Combining Operatic Air Varié with Style Hongrois in Carl Maria von Weber’s Andante and Rondo Ungarese (1813): A Recipe for Success

Ahnnabella Kolacki
SOURCE 2020
Valparaiso University
May 14, 2020
How does Carl Maria von Weber achieve exoctism and virtuosity through popular genre (*air varié*) and style (*style hongrois*) markers?
Background

Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826) was a German Composer during the Romantic Era.

- **Born**
  - 1786
  - Eutin, Germany

- **Moved**
  - 1803
  - Vienna, Austria

- **1809**
  - Returns to Germany
  - Andante and Rondo Ungarese composed originally for viola

- **1813**
  - Concerto
    - transposed for bassoon and Orchestra

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Methods

Weber’s *Andante and Rondo Ungarese (1813)* for bassoon fits two established stylistic categories of the time:

- First Movement exemplifies the genre of *Air Varié*
- Second Movement utilizes the musical dialect known as *Style Hongrois*
1st Movement

Air Varié

Variations
- Increasing activity in surface rhythm (quarter to eighth-note to sixteenth-note etc.)
- Virtuosity

Melodic Elements
- Lyrical/songful
- Simple and accessible
1st Movement (*air varié*)

- **Main Theme**
  - Mm. 1-17
  - Silicane rhythm, 6/8

- **First Variation**
  - Mm. 22-37
  - Sixteenth notes in the bassoon

- **Second Variation**
  - Mm. 40-55
  - Thirty-second notes; unexpected “exotic” harmonic shift
1st Movement: Main Theme

Variations on this theme ensue (Air varié)

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1st Movement (air varié)

- **Main Theme**
  - Mm. 1-17
  - Siliciana rhythm, 6/8

- **First Variation**
  - Mm. 22-37
  - Sixteenth notes in the bassoon

- **Second Variation**
  - Mm. 40-55
  - Thirty-second notes; unexpected “exotic” harmonic shift

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1st Movement: First Variation (air varié)
Sectional Variations

The progression on variations on the theme is effective, each adds a new layer of complexity and energy.

**Main Theme**
- Silicana rhythm, 6/8
- Mm. 1-17

**First Variation**
- Sixteenth notes in the bassoon
- Mm. 22-37

**Second Variation**
- Thirty-second notes; unexpected “exotic” harmonic shift
- Mm. 40-55
1st Movement: Second Variation (air varié)
Characteristics

- Dotted Rhythm
- Augmented 2nds
- Syncopation
- Alla Zoppa
- Anapests

Hungarian National Dialect

- Verbunkos Dance
- Gypsy Sound

Hongrois

2nd Movement
Stylistic Indicators

Mm. 99
- Spondee

Mm. 106
- Syncopated Accents
- Alla Zoppa

Mm. 132
- Anapests
- Ties

Mm. 194
- Bokazo
Stylistic Indicators

- Spondee

- Syncopated Accents

- Alla Zoppa

- Ties

- Bokazo

Mm. 99
- Spondee

Mm. 194
- Bokazo

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Stylistic Indicators

- Spondee
- Syncopated Accents
- Alla Zoppa
- Anapests
- Ties

Mm. 99
- Spondee

Mm. 194
- Bokazo

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Stylistic Indicators

Mm. 99
- Spondee

Mm. 106
- Syncopated Accents

Mm. 129
- Anapests
- Ties

Mm. 194
- Bokazo

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Hungarian Anapest: measure 132

Stylistic Indicators

- Turn Motifs
- Leaping 8ths
- Dotted Rhythms
- Syncopated Accents
- Cadential motion jumps
- Anapests
- Ties

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Stylistic Indicators

Mm. 99
- Spondee

Mm. 106
- Syncopated Accents

Mm. 129
- Anapests
- Ties

Mm. 194
- Bokazo
Stylistic Indicators

- Turn Motifs
- Leaping 8ths
- Dotted Rhythms

Mm. 82 & 85

- Syncopated Accents

Mm. 194

- Bokazo

Bokázó: measure 194

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Weber: Life and Works

- Julius. Benedict *Carl Maria Von Weber*.
- J. Palgrave Simpson. *Carl Maria Von Weber: the Life of an Artist*.

**Literature**

- *air varié genre*
- *style hongrois*
  - Bellman, Jonathon. *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*.
  - Kritzer, Melissa. “Discovering the ‘Hungarian’ in Andante and Rondo.”
Andate and Rondo Ungarese

Air Varie

Hongrois

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Resources


