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A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS AND TECHNICAL CONSIDERATION OF *DEBUSSY'S SONATA FOR CELLO AND PIANO*

BY

SUNKYOUNG HONG

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts, The City University of New York

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ABSTRACT

A Stylistic Analysis and Technical Consideration of Debussy's *Sonata for Cello and Piano*

by
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Debussy wrote three sonatas toward the end of his life, the first of which is the Sonata for Cello and Piano (1915). With this work the instrumental techniques and colors which he had established throughout his compositional life matured to a high level. Because Debussy did not want to limit himself to any school or be labeled an Impressionist or a Symbolist, some critics, finding Impressionistic or Symbolistic qualities in Debussy's earlier work, did not understand his late style and ascribed the stylistic changes in this sonata to his final illness.

The purpose of this study is to explore the performance and technical issues in relation to stylistic analysis for a successful performance of the sonata. Debussy is an innovative composer, not only in harmony but also in many aspects of style. His music is considered difficult to perform. To elaborate on how he produced the unique and delicate sounds, one needs to study his work more thoroughly. The audible *portamento*

used in this sonata not only makes this sonata very modern but also may have influenced later composers such as Bartók. Moreover, in the *Sérénade* the guitar-like sound through *pizzicato* represents the influence of Italian *commedia dell' arte*, in which Debussy had a life-long interest.

The sonata is characterized by its modest size and by the juxtaposition or repetition of melodic ideas as opposed to the progression of large-scale harmonic units. It features the use of a variety of chords--extended (7th, 9th, 11th, 13th), altered, incomplete, and added- tone. It also employs a variety of scales—major/minor, chromatic, pentatonic, and wholetone, along with half-step dyadic conflicts and melodies constructed on 4ths, 5ths and tritones. These melodies are often centered around two pitch classes that are a fifth away from D (A and G). Rhythmic freedom appears with the avoidance of regular metric accents, syncopation, hemiola, frequent time fluctuations and indications of *rubato*, *cédez*, and the like. Ostinatos occasionally generate a sense of rhythmic stasis. Furthermore, the application of coloristic techniques (e.g., *sur le chevalet*, *sur la touche*, *flautando*, *harmonics*, *pizzicato* and *portamento*), sensitive dynamics favoring *piano* over *forte*, nuanced expression signs (e.g., *lusingando*, *fantasque et léger*, *volubile* and *ironique*), and extreme changes of register all play an important role in the creation of Debussy's unique mature style.

To my parents

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I am grateful to the members of my committee for their support. I would like to thank my adviser, Joseph Straus, for his encouragement and guidance. I would also like to thank Chairman, Peter Basquin for his generosity, encouragement and advice for the completion of the entire course and this thesis. Professor Bruce MacIntyre, for his help for shaping this work words to words in detail, Professor David Olan, for his helpful advice, Professor Maurice Peress, for his comments for better explanation, and my teacher, Fredrick Zlotkin for his invaluable advice in performance issues, I am very grateful.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Claude Debussy, one of the most significant of the fin-de-siècle composers, completed three sonatas of a planned cycle of six toward the end of his life. The Cello Sonata, written in 1915, is the first of the three.

Several issues regarding this sonata will be discussed in this paper, including the value of Debussy's late works. Writers such as Ernest Newman, Nadia Boulanger and Martin Cooper failed to see the style changes in Debussy's late works and thus seriously misjudged them, considering them inferior to the early ones. Some of these controversial discussions included the writing of Rollo Myers, Wilfrid Mellers, Robert Morgan and Pierre Boulez as well. Myers and Morgan, however, argue that Debussy's sonatas have traits that led to the eventual development of Neo-Classicism.

The influence on Debussy of the Italian *commedia dell' arte* and of street music or music hall *revue* was enormous. This influence is seen not only in his early song cycles but also in his late works. Because this sonata was originally subtitled *Pierrot fâché avec la lune* (*Pierrot angry at the moon*)[1], the manner in which Debussy might have considered the *Pierrot* image, the potential reasons for the withdrawal of the subtitle and the influence of the music hall *revue* will be discussed.

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[1]Léon Vallas, *Claude Debussy: His Life and Works*, trans. Maire and Grace O'Brien (London: Oxford University, 1933; New York: Dover, 1973), 261. Edward Lockspeiser, *Debussy*, revised and reset ed. (London: J.M. Dent & Sons LTD., 1951), 176. Wilfrid Mellers, "The Later Works of Claude Debussy or *Pierrot fâché avec la lune*," *Studies in Contemporary Music* (London: Dennis Dobson Ltd., 1947), 53. Moray Welsh, "Behind the moon-eyed mask," *The Strad* 103 (April 1992), 328.

Many writers have analyzed this sonata, particularly the *Prologue* as following Classical sonata form, something which Debussy had condemned in his early career. Instead, this sonata harks back to the Baroque period, especially the style of two of Debussy's favorite French composers, Couperin and Rameau.

Attempts to approach Debussy's music using traditional analytical concepts often create confusion and do not succeed in generalizing Debussy's style for the most part. For instance, Arnold Whittall refers to Debussy's 'whole-tonality' or his 'expanded tonality'.[2] Laloy writes, "A chord no longer has to furnish any proof of its legitimacy: it is a sonority . . . This music, which seems to employ so many different scales, does not use any . . . it only has melodies." and "This is music without scales. . . ."[3] Roland Nadeau, particularly referring to Debussy's mature works, writes, "Each chord is a variable independent harmonic mass."[4]

Actually this sonata is composed with neither traditional harmonic progressions nor conventional voice-leading. Therefore, viewing it in the traditional way does not give any understanding of the work and only brings confusion, as evidenced by Nadeau's "harmonic mass." Debussy himself, writing in a letter after composing *Douze Etudes* for piano, the Cello Sonata and the Sonata for flute, viola and harp, alluded to the fact that the Cello Sonata is not written in a conventional harmonic style:

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[2]Arnold Whittall, "Tonality and the Whole-Tone Scale in the Music of Debussy," *Music Review* XXXVI (1975): 271.

[3]Louis Laloy, "Claude Debussy and Debussyism"; "Debussy's compositional style," *Louis Laloy (1874-1944) on Debussy, Ravel, and Stravinsky*, translated, an introduction and notes by Deborah Priest (England and USA: Ashgate, 1999), 91, 82.

[4]Roland Nadeau, "Brouillards: A Tonal Music," 45, quoted in David Paul Goldman, "Esotericism as a Determinant of Debussy's Harmonic Language," *Musical Quarterly* LXXV/2 (summer 1991), 133.

> . . . nearly a year unable to write music . . . after that I've almost had to re-learn it. It was like a rediscovery and it's seemed to me more beautiful than ever! . . .
> . . . We're still in the age of 'harmonic progressions' and people who are happy just with beauty of sound are hard to find.[5]

In this sonata Debussy uses well-ordered motivic ideas, dyadic conflicts, tritone relationships and the fifth root implications as the unifying factors for the entire work.

Moreover, Debussy is an innovative composer not only in terms of harmony but also in many other aspects of style. In particular, his music is considered difficult to perform. No writer has attempted to discuss the performance issues of this sonata. Therefore, I hope to contribute to its successful performance by discussing some of its technical challenges. These will include rhythm, *vibrato*, coloristic devices, and *spiccato* bowing techniques that Debussy used to create his unique sound. In addition, since cellist-composers contributed enormously to the development of cello techniques and the introduction of the cello sonata in France, the possible models of coloristic techniques from which Debussy might have derived his palette are discussed through such cellist-composers' works.

Fred Goldbeck once recommended Debussy's Cello Sonata as a model of twentieth century composition:

> . . . when a young musician asks me to show him a model of modern composition, I advise him to study Debussy's Sonata for Violoncello and Piano and try to discover how, in this dialogue with every kind of music, the comings and goings between the music of Monteverdi and Mussorgsky, street music, the music of Italian comedy and the music of ghosts have combined to make the music of Debussy.[6]

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[5]Debussy, *Debussy Letters*, selected and edited by François Lesure and Roger Nichols, trans. Roger Nichols (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 303.

[6]Fred. Goldbeck, "Twentieth-Century Composers and Tradition," in *Twentieth Century Music*, ed., Rollo H. Myers, 3rd ed. (New York: Calder and Boysars Ltd, 1968; Norwich: Fletcher and Son Ltd, 1969; New York: The Orion Press, 1970), 28.

I hope that this paper will create new interest in and understanding of Debussy's Cello Sonata for both the musicologist and the performer.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Toward the end of the nineteenth century France underwent enormous social and political changes. During this time Impressionism in painting and Symbolism in literature flourished. In 1870 France fought the Franco-Prussian War and founded the Third Republic. In 1894, France controlled a colonial empire in Africa and Asia and formed a military alliance with Russia. Her strength and prosperity grew until World War I.

Paris hosted world exhibitions. The Eiffel Tower was constructed during the 1880s, and many international artists and musicians came to live in Paris. Thus it became the cultural center of the western world by the end of the nineteenth century. Debussy was inevitably influenced by these political and cultural circumstances, and his frequent travels gave him opportunities to encounter the music of other countries. All of this influenced his creativity.

Late Period (1914-18)

Debussy first stated his project of composing six sonatas in a letter to Bernardo Molinari[1] on 6 October 1915 after the completion of the first two sonatas: "There are going to be six of them for different groups of instruments and the last one will

[1]A conductor and artistic director of the Augusteo in Rome.

combine all those used in the previous five." The original plan for this series, *Six sonates pour divers instruments*, is described in the Bibliothèque Nationale on an undated single sheet from a notebook as follows:

> *I. Violoncelle et piano*
> *II. Flute, alte et harpe*
> *III. Violon, cor anglais et piano*
> *IV. Hautbois, cor et clavecin*
> *V. Trompette, clarinette, bassoon et piano*
> *VI. La sixième Sonata sera en forme de concert, on y trouvera rassemblé des 'divers instruments' avec en plus le gracieux concours d'une contrabass.*[2]

There were some changes: originally the second sonata was planned for flute, oboe (instead of viola) and harp; the third sonata, the *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, was originally a trio for violin, English horn (this was dropped in the final version), and piano. The fourth was to have been for oboe, horn, and harpsichord; the fifth for trumpet, clarinet, bassoon and piano; and the last for diverse instruments, using all the instruments from the preceding sonatas, plus a double bass. Only three sonatas were completed before his death. The *Sonata for Cello and Piano* was composed between the end of July and the first day of August, 1915; the *Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp*, was completed in October 1915; and the *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, was completed in April 1917. According to Jacques Durand, Debussy's publisher, the projected series were inspired by Saint-Saëns' Septet for piano, trumpet, and strings, op. 65 (1881), that Debussy had heard again at the Concerts Durand in 1913.[3]

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[2]Welsh, 327.

[3]Jacques Durand, *Quelques souvenirs d'un éditeur de musique*, 2 vols. (Paris: Durand, 1924, 1925), quoted in Teresa Maria Davidian, "Debussy's Sonata Forms" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1988), 139.

As Debussy was composing the three sonatas, France was overtaken by World War I. He was hoping that in some way his works would serve in the war against the hegemony of German culture. Debussy had long been eager to reestablish the French quality in music, which he believed had been lost after Rameau. This notion appears in his writings, such as *En fin seuls!* in the Paris daily *L'Intransigeant* on 11 March 1915 and in the *Bulletin musical de la Société Internationale de Musique*, as well as in his works: *Berceuse héroïque* (1914), dedicated to King Albert I of Belgium and his soldiers; the second movement of *En blanc et noir* (1915), dedicated to the memory of Durand's cousin, Lieutenant Jacques Charlot, killed on 3 March 1915; the *Noël des enfants qui n'ont plus de maison* (1915), for the children in Flanders which was devastated by the Germans during the war; and *Ode à la France*, an incomplete work scored for solo voices, chorus, and orchestra. Moreover, on the title page of each of the three sonatas he emphasized his French heritage by signing "Claude Debussy, *Musicien français*."[4]

Late Style

Debussy's struggle to find a new musical style may have led to a deep depression. In a letter dated 14 July 1914 to Godet, Debussy talked of 'hours in which one can hardly think of anything but suicide as a way out.' Yet at about the same time, Debussy wrote to Vallery-Radot:

[4]Vallas, *Claude Debussy: His Life and Works*, 260.

> Never have I approached work with so much verve. I have still so much to say; and there are so many musical ideas which have never been expressed.[5]

As I mentioned previously, after composing *Douze Etudes* for piano, the Cello Sonata and the Sonata for flute, viola and harp, Debussy wrote, "It was like a rediscovery and it's seemed to me more beautiful than ever!"[6] Eventually, toward the end of his life, Debussy distinctly changed his compositional direction toward absolute music or, as Debussy himself said, "pure" music.[7] The programmatic titles and the sensuousness of the previous works disappeared and were replaced by abstract music of a more refined, restrained, brighter and clearer character. Yet Debussy's late pieces are often judged by his contemporaries to be inferior to his early works. In 1918 Ernest Newman wrote, "one charm of his earlier works was its incalculability; the great defect of his later work was that it rarely held a surprise for us."[8] In 1926 Nadia Boulanger stated, "[they are] frankly inferior . . . since they were written under the strain of the war and the steady progress of an incurable disease [cancer]."[9] Even later scholars, such as Martin Cooper, criticized Debussy's late works:

> . . . He was a supreme transliterator from one sense to another, the discoverer of exquisite musical counterparts for the impressions of the other senses---sight, touch and smell---the musician who more than

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[5]Lockspeiser, *Debussy: His Life and Mind*, Vol. II, Reprint with corrections (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 205.

[6]Debussy, *Debussy Letters*, 303, see also 5n. p. 3.

[7]"I've actually written nothing except 'pure' music: twelve Etudes for piano: two sonatas for various instruments, in the old French style which was kind enough not to ask for tetraological [*sic*] efforts from its listeners." Ibid., 309.

[8]Ernest Newman, "The Development of Debussy," *The Musical Times* 59 (1918), 199.

[9]"Lectures on Modern Music," Rice Institute Pamphlet 13, No. 2 (1926), 159, cited in Yoohee kwon, "Tradition and Innovation in the Three Late Sonatas of Claude Debussy" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1997), 44.

> any other artist fulfilled Baudelaire's theory of correspondence between the arts. His last works lack this sensual inspiration or have it only in a diluted form, as of impressions remembered but no longer experienced. The memories are coloured with nostalgia, the temperament through which they are filtered has lost tone and resilience and the music correspondingly lacks immediacy because it lacks sensual impetus. The *grisaille* at which Debussy said that he some times aimed in *Pelléas* was then a discipline, a deliberate renunciation of colour; in the last works it has become a sad necessity.[10]

In short, Debussy's critics complained that he had lost his creativity, relying too heavily on his own earlier compositional devices to the point they had become trite and uninteresting. Boulanger claims it is the result of illness, not considering that the compositional spirit generated in the Cello Sonata seems not to be the result of illness, but rather is bright and full of gaiety and power. Wilfrid Mellers supports this view:

> And so, disillusioned though it may be in the strict sense, this music conveys an impression not of spiritual sickness, but of freshness and health. Because of their honesty, these works have dignity and power.[11]

Moreover, his critics failed to see that the techniques he developed throughout his career were expressed in different, more stylized ways in these elegant, hyper-sophisticated late examples of absolute music.[12] It is crucial to remember that Debussy never wanted to be labeled as an Impressionist or as a Symbolist,[13] preferring a

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[10]Martin Cooper, *French Music: From the death of Berlioz to the death of Fauré* (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), 178.

[11]Mellers, 53.

[12]Raymond Roy Park, "The Later Style of Claude Debussy" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1967), 250.

[13]"I dared to point out to him that in poetry and painting alike (and I managed to think of a couple of musicians as well) men had tried to shake away the dust of tradition, but that it had only earned them the labels of "symbolists" or "impressionists"—useful terms of abuse.

'It's only journalists doing their job who call them that,' continued Monsieur Croche unflinchingly. 'That's of no importance. Imbeciles can find something to ridicule in a fundamentally beautiful idea,...

continual search for an individual and unique approach to composition throughout his life.[14] Debussy's critics, including Cooper, did not understand that Debussy was searching for a pure music in his late period, one that was not in any way associated with Impressionism.

Several other scholars such as Morgan, Myers and James McCalla believe that Debussy's sonatas even look forward to Neo-Classicism. The "harmonic austerity" and 'bareness'" with "no literary or extra-musical content" in these sonatas show "the germs of the neo-classical movement."[15] His tendency to economize texture and form began with the *Études* for piano (1913) and reached its peak in the three sonatas of 1915-1917.[16] According to McCalla, Debussy is the leading composer of the modern sonata tradition that includes sonatas by Bartók, Poulenc and Carter, and his sonatas share the textural and harmonic clarity of modern Neo-Classicism. Debussy's sonatas

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'Remain unique!...unblemished!...

'Search for a discipline within freedom! Don't let yourself be governed by formulae drawn from decadent philosophies: they are for the feeble-minded. Listen to no one's advice except that of the wind in the trees. That can recount the whole history of mankind. . . . " Debussy, "Conversation with M. Croche," *La Revue Blanche* (1 July 1901), in Debussy, *Debussy on Music, The Critical Writings of the Great French Composer*, collected and introduced by François Lesure, trans. and ed. Richard Langham Smith (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press), 48.

[14]"I am neither revolutionizing nor demolishing anything. I am quietly forging my own way ahead, without any trace of propaganda for my ideas---as is proper for a revolutionary. . . . I am for freedom. But freedom must essentially be free. All the noises we hear around ourselves can be re-created. . . . Some people wish above all to conform to the rules; for myself, I wish only to render what I can hear.

There is no Debussy school. I have no disciples; I am myself." Idem, "Statement to an Austrian Journalist," December 1910 in ibid., 243.

[15]Rollo Myers, *Modern French Music: From Fauré to Boulez* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 100.

[16]Robert P. Morgan, *Twentieth-Century Music: A History of Musical Style in Modern Europe and America* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1991), 50.

do not necessarily follow the ordering of movements in a Classical sonata, nor do they necessarily use sonata form, which is common in Neo-Classicism.[17]

Indeed, the Cello Sonata, as a result of its anti-Romanticism, features a lack of voluptuousness, a restraint that is more refined than in his earlier works, and that which would develop into Neo-Classicism elsewhere only a few years later in 1918. Another characteristic of Neo-Classicism, the use of expanded tonality, modalism in order "to reproduce the hierarchically structured tonal system of true (Viennese) Classicism"[18] also appears in the Cello Sonata. Moreover, one can easily find traces of the Neo-Classical style in the sonata's concise size, lack of programmatic content, harmonic clarity, generally homophonic texture, plagal cadences, picardy thirds, melismatic or improvisatory melodies, well-balanced phrase structure, and diatonicism, particularly in the *Prologue*.

It is difficult, however, to categorize the entire sonata as a Neo-Classical work. The *Sérénade* features extremely sophisticated chromaticism, and the *Finale* combines diatonicism and chromaticism with abrupt changes of mood. Furthermore, Debussy still has his unique musical language, and while it is more refined, clearer and brighter than before, it deviates considerably from what might be defined as strictly Classical or Neo-Classical. Therefore this work may be described as a prototype of Neo-Classicism, but not a purely Neo-Classical work. As a result, these sonatas mark Debussy as one of the most influential composers for the twentieth-century music. Mellers best summarizes the perfection and possibilities of Debussy's late sonatas:

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[17]James McCalla, "The Modern Sonata," *Twentieth-Century Chamber Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996), 173.

[18]Whittall, "Neo-Classical," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 1980, 104-5.

> Debussy never wrote anything more perfectly realized than these calmly complex sonatas. Although in more senses than one opera ultima, they are pregnant with possibilities for future development, had the composer lived and they mark Debussy's realization that much of what he had previously accomplished was, however beautiful, partial and incomplete.[19]

Debussy's late style influenced such composers as Ravel, Cage, Messiaen, Milhaud, Stockhausen, and Boulez. In fact, Boulez recognizes that the first composers "to learn the lesson of Debussy's last works" were Varèse and Webern. These two composers learned:

> . . . to 'think forms', not – in Debussy's words – as 'sonata boxes' but as arising from a process that is primarily spatial and rhythmic, linking 'a succession of alternative, contrasting or correlated states' – that is to say, intrinsic to its object but at the same time in complete control of it.[20]

Pierrot in Debussy's life

Debussy originally subtitled the Cello Sonata *Pierrot fâché avec la lune* (Pierrot angry at the moon), and according to Léon Vallas, who was acquainted with Debussy, "We are told that the musician had thought of calling it '*Pierrot fâché avec la lune*,' and wished to evoke characters from the old Italian comedy,"[21] namely the *commedia dell' arte* of 16th-century Italy.

The stock characters of the *commedia dell' arte*, Arlecchino, Pantaloon, Pulcinella, Scapino and Scaramouche, all of whom wore masks, provided improvised music and spoken comedy, and were the basis for the buffo characters of later comic opera. As Italian companies toured abroad, *commedia dell' arte* began to flourish in France

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[19]Mellers, "The Late Works of Claude Debussy," 55.

[20]Pierre Boulez, *Orientations: Collected Writings Pierre Boulez*, ed., Jean-Jacques Nattiez, trans. Martin Cooper (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986), 371.

[21]Vallas, *Claude Debussy: His Life and Works*, 261.

around the middle of the 17th century. However, because of language difficulties, the characters were turned into mimes, thereby establishing a new style based more on the costumes of the masked characters, and the romantic aspects of the *harlequinade* which superseded the traditions of the *commedia dell' arte*. From this time onwards, the characters of Pierrot and Columbine played an important role in the drama. The final shape of Pierrot in France was created by Jean Gaspard Deburau who was born towards the end of the eighteenth century. S. R. Littlewood describes:

> . . . discarding the old grin and horseplay, Deburau made him into a natural, gentle half-pathetic, half-humorous, wholly human figure, pale and cadaverous, with a smile of silent raillery forever flickering round his lips.[22]

This complex image of Pierrot captivated Debussy throughout his career. In 1881 he composed the art song *Pierrot*, a setting of a poem by Théodore de Banville. and in the next year five songs from Paul Verlaine's *Fêtes galantes* (*Pantomime*, *En sourdine*, *Mandoline*, *Clair de Lune* and *Fantoches*). While he was a student at Villa Medici (after winning of the Prix de Rome in 1885), Debussy used to go to the performances of the Neapolitan *Polchinelle*, a kind of masked Pierrot. Vallas writes:

> He took the greatest delight in the performance itself and in the resigned attitude of the old double-bass player whose instrument formed the basis of the lamentable little orchestra of this popular theatre. The keen sense of humor, which Debussy so often manifested in his later works, also found expression in the imitations, parodies, and amusing improvisations to which he sometimes treated his colleagues.[23]

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[22]S. R. Littlewood, *The Story of Pierrot*, quoted in Welsh, 329.

[23]Vallas, 40.

Later, he wrote two cycles of *Fêtes galantes*: the first cycle, *En sourdine*, *Fantoches*, and *Clair de lune* in 1891 and 1892; and the second, *Les ingénus*, *La faune*, and *Colloque sentimental*, in 1904.

At the end of June 1915, in a letter to Durand, Debussy actually stated that he had thought of writing a work under the title of the *Fêtes galantes*:

> I have a few ideas at the moment, and, although they are not worth making a fuss about, I should like to cultivate them for the benefit of the duet for two pianos, and of the *Fêtes galantes*.[24]

According to Vallas, Debussy also planned an operatic work with the title *Fêtes galantes* but instead published '*En blanc et noir*' for two pianos later in 1915.[25] It is not known why the operatic work was not composed, but the cellist Welsh suggests that the Cello Sonata became a 'surrogate mini-opera'.[26]

Thus Debussy was fascinated by the idea of Pierrot throughout his life. However, his attitude toward Pierrot changed over time. The Pierrot of Debussy's early songs and that of his last years appear to be different. Mellers observes that the world of the mythological Pierrot and the world of the mask and the phantom, that was illustrated in his early works, were not enough for the real world at the end of his life, when he was beset with illness and the oppression of the war. Instead, Debussy began to ironically contemplate the masked Pierrot, for "even his sadness and his disillusion now scarcely seem real to him." The spirit of the Cello Sonata comes from "this newly won honesty

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[24]Ibid., 254.

[25]Ibid., 254-55.

[26]Welsh, 329.

and self-knowledge."[27] Specifically, the melodic ideas of the *Prologue* which are connected to each other "in the manner of a narrative," and the sound of the cello in the "bitter" and "tragic" *Sérénade* imitating a guitar, a mandoline, sometimes a flute and even tambourine[28] make the movement "one of the most concentrated of Debussy's Harlequin pieces and the most significantly 'modern'."[29] Likewise, the *Finale* contains "a pathetic Harlequinesque semblance of high spirits, interrupted in the course of its hurried pace by this heart-rending passage marked *con morbidezza.* Harlequin is at last unmasked, and the artist is faced with the desolation of his solitude."[30]

The image of Pierrot appears most plainly in the *Sérénade*, especially given the guitar-like sounds of the *pizzicato* and other coloristic devices in the cello. Debussy almost completely ignores the legato sound of the cello, and when he does include legato passages, they "eventually dissolve into nervous ornaments."[31] Furthermore, Debussy destroys continuity by "a free modulation" that appears with "a surrealistic juxtaposition of different ideas."[32] Similarly, the abrupt and frequent changes of moods in the *Finale* may also describe the psychological inner mind of Pierrot, portrayed also by strong *portamento*, *sur le chevalet* in the crescendo, quick changes of register, and various bowing techniques. Vallas believes that this music recalls some of Debussy's early works, such as *Pelléas*, *La cathédrale engloutie*, and the Caprices, as well as *En*

[27]Mellers, "The Late Works of Claude Debussy," 52-53.

[28]Lockspeiser, *Debussy,* 177-78.

[29]Mellers, "The Late Works of Claude Debussy," 54.

[30]Lockspeiser, *Debussy*, 177-78.

[31]Roger Nichols, "Debussy, (Achille-) Claude," *The New Grove Dictionary Music and Musicians*, 1980, 300.

[32]Ibid.

blanc et noir in the *Prologue*, and *Fantoches* in the *Finale*.[33] In a sense the Cello Sonata seemed to be the summation of all his previous works "*Fantoches*, *Masques*, *Minstrels* and *Bôite à Joujoux*, an allegorical ballet with elements of the frustrated love story, and assumed a kind of valedictory statement of the artist against the world."[34]

It is not known why the title *Pierrot fâché avec la lune* was dropped. Possibly Debussy was upset by the cellist Louis Rosoor's program notes' reference to Pierrot, as will be discussed below; as a result, Debussy would have to drop the programmatic name, deciding to turn it into a more classical piece of pure music, as he wrote in a letter to Stravinsky on 24 October 1915.[35] Regardless, it is easy to hear that Debussy might have associated the sonata with the Pierrot character, with its guitar-like sounds, its juxtaposed melodic lines, which create quickly changing moods that are sometimes comic and joyful, sometimes sad and dreamy, sometimes sarcastic and ironic. The juxtaposition of technical elements in this sonata creates sudden and rapid changes of these moods. The melodies are not symmetrical self-contained organisms, but "volcanic" with sudden up and downward motions. The fragmentary melodic phrases with their violent contrast of moods are in fact differentiated from Debussy's concentration on harmonic fluctuation in his earlier works.[36]

According to Yoohee Kwon, the opening melody of this sonata (C, D, E, D) seems to recall Debussy's early song, *Pierrot* (1881), which is based on the popular tune

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[33]Vallas, *Claude Debussy*, 262.

[34]Welsh, 331.

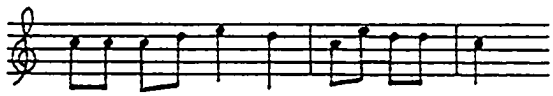
[35]Debussy, *Debussy Letters*, 309.

[36]Mellers, "The Late Works of Claude Debussy," 48.

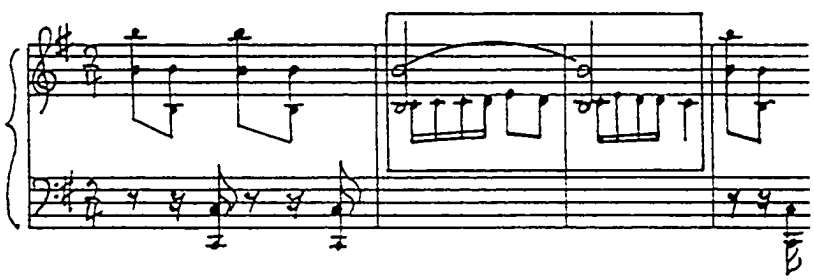
whose melody begins with C, C, C, D, E, D (Fig. 1). This association, however, is quite distant, not readily audible.

Fig. 1. The tunes of popular music and the Prologue[37]

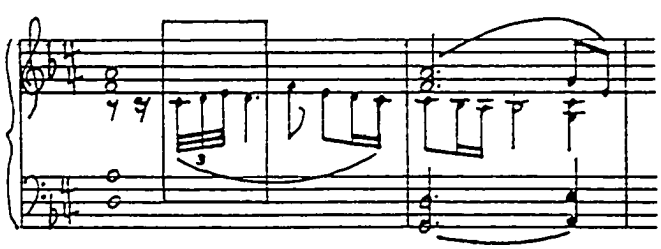
a. *Au clair de la lune*



b. *Pierrot* (1881), mm. 1-3



c. *Prologue*, mm. 1-2



[37]Kwon, 47.

Popular Music and Debussy

Debussy was also fascinated by the circus and the music hall, as evidenced by such pieces as *Golliwogg's Cake Walk* (*Children's Corner*, 1906-8), *Minstrels* (*Préludes* I, 1910), and *General Lavine---eccentric* (*Préludes* II, 1912-13). While *Golliwogg's Cake Walk* and *Minstrels* appear to borrow from American ragtime and minstrelsy, the former utilized cakewalk to poke racist fun at Wagner. Debussy successfully incorporated popular music in his first book of *Préludes*: Neapolitan song in *Les collines d'Anacapri*, music-hall song in *Minstrels*, guitar-strumming in *La sérénade interrompue* and an unidentifiable, non-serious style in *La danse de Puck.*[38]

He also captured elements of the late nineteenth-century music hall such as the anarchic structure of the circus, the spontaneous looseness of form which stood against the more ordered unfolding of traditional theater, the noise and bustle of the onlookers, and the constant interruption of the action onstage, which was essential to the music hall's nature.[39] Indeed, the music hall's "variety" and the structural principle of the music-hall *revue*, "the jumbling and splicing of current events in tableaux which occur in rapid succession and utter disregard for continuous narrative,"[40] abound in the sonata, with its repetition and constant juxtaposition of contrasting musical ideas and melodies. Moreover, terms frequently used to describe music-hall and *revue* performances, such

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[38]Nichols, "Debussy, (Achille-) Claude," 306.

[39]Paul Robert, *Images: The Piano Music of Claude Debussy*, ed. Reinhard G. Pauly (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1996), 220.

[40]Jeffrey Weiss, *The Popular Culture of Modern Art: Picasso, Duchamp, and Avant-gardism* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1994), 30.

as "glib and ironic"[41] appear as terms of expression in the sonata. For instance, he indicates in his score that music is to be played *fantasque et léger* (fantastical and light), *ironique*, *très serré* (compressed), and *léger et nerveux* (light and nervous).

Debussy was also interested in the popular music of Spain. In 1913 he was entranced by a concert of Spanish music performed by Spanish musicians and wrote that they:

> . . . were treated to the sound of their wonderful popular music, in which so much imagination mingles with so much rhythm, qualities that make it one of the greatest treasure-houses of musical riches in the world. The very richness of their folk music appears to be the reason for the slowness with which their "other" music has developed.[42]

According to Manuel de Falla, several of Debussy's works show the influence of Spanish folk-music, including the songs *Fantoches* and *Mandoline*, the piano piece *Masques*, the *Danse profane* for harp and strings, and the second movement of the String Quartet, "the greater part of which, if only because of its texture, might well be one of the most beautiful Andalusian dances ever written."[43] The Cello Sonata is often mentioned as being reminiscent of Spanish music. The *Prologue* is quite Spanish-like, recalling Spanish folk song in its "troubadour-like melodic arabesques."[44]

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[41]"The tone of the *revue*, the posture which belongs to the *revue* alone among genres of theater, is glib and ironic. French vocabulary for this comic manner is specific: *blague* of irony when it is confident and careless, *rosserie* when spiteful or cynical. The primary formal device of the *revue* is the play on words, or the "allusion" (the word is identical in French and English)." Ibid., 14.

[42]Debussy, "Concerts Colonne and Société des Nouveaux Concerts Spanish Music," 1 December 1913, in Debussy, *Debussy on Music*, 300.

[43]Lockspeiser, *Debussy: His Life and Mind*, Vol. II, 256.

[44]Mellers, "The Late Works of Claude Debussy," 53-54.

Cellists L. Rosoor and M. Maréchal

The first performance of the Cello Sonata in Paris took place 24 March 1917 with Joseph Salmon playing the cello and Debussy at the piano.[45] There was an earlier private performance by a yet-to-be-identified cellist who was found by André Caplet.[46] In June 1916 Debussy wrote a letter to Caplet regarding this performance.[47] Unfortunately, however, he makes no mention of who the cellist was. One possible is Louis Rosoor,[48] who eventually made Debussy unhappy by suggesting his own programmatic notes for the Cello Sonata, as follows:

Prologue

Pierrot wakes up with a jolt, shakes off his sleepiness, and remembers fondly the charms of his beloved...

Sérénade

...to whom he goes to play a serenade; but the most beguiling entreaties leave her unfeelingly cold towards him...

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[45]It is generally said that the Paris concert is the first performance of the sonata (Ginsburg, *History of the Violoncello*, 289; Lockspeiser, *Debussy: His Life and Mind*, Vol. II. 300; Nichols, *The Life of Debussy*, 158; Vallas, *Claude Debussy: His Life and Works*, 261; Welsh, *The Strad* 103, 330). However, François Lesure claims that the first performan and Madame Alfred Hobday on 4 March 1916, then on 9 March in Geneva by Léonce Allard and Marie Panthès. *Claude Debussy: Sonate für Violoncello und Klavier*, according to the autograph and first edition ed. Ernst-Günter Heinemann with a preface by François Lesure, bowing and fingering by Reiner ce took place in London by C. Warwick Evans Ginzel and Klaus Schilde (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1998).

[46]A famous French composer, conductor and an associated and trusted collaborator (1878-1925) with Debussy.

[47]In June 1916 Debussy wrote to Caplet, "You're an amazing fellow . . . As bold as a lion, you manage to find a piano, a cellist and a sonata and to get them all together just a few metres away from the Boches . . . such elegant bravura is and always will be the very 'essence of France'. As for the bowing, do what you like! The fact is, every cellist will find a bowing he thinks is best . . . Except when they're playing together in an orchestra, I don't think it's anything to worry about, do you? As for printing mistakes, contact Jacques Durand." Debussy, *Debussy Letters*, 315.

[48]There is no source proving Caplet and Rosoor's acquaintance.

Finale

Pierrot consoles himself meanwhile, by singing a song to freedom, not without some regret... [49]

Rosoor distributed these notes to the audience, saying that the program had been given to him personally by Debussy.[50] Moreover, it seems that Rosoor might even have tried to influence Durand with these. In a letter to Durand on 12 October 1916, Debussy wrote:

> Yesterday I had a visit from Mr. L. Roos . . . For a moment he made me feel sorry I'd composed a sonata and I began to wonder whether my writing was at fault! There's no escaping the fact, bad musicians are everywhere! This episode has worried me considerably; the ramifications are many and I'm not surprised any more that my poor music is so often not understood. Without dramatizing things unduly, it was terrifying. . . .
>
> It's a miscalculation, indeed I'd go so far as to call it dishonest! If only it weren't too late, unfortunately, to make something out of this bitter truth.[51]

Several days later, 17 October, Debussy wrote to Durand, again mentioning Rosoor:

> M. Louis Rosoor the cellist comes not from Bordeaux but from Lille and won a first prize at the Paris Conservatoire. That doesn't stop him having his own individual understanding of my music. We must be particularly tolerant with those who've been invaded by the Germans! If the world's now coming to 4 Place de la Madeleine to buy my music and treating it any old how, that doesn't worry me, but when self-styled 'virtuosi' spread error and desolation in so-called 'concert' halls,

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[49]Welsh, 329.

[50]According to Ginsburg, Debussy told Maréchal in 1916 that when he wrote the sonata, especially the *Sérénade*, he thought of the puppet Pierrot. Levin Ginsburg, *History of the Violoncello: Western Violoncello Art of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Excluding Russian and Soviet Schools*, ed. Dr. Herbert R. Axelord, trans. Tanya Tchistyakova (Neptune City, New Jersey: Paganiniana Publications, 1983), 290.

[51]Debussy, *Debussy Letters*, 319.

> I continue to find that irritating. But if you don't see anything wrong, we'll say no more about it.[52]

It is quite easy to see from the letters how unhappy Debussy was with Rosoor.

Another possible cellist was Maurice Maréchal (1892-1964), a good friend of Caplet,[53] who was also closely acquainted with Ravel during the composition of that composer's *Sonata for Violin and Cello* (1920-22), dedicated "To the memory of Claude Debussy." Maréchal gave the first performance of the Ravel work, with the violinist, Hélène Jourdan-Morhange, on 6 April 1922, and Andre Caplet's *Epiphanie* for cello and orchestra in 1922. Maréchal was a well-known cellist, known for his excellent technique, tone quality, and musical interpretation, and was a favorite of Debussy. In reviewing a Maréchal recital, one contemporary stated, "I have never heard such a peerless rendition of the Debussy Sonata, one of the best works of this composer . . . "[54] The French musicologist Marc Pincherle called Maréchal one of the most outstanding representatives of French performing culture:

> Outstanding French composers of his time asked Maréchal to be the first performer of their cello works, the majority of which they dedicated to him...If the contemporary French cello school so prospers (from the point of view of European classification apparently, it surpasses our violin and piano schools), it's to a great extent to Maurice Maréchal's credit.[55]

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[52]Ibid.

[53]According to Ginsburg (1907-1981), an author of *Maurice Maréchal* (1971), Caplet when he was in the army found Maurice Maréchal, whom I am going to discuss later, playing the cello in the courtyard of a farm. Soon after, their relationship began. Ginsburg, 179.

[54]Ibid., 183.

[55]Ibid., 190-91.

Maréchal seems to be the more likely of the two cellists to have first performed Debussy's work, since Debussy told Maréchal in 1916 that when he wrote the sonata, especially its *Sérénade*, he thought of the puppet Pierrot. In addition, when Maréchal returned to his regiment, he had a copy of the sonata in his possession, published not long before his arrival in Paris. In a letter to Durand, 17 October 1916, Debussy also differentiates the cellist from Lille, Rosoor, from the cellist from Bordeaux. Maréchal visited Debussy's home near the Bois de Boulogne with Caplet. He played the sonata twice with the composer at the piano and received from Debussy a copy of the sonata on which Debussy inscribed, "To M. Maréchal as a token of gratitude for his already great talent. Claude Debussy. January 1917."[56]

Theoretical Background

Debussy and Sonata Form

Debussy condemned the sonata form in criticizing Beethoven and Wagner:

> Already for Beethoven the art of development consists in repetition, in the incessant restatement of identical themes . . . And Wagner has exaggerated this procedure to the point of caricature . . . Do you think that in composition the same emotion can be expressed twice?[57]

He also writes: "Explorations previously made in the realm of pure music had led me toward a hatred of classical development, whose beauty is solely technical."[58] Debussy looked for a form that was different from the one stemming from the Germanic tradition. He enthusiastically wanted to create a French interpretation of the sonata:

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[56]Ibid., 179. Ginsburg source came from the archives of the Maréchal family.

[57]Oscar Thompson, *Debussy: Man and Artist*, new ed. (New York: Dover, 1967), 103.

[58]Debussy, *Debussy on Music*, 124-25.

> I should like to have someone achieve, I would achieve myself, a music truly free from motifs, or formed out of a single continuous motif that nothing interrupts and which never repeats itself. Then there would be a logical, tight, deductive development; between two repetitions of the same motif, characteristic and typical of the work, there would not be a hasty and superfluous filling-in. Development would no longer consist of physical amplification . . . but would be understood in a more universal and finally psychic acceptance.[59]

Kurt von Fischer finds Debussy's use of sonata form in only two of his works: the first movement of the *Fantaisie pour piano et orchestre* (1890) and the *String Quartet* (1894) but in none of Debussy's late sonatas.[60] Teresa Maria Davidian adds the Violin Sonata, saying it uses sonata form.[61] She points out that Debussy's use of sonata form resulted from the influence of the Société Nationale de Musique. When Debussy associated with this concert organization (1888) ruled largely by advocates of German music, such as Vincent d'Indy, Ernest Chausson and other students of César Franck, Debussy experimented with sonata form in the String Quartet for the first time.[62]

In his late period Debussy finally expressed his own sonata form. The *Prologue* of the Cello Sonata is a good example of his own reaction to the traditional, German Romantic sonata form. The *Prologue* movement is a ternary design. There is a kind of developmental section (mm. 20-36), which is, as Debussy conceived, intensive, tiny, and not substantially augmented: only 16 measures long and divided into two eight-measure groups, it contrasts a diatonic climax that is preceded by the first eight-

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[59]André Fontinas, *Mes Souvenirs du Symbolisme* (Paris: Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1928), 92-93, quoted in Arthur B. Wenk, *Claude Debussy and Twentieth-Century Music*, 13.

[60]Kurt von Fischer, "Debussy und die Sonate," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung. Literaturbeilage*, 19 August 1962.

[61]Davidian, "Debussy's Sonata Forms," 5.

[62]Ibid., 6-7.

measure chromatic ostinato. It is created not by processing harmonies or thematic material in the Germanic way, but by juxtaposing or repeating motivic cells and melodies. Moreover, there are no definite modulations; rather, the development stays primarily in D minor. There are also two, possibly three, thematic elements: at the opening of the introduction, motive *a* (mm. 1-2), at the A section, motive *c* (mm. 8-9) and at the B section, motive *d* (mm. 16-17, see Formal Analysis in the Appendix I). Debussy thus established the modern French Sonata with its sensitivity, simplicity and concision--specifically French qualities--setting this against the monumental and complicated German Romantic sonata. Approaching this sonata in the traditional way is improper and leads to confused conclusions, such as analyzing the piece as a monothematic movement,[63] or switching the return of the first theme (mm. 1-2) and the second (mm. 8-9) in the recapitulation.[64]

Theorists and Differing Views of Debussy's Cello Sonata

Analyzing Debussy's music is notoriously difficult. Several writers have analyzed this sonata, convinced that theirs is the best way. Robert Moevs deals with the intervallic procedure in the second movement, saying the interplay of intervals is "a fundamental character of Debussy's musical thought." He also mentions that there are two distinct intervallic poles, the tritone and the fifth. Generally, a 4th or 5th has a diatonic character and a tritone has a more chromatic character, regardless of whether

[63]Debussy, *Sonate pour violoncelle et piano*, ed. Josef Schwab (Leipzig: Edition Peters, 1969), in preliminary note, he writes, "As in the case of the sonata for flute, viola and harp and the sonata for violin, for the model taken [i.e., the cello sonata] is not the dualist sonata form of Viennese classicism but the monothematic sonata of 17th and 18th century France. Particularly the works of François Couperin had an influence on Debussy's composition;" Davidian, "Debussy's Sonata Forms," 146.

[64]Park, 253; Kwon, 86.

these are built chromatically or diatonically.[65] Even though the *Prologue* is a more diatonic movement than the *Sérénade*, the *Prologue* also contains the intervals of the 4th, 5th along with tritone relationships as important factors. Moevs' analysis helps to understand the intervallic background of Debussy music.

Analysts such as Elizabeth Knowles Cantrell and Davidian focus more on pitch-class set theory.[66] Davidian writes, "Even though many of the various pitch collections may be characterized as tonal, they are related and manipulated in ways most commonly associated with atonality."[67] However, this is not an atonal piece, nor is it entirely tonal. Thus, using this technique to examine the work, one may miss chromatic issues in a context still related to tonality: Debussy still uses key signatures, and even though that does not imply the tonality of the key, it does have a structural importance. Moreover, as a performer myself, I am not convinced how much the pitch-class set theory helps performers' understanding of the work.

The latest analytical study is "Tradition and Innovation in the Three Late Sonatas of Claude Debussy" by Yoohee Kwon (1997). He attempts to show the differences between traditional sonata form and the form in the *Prologue* of Debussy's Cello Sonata. He views the form of the *Prologue* as three parts without introduction, agreeing with previous analyses by Raymond Roy Park and Eugene Norman Wilson.[68]

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[65]Robert Moevs, "Intervallic Procedures in Debussy: Sérénade from the Sonata for Cello and Piano," *Perspectives of New Music* VII (Fall-Winter 1969): 85, 89.

[66]Elizabeth Knowles Cantrell, "Analysis of Debussy's Sonata for Cello and Piano" (DMA diss., University of Georgia, 1988); Davidian, "Intervallic Process and Autonomy in the First Movement of Debussy's Sonata for Cello and Piano," *Theory and Practice* XIV-XV (1989-90).

[67]Davidian, "Intervallic Process and Autonomy," 1.

[68]Park, 253; Eugene Norman Wilson, "Form and Texture in the Chamber Music of Debussy and Ravel" (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1968), 54; Cantrell sees also three parts, without

Kwon writes that the *Prologue* is not in the traditional sonata form; however, his analysis is actually based on the formal traditional sonata form having three sections: exposition (Section I, mm. 1-15: mm. 1-2, the first thematic material; mm. 8-9, the second thematic material), development (Section II, mm. 16-34, retransition mm. 35-38), and recapitulation (Section I′, mm. 39-51, switching the return of the thematic materials).[69]

In my view, since this is not really sonata form, it does not need to be interpreted so strictly as the three parts of exposition, development, and recapitulation, which can create confusion. Kwon writes, "The middle section, or Section II, develops motivic materials derived from the Section I like a development section."[70] Actually, in my view, section II begins at m. 16, as Kwon sees, but the possible traditional development section starts from m. 21, not from m. 16. Therefore, the sonata, in a more traditional way, could have an introduction (mm. 1-7), exposition (mm. 8-20: the first thematic material, mm. 8-9; the second thematic material, mm. 16-17), development (mm. 21-38), and recapitulation (mm. 39-51). However, this sonata is not in the traditional sonata form, and thus, I do not follow the scheme of the traditional sonata form. Rather, it has an introduction (mm. 1-7), section A (mm. 8-15), section B (mm. 16-38, divided into three small parts), section A′ (mm. 39-44) and a coda (mm. 45-51; see diagram in Appendix I). Moreover, Kwon doesn't count the material of mm. 16-17 as possible

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Introduction. However, she counts the return of A from m. 29, thus, without a switching of thematic materials. Cantrell, 15.

[69]Kwon, 166-167.

[70]Ibid., 166.

second thematic material (for its motivic quality) and includes that in a part of the development section.

However, Debussy himself mentioned in two letters of October 1915 that he composed this sonata "in the ancient, flexible mould with none of the grandiloquence of modern sonatas. . . . " and "in the old French style . . . "[71] The motivic melody is one of the characteristics of the late Baroque period. G. Jean Shaw writes that themes in the late Baroque period "in many instances are so motivic that they are difficult to identify as thematic material."[72] Kwon, however, in finding the innovative aspects of melody and texture in all three sonatas, contributes to the understanding of Debussy's music. Other analyses, like Park's overview of the late style, Marianne Weeldon's discussion of "Organicism and Ironic Inversion in the Prologue," and Eugene Norman Wilson's textural view of the Cello Sonata all contribute greatly to our understanding of the Cello Sonata by Debussy.[73]

The purpose of my analysis is to augment the performer's understanding of Debussy's work. Debussy's music is known to be difficult to perform, most especially when one is ignorant of his style. This work is cyclic, and many elements found in the introduction of the *Prologue* appear throughout the other two movements. In this sense this work is more like a whole rather than a piece with three separate movements. Therefore, along with a stylistic analysis, I will discuss the dyadic conflicts, tritone

[71]Debussy, *Debussy Letters*, 303, 309.

[72]G. Jean Shaw. "The Violoncello Sonata Literature in France During the Eighteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., The Catholic University of America, 1963), 67.

[73]Park, 252-274; Marianne Wheeldon, "Interpreting Discontinuity in the Late Works of Claude Debussy" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1997), 152; Wilson, 146-152.

relationships and fifth movement root implications that appear as important factors in the structural scheme of the entire sonata.

CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF THE SONATA

Stylistic Influences

Debussy's interest in French music and history led him to identify his own music within the French tradition. On 4 November 1909 in an interview for *Comoedia* Debussy states, "I sought above all to rediscover being French. The French tend to forget too easily their innate qualities of clarity and elegance."[1] In fact, his own music is characterized by the elements which he finds to be French qualities, such as concision, simplicity, elegance, clarity, reserve, restraint, and discretion.[2]

His numerous articles and letters also show this musical patriotism. On 14 October 1915 Debussy wrote a letter to R. Godet, asking:

> What about French music? Where are our old harpsichordists who produced real music in abundance? They held the secret of that graceful profundity, that emotion without epilepsy which we shy away from like ungrateful children . . .[3]

Time and again Debussy claimed that the true French composers were Rameau and François Couperin. He often wrote about and praised their musical qualities, particularly Rameau's lyricism and Couperin's poetic quality, wit, and charm. On 23

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[1]Quoted in Cecilia Dunoyer, "Debussy and Early Debussystes at the Piano," in *Debussy in Performance*, ed. James R. Briscoe (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1999), 116.

[2]Vallas, *Claude Debussy*, 260.

[3]Debussy, *Debussy Letters*, 306.

February 1903 in a humorously-intended open letter to Gluck, who by then had been dead for over a century, Debussy wrote:

> Rameau was far more Greek than you! (Don't get angry, I'll be leaving you soon!) What's more, Rameau was lyrical, and that suits the French spirit from all points of view. We should have continued this tradition of lyricism before, not waited for a century to pass before we rediscovered it.[4]

In November 1912, in an article about Rameau, Debussy continued:

> Rameau's major contribution to music was that he knew how to find "sensibility" within the harmony itself; and that he succeeded in capturing effects of color and certain nuances that, before his time, musicians had not clearly understood. . . .
>
> . . . Rameau, whatever one may think, is definitely a key figure in music, and we can follow in his footsteps without fear of sinking into any pitfalls. . . . He may have been a little disagreeable, but he was a man of truth.[5]

On 11 March 1915, in the Paris daily *L'Intransigeant* under the title "*Enfin seuls (Alone at last)!*" Debussy lamented the loss of French tradition after Rameau:

> For many years now I have been saying the same thing: that we have been unfaithful to the musical traditions of our own race for more than a century and a half. . . .
>
> In fact, since Rameau, we have had no purely French tradition. His death severed the thread, Ariadne's thread, that guided us through the labyrinth of the past. Since then, we have failed to cultivate our garden . . . We adopted ways of writing that were quite contrary to our own nature, and excesses of language far from compatible with our own ways of thinking. We tolerated overblown orchestras, tortuous forms, cheap luxury and clashing colors, and we were about to give the seal of approval to even more suspect naturalizations when the sound of gunfire put a sudden stop to it all. . . .
>
> . . . Today, when the virtues of our race are being exalted, the victory should give our artists a sense of purity and remind them of the nobility of the French blood. We have a whole intellectual province to recapture! That is why, at a time when only Fate can turn the page,

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[4]Idem, "An Open Letter to Monsieur le Chevalier C. W. Gluck," *Gil Blas*, 23 February 1903, in Debussy, *Debussy on Music*, 124-25.

[5]Idem, "Jean Philippe Rameau," November 1912, in ibid., 255.

> Music must bide her time and take stock of herself before breaking that dreadful silence which will remain after the last shell has been fired.[6]

Debussy contributed to Rameau's stature not only by writing about him, but also by revising Rameau's opera *Les Fêtes de Polymnie*. At the same time he wrote his first series of *Images* which contains the *Hommage à Rameau* (1905). Actually, there are harmonic and rhythmic similarities between the openings of Rameau's *Prologue* to *Les Fêtes de Polymnie* and Debussy's Cello Sonata (Rameau, in D major: I 7-V 6/5- I [I 6] - IV; Debussy, in D minor: i – iv 9 –v 7 - i [III] - IV).[7] The triplet figures in the sonata, appear not only in Rameau's *Les Fêtes de Polymnie*, but also in many of his keyboard works. Furthermore, the titles of the three movements of the Cello Sonata may have been inspired by the operas of Rameau and Lully and Italian *commedia dell' arte*. A *Prologue* was always used to open a French opera and drama in the Baroque period, in the works of both Lully and Rameau. Lully, who was not only a composer and violinist, but also a dancer and mime, used the title *Sérénade* for one of the movements of his *Ballet des Plaisirs* (1655) and the comedy-ballet *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* (Divertissement royal de Chambord, 1669, published in Paris, 1715).

Debussy's fondness for Couperin began to show in his writings from 1908: "His [Couperin's] music was never superfluous, and he had great wit---something we hardly dare show these days, considering it to lack grandeur."[8] Debussy often associated

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[6]Idem, "*Enfin Seuls* (Alone at last)!" Paris Daily, L'Intransigeant, 11 March 1915 in ibid., 322-23.

[7]Scott Messing, "Neo-Classicism: The Origins of the Term and Its use in the Schoenberg / Stravinsky Polemic in the 1920's" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1986), 96-98.

[8]Debussy, "Apropos of Hippolyte et Aricie," Le Figaro, 8 May 1908, in Debussy, *Debussy on Music*, 230.

Couperin's poeticism with "the landscape filled with plaintive figures" of the Rococo painter, Jean Antoine Watteau (1684-1721).[9] In 1730 Couperin's fourth book of harpsichord works came out including *L'Arlequine*, written in the tradition of the *commedia*. The work includes a weaving figure, oscillating between the fifth and sixth, and opens with a diatonic simplicity. This simplicity is offset by the contrived symmetry of the phrases, by the percussive effects, by the humorous major and minor seconds, and by the seventh and ninth chords, which give melancholic feelings. It portrays "a bumpkin simplicity and a sophisticated hyper-sensitivity" which are often compared to Watteau's painting *Gilles*. This kind of rich sonority and effect influenced Debussy profoundly.[10] Moreover, Couperin's *La Pantomime* in *commedia dell' arte* style also contains percussive guitar-like effects and the dissonances of major and minor ninth with an irresistible witty exuberance.[11] Similarly, the Cello Sonata shows percussive effects, a diatonic opening confused by major and minor or modal conflicts, simplicity and sophisticated hyper-sensitivity. In 1913, just two years before the sonata, Debussy mentioned Couperin's work:

> We should think about the example Couperin's harpsichord pieces set us: they are marvelous models of grace and innocence long past. Nothing could ever make us forget the subtly voluptuous perfume, so delicately perverse, that so innocently hovers over the *Barricades mystérieuses*.[12]

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[9]Idem, "The End of the Year," *Société Internatiionale de Musique*, 15 January 1913, ibid., 273. Watteau drew *Italian Comedians*, about 1720, presenting fifteen figures dressed in costumes of the commedia dell'arte theater, including Pierrot and Harlequin. The tension between illusion and reality is typical of his paintings and influenced his followers to see the relationships between painting and theater.

[10]Mellers, *François Couperin and the French Classical Tradition*, new version (London: Faber and Faber, 1987), 204-05.

[11]Ibid., 209.

[12]Debussy, *Société Internationale de Musique*, 1 November 1913, in Debussy, *Debussy on Music*, 296.

The improvisatory nature of the melodies in the sonata also comes from the influence of the eighteenth-century French clavecinistes, such as Rameau, Couperin and Chambonnières.

Furthermore, Debussy tried to emulate older French forms, as Vallas wrote in describing the Cello Sonata:

> In this composition [the Sonata for Cello and Piano] he does indeed seem to have rediscovered French forms of long ago and to have joined up instinctively as well as deliberately the broken thread of national tradition. The work is not at all on the Beethoven plan. It bears a resemblance to the French sonatas of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is the continuation, after a long interval, of the manner or rather the simple form employed by J.-M.Leclair and his predecessors.[13]

Notably, the adoption of the sonata in France was slower than in other countries. It was only around 1700 that French composers began to write sonatas. The sonata was first introduced in France in 1682 when the Dresden violinist J. P. Westhoff played his sonata for Louis XIV; afterwards, two of his works, a suite and a sonata for solo violin, were published by the *Mercure galant* of Paris. Corelli also significantly influenced the introduction of the sonata in France with the publication of his violin sonatas (op. 5) in Paris in 1700. The first trio sonatas in France, the *Pièces en trio pour les flûtes, violon, et dessus de viole*, appeared in 1692, ten years after Westhoff's performance, and were composed by Marin Marais (1656-1728), a famous viol player and composer, pupil of Lully in composition and contemporary of Couperin. Couperin also composed four sonatas in the Italian *da chiesa* manner at the same time. His sonatas, however, were not published until decades later. He added two more sonatas, also in the Italian manner, in 1695. His effort to combine Italian and French style, *Les nations: sonades*

[13]Vallas, *Claude Debussy*, 261-2.

et suites de symphonies (The nations: sonatas and sets of instrumental trios), was published in 1726, more than two decades later. However, all of Couperin's sonatas, including his last sonata, for "solo" viol and basso continuo (1728), are in six to eight movements.

The French Baroque approach to sonatas can be categorized into two groups: one led by François Couperin (1668-1733) under the direct influence of Corelli, and the other in the late Baroque by Jean-Marie Leclair (1697-1764). Rameau did not write any sonatas, and his nearest work to a sonata is his *Pièces de clavecin en concerts* (1741) consisting of the three movements in the Italian form of allegro-andante-allegro. Couperin's early sonatas (1692 and 1695) use an operatic type of melody, polyphonic texture in the soloist's music, homophony in the continuo, and Corellian harmonic progressions. Moreover, the works are characterized by rich harmonies using ninth chords, a tendency to raise the seventh scale degree while ascending and lower it while descending, hushed suspensions of dotted rhythm, restrained texture, and particularly, modulations to the minor dominant. Couperin's last published work, the sonata for solo viol and basso continuo, *Pièces de violes avec la basse chifrée* (1728), is arranged in two sets of suites: the first a traditional French *ordre*, the second a refashioned *sonata da chiesa*. The prelude to the first suite is characterized by dotted rhythms and *tirades*, short phrases including abundant expressive intervals, restrained melodic sequences, and chromaticism. The second suite, which is in a more Italian manner, employs breadth of melody, rich harmonies, and a formal clarity by spare use of a rounded binary, particularly in the third movement.

The Leclair sonatas generally have four movements in a slow-fast-slow-fast scheme, and sometimes three movements in a fast-slow-fast or fast-fast-fast scheme. The "solo" sonata or sonata for the cello and basso continuo, having three to four movements, were introduced in France in 1733 by a cellist-composer, Jean Barrière. The reduction of the number of movements to generally four movements, with the occasional appearance of three-movement works, was one of the characteristics of the late Baroque. Furthermore, late French Baroque composers favored simple forms, as follows:

1) a nebulous A form with motivic expansion in no clear-cut plan
2) a simple bithematic two-part form of A B (all in I or a I-V-I relationship)
3) a simple monothematic three-part song form of A A′ A (in a I-V-I relationship)
4) a simple bithematic three-part song form of A B A (all in I or a I-V-I relationship)[14]

The *Prologue* movement of Debussy's Cello Sonata is particularly similar to the late Baroque's bithematic three-part song form (ABA′). Other features of the late Baroque and the style gallant are thinly-voiced homophonic settings, motivic themes, and the use of balanced phrases. Some of these characteristics also emerge in Debussy's Cello Sonata. For instance, themes in the late Baroque period are often "so motivic that they are difficult to identify as thematic material."[15] This is reminiscent of the melody (mm. 16-19) in the *Prologue* of the Cello Sonata beginning with motive *d* showing dyadic conflicts on V of the tonic (see Fig. 6, pp. 51-52). Possibly this is the reason why some writers do not consider this to be a theme, instead saying this sonata is monothematic, or this melody functions just as the beginning of the development.

[14]Shaw, 43.

[15]Ibid., 67.

Both styles of French late Baroque sonata composition stem from French and Italian models. Couperin's early sonatas are primarily in the style of the Italian sonata, and his late sonatas are the combination of the French and Italian styles. Even the sonatas of Jean-Marie Leclair were influenced by Corelli. Conversely, though, Corelli very often draws his musical influences from French dance music: his church sonatas are often compared to the French overture which Lully established as the opening for ballets and operas, starting with that from *Ballet d'Alcidiane*. Corelli's church sonatas usually contain a slow, French-overture grave, in a severe or solemn mood, an abundance of dotted rhythm, up beat motives, a fast fugal section, a slow operatic arioso in a sarabande rhythm, a fast allemande or gigue, and sporadically a gavotte or balletto.[16]

It is important to remember that the French style in music of the eighteenth century actually comes from their culture. The playing of overtures, dances in Lullian opera and ballet, the French language, and the development of the bow and its technique all contributed to the establishment of a French style in music. Language and dance particularly affected the music. The French language's expression of every syllable and nuance in balanced and rhyming lines of poetry and, "as a parallel art of rhyme and symmetry,"[17] French dance's requirement of certain types of rhythmic patterns, tempos, and meter for each dance, all appear in French music as balanced, short-breathed phrases, expressive, small-scale, speech-like ornaments (as opposed to exaggerated

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[16]Claude V. Palisca, *Baroque Music*, 3rd ed., H. Wiley Hitchcock (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc, 1991), 154.

[17]John Butt, sleeve notes from Jean-Marie Leclair Sonatas I, 1999, available from http://www2.hyperion- records.co.uk/notes/67033.html; Internet; accessed 28 August 2001.

Italian ornaments), exact, detailed articulation, and rhythmic nuance. Additionally, a flexible approach to dotted rhythms, common in French eighteenth-century music, is reflected in contemporary performance practice with the overture. Another feature of the French style is the solemn, full-voiced texture that often opens a work and recreates in miniature the full-voiced effect of a large orchestra, as in the opening of Leclair's Sonata No 6.[18]

The stylistic differences between French and Italian music can also be seen in the development of the bow, since bow makers improved their bows according to changes in musical styles. Before 1725 there were two distinct types of bow: one was the French dance bow used for dance music, and the other was called the "sonata" Corelli-Tartini bow (about 24 inches in length). The French dance bow, dating from just before 1665, was much shorter than the sonata bow, had a convex shape, and was held with the old type of the thumb-under-hair grip.[19] It was good for producing short, frequent retaking and lifting bow strokes, and for emphasizing the rhythm of the dance music precisely. The "sonata" Corelli –Tartini bow was adopted in France possibly about 1725 through the French violinist Leclair, who had studied in Italy. It was a slightly convex or straight stick that required the grip used by Italian violinists (i.e., placing thumb under the stick not the hair), rather than the French-dance bow grip. The sonata bow was well suited for the music of Corelli, Vivaldi, Geminiani, Tartini, and others in the first half of the eighteenth century. This music required more virtuoso techniques, embellished and quick passage-work, and more sustained musical lines.

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[18]Ibid.

[19]Evidence includes a painting by Gerard Dou (1665) in David D. Boyden, "The Violin bow in the 18th century," *Early Music*, VIII/2 (April 1980), 205.

Similarly for cellists, there were two types of bow grips, one being the underhand bow grip, which came from the viola da gamba bow grip, and the other being the overhand grip, which came from the violin grip. French cellists held the bow similarly to French violinists, with the fingers on top of the stick and the thumb under the hair which is the same as the French dance bow grip.[20] After the middle of the century, however, French cellists changed to the Italian grip, which placed the thumb under the stick not under the hair.[21] These changes affected the musical style of the day, placing more emphasis on virtuosic and legato passage-work.

In Debussy's Cello Sonata one can trace the French qualities of a concise, clear scheme, transparent texture, balanced and short-phrases, and a full-voiced opening, particularly in the beginning of the *Prologue*. Moreover, the slow, declamatory, and dotted rhythm of the *Prologue* shows the influence of French opera and speech, as well as elements of French recitative. At the end of the seventeenth century Lully established French recitative with its declamatory melodiousness borrowed from early Italian opera. Significantly, late Baroque Italian composers abandoned this melodious recitative for a more speech-like style. French recitative [*récitatif*], however, is constructed precisely on the nuances of the French language's pronunciation, with its long and short syllables. The rhythm of Debussy's Sonata seems to reflect their language and approach to recitative. The ties, syncopations, and various dotted rhythms provide the intervals of short or long. These rhythms, along with chromatic

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[20]Muffat, Georg, "Florilegium secundum für streichinstrumente," ed. Heinrich Rietsch in *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich*, vol. IV, Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1959, as cited in Valerie Walden, *One Hundred Years of Violoncello: A History of Technique and Performance Practice, 1740-1840* (Cambridge, University of Cambridge, 1998), 80.

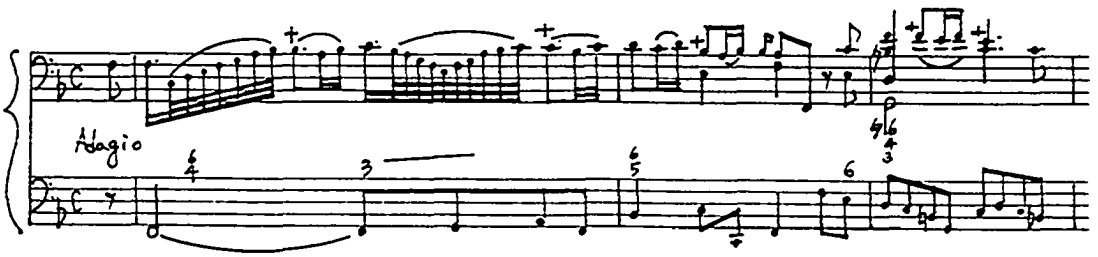
[21]Walden, *One Hundred Years of Violoncello*, 81.

and whole-step motion, third leaps, the prominent intervals of 4th or 5th, and repeated notes are all potential echoes of French language and recitative. The melodies are singable and flow naturally without specific emphasis on meter in the sonata. In fact, freedom and a lack of emphasis are characteristic of Debussy's melody. These instrumental melodies are accurately described as "vocal melody without words."[22]

A quick comparison of a sonata by Barrière and Debussy is informative. One can see similarities in rhythm, embellishments, and motivic accompaniments along with the intervallic importance of 4ths and 5ths. The similarities between these pieces show the influence of French tradition on Debussy (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Comparison of a sonata by Barrière and Debussy

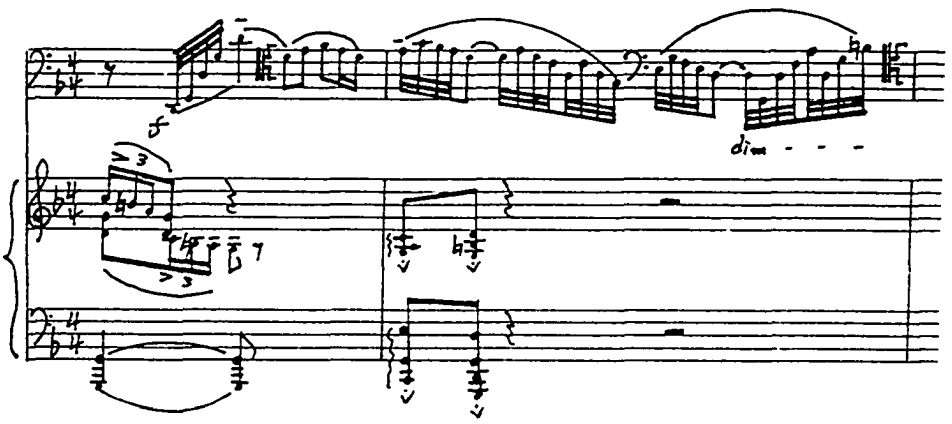
a. Barrière's Sonata V, Book I, First Movement (1740)[23]



[22]Claude Abravanel, "Symbolism and Performance," in *Debussy in Performance*, 36.

[23]Shaw, 94.

b. Debussy Cello Sonata, *Prologue*, mm. 4-5



This sonata may also be influenced by a completely different source: Musorgsky. Debussy admired Musorgsky's spontaneity and freedom, as he wrote in reference to Musorgsky's *Nursery* on 15 April 1901:

> No one has given utterance to the best within us in tones more gentle or profound: he is unique, and will remain so, because his art is spontaneous and free from arid formulas. Never has a more refined sensibility been conveyed by such simple means; it is like the art of an enquiring savage discovering music step by step through his emotions. Nor is there ever a question of any particular form; at all events the form is so varied that by no possibility whatsoever can it be related to any established, one might say official, form, since it depends on and is made up of successive minute touches mysteriously linked together by means of an instinctive clairvoyance.[24]

Debussy used the French clarity, simplicity, concision, and sensitiveness inherited from Rameau as an antithesis to the German Romanticism of Wagner, Beethoven, and French advocates of German music, such as Franck, Saint-Saëns, and Widor, and drew

[24]Claude Debussy, *Monsieur Croche the Dilettante Hater*, trans. B. N. Langdon Davies (U.S.A.: The Viking Press, Inc., 1928). Reprinted as an unabridged and unaltered in *Three Classics in The Aesthetic of Music: Claude Debussy, Monsieur Croche Dilettante Harter; Ferruccio Busoni, Sketch of a New Esthetic of Music; Charles E. Ives, Essays before a Sonata* (New York: Dover, 1962) 19.

on the spontaneity and freedom of spirit of Musorgsky to establish the modern French style at the end of his life. Therefore, as Nichols points out, late in his life Debussy needed Musorgsky's directness, spontaneity and freedom more than Wagner's heaviness and complicatedness.[25]

Form

As stated before, the Cello Sonata is not composed in the German Romantic style. On the contrary, it is concise, simple and elegant, embodying Debussy's views of what French music ought to be. The cello sonata was composed during the end of July and the first days of August in 1915. Debussy wrote in a letter to his publisher Jacques Durand at that time, "It's not for me to judge its excellence but I like its proportions and its almost classical form, in the good sense of the word."[26] Later to B. Molinar (on 6 October 1915), referring to the Cello Sonata and Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp, he wrote that it has "none of the grandiloquence of modern sonatas."[27]

In fact, each of the Cello Sonata's three movements is in ABA' form, with elements of rondo, particularly in the *Sérénade* and *Finale* (Fig. 2). To a certain extent Debussy's three-part form recalls the late French Baroque bithematic song form discussed earlier (see p. 36).

[25]Nichols, "Debussy, (Achille-) Claude," 309.

[26]Debussy. *Debussy Letters*, 299.

[27]Ibid., 303.

Fig. 2. Form of Debussy's Cello Sonata

Prologue

Introduction (mm. 1-7)
A (mm. 8-15)
B (mm. 16-38)

Part 1 (mm. 16-20)
Part 2 (mm. 21-28)
Part 3 (mm. 29-36)
Retransition (mm. 36-38)

A' (mm. 39-44)

Coda (mm. 45-51)

Sérénade Rondo Aspects

Introduction (mm. 1-2)		
A (mm. 3-30)	Part 1 (mm. 3-11)	a
	Part 2 (mm. 12-18)	b
	Part 3 (mm. 19-27)	a'
	Transition (mm. 28-30)	
B (mm. 31-53)	Part 1 (mm. 31-43)	c
	Part 2 (mm. 44-53)	
A' (mm. 54-64)	Transition to the *Finale* (mm. 59-64)	a"

Finale

A (mm. 1-37:1)	Part 1 (mm. 1-14)		a
	Part 2 (mm. 15-22)		
	Part 3 (mm. 23-37:1)	i (mm. 23-28)	b
		ii (mm. 29-39:1)	
B (mm. 37: 2-85: 1)	Part 1 (mm. 37:2-44)		a'
	Part 2 (mm. 45-56)		c
	Part 3 (mm. 57-68)		

Fig. 2—*Continued.*

Finale Rondo Aspects

	Transition (mm. 69-85:1)		
A′ (mm. 85:2-114)	Part 1 (mm. 85 :2-95)		a″
	Part 2 (mm. 96-103)		
	Part 3 (mm. 104-114)		
Coda (mm. 115-123)			

As we have seen, several writers have tried to explain this sonata with the traditional sonata form. However, even though the *Prologue* is divided into three parts, there are some difficulties defining the form of this sonata in a traditional theoretical manner. Some writers such as Park, Wilson, Cantrell, and Kwon all agree that the first movement divides into three parts, without introduction, and contains two themes: the first theme (mm. 1-2) and the second theme (mm. 8-15). Park and Kwon see the return of A at mm. 39-51, with a reversal of the order of the first and second themes. Cantrell sees the return of the A at mm. 29-51, thus seeing the first theme at mm. 29-38 and the second theme at mm. 39-51.[28] On the contrary Schwaband and Davidian see this movement as monothematic.[29] Clearly, the first movement poses problems for a traditional analysis.

In my view the *Prologue* may be interpreted in a traditional way, including an introduction (mm. 1-7), a development (mm. 21-36), and a recapitulation (mm. 39-44). The introduction exposes important motives for the entire movement and ends on the

[28]Park, "The Later Style of Claude Debussy," 253; Wilson, "Form and Texture in the Chamber Music of Debussy and Ravel" (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1968), 54; Cantrell, "Analysis of Debussy's Sonata for Cello and Piano," 15; Kwon, "Tradition and Innovation in the Three Late Sonatas of Claude Debussy," 86.

[29]See 63n., p. 25.

♭V7 instead of the usual V. The first thematic area (mm. 8-15; A) ends on a plagal cadence in d minor (m. 15), and the second thematic area (mm. 16-20; Part 1 of B section) begins on the dominant but does not stay there. This area leads into a development area (mm. 21-36; Part 2 and 3 of B section) that includes chromaticism in the piano, creating tremendous harmonic tension with the cello's ostinato figuration that derives from the motives of the introduction and the first thematic material. This tension reaches a climax at m. 29, where Debussy uses the lowest register of the piano and the highest of the cello, and the loudest dynamic level (*f*) of the movement. The retransition (mm. 36-38), with its leading tone C♯ returns to d minor, and the truncated recapitulation (mm. 39-44; A') has no return of the second thematic material. The movement then ends with a coda (mm. 45-51). The *Prologue* is well balanced with each section or part consisting of approximately five to eight measures: introduction (7 measures), section A (8 measures), section B (23 measures divided into three small parts, 5, 8, and 8 measures in that order, and 2 measures retransition), A′ (6 measures), and coda (7 measures).

For several reasons, however, I do not interpret this movement as a traditional sonata form. For instance, the secondary thematic material (mm. 16-20) does not actually appear in a new key. Rather it appears *on* the V of the original key of D minor, instead of in the usual relative key, F major. In the second phrase of the first thematic area (mm. 12-14), F major is suggested; however, it goes back to D minor very quickly and ends not on the V of the new key, but on the tonic, D minor, approached by a plagal cadence (v-IV-i). Therefore D minor predominates, with neither transitional passages nor definite change of key. Moreover, at the end of the possible second

thematic area, there is a feeling of C major ending on an imperfect authentic cadence ($V\text{-}I^{M6}$, including an added major sixth, mm. 19-20). This cadence does not follow a typical harmonic scheme, which is an important factor in defining structure of a sonata-form movement. Furthermore, the development creates harmonic tension; however, the tension resolves to G, which is the dominant of C (m. 28) and then to C (m. 29), with an emphasis on the C pentatonic scale in the piano. The tension climaxes simultaneously with the juxtaposition of the introductory melody transposed up a fifth (m. 29). This also deviates from the character of a traditional development section.[30] In her dissertation Marianne Wheeldon astutely claims that the *Prologue* parodies sonata form:

> . . . Even the Prologue of the Cello Sonata, which adheres closely to the harmonic and thematic format of a sonata-form movement (with eight distinct sections that clearly parody the function of introduction, first theme, second theme development, climax, retransition, recapitulation, and codetta), emphasizes a critical distance from sonata form.
> . . . The most significant way Debussy "establishes difference" in the Prologue is by inverting the organic principle of nineteenth-century sonata form. . . .
> The thematic repetition and motivic consistency of the Prologue negate the process of growth in an organic form—instead emphasizing similarity and stasis—while the unerring emphasis of unity disrupts the unity-in-variety equilibrium of organicism.[31]

Therefore, I define the form of the *Prologue* not as a pure sonata form, but as a three-part form with introduction and coda (see Fig. 2 above).

The *Sérénade* can be defined as a three-part form: A (mm. 1-30), B (mm. 31-53), A'(mm. 54-64). It also has a rondo-like character because of the multiple returns of

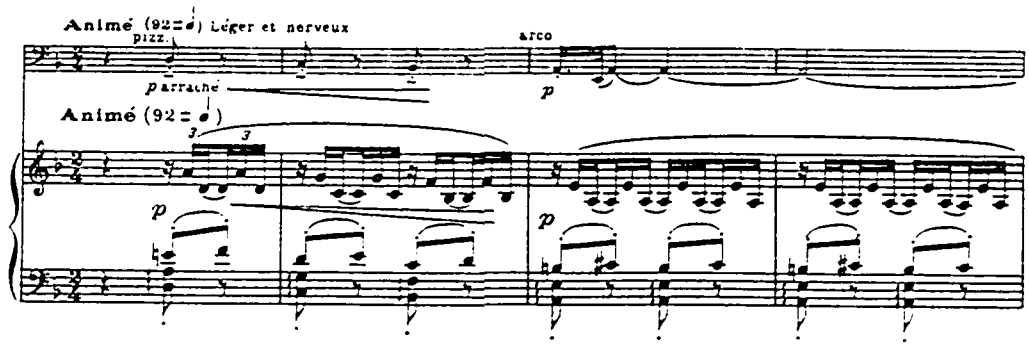
[30]Wheeldon calls the climax of the first movement (m. 29) a 'statistical climax' using a term of Leonard B. Meyer, Wheeldon, 160; Leonard B. Meyer, *Style and Music: Theory, History, and Ideology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 328.

[31]Wheeldon, 150-53, 165.

melodic and harmonic material, for example, a (mm. 1-11), b (mm. 12-18), a′ (mm. 19-27), transition (mm. 28-30), c (mm. 31-53), a″ (mm. 54-64). The form of the *Finale* also has a rondo-like character: a (mm. 1-22), b (mm. 23-37:1), a′ (mm. 37: 2-44), c (mm. 45-68), a″ (mm. 85: 2-114), and coda (mm. 115-123). However, the rondo form is embedded within the three-part ABA′ structure, as in the *Sérénade* (see Fig. 2). For example, the B section starts with the same motive of section A; however, the bass moves from C to G (mm. 37-39) rather than D to A (mm. 1-3, 85-87) (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3. Beginning of each "rondo" section of the *Finale*

a. Section A, mm. 1-3



b. Section A′, mm. 85-87

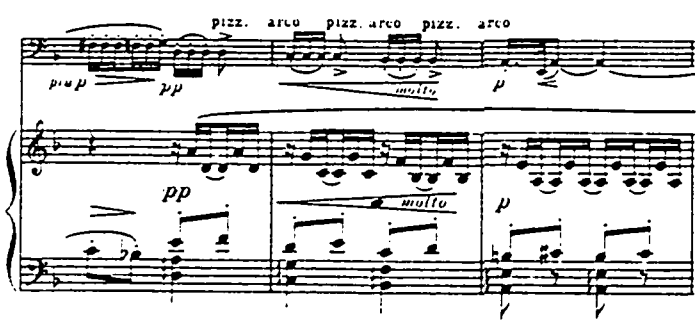
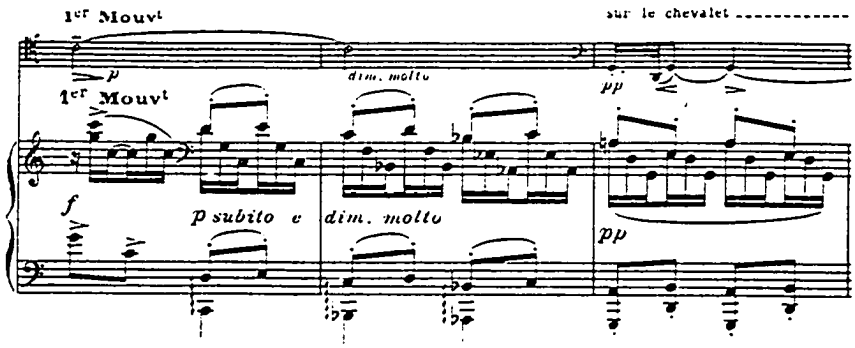


Fig. 3—*Continued.*

c. Section B, mm. 37-39



Melody and Motives

Melodies, in this sonata, rather than the harmonic procedure, are used as one of the important factors for delineating formal structure. The variants of melodic elements as motives are usually restrained and short --- one or two measures --- and are even fragmentary, especially in the *Sérénade*. These are repeated, juxtaposed or fragmented rather than progress in an unfolding line. They act like refrains not only in rondo-like movements of *Sérénade* and the *Finale* but also in the *Prologue*. Davidian claims that one of Debussy's contributions is "the transference of a traditional tonal operation to a melodic context."[32] The melodies in this sonata may be evaluated by their intervallic contour of the 4th, 5th, and tritone, all of which combine into motivic cells (see examples below) within a modal context.

In the following part, I am going to identify thirteen motives labeled *a-m*, distinct, but sharing not only the intervallic ideas of 4ths, 5ths, and tritones, but also chromatic lines, modal and dyadic conflicts, along with rhythmic ideas. Particularly motives *a*

[32]Davidian, "Debussy's Sonata Forms," 212.

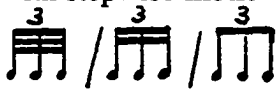
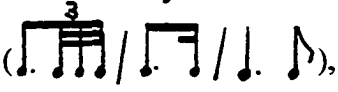
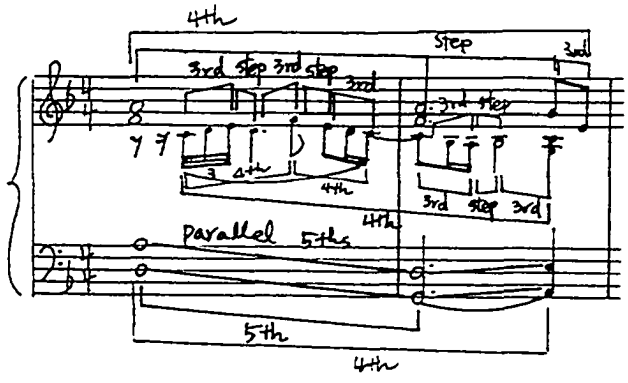
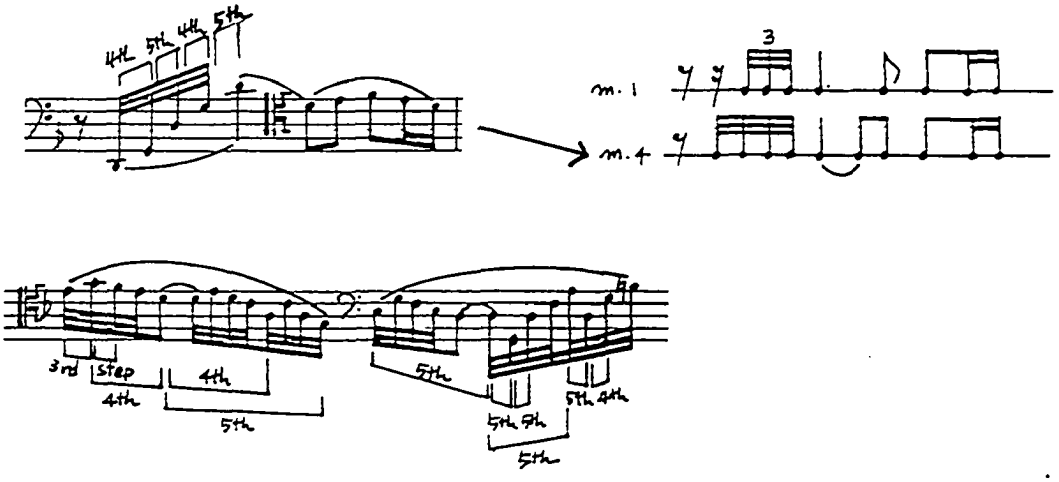
and *b* in the introduction of the *Prologue* play an important role throughout the sonata with other recurring intervals, and give the sonata a sense of unity among its disparate parts (Fig. 4). Note that motive *a* includes the intervals of 4ths (or the leap of a third combined with stepwise motion) and 5ths. Furthermore, it contains the rhythmic ideas of triplet ( or combined ), dotted (),  , and tied.

Fig. 4. Motive *a* and *b* in the *Prologue*

a. Motive *a* (mm. 1-2)



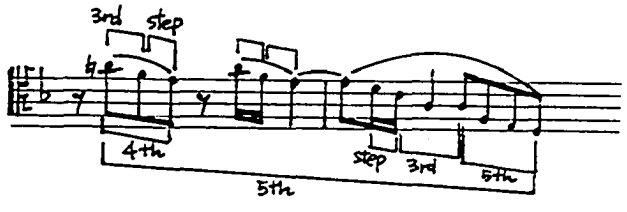
b. Motive *b* (mm. 4-5)



The intervals of motive *b* come from motive *a*, and particularly the consecutive intervallic idea of 4ths or 5ths of m. 4, and the melodic type of mm. 5-6, are employed also in the *Finale*, mm. 6-7 (see also Fig. 12). The rhythm of motive *b* (m. 4) is a transformation of the rhythm of motive *a* (m. 1, see Fig. 4-b). The turn and rhythm of the melody in m. 5 are used not only in the *Prologue* (mm. 17, 31, 37-38) but also in the other two movements: in the *Sérénade* (mm. 29, 31,42, 60, 62) and in the *Finale* (mm. 14, 17-18, 21-22, 24, 26, 33-34, 49, 51, 57, 62-63, 98-99, 102-104 and in the coda, m. 115).

Subsequent motives and melodies use the motives of the introduction of the *Prologue*. For example, motive *c* (see Fig. 5) employs the same intervallic ideas as the introduction of the *Prologue*.

Fig. 5. *Prologue*, motive *c* (mm. 8-9, cello)



Similarly, motive *d* is the combination of motives *a* and *b* (the cello melody, m. 17). It contains the intervals of 4ths in the cello, the intervals of 5ths namely A-D-G in the first phrase in the piano (mm. 16-17, Fig. 6-a). In the second phrase (mm. 18-20).

The bass contains an A-E♭ tritone in the context of descending fifths A-D-G (A-E♭-D-G, mm. 18-19) as well as 4ths (G-C, mm. 19-20, see Fig. 6-b). The dyadic conflict of C and C♯ that arises in introducing motive *d* creates a feeling of contrasting A minor and A major (modal mixture).

Even the *Sérénade*'s introduction outlines the interval of the fifth (Fig. 7), and motive *e* also contains the intervals of 4ths and 5ths, only this time Debussy combines them with tritones that move chromatically (i.e., G-D♭, A♭-D♮, and A♮-E♭, Fig. 8). Motive *f* is likewise characterized by tritones combined with chromatic pitches (E-F-F♯-G-A♭-A♮, Fig. 9).

Fig. 6. *Prologue*

a. Motive *d* (mm. 16-17)

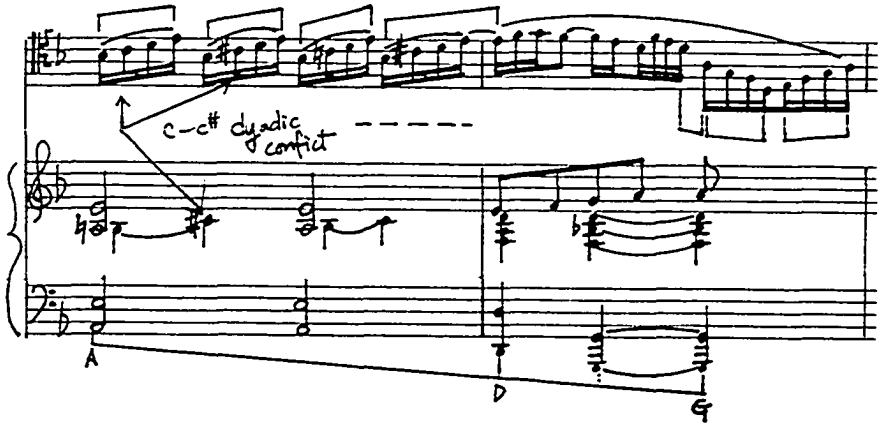


Fig. 6—*Continued.*

b. The Second Phrase (mm. 18-20)

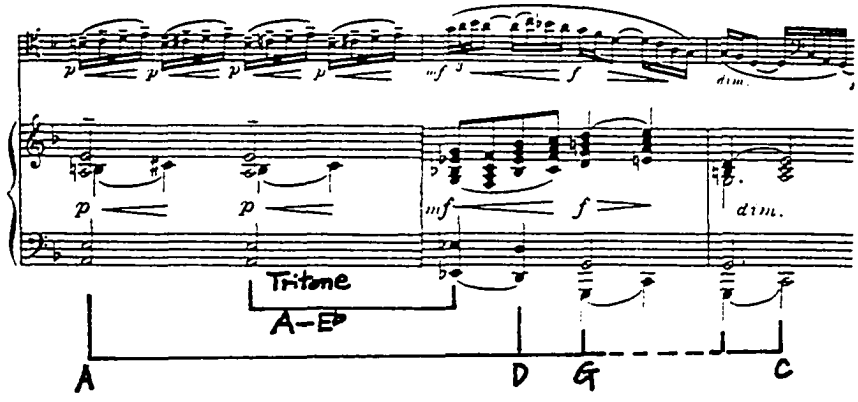


Fig. 7. *Sérénade*, Introduction (m. 1)

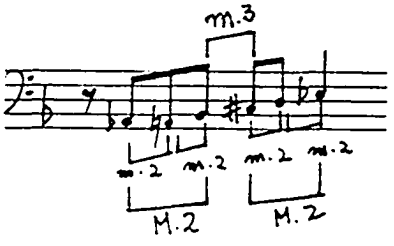


Fig. 8. *Sérénade*, motive *e* (mm. 3-4)

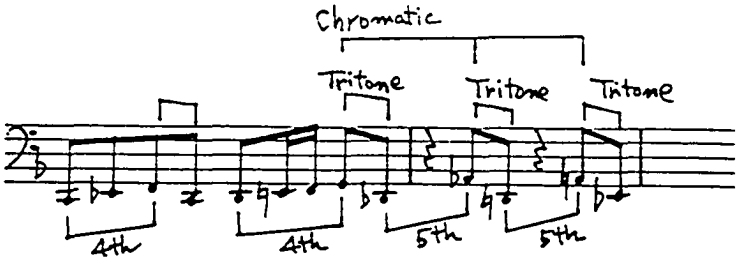
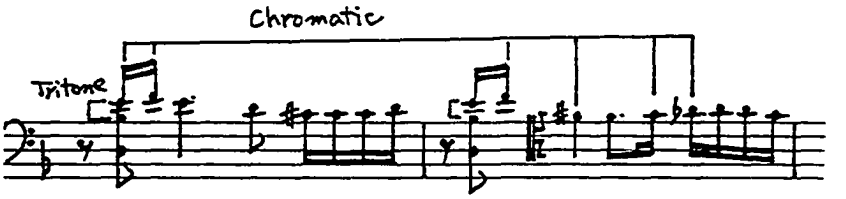
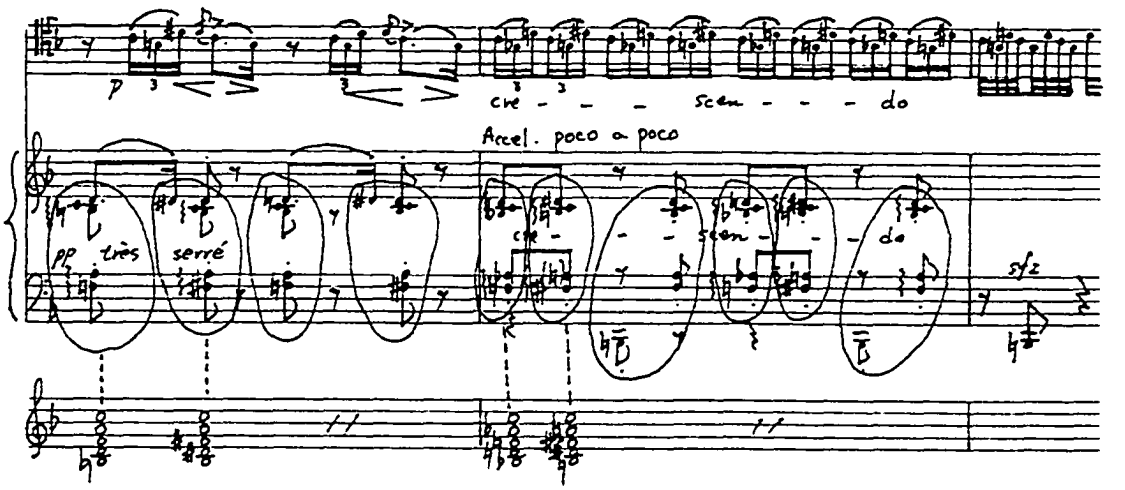


Fig. 9. *Sérénade*, motive *f* (mm. 5-6)[33]



Finally, motive *g* in the cello shows dyadic conflicts of B♭/B♮ and D♮/D♯ coming from the mixture idea of the *Prologue* (Fig. 10). These dyadic conflicts with the F-F♯ and A♭-A♮ conflicts in the piano form parallel 9th chords. The rhythm of mm. 28, 30 also comes from the rhythm of the motive *a* and *b* of the *Prologue*.

Fig. 10. *Sérénade*, motive *g* (mm. 28-30)



[33]Jeffrey Solow has pointed out misprints of the sonata in Durand edition that is helpful for the performers. Most of them have been corrected in the latest version, Henle edition, except this motive *f*. The m. 22 should probably be identical to m. 6 as Solow pointed out. Debussy, *Sonate für Violoncello und Klavier d-moll*, according to autograph and first edition, ed. Ernst-Günter Heinemann with a preface by François Lesure, bowing and fingering by Reiner Ginzel and Klaus Schilde (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1998); Jeffrey Solow, "Misprints in the Cello Literature," *Newsletter of Violoncello Society, Inc.*, winter 1990/1991, 4.

The motives of the *Finale* also contain the intervals of 4ths and 5ths and the rhythmic ideas of the *Prologue*. Motive *h* in the *Finale* includes these intervals in both cello and piano (in ostinato figuration) parts (Fig. 11). Note that the melodic type and its consecutive leap of a 5th of the cello of mm. 6-7 come from the cello melody (mm. 4-6) in the introduction of the *Prologue* (Fig. 12, see also Fig. 4-b, motive *b*, p. 49).

Fig. 11. *Finale*: motive *h* (mm. 1-3:1)

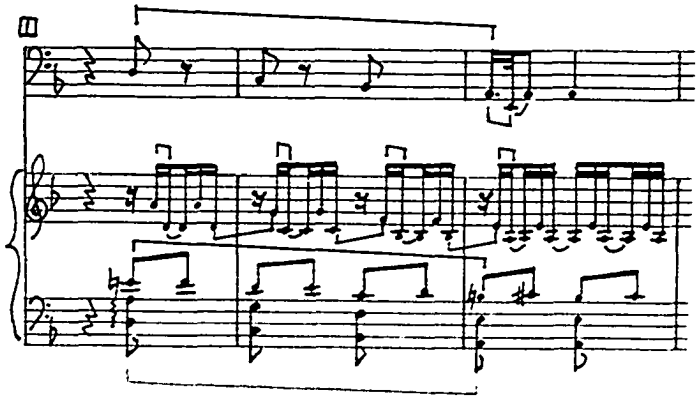
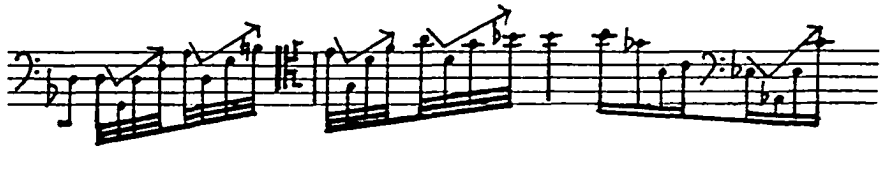


Fig. 12. Similarities in the melodies of the *Finale* and the *Prologue*

Finale (m. 6)

Prologue (mm. 5-6)



Motives *i*, *j*, *k*, and *l* all show the intervals of 4ths and 5ths again (Fig. 13-16). These are, however, characterized by employing A Dorian mode (motive *i*) and including other intervals of minor 3rds (motive *j*) or tritones (motive *k*, tritones, E♯-B or F-B that are contrasted to the intervals of 5ths, C♯-G♯ and D-A). The melody of motive *k* in the piano (m. 24) comes rhythmically from the motive *b* of the *Prologue*.

Fig. 13. *Finale*, motive *i* (mm. 7-10)

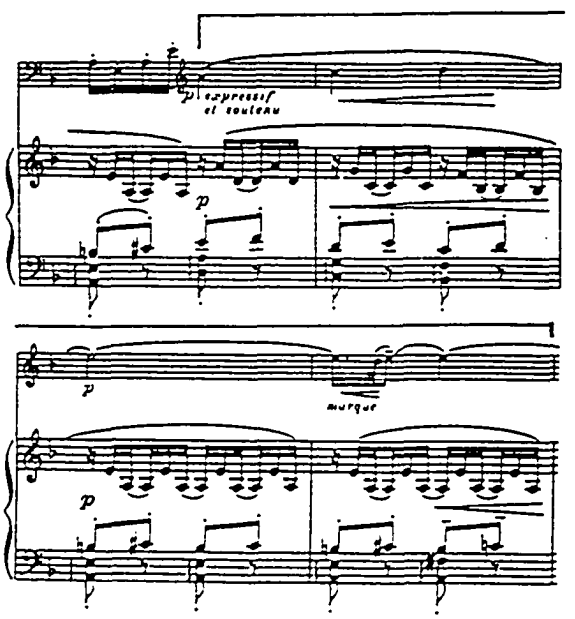


Fig. 14. *Finale*, motive *j* (cello, mm. 15-16)

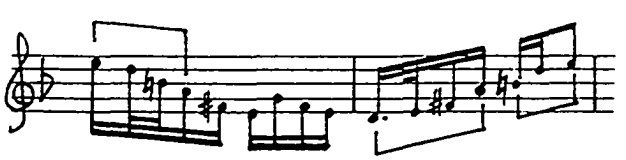


Fig. 15. *Finale*, motive *k* (piano, mm. 23-24)

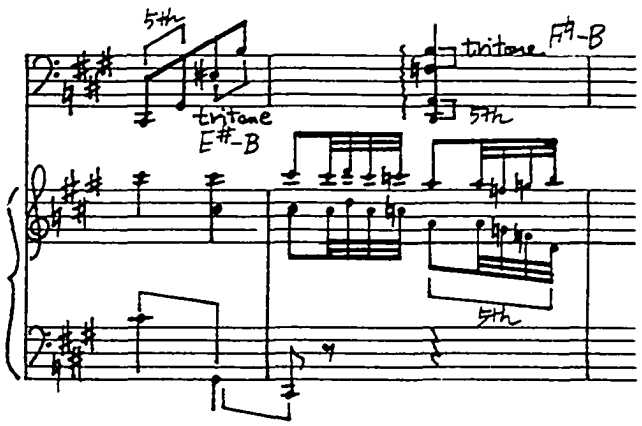
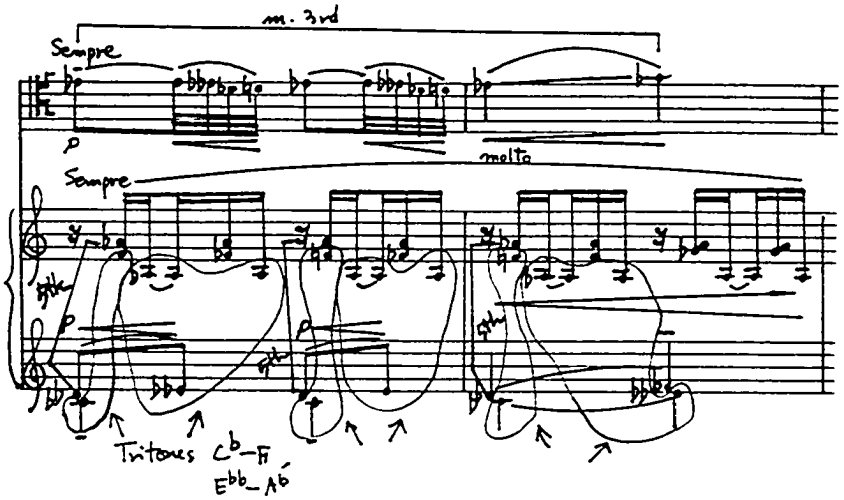


Fig. 16. *Finale*, motive *l* (mm. 45-48)

The motive *m* in the cello contains the interval of minor 3rd E♭-G♭(m. 50) moving a whole step to F-A♭(m. 52). Tritones C♭-F and E♭♭-A♭ in the piano part (mm. 49-50) in the following phrase also move a whole step to D♭-G and F♭-B♭ (mm. 51-52, see also Fig. 31, p.73). The rhythm of the cello's chromatic lines (m. 49) comes from the motive *b* of the *Prologue* (Fig. 17).

Fig. 17. *Finale*, motive *m* (mm. 49-50)



As we see above, throughout the sonata Debussy repeats, juxtaposes, or fragments all of his inter-related motives. The repetition and juxtaposition of the motivic elements are integral in creating the unity, structure, and freer form of this sonata. As stated earlier, the techniques of the repetition and juxtaposition are often found in the Parisian popular entertainment, the music hall,[34] with the "variety" and "interruption"[35] that are the structural principles of the *revue*.[36] In trying to "purify our music," as Debussy wrote, he turned away from "the procedures of academic musical forms, . . . the process of development and found the music hall and the circus ring so satisfying."[37] Actually Debussy wished to preserve the "French spirit" and find a "less

[34]Wheeldon, 179.

[35]Roberts, 220.

[36]Weiss, 30.

[37]Roberts, 220.

cluttered kind of music," instead of using a mass of superimposed designs and motives. He wrote, "how can we hope to preserve our finesse, our spirit, if we insist on being preoccupied with so many details of composition?"[38] Debussy's use of juxtaposition is part of a twentieth century trend in which modern art moved away from the earlier ideal of "transition" to one of "juxtaposition" of blocks of different sonorities.[39] Indeed, after Satie, Debussy, and *Les Six*, transitional passages rapidly disappeared.[40]

Perhaps in response to the influence of the music hall, the phrase structure of this sonata is varied, including both asymmetrical phrases as well as the balanced phrases reminiscent of early French sonatas, particularly in the *Prologue* (see phrase structure analysis in Appendix I). Debussy creates an end to a phrase or a sense of cadence through various means that are not always harmonically based. Besides plagal cadences (*Prologue*, m. 15), changes of tempo, theme, and rhythm, he also uses different blocks of timbre and changing textures. In the introduction to the first movement, a four-measure statement in the piano (2 + 2, mm. 1-4) elides into a four-measure melody in the cello (mm. 4-7) that has a declamatory, recitative-like character. The next theme (mm. 8-15) appearing in the cello divides into a 4 + 4 traditional, well-balanced structure (mm. 8-11 and mm. 12-15, respectively). The next melody in the cello suggests a phrase structure of 2 + 2½ (mm. 16-17 and mm. 18-20:2). However, in

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[38]Debussy, *Société Internationale de Musique*l November 1913, in Debussy, *Debussy on Music*, 297-98.

[39]Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant Garde in France·1885 to World War I* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), 332.

[40]Ibid., 336.

the *Sérénade* and *Finale*, the cello melodies are structured irregularly (see also phrase structures in Appendix I and discussion of harmony below, p. 62).

Besides being built from repeating motives, the melodies in this sonata have modal elements and use other types of scales. For example, Debussy uses D Aeolian in the piano (mm. 1-2) in the first movement, with a B♭/B♮ pairing that results from a conflict between Aeolian and Dorian modes (mm. 3-4). In the *Finale* he uses A Dorian in mm. 7-14 and mm. 90-95 in the cello (with C♯ conflicting in the piano). Moreover, Debussy includes whole-tone scales in the second movement in mm. 11-12 and mm. 15-16 in the piano, pentatonic scales in the first movement in mm. 29-30 in the piano and *Sérénade* in m. 7 (Fig. 18), and octatonic-scale harmonies with a succession of interlocking diminished seventh chords in the first movement in mm. 21-23 in the piano (Fig. 19). He also employs chromatic scales as well as major and minor diatonic scales throughout the sonata. The use of all of these forms of scales is a symptom of Debussy's strong desire to be free from traditional tonality.

Fig. 18. Pentatonic

a. *Prologue*, mm. 29-30

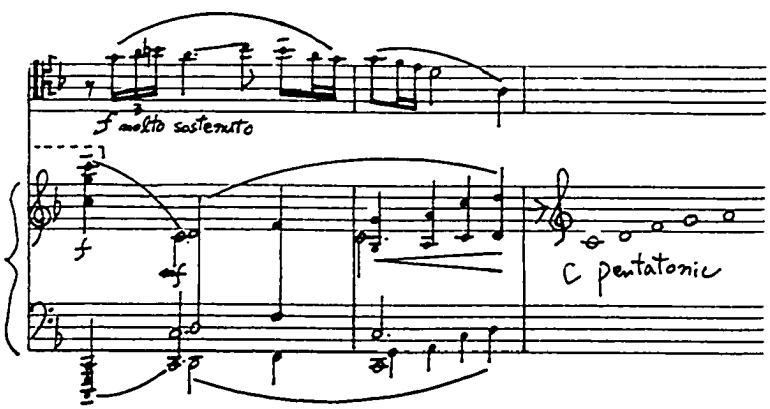


Fig. 18—*Continued.*

b. *Sérénade*, m. 7

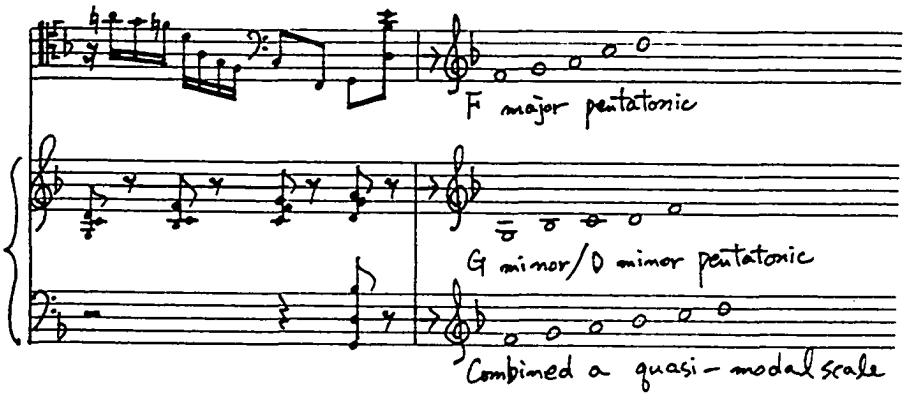
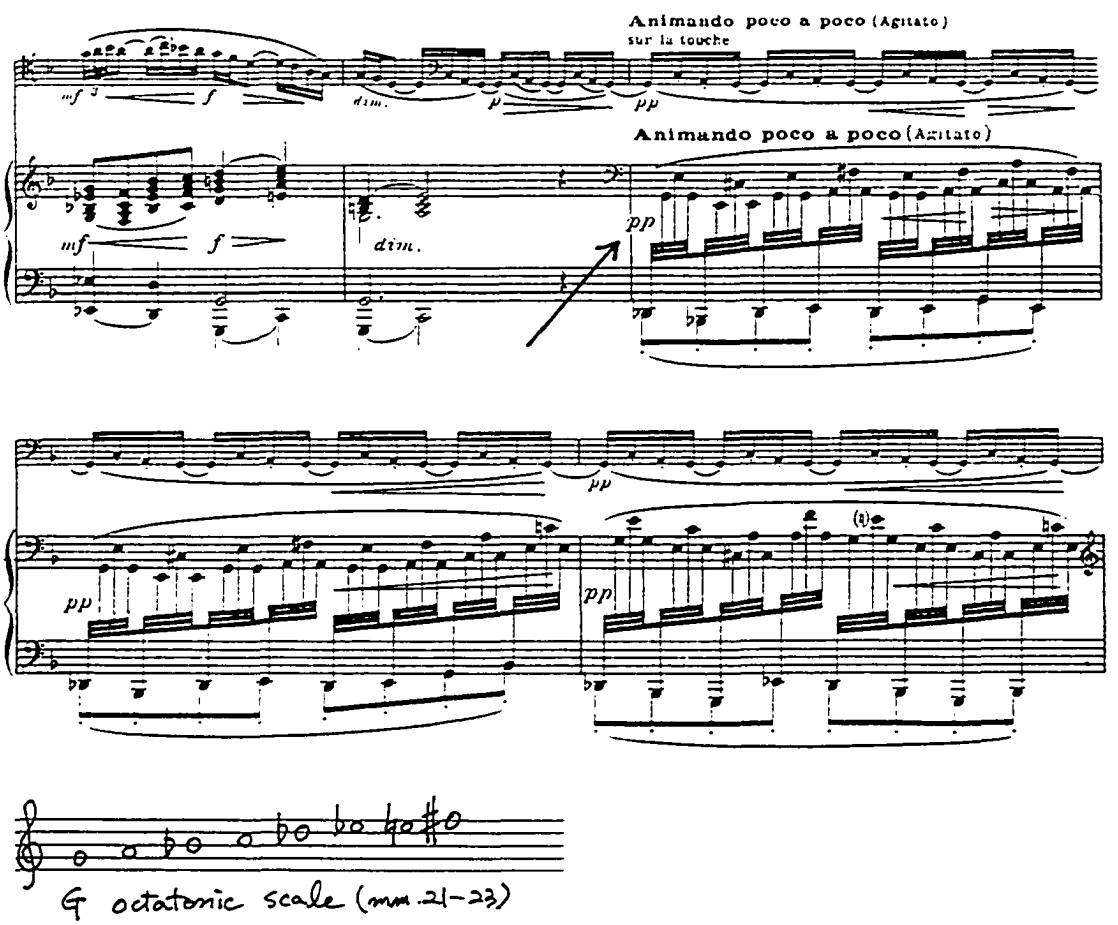


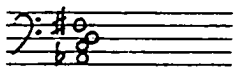
Fig. 19. Octatonic: *Prologue*, mm. 19-23.



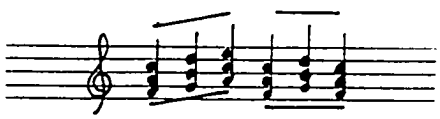
Harmony

In 1890, in a conversation with Ernest Guiraud, Debussy expressed his desire to free himself from tonality:

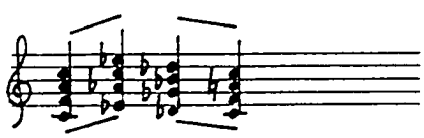
> Debussy: . . . The tonal scale must be enriched by other scales. I am not misled by equal temperament.... Relative keys are nonsense too. Music is neither major nor minor. Minor thirds and major thirds should be combined, modulation thus becoming more flexible. The mode is that which one happens to choose at the moment. It is inconstant....
> Guiraud (Debussy having played a series of intervals on the piano): What's that?
> Debussy: Incomplete chords, floating. *Il faut noyer le ton.* One can travel where one wishes and leave by any door. Greater nuances.
> Guiraud: But when I play this it has to resolve.



> Debussy: I don't see that it should. Why?
> Guiraud: Well, do you find this lovely?



> Debussy: Yes, yes, yes!
> Guiraud: But how would you get out of this.

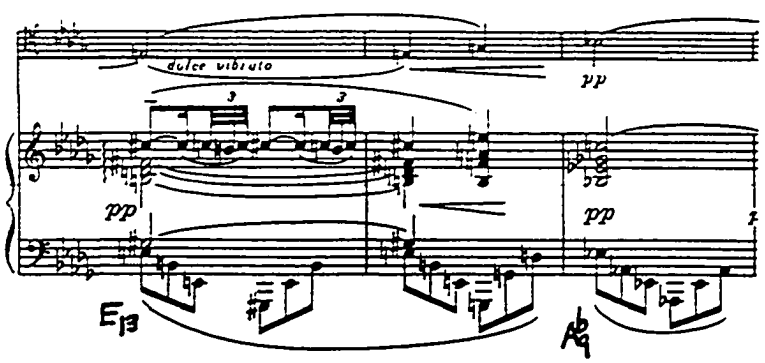


> I am not saying that what you do isn't beautiful, but it's theoretically absurd.
> Debussy: There is no theory. You have merely to listen. Pleasure is the law.
> Guirad:...But how do you teach music to others?
> Debussy: Music cannot be learnt.[41]

[41]Lockspeiser, *Debussy: His Life and Mind*, Vol. I, 206-07.

As we see above, Debussy sought new colors and fresh sonorities. In this sonata he uses incomplete chords, added-tone chords (e.g., the added sixth in mm. 5-6 and 21-22 in the *Sérénade*, and the added ninth in mm. 1-3, 37-39, and 85-87 in the *Finale*), chords based on whole-tone scales (e.g., whole-tone chord in mm. 36-37 in the *Prologue*), and pentatonic harmonies combined with church modes. There are not only seventh, but also ninth, eleventh and thirteenth chords (e.g., 13th and 9th chords in mm. 63-65 in the *Finale*, see Fig. 20). These complex chords often move in parallel motion, giving his music a mysterious and fresh sound. He also avoids strong functional tonal relationships, using instead plagal cadences (e.g., mm. 15, 46-47 of the *Prologue*) and half cadences that substitute ♭V7 for V (e.g., mm. 6-7 in the *Prologue*). His use of modal, pentatonic, and whole-tone scales also weakens ordinary harmonic progressions by lowering the seventh degree of the scale.

Fig. 20. 13th and 9th chords: *Finale*, mm. 63-65



In reference to traditional tonality, Debussy uses key signatures, however, not for the tonality of the key in the traditional way, but rather for implication of the motivic tones, particularly the trichord segment, D-C♯-C♮, which appears for the first time in the accompaniment of motive *c* in the *Prologue* (mm. 8-9). There is no key signature change in the *Prologue*; however, in the other two movements it appears. In the *Sérénade*, changes occur from 1♭ (representing D in the trichord segment) in the beginning to 3♯ (C♯) in the B section (mm. 36-53), with C♮ emphasized at the B section's end (mm. 52-53). In the *Finale*, again 1♭ moves to 3♯ (C♯, mm. 23-36), with C♮ recurring at the A section's end (mm. 37-56). The arrival of C here brightly shows the 4th movement bass progression of D-G-C (mm. 35-37:1). In mm. 57-68, the C♮ centering moves to 6♭ (D♭), then to 3♯ (C♯) in the transition (mm. 69-84) and finally, to 1♭ (D) at the end. Thus, these key signature changes imply the following: in the *Sérénade*, movement shifts through the trichord segment, D-C♯-C♮; in the *Finale*, movement shifts through the trichord segment D-C♯-C♮; however, immediately following this, D♭ and then C♯ lead back to D♮ at the end.

In 1895 while he was in Spain, Pierre Louÿs wrote to Debussy asking about songs that seemed not to cadence on the tonic. Debussy responded:

> But my dear good fellow! Remember the music of Java, which contained every nuance, even the ones we no longer have names for. There, tonic and dominant had become empty shadows of use only to stupid children.[42]

Thus, analyzing this sonata with traditional diatonic function cannot truly help in understanding Debussy's music. Boulez describes the difficulties of analyzing the music of Debussy this way:

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[42]Debussy, *Debussy Letters*, 76.

> All his life was a quest for everything that defies analysis . . . and for a development which, by its very nature, incorporates the surprises that arise from our imagination. He distrusts architecture, in the old-fashioned sense of the term, and prefers structures that mingle rigour and freedom of choice. That is why, with him, those words, those keys with which we are saturated in our schools and academies have no meaning or purpose: the habitual mental categories of a worn-out tradition could never be applied to his works, even if we tried to adjust them by twisting them here and there.[43]

It therefore becomes necessary to analyze Debussy's music in other ways. After some analysis it becomes apparent that Debussy's music is built in a more motivic way, one not based on traditional harmonic relationships or conventional voice-leading. Modal, pentatonic, whole-tone, major, minor and chromatic scales can be explained in the context of the repetition or juxtaposition of motivic cells. In addition, there are several other important factors controlling this sonata most of which Debussy presents in the *Prologue*'s introduction: dyadic conflicts arising from modal elements, tritone relationships and fifth movement root implications. These factors help explain the motivic structure of the sonata.

Dyadic Conflicts

A dyadic conflict occurs when a diatonic tone is contrasted with one of its chromatic inflections. The dyadic conflict becomes one of the developmental issues in a musical context. Particularly in this sonata this half step dyadic conflicts arise from the different modes used in the sonata. These conflicts appear in terms of a scale on D, as lowered or raised 7th degrees (C♮-C♯ from Aeolian and D minor scales), 6th degrees (B♮-B♭, from Dorian and D minor), 2nd degrees (E♭-E♮, from Phrygian and

[43] *Relevés d'apprenti*, Paris, 1966, 35, quoted in Stefan Jarocinski, *Debussy: Impressionism and Symbolism*, 159.

D minor), or from major and minor scales, 5th degrees (A♭-A♮, from F minor and F major), and 3rd degrees, (F♯-F♮, from D major and D minor).

The first movement of the Cello Sonata begins in the minor mode with built-in conflicts between minor and major (i / I) and modal conflicts as well (Aeolian / Dorian), which raise dyadic conflicts between the notes F and F♯, as well as B♭and B♮. The first movement ends on a Picardy third, further highlighting the dyadic conflict of F and F♯ (Fig. 21, mm. 47-51). In the second phrase of the A section (mm. 12-13) in the piano, the conflict of A-A♭appears, highlighting the conflict of F major and minor. The C♯-C♮and F♯-F♮ conflicts also appear (mm. 14-15) coming from the conflict between D major and D minor (Fig. 22). The C♮-C♯ conflict appears also in the first part of the B section horizontally and vertically (mm. 16 and 18) coming from v/D and V/D (Fig. 23). The E♭-E♮conflict is seen in the retransition of the *Prologue* (Fig. 24, mm. 37-38).

Fig. 21. *Prologue*, mm. 47-51

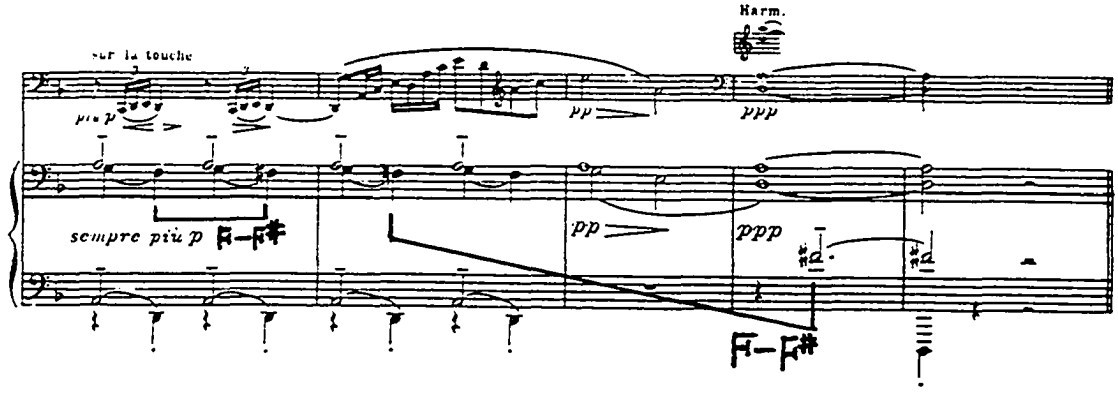


Fig. 22. *Prologue*, mm. 12-15

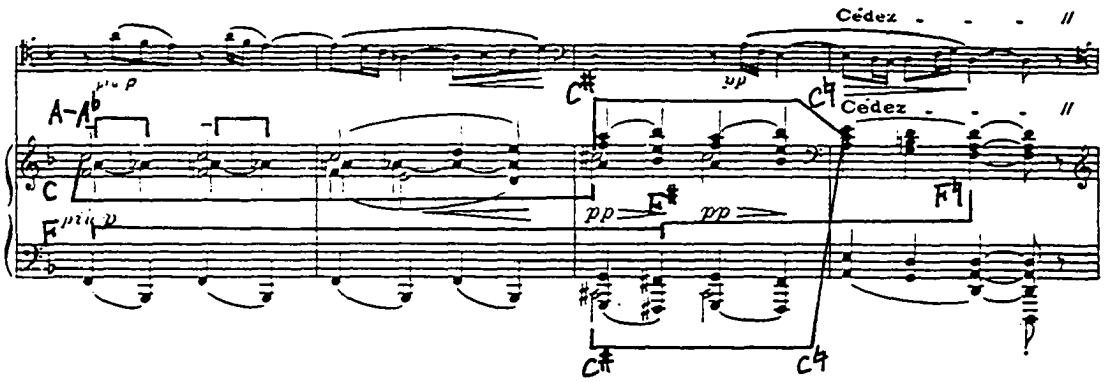


Fig. 23. *Prologue*, mm. 16-18

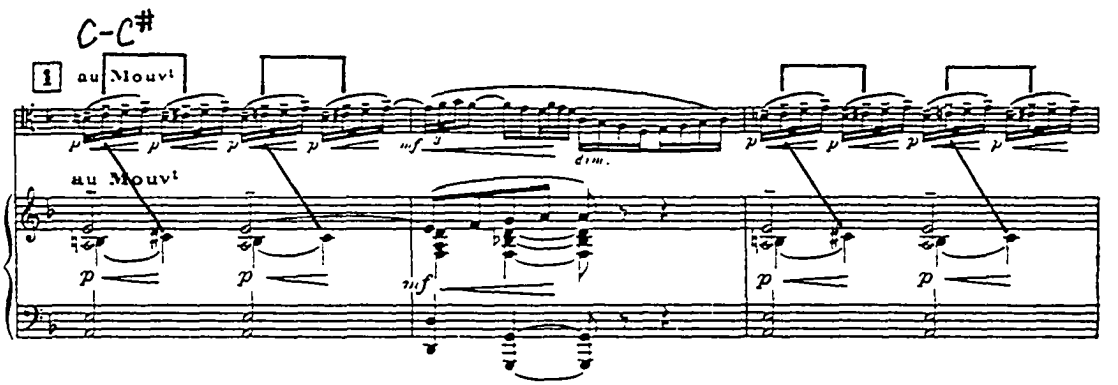
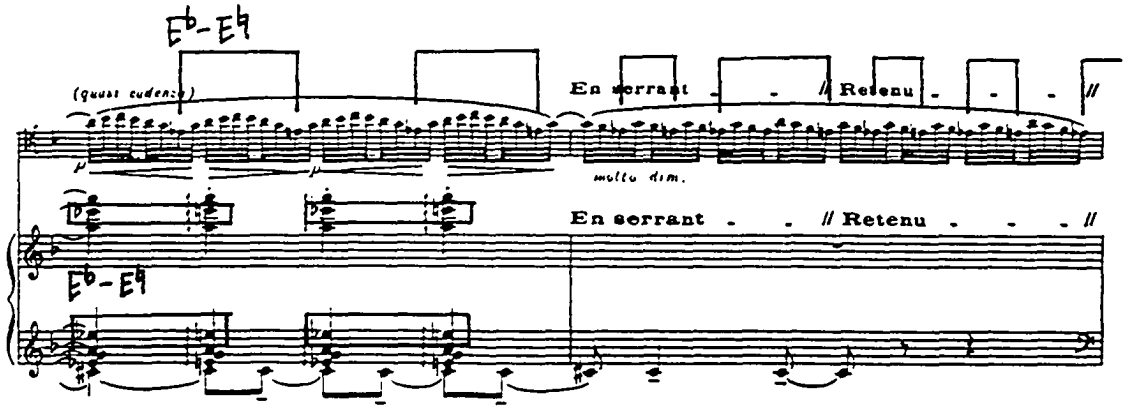
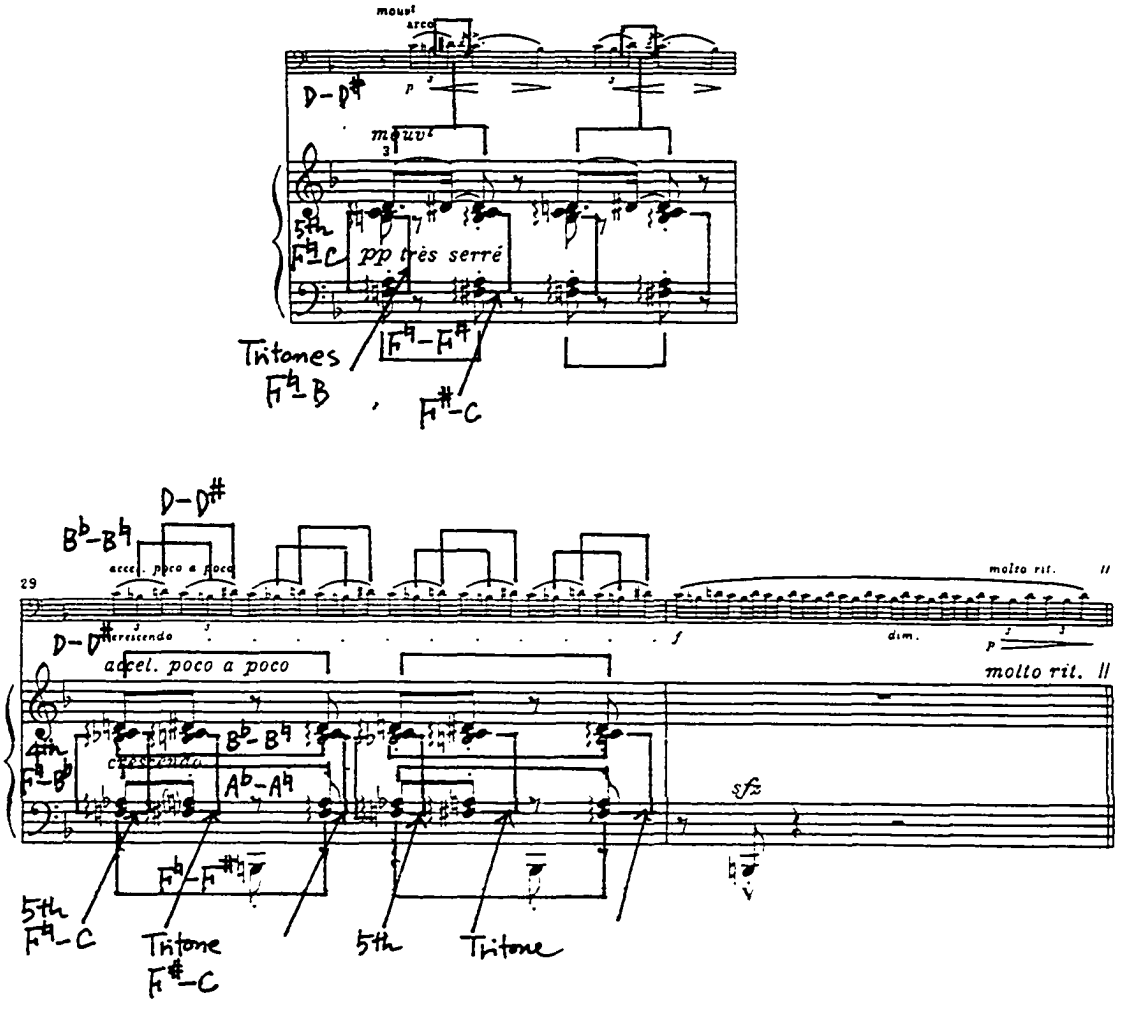


Fig. 24. *Prologue*, mm. 37-38



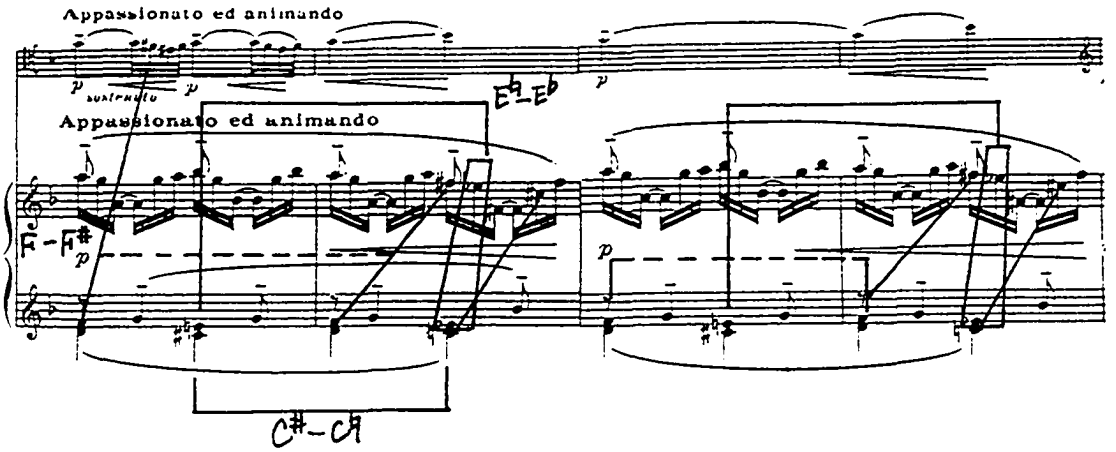
In the transition of the *Sérénade* (mm. 28-30) dyadic conflicts--B♭-B♮, D-D♯, F-F♯, and A-A♭--are joined (Fig. 25, see also Fig. 10, p. 53). In the *Finale* (mm. 104-107) conflicts of E♮-E♭, C♯-C♮, and F♮-F♯ appear (Fig. 26).

Fig. 25. *Sérénade*, mm. 28-30[44]



[44]Claude Debussy, *Sonate für Violoncello und Klavier*, ed. Ernst-Günter Heinemann with a preface by François Lesure, bowing and fingering by Reiner Ginzel and Klaus Schilde (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1998). In Durand edition '♮' sign is missing for the second A of the left hand of the piano in m. 29. This has been corrected in Henle edition, not in Peters.

Fig. 26. *Finale*, mm. 104-107

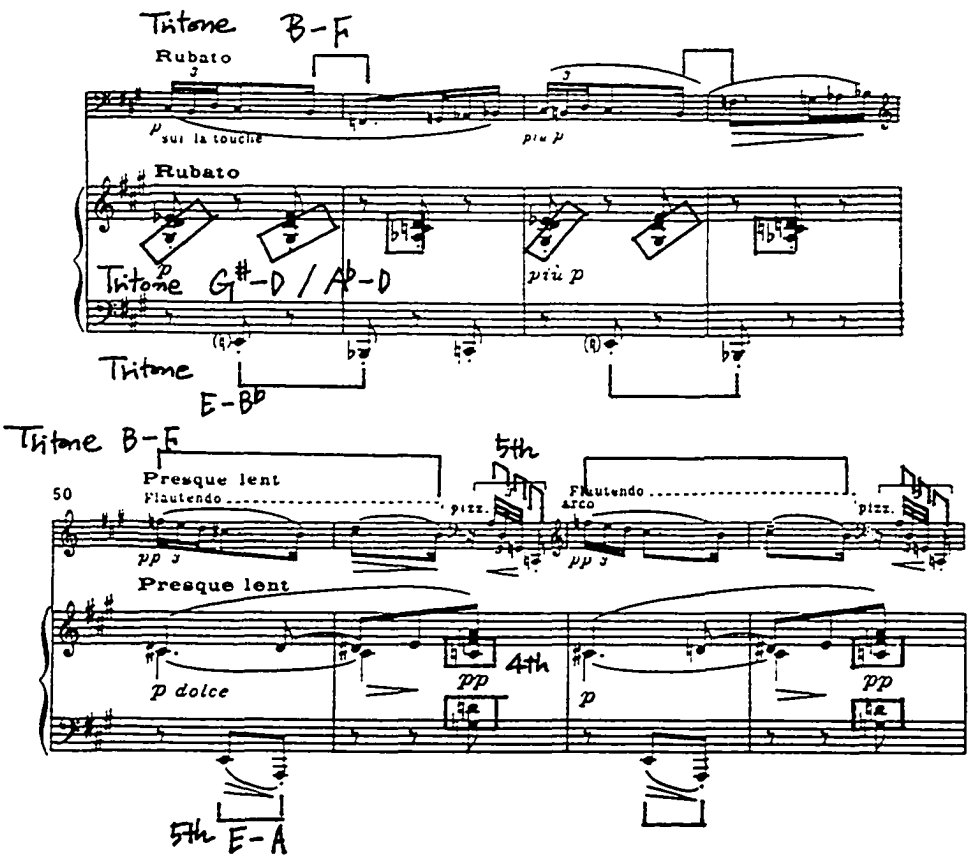


Tritone Relationships

In the introduction to the Cello Sonata the notes of a D minor seventh chord are paired with the note a tritone away to create four tritone relationships: D-A♭, F-B♮, A-E♭, and C-G♭. In this *Prologue*, from m. 21 to 23 in the piano, Debussy interlocks tritones (G-D♭ and E-B♭) to produce diminished seventh chords (see Fig. 19, p. 60). These tritones appear to be important factors, more in the *Sérénade* than the other two movements, for delineating parts of the form of the *Sérénade*. The last note of the first movement, D "leads" to A♭, the first note of the *Sérénade*. These pitches, as well as the G♯-D tritone, rule the *Sérénade*'s A section (mm. 1-27): A♭-D (mm. 4 and 10-11), G♯-D (in part 2, mm. 12-17) and A♭-D (in part 3, mm. 23-24 and 26-27). The F-B♮ tritone is used for the transition and B section (mm. 28-53): in transition, mm. 28-29 (see Fig. 25) and in the B section's part 1 and 2 (in part 1, mm. 31-34 and in part 2, mm. 44-51, see Fig. 27). A-E♭ tritone appears for A′ (mm. 55 and 59-64). Other tritones are employed intermittently to elaborate motives or to enhance the tension of the part. The motive *e* (mm. 3-4, 19-20 and 54-55) is elaborated with three tritones arranged

chromatically: G-D♭, A♭-D♮, A♮-E♭(see Fig. 8, p. 52 and Appendix I for motive letters) and the motive *f* (mm. 5-6 and 21-22, see Fig. 9, p. 53) with E-B♭. This E-B♭ tritone appears again in the A section's part 2 as A♯-E (mm. 15-16, see also Fig. 29) as well as in the B section's part 2 (mm. 44-47). This B section's part 2 uses motive *g* of the *Sérénade* in a transformation of motive *a* of the *Prologue* with the other tritones previously mentioned, G♯-D and B♮-F. Thus it is elaborated and emphasized with three tritones' appearances (E-B♭, G♯/ A♭-D, and B-F). The B-F tritone here is contrasted with the perfect 5ths, particularly in the bass, A-E and G-D (mm. 48-51, see Fig. 27).

Fig. 27. *Sérénade*, mm. 44-53



The C-G♭ (F♯) / G♭ (F♯)-C tritone appears twice to enhance the tension of the music: the first one appears with the A♭-D♮ tritone contrasted with the 5th, A-D/A♭-D♭ and chromatically rising cello (mm. 23-24, Fig. 28); the second one (mm. 28-29) appears with the F-B♮ tritone for the transitional part (see Fig. 25, p. 67). There are also ostinato tritone passages as well (mm. 11-16) in the context of whole-tone scales in the *Sérénade* (Fig. 29).

Fig. 28. *Sérénade*, mm. 23-24

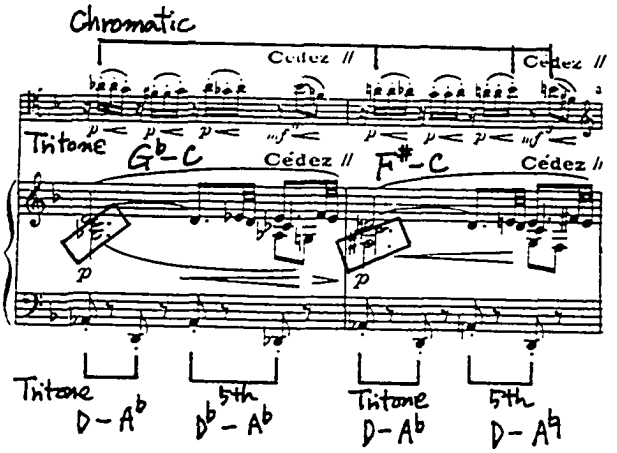


Fig. 29. *Sérénade*, mm. 11-16

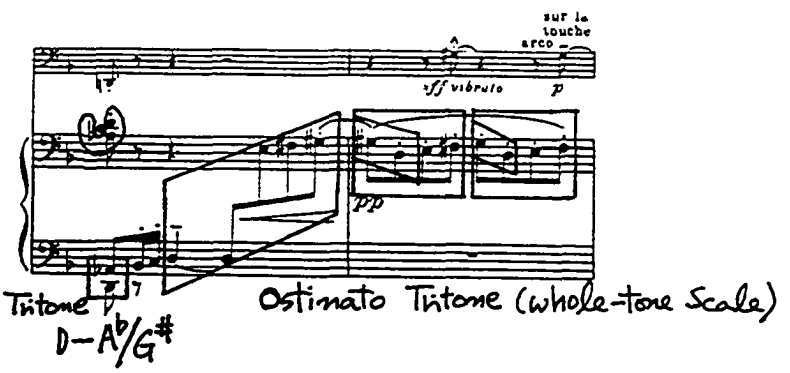
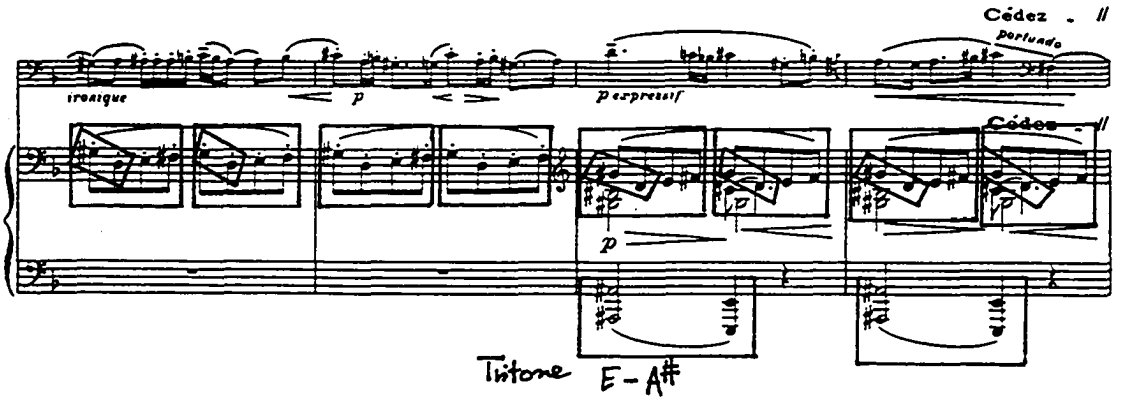


Fig. 29—*Continued.*



In the *Finale*, as stated earlier, tritones are also used for motives. The entire part 3 of section A using motive *k* employs tritones E♯(F)-B (first half of part 3, mm. 23-28) and A♯(B♭)-E (second half of part 3, mm. 29-34). These tritones are also contrasted with 5th movements, C♯-G♯, D-A, and F♯-C♯ (Fig. 30). The motive *m* in section B is elaborated with tritones in the piano: C♭-F and E♭♭-A♭(mm. 49-50) as well as D♭-G and F♭-B♭ (in the following mm. 51-52, Fig. 31).

Fig. 30. *Finale*, mm. 23-34

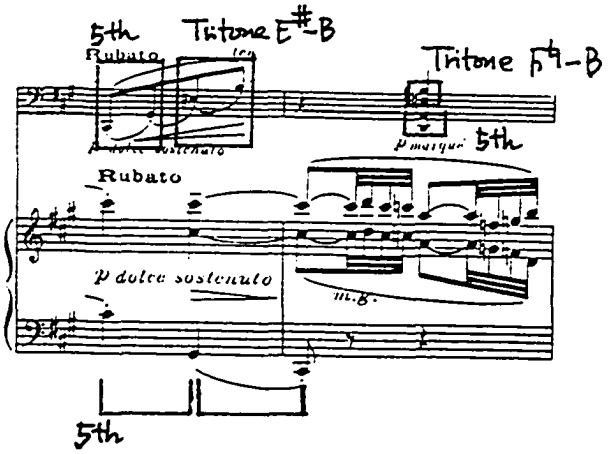


Fig. 30—*Continued.*

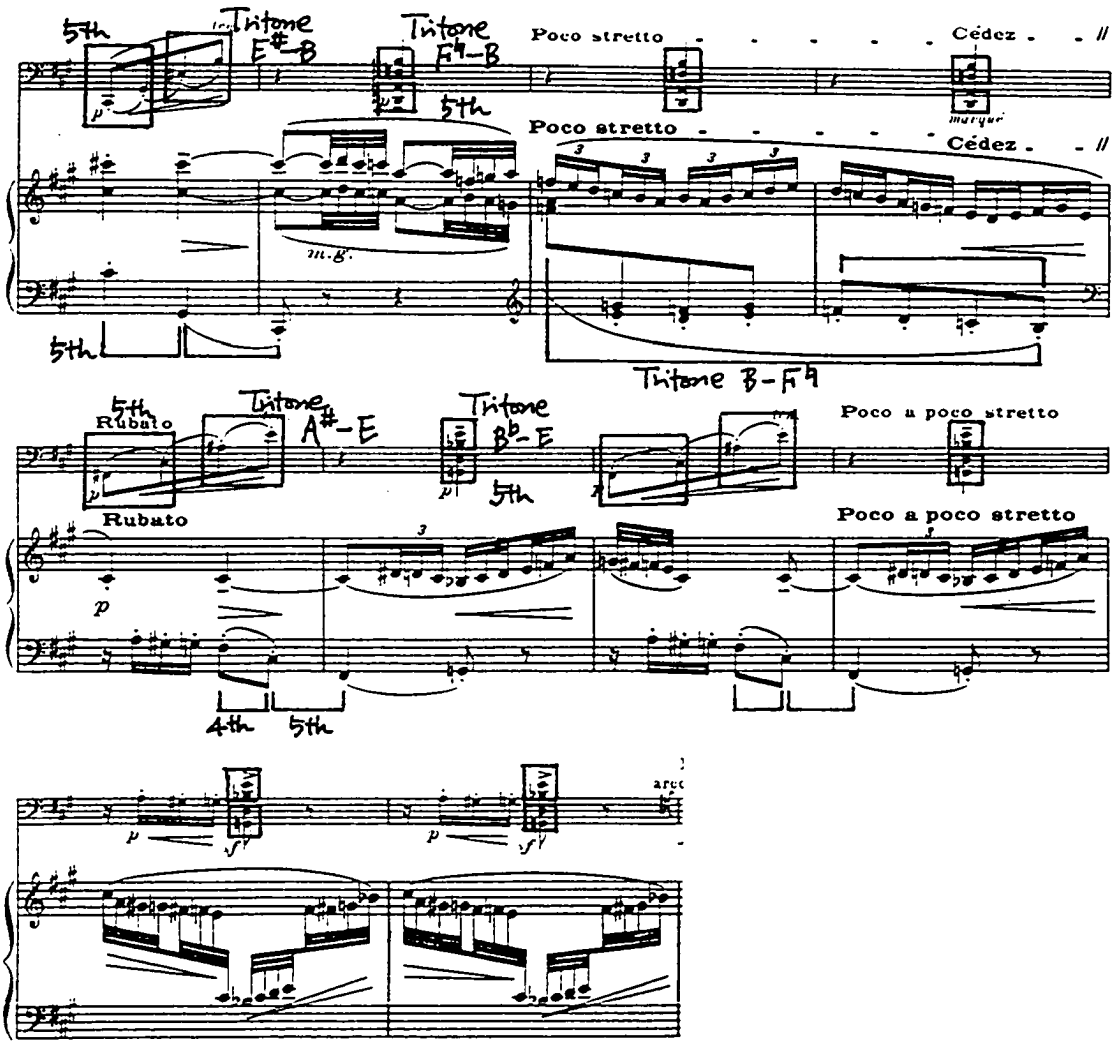
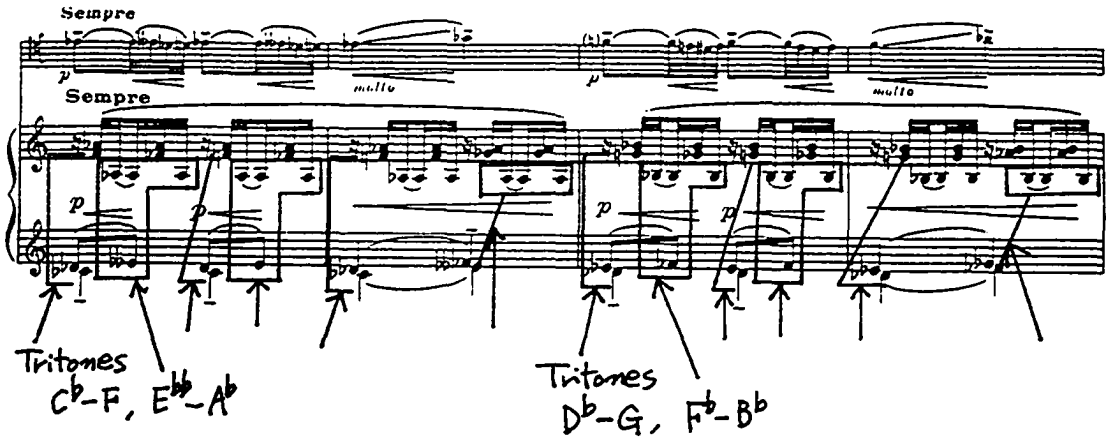


Fig. 31. *Finale*, mm. 49-52



Fifth Movement Root Implications

In the sonata not only the melodies, but also the harmonic or bass progressions often stress fourths or fifths (see Fig. 32). At the beginning of the *Prologue*'s introduction, the bass presents movements of D-G and A-D (mm. 1-4). In m. 5, the piano shows the fifth movement of C-G. These fifth bass movements are contrasted with four tritone relationships--D-A♭, F-B♮, A-E♭, and C-G♭--also appearing here. These fifth relationships play an important structural role throughout the sonata and give diatonic qualities to the sonata.

The *Prologue*'s A section ends with a plagal cadence (m.15, v-IV-i) and the B section's part 1 shows primarily the bass movement of A-D-G-C (mm. 16-20). The B section's part 2 also ends with G-C, leading to the climatic next part 3 (mm. 28-29). This last part of the B section moves from C to F intermittently (mm. 29-33) and, at the end, again from G to C (mm. 34-35). Then it shifts chromatically through C♯ of the

retransition (mm. 36-38) to D of the A′ section. The coda shows the same plagal cadence as the A section, G-D (mm. 46-47), and ends with a picardy third.

Particularly in the *Sérénade* these fifth movements appear not only as chords but also as single pitches and play as important a structural role as in the *Prologue*. They give diatonicism to the sonata and a contrast with the chromaticism created by the tritone relationships. The *Sérénade*'s A section's part 1 presents the first strong G at measure 5 and ends on D, along with the tritone A♭ (m. 12). At the end of the A section's part 2 the bass moves from D (in the piano, m. 17) to G-C (in the cello, 18). In mm. 21-27, the same movement as that of part 1 appears (G-D along with the tritone pitch A♭) contrasting with another tritone relationship, F-B♮, in the transition (mm. 28-30). At the end of the B section the fifth movement of E-A appears intermittently (mm. 48, 50), but this section ends with G-C (mm. 51-53), too. Following this, A′ (mm. 54-64) prepares the *Finale* with A, its dominant.

The *Finale*, also, shows movement of D-A at the beginning of each section (mm. 1-3, 85-87, 90-92) and D-G-C, in the middle of the movement, at the end of section A (mm. 35-37) and C-G in the B section's part 1 (mm. 37:1-44). Intermittently C♯-F♯ appears in the A section's part 3 (mm. 23-32), ending with a plagal cadence, D-G (i_6-IV_7, mm. 112-114). The movement concludes with A-D in the coda (mm. 120-123, see Fig. 32).

Fig. 32. The Fifth Bass Movement

Movement	Event		Measures	Fifth Bass Movement
Prologue	Introduction		mm. 1-4	D-G –A-D-G
			m. 5	C-G
	Section A		m. 15	G-D, a plagal cadence
	Section B	Part 1	mm. 16-20	A-D-G-C
		Part 2	mm. 28-29:1	G-C
		Part 3	mm. 29-33	C-F intermittently
			mm. 34-35	G-C
	Coda		mm. 46-47	G-D, the same plagal cadence as section A
Sérénade	Section A	Part 1	mm. 5-12	G-D appears with tritone A♭
		Part 2	mm. 17-18	D (in the piano)-G-C (in the cello)
		Part 3	mm. 21-27	G-D appears with tritone A♭, contrasts with the following tritone relationship, F-B♮ (Transition)
	Section B	Part 2	mm. 48, 50	E-A intermittently contrasts with the previous tritone relationship, E-B♭ (mm. 44-45, and 46-47)
			mm. 51-53	G-C
	Section A′	Transition to the *Finale*	mm. 59-64	A prepares the *Finale*'s D
Finale	Section A	Part 1	mm. 1-3	D-A
		Part 3	mm. 23-32	C♯-F♯ intermittently
			mm. 35-37	D-G-C
	Section B	Part 1	mm. 37-44	C-G
	Section A′	Part 1	mm. 85-87	D-A
		Part 3	mm. 112-114	D-G (i_6-IV_7), a plagal cadence
	Coda		mm. 120-123	A-D

As we see above, fourth or fifth movements of D-G, D-A, and G-C presented in the *Prologue*'s introduction play an important role throughout, not only to cadence and to

balance the movements, but also to give contrast to the chromaticism of the tritone relationships. Other fifth movements of E-A, C-F and C♯-F♯appear intermittently (Fig. 32).

Debussy tried for an all-natural approach for generating music, as he stated in "Music in the Open Air" in 1901. This approach moved away from the traditional harmonic rules towards freedom, in order to "kill off that silly obsession with over precise 'forms' and 'tonality,' which so unfortunately encumber music. She [music] could certainly be regenerated, taking a lesson in freedom from the blossoming of the trees."[45]

Soon after writing the Cello Sonata, Debussy (on 6 October 1915) expressed his happiness at finding a new way of composing after a long struggle:

> When I tell you that I spent nearly a year unable to write music . . . after that I've almost had to re-learn it. It was like a rediscovery and it's seemed to me more beautiful than ever!
>
> Is it because I was deprived of it for so long? I don't know. What beauties there are in music 'by itself', with no axe to grind or new inventions to amaze the so-called 'dilettanti' . . . The emotional satisfaction one gets from it can't be equalled, can it, in any of the other arts? This power of 'the right chord in the right place' that strikes you . . . We're still in the age of 'harmonic progressions' and people who are happy just with beauty of sound are hard to find.[46]

As we have seen above the sonata has a strong sense of diatonicism (particularly in the *Prologue*) even though it is often blurred and wanders between diatonicism and chromaticism. The *Prologue* favors diatonicism, the *Sérénade* chromaticism, and the *Finale* combines both diatonicism and chromaticism. As I have shown, even though he disdained them, Debussy gives diatonic qualities with 5ths: D with its adjacent 5ths A

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[45]Debussy, "Music in the Open Air," La Revue blanche, 1901, as cited in: *Debussy on Music*, 41.

[46]Idem, *Debussy Letters*, 303.

and G and, also, C. However, in relation to his key signatures, he does not always use these 5th movements traditionally. He regenerates them repeating the same 5ths for the structure of the entire sonata in association with the motivic ideas, D-C♯-C♮. This gives the work unity and balance. Even in the chromatic movement, *Sérénade*, he uses the same 5ths for the structure of the movement as chords or single notes. As for his chromaticism, in all three movements it can be explained sometimes as dyadic conflicts from the modes, such as lowered or raised 7th degree (C♮-C♯), 6th degree (B♭-B♮), 5th degree (A♮-A♭), 3rd degree (F♮-F♯), and 2nd degree (E♭-E♮), and sometimes as tritone relationships (D-A♭, F-B♮, A-E♭, C-G♭, E-B♭ and G-D♭--often with whole-tone allusions).

Debussy's music cannot be analyzed as either tonal or atonal music. Analyzing this work as tonal music may look 'chaotic,' hence, Roland Nadeau writes of the "harmonic mass" of Debussy's mature style.[47] Despite this, Debussy uses existing tools, arranging and regenerating them in his own creative way.

Texture

The texture of this sonata is light, simple and transparent homophony, particularly in the *Prologue* and *Sérénade*. In the opening of the *Prologue*, the piano states the melody with simple static chords, and then the cello takes the melodic role, again with a simple and almost transparent accompanimental piano part. One can clearly hear all the melodies. Except for the opening and the developmental section (mm. 21-28), the cello dominates the melody. Debussy also uses texture structurally, contrasting the

[47]Nadeau, "Brouillards: A Tonal Music," 133.

thickness of part 2 of the B section (mm. 21-28) with the thin quality of the surrounding parts, to enhance the tension that leads to the climax of the movement. For the transitions, a thin texture is used in all three movements. The transitions of the *Prologue* (mm. 36:4-38) and *Sérénade* (mm. 28-30) show similarities not only in texture, but also dyadic conflicts, rhythmic freedom and soft dynamics at the end to prepare for the next part. The last transition of the sonata, that of the *Finale* (mm. 69-85:1), also shows a thin texture and ends with soft dynamics; however, it is elaborated with a variety of colorful sounds, e.g., coloristic devices and changes of register (see Appendix III, Changes of Register and IV, Overall Structure Graph of the *Finale*). The texture of the *Sérénade* overall, as mentioned before, is the same as the *Prologue* --- simple and transparent with a reduced single line. Again, the cello takes the melody and the piano accompanies. The piano part is extremely light, with *staccato* sounds corresponding to the pizzicato of the cello. Even when the piano's texture is relatively thick, particularly in the first part of the B section (mm. 37-41), compared to the other parts, it is played *pp subito, leggiero*. Thus the melodies in the *Sérénade* are always heard clearly.

Compared to the other movements, the texture of the *Finale* is characterized by a thicker piano part, which plays a more equal role with the cello and enhances the brilliant character of the *Finale*. For these thick-textured piano parts, Debussy uses not only a variety of coloristic devices but also the higher register of the cello in tenor or treble clef, thus ensuring the clarity of the cello melody (see Appendix IV, Overall Structure Graph of the *Finale*).

As for specific coloristic devices, *sur la touche* is generally used in lighter textures, the ostinato passage of the *Prologue* being an exception (mm. 21-27). In comparison, *sur le chevalet* appears with the piano's thick texture in a variety of settings (mm. 39-41:1, 77-78) and is used with *staccato* or *spiccato* passages. The metallic sound of *sur le chevalet* is especially effective against the thick texture of the piano. For *pizzicato*, as in the *Sérénade*, in the thick-textured *Finale* movement, Debussy uses a thin piano part played staccato or as a legato single line (mm. 19-34). *Portamento* appears with a variety of textures. When thick, Debussy employs upward motion of longer note values, played molto crescendo in the tenor clef (mm. 50, 52).

As we have seen above, Debussy was very careful with sound production. The melodies are clearly heard in the well-balanced textures of the two instruments. While thick piano parts are problematic in Romantic works, since they tend to cover the sounds of the low-register cello, in this sonata Debussy eliminates those problems by careful use of coloristic devices, dynamics and register. Moreover, he wrote the cello part idiomatically---one finds here no pianistic passages, e.g., consecutive thick chordal passages, the likes of which occur in the cello sonatas of pianist-composers Chopin, Brahms and Rachmaninof.

Dynamics

Capturing the stillness of nature in music entranced Debussy. In 1889 Debussy wrote, "Music is made for the inexpressible: I should like it to have the air of emerging

from shadow and gradually returning there, of always being a discreet person."[48] Four years later, in 1893, he mentioned a similar idea in a letter to Chausson:

> I found myself using, quite spontaneously too, a means of expression which I think is quite unusual, namely silence (don't laugh). It is perhaps the only way to give the emotion of a phrase its full value . . .[49]

In 1917 Debussy commented to Marguerite Long about the relationship of music to nature:

> Do you hear the sea? . . . To be face to face with the splendour of the ocean, that is music itself. . . .
> The sea --- there is nothing so musical. All that one could wish for in the way of music.[50]

Debussy's interest in the softness and stillness of nature appears in his extremely soft and subtle dynamics. Regularly Debussy calls for "almost nothing," "dying away," "scarcely murmured," "gradually vanishing," "fading away," "in a soft, veiled sonority," "becoming weaker," and "as soft as possible," in his music.[51] Stefan Jarocinski even states that "80 percent of Debussy's music has a dynamic level of *piano* or *pianissimo*."[52]

In this Cello Sonata Debussy uses *piano* dynamics like his other works more frequently than *forte* dynamics, and in great variety: *più p*, *sempre pp* (*Prologue*, mm. 8-9), *pp subito* (*Sérénade*, mm. 37-38), < *pp* > *pp* > (*Prologue*, mm. 13-14), *p* < *p* < (*Prologue*, mm. 16, 18; *Sérénade*, mm. 23-24), *p* > *p*> (*Sérénade*, mm. 4 and 55), *molto*

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[48]Maurice Emmanuel, *Pelléas et Mélisande de Debussy* (Paris: Editions Melottée, 1950), 35, quoted in Wenk, 87.

[49]Debussy, *Debussy Letters*, 56.

[50]Nichols, *Debussy Remembered*, 175-76.

[51]Wenk, 45.

[52]Cited in ibid., 87.

dim. (*Prologue*, m. 38), *sempre più p*, *pp* > *ppp* (*Prologue*, mm. 49-51), *p expressif* (*Sérénade*, m.15), >*estinto* (extinguished, *Finale*, mm. 67-68). In fact, in the *Sérénade* the *piano* markings outweigh the *forte* markings 38 to 7 in the piano part. Debussy usually reserves *f* for dramatic effect, starting the Cello Sonata with *f* and ending with *ff* (the *Prologue* and *Sérénade* end *ppp* and *pp*, respectively). Only at the end of this piece do the dynamic levels move to consistently louder *mf* < *mf* < *molto, sff, f, ff, sff, ff* markings (*Finale*, mm. 110-123).

Timbre

Debussy creates unique sounds with special coloristic devices and with registers refined by his unique and delicate expression. Debussy's fondness for muted sound is not employed in this sonata; however, he uses other special sounds, such as *sur la touche* (*sul tasto*), *flautendo* [*sic*], *sur le chevalet* (*sul ponticello*), *pizzicato*, harmonics and *portamento*. He uses these also to articulate the structure of the music. For example, the audible use of *portamento* is used for the climax in the *Prologue* (m. 29) and, in the *Finale*, for the passage that leads to the next climatic phrase of the cello (mm. 50, 52). In addition, the openings of the *Finale*'s sections, all of which use the same melodies, are differentiated by changes of instrumental color or the use of coloristic devices: motive *h* of section A is played in unison by the cello's *pizzicato* and the piano's left hand; motive *h* of section A′, however, is played by the cello alternating *pizzicato* with *arco* (slurred *staccato*). In the B section, Debussy elaborates the phrases with changes of instrumental color: first motive *h* is played by the piano a ninth lower, then, the next phrase is executed by the cello *sur le chevalet*. Part 3 of the *Finale*'s A

section is characterized by *pizzicato* in association with *rubato* (mm. 23-34). At the end, however, this changes to *arco* played *forte* with *rubato*, to lead to the B section played *legato*. This resembles the end of the A section's part 2, where timbre shifts from *arco* to *pizzicato* for a smoother transformation into the next part. The last transition of the sonata is emphasized and articulated more brightly than the others, not only by its length, but also by its variety of coloristic devices. It is filled with *sur la touche*, *sur le chevalet* and *spiccato* bowing, showing timbre contrasts with the legato sound of the previous part, as well as abrupt registrar changes.

Particularly, Debussy experiments with *pizzicato* imitating Pierrot's plucked guitar, thereby moving away from the cello's usual legato qualities. Moreover, his bold and audible use of *portamento* (m. 29 in the *Prologue*; mm. 50, 52 and 105 in the *Finale*), *sur le chevalet* with crescendo (mm. 77-78 in the transition of the *Finale*) and various bowing techniques make this sonata very modern. These bowing techniques include extreme changes of registers: the exchange of *arco* with *pizzicato* in the *Sérénade* showing harmonics with *pizzicato* (e^1-F_1, mm. 8-9) and *flautando* with *pizzicato* (f^1-C_1, mm 47-51); and *spiccato* bowing of the *Finale* (mm. 69-85), particularly with the F♯ ostinato in consecutive register changes (F♯-$f♯^1$, mm. 81-85, see Appendix III, Changes of Register).

It is remarkable to see in this sonata that Debussy uses register not only to produce unique moods, but also to emphasize formal structure. Extreme changes in register create intensity in consecutive use and give structural importance. Istvan Kecskeméti writes that register in Debussy's sonatas is "one of the means to counterbalance the

self-imposed limitation in exploiting color and strength of tone, the voluntarily applied plain texture."[53]

To create contrasting moods of the motives, Debussy changes their ranges (see Appendix II, Range of the Motives). In the *Prologue*, the ranges of motive *a* and *c* are contrasted with the quick moving broad range of motive *b*. This occurs also for the motives of the *Sérénade* and the *Finale*. In the *Sérénade*, motive *f* is contrasted with the surrounding motives *e* and *g* not only in range, but also in its higher sounds. In the *Finale*, motive *i* shows great contrast to the opening motive *h*, and motive *k* played *pizzicato* is contrasted with other motives *h*, *i*, *j*, *l*, and *m* in its range and in its lower sounds. The motives of the *Sérénade* and the *Finale* show more abrupt changes of register than the motives of the *Prologue*. In the *Sérénade*, dark color is produced by using the lower register. This dark color is related possibly to the moon of the withdrawn title, *Pierrot angry at the moon.* The high register of the *Finale* is thus both heightened by the dark color of the *Sérénade* and contrasted with it. Particularly, the change of register is used to emphasize formal structure. The following example shows a summary of changes of register in the sonata (Fig. 33, see also Appendix III, Changes of Register).

Debussy uses many unusual and precise expression markings: *largement déclamé* (extensively declaimed, *Prologue*, m. 29), *lusigando* [*sic*] (caressingly, *Prologue*, m. 35 and *Finale*, mm. 57-68), *poco vibrato* (*Prologue*, m. 45), *fantasque et léger* (fantastical and light, *Sérénade*, m. 1), *sff vibrato* (*Sérénade*, m. 12), *ironique* (*Sérénade*, m. 13), *suivez* (follow, *Sérénade*, m. 18), *très serré* (compressed, *Sérénade*, m. 28),

[53]Istvan Kecskeméti, "Claude Debussy, Musicien Français: His Last Sonatas," *Revue Belge de Musicologie* 16, 130.

Fig. 33. Changes of Register

Movement	Event	Technique
Prologue	Arrival of the climax	Lowest and highest notes of the piano, C_2-c^3 (m. 29)
	Arrival of the retransition	Abrupt change of register in the bass, C_2–c♯ (m. 36)
Sérénade	Second appearance of motive *e* among three times of its appearance	Abrupt change of register in the piano's right hand, from F♯-g♯ to e^1 - e^2(mm. 17-18)
	Transition to the *Finale*	*Sérénade*'s highest note in the piano with a sudden change of register: cello, from C♯1 - B to a; piano, from A♭1 - a♭^{1} to a - f♭^{3} (mm. 58-59)
Finale	At the end of the A section	Register changes in the piano with *forte* dynamics: in the bass, G_2-G_1-g, in the right hand, B-g^1 (mm. 36-37), giving back to the lower register at the beginning of the B section
	At the end of the B section's part 1	Register changes to prepare the next part 1 in the piano: in the bass, G1 - f (m. 44) and in the right hand, G – d to g – d
	At the end of the transition	Register changes in the cello and piano: In the piano, the top note moves g♯ - g♯^{1} - b♭^{1} - b♭^{2}, the bass moves C♯1 - C♯ - B♭ - b♭ (mm. 79-81); In the cello, F♯ - f♯^{1} (mm. 81-85); then in the piano back to the lower register for preparation of A′ section, D – C – B♭1 - A♭1 - to d – c - B♭ (mm. 82-85:1)

Fig. 33—*Continued.*

Movement	Event	Technique
Finale	At the end of the coda	Register change presenting the highest and lowest notes of the *Finale* in *forte* dynamics in the piano: left hand, B♭ - d – D - D_2, right hand, c – d^3 - d – D (mm. 119-123)

leggierissimo (very light, flighty, *Sérénade*, m. 31), *arraché* (snatched, *Finale*, m. 1), *léger et nerveux* (light and nervous, *Finale*, mm. 1-7:1), *expressif et soutenu* (expressive sustained, *Finale*, mm. 7:2-14), *marqué* (accented, *Finale*, mm. 10, 12, 24, and 28), *volubile* (voluble, speaking, *Finale*, mm. 15, 96 for the cello, and m. 19 for the piano), *delicatissimo* (*Finale*, m. 62), *dolce vibrato* (*Finale*, m. 63), *estinto* (extinguished, *Finale*, mm. 67-68), *sec* (dry, hard, *Finale*, mm. 114, 123) and *à plein son* (with full tone, *Finale*, m. 116). These special expression markings, along with varieties of string techniques, effective use of dynamics and registration, refine his music and create unique sonorities.

Debussy's creative use of sounds is one of the most important contributions to twentieth-century musical practice, not only because of his beautiful and unique sonorities, but also because of their use to emphasize important structural events. Stefan Jarocinski remarks, "It is since Debussy that pure sound has begun to collaborate on an equal footing with melody and harmony and thus acquire . . . the

primordial factor."[54] Debussy opened a new vision to the later composers, and particularly, "Varèse, for one, envisioned a music in which sonority would become an integral part of form."[55]

[54]Stefan Jarocinski, "Quelques aspects de l'unvers sonore de Debussy," in *Debussy et l'evolution de la musique au Xxe siècle*, ed. Edith Weber (Paris, 1965), 168, quoted in Wenk, 43.

[55]Wenk, 86.

CHAPTER III

PERFORMANCE AND TECHNICAL ISSUES

> When I [George Copeland] asked him why so few people were able to play his music, Debussy replied, after some reflection: 'I think it is because they try to impose themselves upon the music. It is necessary to abandon yourself completely, and let the music do as it will with you --- to be a vessel through which it passes.'[1]

It is difficult to perform Debussy's music without fully understanding his style, its fluctuating rhythm and tempo, its varied phrase structure, and its unique sonority and timbre, along with its carefully marked delicate dynamics and expressions. To project his unique, colorful and picturesque sound, even in this 'pure music,' performers need to take special care and make a thorough study of the sonata.

Rhythm

In 1890 Debussy expressed his ideas about rhythm in a conversation with Ernest Guiraud:

> Rhythms are stifling. Rhythms cannot be contained within bars. It is nonsense to speak of 'simple' and 'composed' time. There should be an interminable flow of them both without seeking to bury the rhythmic patterns.[2]

Obviously Debussy wanted rhythm to be as free from rules as harmony and melody were. Rhythm in the Cello Sonata is generally composed of triplets, dotted figures

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[1]Nichols, *Debussy Remembered*, 167.

[2]Lockspeiser, *Debussy: His Life and Mind*, Vol. I, 206.

linked by ties, syncopations, and hemiolas (for example in the *Sérénade*, mm. 31ff, and 44-47, the piano is heard as 3/4 over the actual meter of 3/8). The melodies usually begin off the beat, rather than on it, which obscures regular metric accents and the pulse. Rhythmic freedom is also reinforced by frequent time fluctuation in the Cello Sonata through the indications of *accel. poco a poco*, *animando, appassionato ed animando*, *animando poco a poco agitato, animé*, *modérément animé*, *au mouvt* (in tempo), *1er mouvt* (tempo 1), *cédez* (slow down), *en serrant* (becoming faster), *la moitie plus lent* (half tempo), *largo*, *lent*, *presque lent* (almost slowly), *poco stretto*, *retenu* (holding back, with restraint), *sostenuto*, *molto sostenuto*, *rit.*, *molto rit.*, *rubato*, *molto rubato*, and *vivace*. Debussy's rhythmic language is inspired by the silence and even the noises of nature and appears in his music in the form of irregular metrical arrangements, irregular accents, and the frequent disruption of tempo through *rubato*. He stated, "All the noises we hear around . . . can be re-created" and "can be represented musically. . . . I wish only to render what I can hear."[3] Furthermore his rhythmic language, including dotted rhythms, syncopations, triplets, and *tenutos* come from the French culture and language, as discussed above in chapter II (see pp. 30-42).

Metronome and Tempo Marks

> Debussy wrote in a letter to Jacques Durand on 9 October 1915:
>
> You know what I think about metronome marks: they're right for a single bar, like 'roses, with a morning's life'. Only there are 'those' who don't hear music and who take these marks as authority to hear it still less!
>
> But do what you please.[4]

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[3]Debussy, *Debussy on Music*, 243.

[4]Idem, *Debussy Letters*, 305. According to Roy Howat, this relates more to the Cello Sonata or *En blanc et noir* than to the *Etudes*, "both published in December 1915; the *Etudes* did not go to engraving until 1916." Roy Howat, "Debussy's piano music: sources and performance," in Richard Langham

By 1904 Debussy's metronome marks had appeared in only three works: the song *Mandoline* (published 1890), the String Quartet (published 1894), and the piano piece *Masques* (1904). After *La mer*, from 1905, metronome markings showed up more frequently: the second series of piano *Images* (1907), eight preludes from the first book piano preludes (1909-10), one prelude from the second book of preludes (1911-13), *En blanc et noir*, and the Cello and Violin Sonatas, all contain these marks.[5] In my view the metronome marks are only suggestions, not only in this sonata, but also in other works.

In Debussy's music performers have to feel a sense of flowing before settling on a definite tempo. In this sonata many places require an inner sense of direction. These are sometimes expressed as dance-like passages, sometimes pulling or pushing, and are produced by delicate dynamics, *rubatos*, articulations, constant tempo changes, silences, musical stops with the indication *cedez*, and frequent, sudden changes of moods generated by the juxtaposition of diverse musical ideas. These silences, rests, and the like are indications of timing and can be understood in the context of rhythm, for as William Pleeth has noted, "Even silence is incorporated in the whole scheme of rhythm--it is the rhythm of space and timing."[6] To execute this work successfully the performer needs to understand these features and feel the music and the moods of the piece, never simply counting mechanically. This is critical in this sonata since it has so many vital contrasts of moods. Sensitivity to these moods and recognizing the inner direction of the music create musical rhythm and time. The metronome markings and tempo

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Smith, ed., *Debussy Studies* (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 89.

[5]Howat, "Debussy's piano music," 89.

[6]William Pleeth, *Cello* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1982), 103.

indications are best considered as suggestions for creating a tempo that has a great deal of freedom beyond the boundaries of strictly measured time.

Debussy seemed to change his opinion about tempi. For instance, Marguerite Long said that Debussy was very strict about his tempo;

> 'To the metronome,' he said one day before I started playing [*Sarabande*]. This shows how solicitous he was that his tempi should remain immutable for all time. It is not easy for us to achieve such precision.[7]

However, Debussy said to the conductor Camille Chevillard during one of the rehearsals for the first performance of *La mer* on 15 October 1905:

> . . . *'un peu plus vite ici'* . . . So Chevillard said: *Mon cher ami*, yesterday you gave me the tempo we have just played.' Debussy looked at him with intense reflection in his eyes and said: 'But I *don't feel music* the *same way every day*.'[8]

Debussy also wrote about rhythmic matters in a letter to Manuel De Falla on 13 January 1907 in response to a query about Debussy's *Dances for Harp and Orchestra* (1904) that De Falla performed in a piano version a few weeks after this letter:

> It's not possible to write down the exact form of a rhythm, any more than it is to explain the different effects of a single phrase!
>
> The best thing, I think, is to be guided by how you feel . . . The colour of the two dances seems to me to be clearly defined. . . . I am quite happy to leave the performance to your good taste.[9]

Thus, the key to performing Debussy's music seems to be searching for "the sense of movement," or "the inner sense of flow," based on the suggested metronomic speed which acts as just one "determining factor" of the tempo, rather than consenting to a

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[7]Marguerite Long, *At the Piano with Debussy*, trans. Loive Senior-Ellis (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1972), 23.

[8]Nichols, *Debussy Remembered*, 183.

[9]Debussy, *Debussy Letters*, 176.

strict sense of "a measured speed."[10] In fact, without a sense of "inner logic of the music" the performance of the work is incomplete. Music should be performed with "freedom within the boundaries set by the rhythmic spine."[11] For example, the beginning of the *Sérénade* cannot be performed successfully simply by counting. In the second measure, where Debussy puts slurred *pizzicatos*, which might be imitating a drunken Pierrot, performers might add a "shaky" kind of articulation of the beat. Without sensing the general feeling, or in other words, just playing strictly in time, one cannot express anything with music. Felix Galimir, an expert violinist states in one of his interviews, "You have to let your interpretive decisions flow from that feeling rather than from a too-literal fidelity to the score."[12]

Rubato

Debussy used *rubato* "far more frequently than any composer before him."[13] Thirty-six of the total of one hundred and two *rubato* indications in fifty-seven works written between around 1880 and 1917 are found in Debussy's late works between 1915 and 1917.[14] Maurice Dumesnil recollects when he played *Claire de Lune* from the *Suite bergamasque*:

> Again the matter of triplet values came up. Now he found them too strictly in time. It was all right in a way, he said, but they ought to be included 'within a general flexibility'. He advised me to depress the

[10]Pleeth, 96-97.

[11]Ibid., 103-04.

[12]Robert Martin, "The Quartets in Performance: A Player's Perspective," ed., Robert Winter and Robert Martin, *The Beethoven Quartet Companion* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 1994), 138.

[13]Richard Hudson, *Stolen Time: The History of Tempo Rubato* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994; Clarendon Paperbacks, 1997), 342.

[14]Ibid.

> two pedals before starting, so that the overtones would vibrate immediately upon contact. Remembering his previous remarks about dramatizing, I tried to keep the middle part moderate. But I guess I still overdid it: 'No,' he said, 'you exaggerate both the crescendo and the rubato. The latter must be done within the entire phrase, never on a single beat.'[15]

Here Debussy explained the drawn-out *rubato* he wanted by saying that the *rubato* "must be done within the entire phrase, never on a single beat."

After 1902, even though Debussy still used *rubato* for long phrases, he increasingly employed it for shorter fragments that are between one half and four bars long.[16] In this sonata *rubato* appears once in both the first and second movements after *cédez* is indicated: in the first movement Debussy indicates *rubato* with *lusingando* (caressingly) for two measures over a three against two polyrhythm (mm. 35-36); in the second movement he indicates it for four bars (mm. 44-47). However, in the *Finale* *rubato* appears more than in the other two movements. In fact, Debussy indicates *rubato* four times within varieties of phrase lengths, giving more tempo contrast within the movement than the earlier two movements. To execute these more smoothly and naturally rather than with a sudden change of tempo, the performer has to have a secure sense of where the music has come from and where it is going. For instance, in the *Finale*, part 3 (mm. 23-37:1) of section A divides into two small parts (mm. 23-28, and 29-37:1) and shows *rubato* indications three times. The cello melodies are to be played with *rubato* and with the carefully marked *p dolce sostenuto*, slurred and with the last note *tenutos*. Notably this melody is constructed around the combination of the perfect 5th and the tritone, E♯(or F♮)-B or A♯(or B♭)-E, and played *pizzicato*. These

[15]Nichols, *Debussy Remembered*, 159.

[16]Hudson, 342.

markings are contrasted with the piano's lyrical accompaniment which comes from motive *b* of the *Prologue*, and with the succeeding indication of *poco stretto* (mm. 27, 32). Previously, in the second phrase of part 2 (mm. 19-22), played *au mouvt*, the cello plays the same kind of rhythm as the *rubato* part, as well as in *pizzicato*. Similarly, the piano melody here also uses the same type of the rhythm as the next section (mm. 19-22, 23-24). Even though these parts are contrasted in tempo by *au mouvt* and *rubato*, with the similarities in the rhythm and timbres, one can feel the continuation of both parts. The *poco stretto* and *cédez* (mm. 27-28) also offers time to move naturally to the next *rubato* part, starting at m. 29. The last *rubato* (mm. 35-36), even though it is contrasted to the *poco a poco stretto* part (mm. 32-34), moves directly forward with *f* dynamics to end the first A section brightly on C. Therefore the *rubato* parts are better executed naturally, not by a sudden change of tempo but by the smooth continuation of the music.

The cello rhythm of part 3 of section B (mm. 57-68), indicated by *lento* and *molto rubato con morbidezza*, shows the longest phrase using *rubato* of twelve measures and creates a dance-like feeling. The theme also comes from motive *b* of the *Prologue*. The piano, however, is moving in static rhythm *pp molto dolce, lusingando*. This is preceded by part 2 of B section (mm. 45-56), which divides into three phrases, marked *Con fuoco ed appassionato* (mm.45-48), and *sempre* (for the remaining two phrases, mm. 49-52, and 53-56). In the second cello phrase (mm. 49-52) the same kind of dance-like rhythm is presented more intensely than in the *rubato* part, with ascending whole steps, chromatic lines, tritones, and the use of *portamento* within *molto crescendo*. As one can see through the carefully marked dynamics, spaces, and

rhythmic similarities along with accompanied static rhythmic figuration, as Long states, Debussy's "Rubato does not mean alteration of line or measure, but of nuance or élan;"[17] it is more like a continuation of the previous part which gives some different nuances to the music with *molto rubato*, even where there are static ostinato piano figurations (mm. 57-68). This is followed by *1er mouvt*, which is as the last transition of the sonata. The *1er mouvt* lends more tension and brightness to the music, especially in the more motivic passages played with *spiccato* bowings. This contrasts with the *legato* passages of the previous B section and allows the music to go back to the A´ section. The two parts (mm. 53-56 and the transitional part, mm. 68-85:1) are connected naturally to this *rubato* part through dynamics, namely *decrescendo* (mm. 53-56), with *pp* (*molto rubato* part, mm. 57-68), and the *rubato* part's *estinto* ending with *pp* at the beginning of the transitional part (mm. 67-68). These dynamics also help to suggest a smooth transition between each part.

Indeed, Debussy's *rubato* is "sensual," giving nuances or character to the music, and is "smooth and not jerky or capricious, and operated over a carefully specified length of time."[18] As Long states,

> In [Debussy's] music this all adds up to a series of nuances that are not to be defined unless they are felt, and which are represented by rubato that is as much part of the interpretation of Debussy. . . .
>
> This delicate rubato is difficult to obtain . . . . It is confined by a rigorous precision, in almost the same way as a stream is the captive of its banks. Rubato does not mean alteration of line or measure, but of nuance or élan.[19]

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[17]Long, 25.

[18]Hudson, 354.

[19]Long, 25.

Vibrato

In the early part of the twentieth century *vibrato* was used sparingly as an ornament, as in previous generations. Bernhard Heinrich Romberg (1767-1841),[20] who had a close association with Beethoven and contributed enormously to the development of cello technique, provided a description of *vibrato* in a cello method written in 1839. His method was accepted as a manual for the Paris Conservatoire and was first published in Paris, and then in Germany, Austria, and England.[21] In this method he wrote that the *vibrato*, then mistakenly called a tremolo, should be used at the beginning of a note:

> The close shake, or Tremolo is produced by a rapid lateral motion of the finger when pressed on the string. When used with moderation, and executed with great power of bow, it gives fire and animation to the Tone, but it should be made only at the beginning of the note, and ought not to be continued throughout its whole duration.
> The 2nd finger will be found the best in making the close-shake . . .
> The close-shake must never be held on through the whole duration of the note, otherwise it will fail in its object, which is, to add power to the tone; and should never exceed in time the third part of the value of the note.[22]

Also in 1839 Friedrich August Kummer (1797-1879) wrote that "a certain trembling [*Bebung*]" for occasional notes can be more expressive and bright, but it should not be used too frequently as a permanent character of playing.[23] Even in 1889 the close

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[20]Romberg was credited with advancing thumb techniques since Boccherini and inventing the sign for the thumb. His innovations included: flattening the right-side of the fingerboard to stop the C string beating on it; thinning and lengthening of the cello neck, lengthening the finger-board, and increasing the distance between the finger-board and the sound-board.

[21]Ginsburg, 20.

[22]Bernhard Romberg, *A Complete Theoretical and Practical School for the Violoncello* (London: Boosey & Sons Foreign Musical Library, 1839), 87, 90.

[23]F. A. Kummer, *Violoncellschule op. 165* (Leipzig, 1839), 30, quoted in Robert Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style: Changing Tastes in Instrumental Performance, 1900-1950* (Cambridge:

shake was not predominant, as Carl Schroeder wrote: "A special sign for the close shake is not in general use, its employment being left to the player's taste."[24] The distinguished cellist and teacher Hugo Becker (1863-1941) mentioned that his teacher Alfredo Piatti (1822-1901) "seldom used vibrato and then only in a very circumspect way . . ."[25] Becker viewed *vibrato* as an "emotional enlivening of the tone," saying that, "The intensity and speed of the vibrato must be defined and applied solely in accordance with the specific emotional character." Even as late as 1929 Becker and Dyno Rynar were against overusing the *vibrato* technique.[26]

Tellingly, the Belgian cellist Adrien François Servais (1807-66), who made his Paris debut in 1834 and had concert tours between 1830 and 1860 in Russia, was criticized for "unending sugary vibrato" by the Russian critic Pavel Makarov:

> Servais' bowing certainly does have more lilt than Davydov's, but this very lilt is so full of the unending sugary vibrato that one would, no doubt, like to cleanse one's ears with full and clear sounds, as one would like to have some plain water after eating candies.[27]

Notably, Servais invented the adjustable end-pin (1846) because of his difficulty holding the cello in his late age.[28] The introduction of the end-pin enormously affected

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Cambridge University Press, first published 1992, reprinted 1994, transferred to digital printing, 1998), 210.

[24]Carl Schroeder, *Handbook of Violoncello Playing*, (Hamburg, 1889; Eng. Trans., 1893), 67.

[25]H. Becker and D. Rynar, *Mechanik und Ästhetik des Violoncellspiels*, 199-202 (Vienna, 1929, reprinted 1971), quoted in Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, 210.

[26]Ibid., 102.

[27]P. Makarov, St. Petersburg concerts---Muzikalny svet, 1866, No. 6, quoted in Ginsburg, 52.

[28]The fixed end-pin was introduced in the second edition of *The Complete Tutor for the Violoncello* (1765) by Robert Crome who recommended it for beginners. Margaret Campbell, Paganini of the Cello': Adrien Servais," *The Great Cellists* (Great Britain: Victor Gollancz, 1988: U.S.A.: Trafalgar Square, 1989), 80.

cello bowing and *vibrato*. Servais' use of the end-pin made possible his "unending sugary vibrato."

Servais wrote violin and cello duos in cooperation with the violinists Léonard and Henri Vieuxtemps (1820-1881). Both Vieuxtemps and Henri Wieniawski (1835-1880) had 'intensified' the use of *vibrato*, according to the violinist Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962), who studied at the Paris Conservatoire in 1885-887 with Joseph Massart (1811-1892), Wieniawski's teacher.

> I believe Massart liked me because I played in the style of Wieniawski. You will recall that Wieniawski intensified the vibrato and brought it to heights never before achieved, so that it became known as the "French vibrato". Vieuxtemps also took it up, and after him Eugene Ysaÿe, who became its greatest exponent, and I. Joseph Joachim, for instance, disdained it.[29]

Robert Philip is not convinced, however, that the Vieuxtemps' and Wieniawski's *vibrato* was a continuous one.[30] However, given Servais' "unending sugary vibrato" and his close relationship to Vieuxtemps, it seems safe to assume their use. This continuous *vibrato* was very influential for cellists.

Moreover, the continuous *vibrato* was used more frequently by the French and Belgians than by the Germans and Viennese. As Philip also writes, "The continuous vibrato may or may not have been a Franco-Belgian invention, but it seems very likely that French taste was significant in its development."[31] Indeed, in the earliest recording

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[29]Louis P. Lochner, *Fritz Kreisler* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), 21.

[30]Philip writes, "It is tempting to infer from this comment, which Kreisler made in the 1940s, that Wieniawski and Vieuxtemps developed the continuous vibrato. But Kreisler never heard either of them (both were dead by the time Kreisler was six), and there is no reason to suppose that Wieniawski's 'French vibrato' was continuous, even assuming it was unusually prominent for the period. Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, 210.

[31]Ibid., 137.

of Debussy's Cello Sonata, performed by Maurice Maréchal and Robert Casadesus in 1930, Maréchal employed a fast, narrow, continuous *vibrato* with a fairly fast tempo.[32] Maurice Eisenberg (1902-1972), an American cellist of German birth who served as a substitute professor of the Casals class at the *École Normale* in Paris from 1929 to 1939 and as a professor at the Juilliard School in New York at the end of his life, described the French *vibrato*:

> Strangely enough, geographical conditions often seem to have a considerable influence in this matter. Many string players appear to reveal their national characteristics subconsciously through the texture of the vibrato. Take for example the French. Speaking generally, they are infinitely, more volatile and exuberant than the Anglo-Saxons, and their violinists, violists, and cellists tend to produce a tone that is tighter and more brittle than that of their neighbors to the North or East, mainly because they so often use a tense, quick and rather narrow finger oscillation. This is a reflection of the national temperament. It has many advantages, particularly in French music . . . [33]

In 1922 Diran Alexanian wrote in his *Theoretical and Practical Treatise of the Violoncello* (written in collaboration with Casals):

> The Vibrato is one of the most active factors of the "fullness" of tone-color. The old school forbade its regular use, no doubt on account of the inaccuracy of pitch that its execution engendered.
>
> I knew a very aged violinist, who maintained that the vibrato was an unhealthy habit brought on by the lack of control of the pureness of sound, and that string-instrumentalists would make a grave error in permitting a trembling of the left hand, as grotesque and indefensible as the quavering of certain badly placed voices.
>
> This reasoning was based upon an inexactitude.
>
> The vibrato is not any more a quavering than the "portamento" is a chromatic scale.

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[32]Claude Debussy, *Sonata for Cello and Piano*, perf. Maurice Maréchal, cello with Robert Casadesus, piano, Mats. WLX 1411-13, French Columbia LFX 85-6. 1930, in *Claude Debussy: An Anthology of Instrumental Music, The Three Late Sonatas , Dances for Harp/Saxophone Rhapsody*, Pearl GEMM CD9348, 1989.

[33]Maurice Eisenberg, *Cello Playing of Today*, collaboration with M. B. Stanfield (London: Lavender Publications, 1957), 108.

> The vibrato is an expressive undulation; principally on the violoncello, this undulation allows of the singing of a phrase, with the charm and intensity of a warm and well-colored voice. . . .[34]

One can see, then, how *vibrato* is especially important in French music and becomes an important factor in tone color for music from the end of the Romantic period onwards. This knowledge should also inform the performer's approach to *vibrato* in Debussy's Cello Sonata.

In his Cello Sonata Debussy specified the use of *vibrato* at four points (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. *Vibrato* use in the Cello Sonata

poco vibrato----------*Prologue* (m. 45)

sff vibrato (played *pizzicato*)----------*Sérénade* (m. 12)

sf vibrato with *tenuto* (played *pizzicato*)----------*Sérénade* (m. 52)

dolce vibrato ----------*Finale* (m. 63)

Bartók was possibly influenced by Debussy in such indications. Through these one can see how attentive Debussy was to sound creation in his sonata. The varieties of the *vibrati* he includes are as important as his dynamics and any other musical indications.

Elsewhere Debussy's Cello Sonata the performer should experiment with varied types of *vibrati* not only in relation to the fluctuating tempos and dynamics, but also in conjunction with other techniques such as *pizzicato*, *sur le chevalet* (*sul ponticello*), *sul la touche* (*sul tasto*), and *flautando*. His expression markings (*ironique*, *dolce*, *dolce*

[34]Diran Alexanian, *Traité Théorique et pratique du violoncelle / The Technique of Violoncello Playing* (Paris: A.Z. Mathot, 1922), 96.

vibrato, *expressif*, *expressif et soutenu*, *volubile*), tempi markings (*rubato*), special coloristic devices, and register must also be considered in determining the type of *vibrato* used. For instance, Debussy includes many *dolce* indications, particularly in the *Prologue* and the *Finale*. There are *dolce sostenuto* (*Prologue*, m. 8, *Finale*, m. 23 played by, *pizzicato*), *più dolce* (*Prologue*, m. 10), *pp dolcissimo ma sostenuto* in the cello part (*Finale*, m. 57), and even more specifically, *dolce vibrato* (*Finale*, m. 63). These should not be overlooked when choosing *vibrati* for the creation of color in the work. As Pleeth astutely writes about *vibrato* in relation to *dolce*:

> . . . How often does one see the word *dolce* (meaning 'sweetly') written into the music? And what does the cellist who habitually plays with a sweet, *dolce* sound then do when he actually encounters the word *dolce* in the score?
> Surely it must be obvious that there cannot be sameness throughout a creative work of art.[35]

Therefore, to produce the right sounds or color of *dolce*, one should experiment with various types of *vibrati*. Moreover, *vibrato* should create smooth musical continuity: poorly connected *vibrati* between notes actually break the musical lines. Performers should sensitively connect their *vibrati* for the sake of musical continuity and carefully choose a *vibrato* for the right vibrancy and variety of colors. Therefore, as Pleeth writes, *vibrato* should be treated as "a part of the total musical concept," such as "colors, textures, dynamics and intensities."[36]

My teacher, Frederick Zlotkin, as a general rule for choosing *vibrato*, refers to the distance between the finger placement and the bridge influencing the choice of *vibrato*. Similarly, Alexanian proposes that there are "proportions imposed on a *vibrato* by the

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[35]Pleeth, 92-94.

[36]Ibid.

changes of register," and natural reduction of the extent of the oscillations in proportion to the stopping of the string.[37] In other words, a general rule for *vibrato* might be formulated this way: in the low register, requiring a deep tone quality, use a slow and broad *vibrato*; for the high register with a piano dynamic, use weak and sometimes no *vibrato* at all; for intensive passages in *forte*, use a narrow and fast *vibrato*. If the passage is *piano* during a very expressive moment, then the *vibrato* can be faster. Alexanian views the variety of *vibrati* as follows:

> For weak sounds the vibrato should be spaced and supple. For full sounds the vibrato should, on the contrary, be rapid and nervous. In order to prove to oneself the correctness of this it will be sufficient to undertake to reverse the above principle. In a "piano" a rapid tremor would not fail to give an impression of feverishness. A "forte" on the other hand would appear weak and nerveless if played with a slow undulation.[38]

The variety of *vibrati* should be experimented with and studied by the performer. The choice of the *vibrato* comes from a performer's musical understanding and taste, and the choice will differ for each performer. For instance, in the *Prologue*, for the *pp* passage at m. 14, Maréchal played with *vibrato* (1930). Maurice Gendron (1964) did not, nor did Mari Fujiwara (1983) who studied with Pierre Fournier.[39] For the last note, A, of measure 30, Gendron uses *vibrato* on the D string which is not connected to the first note (G) of the next measure. However, Maréchal and Fujiwara use an open string A, and it leads directly to the G. I prefer Maréchal's and Fujiwara's approach in this

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[37]Alexanian, 96.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Debussy, *Sonata for Cello and Piano*, perf. Maréchal, cello, with Casadesus, piano; Ibid., perf. Maurice Gendron, cello with Jean Françaix, piano, Aufnahmen · Enregistrement: Switzerland, November, 1964, in *Debussy 3 Sonatas ·Syrinx*, Philips, 422839-2 PC, 1989; Ibid., perf. Mari Fujiwara, cello with Jacques Rouvier, piano, Aufnahme Enregistrement: Tokyo, December, 1983, in *Three Masterpieces for Violoncello of the Early 20th century*, Denon 33C37-7563, 1985.

part. At the end of the high A, in measure 49, where *pp decrescendo* is indicated, Gendron plays with *vibrato*, whereas Maréchal and Fujiwara do not. I also like to play without *vibrato* for this note. In the *Sérénade*, Maréchal plays with *vibrato* for the *flautando* sound (mm. 49-50, 51-52), but Gendron applies *vibrato* only for the C# and occasionally for the B in the passage. Fujiwara plays with no *vibrato* here. For the last long A (mm. 63-64) Maréchal and Gendron play with *vibrato*, but not Fujiwara. For the *Finale*, from measures 63 to 68, marked *dolce vibrato*, Maréchal plays the entire passage with *vibrato* and Gendron mixes *vibrato* and *non-vibrato*, while Fujiwara plays *non-vibrato*.

As we see, *vibrato* relates not only to personal taste and musical creative understanding, but also to the taste of the time. By the 1930s *vibrato* had become a necessary component for enhancing a beautiful string tone. Currently cellists use *non-vibrato* more than *vibrato* for sheer effect, which explains Fujiwara's preference for *non-vibrato*. However, even in 1927 writer Lucien Capet already stated this modern view of *vibrato*:

> . . . the omission of the left-hand vibrato (at certain moments in the musical life of a work) is a means of discovering the abstract and inexpressible beauty of universal august art. Like a vision into the hereafter, it enables us to evaluate correctly all those base expressions produced by the vibrato of the left hand.[40]

Certainly *vibrato* is important to performing French music, particularly this sonata with all of its delicateness and sensitive qualities. To generate a fine and faster *vibrato* the performer needs to consider in several points: 1) relax left thumb, 2) release tension of the both shoulders, 3) do not let both elbows drop too low, for too heavy arms'

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[40]*La Technique Supérieure de l'Archet* (Paris, 1927), quoted in Hauck, *Vibrato on the Violin*, 22, in Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, 101.

weight makes a fast *vibrato* more difficult. Find the correct height for the arms by testing both arms higher or lower. This will give more strength to the left fingers and make possible to generate solid and fast *vibrato*. The varieties of *vibrato*, particularly in this sonata, as well as its natural connection between notes in order to create effective sound colors and musical continuity are important. The performer not only needs to apply general rules to *vibrato* but also must experiment with it in relation to all kinds of expression marks, tempi, and dynamics in the context of the musical texture. Only then can the performer begin to discover and create the subtle colors of the sonata.

Pizzicato

The *pizzicato* in solo cello works manifested itself toward the end of the eighteenth century. Early examples include: the opening of the third sonata in Nochez's op. 1 (1765), the combination of single-note and chordal *pizzicato* in the slow movement of the Concerto in F# minor (1783) by French cellist and composer of German descent Jean Balthasar Tricklir (1750-1813), and the contrasting *arco* and left-hand *pizzicato* passages in the *Traité du violoncelle*, op. 42 (1804) by Jean-Baptiste Sébastien Bréval (1753-1823). Similarly, the *Méthode pour le violoncelle*, vol. II (1828), by the French cellist and composer Charles-Nicolas Baudiot (1773-1849) contains contrasts between *arco* and left-hand *pizzicato*.[41]

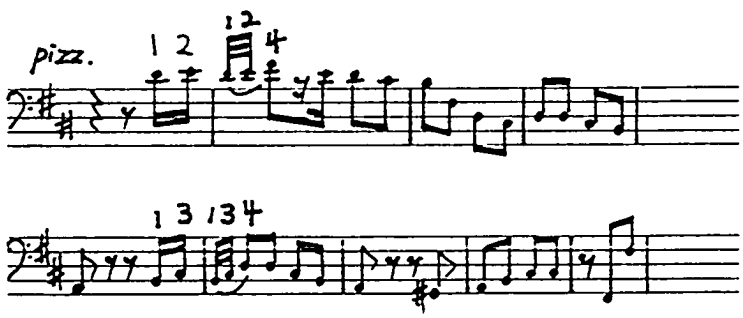
The next issue concerning the use of *pizzicato* involves the slurred *pizzicato*. Such articulation marks appear in the Mendelssohn Sonata for Cello no. 2 in D major, op. 58, published in 1843 (Fig. 2-a) and also in the Brahms Sonata for Cello no. 2 in F major,

[41]Walden, *One Hundred Years of Violoncello*, 203.

op. 99, published in 1886 (Fig. 2-b). The former is executed by plucking the string once with the right finger and stopping the next note or notes with the left fingers. Brahms' slurred pizzicato is played similarly to Mendelssohn's Sonata for the ascending note. However, the descending note requires the left finger's plucking, once with the right finger and the next with the left. Debussy's slurred *pizzicato* is still different in his Cello Sonata, however: this involves deliberately sliding from one note to the next rather than stopping the note or plucking strings with left fingers (Fig. 2-c).[42]

Fig. 2. *Pizzicatos*: *Slurred Pizzicato*

a. Mendelssohn Cello Sonata no. 2 in D major, op. 58 (Second movement, mm. 4-12)[43]

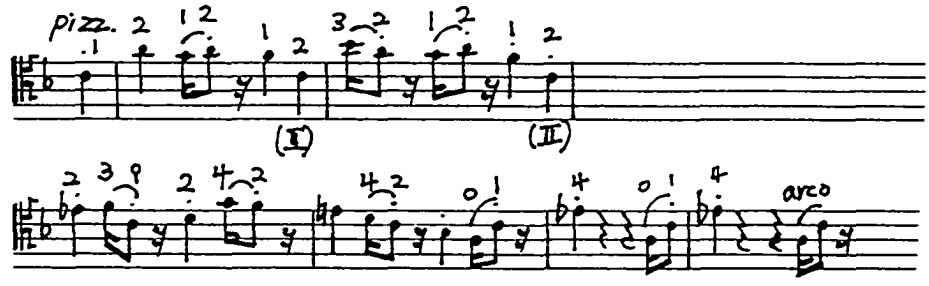


[42]Gendron plays this passage by stopping not by sliding (1964). But it is generally played by sliding, e.g., Maréchal (1930) and Fujiwara (1983).

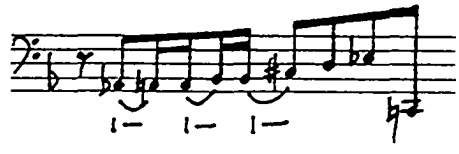
[43]In Peters edition the fingers, 1, 3, 3 (D-E-F), are given for the slurred pizzicato. However, this is executed with 1, 2, 4 generally, by stopping E and F with 2nd and 4th fingers of the left. E. Van der Straeten's notes show how this was played, "Here the first two notes are plucked separately, as also the third note (first grace note d'), while the e and f' sharp are sounded by stopping them quickly and firmly by the second and fourth fingers." Felix Mendelsshon, *Sonata for Violoncello and Piano no. 2 in D major, op. 58,* ed., Ernst Cahnbley (New York: C. F. Peters, n.d.); E. Van der Straeten, *Technics of Violoncello Playing* (London: The Strad Office, E. Donajowski, D.R. Duncan, 1898), 139.

Fig. 2—*Continued.*

b. Brahms Cello Sonata no. 2 in F major, op 99 (*Finale*, mm. 128-34)



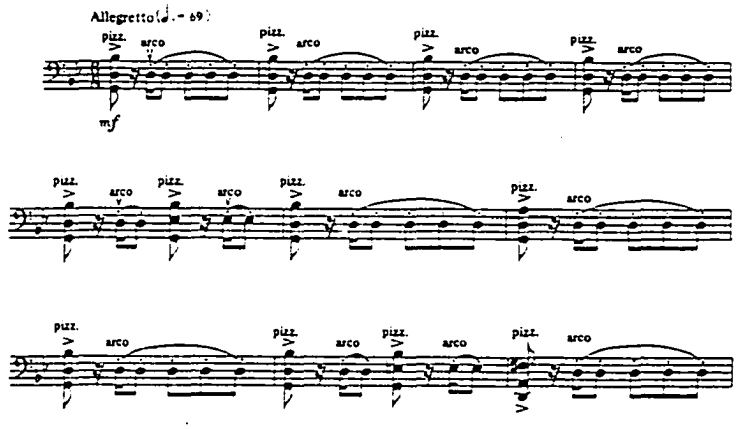
c. Debussy Cello Sonata (*Sérénade*. m. 2)



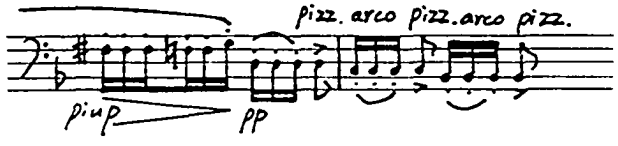
Cesar Cui (1835-1918) includes a mixture of *pizzicato* and *arco* playing in slurred staccato in his "Oriental" from "Kaleidoscope," op. 50, no. 9 (1893). This is quite similar to the mixture used by Debussy in the *Finale* of the Cello Sonata (cf. Fig. 3-a and 3-c).

Fig. 3. Mixture of *Pizzicato* and *Arco*

a. Cui *Orientale Kaleidoscope* op. 50, no. 9 for violoncello and piano (mm. 1-10)[44]



b. Debussy Cello Sonata (*Finale*, mm. 85-6)



The instruction for *pizzicato* became more precise toward the 1840s.[45] In the late 1820s cellist Charles Baudiot wrote that "pizzicato created a good effect on the violoncello and was frequently used by 'modern' composers," and "to achieve a round, soft sound, the string should be plucked with the fleshy part of the finger."[46] In that he also provided a left-hand *pizzicato* played by the second or third finger. By the 1890s cellist E. Van der Straeten added to this:

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[44]César Cui, *Orientale: Kaleidoscope, op. 50, no. 9*, ed., Edmund Kurtz (New York: International Music Company, 1989).

[45]Walden, 203.

[46]Charles Baudiot, *Méthode pour le violoncelle, op. 25*, vol. II (Paris: Pleyel, 1828), 226.

> To make a good pizzicato the strings should be plucked near the end of the fingerboard, but over the latter. This should be done with the tips of the fingers and with the fleshy part. The nails should never be used as the tone which they produce is not agreeable.[47]

Debussy eventually made *pizzicato* popular in composition before the sonata, particularly through the third movement of his String Quartet (1894).[48]

In the *Sérénade* and *Finale* of the Cello Sonata Debussy creates unique moods through the use of various types of *pizzicatos* (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. *Pizzicato* use in the Cello Sonata

i) Contrasting arco with *pizzicato*

arco harmonics followed by *pizzicato*----------*Sérénade*, mm. 8-9
flautando followed by *pizzicato*----------*Sérénade*, mm. 48-51
rapid contrast between slurred *staccato* and *pizzicato*--*Finale*, mm. 85-87

ii) Slurred *pizzicato*----------*Sérénade*, m. 2

iii) sff *pizzicato* with *vibrato*----------*Sérénade*, m. 12

iv) *sf vibrato pizzicato* with *tenuto*----------*Sérénade*, mm. 52-53

v) Combination of different types of *pizzicatos* with dynamics/articulation marks

chordal with single note type---*Finale* (mm.19-34, mm.119-23), marked *dolce sostenuto* with *crescendo* (m.23), *marqué* (m.24, 28)

[47]Straeten, 139.

[48]Debussy's *pizzicato* writing in the quartet may have been influenced by Tchaikovsky's Scherzo movement of the Fourth Symphony. Lockspeiser, *Debussy: His Life and Mind*, vol. I, 51.

The various types of *pizzicatos* used by Debussy in his Cello Sonata had been used in other composers' works. Debussy's indications, however, are more characteristically associated with dynamics and with rhythm. He may have also used *pizzicato* techniques to help portray the Pierrot image. To Vallas the cello in the *Sérénade* "seems to strike the tambourine, to pluck the guitar, to play the flute . . ."[49] Debussy's use of *pizzicato* in this sonata redefined the character of cello playing. As Nichols mentions:

> . . . [Debussy] uses timbre as a structural agent in a way which looks forward to later twentieth-century developments, and specifically in his apportioning of pizzicato: after a first movement in which the cello plays arco throughout, in the second movement (to be mathematical for a moment) some 42 percent of its bars include pizzicato; the last movement (22 per cent) represents a rapprochement between them. Overall, his vision of the cello as a giant guitar moved it decisively and definitively away from its nineteenth-century legato inheritance.[50]

It is essential for performers to experiment with different fingers to produce the characteristic *pizzicato* sounds that Debussy used in this sonata. For the chord in mm. 5-6 and 21-22 of the *Sérénade* I suggest rolling with the thumb and second finger. Here I usually find that the second finger sounds clearer than the first. For the sixteenth notes in the next measure, one can switch to the first finger, and for the last chord in the same measure play with the thumb again. The left hand fingerings for this passage (from the bottom) that I suggest are: 1 (D), 3 (B♭), 2 (E) or 1, 2, 1, and for the following F, use 3 or 2. Eisenberg gives 1, 3, 2 for this chord and slides to the next F (2) with plucking.[51] For the performer who has small fingers, I recommend 1, 3, 2,

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[49]Vallas, *Debussy: His Life and Works*, 262.

[50]Nichols, *The Life of Debussy*, 155.

[51]Eisenberg, 115.

because using the first finger both for the bottom (D) and top (E) would make the sound of the top E unclear. Gendron plays this part using a clear slide.[52] It is not clear that this part should be played with the slide the way he did. There are many players, including Maréchal, who play without sliding, and though there is a slight *tenuto* mark for the top E of the chord, I also prefer to play without sliding.

Sur la touche (Sul Tasto) and Sur le chevalet (Sul Ponticello)

The *sur la touche* instruction in the cello repertoire is first found in the works of Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805) who is held in high esteem in the history of the cello, as a composer and as a cello virtuoso. In 1767 he arrived in Paris, where his works were published. His Paris *début* was made in the following year at the Concert Spirituel series. He also had a connection with Spain where he was employed by Don Luis from 1770 to 1785. After that, the amateur cellist Frederick William II, as his patron, named Boccherini "Composer of Our Chamber." Technically Boccherini is known as one of the first Italians to provide expression in cello virtuosity by using the thumb position in the soprano range.[53] For coloristic sonorities in his quintets (composed in the 1770s) he used not only *sur la touche* and *sur le chevalet* but also some other coloristic devices such as *con sordino,* harmonics, and *pizzicato* (Fig. 5). Moreover, his music uses the sensitive markings of *dolce*, and sometimes *espressivo* and *tenuto*, even "irresistibly

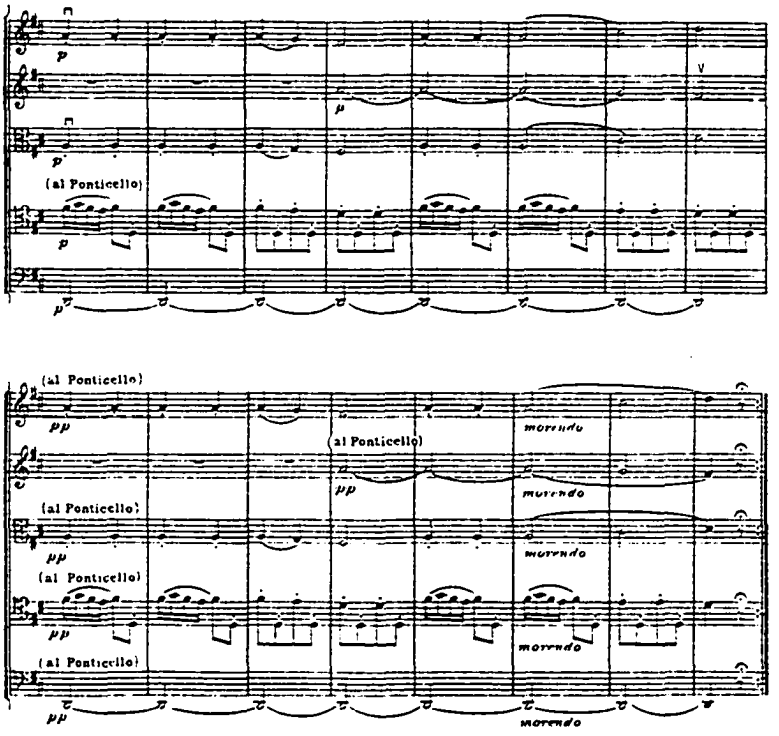
[52]Debussy, *Sonata for Violoncello and Piano*, perf. Gendron, cello; Françaix, piano. 1964.

[53]Margaret Campbell, 54.

happy" along with soft dynamics including *ppp*. In Boccherini's quintets the texture and sensuality of sound is often more important than the themes themselves.[54]

Fig. 5. *Sur le chevalet* and *sur la touche* in Boccherini's Quintets

a. *Sur le chevalet*: String Quintet no. 3 in D major, op. 39 (*Finale*, mm. 152-167)[55]

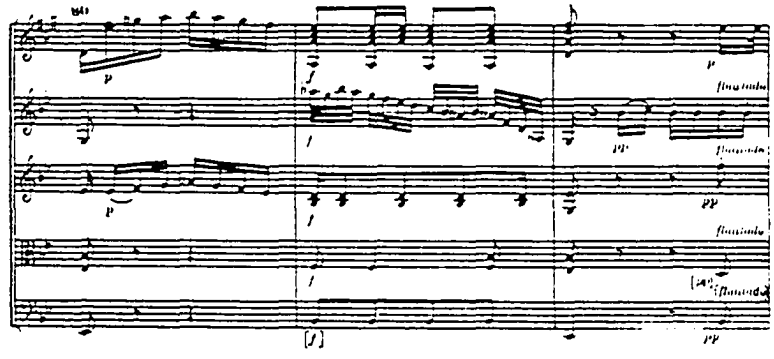


[54]Ibid.

[55]The *Finale* movement is composed with contrasting sounds of *sul ponticello* and normal. It indicates *sul ponticello* five times and ends with it. Notice that it is executed at the piano dynamic level. The opus number cited here is Boccherini's autograph catalogue number (in Ricordi edition, the opus number is no. 2, op. 37). It is originally scored for 2 violins, viola, violoncello and double bass. Luigi Boccherini, *String Quintet no. 2 in D major, op. 37*, in Luigi Boccherini, *6 String Quintets*, miniature score, ed., Enrico Polo (London: G. Ricordi & C. Milano, 1949).

Fig. 5—*Continued.*

b. *Sur la touche*: Guitar Quintet (guitar, 2 violins, viola, and violoncello) no. 3 in B♭ major (First movement, mm.80-82)[56]



Boccherini wrote 125 string quintets, most of which have been published predominantly in editions of differing groups: 110 for two violins, viola and two cellos; twelve for two violins, two violas and one cello; and three for two violins, viola, cello and double bass.[57] His melodies are usually doubled in octaves, in thirds or both, and are not concerned with working out of thematic elements.[58] As compared to the music of the Viennese Classicists Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven in which "one experiences

[56]According to Gérard, the six guitar quintets were transcribed by Boccherini at the end of 1798 from his previous works, with two exceptions, and the third quintet cited here is a complete transcription of a single work. Luigi Boccherini, *Guitar Quintet no. 3 in Bb major*, in *Sei Quintetti Con Chitarra*, LP. 29, ed., Yves Gérard, Le Pupitre *Collection de musique ancienne publiée sous la direction de François Lesure* (Paris: Heugel, 1974).

[57]Ellen Iris Amsterdam, "The String Quintets of Luigi Boccherini" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1969), iii.

[58]Peter Allsop, "Ensemble music: in the chamber and the orchestra," in Robin Stowell, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Cello* (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 165-66.

organic growth of the subject matter," the music of Boccherini creates the effect "of a musical still-life, complete and perfect all at once."[59] It features the Spanish elements of *seguidilla*, *spagnola*, and *fandango*. These are displayed along with varieties of coloristic devices such as *pizzicato, con sordino*, *flautando*, *sul ponticello*, and harmonics.[60] These were well known to Parisians through the violinist Pierre Marie Baillot's (1771-1842) performances. Baillot included Boccherini's works in his cello method (*Méthode de violoncelle*, with Levasseur, Cartel, Baudiot, 1804) published by the Paris Conservatoire. At the end of his life, even though this relationship ended unpleasantly, Boccherini was also acquainted with the Viennese composer and music publisher Ignace Pleyel, who settled in Paris and recognized Boccherini's genius by agreeing to publish all his music.

Notably the French school used *sur le chevalet* "as a special effect for accompaniment that applied only to rapid passages, not to slow phrases."[61] For instance, Romberg employed *sur le chevalet*, using the indication "*alla gamba*" in his Concerto no. 2 in D major, op. 3 composed in Paris writing that this device is particularly effective in variations and similar forms (Fig. 6).[62] The Austrians and Germans also used this in solo contexts. Anton Kraft (1749-1820) employed this technique in his Duet for Violin and Violoncello (op. 3, n.d.) with dynamics.[63] Even though rare at the

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[59]Amsterdam, 82.

[60]Allsop, 165-66.

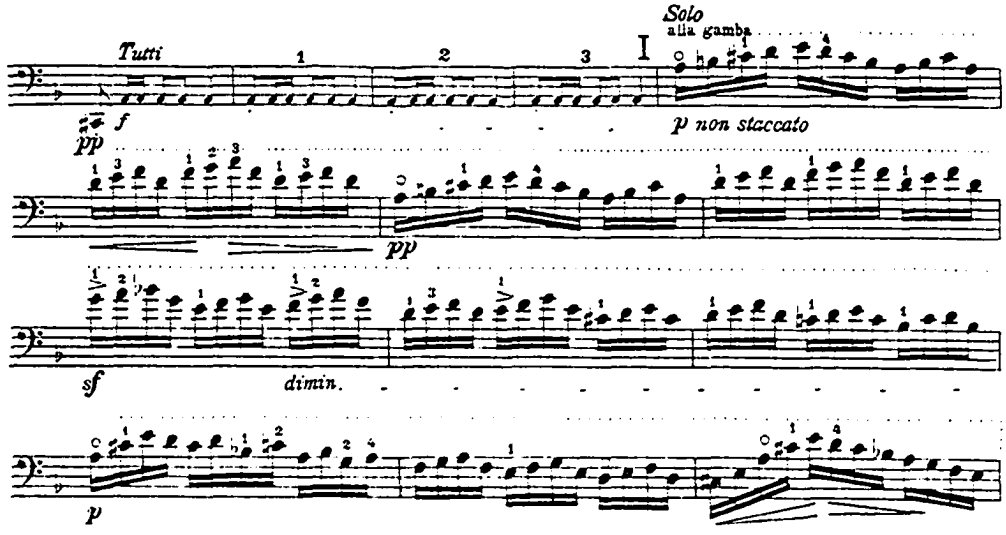
[61]Walden, *One Hundred Years of Violoncello*, 209.

[62]Romberg, 97.

[63]Walden, *One Hundred Years of Violoncello*, 209.

time, Servais also used *sur le chevalet* in the second variation of the fantasia on an aria from Donizetti's *La Fille du Régiment* [n.d.].[64]

Fig. 6. Romberg Concerto no. 2 in D major, op. 3 (Rondo, mm. 165-178)[65]



The *sur la touche* is defined as "a flutelike effect (hence also called *flautando*) produced by bowing over the end of the fingerboard."[66] Boccherini uses *flautando* in the high register, b-f^1, for the violin but not for the cello; rather, he uses *flautando* in the low register for the viola (D) and for the cello (B$\flat$1) (see Fig. 5-b). However, we can hardly expect a flutelike sound in the low register.

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[64]Ginsburg, 47.

[65]Romberg, *Concerto no. 2 in D major, op 3 for cello and piano* (originally for Cello and Orchestra), ed., Leonard Rose (New York: International Music Company, 1960).

[66]Don Michael Randel ed., *The Harvard Dictionary of Music*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986), 106.

Possibly Debussy recognized this and differentiated *flautando* for the high register to create a flute-like effect, and *sur la touche* for the low register (see Fig. 7). However, these devices are no longer limited to accompanimental effects. For Debussy these color differences were crucial to the structure of the work.

Fig. 7. *Sur la touche* and *Sur le chevalet* use in the Cello Sonata

i) *Sul tasto* (*sur la touche*)----------*Prologue*, mm. 21-27 (G_1–C), and m. 47 (C_1–E_1)
Sérénade, mm. 12-14 (G♯-c♯), mm. 44-47 (F_1–B♭), and m. 56 (C♯-e)
Finale, mm. 69-76 (E_1-f♯)

ii) *Flautando* ----------*Sérénade*, mm. 48-49, and 50-51(b - f^1)

iii) *Sul ponticello* (*sur le chevalet)* -------*Finale*, mm. 39-41(D_1-d) and 77 (D)

In the *Finale*, during the rapid *spiccato* section (mm. 19-84), Debussy uses *sur la touche* (m. 69) and *sur le chevalet* (m. 77) consecutively, and at m. 79 goes back to "normal" sound. Thus all three colors of sounds are contrasted with each other. Moreover, Debussy creates an extremely modern sound by adding a *crescendo* to the *sur le chevalet*.

For the performer it is important to know how to produce the color of Debussy's evocative sounds, not the "real" sound that we expect in Brahms' sonatas. Debussy's sound requires one to play close to the fingerboard with less bow pressure and on the side of the bow hair with a completely relaxed, well-balanced bow arm at the correct angle to the string. Debussy's use of these coloristic devices hints at the fact that

Debussy's interest was not in a fundamental tone that is obviously heard, but in the overtones above the fundamental. Debussy was highly sensitive to sonority:

> . . . [What] Debussy insisted upon was the proper way to strike a note on the piano. 'It must be struck in a peculiar way,' he would say, 'otherwise the sympathetic vibrations of the other notes will not be heard quivering distantly in the air.'
>
> Debussy regarded the piano as the Balinese musicians regard their gamelan orchestras. He was interested not so much in the single tone that was obviously heard when a note was struck, as in the patterns of resonance which that tone set up around itself. Many of his pieces are built entirely on this acoustical sense of the piano. Played badly, without a consciousness of the fine, almost inaudible, background of overtones, they are mere skeletons. The warm, indefinable, sensitive, inner beauty---the real quality of Debussy---is totally lacking.
>
> One cannot make up for this bareness by thick, gushy pedaling. One cannot substitute for this exquisite and evocative charm, double tempos, hasty phrases, or erratic interpretations. One must learn to play Debussy's music as he played it himself, striking each note as though it were a bell, listening always for the hovering clusters of vibrating overtones above and below it.[67]

This interest in overtones makes it imperative for the cellist to master the coloristic devices that Debussy includes.

Portamento

Debussy also made calculated use of the *portamento*. In 1898 Straeten defined *glissando* and *portamento* and warned against their abuse:

> Both [the glissando and *portamento*] consist in connecting two slurred notes with each other, and they are practically one and the same, except that the term "*portamento*" applies to a more deliberate way of sliding from one note to another, than that which is implied by the former term.
>
> The *portamento* is a favorite ornamentation with singers, and the effect is very beautiful if applied sparingly, and with discrimination.

[67]Nichols, *Debussy Remembered*, 171.

> Its abuse gives a whining effect which becomes irritating, and even intolerable.[68]

Romberg, Justus Johann Friedrich Dotzauer (1783-1860), and Friedrich August Kummer (1797-1879) viewed it as an emotional enhancement. However, in the early part of the twentieth century the *portamento* was made frequently not only for musical expression but also for the performer's convenience, allowing them to slide great distances from one note to another. Fingerings were often left to the performer's taste and judgment. Both violinists and cellists use the *portamento*, or 'slide'. On both instruments, "The rules governing the 'slide' are not restricted, as its use and effect depend upon the judgement of the player."[69] However, the slide occurs on the cello more often than on the violin, due to its larger size and more numerous changes of position.[70]

Pablo Casals greatly influenced the use of *portamento*. Carl Flesch (1873-1944), who played with him, remarked:

> Casals in practice showed his colleagues the difference between unavoidable and only technical glissando, and expressive and necessary glissando..That's why, thanks to Casals, contemporary cellists give musicians more artistic satisfaction than ever before. Their playing is less whining, more flexible, less sentimental and more pure.[71]

Casals also created fingering exercises with Diran Alexanian, in order to extend the distance between the second and third fingers that might reduce the undesirable slides:

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[68]Straeten, 136-37.

[69]Olga Racster, "Slide," *Grove*, II, 1904-10, iv, 482.

[70]Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, 143.

[71]C. Flesch, "A propos de Pablo Casals," *Le Monde musica*, 1937, Nos. 8-9, quoted in Ginsburg, 161-62.

> It is also only experience that will teach him how to diminish, for the ear, the disagreeable effect caused by certain fingerings that are contrary to the rhythm, but that one has to adopt owing to the necessity of accepting as the point of departure of a scale (or portion of a scale) the position on the string and the finger that are forced upon one by the preceding passage.[72]

The frequency of performers' sliding has been reduced greatly, followed by technical developments and musical taste from Casals. For instance, in the recordings of the second movement of the Elgar Cello Concerto (mm. 1-26) the number of slides diminishes: Squire slides 23 times (1930); Harrison slides 16 times (1928); and Casals slides 10 times (1945).[73]

As we see above, the approach to *portamento* has changed along with performers' musical tastes and fingering techniques. Debussy, however, used *portamento* deliberately as a musical expression and specifically marked where *portamento* should be employed. Precisely indicated *portamento*, either by a word ("*portamento*" or "*glissando*") or by a connecting line, was found in the music of early twentieth-century composers. These *portamento* indications are generally categorized into two types: 1) the conventional, sparsely indicated type, from the nineteenth-century tradition (Brahms, Wagner, Tchaikovsky, Verdi, Elgar, Mahler), and 2) the "fantasy portamento," so named by Flesch, coming from Hungarian Gypsy music and from Jazz (Bartók and Ravel).[74] The *portamento* used in Debussy's Cello Sonata belongs to the "fantasy" type and is used in dance-like or folk-influenced passages, usually with overt *f* dynamics and *crescendos* that were probably models for Bartók's use of this technique. It seems that

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[72]Alexanian, 66.

[73]Philip, "1900-1940," in Howard Mayer Brown and Stanley Sadie, eds., *Performance Practice Music After 1600*, 466.

[74]Idem, *Early Recordings and Musical Style*, 152-53.

Debussy was the first composer to use this kind of *portamento* with strong dynamics (Fig. 8).

Fig. 8. *Portamento* use in the Cello Sonata

Prologue--------m. 29, in the *forte* for the climax

Sérénade--------mm. 16, in the *crescendo* from A string to D string
mm. 23, 24, mf *crescendo* played by slurred *pizzicato*
mm. 56, 57, *diminuendo* to *staccato* bowing with string crossings from D to G, and G to C

Finale----------mm. 50, 52 with *molto crescendo*
mm. 105 *crescendo*

As we see from Figure 8, Debussy used *portamento* in a musical context very freely, most often with *crescendos*, and with one *decrescendo* as well as a slurred *pizzicato*. In the *Prologue* Debussy enhances a passage by using a *portamento* at the climax of the movement with a *forte crescendo*. In the *Sérénade* his use of *portamento* appears more varied than in the other two movements. It is executed not only with *arco* but also with slurred *pizzicato* within *crescendo* and *diminuendo* dynamics. Moreover, he combines it with string crossings and *staccato* bowing. In the *Finale* the *portamento* enhances the mood with *crescendo*. Particularly the one in mm. 50 and 52, with a *molto crescendo* in upward motion and with its consecutive appearance, elevates the mood more intensely (E♭-G♭, m. 50; F-A♭, m. 52) and leads to the following climatic cello melody in mm. 53-56.

Harmonics

According to Rousseau, the appearance of the natural harmonics in the violoncello repertoire began in the mid-eighteenth century with Berteau Martin (1700-1771), a founder of the French school of cello playing.[75] In his *Essai* Jean Louis Duport (1749-1819), who was nicknamed the "Viotti of the cello," discussed both natural and artificial harmonics.[76] Moreover, J. L. Duport developed the variants of harmonics. He mixed harmonics with other tones and used them alternately. Furthermore, he introduced a third species of harmonic by bending the string from right to left, and playing whole passages in this manner, producing a fascinating effect.[77] In his op. 3 concerto, Romberg, who taught at the Paris Conservatoire from 1801 to 1807, employed not only natural but also artificial harmonics (Fig. 9). Moreover, Romberg, in his Op. 44 concerto entitled *A Picture of Switzerland* (composed in Moscow in 1811), used natural harmonics to describe the sound of Swiss cow bells.[78] Later, however, Romberg criticized Paganini's abundant use of harmonics after hearing him in Italy in 1820, saying that harmonics "possess a peculiar charm where tastefully managed, but they

[75]Walden, *One Hundred Years of Violoncello*, 194.

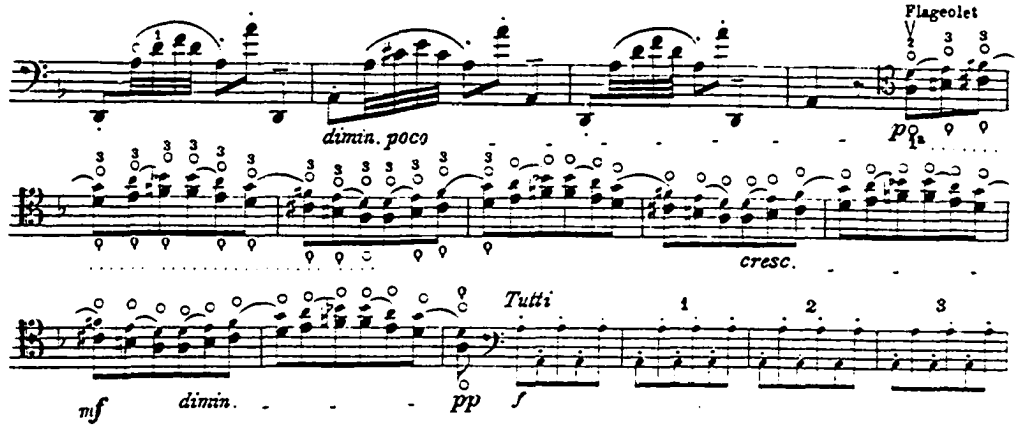
[76]J.L. Duport's elder brother, Jean-Pierre Duport (1741-1818) was one of Berteau's outstanding students. He taught Frederick William II and met both Mozart and Beethoven. Mozart's last three quartets, called *Prussian Quartets* or *Cello Quartets* (K. 575 in 1789; K. 589 and K. 590 in 1790), were dedicated to King Frederick William II. Mozart's piano variations K. 573 were based on a minuet by Duport. Beethoven's two early cello sonatas, op. 5 (1796) were written for J.P. Duport but dedicated to King Frederick William II. Duport played the sonatas with the composer at the court. Jean-Louis Duport, *Essai sur le doigté du violoncelle, et sur la conduite de l'archet* (Paris: Janet Cotelle, 1806), 54.

[77]Romberg, 73.

[78]Walden, *One Hundred Years of Violoncello*, 200.

should be considered as musical *Bonbons*, and used sparingly, or the ear will soon tire of them."[79]

Fig. 9. Romberg Concerto no. 2 in D major, op. 3 (Rondo, mm. 185-199)[80]



After Romberg, cellists used *harmonics* in their works more frequently as a standard device and discussed them in their methods in order to improve execution. Alexanian explains *harmonics* precisely and even presents six species of artificial *harmonics* in the thumb position. Moreover, he creates exercises for both natural and artificial *harmonics*.[81] These exercises are helpful in knowing how to produce *harmonics* in all positions on the cello.

In his cello sonata, Debussy used both natural and artificial *harmonics* in the *Prologue* and *Sérénade* (Fig. 10).

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[79]Romberg, 73.

[80]Idem, *Concerto no. 2 in D major, op 3 for cello and piano*, ed. Leonard Rose.

[81]Alexanian, 165-172.

Fig. 10. *Harmonics* use in the Cello Sonata

Prologue----------mm. 50-51, natural harmonics in *ppp* at the end of the movement

Sérénade----------mm. 8-9, employing artificial harmonics and *pizzicato*

For these *harmonics* the performer needs to experiment with bow-placement on the strings and less pressure on the bow to create a clear but thin sonority and better reverberation of the strings. Moreover, the natural *harmonics* in the *Prologue* can be produced in a high or low position. The performer can choose either position by determining which feels most comfortable and makes a better sound. The *harmonics* of the *Sérénade* are artificial *harmonics*; however, for this part, there is not enough time to position the thumb and third finger as we normally do for generating artificial *harmonics*. The same pitch can be produced by lightly touching the E in the fourth position on the A string like a natural *harmonics*. Being able to generate *harmonics* that match the required pitch with ease is a most valuable technique.

Spiccato Bowing

Spring bowings, such as *spiccato* and *sautillé*, appeared in the French school in the late1820s, and Baudiot was one of the first violoncellists who mentioned such bowings.[82] Alexanian explains the differences between these two bowings:

> Do not let us make the common mistake of uniting under the same name two different kinds of bowing, that have in common only the

[82]Walden, "Technique, Style and Performing Practice to c. 1900," in Robin Stowell, ed., *Cello*, 191; Idem, *One Hundred years of Violoncello*, 174.

> principle of the rebounding of the hairs from the string. The "*spiccato*" is a fluttering of the bow, light, rapid and dainty. . . .
>
> The "*spiccato*" can be obtained only by means of a "putting in action," a "launching" of the bow. It proceeds really from centrifugal force, and the speed acquired has a great deal to do with the equilibrium of its regularity: thus, in order to stop it or to slow it down, a special and indispensable effort is required. . . . The momentum of the "*saltellato*" is not, like the "*spiccato*," the result of a "launching" of the bow with a continuous adherence of the hairs to the string; but on the contrary, consists in a fairly heavy fall of these hairs, that are at once thrown back to their original position, above the strings. . . . The resulting rebounds are much more clearly defined than in the "*spiccato*," and the acoustic effect is therefore much coarser.[83]

Servais, who was nicknamed the "Paganini of the cello," also used these bowings along with other types of "spring bowings."[84] Ginsburg writes that "light 'jumping' *sautillé* strokes and the flying *spiccato* can be found in almost all of Servais' fantasias."[85] These spring bowings were a well-known feature of Belgian technique by the mid-nineteenth century.

In the *Finale* of the Cello Sonata (mm. 69-85) Debussy writes a large *spiccato* section. This section is filled with other colorful devices such as *sur la touche* and *sul ponticello*, along with changes in dynamics and register. The performer has to be cautious about color changes and place the bow correctly on the string for the right sound. For instance, for the higher register it sounds better when the bow is close to the bridge and the pressure is light. For measures 81-85, where the performer leaps from

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[83]Alexanian, 203.

[84]In 1844, when Servais appeared in Berlin with conductor Felix Mendelssohn, a Berlin paper called Servais "the Paganini of the cello."

Hector Berlioz also wrote, "In the second concert we discovered a first class talent, of Paganini's standing, which amazes, touches and fascinates by its courage, flights of feeling and vehemence: I am speaking of the great violoncellist Servais..." Ginsburg, 34.

[85]Ibid., 47.

one register to another, correct bow placement is essential. Eisenberg writes about this section:

> In spiccato, the tone will only be clear in the upper registers if the bow cuts across the string nearer to the bridge and points more sharply towards the ground than when playing in the first or second positions. Players have, therefore, to be constantly on the alert, to make sure that the tone is "focused". When going up or down a scale passage, this is a matter of gradual adjustment, mainly affecting the arm and shoulder muscles; the infinitesimal alterations in the wrist and finger action usually follow naturally, without much effort. The problem becomes more acute, however, when sudden leaps are involved, as in the Finale of the Debussy Sonata.
>
> Swift, if slight, manipulations of the hand unit will be needed, because the bow will have to be turned immediately, either to slope downwards as the left hand is shifted to a higher register, or to be straightened as the fingers are brought back to a lower position.
>
> To gain proficiency in these leaps, players should work at exercises jumping from one register to another . . . [86]

Throughout this chapter we have seen that coloristic techniques have been cultivated mostly in cellist-composers' works, particularly those by Boccherini, Romberg, and Servais. Their techniques and experiments with coloristic devices greatly influenced other composers' writings for cello. Boccherini's use of delicate expressions of *dolce*, *expressivo* and *tenuto*, his preference for soft dynamics, his interest in colors rather than developing themes, and his use of the coloristic devices *con sordino*, *sul tasto*, *sul ponticello*, and harmonics are similar to those seen in Debussy's sonata. Moreover, Boccherini also developed cello technique in high registers. Romberg's works had a great teaching value in the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. In 1911 his cello concertos were featured for the program of the cello competition dedicated to the fiftieth anniversary of the Russian Music Society. His extensive use of harmonics greatly influenced the next generation

[86]Eisenberg, 44.

of composers, and his modifications of the cello, such as flattening the right-side of the fingerboard in order to facilitate the use of the low register and lengthening the fingerboard, made the instrument a more brilliant solo instrument. Servais's innovative use of techniques including *sautillé* and *spiccato* bowings, "sugary *vibratos*," coloristic techniques, harmonics, and the combination of *arco* and *pizzicato* contributed to the expanding palette of cello sounds.

Debussy used these various coloristic devices, transformed them from conventional use into a more modern use, and thereby influenced the next generation of composers. His sensitivity to colors appears in his delicate changes of dynamics, abruptly changing registers, and original expressive indications such as *dolce*, *volubile*, *ironique*, *fantasque et léger*, *léger et nerveux*, *très serré*, *lusingando*, and *estinto*. All these enhance his colors and timbres to create rich panoply of unique sounds. Moreover, in light of his preference for overtone sounds in the piano, performers should be attentive to these sounds in the cello also. For all of Debussy's characteristic sounds, performers need to experiment with the techniques. I have suggested only a few ways here. The experimentation ultimately depends on performer's taste and techniques, through the use of a variety of fingerings, correct bow placement on the string, and a well-balanced, relaxed bow arm. Furthermore, for his abrupt changes of moods, rhythmic freedom, and fluctuation of time, performers should consider how to execute these naturally. To do this, one needs a thorough understanding of the work as a means for discovering its inner sense of movement.

APPENDIXES

1. Summary of Formal Analysis of the Cello Sonata

2. Range of the Motives

This graph shows the ranges of the motives along with their registers.

3. Changes of Register

This graph illustrates the abrupt changes of register used to emphasize structure in the sonata.

Piano's Right Hand: ▬▬▬▬▬▬

Piano's Left Hand or Bass: ▬▬▬▬

Cello: ▬▬▬▬

Connecting two short notes: ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪

4. Overall Structure Graph of the *Finale*

The *Finale* uses a variety of coloristic devices more than the other two movements. This graph shows the relationship of the elements listed.

Range: The extent of the pitches used for each section or part.
White and black notes indicate the outer limits of the cello and piano.

Motives: Motives used in the *Finale*.

Texture: The texture of the cello and piano indicated as four types:

Coloristic Devices: All coloristic devices used in the score.

Dynamics: Sound intensity indicated in the score:

estinto *pp* *p* *mf* *f* *sf* *ff* *sff* *fff*

Tempo: Tempo indications as in the score.

Key signature: Key signatures as in the score.

APPENDIX I

SUMMARY OF FORMAL ANALYSIS OF THE CELLO SONATA

Prologue

Main Section	Subsections	Phrase Structure	Motives
Introduction (mm. 1-7)		2 + 2 (piano) elides into 4 measures of the cello	*a* (mm. 1-2, piano) *b* (mm. 4-5, cello)
A (mm. 8-15)		4 + 4 in the cello	*c* (mm. 8-9, cello)
B (mm. 16-38)	Part 1 (mm. 16-20)	2 + 2½	*d* (mm. 16-17, cello)
	Part 2 (mm. 21-28)	3 + 5 (2 + 3)	cello ostinato figures come from motive *c* (A-F-E)
	Part 3 (mm. 29-36)	4 (2 + 2) + 2 + 2 extension	combination of motives, *a* (mm. 29-30, cello) and *b* (m. 31, cello)
	Retransition (mm. 36-38)		comes from motive *b*
A′ (mm. 39-44)		4 + 2	*c* (mm. 39-44)
Coda (mm. 45-51)		2 + 5	*a* (mm. 45-51)

Sérénade

Main Sections	Subsections	Phrase Structure	Motives
Introduction (mm. 1-2)			Introductory material (mm. 1-2, cello) comes from the *Prologue*
A (mm. 3-30)	Part 1 (mm. 3-11)	2 + 2 + 1 + 2 + 2	*e* (mm. 3-4, cello) *f* (mm. 5-6, cello)
	Part 2 (mm. 12-18)	3 + 3 + 2	come from motives *e* and *f* (cello and piano) : whole-tone, chromatic and tritone
	Part 3 (mm. 19-27)	2 + 2 + 2 + 1 + 2	*e* (mm. 19-20) and *f* (mm. 21-22)
	Transition (mm. 28-30)		*g*
B (mm. 31-53)	Part 1 (mm. 31-43)	6 (2 + 2 + 2) + 4 (2 + 2) + 3	*g* (mm. 31-32, cello come form mm. 28-30 of transition
	Part 2 (mm. 44-53)	4 (2 + 2) + 4 (2 + 2) + 2 extension	*g* (mm. 44-45, cello)
A′ (mm. 54-64)	Transition to the *Finale* (mm. 59-64)	2 + 3 (2 + 2 +1) + 6 (4 (2 + 2) + 2)	*e* (mm. 54-55) and *f* (mm. 56-57)

Finale

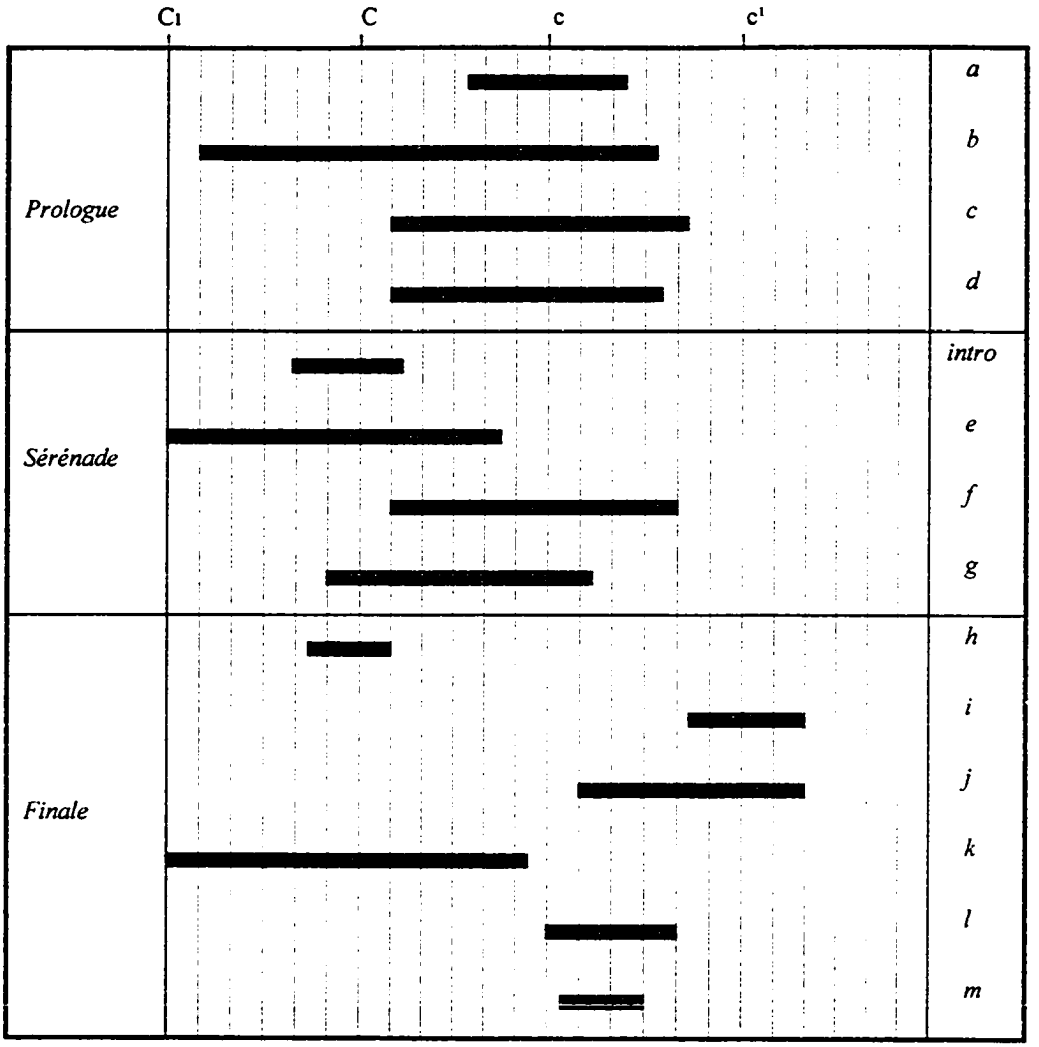
Main Sections	Subsections	Phrase Structure	Motives
A (mm. 1-37:1)	Part 1 (mm. 1-14)	6 ½ (2 measures in the piano elide into 4 ½ cello melody) + 7 ½	*h* (mm. 1-3:1, D-C-B♭-A) and *i* (mm. 7:2-10, cello)
	Part 2 (mm. 15-22)	4 + 4	*j* (mm. 15-16, cello)
	Part 3 (mm. 23-37:1)		
	i (mm. 23-28)	6 (4 (2 + 2) + 2)	*k* (mm. 23-24)
	ii (mm. 29-37:1)	6 (4 (2 + 2) + 2) + 2 ½	
B (mm. 37:2-85:1)	Part 1 (mm. 37:2-44)	4 ½ (2 measures in the piano elide into 2 ½ cello melody) + 3 ½	*h'* (C-B♭-A♭-G appear in the bass, along with motive *h*, *i'* (mm. 41:2-44) in the cello
	Part 2 (mm. 45-56)	4 + 4 + 4	*l* (mm. 45-48, cello transformation of motive *i*) *m* (mm. 49-50, cello) *l '*(mm. 53-56, cello)
	Part 3 (mm. 57-68)	6 + 6	*m '* (mm. 57-62, cello, mm. 63-68, piano) and piano's ostinato figurations
	Transition (mm. 69-85:1)	4 + 4 + 4 + 5 ½	

Finale—Continued.

A´ (mm. 85:2-114)	Part 1 (mm. 85:2-95)	5 (2 measures in the piano elide into 3 ½ cello melody) + 5 ½	*h* and *i*
	Part 2 (mm. 96-103)	4 + 4	*j*
	Part 3 (mm. 104-114)	8 (2 + 4 + 2 measures extension for the cello and 4 (2 + 2) + 4 (2 + 2) for the piano + 3	combination of motives *m* and *l* in the cello
Coda (mm. 115-123)	mm. 115-118	4 +	mm. 115-118 (cello) comes from the element of *Prologue*, mm. 31-32
	mm. 119-123	5	*h* appears as D♭ instead of D♮

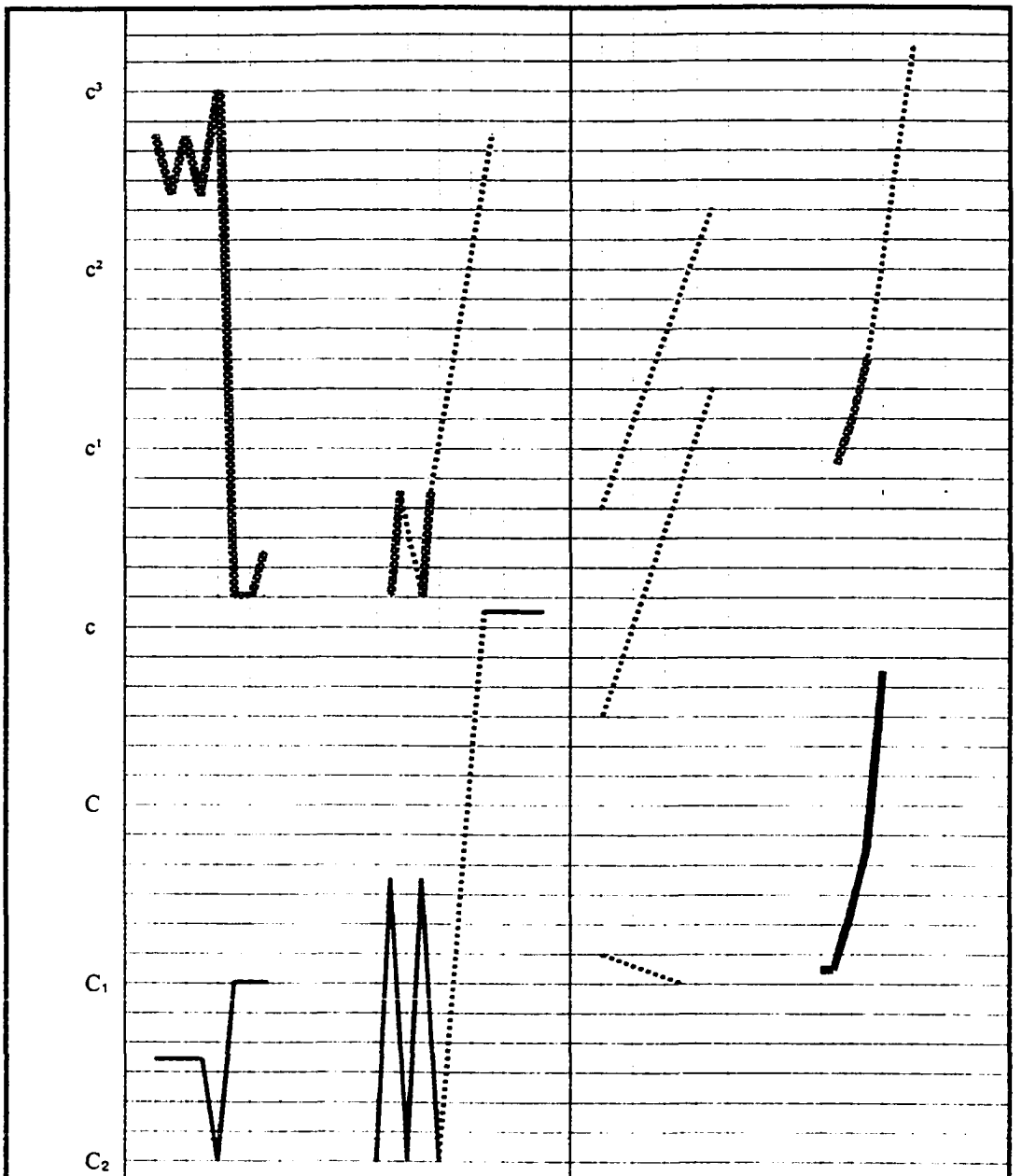
APPENDIX II

RANGE OF THE MOTIVES



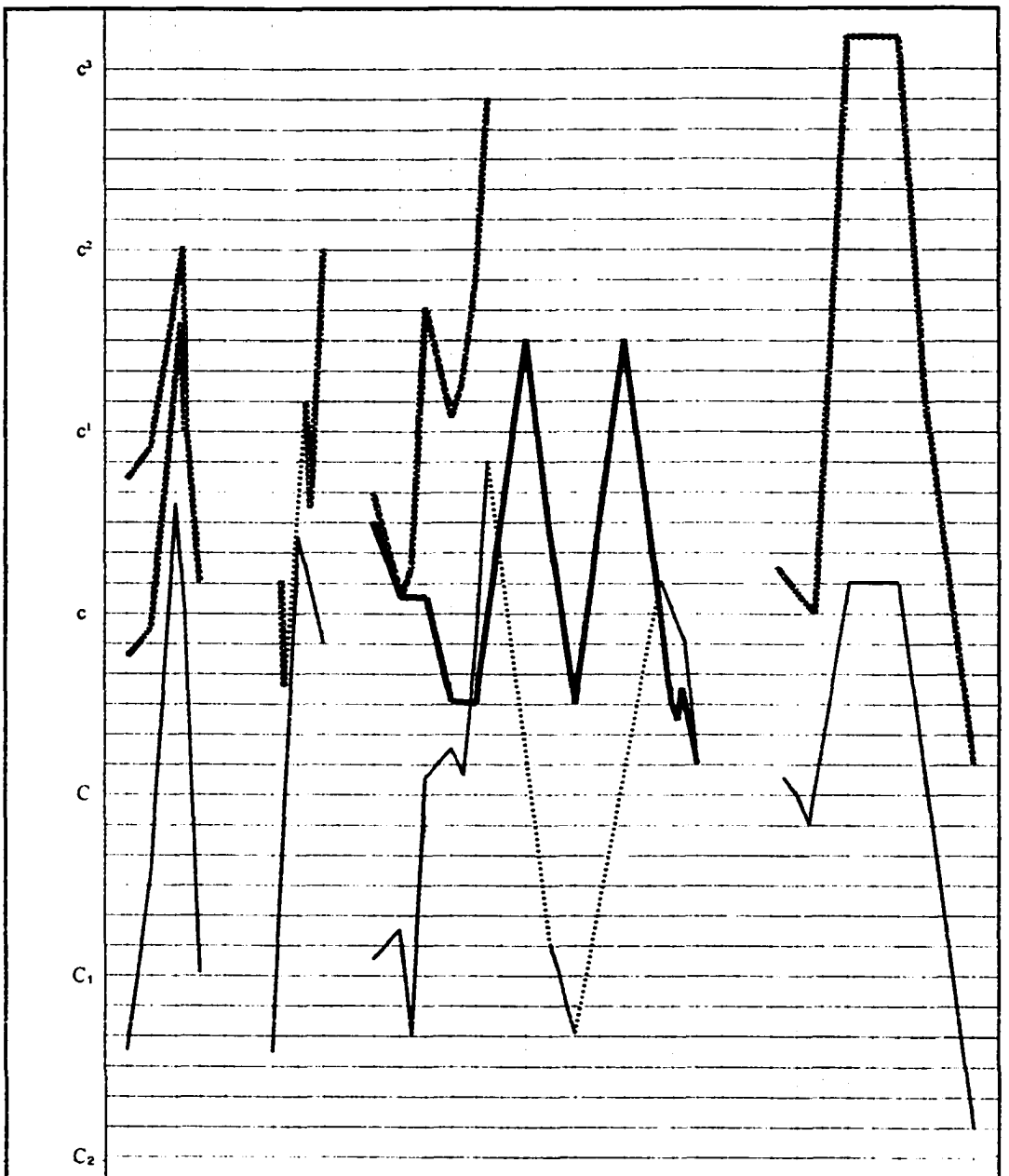
APPENDIX III

CHANGES OF REGISTER



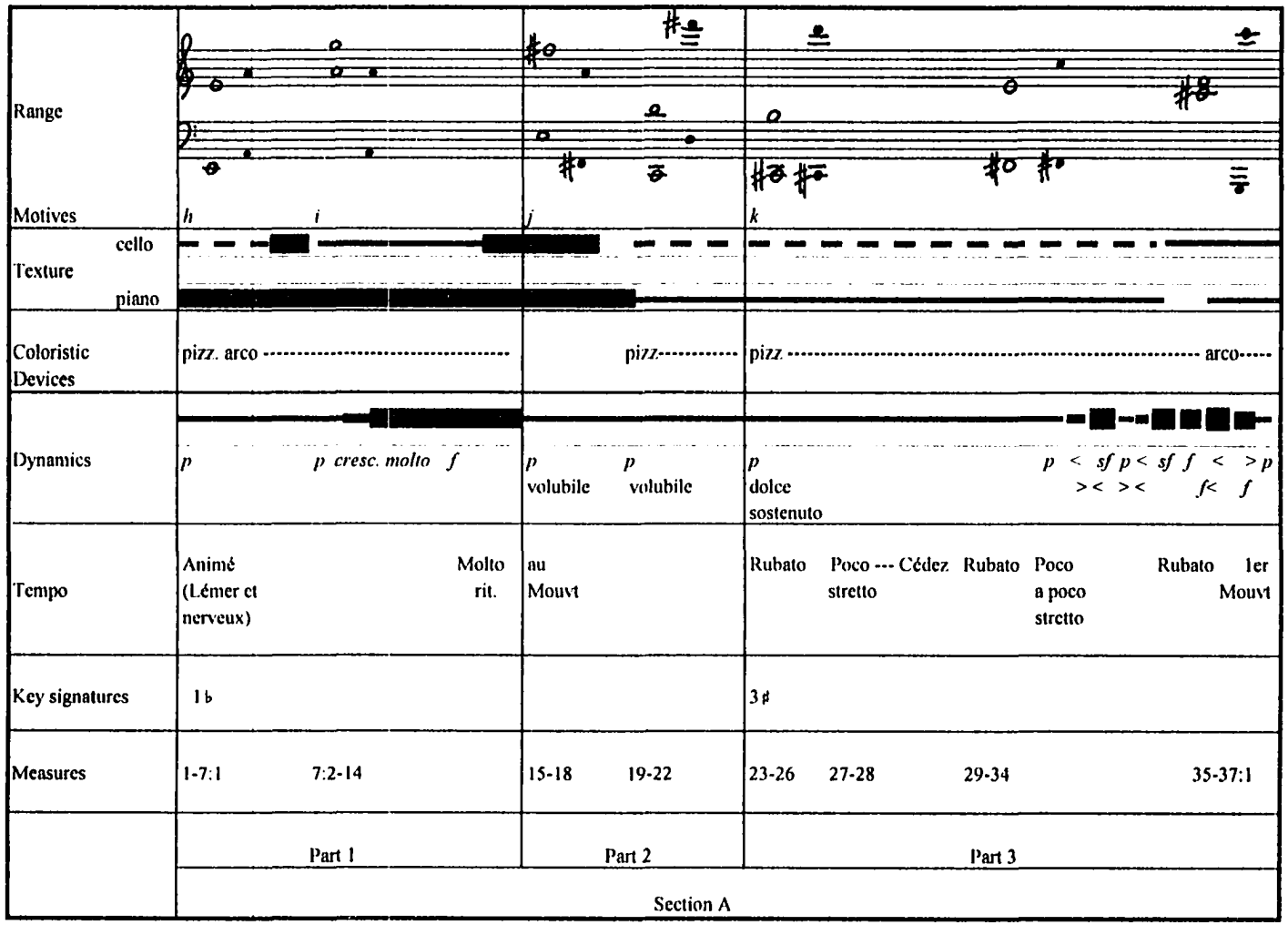
Measures	28 29	35 36	17 18	58 59
Event	Climax	Retransition	Second appearance of motive *e*	Transition to the *Finale*
Movement	*Prologue*		*Sérénade*	

Appendix III--*Continued*.

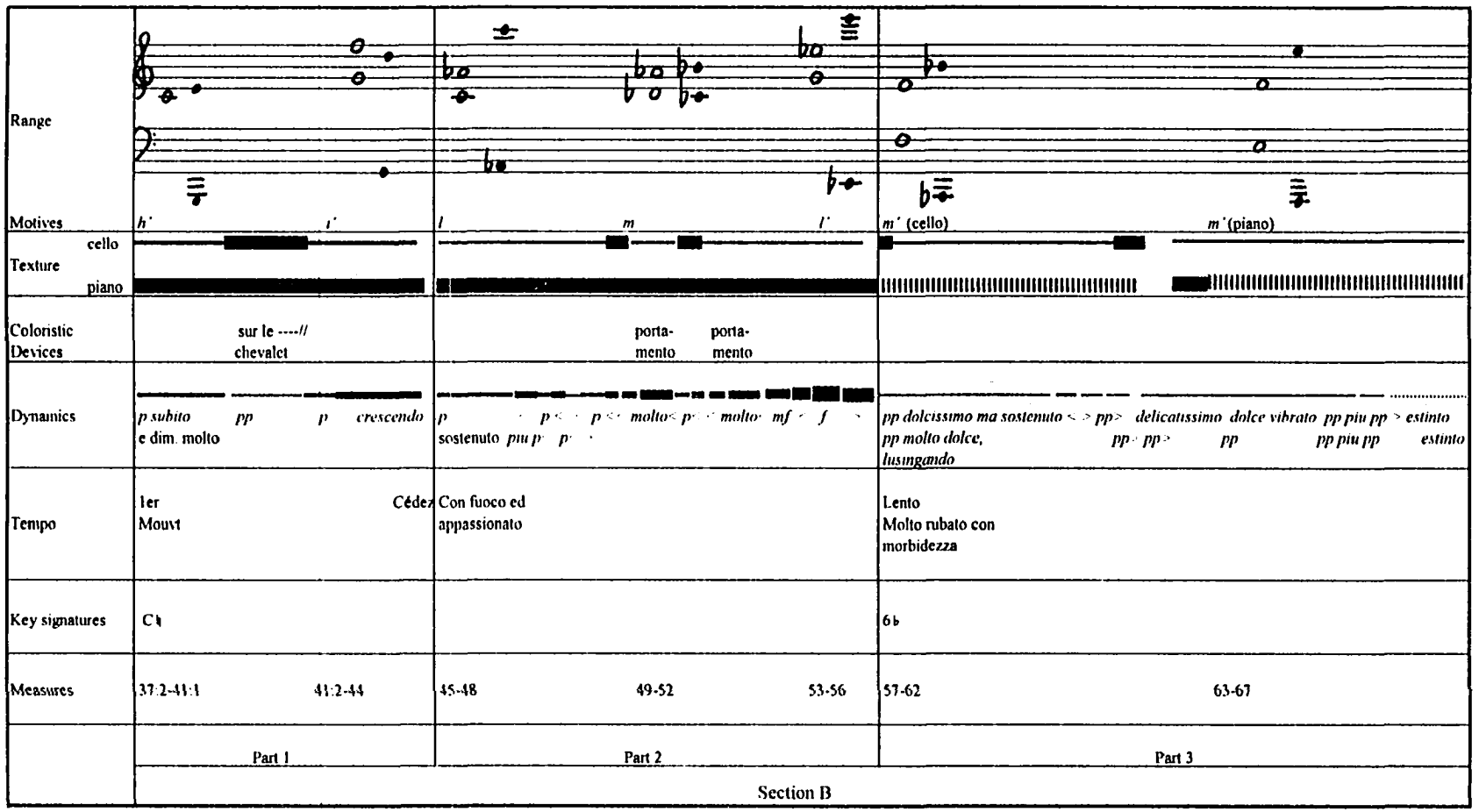


APPENDIX IV

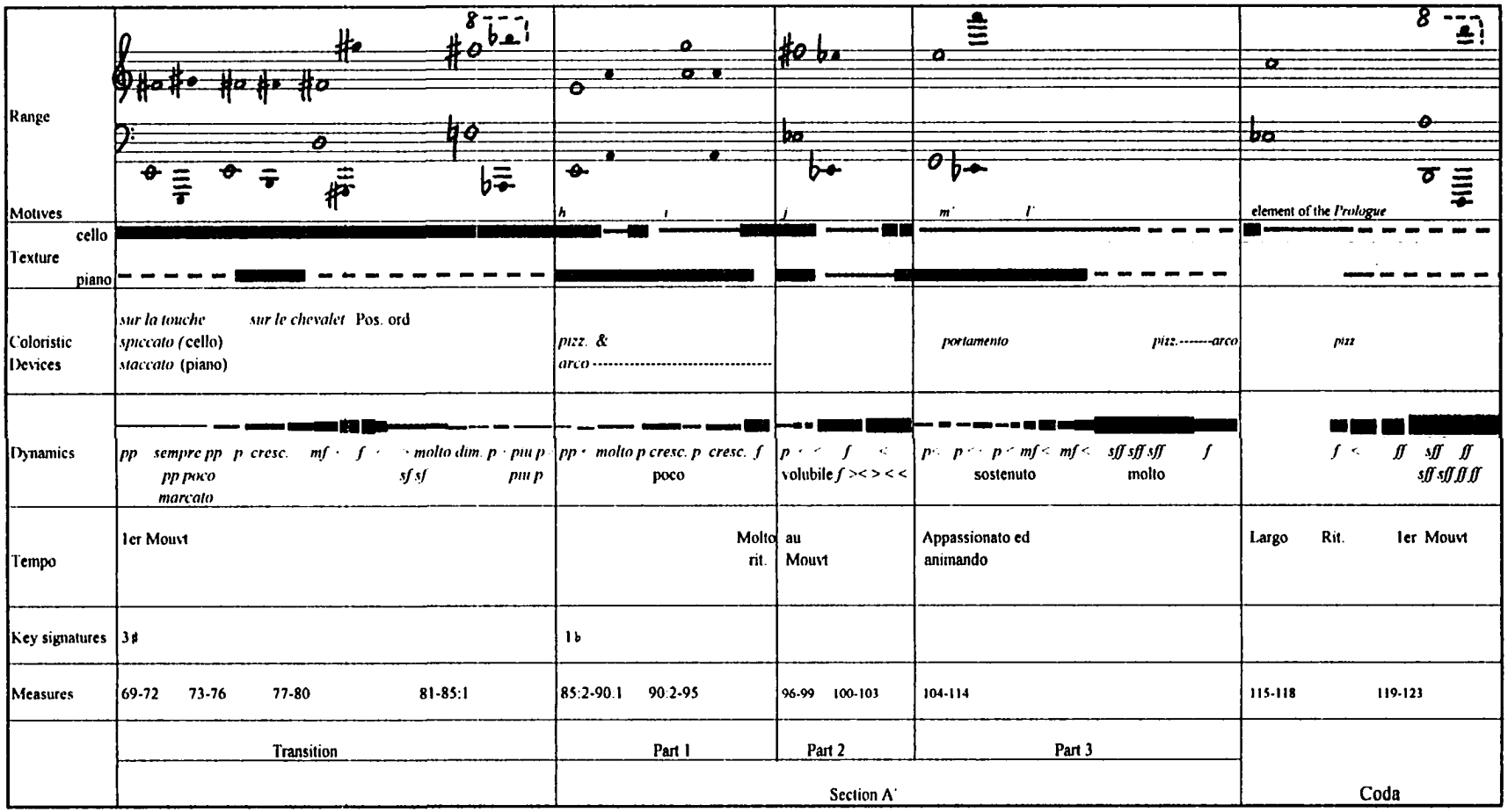
OVERALL STRUCTURE GRAPH OF THE FINALE



Appendix IV--*Continued*.



Appendix IV--*Continued.*



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