

CHOPIN'S LAST MESSAGE: A STUDY OF THE FIRST MOVEMENT OF CHOPIN'S SONATA
FOR CELLO AND PIANO, OP. 65

An Essay
Presented to
The Faculty of the Moores School of Music
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts

By
Daniel Saenz
December 2015

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ABSTRACT

Frédéric Chopin's Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 65, is an undervalued masterpiece that has been unfairly misrepresented in the history of musical criticism. This essay offers a new appraisal of the piece based on historical research, Chopin's correspondence, detailed formal analysis, and a study of expressive tools used to enhance this sonata.

The first section provides background on the popular criticism of Chopin's oeuvre, the genesis of the cello sonata, and Chopin's enduring friendship with August Franchomme. This is accomplished through a discussion of contemporary critical writings on Chopin's music and recent analytical studies of his sonatas in particular. His letters are referenced to help demonstrate personal and professional situations he experienced during the composition of the cello sonata. Additionally, a brief history of his friendship with August Franchomme, the cellist to whom the work is dedicated, illustrates his deep commitment to close friends in his circle and documents circumstances surrounding the debut of the work.

The second section delves into Chopin's correspondence during the years 1830-1849 to help illuminate how melancholia or depression and ill health affected his life and work. His struggle to compose the cello sonata makes sense when viewed through the anecdotal evidence in his letters to friends and colleagues. His letters also reveal supporting information that connects his works, late style, failing health, and melancholia during the final years of his life.

Lastly, through an analysis of the first movement's formal structure and an outline of the various quoted themes Chopin included throughout the sonata, this essay will explore how the cello sonata fits within the context of his late style. Darcy and Hepokoski's seminal work on sonata theory, Andrew Davis' article on Chopin and the Romantic Sonata, and Janet Schmalfeldt's article on evaded cadences are referenced throughout the analysis to help support the findings. Chopin integrated expressive devices including evaded cadences and quoted themes to create a work that is singular among instrumental sonatas in the Romantic period.

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Introduction

Musical criticism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has not been kind to Frédéric Chopin's Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 65. Typical of such critical assessment was that of Chopin biographer, Frederick Niecks, (1924) who wrote:

The Sonata for piano and violoncello [is] anything else but effort, painful effort. The first and last movements are immense wilderness with only here and there a small flower. The middle movements do not rise to the dignity of the sonata, and, moreover, lack distinction.¹

Niecks' opinion of Chopin's cello sonata was a respected view in the late nineteenth century and one that resonated with many Chopin scholars in the early twentieth century. In light of recent thought regarding sonata-form processes, a fresh evaluation of the cello sonata seems to be in order.² The main thrust of this essay, then, is to nuance the perception of this undervalued work and to bring to light a new view of Frédéric Chopin's cello sonata, a work that has been undervalued throughout its history.

The first section of the essay provides background on the popular criticism of Chopin's oeuvre, the genesis of the Sonata for Cello and Piano, and Chopin's enduring friendship with August Franchomme, the cellist to whom the work is dedicated. Additionally, through Chopin's personal correspondence, this essay will reveal threads connecting his works, failing health, and melancholia during the final years of his life.³

¹ Frederick Niecks, *Chopin as a Man and Musician* (New York: Copper Square Publishers, 1973), 174.

² James A. Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Andrew Davis, "Chopin and the Romantic Sonata: The First Movement of Op. 58," *Music Theory Spectrum* 36, no. 2 (December 2014): 270-294. Darcy and Hepokoski have contributed greatly to the development of sonata theory in the Classical era. Davis has focused on the Romantic era to expand on their ideas.

³ In the nineteenth century, melancholia referred to a subtype of mania that exhibited depressive, agitated, hallucinatory, paranoid, and demented states. G. E. Berrios, "Melancholia and Depression During the 19th Century: A Conceptual History," *British Journal of Psychiatry*, (1988): 298-304; Before the 19th century, melancholia was generally believed caused by an overabundance of black bile. Donna Trembinski, "Melacholy/Mania and Modern

Lastly, through an analysis of the first movement's formal structure and an outline of the various quoted themes Chopin included throughout the sonata, this essay will explore how this work fits within the context of Chopin's late style.⁴

Criticism, the Cello Sonata, and August Franchomme

Criticism of Chopin's works began during his student days when he was accused of a lack of respect for the rules of composition. Somewhat prophetically, Józef Elsner, Chopin's only composition teacher in Warsaw, justified Chopin's technique when he said, "Leave him alone...he does not adhere to the old method because he has one of his own, and his works will reveal an originality hitherto unknown."⁵

Much of Chopin's early success as a composer and virtuoso pianist came from his numerous mazurkas and polonaises, music that undoubtedly brought him closer to his countrymen and the memory of his youth. Wayne C. Petty writes that as Chopin settled in Paris in the early 1830s, he kept a safe distance from Beethoven and the sonata genre by composing mazurkas, polonaises, nocturnes, preludes, études, ballades, and independent scherzi, works that had no significant relationship to Beethoven's practice.⁶ Chopin was not alone in this avoidance; many composers of the generation immediately after

Trauma: An Argument in Favor of Historical Experiences of Trauma," *History of Psychology* 11, No. 1 (2011): 80-89; Recently, Kay Jamison made convincing arguments for the relationship between melancholia or depression (or cyclothymia its milder form) and the creative artist. She writes, "Artistic expression can be the beneficiary of either visionary and ecstatic or painful, frightening, and melancholic experiences. Even more important, however, it can derive great strength from the struggle to come to terms with such emotional extremes, and from the attempt to derive from them some redemptive value." Kay R. Jamison, *Touched with Fire: Manic-Depressive Illness and the Artistic Temperament* (New York: Free Press, 1993), 116. For this essay, melancholia will refer to Chopin's depressed mental condition during the final years of his life.

⁴ Works by Chopin that are referenced in the first movement include his Concerto for Piano, op. 21, Nocturne, op. 62, no.1, Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, op. 35, and the *Polonaise-Fantasie*, op. 61.

⁵ G. A. Osborne, *Reminiscences of Fredrick Chopin* (London: Stanley Lucas, Weber, & Co., 1880), 92.

⁶ Wayne C. Petty, "Chopin and the Ghost of Beethoven," *Nineteenth Century Music* 22, No. 3 (1999): 281.

Beethoven also preferred to write in small forms and to exploit the character piece. By focusing on smaller genres during his formative years in Paris, Chopin managed to eschew the long shadow that Beethoven cast over most of the nineteenth century, while at the same time expressing a unity with his countrymen through his music of Polish origin.

By 1839, Chopin had completed his Sonata for Piano in B-flat minor, op. 35, about which Robert Schumann's criticism sparked a reaction that set "the pattern for most later criticisms of Chopin: an acknowledgment of imaginative power along with an assertion of technical limitations."⁷ Schumann described Chopin's Sonata no. 2 for Piano as akin to, "four of Chopin's maddest children under the same roof."⁸ Contemporary critics, including Schumann, did not fully acknowledge in Chopin's sonatas the "strong urge to renovate a form that had been around for many decades, [making] it more spontaneous and less predictable."⁹ Certainly, experiments in sonata form were a common occurrence throughout the preceding Classical era; however, if we see Chopin's experiments of sonata form through a lens of fragmentation-a common expressive device used in the Romantic era-we may begin to gain a deeper understanding of the narrative Chopin wished to convey to his audience.¹⁰ Recent thought on the subject of Chopin's compositions in sonata form has taken a more positive turn as Anatole Leiken asserts in his 1992 article, "the conviction that Chopin could not handle sonata form is fortunately fading away."¹¹

Chopin did not write any large-scale works other than his piano concerti.

⁷ Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995), 284.

⁸ Anatole Leiken, "The Sonatas," in *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin*, ed. by Jim Samson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 161.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 161.

¹⁰ Andrew Davis, "Chopin and the Romantic Sonata: The First Movement of Op. 58," *Music Theory Spectrum* 36, no. 2 (December 2014): 270-294. In his article, Davis posits that Chopin found a new means of expression through fragmentation or musical non-sequiturs in his sonatas. This topic will be discussed later in the analysis of the first movement.

¹¹ Leiken, "The Sonatas," 161.

Although his nocturnes for piano embodied the *bel canto* style, his works for voice included only seventeen songs published posthumously. Unsurprisingly, his few chamber works for other instruments have always included the piano in the ensemble. Chopin's avoidance of large-scale works may be due to the unsuitability of his compositional style for the symphonic and operatic genres, or, the increasing presence of illness in his life that may have made it difficult for him to explore large-scale works. Taking on larger projects would mean extending his forces beyond their capacity.

The Sonata for Cello and Piano op. 65 is exceptional for being one of Chopin's rare chamber works. Taking into consideration the evidence about the work's premiere, popular opinions of the sonata, and the fact that it was written during a personally tumultuous time shortly before his death, Chopin's decision to not include the first movement in the debut is indeed striking.¹² The sonata's first performance was well-received in spite of its incomplete presentation. In 1852, a complete performance of the work with Auguste Franchomme (1808-1884) playing the cello was also critically praised. The critics at the latter performance favored its opening movement more than the others, this in spite of its omission from the 1848 performance.¹³

French cellist Auguste Franchomme played a central role in the creation of the Cello Sonata and was one of Chopin's closest companions during the final years of composer's life. Chopin met Franchomme in 1832 at a dinner organized by Liszt. Ferdinand Hiller, also in attendance that evening, would later recount to Niecks (Chopin's biographer) that Chopin and Franchomme "formed a friendship as is rarely encountered

¹² Leiken, "The Sonatas," 187. Chopin played the cello sonata in a dress rehearsal for a few guests before the debut. It remains unclear why the first movement would be omitted from its first performance.

¹³ Maurice Schlesinger, *Revue et gazette musicale de Paris* (February 20, 1848): 2; Léon Kreutzer, "Concert de M. Tellefsen," *Revue et gazette musicale de Paris* (April 10, 1853): 132. About the Cello Sonata Mr. Kreutzer commented "everything in it is plaintive and melancholic, we found the first two movements better than the last."

among musicians in urban centers.”¹⁴ The following year, Chopin and Franchomme published the *Grand Duo* in E Major on themes from *Robert le Diable*, a work co-written by the two musicians.¹⁵ It is interesting to point out that before meeting Chopin, Franchomme had only composed a few works and subsequent to the debut of their friendship, Franchomme coincidentally composed thirty-three more works, perhaps under Chopin’s influence. Additionally, Franchomme arranged for cello many of Chopin’s solo piano works and added several revisions to the *Introduction and Polonaise Brillante*, Op. 3 of 1831.¹⁶ Franchomme played principal cello in the Théâtre-Italien, today the site of the Opéra Comique. Chopin, whose love of Italian *bel canto* opera is well-documented, would have frequented Franchomme’s performances at the Théâtre-Italien.¹⁷

Most contemporary reviews praised Franchomme’s playing. Berlioz thought he was “the best cellist in the capital and there was none more secure than he in the dangerous keys, no more charming in sustained singing.”¹⁸ Others, like the painter Delacroix, found his playing reserved: “That which [is] well planned and precise, seems to me to be at times cold and dry.”¹⁹ Compared to other cellists who frequented the salons of Paris, Franchomme did not resort to visual demonstrations. Rather, he was a thoughtful and musical player with great respect for the composers’ wishes. Franchomme’s immaculate and reserved style of cello playing must have struck a chord within Chopin whose own style of piano playing was unique, introverted, and ill-suited for the large concert hall. Franchomme’s bond with Chopin could be best summed up by violinist

¹⁴ Frederick Niecks, *Frederick Chopin as man and musician*, vol. I (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1973), 231-232.

¹⁵ Chopin’s letters from Vienna mention a violinist named Josef Slavick with whom he also planned a co-written duo. There is no evidence of this collaboration.

¹⁶ A work dedicated to Austrian cellist Joseph Merk.

¹⁷ Jim Samson, *The Music of Chopin* (London, Boston and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), 81.

¹⁸ Hector Berlioz, *Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* (February 27, 1842): 81.

¹⁹ Louise Dubin, “Auguste Franchomme: A Study of the Virtuoso, Pedagogue, and Composer, with a Focus on His Contributions to Violoncello Repertoire and Technique” (DMA diss., Indiana University, 2011), 60.

Eugene Sauzay's words spoken on the occasion of Franchomme's funeral in 1884: "I would be remiss to not mention the name of one who charmed Franchomme's life, Chopin! Alas, they are reunited today."²⁰

Chopin's Battle with Melancholia

As Chopin's friendship with Franchomme blossomed during the mid-1830s, Chopin's personal life began showing signs of distress due to the failed Polish insurrection of 1830-31, the marriage of his beloved Konstancja Gladkowska to another, the subsequent rejected marriage proposal to Maria Wodzinska and finally, his declining health. The failed Polish insurrection and Gladkowska's marriage serves as the starting point for Chopin's battle with melancholia. A letter written in Stuttgart from September 1831 purportedly marks the moment where this melancholia originally entered in his psyche. The letter is filled with anxiety over the well-being of his loved ones in Poland, who were presumably suffering under Russian rule. It also makes several vivid references to corpses and to what he can only imagine as being the spoils of war. He writes, "mother, poor suffering mother, have you borne a daughter to see a Russian violate her very bones?"²¹ About Gladkowska he imagines a Russian soldier, "strangling her, killing, murdering!"²² Later in the same letter, he compares his body to that of a corpse, "a corpse is as colorless as I, as cold, as I am cold to everything now." He ends the letter by resigning to being a corpse himself, stating that he is "wretched... This is a strange state,

²⁰ Ibid., 38.

²¹ Frédéric Chopin, *Chopin's Letters*, ed. Ethel Lilian Voynich (New York: Vienna House, 1973), 149.

²² Ibid., 149.

but that is so with a corpse; it's well and not well with it at the same moment.”²³ Chopin's mental state during this time shifted to a dark place from which it would never break away. Ewelina Boczkowska describes Chopin's letters from this period:

[Chopin] often uses morbid imagery in situations involving a traumatic loss or deep melancholia at crucial moments in his personal life.... No wonder, then, that Chopin's refusal to come to terms with the reality of loss also found another expressive outlet: his music.²⁴

This sentiment agrees with Aristotle's musing on the link between melancholia and artistic inspiration: “Why is it that all men who are outstanding in philosophy, poetry or the arts are melancholic?”²⁵

New ideas flowed from Chopin's pen in 1845 when he began working on his Sonata for Cello and Piano, *Barcarolle in F-sharp major*, and the *Polonaise-Fantasia*. This time of his life corresponds with his late period, an era that began with the unfortunate stay in Mallorca of 1838-39 and continued until his death in 1849. Chopin's last decade is one of vision, revision, and of a reacquaintance with the learned style.²⁶ Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven all returned to counterpoint at the end of their lives. Returning to counterpoint is, “tantamount to putting one's creative life in order before the long silence.”²⁷

The inclusion of counterpoint in one's music carries with it a religious connotation; however, this was not necessarily the case with Chopin and his late music.²⁸

²³ Ibid., 150.

²⁴ Ewelina Boczkowska, “Chopin's Ghosts,” *Nineteenth Century Music* 35, no. 3 (Spring 2012): 204.

²⁵ Aristotle, *Problems II: Books XXII-XXXVIII*, trans. W. S. Hett (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), 155-157.

²⁶ *The Worksheets to Chopin's Violoncello Sonata*. Facsimile (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1988), 155-158.

²⁷ W. Dean Sutcliffe, “Chopin's Counterpoint: The Largo from the Cello Sonata, Op. 65,” *The Musical Quarterly* 83, no. 1 (1999): 116.

²⁸ There is one exception. Chopin purportedly wrote a work for chorus and organ, *Veni Creator*. This work was written during 1846 as a gift for a friend's wedding. Unfortunately, the score is lost. Adam Zamoyski, “Chopin:

He used counterpoint more as a springboard to create new textures and ideas in his music. Furthermore, Chopin's exploration of counterpoint helped shift his music out of the mundane and into music operating on a deeper level, the kind of music that a post-1848 Europe would experience through Wagner and Liszt's chromatically rich operas and tone poems. Additionally, counterpoint in Chopin's late works conveys timelessness in a moment of illness and encroaching death.

The first movement of the Cello Sonata is haunted with musical ghosts that contribute to the fragmentation of its sonata form and provide evidence of Chopin's struggle to forge a new style near the end of his life. Anatole Leikin brings to our attention that the basic idea from the opening measures of the first movement is a reference to the song "Gute Nacht" from Franz Schubert's *Winterreisen*.²⁹ Further investigation of the first movement uncovers other musical quotations scattered throughout the score akin to a scrapbook of memories that are too distant to see clearly. The struggle that Chopin had in composing this work and the subsequent rejection of the first movement for the premiere brings up the real possibility that the narrative he wanted to convey was one of farewell, as Schubert's song conveys: "As a stranger I arrived, As a stranger again I leave."³⁰ Indeed, Chopin felt he was a stranger in Paris. (see Example 1)

Prince of the Romantics", (London: HarperPress, 2010), 242.

²⁹ Leikin, "The Sonatas," 185.

³⁰ "Gute Nacht" text.

Example 1. Opening of Schubert's *Winterreisen*, mm. 7-12

Contour similar to Op. 65 Half step motive

Fremd bin ich einge - zo - gen, fremd zieh' ich wie - der aus. Der Mai war mir ge -
 Ich kann zu meiner Rei - sen nicht wäh - len mit der Zeit, muss selbst den Weg mir

Opening of Chopin's Op. 65, mm. 1-4

Allegro moderato.

Violoncello.

Pianoforte.

Similar contour to Gute nacht Half step motive Half step motive

sostenuto

After the failed Polish insurrection against Russia during 1830-31, Chopin felt something inside of him had died. This started a lifelong battle with melancholia that would permeate his music until his last days, perhaps contributing to the fragmentation of his sonata form. Ewelina Boczkowska explains:

Chopin's music carries a poignant relationship to loss and melancholy. Much of this music is imbued with unremitting melancholia and reflects a particular experience of shattered hope, forced displacement, and social estrangement.³¹

In the Sonata op. 65 musical evidence of Chopin's melancholy is conveyed via the many themes he quotes, of his own and that of Schubert, which in turn contribute to the fragmentation of the movement's form. Andrew Davis writes:

The Romantic composer's solution to the problem [of sonata form] was not to try to reproduce and sustain the older genres but instead to seek new, fragmented forms in which the old and the new, the then and now, could merge

³¹ Boczkowska, "Chopin's Ghosts," 205.

in a provocative expressive dialogue.³²

Referring again to example 1 from Schubert's *Winterreisen*, note how the piano's opening theme of sonata closely follows the contour of the vocal line and how the half step motive (labeled in both scores) from "Gute Nacht" is mimicked in the sonata. This half step motive will form a cell that will grow throughout the work's entirety. More than just a basic idea, this motive is the basis for the Grundgestalt of the whole sonata and is then varied throughout each of its four movements.

Chopin's late style displays the following characteristics: frequent use of counterpoint, virtuosic control over long passages of unstable material, and experimentation in form. In his analysis of the *Polonaise-Fantasie*, Op. 61, Jeffery Kallberg concludes that Chopin created a new hybrid genre that pushed the boundaries of form and harmony through which he was able to exhibit "control over long passages of unstable material" and discover "new means of musical continuity."³³ The balance of instability and stability is the hallmark of Chopin's late style and, as Kallberg argues, is evident in his *Polonaise-Fantasie* and other late works, including the Sonata for Cello and Piano. Unfortunately, Chopin's burst of inspiration was poorly timed, "for just when he needed to muster all of his energy in the service of his art, the structure of his daily existence collapsed."³⁴ Kallberg also makes an important point that new developments in Chopin's musical continuity and his dissatisfaction with older genres were surfacing during the last years of his life; Chopin's last style foreshadows many of the ideals and techniques Verdi, Wagner, and Liszt would all soon develop in their own music after

³² Davis, "Chopin and the Romantic Sonata," 270-294.

³³ Jeffery Kallberg, *Chopin at the Boundaries: Sex, History, and Musical Genre* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1996), 98. Kallberg refers to the highly chromatic language that Verdi, Wagner, and Liszt would all employ in the following decades.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 134.

1848.³⁵ Chopin's Sonata for Cello and Piano embodies his last style, not so much by creating a new genre as he did in the *Polonaise-Fantasie*, but through "applying his new techniques within the context of already familiar genres."³⁶

Chopin's correspondence during the years 1845-48 reveals a disinclination to compose brought about by what we can conjecture is the ever-increasing presence of his illness.³⁷ In a long and rambling letter to his family he writes, "sometimes I am satisfied with my violoncello sonata, sometimes not. I throw it into the corner, then take it up again."³⁸ His deteriorating relationship with George Sand compounded the difficulties in composing his sonata during this period.³⁹ Amid all of this, Chopin kept up his usual teaching schedule in order to support himself. Despite these internal and external hurdles, in February 1848, he would include his cello sonata in what was to be his final concert in Paris.⁴⁰

His closest friends who heard the cello sonata's preview performance urged him not to include the first movement on the program, presumably because it had too many ideas; his declining health and the rupture of his nine-year relationship with Sand, however, may have had more to do with the seemingly scattered and unfocused form of the first movement.⁴¹ Here we can draw a parallel between Chopin's increasingly invasive illness and unfortunate personal circumstances with Beethoven's deafness and

³⁵ Ibid., 134.

³⁶ Ibid., 134.

³⁷ Chopin suffered from what many doctors and historians believe was tuberculosis. Recent research has included the diagnosis of cystic fibrosis. John O'Shea, "Was Frederic Chopin's illness actually cystic fibrosis?" *The Medical Journal of Australia*, 147 (1987): 586-589.

³⁸ Chopin, *Chopin's Letters*, 311; *The Worksheets to Chopin's Violoncello Sonata*. Facsimile (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1988). This volume contains the worksheets for Sonata for Piano, op. 58, *Polonaise-Fantasie*, op. 61, and the Sonata for Cello, op. 65. It also includes copies of fugues by Cherubini.

³⁹ George Sand penned *Lucrezia Floriani*, a novel of about her relationship with Chopin.

⁴⁰ February 16, 1848, Salons Pleyel.

⁴¹ Benita Eisler, *Chopin's Funeral* (New York: Knopf, 2003), 174.

consequent exile from society.⁴² In the case of Chopin, what appears to have exiled him away from traditional conventions was his handling of the sonata form and the fragmentation found therein. It is possible that the first audience present at cello sonata's dress rehearsal could not understand the new direction Chopin exhibited in his late style. There is an equal chance that they fully comprehended its implications: the fragmented sonata which creates a narrative that harkens back to earlier musical works and ultimately suggests his melancholia for the past and a sense of impending death. He was "fully conscious, full of memory, and also very (even preternaturally) aware of the present" as he was struggling to finish his cello sonata.⁴³ Chopin's art in his final years did not "abdicate its rights in favor of reality; his art forged ahead in spite of these obstacles."⁴⁴

Letters written during his autumnal trip to England in 1848 reveal a tone shifted onto the subject of death and expose just how much Chopin's struggle with illness had disabled him. Chopin in this last phase of life has perhaps grown more aware of his physical condition. He left behind the virtuosity, exaggerated themes, figurations, and liberal application of coloratura characteristic of the 1830s. By the late 1840s a new style had emerged seemingly as a result of his developing illness and encroaching death. To Julian Fontana he writes of relinquishing thoughts of youth and of accepting his weakened body, "it is a pity that we are the work of some famous luthier, some

⁴² Edward W. Said, *On Late Style: Music and Literature against the Grain* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006), 8.

⁴³ Ibid., 14.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 9; There is an inherent danger in reading too much into the mental health of composers like Chopin; recent progress, however, in accurately diagnosing depression has led many to re-examine the lives of great artists. Kay Jamison writes, "when energy is profoundly dissipated, the ability to think is clearly eroded, and the capacity to actively engage in the efforts and pleasures of life is fundamentally altered, then depression becomes an illness rather than a temporary or existential state." Seen in light of this modern diagnosis, Chopin seemed to be suffering from depression during the creation of the Cello Sonata. Kay Jamison, *Touched with Fire: Manic-Depressive Illness and the Artistic Temperament* (New York: Free Press, 1993), 18.

Stradivarius sui generis, who is no longer around to repair us.”⁴⁵ Regret also features prominently in the letters from Chopin’s final year. He writes that he dreams of happiness alongside misery and ponders, “what has happened to my art? And my heart, where did I squander it?”⁴⁶ To Solange Clésinger, estranged daughter of George Sand, Chopin writes, “[I am] weaker than you have ever seen me.”⁴⁷ Some of his letters show that although he was losing the battle with his illness, there was still a semblance of his humorous side. He writes of the well-to-do ladies he met in England, “they all look at their hands, and play all the wrong notes with much feeling.”⁴⁸

Chopin laid sick in bed for most of his visit to England; the climate did not suit him and because of this trip his condition hastened to a point of no return. Exacerbating his condition was his hosts’ insistence on his participation in numerous social calls and events, which exhausted whatever little energy he had left in reserve. One can imagine the countless hours he had at his disposal while he laid sick in bed thinking about the songs from his childhood, his failed love interests, the unexpected deaths of his close family and friends, and most of all of a time when he was full of strength for life and his art.

Contrary to the loneliness and suffering he endured during the last decade of his life, it is apparent that Chopin’s late period synthesizes his past works and presents with each opus a more focused and forward thinking kind of music. His late style is a consequence of a poignant experience with illness, loneliness, regret, and melancholia. Fully conscious of the approaching end of life, his late style music takes on means

⁴⁵ Chopin, *Chopin’s Letters*, 366.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 366, 397.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 400.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 395.

that will anticipate the music of future generations.⁴⁹

Now that a historical background surrounding the creation of the cello sonata has been set, let us now venture into an analysis of its first movement. This analysis will help put into perspective Chopin's struggle with illness, loneliness, regret, and melancholia; all key elements within his late style.

Analysis of the First Movement of the Sonata for Cello and Piano, op. 65

As previously mentioned, the cello sonata's first movement begins in the key of g minor with a melody that resembles the opening of Schubert's song "Gute Nacht." In the following twenty-three measures Chopin sets up the harmonic and melodic scheme that forms the foundation for the rest of the movement. Key elements to this foundation include the following: dotted upbeat figures that recall funeral march rhythms; a half-step motive that mimics a similar figure in "Gute Nacht"; musical ghosts from past works; tonicizations of remote keys; and an aversion to leave the tonic key.

Chopin's first phrase exploits the funeral march element beginning with a dotted upbeat that alternates with quarter notes. Schubert's half-step motive is present from the pickup to measure 2 and in measure 4 it prefigures the cello's first entrance. Following the cello's entrance, this motive is quickly absorbed into the fabric of the composition. Variations of this motive are subsequently audible in measure 12 and in measure 14 wherein a shocking tonicization of D-flat is presented. Besides the tonicization of D-flat in measure 14, there are other moments of lingering dissonance such as measures 21-23

⁴⁹ Many writers such as Jeffery Kallberg and Charles Rosen have written about Chopin's late style characteristics predating later Romantic composers. The combination of Chopin's increasing illness and melancholia late in life may have been the impulse that led his music in a new direction. "The world owes all its onward impulses to men ill at ease." Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The House of the Seven Gables* (Toronto: Batham Books, 1981), 235.

that create a moment of atemporality and suspend “the sonata’s generically obligatory forward-vectored progress through time.”⁵⁰ This moment along with measures 48-51 tonicize the Neapolitan and, with an ironic brilliance, show some of the most optimistic music of the movement; in both cases, however, the harmony sadly circles back to the dominant seventh of g minor. Chopin’s aversion to leaving the tonic early on is what contributes to a three key exposition in this movement.

Alongside these structural features Chopin also manages to insert musical ghosts from his past into each area of the movement. These musical ghosts appear suddenly and disrupt the narrative temporality.⁵¹ Melancholia saturates the spaces where Chopin reflects upon his past work; this can be interpreted as the artist’s, “inability, as a melancholic, to articulate memories and feelings of grief.”⁵² Musical ghosts in his cello sonata create a narrative of discontinuity that in turn enables the fragmentation of its sonata form. These ghosts “superimpose new material onto the principal narrative stream” and extend the movement’s formal structure beyond the normative area allotted in the P and TR spaces of the exposition.⁵³

There are a few characteristics that dominate the transition space of the exposition. These are: Chopin’s use of the tonic key g minor, the presence of two MC’s, and his use of cadential evasions. First, the tonic key is prominent throughout. The goal of the transition space is to propel us in to the S-space. This is usually done through a convincing HC in the dominant key or, in the case of a minor key sonata, the major mediant. In the transition of the sonata’s first movement there is a reluctance to leave the tonic. See mm. 24-29 and note how the cello melody circles around the tonic key. It is not

⁵⁰ Davis, “Chopin and the Romantic Sonata,” 273.

⁵¹ Boczkowska, “Chopin’s Ghosts,” 212.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 212.

⁵³ Davis, “Chopin and the Romantic Sonata,” 273-74.

until m. 30 that there is motion towards a new key through the use of a German augmented sixth chord. This chord also highlights a possible tonal problem that first arose in m. 14 in the cello part and will go on to play an important role throughout the movement.⁵⁴ Two dominant locks, mm. 44-46 and mm. 53-60, only serve to support the exposition's reluctance to leave the home key. Chopin's choice to drop down to c minor in m. 36 also supports staying near the tonic area. Moreover, dropping to c minor conveys weakness and is a sign that the momentum and drive towards a MC in the major mediant or minor dominant key is in peril.⁵⁵

A second characteristic of this movement is blockage exemplified by the presence of two MC's. Blockage prevents the harmonic motion from arriving at its normal goal and it prolongs a normal harmonic progression. Jonathan Mitchell makes an argument for what he calls a failed MC and a real MC, mm. 59 and 68 respectively.⁵⁶ His argument makes sense if we consider the diffusion of energy leading up to m. 59 through the reliance on the home key and a general reduction in rhythmic drive. Additionally, when we arrive at m. 59 we are harmonically on the dominant of g minor. This situation poses a problem: how do we then arrive at a satisfying HC in either the major mediant or the minor dominant? Mitchell's suggestion that we see mm. 61-67 as a failed S-launch makes sense in this case because the forward drive of the sonata form has all but stopped at this point. By inserting these measures, Chopin is delaying the arrival of S in hopes to reach S satisfactorily. The nature of the end of the transition, with its de-energizing characteristics suggests Chopin had a limited amount of space to create a smooth transition to the

⁵⁴ Jonathan Mitchell, "Dialogues, Dysfunctional Transitions, and Embodied Plot Schemas: (Re) Considering Form in Chopin's Sonatas and Ballades" (PhD diss., Louisiana State University, 2012), 87. Mitchell calls this note a chromatic irritant.

⁵⁵ M. 36 contains important musical ideas that return in the development. See mm. 159-167. Note how Chopin uses raises the key from dm to em. This motion is usually normative in the TR-space.

⁵⁶ Mitchell, "Dialogues," 89.

secondary area. He accomplishes the transition into the S-space through the addition of new thematic material and a quick modulation into the major mediant.⁵⁷

A third characteristic of the TR-space is the presence of blockage in the form of cadential evasions. An evaded cadence, in the words of Janet Schmalfeldt, “prevents the idea or phrases from being completed.”⁵⁸ These kinds of cadences share a similar meaning with deceptive cadences in that both finish off a “phrase-structural process that expresses a beginning and often a middle.”⁵⁹ These two processes diverge at the point where an evaded cadence renews its impetus, is preceded by a crescendo, and has a definite terminal feeling of harmonic motion.⁶⁰ On the contrary, a deceptive cadence is usually performed with an anticipatory decrescendo softening the arrival. Evaded cadences in the cello sonata’s first movement potentially convey Chopin’s agitated state of mind caused by the rupture of his relationship with Georges Sand, failing health, and alienation. Similar to the example of Cherubino’s aria used by Schmalfeldt in her essay, Chopin’s “one time technique” serves the purpose of expanding the sonata form as well conveying an agitated state of mind through the many evaded cadences in the exposition.⁶¹

A prime example of this technique is found in m. 36. Here the harmonic momentum is heading in the right direction, a tonicization of the minor dominant, but it is quickly taken in the wrong direction of c minor. Another moment of cadential evasion occurs in m. 42 when the cello descends to a low D-flat, thus blocking c minor from

⁵⁷ The exposition of the cello sonata exhibits characteristics of what Darcy and Hepokoski describe as a tri-modular block. James A. Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 170.

⁵⁸ Janet Schmalfeldt, “Cadential Processes: The Evaded Cadence and the ‘One More Time’ Technique,” *Journal of Musicological Research* 12 (1992): 3.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

taking hold by evading its cadence.⁶² Furthermore, m. 46 begins a tonicization of the Neapolitan of g minor and with it the hope of a half-cadence in the dominant of the secondary key area. As previously mentioned, a MC in the tonic key is a sign of weakness although not an unusual procedure.

An abundant presence of blockage certainly creates and enhances the narrative of the sonata form. The lack of closure in these isolated areas motivates the next event, but it also forces Chopin to back up and try “one more time”.⁶³ Evaded cadences are a sign of an unwillingness to let go of the primary key area and give an overall feeling of pessimism throughout the movement. Chopin’s personal journey throughout the 1840s consistently met with roadblocks causing him to back up and find a new path forward. Personal and physical roadblocks during 1844-1847 caused Chopin to spend more time on composing the cello sonata than any other work. A letter to Franchomme during the fall of 1846 reveals some of the struggle Chopin had in completing the sonata: “I do everything I can in order to work but [it’s] no good.”⁶⁴

The question now turns to how Chopin dealt with the S-space beginning in m. 69. Here the action begins slowly with a chromatically colored melody coupled with an ambiguously syncopated accompaniment. These characteristics keep the S-space from gaining any real traction until m. 81 where, via harmonic sequencing and quicker subdivisions, the energy that was diffused at the end of the TR space finally begins to gather momentum. In m. 84, this momentum continues to build as a result of the

⁶² This D-flat perhaps has deeper implications as a tonal problem.

⁶³ Schmalfeldt, “Evaded Cadences,” 3.

⁶⁴ Zamoyski, *Chopin: Prince of the Romantics*, 242; Some composers, Hector Belioz among them, found solace in their music during times of deep melancholia. He writes that, “Sometimes I can scarcely endure this mental and physical pain.... I have found only one way of completely satisfying this immense appetite for emotion, and that is music. Without it I am certain I could not go on living.” Hector Berlioz, letter to his father, February 13, 1830, quoted in David Cairns, *Berlioz, vol. 1, The Making of an Artist (1803-1832)* (London: André Deutsch, 1989), 330.

characteristic funeral march dotted rhythms in the piano and the lyrical yet incessant melody in the cello. These traits should foreshadow the arrival of a normative EEC that eventually leads to the closing section of the exposition; however, we have an evaded cadence in m. 88. The drive built up from mm. 69-88 is so great that it convinces the listener of an important arrival point, but it occurs the wrong key of F major. Through another cadential evasion and quick modulation, we arrive at the EEC in m. 92, albeit with a weaker arrival. Measure 92 begins the closing section that ends with a sprint to the top of the cello register in m. 109.

Cadential evasions in the exposition hold significant meaning within the larger context of the narrative of Chopin's cello sonata. One such meaning may be found in Chopin's desire to break away from the traditional expectations placed on composers of the mid-nineteenth century. Schumann's 1839 criticism of Chopin's Sonata, op. 35, is perhaps in truth due to sudden shifts of level of discourse Chopin generally employed within his sonata form movements. The normative route to take in a sonata form movement is thematically driven with definitive cadential moments, which close off the large spaces that are the exposition, development, and the recapitulation. As Andrew Davis suggests, these shifts within the Romantic sonata:

Often manifest as various forms of musical non sequiturs, perhaps triggered by interrupted themes, deflected or rhetorically charged harmonic progressions or modulatory schemes, stalled developmental procedures, sudden or unusual tonal shifts, or marked changes of style or topical register.⁶⁵

In the case of his cello sonata, we find many areas of development in the exposition, multi-key struggles, and the reluctance to break away from the tonic key. These

⁶⁵ Davis, "Chopin and the Romantic Sonata," 274.

characteristics listed above are either indicative of an untrained composer incapable of keeping his “four children” in order, or a sign of a musical visionary who sought to “move away from the predetermination of the Classical sonata structure ... blurring sections of the sonata and their functions.”⁶⁶

Another extramusical characteristic in Chopin’s cello sonata might be found in his perpetual frail health, which only worsened in his later years. Chopin suffered tremendously from what most historians believed to be tuberculosis; recent research, however, points to his symptoms being associated with cystic fibrosis.⁶⁷ Taking Chopin’s health into consideration, cadential evasions make sense in the larger scheme of his sonata form if we view them as evidence of blockage. In every corner of the TR-space of the cello sonata, there is blockage preventing the momentum from progressing into the S-space. The attainment of good health was something that Chopin would never know during his life; he was sickly as a child and he died a sick man.

There are two characteristics indicative of disability that is present in the TR-space of the 1st movement of Chopin’s Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 65. These include the reluctance to leave the tonic area and the evidence of blockage at key cadential points. The S-space exhibits the following characteristics: highly chromatic melodies, ambiguous syncopations, and large areas of developmental material. Combined, these characteristics not only convey Chopin’s desire to “blur sections of the sonata [form] and their functions,” they also effectively point to his life-long struggle with poor health and provide supporting musical evidence that Chopin was blocked from obtaining a healthy and balanced physical condition.

⁶⁶ Leiken, “The Sonatas,” 166.

⁶⁷ John O’Shea, “Was Frederic Chopin’s illness actually cystic fibrosis?” *The Medical Journal of Australia*, 147 (1987): 586-589.

Measure 114 cues the beginning of the development section and the second rotation of the movement. In the second rotation of a Type 2 sonata it is commonplace to focus on developing the first theme (P) sounding “either as an explicit thematic reference or in an immediate developmental elaboration...most often [in] the key in which the exposition had ended.”⁶⁸ Chopin used a three-key plan for the exposition: g minor, B-flat major, and d minor. This is one of his favorite devices that he exploits in much of his solo piano music.⁶⁹ In the case of the cello sonata, the location of the tonal area in measure 114 is ambiguous. One would expect that after the exposition’s cadential conclusion in d minor that the second rotation would begin in the same key or perhaps D major; however, Chopin launches the developmental space in what appears on the surface level to be the key of G major. It appears so because of the B-natural in m. 115. Chopin’s insecurity about leaving the home key area is reaffirmed in this vague tonal area.⁷⁰

The cello enters in m. 122 and plays a vacillating melody around F major for two bars after which it marches up to the cello’s highest register. Harmonic motion throughout this area seems static, yet there is a strange feeling that we are moving uncomfortably away from any of the friendly keys associated with g minor. At m. 130, there is a surprising drop to the key of G-flat major. This is accomplished by a simple chromatic drop to D-flat in the cello that enharmonically brings us into the dominant of G-flat major instead of the expected A major. Chopin’s ingenious use of dominant locks such as the one found in mm. 126-129 builds suspense in anticipation of the following area. Dominant locks can also function as a location of harmonic stasis in the midst of the

⁶⁸ Darcy and Hepokoski, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 353. Chopin’s choice to leave out the primary theme from the recapitulation is indicative of a Type II sonata.

⁶⁹ The Sonata for Piano, Op. 58 is a case in point. The three keys of its exposition are B minor, D major, and f-sharp minor.

⁷⁰ The chord on the downbeats of m. 112 and 114 implies D minor, but the third is noticeably absent.

commotion caused by vague tonal beginnings and modulations to remote keys.⁷¹

An extraordinary section ensues beginning in m. 130. Chopin's harmonic ingenuity drives this area of the development through a myriad of tonal centers including G-flat, G, E, F-sharp, F, B-flat, d minor, and e minor before finally coming to rest on a dominant lock in a minor (mm. 173-184). Measures 130-145 are of a particular interest for their foretelling of the vague harmonic tendencies Wagner's music would exhibit in the years to follow. Contrary motion in mm. 132-133 between the cello line and the left hand of the piano precipitates a drop from D-flat to C. These measures reveal Chopin's genius in his ability to make us feel we are sinking with each change of tonal center when in fact the harmony is rising.

The search for a stable key area continues as the development moves ahead. Measure 139 falsely settles into E major; the B in the bass signals that the harmonic momentum is in flux. Subsequently, other keys are tonicized including F-sharp, F, and B-flat, until d minor is reached through a PAC in m. 159. Chopin uses P and TR material exclusively throughout the entirety of the development. Another strong PAC occurs in e minor at m. 167. After a dominant lock on a minor in mm. 173-181, an abrupt interruption of the momentum built up over the course of the development diffuses into the S-space (m. 182). The return of the S-space features the tonal areas of G, B-flat, and G minor.

⁷¹ Eugene Narmour, "Melodic structuring of harmonic dissonance; a method for analyzing Chopin's contribution to the development of harmony," in *Chopin Studies*, ed. Jim Samson and John Rink (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 77.

Table 1

Sonata Form in the first movement of Chopin's Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 65:

Rotation 1

<u>P</u>	<u>TR</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>C</u>
m. 1	m. 24	m. 69	m. 92
g min	g min	B-flat	d min

Rotation 2

<u>D</u>	<u>(Variations on P,TR)</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>C</u>
m. 114		m. 183	m. 206
G maj		G maj	g min

Chopin's use of non-cadential endings, vague tonal beginnings, and modulations to remote keys throughout the Cello Sonata's first movement "sustain interest over a large structure without the clear-cut oppositions and tensions of Classical modulation."⁷² Moreover, his inherent harmonic originality "enabled him to create narrative forms that were continuously lyrical in feeling."⁷³ In addition to these factors, his aversion to leaving the tonic key in the exposition, coupled with the abundant use of evaded cadences in the first movement, help disclose his unique choices of harmony and form commonly found in his late style works.

Alongside the structural features found in the first movement, Chopin also manages to insert musical ghosts from his past into the rest of the Cello Sonata. These

⁷² Rosen, *The Romantic Generation*, 343.

⁷³ Ibid., 343-344.

musical ghosts appear suddenly and disrupt the narrative temporality.⁷⁴ Melancholia saturates the spaces where Chopin reflects upon his past work. These ghosts “superimpose new material onto the principal narrative stream” and enhance each movement’s formal structure.⁷⁵ Moreover, musical ghosts in his cello sonata create a narrative of discontinuity that enables the fragmentation of its sonata form and enriches each movement with pathos and an expression unique to the biography of Chopin’s life.

Musical Ghosts in the Chopin’s Cello Sonata

In addition to Schubert’s “Gute Nacht,” other musical ghosts present throughout the rest of the Cello Sonata include his Concerto for Piano, op. 21, Nocturne, op. 62, no.1, Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, op. 35, and the *Polonaise-Fantasia*, op. 61. Fragments of these works are scattered throughout the sonata and are employed as musical non-sequiturs that hold deep personal meaning for Chopin. His choice to reference Schubert’s song at the onset of the Cello Sonata is a relevant illustrative example of this. There is no evidence in Chopin’s correspondence that he heard the song or that he performed it with his friend, tenor Adolphe Nourrit of the Théâtre Italien; Nourrit is noted, however, as the singer who first introduced Schubert Lieder to Paris in the 1830s. That this time corresponds to Chopin’s first decade in the French capital holds significant meaning when considering the size of his musical world and the many salon concerts that he supposedly attended featuring Nourrit singing Schubert Lieder.⁷⁶ Another important influential figure was Franz Liszt, whose Schubert transcriptions for solo piano of 1840

⁷⁴ Boczkowska, “Chopin’s Ghosts,” 212.

⁷⁵ Davis, “Chopin and the Romantic Sonata,” 273-74.

⁷⁶ Gazette Musicale de Paris 1832-1840.

include “Gute Nacht.”⁷⁷ Unlike Eugène Delacroix whose diary features several vignettes of Chopin and his circle, Chopin, outside of a few moments in his correspondence, did not document his daily life and social events. The only documentary evidence available that Chopin performed Schubert is at the occasion of a Requiem Mass given for Nourrit in Marseille.⁷⁸ Thus, one is left to speculate if Chopin discussed “Gute Nacht” with Liszt or heard the song at one of the many salon concerts Nourrit and Liszt performed during the 1830s.⁷⁹

Returning to Boczkowska’s article, she states that “ghosts confront us with questions about our relationship with time and history, makes palpable our ephemeral relation to material objects and past experiences, and ...[are a] vestige of the past, [that embody] a condition of loss.”⁸⁰ Chopin’s Cello Sonata takes on a profound significance in the biography of his life when viewed through his melancholia for the past and his choice of musical quotes.

During the summer of 1845, Chopin confessed his alienation while staying in Nohant, the summer home of Georges Sand. In a letter to his family he explains, “as is often the case, I’m in some strange world elsewhere, a place that exists only in my imagination.”⁸¹ Sketches from this period show he was working on the Cello Sonata. This “strange world elsewhere” full of encrypted memories of loss seeped into the fabric of the sonata, perhaps without his being cognizant of it happening, and in turn contributed to the

⁷⁷ Franz Liszt, “Gute Nacht”, S. 561/1.

⁷⁸ Zamoyski, *Chopin: Prince of the Romantics*, 176. In early 1839, Chopin left Mallorca to return to Paris. While stopping in Marseille he heard the news of Nourrit’s suicide. For Nourrit’s Requiem Mass, Chopin performed Schubert’s “Die Gestirne”.

⁷⁹ According to Benita Eisler, Maurice Schlesinger, Chopin’s publisher in France, also published Schubert’s works. Other singers who sang Schubert Lieder and were admired by Chopin included Luigi Lablanche and Pauline Viardot. George Sand is also reputed to have been an ardent admirer of Schubert’s music. Eisler, *Chopin’s Funeral*, 160.

⁸⁰ Boczkowska, “Chopin’s Ghosts,” 206.

⁸¹ Eisler, *Chopin’s Funeral*, 140.

creation of new work that embodied his condition of loss and alienation ostensibly brought about by his illness and fractured relationship with Sand.

It is from the crypt of unspoken secrets that Chopin's musical ghosts arose.⁸² By the time the sonata was completed in late 1847, Chopin's illness had worsened and his relationship with Sand ended. Bohdan Pocij writes that "[Chopin's] late style actually signifies a sort of synthesis of the experiences and creative achievements ...the result is a reflection on the path that has been travelled."⁸³ Certainly, Chopin's lonely summer in Nohant caused a reflection upon his past works and experiences; his cello sonata, possessed of musical ghosts, is quite clearly an embodiment of this contemplation.

In 1830, Chopin began work on his Piano Concerto in E minor. During this time he was very much in love with a singer whom he met at the conservatory in Warsaw, Konstancja Gladowska. The restless Chopin took every opportunity to see her even at the expense of abandoning a vacation with his friends out in the country. Part of this work was also composed on the terrace of his family's summer vacation home as local children sat secretly in the garden listening to his music.⁸⁴ His Piano Concerto in E minor represents a youthful time of joy and freedom preceding the failed insurrection against Russia and his self imposed exile from Poland.

Two musical ghosts from this concerto appear in the cello sonata. One is found in the opening of the first movement mm. 5-7 (see Example 2). Used in the presentation of basic idea, the cascade of notes encompasses the entire keyboard preceding the entrance of the cello in m. 8. This musical ghost resembles the original in the descent of the

⁸² Boczkowska, "Chopin's Ghosts," 206.

⁸³ Pocij, Bohdan, "Chopin's Late Style. Late Style: Lassitude and Innovation," *Chopin's musical worlds: the 1840's: Warszawa 2007* (Warszawa: Narodowy Instytut Fryderyka Chopina, 2008), 330.

⁸⁴ Zamoyski, *Chopin: Prince of the Romantics*, 54. Chopin's best friend Tytus was quite annoyed that Chopin left their idyllic country vacation to see Konstancja sing her debut in Warsaw. The Piano Concerto in E minor was almost completed during this time.

passage and differs from it by prominently featuring the Schubert inspired half step on every beat of the right hand of the piano. Later this same ghost figures prominently at the end of the development and the return of the secondary space mm. 171-173 (see Example 3).

Example 2. First Piano Concerto, I. Allegro maestoso, mm. 143-147

Musical Ghost in the Cello Sonata, I. Allegro moderato, mm. 5-7

Example 3. Musical Ghost in the Cello Sonata before the recap, I. Allegro Moderato, mm. 171-173

The second ghost from the Piano Concerto in E minor manifests itself in the Scherzo movement (see example 4). This movement has a mazurka element that favors a heavier accent on the third beat of the bar, features scales that are oriental in sound, and has a trio that uses modal mixture in a way that foreshadows the music of Brahms. In mm. 81-88, there appears a passage that is eerily similar to one from the Largo movement of the piano concerto. Chopin uses this passage in the concerto as a moment of atemporality just before the return of the movement's main theme. In the sonata, the contrary motion of the arpeggiations has now been transformed into a lilting dance that has a macabre character, mm. 81-88 (see Example 5).

Example 4. First Piano Concerto, II. Romanze – Larghetto, mm. 102-104



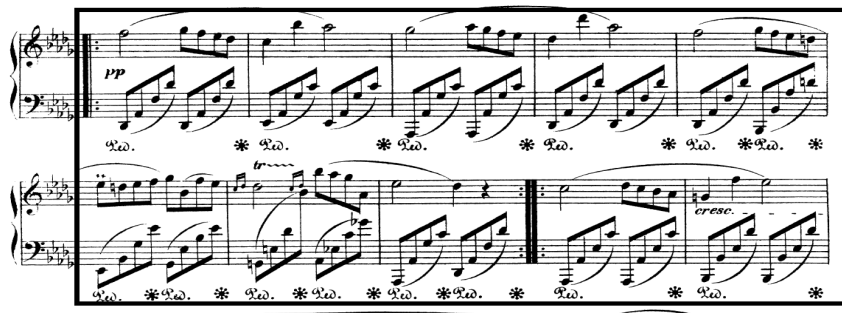
Example 5. Musical Ghost from the First Piano Concerto in the Cello Sonata, III.

Scherzo, mm. 81-88



Two of the most poignant musical ghosts are exhibited in the Largo movement of the Sonata. The first one references the major key area from the Funeral March movement of his Sonata for Piano, op. 35. The work that was critically panned by Schumann now returns in the cello sonata as a reflection of the path that led him away from Poland and brought him to Paris. A side-by-side comparison of these two movements makes it difficult to ignore the similarities making the appearance of the musical ghost all the more haunting (see Example 6).

Example 6. Piano Sonata, op. 35, (“Funeral March”), mm. 24-31



Musical Ghost in the Cello Sonata, III. Largo, mm. 19-21



The Nocturne, op. 62, no. 1, from 1846, is one of Chopin's most evocative late works. It was written in close proximity to the cello sonata and shares a similar contrapuntal shape with the left hand of the piano. This musical ghost is a brief rising triplet figure that occurs in m. 28 of the movement (see Example 7).

Example 7. Nocturne, op. 62, no. 1, mm. 26-31

Musical Ghost in the Cello Sonata, III. Largo, 25-28

Another late work written alongside the cello sonata is the *Polonaise-Fantasia*, op. 61. This work is a hybrid genre created through the juxtaposition of stable and unstable material and along with the Nocturne, op. 62, no.1 and the cello sonata, signals a

new direction forward in the development of Chopin's music.⁸⁵ The musical ghost in the last movement of the cello sonata is an octatonic scale inserted just before the coda in mm. 163-164. This moment is almost identical to a sixteenth-note passage that appears near the climax in mm. 227-231 of the *Polonaise-Fantasia* (see Example 8).

Example 8. *Polonaise-Fantasia*, op. 61, mm. 227-231



Musical Ghost in the Cello Sonata, IV. Finale – Allegro, mm. 163-164



⁸⁵ His *Polonaise-Fantasia* was left unnamed until just before publication. In a letter to his family from December 1845 he writes, "I would like now to finish my violoncello sonata, barcarole, and something else that I don't know how to name." Chopin, *Chopin's Letters*, 301.

Conclusion

Through the analysis presented above, it appears that cadential evasions, tonicizations of remote keys, the aversion to leave the tonic, and the presence of musical ghosts are all expressive tools that enhanced Chopin's Sonata for Cello and Piano, op. 65. His choice of the first movement's formal structure, a Type II rotation, allowed him the freedom to enlarge the transitional space and to develop the primary and transitional material throughout the developmental space. This in turn provides evidence that his adapted sonata form is not a failure of the genre, but is a natural extension of the models that preceded the Romantic era.

In the first movement, the abundance of blockage via the many cadential evasions point to a real life crisis concerning his increasingly frail health and fractured relationship with Georges Sand. The various quoted themes that appear like musical ghosts throughout the sonata are the musical non-sequiturs that contribute to the fragmentation of Chopin's sonata form. Furthermore, the balance he strikes between the stable and unstable elements throughout his cello sonata are indicative of his late style. These structural elements form threads that interconnect his works, failing health, and melancholic frame of mind during the final years of his life.

Chopin's personal correspondence is full of references to death and often has a melancholic tone. In 1837, he writes to Julian Fontana that his body is like a mushroom that seems edible, but poisons those who pull it up mistaking it for something else.⁸⁶ His letters reveal how difficult it was for him to gather up the energy to compose in times of personal conflict and ill health. Perhaps it is for this reason Chopin never attempted to

⁸⁶ Chopin, *Chopin's Letters*, 192.

compose an opera or any other large-scale work beside his two early piano concertos.

Popular criticism of Chopin's oeuvre seems unfounded when we view his handling of sonata form through the lens of fragmentation. His solution to the problem of sonata form merged the old and the new, the then and now, in a provocative expressive dialogue. His melancholic state of mind took him to a crypt of unspoken secrets in some strange world elsewhere. From this crypt Chopin's musical ghosts arose to saturate the spaces of his cello sonata, imbuing it with an expression that spoke from the memoirs of his life.

On October 16, 1849, Chopin laid on his deathbed surrounded by his closest family and friends, Auguste Franchomme among them. Chopin's last days on earth were full of pain, moments of suffocation, and music. Franchomme played Mozart and then Chopin asked to hear his cello sonata. We do not know what movement was played, but considering the beauty, pathos, and musical ghosts within the Largo, it is difficult to imagine any other possibility.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Zamoyski, *Chopin: Prince of the Romantics*, 293.

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