more radical way the similar bars 58 to 60 are transformed into 61 to 63.³³

Instead, Beethoven surprisingly modulates to C major, lowered sixth degree of E major, bars 61-62, and gets back to E major at the end of bar 62, through the reductive technique. The *cresc.* and *f* of bars 60-61, reaching the Vth degree of C major and underlying it, are important, but what is even more important here is the *dim.* at the end of bar 61 and the *ff* following: the C major chord of bar 62 is better underlined if the sound is reduced just before (Example 3.6).³⁴ An immense amount of sound should be used for this chord: 'The C major at bar 62 is the only fortissimo in the movement: it should sound exceptional'.³⁵ At the end of bar 62, the music returns to E major through the reductive technique, by means of a chromatic sliding of only two semiquavers in opposite movement of both hands. The first semiquaver is still in a C major harmony, while the second semiquaver is already clearly the first inversion of the E major chord. In the first edition (Example 3.6), these two semiquavers are at the end of a *dim.*, but the last semiquaver with the G#, harbinger of the E major harmony, is repeated twice in the two quavers following, in a *cresc.* dynamic, and with a *sf* on the last quaver. Beethoven, through the dynamics, is therefore underlying the fact that the music is now back in E major.

³³ Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: A Short Companion*, 231.

³⁴ The facsimile of the first edition shows that the *diminuendo* of bar 61 and the *ff* of bar 62 were indicated by Beethoven himself.

³⁵ Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: A Short Companion*, 231.

Example 3.6: Facsimile of the first edition of the sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 51-64

The image shows a facsimile of the first edition of the first movement of Beethoven's Sonata Op. 109, bars 51-64. The score is written for piano and consists of four systems of music. The first system (bars 51-54) features a right-hand melody with 'loco.' and 'cresc.' markings, and a left-hand accompaniment with 'loco.' and 'legato' markings. The second system (bars 55-58) includes 'Adagio' and 'espressivo' markings, with 'cresc.' in both hands. The third system (bars 59-62) shows 'Ped' (pedal) markings and 'cresc.' in both hands. The fourth system (bars 63-64) features 'espressivo', 'cresc.', and 'dimin' markings, with 'Ped' and 'cresc.' in the left hand. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4.

3.2.1.6 Coda: thematic integration and importance of the G#-B interval

It is in the coda that Beethoven accomplishes an impressive reconciliation of the first and second themes' opposite characters (Example 3.7). Through a rhythmical augmentation at bars 75-77 and a reduction of the harmony, Beethoven slows down the tempo and helps to support the recognition of the second theme's material, bars 75 to 85.³⁶ By doing so, he integrates the material of the second theme within the tempo of the first theme:

Clearly the unstable transitional/second theme is being invoked, with similar diminished sevenths and expansion of the supertonic. Beethoven places the material in the tempo and meter of the first theme, and even liquidates the rhythmic setting to relatively constant quarter-note motion ...³⁷

³⁶ Bars 75 to 85 are of vertical composition as is the second theme of both the exposition and recapitulation, while bars 66-74 and 86-97 are based on the linear material of both first themes.

³⁷ Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes*, 173, 175.

Furthermore, the G#-B interval and its deferred realisation play an important role in this coda too. The melodic-motion G#-B is interrupted at bar 77, but concluded – even though by reversal of direction – at the end of the cadence, bars 85-86: the motion F#-G#-A-B of bars 69-71 and 71-73 is reiterated twice, the first time incomplete (F#-G#-A), at bars 73-74, without legato-slur and in a *cresc.*, and the second time, bars 75-77 incomplete too, in a *subito p*, with breaks and syncopated chords. Nevertheless, this last time carries on to a long cadenza where the unanswered question (the ‘broken’ motion G#-B) is resolved at the end of the cadenza as the melody reaches the G#, preceded by the B.

Example 3.7: Sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 65-86

Tempo I

65 *a tempo*
ligato

70

75 *p*

83 *ligato*
p
cresc.

From bar 86 to the end, Beethoven plays with the colour of the lowered sixth degree of E major, alternating with the C#, almost as a remembrance of the modulation in C major found in the recapitulation (Example 3.8). To underline the colour of the C note, Beethoven writes it twice in the upper melody, bars 89 and 91, but in a *dim.* or even *pp.* The last complete statement of the melodic interval G#-B (the last two semiquavers in the left hand) should clearly be heard but this happens almost naturally as it is written in a higher register than the notes in the right hand.

Example 3.8: Sonata op. 109, first movement, bars 86-99

3.2.1.7 Impacts on the interpretation

The rhythm starting the movement creates unity between the first theme of the exposition and recapitulation, the development, and most of the coda. The contrasting duality between both themes which causes a fracture in this first movement is reduced and counterbalanced by the melodic interval G#-B unifying the

movement.³⁸ The first bars start with a character of carefreeness, but the *cresc.* of bar 4 announces a possible arrival of tension. Still, the shocking surprise of bar 9 is not expected and a sudden disequilibrium is felt:³⁹ the character, the key, the tempo, the rhythm are different. When bar 14 is initiated, through the reductive technique, this latter being present through an emptiness in the musical notation at the end of bar 13, it feels as if the tension created through the fracture is about to be released. In the next bar, each time the B is reiterated it feels like an arrival: first the right hand begins the bar with a B, the left hand follows with two Bs, and the development starts with B, preceded by a *ritardando*. The intensity created during the second theme, disappears gradually from the end of bar 13, where the music heads towards the reiterated Bs of bar 15.

In the development, it is important to understand how the tension is built, since it is done over a very short period of time and is very well organised. Furthermore, the pianist should be aware that another fulfilment of the melodic interval G#-B, even though chromatically filled, happens at the same time where the music reaches the last level of tension before the recapitulation.

At the beginning of the recapitulation, it is almost impossible not to take a bit of time on the last beat of bar 48, as the tension, perfectly built in the last two thirds of the development, now arrives, and this feels like an explosion. The surprise of the diminished chord at 58, almost awaited this time, is not as shocking as in the exposition, and the resolution at bar 65 of the aborted melodic line is less underlined

³⁸ For Theodor Adorno, these fractures, which he called caesuras and sudden discontinuities, characterise the very late Beethoven. Theodor Adorno, *Essays on Music*, trans. Susan H. Gillespie, ed. Richard Leppert (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 567.

³⁹ 'Of the many elements of Beethoven's late style that have been interpreted as anticipations of twentieth-century musical approaches, perhaps the most often noted is Beethoven's extensive use of abrupt juxtapositions or disruptions.' Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes*, 267.

than in the exposition. Nonetheless, the *cresc.*, and *sf* at the end of bar 62, are well appreciated as they underscore the fact that the music is getting back to E major.

The music goes through different ruptures at the beginning of the coda, whether in the musical notation and at the same time the rhythm, or in the melodic line.

Nevertheless, the coherence in this coda is due to the fact that Beethoven summarises important characteristics of his movement. The highly contrasting character between the first and second theme is mentioned again, but in a less drastic manner than in the exposition/recapitulation, as the musical material referring to the second theme, allows the interrupted line of the preceding musical material to fulfil its melodic goal by reaching the B-G# at bars 85-86. In parallel, the melodic movement, interrupted at bar 74 through the first break, and at bar 76 interestingly through the same diminished chord as the one starting the second theme bar 9, is also answered through the B-G# melodic interval of bars 85-86. The first rest of bar 75 establishes an uneasy climate and the melodic line – F#-G#-A – is now rhythmically augmented. The tension built inside these three bars, 75-77, has to be kept up by the performer all the way through the cadenza and has to be resolved only at bars 85-86, where the resolution of the aborted motion G#-B happens, this time in a reversal of direction. This is an incredible moment and creates a sensation of relief. It gives this coda a peaceful character, as if two opposite parties are now finding each other. And even though the inverted motion of the beginning interval is heard again in the penultimate bar, in the right hand, it is directly followed by G#-B, in the left, almost as if Beethoven does not really close the movement.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ It is highly interesting to notice that the second movement is following *attacca*, and starts on a G natural.

3.2.2 Beethoven, Sonata no. 31 in Ab major, Op. 110, first movement

3.2.2.1 Homogeneity of the exposition: similarity between the themes

The theme starting this sonata has two sections, from bars 1 to 4 and 5 to 11; its second section is harmonically an augmentation of the first one (Table 3.2 and Example 3.9).

Table 3.2: Harmonic construction of parts 1 and 2 of the first theme

Degrees:	I	V	I	IV	V	I
Part 1:	Bar 1	Bar 2	Bar 3	Bar 3	Bar 4	Bar 5
Part 2:	Bar 5	Bars 6-7	Bars 8-9	Bar 10	Bar 11	Bar 12

Example 3.9: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 1-12

The musical score for Example 3.9 shows the first 12 bars of the first movement of Beethoven's Sonata Op. 110. The tempo is marked 'Moderato cantabile molto espressivo'. The score is in 3/4 time and Ab major. It features a piano introduction with a descending melodic line in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The first section (bars 1-4) is marked 'p con amabilità (sanft)'. The second section (bars 5-12) is marked 'p' and includes a trill in bar 5, a crescendo in bar 11, and a fortissimo (sf) dynamic in bar 10. The score concludes with a piano (p leggiermente) section in bar 12.

The beginning of the second theme shows similarities to the first part of the first theme (Example 3.10): it starts, at bar 20 with the same dynamic, and has in the right hand, the descending motion of C-Bb-Ab which is the filling of the starting melodic

interval C-Ab of bar 1.⁴¹ Michael Spitzer, writing about arch contours in the melody, and especially about the 3 = 6 arch, explains:

This C [starting the top melody of bar 20] initiates the descent of the second group and is ... also representing, in voice-leading terms, a massive registral transfer of the piece's opening C ... The modulation stakes out a rise between the same pitches at different octaves, disposed as 3 and 6.⁴²

The unexpected dynamic, *p*, starting this second theme is underlined by the *cresc.* preceding it, the first change since the beginning of the transition. The Ab-C harmonic interval of a third or a tenth, depending on how Beethoven writes it, starts the first and second parts of the first theme, as well as the second theme (Examples 3.9 and 3.10).

Example 3.10: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 17-23

⁴¹ The right hand at the beginning of the second movement starts also with the descending motion C-Bb-Ab.

⁴² Spitzer, *Music as Philosophy: Adorno and Beethoven's Late Style*, 82.

The only section where the music offers a contrast to the rest of the exposition is found at bars 25 to 31 of the second theme: the musical notation is different, the music reaches *f* for the first time, and the distance between both hands attains its most extreme range (Example 3.11).

Example 3.11: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 25-31



3.2.2.2 The reductive technique as transition between the exposition and development

The transition from the exposition to the development happens through the reductive technique: the codetta of the exposition ends on the first beat at bar 38 while the development starts at bar 40 (Example 3.12). Within only two bars, and through simple passing octaves, both hands slide from the dominant degree of *Ab* major to the sixth degree of *F* minor, to finally go down a semitone lower and reach the *C* octaves, dominant degree of *F* minor at bar 40, where the development starts. Charles Rosen explains: ‘We can see Beethoven stripping everything away from an element of structure so that it can make its point on its own.’⁴³ In these two bars, Beethoven

⁴³ Rosen, *The Classical Style*, 491.

reaches a total emptiness, bareness, in order to make a new start possible.⁴⁴ Changing from a musical notation of semiquavers to crotchets, and from full harmonies to unfilled octaves, he writes a transition with as few components as possible: ‘The development section is introduced by a single solemn step – a descent in open octaves from E flat through D flat to C.’⁴⁵ This move from Eb to Db has to be special, the atmosphere of bar 39 should be as quiet as possible. It is, for a short instant, a moment of introspection and intimacy.

Example 3.12: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 35-40

The rest of the development section is an example of simplicity: the beginning of the first theme is stated in F minor and undergoes a descending sequence. Charles Rosen observes:

... here Beethoven actually starts in the relative minor and never really leaves it for the entire development. In a strict sense, there is no development, but only a retransition back to the tonic. The whole section is radically simple: the motif of bars 1 to 2 is played eight times in a descending sequence.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ ‘His late work still remains process, but not as development; rather as catching fire between the extremes ... Between extremes in the most precise technical sense: on the one hand the monophony, the *unisono* of the significant mere phrase; on the other the polyphony, which rises above it without mediation.’ Adorno, *Essays on Music*, 567.

⁴⁵ Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade*, 189.

⁴⁶ Rosen, *Beethoven’s Piano Sonatas: A Short Companion*, 236.

3.2.2.3 The modulation to E major and the return to Ab major

Of all the sections of this first movement, it is the recapitulation that has the most unusual tonal feature. Starting with a thematic integration – as the material used for the transition in the exposition is now accompanying the first theme in Ab major – the music modulates at bar 62, where the second part of the first theme is introduced in Db major, bar 63 (Example 3.13).

Example 3.13: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 60-82

The musical score for Example 3.13, Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 60-82, is presented in five systems. The first system (bars 60-61) begins in Ab major with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *cresc.* marking. The second system (bars 62-63) shows a modulation to Db major, with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The third system (bars 64-65) features a *cresc.* marking followed by a *dimin.* marking. The fourth system (bars 66-68) includes a *pp* dynamic followed by a *p* dynamic. The fifth system (bars 69-71) continues with a *p* dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics, articulation marks, and a key signature change from Ab major to Db major.

73 *cresc.*

75 *8va* *p molto legato*

77 *ritenente* *a tempo*
cresc. *zurück-haltend* *p espressivo*

80 *cresc.*

The first chord of bar 62 should be played with emphasis and conviction as it is the first sign of a modulation to *Db* major through the *Gb* note. The music reaches thereafter *C#* minor, minor enharmonic of *Db*, bar 67, and finally presents the transition and the first part of the second theme in *E* major, enharmonic of *Fb*, itself the lowered sixth degree of *Ab* major. According to Martin Cooper:

In op. 110, for instance, the *E* major section in the recapitulation of the first movement has only to be thought of as *F* flat to give us the same relationship with the *A* flat tonic of the movement; but here again the intermediary steps are so carefully worked through that we are less aware of the relationship.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade*, 427.

As Charles Rosen describes, this is ‘the only modulation in the opening movement to a remote key.’ He states: ‘The most complex harmonic treatment takes place, not in the development but in the recapitulation.’⁴⁸ Even though E major is a harmonic region foreign to *Ab* major, the modulation from *Ab* to E is written following the convention of that time. Rosen writes:

Opus 110 stands out from any other work of Beethoven or of his predecessors: the most remote harmonic region is placed in the recapitulation, and yet this is achieved simply by the expansion of the most conventional procedure of late eighteenth-century style.⁴⁹

The second beat of bar 68 is the first place where the music clearly tends to move to the tonality of E major and therefore should be played in a special colour. Moreover, bar 69 should be without pedal, in order to emphasise the *pp*, the colour of the E major tonality and to avoid blurring the demisemiquavers.

The modulation back to *Ab* major is of very quick process, performed through the reductive technique, with help of chromaticism and of the harmonic interval of tenth: in a very brief amount of time – end of bar 77, beginning of bar 78 – both hands separated by an interval of tenths slide down from G# to G in the right hand and E#-E to Eb in the left hand, where the *Ab* tonality is now confirmed through the Eb note (Example 3.13). Not only is the main tonality quickly re-established, but it happens suddenly and surprises the listener. Rosen writes: ‘The return from E major to the tonic A flat major at the end of bar 77 is properly ambiguous and mysterious.’⁵⁰ The *ritenente* of bar 78, the reiteration of the first part of the second theme in *Ab* major, bars 79-80, and its variation, bars 81-82, help clarify that the music has now switched back to the main tonality. Rosen explains:

⁴⁸ Rosen, *The Classical Style*, 492.

⁴⁹ Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: A Short Companion*, 237.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 237.

The transition to E major is a moment of intense lyrical expression, but the eventual return to the tonic is even more extraordinary: ... the listener must use his imagination to interpret the harmonic meaning of these last two notes of measure 77 ... There is a genuine ambiguity now, as the modulation back to A flat major does not take place precisely in phase between the two hands ... Harmonic explanation is left suspended until we hear the E flat ... After the fact, the importance of this juncture is marked by the *crescendo*, and the *ritenente* of bar 78.⁵¹

3.2.2.4 The harmonic interval of tenth as unifying element

As in the first movement of op. 109, there is an interval here unifying this movement: the harmonic interval of a third which starts the movement and which is, however, at the same time, a harmonic interval of a tenth.⁵² Dimitri Papadimitriou writes:

Beethoven opens most of the A ♭ movements with scale degree III as the first note of the melodic line. A closer look reveals an identical tenth, chordal and hushed openings in opp.13/ii, 27 no.1/iii and 56/ii, along with the ones of opp.15/ii, 30 no.2/ii and 110, which demonstrate the same behaviour but at an octave higher.⁵³

This harmonic interval starts the first and second part of the first theme, bars 1 and 5 (Example 3.9), starts the second theme (Example 3.10), unifies most of the development (Example 3.14), and is part of the reductive technique found at bars 77-78 (Example 3.13).

Example 3.14: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 44-55



⁵¹ Rosen, *The Classical Style*, 492-494.

⁵² There is a harmonic interval of a third between the two voices in the right hand, and the melody starts with an interval of a third too, but there is a harmonic interval of a tenth between the lowest voice in the left hand and the C of the right hand.

⁵³ Dimitri Papadimitriou, 'An exploration of the key characteristics in Beethoven's piano sonatas and selected instrumental repertoire' (DMusPerf dissertation, Royal Irish Academy of Music, 2013), 118.

3.2.2.5 Impacts on the interpretation

This first movement impresses by its uniformity and its homogeneity. It would be expected, at that time of composition, that the first and second themes of a sonata form movement show different characters.⁵⁴ In the exposition, both the first theme and the beginning of the second theme share similarities in their character, their dynamics, and how they start. This gives unity and creates coherence between both the first and second themes, but at the same time, few of the sections are really contrasting with each other. Certainly, the second part of the second theme, through its dynamic and the bright range between both hands, is presenting a different character, but this lasts only for a few bars. The development section is peaceful, very homogeneous, stating only the beginning of the first theme in a descending sequence, where the pianist has to be very careful of choosing a different colour each

⁵⁴ 'In most accounts of sonata form a great deal is made of the principle of contrasting themes. It seems to me that once the idea of articulating a form by using a new theme to set off the arrival at the dominant comes into being, it is inevitable that the majority of the 'second' themes will have a character that contrasts sharply with the 'first'.' Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, 230.

time. Furthermore, the harmonic interval of tenth, found in important places throughout the movement, serves also as a unifying element. The peaceful character of the beginning predominates through the end, the dynamics stay in the same field: they are mostly *p*, and when a *cresc.* appears it never reaches *f* except, again, from bars 28 to 31, and 84 to 90. Even the modulatory process from *Ab* to E, bars 62 to 70, is carried out with gentleness, without rush or hurry. It is done so well that when the secondary theme arrives in E, it sounds as if the whole movement has always been in E major. The particularity of this movement is not to shock through a visible fracture, as in the first movement of op. 109, but much more to retain the attention through the modulation back to *Ab* in the recapitulation. It is then that for the first time since the piece started, a disruption is felt even though it happens again in the *p* dynamic. The last two quavers of bar 77 not only surprise but sound almost wrong, as if Beethoven is playing tricks. Thence, the *ritenente*⁵⁵ and the fact that the second theme is now repeated in the right tonality are extremely helpful. Even though it might feel necessary, the pianist should do no *rit.* at all at the end of bar 77 or in the beginning of 78, as it is already written in the music: first through a rhythmic reduction from semiquavers to quavers to dotted crotchet, second through the *ritenente* of bar 78. When the second part of the second theme arrives at bar 87, with its dynamic *f* and the *cresc.* preceding it, they create a feeling of relief and ecstasy, in that the return of the *Ab* major tonality is now really confirmed. It is then that the necessity for material contrasting with the rest of the movement is felt at its maximum.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ The word 'Zurückhaltend', found at bar 78 of the 'Wiener Urtext' edition, is not mentioned here because in the facsimile of the first edition, Beethoven has only put the word 'ritenente'.

⁵⁶ 'There is, after all, no point in having two themes if they do not provide some kind of contrast.' Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, 230.

The coda of this movement is a recollection of some elements (Example 3.15): the dynamic *p*, the movement of demisemi-quavers found in the transition, and the *Fb*, lowered sixth degree of *Ab*, reminiscent of the modulation to E major, this time underlined by a *forte*, but again, resolving on a *piano*, bars 114-115.

Example 3.15: Sonata op. 110, first movement, bars 105-116

105
p leggiermente

107

109
cresc..

111
p cresc.. p cresc.. f > p

3.2.3 Beethoven, Sonata no. 32 in C minor, Op. 111, first movement

3.2.3.1 Continuous intensity and unifying rhythm, with exception of the second theme

This whole movement, apart from the first section of its second theme, is loaded with growing tension, continual drive and momentum, energy that rarely rests, and breath-taking intensity.

The movement starts with a dramatic introduction, which, harmonically gesturing a cadence in C minor (V-IV-V-I),⁵⁷ is mostly unified by the powerful rhythm starting the piece (Example 3.16).

Example 3.16: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 1-16

The musical score for Example 3.16, Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 1-16, is presented in three systems. The first system (bars 1-3) is marked *Maestoso* and begins with a dramatic introduction. The dynamics range from *f* to *sf*, with a trill in the right hand. The second system (bars 4-6) continues the intensity, with dynamics from *p* to *sf* and a trill. The third system (bars 7-9) shows a change in texture with *pp* and *sempre pp* dynamics, followed by a crescendo to *f*. The score includes various musical notations such as trills, accents, and dynamic markings.

⁵⁷ The two first bars are set down on the Vth degree of C minor, bars 3 and 4 are set down on the IVth degree of C minor and, through chromaticism, bars 5 to 11 slide from IV to V, where the music stays on a dominant pedal until the beginning of the exposition.

The image shows a musical score for piano, measures 11 through 18. Measure 11 begins with a dynamic marking of *sf* in the bass and *p* in the treble. The bass line features a chromatic ascent from G-flat to D natural. Measures 12, 13, and 14 are marked *sfp*. Measure 15 is marked *pp*. Measures 16, 17, and 18 show a continuation of the chromatic bass line with a *sfp* dynamic. A *Ped.* marking is present under measure 15, and an asterisk (*) is placed below measure 16.

Even when the music, bars 6 to 8, is reduced to *p*, *dim.*, *pp*, the energy accumulated from bars 1 to 5 is still greatly kept through the unifying rhythm and through the expanded structural chromatic line in the bass. Martin Cooper comments on the passage as follows:

The chromatically rising bass (G flat to D natural), narrowing the intervals in the left hand against the widening intervals in the right creates a feeling of agonized pressure ... The sensation of constriction is all the more acute because the whole passage is pianissimo.⁵⁸

Even the attainment of the dominant at bar 11, which might feel like a relief after such an amount of tension, is of short duration, due to the syncopated *sf* following and to the unifying rhythm (a double dotted quaver followed by a demisemi-quaver), which though lessened, is still present.

The long section of the first theme, the transition to the second theme, the end of the exposition, where the music heads for the development, as well as the development itself, are all driven by a constant energy. Each time Beethoven writes indications that might signal a rest or break in the music, it is to allow the energy to start up

⁵⁸ Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade*, 198.

again with renewed vigour, as, for example, in bars 23, 30 to 31, and 34 to 35 (Example 3.17).

Example 3.17: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 19-35

19 *f ff sf sf mezzo piano poco riteneute a tempo cresc..*

24 *sf sf*

27 *sf sf sf sf sf p*

30 *poco riteneute a tempo cresc..*

33 *rinforz. poco riteneute espressivo tr a tempo p f*

The indefatigable rhythmical movement of semiquavers is everywhere, and when not, it is because the first theme, its restatement, or parts of it, which also have

forward momentum,⁵⁹ are present, as, for example, in bars 19 to 23 (Example 3.17), or bars 72 to 77 (Example 3.18).

Example 3.18: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 72-77



Moreover, further elements help to keep the inner drive of energy. Fugal components, for example, are present in the development but also in the transition, where the head of the first theme is repeated (Example 3.19).

Example 3.19: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 35-47



⁵⁹ 'Beethoven is not composing with themes in the sense of exploring the developmental possibilities of some a priori, fixed thematic entity. He instead is creating the illusion of powerful motion, the realization of a large-scale rhythm. Everything becomes thematic, in the sense of bearing the principal argument, for the unfolding of such a whole is the principal argument.' Burnham, *Beethoven Hero*, 62.

The insertion of fugal elements in a late work is nothing unusual for Beethoven. It also happens, for example, in the *Missa Solemnis*, the Symphony no. 9, opp. 106 and 110, and the *Grosse Fugue*, among others.⁶⁰ Glenn Stanley explains: ‘the third-period pre-occupation with fugue and variations that is often stressed in the literature represents nothing new, but rather the culmination of interests in these forms that had always been strong.’⁶¹ Nicholas Marston remarks: ‘the concomitant exploration of fugue in the late works, may be explained partly in terms of his [Beethoven’s] seeking to find alternatives to sonata-form in the large scale instrumental genres.’⁶² Still, it gives these sections a supplementary level of intensity. It conjures also, in the case of the development, an atmosphere of suspense, realised through simple classical degrees of G minor, in bars 76-77, C minor, in bars 78-79, and F minor, in bars 80-81 (Example 3.20).

⁶⁰ Cooper, *Beethoven, The Last Decade*, 418-419.

⁶¹ Glenn Stanley, ‘Some thoughts on biography and a chronology of Beethoven’s life and music’, in Glenn Stanley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 5.

⁶² Nicholas Marston, ‘Goal-directedness in Beethoven’s music’, in Glenn Stanley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 316, footnote 15.

Example 3.20: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 76-81

The section in the recapitulation, where the music leaves the peaceful and calming character of the second theme, to reach a new level of tension which leads to the end of the piece, is brilliantly built. The second theme first in C major, is reiterated in F minor,⁶³ where the left hand, from bar 128, undertakes a very long line of structural chromaticism in order to reach the diminished seventh chord of bar 132 (Example 3.21). This diminished seventh, added to the structural chromaticism preceding, creates an immense level of intensity which leads the music back to C minor.

Example 3.21: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 124-135

⁶³ The particularities of this second theme in the recapitulation are seen in detail in the next point, 3.2.3.2.

130 *8va* *Tempo I*
ff
 133
p cresc. *ff* *sf*

Even the end of the movement, apart from its last two bars in C major, offers no place to rest. The head of the first theme, punctuated by *sf*, is stated in rhythmical augmentation and placed on upbeats. Furthermore, it is fused to the same diminished seventh chords that are found in the introduction.⁶⁴ The coda is dominated by the movement of semiquavers (Example 3.22).

Example 3.22: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 145-158

145 *8va*
sf sf sf sf ff sf sf sf sf *dimin.*
 150
p
 153
p

⁶⁴ 'At the end of the movement Beethoven harmonizes the theme with the chords where the diminished sevenths occur in the same order as in the introduction.' Rosen, *The Classical Style*, 443.



3.2.3.2 The second theme and its tonalities

The second theme is the only peaceful oasis this first movement has to propose, and its beginning is the only possibility for the pianist to rest. For William Kinderman, ‘the fleeting appearance of the lyrical second theme in *Ab* major, and its more sustained passages in C major and F minor in the recapitulation, represent a foreshadowing of the character of the *Arietta*.’⁶⁵ For Robert S. Hatten, ‘its brevity and parenthetical appearance between diminished seventh chords attest to its still-illusory status in the expressive drama of the movement. The tragedy of the first movement manages only to hint at this more positive realm.’⁶⁶

It feels like a complete relief when the four minims of bars 48-49 appear, like four bells ringing, supported by *sf*, announcing the arrival of the theme, and allowing the atmosphere to loosen, therefore preparing the path for this new character. Elevated on a dominant pedal, the second theme is in *Ab* major (Example 3.23). James

Hepokoski and Warren Darcy comment:

In music from the nineteenth century one encounters the occasional exposition that moves from a minor tonic to the key of the major submediant, i – VI: for example, from D minor to B-flat major. This may be found in the first movements of Beethoven’s String Quartet in F minor, op. 95, and his Piano Sonata in C minor, op. 111. Before long this option became

⁶⁵ William Kinderman, ‘The piano music’, in Glenn Stanley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 121.

⁶⁶ Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes*, 26.

more frequently employed, and it might be argued that by the 1840s it had replaced the i–v option.⁶⁷

Beethoven's use of the VI degree of C minor for its secondary theme is for Robert S. Hatten already conventional, and plays an opposite role to C minor:

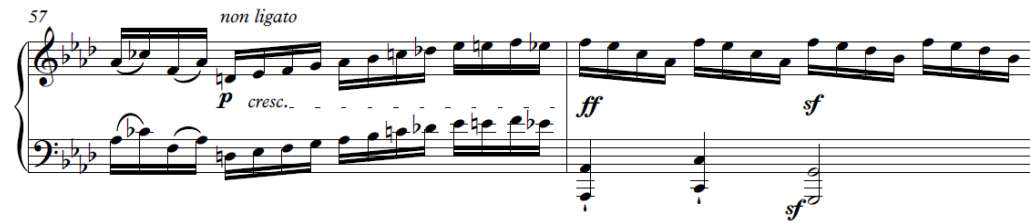
Since the subdominant in a minor key is also minor, the convention substitutes the (major) subdominant of the relative major (or VI in minor) for the slow movements of works in minor – as in Op. 13 (*Pathétique*), Op. 31, no. 2 (*Tempest*), and Op. 57 (*Appassionata*). This choice of key for slow movements was easily adopted for the second key area in a minor-mode work whenever that area implemented a more positive topical opposition to the tragic first theme group.⁶⁸

Example 3.23: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 48-58

The musical score for Example 3.23, Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 48-58, is presented in three systems. The first system (bars 48-51) shows a piano introduction with dynamics ranging from *ff* to *p*. It includes markings for *Ped.* and ** Ped.*. The second system (bars 52-54) is marked *meno allegro 12* and *adagio*, with *ritar.* and *dan. do* markings. The third system (bars 55-58) is marked *Tempo I* and *ff*.

⁶⁷ James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 317.

⁶⁸ Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes*, 273, 275.



The two other tonalities that could have been employed for this second theme, the tonalities of G minor and *E_b* major, are used by Beethoven at other places: in the transition, the head of the first theme appears in *E_b* major, bar 39 (Example 3.19), and the development starts in the tonality of G minor, which is reached by means of the reductive technique (Paragraph 3.2.3.3 and Example 3.25). Nevertheless, the tonic of this second theme appears in the bass only at bar 58, distinctly underlined by the *p* subito, *cresc.*, and the *non legato* preceding.

In the recapitulation, it is presented in C major (Example 3.24). Citing Barry Cooper and Lewis Lockwood,⁶⁹ Dimitri Papadimitriou writes: ‘The C minor/C major polarity, quite prominent in Beethoven’s music, translates as the progression from ‘darkness’ to ‘light’.’⁷⁰ It is announced, as in the exposition, through the four minims of bars 114-115, but also through the foreshadowing technique: the switch in the right hand at bar 112 from a semiquaver *B_b* to B, plays the role of harbinger for the C major tonality. It might feel like a relief to hear the C major tonality, but this is of short duration, as the theme is reiterated in F minor, in the left hand of bar 124.

Compared to the exposition, the C major tonic waits even longer this time before appearing in the bass. And when it does, at bar 135, it has become the tonic degree of

⁶⁹ Barry Cooper, *Beethoven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 127, 204, Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven: the Music and the Life* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003), 224; quoted in Dimitri Papadimitriou, ‘An exploration of the key characteristics in Beethoven’s piano sonatas and selected instrumental repertoire’ (DMusPerf dissertation, Royal Irish Academy of Music, 2013), 48.

⁷⁰ Papadimitriou, ‘An exploration of the key characteristics in Beethoven’s piano sonatas and selected instrumental repertoire’, 48.

C minor, not C major. Thus the level of tension created between the departure of C major to the arrival of the C, as tonic of C minor, in the left hand of bar 135, is enormous.⁷¹

Example 3.24: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 112-127

⁷¹ See the explanation on p. 69, Example 3.21.

3.2.3.3 The reductive technique as transition to the development

It is through the reductive technique and through structural chromaticism, that Beethoven reaches the beginning of his short development. After a succession of *sf*, the *Ab* octaves, bar 69, written on a *ff* and with *staccatissimo*, signal the end of the exposition. With the help of breaks, appearing for the first time since the end of the second theme, and with radical changes in the dynamics, both hands slide a semitone lower, from *Ab* to *G*, and reach the *F#* in the left hand and the dominant chord of *G* minor in the right hand at bar 71, in order to present the beginning of the fugue in *G* minor. The *p* dynamic on the *G*-octaves, bar 70, helps build suspense and anticipation. In the following bar, the *G* minor harmony is confirmed and underlined through the *cresc.* and *sf*. Moreover, the rhythm is suddenly really sparse: the preceding bars were filled in by semiquavers; now, the rhythmical figure used for the reductive technique is the crotchet, followed by breaks (Example 3.25).

Example 3.25: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 67-72

The musical score for Example 3.25 consists of two systems of piano music. The first system covers bars 67 and 68. Both hands play a continuous stream of semiquavers (eighths) in a descending chromatic pattern. The dynamics are marked *sf* (sforzando) throughout. The second system covers bars 69, 70, 71, and 72. Bar 69 features a first ending (1.) with a *ff* dynamic and a *staccatissimo* marking, and a second ending (2.) with a *p* dynamic. Bar 70 begins with a *p* dynamic on the *G*-octaves. Bar 71 features a *cresc.* (crescendo) leading to a *sf* dynamic. Bar 72 concludes with a *p* dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

3.2.3.4 Impacts on the interpretation

This movement, through its main tonality, its dramatic introduction, its motivic rhythmic figures, its fugal sections in the transitions and development, its dynamics, and its character, is driven by an incredible energy. It is a great example of how Beethoven builds, drives, and sustains the tension in a piece. Therefore, it is important to be aware that the only place to rest is the beginning of the second theme, as this movement demands an incredible high level of inner energy from the performer.

The upbeat to bar 19 is the first time where the head of the first theme appears (Example 3.26). From the point of view of the rhythm and of the musical notation, this upbeat is bound to the semiquavers preceding it. Doing a small gestural caesura between the last *Ab* and the G (first note of the upbeat) will help for two reasons: first it will be easier to control the upbeat; second, it will help to show the beginning of the first theme.

Example 3.26: Sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 17-19

Something similar happens at bar 23. Rhythmically speaking there is no separation between the end of the first theme (the C, first semiquaver of the fourth beat) and the beginning of its varied repetition (Example 3.17). Therefore, a small gestural caesura between these two semiquavers is recommended, since it will help to define what

ends and what starts. This is suggested by Beethoven, since the indication *a tempo* is above the second semiquaver of the last beat (Example 3.27).

Example 3.27: Facsimile of the second edition of the sonata op. 111, first movement, bars 22-25⁷²



The transition has absolutely no place where the tension is loosened. Only at bars 48-49 does it feel as if the music suddenly reaches a place to rest. These two bars prepare the arrival of the second theme. In all of Beethoven's three first movements it is the only time where the beginning of a theme (first or second), is built on a pedal.⁷³ It is felt as necessity here: it gives the music a kind of heightened and noble transcendence which goes against the incredible compelling forward drive of the rest of the movement. The tension suddenly disappears and is replaced by a lyric melody, containing elements of coloratura and improvisation, totally at the opposite of the material used before. It is also the only section which does not hold any of the rhythmical motifs found everywhere else. Unfortunately, this respite is of short duration and it feels almost disturbing when the tension brutally reappears, through the diminished seventh chord, the *ff* and the unison of both hands at bars 55-56.⁷⁴

⁷² The copy of the facsimile used here is from the publication made by Clementi in April 1823, not from Schlesinger 'The original edition was assured by Maurice Schlesinger in Paris, April/May 1823 ... There were so many mistakes despite two proofreading, a new engraving was necessary.'

'L'édition originale fut assurée à Paris par Maurice Schlesinger, avril/mai 1823... Il y avait tant de fautes, malgré deux corrections d'épreuves, qu'une nouvelle gravure fut nécessaire.' Elisabeth Brisson, *Guide de la Musique de Beethoven* (Paris: Éditions Fayard, 2005), 724.

⁷³ Conversely, in Schubert's three first movements, almost every first or second theme is built on a pedal.

⁷⁴ 'There is also the straightforward expressive association between the diminished-seventh sound and a sense of 'tension', or more specifically, human *angst*, that has a long history of rhetorical usage

In the development too, the tension is never released, there are no places to rest, and the inner energy always drives forward. At its beginning, even though the music becomes suddenly sparse because of the reductive technique, it still does not allow any loosening, and the full breaks, rather rare, are loaded with tension.

When the music reaches the second theme of the recapitulation, it is a total relief to hear the tonality of C major. But Beethoven repeats this lyric melody in F minor in the left hand, with an accompaniment of urging semiquavers in the right hand, which, if this was not understood yet, makes clear that this second theme's melody has now succumbed to the oppressive tension of the movement. The rise of intensity that follows reaches a new culmination through the long chromatic line in the left hand, the augmentation of dynamics and the *poi a poi sempre piu allegro*. The transition to the coda, with the head of the first theme in *sf* dynamic, on upbeats, and placed on the diminished seventh chords that build the introduction, disturbs and almost hurts. And the coda, despite its dynamic *p*, proposes no respite, except for the two final bars in C major.⁷⁵ These last two bars should reach a redeemed atmosphere, because as Rosen mentions: 'The ending in C major clearly prepares the second and final movement'.⁷⁶

going back to early Baroque recitative.' Robert S. Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 49-50.

⁷⁵ 'There are relatively few occasions on which Beethoven concluded the first movement of a minor mode work in the tonic major (cf. Op. 5, no 2; Op. 49, no. 1; Op. 111).' Robert Winter, *Compositional Origins of Beethoven's Opus 131* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1982), 118; quoted in Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven*, 145, 150.

⁷⁶ Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: A Short Companion*, 246.

3.3 First movement sonata form in Schubert's last three piano sonatas

3.3.1 Schubert, Sonata no. 19 in C minor, D. 958, first movement

3.3.1.1 Importance of the *Ab* major tonality

Starting with dramatic character,⁷⁷ this piano sonata and the beginning of its first movement have given scholars the opportunity to draw comparisons with some of Beethoven's pieces:

More than any of Schubert's other sonatas – more indeed, than any of his other works – the C-Minor Sonata is compared to Beethoven. Virtually every discussion of the sonata draws parallels between it and one or another – or, more often, several – of Beethoven's works.⁷⁸

For Christopher H. Gibbs this sonata is 'one of the most explicitly Beethovenian works Schubert ever wrote'.⁷⁹ Charles Fisk makes a parallel between the beginning of this sonata and the beginning of two of Beethoven's sonatas:

Like both of Beethoven's early sonatas in this key, op. 10, no. 1, and op. 13, Schubert's C-Minor Sonata begins aggressively with a full-voiced, forte tonic triad; as in both of these Beethoven sonatas, forceful accents, dotted rhythms, and abrupt silences impart to this theme's opening a defiant tension.⁸⁰

Edward Cone remarks: 'Schubert's opening is taken almost note-for-note from the theme of Beethoven's Thirty-Two Variations in C minor,'⁸¹ and Margaret Notley sees in this beginning, Schubert's own will to use Beethoven's Variations theme:

Schubert's borrowing was most likely overdetermined, at once an act of self-assertion and a tribute by a dying composer to a recently deceased one. He must also have realized that he

⁷⁷ William Kinderman writes that this sonata is one of Schubert's instrumental works which are associated with death. William Kinderman, 'Schubert's piano music: probing the human condition', 159.

⁷⁸ Charles Fisk, *Returning Cycles: Contexts for the Interpretation of Schubert's Impromptus and Last Sonatas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 180.

⁷⁹ Christopher H. Gibbs, *The life of Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2000, 162.

⁸⁰ Fisk, *Returning Cycles*, 180.

⁸¹ Edward Cone, 'Schubert's Beethoven', *The Musical Quarterly* 56 (1970), 780.

could expand Beethoven's oddly truncated theme into a powerful beginning for a large-scale sonata theme.⁸²

It is therefore astonishing to realise how brilliantly Schubert succeeds in doing a turn of events in the music, by appending his signature and utilising one of his hallmarks: the use of one of the tonic's third relationships, through a sudden modulation to *Ab* major at bar 12 (Example 3.28). For Fisk there is a 'progression in this C-Minor Sonata from a Beethovenian beginning into an idiosyncratically Schubertian.'⁸³ Lawrence Kramer remarks: 'Schubert forms blocks of contrasting harmonies and juxtaposes them – either to displace the structural effect of Classical fifth relationships with the coloristic effect of third relationships, or to spell out an antithesis between Classical and Romantic idioms.'⁸⁴

Example 3.28: Sonata D. 958, first movement, bars 1-16

The image displays a musical score for the first movement of Schubert's Sonata D. 958 in C minor, Op. 958. The score is presented in two systems. The first system covers bars 1 through 7, and the second system covers bars 8 through 16. The music is in 3/4 time and C minor. The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The first system begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand features a melodic line with some chromaticism, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment. A 'cresc.' (crescendo) marking is placed above the right hand in the fifth bar. The second system starts at bar 8. The right hand continues its melodic development, and the left hand maintains its accompaniment. A fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic is indicated in the second system. The piece concludes with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand.

⁸² Margaret Notley, 'Beethoven in the works of other composers', in Glenn Stanley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 253.

⁸³ Charles Fisk, 'Schubert recollects himself: the Piano Sonata in C Minor, D. 958', *The Musical Quarterly* 84 (2000), 653.

⁸⁴ Lawrence Kramer, 'The Schubert Lied: Romantic Form and Romantic Conscious', in Walter Frisch (ed.), *Schubert: Critical and Analytical Studies* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 203.



The melody of the beginning, partly through structural chromaticism which helps in the building and sustaining of the intensity, climbs to bar 12, where the music is now in an *Ab* tonicisation, and where the atmosphere changes completely. In the draft of the first movement,⁸⁵ it is clear that Schubert, for the beginning of this tonicisation, wants something radically different in the music: although dynamic indications in the draft are rare, Schubert explicitly wished this arrival on *Ab* in a *ff* dynamic, and the long descent of the right hand in bar 12-13 is written in only one bar, even though the rhythm does not fit in. By doing this tonicisation in *Ab* at the beginning of his movement, Schubert achieves three characteristics. Firstly, the tension built in the first eleven bars has now completely disappeared and the awaited cadence in C minor is replaced by the tonicisation in *Ab* major. Fisk explains that this ‘downward-rushing A-flat major scale stalls momentum and ... has the effect of immediately tonicizing A-flat, of wrenching the music into this key and thus of suddenly collapsing the momentum toward a C-minor cadence.’⁸⁶ Secondly, as if to underline the new tonality, Schubert adds its lowered sixth degree, the *Fb* found in bars 14-15, in a *p* dynamic. Thirdly, the tonicisation in *Ab*, as it will be seen, has further impact on the movement,⁸⁷ and the melodic gesture of bars 14-15, is not only the inspiration

⁸⁵ Franz Schubert, Walburga Litschauer ed., *Drafts of the Sonata in C minor D. 958* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, Urtext of the New Schubert Edition) <<https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/BA10869>> [Accessed 12 July 2016].

⁸⁶ Fisk, ‘Schubert recollects himself’, 635, 637.

⁸⁷ It has also an impact on the whole sonata, because as Ryan McClelland remarks, the tonality for the second and third movements is *Ab* major. Ryan McClelland, ‘Tonal recollection in Schubert’s late instrumental music’, in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert’s Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 247-256.

for the melody of the second theme, but also for the melody starting the second movement: ‘The melodic motive that emerges in this A-flat major aside, 1-7-1-2-3-4-3, reemerges not only as the second theme of the first movement itself (in mm. 40-42), but also as the theme of the following adagio.’⁸⁸

3.3.1.2 Sub-process of the ABA´ form and appearance of the *Eb* tonality

Through the return of the C minor tonality at bar 17, and the reappearance of the first theme, varied, at bar 21 (Example 3.29), Schubert introduces the technique called in this work, the sub-process of the ABA´ form. A harmonic (C minor – *Ab* major – C minor), and thematic ABA´ form is built as the music gets back to C minor and the first theme, with an accompaniment of semiquavers in the left hand and small changes in the melody, reappears. The ‘Beethovenian’ character of the theme that starts the movement, has now switched for a less dramatic but more breathless version. Margaret Notley notices about this variation that ‘Schubert thoroughly assimilated the borrowed theme to his own style, thereby both fulfilling the requirement of originality, accentuated after Beethoven, and effectively preparing the poised inwardness of the theme in *Eb* that follows.’⁸⁹ At bar 27 one of Schubert’s magical moments occurs: the entrance of the *Eb* tonality, tonality of the second theme, which counterbalances the earlier tonicisation of *Ab*, by establishing the opposite relation of a third with C minor (Example 3.29). This *Eb* major appears early, since the second theme only starts at bar 39, and the tonicisation of *Ab* major is not yet far away; but by doing so, Schubert establishes, at the beginning of his sonata, a relation of lower and higher third with the tonic: *Ab* major – C minor – *Eb*

⁸⁸ Fisk, ‘Schubert recollects himself’, 639.

⁸⁹ Notley, ‘Beethoven in the works of other composers’, 253.

major. Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen observes Schubert's 'preference for mediant relations',⁹⁰ and Ernst Kurth explains:

The Romantic period is the era of thirds ... Already Schubert's instrumental forms had brought keys in mostly mediant relationships set against one another, rather than the initial dominant or parallel relationships.⁹¹

Xavier Hascher acknowledges that:

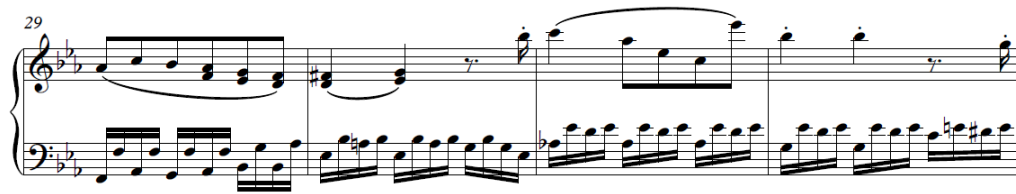
This issue of the third and the potential of dissolution it has, compared with tonalities expressed a priori by the fifth, are issues with crucial significance in order to situate the role of Schubert in the evolution of the forms in the nineteenth century and to assign his historical importance.⁹²

Example 3.29: Sonata D. 958, first movement, bars 17-32

⁹⁰ 'Bevorzugung von Terzbeziehungen', Hinrichsen, 'Die Sonatenform im Spätwerk Franz Schuberts', 29.

⁹¹ 'Die Romantik wird das Zeitalter der Terzen. ... schon Schuberts instrumentale Formen bringen hier statt des ursprünglichen dominantischen oder Parallel-Verhältnisses meist mediantische Tonarten gegeneinandergestellt.' Ernst Kurth, 'Romantische Harmonik und ihre Krise in Wagners „Tristan“', (Hildesheim: Nachdruck der Ausgabe Berlin 1923, 1968), 178, quoted in Hinrichsen, 'Die Sonatenform im Spätwerk Franz Schuberts', 47.

⁹² 'Cette problématique de la tierce, le potentiel de dissolution que celle-ci possède en réserve sur une tonalité exprimée prioritairement par la quinte, sont des enjeux dont la signification est capitale pour situer le rôle de Schubert dans l'évolution des formes au XIXe siècle et assigner son importance historique.' Hascher, *Schubert, la forme sonate et son évolution*, 33.



3.3.1.3 Process of variation in the second theme

Schubert uses the technique of variation for his second theme.⁹³

Schubert's second theme now becomes a basis for variations ... The first of these is a simple figural variation in which this theme comes again, made more vivid by the octaves in the right hand and more fluid by the accompanimental triplets in the left. A second variation, more agitated and beginning now in *Eb* minor, follows.⁹⁴

Stated from bars 39 to 53, it is varied a first time with accompaniment of triplets and intervals of octaves in the right hand, from bars 53 to 67, and a second variation in *Eb* minor starts at bar 67, with a movement of semiquavers in the right hand and *staccato* in the left hand (Example 3.30).

Example 3.30: Sonata D. 958, first movement, bars 39-77

⁹³ The melodic contour of this secondary theme takes its origin in the melodic contour of the *Ab* tonicisation at the beginning of the movement. See chapter three, pp. 81-82.

⁹⁴ Charles Fisk, *Returning Cycles*, 185.

To insert a theme and variation in a section of a sonata-form movement is nothing new for Schubert,⁹⁵ but it is still something very rare at the time of composition. It will happen again later, for example, in the first movement of Brahms's piano quartet op. 60 in C minor. Carl Dahlhaus mentions: 'the practice continues after Schubert as well: in Brahms and Mahler we observe the tendency to transform symphonic sonata form, now presented in an extreme fashion, into a cycle of variations'.⁹⁶ In this second theme, it is also interesting to note the intervallic relation between bars 46-47, and 48-49: the notes in bars 48-49 are written a lower major second (or lower whole tone) than the notes in bars 46-47. This is the result of a sudden whole-tone modulation where the music, for two bars in the tonality of *Ab* major (bars 46-47),

⁹⁵ He does the same, for example, in the exposition and recapitulation of the first movement of his String Quartet in G major, D. 887.

⁹⁶ Dahlhaus, 'Sonata Form in Schubert: The First Movement of the G-major String Quartet, op. 161 (D. 887)', 3-4.

changes to *Gb* major, a perfect example of ‘daring tensions between distant keys’.⁹⁷

In the second variation the section in *Gb* major appears from bar 72 and adds to the change of tonalities, the change from a minor to a major mode.

3.3.1.4 Impacts of the *Ab* tonicisation and chromaticism in the development and coda

Through the end of an interrupted cadence, Schubert starts his development, bringing again to light the tonality of *Ab* major, which is emphasised by the *ffz* and *ff* on its tonic chord and by the accentuation, > and ' , and the *ff* on its fifth degree, bars 99 to 102 (Example 3.31). ‘The powerful *Ab*-major triad with which the development abruptly begins only strengthens the impression of *Ab* as a dramatic antipode to *C* minor in this sonata.’⁹⁸

Example 3.31: Sonata D. 958, first movement, bars 98-117

⁹⁷ See chapter three, p. 35, footnote no. 14.

⁹⁸ Fisk, *Returning Cycles*, 186.

Mostly through chromaticism in the bass, the music reaches the D major of bar 117, (Example 3.31), where a semi-tone motif, motivic element for the following thirty-three bars and the coda, appears (Example 3.32). According to Fisk, who calls it a ‘ghostly, oracular figure’, this motif is a fusion of ‘the half-step lower neighbour figure of the second theme with the repeated-quarter note motive of the first theme’.⁹⁹ Interesting here is that the half-step lower neighbour figure of the second theme is inspired by the beginning of the melodic gesture of the *Ab* tonicisation of bar 14. This proves that even though the music is not any more in *Ab*, but in D major, the tonicisation in *Ab* major of the exposition is somehow still influencing the music. And effectively, the music returns to *Ab* major at bar 129 (Example 3.32).

... the head motive of the new theme separates and repeats itself to initiate a further chromatic ascent. Its first articulated goal is a return to the *Ab* major with which the development began (mm. 125-130). Thus, even in retrospect, the apparent D major of this theme never acquires the function that one might expect of it in a C-minor piece, as the dominant of the dominant. Instead it arises near the midpoint of an expanse that is controlled at its beginning and again at its first provisional end by *Ab* major.¹⁰⁰

Thus, the first two thirds of the development are radically dominated by the *Ab* tonicisation of the beginning, and by chromaticism.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 187.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 187, 189.

Example 3.32: Sonata D. 958, first movement, bars 117-141

117 *fp* *decresc.* *pp*

121

125 *cresc.*

128 *p*

131 *pp*

135 *cresc.* *p* *8va*

139 *pp*

In the coda, the semi tone motif reappears, but now in C minor. Nonetheless, the *Ab* is still present, as an emphasis is put on the *Ab*-octaves of bar 260. Twice accentuated in a *cresc.*, bars 260-261, and rhythmically shifted (first on the second beat, than on the third), this *Ab*-octave appears a last time on *f*, on the first beat of bar 263 (Example 3.33).

Example 3.33: Sonata D. 958, first movement, bars 244-274

The musical score for Example 3.33 is presented in six systems, each with a piano (right) and bass (left) staff. The key signature is C minor (three flats).
 - System 1 (bars 244-249): The piano part begins with a *dim.* marking and features chords with accents. The bass part has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. A *pp* marking appears in the piano part at the end of the system.
 - System 2 (bars 250-253): Continues the accompaniment in the bass part.
 - System 3 (bars 254-257): The piano part has a melodic line, and the bass part continues the accompaniment.
 - System 4 (bars 258-261): Includes a *cresc.* marking and a dynamic shift to *f* in the piano part.
 - System 5 (bars 262-265): Features a *decresc.* marking and a dynamic shift to *p* in the piano part.
 - System 6 (bars 266-274): Concludes the passage with a final *decresc.* marking and a dynamic shift to *p* in the piano part.



3.3.1.5 Impacts on the interpretation

A particularity in the interpretation of this first movement is its frequent alternation between building tension and loosening intensity. The first theme builds a line of tragic energy through parallel octaves and chromaticism, but the moment the music reaches bar 12, it vanishes suddenly, through the long, almost improvised, descending *Ab* scale. The musical material of bars 12 and 13 could not be more different than the material beginning this movement. There should be no *ritenuto* at all at the end of bar 11: the next bar should come as a total surprise. The descent at bars 12-13 should be played really freely, like an improvisation gesture, but the first beat of bar 14 should absolutely arrive in time. Through the staccatos, bars 14-15, the accents, the *Fb*, and the rising semiquavers returning to C minor in a growing dynamic, the process of building the tension starts again and is kept this time through the left hand accompanying the reappearance of the first theme with semiquavers. Despite the agitated mood of the left hand, the recurrence of the first melody delivers a character of lyrical urgency that leads to bar 27, a magical Schubertian moment, where the sun unexpectedly comes out through the presence of the tonality of *Eb* major. For this reason, it is extremely important that the pianist conjures an unexpected colour at the start of bar 27, and might even think of slowing down the tempo a little for a short moment. The breaks of bars 38-39 enable the performer to prepare inwardly for the arrival of the second theme, which, despite its peaceful character, plunges the music through its second variation at bars 67-68 into a

completely different mood with the accentuated left hand and the semiquavers of the right hand that create the atmosphere of a melancholic German dance. It is interesting to observe that this second theme, through its two variations, has a lot to offer to the performer: a theme full of plenitude, the hopping mood of its first variation, and a slightly nostalgic last variation. The two short tonicisations of bars 46-49, which also appear in the first variation, as well as the *Gb* major section of the second variation, add to this second theme, wonderful colours.

As William Kinderman has written, 'Especially impressive in this movement are the mysterious, chromatically veiled passages of the development',¹⁰¹ this development surprises with its highly chromatic passages. The motif that leads two thirds of the development to the recapitulation creates an uneasy feeling with its first appearance at bars 119-121, because of its great chromaticism. But Schubert repeats it so much that the pianist gets used to it and it suddenly feels as if the motif is now an integral part of himself/herself. Something similar happens with the presence of the *Ab* tonicisation: through its important role at the beginning of the movement, it has become part of the music and it is creating now in this development a factor of solidity across all the chromaticism. It helps considerably, in the interpretation, to be aware that although the chromaticism might seem omnipresent, this development starts in *Ab* at bar 99, returns to *Ab* at bar 133, and from there, heads for *G* minor in order to get back to the main tonality. The twofold presence of the *Ab* tonality plays the role of principal pillars throughout the chromaticism of the development.

There is a frequent change between *C* major-*C* minor from the arrival of the second theme in the recapitulation to the coda of the movement. But the fact that the codetta

¹⁰¹ William Kinderman, 'Schubert's piano music: probing the human condition', 161.

of the recapitulation ends in a major key helps to create a sudden dramatic and tense atmosphere when the coda arrives in C minor, bar 249. Furthermore, the chromatic motif of the development is back. Charles Fisk states that the renewed presence of *Ab* at the end of the coda signals a victory over C minor: ‘the *Ab*, Schubert’s *Ab*, wins control of this ending.’¹⁰² But in this work, similarly as Ryan McClelland observes,¹⁰³ the *Ab* has actually lost its fight. Its message of hope, as understood from its other appearances in the rest of the movement, is now darkened by the C minor presence that surrounded it: ‘As the *Ab* continually reaches higher, it seems to strive for something unattainable – perhaps an *Ab* harmony or a scalar flourish – but it is now trapped within the thematic material derived from the development and restricted within the confines of a tonic pedal.’¹⁰⁴ For the first time since the beginning of the first movement, the *Ab* now carries with it an overtone of anxiety.

¹⁰² Fisk, *Returning Cycles*, 190.

¹⁰³ McClelland, ‘Tonal recollection in Schubert’s late instrumental music’, 252.

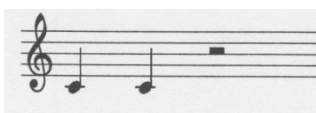
¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 252.

3.3.2 Schubert, Sonata no. 20 in A major, D. 959, first movement

3.3.2.1 Unifying rhythmical motifs and their variants

This whole movement is unified by important rhythmical motifs. In order to help understand what the motifs are, where they are, and how they vary, this paragraph will go through each of them by giving as example the first bar where they appear, accompanied by an explanation and a numbering. Therefore, it will be easier in the following paragraphs to understand where these motifs reappear, how they transform, what their motivic roles are, and how they are an integral part of each characteristic feature of the composition.

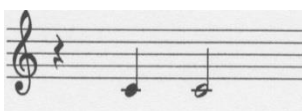
Motif no. 1: The two crotchets in the left hand starting the movement



Motif no. 2: The descending triplets of bar 7



Motif no. 3: The crotchet and minim of bar 8



Motif no. 4: A fusion of motifs no. 1 and 3. The two crotchets of motif no. 1 are replaced by two quavers and followed by the minim of motif no. 3. It is found for the first time in bar 16.



Motif no. 5: A variant of motif no. 4, instead of two quavers, this motif shows two crotchets followed by a minim, as in bar 57.



Motif no. 6: Fusing motif no. 5 and the half of motif no. 2, this motif has two crotchets followed by two groups of quaver-triplets. It is found for the first time in bars 82-83.



Motif no. 7: This motif is a variant of motif no. 5. The second crotchet is replaced by four semiquavers. It appears for the first time at bar 121.



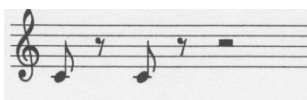
Motif no. 8: A variant of motif no. 4, this motif is found at the end of the development, and shows four quavers, each of them followed by a quaver break.



Motif no. 9: A slightly different version than motif no. 8, this motif, where the last two quavers followed by quaver breaks are replaced by four quavers, is also found at the end of the development.



Motif no. 10: Almost the same as motif no. 4, motif no. 10 has no minim but a minim break that follows the two quavers. It is found in the coda of the movement.



Every single part of this movement is unified by one of these motifs.

3.3.2.2 The two contrasting ideas of the beginning

This movement begins impregnated with noble character. With a wide gesture of the left hand,¹⁰⁵ motif no. 1 is introduced and repeated twice (Example 3.34). The six first bars, driven by an energetic and majestic character, appear to be more like an opening than like the awaited first theme of a piano sonata. Charles Fisk comments on these bars as follows:

The blankness of the opening phrase makes it, in a sense, inscrutable. This is one of Schubert's most Classical, "*multum in parvo*" gestures, neither lyrical nor immediately passionate, but instead abstract and pregnant with motivic possibilities. Even though it appears more Classical than Romantic in character, this opening differs from most Classical openings because it seems unsuitable for incorporation into either a period or sentence structure. Instead it stands alone, as if it really were the introduction that the just-ventured thought experiment made of it.¹⁰⁶

The completely different motif of descending triplets, entering at bar 7, seems to be part of a new world if compared to the first bars (Example 3.34). For Malcolm Bilson, the function of these triplets is 'to bring in the opposite sentiment of the sharp fanfare-like rhythm of the opening'¹⁰⁷ while for Robert S. Hatten: 'The dialogical response of mm. 7-8 implies freedom from dutiful constraint (the arpeggiated descent from a higher register, suggestive of inspiration from outside the encapsulated sphere of the opening) ...'¹⁰⁸ The *p* with which the triplets start and which helps underline the contrast is specifically wanted by Schubert, as seen in his

¹⁰⁵ Robert S. Hatten sees in this opening an example for Schubert's interest in overtone resonance: 'Schubert's interest in overtone resonance is thematised in the late Piano Sonata in A major, D. 959. Here, he explores the piano's capacity to enhance previously sounded higher pitches by keeping their dampers raised and by accenting lower pitches that include those higher pitches in their overtone complex.' Robert S. Hatten, 'Schubert's alchemy: transformative surfaces, transfiguring depths', in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert's Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 91-92.

¹⁰⁶ Fisk, *Returning Cycles*, 207.

¹⁰⁷ Malcolm Bilson, 'The future of Schubert interpretation: What is really needed?', *Early Music*, 25 (1997), 720.

¹⁰⁸ Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes*, 182.

draft.¹⁰⁹ This new fresh idea presents the third rhythmical motif found in bar 8 for the first time. For Robert S. Hatten, this motif no. 3 is an example of Schubert playing with sound and structure. In his chapter ‘Schubert’s alchemy: transformative surfaces, transfiguring depths’, he explains why:

Another kind of alchemical experimentation involves musical gesture. A particularly tactile gesture employed by Schubert is based on the articulation of two notes, short-long, with a separation in sound but not in energetic shaping ... In Schubert’s D. 959, the gesture is first clearly articulated in bar 8, where its softness and deceptive harmonic motion might suggest a sense of mystical awe or trepidation (comparable to a short intake of breath, broken off by something surprising, followed by an exhalation expressive of wonder).¹¹⁰

The descending triplets, alternating with motif no. 3, reach through structural chromaticism, the dominant chord of bar 13.

3.3.2.3 Variation and technique of deferred realisation in the first theme

From bar 16, Schubert twice fuses two motivic elements. The first theme, which is now presented in a variation from bar 16 to 21, has not much in common with its opening gesture: it has switched the triumphant character of the beginning for the atmosphere that prevails from bar 7.¹¹¹ Motif no. 1 has been fused to motif no. 3, thus creating motif no. 4,¹¹² which plays a major role in upcoming sections of the movement. Moreover, through the presentation of this variation, Schubert accomplishes the technique called in this work, a technique of deferred realisation¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Franz Schubert, Walburga Litschauer ed., *Drafts of the Sonata in A major D. 959* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, Urtext of the New Schubert Edition)

<<https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/BA10861>> [Accessed 21 July 2016].

¹¹⁰ Hatten, ‘Schubert’s alchemy: transformative surfaces, transfiguring depths’, 95-96.

¹¹¹ ‘The ease with which the third phrase achieves a fusion of the seemingly impenetrable ‘Objectivity’ of the first with the ‘subjectivity’ that interrogates it in the second conveys an air of youthful innocence.’ Fisk, *Returning Cycles*, 209.

¹¹² ‘The two hands in their interaction already suggest a possible combination of the opposed motives *x* [in this work, motif no. 1] and *y* [motif no. 3] into a three-note motive, *z* [motive no. 4], consisting of two quarters and a half note.’ [with ‘two quarters’ Fisk means here the first two beats of bar 16] *Ibid.*, 209.

¹¹³ See chapter three, p. 35.

(Example 3.34). Some elements that were left incomplete in the preceding bars are now fulfilled: firstly, the G# of bar 6 asks for a resolution on the tonic degree, which happens only later in the thumb of the right hand at bar 16; secondly, the Ds of bars 7 to 12, asking for a C#, are resolved through the motion in the top of the right hand at bar 21-22: D-C#; thirdly, the B at the bottom of the left hand in bar 13, reached through the chromatic line of bars 7 to 13, is only resolved at bar 16 on the A. As if to make sure that the pianist has understood that these elements, at first left incomplete, are later resolved, Schubert summarises the three deferred realisations in two bars, at bars 21-22: in the upper voice of the left hand, the G# is resolved on the A, in the upper voice of the right hand, the D is resolved on the C#, and in the bass, the B semibreve, is followed by the A. The rhythmical motifs no. 3 and 4 unify most of the transition that follows.

Example 3.34: Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 1-30

The musical score for Example 3.34, Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 1-30, is presented in three systems. The first system (bars 1-6) is marked 'Allegro' and begins with a piano introduction. The right hand plays a series of chords, while the left hand plays a bass line. Dynamics include *f* and *fz*. The second system (bars 7-12) features a piano section with dynamics *p* and *cresc.*. It includes triplet markings in the right hand. The third system (bars 13-16) shows a piano section with dynamics *f*. It includes a semibreve in the bass.

3.3.2.4 Harmonic construction of the first and second themes' beginnings

Introduced through quavers in *staccato*, which produce an air of freshness after the tireless movements of the triplets in the transition, the beginning of this second theme starts with the same harmonic construction as the beginning of the first theme (Table 3.3 and Example 3.35).¹¹⁴

Table 3. 3: Harmonic construction of the first and second themes' beginnings

Bars	1	2	3	4 - 6
	I	II	I-IV	I V
Bars	55	56	57	58
	I	V	I-IV	I-V

¹¹⁴ 'As Waldbauer and Brendel have both recognized, the second theme is a new version of the first, incorporating the same stepwise ascending bass and accompanying thirds.' Fisk, *Returning Cycles*, 210.

3.3.2.5 Sub-process of the ABA' form in the second theme

This whole second theme's group is a great example of Schubert inserting the sub-process of the ABA' form in a sonata-form movement.¹¹⁵ The A part is stated from bars 55 to 81, B is found from bars 82 to 111, and the A' part starts at bar 117, preceded by a variant of the same four bars that introduced A (Example 3.35).

The beginnings and ends of each of these sections are clearly indicated in the music: the dynamics from bars 81 to 82 change drastically from *pp* to *f*, and the end of the B section is separated from A' by a whole bar's pause. More than that, the B part fuses three different style types. Apart from being the middle part of an ABA' sub-process, this B part offers a developmental section and contains at the same time fugal elements: the rhythmical motif no. 6 that is constantly repeated, alternates between both hands which continually undercut each other. Robert S. Hatten calls this section a 'lengthy "predevelopment" section.'¹¹⁶

In this long second theme's group, the following rhythmical motifs are present and serve as motivic components: motif no. 5 is found in bars 57-58 for the first time; motifs no. 5, 6 and 2 share bars 82 to 105; bars 121-122 show the first appearance of motif no. 7; and motif no. 6 is found again from bars 124 to 130. The rhythmical motif no. 7 uses the first semiquavers of the piece, and the dynamic *pianissimo* appears for the first time too (Example 3.35). Interesting is that in the draft of the

¹¹⁵ 'It [the second theme] constitutes a ternary design, the contrasting middle of which comprises a developmental episode.' Julian Horton, 'The first movement of Schubert's Piano Sonata D. 959 and the performance of analysis', in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert's Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 178.

¹¹⁶ Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gesture*, 183.

first movement,¹¹⁷ these semiquavers are absent and Schubert simply jumps from bar 120 to 123.

Example 3.35: Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 51-130

¹¹⁷ Franz Schubert, Walburga Litschauer ed., *Drafts of the Sonata in A major D. 959* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, Urtext of the New Schubert Edition)
<<https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/BA10861>> [Accessed 12 July 2016].

83

Musical score for measures 83-86. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in bass clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Both staves are in the key of D major. Measure 83 features a triplet of eighth notes in both staves. Measure 84 has a triplet of eighth notes in the lower staff. Measure 85 has a triplet of eighth notes in the lower staff. Measure 86 has a triplet of eighth notes in the lower staff. Dynamics include accents (>) and hairpins (crescendo and decrescendo).

87

Musical score for measures 87-90. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Both staves are in the key of D major. Measure 87 features a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 88 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 89 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 90 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Dynamics include accents (>) and hairpins (crescendo and decrescendo).

91

Musical score for measures 91-94. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Both staves are in the key of D major. Measure 91 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 92 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 93 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 94 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Dynamics include accents (>) and hairpins (crescendo).

95

Musical score for measures 95-98. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Both staves are in the key of D major. Measure 95 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 96 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 97 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 98 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Dynamics include accents (>) and hairpins (crescendo and decrescendo).

99

Musical score for measures 99-102. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Both staves are in the key of D major. Measure 99 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 100 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 101 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 102 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Dynamics include accents (>) and hairpins (crescendo and decrescendo).

103

Musical score for measures 103-106. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Both staves are in the key of D major. Measure 103 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 104 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 105 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 106 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Dynamics include accents (>) and hairpins (crescendo and decrescendo).

107

Musical score for measures 107-110. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Both staves are in the key of D major. Measure 107 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 108 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 109 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Measure 110 has a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. Dynamics include accents (>) and hairpins (crescendo).

3.3.2.6 Motifs versus gesture

Robert S. Hatten has said that for him, ‘Schubert was one of the most ‘gestural’ of composers’. He scrutinises the thematic musical gesture found at the beginning of the first movement of D. 959 and explains that the gesture found in bar 8 [called above motif no. 3] is a ‘particularly tactile gesture employed by Schubert’.¹¹⁸ He also writes that the gesture found in bar 1 ‘was conceived in dialectical opposition’ to the gesture of bar 8.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ See chapter three, p. 96, footnote 110.

¹¹⁹ Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gesture*, 180.

Although the gesture found in bar 1 is dialectically opposed to the gesture in bar 8, Schubert, by combining motifs no. 1 and 3, automatically fuses both gestures together, especially in the transition to the second theme, as for example, in bars 23, 25, and 28, with the leap of the left hand recalling the gesture of bar 1 (Example 3.34). Motifs no. 1 and 3 are also combined in the second theme, producing motif no. 5. This latter is found among others, at bar 57, but also from bar 82 where it alternates with motif no. 6 (Example 3.35). As Hatten explains, Schubert combines ‘the two opposing gestures (mm. 1 and 8) into a larger, three-note gesture created by their overlap. This three-note gesture is the basis for a lengthy “predevelopment” section inserted between statements of the second theme in the exposition.’¹²⁰ Nevertheless, the gesture that results from motif no. 5 is very different whether it is found at bars 57 or 82. Although an accent at bar 57 is placed on the minim as for example in bar 23, it is a very legato and singing gesture. At bar 82, the accent is shifted and the gesture has a great rhythmical and martial character, resembling therefore the character of the gesture found in bar 1.

3.3.2.7 Chromaticism and unexpected character of the development

The lively character introduced at the end of the exposition, through the semiquavers of motif no. 7, gently rocks the beginning of this development in a peaceful atmosphere, as this motif, combined with chromaticism, fills the first two thirds of the development. Starting in C major, lowered sixth degree of E major, the unifying motif and its following melody moves to B major at bar 135. Apart from the fact that the music is now a half step lower, these bars are identical to bars 130-134. The same process happens twice again: bars 145-149, and 155-159, are a half step lower to respectively, bars 140-144, and 150-154, and are almost of the same musical material

¹²⁰ Ibid., 183.

(Example 3.36). Julian Horton explains that this back and forth between C and B major takes its origins in the bass progression of bars 65-77 of the second theme (Example 3.35): ‘The entire passage from bars 130 to 160 oscillates between C major and B major ... Even more remarkably, the B-C oscillation is prefigured as a middle-ground bass progression in bars 65-77’.¹²¹ To underline the difference of harmonic colour between C major and B major, Schubert indicates the first two statements in C major in *p*, and the first two in B major in *pp*. It is interesting to notice that in the sketch of his first draft, Schubert even indicates the first C major assertion in *pp*, while bar 136, where the B major is answering, is indicated *ppp*.¹²² For Charles Rosen, the beginning of this development is a great example of Schubert’s innovativeness in a classical context:

Schubert was often able to combine his un-Classical sensibility with an extraordinarily skilful manipulation of Classical conventions. His use of the shift of a half step in the Sonata in A major (D959) shows both his handling of tradition and his successful integration of stylistic ideals that might appear incompatible. The development section of the first movement begins with an oscillation between C major and B major which has no precedent in Classical practice ... A new melody based on the preceding cadential phrase swings from C to B and back again three times in a series of five-measures phrases. The combination of this static harmonic structure with the irregular regularity of a five-measure period is beautifully calculated. The continuous swing back and forth between two neighboring pitches weakens the sense of direction. The odd-numbered grouping of five blurs the traditional alternation between strongly and weakly accented measures. The two procedures act together to suspend momentum.¹²³

¹²¹ Horton, ‘The first movement of Schubert’s Piano Sonata D. 959 and the performance of analysis’, 184.

¹²² Franz Schubert, Walburga Litschauer ed., *Drafts of the Sonata in A major D. 959* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, Urtext of the New Schubert Edition)

<<https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/BA10861>> [Accessed 21 July 2016].

¹²³ Charles Rosen, ‘Schubert’s inflections of classical form’, in Christopher H. Gibbs (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 90-91.

Example 3.36: Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 130-160

130 *p*

134 *pp*

138 *p* *8va*

142 *pp*

146 *pp*

149 *cresc.* *f* *cresc.*

153 *ff* *f*

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is presented in a grand staff format (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The piece begins at bar 130 with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The bass line consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The treble line features a melodic line with slurs and accents. Bar 134 introduces a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic. Bar 138 includes an *8va* marking above a melodic phrase. Bar 142 continues the piano accompaniment. Bar 146 features a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic. Bar 149 shows a crescendo (*cresc.*) leading to a forte (*f*) dynamic. Bar 153 features a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic in the treble and a forte (*f*) dynamic in the bass.



Through the appearance of motif no. 7, in C minor, bars 161-162 (Example 3.37), the music attains an additional level of intensity and the material of bars 131 to 134 develops as the melody reaches a very *legato* section in the right hand, bars 164 to 167. At bar 173, the tonality of A minor is heard and is announced through the *pp* of bar 168, and the *decresc.* of bar 171. This A minor section is unusual because in a development, the main tonality of a piece, or its minor homonym, should appear only shortly before the beginning of the recapitulation. In this case, it is already heard at bar 173, more than twenty bars before the recapitulation starts. Again, Charles Rosen explains:

At the end of the development the music goes from C minor to A minor, and then develops the most powerful of all Schubert's preparations for the return to the tonic with a long dominant pedal. It might be objected that since the music has already reached the tonic, a preparation for a tonic return is not necessary, but this would be to misunderstand the importance of mode for Schubert. It is not the return to the tonic but the return to the major mode that is prepared with such force.¹²⁴

In the long dominant pedal, lasting fourteen bars and preparing for the arrival of the recapitulation, the music leaves motif no. 7 behind and adopts a new motif, motif no. 8, at bar 184, followed by motif no. 9, bar 186. Through the absence of semiquavers, the character of this last development's part is suddenly different; more martial, it prepares for the return of the character of the first theme (Example 3.37).

¹²⁴ Ibid., 91.

Example 3.37: Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 160-187

160 *decresc.* *p*

163 *fp* *fp*

167 *pp*

171 *decresc.*

175 *fp* *fp*

179 *cresc.*

182 *cresc.* *f*



For Robert S. Hatten, because the B part of the second theme of the exposition delivers so much the character of a development, Schubert has to come with a compromise for the development itself:

Having exhausted the traditional developmental *fugato* here, Schubert must find an alternative compositional strategy for his actual development section, and his solution is stunning: a musette-like theme in the high register that features oscillation between C major and B major, a descent to a rustic dance in C minor and A minor, and a long dominant prolongation. This topically motivated and tonally static development section captures, especially in its opening oscillations, the character of Romantic reflection, in opposition to the willful energies of the earlier *fugato*.¹²⁵

Through the thematic transformation Schubert makes with motif no. 7, this development stands apart from the traditional development. Idyllic and of pastoral character, this ‘musette-like’ theme, as Hatten calls it, establishes an almost transcendental, inward atmosphere, that is sustained over the first third of the development.

3.3.2.8 Similarity with op. 110’s first movement

In both op. 110’s and D. 959’s first movements, the musical activity that is usually present in a development, is here almost non-existent or very little: in the development of op. 110’s first movement, the beginning of the main theme is restated in a descending sequence of thirds starting in F minor;¹²⁶ in the development

¹²⁵ Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes*, 183.

¹²⁶ See chapter three, p. 56.

of D. 959's first movement, the rhythmical motif no. 7 is reiterated oscillating between the tonalities of C and B major,¹²⁷ until it reaches the C minor and slowly heads on for the beginning of the recapitulation. In both these first movements, it is either before or after the development that a musical activity happens, stealing the development its 'expected role'. In op. 110's first movement, as Charles Rosen remarks, it is in the recapitulation, not in the development, that the most remote key from the main tonality is reached.¹²⁸ In D. 959's first movement, as Hatten notes, it is in the second theme that fugal components and developmental character are found, not in the development.¹²⁹ Therefore, it is even more important to show that in both Op. 110 and D. 959's first movements, the main characteristic of their developments is the change of colours that happens through either the descending sequence of thirds, or the oscillation between C and B major.

3.3.2.9 Variation and lowered sixth degree in the recapitulation

As in the exposition, the technique of variation is used too in the recapitulation, but this time, the first theme is varied twice (Example 3.38): the first time, from bars 213 to 218, exactly as in the exposition; the second time, from bars 219 to 224, starting in A minor and moving to F major, lowered sixth degree of the main tonality of the piece.¹³⁰ The A minor of bar 219 is underlined by the dynamic *pp*. At bar 225, where the music is in F major, Schubert writes again the *pp* dynamic, although there are no other dynamics appearing between the first *pp* of bar 219 and the second of

¹²⁷ See chapter three, pp. 103-104.

¹²⁸ See chapter three, p. 59, footnote no. 48.

¹²⁹ See chapter three, p. 103, footnote no. 120 and p. 108, footnote no. 125.

¹³⁰ 'In the recapitulation, the consequent presentation phrase is repeated in a minor-mode variant, which modulates to VI^b, in which key the continuation and transition then ensue without strong cadential punctuation.' Horton, 'The first movement of Schubert's Piano Sonata D. 959 and the performance of analysis', 182.

bar 225. This shows the necessity of underlying the new tonality of F major through a particular sound, different from the one at bar 219.

Example 3.38: Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 213-226

The image displays a musical score for Example 3.38, Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 213-226. The score is presented in three systems, each with a treble and bass clef. The first system (bars 213-218) begins with a forte piano (*fp*) dynamic and features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand. The second system (bars 219-222) starts with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic and includes another triplet of eighth notes. The third system (bars 223-226) continues the *pp* dynamic and shows a melodic line in the right hand that moves towards the new tonality of F major. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

3.3.2.10 Ethereal character of the coda

The first theme when it reappears in the coda has entirely lost its imposing character (Example 3.39). Instead, it is a mysterious remembrance of how this movement started. ‘When the theme returns in the coda, up an octave, *pianissimo*, it takes on an ethereal character, transcendent in that it sounds from beyond the body, as if suggesting a spectral reminiscence.’¹³¹ The sketch for the coda¹³² is quite different, but the quick journey to F major, lowered sixth degree of A major, which is found here at bar 343-344, is present there too. The motion of triplets of bar 349, which

¹³¹ Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes*, 184.

¹³² Franz Schubert, Walburga Litschauer ed., *Drafts of the Sonata in A major D. 959* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, Urtext of the New Schubert Edition) <<https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/BA10861>> [Accessed 21 July 2016].

recalls motif no. 2, is followed by the last version of motif no. 4, now transformed as motif no. 10. Schubert alternates these two motifs and adds to them the otherworldly mood of this coda.

Example 3.39: Sonata D. 959, first movement, bars 331-357

331
pp

337

343
cresc. *p* *decresc.*

349
pp *8va*

353
dim.

3.3.2.11 Impacts on the interpretation

This movement impresses by its length, but its comprehension is made easier through the use of rhythmical motifs that unify the different sections.

The declamatory and almost theatrical beginning strikes not by the melody with which it starts, but much more through the rhythm carried out by a wide thematic gesture in the left hand, and through the overtones' resonances that occur on the tonic pedal.¹³³ The very sudden change of character when the triplet-motion of bar 7 enters, catapults the performer into a completely different musical dimension, as if Schubert has neatly taken care of allowing the pianist to experience two different worlds in a short time. At bar 16, when both motifs are fused (the gestural opening of the left hand and the motif of bar 8), it is impossible to forecast the upcoming journey this new motif will have throughout the rest of the movement. What Schubert does there is remarkable: not only does he combine two contrasted rhythmical figures in one new motif that will have impact in the other sections of the movement, but he also merges the two opposite ideas of the beginning. For Robert S. Hatten, these six bars (bars 16 to 21) mediate the opposition which exists between bars 1 to 6, and 7 to 15: 'Schubert ends his first theme (mm. 1-6) on the dominant, shifts to a radically different idea (mm. 7-15), then mediates the opposition in a counterstatement (mm. 16-21).'¹³⁴ The delicate variation of the first six bars is one of Schubert's special moments and is for the pianist a lovely and cheerful experience as the material of the beginning is remembered but the musical context has changed. Therefore, he/she should create an instantly new and carefree character. Similarly as in the beginning of the D. 958, first movement, Schubert plays in the first part of this exposition with a constant alternation between building tension and loosening it: the sustained tension of the first six bars is loosened at bar 7 when the triplets enter; the structural line of chromaticism in the left hand rebuilds the tension to bar 13, and when the variation starts, the atmosphere that comes out is of an absolute

¹³³ See chapter three, p. 95, footnote no. 105.

¹³⁴ Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes*, 180.

carefreeness. Through the end of the variation, the bar following it (bar 22), and through the resolution of some previous unanswered elements,¹³⁵ the music proceeds to the transition. The new rhythmical motif (motif no. 4, found in the variation), the triplets motif of bar 7, as well as motif no. 3, carry the pianist throughout the transition until the arrival of the dominant pedal at bar 39. This dominant pedal, at first very heroic, hands over to a new character produced mainly by a diminution of both the dynamics and the musical material: motifs no. 3 and 4 are now completely absent and the triplet motion (also considered a recurrent motif in this work) is later replaced by quavers with *staccato* indication. This paves the way for the arrival of the second theme, which when it appears, at bar 55, feels like a miracle full of naturalness, love, and wonderment. The pianist should let this theme – which contains the most lyrical version of motif no. 4, motif no. 5 – sing as much as possible and might want to take a slightly slower tempo for the entrance of this second theme. The hues of tonal colour that follows are well appreciated: the iteration of the theme switches from E major to E minor for a very short moment at bars 62-63, and the music heads to G major, bars 63-64, before returning to E major, bars 70-71 (Example 3.35). The performer should be aware that Schubert underlines the harmonic motion from E major to E minor and to G major, through the *cresc.*, *>*, *decresc.*, and *p* of bars 62-63, which are also found in the draft.¹³⁶ The reappearance of the triplet motion at bar 74 disrupts the peaceful atmosphere and announces the upcoming arrival of the B part. This middle part, which beginning is clearly indicated by the dynamic *f* (also found in the draft), is driven by a constant energy through the motif of triplets and through the reiterated presence of motifs no. 5 and 6, which makes it resemble a developmental fugato.

¹³⁵ See paragraph 3.3.2.3, pp. 96-97.

¹³⁶ Franz Schubert, Walburga Litschauer ed., *Drafts of the Sonata in A major D. 959* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, Urtext of the New Schubert Edition) <<https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/BA10861>> [Accessed 21 July 2016].

Certainly, this second theme's group impresses by its length, but its ABA' form, the presence of motifs no. 5, 6, and of the motif of triplets give it a consistence.

Furthermore, the serene character of the A part, which is interrupted by the arrival of the B part, is well appreciated when it is heard again at the end of the exposition, and feels almost necessary after the rhythmical whirlwind of the B part. The first appearance of motif no. 7, and the motifs no. 5 and 6 that are overlapping each other in a *pp* dynamic, give this A' part a very light-hearted character.

The feeling experienced at the beginning of the development is astonishing: the rehearing of motif no. 7 but repeated several times, the surprise of freshness of the C major tonality, and the constant oscillation between C and B major make it one of the great moments of this movement. Even though the musical material is the same, the music is full of originality each time it switches from C to B, back to C, as if this was not some well-known material, but instead, a completely new one. The pianist has to be very aware here, that for each statement in either C major, or B major, the colour has to be totally different. Almost like an impromptu, the beginning of this development necessitates also a slightly slower tempo when the music repeats the statement in B major, in order to create a contemplative climate and let the door open up to a completely new world. When the music reaches the A minor section, attained through the preceding C minor section, it is clear that something is about to happen, namely the arrival of the recapitulation. The last part of the development uses the martial character of motifs no. 8 and no. 9 in order to prepare the music for the return of the first theme.

In the coda, the pianist should be careful to create an almost surreal atmosphere: the rehearing of the first theme but sounding now like reminiscence, the fugitive

presence of motif no. 10 where the minim of motif no. 4 has been replaced by the minim break, provide to the end of this movement a spectral character.

3.3.3 Schubert, Sonata no. 21 in Bb major, D. 960, first movement

Schubert's Piano Sonata in Bb, D. 960, stands as one of the crowning achievements of his output.¹³⁷

3.3.3.1 The trill and the foreshadowing technique for the Gb major modulation

The beginning of this exposition has a very particular character and colour (Example 3.40). Built on tonic and dominant pedals, and unified by the interval of the octave,¹³⁸ the marvellous theme starting the movement, is interrupted on its dominant degree, through a break in the left hand followed by the trill on Gb, which feels like a disruptive question mark left unanswered.¹³⁹ The melody reappears, at bars 9-10, and gives the impression that the loss of balance, caused by the trill, never existed, but the passing note of bar 15, in the left hand, evokes the trill again.¹⁴⁰ However, when the music initiates the modulation to Gb, bar 20, an impression of attainment is felt: now, the trill and the passing note make full sense. Thus, the trill was foreshadowing the Gb tonality. Charles Fisk explains that 'the emphasis of Gb in a Bb-major piece is nothing extraordinary.' But by manipulating the phrase rhythm and letting the dominant chord of bar 7 arrive in the middle of the bar, 'Schubert finds a context for his mysterious gesture that makes its Gb not merely a coloristic element, but a seemingly portentous one. The trill reconfigures a common chromatic inflection, the

¹³⁷ Eric Wen, Schubert's *Wiegenlied*: the Andante sostenuto from the Piano Sonata in Bb, D. 960', in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert's Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 134.

¹³⁸ The same characteristic is happening in the first movements of D. 958 and 959, where both beginning of the first themes are also built on a pedal and unified by the interval of the octave. Therefore, this characteristic is found at the beginning of all three Schubert's first movements.

¹³⁹ 'The first movement begins, in the words of Donald Francis Tovey, with a "sublime theme of the utmost calmness and breadth" whose first half ends mysteriously in a long, low trill on Gb.' Kinderman, 'Schubert's piano music: probing the human condition', 164.

¹⁴⁰ 'The second phrase, in response, incorporates the Gb into a continuous progression in which the bass descend chromatically (mm. 13-18), passing from the tonic down through Ab to G. The G is prolonged for nearly two measures before the bass slips down through Gb to F.' Fisk, *Returning Cycles*, 33.

lowered sixth degree, as something extraordinary.’¹⁴¹ Similarly, Su Yin Mak observes:

We first hear *Gb* as a moment of disjunction, a trill in the lowest register and with the softest dynamics (m. 8). It emerges from the depths of the half cadence that ends the main theme’s antecedent phrase and delays the appearance of the answering consequent ... At measures 20–35, *Gb* is stabilized with a closed, lyrical theme that seems to function as the middle section of a ternary form.¹⁴²

3.3.3.2 The sub-process of the ABA’ form and overlapping of formal functions

The ABA’ sub-process, through the statement of the first theme (bars 1 to 18), through the section in *Gb* (bars 19 to 35), and through the return of the first theme (bars 36 to 44), is present in this exposition too.¹⁴³ It is a harmonic (*Bb-Gb-Bb*) as well as a thematic ABA’ sub-process (Example 3.40). As in the first movement of op. 109, there is no visible transition between the first and second themes.¹⁴⁴ The end of the A’ part of the ABA’ sub-process is abbreviated; a diminished seventh chord appears as pivotal tool and enables the music to reach the tonality of F# minor where the second theme starts. Schubert does here something similar to Beethoven: where Beethoven absorbs the transition into the beginning of the second theme with help of a diminished seventh chord, Schubert, with help of a diminished seventh chord too, absorbs the transition at the end of the first theme. Both bars 9-10 of op. 109’s first movement and bars 45-47 of D. 960’s first movement are transitional in nature, and both composers achieve therefore an overlapping of formal functions.

¹⁴¹ Fisk, *Returning Cycles*, 241.

¹⁴² Mak, ‘Schubert’s Sonata Form and the Poetics of the Lyric’, 268.

¹⁴³ The ABA’ sub-process is also found in the two other first movements: at the beginning of the D. 958 first movement, and in the secondary theme of the D. 959 first movement.

¹⁴⁴ See paragraph 3.2.1.3, p. 41.

Example 3.40: Sonata D. 960, first movement, bars 1-45

Molto moderato

pp legato

6

pp tr

11

16

pp

21

24

27

pp

30

33

36

40

43

cresc.

f

decresc.

3.3.3.3 Three-key exposition and the first example of the technique of expansion

In his book *Franz Schubert*, Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen takes as model the Piano Trio in *E \flat* major, which, with its three-key exposition, modulates from *E \flat* major, to B minor (minor enharmonic of *C \flat* minor, this later being in a lower major third relation to the tonic), and to *B \flat* major, dominant of the tonic, and explains:

Such enharmonic confusion, which deliberately obscures the direction of modulations, was until then, and with understandable reasons, an absolute taboo for the exposition section of

the classical sonata form. It equalised or downplayed the clear fundamental form of the dominant polarity.¹⁴⁵

Later on he adds ‘this enharmonic process also shapes the exposition of the last piano sonata D. 960’.¹⁴⁶

Despite the harmonic construction of this exposition – the tonic (Bb), its lowered submediant degree (Gb) and the enharmonic (F#) as second tonality, and F major, tonality for the third tonal area – the polarity tonic-dominant so important in the sonata-form of the classical era, is still very present.¹⁴⁷ It is due to the way Schubert confirms its F major and to the fact that the tonality of the second theme, F# minor, is never really affirmed (Example 3.41). Fisk explains:

The lowered submediant within the Bb-Major Sonata’s first theme, Gb major, comes without the preparation of an articulated modulation. Later on, F# minor also emerges quite suddenly once again seeming to befall the music unexpectedly ... Only F major, the dominant, makes a fully prepared entrance, emerging predictably from a six-measure prolongation of its own dominant.¹⁴⁸

Charles Rosen expresses something similar and states ‘the section in F# minor is a magnificent detour.’¹⁴⁹

The way Schubert reaches his second theme is very interesting (Example 3.41): through a transition made up of a diminished seventh chord, bar 45, and its

¹⁴⁵ ‘Ein solches enharmonisches Verwirrspiel, das die Modulationsrichtung absichtsvoll verschleiern, war bis dahin in der klassischen Sonatenexposition aus verständlichen Gründen ein absolutes Tabu, denn es nivelliert oder entdramatisiert die klare formkonstitutive dominante Polarität.’ Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, *Franz Schubert* (Munich: C.H.Beck, 2011), 107.

¹⁴⁶ ‘... dieses enharmonische Expositionsverfahren, auch die letzte Klaviersonate D 960, prägt ...’ Hinrichsen, *Franz Schubert*, 107.

¹⁴⁷ Xavier Hascher writes: ‘The fifth still prevails in his [Schubert’s] work, even though it no longer rules it – at least not anymore in an exclusive way.’ ‘La quinte règne toujours dans son œuvre, même si elle ne gouverne plus, - ou plus de façon exclusive.’ Hascher, *Schubert, la forme sonate et son évolution*, 48.

¹⁴⁸ Fisk, *Returning Cycles*, 18.

¹⁴⁹ Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, 249.

enharmonic variant, bar 47, the music modulates to F# minor. ‘The B*b*-major cadence is denied: B natural takes the place of its B*b* melodic resolution over an ambiguous diminished seventh harmony. After hovering with growing tension on this harmony for three measures, the music is plunged into F# minor.’¹⁵⁰ Even more interesting is that without affirming any of the ‘passing tonalities’ between bars 48 and 72, Schubert reaches at bar 72, the same diminished seventh chord as at bars 45 and 47, but this time uses it as a pivot to attain the F major tonality – the third tonal region of this three-key exposition – with an authentic cadence in bars 79-80. This is the first example of the technique of expansion. The V⁷ chord of B*b* of bar 44 and the seventh diminished chord at bar 45 do not come to a close, but could also lead directly to bars 72 and following, because in the section between bars 47 and 72, all the tonalities appearing after the statement of the secondary theme in F# minor are blurred: the impression of being in A major is misled by the notes B*b* and its enharmonic A#; the D minor heard at 67 to 69 is never really confirmed; the B*b* major of bars 70-71 ends on a diminished seventh (the same chord as in bar 45) and leads finally to F major (Example 3.41). Fisk explains:

The first F#-minor phrase already gestures toward A major, but it is pulled back to F# minor in its fifth measure. Its consequent reaches A major (m. 58), but the ensuing music immediately takes a vacillating course that ultimately returns through B*b* (m. 70) to another resolution-evading B, this one finally resolving to the dominant of F major. This emergence reverses, for the moment, the effect of the earlier plunge, from the same B over the same diminished seventh, into F# minor. Thus this first short journey, although vacillating, does reach a comfortingly familiar goal: the dominant of the dominant.¹⁵¹

The authentic V⁷-I cadence at bars 79-80, is the first real confirmation of a tonality since this section has started, bar 48. Schubert is drifting here between tonal regions;

¹⁵⁰ Fisk *Returning Cycles*, 242.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 242-243.

these are a continuation of the chords but not a progression. He succeeds in doing this through the highly semi-tonal tension crossing all the bars and the F reached in the bass at bar 70, after a succession of F# is long-awaited.¹⁵² Furthermore, from the second quaver of bar 48 to bar 77, all dynamics signs are supporting the harmonic confusion prevailing in this section: no dynamics are louder than *p*, and the *crescendos* are followed by *decresc.* or *p*. The only *cresc.* of this section that reaches the *f* happens at bar 75, just before the confirmation of the F major tonality.

Example 3.41: Sonata D. 960, first movement, bars 45-80

The musical score for Example 3.41, Sonata D. 960, first movement, bars 45-80, is presented in four systems. The first system (bars 45-47) begins with a piano introduction, marked with *decresc.*, *cresc.*, and *ff*. The second system (bars 48-51) features a piano texture with dynamics *p*, *pp*, and *cresc.*. The third system (bars 52-55) continues the piano texture with dynamics *decresc.* and *pp*. The fourth system (bars 56-59) shows further piano texture with dynamics *cresc.* and *decresc.*.

¹⁵² In accordance with the technique of expansion, the attainment of the F in the left hand of bar 36, is preceded by a predominance of G \flat in the bass; the F of bar 70 is preceded by a whole section, bars 48-69, where the F# dominates.

59

cresc.

Measures 59-61: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The right hand features a melodic line with a slur over measures 59-61. The bass line consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment. A *cresc.* marking is present in measure 61.

62

p

Measures 62-64: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The right hand has a melodic line with a slur. The bass line continues with eighth-note accompaniment. A *p* marking is present in measure 62.

65

cresc. *p*

Measures 65-67: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The right hand features a complex chordal texture with a slur. The bass line continues with eighth-note accompaniment. *cresc.* is in measure 65 and *p* is in measure 67.

68

cresc. *8va*

Measures 68-70: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The right hand has a melodic line with a slur. The bass line continues with eighth-note accompaniment. *cresc.* is in measure 68 and *8va* is marked above measure 69.

71

decresc. *pp*

Measures 71-73: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The right hand has a melodic line with a slur. The bass line continues with eighth-note accompaniment. *decresc.* is in measure 71 and *pp* is in measure 73.

74

cresc. *tr* *8va*

Measures 74-76: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The right hand has a melodic line with a slur. The bass line continues with eighth-note accompaniment. *cresc.* is in measure 74, *tr* is in measure 75, and *8va* is marked above measure 76.

77

f *3* *decresc.* *p*

Measures 77-79: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The right hand has a melodic line with a slur. The bass line continues with eighth-note accompaniment. *f* is in measure 77, *3* is in measure 78, *decresc.* is in measure 78, and *p* is in measure 79.

3.3.3.4 Second example of the technique of expansion

The second example of how Schubert stretches his music is found at the end of the exposition/end of the recapitulation.¹⁵³ The only difference between bars 101 and 115 is the rhythm and the fermata of bar 101 which is absent in bar 115 (Example 3.42). In Schubert's draft¹⁵⁴ both bars (bars 86 and 93 in the draft) are absolutely identical: the rhythm is the same, there is no fermata. Theoretically, the music could go directly from bar 101 to 116, in order to head towards the *prima* or *seconda volta*, but it would miss what Benedict Taylor describes as Schubert's 'penchant for unusual harmonic slippage':¹⁵⁵ the sequential repetition that follows is a great example of 'Schubert, the colourist', one of Schubert's particularities of composition,¹⁵⁶ where the music in F major (bar 101), switches from G minor (bar 103), to A minor (bar 105), and Bb major (bars 106-107).

Example 3.42: Sonata D. 960, first movement, bars 99-117b

The image shows a musical score for Example 3.42, Sonata D. 960, first movement, bars 99-117b. The score is in G minor and 3/4 time. It consists of two systems of piano music. The first system covers bars 99-101, and the second system covers bars 102-107. The music features dynamic markings such as *fp*, *f*, *pp*, *mf*, and *ff*, along with crescendos and fermatas. The key signature changes from G minor to A minor and then to Bb major.

¹⁵³ The section in the exposition is used here as example.

¹⁵⁴ Franz Schubert, Walburga Litschauer ed., *Drafts of the Sonata in Bb major D. 960* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, Urtext of the New Schubert Edition)

<<https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/BA10860>> [Accessed 25 July 2016].

¹⁵⁵ Benedict Taylor, 'Schubert and the Construction of Memory: The String Quartet in A minor, D. 804 ('Rosamunde')', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 139 (2014), 65.

¹⁵⁶ See chapter four, paragraph 4.2.1.3, pp. 146-149.

3.3.3.5 Third example of the technique of expansion

Starting the development in C# minor with the melody of the first theme, Schubert develops it in a gloomy lyrical version.¹⁵⁷ From bar 131, a motive, which originates in the accompaniment of the F major section of the exposition, drives the music to a D minor section, starting at bar 173. This section is important: it is from there that the music turns toward the recapitulation and oscillates with the main tonality. At the

¹⁵⁷ The relation of C# minor to F major, last tonality appearing in the exposition, is the same as the relation of F# minor, tonality of the second theme, to Bb major, tonality of the first theme.

same time, this last development section presents the next case of the technique of expansion. The dominant chord of the main tonality (an F major chord which itself could be reached through its Vth degree) should be expected. This is what happens at bars 202-203: the last beat of bar 202 and the first beat of bar 203 are respectively the V⁷ degree of F, and the V⁷ of Bb (Example 3.43). However, between bar 173, where the D minor starts, and bars 202-203, where the music is proceeding to a clear end of the development, the chord Vth of Vth appears twice (last chord of bars 178 and 184), and is twice resolved to a D minor chord.¹⁵⁸ This sounds like an aborted attempt to reach the F major chord in order to get back to Bb. And as if trying to blur the music even more, the main melody of the piece reappears in Bb, at bar 193, with an accompaniment in the same tonality, but with the Gb. As a confirmation of this intentional wandering between the D minor/Bb major tonalities, the trill present at the beginning of the movement reappears, in both tonalities. This technique of expansion is also understandable through the dynamic levels found between bars 173 and 215: the music is aiming for the recapitulation from bar 173 onward, which means that the urgency of reaching the dominant of Bb major becomes more and more acute. However, the *ppp* of bar 193, which appears for the first time in this movement, requires a very particular sound or colour, because the small passage from bars 193 to 197 is in Bb (although coloured by the Gb) and contains the melody exactly as found at the very beginning of the movement. This sounds almost like a blurred hope. Therefore, the arrival of the Bb major chord at bar 193 has to be underlined. Similarly, the *cresc.* of bar 198 emphasises the return to D minor, which itself is indicated *p*. Anne M. Hyland describes the passage as following:

¹⁵⁸ 'Here at the development's climax, this D-minor theme remains in D, deepening its own stillness by not responding to the pull of its penultimate chord. And when, in the echo of the first D-minor phrase, the cadential dominant of F major falls back to a D-minor chord a second time, the stage is set for yet another D-minor phrase.' Fisk, *Returning Cycles*, 252.

The harmony of the first half of RT [retransition to recapitulation] juxtaposes two ostensibly disconnected tonal centres, D minor and B \flat major, without any transition or harmonic preparation, thus reinforcing the paratactic nature of the passage. As a result, the listener simply finds herself in B \flat (as yet, a mere suggestion of the tonic), and is just as suddenly transported away from it, in a kind of temporal reversal, resuming D minor. This is reinforced by the dynamics: D minor is articulated *piano*, whereas B \flat is softened to *pianissimo*, making it sound even more distant and *unheimlich*; a moment's inattention and you have missed it.¹⁵⁹

It is at bar 203 that the first obvious clue for the imminent arrival of the recapitulation manifests itself through the attainment of the V⁷ chord of B \flat . The urgent need to underline this chord on its first beat is justified by the long journey undertaken to reach it. Nevertheless, Schubert still needs twelve bars before finally starting his recapitulation; twelve bars in which G \flat reappears frequently and sustains a sense of uncertainty.

Example 3.43: Sonata D. 960, first movement, bars 173-215

¹⁵⁹ Anne M. Hyland, '[Un]Himmliche Länge: editorial intervention as reception history', in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert's Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 68-69.

188

decresc.

tr

193

ppp

198

p

tr

203

fp

208

pp

decresc.

211

ppp

pp

sempre legato

tr

3.3.3.6 The deferred realisation of the first trill

A statement of the first theme reappears at bar 345 to close the movement. More a remembrance of the beginning of the piece, it is slightly varied and built this time only on the dominant pedal. The trill of the beginning follows. Even though it sounded like a question mark at the beginning of the piece, because the sentence was

left opened on a dominant chord, now it is resolved through the three tonic chords that end the movement: as if the music has now come to a full circle (Example 3.44).

Example 3.44: Sonata D. 960, first movement, bars 345-357

3.3.3.7 Impacts on the interpretation

The first movement of the D. 960 piano sonata has a character of inner peace and serenity. Even in places where an element might be troubling, like the trill at the beginning, or the last bars of the *prima volta*, it is always resolved. It is as if the composer is telling his last confidences, being inwardly in accord, before leaving this world. Even though the draft¹⁶⁰ is a lot different from the version known today, it is clear that Schubert had from the beginning, the idea of the trill, of the modulation to *Gb*, the return to *Bb*, and of the *F#* tonality as tonality for the second theme, this latter reached very differently in the draft, but still without any confirmation of tonalities until the *F* major.

¹⁶⁰ Franz Schubert, Walburga Litschauer ed., *Drafts of the Sonata in Bb major D. 960* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, Urtext of the New Schubert Edition) <<https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/BA10860>> [Accessed 25 July 2016].

This whole movement should be played in a tempo that is under no circumstances static or too slow, but moving forward and staying in motion, and this should be made clear straightaway at the beginning of the piece. Full of serenity, the first theme creates a bridge between humanity and the hereafter, and sounds as if Schubert has reconciled with his past. Certainly the trill could be seen as disturbing the quiet peacefulness that comes from this beginning but when it is understood as harbinger of important upcoming sections of the movement, it then makes absolute sense: ‘The opening phrase of the first theme of this movement ends with a trill in the bass, *pianissimo*, on a *Gb* resolved into an *F*, and the more one plays it, the more the entire work seems to arise out of that mysterious sonority.’¹⁶¹ Nonetheless, it still creates an uncanny atmosphere and when, after the *fermata* the serene melody reappears, the enjoyment is even bigger than at the beginning. The darker colour created by the passing note of bar 15 is soon over and when, after the second trill, the music finally reaches the *Gb* section previously announced, an even higher state of pleasure is reached through the lyricism of the new tonality, and the melody seems now to bloom. An excitement is felt from bar 29, maybe through the semiquavers in the right hand, and when the theme of the beginning is reappearing, it carries with it a positive and euphoric character, almost like a triumph. It is as if the beginning melody in *Bb* had to go through the previous *Gb* in order to leave behind its dreamy version and reach the new confident one. Therefore, there should be an explosion of relief, and tremendous excitement, at bar 36, where the *A'* part appears. Moreover, the last triplet of bar 35 should be accentuated as these three chords are already in *Bb*.

¹⁶¹ Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, 249.

The first chord of bar 45 surprises the performer and the modulation from Bb to F# minor, underlined by the *cresc.* and *ff*, astonishes. Hugh MacDonald describes this moment as one of Schubert's volcanic temper: 'In bars 44 to 49, the modulation from Bb to F# minor is achieved by a sudden burst of dynamic energy which seems to act like combustion.'¹⁶² In the sketch, even though the music is quite different, the *ff* is still present – on the first beat of 48, not on the last beat of 47. The whole section of the second theme leaves behind a melancholic and a troubling atmosphere, through its tonalities and the fact that none of them are confirmed. Nothing is felt as very stable or anchored. It is as if the whole section is changing colours fugitively. Conversely, the third tonal region in F major starts with a convincing mood and its tonality is clearly heard. Therefore, the F major tonality should be prepared, from bars 73-74, with a growing, tremendous amount of excitement and should arrive with much relief. This F major section feels like if the music has finally reached its goal. It is thus a very interesting experience for the performer, when the music, bars 102-103, switches from F to G minor, Ab minor, A minor, Bb major, and finally back to F. In a few bars, Schubert plays with very different colours and gives the pianist the chance to experience something similar in various ways. The *prima volta* carries the performer once more into a section of Schubert's 'volcanic temper', bars 123a-124a, with the *ff*, the triplets, the *ffz*, and the trill. These last bars before the return of the exposition should be played like an outburst of rage, as if the trill of bar 124a, sounding as a dark omen, needs the serenity of the first melody to find back its first character.¹⁶³

¹⁶² Hugh MacDonald, 'Schubert's Volcanic Temper', *The Musical Times* 119 (1978), 950.

¹⁶³ The question of doing the repeat of the exposition or not, has challenged in Schubert's piano sonatas. In this work, the author believes that when the musical material at the end of the exposition, is different whether the pianist plays the *prima* or *seconda volta*, – as it is the case in the D. 959 and 960, first movements – it is then absolutely necessary to do the reprise of the exposition. The musical material of the *prima volta* cannot simply be ignored.

With the reminiscence of its first theme, but in a tonality near the F# minor of the exposition's second area, Schubert creates at the beginning of his development an atmosphere of tragic sadness, which has to be heard in the performer's interpretation, as if the peaceful serenity of the beginning has now succumbed to doubt. The sudden change of character at bar 131 makes room for the material of the F major section of the exposition. The left hand should come out here, at least in the first bar, because it is the motif that is used to reach the D minor section of the recapitulation, and it also becomes melody at bar 151. The disquieting and violent section from bars 167 to 173, with its dynamic, and the tension of the triplets against the quavers is necessary to reach the D minor and the astonishing section before the recapitulation, where the music oscillates between Bb major and D minor. From bars 193 to 197, the statement of the first theme in *ppp* could be played in a slightly slower tempo in order to help the pianist create a very particular sound, and otherworldly atmosphere. Bars 173 to 215 – beginning of the recapitulation – are not easy to perform: the whole section stays in dynamics such as *p*, *pp*, or *ppp*, the recapitulation is much anticipated, and the tension created by the expectation of its arrival has to be sustained all the way through. This last development section feels like something unreal, where the performer is transported in the realm of a dream, or in a dimension outside of the world. The chord of bar 203, which the pianist should emphasise, brings back to reality: it is now clear that the music heads on to the recapitulation, even though the *Gb* and the trill are still present.

To close his last first movement, Schubert reiterates his first theme, but this time impregnated through fatalism, it always returns to the tonic degree (bars 347 and

349). As explained in paragraph 3.3.3.6,¹⁶⁴ the trill, heard for the last time, is now answered by the dominant chord and the three tonic chords that follow. It is with great contemplation and recollection that the pianist should end this movement.

3.4 Conclusion

In the analysis seen previously, Beethoven's opp. 109, 110, and 111 all show the use of the reductive technique, and the use of a unifying element (rhythmical figures for opp. 109 and 111, and unifying interval for opp. 109 and 110). Furthermore, op. 109 impresses by its concision, op. 110, by its homogeneity and its economy of musical material, while the development of op. 109 and the first movement of op. 111 demonstrate a remarkable intensity. By contrast, the sub-process of the ABA' form appears in each of Schubert's first movements, and the process of variation also takes place in the first movements of D. 958 as well as in D. 959. A great utilisation of chromaticism happens in the developments of D. 958, and D. 959. The technique of expansion is only found in D. 960, first movement, but at three different places. The beginnings of Schubert's opening themes of D. 958, 959, and 960 are all unified by a pedal and the interval of the octave, and the whole D. 959, first movement is unified by rhythmical figures that are sometimes fused with one another. Furthermore, the first movements of D. 958 and 960 perform a modulation to the lower third of the tonic which has an impact on the rest of the movement. Both Beethoven and Schubert use the foreshadowing technique (in op. 111, and D. 960), and the technique of deferred realisation (op. 109, D. 959 and 960).

¹⁶⁴ See chapter three, pp. 128-129.

Chapter four scrutinises how these techniques produce elements of concision, coherence, or unity; examines the aspect of length in Schubert's movements; and offers a closer insight into the impact these techniques have on interpretation.

4. Beethoven, ‘the architect’; Schubert, ‘the colourist’

4.1 Beethoven, ‘the architect’: concision, coherence, unity

In its third chapter, this work has explained and shown techniques of composition characteristic of Beethoven’s style, and particularities appearing in the first movements of his last three sonatas. The following section demonstrates how Beethoven, by means of these techniques and particularities, reaches concision and achieves aspects of coherence and unity in his first movements.

4.1.1 Concision

Beethoven, in his late style, removes all superfluous elements from the musical discourse. As Rosen observes: ‘The urge to force the single note, the single harmony, the single rhythmic gesture to release its implicit meaning manifested itself early in Beethoven’s career, but it became more pressing in the final years’.¹ This work has used the word concision to describe such particularities.

A striking and obvious example of concision in Beethoven’s final three first movements is his use of the reductive technique. Totally stripped of all kind of artifices, its presence, through parallel and sometimes unfilled octaves, is conspicuous. Nonetheless, the pianist should be aware of why and where these reductive techniques happen in order to avoid hiding them, but much more to highlight them. They are tools that often help the music move forward, and are always placed at turning points in the movements: between expositions and developments, as in the case of the first movements opp. 110 and 111; between two

¹ Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 491.

tonalities, as in opp. 109 and 110, first movements. They happen abruptly and often unexpectedly but Beethoven helps by signalling them through unfilled octaves that makes the musical material look suddenly economical and primordial.

Concision also plays a major role throughout the entire first movement of op. 109. The first theme is stated within no more than eight bars, and the music goes directly to the second theme, but everything that is necessary is present. The development, very concise too, is remarkable with its line of growing tension that achieves an immense outline in such a short time. In the coda nothing is superfluous.

Nevertheless, within thirty-four bars, Beethoven manages to accomplish a complete summary of the whole movement, including all its main components and important characteristics.

The tension and intensity that prevail almost everywhere in the first movement of op. 111 are built by Beethoven in a very concise way: no energy is lost or loosened; almost every tool, technique, and material is used in order to sustain or increase the level of intensity.

4.1.2 Coherence and unity

A. B. Marx, quoted by Scott Burnham, describes a compelling aspect of Beethoven's music: 'each *Satz* leads to the next in such a way that the listener is prepared to 'take it up'.² Burnham explains this himself with the following words: 'a sustained line heard to be both weighty and inexorable, initiated with an exhortation, continued

² A. B. Marx, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Leben und Schaffen*, 3rd edn (Berlin, 1875), vol. 1, 253-254; quoted in Scott Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 10.

with wavelike momentum, and concluded with monumental asseveration.³ The inescapable drive that is idiosyncratic of Beethoven's middle period has not entirely left his last sonatas. In these last three first movements, this straightforward line is partly due to Beethoven's ability to achieve coherence in his movements.

Both the first movements of opp. 109 and 111 show unity through rhythmical motifs that are predominant: in the op. 109, it is the rhythmical motif which starts the movement, in the op. 111 it is the succession of semiquavers which is almost everywhere and when not, is replaced by rhythmical motifs originating from the first theme. Unity is also created, in opp. 109 and 110, first movements, through an interval. In the op. 109 it is the whole movement which is unified by the melodic interval of a third, G#-B, in the sense that it starts the movement, it connects the end of the first theme with the end of the second theme, it begins the last peak of intensity in the development, it links bars 77 to 85-86 in the coda, with the reminiscence of the second theme in between, and it ends the movement in both the right and left hands. As seen in chapter three, important sections of op. 110 first movement are unified by the harmonic interval of tenths: both the first and second parts of the first theme as well as the beginning of the second theme start with the tenth, most of the development, and the reductive technique in the recapitulation that reaches back *Ab* major are built with the interval of tenth.

The coherence in op. 109, first movement, is attained not only through the presence of the melodic interval G#-B but through its deferred realisation. As seen above, this interval creates unity in the movement, but it does not always appear as a whole.

Beethoven sometimes interrupts it and the missing note is reached later on. That is

³ Burnham, *Beethoven Hero*, 149.

the technique called here technique of deferred realisation, as found in the exposition, the recapitulation, and the coda. When this happens, the attainment of the previous missing note produces coherence as the interval is then fulfilled. The implication technique that is found in the exposition of op. 109, first movement, is also a parameter giving coherence to the section. Being aware, for example, that the difference in the dynamics between bars 9-11, and their variation, bars 12-14, is explained by the fact that the Fx passing note of bar 10 becomes part of a chord at bar 13, helps to support the logic of the musical discourse. The coda also gives coherence to the first movement of op. 109, as it summarises all its thematic elements: the unifying rhythm, the musical material of both themes, the G#-B interval, and the lowered sixth degree. In op. 110, first movement, the coherence is reached through the similarities between the first and second themes. As explained in chapter three, this first movement surprises by its homogeneity.⁴

⁴ See chapter three, paragraph 3.2.2.1.

4.2 Rethinking and challenging the aspect of the length in Schubert's first movements

In the introductory and second chapters, it has been seen that idiosyncrasies of Schubert's music that have been long criticised by the past, have been analysed in a new light in recent decades and reassessed as significant expressive features of his music. To this belongs its length. The following points explain the purposes of the length, which role does it have in the context of each movement. It will be demonstrated that the presence of length in a movement is justified by the impact it has on the interpretation.

4.2.1 The purposes of the length

4.2.1.1 Coherence and unity

Two techniques used by Schubert to produce length simultaneously provide coherence and/or unity to the work. Through the use of the variation process and the sub-process of the ABA' form, Schubert's music shows unity. Although these techniques generate a circularity instead of the awaited forward drive of the sonata form, their presence create homogeneity, and the rehearing of a melody – whether it is as a varied version or as the A' part of a ABA' sub-process – gives a feeling of coherence and logic to the section where they happen.

Both the first movements of the sonatas in C minor, D. 958, and in Bb major, D. 960, display a harmonic and thematic ABA' sub-process at the beginning of their expositions. The B part of both – the tonicisation in Ab major in the first movement of D. 958; the modulation to Gb major in the D. 960's first movement – produce a disequilibrium which is counterbalanced by the recurrence of the first theme in its

original tonality. Furthermore the *Ab* tonicisation as well as the modulation to *Gb* have further impacts on the movement: the melodic gesture at the beginning of the *Ab* tonicisation generates the beginning of the melody in the second theme, and the *Ab* tonality, or the presence of the *Ab*, also has important roles to play in other sections of the movement; the tonality of *Gb* is the major enharmonic equivalent of the tonality that Schubert uses for its second theme. Therefore, in the first movement of D. 958 as well as D. 960, both B parts provide unity and coherence to the rest of the movement.

The first movement of the D. 958 sonata also uses the technique of variation for the presentation of its second theme. It is introduced from bars 39 to 53, and varied twice. Its twofold recurrence adds to the length of the section but concurrently, produces unity.

In the exposition of the first movement of the sonata D. 959, a variation of the first theme is presented at bar 16. This creates unity because the theme, even though varied, is now fused with the character dominating the second group starting at bar 7, and because the new rhythmical motif that appears at bar 16 is a combination of the motifs found at bar 1 and bar 8.⁵ Furthermore, the presence of this variation gives coherence to the first part of the exposition. The ABA' sub-process, found as second theme-group in the same movement, provides unity to the section through the rehearing of bars 51 to 58 at bars 113 to 120. Moreover, the fact that this whole sub-process is unified by rhythmical motifs that appear elsewhere in the movement, creates also an incredible coherence in all this section. Firstly, motif no. 5, which emerges at the beginning of the A part, in bar 57, is a variant of motif no. 4, itself a

⁵ For further explanations, see chapter three, paragraph 3.3.2.3, p. 96.

fusion of motifs no. 1 and 3. Secondly, most of the B part is unified through motif no. 6, which is fusing motif no. 5 (found in the A part) and motif no. 2. Thirdly, motif no. 5 of the A part, is transformed as motif no. 7 in the A' part of the sub-process and becomes the motivic rhythmical figure that links two thirds of the development. Moreover, the A' part shows also the use of motifs no. 5 and 6.

4.2.1.2 Lyricism and parataxis⁶

Schubert, through his immense experience and achievements as lied composer, produced instrumental music impregnated by lyricism. 'Schubert's lyricism permeates all the genres in which he composed; the infusion of his Lieder into a wide range of instrumental works testifies to a sovereign lyric sensibility.'⁷ This lyricism has been repeatedly criticised and given as one of the reasons for the length and lack of inner organisation in his instrumental music, especially in his sonata-form movements: 'Schubert's sonata form movements are weak because they indulge in a succession of lyrical structures unchecked by improvisation, and are both excessive in length and lacking in organic unity.'⁸

The cultural expectations of classical music of the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries have taken Beethoven's music and its inexorable forward drive⁹ as paradigms: 'Beethoven is treated as the embodiment of music, the indispensable

⁶ '[Parataxis] connotes a kind of taxis, a schema for concatenating formal units ... It is generated by the assemblage of independent metric patterns ... provided that the units permit horizontal continuities or modular interrelations.' Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, *Classical Architecture; The Poetics of Order* (Cambridge (Mass.), London: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 4th edn, 1990), 243; quoted in Xavier Hascher, *Schubert, la forme sonate et son évolution* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1996), 51.

⁷ Christopher H. Gibbs, 'Introduction: the elusive Schubert', in Christopher H. Gibbs (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 4.

⁸ Felix Salzer, "Die Sonatenform bei Schubert," trans. Su Yin Mak, *Studien zur Musikwissenschaft* 15 (1928): 90; quoted in Su Yin, Mak, 'Schubert's Sonata Form and the Poetics of the Lyric', *The Journal of Musicology*, 23 (2006), 267.

⁹ 'The entire musical texture assumes the forward flow of a melodic line.' Burnham, *Beethoven Hero*, 32.

authority on the question of how music ought to go.¹⁰ Therefore, the hypotactic discourse of the sonata form, as it is known with Beethoven's sonatas, became the norm. But lyricism acts against forward moving: 'Lyrical sections linger on particular moments, thereby arresting "sonata time" and impeding the rhetorical progress of the discourse.'¹¹ Lyricism needs time and has something static which automatically goes against the principle of sonata form. John Gingerich writes:

Stasis has pejorative connotations, at least in the West: lack of motion, lack of drama, death. But stasis has another side: it allows the present moment to expand in time, and in importance. Schubert's penchant for the subdominant, and his so-called three-key sonata-form expositions (with a flat-side key interpolated between tonic and dominant) are examples of procedures that reduce forward drive and thereby create a low-pressure space in which the present can expand and 'lyricism' can flourish.¹²

Similarly, Su Yin Mak explains that Schubert's lyrical musical discourse is related to the paratactic style - as opposed to hypotaxis – therefore resembling 'the discursive techniques of lyric poetry'.¹³ The following paragraphs explain the lyrical aspects of Schubert's first movements as purposes for the length.

Sonata no. 19 in C minor, D. 958, first movement

One of the reasons for the repetition of the first theme at bar 21 is to add to it a lyrical touch, as it has substituted its tragic rhythmical character of the beginning for a more expressive melodic line, despite the breathless accompaniment of the left hand and the return of the disquieting C minor tonality. Moreover, this urgent but singing melody leads to a breathtaking instant of glowing lyricism, at bar 27, where the tonality of *Eb* enters.

¹⁰ Ibid., xvi.

¹¹ Mak, 'Schubert's Sonata Form and the Poetics of the Lyric', 267.

¹² John Gingerich, *Schubert's Beethoven Project* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 318.

¹³ Mak, 'Schubert's Sonata Form and the Poetics of the Lyric', 286.

The chromatic motif of the development of D. 958 first movement has, on its first appearance, not much lyricism to offer. But it is repeated so much, almost incessantly, that it changes role from motif to melody. When, at bar 134, the right hand, in parallel octaves starts the motif in *Ab* – which tonality, as was seen, is important for the construction of the movement – it has definitively become a lyrical motif.

Sonata no. 20 in A major, D. 959, first movement

In the first movement of sonata D. 959, the variation of the first theme that appears at bar 16 has a similar effect as does the variation at bar 21 of the D. 958 first movement: it proposes another version of the first bars; this time with a carefree and lyrical charm.

Chapter three has shown that this whole movement is unified by specific rhythmical motifs that are fused or transformed. Motif no. 5, appearing at bars 57 and 58, is the first of these that has a lyrical character. It is interesting that in order to reach this lyrical melodic aspect of the motif, Schubert needs time, and thus firstly combines motifs no. 1 and 3 into 4, and varies motif no. 4 into motif no. 5. Charles Fisk explains: ‘The new theme begins to sing: it rises to a new motive, 5-3-6-5-3-2 (... a twofold lyrical articulation of motive *z*)’.¹⁴

At the end of the exposition, Schubert transforms the already lyrical version of no. 5 into motif no. 7, which, using the first semiquavers of the piece, adds to the expressiveness of the motif an aspect of freshness. Paragraph 3.3.2.5 of chapter

¹⁴ Charles Fisk, *Returning Cycles: Contexts for the Interpretation of Schubert's Impromptus and Last Sonatas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 210. What Fisk calls motive *z* is in this work motif no. 4. See chapter three, paragraph 3.3.2.3, p. 96, footnote no. 112.

three¹⁵ explains that in the draft of the first movement, the bars 121-122 that contain the appearance of motif no. 7, are absent. This is a great example of length, even though it concerns not more than two bars: by extending his section with this new motif, Schubert adds to the end of the exposition a supplementary character of lyricism, and creates a motivic rhythmical element that will be used in the first two thirds of the development.

At the beginning of the development, described by Robert S. Hatten as ‘capturing the character of Romantic reflection’,¹⁶ Schubert, through chromaticism, oscillates between the presentation of motif no. 7, in C, and in B major. It is an impressive moment of immobility, where the momentum of the music is stopped, thus enabling the lyricism to blossom. An additional level of lyricism is attained when, developing the motif, Schubert reaches the tonality of C minor and A minor.¹⁷

The coda of this movement is also an example of Schubert lengthening the music through lyricism: the first theme is restated, not in its starting character, but in a farewell version, and is extended through a short tonicisation in its lowered sixth degree, F major, therefore adding to this section, from bars 340 to 349, a celestial and delicate lyricism.

Sonata no. 21 in B \flat major, D. 960, first movement

The theme which starts this movement has a great and serene beauty. But when it is reiterated in the new tonality of G \flat , at bar 19, the expressiveness found at the beginning of the movement is transcended by the lyricism attained there. This G \flat

¹⁵ See chapter three, pp. 99-100.

¹⁶ See chapter three, p. 108, footnote no. 125.

¹⁷ See chapter three, p. 106.

major tonality, part of the ABA' sub-process that extends the exposition, permits an attainment of lyricism beyond that of the opening theme.

At the end of the development, the technique of expansion, which was explained in chapter three,¹⁸ allows Schubert to reach an unexpected level of lyricism: the first theme is restated alternating between D minor and Bb major. As Xavier Hascher concedes, Schubert could have started the recapitulation earlier, but thematically, he was not ready for it.¹⁹ This section is a beautiful example of length and of the possibilities for Schubert's lyricism to bloom: it has the nostalgic colour of reminiscence, but at the same time, there is an expectation felt because of the evidence that the recapitulation is approaching. Anne M. Hyland observes that these statements of the beginning of the first theme, which she calls 'figure b', 'generate a distinct sense of anticipation'.²⁰ She later adds that 'a paratactic dynamic' is 'fuelling this retransition' which, 'through successive repetitions, creates a feeling of mounting tension.'²¹ Hyland also remarks that in the sketch of the original, some bars missing (206-209), were added later on.²² It shows that Schubert had no fear to lengthen a section if it was for the purpose of lyricism. Hyland explains: 'The simplicity of invention inherent in the repetitions of D. 960 speaks not of a composer for whom the spark of invention is all but extinguished, but rather of a late style

¹⁸ See chapter three, paragraph 3.3.3.5, pp. 125-127.

¹⁹ 'Schubert could have immediately realized the transformation of the third degree [F, third degree of D minor] into the fifth [F, fifth degree of Bb major] ... in order to start his recapitulation. But from a thematic perspective, this return would have been too sudden.' 'Il suffisait à Schubert de réaliser d'emblée la transformation du troisième degré en cinquième ... pour être à même de faire partir sa réexposition. Mais ce retour eût été trop soudain du point de vue thématique.' Xavier Hascher, 'Sur les pas du « Wanderer »', in Xavier Hascher (ed.), *Le Style Instrumental de Schubert: Sources, analyse, évolution* (Paris: Publication de la Sorbonne, 2007), 189-190.

²⁰ Anne M. Hyland, '[Un]Himmlische Länge: editorial intervention as reception history', in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert's Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 65.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 68.

²² *Ibid.*, 75.

indebted to the syntax of parataxis, wherein space (or duration) is called for by the ‘spinning out’ of the musical ideas.’²³

Lyricalism is one of the greatest hallmarks of Schubert’s music and as Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen cleverly summarises: Schubert, in his concept of sonata-form, was fully able to accomplish ‘the self-assertion of a lyrical singer’.²⁴

4.2.1.3 Schubert, ‘the colourist’

He [Schubert] knows how to paint in sound.²⁵

In *Schubert’s Late Music*, Anne M. Hyland explains that when Schubert’s pieces were first heard ‘it was not the actual time spent listening to a Schubertian work which was deemed excessive’, but rather, inter alia, ‘the shocking, underprepared modulations’ of the music.²⁶ Leon Botstein notes that: ‘Schubert was understood as having a penchant for extreme harmonic contrast’.²⁷ Schubert’s experiments with various tonal colours lengthen a section but increase the quality of the music and help sustain the interest carried in a passage. Praised by Dieter Schnebel as an ‘epiphany of new spheres of sound’,²⁸ and by James M. Baker as ‘myriad harmonic nuances’,²⁹ this characteristic of Schubert’s style is pointed out here, by going

²³ Ibid., 75.

²⁴ ‘die Selbstbehauptung des lyrischen Sängers’, Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, ‘Die Sonatenform im Spätwerk Franz Schuberts’, *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 45(1988), 49.

²⁵ Otto Erich Deutsch, *Schubert: A Documentary Biography*, trans. Eric Blom. (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1946), 155; quoted in Christopher H. Gibbs, *The Life of Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 79.

²⁶ Hyland, ‘[Un]Himmlische Länge: editorial interventions as reception history’, 54.

²⁷ Leon Botstein, ‘Realism transformed: Franz Schubert and Vienna’, in Christopher H. Gibbs (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 33.

²⁸ ‘Epiphanie neuer Klangräume’, Dieter Schnebel, ‘Klangräume – Zeitklänge. Zweiter Versuch über Schubert’, in *Musik-Konzepte Sonderband Franz Schubert* (Munich: Heinz – K. Metzger und Rainer Riehn, 1979), 95; quoted in Hinrichsen, ‘Die Sonatenform im Spätwerk Franz Schuberts’, 19.

²⁹ See chapter two, p. 25, footnote no. 45.

through some sections in the movements, which might affect the length, but are especially ‘colourful’.

An example of such a passage is found in the first movement of the sonata in C minor, D. 958. In the second theme and its first variation, a sudden and surprising change of colour awakens the interest: the music suddenly leaves *Eb* major and presents a two bars tonicisation, underlined by a *cresc.*, on the Vth degree of *Ab* major (bars 46-47). It is followed by the next tonicisation on the Vth degree of *Gb*, reached through a lower whole tone modulation: ‘the *Db* dominant seventh chord that succeeds the *Eb* one makes the *Ab* distant, as if in a receding image of a faraway place.’³⁰ These two bars (48-49) suddenly create an unexpected warm and delicate colour in a *pp* dynamic.

Describing Schubert as an alchemist, Robert S. Hatten explains.

Alchemists were concerned with more than a material quest for gold; their quarry was a deeper spiritual understanding of the mysteries of the universe. Schubert, through his transmutations of sound and structure, sought a similar depth in the realm of spiritually expressive meaning.³¹

For Hatten, the first theme of the sonata D. 959 and its reappearance at the end of the movement in the coda are examples of Schubert’s quest for tonal special effects.³²

Certainly, by presenting his first theme in an aerial character like he does in the coda, Schubert creates a new colour, giving this theme a different tonal facet.

³⁰ Fisk, *Returning Cycles*, 185.

³¹ Robert S. Hatten, ‘Schubert’s alchemy: transformative surfaces, transfiguring depths’, in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert’s Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 91.

³² *Ibid.*, 92.

Later on, Hatten adds that the motif no. 3, what he calls a musical gesture, is a further ‘alchemical experimentation’ of Schubert.³³ When comparing the motif no. 3 with all other motifs that are generated from it (motifs no. 4, 5, 7, 8, and 9) it is as if Schubert, for each of them, chose a new hue from his abundant palette of tonal colours.

The beginning section of the development, in the first movement of the sonata D. 959, shows Schubert’s great mastery in presenting a statement verbatim to the previous one but in a completely different colour, due to the alternation between C and B major. Charles Rosen sees this as one of Schubert’s innovation, ‘perhaps the greatest of all: the oscillation between two tonal levels to achieve a kind of stasis.’³⁴ He also explains: ‘The absence of real harmonic movement creates a remarkable tension’.³⁵ By alternating between two tonalities, but with the same musical material, Schubert’s music attains an immobility that simultaneously keeps performers and listeners captivated.

Another fascinating example is found at the end of the exposition and recapitulation of the D. 960, first movement.³⁶ After finally having confirmed the F major and offering a closing theme in this tonality, Schubert proposes a very colourful section before the start of the development. The bars 102 and beginning of 103 are a reiteration of bars 99-100 and the expectation is to rehear bar 101 in bar 104 (Example 3.42 in chapter three). Schubert deviates from this expectation by inserting cadential groups, not in F major, but through a harmonic chromatic process, in G minor, *Ab* minor, A minor, and *Bb* major. ‘A closing theme is also presented in F

³³ *Ibid.*, 95.

³⁴ Charles Rosen, *Sonata Forms* (New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1980), 287.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 289.

³⁶ It is the section in the exposition which is taken here as example.

major, but Schubert goes to great length to undermine the strength of the dominant at this point, interjecting brusque cadences to minor chords on G, Ab, and A (103-5).³⁷

Hugh Macdonald describes this passage as following: ‘there is a violent outburst when the dominant tonality, F major, has been reached and some subterranean force erupts and tries frenetically but unsuccessfully to turn that settled tonality away.’³⁸

The palette of colours and expressiveness that is proposed between the F chords of bars 101 and 110 is captivating.

In his creative quest for new colours, Schubert achieves in his first movements a blend of harmonic and tonal colours that is sometimes unexpected and of breathtaking beauty. But to do so, he needs time.

4.2.2 Positives impacts of the length on the interpretation

4.2.2.1 References

The first impact length has on the interpretation is that it creates benchmarks, or points of reference for the pianist. By repeating an idea, a section, a melody, or a rhythmical motif, Schubert generates an impression of déjà-vu, thereby building a comforting feeling of familiarity. When arriving at the A´ part of the ABA´ sub-process, at the beginning of the D. 960, first movement, for example, the pianist knows that he/she has heard this melody before. It now sounds familiar to him/her, and the re-entrance of the Bb tonality makes him/her feel ‘home’. The excitement in playing these bars is therefore enormous: it is the excitement of finding itself in an already well-known territory. In the D. 959, first movement, the rhythmical motifs, through all the fusions and repetitions they undertake, finally become a kind of idée

³⁷ James M. Baker, ‘Skirting the Structural Tonic’, in Xavier Hascher (ed.), *Le Style Instrumental de Schubert: Sources, analyse, évolution* (Paris: Publication de la Sorbonne, 2007), 231-232.

³⁸ Hugh Macdonald, ‘Schubert’s Volcanic Temper’, *The Musical Times* 119 (1978), 950.

fixe that accompanies the pianist throughout the piece, stimulating the impression that it belongs to oneself, that it is now something personal. Something similar happens in the development of the D. 958, first movement. The chromatic motif that is incessantly repeated in different tonalities, from bars 119 to 151, and which finally becomes the conductive motif of the development, is the one element that retains the pianist's attention.

4.2.2.2 Memory; other landscapes or musical environments

Benedict Taylor has written on Schubert: 'Qualities of memory, reminiscence, fatalism, wandering, circularity or non-teleological lyricism, dwelling on the sensuous present, seem to constitute some of the most characteristic and endearing attributes that make Schubert sound like Schubert.'³⁹ His article 'Schubert and the Construction of Memory', explains the various state of memory found in Schubert's music, such as 'the modified repetition of ideas in which the backdrop or emotive connotation is changed, which might suggest the subjective, mutable quality of memory. The object stays the same, but our perspective, our interpretation of it, changes.'⁴⁰ Similarly, Scott Burnham, referring to Adorno's essay⁴¹ in his article 'Landscape as Music, landscape as Truth: Schubert and the Burden of Repetition',⁴² demonstrates that Schubert's repetitions are like 'experiencing the same landscape at different times of day'.⁴³

³⁹ Benedict Taylor, 'Schubert and the Construction of Memory: The String Quartet in A minor, D. 804 ('Rosamunde')', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 139 (2014), 42.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁴¹ Theodor W. Adorno, 'Schubert', *Moments musicaux* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1964), 18-36.

⁴² Scott Burnham, 'Landscape as Music, Landscape as Truth: Schubert and the Burden of Repetition', *19th-Century Music* 36 (2005), 31-41.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 33.

Schubert's capacity for using the same material but in different perspectives is the next impact of length on the interpretation. Through changes in the tonalities, or small modifications in musical ideas, sections, rhythmical motifs, that are repeated, Schubert changes their landscape, their musical environment, character, or colour. By doing so, Schubert firstly, allows the pianist to experience a memory, namely, to remember something that he/she already knows, even though it is in a different context. Secondly, as Burnham writes, Schubert gives the pianist the opportunity to enjoy the same landscape in different daylights. At the beginning of the first movement of the D. 958 sonata, the character of the melody that appears at bar 21 has very little in common with the character of the theme starting the piece. More urgent, more lyrical, its landscape has now completely changed. In the development of the first movement of the D. 959 sonata, the simple oscillation between two tonalities creates an absolutely different environment depending if it is in C major or in B major. In a short time, Schubert propels the pianist in a completely disparate world, by simply changing the colour of the tonality. When, in the first movement of D. 960, the pianist arrives at the modulation in *Gb* major of the exposition, it is a memory of a melody already known, but now presented in a different tonality, therefore, creating a new atmosphere. As Taylor, quoting Burnham, explains: 'Schubert's "often sudden changes of key give us the sense of being instantly transported to another realm."'»⁴⁴

4.2.2.3 The diversity of experiences

The following impact of length on the interpretation is tightly linked with the last one. Through these various landscapes or experiences of memory, Schubert shows

⁴⁴ Scott Burnham, 'The 'Heavenly Length' of Schubert's Music', *Ideas* 6 (1999), <<http://archive-org.com/page/2100751/2013-05-18/http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/ideasv61/burnham.htm>>; quoted in Taylor, 'Schubert and the Construction of Memory', 77.

pianists the multifariousness of a theme, of an idea, and therefore, gives performers plenty of possibilities for how to enjoy it. For example, the second theme of the D. 958, first movement is experienced three times differently: its statement, from bars 39 to 53, is in a peaceful and warm colour, its first variation, from bars 53 to 67, in a cheerful version with the hopping accompaniment of the left hand, and its second variation, starting at bar 67, in a character of seriousness. In a short time, three different facets of the same idea are proposed to the pianist. The variation of the first theme in the first movement of the D. 959 sonata that happens at bar 16, or the statement of the first theme in the coda, are supplementary chances to appreciate, in completely different atmospheres, the musical idea starting this sonata. Similarly, at the end of the development of the D. 960, first movement, what special feeling to play the first theme that reappears as reminiscence, alternating between D minor and *Bb* major.

4.2.3 Difficulties

Schubert's movements necessitate from the performers an incredible aptitude for originality. The variety he shows in presenting one idea under different aspects requires an exceptional aptitude to come up, in a very short time, with something new, something fresh. Schubert challenges pianists and asks them to show their capacities to create a sudden different sound, to sing with melodies as if they were just new, to repeat an already well-known passage and simultaneously underline what is different, or emphasise what changed, to breathe new life into a repeated section, to show the listener the excitement felt by discovering these similar ideas in a completely different character or colour. This is probably the biggest challenge in interpreting Schubert's movements, but at the same time, it is Schubert's greatest genius. And it is only feasible if the pianist is exactly aware of the reasons and

purposes that lie behind these lengths, behind these repetitions. It is thus possible to underline these purposes for the listener, and to rescue Schubert's movements from a naïve critique of long-windedness.

4.3 Performing the six first movements: a comparison of the interpretation between Schubert's and Beethoven's movements

4.3.1 Principal characteristics

Beethoven's movements demand a sharp and high sense of presence on the part of the performer. The pianist has to be alert, watchful, and vigilant, as Beethoven's music requires that he/she stays in the moment, in the immediacy. Scott Burnham explains: 'The presence in Beethoven's music is simultaneously the uncanny effect of an actual presence and the engaging effect of being acutely alive to the present moment.'¹ There is a constant synergy between the music and the performer: 'There is a visceral element immediately perceptible in this music, a disturbing, invasive, and ultimately compelling interaction with the listener.'²

In the third chapter, the techniques and particularities that have been scrutinised all work together to obtain this state of immediacy: the reductive technique is immediate and sudden, it happens so fast – as for example in the recapitulation of op. 110, first movement –, that if the performer is not aware of it, the chances are that he/she will miss it. The trajectory of intensity, because it rarely loosens (for example in the development of op. 109, or in most of op. 111), requires that the pianist be constantly aware of what is happening next. Immediacy is also the reason why Beethoven, when he uses variation process or chromaticism, always uses their structural version as they are then tightly connected with forward motion and processuality.

Schubert propels the performer in the realm of the dream, in the world of memories, or in the dimension of lyricism. Benedict Taylor explains:

¹ Scott Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 165.

² *Ibid.*, 32.

Schubert's music may readily be heard as a projection of consciousness and subjectivity ... Consciousness or subjectivity seems in many ways a good cover-all term for Schubertian analogical language. It may incorporate memory, the interaction of temporal levels in which memory operates, the projection of dreams, subconscious drives and psychopathology, and even landscape.³

Through chromaticism, Schubert achieves a delicious stasis, a state of timelessness that allows the performer to rest for a moment and simply enjoy, as for example the beginning of the development in the D. 959, first movement. Charles Fisk describes: 'Like a dream, the music of this development ... takes on its own life, losing any sense of tonal destination. Through its exotic, even hypnotic alternation with B major, C major gains an illusory stability'.⁴ With his technique of expansion, it is as if the performer suddenly finds itself in another dimension:

Schubert's music could be abstractly summarized as follows: a series of clearly demarcated musical section or tableaux, whose relationship to each other is clarified only gradually, perhaps never entirely. Each section, each tableau can have different temporal properties – forward-striving sections are commonly alternated with static ones.⁵

The sub-process of the ABA' form and the process of variation, give the performer the precious possibility of reliving an incredible experience. James William Sobaskie explains that 'retrospective episodes' in Schubert's music are 'passages in which familiar and distinctive thematic material briefly returns to create the effect of *réminiscence*.' He acknowledges: 'Within such episodes, attention is drawn away

³ Benedict Taylor, 'Schubert and the Construction of Memory: The String Quartet in A minor, D. 804 ('Rosamunde')', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 139 (2014), 86.

⁴ Charles Fisk, *Returning Cycles: Contexts for the Interpretation of Schubert's Impromptus and Last Sonatas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 217.

⁵ John Gingerich, 'Schubert's Beethoven Project: The Chamber Music, 1824-1828' (PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1996), 103-104.

from the unfolding dramatic narrative, time seems momentarily suspended, and reflection on past experience seems to occur.⁶

4.3.2 Reaching the same technique by different means

Chapter three has shown that Beethoven and Schubert share some compositional techniques, as the unifying element, the technique of deferred realisation and the foreshadowing technique. But how these techniques are used or achieved is very different depending on whether it is a movement of Beethoven or of Schubert.

In Beethoven's movements, unifying elements are mostly clearly visible, as for example the starting rhythm that unifies most of the op. 109, first movement, the harmonic interval of tenth that binds the op. 110, or the rhythmical figures in the first movement of op. 111. With Schubert the unifying elements might not always be discovered at first sight: the first themes of D. 958, 959, and 960, for example, are all unified by a pedal and the interval of the octave. Beethoven's unifying elements are mostly processual, while with Schubert, his unifying elements, as for example, the pedal binding a theme, could create a state of stasis. Nevertheless, the motivic rhythmical figures found in the D. 959, first movement, do help to build a forward motion in the music, but not necessarily in each section where the motif is appearing (for example, not at the beginning of the development, but certainly in the B part of the second theme). For both composers, the reason for the technique of deferred realisation is a fracture produced by the non-resolution of a component that has therefore to be resolved later. As with the unifying element, this fracture is clearly visible in Beethoven's op. 109, while in Schubert's D. 959 the fracture is created

⁶ James William Sobaskie, 'A Balance Struck: Gesture, Form, and Drama in Schubert's E-flat-Major Piano Trio', in Xavier Hascher (ed.), *Le Style Instrumental de Schubert: Sources, analyse, évolution* (Paris: Publication de la Sorbonne, 2007), 131.

with such subtlety that it is almost hard to be aware of it.⁷ The outline of intensity is with Beethoven greatly sustained and often increased. Schubert's use of whole bars of break is frequent and he plays with a constant change between building and loosening the tension. His music takes the liberty of suddenly stopping a forward motion – as for example at bars 37-38 of the first movement, D. 958, or at bar 112 of the first movement D. 959 – or of abruptly removing all the previous elements that were building the intensity so that the tension suddenly disappears – as at the beginning of D. 958, bars 12-13. Another technique that is used by both composers but realised very differently is the foreshadowing technique. In the first movement of op. 111, the passage from the *Bb* to the *B \natural* , announcing the upcoming C major tonality, is barely taken into account, because it happens so fast. In the first movement of D. 960, when Schubert anticipates the second key area in *Gb* with the trill, the pianist has plenty of time to prepare for the key's arrival.⁸

4.4 Conclusion

For the musician, Beethoven's last three final movements have precise architectures. The performer has to be vigilant in order to emphasise these architectures, in order to accentuate and highlight the abrupt ruptures, the sudden transitions, and the intricate construction of tension. The motion of the music carries the pianist forward, even in the first movement op. 110 although it might appear less than in the first movements of opp. 109, and 111. Because of his immediacy, Beethoven demands quick reflexes from pianists, and requires them to have an interpretation that is sometimes impetuous, in order to constantly show what is happening. Beethoven's music asks

⁷ See chapter three, pp. 40-41, and pp. 96-97.

⁸ See chapter three, p. 73, and pp. 116-117.

pianists to stay in the instant. At the same time, through the economy of material, a sense of introspection is present that has also to be revealed.

With Schubert, pianists find themselves sometimes in a state of latency, in an oneiric realm. Schubert gives pianists time to enjoy, or time to prepare for something that is coming in the musical discourse. He also gives pianists the time to dream, because dreaming necessitates time. Therefore, pacing the tempo is a crucial aspect of Schubert's music as the pianist should have the sense to know when to slow down the tempo a little – as at the beginning of the development of D. 959's first movement⁹ – or to know when to keep the tempo moving forward – as for example the first movement of D. 960 in general.¹⁰ Schubert often avoids being too sudden, hasty, or direct, instead playing rather with colours, landscapes, or memories. Therefore pianists need an immense palette of colours, a predisposition to originality, and an enormous capacity to sing and let the music sing. Lyrical sections in Schubert's movements flourish sometimes so strongly that the pianist may want to luxuriate in the moment. His abundant imagination, when it comes to sudden unexpected tonalities, sends the pianist sometimes in a totally different dimension. Robert S. Hatten explains that with Schubert's 'harmonic and tonal miracles, we are suddenly transported from the prevailing discourse as if to another realm, often either darkly tragic or glowingly transcendent.'¹¹ Furthermore, Schubert playing with time, by expanding some sections, could appear for the performer (especially in the first movement of his last sonata) as if he wants to delay the conclusion (of a section, of the whole movement). Perhaps because at this point of his life, he not only knows

⁹ See chapter three, p. 114.

¹⁰ See chapter three, p. 130.

¹¹ Robert S. Hatten, 'Schubert's alchemy: transformative surfaces, transfiguring depths', in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert's Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 99.

that he is ill but foremost that he will never recover.¹² And as long as he composes,
he is alive.

¹² 'When Franz Schubert contracted syphilis in 1822, it was for all practical purposes a death sentence, and he would have expected to live between three and ten years.' Lorraine Byrne Bodley, 'A place at the edge: reflections on Schubert's late style', *Oxford German Studies* 44 (2015), 18.

5. Conclusion

Beethoven's and Schubert's final three sonatas exert an extraordinary fascination on the classical musical world. Beethoven's compositions as well as his image were, and are still taken as exemplars by performers and scholars, and are highly cherished by the public. Schubert's reception has fortunately started to change, and recent researches have put into a positive light those idiosyncrasies of his music, providing a more accurate image of the man and his work.

The final thoughts – as the title of this work mentions – that were aroused throughout this research propose a deeper and better understanding on the interpretation of these first movements, by demonstrating a range of techniques that are relevant for Beethoven's and Schubert's compositional processes, and explaining their impact on the interpretation.

It appears that Beethoven tends towards an economy of musical material. The first movement of the op. 109, for example, is written in a great desire of conciseness. Similarly, the concise outline of intensity achieved in the first movement of op. 111, is so perfectly built, that none of his section – apart from the beginning of the second theme – does not actively participate to sustain, and increase this intensity. The first movement of op. 110 shows a great economy of musical material through its homogeneity. In parallel, the study showed that the purpose of most of Beethoven's techniques was a processual one: the reductive technique, the outline of intensity, the process of variation, and unifying elements, such as the G#-B melodic interval in op. 109's first movement and the motion of semiquavers in op. 111's first movement,

participate to sustain the processuality of the music. These concepts of concision, of economy, and processuality occur in the immediate, requiring an exceptional vigilance from the performer and asking him/her to continuously be ready for what is coming next.

Idiosyncratic techniques in Schubert's first movements unveil Schubert's tendency to build sections of great lyricism with the help, for example, of the sub-process of the ABA' form; to surprise with unexpected harmonic colour; to play with time and temporal dimensions through, *inter alia*, the technique of expansion; to constantly oscillate between the building or loosening of the intensity, and at the same time between the forward motion and the timeless motion through chromaticism, for example. These techniques necessitate from the performer a great originality, the ability to come up rapidly with a new colour of sound, the wish to enjoy and have time, or the wish to experience oneiric moments, the desire to re-live an experience but in another environment, and the capacity to lose temporal boundaries.

The thesis was also able to identify that these six first movements show elements of coherence and unity through unifying elements or unifying intervals, through the technique of deferred realisation, the implication technique, and through the foreshadowing technique. Beethoven also achieves unity and coherence with his outline of intensity in opp. 109 and 111 first movements, and with the homogeneity found in the first movement of op. 110. Schubert's use of the ABA' sub-process and of the process of variation generates coherence and unity where these techniques appear. It was also shown that both composers reach these elements of unity and coherence very differently: Beethoven through directness, Schubert through finesse, subtleness, but also through the length found in his movements. In the fourth chapter,

the dissertation also pointed out that length in Schubert's last three first movements allows the music great lyricism and gives Schubert the opportunity to show a great palette of colours and expressiveness, produced by different harmonic contexts. The positive impact that length has on the interpretation are several: it creates point of references, it gives the performer the chance to play an already known passage but in new surroundings, it allows the performer to recall past events, and it gives a great diversity of experience for the pianist to recreate. The length is certainly serving the music, because without it, most of Schubert's qualities of composition, would be absent from these movements.

The research presented in this dissertation enables a pianist to have greater awareness of what is happening and why it is happening. It increases the understanding of the musical material and the meaning and signification of the movement, of a section, of a note, therefore giving a supplementary consciousness and helping the performer to play with great conviction. It might also change the conception of a passage, and help find the proper character for a section. It could help in the process of memorising a movement, and also help with technical passage as the pianist might concentrate more on its meaning and signification, than on its technical difficulties. Finally, it might increase the pleasure while playing and the appreciation of each musical moment.

The characteristics of interpretation that are described in this chapter are not only particular to these movements. Certainly, they appear in general in Beethoven's and Schubert's late style. Nonetheless, it is interesting to see how they are created, and what their purposes are. That Beethoven's pieces are concise, that an economy of musical material is observed, and that the music is often driven by a forward motion

(even though idiosyncratic of his heroic period, it is also found in these movements), are not new. It is also no discovery that Schubert's movements are driven by length and by the interpretative impacts that arise from it. But again, it is interesting to understand how and why. What performers feel while playing these movements is very personal and might be different from the descriptions above. But when performers sense the urge of immediacy, sometimes combined with a state of introspection in Beethoven's three first final movements, or when they experience lyric retrospection while playing Schubert's movements, then these interpretative characteristics might be part of the reason.

This work concentrated only on the first movement of each sonata, but it would be certainly interesting to see which composers' particularities of composition are prevailing in the other movements, how various or similar they are with the one found in these movements, and what impact do they have on the interpretation of the following movements, or if some impacts are observed across the whole sonata. However, no matter what kind of future research could be achieved with these six movements, it is clear that both composers provided thereby an immense contribution to the music world. And as Anne M. Hyland remarks, the classical musical world should stop comparing Schubert with Beethoven's idioms by trying to make 'Schubert more teleological' or by trying 'to explain that although there may be an abundance of repetition on the musical surface, hypotactic logic exists beneath.'¹ Because as she explains:

In so doing, we render Schubert's idiom more Beethovenian, and confront the composer's negative comparison with his great contemporary, but we also sidestep the myriad

¹ Anne M. Hyland, "[Un]Himmlische Länge: editorial intervention as reception history", in Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Julian Horton (eds), *Schubert's Late Music: History, Theory, Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 75.

opportunities for understanding Schubert's idiom on its own terms, and in more meaningful ways than affording it Beethovenian plaudit.²

Or, as Hermann Keller, quoting a statement Armin Knab already made in 1920, writes: 'One should at last finally stop viewing Schubert's sonatas simply as failed Beethoven's sonatas.'³ As this thesis demonstrates, Schubert's qualities of composition are totally different than Beethoven's but not at all less precious. Taking this in consideration allows performers, listeners, scholars – in short, the musical world – to appreciate and recognise the true value of Schubert's music.

² Ibid., 75.

³ 'Man möge doch endlich aufhören, in Schuberts Sonaten nur verhinderte Beethoven-Sonaten zu sehen.' Armin Knab, *Denken und Tun. Gesammelte Aufsätze über Musik* (Berlin: Merseburger, 1959), 151; quoted in Herman Keller, 'Schuberts Verhältnis zur Sonatenform', in Ernst H. Meyer (ed.), *Musa – Mens – Musici: Im Gedenken an Walther Vetter* (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1969), 293.

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