



FORM AND CONTENT

An Analysis of Beethoven's 5 last Piano Sonatas
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INTRODUCTION AND PREMISES

These texts are largely inspired by the time I spent with my professor of form analysis, Erwin Ratz, whose teaching I had the pleasure of following during my studies in Vienna in the late 1960's. His analytical approach stems from his own period of study in the circle around Arnold Schönberg, which in turn has been crucial to my own approach to musical interpretation. Much has been written about Beethoven's later works, and personally I have benefitted in particular from studying Charles Rosen's and Carl Dahlhaus's contributions, but the synthesis of musical insight and enthusiastic devotion that I experienced in listening to Prof. Ratz I rarely have come across through other sources. Therefore this is something I have long wanted to let others take part in.

That being said, it would be of little value to solely copy one's sources of inspiration and besides, during my work with this music, I have of course made my own observations. The later works of Beethoven are so multifaceted and so subtle that bombastic claims would be futile. Therefore one of my hopes for these texts will be not only to insist upon agreement, but also that they might incite responses of contradiction. My main concern is to stimulate pianists and others who study this repertoire to develop their own convictions by immersing themselves in this material in deep thought and careful consideration. It is important to verify all assertions, both mine and the statements of others. One who studies the scores with the same curiosity and open-minded attitude as an archaeologist who has just discovered the Dead Sea Scrolls, will find there are many fruitful experiences in store for one.

Only to a very small extent will I propose pianistic solutions to the challenges my analyses may present. The pianist Alfred Brendel, a fine example of a well-informed musician, argues, surprisingly, that analysis of music will not necessarily provide one with a solution on how to execute it - something my own experience also taught me - the flood of ideas may simply become too large to handle.

So why should one bother with such work at all then? Can't one just as well study the sheet music carefully, follow the composer's instructions conscientiously and simply use all one's imagination, pianistic expertise and emotional empathy to achieve a performance that will be effective in the concert hall? Why yes, these are all necessary requirements, regardless of the repertoire. But why let such an opportunity pass one by? Why not besides team up with the composer and try to discover how this music originated, with its own intrinsic, requisite character? Otherwise this would be like trying to learn a language using only phonetics and pronunciation rules. Is it not the actual meaning of the words themselves; is it not the structure - the grammar - itself that makes sense of the words, or musical sounds that is of paramount importance, beyond that it just sounds beautiful or exciting? That being said, the language metaphor when it comes to music is not without its problems, not in the least when it concerns the music of Beethoven. Probably one of the most revolutionary aspects of his music is that he tends to lift it out of the mere sphere of sound and entertainment for the aristocracy of his day and uses it as a tool for a universal message of existential issues and humanistic values. As a performer myself I feel therefore an obligation to convey this message and to try to achieve an understanding of how Beethoven organizes his ideas and feelings to become such an instrumental tool, and how, to quote Goethe, the form becomes the content. The mere understanding itself of what one is playing will automatically change the way one performs it. This is indeed similar to the speech intonation one chooses to use when wanting to express something of importance, as

opposed to reciting a text that has been learnt by rote, but not entirely understood. All good performers will have their own individual, pianistic palette at their disposal for realizing their musical interpretations. There are probably no quick and easy answers here, but many pitfalls and oversights can be avoided. Moreover, with a deeper understanding the joy of performance will be amplified. I would argue that the fear some musicians have that utilizing music theory only creates dull and academic interpretations is based on a misunderstanding of what theory can and should be about. This then sums up the chief content of my time spent with Prof. Ratz some fifty years ago. It has been one of the main building blocks of my life as a musician, and with these texts I would like to further some of it on.

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Accordingly I wish to attempt in the following article, to get under the skin of these sonatas, and to explore to what extent I am able to express in words the reasons why we are so impacted by this music. I do not claim these analyses is be comprehensive, but rather that they are attempts to highlight that which I see to be vital elements in the works, elements which do not always seem to be immediately apparent, but never-the-less are essential to the experience of the music.

The following text assumes that the reader has a prior knowledge of the rudiments of music theory and form principles, and in order to help you follow my train of thought, I have based the following text on some self-evident principles. These are claims which are not discussed here, and if one is fundamentally in disagreement with them, then one will probably disagree with most of the following.

1. In spite of many instances of daring uses of dissonance, Beethoven always remains faithful to traditional functional harmony. This close adherence to traditional rules means that distant harmonic relationships may have important relevance. Tensions between Dominant and Tonic harmonies are fundamental, and often have important formal significance.
2. The tonality of the composition is vital to the understanding of the content and structure of the music.
3. The exploitation of the tension between major and minor keys is an important element in Beethoven's music.
4. Convention at this particular time in music history dictates that 4-(8) bar phrase lengths are the norm. Any deviation from this should be explored.
5. In order for the listener to enjoy a meaningful musical experience, it is essential that they approach the music in a state of alertness and expectancy, and with the ability to recognize the repetition of previous material statements, For instance, when recognizing the reiteration of a previous statement, the listener should instinctively expect that the statement be followed through in the same way as it was the *first* time it was heard. The listener should trust that even if the conscious mind struggles to perceive the totality of a complex work at a first listening, the unconscious mind absorbs and retains substantially more than one is aware of. Awareness of the work will be enhanced by repeated listening, and the perception of the music will be enhanced through the in-depth study of the composition. My respectful opinion, not to mention experience, is that a profound study of a work will repay the listener in proportion to the extent of this study; the deeper one delves into a work, the richer the rewards.

Further more, the use of certain devices in the text makes it necessary for me to present some definitions and lay down some guidelines for the reader:

The bar numbers are marked with a "b".

The key is often referred to only by the fundamental, an upper case letter for the major and a lower case for the minor. The name of the notes is given in lower case italics. Tones are always marked with small letters and italics.

Since my background stems from the Viennese tradition from quite some years back now, I shall here therefore, without necessarily implying any preference, I sometimes use words and expressions that, quite likely, deviate from what is in common use, explain how I define some of these terms, besides clarifying some of the abbreviations occasionally to be found in the text.

The sonata form is the most common musical form in first movements of a sonata, quartet, symphony etc. from this era. As I expect the reader to be already familiar with this form, I shall not present a definition of it here. All the same, it may be useful to explain my use of terminology and abbreviations in connection with this and other musical forms.

Starting with the sonata form:

First theme (FT): the first completed statement in a movement.

Modulation (M): transition from FT to ST.

Secondary theme is abbreviated by ST

Codetta = the concluding part of the exposition or repeat; not the "coda".

The development section is abbreviated by D.

Coda: Beethoven often treats the coda as an independent constituent of the form, and it serves to conclude the movement. (It may also have this function in other form types.)

Other forms: In slow movements we find here examples of what I, with my particular background, refer to as two-part adagio form, this being somewhat similar to the sonata form, but without its independent development section: i.e. FT + ST (plus perhaps a return section) + FT + ST, - unlike three-part adagio form (A + B + A) which does not occur in these sonatas.

In the scherzo form (scherzo + trio + scherzo), the sections can vary between A + B + A, or A + B, whilst the trio itself usually has a more straightforward A-B-A form.

The Rondo - a less rigid form ("chorus and verses"), commonly found in last movements in the classical era - typically does not turn up in these five sonatas.

The differing theme types which are referred to here:

8-bar *Satz*, (2+2+4), which is the repetition and fragmentation of a motif. It may also occur as a 4-bar, or 16-bar *Satz*.

8-bar period (4 +4 often with a half cadence in the middle.)

Tripartite Lied-form (A+B+A, mostly with a I-V-I harmonic structure.

Other theme types will also be dealt with in the text.

Motif, (m): a constituent part of a theme, not the actual theme.

And finally, before I present my analyses, I wish to stress that my goal has not been to write a musicological dissertation, rather this paper should be read as if it were a report from a workshop, a summing up of many years work and experience with these sonatas. I am a performer, not a theoretician, but I acknowledge the importance that a certain level of insight into the material with which I work, has. It is my vain desire to be able to share this alleged insight with the reader.

SONATA in A op. 101

The introspective, almost dream-like first movement in opus 101, gives us only an inkling of what is in store for us in this sonata. We are struck not only by the lyrical, songlike quality, but also by a feeling of levitation. Is this floating feeling only a purely aesthetic phenomenon - for instance, it is clear that the frequent use of syncopation contributes to this impression, as does the 6/8 time signature - or is a quality of the form? On closer inspection, the first thing we come to realize is that the movement may well be considered to be in sonata form: MT (bars 1-4), M (b 5-8), ST (b 9-14), S (b 15-34), D (b 35-54), repeat (b 55-84) and Coda (b 85-102). Sonata form is essentially a dynamic form based on contrasts and thematic development, and is not really suitable for a lyrical movement.

Here, however, Beethoven transforms this form into a coherent and continuous *cantilene* where all the constituent parts glide imperceptibly into each other. This seamlessness leads to ambiguity. How long in reality is MT? Does ST start at bar 9, or rather at bar 15? The repeat's presentation of MT is almost an after-thought, and does it really start at bar 55, why not just as well at bar 58. The movement's main key of A is in any case not convincingly established, neither is the commencement of the Coda as unambiguous as a schematic overview would predict. The formal layout of the sonata indicates a classical first movement whilst, at the same time, the expression of the music obscures it. This ambiguity establishes itself as a fascinating part of the movement's content.

Furthermore, the sensation of levitation is reinforced by a rather subtle use of harmony. The main theme describes the harmonic progression like this, avoiding the tonic in root position:

Ex.1

Op. 101.
1816

Etwas lebhaft und mit der innigsten Empfindung
Allegretto, ma non troppo

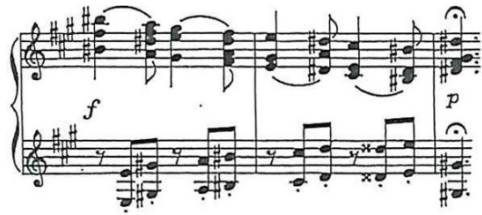
V. IV IV I I
6 6 6 6 4

That which, in bar 5, sounds like the last half of an eight bar period, is already introducing the modulation to E, whilst the root-position tonic (in E) is not explicitly stated until bar 25. The main key of A is only established towards the end of the repeat.

This is how we hear how the music levitates, because it does so in conjunction with the tonality and form. The formal structure is imperceptibly worked through, the harmony avoiding the root-position A-tonic.

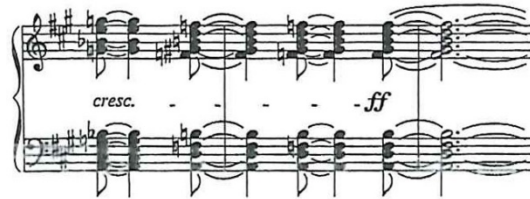
The peaceful and harmonious atmosphere is twice threatened: during the development, (most clearly in bars 50-51, see next page ex.2):

Ex.2



and in the introduction to the codetta (bars 85-87):

Ex.2

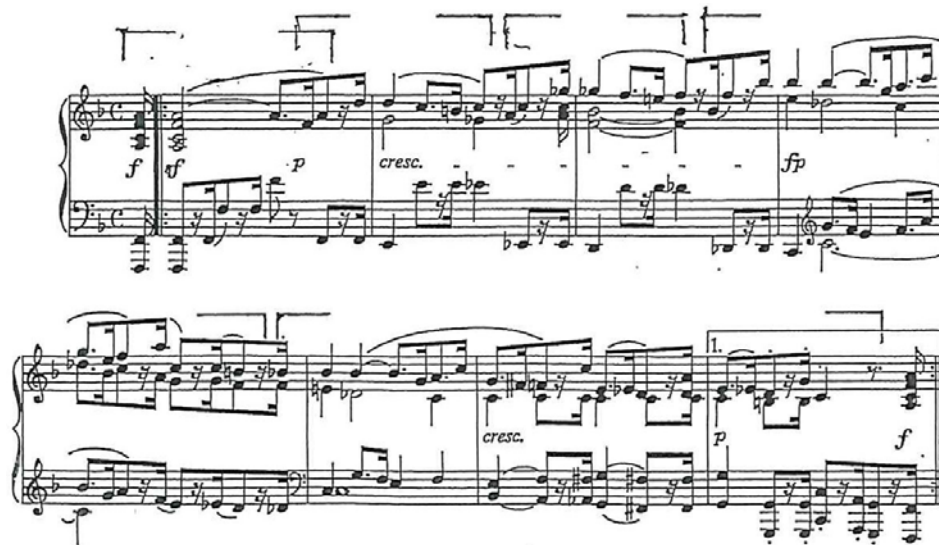


Both times the threat is averted, as though to repress "a ruthless reality, so as to be able to continue dreaming. This could, however, be an omen of things to come.

So, when the tonic of A is, at last, attained, and the balance is restored, the *a* is redefined as the major third of the mediant key of F. The door is thrown open to a rugged world, and we are ejected out into a self-conscious and energetic march. Here there is no ambiguity as to which key we are dealing with!

The form of this march reflects the form of a scherzo as A+B in the march, and A+B+A+ transition in the trio. Beethoven however does not explicitly call this movement a march. Instead, he gives it the suggestive expression mark "*marschmässig*" – not without a reason. The traditional march has, necessarily, a "square-like" nature - constructed as it is in regular 4 or 8 bar phrases, to be able to fulfill its purpose to enforce order and discipline. In this case, however, the phrases are often "crooked". The first part of the main theme's apparently regular 8-bar structure may be perceived as: 1(signal)+1+1(sequence)+2+3(sequence, "splitting up", and cadence to the dominant):

Ex.4



As the march modulates in its second part (bars 12-36), the phrase pattern is thus: 3+4(2+2)+4(2+2)+7(3+2+2)+3+3. In this way a contradiction arises between the robust

expression and the somewhat limping phrase structure. This contradiction is gradually reflected in the harmonic development in the form of increasingly daring use of dissonance, increasing use of polyphony and a leaning towards minor keys.

The two voices of the trio only agree on one common meter in three bars (unison in the first bar), only to get out of time with each other in a canon, where, alternately one voice, then the other, is one step ahead. The harmonies that thus arise are hardly in accordance with the conventions of the time, and underline, together with the irregular periodic nature of the music, the movement's lack of stability:

Ex.5



One could read from this that the march is providing the dream of the first movement, an answer, an answer which tempts its aggressive self-awareness, whilst, at the same time being contradicted by its own imbalanced structure. The third movement could be perceived to reject the second movement - in the shape of an incomplete fragment the longing ("*sehnsuchtsvoll*") is directed towards something other than this. Perhaps back to the dream? This is hinted at by quoting the FT of the first movement in bar 21. However in the subsequent bars the dream is quickly transformed into the first theme of the fourth movement, and we are once more out in the world, this time a joyous and congenial one at that, one in which we would like to live.

Now might be the time to bring to the attention of the reader the particularly subtle way in which Beethoven creates a cohesion between the movements. He does this by discreetly intimating a thematic relationship between the introductory motifs in each movement. In the first movement the tonal range of the first motif is that of a sixth; *g* sharp to *e*, in the second movement, the range is *f* to *d* ; in the third movement we find *e* to *c*, both implicit and explicit; and finally, in the fourth movement the quote from the first movement in retrograde with the falling sixth, *e* to *g-sharp*, as an outline of the first four bars of the FT (see ex. 6 next page):

Thus the sixth becomes an abstract common denominator in four very different musical statements; this common denominator forms a network of arteries throughout the sonata's four movements, stimulating our unconscious ear, and contributing thereby to the cohesion of the entire/whole sonata.

The fourth movement is in sonata form, the exposition and recapitulation exhibiting no ambiguities, predominantly in the major key, and diatonic, as they are, (as opposed to the march), with balanced 4 and 8 bar phrases, (with the exception of certain abridgments), whilst the development, which has a totally different character, is atypically more marked by the influence of fugue and considerably less by that of the quadrangle.

Ex.6

The comprehensive FT (bars 33-64) which, in their extremities exude *joie de vivre* and vitality, and is in tripartite Lied form. The B part (bars 49-56) presents an apparently new two bar motif (bars 49-50). This little motif (m1), whose character reminds one of the first movement, is, in fact, a condensation of the first movements floating four-bar FT. The tonal extent in each of this theme's two parts is described in the two top parts, respectively in the first and second bars of the motif:

Ex.7

This nostalgic retrospective glance does not, however, endure, and a *crescendo* presents us with the repetition of part A, (bars 57-64), which immediately proceeds to the MT, (bars 65-80), where the semiquaver motif from the FT is a playful and jocular driving force in the modulation to E. At the same time a contrapuntal *cantilene* insistently reflects upon the first movement's *g-sharp-e*. The ST, (bars 81-90), suggest a more intimate atmosphere (perhaps a sublimation of the march?), but it does not last long until the uncomplicated and exuberant once more takes over and dominates the C (bars 91-113). Again, the semiquaver motif is the driving force, until a new humorous little motif pops up at the end before we are carried off into a repetition of it all:

Ex.8



So does this suggest an extraverted and carefree conclusion to the sonata? Like a bolt from the blue, bars 121-122 (*ff!*) demolish this expectation. The ominous signs in the first movement were not without reason. The D starts in veiled forbidding and finishes in pure terror. This section is distinctly influenced by fugue, without entirely complying with conventional fugal discipline. Beethoven uses a seven-bar subject, (bars 124-130), which consists of a three-bar quote from the opening motif, and a sequential two-bar quaver motif, with trill, which could have been diverted from the conclusion of the exposition, (bars 106-113), or may equally be a grotesque distortion of the jovial dance accompaniment in bars 91-97:

Ex.9



The answers to the subject breaks with the conventional *dux* and *comes*, but is dictated by a different harmonic progress. The subject and motivic development advances unabated until the last subject entrance explodes in the bass - augmented four times - over an organ/pedal point in the dominant in a, (bars 223-228), whilst the fragmentary remains of the semiquaver and quaver motifs act in counterpoint:

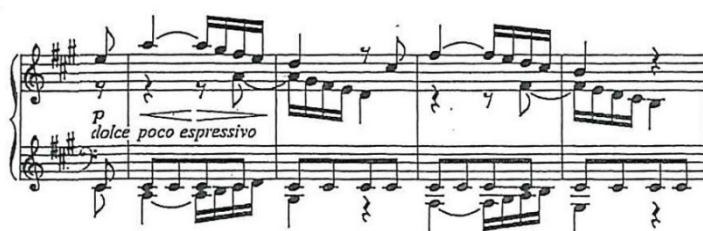
Ex.10



After four bars of the dominant chord spread over the entire piano register, the first eight bars of the FT break through with the same effect as a helping hand in the nick of time, (bars 232-239).

It is of interest that the recapitulation, which otherwise exhibits the same series of events as the exposition, does not present the FT in its entirety. Also, instead of the expected continuation we are given, in bars 240-243, an interpolation based on an inversion of the opening motif - with the indications *dolce* and *poco espressivo* - almost apologetically, as if it were a mild and comforting retraction of the previous fear which was created in the development - whilst the repetitive quavers in the left hand replace the increasingly cruel quavers from earlier, with the benign ones from the exposition:

Ex.11



The coda begins at bar 303 with an insistence on the quaver motif. Those of us who have been paying attention will remember what happened here last time; will the same happen again? The *ff* strokes in bars 313-314 - but in the major key. The two strokes are repeated, now in the minor key and *p*. The fear of a new nightmare is rekindled, but spiced with some expectant bewilderment. In bar 319 something starts which threatens to develop into a transposed repeat of the frightening *fugato*, but which immediately appears to lead to FT's gentle B-section. The moment of anxiety passes, a new disaster is avoided and a conciliatory tone is maintained almost to the end.

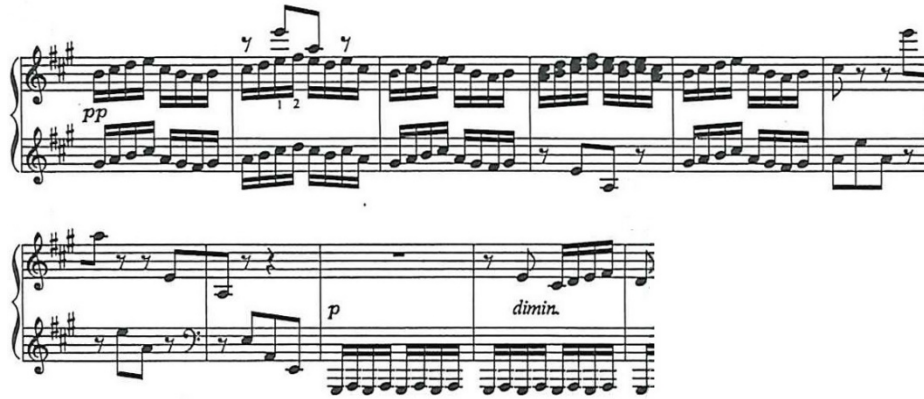
Besides, the coda also exhibits another device for achieving *détente* - taking its point of departure from the motif m1, which was a variant of FT in the first movement. Bars 325-338 brings m1 as the motif, into a repeated, (abridged) eight-bar *Satz*, and we get, in bar 330 and 337, for the first time in tonic root position, as the resolution of the first part of the motif, something which may symbolize the ultimate abolishment of the condition of levitation created in the FT of the first movement:

Ex.12



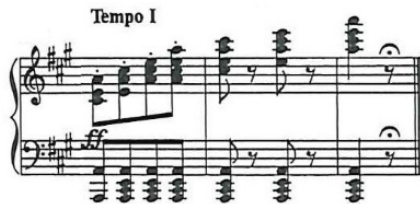
The essence of this process is repeated in bars 339-346: the sixth *g-sharp-e* which is described in the outline of bar 339 and 341, is transformed in the subsequent bar to the fifth *e-a* as a jolly quaver motif, *pp*. the following trill *g-sharp-a*, (bars 347-358), lowers the tension even further:

Ex.13



and the ambiguity from the first movement is most definitely brushed aside with the seven triumphant concluding tonic chords (all in root position!):

Ex.14



One might object that the conflict between D and the rest of the last movement is given a too subtle solution and thus renders the sonata more descriptive than dynamic. This issue, which is part of the problem of creating unity within a work, engaged Beethoven increasingly during the following years. In the next sonatas we will experience how the composer in various ways met this challenge.

SONATA in B-flat op. 106

“The form is the content” could have served as a title here, even though, in various ways, the same heading could apply to all of his later works. This sonata has attained, (together perhaps with the Diabelli variations, op. 120), a certain legendary status due to its proportions; it is Beethoven’s largest piano composition. Such a status, however, says nothing of the profound psychological process into which the listener is drawn, a psychological process which gives the work the character of an existential drama in four acts.

The first movement is laid out in large scale sonata form. It starts, more or less, with a climax - a bipartite first theme, FT1, bars 1-16:

Ex.1

Allegro (♩=138)

The musical notation for Ex.1 shows the first theme (FT1) in B-flat major, bars 1-16. The tempo is Allegro (♩=138) and the dynamic is *ff*. The notation is in a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The first part of the theme (bars 1-8) features a series of chords in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. The second part (bars 9-16) features a more complex chordal texture in both hands. A repeat sign is placed at the end of the first part.

and FT2 bars 17-34:

Ex.2

The musical notation for Ex.2 shows the second theme (FT2) in B-flat major, bars 17-34. The dynamic is *p*. The notation is in a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The first part of the theme (bars 17-24) features a series of chords in the right hand and a single note in the left hand. The second part (bars 25-34) features a more complex chordal texture in both hands. A repeat sign is placed at the end of the first part.

where the second theme is born of the first, and which, for a long time seem to evoke the "heroic" and life-affirming. ST1, (bars 47-62), and ST2, (bars 63-74), in the submediant key of G seems to confirm this with its friendly flowing nature.

However, those listeners, who have heightened sensibilities, will perceive a certain underlying and gradually increasing uneasiness:

Bars 12 and 14, (*g-flat* in the bass, see ex. 3 next page):

Ex.3

cresc. poco a poco

bars 70-74, (a sudden, unprepared acceleration of the harmonic progression):

Ex.4

bars 75-78, (codetta 1- the strange conclusion of the *crescendi*):

Ex.5

bar 100, (sudden change of character):

Ex.6

cantabile
P dolce ed espressivo

in the development section, particularly from bar 177, where the heroic is transformed into something resembling the desperate:

Ex.7

[P]

bar 201, (unexpected turning to FT, see sx.8 next page):

Ex.8

8
poco ritardando a tempo
dimin. p cantabile

bars 223-226, (extremely concise and unsatisfactory rescue operation to restore the piece to its main key of B-flat), bars 227-248, (the polyphony disturbs the clarity of the original statement, and B-flat disappears almost as suddenly as when it arrived):

Ex.9

ritard. a tempo
ff p
cantabile e legato

bars 249-258, (what happened to the clarity of FT2? – see ex.10 next page):

Ex.10

bar 267, (b-minor outburst):

Ex.11

and, of course the entire conclusion, (bars 386-405, see ex.12 next page):

The magnificence of FT1 and FT2, themes which radiate overwhelming power and mental stability, are gradually more and more exposed to subversive elements. The apparently innocent *g-flat*, diminished sixth, which could as easily have been a chromatic colouring of the theme's fragmentation, play here, an ever increasingly important rôle. Bars 70-73 involve a threatening collapse of the prevailing G major key, and is saved at the last moment by bar 74 (see ex.4 page 12). In bar 76 (C1) the sixth appears both in the diminished form, and in its original form, almost as if it were competing for attention (see ex.5 page 12). The surprising appearance of a new elegiac motif, (C2), in bar 100 brings once more with it the minor subdominant, the uneasiness is brushed aside in the repetition (bars 106-111, see ex.6 page 12), where the *e-flat* is transformed to *e*, and C3 (bars 112-123, see ex.13 next page) which conclude the exposition, gives us a new, magnificent climax.

This could have been Ibsen's "A Doll's House" in sonic form. All appears to be harmonious and in good spirits while small signs spring up, contradicting this, and in the development this process becomes more explicit. After a "decomposing" of the C3, (bars 124-133), together with two signals formed from the opening leap in the subdominant key of E-flat, the FT1 is now treated polyphonically and thereby loses its original homophonic sheen, (bars 138-176), all of this taking place whilst E-flat major gradually moves towards c-minor.

Ex.12

Ex.12 is a piano exercise in 2/4 time, featuring a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The score is written for piano and bass clef. The first system includes dynamic markings *pp* and *f*. The second system includes *p* and *f*. The third system includes *p* and *f*. The fourth system includes *p* and *f*, and the instruction *sempre dim.*. The fifth system includes *pp sempre*, *ppp cresc.*, and *ff*. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a fermata.

Ex.13

Ex.13 is a piano exercise in 2/4 time, featuring a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The score is written for piano and bass clef. The first system includes dynamic markings *ff* and *f*, and the instruction *cresc.*. The second system includes *p* and *ff*. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a fermata.

The opening signal is then sequenced in *ff sempre*, and in increasingly more crass dissonances, (bars 177-200, see ex.7 page 12) until it stabilizes itself in the dominant, G, in *diminuendo*. We have gradually wandered far from FT1's optimistic atmosphere; do we dare, with this diminuendo, to hope for something milder, perhaps the friendly G major from the second theme? Our hopes are not met. Completely unexpectedly, the C2 has moved to the mediant key of B major, without the former lighter repeat (bars 201-212, see ex.8 page 12).

This is not done just to cause an esthetic/harmonic effect; to the attentive listener, this constitutes quite a disturbing event, and it will soon be revealed that the B major key is a premonition.

Is there any way in which we could return from this state to a new equilibrium? FT1 makes an initial attempt through imitation, then forming the opening leap - which has, in the course of events, been reduced from a tenth to a sixth, then to a fifth - a rising chromatic line *g-g-sharp-a* (bars 223-225), the *a* is transformed, at the last moment, to the leading-note in B-flat (bar 226), and FT1 is allowed to sound again as it first did, at least partially.

But the main key, and hence the repeat, can not be reinstated so summarily in a work of such dimensions. (Compare with similar places in the first movements of two other of Beethoven's monumental piano sonatas, op.53 and op. 57.) Now the FT1 is destabilized by hectic counterpart in the bass; its originally homophonic and unambiguous character can not be re-established after such a development. The semblance of equilibrium is only able to be sustained in a few bars before we also "lose" B-flat and are left high and dry on G-flat (ex.9 page 13). We remember the note of *g-flat* hinting at unease in bars 12 and 14. Here the *g-flat* forms a tonal basis which is far removed from the home key. Another element which is distant from its original state is the harmonization of FT2, (from bar 249), having become decidedly repulsive through the liberal use of diminished seventh chords which continually collide with the *g-flat* pedal point. In addition to this, the original falling semitone - thirds motif replaced with a dramatic two-octave leap downwards (see ex.10, page 14). The sequence of events from the middle of bar 259 to bar 266 is, however, in its original form, and the expectation of the same sequence of events: FT1's repeat in radiant *ff* tonic, if in the wrong key might still prove realistic.

What follows represents some of the most drastic music ever written by Beethoven. The tonic appears in the middle of bar 266, a half bar too early, only it is in the form of a perfect fifth, and in *pp*. The interval of the fifth is reinterpreted, enharmonically, into the dominant, and we get, in the following bar, the opening motif from FT1 as an *ff* outburst in b minor. Note the connection here to previous B major. Beethoven has characterized this key as the "black" key, and it is responsible here for a devastating blow. Thus, b-minor represents the destructive element of the movement. The symbolic meaning of certain keys plays an important rôle in this sonata! Another subtle feature of the movement is the V-I relationship between the keys G-flat(F-sharp) and b, b being the harmonic fulfillment of what G-flat(F-sharp) forewarns (see ex.11 page 14).

That the next series of events, after a modulation back to B-flat, is an almost unaltered transposition of the equivalent part of the exposition, and although it complies with the rules of sonata form, it may also be interpreted in many other ways. I am fascinated by the way that it can express an attitude of pretending that nothing happened, which is a way of reacting to the transgression of the rules of etiquette by others. The conventional musical discourse here may mirror a conventional human reaction. What is more, this instrument of repression is, actually, almost successful in that we are, in the coda, (bars 363-405), after a sequencing - *crescendo* - of the opening motif, (bars 377-385), at long last sure that we are going to hear FT1 for one last time in all its B-flat glory! Instead we are met by the final catastrophe: The liquidation of FT1. The radiant opening theme is chopped up into increasingly smaller bits, and finally disappears. The *g-flat* is there, contributing to the

garish dissonances before everything is concluded with two hammer blows (see ex.12 page 15).

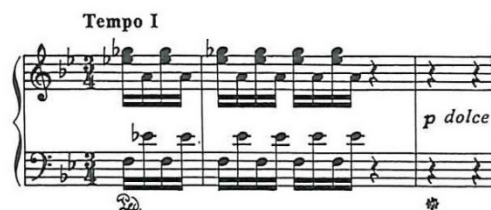
The movement's psychological constitution, with its "cliff-hanger", stands in stark contrast to the symmetrical pattern of conventional sonata form. It is evident that the work cannot finish here.

Since the first movement leaves us unbalanced, it comes as no surprise to find that this imbalance forms an integral part of the second movement, which is in scherzo form.

The outer parts as A+B+A, (with repeats), the trio part as A+B, (also with repeats), but with an unconventional extension, (bars 81-114.) The FT in the scherzo part, forms an irregular 7-bar phrase. The melodic structure is 3+4, whilst the harmonic structure is 4+3, (cadence to the tonic in bar 4), - an ambivalent structure. Section B, (bars 15-22), sequences the opening motif, over a pedal point in the dominant, but veers unexpectedly towards a half cadence to the dominant in c. The repetition of the A part brings with it a variant which has been considerably harmonically altered, and the tonic, B-flat major, is only reached in the nick of time. This is musically worked out restlessness and agitation.

The trio repeats, monomaniacally a simple triad motif, (as a canon in the repeats), over just two simple harmonies - almost like children humming to themselves in order to shut out some unpleasantness - before interrupted by the *presto* with a new motif which rises in intensity and drama in order to culminate in a shriek, (bars 112-113):

Ex.14



This poses the question: how is the character of a shriek created? The answer, the old culprit, *g-flat*. The feeling of unrest from the first time is somewhat increased even further in the repeat of the scherzo section, by the hint of a syncopated quaver motive, (from bar 122), and the tonic of B-flat is reached in a similar out-of-breath way, in bar 162.

According to convention, the movement could quite easily end here, but instead we are clearly shown how everything in it is connected to the previous movement. For instance, two *b*-s show up out of the blue, a short scuffle between *b* and *b-flat* ensues before 15 unadorned *b*-s are frenetically hammered out in bars 168-171 (see ex.15 next page): The relationship to the b-minor of the first movement, cannot be missed; this is the most succinct and brutal expression of the breakdown which Beethoven's musical language allows. The movement ends in B, but in second inversion. Security is now an impossibility. I know of no other work by Beethoven or any other composer working with classical functional harmony who concludes a composition in this way, a way which stresses the perilous nature of the situation.

Ex.15

un poco ri -
tar - dan - do Presto
Tempo I

p *f* *dim.* *pp* *cresc.* *ff* *p* *pp*

Detailed description: This musical score consists of three systems. The first system shows a piano accompaniment with dynamics *p*, *f*, and *dim.*, and a vocal line with the lyrics 'un poco ri -'. The second system continues the piano accompaniment with dynamics *pp*, *cresc.*, and *ff*, and the vocal line with lyrics 'tar - dan - do' and a tempo change to 'Presto'. The third system is marked 'Tempo I' and features piano accompaniment with dynamics *p*, *p*, and *pp*.

That which follows in the third movement, (in f-sharp minor, enharmonically with g-flat) is the many faces of sorrow; painful, but still introverted in the FT (bars 1-26):

Ex.16

Adagio sostenuto (♩=92)
Appassionato e con molto sentimento

una corda mezza voce

Detailed description: This musical score is for a piano piece in F# minor. It is marked 'Adagio sostenuto (♩=92)' and 'Appassionato e con molto sentimento'. The score shows piano accompaniment with dynamic markings 'una corda' and 'mezza voce'.

plaintive and extraverted, (bars 27-38):

Ex.17

cresc. -
tutte le corde con grand'espressione

p.

Detailed description: This musical score shows piano accompaniment with dynamic markings 'cresc. -' and 'tutte le corde', and performance instructions 'con grand'espressione' and '*p.*'.

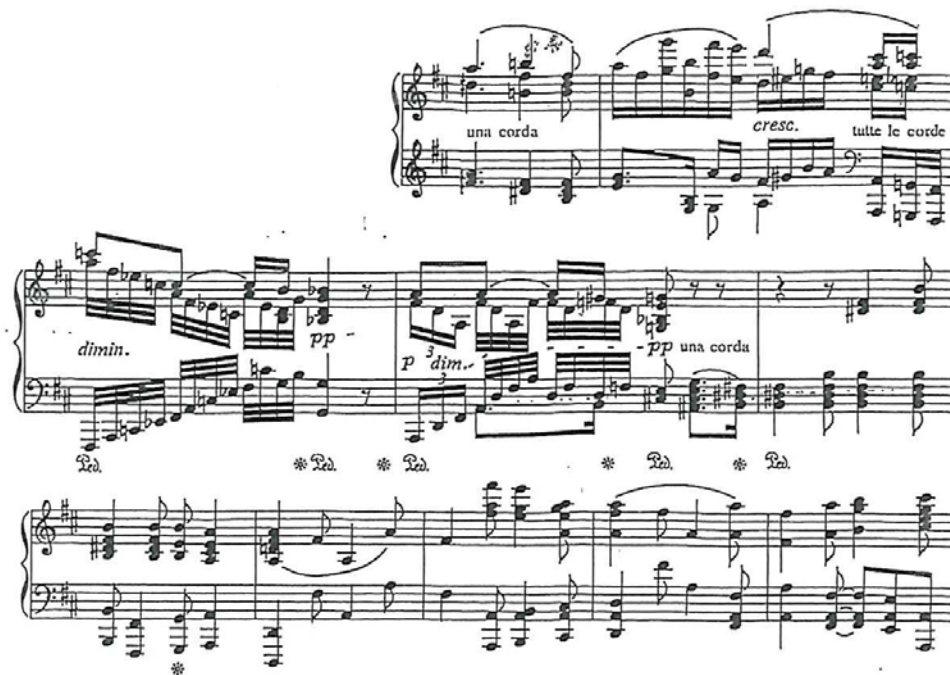
nostalgic and dream-like in ST, (bars 45-56, we will meet again the key of D in an important rôle in the last movement):

Ex.18



naked, total loneliness which gradually grows into a protest, (bars 57-86):

Ex.19



the sorrow even more heartfelt, (bars 87-112):

Ex.20



pain which catches up with the dream, (bars 158-165):

Ex.21

The musical score for Ex.21 consists of four systems of piano accompaniment. The first system shows the beginning of the passage with a 'tutte le corde' instruction and a triplet in the right hand. The second system continues the texture with a 'cresc.' marking. The third system features a 'f più f' dynamic and includes fingerings (4 3, 4 3, 4 3, 4 3, 4 3) and a '322' marking. The fourth system concludes the passage with a '6' marking under the left hand.

and finally the obliteration of the last vestiges of hope at the conclusion.

This is, perhaps, some of the most sombre music that Beethoven ever wrote.

We also find tragedy in the general structure of the movement. It is written in a two part adagio form. FT - in tripartite Lied form with repeated B+A part - containing two bars of hope, (bars 14-15):

Ex.22

The musical score for Ex.22 shows a short melodic fragment in the right hand, consisting of two bars of music. The left hand provides a simple accompaniment. The key signature is G major.

which for a long time appears as a part of the FT, showing a clear affinity with the G major section from the exposition of the first movement. Furthermore, in the midst of the sorrow, the ST sections of the movement a more consoling atmosphere. Once more, the decisive

tragic events are placed at the end of the movement: the comforting is transformed into pain, (bars 158-165), with a culminating outcry in *f-sharp (g-flat!)* and, most decisively, the FT is reduced twice, (bars 166-175, and 181-183), the last time to only three bars and without the two G major bars:

Ex.23



We are left standing with nothing but sorrow.

The continuation, that is to say the introduction to the fourth movement, seems, apparently, to completely lack structure, as a shattered *Weltanschauung*, notated in part without bar lines, and lacking a clear relationship to any key. The tones float freely like expired atomic particles which, occasionally they collect together, as if attempting to form thematic statements, but all of which come to nothing. After modulating to the mediant, B-flat, we are presented, more or less unprepared, that which turns out to be the theme (FT1), as a boldly laid out fugue.

Ex.24



But *is* it unprepared? If one listens carefully one will discover that the central notes at the start and conclusion of this introduction – *f*:

Ex.25



and *a*:

Ex.26



are the very same notes of the pronounced tenth-interval leap which opens the fugue theme, in other words, a giant upbeat - or inn-breath, which prepares us for what is to come, but hidden in seemingly amorphous, atomic structure.

There is still more here, for the attentive listener. As in op. 101, all the opening motifs are constructed from a common source. In this case the interval of the third is central, either in the form of a rising figure as found in the first movement, descending as in the second, or in both forms, as in the last two. We find a parallel to the leap of a tenth found at the opening of the first movement, in the fugue's theme; in the first movement it was in the tonic, symbolizing *détente* and stability, in the fugue theme, the dominant, symbolizing tension and exertion.

(It may have been in order to emphasize the internal relationships between the movements, that Beethoven later added the first bar in the third movement. This emphasizes the melodic tenth interval between the first and second bar. He did this in a letter to his publisher after completing the whole sonata.)

Besides, the relationship between the keys, and hence the form, are marked by the mediant, or interval of the third, and through this the form and the themes are interrelated. In a way, the introduction to the fourth movement may be said to symbolize all of this with its insistent third-modulating, perhaps as a summing up in order to muster the strength for the fugal battle to restore the equilibrium.

This restoration of balance is, indeed, the goal of the fugue: to rebuild that which has been destroyed during the course of the first three movements. None of the forms used in the classical Viennese tradition can be used for this purpose, especially not the uncomplicated rondo, which is the most common last movement form in this period. Beethoven was one of the few of his generation who was well acquainted with J.S. Bach's "*The Well-Tempered Clavier*", and had been so already from his time in Bonn, with his teacher, Neeffe. In his later years Beethoven immersed himself more and more in the study of the music of Bach, and frequently confessed as to how these studies gave him ideas for new ways of composing. I believe that one of the things that he saw in Bach's music was that the fugue is not a rigid form, but rather a form which has to be recreated time and time again, dependent on what it is that the composer wishes to express. Also the choice of a polyphonic form enables him, as we shall see, the ability to use contrapuntal techniques as symbols for important events in the movement.

A layout of the fugue's principle sections may be seen thus:

1. Introduction and development of the SJ1 in all voices, in B-flat, (bars 11-47) Interlude (bars 48-51).
2. *Dux* and *comes* in A-flat, fragmentation and cadence to G-flat, (bars 52-85.)
3. Development of augmented SJ1, attempt at *stretto* with its inversion, in e-flat, (bars 94-129.)

4. Interlude, (bars 86-93.)
5. Development of retrograde SJ1, in b-flat minor, (bars 153-179.)
6. FS1 as *comes* in G, inversions in G and E-flat, tonality modulating between D, G and E-flat, fragmentation, and half cadence to the dominant. in D, (bars 196-249.)
7. New theme FS2 which is developed in all the voices, in D, (bars 250-278.)
8. Development of FS2 in combination with FS1 development and *stretto* of FS1 and its inversion, alternation between treatment of motif(s) and *dux*- and *comes* entrances, in B-flat, (bars 279-400.)

We note, once more, a number of mediant relationships, what lies behind this otherwise somewhat dry summary? It is the search of the fugue theme for redemption. This search may be said to be symbolized by the restless semiquaver sections which, with each appearance of the theme, are frequently varied, both melodically and in length; they may even be shared between several voices as, for example, in bars 65-73, *fuga con alcune licenze!* Phrases are often formed with supreme disregard for traditional four or eight-bar structure, as is often the case in a Bach fugue. After the theme has been presented in all three voices the key is quickly modulated from B-flat to D-flat, with two entrances of the theme which stride the bar lines, as if the impatience of the theme entices it to "jump the gun" by a crotchet. After being sequenced several times the key of G-flat is reached, (bars 80-85) where the music rests for a short while. The key is no longer experienced as an element of disruption, and presents a brief, more relaxed episode built upon a new motif, (from bar 85). However, this interlude rapidly shifts character and leads to a grand attempt at stretto of the theme and its inversion, (in augmentation), from bar 110. This could have symbolized the unification of opposites, (thesis/antithesis=synthesis), and the re-establishment of the ruined balance, but the key, e-flat, being the parallel minor key to g-flat, is wrong. Also the timing is wrong. Much more is needed if we are to experience a feeling of credibility and accord, but these requirements are not met with, and we are led into discord. The fugue starts to fall apart from bar 117, where it collapses into an inferno of trills and dissonances, showing Beethoven at his most crass. Whereas, in the other movements, we are abandoned in a state of shock and dismay, here there is a toning down of the calamity, and we are seamlessly returned to the motif from the episode, this time in A-flat, (bars 130-133, see ex.27 next page):

The hunt continues, with increasing intensity, aided by this motif, and we return briefly to the key of G-flat, (bar 147), and G-flat becomes, as in the first movement, transformed into the dominant of b which, in its turn becomes the key in which new developments of the fugue theme are presented, bars 153-179).

The b-minor is remembered as the destructive element from the first and second movements, but whereas earlier we were shocked by it, it is here experienced more as a sorrowful recollection, as a recollection of something which went wrong. The theme itself stresses this by appearing in the retrospective guise of the retrograde, and in addition, attains an elegiac, melodious expression which is helped by its new counterpoint:

Ex.28



Ex.27.

Musical score for Ex.27, measures 94-124. The score is written for piano in a key signature of three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor) and a 3/4 time signature. It consists of six systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The music features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and various dynamic markings such as *sf* (sforzando), *m.s.* (mezzo-soprano), *m.d.* (mezzo-dolce), *tr* (trill), *dim.* (diminuendo), and *p* (piano). The piece concludes with a *p* marking in measure 124.

The project starts to achieve its distinct form, but what to do with the unresolved problem of the b-minor? The answer lies in a new question: what is the positive opposite of the b-minor? Of course, the parallel key of D-major! With this, the aim of the project is to transform the b minor into D-major, and simultaneously allow the attempt the unification of the theme with its inversion to symbolize the synthesis of the sonata's fatal contradictions. Here, instead of stampeding ahead as we did the first time this was attempted, we progress more cautiously. The way in which things develop is just as gripping and thrilling as any novel! First we are presented with the second bar of the theme in all three voices - still in retrograde in two of the voices - (bars 180-181), then in retrograde inversion, (bars 182-183), then the same motif, its inversion and retrograde, are combined, (bars 184-192.) We have a provisional unification at the motif level, and all this happens in the implied key of D, without this key being properly prepared. The theme is subsequently fully presented in bar 196, (which is really comes in G, whilst the harmony remains, for the time being, in the vicinity of D), three complete, inverted thematic statements, two of them in G, (*dux* in bar 208:

Ex.29

Ex.29 is a musical score for piano and harpsichord. The piano part consists of two staves. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a trill (*tr*) over a half note. The second staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. It features a series of sixteenth-note patterns, with accents (*sf*) and dynamic markings. The harpsichord part is shown below the piano part, with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp, containing a few chords.

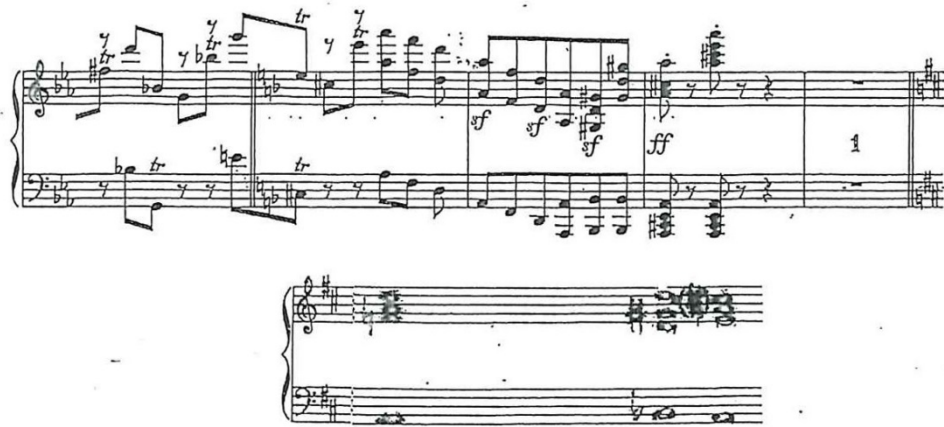
and comes in bar 216), and one in E-flat, (bar 229):

Ex.30

Ex.30 is a musical score for piano and harpsichord. The piano part consists of two staves. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. It begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a trill (*tr*) over a half note. The second staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. It features a series of sixteenth-note patterns, with accents (*sf*) and dynamic markings. The harpsichord part is shown below the piano part, with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp, containing a few chords.

The subject is shortened and compromised until the dominant of D is reached:

Ex.31



If one looks on these final statements of the subject as an extensive tonal cadence in D, with the G statements operating as the subdominant, and the E-flat statement as a Neapolitan sixth, then we perceive a giant bow across everything and it appears as a colossal colon, a gateway to following events.

What *does* arrive next, strikes at the core of the entire movement: after a fermata we are led in to a well prepared D-major, and a transformed, harmonic almost ethereal state in the form of a new, peaceful fugue (FS2) and its developments, (bars 250-278.):

Ex.32



It was this simple subject that was finally needed in order to accomplish the transition from b to D, and to turn from catastrophe to redemption.

This section, with the direction *una corda, sempre dolce e cantabile*, constitutes an emotional climax. Thus, after a brief joining of FS2 with FS1, the unification of the opposites may take place. Soon, in bars 294-307, we reach a new highpoint where the entire FS1 together with its inversion, *stretto*, is united in the main key, but without being followed up by the previous collapse (ex.33 next page):

Ex.33

The goal is reached, we remain in the main key and the rest of the fugue is concerned with retaining this newly attained balance. A fleeting moment of threat appears in bars 331-333, but is quickly dissipated by a lighthearted comes interjection which is followed by synchronized presentation of FS1 together with its inversion which serves to show that the union is stable:

Ex.34

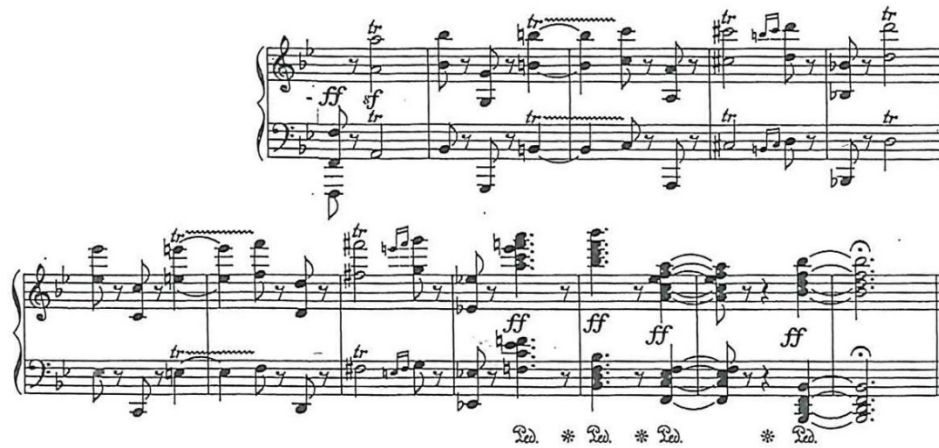
A premature and thus unsatisfactory ending at bar 366, (perhaps due to over confidence?) is followed by another brief threatening episode in bars 367-380, as if the *g-flat* ogre has raised its head one last time, but the threat soon fades until the *g-flat* in bar 381, calmly and quietly is raised to *g-natural* (see ex.35 next page):

Ex.35



The last bit of the puzzle falls into place, the B-flat-major scale runs downwards through five octaves, (bars 387-388), and rises (bar 389 to the end), in the form of *alla breve* sequencing of the tenth-leap motif:

Ex.36



Herewith closes the circle between the opening and the conclusion of the sonata. At the same time, whilst the opening, heard in the light of subsequent events, stands out as a distant and utopian past, this ending, albeit by means of a laborious struggle, remains credible, using the same motif.

One of Beethoven's best-known "crowning finales" is undoubtedly to be found in the last movement of his fifth symphony. There diatonic harmonies of major triads dominate, in joy of the triumph over fate. In opus 106 we find that the struggle to restore balance and harmony after a catastrophe leaves its mark all the way into the sonorous effects of the closing bars, thus bringing another type of "realism" into the narrative. Undoubtedly Beethoven's own human experiences, not in the least his deafness and the struggle to realize his creative urge in spite of it, have helped to trigger these and similar ideas concerning compositional form. However, here one finds no hint of narcissism; the wordless message transcends his own person and thus may feel relevant to all who care to listen.

There are two well-known issues with the musical text in this sonata.

1. This is the only one of Beethoven's piano sonatas which he has equipped with metronome indications, indications that, especially in the first movement, suggest extremely fast tempi that in the opinion of many are unrealistic. I have a similar example from my own experience, namely Schoenberg's First Chamber Symphony, where one not only finds extreme metronome indications, but also a specified duration I, at one time, was involved in a performance of this work as arranged by Webern, but we played at a tempo much slower than that which was indicated in the score. However, the *durata* of our performance of the work corresponded more or less with that which the composer had written in the score. Schoenberg had not heard the symphony at the time he wrote his metronome indications, and Beethoven was completely deaf when he wrote his. Can it be that the "tangibility", the music's physical presence, demands slower tempi than those imagined in one's inner ear?

2. Looking at bar 225 in the first movement: is it an *a-sharp*, or an *a-natural*? Has Beethoven forgotten the last accidental in B major? I say that he has, and I unhesitatingly choose the *a-natural*. An *a-sharp* here, does not impart meaning to this daring and rapid passage, as the *a-natural* does, and my conclusion must be that even the masters can commit orthographical errors.

SONATA in E op. 109

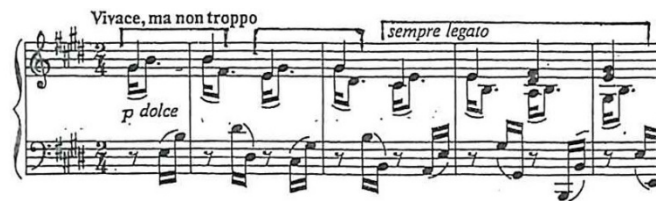
An abyss separates this sonata from op. 106. One enters, in op. 109, into a completely different space: intimate, predominantly light and friendly, devoid of drama, and inspired, apparently, by the domestic bliss of one of the composer's friends.

The first movement commutes between an evenly rapid and flowingly singing, and a calm, more complex, expressiveness. Is this a fantasizing movement, or are there other points of reference where we may observe a more robust structure?

One interpretation, which may seem plausible, is that we have before us a hybrid, a combination of a traditional first and second movement form since the expectation of a slower movement is met with a *prestissimo*, and this structure is pretty certainly an important element in this movement. However, if we examine the passage closer, we discover here another example of Beethoven's undogmatic approach to sonata form: FT bars 1-4, MT bars 5-8, ST bars 9-15, D bars 16-48, repeat bars 49-65 and coda, (bars 66 to end). This becomes, as in the first bar of op.101, an underlying fundament for rather subtle events; sonata form as drama is not the issue here.

The FT must be one of Beethoven's shortest, (a parallel may be found in the last movement of op. 54 with what must be the shortest exposition he ever wrote), four bars with a simple triad based melody in the form of a 4-bar structure, (1+1+2), accompanied by an airy, falling E-major scale, all in an isorhythmic, complimentary type of movement:

Ex.1



This type of movement is maintained throughout in the *vivace* sections, except for once. What we hear is marked by simplicity and comprehensibility.

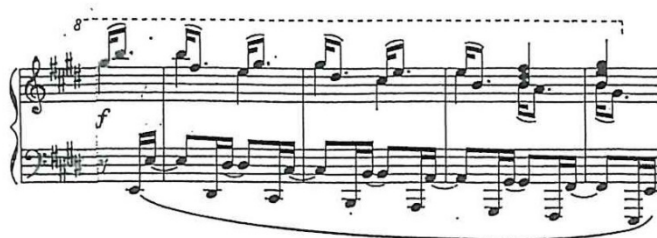
Yet still, what became of the FT in the D? A playful dislocation of the hierarchy between the melody and the accompaniment occurs here in bars 1-4, when the melody, first in the left and then in the right hand, from bar 16 forgets the triad character of the FT, and instead lets itself be served by the scale-movements of the accompaniment:

Ex.2



This culminates in the repeat, when both hands appear *legato*, at this point as equals, the hierarchy having been abolished!

Ex.3



This domination of the step-wise movement is also evident in the graceful dialogue between the voices in the coda. An augmented and syncopated version of the "*f-sharp-g-sharp-a*" motif from the preceding bars appears in bar 75, only now without the semi quavers. Here the music seems to "hold its breath" before the motif is developed into a beautiful *cantilene*:

Ex.4



But the gravity is not allowed to establish itself, the isorhythmic is allowed to take over once more, and the movement concludes on a tonic pedal point, (bars 86 to end), where the game continues, now between a slightly wistful *c* and a candid *c-sharp*, which in the spirit of the movement, has the last word.

A few words remain to be said about the ST, to all intents and purposes, the complement of the FT. Whereas the FT is simple in terms of its use of motifs and harmony, the ST is complex; where FT is immediately presented in the tonic, the ST postpones this as long as possible; where the FT is in four bars, the ST consists of a three bar sentence and its varied repetition. The bar structure is not easily perceived, and it shows how far Beethoven can remove himself from his point of departure when he, as here, wishes to examine possible progressions from a chord which is distantly related to the tonic, back *to* the tonic. It is this which is made the object of variation, whilst the melodic outline allows itself to be recognized. Here, future events are forewarned (see ex.5 next page):

A few paradoxes are revealed in the analysis of the second movement. If one entertains the idea of the first movement being a combination of a brisk and a slow movement, one could, if following the conventional succession of movements, perhaps expect a *scherzo* here. Indeed, we get something, which, on the surface could pass as one, but the form is not the one of a *scherzo*. During the course of the movement we hear a FT, (bars 1-24), a MT, (bars 25-32), a ST, (derived from the second part of the FT, bars 33-56), and a concluding Ca, (bars 57-69.) Is this in sonata form?

Ex.5

The musical score for Ex.5 is written in G major and 3/4 time. It begins with the tempo and mood marking "Adagio espressivo". The piano accompaniment starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic, followed by a piano (*p*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*). The vocal line enters with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*). The score includes various performance instructions such as *f*, *p*, *cresc.*, *dim.*, *espressivo*, and *dimin.*. There are also numerical markings like 3, 5, 6, and 8, which likely refer to fingerings or specific musical techniques. The vocal line includes the lyrics "ri - - - tar - - - dan - - - do".

The bars 70-140, with their *dim.* and its decreasing level of activity, disappoint this expectation. As a development section this is unable to balance with that which could have been an exposition. This is followed by a repeat and a short coda, (bars 166 to the end.)

It could appear that we are here dealing with a case, which, whilst being the opposite of the first movement of op. 101, is also related to it and its examination of the possibilities of combining a dynamic form with a lyrical expression. The form of this moment follows faithfully the form of a two-part adagio-form, but combines a lyrical form with a dynamic expression. I believe that this form is one of the reasons that the expression here, in spite of the tempo and minor key, is never experienced as truly dramatic. It comes over more like a story told at break-neck speed, almost imitating a child who is overeager to relate an exiting experience which has only just occurred, and cannot get the words out fast enough. The singable and almost ballad-like are in evidence throughout.

But there is more to come. The bass line in the first part of FT, (bars 1-8, indication *ben marcato*), is no less than a variation of the declining scale from the opening of the first movement:

Ex.6



This motif, which, as in the first movement, is developed further in the Ca, (from bar 57, and from bar 158):

Ex.7



the transition, Bar (70-104):

Ex.8



and, not least in the coda where bars 3-4 are abstracted to create a rhythmic signal, (bars 166-169, and in the two last bars):

Ex.9



In the FT of the repeat it even gets promoted to the upper voice, (bars 112-119):

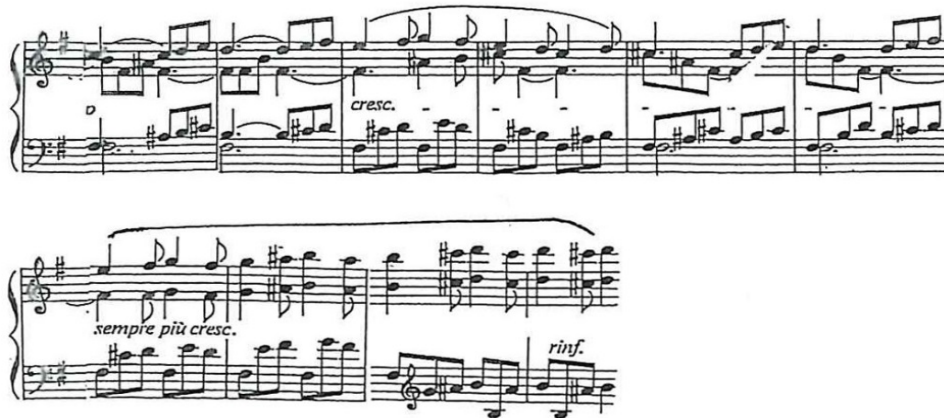
Ex.10



If one examines the relationship between the FT and ST one discovers that whilst the FT is based on a triad structure, as in the FT in the first movement, so is the melodic outline of the

ST a scale, in other words a vertical relationship from the first movement which is spread out horizontally in this movement:

Ex.11



The interrelationship between the movements is underlined by the fact that Beethoven indicates that the last chord of the first movement be sustained by the pedal until the first note of the second movement is played.

If anyone is in doubt as to how far Beethoven is willing to go in order to vary a motif or theme, just study the following last movement. A wonderfully beautiful theme is followed by six variations, which, while never straying from basic idea of presenting happiness in all its manifestations, exhibit an almost unbelievable expressive richness, and represents a positive counterpart to the slow movement in op. 106.

Let us first examine the theme:

Ex.12



Listening to the passage up to, and including bar 11, we hear the hallmarks of a tripartite Lied-form, namely an eight bar A section in the tonic followed by a B section in the dominant until an unexpected turn to the parallel dominant in bar 12, and four concluding bars which are built on the four previous ones, makes us admit that we are dealing with a combination of two eight bar periods, AB form, in other words a bipartite Lied form. We recognize the

triad intervals from the first movement, in the melody of the opening of the theme, and maybe also in the scale movements in the bass, this time rising and *legato*. We may perhaps, if we listen carefully, also discover that the melody in the A section on the whole moves in broken triads, whilst in the B section it moves, on the whole, step by step. One could be tempted to say that the theme itself is a variation in the form of a summing up of the previous movements. Thus the theme acquires an additional function, and becomes, not only a beautiful point of departure for a series of variations, but also a collector of loose threads. In addition to this, it also brings us back to the opening, and to the work's fundamental idea of Light and Happiness. The second movement remains, expressively, an intermezzo. The out-of-control child is now sitting calmly in the bosom of its family.

The variations follow the principle of the *variation's motif*, being a motif, or structure, melodic, or harmonic, which is particular to the individual variation, and which is combined with motivic material from the theme. A lay out of these motifs or structures could look like this:

Var. 1: Calm, *Ländler*-like left hand.

Var. 2: Two variations rolled into one - first: part-variation, complimentary rhythm, second: part-variation, imitation, regular quaver chords, after a while acting alternately.

Var. 3: Semiquavers against quavers.

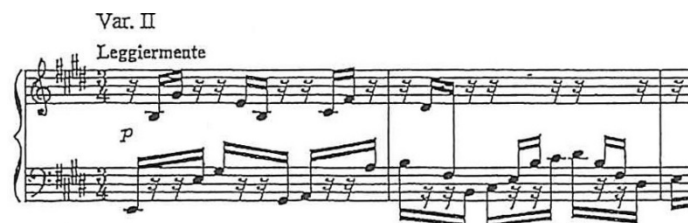
Var. 4: Imitation of two parallel motifs.

Var. 5: Polyphonic structure, later *staccato* quavers.

Var. 6: Pedal point on *b*, which moves from crotchets to trills.

Never the less, nothing in this tells us anything about how the theme itself, is varied. This happens mainly, but not exclusively, by means of the transformation of one short motif, (from the theme), into another. This is done by keeping the pitches, but varying the rhythm and character, and allowing this new motif to stamp its mark on the variation. The melodic passages in the variations can, in this way, appear quite altered from the way they appeared in the theme, depending on how the newly created motif develops, but the harmonic progressions is, on the whole, retained, preserving in this way the relationship between theme and variation. An expressive *arioso* is created in var.1 stemming from the more contemplative theme. This is achieved by extending the distance between the intervals and register in the melody, and considerably increasing the distance between the melody and the accompaniment. The one part- variation in the graceful second variation, involves the fragmentation of its chord-like character, whilst the melodic element is perceived as unchanged:

Ex.13



The second part-variation, (from bar 9), is constructed on a motif which is an ornamentation of the first, second and fourth notes, which are imitated in a stepwise movement, before this in turn is varied in the form of alternating chords (see ex.14 next page) :

Ex.14

Note what happens in bar 25 where imitation is no longer stepwise, even though the theme, in the equivalent place, *is* so. We meet once more the same playful treatment of triads and scales as previously:

Ex.15

The energetic and light-hearted third variation abstracts the theme's thirds into lines consisting solely of ascending and descending thirds until the scale-movement gradually take over. All of this done as concisely and as focused as possible:

Ex.16

Var. III
Allegro vivace

The first part of the sensual fourth variation lets the *grazioso* motif hemiologically rewrite the falling motif of thirds which weaves itself around a motif built on the theme's second, third and fourth notes (in the order 2-1-3-1-4). This is developed in all the voices:

Ex.17

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

piacevole

The B part simplifies the structure, and allows the semi-quavers to lead.

The first five notes in the vivacious and self-conscious fifth variation form a new, rhythmically pithy motif, which is well suited for imitation. All this whilst the bass voice insists on its stepwise, rising thirds:

Ex.18



Energetic quavers moving in scales eventually appear. The melodic outline of the theme is abandoned in the varied repeat of part B (itself being repeated – *p*, like an echo) in favour of a derivative from the introductory rhythmic motif, now with a falling leap of a sixth, whilst the quavers go over to describing broken chords:

Ex.19



Wide leaps in the melody line mark the end of this part, in contrast to the stepwise motions in the first part, and in jovial contrast to the theme.

Often, when Beethoven writes works in variation form, one notices a super-structure which binds together groups of variations in order to form a dynamic form progression. That is not the case here. In fact the form of the movement is almost static in nature, where each variation appears like a cross-section of the whole entity. Does this diminish our interest? Not at all! Quite the opposite; the non-dynamic form supports the fundamental idea on which the movement is based: the attainment of happiness. Variation 6, which really just describes a single dominant chord, coupled with ever-increasing expectations, may, in a form such as this, uncontroversially, and without fear of appearing as a cliché, lead us back to an almost unchanged repeat of the theme which leaves us in a state of contemplation and complete harmony.

- - -

A possibly controversial, though not unimportant detail; I am fairly sure that the transition between bars 16 and 17 in variation no.6 of the third movement does not imply a new metre. In other words, the four demisemiquavers still correspond to a normal quaver, and not a triplet quaver, as is often asserted. A similar situation occurs between the second and third variation in the second movement of opus 111. This will be discussed in the appropriate chapter.

SONATA in A-flat op. 110

We are served yet another lyrical first movement, only this time in a clearly recognizable sonata form: FT bars 1(5?)-11, MT bars 12-19, ST bars 20-27, Ca bars 28-39, D bars 40-55, repeat bars 46-104, C bar 105 to end. Yet here again, going against the sonata form's usual symmetry, one finds a less distinct course of events reaching throughout the movement and even, as will be shown, transgressing the boundaries of the separate movements. This being the case, we still find clear passages which traverse the symmetry of the sonata form, albeit less obviously, and which will reappear later transgressing the boundaries of the separate movements. A certain wonderment is created already at the start: are the first four bars an introduction to a FT in bar 5? The pause and trill in bar 4, the evenly flowing accompaniment from bar 5 would seem to suggest this, FT becomes in this case, an 8-bars sats (with curtailed fragmentation.) There is, at the same time, a strong affinity, both rhythmically and concerning the intervals, between bar 1-2, and bars 5-6, which may well allow us to hear the first eleven bars as an extended 8(4+7)-bar period:

Ex.1

This hangs, for the time being, in the air. MT then presents a gossamer-light two bar motif in demisemi-quavers:

Ex.2

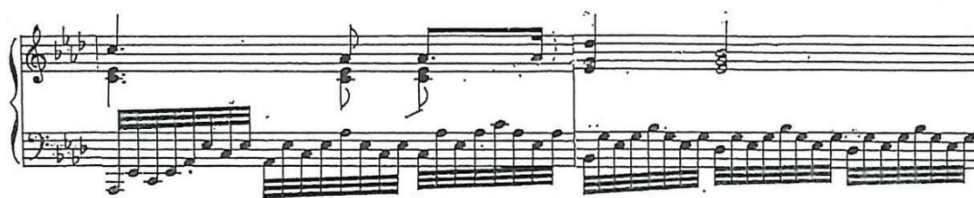
which develops, rises and modulates to a *subito p* ST. The rest of the exposition poses no mysteries, alternating, as it does, between the lyrical and the energetically expressive.

The entire exposition reminds one of the atmosphere from op. 109, brightness, amicability and freedom from conflict. However, something which is not immediately perceived, is the means by which Beethoven achieves this atmosphere. Until bar 40 we do not encounter one single functional minor chord. Almost as if flagging a program, the light major character is established. (Beethoven, with the same goal in mind, does the same thing for the same purpose during the entire course of the first movement of his sixth symphony.)

As we hear the start of the D, (bars 40-43), two things become evident: the spell of the major chord is broken, and bars 1-4, which I will hereafter refer to as m1 will come to have a greater significance than a beautiful forerunner to the main theme would seem to suggest. m1 becomes the motivic material in three sequenced 4-bar phrases, (bars 44-55), now as if sleep walking, and directionless. The spell is broken; the thread is lost, lost that is until we almost stumble over the main key of A-flat, and the repeat can start.

Now it is no longer possible to doubt; m1 is a constituent of FT, and the character of forerunner is gone:

Ex.3



The demisemiquavers of the MT participate, and thereby is transformed from a transition figure to a more and more jubilant counterpoint to FT. m1 is repeated in a curtailed, sequenced repeat, and forms an eight-bar period with itself, but this is before it becomes clear that the jubilation is premature. It is impossible to stop the modulatory process from the D since the main key was not reinstated convincingly enough, (we remember this from op. 106), and the rest of FT is presented in D-flat. We lose the thread once more, the theme gets lost in the distant key of E, we get MT, which this time does not modulate, and even an initiated ST, (bars 76-77), in the same key, before the music seems to notice that something is wrong, breaks off, and tries to save the situation. The modulation (if one can call it that) from E to A-flat which takes place between bars 77 and 78, is one of the most bizarre occurrences in the entire movement. (Haydn, who was one of Beethoven's teachers, would have shaken his head in disbelief!):

Ex.4



It is not possible to return to the main key in a more unconvincing way, and this remains an unsolved problem throughout the remainder of the repeat, which is essentially the same as it was the first time round. After the demisemiquaver-motif embarks upon a new, jubilant expression at the start of the Ca, (bars 105-110), we are, once more, cheated out of its climax in that the movement finishes in an atmosphere of reflection after bar 111. The last three-bar phrase, (bars 114-116), introduces a chord of the dominant seventh with a diminished ninth over an *a-flat* pedal point, (something which, in this major landscape, creates quite a painful dissonance), together with the two short tonic-chords which finish the movement,

appear more to be holding their breath rather breathing out. The movement demands a continuation:

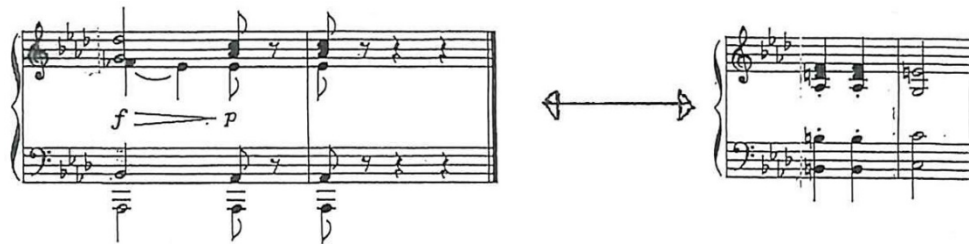
Ex.5



However, the second movement, in scherzo form, brings no solution. This movement, with its almost trivial FT, (bars 1-8, apparently a street song sung by Vienna's street boys), and its rather unsophisticated, strophic form, comes as a provocation to the illuminated and elevated which, in spite of everything, dominated the first movement. The trio's surreal play with quavers, syncopation and asymmetrical **ff**-outbursts don't help either.

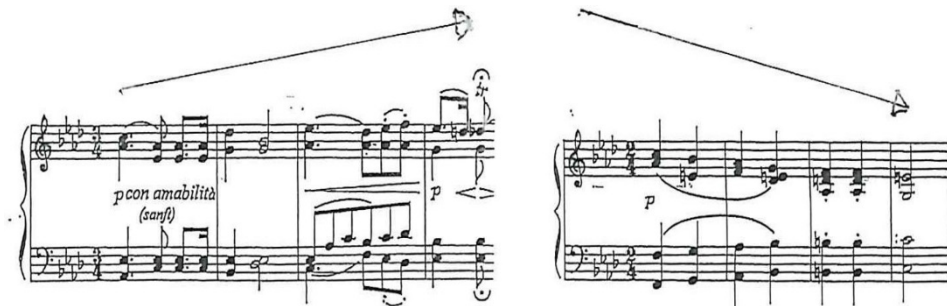
We have to look beneath the surface here to find the sophistication, and it is found in the retrospective associations. The motif in bars 3-4, which is a characteristic and recognizable attribute of the scherzo part, is in fact, a rhythmic retrograde of the first movement's two last bars:

Ex.6



Even more significantly, the first four bars of the second movement are a simplified inversion of the first four bars of the first movement (m1). This beautiful motif is here debased:

Ex.7



After four aggressive **sf** strikes, the movement fades out in a spread out F-major chord. This chord is retranslated into the dominant of b-flat-minor, and becomes thus an up-beat to the deeply original and multifaceted third movement. This movement must now relate to the state of conflict, subtly hinted at in the first movement, and exposed in the second movement. The external form may, as in the first movement of op. 109, be interpreted as a hybrid of two types of movement, in this case an *adagio* and a fugue, both repeated and with a concluding Ca. (Czerny misunderstood this, and labeled the fugue as a fourth movement.)

Does this represent a superficial attempt at creating an original formal model? No. The progression of the movement is a necessary result of a musical progression.

Quiet melancholy is brought forth through the *adagio* in bar 1, a ray of light shines through in the second bar, only to be followed by the return of melancholy in bar 3, which prepares for the recitative in bar 4. That which has transpired is commented upon as if it were a *vox humana*, and something here that moves us, is the fact that the notes in the recitative are taken from the inverted m1 in FT1 of the second movement, although not in its entirety, and hardly recognizable, but still characterized by the hesitant, almost stuttering repetition of this motif:

Ex.8

The image shows a musical score for a piano accompaniment. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into two sections. The first section, labeled 'Recitativo', starts in bar 1 and ends in bar 3. The second section, labeled 'più adagio', starts in bar 4 and ends in bar 6. There are some markings above the notes, including a '6' above a sixteenth-note group in bar 4 and a '5' above a sixteenth-note group in bar 5. There are also some markings below the bass staff, including a '22' and an asterisk '*'.

At the start of the following lament, (bars 9-10), we hear this association very clearly:

Ex.9

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and piano accompaniment. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has a vocal line on top and a piano accompaniment on the bottom. The second system has a vocal line on top and a piano accompaniment on the bottom. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into two sections. The first section, labeled 'Klagender Gesang', starts in bar 9 and ends in bar 10. The second section, labeled 'Arioso dolente', starts in bar 11 and ends in bar 26. There are some markings above the vocal line, including a 'p' and a 'p'. There are also some markings below the piano accompaniment, including a 'p'.

In other words, the vulgarized/debased m1 is sublimated to a lament over itself and its fate. The *Arioso*, (bars 9-24), may be seen as being strophic, in four bar phrases, or else as a two part Lied, (8+8), and finishing like a refrain in bars 25-26.

A suggested retrograde of the refrain allows the m1 to be resurrected in its original form, only now as the theme of the fugue, (up-beat to bars 27-30), only ascetically reduced to its core notes, deprived of its captivating rhythmic plasticity and ornamentation (see ex.10 next page):

Ex.10

Fuga
Allegro ma non troppo

The image shows a musical score for a fugue. It consists of two systems of staves. The top system is in G minor (two flats) and 3/4 time. It features a treble and bass clef. The music includes dynamics such as *dim.* (diminuendo), *pp* (pianissimo), and *p* (piano). There are also markings for *32* and *33* in the bass line. The bottom system continues the piece, marked *p con amabilità (sarf)* and *p*. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs.

A rebuilding process starts.

The fugue consists of three parts:

1. (bars 26-65.) In A-flat. Development of the subject in all three voices, (bars 26-40), interlude (bars 40-45), *comes*- (extended), and *dux* entrances, bars 45-51 and 53-57), interlude, and attempt at modulation, (bars 57-62), and *comes* entrance, (bars 62-66.) There follows an interlude which attempts to modulate, (bars 66-72.)
2. (bars 73-101.) In c, and later in D-flat. *Comes*-entrance, greatly extended and later on modulating, in c (bars 73-81), interlude, modulating to D-flat, (bars 81-87), *dux* and *comes* in D-flat, (bars 81-87), entrance to *stretto* of *comes*, (bars 87-95), episode and pedal point on the dominant to A-flat, (bars 95-101.)
3. (bars 101-114.) In A-flat. *Comes* statement, again with an episode to *stretto*, (bars 101-105), *stretto* of extended and accelerated *comes* (bars 105-109), half cadence to the dominant, (bars 109-114.)

The counterparts to the subject in the first development, together with the subject itself, comprise the departure point for almost all of the melodic material in this fugue. Thus it acquires an economy of means which could be compared with that of the B-flat fugue from *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Vol.I*. But still, the expression is not, with the exception of the c-minor entrance, strict. It is sooner generous and poised, harmonious and reconciliatory; in other word, all that the second movement was not. It rises to a great climax in the third part, and we prepare ourselves for a powerful conclusion, may be somewhat in the manner of Handel's oratorio fugues. Here m1 is to receive its reparation! Instead, we hear a *diminuendo* and then a totally unexpected modulation (bars 110-113). As a result of the interrupted cadence in bar 114, we find ourselves in the key of g, a semi-tone too low, symbolizing powerless deflation. The lament is intoned once more in bar 116, albeit

fragmented, and having lost its ability to sustain longer lines or continuity. The laborious efforts of the fugue to reconcile the conflict which arose between the first and second movements, seems to have been in vain:

Ex.11

The musical score for Ex.11 consists of four systems of piano and vocal staves. The first system shows a piano introduction with dynamics *f* and *ff*. The second system includes dynamics *f*, *ff*, and *dim.*, with a trill (*tr*) in the vocal line. The third system is marked "L'istesso tempo di Arioso" and includes dynamics *p*, *cresc.*, and *dim.*. The fourth system includes the lyrics "Ermattet, klagend / Perdendo le forze, dolente" and dynamics *p*, *dim.*, and *cresc.*. The score concludes with a double bar line and a fermata.

If the reader sits down at the piano, and attempts to create a conventional conclusion to the fugue, and with that a conclusion to op. 110 as a whole, I think that one would find it credible that the fugue could satisfactorily end here. In this way it would at least attain a more or less traditional overall form. At the same time, this would leave one with a certain feeling of dissatisfaction, perhaps also an experience of imbalance, and this not only because the listener already knows the outcome. We find ourselves, in fact, in a similar situation to that of the third part of the fugue in op.106; the attempt at reconciliation is arrived at too early, the weight of previous events is too great, and besides, there is something missing. Once more a continuation is forced upon us.

De profundis, instead of the expected minor conclusion, a shapeless G-major gradually emerges from bar 132, almost impressionistically it becomes brighter and is thinned out in bars 135-136, and we are anew presented with the fugue subject, (bars 136-140), only this time in the inversion and *una corda*:

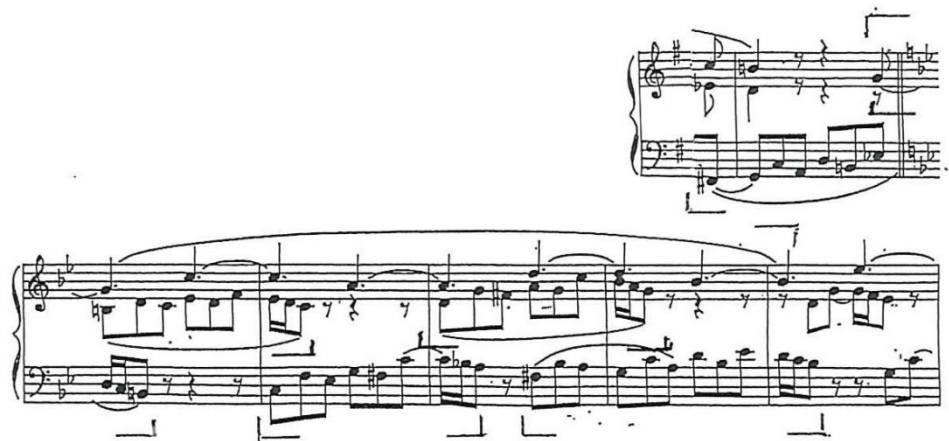
Ex.12

The musical score for Ex.12 shows piano and vocal staves. The piano part is marked "sempre una corda". The vocal part includes the lyrics "L'istesso tempo della Fuga poi a poi di nuovo vivente / Nach und nach wieder auflebend" and "L'inversione della Fuga. Die Umkehrung der Fuge." The score concludes with a double bar line and a fermata.

This is the missing link, the inversion of m1, which was the point of departure for FS in the second movement and for the lament in the third movement, had to be completely changed. The fugue appears now in a purified state, delicate, bright and cheerful, and the new fugue thus introduced, is able to collect itself together, and serve the listener with a jubilant conclusion.

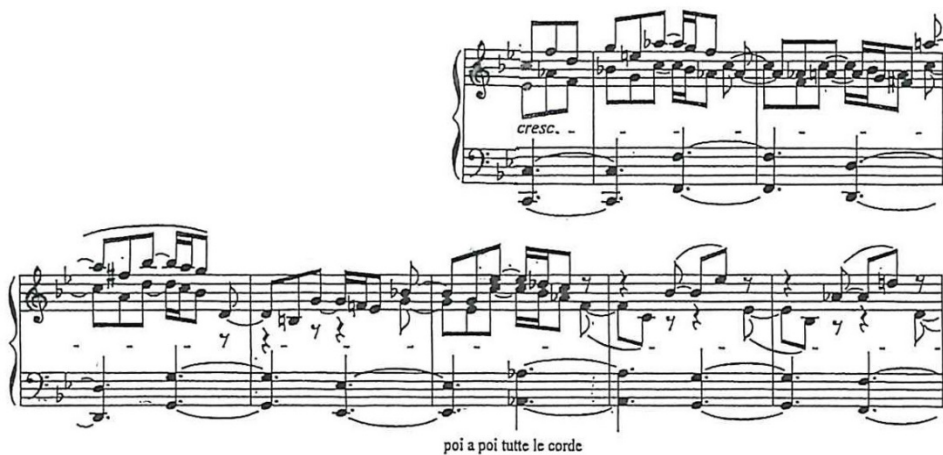
The way in which this is achieved, is extremely interesting: after the subject has been given in all the voices, we are presented with yet another varied statement of the *comes* in G, harmonized in c-minor, c-minor becoming the main key. The "strict" moment in the first fugue was in c-minor, but here the strictness is just a memory, and strange things begin to happen: The fugue's original subject appears thrice diminished, and later abbreviated, (bars 152-160), in the stretto between two voices, and is gradually abstracted until it only describes the subject's movement. The fugue subject, thrice diminished from its original form and gradually shortened (bars 160-168), appears in the stretto between two voices. It is gradually abstracted to the extent that it ends up only describing the direction of the subject's movement. The upper voice works in counterpoint with *comes* in syncopated augmentation:

Ex.13



The next phrase, (bars 160-168), brings the diminished subject into parallel movement, and with new abridgments in two voices, while the lower voice brings the *dux*, syncopated and augmented:

Ex.14



This involves a quite audible acceleration of the musical progression, as described in the title of this fugue: *nach und nach wieder auflebend*. An opportunity arises at the end of the *dux*-statement, for a new modulation to E-flat, in a calmer tempo, but with a new subject acceleration. The subject is now diminished six times, and in addition curtailed and abstracted furthermore; also it dances with increasing merriness around the mid-voice's almost unrecognizable version of the subject statement, in the original note values, (bars 168-174):

Ex.15

The E-flat modulates to A-flat, the tempo increases, and we are, at last, ready for the restitution of *m1* with intonations of the fugue subject in its original form and key (bar 174 and to the end):

Ex.16

And the semiquavers contribute. These note values, from the time they are introduced in bar 168 and until the end of the movement, abstract the subject more and more, and in a continuously accelerating tempo. It is gradually completely changed into pure movement, in this way adopting more and more the character of the demisemiquaver motif from the first movement, this motif, which several times yearned for a climax which did not arrive, here, at last, achieves its resolution. All the while, the counter voice presents a *dux* (bars 174-178), a *comes* (bars 178-184), a further developed, song-like *dux*, (bars 184-200), and yet another expanded and concluding *dux* statement, (bars 200-209), until the semiquavers,

with the help of the sustain-pedal, form a jubilant tonic chord, utilizing almost the entire range of the piano.

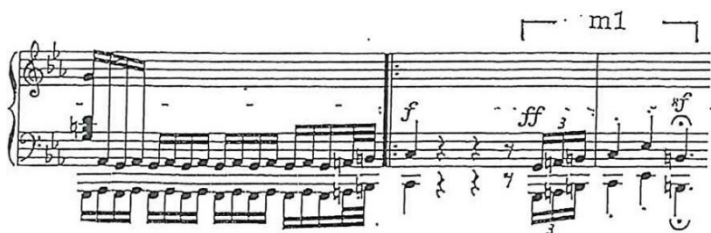
Every note, from bar 152 to the end, is thus derived from the fugue subject, which is, in its turn, a derivative of the motif m1. This motif, which we suspected of being merely a pretty introduction the first time we heard it, turns out in the end to be the pivotal structure of the entire sonata. Thus, form and content melt into one.

SONATA in c op. 111

Chords of the diminished seventh and an accented double dotted rhythm propel us directly into the rugged and disharmonious psychological landscape, which constitutes the first movement of op. 111. The introduction – *maestoso* – and the principal section, – *allegro con brio ed appassionato* – must surely rank together as one of Beethoven's most discontinuous compositions, and we experience a radical correspondence between the music's affect and the way in which it is structured.

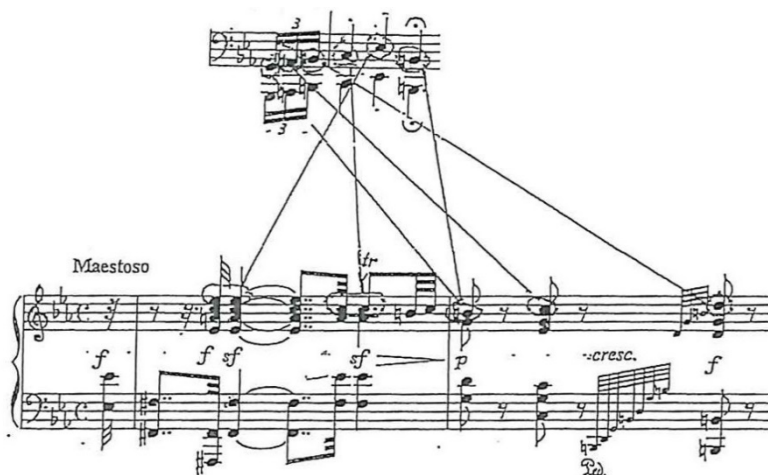
The introduction takes us, with the help of sequencing and fragmentation of the two-bar opening motif, restlessly through a series of tonalities without ever establishing a clear main key. Not until, that is, we arrive at a tonal center of *g*, with an evident dominant function in *c*, (bar 11.) The double-dotting gradually fades away, a deep *g* intones a *pp* trill which rises and accelerates until it culminates on the fundamental *c*. Thereafter a dramatic pause is followed, in *ff* by a short, one part, belligerent and defiant motif, (m1), which is probably the start of the *allegro*'s FT:

Ex.1



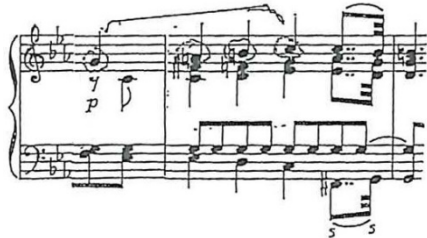
This is the manifest progression of events. However, more things are happening beneath the surface of this introduction. The m1 has a ghost-like presence already from the first bar. The notes *e-flat-c-b* in the opening motif, are a permutation of m1's *c-e-flat-b*, and the upper voice in bar 2 is a transposed hint at m1's up-beat triplet:

Ex.2

Musical notation for Ex.2, showing a piano introduction. The score is in G major, 3/4 time. It features a trill on G in the bass clef, followed by a motif labeled 'm1' in the treble clef. The motif consists of a quarter note G, a quarter note A, and a quarter note B. The notation includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *sf*, *p*, and *cresc.*, and a triplet of eighth notes.

In bars 12 and 14, together with the up-beat, we get a clearer "prediction" - the upper voice's *g-a-b-c*, as an extreme and highly-strung *sostenuto* of the up-beat in m1, before the double dotted rhythm interrupts and deflects:

Ex.3



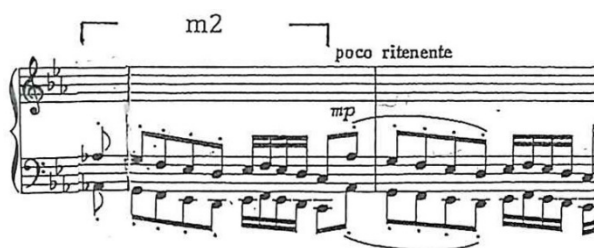
m1 in bar 20 becomes in this way, the audible manifestation of the latency of the introduction, the *maestoso* becomes a process of creation, with the *allegro*'s main motif as the result.

The *allegro* is in sonata form and the schematic layout looks like this: FT (bars 20-35), MT (bars 35-49), ST (bars 50-55), Ca (bars 56-69), D (bars 70-91), repeat (bars 92-149), C (bar 150 to end.)

The following takes place behind this layout:

The newly created m1 is repeated after a *fermata* is then followed by a new, equally defiant motif, (m2, bars 24-26), which, in its turn, is given a *ritenente* repetition,

Ex.4



and this is followed by a section in unison semiquavers, (bars 24-29.) Hidden in this lies the (figured) m2 and the triplet movement from m1, hemiolic, and inverted, (middle of bar 26-27.) The first part of bar 26 comprises a half cadence to the dominant, while the *sforzati* from bar 26 form, in two groups of three, augments the m1's triplets. All is concluded with a descending scale, obliterating all the motivic relationships. One could illustrate the chaotic nature of these bars by drawing new bar-lines. This would give the following pattern: 4/4 + 3 x 2/4 + 2 x 3/4 + 2 x 3/4 + 4/4 (see ex.5 next page):

Ex.5

This independence from a regular meter is a continually recurring distinguishing feature of this movement, and this fragmented section may hardly be classified as a main theme (first theme), in the classical sense of the word.

A renewed attempt at establishing a theme is made in bar 29, this time helped by the harmonization, and an even quaver accompaniment:

Ex.6

The hesitation of m2 interrupts the process once more, and is followed this time by its increasingly more insistent sequencing. The cadence comes, in bar 34, *espressivo*, and again *poco ritenente*, (as if it were a complaint), before the meter is again displaced, and m1, in the middle of bar 35, makes a third attempt at creating a continuous thematic coherence.

This attempt seems to succeed here, m1 and m2, (m2 in figured sequences as in bars 24-25), give, for the first time, impetus and flow to the *allegro*. A counterpoint in quavers, which permeates m1, marks this *fugato* section:

Ex.7

However, we are soon made aware of the fact that we are in the area of modulation, which is made clear by new motif entrances, E-flat and A-flat. Each entrance involves a pronounced interruption of the counter-voice. The structure of this section is three 31/2 bar phrases, (or three times the $3 \times 4/4 + 2/4$), which is something that enhances the "ragged" expression. If it were not for the fact that D-flat protests in the form of a gigantic minim leap in bars 48-49, and that two accented e-flats which arrests movement, it could have continued in a circle of fifths *ad perpetuum*. A ray of sunshine unexpectedly appears in the landscape, in the unusual (for sonata form) subdominant parallel key of A-flat, (bars 50-55.) The polarity of major/minor as a device is completely essential in the introduction of this ST section, which represents tentative hope. Neither here, as in the FT section, do we find any complete theme. The entrance of a motif, (m3), and its ornamented and thereby increasingly more disintegrated *ritardando* repetition is what we hear before the section fades out, and the following pause leaves us insecure:

Ex.8

The musical score for Ex.8 consists of three systems. The first system shows the piano part with a treble clef and a bass clef. It features a series of chords in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. Dynamic markings include *ff*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, and *p*. Performance instructions include *rit.* and *rit.* with asterisks. The second system continues the piano part, with a treble clef and a bass clef. It features a series of chords in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. Dynamic markings include *meno allegro*, *ritar - dan - do*, and *Adagio*. Performance instructions include *ritar - dan - do* and *Adagio*. The third system shows the violin part with a treble clef and a bass clef. It features a series of chords in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. Dynamic markings include *ff*, *sf*, *sf*, and *p*. Performance instructions include *rit.* and *rit.* with asterisks. The score is in the key of A-flat major and 4/4 time.

The spread, diminished seventh chord which introduces the final movement comes as a slap in the face. The Ca, (bars 56-69), retains, truly enough, the major tonality, but it emerges here more in the guise of a sombre triumph than of optimism. m1, in combination with an inversion of m3, reappear, this time in interrupted phrases and with the same ragged independence of the bar lines as previously (see ex.9 next page):

Ex.9

Musical score for Ex.9. It consists of two systems of piano and vocal staves. The piano part features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with dynamic markings of *ff* and *sf*. The vocal part has melodic lines with lyrics 'm1' and 'εω' written below. The key signature has two flats, and the time signature is 4/4.

The ending, (bar 69), turns the signal from bar 50, around, before the whole of this harrowing exposition is repeated and the D, (bars 69b-91), can commence:

Ex.10

Musical score for Ex.10. It shows two piano staves. The left staff has a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *sf*. A double-headed arrow points to the right staff, which shows a similar melodic line with a dynamic marking of *sf*. The key signature has two flats, and the time signature is 4/4.

D is introduced as an echo of Ca, m1 combined with m3, which now sounds exhausted, (bars 72-75), m1 and m2 then attempt the circle of fifths imitation, (bars 76-81), as those which took place in MT, (bars 35-49), but it remains weak. The small remnants of the semiquaver movements which we find here, are unified in bar 82, and gradually impart a renewed energy to m1 for a sequenced building up on an pedal point on g, the dominant of c, where the harmonization of m1 by chords of the diminished seventh create quite harsh dissonances, (bars 86-91.) m1, followed by m2, in the main key, is in fact reached two bars before the fulfillment of the harmonic progression, so that the entrance, in bar 91, attains the character of both recapitulation *and* repeat. Yet another sign of the movement's lack of equilibrium.

The repeat contains a severely curtailed FT part. It is worth noticing the way in which m2 hesitates, twice this time, (bars 94-95) in *ritardando*, and with an heartfelt harmonization; a final plea in the search to find an alternative way?:

Ex.11

Musical score for Ex.11. It consists of two systems of piano and vocal staves. The piano part has a dynamic marking of *p*. The vocal part has lyrics 'ri - tar - dan - do' written above the notes. The key signature has two flats, and the time signature is 4/4.

In vain, the listener is once more tossed out into MT's *fugato* (bars 100-115) which, in bars 108-113 let both voices move in semiquavers as a reinforcement of the shrunken expression. The sunbeam in the form of the Ca part is again resurrected, now in C. The series of events is also the same, so that we, during the pause in bar 121, spontaneously remember the blow from last time, and expect the same continuation.

However, what actually transpires is far more annihilating, and constitutes the tragic high point of the movement; the transformation of m3 from major to minor, at first hinted at, then manifest in the subdominant, (bars 122-131):

Ex.12

The image shows a musical score for two staves. The top staff is for the piano, and the bottom staff is for the violin. The piano part begins with a 'Tempo I' marking. The music features a series of chords and melodic lines. Dynamic markings include 'cresc.' (crescendo), 'p' (piano), and 'pp' (pianissimo). The tempo changes from 'meno allegro' to 'ritar - dan - do' (ritardando). The violin part features a quintuplet ornament in the middle section.

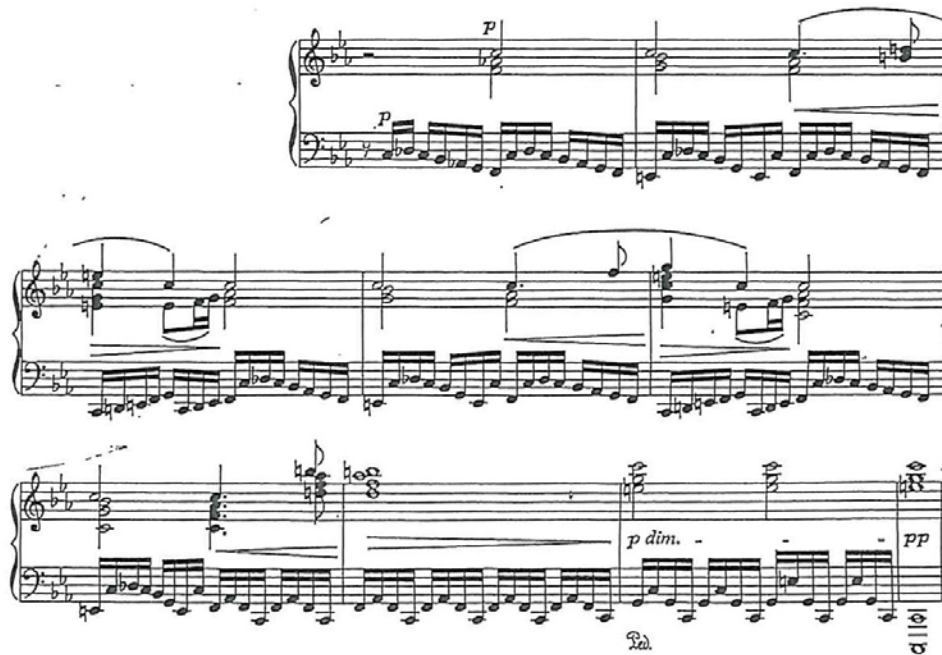
Here, the major/minor polarity is at its most acute, and, in addition to the immediately audible transformation, the subdominant points towards m3's original key of A-flat and negates this; (note the opposite progression in the sixth part of the fugue in op. 106.) The tentative hope expressed in m3, now dissipates. When m3's quintuplet ornament, during the course of bars 128-131, is then gradually transformed into a desperate outcry, the tragedy is further emphasized. The subsequent Ca, (bars 132-149), represents this time an expression of desperation, and four crushing, syncopated blows, built on m1'2 rising thirds, (bars 146-147), consummate the process. Thereafter the blows are toned down, and we are prepared for a conclusion.

The movement concludes in an air of resignation, symbolized by the limp, distinctively subdominant-like coda, (bars 150 to the end.) Further struggle would be in vain, and with a sigh, (bar 156), we are resigned to the situation, and the movement fades out in **pp** - in the major (see ex.13 next page):

Is this the traditional major third in the terminating chord of a piece written in the minor key? The answer is left to the second movement.

The second movement, *adagio molto semplice e cantabile*, is an expansive variation movement in C-major, consisting of a theme, four variations and an extended coda. The theme is written, as it was in the last movement of op. 109, in a bipartite Lied form. The variation technique used here is, at least for Beethoven, rather old-fashioned in that it consists of variations of the ornaments, whilst the melody line and the harmonic progression remain unchanged. The entire movement is marked by simplicity, equilibrium, poise and the absence of conflict and drama. (There exists a manuscript page of this sonata where Beethoven has written: "einfacher, immer einfacher" - simpler, always simpler.) The expression is open, it is what you hear. Here there is no sub-text, as otherwise often is the case in the late sonatas, and the only possible type of variation that could be used in this case, is the one described above.

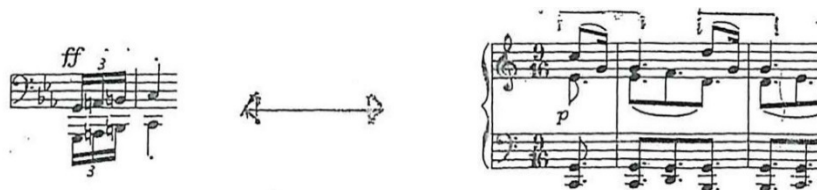
Ex.13



This movement becomes meaningless when removed from its context. In all its parts it is the opposite of the first movement, not only in the major/minor polarity, and the obvious contrast between the dramatic and the lyrical expression. Where the first movement is fragmentary, the second movement is organic. Where the first movement is discontinuous, the second movement is continuous. Where the first movement is more or less a-thematic, the entire second movement is built upon the beautiful *cantilene* theme. Where the phrases in the first movement are irregular and tattered, the second movement moves in long, calm eight-bar periods. Where the first movement modulates, the second movement, with one exception, retains its main key of C throughout.

Do these two movements connect to each other solely by virtue of the fact that they are each other's opposites? I do not believe so, and the key to understanding the connection may be found in the tragic ending to the first movement, with its subsequent resignation. The message could be; desist from further struggle, give up and resign yourself to the situation. Look around, and you will see what an insignificant part of the Cosmos you are. The combatant individual from the first movement becomes a part of the limitless universe of the second movement, and the major-key ending of the first movement becomes a bridge to what follows. We find relationships between the motifs of each movement, which have important symbolic significance; the dramatic triplet up-beat to m1 the first movement, with the interval of *g-c* is transformed into the mild, falling fourth, *c-g*, which is expanded to *d-g* in the opening bars of the theme of the variations:

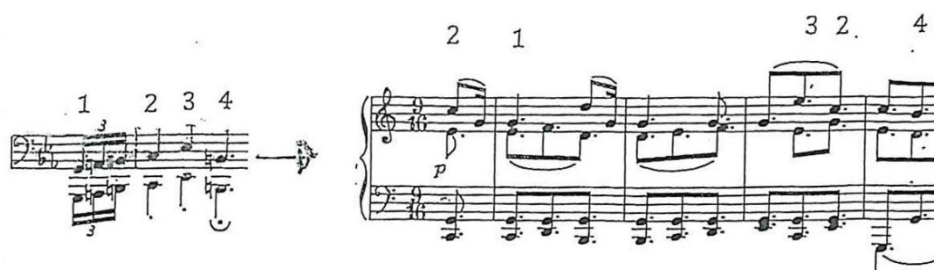
Ex.14



This offers a gripping perspective of the extremely expressive form this motif is given at the conclusion of the movement (see ex.17 page 54):

Furthermore, the notes in the first four bars of the theme of the variations are perceived as a permutation of m1, and symbolizes the entire transformation of this motif:

Ex.15



The progression of the sonata follows, more or less, the following lines: The theme and the first three variations form an increasingly tightly-knit and intricate rhythmic texture, arriving at a vital climax in the third variation. Variation number four, being two variations rolled into one, is almost impressionist-like in its inertness. The last part is gradually expanded and developed out of the inertia towards the coda, which can be said to begin in bar 106. Here, combined with the opening motif, is introduced for the first time, the trill, which is the movement most rapid action, and which makes an important contribution to the expressive nature at the end of the movement. The movement leaves, for the first and only time, the key of C, and modulates to E-flat. An unforgettable moment in bars 118-119 is reached when bars 5 and 6 from the theme is quoted at an enormous distance from the counter melody in the bass. This evokes a feeling of the infinity of the universe, and that which follows is as if it were a reflection of this moment in that the continuation of this quote, (bars 7-8 in the theme), is quoted and sequenced in *espressivo* syncopation, all the time while the movement quietly modulates back to C:

Ex.16



The theme is heard once more in the up-beat to bar 131, and one might hear this as if it were a fifth variation. I, on the other hand, see it as rather being a jubilant repetition of the theme which is further elaborated from bar 146. The first sentence of the theme, expanded and surrounded by *pp* trills, and tremolos, form the ethereal conclusion to the movement where the last word is given to the falling fourth/fifth (see ex.17 next page):

Ex.17

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system shows a melodic line in the right hand and a complex rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The second system starts at measure 170 and features a 'pp' dynamic marking. The third system includes a 'cresc.' marking and dynamic changes from 'sf' to 'p' to 'dim.' to 'pp'.

The movement's fundamental idea makes further analysis redundant, and it would only belie the true nature of the movement: radical simplicity.

There are two controversial places in this sonata, both in the second movement:

1. At the transition to the second variation a change of time signature is notated 9/16 to 6/16, together with the indication *l'istesso tempo*. I am reasonably convinced that this indication means that the three beats in the bar retain their duration, and not that the semiquavers equal each other. (Compare op. 109, third movement, variation number 6, bs 16-17) If the last case were true, then variations number 2 and 3 would last shorter than the theme and the other variations, thus compromising the movement's regularity and balanced architecture.

2. The fourth variation has seemingly tied semiquaver chords in the right hand. I believe this is a notation for "*Bebung*", of the same type as, for instance, in bar 5 of the last movement of op. 110 or bs 164-165 in the third movement of op. 106. This gives the movement a completely isorhythmic character, and seems to be more aligned with its fundamental idea.

CODETTA

Collectively, these sonatas represent, not only a musical, but also a human universe. No motif is too small, no articulation too insignificant to play its part in this universe. Simultaneously, we see how totally fearless the composer is in his search for the necessary musical devices, and how irrespective he is of any aesthetic consequences this may have. He makes his choices based solely on the criterion that they serve his goal, and that they clarify that which he wishes to express. Herein lies Beethoven's modernity. After immersing oneself in this music, it is my conviction that it becomes impossible to reject contemporary music.

Each of these sonatas build their own individual worlds, with their own unique meaning. We take note that each of these sonatas, with the exception of op.109, have their "accident point": the fugato in op.101, the b-minor shock in op. 106, the second movement in op. 110, and the fate of the second theme in op. 111, and that they all end optimistically. One may choose to characterize the message implied here, as being naïve, but, never the less, one cannot avoid being gripped by Beethoven's handling of the sheer musical material. There is no pre-existing, extra musical programs for these sonatas. However, the way in which the ideas are structured, the manner in which the phrases are formed and relate to each other, how the harmonies, keys, rhythms and dynamics play off each other, this will all resonate within the listener, creating in the listener's imagination the above described progressions and processes.

If I, through these analyses, have managed to show how form and content in Beethoven's music, are two sides of the same thing, and how they fuse together into a higher unity, then my work will not have been in vain.