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*Corresponding author:
Nathan Thomas, FBS Music Arts
Study Program, Satya
Wacana Christian University

E-mail:
852020014@student.uksw.edu

Mozart's Sonata in C Minor K. 457: Classic Gems Analytical Journey Works of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Nathan Thomas

Satya Wacana Christian University, Salatiga, Indonesia

Abstract: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is a very well-known classical music composer. It doesn't matter whether you are a classical music enthusiast or just a casual listener. You would have heard about Mozart. This research delves into the intricate musical landscape of Mozart's Sonata in C Minor, employing a descriptive qualitative analysis to unravel the underlying structural form within the composition. Focusing on the examination of the sonata's score, the study aims to elucidate the organization and interplay of musical elements made by Mozart in shaping this enduring masterpiece. In conclusion, this research aspires to contribute valuable insights into the formal architecture of Mozart's Sonata in C Minor, unraveling the intricacies that define its structural integrity. The qualitative descriptive analysis offers a nuanced exploration of the musical score, providing a foundation for future scholarly discussions and fostering a heightened appreciation for the timeless artistry of Mozart. The findings of the research showed the musical intrigues of Mozart's Sonata in C Minor. In conclusion, the analysis not only enriches the existing literature but also presents implications for both theoretical and practical applications in musicology and performance practice.

Keywords: Mozart, form overview, sonata in c minor

1. INTRODUCTION

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, one of the most recognized and influential composers in the history of music (Indrawan, 2019), continues to captivate audiences and scholars with the depth and brilliance of his compositions (Sadie, 2023). Born on January 27, 1756, in Salzburg, Austria, Mozart is considered one of the most talented and influential composers in the history of classical music. His extraordinary musical abilities were evident from an early age when he demonstrated extraordinary proficiency in music and composition (Sadie, 2023).

Mozart's father, Leopold, recognized his son's extraordinary talent and embarked on an extensive tour throughout Europe to showcase young Wolfgang's musical abilities. These trips exposed the young prodigy to a variety of musical styles, cultures, and compositions, fostering his artistic development and broadening his musical horizons (Hanning, 2002). Although Mozart died at the age of 35, Mozart left behind an unparalleled musical legacy, creating more than 600 works in a variety of genres, including symphonies, operas, chamber music, concertos, and sonatas. His compositions display an extraordinary blend of innovation, emotional depth, technical mastery, and melodic elegance, cementing his reputation as a figure in classical music of the Classical era (Sadie, 2023).

Even though Mozart was revered as a genius of his time, Pauwels (2022) stated in his journal that Mozart's income was uncertain and irregular. However, Mozart enjoyed large incomes



from commissions and appearances to pay his gambling expenses and imitate the lifestyle of his wealthy friends (Pauwels, 2022). Mozart was reported to be suffering from a long illness. However, in his final years, there was a decline in interest in Mozart's compositions and performances, and it was clear that his fortunes were gone at his death (Pauwels, 2022). Until now, the cause of his death is still a matter of conjecture and it is very possible that Mozart, whose physical condition had deteriorated, died of a non-specific infectious disease due to septic shock (Pauwels, 2022).

Mozart's compositions are characterized by clarity of form, elegant melody, harmonic sophistication, and expressive depth (Hanning, 2002). Mozart's voice has a characteristic where the sound of his works is intended to sound light, fresh, and round (Chen, 2023). His innate ability to effortlessly combine technical expertise with profound emotional depth remains unmatched (Kempfert & Wong, 2020). He excelled at capturing human emotion, whether in the joy of his operatic *arias*, the poignancy of his *adagios*, or the brilliance of his piano *concertos* (Hanning, 2002). In Mozart's compositions, every significant thematic detail has meaning (Susidko, 2022).

The diversity and brilliance of Mozart's works continue to amaze and captivate musicians and audiences throughout the world (Sadie, 2023). His contributions to the development of classical music, particularly in perfecting the structure and form of symphony, opera, and chamber music, had a long-lasting impact on subsequent generations of composers (Ngo, 2021).

Apart from his contribution to the development of classical music, Mozart's works also influenced the medical field, especially in brain neurology. In the journal reviewed by Shi (2020) and van Esch (2020). In Shi's (2020) research, it was found that the Sonata in D Major, K.448, and the rhythm pattern of the first movement of the Sonata in D Major can encourage a person's spatial intelligence. In van Esch's research (2020), van Esch examined the impact of the Sonata in D Major, K.448 on brain activity waves. In van Esch's (2020) research findings, it was found that long-term listening to the Sonata in D Major, K.448 can increase waves of brain activity. Research conducted by Drzymalski et al. (2023) also examined the effect of Mozart's music on patient satisfaction during cesarean delivery. It was found in this study (Drzymalski et al., 2023) that although the difference was not too great, patients who heard Mozart's works during labor had a higher level of satisfaction than patients who did not listen to any music.

Mozart's work also had an effect on epilepsy as revealed in research by Štillová et al. (2020), Ding et al. (2023), Sesso & Sicca (2020), and Maguire (2022). The studies above used Sonata in D Major, K.448 to examine its effect on epilepsy. It was found in these four journals that Sonata in D Major, K.448 can help epilepsy sufferers. Music therapy Sonata in D Major, K.448 was found to help reduce seizures (Štillová et al., 2020, Sesso & Sicca, 2020). Sound waves in Sonata in D Major, K.448 can trigger brain tissue to produce optimal brain frequencies for epilepsy sufferers (Ding et al., 2023 & Maguire, 2022).

Additionally, Mozart's influence extended beyond his own time, inspiring countless composers and musicians throughout the centuries. His music remains an integral part of concert repertoire,

educational curricula, and cultural heritage, reaffirming its enduring appeal and relevance to contemporary audiences.

Mozart's genius lay not only in his extraordinary technical abilities but also in his innate musical intuition, which allowed him to create compositions that transcended time and spoke directly to the soul and conscience. Among his vast repertoire, the *Sonata* in C Minor is a profound testament to Mozart's compositional prowess and musical ingenuity. *Sonata* in C Minor, K. 457, written in 1784, encapsulates the essence of the Classical era while bearing traces of Mozart's genius (Wolf, 1992). Situated in the context of his extensive piano repertoire, this particular work has a distinctive position due to its profound emotional depth, technical sophistication, and structural innovation.

Sonata in C Minor is renowned for its evocative and dramatic nature, showcasing Mozart's ability to combine deep emotional content with the subtle compositional skills of the Classical era. Composed of three movements—*Molto Allegro*, *Adagio*, and *Allegro assai*—the *sonata* unfolds with an intensity that distinguishes it from many of Mozart's other piano works (Marks, 1921).

Sonata in C Minor is often hailed as one of Mozart's most significant contributions to the piano repertoire. The opening movement, *Molto Allegro*, is full of energy and tension, characterized by bold harmonic shifts and dynamic contrasts that create a sense of urgency and excitement. This movement is a testament to Mozart's mastery of sonata form, in which he expertly balances thematic development and structural coherence. The subsequent *Adagio* offers a striking contrast, presenting a lyrical and contemplative mood that showcases Mozart's talent for melody and emotional expression. The final movement, *Allegro assai*, brings the *sonata* to a passionate and triumphant conclusion, with rapid passages and complex textures that demonstrate the technical prowess required of the performer.

In the *Sonata* in C Minor, Mozart shows his mastery of musical form, harmonic development, and thematic development. His ability to impart emotional depth to the work while adhering to the structural conventions of the time is a testament to his genius (Marks, 1921). Additionally, the *sonata* is an important example of the evolution of the classical sonata form, demonstrating Mozart's innovative approach to the genre.

Sonata in C Minor Mozart's work is not only a technical tour de force but also a work of great emotional depth. The *sonata*'s dramatic narrative and expressive range have led many scholars and performers to consider it a reflection of Mozart's struggles and triumphs. The use of C minor, a key often associated with intensity and passion in Mozart's work, further emphasizes the emotional weight of this composition.

This *sonata* exemplifies Mozart's ability to innovate within the constraints of Classical form. The use of chromaticism, unexpected modulations, and complex rhythmic patterns give the *sonata* a sense of forward-looking experimentation that would influence subsequent generations of composers. Additionally, the *Sonata* in C Minor stands as a bridge between the Classical and Romantic eras, with its expressive richness demonstrating the emotionalism that came to define Romantic music.

Despite its technical complexity and emotional richness, the *Sonata* in C Minor remains a major part of the piano repertoire, captivating audiences and pianists alike with its sheer beauty and musical depth (Marks, 1921). Its enduring popularity confirms its status as a classic within Mozart's vast and varied compositions, leaving an indelible mark on the classical music landscape (Gillespie, 1965). As a focal point of scholarly interest and fascination, the score of Mozart's *Sonata* in C Minor serves as a canvas that invites exploration and analysis. Its intricate melodies, harmonic richness, and structural complexity provide ample material for in-depth analysis. *Sonata* is also considered a process of dialogue between individuals and a network of general norms imposed by implicitly given guidelines, expectations, and limitations (Duane, 2019).

The original score of this work was discovered in 1990 at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia by Judith DiBona, an amateur pianist and accounting manager at Eastern's sister school (Wolf, 1992). Wolf (1992) at the University of Pennsylvania was contacted to identify and authenticate the manuscript. Wolf came up with findings regarding the compositional timing between sonata movements, which were published in *The Journal of Musicology* in 1992.

Wolf (1992) found differences in paper type between the sonata's first and third movements as well as the *Adagio* movement, implying that the second movement was written at separate times. He theorizes that the second movement was composed earliest as an instructional piece for Theresia von Trattner. Because the second movement is written in *rondo* form and is slower than the other movements.

This research aims to analyze Mozart's *Sonata* in C Minor through analysis of the score. This study seeks to reveal the layers of nuance that make up this masterpiece. Through a comprehensive investigation of the score, this analysis seeks to offer a deeper understanding and appreciation of Mozart's *Sonata* in C Minor, revealing the intricacies and brilliance of this timeless musical work.

This research makes several significant contributions to existing Mozart literature and classical music analysis. First, by providing a careful structural analysis of *Sonata* in C Minor, K. 457, this study fills a gap in the current literature, which often focuses on Mozart's more general sonatas. This detailed analysis highlights the compositional techniques and formal elements Mozart used, offering new insights into the complexity and ingenuity of his work. This analysis helps understand how Mozart's use of motifs, harmonic progression, and thematic development contribute to the sonata's overall coherence and impact.

Additionally, this research integrates perspectives from music theory, musicology, and performance studies, offering a holistic view of *Sonata* in C Minor Mozart's works. This interdisciplinary approach not only broadens the scope of analysis but also shows how different academic disciplines can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of a musical work.

Finally, the findings of this study can serve as a basis for future scientific research on Mozart's piano sonatas and other works. The methodology used can be adapted to analyze other compositions, thereby expanding the impact of this research

beyond its specific focus on *Sonata* in C Minor. This foundation encourages further exploration of Mozart's work and the broader classical repertoire.

By discussing these aspects, this research hopes to not only enrich the existing literature but also provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of one of Mozart's masterpieces, highlighting its significance in the classical music canon.

2. METHODS

In this research, which aims to analyze the score of Mozart's *Sonata* in C Minor to understand the form and structure of this work, the research will be carried out using descriptive qualitative research methods by analyzing the content of the score. The object studied in this research is Mozart's score entitled *Sonata* in C Minor.

Data collection was carried out using literature studies and documentation studies. The literature study referred to in this research is a research process that will process data from book sources related to this research. This literature study is important for this research because conducting a literature study can strengthen the basis for carrying out an analysis of Mozart's *Sonata* in C Minor. Meanwhile, documentation studies are a method for collecting data for this research. In this case, data collection for this research was taken from the score of Mozart's *Sonata* in C Minor.

The data analysis carried out in this research is processing data obtained when dissecting and studying the score of Mozart's *Sonata* in C Minor. There are several stages in this analysis: (1) looking at books and other sources regarding music science, (2) dividing the score for Mozart's *Sonata* in C Minor per bar, (3) examining each bar in the score for Mozart's *Sonata* in C Minor, (4) reviewing the form of Mozart's *Sonata* in C Minor.

This research tested the validity of the data using data credibility testing techniques. Where the credibility test technique in this research is carried out by extending observations, increasing persistence, and critical levels in research and triangulation. The extension of observation is to carry out in-depth analysis and observation of the research object (score). The extension of this observation is also focused on obtaining data from sheet music which then proves its credibility so that the data used in this research is credible. Increasing diligence and a critical level in research means carrying out research analysis more carefully and diligently, as well as being more critical in processing research data by reading references related to this research and ensuring that the references are correct and have credible sources. The triangulation referred to is the re-examination of data results and data analysis obtained through literature study and documentation study by comparing them with other most accurate sources.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sonata in C Minor examined in this research is the work of Mozart, one of the classical music composers of the classical era. This work is a work created and completed in 1784 (Wolf, 1992). Recorded in Mozart's catalog of works, this work was recorded on October 14, 1784 (Wolf, 1992). This *sonata* was created to be

played solo on a piano instrument and uses the key of C minor. This work has five hundred and sixty-two bars which are then divided into three movements.

The following is a description of the musical form analysis of the *Sonata* in C Minor in table form.

Table 1. The musical form analysis of the *Sonata* in C Minor in table form

Movement	Time	Part
1 (<i>Molto allegro</i>)	Bars 1-22	Theme 1
	Bars 1-8	Sentence 1
	Bars 1-4	Antecedent phrase
	Bars 5-8	Consequent phrases
	Bars 9-22	Transitions/episodes/inserts
	Bars 9-13(Beat 1)	Use of the Pedal Point technique
	Bars 23-59	Theme 2
	Bars 23-26	Antecedent phrase
	Bars 27-30	Consequent phrases
	Bars 30 (Beat 4 -35	Transitions/episodes/inserts
	Bars 36-43	Sentence 2
	Bars 38-43	Use of suspension techniques
	Bars 44-59 (Beat 1)	Sentence 3
	Bar 59(Beat 4-74	Codeta (Closing)
	Bars 75-98	Developing themes 1
	Bars 75-78	Antecedent phrase
	Bars 79-82	Consequent phrases
	Bars 87-99	Modulation
	Bars 87&88	Up from 83
	Bars 100-120	Recapitulation
Bars 121-135	Transitions/episodes/inserts	
Bars 131-139	Theme 2	
Bars 140-157	Transitions/episodes/inserts	
Bar 158-166(Beat 1)	Coda 1	
Bars 170-186	Closing	
2 (<i>Adagio</i>)	Bars 1-7	A
	Bars 8-16	B
	Bars 17-23	A' (with Modification)
	Bars 24-40	C
	Bar 35 (Beat 1-40	Bridge
	Bars 41-50 (Beat 3)	A''
	Bar 49(Beat 3-52 (Fermata)	Conclusion
	Bar 29(Beat 3-57	Coda
	3 (<i>Allegro assai</i>)	Bars 1-45
Bars 1-24		Sentence 1(a)
Bars 26-38		Sentence 1(b)
Bars 40-45		Part A conclusion
Bars 46-82(Beat 1)		B (Modulation to Eb Major)
Bars 46-58 (Beat 1)		Sentence 2(a)
Bar 58(Beat 2)-68		Interlude
Bars 69-82(Beat 1)		Sentence 2(b)
Bar 82(Beat 2)-102		Interlude/episode/insert
Bars 103-166		A' (Recapitulation)
Bars 103-127		Sentence 3(a)
Bars 129-141		Sentence 3(b)
Bars 143-155		Conclusion A' & Sentence 3(b)
Bars 157-166		Conclusion (Modulation to G Minor)
Bars 167-205(Beat 1)		C (Modulation to C Minor)
Bars 205-220		Pivot
Bars 221-271		A''
Bars 272-274		Bridge
Bars 275-287(Beat 1)		Conclusion (Modulation to F Minor)

From the table above, it can be seen that the first movement (*Molto allegro*) has one hundred and eighty-six bars, the second movement (*Adagio*) has fifty-seven bars and the third movement (*Allegro assai*) has three hundred and nineteen bars. The forms between the movements are different, the second movement uses the *Rondo with Variation* form while the third movement uses the *Rondo and Sonata* forms.

The aesthetics of a *sonata* follows the path of Hegel's absolute ideas, in which there are moments of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis that go along with the theme (Ibanescu, 2019). According to Allegraud et al. (2019) the *sonata* form can be divided into: Introduction, Exposition, Development, Recapitulation, and Coda. In the introduction there is a core theme (theme 1) then in the expositied, re i a supporting theme (theme 2) which is punctuated by transitions (Yust, Lee & Pinsky, 2022). Within the theme, some sentences support and emphasize the theme. Sentences can then be divided into antecedent phrases and consequent phrases (Hentschel et al., 2021). Then it is closed by the Coda which is the closing of a movement where the ending is reached with a perfect rhythm that is strongly articulated in the core key (Aziz, 2022).



Figure 1. First Movement Notation, Bars 1-8

In the analysis of the first movement bars 1-22 are Theme 1 for the first movement. Where in it there is Sentence 1 which covers bars 1-8. Bars 1-4 are the Antecedent Phrase and bars 5-8 are the Consequent Phrase. An antecedent phrase is an incomplete introductory phrase. At the end of the Antecedent phrase, the music sounds disjointed and unfinished. Then another phrase ends the season that began in the Antecedent phrase. Phrases that do this are called Consequent Phrases. Its name reflects its function in that it is a natural consequence of what preceded it. The Consequent Phrase is the conclusion of the Antecedent Phrase.



Figure 2. First Movement Notation, Bars 9-22

Meanwhile, bars 9-22 are a transition. In bars 9-13 (Beat 1) it is also seen that the Pedal Point technique is used. Then followed by bars 23-59 which is Theme 2 of the first movement. Within these bars there is an Antecedent Phrase in bars 23-26 and a Consequent Phrase in bars 27-30. Bars 30(Beat 4)-35 are the Transition, then followed by bars 36-43 which is Sentence 2 of the first movement. In bars 38-43 there is the use of the Suspension technique.



Figure 3. First Movement Notation, Bars 21-43

In bars 44-59 (Beat 1) Sentence 3 of the first movement is revealed. Starting from bar 59 (Beat 4) to bar 74 is the Codeta (Closing).





Figure 4. First Movement Notation, Bars 44-74

Bars 75-98 redevelop Theme 1. There is an Antecedent Phrase in bars 75-78 and a Consequent Phrase in bars 79-82. Starting from bars 87 to 99 is Modulation. Selwen rises from 83 in bars 87 and 88.



Figure 5. First Movement Notation, Bars 75-88

Bars 100 to 120 are the Recapitulation. Bars 121-135 are a transition. Theme 2 of the first movement is located in bars 131-139. Bars 140-157 are the Transition and starting from bars 158 to 166 (Beat 1) is Coda 1. Bars 170-186 are the Closing of the first movement. So, in the first movement, the form used is the Sonata form.



Figure 6. First Movement Notation, Bars 170-186



Figure 7. Second Movement Notation, Bars 1-9

The second movement has the form Rondo with Variation and has a total of fifty-seven bars. Rondo is a form that has 3 unique parts arranged in ABACA order (Kempfert & Wong, 2020). "For this second movement, the Rondo used has variations in part A so that the order of the parts is AB-A'-CA" (Kempfert & Wong, 2020). Starting with part A in bars 1-7 which then becomes part B in bars 8-16.



Figure 10. Second Movement Notation, Bars 41-50

The third movement uses the *Rondo* and *Sonata* forms and has a total of three hundred and nineteen bars. The movement starts from Part A which is in bars 1-45. In Part A, there is Sentence 1(a) which is located in bars 1-2, and Sentence 1(b) which is located in bars 26-38. Then followed by the Conclusion Part A in bars 40-45.



Figure 11. Third Movement Notation, Bars 1-45

Part B is in bars 46-82 (Beat 1), in this part, there is also a Modulation to E-Flat Major. Bars 46-58 (Beat 1) are Sentence (a), followed by an Interlude in bars 58 (Knock 2)-68 and closed with Sentence 2(b) in bars 69-82 (Knock 1).



Figure 12. Third Movement Notation, Bars 46-68

Starting from bar 82 (Tap 2) to bar 102 is the Interlude for the third movement. Followed by part A' which is a Recapitulation in bars 103-166. It contains Sentence 3(a) in bars 103-127 and Sentence 3(b) in bars 129-141. Bars 143-155 are the conclusion of part A' and sentence 3(b). Continued with bars 157-166 which is the Conclusion with Modulation to G Minor.



Figure 13. Third Movement Notation, Bars 143-155

Bars 167-205 (Beat 1) are a C section with Modulation to C Minor. Then it is continued by bars 205-220 which is the third Pivot movement. Bars 221-271 are part A" and bars 272-274 are the Bridge which is followed by a Conclusion with Modulation to F Minor in bars 275-287 (Beat 1) and the third movement closes with a Coda in bars 287-319.





Figure 14. Third Movement Notation, Bars 287-319

From the findings and analysis of this research, it can be stated that this research has significant implications for both theoretical and practical applications. Theoretically, this research enhances understanding of classical sonata form and Mozart's innovative approach to composition. By dissecting the score, we found structural elements and compositional techniques used in Mozart's *Sonata in C Minor*, this research provides deeper insight into the intricacies of Classical music theory. This research explains how Mozart manipulated harmonic development, thematic development, and formal structure to create a work with great emotional and intellectual depth. These insights can inform and refine theoretical frameworks used to analyze Classical composition, offering new perspectives on standard sonata form and its variations.

In practical terms, a detailed analysis of sonata scores has direct implications for performance practice. Musicians and educators can use these findings to guide the interpretation and performance of the *Sonata in C Minor*. This research offers insights that can improve the authenticity and expressiveness of performances. By understanding the sonata's compositional intent and structural nuances, musicians can make more informed decisions that align with the work's stylistic and historical context. This knowledge not only helps in achieving a more faithful delivery but also allows musicians to convey the emotional and intellectual richness of the work more effectively.

For music educators, this research serves as a valuable resource for teaching performance and analysis. Comprehensive details of sonata structure and thematic elements can be incorporated into curriculum materials, helping learners develop a deeper understanding of Classical music analysis. Educators can use these findings to illustrate key concepts in music theory, such as motif development, harmonic development, and formal structure. Additionally, practical insights into performance practice can be utilized in teaching environments to teach students how to approach and interpret Classical compositions.

4. CONCLUSION

This research provides a detailed and nuanced analysis of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Sonata in C Minor*, K.457, revealing the complex musical elements and structural integrity that define this masterpiece. Through careful analysis of the score, this research reveals how to dissect Mozart's use of harmonic progression, thematic development, and formal structure in the *Sonata in C Minor*. By focusing on the compositional techniques used by Mozart, this study highlights the sophisticated

craftsmanship underlying his work, enhancing our appreciation of his genius.

This research contributes to the existing literature by offering new insights into Mozart's *Sonata* in C Minor. This research addresses a gap in current scholarship by providing a comprehensive structural analysis of sheet music. These contributions are very important because they not only deepen understanding of specific *sonatas* but also provide input for broader discussions of Classical music and compositional techniques.

Based on the results findings research above, the *Sonata* in C Minor has a total of 562 bars in total where the first movement has 186 bars, the second movement has 57 bars and the third movement has 319 bars. In the first movement, it can be said that the first movement uses the *Sonata* form the second movement uses the *Rondo* form with variations and the third movement uses the *Rondo* and *Sonata* forms. In the second movement, the *Rondo* is referred to as *Rondo* with variations, where variations are made to the main theme. In the third movement which uses the *Rondo* and *Sonata* forms, the *Sonata* in C Minor combines the two forms used in the previous movement and assimilates the two forms. So, it can be said that this work is not a work that is easy for beginner pianists to play, this work uses piano playing techniques that are difficult for beginner pianists.

The findings of this study have major implications for both theoretical and practical applications. Theoretically, this analysis enhances understanding of classical sonata form and Mozart's innovative approach to composition. The findings of this study provide a foundation for future research and encourage exploring similar methodologies in analyzing other works by Mozart and his contemporaries. Practically speaking, the insights gained from this research can inform performance practice, guiding musicians in the interpretation and execution of the *Sonata* in C Minor. Educators can also utilize detailed analysis to teach music theory and performance, helping students develop a deeper appreciation and understanding of Classical music.

Thus, with the comprehensive analysis of the score carried out in this research, this research reaffirms the importance of Mozart's *Sonata* in C Minor, K.457, in the classical music canon. This research enriches the existing literature, provides valuable insights for theoretical and practical applications, and underscores the importance of holistic and contextual approaches in the analysis of musical scores. By highlighting the complex craftsmanship of the sonata, this study enhances appreciation of Mozart's genius and contributes to ongoing research on one of the most influential composers in the history of classical music.

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