

UNDERSTANDING THE RECEPTION OF WALTON'S VIOLIN SONATA:  
AN ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST MOVEMENT

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A Doctoral Document

Presented to

The Faculty of the

Moore School of Music

University of Houston

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In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctoral of Musical Arts

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By

Jackson H. Guillén

December, 2014

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## **ABSTRACT**

This essay explores the tonal and formal structure of the first movement of the Sonata for Violin and Piano by William Walton in the context of its reception history. Reviews of the first performances of the work are discussed in the first section. In order to understand the negative reception of the piece evident in these reviews, an analysis of the first movement is then presented, with the purpose of exploring the tonal and formal aspects of the movement that may have led contemporary critics to conclude that the Sonata was too conservative, or too tonal. The analysis uses current methodologies to interpret form and design, including the Sonata Theory of James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy. Although the movement contains several instances of twentieth-century compositional strategies, its formal and tonal structure are still most closely related to the aesthetics of the Romantic era. This is a feature of the piece with which critics in the mid-twentieth century would naturally not be pleased, considering that after World War II the resurgence of experimentalism and serialism created a new set of aesthetic criteria from which they would judge new works.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## INTRODUCTION

Composed between 1947 and 1949, the Sonata for Violin and Piano by English composer William Walton was not well received among critics. Although Walton incorporated many elements of twentieth-century compositional approaches in his Sonata, many of the reviews seem to agree that the piece could be regarded as too conservative, too tonal, and lacking in creativity; these conclusions found a complement in Walton's own words about the piece, wherein he himself stated that the Sonata's idiom was out of date. Nevertheless, although not performed often, the Sonata has made its way into the repertoire for violin and today represents a valuable contribution to the genre during the mid-twentieth century.

Although Walton's Sonata was criticized because of the composer's inclination towards tonality, few formal and theoretical analyses of the piece have been made with the purpose of understanding its reception history. Some analyses have focused on important aspects of the work but nevertheless provided minimal information about its tonal and formal structure using a systematic methodology. My objective in this essay will be to survey the reception of the piece, discussing several reviews (positive and negative) of the first performances of the Sonata. Then I will provide a detailed analysis and critical interpretation of the first movement, the *Allegro tranquillo*, using the methodology known as Sonata Theory and recently explicated by James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy. The analysis and interpretation, together with a survey of the reception of the second movement, will serve as a framework for understanding its reception history.

## RECEPTION OF THE VIOLIN SONATA IN THE CONTEXT OF WALTON'S STYLISTIC EVOLUTION

The first performances of the Sonata received a balanced amount of criticism, with some positive reviews and some negative ones. Many critics perceived the beauty of the violin part, as it exploits the lyrical and expressive qualities of the instrument as well as its technical capabilities, especially in the second movement. Others focused their criticism on aspects such as the tonal and formal structure of the work, expressing disagreement on Walton's preferences for a more tonal, rather than atonal, harmonic setting for his Sonata. Other points addressed in the reviews included the Sonata's form, its use of the Romantic style, and a perceived lack of originality and creativity. This section discusses several reviews, both negative and positive, from the first two performances of the piece as well as the historical context in which the Sonata was conceived. In order to understand the reception of the Sonata, this section will also consider Walton's evolution as a composer and the important, innovative, and new compositional approaches composers experimented with during the post-war years.

In 1975, recommending his Sonata for Violin and Piano to his agent for a hoped-for new recording, William Walton mentioned that "the Sonata had been a 'dead flop' in 1950. It is very good but in an out-of-date-at-the-time idiom. It's back again."<sup>1</sup> Certainly after its premiere, the Sonata raised many questions among critics regarding its style, many of them arguing in their reviews that the piece in general lacked creativity due to what they perceived as "thematic concentration," and that it was too attached to tonality and thus was too conservative. The strong connection between the critic's comments and Walton's own words

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Kennedy, *Portrait of Walton* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 147.

about his Sonata is evident, and one may assume that the latter could have come as a consequence of the former, as I will discuss presently.

The circumstances surrounding the conception of the Sonata are somewhat tragic. While in Switzerland, and under difficult economic circumstances, Walton accepted the commission to write a violin sonata from violinist Yehudi Menuhin and his wife-to-be Diana Gould. Walton somehow felt forced to take the job, as he was in desperate need for money to cover the medical expenses of his beloved Alice Wimborne, who had fallen ill during their time in Switzerland and was diagnosed with bronchial cancer. From the time of its commission in 1947, it took Walton two years to complete the work, which he did in 1949 (Walton was regarded as a slow writer, so it is not a surprise that it took him two years to compose the Sonata). In this period there were many other personal events, including Alice's agonizing death in April of 1948 and Walton's marriage to Susana Gil Passo in December of the same year.<sup>2</sup>

According to Walton, the circumstances that led to the conception of the work, in addition to the events that took place during the two years of its compositional process, affected the overall flow of its composition. In a letter of March, 1969 to pianist Angus Morrison, who was about to perform the piece, Walton suggests that the story behind the Sonata's genesis had an important impact on the final result:

Odd that you should feel it to be a spontaneous work as it was written at various times and came about by my meeting Diana in the train in Switzerland . . . Between the beginning and the end of working on it, a great deal happened and work was very sporadic. Alice died and I went to Buenos Aires and married [Susana] and completed it in London on our return, so it's surprising that the piece has any continuity at all.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Stephen Lloyd, *Muse of Fire* (New York: The Boydell Press, 2001), 207.

<sup>3</sup> Kennedy, *Portrait of Walton*, 147.

The Sonata received its first performance on September 30, 1949 in Zürich, Switzerland, at the Tonhalle, with Yehudi Menuhin on the violin and Louis Kentner at the piano. Following this first performance, Walton made further revisions before the piece's London premiere on February 5, 1950 at the Drury Lane Theater, performed by the same artists.<sup>4</sup>

As mentioned, the reception of the work by critics might have influenced the way Walton perceived the piece years later. A review published in *The Music Review* by Hans Keller of the very first performance of the piece in Zürich attacks the composer, finding the Sonata extremely tonal. Keller states that the piece is not worth hearing twice and that both the composition and performance of the Sonata were a failure: "I personally never want to hear this Sonata again, nor do I want to see it. . . Is Walton, somewhere in his mind, reacting against atonality? The negative, worn-out, almost defiantly conservative style of the work asks for an explanation."<sup>5</sup> Keller also commented not only on the piece's form: "As for its form, the sonata movement has none, though it contains cogent stretches, such as an inspired, lyrical *Rückführung* [recirculation], a structural juncture which nowadays is usually mismanaged."<sup>6</sup>

Reviewers of the first performance in London also commented on the conservative characteristics of the piece. This is true of a review by Martin Cooper in *The Musical Quarterly* in April of 1950, in which he mentions that "The harmonic idiom is conservative . . . The feeling of tension common to most of Walton's mature works is almost wholly

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<sup>4</sup> William Walton, *Chamber Music*, ed. Hugh Macdonald, William Walton Edition vol. 19 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), ix.

<sup>5</sup> Hans Keller, review of the first performance of the Sonata for Violin and Piano by William Walton, Tonhalle, September 30, 1949, Menuhin (violin) and Kentner (piano). *The Music Review* 11 (May, 1950):148.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

absent. . . ”<sup>7</sup> A review from *The Musical Opinion* even mentions that in this Sonata “the composer shows unmistakably his affinity with the Romantic school,”<sup>8</sup> and Edward Lockspriser in his review for *The Musical America* states that “the Sonata revealed that the spirit of Elgar is still alive in English modern music, although not in this case productive of anything vital or original.”<sup>9</sup> For other critics even originality and creativity were almost absent in the piece. The author of a *Times of London* review, for example, mentions that Walton’s “usual lack of creativity” is evident in this piece and that “Walton has never been prodigal with his creative gifts . . . Much of the thematic material is akin to that of the Violin Concerto . . . Perhaps the concentration of materials argues for a decrease in Walton’s powers of thematic invention.”<sup>10</sup>

Regarding the Sonata’s perceived “thematic concentration,” reviewers seem to recognize that a third movement would have given Walton more room for thematic development and would have helped with the overall shape of the Sonata. Cooper, for example, mentions that the piece “lacks a satisfactory shape and needs a third movement. . . ”

<sup>11</sup> Indeed, there was another movement at one time: “Walton produced a last-minute scherzo to serve as a middle movement, but there was not time to include it in the first

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<sup>7</sup> Martin Cooper, review of the first London performance of the Sonata for Violin and Piano by William Walton, Drury Lane Theater, February 5, 1950, Menuhin (violin) and Kentner (piano). *The Musical Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (April 1950): 286.

<sup>8</sup> Anonymous, review of the first publication of the Sonata for Violin and Piano by William Walton. *Musical Opinion* 73 (July 1950): 587.

<sup>9</sup> Edward Lockspriser, review of the first London performance of the Sonata for Violin and Piano by William Walton, Drury Lane Theater, February 5, 1950, Menuhin (violin) and Kentner (piano). *Musical America* 70 (April 1950): 6.

<sup>10</sup> Anonymous, Menuhin and Kentner: New Sonata by Walton, review of the First London performance of the Sonata for Violin and Piano by William Walton, Drury Lane Theater, February 5, 1950, Menuhin (violin) and Kentner (piano). *Times* February 6, 1950.

<sup>11</sup> Cooper, review, 286.

performance.”<sup>12</sup> The Scherzo (or Scherzetto as it appears in the eventual published edition) became the second piece of his *Two Pieces for Violin and Piano*, published in 1951.<sup>13</sup>

Although most of the reviewers perceived many flaws in the tonal and formal structure of the Sonata, many were also impressed by its expressive, lyrical qualities. Arthur Notcutt, writing for *The Musical Courier*, claims that “This Sonata, which represents [Walton] in the most coordinated style, should be heard again soon; it created a marked impression.”<sup>14</sup> The review from the *Musical Opinion* also states that “It is, without doubt, a fine work, of which the composer can be proud of.”<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, critics also pointed out the amount of lyricism in the cantabile, expressive melodic writing for the violin. Cooper realizes, for example, that “the work exploits the cantabile qualities of the violin rather than its potentialities for brilliant display.”<sup>16</sup>

Still other reviews of the Sonata were even more positive. In July, 1950, the journal *Music and Letters* published an extensive review by English composer Herbert Murrill in which he argues that critics should be careful not to fall into the error of “approaching a new work with a preconceived notion of what the composer should do and how he should do it . . . . The result is a great deal of exasperation, disappointment, and bad criticism.”<sup>17</sup> Based on this assessment, Murrill argues that the Sonata is a magnificent work of art: “the Sonata is a clear sighted and masterly piece of work, admirably poised against a well-defined

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<sup>12</sup> William Walton, *Chamber Music*, ix.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Arthur Notcutt, “London Greets New Scores and Debuts in Concerts and Opera,” review of the first London performance of the Sonata for Violin and Piano by William Walton, Drury Lane Theater, Menuhin (violin) and Kentner (piano). *Musical Courier* 141 (April 1, 1950): 6.

<sup>15</sup> Anonymous, review (*Musical Opinion*), 587.

<sup>16</sup> Cooper, review, 286.

<sup>17</sup> Herbert Murrill, review of the first London performance of the Sonata for Violin and Piano by Walton, Drury Lane Theater, February 5, 1950, Menuhin (violin) and Kentner (piano). *Music & Letter* 31, no. 3 (July 1950): 208.

background, and solidly knit by means of cleverly devised and successful figuration.”<sup>18</sup>

Murrill also praised the melodic lyricism of the first movement— “indeed the violin cantilena soars as easily and with the same freedom as an operatic vocal line . . . and it is a most welcome element in contemporary music”<sup>19</sup>— and noticed the influence of older traditions in its form: “Of the two movements, the first is planned on broadly classical lines, with a well-contrasted second subject.”<sup>20</sup>

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“Conservative” seems to be the term used by most critics to describe the Sonata, along with, in the case of Keller, “too tonal.” To understand the reasons critics perceived the piece this way, it is important to also be aware of some of the trends in compositional techniques that were emerging in the mid-twentieth century in Europe and America at the time Walton composed the piece. The Sonata was written in the years immediately after World War II, a period marked by the dimming of the neo-classical movement that prevailed before the war and by the emergence of a series of new innovations in compositional techniques involving experimentation and a renewed push towards atonality—including the use of chance in music (indeterminacy) and the return of serialism.<sup>21</sup>

The revival of twelve-tone techniques “as synonymous with musical progression”<sup>22</sup> expanded through Europe around this time and became a topic of great debate among composers and scholars. Composers such as Olivier Messiaen made important contributions to the revival of serialism and in so doing influenced many young composers of the time,

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<sup>18</sup> Murrill, review, 212.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 210.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 212.

<sup>21</sup> Bryan Simms, *Music of the Twentieth Century: Style and Structure* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1986), 357.

<sup>22</sup> M. J. Grant, *Serial Music, Serial Aesthetics: Compositional Theory in Post-war Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 41.

including Karlheinz Stockhausen, Pierre Boulez, and others in the group founded in 1946 and known today as the Darmstadt school.<sup>23</sup> Boulez himself even stated that serialism was the path that leads to music of the future: “I . . . assert that any musician who has not experienced—I do not say understood, but in all exactness, experienced—the necessity for the dodecaphonic language is USELESS. For his whole work is irrelevant to the needs of his epoch.”<sup>24</sup>

In England in particular, at the beginning of the century, composers were not as well known for their contributions to the European avant-garde of the time. Instead, composers such as Elgar and Delius tended to remain fundamentally rooted in the Romantic tradition. Even the music of Benjamin Britten, one of the most influential composers in England during this period, constitutes an example of the prevalence of the Classical-Romantic tradition in England in the first half of the century. It was not until 1951 that Britten started to use a more dissonant and less triadic language, in his opera *Billy Bud*.<sup>25</sup>

In the case of Walton, during the 1920s he gained a reputation as a modernist and became regarded as a promising composer destined to be one of the most prolific English composers of the time; evidence of such view comes from Alban Berg, who, at the International Society for Contemporary Music at Salzburg in 1923, greeted Walton as “the leader of English atonal music.”<sup>26</sup> Although during the 1930s Walton was still recognized as one of the most important modern composers in England, by the end of that decade Walton’s music started to be regarded as “conservative,” with the influence of Elgar more and more

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<sup>23</sup> Simms, *Music of the Twentieth Century: Style and Structure*, 344-45.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 332.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 297-99.

<sup>26</sup> Michael Trend, *The Music Makers: Heirs and Rebels of the English Musical Renaissance* (London: Weidenfel and Nicolson, 1985), 168.



apparent in his compositions. The demands of World War II also had a great impact on Walton as a composer; during those years his major musical contributions were focused on music for radio, stage, or cinema.<sup>27</sup> These circumstances probably changed his compositional style; indeed, by the end of the war there were many that regarded Walton's music ". . . in the sort of light that the bright young things of the 1920s had reserved for Elgar. . ."<sup>28</sup>

For instance, Walton's String Quartet in A Minor, completed in 1946 and premiered in 1947, stands as his first major composition after the war. Commentaries about the work implied that the piece was somehow different from Walton's other compositions to date. Film-music conductor Ernest Irving, to whom the Quartet was dedicated, commented on the second movement and suggested that it was "a lovely slow movement, somewhat unfashionable in these days of atonalism and twelve-tone scales, that will remind many of Brahms and Elgar."<sup>29</sup> Michael Kennedy, Walton's biographer, also mentions that the Quartet had a new mood with a more classical sense and a second movement that contains "fewer of the rhythmical snaps and quirks of its predecessor."<sup>30</sup>

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It is in this context that I will consider Walton's Sonata for Violin and Piano. The piece constitutes his second major work after the war and, as mentioned, critics seem to agree that the piece exhibits a more retrospective approach to musical language as well. The analysis that follows is intended to facilitate a better understanding of why contemporary critics perceived the Sonata as conservative, taking into consideration the circumstances

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<sup>27</sup> Humphrey Burton and Maureen Murray, *William Walton: The Romantic Loner* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 86.

<sup>28</sup> Trend, *The Music Makers: Heirs and Rebels of the English Musical Renaissance*, 168.

<sup>29</sup> Stephen Lloyd, *Muse of Fire* (New York: The Boydell Press, 2001), 205.

<sup>30</sup> Kennedy, *Portrait of Walton*, 135.

under which the Sonata was conceived as well as how innovations in compositional techniques of the post-war period could have influenced critics' perceptions of the work. The analysis will consider the Sonata's structure as well as how Walton used various compositional devices common in the post-tonal period to destabilize the tonal foundation of the piece, including whole-tone scales, octatonic scales, and chromaticism.

## ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST MOVEMENT

### METHODOLOGY

The Sonata Theory of James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy offers a fresh approach to exploring the tonal and formal structure of sonata-form movements. As shown in Fig. 1, the approach considers the progression of specific musical events in the structure of a sonata-form movement towards a series of perceptible harmonic and structural goals. The consistency of the patterns presented by these events in large numbers of sonata-form movements, creates a set of “norms” encapsulated within the expectations associated with the larger genre. This set of norms also provides the basis for the categorization of sonata forms into various formal types, which themselves depend upon a composers’ treatment of the different sections in the form. Hepokoski and Darcy refer to these sections traditionally known as exposition, development, and recapitulation as “rotations,” because of their cyclic recycling of the same musical materials in the same order each time they appear. The Sonata Theory methodology focuses on providing ways of interpreting the variation and manipulation of these norms at many structural levels, where such manipulations produce what the authors call “deformations.” In Sonata Theory, deformations are structural and harmonic anomalies that act as signifiers for expressively meaningful events within the structure and together contribute to a movement’s rhetorical trajectory.<sup>31</sup>

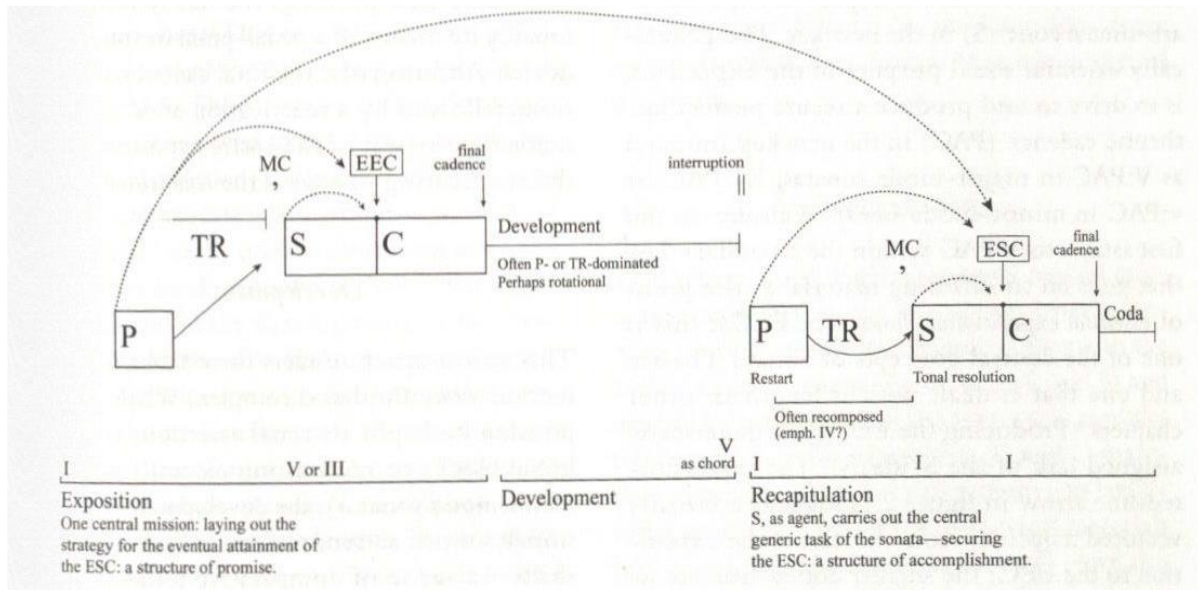
The first movement of Walton’s Violin Sonata is a Type 3 sonata, as explicated by Hepokoski and Darcy. This means that the movement includes four rotations, either full or partial: as mentioned, these are the exposition, development, recapitulation, and the coda,

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<sup>31</sup> James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth Century Sonata Form* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), v-ix.

where the latter normally initiates but does not complete a final, fourth rotation. Based on the generic layout of the Type 3 sonata, my analysis of the movement will consider the harmonic and structural progression of the musical events within Walton's rotations, in order to better understand Walton's treatment of the sonata-form design, its deformations, and its expressive content.<sup>32</sup>

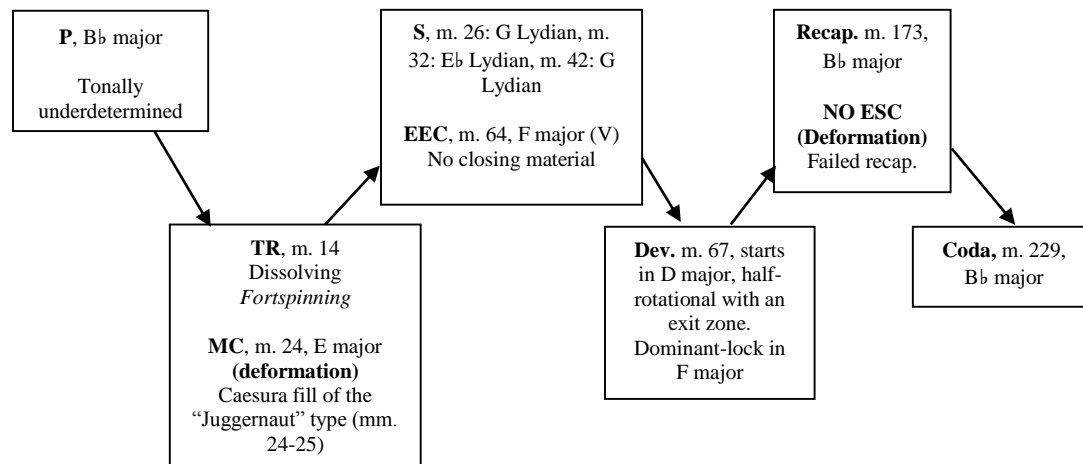
**Fig. 1. Generic layout of the Type 3 sonata form.<sup>33</sup>**



<sup>32</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth Century Sonata Form*, 16.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 17.

**Fig. 2. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt. I. Tonal and formal analysis.**



## EXPOSITION

Fig. 2 provides a complete diagram of the movement. The exposition (first rotation) comprises sixty-four measures and includes all of the normative sections expected within an initial sonata rotation except a closing section. Thus, the exposition includes a Primary Theme (P), Transition (TR), and Secondary Theme (S), along with the expected structural arrivals including the Medial Caesura (MC) and the Essential Expositional Closure (EEC). The movement as a whole is in, or at least it begins and ends in, the key of Bb major. The piano begins the piece with a tonic triad using syncopated rhythmic activity; such syncopation is a rhythmic device that remains prevalent throughout the rest of the Sonata. This short, introductory musical cell made a formidable impression in the mind of some scholars and critics, apparently because of the simplicity of the chord, a simple Bb-major triad. Walton often incorporates a sixth or a seventh in his triads, and for this reason English

music critic Frank Howes comments that the chord in this case is “firm and uncomplicated, resembling the opening of the Brahms G Major Sonata.”<sup>34</sup>

The primary theme in the violin starting at the end of m. 2 lasts for thirteen measures and includes, as mentioned, a rhythmic structure based on syncopation. The syncopation helps to create a sense of urgency and energy-gaining motion towards a goal. Walton releases this rhythmic tension by using a motive that will become the main cell of music that ties the complete movement together: a group of four sixteenth notes that, for the purpose of this analysis, will be referred to as motive (a) (see Fig. 3).<sup>35</sup> The P-theme also seems to contain specific points of arrival that can be perceived as cadential. The first such point is found in m. 5, where Walton ends the pedal in the piano that began with the open triad in m. 1 (Bb-D), thus releasing the syncopated tension into motive (a) on the first beat of the measure, still in the key of Bb major.

**Fig. 3. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I, mm. 1-8. P-theme.**

The image shows a musical score for the first movement of Walton's Sonata for Violin and Piano, measures 1 through 8. The tempo is marked 'Allegro tranquillo' with a metronome marking of c. 112. The key signature has two flats (B-flat major). The Violin part is in the upper staff, and the Piano part is in the lower staff. A box labeled 'Motive (a)' points to a specific rhythmic figure in the Violin part at measure 5. The Piano part features a pedal point in the right hand (Bb-D) and a more active left hand. Dynamics include *pp*, *mp cresc.*, and *p cresc.*

<sup>34</sup> Frank Howes, *The Music of William Walton*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), 146.

<sup>35</sup> Murrill, review, 211.

Although the triadic opening of the Sonata suggests a highly conventional and tonal theme, after m. 5 Walton gradually starts to introduce chromaticism (note the use of A $\flat$ , G $\flat$ , D $\flat$  and C $\flat$ ). This lasts until m. 10, at which time a second point of arrival can be perceived when the violin sounds a B $\flat$ -minor triad. The *forte* dynamic at this point, the loudest so far in the movement, seems to suggest the climax of the P-theme. This perception is reinforced by the gradual *diminuendo* that follows until its final arrival point on beat 3 of m. 13, now in B major. To achieve this cadential moment in B major, Walton moves chromatically upwards from the original B $\flat$  major starting in m. 11, using enharmonic pitches to create a smooth, chromatic motion from one key to the next.

This third and final point of arrival, although followed by what appears to be the Sonata's transitional material, should not be considered a final closure of the P-theme, as the cadence is not in the tonic key and it is located on a weak beat at the end of a m. 13. Furthermore, the apparent transitional passage that follows seems to launch from P-based material, destabilizing the path to a proper cadence that is never reached (see Fig. 4). Hepokoski and Darcy refer to this type of P-theme as *tonally underdetermined*: a tonally underdetermined P is one in which "the tonic is clearly understood but not secured with an authentic cadence."<sup>36</sup> In this case, Walton initiates P with a strong sense of tonality, in B $\flat$  major, but the theme dissolves before reaching its cadential goal.

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<sup>36</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth Century Sonata Form*, 73.

**Fig. 4. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I, mm. 8-13. P-theme.**

8

11

*dim.*

*dim.*

*f*

*f*

Continuation to transition

Cb = B

Gb = F#

A

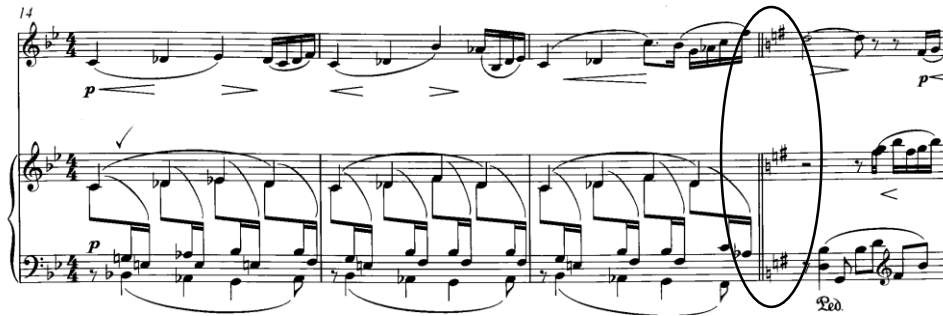
E

The transition (TR) occupies the following ten measures (mm. 14-23) and opens with a three-measure bridge that, as mentioned, seems to be a continuation of the P-theme before suddenly shifting to G major in m. 17 (see Fig. 5). At this point Walton restates P, now in the piano and accompanied by the violin, using sixteenth notes that serve to increase the energy and momentum. This is a fragmented statement of P that lasts until the appearance of motive (a) in m. 20; what follows at that point is material based on motive (a) and comprising an unstable harmonic progression that incorporates the first appearance of whole-tone scales in the movement. For instance, the violin material in mm. 20 and 21 is based on the whole-tone scale that includes B and C#, and arrives on an Eb-major triad in m. 22 (see Fig. 6). The piano then again sounds a fragmented version of the P-theme, this time in Eb major,



truncated in m. 23 by material based partially on another whole-tone scale—the scale including C and D. The scale arrives on an E-major triad in m. 24.

**Fig. 5. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I, mm. 14-17. Transition.**



**Fig. 6. Walton, Sonata for Violino and Piano, movt I, mm. 18-22. Transition, first attempt to MC.**

Whole-tone scale: B-C $\sharp$ -D $\sharp$ -F-G-A

P

18

mp cresc.

p cresc.

21

f

p

mf

\*

3

6

3

6

This textural and dynamic progression of the TR in mm. 20-24 cause it to gain momentum in pursuit of a goal: the medial caesura, which is the generically normative, mid-expositional textural and harmonic break that sets up the entrance of the second theme (S). In most Classical sonata movements, the MC would occur following a modulation to the dominant key (V) for major mode sonatas, or to the median (III) in minor mode sonatas.<sup>37</sup> The normative increase in momentum towards the MC in this case is created as the violin line ascends not only to higher pitches, but also gradually increases its dynamic range. In the process, Walton makes two attempts to close the curtain on the P – TR zone and open the S-theme: the first attempt begins in m. 20, starting *mp* and *crescendoing* toward its E $\flat$ -major arrival, sounded *mf* in the piano. We can consider this a failed attempt, perhaps because it fails to achieve the desired tonal goal, and a second attempt immediately ensues: the second attempt begins in m. 23 and again comprises an ascending line in the violin, starting *mp* and again *crescendoing*, this time reaching all the way to E major at a *forte* dynamic.

The pattern is a chromatic one that perhaps with one more attempt, would have taken the transition all the way to an F-major triad, where F major—dominant of the original tonic B $\flat$  major—would have been one of the more normative harmonies for a MC in the Classical sonata. However, Walton stops short of an F-major arrival, ending the TR on E major in m. 24, which then constitutes the MC (see Fig. 7). The transition as a whole comprises what Hepokoski and Darcy refer to as a dissolving TR, or one that opens as a continuation of the P-theme before quickly dissolving into motivic development or *Fortspinnung* [continuous spin voltage].<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth Century Sonata Form*, 18.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 73

Note that the MC on the downbeat of m. 24 thus becomes more conceptual than practical, obviously not resembling a Classical MC in all its features. Walton's MC is articulated mostly through texture, rather than through conventional harmonic features. The tonal ambiguity of the transition, made more extreme by its chromaticism and the use of the whole-tone scales, makes it difficult to trace a conventional harmonic progression. The MC is then approached by energetic rhythmic scalar passages and reinforced by the changes in dynamic levels, all of which create an effect of progression towards a goal; that goal is m. 24 and the E-major triad. Thus, the modulation to the dominant is completely avoided, and Walton bypasses the tonal norm that we may have expected to be in sight.<sup>39</sup> Therefore the E major (♯IV) should be regarded as a harmonic deformation of a normative Classical MC, and in some sense it represents another failure to reach an expected tonal goal, as also occurred within the P-theme itself. Note that while Walton's TR exhibits an anomaly with regard to the normative strategies for approaching the MC as well as the harmonic goal at the MC itself, Walton can also be regarded as participating in the tradition of playing with the conventions surrounding the MC—a tradition that dates back to the late eighteenth century, as Peter Smith has written.<sup>40</sup>

Following the E-major MC, Walton includes filler material (mm. 24-25), which in this case is representative of what Hepokoski and Darcy would call *expanded caesura fill*, due to its length and its degree of elaboration (see Fig. 7). Expanded caesura fill normally creates an opportunity to gradually prepare for the onset of the S-theme. Hepokoski and Darcy explain that usually this filler material will include a *diminuendo*, suggesting a gradual

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<sup>39</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth Century Sonata Form*, 25.

<sup>40</sup> Peter Howard Smith, *Expressive Forms in Brahms's Instrumental Music: Structure and Meaning in his Werther quartet* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 147.

loss of energy from the TR. In this specific case, however, Walton maintains the intensity of the dynamics, even writing a *fortissimo* for the piano and violin throughout the filler material, then arrives at a unison at the end of the passage before suddenly dropping to *piano* at the beginning of the S-theme in m. 26. This specific type of expanded caesura fill is in the category that Hepokoski and Darcy call the *caesura fill of the “juggernaut” type*, and it constitutes an overriding of the Classical norm.<sup>41</sup> In Walton’s case, it suggests a reluctance to release the tension that has accumulated by the failure to provide complete closure to P and TR.

**Fig. 7. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I, mm. 23-26. Transition, MC.**

<sup>41</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth Century Sonata Form*, 44.

The S-theme then begins abruptly in m. 26, with a G-major key signature and the piano playing the first melodic idea in the manner of an introduction. This introductory melody incorporates a raised 4<sup>th</sup> scale degree, (C#); the passage then unfolds in G Lydian mode. At this point the texture has changed, and triplets have become the prominent rhythmic figure. After a small *ritardando*, the violin joins the piano in m. 32. At this moment Walton changes to a two-flat key signature, initially suggesting a change of mode from G major to G minor; however, the piano accompaniment includes an Eb pedal (mm. 33-35), and the subsequent material proceeds to unfold in the Eb Lydian mode. After a cadential moment in m. 39 on Eb, Walton changes the key signature once more, suggesting a move to C major or A minor; however, the appearance of F# and C# suggest a return to G Lydian. The violin then re-enters, sounding the melodic line under a descending thirds progression: G Lydian in m. 42, Eb major in m. 44, and C minor in m. 46. The kind of tonal ambiguity heard here is typical of Walton's style, and it occurs throughout this Sonata.

This first statement of S is thus organized into three parts with the first section in G Lydian (mm. 26-31), the second in Eb Lydian (mm. 32-41), and the third part back in G Lydian (mm. 42-43). After this, S proceeds to dissolve into a new module using a descending thirds progression in mm. 44-46 (see Fig. 8a and 8b). The melodic line starts to gain energy in m. 46, with the violin rising to a higher register, and arrives in m. 48 in Cb major (enharmonically B major). At this point the piano launches a new module for the S-theme, one that contrasts with the melodic, lyrical *cantabile* line of the first module. In Sonata

Theory these modules are referred to as  $S^{1.1}$  and  $S^{1.2}$ , and as such we can say that Walton uses what is known in Sonata Theory as a multi-modular  $S$ .<sup>42</sup>

**Fig. 8. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I. Second theme, module S<sup>1.1</sup>.**

**a. mm. 25-27. Passage in G Lydian.**

**b. mm. 32-34. Passage in E Lydian.**

[illegible]

<sup>42</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth Century Sonata Form*, 139.

S<sup>1.2</sup> begins in m. 50, and, as mentioned, its character is now different: the former eight-note triplets become sixteenth-note triplets, and the violin *cantabile* turns into a group of short cells of sixteenth notes interacting with the piano (see Fig. 9a). The effect creates a sense of anxiety and rush, as if all of a sudden the peaceful and thoughtful atmosphere expressed in S<sup>1.1</sup> has been interrupted by a persecution. This anxious, rushing effect becomes even more pronounced in m. 56, where the fast interaction between piano and violin using sixteenth notes, together with the ascent from a *p* dynamic to a *ff*, creates a feeling of moving forward and a searching for a point of arrival (perhaps a cadence). However, whatever arrival that is being sought seems to be impossible to achieve, in part because Walton bases the entire passage (mm. 56-64) on an octatonic scale (see Fig. 9b). The passage reaches its highest point in m. 59, and although the dynamic level remains at *forte*, the melodic line begins to descend. In m. 61 the passage starts to dissolve rhythmically as well as dynamically, almost as if it was full of confusion. The figuration changes from sixteenth notes to triplets and the dynamics become softer, until finally there arrives a moment of rest, in m. 64, in the key of F major.

Although not a conventional PAC, the effect of closure is evident at this moment. Thus this moment can be understood as a kind of Essential Expositional Closure (EEC), functioning as the final cadence for the expositional rotation, even though this is not a Classical EEC (see Fig. 9c). This constitutes the final step in a sonata exposition in which almost all of the musical events and modules have struggled to reach complete closure; this was true of P and TR; even S experienced a decay and struggle to find cadential arrival, a struggle expressed most clearly in the shift from S<sup>1.1</sup> to S<sup>1.2</sup>. However, even throughout the struggle and confusion of the S<sup>1.2</sup> module, the exposition ultimately arrives on F major, the

normative key for a Classical secondary theme following from a P-theme in B $\flat$  major.

Walton has delayed this arrival on the normative tonality until the very end of the exposition, at the very last possible moment, likely in order to create a feeling of struggle and reluctance across the rotation as a whole.

**Fig. 9. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I. Second theme, module S<sup>1.2</sup>.**

**a. mm. 49-51. Beginning of module S<sup>1.2</sup>.**

49

*a tempo 1mo sub.* *agitato e cresc. poco a poco*

*f* *p*

*a tempo 1mo sub.* *agitato e cresc. poco a poco*

*p*

**b. mm. 55-60. Passage based on octatonic scale: B $\flat$ -C-D $\flat$ -E $\flat$ -E-F $\sharp$ -G-A.**

55

*p* *f* *pp sub.* *p*

*p* *f* *pp* *p*

58

*mf* *ff*



c. mm. 61-66. Dissolving passage based on octatonic scale and arrival at the EEC.

The image displays three staves of musical notation for measures 61-66. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef, marked with a forte *f* dynamic at the beginning, a mezzo-forte *mf* dynamic in the middle, and a piano *p* dynamic towards the end. It includes the instruction "pochiss. rit." (very little ritardando) and features a triplet of eighth notes. The middle staff is a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs), also marked with *f*, *mf*, and *p* dynamics, and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The bottom staff is another piano accompaniment in grand staff, marked with *pp* (pianissimo) and *cresc.* (crescendo) dynamics, and includes the instruction "a tempo lmo". A box labeled "EEC (F major)" is placed over the final measures of the bottom staff, indicating the arrival at the EEC.

## DEVELOPMENT

After a small piano bridge (mm. 64-66), the second rotation begins normatively with a statement of the P-theme. Walton uses a key signature with two sharps, suggesting an opening in the key of D major, even though an A $\sharp$  appears a few measures later and forecasts a modulation to F $\sharp$  major; that modulation occurs in m. 77. New material, now a lyrical *cantabile* melody, appears in the violin at m. 81, where Walton again changes the key signature to no sharps and no flats. This new material provides an example of one of Walton's typical chromatic transitions, as it is supported by a progression moving from F $\sharp$ , F, E, and finally to E $\flat$  (see Fig. 10a and 10b). From this point forward, fragments of P

continue to sound in the piano, first in E $\flat$  major (mm. 81-84), and later in F $\sharp$  major (mm. 87-90).

**Fig. 10. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I. Development.**

**a. mm. 68-70. P-based opening.**

**b. mm. 76-81. Descending chromatic progression.**

In m. 92 the texture changes again, as the rotation enters into material based on the expositional TR (note the way Walton maintains the original rotational order of material, even in the development section—one of the more Classical features of the Sonata). The piano sounds an energetic accompaniment using sixteenth notes in a “Alberti bass” manner, starting *p* and then *crescendoing* to gain energy as the dynamic level increases, and the violin line crawls to a higher register (see Fig. 11a). Upon reaching a *fortissimo* dynamic at m. 98, the material that follows contains many elements of the TR material from the exposition, including the rising scalar lines in the violin, increasing in volume and based on motive (a) (see Fig. 11b). These lines will reach the high register before falling again, re-starting at a *p* dynamic and rising once more before finally reaching their highest point in m. 108.

At this point the intensity increases due to the constant rhythmic motion created by the persistent sixteenth notes in the piano and violin. The *forte* dynamic now stays constant, and Walton includes *stringendo* indications in m. 108 and a *piú animato* indication in m. 114. The climax of the transition occurs in m. 120, where the violin sounds the high A and B in octaves and then suddenly drops to the G string, sounding motive (a). The intensity gradually starts to dissolve, and the effect is reinforced by a long descending octatonic bass line that spans twelve measures (mm. 120-32) (see Fig 11c).

**Fig. 11. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I. Development's transition.**

**a. mm. 90-92. Beginning of the transition.**



**b. mm. 99-103. Material from the transition in the exposition.**



c. mm. 119-25. Octatonic-scale-based descending bass line: B $\flat$ -A $\flat$ -G-F-E-D-C $\sharp$ -B.

The image shows a musical score for measures 119-125. It consists of two systems of staves. The top system includes a violin staff and a piano staff. The piano staff has a descending octatonic bass line. A box labeled "TR's climax" is placed over measures 120-124. Measure 125 is marked with a box. The bottom system continues the piano staff. A double bar line with the number 11 is at the bottom.

A third section begins in m. 133 with new material for the violin (see Fig. 12a). Just as everything seems to have calmed down, this new, sequential material regains energy as it ascends in register, dynamic level, and tempo (the later due to the *poco a poco stringendo*). The sequence reaches its climax in m. 155, where the violin and piano join together to sound a B $\flat$ -major triad and forecast the imminent recapitulation (see Fig. 12b). A dissolution immediately ensues, as the dynamic drops suddenly to *piano* in m. 158 and the melodic contour rapidly descends through an octatonic scale (see Fig. 12c).

This last section of the development is also rooted in the Classical tradition and can be referred to as an *exit zone* or *retransition*, terms used in Sonata Theory to describe music “surrounding the preparation for and/or execution of a structural dominant-lock, usually V of

the principal tonic.”<sup>43</sup> Indeed, Walton’s long, descending, octatonic material transitions to a zone in which the composer, instead of writing an F pedal (V of the tonic B $\flat$ ), uses the third (A), fifth (C), and the seventh (E $\flat$ ) of the F-major dominant-seventh chord as pedals, omitting the root of the chord and putting special emphasis on the seventh, E $\flat$ , in the violin and in the right-hand piano part. This unique approach to the dominant-lock lasts for seven measures (mm. 165-72), when finally E $\flat$  resolves to D, C moves to D, and a measure later the final resolution of A to B $\flat$  occurs in m. 173 to launch the third rotation, or the recapitulation (see Fig. 12d).

**Fig. 12. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I. Exit zone or re-transition.**

**a. mm. 130-36. New material sounded by the violin.**

The musical score for measures 130-136 of Walton's Sonata for Violin and Piano, movement I, is shown. The violin part (top staff) begins in measure 130 with a descending octatonic scale (G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3) marked 'pochiss. rall.'. In measure 135, the tempo changes to 'a tempo (con moto)'. The piano part (bottom staff) features a descending octatonic scale (G3, F#3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2) starting in measure 130. In measure 134, the piano part has a trill on G3 marked 'tr'. In measure 135, the piano part has a 'p espress.' marking. The piano part ends in measure 136 with a 'pp' marking.

<sup>43</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth Century Sonata Form*, 230.

b. mm. 154-57. Transition's climax.

155

c. mm. 159-65. Octatonic scale dissolving passage: Db-C-Bb-A-G-F#-Fb-Eb.

160

pochiss. rit.

165

a tempo (con moto)

**d. mm. 163-66, and 171-73. Dominant-lock.**

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system covers measures 163 to 166. It begins with a piano part in the left hand and a violin part in the right hand. The tempo is marked *pochiss. rit.* (very, very slowing down). At measure 165, the tempo changes to *a tempo (con moto)*. A box labeled "Emphasis on Eb" points to a specific note in the violin part. Another box labeled "Lower neighbor" points to a note in the piano part. The second system covers measures 171 to 173. It begins with a piano part in the left hand and a violin part in the right hand. The tempo is marked *poco marc.* (moderately). A box labeled "Resolutions" points to a specific note in the violin part. A box labeled "p legato" points to a specific note in the piano part.

In sum, the development thus is organized into three parts: two sections follow the normative rotational pattern, starting with a presentation of P-based material and then proceeding to a passage based on TR material. The third part is an exit zone that employs octatonic scales to move the development to the dominant-lock that prepares the arrival of the final rotation, or recapitulation. The Sonata's development is thus half rotational, with P material followed by TR material and a retransition back to the recapitulation, as is the case in many Classical development sections.



## RECAPITULATION

The third rotation, or recapitulation, begins in m. 173 with the violin sounding the P-theme mostly intact; Walton introduces some minor variations to the theme, moving it at some points an octave higher than the original. The piano accompaniment presents a more varied layout in this rotation, including new sonorities and new harmonic materials. Walton keeps the original syncopated rhythm in the upper voice of the piano, while the lower voice sounds ascending and descending arpeggiated half notes (see Fig. 13a). The P-theme occupies thirteen measures and again arrives at a B-major cadence in m. 185 third beat. Here Walton adds an extra measure that mirrors the cadential arrival in the previous measure, but now arrives on an F-minor triad, functioning as a half cadence in the key of the tonic, on a minor dominant triad (see Fig. 13b).

**Fig. 13. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I. Recapitulation.**

**a. mm. 173-76. P-theme.**

173

*p legato*

*p poco marc.*

Variations in the piano accompaniment

**b. mm. 185-86. P-theme final point of arrival.**

The image shows a musical score for measures 185-186. The score is in 3/4 time and features a piano accompaniment. The right hand has a melody with a long note in measure 185, followed by a series of eighth notes. The left hand has a running scalar passage. The key signature changes from B major to Bb7 / F minor. The score is annotated with '185', 'B major', and 'Bb7 / F minor'.

The transition (TR) again launches from P-material that serves as a small three-measure bridge, as in the exposition. In m. 190 Walton changes the key signature to no sharps and no flats, and the piano sounds a fragment of the P-theme, again truncated by running scalar passages in the violin, based on motive (a), in m. 193. Note that motive (a), as mentioned, becomes an important motivic cell of music throughout the movement, providing some sense of stability within a structure that nevertheless fails to achieve tonal closure. The motive reappears almost exclusively in its original form, with little or no motivic development, throughout the entire movement (only in the coda does Walton use quarter-note triples at m. 261). It is almost as if the movement was immersed in a tonal maze in which motive (a) is the only compass available.

TR then proceeds exactly as in the exposition, including the running, scalar, energetic passages in the violin that lead to the MC. But the material is slightly different than before: in the exposition Walton used whole-tone scales, while here in the recapitulation the first attempt at the MC is based on an Eb-major scale that arrives at a G-major triad in m. 195

(see Fig. 14a). The second attempt returns to the original whole-tone material, utilizing the whole-tone scale that includes C and D. The MC ensues, this time on C major, in another striking deformation of Classical norms for recapitulations: this is a half cadence in the key of the dominant, rather than the expected half cadence in the key of the tonic (see Fig. 14b). Thus the MC here in the recapitulation actually occurs at the tonal level at which the MC should have occurred in the exposition (m. 24)—that is, a half cadence in the key of the dominant, F major (V:HC). In the exposition, of course, Walton avoided this normative procedure in order to maintain the unresolved tonal tension throughout the initial sonata rotation. The recapitulatory MC, on the other hand, can thus be interpreted as a looking backward, nostalgically, at what “might have been,” as if looking back at a better or more perfect past that actually never happened—very much in the way that German Romantic music tends to signify the same kind of nostalgia for a “better” Classical past.<sup>44</sup> Just as in the exposition, the *caesura fill of the “juggernaut” type* ensues and effects a harmonic shift to B♭ major, which, of course, is the normative key of the recapitulatory S-theme.

**Fig. 14. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I. Recapitulation’s TR.**

**a. mm. 193-95. First attempt to MC.**

<sup>44</sup> Andrew Davis, *Fragments: Romanticism and Musical Narrative in the Piano Sonatas of Brahms, Schumann, and Chopin*, forthcoming (typescript copy).

**b. mm. 196-201. Medial Caesura and expanded caesura fill.**

Whole-tone scale: C-D-E-F#-Ab-Bb

MC: C major

196

*mp cresc.*

*p cresc.*

*f*

*ff*

S: Bb major

199

*ff*

*espress.*

*p sub.*

S begins in m. 200, with a B $\flat$ -major key signature and with a raised 4<sup>th</sup> (E $\sharp$ ); the passage is thus in B $\flat$  Lydian. As in the expositional rotation, in the second part of S<sup>1.1</sup>, in m. 206, Walton shifts to G $\flat$  Lydian (see Fig. 15a). In this module Walton decides to omit the third part, or in this case, the return to B $\flat$  Lydian and dive right into the next module S<sup>1.2</sup> in m. 212. Ultimately S again comprises two modules, just as in the exposition, with the second S<sup>1.2</sup> utilizing a more agitated and driving motion. This second module also includes a passage (mm. 218-24) based on the octatonic scale that opens with B-C-D. The S<sup>1.2</sup> module dissolves rhythmically and dynamically (mm. 223-25) as the final cadence approaches, a moment that

should function as the Essential Structural Closure (ESC), “the goal toward which the entire sonata-trajectory has been aimed”<sup>45</sup> (see Fig. 15b).

**Fig. 15. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I. Recapitulation, S-theme.**

**a. mm. 199-201 and 205-06. Passages in B $\flat$  Lydian and G $\flat$  Lydian.**

The image displays two excerpts from the recapitulation of the first movement of Walton's Sonata for Violin and Piano. The first excerpt, starting at measure 200, is in B $\flat$  Lydian mode. It shows a piano (p) and a sub-octave (sub.) passage. The second excerpt, starting at measure 205, is in G $\flat$  Lydian mode. It includes a 'pochiss rit.' (very little ritardando) marking and an 'a tempo' marking. The score is written for violin and piano, with the piano part featuring complex rhythmic patterns and the violin part featuring melodic lines.

<sup>45</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth Century Sonata Form*, 232.

**b. mm. 223-29. Arrival at the ESC, failed recapitulation.**

Octatonic-scale-based passage: B-C-D-Eb- F-Gb-Ab-A

ESC: Db major (failed)

226 a tempo *Imo*

a tempo *Imo*

*pp cresc.*

*f* *p*

As explained by Hepokoski and Darcy, the ESC should be a satisfactory PAC in the key of the tonic at the end of the recapitulatory S-theme. However, in this particular case, Walton arrives in m. 226 on a Db-major triad, thus avoiding the expected PAC by moving to a new key. Just as in the exposition, following the ESC-moment there occurs a short bridge in the piano, this time progressing through Db-Ab, F#, and then suddenly to Bb Major in m. 229, at which point the coda begins (see Fig. 15c). If indeed we understand m. 226 as the moment at which the normative ESC in Bb major should have occurred but does not, then this indicates the presence of a major deformation, explained by Hepokoski and Darcy as follows: “since the main generic requirement of a recapitulation is to secure the ESC with a

satisfactory PAC in the tonic at the end of S, any recapitulation that falls short of this obligation . . . is problematic.”<sup>46</sup> Although the coda returns to B♭ major in m. 229, it is “too late” to save the sonata; the chance at a B♭-major ESC has already been missed, and the sonata has “failed.” This type of recapitulation is referred to as a *non-resolving* or *failed recapitulation*, and it reinforces the most problematic features of the entire sonata trajectory: that is, the struggle or reluctance to be able to achieve harmonic closure within the various subsections of the structure.

It is important to understand that the presence of a non-resolving or failed recapitulation in this movement suggests the presence of the aesthetics of the Romantic era. Andrew Davis comments that “the number of sonatas in which the exposition fails to produce an EEC, or in which the recapitulation fails to produce an ESC, increases exponentially in the nineteenth century.”<sup>47</sup> In addition he writes:

In the Romantic sonata, these issues become more complex, in large part because some would maintain that the highly diversified stylistic and tonal language of the post-Beethovenian nineteenth century necessitates admitting a wider range of possibilities for the kinds of events that are understood as *cadential*.<sup>48</sup>

Most importantly, as Davis mentions, within Sonata Theory any use of the word *failure* in this context does not refer to a lack of a composer’s abilities to manipulate the harmonic structure of a sonata-form movement. On the contrary:

The movement’s failures are *staged shortcomings*—staged for the implied listener by the implied composer (who one might wish, but does not necessarily need, to conflate with the actual composer)—that comment in true Romantic fashion on the role of the Classical past in the Romantic imagination.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth Century Sonata Form* 245.

<sup>47</sup> Andrew Davis, *Fragments: Romanticism and Musical Narrative in the Piano Sonatas of Brahms, Schumann, and Chopin*, forthcoming (typescript copy).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

## CODA

As defined by Hepokoski and Darcy, codas are “parageneric spaces that stand outside the sonata-form proper.”<sup>50</sup> In the case of Walton’s Sonata, tonal closure has become an issue within the sonata-space: even the recapitulation failed to arrive on a clear PAC and close the sonata structure. As such, in a Sonata Theory view, the movement is therefore understood as having jettisoned or abandoned its sonata form in favor of an extra-structural space: the coda. It is expected in many Classical sonatas that the movement will finally find tonal closure in its coda, although according to Hepokoski and Darcy, even if this does happen, it remains insufficient closure for the sonata’s overall tonal structure: “The assumption that [a coda] serves to establish the tonality is hardly justified; it could scarcely compensate for failure to establish the tonality in the previous section.”<sup>51</sup>

Very importantly, with regard to the coda’s location and function in this movement, note that Walton includes a double-bar line that is located exactly at the point at which the material in the recapitulation corresponds to that of the exposition: this is a signal that the recapitulation has ended and another rotation, specifically the coda, has begun. Note also that, as mentioned before, Walton returns to the tonic for the beginning of the coda, and that the piano plays an introductory passage similar to the passage that was used at the beginning of every one of the previous rotations.

The coda thus begins in m. 229 and lasts for forty-two measures. The texture is generally lighter, the violin is now muted, and the piano is instructed to play *una corda sempre al fine*. All these aspects suggest a calm and resigned space—the coda itself—that

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<sup>50</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth Century Sonata Form*, 282.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.



will slowly die and find peace after an agitated journey—the sonata proper. Although the introductory measures in the piano call for a restatement of P, the violin plays material from the development’s retransitional passage for five measures, giving the impression that this is a coda based on the exit zone from the development; however, in m. 236, P material appears in the violin an octave higher than its original version, with the piano accompaniment mirroring the beginning of the recapitulatory rotation (see Fig. 16).

**Fig. 16. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I, mm. 230-37. Beginning of the coda.**

The musical score for Walton's Sonata for Violin and Piano, movement I, measures 230-37, is shown. The violin part begins at measure 230 with a *rit. con sord.* marking. A box labeled "Material from the development's exit zone" highlights a five-measure passage in the violin, starting with a *p* dynamic and ending with a *fp* dynamic. The piano part begins at measure 230 with a *pp* dynamic. A box labeled "P-theme" highlights a five-measure passage in the piano. The score ends with a *rit.* marking at measure 237. A box labeled "una corda sempre al fine" is located below the piano part.

The dynamic level gradually increases and the violin proceeds to a higher register until m. 243, where the key signature changes to no sharps and no flats, even while the F#

and C# in the violin and piano parts seem to suggest a passage in the key of D major. Walton indicates *con moto*, an effect that creates another feeling of rush and anxiety, recalling the feeling present in previous rotations. The climax occurs in m. 245, where the violin plays the highest notes heard thus far in the movement. The violin starts to descend in sixths in m. 247 based on the octatonic scale that includes C#, D, and E. Walton adds a *diminuendo* indication, finally arriving in m. 253, where the key signature changes back to Bb major (see Fig. 17a). P-based material occurs in the violin and lasts until m. 262, where the piano plays a melodic line based on material from S, finally arriving on a Bb-major triad without a third in m. 266 and m. 267 (see Fig. 17b). Indeed, it is not until the final two measures of the movement that Walton will include a full Bb-major triad.

**Fig. 17. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt I. Coda.**

**a. mm. 246-52. Dissolving octatonic-scale-based passage: C#-D-E-F-Ab-A#-B.**

The image displays a musical score for the Coda of the first movement of Walton's Sonata for Violin and Piano. It is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 246 to 252. The violin part (top staff) features a descending line of sixths, starting with a forte dynamic and a *diminuendo* marking. The piano part (bottom staff) consists of chords. The second system covers measures 250 to 252. The violin part continues the descending line, and the piano part features a melodic line. The key signature changes from one sharp (D major) to two flats (Bb major) at measure 253, indicated by a box labeled '250' above the first measure of the second system.

**b. mm. 266-71. Arrival at a B $\flat$ -major triad, tonal closure.**

The image displays a musical score for measures 266-71. A box at the top left is labeled "B $\flat$  major with no third". The score is written for piano, with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is B-flat major. The music features a descending line in the treble staff, marked with a "5" for a quintuplet. The bass staff has a "pp" (pianissimo) marking. The score concludes with a final chord, a B-flat major triad, marked with a "8" and a dashed line, indicating an octave. The piece ends with a double bar line.

The expressive trajectory of the coda thus closely resembles the expressive trajectory of every other rotation within the form. It even contains the element of anxiety, reaching a climax that dissolves using descending lines gradually getting softer, and based either on chromaticism or on other scale types, such as octatonic scales. Thus the coda provides a summary of the entire movement, a reinforcement of the ideas presented throughout the movement by the composer; it also provides a necessary extension of the sonata space in order to finally find the tonal closure that did not occur within the recapitulation. Yet even in the coda, which initially suggests peace and resignation, Walton's reluctance to find resolution is clearly evident, as he keeps making references to materials from earlier sections that avoided, rather than found, clear cadential closure. Only at the very end does the movement finally find anything that resembles peace and resolution. In the end, the coda in effect "rescues" the sonata as it from the outside, stepping in to provide closure as if acting as an "outside force" that "saves" the failed sonata from complete doom.

## CONCLUSIONS

In sum, the first movement of the Sonata for Violin and Piano by Walton presents a sonata-form structure with four rotations: exposition, development, recapitulation, and coda. My analysis has shown that Walton provides clear points of arrival that represent the ends of sections and the beginnings of other sections, even though these points are articulated using texture and dynamics more than harmony and tonality. The movement conspicuously avoids closure in almost all its forms, including at the ostensible moments of EEC and ESC. Table 1 provides a summary of this aspect of the movement.

**Table 1. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt. I. Summary of key relationships.**

Section	Normative key structure	Walton's choices
P-theme	Tonic: B $\flat$ major	Tonic: B $\flat$ major, ends on B major (avoid tonal closure)
Transition (TR)	Modulates to the dominant (V)	Chromatically modulates to E major (Raised IV)
Medial Caesura (MC)	V:HC, V:PAC, I:HC, or I:PAC	Arrival on E major
Second Theme (S)	Dominant: F major	Super-dominant: G major to then modulate to E $\flat$ major
Essential Expositional Closure (EEC)	V:PAC	Arrival on the dominant F major (V) (weak cadence)
Development	Modulatory, fragmentary.	Modulatory, fragmentary. Half rotational with exit zone
Recapitulation	Tonic: B $\flat$ Major	Tonic: B $\flat$ Major
Essential Structural Closure (ESC)	I:PAC	NO ESC, Arrival on D $\flat$ major (I: $\flat$ III)
Coda	Tonic: B $\flat$ Major	Tonic: B $\flat$ Major

With regard to the larger issue of the Sonata's reception history, this problem can be better understood in the context of a survey of Walton's second movement, including a consideration of its reception history and how it differs from that of the first movement. The second movement was received more positively. In his review of the first performance of the sonata, Keller comments on the second movement: "As was to be expected, the variation movement is better."<sup>52</sup> Keller praised the variation movement after strongly attacking the first movement, referring to movement I as too tonal. Is he implying that he perceived the second movement as less tonal than the first movement? Another review for the Oxford University Press is similarly positive, stating that "although for sheer and beauty of sound I do not think it can quite match the first, the composer displays immense technical resource, and builds up the movement into a convincingly coherent whole."<sup>53</sup>

During his life as a composer, Walton had shown certain affinity for the compositional technique of variations. In his article "In Search of Walton" Bayan Northcott makes reference to Walton's fondness for the variation principle: "If the music came marginally more easily from the 1940s to the 60s, this surely represented Walton's recognition of the principle of variation, on every level, as the most fruitful response to his creative tensions . . ."<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, Frank Howes mentions that "Variation has increasingly engaged his attention, in the Violin Sonata, the Cello Concerto, the Second Symphony, and the Hindemith Variations."<sup>55</sup>

Not surprising in the context of Walton's attraction to variations, the Violin Sonata's second movement (titled *Variazioni*) comprises a variations set based on a harmonic structure

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<sup>52</sup> Keller, review, 148.

<sup>53</sup> Anonymous, review (*Musical Opinion*), 587.

<sup>54</sup> Bayan Northcott, "In Search for Walton" *The Musical Times* 123, no. 1669 (March 1982), 179.

<sup>55</sup> Howes, *The Music of William Walton*, 236.

that pushes towards atonality. The movement is tied together by the ascending chromatic motion of each variation's tonal center. In other words, as every variation finishes, the tonal center is raised a half-step in preparation for the next one.<sup>56</sup> Walton thus outlines a chromatic path that starts on B $\flat$  as the tonal center for Variation I; at the very end of the variation, Walton moves this tonal center to B $\natural$  in preparation for Variation II. The pattern continues until Variation VII, where the tonal center moves to F, which functions as the dominant of the main key in which the Sonata started, B $\flat$  Major.<sup>57</sup> Table 2 shows the tonal scheme for the entire movement.

**Table 2. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt. II. Variations and tonal centers.**

Variation	Tonal center
I	B
II	C
III	D $\flat$
IV	D
V	E $\flat$
VI	E
VII	F
Coda	B $\flat$

Another important aspect of the movement which reveals Walton's inclination toward atonality in this movement is his use of twelve-tone rows throughout the movement.

Although he does not make use of the rows as serialists do, every variation, and even the Coda, present a twelve-tone-row-based passage played at least once. In the Theme and the

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<sup>56</sup> Murrill, review, 214.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

first three variations, the row appears consistently at the end of the piano cadenza. Walton then breaks this established pattern beginning in Variation IV, placing the row in different locations and instruments until the end of the movement. These twelve-tone rows seem to serve certain purposes. In most cases the row is placed at the end of a variation and serves as closing or transitional material for the next variation; this occurs in the Theme, and in Variations I, II, III, and V. Elsewhere, the row is inserted at different locations within the variations and is sounded sometimes in the violin instead of the piano; this occurs such in Variations IV, VI, and VI. The Coda sounds the row at the very beginning, presumably because there is no expected transition to another variation (see Fig. 18).

Variation IV is a special case: here, chromatic saturation is perceived, but no complete twelve-tone rows are actually present. The variation is energetic and features both instruments working together as a unit instead of one accompanying the other. The melody is angular and uses intervallic motion similar to that which served as the basis for the spelling of the twelve-tone rows: descending fourths, ascending and descending seconds, and ascending fifths (this melodic shaping is a prominent feature of the movement as a whole). This melodic motion at the beginning of the variation (mm. 153-55) lends the impression that it is rooted in another statement of a twelve-tone row, but in this case Walton only uses eleven pitches of the chromatic scale, repeating one of them at the end of the line. The same thing occurs at every statement of the initial melodic line throughout the variation; thus it is possible that Walton was more concerned here about the intervallic symmetry of the melodic line than with actually spelling a complete twelve-tone row (see Fig. 18e).

**Fig. 18. Walton, Sonata for Violin and Piano, movt. II. Passages based on twelve-tone rows.**

**a. mm. 290-94. Theme.**

**290**  
a tempo

**b. mm. 323-26. Variation I.**

a tempo **325**

**c. mm. 358-66. Variation II.**

**360**

*pp* *mp* *cresc.*

**365**

8



d. mm. 410-19. Variation III.

**410**

**415**

e. mm. 425-28. Variation IV, incomplete rows.

**425** *Allegro molto* ( $\text{♩} = 126 \text{ circa}$ )

*f (strepitoso)*

**8**

f. mm. 490-91. Variation V.

**490**

*p a piacere* *cresc.* *rit. e dim.* *a tempo*

g. mm. 515-21. Variation VI.

**515**

*p cresc.* *p cresc.* *p cresc.* *p cresc.* *p cresc.* *p cresc.* *p cresc.*

Var. VII  
(♩ = 40 circa)  
Andante tranquillo

**520**

*ff* *p*

h. mm. 549-52. Variation VII.

**550**

*ten.* *ten.* *ten.* *ten.*

**i. mm. 560-63. Coda.**



All these features of the second movement that lean toward atonality seem to have created a different impression of the music in the mind of critics such as Keller. This helps to contextualize the difference in the reception of the second movement versus the reception of the first movement: the second movement seems to have been better received because it was less tonal, whereas the first movement was not well received because it was tonal and was rooted in the aesthetics of nineteenth-century Romanticism. Clearly critics in the mid-twentieth century, informed by the aesthetics of modernism, were not going to take well to a piece that looks backward, to the nineteenth century. This is because after World War II, a revival of the avant-garde movement made composers “question the truthfulness of an artistic language that emphasized classical proportion and serenity.”<sup>58</sup> Such views inform the expectations of contemporary critics, which were fundamentally rooted in the aesthetics created by this revival of experimentalism.

The structure of Walton’s Sonata did not conform to such expectations; however original and creative his piece may have been, Walton did not show, especially in the first movement, any vital element of “originality” as such a concept was defined in the mind of

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<sup>58</sup> Simms, *Music of the Twentieth Century: Style and Structure*, 302.

critics, according to the new aesthetics of the time. Walton instead wrote a piece that, even while it certainly includes many compositional techniques that reflect the era in which it was composed, nevertheless looked back in time—in the sense that even its most salient formal deformations and harmonic anomalies are similar to those that appear in works from the Romantic era. Walton's expressive strategies in this piece are predominantly those of an earlier era; understanding this fact alone leads to a better understanding of this interesting work's problematic reception history.

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