An Analytical Study of
Four Compositions for Violoncello and Piano
Performed in a Graduate Recital

By
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A Study Presented to
the Faculty of the Graduate School
Appalachian State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

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The musical selections which were chosen for this study and performance represent a variety of musical styles and periods.

Sonata Number Two in D Major a work by J. S. Bach, is an example of German Baroque chamber music. This work was originally composed for viola da gamba and clavier.

Elegy, by Gabriel Fauré, is an example of music of the Late Romantic Period in France.

The third composition examined in this study is the "Intermezso," from the opera Goyescas by Enrique Granados. The rhythms and harmonies of the "Intermezso" have their origin in Spanish folk music.

The final composition analyzed in this study is Sonata in G Minor, Opus 65 by the Polish-born composer Frederic Chopin. Opus 65 was the last of his publications while he was alive; it has many of the characteristics found in his other compositions, and a good deal of structural innovation.
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J. S. Bach: Sonata Number Two in D Major
for Cello and Piano
(Originally Composed for Viola Da Gamba)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) composed music in many different categories, but he is best known for his sacred works, most of which were composed during periods of employment as a church organist or cantor. Bach served as a church musician and composer most of his life, but from 1717 until 1723 he was employed at the court of Prince Leopold in Göthen, and it was at Göthen that much of his secular chamber and solo keyboard works were composed, including the three sonatas for viola da gamba.

Little is known about Bach's reasons for accepting the post at Göthen. It seems strange that he should accept a position which would offer him little opportunity to compose and perform sacred music, which was his first love. Prince Leopold was an amateur musician and apparently played well several stringed instruments and the clavier. Partly because of their mutual interest in music, Bach and Leopold soon developed a warm friendship.

Altogether, Bach composed eleven sonatas for melody instrument and clavier, and all of these were probably written at Göthen.

The style of J. S. Bach has often been described as a fusion of French and German national styles of the period. Bach's music, of course, belongs to that period which has gained the designation of Baroque, and his music exhibits the driving rhythm, terraced dynamics, use of Affektenlehre, and other characteristics usually associated with music of that period. These eleven sonatas, then, contain these typical features, but they also display a good deal of experimentation in form and device.

Elements of the concerto appear in them. Da capo and rondo forms are also found, as are long solo passages. They show a wide range of moods: gay, energetic, stubborn, tender, melancholy, or tragic.  

The gamba sonatas (BWV 1027, 1028, and 1029) were probably written for performance by Prince Leopold, but they might have been performed by Christian Ferdinand Abel, the virtuoso cellist at Leopold's court for whom Bach composed the six suites for unaccompanied cello.
Analysis

The D major sonata is not as well known as the first and third sonatas for gamba and harpsichord. Like the first sonata, it has four movements, arranged in the traditional slow-fast-slow-fast order. The contrast in tempo which exists from one movement to the next is accompanied by a contrast in mood. The first movement, marked adagio, is lyrical and pensive. The second movement is gay, and is built upon the standard rhythmic figure which, for Bach, represented gaiety: two sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note. The third movement, a siciliano, is sad and melancholy in character, and the turns and ornaments suggesting grief in the Affektenlehre appear in this movement. The third movement is the only movement of the sonata which is predominantly in the minor mode. The final movement is a happy frolic, written mostly in the major mode.

First Movement: Adagio

M. 1-14

The key is D major. The bass clavier part is an eighth-note accompaniment to the cello and treble clavier parts. The cello and treble clavier parts are heard in imitative style, much like a two-part invention. The cadence in M. 14 is in the key of B minor, the relative minor key.

M. 14-23

The same texture is continued until M. 16 when the bass clavier part breaks away from its accompanimental function and becomes, briefly, a third contrapuntal part. This has the effect of giving more movement to the music and propelling it toward the half-cadence in the key of D major in M. 23.

Second Movement: Allegro

M. 1-16

The key is D major and the texture is three-part. The cello and right-hand clavier parts introduce the motive in thirds while the bass clavier part plays an accompaniment figure which continues to appear throughout the movement. The motive itself consists of two sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note, as was discussed previously. The cadence in M. 16 is somewhat deceptive; the cello part plays a descending D major scale in M. 15, but instead of going to the bottom D in the scale, it begins a new sequence starting on F#, thus creating an imperfect cadence.

M. 16-24

This section consists of a sequence in all three parts which modulates to the key of A major, which is the dominant key. There is a strong cadence in the new key in M. 24.
A kind of harmonic joke occurs in this section as Bach leaves us guessing about the tonality until the last moment. Having modulated to A major, the clavier part immediately plays a G natural, and harmonic ambiguity ensues which is not cleared up until M. 32. One hears implications of the harmonies of D major, A major, A minor, and, finally, A Major.

The three-part imitative texture continues. A sequential treatment of the motive ends the section with a cadence in B minor.

The B minor chord in M. 48 becomes the supertonic in A major, then a G natural in M. 51 leads the tonality away from this key. A definite cadence in F# minor in M. 56 ends the section.

A G natural in the cello part immediately leads away from the F# minor tonality. This section uses thematic material identical to that found in the first two sections of the movement. It might therefore be considered to be a kind of recapitulation. The cadence in M. 72 is in D major.

The movement is harmonically complete in M. 72, so this final section may be regarded as a coda. In a movement with much harmonic ambiguity, the coda provides a much-needed reinforcement of the D major tonality.

This movement is, possibly, the most difficult of the four to interpret. Its long extended phrases require much care in execution. The character is one of subtle sadness, and any tendency to exaggerate this character on the part of the performer would tend to upset the subtle effect of the music. The tonality is B minor - D major.

As in the first movement, the left-hand clavier part provides an accompaniment to the imitative two-part music of the cello and right-hand clavier parts. The imitation between cello and clavier parts is at the interval of a fifth and results in a cadence on C# minor in M. 6.

The C# minor chord acts as a pivot chord to make a transition to the key of A major, and the cello plays the original melody in this key. Again this cello line is imitated by the treble clavier part. In M. 10 a modulation to E minor occurs.
M. 11-19

The B minor tonality continues for two measures, then moves easily into the relative G major in M. 14. Here, for the first time in the movement, the treble clavier part has the melody prior to the cello; the imitation in the cello part is at the interval of a fourth. However, instead of an exact imitation, the cello part sets in motion a sequence which modulates to B minor.

M. 20-32

These measures form the concluding section. The original theme appears in the original key in the cello part in M. 20, and the treble clavier part imitates this cello part at the interval of a fourth. The imitative sequential pattern continues in the key of B minor until the end of the movement. In the last four measures, the imitative pattern appears for the last time, and here the clavier part's imitation is at the octave, thus ending the movement in B minor.

Fourth Movement: Allegro

M. 1-17

This movement is in 6/8 time and is in D major. As in the other movements, the bass clavier part serves as an accompaniment to the other two parts. The theme consists of an eighth-note section, two bars long, followed by approximately two bars of sixteenth notes. The cello part and right-hand clavier part imitate each other in such a way that one plays the eighth notes while the other plays the sixteenth notes, with trill sections added for continuity. The cadence in M. 17 is in the key of the dominant, A major.

M. 17-31

The same type of imitative texture continues in this section, which goes through the key of B minor and returns to D major in M. 31.

M. 31-69

The D major tonality is never convincingly left throughout this section, and the musical textures and harmonies are similar to those which immediately precede it.

M. 69-81

This section begins with an abrupt change to B minor. The clavier part imitates the cello part at the interval of a fifth, and this device leads to a cadence in F# minor in M. 81.

M. 81-97

The texture of this section is unique in the movement. The clavier part is a series of arpeggios in prelude fashion, while
the cello part is an accompaniment of eighth notes, traditionally played pizzicato. The tonality is ambiguous and seems to change with each new measure, but the section, having been in the minor mode throughout, ends in A major.

M. 97-111

Although this section begins like the first part of the movement, in M. 99 the cello part begins a series of sequences composed of thematic material which has not been heard previously in its present form. The sequences conclude with a cadence in G major.

M. 111-125

This section is identical to the first section of the movement except for the first four bars, which modulate to D major, and the last four bars, which are a concluding sequence.

Gabriel Fauré: Elegy for Cello and Piano, Opus 24

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) was born in Pamiers, Ariège, France. He studied at the École Niedermeyer with Saint-Saëns. He became a teacher of composition at the Paris Conservatory and eventually became Director there in 1905, succeeding Théodore Dubois.

Fauré first gained recognition for his songs, but he also composed a moderately large body of chamber music and music for solo piano. Although his music is widely loved in France, it has, like the works of Rameau, found slow acceptance in other countries. Like Brahms, he composed his most memorable works after he became middle-aged. In contrast to Debussy, he used conventional harmonies, but his progressions and modulations show much originality. In composing, he usually first devised a harmonic scheme, then suited the thematic material to it. His originality lies in his use of texture, melody, and harmony. His use of rhythms and forms was mostly traditional, and his compositions make little use of instrumental color.

Analysis

The Elegy, Opus 24, was composed in 1883. It was originally intended to be the slow movement of a cello sonata, but Fauré never completed the additional movements. It was dedicated to the
callist Jules Leeb, who gave its premier performance on December 15, 1883. The composition is in continuous ternary form; its design is A B A'. The first section is in C minor, with a funeral march accompaniment in the piano part. The second section, centering around Ab major, features the piano playing a senescent theme typical of the late romantic period. In the final section the cello part restates the original C minor theme, but the piano part has undergone a great transformation; instead of the funeral march, it is now a series of thirty-second note arpeggios, in a style commonly associated with Franz Liszt.

Section A, M. 1-22
After a one-measure piano introduction, the cello part enters with the C minor theme, which is essentially a descending C minor scale arranged in four sequential groups. The cello part holds the melodic interest throughout Section A while the piano part has eighth-note chords. Thematic material in this section subdivides into a sectional ternary form.

Section B, M. 23-39
The texture changes greatly in this section. Instead of a melody with accompaniment, there are two melodies with accompaniment, giving the section a three-part texture. A bass line in eighth notes is heard first in the piano part, and then in the cello part as the piano part begins the second melody, which might be called a cantilena; it is syncopated and contains triplets, and both of these features stand in contrast to the squared rhythms of Section A. The accompaniment to both of these parts is in thirty-second notes, and the key of the section is Ab major.

Section B gives a sense of relaxation and movement after the tension created in Section A. The momentum increases as the thirty-second notes become sextuplets in the cello and piano parts, and a crescendo carries the music up to a fortissimo level. A key then moves back to C minor. A scale passage in the cello part leads into the third section, beginning in M. 40.

Section A', M. 40-45
The momentum of the thirty-second note accompaniment continues through this section as the cello part plays again the C minor theme of Section A.

Coda, M. 46-53
Thematic material from the first two sections is used in the coda. Alterations are made so that the entire section remains in the key of C minor. The thirty-second note accompaniment does not cease until the last three measures. The conclusion of this accompaniment is very effective in contributing to the general feeling of despair engendered by the music.
Enrique Granados: "Intemesso" from the Opera Goyescas

Enrique Granados (1867-1916) was a native of Lérida, Spain. He lived most of his life in Barcelona, where he achieved wide recognition as a concert pianist and teacher. His masterpiece is the two-volume set of piano pieces intitled Goyescas, inspired by the paintings of Goya. Granados used the music from Goyescas to compose an opera of the same title, with a libretto by Fernando Periquet. Originally this opera was scheduled for production in Paris, but the outbreak of World War I forced its cancelation. Thus it was that the opera had its premier not in Europe but in New York City, at the Metropolitan Opera on January 28, 1916. Success in New York was followed by tragedy. Granados and his wife were lost at sea in the English Channel returning home to Spain after supervising the opera's production in New York. The ship which they were aboard, the "Sussex," was torpedosed by a German submarine.

The music of Granados carries those rhythmic and harmonic elements normally associated with Spanish folk music, although the thematic material used was original. His piano style was influenced by Chopin, Grieg, and Liszt. His harmonies show some German influence, but his music is definitely and wholly Spanish. Concerning this, Granados wrote:

The musical interpretation of Spain is not to be found in tawdry boleros and habaneras, in Carmen, in anything accompanied by tambourines and castanets. The music of my nation is far more complex, more poetic, and more subtle.

Analysis

The "Intemesso" is probably the best known composition of Granados, yet he composed it in only a few hours for the Goyescas production in New York, after someone suggested that such a composition would be useful at a certain point in the opera. Yet on a small scale, the work reflects the moods of the whole opera. Granados wrote the following statement about the music in Goyescas:

I intended to give a personal note, a mixture of bitterness and grace . . . rhythm, color, and life that are typically Spanish; and a sentiment suddenly amorous and passionate, dramatic and tragic, such as is seen in the works of Goya.

The rhythms used in the "Intemesso" are traditional Spanish folk rhythms, with syncopation and triplets. The harmonies make use of a blend of major, minor, and modal scales typical of Spanish music. The form is ternary. The analytical comments which follow refer to the composition as transcribed for violoncello and piano by Gaspar Cassado.

Introduction, M. 1-5

There is a five-bar introduction using thematic material from Section B. The piano and cello parts are in unison, and the music resembles a fanfare. The Phrygian mode is used here and throughout the piece.
Section A, M. 6-62

A sensuous cantilena melody in the cello part is accompanied by staccato quarter notes in the piano part. An authentic cadence brings the section to a close in M. 59-62.

Section B, M. 63-94

This section is distinct from Section A in thematic material, rhythms, and texture. The cello part is a syncopated melody with triplets, while the piano part is a tremolo accompaniment in flamenco guitar style. A half cadence closes the section.

Section A', M. 95-133

This section is similar to Section A. Instead of a simple quarter-note accompaniment, the treble piano part is in eighth notes to create more movement and to avoid the monotony of an exact restatement.

Coda, M. 133-144

For four measures the coda is in the Phrygian mode. This creates an interesting harmonic effect when the Eb chord is heard in M. 137. The final eight bars continue the Eb harmony.

Frederic Chopin: Sonata in G Minor
for Cello and Piano, Opus 65

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849) is best remembered as a composer of relatively short works for the piano. He was born in the town of Zelasowa Wola, Poland, and moved to Paris in 1831. In Paris he became acquainted with Liszt, Mendelssohn, Berlioz, and other outstanding artists and musicians. It was in Paris that he met the novelist George Sand and began an affair with her which lasted almost ten years.

Chopin was a victim of tuberculosis and his last years were filled with suffering. He accepted the invitation of one of his students to visit Scotland in 1848 partly because of quarrels with George Sand. The journey to the British Isles and subsequent stay there further weakened his health, and on his return to Paris he was in a critical state. He died in Paris on October 17.

Chopin disliked large recital halls; his art was an intimate one. His delicate performance techniques and his compositions could not be appreciated by large concert audiences. For this reason he was not as popular as some other contemporary virtuoso pianists, such as Franz Liszt. As his physical condition grew worse, he became more and more reluctant to perform in public. Yet his followers in Paris and elsewhere were very devoted, and
his last public performance in Paris was a sellout. It was at this concert that he gave the premier performance, along with the cellist Franzosmme, of the G Minor Sonata, Opus 65.

Chopin's musical style is unique, but it is the result of a variety of musical influences. He was a musical descendant of Hummel, Field, and Moscheles, rather than Mozart and Beethoven. One can find traces of the influence of Weber and Schubert. He studied composition formally with only one teacher, Joseph Elsner (1769-1851), who was noted for his piano compositions and harmonic innovation. Although most of his greatest music was composed after he moved to Paris, there is little evidence that he was influenced by French contemporaries such as Berlioz and Feldman. French taste, however, did influence his musical evolution.

Chopin was most comfortable with the non-classical forms. His few concertos and sonatas have never been as popular as his many short piano pieces. He had difficulty in organizing the longer forms, whereas the shorter pieces seemed to spring from his mind almost spontaneously (but they were carefully re-worked before they were published). His Opus 65 caused him particular problems in his search for a new means of expression. He was moving away from traditional styles of composition. Working on the G Minor Sonata at George Sand's estate at Nohant, he wrote, "With my sonata for cello and piano, I am satisfied one day, another not. I lay it aside then pick it up again."

The work was completed by the end of the summer, and Chopin decided to present it to the public at his February 16, 1848 concert. At the last moment he withdrew the first movement, saying that it needed alterations; he and Franzosmme played only the second, third, and fourth movements. Opus 65 was the last of his works to be published while Chopin was living.

The premier performance was well received, but Opus 65 never gained wide popularity. Critics have objected to the structural weakness, harmonic vagueness, and unusual use of polyphony in the work. Balance between the two instruments is a serious problem. The difficult piano passages must sound effortless, otherwise the effect is that of a weakly accompanied piano concerto. The phrasing and syntax are extremely subtle and easily spoiled. In spite of these difficulties, Opus 65 has much charm and a great wealth of musical ideas, and deserves to be heard more frequently.

**Analysis**

The sonata consists of four movements. The first movement is in sonata form; the second is a scherzo; the third movement is a brief song form with little development; the fourth movement is a unique design in the shape of A B C A' B' C' Coda.

Thematically, the entire work grows out of the melodic statement with which the cello enters: a three-note
upper-neighbor pattern with the first note dotted. This motif has both melodic and rhythmic character. Dramatic interest grows as the interval involved grows to a third, then a sixth, then an octave. This upper-neighbor figure is the unifying thematic element throughout the work. It is found in the second and third movements without its dotted rhythm.

The sonata follows a relatively standard harmonic scheme. The first movement is in G minor; the second movement is in the dominant minor key, D minor. The third movement is in the key of Bb major, the relative major key to G minor. The fourth movement is in G minor, except for the coda section, which is in G major.

First Movement: Allegro Moderato

Exposition, M. 1-60

The piano part begins the movement with the introduction of the three-note dotted figure motif. An arpeggio and scale passage leads up to the first cello notes which consist of the three-note motif:

![Three-note motif](image)

The first theme section grows in intensity as the interval between the first and second notes of this motif gets larger. The first section closes in M. 60 with an ambiguous cadence in G minor played by the cello alone.

M. 61-92

A G seven chord in the piano immediately undermines the G minor tonality. It functions as the secondary dominant of the supertonic in the new key of Bb major. This second section contrasts with the first by being more relaxed, yet it still grows out of the original motif. A very definite cadence in the key of D minor ends this section in M. 92.

M. 92-112

This section is a coda. Like the second theme group it is closely related to the central motif, but it stands out as a separate section because of its more gentle character. It is marked dolce. Harmonically it serves to strengthen the D minor tonality. A definite D minor cadence ends the coda in M. 112, and the exposition comes to an end.

Development, M. 113-175

A G major chord in the piano immediately leads away from the D minor tonality. It functions as the secondary dominant of the supertonic in the new tonality of F major. This is exactly the
same type of harmonic device used previously to lead into the second theme of the exposition. Fragments of all three of the exposition themes are used in the development. The tonality goes from F major, passes through Gb, G, E, and returns to F, then continues toward a half cadence in A minor in M. 176.

Recapitulation, M. 176-236

The cello part signals the start of the recapitulation in M. 176 with the original three-note motif played forte and pesante. In M. 177 the E seven chord functions as the secondary dominant of the supertonic in G major, and the second theme group is heard in this key. An authentic cadence in G minor occurs in M. 208. The recapitulation concludes with the codetta in G minor similar to the close of the exposition.

Second Movement : Scherzo : Allegro Con Brio

The key of the scherzo is the dominant minor, D minor. The upper neighbor figure from the first movement serves as a cohesive factor throughout the movement.

In the example given on page 21, the upper neighbor figure appears first in its original form, then, in M. 2, in inversion.

M. 1-132

The scherzo theme is heard first in the cello part and then, in M. 19, in the piano part. The scherzo effect is heightened by the relatively contrapuntal texture. In M. 29 a Bb major tonality is implied very briefly, then D minor returns in M. 31.

M. 133-212

The trio is in the parallel major key, the key of D major. It is marked L'istesso Tempo by certain editors to counteract the tendency a performer may have to play it slower because of its more lyric nature. The melody and harmony are simple and straightforward. A Bb in M. 206 draws the tonality back toward D minor.

M. 213-259

The scherzo section is heard again essentially unchanged up to M. 245 where a modulation to G minor begins. By the end of the movement, the G minor tonality has been well established. The movement ends with a D major chord played simultaneously in both the cello and piano parts. The effect is one of an abrupt stop.
Third Movement: Largo
M. 1-27

The final chord of the scherzo is the dominant chord in G minor. The third movement, however, is in Bb major, the relative major key to G minor. This movement is a restful interlude before the final movement, which is in G minor. The third movement uses dynamic levels that are generally subdued. The form is three-part song form. The first section includes M. 1-17, and this same thematic material returns in M. 23. The middle section, M. 18-22, contains contrasting thematic material.

The first three notes in the cello part are the upper-neighbor figure from the first movement. This figure appears throughout the Largo, and attains particular significance in M. 22 and 26, where it appears in the cello part in half-note values.

Fourth Movement: Finale: Allegro

The fourth movement has a unique form with the pattern A B G A' B' G Coda. Each section is thematically related to the upper-neighbor figure which has occurred throughout the length of the sonata. The key is G minor, except for the coda section, which is in G major.

Section A, M. 1-34

The upper-neighbor figure with dotted rhythm begins the theme in the piano part in M. 1, and in the cello part in M. 6. The movement begins in G minor, but a cadence in M. 33-34 shifts the tonality to C minor.

Section B, M. 35-56

This section is marked Dolce expressive and begins softly, in contrast to Section A. The neighboring figure is inverted and the dotted rhythm is delayed one beat. This creates a sense of relaxation in the motive. A cadence in G major occurs in M. 52-53, and a brief transition passage leads to Section C.

Section C, M. 57-72

This section is characterized by its rhythmic movement of simultaneous dotted rhythms and triplets. Thematic material evolves from the dotted upper-neighbor figure. The key is C major, but F#'s are heard in M. 61 and 65, and they begin a modulation back to G minor.

Section A', M. 72-113

Although thematically similar to the first section, the music here takes a different tonal direction. It begins in G minor and goes to the dominant minor key, D minor.

Section B', M. 113-137

This section is similar to the second section. Like Section B its harmonic movement is from minor key to parallel major key, in this case from D minor to D major.
This section is rhythmically and thematically similar to Section C. Beginning in D major, the music modulates back to the home key, G minor. Once again, the modulation is accomplished through the secondary dominant chord of the supertonic tone in the new key. In this case, M. 158 contains the secondary dominant of the A minor chord, which is the supertonic in the key of G minor. A deceptive cadence occurs in M. 160. Instead of the expected cadence on G minor, the chord of resolution is an A seven chord, which functions as the secondary dominant of the dominant in G minor and G major. A five-measure transition section leads to the coda, which is in G major.

The coda is a continuation of the rhythmic patterns in Section C'. It is entirely in G major, and the composer has indicated the change to the major mode by changing the key signature from two flats to one sharp. Since the coda serves the purpose of bringing the whole sonata to a conclusion, there is no tonal ambiguity, but remnants of the G minor tonality remain. The final cadence is plagal, and uses a C minor subdominant chord, instead of the C major subdominant chord found in the key of G major.

Reference Footnotes

2Throughout the text, the abbreviation M. has been used for "measure" and "measures."
5Ibid., p. 140.
8Ibid.
10Ibid.
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