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**A critical study of four piano sonatas by Israeli composers,
1950–1979**

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A Critical Study of
Four Piano Sonatas by Israeli Composers, 1950-1979

by
Aviva Espiedra

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

A Critical Study of
Four Piano Sonatas by Israeli Composers, 1950-1979
by
Aviva Espiedra

Dissertation Advisor: Dr. Bruno Amato

Josef Tal (b. 1910), Paul Ben-Haim (1897-1983), Noam Sheriff (b. 1935), and Tzvi Avni (b. 1927) are major Israeli composers in whose works piano sonatas are significant, as well as in the Israeli repertoire. Prolific and original, they have gained international recognition, albeit with a curiosity regarding the "Israeliness" of their style.

Israel's demographic and cultural diversity is inevitably a home for pluralistic expression, yet major stylistic trends can be discerned. The four sonatas, Tal's Sonata for Piano (1950), Ben-Haim's Sonata for Piano (1954), Sheriff's Piano-Sonata (1961), and Avni's Epitaph: Piano Sonata No. 2 (1979), reflect, despite their diverse and individual approaches, a trend consistently characterized by the yearning for a synthesis of East and West: East, implying Middle and Near Eastern sources of the various Jewish communities' heritage, including the Bible and the Hebrew language,

and the regional Arabic music; West, implying the European musical language and its contemporary influences.

This dissertation is a critical study/analysis of the musical parameters of these four compositions. Covering nearly thirty years, a national school unfolds through the common style characteristics of the music. Folkloristic elements are examined from their sources to their integration by means of organizational procedures. A unique synthesis, implemented through and complemented by highly skillful composition, distinguishes these sonatas as important and challenging contributions to the piano repertoire.

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Chapter I

Introduction

The four piano sonatas discussed in this dissertation, Josef Tal's Sonata for Piano (1950), Paul Ben-Haim's Sonata for Piano (1954), Noam Sheriff's Piano-Sonata (1961), and Tzvi Avni's Epitaph: Piano Sonata No. 2 (1979), reflect, through their stylistic common denominators and differences, some central features of musical composition in Israel.¹

Established in 1948, the small state of Israel has had a disproportionate number of composers, musicians, and richness of musical activities in relation to its population, all forming a mosaic of attitudes and trends.² In 1966 Tzvi Avni wrote:

¹ For an indepth discussion of Israeli music, see, Tzvi Avni, "Israel," Dictionary of Contemporary Music, ed. John Vinton, 1974 ed.; Benjamin Bar-Am, ed., 20 Years of Israel Music (Tel-Aviv: Israel Composers' League, 1968); Peter Gradenwitz, The Music of Israel (New York: Norton, 1949) and Music and Musicians in Israel, 3d ed. (Tel-Aviv: Israeli Music Publications, 1978).

² Since this introduction does not intend to present a systematic survey detailing all processes, events, and composers who contributed to the establishment of the Israeli school of composition, it will point only to the main factors creating the artistic climate in which the four sonatas under discussion were written.

The Israeli composer is faced with problems of an unusual nature. On the one hand he is a product of the twentieth century who aspires to express himself in musical terms characteristic to his generation. But on the other hand many of them have an urge to stress some form of identification with "Israeli" music and, like all thinking men in Israel, ask themselves, "who am I?"³

This underlying question of identity has taken different forms in both reaction and intensity starting with the emergence of musical works in the late 1930s.

The renewal of Jewish life in the historic homeland started in the late nineteenth century, long after European nationalism was at its peak in the mid-1800s, with the arrival of the early pioneers. Unlike European nationalism, Israeli composers seemed to be missing a necessary component: a lack of any real historic continuity. The emergence into the modern period, according to Yehuda Cohen, was characterized by "missing entirely the Romantic age, that period of crystallization of characteristic elements in national music."⁴

In a search for genuine sources which bear common

³ Tzvi Avni, "The Israeli Composer and His Works," Seventh Annual Conference Israeli Music Week [League of Composers in Israel] (1966), p. 33.

⁴ Yehuda Cohen, "New Israeli Music-A Bibliography," Israeli Music 1971 1972 [League of Composers in Israel] (1971-72), p. 7. A discussion of the explanations for the lack of historic continuity is detailed in Ami Maayani, "The Music of Israel 1983-1985," New Music in Israel [Israel Composers' League] (1985), pp. 13-14.

denominators to the various communities already living in Israel⁵ or arriving from a multitude of diasporas, the Bible and the cantillations of Biblical reading became the central sources for material and inspiration. Interest in Biblical texts, flowing from a renewal of interest in the Hebrew language, as well as an interest in its rhythms and inflections, and the accumulating treasure of the various communities' prayers, particularly those of Eastern origin, considered authentic or less touched by the host cultures, became the common origin. The Israeli scholar Edith Gerson-Kiwi, while examining the authenticity of these sources, underscores their interrelatedness and significance:

With the return of Jewish exiles, the nation is now sheltering a multitude of synthetic musical traditions which, in spite of their diversity, and often complete unrelatedness, point among themselves to one common source, transparent behind the many later layers and the strongest peculiarities of Diaspora formations. This common source is the Book of the Bible. Its reading, or better, its chanting, was, in the centuries of exile, the magic means of keeping the balance between the true and the adopted 'ego'. Adopted were the various local traditions-particularly, in Eastern countries, the Arab-Persian styles of singing-which were assimilated to the true Jewish style to the extent that entirely synthetic forms were evolved. Whether we shall ever be able to isolate the components and uncover the underlying cantus-firmus

⁵ Whenever reference is made to Israel or Israelis, it may include the predecessor Palestine.

remains an open question. What we hear today is, so to speak, an endless row of variations on a forlorn theme, and who could ever tell the ultimate line of its original melos?⁶

Bracha Zephira (born circa 1915, died 1990), "a unique figure in the history of art music in Israel",⁷ is regarded as a central factor in the development of Israeli music which "undoubtedly would have been different, without the connection created [before the Second World War] between a young folksinger and the period's known composers."⁸ Zephira was born in Jerusalem to a poor Yemenite family⁹ and raised, as a result of her parents' death, by several families, belonging to different communities, Yemenite, Russian, and Sephardic. As a young girl she absorbed the various communities' traditions of prayers, customs,

⁶ Edith Gerson-Kiwi, "Synthesis and Symbiosis of Styles in Jewish-Oriental Music," in Migrations and Mutations of the Music in East and West (Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University, 1980), p. 9. An examination of the Biblical cantillations in historic perspective is found in Max Brod, Israel's Music, trans. Toni Volcani (Tel-Aviv: Wizo, 1951), pp. 11-18.

⁷ Jehoash Hirshberg, "The Emergence of Israeli Art Music," Aspects of Music in Israel [Israel Composers' League] (1980), p. 9.

⁸ Yehuda Cohen, The Heirs of the Psalmist Israel's New Music (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved, 1990), p. 19. All translations from Hebrew are by the author of this dissertation.

⁹ Hereafter reference to the term "Yemenite" or "Persian" means Jewish Yemenite or Persian; and "Oriental" or "Eastern" refers to the Middle or Near East.

secular songs and dialects; and on this rich material, she based her spectacular performances in Europe (during and after her studies in Berlin), and later in Palestine.¹⁰

Zephira's decisive role appears to have had two consequences: through her performances, the Oriental and Sephardic heritage was introduced to audiences of European immigrants, thus shaping and reinforcing the acceptance of the Eastern melos, while her work with important composers such as Paul Ben-Haim, Oedoen Partos, Marc Lavry, Alexander Uriah Boskovich, Menachem Avidom, and Max Brod "transferred the Oriental tradition into the purely Western field of concert music."¹¹

In a letter dating from 1965, Partos writes that the encounter with her singing

. . . was an overwhelming experience, which served as an inspiration to me and all my fellow musicians and composers in the country. Subsequently many of us wrote for Mrs. Zephira, both original works and adaptations of folk songs for the entire instrumental range.¹²

Moreover, these folksongs were studied for their

¹⁰ Hirshberg, "The Emergence," p. 9; and Cohen, The Heirs, p. 19.

¹¹ Hirshberg, "The Emergence," p. 10.

¹² Bracha Zephira, Kolot Rabim ([Tel-Aviv]: Masada, 1978), n. pag.

different elements and incorporated in their original or elaborated form into the compositions.

The Israeli song genre, a phenomenon which has its roots in the pioneers' settlement in Eretz Israel,¹³ starting at the beginning of the century, also became source material. The dominant idealism of the early European immigrants found its expression in songs that reflected nostalgia, work, and dance, in styles they brought with them. However, a turning point occurred with the arrival of Yoel Engel in 1924, who began a trend, followed by such composers as Emanuel Zamir, Mordechai Zeira, Nachum Nardi, Matitياهو Shelem, Jedidia Admon, Emanuel Amiran, Sara Levy-Tanai, and many more, that aimed at creating a new type of song, which, according to its various stages of development, adopted Russian, Slavic, and elements from other nations, and, consequently, Eastern-influenced elements. In her study of folksong in Israel, Michal Smoira-Roll notes:

To generalize here would be simply misleading, for how can one isolate one factor from what is a configuration of sources? It is thus a synthesis which not only combines different cultural traditions,

¹³ "Eretz Israel," meaning the "land of Israel," is a Biblically derived term referring to the ancient land of Israel; it refers to the foreign ruled area (the Ottoman Empire or the British Mandate) which preceded the establishment of the independent state of Israel.

which have gathered together in new Israel, but to an even greater extent includes elements of different historic periods, with their varying styles. Naturally, the Oriental strain is very strong. . . . Indeed the Oriental song is the only one which has kept place to the present day alongside the Israel song, while the other songs of the Diaspora were cast off long ago.¹⁴

Such Oriental tendencies were reinforced by the encounter with the local Arabic or the regional Middle Eastern music which in the 1940s and 1950s, together with scenery, color, and lyrical expression, characterized a major trend of composition termed "Mediterranean Israeli School." As Ami Maayani remarks, "The term . . . is controversial and liberally interpreted, but there is no question of its reality in fact." First used by Max Brod, while Alexander Uriah Boskovich was considered its main proponent, it referred to

. . . transparent, clear music, absorbing the bright light of the Mediterranean air, not polyphonically loaded, influenced by the melodies of different Jewish ethnic groups—mainly the Yemenites, music which returns to the ancient modes, neglecting all the components and harmonics of minor and major scales, involving percussion as an accompaniment to ornamental melodies marked by microtonal melisma and heterophonic treatment. The composers are influenced by

¹⁴ Michal Smoira-Roll, Folk Song in Israel: An Analysis Attempted (Tel-Aviv: Israel Music Institute, 1963), p. 59. A much wider scope of analysis which reaches some similar conclusions is presented in Herzl Shmueli, The Israeli Song (Tel-Aviv: The Center for Culture and Education, 1971).

the landscape and a return to a lifestyle which harks back to biblical origins. The Israeli composer has the mandate of creating original works free of exclusively Western as well as Jewish Diaspora influences, and to express the landscape of the country as well as the revival of the land of Israel in musical symbolism able to be grasped by the public.¹⁵

Although reflecting ideals of a pioneering period and spirit, features of the expressed ideals are discerned in the works of composers such as Alexander Uriah Boskovich,

. . . Paul Ben-Haim (deemed by many to be the creator of the school of Eastern Mediterranean music in Israel), Oedoen Partos, Menahem Avidom, Josef Tal (in his earliest compositions written in Israel, also ideologically opposed to being identified with Mediterranean composers), Marc Lavry . . . who made important contributions [to this trend] in its early stages.¹⁶

However, between the Second World War, through the War of Independence (1948), and the early fifties, the population was isolated from a lack of contact with the outside world, particularly the West. Composers did not have much access to, or information about, the developments abroad. Nonetheless, the political events abroad had their impact, stimulating a strong desire for national identity, to protect against the pain of

¹⁵ Maayani, "The Music," pp. 14-15. This description is closely based on Max Brod, Israel's Music, pp. 57-58.

¹⁶ Maayani, "The Music," p. 15.

the events elsewhere. Thus, the continuing search for roots as part of the underlying search for identity started to focus on the conflict and synthesis of East and West.

Beginning in the mid-fifties, study abroad and participation in international conferences as well as other types of musical exposure allowed composers to keep track of developments in the West, while the "increasing interest in international influences" also brought a "more individualistic expression."¹⁷ One could no longer speak of "schools" but of individual approaches which in the 1950s and 1960s often were extended by arguments as to questions of whether there was, or what was, Israeli music.

At the core of the dilemma is the divergence of attitudes in which a major trend is discerned, of composers such as Paul Ben-Haim, Alexander Uriah Boskovich, Mordechai Seter, Oedoen Partos, Abel Ehrlich, Ben-Zion Orgad, and others of the same generations who have held a philosophical justification to return to the nation's Eastern roots while retaining them through a synthesis with the Western musical culture. A number of questions relate to this approach: should the new music of Israel be identified

¹⁷ Nathan Mishori, "A Critic Looks At His Generation," Aspects of Music in Israel [Israel Composers' League] (1980), p. 18.

according to its folkloristic basis and, if so, by which elements; would the subject matter alone, Biblical or historical, provide the answer; or perhaps the cosmopolitan, "neutral" approach could be justified?

Whereas the first question ceased to be relevant from the late 1960s, a study of musical composition in Israel lends an array of answers. Yehuda Cohen writes in the opening to his widely encompassing work on Israeli music,

Along [with the search for genuine musical sources,] composers made use of European-derived modern means of expression, and the different components existed side by side or were amalgamated into one. In the Israeli music every possible combination of these components can be found: from symbiosis to synthesis.¹⁸

This variety is presented in the four sonatas to be discussed. On different levels the sonatas feature Eastern and Western elements, though neither is purely one or the other. While Tal's sonata reflects the influence of a "Mediterranean School" trend, Ben-Haim's, Sheriff's, and Avni's sonatas reflect their commitment to a synthesis that is not based on theoretical decisions or "neo-Oriental" exoticism, but rather a genuine and deep need to return to the

¹⁸ Cohen, The Heirs, p. 13.

sources.¹⁹ In Ben-Haim, it is a fulfillment of a vision, whereas in Sheriff and Avni, there is an attempt to answer the question, "who am I?" Being situated at a cultural meeting point of East and West²⁰ reinforces the sense of belonging to the general community which is reflected in a remarkable and obvious employment of Western techniques.

The sonatas represent three decades of composition, from 1950 to 1979, by composers who were at various stages of development²¹ in both age and style. Tal and Ben-Haim were Europeans by birth and education. Their immigration was stimulated by the advent of Hitler in 1933, and they had to readjust to their new lives. Consequently, their stylistic development began at the foundation level (for example, the discovery of Oriental material through a live encounter or in Idelsohn's Thesaurus). Their resulting

¹⁹ Such subjects as Eastern and Western influences on a composition and fashionable exoticism are included in Michal Smorah, "Regional Elements in the Art Music in Israel," in Eastern and Western Elements in the Music in Israel, ed. Michal Smorah (Tel-Aviv: Israel Music Institute, 1968), p. 41; and Michal Roehr, "On Folk Song in Israel," Bat Kol, 2 [March] (1961), p. 66.

²⁰ Mordechai Seter wrote in 1961, "we are simultaneously the Eastern end of Europe and Western end of Asia" in "East and West in Music How?" Bat Kol, 1, [5] (1961), p. 7.

²¹ Tal was 40 years old when he composed his sonata, Ben-Haim was 57, Sheriff was 26, and Avni was in his late 40s and early 50s.

styles, however, are opposite and defy any "school" classification.

Sheriff, born and raised in Israel, and Avni, arriving in early childhood, absorbed both the language and culture of Israel as a natural process. Moreover, their formation was assisted by their composition studies with Ben-Haim (Avni, also studying with Ehrlich and Seter), and exposure to a growing number of immigrants from Eastern countries, giving them a model of composition to which they could react.

These sonatas interrelate to a major trend in Israeli music characterized by "the unique and singular East-West synthesis, attempted by most of the country's serious composers, [and which] gives an unmistakable flavor of its own to Israeli music."²² They feature four different points of view and personal solutions to the conflict of materials. Strongly marked by a depth of expression and sophistication of thought, they are not only considered important in each composer's work but also as important contributions to the Israeli piano literature. Cohen singles out Ben-Haim's and Avni's sonatas as central in their output and points to the importance of Tal's sonata²³ and Benjamin Bar-Am sees the significance of Sheriff's sonata in its

²² Maayani, "The Music," p. 16.

²³ Cohen, The Heirs, p. 36.

stylistic accomplishment, noting its Oriental flavor and "sharp" sonorities.²⁴

Both the piano and the sonata form or design occur frequently in the Israeli musical literature. The piano has been a particular favorite of many composers, even when faced with the instrument's limitations in providing microtonal pitch material. For Tal and Ben-Haim, it has been, in accordance with their professional pianistic accomplishment, a medium of personal expression, while Sheriff and Avni, although not pianists, have found the piano to be a challenging medium.

The sonata form, for reasons of its scope and the search by Israeli composers for "new roads in an old land," is found in various ensembles, symphonic, concerto, chamber, and solo, often in deviations from the traditional form.²⁵ Its interest for the Israeli composer lies in the challenge of integrating a traditionally Western form with Eastern-derived procedures. They combine Western closed designs, which are built toward climactic points, with Eastern designs to create an amalgamation of these two diverse styles, resulting in a dramatically new style of composition.

²⁴ Benjamin Bar-Am, in a brief conversation with the author, Tel-Aviv, January 1983.

²⁵ Cohen, The Heirs, pp. 32-33.

Exposed to these two opposing musical cultures, these Israeli composers present in their sonatas a resolution of the apparent conflict between East and West, which in reality becomes a synthesis.

Chapter II

Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano

Biography

Josef Tal was born in 1910 in Pinne, near Poznan (Poland), which was then part of Germany. He graduated with degrees in composition and pedagogy from the Berlin Hochschule fur Musik where his teachers included Heinz Tiessen (composition), Max Trapp (piano), Max Saal (harp), Paul Hindemith, and Kurt Sachs. He arrived in Palestine in 1934, and after two years of agricultural work as a member of Kibbutz Gesher, he began teaching piano and composition at the Jerusalem Academy of Music. He was its director from 1948 to 1952. In 1950 Tal was appointed lecturer in music at Hebrew University, Jerusalem. From 1965 to 1970 he was head of the musicology department, where in 1971 he received his professorship. Since 1961 Tal has been director of the Israel Centre of Electronic Music which he founded.¹

¹ This biographical information is gathered from the following sources: William Y. Ellias, "Josef Tal," IMI Mini Monograph Series (Tel-Aviv: Israel Music Institute, 1981); William Y. Ellias, "Josef Tal-80th Anniversary," IMI News, [Tel-Aviv, Israel Music

Throughout his career, Tal appeared with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and with European orchestras both as a pianist and conductor and made frequent lecture tours to the musical centers of Europe, the United States, and the Far East.

His honors include the thrice-awarded Engel Prize of the Tel Aviv Municipality. In addition, in 1969 he was elected an honorary member of the music department of the West Berlin Academy of Arts; in 1971 he was awarded the State of Israel Prize; between 1974 and 1982 he was president of the Israel section of the International Music Council; and in 1975 he was awarded the Arts Prize of the City of Berlin. He is an honorary member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. In 1983 he received the prestigious Dr. Ricardo Wolf Prize.

Since 1952 he has represented Israel at international conferences such as the International Society for Contemporary Music festivals, International Music Council meetings, and in numerous important contemporary music conferences all over the world.

Institute], No. 1 (1990), n. pag.; Alexander Ringer, "Tal, Josef," The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 1980 ed.; Alexander Ringer, "Musical Composition in Modern Israel," Musical Quarterly, No. 51 (1965), p. 288; and "Tal, Josef," Dictionary of Contemporary Music, ed. John Vinton, 1974 ed., p. 730.

Tal's impressive list of works includes solo instrumental compositions, a piano sonata, chamber music, six piano concertos (including three with electronic accompaniment), concertos for violin, viola, and violoncello, a double concerto for two pianos, cantatas and operas, and electronic music.

Many of his works have been frequently performed in Israel and have also gained international recognition and critical success: Concerto for Viola (1954) (awarded the ISCM prize in 1956); Concerto for Harp and Electronic Music (1971, rev. 1980) (commissioned by Nikanor Zabaleta and first performed in Munich in 1972); Shape for chamber orchestra (commissioned for the United States Bicentenary Celebration and first performed in Chicago in 1976 by the Israel Chamber Orchestra conducted by Ralph Shapey); Concerto for Flute (1976) (composed for Aurele Nicolet); Symphony No. 3 (1978) (first performed by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra at the 1979 Israel Festival under the direction of Zubin Mehta, and later included in the orchestra's European tour and in London's Promenade Concerts); Imago for orchestra (1981) (commissioned by the Library of Congress and performed there in 1983); Symphony No. 4, "Jubilee" (commissioned by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and performed in its 1987 European tour, which included the

Berlin Festival); and Double Concerto for two pianos and orchestra (commissioned by the European Broadcasting Union [EBU] and broadcast throughout Europe by satellite transmission, first performed in 1981 by the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra with the Eden-Tamir duo-pianists and conductor Gary Bertini).

His operas receive wide acclaim: Ashmedai (commissioned by Rolf Lieberman for the Hamburg State Opera, first performed in 1971, subsequently produced by the New York City Opera in 1976); Die Versuchung (The Temptation) (commissioned and first performed by the Bavarian State Opera, Munich, in 1976); Der Turm (The Tower) (commissioned by the Institute for Advanced Studies in West Berlin, first performed at the Berlin Festival by the Kassel State Opera in 1987); and Der Garten (The Garden) (commissioned by Lieberman for the Hamburg State Opera and first performed in 1988).

Tal was among the world pioneers of electronic music and "almost simultaneously with the first works composed in Cologne and Paris he composed, in 1954, his Exodus II ballet music (which was among the first electronic works registered with the Library of Congress, Washington)."² Tal's electronic music consists of works for purely electronic media and instrumental and vocal works that incorporate magnetic

² Elias, IMI News.

tape, such as the requiem Death of Moses, some of his operas, and the piano, harpsichord, and harp concertos. At present he heads a research team working on a method of computerized notation for electronic music.

Described as "Consummate pianist and harpist, electrifying lecturer and devoted educator" and "one of the very few composers who can claim to have been active for almost the whole of the twentieth century",³ Tal has been identified by his willingness to experiment and has been characterized as "never resting content with one style or one system" and carrying forth "an ardent campaign for new music."⁴ Until the late 1950s, he searched for a means of expressing national symbols while, at the same time, he continued to retain "his inherent ties with the German cultural tradition in general and with Schoenberg in particular."⁵ But as Jehoash Hirshberg observes, "It was not only the techniques-dodecaphonic and to a lesser degree, serial, which interested him, but mostly the spiritual power and sincerity of Schoenberg." His open criticism of those who quoted or imitated folk and

³ Benjamin Bar-Am, "Josef Tal at 80," The Jerusalem Post International Edition, 27 Oct. 1990, p. 18.

⁴ Don Harran, "A World Premiere: Josef Tal's Opera MASADA 967," Orbis Musicae, No. 5 (1975-76), p. 107.

⁵ Reinhard Flender, IMI News, No. 4 (1990), p.6.

traditional material did not stem from a "dogmatic attitude" or "prevent him from using a traditional prayer of Babylonian Jews in his first symphony, or from using a song melody . . . in his piano sonata."⁶ Gradually, however, his references to the traditional elements have concentrated largely on subject matter drawn from Biblical and historical sources, and his style has changed greatly over years, especially if one compares the first one with the second symphonies, or compares the first three piano concertos with the following three concertos for piano and electronic tape.⁷

His works are marked by a strong, individual quality which is discernible regardless of the style, technique, or period of composition. They are acclaimed by a number of critics for their "broad dramatic gestures and driving bursts of energy",⁸ and strong expressive quality. For example, Mishori calls

⁶ Jehoash Hirshberg, "The Emergence of Israeli Art Music," Aspects of Music in Israel [Israel Composers' League] (1980), p. 11.

⁷ Yehuda Cohen, The Heirs of the Psalmist Israel's New Music (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved, 1990), p. 156.

⁸ Ringer, "Tal, Josef," Vol. XVIII, p. 537.

the second symphony "a masterpiece of emotional and musical tensions."⁹

Although Tal is intimately familiar with the piano and its literature, nevertheless, his piano works include only one piano sonata, the above-mentioned six piano concertos, and a few solo piano works, mostly dating from his early period. The Sonata for Piano, was composed in 1950, sixteen years after his immigration and is among his first published compositions.

Sonata for Piano (1950)

The sonata was composed by Tal, according to Yehuda Cohen, in 1950 and first performed by the composer in 1955. It belongs, as does the Symphony No. 1, (1952), Piano Concerto No. 2 (1953), Viola Concerto, (1954), and String Quartet No. 1 (1959), to the decade of the fifties.¹⁰ It is a period characterized by the country's isolation, during which Tal's application of

⁹ Nathan Mishori, "A Critic Looks At His Generation," Aspects of Music in Israel [Israel Composers' League] (1980), p. 18.

¹⁰ Cohen, The Heirs, p. 163; and Ringer, "Musical Composition," pp. 288-89. According to Cohen, p. 158, the piano concerto is based on an ancient Babylonian tune from which a group of motives is developed in serial technique; and in the viola concerto, Tal develops very small motives from a Jewish-Persian tune.

the Middle Eastern elements denotes an attempt to deal with the prevailing dilemma of a national style. In the sonata, "features characteristic to his later symphonic works can be discerned. Its style is very personal and in its second movement a folksong of Yehuda Sharett is featured."¹¹ Tal's approach in those years, in accordance with the concept that the revival of Hebrew culture could be linked with the Jewish folklore heritage and the then flourishing Israeli song genre, was one of using local melodies as compositional material.

His Symphony No. 1, composed in 1952, first performed by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra under the conductor Heinz Freundenthal in 1957, and recipient of the Engel Prize in 1957, features an ancient Jewish-Persian Lamentation as transcribed by Idelsohn. According to Tal, its "entire motivic material" is based on this one source presented in its entirety only in the slow second section. The symphony also features, in its closing section, another folk-inspired "dance-movement which gradually increases in intensity and strength."¹² The ancient lamentation is illustrated below in Example 1.

¹¹ Cohen, The Heirs, p. 163.

¹² Josef Tal, in the introduction to the score, Symphony No. 1 (Tel-Aviv: Israel Music Institute, 1952). Originally it was published by Israeli Music Publications, and is now under Israel Music Institute copyright.

Example 1. Josef Tal, Symphony No. 1, second section, measures 96-113, an ancient Jewish-Persian Lamentation. © 1952, IMI Israel Music Institute. Used by permission of the publisher.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for measures 96-113 of the second section of Josef Tal's Symphony No. 1. The score is written on multiple staves for various instruments including Clarinet, Bassoon, Flute, Piccolo, Oboe, and Piano. It includes tempo markings like "Lento" and "P. rannan.", and dynamic markings like "ppp" and "pp". The number "23" is written in the top right corner of the first system. The score is written in a style that appears to be a working draft or a composer's manuscript, with some corrections and annotations visible.

In 1961, however, in an article entitled "National Style and Contemporary Composition--How?" Tal Wrote:

. . . not tonality and not modality, not atonality and not dodecaphonism, serialism or electronic music make Israeli music. They are merely means to which also the folkloristic quotation, Mediterranean-combined fifths, a-la-Hora dance and the like, belong. The means are all good on the condition that they serve a live content and will.¹³

The aforementioned works from the 1950s, including the piano sonata, are excellent examples of the use of Eastern folklore-derived materials, including actual quotations. Tal incorporated such quotations in his early works, despite his subsequent rejection of such use. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, he reorganized his compositional techniques and accordingly entered into an entirely different stylistic period.

The sonata was preceded by two earlier solo piano works, Three Preludes (1942) and Six Sonnets (1946), and followed by two pedagogical compositions, Six Inventions (1956) and Five Dodecaphonic Episodes (1956). Tal's sonata is a contemporary interpretation of the classical three-movement design, consisting of a fast movement (compound ternary), a slow one (passacaglia), and the final fast movement (rondo-toccata). Tal's use of the form of sonata also

¹³ Josef Tal, "National Style and Contemporary Composition--How?," Bat-Kol, 1 [5] (1961), pp. 6-7.

emphasizes his "serious intent."¹⁴ Possibly it also reflects on the composer's retained link with his teacher, Paul Hindemith, who wrote sonatas in the neo-Classical style, and the Second Viennese School whose members, in particular, his idol Schoenberg, "returned to large instrumental movements based on traditional formal plans."¹⁵ Although at this stage, Tal's new stylistic orientations are yet to come, his ties to German tradition permeate his compositional procedures as in his motivic development and are discerned in the numerous compositions written in sonata-related forms, such as the chamber sonatas, chamber ensembles, concertos, and symphonies.

The German tradition is also reflected in the sonata's intense expression. This "powerful and dramatic expression"¹⁶ which characterizes Tal's composition is central to defining his individual style. "His piano sonata," writes Gradenwitz, "is a concentrated and highly expressive three-movement work."¹⁷

¹⁴ Paul Griffiths, "Sonata," The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 1980 ed.

¹⁵ James Webster, "Sonata Form," The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 1980 ed.

¹⁶ Hirshberg, "The Emergence," p. 11.

¹⁷ Peter Gradenwitz, Music and Musicians in Israel (Tel-Aviv: Israeli Music Publications, 1978), p. 49.

First Movement

The first movement is in a compound ternary form in which the three overlaying sections are broken down as follows: section A consisting of three sub-sections, a and b (mm. 1-3, 4-5), a' and b' (mm. 6-8, 9-14), and a" (mm. 15-18); section B, four sub-sections, c and d (mm. 19-22, 23-24), c' and d' (mm. 25-28, 29-30), c" (mm. 31-34), and d" (mm. 35-38); and a final section A' consisting of two sub-sections plus a closing statement, materials a (mm. 39-41), b (mm. 42-51), and e (mm. 52-53). (This sectional division and the related tonal centers are illustrated in Table 1.)

Table 1

First Movement's Sectional Division and Tonal Centers

Section	Material	Measures	Tonal centers	Division by tempo
A	a*	1-3	C (/F#)	Grave $\text{♩} = 44$
	b	4-5	C	string.to 104, rit. molto
	a'	6-8	F#;C	Tempo I
	b'	9-14	F, F/G-C	Tempo II, rit.
	a''	15-18	F/(C#-C)-C(/F#)	Tempo I, rit.
	B	c	19-22	D (\rightarrow D \flat /E \flat)
d		23-24	D/D \flat -E \flat	
c'		25-28	D (\rightarrow D \flat /E \flat)	
d'		29-30	D/D \flat -E \flat	
c''		31-34	D (\rightarrow D \flat /E \flat)	poco mosso
d''		35-38	D/D \flat -E \flat	tranql, ♩
A'	a	39-41	C (/F#) C	Tempo I
	b	42-51	C-G-D \flat -C#	Tempo II, ♩
	e	52-53	C#-C	$\text{♩} = 70$

* Hereinafter sometimes referred to as Aa, Aa', and so forth

The equilibrium of unifying and contrasting features sets the movement's potential sense of balance. The A sections, by their own opposing thematic materials, feature contrast, which in turn creates a dramatic tension compared to the B section's lyricism. The following Example 2 includes the movement's opening statements presenting, successively, the tense slow material Aa and the tense, accelerating material Ab; and the B section's first statement of the slow, tranquil Bc and Bd materials.

Example 2. Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, first movement, mm. 1-7 and 19-24. © 1955, IMI Israel Music Institute. Used by permission of the publisher.¹⁸

(a) section A, a and b materials.

The image displays two staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled 'a material' and begins with the tempo marking 'Grave' and a metronome marking of quarter note = 44. It features a piano (pp) dynamic and includes the publisher information: 'JOSEF TAL • יוסף טל' and 'JERUSALEM 1952 ירושלים'. The bottom staff is labeled 'b material' and starts with 'stringendo' and a metronome marking of quarter note = 104. It includes dynamics such as 'pp' and 'rit. molto', and a tempo change to 'Tempo I' with a metronome marking of quarter note = 44.

¹⁸ Tal's Sonata for Piano was first published by Israeli Music Publications and is now under the copyright of the Israel Music Institute.

(b) section B, c and d materials.

C material

19 tranquillo molto *♩-54*
pp quasi lontano
pp sempre

d material

22
sempre pp
cadenza

There is a certain pattern in the arrangement of the sections: the sections are in a ternary sequence, whereas the sub-sections alternate. This order results in a degree of predictability, but the two transitions from the A to B sections and the closure of the movement demonstrate a more subtle approach to the relationship between the form and its content. Sub-sections Aa" (mm. 15-18) and A'a (mm. 39-41) are supposed to stand in contrast to the following or preceding B section materials, and yet, in spite of both being slow and sustained, they differ in a more subtle way through their tension or lyricism. Also the ending of the movement is unpredictable. The extended A'b material (mm. 42-51) ends with an abrupt cessation

of motion, followed by a quarter-note rest under a fermata, and the remaining two slow measures, designated as e material, form the codetta. Consequently, the ordered alternation of thematic materials is altered, but, as compensation, the e material's textural setting is reminiscent of the Aa material, and the melodic pitch content (C-sharp, C, B, C) refers to both the B and A sections, thus bringing the movement to a coherent ending (see Example 3).

Example 3. Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, first movement, mm. 50-53.



A characteristic feature in the shaping of the movement is the clear-cut sectional division. In addition to the change of thematic materials, detailed temporal modifications, such as tempo and metronome markings, ritardando, and acceleration indications, as well as fermata and rest signs, define the divisions.

A strong and constant tonal feeling, often though not always, based on a definite pitch focus is established within the highly chromatic vocabulary. Primary in this movement's tonal design are the tritone/quartal and secundal relations of the tonal centers; these intervals are structural also in the melodic and harmonic parameters.

By its prominence in the A and A' sections, tonal center C assumes a focus to which the tonal centers F-sharp and F in these sections, and the tonal centers D and D-flat/E-flat in the B section relate. Consequently, the tonal scheme supports the formal ternary design.

In Example 2a, quoting the movement's introduction of the Aa and Ab materials, the centrality of C is illustrated. A simultaneous sounding of the initial grace notes, C as an inner voice pedal and F-sharp commencing the bass melody, is repeated in measure 2. This tritone relation is formed as, concurrently, the upper voice pronounces the pitches which circle tonal center C, B-flat, and D, as an upper pedal. The omission of F-sharp (m. 3) and the ending of this statement on C establish the latter as a main tonal center. In measures 4-5, the bass pedal C alternates with C-sharp while the voice above it proceeds with a chromatic motion that includes the alternated spelling,

C-sharp/D-flat. Once again, tonal center C is established by its location at the closing of the phrase.

A different portrayal of quartal relations is seen in the following quoted Aa" material in which the discussed juxtaposition of F-sharp/C is "inverted" by the setting of F as an inner pedal above C-sharp in the bass. The quartally derived interval of the diminished fourth, C-sharp/F is similarly reiterated but through the use of an extension (m. 18), the dyad C and F-sharp returns.

Example 4. Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, first movement, mm. 15-18, dyad F and C-sharp returns to dyad C and F-sharp.

By use of similar recurrences at points of formal articulation, the tonal centers are established throughout the movement. For example, in section B, c and d materials (mm. 19-24) the five reiterations of pitch D in the upper-voice melody establish it as a tonal center supported by the also reiterated pitches,

A and E. Furthermore, beginning in measure 21, a tonal activity involving all voices results in a move to tonal center D (mm. 23-24) as part of an upper-voice pedal, D/F, superimposed on the bass pedal, D-flat/E-flat.

The aforementioned accordance between the formal and tonal parameters is also manifested through the A sections' tonal flux, as opposed to the uniform tonal centrality of the B section. An underlying feature found in section A, particularly in its b' material and its counterpart (A' section, b material), is the recurring reference to the pitch, C-sharp. Through this pitch, a tonal process takes place where the centrality of pitch C is challenged, either as C, C-sharp or in its respelling as D-flat; this contrast becomes a central element in all three sections of the movement. Reference to C-sharp occurs already in measures 4-5 (seen in Example 2a) where it is set between two soundings of tonal center C, and is continued in measures 12-14 (shown in the following Example 5). C-sharp is repeated twice in the bass as part of a chord on D-flat (m. 11); it is further repeated in the bass as C-sharp; and while the diverging voices proceed with a motion affirming pitches G/F (mm. 13-14), the upper voice emphatically

turns around C-sharp and D-flat. (See also Example 3 which shows this process' completion.)

Example 5. Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, first movement, mm. 8-14, the continuing process of tonal contrast, C, C-sharp/D flat.

Almost to the movement's very end, the meaningful motion between the chromatically altered C, C-sharp, and D-flat continues, only to be resolved by the concluding sonority, composed of an harmonic structure defined by two C-sharps and a melodic motion that ends on tonal center C. This movement then, is primarily about secundal relations. (See Table 1 where the tonal centers are seen as formal delineators and as part of a tonal process.)

Principles of development and variation shape the melodic element of this movement, as in other works of Tal, whose "technique is based on the great classical tradition of motivic work and elaboration."¹⁹ When comparing the presentation of the materials with their development or elaboration, there is no essential difference because development is inherent in their presentation. The motives in this melody are given to different degrees of development; whereas Aa and Bc materials are fairly predictable, Ab material in particular and Bd material to a lesser extent are less predictable.

Central in the melodic organization, the quartal/tritone juxtaposition, already seen in the tonal parameter, is likewise structurally significant. The intervals of the fourth, the second, and the seventh dominate the melodic motion.

The first sonorities of the movement consist of fourths (Example 2a). Furthermore, the bass melody in measures 1 and 2 can be described as a motion basically in tritones and fourths (though connected by seconds), namely, F-sharp and C, C and F, in measure 1, and F-sharp and C, F-sharp and B-flat, in measure 2.

Although with less frequency, the interval of the fourth is further projected in the B section (see

¹⁹ Hirshberg, "The Emergence," p. 11.

Example 2b), in the c material, D-flat and A-flat (mm. 19-20), E and A between the middle and lower voices (m. 21), C and F (m. 22); and in the d material, G-flat and D-flat (m. 23). These instances are iterated twice more with the reoccurrences of the respective subsections. The significance of the interval of the fourth is apparent in its location in the melodic phrase and its quantitative employment, as well as its location at the end of sections: for example, at the end of b' and beginning of a" sections (mm. 14-15), B and F, a tritone; preceding the end of c (m. 22), D-flat and G, a tritone; and the end of d" (mm. 37-38), G-flat and D-flat, an implied fourth; and towards the movement's end, in A'b and A'c materials, C-sharp, F-sharp, and C-sharp, a fourth.

Secondary in importance to the fourth is the interval of the second. Occurring as a ninth or in its inversion, the seventh, it connects the tritones to the fourths. (See in the following Example 6, quoting from the A' section, b material, its pronounced function as a link and its importance as a melodic element on its own.) In addition to its continuous recurrences in the upper voice, the lower-voice motion consists exclusively of seconds and sevenths in measures 42-43, and with the fifth or the third in measures 44-46.

Example 6. Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, first movement, mm. 42-49, employment of the interval of the second.

An even more significant assertion of its structural importance is the closing of a number of sections with the motion of a second. In section A, material a ends with the motion, D to C (m. 3), material b with C-sharp to C (m. 5), material a' with F-sharp to F or D to C (mm. 7-8); in section B, materials c and d end with the motions G to F

(following a succession of descending seconds: G-sharp, F-sharp, E, D, E-flat, D-flat) (m. 22), and B-flat, A-flat (m. 24), respectively; and in section A', material a ends with the motion, D to C (m. 41).

The augmented second, characteristic of the Jewish mode called Ahavah Rabah is surveyed and explained by Idelsohn as a process of adaptation that began in the thirteenth century.²⁰ It is found in Sabbath and Festival prayers and in a "number of rhythmic melodies not only for religious but also for secular purposes," namely, folk songs.²¹ It should be noted that, as Idelsohn mentions, the "vast number of tunes adopted for the Jewish-Oriental folk-song" show a preference for certain modes including the Oriental mode "Hedjaz, which corresponds to the Ahavoh-Rabboh mode."²²

²⁰ A. Z. Idelsohn, in Jewish Music, 1st ed. (1929; rpt. New York: Schocken, 1967), pp. 87-88, explains that "The fact that this mode is not used for the Bible and the ancient prayers nor in the ancient communities in the Near East for the prayers or for the old piyyut, created in the period 800-1000 C.E., leads us to the opinion that this mode was originally unknown to the Jewish people, and that only later was adopted as a result of the influx of the Mongolian and Tartarian tribes into Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, as well as the Balkan, beginning with the thirteenth century. . . . Be that as it may, this mode came to be much liked by the Jews of the countries mentioned above, so that it became a real channel of Jewish expression."

²¹ Idelsohn, Jewish Music, pp. 87-88.

²² Idelsohn, Jewish Music, p. 364. The Hedjaz mode is illustrated through an Arabic religious tune (Table 1, No. 7, p. 30) based on D, E-flat, F-sharp, G,

By following the development of the b and b' subsections, it becomes clear that this motive, both different from the preceding materials and yet reminiscent of a liturgical or folkloristic idiom, suggests a melodic borrowing that is related to the East. Although its employment is brief, it is located at significant formal points of both the closing of the b' material and the entire movement. The motive, while well incorporated here, is not stylistically absorbed as a component in the composer's language. Its employment in this sonata is an implication of the composer's attempt to reconcile Western and Eastern styles.

The harmonic element's richness of color results from a non-functional chromatic motion. A basic feature characterizing this movement is the setting of two opposing elements, the quartal-based melody against a stated or implied triadic harmony and vertical combinations that sound like seventh, ninth, or eleventh chords. Since these chords portray progressions that are linear, the tonal basis often remains vague and undefined.

The first melodic-harmonic material (mm. 1-3) is a juxtaposition of two elements which together form

A, B-flat, C, D. It will be further discussed in the following chapters in reference to other piano sonatas.

vertical combinations whose upper component is a third within an octave, F-sharp, C, B-flat, D, and B-flat. In its return as a' (seen in the following Example 7), this material implies triadic harmony (such as D major and A major/minor or F major/minor). (For another example, see also measure 21, shown in Example 2, c material, where D major and A major chords are implied.)

Example 7. Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, first movement, mm. 4-8, triadic harmony.

The image shows a musical score for Example 7, consisting of two staves. The top staff is the full score, and the bottom staff is a piano reduction. The music is in G major and 3/4 time. The top staff begins with a 'stringendo' marking and a tempo of 'Tempo I. = 66'. The score includes various dynamics such as 'ap' (pianissimo) and 'rit. molto' (ritardando molto). A bracket labeled 'a' material' spans measures 5-8. The piano reduction below shows the same material in a simplified form.

The harmonic element serves also as a formal delineator. Except for the similarity in the pitch content of the openings of the A and A' sections (Aa and A'a sub-sections), there is no exact repetition, and throughout the movement the materials are constantly changed. While materials Aa and Aa' differ

in their harmonic content, sub-sections a and a", which are inherently more similar to each other, denote different tonal implications; in the three b materials there is a pattern of variation where one is a development of the other, including a formal extension; and similarly in the c and d materials, each repetition brings forth slight harmonic changes, including one extension of the d'' material. Thus, through common features and imposed changes, the materials and sections are harmonically differentiated as well.

The rhythmic element is a source for formal articulation, as changes of pulse rate, ritardando, and fermata indicate sectional division (discussed earlier in the section on form). The Aa material consists of quarter and eighth notes, successive syncopation is present in each of the three initial measures, and the impression is of repeated phrases in modification. The Ab material consists mainly of sixteenth notes, in uninterrupted "stringendo" motion, and, although they can be divided into groups of four, as the recurrent beat, they follow as if one energy-accumulating group, stopped by a "rit. molto" of three notes (eighth and quarter notes). The Bc and Bd materials consist mainly of dotted quarter, quarter, eighth notes, and triplets of eighth notes in changing meters of four and five quarters and five and seven eighths; syncopation within

and over the barline further varies the phrase length; and the impression is of a continuously changing elaboration of small motives.

Thus, rhythmic development occurs mainly in the reoccurring, A'b, and Bc and Bd materials, whereas it does not occur in the a material (except for the mentioned extension) whose restatements are rhythmically identical. However, accentuated upbeats of extreme changes in volume form an additional element of rhythmic variation. It is seen, for example, in the Aa material (mm. 3 and 8) or in the developed Ab material's dramatic-off-the beat placement of accents (mm. 49-51), where after a two-measure setting (mm. 47-48) of a regular pattern of recurrent down beats, the sforzando and "sFFz" accents create new, unpredictable rhythms.

Counterpoint of two to four voices characterizes most of this movement, except for two monophonic sections where the melody is doubled at the octave (A and A' sections, b' and b sub-sections, mm. 9-10 and 48-51, respectively); and two instances occurring in the c and c' sub-sections which are monophonic (mm. 22 and 28, respectively). Among the procedures employed are pedal voices, sustained notes, and an ostinato pattern.

One of the Aa material's recognized features is the double-voice pedals, namely, the simultaneous single-pitch middle voice (C or F) which implies the tonal center and the upper-voice chordal structure which consists of three pitches (B-flat, D, B-flat, or C, E, C). Another such feature is the double-voice pedals of Bd material. Both the bass and soprano voices of its four-voice texture are thickened, the bass, by the significant interval of the second D-flat/E-flat and the soprano, by a minor third D/F.

An ostinato pattern divided between two lower voices is seen in Bc material. Pitch A of the lower voice and pitch E of the middle voice form a fifth that is restated three times (mm. 19-20), followed by modifications to a minor third, A-flat, C-flat, and a fourth, E, A. Its identical repetition occurs in the c' sub-section (mm. 25-27).

A fluctuation in textural density characterizes the movement as a whole. The movement opens with widely spaced chords and ends with chords spaced closer together, consisting of seconds and thirds topped by a fourth. When the opening Aa material returns as Aa', its chords are more closely spaced. Modification in textural spacing is a feature discerned also in the Ab and Bc materials: b' material starts with the doubling in an octave, (m. 11), which soon folds into a

relatively closer spaced texture, while Bc material, which commences with closely set and even overlapping voices (mm. 19-20), ends in parallel motion at a distance of two octaves.

All four materials exemplify modifications: the open-spaced chords of Aa sub-section are replaced by the closely spaced chords of the a' sub-section, or their vertical components' order is inverted in the restated A'a sub-section; the b material features a number of textures including sustained notes, chords, or contrasting monophony. The reiterated Bc and Bd materials feature a number of subtle modifications, such as the brief added upper voice (mm. 25-26), doubling in octaves, now in wider spacing (mm. 27-28), a textural change from monophonic to contrapuntal (mm. 22 and 34), and the additional D-flat pedal points of Bd" material. (For a comprehensive illustration, see the following Table 2.)

Table 2

The First Movement's Textural Organization

Section	Material	Mm.	Voices	Texture
A	a	1-3	3	Contrapuntal;pedal voices
	b	4-5	2-3	Contrapuntal;sustained notes
	a'	6-8	4	Contrapuntal
	b'	9-14	2-3	Monophonic;cptl.;sustained notes
	a'	15-18	3	Contrapuntal;pedal points
B	c	19-22	2-4	Cptl.;ostinato;monophonic
	d	23-24	4	Cptl.;pedal voices;(sust. notes.)
	c'	25-28	2-4	Cptl.;ostinato;monophonic
	d'	29-30	4	Cptl.;pedal voices;(sust. notes.)
	c''	31-34	4	Contrapuntal;ostinato
	d''	35-38	4	Contrapuntal;ostinato
A'	a	39-41	3	Contrapuntal;pedal voices
	b	42-51	2-3	Cptl.;sust. notes.;monophonic
	e	52-53	3	Cptl.;pedal chord

Registral distribution of materials also assists in defining sections. Even when the a-material's registral order is inverted, it is still associated with the registral range between the Small- and three-

line octaves (mm. 39-41) while the b material is associated with reaching the extreme registers (for example, in measures 9-14, from Contra-octave E to three-line C-sharp); and c and d material with the lower registers of the Small- to Contra-octaves, although higher registers are included as variation.

By verbally notating "(quasi gong)" (m. 5), there is an indication of Tal's intention to utilize the color possibilities of the piano through an association with another instrument. This approach is reflected also by the interpolated chord (from a material; m. 25) in the four-line octave register and the orchestral monophonic effect of the movement's closing statements. Although there is no consistency and substance of such a treatment of the piano to point to stylistic borrowing from the East, the intention itself points to the composer's awareness of non-European sound resources.

Second Movement: "Basso Ostinato"

The form of this movement is a passacaglia, called "Basso Ostinato" by Tal. Ostinato form and contrapuntal texture enabled Tal to set off two different tonal languages, modal against chromatic. The modal language is realized by borrowing an Israeli

song, Hen Dama set by Yehuda Sharett (circa 1937-38)²³ to the poem "Rachel," by the nationally known poetess, Rachel (Rachel Blaustein, 1890-1931).

The borrowing of a song, popular not only for its tune but also for its ubiquitously known poem, lends additional interest to the movement. The poetry of Rachel, "the veteran of modern Hebrew poetry," was associated with the pioneer generation "returning to the Land of its Fathers" and the "agricultural labor on its soil."²⁴ Her importance in expressing national feelings and symbolizing "a whole period in our history," as Bar-Am writes, is significant to the understanding of Tal's reference to such folk material at the time and to the audience for which this sonata was written.²⁵

The following example quotes Sharett's tune and Tal's presentation of the ostinato melody. While pitch content is identical, the tune's meter of six quarters

²³ Bathja Bayer, "Sharett, Yehudah," Encyclopaedia Judaica, 1971 ed.

²⁴ Sholom J. Kahn, "The Poetry of Rachel," Ariel, 38 (1975), p. 5.

²⁵ Benjamin Bar-Am, "The Composer Forum Songs by Rahel by Avraham Daus," Bat Kol, 2 (1961), pp. 72-73. Rachel's work interested not only folk-song writers but also composers such as Paul Ben-Haim, who wrote two songs for voice and piano, and Avraham Daus, who wrote a set for voice, flute, and viola.

becomes a changing meter of two, three, and four quarters.

Example 8. Sharett's tune and Tal's ostinato melody.

(a) Yehuda Sharett, Hen Dama tune.²⁶

*) *mf*

*) *p*

ןן בי — להקו ונו גמ.זו מי-ד-ב קמה-ד הו

אם-ה אם חל- — חל-ד . בן-ל שאן-עה-רו-ה חל-ד

(b) Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, "Basso Ostinato," mm. 1-12, the ostinato melody. © 1950, IMI Israel Music Institute. Used by permission of the publisher.

Andante *pp* *a con espressione*

pp

complice

6

12

²⁶ Herzl Shmueli, The Israeli Song (Tel-Aviv: The Center for Culture and Education, 1971), p. 36.

The passacaglia consists of six variations which form four sections: the first, Variation I (mm. 1-12); the second, Variations II and III (mm. 13-20 and 21-28); the third, Variations IV and V (mm. 29-40 and 41-47); and the fourth, Variation VI (mm. 50-59). The following Table 3 shows the passacaglia's division by sections, variations, and phrase structure, their meters, and measures.

Table 3

The Formal Organization of the Passacaglia

Section	Var	A		B		A		
One	I	Meter	4+2	3+3	4+2	4+2	4+2	4+3
		Mm.	(1-4)		(5-8)		(9-12)	
Two	II		4+2 (13-16)	4+3	4+2 (17-20)	4+3		
	III		4+2 (21-24)	4+4	4+2 (25-28)	4+3		
Three	IV		4+2 (29-32)	4+3	4+2 (33-36)	4+3	4+2 (37-40)	4+3
	V		4 + 5 (41-43)	+2	4+2 (44-47)	4+4		
Four	VI		4+2 (48-51)	3+2	4+2 (52-55)	4+2	4+2 (56-59)	4+3

By opening and closing the passacaglia with variations comparable in length (Variations I and VI), and placing the longest, Variation IV, and the most metrically and rhythmically modified, Variation V, midway in the movement, a formal balance is created.

Two simultaneous tonal languages are featured in the passacaglia, the locally derived modal and the highly chromatic. Both contribute equally to the overall sound. A tetrachord, D, E, F, G, serves as a basis for the ostinato melody. Herzl Shmueli argues that this four-note scale is not the lower tetrachord of a Dorian mode, as in the European tradition of heptatonic scales within the octave, but follows the Eastern tradition of shorter scales²⁷ Shmueli's views are supported by Idelsohn's comments that "seldom does the melodic construction show the tendency of the octachordal line, for [Oriental] folk-tunes are usually built on the tetrachordal or pentachordal range."²⁸

The ostinato is tonally defined by its tonic D, and the tonal center of each variation is established at its closing cadence which centers on pitch, D. A single tonal level predominates throughout the passacaglia.

²⁷ Shmueli, The Israeli Song, p. 144.

²⁸ Idelsohn, Jewish Music, p. 25.

Variations I and VI, similar in pitch content, end with a minor triad on D (mm. 12 and 59); Variation IV implies the minor by its motion on D, F, and E-flat (m. 40); and Variation III ends on D, G, and B, a second inversion of a G major chord which sounds like a half cadence (m. 28). Variation II ends on the interval D/E (m. 20), and Variation V ends on a fifth, D/A (m. 47).

With these cadential arrivals on D, the form of the passacaglia is articulated. Examples 8b and 9 show the six cadential arrivals.

Example 9. Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, "Basso Ostinato," the closing cadences.

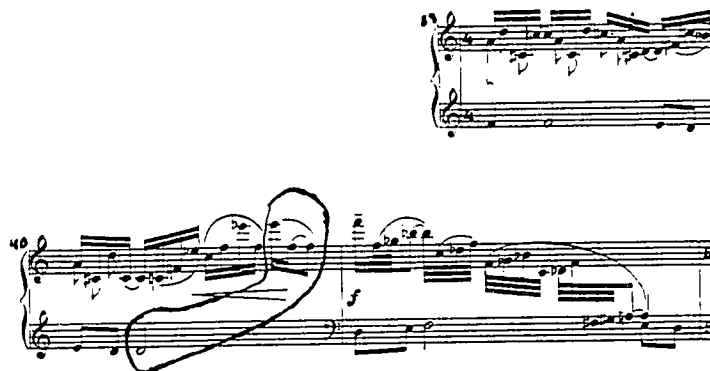
a) Variation II, mm. 19-21, interval D, E.



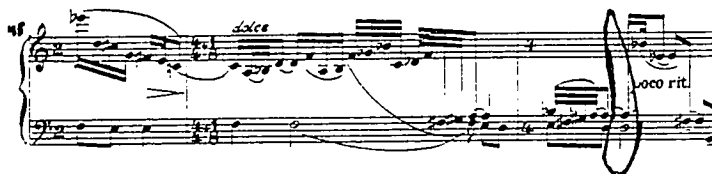
(b) Variation III, mm. 25-29, G chord, second inversion.



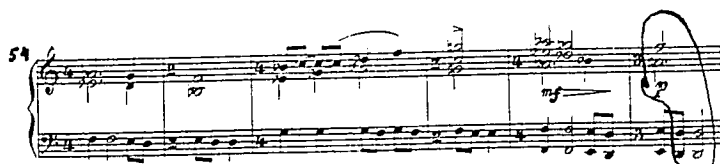
(c) Variation IV, mm. 39-41, implied minor triad, D, F, E-flat.



(d) Variation V, mm. 45-47, a fifth D/A.



(e) Variation VI, mm. 54-59, D minor triad.



Each variation deals with one of the three intervals pronounced or implied by the ostinato melody: the interval of the fourth, of the second, and the third, implied by the motion articulated within thirds, D, E, F; G, F, E; and F, E, D (Example 8b).²⁹ Variation I and Variation VI feature a melody doubled at the intervals of the third, fourth and their inversions, the sixth and the fifth. Variation II features a melodic motion consisting mostly of seconds, fourths, and fifths.

Variation III also displays a motion doubled by intervals, this time, of mostly major or minor thirds. Variations IV and V feature an array of intervals between the second and the ninth. In Variation V three related but different patterns appear. The first is distinguished by its motive B-flat, F-sharp, G-sharp (mm. 29 and 31), consisting of a diminished fourth and a second; the second pattern is distinguished by a fourth, ninth, and a diminished octave (m. 35); and the third, by its combination of a third, a fourth, and a second (m. 37). Variation V features arpeggiated patterns projecting bigger intervals, such as the

²⁹ Shmueli, The Israeli Song, p. 36. Shmueli calls the fourth a "dead" interval because of the tune's actual motion in seconds, and he points to the range of a third in the first phrase.

octave or the seventh juxtaposed with seconds, thirds, fourths, or fifths.

In spite of the variations' diverse intervallic content there is a definite characteristic sound resulting from the recurrence of the second and the fourth (or their derived inversions or alterations) in the context of the reiterated ostinato melody. See in Example 8b and the following quotations, instances of the above-discussed intervallic usages.

Example 10. Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, "Basso Ostinato," intervallic content of the variations' melodic motion and doubling.

(a) Variation II, mm. 12-16, melodic motion of seconds, fourths, and fifths.

The image displays musical notation for two systems of piano music. The first system, labeled '12', spans measures 12 to 16. It features a treble and bass staff with a piano accompaniment. Handwritten annotations above the staff indicate intervals: '4th' above measures 12-13 and '2nd' above measures 14-15. Below the staff, the markings 'p cantabile' and 'ritard' are present. The second system, labeled '16', spans measures 16 to 17 and includes a handwritten annotation '5th' above the staff.

- (b) Variation III, mm. 20-24, melodic motion doubled by major/minor thirds.

- (c) Variation IV, mm. 30-39, intervals ranging between the second and ninth, and the three main patterns.

- (d) Variation V, m. 42, arpeggiated patterns of bigger intervals, including the sixth or the diminished octave.

- (e) Variation VI, mm. 48-53, melody doubled by thirds and fourths.



The technique of variation is realized by free alteration and/or addition of pitches. When a variation consists of three major phrases (ABB'), a modified repetition occurs where additional notes are added (Variation I, mm. 5-8 and 9-12), the pitch content is modified (Variation VI, mm. 52-55 and 56-59), or both (Variation IV; for example, F/C, E-flat, and C/D, A-flat of measure 33, are repeated in modification and addition in measure 37).

However, motivic development remains, as in the first movement, a central feature. The ostinato's motive of an ascending or descending second in paired eighth notes is interpolated into the melodic motion in several ways. In Variation II, the motive occurs in the single-note voice as G, F-sharp, C-sharp, B (m. 14) or B-flat, A (m. 18); in Variation IV it is reiterated in the upper voice, D and C, D and C (m. 25). In Variations IV and VI it is modified by augmentation and occurs as a tritone and a simultaneous second C, D, A-

flat (m. 33), as altered sixths A-flat and C, A and C-sharp (m. 37); or as a tritone and a minor third, B-flat and E, F-flat and D-flat (mm. 52-53).

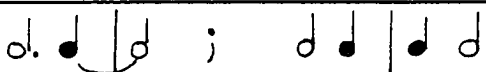
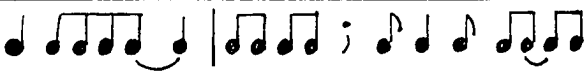

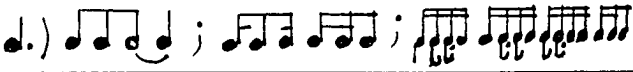

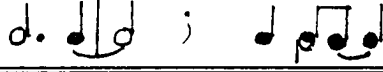
The harmony is similar to that of the first movement in its emphasis on the interval of the fourth. Implications of quartal harmony are present in the two-voice texture of Variations I and V or the three-voice texture of the outer variations. In Variation I, for instance, the upper voice is thickened by fourths. In Variation III where the upper voice is thickened by thirds, the quartal sound persists through intervals such as a fifth, D, A, and a fourth, D, G (m. 22), a fourth, F, B-flat (m. 23), a tritone, A, E-flat, an augmented fifth, F, C-sharp, a tritone, F, B, and a fifth, F, C (m. 24, Example 10b).

The moderately slow passacaglia ("Andante") features pulse-oriented rhythm (M.M. ♩ = 60). While relative simplicity characterizes the rhythmic patterns, their organization in changing meters (as earlier discussed and illustrated in Table 3) creates flexibility and a sense of asymmetry.

Each variation is characterized by one or more rhythmic motives whose free elaboration, limited within the variation, forms a continuous flow of different rhythmic patterns of which only the first (of Variation I) returns in modification in the last variation. The

following table shows the variations' typical rhythmic motives and patterns.

Table 4
The Variations' Rhythmic Motives and Patterns

Variation	Motives/Patterns
I	
II	
III	
IV	
V	
VI	

Two major characteristics are discerned: first, syncopation is a principal feature, characterizing unexceptionably the whole movement, and second, a rhythmic acceleration beginning with Variation II and lasting through Variation V. As can be seen in Variation IV, the syncopation is elaborated by ties and irregular prolongation of the sixteenth notes (mm. 35-

37, and 39-40). The consistently increasing activity (assisted also by dynamics, registral location, and contour), culminates in Variation V.

Textural variability is manifested through the fluctuation between two to three contrapuntal voices and their registral spacing. Similarly characteristic to the passacaglia is the fluctuation between close and wider spacing, with the exception only of Variation II, whose voices are consistently widely spaced.

The climax referred to in regard to the form is reached through a combination of a number of elements. As seen earlier, Variation V, formally, is the shortest and most modified in its proportions; it is rhythmically the most active; its voice spacing is the most fluctuant effecting its broad contoural lines; its forte dynamic is the loudest of the movement; and it features the highest registral location, pitch F4.

It is relevant and significant that this movement bears only minimal performance indications, "semplice" (m. 1), "e con espressione" (m. 3), "cantabile simile" (m. 13), and few dynamic indications, as the opening and closing "pp." It may be that the many melodic, rhythmic, and textural modifications, including the registral-timbral ones, make the addition of performance indications counterproductive, and would destroy the simplicity and peacefulness of the music.

Third Movement: "Rondo"

The final movement is a rondo in the character of a toccata with its largely "moto perpetuo" motion played "sempre martellato." Formally, the rondo principle of alternating sections is not incongruent with either the Italian or German Baroque toccata's organization. Johann Sebastian Bach's toccatas, in particular, alternate between free and contrapuntal styles, as between rhapsodic figurations and rhythmic precision,³⁰ including slow (adagio), or recitative-like sections.³¹ The toccata, somewhat neglected during the Classical and Romantic periods was revived by Debussy (1901) and continued by composers such as Balakirev, Prokofiev, Krenek, Holst, Poulenc, and Petrassi.³²

Tal's toccata, although not labelled as such, draws from the Baroque form by its alternation of contrasting materials and the inclusion of a slow

³⁰ Willi Apel, "Toccatas," Harvard Dictionary of Music, 1969 ed., p. 853.

³¹ John Caldwell, "Toccatas," The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 1980 ed. Vol. XIX, p. 19.

³² Arthur J. Ness, "Toccatas," The New Harvard Dictionary of Music, ed. Don Michael Randel, 1986 ed., p. 860.

cyclical digression by recalling materials from the sonata's first movement. In addition to the interest of an old form, it also features melodic material which implies a non-European derivation, an aspect setting it apart and linking it with the preceding folklore-incorporating movements.

It is of importance to note that the cyclical quality provided by the recalled first-movement material is a feature that also characterizes Tal's Symphony No. 1, previously mentioned. Referring to the coda of his first symphony Tal writes "reminiscences of the past are combined with the youthful rhythms [the dance rhythms]-and thus closes the circle.", reinforcing the observed stylistic similarities in his compositions of the fifties.³³

The standard five-part alternation scheme is expanded through variation and developmental procedures to eleven parts plus coda. The form can be represented by the following symbols: ABB' A'B"A' C ABB'A' coda, yet the materials involved are interrelated by their setting against each other in different combinations whose specific content cannot be described by the above symbols. Hence, these complex combinations are represented by the symbols shown in the following Table

³³ Josef Tal, in introduction to the symphony's score.

5. It shows the rondo's eleven-part plus coda sectional scheme, thematic materials, and their measure numbers.

Table 5

The Third Movement--Rondo's Formal Organization

Section	Symbols	Material	Measure numbers
1	A A	A trns a	1-3 4
2		B A'/B trns b	5-7 8
3		B' trns a'/B	9-11
4		A' A trns b'	12-14 15-21
5		B'' B'/trns a'	22-26
6		A' A' trns b'	27-30 31-32
7	B C	C	33-39
8	A A	A'' trns a''	40-42 43
9		B B/A trns b	44-47 47
10		B' trns a'/B	48-50
11		A' A trns b''	51-53 54-60
		coda A/trns a	61-63

The formal design consists of five statements of the rondo theme followed by the first or second transition; five statements of the digression theme simultaneously with the rondo theme or the first transition in variation or development, twice followed by the second transition; a middle section combining motives from the a and e materials of the first movement with motivic material derived from the second transition; and a coda developing simultaneously the rondo theme and the first transition. Following are quotations exemplifying the five materials in their first presentation.

Example 11. Josef Tal, *Sonata for Piano*, third movement. © 1950, IMI Israel Music Institute. Used by permission of the publisher.

(a) mm. 1-4, the rondo theme followed by the first transition.

rondo theme

The musical score consists of three systems of piano music. The first system is labeled 'rondo theme' and includes the instruction 'Vivace d. = 60' and 'sempre martellato'. The second system continues the rondo theme with the instruction 'non legato'. The third system is labeled 'First transition' and shows a change in melodic material.

- (b) mm. 4-8, the setting of the digression theme in variation, followed by the second transition.

digression theme

pp

sf dolce

second transition

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of four systems of staves. The first system is labeled 'digression theme' and includes the dynamic marking 'pp'. The second system is marked 'sf dolce'. The third system is marked 'sf'. The fourth system is labeled 'second transition'. The score is written in treble and bass clefs with various musical notations including notes, rests, and slurs.

(c) mm. 32-39, C section: first movement's Aa material set against the second transition derived motive.

The tonal design, based on two principal tonal centers, G, established by the rondo theme, and F, by the digression theme, includes, though of secondary importance, G-flat (or F-sharp) and B-flat, as well as D. These tonal centers are established by repetition that suggests an implied pedal point or by their location at the beginning of a statement or at cadential arrivals.

These materials are organized in bitonal settings in almost half of the movement (in the second, third, fifth, sixth, ninth, tenth, and the coda sections). The following table shows the tonal centers of the sections according to materials and measure numbers.

Table 6
The Rondo's Tonal Centers

Section	Measures	Material	Tonal Centers
1	1 4	A a	G F#/G♭
2	5 8	A'/B b	G/F F
3	9	a'/B	G/F
4	12 15-21	A b'	G F, B♭, G♭, F
5	22	B'/a'	F/B♭ G♭/B♭ G
6	27 31-32	A' b'	G G♭G/G♭
7	33-39	C	G D F
8	40 43	A'' a''	G F#/G♭
9	44 47	B/A b	F/B♭ F
10	48	a'/B	G/F
11	51 54-59	A b''	G F G♭
coda	61-63	A/a	(D♭)/G♭ G

As this table demonstrates, the tonal relations are determined by two intervals, the second and the fifth. Seen already in the first movement of this sonata, the interval of the second is structurally reemphasized in the rondo by tonal relations a major second apart, G, F, or a minor second apart, G, G-flat (F-sharp) or F, G-flat. The interval of the fifth occurs always as a perfect interval between F and B-flat or as in the coda, D-flat and G-flat.

Whereas the relation of G, F is presented as a central tonal idea stated simultaneously or successively by the first to fourth sections and restated by the eighth to eleventh sections, the minor-second relations occur with the first transition (m. 4 or its restatement, m. 42), and in the following developmental sections: in the fourth section (mm. 15-20), fifth section (mm. 22-23), sixth section (mm. 30-31), eleventh section (m. 58), and the coda (mm. 60-61). The coda continues to focus on the earlier established G-flat and ends the movement with a short concluding statement of G as the principal tonal center.

A basic motive, the interval of the second, characterizes the rondo theme and the two transitions, appearing in different melodic patterns of persistent motion of sixteenth notes. It is presented by the

rondo theme within the limited range of a minor pentachord with a lowered fifth, G, A, B-flat, C, D-flat. This tritone is the aforementioned non-European factor that relates to the quartal element of the first and second movements. However, in its step-wise motion it is similar to the former's Ahavah Rabah motive and the second movement's ostinato melody, which also feature step-wise motions.

The basic motive serves as a basis for the two transitions. As seen in Examples 11a and 11b, the first transition consists mostly of an alternation between a minor second, G-sharp, A, and an octave A, A, while the second transition consists of repeated and sequential descending/ascending seconds in a descending-static-ascending motion which is mostly scalar.

The digression theme features a contrasting melodic character through its non-repetitive motion and diverse intervallic content.

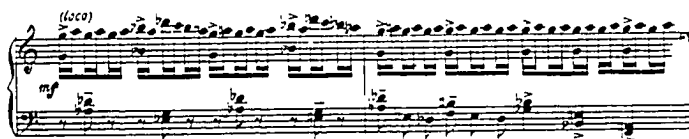
The continuous melodic activity that characterizes this rondo-toccata is founded primarily on principles of variation. Of the three main materials, the rondo theme and the second digression are given to relatively less development in their restatements, while the slow digression (designated C) features a motivic

elaboration that interrupts and slows down the previous momentum.

In its second restatement, the rondo theme is repeated by a slight modification of doubling the beginnings of its motives in an octave (mm. 27-28 and 32). The coda comprises repetitions of its first motive, G, A, doubled by an octave (m. 63). Both instances accentuate the interval of the second. See the following quotations which include also the transposition of the rondo theme in the coda to a pentachord starting on D-flat (a dominant of G-flat).

Example 12. Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, third movement.

(a) mm. 27-28, modified rondo theme.



(b) mm. 60-63, coda: a transposed on D-flat rondo theme.

The image shows a musical score for three staves, numbered 60, 61, and 63. The score is in a grand staff format (treble and bass clefs). Above the first staff, the text "Coda rondo theme" is written. The first staff (m. 60) begins with a forte (ff) dynamic marking. The second staff (m. 61) and third staff (m. 63) continue the melodic and harmonic development. The third staff includes some performance markings such as accents and dynamic changes.

Out of four statements, the digression theme features only a minor modification through a short extension of a descending scale pattern in its third recurrence (mm. 44-47) and a motivic development and extension through modified repetitions in its second recurrence (mm. 22-26). This motive of seconds is interrupted by an interpolation of the seventh F-sharp, E (m. 25), but continues with an elaboration on its mirror inversion transposed to E (m. 26).

Example 13. Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, third movement, mm. 21-25, motivic development in the second restatement of the digression theme.

The image displays three staves of musical notation. The top staff shows the 'digression theme' starting at measure 21, marked 'p' and 'non cresc.'. The middle staff, labeled with a circled '23', shows the first restatement of the theme, marked 'p'. The bottom staff, labeled with a circled '24', shows the second restatement, marked 'sf'. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, a key signature of one flat, and various rhythmic values and articulations.

In the first transition (mm. 9-11), the initial interval of an octave (m. 4) is augmented to a ninth, G, F-sharp, while pitch F is repeatedly altered to F-sharp. In Example 13 the intervallic modification takes another form. The predominant interval is the second (although the ninth, seventh, and fourth are included), but from measure 23 on, whole-tone scale patterns are featured. See in measure 23 B-flat, A-flat, G-flat, E, D, C, and in measure 24 E-flat, F, G, A, B, C-sharp.

A development through altered transpositions and alternation of patterns is apparent in the second transition (mm. 15-21). See in the following quoted segment (Example 14) the transposition of the descending pattern (m. 15) from F to A-flat (m. 16). This transition is characterized also by constant pitch alteration and an expansion of its range.

Example 14. Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, third movement, mm. 14-21, melodic development in the second transition.

The musical score for Example 14 consists of four systems of piano and melodic staves. The first system shows measures 14 and 15, with a bracket above the staff labeled "Second transition" starting at measure 15. Measure 15 contains a descending melodic pattern. The second system shows measures 16 and 17, where the descending pattern is transposed to a lower register (A-flat). The third system shows measures 18 and 19, with a circled measure number "20" above the staff. The fourth system shows measure 20, with the instruction "non cresc." below the staff.

As seen in Example 11c, the C section combines the first movement's a material with a melodic pattern derived from the second transition. In measures 37-49 the motive from material a is transposed or altered and followed by the transposed first movement e material.

Consistent with the harmonic language of the former movements, the rondo-tocatta features harmonic combinations of the fourth and the second. The rondo theme commences with a chord consisting of two fourths, perfect and augmented, A-flat, D-flat, G, and continues with the emphasis on the tritone, second and seventh (m. 2). These same intervals comprise the accompaniment seen in measure 1, A-flat, E-flat, or in measure 2, A-flat, E-flat, D-flat, G, F-sharp, B, C-sharp, F, G, A.

Similarly, the digression theme commences with a chord which includes two perfect fourths, F, B-flat, E-flat, G. A more specific projection is discerned in the two transitions, the first, reiterating the interval of a second, and the second, reiterating the interval of a fourth.

Rhythm is the main factor in creating the character of a toccata. The sixteenth notes are organized mostly according to a beat of a dotted quarter note (M.M. $\bullet = 69$), while the number of subdivisions per measure changes to include twelve,

nine, or six eighth notes. The metric organization is changed when a melodic development occurs, most often in the digression theme and the second transition. Moreover, in the second transition there is a change of beat, from a dotted quarter to a quarter. Specifically, measure 17 consists of two beats, a dotted quarter, and a quarter, measure 20 of a dotted quarter, quarter, quarter, and a dotted quarter, and measure 21 of a dotted quarter, a quarter, and a dotted quarter. A similar process occurs in the last occurrence of the second transition, measures 56-59. (See Example 14.)

Changes of beat and meter are also in the slow digression (Example 11c, mm. 33-39) where the first five measures are in a four quarter-note meter and the last two measures are in a two quarter- and four-half-note meter.

As a result of the continuous rhythmic motion, the development of rhythmic motives is limited to the accompanimental voices of the rondo theme, the two transitions, and to the development of the digression theme. In the accompaniment to the rondo theme, for instance, the second eighth note of the dotted-quarter beat is enunciated (m. 1), and motives begin on the sixth sixteenth note (F, F-sharp, G) or on the third eighth note of the same beat (G-sharp, D-flat, E, F-

sharp, m. 3). Similar enunciation is featured by the accompaniment to the first transition second dotted eighth (G-flat, m. 4), and the accompaniment to the second transition accented quarter notes A-flat, G-flat, F (m. 8).

A short pattern of syncopation is introduced by the coinciding accompaniment to the digression theme (Example 13, mm. 24-25), as well as by the end of the coda (Example 12b, m. 63), where the accompanying chords articulate, as at the beginning of the movement, the second eighth note of the dotted quarter.

Most of the movement, including the slow digression, is written in a contrapuntal texture of two to three voices. The rondo theme and the first transition occur in a texture of two voices except for their coincidence in the coda where a pedal point on G-flat adds a third voice; the digression theme's four statements alternate between a three- to two-voice texture; and the second transition maintains a three-voice texture throughout.



A brief instance of modified imitation enhances the contrapuntal quality of the toccata with the returning ternary A' section, measures 40-41. The rondo theme's second motive is imitated by the lower voice.

Example 15. Josef Tal, Sonata for Piano, third movement, mm. 40-43, modified imitation in the returning rondo theme.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system is labeled 'Tempo I (Vivace)' and begins at measure 40. It features a complex, rhythmic melody in the right hand with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and a more active bass line. The second system begins at measure 42 and continues the same style of music. Dynamic markings such as 'f' and 'ffz' are visible throughout the score.

The dynamics assist in defining the sections, as sections or a group of sections are differentiated by their volume. Whereas the B section of the ternary form is characterized mostly by pianissimo interrupted by sudden forte, "sFFz," and fortissimo, the following A' section proceeds along forte and fortissimo. The application of dynamics in the A section is characterized by abrupt contrasts between and within the sections with only two instances of crescendo. Table 7 illustrates the detailed dynamics of the movement.

Table 7
The Third Movement's Dynamics

Section		Material	Dynamics
1	A	A+a	F
2		A'/B+b	pp-mF
3		a'/B	p
4		A+b'	F 
5		B'/a'	mF-p
6		A'+b'	mF-p-cresc.-FF
7	B	C	pp (F) pp FF pp
8	A	A''+a	F
9		B/A+b	
10		a'/B	
11		A+b''	F  cresc.
coda		A/a	FF

The rondo-toccata movement is marked by its variation techniques while its dramatic quality results from rhythmic propulsion and abrupt and extreme changes in the registral location. This movement, in particular, is a reflection of Tal's performing abilities on the piano, in that it is idiomatic and technically virtuosic as written.

The sonata is a demanding work. Aesthetically, it presents a combination of post-Romantic dramatic expression with Eastern features in a Western virtuosic style. Older forms are shaped in an arch design and

all three movements are developed by variation techniques, sharing the same quartal language, and the inclination toward local sources. Of the three, the last movement best exemplifies his integration of folklore melodic material.

Although the sonata uses a conservative approach in material and development, its motivic work, the broad melodic gestures, and the intense dramatic quality, are characteristic of Tal's later, advanced works.

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