A STYLE CHANGE IN RACHMANINOFF'S PIANO MUSIC AS SEEN IN THE SECOND PIANO SONATA IN B-FLAT MINOR, OPUS 36 (1913 AND 1931 VERSIONS)

DOCTORAL DOCUMENT

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Musical Arts in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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* * * * *

The Ohio State University

1988

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Document Advisor
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To My Parents
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My sincerest gratitude and appreciation are extended to Mr. Richard Tetley-Kardos for his years of dedicated patience and insight and to Dr. Peter Gano for his guidance and support throughout this project. Thanks go to the other members of my advisory committee, Dr. Burdette Green, Dr. Rosemary Platt, and Professor Sylvia Zaremby, for their comments and suggestions. Special gratitude is expressed to Ms. Jane Zinman for her support and technical assistance.
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Major Field: Piano and Piano Literature
LIST OF RECITALS

Sunday, June 29, 1980
3:00 p.m.
Hughes Hall Auditorium

Kim Andrei Lasarenko, piano

This recital is presented as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts.

Program

Adagio, B minor, K. 540
Mozart

Sonata, Op. 53 ("Waldstein")
Beethoven

Allegro
Introduzione--Adagio Molto
Rondo--Allegretto Moderato

Intermission

Goyescas
The Maiden and the Nightingale
Granados

Sonata, B minor, Op. 58
Chopin

Allegro Maestoso
Scherzo--Molto Vivace
Largo
Finale--Presto, Non Tanto
Sunday, June 22, 1981
3:00 p.m.
Hughes Hall Auditorium

Kim Andrei Lasarenko, piano
Charles Jenney, French Horn
Eleanor Bergen, Violin

This recital is presented as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts.

Program

Sonata for Violin and Piano
E minor, K. 504
Allegro
Tempo di Menuetto

Sonata for French Horn and Piano

Hindemith

Intermission

Trio for French Horn, Violin, and Piano, Op. 40

Brahms

vi
Thursday, March 31, 1983
3:00 p.m.
Hughes Hall Auditorium

Kim Andrei Lasarenko, piano
Michael Dellinger, Piano

This recital is presented as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts.

Program

Konzertstuck for piano and orchestra, Op. 79
Weber

Intermission

Concerto in D minor for piano and orchestra, Op. 15
Brahms
Sunday, August 28, 1983  
3:00 p.m.  
Hughes Hall Auditorium

Kim Andrei Lasarenko, piano

This recital is presented as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts.

Program

Fantasy and Sonata in C minor, K. 457  
Mozart

Allegro
Adagio
Molto Allegro

Impromptu in G-flat major, Op. 90 No. 3  
Schubert

Etudes

Op. 25 No. 6 in G-sharp minor
Op. 25 No. 7 in C-sharp minor
Op. 25 No. 12 in C minor

Intermission

Sonata in B-flat minor, Opus 36  
Rachmaninoff

Allegro Agitato
Non Allegro, Lento
L'istesso tempo, Allegro molto
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INTRODUCTION

Until recently, few investigations of Rachmaninoff's life or his piano music have been done, due, in part, both to his popularity with audiences as well as to the popularity of some of his melodies in the form of Hollywood songs. This lack of investigation is due also in part to his anachronistic nature as a composer of this century of exploration of tonal frontiers. As a first step to remedy this situation, this document will focus on the middle of his career, the period 1913 to 1931. During this period there was a style change in his piano music. A comparative examination of the Second Piano Sonata in B-flat minor, Opus 36, both the original (1913) and the revised edition (1931), will support this assertion and document the nature of this style change. Due to the limitations of this document, no attempt will be made to trace the development of this style change.

By and large, the biographies of Rachmaninoff have had a tendency to resemble romantic film scripts. The brief biography included in the first chapter will instead chronicle only the major events in Rachmaninoff's life without
dwelling on the more personal aspects and will discuss the type of training that Rachmaninoff received as a child. Although Rachmaninoff is recognized today as one of the leading pianists of this century, he regarded himself as a composer. This document will also demonstrate that this difference of perception between Rachmaninoff and his critics has profound implications for the way we understand his music.

In order to show conclusively the stylistic change of Rachmaninoff's piano music, the second chapter presents a structural analysis of both the original edition and the revised edition of the Second Piano Sonata. The comparative discussion of the two editions which follows specifically points out those facets of Rachmaninoff's music that constitute the style change. To clarify both the structural analysis and comparative discussion, a schematic analysis of both editions of the Second Sonata are appended to this document.

In order to help clarify the cyclical nature of the Sonata, the following format in labeling themes is used: Roman numerals indicate movements, i.e., I, II, or III; Arabic numerals indicate themes; and lower-case letters indicate subsections of themes. The numbering of measures throughout follows the movement structure of the work, in-
cluding the attacca found at the end of the second movement. Thus, the numbering of measures is restarted in the second movement and continues without break through the third movement.

A discussion concerning the problems of performance found in the Second Piano Sonata will be included within the comparative discussion. The focus of this section is on the technical problems, common to both editions, and suggestions are offered concerning possible solutions to the problems that are examined. The last section of this document addresses the problem of which edition ought to be used in performance, the advantages and disadvantages of each edition, and based on the experience of this writer, which solutions are most effective in actual performance.

The premise of this study, the existence of a style change in Rachmaninoff's piano music, is substantiated by the analytical sections. Therefore, on the basis of this document, a greater understanding of the composer and his music will be reached.
CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHY

Sergei Vasilyevitch Rachmaninoff was born on April 1, 1873, in Semyonovo, Russia.¹ His parents were wealthy nobles of the time: his father, Vasily Arkadyevitch Rachmaninoff, was well-to-do, but his mother, Lyubov Petrovna Butakova, came from a very rich family that was heavily steeped in military tradition. However, Vasily was not the shrewdest of businessmen, and as a consequence, was forced to sell off all but one of the family's estates to meet debts. This set of circumstances forced the family to move to their one remaining estate, Oneg. It was here that Sergei Rachmaninoff's musical abilities were first noticed and encouraged.

Rachmaninoff's mother hired Anna Ornatskaya to give piano lessons to Sergei.² Ornatskaya was a graduate of


²Ibid.
the St. Petersburg Conservatory of Music and had studied
with Gustav Cross, the leading piano teacher at the conserv-
vatory. 3

In 1882, even Oneg had to be disposed of to settle
debts Vasili had accumulated. As a result, the Rachmani-
noff's moved to St. Petersburg, where Sergei was awarded a
scholarship to study with Vladimir Demyansky at the conserv-
vatory. It was assumed that Sergei would make satisfactory
progress and that he would then study with the great
teacher, Gustav Cross. 4

But Sergei was more lazy than hard-working, 5 and
his progress during this period of study was unsatisfactory.
In addition, his parents separated, and his mother did not
monitor his academic progress. Consequently, Sergei failed
all of his academic subjects in 1885. 6 The Conservatory
stated that, unless Sergei's performance improved dramati-
cally, his scholarship would be taken away. His family
realized that a strong move had to be made in order to
ensure that Sergei's musical abilities would continue to
develop.

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3 Geoffry Norris, Rakhmaninov (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1976), 2
4 Ibid. 5 Norris op. cit., 3.
6 Norris, op. cit., XV, 550.
In desperation, his mother turned to Alexander Ziloti, a relative by marriage, who was a one-time student of Franz Liszt, and a successful, famous pianist. Ziloti advised that Sergei be sent to study with one of his own former teachers, Nikolay Zverev, who was an exacting task-master. It was hoped that his stern influence and guidance would produce the same results that had brought Ziloti his success. Upon Ziloti's recommendation, Zverev accepted Sergei as a pupil.

One of the conditions of acceptance was that Sergei live with his teacher. In this way it was possible for Zverev to oversee all aspects of Sergei's education. The routine followed at the house was very strict, with practice starting at six o'clock in the morning. After Zverev left to go teach at the Moscow Conservatory, Anna Sergeyevna, Zverev's sister, supervised the students at the house. In addition to all of the practice and study, Zverev often took his students to concerts given by notables of the Russian music world at the time; Anton Rubenstein's historic concert series outlining the history of piano music made a very deep and lasting impression on the young Rachmaninoff. Zverev,

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7 Norris, op. cit., XV, 550.
9 Norris, op. cit..
who was very much in the mainstream of Russian musical life, also had many famous musicians come to his house, among whom were Anton Rubenstein, Taneyev, Arensky, Safonov, Ziloti, and most importantly, Tchaikovsky. As a result of these influences, Sergei's technique and musical abilities improved tremendously.

While still residing at Zverev's house, Rachmaninoff entered the senior division at the Moscow Conservatory in 1888 to begin study with Ziloti.\(^{10}\) A year later, Rachmaninoff enrolled in Taneyev's class in counterpoint and in Arensky's class in harmony.\(^{11}\) Rachmaninoff had already shown an interest in composition, but Zverev was only interested in developing Rachmaninoff's technique as a pianist and considered his interest in composition to be a waste of time. This difference of goals between teacher and student eventually led to Rachmaninoff's moving out of the Zverev household and his not speaking to Zverev for three years.

Rachmaninoff's first commission, in 1890, was to make a four-hand transcription of Tchaikovsky's *The Sleeping Beauty*. Initially, this endeavor was not a success; his inexperience with the genre rendered his first attempts awkward and unsatisfactory to Tchaikovsky. With Ziloti's

\(^{10}\) Norris, *op. cit.*, XV, 51.

\(^{11}\) Ibid.
help, however, a revision of the transcription finally met Tchaikovsky’s exacting standards.\(^1\)

In 1891, Ziloti resigned from the Conservatory. Not wanting to change teachers at this late date in his training, Rachmaninoff opted to take his piano and composition examinations one year early. His composition examination was to write an opera in one act. \textit{Aleko}, based on Pushkin’s poem \textit{Tsigani (The Gypsies)} was the result, which won Rachmaninoff the highest marks and The Great Gold Medal, previously given to only two other students in the history of the Moscow Conservatory.\(^2\)

After graduating from the Conservatory, Rachmaninoff signed a contract with Guthiel, the publisher, who purchased his opera \textit{Aleko}, two cello pieces, six songs, and the famous Prelude in C-sharp minor among others. All of these publications helped establish Rachmaninoff’s reputation as a composer and encouraged him to start work on his first symphonic work, the Symphony in D minor. In 1897, the symphony was performed under the direction of Glazunov. According to the critics/reviewers, the performance was an unmitigated disaster. Cesar Cui, one of the reviewers, wrote:

\(^{12}\text{Bazhanov, \textit{op. cit.}, 51.}\)

\(^{13}\text{Morris, \textit{op. cit.}, XV, 551.}\)
If there were a conservatory in Hell, if one of its talented students were instructed to write a programme symphony on the 'Seven Plagues of Egypt', and if he were to compose a symphony like Mr. Rachmaninoff's, then he would have fulfilled his task brilliantly and would bring delight to the inhabitants of Hell.\textsuperscript{14}

Most of the blame for this disaster can be attributed to Glazunov's conducting at the performance. Many years later, Mrs. Rachmaninoff commented that the main reason for this disaster was that Glazunov was drunk during the performance.\textsuperscript{15} As a result of this disaster, Rachmaninoff became deeply depressed and composed nothing for the next three years. This setback, however, did not keep Rachmaninoff from conducting and occasionally performing some of his own works. These successes in performance, nonetheless, did not enable Rachmaninoff to regain his self-confidence as a composer.

In 1900 Rachmaninoff began a series of treatments with a Dr. Dahl, who specialized in hypnosis, which had a decidedly positive effect on his ability to work.\textsuperscript{16} Rachmaninoff very shortly started work on his Second Piano Concerto. The second and third movements were completed that year, and Rachmaninoff performed these two movements in

\textsuperscript{14}Norris, \textit{op. cit.}, 25.
\textsuperscript{15}Bazhanov, \textit{op. cit.}, 121.
\textsuperscript{16}Norris, \textit{op. cit.}, 31.
December. His work was so well received that Rachmaninoff was encouraged to add the first movement in 1901. In November of that same year Rachmaninoff gave the first complete performance of the Second Piano Concerto.

The following year, 1902, Rachmaninoff announced his engagement to Natalia Satina, a first cousin. Since the Eastern Orthodox Church forbids marriage of first cousins, the marriage was difficult to arrange, but given enough money, the Church withdrew its objections, and the Rachmaninoffs settled in Moscow, where they had their first daughter in 1903.\textsuperscript{17} During this period Rachmaninoff composed twelve songs, Opus 21, the Chopin Variations, Preludes Opus 23, and began to work on his second opera, \textit{The Miserly Knight}.\textsuperscript{18}

During the next year Rachmaninoff signed a two-year contract to conduct at the Bolshoy Theater. This period of his life was extremely invaluable to him as a musician as it permitted him to refine his skills as a conductor. These skills eventually permitted him to conduct the premieres of two of his operas, \textit{Francesca di Rimini} and \textit{The Miserly Knight}. After resigning his conducting post in 1906, Rachmaninoff moved to his country estate where he

\textsuperscript{17} Norris, \textit{op. cit.}, 34.

\textsuperscript{18} Norris, \textit{op. cit.}, 36.
completed the Opus 26 songs and began work on the Second Symphony.\textsuperscript{19}

In the fall of that same year Rachmaninoff decided to move to Dresden where he continued work on the Second Symphony and also composed his first Piano Sonata.\textsuperscript{20} Upon his return to Russia in 1907, his second daughter was born at the Rachmaninoff country estate.

In many ways, 1909 was a landmark year for Rachmaninoff; the Third Piano Concerto was written, he was appointed Vice-President of the Russian Musical Society,\textsuperscript{21} and he gave the premiere performance of the Third Piano Concerto on his first tour of America. After finishing this tour in February of 1910, one which he especially disliked, Rachmaninoff spent the next three years at his country estate. There he was able to compose a number of important works, which include his Liturgy, Preludes Opus 32, Etudes-Tableaux Opus 33, and fourteen songs Opus 34.\textsuperscript{22}

Tired from the various conducting engagements that helped supplement the family income, Rachmaninoff, in 1913, took his family to Rome. While there, they lived in the same apartment that Tchaikovsky had used. Feeling that this

\textsuperscript{19}Norris, \textit{op. cit.}, 40.
\textsuperscript{20}Norris, \textit{op. cit.}, XV, 553.
\textsuperscript{21}Norris, \textit{op. cit.}, 46. \textsuperscript{22}Norris, \textit{op. cit.}, 553.
would be of some inspirational help, Rachmaninoff started work on *The Bells* and the Second Piano Sonata.\(^{23}\) At this time, both daughters contracted typhoid fever and the Rachmaninoffs went to Berlin to consult doctors. When the girls were well enough to travel, Rachmaninoff moved the family back to the country estate in order that the daughters recuperate fully. This was the time during which Rachmaninoff finished both works, and their premieres took place in St. Petersburg in December of 1913.\(^{24}\)

Until Rachmaninoff left Russia permanently in December, 1916, he composed relatively little. He produced only *The All-Night Vigil*, an unaccompanied choral work, six songs Opus 38, and the *Etudes-Tableaux*, Opus 39.\(^{25}\) In 1917, Rachmaninoff revised his First Piano Concerto before leaving Russia with his family for Stockholm. Because of the revolution, this was a difficult time for the entire family; they had to leave all of their property and possessions behind in Russia.

Rachmaninoff now had to make an important decision: how to support his family. Of the three choices that he had—conducting, composing, and playing the piano—it appeared to him that playing the piano would bring the most

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\(^{23}\)Ibid. \(^{24}\)Ibid. \(^{25}\)Ibid.
money in the shortest amount of time. Such a choice, however, meant that at the age of forty-five, he would have to start practising and learning new repertory. In 1919, Rachmaninoff decided to move the entire family to America. From this point on, Rachmaninoff would be occupied with concertizing and there would be little time for him to compose new works. In fact, it would be seven years before he would write anything new.

In 1926, Rachmaninoff completed his Fourth Piano Concerto and three Russian Songs. It should be noted that Rachmaninoff started to record more extensively, primarily his own works. Another five years would go by before Rachmaninoff composed a new work work or even revised any existing works. In 1931, Rachmaninoff produced his Corelli Variations and revised his Second Piano Sonata.

Because of Rachmaninoff's heavy concert schedule, he again was unable to find time to write until 1934, which saw the completion of the Paganini Variations. In 1935, Rachmaninoff began work on his Third Symphony, which was completed in 1936. Until 1941, Rachmaninoff was occupied with concertizing and recording his four concerti. During

\[26\text{Norris, op. cit., 55-56.}\]

\[27\text{Ibid.}\]

\[28\text{Norris, op. cit., XV, 554.}\]
this last period of compositional and performing activity, Rachmaninoff produced his last work, the Symphonic Dances.

Rachmaninoff continued to concertize almost to the very end of his life. This is in many ways fortunate for music lovers everywhere; however, in the final years, Rachmaninoff's abilities at the keyboard began to decline, not so much from advancing age but rather from the slow, sure destruction of his body from cancer. While on tour in 1943, Rachmaninoff gave a last concert in Knoxville, Tennessee. The remainder of the tour was cancelled and Rachmaninoff returned to California where, on March 28, 1943, he passed away.
CHAPTER II

STRUCTURAL DISCUSSION

SONATA IN B-FLAT MINOR, OPUS 36 (Original Edition)

Background

During the year 1912, Rachmaninoff had a great many engagements as a conductor which left him exhausted, and without time for composition. On December 14, 1912, he was so tired that he canceled his final appearance for the Philharmonic Society and left with his family for Switzerland.¹

After spending one month in Switzerland, the Rachmaninoffs moved to Rome, where rested and in good health, Rachmaninoff began work on his largest choral work, Kolokola (The Bells). At this point he also began work on the Second Piano Sonata. His simultaneous work on both compositions explains the carillon-type sections in the first and second movements of the Piano Sonata. Rachmaninoff was experimenting with the idea of bells in different settings. With an

¹Norris, op. cit., 55.
orchestra it is much easier to imitate or give the illusion of bells than with solo piano. However, with Rachmaninoff's vast knowledge and command of piano technique, he was able to carry off this effect in the Second Piano Sonata quite successfully as noted below in the discussion.

Rachmaninoff's progress on both works was abruptly discontinued when his daughters contracted typhoid fever.\(^2\) In December of that same year, Rachmaninoff nonetheless gave the premiere performance of both works for a St. Petersburg audience in the Marinsky Theater. As far as can be determined, this is Rachmaninoff's only performance of the Second Sonata.\(^3\) Furthermore, Rachmaninoff never actually performed the revised (1931) edition of the Second Sonata in public. Among the many works of his own that he recorded, neither version of this sonata was committed to disc.

**Structural Discussion, Original Edition**

First Movement

The first movement of the Second Piano Sonata is in sonata-allegro form (see Appendix I). Theme I has a descending arpeggio that ends with a low B-flat octave

\(^2\)Norris, *loc. cit.*, 55.

followed by a B-flat minor chord which is distinguished by a
sixteenth-note, quarter-note rhythmic figure. Measures
three and four are a continuation of the first theme as can
be seen in the following example. As will be shown, this
first theme recurs throughout the sonata as the main uni-
ifying element, thus establishing the cyclic nature of the
sonata.

Example 1. Rachmaninoff, Second Piano Sonata, Opus 36,
B-flat minor, 1st movement (Allegro
agitato) measures 1-4, Theme I-a and b. 

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4See page 2 of the Introduction for an explana-
tion of the labeling of themes.

5Sergei Rachmaninoff, Sonata No. 2, Opus 36 (New
York: International Music Company, n.d.).
A rhythmic variation of the first measure (Example 2) occurs in measure five, followed by two repetitions (complete) of Theme I-1-a and I-1-b:

Example 2. Measure 5, rhythmic variation of measure 1.

The theme group extension that follows, measures 15-35, is functionally developmental and utilizes motifs a and b of Theme I-1 (see Example 1). It is divided into three sections, the first, measures 15-23, employs Theme I-1-a in measures 15-16, followed by a similar figuration in measures 17-18 with added sixteenth notes in the right hand to fill in the intervalic distances. Theme I-1-a is further emphasized in measures 19-23 in the right hand through the use of chords that build to a climax in measure 24. The next area, measures 24-29, apply both motifs a and b of Theme I-1: I-1-b in the right hand, accentuated by I-1-a in the left hand as seen in Example 3 (overleaf). In measures 28-29, the same method of overlaying one motif on
the other is made use of with shortened versions of the two as seen in Example 4 below:

Example 3: Measure 25, overlay of motifs a and b from Theme I-1.

Example 4. Measures 28-29, overlay of motifs a and b from Theme I-1, in shortened form.

In the third division, Rachmaninoff presages the text of the cadenza by merging Theme I-1-a and I-1-b. Note that Theme I-1-b is outlined within the long notes of Theme I-1-a:
Example 5. Measures 30-31, merging of Theme I-1-a and Theme I-1-b.

In measures 36-37, a cadenza-like passage acts as a bridge into the second theme area of the movement with a melodic anticipation in the left hand in measure 37 as seen below:

Example 6. Measures 36-37, bridge with anticipation of second theme.

The second theme, measures 38-43, in D-flat major, is in sharp contrast to the first theme. It's chorale-like texture contrasts with the brilliance of the first theme as seen below:
Example 7. Measures 38-43, second theme area.

*Meno mosso (4/4)*

Measures 41-43 extend the second theme using the rhythm of Theme I-1-a in augmented form (see Example 7). The second theme ends in measure 49 and is followed by an extension.

This extension, measures 49-70, is divided into three sections, the first section (measures 49-52) utilizes Theme I-1-b in the soprano. The second section (measures 53-66) employs the descending third of Theme I-1-a to build to a climax in measure 63 with the use of octaves. The flow of constant sixteenth notes gradually diminishes until the third section of this extension is reached in measure 67. At this point, the transition becomes syncopated, with the texture gradually becoming thinner in approaching Theme I-1-b (see Example 8 below). This leads to the development section:
Example 8. Measures 67–70, final section of transition leading to development.

The development section is divided into three areas: the first, measures 70–85; the second, measures 86–107; and the third, measures 108–121. The first division of the development, in D-minor, is based on both Theme I-1-\(a\) and I-1-\(b\). The character of these motifs, in conjunction with the highly chromatic accompaniment, establishes an unstable harmonic atmosphere, as seen below (overleaf):
Example 9: Measures 70-72, chromatic accompaniment, first movement, original edition.

In measure 76, Theme I-1-b is raised a whole step to E-minor through measure 80, its frequent recurrence increases the feeling of unrest. The final statement of Theme I-1-b in this section occurs in measures 80-81, which leads the listener to the partial statement of Theme I-2-a in E-flat major as illustrated below in measures 83-84 (overleaf).
Example 10. Measures 83-84, partial statement of Theme I-2-a in development.

The second area of the development, beginning at measure 86, is in B minor, a third lower than the first division. Theme I-1-b is used in this area of the development, and continues until measure 100 where Theme I-1-a returns. This portion of the development is in C minor, and in measures 102, 104, and 106, passes through to A-flat minor, B-flat minor, and C minor, respectively. It is in this final division of the development that a truly large crescendo takes place. This area, which begins in E minor, is imitative of bells in the left hand by employing chromatically descending, alternating sevenths and thirds emulating the rich overtones of a carillon. In measure 112, Rachmaninoff passes through D minor and the right hand descends in chords until measure 114 where he touches on C minor as the right hand chords thicken to create a heavier texture. In measure 117, Rachmaninoff modulates briefly to
E-flat minor as a plagal preparation for the recapitulation that begins in measure 122.

In the recapitulation, in E-flat minor, the first theme of the exposition has been foreshortened to only eight measures as opposed to the twelve measures in the exposition. The effect of all the chromatic passages in the development cannot be underestimated. The effective tonal instability of the development comes to a conclusion with the resounding resolution in the tonic, E-flat minor, which is most welcome to the ear. The transition into the second theme area, which begins in measure 130, has also been shortened and only uses Theme I-1-a. The melodic anticipation of the second theme, seen in the exposition at measures 36-37, has now been lengthened in measures 137-141. The effect is a lengthier transition leading to the second theme area.

Theme I-2 of the recapitulation is in G-flat major, and is presented only once in a foreshortened version. Theme I-2-b is repeated in E-flat major and leads directly into the transition.

The extension, measures 148-169, follows the same format as its counterpart in the exposition. It is divided into three areas: the first area, measures 148-154; the second, measures 154-159; and the final area, measures
160-169. The first section begins in E-flat major and utilizes Theme I-1-b as found in the transition into the development in measures 49-52. The second section follows the same format as its counterpart in the exposition in measures 53-66. The final area, measures 160-169, relies on an expanded version of measures 63-70 as seen below in Examples 11a and 11b. This final section vacillates from B-flat major to B-flat minor, but the tonic is not clearly present until the coda which begins in measure 170, delaying the conclusion.

Example 11a. Measures 63-64.
Example 11b. Measures 160-161

The coda, measures 170-185, is clearly in B-flat minor with both Theme I-1-a and I-1-b present as seen below:

Example 12. Measures 170-171 and measure 174 of coda. Theme I-1-a is circled. Theme I-1-b is in brackets.

The movement ends with a statement of Theme I-1-b in B-flat minor. The last note of the movement, an F natural, is
held until the note almost dies out. In doing this, the listener is prepared for the second movement, for the F natural, in its isolation, acts as a connecting link into the first melodic note of the second movement as illustrated below:

Example 13. Measures 183-185, last statement of Theme I-1-b with F natural acting as leading tone into the introduction of the second movement.

Second Movement

The second movement is in two-part, song form. An interlude of seven measures links the first and second movements and is in G major as implied by the resolution in measure 7. The final chord sets up the relative minor key area of E minor in measure 8 where Theme II-1 begins (overleaf):

Theme II-1 begins in measure seven and continues through measure eleven. A distinctive feature of this theme is its quadruple meter. The cadence in measure eleven has a quintuplet figure that returns later. Theme II-1 is repeated twice and leads to a short contrasting section that uses elements of Theme I-1-b as shown below.

Example 15. Second movement, measure 16, fragment of Theme I-1-b in long notes of the left hand.
This reference to material from the first movement is the beginning of the formal device that Rachmaninoff employs throughout the entire sonata: cyclic unity. This formal device unfolds throughout the remainder of the sonata using only Themes I-1-a and I-1-b. Here, Rachmaninoff establishes the relative major, G major, as a point of contrast. After the cadence on the dominant in measure 23, Theme II-1 is presented once more with additional figuration in the right hand:

Example 16. Measures 23-25, Theme II-1 with additional figuration.

In measures 28-35, Theme II-1 is superimposed onto an augmented version of Theme I-1-b and is brought to a climax in measure 31. The texture and volume are reduced to a statement of Theme I-1-b in measure 34 which leads to the transition beginning in measure 35 as illustrated below (overleaf):
Example 17. Measures 35-36, reduced statement of Theme I-1-b leading to transition in second movement.

The transition, measures 36-45, is highly chromatic and is based on the descending third of Theme I-1-a, (Example 18). Measures 42-44 descend chromatically and lead directly into the middle section of the second movement.

Example 18. Measure 37, the descending third of transition based on Theme I-1-a.

The middle section of this movement utilizes Theme I-1-b exclusively and is divided into two sections, measures 46-62, and measures 63-73. After presenting Theme I-1-b as the main motif of this central division, (measures 46-50), Theme I-1-b is repeated in E-flat minor
in measures 52-56. Theme I-1-b in measures 56-62 is foreshortened and passes chromatically through several tonal areas, leading the listener back to E minor in measure 63, the beginning of the second division of the middle section.

The second division of this section returns to E-minor and uses Theme I-1-b; however, this appears as an ostinato accompanimental figure in the right hand while the left hand has a pedal point E in the bass as shown below:


This particular section is cadenza-like and is preoccupied with reestablishing the carillon-type of texture as opposed to presenting any new variants of first movement themes and motifs. This area ends abruptly in measure 73 with a chromatic sweep upwards beginning on A, which reinforces the plagal relationship that Rachmaninoff has used earlier in the sonata.
The third portion of the second movement begins in measure 74 and continues through measure 89. The key here is E minor, but there is, in measure 76, a modulation to the parallel major. The last statement of Theme II-1 is also altered rhythmically by having the accents shifted as seen below in Example 20b. Measures 86-89 cadentially reinforce the plagal relationships found throughout the first two movements of this sonata.

Example 20a. Measures 7-8 of second movement, shift of rhythmic emphasis in Theme II-1.

Example 20b. Measures 77-78 of second movement, shift of rhythmic emphasis in Theme II-1.
Third Movement

The third movement begins in measure 90 with a repetition of the interlude to the second movement. This time, however, the meter has been changed from $\frac{4}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{2}$. This interlude, found at the beginning of the second and third movements of the sonata, also acts as a bridge so that the sonata is performed without any breaks. This interlude is in F major by implication of the resolving cadence in measures 95–96.

The final movement, which is in sonata-allegro form, continues in measure 97 with a reference to Theme I-1-a in B-flat major:

Example 21. Third movement, measure 97, reference to Theme I-1-a.

The Example above is one more instance of one of the main unifying devices—cyclic unity, using Theme I-1-a.
In measure 105, Rachmaninoff establishes G-flat major with Theme III-1. This material also draws on Themes I-1-a and I-1-b as shown below:

Example 22. Measures 105-109, Theme III-1.

Theme III-1 is repeated in measures 113-116, followed by a short development-like section (measures 117-136) in which Theme I-1-a and Theme III-1-a are utilized (see Example 22). A final statement of Theme III-1 begins in measure 141 and leads into the transition which starts in measure 153.

This transition begins in D minor with a reminder of the plagal cadences that have been found throughout the sonata as seen below (overleaf):

An unusual feature of this transition is the introduction of a new theme in D major (measures 164-171).

Example 24. Measures 164-166, new theme in transition.

The transition theme is in $\frac{4}{4}$ and march-like. Measures 172-179 descend chromatically using the transition theme in quarter-notes as seen in Example 25 below (overleaf):
Example 25. Measure 172, transition Theme III-2 descending chromatically in quarter notes.

The second theme area (measures 180-205) is in E-flat major-minor. The reason for this designation is that Rachmaninoff fluctuates so often from the major to the minor mode. Theme III-2, with its gentle character, serves to relieve the tension of the Theme III-1 and provides a balance between Theme III-1 and the ensuing development section as seen in Example 26 below. The vacillation between major and minor, however, prepares the development section, which is also somewhat unstable in key.


Theme III-2 is divided into three areas: measures 180-189 (see above), measures 190-204, and measures 205-214. Area
two begins in the dominant, B-flat minor and rises to a chromatic climax in measure 201, then descends back to E-flat minor for the third area in measure 205.

The development section, which begins with a statement of Theme III-1-a in G minor is once again split into three areas: measures 215-254, measures 255-274, and measures 275-284. Theme III-1-a, in G minor, ends with a plagal cadence in measures 223-224. A repetition of the development's opening arpeggio is found in measures 225-226, which sets off this section and in measures 226-227 cadences in C minor. Theme III-1-b is presented in measures 227-230. The presentation of material is varied with the introduction of a fragment of Theme I-1-b in the soprano before returning to Theme III-1 (measure 236):

Example 27. Measures 232-234, fragment of Theme I-1-b in the soprano.
The following repetition is in B-flat minor and in measure 243 a slightly different version of measures 232-234 is presented. Measures 247-254 are another repetition of Theme III-1. The second area of the development continues in measure 255 in B major. This area itself is portioned off into two areas: measures 255-266 and measures 267-274. The first subdivision uses Theme I-1-a rhythmically and in the long notes of this motif, outlines Theme III-1-b as shown below:

Example 28. Measures 258-260, Theme I-1-a and Theme III-1-b combined.

The second subdivision continues the triplet accompaniment, utilizes Theme I-1-b as a unifying motif in E-flat minor, and helps create a smooth transition into the ensuing section. The last area of the development draws upon material from Theme I-1-a. Measures 279-284 are derived from measures 19-23 of the first movement transition between Themes I-1 and I-2.
The recapitulation is reached in measure 285 and is in B-flat major. Theme III-1 is stated only once in measures 285-292. The following episode (measure 293) begins in the same manner as did the earlier one in the movement (measures 117-137). This particular episode is somewhat longer than the first episode and prepares Theme III-3 through the dominant, F major in measures 324-328.

In measure 329 of the recapitulation, the final statement of Theme III-3 in B-flat major begins. This section extends through measure 358 and in contrast to the first presentation of this theme, is big and expansive, preparing the listener for the brilliant coda that follows.

The coda, measures 359-385, utilizes Themes I-1-a and I-1-b for motivic material. Highly chromatic, brilliant, the coda provides a well-balanced conclusion to this cyclical sonata.
CHAPTER III

STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS, REVISED EDITION

In the interest of time, a detailed analysis of every structural aspect of the Second Sonata, rev. ed. (1931), will not be presented. Only those structural features of the revised edition that differ from the original edition will be discussed. In all other structural matters that remain the same, the reader may refer to the discussion of the original edition or to the schematic found in the appendix.

First Movement

The first movement of the Second Sonata, rev. ed., is also in sonata-allegro form. The presentation of the first and second themes is the same as in the original edition, through measure 49. Measure 49 begins the transition into the development section where the first structural difference between the two versions of the sonata is found.

This transition, measures 49-52, has been considerably shortened in the revised edition. Theme I-1-b
is employed in the same manner as in the original edition; however, instead of developing Theme I-1-b further, Rachmaninoff goes directly into the development in measure 53, in D-flat major.

The development of the revised edition is also altered from the original. Although the key schemes of both (development sections) are the same and the division of the development remains the same, the use of material in the first area of development (rev. ed.) is different. Rachmaninoff, using the same motivic material, compresses this into a smaller area, as opposed to giving each idea its independent section in which to be developed, as seen in the Example below (overleaf):

The second and third areas of the development follow the same format as the original edition. The third area also prepares for the recapitulation in the same way as the original edition.

The recapitulation of the first theme in B-flat minor, measures 98-105, is the same as the original edition. The transition into the second theme area, measures 106-111, utilizes the same motivic idea but is presented in a much shorter version and does not include an anticipation as does the original edition, but rather it
moves directly into the second theme area which is in G-flat major.

The presentation of the second theme in the recapitulation is the same as the original edition and makes use of the same structure of themes and keys to reach the transition. The transition, measures 119-125, however, is different from the original edition. As before, in the rev. ed., the transition is shorter and divided into only two areas. The first area, measures 119-123, employs Theme I-1-b as does the original edition. The second area of this transition, measures 124-125, repeats the idea that was used in the revised edition. This leads directly to the coda of the first movement.

The coda of the first movement (rev. ed.), measures 126-138, is the same as the coda of the original edition in all structural respects, including the enharmonically written leading tone in measure 138. This leading tone prepares the listener for the first melodic note of the introduction of the second movement.

Second Movement

The second movement, structurally, harmonically, and thematically is the same as the original edition of the sonata until measure 36, which is the beginning of the transition into the middle section of the movement. The
second theme area is divided in two parts, measures 38-52, and measures 53-62. In the first area, Rachmaninoff uses Theme I-1-b in a less expansive manner than in the original edition. This gives the middle section a much more dense texture and is harmonically unstable. The middle section leaves the impression of being a little hurried and does not lead into the second area quite as effectively as the original edition does. The second area of the middle section is the same as the original with bell-like effects in the left hand and Theme I-1-b appearing as an ostinato accompaniment figure in the right hand. This leads to the third section of the movement, measures 63-76.

The third section of the movement is essentially the same as the original edition. The only structural difference being the momentary use of Theme I-2-1 in measures 65-66. This device further unifies the closing section of the second movement with earlier portions of the Sonata.

The third movement begins with the interlude, measures 77-83. This interlude is the same as the original of the second movement with the exception of the time signature which was in the first time and now is changed to to help prepare for the third movement. This section serves as a link with the previous movement, thus further unifying the sonata as seen in the example below (overleaf):
Example 30. Measures 77-81, meter shift from $\frac{4}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$.

The structure of the third movement is the same as in the original edition, again until the transition into the second theme area is reached. This transition begins in measure 131 of the revised edition. Although the same key schemes and motifs are used, Rachmaninoff deletes much developmental material, making this transition more effective in reaching the second theme area.

The second theme area, measures 152-181, and the development, measures 182-221, follow the same format as the original edition. Structurally, the only difference between the two editions is that the transition into the recapitulation of the revised edition has been deleted. The development of the revised edition goes directly into the recapitulation in measure 222.

The recapitulation and the coda of the revised edition is structurally and harmonically the same as the original edition. (See Table, p. 51 and schematic analysis
of rev. ed. in appendix.) Thus, while the overall structures of the two versions of the Sonata are similar, there are numerous differences in the transitions which, as we shall see, lead to some interesting comparisons in length of phrase and harmonic patterns.
CHAPTER IV
STRUCTURAL DIFFERENCES

There are two important types of differences between the two editions of the Second Sonata. These are: 1) the overall structural difference and 2) differences in the treatment of various textures. These will be discussed separately. In order to avoid the tedium of a measure-by-measure comparison, the various types of differences will be categorized with examples as illustrations.

In the first movement of the Second Sonata, the structure is identical in both the first and second theme areas. There are differences of a textural nature and these are discussed in the following chapter. The areas of disparity between the two versions occur in the transitions and development sections. In the original edition, the transition from second theme to the development takes place in measures 49-70, a total of twenty-one measures. In the revised edition, this same transition is located in measures 49-52, a total of only four measures. Considering the content of both transitions, it is clear that in the
revised edition, Rachmaninoff considered the transition simply as a means by which he could go from one section to another. In the original edition, however, the transition served not only as a connecting link, but also as a section in which he could develop themes and motifs outside of the development section itself. Thus, the original transition furthers the structural development of the work.

The section where a substantial difference from the original edition occurs is the development of the revised edition. In revising the development, Rachmaninoff inserted some related materials from the original edition's transition. An example of this is found in measures 53-58 of the revised edition compared with measures 63-70 of the transition of the original edition, as seen below in Examples 31a and 31b (overleaf):
Example 31b. Measures 63-70, first movement of original edition. Transition leading to development.
In measures 58-67 of the revised edition, Rachmaninoff also compresses previous themes and motifs in a smaller time frame. Through the use of compression, the expansiveness that one associates with the original edition is greatly reduced.

The next area of change in the first movement is the transition from the first to the second theme area in the recapitulation as seen below in Examples 32a and 32b:

Example 32a. Measures 106-111, first movement of the revised edition, transition to second theme in the recapitulation.
Example 32b. Measures 130-141, first movement of original edition, transition into second theme area of recapitulation.
Example 32b. Measures 130-141, first movement of original edition, transition into second theme area of recapitulation (continued).

In both editions, the same motivic material is used. In the original edition, however, Rachmaninoff uses the transition as an opportunity to further develop the material while progressing from one area of the sonata to another.

The last area of revision in the movement is found in the transition from the second theme area to the coda. In the revised edition, this transition is six measures long (measures 119-125). In the original edition it is twenty-one measures long (measures 148-169). The transition of the original edition parallels the transition into the development earlier in the movement (see Example 27b). In the revised edition, through measures 148-149,
this particular transition begins in the same way as the original edition. The revised edition in measures 124-125 skips to what, in the original edition would be measures 164-165. This follows the pattern already established by Rachmaninoff of compressing material into smaller units as seen in Example 33 below.

Example 33. Table of revisions (1931 ed.)

Exposition -- transition from Theme I to Theme II

Exposition -- transition from Theme II to Development (by 18 measures)

Development-- (by 6 measures)

Recapitulation -- transition from Theme I to Theme II (by 5 measures)

Recapitulation -- transition from Theme II to Coda (by 15 measures)

The second movement of the Sonata does not differ in structure from the original edition until the central section. The revisions that do exist in the first major division of the second movement are of the textural types that will be addressed below. Both editions use the same motivic material in the central section, however, the manner in which this material is used and at what length it is used varies a great deal between the two editions. Measures 36-45 of the original edition are characterized by a
chromatic triplet figure in the left hand and serve as an introductory section to the next section. In the revised edition, this introductory section is compressed into measures 36-37.

The division following the central section in the revised edition parallels the original in spirit, but not in actuality. In keeping with the cyclical nature of the work, Rachmaninoff employs motivic material from the first movement, specifically measures 59-65 of the first movement. In the original edition, Rachmaninoff relies on motivic material from the first movement also; however, in the second division of the central area of the second movement, this material is presented in a completely different manner. The result of this type of revision is that the listener recognizes (in both editions) the motivic material presented. The original edition, however, does not afford the same sense of immediate recognition that the revised edition presents. The original edition relies on length of presentation to establish the cyclical nature for the listener; the revised edition relies on the directness and similarity of material and texture to provide cyclical unity to the listener. The final division of the middle section is the same in both editions and does not affect the structure of the movement.
In the final section of the second movement there are distinct differences in the two editions; however, these differences are not structural but are of a textural nature and will be discussed in the next section of this document. The final section leads to a return of the interlude found at the beginning of the second movement. This interlude not only introduces the third movement but also connects the movements of the Sonata.

Third Movement

In the third movement, as before, Rachmaninoff makes his major structural revisions in the transitions. The first structural revision is found in the transition into the second theme area. The transition in both editions is the same through the presentation of the march-like section, measures 264–271 of the original edition and measures 131–151 of the revised edition. In the original edition, Rachmaninoff takes eight more measures to reach the theme area, whereas in the revised edition, these chromatically descending passages have been deleted. Once again, by down-playing the developmental nature of this transition, Rachmaninoff moves directly into the next section, thereby creating a more direct, if not abrupt, feeling of transition.
The final structural revision in the third movement is located at a point comparable to the last division of the original edition's development section, measures 255-284. In the revised edition Rachmaninoff has completely eliminated this section and goes directly into the recapitulation. It is evident that in the original edition Rachmaninoff's conception of this section was along the lines of not only having a developmental area but also of having an area where he might, in a more leisurely manner, set up the return of the main theme group of the third movement. It is interesting to note that in the revised edition, this expansiveness is eliminated, creating a more compact and direct work. The Sonata is a lengthy work and both editions reflect Rachmaninoff's compositional viewpoint at the time. The original edition is more expansive and developmental in nature; the revised edition is more direct and economical in its development of themes and motifs. Structurally, both editions are equally effective. However, it is necessary to examine the changes in local texture and coloration to determine if either edition is ultimately more effective.
CHAPTER V
A COMPARATIVE DISCUSSION: TEXTURE

Apart from the structural differences that Rachmaninoff introduced into the revised edition of the Second Sonata, the other factor that constitutes a change of style is his treatment of textures. For the purposes of this discussion, texture refers to the thickness or sparseness of writing. Since the change of textures are so closely related to the technique required to play these passages, a discussion of the technical problems related to these textural revisions is necessary, with reference to these textural changes. It is generally understood that as a composer matures with age, he becomes more proficient and knowledgeable in the use of various compositional devices. Yet this explanation is insufficient for the revisions made in the Second Sonata.

There are six basic categories within which Rachmaninoff made textural alterations: 1) thinning of texture, 2) elimination of repetitive chords, 3) octave transference, 4) reduction of rhythmic complexities, 5) reduction of mis-
cellaneous, usually chromatic, accompaniment passages, and 6) deletion of passages. The first and most commonly found alteration is the thinning of texture. In many instances, this device simply means that there are fewer notes than before. In Rachmaninoff's revised version, not only does the thinning of texture hold true, but also this is taken one step further; the same musical impact is achieved as before as seen below in Example 34a and Example 34b:

Example 34a. Measures 2-4, first movement of original edition.
Example 34b. Measures 2-4, first movement of revised edition.

This particular point of revision is important in Rachmaninoff's sonata because one of the predominant characteristics of his piano compositions, dense texture, still remains. This aspect of style change makes it significantly easier to be able to hear the individual voices in Rachmaninoff's music more clearly than before. In addition to achieving this musical clarity, Rachmaninoff has also made it easier for the pianist to play all of the notes. As seen in Example 34a, the original edition requires the pianist not only to play rapid triads in different inversions but also repeated triads. At the tempo indicated, Allegro agitato, repeated triads have a tendency to become indistinct. In the revised edition, as seen in Example 34b, Rachmaninoff has effectively solved the problem through the thinning of the texture, while achieving the
same musical impact. Another outstanding example of this type of change would be the second theme of the third movement. The elimination of much of the left hand figuration makes both the melody and the counter-melodies more discernible to the ear.

The second type of alteration deals with elimination of repetitive chords or with substitution of longer note values for repeated chords as seen in Examples 35a and 35b below. This variety of alteration eliminates the ponderous nature of repetitive chords found in the original edition and enables the listener to understand more clearly what Rachmaninoff is doing. Still another benefit of this kind of revision is the reduction of the number of climaxes in a highly dramatic work, which increases the dramatic effectiveness of the work without destroying its structural logic.
Example 35a. Measures 63-64, first movement of original edition, repetitive chords.

Example 35b. Measures 53-54, first movement of revised edition, substitution of longer note values for repeated chords.

Through the use of the type of revision seen above (Examples 35a and 35b), Rachmaninoff has eliminated a technical problem that is common in the original edition, that of dealing with rapidly changing chords that also change octaves. By substituting the longer note values, Rachmaninoff affords the pianist more time to prepare physically
for the next chord rather than relying on the reflexes and hoping that one does not miss the next chord.

The third aspect of textural revision, octave transference, involves the raising or lowering of melodic or accompanimental passages one octave. This specific device is less commonly found than the other types of textural revisions; nonetheless, it contributes towards clarity of texture and provides the same musical impact as in the original edition, as seen below in Examples 36a and 36b:

Example 36a. Measures 13-14, first movement of original edition.
Example 36b. Measures 13-14, first movement of revised edition, octave transference.

The fourth textural alteration is the reduction of rhythmic complexities in fast passages as seen below in Examples 37a and 37b (overleaf):

Example 37b. Measures 130–133, first movement of revised edition, reduction of rhythmic complexities fast passage (left hand).
Once again, Rachmaninoff's revision demonstrates a concern for textural transparency and again achieves the same musical impact that was intended in the original edition. In eliminating the large skips that are found in the left hand of the original edition, Rachmaninoff shows a much greater sensitivity towards pianists who are not as well endowed technically as he was himself.

The fifth variety of alteration is the reduction of miscellaneous, usually chromatic, accompaniment passages as seen below in Examples 38a and 38b (overleaf):

The type of writing seen in Example 38a, chromatic accompaniment passages, although very exciting, does not wear well if there is an overabundance of it. From a pianistic viewpoint, the reduction of such passages also simplifies the demands on the pianist. Not only are the rhythms easier to deal with, but the type of texture found in the revised edition (Example 38b) is much easier to control. There is less of a tendency to hurry through such a passage if it does not hold any technical terrors. In a long work already filled with dramatic ideas and highly chromatic to begin with, this type of writing is not nearly as effective as it could be, particularly if the setting was much less complex.

The final type of alteration found is outright deletion. The areas where Rachmaninoff employs this drastic
procedure are the transitional passages. One outstanding example of this is measures 255–284 of the original edition, third movement. This section is not only ponderous and thick, but structurally awkward. Pianistically, this passage presents problems of rhythm, balance, and musical coherence. Through deletion, Rachmaninoff has taken care of all these problems and presented the listener with a structurally more balanced work.

The common thread that runs through all of the revisions made by Rachmaninoff is the simplification and clarification both of structure and of texture. It is this thread that constitutes the change of style, not a change of harmonic vocabulary. In the process of doing this, Rachmaninoff has arrived at a version of the Second Sonata that is pianistically much more accessible, and offers two distinct versions of the Second Sonata from which to choose.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

As has been shown in the comparison of the two editions of the Second Sonata, Rachmaninoff indeed underwent a change of style. This style change is borne out not only by the revised edition but also by supported by Rachmaninoff's two remaining piano works written after the revision of the Second Sonata, the Corelli Variations, Opus 42, and the Variations on a Theme of Paganini, Opus 43. Since both works are theme and variations, they lend themselves very well to the short, concise, and more direct style of later Rachmaninoff.

The original edition of the Second Sonata is a cyclical work of substantial length, and as such, is not immune to a certain number of weaknesses. These weaknesses stem from two aspects of Rachmaninoff's musical style: 1) Rachmaninoff's awkwardness in handling a large cyclical form, and 2) Rachmaninoff's prodigious pianistic technique.

The awkwardness mentioned above in dealing with a long cyclical work is most evident in two areas of the
original edition: the method in which Rachmaninoff estab-
ishes cyclic unity and the length and function of transi-
tions within individual movements of the Sonata. These
weaknesses are most noticeable in the third movement of the
Sonata where cyclic unity is most problematic. Through the
use of the sonata-allegro form in the first movement, Rach-
maninoff avoids any problems with unity. In the second
movement of the original edition, Rachmaninoff utilizes the
transition into the central section not only to restate
Theme I-1-a but also to develop this theme in a different
context, a highly chromatic context that not only esta-
blishes clearly the cyclical aspect of the sonata but pre-
pares the listener for the chromatic nature of the central
section as well. In this area, the use of Theme I-1-b is
featured as the main theme of this section, further esta-
blishing the cyclic unity of the Sonata. This extensive
use of Theme I-1-a and Theme I-1-b material in such close
proximity to each other is what gives the original edition
of the Second Sonata such coherence.

The third movement presents the most awkward
handling of cyclic unity. An example of this awkwardness
is found in the last section of the development which also
acts as a transition into the recapitulation. Here Rach-
maninoff not only brings back Theme I-1-a and Theme I-1-b,
but also there seems to be no logical reason for this restatement of motifs. It would seem that if Rachmaninoff had used one of the other themes from movements one or two, then a greater sense of unity could have been established. However, Rachmaninoff did not do so, thus the result is that the listener must endure still another statement of Themes I-1-a and I-1-b.

The revised edition of the Second Sonata takes care of the original edition's persistent repetition of Themes I-1-a and I-1-b through the employment of compression. In the use of this compositional device, the same material is presented as before, however, this material is now compressed into a much smaller unit. This relieves the listener of a great deal of the repetition of themes at great length. The aspect of this device that causes some problems is that it has a tendency to make the transitions from section to section seem rather abrupt, a correction in the opposite direction of the problems found in the original edition. This now brings up the question of what is the function of a transition in a large work.

As evidenced in the original edition, Rachmaninoff viewed the transition as not only a means of connecting two larger sections of a work but also as an area where he could develop themes and motifs to a greater extent than
is normally associated with a transition. This in and of itself is a useful aspect of a lengthier transition. In Rachmaninoff's case, however, the transitions tended to be bulky vehicles for the display of empty virtuosity and reiteration of themes and motifs. In his search for a solution to this problem, Rachmaninoff went to the other extreme. In the revised edition of the Second Sonata, Rachmaninoff, as has been shown, viewed the transition almost exclusively as a connecting link between two larger sections of a movement. This viewpoint and the use of compression limited the length of transitions and the result is a work that does not flow as smoothly from start to finish. This raises the question for the performer of which edition of the Second Sonata should be used in performance.

The answer to this question offers the performer three choices:

1) The original edition. From both a historical and musical viewpoint, this edition is quite interesting in that it exhibits Rachmaninoff's early style and is filled with an extraordinary amount of tonal colors and virtuosity that despite some structural difficulties is always a pleasure to hear. The inherent danger of this choice is that the technical difficulties that are presented are of
such a high caliber that many pianists would be well advised to consider seriously the second choice.

2) The revised edition. This choice is perhaps the most obvious of the three. The revised edition not only presents the Second Sonata during Rachmaninoff's late style period but also relieves the performer of the burden of trying successfully to match Rachmaninoff's pianistic technique that dominates the original edition of the Second Sonata. This is not to say that the revised edition of the Sonata is easy to play, but due to the type of textural revisions that Rachmaninoff made in the revised edition, the technical demands are such that a competent pianist should be able to overcome these demands. The greatest advantage of this edition is that the musical impact that Rachmaninoff had in mind in the original edition still comes across with as much force and drama as the original edition.

3) The personal performance edition. This choice consists of a combination of both editions and is based on an event that happened in 1931 after the complete revision of the Sonata. Vladimir Horowitz, a close friend of Rachmaninoff, perceived the problems of both editions mentioned above. As a result, Horowitz sought and received the composer's permission to create a third and unpublished
personal performance edition.¹ This final choice is perhaps the most successful method to use in presenting the most coherent and musically satisfying rendition of the Second Sonata. The danger that is to be avoided in this solution is that whatever combination of editions that is finally made must reflect the composer's intentions and not the performer's ego. Thus, the result should produce a version of the Second Sonata that successfully eliminates the long, ponderous virtuosic passages of the original edition and resolves the abruptness of the revised edition. One possible solution which is quite successful and simple is to substitute the last movement of the original edition for the revised edition's last movement. This solution not only takes into account the dangers mentioned above, but also benefits the entire work as a whole. The first two movements of the original edition are strong enough to stand on their own merits. With the substitution of the last movement, the architecture of the entire work is more balanced through the elimination of the long and virtuosic transitions in the third movement. With this third option, I have given the performer the best of both styles while retaining the composer's original intent. Consequently, this document should prove beneficial not only to

¹Bazhanov, op. cit., 312.
performers, but to aficionados of piano literature by fostering a greater appreciation and understanding of Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Sonata.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX

SCHEMATICS OF ORIGINAL AND REVISED EDITIONS
1st Movement Original Edition
Sonata #2 Op.36

Exposition

R flat minor

Development

G flat major

Recapitulation

 CODA

B flat minor

G flat major

E flat major

B flat major minor
2nd Movement Original Edition
Sonata #2 Op.36

A
interlude
4 5 8 12 13
E minor

repetition of Theme II-1 with counter melody
17 Theme I-1-b 25 Theme II-1 third repetition
G major E minor

B

28 continuation of Themes II-1 with thicker texture
36 Theme I-1-a with chromatic accompaniment

transitions
46 Theme I-1-b as melody and accompaniment
52 development of Theme I-1-b as B material
57 passes chromatically through keys

E minor F minor E flat minor

63 Theme I-1-b (bells)
67 74 76 77 78 89
2nd division of B section
C major E minor E minor E major

Return of Theme II-1
Attacca
1st Movement Revised Edition
Sonata #2 Op.36

Exposition

- Theme I-1-a
- Theme I-1-b

5 3 2
1st division 2nd division 3rd division

B flat minor

Development

- Transition
- Theme I-1-a
- Theme I-1-b

50 53 59 60 63
1st division 2nd division

G flat major D flat major D minor E minor

Recapitulation

- Theme I-1-a & b
- Transition
- Theme I-2

98 105 119 124 126
3rd division

B flat minor G flat major E flat major B flat minor

CODA

- Theme I-1-a

88 92 93 94 (foreshortened)
2nd Movement Revised Edition
Sonata #2 Op. 36

A
interlude

G major

E minor

G major

repitition of Theme II-1 with counter melody

B

continuation of Theme II-1 with thicker texture

transition using Theme I-1-b

Theme I-1-b

1st division

2nd division (begin)

transition

Theme I-2

B flat minor

C major

E minor

E major

A'

return of A with Theme II-1

Attacca

84
3rd Movement Original Edition
Sonata #2 Op.36

Exposition
90 interlude
97 Theme III-1-a
105 Theme III-1-b
137 repetition of Theme III-1-a
141 Theme III-1-b
152 transition
161 Theme I-1-b
164 transition theme

F major
B flat major
G flat major
D minor
D major

Second Theme Area
172 chromatic sequence
212 Theme III-2
215 Theme III-1-a transition

G minor
E flat major
G minor
E minor
F minor
F sharp minor
E flat minor

Development
239 Theme III-1-a & b
251 Theme III-1-b
255 Theme III-1-b
267 Theme I-1-a & b

Recapitulation
275 Theme I-1-a
265 3rd division
269 D major
267 B flat major
297 E major
321 B flat major

second theme
329 Theme III-a
359 Theme III-1-a
367 Theme I-1-a & b

CODA