İSTANBUL UNIVERSITY PRESS

ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ / RESEARCH ARTICLE

Eclectic Approaches, Influences, and Stylistic Parallels in Paul Hindemith's *Sonata for Two Pianos*

Paul Hindemith'in *İki Piyano için Sonat*'ındaki Eklektik Yaklaşımlar, Etkileşimler ve Üslupsal Paralellikler

Hatice Çağla ÇOKER[1]

[1]PhD Student, Istanbul Technical University, Dr. Erol Üçer Center for Advanced Studies in Music (MIAM), Istanbul, Turkiye

ORCID: Ç.Ç. 0000-0002-9164-2791

Sorumlu yazar/Corresponding author:
Hatice Çağla COKER,
Istanbul Technical University, Dr. Erol Üçer Center for Advanced Studies in Music (MIAM), Istanbul, Turkiye
E-posta/E-mail: hcaglacoker@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This article will focus on Paul Hindemith's *Sonata for Two Pianos* and attempt to exemplify its eclectic approaches as well as technical and stylistic parallels and influences, both from the piece's past and future. Examples that predate the piece do not necessarily mean they are direct references but should be perceived as having common ancestors, much like how Darwinian evolution trees are understood, and examples that postdate the piece do not necessarily mean they have been directly influenced but rather that the original work foreshadowed certain concepts that were meant to appear in due time. Although Hindemith was one of the most important and prolific composers of the 20th century, his works did not receive as much attention from many musicologists and performers as his contemporaries. The purpose of this article is to renew interest in *Sonata for Two Pianos*, which deserves to have a significant high standing in the piano repertoire. Paul Hindemith's *Sonata for Two Pianos* should be considered as a piece that should be played more frequently in piano recitals and studied more deeply by musicologists. In addition, Hindemith's eclectic compositional approach in his works needs to be examined thoroughly. This article uses the methods of qualitative analysis and comparative analysis on the works before and after Hindemith's *Sonata for Two Pianos* in addition to a score analysis.

Keywords: Paul Hindemith, eclecticism, Baroque influences

ÖZ

Bu makale, Paul Hindemith'in İki Piyano için Sonat'ını inceleyecek ve eserdeki eklektik yaklaşımları, teorik ve biçimsel benzerlikleri eserin öncül ve ardıllarından örneklerle açıklamaya çalışacaktır. Eserin öncülü olan örnekler, doğrudan kaynak olmaktan ziyade, daha çok Darwin'in evrimsel hayat ağacında olduğu gibi ortak bir kökene sahip oldukları şeklinde algılanmalı, eserin ardılı olan örnekler ise, onları doğrudan etkilemekten ziyade, zamanı geldiğinde ortaya çıkacak olan belirli kavramların işareti olarak anlaşılmalıdır. Paul Hindemith, 20. yüzyılın en önemli ve üretken bestecilerinden biri olmasına rağmen, eserleri birçok müzikolog ve icracı tarafından çağdaşları kadar ilgi görememiştir. Bu makalenin amacı, piyano repertuarında önemli ve

yüksek bir yere sahip olmayı hak eden İki Piyano için Sonat'a ilgiyi tazelemektir. Paul Hindemith'in İki Piyano için Sonatı'nın, piyano resitallerinde daha sık çalınması ve müzikologlar tarafından daha derinlemesine incelenmesi gereken bir eser olduğu düşünülmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra Hindemith'in eserlerindeki eklektik kompozisyon yaklaşımının da ayrıntılarıyla incelenmesi gerekmektedir. Bu makalede kullanılan yöntemler, nitel analiz, Hindemith'in İki Piyano için Sonatı öncesi ve sonrası eserlerin karşılaştırmalı analizi ve partisyon analizidir.
Anahtar Kelimeler: Paul Hindemith, eklektisizm, Barok etkileşimler

Introduction

Paul Hindemith was one of the most important and prolific composers of the 20th century along with Stravinsky, Bartok, and Schoenberg and a very rare figure in music history who succeeded to combine being a performer, conductor, composer, theorist, and inspiring teacher. His enormous output has contributed to the repertoire of almost every instrument. According to David Fligg (2010, p. 182), "His compositional style is somewhat eclectic,[1] starting first composing in a late-romantic way to *Neue Sachlichkeit* [New Objectivity], then to *Gebrauchsmusik* [utility music], employing a highly chromatic type of counterpoint, informed by, though stylistically different from Bach, while fusing this music with Neo-Classical features." Even though Hindemith's early music includes a diversity of many styles and is usually labeled as eclectic, his *Sonata for Two Pianos*, which he composed in 1942, also has many elements of eclecticism.

At the end of the 1930s, a recently emigrated Hindemith in the United States was contemplating ways to move forward with his compositional practice. One can speculate the factors that contributed to his artistic psyche, likely a combination of nostalgia for the Old World and its cultural heritage, a curiosity towards and examination of the artistic landscape and status quo of the New World, a critical stance toward the ongoing developments in Central Europe, a crystallizing of experiences in education and organizational activism from his stay in the Republic of Turkey, a certain political agnosticism for which Hindemith was known, and at the culmination of it all, a search for direction in his future musical output.

Up to this point, Hindemith had interacted with a variety of creative movements. From the pre-1922 open eclecticism that even included Broadway culture to almost simultaneous works in the expressionist idiom that he would then go on to reject while

---

1 Eclecticism in music involves the composer's conscious use of a combination of many styles and influences. Generally, eclecticism and polystylism are perceived as similar concepts, with eclecticism meaning the practice of creating a new work out of elements drawn from various sources and polystylism meaning the use of elements from another style. When looking at these definitions, one might think the terms are simply similar, but they have specific differences in their meanings. Though polystylism means using elements from another style, Alfred Schnittke, who is associated with the term, distinguished two main principles of polystylism: the principle of quotation and the principle of allusion. (For further reading, see Alfred Schnittke's *A Schnittke Reader*). According to many musicologists, eclecticism is the essence of the 20th century, demonstrating the individualism and pluralism that characterized the period. The author of this article prefers to use the word eclecticism for two reasons: One is that Hindemith's early works have usually been referred to as eclectic by many musicologists (not as polystylistic), and the second is that this research on the Sonata for Two Pianos led the author to the reasoning that the piece has eclectic approaches.

later searching for a new pragmatism within *Gebrauchsmusik*, Hindemith always proved to have a permissive compositional palette. His social and cultural surroundings, however, were not always so acceptive.

The irony and paradox within the different critiques toward his style are not lost on the present day. Hindemith's expressionist works led German nationalist music critics to dismiss his music as "...rather simply games with tones, an artistic acrobatic artistical-ness" (Music and the Holocaust, 2022; Goethe Institut, 2022); at the same time, however, Hindemith's interest in German folk music prompted Joseph Goebbels himself to endorse Hindemith as one of the finest talents in and essential to German music. Less than a year later and most likely due to Hindemith frequently performing with Jewish musicians, the German premiere of Hindemith's opera *Mathis der Maler* would be canceled, this time by Hermann Göring, and two years later Hindemith's music would be banned in Germany and labeled as degenerate art. Sometime before this, Goebbels had also changed his stance towards Hindemith, now calling him an "atonal noise-maker" (Goethe Institut, 2022) and branding him as being under the influence of cultural Bolshevism. Yet somehow almost completely contradictory to these developments, the 1934 New York premiere of the symphonic version of *Mathis der Maler* would be critiqued by Kenneth Burke for offering a certain "identification" (Overall, 2017, pp. 232–243) toward a unified Nazi ideology. Besides this critical friction toward Hindemith, Theodor Adorno would continue criticizing Hindemith both before and after the war for not continuing the stylistic path of Schoenberg and Webern. Adorno's anti-neoclassical stance had spread with his exile from Berlin to Oxford and then to New York and had greeted Hindemith upon his arrival to the East Coast. Adornonian circles would dismiss Hindemith's work as a relic of a bygone era. Hindemith wrote in 1955:

> The music of our time has taken the path of abandoning tradition for cluelessness. Of course, new horizons have been opened, but the vastness that has been descried is, like that of endless seas and sandy deserts, uninhabitable by man. (Goethe Institut, 2022; Satie and Minimalism: Parallels & Points of Contact, n.d.)

Despite such varying opposition toward his music, to say that Hindemith didn't see a successful career would be wrong. He was invited to teach at prominent American Universities and saw many commissions and opportunities to conduct. With Hindemith's

arrival in the United States, his compositional style incorporated more and more techniques and syntax of the old without discriminating between the different periods of classical music.

After *Sonata for Two Pianos*, Hindemith completed *Ludus Tonalis*, which saw a more compartmentalized approach to stylistic renewal. The piece alternates fugues with interludes that refer to dances such as gavottes, Courantes, and waltzes, albeit with an updated musical language that referred to his book *The Craft of Musical Composition*. The rhythms and textures in *Ludus Tonalis* imply the styles, but the pitch vocabulary is modernized. This sees a certain opposition to Stravinsky's neoclassicism when compared to his *Violin Concerto in D*, where the rhythms are amalgamated, but the harmonic and melodic content is more sympathetic. This personal balance between a re-imagined harmonic/melodic vocabulary and referential rhythm/texture was first developed in *Sonata for Two Pianos* by touching upon practices of the old and foreshadowed what was to come in *Ludus Tonalis.*

Eclectic Approaches, Influences, and Stylistic Parallels in Sonata for Two Pianos

Paul Hindemith composed *Sonata for Two Pianos* in 1942 in New Haven, CT, USA. By that time, Hindemith had developed such a fluent technique that he finished the work in just four days between August 24-28. It consists of five movements: Glockenspiel, Allegro, Canon, Recitative, and Fugue.

The First Movement: *Glockenspiel*

After the grand opening chords in the first bar of the first movement, the piece introduces a canon in three voices. The subject is highly chromatic and uses almost only 32nd notes. The combination of all three layers in the canon forms a wall of continuous 32nd notes, a texture and keyboard technique reminiscent of Baroque harpsichord and some Baroque string, organ, lute, and flute music.

Figure 1. Hindemith's Sonata for Two Pianos, Mov. 1, mm. 1-3, Canon in 3 Voices,
Schott Music, Germany.

Such continuous passages of 32nd or 16th notes in the Baroque period were usually found in the introductions of toccatas, in preludes, or in fantasies, where the compositional approach was to imitate that of improvisatory and virtuosic material to drive the piece forward. A common term used to describe this rhythmic continuity of a whole movement, or sometimes certain passages, is *moto perpetuo* (i.e., *perpetuum mobile*). One example that is close to the continuous stream of linearity in the Hindemith texture could be J.S. Bach's *Prelude (Fantasie) in A Minor*, for harpsichord, BWV 922.
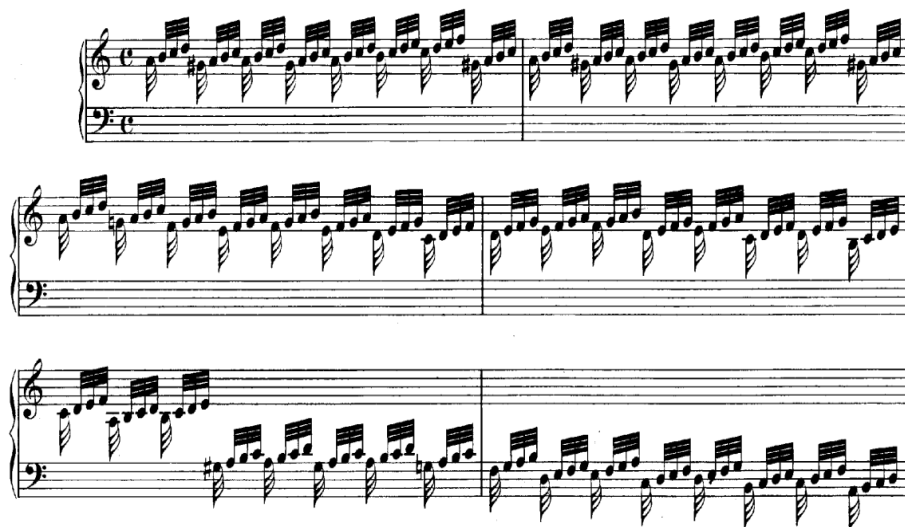
Figure 2. J.S. Bach, BWV 922, mm. 1-6, *Breitkopf und Härtel*, Germany.

Much of the compositional practice and mannerisms behind these highly active textures stem from the early Baroque notion of *stylus fantasticus*, and this style brought forth the liberalization of varying rhythmic, harmonic, and melodic textures being used consecutively. An example for this style could be the usage of both monophonic and polyphonic improvisational passages in the same movement. The *stylus fantasticus* movement, combined with the increasing demand for virtuosity and increasing technical precision in instrument making that made this virtuosity possible in the Baroque period, resulted in a flourish in the number of preludes, toccatas, and fantasias that were composed.

Besides the *moto perpetuo* link to the *fantasticus* influence on prelude writing, while the Hindemith texture is a strict canon when it comes to compositional structure, that it has a certain freedom in compositional approach that could be tied to the *stylus fantasticus* is important to note.

One final term that could be linked to the passage in *Sonata for Two Pianos* is *fortspinnung*. Coined by musicologist Wilhelm Fischer in 1915, the term translates as "spinning

further" or "spinning out" and is used to describe the developmental path a piece takes after the exposition of a *thema* and before a concluding and cadencing epilogue. While Fischer used the term to identify compositional development in the transition from the Baroque to Classical period sonatas, later theorists embellished the meaning and scope of the term to fit their own analytical agendas (see Mutch, 2018).

In summary, this passage from Hindemith could be said to be *fortspinnung* into development, rhythmically laminated by *moto perpetuo* in reference to Baroque practices, obviously by its canonic structure and implicitly through its musical content and keyboard technique.

Measure 10 in the first movement sees the start of a repetitive three-note figuration in 32nd notes with contrasting punctuative melodic and chordal material in higher and lower registers. The ostinato centralizes modality, specifically in B Dorian mode when the B-D-E pitches of the ostinato are combined with the C-sharp, F-sharp, and G-sharp in the melody.

The elongation of the passage immediately reverberates with both the minimalism movement to come and with the ostinato and ground bass traditions of older forms such as canon, passacaglia, and chaconne.
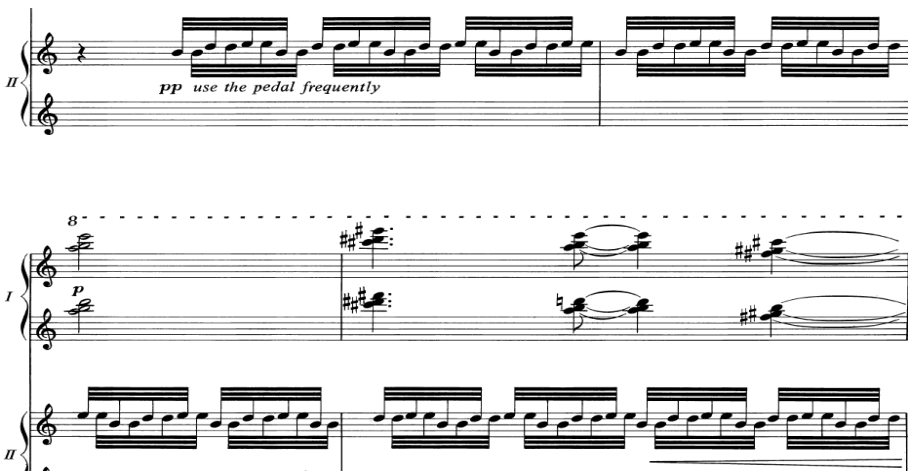

Figure 3. Hindemith, *Sonata for Two Pianos*, Mov. 1, mm. 10–12, *Schott Music*, Germany.

One of the main characteristics of the minimalist music of the 1960s was musical stasis: working with static textures that either do not develop (Philip Glass, much of La Monte Young's art), or the use of non-classical developmental methods such as phase shifting (Steve Reich) or choice-based indeterminacy (Terry Riley's *In C*). While also going against the serialist practices of the time, one common motivation behind these approaches was "...to negate the idea of argument or discussion which is fundamental to so much Western music" (Satie and Minimalism: Parallels & Points of Contact, n.d.; Samson, Oxford Music Online, 2022), such as the dialectical approach to arguing a theme in sonata form or proving the consistency of a theme with a fugue. While *Sonata for Two Pianos* arguably does both in the grand scheme, focusing on this passage taps into a rich tradition of stasis and non-development.

At its core, the Hindemith passage comprises two elements: the repetitive three-note figuration which is the modal ground (not necessarily ground bass), and the surrounding higher and lower melodies giving directionality. The ground here does not imply harmonic progression or cadentiality in the classical sense. Nevertheless, keeping in mind the speed and amount of repetition, this ground implies a certain stasis. One of the earliest pieces that present a striking amount of stasis in repetition, not necessarily one without harmonic function but one that presents it so simply, is the miniature canon by J.S. Bach, *Canon for 8 Voices*, BWV 1072.

Figure 4. J.S. Bach, BWV 1072, *Canon for 8 Voices*, *Breitkopf und Härtel*, Germany.

The canon is scored for two SATB choirs and is composed only four measures long with repetitions; it only uses Do-Re-Mi-Fa-Sol and its retrograde, with offset entries and shorter 1/8th notes for passing tones. While originally written as a demonstration of the universal strength of counterpoint, the audible result is a bewildering sonic cloud of both tonality and non-tonality, both developmental and non-developmental, experienced not just linearly but almost in four-dimensional space-time.

The ground texture in the Hindemith passage certainly draws parallels from some early music structures. While the surrounding melodic and chordal texture provides a certain linear progression, one must look at what it is not doing to fully understand what it is doing.

Marin Marais' (1656-1728) *Sonnerie de Sainte Geneviève du Mont de Paris* (1723), written for viol, violin, and harpsichord with basso continuo, is a passacaglia with an ostinato bass figure that runs throughout the piece. Even though the ostinato undergoes three modulations with some embellishments and pattern variations, the underlying rhythmic and harmonic idea stays constant throughout some 280 repetitions. The ground always uses a three-note figuration (D-F-E) that implies a T-T-D (i-i6 or vi64-V43) cadence, with the viol and violin playing lively phrases and patterns on top of the given harmonic context.

Figure 5. Marais, *Sonnerie de Sainte Geneviève du Mont de Paris*, mm 39-48.

Even though the piece is built upon a similar duality of ground versus linear motivator, the piece has a maximalist approach toward what is built on top of the minimalist ground. The viol and violin composition uses energetic and rhythmically dense phrases with variations and embellishments while supporting the harmonic progression through rich orchestration and voice leading. Marais pushes a narrow harmonic scope to its limits and excels at creative melodic writing and, being a viol player himself, achieves virtuosity in both composition and performance, with virtuosity being a concept minimalism would completely reject and go against. In summary, Marais' *Sonnerie* employs a linear narrative on top of the ground, with ups and downs, tension and release, and developmental variation in melodic activity driving the piece forward.

Coming back to the Hindemith texture, it can be said to be less monolithic and minimalistic than Bach's *Canon for 8 Voices*, but it is also not as developmentally maximalist and extroverted as Marais' *Sonnerie*, even though all three pieces work with a repetitive ground texture. Hindemith differs from Bach in that it has an additional layer on top of the ground but differs from Marais in that it has no linear development, but simply motivic or phrase repetitions that don't necessarily progress toward a goal. To explain this middle ground, looking at Erik Satie, the composer considered by many as the forebearer of minimalism and a true avant-garde of their time, would be appropriate.

Although Satie's direct influence on the first generation of American minimalist composers is not well documented, the most apparent link would be through John Cage's admiration, promotion, and curation of Satie's music in the United States and subsequent influence on Minimalist music. One motivational similarity that existed among Hindemith, the minimalists, and Satie was that all found themselves rebelling against the widely accepted stylistic standards of the music of their time and, by so doing, created unique styles. Satie leaned toward a simplicity that went against the post-Romantic Wagnerian norms of the time in France, such as his emotive chromaticity within functional harmony and traditional forms of development. Hindemith and later the minimalists would go against the then-worldwide norms of serialism.

Pieces by Satie such as *Vexations* or *Ogives* employ repetition as the main developmental technique, such as the composer's indication to repeat the piece 840 times in the case of *Vexations*. Yet the closest balance between ground and linearity in the Hindemith passage is found in Satie's *Avant-Dernières Pensées* (1915).

The first movement is titled *Idylle* and dedicated to Debussy, working with a tetrachord ostinato as a ground that centralizes an A-minor-like modality, similar to the Hindemith passage but slower. The linear material on top has commonalities with the Hindemith passage in terms of both harmonic content as well as method of exposition and development.

By combining the two layers, the piece sees a harmonic freedom of not simply dissonance, but rather contradicting consonances, what would later go on to be called bi- or polytonality. This technique had been used before by Charles Ives and Stravinsky, although through different compositional approaches, and would go on to be used in more similar ways to Satie in Bartok's *Mikrokosmos* and Samuel Barber's *Excursions*, with the technique seeing a certain popularity in the 1940s in the United States. This freedom of expression made available over a modal ostinato or over any other material that allows for a harmonic pedal would prove to be enticing to the minimalists of the 1960s as well.

Figure 6. Erik Satie, *Avant-Dernières Pensées*, Mov. 1: Idylle, First Page, *Edition Peters*, Germany.

A similar duality of contradicting tonalities is found in the Hindemith passage such as with the repeated use of chords with D-sharp implying the B-major on top of the ostinato that implies the B-minor. In summary, the Hindemith passage isolated in this section has its clear place in the musical evolution tree concerning repetitive functions and liberation of/from harmonic development, ranging from older canons and passacaglias to the World War 1 era developments while preceding the minimalism of the 1960s.

The Second Movement: *Allegro*

Allegro is the second movement of *Sonata for Two Pianos* and is the only movement where the sonata form is represented. It is an example of Hindemith's development of the sonata form composed in the Neoclassical style in 2/2 meter and a tempo marking of 120, with a powerful and determined first theme. The movement is a textbook sonata form with just one exception: the development part in measure 73 begins with a big fugue built on the first theme.

Figure 7. Hindemith, *Sonata for Two Pianos*, Mov. 2, mm. 71-81, *Schott Music*, Germany.

This method of writing a fugue for the development part can be observed in the last movement of Beethoven's piano sonata op. 101, where the fugue functions as the development section.
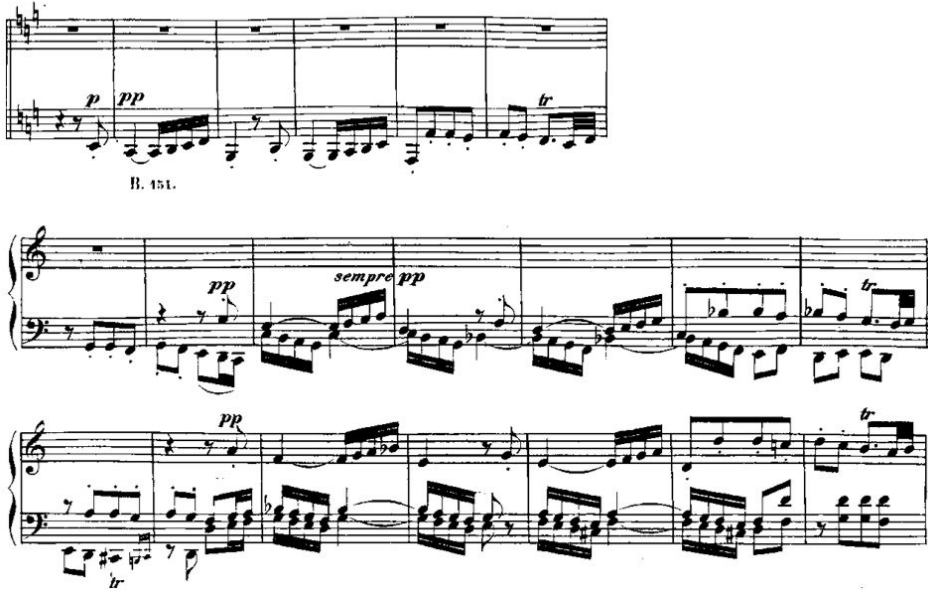

Figure 8. Beethoven, Sonata, Op. 101, Mov. 4, *Breitkopf und Härtel*, Germany.

III. *Canon*

Canon is the title of the third movement, in which the two pianos play the same melody in turn in 4/8 with a *Lento* tempo, creating an extraordinarily slow-moving piece (with the only exception of the second piano part playing the melody one octave lower). Composing a canon which functions as a slow movement is unusual for a classical sonata. According to Sediuk, "The slow tempo *Lento*, the static movement of musical thought, where 'step' pulsation is felt in 4/8 metrics, unusual for classic and romantic culture, the predominance of quiet sound implies the tragic pathetic element in 'Recitative'" (Sediuk, 2020). This movement is a unique example of Hindemith's craftsmanship in composition. Both the tempo marking a choice and the usage of the same melody in both piano parts throughout the piece to build a powerful and dramatic slow movement out of this material are remarkable.

Figure 9. Hindemith, *Sonata for Two Pianos*, Mov. 3, mm. 1-9, *Schott Music*, Germany.

The Fourth Movement: *Recitativ*

The fourth movement is titled Recitativ and is based on an Old English 14th-century verse text.

Figure 10. Hindemith, *Sonata for Two Pianos*, Mov. 4, mm. 1-2, *Schott Music*, Germany.

This World's Joy

(Anonymous ca.1300)

Wynter wakeneth al my care, *nou this leves waxeth bare;* *ofte I sike ant mourne sare* *when hit cometh in my thoht* *of this worlded joie, hou hit goth al to* *nothing.* *Nou hit is, and nou hit nys,* *Al so hit ner nere, ywys;* *That moni mon seith, soth hit ys:* *Al goth bote Godes wille:* *Alle we shule deye, that us like ylle.* *Al that gren me grauet gerene,* *nou hit faleweth albydene:* *Jesu, help that hit be sene* *ant shild us from helle!* *For y not whider y shal, ne hou longe her duelle*	*Winter awakens all my sorrow,* *now these leaves grove bare;* *often I sigh and mourn sorely* *when I come to think* *of this world's joy, and how it goes to nothing.* *Now it is, now it is not,* *As though it had never been, truly;* *Many men say this, and it is so:* *Everything goes except God's will,* *And we shall all die, though we don't like it.* *All that green (i.e., grass) which grows greenn* *now it fades altogether:* *Jesus help this to be seen (i.e., understood)* *And shield us from hell!* *For I don't know where I shall go, nor how long I shall* *dwell here.[2]*

---

2   Translation from https://interestingliterature.com

As Hindemith indicated, he possessed a high level of sensitivity for high quality art and literature; and the poems of Else Lasker-Schüler, Georg Trakl, Christian Morgensterm, and Rainer Maria Rilke fascinated him. Hindemith also stated paying special attention to the texts that he would use for his compositions (Hindemith, 2022/1937). In this movement, one can observe Hindemith's use of a literary source, an Old English 14th-century verse text, directly with the score, just like Romantic composers such as Liszt, Schumann, and Brahms had done. The use of literary sources became an inspiration for many composers during the Romantic period in music history. As Samson (Oxford Music Online, 2022) claims, "It was a key motivation underlying the marked inclination of post-Beethoven composers to look outwards to the other arts, and especially to poetry."

The poem consists of 15 lines, and the recitative part is 15 measures, thus every line has a musical meaning written in one measure. The Old English verse provides emotional setting for the movement, and Hindemith clearly displays a typical example of a Romantic trait by using a literary source for his composition. On top of that, the movement clearly shows a connection with Baroque vocal genres by combining concise musical phrases and typical rhythmic formulas that embody the freedom of language intonation (Sediuk, 2020).

The Fifth Movement: *Fugue*

The fugue subject in the fifth movement of *Sonata for Two Pianos* uses repeated perfect 4th leaps that present an alternative way of linear melodic writing, because for much of classical music, 4ths were seen as a dissonance requiring resolution.

Figure 11. Hindemith, *Sonata for Two Pianos*, Mov. 5, mm. 27-31, *Schott Music*, Germany.

Before going into quartal melodies, the article will discuss the use of quartal harmonies in music. Quartal harmonies have seen recent developments in the past century. This technique owes its roots to the medieval practice of parallel organum, where melodies could be harmonized a perfect 4th lower, at a time when the perfect 4th was considered a consonance. The common practice of the period, however, would treat perfect 4ths as dissonances, and this might have been one of the reasons Wagner's revolutionary Tristan chord would be voiced as two 4ths (one augmented and one perfect) apart, treating it as a point of relative stability. Early future developments of quartal harmony would occur with Debussy (*Etude Book 1 no.3 "Pour les quartes"*) and Ravel (the opening of *L'Enfant et les Sortileges*) creating new modal textures that refer to the Medieval practice, as well as with Scriabin, who used the quartal mystic chord as the harmonic and melodic basis for most of his late compositions.

Quartal melodies (linear melodies with repeated 4ths), however, saw fewer occurrences before and during the first half of the 20th century, possibly because melodies were inherently associated with singing and vocalization, and repeated perfect 4ths could be considered difficult and somewhat unnatural to sing. One of the earliest liberations of quartal melodic construction was composed by Liszt in his *Nuages Gris*, S. 199 (1881). This short anti-virtuosic piece turned focus away from harmonic progression and toward tone color, liberated dissonance, and simplicity in an almost uncanny foreshadowing of what was to come in a few decades' time. The haunting repeated motif starts with a perfect 4th followed by an augmented 4th leap.

Figure 12. Liszt, *Nuages Gris*, S. 199, mm. 1-10, *Breitkopf und Härtel*, Germany.

Another later occurrence of quartal melodies is found in Bartok's *Concerto for Orchestra* (1943) in the lower strings within the introduction movement.

Figure 13. Bartok, *Concerto for Orchestra*, Sz. 116, mm. 21-30, *Boosey & Hawkes*, United Kingdom.

Bartok could have used the 4ths in the opening to create an unfolding effect and expectancy toward what is to come, as the leaps later slowly diminish into 3rds and 2nds with an increase in momentum and density.

The fact that Hindemith used such a modern device in a strict fugue demonstrates the personal balance of his style leaning against both the old and the new. In his book *The Craft of Musical Composition* however, he assigns the highest order of importance to triadic composition, music based on the 3rds, even though both his *Mathis der Maler* and *Un Cygne* [A Swan], the second movement of *Six Chansons* (1939), had made use of many quartal and quintal chords.

"...the musician is bound by this [triadic composition] as the painter to his primary colors, the architect to the three dimensions." (Hindemith, 1937)

Thematic Connections

Another significant element observable in the *Sonata for Two Pianos* is the presence of thematic connections that unify the sonata. The clearest connection is the second

movement's opening theme, which is derived from the first movement's opening chords.

Figure 14. Hindemith, *Sonata for Two Pianos*, Mov.2, mm. 1-4, *Schott Music*, Germany.

The fourth movement's theme is also derived from the first movement's chords.

Figure 15. Hindemith, *Sonata for Two Pianos*, Mov. 4, measure 1, *Schott Music*, Germany.

Also, the last four measures of the fourth movement again repeat the first movement's opening motive, this time in reverse.

Figure 16. Hindemith, *Sonata for Two Pianos*, Mov. 4, mm. 21-25, *Schott Music*, Germany.

In the last movement, this opening motive is again heard, hidden in the fugue.

Figure 17. Hindemith, *Sonata for Two Pianos*, Mov. 5, mm. 36-38, *Schott Music*, Germany.

The usage of a theme as a direct quotation throughout the sonata can be interpreted as a cyclic device. Charles Rosen (1995, p. 88) explained the cyclic form as "the disturbance of an established form [that is achieved when] an earlier movement intrude[s] on the domain of a later one." In this sonata, the movements do not share direct thematic connection, but the sonata is unified through the transformation of the thematic material. This gives the impression that the whole sonata flows like a single thought.

Conclusion

Paul Hindemith is often mentioned as a Neoclassical composer by many musicologists. His enormous output contains many examples that can be categorized as Neoclassical works, while the *Sonata for Two Pianos* also contains eclectic approaches in addition to Neoclassicism. In particular, the influences and parallels of Baroque and Minimalism in the first movement, a sonata for the second movement in the Neoclassical style, the use of a canon in the third movement functioning as a slow movement, the use of a literary source in the fourth movement (which was also an important inspiration in Romanticism), the use of quartal melodies in the last movement fugue, and the use of cyclic devices throughout the sonata all show a blend of different styles. This idea of combining many styles coincides with Hindemith's philosophy about music as an art. In Hindemith's oeuvre, one can observe his attempt to build a bridge from Medieval times to the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Modernist periods. Hindemith's works are the best examples of creating something new based on a synthesis of the old. He succeeded in treating the forms and genres of the past originally, blending the different styles in a way that achieved a unique and identical Hindemith sound. This sound gave Hindemith what he had looked for throughout his entire life: compositions with eternal value.

References

Fligg, D. (2010). *A concise guide to orchestral music: 1700 to the present day.* Mel Bay.

Goethe Institut. (2022, August 5). Website. Retrieved from: https://www.goethe.de/en/kul/mus/20366183.html

Hindemith, P. (1937). *The craft of musical composition.* (A. Mendel, Dü.). B. Schott's Sohne.

Hindemith, P. 2. (2022, July 3). *Paul Hindemith.* Retrieved from: https://www.hindemith.info

Minim-Media. (n.d.). *Satie and minimalism: Parallels & points of contact.* Retrieved from: http://www.minim-media.com/satie/points.htm

Music and the Holocaust. (2022, April 27). Music and the Holocaust. Retrieved from: https://holocaustmusic.ort.org/politics-and-propaganda/third-reich/hindemith-paul/

Overall, J. (2017). *Kenneth Burke and the problem of sonic identification.* Rhetoric Review.

Rosen, C. (1995). *The romantic generation.* Harvard University Press.

Samson, J. (2022, June 16). *Oxford Music Online.* Retrieved from: https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/

Sediuk, I. (2020). The originality of neoclassic principles: Reflection in *The Sonata For Two Pianos* by Paul Hindemith.