
Syntax and Piano Structures in *Sonata IV – Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte Op. 28 No. 1* by Constantin Silvestri

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Motto: “In Silvestri’s works, we will not encounter rounded musical forms, closed periods, or decisive cadences (...). Usually, the fast parts appear messy and tangled. But upon closer examination, all these become clear and clear.”
(Mihail Jora)

Abstract: *Sonata IV – Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte Op. 28 No. 1* is a significant work by Constantin Silvestri that has not been the subject of musicological or interpretative analysis. This study aims to offer a model for text processing in a specific interpretative key, for this work. Constantin Silvestri's compositional language skillfully merges the structural aspects of musical thought with the piano topography and its associated techniques. A convincing performance can only be achieved by clarifying the theoretical elements embedded in the text. The argumentative framework highlights piano writing easily integrated into mental-instrumental patterns while proposing advanced mnemonic assimilation schemes based on a thorough understanding of Silvestri's syntactical nuances. Essentially, theorizations across various identifiable coordinates in his writing serve as foundations for developing nuanced interpretative versions, aiding in deciphering the meanings behind the unique organization of musical symbols and their expressive intent. We hope the insights uncovered will enhance the appeal of this opus within both Romanian and universal solo piano repertoires.

Keywords: syntax, pattern, technical, mnemonic device, expression.

1. Introduction

Sonata IV Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte Op. 28 No. 1 is the last piano work of the composer¹. Its style has benefited from musicological comments focused on the development of musical language in connection with

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¹ The sonata was composed between April and May 1953, with a revision in 1957. The manuscript is housed at the “George Enescu” Museum, which is pertinent information for performers seeking to compare Professor Constantin Ionescu-Vovu's edition with the original text.

the syntactic innovations of the early 20th century². This work avoids the atonal areas explored in previous pieces (such as *Sonata for Flute and Piano Op. 23 No. 2*); alongside neoclassical elements (typical of the 1938-1940 creative phase) and expressionist features (1944), the opus incorporates stylized folkloric structures that enhance its relative accessibility. From a pianistic perspective, the precedence of the third Sonata Op. 24 No. 1, which was performed publicly but whose manuscript remains undiscovered, is noteworthy. It has been described as follows: “With the *Sonata* of prodigious difficulty, executed by the demonic virtuoso Mr. Silvestri, we are entering the land of modernism (...). The transcendent virtuosity it demands is (...) a characteristic feature of the entire work” (Ciomac, 1944). The same observation applies to *Rapsodia in 3 episodi*.

From an interpretative standpoint, the alignment of musical language elements with instrumental structures establishes a referential connection, which forms the foundation of this research.

2. Structural aspects

The architectural coherence of the work relies on cyclic structures, a technique also evident in earlier compositions: 10 Songs on lyrics by Heinrich Heine Op. 1, Sonata for oboe and piano, Sonata per pianoforte, Sonatina Op. 3 No. 3, String Quartet Op. 27 No. 2³. In Sonata IV, the unifying element is the diminished octave interval⁴ (part of the Stravinskian chord with a diminished octave). From the perspective of piano technique, this is observed in the repetitive nature of certain instrumental positions, which serve varying roles from background to foreground. It also serves as a significant mnemonic reference throughout the sonata.

² A notable reference in this context is the article by Octavia Răceu-Marc (2015), titled Constantin Silvestri – activitatea de creație. Aspecte generale și considerații stilistice [Constantin Silvestri – Creative Activity: General Aspects and Stylistic Considerations]. *Lucrări de Muzicologie [Musicology Papers]*, XXX-I, 150-183. Cluj-Napoca: Editura MediaMusica.

³ For further insights, see Constantin Ionescu-Vovu's (2014). *Silvestri inedit* [Silvestri Unpublished], Tiberiu Herdlicska's (2014). *Constantin Silvestri — Compozitor* [Constantin Silvestri — Composer], and Aurel Marc's (2014). *Sonata pentru oboi și pian op. 19 nr. 1 în creația camerală silvestriană* [Sonata for Oboe and Piano Op. 19 No. 1 in Silvestri's Chamber Music Works], in (2014). In Răceu, Octavia (Ed.), *Constantin Silvestri – Compozitor și interpret* [Constantin Silvestri - Composer and Performer]. Cluj-Napoca: Editura MediaMusica.

⁴ A privileged interval is observed in *Suite II Op. 3 No. 2 ("Sleeping Doll")* and *Suite III for Piano Op. 6, No. 1*. Refer to Octavia Răceu-Marc's (2013). *Stylistic-Interpretative Aspects in Suite III for Piano Op. 6 No. 1 by Constantin Silvestri*. In Lupu, Olguța (Ed.), *Paul Constantinescu și Constantin Silvestri din perspectiva contemporaneității* [Paul Constantinescu and Constantin Silvestri from the Perspective of Contemporaneity] (pp. 168-181). București: Editura UNMB.

Among the frequently encountered musical structures are rhythmic or melodic *ostinato* patterns, intervallic and chordal parallelisms based on scalar patterns, bi-tonalism and bi-modalism, which correspond to the topographical organization of white and black keys, offering instrumental convenience. Additionally, chromatic structures are skilfully integrated into the complex writing, as exemplified by the dominant pedal in the Coda of the third movement (mm. 126-143).

Musicologist Clemansa Liliana Firca, in her analysis of works from 1930-1934, notes that the two stereotypes – the *ostinato* and the parallelisms of intervals and chords – become enduring features in the composer's oeuvre, significantly contributing to the early individualization of Silvestri's musical language and stylistics. These structures are particularly effective in neutralizing or dismantling tonal monocentrism, promoting functional equi(pluri)vocal textures, and facilitating the bi- or polytonal linearity of the music (Firca, 2002, pp. 150-151).

From a mnemonic perspective, the structural relationship between melody and harmony, as described by Zeno Vancea, is noteworthy: "... starting with the *Prelude and Toccata*⁵, Silvestri's harmony is challenging to define. Generally, it operates independently of the melody that evolves above it (s.n.) and often forms quite harsh dissonances. It serves more as a 'neutral' sound support, from which the melody can completely detach itself" (Vancea, 1978, p. 221). We concur with this perspective, particularly the phrase "in general", as the investigation of structural associations for the logical memorization of text reveals episodic correlations between melody and accompaniment.

An example is provided:

Fig. 1 C. Silvestri, *Rhapsody in 3 episodes per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 2, mm. 13-14

The applied analysis examines acoustic landmarks, which are enharmonically identifiable, in conjunction with logical-structural elements to aid in the comprehension of the text. An illustration of complex enharmonic relationships is the interval of 2 M, which is presented both melodically (in

⁵ *Prelude and Fugue (Toccata) for large orchestra Op. 17 No. 2* (1940; rev. 1956).

mm. 18 and 19) and harmonically (in m. 20); additionally, the leap serves as an enharmonic and topographical landmark (m. 21, from G# to B).



Fig. 2 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. I, mm. 17-21

Form. The structure of musical content is associated with the new interpretations of the concept of form that emerged at the beginning of the 20th century, exemplified by Wolfgang-Andreas Schultz's notion of “fluctuating form”⁶. The distinction lies in the fact that the general framework allows for variations, with B not invariably being “quiet” and “free”, as the originator of the concept initially posits.

The first movement, characterized by an intricate aesthetic-structural improvisation, aptly justifies the opus's title – Rhapsody. This designation implies a predominance of creative freedom over the structural-formal constraints typically associated with the term “sonata,” with expressive liberty closely linked to the incorporation of folkloric elements. Syntactically, the integration of modal style with expressionist components positions the music near the threshold of atonality. Formally, the preferred architectural technique involves reversing the order of sections, a significant feature on the two coordinates: expressive and mnemonic. The opening measures (mm. 1-7) introduce three foundational nuclei that form the basis for subsequent variations: generating material I (mm. 1-4), generating material II (mm. 5-6), and generating material III (m. 7); all of these are interconnected hypostases. Measures 1-2 develop in 3-4, and a similar relationship exists between mm. 5-6, with the 6th measure serving as a rhythmic and register variation of m. 5. This characteristic is not exclusive to Silvestri's works. The study *Unity and Meaning in the Desert Songs by Constantin Silvestri*, written in an admirably synthesizing style, observes that the first piece in this cycle features three generating cells linked by intonational similarities: “The three cells appear (...) both in rough, unaltered forms and in combinations, from their concatenations

⁶ Refer to Ghircioiașu, M. (1991, pp. 57-59).

resulting larger surfaces” (Lupu, 2013, pp. 203-204). Identifying sound hypostases that emerge during the form's development is interpretatively beneficial. Thus, it provides sound suggestions that generating material I (mm. 1-4) appears in the chordal writings of measures 30-33. The prominent motif, in octaves / *f*, measures 5-6 (generating material II) reemerges in 26-27 with a similar character – *ben f marcato* on monodic writing, then as an echo/*mp* in the following measures (28-29). Its fragmentary presence is noted in the texture of the broken chords of measures 37-39, and it ultimately assumes a climactic role *ff drammatico* in measures 193-206. Generating material III (m. 7) cyclically initiates and concludes sections of the form, including the introductory area completed on the same motif (mm. 14-17, *pensieroso*).

In Section A (mm. 18-51), the three distinct thematic segments are introduced in reverse sequence: III (mm. 18-19), II (mm. 26-29), and I (mm. 32-51).

In Section Av (mm. 52-79), the thematic elements are presented in a reversed order: III (mm. 52-59), II (mm. 60-68), and I (mm. 76-88). A significant aspect of this section is the passage characterized by a dense texture, which, as revealed in B and the reprise, resembles a stylized *doina*. In contrast to the progression in A', the music transitions from a dramatic to a more lyrical and intimate expression.

The central section introduces new musical material characterized by stylized folklore, embellished with ornaments across four episodes of the chain form. Recurrences of section A are frequently observed: **a**/mm. 89-125 (ternary rhythm, great hora or carol⁷), **b**/mm. 126-136, which features musical material derived from children's folklore, tripartite **c** – **c1**/mm. 135-148, insertion A, **c2**/mm. 163-176, **d**/mm. 177–183; an insertion from A serves a transitional function leading to the reprise (mm. 184-192). The latter section employs generating material II, culminating in an *ostinato* formula whose intervals enhance the dramatic effect associated with the *ff* dynamics. Generating material III undergoes a transformation into a succinct hypostasis, marked as *ben f, brutale* (mm. 219-221), serving as the antithesis to the *dolce* character initially designated (m. 7). Generating material II (mm. 5-6) is distorted, assuming a grotesque quality by expanding the initial interval (mm. 226-229). The persistent use of a fragmented, free-agogic style, developed over the E flat pedal, facilitates the release of tension accumulated throughout the movement in a *ff* attack, characterized by its generous, reverberating, and undulating nature, following the *decrescendo/crescendo* indications until it reaches complete extinction in *pp* – a terminal dynamic against the background where the shadow of the *doina* emerges in Subsection D, *quasi-arpa*.

⁷ Refer to Bartók, Béla (1913). *Cântece populare românești din comitatul Bihor* [Romanian Folk Songs from Bihor County], No. 208, titled “Colind (Șebiș), p. 193. București: Librăria Socec & Comp.

Performance options. Although the three sections of the sonata exhibit structural similarities, they may be performed independently in accordance with the composer's instructions, thereby allowing a degree of autonomy for the sound variants (we find here a new explanation of the title *Rhapsody*). In the initial movement, the development of thematic cores results in diverse architectural sound projections. Their progression can be guided by a pertinent observation: “If the performances of Silvestri's works overlook the improvisational nature – which was intrinsic to the composer – their universe will never seem complete and personalized” (Anastasescu, 2014, p. 27). The focus is on a structure rich in distinctive expressive and formative functions: generative material III, which plays a cyclical role in organizing the music. This is likely referenced by pianist Anda Anastasescu when she notes that *Sonata Op. 28 No. 1* is “influenced by the archaic Romanian lament”. The persistent presence of this motif throughout the first movement endows it with the role of a “red thread”. With one exception, it is consistently characterized by agogic flexibility (*parlando-rubato* style); initially introduced subtly, *p dolce, ritenuto*, then *mf pensieroso*, rhythmically varied (m. 14), conveying a sequential echo in the bass register, *poco p*:

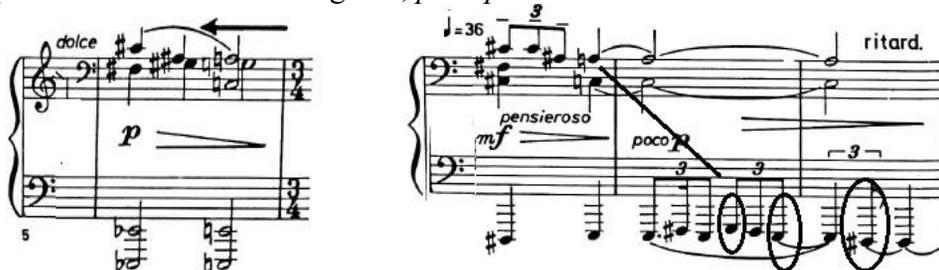


Fig. 3 C. Silvestri, *Rhapsody in 3 episodes per Pianoforte, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 1, m. 5, mm. 14-16*

Subsequently, it appeared *as mp espress. con passione*, on polyphonic writing (m. 18), with a dynamic intensification to *mf* within a freely agogic framework:

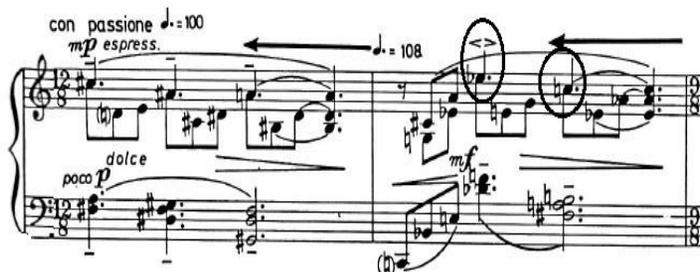


Fig. 4 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 1, m. 5, mm. 14-16*

The passage returns to the *calando* character, marked *mp*, in measures 49-51:

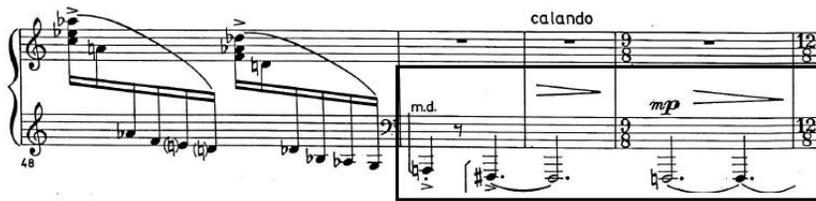


Fig. 5 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 1, m. 5, mm. 49-52

subsequently initiating the **av** section, which serves as the starting point for the development in measure 52. The character of the formula becomes abrupt and concise, adopting a rigorously metric quality for the first time as it approaches the climax,

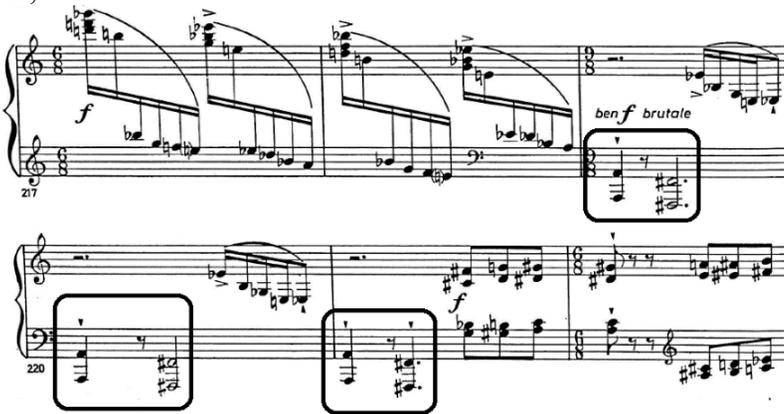


Fig. 6 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 1, mm. 217-222

The conclusion evokes a sense of nostalgia – perhaps even resignation – reminiscent of the beginning.



Fig. 7 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 1, mm. 217-220

In summary, the evolution of the “lament-motif” is juxtaposed with the dynamic tension inherent in the diminished octave interval – a referential pattern that is succinctly presented (m. 10), developed in an improvisational manner (mm. 11-13), or imposed in a *giusto* style, resulting in the persistent disruption of the perfect octave frame (mm. 32-51). Its aesthetic significance can be associated with the composer's biographical challenges during his time

in Romania⁸, a period consistently characterized by a lack of recognition, which is psychologically manifested as internal discord. Practically, the development of the first movement is entirely derived from the semantic potential of this interval. In the first movement, it engenders the expansiveness of the music; in the second movement, it assumes the form of a concentrated, chordal *ostinato*, which underpins the introspective nature of the music. Between the two musical intervals, which aesthetically correspond to contrasting states – intimism versus expansiveness – lie the potential interpretative conceptions of the first movement.

In conclusion, the soundscape of the first movement appears to be composed of a structural mosaic, whose acoustic coherence relies on the ability to create contrasts – in character, in virtuosity correlating with *cantabile* and introverted sections. We propose that the accurate interpretation of the sound textures can be achieved either as a pure effect or as a subtle background to the main lines. The articulation of the form is contingent upon the strategic placement of fermatas, aligned with the variable concept of tension-relaxation areas; the precise positioning of accents, whether culminating or delimitative; and the contrasts in pedaling – *senza/con ped.* – contextually understood to prioritize rhythm, harmony, sound effect, and melodic motifs. Additionally, it depends on the ability to intuit the composer's acoustic intentions beyond the written symbols. For instance, the accompaniment of the generator material II, in four sixteenth-note patterns, should not be executed rigidly; the underlying concept is to provide a shivering background that supports the folkloric melody (mm. 26-27, 60-70). The first movement of the Sonata necessitates the capacity to readjust the architectural accents, which are shaped in various sonorous-imaginative variants that are challenging to balance.

The second movement unfolds lyrically, presenting a *doina* within a free-form lied structure characterized by expansive arches. The interpretation can be built by considering the indications *Lirico* and *molto sensibile*, as well as the frequent *dolce* markings throughout. These do not, however, lead to sentimental excess, as the tempo, marked as crotchet = 50 sempre (s.n.), aligns with the *ostinato* writing in the left hand. Above this, the right hand sketches a subtle *rubato* against a background of alternating time signatures. Music evokes simplicity and an expressiveness that imposes its own constraints. Avoiding monotony – a risk posed by the isochrony of the background – fundamentally depends on the execution of dynamic-agogic variations in the right hand. This can be achieved by observing several key aspects:

⁸ Refer to Coman, Lavinia (2014). *Constantin Silvestri*. București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică; and Voicu-Arnăuțoiu, Raluca (2013). *Constantin Silvestri. Biografie necunoscută* [Constantin Silvestri: Unknown Biography]. București: Editura Ars Docendi.

- wide dynamic range, spanning from *f* to *pp*, with the initial measure foreshadowing the subtle extensions that occur later in both directions, such as *ben pp* and *poco f*. We encourage the performer to embrace the challenge of reproducing these dynamic extremes with confidence.

- the rapid execution of appoggiaturas is not confined solely to the initial measure, as might be inferred; rather, it extends to analogous instances throughout the piece. This is particularly relevant to the articulation of phrases in soft dynamics, where the *diminuendo* might be redundantly and uninspiredly accentuated by agogic expansion. Our interpretation, which advocates for a precisely executed appoggiatura, is substantiated in measures 62-63. Here, the second phrase necessitates a slightly more spaced articulation due to the *portato* markings explicitly indicated by the composer, suggesting an exception to the general practice.



Fig. 8 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 2, mm. 62-63

The contrast between the tranquil state of introspection and the free, “turbulent”/leggiero passages (mm. 9, 75, and 77) warrants attention to agogic and dynamic variations: *f in tempo* (m. 9), *poco f quasi in tempo* (s.n.) m. 75, and *ben piano* (m. 77). It is recommended that the initial passage (m. 9) be executed with a compact agogic approach, devoid of *rubato*, thereby accentuating the contrast with the surrounding calm. Moreover, the indication *in tempo* implies a strictly metrical execution. Similar to movement 1, the distillation of the passage to its essentials once again reveals the structure of a lament (see Béla Bartók's Collection, no. 354).

In a formal context, we delineate the following sections:

A/a, a1, B, A', Coda

- **a** (mm. 1-11) is a phrase derived from the thematic motif (m. 1), which is subsequently endowed with new expressive functions:



Fig. 9 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 2, m. 1

The motif reappears in measures 24 and 47, assuming a propulsive function that generates phrasing arches. As it metamorphoses, it facilitates the dissolution of the music towards the conclusion (Coda), beginning from m. 79.

- **Phrase a1** (mm. 11-21) introduces the initial melodic line of expansive breath, a rhythmic-melodic derivation of the *doina* element observed in mm. 1-3. The distinction lies in the free, evolutionary character of the second phrase, contrasting with the closed, circular nature of the first.

Section **B**, constructed on a chord motif (mm. 22-23), is subsequently transformed into an *ostinato*, interspersed like an obsessive thought within and throughout the fabric of the broad-breathed phrases. This motif is also encountered in section A' (mm. 64, 68, 71, 73, 78, 80, 83, 85), albeit with slight metro-rhythmic variations; phrase **b** (extended a1 / mm. 24-37); then **b'** (mm. 38-46) and **b''** (mm. 47-61). Notably, passages notated similarly as *molto espressivo* exhibit differences in articulation (mm. 44-46 and 56-57): the first is marked *mf* with a slight declamatory tone due to the *portato* signs, while the second is marked *ben p – legato*.

Section **A'** (mm. 62-77) represents a mixed section resulting from the interweaving of motif **b** with the wide, varied line of section A.

In the **Coda** (mm. 78-104), the melody dissipates into figurative material, except for the passage marked *espress.* (mm. 89-97), which is also interspersed with ornamental elements.

The proposed formal scheme emerges from the expressive arches, resulting in the overlapping of sections within the second movement and its expansive phrases. In the initial section (mm. 1-10), a brief caesura is considered before the complex *appoggiatura* (m. 8) to ensure the accurate execution of the subsequent *rfz* accent. It is imperative to connect seamlessly, without *ritenuto*, to the second phrase/section **b'**; otherwise, the continuity of the *ostinato* harmonies in the left hand, which create atmosphere, would be disrupted. A similar approach is required between sections **b** and **b'** (mm. 37-38). In section **b**, we observe the contrast between the sign < >, indicating subtle agogic emphasis, and a slightly incisive accent > placed above the *appoggiatura* in measure 30 – expressive differentiations intended by the composer. We recommend a sustained *legato* in two specific contexts – despite the interruption of phrasing arches in the score – since the expressive intent behind the notations is paramount: the micro-phrase from measures 24-26 and the extensively developed phrase between mm. 30-37. A technical aspect with aesthetic implications is noted: performers with smaller hands, unable to fully encompass the chords in mm. 22-23, should play only the fifth of the bass harmony; otherwise, arpeggiated structures in the low register would compromise the tense atmosphere the composer seeks. However, *arpeggiato* is essential in areas of expressive accumulation (mm. 43, 74-75), where the

composer precisely indicates his intention, as evidenced by the bass writing in measure 92.

The second movement presents a significant challenge in terms of memorization, primarily due to the juxtaposition of a folkloric melody against an atonal accompaniment, a technique rooted in Bartókian tradition⁹. We propose marking textual identities and symmetries, as well as comparing slightly varied structures to discern subtle differences. Additionally, it is important to identify significant parameters that pertain to the contextual musical logic:

- for example, a common interval, executed by the left hand and the right hand:

Fig. 10 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 2, mm. 71-72

- enharmonies:

Fig. 11 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 2, mm. 99-100

Fig. 12 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 2, m. 87

The enharmonic interval C \sharp -F \sharp from the harmonic aggregate of the left hand (m. 81) corresponds with the interval Db-Gb from the harmonic structure of the right hand (m. 83):

⁹ Refer to Firca, Clemansa Liliana (2002, pp. 59-60).

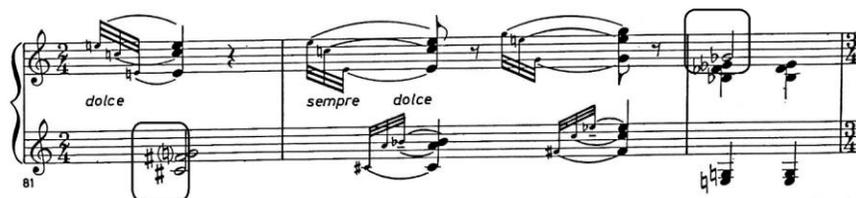


Fig. 13 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 2, mm. 81-83

The harmonic-melodic interaction on the interval c#-f# is initially presented harmonically in measure 81, and subsequently configured melodically in the following measure through the first notes of the appoggiatura:

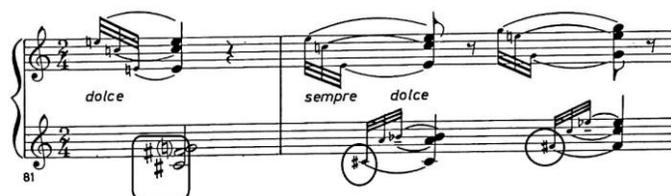


Fig. 14 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 2, mm. 81-82

In a similar manner in measure 98, where the left-hand harmony subsequently appears developed as an *appoggiatura*:

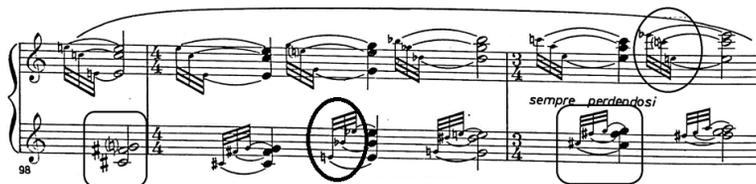


Fig. 15. C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 2, mm. 98-100

In the preceding example, we observe the presence of the pivotal interval within the entire Sonata, specifically the diminished octave (refer to the circled *appoggiatura*). This interval is discernible in the accompanying chords of the principal melodic line in section A (mm. 4-10, left hand); within the chord progressions at the commencement of section B (mm. 38-42); and in the *ostinato* that underpins the conclusion of section A'. Additionally, it appears in the Coda (mm. 74-80), serving as a sonorous background that conveys a subtle yet persistent sense of unfulfillment, which is ultimately resolved in the consonant purity of the final chord, C major. Furthermore, we note its association with the principal melodic line marked *mf subito, espress.* in measures 89-104, which is interspersed with discreet ornamental passages.

We propose a technical recommendation concerning the allocation of notes in the final chord of measure 87, as indicated by the editor. We contend that this allocation does not align with Silvestri's musical conceptualization, which is

fundamentally oriented around the pianistic topography. Accordingly, we advocate for the distribution of the black keys exclusively to the right hand and the white keys exclusively to the left hand, in a symmetrical manner. Our recommendation is substantiated by the enharmonic equivalence that validates the alignment of this technical approach with the underlying compositional intent.

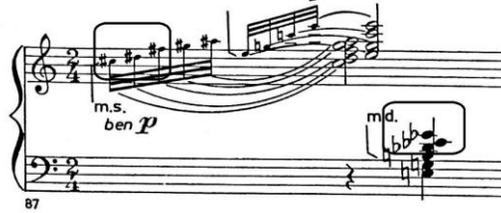


Fig. 16 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 2, m. 87*

The observation of identical notes in consecutive structures provides mnemonic stability, as exemplified in measures 47-48 / second a flat-b flat:



Fig. 17 C. Silvestri *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 2, mm. 47-48*

A mnemonic challenge involves the precise reproduction of two passages from the Coda that exhibit similar writing: mm. 81-88 and 98-104. Effective memorization hinges on attention to the following aspects:

a) the meaningful grouping of musical structures. At the beginning of the Coda, we propose grouping based on the principle of symmetry, as follows: mm. 78-79, 80-81, 84, and 86. We observe a regression in the repetitions of the background chord (*ostinato*) from three occurrences (mm. 78 and 80) to two (m. 83), and finally to a single occurrence (m. 85).

b) Constructing the memorization process on the pianistic topography aids in distinguishing the passage of measures 82-86 from the similar passage of mm. 98-104 by noticing an aspect that ensures absolute mnemonic accuracy: in the first passage (mm. 82-86), the 5th finger of the left hand engages only with black keys, whereas in the corresponding passage at the end (mm. 98-104), it also includes attacks on white keys (m. 99).

An illustration of memorization grounded in the deep structures of the text, as opposed to visibility (the topographic criterion), is as follows: In the Coda, the ascending progression F#-G-A-B flat, set against the backdrop of the C# pedal in the left hand (mm. 81-82), imitates the structural landmarks of the

free-ornamental passage in measure 75. Both sequences exhibit the semitone–tone–semitone organization:

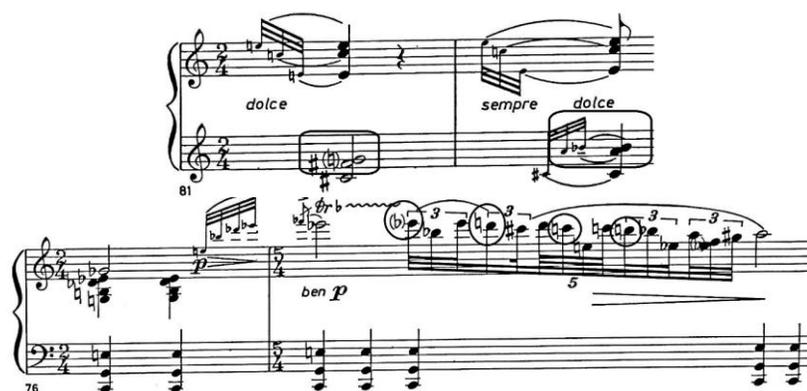


Fig. 18 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte, Op.28 No.1, mvt. 2, mm. 81-82, 76-77*

In general, enharmony delineates the structure of the second movement. The F#/G \flat sound emerges as an acoustic-structural reference point beginning at measure 61; although presented in a soft dynamic (*p* or *mp*), its repetition establishes it, offering the performer a foundation for constructing sound coherence (mm. 74-80, 89 and 97). We posit that the text can be memorized by identifying the ordering principles present both on the surface and in depth (principles congruent with the syntax). Recognizing these principles provides the performer with a robust associative-mnemonic framework.

The third movement integrates sound effects with form-generating structures, necessitating a tempo of crotchet = 108, which demands exceptional virtuosity. We distill the structures of the musical language to align with mental-interpretative patterns: the structural interval is the third; melodic parallelisms include bitonal and pentatonic scales, while harmonic elements favor perfect fifths and octaves, as well as three and four-tone chords. The dense texture necessitates a primary focus on the clear acoustic delineation of these structures, alongside the enhancement of soft dynamic levels and timbral variety. Without these considerations, the sonority of the final section may become monotonous. Occasionally, we question whether it is permissible to deviate from the expression indications provided in the text; such deviation would be justified in measure 34, where the composer notes *subito ben f e marcato*. The acoustic architecture, designed on expansive surfaces, particularly the two sequences progressively oriented towards the climax (m. 48), would permit the substitution of the composer's indication with a *p* dynamic level, associated with a mysterious character set against a discreet, unpedalled *ostinato* background. Timbrally, the third movement offers a rich diversity, encouraging the exploration of timbral extremes – for instance, the

finesse at the threshold of audibility that concludes the A section contrasts with the metallic brilliance encountered at the end of the scale, which prepares the culmination *sf drammatico* (m. 112). The final movement also serves as a test of psychological endurance, with the maintenance of high energy levels over extensive musical passages being crucial, and this energy should be effectively conveyed to the listener.

Section A commences with an introduction characterized by a pure acoustic effect, evoking the imagery of fireworks. This is achieved through the unitary gesture of measures 1-3, where a *p* trill plays an energetic and propulsive role, followed by an ascending trajectory that culminates in suspense. This is indicated *Ped con sordino*, which persists until the midpoint of the second measure, after which the pedal supports the transition to the high register. A brief subsequent pause, functioning as a caesura, initiates the descending sequential tirade. The effect is almost visually reminiscent of extinguishing light flashes. However, the musical phrase does not conclude in measure 3. The accent that initiates the descent in measure 4 arises from the natural ricochet of the forearm on the final note of the preceding passage, suggestively marked by the symbol ▼. Measures 5-6 serve as a variation of mm. 4-5. Notably, the detail *senza Ped.* ensures precise articulation in the left-hand formulas, consisting of groups of two sixteenths in measures 4 and 6. This contrasts with the derived passage in measures 7-8, where the extended legato arches signify a change in character, as indicated by *espress.*

Fig. 19 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 3, mm. 4, 7

From the original arch, which spans the extreme registers, a small volute remains in m. 7. Measures 7-9, on a reduced scale, resemble the preceding measures 1-5, with the writing exhibiting similarities to the photographic technique of creative zoom (zoom-in, zoom-out). The initial structural motif in m. 10 is expressively transfigured in measures 11 and 19:

Fig. 20 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 3, mm. 10-12

The motif is intermittently present in the development, contributing to the accumulation of sound (m. 86) and ultimately reaching its culmination in measure 94. It also serves as musical material for elaborations in the final section (mm. 126-135) and the Coda (mm. 173-178). This motif gradually integrates itself into the texture of the figurative effects that persistently interrupt the musical flow. Contrary to the typical process of moving from simplicity to ornamentation, Silvestri initially presents the ornamented form, subsequently clarifying it by omitting non-essential elements. The second structural motif, introduced in measure 21, is expressively and enharmonically transformed in measure 81:



Fig. 21 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte, Op. 28 No. 1*, mvt. 3, mm. 21, 81

The fragmentary hypostases coalesce in the extended line during the initial climax, spanning measures 94-97, featuring a melody of folkloric origin derived from B. Bartók's Collection, no. 299, *Joc (Măruntelul)* from Beiuș. Silvestri had previously incorporated this melody in *Jocuri populare românești din Transilvania/Romanian Folk Dances from Transilvania Op. 4*, for orchestra (1929), as well as in the piano four-hand arrangement of the same composition. In contrast to the orchestral version, where the folkloric material is presented in a lyrical manner, the third movement of the sonata assigns this melody a climactic function, with its simple and rugged character subsequently evolving into a *con esuberanza* expression (mm. 126-135).

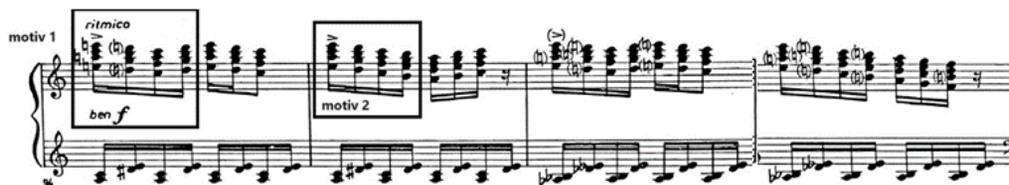


Fig. 22 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte, Op. 28 No. 1*, mvt. 3, mm. 94-97

The interpretation of structural transformations significantly influences their perceived meaning. For instance, the initial trill, characterized by a deep murmur from which the introductory ornamental passage emerges, evolves into an organized, precise, and playful pattern at the beginning of section B:

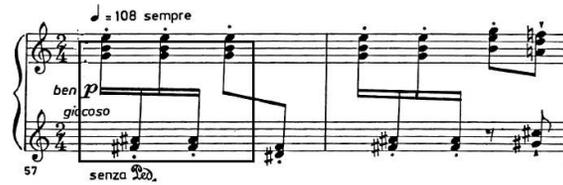


Fig. 23 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte, op. 28 nr. 1, mvt. 3, mm. 57-58*

Most musical passages can be conceptualized similarly by distilling the structures to their essentials, thereby elucidating the “puzzle” architecture inherent in the compositions. This term is employed due to the evident playful intent in Silvestri's piano compositions. The topographic interplay of white and black keys, characteristic of all the composer's piano works, aligns with this concept, facilitating the brilliant virtuosity that defines his scores. However, despite being “pianistically” written, Silvestri's works do not preclude challenges. Practicing specific fingerings can provide relaxation solutions while enhancing technical proficiency. For instance, the passage spanning measures 67-88, composed entirely of *staccato* chords, may become demanding if the infrequent *legato* moments of two eighth notes, executed fluidly through wrist movement, are not effectively utilized. Although triads might suggest the uniformity of the 1-3-5 pattern, the repetitive *staccato* movements from the wrist, albeit minimal, can become arduous and may impede the precision of attacks. The following fingering is recommended:



Fig. 24 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 3, m. 74*

To ensure the passage's character is accurately rendered, we reference its origin from Bela Bartók's collection, specifically *Romanian Folk Songs from Bihor County No. 362, Joc (from Drâmboaia), Budureasa*. Additionally, in the third movement, we observe the intervallic structure of the diminished octave, a cyclical element characteristic of all movements in *Sonata IV*. In the first movement, this structure appears frequently, while its significance diminishes in the second movement. In the final movement, it occurs infrequently, specifically in measures 34-38 (left hand), 41-47, 100-103, and mm. 109-111, thereby structurally shaping the conclusion of the sonata.

From a mnemonic perspective, considering the fast tempo of the final movement, we recommend attention to several unifying elements:

- all bitonal scales, with the exception of measures 9 and 51 (where F# major overlaps with D major), are executed solely on the white keys by the left hand; the right hand performs either the A-flat major scale or the pentatonic scale.
- the bitonal scales are distributed at a tenth interval, except in measures 2-3 and 112; their initial and terminal intervals are consistent, with the exception of m. 112. Silvestri uses ingenious mental tricks, offering the performer genuine “riddles” of writing that could be solved only through a keen sense of observation. One of them is, for example, the enharmony of intervals played simultaneously by both hands in measures 53-55: Eb-Bb on the left-hand and A# – D# on the right, on both melodic-harmonic coordinates.



Fig. 25 C. Silvestri, *Rapsodia in 3 episodi per Pianoforte*, Op. 28 No. 1, mvt. 3, mm. 53-55

3. Conclusion

The meticulous analysis of numerous details is crucial for effective memorization and the cognitive fluency that results from the efficient organization of information, including in the domain of piano technique. This study aimed to elucidate key elements of Constantin Silvestri's piano compositions as a foundation for further exploration. The text of Sonata IV is particularly engaging in terms of challenging the cognitive abilities of the performer. It is our hope that the aspects briefly highlighted herein will draw pianists into the musical realm of this remarkable composer.

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