Conservative and Radical Progressive Compositional Styles in the Music of Robert Schumann, Felix Mendelssohn, and Franz Liszt

BY

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to examine the piano music of Robert Schumann, Felix Mendelssohn, and Franz Liszt to demonstrate conservative and radical progressive compositional techniques that these composers use. I examine their approaches through the lens of each composers' treatment with several elements of composition:

- Virtuosity and Technique
- Sonata Form in the Piano Sonata
- Tonality
- Harmonic Structure

This body of work evolved from my performance preparation of selected piano works by these composers for the recital portion of my degree.

Prominent composers from the early to middle part of the Romantic era are often placed into two categories as composers: Conservative or Radical Progressive. In the case of Schumann and Mendelssohn, they are often labelled as conservatives, whereas Liszt is regarded as a radical progressive.

The principal argument of this thesis concludes that Schumann must not be labelled as a conservative, but a progressive. Although he shared conservative idealisms in his public writings, his compositional approach in these four aspects does not reflect this. For example, Schumann employed a similar technique to Liszt using unconventional transitions between distantly related harmonies; a technique I characterise as functional enharmonic equivalents. This thesis shows that Schumann's approach is original and unique, moving past the barrier of conservativism. Thus, his grouping with the conservatives should be reevaluated.

INTRODUCTION

The nineteenth century was an extraordinary time to be a musician and composer. It was a time that saw one of the most significant evolutions of compositional styles ever seen in music up to that point and led to one of the clearest set of factions within the musical sphere. For my recital, I will be performing music written by three composers who illustrate these changes: Franz Liszt, Robert Schumann, and Felix Mendelssohn. These three composers represent two distinct styles of composition found in the Romantic era: conservative, and radical progressive. In this thesis, I will examine some illustrative elements within these two compositional styles of these composers' works: virtuosity and technical elements, approach to sonata form, and tonality and harmonic structure.

Robert Schumann was born on 8 June 1810 in Zwickau in the Kingdom of Saxony, a province in Napoleonic-era Germany. He originally intended to pursue a career as a pianist, however, due to what was likely the worsening of a chronic form of focal hand dystonia, although it is commonly believed that he constructed a device designed to stretch his hands and increase his reach. No matter the cause, he was unable to pursue such a career, and he dedicated himself to composition. Originally taught by Johann Kuntzsch in high school, he was the taught piano by Friedrich Wieck from age 20, during and after he dropped out of his law studies, which he took due to family pressure. He married Wieck's daughter Clara, a prodigious pianist in her own right in 1840, after years of disputes with Friedrich Wieck regarding such an arrangement. Clara would go on to become one of the most renowned pianists of the Romantic era, and had a profound influence on Schumann's music, who dedicated many of his works to her. The Schumanns had close relationships with fellow composers Felix Mendelssohn and Johannes Brahms and initially with Franz Liszt, until Liszt began to move away into a radical progressive compositional style, of which he is seen as a pioneer.

He was very fond of literature, and many of his compositions featured various kinds of characters. In *Schumann's Doppelgängers,* Judith Chernaik notes that the characters of Florestan and Eusebius appeared in his diary in 1831, and that numerous other characters represented members of his inner circle. Most biographers also consider these characters as representations of his personality traits. His Piano Sonata in F-sharp Minor, Op. 11 which he

published anonymously, is titled 'Pianoforte Sonata, dedicated to Clara by Florestan and Eusebius' shows he most likely treated them that way as well.

From his early 20s until his death, Schumann struggled with mental health issues, with modern diagnoses pointing towards bipolar disorder, which greatly influenced his compositional style. Some of his most well-known works for solo piano are his sets *Album für die Jugend* (Album for the Young) and *Kinderszenen* (Scenes from Childhood), as well as the highly virtuosic *Symphonic Etudes*. In 1854, he composed the *Geistervariationen*, or *Ghost Variations*, his final work, shortly before he attempted to drown himself in the Rhine. He then admitted himself to an insane asylum in Endenich, on the outskirts of Bonn, where he died in 1856 of pneumonia. He is considered one of the greatest composers of the Romantic era, with his works for piano and orchestra being a cornerstone of the Romantic repertoire.

Felix Mendelssohn was born on 3 February 1809 in Hamburg. His family were of Jewish heritage, but Mendelssohn and his three siblings were brought up without any religious practices. A child prodigy, he began having piano lessons with his mother at six. His older sister Fanny also displayed exceptional musical ability from a young age, and the two had piano lessons from Ludwig Berger, a former pupil of Muzio Clementi. After the family moved to Berlin in 1811, he took lessons in counterpoint and composition from Carl Friedrich Zelter, a composer and conductor whom Mendelssohn inherited his love for the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. In fact, one of the defining aspects of Mendelssohn's reputation, is that he is known as the composer who revived contemporary interest in Bach's music. At age 20, he arranged and conducted the Berlin performance of the *St Matthew Passion* in 1829, earning him critical acclaim. It was the first major performance of the *Passion* outside of Leipzig and is seen as the biggest turning point in public and scholarly interest in Bach.

In addition to his work as a composer and conductor, he was the music director in Düsseldorf, and later the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchester. In 1883, he directed the Lower Rhenish Music Festival, performing Handel's *Israel in Egypt* as part of it, where much like his revival of Bach, led to a revival of Handel's music in Germany. He toured widely, giving concerts in Austria, Britain, Germany, and Italy as both a soloist and conductor. Mendelssohn was also one of the founders of the Leipzig Conservatory (now the *Hochschule für Musik und*

Theater) in 1843, the oldest of its kind in Germany. Some of his most well-known works include his numerous volumes of *Lieder ohne Worte* (Songs Without Words), composed between 1829 and 1845, the *Hebrides Overture*, and the *Scottish* and *Italian* symphonies. Amidst his busy and stressful working schedule and a tour of England that left him physically exhausted, he fell ill, and after a series of strokes, died on November 4th, 1847, aged 38, less than 6 months after the death of his older sister.

Franz Liszt was born on 22 October 1810 in Dobojrán, a town part of the Kingdom of Hungary within the Austrian Empire. The Austrian Empire was a European sovereign-state formed in 1804 through the unification of lands still ruled under the House of Habsburg. It was made up primarily of Central and Eastern European countries as the Habsburg's influence had been in steady decline since the early 1700s. Since 1918, the town of Dobojrán has been part of the Burgenland region and now known as Raiding, after coming under Austrian rule by treaty agreement at the end of World War I.

One of Liszt's earliest published compositions was a variation in the set compiled by Anton Diabelli, called the *Vaterländischer Künstlerverein*. In 1819, Anton Diabelli wrote a short, simple theme (as a waltz) and sent it to prominent composers of the time within the borders of the Austrian Empire. He intended to compile a set of variations on this theme into one volume, giving the proceeds to orphans and widows of the Napoleonic Wars. These included Franz Schubert, Carl Czerny, and Johann Hummel. Liszt was only 11 years old and a pupil of Czerny's at the time, providing him an opportunity to compose a variation for Diabelli. Some of his most well-known works for piano include the *Années de Pèlerinage* (Years of Pilgrimage), the *Hungarian Rhapsodies,* and the *Transcendental Etudes*. He was also very capable in writing orchestral music, with some of his most well-known works being tone poems such as *Les Préludes* and *Hungaria.* In fact, he arranged the orchestral parts for Chopin's two piano concerti. In 1846, after a series of very well received tours around Europe, he became disillusioned with the career of a virtuoso, spending significant time away from the piano and concentrating on composition, during which he composed the Years of Pilgrimage. His later years reflect a much more reserved compositional style both musically and technically. He is regarded as one of the great virtuosi of the Romantic era, alongside others including violinist Niccolo Paganini, and one of the greatest pianists in history. He died in 1886 at the age of 74 in Bayreuth, Germany.

The War of the Romantics is a name given to the musical division between several of the well-known musicians and composers in Europe. This division was between the radical progressive and conservative compositional styles. Liszt was the most prominent of the radical progressives, another well-known example being Richard Wagner. Schumann, alongside with Johannes Brahms, founded the *Neue Zeitschrift (*The New Journal of Music) in 1840; a music magazine still in print today that discusses music and compositions. Schumann had maintained relationships at the time with conservative and progressive composers and was an admirer of Liszt. This praise turned to criticism by 1842, as Liszt's celebrity status as one of the great virtuosi grew throughout Europe and his music evolved towards a radical progressive sound.

VIRTUOSITY

A major reason why we see such clear separations in the forms of technical and virtuosic elements present in the music of Liszt compared to Schumann and Mendelssohn is found in the wider context of the prevailing opinions of traditionalist German musicians and composers. In *The Battle of Instrumental Virtuosity,* Dana Gooley discusses how the domestic musical life in Germany was more decentralised than in Vienna. This constituted a different balance of power between professional and amateur musicians and thus, the structure of what Gooley describes as 'musical authority[1]'. The importance of the court musician and composer, and the role of the Kapellmeister remained a central part of the professional musical environment in Germany. Vienna was much more centralised, as one of the musical hubs of Europe as a whole, alongside London and in comparison, Viennese audiences, 'could not even appreciate new orchestral music without it.[2]' This was also because these two cities had a very significant concentration of professional musicians and large venues. There was a much greater separation between the environments of professional compared to amateur music making, as well as the establishment of renowned institutions for training in music.

While the amateur may have purely had their tutelage from private or group lessons from a young age, and not proceed to further education, their music making remaining in the household, the journey of a professional musician went further into these institutes for higher education in musical arts. Schumann and Mendelssohn follow these traditions of musical education, constituting instrumental teaching in addition to work in music theory, and the study of counterpoint at a higher level than amateur. Gooley also discusses how the influential Kapellmeisters, and court musicians described the two different kinds of virtuoso[3]: there was the 'true virtuoso', an instrumentalist with exceptional ability, but also a background in traditional music education, with understanding of music theory, and particularly counterpoint; and then the 'pseudo-virtuoso': the 'merely excellent instrumentalist who might cobble together a simple Italionate concerto[4]'. Schumann's criticism in this perspective, is directed at the kinds of figures found in Liszt's piano music

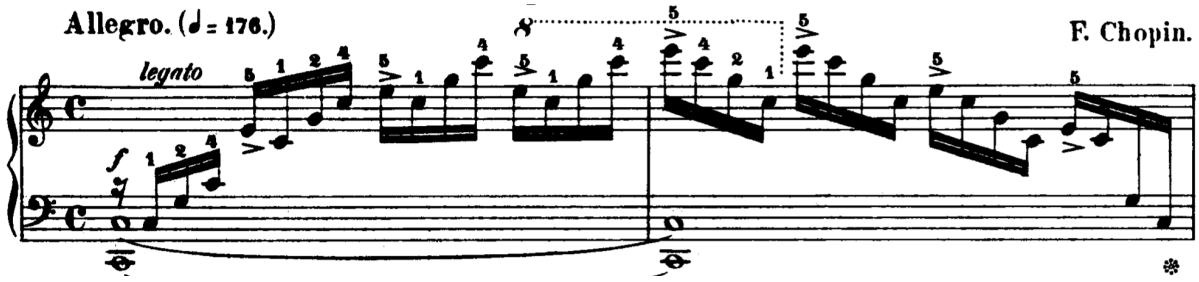
[1] Gooley, Dana, "The Battle Against Instrumental Virtuosity in the Early Nineteenth Century," In *Franz Liszt and His World*, 83
[2] Gooley, Dana, "The Battle Against Instrumental Virtuosity," 75
[3] Gooley, Dana, "The Battle Against Instrumental Virtuosity," 82
[4] Gooley, Dana, "The Battle Against Instrumental Virtuosity," 82

that serve to exhibit an exceptional ability, rather than to add to the music itself. Liszt in this case can be considered a true virtuoso with a background in music theory, and clear compositional ability from solo to orchestral. In fact, this view by the courts was more directed at the 'freelance performers who were springing up everywhere but possessed few traditional credentials, particularly in the area of music theory.

The etude during the Romantic era is a musical form in which one can see this evolution of virtuosity, and the separation between progressive and conservative composers. The etude began as a form whereby a specific technique or figure is repeated but developed musically so as to practise it over a cohesive and interesting piece of music, as opposed to a series of purely exercises like the Hanon set. Carl Czerny provides one of the most comprehensive sets of etudes designed for technical study. It was however, during the Romantic era, that the etude progressed from its role as a study piece for the practice room, to a performance piece for the concert hall.

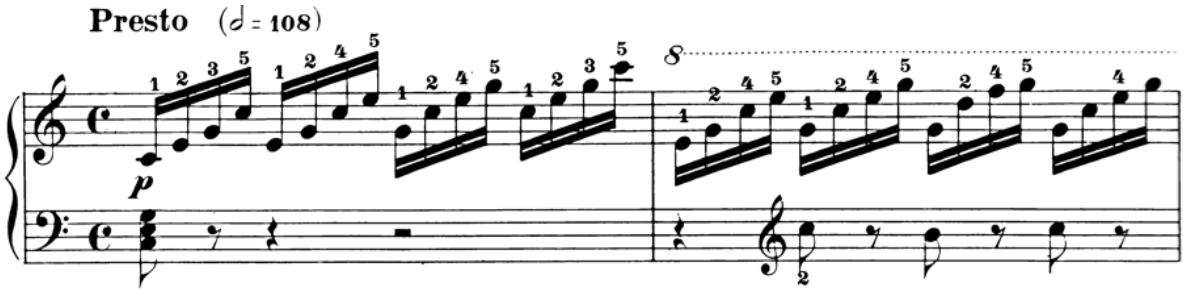
The etude form itself remains clear, but the featured techniques and figures become significantly more difficult and virtuosic. These figures build on the original etudes that focused on practice and repetition to create elaborate melodies phrases beyond a practice regiment. These can be seen in the treatment of arpeggios, scales, and octaves in Romantic era etudes. One example is found in Frederic Chopin's Etude Op. 10 No. 1 in C major, nicknamed 'Waterfall': The rising and falling arpeggios in the right hand moving from the bass clef to a couple of octaves above the treble, accompanied by a simple octave melody in the bass, are made more difficult due to their speed, but particularly due to the span of them.

Fig. 1 (Bars 1 – 2):



In bar 1, the first arpeggio in C major spans a tenth; requiring not only greater technical ability and freedom in the wrist, but also quite a large hand, particularly for the time. Most arpeggios in the etude span the interval of a ninth or more. This is highly evolved in comparison to this example from Czerny below, the third etude from his *School of Velocity* (Schule der Geläufigkeit), Op. 299.

Fig. 2 (Bars 1 – 2):



A more elaborate treatment of scales by Chopin and Moritz Moszkowski reflects the evolution of the etude in the Romantic era. In his Op. 25 No. 2 in F minor, Chopin writes a scalar melody in triplets played presto (Fig. 3) with a simple single note accompaniment in the left hand. Moszkowski provides another example in his Etude Op. 72 No. 1 in E major (Fig. 4). Rapid scales played *Vivace* in E major feature in the right hand, accompanied by an emphatic chordal accompaniment in the left hand.

Fig. 3 (Bars 1 – 3):

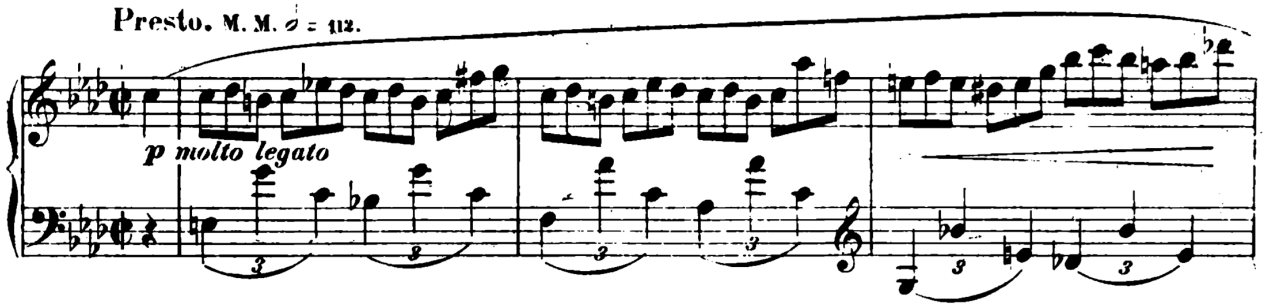
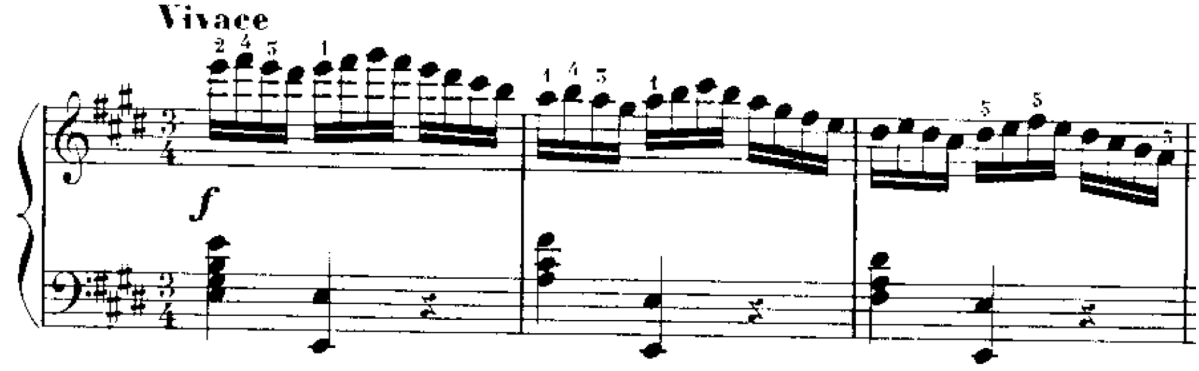


Fig. 4 (Bars 1 – 3):



This shifts to a rapid section of articulated arpeggiated chords from bars 33 – 48 until at bar 49, the main scalar theme is transferred to the left hand in the dominant of B major (V).

Fig. 5 (Bars 33 – 36):

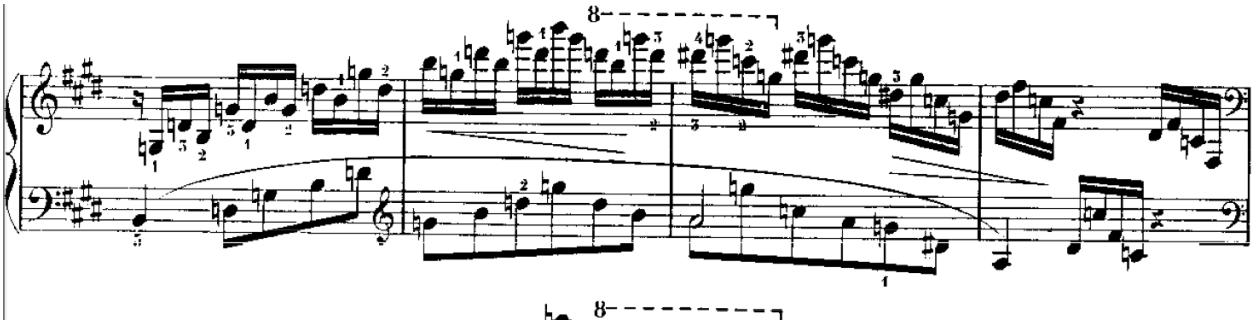
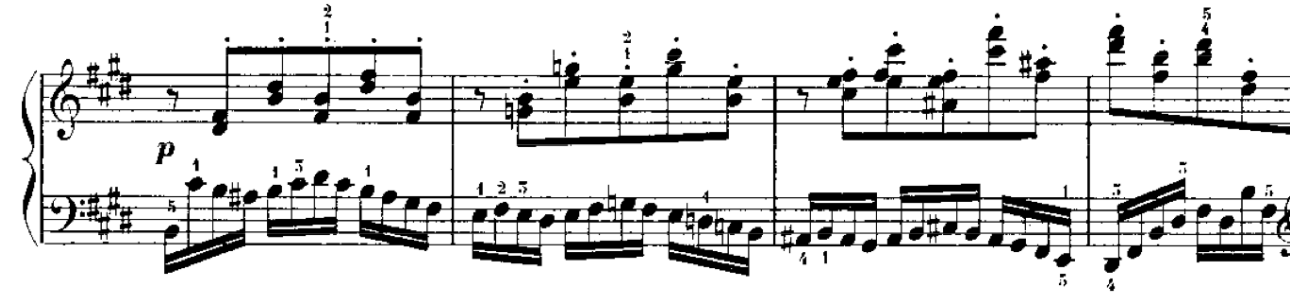
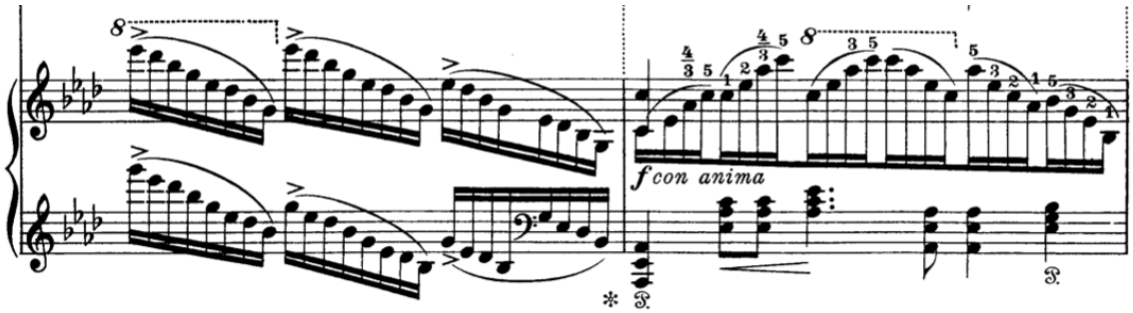


Fig. 6 (Bars 49 – 52):



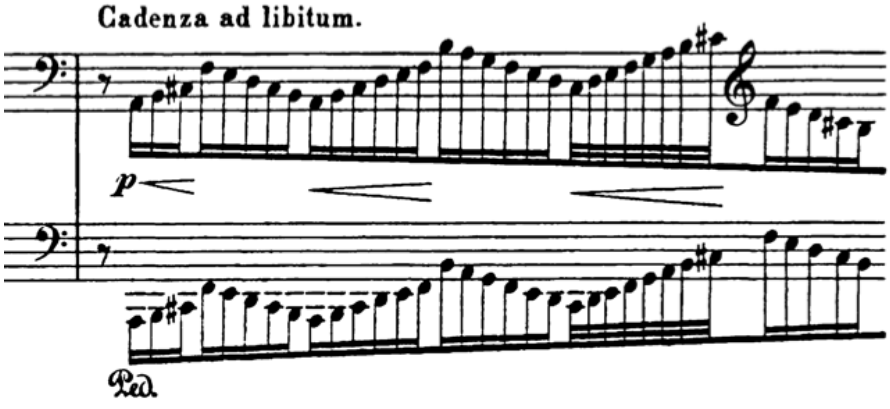
Regarding the music of Franz Liszt, some, although not all of the virtuosity present in his music still serves a musical purpose. In his transcription of Schumann's song Widmung, Liszt looks to add his own touch of brilliance and flair to infuse the passionate performance of the singer into the piano part beyond the original accompaniment. In figure 7, the rapid arpeggios spanning a significant size of the piano's range depicts this very effectively.

Fig. 7 (Bars 48 – 49):



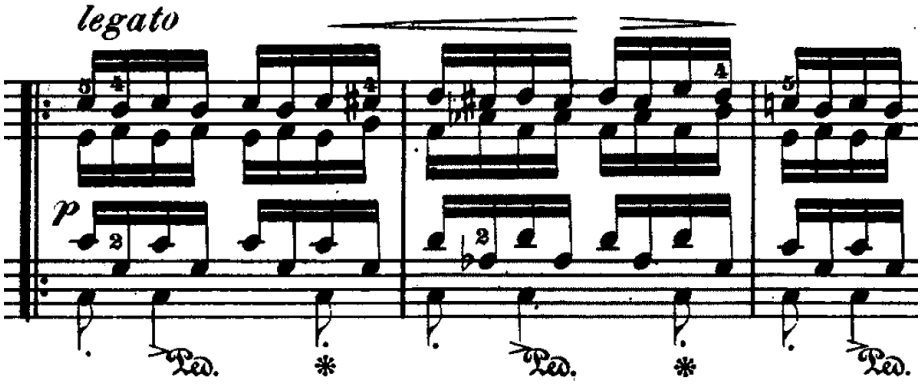
I believe that the context in which these kinds of virtuosic figures are presented is where the principal criticism lies. Fast, rapid figures intended to exhibit a soloist's ability were and still are a fundamental element to cadenzas in solo concerti, but were yet to be realised in the same manner within solo piano music until the time of Chopin's etudes in the early nineteenth century. In an alternative example, his fourth Transcendental Etude, titled 'Mazeppa' contains sections and figures clearly intended to exhibit his virtuosic ability. In figure 8, he incorporates a cadenza made up of very rapid scales moving from the lower registers of the piano up to a climax in the upper register, until a very swift move back down into the fortissimo main theme of the etude in bar 7. From an analytical perspective, this passage serves no musical purpose and does not contribute to the piece's ternary form, but it does serve a sonic one; intended to set up the emphatic beginning of the etude proper.

Fig. 8 (Bar 6):



In the example below (Fig. 9), taken from Schumann's Toccata in C, Op. 7, the main theme, beginning in bar 3, is made up of three voices in semiquavers with a drone-like accompaniment in the bass, making up much of the piece.

Fig. 9 (Bars 3 – 5):



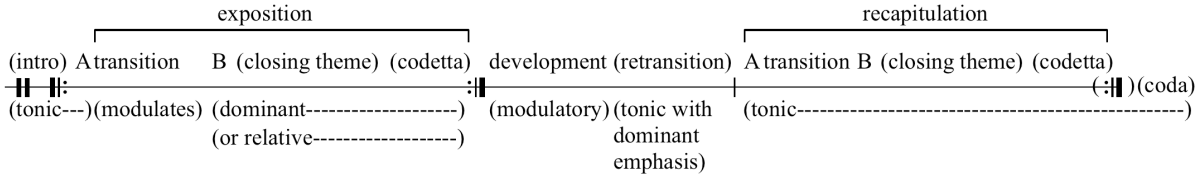
The theme's four distinct voices are independent with clear melody and accompaniment, whilst maintaining a real sense of the counterpoint in this arrangement. In this way, the musical content is in the foreground, and the virtuosity is found in the natural difficulty of the arrangement. This makes sense for Schumann's approach, in that the virtuosity is borne out of the musical content.

The evolution of virtuosity during the nineteenth century also introduced differing perspectives of showmanship in musical performance, which is another centre of the conservative criticism. The existing form of the solo concerto was always used as a way of featuring the technical proficiency of the soloist. However, soloists whose style could be considered progressive began to develop more extroverted personalities on stage. Accounts of Liszt's performances suggest an embracement of showmanship on his part[5]. Lang Lang is likely the best example of a modern-day pianist who embodies the role of a showman, compared to a more visually conservative performer like Evgeny Kissin. However, in modern times, we often associate the persona of the showman with rock musicians rather than classical musicians.

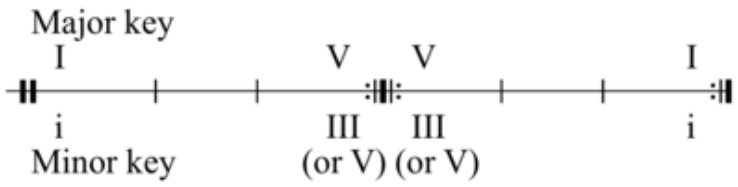
[5] Gooley, Dana, "The Battle Against Instrumental Virtuosity," 84

FORM AND STRUCTURE

I will now examine some of the approaches that Schumann, Mendelssohn and Liszt take to the form and structure of a piece. For simplicity's sake, in this thesis, I will focus on examples of each of their approaches to sonata form. Sonata form is one of the most important musical forms in the entire history of classical music. Much of the music written for arrangements ranging from solo to symphonic from the 18th century, well into the 20th and beyond most often contain movements in sonata form. As shown by the chart below, sonata form constitutes exposition, development, and recapitulation sections:



In classical sonata form set in a major key, the exposition opens in the tonic (I), before modulating and concluding on the dominant (V) and is repeated. In the case of a minor key, the modulation often goes to the relative major (III), although this evolved as Beethoven began to experiment with sonata form. Following this is the development section, whereby versions of main (A and B), transitional, or closing themes (otherwise referred to as the second theme) are modified and developed, frequently tonicizing different keys that are typically relatively close to the tonic; development sections in many classical works often involve a transition into the relative major or minor (III or vi), where thematic material from the exposition is then played. Following this comes a retransition emphasising the dominant (V), preparing the arrival of the tonic (I). The material that follows is typically a repeat of the exposition, this time all in the tonic, with a final coda leading to the music's conclusion. As per the diagram above, sections of the form are often repeated: the exposition on its own, followed by the development and recapitulation repeated as one. This can be most easily seen in the piano sonatas and symphonies of Joseph Haydn, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Sonata form can be viewed as an evolved combination of binary and ternary forms. The following is a chart of basic binary form:



Binary form's thematic structure at its simplest level can be defined as AB, or the first A section, followed by a proceeding B section. In the case of its influence on sonata form, some of the best, and most straight forward works to examine are the keyboard sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti. The A section opens with the main theme of the sonata, transitioning itself harmonically to a half cadence in the dominant of the new key (either V/V or V/III), leading to a modulation to either the dominant (V) or relative major (III) in a major or minor key respectively. Following this is a second theme or codetta theme, this time in the new key. Rather than being a second theme like in sonata form that is developed in some way harmonically, this theme more than anything affirms the new key, hence why I would also refer to it as being a codetta theme. This then leads to a perfect authentic cadence (PAC) in the new key and a repeat. Following this is what can be seen as almost a development section. Scarlatti sometimes shifts immediately to the parallel minor and develops the main and codetta theme through modulation. This then leads to a half cadence in order to set up a modulation to the tonic. Proceeding this, is a repeat of the codetta theme in the tonic, and the conclusion of the piece, with a second repeat.

In a multimovement piano sonata, ternary form is used most frequently in either the second movement of a three-movement, or the second or third of a four-movement sonata. Thematically, it is structured in an ABA form, where unlike binary form, the A section is repeated after the B section. It is otherwise known as song form, since it is frequently used in art song. In comparison to binary form, the A section typically ends in the tonic, rather than concluding in a modulated key. Additionally, the recapitulation of the A section is much clearer, with the beginning of the section clearly stating the main theme, with no alteration to the key of the A section, since it concludes in the tonic. In this way, sonata form is a combination of both binary and ternary forms; the binary form influences in sonata form include a principal theme and modulation to a new key via a half cadence, with a second theme in this new key, as well as a clear development of this thematic material harmonically, whereby the second theme reappears in the tonic. Furthermore, the repeat of both sections in binary form resembles sonata form's repeats of both the exposition, and the development/recapitulation.

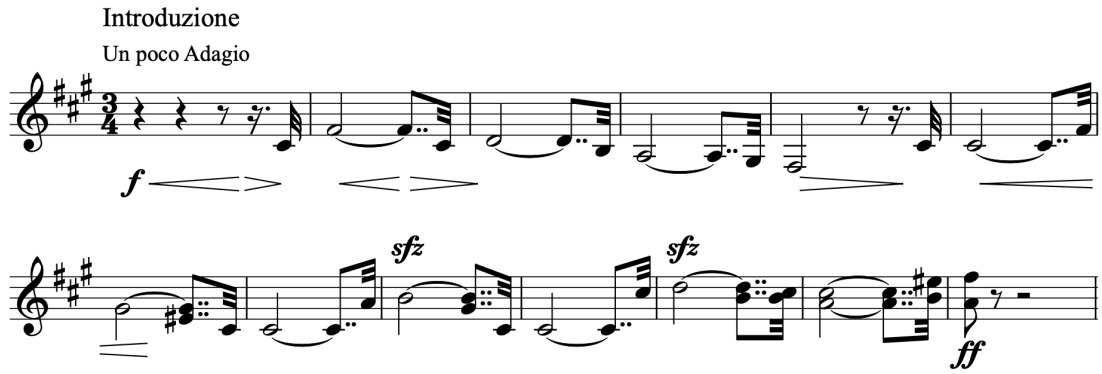
The way many binary forms open the second (B) section as a sort of digression that eventually leads back to the primary theme resembles the way that sonata form development digresses and explores the musical content before arriving at the familiar material of the

recapitulation. The parallel with ternary form lies more in the aural recognisability of three distinct sections in the exposition, development, and recapitulation. The entire form does to a degree, resemble the ABA form, primarily in that the main theme appears (most often) in its original form in the opening and concluding sections, namely, the exposition and recapitulation.

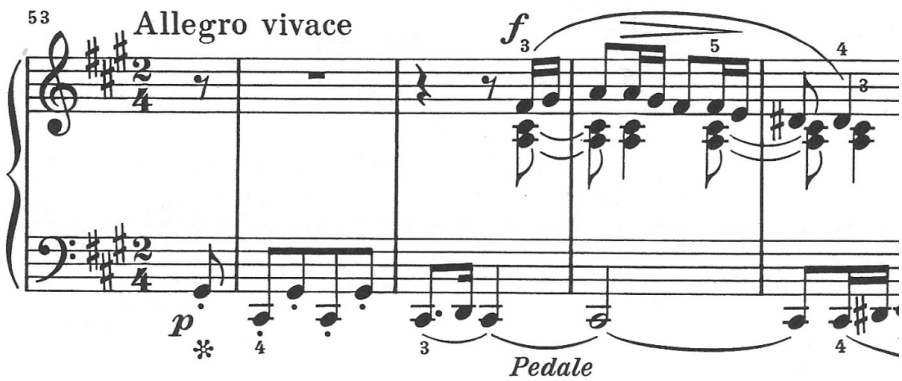
ROBERT SCHUMANN

To compare the approaches to sonata form, I will concentrate on examples from three piano sonatas, one each from Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Liszt. Robert Schumann composed his Piano Sonata in F-sharp Minor, Op. 11 between 1833 – 1835, and published in 1836. His inspiration for this sonata was his future wife, Clara Wieck, and it is known for its relatively unusual structure. This is also the case with his following two sonatas, Op. 22 in G minor and Op. 14 in F minor (the opus numbers confuse the given order) and reflects how I view him as a progressive composer, despite his common labelling as a conservative. Op. 11 is made up of four movements and a standard performance lasts roughly thirty minutes. For this thesis, I will be focusing on the first movement, as it is the only movement in sonata form; the second and third being in ternary form, and the fourth is a large sonata-rondo finale. For my examination of how he approaches sonata form in the first movement, I have broken the movement down into each of the major themes and motifs that he features and develops.

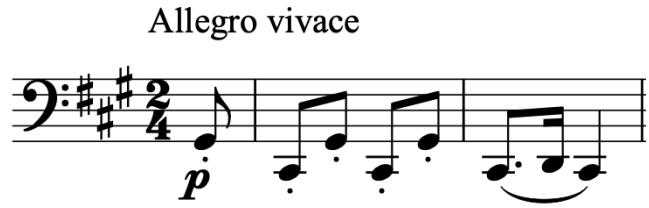
Introduction theme (bars 1 – 13):



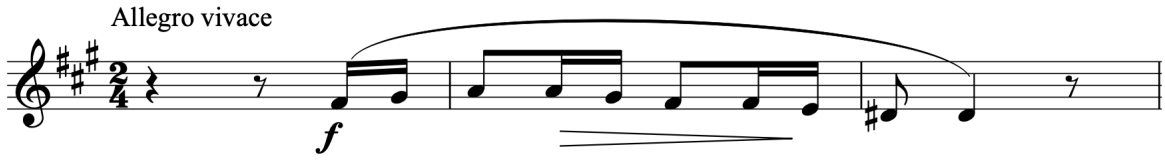
Main theme (bars 53 – 56):



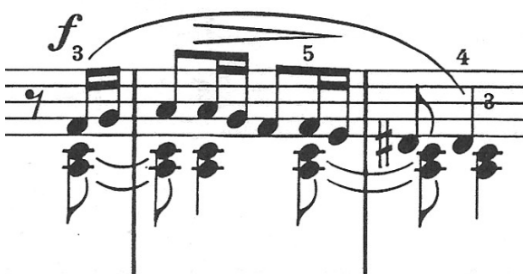
‘Lead-in Motif’ (bars 53 – 54):



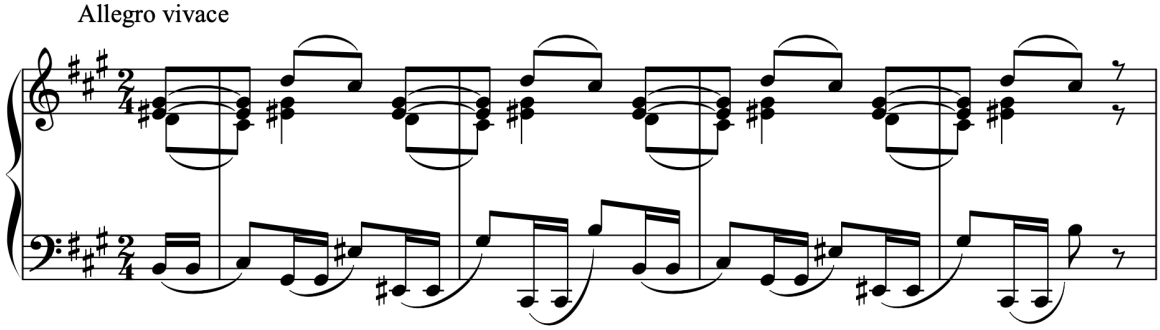
‘Galloping motif’ (isolated) (bars 54 – 56):



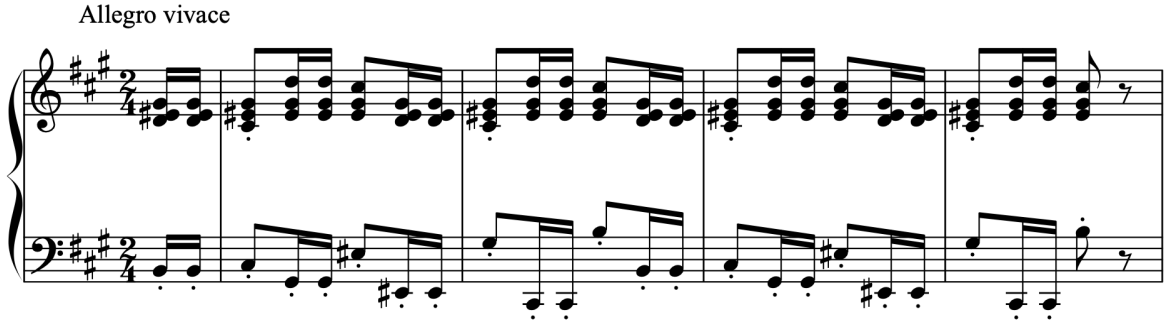
‘Galloping motif’ with syncopated accompaniment:



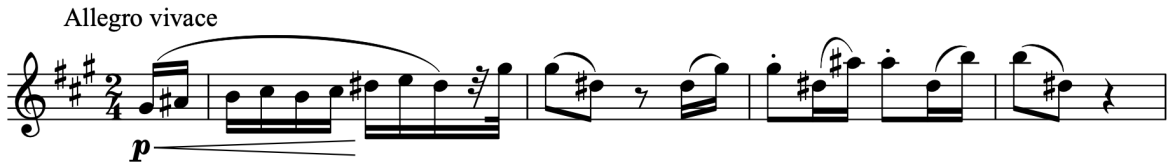
Motif A (bars 68 – 74):



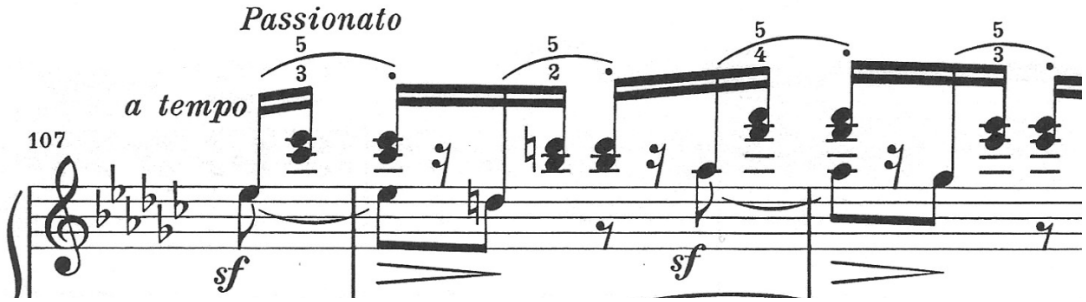
Motif A variation (bars 89 – 94):



Motif B (bars 98 – 102):

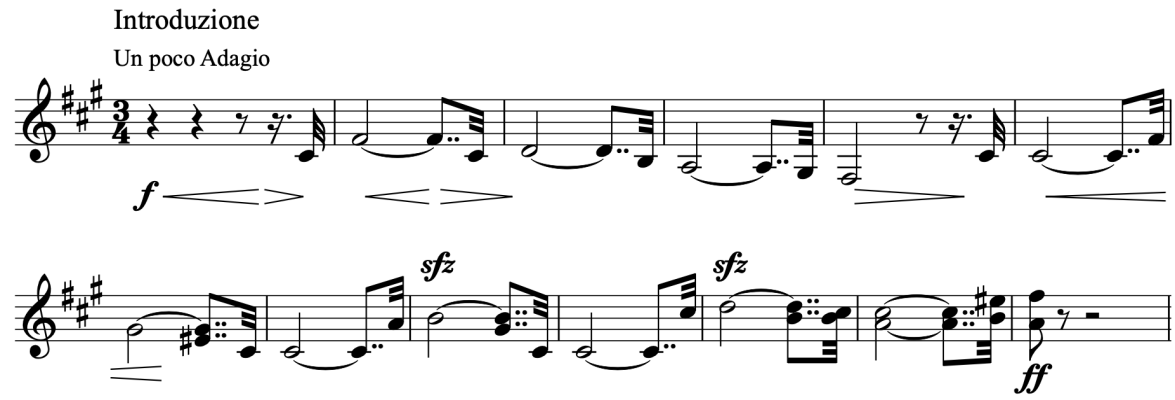


Motif C (bars 107 – 108):



This first movement features a diverse amount of thematic material, with several important themes and numerous motifs that Schumann develops through the entire movement. Additionally, he fragments these themes and motifs, using small melodic and rhythmic ideas from them. This is a common feature in Schumann's music and in longer forms like a sonata, results in a unique form of thematic development that at times, makes the music feel quite fragmented. There is a clear change in sections, and each thematic shift plays an important role in the overarching form of the movement's sonata form. However, the purpose of these sections is not necessarily clear. The movement opens with a slow introduction (Fig. 10) with a long and passionate opening theme in F-sharp minor that very much reflects the personal inspiration behind the sonata.

Fig. 10 (Bars 1 – 13):



The introduction is in a small ternary form, and this theme makes up the A section (bars 1 – 13). The B section (bars 14 - 38) is in the relative major of A (III), beginning with a brief reworking of the introduction theme in A, now in the left hand (bars 14 – 20).

Fig. 11 (Bars 14 – 21):

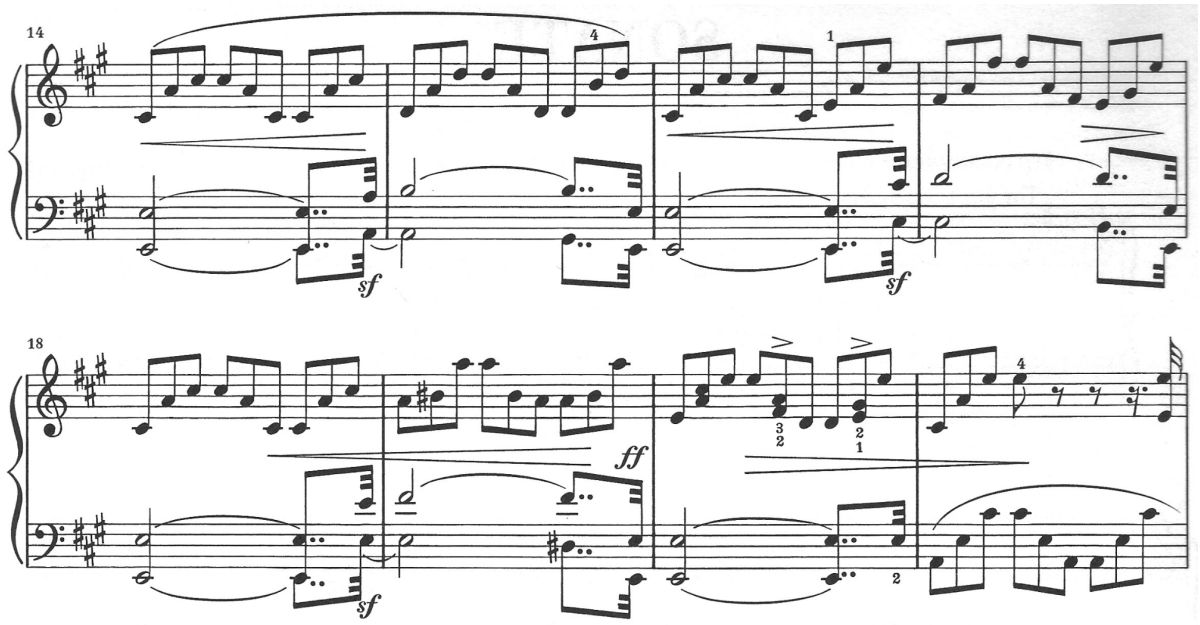
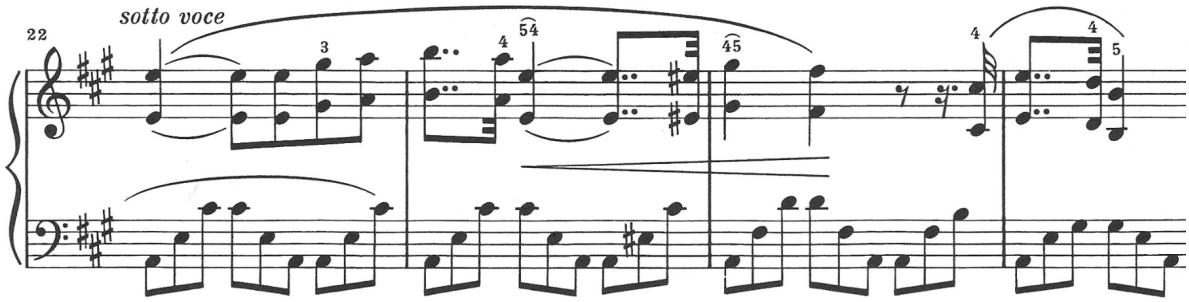


Fig. 12 (Bars 22 – 25):

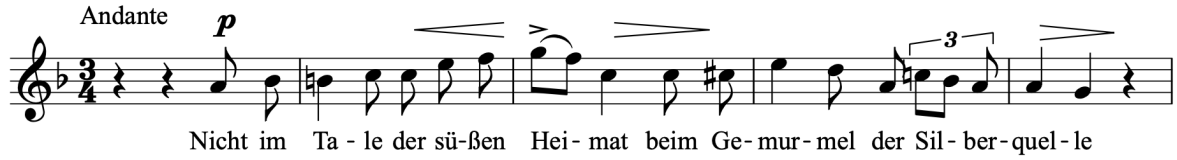
This leads to the appearance of a new *sotto voce* (soft voice) theme:



The introduction theme featured notes held to a value of a minim + double dotted quaver that were contrasted with swift 32nd note upbeats, but the *sotto voce* theme is played with a smoother and less accented legato. It is a slower tempo, with the quiet and smooth melody evoking a sense of Schumann's thoughtful sadness of being unable to be with Clara, in

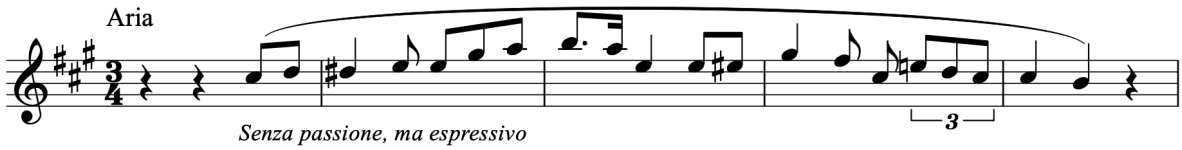
contrast to the anger felt in the opening F# minor. This theme is a variation of the opening melody (Fig. 13) from the song *An Anna,* one of the inspirations for this piece.

Fig. 13 (Bars 1 – 5):



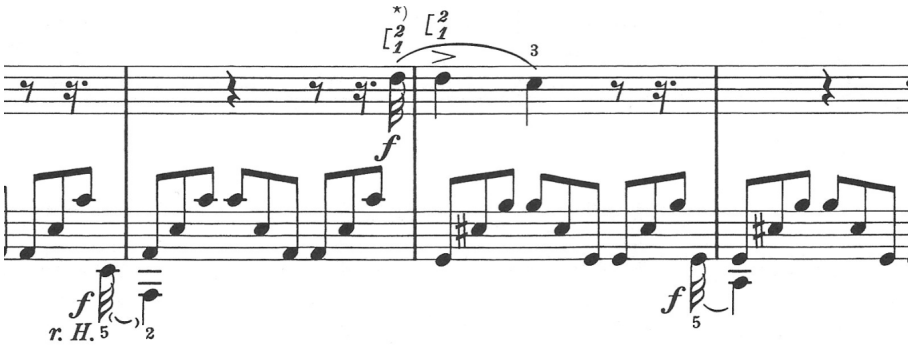
In this movement, the theme does not play a significant role, other than to act as a response to the introductory theme; a bright and optimistic answer in F-sharp minor's relative major. After this first appearance, it does not appear anywhere else in the movement until the beginning of the 2nd movement (Aria):

Fig. 14 (Bars 1 – 5):



This provides an important insight into another aspect of this sonata that is unusual and very progressive: despite there being clear separate movements with pauses, these two movements are thematically linked separate from the independent structure of both movements. Following this, from bars 25 – 31, is a transitional section using a small fragment from the introduction theme: the rhythmic 32nd note upbeat.

Fig. 15 (Bars 25 – 28):



This transition leads to a brief development in bars 31 – 38 based on the *sotto voce* theme made up of a series of rapid tonicizations from A7 – D – Bm – C# until at bar 38, initially using the double dotted quaver + 32nd note figure in beat one from bar 23.

Fig. 16 (Bars 31 – 32)

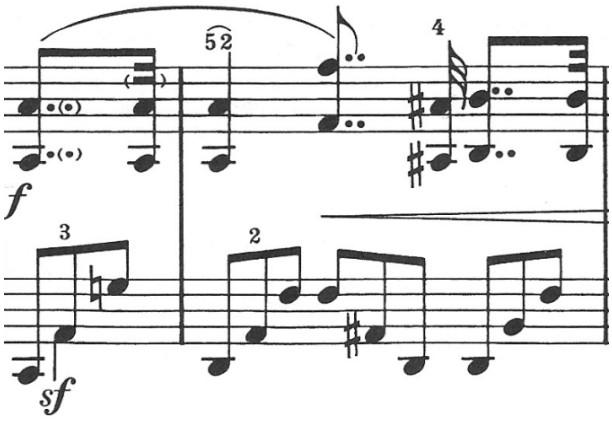
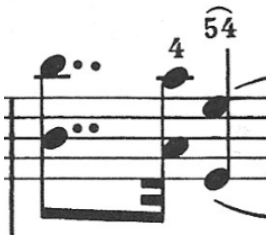
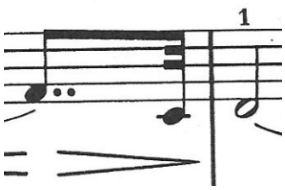


Fig. 17 (Bar 23):



This itself, is yet another development from a fragment of the introduction theme:

Fig. 18 (Bar 2):

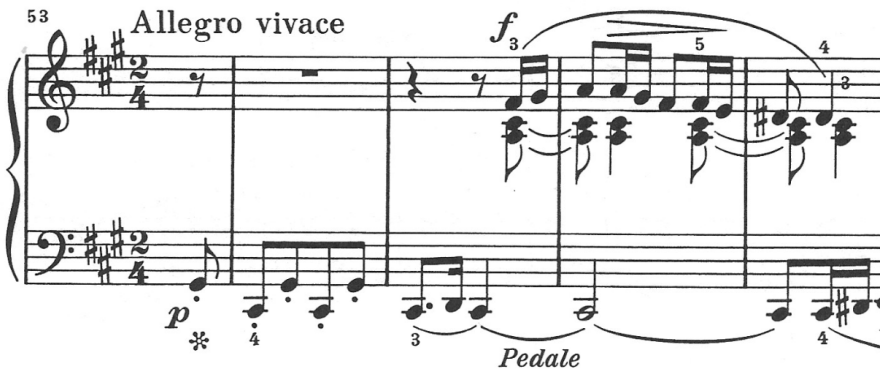


As we can see from the introduction, Schumann has already introduced two prominent themes to open the sonata, and the introduction already has quite a significant amount of thematic development going on in it. This is another aspect that I see as being something that separates Schumann from other conservative composers, in that the introduction is expansive

and plays a greater role than simply the tonic of F-sharp minor. It also introduces what later becomes the principal theme in the second movement (the *sotto voce* theme).

The sonata form itself does not begin until the *Allegro vivace* at bar 53, where an entirely new theme is introduced in the exposition. The main theme (bars 53 – 56) is made up of two separate motifs, the first in the left hand (bars 53 – 54) which I refer to as the 'lead-in motif', and the second being the 'galloping motif' in the right hand (bars 54 – 56).

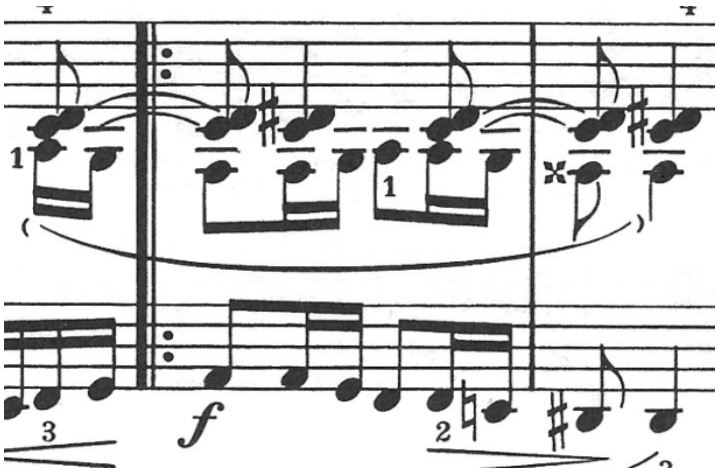
Fig. 19 (Bars 53 – 56):



It is interesting to see how the galloping motif is played over a dominant pedal (C#) to not confirm the tonic yet. It also finishes on a D#, which is in the tonic's melodic minor, but since the motif is descending, one expects a D-natural. This is an unstable main theme due to its unusual harmonic and rhythmic direction. The galloping motif juxtaposes the lead-in motif rhythmically with an offbeat entry, throwing the listener off to where the strong beat is. Schumann further emphasises the offbeat nature by accompanying the motif with a syncopated chord underneath with A and C#, which acts to also fill-out the F-sharp minor harmony. The tonality at the beginning of the exposition changes very rapidly, and the galloping motif is repeated several times in a unique approach to sequence.

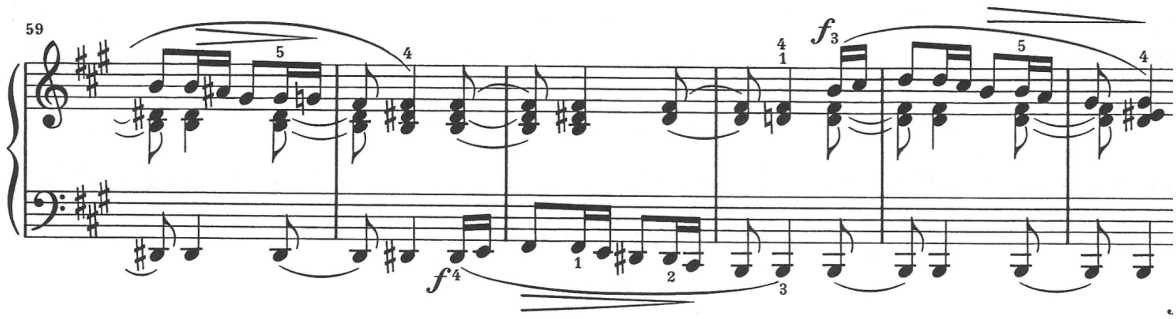
After its first appearance in bars 54 – 56, it is imitated in the lower voice of the right hand, beginning on A with its direction now inverted (Fig. 20). Underneath, the galloping motif is played in its original form.

Fig. 20 (Bars 56 – 58):



Because the motif concludes on the D#, this leaves the option open for a tonicization setup. In this case, the inverted version in the right hand moves chromatically down to an F double-sharp, which combined with the syncopated chord above, creates a D#7 chord (without the 5th). This tonicization allows Schumann to now repeat the motif in G# minor in bars 58 – 60.

Fig. 21 (Bars 59 – 64):

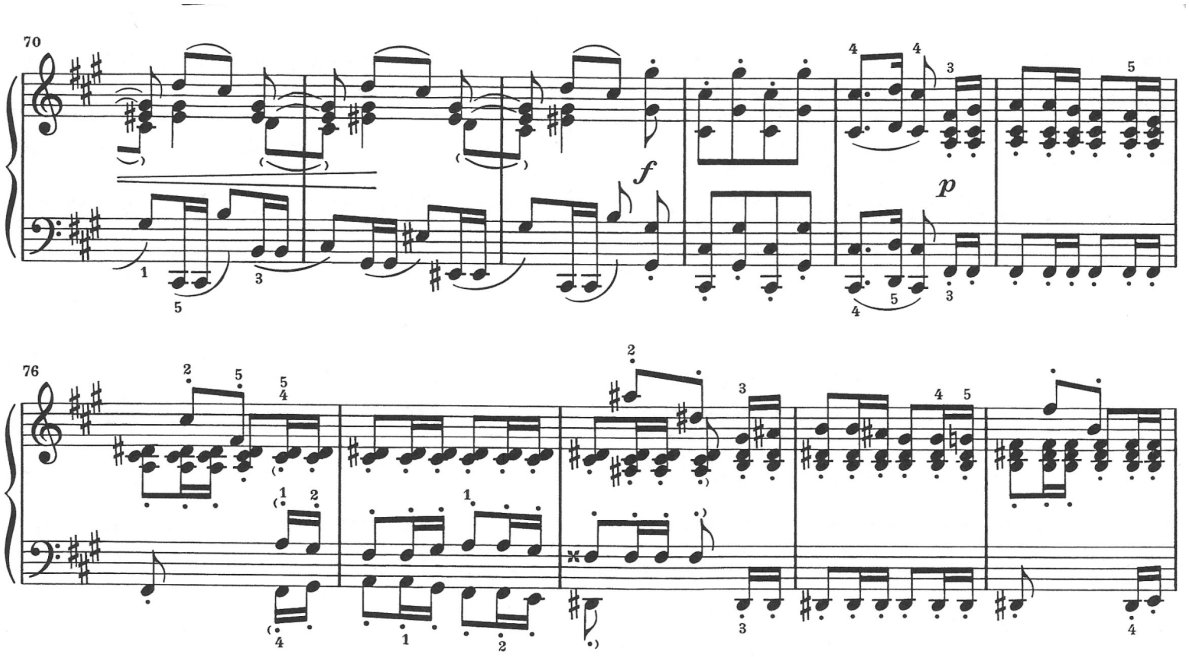


Schumann repeats this elaboration once more in bars 65 – 68 until we get the first dominant build-up of the exposition in bars 68 – 74. The harmony emphasised is C#7 with a small D – C# descending melody in the right hand, while the left hand arpeggiates C#7 in bars 69 – 72.

After this, the main theme reappears again, but this time with a staccato articulation, and an articulated chordal accompaniment that matches the melody, as opposed to being syncopated like its first appearance. It is interesting to see in these first couple of pages in the exposition

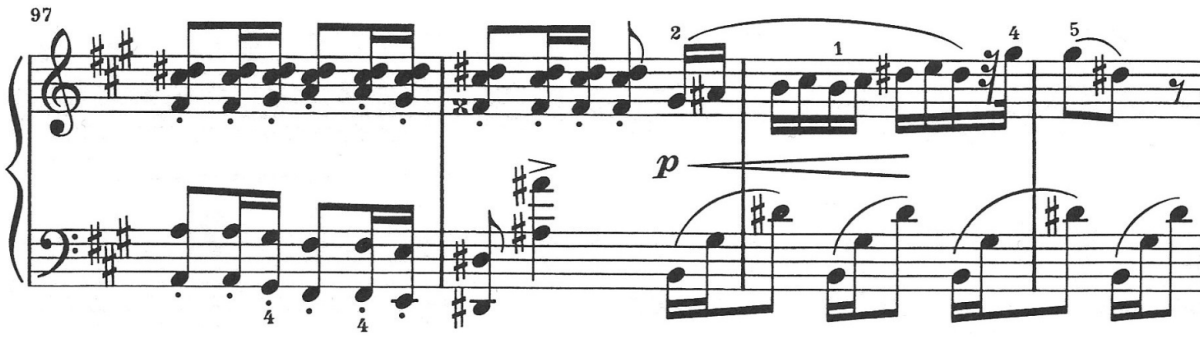
because Schumann merely repeats the same section twice with variations in rhythm and dynamics as opposed incorporating new thematic material.

Fig. 22 (Bars 70 – 80):



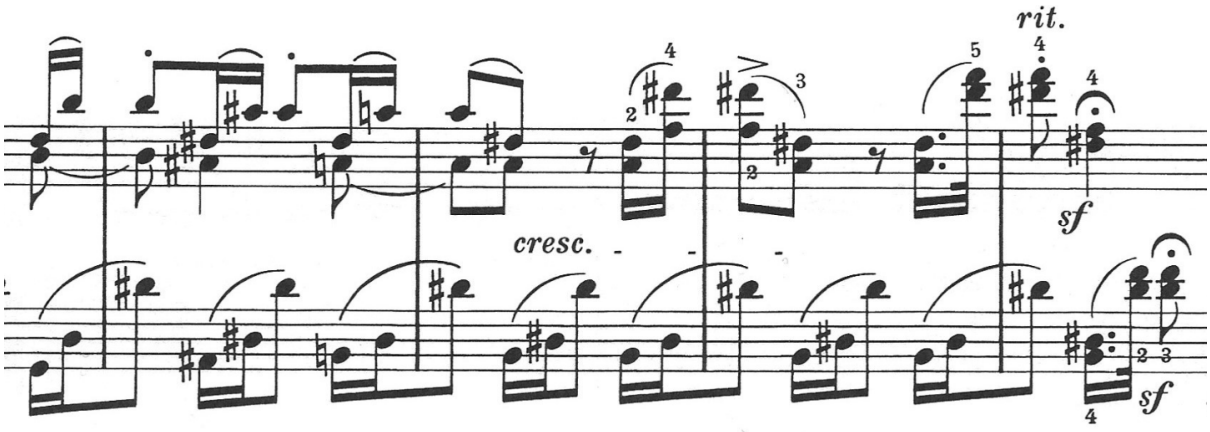
This variation on the first theme is rhythmically identical to the galloping motif and creates a new musical vigour to the material in the latter portion of this section. From the perspective of total bars into the music, this portion of the exposition would conventionally lead to a transitional section, with an initial harmonic movement and modulation, leading to the second theme and new tonic. Instead, Schumann repeats the first theme harmonically and melodically verbatim for the most part. The transitional section can be seen as beginning around bar 97, where we hear a similar harmonic set up in bars 56 - 58, as well as 76 - 78, where the galloping motif sets up a D-sharp 7 (V/v). Unlike the previous two cases however, Schumann introduces motif B and it sounds quiet and contemplative, stopping the harmonic buildup that the listener expects from the previous material. This opens the door for a harmonic setup and a new crescendo opportunity to lead towards a half-cadence, so as to set up a modulation to C-sharp minor, the dominant (v) of the tonic, and the second theme of the exposition.

Fig. 23 (Bars 97 – 100):



However, Schumann yet again plays with listeners' anticipation. Instead of choosing a conventional path towards a modulation and conventional transition, Schumann uses this first appearance of motif B to transition to a musical pause on an unstable B-dominant 7th harmony at bar 106. In this small section of bars 97 – 106, Schumann initially begins around G# minor, but steadily moves away from a stable harmony. Note how in bars 102 – 104 the top voice moves chromatically from B - A# - A-natural in order to reach this harmony.

Fig. 24 (Bars 102 – 106):

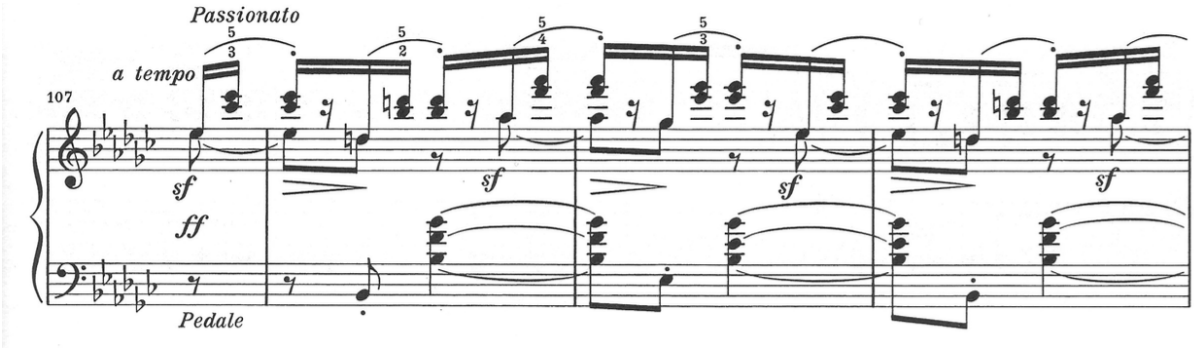


This harmonic ambiguity gives Schumann freedom to play with various possible harmonic directions the music can take and play with the listeners' expectations; not only because that is the nature of dominant 7th chords, but since the setup is a chromatic descent, in that there were no functional predominant chords used to set this harmony up, there was never an explicit direction in the first place. This is a demonstration not only of his progressiveness, but also how he is rooted in conservative practices, because no matter what direction the

music takes, he does not break any of the rules of a perfect authentic cadence (PAC) since he utilised a non-harmonic setup.

At 107, a highly contrasting new section begins, now in Eb minor. This new section is not linked to any of the preceding material, and its role musically is initially unclear. The onset is a surprising fortissimo, since the previous transition was a crescendo from piano with no clear marking of the finishing dynamic, aside from a sforzando in bar 106.

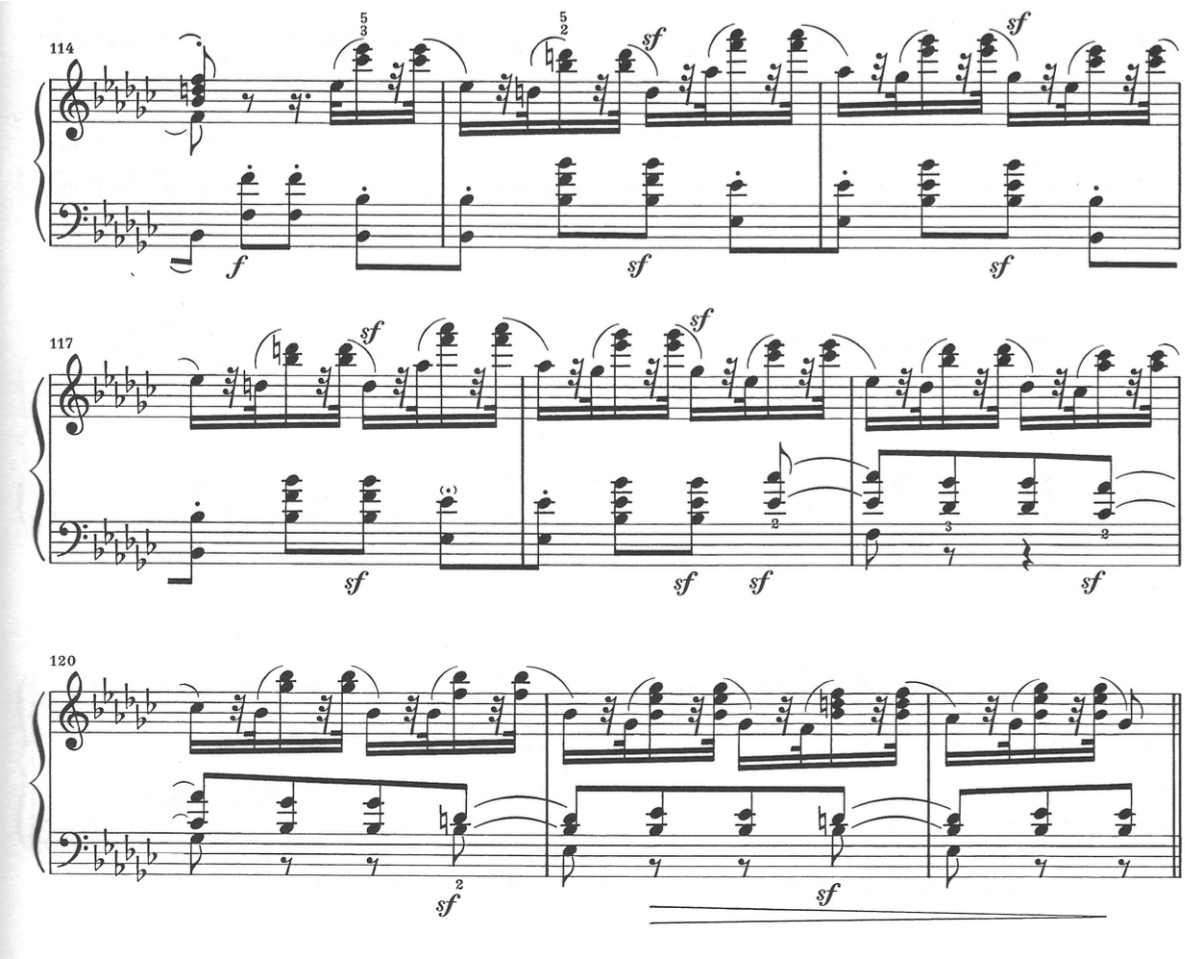
Fig. 25 (Bars 107 – 109):



The manner in which Schumann arrives at this section is incredibly swift, and this is by his use of enharmonic equivalents. This is something that can be seen several times throughout this movement and creates rapid harmonic shifts in a style that is highly progressive. The way Schumann utilises the properties of the enharmonic equivalent is what I would consider a form of functional harmony. Although the B7 setup does not serve its conventional purpose as the dominant chord in a V^7 – I cadence in E, it does still set up a harmonic shift, giving it function. The pickup to Fig. 25 contains a first inversion C-flat major dyad (since the Gb fifth is omitted) in the right hand, and its enharmonic equivalent would be the same relationship in B major. This dyad acts as a suspension chord to move to Bb harmony in bar 107 proper, providing support for the harmonic direction. Thus, I would describe this aspect of Schumann's compositional approach as the use of functional enharmonic equivalents. The primary melody that is emphasised is in the alto voice: Eb – D – Ab – Gb; the confirmation of Bb major leads to its dominant 7th form with the Ab, which provides the necessary direction to the section's key of Eb minor, landing on this key's 3rd of Gb. Note that due to this setup, the important harmonies of Bb and Eb minor are emphasised by their respective 3rds, which gives the best support to a major or minor harmony. Note that just as Schumann

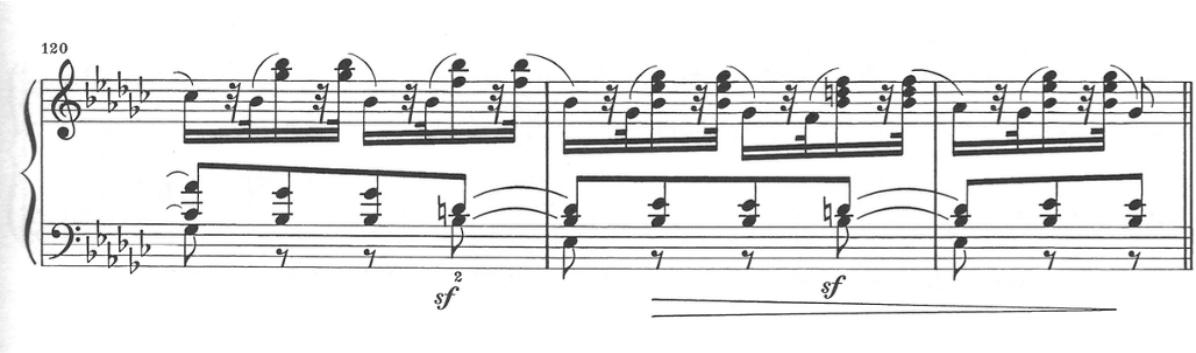
does the exact same thing here in bars 114 – 122 with rhythmic variation as he did in bars 53 – 98.

Fig. 26 (Bars 114 – 122):



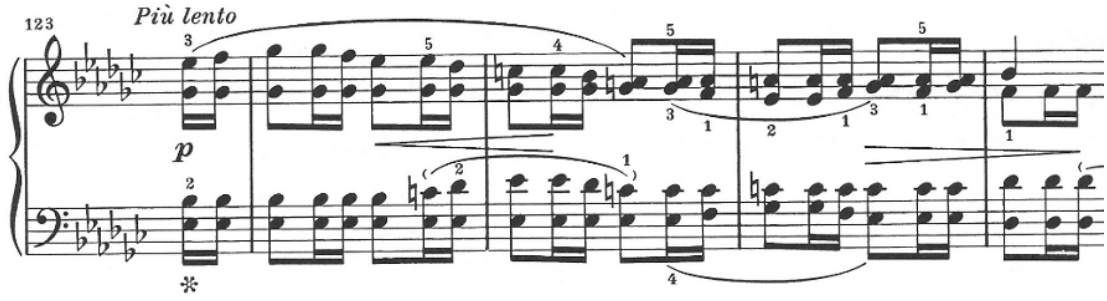
These two sections, containing the same type of rhythmic treatment on highly contrasting motifs does in a way demonstrate Schumann's younger tendency to shift quite rapidly both thematically and harmonically due to his inexperience with longer form pieces and treatment of important musical material that eventually improved with experience. This is an interesting section harmonically because of the longer form role that Eb minor could play in the setup. As with the chart on conventional sonata form, the next section and the modulation to the new tonic is typically set up with a half cadence, or with a tonicization of the dominant of the new tonic. One reason Schumann could use Eb minor is that if the new tonic was in the dominant of C# minor (v), he could set up the transition in a longer form by first tonicizing C# minor's dominant: G# minor. This could be done by beginning in Eb minor so as to set up a progression that follows the circle of 5ths in the context of C# minor. Instead, he concludes

with a double bar line in Eb minor, pausing and reducing certainty of where the music goes once again.



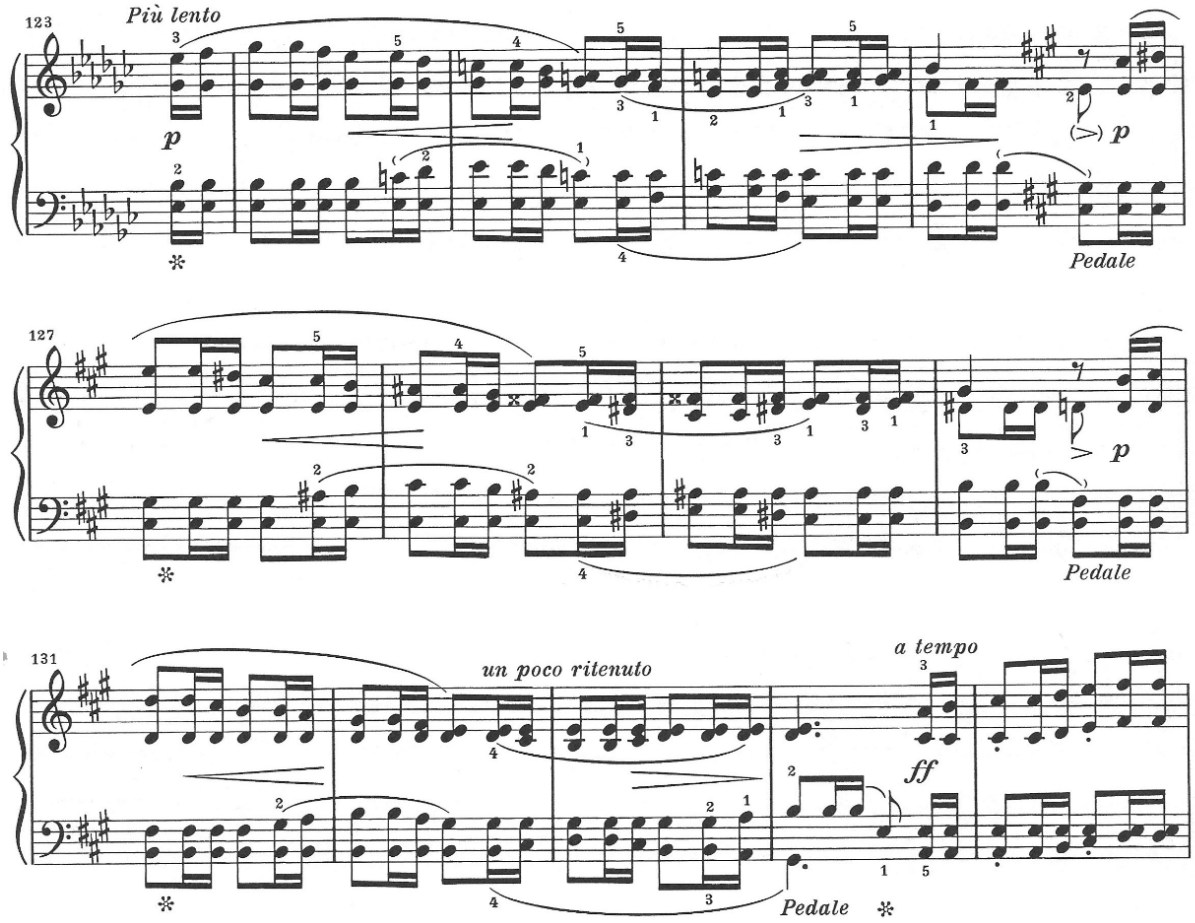
After the Eb minor section in bars 107 – 122, the transitional passage in bars 123 - 134 that follows is highly contrasting in terms of its time in specific harmonies. It seems to be used as a rapid and convenient way to modulate to A and is a sequence of rapid tonicizations. The harmonic sequence is a D2 (descending second) sequence, going from Eb minor – Bb minor (Fig. 27).

Fig. 27 (Bars 123 – 126):



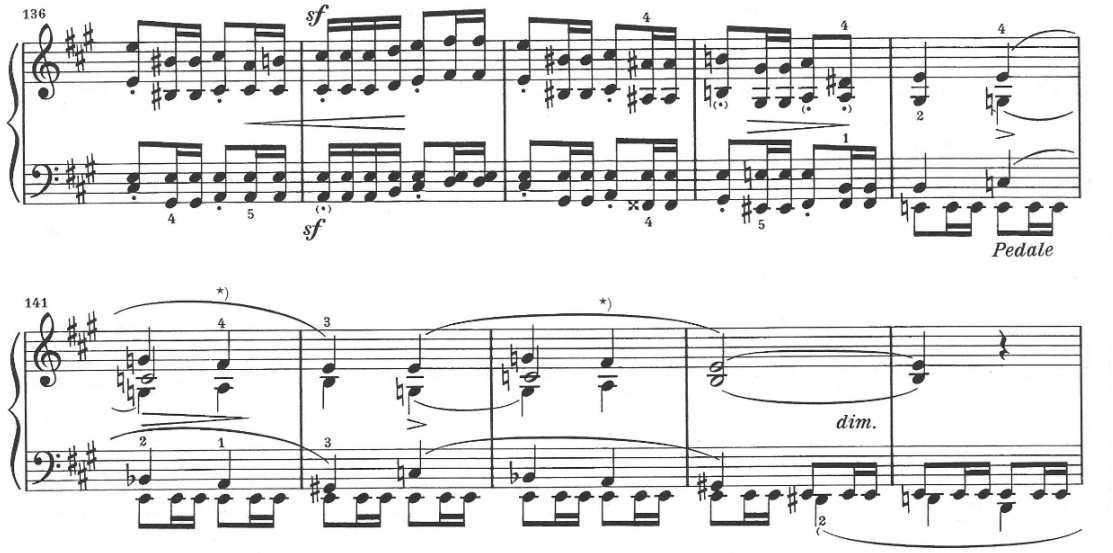
C# minor – G# minor (bars 126 – 130), and finally breaks the sequence with Bm – E7 (bars 130 – 134) to lead to the new tonic of A major with a conventional ii – V^7 – I perfect cadence (Fig. 28).

Fig. 28 (Bars 123 – 135):



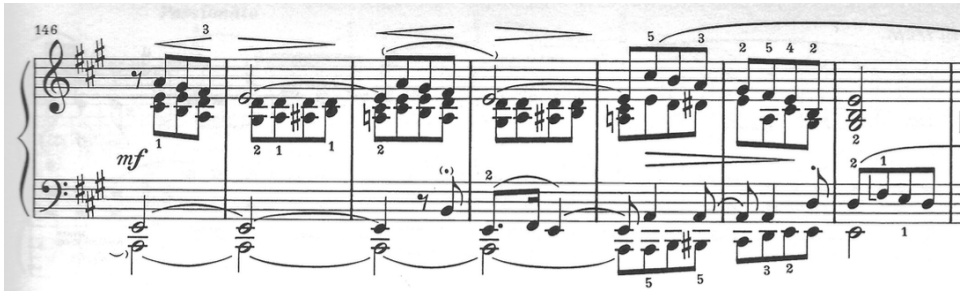
At this perfect cadence, the movement completes its modulation to A (III), the relative major of F# minor. As is found in bars 134 – 139, what is played could be viewed as the second theme. Rather than being a standalone and independent theme, it is a variation on the galloping motif, with the initial three-note ascent being the primary portion taken from it; in the original, it was F#, G#, A, and now it is A, B, C# (Fig. 28). The main theme as I showed, did not necessarily affirm F# minor as the galloping motif finished on D#, whereas this second theme confirms that we are now in A major. Yet again, this is very short lived, and immediately after, it moves into quite a bizarre set of two cadential phrases (bars 140 – 145) that now emphasise its dominant of E with a chromatic melody in the top voice of E – E – G-natural – F# – E (Fig. 29).

Fig. 29 (Bars 136 – 145):



It is useful to note the harmonic movement; the brief harmonic progression is non-functional, deliberately suspending any confirming cadence. The progression is E – C – C^7 – F#m^7 – E. Schumann uses the deceptive cadence in the dominant of E, shifting to C major (first inversion) and extending the predominant setup to another cadential confirmation of a key. Schumann then turns the C into a C dominant 7th (bar 143) with the descending melody in the top voice of the left hand, choosing to C – Bb – A, but with an alteration of harmony. As the listener expects, this 7th chord would usually be used to set up a tonicization. However, Schumann avoids it as the topmost melody G moves down to an F# instead of an F-natural, before moving down to an uncertain E major in bar 144. Schumann presents the C dominant 7th chord, but uses it to create harmonic instability, as opposed to utilising it functionally for the purpose of tonicization. This demonstrates Schumann's progressiveness, in which he avoids the functional use of the dominant 7th, instead, using its unique harmonic properties to act as a means of instability and tension, as opposed to a cadential tool. This sets up a cadence back to the key of A at bar 146, where a new and contrasting legato theme appears. This confirms the key of A to a much greater degree than the previous variation on the main theme (that could be a second theme) in bars 146 – 152.

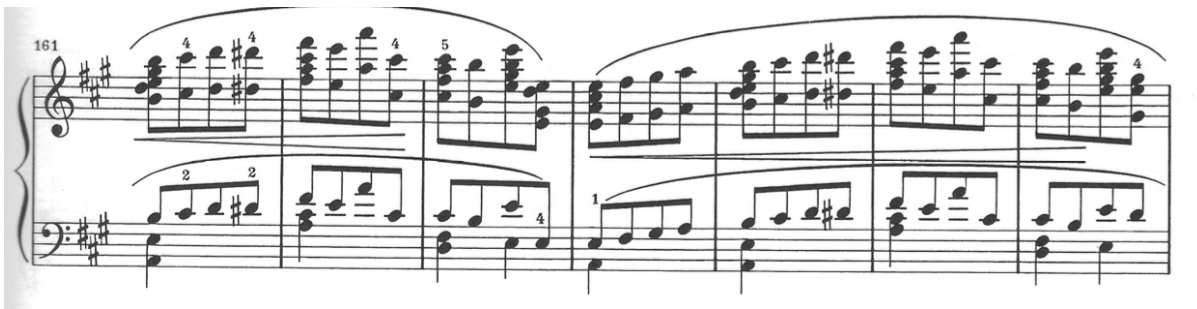
Fig. 30 (Bars 146 – 152):



Again, this theme's purpose is difficult to pinpoint, particularly given the previous key confirmation from before. Rather than bars 134 – 139 being the second theme, I consider it to be Fig. 30 as it contains several aspects attributed to a second theme: it is in the new tonic and confirms it clearly whilst being significantly contrasting to the main theme. This ambiguity comes from the inherent nature of the exposition: its fragmented nature with the amount of material introduced, no matter how brief, creates a complex interaction of thematic ideas. The purpose of a piece of thematic material in this sonata is fluid. Despite the characteristics this theme fulfills, it appears so close to the end of the exposition that its role potentially overlaps as being a new theme in the coda. Despite the fact that this could be considered a new theme, I have not included it in my list of major themes and motifs in this movement, because its only role is as the closing idea which concludes the exposition, and the recapitulation. It does not undergo any significant transformations or alterations that are associated with important themes and motifs in a sonata form movement.

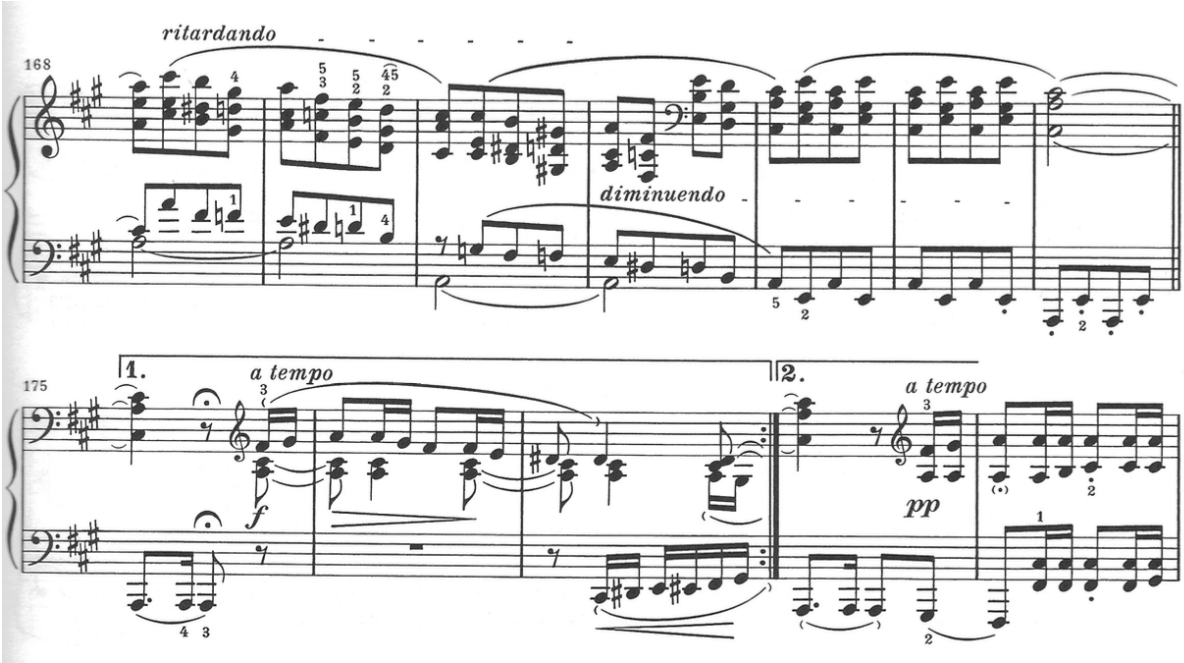
After this brief new material, comes a scalar concluding melody in bars 156 – 167 (Fig. 31) that is legato and contemplative, that feels more concluding rather than thematic, and its only appearance within the sonata is here, and in the coda of the recapitulation which ends the movement, as with the previous new material preceding it.

Fig. 31 (Bars 161 – 167):



This is followed by a chromatic confirmation in bars 168 – 172 (Fig. 32), leading to the final cadence in A at 173, as an elongated version of the lead-in motif plays underneath to conclude the exposition.

Fig. 32 (Bars 168 – 177):

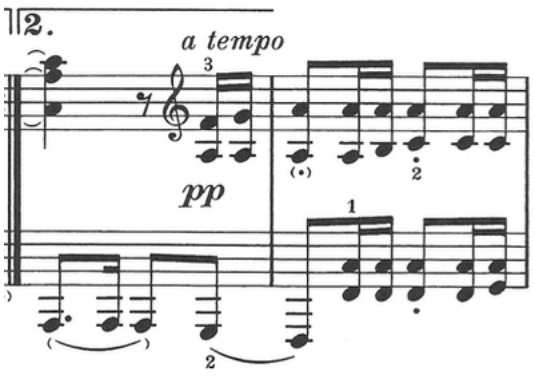


The cadential progressions which conclude the exposition in A in bars 168 – 172 serve a harmonic function, yet the progression itself does not serve the cadential function of a PAC. This represents one of the progressive aspects of the Transitional and Romantic eras, whereby composers no longer relied on functional cadences with the correct inversions and orientations of a given harmony. So long as it served the harmonic purpose and was near to convention, its harmonic purpose is fulfilled. In this case, a ii – V – I cadence in A would look like Bm – E(7) – A. In this case, Schumann approaches it in a more chromatic manner with a series of captivating 'tonicizations.' In bars 168 – 169 for example, Schumann opens the first two quavers with A in root position, before moving to a B/F# – F^{O} and arriving at A/E on the first quaver beat of bar 169. I view this case and the succeeding progressions as being pseudo-tonicizations. Despite the fact that he does move to diminished chords, they have tonicizing properties. For example, B/F# – F^{O} sounds like a B – E7, and the diminished version acts to fulfill the chromatic nature of the melody in the left hand. The same goes with how the $F\#^{O}$ to a two-quaver E7 figure in bar 169 is essentially the equivalent to B7 – E but maintains the diminished quality to fit the previous tonicization. Each diminished chord

shares three notes with the corresponding major harmony: F^{O} and E7 share G#, B, and D; $F\#^{O}$ and B7 share D#, F#, and A. After repeating the sequence down, he concludes in A with a continuous E7 – A in bars 171 - 174, ending on the C# in the right hand, completing the exposition in A.

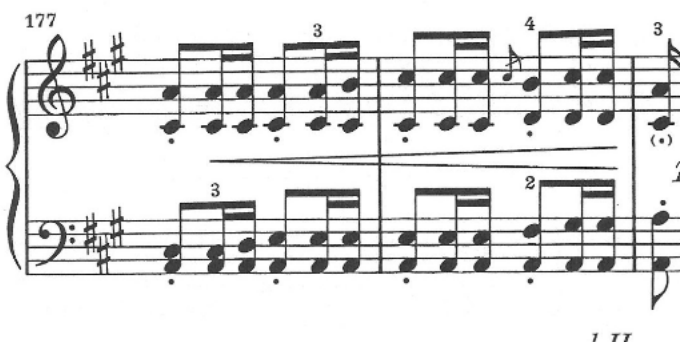
The development section in sonata form is where the greatest number of transformations of thematic material occur and is the most free and flexible section in terms of form. As can be seen in the chart on conventional sonata form, the development section is modulatory, in that it shifts through tonal centres rapidly, developing themes and motives harmonically and thematically among other methods. Schumann opens his development at bar 175 with a version of the galloping motif, although the lead-in motif is present, which acts as a transitional variation. The three note ascending figure that I wrote about previously, appears in its original F – G# – A, and this time, is imitated in different voices. In the right hand, it initially appears in the top voice, before being imitated by the alto voice underneath in the start of the next galloping rhythm, this time as A – C# – E, followed by an imitation in the bass (Fig. 32).

Fig. 32 (Bars 175 – 176 second time):



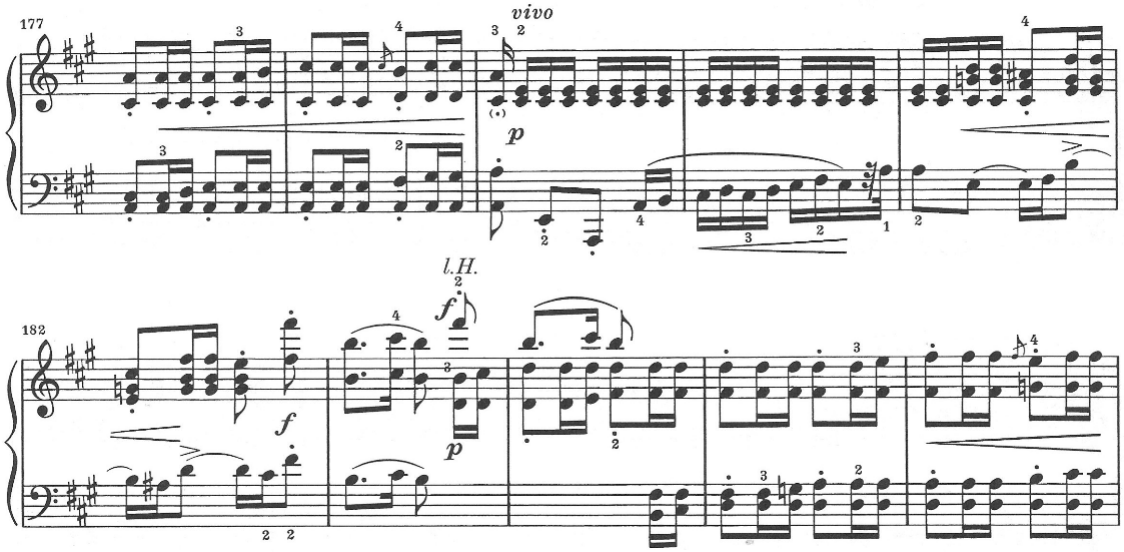
This is followed by a transposed version, now back in A (Fig. 33). This variation is a transitional version when it comes to the harmony particularly, as the development section opens in the tonic of F# minor and the way it moves, allows it to naturally return to the relative major of A by bar 177, with a concluding A at bar 179.

Fig. 33 (Bars 177 – 179):

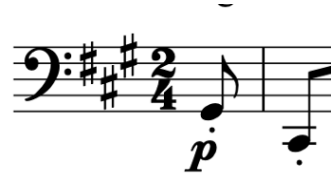


The highly unique process Schumann takes to thematic development then proceeds. Including the previous version of the galloping theme (Fig. 32 and 33), the following material forms a complete and longer 'development theme', which is a merging of various important motifs heard in the exposition. These motifs appeared separately, and made the music quite fragmented in the exposition, but Schumann now integrates them all into a cohesive single theme. The lead-in motif is alluded to with a staccato E – A fifth at bar 179 (Fig. 34), this time emphasised on a different beat (the 2nd and 3rd quavers as opposed to the pickup on the 4th like the original), followed by motif B, now in A major.

Fig. 34 (Bars 177 – 186):

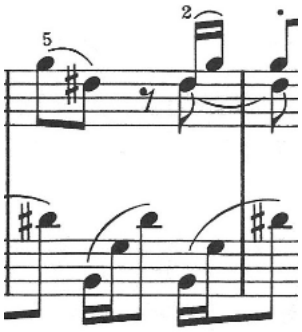


Original lead-in motif:

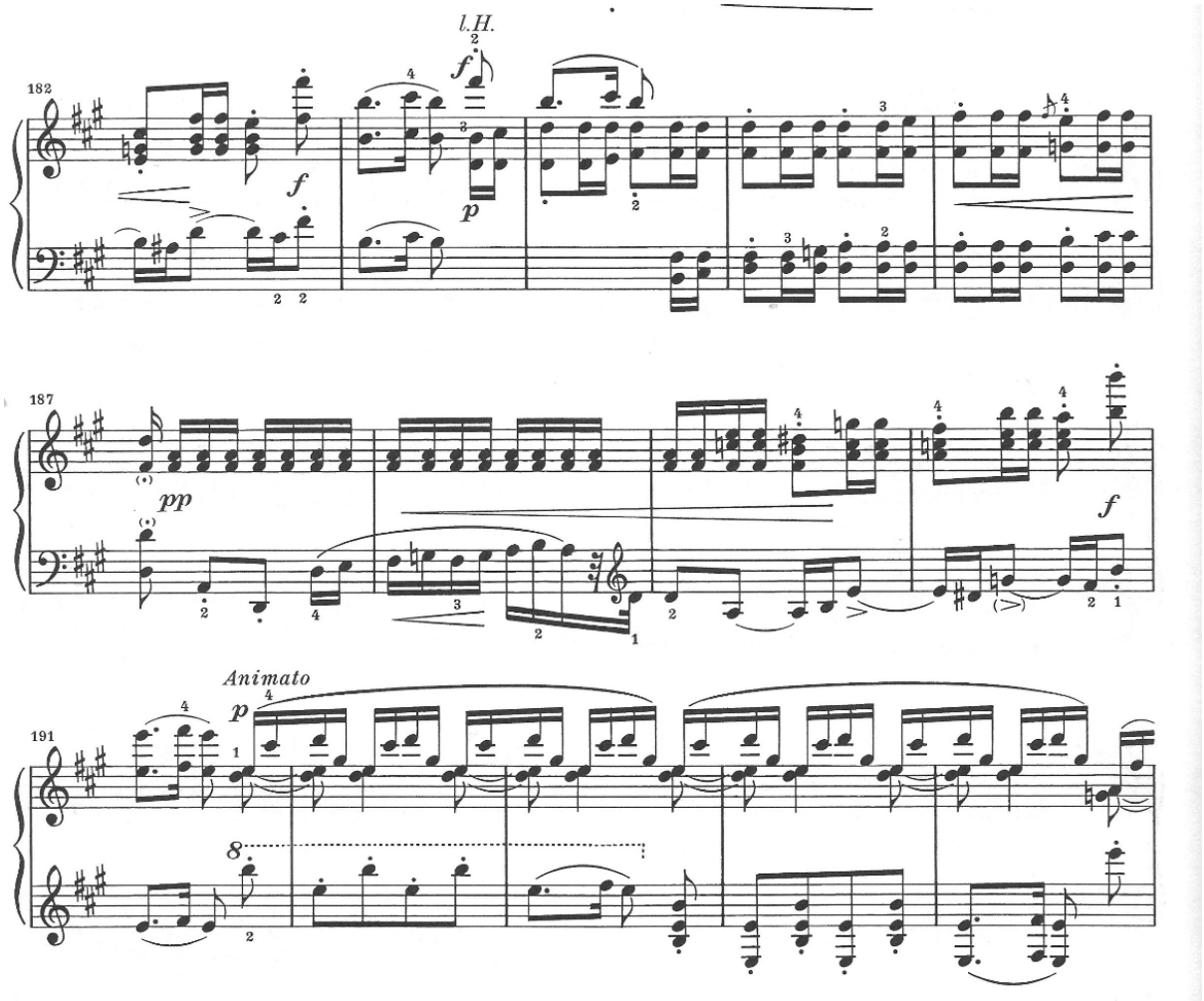


Succeeding this in bars 181 – 182 is what I view to be a continuation of motif B in the left hand that is almost like the two-semi-quaver figure seen in bar 100 (Fig. 23) but played slightly earlier compared to the original seen here.

Fig. 23 (Bars 100 – 101):



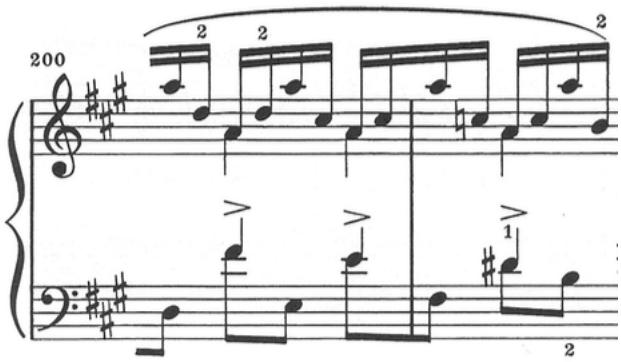
The lead-in motif is then played in its original form, now in octaves with a unison in the left hand, at the final quaver beat of bar 182 – 183. After this, is a repeat of the same material we have just heard, now transposed to the key of B minor from bars 183 – 191, as the continuation and lead-in motif us to this key.



The exact same harmonic changes occur, now within the tonal centre of B minor. We can see the same imitation of the varied galloping motif in the different voices in bars 183 – 187, with the final concluding chord in the relative major of D. Motif B is clearly heard, followed by the continuation that now leads the music into E.

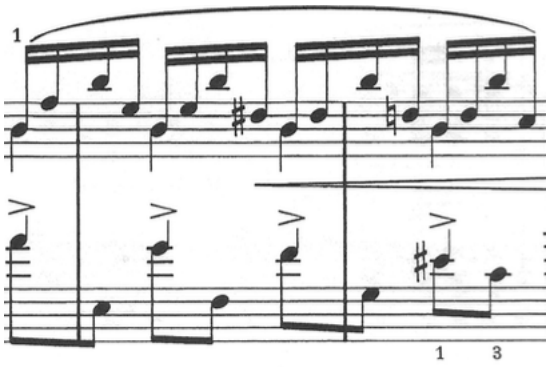
What follows is another section with transitional properties, beginning at the final quaver beat of bar 191, and continuing to bar 199. The left hand plays the lead-in motif in E above the right hand, an octave above, before imitating it immediately afterwards two octaves below. Note how the right-hand accompaniment contains the D-natural, providing context that this is E^7 rather than just E, creating the appropriate instability for an effective transitional section. This is then followed by a relatively unprepared version of this idea, now in A, as A^7. The next portion of this follows this similar kind of instability, with a melody in the top voice of the left hand continuing the A^7 feel beginning on the G-natural at bar 199, with the melody being scalar to bar 201 (Fig. 35), of G – F# – E, until we get a D# on the second quaver beat. Schumann moves the right-hand accompaniment's C# to a C-natural at 201 in order to evoke a diminished sound. This melody is very much transitional, and only plays a role in the development section, as opposed to anywhere else in the music.

Fig. 35 (Bars 200 – 201):



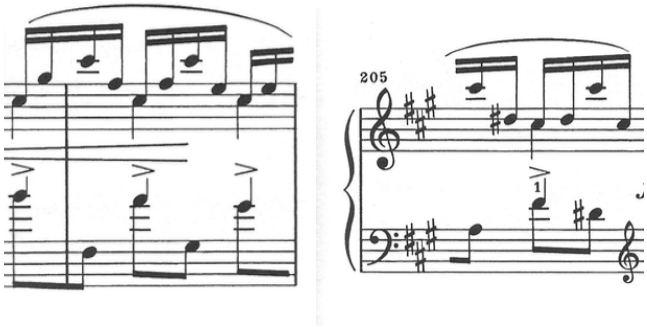
The music now moves in a tonicized ascending sequence, with the shift now to B^7 on the final quaver beat of bar 201, and E major briefly on the second quaver beat at bar 202. These seventh chords help to make effective tonicizations, no matter how brief.

Fig. 36 (Bars 201 – 203):



Schumann does the same naturalisation of the D# in the right hand, down to a D-natural in Fig. 36, replicating the same diminished sound, followed by a third and final version of this sequence, now around C#^{7} and briefly F# minor in Fig. 37.

Fig. 37 (Bars 203 – 205):



What follows is a magnificent version of the Eb minor section from bars 107 – 122. It is now in C# minor, with a slight rhythmic variation of motif C, now in straight semiquavers as opposed to the original that had a semiquaver rest. The added rhythmic pace creates a far greater feeling of tension and desperation in the music that becomes less and less controlled.

Fig. 38 (Bars 107 – 109):

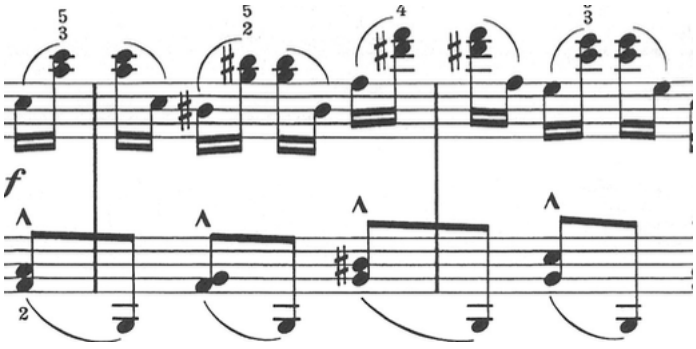
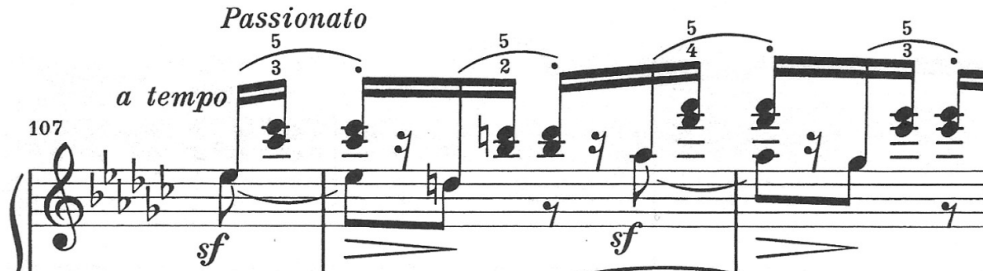


Fig. 25 (Bars 107 – 109):



The shape and cadence are preserved completely, but now transposed, and is a brilliant development, despite its similarity to the original Fig. 25. Furthermore, its appearance after the 'development theme' (Fig. 34), which I previously noted is a combination of important motifs that are played prior to this, creates a sense of linearity and stability that feels familiar. The original descending figure found in bars 118 – 121 (Fig. 26) is also replicated, which happens in bars 209 – 213.

Fig. 39 (Bars 209 – 213):

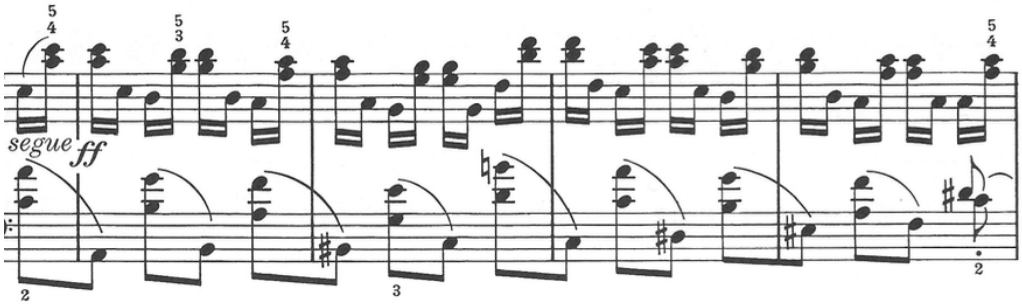
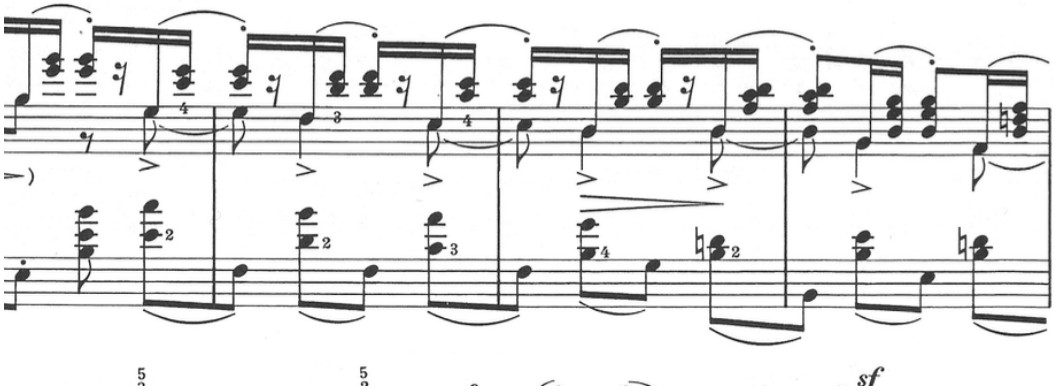
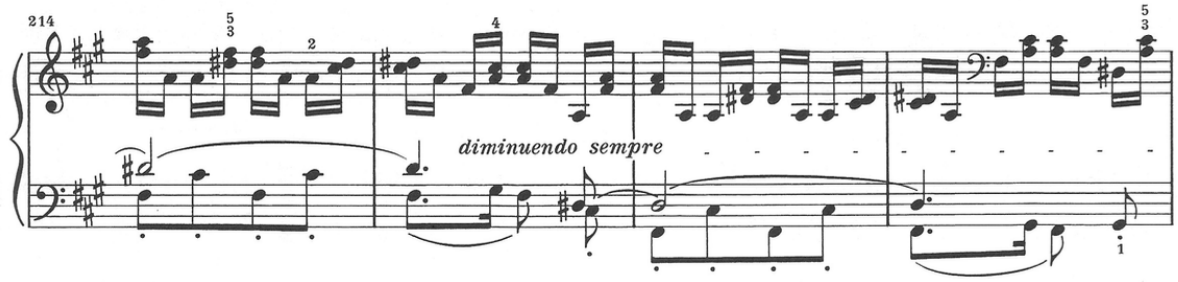


Fig. 26 (Bars 118 – 121):



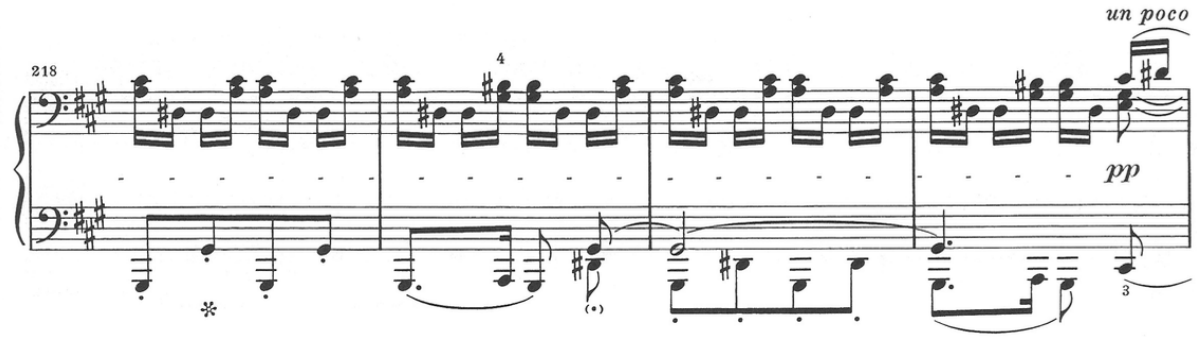
A continuation of this idea now happens, as both hands continue to move down the piano, the lead-in motif is heard in the left hand, now in F# (bars 214 – 217):

Fig. 40 (Bars 214 – 217):



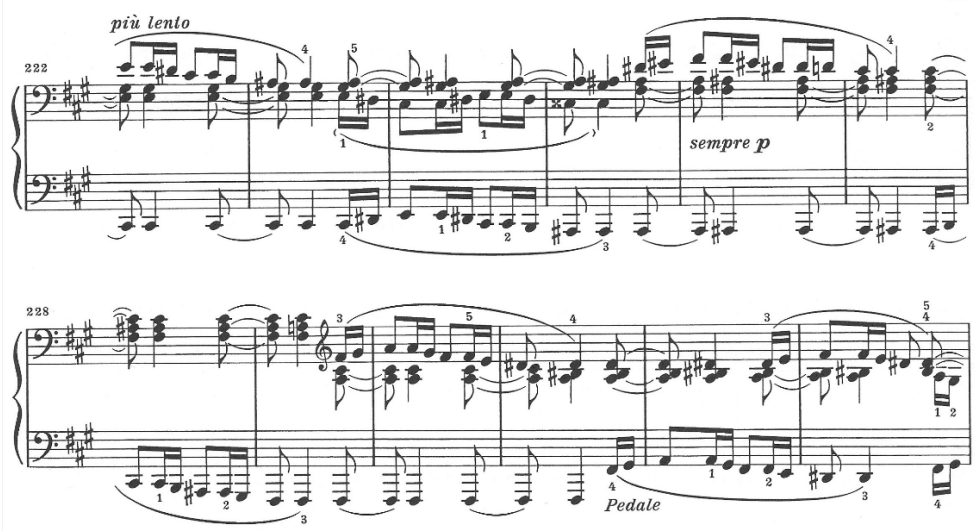
Following this is a version of the lead-in motif, now as an octave jump, rather than the interval of a perfect 5th like the original, on G# (bars 218 – 221), which sets up a movement to C# minor, beginning in the 4th quaver beat of 221.

Fig. 41 (Bars 218 – 221):



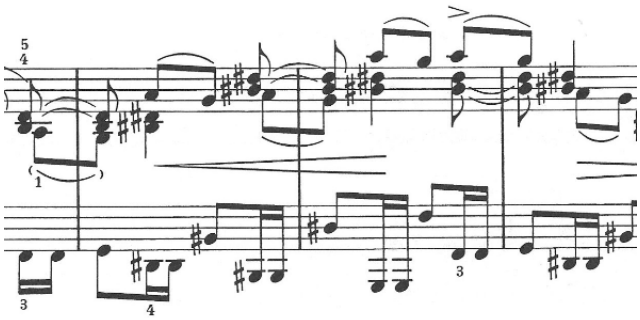
The next section of the development, from bars 221 – 244 presents a transformed version of the galloping motif and motif A, more faithful to their original versions. It begins this time, in C# minor, evoking the syncopation of the main theme's accompaniment in the left hand in bars 222 – 223 in the left hand, and bars 227 – 228 in the right, before shifting back to the original version in F# minor by bar 229.

Fig. 42 (Bars 222 – 233):



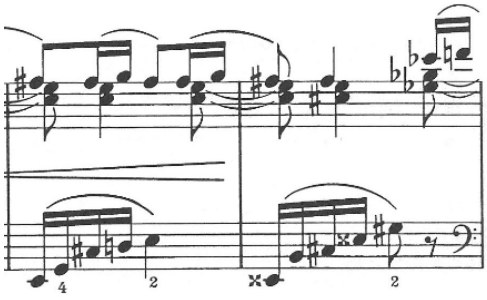
Unlike the original however, motif A is not presented in its original tonality where it spells out a C#^{7} chord. Instead, at bars 235 – 239, it is now a G#^{7}, further confirming that this is C# minor, and not the original, as might be expected in a recapitulation.

Fig. 43 (235 – 238):



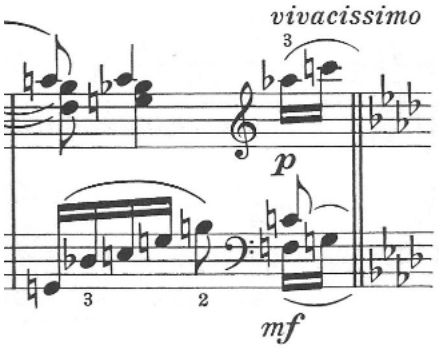
What happens next is another harmonic transition, beginning again in C# minor at bar 239, but moving very chromatically and unexpectedly, as we hear the left hand go from a C#^{7} harmony, now to Bb^7, briefly tonicizing Eb minor.

Fig. 44 (Bars 239 – 240):

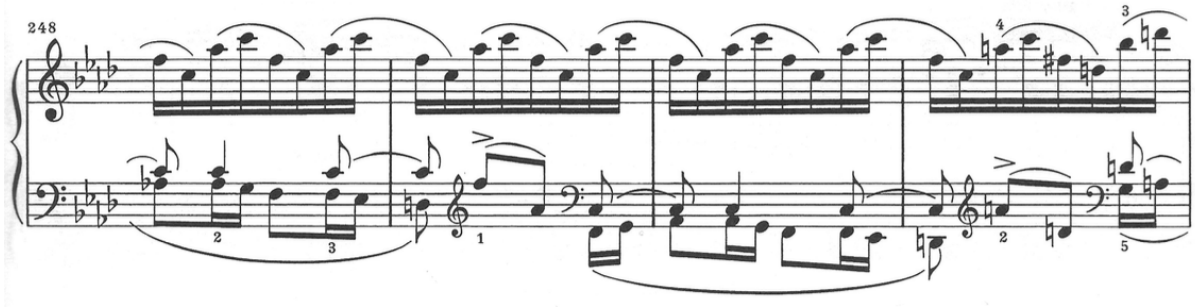


A similar chromatic shift then occurs with a move to a C^7 at bar 247, and a stark change of key. Yet again, Schumann uses mostly dominant 7ths in this harmonic transition, and demonstrates his use of non-functional progressions, as it allows him to make these chromatic shifts, without breaking any fundamental harmonic conventions.

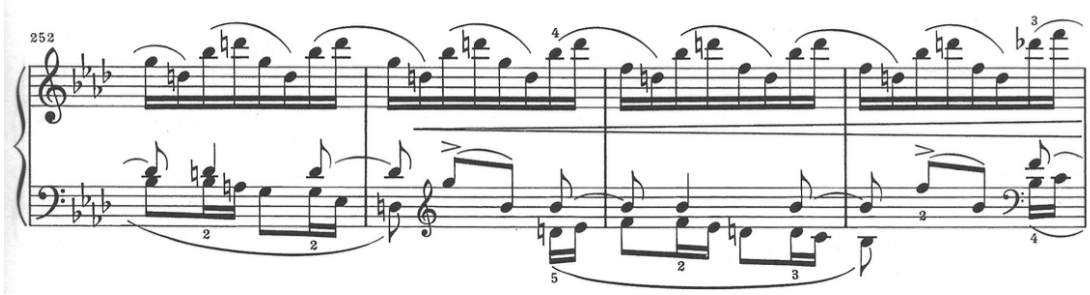
Fig. 45 (Bar 247):



The next portion of the development section, from the final quaver of bar 247 through to 267 is a retransition, with a dominant emphasis that would often lead to the recapitulation, as can be found in a classical sonata. The ascending portion of the galloping motif suggests the key of F minor, in bars 248 – 251 below with the D-naturals concluding it instead evoking a D half-diminished harmony.

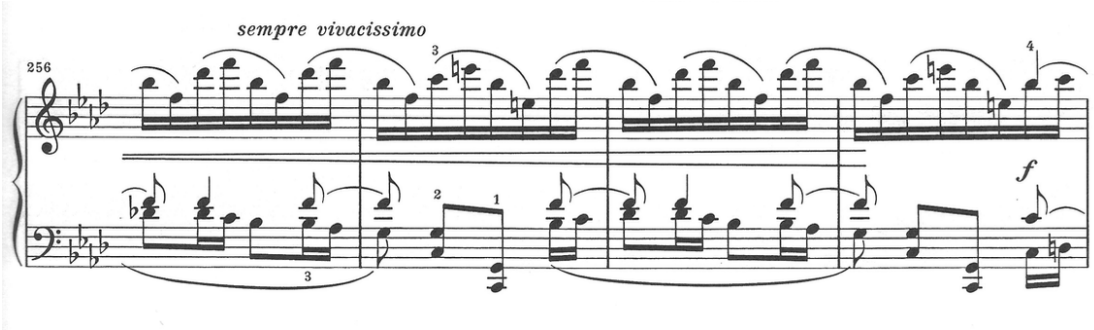


The final quaver of bar 251 through to 253 are around G minor, with that final D still being heard, until this continues into G minor's relative major of Bb in 253 – 255.



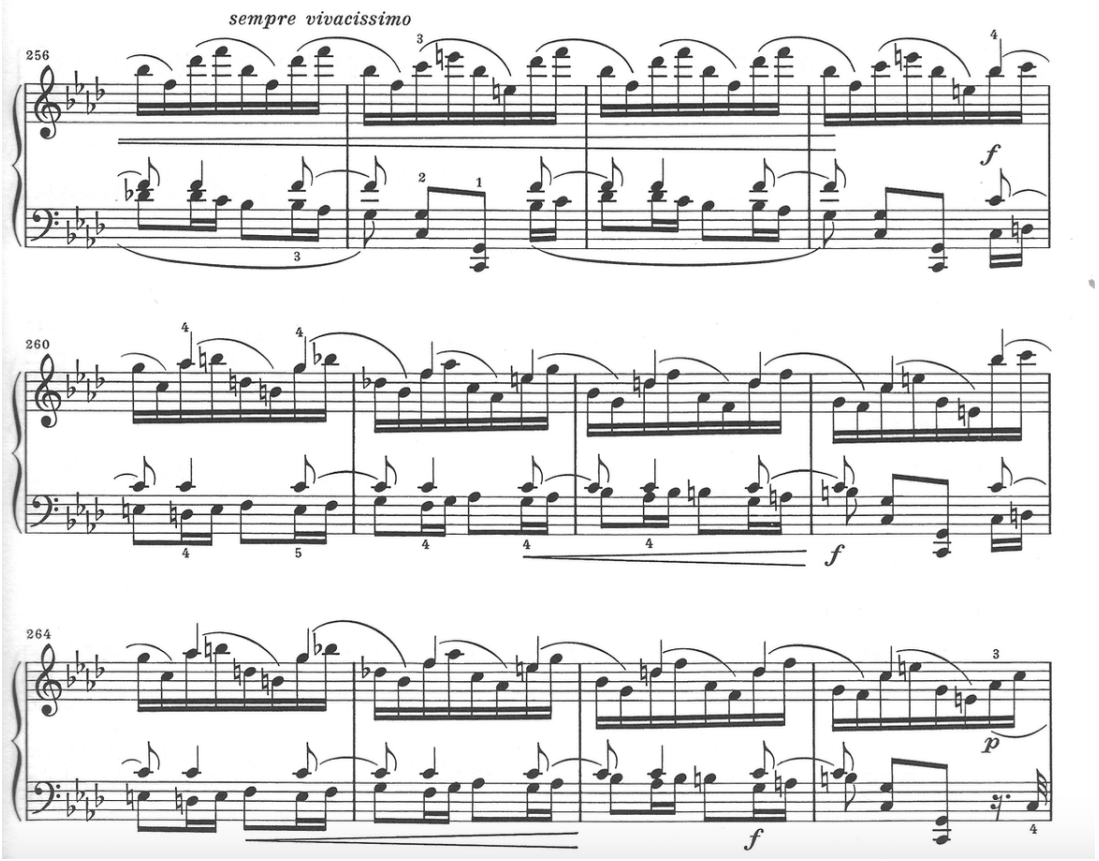
This is continued with a shift to the parallel of Bb minor at bar 254, until we reach bar 257 where hints of a dominant emphasis begin to appear.

Fig. 46 (Bars 256 – 259):



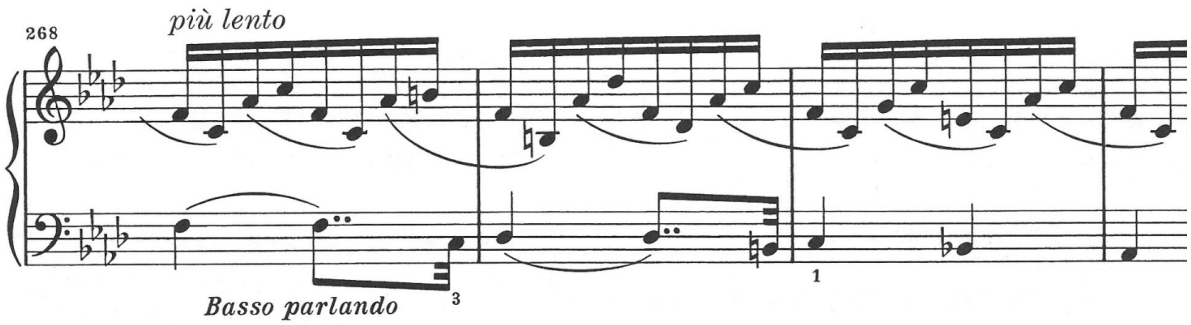
However, as opposed to C#, in Fig. 46, the retransition now moves around the key of C; I say this, since there are still minor intervals used throughout evoking the minor tonality heard prior, particularly F minor, as per the conventional setup of tonic with dominant emphasis.

Fig. 47 (Bars 256 – 267):



However, the C tonality is very much emphasised by the open fifths in bars 257, 259, 263, and 267. Rather than moving to a transition back to F-sharp minor (I) with a C# dominant emphasis, and the recapitulation, Schumann has instead misled the listener by leading in a harmonically predictable and conventional manner to a restatement of the introductory theme (bars 268 – 277) in the very remote key of F minor. The reason this is so surprising, is that the development section has moved through so many different tonal centres, the listeners' sense of the home key has disappeared, and Schumann plays with the listeners' aural orientation by using this conventional harmonic technique of sonata form.

Fig. 48 (Bars 268 – 271):



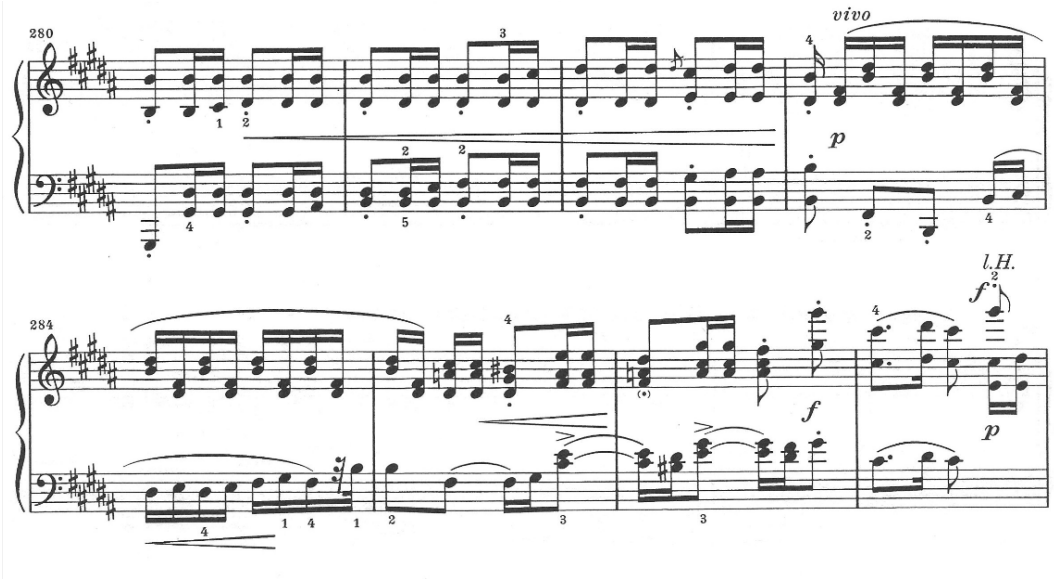
This is not a recapitulation; it acts merely as a bridge to a repeat of the development's form we have heard in bars 175 – 217 but now beginning in G# minor at bar 280. This incorporation of a false recapitulation is a progressive technique found in numerous other revolutionary composers of their time[6]. Beethoven employed a false recapitulation in the first movement of his *Eroica* Symphony, Op. 55[7], and it is also a technique we will see being employed by Liszt himself in his sonata.

From my perspective, the key change to G# minor is another example of Schumann's application of functional enharmonic equivalents. Although the shift may have also been done for the sake of readability given the reduced number of accidentals, keeping the eventual harmonic direction in mind, this can also be considered a shift to the minor mediant (iii) of F minor, Ab minor. Schumann once again takes advantage of the enharmonic equivalent, and the nature of the chord's overlapping qualities in two different keys and uses the harmonic properties of both Ab minor and G# minor to drive the following harmonic

[6] Tanner, Mark. "The Power of Performance as an Alternative Analytical Discourse: The Liszt Sonata in B Minor." *19th-Century Music* 24, no. 2 (2000), 174
[7] Tanner, Mark. "The Power of Performance," 174

progression. Again, he plays with different setups to generate a harmonic ambiguity of direction that he can take advantage of.

Fig. 49 (Bars 280 – 287):



As with bars 175 – 191, Schumann begins the development theme again in bars 280 – 287. What then follows is a transposed version of bars 175 – 217, beginning in G# minor rather than F# minor. The section is replicated and transposed harmonically, creating what is an extraordinary level of structural and harmonic stability compared with the development sections of other Romantic era sonatas. The continuation after this playing on the development theme appears in bars 294 – 309, followed by the same, transposed variant on motif C, now in D# minor, in bars 309 – 323.

Fig. 50 (Beginning of the continuation bars 293 – 297):

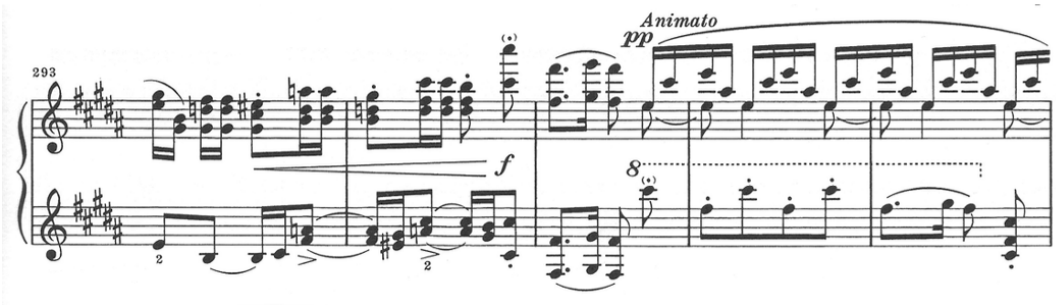
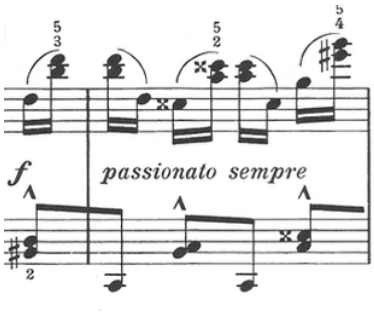


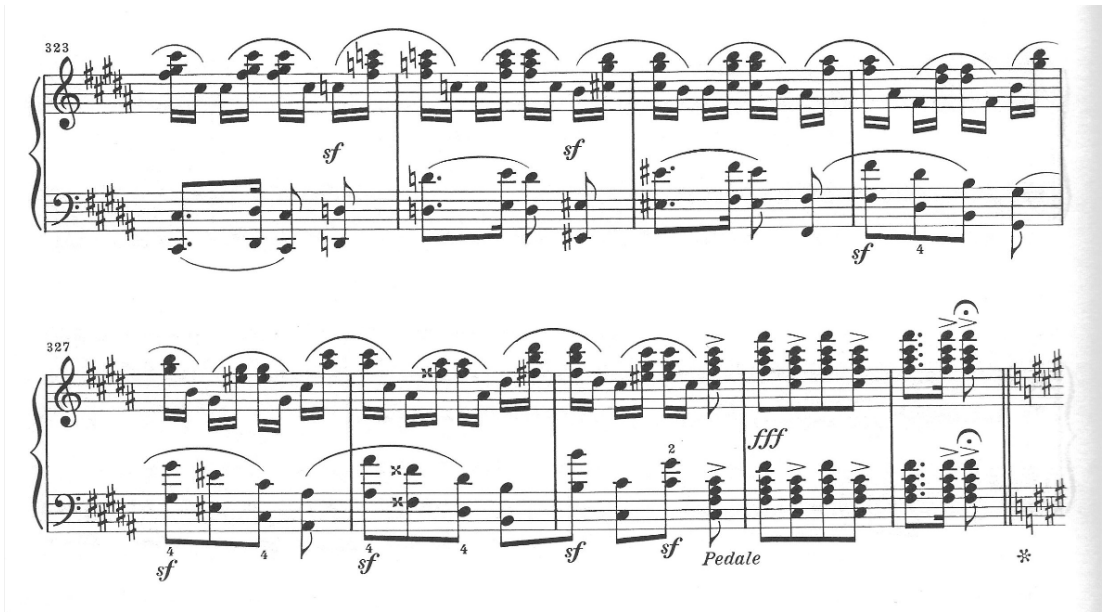
Fig. 51 (Beginning of the transposed variation of motif C, bars 309 – 310):



This helps to balance out the fragmented nature of the exposition, particularly since Schumann has merged motifs together in order to create the development theme, as well as creating a more organic continuation of the section containing motif C. The next point of difference is in the continuation after the motif C portion.

Instead of moving towards C# minor, Schumann now does a more chromatic retransition in bars 323 – 329 of Fig. 52 towards F# minor. He moves rapidly through various harmonies, in a manner that is non-functional. There are no tonicizations, and the most emphasised note on the first quaver of each bar moves up in scale: D – E# – F# – G# – A# – B – C#. Played in octaves, each of these notes on the downbeat is set up by the octave below on the final beat of each bar.

Fig. 52 (Bars 323 – 331):



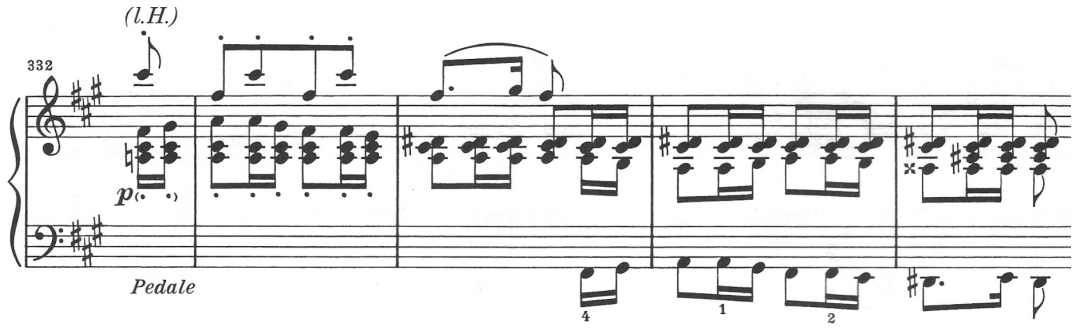
The accompanying harmonies and their corresponding arpeggios are built around the notes of this scale, rather than the other way round, and they reflect this non-functionality. The harmonic progression is the following:

D7 – C# major (1st inversion) – B – C#7 (root position) – D# – B – C#7 – F# major.

After a concluding C# major in quaver beats 2 and 3 of bar 330, on the final quaver beat, he yet again surprises the listener by concluding on a triumphant F# major version of the lead-in motif; he confirms and preserves the tonality even further my maintaining the final dotted rhythm in the latter portion of the motif, but omits the ascending semiquaver which is seen in each appearance (as can be heard just before in bars 323 – 325).

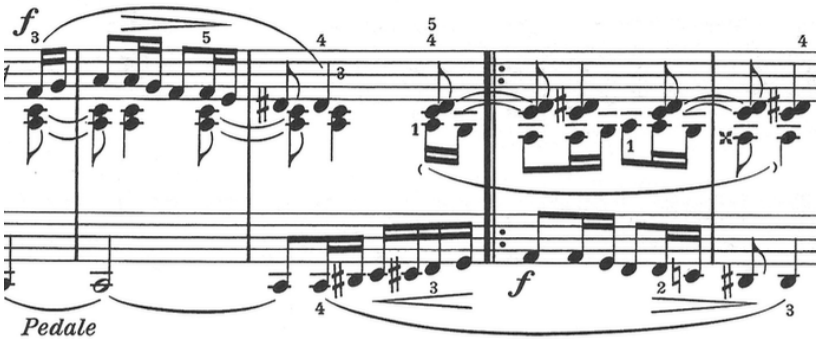
After this extraordinary development section, a very clear and anticipated recapitulation section finally arrives, with an evolved version of the main theme. The lead-in motif and the galloping motif now overlap each other, with the lead-in motif played by the top voice, as the galloping motif appears in the same register as its original, now playing the role of accompaniment rather than driving the theme's movement. It is interesting how rather than having the main theme reappear in its original legato form, it appears in its staccato version, as seen previously in bars 74 – 75. Following this, in Fig. 53 is the imitation of the galloping motif in the left hand, with the same accompanying figure in the lowermost voice of the right hand, whose melodic line is in contrary motion to the galloping motif.

Fig. 53 (Bars 332 – 335):

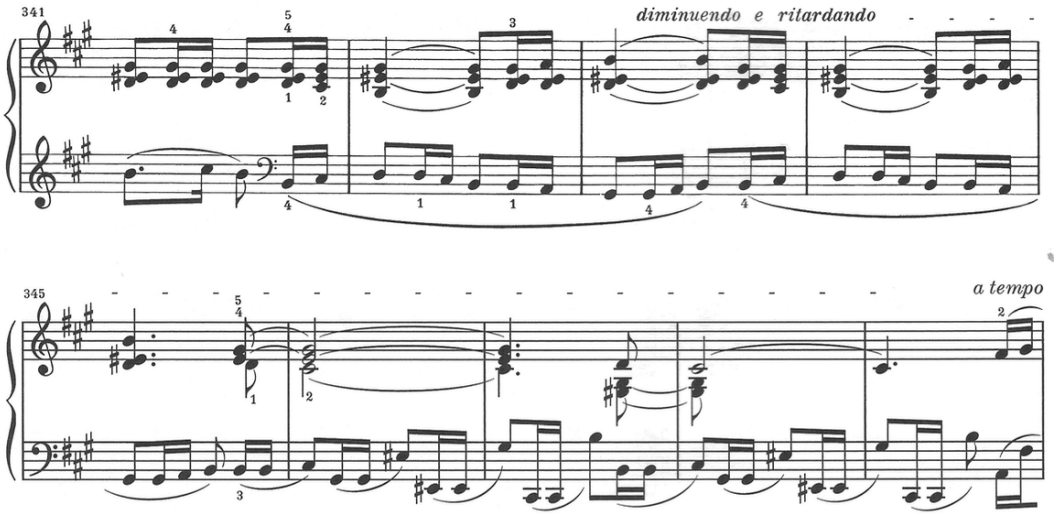


The version in the recapitulation is a simpler and stripped-down version compared to the original in the exposition. There is no chromatic scale leading into the imitation as there was in bar 57, and the lack of syncopated chords underneath reduces the harmonic density compared to the original version as seen here:

Fig. 19 and Fig. 20 (Bars 55 – 59):

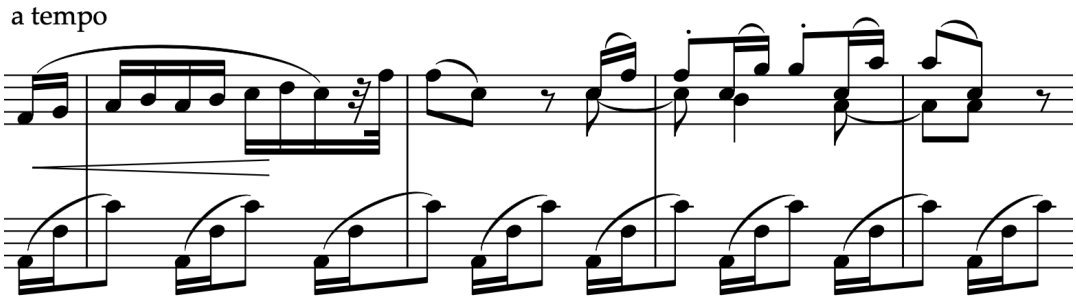


This is exactly what Schumann is looking for in the recapitulation; he looks to create significant contrasts in the start of the recapitulation compared to the opening of the exposition and the beginning of the sonata proper. The exposition originally contained rapid dynamic shifts, in which the lead-in motif was *p* followed by the emphatic interruption of the galloping motif in *forte* that carries on in the proceeding bars. In contrast, the recapitulation begins in a *p* dynamic which carries over for a significant number of bars. The dynamic markings are limited to a diminuendo beginning at bar 343, a brief crescendo at bar 350, until Schumann marks for another crescendo beginning at bar 353. In keeping with a more streamlined recapitulation, Schumann does not include a repeat of the main theme and its development with the rhythmic variation as was the role of bars 74 – 98, instead choosing to expand on the legato motif A with a diminuendo as the right hand descends with its distinct progression in bars 341 – 349 (Fig. 54).



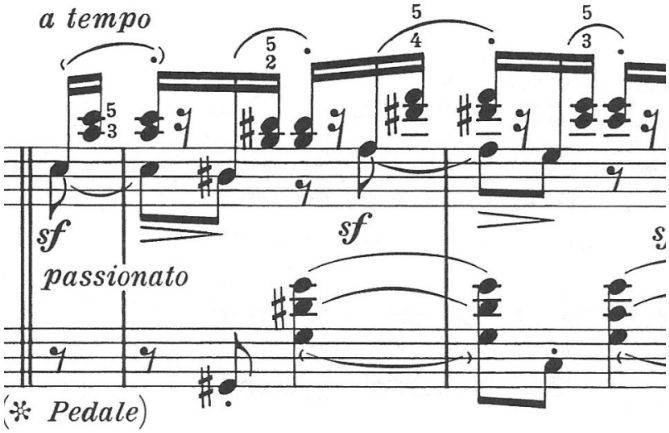
Following this is a smooth and unanticipated but welcomed shift to a more contemplative version of motif B in bars 349 – 353, now in the tonic of F# minor.

Fig. 55 (Bars 349 – 353):



Schumann then moves back to the tonic version of the *passionato* section in bars 358 – 373 in C# minor. Unlike the exposition's version, which was in Eb minor, or a tritone away from the modulated tonic of A major, C# minor is the minor dominant (v) of F# minor (i), and this emphasis of C# minor allows for a smoother transition towards the tonic due to the closer relationship.

Fig. 56 (Bars 358 – 360):



After this, comes the next transitional passage in bars 374 – 381 (Fig. 57). It continues in C# minor and has been reduced by one four-bar sequence compared to the original. The way Schumann replicates the exact C# minor version found in bars 126 – 130 (Fig. 27 – 28) is very interesting; this is once again an example of his streamlined approach to the recapitulation, with no necessary additional harmonic movements, and remaining

thematically familiar to the exposition's version. The same D2 sequence is heard, going C#m – G#m – Bm – F#m. Note that the sequence is not broken since we are now in F# minor; yet again, another case of a smooth and efficient harmonic transition.

Fig. 57 (Bars 374 – 381):

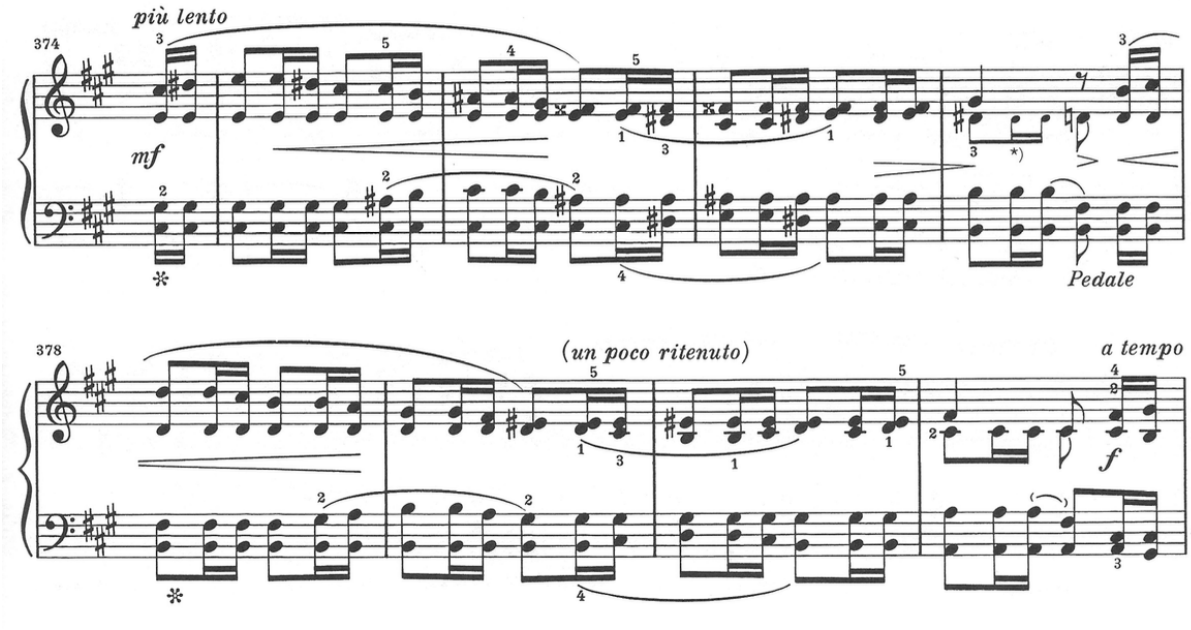
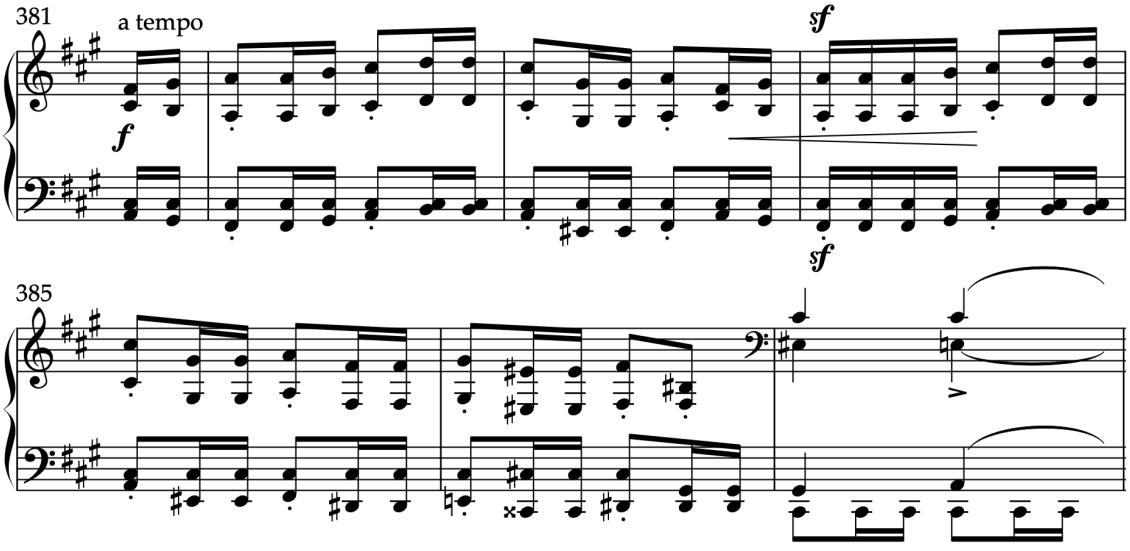
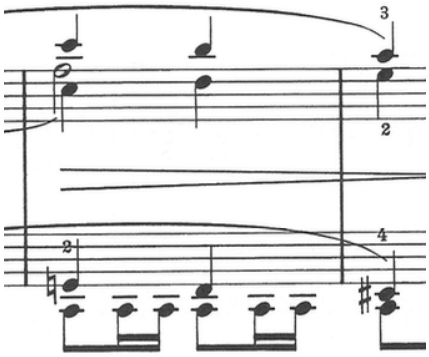


Fig. 58 (Bars 381 – 386):



At bar 388 (Fig. 59), Schumann uses a Neapolitan 2nd (bII) in the right hand to shift back to C# major (V), a tool found in conventional harmonic progressions when confirming a minor key.

Fig. 59 (Bars 388 – 389):



In this case, the Neapolitan is in relation to the harmony of C# major (V) or bII/V and acts as a suspension; it creates a sense of harmonic instability and uneasiness. Schumann plays around this V harmony, allowing him to delay the eventual resolution to F# minor (i) to bar 393. Bars 393 – 399 (Fig. 60) sees the final appearance of the new theme in the tonic. It is transposed tonally to fit the F# minor scale, as is the final scalar figure from bars 403 – 410 (Fig. 61 – 62). The only difference outside of the direct transposition is the change in register. As I stated previously, it does not appear to have had any important influence on the direction that the sonata form takes, and this is its second and final appearance in the movement.

Fig. 60 (Bars 393 – 399):

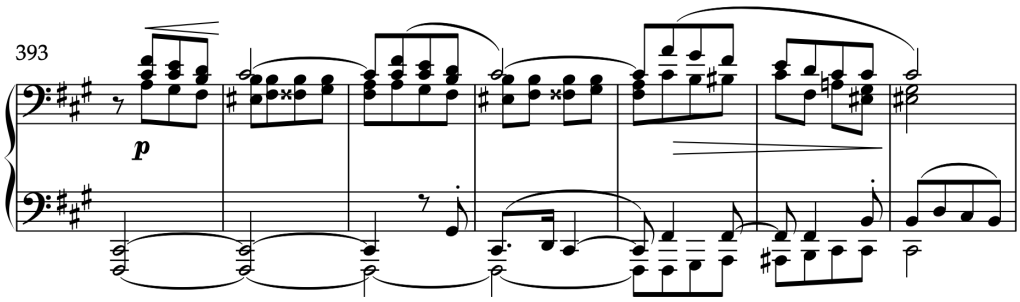


Fig. 61 (Bars 403 – 406):

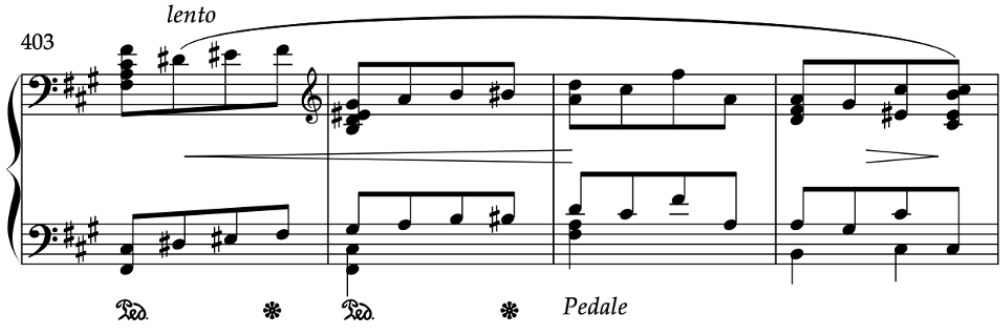
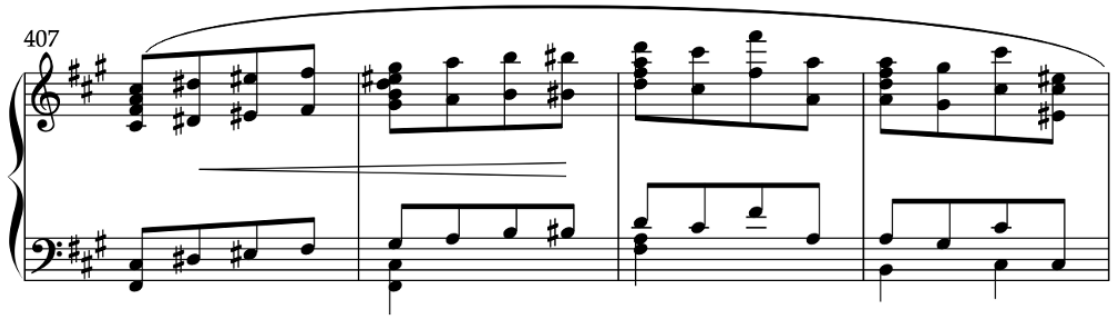


Fig. 62 (Bars 407 – 410):



The entire section is a third lower, creating a considerably more grounded and darker colour which adds to the ominous conclusion of this incredible movement. Note how the scale ascends in F# melodic minor; this creates a smoother melodic line without an augmented jump unlike harmonic minor. The small extra-scalar movement Schumann uses appears in bars 404 and 408 where he includes a B# after the B-natural on the final quaver beat as a small chromatic movement. This moves to a D-natural in bars 405 and 409 (Fig. 63 – 64), which acts essentially as a double neighbour note suspension to the C# on the second quaver beats.

Fig. 63 (Bars 404 – 405):

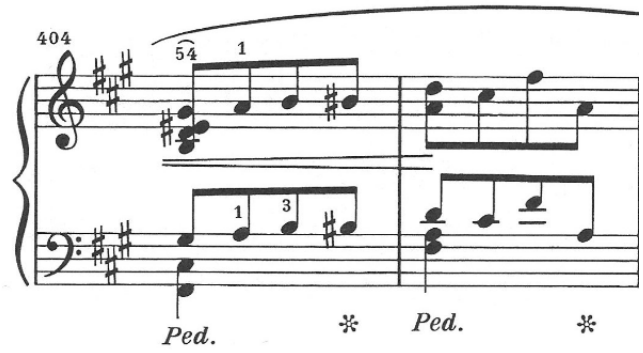
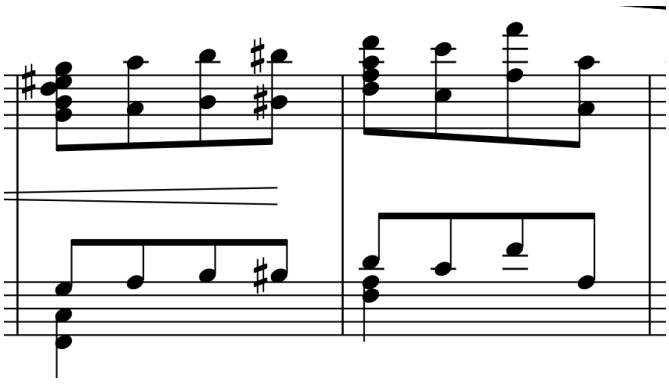
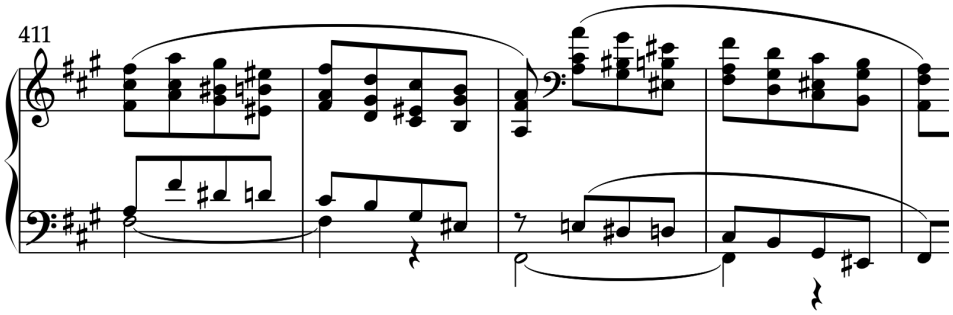


Fig. 64 (Bars 408 – 409):



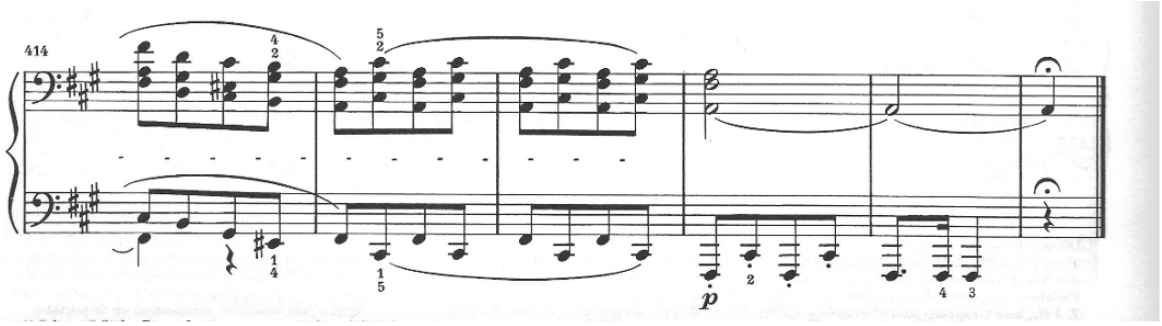
Both notes are a semitone away, creating a small and tense movement in the confirmation. Although Schumann looks to confirm and create an ominous sense of the tonic, he does not sacrifice a smoother melodic direction overall; this suits the music, as an ascending scale in the harmonic minor would be more of a distraction, particularly the augmented D – E# – F# portion of the scale. It can be seen once again that the final cadential progressions Schumann does from bars 411 – 414 (Fig. 65), replicated from the exposition possess the harmonic properties of a cadence, but are non-functional, making this a pseudo-imperfect authentic cadence.

Fig. 65 (Bars 411 – 415):



This is interesting, since Schumann's direct replication of the recapitulation is continued, and rather than confirming the tonic even further with the incorporation of a Neapolitan 6th for a bII – V – i, Schumann chooses to end the movement without a perfect authentic cadence, with the final held note of the movement not being the F# in the left hand, but the A in the right (bar 419), emphasising the minor 3rd, as the A is then carried over into the second movement. This is an arguably smoother and easier way to conclude the movement as the music decrescendos. The bII – V – i to conclude on the tonic (Fig. 66) is a bit more emphatic and brighter, but Schumann wants the music to essentially melt into F# minor, rather than emphasise the tonic, as the music gets quieter and quieter.

Fig. 66 (Bars 414 – 419):



Schumann very much adheres to classical convention in the recapitulation from a form standpoint. Rather than introduce any new themes or motifs, or make any substantial transformations, the recapitulation is almost exactly a replication of the exposition, only now in the tonic of F# minor. It is also simpler and streamlined, as Schumann omits the articulated and staccato variation of the main theme; instead choosing to move straight into motif B and continuing the recapitulation without an extended suspension/transition as was the case in bars 73 – 98. This makes sense and demonstrates an element of conservativism. Schumann understands as with classical convention, that a larger and more substantial transitional section is not required, and the efficiency and linearity of the recapitulation is preserved by its omission. This can also be seen in piano sonatas by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, and is a demonstration that despite Schumann's progressive approach to elements of sonata form, including harmonic structure and use of functional enharmonic equivalents, he remains musically grounded within the conservative ideal of clarity of form.

Schumann's use of a significant amount of thematic material and motifs in a single movement is something that separates him from other composers. Throughout the movement, his introduction of new thematic material results in a unique and comparatively fragmented version of sonata form. Often, there is a clear break in sections, at times marked with double bar lines, but the role that this new material plays results in quite significant grey areas in terms of how they fit within the overarching sonata form. The *Passionato* section from bars 107 – 122 plays a role in the transition in the modulation to A (III) by affirming the distant key of Eb minor. I see this as being a section that works to distance itself to transition to the new tonic. The tonality is so unusual and distant, that the listener loses a sense of the tonic. However, the next transitional passage in bars 123 – 134 that follows seems to be used as a rapid and convenient way to modulate to A and is a sequence of rapid, unsustained tonicizations. The harmonic sequence is a D2 (descending second) sequence, moving from Eb minor – Bb minor (bars 123 – 126), C# minor – G# minor (bars 126 – 130), and finally breaks the sequence with Bm – E7 (bars 130 – 134) to lead to the new tonic of A major.

This unconventional approach to sonata form is due to the way in which Schumann treats and develops thematic material. He does it almost out of necessity to avoid any kind of musical stagnation. As we saw in the exposition, in bars 53 – 106, and 107 – 122, he introduced two highly contrasting thematic ideas in very different keys but treated them both the same way in regard to rhythmic variation. Unlike Beethoven, who possessed an extraordinary ability to

develop, expand, and transform a theme or motif over an extended period coherently, the consensus among musicologists is that the younger Schumann's ability to develop and expand on thematic material was, at the time, ill-fit for longer forms like the Romantic era piano sonata. One can, however, quite easily see the growth and maturing of this ability when listening to his four symphonies. His ability to develop a single theme and a small number of motifs improved with experience; his youth, however, does show in this sonata, with respect to the amount of thematic material and motifs that he introduces in the exposition.

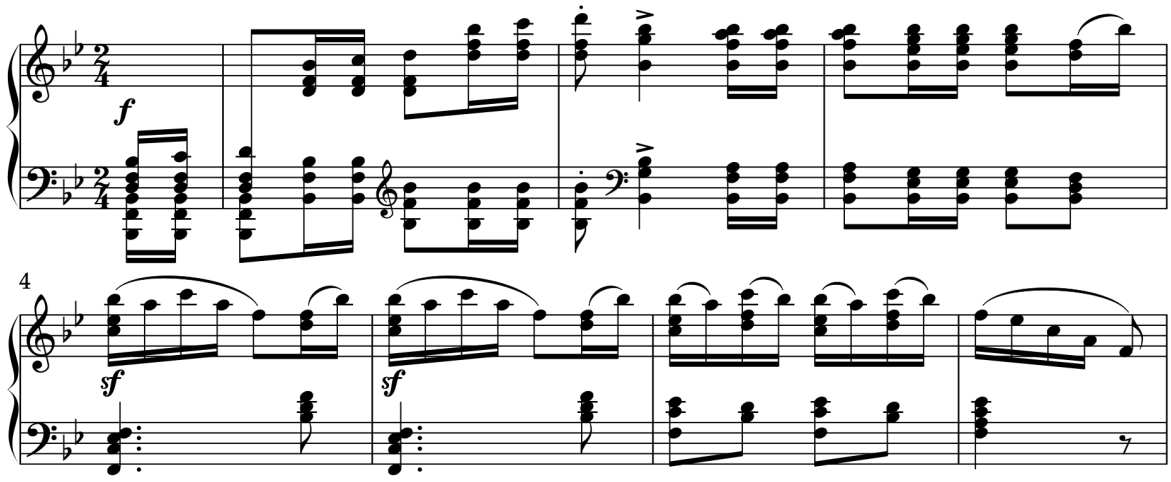
However, with such a substantial amount of material comes a varied but very coherent development section that does show more restraint in form compared to the exposition. Schumann does not introduce new motifs or themes in the development section, but transforms the previous material in unique ways, such as in bars 176 – 191 (Fig. 32 – 34) where he splices together important motifs initially presented separately and merges them into one single 'development theme'. The overall stability of the development section is an intriguing juxtaposition. Whilst the exposition is fragmented and unpredictable, the development section contains a clearer structure, both thematically and harmonically, providing a nice contrast when Schumann moves into the recapitulation. The recapitulation section is relatively unvaried compared to the exposition. As with classical convention, it is a modulated version of the exposition, with all the material and the harmonic relationships now aligned to the tonic of F# minor. While the exposition was fragmented with various important motifs and quick changes in harmonic direction, because the recapitulation is a direct replication, it feels familiar and ties the movement together well.

This analysis represents only one example of Schumann's approach to sonata form, but I believe it is a very effective example that demonstrates why Schumann cannot be regarded as a conservative composer. Schumann can be regarded as a progressive composer who errs on the side of a clearer sonata form, grounded in the ideals associated with conservatives. This is because his treatment of sonata form differs highly from that of other conservative composers, as you will see in my analysis of Felix Mendelssohn's approach. His progressiveness, however, has a line drawn with regards to clarity and treatment. His compositional style might move towards or close to, but never truly joins the radical progressives like Liszt, who move considerably beyond conservative musical idealisms.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

The next example I will analyse, is the first movement from Felix Mendelssohn's *Piano Sonata in B-flat*, Op. 106. This was his final published piano sonata, the others being Op. 6 in E, and Op. 105 in G minor. They were all written prior to 1827, but Op. 106 was published shortly after Mendelssohn's death in 1847. This sonata was greatly influenced by Beethoven's *Hammerklavier*, which was composed in 1818; both sonatas are in Bb major and have the same opus number (Op. 106). According to several accounts, Mendelssohn wished for this sonata to be published posthumously with the same opus number, as a homage to Beethoven. Another influence of Beethoven that can be seen in this sonata, is Mendelssohn's use of the interval of a third. In fact, one of the defining structural elements of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* is the interval of a third, and how he uses it. In both sonatas, the third refers to a third above or below a given note (otherwise known as an inverted sixth).
The sonata opens with an emphatic forte Bb major main theme; the first chordal melody in the pickup and bar 1 is reminiscent of the loud and harmonically dense Bb major chords that open Beethoven's sonata. What then follows is a scalar melody within the chords of the right and left hand, as this harmonic density continues. The melody is Bb – A – G, until we reach bar 4 which reaches a quasi-half cadence on an F^7 chord.

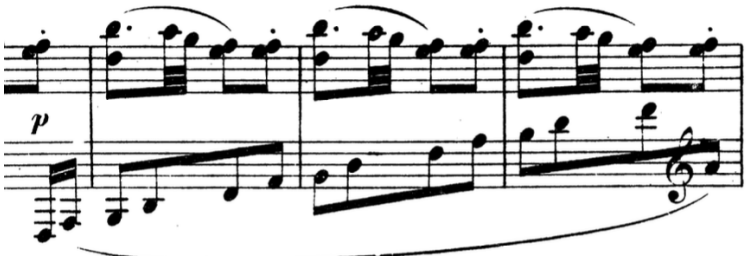
Fig. 67 (Main theme, bars 1 – 7):



The theme is repeated again, before two sets of ascending two-note pairs: Bb – A – C – Bb (bar 6), going back to F^7 as the main theme is repeated in bars 7 – 14. In bars 15 – 17 (Fig. 68) is a repeated motif whilst being accompanied by a quiet Bb major arpeggio in the left

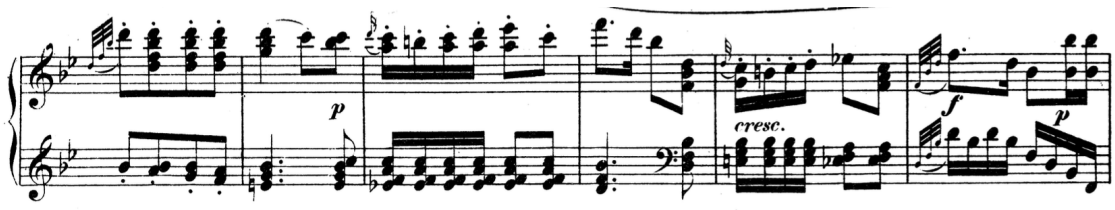
hand. This can be viewed as not a part of the main theme, so much as it acts to simply confirm the tonic of Bb major.

Fig. 68 (Bars 14 – 17):



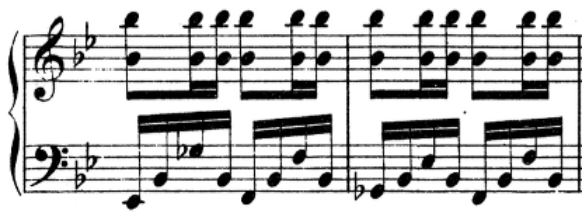
The main theme is very rhythmically driven, with a clear dance-like semiquaver-semiquaver-quaver rhythm that is a similar fragment to what can be heard in European dances such the polonaise. Bars 18 – 23 (Fig. 69), are another confirmation of the Bb tonic, but not to conclude with a perfect authentic cadence; note that the melody finishes on the Bb in bar 21 on the weaker second beat, as opposed to the first downbeat. Additionally, the left-hand Bb chords in bars 21 are in their first inversion, and the left-hand arpeggio at bar 23 ends on an F.

Fig. 69 (Bars 18 – 23):



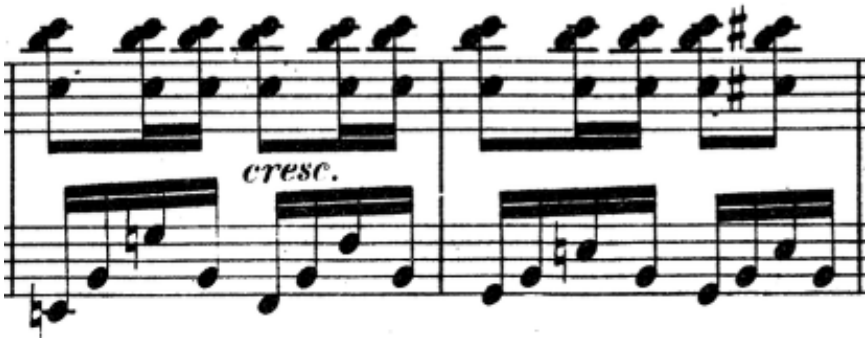
This material allows the music to now move into the transition that starts with the two Bb octaves at bar 23. The melody is now in the left hand, made up of the bottom-most notes of the arpeggios. The melody in bars 24 – 25 is Eb – F – Gb – F (Fig. 70).

Fig. 70 (Bars 24 – 25):



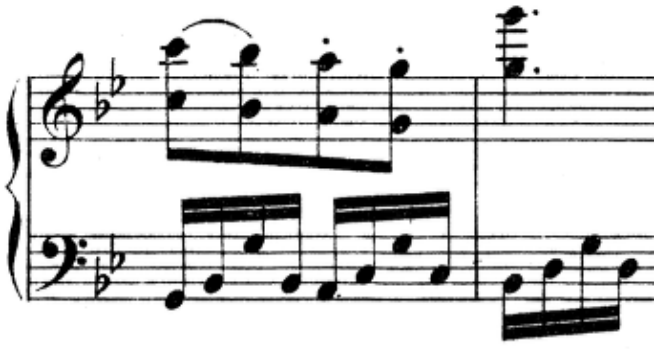
Mendelssohn is briefly moving into Eb minor which brings the contrasting darker colour of the minor key before disregarding it in bars 26 – 27 (Fig. 71) where he naturalises the melody, which is now E – F – G – G.

Fig. 71 (Bars 26 – 27):



These brief minor shifts are something that Mendelssohn likes to play with as a means of a colour change, and this technique is something also practiced in the Classical era. He also does this to blur the tonality; the previous material served to confirm the key of Bb and setup the transition. Mendelssohn then tonicizes the key of G minor, with an E^{O7} at the final quaver of bar 27 leading to D major in bar 28. The voice leading of the melody leads to this resolution as well, with the main melody in bars 24 – 27 (Fig. 70 – 71) being Bb – C – C#. The melody of D – C turns it into a dominant 7^{th} which then creates the tonicization of G minor.

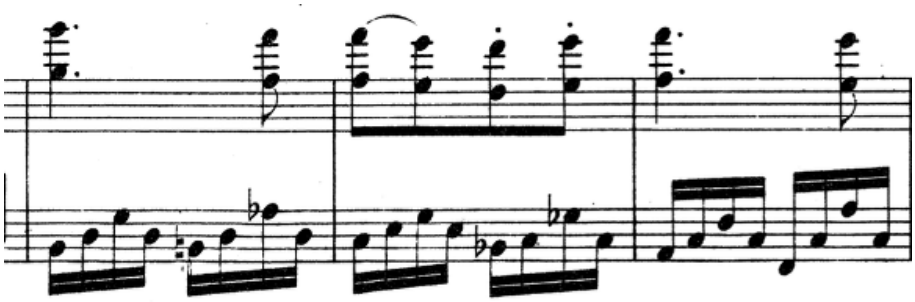
Fig. 72 (Bars 29 – 30):



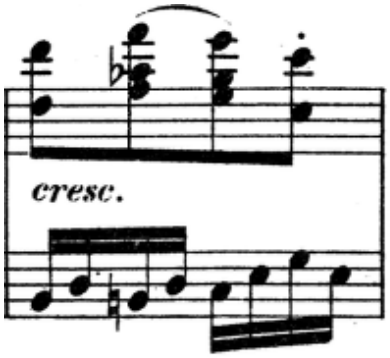
Mendelssohn does another tonicization, now moving from G minor to C minor via a B^{O7} in bars 30 – 31 (Fig. 73) before arriving at F major. The Gm - Cm – F progression is a setup towards another perfect cadence, and Mendelssohn once again uses the melody to do this

smoothly. Note how at bar 31 there is an Eb octave in the right hand and a Gb in the left. These are a tone and semitone away (respectively) from F, once again letting the voice leading control the direction of the harmony.

Fig. 73 (Bars 30 – 32):

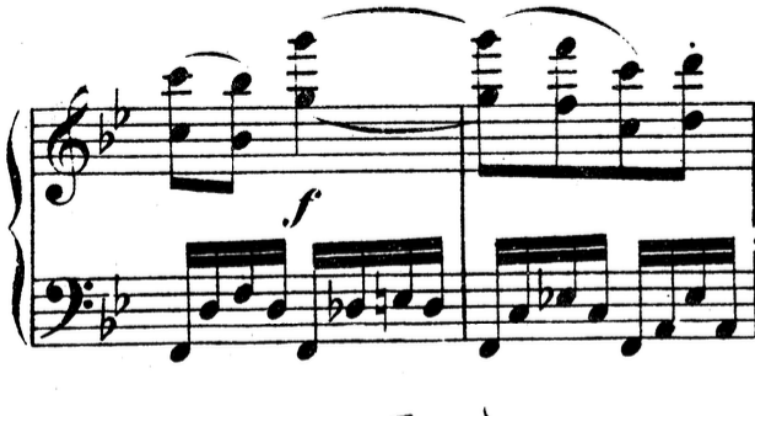


At bar 33 is a brief variation on the shift to C minor:



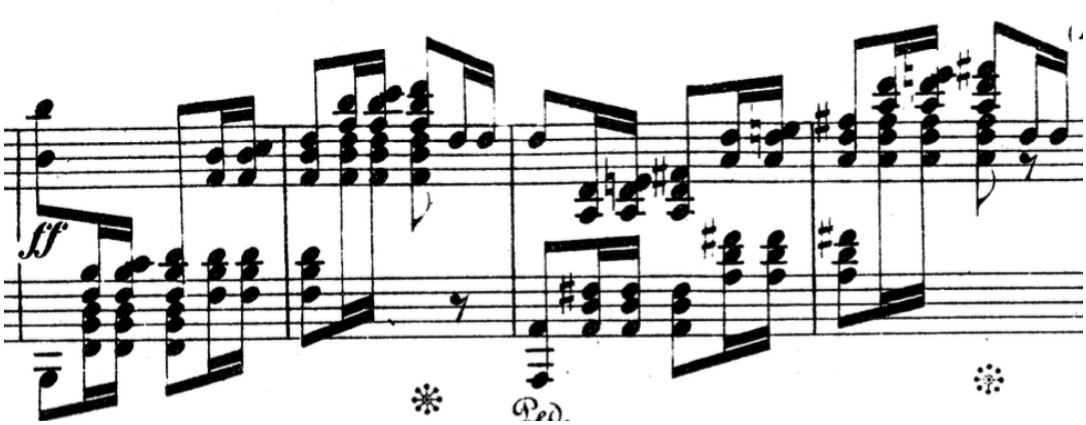
Followed then by a continuation of the melody, starting back up at the G in bar 34 (Fig. 74), with a chromatic alberti-bass style accompaniment underneath a pedal F, until reaching F^7:

Fig. 74 (Bars 34 – 35):



After this transition, the opening Bb theme returns once again in bars 36 – 37 (Fig. 75), but not for long, as a D major version, over a pedal A underneath immediately succeeds it.

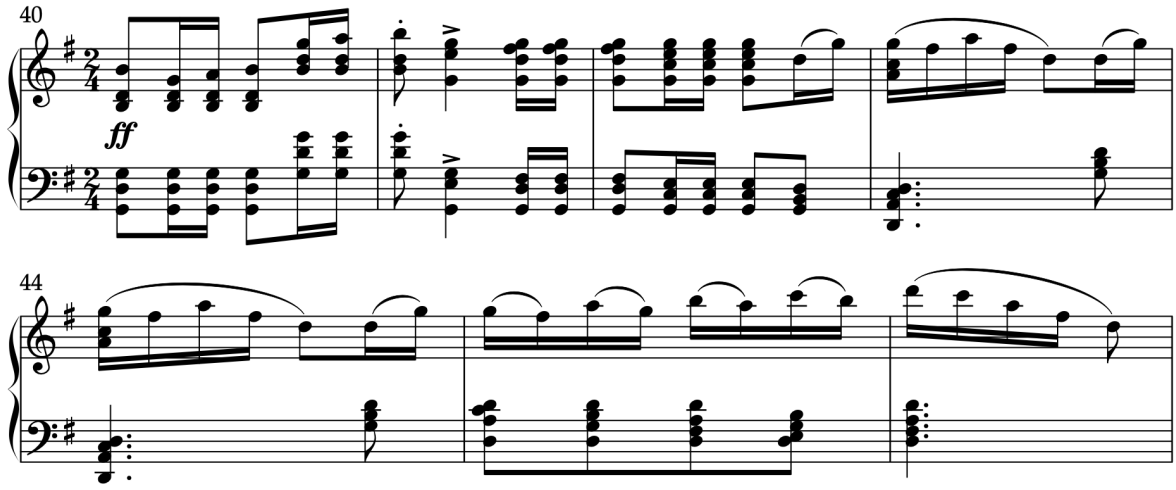
Fig. 75 (Bars 36 – 39):



Following this is a surprising but welcomed change in key. Mendelssohn uses quite a common technique among the sonatas of Mozart and Haydn, in which he employs the surprise of the appearance of the parallel key. However, as opposed to briefly featuring the parallel, it becomes the new key. Mendelssohn's shift to the key of G major is only briefly prepared with a perfect cadence by the D version of the opening, but the lack of harmonic preparation, in addition to the A pedal, provides the progression with a significantly brighter colour, as the listener anticipates a movement to G minor, the relative to Bb major. Note how the key of G major (VI) is a third away from Bb, which recalls the first movement of *Hammerklavier,* where the exposition of the first movement also concludes in G major. It is also interesting to hear the voice leading underneath; it is overpowered by the dense chords, but the strong quavers on the downbeat are a melody of Bb – A – G.

This modulation to G major, and eventually the second theme also demonstrates that Mendelssohn is a Romantic-era composer, in that he does not feature a half-cadence. The shift is unexpected and extremely effective, providing a real lift to when G major arrives, and is backed up by a fortissimo version of the main theme in bars 40 – 46 (Fig. 76) in the new key.

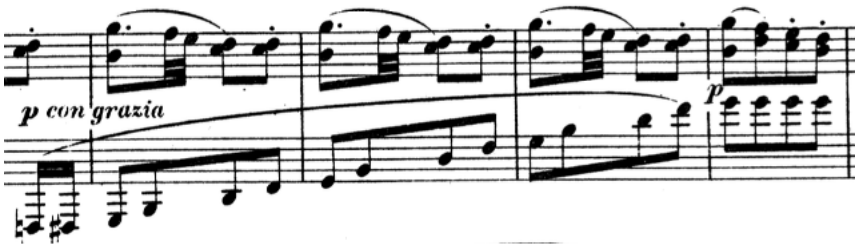
Fig. 76 (Bars 40 – 46):



This harmonically surprising shift, however, is done in the manner of a conservative composer. Mendelssohn looks for this surprise in a manner that is direct and harmonically sound, rather than use more distant harmonies or progression with a harmonic sequence like Schumann does in Op. 11.

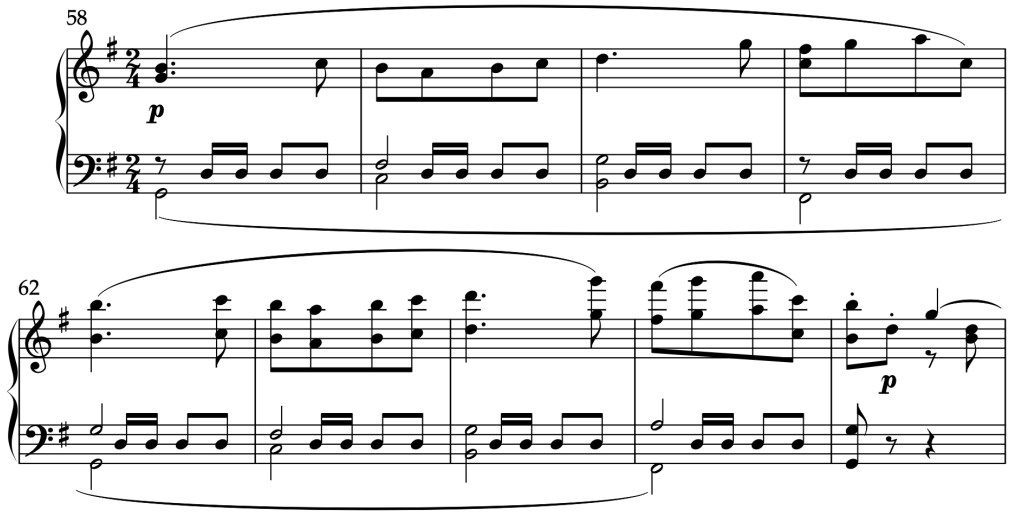
In bars 47 – 50 (Fig. 77), he uses the motif we heard before that comes after the theme to confirm G major as the new key, rather than another tonicization, and after he has completed this, only then does he move to the second theme. He also does this for dynamic purposes.

Fig. 77 (Bars 47 – 51):



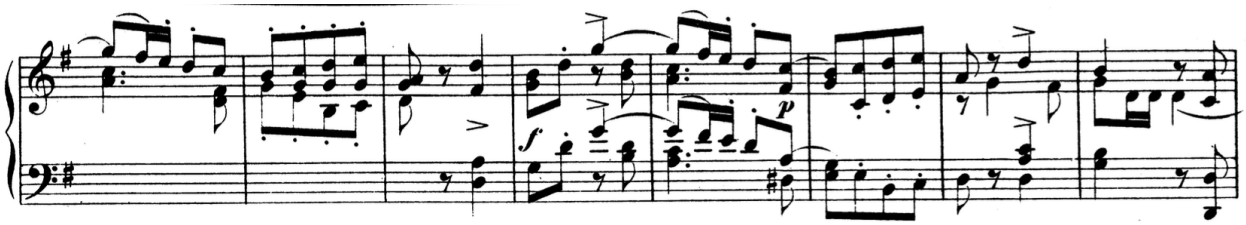
Mendelssohn contrasts the main theme with a second theme (bars 58 – 61 (Fig. 78)) that is quieter and more contemplative, with a singing and longer melody as opposed to being shorter and driven by the rapid and unrelenting dance like rhythm and pulse. The theme is made up of one 4-bar phrase, and its contemplating nature can be found in its question-and-answer form: bar 58 to the first half of bar 60 acts as the question, followed by an answer in the second half of bar 60 and 62. The theme then repeats in octaves.

Fig. 78 (Bars 58 – 66):



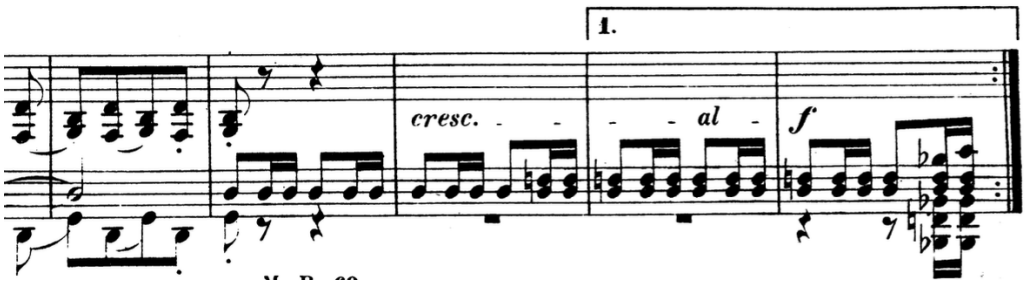
However, Mendelssohn still hints at the rhythmic nature of the main theme and connects the two themes by having the accompaniment play a version of the dance-like rhythm underneath the singing melody, as well as having the second theme be repeated, just like he did with the main theme. Following this is a codetta in bars 66 – 80 (Fig. 78 – 80), as the register moves down the piano and back towards the opening's range.

Fig. 79 (Bars 71 – 74):



Mendelssohn's approach to the repeat is harmonically predictable due to the conclusion of G at bar 77 (Fig. 80), and the continuation of the D, and eventually including the F moving us back to the tonic of Bb major.

Fig. 80 (Bars 76 – 81):



This development section is quite extraordinary and is an excellent example for how Mendelssohn will develop a theme. At the second repeat, Mendelssohn maintains the same D, F dyad (Fig. 81) but we now hear a melody based on an arpeggiated G^7 chord. Additionally, its rhythmic origins also lie in the accompaniment of the second theme (which in itself was a variation on that of the main theme:

Fig. 81 (Bar 80, second time):

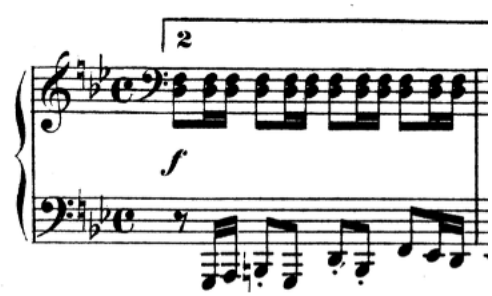
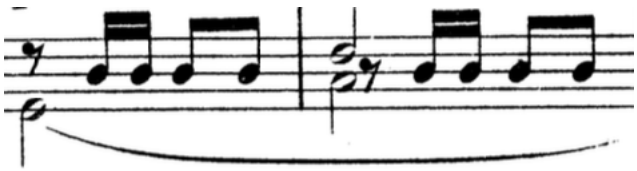
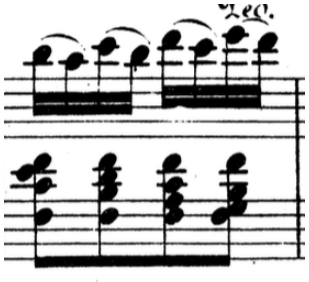


Fig. 82 (Bars 58 – 59), accompaniment to the second theme:



Despite the fact that the subject does not appear to relate to the main theme all that much, the roots in its rhythm are clear, but to a certain extent, so is its melody. Although it spells out the arpeggiated version of each chord, its upper-lower melodic direction can be traced back to the 6th bar of the main theme.

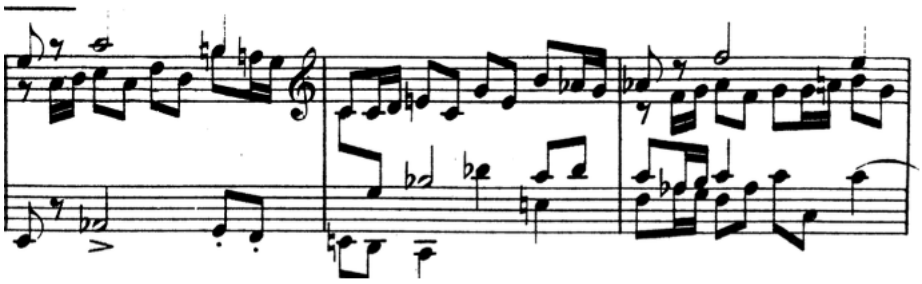
Fig. 83 (Bar 125):



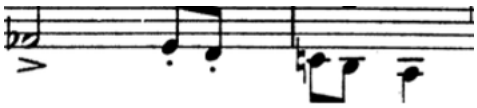
What follows is a harmonic and melodic exploration of this subject. Furthermore, there is a shift in the emphasis of the beats, as Mendelssohn has altered the time signature from 2/4 to

C (Common time). Thus, the length of a bar has doubled, making room for longer melodies and harmonic development without the frequent accents of a fast 2/4 bar. In this development section, Mendelssohn uses counterpoint as the driving force for thematic development and momentum. Talking from a contrapuntal perspective, the G^7 melody becomes the subject, which is now imitated in the right hand within the bass clef (bars 81 – 82 (Fig. 84)). I will thus refer to this motif as such.

Fig. 84 (Bars 81 – 83):



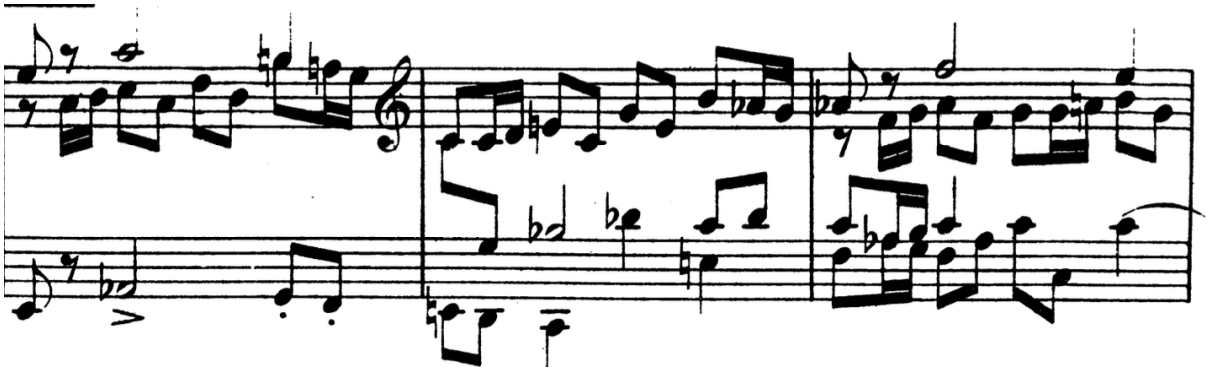
Rather than gradually build the number of voices and harmonic density, Mendelssohn immediately brings in multiple voices at bar 81, and a new countersubject in the left hand:



This contrapuntal approach is the driving force of the development. Mendelssohn transforms and develops the subject significantly, tonicizing and moving through tonal centres that get very distant from the tonic. He very often does this with dominant or diminished 7^{th}s, although there are also examples where he uses quasi-perfect cadences. Immediately from the outset, Mendelssohn moves from G^7 to an extremely brief tonicization of C minor in only the first crotchet beat of bar 80. Note how the C minor is confirmed at the C semiquaver:

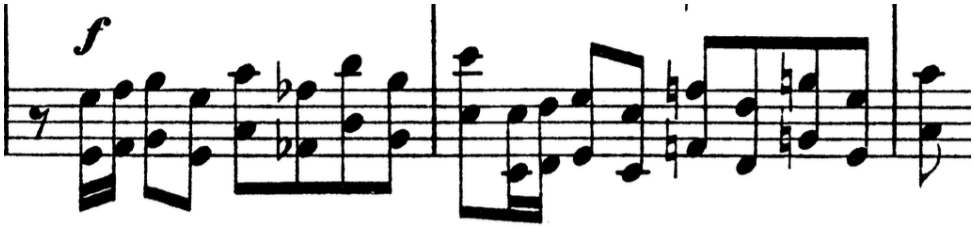
The subject has also slightly changed, in that the upper-lower quaver melody has moved from an arpeggio to a scalar movement upwards: in bar 81, this is Eb – C, and F – D. This creates a melody that incorporates the passing notes of the scale, rather than simply spelling out an arpeggio each time. He then does a harmonic movement that Liszt is often quite fond of doing: an unprepared deceptive cadence by shifting from this very brief C minor to Ab major, before moving back to G, now tonicizing the parallel major of C in bar 82. He then transforms it into its dominant 7th version on the second crochet beat; he then plays with C^7/Eb^O harmonies before tonicizing F minor at bar 83. We can also hear the countersubject in the tenor voice (now in contrary motion): a Bb minim followed by C – Db quavers.

Fig. 84 (Bars 81 – 83):



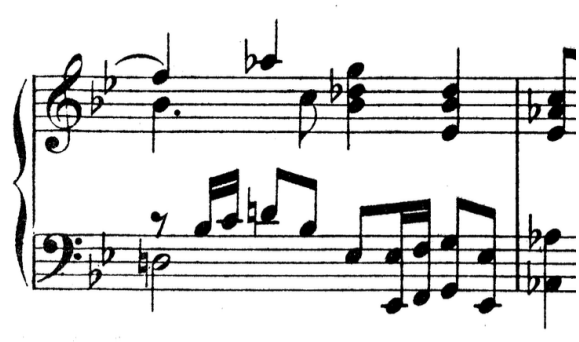
This fugal portion has now transformed from three-voices to a complex four-voice fugue. This development is a unique mix of the fugal approaches of both Bach and Beethoven. Mendelssohn appropriately shifts between two, three, and four voices. Like Beethoven, he also likes to feature the subject in once voice but in octaves.

Fig. 85 (Bars 85 – 87):



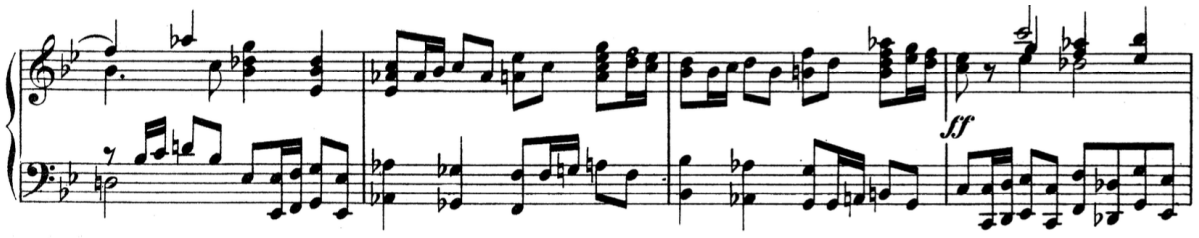
Mendelssohn sometimes uses the circle of fifths to give even more direction to successive tonicizations, such as in bars 88 – 89, where the progression is Bb^7 – Eb^7 – Ab^7 (Fig. 86).

Fig. 86 (Bars 88 – 89):



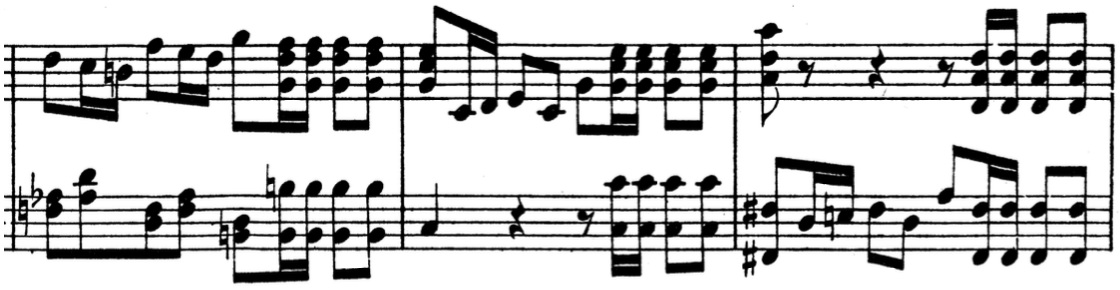
Mendelssohn's dominant 7th chord tonicizations but substitutes or incorporates tones from diminished 7th versions that possess the dominant function, and quality is similar to what Schumann does in Op. 11, at bars 168 – 171 (Fig. 32), and 411 – 414 (Fig. 65 – 66).

Fig. 87 (Bars 88 – 91):



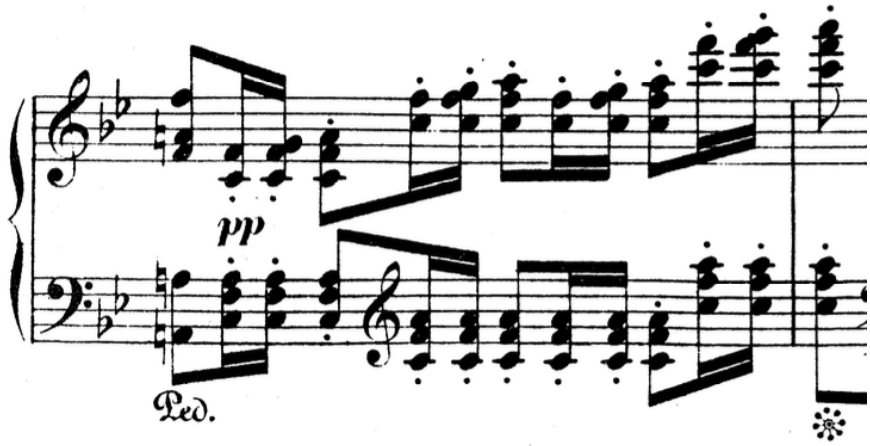
This is because their unstable quality means they can resolve themselves immediately to their respective tonic chords, meaning Mendelssohn never loses momentum or a harmonic direction, since he could tonicize this way almost perpetually. There is a brief transition in bars 104 – 106, where we begin to hear echoes of the main theme in the form of repeated chords in the same rhythm:

Fig. 88 (Bars 104 – 106):

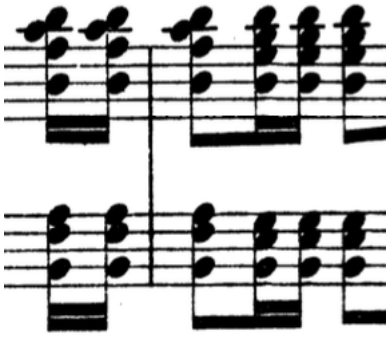


The main theme also appears in different versions as interjections, such as in bars 96 (to the first quaver of 97) and 98 (to the first quaver of 99) where it briefly breaks up the unrelenting contrapuntal development of the subject:

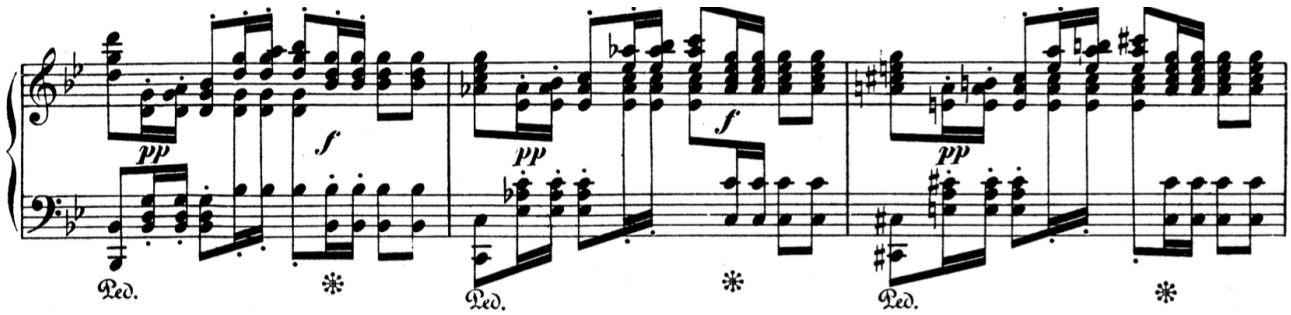
Bars 96 – 97:



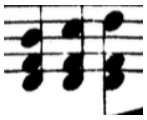
Fragment of the main theme (bars 2 – 3):



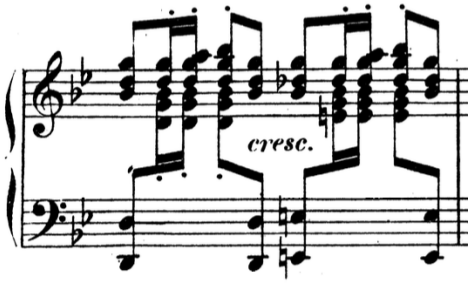
In bars 107 – 109, we start to hear the main theme moving further up chromatically. What gives it away is the three-note fragment of the theme:



Original in Bb (Bb – C – D):



This continues into bar 110, where we hear Bb in its first inversion:



The chord progression over these four bars is important to examine. The harmony changes once per bar in 107 – 109: G minor – Ab major – A major, followed by Bb – E^{O7} in bar 110. This finally leads to bars 111 – 119 where we hear the start of the retransition back to the tonic of Bb. This is shown by the majority of this section focusing around either the F^7 chord, or Bb over a pedal F (V6/4).

Fig. 89 (Bars 111 – 113):

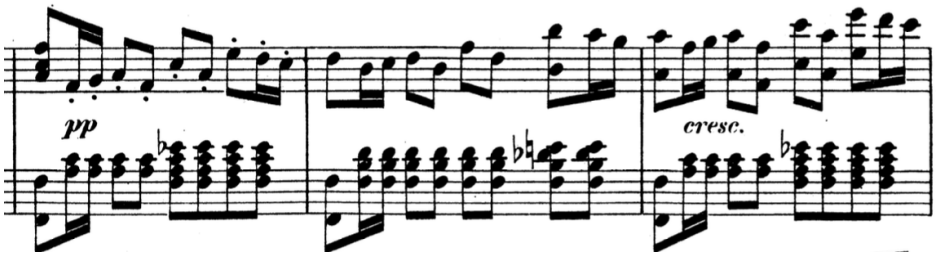
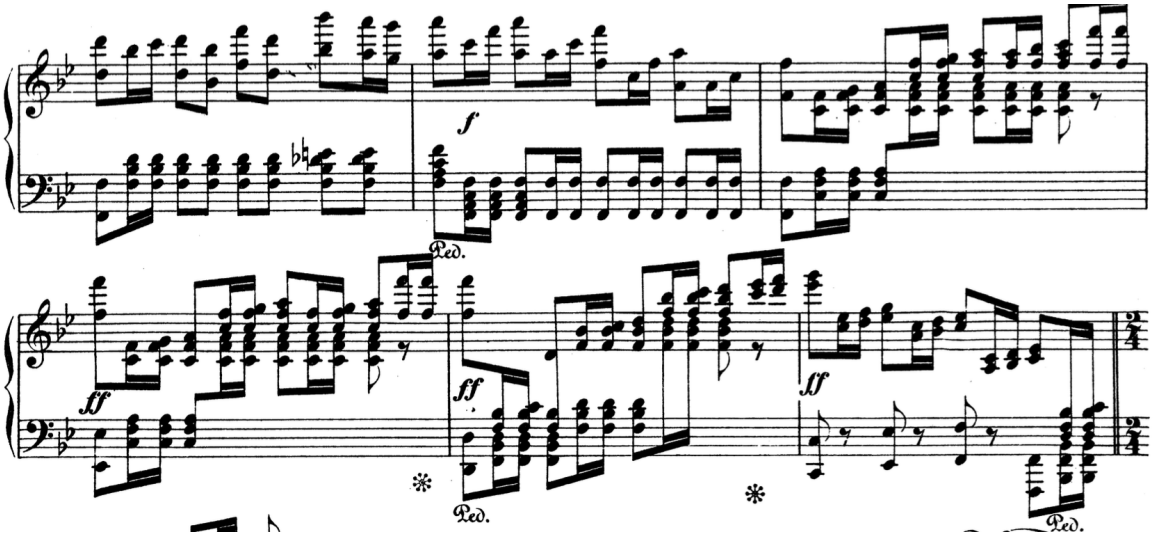
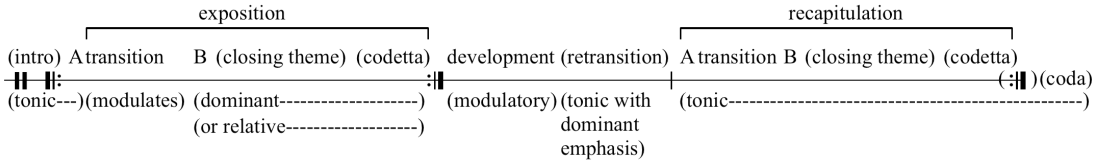


Fig. 90 (Bars 114 – 119):



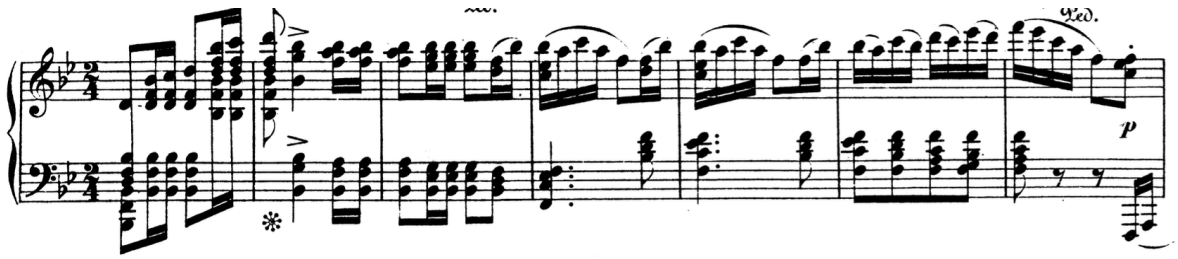
Mendelssohn is adhering to the classical convention in sonata form, where the retransition into the recapitulation is done as the tonic with dominant emphasis, as seen by the chart I showed in the introduction to this section:



Another interesting aspect regarding the development section is register and range. The exposition concludes in the bass clef, and the development begins there as well to help the flow of the piece as it naturally moves into the development, rather than cutting off like you might see in an early Mozart sonata. The overall shape of the development in terms of register, is a gradual melodic movement from the very low register of the piano with the G^7 subject, to bar 119 (Fig. 90), where we reach a high G, more than an octave above the treble clef.

After this extraordinary development section, we reach the recapitulation again at the end of bar 120 (Fig. 91), where we meet up with the pickup semiquaver fragment.

Fig. 91 (Bars 120 – 126):



This recapitulation, like Schumann, is very slightly streamlined. This is relatively limited because of the small amount of motivic content as well as the small number of bars in which the main theme and transitional material appeared. Since everything is now in, or in relation to the tonic harmonically, there is no need to confirm the harmony a second time. Much of the material from the exposition is mostly the same, aside from a couple of minute alterations in articulation. This is a similarity that Mendelssohn shares with Schumann and Liszt, primarily because variation in the recapitulation section was preferred among Romantic-era composers. Some examples include bars 130 – 133 (Fig. 92), in which the ornamental

arpeggio has been removed in 130, and the left-hand accompanying chords have a note omitted (131 – 132) which reduces the harmonic density and adds greater clarity. The Bb arpeggio down in bar 133 now has a small, ornamented arpeggio (up to the high F) all its own.

Fig. 92 (Bars 130 – 133):

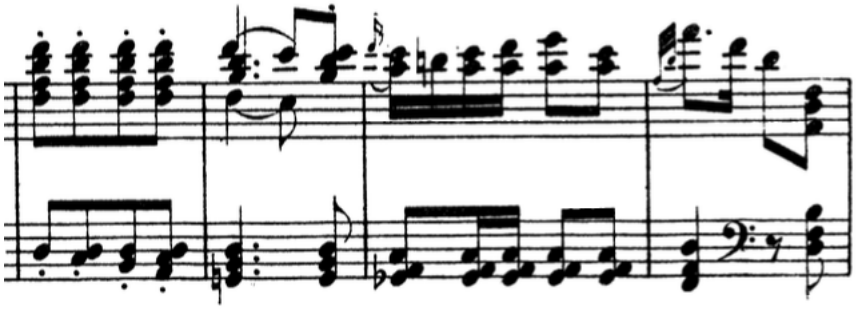
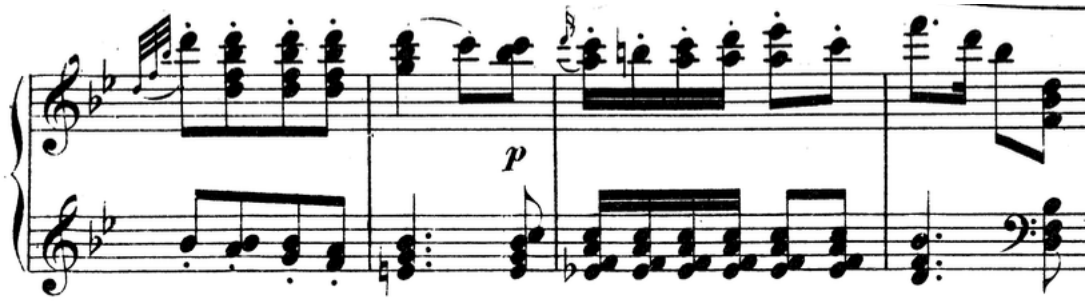
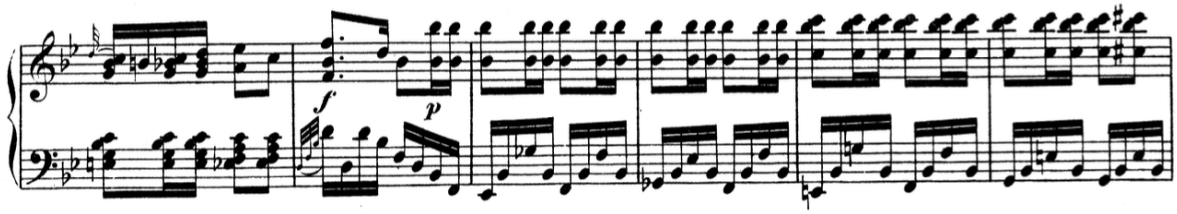


Fig. 69 (Bars 18 – 21):



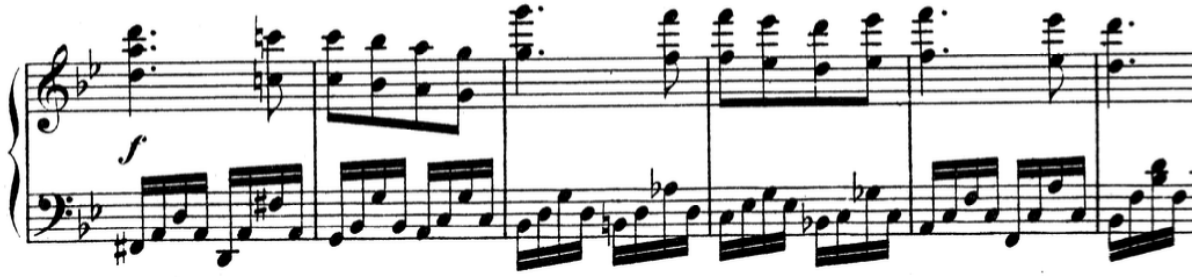
The transitional section is also preserved, aside from the different ariculation bars 134 – 135 (Fig. 93) compared to the original.

Fig. 93 (Bars 134 – 139):



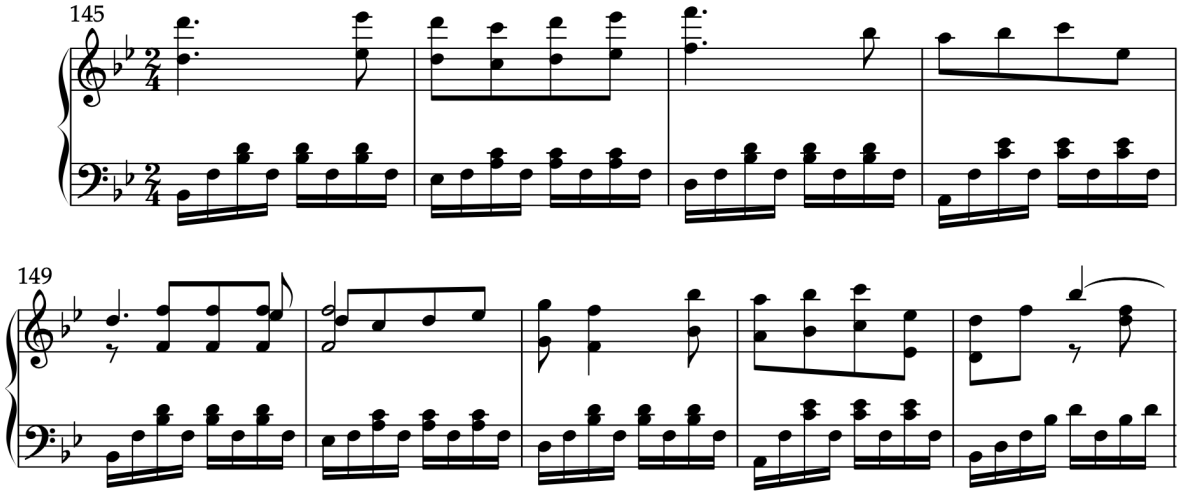
The only difference in the transitional section, which allows for the arrival to the second theme in Bb, is that unlike at bar 33 (Fig. 73), which was another bar tonicizing C minor so as to lead towards a restatement of the main theme, it arrives at the D, but moves straight into the second theme (Fig. 94).

Fig 94 (Bars 140 – 145):



The second theme now appears in the tonic, returning in octaves, in the contrasting forte dynamic (in bar 140) and continuing the alberti-bass style accompaniment.

Fig. 95 (Bars 145 – 153):



What follows is a repeat of the initial portion of the codetta in bars 154 – 158 (Fig. 96), before we move to a descending scalar melodic sequence, made up of a series of tonicizations in bars 159 – 164 (Fig. 97).

Fig. 96 (Bars 154 – 158):

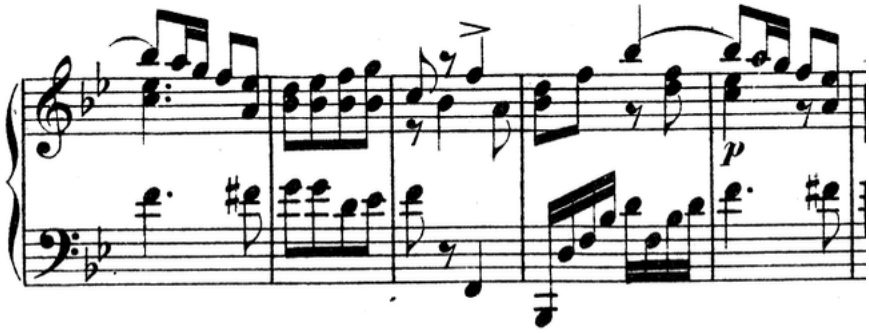
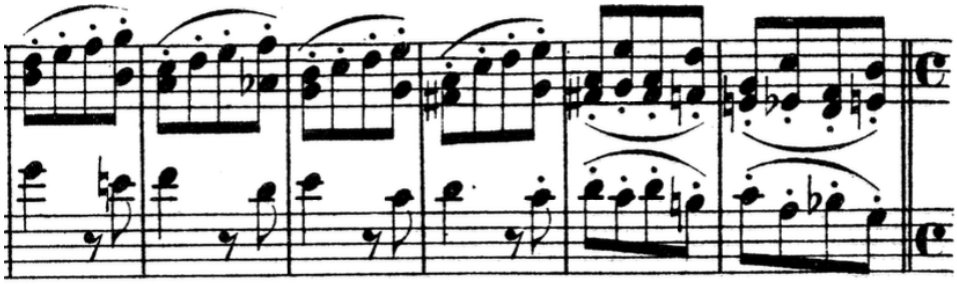
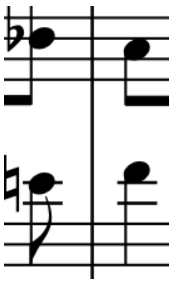


Fig. 97 (Bars 159 – 164):

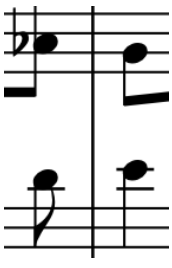


This progression is intriguing, as Fig. 97 contains implied 7th chords on the final quavers of each bar. They are lacking their root notes which would determine if they were either dominant or diminished 7ths thus, creating harmonic ambiguity, since they both share all three notes; the chords, however, are diminished so they still retain their 7th quality and can thus, still be functionally resolved. Gm – C^7 – F – Eb. Note how this diminished chord is spread out, with the lowest note of the right hand, and the melody in the left being a tritone, which ensures that both notes resolve inwards.

Bars 159 – 160 (E/Bb – A/F):

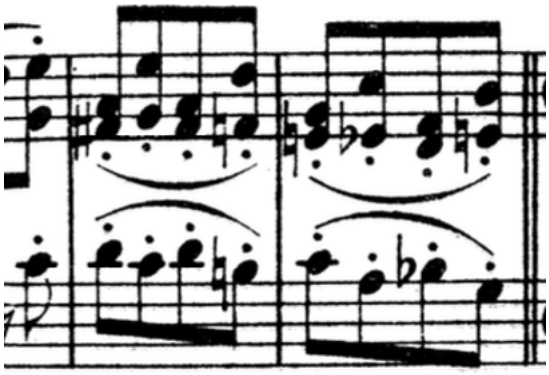


Bars 160 – 161 (Ab/D – G/Eb):



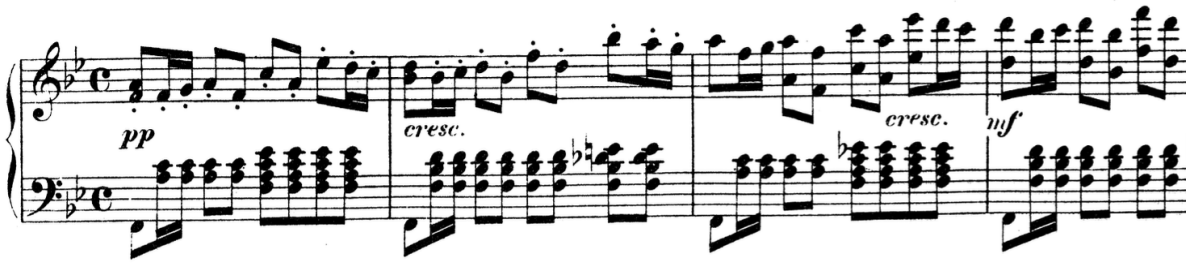
There is an outlier to this trend at bar 162 – 163 where we see a C minor chord resolves to D major, until the tonicization-by-diminished cycle restarts to bar 164 (Fig. 98).

Fig. 98 (Bars 163 – 164):



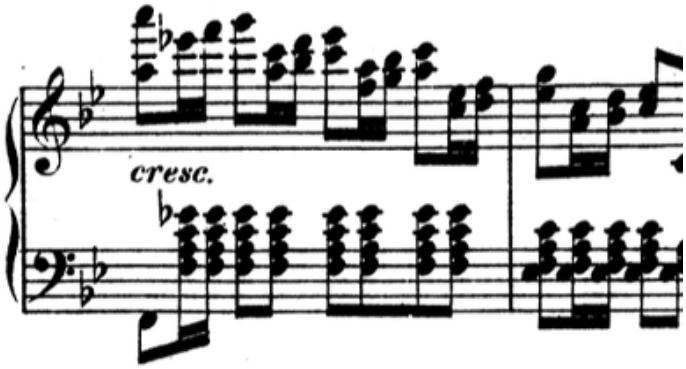
This marks the end of the recapitulation, and now the beginning of the coda, which opens on F major. The time signature is altered back to common time, and the melody in bars 165 – 169 (Fig. 99 – 100) is the subject from the development, now played in F major, then Bb, and repeated again in octaves.

Fig. 99 (Bars 165 – 168):



Following this in bars 169 – 170 (Fig. 100) is a similar melody to that of bar 119 which was the signal to the beginning of the recapitulation:

Fig. 100 (Bars 169 – 170):



This leads back to Bb major (in its first inversion) in bars 171 – 174 (Fig. 101 – 102) to an octave melody in the bass that ascends chromatically: D – Eb – E – F – F# – G (Bars 171 – 174).

Fig. 101 (Bars 169 – 172):

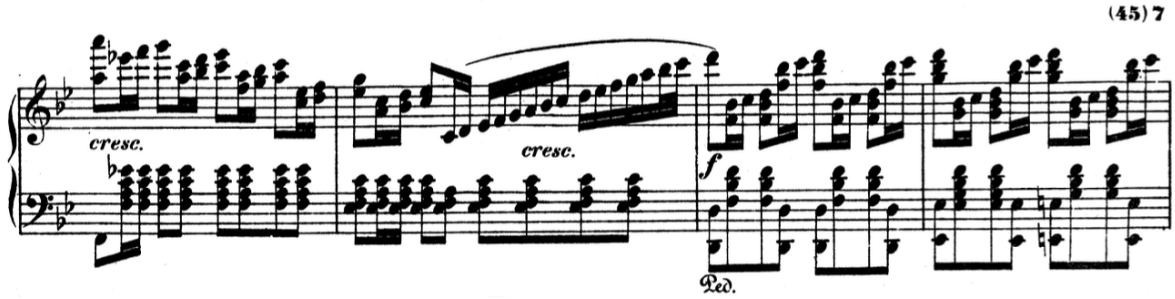


Fig. 102 (Bars 173 – 174):

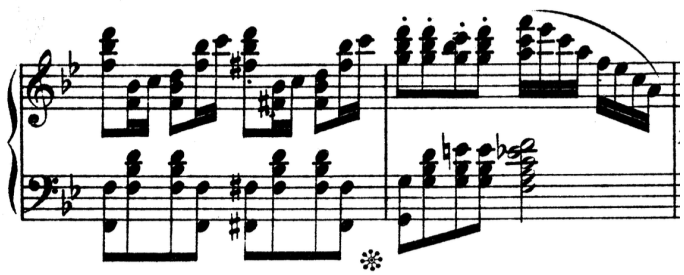
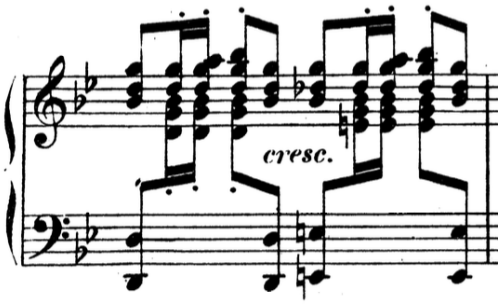
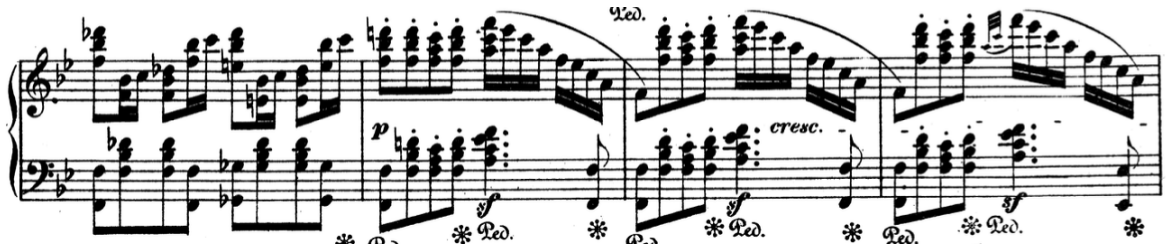


Fig. 103 (Fragment of the original (from bar 110)):

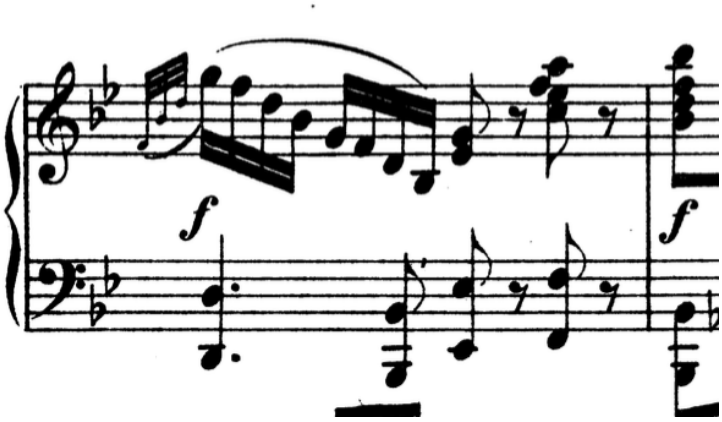


This G minor chord shifts to an F^7 chord and arpeggio, leading back to Bb major at bar 175, now in root position. The figure begins again with a slight variation to the melody: Bb – D – Eb – E – F – Gb (bars 175 – 177). Mendelssohn briefly flirts with minor keys, in bar 177, he briefly shifts to Bb minor over the F in the melody; this is followed by a Gb augmented 6^{th} so as to shift back to F in bar 178 in the form of a V6/4 from bars 178 – 180 (Fig. 104).

Fig. 104 (Bars 177 – 180):



At bar 181, Mendelssohn finally resolves back into Bb major:



In bars 182 – 185, versions of the main theme return, a progression each bar: Bb^7 – Ebm – Bb^7 – Ebm. This is another point where he very briefly flirts with the minor key in order to add a slightly different colour. Additionally, since he concluded in Bb major with a perfect cadence, this is additional material that does not serve a cadential purpose, so much as to confirm and complete the movement in the tonic. The end is dynamically contrasting to the opening, with the main theme figures initially starting with a forte dynamic, until a continuous diminuendo towards the final Bb figures in bars 186 – 191 (Fig. 105 – 106) in a *p* dynamic, followed by pianissimo at bar 189.

Fig. 105 (Bars 185 – 187):

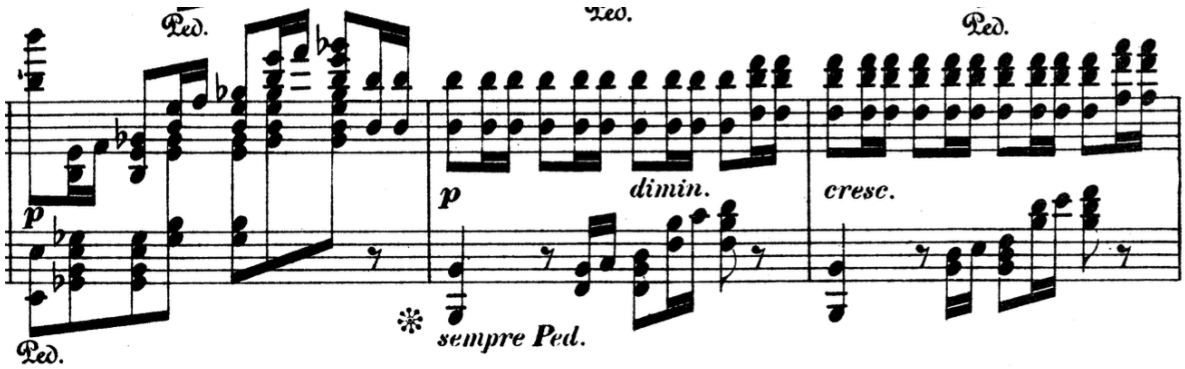
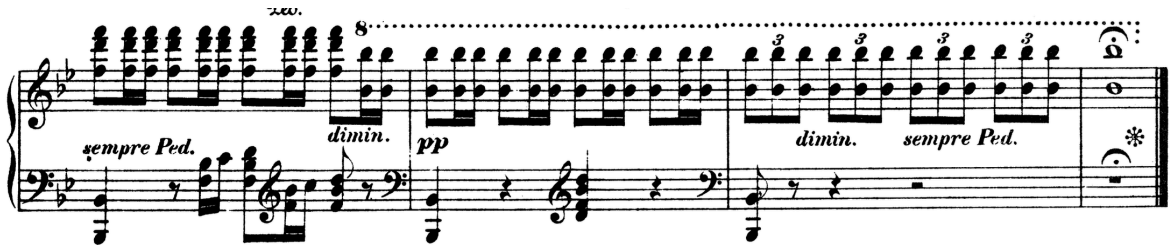


Fig. 106 (Bars 188 – 191):



Overall, the first movement of Mendelssohn's Op. 106 demonstrates the composer's tendency towards a more conservative approach. The Romantic era aspects found within it tend to be found more within the development section where Mendelssohn uses the circle of fifths and dominant 7ths in order to tonicize through keys that can get increasingly distant from the tonic. His use of counterpoint from the beginning of the development section is magnificent and is very clearly influenced by Beethoven's use of counterpoint and canon outside of Baroque forms such as the fugue. Rather than developing and transforming the main theme, Mendelssohn introduces a 'development subject' which is expanded on and imitated contrapuntally through many different tonal centres. This is the peak of his tonal exploration, and his use of 7ths allows him to do it expansively but in a manner that is harmonically smooth and theoretically sound. This adds a very different harmonic flavour, with a complexity and harmonic density which allows for a magnificent thematic development. The main theme in fact, only appears in two bars until the beginning of the retransition at bar 107. Additionally, the metre changed from 2/4 to C (common time), so the emphasis on the beat has doubled in length, allowing Mendelssohn to lengthen the subject itself.

He also experiments briefly with quick shifts of contrasting tonalities in the coda, shifting to the parallel minors of Bb minor (Fig. 104), and Eb minor (bars 183 and 185 (Fig. 105)), returning to common time (C) after the 2/4 in the recapitulation (Fig. 91), once again, taking advantage of the flexibility of a coda section in sonata form.

His approach to sonata form very much adheres to conservativism, having a very clear break in sections, and relatively conventional transitions in between important themes; unlike in Schumann, where he blurs the end of the transitional section and the second theme with a fragmented exposition. Mendelssohn's movement back into the recapitulation is very clear,

with the use of the ‘tonic with dominant emphasis’ which I showed back in the section’s introduction as a standard element of conventional sonata form. Thus, although his approach to tonality and thematic development in the development section and coda demonstrates an early-Romantic era approach, his adherence to sonata form is significantly clearer than Schumann, and his experimentation with the form of clearer and less flexible sections like the exposition and recapitulation is very limited.

FRANZ LISZT

Liszt's only piano sonata, his *Sonata in B Minor* (S.178) approaches sonata form in a unique way that demonstrates his radical progressive approach at the time. Completed in 1853, and published in 1854 and dedicated to Robert Schumann, the piece can be analysed in several different ways due to Liszt's use of a quasi-sonata form. The form of the work can at its simplest, be viewed as four uninterrupted movements that are all thematically linked to each other.

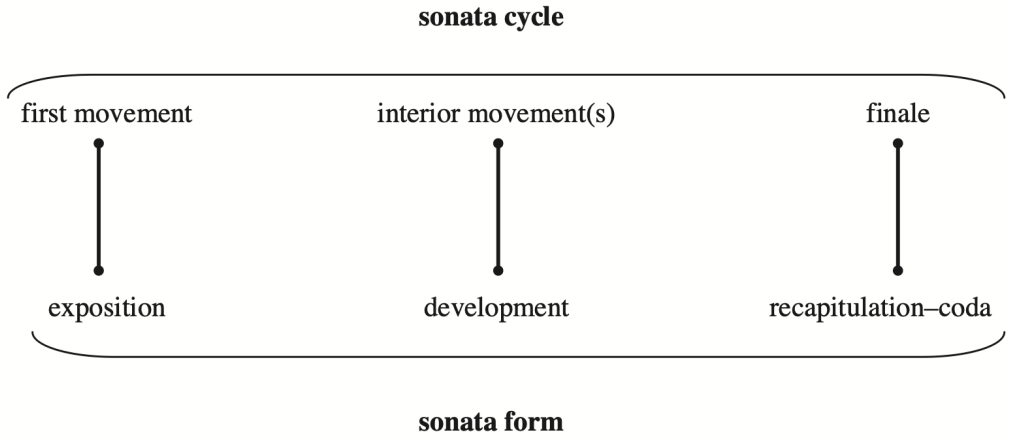
Since the composition was written and published at a time during which Robert Schumann had already been committed to the insane asylum where he later died, his wife Clara was the one who took to reviewing the piece. According to *Deciphering Liszt,* she wrote to a friend that it was "merely a blind noise, no healthy ideas anymore, everything confused, and yet I must thank him for [the dedication to Robert Schumann]. It really is too awful[8]." In this case, I would certainly surmise that Clara's attitude towards the *Sonata* echoes the sentiment that Robert likely would have had for the piece. In fact, not only did Clara dislike the piece, but it fared equally as poorly with critics as well. Gustav Engel, a German tenor and music journalist of the time, said that "in order to take pleasure in works of this type, one must completely renounce everything required by nature and logic[9]". For this look at sonata form in the *Sonata in B Minor*, I will be examining Steven Vande Moortele's interpretation as he writes in his book *Two-Dimensional Sonata form*. For this thesis, I will only give a brief overview of the sonata form, in addition to some of the important themes.

Moortele's interpretation of Liszt's approach to sonata form as the title suggests, is that of two-dimensions that work together and function simultaneously. This is also referred to as a form within a form. The two dimensions are the Sonata Form, and the Sonata Cycle. The chart below demonstrates the relationship that these two dimensions share with each other, and how they interact in this kind of form within a form. This is appropriate for examining Liszt's sonata, as there are four distinct sections that can be deemed as 'movements' that are independent but also thematically linked with each other.

[8] Brown, David, "The B Minor Sonata Revisited: Deciphering Liszt," *The Musical Times,* 144, no. 1882 (2003): 9

[9] Brown, David, "The B Minor Sonata Revisited: Deciphering Liszt," 9

Fig. 107:



This chart is an overview of the sonata's form, with the 'sonata form' dimension in the line above, and the 'sonata cycle' underneath. The harmonic structure as a whole is quite unique.

Fig. 108:

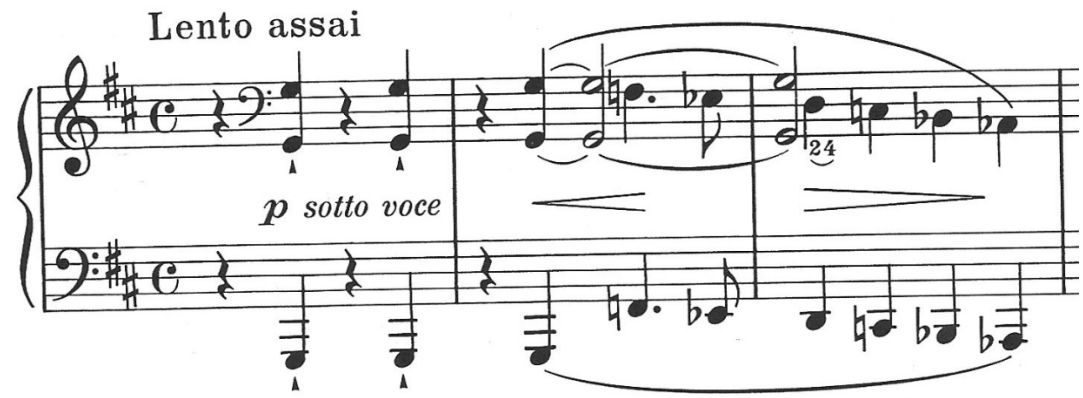
INTRODUCTION	EXPOSITION **b – D – (F♯)**	DEVELOPMENT	
1–7	8–204	205–330	331–452
SONATA-FORM FIRST MOVEMENT **B**			SLOW MOVEMENT **F♯**

INTRODUCTION RETURN	RECAPITULATION **b♭ – b – B**		CODA **B**
453–459	460–532	533–672	673–760
	SCHERZO ⇒ FINALE **b♭** **b – B**		

The exposition's harmonic structure at its simplest is B minor – D major – F# minor, but the direction is takes is extremely complex. Liszt's radical progressive approach to harmonic structure is clearly demonstrated in the recapitulation, which begins a semitone lower in Bb minor, with an overall chromatic progression of Bb minor – B minor, and finally B major.

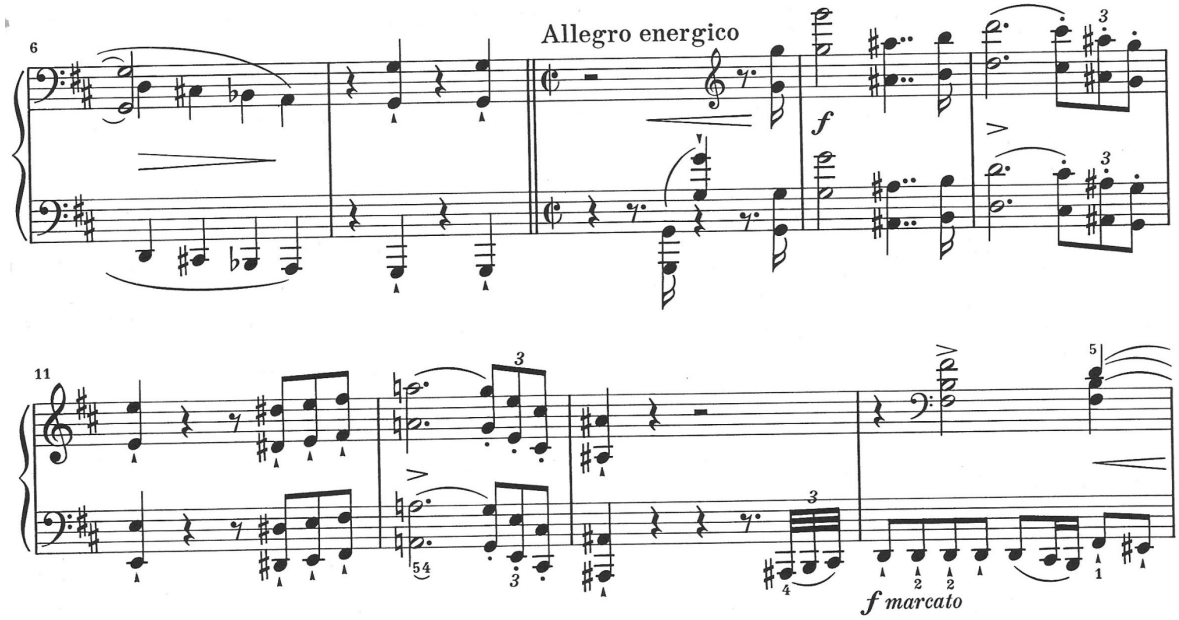
Liszt opens the sonata with a strange introduction starting on the G, before at bars 2 – 3, playing a slow Eb major scale that disappears into nothing.

Fig. 109 (Bars 1 – 3):



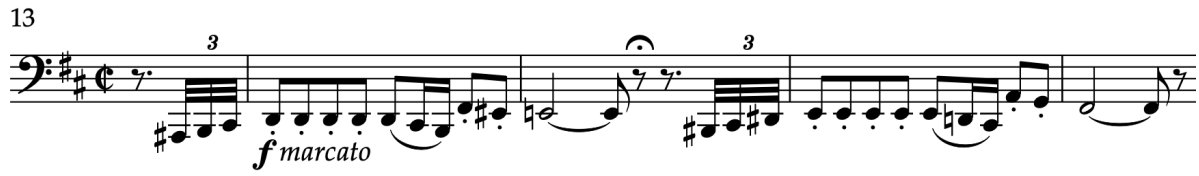
In bars 9 – 13, we get our first piece of tangible thematic material that is repeated in many different versions and is one of the most recognizable themes of the sonata. The idea is essentially made up of a melody, which in bars 10 – 12, spells out a G diminished 7th that finishes on its first inversion on the A#:

Fig. 110 (Bars 6 – 14):



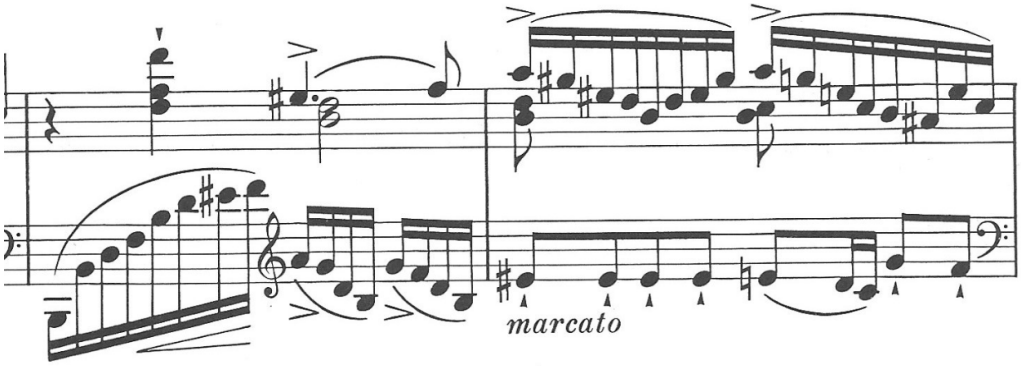
However, as quickly as it started, it finishes, being replaced by a new and rhythmic theme in the tonic of B minor.

Fig. 111 (Bars 13 – 17):



This leads to a swift transitional section from bars 18 – 104. One of the most recognizable melodies includes a variation on the previous theme in the left hand

Fig. 112 (Bars 32 – 33):



Following this, is the arrival of the second theme in a fortissimo D major at bar 105, with a very harmonically dense chordal accompaniment.

Fig. 113 (Bars 105 – 106)

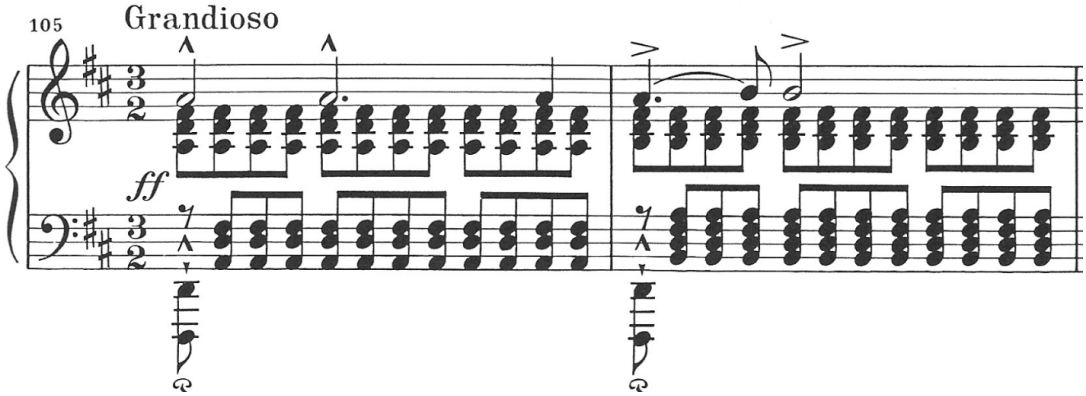
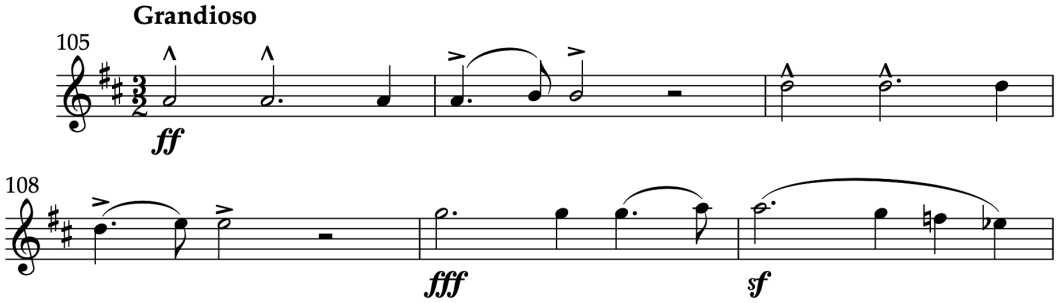


Fig. 114 (Bars 105 – 110, melody on its own):



At bar 120 enters a new theme based off of the material in bars 9 – 13 in an elongated form.

Fig. 115 (Bars 120 – 133):

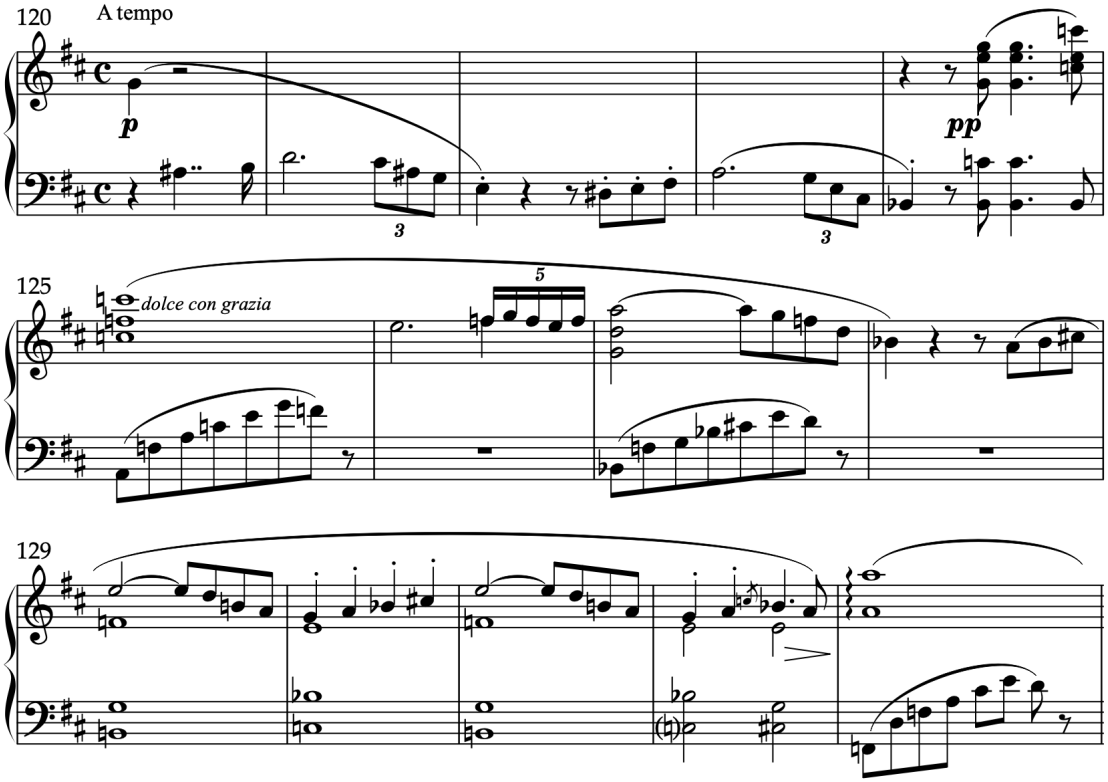
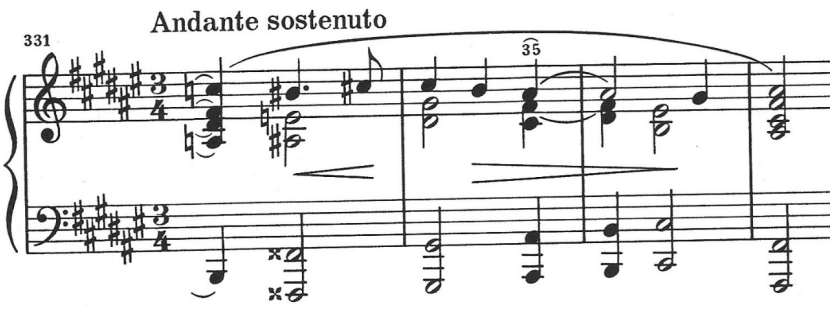


Fig. 116 (Beginning of the 3rd 'movement' of the sonata in bars 331 – 452):



The beginning of the recapitulation, a semitone lower than the original (bars 454 – 465).

Fig. 117 (Bars 454 – 465):

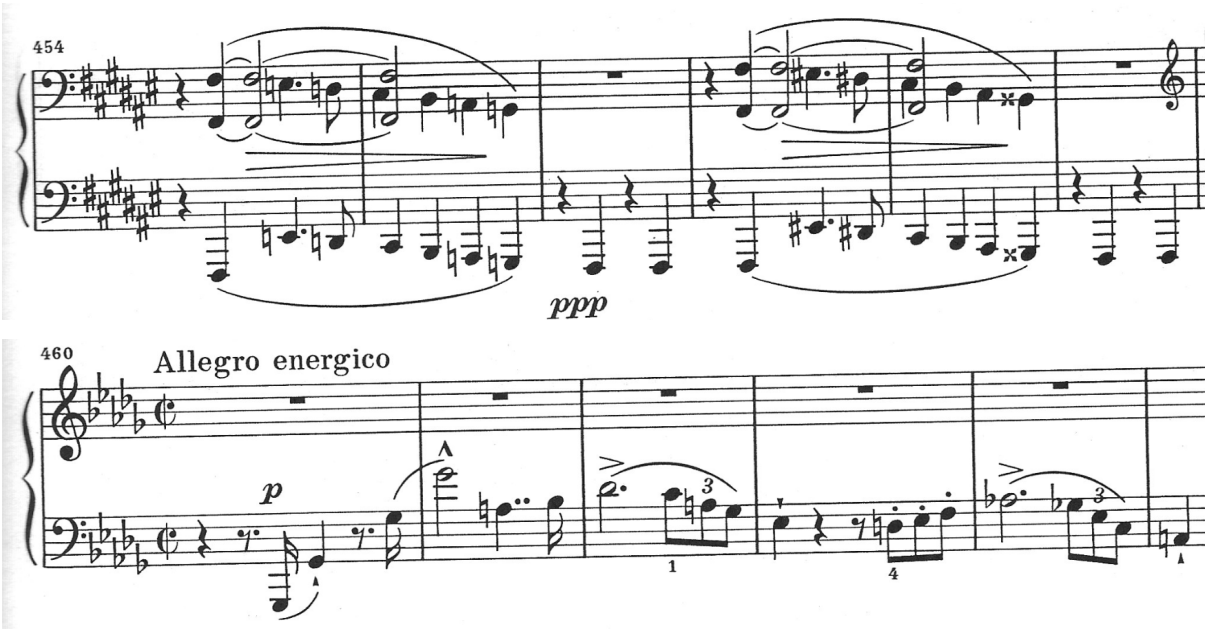


Fig. 118 (Grandioso theme in B major, bars 600 – 604):

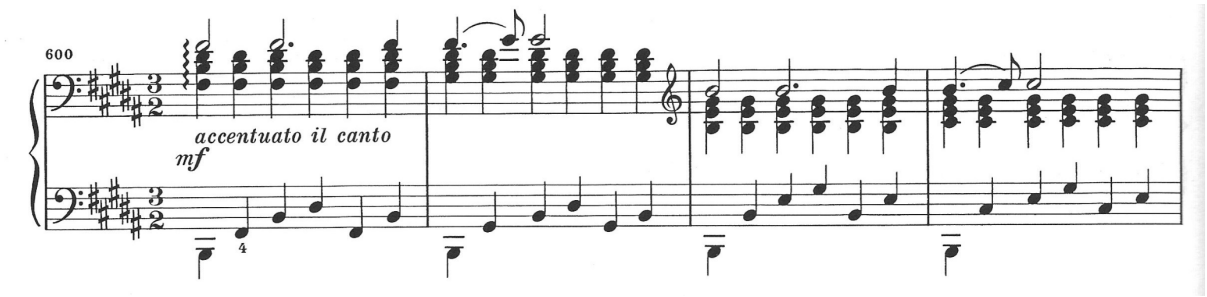
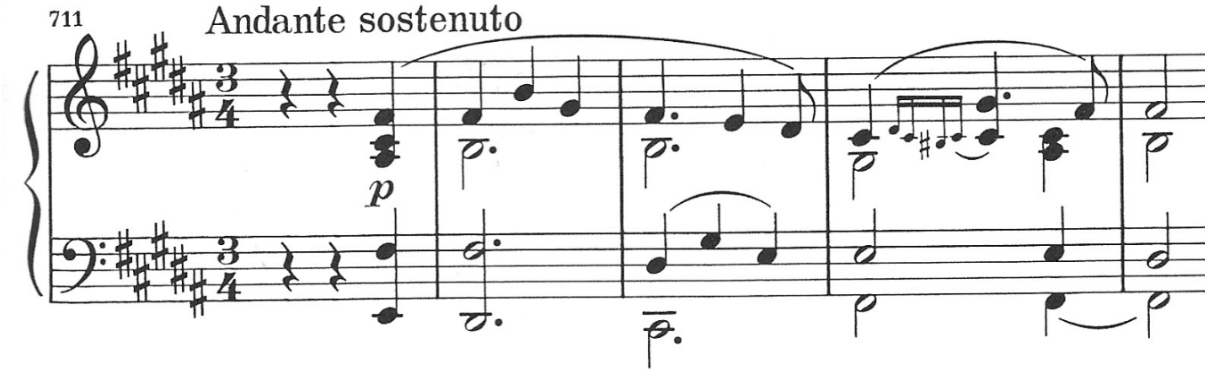
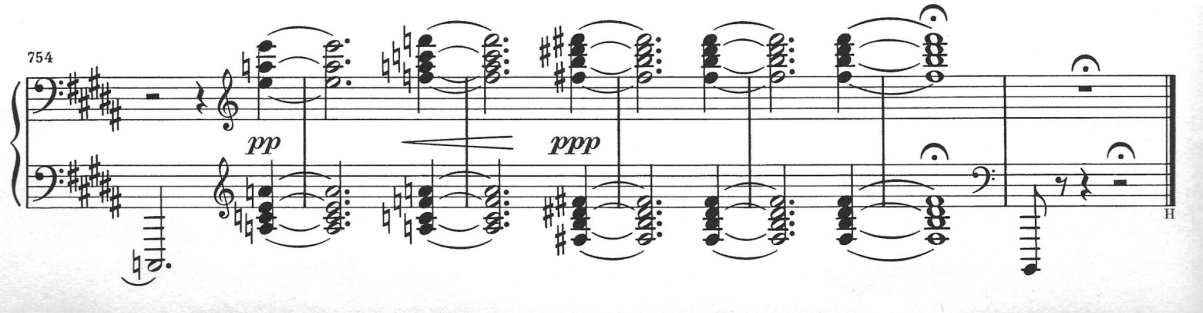


Fig. 119 (Slow movement theme now in B major, bars 711 – 715):



Bars 754 – 760 contains the final chord progression that Liszt leaves the listener with. It is a very bizarre concluding progression. What is particularly interesting is the contrast of the dynamics with the chords. The progression is Am – F – B/F#, until the final B quaver in bar 760. The top voice essentially leads, with a chromatic ascent of E – F – F#, but this is the smoothest aspect. This is another example of Liszt's incorporation of non-functional harmonies. The conclusion is as unusual as the sonata's form; it is a rather anticlimactic finish for such a grand work to conclude with an F – B (bV – I) cadence of a tritone instead of an F# – B (V – I) perfect cadence.

Fig. 120 (Bars 754 – 760):



This was a very brief overview of Liszt's use of sonata form within his *Sonata in B Minor.* Moortele's examination of the form was the primary example I took to trying to discuss his use of the form within a form. This review, nonetheless, demonstrated his radical progressive approach to applying sonata form on a large scale, uninterrupted work. His use of sonata form, no matter the criticism, is innovative and very unique, and demonstrates his radical progressive approach to all aspects of sonata form. This was a form that he was well versed in, and understood, striving to approach it in an entirely different manner that is difficult to analyse. It shares its quasi-form with other works such as Schubert's Fantasy in F Minor, D. 940, and Mozart's Fantasies in D minor and C minor, K. 396 and 397 respectively. Mark Tanner opines that this work "falls more readily into the tradition of the Viennese Fantasia[10]" which are "sonata movements compressed into a continuous unified whole[11]."

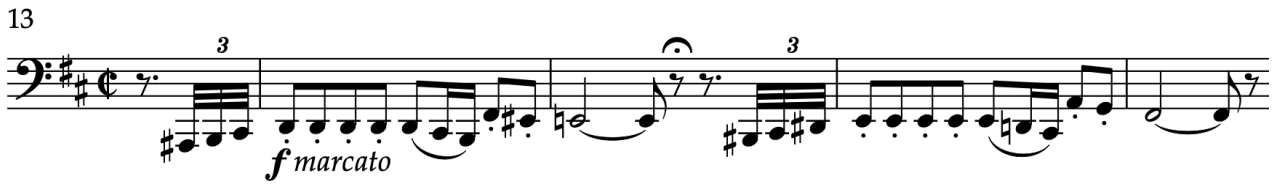
One common trait that Schumann and Liszt's sonatas share, is the inspiration behind their thematic material. Schumann and Liszt both wrote a significant amount of programmatic music; taking influences from stories, poetry, and internal emotions that move the music

[10] Tanner, Mark. "The Power of Performance," 173
[11] Tanner, Mark. "The Power of Performance," 174

beyond a complete adherence to an absolute form. Both Schumann's Op. 11 and Liszt's S.178 share the common theme of love, which is important to take into consideration when analysing these two works. Extra-musical evidence of this with Schumann can be seen in the dedication for his sonata: 'Clara zugeeignet von Florestan und Eusebius', or 'Dedicated to Clara from Florestan and Eusebius'. These two names were those of characters that Robert used to describe aspects of his personal feelings and emotions, and likely used them to hide who the composer actually was from her unapproving father.

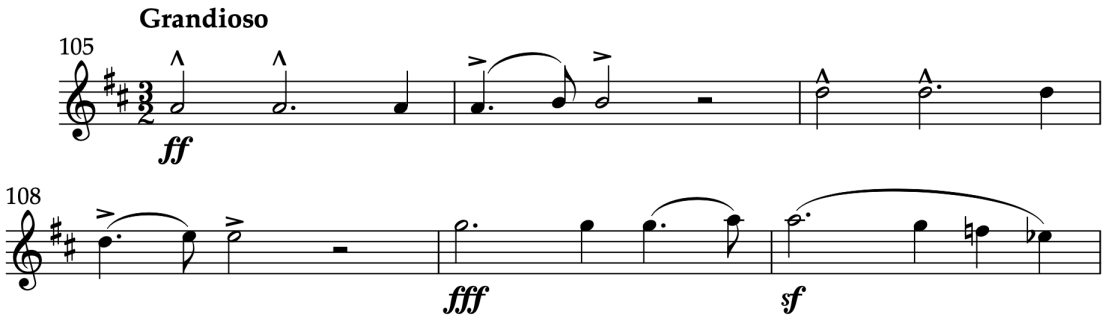
The pieces show however, that despite the common influence of love which they both share, the two composers' approaches to form are different, and are rooted in the contrasts of conservative and radical progressive approaches. Despite its programmatic nature, Schumann's sonata is still rooted in an underlying common practice as a whole, and we can consider that the emotions do drive the music, but they do not structure it. The form of its thematic development is overall, rooted in a clear and overarching sonata form.

In contrast, Liszt's is considerably more ambiguous and possesses what Moortele refers to as a 'fundamental ambiguity[12]'. In this case, fundamental ambiguity refers not only to the way Liszt uses sonata form, but also how the important themes can be interpreted, both in regard to performing, as well as what they each mean in regard to these extra-musical influences. In *The B Minor Sonata Revisited,* David Brown shows that the important themes can be interpreted in this way such as Liszt's love theme[13] (Fig. 111):

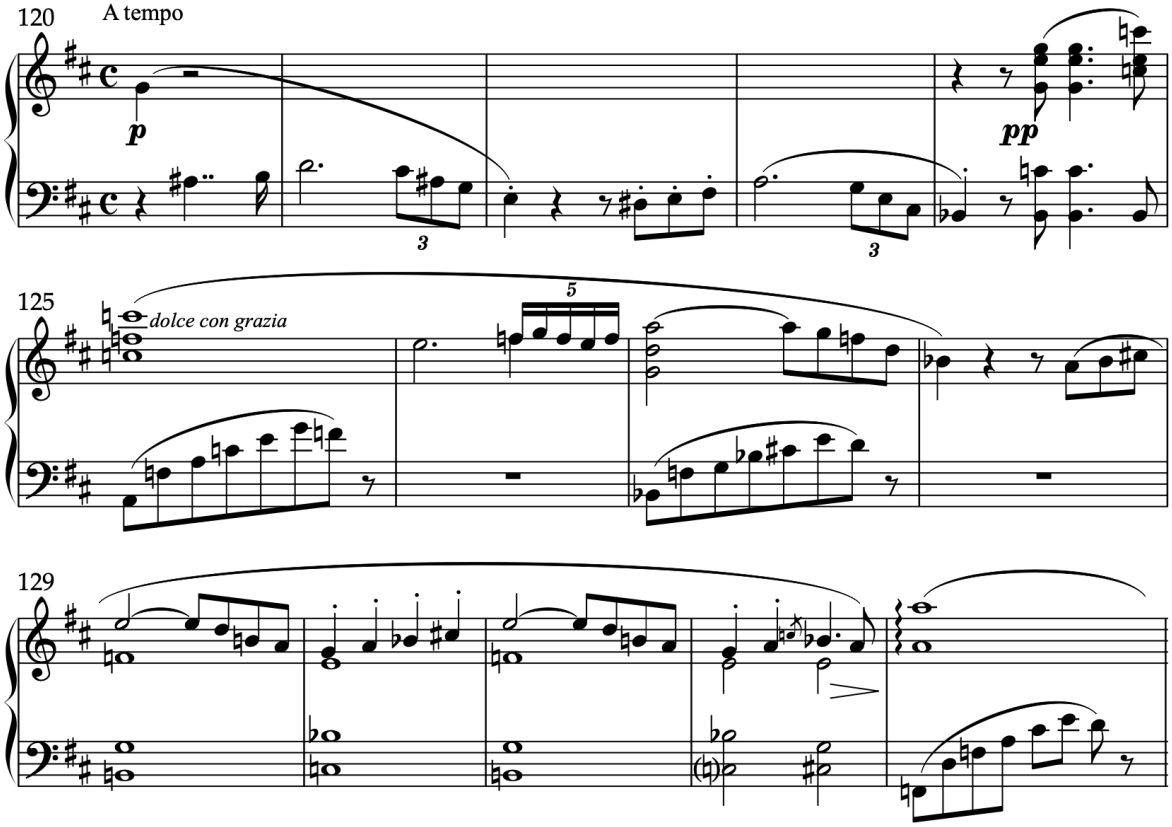


[12] Moortele, Steven Vande. "Liszt's B-Minor Sonata," *Two-Dimensional Sonata Form: Form and Cycle in Single-Movement Instrumental Works by Liszt, Strauss, Schoenberg and Zemlinsky*, 39
[13] Brown, David, "The B Minor Sonata Revisited: Deciphering Liszt," *The Musical Times* 144, no. 1882 (2003): 8

Karolina's theme[14] (Fig. 114):



Liszt's theme[15] (Fig. 115):



His emotions drive the music, but it is in a quasi-form. The way in which Liszt presents and uses sonata form in the sonata has regions of clarity that at times show sectional boundaries,

[14] "The B Minor Sonata Revisited," 8
[15] "The B Minor Sonata Revisited," 8

but overall, there are various possible interpretations, and Moortele's principle of a two-dimensional sonata form is one of numerous possible means of interpretation.

In his use of quasi-sonata form, Liszt uses linking in order to connect separate movements together by a common theme. The most important example is in the recapitulation, in which the introductory theme reappears a semitone below. Previously, the introduction had played a small influence in the creation of themes, but not in the quasi-first movement.

Fig. 109:

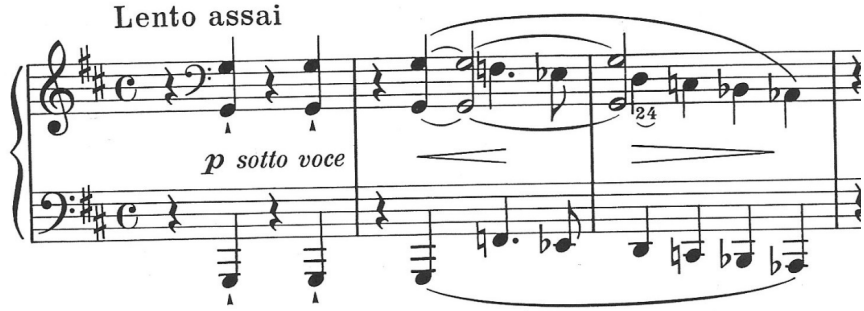
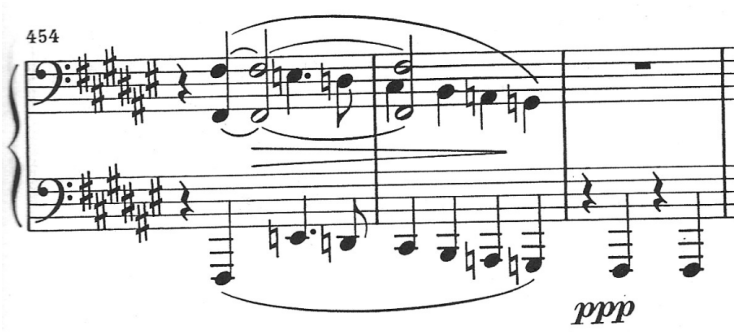


Fig. 117:



This example of thematic linking between the 'movements' in Liszt's sonata shows a high degree of similarity with cases I found in Schumann's; in that there is thematic material linked together independently of the movements, and the material plays a different role in each version it appears in. In the case of Schumann, the *sotto voce* theme (Fig. 12) appears very briefly in the introduction of the first movement, but plays no significant role in the movement's direction, yet when it appears again at the beginning of the 2nd movement (Fig. 14), it is now the main theme. This use of inter-movement thematic connections, as Moortele

notes, is the only aspect of the sonata cycle that has been prominently studied by twentieth-century theorists[16].

Fig. 12:

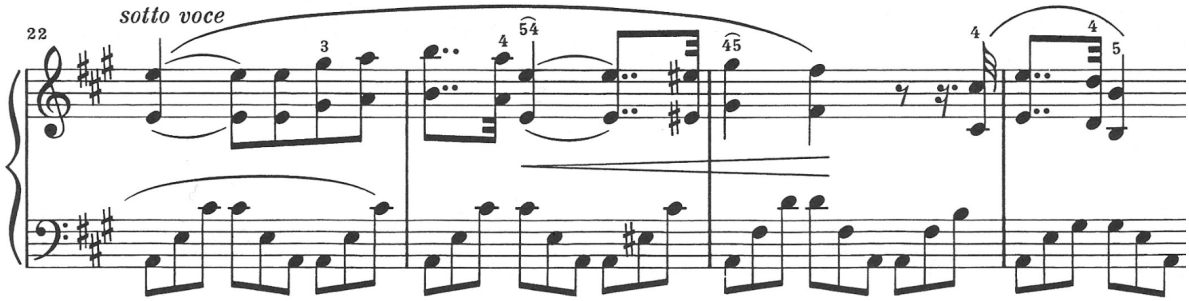
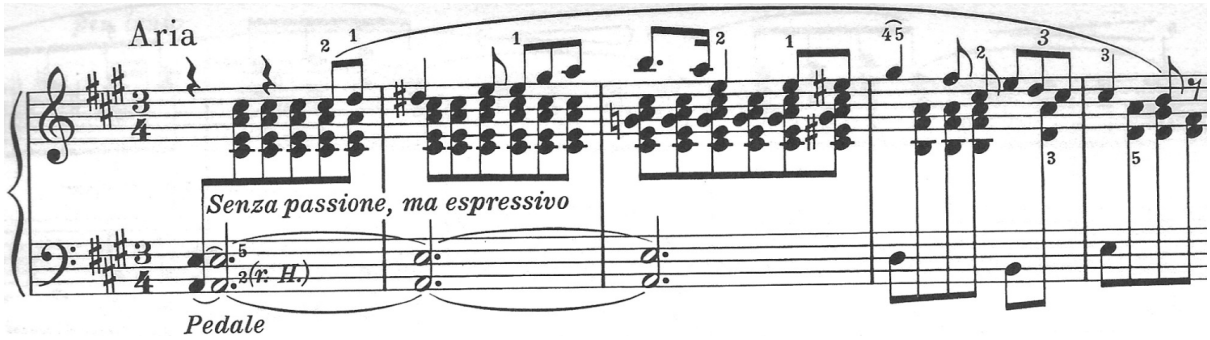


Fig. 14 with the melody in the top voice, left hand accompaniment in the lower treble clef register:



In a way, the two sonatas are both pieces of passion and love, and their approaches to form have a number of similarities, but also contain distinct differences.

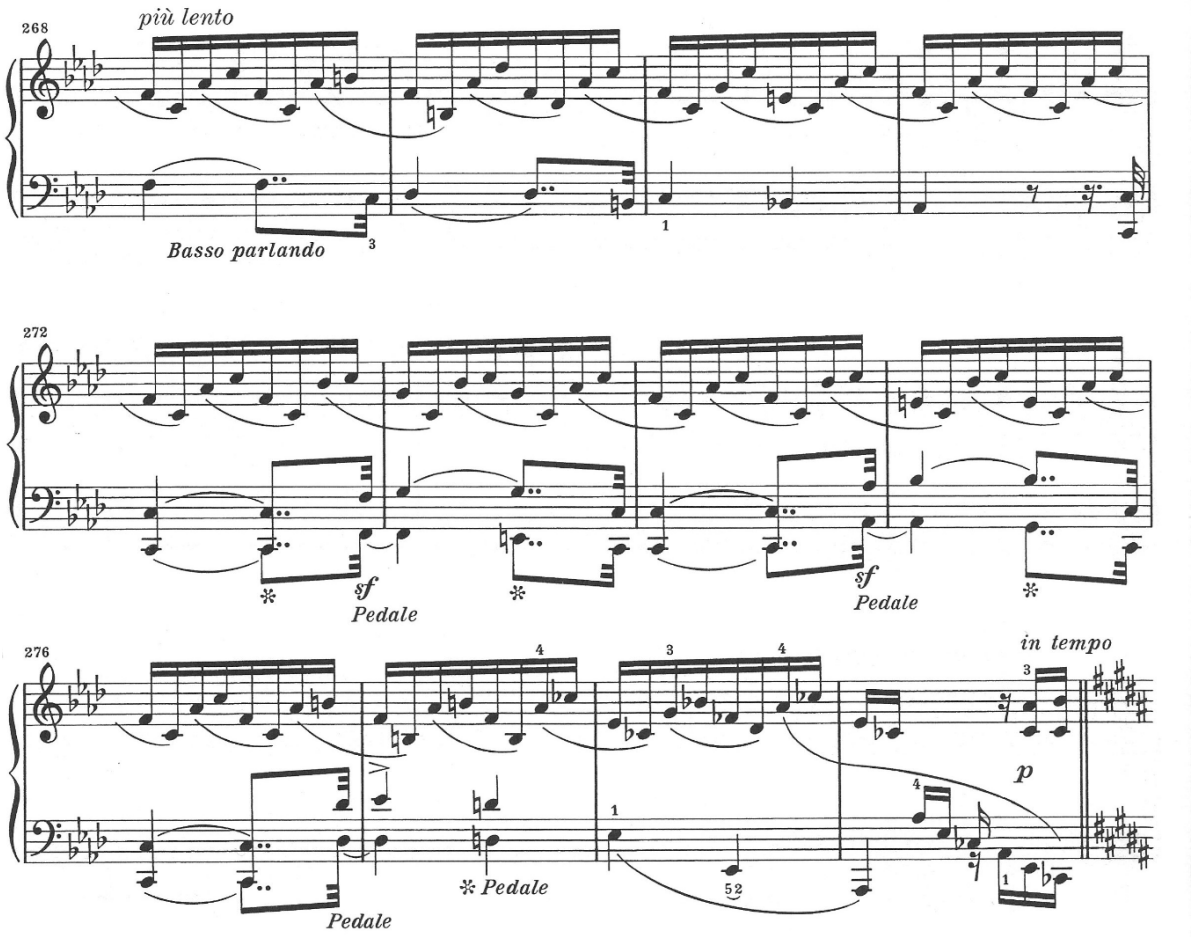
Schumann's Op. 11, and all three of his sonatas represent examples of progressive repertoire, with roots in a conservative approach to sonata form. The clarity of sonata form as a whole in the first movement of Op. 11 is clear, whilst the exposition, development, and recapitulation sections on a deeper level are very thematically and harmonically complex, in comparison to the sections and transitions among other conservative composers and the classical sonatas that preceded the Romantic era. When considering Liszt and Schumann's use of thematic linking, it is useful to note how this alters the listeners' perspective to the purpose of the theme during a listening. I would consider this to be the effect of what could be described as

[16] Moortele, Steven Vande. "Liszt's B-Minor Sonata," 16

hindsight and altered purpose. The fact that a continual listening of a piece can alter the context and overarching role of a piece of musical material if it is used in a unique way further into a piece, as opposed to examining its use exclusively in one place.

One example of this can be found in Schumann's Op. 11, where the introductory theme at the opening of the movement reappears in the remote key of F minor (bars 268 – 279). Schumann makes the listener think it is almost a recapitulation, until in bar 280, Schumann musically reveals it to merely act as a transitional passage towards the next section of the development.

Fig. 120 (Bars 268 – 279, Incl. Fig. 48):



Despite the fact that its role is only transitional, its purpose has been altered when considering its first appearance in the introduction. It initially acts as an opening, with one role as acting to set up the first appearance of the *sotto voce* theme. Aside from this, it initially would seem to present no other significant thematic material, aside from setting the

atmosphere of the sonata. However, with this reappearance, the introduction theme (1 – 13) is shown to be more to the movement than before, and the perspective of its overarching role has changed. This effect of musical hindsight and an altered musical purpose can be seen as a form of retrospective reconsideration. This is another example of why I consider Schumann to be a progressive composer. The difference, however, and what makes Liszt's approach radically progressive, is in this fundamental ambiguity. Although Schumann's approach is highly progressive and unique in Op. 11, it is still fundamentally grounded in an evolved version of the historic approach to sonata form; so, the purpose of it is often less ambiguous compared to Liszt. Since Liszt's approach to sonata form is so different, some of my examples can be viewed as playing different roles in the music. There is a fundamental ambiguity in the Liszt that we do not find in either the Op. 11 or Op. 106 of Schumann and Mendelssohn respectively. Liszt's quasi-sonata form can be viewed as an employment of form within a form.

Taking Engel's opinion of its lack of logic into account, I pose the argument that logic can be built around Liszt's sonata, but only with significantly deeper analysis due to Liszt's radically progressive approach with the use of quasi-forms. A cohesive musical analysis is only capable after a complete listening, because sections of the music often play overlapping roles as Moortele has demonstrated in his analysis. Liszt not only uses extra-musical influences to shape his music and align it with his emotional side, I believe that he, like Beethoven and the majority of composers of any era, enjoyed toying with listeners' expectations, and musical twists of a piece in its form and structure, as well as its harmonic direction, but took it to more radical progressive realms. Mark Tanner's opinion on Liszt's purpose for using a quasi-form, is that had Liszt 'wished to present a transparent structure he could have easily done so[17]', and thus, this sonata is 'not an example of ineptitude[18]'. In this way, according to Tanner, critics of the time were quick to suggest that this was a work demonstrating Liszt's incompetence and inability to write compelling music that could be understood, although there are plenty of examples that go against such an argument.

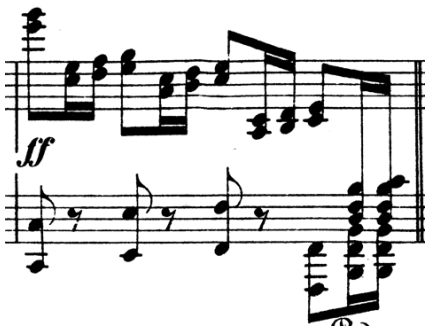
Among these three sonatas, the most interesting section to compare is the recapitulation section. Each of the recapitulation sections of these sonatas exhibits a shared (with

[17] Tanner, Mark. "The Power of Performance," 174
[18] Tanner, Mark. "The Power of Performance," 174

differences in approach) fundamental philosophy found in 19th century sonata form. Moortele notes that composers including Liszt 'hope to solve one of the central problems of sonata form after Beethoven[19].' Moortele goes on to state that composers of Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Liszt's generation gained awareness of the 'recapitulation problem[20].' In short, due to Beethoven's revolutionary approach to sonata form, composers no longer found the absolute symmetricity of the classical sonata to be as appealing, 'avoiding the schematic and symmetrical model', whereby a sonata form movement was sandwiched by an exposition and a recapitulation which repeated a modulated version of the former's material in a section of similar length.

This was a time of progress and an evolution of sonata form not seen any time previously, as composers looked to push the barriers of what defined the exposition, development, and recapitulation sections. Moortele goes on to further note that composers sought to go beyond the 'symmetrical model of classical sonata form while not altogether ignoring the idea of a recapitulation as one of the most essential aspects of the form[21].' Beethoven had helped evolve sonata form and helped it progress to where the basic question which many composers of the post-Beethovenian era, conservative and progressive, were asking themselves about sonata form was, "what's next?" Mendelssohn's answer to this matter is the most conservative; his build up to the recapitulation is very clear, as he brings in the dominant emphasis from bars 111 – 115, which guides the music back to the recapitulation at bar 120, with a clear scalar melody in octaves on the downbeat in bars 116 – 119, which helps to anticipate the arrival. The melody appears directly on the downbeat in the bass clef as F – Eb – D, followed by a ii – V^7 – I.

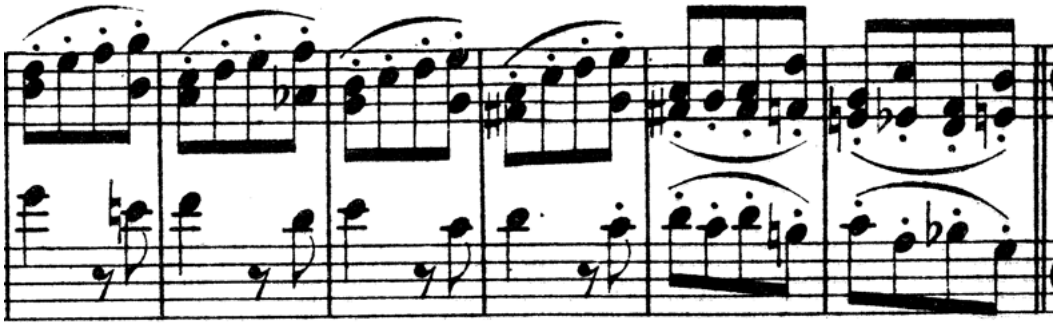
Fig. 121 (Bar 119):



[19] Moortele, Steven Vande. "Liszt's B-Minor Sonata," 54
[20] Moortele, Steven Vande. "Liszt's B-Minor Sonata," 54
[21] Moortele, Steven Vande. "Liszt's B-Minor Sonata," 54

After the arrival, the recapitulation section is an almost direct replication of the exposition, aside from an alteration of the transitional portion in bars 142 – 148 which is done to fit to the tonic of Bb as opposed to G, as it was in the exposition. Mendelssohn then expands the conclusion slightly further with a sequence of descending tonicizations in Fig. 97 in order to arrive at the coda:

Fig. 97:

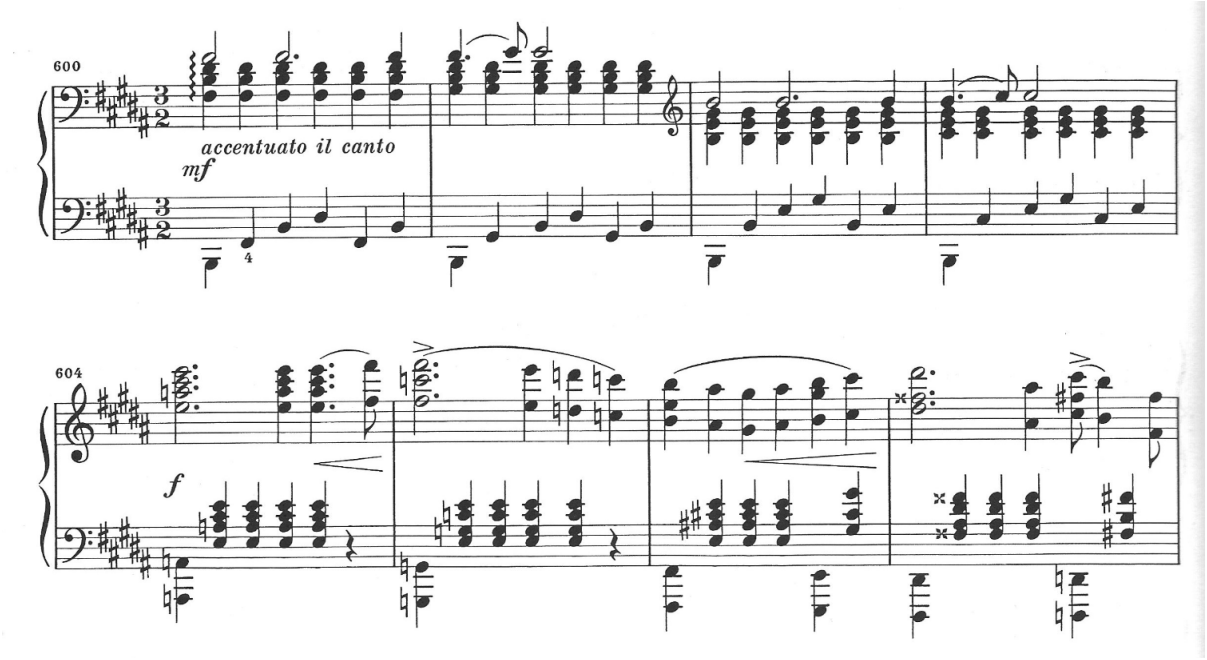


Schumann's approach was relatively similar to Mendelssohn's. When I discussed how his approach to the exposition and development sections of sonata form were very progressive, which demonstrated why I see him as a progressive rather than conservative composer, the recapitulation is very much a simpler, and more efficient version of the exposition in the tonic. Additionally, Schumann does not provide any dominant emphasis to anticipate the recapitulation, instead concluding a loud buildup in F# major and a pause. This approach to recapitulation acts as a very good balance, to offset an exposition that was highly fragmented an unusual. Schumann streamlines it, and entirely omits the rhythmic variation of the main theme from the exposition, instead shifting directly to motif B, and the beginning of the *passionato*, as the sonata continues with the exact same material, but now in the tonic. Unlike Mendelssohn however, he contrasts the way the main theme returns, choosing to opt for a more sparse and quieter recapitulation, with the lead-in motif and the galloping motif appearing together, this time flipped.

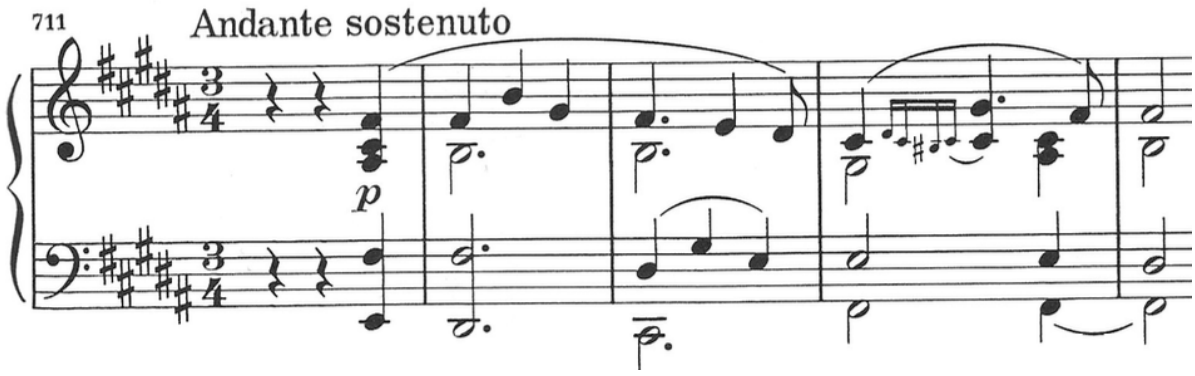
Liszt's approach to recapitulation is very intriguing. The introductory theme returns at bar 453 on an F# as opposed to a G. This recapitulation's tonality is entirely different compared to the beginning, with Liszt's theme (Fig. 115) now being in Bb minor as opposed to B minor. In fact, it is not until bar 533 that we hear the same material from Fig. 112.

For the recapitulation, Liszt modulates and concludes the work in the parallel of B major, and this recapitulation reflects this as we see Karolina's theme in bars 600 – 608 now played in relation to B major:

Fig. 122 (Bar 600 – 607):

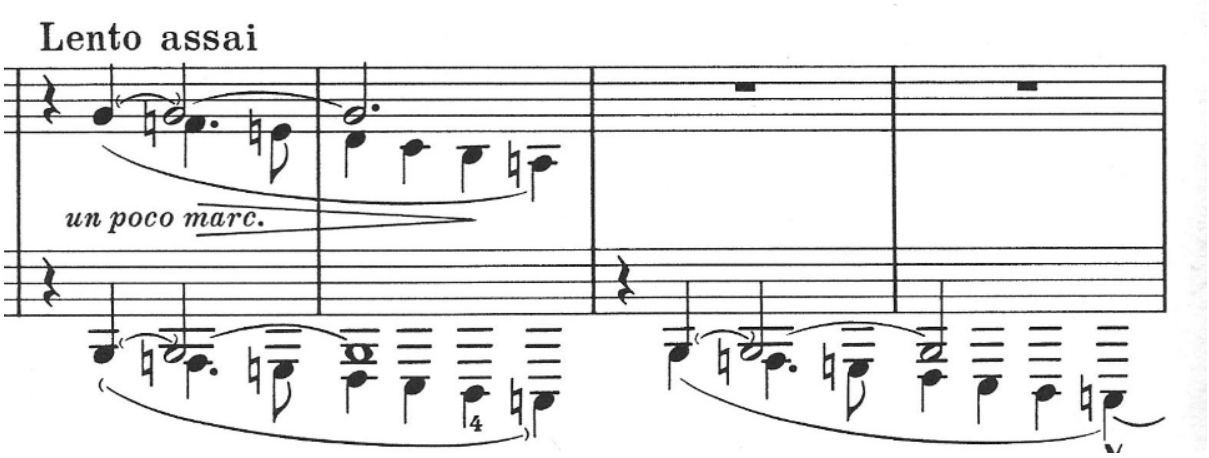


Further into the recapitulation we then hear the theme from the slow movement make a return (Fig. 119):



This leads to the final page, in which the final piece of thematic material is the scalar portion within the introduction, in bars 750 – 753, makes use of non-functional harmonies to its *ppp* conclusion in B major.

Fig. 123 (Bars 750 – 753):



This recalling of each idea creates the appropriate sense of unity that Liszt strives for in this sonata. Despite the distinct 'movements', they are thematically linked as one unified sonata form.

In conclusion, I have demonstrated some of the various ways in which Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Liszt each employ sonata form in the context of the piano sonata. For this thesis, I have concentrated on one movement from sonatas by Schumann and Mendelssohn and provided an overview of Liszt's *Sonata in B Minor*. I elucidated several differences in conservative and radical progressive approaches among the three, and the spectrum that the three composers each fell into. Some interesting similarities between Schumann and Liszt were uncovered; Out of these three composers, Mendelssohn's piano sonata stands out as the most conservative, particularly in his approach to more complex harmonic and motivic ideas within the first movement. He frequently takes the simplest approach to modulating and uses dominant 7ths to allow predictive tonicizations. Schumann's treatment and approach to sonata form, in comparison, is unique and unusual in comparison to conservative conventions, and I found it intriguing that for Schumann and Liszt, one of the greatest influences of the thematic material in their sonatas, and the thematic development, came from extra-musical influences: the love for their significant others.

This more programmatically influenced aspect in their compositions provides a unique insight, particularly into Schumann, and how I view him to be a more progressive and experimental composer, but one who maintained an adherence to clear form as with the conservatives. I have shown, in this way, that Liszt's employment of a quasi-sonata form, in

what Moortele refers to as a two-dimensional sonata form, can be seen as one of the greatest points of criticism among the conservative composers. The sonata's ambiguity of form makes it tricky to interpret, and Moortele's version is just one of the many possible interpretations and analyses of what the form of the *Sonata in B minor* is. This is what keeps people coming back to it, and it "demonstrates the era's growing fascination with ambiguity in music [during this period][22]."

[22] Brown, David, "The B Minor Sonata Revisited: Deciphering Liszt," *The Musical Times* 144, no. 1882 (2003): 9

TONALITY

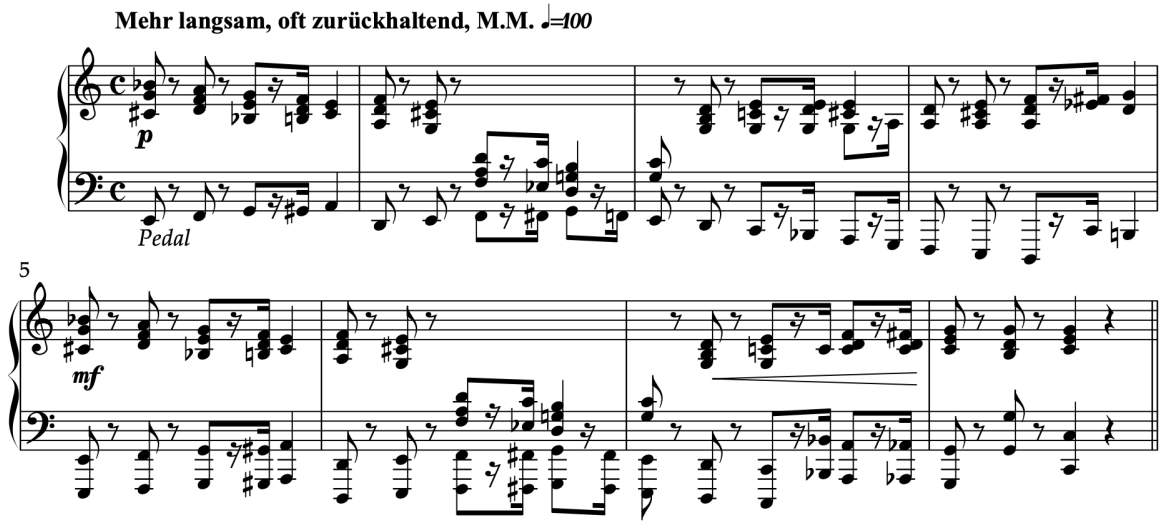
The final elements that will be discussed in this thesis, are the various approaches to tonality and harmonic structure that these three composers exhibit, and how they reflect conservative and radical progressive compositional styles. For this part of discussion, it is important to define what the terms tonality and harmonic structure will refer to. In this case, tonality refers to progressions and tonicizations of a key (and keys used) and their relation to the tonic of a piece and whether they reflect or go beyond common compositional practices of the time; additionally, I will examine how each composer approaches unstable or commonly avoided intervals. This can be seen as an analysis at the smaller level. I will concentrate on each composers' approach to harmonic structure in sonata form, and this refers to the progression of tonality at the macro level: how the tonality of the music progresses in relation to the entire sonata form, and how they relate to each other and the tonic.

The first element I will discuss for tonality, are the types of keys which Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Liszt feature in various examples of their piano music. This is an important point to examine among these composers; Liszt features very unique and contrasting keys in his work, and Schumann, as we have already seen, is also unafraid to incorporate unusual keys and chromaticism. Mendelssohn is also an interesting composer to examine in this case, as he approaches this in a way that is fundamentally conservative but shows hints of progressiveness. In my examination of sonata form of the first movements of the piano sonatas I chose, I showed several examples of each composers' approaches to tonality; the following discussion will look at other examples by each of these composers.

Robert Schumann's approach to tonality is one of the major elements that makes him as I have focused on in this thesis, a progressive composer as opposed to a conservative. The keys in which he chooses to feature, and how he arrives to them does often go beyond the conservative approach, whilst not quite reaching the level of radical progressivism like in Franz Liszt. A number of examples can be found in his set of songs called the *Nachtstücke,* Op. 23. These 'Night Pieces' were composed in 1839 but were not published until 1840. They were written during the time that Schumann was dealing with the death of his older brother. Each of the four pieces in this set contain some extraordinary explorations of tonality and harmonic structure, particularly in the first and second movements.

The first piece opens with an E^{O7} chord, rather than a diatonic one. This lack of an established key is a progressive technique, and a practice that Liszt was frequently fond of. This enigmatic opening is ambiguous in its key; it is a series of tonicizations, and resolutions brought on by the nature of the 7th chord. The relatively chromatic melody in the left hand drives the harmonies above it in an intriguing example of voice leading. The progression in bars 1 is E^{O7} – Dm/F – G^{O} – $G\#^{O}$ – A, followed by Dm – E^{O7} – Dm/F – $F\#^{O}$ – G in bar 2. In these two bars alone, the primary drivers of chordal resolution have been diminished and diminished seventh chords which resolve inwards. This is followed by a second unit in bar 3 which goes C/E – G/D – C – E half-diminished – A^{7}, and in bar 4 with Dm – A – Dm – C^{O} – G/B. Both times, these units have led to quasi-cadences/resolutions in G major.

Fig. 124 (Bars 1 – 8):

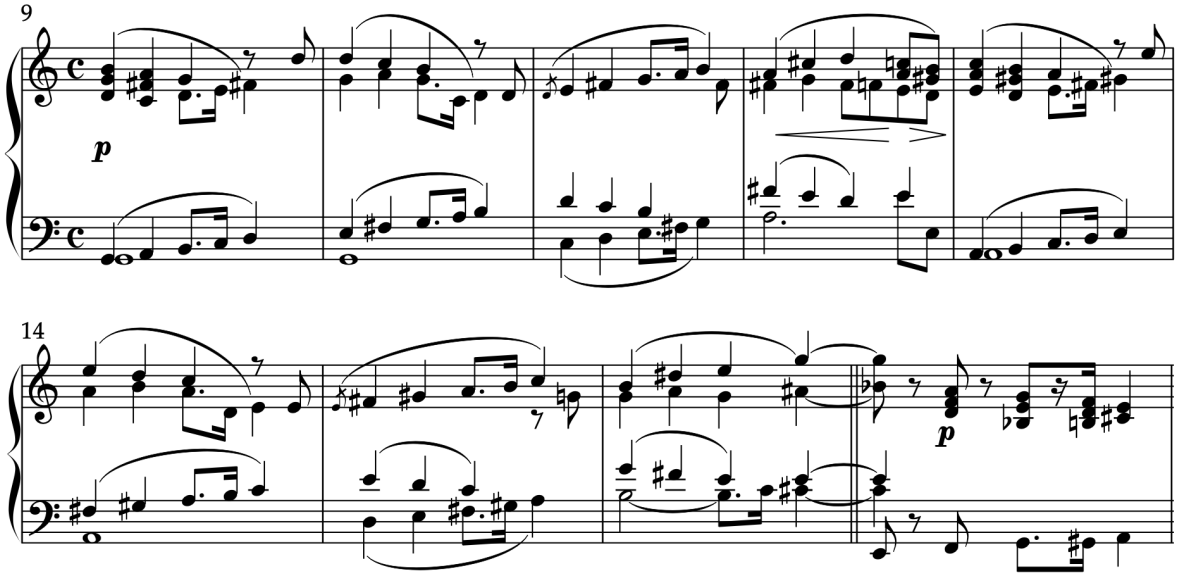


After this first statement, the phrase starts again, now *mf,* but the latter two bars of the phrase are different, with an Ab augmented 6th allowing for the movement to a V6/4 – V – I in C. Tee tonicizations and harmonies that Schumann chooses to feature in these two four-bar phrases show a hint of melody. The melody is relatively scalar, interacting between the uppermost line in the right hand, and the clearer left hand, in contrary motion. Yet, it is filled with an almost Liszt-ian tonal ambiguity. In fact, it is not until bar 8 where we receive that cadence in C, and the conclusion of this theme. This cadence is a functional one, although quite a difficult one to hear. Schumann's use of the seventh chords results in the listener's loss of the sense of harmonic direction. The cadence is a slightly expanded version of the ii – V – I, as ii – V6/4 – V – I. The setup is itself tonicized, with the Ab augmented 6th as I noted

before helping to clarify that G and C are the dominant and tonic respectively. This still does not feel like a strong harmonic conclusion in the tonic, creating this very enigmatic and unusual sense of harmonic ambiguity.

The movement moves through various tonal centres in a very fragmented manner. None of the new sections feature a harmonic preparation or modulation into them or out of them, and the only common thing they share, is the same set of two four-bar phrases which always returns. The piece is a curious mix of harmonic ambiguity and diatonicism. Bars 9 – 16 contains a sequence of two four-bar phrases once again, which each conclude on half cadences. The first is in G major, concluding in D; followed by the next now a whole step higher in A minor. However, instead of finishing in E major, it instead ends on $C\#^{O7}$, and the low E in the bass starts the opening theme again at bar 17.

Fig. 125 (Bars 9 – 17):



Out of the entire first movement, the most quiet and reflective (whilst still compelling) series of keys is in the third new section in bars 49 – 72 (Fig. 127 – 129). It is very simple and conventional, unlike the opening; a scalar melody that is in canon, where the right hand imitates the left, alters key at each new repeat by a simple tonicization with the dominant seventh. In bars 49 – 56, we hear two sets of this long phrase in the key of Gb (bV), a very distant tritone away from the tonic of C. The way in which Schumann arrives at the key is

astonishing in itself. As opposed to any setup or tonicization, a scalar descent beginning on the C octave at bar 48 moves down in a whole-tone scale to bring us to it.

Fig. 126 (Bars 47 – 48):

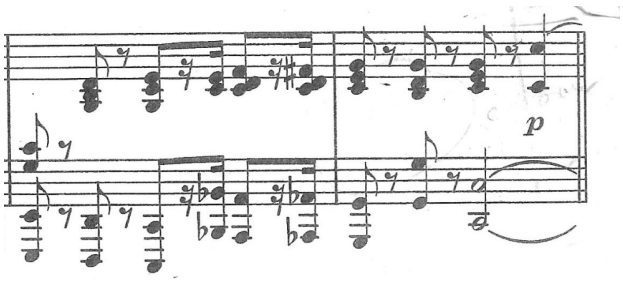
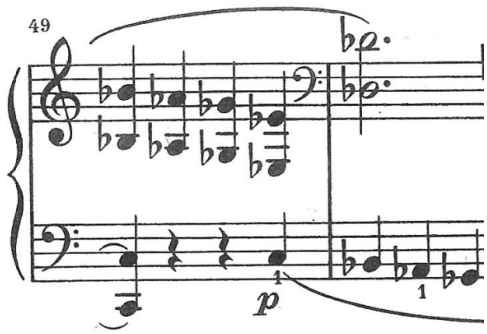


Fig. 127 (Bars 49 – 50):



After this expansive two phrases in Gb, Schumann turns the Gb into an F#7 and we move into the phrase now in B major. He then uses an E^{O7} chord at bar 60, which leads to another modulation, with the phrase now in D major. His use of the dominant 7th chord to lead into each modulation results in a sequence of the circle of fifths. After moving into D, this sequence continues into G in bars 65 – 68, and finally C in bars 69 – 71; however, Schumann once again deceives the listener because he once again ends this section on the now ominously familiar E^{O7}.

Fig. 128 (Bars 55 – 60):

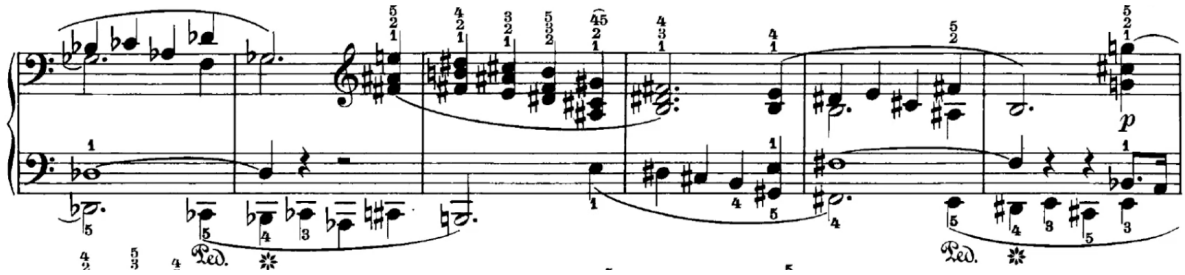
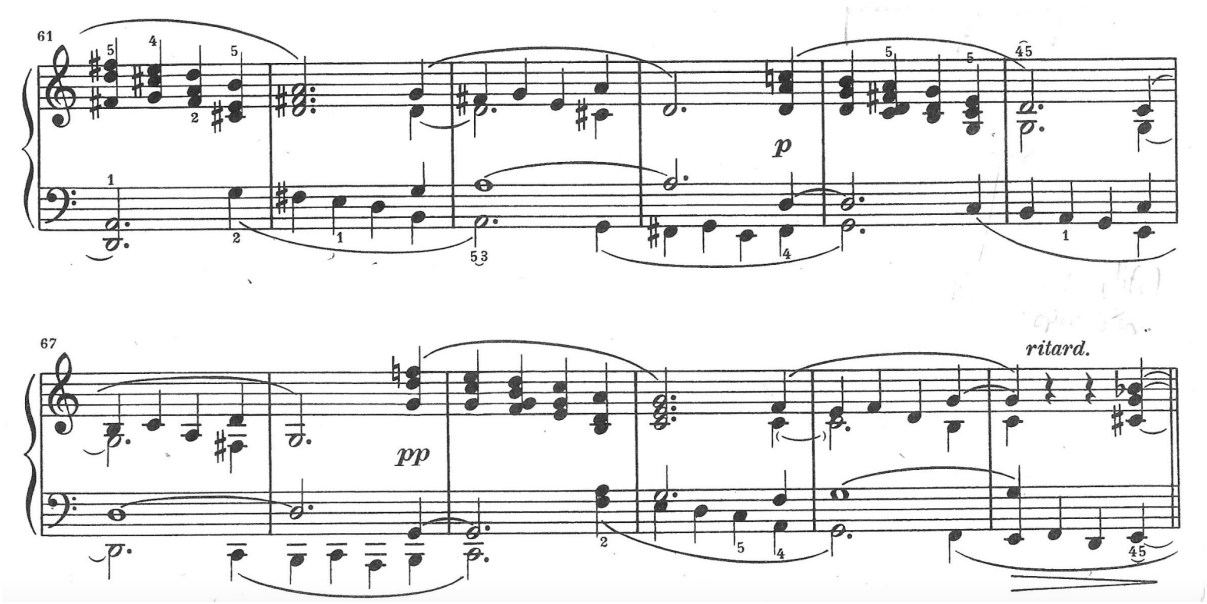
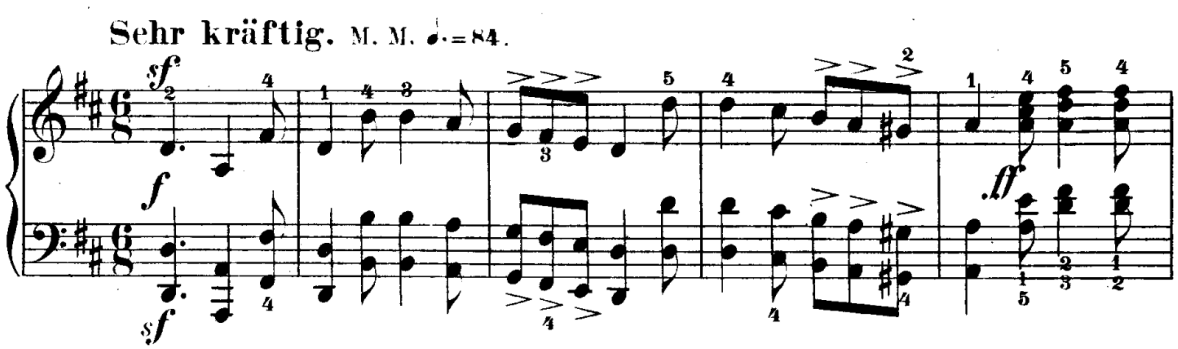


Fig. 129 (Bars 61 – 72):



Another example in a slightly less exploratory setting can be found in one of his most famous sets, *Album for the Young*. This example comes specifically from the *Kriegslied* or 'War Song' in D major. Schumann opens the song with a unison melody at Fig. 130, concluding on the A in a perceived half cadence before an emphatic A – D at bar 5.

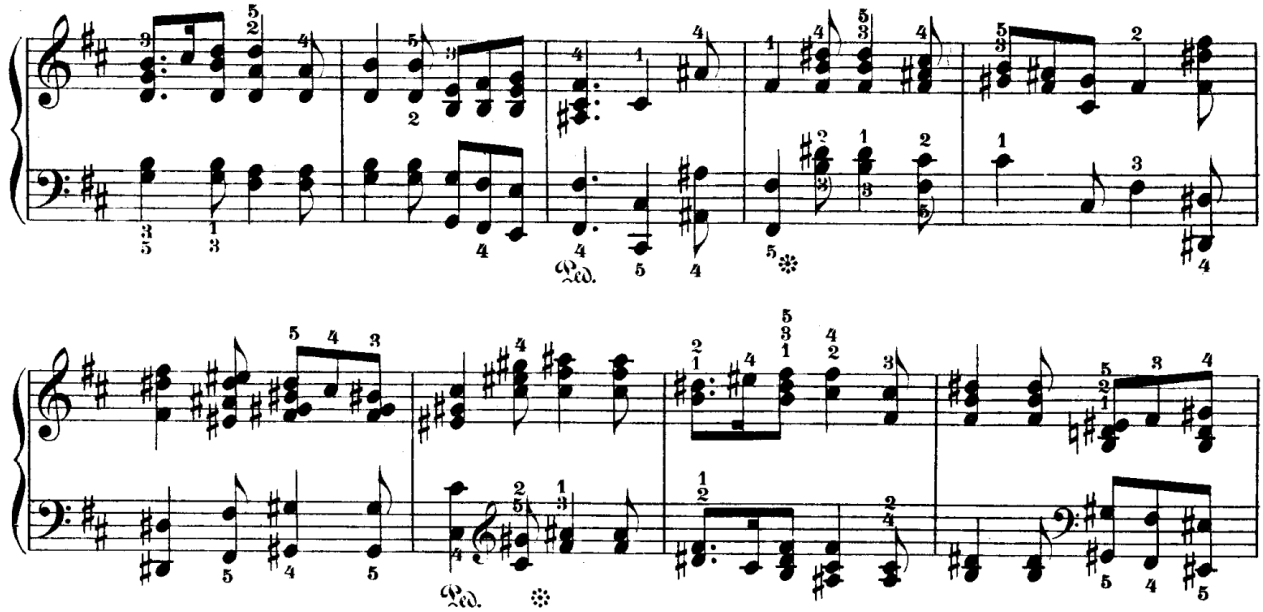
Fig. 130 (Bars 1 – 5):



He then continues this melody to a proper resolution, featuring a beautiful plagal cadence of G – D (IV – I) until he begins what could be a cadence back to the tonic. In the second half of bar 7 is an E minor chord until he begins the opening phrase again, now in F# major (III). What makes this movement extraordinary is not only the fact that it is the parallel mediant, but due to its lack of harmonic preparation, which is once again a very progressive technique. The preparation is done by the voice leading. Note how the melody in the top is E – F# – G – F#. Schumann uses the melodic line to direct the music, where the harmony follows. The

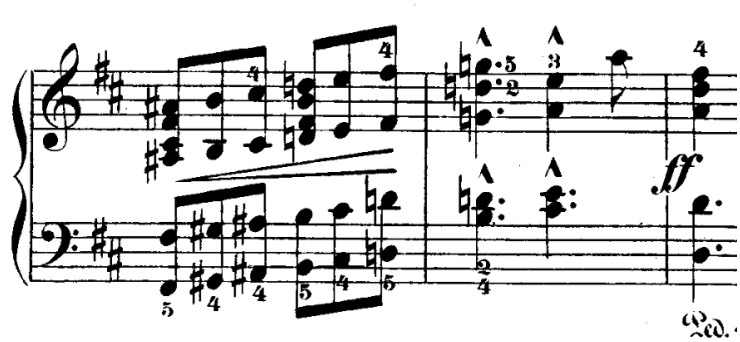
surprise and the smoothness create a lift to the phrase much in the way that Liszt employs in his own piano music.

Fig. 131 (Bars 6 – 14)



This version in F# major is continued as before, now with the harmonies even more filled out in both hands, until we reach yet another intriguing passage in bars 15 – 17. Schumann quicky moves through a scale in octaves with two chords played on the triplet downbeats of bar 15, showing a chord progression of F# - Bm, until at bars 16 – 17, Schumann cadences back to D with a IV – V – I comprising G – A – D, non-functional yet harmonically sound cadence.

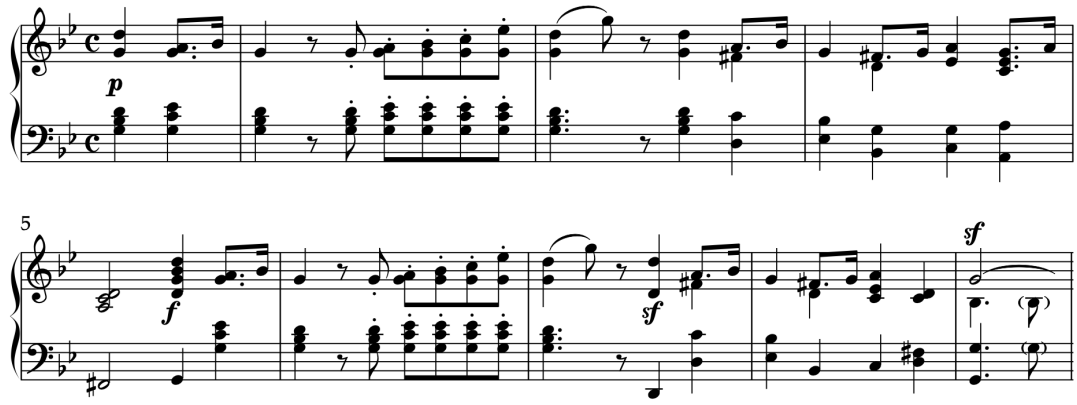
Fig. 132 (Bars 15 – 17):



Mendelssohn is an interesting composer to examine in terms of the kinds of keys he uses in his piano music. His piano music was highly influenced by art song or lieder, in the

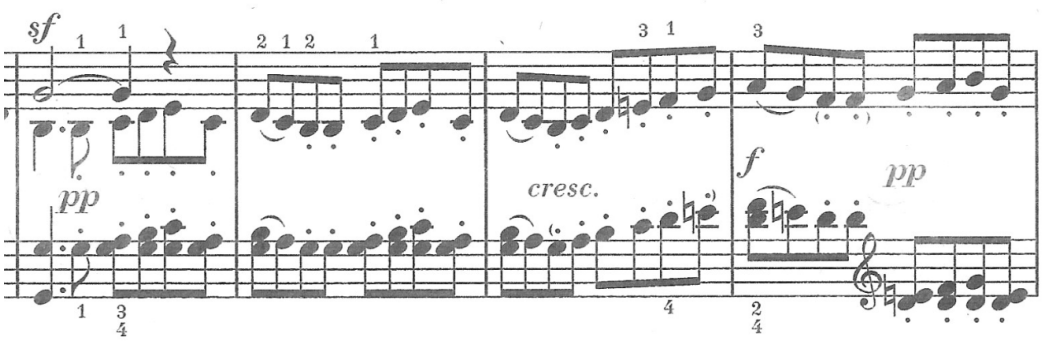
arrangement of singer with piano accompaniment. Some of his most well-known works imitate this form, including his numerous sets of *Lieder ohne Worte* (Songs without Words) for solo piano. The way in which he explores keys in his piano works is an intriguing mix of conservative and progressive, depending on the type of piece you look at. For example, in *Sechs Kinderstücke,* Op. 72 he explores tonalities that move away from the tonic, but due to the setting of the pieces, and the environment that he is trying to depict, tends to tonicize keys relatively close to the tonic of each piece. For example, in the 5th song in G minor, we start off with a basic theme, he explores via cadence initially, with deceptive cadences of D^7 – Eb (V^7 – VI) occurring in bars 2 – 3 and 6 – 7:

Fig. 133 (Bars 1 – 9):



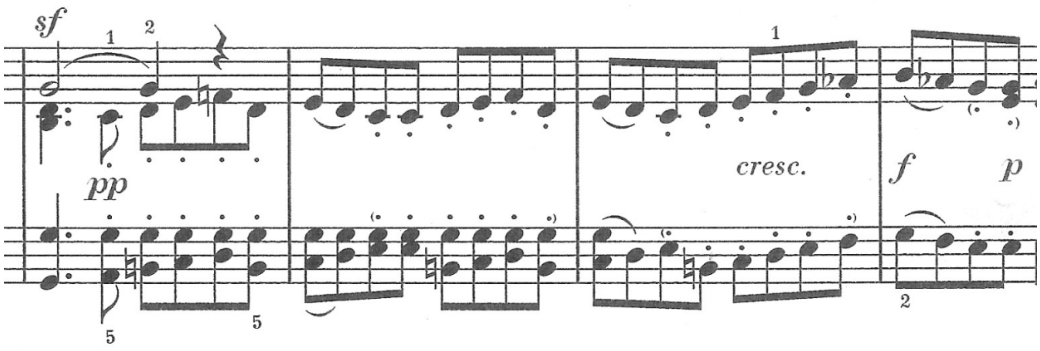
Following this is a scalar melody playing with the Gm – Cm – Gm (i – iv – i) minor plagal cadence idea from the pickup and bar 1, as well as in bars 5 – 6. He then crescendos to D minor at bar 11:

Fig. 134 (Bars 8 – 11):



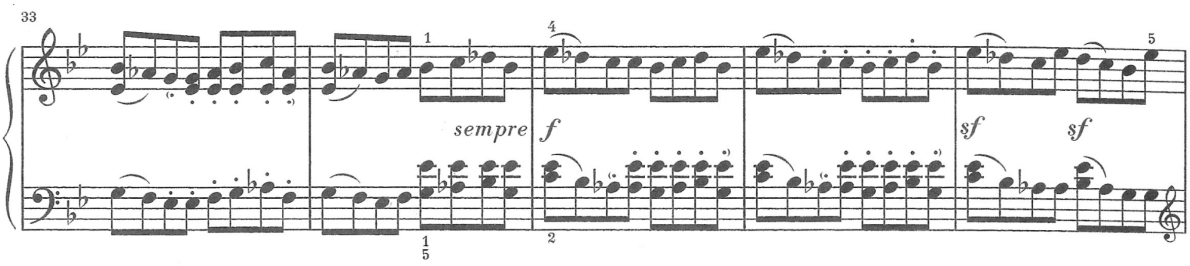
Upon the restatement of the main theme in bars 21 – 28, after a sequence in bars 16 - 19, Mendelssohn explores this idea again, this time turning the harmony into a G^7 and allowing for the tonicization of C minor (bars 29 – 32).

Fig. 135 (Bars 29 – 32)



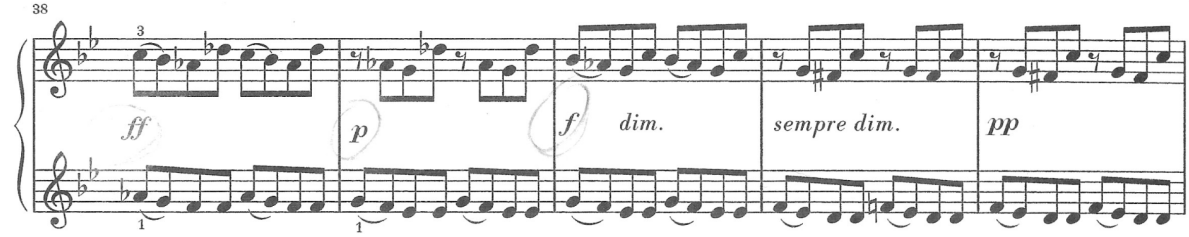
He then explores Eb major, the relative of C minor (III/iv) before he turns Eb into a dominant 7th and tonicizes Ab, the Neapolitan chord of G minor (bII).

Fig. 136 (Bars 33 – 37):



In bars 38 – 42, he does a variation on the sequence found in bars 16 – 19 that takes us back to a slightly more moving version of the main theme.

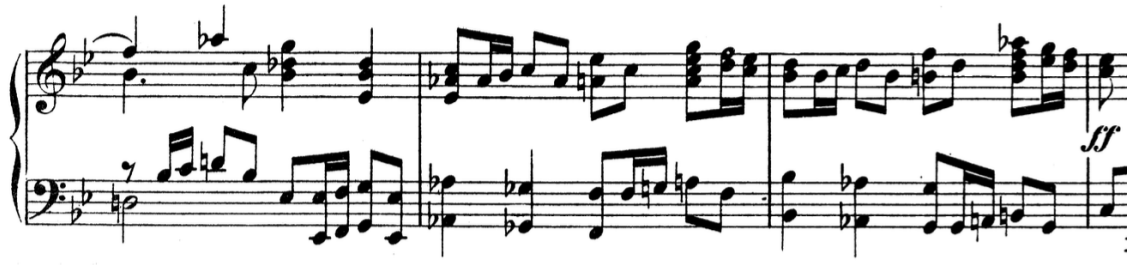
Fig. 137 (Bars 38 – 42):



An excellent example to be reminded of is found in his Op. 106 piano sonata. I briefly discussed in my analysis how he develops the subject found at the start of the section with

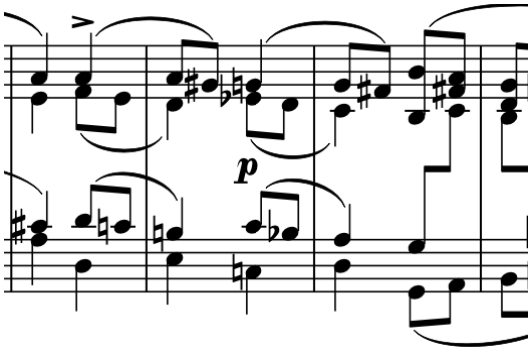
counterpoint in a fugal manner. In particular, he moves very swiftly through different keys via tonicizations, with many of these tonicizations only lasting half a bar. This example is from Fig. 87, where each key lasts for the unit of half a bar (two crotchet beats).

Fig. 87 (Bars 88 – 91):



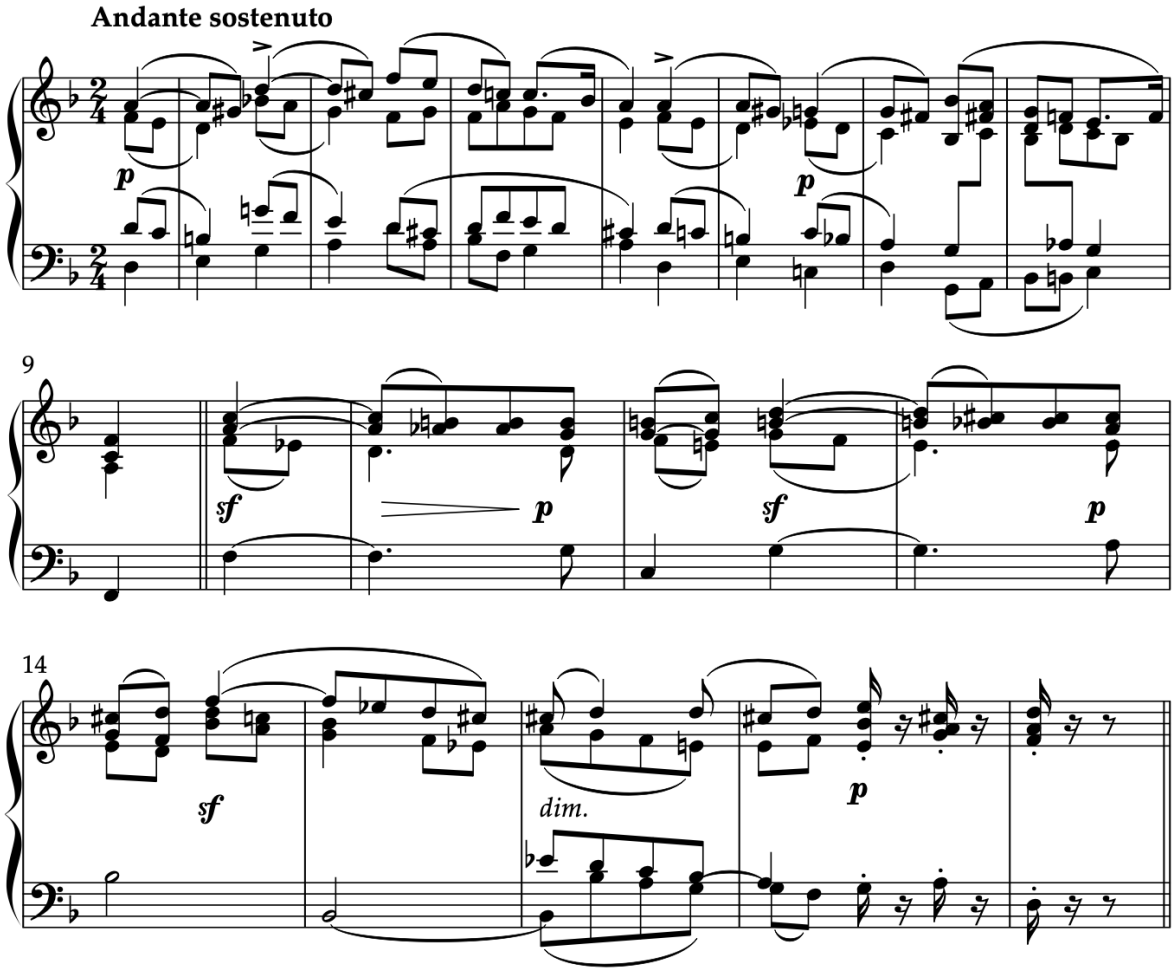
The progression is Bb – Eb – Ab – F – Bb – G – Cm, which he does through a mixture of dominant and diminished 7ths, since these versions of the 7th chord can most rapidly be resolved. As you can see from these examples, Mendelssohn's exploration of unique keys is most often executed with a degree of harmonic preparation, such as via the dominant or diminished 7ths, or through cadence, be that over a longer or smaller number of bars or in brief sequences. He does, however, incorporate unprepared and harmonies quite distantly related, essentially in passing. This can be seen in the theme of his *Variations sèrieuses* Op. 54. The theme for this theme and variations is quite chromatic, being considerably more experimental and chromatic, compared to a typical theme for this kind of work which is much simpler and more open in order to provide opportunity for variation. A very interesting progression of this theme can be found in bars 4 – 7. The theme is in D minor, and at this point has reached its first cadence point, where Mendelssohn concludes with an A chord. The beginning of the theme restarts as before until halfway through bar 5, seemingly out of nowhere the key of C minor is briefly heard.

Fig. 138 (Bars 4 – 6):



Unlike previous examples, this harmony is distant from the tonic (ii), or the dominant (biii), and is entirely unprepared. The progression at the theme's restarting is Dm – E^7 – Cm. However, despite this, the theme still preserves its diatonicism, and its clarity at the important cadence points, and they only really act as passing chords; in C minor's case, it is unusual, but this is more influenced by the voice leading in the melody, which in bar 5 – 6 is E – C – D.

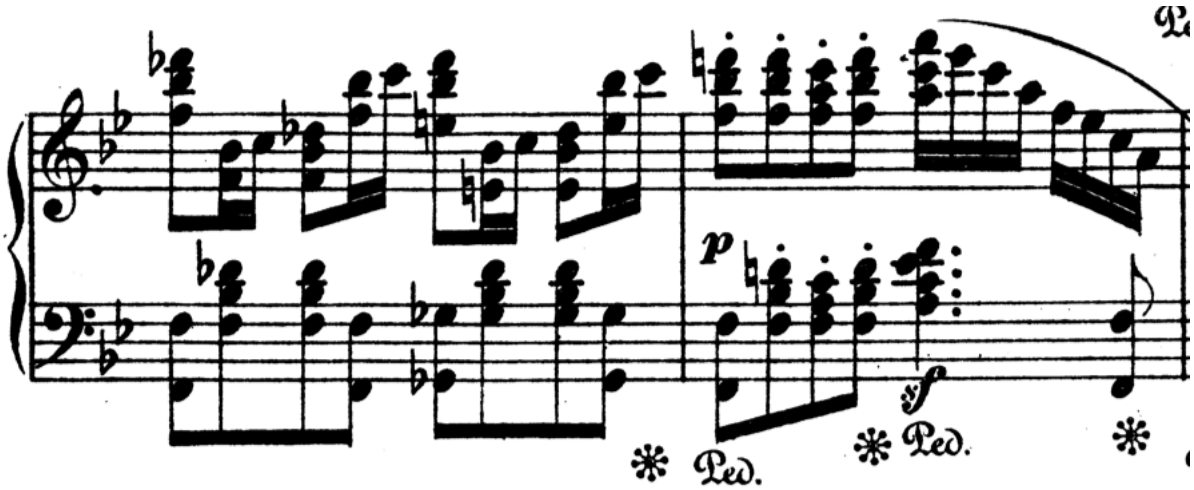
Fig. 139 (the theme):



Mendelssohn also occasionally shifts to parallel minors. These shifts are not unusual, even in Classical-era piano sonatas. In their sonatas, Mozart and Haydn frequently make use of the parallel minor in a major key. Mendelssohn does the same thing, once again, taking inspiration from what by the time in the Romantic era was a more conservative approach. In the coda of his third piano sonata, Mendelssohn shifts briefly to Bb minor in bar 177, then a Gb augmented sixth, followed immediately by moving back into Bb major/F (V6/4) in Fig. 104. As with Mozart and Haydn, this shift to the parallel minor is used as a means of a brief

harmonic contrast and sense of harmonic instability and tension, that is resolved within at least the next few measures.

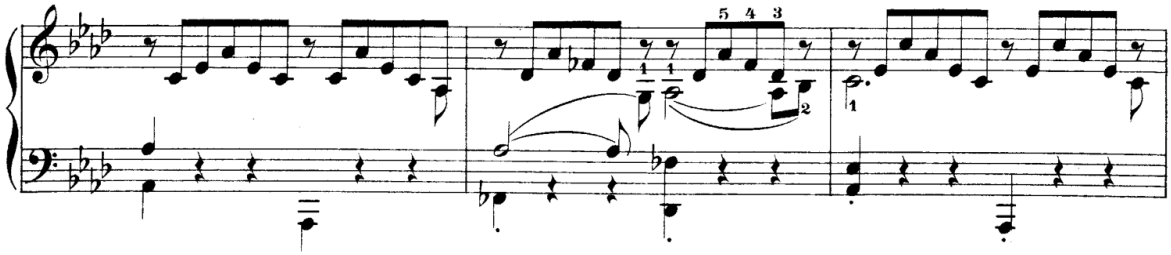
Fig. 104 (Bars 177 – 178):



Overall, Mendelssohn's exploration and featuring of different keys is very dependent on what piece you look at. Depending on the environment he is portraying, or the arrangement he is imitating, it informs the harmonic direction a piece takes. In works such as his *Lieder ohne Worte,* in which the melody is imitating that of a singer's line, with a simpler piano accompaniment, significant or rapid tonal shifts are neither idiomatic, nor practical. It is very likely most singers would struggle if he was very exploratory in his choice of keys. In his *Kinderstücke*, this is also the case; these are children's songs, depicting an environment of children playing, and thus, significant harmonic exploration does not fit the intended picture Mendelssohn is visualising. However, in his *Variations* and the Op. 106 piano sonata, he demonstrates his willingness to explore and feature distant harmonies, in a more progressive fashion, than being stuck within classical diatonicism.

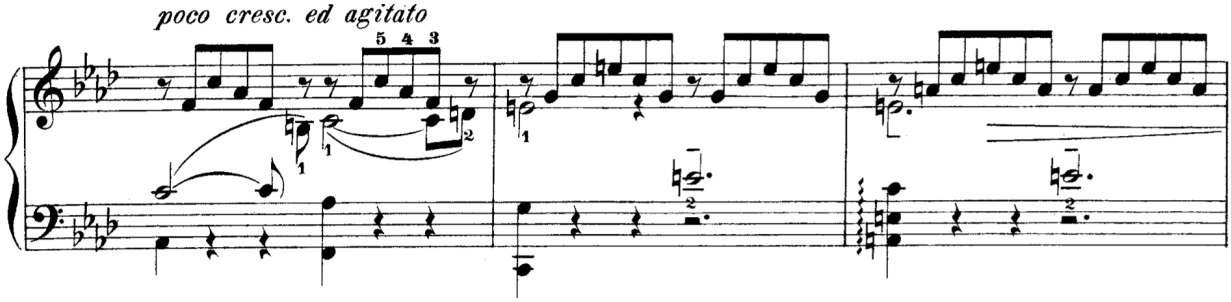
In one of his most famous works for solo piano, is an example of Liszt's use of stark key changes. The third nocturne of his *Liebesträumen* set or 'Love Dreams' is in Ab major, but in bars 13 – 14, Liszt briefly hints towards Fb major, the bVI of Ab, or its enharmonic equivalent of E major, before shifting to Db minor (C#m) in the second half of the bar. This is a very smooth movement due to Liszt's use of voice leading. He takes advantage of the fact that the Ab/G# is shared between these keys in order to surprise the listener, by altering the harmonic accompaniment with preservation of the melody. The single melodic line is what directs the harmonic movements underneath.

Fig. 140 (Bars 13 – 14):



He follows this up by moving back to Ab in bar 14, to the relative of F minor (bar 15), to C major in the next bar. This could be viewed both as being III of Ab or the V/vi. This is further blurred by the fact that Liszt makes the exact same harmonic movement as seen before; C major to its relative of A minor, until reaching E major at bar 18.

Fig. 141 (Bars 15 – 17):



He then plays on the nature of the half cadence. The Eb chord is emphasised on the first beat of the bar in 21 – 22 but shifts up a semitone to Db^6 and back down. This more rapid chromatic shift brings more harmonic movement and tension, also reflected in the fact that the main melody in the middle voice is less elongated, made up mostly of shorter note values like crotchets and minims, rather than successive dotted minims with larger gaps in the melodic line. He then concludes this with a downward scale in Fb until reaching a G-natural in bar 24 at Fig. 143, signalling the concluding half-cadence of Eb major.

Fig. 142 (Bars 21 – 23):

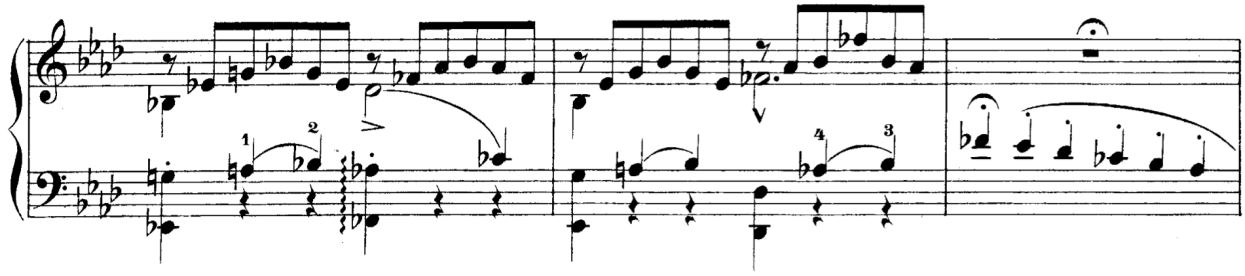
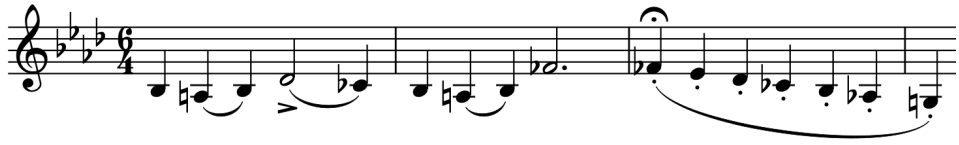


Fig. 143 (Melody, bars 21 – 24):



In *Petrarch Sonnet No. 47,* Liszt also takes advantage of the closeness between the tonic, and the sixth or third. He does it to an even greater degree than he does in *Liebesträume,* and it demonstrates his experimentation on not only unprepared progressions, but also the nature of a chords shift by the next progression. In Fig. 143 – 145, he uses a series of successive sixths that behave as essentially unprepared deceptive cadences, with no setup prior, in which each harmony acts as both the submediant, and as a pseudo-tonic, with the progressions essentially being successive and overlapping versions of tonic – submediant (or I – VI in the major). Additionally, he uses a variety of the flattened, normal, or parallel versions of the sixth chord: Bars 43 – 44 is Em – C minor, a shift of I – bvi. This is followed by Cm – Ab in 44 – 45 (i – VI). Ab then leads to F major (I – VI) in the first shift to the parallel major in bars 45 – 46, followed by F – D major (I – VI) in bars 46 – 47 rather than being setup with the dominant like a conventional V – vi. Note how Cm went from being bvi to I, providing the opportunity to set up the next progression.

Fig. 144 (Bars 43 – 44):

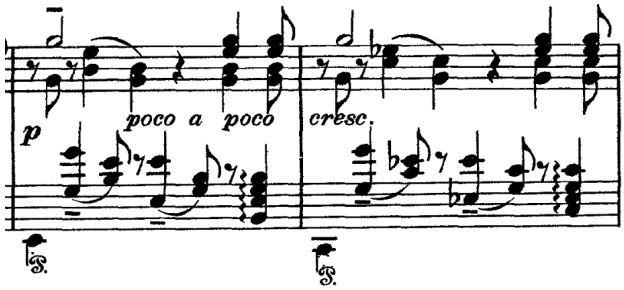
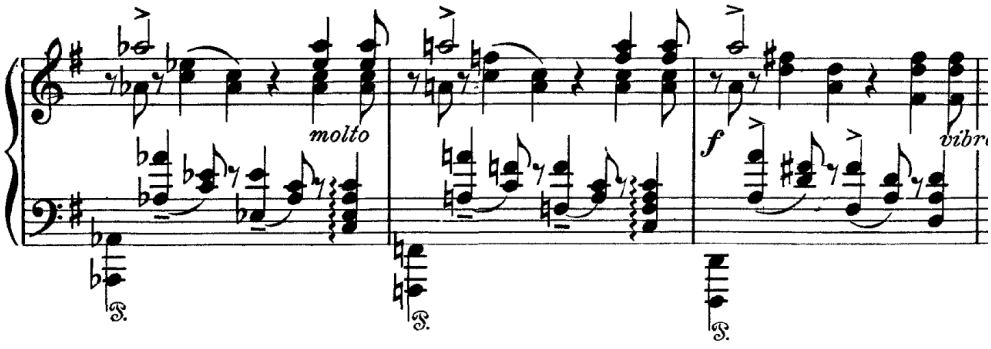


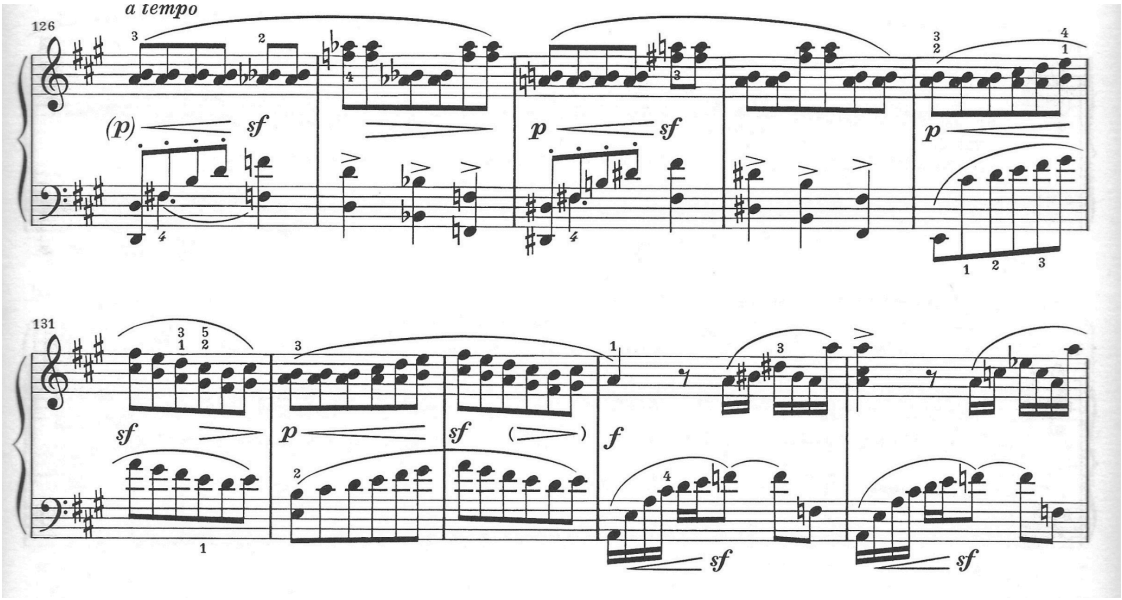
Fig. 145 (Bars 45 – 47):



Overall, these examples demonstrate Liszt's common practice of featuring unique keys that are at times very distantly related to the tonal centre they appear in. He does this in both swift chord progressions as well as over a longer length. In the case of the *Sonnet 47*, he shifts from Db major to the key of G (a tritone apart) in bar 35, before doing the sequence of unprepared deceptive cadences (tonic – submediant) beginning in the key's relative of E minor at Fig. 144. These progressions serve a sonic purpose, and possess no function in terms of the cadence's direction, adding a brightness and energy to the music within a very small sequence that a neither diatonic or conventional sequence of functional cadences could easily accomplish or evoke.

The next aspect of tonality I will examine, are the ways in which the three composers use chord progressions in their music, and how their approaches reflect their respective compositional styles. An interesting similarity that Schumann and Liszt share at times, is the use of non-functional harmonic progressions. Taking an example from the 4th movement of his Op. 11 piano sonata, at bars 126 – 133, he does what could be seen as a non-functional but harmonic perfect cadence (or quasi-perfect) cadence.

Fig. 146 (Bars 126 – 135):

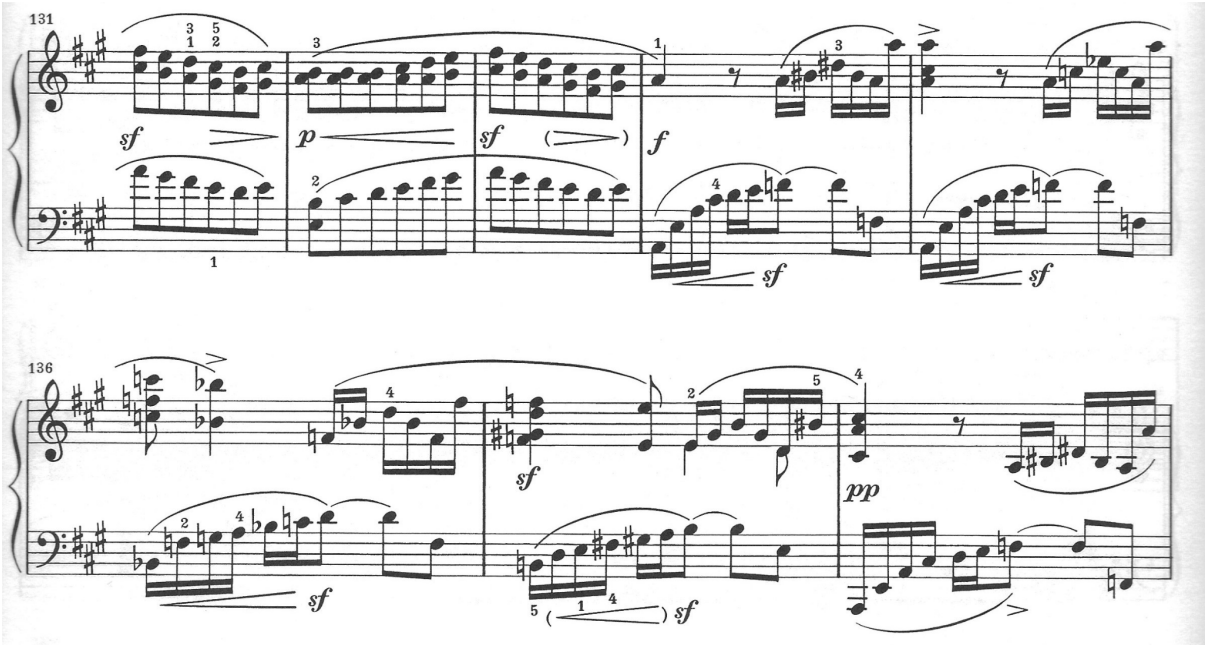


At this point in the fourth movement, Schumann has moved to the relative major of A, which is established as the new tonic. Although the cadence has an overall PAC form of ii – V – I, the surprising chromatic shifts in tonality Schumann does within this cadence produces a

contrast of instability, when a PAC serves as a way to establish the home key. The progression overall in these 10 bars is Bm – E – A, but Schumann incorporates a series of unexpected chords outside of the cadence which makes it non-functional. A more detailed examination of the progression shows it to be Bm7 – Bb7 – B7 – E – A. In terms of scale degrees, it looks like the following: ii^7 – bII^7 – II^7 – V – I.

Schumann starts with B minor, but this is quickly replaced with the surprising Bb7 (bII), or the Neapolitan which is often seen in PACs within a minor key. This can be seen as briefly flirting with the harmonies of the parallel minor, since both the major and minor versions of A are modes of the same tonal centre. Following this, he then incorporates the parallel major of B major with a dominant seventh in order to tonicize E major in bars 128 – 129 before an expansive scalar melody underneath a pedal E in bars 130 – 133 until the confirmation of A at bar 134. Schumann once again uses functional enharmonic equivalents, which I discussed in the section on his approach to sonata form. This appears in bars 134 and 135; the difference is clearer in this example, since he initially spells out the same harmony in sharps (B# and D#), and the alternate in flats (C-natural and Eb).

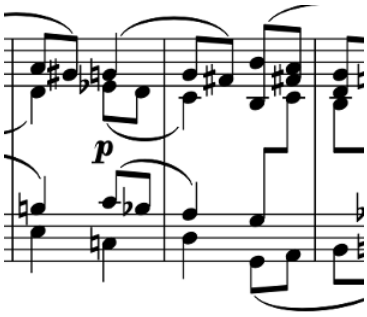
Fig. 147 (Bars 131 – 138):



Note how the left hand is exactly the same in both bars, but the respelling in the right demonstrates Schumann's differing intentions for both passages. Bar 134, when incorporating the F-natural in the left-hand results in an arpeggiated Italian-style augmented 6^{th} (It^{+6}). This allows Schumann to potentially move to E major and cadence back into A, but

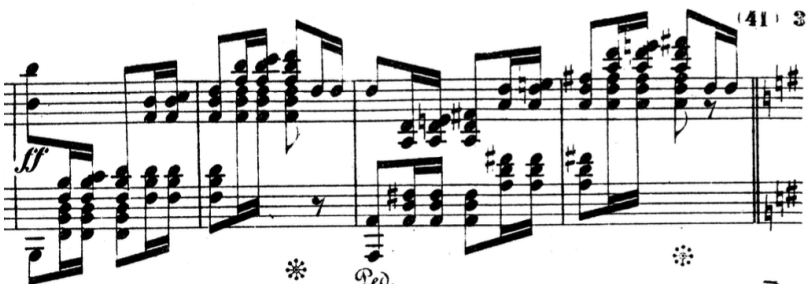
instead, he moves straight back to A. Directly afterwards, repeating the exact same passage, it is now an F7 chord. This is the enharmonic equivalent, but it allows Schumann to move in an entirely different direction harmonically, as he uses the F7 to briefly tonicize the Neapolitan Bb (bII) chord, before eventually moving back to A. In doing this, Schumann has created a smooth but entirely different tonicization with the same line, allowing him the freedom to explore very different harmonic directions, which, you will soon see is a technique Liszt also uses. Mendelssohn's approach to chord progressions in the examples I found tends to be reasonably conventional. He likes to feature keys that are at times distant from their respective tonics, but usually sets these up with clear tonicizations; most often doing a V^7 – I perfect cadence, either without or with some variation on a predominant setup (examples included IV – V – I, as well as the ii – V – I PAC). There were also cases in which he uses various forms of the unprepared deceptive cadences (I – vi in a major key), similarly to Liszt. An example can be found in Fig. 139*,* where in bar 5, a C minor chord appears almost out of nowhere; in relation to the E^7 chord that appears just prior, it is a highly unusual I – bvi unprepared deceptive cadence.

Fig. 139 (Bars 5 – 7):



Even within the more conventional setups, he still manages to surprise the listener. Referring back to Fig. 75, he shifts to the second theme in his sonata, by the very brief D – G (V – I) perfect cadence.

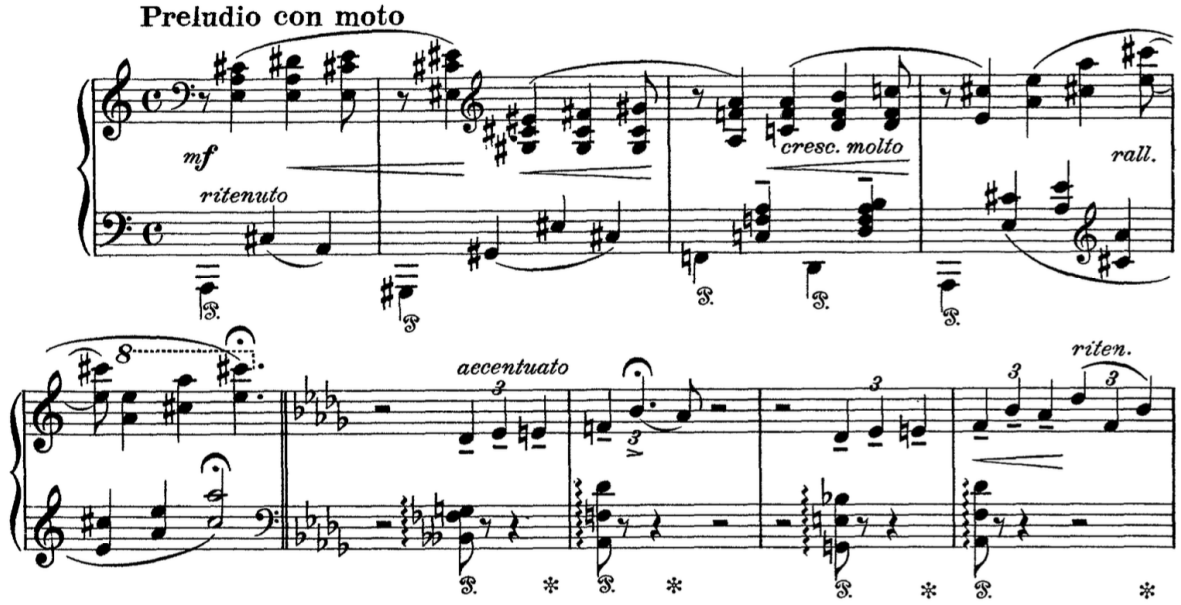
Fig. 75:



Overall, Mendelssohn's approach to chord progressions is another intriguing mix when it comes to his style. His explorations depend on the setting of the piece, and he demonstrates both Romantic-era and conservative progressions whilst not experimenting to the same degree that Schumann does.

Liszt's approach to chord progressions is one of the most stylistically recognisable, and this is one of the major aspects that makes Liszt a radical progressive composer. In the case of his approach to tonality, he is unafraid to incorporate an unexpected harmony with little to no harmonic preparation via a tonicization. These chords still have a relatively close relation to the tonic, or sometimes even just to the previous chord of a sequence, so they are not simply random substitutions. One example of this can be found in the opening of *Sonnet 47* in bars 1 – 4. Each bar includes an unexpected key change brought on by the top note of the final chord of each bar.

Fig. 148 (Bars 1 – 9):



The reason the progression feels relatively natural yet still musically surprising, is the scalar nature of the melody. The way in which Liszt uses the technique of voice leading in Fig. 148 allows him to incorporate such an unusual progression with chords that do feature the note in their triadic form. In bar 1, this top note is E, leading to an E#, followed by G# - A, and finally C – C#. The progression is A major – C# major – F major – A major, a circular progression that returns the opening key of A through a series of major 3rds, in their parallel

majors (in comparison to the usual minor mediant (iii) found in the major scale). These chords spell out an augmented triad, which is a symmetrical chord since it is made up of only major 3rds, compared to a major chord which is made up of a major 3rd, followed by a minor 3rd. This is an example of what Peter Toth writes about is one of Liszt's approaches to tonality: symmetrical pitch construction[23]. Liszt does this not only to create a surprising chord progression, but also to create an even greater lift and brightness to the opening that a series of predictable and a very clear series of perfect cadences in A will not necessarily do in a progression that lasts only the length of a four-bar phrase.

In *The "Unwelcomed Guest" Regaled,* Todd notes although Liszt's early period in Paris during the 1820s and 30s, where he composed and toured widely is relatively incomplete, the music that survives shows how he moves towards a radical progressive style during this time. He writes that 'among the stylistic evidence we may cite Liszt's new flexibility[24]' in elements such as rhythm, metre, and tempo. Furthermore, Todd discusses during this period 'his relaxing of the rules governing dissonance treatment[25]' and his 'widespread use of mediant [III or iii] relationship[26]'. In this example from S.47, we can see one of these unique uses of the mediant relationship with the A – C# – F – A movement as a series of successive major thirds. In fact, the mediant relationship can be viewed as going further, since the actual tonic of this sonnet is Db major (which when spelled differently is C# major, or chord III in A). The opening is independent to the sonnet's *Sempre mosso* which begins on bar 12 after a double bar and a time signature shift from common time to 3/2 (6/4). I would also view this sonnet as being one of Liszt's experiments in progressive tonality. Progressive tonality is where the key that a piece concludes in differs from the one it opens in, in this case Db major as opposed to A major respectively. This concept is a great example of radical progressiveness. It is still viewed as a radical approach in contemporary composition, and did not begin to be properly explored until at least the late 19th century.

A key part of both tonality and harmonic structure is the nature of and approach to cadence. The manner in which conservative and radical progressive composers approach cadence can

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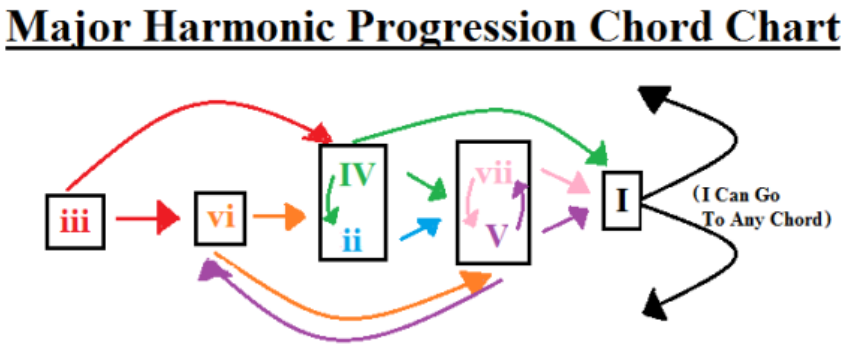
[23] Toth, Peter, "Symmetrical Pitch Constructions in Liszt's Piano Music," *International Journal of Musicology* 2 (2016): 149
[24] Todd, R. Larry, "The 'Unwelcome Guest' Regaled: Franz Liszt and the Augmented Triad." *19th-Century Music* 12, no. 2 (1988): 94
[25] Todd, R. Larry. "The 'Unwelcome Guest' Regaled," 94
[26] Todd, R. Larry. "The 'Unwelcome Guest' Regaled," 94

differ widely. Although Liszt does often use various forms of perfect cadences to end pieces (but not necessarily), as well as in the middle of pieces/movements themselves, there are marked differences in ways in which he modulates or inserts unusual and surprising chords within a progression or overall harmonic development, in a kind of non-functional harmonic progression. The non-functional harmonies he features serve no purpose to resolve tension, as will be seen, and this in my view, affects the nature and strength of the cadence itself. Before I discuss examples of each composer's approach to cadence, I will first discuss what the conventions for perfect authentic cadences (PACs) in a major key according to music theory, as the conservatives most often adhered to.

Fig. 149:

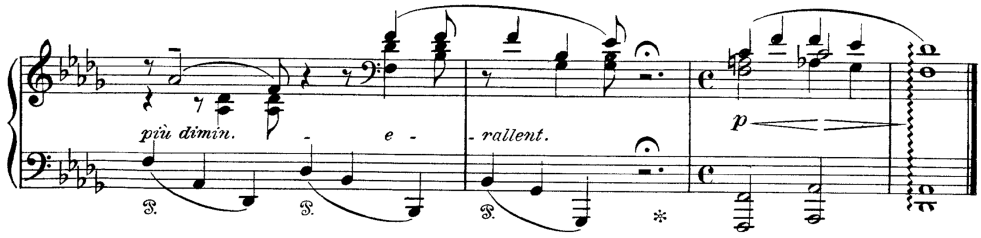


A conventional PAC calls for a ii – V – I, with the option of using V7 chord, with the tonic ending in its root position. As can be seen, the mediant cannot move directly to the dominant, let alone briefly incorporating the mediant's parallel major. This approach to chord progressions is part of why I believe Liszt's music was so polarising among conservatives; the swiftness with which he incorporates surprising chords with little to no harmonic preparation (and relating to the tonic or not) creates an unpredictability and unexpectedness that conservative composers and followers of traditional music theory would possibly view as at times being borderline sinful. These cases are on the tamer side really, because as we saw previously, Liszt has no problem featuring the augmented triad in his work, or heavily featuring the tritone in the *Dante Sonata* despite its connotations with the devil and the sinister.

A clear example of Liszt's use of non-functional cadences can be seen in the bars 90 – 93 in which he moves from Db major (I), to the relative minor of Bb minor (vi) and a brief pause at

Eb minor (ii), suspending an expected setup for the ii – V– I cadence. The I – vi – ii movement as can be seen above, adheres to theoretical practices. Liszt suddenly continues the cadence by incorporating a highly contrasting F major chord, prior the final V – I conclusion of the cadence (in this case, V6/4 – V7 – I). This turns it into a non-functional cadence, that still contains its harmonic resolution and 'perfect' conclusion in Db, but has lost its functionality and is no longer an authentic cadence, instead turning into a ii – III – V – I.

Fig. 150 (Bars 90 – 93):



An excellent example that goes considerably past the boundaries of perfect authentic, or imperfect authentic cadences (functional or non-functional), let alone the fundamental dominant – tonic (V – I) movement that underpins diatonicism and the relationship that is fundamental to essentially all of classical music, can be found in the ending of *Sonnet 123* (Fig. 151-152). Liszt chooses to and the work with a series of unprepared deceptive cadences in Ab major in Fig. 152. Liszt initially seems to setup for a V6/4 at bar 78 with a melody over a Db/A accompaniment, until shifting very swiftly to Dbm/Ab, and then what is essentially a respelled and embellished E major arpeggio in bar 79. This leads to a series of three oscillations of E7 – Ab (note how the E7 is in its first inversion, thereby sharing the enharmonic equivalent of G#/Ab, another example of his use of functional enharmonic equivalents). This is followed by a melody above comprising of F# – E (with E7) or G – F (with Ab) until bar 83 with the successive Ab chords and a melody of G – F – Ab – G – Bb – Ab.

Fig. 151 (Bars 78 – 80):

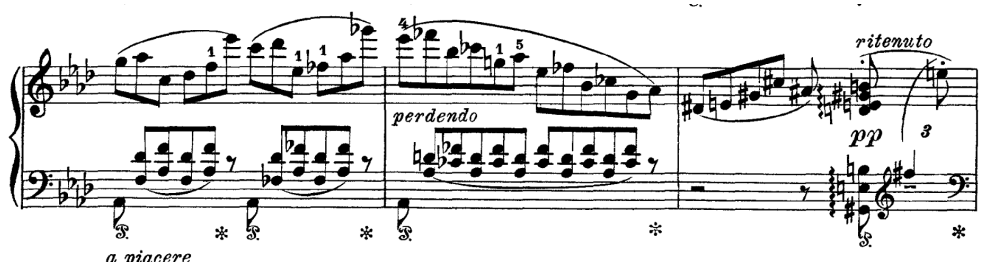
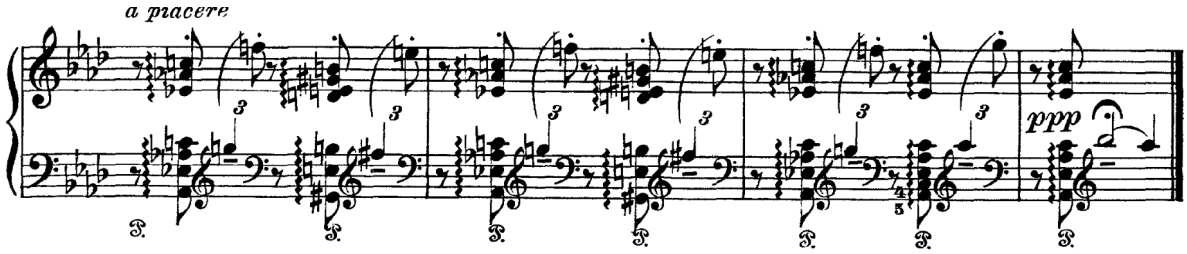


Fig. 152 (Bars 81 – 84):

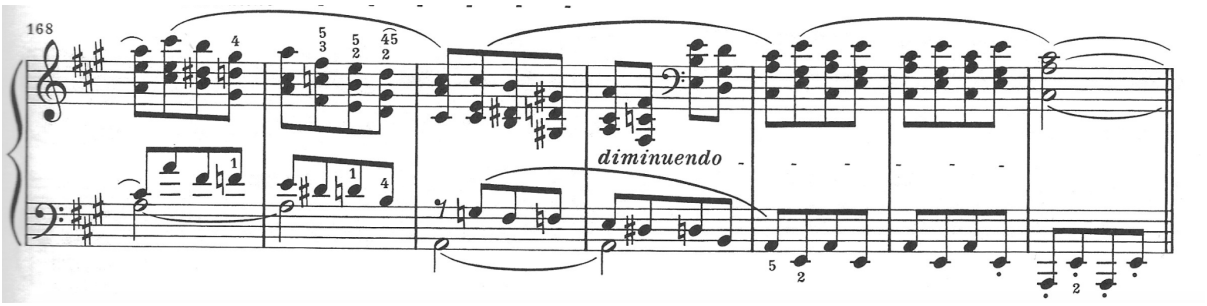


This simple conclusion with no PAC or a V – I of any kind is a demonstration of Liszt's radical progressiveness. As he began to explore tonality further, he started to experiment with the tonic-dominant relationship and its nature. In his later years, this led to works which featured significant amounts of atonality and exploration of the need for such a contrast in music. Zdenek Skoumal, in *Liszt's Androgynous Harmony*, states that "the dominant element has a strong tonic character and may be perceived simply as an inflection of the tonic. It is such situations that become common in Liszt's later music; hence the tonic-dominant contrast is weakened.[27]"

In the case of Robert Schumann's approach to cadence, this is one aspect where you can very much see his conservative tendencies. Although he does not always use a PAC to conclude a phrase or end his music, the cadence still serves its purpose as a resolution. Schumann never explores the nature of the cadence to the degree that Liszt does, and he always priorities the tonic-dominant relationship over anything else. When it comes to variations in a cadence, Schumann quite likes to incorporate tonicizations within a setup, such as in the first movement of Op. 11. In Fig. 153 (in the exposition), within bars 168 – 171, a chromatic melody in the left hand is accompanied by a series of tonicizations moving down the piano towards the bass clef. In this case, Schumann uses 7ths in order to make the tonicizations very clear, as the instability of the chord allows for a quick resolution. Additionally, this is made very smooth by the left-hand melody's voice leading. Due to its scalar nature, the melody directs the harmonic accompaniment to which way the cadence is heading. This is followed in bars 171 – 174 with a clear V – I perfect cadence in A, to conclude.

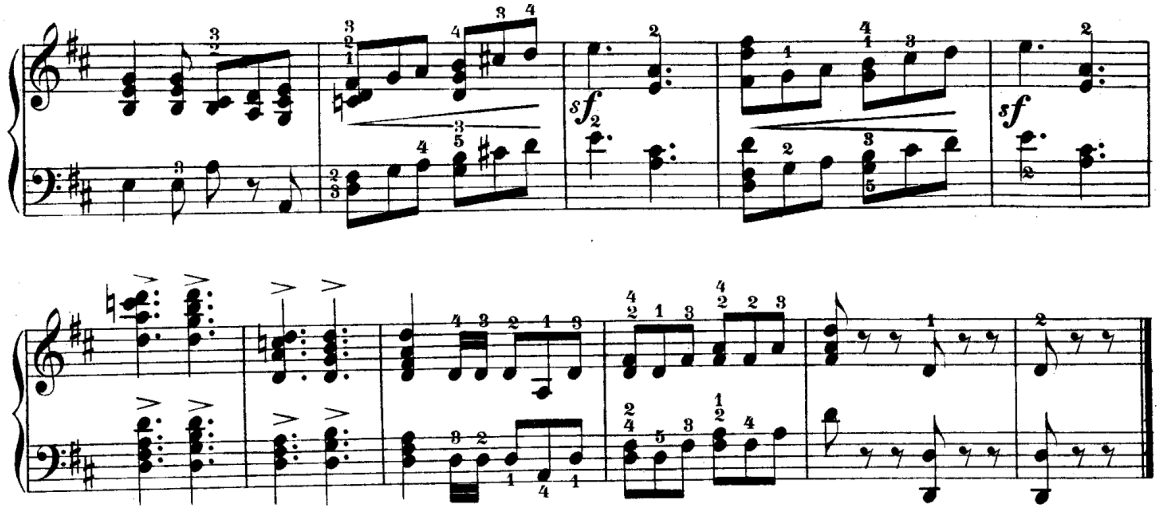
[27] Skoumal, Zdenek, "Liszt's Androgynous Harmony," *Music Analysis* 13, no. 1 (1994): 67

Fig. 153 (Bars 168 – 174, 1st movement, op. 11):



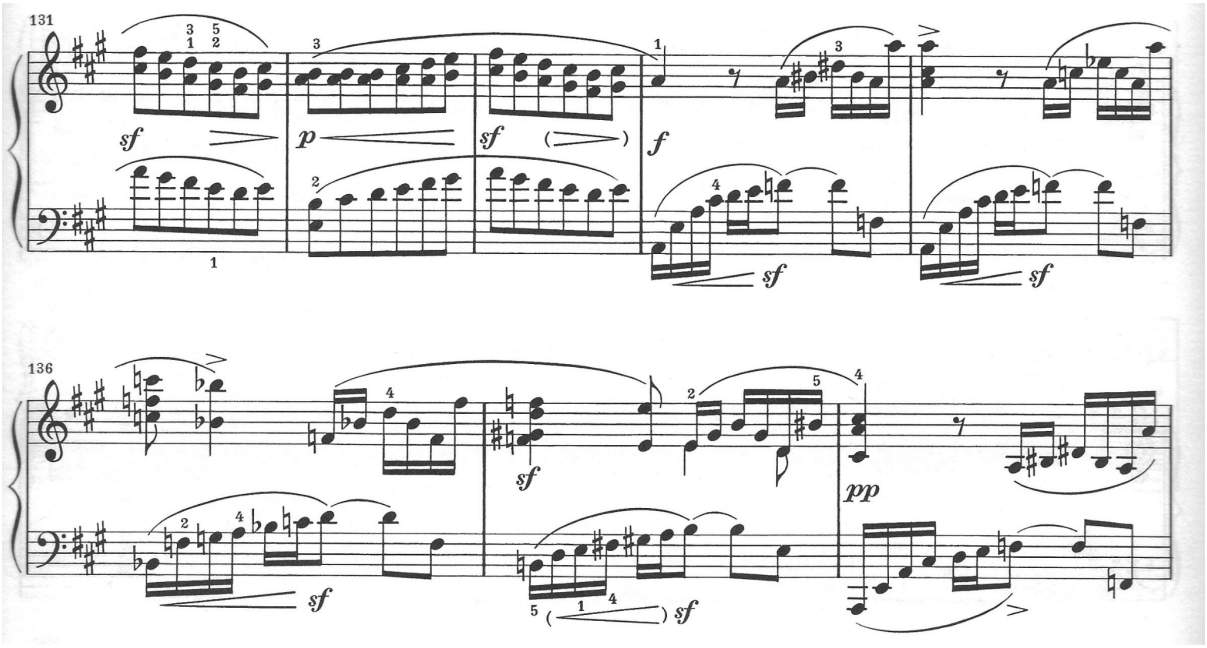
An example of a non-functional harmonic cadence in his work can be found in the *Kriegslied* from *Album for the Young.* The final 10 bars of the song are essentially a ii – V – I over a number of bars, that is filled with tonicizations in-between. The E minor (ii) at bar 45 is quite clear, but a brief tonicization of G in bar 46 leading up to A major (bar 47) starts to blur this predominant setup. What is even more interesting is that the final explicit cadence of the piece is not even a V – I, but a tonicization of G, in which D major is in its dominant 7th version in bars 50 – 51, then concluding in bars 52 – 55 with a pair of D major arpeggios and staccato unison Ds in the right and left hand.

Fig. 154 (Bars 45 – 55):



My final example of Schumann's approach to cadence comes from the 4th movement of Op. 11, in bars 135 – 138. This is a very intriguing passage; the music is now in A and is in the process of confirming this:

Fig. 155 (Bars 131 – 138):

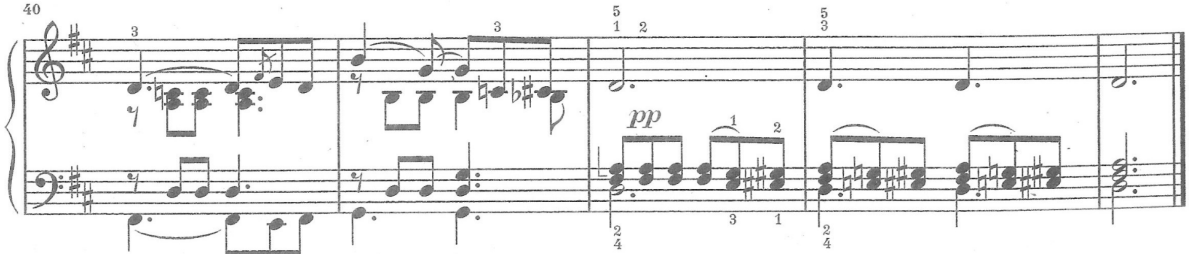


What makes this example from bars 135 – 138 interesting is how it is essentially a PAC, brought into the context of A major (as opposed to A minor). The Neapolitan bII chord (Bb for this example) is used since the triad of the supertonic is diminished, or ii^{O}, which means a PAC is not possible. Schumann removes the Bb chord from its original context, putting it into a major setting for a very harmonically progressive bII – V – I exploration of the PAC.

Schumann might not always use a PAC to conclude his music, and, in some of my other examples, these cadences still serve their harmonic purpose of resolving to the tonic and the end of a phrase, or the music's conclusion. Schumann does not usually insert non-functional harmonies which are never revolved like Liszt does, although the cadence itself might not be functional from a theoretical perspective. For example, he sometimes concludes with a IV – V – I cadence instead of a ii – V – I in a major key; or in the *Kriegslied*, where he sets up a quasi ii – V setup (Em – A) before tonicizing G major (D7 – G) and concluding with a D arpeggio. However, no matter what tonicizations or tonal centres he explores in the setup, or even prior to the statement of the tonic, the V – I, dominant-tonic relationship is always preserved and prioritised. This is unlike some of Liszt's middle period, who starts to explore the entire nature of this relationship, and whether a soundly composed piece of music even needs to highlight this relationship which underpins almost all of the pre-20th century Western canon.

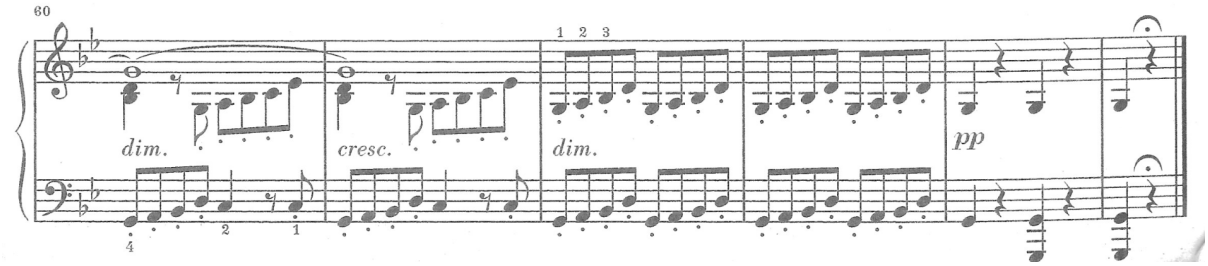
Mendelssohn's approach to cadence is arguably the most conventional. In my work, I have never seen him insert a non-functional harmony into a cadence like Liszt which never ends up resolving itself in some way. Schumann and Mendelssohn's approaches to cadence are relatively similar. Although Schumann incorporates dominant and diminished 7ths at times into a cadence, they preserve their function, and the cadence tends to remain functional (or for Schumann, the more conservative side of non-functional cadences). In his *Kinderstücke,* there are several examples where he features an extension to the cadence that essentially act as a small coda to the ending. The example in the fourth song is interesting, as there is no PAC or direct V – I cadence to confirm the D major. Instead, the only thing used to confirm it is in bar 41 where on the final quaver of the bar, a duad of C# and Bb resolves to the D and A of the tonic respectively, as the final three bars play a chromatic confirmation to it.

Fig. 156 (Fourth song, bars 40 – 44):



Another of these kinds of examples can be found in the fifth song, in which after confirming G minor at bar 54 with a perfect cadence, comes additional material featuring variations on the Gm – Cm (i – iv) progression, before a final conclusion in the tonic.

Fig. 157 (Fifth song, bars 60 – 65):



Even in his more exploratory *Variations sèrieuses,* there are clear examples where despite the chromaticism, Mendelssohn maintains each chords' harmonic function in the setup of a cadence. With Schumann however, he sometimes explores distant harmonies in his work, that

are placed in a new harmonic context, such as in the 4th movement of Op. 11, where he features the Neapolitan chord in A major (rather than A minor).

The final element of tonality I will discuss, are the ways in which Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Liszt incorporate dominant and/or diminished 7ths. The ways in which these three composers choose to feature and incorporate them can differ sizeably, particularly regarding the various roles they serve and the forms they take in their piano works.

Schumann tends to use dominant and diminished 7ths in his music most often in a functional manner, to serve the purpose of a tonicization or resolution to a particular harmony. He does this not only if there is a clear tonic or key, but also when there is a lack of one. We saw this previously when examining the opening of the first movement of his *Nachtstücke,* and another great example can be seen in the opening of the second movement.

Fig. 158 (Opening of 1st mvt):

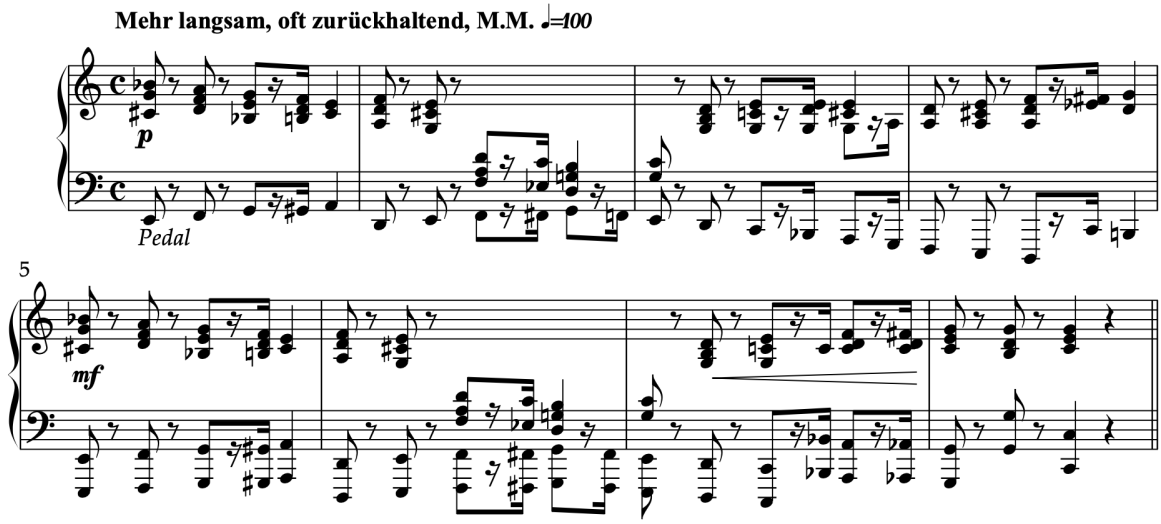
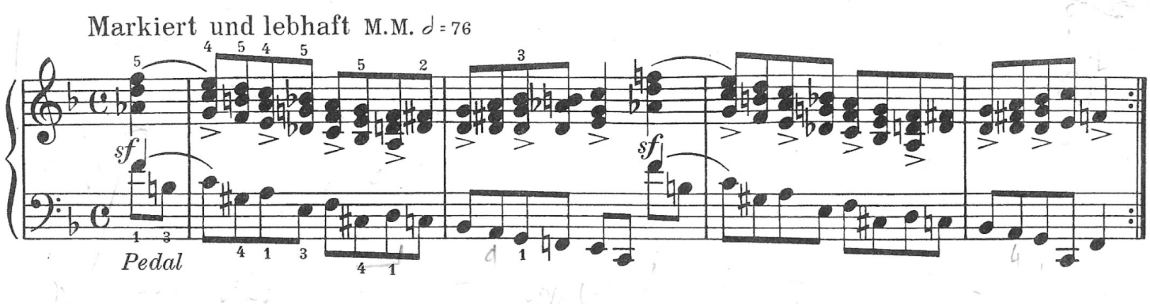


Fig. 159 (Opening of 2nd movement):

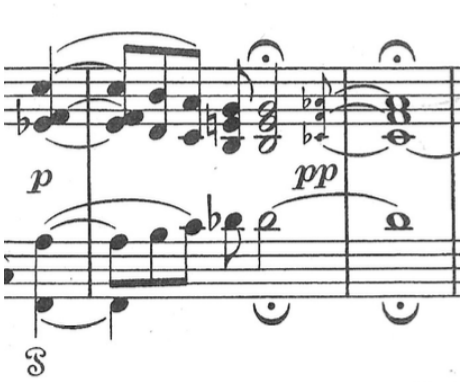


Like in the first movement, Schumann opens with a series of resolving diminished sevenths, in a scalar melody in which each pair diminished – triad (major/minor) resolves inward in line with the melodic scale. This rapidly tonicizes a large number of keys, resulting in the same kind of harmonic ambiguity. Very similarly as well, the perfect cadence in F which we see at bar 4 (Gm (ii) – C (V) – F (I)), that is very compact and only occurs in the final two beats of the bar does not feel like a true confirmation of the tonic.

Schumann in this case, is making use of the unstable nature of the diminished 7ths to quasi-tonicize various harmonies within F major, and because of the diminished nature, creates harmonic momentum and uncertainty, since they are not V^7 – I progressions but rather V^O – I.

He plays with this diminished-dominant shift further into the movement, in the slow cadenza-like transition back into the opening theme, in which he completes the phrase on a diminished 7th minim, before moving to a new dominant 7th. In bars 126 – 128 he completes the phrase on a Db^{O7} before an acciaccatura turns this into a Db^7, utilising the shared Db in order to pivot. He does the same

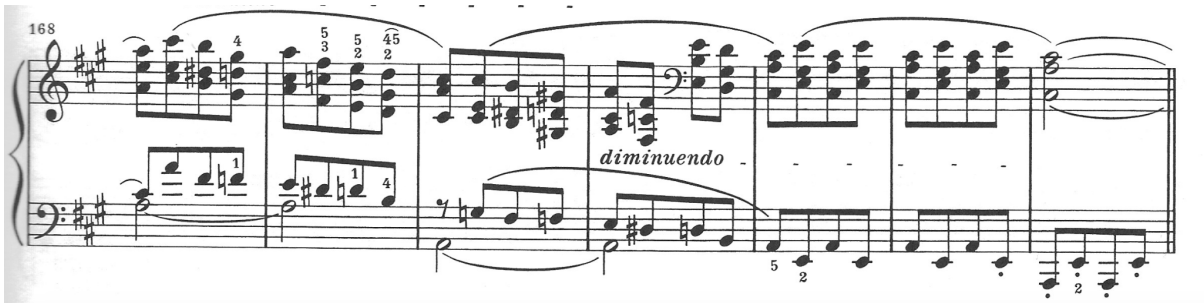
Fig. 160 (Bars 57 – 59 and 126 – 128):



Looking back to Fig. 32, Schumann uses this property to conclude the exposition and recapitulation sections in A and F# minor (Fig. 66) respectively in a very smooth manner. He also includes dominant 7th chords as well, so as to give the lines better harmonic direction given the certainty of the key. In this case, the diminished 7ths act more as unproblematic passing chords. The example below is taken from the exposition, where you can see diminished 7ths on the following beats:

- Fourth quaver beat of bar 168
- Second quaver beat of bar 169
- Fourth quaver beat of bar 170
- Second quaver beat of 171

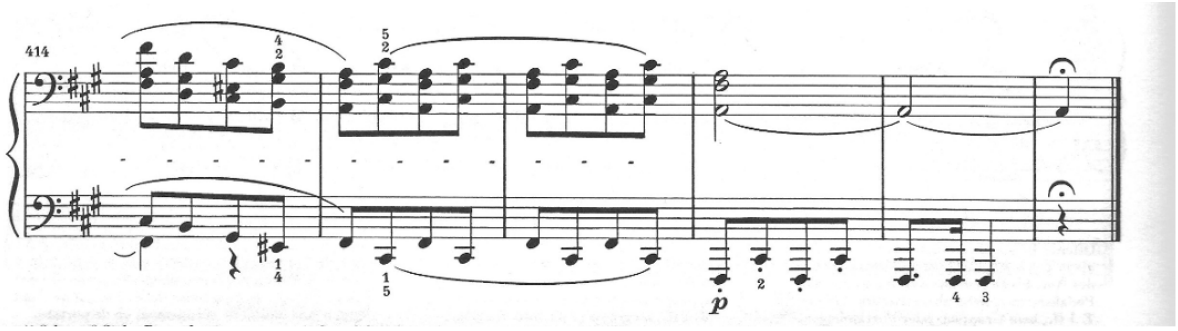
Fig. 32 (Bars 168 – 174):



Taking these into account, you can see where Schumann inserts dominant 7ths in to complement these harmonies, and provide the necessary harmonic direction needed to end effectively on A major. They appear on the following beats:

- Third quaver beat of bar 169
- Second quaver beat of bar 170
- Third quaver beat of bar 171

Fig. 66 (Bars 414 – 419)

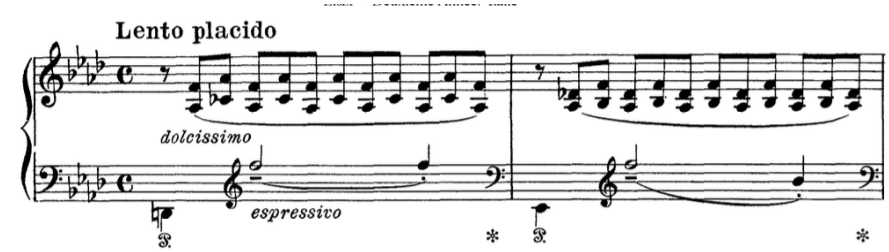


As can be seen from these two examples, Schumann is not necessarily afraid to utilise dominant and diminished 7ths in a melody, or as we saw in the *Nachtstücke* examples, he will even use them as the opening harmony; however, he follows the conservative compositional in that they still act functionally. Each dominant or diminished 7th does resolve or tonicize functionally, despite the ambiguity in the tonality. Mendelssohn's use of dominant and diminished 7ths is very similar to Schumann. Both composers use them functionally, and as a means of tonicizing a particular key. Unlike Liszt, who has already shown his tendency to

explore non-functionality in my previous examples. Mendelssohn is not quite as experimental with Schumann in terms of where he applies them. Schumann's use of the diminished and dominant 7ths in the tempo and tonicizations in the opening of the *Nachtstücke'*s first movement blurs the tonality in the opening. In my examples, Mendelssohn never opens any of the works with a dominant or diminished 7th chord. Each time Mendelssohn uses one of these 7th chords, it always appropriately resolves to its respective 'tonic.' We saw this in various examples from the development section of his Op. 106 piano sonata.

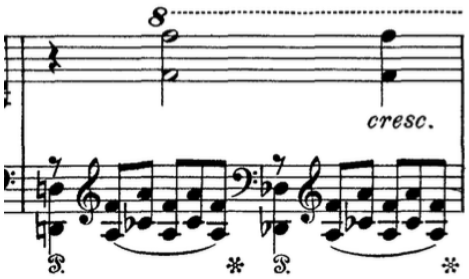
In Liszt's music, there are several cases where he uses the diminished 7th as a means of generating musical ambiguity to move the music into a different thematic direction or tonal centre. In the opening to *Sonnet 123*, again from the Italian volume of his *Years of Pilgrimage*. Despite the tonic being Ab major, he instead opens on a D-diminished 7th chord, which shifts to a Bb minor 7/Eb in the next bar, with a very simple melody played by the left hand of F – Bb above the right hand.

Fig. 161 (Bars 1 – 2):



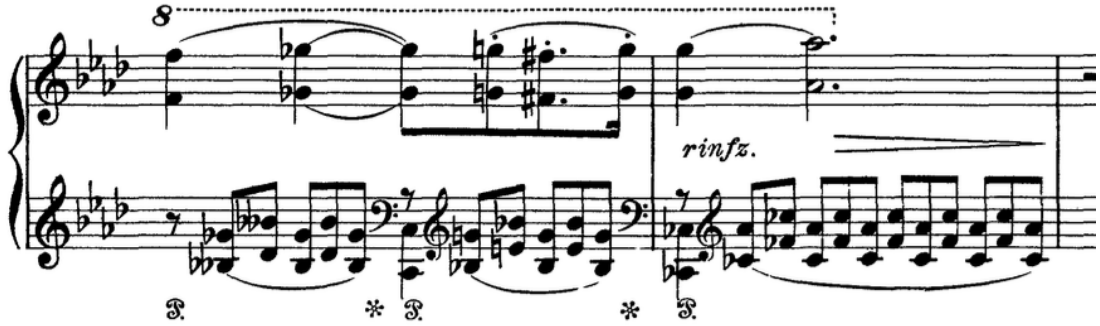
In the opening page, Liszt avoids any kind of perfect cadence to confirm the tonic of Ab, let alone anything that could confirm a tonic. Instead, he delays this by incorporating the 7th. As is already seen, he uses the diminished 7th and minor 7th, and he follows this in bars 5 – 7 with an octave melody in the left hand that changes the context of the same diminished arpeggio. The first half of bar 5 makes it a D^{O7}, until a Db turns it into a Db^{7}.

Fig. 162 (Bar 4):



This then resolves to Gb minor at bar 6, until an octave C in the bass results in a C7. These variations in the 7th quality are due to the melodic octaves, since the accompanying chordal portion in the treble clef is always diminished. This then resolves to a Cb major V6/4. Liszt is using a technique that Schumann uses in Op. 11 as a means of progression. He uses functional enharmonic equivalents; this further demonstrates that Schumann is a progressive composer. In this case, the enharmonic equivalent of Gb minor would be F# minor.

Fig. 163 (Bars 6 – 7):



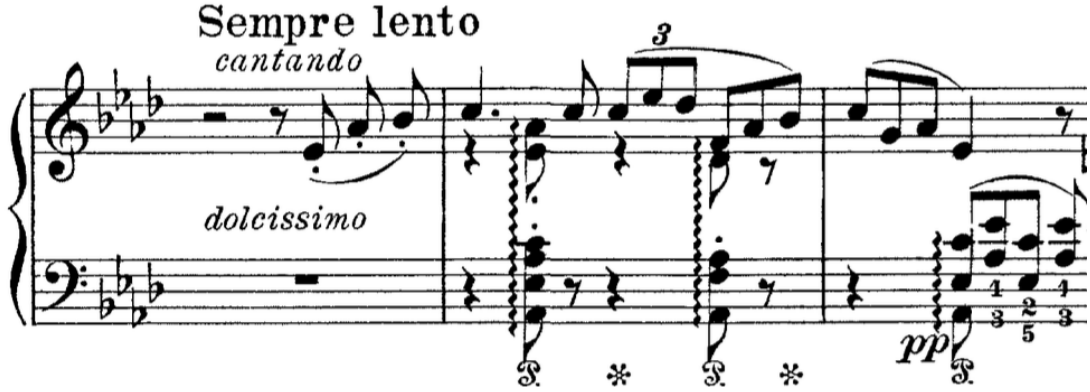
Liszt utilises the functional enharmonic equivalent to provide him the opportunity to take the music in various possible directions; he uses the properties of Gb minor in this case, to more easily move to the C7 smoothly. Despite it being a tritone apart, it is much easier for Liszt to move toward it in the context of Gb. The tonic of the piece is Ab major, and Gb is the flattened seventh degree of this scale. In this context, since we are working in the scale of Ab, C-natural appears within it, making a transition far smoother than in the context of F# minor.

Liszt uses the 7th chord in this opening in order to generate musical ambiguity, which allows him to shift keys without tonicizations effortlessly and allow the music to move in many different potential directions. Since he uses the 7th chord many times over in this opening, it begins to lose its harmonic function. I view this as being some sort of musical version of semantic satiation. Semantic satiation is the phenomenon experienced when a person either utters a word many times over, or stares at it for a long time. The word, over time, begins to lose its meaning and function, and this is exactly how I view aspects of Liszt's approaches to 7th harmonies in his music. Since these series of 7ths are used in a manner where they no longer have function, the listener no longer expects the necessary resolution or tonicization.

Liszt also incorporates both diminished and dominant forms of 7th chords together. In the case of *Sonnet 123*, with the progression of $D^{O}7$ – Db7 – Gbm – C7 – Cb6/4, the 7th chords are never resolved and thus, no longer serve a functional purpose; instead, they only serve a harmonic one. Furthermore, the nature of the 7th is that it is naturally unstable harmonically, which makes shifting between unusual keys or tonal centres that are not closely related, considerably easier and smoother since these keys are not confirmed.

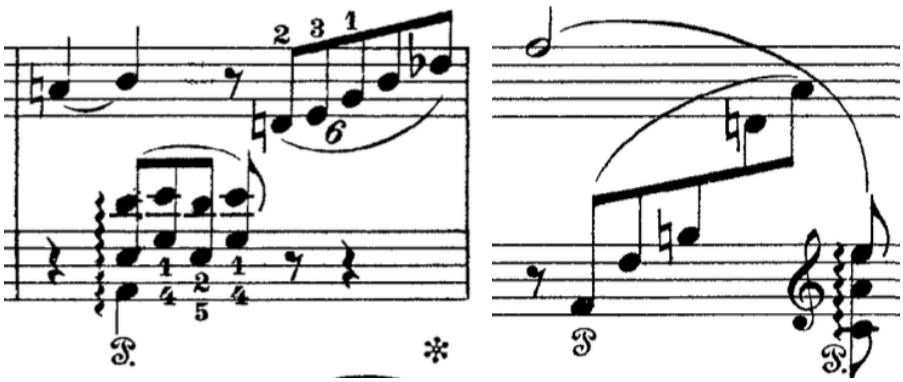
Liszt uses this musical semantic satiation as a means of putting further emphasis to when the music does return to a diatonic environment. After the opening, at Fig. 164, the listener is finally treated to the main theme in the tonic of A-flat major.

Fig. 164 (Bars 15 – 17):



The music returns to a diatonic environment now, and this can be seen clearly in his use of 7ths. The dominant seventh harmonies he features now tonicize important harmonies. In bar 18, we see an Eb7 which resolves back to Ab in bar 19.

Fig. 165 (Bars 18 – 19):



Another example comes in bars 23 - 24, where we hear a Bb7 resolve to Eb major, and then and F7 briefly tonicizing Bb minor in bars 26 – 27.

Fig. 166 (Bars 23 – 24):

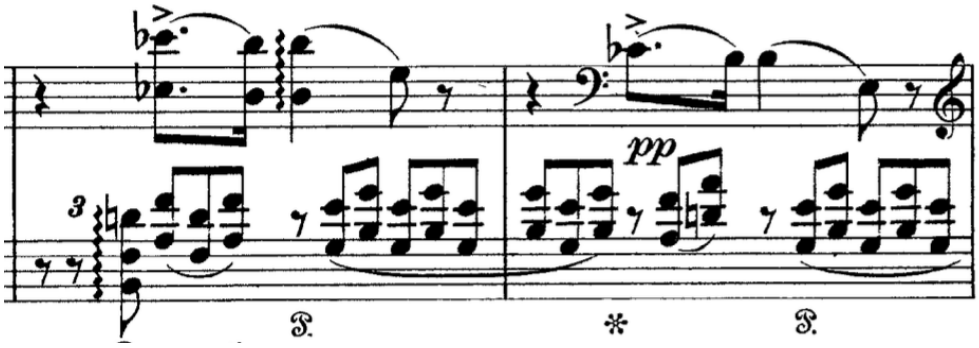
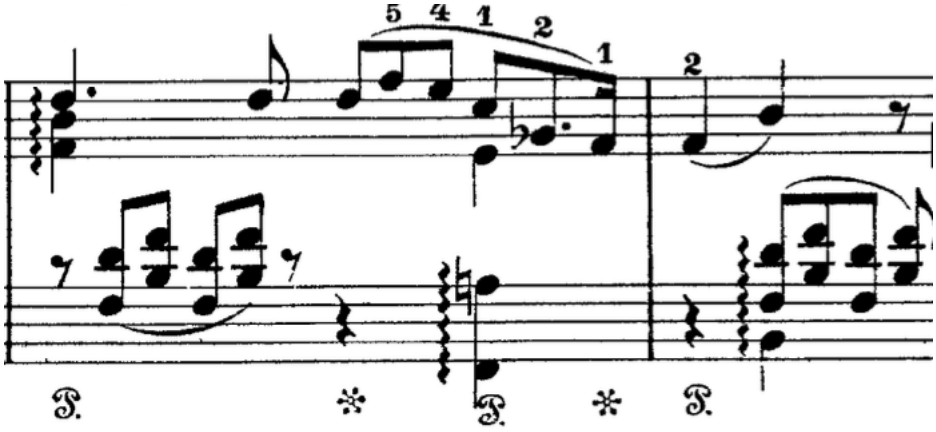
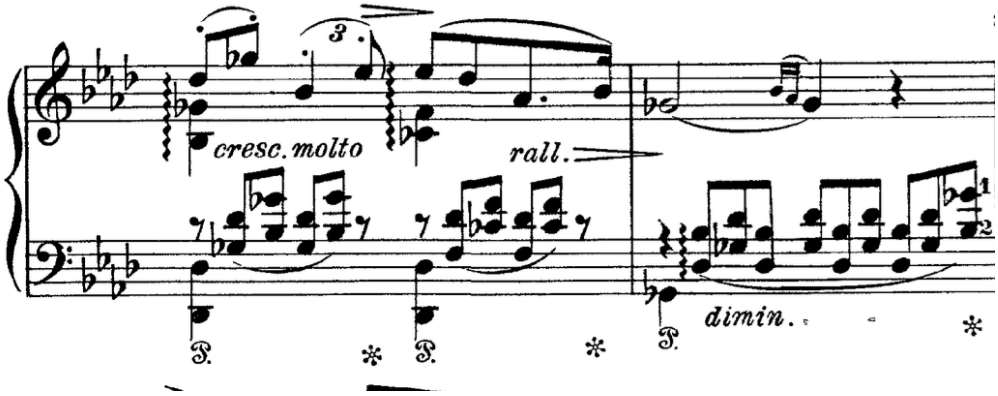


Fig. 167 (Bars 26 – 27):



Finally, Liszt leaves the most magnificent arrival to bars 28 – 29, in which we hear a Db6/4 – Db7 – Gb.

Fig. 168 (Bars 28 – 29):



This contrasting use of 7ths is something Liszt explores in other works of his. In *Sonnet 47*, rather than a mix of different versions of the 7th chord, he uses exclusively diminished 7ths in the cadenza found in bar 57. The initial setup is diatonic; bars 51 – 56 feature an interaction between the lower melodic voice, and quietly echoing chords above.

Fig. 168 (Bars 51 – 52):

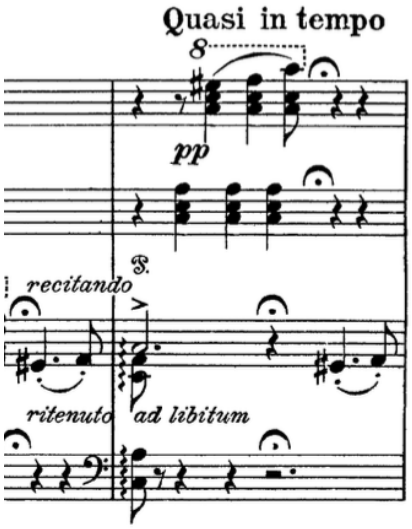


Fig. 169 (Bars 53 – 56):

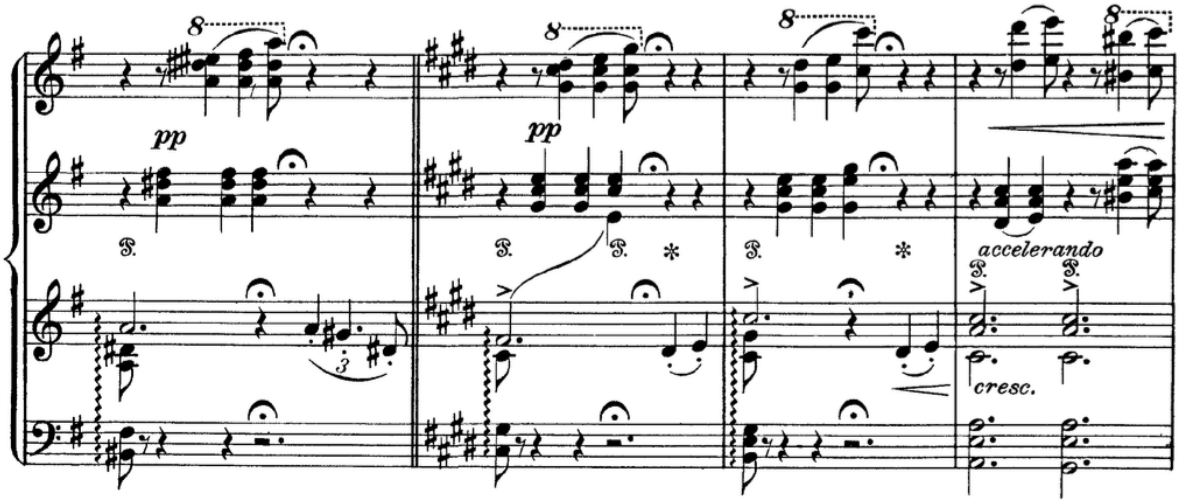
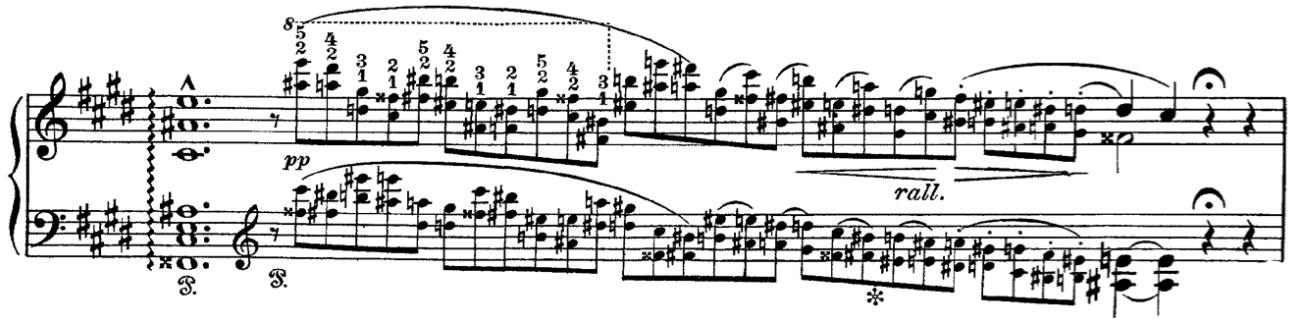
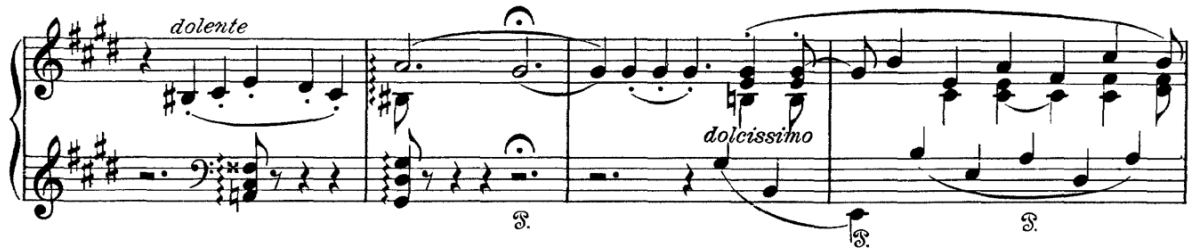


Fig. 170 (Cadenza at bar 57):



Liszt's use of diminished 7ths in this cadenza, is to act as a transition to the next section. There are numerous examples where Liszt uses a series of diminished 7ths as a transitional tool, and due to the musical semantic satiation, the diminished 7ths no longer have function. They are an example of Liszt's exploration of atonality within a diatonic setting. This is interesting, because it demonstrates a marked difference of the meaning of the term in the nineteenth versus the twentieth century. Many composers today, often associate atonality with the twelve-tone style of the Second Viennese School of the early twentieth century; however, atonality comes in many different forms. Atonality in nineteenth century music, takes its form more as a passage or piece that lacks material with functional harmonic material. In Fig. 171, taken from *Sonnet 47*, Liszt uses this atonality to make a more expansive modulation to E major. Since the diminished sevenths are used in a highly chromatic sequence, the chord has lost its harmonic function and can thus be viewed as atonal, leaving the option open to transition to E major through voice leading alone.

Fig. 171 (Bars 58 – 61)



The voice leading Liszt does in this case, is by using the F double-sharp minim clearly seen at the end of Fig. 170. This functions as part of a double neighbour tone movement to the G sharp in bar 60. The section neighbour tone being the A at the start of bar 60 in the top voice of the right hand. Liszt, however, continues to leave his options open tonally, since bars 58 – 59 features an augmented 6th progression that seemingly sets up a half cadence to a potential progression to C# minor, as seen by the concluding G# major harmonies underneath the A.

Other examples in which Liszt uses atonal sequences of successive diminished 7th chords can be found prominently in the fifth Transcendental Etude, nicknamed 'Feux Follet'. The etude is in Bb, but frequently avoids a diatonic environment. The opening of the etude is a series of chromatic scales. His use of these rapid diminished 7th arpeggiated figures serves a more sonic purpose. The diminished 7th figures seen below are act as atonal fillers to the melody.

Fig. 172 (Bars 7 – 8):

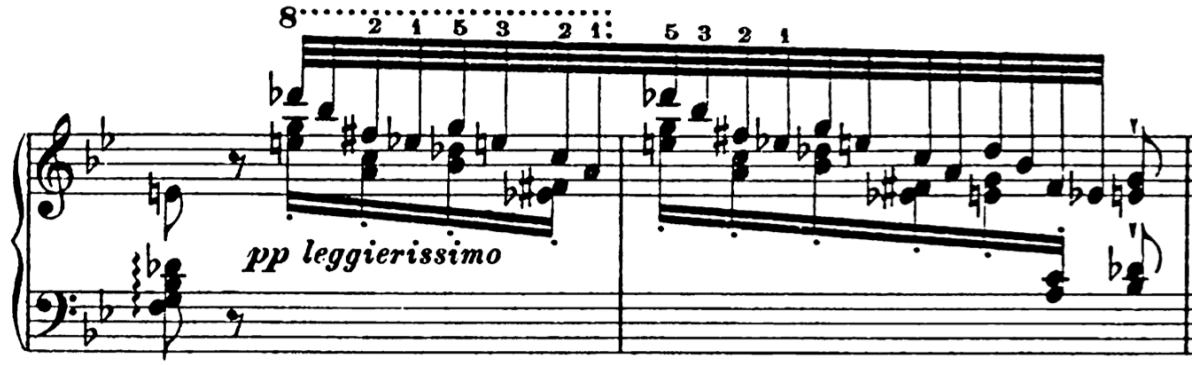


Fig. 173 (Bars 42 – 43):

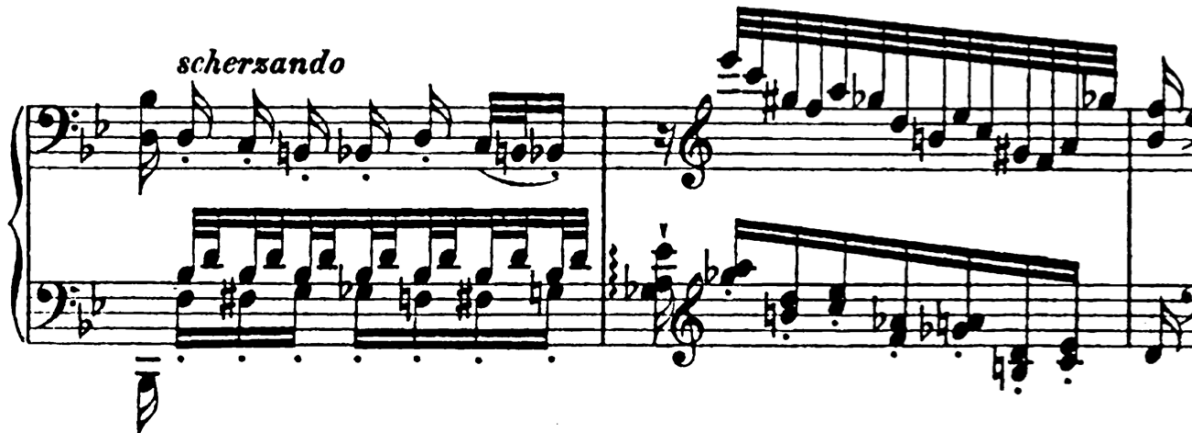
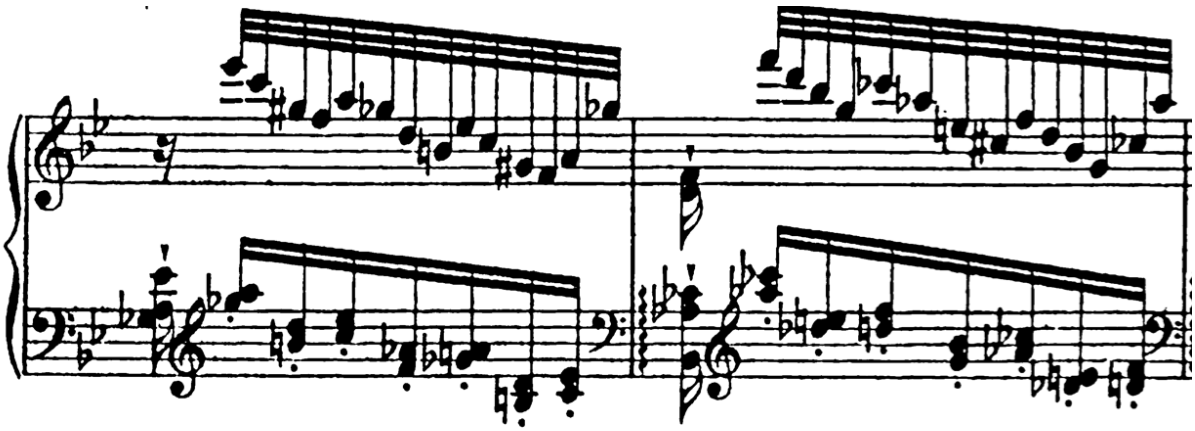


Fig. 174 (Bars 45 – 46):



Overall, this examination of various aspects of tonality demonstrated the varied nature of the approaches taken by each composer. The unique keys that Schumann and Liszt choose to feature are at times quite far removed from the tonal centre of the piece. Additionally, I demonstrated why Schumann is a progressive composer, in that I demonstrated how Liszt

uses functional enharmonic equivalents in *Sonnet 123*. This is one of my most important findings as it demonstrates tangibly that Schumann employs a radical progressive compositional technique in his music; a technique that Liszt himself employs. Op. 11 was written between 1833 and 1835, whereas the second set (Italian) of the *Years of Pilgrimage* was written between 1835 and 1838, so it is possible to argue that Schumann is likely to have employed the technique before Liszt himself.

The approaches to commonly avoided intervals were very interesting. Schumann is unafraid to use diminished 7ths as the starting harmony of a piece, as was the case with the opening two movements of his *Nachtstücke,* although, they still serve their functional purpose in that each 7th did resolve, as was the same with dominant 7ths. Mendelssohn however, tends to be less exploratory in where he places these 7th chords in comparison to Schumann, utilising them to tonicize rapidly and effectively due to the inherent instability of the chord, whilst making sure that it never loses its function.

As we saw in the examples of Liszt, he uses dominant and diminished 7th chords in a variety of contexts, both functional and non-functional. The most fascinating cases are where he repeats 7th chords but removes their function so as to provide him freedom to where the music can move next. In doing this, some cases exhibit qualities of atonality; The cadenza from *Sonnet 47*, made up of successive diminished 7ths, removed any sense of harmony to the listener, which allows Liszt to move effortlessly into the main theme in E major. In the opening to *Sonnet 123*, we saw an example of Liszt incorporating both dominant and diminished 7ths together underneath a melody. This is a form of androgynous harmony, as opposed to atonality, in which the music is still harmonic, but open and non-functional. Skoumal notes regarding Liszt's use of it, that "the vagueness of androgynous harmony in general – is a direct expression of [the] Romantic ideology, an ideology which values openness and progression above closure and stability[28]." Although Schumann does play with non-functional ideas in his music, it is not necessarily to the degree in which Liszt incorporates them, and this can be viewed as another point of criticism among the conservative composers. In most of my examples, his use of diminished/dominant 7ths naturally tonicize various keys, preserving their function whilst preserving the resolution of the cadence.

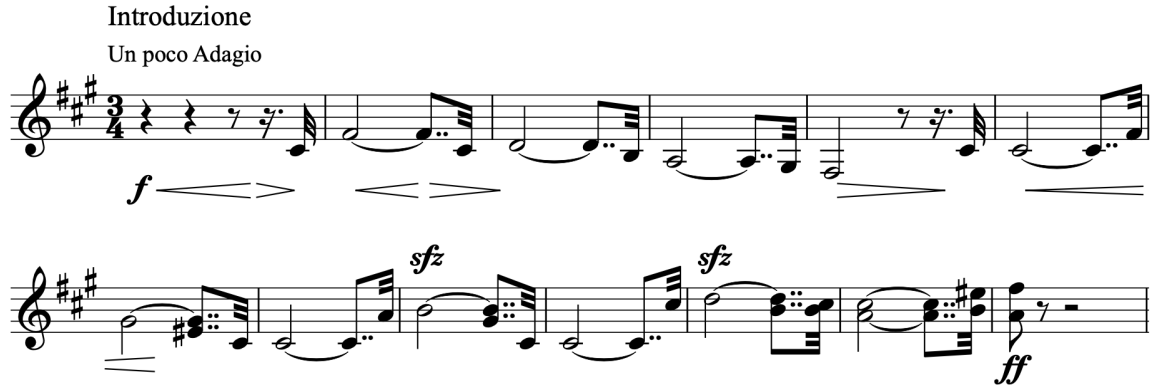
[28] Skoumal, Zdenek, "Liszt's Androgynous Harmony," *Music Analysis* 13, no. 1 (1994): 69

HARMONIC STRUCTURE IN SONATA FORM

For any piece written in sonata form, the most contrasting, rapid shifts in tonality and varying harmonic structure happen in the development section, but as we move into the Romantic era, contrasting tonicizations or unique modulations often start to happen in the exposition and recapitulation sections as well. I will only be discussing Schumann and Mendelssohn's harmonic structures since I covered some of Liszt's when I analysed his approach to sonata form. Additionally, I want to examine Schumann and Mendelssohn's examples together, to directly compare the harmonic structures of composers who are both labelled as conservatives.

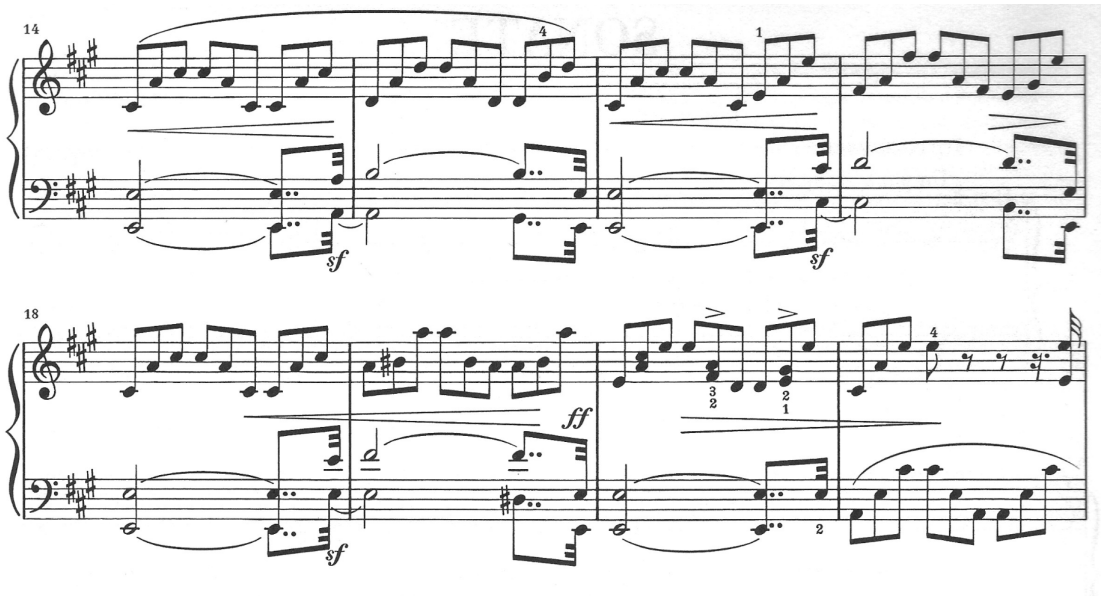
When I discussed how Schumann approaches sonata form in the first movement of Op. 11, the way in which he uses and presents thematic material makes for a very unique exposition. These examples for Schumann demonstrate that his approach to tonality and harmonic structure is very progressive and tests the boundaries of tonal evolution in a single movement, which once again, backs up my argument that he should instead be referred to as a progressive composer. Schumann's writing contains daring and rapid shifts in tonality and very original harmonic structure, despite the fact that he is labelled as a conservative composer and was highly critical of Liszt's radically progressive approach.

The introduction to the first movement of Schumann's Op. 11 is in a basic ternary form (ABA), opening with the figure 10 introduction:



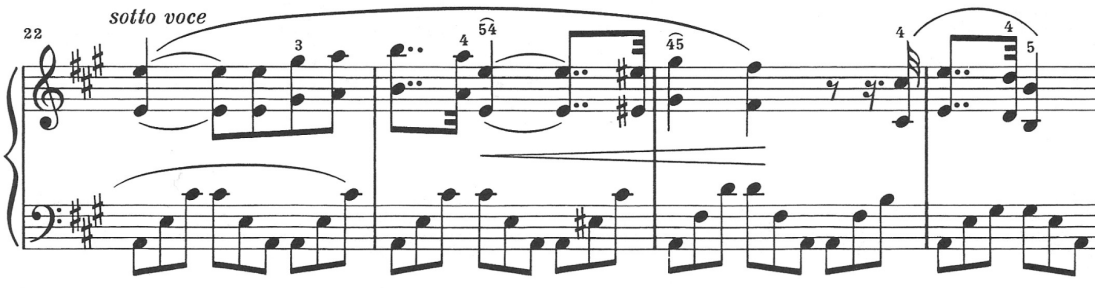
This is followed by the B section (Fig. 11 from previously), now in the relative of A major; which initially continues to play with the rhythmic contrasts of this theme, particularly the contrast of a 32nd note upbeat juxtaposed by long lasting notes on the arrival of the downbeat.

Fig. 11 (Bars 14 – 21):



This is followed by the statement of the *sotto voce* theme from Fig. 12. This is a smooth and legato theme, which plays no significant role in the first movement, aside from acting as the feature of the introduction's B section. Its most important role later comes as the main theme for the second movement.

Fig. 12 (*sotto voce* theme):



Following this, is a brief diminuendo back into the area of F# minor, until in bars 31 – 38, we hear a transition to a clear movement of a dominant C# major, and the return of the A section, concluding with an expansive arpeggiated conclusion to the introduction.

Having already examined the way Schumann utilises functional enharmonic equivalents and sequences to progress to contrasting keys in the exposition (and their replication in the recapitulation), it is striking to see the keys that feature most prominently in each portion of the exposition and recapitulation sections in the longer form (I have omitted the development since contrasting tonicizations/modulations are expected in the development):

Introduction:
F# minor (bars 1 – 13)
A major (bars 14 – 38)
F# minor (bars 38 – 53)

Exposition:
F# minor (bars 53 – 106)
Eb minor (bars 107 – 122)
D2 sequence (bars 123 – 134)
A major (bars 134 – 174)

Recapitulation:
F# minor (bars 332 – 357)
C# minor (bars 358 – 373)
D2 sequence (bars 374 – 381)
F# minor (381 – 419)

The reason I view Schumann's approach to harmonic structure as being progressive, is found primarily in the exposition. After an expansive continuation of the main theme, repeated with rhythmic variation, he transitions very rapidly to the remote key of Eb minor with the *passionate* at Fig. 26. Although it only features briefly in the grand scheme of the exposition (16 bars), it is a unique harmonic transition to A major (III). It is an extended passage that concludes on a double bar line, and only after a sequence, do we reach A major. This is highly contrasting compared to the more conservative approach that might feature a half-cadence of some kind, and a smoother modulation to the new key. The smoothest aspect of this transition is the brief sequence found in Fig. 28, where a series of tonicizations guides the music to A major; realistically, this is the smoothest and most efficient way of doing this,

simply because Eb and A are a tritone apart. Outside of tonality, this is one way Schumann uses the tritone: rather than in a melodic way like Liszt, he uses the interval in its longer form as being part of the exposition's harmonic structure.

This is another example of Schumann's progressiveness. Similarly to Liszt, he does not entirely shy away from featuring the tritone more prominently, but unlike Liszt, he chooses to feature it as a longer-form harmonic tool, as opposed to featuring it in a thematic or melodic manner as we saw in the *Petrarch Sonnets, Feux Follets,* or the *Dante Sonata*. The recapitulation in comparison, provides a very nice balance to the progressive nature of the exposition. The *passionato* section is now in C# minor, considerably closer to the tonic, helps to complement and provide balance to the sonata's form, as the recapitulation is a streamlined version of the exposition, leaving out the expansion of the main theme as we heard in bars 73 – 98 (Part of Fig. 22 and Fig. 23).

In comparison to Schumann, the harmonic structure of Mendelssohn's Op. 106 in terms of the exposition and recapitulation is considerably less progressive. In the development, we saw a contrast to this, where he demonstrates his ability to write compelling and clear contrapuntal writing, developing a separate subject that clearly has its roots within the main theme. This simplicity, however, does not reduce the overall quality of the sonata's composition, and its treatment of sonata form; but it does show that in the more rigid and conventionally less flexible portions of sonata form, Mendelssohn's approach limits his exploration of harmonic structure in certain aspects.

The harmonic structure of the exposition can be reduced to the following:

Exposition
Bb major (bars 1 – 23)
Transitional (bars 24 – 39)
G major (bars 40 – 78)

After opening with a repeat of the main theme (Fig. 67) twice, Mendelssohn confirms the tonic with two small musical ideas (Fig. 68 – 69), unlike Schumann, whose main theme was very exploratory tonally and did not truly confirm or provide a sense of the tonic at all.

Fig. 67:

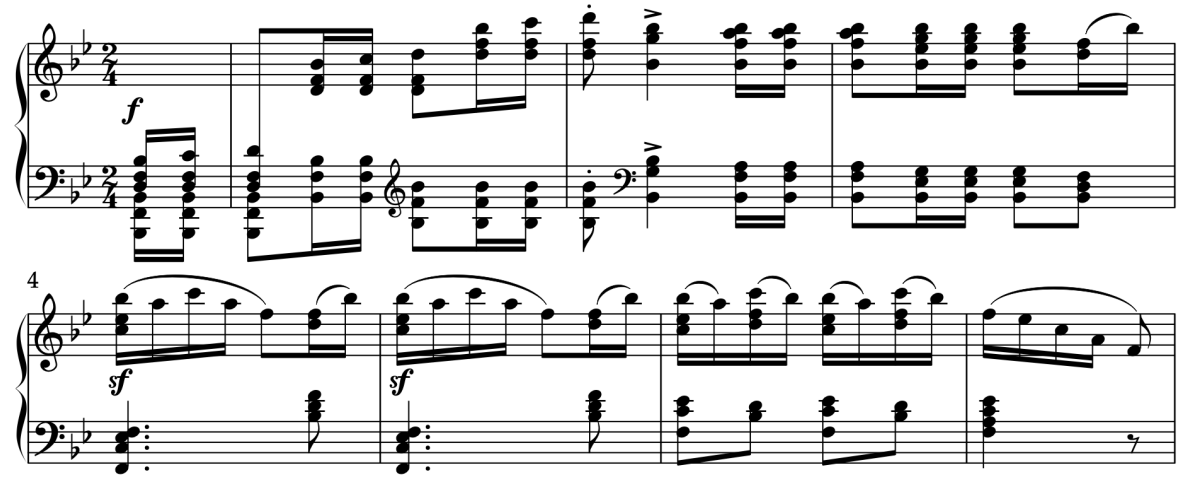


Fig. 68:

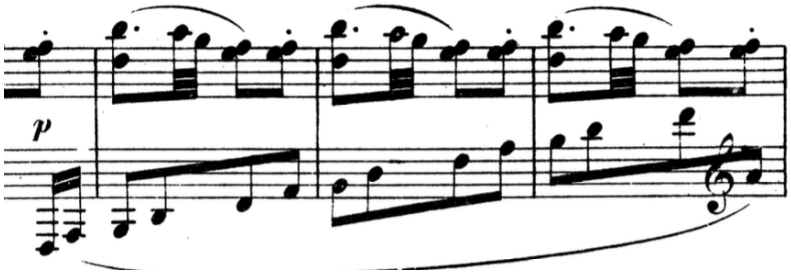
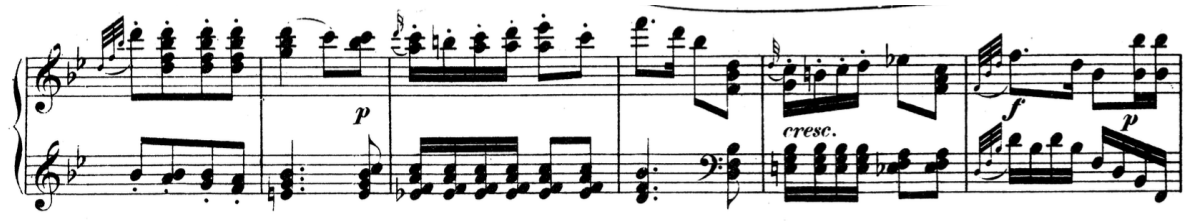


Fig. 69:



Both the transitional section of Op. 11 and Op. 106 serve the same purpose of drawing the listener away from the sense of the tonic, so as to modulate into a new theme and the new tonic. Interestingly, although Mendelssohn's transitional section removes a sense of tonal centre, the modulation to the new tonic of G major is very surprising, and demonstrates a harmonic surprise seen in Romantic-era music. The restatement of two bars of the main

theme in bar 36 of Fig. 70 does not take away from the intended purpose of the transitional section, since it provides Mendelssohn with the flexibility to move straight to D major, and finally but swiftly modulating with a V – I to G major. Because of this, as opposed to moving straight into the second theme, Mendelssohn plays the main theme (and the confirmation material after it) in its entirety, before moving on to the second theme.

Fig. 76 (Bars 40 – 46):

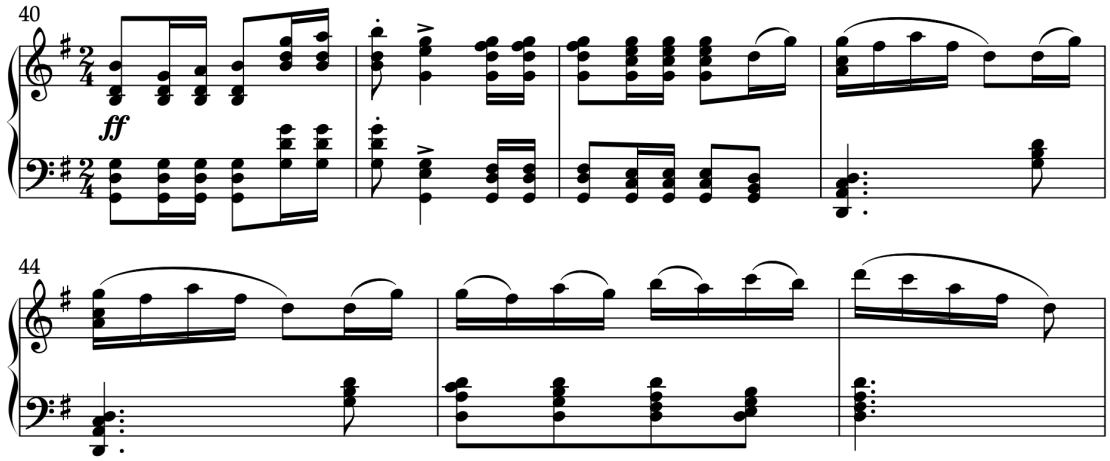
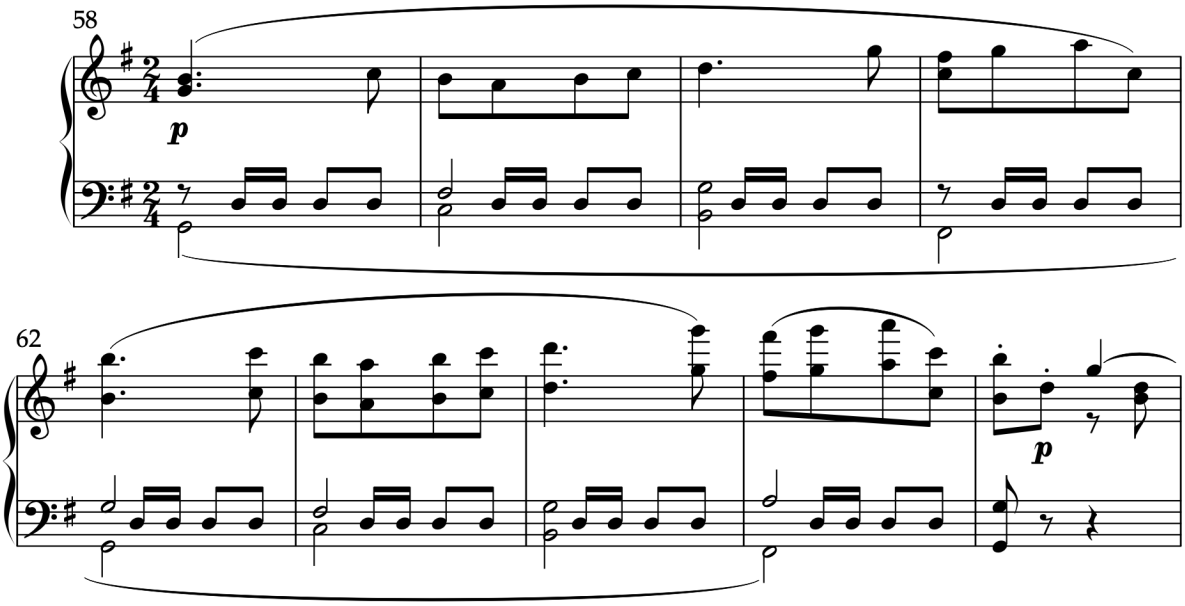


Fig. 77 (Second theme, bars 58 – 62):



Mendelssohn's largest exploration in the exposition is to do with the modulation and the second theme. As opposed to modulating to the dominant (F major) as was conventional in classical sonata form, he moves to G major (VI), the parallel major of the submediant. As mentioned previously, Mendelssohn was influenced by Beethoven's *Hammerklavier,* and his

modulation to G is a reference to this sonata, which places a lot of emphasis on the interval of a third (above or below the tonic root note).

The recapitulation is very conventional and slightly streamlined (like Schumann) for the sake of efficiency since we have returned to the tonic. Mendelssohn's streamlining is relatively clear, because although the transitional section is quite small, the repeat of the main theme and the tonal confirmation material (as was done in bars Fig. 74 – 77) is removed since we are now in the tonic, with second theme coming in at bar 145 (Fig. 95).

Recapitulation
Bb major (bars 120 – 135)
Transitional (bars 136 – 144)
Bb major (bars 145 – 164)

Following the recapitulation, in which we see a slight extension of the original codetta (bars 159 – 164), we reach the coda proper.

Coda
Bb major (bars 165 – 191)

I have labelled the coda section as being in Bb major overall, primarily because the tonic is the most emphasised. This is also in the case of the tonicizations Mendelssohn uses, which usually involve harmonies closely related to the tonic. In this case, these are often Eb major, G minor or F major, the latter two playing the role of a longform PAC of ii – V – I. However, as I previously noted in my sonata form analysis, Mendelssohn briefly explores parallel minors for changes of colour and chord quality, such as at Fig. 104 in bars 177 (Bb minor) as well as bars 182 – 185 of Fig. 104 (Bb^7 – Eb minor tonicization).

To conclude, Mendelssohn's approach to the exposition and recapitulation is considerably less experimental to Schumann. He tends to take the most efficient route, with a small transitional section (Fig. 70 - 74) that spends no meaningful amount of time in another key and moves to G major via a very rapid and unexpected V – I in Fig. 75. His recapitulation is considerably more efficient and streamlined to the exposition. He preserves bars 24 – 32 of Fig. 70 – 73 since it is the most important but omits the material from bars Fig. 74 – 77,

instead shifting straight to the second theme. This is similar to Schumann, where he eliminates the rhythmic variation of his main theme in the recapitulation to Op. 11.

An important note to make is that the degree of experimentation among these composers varies depending on the pieces you examine. The differences demonstrate that although Schumann and Mendelssohn are labelled as conservatives, they still experimented to different degrees with tonality and harmonic structure than what such a label suggests. In the case of Mendelssohn, his approach to tonality in his *Lieder ohne Worte* or *Kinderstücke* compared to his *Variations sèrieuses* differs sizeably. This is because of the intended setting, as his *Lieder ohne Worte* is written as an imitation of a singer and accompanist art song in mind, whilst the *Variations* form (theme and variations) is designed for experimentation, featuring more expansive chromaticism and differing chord qualities in each variation. In terms of harmonic structure in their piano sonatas, Schumann and Mendelssohn are quite different. Schumann's exposition is more fragmented and longer, featuring a longer transitional section in the unusual key of Eb minor (Fig. 26). In comparison, Mendelssohn, over the same length of bars, spent no more than one bar in a single key in his transitional section (Fig. 70 – 74).

The distinct differences between the conservative and radical progressive approaches to form, as well as tonality and harmonic structure can be clearly seen in my given examples, but upon reflection, there are important similarities between both approaches. Particularly, are the ways in which Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Liszt approach tonality. As we saw in the examples from Schumann's Op. 11, he modulates through harmonies that get very distant from the original tonic (like Liszt), but the harmonic structure and hierarchy, and process of moving through these keys is where the principal difference lies.

There is generally, a much greater sense of linearity and logic to the way in which Schumann does this, and how the harmonic structure flows. Despite that looking at it in long form, the keys Schumann moves through in the first movement in Op. 11 are highly diverse and get very distant from the tonic, it sounds quite natural. When the opening theme from the introduction reappears in F minor at Fig. 48, it feels so natural from the set up in the prior bars, that one could be forgiven for thinking it is the beginning of the recapitulation. Additionally, in Fig. 49, where Schumann surprisingly shifts from F minor to Ab minor (written G#), he sets it up by pivoting with an Eb-diminished 7 and hinting to the minor with that Fb in the right hand. The tonicizations and modulations all have a sense of logic and

linearity; and the harmonies are set up in some way where even if it is surprising, it is very clear. His use of the functional enharmonic equivalent helps him do this, allowing him to bridge very distant keys (such as Fm and G# minor) in a smooth and effortless manner. This is not something you always get with Liszt's work; many of the examples I have presented in this thesis have featured rapid and quick shifts in tonality underneath what in long form would be a predictable harmonic structure. Additionally, I showed how in his later years, Liszt began to explore the nature of the tonic-dominant relationship and explore writing beyond its importance as one of the guiding relationships of sonata form.

I want to emphasise however, that Franz Liszt knew exactly what he was doing in pushing these boundaries of form, tonality, and harmonic structure. Just as his extraordinary skills at the piano made him one of the greatest virtuosi as opposed to the 'pseudo-virtuosi', he was not an ignorant composer. His musical education, grounded in the fundamentals of music theory and counterpoint back up how educated a musician he was, regardless of talent, or the virtuosic nature of his piano music. What separates him from a progressive like Schumann, is the degree to which he pushed the boundaries of functional harmony and thematic structure; not merely progressive, but radically progressive. A final point of consideration towards Liszt's critical reception, and why conservatives criticised him so much, was also likely due to the level of his success. He had attained a level of fame and adulation from the public by the time he was in his mid-twenties that it made him a music critics' ideal target; an animosity that can still be seen today.

However, it depends on the works you examine; Mendelssohn's *Kinderstücke* or the *Lieder ohne Worte* have a more conservative approach to tonality and harmonic structure for example. This is primarily to their compositional settings; the former is a set of children's songs, and the latter is art song for solo piano, imitating that of a singer with piano accompaniment. In this case, a singer would most certainly struggle to perform some of the surprising and unusual shifts in tonality we have seen in the piano music of Schumann and Liszt. In comparison, works like his *Variations sérieuses* possess clearer contrasts in harmonic structure and tonality due to the differing nature of their setting. This is the same with Liszt's *Petrarch Sonnets,* which are exploratory but not nearly as expansive in scope as his larger piano works are. A similar case falls within Schumann's work too, when you consider his volumes of smaller works in the settings of childhood, such as *Album for the Young* or *Kinderszenen.*

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I examined some of the examples of differences and similarities between conservative and radical progressive compositional styles during the Romantic era. In the music of Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Liszt, I concentrated on their approaches to virtuosity, form, and tonality and harmonic structure. There were several clear differences that made each of their approaches unique, as well as provided insights into what separates conservative and radical progressive styles. However, it is not as simple as designating these three composers as either conservative or radical progressive. My analysis demonstrates that among the three, Mendelssohn was the most conservative. Particularly in terms of form, he does not move very far away from conservativism and prioritises clarity of form. In tonality and harmonic structure, his explorations are also quite limited, although there were several examples regarding tonality, I demonstrated that he does experiment and incorporate unusual and compelling harmonies.

In comparison, Schumann's approaches to virtuosity, form, tonality and harmonic structure, were considerably progressive, despite being labelled as a conservative, which I see in some respects as being a bit of a misnomer. This made me consider and reflect on why conservative composers like him were so critical of Liszt's music. I believe the criticism was directed to Liszt's approach to form (in this case sonata form), in addition to his approaches to tonality and cadence. It is the way in which he arranged his ideas and themes within a movement, as we saw with his employment of a quasi-sonata form (or in Moortele's interpretation, a two-dimensional sonata form). Furthermore, it is the way in which he tonicized and used non-functional harmonies, his distinct use of chromaticism and atonality within a diatonic environment, as well as how he modulates between different keys or arrived at important tonal centres. He often wrote with these techniques in a manner that was radically different from established musical convention that, in combination with his unashamed showmanship and explicitly virtuosic writing, opened him up to persistent criticism by his conservative contemporaries.

However, it is important to reflect on the examples I chose to feature in this thesis, since Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Liszt sometimes approach virtuosity, form, tonality and harmonic structure differently depending on the kind of piece. Thus, to build a more complete picture of the approaches of conservatives and radical progressives to these

compositional features, a significantly larger volume of works must be examined, and this thesis only provides a small snapshot of this musical environment. Furthermore, Franz Liszt's compositional style did evolve. As Liszt moved into his late era, his music, consisting primarily of choral and keyboard works, began to move towards the realm of atonality in a way almost no major composer had done prior. It is important to consider that analysing Liszt's late style is not something we are able to do with either Schumann or Mendelssohn. We can reflect on Liszt's evolution in relation to his early and middle periods but, due to the relatively early deaths of Schumann and Mendelssohn, this left their compositional output frozen within their middle periods. Because of this, the ways in which their styles may have evolved over time can only be speculated upon.

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