POLYPHONIC HARMONY IN THREE OF FERRUCCIO BUSONI’S
ORCHESTRAL ELEGIES

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This dissertation focuses on three of Busoni’s late orchestral works known as “orchestral elegies”: *Berceuse élégiaque* (Elegie no. 1, 1909), *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister* (Elegie no. 4, 1915), and *Sarabande* (Elegie no. 5, 1918-19). The study seeks to provide a better understanding of Busoni’s late style as a crucial bridge from late nineteenth-century chromaticism in the works of Liszt, Wagner, and others to the post-tonal languages of the twentieth century. At the heart of this study lies a particular concept that forms the basis of many characteristic features of Busoni’s late style, namely the concept of polyphonic harmony, or harmony as a cumulative result of independent melodic lines. This concept is also related to a technique of orchestration in which the collective harmony is sounded in such a way that the individual voices are distinct. In the highly personal tonal language of Busoni’s late works, passages often consist of a web of motives weaved throughout the voices at the surface level of the music. Linear analysis provides a means of unravelling the dense fabric of voices and illustrating the underlying harmonic progressions, which most often consist of parallel, primarily semitonal, progressions of tertian sonorities. Chapter 1 provides a backdrop for this study, including a brief summary of Busoni’s ideas on the aesthetics of music and a summary of his influence and development as a composer. Chapter 2 addresses the concept of polyphonic harmony in more detail, some theoretical ideas related to it, and characteristics of Busoni’s late style that reflect this concept. Chapter 3 is dedicated to analytical methodology, addressing concepts which emerge from various linear approaches to the analysis of some twentieth-century music. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 are each dedicated to a specific work, the purpose being to illuminate through linear analysis.
compositional characteristics and techniques related to the concept of polyphonic harmony, including the flexibility between the melodic and harmonic realms, chord misalignment, overlap, and superposition.
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Colin Davis
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Busoni as Composer

*Busoni has been called the prophet of the new music. A better description would be its conscience.*

Willi Schuh

Ferruccio Busoni (1866–1924) is a complicated figure in music history, sometimes painted as a staunch advocate for new music, at other times as too conservative in his own compositions. Reconciling the author of *Entwurf einer neuen Ästhetik der Tonkunst* (1907), a progressive vision of modern music that Schoenberg annotated, Varèse championed, and Pfitzner ranted against, with the proponent of the idea of “young classicism,” or a strong belief in the value of past musical experiments, is a seeming contradiction that music historians have sought to clarify.\(^1\) Perhaps his greatest appeal is that he is not so clear cut a historical personage. In the early twentieth century, at a time when many composers sought to break from tradition and discover new ways of musical organization amidst the breakdown of tonality, Busoni represented a middle ground, drawing upon the spirit and traditions of past music expanded, transformed, and combined with newer, experimental music.

Busoni was a polymath, fully engaged in numerous areas of artistic discourse. Apart from his influential writings on musical aesthetics, he was a highly regarded concert pianist. At the

height of his career in the early part of the twentieth century, he was known among the general public from New York to Paris to Moscow. It is in the wake of a career as a pianist that Busoni struggled to achieve success as a composer, feeling that too many perceived him only as a virtuoso and did not fully recognize his compositional achievements.² Wanting most of all to be known as a composer, Busoni writes, “I should like to catch hold of a corner of the coming art of music, and where possible, sew a seam in it myself.”³ And thus another point of explanation for music historians and critics has been that while so many attest to Busoni’s influence as a pianist and writer, his own compositions seemed to have garnered less enthusiasm. Various explanations have been given as to the lack of interest in his compositions, such as his overly intellectual approach to composition, his tendency toward abstraction, his lack of a personal style as a result of eclecticism, his failure to realize his intentions, or, as Cecil Gray bluntly put it, “his music lacks the ecstasy” that others of his generation offered.⁴

Some suggested Busoni’s dual career detracted from complete focus on composition, a claim that is not without some basis. As Busoni himself commented, “my development as a composer would already be at quite a different stage if it had not been for the long interruptions and having to gather up the threads again so laboriously. I have only four months in the year in which to produce some better work and then I have to take a little step backwards again.”⁵

² Busoni’s desire to be thought of primarily as a composer is best expressed in his letter to Breitkopf & Härtel of 1913 discussed by Tamara Levitz in Teaching New Classicality (Berlin: Peter Lang, 1996). Levitz states, “he quickly discovered, however, that academic institutions, cultural organizations, and concert agencies perceived him almost exclusively as a pianist, showing little interest in his compositional achievements, and wanting him only to perform. He had long resisted being identified only as a virtuoso,” 42.
Some critics, like Peter Heyworth, suggest that Busoni lacked a creative identity because he sought to synthesize various styles. Heyworth also represents well the view that Busoni’s vision for new music was never realized in his later style, claiming, “in his writings, Busoni pointed the way toward the future. In his music he lacked the power to enter the promise land.”

This is a sentiment that Edgard Varèse, a great admirer of Busoni, also suggests: “It was as though his (Busoni’s) heart, loyal to the past, refused to follow his adventurous mind into so strange a future.”

In addition to the indifference expressed by critics about his compositions, many did not view Busoni as a composer who would pass on his legacy to future generations. Though well respected by his composition students, some of who became more successful than Busoni, he was viewed as a teacher without a school, without specific methods to offer to his students for imitation.

Despite these narratives in discourse surrounding Busoni’s compositions, interest in him as a composer and composition teacher has grown steadily since his death, especially over the past fifty years. Music scholars are increasingly addressing the depth of his music and ideas, and in particular, their importance for a fuller picture of early twentieth-century music development and their influence on other twentieth-century composers.

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7 Ibid., 17.
9 Among Busoni’s most notable composition students were Kurt Weill, Stefan Wolpe, Vladimir Vogel, and Philipp Jarnach.
on Busoni’s artistic life as a pianist, piano teacher, and writer. Relatively few studies are dedicated to his musical compositions, which have arguably been marginalized in the canon of early twentieth-century music. Whether or for what reasons Busoni’s music has been neglected in comparison to the music of others in his generation (Mahler, Strauss, Debussy, Schoenberg, Scriabin, Bartok, etc.), his music is still performed today. Certain works are familiar to various groups of instrumentalists and vocalists, whether the numerous transcriptions popular among pianists, the clarinet Concertino that is standard twentieth-century concerto repertoire among clarinetists, or the occasional revival of his most well-known opera Doktor Faust.

1.2 Purpose of Study

This study focuses on three of Busoni’s late orchestral works known as “orchestral elegies”: Berceuse élégiaque (Elegie no. 1, 1909), Gesang vom Reigen der Geister (Elegie no. 4, 1915), and Sarabande (Elegie no. 5, 1918-19). Ultimately this study seeks to provide through analysis a better understanding of Busoni’s late style as a crucial bridge from late nineteenth-century chromaticism in the works of Liszt, Wagner, and others to some post-tonal languages of the twentieth century. At the heart of this study lies a particular concept that in my view forms...

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the basis of many characteristic features of Busoni’s late style, namely the concept of polyphonic harmony, or harmony within a primarily triadic framework that results from the interaction of independent lines. I am particularly interested in a specific type of polyphonic harmony based on primarily semitonal voice leading as a principle means of progression, arguably the core feature of Busoni’s late style. The remainder of Chapter 1 provides a backdrop for this study, including a brief summary of Busoni’s ideas on the aesthetics of music, which inform his approach to musical creativity as a performer and composer, and a summary of his influence and development as a composer. As a preface to the analyses of these orchestral elegies, Chapter 2 addresses the concept of polyphonic harmony in more detail, some theoretical ideas related to it, and characteristics of Busoni’s late style that reflect this concept. Chapter 3 is dedicated to analytical methodology, discussing concepts which emerge from various linear approaches to the analysis of some twentieth-century music. Each subsequent chapter is dedicated to a specific work, the purpose being to illuminate through analysis the compositional techniques related to the concept of polyphonic harmony, including chord misalignment, overlap, elision, and superposition, as well as the integration of tertian and quartal harmonies. Busoni experiments with these techniques while still maintaining an overall sense of tonality or tonal center and using primarily tertian harmonies; however, traditional or functional tonality is considerably weakened through emphasis on these and other techniques, as is certainly the case in most of Busoni’s later works. The Berceuse élégiaque is the most experimental in this regard, yet even in this work a basic tonal center is discernible through points of tonal clarification. Indeed, the contrast between more traditional tonal writing and passages of extended tonality is a critical means of expression for Busoni that culminates in his later works, most notably in the dramatic context of his opera Doktor Faust.
The decision to focus on three of the orchestral elegies is not due to the paucity of analytical literature concerning them but rather is based on their nature and placement in Busoni’s compositional development. Though they are related by name and to some extent by their compositional geneses, these three orchestral elegies vary in tone, content, and form and are representative of the diversity of Busoni’s late style. Furthermore, these works, each less than ten minutes, are short compositional realizations of many of Busoni’s aesthetic postulations concerning harmony, instrumentation, and form. As a group, they display a remarkable variety of innovative harmonic and formal features. In many ways, however, these pieces are not simply representative of his late style but a microcosm of the multi-faceted aspects of Busoni’s entire oeuvre. They are either rooted in an earlier work, as is the case with Berceuse élégiaque and Gesang vom Reigen der Geister or are used as studies for and appear within a later work, as is the case with Sarabande.

1.3 Busoni’s Aesthetic Viewpoint

Busoni is widely recognized for his writings on musical aesthetics, most notably the above-mentioned Entwurf einer neuen Ästhetik der Tonkunst (1907) and Von der Einheit der Musik (1922), which express the underlying philosophies of modern music. Busoni opens his discussion in Entwurf with a focus on the nature of music in comparison to the other arts, particularly sculpture, painting, architecture, and poetry. He first declares the purpose of art: “But all arts, resources and forms ever aim at the one end, namely, the imitation of nature and the

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12 Busoni, Von der Einheit der Musik (Liepzig: Max Hesses Verlag, 1922); reprinted as “Die Einheit der Musik und die Möglichkeiten der Oper” in Wesen und Einheit der Musik, translated as “The Oneness of Music and the Possibilities of the Opera” in The Essence of Music.
interpretation of human feelings.”13 In comparing music to the other arts, Busoni uses the metaphor of a child. Like a child, music has an unlimited potential for creative development, but it must be led and nurtured. While music is much younger than the other arts, it possesses powers beyond them. Most importantly, he characterizes the nature of music as free and incorporeal: “Music was born free; and to win freedom is its destiny. It will become the most complete of all reflexes of nature by reason of its untrammeled immateriality. Even the poetic word ranks lower in point of incorporealness.”14 A latent conflict is present throughout Entwurf between the incorporeal nature of music and the limitations that come about through its material existence. These include what Busoni refers to as “limitations of matter,” or conventions of form and tonality associated with absolute music, limitations brought about by attaching a program to music, and other limitations associated with conventions of notation.15 His discussion of these limitations is not necessarily a call for an absence of limitations, but rather recognition of the limiting nature of such conventions upon the true, incorporeal nature of music.

Busoni casts a negative light on what he claims many at the time understood to be absolute music, a “form-play without poetic program, in which the form is intended to have the leading part.”16 As Erinn Knyt has pointed out, one of the primary ways Busoni used the term “absolute music” was in reference to what he considered the common meaning of the term: instrumental music without a program that conforms to the conventions of architectonic form

13 Sketch, 3. “…aber alle Künste, Mittel und Formen erzielen beständig das eine, nämlich die Abbildung der Natur und die Wiedergabe der menschlichen Empfindungen.,” Entwurf, 6. Quotations in the text are cited from the English edition (see footnote 1). For purposes of comparison, footnotes include the original German.
16 Ibid., 6. “Absolute Musik’’ ist ein Formenspiel ohne dichterisches Programm, wobei die Form die wichtigste Rolle abgibt,” Entwurf, 9.
and the tonal system. Busoni rejects this understanding of absolute music and posits instead the concept of “the absolute in music” as free from such conventions. By extension, the view of conventional forms and tonality as a material limitation upon the incorporeal nature of music sets up some of the most oft-cited, progressive ideas in Busoni’s treatise directed toward expansion of musical materials: microtonal subdivisions of the octave (third- and sixth-tones) and expansion of scale formations (113 different possibilities within the octave).

Busoni believed that, like absolute music, a program also imposes limitations upon the nature of music: “In reality, program-music is precisely as one-sided and limited as that which is called absolute…In place of architectonic and symmetric formulas, instead of the relation of tonic to dominant, it has bound itself in the stays of a connecting poetic—sometimes even philosophic—program.” Busoni attacks the premise of program music, arguing that “representation and description are not the nature of music.” Rather, music “realizes a temperament, without describing it.” The distinction Busoni makes here between musical mimesis of the outer world versus inner emotional states is reminiscent of Rousseau, who writes in his *Dictionnaire de musique*: “He (the composer) will not directly represent things (such as rain, fire, tempests, etc.), but excite in the soul the same movement which we feel in seeing them.”

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21 Ibid., 5. Sie gibt ein Temperament wieder, ohne es zu beschreiben,…,” *Entwurf*, 9.
To music, indeed, it is given to set in vibrations our human moods: Dread (*Leporello*), oppression of soul, invigoration, lassitude (Beethoven’s last Quartets), decision (*Wotan*), hesitation, despondency, encouragement, harshness, tenderness, excitement, tranquillization, the feeling of surprise or expectancy, and still others; likewise the inner echo of external occurrences which is bound up in these moods of the soul. But not the moving cause itself of these spiritual affectations;—not the joy over an avoided danger, not the danger itself, or the kind of danger which caused the dread; an emotional state, yes, but not the psychic species of this emotion, such as envy, or jealousy; and it is equally futile to attempt the expression, through music, of moral characteristics (vanity, cleverness), or abstract ideas like truth and justice.23

Interestingly, Busoni extends those elements which music cannot express to include not only the external impetus for human emotions, but also the “psychic species” of such human emotions as well as abstract ideas.

For Busoni, program music seeks to represent and describe elements of the external world and, by its very nature, involves a developmental process determined in large part by those external elements. At the heart of his argument against a program is the concept that ideas or inspirations arrived at in the first act of the creative process, and by extension musical ideas or motives, contain within themselves the method and pace of their own development and must be allowed to develop free of any external sound-medium or intellectual constraints. The problem with program music is that the program *imposes* upon the original musical idea its own developmental process and thus becomes a limiting factor. This is a concept Busoni applies not only to musical ideas or motives but also to overall form.

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Busoni’s views on the nature and creation of music in *Entwurf* also inform matters of composition, notation, transcription, and performance. Indeed, much of Busoni’s ideas on the aesthetics of music are intertwined with his own compositional process, one that is further revealed in his essay “How I Compose” (“Wie ich komponiere?”).²⁴ For Busoni, the composer begins with an abstract *Idee* (idea), drawn from human experiences or from other arts, which is then made manifest in a musical creation. The composer captures the *Idee* through notation, thus the *Idee* exists independently prior to its notation. In *Entwurf*, Busoni characterizes this act as the first transcription. Thus Busoni views notation as merely symbolic or “the transcription of an abstract idea.”²⁵ Here, too, the idea of limitation is suggested, but in the context of the creative process by which a composer realizes the *Idee* into music, in particular, with regard to matters of conventional instrumentation and notation. This is conveyed in a section on notation: “The instant the pen seizes it, the idea loses its original form. The very intention to write down the idea compels a choice of measure and key. The form, and the musical agency, which the composer must decide upon, still more closely define the way and the limits.”²⁶ The choices a composer makes in instrumentation, form, harmony, etc., in realizing the *Idee* and the process of notating are by their very nature limiting.

This view reveals much about Busoni’s approach to transcription and performance, an important part of his creative output. Transcription and performance are similar in nature; it is in these acts that the composer or performer arranges or interprets based on the original idea: “Notation, the writing out of compositions, is primarily an ingenious expedient for catching an

inspiration (idea), with the purpose of exploiting it later. But notation is to improvisation as the portrait to the living model. It is for the interpreter to resolve the rigidity of the signs into the primitive emotion.”  

The acts of transcription and performance relate to the word “improvisation.” This concept is expressed more directly in relation to performance in the following quote: “What the composer’s inspiration necessarily loses through notation, his interpreter should restore by his own.” Together, the above passages point toward performance, and also transcription, as an interpretation in which the performer/transcriber or interpreter returns to the music the spirit and emotion of the musical Idee lost in translation through notation.

Latent within Busoni’s understanding of the nature of music in Entwurf is an idea referred to as “the oneness of music” (“die Einheit der Musik”) that is further developed in later essays. At a time when Busoni was engrossed in his last and most ambitious project, the opera Doktor Faust, he composed an essay entitled “Die Einheit der Musik und die Möglichkeiten der Oper.” Busoni describes the basic idea of the “oneness of music” at the outset of his essay:

The time has come to recognise the whole phenomenon of music as a “oneness” and no longer to split it up according to its purpose, form, and sound-medium. It should be recognised from two premises exclusively, that of its content and that of its quality.  

This concept has multiple implications for composition. Busoni advocated for a music not only free from conventions of form and tonality, but also from conventions of genre and function. In practice, this results in works that merge a multitude of styles, as is the case in many of Busoni’s later works, most importantly his last opera Doktor Faust. Yet this concept extends further,

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particularly in the context of his discussion of opera. As mentioned earlier, Busoni believed that music should convey an *Idee*. It was important to Busoni that when music is merged with narrative and visual arts, as in an operatic setting, that music not simply be a representation of the unfolding drama or of the nature and development of characters and events expressed visually and/or in the text. Rather, music should remain autonomous in its embodiment of an idea or ideas that lie at the heart of the story, characters, or events. Music should be an indispensable element, for Busoni did not see the point in merging a story with music if the story could stand alone without it. Ideally, the music should interact with and form a “oneness” with the other elements in the embodiment of an idea. This concept is undoubtedly rooted in Busoni’s above-mentioned views concerning music and representation.

1.4 Busoni’s Concept of Young Classicism

As mentioned above, Busoni’s idea of “oneness in music” extended beyond the mere abstract to include the universality of musical styles, a concept he also promoted at the end of *Entwurf*. His invocation of a Nietzschean liberation of music from the influence of a national or regional identity, such as German music or French music, sparked criticism from Hans Pfitzner, who was intent on forging a more political and nationalistic narrative for the development of music. Pfitzner accused Busoni of being anti-German and criticized Busoni’s characterization of music as being in an early stage of development. Likely reading into Busoni’s statement that Bach and Beethoven were only a beginning and not, as some would regard, “unsurpassable

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29 Busoni was interested in Nietzsche, even at times using the phrase “jenseits von Gut und Böse” as in “Es gibt aber eine Kunst, die ‘jenseits von Gut und Böse’ steht, und die zu jeder Zeit eine grosse Kunst bleibt, vor der auch jene Kritiker fortschrittlicher Haltung instinktiv sich beugen: wie vor einem Bach, einem Beethoven, und—nolens volens—einem Wagner,” *Wesen und Einheit*, 41. “But there is an art which stands ‘jenseits von Gut und Böse,’ and which remains a great art in every age; before this art critics of the most advanced kind bow down instinctively as before that of Bach or Beethoven and nolens volens…Wagner,” *Essence*, 25; Hans Pfitzner, *Futuristengefahr: Bei Gelegenheit von Busoni’s Ästhetik* (“The Danger of Futurism”) *Süddeutsche Monatshefte* (Leipzig and Munich, 1917).
finalities,” Pfitzner implied that Busoni held little regard for the “classics” and “hallowed traditions” and, by extension, did not advocate for a national music rooted in these traditions. It is clear in Entwurf that the latter, at least, was true. As to the former implication, Busoni himself responded in a published letter to friend and critic Paul Bekker that he did value past traditions and affirmed his veneration for Bach and Mozart.30

Busoni’s own musical creativity, both as a performer and composer, reflected a desire to embrace new technical innovations while at the same time respecting and emulating the musical values of past traditions. He writes, “first, before we begin a new way, can we do everything in the old way as well as it has been done in the past? Secondly, in addition to this have we the talent?”31 This reverence for past traditions is reflected not only in his own works but also in his numerous transcriptions and editions of works by earlier composers, most notably Bach and Liszt.32 Busoni believed that music of past traditions could inform contemporary composition and he sought for new music the lasting value of old music in his concept of “young classicism” [“junge Klassizität”], or in his own words, “the mastery, the sifting and the turning to account of all the gains of previous experiments and their inclusion in strong and beautiful forms.”33 This “mastery” would ultimately provide the composer with a foundation upon which one could invent new contexts for and further develop “previous experiments.” Busoni, however, was not only concerned with musical materials. He was particularly interested in a reinvigoration of the spirit of an artwork or epoch rather than the requisition of its forms. Busoni did not wish to simply reinterpret older forms, indeed, quite the opposite: “One follows a great example most

32 Beethoven (3), Brahms (1), Chopin (1), Cornelius (1), Cramer (1), Niels Gade (1), Goldmark (2), Liszt (19), Mendelssohn (1), Mozart (17) Novacek (2), Schoenberg (1), Schubert (9), Schumann (3), Spohr (1), Wagner (1), and Weill (1) as listed in Della Couling, Busoni: A Musical Ishmael (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 368.
33 Busoni, Essence, 20.
faithfully by turning away from it,’ I said once, and by that I meant that an example is great because it creates a *new* type. If the type is repeated nothing new is created and the idea of an example is destroyed.”

What Busoni desired to understand and emulate from earlier masters was not simply their techniques, but their approach to art and the creative process. A few passages from Busoni’s Beethoven article illustrate this point:

Beethoven’s work aroused in his successors the ambition to put significance and depth into their work and to compose on a cyclopean scale; the measurement of width and of means pile up chronologically.

…What does Beethoven signify to the people of today? Sincerity is one of the absolute necessities for the existence and activity of creation.

…A second motive with Beethoven that the youth of the present day might take to heart is the *subservience of virtuosity to the Idea.*

And in reference to Bach’s influence:

Form, imagination and feeling are indispensable to the artist, they are the most precious of all things—those to which he offers sacrifice—the sacrifice of himself. These things I put into my work of completion and in that way it became my own. I believed I was acting in accordance with the spirit of Bach, when I placed the *latest possibilities of our present-day art in the service of his plan—as the organic continuation of his art—as he himself brought the latest possibilities of the art of his time to expression* (emphasis mine).

While an important aspect of “young classicism” is the composer’s experimentation with traditional techniques in a modern context, the above passages indicate that Busoni also sought

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to emulate composers he admired in their artistic approach to composition. In particular, what he desired to emulate from Bach is not necessarily his style or art, but rather, like Bach, to fully bring to fruition the techniques of his own time.

1.5 Busoni and the Essence of Music

Many of Busoni’s earlier ideas on the aesthetics of music culminate in his understanding of the essence of music. Busoni develops this concept in what some believe to be his last essay, “Vom Wesen der Musik.” For Busoni, the essence of music is elusive, but rooted in the idea of a primordial music or Ur-musik existing beyond the human perception of time. Busoni’s notion of an incorporeal music in Entwurf in many ways sets the stage for the idea of a primordial music. Furthermore, Busoni hints at the origin of the idea in “Vom Wesen der Musik”: “The following passage, quoted from a novel by Anatole France, could be taken as a motto for my own book (Entwurf, 1906): ‘For the content of a piece of music existed and exists complete and unalterable before and after it has sounded.’” For Busoni, a primordial music contains within it all “forms, motives, and combinations of past and future music.”

One of the passages that foreshadows in some ways the idea of the essence of music appears toward the beginning of Entwurf:

The spirit of the art-work, the measure of emotion, of humanity, that is in it—these remain unchanged in value through changing years; the form which these three assumed, the manner of their expression, and the flavor of the epoch which gave them birth, are transient, and age rapidly.

Here Busoni focuses on the spirit or idea within an art-work as distinct from the conventions that define periods in music history, periods that essentially are a means of constructing a perception

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37 Essence, 197. “…so ist auch die kosmische Atmosphäre mit sämtlichen Formen, Motiven und Kombinationen gewesener und künftiger Musik völlig erfüllt,” Wesen und Einheit, 5.
38 Sketch, 2. “Der Geist eines Kunstwerkes, das Maß der Empfindung, das Menschliche, das in ihm ist – sie bleiben durch wechselnde Zeiten unverändert an Wert; die Form, die diese drei aufnahm, die Mittel, die sie ausdrückten, und der Geschmack, den die Epoche ihres Entstehens über sie ausgoß, sie sind vergänglich und rasch alternd,” Entwurf, 5–6.
of time. Like the spirit or idea that remains “unchanged,” the concept of a primordial music that exists beyond the conception of time orients the artist-composer in a specific way: “To me, a composer is like a gardener to whom a small portion of a large piece of ground has been allotted for cultivation; it falls to him to gather what grows on his soil, to arrange it, to make a bouquet of it; and if he is very ambitious, to develop it as a garden. It devolves on this gardener to collect and form that which is in reach of his eyes, his arms—his power of differentiation.”

The idea that a composer draws from and develops the ideas of his or her own time, mentioned above in relation to “young classicism,” thus resonates with Busoni’s understanding of the essence in music. A composer can tap into this primordial music by arranging what “forms, motives, and combinations” are visible to him or her, or are within reach at his or her point in time. Ultimately, however, the complete reality and extent of the essence of music is beyond human perception.

There is remarkable interconnectedness between the above-mentioned aesthetic issues and concepts in Busoni’s writings. The incorporeal nature of music comes to full fruition in Busoni’s understanding of the essence of music. The argument for a music free of conventions, genres, and styles likewise paves the way for “young classicism.” Furthermore, one facet of the “oneness of music” is the concept that musical ideas cannot be fixed; therefore, there are no fixed texts. Thus musical ideas can be newly discovered or interpreted differently from age to age (through performance and transcription) or from one composition to another. These idea are embodied in Busoni’s own musical creativity in many ways, whether in the expressive interpretation of a work in performance; the revitalization and reworking of a piece or style

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through transcription, arrangement, or imitation; or the seeming disregard for any borders that might exist between musical works of different instrumentation, genre, or function. One of the most significant characteristics in his own compositions reflecting the concept of the autonomy of the musical idea is his common adoption of musical ideas from one piece for another or the recasting of a piece with different instrumentation or in a different musical setting. This tendency results in a rich tapestry of musical connections between works within different instrumental genres.

Finally, engaging with the subtleties of Busoni’s ideas on the aesthetics of music not only reveals his views on performance and composition, but also helps to clarify some of the seeming contradictions about Busoni’s views on modern music in comparison with those of his contemporaries. His knowledge and mastery of past music derived from his experience as a performer, editor, and composer, as well as his message to younger composers to emulate their predecessors in their approach to art gained him a certain amount of respect among conservatives. At the same time, his writings on the aesthetics of music, his support for younger composers and their new experiments, as well as his desire to participate to some extent in these new experiments later in life, garnered a certain amount of support from his younger contemporaries and disdain from some conservatives. Busoni seems to have been cautious of both camps, critical both of those who would cling to tradition at the expense of progress, and also of those who would entirely discard the usefulness of compositional antecedents.

1.6 Influence and Development as a Composer

Busoni’s approach to art, performance, and composition, both past and present, is his primary influence on other musicians. Numerous composers and musicians of both
contemporaneous and subsequent generations, including Edgard Varèse, Kurt Weill, Vladimir Vogel, and Otto Leuning, cite Busoni as a direct influence on their music and aesthetic views. Varèse writes of Busoni:

I owe a most tremendous debt of gratitude to this extraordinary man—almost a figure out of the Renaissance—not only one of the greatest pianists of all time, but a man of wide culture, a scholar, thinker, writer, composer, conductor, teacher, and animateur—a man who stimulated others to think and to do things. Personally, I know that he crystallized my half-formed ideas, stimulated my imagination, and determined, I believe, the future development of my music.\textsuperscript{40}

It was most likely Busoni’s idea of the freedom of music that appealed so much to Varèse, who at the time was beginning to imagine the possibilities of sound, liberated from traditional instrumentation. In particular, one finds Varèse struggling to do this in his own early compositions, one of which he had shown to Busoni.\textsuperscript{41} In this case and many others, Busoni’s most lasting impact on future composers is found in his imparting an approach to composition rather than a specific handling of musical materials. Busoni concerned himself primarily with the artistic and spiritual development of his students, mostly leaving the content and techniques for them to discover. Many of Busoni’s students describe a style of teaching akin to leading from behind, as Vladimir Vogel reports:

Busoni started with the inspiration, the idea which was basic to the pupil’s composition, and, sought to implant in the pupil’s mind that realization and technique which would be best suited to making the most of the inspiration and idea. But since every inspiration, every idea had its own quite individual aspect, no definite approach to music, no method was fixed. It was as if one stood each time at the beginning of a path opening upon a different view. And this meant, too, that the music was not treated merely as material or as an object to be manipulated, divorced from the meaning, the content, and the aim one wanted to give to the work.

This is why Busoni’s teaching was not based on any fixed system or method; one was free from every preconceived notion, and the idea, often an unconscious inspiration, promised to open up the way. Each pupil could follow his own path, express himself in

\textsuperscript{40} Varèse, \textit{Varèse: A Looking-Glass Diary}, 50.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., 50. Varèse mentions that he showed Busoni his latest score at the time. Though he doesn’t remember which, he mentions two possible pieces, \textit{Les Cycles du Nord} and \textit{Oedipus und die Sphinx}. 
various musical languages, and thus develop in the way best suited to himself; he could make his own slumbering powers into “assets” and “invest” them without what was peculiarly his own being suffocated by an overpowering model or a dominating father figure.42

This approach to teaching also reflects Busoni’s own compositional approach, which above all else called for the unfettered development of the musical idea, particularly in a formal sense, and for the freedom to assimilate a multitude of musical styles and techniques toward that end.

The lack of a “Busonian” style overtly carried out in the music of his students may very well be rooted in the fact that the overarching characteristics of Busoni’s own compositional development are difficult to categorize. As composer Ronald Stevenson states, Busoni “was the only composer—and still is—who has in his music embraced the whole range of European music from Bach to Schönberg.”43 At an early age, Busoni exhibited a mastery of assimilating the sound and techniques of other composers. Many compositions of his childhood (1873–1882) include genres and forms familiar to earlier periods, beginning with J.S. Bach: “Since early childhood I have played Bach and practiced counterpoint. At the time it was a mania with me and at least one Fugato actually comes into every one of my youthful works.”44 His mastery of counterpoint comes to a pinnacle later in life in his Fantasia Contrappuntistica (1910), which combines Bach’s unfinished Art of Fugue, the Grosse Fuge, with his own original setting of a chorale melody. Many of his early works (1883–1889) also show the influence of Beethoven and Brahms, or reflect the chromatic music of the latter half of the nineteenth century in general, using various composers as models. This could be said of his Second String Quartet in D minor.

and his *Konzertstück*, which he deemed the first compositions of his “manhood” (1889–1906). Of these compositions, the Violin Concerto is perhaps his most successful work, a piece he described to his wife at the time as the beginning of his “existence as a composer.” It was not until his mature style (1906–1924), however, that Busoni, by his own admission (in 1908), gained a decidedly personal style:

In the ideal sense I first found my way as composer in the Second Violin Sonata (op. 36a), which among friends I also call my Opus 1, followed by (as real Opus 2 and 3) the Concerto and *Turandot*. But my entire personal vision I put down at last and for the first time in the Elegies (finished January 1908).

Busoni later commented that the second of those mentioned above, the Piano Concerto (finished August 1904), represented a kind of summation of all that came before:

I endeavored with this work to gather together the results of my first period of manhood and it (Piano Concerto) represents the actual conclusion of it.

Like every work which falls into such a period of development, it is ripe through gained experience and supported by tradition.

It does not know about the future at all, but represents the present at the time of its origin. The proportions and the contrasts are carefully distributed and, because the plan should be firmly established before putting it into execution, nothing in it is accidental.

The old does not yield to the new but to the better. We have this advantage over the academicians in that we hope for the new whilst we honour the old; that we can suffer and enjoy at the same time; that we willingly humble ourselves without remaining inactive.

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Indeed, the work was regarded by some as too large in scope and too varied in character. As Della Couling points out, “the breadth of the work’s intellectual canvas also antagonized: from its Brahmsian beginning, to its Italian exuberance and its mystic final chorus of a hymn to Allah.”49 The reaction by critics in this direction already hints towards a characterization of Busoni’s compositions as too eclectic and lacking in personal style. The epic nature of this gathering up of a great many experiments from previous decades is surpassed only by his final work *Doktor Faust*, which in a similar fashion built upon the experiments of the 1910s.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Busoni reinvented his compositional style by shifting away from nineteenth-century Romanticism. He sought for his music a refinement free of former influences, an individuality in which each new piece created its own idiom. A year after his essay on the future of music, *Entwurf*, was published, Busoni embarked on this new path with the above-mentioned *Elegien* for piano, completed in 1908. The *Elegien*, like the orchestral elegies, exhibit a characteristic of Busoni’s style that persists throughout his lifetime, namely, the borrowing of material from his own works. Elegy no. 2 came from his Piano Concerto, no. 3 became *Fantasia Contrappuntistica* two years later, nos. 4 and 5 originated in the *Turandot Suite*, and no. 6 was scored for his opera *Die Brautwahl*. The *Berceuse* for piano was added as the seventh Elegy a year later and was eventually adapted for orchestra, becoming the *Berceuse élégiaque*. In the words of Larry Sitkoy, “the language of all these earlier pieces (the models upon which some of the Elegies are based) is subtly altered to conform to Busoni’s new outlook on music; tonality is generally weakened and a deliberately diffuse bitonality

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appears.” In these works, Busoni began a decidedly more experimental style that could best be described as extended tonality.

Following the *Elegien*, Busoni begins to experiment with this new language in a variety of instrumental genres, composing a series of short orchestral works (later referred to as the orchestral elegies), a series of piano sonatinas and a toccata, and his final opera *Doktor Faust*. While difficult to characterize as a whole, some important features in these later works are a renewed interest in polyphonic textures and experimentation with instrumentation and harmonic coloring. Busoni continued to expand his harmonic language, combining various musical styles and techniques. Some of these works could be characterized as tonal with modifications, while others are best understood as post-tonal. As Jim Samson eloquently states, “his (Busoni’s) music forms a link between the incipient atonality of the later works of Liszt and the new tonal languages of Debussy, Bartok and Stravinsky. While offering no single solution to the tonal dilemma, it reflects in a peculiarly vivid way many of the problems confronting early twentieth-century composers with progressive sympathies as traditional tonality declined.”

While this study does not encompass the entirety of Busoni’s late style, the following discussion of the concept of polyphonic harmony in relation to his works and the analyses of these three orchestral elegies help form a better picture of Busoni’s approach to harmony and tonality in comparison to other composers during this seminal period in early twentieth-century music.

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CHAPTER 2
THE CONCEPT OF POLYPHONIC HARMONY IN BUSONI’S LATE STYLE

2.1 Introduction

Two small orchestral pieces, the Berceuse élégiaque and the Nocturne symphonique, show the fully developed, mature style of Busoni, his individuality clearly marked. The orchestral mass is dissolved here into individual elements. The intimacy, perspicious clearness, delicacy of tone-colours desired necessitate the suppression of the massive, loud-sounding instruments, like trumpets and trombones. A new kind of “polyphonic harmony” is used. Not one part is written against the other, not one group of instruments balanced against another, but tone against tone, every single instrument against some other. The music looks very simple, but its proper performance demands an infinite subtlety, otherwise pieces of this kind are easily turned into caricatures. Different chords run into each other, major and minor are sounded at the same time, unexpected chord-combinations clash one upon another.

Hugo Leichtentritt (1917)

Hugo Leichtentritt is one of the first writers to attempt to characterize the style of two of Busoni’s late orchestral works in his description of the Berceuse élégiaque (1909) and the Nocturne symphonique (1913). In particular, he uses the phrase “a new kind of polyphonic harmony” to describe the contrapuntal complexity of these works. His impression of the music suggests that Busoni took a detail-oriented approach to the orchestration in which each instrument displays a remarkable individuality. Leichtentritt also refers to some of the more modern harmonic devices that result from his approach, including chord overlap, mode mixture, and polychords. His description is likely rooted in a 1914 letter he received from Busoni in which Busoni comments in reference to the Nocturne symphonique just beneath a chronological list of recent compositions: “Takes the polyphonic harmony (polyphoner Harmonik) of the

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Berceuse a step further, strives to dissolve massed orchestral sound into individual elements, does without trumpets and trombones.”

In this chapter, I examine the concept of polyphonic harmony as it relates to a technique of orchestration and to Busoni’s own views on harmony as expressed in his writings. I also address certain influences that may have played a significant role in shaping Busoni’s approach to harmony in his mature compositions. Among these influences is the polyphonic music of Bach. Passages from some of Busoni’s more liberal Bach transcriptions demonstrate that Busoni’s harmonic experimentation in these works are reflective of certain characteristics in his late style. Busoni’s views on harmony are also connected with composer and theorist Bernhard Ziehn. A brief description of Ziehn’s views on harmony and, in particular, the technique of symmetrical inversion, directly relates to Busoni’s approach to harmony in one of his later Bach transcriptions, the Fantasia contrappuntistica, which could be viewed as an original composition based on Bach’s The Art of Fugue. Passages from this work illustrate certain harmonic devices which also appear in the orchestral elegies. Finally, I establish some general characteristics of harmony in Busoni’s late style and their implications for analysis.

Independently, the terms polyphony and harmony are generally used to describe a musical texture (i.e., polyphonic), a style (i.e., sixteenth-century polyphony or Romantic harmony), or a theory (i.e., tonal harmony). Given the association of these terms with different dimensions of music, horizontal vs. vertical, the combination of the words polyphony and harmony into an adjective-noun construction might at first seem a contradiction in terms. However, the combination “polyphonic harmony” is often used to refer specifically to the character of a passage or piece containing independent voices and the resulting harmony or,

more specifically, to the harmony itself as a cumulative effect of the independent voices. It suggests a compositional emphasis on the derivation of harmony through a combination of “individual elements” rather than through an *a priori* system of harmonic relationships.

Both Busoni’s and Leichtentritt’s above descriptions of polyphonic harmony make reference to a technique of orchestration that is apparent in the opening passage of the *Berceuse élégiaque* shown in Example 2.1a-d. Busoni is careful to maintain a sense of “individual elements” by isolating the variety of voices to single instruments or small groups of instruments. In the string section, each instrument has a different voice with a distinct rhythmic pattern and melodic profile whether a pedal tone, an ostinato pattern, an arpeggiation, or a slow-moving stepwise line. The harp, too, has its own rhythmic pattern, distinguished from the other instruments and consisting primarily of a chromatic line. The brass and woodwind instruments have distinct parts as well, the melodic ideas occurring mostly in the flutes and clarinets. While there are passages throughout in which several instruments are playing in unison, the variety of instrumental combinations and, in some cases, the subtle variation between parts maintains a sense of individuality among the instruments.

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54 In general, writers from various eras use this term to describe or suggest a harmony, whether tonal or atonal, which is rooted in polyphony. A.B. Marx, for example, uses the term “polyphonic Harmonik” to refer to the harmonic combinations of two or more entirely independent and fully developed, yet complimentary, voices. See The Universal School of Music: A Manual for Teachers and Students in Every Branch of Musical Art,” translated from the 5th ed. by A. H. Wehrhan (London: Robert Cocks and Co., 1853), 226–227. Ernst Kurth, in reference to Bach’s music, describes a similar idea in “linear counterpoint” as the cumulative result of two or more linear streams. See Lee A. Rothfarb, Ernst Kurth: Selected Writings (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 27 and 37. Percy Grainger describes in more detail a type of polyphonic harmony outside the realm of tonality in reference to an indigenous native music:

in this Rarotongan music, most fascinating of all to a modern composer are the Bach-like gems of everchanging, euphoniously discordant polyphonic harmony which throughout surprise, baffle and soothe the ear; patches of concords alternating with whole successions of discords—mainly seconds. Percy Grainger, Grainger on Music (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 53. Related to the concept of polyphonic harmony are what Felix Salzer calls “contrapuntal chords.” Salzer describes these chords in the following passage: “..., all chords not based on harmonic association are products of motion, direction and embellishment and, paradoxical as it may sound, have a horizontal tendency. They result from the motion of voices since they are generated by voice leading and voice direction..., in contrast to chords of harmonic origin,” Structural Hearing: Tonal Coherence in Music, Vol. 1 (New York: Dover, 1962), 15.
One finds a similar sense of instrumental independence in the *Nocturne symphonique*, a representative passage of which is shown in Example 2.2a-c starting from the *Tranquillo* section. Here, too, several different musical ideas are for the most part distributed amongst the instruments. The diversity of parts within instrumental groups also increases over the course of the passage. This is most apparent in mm. 22–25 (Example 2.2c) as the amount of voices and slight differentiation between voices becomes more complex. Related to the instrumental independence is the careful attention Busoni pays to instrumental timbre in a climate of such a complex interaction of voices. Antony Beaumont describes these timbres as “broken down into indeterminate colours by a complex process of doubling and mixing” and further remarks that “no sonority in the score is used more than once.” This gives a fleeting quality to the timbral combinations and to the harmonies created as the voices intersect at any given point.

The first word in the adjective-noun construction polyphonic harmony generally refers to textures in which the voices are independent because they are *equally* developed. In general, the melodic development of a voice largely affects its perceived degree of independence in relation to other voices. It would be difficult, however, to describe each of the parts in the above passages as *equally* developed, independent melodic lines, since there is some variation as to their degree of development. In the *Berceuse* the principle melodic parts are in the clarinets, flutes, and oboe, while the other voices tend to act as supporting, either as a stepwise line or an arpeggiation. At times, the listener may clearly perceive a hierarchy amongst parts rather than

56 According to Wolf Frobenius (“Polyphony,” <oxfordmusiconline.com>, accessed 13 March 2011), until the 18th century, the term “polyphony” was generally used to refer to a texture of multiple voices. Eventually, specific definitions or categories of polyphony emerged based on the degree of independence of each voice and based on whether each voice is equally developed. Some 18th-century writers such as Marpurg and Koch, for example, used the term to refer specifically to multiple voices of *equal* importance. Koch also used it to describe further characterizations of the multiple parts as being *developed equally*, each taking on the character of a main voice. A. B. Marx used the term polyphony to describe both the relationship of the voices and a type of music that differs from the homophonic style, in which there is a principle part and accessory parts.
total equality; for example, the melodic line in the clarinets may be more developed, and thus more independent, than the ostinato pattern in the cellos or the pedal in the basses. In the above passages, however, the independence of the voices is established not entirely through equal melodic development but also through the diversity of voices both melodically and rhythmically and their distribution among individual instruments. Thus polyphony as a textural description is inextricably linked with Busoni’s technique of orchestration which “dissolves massed orchestral sound into individual elements.”

Busoni’s above description of “polyphonic harmony” in reference to these pieces makes no mention of harmony *per se*, but rather refers to the above-described technique of orchestration. Though there may be emphasis on the idea of independent elements resulting in harmony, the almost exclusively tertian construction of the harmonies in the *Berceuse* points to the fact that he is also concerned with the harmonic effects themselves and when and how the individual parts sound together. The chords are formed of exclusively stepwise, often chromatic, voice leading. The manner in which these triads unfold, overlap, and are occasionally superimposed is perhaps what Leichtentritt refers to in his description as a “new kind of polyphonic harmony.” Together, Busoni’s technique of orchestration and its relationship to polyphony and Leichtentritt’s description of the harmonic aspects express the two facets of the term polyphonic harmony, one which describes the texture and relationship of the voices and one which refers to the harmonic result of that relationship.

2.2 J.S. Bach’s Polyphonic Style as a Model for Harmonic Exploration

Busoni’s more polyphonic approach in his late style may well be rooted in his interest in Bach’s polyphonic music, which for many composers at the turn of the century represented an
alternative to Romantic models.\textsuperscript{57} His interest in Bach is also associated with the afore-
mentioned concept of “young classicism,” or “the mastery, the sifting and the turning to account
of all the gains of previous experiments and their inclusion in strong and beautiful forms.”\textsuperscript{58} The
idea of building on previous experiments in composition of new music is echoed in the concept
of “historicist modernism.” Walter Frisch describes this concept as follows:

\begin{quote}
Only more recently have we begun to understand that early modernism was a many-
splendored thing, not restricted to late Mahler, Schoenberg and his pupils, and Strauss
through \textit{Elektra}. One particularly rich vein of this period that has yet to be fully mined is
what might be called historicist modernism, incorporating music written in the years
around 1900 that derives its compositional and aesthetic energy not primarily from an
impulse to be New, but from a deep and sophisticated engagement with music of the past.
I am not referring here to neoclassicism, a term that normally connotes a repertory and
practices associated with Stravinsky, Hindemith, and other composes of the 1920s and
30s. Often brash and cosmopolitan—self-consciously \textit{au courant}—neo-classicism has
tended to overshadow historicist modernism, an earlier and soberer, but equally
fascinating, phenomenon.\textsuperscript{59}
\end{quote}

Busoni’s own “deep and sophisticated engagement” with Bach began early in life. In 1912,
toward the beginning of his late period, Busoni writes:

\begin{quote}
Since early childhood I have played Bach and practiced counterpoint. At that time it was
a mania with me and at least one Fugato actually comes into every one of my youthful
works. Now I found myself a contrapuntal again although from a completely new
standpoint. Nature’s unbroken and hidden work had accomplished a great deal in me
unconsciously, and I became aware of unexpected acquisitions, which had matured
inwardly. One of the most valuable of these was the newly found harmony that can arise
through independent polyphony. Thus, I had many tools in hand for the making of a good
technical building.\textsuperscript{60}
\end{quote}

Indeed, it may not have only been a study or imitation of Bach’s style in which Busoni was
engaged. Bach’s influence, in a general sense, is visible in Busoni’s music, particularly in the
more complicated contrapuntal textures he often employs and in the idea of harmonic

\textsuperscript{57} Walter Frisch, “Reger’s Bach and Historicist Modernism,” \textit{19th-Century Music} 25/nos. 2–3 (Fall/Spring, 2001–
02): 297.
\textsuperscript{58} Busoni, \textit{Essence}, 20.
\textsuperscript{59} Walter Frisch, “Reger’s Bach and Historicist Modernism,” 296.
\textsuperscript{60} Busoni, “About himself and his works,” \textit{Essence}, 48.
exploration through polyphony. There are also highly chromatic passages in some of Bach’s music that contain unique harmonic combinations as a result of the independent voices.

Apart from his Bach editions, including the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, Busoni arranged many of Bach’s pieces for piano with significant additions and expansions. In his later years, Busoni became more liberal with his transcriptions of Bach’s music, most notably in the *Fantasia nach J.S. Bach* (1909) and *Fantasia contrapuntistica* (1910), both of which could be considered more original compositions that incorporate themes from Bach’s music than transcriptions.61 The elastic manner in which Busoni treated Bach’s music often highlighted the linear aspects of the original works as well as adding new harmonic possibilities to them. I later address passages from the *Fantasia contrapuntistica* that illustrate this in a more robust manner; however, let us look first at a more subtle example in an earlier transcription, the Chaconne in D minor from Violin Partita no. 4.

Though most of Busoni’s Bach transcriptions prior to 1900 remain very close to the original, the 1893 transcription of the Chaconne in D minor is an exception. Busoni’s approach is more of paraphrase than strict transcription. He realizes the underlying harmonic implications of the original and adds additional chromatic motion with several harmonic variants throughout the variations. A brief passage from this transcription is shown in Example 2.3a with a voice-leading sketch (2.3b) and the original polyphonic melody (2.3c). There are three melodic strands in the original polyphonic melody which are shown in Example 2.3c along with an implied harmonic progression. The implied progression at this point in the Chaconne differs from the progression given at the opening (I–[II$\sharp$]–V$\flat$–[I]–VI–IV–V$\flat$–$\frac{3}{2}$–I) of the work. While the II$\sharp$ of the initial

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61 Beaumont also expresses this idea: “Although the Fantasia makes use of three separate organ pieces of Bach, almost half the work is original material. The Bachian elements are transformed in much the same way as the original themes in a Lisztian operatic fantasy. There is therefore ample justification in considering the *Fantasia* a composition in its own right,” *Busoni the Composer*, 137.
progression could be implied briefly on beat 2 of m. 33, interpreting a I chord on beat 2 of m. 34 would disrupt the continuity of the lower voice chromatic motion C♯–C (Example 2.3c). The melody also includes G♯ and F♯ in mm. 33 and 34 which could be interpreted as chromatic lower neighbors to A and G, or perhaps part of chromatic harmonies applied to the dominant and subdominant (possibilities shown in parentheses). Busoni takes full advantage of these chromatic notes in his transcription. He displaces the B♭ of the upper strand two octaves lower at the end of m. 33, setting up a pattern whereby the upper voice of the original polyphonic melody is doubled or temporarily migrates into an inner voice at the end of each measure (Example 2.3a-b). The B♭, G♯, and D of the melody are combined to form a ⅓ version of a German 6th at the end of m. 33 leading to the dominant. He also adds chromatic motion to the original upper two voices (shown in Example 2.3c) with the addition of A♭ (m. 34, b. 3.5), E♭ (m. 34, b. 2.5), and C♯ (m. 35, b. 3.5) in his transcription (Example 2.3a). These upper two voices with chromatic additions are highlighted in Example 2.3a. The notes of the upper voice, B♭–A–A♭–G–F, some steps of which are repeated and at times transferred into an inner voice, are circled (the A migrating to A♭ in the inner voice). The notes of the inner voice, F–E–E♭–D–C♯–D, are framed in squares. The result is another augmented-sixth chord leading to the subdominant (m. 34, b. 3.5) and a VII♭ (m. 35, b. 3.5) instead of the implied II♭ in Bach’s original (see also Example 2.3b). This subtle exploration of harmonic possibilities through chromatic linear motion, albeit firmly grounded in tonal harmony, foreshadows Busoni’s harmonic experimentation through primarily chromatic voice leading in his late style.
2.3 Bernhard Ziehn’s Influence on Busoni’s Harmonic Thinking

The most revealing description of Busoni’s views regarding new developments in harmony appears in his article entitled “The New Harmony” written in 1911:

The present-day harmony and that of the future interest me as they do the musical world and with a similar intensity. At present there is a seething and groping but I see the roads. There are five in all and as yet no composer has walked up to the end of any of them.

The first new harmonic system rests upon chord formation according to customary scales. (Debussy, out of 113 scales which I have compiled, only employs the whole-tone scale, and only in the melody.)

By the symmetrical inversion of the harmonic order Bernhard Ziehn shows me the second way.

Keeping the voices independent of each other in polyphonic compositions produces the third road. (I have, as an experiment, constructed a five-part fugue in which every voice is in a different key so that the harmony flows in quite new chord successions.)

A fourth road is anarchy, an arbitrary placing of intervals, next and over one another, according to the mood and taste. Arnold Schoenberg is trying it; but already his is beginning to turn round in a circle.

The fifth will be the birth of a new key system which will include all the four aforementioned ways.

I believe this list is as clear as it is complete; it contains enough material to fill an extensive volume. This is left for the latest theorist. For every good theory can be expressed in a short sentence, whereas every fundamental sentence contains the stuff for an extension as long as you please. The world, to be sure, usually only allows itself to be convinced through works of several volumes.  

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Of the “roads” Busoni describes above, the second and third are most reflective of harmony in his late style. The third road in particular describes a kind of post-tonal harmony yielded through emphasis on independent voices.

Busoni attributes composer and theorist Bernhard Ziehn (1845–1912) with showing the “second road” toward a new harmony. Ziehn’s practical applications and his extensive knowledge of counterpoint are perhaps the main reasons why Busoni was so interested in Ziehn. The two composers seem to have shared similar views with regard to harmony and chromatic voice leading in general and, in particular, the important role that polyphony could play in exploring new harmonic possibilities. Thus Ziehn’s theoretical work is an important window into Busoni’s harmonic thinking.63

Ziehn’s theories are startlingly advanced for the time. Part of the reason this is the case is that, at a time of much speculative theory about harmony, Ziehn, as a composer, was much more concerned with relating theory to practice. This is evident from his Manual of Harmony: Theoretical and Practical which contains very little prose and, by any standards, an exceptional wealth of musical examples, including those of his contemporaries.64 His theories on both chromatic harmony and voice leading and his expansion of canonic writing in Canonical Studies beyond diatonic harmony to the chromatic spectrum is a reflection of more advanced developments in composition that extend into twentieth-century practice. As Winthrop Sargeant suggests, “Ziehn so sensitively guessed the temper of that time as to be able to place the technical paraphernalia of his contemporaries in a musicological-historical perspective, and that

Formulating an advanced theory of chromatic harmony markedly different from those of his contemporaries is perhaps Ziehn’s greatest achievement.

Ziehn rooted his harmonic theory on a tempered chromatic-enharmonic basis and from that basis arrives at the concept of enharmonic unity of triadic and quartal harmonies. He codified a new classification of chromatic chordal progressions based on his “enharmonic law”: “In every triad or seventh-chord of whatever sort, as well as in every major ninth-chord, each inversion can be the root position of another chord containing the same tones; that is, each tone in the chord can become a root.” This law is reflected in his formation of nine “chromatic seventh-chords” beyond those familiar to the diatonic system, many of which were unrecognized at the time. Example 2.4 shows a passage from his Manual of Harmony in C major with all nine chromatic seventh-chords (Roman numerals do not refer to scale steps, but rather are numbered based on their intervallic content). Note that some of these chords are created through chromatic neighbors, others through linear chromatic motion. Ziehn designates as a chord type, what some might view the result of chromatic embellishment. The passage shown in Example 2.5 demonstrates voice-leading connections between chromatically progressing seventh-chords. As is demonstrated in this example, in Ziehn’s view of harmony based on a chromatic-enharmonic system, chord progressions are clearly not limited to those familiar to the diatonic spectrum. In Example 2.5 in particular, there is little concern here for common-practice harmonic progressions. Furthermore, voice-leading procedures do not help to clarify the fundamentals of fully-diminished chords as they often do in diatonic progressions. Thus there are in some cases multiple interpretations of the fundamental of a verticality. The semitonal voice leading is the

66 Quoted from Carol Baron, “At the Cutting Edge: Three American Theorists at the End of the Nineteenth Century,” International Journal of Musicology 2 (1993): 206. “In jedem Dreiklange oder Spetimenaccorde irgend einer Art, sowie im grossen Nonenaccorde, kann jede Umkehrung die Grundform eines anderen, aus denselben Toenen bestehenden Accordes sein; also jeder accordische Ton kan Grundton warden.”
main concern here, which generates the resulting harmonic possibilities. From a melodic perspective, the progressions consist of ascending chromatic voices within a narrow range. The variety of harmonic possibilities can also be viewed as resulting from the combination of these chromatic voices progressing at different paces or with different rhythmic values. In relation to harmony, the individual voices in this case seem to assert independence regardless of their melodic development. As we shall see, this kind of chromatic voice leading between triadic harmonies at the surface level of the music is also characteristic of Busoni’s late style.

Polyphony also played an important role in Ziehn’s theories and he extensively explored the technique of “symmetrical inversion”—or the old contrarium reversum with chromatic expansion—in Canonical Studies: “The examples given in this book demonstrate that real canons are possible in any interval, and furthermore, that canonical harmonization is not necessarily restricted to a few diatonic chords.”67 As noted above, it is this procedure that caught the attention of Busoni, who was likely interested in the harmonic possibilities of such a technique beyond the limitations of conventional tonality. Canonical Studies concludes with examples of symmetrical double canons, one of which is shown in Example 2.6. There are two themes, each six measures in length. The comes voices are symmetrical inversions of the dux voices around the D–G# axis, oriented such that the inner parts correspond and the outer parts correspond. The comes voice enters halfway through the dux voice for each theme, a whole step below the dux for the first theme and a minor third below for the second theme. While this double canon is almost exclusively made up of triadic harmonies and contains short segments of common-practice chord progressions, no single key is clearly established through these progressions or a tonic-dominant axis. These triadic harmonies result from a purely logical

67 Bernhard Ziehn, Canonical Studies, 1.
contrapuntal process that is not integrated with a diatonic system of triadic relationships. For the most part, the triadic progressions exhibit parsimonious voice leading.

Ziehn emigrated from Erfurt, Germany to Chicago where he taught music theory, mathematics, and German at a German Lutheran School from 1868 to 1871. Though they may have been acquainted earlier, Busoni met with Ziehn in Chicago in 1910 during one of his concert tours and was impressed with both Ziehn and his student Wilhelm Mittelschulte, to whom he later dedicated *Fantasia contrappuntistica*. Busoni discovered in their music an approach to harmony through polyphony, again with reference to the style of Bach. In an article on Ziehn and Mittelschulte, Busoni expressed his sentiments about “the Gothics of Chicago,” as he called them, and their rejuvenation of what he referred to as “Die gotische Tonkunst”:

Gothic tone art at its core perhaps consists of: a feeling, a voice, an idea expressed through counterpoint, Bach simply knew no other way… They [Ziehn and Mittelschulte] honestly sought and contemplated the beautiful, authentic lines and Gothic “structures,” the rejuvenated colors of a great, new harmony, created through ruthlessly-logical interval motion of single, independent voices that, particularly at the points where they [the voices] come together, lead to unique chord constructions.

Later, in his edition of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* Busoni relates a similar notion also with reference to Bach’s music:

For the last time I proclaim the victory of melody over every other compositional technic in music: the universal polyphony as a last consequence of melody, as begetter of harmony and as carrier of the idea.

And again toward the end of the article on Ziehn and Mittelschulte Busoni writes:

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Namely as harmonist he (Ziehn) stands alone. It appears to me, Ziehn’s harmony is not to be thought of without polyphony. César Franck first practiced this art, whereby thematic voices unmercifully sounding together result in new chordal-intervallic creations. In this regard, Ziehn is also a rare contrapuntalist.  

Though he does not use the term, “polyphonic harmony,” in the above quotations, it is in these passages that Busoni most clearly expresses the concept of unique chords arising from the combination of independent voices and an essentially melodic-genetic point of view in which harmony is shaped by the thematic idea(s).

During their meeting in 1910, Ziehn suggested to Busoni that the technique of symmetrical inversion could be incorporated in a completion of Bach’s unfinished The Art of Fugue and even provided some examples of how the themes could be combined using this technique. Instances of symmetrical inversion appear in Fuga III, the Intermezzo, and the Appendix to Fuga IV from Busoni’s Fantasia contrappuntistica. In only the last case does Busoni end up using one of Ziehn’s examples. A few passages from Fantasia contrappuntistica illustrate how Busoni applies this technique to Bach’s themes and in the process produces some rather unique harmonic combinations and devices, such as harmonic displacement, chord overlap, and chord superposition, which are characteristic of Busoni’s late style.

The first example of symmetrical inversion appears in Fuga III of Fantasia contrappuntistica and is a more subtle case of harmonic experimentation compared to later instances. This first example nevertheless betrays Busoni’s completion of the fugue as that of a modern composer. Fuga III (mm. 384–563) is a nearly exact transcription of the third theme,

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72 Beaumont, Busoni the Composer, 162.

73 Busoni composed two versions of Fantasia contrappuntistica: versio definitivo and versio minore. The latter was, according to Beaumont, intended as a compositional study (Busoni, 171). In the versio minore, Busoni attributes a combination of the themes to Ziehn in a footnote. The same material appears in the “Anhang” of the versio definitivo, from which I draw this example.
containing the B-A-C-H motif, from Bach’s *Fuga a 3 soggetti* in *The Art of Fugue* up to the point at which the Bach fragment ends (mm. 193–239 in Bach’s original) followed by Busoni’s new completion of the fugue. In his completion, Busoni continues the fugue with a combination of the three themes. In the passage shown in Example 2.7a, Theme I is presented in the lowest voice in mm. 508–512 and is symmetrically inverted in diminution in mm. 512–515, still in the bass. While Bach’s style is essentially maintained throughout this passage, with a clear tonal focus on D minor, certain harmonic peculiarities stand out, some as a result of the symmetrically inverted voice. First of all, the symmetrical inversion of this theme, if treated in a manner similar to its appearance in D minor, would likely articulate the subdominant, given the opening D–G descending fifth in mm. 512–513 and the outline of a G triad. This, however, is not the case. Of course, re-contextualizing these pitches to function differently than in their initial context would certainly not be uncharacteristic of Bach, yet it sounds as though Busoni sets this theme apart from the upper three voices. For example, the opening D, beginning in the second half of m. 512, does not fit with the A dominant-seventh harmony clearly articulated in the upper three voices and so strongly prepared by its leading tone chord (m. 512, b. 2.5). When the G arrives in the bass in m. 513, it could function as the seventh of the dominant-seventh harmony in the upper three voices, as I show in the voice-leading sketch, yet this is an unusual approach to the seventh, its resolution then thwarted through a migration to G# in the alto voice of the following German augmented-sixth chord. Thus, the theme forms a rather awkward bass line within the prolongation of the dominant over the course of these measures.

At the end of the symmetrical inversion of this theme, a second peculiar harmonic moment occurs with the arrival of the overlapping B-A-C-H motif, beginning in the second half of m. 514 in the tenor voice (Example 2.7a-b). From a voice-leading perspective, this harmony,
C–E♭–G–B♭, passes between the V₃ and I in the following measure (see voice-leading sketch) but is unlike any typical diatonic progression one might expect at this point, such as a V₃–I or a passing VII°₇ to accommodate the opening B♭ of the Bach motif. In this example, it is as though the emphasis is on asserting the independence of the themes rather than their smooth integration with the other voices into a common-practice harmonic progression.

As the work progresses, Busoni’s use of stretto and canonic devices with symmetrical inversion results in more complicated harmonic combinations, clearly diverging from common-practice tonality. In the following examples, I illustrate instances of harmonically displaced chord members, chord overlap, and chord superposition, all features which appear frequently in Busoni’s late style. In the case of the Intermezzo, Busoni applies symmetrical inversion more extensively to the B-A-C-H motif or Theme III. A score and accompanying voice-leading sketch are shown in Example 2.8a-c. The Intermezzo presents this theme at different pitch levels, in stretto, and in symmetrical inversion. It begins and ends on D major, with portions that outline motion from tonic to dominant in this key. On a larger-scale, the D major of the Intermezzo acts as dominant preparation for the arrival of G at the beginning of Variation I. Like the Ziehn double canon, the Intermezzo consists of mostly tertian verticalities, in this case moving in parallel motion. The harmonic motion is governed by the shape of the theme, variations of which permeate each voice. Unique harmonic combinations are primarily a result of the contrapuntal devices at play; in particular, the harmonic displacement between the upper voices and the bass is a result of the stretto and canonic devices. This is shown in the voice-leading sketch by using lines to adjoin displaced chord members. For example, in mm. 569–572, variations of Theme III occur in each of the four voices, beginning on a G♯ major chord in m. 569. The soprano and bass voices state the theme transposed to begin on D♯ and G♯, respectively. The inner voices follow
the shape of Theme III (circled notes in Example 2.8b score), but with embellishment and altered
intervallic content. The variations in all four voices start at the same time but the first note of the
theme in the bass voice (G♯) is held two beats longer than the first note of the theme in the upper
three voices. Thus while the harmonic progression, re-aligned or “regularized” at the
middleground level, consists of a series of parallel triads and seventh chords (see voice-leading
sketch), the chord members of which outline the theme, the upper parts of each harmony are
displaced from the bass. This displacement at the surface level results in a series of verticalities
that, while still primarily tertian, result in a variety of intervallic combinations. The same process
continues in the second half of beat 572, with a canonic presentation of the theme, again in all
four voices, resulting in another series of displaced parallel seventh-chords. In this case, the
upper two voices, or the dux voices, move in parallel sixths. The lower two voices, or comes
voices, enter two beats later. From a harmonic perspective, the voices form a series of parallel
seventh chords in which the upper two voices are displaced from the lower two voices (see
voice-leading sketch below score in Example 2.8b-c).

The superposition of harmonies also occurs in Fantasia contrappuntistica, often as a
result of superposed thematic material. The above-described passage leads to what sounds like a
cadential formula in B minor at the end of m. 577, the F♯ dominant-seventh forming as the upper
E–C♯ is sustained, allowing the lower F♯–A♯ to align with the upper voices. Yet even as the B
minor arrives in the upper voices at the end of m. 577, it is superposed against the introduction of
the symmetrical inversion of the theme in the lower voices starting on E–G♯. Likewise, as the
passage later comes to a close on D major in the lower voices in m. 582, the A♭–C lingers over
from the previous D♭ major-seventh chord. It is not so much the technique of symmetrical
inversion but the imitative or canonic setting in which it occurs that creates these unique chord
combinations. Another feature worth noting are the long pedals sustained in the lowest voice against the continuing parallel harmonic motion in the upper voices. This feature and the use of displaced harmonies through imitative devices which result in unique harmonic combinations on the surface level are characteristic of Busoni’s late style.

A further example of harmonic superposition occurs later in the Anhang to Fuga IV. In the Anhang, Busoni combines Bach’s Themes I–III, presented together in the *Fuga a 3 soggetti*, with the primary theme of the whole work, as was also suggested by Ziehn. The passage in Example 2.9a-b from the beginning of the Anhang again incorporates symmetrical inversion, this time in the manner attributed to Ziehn. The main key is D minor with a shift to the dominant in m. 747. Each theme appears in symmetrical inversion over the course of the prolongation of the dominant (mm. 747–753). The symmetrical inversions of the Primary Theme and Theme II in the upper two voices clearly convey A minor, with a I–VIIø⁷–V₇–I progression over the course of mm. 749–751. The bass line, however, descending to a sustained F in m. 750, is at odds with the harmonic progression conveyed in the upper voices. While the sustained F functions as the seventh of VII⁰⁷, it clashes with the arrival of E in the V⁷ chord above. Rather than sounding integrated into the progression in the upper voices, the F seems to anticipate the arrival of a first inversion D minor at m. 751, which is superposed against the arrival of an A minor chord implied in the upper two voice by A and C. The D–G# augmented fourth in m. 750 strengthens the arrival of A and C as an implied A minor resolution of the previous VII⁰⁷. In m. 749, Theme I, now in the tenor, is incorporated into the underlying progression in A minor, yet it too, especially with its opening A–D fifth and its outline of the D minor triad, seems to convey D minor. The superposition of tonic and dominant continues over the course of mm. 751–753. As
with harmonic displacement, the technique of harmonic superposition is also a characteristic
harmonic device in Busoni’s late style.

2.4 Polyphonic Harmony in Busoni’s Late Style

Most of Busoni’s own works up to the first decade of the twentieth century were firmly
rooted in tonality, although they incorporated the chromaticism of the later nineteenth century. In
the first decade of the twentieth century, he more fervently expressed his views on the future
path of music. In one such passage from Entwurf, Busoni references polyphonic harmony in the
context of proclaiming the limitations of traditional instruments:

Perhaps, not yet all possibilities within these limits (instruments) have been exploited—
polyphonic harmony may yet be able to produce more sound phenomenon—, however,
the exhaustion of possibilities waits safely at the end of a path, the longest stretches of
which are already laid out. Where then do we turn our view, in which direction is the next
step?

I think, to abstract sounds, to unhindered technique, to boundlessness of tone, wherein all
effects must aim toward the pure rising up of a new beginning.74

Although it is perhaps more abstract in meaning than similar ideas expressed in his later article
“The New Harmony,” this passage indicates that in the first decade of the twentieth century,
Busoni considered the concept of polyphonic harmony to be a possible avenue or means of
harmonic exploration beyond the realms of traditional tonal harmony, something he intended to
experiment with in his own style.

Schoenberg also acknowledges such a development in his Theory of Harmony, published
later in 1911:

74 Busoni, Entwurf, 85: “Vielleicht, daß noch nicht alle Möglichkeiten innerhalb dieser Grenzen ausgebeutet wurden
– die polyphone Harmonik dürfte noch manches Klangphänomen erzeugen können –, aber die Erschöpftheit wartet
sicher am Ende einer Bahn, deren längste Strecke bereits zurückgelegt ist. Wohin wenden wir dann unseren Blick,
nach welcher Richtung führt der nächste Schritt?
Ich meine, zum abstrakten Klange, zur hindernislosen Technik, zur tonlichen Unabgegrenztheit. Dahin müssen alle
Bemühungen zielen, daß ein neuer Anfang jungfräulich erstehe.” The translation is my own.
I believe that continued evolution of the theory of harmony is not to be expected at present. Modern music that uses chords of six or more parts seems to be at a stage corresponding to the first epoch of polyphonic music. Accordingly, one might reach conclusions concerning the constitution of chords through a procedure similar to figured bass more easily than one could clarify their function by the methods of reference to degrees. For it is apparent, and will probably become increasingly clear, that we are turning to a new epoch of polyphonic style, and as in the earlier epochs, harmonies will be a product of the voice leading: justified solely by the melodic line.\(^\text{75}\)

In Schoenberg’s characterization, it seems that this “new harmony” is not viewed as an evolution but rather a return to earlier polyphonic styles. The “new harmony” he describes is not necessarily rooted in Stufen theory and not beholden to earlier trends in harmonic practice and, therefore, while it is a return to polyphony, it represents an extension into a new realm of harmony resulting from melodic independence.

It is interesting to note that Busoni sets a polyphonic approach to harmony apart from the techniques of some of his contemporaries. In particular, Busoni argues a distinction between his music and that of Debussy’s in his article “About Himself and His Works,” particularly in response to critics who described his Berceuse élégiaque as reflecting Debussy’s style:

“Debussy’s tone pictures are parallel and homophonic; I wish mine to be polyphonic and ‘universal’. In Debussy’s music we find the chord of the dominant ninth as a harmonic foundation and the whole tone as a melodic principle, without their merging together. I try to avoid every system, and to turn harmony and melody into indissoluble unity.”\(^\text{76}\)

While his characterization of Debussy’s music exhibits a rather limited view, his perceived distinction reveals a great deal about his own approach; namely, that his means of harmonic exploration is rooted in the unity of harmony and melody within a polyphonic texture.


\(^\text{76}\) Busoni, *Essence*, 49.
Busoni’s above-described views on harmony came later in his compositional development, far removed from his imitation of Bach as a youth. It is in this sense that Leichtentritt and subsequent authors refer to Busoni’s “polyphonic harmony” as resulting in harmonic formations considered to be novel or viewed as extensions of tonal harmony. Unfortunately, later authors who also used the term polyphonic harmony to describe Busoni’s late style did not specify in any greater detail the extensions or methods hinted at in Leichtentritt’s description.\textsuperscript{77} It was not unknown during Busoni’s lifetime, however, that this feature of his music contributed greatly to his personal style, and more particularly, his own unique treatment of harmony. Other than Leichtentritt’s descriptions, musicologist Denis Browne states in a lecture entitled “Modern Harmonic Tendencies” delivered for the Royal Musical Association in 1914, “his (Busoni’s) harmonies, often simple in themselves, are generally combined with other moving harmonies, equally simple; but his methods are so individual that the results could not be mistaken for the work of anyone else.”\textsuperscript{78}

In order to clarify the concept of polyphonic harmony in the context of Busoni’s late works, or what these individual methods Browne refers to are, a more specific definition of polyphonic harmony is useful, one that extends beyond the more general meanings associated with the term as harmony as a cumulative result of independent lines. More recent analysts have already begun to focus on more specific characteristics of harmony in Busoni’s late style. John C. Waterhouse makes a case for Busonian influences in the music of his student Kurt Weill. He describes harmony in Weill’s \textit{The Three-Penny Opera} as “‘semitonal instability,’ whereby one chord or harmonic complex dissolves into the next through the chromatic shifting of a semitone


\textsuperscript{78} Denis Browne, “Modern Harmonic Tendencies,” \textit{Proceedings of the (Royal) Musical Association}, 40\textsuperscript{th} session (1913–1914): 150.
by one or more of its notes. The result is a continual hovering between major and minor keys, and a constant threat to tonality itself, which is, however, usually maintained by a clear tonal focus in the melodic line and by such devices as pedal points or ostinato basses.\textsuperscript{79} He attributes these characteristics to Busoni’s mature music. In this sense, polyphonic harmony in Busoni’s late style is harmony as the \textit{result} of stepwise and most often semitonal voice leading as a principle of progression. The harmonic progression is often shaped by an unfolding melodic or motivic idea. The stepwise voice leading between harmonies may result in non-tertian harmonies without a clearly articulated tonal center or, as is more often the case, in mostly tertian harmonies with a clearly articulated tonal center.

Though Busoni’s writings reflect a melodic-genetic point of view, a recurring theme in them is the relationship between melody and harmony. In \textit{Einheit}, he writes, “this ‘absolute’ melody, at first a self-sufficient formation, united itself subsequently with the accompanying harmony, and later melted with it into oneness; out of this oneness the continually progressive polyharmony now aims to free and liberate itself.”\textsuperscript{80} In the realization of this concept, melodic and motivic ideas play an important role in shaping the harmonic progressions, as is the case in the Intermezzo movement discussed above.

Peter Schubert discusses a similar concept in his article on Schoenberg’s notion of a new polyphonic style and its harmonic implications at the turn of the century. What Schubert explains, in reference to Schoenberg’s writings, is a kind of polyphony where the structure relies on motive-based contrapuntal combinations and chromatic voice-leading: “The reader may be relieved to see abandoned the identification of chords with many altered factors and with roots


omitted; yet what structural principle remains? The only conclusion that can be drawn is that, when it is impossible to register chords in a key and 'control through the melodic lines' takes over, the chromatic scale, with its many leading notes, will be the clearest or most basic type of justification." Schubert closes his article with the following: “Is the 'new epoch of polyphonic style' a conceit for Schoenberg's music alone, or does it embrace the work of other turn-of-the-century composers? Do the kinds of 'first species' structures that have been discussed here occur as elements in twelve-note music, or was the 'new epoch' ended summarily by the systematization of twelve-note technique? Answers to these questions must await further research. It may have been a very short epoch indeed, heralded by a single prophet.” I would argue that this epoch was not exclusive to Schoenberg’s early music. Busoni represents at least one other composer who took a similar path.

Let us now focus briefly on the harmonic aspects of the passage from the Berceuse élégiaque shown at the beginning of this chapter (Example 2.1a-d) and establish some general harmonic characteristics. First, almost all of the harmonies are of tertian construction, yet at the surface level the chord successions do not always reflect common-practice harmonic progressions. The root motion between these triads is typically parallel. Whether parallel or not, the principle means of harmonic progression at the surface level is stepwise, often chromatic, voice leading. Second, if the underlying basis for harmonic constructions is tertian, then not every accumulation of the voices at each point in time is considered an autonomous harmonic entity. This is, of course, also the case in common-practice tonal analysis where temporal factors are integral in establishing surface-level dissonances such as suspensions or anticipations.

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Given these basic harmonic characteristics, from an analytical perspective, important questions arise with regard to harmony in Busoni’s late style: What is the basis for understanding deeper-levels of structure in the absence of common-practice harmonic progressions on the surface level or a clear tonic-dominant axis? How can a tonic or referential sonority in a tonal sense be established under such circumstances? What is the basis of hierarchy between pitches and sonorities upon which structural levels can be established? Most would agree that F is the tonal center of the passage shown from the *Berceuse élé giaque*. But the nature of its establishment as such or of the prolongation of an F tertian sonority is somewhat different in this style than in its common-practice predecessors. In the absence of common-practice progressions, other factors such as the pedal point, the principle melodic idea and the placement of an F tertian sonority within the phrase structure all help to establish F as tonal center. In general, phrasing, textural shifts, motivic connections, and other factors can help to articulate structural harmonies and their linear connections at deeper structural levels. As is often the case, these deeper-level connections may also help to outline certain harmonies, establishing the basis for hierarchical relationships. Furthermore, some tonal relationships emerge at deeper structural levels. In this way, the harmony used in these works can be viewed as an extension of tonality in that it is rooted in tertian constructions, yet the means by which these tertian constructions are prolonged at the surface level is no longer entirely based on common-practice harmonic progression or necessarily a tonic-dominant axis.

That is not to say, however, that all vestiges of common-practice voice-leading principles are no longer present in Busoni’s late style. As with some of his contemporaries, Busoni, by his own admission, did not seek to abandon tonality, but rather to expand it. From an analytical perspective, the ways in which tonality is extended in these works are (1) the basis of harmonic
progression is fundamentally different at the foreground level since it is rooted in stepwise, mostly chromatic, voice leading and therefore (2) while the triad is the basis of harmonic construction, harmonic possibilities are rooted in the chromatic rather than the solely the major or minor scales or, in some cases, major and minor are unified, and as a result (3) the means by which harmonies are prolonged is in some cases different than in common-practice tonality.

The following chapter describes some analytical approaches that provide a framework for the analyses in this study with regard to prolongation and hierarchy. The analyses in this study seek to address both the large-scale tonal aspects of the works and the surface-level harmonic and contrapuntal features characteristic of Busoni’s late style.
CHAPTER 3

ANALYTICAL APPROACH

3.1 Introduction

Busoni’s late works present something of a challenge for the music analyst since they lie somewhere in between the realms of tonal and post-tonal music. One might observe that, especially in his last major work *Doktor Faust*, Busoni combines tonal and post-tonal passages and the line between them is often blurred. As stated in the previous chapter, though in many instances harmonies are primarily tertian, harmonic progressions and voice leading do not always reflect common-practice tonality. In some cases, the term pantonality could describe passages where there is implication of tonal relationships, yet no key center is clearly established. These instances are, however, rare in three orchestral elegies in this study since nearly always there is a clear sense of tonal center. The nature of Busoni’s late style, stepwise progressions of predominantly tertian sonorities resulting from a complex interweaving of independent lines, favors an analytical approach rooted in linear analysis, one that goes some way toward understanding the complex interaction between the horizontal and vertical dimensions at the surface level and, in particular, one that seeks to unravel this complexity through graphic analysis. While Schenkerian analysis seeks to do this with common-practice tonal music, one should be wary of a strict application of Schenkerian methodology, principles of tonal counterpoint, and functional harmonic progressions to Busoni’s late works at large. While some functional harmonic progressions may appear at the surface level or even underlie the structure, progressions do not always reflect the tonic-dominant axis characteristic of common-practice tonality.
In order to provide a context for my own analytical approach, in this chapter, I provide a brief survey of some analytical approaches that retain concepts from Schenkerian analysis such as prolongation, hierarchy, and structural levels, in the context of post-tonal analysis and further clarify these concepts in relation to my own analytical approach. In addition, I orient my own approach by way of contrast to two recent approaches to tonal and post-tonal tertian music, namely Evan Jones’s approach to prolongation in tonal music through the concept of pervasive fluency and Matthew Santa’s approach to analyzing post-tonal diatonic music based on set theory mod-7.

3.2 Prolongation in Post-Tonal Analysis

Various analytical approaches to post-tonal music seek to establish structural relationships and connections between pitches, motives, and sonorities in different ways. Of the three main analytical models that have emerged for post-tonal music—prolongational, associational, and transformational—, my analyses are based on a prolongational model. It is by now well known that many analysts have extended some concepts of Schenkerian analysis, in particular the idea of prolongation, to post-tonal music, arguing that a modified version of this analytical method, one that assimilates more complex, extended, or new musical practices, can be effective in understanding the structure of some post-tonal works. This approach, referred to

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by some as linear analysis, incorporates the concept of linear progression and the possibility of particular pitches and sonorities bearing structural significance based on a multitude of contextual factors not necessarily related to consonance and dissonance, tonal counterpoint, or functional harmony. Many examples of this approach maintain the possibility of prolongation and hierarchical relationships between pitches and sonorities in a variety of post-tonal circumstances.\(^4\) Apart from contextual factors, these analyses often qualify prolongation through systematic frameworks other than conventional tonality.

Some analysts find the concept of prolongation in post-tonal music to be problematic and prefer other methods of relating pitches and harmonies and determining structure, in particular, an associational rather than a prolongational model. In one of the earliest articles on this topic, Joseph Straus establishes conditions for prolongation that are not possible in most non-tertian music and argues instead for an associational model using mod-12 set theory in order to establish

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\(^4\) Of those listed in footnote 83, James Baker must be excluded here since he does not claim prolongation but rather adopts certain other Schenkerian principles in post-tonal analysis.
structural relationships.\footnote{Joseph Straus, “The Problem of Prolongation in Post-Tonal Music,” \textit{Journal of Music Theory} 31, no. 1 (1987): 1–21.} Pitches may be associated through contextual factors such as metrical placement, articulation, dynamics, timbre, and register but associational devices in and of themselves do not constitute prolongations. Straus’s conditions for prolongation in tonal music are 1) “a consistent, pitch-defined basis for determining relative structural weight,” 2) “a consistent hierarchy of consonant harmonies,” 3) “a consistent set of relationships between tones of lesser and greater structural weight,” and 4) “a clear distinction between the vertical and horizontal dimensions.”\footnote{Ibid., 2–5.} Those who have incorporated a prolongational approach in analyzing post-tonal music, however, often have a different understanding of prolongation. Some have argued for a more flexible definition of prolongation, one in which the conditions that Straus outlines in tonal music are either replaced by other factors in post-tonal music or they have argued that not all of Straus’s conditions are necessary, even in tonal music, for prolongation.

For example, Steve Larson argues for a cognitive understanding of prolongation in which prolongation and hierarchical relationships may occur without such a strong reliance on the connection between consonance and structural weight. In defining contextual stability, Larson writes that “to hear a note as unstable means to auralize a more stable pitch to which it tends to move and a path (usually involving stepwise motion) that would take it there, displacing its trace.”\footnote{Ibid., 106.} He also makes an important distinction between “prolongation” and “structural hearing,” writing,

\begin{quote}
Prolongation is also a particular kind of association: it is an association between events at different hierarchical levels. This suggests that sameness, similarity, or successorship must play a role in prolongation, too. This is because prolongation results from "transformations that turn notes on one level into notes on another level. And those transformations, to be understood as such, create similarity by preserving sameness in
\end{quote}
some element and by introducing differences through operations on alphabets, operations which are based on sameness or successorship. The act of hearing a passage of music as containing a prolongation I call (after Salzer 1952) "structural hearing." Accordingly, Schenker’s term Fernhören means global structural hearing. These terms suggest a fruitful way of refocusing debates concerning the relation of Schenkerian analysis to the experience of listeners.  

In this regard, Larson is not proposing a model for prolongation in post-tonal music, his purpose is to redefine prolongation in tonal music and, by extension, this redefinition has ramifications for post-tonal analysis. Larson’s “Taxonomy of Transformations,” or the conditions under which a transformation may be heard as a prolongation are essentially embellishment figures that can be deduced cognitively in both tonal and post-tonal music.  

Along the same lines, Fred Lerdahl argues that whereas consonance and dissonance in tonal music contribute to establishing hierarchy, in post-tonal music certain “salience conditions” replace stability conditions in helping to establish hierarchy. The following statement by Charles Morrison is further representative of this view of prolongation and hierarchy in the absence of common-practice tonality: “Consideration of prolongational structures not based entirely on patterns and processes associated with the major-minor system may reveal details and relationships in post-tonal music that might otherwise remain unaccounted for through a ‘strict-constructionist’ point of view. And one element of flexibility is the acceptance of prolongational structures based on salience conditions if abstract musical constructs and attendant patterns and processes are not available.”

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88 Ibid., 115.
89 Ibid., 119ff.
90 Lerdhal, “Atonal Prolongational Structure” and “Spatial and Psychoacoustic Factors in Atonal Prolongation.” Along the same lines, Joseph Dubiel’s separation of acoustic property from structural significance in Schenkerian analysis also disagrees with Straus’s conditions for prolongation, “‘When you are a Beethoven’: Kinds of Rules in Schenker’s Counterpoint,” Journal of Music Theory 34, no. 2: 291–340.
91 Morrison, “Prolongation in the Final Movement of Bartok’s String Quartet No. 4,” 194.
One might add to the above statement that abstract musical constructs and attendant patterns not associated with tonality are also sometimes applicable to many post-tonal works and that these patterns could provide a basis for structural connections and hierarchy. Some analysts seek to show how individual pieces may provide their own concrete musical constructs and patterns within which to relate chords and pitches such that each piece provides its own structural harmonies and system of hierarchy and thus creates the conditions under which prolongation is possible. Craig Ayrey illustrates this idea in his analysis of Berg’s *Scheideweg*, writing:

> Assuming the lack of a background archetype for prolongation, the first steps toward a definition of the rules governing structural phenomena can only be to ‘reconstruct the system of which they are manifestations’ (Levi-Strauss), and initially at least, these rules can be perceived only as unique to individual compositions. In *Am Scheideweg*, for example, the rule which governs the creation of high-level linear connections is the association of register and phonological opposition; once analysed out the rule is revealed as fundamental to the construction of a self-referential system.\(^92\)

Edward Pearsall’s approach is similar to that of Ayrey, particularly in his broader proposition that “if each atonal composition generates its own organic structural material then it seems likely that each atonal composition may also generate its own voice-leading characteristics and harmonic background.”\(^93\) Morrison also points to specific principles that provide a basis for prolongation in a specific piece. For example, he proposes that a “departure-return pattern” is the basis for foreground prolongation in Bartok’s String Quartet no. 4 and that “nesting” of this pattern provides the basis for large-scale prolongation.\(^94\)

Taking a somewhat different approach, Olli Väisälä proposes a broader theory for how certain post-tonal pieces do in fact meet Straus’s conditions for prolongation by other means. In his analyses of certain post-tonal pieces on the basis of prolongation involving non-triadic,

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\(^94\) Morrison, “Prolongation in the Final Movement of Bartok’s String Quartet No. 4,” 180.
referential sonorities, Väisälä takes a different view of harmony and intervals from that of Straus. In his dissertation on the topic, which is a compilation of three articles, he states: “Straus identifies harmonies as pitch-class sets and intervals as interval classes, which involves the presupposition of full octave equivalence or unrestricted registral freedom. In the present studies, octave equivalence is restricted in variable degrees; in other words, registral disposition is regarded as essential for the identity of harmonies and intervals.” He argues that “the structural status of harmonies and intervals is crucially influenced by the registral distribution of pitches.” This approach provides a means for meeting Straus’s “consonance/dissonance” and “harmony/voice-leading” conditions for prolongation in the absence of norms associated with conventional tonality.

Finally, Edward Laufer and Timothy L. Jackson take a linear approach to some early twentieth-century, post-tonal music, including works by Schoenberg, Webern, Debussy, Bartók, Dallapiccola, Sessions, and Tubin. Of particular importance in some of their analyses is the idea of the “referential sonority” as the primary structural entity of a work and the main source of its cohesiveness. Laufer states: “The prime sonority will be extended by what I have called *composing between the notes of the prime sonority* – a procedure analogous to Schenkerian prolongation of an interval or *composing-out* of a chord.” Laufer shows in his graphic analyses structural levels relying on contextual factors. Indeed, Jackson notes in his article on Schoenberg’s Op. 14 songs “that contextual factors, including register, phrasing, rhythm, dynamics, texture, and motive assume greater significance in defining structure in post-tonal

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98 Laufer, “An Approach to Linear Analysis of Some Early Twentieth-Century Compositions.”
music than in tonal music.”\textsuperscript{99} It is important to note that the referential sonority is not the only means of establishing structure. In Jackson’s analyses, a referential sonority is not composed out over the course of the piece, but rather the structure is “realized through directed, large-scale, contrapuntal motion from one sonority to another.”\textsuperscript{100} Sonorities become structural based on the above-listed contextual factors which are unique to the piece.

In conclusion, the means by which prolongation and hierarchy are established in post-tonal analysis are varied. The concept of prolongation is either expanded or modified in such a way as to replace Straus’s conditions for prolongation in tonal music. All approaches, however, tend to focus on contextual factors that allow for surface-level and deeper-level connections based on a multitude of musical parameters and essentially some kind of musical structure, whether it involves an explicit hierarchy of structural levels or not. Arthur Maisel’s description of more general requirements for prolongation in atonal music reflect this more flexible approach: “first, that a large structure seems to be organized around a single musical object—be it a chord, an interval, or a single pitch; second, one must be able to show on the surface of the music how the listener could, in principle at least, cognitively organize the intervening music so as to be able to connect distant points.”\textsuperscript{101} I adopt this broader conception of prolongation. I consider prolongation in a general sense as the continuation of a musical event, which is not present at every moment on the musical surface, by means of elaboration or retention.\textsuperscript{102} In particular, my own analyses illustrate large-scale structure that revolves around (1) a tonal center and a referential sonority that is tertian in construction, and (2) stepwise, often chromatic voice-

\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., 47.
\textsuperscript{101} Maisel, “Voice Leading as Drama in Wozzeck,” 178.
\textsuperscript{102} This definition is based upon Drabkin’s encyclopedic definition on Grove Music Online, ed. L. Macy (accessed [March 7, 2007]), http://www.grovemusic.com, which itself is very similar to Forte and Gilbert’s definition in Introduction to Schenkerian Analysis (New York: Norton, 1982), 142. Salzer defines it more broadly as the “shaping and individual treatment through elaboration, expansion and detour of the music’s basic direction.” Theorists differ as to the methods of prolongation and the subtle distinctions between them.
leading connections between primarily tertian sonorities at the surface level. These voice-leading connections, in combination with contextual factors, help to establish prolongational spans and structural relationships both at the foreground and middleground levels.

3.3 A More Recent Approach to Prolongation in Tonal Music through Pervasive Fluency

Evan Jones’s writings on prolongation address tonal music, but nonetheless have implications for post-tonal analysis involving tertian sonorities. Jones provides a method of asserting tonal prolongations based on what he calls a “pervasive fluency” between harmonies in which each note in both harmonies “participates in a passing or neighboring line in modular diatonic space that extends continuously to some note in the other verticality.”\textsuperscript{103} He describes his theory of pervasive fluency as follows:

I propose that under certain circumstances, a confluence of diatonic lines in vertical juxtaposition can be understood and experienced as connecting two harmonies at some distance from one another. According to the theory, a connection between two harmonic verticalities may be posited if every pitch class in each verticality participates in a "primitive" diatonic line that extends continuously to the other verticality. For convenience of reference, one may imagine the various notes of each chord as "endpoints" of such lines. When this condition is met, I recognize an instance of "pervasive fluency" between the two verticalities. As will be seen, the linkage of one chord to another by these means is not a symmetric relation. Even if all of a chord’s notes initiate primitive lines that extend to another chord, it may be that not all the notes in the second chord participate in such lines (since one diatonic line may branch into several, or several may coalesce into one). This is exactly the condition I place, however all notes in each chord must participate in a primitive line extending to the other chord.\textsuperscript{104}

This approach enables voice-leading connections between harmonies beyond the surface level with a more flexible method of establishing hierarchy. He represents these voice-leading connections in diatonic space with lattice diagrams. Jones points out some important differences.

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., 2.
between his method and Schenkerian analysis. First, stepwise voice-leading connections between harmonies are understood in diatonic space independent of register on all hierarchical levels in contrast to Schenker’s concept of obligatory register. Second, Jones’s approach excludes non-adjacent melodic motion and focuses exclusively on stepwise melodic connections in diatonic space and, in particular, passing and neighboring motions.

While Jones engages with several established transformational models of voice-leading and builds upon them in his own theory, his observation on how these models do not easily allow for a complex of independent voices moving in stepwise motion that often split into two or more lines or that converge on the same note, presents a convincing basis for a new theory and analytical approach to tonal prolongation. While he does not engage with non-tertian harmonic constructions, his approach at the very least represents an alternative path toward maintaining these concepts in analysis of non-functional, tertian, post-tonal music.

While I am convinced that the concept of pervasive fluency could be shown to underlie prolongation of certain diatonic and chromatic passages in Busoni’s music, and that the notion of pervasive fluency as a means of prolongation may help to unravel the often fragmented and intersecting voices in Busoni’s later music, I do not adopt this approach in the following analyses. First, it does not aid in the determination of prolongational spans or of structurally significant pitches and sonorities. As Robert Kelley states, “pervasively fluent passages are helpful in determining how one might go about hearing a passage as prolonging one harmony, but pervasive fluency does not determine what chords are structural or how one may find prolongations.”

Jones’s method shows pervasively fluent passages wherein multiple readings of prolongational spans and the structural orientation of a particular harmony are supported.

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Which reading to favor is based on analytical judgment and contextual factors. While I discuss in some cases multiple readings of a passage in my own analyses, in general, the voice-leading sketches on the musical staff, as they do in Schenkerian analysis, more accurately and quickly convey a specific reading and are, in my opinion, more conducive to showing hierarchy. Second, in many cases, I maintain closeness to the foreground in order to interpret harmonic events as a result of contrapuntal combinations and often as some kind of rhythmic displacement. While it serves well the purpose for which it was intended, Jones’s analytical apparatus, particularly the lattices, would be ill-suited to this purpose since they would obscure some of these surface-level events.

3.4 An Associational Approach to Post-Tonal, Tertian Music

In a discussion of post-tonal analysis, one may distinguish between non-tertian, post-tonal music and tertian, non-functional or partially functional, post-tonal music. Analysts have applied both the prolongational and associational models to tertian post-tonal music. Many of the approaches listed in footnote 83 utilize a prolongational approach for non-functional, post-tonal music. In order to orient my own approach by way of comparison, I present here a broad explanation of a recent approach that considers tertian post-tonal music in particular.

Matthew Santa elaborated on Straus’s associational model and developed an approach to analyzing post-tonal diatonic music based on set theory mod-7. He identifies music that is based on a diatonic scale but is not tonal, following Straus’s above-mentioned conditions, either because there are no tertian harmonies, tonal center, hierarchical relationships based on function, or common-practice contrapuntal procedures. Since tertian, post-tonal music is not always

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“tonal,” it does not always respond well to a tonal analysis. Since it is often diatonic, it is also
difficult to apply mod-12 set theory—thus the need for a mod-7 approach that borrows concepts
from the mod-12 system. Indeed his analyses, based on set theory adapted to a mod-7
perspective, show relationships that would be missed from the mod-12 perspective.

Though I do not address here the transformational model of analysis, Santa’s description
of the difference between his approach, which is rooted in the associational model, and the
transformational model is revealing: “The associational approach focuses on how lines express
motives that are musical objects, while the transformational approach focuses on how voices
express motives that are successions of operations.”107 The former is concerned with linking
pitch segments based on features in the music such as register, melodic contour, duration, etc.,
while the latter is concerned with operations between musical objects. In particular, Santa’s
approach seeks to establish certain criteria in post-tonal music for determining chordal tonal
centers and pitch subordination within post-tonal diatonic harmonies based on their intervallic
make-up, doublings, voicings, and the linear context in which they appear. The structural
significance of a chord is based on factors such as metric, agogic, ordinal (based on its position
in a series), and harmonic stress. Thus structural levels do emerge with recognition of structural
versus ornamental functions, certain pitches being structural based on contextual salience and
motivic significance.108

Since there may be in any given piece many transformations between pc-sets that reveal
structural relationships at the more abstract pitch-class level, there must be a reason to associate
pitches or pitch-classes, lest the association be arbitrary or unmusical. In this regard, Santa’s
approach shares with linear analysis the need to segment, to provide logical associations between

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107 Santa, 5.
108 Santa, 71.
non-adjacent musical events, and to argue the salience of certain musical events based on multiple parameters apparent at the surface level, rather than completely relying on relationships only at deeper levels of abstraction. Analysis thus, as Santa relates, should maintain a close relationship to musical objects. Santa’s approach, of course, differs from the prolongational model in that it does not assume structural levels through prolongation. In my view, this difference is conceptual, but it may also be based on the music under scrutiny. In the pieces in this study, several features create conditions under which, I believe, the concept of prolongation and structural hierarchy are possible. Certainly the perception of a tonal center and a referential sonority around which other pitches and harmonies can be oriented contribute to the possibility of prolongation. Furthermore, certain factors allow for prolongation including the underlying tertian constructions arrived at through directed, stepwise voice leading, in which certain pitches can be said to be “chordal” versus embellishing, and the multitude of other contextual factors including motivic significance, registral connections, texture, etc., that help in segmenting and determining structurally salient pitches and sonorities. Finally, formal aspects can promote deeper-level structural relationships between surface-level events.

3.5 Analytical Approach to the Orchestral Elegies

Many of Busoni’s late works still maintain a clear relationship between consonance and dissonance and, in some cases, passages of functional harmony and common-practice tonality. Likewise, there is often a clear distinction between harmonies within a progression and, in some cases, it is also possible to determine chord and non-chord tones simply due to the fact that the triad is still the basic building block of harmonic construction. This allows to a large extent for a hierarchy between pitches and sonorities analogous to common-practice tonal music. On the
other hand, the traditional notion of consonance and dissonance cannot be said to be continually present in Busoni’s late style, nor is there a consistent tonic-dominant axis, nor are there consistently functional progressions as in common-practice tonal music. If a general basis for harmonic progression exists in Busoni’s late style, it is one of stepwise, often chromatic, voice leading that connects a series of adjacent harmonies. However, just as they do in tonal music, contextual factors also play a significant role in establishing salient pitches and harmonies in a hierarchical relationship and their prolongational spans. Thus, I consider hierarchy between pitches both melodically and harmonically largely a result of contextual factors in combination with an underlying tonal center. In this regard, the analytical approach, like the music, lies somewhere between tonal and post-tonal methodology. To be clear, the following analyses do resemble those presented above which apply to non-tertian, post-tonal music in that they often rely on contextual factors as a means of establishing prolongation in the absence of functional harmonic progressions at the surface level. Large-scale linear motions are often articulated by foreground events such as composing out motives, the alignment of voices, a change of direction in the voices, or coincidence with the beginning or ending of phrases or thematic gestures. Likewise, metric and rhythmic emphasis as well as orchestration and texture play a significant role in determining structurally significant sonorities and prolongational spans at the surface level. Some of the above-mentioned parameters, especially register and texture, can help to establish deeper-level connections on the middleground and background levels. Other large-scale factors such as form also play a role in defining deeper-level connections.

In the voice-leading sketches in this study, foreground and middleground sketches do represent structural levels. With regard to hierarchical levels, prolongational approaches, to use Cohn’s and Dempster’s terminology, consider the middleground and background levels to be
either “inclusional” hierarchy or “representational” hierarchy. In my own analysis, as in Schenkerian analysis, I consider the notes and events on the middleground and background level as “inclusional” hierarchy in that they are abstract representations of notes and events on the foreground level and may not literally occur in the foreground. Following Komar, I do argue to some extent for different criteria in determining prolongation at different levels, with contextual stability more important at the foreground level and formal salience at the middleground and background levels. With regard to voice-leading sketches, though they are sometimes similar to Schenker’s Ursätzen, the specific types of Ursätzen as illustrated in Der freie Satz are not consistently present in Busoni’s late music.

While discussing the structure of each work, I refer to voice-leading sketches at a deep middleground level. For more detailed discussions, I refer to foreground or middleground sketches. As in Schenkerian analysis, whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes and stemmed and non-stemmed notes are used to show hierarchy (stem length, however, is not), beams show linear progressions, and slurs show either linear progressions or arpeggitations. Dotted slurs or beams represent the continued background presence of a pitch or common tones between adjacent harmonies. Due to the contrapuntal complexity of Busoni’s late style, beams are often useful in illustrating linear progressions rather than slurs. There are often several linear progressions occurring simultaneously, as in Example 2.3c, and thus a need to distinguish different lines using the small half circle, meant to show a line crossing over another line, a technique I adopt from Timothy Jackson. Finally, I occasionally show stepwise voice leading

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109 According to Cohn and Dempster, Representational Hierarchy means individual events on a given level are represented by one chosen member at the next highest level as opposed to Inclusional Hierarchy, which means events on the lowest level are organized into successively larger groups at higher levels. See Richard Cohn and Douglas Dempster, “Hierarchical Unities, Plural Unities: Toward a Reconciliation,” Disciplining Music: Musicology and its Canons, eds. Katherine Bergeron and Philip Bohlman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 156–181.

using solid or dotted lines between note heads, particularly between notes that are not on the same staff.
CHAPTER 4

BERCEUSE ÉLÉGIAQUE

4.1 Introduction

In 1909, inspired by his father’s death, Busoni composed a piano piece entitled *Berceuse*. It was later added as the final piece of the 1907 *Elegien* for piano, a collection of short pieces that represent a turning point toward a more modern and personal style. Busoni’s mother Anna Weiss Busoni passed away later in the year 1909 and it was then that Busoni composed the orchestral version entitled *Berceuse élégiaque*, which was completed on October 27 and dedicated to his mother.¹¹¹ The orchestral version is twice as long as the original piano version, including varied repetition and re-composition of some material as well as the addition of new material. Whether or not Busoni originally conceived the piano version as potentially adaptable to an orchestral setting, the new medium enhances many features of the original work, such as extensive pedal points and the overlap and superposition of harmonies. It also gave Busoni a chance to experiment further with new instrumental combinations in concert with his progression into a more modern idiom. He describes the work in the program notes to its New York premiere on February 21, 1911, as containing “a number of singular harmonic and instrumental combinations which have not yet been approved” and lists the instruments as “Poesie for sixfold muted string quartet, three flutes, one oboe, three clarinets, four horns, gong, harp and celesta.”¹¹² The orchestra is thus paired down significantly from his earlier orchestral works to the bare minimum, allowing for more focus on timbre and color.

*Berceuse élégiaque* received mixed reviews upon its premiere at Carnegie Hall in what was Gustav Mahler’s last concert as conductor of the New York Philharmonic. All seemed to

¹¹² Program notes to the New York premiere, February 21, 1911.
agree, however, that it was certainly modern in sentiment. The New York Times noted that “the harmonic and instrumental combinations were singular to a degree” and described it as “a gruesome work in a modern composer’s most modern manner. However, it was applauded, and Mr. Busoni, who sat in a box with Mr. Toscanini, rose to bow his thanks.”

Some were even less kind, The Press finding it “weird, and, for the moment at least, incomprehensible,” while American music critic Henry Edward Krehbiel wrote in the New York Tribune that Busoni “introduce(d) enough cacophony to make the audience wish he had never perpetrated his ‘Berceuse élégiaque’, or if he had he had not honored New York with its first performance.”

After later hearing the piece read by Oskar Fried and the Berlin Philharmonic, musicologist and Busoni biographer Hugo Leichtentritt wrote, “neither the conductor nor the players knew what to do with the strange piece which evoked the barely suppressed mirth of the orchestra and Fried’s great embarrassment. Its polytonality, its collisions of major and minor triads, its strange enervated harmony, its symphony of sighs appeared altogether novel in 1910.”

Not all reactions to the work, however, were negative or ambivalent. After having attended a 1912 performance of the work at the Berlin Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Schoenberg wrote, “I felt most drawn to the Berceuse, which is a very beautiful, deeply arresting piece. It made a strong impression on me from beginning to end and, as I say, really moved me.”

Busoni reflects on the Berceuse élégiaque in an article written two years after its premiere:

A cradle song sung for the dead mother…With this piece, which is now two years old, I succeeded for the first time in hitting upon my own sound idiom and in dissolving the form into the feeling. This made it all the more surprising to me to read of my work being

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116 Busoni, Selected Letters, 414.
taken for the art of the Frenchman Debussy. I want to correct this error firmly. Debussy’s art propels his personal and clearly defined feeling out of his own nature, into the outer world. I endeavor to draw upon the Infinite which surrounds mankind and to give it back in created form.\textsuperscript{117}

The reader will recall from Chapter 2 the passage which follows shortly after the above description:

Debussy’s tone pictures are parallel and homophonic; I wish mine to be polyphonic and “multi-versal.” In Debussy’s music we find the chord of the dominant ninth as a harmonic foundation and the whole tone as a melodic principle, without their merging together. I try to avoid every system [and] to turn harmony and melody into indissoluble unity.\textsuperscript{118}

That Busoni should choose Debussy as a means of emphasizing certain aspects of \textit{Berceuse élégiaque} by way of comparison may have been rooted in a desire to distance his music from what critics deemed Impressionist. His characterization of Debussy’s music perhaps served to both contradict critics who had also earlier made this comparison with some of his other pieces, but more importantly, to highlight what elements of the \textit{Berceuse élégiaque} he thought novel, in particular his experimentation with harmony and melody in a more polyphonic setting. The integration of harmony and melody exemplified in the polyphonic style of Bach and his contemporaries, much to Busoni’s admiration, was, of course, firmly grounded in tonal harmony. While tertian chords are the basic building blocks of harmony in \textit{Berceuse élégiaque}, the polyphonic approach and characteristics of voice leading, chords, chord progressions, and harmonic relationships extend beyond conventional tonality.


Busoni writes in a letter to biographer Edward Dent: “As for the rest, should you desire to study the *Berceuse élégiaque*, you will discover in it that same ‘polyphonic logic’ for which you have so finely praised me.”\(^{119}\) It is difficult to ascertain precisely what Busoni meant by ‘polyphonic logic’; however, both the orchestral medium and certain contrapuntal processes play a role in conveying the polyphonic nature of this piece. One characteristic of polyphonic textures is that, while there can be a perceptible hierarchy of voices based on thematic content or other factors, the voices are independent because they each carry relatively equally developed ideas, or a small group of equally developed ideas are distributed among the voices. In *Berceuse élégiaque*, the limited number of instruments and the manner in which they are presented emphasizes the individuality of the voices. Busoni makes reference to this aspect in his remarks about a later orchestral elegy, *Nocturne symphonique*, which he compares to *Berceuse élégiaque*: “takes the polyphonic harmony (polyphoner Harmonik) of the *Berceuse* a step further, strives to dissolve massed orchestral sound into individual elements, does without trumpets and trombones.”\(^{120}\) This suggests a concern not simply with individual voices remaining independent in a contrapuntal texture, but also with their individual contribution to the harmony, both in terms of pitch and timbre. The collective harmony is sounded in such a way that the individual voices are visible and distinct, giving the impression of an intricately woven fabric. To a large extent, isolation of instrumental groups and assignment of a variety of parts to individual instruments within those groups are the means by which this is achieved.

Certain contrapuntal processes also assert the independence of the voices. From a harmonic perspective, the *Berceuse élégiaque* consists almost exclusively of stepwise, mostly chromatic, voice leading between primarily tertian chords both on a small and large scale; and

\(^{119}\) Ferruccio Busoni to Edward Dent, May 10, 1911, in *Ferruccio Busoni: Selected Letters*, 123

\(^{120}\) Ferruccio Busoni to Hugo Leichtentritt, February 25, 1914, in *Ferruccio Busoni: Selected Letters*, 176.
most often of stepwise root movement or parallel motion. Many of the more complex sonorities, however, result from voices or groups of voices acting independently of a purely homophonic texture. Within a triadic framework, this can often be described in terms of harmonic misalignments, overlap involving suspensions or anticipations, and superposition of chords and chord progressions.

Due to the intricate polyphonic texture of this piece, understanding the more innovative aspects of harmony and melody requires an unraveling of the complexity of the musical surface. In this chapter, I shall discuss certain features of the Berceuse élégiaque related to the concept of polyphonic harmony, some of which are unique to this work and some of which carry over into other works. These include harmonic relations through chromatic fluctuations, chord overlap and superposition, chord misalignment, quartal chords as intermediary voice-leading chords, and the interaction of harmony and melody. After providing an overview, I focus on specific passages in detail as a way of discussing certain concepts.

4.2 Stylistic, Formal, and Structural Overview

The majority of the Berceuse élégiaque is characterized by a slow-moving bass line and arpeggiated harmonies in the strings, which convey a perpetual rocking motion. The gentle and static quality throughout, created by extensive pedal points, the rocking rhythmic patterns, and a slow harmonic rhythm, is reflective of the genre Berceuse, and reminiscent of the Romantic era character pieces of that name by Chopin, Liszt, Brahms, and others. A dream-like state is evoked throughout the Berceuse élégiaque, which relates to the two literary influences on the work discussed by Beaumont in his survey: Thomas de Quincey’s Suspiria de Profundis and a scene
The former is a collection of ‘dream visions’, the focus in this case on one entitled “Levana and our Ladies of Sorrow,” and in particular on “Our Lady of Sighs,” a character who expressed her grief in “muted tones.” In the latter work, a particular scene in which Aladdin, upon visiting his mother’s grave, “makes as if to rock her in a cradle and intones a lullaby” is echoed in the subtitle to Berceuse élégiaque which reads “des Mannes Wiegenlied am Sarge seiner Mutter” (“Cradle Song of a Man beside His Mother’s Coffin”). This infant sleep as death metaphor evokes at once the lullaby and the lament.

The static quality of the piece shifts focus to the development of the motivic ideas in different harmonic contexts and to the shifting timbral qualities. The different motivic ideas and their interrelation with harmony is one important aspect throughout the following analysis. An F-major chord is the initial harmonic context for the main thematic idea which begins with interlocking thirds on A–C, later transposed to C–E, within the first section (Example 4.1[a], mm. 4–5 horns and clarinets). The rising third that initiates the main theme, labeled motive (a), appears frequently throughout and is transformed later in the work. Depending on the context, the interlocking thirds theme typically consists of members of a given tertian sonority composed out horizontally. In this case, the interlocking A–C above the F pedal (strings) quite clearly articulates the F major triad. A second rhythmic motive, or motive (b), is repeated in an expanding series of falling intervals within the main theme (Example 4.1[a], mm. 6–7, horns and clarinets). This repeated rhythmic motive and its intervallic expansion also typically outlines members of a triad in a given harmonic context. From a linear perspective, this portion of the

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122 Ibid., 140.
theme often takes on the shape of the Schenkerian concept of motion into an inner voice. In the case of Example 4.1(a), the pitch A is elongated in alternation with descending chromatic motion to F in an inner voice. The inner voice descent occurs within the local context of a progression from F major to D minor, the elongated A being a member of both triads. Motives (a) and (b) in Example 4.1(a) almost always occur in succession; however, there are instances in which motive (b) appears alone.

Whereas motives (a) and (b) often remain within relative harmonic stasis, a second thematic idea (Example 4.1[b]) is the primary means of both ascending and descending harmonic motion. This theme contains motive (c), an ascending whole step followed by descending half step or, as occurs later in the piece, a descending whole step followed by an ascending half step. From a linear perspective, this motive linked together and transposed up or down by step implies ascending or descending chromatic motion between two points and is usually accompanied by parallel chromatic motion in the other voices. This third motivic idea appears in various harmonic contexts, usually involving a group of ascending or descending chromatic intervals or chords.

The form of the Berceuse élégiaque is largely an unfolding of different settings of these two thematic ideas and their three motives (A sections) in contrast to a parallel harmonic progression underlying a more lyrical melody (B sections). A formal diagram is provided at the top of Example 4.2. The sections or parts are defined by changes in thematic or motivic content and texture and orchestration, coinciding to great extent with changes in tempo and mood. Despite the static nature of the piece, Busoni achieves a sense of propulsion and suspension throughout by means of subtle harmonic shifts and the denial of strong endings through cadential

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123 Allen Cadwallader and David Gagné, *Analysis of Tonal Music: A Schenkerian Approach*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 127: “Frequently the melody will move from an established top-voice tone into an inner voice through a linear progression, a technique referred to as motion into an inner voice.”
gestures or tension-release patterns. The most significant of these deceptive endings, which also help to shape the form of the work, occur in mm. 38–40 at the end of Part I, in mm. 53–54 at the return of the main theme, in mm. 67–69 midway through the return of the main theme, in mm. 80–81 at the end of Part II, and in mm. 96–97 during the final return of the main theme. At each of these junctures, the harmonic instability of a second inversion triad or a change of direction in the parallel motion of the voices creates a sense of shift between sections.

The orchestral work significantly expands the basic material of the piano work upon which it is based and comparing the two works can be informative with regard to form and structure. As is shown in the formal diagram in Example 4.2, the piano version is in ternary form with a short introduction (mm. 1–3) and coda, while the orchestral version consists of three larger parts including a varied restatement of the opening in mm. 20–39 in Part I and an added variation of the B section in mm. 81–96 of Part III.

With regard to structure, I mention here some significant features of the Berceuse for piano, which are further addressed in comparison to the orchestral version throughout the following analysis. A score and integrated voice-leading sketch of the Berceuse for piano are provided in Example 4.3a-d. First, an F chord with a split third and seventh serves as the referential sonority. The split third on A and A♭ is most clearly manifest in the top voice of the voice-leading sketch in m. 20, as F major and A♭ minor are superposed. Second, F♯ major and minor, also spelled enharmonically with G♭ as root, are structurally significant in the work. G♭/F♯ major in particular appears at the endpoint of the harmonic progression in the B section (in alternation with F, m. 35) and as a large-scale neighboring sonority (mm. 46–66, see m. 56).

124 "Referential sonority" is a term I borrow from Edward Laufer, “An Approach to Linear Analysis of Some Twentieth-Century Works,” 2, and Timothy L. Jackson, “Schoenberg’s Op. 14 Songs: Textual Sources and Analytical Perception,” 47. In this case, it is a modified tertian chord that acts as the tonal center of the work.
Third, A♭ major and minor and A major and minor chords also play a role in the overall structure as mediant-related chords to F and F♯. They are hinted at in the A section (mm. 8–12), and more fully realized in the B section (A♭m as upper third to F, mm. 20–22), in the A’ section (mm. 38–41), and especially in the Coda (mm. 67–74). Fourth, the nature of the stepwise progression of triads over the course of the B section, beginning on F and ending on G♭ is a significant feature in the piece. As is illustrated with the nested linear progressions and the crossing slurs, the voice leading within this alternation of chords suggests two separate interlocking harmonic progressions, a feature that is further enhanced in the orchestral version, forming the basis of chord superposition. Finally, the piano version is left open-ended on the dominant C major. This ending is slightly altered in the orchestral version to provide a somewhat more conclusive return to F.

Let us now focus on the large-scale tonal structure of the orchestral work, a middleground voice-leading sketch of which is shown in Example 4.4. I shall summarize here features that are addressed in more detail below. Like in the piano version, an F chord with split third and seventh serves as the referential sonority. The split-chord members of the referential sonority represent the fluctuation of F major and minor (sometimes with added sevenths) over the course of the piece, which is achieved primarily through neighbor and chromatic linear motion in each of the voices. Parallel triadic progressions often connect F major or minor (seventh) chords occurring at formal junctures. The split third of the referential sonority is most clearly manifest in the top voice of the voice-leading sketch in mm. 30, 40, 54, and 95. While the pitches A and A♭ in the upper voice are not always supported by an F sonority, the fluctuation between these pitches and their occasional superposition throughout the work is also represented by the split third in the referential sonority.
The tonal structure at the surface level is complicated by the migration of chromatic lines between voices, the interaction of melodic and motivic ideas with the underlying harmonic progressions, chord misalignments, and, most especially, the extensive harmonic overlap and superposition of intervals and tertian chords, now more pronounced with the orchestral medium, which results in a variety of harmonic effects. Indeed, many tertian chords shown in the middleground sketch to form a single, often chromatic, harmonic progression are superposed at the surface level.

Over the course of the $A^2$ section, parallel ascending and descending seventh-chord progressions connect F-seventh chords (mm. 24 and 30) with harmonies related by semitone. Each of the chords shown in the middleground sketch over the course of this section is highlighted by a change in the parallel motion of the voices. The F chords in mm. 24 and 30 are split-member chords. For example, the F-seventh chord in m. 24 contains both an $E_b$ (strings) and E (flutes) while the F-seventh chord in m. 30 also contains both $A_b$ (strings) and A (flutes), thus combining the F minor- and major-seventh qualities. A possible way of relating the above-mentioned harmonies is through chromatic dyads, expressed throughout the piece both as neighbors and superpositions, or chromatic fluctuations of the members of the referential sonority. Indeed, the global harmonic relationships between tertian sonorities in this piece are rooted in the chromatic fluctuation of dyads from the initial $F^M7$ chord of the piece. For example, the diagram in Example 4.5a shows a chromatic shift from the $F^M7$ to an $F^m7$ chord with fluctuation in the above-mentioned dyads A to $A_b$ and E to $E_b$. The following analysis addresses how this plays out on the surface level of the music.

Also of note in the $A^2$ section is the appearance of an $F^#m7$ first hinted at in m. 20 as it is superposed against a $B^7$ chord. Enharmonically related to this chord is the fully realized $G_b^7$. 
spelled as $G_{b^{-}}B_{b^{-}}D_{b^{-}}E(F_{b})$, that appears as the endpoint of a descending, parallel chord progression in m. 37. The $G_{b^{-}}7$ is superimposed upon an F major sound (F and A in the cello and bass), this being the first clear example of the superposition of $F_{b}(G_{b})$- and F-seventh chords, a phenomenon that occurs in various forms throughout the piece. The $F_{b}(G_{b})$ seventh chords here and elsewhere function at a local level as passing sonorities (mm. 48–9, 54–7, 78, 92, and 101–3), but can also be understood at a deeper structural level as related to an $F_{M7}$ sonority through chromatic fluctuation, as is also shown in Example 4.5(a). Thus the $F_{b}$-seventh chords serve as secondary sonorities, often superposed upon the F-seventh chords.

The $B_{b}$ section involves the superposition of chords forming a descending, parallel chord progression. The superposed triads, beginning with $F_{M7}$ and $A_{b^{-}}m7$, form two separate chord progressions initially involving root motion by fifth, each with their own stepwise, primarily chromatic, voice-leading scheme. When shown in succession, as in the middleground sketch, a single chromatic progression connects the F major and F minor chords that bookend the section.

The superposition of F major and $F_{b}$ minor reappears at the end of the $B_{b}$ section and continues into the $A_{b}$ section. The chords in the $A_{b}$ section are now superposed in various ways on the surface level, which are illustrated later in the chapter. Over the course of the $A_{b}$ section, a rising progression outlines motion from $F_{b}$ minor and major and F minor and major to their mediants, $A_{b}$ and A, via a passing $G_{7}$ sonority. These mediants are also superposed at the surface level, mirroring the relationship between F and $F_{b}$. The mediant-related chords can also be understood as extensions or constituents of the F and $F_{b}$ chords or through fluctuations of chromatic dyads, as is shown in Example 4.5(b).
The B\textsuperscript{2} section begins with A major, or the mediant extension of F\# minor superposed against its chromatic mediant, C minor. Like in the B\textsuperscript{1} section, the chords progress in fifths and two separate chord progressions form a single chromatic, parallel, descending progression. This descent continues into the A\textsuperscript{4} section, which contains the Coda material of the original piano version along with motives from the main theme, thus labeled A\textsuperscript{4}. Unlike the piano version, the orchestral version has a somewhat more conclusive ending by outlining motion from C to F and ending with F in the bass.

4.3 Chromatic Fluctuation of the Referential Sonority through Neighbor Tones

In the explanation of large-scale form, I posited that an F chord with split third and seventh serves as the referential sonority and is prolonged over the course of the work through stepwise, primarily chromatic motion connecting instances of this chord in correspondence with other design features. I also posited that other structural tertian chords related by semitone or third to the referential sonority can be connected to the referential sonority through chromatic fluctuations. A closer look at the initial chromatic fluctuations of the referential sonority first appearing as neighboring tones in the A\textsuperscript{1} section (not shown in middleground sketch) provides some basis for this interpretation. A score of mm. 1–26 is provided in Example 4.6a-b accompanied by a foreground and middleground sketch of mm. 1–19 in Example 4.7. The first 13 measures consist of primarily chromatic linear motion above a sustained F pedal. An F\textsuperscript{M7} chord does not fully materialize, complete with added seventh, until mm. 12–13, but is gradually established through the unfolding of the motivic ideas. Hierarchical relationships among pitches and sonorities shown in the sketch are based on the concept of composing out the referential sonority through linear progressions and motion into an inner voice and prolonging this harmony.
through neighbor motion involving the chromatic fluctuation of its members. These hierarchical relationships are supported by contextual surface-level features such as the alignment of voices into tertian sonorities, sustained versus moving voices, and the statement and restatement of melodic motives and the resultant measure groupings. Thus certain pitches and sonorities can be understood as embellishing or transitory. A clear path of stepwise voice leading can be traced between non-adjacent harmonies that are determined to be structural based on contextual factors.

The first segment of the main theme can be divided into two phrases, mm. 1–7 and 8–13 (Example 4.6a). Chromatic lines begin to emerge in m. 6, most prominently in the strings and harp. From these chromatic lines, in participation with the above-mentioned motive (a), the impression of additional triads emerges above the F pedal: an A♭-major chord (mm. 8 and 12) and A-major and -minor chords (mm. 9–11). Their early emergence foreshadows their large-scale significance as mediants to F and F♯. I view these chords at a local level as derived from chromatic neighbors to the members of the F imagined chord as the melody unfolds over the course of the first section. These neighboring motions, indicated in the sketch, are not adjacent and span beyond the boundaries of the descending and ascending linear progressions indicated as motive (b) and its inversion at the foreground level. They appear in the sketches with flags as local incomplete neighbors (foreground) and understood as fully realized neighboring motions.

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125 Josef Goldenberg makes a useful distinction between composing out, or Auskomponierung, and prolongation: “Strictly speaking, ‘composing out’ is an appropriate term only for those prolongation techniques that horizontalize tones that are simultaneous at a deeper level, and which outline a tonal (or chordal) space: arpeggiation, unfolding, and especially the stepwise filling of them through linear progressions. Register transfer, coupling and motion from or into an inner voice also outline tonal spaces that are conceptually vertical,” Prolongation of Seventh Chords in Tonal Music (Lewiston, NY: Edward Mellin Press, 2008), 8. According to Goldenberg, neighboring motion would then not be considered composing out; however, if understood as chromatic fluctuations of the referential sonority, a point that is later bolstered by superposition, then these neighboring tones might be understood as horizontalizing or realizing chromatic fluctuations of the referential sonority through chordal space.
connected to implied notes of the initial $F^{M7}$ sonority (middleground). This reflects the concept in Schenkerian analysis whereby a pitch may have a different function between structural levels.

Certain musical features help to articulate these deeper-level neighbor connections. The neighboring motions, $A – A♭ – A$ and $E – E♭ – E$, are articulated in the thirds motives in mm. 4–9 and 10–13, respectively. The varied restatement beginning on $A♭$ in m. 8 constitutes a new measure grouping, thus emphasizing the arrival of the $A♭$ neighbor which is quickly “corrected” to $A♯$ in m. 9. This emphasis on $A♭$ is due to its placement at the beginning of a restatement of the initial melodic thirds idea, which is further reflected in the 3+4+6 grouping of mm. 1–13. The four-measure grouping, mm. 4–7, which consists of the first presentation of the overlapping motive (a), is expanded to six measures upon its restatement in mm. 8–13. The $E♭$ neighbor in m. 12 is emphasized because its arrival coincides with the entrance of the flutes in the upper register at the beginning of the two-measure expansion of the restatement. Like the $A♭$ neighbor, the $E♭$ neighbor is also quickly corrected by semitone to $E♭$ in m. 13.

The $(F) – F♯ – F♭$ and $(C) – C♯ – C♭$ neighbors are embedded in the unfolding of motive (b) in the descending melody in mm. 6–7 and 10–12, respectively. As mentioned above, motive (b) often reflects the Schenkerian concept of motion into an inner voice. This is evidenced here by the repetition of the $A$ in mm. 6–7 and the $E$ in mm. 10–11 between each note of the descending melody. (Note that the final note of the descent in mm. 10–13, $C♭$, is delayed until beat 3 of m. 12, in comparison with the faster unfolding of the melody in mm. 6–7 with the arrival of $F♭$ in the last beat of m. 7.) The $F♯$ and $C♯$ can be understood as passing within the unfolding of the melody, but foreshadow the role of the $F♯$ major- and minor-seventh chords as chromatic fluctuations or neighboring sonorities to the referential sonority.
Not all of the vertical sonorities in mm. 1–13 are established as autonomous harmonic entities. Other vertical sonorities such as in mm. 7 (F–D–A–C) and 11 (F–G–C♯–E) can thus be understood as transitional, i.e., the harmonies created as the D and G are passing in motive (b) and its inversion. Together, the referential sonority, the chromatic neighbors, and these passing tones present nearly the entire chromatic spectrum within the first few phrases (only the note B♭ [A♯] is absent). In summary, the chromatic neighboring motions emphasize the dyads F–F♯, A–A♭, C–C♯, and E♭–E at a deeper structural level.

4.4 Motive or Melody-Driven Harmony, Interlocking Harmonic Intervals, and the Interaction of Melody and Harmony

My analysis of the first 13 measures with regard to the function of notes as structural or embellishing is largely based on a harmonic foundation of tertian chords and, in particular, the prolongation and mixture of the referential sonority through neighboring and passing tones. The chromatic neighboring motions project a sense of static prolongation in comparison to the more transitional nature of the following passage in mm. 14–19, which forms the second half of the main theme. These measures (shown in Example 4.6b, with voice-leading sketch in Example 4.7) present a further analytic challenge because there is no clear sense of a tertian chord being composed out or of a clear progression of tertian chords. Ascending chromatic linear motion occurs in most of the voices in mm. 14–19. Each voice presents a different segment of the chromatic scale resulting, as in mm. 1–13, in chromatic saturation. The melodic line consists of repetition of the three-note motive (c) and is accompanied by two ascending chromatic lines in the inner voices beginning on C and B♭ articulated in differing figurations throughout the instruments. A slower moving bass line descends in stepwise motion to C. The harmonic formations are largely a result of chromatic linear progressions involving a kind of superposition,
in this case of harmonic intervals. While the voices do align at points to produce tertian chords, a voice-leading pattern of interlocking sixths better explains the harmonic result. The resulting simultaneities can then be understood as resulting primarily from a linear or motivic design.

As a side note, a similar notion appears in Peter Schubert’s article addressing Schoenberg’s views on harmony, previously discussed in Chapter 2. Schubert offers this explanation of a type of progression based on the ‘omnibus’ that appears in many tonal works: “There is another way to look at this type of progression, in which the chords are understood to be determined by the intervals resulting from the voice-leading combination created by the chromatic scales.”¹²⁶ Tertian sonorities that are commonly understood as ‘vagrant’ in terms of a functional harmonic progression in tonal music are a result of chromatic motion and in particular of melody- or motive-driven logic. Schubert comments on harmonic construction in Schoenberg’s Verklärte Nacht: “Schoenberg's problem is finding acceptable chord-types in which to embed the contrapuntal combination. In the event, the motive is made up largely of a chromatic scale, and the chord-types are all vagrant.”¹²⁷ Schubert suggests here that, at least in Schoenberg’s early music, the use of tertian sonorities or “acceptable chord-types” is intentional in this context.

In order to make sense of the driving force behind the resulting harmonic progression of the voices in mm. 14–19, it helps to first look at the cognate passage in the piano version. Only one ascending chromatic voice is articulated in the inner voice of the cognate passage from the piano version, shown in Example 4.3a. The chromatic line beginning on C is added in the orchestral version. In the piano version, the underlying linear motion can be reduced to a series of parallel sixths above the bass. At the surface level, the voice-leading pattern gives the

¹²⁶ Schubert, “‘A New Epoch of Polyphonic Style’: Schoenberg on Chords and Lines,” 297.
¹²⁷ Ibid., 297.
impression of a 7–6 interval motion above the middle voice within each three-note motivic segment of the melody (G–[A]–G♯; G♯–[B♭]–A; A–[B]–B♭). Assuming the context of an ascending chromatic line in tandem with the 7–6 interval motion, the notes in brackets resemble incomplete upper neighbors. Note that the inner-voice C in m. 17 is retained through m. 19, a registral connection apparent in the left-hand arpeggiation. The lowest voice (F–E–E♭–D♭–C) descends at a different pace, outlining the fourth from F to C, seemingly independent of the upper voices.

If one were to view the passage from a tertian perspective, the progression might be explained through m. 17 as follows: The G/B♭ are passing between the continuation of A/F in m. 13 (A moves to B♭ and F moves to G) and the arrival of B/G♯ in m. 15. The F bass is held over through the passing tones G/B♭ eventually shifting to E in m. 16 which aligns with B and G♯ to form a triad a step below the previous F major chord, thus a descending second progression from F major to E major. The E-major harmony then shifts through stepwise motion to an A minor chord in second inversion in m. 17, root movement of a descending fourth. In m. 18, however, the triadic progression breaks down as motion in the bass voice speeds up. No plausible triads result from the voice leading in mm. 18–19.

A consideration of Busoni’s addition of the chromatic line, C–D♭–D–E♭–E, in the orchestral version lends insight into one plausible interpretation of this passage, where harmony is a result of the contrapuntal interaction of interlocking sixth intervals, since this new voice now forms a series of parallel sixths with the second note of each three-note motive A–B♭–B–C–(C♯) in the melodic voice (Examples 4.6–7). This additional parallel sixths progression suggests that the melodic voice in the flutes and clarinets can be understood as a polyphonic melody, in which two chromatic lines, and thus two linear progressions of intervals, are implied. In this case, the
two progressions of parallel sixths are established as distinct. Coming from the referential sonority articulated over the course of mm. 1–13, the persistence of the F in the bass through m. 14 and the addition of C suggests an overlap of the A–C sixth, part of the previous F sonority, and the B♭–G sixth, or a stepwise progression from the A–F sixth in the F sonority. At a deeper structural level, however, these sixths are reduced to a voice-leading pattern that reflects the shape of motive (c). The function of each note of the melody is altered at the middleground level with the addition of the fourth voice. While on the foreground level of the three-voice version, one might hear the second note of each motive (c) as embellishing the chromatic sixth progression as an incomplete upper neighbor, a multi-linear progression emerges at a deeper structural level of the orchestral version which compels a different reading. In this case, the notes of the melody produce two separate, primarily chromatic, linear progressions.

The linear progression of sixths involving the lowest ascending chromatic voice in the voice-leading sketch and the second note of each motive (c) (A–B♭–B) continues after B/E♭(D♯). The C/E in the lower two voices of the voice-leading sketch in m. 19 are the progression from B/D♯ now as a third. This results in the superposition of the C/E third and the B♭/D sixth. Interestingly, the resulting interval superposition sounds as a dominant-seventh chord (with added D), thus ending the phrase with a half-cadential gesture.

Some explanation is needed with regard to the voice-leading sketch, where certain notes are shown to be neighboring, even though they form separate linear progressions at a deeper structural level. I view the A–B♭–B linear progression shown in the upper voice as both neighbor notes at one level and also part of a separate third progression on another level. In this case, the interaction between the overlapping statements of motive (c) in the melody at the surface level is shown with neighboring tones.
The melodic voice, and more specifically motive (c), reflects both sixth (third) progressions simultaneously and shapes the underlying harmonic result. Even though the underlying progression of intervals is still based on stepwise, mostly chromatic, motion, it is complicated at the surface level by the temporal displacement of harmonic overlap, the interlocking sixth progression, and intervallic superposition. As is shown in the voice-leading sketch, the linear progressions sound as a chromatic progression of intervals that connects the $F^M7$ sonority with the $F^m7/B^7$ in m. 20. This type of interlocking intervallic progression foreshadows the multiple interlocking chord progressions that occur later in the piece.

4.5 Chord Superposition at the Surface Level

The next section of the analysis explores the concepts of voice leading, hierarchy, and structural levels in relation to chord superposition. The intention here is not to propose a general methodological model for linear analysis of superposed chords, which would be better constructed of different examples from various composers, but rather to address the cases and types as they appear in *Berceuse élégiaque* and attempt to explicate through linear analysis my interpretation of superposed chords as they relate to the overall structure. Ultimately, I show one way of understanding chord superposition in this piece to involve multiple superposed chord progressions at the foreground level which can in some cases be understood to form a single harmonic progression at a deeper structural level connecting two structural chords.

Chord overlap occurs when two chords within a single chord progression temporarily overlap as the first chord progresses to the second. With regard to voice leading space, each

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128 Edwar...Schenker Studies 2, ed. Carl Schachter and Hedi Siegel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 127.
pitch class in the first chord ultimately moves to a pitch class or classes in the second chord. This may be distinguished from instances where two complete or nearly complete chords are sounded simultaneously, resulting in a compound chord. I refer to this phenomenon as chord superposition.  

Chord superposition might be considered an extension of chord overlap, if the constituent parts of the compound chord can be understood to form a chord succession.

In order for a chord superposition to be perceived as comprising two separate harmonic entities, the chords are typically established in some way as distinct, either because they form separate triads or through other parameters such as by separation in orchestration or register. The sonorities may also be heard separately or established as significant at some other point in the piece and, therefore, are aurally interpreted as autonomous harmonic entities sounding together.

As one might imagine, chord superposition and the concept of compound chords poses certain challenges for voice-leading analysis. In particular, it becomes more difficult to trace the voice leading between successive chords and to determine their structural meaning. Felix Salzer is one of the first to apply voice-leading analysis to what he describes as polychords, which are included in his discussion of “contrapuntal chords” or “color chords,” more specifically chords with “no other function than that of giving emphasis and color to the melody.” In the case of polychords, Salzer makes a distinction between “chords whose only function is to provide color and those which have a voice-leading or structural function with an added effect of color.”

In his discussion, he shows examples of polychords from Ravel, Copeland, and Martinů which he

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129 Not to be confused with the Schenkerian concept of superposition in which an inner voice or inner voices are transferred above the main top-voice note.


131 Ibid., 195.
shows to be “integral parts of the voice leading, style and pattern” and “represent the basic
chords or chords resulting from voice leading.”\footnote{132}

In Berceuse élégiaque compound chords provide color but are also an “integral” part of
the voice leading. There are many such instances of a progression of compound chords that are
separated through orchestration and suggest multiple chord progressions occurring
simultaneously. In these instances, the voice leading can quite clearly be constructed between the
triadic constituents of the compound chords and shown in a voice-leading sketch.

Instances of chord superposition appear in different forms in the Berceuse. The first
instance of chord superposition is very subtle, involving the impression of a parallel progression
of compound chords made up of chords related by fifth. This progression occurs over the course
mm. 20–24 accompanying a transposed restatement of the main theme (see score with mm. 20–
26 in Example 4.6b, and mm. 27–39 in Example 4.8, and accompanying voice-leading sketch in
Example 4.9). Though there is a clear break between phrases in mm. 19 and 20, the superposed
B\textsubscript{b}/D sixth and C/E third discussed above continue their ascent by step into m. 20, resulting in the
compound chord F\textsubscript{b}m7/B\textsubscript{7} (see score in Example 4.6b). An alternate interpretation of F\textsubscript{b}m7/B\textsubscript{7} is
simply B\textsubscript{13}. Certain features, however, point to a chord superposition. First, the chords are
separated in the score, the B\textsubscript{7} sustained in the strings and arpeggiated in the clarinets. Second, the
melodic voice in the oboe sounds disconnected from the underlying B\textsubscript{7} and the ensuing
descending progression in the strings. The oboe now outlines motive (a) transposed to C\sharp–E and,
together with the F\sharp–C\sharp fifth in the harp, gives the aural impression that an additional seventh
chord is superposed upon B\textsubscript{7}. Third, as the theme continues over the course of mm. 20–24, the
melody continues to compose out in motive (b) the upper A–C\sharp–E third of F\textsubscript{b}m7. It is thus

\footnote{132}Ibid., 195 with analyses on pp. 192–194.
composed out above the ensuing progression of compound chords, also perceived as comprising of chords related by fifth. This is the first indication in the work, that F♯ will play a structural role, later as neighbor to and superposed upon F.

Like in m. 20, in m. 24 there is a sense that the melodic voice with motive (a) outlining E–G is also disconnected from the underlying F\(^{M7}\) chord and instead part of a superposed C-major chord. Like the first part of the theme, the melodic voice in mm. 24–29 outlines a C\(^{M7}\) (later inflected to C\(^{Mm7}\) in m. 28) as motives (a) and (b) unfold. A change of direction in the voices prompts an ascending progression of seventh chords, some of which are also composed out in the melody (i.e., the G/B of the G\(^{M7}\)), connecting the F\(^7\) of m. 24 with the F\(^{M7}/F^{m7}\) chord (E spelled as F♯) in m. 30. Ultimately, the thematic voice forms a descending linear progression from C♯–A.

4.6 Migration of Chromatic Linear Progressions through Stretto

The full harmonic result as the voices converge in m. 30 is the first appearance of the F\(^{M7}/F^{m7}\) split-member chord. The F\(^{m7}\) results from a fluctuation of the chromatic dyads A–A♭ and E(F♯)–E♭. In mm. 30–39, the inversion of motive (c) combined in repetition results in descending linear motion between two linear strands, one started in the winds and one in the viola (see score in Example 4.8 and voice-leading sketch in Example 4.10). Motive (c) is then merged with motive (b) in the flutes, mm. 34–35, horn, mm. 35–38, and first clarinet, mm. 37–39. Over the course of mm. 30–39, the motives occur in stretto and the linear strands migrate between the voices. This kind of alternation of the main thematic idea between instruments here is representative of the migration of chromatic lines that frequently occurs throughout the work, further complicating the surface level.
As in mm. 14–19, the two linear strands form a progression of interlocking sixths, now descending and accompanied by a series of descending, parallel, seventh chords. The stretto results in misalignments of both the sixths intervals and the corresponding chords in the underlying progression. In some instances, the descending pattern of interlocking sixths based on motive (c), earlier established in mm. 14–19, is left incomplete. Implied notes are shown in the voice-leading sketch, which complete the pattern. An F7 materializes at the end of a progression of seventh chords in m. 39, its main notes being composed out in the bass arpeggiation in combination with the arrival of B♭(C) and E, or the destination of the interlocking sixths. The linear motion in each of the voices and the underlying progression of seventh chords fill in the chromatic space between structural F chords in mm. 30 and 39.

The structural prolongation of different qualities or chromatic fluctuations of the referential sonority is clearly articulated over the course of mm. 20–39 by such factors as the continuation of the F pedal point, changes in the direction of parallel motion in each of the voices, phrasing, and the correspondence of structural chords with the restatement of thematic motives.

4.7 The Linearization of Compound Chords

Compound chords are often related by semitonal fluctuation. For example, when F↑M7 and its chromatic mediant A♭m7 are superposed, the compound chord consists of the chromatic dyads F–G♭, A–A♭, C–C♭, and E–E♭. The succession or neighbor motion of these two chords at other moments in the piece as well as other musical features, such as the alternation of the chords or a melodic voice accompanying the chords, can suggest the linearization of these dyads. This may
lead to the aural interpretation of the two triadic constituents in the compound chord forming a progression with chromatic voice leading, such as $F^{M7}$ progressing to $A^{m7}$.

In order to further demonstrate this concept, it may be useful to consider such cases where intervals or harmonies are layered, often involving alternation or superposition, which may be aurally perceived at a deeper structural level as forming a single linear stream. Such an example of layering appears in the opening of Busoni’s *Doktor Faust*. At the beginning of the “Symphonia,” shown in Example 4.11, an open fifth/octave is sounded first on $F–C–F$ in mm. 1–4. The $G–D–G$ fifth/octave enters in m. 4 and the decay is sustained through the first half of m. 5 in the harp and viola along with the $F–C–F$. As the two are rearticulated, the aural effect is of two fifth/octave sonorities superposed, or the simulation of multiple “cathedral” bells ringing at different time intervals but sustained together. In m. 7, the two are struck simultaneously, temporarily aligning in phase. Since each one has been established for the listener as a separate harmonic entity, or a different bell, one can describe the combined harmony as consisting of two superposed chords, rather than a secundal chord. In terms of voice-leading or chord progression, the first sonority in this case may be understood as conceptually progressing to the next even though the two are sounded simultaneously for a time. If a linear pattern were to continue, a case could be made for this interpretation. When the $E–B–E$ fifth/octave enters in the second half of m. 10, it adds yet another layer. Given the linear progression in the inner voice which repeats $E–F–G$ over the course of mm. 8–20, we might understand a progression from $E–B–E$ to $F–C–F$ to $G–D–G$ as implied at the opening. In this case, these various harmonic entities, articulated by different sets of instruments, can be said to form a part of a single linear stream, even though they at times overlap or sound simultaneously and are out of order. The discussion of the
following type of chord superposition involves the concept that elements that sound together in musical time may in some cases be aurally perceived as forming a single linear stream.

At the opening of the B\textsuperscript{1} section, a progression of compound chords is clearly articulated between instrumental groups. It begins with the above-mentioned compound chord in mm. 40–43, where an $A\flat m7$ chord (arpeggiated in the flutes and clarinet) is superimposed upon an $F^M7$ chord (arpeggiated in the harp and sustained in the horns) (Example 4.12a). In the cognate passage of the piano version, beginning in m. 20, these two chords are not articulated together but rather alternated (Example 4.3a). One might imagine that with the right pedaling, however, the two might be made to sound superposed. In the orchestral setting, they are more clearly superposed, composed out simultaneously in different instrumental groups. Reflecting the more pianistic setting, the strings also alternate between these two mediants, the violins taking the melodic line which shifts back and forth between the chord members A of the $F^M7$ chord and $A\flat$ and B (enharmonically C$\flat$) of the $A\flat m7$. (The alternation maintains the rocking and static nature established in the first part.) Were it not for the separation of the chords in the winds and harp, these two sonorities might be more difficult to perceive as distinct harmonic entities.

In this case, F has been established as the tonal center; therefore, the $A\flat m7$ chord is understood as superimposed on rather than with $F^M7$. Even though the two chords sound as a compound chord there is an implicit progression or linearization of the chords, particularly because the F chord appears first in the alternation of these two chords in the strings. This order is also made apparent in the melodic voice. Even though the two chords are made distinct through orchestration, the appearance of a mediant-related $A\flat m7$ paired with $F^M7$ was foreshadowed in the introductory measures as a distinct sonority in the continual presence of $A\flat$.
major, as a neighboring sonority in mm. 8 and 12, as a passing sonority in mm. 22 and 27, and as superposed against the F\textsuperscript{M7} sonority in m. 30.

4.8 Simultaneous Chord Progressions at the Surface Level as a Result of Harmonic Superposition

It may be useful to declare boundaries on what specifically constitutes this type of progression at the surface level. As with superposed chords, the perception of two separate sets of chords progressing simultaneously is established either through orchestration or some other means. In this case, orchestration continues to play a significant role in this regard. The voice-leading sketches in Examples 4.13 and 4.14 show how the two initially superposed chords, F\textsuperscript{M7} and A\textsuperscript{\textBeta}m7, progress simultaneously through stepwise voice-leading up to bar 53.

These superposed harmonies are in a chromatic mediant relation, but form two distinct harmonic progressions at the surface level consisting initially of root motion by fifth. In the foreground sketch, these two chord progressions are separated between the upper two staves. The lower voice, which maintains emphasis on C throughout the passage, consists mostly of arpeggiation of notes from the chords progressing in the middle stave. Were the root movement by fifth pattern to continue, the C major in m. 44 would progress to G and E\textBeta} minor would progress to B\textBeta}. In mm. 46 and 47, however, the harmonic rhythm speeds up as a brief stepwise progression connects C major with B\textBeta} minor in the harp and E\textBeta} minor with F\textsharp minor in the upper winds, thus exchanging the harmonies that would result from root movement by fifth, an enharmonically spelled diminished fifth (F\textsharp instead of G\textBeta}) in the case of C, between the harp and the upper winds.

The melody in the violin reflects both superposed chord progressions. This integration between melody and harmony is reflected in the sketch, where the melody is shown in relation to
the underlying progressions. On the top stave, representing the violin, structural weight is given to the descending line, A–G–F–E, over the course of mm. 40–53, each note supported harmonically by the underlying progression $F^M7$–C–B♭–$F^M7$. In this case, certain notes in the violin melody (i.e., A♭ and B in mm. 40–44, B♭ and F♯ and D♭ in mm. 44ff, etc.) are understood as neighbors, passing tones, or arpeggiation decorating the main notes of the top voice even though they are harmonically supported by the chord progression shown in the middle stave, $A♭m7$–$E♭m7$–$F♭m$–$Em$–$E♭$–$G♭$. A separate descending line, $A♭$–$G♭$–$F♭$–$E$–$E♭$–$D♭$, is also shown on the middle stave, supported by this second chord progression. If combined, the top lines of each progression are part of a network of chromatic dyads that generate harmonic combinations within the piece, namely A–A♭, G–G♭, F–F♯, F–E, and E–E♭. The chromatic lines in the melodic voice and other voices are formed by the linearization of these dyads.

The melody often helps clarify the linearization of the underlying superposed chords. For example, the initial A–A♭–G that occurs in the top line over the course of mm. 40–44 reflects the linearization or progression of the $F^M7$ to $A♭m7$. Thus one possible way to understand the superposed chord progressions at the middleground level is as forming a single chord progression made up of mostly chromatic linear motion, in this case above a pedal C. The superposition of mediant and their progression in fifths forms the basis for descending chromatic linear motion, again, presenting the entire chromatic spectrum. In effect this would illustrate conceptually a series of triads that result from the linear progressions that connect the two F major sonorities in mm. 40 and 53 (see middleground sketch in Example 4.4).
4.9 Further Examples of Chord Superposition, Quartal Chords, Misalignment, Stretto, and the Interaction of Melody and Harmony

As shown in the middleground sketch in Example 4.4, a progression of tertian chords ascends and descends over the course of the A³, B², and A⁴ sections; however, several features related to Busoni’s polyphonic approach, including further types of chord superposition, quartal chords, misalignment, and stretto, complicate the surface level, and result in more complex harmonic combinations. To begin with, a second type of chord superposition, more subtle than the previous “stacked-chord” superposition, involves only fragments or representatives of each chord or root sounding simultaneously or in alternation. The chord superposition of F minor and G♭ minor (F♯ minor) at the end of the B₁ section extends into the A³ (see voice-leading sketch in Example 4.14). In comparison to the cognate passage in the Berceuse for piano, or the moment of transition from the B section back to the A’ section, the continued superposition of these two chords into the A³ section of the orchestral version is quite clear. While the superposition of G♭ major and F major is implied in the piano version by the alternating chords at the end of m. 35, an F⁷ chord clearly begins the next section with no implication of the continued superposition of these two chords (see score and voice-leading sketch in Example 4.3b). In the orchestral version, the A³ section begins in m. 54 with a short introductory F♯-minor chord sustained in the clarinets above a scalar figure in the strings (Example 4.12b). F minor is implied in the scalar figure, with C and A♭ at its boundaries, and the repeated F in the flutes. While the aural impression of the scale is primarily reflective of F minor, it also contains D♭ and G♭, both part of the G♭ minor (F♯ minor) chord. Like the earlier melody of the B section, the scalar accompaniment here reflects both chords simultaneously. Chromatic inflections then result in both chords becoming major. F minor becomes major as the scale accompaniment shifts to the upper strings and the A♭ is
replaced with A at the end of m. 56. As part of a registral shift in the first clarinet part, A moves to A♯ as motive (a) is transposed to begin a varied restatement of the main theme in m. 58, now within the context of F♯7.

Even as a voice exchange unfolds over the course of mm. 58–61, temporarily prolonging F♯ major, the F major is still present in motive (b) through mm. 60–61. The outline of C and A in motive (b), the repeated Fs in the harp, the sustained F in the horns, and the scalar accompaniment outlining A and F in the violas point again to the continued presence of F major superposed against F♯7. As is shown in the voice-leading sketch in Example 4.14, motive (b) reflects F major, with the underlying C minor harmony as upper fifth, superposed upon the prolongational span of F♯ major (G♭ major). The B♭ passing tone in motive (b) is common to both the F and F♯ major scales. The harmony and melody are again integrated in that the melodic line and the scale accompaniment reflects both chords simultaneously.

Linear motion involving anticipations or passing tones within an underlying progression between two tertian chords often leads to the formation of quartal chords, which serve as intermediary chords. Their frequent occurrence and their seeming autonomy merits brief discussion of them here as a harmonic entity. As motive (a) outlines A♯ to C♯ of the F♯7 chord in m. 58, the rocking motion is also simulated in the other voices as E moves to G♯ and C♯ moves to D♯, forming a quartal chord, D♯–G♯–C♯, in the second half of the measure (see score in Example 4.12b). One interpretation of the G♯ is as progressing from A♯ in voice-leading space. As is shown in the voice-leading sketch in Example 4.14, the G♯ is part of a descending line from A♯ down to G♯, the upper line of the voice exchange prolonging F♯. It forms a kind of quasi-dominant sound along with the C♯ of motive (a). This is also the case in the Berceuse for piano,
only down a half step, where a quartal chord D–G–C occurs on the second half of m. 36, but is more clearly C as dominant of F (Example 4.3b). The D♯ of the quartal chord in the orchestral version anticipates the arrival of E♭ in m. 60. The quartal chord thus acts as an intermediary harmony between F♯7 and C minor.

A variation of this quartal chord is formed as motive (a) is compressed to a minor second from C–C♯ in m. 62 (Example 4.12b). The members of the A minor which supports the C move by step, again reiterating the “rocking” effect inherent in the motive, such that a quartal harmony, D–G♯–C♯, occurs on the second half of m. 62. At a local level, the C♯ of this quartal chord is passing to E♭ in the following A♭ minor chord (see score in Example 4.15a and voice-leading sketch in Example 4.16). Although not shown in the sketch, the C♯ is also passing in a longer-range, chromatic ascent from C to D, supported by the arrival of a G minor chord in m. 65. The G♯ and D of this quartal chord are anticipations of later arriving harmonies, in particular the A♭ minor in m. 64 and the G minor of m. 65, respectively.

While the A minor and A♭ minor chords in mm. 63–65 are passing in the descending, parallel progression, F♯(G♭)–Am–A♭m–Gm, over the course of mm. 58–65, the varied repetition of motives (a) and (b) starting a new phrase in m. 62 suggests they share the same superposed relationship as the immediately preceding F and F♯ chords. Given the continuation of the A–F scalar figure in these measures, the A minor could be understood to represent the F♯M7, which is then superposed with A♭ minor in m. 64, the chromatic mediant pairing that opened the B♭ section in m. 40. The presence of F♯ is, however, also hinted at in the above-mentioned compression of motive (a) in m. 63 and the resulting quartal chord on D–G♯–C♯ as suggesting a quasi-dominant of F♯, a pattern that was established in the previous quartal chord and in the piano
version. The goal of this passage is the G minor, eventually transforming into a seventh chord in m. 69. The progression from A♭m–Gm and the transformation to G⁷, however, is very gradual on the surface level and stymied by the back-and-forth rocking motion. The G minor chord begins to materialize in m. 65 as G arrives first in the bass on the first part of m. 65, overlapping with the A♭ minor. The C♯ neighbor then shifts to D, a figure that is repeated in mm. 66–68 in the second cello part. The B♭ arrives in the second violins and flutes along with D and in the scale figure as A♯ and then begins its own chromatic shift, reflected in the A♯–B motion in the melody, and the B♭–B motion repeated in mm. 66–68 in the first cello. Interestingly, there is a third chromatic shift from G–G♯ in the second cello, a very early anticipation of a move to A♭ in that voice. A texture change and the arrival of a variation on motive (c) in m. 69 confirms the destination on G⁷, or the chromatic ascent from the F/F♯ superposition that begins the A³ section (see middleground sketch in Example 4.4).

At the middleground level, the A³ section consists of a progression of ascending parallel seventh chords, G⁷–A♭⁷–A⁷, extending from the initial F/F♯ chord superposition, which eventually leads back through stepwise motion to F♯m and Fm over the course of mm. 69–80. Certain factors help to emphasize the tertian sonorities in the above-mentioned chord progression as structural. For example, F♯ underlies the transformation of motives (a) and (b) and the return of the main theme in m. 58. G⁷ underlies the second part of the theme with motive (c), and is emphasized by the texture change to an arpeggiated G⁷ in m. 69. A♭⁷ is emphasized as the arpeggiated pattern and the second part of the theme shifts up a step in m. 75. This chord progression is a complete recomposition of the A’ section (mm. 38–41) of the Berceuse for piano. In contrast to the original A’ section, which centers around and prolongs F major, the
recomposed A\textsuperscript{3} section, with its semitone transposition to begin on F\# allows for a more clear superposition of the F and F\# chords and for the more expansive ascent from F/F\# through the G passing chords to their mediant chords, and eventually a return to F/F\#.

A closer look at the foreground voice-leading sketch in Example 4.16 shows how the voice-leading in this underlying progression is further complicated by misalignments and fluctuating, chromatic dyads. These fluctuating dyads permeate all of the voices resulting in the stymied motion from one triad to the next. Ultimately, these dyads combine to form the ascending chromatic lines within the triadic progression that connect the beginning and ending F/F\# superpositions.

Motive (c) is again the agent of ascending stepwise motion in the melody. Based on previous settings of motive (c), one might expect a pair of interlocking parallel sixths with motive (c) as a polyphonic melody in the upper two linear strands. Together the harp and first horn voices form major sixths with the first and third note of motive (c), though at times misaligned. An additional chromatic line, however, does not form sixths with the second note of motive (c), thus only one progression of parallel sixths ascends. Despite the lack of two separate parallel sixth progressions moving in chromatic motion, the aural perception in the top line is of a polyphonic melody, as has been previously established. The second-note of each motive (c) is shown in the voice-leading sketch to form the upper strand of the polyphonic melody. (Implied notes are shown in the sketch to form the second set of sixths.) Motive (c) is altered in m.71 to return to D, thus forming a sort of neighbor group in the melodic voice surrounding the D. Given the continued stepwise ascent in the inner voice from F\# to A, these two voices convey D major, or the upper fifth of the underlying G\textsuperscript{7} chord. The same fifth relation is also implied in mm. 73–
as E♭ is formed of the E♭–G sixth above A♭⁷. These might be viewed as additional types of chord superposition now involving the parallel sixths of motive (c).

The ascending lines in motive (c) extend to G♭ and G♮ in mm. 77–80, forming the superposed F♯ minor and F minor chords that close the section (F♯ spelled as G♭), thus connecting through linear motion the F and F♯ superposed chords at the beginning of Part III. The superposition here is most stark in m. 78, where the voices in the winds have arrived on an A-major harmony, the expected chord in the ascending, chromatic progression from G (Example 4.15b). The final note of motive (c), or G♭, however, coincides with this arrival, thus sounding an F♯m⁷ chord. Though the A♭⁷ in the arpeggiation in the strings ceases on the second half of m. 78, the A♭ bass is held in support of the final destination in the flutes, F minor (spelled with G♯). This creates the sense that the F♯ minor and F minor are again superposed.

A chord overlap, or more specifically anticipation, occurs at the transition into Part III. As mentioned above, A major arrives as part of the F♯m⁷ in m. 78. The A and C♯ of this chord are sustained through the arrival of F minor in m. 80, becoming the third and fifth of the A major chord in m. 81. This aurally connects the F♯m⁷ with the A major that begins Part III, or the goal of the parallel, ascending progression over the course of mm. 54–80 (see middleground sketch in Example 4.4).

Part III includes new material, not originally part of the Berceuse for piano. Like the opening of Part II, Part III begins with a superposition of A major, the upper mediant or constituent of F♯m⁷, and its doubly-chromatic mediant, C minor. The A-major chord is slowly arpeggiated in the lower strings and a new, more lyrical theme in the upper strings reflects both progressions of superposed chords, which descend back to F♯ minor in m. 93 (see score in
Example 4.17 and voice-leading sketch in Example 4.18). This occurs in similar fashion to the B\(^1\) section, the two separate superposed chord progressions forming a single chromatic progression connecting the initial A/Cm superposition with F\(^b\) minor and its chromatic mediant B\(^b\) major in m. 92. A hybrid of motives (b) and (c) and motive (a) return in m. 93ff and mm. 100ff, respectively, thus marked A\(^4\) in the form diagram (see score in Example 4.17, Example 4.19a-b, and voice-leading sketch in Example 4.20). The superposed chord progression continues to descend, arriving on F\(^m7\)/A\(^b\)m, which is composed out over mm. 95–100. This represents the Coda material from the original *Berceuse* for piano. The descent passes through G and G\(^b\) major, arriving on F major in m. 104. The superposition of F/G\(^b\)(F\(^#\)) continues to be implied through these measures, not only in the presence of G\(^b\) major but also articulated by the scalar passage in the bass clarinet.

Busoni recomposes the ending of the *Berceuse élégiaque* to arrive more conclusively on F, in clear contrast to the more open-ended *Berceuse* for piano. An ascending line in the top voice from C to F is supported by “dominant” to “tonic” motion. The placement of the D as a passing tone within the ascending top voice results in quartal chords and gives this progression its characteristic sound. The ending of the orchestral version still lacks a strong sense of complete closure, leaving the listener one last example of chord superposition when all of the pitches from the interwoven linear progressions are sustained into the final chord.

4.10 Concluding Remarks

Throughout *Berceuse élégiaque*, there are several groups of voices that remain relatively independent at the surface level in relation to the underlying chord progressions. The different pacing, overlap, and migration of individual voices participating in primarily parallel chromatic
motion and the interaction between the melodic voice and these underlying parallel progressions creates the more colorful harmonic effects described here as misalignment, overlap, and superposition. While misalignments also occur in conventional tonality and in the more chromatic expansion of harmony in the later nineteenth century, such as with certain kinds of embellishing dissonance or delayed resolutions, the extent is much greater here, resulting in the experimental and fleeting harmonic combinations characteristic of Busoni’s late style.

The complex harmonic combinations shown in the above analysis provide insight into a concept of polyphonic harmony as it relates to Busoni’s late style, understood as a complex of linear processes at the surface level within a triadic framework. This concept is also rooted in a method of orchestration that highlights the individuality of the instruments and, therefore, the voices. Busoni continues to experiment with these types of harmonic effects, parallel chord progressions and different means of organizing primarily tertian harmonies around a tonal center in later orchestral works of the decade.
CHAPTER 5

GESANG VOM REIGEN DER GEISTER

5.1 Introduction

Mysticism is a running theme throughout Busoni’s life and works. It comes as no surprise then that his interests should drift toward the spiritual world of Native American culture during his time in the United States. It was through a former student, Natalie Curtis-Burlin, that Busoni was introduced to traditional Native America songs. She studied the culture of the Hopi Indians in Arizona and eventually compiled a collection of traditional songs and legends published in 1907 as *The Indians’ Book*, a copy of which she gave to Busoni in 1910.133 Inspired by Native American culture and Curtis-Burlin’s collection, Busoni later composed the *Red Indian Fantasy*, op. 44, a piece for piano and orchestra, and the *Red Indian Diary*, in two books. The first book of the latter work is comprised of four studies for piano based on Native American motifs while the second book is a study for string orchestra, six wind instruments and timpani entitled *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister* (Song of the Spirit-Dance), op. 47. This second book was completed in 1915 and later became known as the third elegy for orchestra.

In this chapter, I further explore aspects of harmony in Busoni’s late style by examining demonstrative passages in *Gesang*. First, I briefly address some of the typical harmonic progressions that occur at a local level, some of which emerge from apparent voices amongst single line melodies, a general characteristic of passages that are tilted in favor of a melodic-genetic perspective, and some parallel progressions that emphasize third-related sonorities. Second, I address Busoni’s treatment of the Native American song upon which *Gesang* is based, which reflects an important aesthetic idea related to Busoni’s notion of “absolute melody” and

the relationship between melody and harmony. Finally, I address a few examples of chord superposition, the means by which this occurs on the surface level, and how they operate within the overall structure. I shall begin by providing a brief structural overview and then focus in more detail on select portions of the work.

5.2 Formal and Structural Overview

_Gesang vom Reigen der Geister_ consists of an introduction and two parts (Example 5.1). These two parts feature two inter-related themes that are accompanied by a set of motivic ideas, labelled (a-d) in the formal diagram, that recur throughout the piece. The first theme is a Native American song known as “Song of the Spirit-Dance” (SSD), while the second is a more expressive and expansive melody, the first part of which is based on an embellishment of the SSD theme (Example 5.2[a-c]). Much of the material that accompanies these themes and shapes transitional spaces within the piece is based on motives (a) and (b). These motives are shown in Example 5.3 along with motives (c) and (d), which stem from motive (b). An additional countermelody (CM in diagram) to the SSD theme also plays a significant role in the harmonic structure of Part I, particularly in conveying chord superpositions (Example 5.4). It is often accompanied by a descending eighth-note pattern, the intervallic contour of which is based on the countermelody itself.

Busoni discovered the “Song of the Spirit-Dance” in Natalie Curtis’s above-mentioned book, one she transcribed from the Pawnee Indians (Example 5.2[a]).\(^{134}\) The song itself conveys an E tonal center. One interesting feature of this melody, however, is the absence of \(^{\sharp}\), creating ambiguity within a tonal context with regard to mode. This feature fits well with Busoni’s

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\(^{134}\) Curtis Burlin, _The Indians’ Book_, 141–144.
tendency toward mode mixture within the referential sonority, as in the *Berceuse élégiaque*. This melody does not unfold in the context of a conventional tonal harmonic progression, but rather against a background of ascending and descending triads from the introduction, formed partly by motives (b), (c), and (d), the latter two outlining third-related harmonies surrounding both E minor (m. 38) and major (m. 49) chords (Example 5.2[b]).

The theme sounds as an independent musical element, seemingly uninfluenced by this harmonic backdrop, mainly because the long held notes in the theme are for the most part not in harmonic alignment with the accompanying triads in the strings. As mentioned above, from an aesthetic viewpoint, the frequent discord between the underlying harmonic progression and the song reflect the notion of an absolute melody, which “contains within itself a latent harmony.” In terms of structure, the moments where the theme and the underlying harmonies do align and the transposition of the theme itself serve to reinforce large-scale shifts in harmonic motion. Despite the harmonic complexities of the surface level, the large-scale harmonic structure of the piece is discernible through clear points of departure and arrival coinciding with the presentation of thematic or motivic material. A score is provided in Example 5.5a-g along with a middleground voice-leading sketch in Example 5.6a-b.

The fluctuation between E major and minor chords again point to a split-third referential sonority. This fluctuation is first presented in the introductory mm. 1–34, which begin by implying E minor but arrive on E major in m. 34. The large-scale progression in the introduction, I⁶–II♭–Ⅳ♭–Ⅱ♭–Ⅴ⁷–I, is rooted in stepwise, often chromatic voice leading and prolongs the initial E triad through a chromatic voice exchange. Within this progression, the mixture of scale-degree three, G and G♯, or its enharmonic equivalent A♭ (♯4), is emphasized both from a linear perspective, G is emphasized in the lower voice while A♭ appears in the upper voice descent as
part of D♭/C♯ major, and at times from a harmonic perspective, they sound together in mm. 15–19 as the pedal G is continued against the E-major in the progression above. This mixture is also reflected in the third-related progression of major triads, D♭(C♯), E, and G, beginning in m. 15 which contains A♭, G♯, and G in each of the respective triads.

Over the course of Part I, cadence points articulate the large-scale harmonic progression I–VI–V⁷–Ⅳ−Ⅵ. A second large-scale ascending harmonic motion from E to G is embedded within the first part of this progression, articulated over the course of mm. 38–69 by transpositions of the SSD theme. E is the key center articulated by the first statement of the theme (m. 38), accompanied by an underlying harmonic progression similar to the introduction in the prominence of minor third-related harmonies, D♭(C♯), E, and G. The large-scale harmonic structure of mm. 44–54, and particularly the upper voice prolongation of A♭, is rooted in this underlying progression. The end of this first statement of the theme moves decidedly toward an internal auxiliary cadence on C in m. 54, thus the D♭ and G⁷ function as Neapolitan and dominant in this context, imitating the initial cadence on E major at the end of the introduction and supporting a shift to G in the top voice. The emphasis on C (VI), however, conflicts with the reappearance of the theme, which marks a large-scale stepwise shift from the initial E minor in m. 38 to F major in m. 56. While the “Song of the Spirit-Dance” theme is now transposed up by step to begin on F, the arpeggiated harmony in the background and a new countermelody results in the continued presence of C major, an instance of chord superposition which is discussed in more detail below. Indeed, a pattern of fourth- and fifth-related harmonies form two separate, parallel, ascending, chromatic progressions over the course mm. 54–77. This facilitates a rising chromatic line in the top voice filling in the motion from the initial C/F pair (m. 54) to a D/G pair (m. 67), a relationship that is made clear with a new statement of the theme transposed up from F.
to G in m. 69. It is at this point that a large-scale ascending harmonic motion becomes apparent, articulated by each new statement of the theme and forming parallel first inversion triads ($E^6$ in m. 38, $F^6$ in m. 56, and $G^6$ in m. 69).

The ascending fifth-related pairs G/D, $E^\flat/B^\flat$, and E/B lead to an implied dominant, which is more fully realized and prolonged over the course of mm. 77–85 in anticipation of an arriving E major in m. 86. While $G^\sharp$ is regained in the top voice following a large-scale linear progression from G (m.54) to $G^\sharp$ (m. 86) over the course of Part I, the arrival on E major is not a strong arrival, but rather occurs within the build-up to an anticipated cadence on the dominant in m. 91. The build-up is prompted by the now familiar progression VI$^\flat$ (enharmonically spelled as with C and E$^\natural$)–$ii$–V–$IV^6$ in B major (see also mm. 31–34 and mm. 44–54), yet the cadence is deceptive in its arrival on G in first inversion in m. 91. Indeed, much of the drama of the work lies in the anticipation and continued delay of a structural dominant. From a large-scale structural perspective, an expected dominant note B is implied in the bass in m. 77, but the $G^\sharp$ is regained in the top voice rather than an anticipated F$^\sharp$ or $^\natural$. The arrival of $^\natural$ at the cadence point in m. 91 is further delayed by the deceptive cadence and replaced with G. Following this deceptive motion, a more measured and homophonic progression fluctuates between $IV^\flat$ and VI, the deceptive progression on a larger-scale from $V^7$ to both the major- and minor-mode submediants of E. The top voice wavers between $G^\sharp$ and G, again reflecting mixture of scale-degree three. Note that the progression from E to G to C$^\sharp$ over the course of mm. 86–95 again involves the minor third-relations from the introduction and the beginning of Part I. The chorale-like progression beginning in m. 95 further delays an arrival on E by prolonging C$^\sharp$ minor, the linear motion suggesting an eventual arrival back on the dominant seventh-chord which never materializes (shown in parentheses).
Part II begins with the enharmonic respelling of the prolonged C♯ to D♭ and a shift from minor to major. The passage in mm. 101–109 continues to prolong D♭ major until the much anticipated arrival of the dominant in m. 112. The second, more lyrical, theme based on the “Song of the Spirit-Dance” theme begins by filling in the opening fifth from B to F♯, emphasizing the much anticipated arrival of 2 in the top voice. The dominant-seventh chord is prolonged over the course of this theme through a large-scale, descending step-wise progression, the result of primarily chromatic voice leading. One notable feature at the end of the work is the absence of a strong cadence on E and a clear descent in the top voice to 1. Like the Berceuse for piano, this piece ends partially suspended on the dominant. The E minor chord in m. 146 occurs within the prolongation of the dominant-seventh chord, part of a progression similar to mm. 95–97. The arrival of E in the bass in m. 148 begins the arpeggiation of C major against the continued dominant-seventh chord. It is not until m. 155 that the bass arpeggiation of an E minor triad and the subsequent repeated E’s gives the aural impression of a weak return to E. No such closure, however, is given in the upper voice.

5.3 Progressions Arising from Apparent Voices

One feature of Busoni’s late style is the frequent use of polyphonic melodies to convey underlying harmonies and harmonic progressions. Indeed, the ability for a single voice or linear strand moving amongst instruments to imply a chord or a series of chords is often the means by which multiple harmonies may be understood to overlap or be superposed. In the case of a progression of chords implied through single or multiple melodies, the voice-leading between pitch classes within each harmony and the resulting voices do not exist on the surface level, but would have to be constructed. Both melodic and harmonic patterns can play a significant role in
the aural perception of different melodic strands within a polyphonic melody or within an implied harmonic progression. Consideration of motivic repetition, rhythmic and metric organization, and particularly registral connections are useful means of establishing different lines within an implied harmonic progression. In his discussion of polyphonic melody, Ernst Kurth refers to these lines as apparent voices as opposed to real voices, which would occur within the context of multiple parts. From an analytical viewpoint, the application of this concept in Gesang is particularly useful in showing a primarily parsimonious voice-leading scheme, which ultimately fills in the space between two structural harmonies or participates in the prolongation of a structural harmony.

Consider the primarily contrapuntal opening, which initially consists of only two voices (Example 5.5a). It begins by hinting at a chord superposition of E minor and B\(^7\) (see voice-leading sketch in Example 5.7). B\(^7\) is outlined in motive (a) against a pedal G which anticipates the E minor chord outlined in m. 2, also with seventh. One may be hard pressed to hear a superposition of B and E chords here, rather than simply a dominant chord over a G pedal, since the E chord is implied by only the pitches G and B. My interpretation of a chord superposition is somewhat retrospective, since the later return to these opening measures at the beginning of Part I presents a more clear superposition involving a sustained E triad against motive (a) (m. 34).

Over the course of these opening measures, an implied harmonic progression which establishes the E tonal center and connects E and G chords emerges in motives (a) and (b) and in the bass voice. The dominant pitch B is given melodic prominence as the first note of both the initial rising motive (a), imitated at the fourth in the strings, and the descending motive (b) beginning in m. 5. The two voices imply harmonies, one per measure, which form an ascending fourth progression over the course of mm. 1–5 connecting the initial E minor with G major in m.

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5. The bottom level of the voice-leading sketch shows a possible, abstract, parsimonious, voice-leading pattern representing apparent voices emerging between these sonorities, where the solid lines indicate motion by step and the dotted lines common tones between harmonies. One factor that helps to establish this voice-leading pattern is that the melody is made up of the repetition of motive (a), thus respective chord members fall in the same place within the motive each time it is imitated.

The harmonies projected through the apparent voices of the two contrapuntal voices in mm. 5–9 more clearly move in descending stepwise motion. The polyphonic upper voice consists of two descending voices a third apart, moving in tandem with the descending bass line. Thus a series of parallel triads from G down to E emerges. This series of triads is part of the linear process of connecting the G major (m. 5) and E major triads (m. 9) through parallel motion.

5.4 Parallel Progressions with Implied Tones Emphasizing Minor Third-Related Harmonies

Another frequent occurrence in Gesang is the emphasis of third-related harmonies within a parallel progression of triads. These progressions are formed of multiple motivic ideas that ultimately combine into a series of ascending or descending stepwise lines. Such is the case with the set of minor third-related triads, D♭(C♯), E, and G, which serve as a backdrop to much of the large-scale linear motion occurring over the entire introduction and Part I and that often prolong D♭ major. The first instance of this progression occurs in mm. 15–19 (Example 5.5a). Beaumont refers to these triads as “rapid flow of familiar chords in unrelated keys, eight to a bar, [which] produces a disembodied, desolate language which arises not logically but intuitively out of the
cantus firmus. Hence it is unique; we find it in no other work of Busoni’s.” As his language reveals, Beaumont views Busoni’s music through a conventional tonal lens where “familiar” chords would “logically” function within a single “key.” He rightly describes the language as arising intuitively from the motivic idea rather than through conventional harmonic progressions. In this instance, the $D\flat$ major and G major triads that serve as bookends to the progression are upper and lower mediants surrounding and emphasizing the E triad.

While two of the voices in the three-voice triads move stepwise in tandem in motive (c), one voice takes up the quarter note-eighth rhythm, motive (d), which helps to establish a hierarchy amongst the chords (Example 5.5a). These motives stem from motive (b), as is shown above in Example 5.3. The above-mentioned triads appear as complete triads on the strong beats 1 and 3, the dotted quarters outlining the ascending and descending third motion. The intermediary stepwise harmonies are understood as passing harmonies, deemphasized by their occurrence on the weak parts of beats 2 and 4 in each measure (Example 5.8a). Rather than moving in stepwise motion along with the lower two voices, the third voice leaps to the seventh of an incomplete seventh chord for each passing harmony, as if Busoni were trying to avoid the parallel fifths that would result from purely stepwise motion. The seventh thus substitutes for the fifth, which would otherwise complete a series of ascending, stepwise triads (shown with the implied notes). This type of progression, emphasizing minor-third related harmonies occurs frequently throughout the piece.

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5.5 The “Song of the Spirit-Dance” Theme as Absolute Melody

Busoni’s treatment of the “Song of the Spirit-Dance” is reflective of an important aesthetic idea regarding melody, which is revealed in correspondence with his wife. In particular, he refers to the notion of “absolute melody” in connection with Native American melodies and the idea of polyphony as a means of asserting melody as independent from harmony. An “absolute melody” is “a row of repeated, ascending and descending intervals, which are organized and move rhythmically. It contains in itself a latent harmony, reflects a mood of feeling. It can exist without depending on words for expression and without accompanying voices. When performed, the choice of pitch or of instrument makes no alteration to the nature of its being. Melody, independent at first, joined the accompanying harmony subsequently, and later melted into inseparable unity with it. Recently, it has been the aim of polyphonic music, which is always progressing, to free itself from this unity.” In this vain, the “Song of the Spirit-Dance” is initially presented without much alteration or refinement and seems disconnected from a very free and agile musical setting, particularly from the standpoint of harmony. A closer look at the harmonic progression that underlies the first statement of the theme reveals precisely how the theme is projected as an independent element on the surface level of the music.

The introductory rising motive (a) and the implied harmonic progression return in m. 34, setting up the introduction of the main theme in E. Whereas the descending stepwise repetition of motive (b) in the introduction resulted in a series of parallel descending triads, an ascending repetition of motive (b) coincides with the first statement of the theme in m. 38 (see score in Example 5.5b and voice-leading sketch in Example 5.9). The opening E to B fifth of the theme along with a G pedal conveys E minor in first inversion. Motive (b) outlines a series of ascending

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parallel triads that connect the initial E minor triad with G in m. 40, both with added sevenths. The recurring A in the theme in mm. 39–41 clashes with the prevailing G implied in the figuration and supported by the pedal G. In m. 41 the shift back to B now clashes with a local D minor conveyed in the other voice, particularly in motive (a) in the bass. It is not until m. 43 that the A of the melody coincides in a local context with a D minor triad. Likewise, the subsequent note B of the theme clash with the return of D♯ major in m. 44. The following A and F♯ are supported by the underlying triads as well as the arrival on E in the song in m. 45 which part of an E major triad; however, it occurs against an F pedal and still within the large-scale prolongation of D♯. Misalignments continue through the next passage of parallel triads as well. It is not until m. 49 that motion to E in the bass coincides with E in the song, consequently at a structurally significant point where all the voices align on an E major chord. This alignment on E indicates a large-scale shift from D♯ (m. 44) to E (m. 49) (see Example 5.6a).

As the theme is transposed to begin on F in m. 56, it not only coincides with a C/F superposition, to be discussed in more detail later, thus clashing with C, but cues a large-scale shift from E to F over the course of mm. 38–56 (Example 5.10). The subsequent B♭ of the melody also clashes with the underlying C/F superposition. It is not until m. 61, that the shift to B♭ aligns with a B♭ minor chord and prompts a break from the theme as the beginning of the descending eighth-note pattern. The final transposition of the motive to G in m. 69 indicates a large-scale shift from F. The subsequent C of the theme clashes with the underlying D/G superposition. Again, the D of the theme breaks off in m. 74 and ascends to E♭ coinciding with a shift to E♭ minor.

In contrast to the integration of melody and harmony demonstrated in *Berceuse élégiaque*, particularly in how the melodic line reflected simultaneously both constituents of
chord superposition, the above-described clashes and alignments between the theme and the underlying harmonies outlined in the various motivic figures reflect a much more elastic relationship between melody and harmony at the surface level. The clashes between melody and harmony at a more local level have the effect of heightening moments of alignment which support large-scale shifts in the underlying harmonic structure. The ascending motion from E to G outlined by the transposed theme over the course of Part I does play a significant role in the middleground structure; however, it is in some contexts juxtaposed against other processes at play in the middleground structure, as is explored in the next section. It is this elastic relationship which ultimately emphasizes the theme as an “absolute melody,” which suggests its own inherent harmonic quality reflecting the ascending harmonic motion from E to G, at times seemingly resistant to the underlying harmonic progression.

5.6 Some Instances of Chord Superposition in Gesang

Like in Berceuse élégiaque, there are various types of chord superposition in Gesang. The focus here is how these instances of chord superposition are conveyed at the surface level and how they contribute to shaping the overall structure of the work. Instances in the introduction occur primarily over the course of mm. 15–31, the result of chords sustained against a harmonic progression occurring in a separate layer (Example 5.5a-b). Earlier in m. 12, the repetition of motive (a) concludes by conveying a D♯ leading-tone seventh (Example 5.8a). Motive (b) is then divided between the flute and clarinet in mm. 13–14 implying in its shape a parallel descending progression from B major to A major. A major is transformed by stepwise motion into the following D♭ major chord of m. 15, the C♯ being retained as D♭. Simultaneously, the ascending fourths pattern of motive (a) continues from the initial D♯ to arrive on G major, just
as in m. 5. Its subsequent stepwise descent to F major, a third below, is implied in the outline of the descending chromatic lines in the violin and viola, arriving on an E minor chord, indicated by the sustained E/G sixth in the lower strings. The lingering D♯ from m. 12 is retained in the bass through mm. 13–15 against the pedal G and eventually resolves to E in m. 15. The superposition of these two progressions establishes two separate layers and sets up the superposition in mm. 15–16 of E minor against the minor-third progression of harmonies, D♯(C♯)–E–G, which surround the E chord. The layers are exchanged between the winds and the strings in mm. 17–18, now with E major sustained in the winds. Note that the sustained E major in the winds begins with the arrival of E major in the progression. The layer of chords in the strings continues in mm. 20–22 sounding as a backdrop to the deeper-level progression from E major to F♯ major in the winds and low strings–shown in the middleground voice-leading sketch in Example 5.6a. F♯ major is temporarily superimposed against G major in the upper strings as the progression continues to descend in minor thirds from D♯, through B♯, down to G.

As has already been mentioned, I interpret the sustained chord in the winds to be primary in the middleground sketch. Several factors contribute to the perception of a prolongation of D♯ major, however, against this middleground progression. First, D♯ major is a point of departure and arrival in the repeated progression of chords in mm. 15–18 and just before the shift to E and the texture change in m. 23. Second, D♯ major is also the long-range goal of m. 31, ultimately progressing from the F♯ major chord in the winds. One interpretation of the intervening material in mm. 23–31 is as a kind of parenthetical insertion or transitional space, characterized by several contrapuntal chords resulting from several different motives, including the rising polyphonic melody in the bass, the eighth-note motive in the strings and the descending
chromatic lines in other voices (Example 5.8b). Throughout this passage, the A♭ fifth of the D♭ major chord is also emphasized in the top voice, foreshadowing the arrival of G♯ or♯3 in m. 34.

A second example of chord superposition involves a progression of superposed chords similar to some described in the *Berceuse élégiaque* and is also the result of the perception of multiple layers, each participating in a separate harmonic progression. These multiple progressions are a result of the confluence of several different motive ideas dispersed throughout the voices. Following the cadence on C in m. 54, the “Song of the Spirit-Dance” theme is transposed to F in m. 56, cueing the arrival of F major. A new ostinato pattern appears in the lower strings in mm. 54ff, which acts as a countermelody (Example 5.5c). An additional motivic idea in the second violin, a pattern of eighths which ultimately forms a descending linear motion, is based on the ostinato countermelody in the bass. Example 5.4 shows the relationship between the second violin part and the ostinato countermelody. The second violin part outlines a descent from G of the C chord in m. 56 to A of the F chord in m. 58, forming a descending progression of thirds with the ostinato countermelody. Against these two parts, C major is arpeggiated in the first violins. Indeed, the C-major arpeggiation continues through the entrance of the “Song of the Spirit-Dance” theme on F, which is supported by an F-major chord in first inversion, the first indication of the superposition of these two triads. The metric emphasis on G of the ostinato countermelody in the bass also aligns with C in the theme, further suggesting the continued presence of C. The make-up of the ostinato countermelody itself is ambiguous with regard to harmony, simultaneously emphasizing both C major and F major. In m. 55, the note A in the bass sounds disconnected harmonically in the context of a prevailing C major, anticipating the later move to F major. Similar to some melodies in the *Berceuse élégiaque*, which
simultaneously convey two superposed chords, this ostinato countermelody conveys both F major and C major.

In terms of the large-scale structure, the above-described superposition of the C major and F major triads begins a series of superposed chords, which form two separate parallel progressions (Example 5.9 and 5.10). These two superposed chords progress to a series of fifth-related harmonies conveyed in the ostinato countermelody and the accompanying descending line in the second violin, now transferred to the winds, in combination with a new rising third motive in the viola and second violin, beginning in m. 61. The statement of the “Song of the Spirit-Dance” theme does not descend to F over the course of this passage, but instead breaks off and takes up the descending eighth-note pattern from the second violin in m. 54, now transposed up a step to B♭ in m. 61. The beginning and ending pitches of each of these descending eighth-note patterns form a single line, starting with the G in m. 54 (of the C chord) and A in m. 56 (of the F chord) leading to B♭ in m. 61 and B♭ in m. 63, thus forming the upper line of the voice-leading sketch. The first note of each descending eighth-note pattern in combination with the first note of the ostinato countermelody, likewise shifted up by step, and the first note of the new rising-third progression, form a series of parallel first inversion triads which progress from the initial C major on B♭, B, and C, articulated in mm. 61, 63, and 65. Note that the upper voice is misaligned with the lower two notes of these triads, thus resulting in momentary overlaps with a second series of parallel ascending triads progressing from the initial F major built on F, G♭(F♯), and G.

This second series of fifth-related harmonies is also articulated in the ostinato countermelody, further suggesting that the two chromatic progressions are superposed, and arpeggiated in the rising third motive that emerges in the viola in m. 61, imitated a step higher in
mm. 63 and 65. The first notes of the rising third motive are common tones between the superposed chords, but form a rising line that articulates the roots of the second series of fifth-related harmonies. The last notes of the rising third line, E♭–E–F♯, might be viewed harmonically as the split thirds of the B and C triads, or from a linear point of view as a chromatic, filling-in of the lower voice motion from C to F♯, or C–D♭–D–E♭–E–F♯. The arrival on F♯ anticipates the third of the subsequent D-major triad in mm. 67ff. The E♭–E–F♯ line moves in parallel motion with the last note of the descending eighth-note pattern, the C in m. 63 anticipating the arrival of C minor in m. 65 and the D♭ in m. 65 filling in chromatically the upper-voice linear progression from C to D. This interpretation shows how the ascending line from C to E♭ in the bass continues to F♯ connecting the large-scale motion from C to D.

This large-scale motion is reinforced by the arrival of a D/G superposition, re-establishing the fourth-relation between the initial C/F superposition. It is also reinforced by the transposition of the “Song of the Spirit-Dance” theme up a step to G. The pattern of ascending, superposed progressions is replicated in mm. 67–77 with the fifth-related pairs E♭/B♭ and E/B, arriving on the dominant in m. 77. The entire progression of superposed chords completes the large-scale motion from C to B over the course of mm. 54–77 (see Example 5.6a). The superposed progression of parallel triads related by fourths and fifths connects these two structural sonorities through primarily chromatic linear motion in each of the voices. This rather straightforward progression of parallel triads, apparent upon reduction through linear analysis, underlies an intricate web of motives weaved throughout the independent voices at the surface level.
6.1 Introduction

In January 1919, Busoni completed his final two orchestral elegies, Sarabande and Cortège, which appeared in a 1922 publication with the subtitle “Two Studies for Doktor Faust.”\textsuperscript{138} A process of slow maturation best describes Busoni’s last opera, and arguably his most ambitious work, Doktor Faust. Busoni began the libretto as early as September 1910, and continued to work on the text and music until his death in 1924.\textsuperscript{139} Altogether, there are twenty-three published satellite works for Doktor Faust, some of which were performed long before they appeared in the opera.\textsuperscript{140} Unlike many of these earlier works, the themes and styles of which were later incorporated into the opera, it would appear that the process was reversed with Sarabande and Cortège. In an essay about his works, Busoni reveals the origin and nature of these two orchestral elegies: “In the middle of the whole work (Doktor Faust), separated and yet dependent, I composed, half experimentally, a Sarabande and Cortège (a model reduced in size). Hearing these performed gave me further certainty and instruction.”\textsuperscript{141} Beaumont describes these elegies more specifically as “assembled from a number of fragments from the opera score” and contends that by the autumn of 1918, Busoni had completed large portions of the opera and toward the end of the year decided to compose the Sarabande and Cortège as stand-alone

\textsuperscript{138} The existence or whereabouts of the autograph of Sarabande and Cortège is unknown. Busoni dates the Sarabande “um Neu Jahr [1918/19].” Jürgen Kindermann, Thematisch-chronologisches Verzeichnis der musicalischen Werke von Ferruccio B. Busoni (Regensburg: G. Bosse, 1980), 160.

\textsuperscript{139} Philip Jarnach completed the opera after Busoni’s death leading up to its Dresden premiere in 1925. Years later, Beaumont completed a presumably more informed version of the opera based on recently discovered sketches.

\textsuperscript{140} Busoni mentions a few of these studies in his essay “The Score of ‘Doktor Faust’” (1921): “Already, before writing the libretto, I had consciously made musical studies for Faust in my Nocturne Symphonique and my Sonatina Seconda. The themes and style of these pieces were used in the score and happily fulfilled the task prepared for them with regard to stimulation, compass, and atmosphere,” Busoni, Essence, 72–73.

\textsuperscript{141} Busoni, Essence, 73.
orchestral pieces based on that material.\textsuperscript{142} Despite being an experimental outgrowth of a larger work, however, Busoni indicates that these orchestral pieces were, at least initially, very well received, writing: “fragments [\textit{Sarabande und Cortège}] from \textit{Doktor Faust} have already been performed; they signify my greatest success as a composer.”\textsuperscript{143}

The \textit{Sarabande and Cortège} material forms the centerpiece of the opera. The disparate thematic ideas in the Vorspiel II, the scene in which Faust conjures Mephistopheles, each with their dramatic contexts and associations, coalesce in the \textit{Hauptspiel} and the \textit{Symphonic Intermezzo}, which would become the \textit{Cortège and Sarabande}, respectively. In comparison to the \textit{Symphonic Intermezzo}, the stand-alone orchestral version of \textit{Sarabande} includes only a few differences in orchestration and some additional sections composed of remnants from the Vorspiel II. The \textit{Symphonic Intermezzo (Sarabande)} occurs between the First Tableau, Faust’s courtship of the Duchess of Parma, or the attainment of the Ideal companion with the aid of Mephistopheles, and the Second Tableau, a scene in the future in which Faust learns of the Duchess’s death and the death of her child. It is also in this scene that we learn of Faust’s renunciation of magic and of his own impending death.

Busoni had apparently intended for portions of music like the \textit{Symphonic Intermezzo (Sarabande)} to play an important role in the design of the opera:

...there are intentional gaps in the libretto and it is apparently fragmentary. In this way space is left free to be filled out by the music… My principal task was to mould musically independent forms which at one and the same time would match the words and scenic events and also have a separate and meaningful existence detached from the word and situation.\textsuperscript{144}

He clarifies its specific role in his essay “The Oneness of Music and the Possibilities of the Opera” (1921):

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{142} Beaumont, \textit{Busoni the Composer}, 259.  
\textsuperscript{143} Busoni, \textit{Selected Letters}, 290.  
\textsuperscript{144} Beaumont, \textit{Busoni the Composer}, 317.
\end{flushright}
In this way, the Symphonic intermezzo is a purely instrumental unfolding of the psychological drama of “Vorspiel II,” in particular, Faust’s drawn out conjuration of the five spirits and ultimately Mephistopheles, and the latter’s subsequent courtship of Faust’s soul by offering to make Faust’s potentially fatal concerns disappear.145

Beaumont further points out that the Intermezzos within the opera act as turning points in the drama in which the Symphonic Intermezzo, “expressing itself in the language of ‘absolute music’, anticipates the conclusion of the work and gives an inkling of a realm ‘beyond Good (God) and Evil (Devil)’.”146 Beaumont uses here the Nietzschean reference, or the renunciation of traditional morality, which Busoni also uses in reference to music throughout Entwurf einer neuen Ästhetik der Tonkunst (1907). In the opera’s conclusion, the familiar theme of the unattainable as possible only through self-sacrifice is represented in Faust’s final act of transferring his life-force to the dead child, essentially conquering the devil.

The Symphonic Intermezzo (Sarabande) presents a more organized presentation of specific themes from the Vorspiel II into a unified form. It incorporates motives associated with characters and states of mind presented in the action, in particular, those associated with Mephistopheles and Faust’s inner conflict. The introductory theme of the Sarabande, and in particular the climactic sustained chords in this theme (Example 6.1a, mm. 10–12), are associated with Mephistopheles’s entrance and Faust’s curiosity and subsequent questioning of Mephistopheles (Vorspiel II, mm. 529ff, in G minor). It appears at the crucial moments that Mephistopheles tells Faust how he can serve him and in what way Faust must repay him:

Faust: Was willst Du mir dienen?
Mephistopheles: Fragt sich, fragt sich in welcher Weise? and later,
Faust: jetzt ford’re Du.
Hernach, hernach dienest Du mir fort ab.

145 Busoni, Essence, 75.
146 Beaumont, Busoni the Composer, 318.
The first theme of the *Sarabande* (Example 6.1b) appears in the opera when Faust, on the other hand, reveals his own desires to Mephistopheles (Vorspiel II, mm. 566ff, in B♭ minor). The second theme of the *Sarabande* (Example 6.1c) begins in C major/minor and consists of a chordal arpeggiation followed by an ominous sounding motive, hereafter referred to as the Mephistopheles motive. This theme occurs in the opera during the brief moments of clarity where Faust reconsiders signing his soul away to the devil (Vorspiel II, opera=mm. 400ff, in C♯), especially associated with work as a means of salvation. If he could only invest himself entirely in his work, he could quell the demons brewing within. The outline of the C-major triad at the beginning of the melodic idea signals the redemptive, positive force within the opera. Within this theme, however, are signs of his ultimate fate in the form of the Mephistopheles motive. This motive consists of a natural minor ascent from 5 to 1 that rounds out the melodic idea and ushers in the presence of fatalistic, negative forces. The major/minor duality as good and evil is perhaps most poignant in the construction of this second theme.

In describing the score of *Doktor Faust*, Busoni reveals the following with regard to his compositional approach and his views on melody and harmony in general:

> “The melodic element has yet another significance in instrumentation; it is helpful, ennobling, and it carries the content indeed it is indispensable. That is why it seems to me that the development inside the musical structure strives to put an orchestral movement together out of the pure melodic lines, which cross and support each other and move independently, and from which the harmony arises. In the score of *Doktor Faust* I have adhered almost throughout to these polyphonic lines and restricted the harmonic formation, the graphic picture of the notes being more horizontal than vertical.”147

This characteristic is certainly true of the Symphonic Intermezzo (*Sarabande*), which is in large part an exemplar of Busoni’s more experimental treatment of harmony in his late style. It is constructed of a contrapuntal fabric of ascending and descending stepwise, mostly chromatic

lines intersecting to form primarily three and four-part tertian sonorities. Semi-tonal voice leading is apparent at every level from the foreground to the background. From an analytical perspective, the migration between voices, chord overlaps, and other contrapuntal features complicate the musical surface, resulting in very colorful and unorthodox harmonic successions. As the large-scale voice leading unfolds over the course of the Sarabande, however, it becomes clear that significant formal junctions articulated by changes in tempo and the presentation of thematic material, phrasing, motivic connections, and other parameters emphasize structural harmonies, their prolongational spans, and the large-scale linear connections between them. The following linear analysis points to specific characteristics of the structure and further demonstrates how prolongational spans materialize from a contrapuntal fabric made up of primarily independent voices. As in Chapters 4 and 5, I begin with an explanation of the large-scale structure and then focus in on specific passages, explicating some of the small-scale prolongational spans, and touching upon issues such as the interaction of melody and harmony, overlapping harmonies, and the migration of voices that essentially form continuous chromatic linear motion.

6.2 Formal and Structural Overview

In a letter to Hugo Leichtentritt in September 1918, a year prior to the completion of the Sarabande, Busoni writes:

I am becoming increasingly convinced that musical forms feel the need to be moulded adjustably, according to content and motif; just as a building, according to its given purpose and terrain. Schopenhauer, I recall, writes somewhere that a dog’s head is elongated and therefore beautiful because its body is also formed horizontally. –A text book on form implies for me only a history of form, an enumeration of available examples and prototypes. –A
warning should be printed at the bottom of every page: just as this master here found a form for his idea, so should you seek the only one for your idea.\textsuperscript{148}

The form of the Sarabande is similar to that of the Berceuse élégiaque and Gesang vom Reigen der Geister in that its formation into parts and sections is largely a result of the unfolding of interrelated musical ideas, their immediate development, and the harmonic areas and tempo fluctuations which accompany them (Example 6.2). While it does not fit neatly within any standard categories, it does exhibit some more general formal characteristics associated with symmetrical forms and with sonata principle. The symmetrical nature of the form lies in the reverse restatement of the primary and introductory themes at the end of the piece. Since the end of the introductory theme overlaps with the lead-in to the primary theme, there is also a cyclical aspect to the form when the final statement of the introductory theme maintains this lead-in as the last melodic gesture in the piece. The form also features two contrasting themes in Part I: the primary theme is first presented in B minor and the second theme in C major/minor. While new themes emerge in Part II, it is largely developmental in nature, interweaving various thematic strands from the previous themes. Thus, in a general sense, the form reflects sonata principle in its presentation (Part I), development, and restatement of thematic material (Part II).

The harmonic structure of the piece is rooted in a split-third referential sonority on B. A score is provided in Example 6.3a-i along with a middleground voice-leading sketch in Example 6.4. Part I establishes B minor; however, mixture occurs throughout piece. This major/minor duality is initially hinted at in the harmonic progression of the introductory theme, with both B major and B minor appearing in m. 5 as a result of the descending chromatic line in the upper voice (Example 6.1a) and in the $E_b–D$ of the main upper-voice descent back to B minor in mm. 11–13 (Example 6.4). Indeed, the interplay between $E_b$ or $D#$ and D in the top-voice descent and

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{148} Busoni, Selected Letters, 274.}
elsewhere continues to hint at the large-scale mixture of B major and B minor from a linear perspective over course of Part I. In particular, both Eb and D appear in the upper voice melody within the prolongation of D minor in mm. 17–18, D and D♭ in the inner voice in mm. 28–31, and again Eb and D in the lower voice in mm. 34–35 (Example 6.4). In the second theme, Eb is again emphasized in the top voice, becoming in the developmental space a D♭ leading-tone to E. Both Eb and D appear again in the upper-voice descent back to B in m. 115. Though both Eb and D appear in the final upper-voice descent beginning in m. 148 of Part II, B major is emphasized at the structural close of the piece in mm. 140 and 154.

As mentioned above, in the context of the opera, one might associate the mixture of 3 and 3 with the duality of good and evil or, more specifically, Faust’s inner conflict, not to be resolved, or rather accepted, until later in the opera. This association is not limited to mixture of the referential sonority, but extends to other chords or keys as well. As mentioned above, the connection of good and evil with C major and minor is most poignant in the second theme. It is heard not only at the local level in the melody of the second theme, but also on a large scale in the alternation of E and Eb in the upper voice throughout the second theme and the developmental space (mm. 41–115), which foreshadows the structural descent from 4 to 4(3) in the upper voice occurring in Part II (mm. 132–140).

The structure of the introductory theme introduces on a small scale certain harmonic motions that are projected over the large-scale structure of the piece. A foreground sketch of the introduction is provided in Example 6.5. First, the emphasis on C major in m. 4 foreshadows the key area of the second theme. More specifically, the bass motion from B to C and the upper-voice descent, F♯–F–E, in mm. 1–4, is replicated on a larger scale over the course of mm. 13–41. Second, the contrary motion in the outer voices converging on the second inversion B chord that
occurs in mm. 1–5 is also replicated over the course of mm. 13–22. Third, the appearance of D major/minor as mediant to B in m. 8 is also apparent in the large-scale structure in mm. 17–19 and 30. Fourth, although the B major with seventh added in the bass in m. 9 progresses to #VII, its context in the introduction foreshadows the later B major as dominant to E in the developmental space (mm. 64–82), and in particular the D# to E resolution in the top voice. The B in the trombone and timpani in m. 10 could be interpreted as a member of an E minor chord, sustained in the trombones with an overlapping A♯¾ in the Flutes, Oboe, and English Horn. In this case, the previous B major-minor seventh functions as a dominant-seventh chord resolving to E minor, as it does later in the developmental space. Finally, the return of the introductory theme in mm. 142–151 participates in the structural close of the piece. In particular the cadence point at the end of the introduction, or the ominous chord progression that marks Mephistopheles’s entrance, is now transposed down a step to B♭ and reiterates the structural top-voice descent, again emphasizing the mixture of E♭ and D.

Over the course of the first theme, there is a constant sense of perpetual motion. This is the result of a dense fabric of voices that trace ascending and descending chromatic lines which migrate between voices. The first theme consists of a series of wedge progressions beginning in B minor combined with a polyphonic melody (Example 6.1b). The wide-ranging polyphonic melody articulates various strands of the chromatic voice leading. As is shown in the formal diagram in Example 6.2, this melodic idea is shuffled through the different orchestral registers over the course of mm. 13–39: alto (violins and viola), tenor (English horn and cello), bass (contrabassoon, cello and bass) and soprano (flute, then violins). From a harmonic perspective, significant emphasis is placed on the sonorities B♭ minor (mm. 15–16), D minor (mm. 17–19), and F♯ major (mm. 20–21). The latter two chords form part of a large-scale bass motion outlining
B minor in mm. 13–22. The harmonic progression underlying the first theme is in large part guided by the contrary linear motion in the primary upper voice, from F♯ to B, and the bass, from B to F♯.

The *tranquillo* marks the beginning of the second theme, mm. 41–63, the core of which is first stated in mm. 41–45. Like the first theme, the second theme is immediately developed, first by a restatement in the subdominant F major/minor in mm. 48–51. The E–E♭ fluctuation, now on A–A♭, facilitates the subdominant of both C major and C minor. The dramatic shifts between harmonic areas that follows involves brief interjections of a lyrical melody in both E♭ (m. 52) and D major (m. 58), which further develops the initial major-chord arpeggiation at the opening of the second theme, in alternation with the Mephistopheles motive. At the climactic moments that contain the Mephistopheles motive in mm. 54–57 and mm. 60–63, the outer voices shift down chromatically through 6-5 motions. The linear motion over the course of the second theme and its development connects the initial C with the harmony F–A–C–E♭. If respelled as an augmented-sixth, the expected resolution of this chord to the subdominant E major (shown in parentheses) would continue the descending linear motion in the voices. This resolution is thwarted, however, and a rather unexpected B major begins the rising-third motive of the development space, or the new addition in the orchestral version of the *Sarabande*. Instead of resolving upward to E, the E♭/D♯ in the upper voice is carried over into the following B-major chord (oboe).

The developmental space is marked *sempre sostenuto* and begins with a rising third theme, related to the opening idea in mm. 6–10. This theme is interwoven with a variation on the Mephistopheles motive, first appearing in m. 70, and a new melodic idea appearing in mm. 74–77 (Flute). This first section of development prolongs the subdominant key area and is
characterized by stasis and the contrapuntal reshuffling of various motivic ideas. As mentioned above, the developmental space does not appear in the Symphonic Intermezzo from Doktor Faust. If removed, the return of the opening thematic material in m. 105, can be understood as a continuation of the end of the second theme material. Thus m. 63 would lead into m. 105 fulfilling the expected resolution to E major or the subdominant on the large-scale. Despite adding this part to the Sarabande, Busoni essentially maintains the structural resolution by arriving on the F–A–C–D♯ in m. 104, enharmonically respelled as an augmented sixth.

At the arrival of a first inversion E-major harmony in m. 105, marked by the return to Tempo I, remnants of the first theme begin to return and E is maintained in the top voice. The descending chromatic motion continues to the F♯ dominant in mm. 116ff. The F–A–C–E♭ harmony reemerges in m. 115, supporting the descent to E♭ in the top voice. Its resolution is again thwarted upward to the dominant at m. 116 as the rising third motive now appears in F♯. It is interesting to note that each time this resolution is thwarted, it is followed by the rising third motive, as though the function of this motive is to delay or suspend. The F–A–C–E♭ harmony thus becomes a passing chord between subdominant and dominant harmonies in which the E♭ rather than D♯ spelling cues the descending resolution E–E♭–D–C♯ in the top voice. The developmental space can thus be viewed as a kind of parenthetical insertion within the overall structure, which essentially prolongs the subdominant. The large-scale linear connection of the Neapolitan C major (m. 41) with the dominant (m. 116) occurs over the course of the second theme and developmental space, setting up a return to the primary theme in B minor.

While remnants of the first theme begin to appear at the Tempo I, the true recapitulation of the first theme with its underlying wedge progression in B minor begins in m. 119. The shape and melodic content is maintained; however, the rhythmic profile has been significantly varied.
The rising third theme from the end of the introductory theme emerges in E major (m. 132) supporting scale degree 4 in the top voice and is followed by a new lyrical theme beginning in m. 135. This new lyrical theme continues to prolong E major, which is again connected through chromatic linear motion with the F7/B superposition in m. 140. The F7/B superposition in m. 140 merges together 3 and 2 in the top-voice descent. In m. 142, a deceptive progression to VI diverts a strong arrival on B as the introductory theme returns with the bass motto. This return of the introductory theme is the second addition to the Sarabande, not appearing in the Symphonic Intermezzo, and, as mentioned above lends a symmetrical quality to the form. While 1 is sustained in the top voice, the underlying progression is varied from the opening measures. The bass line in mm. 142–45 appears unchanged from mm. 1–4; however, the top voice descent is accelerated. The result is an earlier arrival on B major/minor in m. 146 (=m. 5) through C minor rather than major. The rising third motive from mm. 6–9 is omitted and a root position rather than first inversion B major ends the phrase in m. 147. This is followed immediately by the sustained chords transposed down a step to B♭.

The shift to B♭ minor is certainly a remarkable feature at the close of the work. The passage that forms the closing measures of the Sarabande, which includes the transposition of the sustained chords to B♭, is taken directly from the Vorspiel II (mm. 543–550) in Doktor Faust. It is one of several fleeting keys that occur within the larger context of C major during the Vorspiel II, the content of the first theme also at one point appearing briefly in B♭. This is the first time in the opera that the climactic chords appear and Busoni may have wanted to make reference to this specific moment in the drama at the end of the Symphonic Intermezzo (Sarabande). The listener is reminded of Mephistopheles’s initial entrance into the story at this
moment just before the turning point in the drama in which Faust learns of the deaths of the Duchess and her child.

As in the introductory theme, the top voice descends over the sustained progression, which now resolves to B♭ minor. From a structural perspective this descent retraces the enharmonic fluctuation between ♯4 and ♩3 that has occurred throughout the piece in the upper voice in the home key of B. The Symphonic Intermezzo in the opera sheds some insight into the structure of this passage. With the omission of the return of the introductory theme, the F♯7/B superposition in mm. 140–141 would progress directly to the first climactic chord in m. 148, as in the Symphonic Intermezzo. The E♭ in the top voice is the chromatic linear descent from E, or the seventh of the F♯7 chord in m. 140. Note that through the climactic chord progression transposed down a step from the introduction, the lower voices continue to sustain G♭ and B♭ or the enharmonic spelling of the previous F♭ chord. Therefore, the shift to B♭ minor occurs within the continued presence of the home key B in the retention of the F♯7 chord from mm. 140–141 against B♭ minor. This same enharmonic spelling and the combination of G♭ major and B♭ minor was established in the introductory theme in m. 3 (Example 6.5). Furthermore, the progression at the close of the Sarabande, F♭ or G♭–B♭m–Dm–Bm is the same harmonic territory that was covered over the course of the first theme (see in particular, mm. 13–17 in Example 6.4). In the Sarabande, the addition of the return to the introductory theme provides a stronger arrival on B in the bass and top voice in m. 142. Therefore, the structural return to B in the outer voices occurs, yet a strong B chord is delayed until m. 154. In terms of the final resolution to B major in m. 154, B♭ can be understood as an enharmonic leading tone to B and the D♭ in the top voice as a reiteration of ♯. 
The final reference to B♭ minor, however, may take on a deeper role as a kind of secondary key hinted at throughout the piece. As mentioned above, B♭ minor appears in the course of the first theme in mm. 15–16. In m. 21, the chord, A–E♯–B♯–D♯, an enharmonic spelling of the dominant of B♭, occurs just before the arrival of the F♯ dominant of B. As is further addressed later in this chapter, this A–E♯–B♯–D♯ chord is highlighted because it breaks up the chromatic wedge progression which prolongs the dominant. The reader will also recall the repetition of the F–A–C–D♯(E♭) harmony throughout the second theme. It is again highlighted because of its appearance just prior to the addition of the developmental space and again at the end of the developmental space. It functions locally as an augmented-sixth resolving to E and later as a passing chord between the subdominant and dominant. However, the frequent appearance and emphasis on this chord throughout Part I, with its plurisignificance as dominant of B♭, foreshadow the unusual reference to B♭ as a kind of shadow key that emerges at the end of the piece. As was the case in Berceuse élégiaque with F and F♯(G♭), a triad or key area with root a semitone above the referential sonority is continually hinted at throughout the work.

6.3 Polyphonic Harmony and Surface-level Conflicts Between Melody and Harmony

A closer look at the introductory theme reveals the interaction of the melodic and harmonic realms, often involving conflict, which emphasizes the independence of the melodic ideas and results in the kind of complex surface-level harmonies typical of Busoni’s late style. The introductory theme gives the impression of a more homophonic texture, in part because many of the voices move in tandem to the rhythmic pattern of the Sarabande dance. The independence of voices is maintained, however, particularly in the interaction of the voices within the underlying progression of harmonies. Let us first examine the basic structure and
voice-leading of the introductory theme and then consider an example of the kinds of conflict between the melodic and harmonic realms that can pose certain challenges for linear analysis.

There are three orchestral groups in the introductory mm. 1–13: the sustained chords in the trombones, the timpani, and the strings, the last of which can be further separated into upper (Violin I and II) and lower (Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass) strings (Example 6.3a). The harp enters later in tandem with the string parts. The introductory theme is characterized by a sequenced pattern of thirds (Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass) in mm. 1–5. An inverted thirds motive appears (Violin I and Harp) in mm. 6–9, followed by a sustained progression in the winds in mm. 10–13, the goal of which is the B minor chord arriving in m. 13. The various motivic ideas and the texture changes establish three phrase segments, 5+4+3, over the course of the introductory theme. At the end of this passage, the main theme enters with an ascending gesture overlapping with the last climactic chord.

Prolongation of B minor over the course of the introductory theme occurs through neighboring and linear motion in each of the voices, connecting the initial B minor with the B minor chord in m. 13 (Example 6.5). The top voices descend chromatically or move in neighbor motion over the course of mm. 1–5 and in the process connect a root position with a second inversion B minor chord. Similar to the chromatic fluctuation of dyads in the Berceuse élégiaque, neighboring motions, B–B♭–B and F♯(G♭)–G–F♯, occur in the inner voices in mm. 1–5 and later in mm. 5–9 in the fluctuation of F♯–G–F♯ (bass), B–A♯–B and D♯–D–D♯. Finally, the bass voice articulates a linear progression over the course of mm. 1–5 from B to E♭, or the enharmonically spelled ♭♭, before completing the outline of the B major/minor triad by arriving on F♯. The arrival of the second inversion B-minor chord and a new melodic pattern in the strings gives the impression of a new phrase segment beginning in m. 6. In this case, the phrase structure
and the motivic ideas help to articulate the boundaries of this first segment of the prolonged B referential sonority.

An underlying harmonic progression is clearly articulated in the introductory theme by sustained harmonies in the trombones and harp and later the entire wind section. From an analytical point of view, the chromatic lines in the upper strings and the sequenced pattern of thirds in the bass voice over the course of mm. 1–5 can be understood to interact with the broader sustained harmonic progression in the trombones. Considering that several notes are enharmonically spelled, this sustained progression establishes the main key of B minor, but with the unorthodox progression I–V–♭II₇–♭I–♭. As mentioned above, the stepwise motion from I to ♭II₇ foreshadows the large-scale motion from B minor to C major/minor later in Part I. The underlying progression over the course of mm. 6–13 involves stepwise motion through the dominant, mediant, and leading-tone chord during which the prolongation of F♭ in the lower voice occurs through stepwise motion spanning the octave.

While a strong case can be made for the prolongation B minor over the course of these measures through directed, stepwise voice leading and contextual factors such as textural shifts, melodic patterning, and phrasing, the interaction between the individual voices, in particular the melodic patterning within the unfolding of the bass voice in the lower strings and the underlying harmonic progression, complicates at times the harmony at the surface level. For example, the melodic bass voice poses certain challenges for analysis if understand in terms of the sustained harmonic progression in the trombones. If the G and E in the melodic bass voice in m. 2 are understood to be upper and lower neighbors to the following F♭, as is shown in the voice-leading sketch, then one would expect that the E♭ and C in m. 4 would also act as upper and lower neighbors to the following D, since they enact the same motivic pattern in the melodic line.
(Example 6.1a). The sketch reflects this parsing of the melodic bass line; however, from a harmonic viewpoint, the D is a passing note between the C and the Eb, which ultimately anticipates enharmonically the arrival of D♯ in the next harmony, because it is occurring within the sustained vii7 chord. Furthermore, there arises a conflict between the vertical and horizontal aspects when the initial bass note B is connected with the D in m. 4, which elevates the status of the D over the C, not reflective of the more local harmonic understanding of the D as passing tone (Example 6.5). A second interpretation in which both the D in m. 4 and the initial F♯ in m. 2 are both understood as passing between the C and Eb and the E and G, respectively, would be another possibility. Parsing the line in this way would suggest an E-minor harmony implied in the melodic voice prior to the arrival of the F♯, a harmony not suggested in the sustained progression in the trombones.

This illustrates on a minute level, how the melodic and harmonic aspects are at times at odds with each other due to a kind of misalignment. The conflict posed here between these realms is perhaps what makes this passage harmonically interesting. It is entirely reasonable to understand this conflict as emerging from the independence of the parts as they unfold in musical time, or from an analytical point of view, the independence of the horizontal and vertical aspects of the music. The lower melodic voice may compose out the referential sonority independently of the underlying harmonic progression unfolding in the other voices. In pointing up the conflicts in analysis, we get a better picture of the interaction between these two parameters and the means by which Busoni’s late style can be said to be at once rooted in tradition, in particular tertian constructions, and also experimenting with harmony through a more contrapuntal approach that involves misalignments between the horizontal and vertical aspects.
6.4 Aspects of Melody and Harmony in Wedge Progressions

Over the course of the first theme, five wedge progressions underlie the free-flowing and wide-ranging melody that is transferred amongst instrumental ranges. The wedge progressions correspond to the first three statements of the melodic idea with variation over the course of mm. 13–25. These wedge progressions either connect through linear motion or compose out structural harmonies. The melodic voice participates in filling in the triadic harmonies within the wedge progressions. Of particular interest here is the polyphonic nature of the melody, which implies multiple linear strands within the wedge progressions, and the prolongational spans and overall voice-leading structure created through the wedge progressions.

Robert Gauldin’s recent study of wedge progressions distinguishes three possible types: chromatic, diatonic, or a hybrid of both. The focus is on chromatic wedge progressions, which he broadly categorizes according to the series of even- or odd-numbered intervals occurring between the voices forming the wedge. The contrary motion may occur between any voice pair, or may involve more than one voice pair, and be either divergent or convergent. I borrow here some of Gauldin’s terminology and also model the diagrams in Example 6.7 on those in his study; however, it should be noted that there are some important differences between the wedge progressions in the Sarabande and those in Gauldin’s study. Most of the theoretical models in Gauldin’s study involve a similar set of triadic progressions, some of which serve to compose out a dominant-seventh chord. These theoretical models are based on examples which occur in Romantic music, primarily in the works of Wagner and Tchaikovsky. In the wedge progressions that occur in the Sarabande, the chord progressions resulting from the voices moving along with the two-voice wedge, are primarily tertian in construction, but do not always reflect those triadic

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150 Ibid., 1–2.
progressions typical of the examples shown in Gauldin’s study. Furthermore, the types of wedge progressions in the Sarabande are mostly odd-interval, which is, according to Gauldin, “exceedingly rare” in Romantic music.\textsuperscript{151} Despite these differences, the diagrams help to further define the phrase structure and illustrate how the wedge voices are combined with the other voices, particularly the melodic voice, to form triadic progressions. They also further illustrate the prolongational spans or the connection of structural chords that occur within each phrase or phrase segment, corresponding to segments or transpositions of the melodic idea, changes in the direction of the voices (convergent vs. divergent), and the alternation of different types of wedge progressions.

The first divergent, odd-interval wedge progression in mm. 13–14 is chromatic and consists primarily of the two-voice wedge and the melodic voice, which is represented in the upper line of the diagram. This chord progression connects through chromatic motion the initial B minor to its dominant, F\textsuperscript{7} (Example 6.5). The phrase structure over the course of the first theme is shaped largely by the melodic idea. In particular, the suspension resolving to A\textsuperscript{♯} at the end of m. 14 articulates this two-measure phrase segment. The next two measures, 15–16, again form a phrase segment which progresses from B\textsubscript{♭} minor to its dominant F\textsuperscript{7}. Here, the motivic ideas from mm. 13–14 are further developed and the melody again comes to a point of repose on A in m. 16. Though the first phrase segment is connected to the second through stepwise motion, the wedge progression in mm. 15–16 is shifted to the lower two voices (Example 6.7). This wedge is quite different than the chromatic wedge progression in the first phrase segment since the lowest voice moves at a slower pace due to repeated notes and the two-voice wedge contains

\textsuperscript{151} Ibid., 19.
both whole- and half-step motion, or a hybrid wedge progression. In this case, the demarcation of these first two phrase segments, and in particular the end of the first chromatic wedge progression, support the connection of B minor and B♭ minor and the chromatic voice-exchange shown in the voice-leading sketch (Example 6.5).

In the context of the triadic progression B minor –D♯ minor–A major in m. 13, the melodic notes F♯–G–F♯–E–F♯ could be interpreted as an upper and lower neighbor figure around F♯, with the subsequent B♯ as passing, as is shown in the voice-leading sketch. While this melodic idea does not move exclusively by step, if we understand certain pitches as implied within a progression of triads formed along with the wedge voices, and account for the conceptual migration of voices within the voice-leading scheme, a possible polyphonic melody emerges which contributes to the stepwise voice-leading between chords. If one were to hear the melodic idea as a polyphonic melody, then yet a more complicated interpretation emerges. Through the upward motion from F♯ to C♯, followed by a descending chromatic line, the ear is drawn to hear multiple linear strands contained in this melody, one beginning with F♯ and a separate strand descending from C♯. In voice-leading space, F♯ may be understood to descend to E when the A major chord arrives, intersecting with the contrary ascending chromatic line D–D♯–E in the inner voice. One might also imagine that the upper linear strand emanates from an implied D above the initial B-minor triad progressing to C♯, and forming a descending chromatic line from D down to A♯ over the course of mm. 13–14. The melody of the second phrase segment foreshadows in its motivic content the Mephistopheles motive of the second theme, emphasizing the longer held notes B♭–B–A, which comprise the top voice in the diagram within the second hybrid wedge.

Gauldin uses the term hybrid to denote wedge progressions that combine diatonic and chromatic motion. The term is used here in a broader sense to denote wedge progressions that combine both whole- and half-steps.
progression. This completes a melodic descent down to A over this second phrase segment in coordination with the descending bass line. Thus, the melodic voice highlights linear strands which also participate in the stepwise voice-leading within the underlying harmonic progression.

The third wedge progression in mm. 17–19 is chromatic and contains both divergent and convergent sections (Example 6.6 and 6.7). The mediant D-minor harmony begins this wedge progression, where the opening melodic idea is transposed to begin on A and continues to be developed over the next few measures. The melody of this phrase segment also comes to a rest on A, supported by a respelling of the D-minor harmony as D–E♭–A on the last beat of m. 19, demarcating the prolongational span of D minor over the course of mm. 17–19. The fifth and sixth chords within this progression break from the odd-interval wedge and do not form tertian harmonies with the melodic voice.

The transposition of the main melodic idea to C♯ in the tenor range in m. 20 cues the next phrase segment and the beginning of a new chromatic, even-interval wedge progression, which prolongs the F♯ dominant harmony through m. 21 by connecting V- and V⅃. The progression is interrupted by the insertion of the afore-mentioned chord A–E♭–B♭–D♯, or the enharmonic spelling of the dominant to B♭ minor, as the penultimate chord. The linear motion, however, continues as the A in the upper voice of the wedge migrates up to A♯ in the melodic voice (Example 6.6).

When the main melodic idea is again transposed to begin on F♯ in m. 22, the B-minor harmony returns now with F♯ in the lower voice. The chromatic wedge progression breaks off in m. 24 and this passage connects through linear motion the two first inversion B minor chords of mm. 22 and 28 (Example 6.6). A deeper-level harmonic progression, which reflects B minor, appears on the larger-scale over the course of the first theme. B minor is established as key
center largely because it is composed out through its mediant, D minor, and its dominant, F♯ major, in mm. 17 and 20. The wedge progressions help to establish the small prolongational spans within the first theme and the linear connections between these structural chords.

6.5 Harmonic Overlap Projected through Independent Voices

Previous chapters included examples of various types of chord superposition involving instances in which the individual motivic ideas combined to form multiple harmonies sounding simultaneously in musical time. Harmonic overlap involves a more clear case of the progression of one harmony to the next, in which the two harmonies temporarily sound together. In some instances, the two harmonies may be composed out in musical time through the combination of various motivic ideas distributed throughout the voices and through other features such as pedal tones or arpeggiations. The various motivic ideas, often in repetition, can give the aural impression of multiple tertian harmonies, thus leading to harmonic overlap. Edward Laufer describes the phenomenon of overlap as a circumstance in which “two different prolongations appear to be combined and overlap... Another purpose is a programmatic one: to create a sense of emerging, as expressed by moving from a harmonically less distinct area in order to reach for a more distinct area and a definite goal.”¹⁵³ One such representative example occurs at the beginning of the developmental space, mainly a result of extensive pedal tones, as B major and its extension to D♯7, or “a harmonically less distinct area,” overlap with the eventual goal of E minor over the course of mm. 64–82 (Example 6.3d-e). Though the B major chord in m. 64 coincides with the arrival of a new rising third motive, it does not signal a strong return to B. The resolution to E minor, or the minor subdominant, is so clearly articulated in m. 82, that the B

major is heard as a dominant function. Thus, the expected resolution of the F–A–C–E♭ as augmented-sixth to E at the end of Part I (mm. 60–63) is eventually fulfilled with the strong arrival of E in m. 82, but is extended by the arrival of B major in m. 64 (Example 6.3d). It is also made clear that this is not a strong return to B, particularly because the rising third theme beginning in m. 64 extends the initial B major triad into a D♯7 chord, functioning as the leading-tone chord to E, above a B–F♯–B pedal (Example 6.8). This alternates with the arrival of a new arpeggiation beginning on E–G in m. 67 which hints at E minor but is part of a passing diminished-seventh chord in the arpeggiation to the F♯–A–C extension of D♯7 in mm. 70–73.

The appearance of the Mephistopheles motive on E–F♯–G–E in the Violin II and Viola parts in m. 70 further hints at an eventual shift to E minor. This is followed in mm. 74–75 with a new melodic idea in the Flutes articulating neighboring motion from E minor to A minor, the A–C held over from the previous D♯7 chord above a sustained E in the Violin II and Viola. This alternation migrates to the Violin II part in mm. 77–81. The Viola part then takes up the lyrical melodic idea from the second theme also outlining E minor. These events suggest that the E minor harmony has partially arrived, yet still within the continued B–F♯–B pedal. A definitive shift to E minor does not occur until the Mephistopheles motive on E migrates to the bass in m. 82. Thus the conveyance of B major, its extension to D♯7, and E minor through the various motivic ideas in mm. 70–81 results in the aural perception of a temporary harmonic overlap.

From a voice-leading perspective, this progression draws out the upper-voice resolution from D♯ to E. This also plays into the emphasis in the structural top voice on these two pitches as ♯4 and ♯3 on a larger-scale.

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154 Interestingly, though I interpret this chord as a secondary function, it is similar to the appearance of an apparent tonic at the beginning of the developmental space that appears in some traditional sonata form movements. See Jack Adrian, “The Function of the Apparent Tonic at the Beginning of Development Sections” Integral 5 (1991): 1–53.
6.6 Chromatic Saturation within Migrating Voices

As is pointed out in Salzer and Schacter’s counterpoint text, “a coherent linear progression need not be confined to a single voice; it can migrate from one part of the texture to another.” As a final instance of how independent voices made up of multiple motivic ideas coalesce to form linear harmonic progressions, this chapter closes with a brief example of the migration of voices between parts, a common feature in Busoni’s later orchestral works. In the Sarabande, examples of this appear not only with stepwise motion migrating between instruments or sections, but also with the reshuffling of melodic motives and themes. The migration of the first theme amongst the different ranges is one example of this. The above-mentioned sense of perpetual motion or suspense is also related to this phenomenon. By migrating between voices, a continual descending or ascending line can extend over a larger passage, giving the sense of perpetual motion or delayed arrival.

The most chromatic passage in the Sarabande has just this quality, and involves the extensive migration of chromatic lines amongst voices. It occurs during the prolongation of the E minor/major subdominant over the course of mm. 90–104 (Example 6.3e-f). Following the rising third theme at the beginning of the development, multiple motivic fragments, primarily from the second theme, are distributed and shuffled among the voices (mm. 74–115). Beginning with the arrival on a root position E minor chord in m. 90, the basic underlying progression consist of a series of parallel seventh chords resulting from the linear motion conveyed in each of the motivic ideas. Each motive contributes to forming this series of seventh chords. The motivic figure in the Flute, Oboe, and Violin parts is linked together to form both ascending and descending linear motion. The motive in the trombones (mm. 92ff), taken from the major-mode interjections in Eb

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and D major from the second theme, consists of a rising fifth which outlines members of a given tertian sonority, followed by a descending stepwise line. The repeated fragment of the Mephistopheles motive in the bass outlines the interval of a third within a given tertian sonority. Some of the motivic figures, such as the one in the Violin II and Viola, are polyphonic melodies that are sequenced to produce multiple linear strands. Within this series of seventh chords, $F^\#7$, $D^\#7$, and $F^7$, or $II^7-VII^7-I^6$ in E minor are emphasized through phrase structure and textural shifts, similar to the above-described wedge progressions (Example 6.8). A pattern emerges in which the prolongational spans of $F^\#7$ and $D^\#7$ are outlined by a series of seventh chords whose roots form a descending chromatic line spanning a fourth before returning to the initial chord. Lines with arrows indicate the migrating voices, which allows for a continual downward descent in each of the voices. $F^7$ is then spelled as augmented-sixth to E and fulfills its resolution to the first inversion major subdominant in m. 105. The progression of seventh chords shown in this example involves primarily chromatic voice-leading with multiple enharmonic spellings and resembles to a large extent the progressions of seventh chords shown in Bernhard Ziehn’s *Manual of Harmony* (Example 2.5). These harmonies, themselves connected through migrating chromatic voices, serve to connect on a larger scale the E minor chord in m. 91 with the E major chord in m. 105, continuing the prolongation of the subdominant over the developmental space.
CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION

7.1 Characteristics of Busoni’s Late Style and their Relation to the Concept of Polyphonic Harmony

In this dissertation, I have sought to illustrate specific characteristics of Busoni’s late style with regard to the treatment of harmony and melody through linear analysis of three representative orchestral works. The concept of polyphonic harmony or the emphasis on the independence of voices in the creation of harmony is a significant aspect of Busoni’s late style. The individuality of the lines is asserted through techniques of orchestration, through the interaction of the harmonic and melodic aspect, and through the distribution of a variety of motivic ideas throughout the voices that combine to convey harmonic progressions. As is clear from his own writings, and his affinity with those of Bernhard Ziehn, Busoni’s views on harmony are linked with this concept and are reflected in his own compositional approach. As his early experimentation with Bach’s music foreshadows, a more contrapuntal approach is the means by which he experiments with harmony in a more modern style.

In the following paragraphs, specific characteristics of Busoni’s late style related to aspect of harmony and melody are summarized and related to the overall concept of polyphonic harmony.

(1) In all three pieces, the use of mode mixture results in split-third referential sonorities. Mixture within the referential sonorities and other structural sonorities is apparent both on the local level and in the large-scale structure of these works. In each piece, mixture is foreshadowed in the introductory sections of the work. This is often the result of the full use of the chromatic spectrum and chromatic linear progressions. Fluctuations in the melodic and motivic ideas frequently emphasize chromatic pitches that result in both the major and minor harmonic
versions of sonorities. In the *Berceuse élégiaque* and the *Sarabande*, chromatic fluctuations in the form of neighboring motion occur at the middleground level. In *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister*, the lack of scale-degree three in the “Song of the Spirit Dance” theme plays upon the modal ambiguity of the work, which is reflected in the split-third referential sonority. From a harmonic perspective, all three pieces include instances where both major and minor sonorities with a single root are occasionally sounded simultaneously. In *Sarabande*, with its genesis linked to *Doktor Faust*, mode mixture can be associated with the duality of good and evil.

(2) The migration of voices occurs frequently in each of the works in this study, most often involving the migration of thematic ideas between voices, particularly in the *Sarabande*, or in the shuffling of motivic ideas that can be combined to form linear progressions. The migration of chromatic linear progressions between voices is associated with a sense of perpetual motion. This phenomenon is characteristic of more contrapuntal textures and is one contributing factor to the harmonic complexity of the surface level.

(3) Harmonic entities are often constructed through a variety of motivic ideas that either outline members of a particular tertian sonority or, when linked together, form linear progressions that combine to form harmonic progressions.

(4) In each of the pieces in this study, the frequent use of polyphonic melodies conveys multiple harmonies. From an analytical perspective, voice-leading between harmonies must often be constructed. In *Berceuse élégiaque*, polyphonic melodies convey in some instances harmonies which are superposed. In *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister*, polyphonic melody is the primary means by which the opening harmonic progression is conveyed through a series of imitative voices. This is also one aspect of more contrapuntal textures which further complicates the harmonic realm.
(5) The superposition and overlap of harmonic entities occur in all of the works in this study. Harmonic superpositions are often the result of the perception of multiple linear strands. The composite chords are typically conveyed through various motivic ideas separated into groups through orchestration or other means. Overlaps are often the result of anticipation of a harmony, again through various motivic ideas conveyed in the independent voices. In Berceuse élégiaque, harmonic superposition is one means of connecting through chromatic linear motion two structural harmonies. In Gesang vom Reigen der Geister, harmonic superpositions support a chromatic linear progression in the top voice. Correlations between harmonic superpositions involving fifth- and fourth-related harmonies occur in both of these pieces.

(6) The flexibility between the melodic and harmonic realms is one characteristic which asserts the independence of the melodic idea. In the Berceuse élégiaque, the integration of melody and harmony is particularly apparent in passages that incorporate harmonic superposition. In the case of Gesang vom Reigen der Geister, the melodic and harmonic realms are at odds. This is reflective of the aesthetic idea of “absolute melody” in reference to the “Song of the Spirit Dance.” Much of the Sarabande analysis points to conflicts between the melodic and harmonic realms, which is reflective of the occasional autonomy of the melodic idea, resulting in complex and colorful harmonic combinations.

(7) In general, linear or motivic patterns such as wedge progressions are often the driving force behind the formation of harmonic progressions at the surface level. These progressions are often parallel, tertian, progressions with mostly chromatic voice leading. They typically establish the prolongational spans of structural harmonies or serve as the connection between those harmonies.
(8) The third is a relation frequently occurring both from a melodic and harmonic perspective. It is apparent in the construction of the primary theme in the *Berceuse élogiaque* and in the introductory theme in the *Sarabande*. Harmonic third relations are also structurally significant in *Berceuse élogiaque* and in local progressions surrounding the E tonal center in *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister*.

7.2 The Concept of Polyphonic Harmony and the Orchestral Elegies in Relation to Busoni’s Aesthetic Views

Chapter 1 of this dissertation includes a summary of some of Busoni’s aesthetic views drawn from his own writings. Some of the ideas put forth in *Entwurf einer neuen Ästhetik der Musik*, particularly with reference to microtonal composition, new types of scales, and electronic techniques, were never fully realized in Busoni’s composition. In this sense, they remained only prophetic ideas, to be exercised by other composers. However, the suggestion of these new technical possibilities is ultimately rooted in Busoni’s discussion of the limitations imposed upon music, particularly through aspects of traditional tonality, form, program, function, genre, and notation. To some extent, certain aspects of the pieces addressed in this study do work against these limitations. Each of the orchestral elegies in this study is related to an earlier or later work. This promotes the idea that a thematic or motivic idea, or *Idee*, is free of a particular function, form, or genre and is adaptable to multiple instrumental settings. Its essence is immutable. This idea is even reflected on a small scale in the constant migration of thematic ideas among instrumental ranges, particularly in the *Sarabande*. The idea of the “absolute melody” reflected in the *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister* is also representative of this concept. The autonomy of this *Idee* is explicitly reflected in the flexibility between the melodic and harmonic realms.
The *Sarabande* as the purely instrumental unfolding of dramatic themes and characters in *Doktor Faust* is one example of the “absolute” nature of music. The *Sarabande* is not a representation of external events, but of the emotional and psychological content of the characters and drama. Busoni intended for the *Sarabande* to be an integral part of the opera, not an introductory or summary piece, but music which was equal to the stage scenery and text in conveying the unfolding drama, or music which formed a “oneness” with the narrative and visual arts. This feature is perhaps what contributed to its adaptable as a stand-alone orchestral piece.

Other characteristics in these orchestral pieces work against, to some extent, the above-mentioned limitations, particularly in aspects of form and harmonic language. From a formal perspective, though they may exhibit aspects of some traditional forms or make reference to traditional genres, the natural unfolding of the thematic ideas and their motivic content shape the form of each piece. In general, the more contrapuntal approach and experimentation of harmony within a primarily tertian harmonic atmosphere can be considered an extension of tonality. This involves the lack of or modification of common-practice tonal progressions and the frequent use of enharmonicism and chromaticism more reflective of Bernhard Ziehn’s “enharmonic unity” of triadic and quartal harmonies.

Yet at the same time we find Busoni’s language never fully breaks from tonality. We find in the concept of polyphonic harmony, harmonic experimentation rooted in the spirit of an earlier polyphonic tradition. We find that his forms and his stylistic eclecticism constantly make reference to earlier musical eras. It is in these aspects, that the notion of “young classicism” is most apparent. Busoni’s compositional outlook seems to collect and build on the spirit and artistic outlook of his predecessors, but through the new materials and techniques of his time.
7.3 Busoni’s Place in Early Twentieth-Century Music History

One of the stated purposes of this study was to provide a better understanding through analysis of how Busoni’s late style serves as a bridge from the chromaticism of some late-Romantic composers to the post-tonal music of the early twentieth century. In Busoni’s music, the harmonic combinations that result from polyphonic strands, often with semitonal motion, the emphasis on third-relations in harmonic structure, and the use of chromatic wedge progressions are features that extend back to the music of Liszt, Wagner, and other late-Romantic composers. The frequent use of pedals, which help to establish a tonal center but also create dissonance against the moving melodic voices, and the extensive parallel chord progressions in Busoni’s music are features reminiscent of Liszt’s piano works of the 1880s in particular. The merging together of the major and minor modes and the flexibility between the melodic and harmonic realms in Busoni’s late style led to harmonic features such as the split-member chord as a referential sonority and overlapping, quartal, and superposed harmonies, features that continued to extend tonality. In this sense, Busoni’s late style runs parallel to the tonal languages in the early music of Schoenberg and in the music of Debussy, Scryabin, Bartók, Stravinsky, and others.

Although it is clear from his writings that Busoni was a staunch proponent of new experiments in music and his own compositions were certainly viewed by many critics of the time as modern, his works of the 1910s did not extend to the post-tonal experimentation of some of his younger contemporaries. For example, while both Schoenberg’s and Busoni’s early music is rooted in German Romanticism, the works of Schoenberg’s transitional period exhibit a considerably more progressive weakening of tonality than in Busoni’s late style as a whole. There are a few of Busoni’s most experimental pieces, such as *Sonatina seconda* (1912) and
Nocturne symphonique (1913), that might be comparable in this regard to some of Schoenberg’s earlier music, such as Das Buch der hängenden Gärten (1908-09), Op. 11 (1909), and Op. 16 (1909), yet Busoni did not continue to pursue a consistent progression away from tonality during the 1910s. Furthermore, the still primarily tonal language of Busoni’s last major work, Doktor Faust, did not extend into the newer realms of post-tonality that materialized around the time of his death in 1924. In particular, Schoenberg’s seminal development of serial techniques in the 1920s might be said to have overshadowed Busoni’s late music. In light of this, Busoni’s own highly personal tonal language can be said to fall within the transition from late-Romantic music to the post-tonal music of the twentieth century. Ultimately, Busoni’s ideas on music aesthetics and modernism in general seem to have had a more significant impact on his contemporaries and future composers than did specific characteristics of his music. His call for a liberation of sound was a motto that many young composers who knew and admired Busoni would adopt in the years following his death.
Example 2.1a. Busoni, *Berceuse élégiaque*, mm. 1–6
Example 2.1b. *Berceuse élégiaque*, mm. 7–12
Example 2.1c. *Berceuse élégiaque*, mm. 13–19
Example 2.1d. Berceuse élégiaque, mm. 20–26
Example 2.2a. *Nocturne symphonique*, mm. 15–18
Example 2.2b. Nocturne symphonique, mm. 19–21
Example 2.2c. *Nocturne symphonique*, mm. 22–25
Example 2.3. Bach-Busoni, Chaconne in D minor

a. Chaconne in D minor transcribed for piano, mm. 33–37

b. Chaconne in D minor, foreground voice-leading sketch

c. Bach, Chaconne in D minor for Solo Violin, mm. 33–37
Example 2.4. Bernhard Ziehn, *Manual of Harmony*

*Example in C major* with all kinds of chromatic Seventh-chords.

Example 2.5. Bernhard Ziehn, *Manual of Harmony*

Figuration of Chromatically Progressing Seventh-chords. A few examples.

*A*: Chord connections ascending.
Example 2.6. Bernhard Ziehn, *Canonical Studies*, Symmetrical double canon

[Music notation image]
Example 2.7b. Busoni, *Fantasia contrappuntistica*, mm. 516–518, with integrated foreground voice-leading sketch

Example 2.8a. Busoni, *Fantasia contrappuntistica*, “Intermezzo,” mm. 564–567, with integrated foreground voice-leading sketch
Example 2.8b. Busoni, *Fantasia contrappuntistica*, “Intermezzo,” mm. 568–577, with integrated foreground voice-leading sketch
Example 2.8c. Busoni, *Fantasia contrappuntistica*, “Intermezzo,” mm. 578–584, with integrated foreground voice-leading sketch
Example 2.9b. Busoni, *Fantasia contrapuntistica*, “Anhang,” mm. 749–753, with integrated foreground voice-leading sketch.
Example 4.1. Primary thematic ideas in *Berceuse élégiaque*

a.

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Andantino calmo
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b.

Example 4.2. Formal correspondence between the *Berceuse élégiaque* for orchestra and the *Berceuse* for piano

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Berceuse élégiaque (orchestra)</th>
<th>A¹ (mm. 1-19)</th>
<th>A² (mm. 20-39)</th>
<th>B¹ (mm. 40-53)</th>
<th>A³ (mm. 54-80)</th>
<th>B² (mm. 81-96)</th>
<th>A⁴ (mm. 54-80)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. (1-13)</td>
<td>b (14-19)</td>
<td>a' (20-29)</td>
<td>b' (30-33)</td>
<td>a&quot; (34-39)</td>
<td>b (40-43)</td>
<td>a (54-68)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(40-43)</td>
<td>(44-47)</td>
<td>(48-53)</td>
<td>(81-84)</td>
<td>(85-88)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>a (54-68)</td>
<td>b (69-72)</td>
<td>(89-92)</td>
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<td>b (73-80)</td>
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<td>(81-84)</td>
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<td>a'' (91-96)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>b (96-118)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part I</td>
<td>Part II</td>
<td>Part III</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Berceuse (piano)</th>
<th>A (mm. 1-19)</th>
<th>B (mm. 20-35)</th>
<th>A' (mm. 36-66)</th>
<th>Coda (67-81)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. (28-31)</td>
<td></td>
<td>a (36-47)</td>
<td>b (48-55)</td>
<td>b (56-66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example 4.3a. Busoni, *Berceuse* for piano, mm. 1–23, with integrated voice-leading sketch

Andantino calmo.

[Music notation image]
Example 4.3b. Busoni, *Berceuse* for piano, mm. 24–42, with integrated voice-leading sketch
Example 4.3c. Busoni, *Berceuse* for piano, mm. 43–55, with integrated voice-leading sketch
Example 4.3d. Busoni, *Berceuse* for piano, mm. 56–81, with integrated voice-leading sketch.
Example 4.4. Busoni, *Berceuse élégiaque* for orchestra, middleground voice-leading sketch

![Voice-leading sketch](image)

Example 4.5. Busoni, *Berceuse élégiaque*, Harmonic Relationships through Chromatic Fluctuations

a. semitone-related seventh chords

![Semitone-related seventh chords](image)

b. mediant-related seventh chords

![Mediant-related seventh chords](image)

Referential sonority
Example 4.6a. Busoni, *Berceuse élégiaque*, mm. 1–12
Example 4.6b. Busoni, *Berceuse élégiaque*, mm. 13–26
Example 4.7. Busoni, *Berceuse élégiaque*, foreground and middleground voice-leading sketches, mm. 1–19
Example 4.9. Busoni, *Berceuse élégiaque*, foreground voice-leading sketch, mm. 20–32

Example 4.10. *Berceuse élégiaque*, foreground voice-leading sketch, mm. 32–39
Example 4.11. Busoni, “Symphonia” from *Doktor Faust*, mm. 1–26
Example 4.13. *Berceuse élégiaque*, foreground voice-leading sketch, mm. 40–48
Example 4.14. *Berceuse élégiaque*, foreground voice-leading sketch, mm. 48–60
Example 4.15a. Busoni, *Berceuse élégiaque*, mm. 63–72
Example 4.15b. Busoni, *Berceuse élégiaque*, mm. 73–80
Example 4.16. *Berceuse élogiaque*, foreground voice-leading sketch, mm. 62–80
Example 4.18. *Berceuse élégiaque*, foreground voice-leading sketch, mm. 81–94
Example 4.20. *Berceuse élégiaque*, foreground voice-leading sketch, mm. 95–114
Example 5.1. Formal diagram of *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Part I</th>
<th>Part II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-14 a/b</td>
<td>15-22 c/d</td>
<td>23-33 b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34-53 SSD on E a/b</td>
<td>54-68 SSD on F w/CM</td>
<td>69-77 SSD on G w/CM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78-100 b</td>
<td>101-111 d</td>
<td>112-160 2nd Theme w/CM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 5.2a. Original “Song of the Spirit-Dance” (Ghost-Dance Song)

With spirit

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=144

Ah, tzik - su ru - ta - ti - ku, Ah, tzik - su ru - ta - ti - ku,
Ah, now my spi - rit stir - reth, Ah, now my spi - rit stir - reth,

We... ra - ku re - ta - ka ra, We... ra - ku re - ta - ka ra,
With the com - ing of the night - fall, With the com - ing of the night - fall,

Kaw - Kaw, ra - ku-wak - ta - hu, Kaw - Kaw, ra - ku-wak - ta - hu,
Caw - Caw, like the crow I cry, Caw - Caw, like the crow I cry,

O - pe - rit we ra ti ku - hu - ri, O - pe - rit we ra ti ku - hu - ri,
All the night we shall wait for the star, All the night we shall wait for the star,
```

```
O - pe - rit ti ra - hu, O - pe - rit ti ra - hu,
Till the star ri - seth here, Till the star ri - seth here.
```
Example 5.2b. “Song of the Spirit-Dance,” reduction, mm. 38–49
Example 5.2c. Second lyrical theme with opening based on “Song of the Spirit-Dance” Theme, reduction, mm. 112–131
Example 5.3. Busoni, *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister*, motives

Example 5.4. Busoni, *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister*,
countermelody
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Example 5.5b. Busoni, *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister*, mm. 26–49
Example 5.5c. Busoni, *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister*, mm. 50–71
Example 5.5d. Busoni, *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister*, mm. 72–91
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Example 5.5g. Busoni, *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister*, mm. 145–160
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Example 5.7. Busoni, *Gesang vom Reigen der Geister*, foreground and middleground voice-leading sketches, mm. 1–11
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a. Introductory Theme

b. First Theme

c. Second Theme

Example 6.2 Formal diagram of *Sarabande*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part I</th>
<th>Part II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Theme</td>
<td>First Theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Theme</td>
<td>Second Theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Space</td>
<td>First Theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>Alto 12-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor 22-27</td>
<td>Bass 28-33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soprano 32-40</td>
<td>41-47</td>
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</table>

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Example 6.3. Busoni, *Sarabande*, mm. 15–37
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Example 6.4a. Busoni, Sarabande, middleground voice-leading sketch
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Example 6.6. Busoni, *Sarabande*, foreground voice-leading sketch, mm. 17–32

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chromatic (mm. 13–14)</th>
<th>Hybrid (mm. 14–16)</th>
<th>Chromatic (mm. 17–19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 5 7 9 11 1</td>
<td>0 0 3 5 8 9</td>
<td>3 5 7 9 10 8 7 5 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F♯ F♯ C♯ C B A♯</td>
<td>B♭ B♭ B♭ B A A</td>
<td>A A E F♭ C B B A♯ A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D D♭ E F F♯ G</td>
<td>A♭ G G F♯ F♯ F</td>
<td>F F♭ G A♭ A G♭ G F♭ E♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B A♭ A A♭ G F</td>
<td>F F / E E D♭ E♭</td>
<td>D C♭ C C♭ B C C C♭ D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chromatic (mm. 20–21) | Hybrid (mm. 22–23)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 10 0 2 4</td>
<td>3 5 7 9 11 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C ♯ C E D ♯ D ♯ (D) A ♯</td>
<td>D D ♯ E F F ♯ G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C B B♭ C ♯</td>
<td>B A♭ A A♭ G F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F♯ G G♯ A E♭ F ♯</td>
<td>F♯ F♯ C ♯ C D D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A♭ A G♭ G A F ♯</td>
<td>F♯ F♯ F♯ (F♯) B A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 7 6/4 - 6/4 3/4 5</td>
<td>6 6 7 6/4 6/8 -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example 6.8. Busoni, *Sarabande*, foreground voice-leading sketch, mm. 64–105
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