BEETHOVEN'S VOCAL STYLES IN SELECTED PIANO SONATAS: A GUIDE FOR PIANISTS

by

Hanmo Qian

Submitted to the faculty of the
Jacobs School of Music in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree,
Doctor of Music
Indiana University
December 2019

Indiana University Jacobs School of Music,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Music

Doctoral Committee

_____
David Cartledge, Research Director

_____
Jean–Louis Haguenauer

_____
Emile Naoumoff

December 1, 2019

To the late Edmund Battersby, my professor and mentor

Table of Contents

List of Examples

List of Tables

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Ludwig van Beethoven is well known for his revolutionary composing style. Scholars and musicians from the past centuries have conducted thorough studies and analyses on his works. The theory of the "three periods"[1] has become a universally recognized summary for his evolving compositions. From his early years of mastering the Viennese Classical style, to the middle period of heroic language, and into the last decades of complexity, grandeur, resignation, and transcendence, Beethoven exhibited his mastery of speaking through music under different circumstances. However, the innovative spirit in Beethoven's piano writing existed from his earliest works. Even in his very first Piano Sonata No. 1 in F Minor, op. 2, no.1, there are many creative nuances. During Beethoven's time, the Classical tradition had been well established by famous composers such as Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Muzio Clementi, C. P. E. Bach, Johann Christian Bach, Luigi Cherubini, Giovanni Sammartini, Carl Stamitz, and more. In order to find his own voice as a younger composer, Beethoven had to break away from tradition.

Within Beethoven's compositional inspirations, there lays a common element—stylistic integration. While stylistic heterogeneity and shifting of topics is a hallmark of the Classical style, Beethoven took this to new levels with his use of stylistic integration. Not only was Beethoven able to combine multiple musical forms, textures, and thematic materials together in his works, he also incorporated different musical genres into musical unity, which led to the daring application of synthetic structures in his late period. Among many creative endeavors, his Grosse Fuge in B♭ Major, op. 133 represents imitative style in concentrated format so that the integration of fugal texture and string quartet texture is fused into a single-movement structure; Fantasia in C Minor, op. 80 merges symphonic presentation with piano concerto, fantasy, and chorale, bringing unity

[1] William Drabkin, "The Stylistic Periods," in *The Beethoven Compendium*, ed. Barry Cooper (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), 198–200.

to reality; and finally, Symphony No. 9 in D Minor, op. 125 ("Choral") takes the leap to perfect his vision of world peace by uniting symphonic language and vocal triumph. Evidently, these masterpieces of Beethoven exemplified an elevated approach to cross-genre writing and stylistic integration.

In the scholarly realm, many Beethoven enthusiasts wrote about Beethoven's cross-genre compositions and have contributed valuable studies and discussions to such topic. John V. Cockshoot's *The Fugue in Beethoven's Piano Music* (1959) conducts comprehensive research on the fugal integration in selected piano music of Beethoven, in which he summarized the chief developments in contrapuntal theory before Beethoven, as well as the composer's use of counterpoint in late keyboard works, including op. 101, op. 106, op. 110, and Diabelli Variations, op. 120. In the end, Cockshoot concluded the reasons for Beethoven's incorporation of fugal language during the late period, stating that "Beethoven found in his later works that frequently only by means of fugue could he adequately resolve the conflicts and tensions presented in the earlier movements or variations."[2] Meanwhile, other scholars such as Joseph Kerman,[3] Vincent D'Indy,[4] Alfred Brendel,[5] William Kinderman,[6] Wildrid Mellers,[7] David Levy,[8] Lewis Lockwood[9] and Sandra Rosenblum[10] also touched on an interesting concept of integration—to fuse vocal inspirations into instrumental genres as to generate diverse expression and musical unity.

---

[2] John V. Cockshoot, *The Fugue in Beethoven's Piano Music* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959), 183.
[3] Joseph Kerman, *The Beethoven String Quartets* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 191–196.
[4] Vincent D'Indy, *Beethoven*, trans. Theodore Baker (Boston, MA: The Boston Music Company, 1912), 97.
[5] Alfred Brendel, *Music Sounded Out* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1991), 60–63.
[6] William Kinderman, *Beethoven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 342.
[7] Wilfrid Mellers, *Beethoven and the Voice of God* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 127–288.
[8] David Benjamin Levy, *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 44–48.
[9] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven: The Music and The Life* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003), 342–48.
[10] Sandra P. Rosenblum, *Performance Practices in Classical Piano Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 14–15.

This essay is an in-depth study on how vocal styles were integrated into Beethoven's piano music throughout his lifetime as well as how vocal styles fit into the grand scheme of Beethoven's stylistic synthesis. We will examine Beethoven's piano sonatas to study the composer's interest in vocal idioms as part of the evolution towards stylistic diversity and aesthetic unity. Ultimately, the essay will serve as an interpretive guide that explores various vocal style integrations in Beethoven's piano sonatas and its significance in the composer's artistic pursuit. The essay will explain the essence of classicism as the foundation for Beethoven's creative endeavor. It is also important to survey composers such as J. S. Bach, Domenico Scarlatti, Muzio Clementi, Joseph Haydn, and W. A. Mozart and to see how their approaches to stylistic integration generated new possibilities for Beethoven. An overview of Beethoven's lyricism in piano playing adds valuable pedagogical comments by his contemporaries, explaining proper execution of *legato* passages in Beethoven's piano works and his philosophy on lyrical playing. We will explore various types of song and polyphonic models and their implementation in Beethoven's selected piano sonatas and propose a case study on selected piano sonatas to examine the role of vocal infusion in Beethoven's overall integration scheme.

It is not the purpose of this study to discuss all thirty-two sonatas as piece-by-piece analyses. On the contrary, the essay intends to select sonatas from all three periods as examples for vocal style integration, idiomatic fusion, and structural synthesis. From a pedagogical standpoint, this essay will provide piano students with a comprehensive guide to a better understanding of Beethoven's vocal idioms within his stylistic synthesis and to applying it to their own interpretations.

Chapter 2: FROM J. S. BACH TO BEETHOVEN

During the transition from the late Renaissance to the early Baroque period, keyboard music began to break away from its traditional basso continuo function. A growing number of composers dedicated their creative energy towards keyboard repertoire. Some of the major contributors—François Couperin, Jean-Philippe Rameau, and George Frideric Handel—dedicated compositions to the harpsichord repertoires that conveyed a broad scope of texture, expression, technique, and style. Some of their important works include Couperin's four volumes of harpsichord books, Rameau's three solo collections and numerous solo arrangements, and Handel's more than twenty keyboard suites and single movements. The blossoming keyboard music became progressively sophisticated, expressive, virtuosic, and diverse, it inevitably pushed towards a new era that started with the Baroque master Johann Sebastian Bach.

As one of the most prominent musical figures during the late Baroque era, Bach brought major changes to aesthetic perception. A new way of writing shaped how the Classical-period works would evolve. Bach's interpretation of cyclic and multi-movement forms sought continuity and diversity in lengthy compositions. Such method was then popularized by many Classical composers. In his single-movement structures, Bach highlighted dramatic contrast through mode changes, texture shifts, or rhythmic alterations, which predicted the aesthetic foundation for the Classical period—the blending of various styles and expression.[1] According to Robert L. Marshall—the compositional process towards *reunion des goûts*—the concept of merging all styles together as one,[2] was one of the most important innovations by Bach.

---

[1] Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 43–46.
[2] Robert L. Marshall, "Johann Sebastian Bach," in *Eighteenth-Century Keyboard Music*, ed. Robert L. Marshall (New York: An Imprint of Macmillan Publishing Company, 1994), 86–88.

Demonstrated in the two volumes of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, English and French Suites, Partitas, the *French Ouverture*, and the Italian Concerto, the collision of Italian and French styles is prominent. In the Goldberg Variations, BWV 988, the blending of a broad array of musical styles and idioms marked a breakthrough for the keyboard music. Music genres and styles that seemed unrelated to one another are now presented in unity. For instance, one may recognize the "aria" theme in the beginning movement of the Goldberg as a songful "air", characterized by idiomatic Sarabande rhythms, and supported by a passacaglia bass line. In Variation no. 16, the composer combined a grandeur French Overture style theme with canonic episodes, followed by a three-voice fugue in the second half of the variation. The last variation of the piece, *Quodlibet*, borrows fragments from popular German folk tunes such as *Ich bin so lang nicht bei dir g'west*, and *Kraut und Rüben*, then presents them in contrapuntal manners.[3]

Moving forward to the Classical era, composers such as Domenico Scarlatti, Muzio Clementi, and eventually Haydn and Mozart explored new possibilities for keyboard music. They also furthered the notion of blending contrasting idioms together as one. Sonata thus became a natural vehicle for such exploration.

Italian composer Scarlatti served as a linkage between the Baroque era and the Classical period. In his 555 keyboard sonatas, Scarlatti discovered endless possibilities of importing diverse idioms into single-movement sonatas. Though the sonata genre was in its infancy at the time of Scarlatti, these keyboard works display a wide range of styles derived from vocal origin and other instrumental genres, marking the aesthetic trajectory for the Classical style. For example, his Sonata in A Major, K. 208 unveils songlike idioms in binary structure. Written as an intimate *Adagio e cantabile*, the melody resides in the right hand, while the left hand provides repeated chords as accompaniment. The writing of the melody is highly decorative. The use of Baroque ornamentations can be found throughout this sonata, including passaggi, coloratura, accento, trill,

---

[3] David Schulenberg, *The Keyboard Music of J. S. Bach* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992), 336–337.

mordent, and appoggiatura, to simulate the sensitivity and expressiveness of a songlike melody. Besides vocal-style integration, Scarlatti saturated his keyboard sonatas with virtuosic displays. Passages in Sonata in G Major, K. 455 mimic rapid plucking effect of guitar playing through a series of fast repeating cut-time eighth notes performed by alternating fingers on the key.

Haydn, the "Father of Symphony" and "Father of the String Quartet", contributed a good number of keyboard sonatas throughout his life. The early sonatas of Haydn were intended for harpsichord. The later ones, starting from Sonata in C Minor, Hob. XVI:20, were written for fortepiano due to added dynamic marks, or at least neutrally for both instruments.[4] On the macro level, Haydn promoted a notion of stylistic synthesis through his infusion of symphonic traits, chamber music style, and vocal idioms into his keyboard works. For example, in the *Allegro con brio* movement of Sonata in D Major, Hob. XVI:37, the transition prior to the secondary theme is almost a direct reference to the "Mannhein Rocket" symphonic gesture invented by Johann Stamitz. In the *Adagio cantabile* movement of the Sonata in E♭ Major, Hob. XVI:49, the melodic lines are decorated with ornaments suggesting expressive rhetoric of a recitative or spoken style. On the micro level, Haydn's fusion of various stylistic topics is everywhere. According to Leonard G. Ratner, Haydn frequently mixed a range of stylistic topics in his keyboard writing as part of the expression.[5] Ratner went on to discuss Sonata in E♭ Major, Hob. XVI:52, and listed the topics used in the opening passage of the first movement: the *French overture* as the first two measures; the *empfindsamer* manner (m. 3); an ornamented *stile legato* (mm.6–16), with a brief interruption of the *brilliant style* (mm. 9–10) in the middle; horn-fifth figure in the left hand (mm. 27–28); a suggestion of *Turkish* music (mm. 29–30); and the *ombra* (m. 38).[6] For Haydn, the

---

[4] Feder, Georg, and James Webster, "Haydn, (Franz) Joseph," *Grove Music Online* (January 2001) , accessed May 30, 2019, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000044593.
[5] Leonard G. Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1980), 412–421.
[6] Ibid., 412.

borrowing and fusing of genres is one of his methods to express a duality between earnestness and humor.[7] Therefore, cross-genre integration serves as a medium for Haydn to showcase his wit as a composer as well as his extensive range of musical expressions on a relatively new keyboard instrument.

Besides adding diverse styles into keyboard language, Haydn also uncovered new structural possibilities for keyboard sonatas. His use of theme and variation can be found in the later sonatas, as seen in Sonata in C Major, Hob. XVI:48. This two-movement sonata cycle begins with an intimate *Andante con espressione*. Besides the fact that the composer used a slow movement as the opener for this sonata, its formal structure is based on a series of variations from the initial binary-form theme. This movement at times hints at a highly decorated vocal style, while at other times portraying turbulent emotions through harsh harmonies and unpredictable modulations.

The Classical composer Clementi dedicated his keyboard works to showcase his wide range of styles, ranging from style *galant*, to dramatic writings close to early Romantic idioms, and to his favoring for the learned style in the keyboard compositions.[8] In the Sonata in G Minor, op. 34, no. 2, Clementi's three-movement sonata cycle shows imitative writing, songlike gestures, dramatic styles, and virtuosic keyboard display. Beginning with an unusual French Overture style introduction, the *Largo e sostenuto* passage combines the dramatic style of French Overture with imitative writing. The "short-short-short-long" theme, likely a coincidence that it resembles the iconic motif from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, is laced throughout the entire movement,

---

[7] James Webster, "Haydn, (Franz) Joseph: Style, aesthetics, compositional method," *Grove Music Online* (2001), accessed February 8, 2019, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000044593.

[8] Tyson, Alan, and Leon Plantinga, "Clementi, Muzio," *Grove Music Online* (January 2001), accessed May 20, 2019, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000040033.

whether as the furious first theme subject, or as the melodious C-Major *Largo* theme (mm.126–133) from the latter portion of the development. The third movement of this sonata presents an imitative section (mm. 198–225) immediately preceding the recapitulation. What makes this canonic passage unique is the fact that Clementi incorporated it as an independent simple canon separated from the surrounding materials, while fusing motivic fragments from both the first and the second theme. The use of lengthy contrapuntal passages in sonata cycle not only proves that Clementi was an experimental composer in the keyboard genre, it also predicts what was to come in the following decades as the idea of stylistic synthesis continued in the post-Enlightenment period.

Deeply fond of the learned style, Mozart's sonatas incorporate impromptu uses of imitative and canonic gestures. In his Sonata in D Major, K. 576, the use of imitative style is apparent. After the initial measures into the development section of the *Allegro* movement, a simple canon in octave (mm. 63–67, mm. 70–73) begins to exploit the primary theme materials. Then the passage transitions into an imitation (mm. 81–91) based on the opening motif of the development. This section is saturated with imitative gestures and layering voices, transforming the initial motif to recall Bachian writing. With these imitative textures dominating the entire development, Mozart used a speedy imitative passage (mm. 107–117) as a modulating transition to the secondary theme in the recapitulation. In the finale *Allegretto*, the composer also explored imitative writing, mainly seen in the secondary theme appearances (mm. 34–39, mm. 103–107, and mm. 125–130). Such elaborate insertion of the "learned" style is significant to Mozart. Aside from the use of contrapuntal materials, Mozart also included fantasia style, concerto style,[9] operatic style, and chamber style in his keyboard sonatas. It is this kind of innovative spirit that prepared the younger Beethoven for his journey to bring stylistic synthesis to a new height.

[9] Rosen, *The Classical Style*, 45.

According to historical records, Beethoven had deep knowledge of his predecessors' ways to approach integration. He studied with Haydn in Vienna and might have also taken some lessons with Mozart.[10] As for Clementi, Beethoven had a great admiration for this Classical composer. Anton Schindler, a biographer and close friend of Beethoven, recorded a commentary made by the composer about Clementi's sonatas:

> He (Beethoven) had the greatest admiration for these sonatas, considering them the most beautiful, the most pianistic of works, both for their lovely, pleasing, original melodies and for the consistent, easily followed form of each movement. Beethoven had but little liking of Mozart's piano music, and the musical education of his beloved nephew was confined for many years almost exclusively to the playing of Clementi sonatas.[11]

Beethoven may have started as a young composer who drew stylistic elements from his predecessors.[12] He soon broke away and broadened the musical language. For the first time, stylistic integration is no longer simply to announce the Classical legacy, rather it is an experiment to investigate what is possible for the sonata genre. Increasingly in Beethoven's sonatas, intense fusions of musical styles grow prominent. Learned style, chorale style, operatic style, and symphonic style are some of the major topics to represent and translate Beethoven's inner world to others.

Beethoven's sense of stylistic synthesis began with Bach. During his pupil years, Beethoven studied Bach's two volumes of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and several other keyboard works. He frequently searched for new works by Bach. In the letter dated in 1801, Beethoven expressed his excitement for music publisher Franz Anton Hoffmeister's decision to publish compositions of Bach: "Your intention to publish the works of Sebastian Bach rejoices

---

[10] Joseph Kerman, Alan Tyson, and Scott G. Burnham, "Beethoven, Ludwig van," *Grove Music Online* (January 2001), accessed May 31, 2019, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000040026.
[11] Anton Felix Schindler, *Beethoven As I Knew Him* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1966), 379.
[12] Rosen, *The Classical Style*, 380.

my heart, which is full of admiration for the great art of this progenitor of harmony, and I hope that your intention will soon be realized."[13] In his letters to publisher Breitkopf und Härtel written in July 1809 and October 1810, Beethoven continuously requested music scores of Bach's instrumental and vocal works.[14] He frequently insisted on learning and reviving the music of Bach, as proven in a recorded conversation between the composer and the instrument maker Johann Andreas Stumpff in 1824. When Stumpff mentioned the name of Sebastian Bach, Beethoven immediately remarked: "He shall live again…Yes, when people begin to study him again, but they haven't the time for it!"[15] In another occasion during Beethoven's 1825 conversation with Karl Gottlieb Freudenberg, Beethoven also articulated his attitude towards Bach as: "Not Bach (brook), but Meer (sea) should be his name, because of his infinite, inexhaustible wealth of melodic combinations and harmonies."[16]

Beethoven cultivated a growing attachment to the old music styles during his later years, especially that of the contrapuntal idioms from the Renaissance and the Baroque periods. Beethoven had reached a point of exhaustion in musical inspiration around 1812, during which his output slowed down significantly. It is during this time that Beethoven finally realized the potential of polyphonic music. There is a major increase in the amount of contrapuntal writing during his last period. Lengthy contrapuntal passages, some virtuosic while others songful, occupy prominent moments in the overall structural planning. The passages replaced the typical Classical-period imitative writings that are fragmented and primarily focusing on highlighting stylistic diversity and fluidity within the passage. Works such as the last five piano sonatas, the "Diabelli" Variations, Fugue for String Quintet in D Major, op. 137, String Quartet No. 15 in A

---

[13] Michael Hamburger, ed. and trans., *Beethoven: Letters, Journals and Conversations* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1952), 34.
[14] Ibid., 75–76, 94.
[15] Ibid., 219.
[16] Ibid., 237.

Minor, op. 132, the *Grosse Fuge*, *Missa solemnis*, and the Ninth Symphony feature prominent use of both virtuosic and songlike counterpoint.

The incorporation of vocal idioms in instrumental presentations is another way for Beethoven to express his stylistic integration. The growing appearances of chorale, song, operatic styles, and even songlike fugal passages can be found in his sonatas and other instrumental works. Despite the bravery of incorporating choral and vocal elements within instrumental genres, Beethoven's vocal writing style was considered unique and bold by scholars and his contemporaries. Joseph Kerman and Alan Tyson commented on Beethoven's stiffness in his first operatic work Leonore (1805).[17] Others including Ralph Vaughan Williams discussed the seemingly unsingable quality due to extreme vocal demands and exhausting lengths.[18] Large vocal works including the Choral Fantasy, Mass in C Major, and the *Missa Solemnis*, contain extreme vocal range and lengthy *forte* passages for choruses. If such awkward vocal writing was the result of Beethoven's insufficient experience or training in singing and relate subjects, then it would be much easier to forgive such an impractical compositional approach. But the reality is quite the opposite. Beethoven in fact had acquired training in vocal techniques and exposures to proper vocal styles during his apprentice years. He took occasional violin and viola lessons under Franz Ries and Franz Georg Rovantini, served as an organist at the church in Bonn, performed as a viola player at the Bonn theatre, and had counterpoint training with Johann Geory Albrechtsberger in 1794.[19] Undoubtedly, he had the training, experience, and credentials to create aesthetically pleasing vocal music if he so desired. Then why is his vocal music so difficult and awkward to perform to the point that it may be considered impossible?[20] The renowned Berlin scholar Paul Bekker discussed a probable motivation, quoting a commentary written by

---

[17] Kerman, Tyson, and Burnham, "Beethoven, Ludwig van," *Grove Music Online*.
[18] Ralph Vaughan Williams, *Some Thoughts on Beethoven's Choral Symphony* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), 1–14.
[19] Kerman, Tyson, and Burnham, "Beethoven, Ludwig van," *Grove Music Online*.
[20] Williams, *Some Thoughts on Beethoven's Choral Symphony*, 8–9.

Beethoven for the Archduke Rudolph: "I let myself be guided by song; I tried to write as flowingly as possible, and I am ready to answer for my work at the tribunal of sound judgment and good taste."[21]

Beethoven consequently felt his vocal writing ought to be guided by inspirations flowing from his heart and not by traditional expectations. Vocal music for Beethoven is a precious medium for genuine expression, a channel for him to directly communicate with God.[22] Nothing can stand in the way of genuine expressiveness, not even the humanly impossible! Beethoven fostered a growing preference to vocal idioms, hence the furtherance of instrumental-vocal integration.

Throughout the evolution of Beethoven's integrated style, he united diverse musical topics and genres to achieve the ultimate freedom in musical expression. Vocal styles, alongside other types of integrated styles became a major source of inspiration for him. In the Choral Fantasy, Beethoven experimented with stylistic integration in a large symphonic work to blend various genres and textures together. For the first time, piano concerto, fantasia style, symphony, and choral style merge as a complete work of art. This eventually served as a model for the Ninth Symphony—a grandeur dramatic work that synthesizes symphonic design with fugue, variation, chorale, recitative, solo aria, and military march—all in one musical entity—to symbolize the unity and joy of mankind.[23]

---

[21] Paul Bekker, *Beethoven*, trans. M. M. Bozman (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1927), 251–252.
[22] David Tame, *Beethoven & the Spiritual Path* (Wheaton, IL: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1994), 70.
[23] Kerman, *The Beethoven String Quartets*, 194.

Chapter 3: LEGATO IN BEETHOVEN'S PIANISM

As a pianist, Beethoven had a successful concert career from about 1782 to 1809.[1] Contrary to the common perception of Beethoven bearing a shy, repulsive, and rough personality,[2] during his early years, Beethoven was in fact characterized as an amiable, modest, and unpretentious artist,[3] with an exceptionally colorful, sensitive and expressive control on the piano.[4]

His pupil Carl Czerny, who frequently observed Beethoven's playing throughout his lifetime, described our composer's piano performance to be much seasoned and poised:

> His bearing while playing was masterfully quiet, noble and beautiful, without the slightest grimace (only bent forward low, as his deafness grew upon him); his fingers were very powerful, not long, and broadened at the tops by much playing, for he told me very often indeed that he generally had to practice until after midnight in his youth.[5]

According to Czerny, Beethoven mastered the *legato* style in piano playing with expressive nuance. In one of his observations on Beethoven's performances, Czerny also remarked:

> Meantime, in 1790, appeared Beethoven, who enriched the Piano-forte by new and bold passages, by the use of the pedals, by an extraordinary characteristic manner of execution, which was particularly remarkable for the strict Legato of the full chords, and which therefore formed new kind of melody; —and by many effects not before thought of. His execution did not possess the pure and brilliant elegance of many other Pianists; but on the other hand it was energetic, profound, noble, with all the charms of smooth and connected cantabile and particularly in the Adagio, highly feeling and romantic. His performance like his Compositions, was a musical painting of the highest class, esteemed on for its general effect.

---

[1] William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven: Playing His Piano Music His Way* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 76.
[2] O. G. Sonneck, *Beethoven: Impressions by His Contemporaries* (New York: Dover Publications, 1967), 94–95.
[3] Ibid., 13.
[4] Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven*, 80.
[5] Elliot Forbes, ed., *Thayer's Life of Beethoven* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), 368.

> The means of Expression is often carried to excess, particularly in regard to humorous and fanciful levity.[6]

Based on the above description, it is not difficult to realize Czerny's admiration for his teacher's careful, expressive execution of legato and cantabile style.

Other contemporaries commented on Beethoven's legato treatment. Carl Ludwig Junker, a music writer and admirer of Beethoven's music, praised Beethoven's piano skill in his 1790 letter to Bossler's "Correspondenz":

> The greatness of this amiable, light-hearted man, as a virtuoso, may in my opinion be sagely estimated from his almost inexhaustible wealth of ideas, the altogether characteristic style of expression in his playing, and the great execution which he displays…but Bethofen, in addition to the execution, has greater clearness and weight of idea, and more expression—in short, he is more for the heart—equally great, therefore, as an adagio or allegro player.[7]

Once again, expressive playing was in the foreground of Junker's impression of Beethoven. According to Junker, the interchanges between *allegro* and *adagio*, between *staccato* and *legato*, were executed perfectly by the composer.

A few years later, German composer Johann Riedrich Reichardt wrote about Beethoven's 1808 performance of his recently-composed Piano Concerto No. 4 as "the Adagio, a masterpiece of lovely drawn-out melody, he truly sang on his instrument with deep, melancholy feeling that moved me to the core."[8]

Beethoven cultivated a particular taste for suitable pianos that could produce his desired touch and colorization. In a 1796 letter to instrument maker Johann Andreas Streicher, Beethoven explicitly requested the kind of pianoforte that he had wished for:

> There is no doubt that so far as the manner of playing it is concerned, the *pianoforte* is still the least studied and developed of all instruments; one often thinks that one is merely listening to a harp. And I am delighted, my dear fellow, that you are one of the few who realize and perceive that, provided one can feel the music, one can also make the pianoforte sing. I hope that the time will come

---

[6] Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven*, 79.
[7] Forbes, ed., *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*, 105.
[8] Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven*, 229.

> when the harp and the pianoforte will be treated as two entirely different instruments.[9]

Beethoven already obtained seasoned control of different touches needed for diverse sound colors and musical characters. During the era when *non-legato* touch was still the standard practice, Beethoven stood by what he believed to be genuine expression way ahead of his time.[10] Czerny praised Beethoven as one of the first pianists to discover the grand effects of *legato* and *cantabile*.[11] Beethoven's music was guided by the vocal models from the beginning of his career. Schindler wrote about the essential role of vocal music in Beethoven's performance practice:

> Beethoven learned directly from Clementi how, after searching everywhere for positive rules governing performance, he finally found the key in vocal art. Himself a singer, he attempted to apply the rules of prosody even to certain instrumental passages where stressed and unstressed notes in endless sequence play an important role.[12]

Beethoven had cultivated a profound connection with the vocal art. As a pedagogue, he also applied the principles of *legato* and sustained style into regular instruction. Schindler described a letter that Beethoven wrote to his pupil Czerny to criticize the younger pianist's performance in 1816. Based on the letter, Schindler extracted Beethoven's intention regarding proper *cantabile* execution:

> In cantilena sections he (Beethoven) adopted the methods of cultivated singers, doing neither too much nor too little. Sometimes he recommended putting appropriate words to a perplexing passage and singing it, or listening to a good violinist or wind player play it.[13]

Czerny, describing his early lessons with Beethoven, recalled precise instructions regarding proper keyboard technique in contrast to the widely recognized Mozartian style that

---

[9] Emily Anderson, trans. and ed., *The Letters of Beethoven*, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1961), 25–26.
[10] Reginald R. Gerig, *Famous Pianists & Their Technique* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 87–88.
[11] Franz Kullak, *Beethoven's Piano Playing* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2013), 4–5.
[12] Schindler, *Beethoven As I Knew Him*, 414.
[13] Ibid., 416.

favored *staccato* and light touch. Once more, Beethoven insisted on the comprehensive training of the *legato* style:

> During the first lessons Beethoven made me work solely on the scales in all keys and showed me many technical fundamentals, which were as yet unknown to most pianists, e.g. the only proper position of the hands and fingers and particularly the use of the thumb; only much later did I recognize fully the usefulness of these rules. He then went through the various keyboard studies in Bach's book and especially insisted on legato technique, which was one of the unforgettable features of his playing; at that time all other pianists considered that kind of legato unattainable, since the hammered, detached staccato technique of Mozart's time was still fashionable.[14]

Despite of Beethoven's promotion of lyricism in keyboard playing throughout his lifetime, his music was written during a transitional period when *legato* was relatively new to the pianistic language while *non-legato* approach was still favored by most pianists. The appropriate identification of *non-legato* touch or a sustained style may become difficult to determine for modern pianists as they deal with Beethoven's notational innovations. According to William Newman, sometimes editors confused ties for irregular rhythmic groupings with *legato* markings, or multicurve slurs with separate shorter slurs.[15] Other times, Beethoven might leave inconsistent indications for *legato* throughout different style periods. In the early compositions, he was more inclined to add detailed articulation markings to indicate *legato* placement. Towards his late years, however, Beethoven began to omit *legato* or *staccato* indications for potential notational economy, leaving passages without any articulation markings.[16] In order to handle such a notational challenge, pianists should select a touch appropriate to the character of the piece or passage, which requires careful study of its characteristic essence beyond notation alone.[17]

Essentially, Beethoven's enthusiasms for *legato* touch and expressive playing provide foundation for his eventual pursuit of integration between vocal idioms and instrumental genres.

---

[14] Carl Czerny, "Recollections from My Life," *The Musical Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (July 1956): 307, accessed February 10, 2019, http://www.jstor.org/stable/740427.
[15] Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven*, 123–133.
[16] Tilman Skowroneck, *Beethoven the Pianist* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 200.
[17] Ibid., 201.

We need knowledge and awareness of the *legato* practice in Beethoven's pianism, in order to grasp his stylistic search for greater lyricism.

Chapter 4 : SONG MODELS IN THE SONATAS

Beethoven was one of the first German composers to devote creative energy towards Lied as a major compositional category. Beethoven had a deep interest in *Volksweise* (folk tune) and had arranged over 150 folksongs for the Scottish publisher George Thomson between late 1809 and 1810. His love for poetry can be seen in many of his songs with lyrics by poets such as Goethe, Friedrich von Matthisson, Gottfried August Bürger, Pietro Metastasio, Christoph August Tiedge, Christian Ludwig Reissig, and many more. By the time Beethoven composed his song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* (1816), the Lied tradition had infused traditional folk song elements into poetic expressions through matured presentation of voice with keyboard accompaniment.[1]

Parallel to his song output, Beethoven began incorporating vocal idioms in keyboard works. Such lyrical writing underwent significant transformation throughout Beethoven's lifetime. In his early years, song-like infusions appear in slow movements where *cantabile* or sensitive style prevail. These slow movements frequently demonstrate an array of vocal models including solo song with accompaniment, or duet song style, that almost mimic the Romantic Lied. In Beethoven's middle period, more and more songful textures are inserted into fast movements to accentuate a dynamic range of textures and moods. One of the first sonatas in which Beethoven adopted lyrical essence into the fast movements is op. 14, no. 1. The E-Major Sonata employs a serene and expressive language in the opening movement that resembles Schubertian lyricism. In the later sonatas, Beethoven largely incorporated chorale, arioso, aria, recitative, and speech-like gestures into the piano vocabulary. This led to a departure from the standard sonata "blueprint" in Beethoven's later keyboard works, from experimenting the chorale texture in the grandeur and dramatic *Marcia Funebre* of op. 26, to inserting recitative and

[1] Kerman, Tyson, and Burnham, "Beethoven, Ludwig van," *Grove Music Online*.

introductory passages in the opening movement of Sonata op. 31, no. 2, to preparing the finale with an earnest and arioso style *Introduzione* in the "Waldstein" Sonata, to showcasing a variation set based on a prayerful and hymn-like theme in the middle movement of the "Appassionata", to imitating an expressive and melancholy song in op. 81a *L'Absence* movement, and finally to mirroring two expressive ariosi in the finale of op. 110. By the time Beethoven composed his last six sonatas, lyricism was assumed into a sonata synthesis that blends diverse moods, expressions, styles, and textures together as one.

There are three principal types of song models and textures that Beethoven frequently employed in his sonatas. The most common type is the accompanied solo song model that consists of single vocal line or chordal melodies alongside accompaniment-like figures. The duet model, on the other hand, accentuates two independent yet interactive vocal lines on top of the supporting layer or layers. Some duets are set in "question" and "answer" format that enables two vocal lines to interact with each other. Other duets may feature continuous narrative so that the two vocal lines and accompaniment evoke layers of contrasting yet complementary textures and moods. The third type of song model in Beethoven's keyboard sonatas may be interpreted as aria and arioso from the opera and oratorio tradition, in which these dramatic vocal styles serve as vehicles for emotional reflection regarding the ongoing plot.

Accompanied Song Models

According to Ratner, accompanied solo songs usually have "two lines—the solo and a bass, which would usually involve a continuo; in simpler pieces the bass could be played by a single instrument."[2] Ratner comments on the use of an idiomatic Alberti-bass accompaniment as the typical arrangement for vocal melody with keyboard setting.[3] Similar settings can be found in

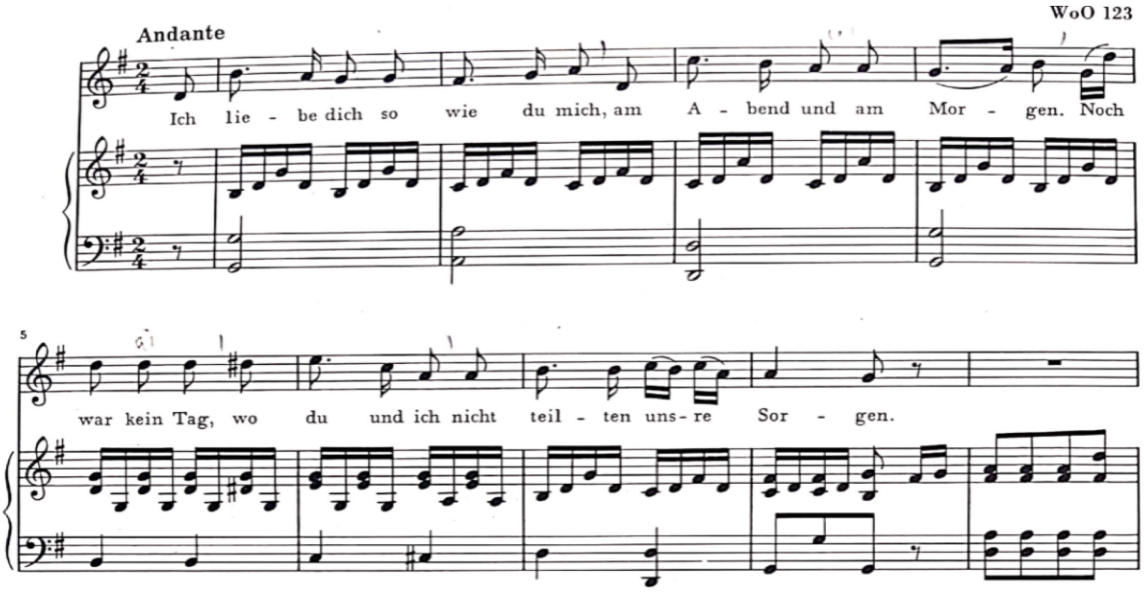
[2] Ratner, *Classic Music*, 162.
[3] Ibid., 164.

Beethoven's early sonatas, in which accompanied solo song style mainly resides in the slow movements. The *Adagio* movement of Sonata op. 2, no. 1, for example, carries a quality of tranquility and tenderness. Czerny in his *On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven's Works for the Piano* described the movement as "with full of feeling and of beautiful melody," and suggested playing it with *cantabile* style throughout, "in a slow, but not dragging time." He also pointed out the necessity of "a refined touch, a perfect legato."[4] Though Czerny did not directly refer to the song style in this movement, one could already observe similarities between this movement and Beethoven's songs from the same period: the Lied *Ich liebe dich so wie du mich*, WoO 123 (Example 4.1) was written in the same year as op. 2, no. 1. The passion of the Lied is reflected in the texts as it states "Ich liebe dich, so wie du mich" (I love you as you love me), "Du tröstetest im Kummer mich, Ich weint in deine Klagen" (you comforted me in my distress, and I wept in your laments), and finally "Du, meines Lebens Freude" (You, my life's joy) as the declaration of love. The piano accompaniment of the song remains simple, as flowing sixteenth-notes Alberti-bass with sustained bass notes.

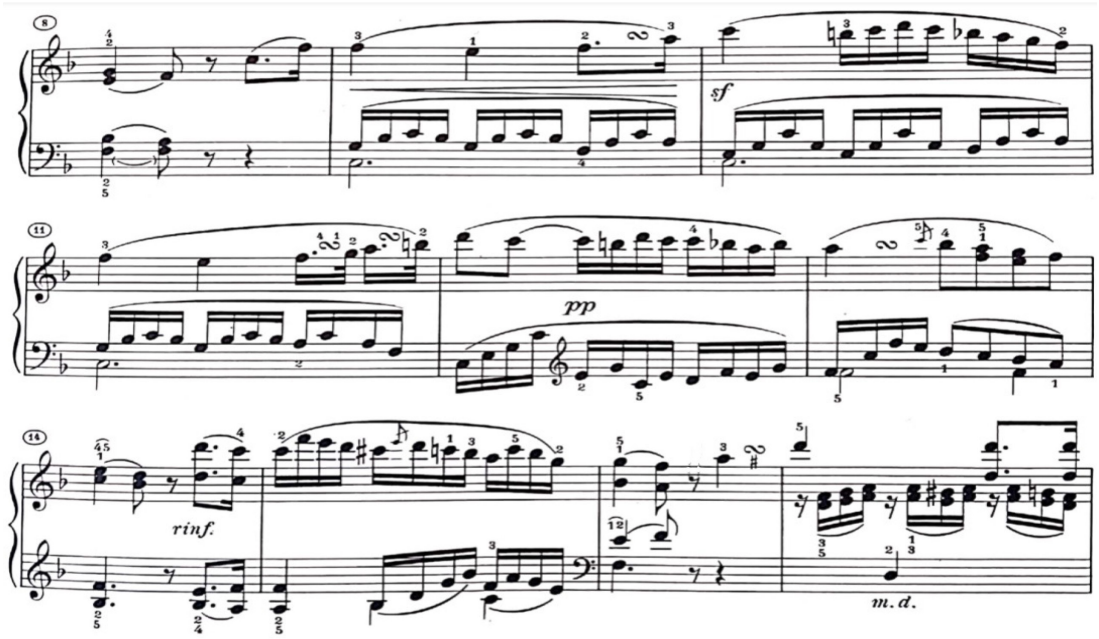
In comparison to the op. 2, no. 1 *Adagio* movement (Example 4.2), the resemblance is clear. This movement is imbued with simplicity and tenderness that echoes the poetic love in a song. After the opening theme, the passage leads into a melodious section supported by an Alberti-bass in the left hand (mm. 9–13, mm. 37–45). The use of appoggiaturas, grace notes, turns, passing tones, and chromatic melodies resembles vocal-styled ornamentations, which bring out the sentimental and expressive nature of the song model. The accompaniment, on the other hand, is written in similar fashion as the Lied. In this case, op. 2, no. 1 undoubtedly took inspirations from his early songs to generate lyricism.

---

[4] Carl Czerny, *On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven's Works for the Piano* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1970), 33.



Example 4.1. Ich liebe dich so wie du mich, WoO 123.[5]



Example 4.2. Sonata in F Minor, op. 2, no. 1, Adagio.[6]

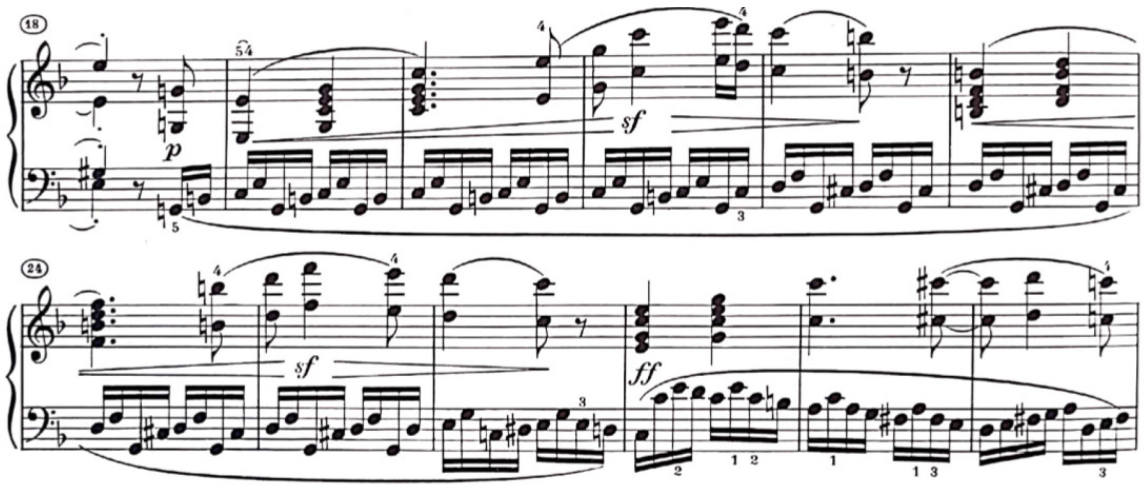
[5] Ludwig van Beethoven, *Lieder und Gesänge mit Klavier*, vol. 1 (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1992), 22–23.
[6] Ludwig van Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten*, vol. 1 (München-Duisburg: G. Henle Verlag, 1952), 11.

Accompanied solo song evocations may be observed in other early sonatas of Beethoven, often embedded in lyrical slow movements. In most cases, they have a distinct vocal melody that controls the flow of music. The other portion is the accompanied figures, in broken chords, Alberti-bass, or repeated chords to harmonically support the main melody. Examples include the op. 10, no. 1 *Adagio molto* movement, the op. 10, no. 3 *Largo e mesto* movement, and the op. 22 *Adagio con molta espressione* movement.

Besides lyrical single melodies with accompaniment, Beethoven also incorporated chordal melodies with accompaniment in his sonatas. These chordal melodies can be interpreted as a hybrid of an accompanied part-singing model[7] and an accompanied song model. Ratner listed the part-singing model under the chorale style, using multiple interdependent vocal lines with chordal instrumental accompaniment *ad libitum*. Unlike the part-singing model, Beethoven's chordal melodies do not have interdependent vocal lines. They are simply harmonized melodies featuring idiomatic accompaniment, including broken chords, Alberti-bass, and arpeggios, to suggest the songful quality. Czerny noted that Beethoven often favored the "strict Legato of the full chords" that "formed a new kind of melody."[8] In order to achieve such an effect of strict *legato* in the chordal passages, pianists ought to consider two important elements: control of phrasing; and finger *legato* technique. Without one or the other, strict *legato* cannot be achieved. Proper control of phrasing brings out the songful characters in chordal passage. For example, in the *Allegro* movement of Sonata No. 6 in F Major, op. 10, no. 2 (Example 4.3), though spirited and lively for majority of the movement, it features an expressive chordal melody (mm. 19–30 and mm. 144–161) which takes place as a transitional passage leading into the secondary theme in both the exposition and the recapitulation. The challenging aspect of this chordal melody is certainly the phrasing problem.

---

[7] Ratner, *Classic Music*, 170–172.
[8] Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven*, 79.



Example 4.3. Excerpt from Sonata in F Major, op. 10, no. 2, Allegro.[9]

The passage consists of broken chord accompaniment in the left hand while the right hand carries an ascending melody line written in chords. From observing the nature of these chordal melodies, two important characteristics surface. First, there are various lengths of slurs in the ascending melodic chords that indicate intricacy in phrasing. Second, Beethoven marks several *crescendos* from *piano* to *sforzando* and then quickly backs down, forming moments of *Messa di voce* to signify vocal-like swelling dynamics in elongated fashion. If one is careless, the execution of these transitional passages may sound choppy due to the nature of the chordal texture, unfortunately going against the desired lyricism. Therefore, the proper control of phrasing in this passage is a necessary step towards strict *legato*. From examining the notational markings, the passage implies a musical direction towards the *fortissimo* peak around m. 27, so that smaller slurs before then are in fact subdivisions of a longer phrase. Each short slur suggests a segment of melody, then connected by *crescendos* of the ascending line to form a larger "sentence". In order to correctly execute phrasing in this chordal passage, pianists should focus on the changing dynamics and horizontal lines that support the flow of melody, rather than

[9] Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten*, vol. 1, 110.

treating them as separate chords or units of chords. From a technical standpoint, placing the chords with weighted arms ensures the richness of sound and the adequate control of the melodic chords and their dynamic changes. This technique essentially generates full and singing tones. Meanwhile, the proper balance of chordal voices also allows the designated melodic layers to be highlighted in the overall texture.

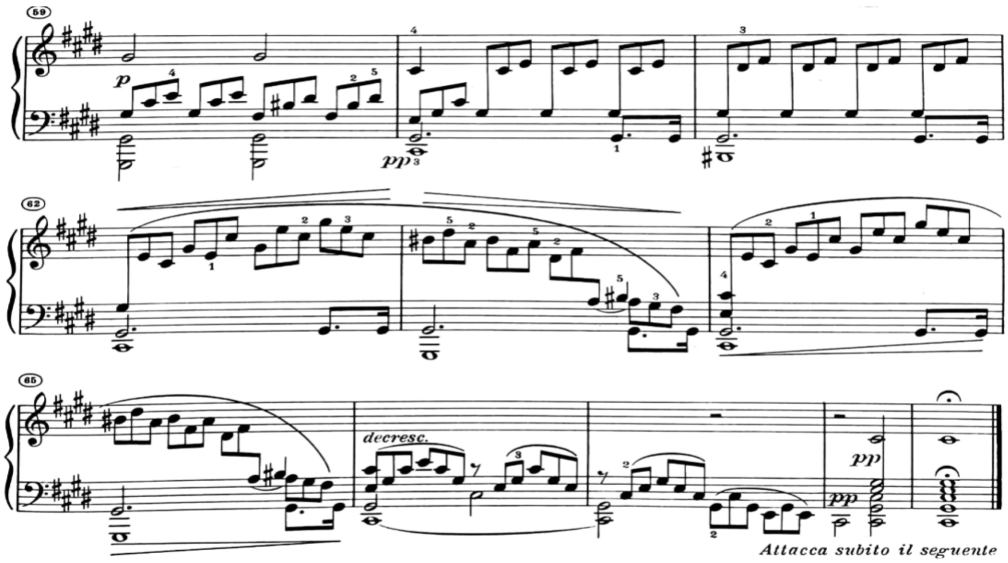
Besides proper phrasing that generates a singing tone, finger *legato* technique is essential in Beethoven's pianistic vocabulary. The *Adagio con espressione* movement of op. 27, no. 1 proves the importance of finger *legato* in generating lyricism. This slow movement features a sentimental melody in mostly octaves throughout. According to Skowroneck, Beethoven regularly indicated explicit notations when it comes to conveying sensitivity and lyricism through finger *legato* techniques.[10] Skowroneck also noted Beethoven's *superlegato* touch—another term for finger *legato*—which was often marked in detail in terms of fingering, articulation, and phrasing direction (dynamics). Throughout the *Adagio con espressione* movement, detailed fingering indications were given for octave melodies in the left hand. Such notational suggestions heavily imply the preference of finger *legato* over the use of damper pedal when it comes to creating the optimal sustained effect. As an experienced organist, Beethoven certainly obtained knowledge in performance practice regarding finger *legato* and intricate finger articulations. Such knowledge was also applied frequently to his keyboard teaching as to how to produce sustained sounds. According to Anton Schindler[11] and Reginald R. Gerig,[12] Beethoven often insisted on "placing the hands over the keyboard in such a position that the fingers need not be raised more than is necessary. This is the only method by which the player can learn to *generate* tone, and, as it were, to make the instrument sing."

---

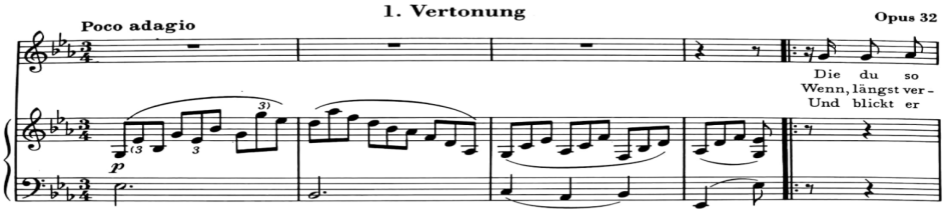
[10] Skowroneck, *Beethoven the Pianist*, 205–208.
[11] Anton Schindler, *The Life of Beethoven*, ed. Ignaz Moscheles (Boston: Oliver Ditson, 184-?), 156.
[12] Gerig, *Famous Pianists & Their Technique*, 91.

Some passages in Beethoven's sonatas also incorporate evocative accompaniment patterns from the song tradition to stimulate dramatic effect. For example, in the *Adagio sostenuto* movement of the "Moonlight" Sonata, the lyrical movement incidentally carries similar accompaniment figures to those of his Lied *An die Hoffnung*, op. 32 from a few years later. In op. 27, no. 2 (Example 4.4), Beethoven arranged an unconventional slow movement as the opening of this sonata cycle. The famous "Moonlight" tune rests easily on the gentle accompaniment figures. This peaceful accompaniment figure is then transformed into surges of turbulence and darkness that echo with the melody. The thematic material is embedded in the accompaniment so much so that these seemingly secondary components from the *Adagio sostenuto* movement eventually steer towards the final motivic transformation in the *Presto agitato* finale.

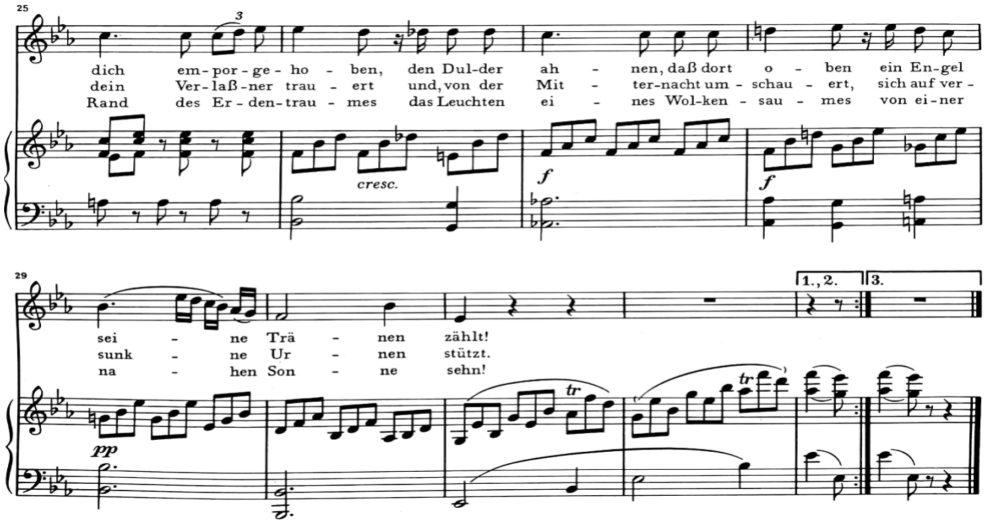
In op. 32, the musical setting in this early version of *An die Hoffnung* delivers an expressive and dramatic writing style in both the melody and the accompaniment. At first served as keyboard interludes to embrace moments of tranquility and sorrow (Example 4.5), the broken-chord figures with the grounded bassline eventually blend together with the vocal melody at the end of each verse (Example 4.6), in order to underscore the melodic fluidity and harmonic intricacy. The union between the voice line and the piano accompaniment marks a mastery of song writing, where Beethoven was able to merge keyboard idioms with vocal melodies to reflect the artistry of the poem. One is no longer secondary to the other in terms of musical content.



Example 4.4. Sonata in C♯ Minor, op. 27, no. 2, Adagio sostenuto.[13]



Example 4.5. *An die Hoffnung*, op. 32, mm. 1–4.[14]



Example 4.6. *An die Hoffnung*, op. 32, mm. 26–33.[15]

[13] Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten*, vol. 1, 251.
[14] Beethoven, *Lieder und Gesänge mit Klavier*, vol. 1, 70–71.
[15] Ibid., 70–71.

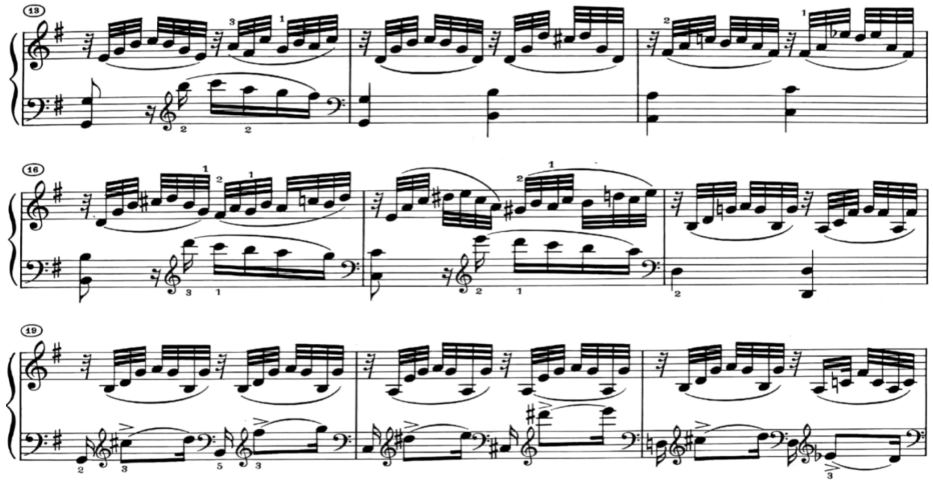
Vocal Duet Models

Beethoven began to adopt vocal duet models as early as his accompanied solo song integration. Ratner refers to Heinrich C. Koch's definition of two types of duet models:[16] one evokes dramatic dialogue between two distinct characters; the other features layered textures to express a continuous narrative.[17]

In Sonata in C Major, op. 2, no. 3 (Example 4.7), the use of duet model heightens the dramatic dialogue in the slow movement. The *Adagio* movement theme is at first set in E major that portrays an intimate and sweet atmosphere in fragmented phrasing. It is in the second theme where things become intriguing. An unexpected shift to minor mode transforms the second theme drastically. Meanwhile, a duet texture appears as two conversing voices, one dark and solemn, the other sighing and lyrical. The dark and solemn voice occupies the lower region of the keyboard, also characterized by slow beats in quarters. The opposing voice, on the hand, brings out a variety of descending sighing melodies in high register. Throughout the two duet sections in the *Adagio* movement, the dramatic intensity is beautifully conveyed through the constant crossing-overs between the two hands, especially when the crossing-overs become increasingly frequent (m. 19), starting with the transformation of the upper voice into a series of two-note slurs with accent (*marcato*) markings to emphasize the sighing gestures. In Czerny's manual, he related the dramatic impact of this movement to poetry and painting, because "we *see* fine pictures," and "we *hear* the narration of circumstances" through the flow of music.[18] Czerny also recommended to perform these passages as *legato* and expressive as possible. Slurs and accents in the duet melodies add nuance to underline the interactive nature of these independent melodies. Pianists should always illustrate distinctions between the two voices by adjusting touch, dynamics, and articulation accordingly.

---

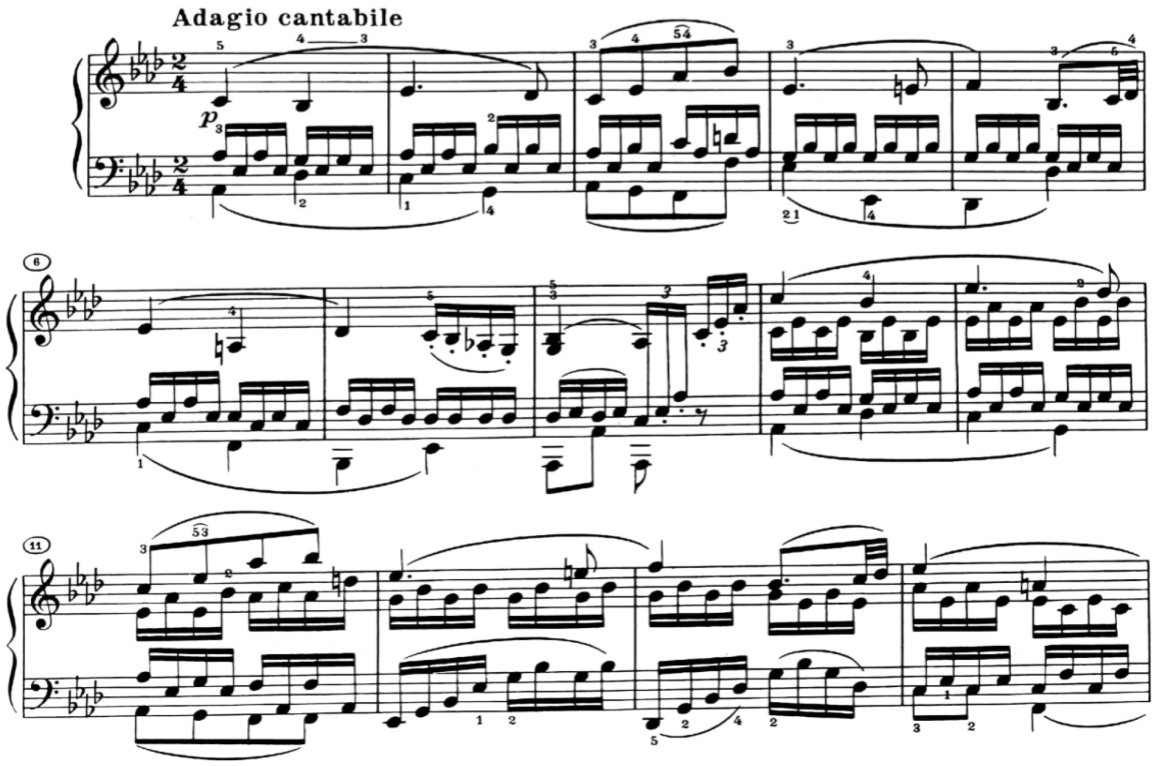
[16] Heinrich C. Koch, *Musikalisches Lexikon* (Frankfurt am Main, 1802).
[17] Ratner, *Classic Music*, 168–169.
[18] Czerny, *On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven's Works for the Piano*, 26.



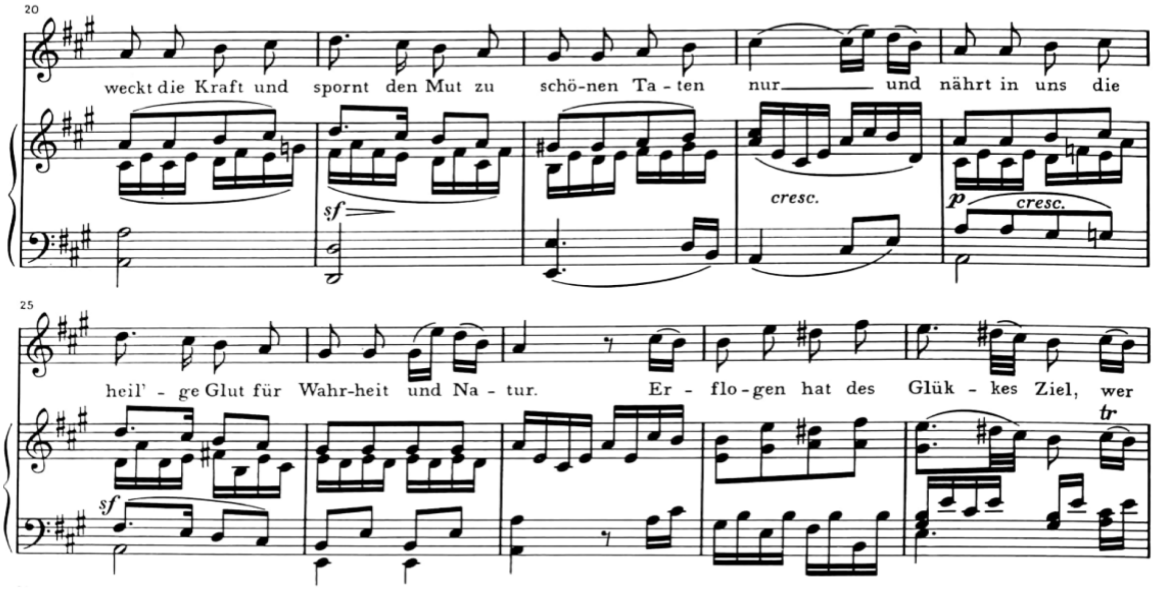
Example 4.7. Sonata No. 3, op. 2, no. 3, Adagio.[19]

The other type of duet has layered vocal lines that make up the ongoing melody. This duet model has vocal lines flowing in parallel, at times complemented by accompaniment texture in between. In the *Adagio cantabile* movement of the "Pathétique" Sonata in C Minor, op. 13 (Example 4.8), Beethoven places both types of duet models as a prayerful, intimate rondo. The recurring A sections belong to the layered-texture duet that possesses three to four sheets of distinct textures. The outer voices sustain a continuous flow as a duet against the broken-chord accompaniment in the middle layers. Then the music shifts to a new theme area, beginning in A♭ minor (mm.37–50). This duet is constructed as a dialogue between the opposite registers: one in the songful *legato* style; and the other as detached sixteenth-notes rolling in the bass.

[19] Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten*, vol. 1, 55.



Example 4.8. Sonata in C Minor, op. 13 ("Pathétique"), Adagio cantabile.[20]



Example 4.9. *Lebensglück*, op. 88.[21]

[20] Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten*, vol. 1, 154.
[21] Beethoven, *Lieder und Gesänge mit Klavier*, vol. 1, 62.

For the performers, the layered voices ought to be separated in accordance with their musical function in the overall texture. Proper balance of multiple conversing melodies is essential for successful execution of the duet textures. Instead of giving attention only to the outer vocal lines, pianists should observe subtle interchanges among the inner voices and their relationship with other textures. This slow movement shows off Beethoven's mastery in writing different types of duet styles and their contrapuntal effects. Similar duet writing can be found in the lighthearted *Lebensglück*, op. 88 (Example 4.9). Though marked in a lively tempo *Andante quasi allegretto*, the accompaniment of this Lied complements the vocal line with a subtle but crafty duet—one in unison with the solo voice and the other grounded in the bass as the secondary melody and harmonic support, and the rest leaves to a continuous flow of sixteenth-notes in broken chord style.

Aria and Arioso Models

Aria and arioso prioritize the vocal sonority as a core element on the dramatic stage. In Ratner's opinion, operatic solo arias amplify a character's expression and sentiment to the fullest with the perfect unity of texts and music. Though its origin may come from the song tradition, its focus is to portray an array of profound respective characters. Some are *aria cantabile* with tenderness; some are *aria parlante* with great agitation; virtuosic passages with impassioned melody is called *aria di bravura*; and *aria di portamento* centers around dignity.[22] With the help from instrumental accompaniment, operatic models draw attention to the intricacy and virtuosity of the human voice through embellishment and bel canto lyricism. The instrumental accompaniment takes on a supportive role, merely doubling the vocal line,[23]or at times creating contrasting texture to enhance the qualities of the vocal line.[24] Arioso, on the other hand, is a

[22] Ratner, *Classic Music*, 280–281.
[23] Ibid., 163–165.
[24] Ibid. 166.

hybrid of recitative and measured aria. It is usually used for moments of extreme expression such as tenderness, melancholy, solemnness, sadness, and so on.[25] In Beethoven's piano sonatas, there are several incorporations of aria and arioso. The *Adagio ma non troppo* movement of op. 110 is a prominent example. Marked with expressive terms such as *Arioso dolente* and *L'istesso tempo di Arioso*, the *Adagio ma non troppo* passage draws attention to the dramatic nuances of the melody line alone. Typical characteristics of an arioso melody, such as speech-like rhythm, expressive melodic contour, and vocal embellishment are present in this movement. At the same time, the chordal accompaniment figure functions as harmonic support, mimicking background string instruments in orchestral setting. The eventual return of *L'istesso tempo di Arioso* (m. 114) emphasizes the expressive nature of arioso even more by installing additional vocal embellishments and syncopated speech-like rhythms.

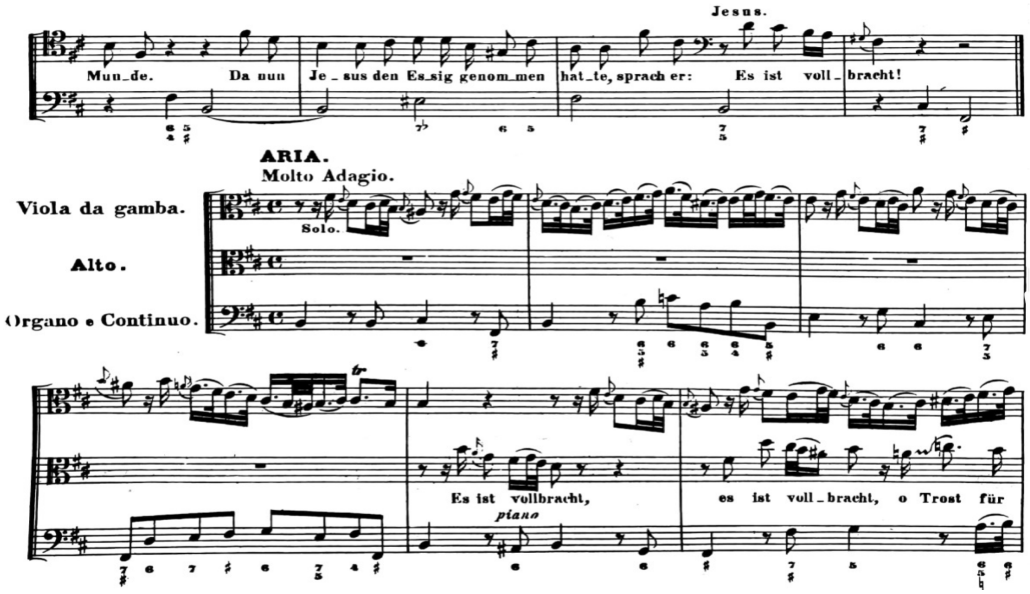
Observed by scholars such as Christopher Reynolds[26] and Kevin Class,[27] the arioso installments in the Sonata op. 110 may also have a possible link to J. S. Bach's *St. John Passion* (Example 4.10). Comparing the moment of Jesus' Crucifixion "Es ist vollbracht!" ("It is finished!")—a short recitative transitioning into an accompanied aria—to the original melody of the op. 110 *Arioso dolente* theme (Example 4.11), the two excerpts show similarities in terms of their melodic content and dramatic significance.

Beethoven's *Arioso dolente* entrance has a descending melody line in syncopated rhythms that resonates with the spoken style. The "Es ist vollbracht!" recitative and subsequent alto aria enter also open a series of descending melody lines, in which the speech-like rhythms prevail. Besides the presumed melodic resemblance, both pieces share a common effect of

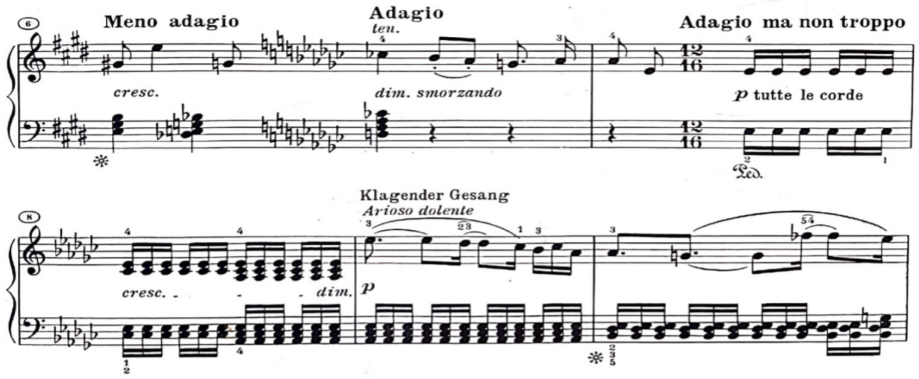
---

[25] Ibid., 316–318.
[26] Christopher Alan Reynolds, *Motives for Allusion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 147–148.
[27] Kevin Class, "Expression & Narrative Design in Beethoven's Piano Sonata, Op. 110," *Kevin Class Masterclass*, January 13, 2005, accessed February 8, 2019, http://www.kevinclass.com/artists/#/masterclassbeethoven110/.

mourning and solemnity at transitional moments, in which dramatic narration becomes the focal point. In this case, both "Es ist Vollbracht!" and the *Arioso dolente* passage prepare listeners for an emotional journey by placing a recitative as a bridge between contrasting materials. Such fluid writing illustrates Beethoven's knowledge of dramatic vocal style and his ability to inject its essence into keyboard writing. Though a direct connection between the two works remains unconfirmed, an homage to Bach in this section of the op. 110 Sonata seems plausible.



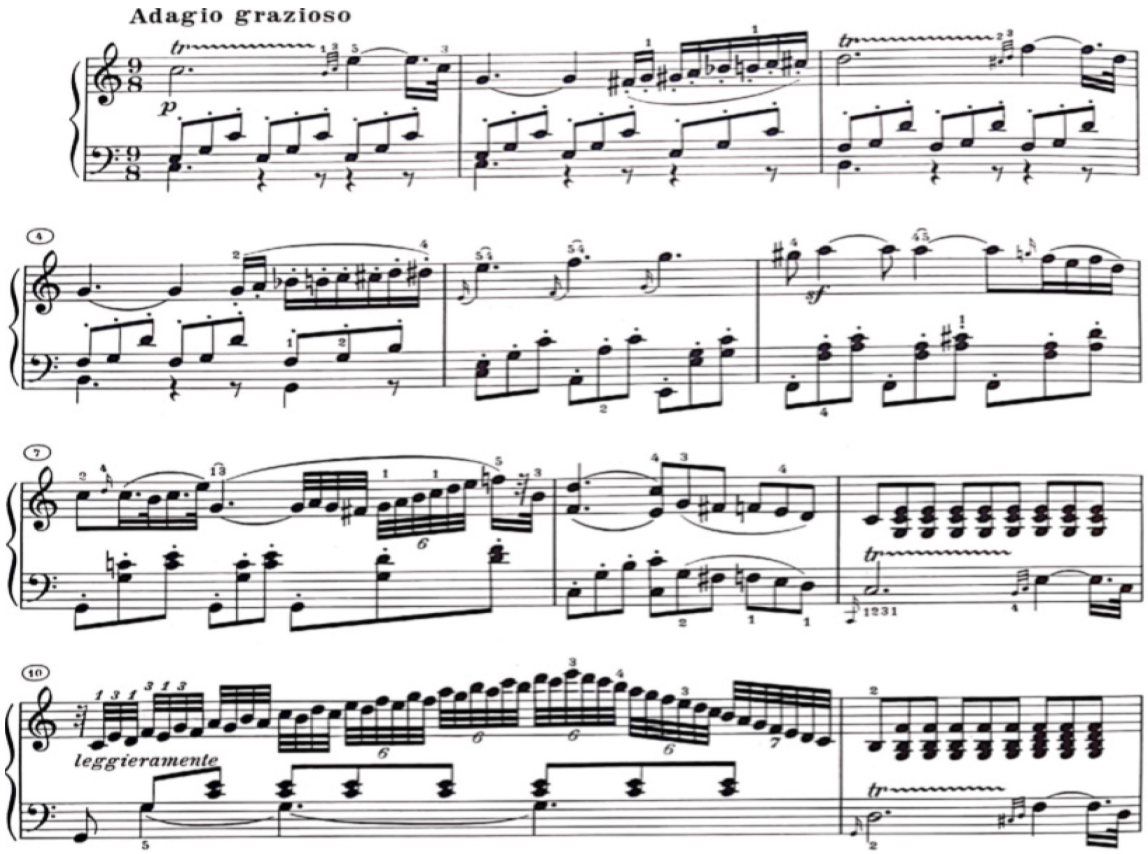
Example 4.10. J. S. Bach, *St. John Passion*, "Es ist vollbracht!".[28]



Example 4.11. Sonata in A♭ Major, op. 110, Adagio ma non troppo.[29]

[28] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Joh. Seb. Bach's Passionmusik: nach den Evangelisten Johannes*, vol. 12 (Leipzig: Bach-Gesellschaft, 1863), 104.
[29] Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten*, vol. 2, 300.

An earlier example of arioso style can be found in Sonata op. 31, no. 1 (Example 4.12). According to William Kinderman, the *Adagio grazioso* movement "indulges in ornate and decorative melodic lines and assumes at times an operatic character."[30] The slow movement in this sonata displays a heavily decorative melody line in the right hand, while supported by a broken chord accompaniment in the left hand. In the beginning, the right hand opens with a long trill followed by a chromatic melody line. The trills copy a style of vocal vibrato that is known to enhance the dramatic effect and expressiveness of long notes during the 19th century.[31]



Example 4.12. Sonata in G Major, op. 31, no. 1, Adagio grazioso.[32]

[30] William Kinderman, "Beethoven," in *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music*, ed. R. Larry Todd (New York: Routledge: 2004), 61.
[31] G. Moens-Haenen, "Vibrato," *Grove Music Online* (January 2001), accessed June 17, 2019, https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000029287.
[32] Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten*, vol. 2, 12.

Pianists should perform these trills with subtle dynamic shifts to mimic expressive and elegant operatic vibratos rather than playing them merely as keyboard-style ornamentations. Beyond these trills, this movement evokes the ideal of the 18th century Italian vocal style of *bel canto*, presenting perfect *legato* and fluid, agile singing in higher registers.[33] Melisma, ornamentations, appoggiaturas, cadenzas, and intricate articulations vividly capture vocal-like expressiveness on the piano. Furthermore, the left-hand accompaniment suggests a poised manner in "staccato" touch and "must be played delicately, almost like the accompaniment of a Guitar."[34] With an awareness of Italian aria style, pianists can achieve the expressive nuances displayed in this movement.

[33] Owen Jander and Ellen T. Harris, "Bel canto," *Grove Music Online* (January 2001), accessed June 5, 2019, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000002551.
[34] Czerny, *On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven's Works for the Piano*, 52.

Chapter 5: POLYPHONIC VOCAL MODELS IN THE SONATAS

Beethoven's incorporation of vocal styles is also reflected in his contrapuntal writings. Chorale style, canon style, vocal fugue style, and other imitative idioms increasingly occupy his sonatas. Henceforth, Beethoven elevated his way to approach polyphonic integration by fusing instrumental-style fugues that are virtuosic and fast-paced with vocal-inspired contrapuntal language, paying homage to J. S. Bach. What makes Beethoven's fondness of polyphony fascinating is the fact that the seed had been planted from his earlier years. Beethoven had gone through rigorous studies of Baroque music from a young age. Reginald Gerig notes that music education during Beethoven's early life heavily concentrated on the studies of organ, singing, and compositions of Bach.[1] Meanwhile, Christian Gottlob Neefe, one of Beethoven's important mentors, praised his young pupil in an article for *Cramer's Magazin*:

> Louis van Beethoven, son of the tenor singer mentioned, a boy of eleven years and of most promising talent. He plays the clavier very skilfully and with power, reads at sight very well, and—to put it in a nutshell—he plays chiefly "The Well-Tempered Clavichord" of Sebastian Bach, which Herr Neefe put into his hands…So far as his duties permitted, Herr Neefe has also given him instruction in thorough-bass.[2]

Throughout his lifetime, Beethoven never ceased to admire Baroque music. And his polyphonic style evolved throughout his years as a maturing composer. During Beethoven's early period, his learned-style writings often appear as brief elements of contrast to the ongoing flow of music. Canon and imitative duo were two favorite polyphonic idioms in his musical vocabulary. The Sonata op. 2, no. 2 is a good example of Beethoven's early attempt to adapt both virtuosic and lyrical imitations. In the *Allegro vivace* movement, the opening theme and the transition before the secondary theme are saturated with imitative writings. A *staccato* instrumental-style

---

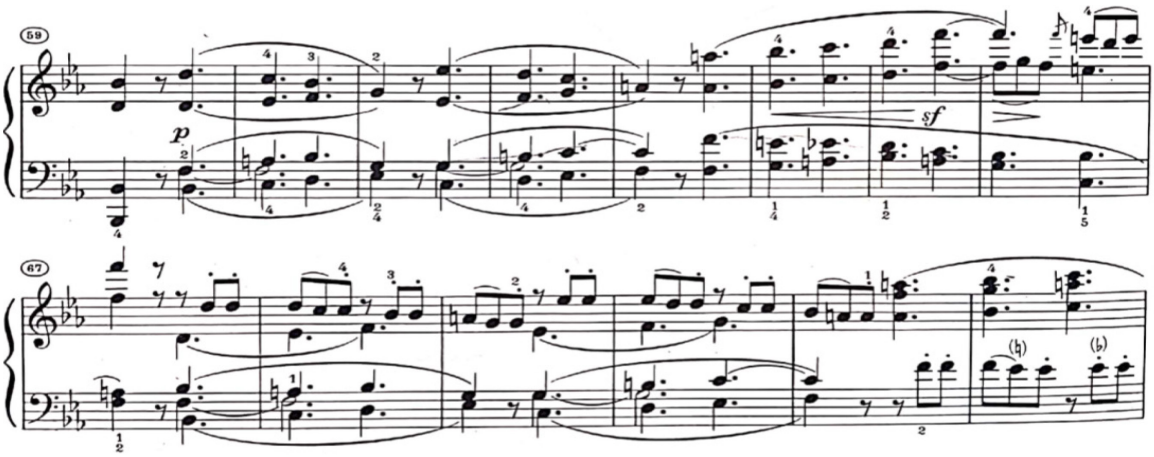
[1] Gerig, *Famous Pianists & Their Technique*, 82.
[2] Ibid., 82.

entrance (mm. 8 –10, mm. 22–24) quickly melts into a lyrical canon (mm. 11–16, mm. 25–30) between layered voices. Then the *staccato* theme transforms into a series of virtuosic imitation (mm. 32–39), which is intensified in the development as an imitation between three layers of voices (mm. 181–198). On the other hand, chorale and other homophonic textures may be found throughout his three periods, evidently adding flavor of richness to the narrative. As Beethoven reaches towards his late period, his use of polyphony increased also. Lengthy fugue or fugato began to emerge as major portions in pieces, replacing traditional sonata content. Due to the complex nature of Beethoven's polyphonic usage throughout his sonata transformation, this chapter will target two categories of polyphonic vocal models: homophonic chorale and lyrical counterpoint.

Chorale Model

In Beethoven's keyboard sonatas throughout all three periods, the use of homophonic chorale language may be found in different scenarios. Some showcase the meditative quality of chorale texture in brief moments, such as the somber *Largo e mesto* movement of op. 10, no. 3, moments in the *Allegro con brio* movement of op. 22 (mm. 30–43, mm. 142–146, and mm. 161–174), the second theme of the *Allegro con brio* movement of op.53, the *Andante con moto* movement of op.57, the opening passage of op. 101, and the grand chorale tutti-like opening of op. 106.

Many chorale integrations in Beethoven's earlier sonatas are short in length, usually serving as a contrasting statement to an energetic counterpart. For instance, in his Sonata in E♭ Major, op. 7, the first movement exhibits great optimistic energy and pianistic brilliance, until the sudden shift to an expressive and sustained secondary subject (Example 5.1).



Example 5.1. Sonata No. 4 in E♭ Major, op. 7, Allegro molto e con brio.[3]

In this passage, there are several elements that imply the chorale style. First, the chordal passage features four individual voices moving smoothly, very much imitating the classic four-part chorale harmonization. Second, the passage is marked with slurs to highlight desired phrasing, to a certain degree, evoking the rhetorical flows and pauses in the spoken language. Lastly, the detailed fingerings in this chordal section also reveals the preferred finger *legato* technique to achieve naturally sustained sound. Incidentally, Czerny commented on this passage and suggested to perform "with intense expression, but by no means dragging."[4]

As Beethoven progresses towards the experimental phase of his late years, the adoption of chorale style in the keyboard music remained as one of his major trajectories towards stylistic integration. Replacing his earlier tendency to limit chorale idiom to lyrical presentations, Beethoven's late style incorporates chorale into more dramatic settings. A famous example of dramatic chorale belongs to the "Hammerklavier" Sonata. Aside from the "Vivat Rudolphus" as the possible sketch idea for the first movement opening chords, and the likelihood of recalling the

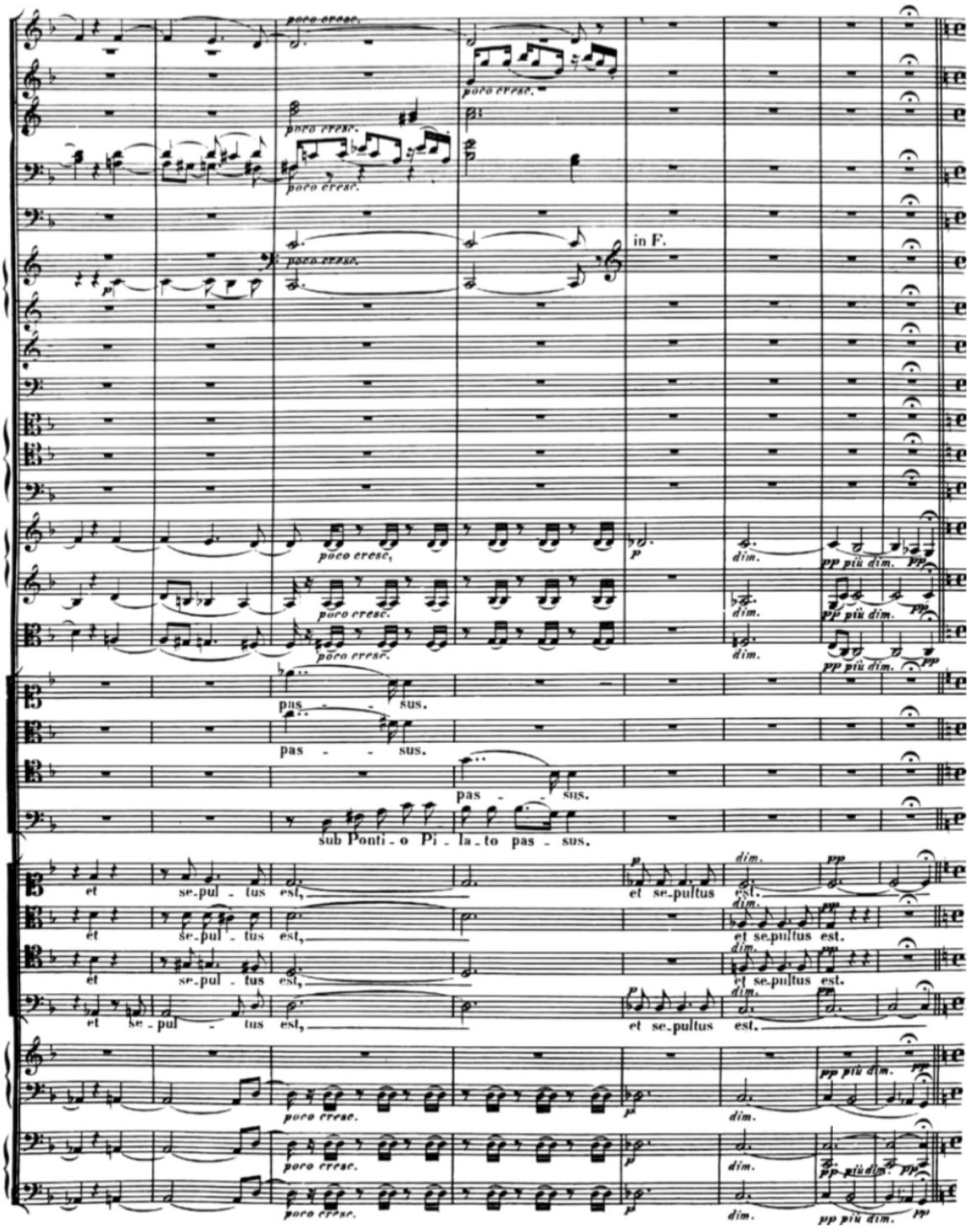
[3] Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten*, vol. 1, 72.
[4] Czerny, *On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven's Works for the Piano*, 38.

leaping gesture from the opening theme of the Credo movement in the *Missa Solemnis*,[5] there is also a possible resemblance with the *Et resurrexit* opening from the Credo of the *Missa Solemnis*.

Comparing the Credo excerpt to the way the opening chordal motif from the "Hammerklavier" is utilized, both cases function as dramatic insertions among contrasting sections. In the Credo passage, the chorale tutti from the *Et resurrexit* opening (Example 5.2) serves as a "call to attention" gesture followed by an imitative chorus in ascending motion. Prior to this critical point, the "et sepultus est" (He was buried) section depicts the depression memory of Christ's burial with thinning orchestration and fading dynamics. At the lowest moment in the music, the six-measure-long chorale tutti jumps in without any forewarning to portray the joyous moment of Christ's resurrection. Such bold insertion of new materials evidently elevates the dramatic contrast that centers around artistic essence of the text.

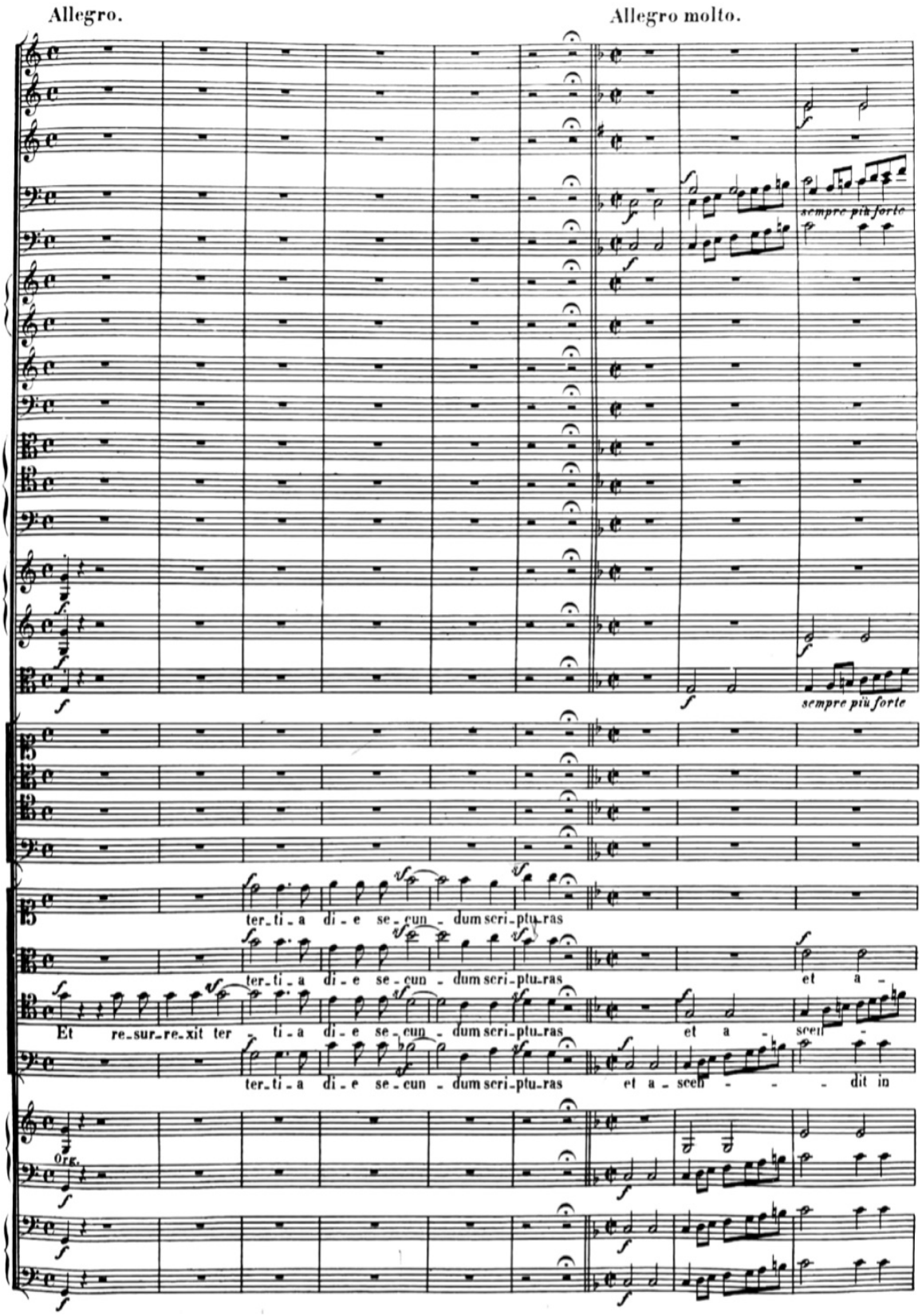
In the "Hammerklavier" Sonata, though without texts, the chordal tutti motif (Example 5.3) is written similarly to the *Et resurrexit* entrance. Each recurring chordal tutti juxtaposes with the surrounding passages, which heightens the polarity of musical character. Essentially, the chordal tutti begins as a "call to attention" gesture, characterized by abrupt entrance, grand pause, and contrasting dynamics. This chordal tutti then becomes the motivic basis for a massive fugue (mm. 133–226) in the development. In both the *Et resurrexit* passage and the "Hammerklavier" opening motif, chorale idiom has a powerful role in Beethoven's late works.

[5] Lockwood, *Beethoven: The Music and the Life*, 408–409.

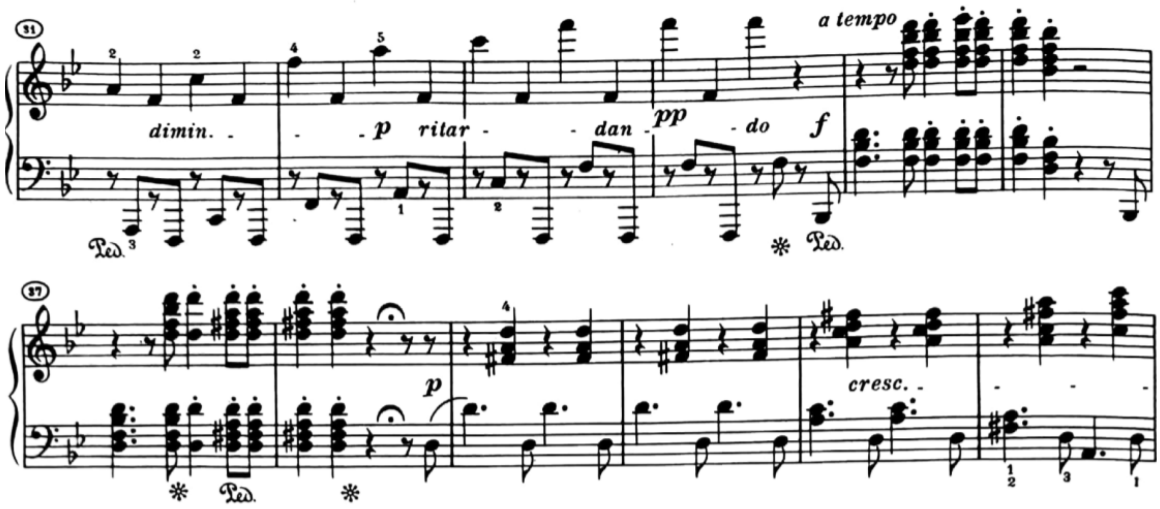


Example 5.2. ***Missa Solemnis, Et resurrexit*** **from Credo.**[6]

[6] Beethoven, *Missa solemnis: From the Breitkopf & Härtel Complete Work Edition* (New York: Dover Publications, 1991), 120–121.



Example 5.2. Continued.



Example 5.3. Sonata in B♭ Major, op.106, Allegro.[7]

In Beethoven's last sonata trilogy, chorale models go beyond the dramatic effect shown in op. 106. Instead, choral models represent sublimity and introversion through a turbulent journey. In the famous *Arietta* of the Sonata op. 111, the sixteen-measure-long theme opens the variations. The movement is marked in *Adagio molto semplice e cantabile*, which suggests a smooth singing style. Czerny commented on the *Arietta* to feature a "beautiful, touching and simple theme" that is "very *cantabile* and *legatissimo*."[8] Apart from its unusual 9/16 meter, the theme is written in a chorale style due to its textural arrangement. The melody resides in the top voice, while the lower three vocal lines flow smoothly below the soprano in a note-against-note fashion. After a series of rhythmic diminutions and virtuosic displays in the middle variations, the chorale theme returns in the last three measures of the piece, connecting the beginning and ending point of a musical journey. Rich and *legato* chords recall fragments of the *Arietta* theme, perhaps to pronounce its final resolution.

---

[7] Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten*, vol. 2, 228.
[8] Czerny, *On the Proper performance of All Beethoven's Works for the Piano*, 67.

As Beethoven progresses through his late style period, the hybrid of various vocal and instrumental models becomes increasingly prominent, with special emphasis on the incorporation of vocally inspired models such as song, chorale, imitative, speech-like, and so on. The chorale model no longer stands on its own in the sonata cycle. Quite the opposite, it enhances the ever-changing expressions and dramatic effect presented in Beethoven's late sonatas.

With an awareness of the chorale model, pianists can address issues such as voicing, projection, and phrasing that often surface in Beethoven's chordal passages. First, chorale texture usually requires proper balancing of voices so that each line is independent and may at times exchange melodic content with one another. Second, chorale style often represents the richness and lyricism of the human voice. *Legato* touch maneuvered by weighted arms is desirable to generate sensitivity and richness in sound. Third, the phrasing of a vocal chorale is usually determined by texts and punctuations. Slurs and other forms of articulation markings may be very helpful to decipher proper phrasing. In order to emulate chorale style on the piano, it is important for pianists to carefully study the balance and connection between independent voices, to determine the priority voices from supporting lines, to execute the desired touch, and to submit to the subtle inflections of vocal music.

The "Learned Style" Models (Canon, Fugue, Fugato, Imitation)

Ratner categorizes two types of subjects in the contrapuntal language. One is *Ricercar* in *alla breve* style that resonates with the sacred motet and the style of plainsong. *Ricercar* is generally written in *stile legato*. According to Ratner, Mozart's G Major Quartet, K. 387 finale, Beethoven's A♭ Sonata, op. 110 finale, and Haydn's F Minor Quartet, op. 20, no. 5 finale belong to the lyrical *ricercar* style. Ratner's other category—*Canzona*—features subjects and virtuosic writings from dance figures and is usually in faster tempo. Beethoven's C Minor Quartet, op. 18, no. 4 second movement and the A Major Sonata, op. 101 finale are both contrapuntal passages in

dance subjects, the former a waltz and the latter a bourrée.[9] The proliferation of the fugal language in Beethoven's compositions is the outcome of a natural progression. Throughout his lifetime, Beethoven utilized different learned style topics such as canon, free style imitation, fugato, and fugue. And we certainly can divide his contrapuntal writings into the two categories mentioned by Ratner (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1. Counterpoint Style Comparison

***Canzona* style counterpoint**	***Ricercar* style counterpoint**
Sonata op. 2, no. 1 – Allegro: (mm. 9–14; mm. 109–114), *free imitation*	Sonata op. 2, no. 3 – Allegro con brio: (mm. 47–57, mm. 180–192), *free imitation/canon*
Sonata op. 2, no. 2 – Allegro vivace: (mm. 181–199), *free imitation*	Sonata op. 7 – Allegro: (mm. 25–31), *canon*
Sonata op. 2, no. 3 – Allegro con brio: (mm. 115–126), *free imitation*	Sonata op. 90 – Nicht zu geschwind und sehr singbar vorgetragen: (mm. 265–271), *counterpoint*
Sonata op. 2, no. 3 – Scherzo: *free imitation*	Sonata op. 106 – Largo–Allegro–Allegro risoluto: (mm. 250 –278), *fugue*
Sonata op. 10, no. 2 – Presto: *sections with fugal influence*	Sonata op. 109 – Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung: Var. 4 (mm. 97 –105), *imitation*
Sonata op. 10, no. 3 – Menuetto: (mm. 16–24), *imitation*	Sonata op. 110 – Finale (Allegro ma non troppo): (mm. 27–109, mm. 137–end), *fugue*
Sonata op. 14, no. 1 – Rondo Allegro cómodo: (mm. 12–17; etc.), *imitation*	
Sonata op. 22 – Rondo: (mm. 80–92), *imitation*	
Sonata op. 27, no. 1 – Allegro vivace: (mm. 1–8; mm. 266–277; etc.), *fugal influence*	
Sonata op. 54 – In Tempo d'un Menuetto: (mm. 24 –44), *canon*	
Sonata op. 54 – Allegretto: (mm. 1–8; mm. 23–28; etc.), *canon*	
Sonata op. 101 – Zeitmass des ersten Stückes: (mm. 32–64), *imitation*; (m. 123), *fugue*	
Sonata op. 106 – Allegro: (mm. 137–200, mm. 213–226), *imitation*	
Sonata op. 106 – Largo–Allegro–Allegro risoluto: (mm. 3–7), *invention*; (mm. 16–249, mm. 279–end), *fugue in free style*	
Sonata op. 109 – Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung: Var. 3, *Invention*; Var. 5, *fugato*	

[9] Ratner, *Classic Music*, 260.

Many of Beethoven's contrapuntal writings took influence from Mozart and other Viennese composers.[10] These learned style passages showcase instrumental virtuosity such as capricious notes, eccentric rhythms, wide span of registers, or hovering melodic lines. From the short canonic appearances in the early sonatas, to the lengthy episodes of fugues in op. 106 and op. 109, Beethoven enhanced the contrapuntal language in the keyboard sonata, allowing it to display unconventional textures and extreme virtuosity.

Beethoven's contrapuntal writings increasingly absorbed stylistic traits from vocal idioms towards his later period. As observed in the list above, besides a few canonic moments in op. 2, no. 3 and op. 7, the majority of the *ricercar* style passages remain in the late sonatas. These contrapuntal writings often convey lyricism and expressiveness inherited from the motet and plainsong styles. In op. 106 finale, a distinct lyrical-style fugue is sandwiched between two lengthy sections of a three-voice fugue. This lyrical fugue is marked *sempre dolce cantabile* and should be performed in a sweet and singing style. The three voices embrace a *legato* subject in quarter notes, which starts in the soprano line, followed by the alto and then by the bass. The full entrance of the subject (mm. 259–263) returns once more before dissolving into an episode. The final appearance of the subject is in the bass line (mm. 272–274) right before the *ritardando* ending back to the *Allegro* grand fugue. What makes this *ricercar* style fugue special is its placement in the entire movement. The finale begins with a series of introductory and episodic materials that lead into a grand fugue (*Allegro risoluto*) with an eleven-measure-long subject that opens with a half-note trill. This grand fugue carries the concept of virtuosity to a new level. Signature fugal techniques such as augmentation (mm. 96–105), inversion (mm. 345–349) and stretto (mm. 349–361) are all featured in it. As the imitative passage reaches to a climax of trill cluster (m. 243), the *fortissimo* passage suddenly stops at a grand pause (m. 249). With a sudden turn of events, the *una corda* fugue enters (m. 250) with completely different theme and mood.

---

[10] Cockshoot, *The Fugue in Beethoven's Piano Music*, 15.

The polarity of musical content in this movement reveals the synthesizing process beyond the early-Classical realm. The astonishing contrast between the fugal sections not only increases the tension between the opposing sonorities, it also allows listeners to savor the characteristics of each passage. With extreme virtuosity surrounding it, this lyrical fugue may deliver the intimate, songful nature to its fullest.

The vocal inspiration in op. 110 is a prominent example of vocal integration in Beethoven's sonatas. The twin Fugues are based on the same subject: the rising dotted-quarter notes, except the second *Fuga* passage (m. 137) takes on an inverted subject. The style of the two fugal installments resembles an *alla breve* style that favors moving tempo such as *Allegro ma non troppo*. The smooth melodic contour and *legato* markings then suggest the sustained touch to be the appropriate practice. The lyrical fugal writing is gradually transformed in the second *Fuga*. Starting as the inverted subject, the passage leads into a quicker tempo with active rhythms, then eventually arriving at a grand *tempo primo* passage filled with octave version of the original subject. By then, the style is no longer songlike. Orchestral tutti fashion has replaced the intimate atmosphere. The transformable nature of the fugal subject is an example of Beethoven's genius in expanding his melodic materials to welcome a full range of possibilities. Here, the vocal idioms in op. 110 are highly integrated into the entire sonata plan. Finally, the art of counterpoint enables a marriage between vocal sonorities and instrumental idioms.

Chapter 6: CASE STUDIES IN SELECTED SONATAS: VOCAL IDIOMS THROUGH DIVERSITY & UNITY

Various vocal idioms have made their appearances throughout Beethoven's compositional journey as discussed in the previous chapters. Yet it is not until his late period that the vocal models have been absorbed as part of the stylistic and structural liberation. Such liberation joins instrumental forces with vocal inspirations, as shown in the Ninth Symphony—the manifestation of stylistic diversity and unity. Looking at his sonatas, there are examples demonstrating Beethoven's aim for blending various styles, idioms, and textures together to the degree that they no longer fit inside the Classical aesthetics. In this chapter, two of Beethoven's late sonatas will be analyzed to showcase dramatic roles for various vocal models within the sonata cycle and the composer's intention for uniting the instrumental and vocal forces.

There are two major structural innovations in Beethoven's late sonatas that establish the premise for creating synthesized idioms. One is the use of cyclic form to emphasize the continuity of musical narrative; the other is the "parenthetical structure", a term used by Kinderman,[1] to heighten the dramatic contrast among diverse musical idioms. Within these two structural innovations are elaborate mingling of different instrumental and vocal models, textures, sonorities, or styles.

The cyclic form originates from Beethoven's vocal compositions. During the years from 1810 to 1815, Beethoven gradually shifted his attention towards vocal compositions, garnering recognition in the song and dramatic vocal genres. His famous song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, op. 98 along with the final revision of Beethoven's opera *Fidelio* in 1814 provided major inspiration for the composer to write music in cyclic fashion. Increasingly, his sonatas embrace

[1] William Kinderman, *Beethoven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 240–242.

the cyclic nature that gives freedom to the musical materials so that they may recall a special moment at any point of the narrative or return at the end of the sonata to complete the circle.

According to Kinderman, "parenthetical structures" enclose musical materials within contrasting sections to elevate the intensity and unpredictability of drama.[2] Such devices are used heavily during the composer's late period. This technique liberates musical formality so that dramatic effect through contrasting idioms remains the focus of the musical narrative.

Sonata in A Major, op. 101

The A-Major Sonata represents a monumental point for stylistic integration. It is the first keyboard sonata to use cyclic form as its structural basis to present a wide scope of idioms and styles, including the chorale style, the march style, the aria style, the duet style, the imitation, and the fugue. This sonata was written around the same time as *An die ferne Geliebte*, in which the cyclic structure enables the final song *Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder* to recollect the theme from the opening song *Auf dem Hügel sitz ich spähend*. In the sonata, the first movement opening theme—a chorale-like tune—reappears at the beginning of the finale, connecting the melancholy *Langsam und sehnsuchtvoll* with the celebratory theme of the final movement. The return of the opening theme signifies the cyclic structure, thus four movements become one continuous narrative.

The use of diverse musical topics in op. 101 is apparent. The *Etwas lebhaft und mit der innigsten Empfindung* movement is filled with layered chordal chorale texture for both the primary theme (mm. 1–4) and the secondary theme (mm. 16–25). Set in a first-movement sonata form, this movement is written on a much smaller scale than the first movements in Beethoven's earlier sonatas. Not only is the classic three-section structure compressed to a shorter length, the two supposedly contrasting themes—primary theme and secondary theme—are in similar lyrical

[2] Ibid., 240–242.

and intimate mood. Perhaps, this deemphasizing of the first movement is a step towards liberation of the sonata cycle, thus to shift dramatic focus from the opening movement to later movements.[3] The second movement features the march style. Ratner defines the march style to be in "moderately quick duple meter, dotted rhythms, and bold manner."[4] The movement announces an obvious contrast to the previous movement, displaying series of virtuosic and capricious writings.

The slow movement, *Langsam und sehnsuchtsvoll*, presents the yearning, solemn quality of a Greek tragedy. For example, in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, the opening chorus "Ah, se intorno a quest'urna funesta" from act I, scene I set the stage for Orfeo's mourning at his wife Euridice's tomb. The theme is in minor, first as orchestral tutti, then sung by a distant chorus accompanied by the instrumental ensemble. The mourning melodic writing, features harsh harmonies, sighing appoggiaturas, and Orfeo's desperate yet fragmented calls for Euridice. The op. 101 slow movement, though a direct connection to Gluck's opera is unlikely, portrays similar tragic and sensitive mood as the *Orfeo* chorus. The melancholy and sensitive writing in the right-hand melody interacts with the octave bass line that rumbles darkness. The music then opens to a passage filled with yearning gestures in dialogue between the two hands (mm. 9–16), leading into a fermata chord in E major (m. 20). An expressive cadenza carries the ending of the slow movement. This cadenza is in an iconic operatic fashion that showcases the vocal range and virtuosity of a singer. The cadenza then melts into the first movement opening theme on a dominant harmony, preparing for the grand finale entrance.

Besides the cyclic nature presented in this reappearance of the first movement theme, it also gives birth to the motivic materials for the entire finale—the E–C# downward leap near the end of the first movement theme that is transformed into the opening imitation (m. 33) and a lengthy fugue in the development section of the finale. The brilliance of this movement relies on

---

[3] Ibid., 342.
[4] Ratner, *Classic Music*, 16.

its use of the learned style, especially the imitative and fugal textures. The primary theme immediately creates a dialogue between the two hands. The secondary theme (m. 65), more lyrical than the first, retains the sixteenth-note figures from the opening material, this time as rapid exchanges in the accompaniment. The development delivers a virtuosic fugue, a compositional technique later used by Romantic composers such as Chopin and Liszt. The ideal of the fugue style allows Beethoven to freely expand on the existing motifs, and eventually explode at the climatic moment (mm. 223–231) before the return of the primary theme.

The prolific use of musical styles is the inspirational basis for Sonata op. 101. Each topic allows the composer to convey specific expressions required in the narrative. Vocal idioms, alongside instrumental styles, are now very much integrated into the entire sonata design. From the pedagogical standpoint, when pianists tackle this sonata, it is important to be reminded of the overall structural integrity through diverse musical topics. Pianists should consider the structural and dramatic layout of the piece, then map out important transitions from one passage or movement to another. When dealing with mood shift and tempo changes, logical and organic flow is essential. When dealing with overall structural planning, recognizing recurring motifs and thematic variants will help pianists make better interpretive decisions.

Sonata in A♭ Major, op. 110

As one of Beethoven's trilogy sonatas, op. 110 stands out as a prominent example of incorporating vocal idioms into the keyboard language while continue to explore the synthesized structure. Vocal elements such as the aria and arioso style, the recitative model, the song model, the chorale, and the *Ricercar* style fugue merge with the instrumental idioms, forming a musical entity through long-range harmonic relations, thematic relations, and structural continuity.[5] Rosen suggested a series of motivic and harmonic relations between all movements of op. 110, such as

[5] Rosen, *The Classical Style*, 494–495.

the melodic similarity between the *Arioso dolente* theme and the opening measure of the second movement *Allegro molto*, a scale motif outlining a sixth throughout all movements, and the subtle harmonic transition between the movements.[6] All of these intricate designs highlight the dramatic continuity.

The first movement, *Moderato cantabile molto espressivo*, has a quality of vocal lyricism. The opening measures bring out a memorable theme, first as a four-voice chorale (mm. 1–3), and soon transitioning into a songlike melody with accompaniment (m. 5–11). Such lyricism is soon exploited in the development where the opening chorale theme is mixed with the accompanied song (m. 40). The slight contrapuntal setting of the melody (mm. 46–55) increases the intensity of the music towards the return of the primary theme, this time in D♭ major (m. 63). The ending of the first movement features an imperfect authentic cadence, which proposes a somewhat inconclusive manner and an invitation for the succeeding movements.

The *Allegro molto* movement possesses a *scherzo* character. Although the texture is chordal, the style belongs to purely instrumental music. Bringing a huge contrast to the previous movement, *Allegro molto* movement showcases pianistic features through impromptu dynamic shifts, extreme keyboard ranges, fast running passages, and intricate articulation changes. The coda of the movement fades into a seamless transition to the following movement.

The subsequent *Adagio ma non troppo* is essentially an introductory passage prior to the finale. According to Ratner, there are four distinct styles of introductory music: *French overture*, *sinfonia da chiesa*, *aria*/*slow dance*, and *fantasia*. This passage implies the *fantasia* nature based on its *ombra* style to evoke dark emotions within free-styled setting.[7] The chordal presentation in the opening measures create an unstable and contemplating atmosphere due to its minor mode and unpredictable harmony changes. The passage is soon taken over by an unmeasured

---

[6] Ibid., 495–498.
[7] Ratner, *Classic Music*, 314–315.

Recitativo—a style closely associated with the dramatic vocal genres. It generally contains no fixed meter, main key, nor symmetrical melodic rhythms. Instead, the style relies on syllabic punctuations made by the vocalist.[8] Before the op. 110 passage, Beethoven had previous incorporated recitative style in the first movement of the "Tempest" Sonata in D Minor, op. 31, no. 2, in which the composer arranged two opposing musical sonorities between the "hovering", "ambiguous" *Largo* passages and the "turbulent" *Allegro* sections in the opening section,[9] and eventually expanded into a recitative-style monologue in the recapitulation. Decades later, Beethoven returned to the recitative style, this time embodying all features of an operatic recitative. On the one hand, the raising thirty-second notes in irregular divisions initiates a single-line melody with speech-like rhythms. On the other hand, there are moments simulating classic vocal ornamentations such as appoggiatura and trillo, further suggesting the vocal style influence.

As discussed in Chapters Four and Five of this essay, the *Arioso dolente* belongs to the aria/arioso style, while the double *Fuga* resemble the *Ricercar* counterpoint. The question remains: how do the two sections construct the entire final movement of op. 110? Essentially, the structure of the finale is as the following: *Adagio ma non troppo* (slow introduction) – *Adagio ma non troppo*/*Arioso dolente* – *Fuga* No. 1 – *L'istesso tempo di Arioso* – *Fuga* No. 2. Both the *Arioso dolente* theme and the *Fuga* appears twice in the movement in the alternating order. If one assumes the *Arioso dolente* theme is the primary subject, and the *Fuga* theme is the secondary subject, then the overall structure should be a "Type 1 Sonata" with a double-rotational structure, or a "sonata without development".[10] However, the seemingly simple structure of this op. 110 finale does not match the requirements of a "Type 1 Sonata". Between the two alternating thematic sections, there are no transitionary materials, nor modulations. The first *Arioso dolente*

---

[8] Ibid., 316.
[9] Kinderman, *Beethoven*, 84–86.
[10] James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 345–346.

is written in A♭ minor with a six-flat signature. The A♭ minor key remains throughout the *Arioso dolente* until an abrupt turn to the *Fuga* in A♭ major. The two parallel keys are linked only by the shared note "A♭", and nothing else. Similar situation occurs at the end of the A♭ major *Fuga*, where the E♭ dominant chord (m. 110–113) becomes an augmented sixth chord (Ger^{+6}) to the succeeding *L'istesso tempo di Arioso* in G minor. Once again, without any transitional gestures, the second Fuga enters in G major. Without the necessary transitions and modulations to help preparing and eventually resolving the harmonic tension between the two opposing thematic sections, it is impossible to name this movement a sonata form.

Then what is this finale? The possible explanation points to Kinderman's "parenthetical structure" theory. If the theory proves to be true, the finale of op. 110 is evidently a synthesized narrative consisted of two distinct themes: an arioso and a fugue. The two themes alternate as the movement unfolds, and eventually push towards a climatic display of the *Fuga* theme in celebratory mood (m. 174). Therefore, the two themes are inserted as "parenthetical structures" to highlight dramatic shifts and emotional turbulence. Harmonic preparation for distant keys between sections is no longer mandatory.

The op. 110 Sonata embraces the union between vocal-like models and instrumental idioms through stylistic and structural liberation. Each idiom is installed in the narrative solely for its dramatic purposes. Together, they reflect Beethoven's philosophy to further musical expressions through diversity and unity.

Chapter 7: CONCLUSION

Ludwig wan Beethoven's legacy as an innovative composer lived through generations of composers to come. His vision to explore beyond stylistic integration was daring at the time, yet it eventually transcended into lasting aesthetics that would guide the growth of Western music for the next hundred years. From his ideal "fusion of styles" in the *Missa solemnis*,[1] to the melodious op. 110 that delivers a "song of thanksgiving",[2] and to the perfect union of vocal sonorities and symphonic force in the Ninth Symphony— "a declamation without words" according to D'Indy,[3] Beethoven sought after what spoke to him as a true artist. In his own words, he believed in "the new, the original, springs up by itself, without our taking thought."[4] In the end, he created the music that reflected his expressions, his aesthetics, and his philosophy. Through many of his endeavors, he pushed the notion of blending vocal sonorities into his instrumental works to a new level. Sprouting as occasional stylistic insertions to diversify the instrumental idioms, vocal integration evolved as Beethoven matured over the years as a composer. At last, it became part of his voice to freely express diverse musical thoughts.

As modern pianists attempt to study Beethoven's sonatas, the awareness of stylistic integration should certainly guide them towards more accurate interpretation for different characteristics in his music. Meanwhile, the knowledge of Beethoven's vocal writings may also help to provide insight into proper execution for various vocally inspired passages in his sonatas. Sound control, phrasing management, and structural execution may differ once pianists have the awareness of the work's stylistic origins. Therefore, the utmost important formula while studying Beethoven's piano sonatas is to investigate the influence of different stylistic idioms and how

---

[1] D'Indy, *Beethoven*, 80.
[2] Ibid., 105.
[3] Ibid.,104.
[4] Ibid., 100.

they are embedded in his structures. With such knowledge in hand, pianists may one day understand the works of Beethoven from a new perspective.

Bibliography

Abraham, Gerald, ed. *The Age of Beethoven, 1790–1830*. London: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Adorno, Theodor W. *Night Music: Essays on Music 1928–1962*. Edited by Rolf Tiedmann. Translated and introduced by Wieland Hoban. London: Seagull Books, 2009.

Anderson, Emily, trans. and ed. *The Letters of Beethoven*. Vol. 1. London: Macmillan, 1961.

Arnold, Denis, and Nigel Fortune, eds. *The Beethoven Reader*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1971.

Bekker, Paul. *Beethoven*. Translated by M. M. Bozman. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1927.

Böker-Heil, Norbert, David Fallows, John H. Baron, James Parsons, Eric Sams, Graham Johnson, and Paul Griffiths. "Lied." *Grove Music Online* (October 2011). Accessed February 8, 2019, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000016611.

Brendel, Alfred. *Music Sounded Out*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1991.

Class, Kevin. “Expression & Narrative Design in Beethoven’s Piano Sonata, Op. 110.” *Kevin Class Masterclass* (January 13, 2005). Accessed February 8, 2019, http://www.kevinclass.com/artists/#/masterclassbeethoven110/.

Cockshoot, John V. *The Fugue in Beethoven’s Piano Music*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959.

Cooper, Barry. *Beethoven’s Folksong Settings: Chronology, Sources, Style*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

Czerny, Carl. *On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven’s Works for the Piano*. Vienna: Universal Edition, 1970.

———. "Recollections from My Life." *The Musical Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (July 1956): 307. Accessed February 10, 2019, http://www.jstor.org/stable/740427.

D’Indy, Vincent. *Beethoven*. Translated by Theodore Baker. Boston, MA: The Boston Music Company, 1912.

Drabkin, William. “The Stylistic Periods.” *The Beethoven Compendium*. Edited by Barry Cooper. London: Thames and Hudson, 1991.

Drake, Kenneth. *The Beethoven Sonatas and the Creative Experience*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994.

Feder, Georg, and James Webster. "Haydn, (Franz) Joseph." *Grove Music Online* (2001). Accessed May 30, 2019, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000044593.

Forbes, Elliot, ed. *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967.

Forkel, Johann Nikolaus. *The Genius of Bach*. Edited by Jost Hermand and Michael Gilbert. Translated by Charles Sanford Terry. New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1994.

Gerig, Reginald R. *Famous Pianists & Their Technique*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007.

Hamburger, Michael, ed. and trans. *Beethoven: Letters, Journals and Conversations*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1952.

Hepokoski, James, and Warren Darcy. *Elements of Sonata Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Hoffmann, Ernst Theodor Amadeus. "Beethoven's Instrumental Music (1813)." In *German Essays on Music*, edited by Jost Hermand, and Michael Gilbert, translated by Oliver Strunk, 59–64. New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1994.

Hughes, Martin. "Beethoven's Piano Music: Contemporary Performance Issues." In *Performing Beethoven*, edited by Robin Stowell, 228–239. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Kerman, Joseph. *The Beethoven String Quartets*. London: Oxford University Press, 1967.

———, Alan Tyson, and Scott G. Burnham. "Beethoven, Ludwig van." *Grove Music Online* (2001). Accessed May 31, 2019, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000040026.

Kinderman, William. *Beethoven*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

———. "Beethoven." In *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music*, edited by R. Larry Todd. New York: Routledge: 2004.

Kullak, Franz. *Beethoven's Piano Playing*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2013.

Lederer, Victor. *Bach's Keyboard Music*. New York: Amadeus Press, 2010.

———. *Beethoven's Piano Music: A Listener's Guide*. New York: Amadeus Press, 2011.

Levy, David Benjamin. *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.

Lockwood, Lewis. *Beethoven: The Music and The Life*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003.

———, and Phyllis Benjamin, eds. *Beethoven Essays: Studies in Honor of Elliot Forbes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984.

MacArdle, Donald W., and Ludwig Misch, Trans. New Beethoven Letters. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957.

Marshall, Robert L. "Johann Sebastian Bach." In *Eighteenth-Century Keyboard Music*, edited by Robert L. Marshall, 86–88. New York: An Imprint of Macmillan Publishing Company, 1994.

———, and Robin A. Leaver. "Chorale." *Grove Music Online* (2001). Accessed February 3, 2019, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000005652.

Marston, Nicholas. *Beethoven's Piano Sonata in E, Op. 109*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1995.

Mellers, Wilfrid. *Beethoven and the Voice of God*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.

Newman, William S. *Beethoven on Beethoven: Playing His Piano Music His Way*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988.

———. *Performance Practices in Beethoven's Piano Sonatas*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1971.

Moens-Haenen, G. "Vibrato." *Grove Music Online* (2001). Accessed June 17, 2019, https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000029287.

Ratner, Leonard G. *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1980.

Reynolds, Christopher Alan. *Motives for Allusion*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Rosen, Charles. *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998.

Rosenblum, Sandra P. *Performance Practices in Classical Piano Music*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.

Schindler, Anton Felix. *Beethoven As I Knew Him*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1966.

Schulenberg, David. *The Keyboard Music of J. S. Bach*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1992.

Skowroneck, Tilman. *Beethoven the Pianist*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Solomon, Maynard. *Late Beethoven: Music, Thought, Imagination*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003.

Sonneck, O. G., ed. *Beethoven: Impressions by His Contemporaries*. New York: Dover Publications, 1962.

Tame, David. *Beethoven & the Spiritual Path*. Wheaton, IL: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1994.

Tovey, Donald Francis. *A Companion to Beethoven's Pianoforte Sonatas*. London: The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, 1998.

Tyson, Alan, and Leon Plantinga. "Clementi, Muzio." *Grove Music Online* (2001). Accessed May 20, 2019, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000040033.

Webster, James. "Haydn, (Franz) Joseph: Style, aesthetics, compositional method." *Grove Music Online* (2001). Accessed February 8, 2019, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000044593.

Williams, Ralph Vaughan. *Some Thoughts on Beethoven's Choral Symphony with Writings on Other Musical Subjects*. London: Oxford University Press, 1953.

Wolff, Konrad. *Masters of the Keyboard: Individual Style Elements in the Piano Music of Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1983.