

TRADITIONAL TAKTAKISHVILI:  
REDISCOVERING THE *SONATA FOR FLUTE AND PIANO*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                         | Page |
|-------------------------|------|
| LIST OF FIGURES .....   | ii   |
| ABSTRACT.....           | iv   |
| CHAPTER                 |      |
| I. Introduction .....   | 1    |
| II. Movement One.....   | 6    |
| III. Movement Two.....  | 16   |
| IV. Movement Three..... | 26   |
| CONCLUSION.....         | 34   |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY.....       | 37   |

## LIST OF FIGURES

|                   | Page |
|-------------------|------|
| Figure 2.1 .....  | 6    |
| Figure 2.2 .....  | 6    |
| Figure 2.3 .....  | 7    |
| Figure 2.4a ..... | 8    |
| Figure 2.4b ..... | 9    |
| Figure 2.5 .....  | 10   |
| Figure 2.6 .....  | 11   |
| Figure 2.7 .....  | 11   |
| Figure 2.8 .....  | 12   |
| Figure 2.9a ..... | 13   |
| Figure 2.9b ..... | 13   |
| Figure 3.1a ..... | 16   |
| Figure 3.1b ..... | 16   |
| Figure 3.2 .....  | 17   |
| Figure 3.3 .....  | 18   |
| Figure 3.4 .....  | 19   |
| Figure 3.5 .....  | 20   |
| Figure 3.6 .....  | 21   |
| Figure 3.7 .....  | 22   |
| Figure 3.8 .....  | 23   |
| Figure 4.1a ..... | 25   |
| Figure 4.2b ..... | 25   |
| Figure 4.2a ..... | 26   |
| Figure 4.2b ..... | 26   |
| Figure 4.3 .....  | 27   |
| Figure 4.4 .....  | 28   |

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Figure 4.5 ..... | 29 |
| Figure 4.6 ..... | 31 |

## Abstract

Otar Taktakishvili (1924-1989) was a Georgian composer who worked behind the Iron Curtain. His socialist-realist compositions and political distinctions have earned him a place of renown in Georgia's musical history. Taktakishvili's work is not well known outside of Georgia except for the *Sonata for Flute and Piano*, frequently performed by American flutists. Despite the fact that the piece has been performed countless times, there is little literature that dissects it and seeks to understand the sonata. While there are papers, articles, and sections of books that delve into biographical information about Taktakishvili and his overall compositional style, there is even less literature about the analysis of the *Sonata for Flute and Piano*.

I have combined the existing biographical research and information about Taktakishvili's compositional style with an in-depth analysis of the entire sonata to illustrate the relationship between the aforementioned literature. My research serves as a starting point into Taktakishvili's compositional style and helps demonstrate that he conforms to the traits of Socialist-Realism. I have accomplished this through extensive analysis of the harmonic idioms and organizational forms of the *Sonata for Flute and Piano* as well as compared the formal models utilized in traditional forms common to the Classical period. I also give appropriate historical context to place this piece within Taktakishvili's compositional output and to demonstrate the external factors that influenced the composition of the sonata.

## Chapter One: Introduction

The name Otar Taktakishvili may be familiar to flute players in the United States, but to other musicians and researchers he is less well known. There is very little published information about the composer; what is available may be culled from performance guides, portions of books, journal and magazine entries, and a report from a master's recital: John Barcellona's "Performing Taktakishvili's Sonata for Flute and Piano: A Guide for Interpreting a Modern Russian Work" in *Flute Talk* magazine; Stanley Krebs' book *Soviet Composers and the Development of Soviet Music*; Evgeny Machavariani and Gulbart Toradze's entry about Taktakisvili available from *Grove Music Online*; and Shana Ryan's report from her master's flute recital at Kansas State University.

Otar Taktakishvili was born on July 27, 1924, in Tsibili, Georgia. He studied composition with pianist and composer Sergey Barkhudarian at the Tsibili Conservatory where, in 1947, he earned his undergraduate degree. After graduation, Taktakishvili remained at the conservatory as a postgraduate teacher in the fields of choral literature, counterpoint, orchestration, and in 1952, year in which he took on the role of rector, he was also named artistic director of the State Coral Kapella of Georgia. Five years later he became the Secretary and Board Member of the USSR Composers' Union, a title he kept until his death in 1989. Among his other political appointments were his role as Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of USSR, Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of Georgia, Member of Presidium of the International Music Council of UNESCO, Chairman of the Georgian Composers' Union (1962), and Minister of the Culture of Georgia (1965 to 1989).

Taktakishvili was honored for his compositions as the three-time laureate of USSR State Prizes and the winner of the 1982 Lenin Prize.

Taktakishvili's compositional output is divided into two periods. In his first compositional period, he wrote a great deal in instrumental pieces; those works are hailed as “display[ing] a consistency of intention and thematic working.”<sup>1</sup> Early period characteristics include pieces described as technical, with creative inclusions of folk material. As he entered the second phase of his compositional career, Taktakishvili turned to vocal genres, influenced by his work as a choral director. During this period Taktakishvili was also concerned with portraying concrete musical images, which he accomplished in his symphonic poem *Mtsiri* in 1956, and his opera *Mindia* in 1960. These works drew on folk materials from Georgia, as well as on texts by Georgian poets.

Taktakishvili is known for his preservation of aspects of Georgian culture in his works. He stated that “the most important tradition is...the Georgian folk song” followed only by Georgian literature.<sup>2</sup> The influence of folk music was not the only source of inspiration for Taktakishvili, made clear in his comment: “Russian school [was]...very close to [him]” as well as “the German symphonies....”<sup>3</sup> Taktakishvili revered composers in the first Viennese school, as well as Carl Maria von Weber and Richard Wagner. He was skeptical about some of his contemporaries, Taktakishvili did appreciate the work of Carl Orff, Hans Eisler, Kurt Wiell, Paul Dessau, and Hans Werner Henze. Clearly, Taktakishvili had some exposure to music outside of the USSR.

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<sup>1</sup> Evgeny Machavariani and Gulbat Toradze, “Taktakishvili, Otar,” *Grove Music Online*, 2015, accessed on 30 November 2015, available from [http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.libproxy.txstate.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/27406?q=taktakishvili&search=quick&pos=2&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.libproxy.txstate.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/27406?q=taktakishvili&search=quick&pos=2&_start=1#firsthit). Retrieved on 30 November 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Hannelore Gerlach, *Fünzig sowjetische Komponisten der Gegenwart: Fakten und Reflexionen* (Leipzig, 1984), 477

<sup>3</sup> Gerlach, 477



Although the evidence of Classicism is evident, Taktakishvili's relationship with modernism is also quite clear. He describes his second piano concerto, composed five years after the *Sonata for Flute and Piano*, as having "many more conflicts and [being] more modern...."<sup>4</sup> He referred to it as generally more dissonant and dense than his earlier pieces.

In the *Sonata for Flute and Piano* the tertian harmonies, predictable progressions, and classical forms make it appear Neoclassical. However, I argue for a broader stylistic consideration, one that contemplates his style as Socialist-Realist. Socialist-Realism is marked by the banning of "experimental idiom, whether 'vanguardist' or 'proletarian'," and the introduction of a "body of classics...extolled for each of the arts...to serve as models."<sup>5</sup> This may stem from the restricted curriculum available to Soviet students in the conservatories. Students were "aware of [modern] Western techniques, but remained relatively isolated."<sup>6</sup> Taktakishvili, for example, knew of other popular compositional trends, but he was critical of them. In a journal article in *The Modern Composer and His World*, Taktakishvili chastises serialism for its inability to touch the human soul.

"When you discuss serialism at great length, you are inclined to overlook the true vocation of music, its task of influencing and acting on human sentiments, human emotions, and the human soul. And in the last analysis the listeners do not experience these great

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<sup>4</sup> Gerlach, 477

<sup>5</sup> Jonathan Walker, "Socialist Realism," *Grove Music Online*, 2016, accessed on 10 March 2016, available from [http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e6274?q=socialist+realism&search=quick&pos=2&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e6274?q=socialist+realism&search=quick&pos=2&_start=1#firsthit)

<sup>6</sup> Amanda Cook, "Otar Taktakishvili's Flute Sonata," *Between the Ledger Lines: A Blog for the Modern Flutist*, *Wordpress.com*, May 30, 2013, accessed April 27, 2016, available from <https://betweentheledgerlines.wordpress.com/2013/05/30/otar-taktakishvili-flute-sonata/>

human sensations and emotions in the listening of productions of serial music.”<sup>7</sup>

This disdain for the complexities of Western modern music is a shared trait among composers who adhered to Socialist-Realism. This composer demanded that music be clearly understood, and able to be enjoyed by the ordinary man, not music written solely for the enjoyment of the upper echelon of society. Many of these pieces included folk tunes or melodies that might appeal to a wide variety of people from other countries and cities. Taktakishvili was one of many Soviet composers who included folk tunes in their works. He wrote an entire song cycle based on Georgian folk songs.

The similarities in the timbre of the voice and the timbre of the flute could have motivated Taktakishvili to composing the *Sonata for Flute and Piano*. While the work does contain melodies that are folk-like, it is unclear whether the themes were drawn from actual folk songs, or if they are quasi-folk songs that include the usual folk music markers. The themes may be difficult to identify because Taktakishvili and his contemporaries borrowed a fusion of folk tunes from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Chechnya, and Georgia. This was referred to as Caucasus music. Taktakishvili alludes to folk like styles in his use of metric shifts and rhythmic devices like ostinato passages and hemiola. And, much of his harmony is modally inflected, the basis of folk music in this region. For example, in the B section of the second movement he writes an octatonic passage and in the development of the third movement he draws on an Aeolian mode.

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<sup>7</sup> Louis Applebaum, “Serialism,” In *The Modern Composer and His World*, edited by John Beckwith and Udo Kasemets, 49–76, University of Toronto Press, 1961, accessed April 27, 2016, available from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/j.ctt15jjfcx.8>.

The *Sonata for Flute and Piano* is only a small representation of Taktakishvili as a composer. The piece does unlock the compositional language used by the composer and helps the reader, and audience, see what it was that socialist-realist composers stood for: music written for consumption by an audience from all backgrounds. The *Sonata for Flute and Piano* clearly accomplishes this goal as demonstrated by its resounding appeal to flutists fifty years after its publication.

## Chapter Two: Movement One

The form of the first movement is Sonata-Allegro form, an expansion of rounded Binary form favored by composers in the early Classical periods. The development of Sonata-Allegro form was in part informed by the devices in oratorical debates in the eighteenth century, manifest in the introduction, conflict, and resolution of thematic material within the two-part form. Taktakishvili adheres to the classical structure but modifies it, as in for example, the exposition, where the primary theme area has nested within it a ternary form. In the recapitulation he states the secondary theme before the primary theme. Such procedures were used by many composers long before Taktakishvili, who was clearly aware of those precedents, and still able to create a work that is unique. James Hepakowski uses the term “recapitulatory reordering” to describe the placement of each component of the exposition in different orders in the recapitulation.<sup>8</sup>

The first movement begins with a piano introduction centered on the dominant pitch of C major. The pitch G is repeated for two measures and embellished by tone clusters composed of the two neighboring pitches a half step away from G in opposite directions, namely A-flat and F-sharp. The harmonic motion pauses slightly in m. 3 on beat 2 when the tone cluster sounds for a full beat, tying into m. 4, and then begins to chromatically descend to tonic. In m. 5, the piano plays a rolling, eighth-note pattern based on a C major pentatonic scale, while the bass sustains a pedal C in the left hand of the piano (see Figure 2.1).

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<sup>8</sup> James Hepakowski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford, 2006), 233-235



**Figure 2.1: The opening ornamented dominant pitch and pentatonic scale.**

The flute enters with the primary theme, a light, lyrical melody in m. 7 on a high G, while the piano continues the pentatonic pattern beneath. In m. 8, the flute melody continues its statement and the harmonic motion accelerates, marked by an alteration in the rolling pentatonic scale to imply an F major chord. The left hand of the piano plays a quarter-note G2 in m. 9, lining up with several notes of the pentatonic scale along with one color note to create an E minor chord in first inversion. This leads to an implied G dominant seventh chord on the following beat with a resolution in m. 10 to a root position, tertian C major chord on the downbeat which aligns with a half-note C in the flute melody. These clear rhythmic and harmonic landmarks guide the listener to the end of the phrase with the first real, perfect-authentic cadence at m. 10 on beat 1 (see Figure 2.2). The flute melody is repeated with slight modifications in mm.11-14, and the C major pentatonic scale in the piano accompanies the flute with modifications to the harmony borrowed from the parallel minor mode.



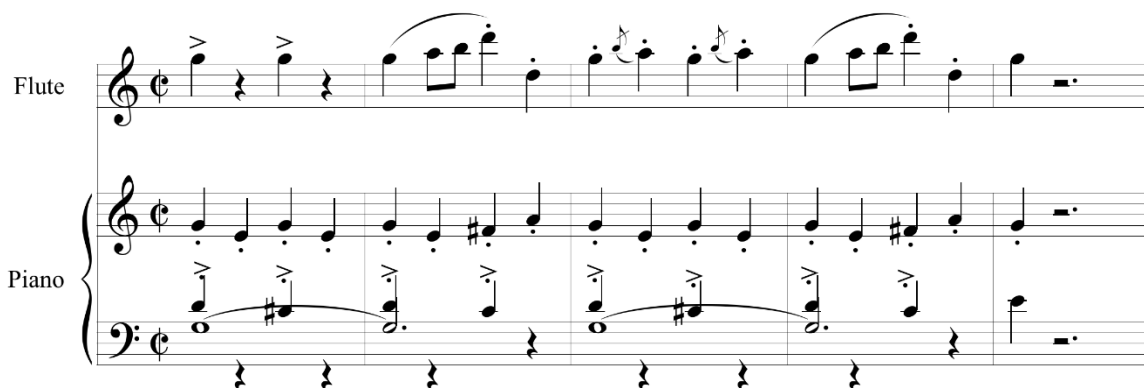
**Figure 2.2: Primary theme in flute and implied chords in the piano.**

The consequent phrase of the primary theme is initiated by a flowing eighth-note figure in the flute, which drives into m. 17 assisted by a rising eighth note line in the right hand of the piano. The piano accompaniment changes to a G major pentatonic scale pattern that suggests a modulation to the dominant, which is reflected in the melody as well (See Figure 2.3). The flute melody retains its fluid character, but in m. 25 it becomes a rapidly-moving figure of repeated eighths. The accompaniment in m. 25 shifts to a downbeat on beat 1 followed by the upbeat of 2, which propels the melody forward throughout this four-measure passage. A two-measure voice exchange initiated by dissonant eighth-note leaps in the flute, followed by eighth-notes in the piano in m. 29, grabs the listeners' attention. A sudden A-flat seventh chord leads into the Neapolitan chord in the key of C major as a running scalar passage in the flute cascades over the piano in m. 31, as the flute continues alone for the next three-and-a-half measures. The piano rejoins the flute on the anacrusis of m. 35 to reinforce the hammer blows which signals the tonic through the use of repeated dominant pitches. The lyrical, flowing flute melody from the beginning of the movement returns briefly in mm. 37-44, accompanied by the familiar, cascading C pentatonic scale in the piano.

The image shows a musical score for Flute and Piano. The Flute part is written on a single staff with a treble clef. It begins with a rising eighth-note figure in measures 44-45, followed by a staccato quarter-note pattern in measures 46-47. The Piano part is written on two staves (treble and bass clefs). It begins with a rising eighth-note figure in measures 44-45, followed by a staccato quarter-note pattern in measures 46-47. Chord symbols V, I, I, and iv are indicated below the piano staff.

**Figure 2.3: The beginning of the consequent phrase of the primary theme.**

After the conclusion of the primary theme in m. 44, the piano introduces the secondary theme area with a rising eighth-note figure in the right hand that coincides on beat 2 with pitches D, A, and C in the left hand to outline a D dominant-seventh chord. The sounding of a G major chord on the downbeat of m. 45 marks the arrival of the secondary theme area and the introduction of a new, march-like theme in the flute, characterized by staccato quarters in the flute and piano for the first half of the phrase followed by an ascending, scalar figure and a flourish in the flute. The theme is repeated in mm. 53-60 and then succeeded by a triplet run in mm. 61-62 with rhythmic punctuations in the piano (see Figure 2.4a). Another voice exchange occurs in m. 63 initiated by triplets in the flute on the downbeat which are mirrored by triplets in the right hand piano and solidified by syncopated quarters in the left. The chords in the left hand direct the listener's ear towards the C major chord at the end of this four-measure phrase which functions as a predominant-function chord in the key of G major (see Figure 2.4b). The cascading passage, enlivened by the voice exchange, is repeated in mm. 65-68, but leads toward a D major chord on the downbeat of m. 68 which clearly acts as the dominant of G major.



**Figure 2.4a: The opening of the secondary theme.**



**Figure 2.4b: The first cascading triplet and voice exchange passage.**

The closing theme begins in m. 69; it is characterized by an obscurity between triplet subdivisions mixed with an implied eighth-note subdivision between the dotted quarter note and eighth at the end of mm. 69 and 72 (See Figure 2.5). Taktakishvili extends this idea by adding extensive triplet figuration after the opening motive in mm. 73-76 in E-flat major which is a lower, chromatic mediant to G major. The pattern changes in mm. 77-80 to an ascending, scalar pattern with heavy accents that leads to an eighth-note ostinato over the Neapolitan chord in G major. Measures 81-85 are the final statement of the closing theme, beginning with syncopated rhythmic patterns in the flute and piano in rhythmic unison and in octaves concluded by an eighth-note based, three-beat hemiola in both voices. The closing theme cadences in m. 85 on a G major chord



which conforms to a conventional sonata-form procedure where the exposition moves from the major tonic and cadences in the dominant.



**Figure 2.5: The opening of the closing theme.**

The development (m. 86) begins with a four-measure piano interlude similar to the beginning of the piece. In m. 90 the flute melody recalls the primary theme, but transposed to G minor. After four measures, Taktakishvili exploits the second half of the primary theme with sighing eighth notes that propel the G minor section forward (mm. 95-103) into D major. In m. 104 the first primary theme returns in the flute, and cadences in D major before the piano moves to D minor (mm. 109-111). The shift allows for a smoother modulation to B-flat major in m. 111, when the piano recalls the antecedent of the first secondary theme. The flute enters with the consequent of the secondary theme in m. 115. This four-measure dialogue paradigm is repeated in mm. 119-125, and the flute ends the secondary theme by adopting transitional material based on figuration of the B-flat major scale in m. 126. The figuration also initiates a move from B-flat major to E-flat major and the flute melody arrives in the new key in m. 129. The piano reenters with the first secondary theme in mm. 131-138 in E-flat major as the flute floats above with the ostinato figure from the end of the closing theme.



**Figure 2.6: The primary theme in C major (flute 1) and the primary theme in G minor (flute 2).**

As the piano concludes its melody in m. 138, the flute plays an ascending, scalar figure that leads into a new theme and key in m. 140. This lyrical flute melody (in B major) extends from mm. 140-149 as the piano supports the line with a continuous eighth-note pattern (see Figure 2.7). In mm. 150-154 the flute repeats the new theme an octave higher than its original statement and begins a transition to A-flat major in m. 155. The flute and piano arrive in A-flat major with the melody in the right hand piano (mm. 156-159), with a two-measure ascending pattern in the flute (mm. 160-161), that leads to a repetition of the new theme in the flute at m. 162 in A major.



**Figure 2.7: The new theme and key exclusive to the development.**

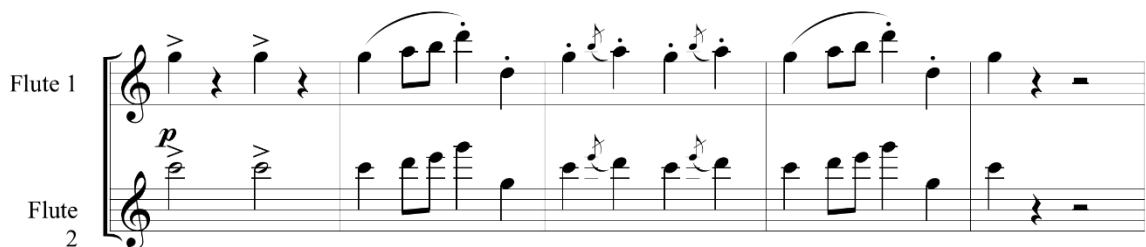
The re-transition begins in m. 176, marked by a return of the latter half of the primary theme transposed to B minor. The eighth-note flute melody leads to a D major

chord at the end of m. 185, which acts as the dominant of G major, in which the piano arrives (m. 186) and reintroduces melodic material from the interlude between the exposition and development, while also assuming the role of a second transitional idea. The harmonic rhythm accelerates, with a fragmented melodic idea distanced by one measure between flute punctuations from mm. 194-197, which leads to the final closing idea in mm. 198-205 in G flat major before using the Neapolitan of C major to modulate back to the opening key before the recapitulation (see Figure 2.8).

**Figure 2.8: The closing theme of the development.**

The recapitulation (m. 206) starts with a piano introduction. The flute begins in m. 210, here with the secondary theme in C major, instead of the perhaps expected primary theme that typically reinforces the return of the tonic key (see Figure 2.9a). The secondary theme area continues from mm. 210-243 with a six measure extension that

allows for the flute's hammer blows, as the piano plays the triplet-against-duple closing theme from the secondary theme area beneath the flute (mm. 244-249). Taktakishvili finally fulfills syntactical expectation with the return of the primary theme in mm. 250-258, but re-harmonizes in the piano with block chords instead of the rolling, pentatonic scale patterns from the exposition. This re-harmonization signals the end of the piece, whose slow harmonic motion and the restful quality of the piano chords finally match the lyrical, flowing quality of the primary theme (see Figure 2.9b). From mm. 259-268, the flute soars above piano and plays forty-one C7s, obviously to reinforce the return to the tonic key of C. Two measures after the initiation of the altissimo notes the piano enters with the secondary theme in the tonic key in mm. 261-268. The first two measures of the piano's melodic statement restate the full antecedent phrase of the secondary theme, while the remaining four statements include only the second measure of the antecedent phrase. The piano's final six measures are marked by block C major-seventh chords that are filled out by the flute on the fourth beat of the first two measures. The third and fourth measures of the phrase are dominated by a chordal piano texture succeeded by a unison sixteenth-note flourish in both the flute and piano, octave Gs on the second beat of the penultimate measure, and finally octave Cs in the final measure.



**Figure 2.9a: The secondary theme in the dominant from the exposition (flute 1) and in the tonic in the recapitulation (flute 2).**

The image displays a musical score for a Flute and Piano. The Flute part is written on a single staff in treble clef, starting with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It begins with a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, and concludes with a whole note. The Piano part is written on two staves (treble and bass clefs) and begins at measure 29. The right hand plays a series of chords and single notes, while the left hand plays a sustained bass line. The score includes a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and a fermata over the final measure of the piano part.

**Figure 2.9b: The final statement of the primary theme.**

Throughout this movement, Taktakishvili toys with the listeners' expectations as he anticipates thematic material, or he alters the order in which the themes are recalled. He efficiently embeds smaller forms within the larger Sonata-Allegro form, as in the ternary profile in the exposition, and the palindrome in the development, which simultaneously balances and deceives.

### Chapter Three: Movement Two

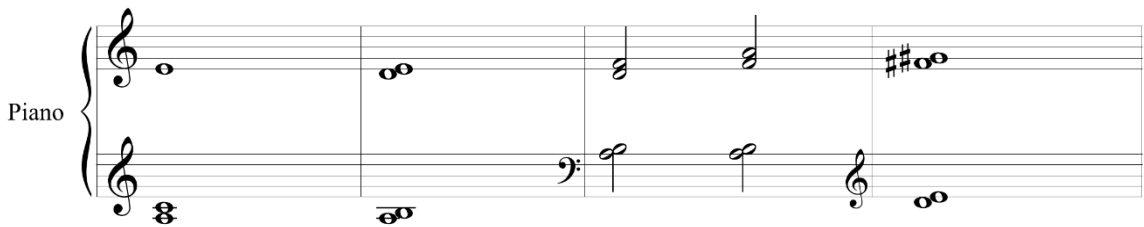
The second movement, “Aria”, is the only movement in the *Sonata for Flute and Piano* with a subtitle. Arias are usually solo, vocal pieces for a leading role character with orchestral accompaniment in an opera. This title is significant due to Taktakishvili’s interest in writing choral music and his time spent as a choral director in his career. The subtitle “Aria” hints at the influence opera music had on instrumental music; the trend of including a lyrical second movement that models an aria has been used since the Baroque period, which is when opera first came into existence. The structure of this movement adheres to a traditional, compositional style by using a simple ternary form with slight modifications. The ternary structure references “aria da capo” form utilized in Baroque operas and reinforces Taktakishvili’s subtitle. Composers would write a ternary structure for leading-role characters to sing in their arias; instead of a literal repetition of the A section, the singers would ornament the existing melody when instructed to return to the beginning of the piece. The ternary structure of the piece mirrors the “da capo aria” structure of Baroque opera arias reinforcing the subtitle that Taktakishvili gave this movement and proving that opera played a large role in the development of instrumental music. The harmony is occasionally extended with added ninth and suspended fourth scale degrees included in the chords. The flute theme is lyrical and moves conjunctively with occasional embellishments, as in an operatic aria, while the piano plays more of a passive, subservient role in this movement as opposed to the first movement.

The A section begins in A minor. After repeated chords in the piano in m. 1, the flute enters with an expressive, lyrical melody with songlike qualities (see Figure 3.1a). In m. 3, the C in the piano’s A minor chord moves down to a B, and a D is added below

the fifth of the previous chord, creating a momentary dissonance in m. 3, which is resolved when the fifth moves up to an F in m. 4. This creates a B half diminished seventh chord, a diatonic chord in the key of A minor. On the third beat of m. 4, the top voice in the piano plays in unison with the flute, while the middle voice plays a third below the piano, and both parts descend together in stepwise motion to m. 5. The left hand piano lines move in contrary motion on beat four in m. 4 into m. 5, and all parts resolve to an octave E on the downbeat. They then move together in stepwise motion through m. 5 and, on beat 4, the flute and the piano align on an E major seven chord with an added second. This altered dominant seven chord acts as a half-cadence, marking the end of the first half of the phrase (see Figure 3.1b).



**Figure 3.1a: The flute's opening melody.**



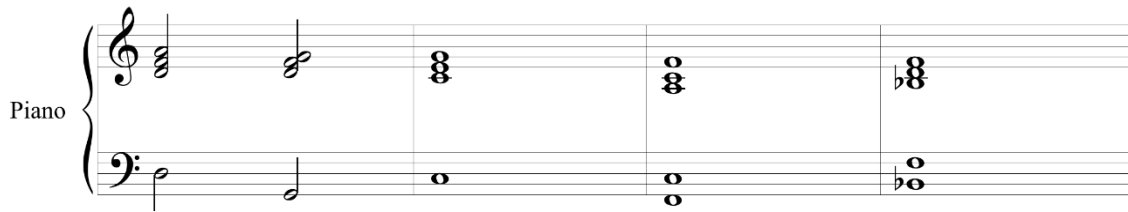
**Figure 3.1b: The underlying harmony of mm. 2-5.**

In m. 6 the consequent of the first phrase begins with the sounding of an A minor seventh chord. The tonal center (m. 7) is predominated by D major, but in m. 8, the piano harmony becomes more chromatic as it plays a D-sharp diminished chord on the downbeat, followed by a G-sharp diminished chord on beat three, and, finally, a D major-seventh chord on beat four. This is resolved in m. 9 with an E dominant seventh chord

with an added ninth. The analysis of mm. 6-9 shows a tonic i chord moving to a predominant IV chord, progressing to a  $V^7/V$  chord that leads into a dominant chord. This progression is conventional and very much part of the harmonic landscapes in music of the eighteenth century. Taktakishvili's usage of classically oriented, harmonic progressions demonstrates again his knowledge of classical style.

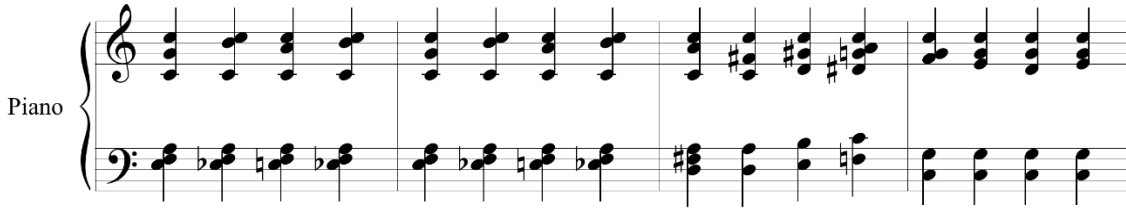
In m. 10, the piano plays a D minor chord with suspended ninth, which is a regression from the prior E dominant seventh chord with an added ninth in the previous measure because the dominant function in m. 9 resolves to a subdominant function in m. 10. The D minor suspended ninth resolves to D minor on beat 3 in m. 10 and continues through m. 11 until the harmony changes to a G dominant seventh chord with a suspended fourth on beat 3. The suspended fourth does not resolve until the upbeat of beat 4 in m. 11, and the G dominant seventh chord then resolves to a C major seventh chord in m. 12, which alternates between an included ninth chord tone and a major seventh chord. This movement, by fifth in mm. 11 and 12, initiates a harmonic sequential pattern that continues through the next four measures (see Figure 3.3). In m. 12, the C major ninth chord resolves to a C dominant ninth chord, which then moves down to an F major chord in m. 13 that hovers between an F suspended fourth and an F major chord. The chords in m. 13 move up by fifth to a B flat major chord, which vacillates between a B flat major suspended ninth and a B flat major chord, and continues throughout mm. 14 and 15. This passage shows the influence of twentieth century compositional devices on Taktakishvili's compositional style, specifically in the use of extended tertian harmony.





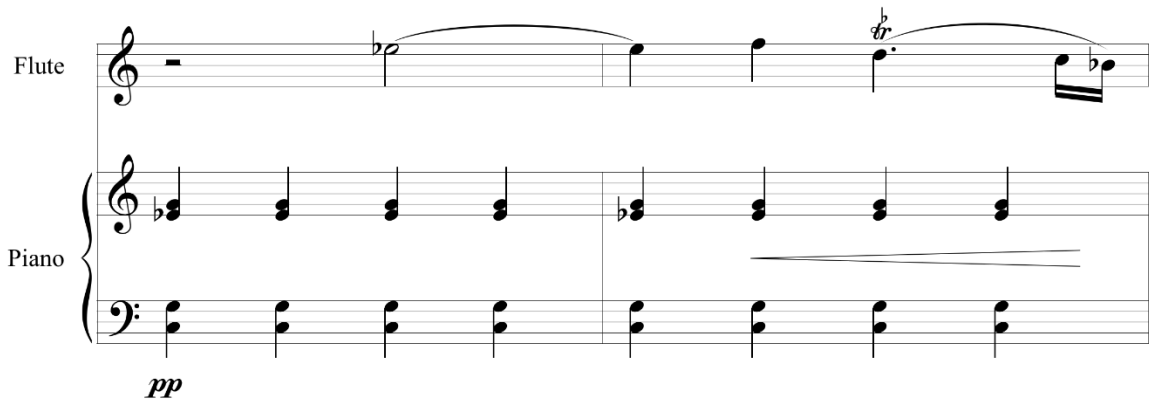
**Figure 3.2: The sequence based on motion by fifth in mm. 11-14.**

The harmony is unchanged in mm. 14-16. However, in m. 16, the third of the chord is in the left hand which is traditionally viewed as a weaker function of the chord. Taktakishvili inverts the chord to allow for a smoother, more melodic transition from a B-flat major chord to a misspelled D half-diminished seventh chord in first inversion in m. 17. The half diminished chord remains until beat four when it resolves to an A dominant seventh chord, acting as a third inversion, secondary dominant-seventh chord to D minor in m. 18, which marks the beginning of a four measure harmonic repetition of mm. 10-13, whose melody is altered until the last two measures of the phrase. A new, two-measure melodic sequence begins in mm. 18-21, followed by a new two measure melodic sequence, similar to the one in mm. 10-13. This sequence is harmonized by F major chords on beats one and three and F major chords with secundal tone clusters on beats two and four, which contributes to the harmonic tension that is finally resolved in m. 24 by the D dominant seventh chord. After that, an E dominant seventh chord appears on beat three, moving to an F dominant seventh added ninth on beat four, moving down a fifth to C major chord in m. 25, which completes the phrase. Passing tones embellish the C major chords and finally come to rest on the last beat of the measure (see Figure 3.4).



**Figure 3.3: The harmonically dissonant, final four measures of the opening A section.**

The B section begins in m. 26, here with a modified version of the theme from m. 2, harmonized by C minor chords in mm. 26-27; ninth chords are added in mm. 28 through 29 (see Figure 3.5). In mm. 30 and 31, the harmony shifts to A-flat major in first inversion, which is the flat-major sixth chord in C minor. In m. 32, there is a move to a D dominant-seventh chord in third inversion that returns to its root position on beat 4. This acts as the secondary dominant of G major, sounding in m. 33, the dominant of C minor that began the eight measure phrase.



**Figure 3.4: The transposed and altered version of the flute's initial theme.**

This theme is transposed to G minor in m. 34 with more extensive alterations than before, though still identifiable because of the interval patterns. The piano harmonies replicate those in mm. 26-33, but in G minor. Taktakishvili stays in G minor until m. 36 when there are added ninth chords and then moves to E-flat major chords in first

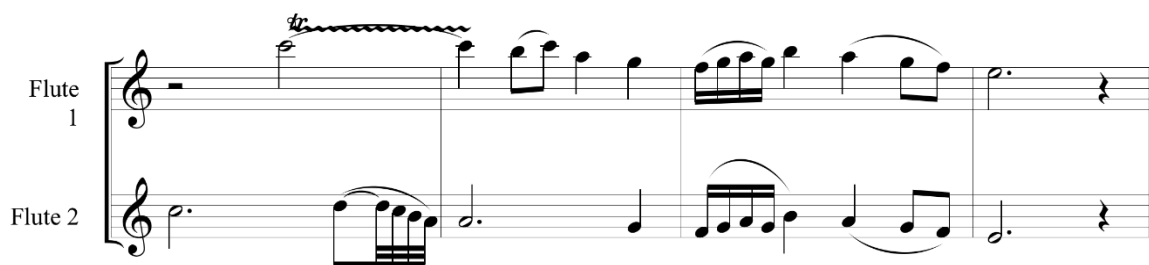
inversion in m. 38. In m. 39, the G in the bass voice in the piano, the third of E-flat major chord, is joined by the tenor voice on E-flat on beat one until it steps up to an E natural on beat three in anticipation of the fifth of the A major chord in the next measure. In m. 40, the harmony shifts to an A dominant seventh chord, the secondary dominant of D in m. 41. This prepares for the resolution to the original key of the eight-measure phrase in mm. 34-41, G minor.

At letter B, in m. 42, Taktakishvili introduces a new theme based on a C-sharp octatonic scale. The piano harmonizes with alternating perfect fifths and tri-tones in the bass, and resounding minor seconds in the right hand brings an anxious mood to these measures. The alternating half and whole steps of the octatonic scale generate additional tension in the flute's melodic line, and the emphasis on C-sharp, A-sharp, and G natural also contributes to the harmonic tension. In m. 50, C-sharp minor returns, which signals the retransition to the A section. The piano drops out in m. 51 and part of m. 52, while the flute plays its own melody in C-sharp minor. In m. 52, the flute melody stills on G-sharp, and two beats later, the piano plays a G-sharp minor chord in second inversion. In m. 53, the harmony in the piano changes on every beat beneath the flute's drone, sounding an A minor chord first, followed by a misspelled B-flat minor chord, then a G augmented chord, followed by an E major with a substituted six chord on beat four (see Figure 3.6). The sounding of the E major with a substituted six chord acts as the dominant of A minor which ushers in the return of the A section and the movement's home key.



**Figure 3.5: The return of tertian chords following the octatonic passage in the B section.**

The return of the A section (m. 54) begins almost exactly like the original A section, except the harmony has been transposed up an octave. The flute part starts differently with a trill on a C above the staff that reinforces the tonic, A minor, in its emphasis on the minor third. Subsequent melodic variations are clear in m. 55 but other times (as in m. 56) the thematic material is unaltered (see Figure 3.7). The harmony is, of course, modified because the point of the return to the A section is stasis, not tension. For example, the piano's harmony in m. 56 is different from in the A section. Here there are three F major chords instead of B half diminished chords. The eighth notes on beat four ascend together rather than converge inwards by contrary motion toward beat one of the next measure with none of the pitches in unison with the flute melody. Measures 57-62 are basically unaltered repetitions of their counterparts in the A section reinforcing the idea that the return to the A section is about harmonic stability and resolution of the tension created in the B section.



**Figure 3.6: The modified melody from the beginning of the piece (flute 1) compared to the original melody from the beginning (flute 2).**

In the return of the A section, mm. 10-17 (from the first A section) are not included. The melodic material in mm. 62-65 is transposed up an octave from mm. 17-20 in the A section. In the bass line of the piano, a D and an A sound simultaneously for four beats and provides the foundation for the D minor chords throughout the measure. In m. 62, the D minor suspended ninth and fourth chords resolve to a D minor chord on beats 3 and 4 by stepwise motion. The first two beats of m. 63 are an extension of the harmony in m. 62 but with an added seventh. Beats 3 and 4 in the piano are a G dominant seventh chord with a four-three suspension in the tenor voice that resolves on the upbeat of beat four. The G dominant seventh chord in m. 63 resolves to a C major seventh added ninth in m. 64, and the major seventh resolves down by half step to a C dominant seventh added ninth which resolves to F major in m. 65.

The melodic material in mm. 66 and 67 restate material from mm. 22 and 23, with a four-measure extension in mm. 68-72. This material is extended by oscillating D dominant seventh and misspelled D fully diminished chords in m. 68, followed by a measure of motion around the circle-of-fifths in m. 69. In the first half of m. 69, quarter notes prevail, while, in the latter half, the harmonic rhythm speeds up with chords that change on every eighth note that conclude on the upbeat of beat four with the sounding of

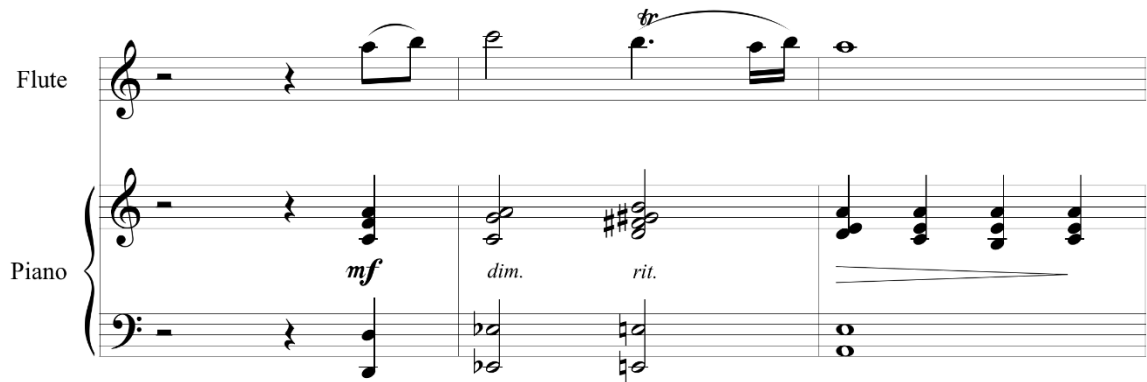
an E dominant seventh chord that resolves on the downbeat of m. 70 with the sounding of an A minor seventh chord. This tonality prevails until mm. 71-72 when a D minor chord in the piano sounds beneath the flute's seven-beat drone on an A6 (see Figure 3.8). Again Taktakishvili makes use of conventional compositional techniques from the eighteenth century, as he extends the phrase with a circle-of-fifths progression, a common practice in the classical period.

The musical score for Figure 3.7 consists of two staves: Flute (top) and Piano (bottom). The Flute staff begins with a melodic line in treble clef, featuring a 'rit.' (ritardando) marking. The Piano staff is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and features oscillating chords and triplet figures. The score is in 3/4 time and includes a key signature of one sharp (F#).

**Figure 3.7: The oscillating chords leading up to the high A drone in the flute.**

The closing section begins in m. 73. The flute line drops down an octave and plays a descending three-note figure with embellishments with an A half-diminished seventh chord on beat 1, an E dominant seventh added ninth chord on beat 3, and an A minor chord on the downbeat of beat 1 of m. 74 (see Figure 3.9). The same melodic and harmonic lines repeat four measures later. In m. 75, a two-measure interjection interrupts with an E half-diminished chord on the downbeat followed by an A minor added fourth chord in m. 76, which shifts to a D major chord in second inversion on beat 3, and then to a D dominant seventh chord on beat 4. The melody returns in m. 77 and 78, and a four-three suspension occurs when the seventh of the E dominant seventh added ninth chord on beat three of m. 77 sustains to the downbeat of 78 and resolves stepwise to a C. This

suspension creates a final moment of dissonance before the conclusion of the movement, instilling in the listener a feeling of longing and sadness.



**Figure 3.8: The descending, three-note figure that permeates the closing section of the second movement.**

This movement is shorter than movements one and three, which adheres to eighteenth-century formal practices. Though classicism prevails in Taktakishvili’s use of ternary form, his more contemporary approach can be heard in his application of extended tertian harmony as has been shown throughout this chapter. A simultaneous nod to Eastern European folk music and modernism is heard in the B section through the use of an octatonic scale as well as through the drones in the bass voice of the piano at the beginning of the B section. While this movement may appear simple, the harmonic innovations bring a surprisingly unique flair that makes “Aria” such a joy to perform and listen to.

## Chapter Four: Movement Three

To conclude the *Sonata for Flute and Piano*, Taktakishvili writes the final movement in a spirited sonata-rondo form with an extensive, contrasting central episode based on a new theme. Taktakishvili frequently plays on the metric hemiola between compound duple and simple triple. John Barcellona, flute professor at California University of Long Beach, states that “the final movement...is a rollicking rondo”<sup>9</sup> but I have found that the central section of the third movement is too extensive to disregard when analyzing the form. I have called the third movement a sonata-rondo to account for the inclusion of the highly extended and complex development.

Like the first movement, the final movement begins with a piano introduction. After the somber mood created by the second movement, Taktakishvili returns to the bright key of C major. The dance-like, prancing rondo melody in compound duple meter establishes a precedent of thematic repetition, beginning with the entrance of the flute melody in m. 5 (see Figure 4.1a). The eight-measure melody fulfills the thematic repetition an octave higher, in m. 9, in the altissimo register. The first episode (m. 21) differs from the rondo in its disjunct pattern and more syncopated rhythms (see Figure 4.1b). An eight-measure transition (m. 37) brings the listener back to the rondo in m. 45. The flute restates the rondo theme in the higher octave for eight measures, and in, m. 53, the piano plays the rondo theme, which satisfies the precedent of thematic repetition set earlier in the movement.

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<sup>9</sup> John Barcellona, “Performing Taktakishvili’s *Sonata for Flute and Piano*: A Guide to Interpreting a Modern Russian Work,” *Flute Talk*, 18 (10 [May/June 2000]): 14.





**Figure 4.1a: The rondo theme of movement three.**

**Figure 4.1b: The theme of the first episode of the rondo structure.**

The second episode begins in m. 61; it is initiated by a driving, sixteenth-note rhythm in the low register of the flute that ascends into the upper register (see Figure 4.2a). The eight-measure melody is taken over by the left hand of the piano in m. 69, as the flute concludes the melody of the second episode and seamlessly morphs into an ostinato above the piano melody (see Figure 4.2b). The ostinato extends from mm. 69-74 but takes up only six-measures instead of the usual eight. The ostinato rhythms begin as eighth notes for two measures, rhythmically accelerating into descending sixteenth notes for two measures, and finally concluding with a descending eighth note line. The flute assimilates the piano's melody in m. 77, but the final two measures are omitted allow for another transition to the rondo theme that enables the piano to conclude its statement of

the second episode that began in m. 81. The retransition to the rondo theme begins in m. 85 with eighth notes that dissolve into the piano interlude eight measures later.



**Figure 4.2a: The beginning of second episode of the rondo structure.**

A musical score for Flute and Piano, labeled 'Flute' and 'Piano' on the left. The Flute part is on a single staff in treble clef, playing a continuous eighth-note pattern. The Piano part consists of two staves. The right hand plays a continuous eighth-note pattern, while the left hand has rests for the first two measures followed by a melodic line of eighth notes. The piano part includes hairpins for dynamics and a crescendo line. The score ends with a double bar line.

**Figure 4.2b: The metamorphosis of the flute's melody from melodic material to ostinato.**

The piano prelude from m. 1 serves as an interlude between the conclusion of the second episode (m. 92) and the rondo theme in m. 97. The piano propels the rondo theme forward with offbeat, eighth note patterns that change from slurred eighth notes to articulated ones as the tessitura of the flute expands in the second repetition to punctuate the rhythm.

The third episode begins in m. 113 at a unison forte dynamic in both voices. The piano pushes the theme forward with an Alberti bass figure in the left hand and syncopated patterns in the right hand alludes to the upcoming metrical shift to simple meter. The flute remains in compound meter with a boisterous melody that soars above the piano (see Figure 4.3) (mm. 113-120), and, in m. 121, Taktakishvili outlines the

theme by retaining memorable, landmark notes in the same rhythmic places as the previous statement, but ornaments it with descending, scalar eighth notes. He reinforces the ornamented version of the melody in mm. 127-128 with a two-measure theme in the piano, as they were in the original statement, in alignment with the eighth notes above in the flute.

The image shows a musical score for Flute and Piano. The Flute part is on a single staff with a treble clef. It contains a melodic line with several trills and ornaments, indicated by wavy lines above the notes. The Piano part consists of two staves, a treble and a bass clef. The bass line is a simple, rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The treble line contains chords and some single notes, with a forte (f) dynamic marking at the beginning.

**Figure 4.3: The third episode, which doubles as the closing theme, and is reminiscent of the first episode of the rondo structure.**

The development is preceded by a four-measure piano interlude that moves from a compound-duple meter into a simple-duple meter, and away from C major to A minor. The weighty theme, which is recalled frequently throughout this section, is stated first by the flute in m. 133. As the piano sits on a pedal A3 in the left hand, coupled with rocking, staccato eighth notes, the flute melody pulls the listener toward beat 1 in each measure (see Figure 4.4). The harmonic motion is slow in the first eight measures, with an A minor drone extending from mm. 133-138, changing to E minor only in m. 139. The harmonic motion accelerates with two-measure shifts between chords, beginning with a move to C major in m. 141, and progresses to D minor in m. 143, until Taktakishvili offers a perfect authentic cadence in mm. 145-148. As the rhythm of the left hand piano

accelerates (m. 149), the flute simultaneously restarts the theme an octave higher than the principal statement.

The image shows a musical score for Flute and Piano. The Flute part is on a single staff, and the Piano part is on two staves. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 2/4. The score covers measures 165 to 168. In measure 165, the Flute plays a triadic eighth-note figure (E4, G4, B4) and continues with a melodic line. The Piano part has a four-measure hiatus in measures 165-168. In measure 167, the left hand plays a fragment of the melody (E4, G4, B4) and the right hand plays a triadic eighth-note figure (E4, G4, B4). The piano part is marked 'pp'.

**Figure 4.4: The theme of the development.**

In m. 165, the flute begins a triadic, eighth note ostinato outlining E minor; now the flute's role is harmonic. The theme takes a four-measure hiatus in mm. 165-168, with a fragment of the melody that appears in the left hand piano in m. 167 and anticipates the placement of the theme there. The flute supplies the predetermined harmonic progression in mm. 169-184 as the piano carries the tune in rhythmic unison octaves in both hands. Taktakishvili fuses the development theme and the eighth-note figure played by the flute at m. 185, bolstered by chromatically embellished chords in the piano (see Figure 4.5). The passage extends from mm. 185-204, with an ascending melodic and harmonic profile. The melody climbs slowly at first, with two measures occurring between each half-step (mm. 185-198), until a rapid acceleration in m. 199, creates shorter rhythmic distances (one-beat separations instead of two measures). The flute melody continues rising with the harmonic assistance of the piano until reaching its climax in m. 201 with a rapid trill on an E6 supplemented by the dominant pedal in the left hand piano. The trill abruptly ends in m. 203 and the piano chromatically descends for two measures with

rolled thirds in both hands until arriving in A major on the downbeat of m. 205 with the sounding of a bright C-sharp 7 in the flute to reinforce the modal shift. A major chords with lower neighbor-tone embellishments sound through mm. 205-208 to reinforce the new key before Taktakishvili restates the development theme in m. 209. Even though the harmony is based on an A major scale, the melody does not assimilate the modal shift and remains in A minor from mm. 209-223. The flute leaves the texture as the piano executes the final repetition of the theme in mm. 225-240 with a nostalgic look back at fragments of the theme for a final two measures.



**Figure 4.5: The beginning of the chromatically altered passage in the development.**

After a quick adieu to A minor in mm. 241-242, a G dominant-seven chord carries the listener from the upbeat of m. 242 into the downbeat of m. 243, with a sudden return to compound meter, which marks the initiation of the recapitulation. The rondo theme reappears in m. 245-252, nearly identically orchestrated as its first appearance, modified only by quarter notes in the left hand piano instead of undulating eighth-note chords in the right. The thematic repetition is fulfilled in mm. 253-260 with the duplicate flute melody in the altissimo register supported by the nearly identical harmony from the beginning of the piece with the only modification in m. 256. Taktakishvili skips the first episode and moves right into the second (m. 261), which is initiated by the left hand

piano in the tonic, C major. The flute receives the melody from the right hand piano in m. 265, which leads to C minor for a brief two measures. The flute's ostinato and the piano's statement of the second episode's theme occur simultaneously in m. 269, and four measures later, the exchange occurs again with the placement of the melody in the flute at m. 273.

The vibrant, lively coda (m. 277), with its disjunct, ascending, articulated triplet line in the flute is supported by oscillating F-sharp and C-sharp minor chords. The subsequent measures are more harmonically dissonant, as in mm. 281-283, with alternating tritone chords in the piano. The harmony is less dissonant in mm. 284-285, with doubly-chromatic mediant chords that are interrupted (mm. 286-287) by oscillating tritones that lead from E-flat minor to a C-sharp minor seven to a C major resolution in m. 289 (see Figure 4.6). As the flute descends chromatically over two measures, the piano (m. 289) punctuates the ends of phrases with a C major chord on the downbeats of every other measure. Taktakishvili juxtaposes the clearly organized tertian chords with chromatic cluster chords, as in m. 290, where the piano sustains a cluster chord resolving to the next tertian chord on the downbeat of m. 291. In m. 293, the flute melody recalls a modified version of the closing theme from the exposition of the first, which underscores the thematic connectivity between all three movements. The melody is shortened with one measure between fragments of the closing theme material in mm. 297-300 coupled with the increased harmonic rhythm demonstrated by one beat oscillations between the C major chord and the cluster chord. The flute begins its final scalar motive in m. 301 and ascends over four measures of off-beat, oscillating A dominant-seven substitute-six and A dominant-seven chords. The ascending flute motive continues in m. 305 and the

harmony includes the A-flat major seven on the off-beats of mm. 305-307 until pushing through the cadence beginning in m. 308 to the resolution in m. 309, with the sounding of first the A-flat major-seventh on beat 1 leading to the G major-seven substitute-six chord on beat 2. The altered G major chord leads to C major on the downbeat of m. 309, as well as to the end of the flute melody reinforced by hammered, octave triplets in the piano ending with a quarter note on the downbeat of m. 310.

The image shows a musical score for Flute and Piano, measures 305-310. The Flute part is in treble clef, 6/8 time, and features a melodic line with many accidentals (sharps and flats) and a final quarter note on the downbeat of m. 310. The Piano part is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs), 6/8 time, and features a harmonic accompaniment with many accidentals and a final quarter note on the downbeat of m. 310.

**Figure 4.6: The tritone interruptions leading to a tertian resolution in m. 289.**

## Conclusion

Taktakishvili's works are little known but, through the popularity of his *Sonata for Flute and Piano*, his name is becoming well-known amongst musicians of the west. Through analysis of the *Sonata for Flute and Piano* supported by research into Taktakishvili's biography and compositional style, I have been able to identify the musical language in which Taktakishvili composed as socialist-realist. This thesis leaves room for continued discovery into Taktakishvili's output and style as it focuses on only one of his works. There is also room to further discover how he integrated folk music into his pieces as well as how vocal music influenced Taktakishvili's instrumental writing.

I have barely scratched the surface of the work left to be done by other authors on rediscovering Taktakishvili's works. Through the analysis of biographical information about the composer, I have been able to surmise that Taktakishvili's stylistic approach to composition was Socialist-Realist. I have been able to support this through what the composer himself has said about his contemporaries, his favorite composers, and his own works. The analysis of the *Sonata for Flute and Piano* has also aided this pursuit.

The spirited, light-hearted melody of the secondary theme and modal inflections of the first movement reinforce the use of folk-like material in the works of Socialist-Realist composers like Taktakishvili. The sonata form structure alludes to the traditional compositional background taught to young Soviet composers in the conservatories. The palindrome-like set up of the sonata form also demonstrates that Taktakishvili knew how to play on the expectations of the listener and create suspense in the movement. The highly lyrical, song-like primary theme indicates to the listener the effect that vocal music



had on Taktakishvili because it not only permeates the melodies he writes, but it also affects the way he names one of the movements.

The second movement is the most modern of the three in the *Sonata for Flute and Piano*. The “Aria” subtitle not only evokes the importance of vocal music to Taktakishvili, but also the lasting imprint operatic music has had on the development of instrumental music. The tall, extended tertian chords used throughout this movement help create a mood of longing and tension that is only resolved at the end of the movement. Taktakishvili masterfully writes an evocative melody with embellishments that guides the listener through the complex tonalities of the second movement. The slow tempo and extensive lyricism cleanse the palate of the listener and offer a respite between the complex outer movements.

While the third movement is less tonally complex than the second, the form Taktakishvili frames the music in is by far the most challenging for the listener to grasp. The fusion of sonata form with a lively rondo offers extensive contrast within a solitary movement. The final movement exhibits the most folk-like qualities of all of the movements in the sonata through its emphasis on hemiola, a common characteristic in Georgian folk songs. The modal harmony of the development also emphasizes the effect that retaining the folk traditions of Georgia had on the composer.

The future of Taktakishvili’s *Sonata for Flute and Piano* is bright as it leaves continued room for research by musicologists. I will continue to identify folk tunes and folk influenced passages within the sonata. I will also compare the second movement to the many arias Taktakishvili wrote for his operas to see if one medium influenced or was taken from the other. This thesis has deepened my appreciation for a beloved piece in the

flute repertoire and I look forward to continuing to hear the stories of endearment other flutists leave behind about this piece.

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