Part 2 Contents

Part 2

The Centered Conducting of Arturo Toscanini

Introduction

The origins of "centered" or "focal point" conducting are—at best—historically vague. The reason rests partially in the fact that the terms "centered" and "focal point" until the second half of the 20th century—were not used to describe a conducting style. Whatever had been observed or written regarding a conductor's beat patterns was referred to—quite simply—as his/her "conducting technique." As the century progressed, however, a steady growth of interest in the art and craft of conducting among musicians and academics was intensified by the publication of several excellent conducting texts in the mid-20th century and beyond.

Being now removed from the first half of the 20th century by more than 65 years, those interested in studying the technique of a conductor from that period or earlier must rely on written descriptions, kinescopes or early sound films. This is the case with major international conductors such as Gustav Mahler, Arthur Nikisch and Wilhelm Furtwängler. Study of mid-century conductor/educators such as Hermann Scherchen, Max Rudolf, Nicolai Malko, Elizabeth Green, Brock McElheran and Hideo Saito has been greatly aided by the existence of their conducting books.

Toscanini's Baton Technique as Recorded by Norman F. Leyden

Regarding centered conducting, historical evidence suggests that the first major conductor to employ the style was Arturo Toscanini.[1] Kinescopes of Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony were produced late in his career; they were broadcast from 1948 to 1952 and are currently available on re-mastered DVDs. Nevertheless, after multiple viewings of a DVD selection, even a trained conductor would be challenged to reproduce Toscanini's varied and unorthodox gestures. It is for this reason that the conducting world is indebted to the late Norman F. Leyden who, for his doctoral dissertation (Columbia University, 1968), chose to reproduce in two dimensions a large body of Toscanini's conducting gestures as they appeared on the NBC kinescopes.[2] [3]

Figure 2.1
Norman F. Leyden

[1] How ironic, then, that during his lifetime Toscanini rarely discussed conducting—his own or others'—let alone teach it. As frequently reported, he was convinced that conducting was an inborn gift: he expected a serious conductor to develop a set of personal gestures derived from an instinctual understanding of the music, a process that could not be taught.

[2] For a fee, Dr. Leyden's 309-page dissertation may be purchased online through the Bell and Howell website. Bell and Howell is the repository of doctoral dissertations previously owned by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA and London, England.

A segment of the abstract titled “Results and Conclusions” provides a synopsis of the three consistent characteristics seen in Toscanini’s conducting. It is reprinted here with permission of Dr. Leyden’s family.

Characteristic 1

Centralization of beat motions. *Toscanini’s beat motions are concentrated around a single point in space, usually directly in front of his body. In music characterized by steady tempo and unaccented rhythmic elements all beat motions begin and end at the same point. Interpretive elements such as dynamic markings and tempo changes affect its position but in principle, all beats begin and end at one point and all patterns are constructed around it.* (Leyden i)

As examples of “Centralization of beat motions,” the “Composites of abstracts of Toscanini patterns” found on the final page of the dissertation are reproduced in Figure 2.2. (Leyden 309) They represent the basic beat pattern used by Toscanini for each meter, devoid of any musical interpretation.

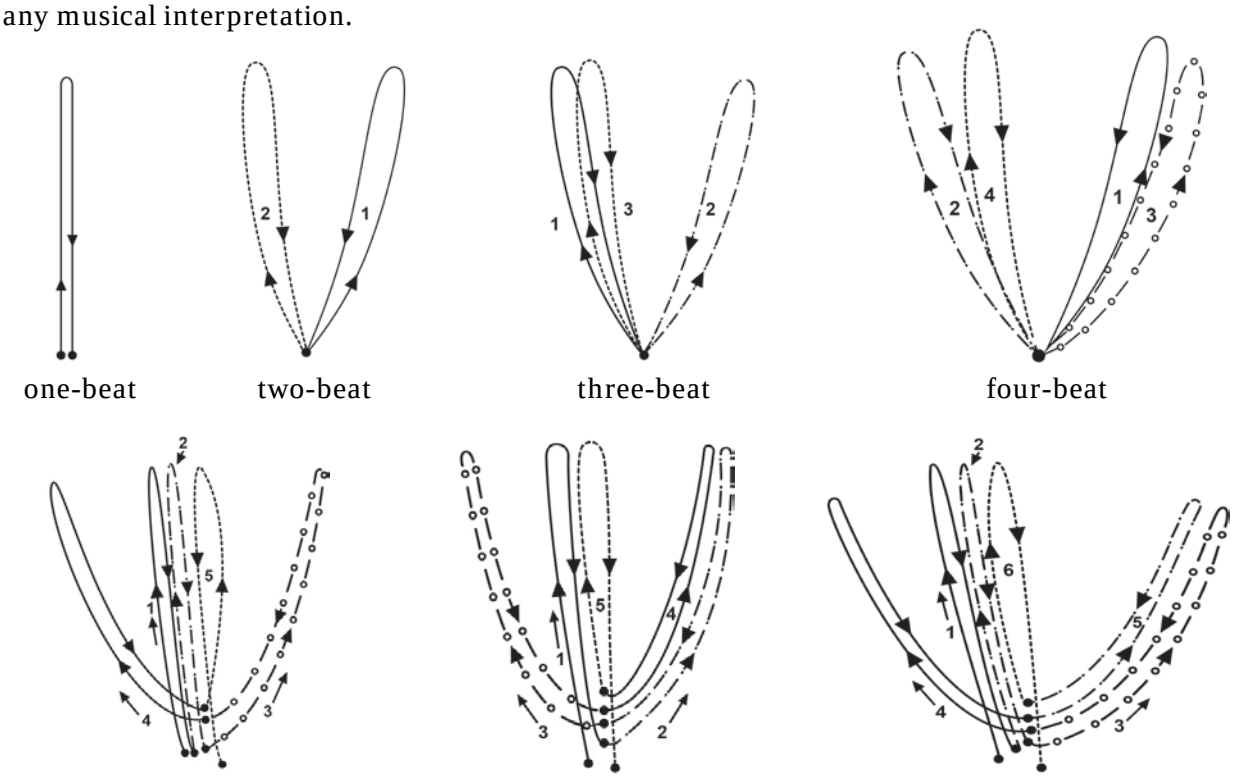

Figure 2.2

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[3] In his dissertation abstract, Leyden describes how he captured Toscanini’s conducting gestures on the kinescopes by using 8mm film to produce the diagrams shown in the dissertation. That segment reads in part: “As each frame was projected [on a 14” x 11” paper screen] a mark was made showing the point where the baton was held between Toscanini’s right thumb and index finger. These marks were connected by lines to form diagrams of single beat motions and combinations of beat motions.” Given such a tedious process, Leyden’s perseverance and dedication to the long-term importance and educational value of these diagrams is inestimable.

Had these composites been printed in a mid-century conducting manual, they might have been viewed with skepticism. Perceiving them as conducting patterns could even have taken effort and perhaps a measure of largesse. Which in turn leads one to inquire where and how did such patterns originate and is it possible to infer from their shapes the source of their creation?

Mindful of the student groups the young Toscanini conducted at the Parma Conservatory, it seems reasonable to postulate that his often-described "instinctive and intuitive" motions derived in some manner from cello bowing with which he was so familiar and comfortable at the time.[4]

Expanding on the cello-playing image, if the two-beat pattern shown above were to be repositioned into a horizontal format, one could envision the lines of those conducting strokes having been produced by the bow arm of a cellist: one down-bow and one up-bow for the first beat, with the second beat being an upbow and downbow—a mirror image of the first. Admittedly, this scenario is an educated guess on the part of the author but, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is a postulate worthy of consideration.

Characteristic 2

Binary nature of individual beats. *Every beat of every pattern is composed of two parts: first a motion away from the starting point and then a motion back to this same point, similar to the motion of a pendulum away from [i.e., moving to its highest point, the apogee] and back to the lowest point [the perigee] in its swing.* (Leyden i)

The binary nature of each beat is described by Dr. Leyden as being "similar to the motion of a pendulum." A pendulum's motion which, technically, is caused by "a restoring force due to gravity," insightfully describes one of the fundamental principals governing the production of Toscanini's conducting strokes.

A pendulum—reacting to the force of gravity—accelerates and decelerates on each full swing *while maintaining a steady pulsation*. For Toscanini, bringing properties of the pendulum to his conducting strokes—consciously or unconsciously—aided the players in predicting the instant of the next beat-point, coming as it does at the bottom of the pendulum swing where the maximum gathered force occurs.

Using the six-beat pattern shown above as an example, the motions between beats 3 and 6 exhibit two complete pendulum swings touching four of the six beats in the pattern. Therefore, one might conclude that a segment of pendulum action—whether in the shape of an arc or ellipse—was present in virtually every stroke Toscanini produced.

Regarding the impact on the orchestra of such a heretofore unseen technique, Leopold Stokowski (1882-1977) said:

> His beat breaks every academic rule—yet it is always clear and eloquent. *But it is between the beats that something almost magical happens:* one can always tell when he has reached the half-beat or the three-quarter beat, even when he does not divide his beats, and it is this certainty and clarity of beat which creates such

[4] Leon Barzin (1900-1999) often mentioned that Toscanini's high podium and low baton strokes derived, respectively, from his small stature and the low position of his right arm during cello playing.

> a perfect ensemble when he conducts, so that the orchestra sounds like one giant instrument. . . . His command over the orchestra is so great that perhaps only other conductors can fully realize how powerful it is.[5] [emphasis added] (Stokowski in Ewen 175-176)

Examples of "Binary nature of individual beats" appear throughout Leyden's dissertation. For example, a dozen diagrams of a single beat can often be found on one page. To offer a multi-beat example of the binary-nature feature, two subdivided patterns have been selected. They satisfy Leyden's description of a motion away from and back to a single point, all the while displaying dramatic differences in the stroke size when moving from a primary beat to its subdivision and *vice versa*.[6]

Toscanini's conducting philosophy embraced the creation of *strokes* that were synchronized with multiple elements of the music. The binary nature of his strokes is especially obvious in the subdivided patterns of Figure 2.3, due in large part to the creation of *additional reference points* which occur at the instant of each directional change of the baton. (Leyden 268-269) Consider that three directional changes follow each primary beat in the binary subdivision. Those changes are synchronized with the beat's inner 16th-note rhythm, in effect doubling the reference points from 8 to16 per measure and creating a count of: 1 de + de, 2 de + de, etc. In the ternary subdivision, there are five directional changes following each primary beat. In one measure the normal reference points again would double, i.e., from 12 to 24, creating a count of [1] de 2 de 3 de, [2] de 2 de 3 de, etc.[7]

The simple action of "away from and back to a given point," i.e., the binary nature of every beat, is the central principal of Toscanini's *temporal pathway*. The maestro gave the concept multiple applications. Samuel Antek described an unusual one.

> What he wanted was not only that each note of a melody come on its appointed beat, but that the note be evenly spaced and sustained over the full value of the beat. . . . It meant holding on to each note as long as possible before moving to the next. This gave an unusually broad, flowing, gliding quality to a succession of notes. A quarter note did not seem to be one quarter note or even two eighth notes. It was as though you felt that one beat was *sixteen sixty-fourth notes*, each

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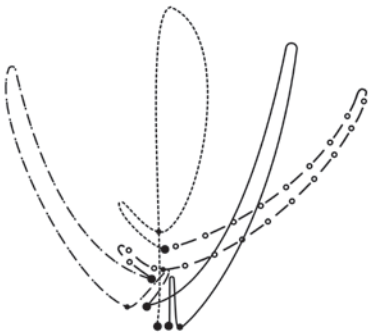
[5] Such inner precision of ensemble occurred, according to Barzin, when Toscanini synchronized his conducting strokes (i.e., the baton's travel motion from one beat-point, through the rebound, to the next beat-point) to the musical and rhythmic activity within each beat.

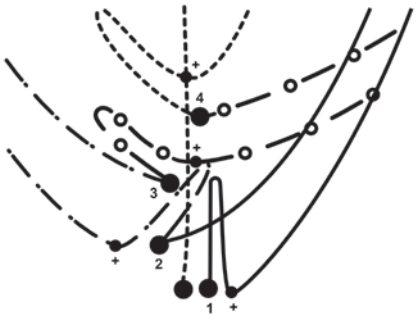
[6] Regarding the line varieties in his diagrams, Leyden explains: "In the diagrams of the four-beat patterns, the first beat of each pattern is shown as a solid line, the second beat as an alternating dot-and-dash line, the third beat as an alternating circle-and-dash line and the fourth beat as a dotted line. Heavy dots indicate the beginning and/or end of each [primary] beat." Smaller dots represent the beginning and/or end of each subdivision.

[7] As with all subdivisions, the pulsation of the beats must remain steady. Naturally, this requires accelerating the baton travel speed for the larger strokes.

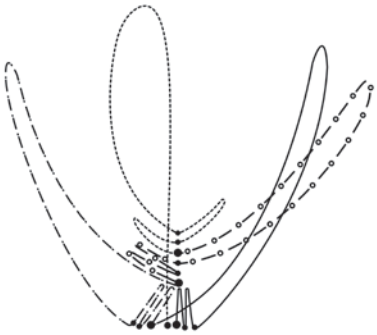
of equal importance; in other words, each quarter note had to be spread evenly over one complete beat of time. Each note then seemed more significant, full-blown, richer, and sustained into the note that followed it. [emphasis added] (Antek 29)[8]



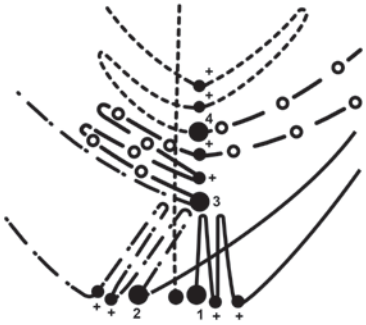
Four pattern—binary subdivision



Interior area of detail



Four pattern—ternary subdivision



Interior area of detail

Figure 2.3

Toscanini's use of a *temporal pathway* may have gone unnoticed by the average concertgoer, perhaps even by certain informed music critics. But, given that his baton's infinite configurations transmitted his musical messages along that pathway, most of the leading conductors of the day and orchestra players with whom he worked understood and valued its existence. (Leyden 268-269)

Hugo Burghauser, bassoonist for the Vienna Philharmonic and, after 1940, the Metropolitan Opera orchestra, said that in his opinion,

> [Toscanini's . . .] greatest ability [. . . was] to show unmistakably, unfailingly, even to a musician of medium-caliber mind, what is *going to happen*. And another almost unheard-of ability, which some of the best conductors did not possess: when

[8] While studying with Barzin, the author was assigned an exercise in which, while beating slow patterns of two, three and four, he was required to *solfége* eight thirty-second notes per beat. If the first thirty-second note of a new group was not perfectly synchronized with the instant of the next beat, Maestro Barzin would be rather swift to voice his displeasure.

> he was conducting, especially in a performance, in a medium tempo [. . .] about half a bar before the occurrence of a detail in the music, you saw already in his face and in his gesture what he was coming to and would want. This was extraordinary: the parallel conducting of what was going on now and what was coming the next moment. . . . It was an entirely unheard-of ability. . . . And again it was a communication *not with words* [emphases added]. (Burghauser qtd. in Marek 156-157)[9]

Characteristic 3

Arc-like shape of all beat motions. *The conducting movements of Toscanini, whether made by the wrist, elbow, or shoulder, are natural body motions and arc-like in configuration.*[10] *Usually his beat motions revolve around a single axis, a condition which produces simple, clear patterns.*[11] (Leyden i)

The images in Figure 2.4 present examples of the arc-like shapes of Toscanini's conducting strokes as seen from his right side:

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[9] The predictability of Toscanini's stroke, as analyzed by Barzin, resulted from the marriage of a centered beat-point and a conducting stroke emulating the *accelerando* and *decelerando* of a pendulum. For each stroke, then, the centered beat-point established a fixed *location*, while the pendulum-like movement created an undulating *baton travel speed*. These elements would provide the player with *two visual references* that produced the phenomenon described by Burghauser.

[10] Although Toscanini did utilize *independent* motions of the wrist, they were infrequent. In the words of Samuel Antek:

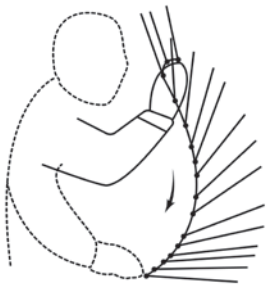
> The undulating [baton] movements were *essentially* arm movements, masculine and virile. I never saw him conduct with wrist or finger movements of his right hand. . . . No matter how intimate or delicate the playing, his movements always conveyed a feeling of the music's breadth and substance. [emphasis added] (Antek 33).

[11] At this juncture, the differences between pendulum-like motions that essentially move left to right and arc-like motions that resemble a horizontal half-pendulum stroke and move in front of the body (as shown in "the arc-like shapes of Toscanini's conducting strokes") should be differentiated.

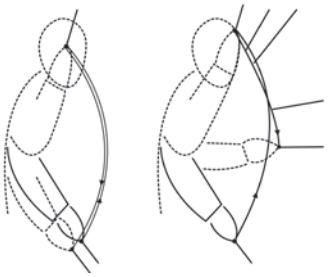
In the first lesson with a new student, Leon Barzin would explain that *every conducting stroke* contained arc-like gestures that were "segments of a circle." *Using the elbow as a fulcrum* and maintaining the forearm—hand—baton unit as a stable (but not tense) unit, the baton could then move up-and-down in arcs or ellipses or side-to-side in pendulum-like gestures. Moving the baton using "segments of a circle" seemed instinctive with Toscanini and fundamental to his technique as illuminated in Leyden's dissertation. According to Barzin, the physical effects of a stable wrist were profound. By eliminating added wrist motions during basic forearm conducting, the forearm—hand—baton unit could be controlled primarily by the biceps muscle. The change of direction of the unit at the instant of the beat point sent gentle vibrations through a relaxed arm and shoulder into the upper torso and spine. Conversely, movements of the upper body—left, right, up or down—reset the location of the conducting unit and/or enlarged the dimensions of the conducting field. In Barzin's opinion, the cross-influences of these actions added a *new dimension to the physical language of conducting.*

a. The one-beat pattern

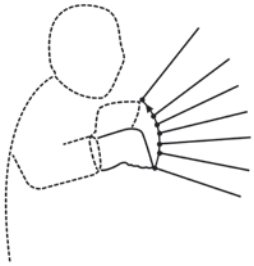
b. Shoulder as axis of motion
Dvorak, *Symphonic Variations on an Original Theme*



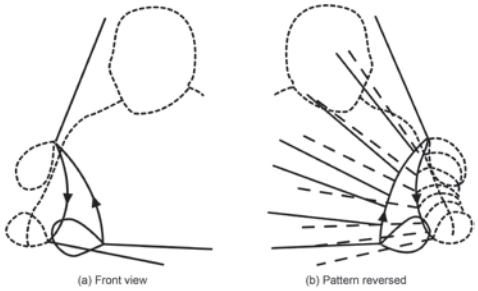
c. Shoulder and elbow as axes of motion
Wagner, *Tannhauser*. "Overture and Bacchanale"



d. Elbow as axis of motion
Rossini, *William Tell* Overture



e. Wrist as axis of motion
Verdi, *Aida*, Act II



f. Arm rotation as axis of motion
Respighi, *Pines of Rome III*

Figure 2.4

Broadly speaking, the images presented in Figure 2.4 capture the hierarchy of motions that comprised Toscanini's basic conducting vocabulary. The shoulder axis (2.4 b.) was used for full-arm beats in broad, weighted passages. It also placed the elbow in proper position for conducting strokes originating at or beyond the elbow axis. The elbow axis (fig. 2.4 d.) served as a fulcrum for the forearm. The wrist axis, whether used independently (fig. 2.4 e.) or in conjunction with forearm rotation (fig. 2.4 f), produced the subtle musical messages of character, style and artistry. (Leyden 51, 27–30, 32, 33)

Toscanini's arm rotation as pictured in Fig 2.4 f. occurred infrequently. Most of the rotations, although slight, took place during his standard conducting, usually when the baton changed direction, either at the ictus or at the apex of the baton stroke. Hints of small rotations can be noted in the live examples portrayed here, especially at the high point of certain rebounds.

Whether Toscanini's conducting was originally intuitive or gradually became a hybrid of myriad influences, at the time of the production of the NBC Symphony's kinescopes (1948-1952) he had been conducting for some 60 years; his gestures, therefore, were polished yet spontaneous representations of his lifelong physical and musical vocabulary.

A vital by-product of the arc motion (Fig. 2.4) was the creation of a depth-of-field or third dimension to each stroke. This assisted musicians, no matter where in the orchestra they were seated, to predict the instant of the next beat, ictus or, in the words of Barzin, "gravity point" in a rather precise manner. Further, it enhanced the conductor's sense of the

gravitational pull exerted on one's baton/arm movements toward and away from the gravity (focal) point of each stroke.[12]

Given that Toscanini's baton operated under gravity's influence, the baton's stroke size was adjusted as much for tempo as for dynamics. Since falling objects travel at a fixed speed, a fast tempo would elicit a small stroke, a slow tempo a larger one; the longer the beat's duration, the further the baton needed to travel.

The concept initiated by Toscanini's tempo/stroke-size relationship was what Barzin referred to as the "conducting lens." In a slow tempo the lens is wide open and the field of beating is large; in a fast tempo the reverse is true.[13] This principle was operative not only *while* conducting but could also be used to determine the position of the body and baton *before* the preparatory beat was given. Barzin regularly utilized the practice.[14]

An anecdote by Hugo Burghauser strongly suggests that Toscanini did likewise. Burghauser recalled that while on a tour with the Vienna Philharmonic, . . .

> Toscanini happened to conduct with us *Pictures At An Exhibition* [. . . and by mistake] he started—instead of 'Tuileries'—'Bydlo'[. . .] causing a phenomenon [. . .] which not one of us, and hardly Toscanini himself ever experienced: *not one musician started to play!* . . . Toscanini conducted in the air, and not one sound occurred! Toscanini, for a tenth of a second, was flabbergasted [. . .] in another tenth of a second, he realized [. . .] he had conducted the beginning of 'Bydlo', which was very different in dynamic character [and tempo]. And with an almost indiscernible nod, he gave the right dynamic sign [and preparatory position . . .] and then the orchestra, most harmoniously [. . .] started to play. Why [did this happen]? Because his *Zeichengebung*, his gesture for communication and conducting is so unmistakable in its *one possible meaning* [emphasis added] that you cannot take it as meaning anything else; and you say: 'Sorry; he's mistaken; I don't play.' But that a *hundred people* should have this immediate mental [. . . connection]—this happened with no other conductor in my fifty years of playing. (Burghauser qtd. in Marek 158)

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[12] Under the influence of gravity, the baton's travel speed—unless consciously altered—is reasonably consistent in a given tempo.

[13] Understandably, loud or soft dynamics would, respectively, enlarge or reduce the stroke sizes within a given tempo.

[14] Kathleen Wilber, a well-known New York horn player who performed under Barzin at the National Orchestral Association, Ballet Society and The New York City Ballet, observed that the orchestra always derived *in advance* the approximate starting tempo of any work from the physical position Barzin would assume prior to beginning a selection (Wilber interview, ca. 1972).

Comparisons of Conducting Patterns Published 1950-1968

Finally, a comparison of the Toscanini patterns with the patterns shown in [. . . three] textbooks on conducting suggests that the concept of centralized beat patterns is unique.[15] (Leyden i)

Figure 2.5 illustrates 3/4 and 4/4 conducting patterns as they appear in the Leyden dissertation. (Leyden 298-299)

From left to right they are: Toscanini and, as represented in their conducting books, Max Rudolf, Elisabeth A. H. Green and Brock McElheran, respectively.[16] Max Rudolf's renowned text offers an excellent compendium of the German conducting tradition; Elizabeth Green's popular book draws much of its content from the conducting principles of Nikolai Malko; and Brock McElheren's work presents many examples of the flowing choral conductor's art.

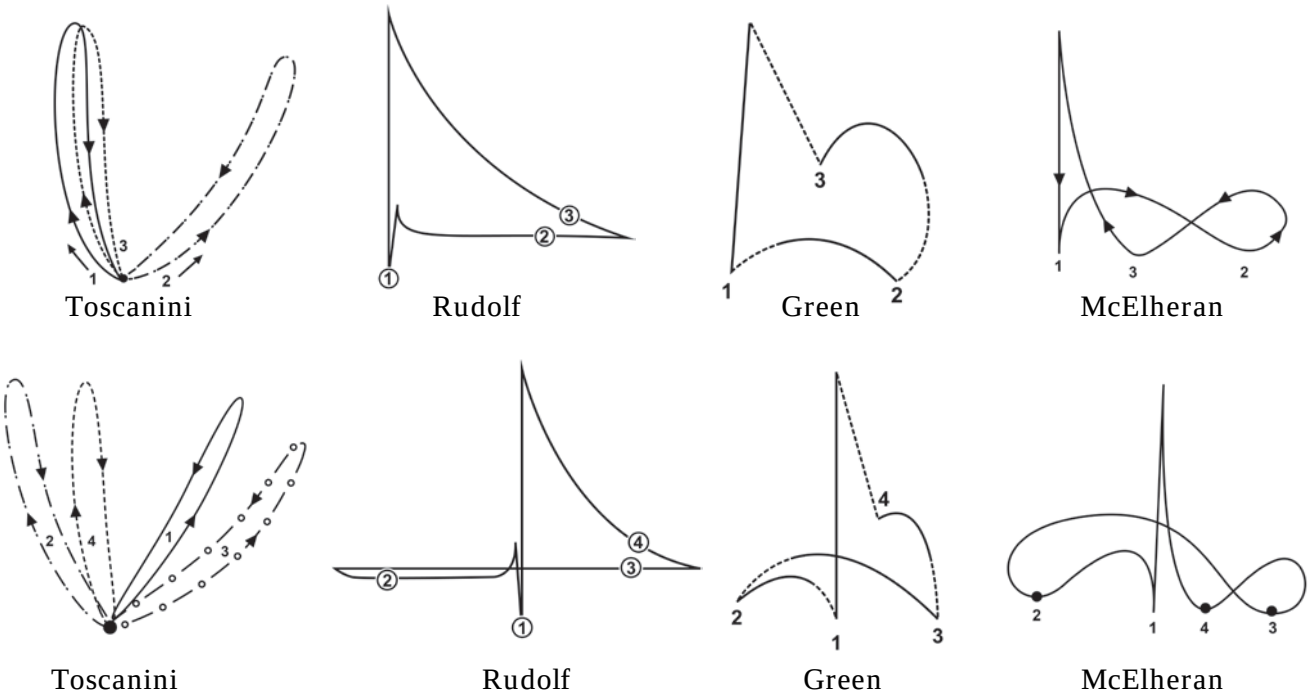

Figure 2.5

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[15] It is indeed possible that Toscanini's centered conducting style was unique early in his career since, in the words of Elliott Galkin, he was "self-taught in conducting. . . . " (Galkin 649) However, as the 20th century progressed, centered and center-balanced conducting began to emerge around the world. Some of that proliferation may have been influenced by Toscanini's conducting style, seen in Italy as early as the late 1880s and in the United States from 1908 forward. (See Part 3)

[16] Max Rudolf, *The Grammar of Conducting*, (New York: G. Schirmer Inc. 1950); Elizabeth A.H. Green, *The Modern Conductor*, 7th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1961); and Brock McElheran, *Conducting Technique for Beginners and Professionals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966).

Live Conducting Patterns

[Author's Note: It is suggested that the reader photocopy pp. 10-16, which will facilitate a side-by-side comparison of the music/baton graphics and the author's analyses thereof. Insights into Toscanini's gestures derive from the author's years of study with Leon Barzin, who was the most renowned American disciple of Arturo Toscanini.]

Example 1 *The Ride of the Valkyries* by Richard Wagner, mm. 13-16

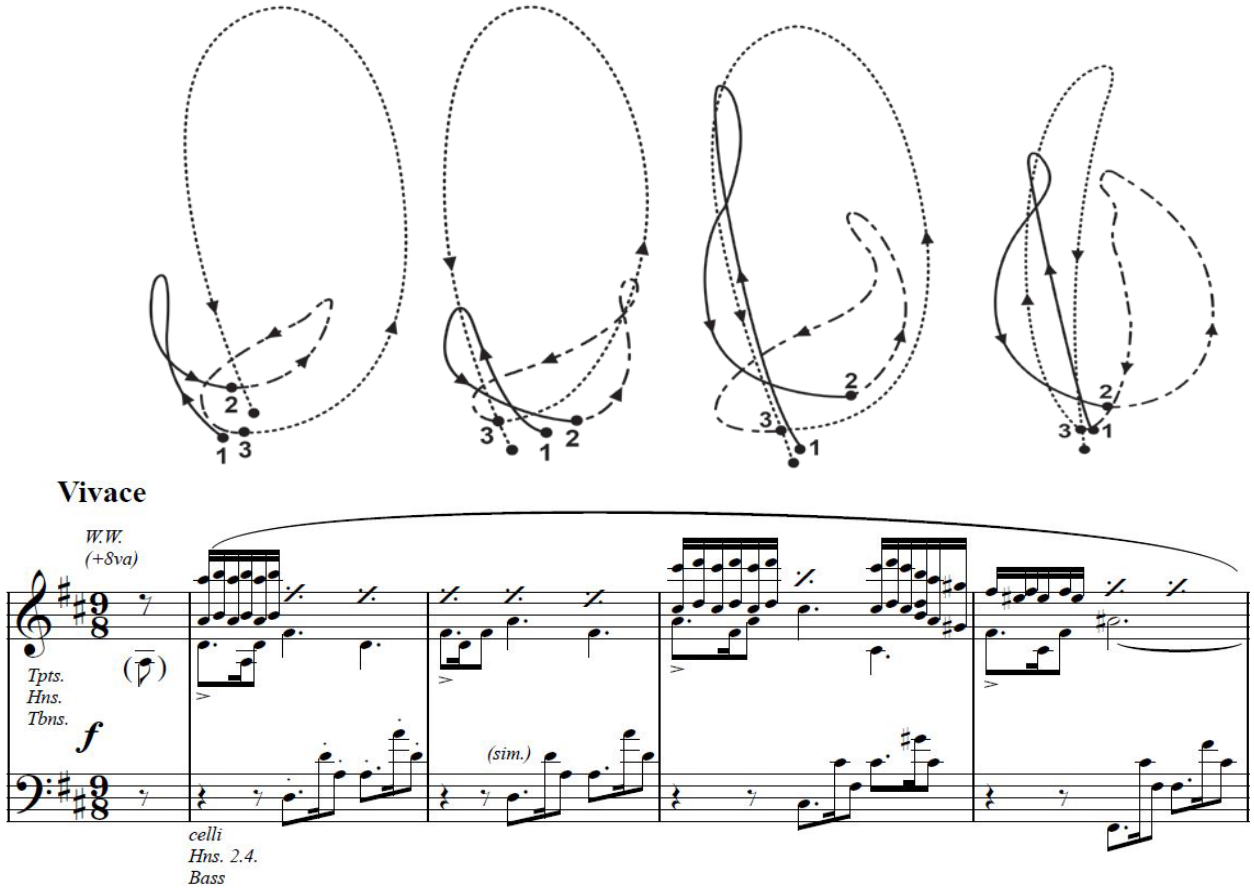

Figure 2.6

In the opinion of the author, the most fascinating and informative entries in Norman Leyden's dissertation are those which present piano reductions of short passages from the standard orchestral repertoire, and above which are displayed graphic representations of Toscanini's baton movements derived from the NBC kinescopes.

The four graphics presented here demonstrate the freedom, spontaneity and precision of Toscanini's baton strokes (often referred to as "paddling and stirring"). They illustrate use of the

temporal pathway discussed earlier. Although Norman Leyden's "Composites of Abstracts" serve as excellent models of Toscanini's *basic* patterns, it is not until one actually views his conducting on a video or in the Leyden dissertation that an informed understanding of Toscanini's technique emerges.

[Click here for video of Example 1] The first example is from Richard Wagner's *The Ride of the Valkyries* (Figure 2.6). In the theme's first three measures, it appears that Toscanini purposely alternates rhythmic precision and dynamic intensity on beats 1 and 2 with propulsion on beat 3. (Leyden 105). The sweeping semi-circular third beat seems to *demand* an accent on the following downbeat and *discourage* one on the second beat—the melodic high point of each measure. This juxtaposition of power and propulsion creates a striking size difference in the conducting strokes.[17]

Although Wagner does not indicate a *crescendo* in this passage, the natural rise and fall of the melodic line suggests a gradual dynamic increase for mm. 13-15 with a slight relaxation in m. 16. The phrase shape is reflected simply via gradations in the stroke sizes. To draw attention to the half cadence at m. 16, beat three is reversed from a counter-clockwise to a clockwise format and placed to the left of the vertical plane. It is noteworthy that Toscanini's baton skills convey the musical power, precision, propulsion and phrase shape of the excerpt virtually *simultaneously*. And, given all the information and emotion being communicated, it is surprising that the beat points remain as closely grouped as they are.

The *Valkyries* excerpt is in 9/8, a meter containing a ternary division within each beat. Toscanini modulated his baton speed to show the inner-beat feeling of "three." He accomplished this by slowing the rebounds from each *ictus* to fill about 2/3rds of the beat and accelerating the remainder of the stroke toward the next *ictus* to fill the remaining 1/3rd. That formula produced the "one-and-uh" stroke division seen in Part 3, Mario Oneglia's semi-subdivided 2/4 (6/8) pattern.[18]

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[17] Frank Brieff, violist in the NBC Symphony, noted that Toscanini favored larger beats than those used by most of his contemporaries. Brieff was quick to add, however, that the orchestra derived most of its dynamic information from the *character* of the maestro's beats, not their *size*.

[18] Since the Leyden graphics do not capture an increase or decrease of speed, the best source for such information would be the Toscanini videos. To gauge his baton speed in the printed excerpts seen here, the selection's tempo and character, together with the impact of gravity, pendulum, arcs, ellipses and the binary/ternary nature of each beat should be considered.

Example 2 *The Redemption* by Cesar Franck. "Symphonic Interlude," mm. 1-6

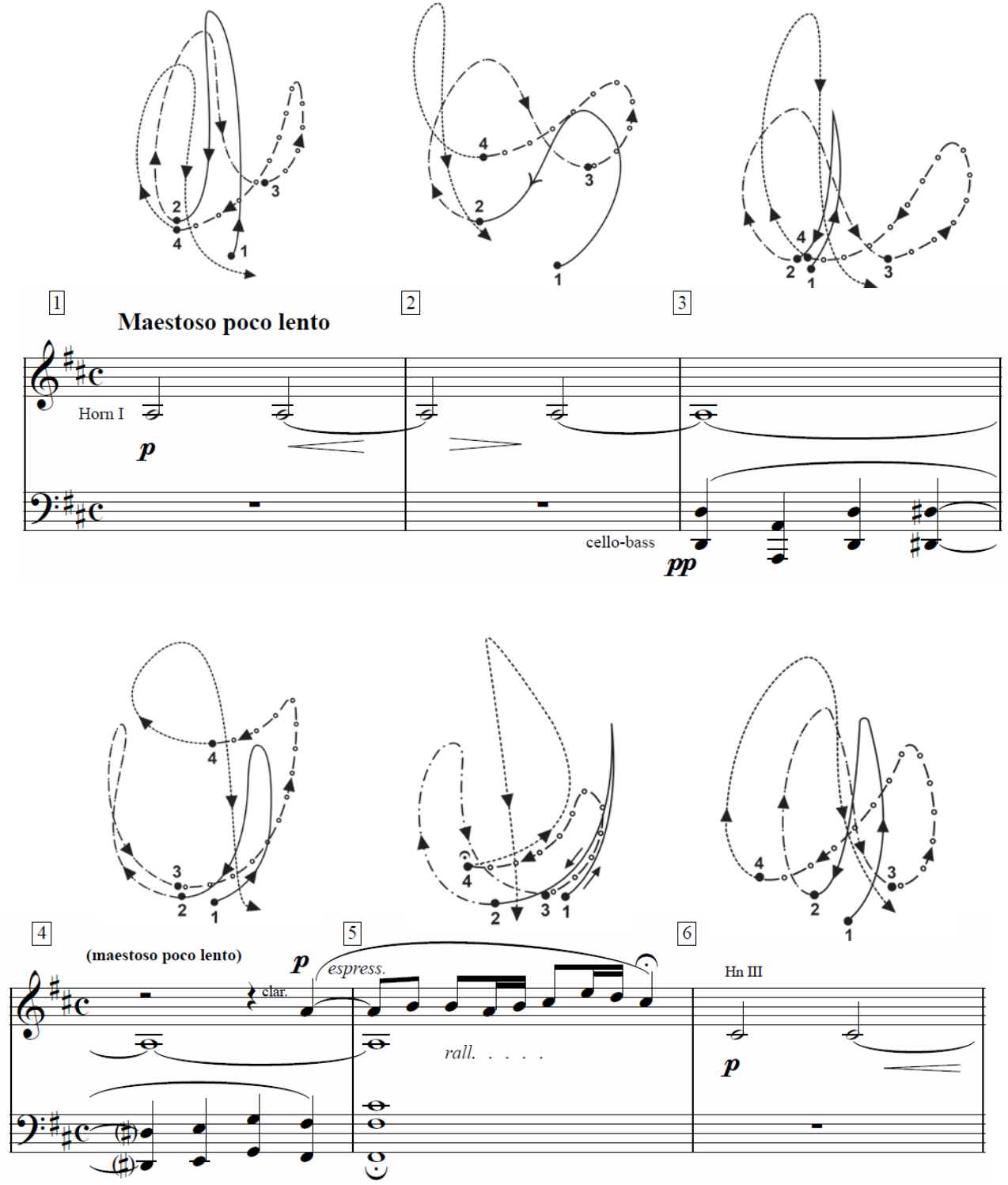

Figure 2.7

[Click here for video of Example 2] Example 2, the opening of Franck's "Symphonic Interlude," begins softly with the solo horn.[19] (Figure 2.7, Leyden 119-120) Toscanini prepares the second horn note (beat 3) with an elevated 2nd-beat rebound, giving a higher placement to the 3rd beat for visual clarity. The strokes that mirror the gentle *crescendo* of the tie use a clockwise circle, have a medium size that move laterally into the downbeat of m. 2. There follow smaller circular strokes, again somewhat elevated, leading to the horn note on beat 3.[20] The height and airy rebound of beat 4 prepares the entrance of the celli and basses on the downbeat of m. 3. Although the cello/bass line is thematically important, Toscanini's strokes remain relatively modest due to the *pp* dynamic; again, the beat-points are approached with pendulum-like motions and placed on a horizontal plane to avoid any implication of accent or *crescendo*. The higher rebound of beat 4 moves the line forward and prepares the slight musical expansion of the tie into the downbeat of m. 4.

With larger pendulum strokes animating the low-string line, Toscanini uses a high subdivided stroke on the 3rd beat rebound which serves as a preparation for the clarinet entrance on beat 4. The elevated rebound of beat 4 prepares the downbeat chord in m. 5 which places a *fermata* on all instruments except the clarinet.

Toscanini's *rallentando* into the clarinet *fermata* in m. 5 in not easily understood, given the diagram alone. However, if one feels the 16th-note pulsation within each beat, the tempo's relaxation can be better understood.[21] In the 1952 kinescope of this selection, Toscanini floats the baton to his right at waist level during the initial phase of the *fermata*. He then uses a left-hand cutoff to release the *fermata* while simultaneously executing a right-hand preparatory gesture into the downbeat of m. 6. Being musically similar, the pattern of m. 6 resembles that of m. 1 but with a slightly more expansive and forward-moving flavor.

[19] A composite of Toscanini's four-beat pattern can be referenced in Figures 2.2 and 2.10.

[20] See Galkin (669-670), quoted in Part 2, regarding Furtwängler's "stratified" or "*étagère conducting*."

[21] The binary nature of each stroke aids in identifying the location of the half-beats.

Example 3 *The Pines of Rome* by Ottorino Respighi, Mvt. II, *Pini presso una catacomba,* mm. 59-62

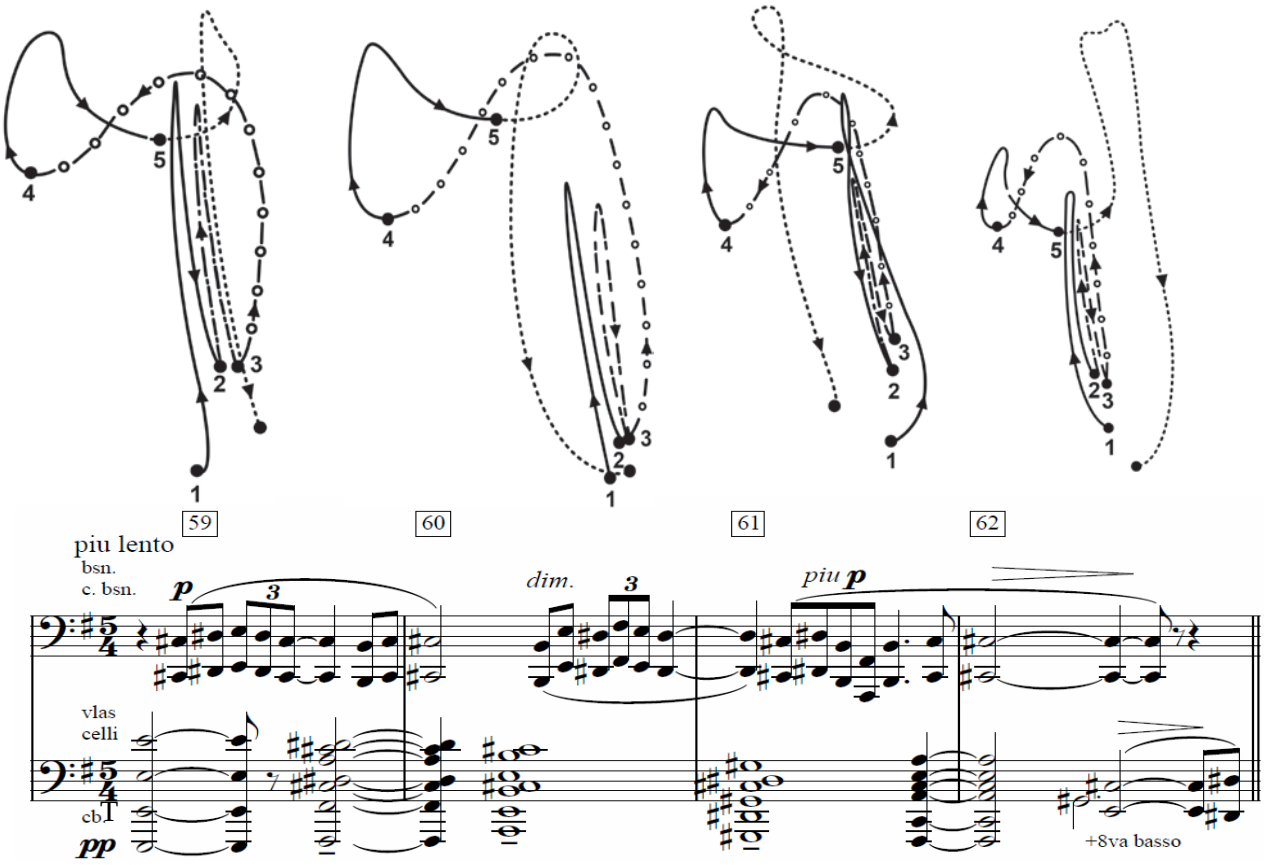

Figure 2.8

[Click here for video of Example 3] The *piu lento* shown in Figure 2.8 begins at m. 59 and features a chant-like melody scored in the bassoons. (Leyden 175) Since this *piu lento* segment is approached by a *rallentando*, Toscanini shortens the second beat stroke of m. 59 to add precision to the new tempo while signaling the entrance of the bassoons and their *piano* dynamic. The triplet figure of beat 3 animates the melodic line and is reflected by a graceful upward baton motion to a higher horizontal plane, clearly indicating the 3 + 2 metric arrangement of the passage; it also prepares the *tenuto* half-note in the low strings. The first 8th note of beat 5 is prepared by a smooth lift of the beat 4 rebound and a half-beat placement at the peak of the stroke. The motion within beat 5 is synchronized to the melodic 8th notes of the chant melody.

The first beat of m. 60 returns to the lower plane; a precise second beat marks the "church-bells" *tenuto* chord in the low strings. Beat 5 traces a counter-clockwise motion which passes laterally through beat 1 of m. 61, providing a "please don't play" notice for those having the tie in the melody and a low baton position for those playing the downbeat *tenuto* chord.

Toscanini's conducting pattern for beats 2 and 3 of each measure is similar. However, in measure 61, he shortens the stroke between beats 3 and 4 to give precision to the melody note "B" on beat 4 and the chord on beat 5. For the pickup 8th-note "C#" of beat 5, Toscanini appears to use a quick arm rotation at the rebound. To reflect the *diminuendo* and "*piu p*" in

mm. 60 and 61 respectively, stroke sizes are reduced. The baton motion used to show the 8th-note placements at the end of mm. 61 and 62 feature a high rebound and arm rotation.

The strokes on beats 1 and 3 of m. 62 give precision to the melody "C#" and the low chord, respectively. The upward rebound of beat 4 suggests a release point for the tied melody notes. The high floating fifth beat may represent an alert to the orchestra for the start of the third movement; a noticeable wrist rotation at the half beat mirrors the 8th-note bass-line motion into the downbeat of Movement III (not shown).

Example 4 *The Pines of Rome* by Ottorino Respighi, Mvt. II, *"Pini presso una catacomba,"* mm. 17-20

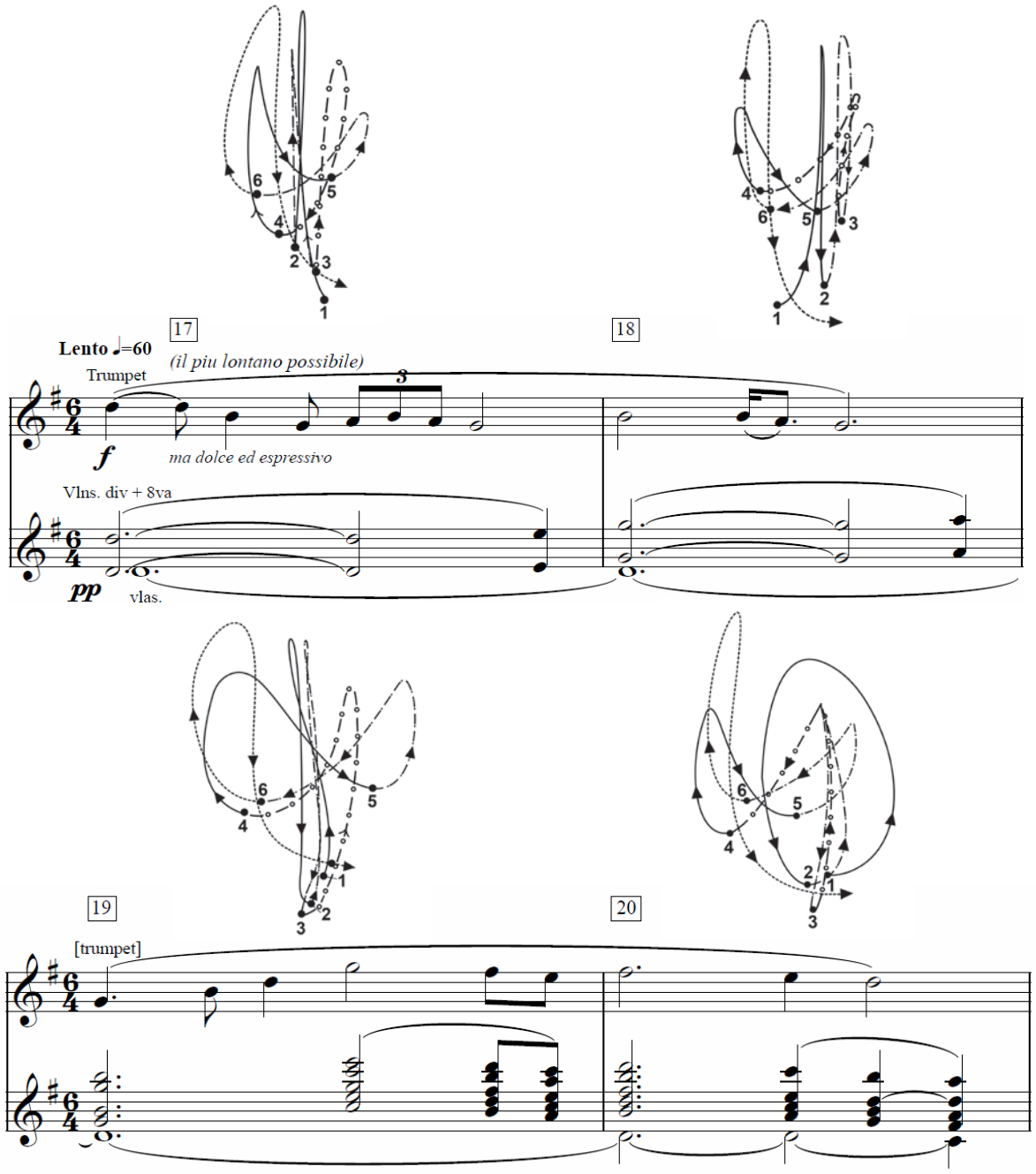

Figure 2.9

[Click here for video of Example 4] In the lovely trumpet solo marked "*Forte, ma dolce ed espressivo*" and "*il piu lontano possible*," (Figure 2.9) Toscanini appears to adopt an accompaniment style of conducting. In the second half of m. 17, he uses flowing, pendulum-like motions to blend with the trumpet's gentle triplet and singing half note. (Leyden 188-189) The muted string accompaniment marked *pp* produces a silken but somber carpet of sound. In m. 18, the third beat stroke is shortened to give precision to the dotted rhythm in the solo while the 4th and 5th beats move horizontally on a higher plane, reflecting the smooth, steady tone of the trumpet's dotted half note.[22] The rebound of beat 5 prepares the 6th beat in the strings.

In mm. 19 and 20, a slight emotional intensification is reflected by higher and wider strokes. At m. 19, in order to assist the trumpet in its ascension to the high G, Toscanini begins horizontal gestures at the halfway point of beat 3, and arrives at beats 4, 5 and 6 at the bottom of each pendulum stroke.

To eliminate a possible trumpet accent on the high F# and G in mm. 20 and 21 (m. 21 not shown), each downbeat gesture is approached laterally from the left, thus eliminating a vertical stroke which could imply an accent. The consecutive counter-clockwise circles formed by the last half beat of m. 19 and the first 1 1/2 beats of m. 20 are hints of Toscanini's well-known personal trait—the so-called "soup stirring."

The contents of Parts 2 and 3 support the historical assessment that Arturo Toscanini was one of the most influential conductors of the 20th century. His personal determination to eradicate over-personalized interpretations, especially those containing excesses of tempo flexibility, moved the music world's interpretive needle from overly romantic renditions to a cleaner classicism based on Toscanini's personal mantra, "*come e scrito*" ("as it is written") and the sanctity of the composer's score.

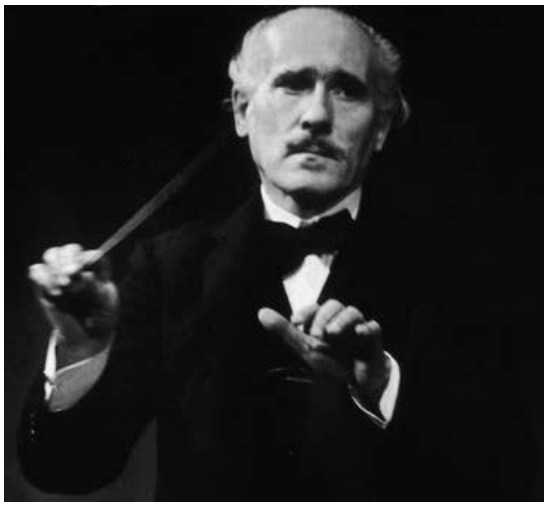

Figure 2.10
Arturo Toscanini

Regarding the interpretation of contemporary works, composer/music critic Virgil Thomson observed that: "Toscanini has [. . .] given straightforwardness to all interpretation in our time that cannot fail to facilitate the execution problem for living composers."[23]

Less celebrated during Toscanini's lifetime was his baton technique. described by Thomson as having "[. . .] radically simplified the technique of orchestral conducting. . . . " That technique is the centerpiece of this, Part 2. The influence of Toscanini's centered conducting on succeeding generations of conductors and conducting will be surveyed in Parts 3 and 4.

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[22] In the patterns positioned above each measure of an example, one observes movements of Toscanini's baton that are more horizontal than those seen in the abstracts. These are generated by musical content. See Schuller's statement (60n) on Toscanini's vertical beat patterns quoted in Part 2.

[23] Thomson's reference to the favorable impact on contemporary composers and compositions of Toscanini's straightforward interpretations should be accorded open-minded reflection, especially in light of published and anecdotal commentaries to the contrary.

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Media Credits

Figure 2.1 Norman F. Leyden

Undated photo. Courtesy of Oregon Symphony Orchestra archives. Source: http://tickets.orsymphony.org/single/eventDetail.aspx?p=2647. Web: 28 March 2016.

Figs. 2.2-2.9 Conducting patterns of Toscanini

Leyden, Norman F. "A Study and Analysis of the Conducting Patterns of Arturo Toscanini as Demonstrated in Kinescope Films." Diss. Columbia University, 1968.

Hyland Graphic Design & Advertising, Matthew Weiss, president. The baton graphics shown in Part 2 are electronic representations of the hand-drawn images that appear in Norman Leyden's dissertation. The author wishes to express sincere gratitude and admiration to Matthew Weiss for his time and skill which produced such outstanding results.

Matthew Hill, composer and choral director in the West Chester Area School District, created digital replicas of the four handwritten musical examples found in Norman Leyden's dissertation.

Video examples extracted from: "Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra: The Television Concerts - 1948-52," Vols. 5 and 9, distributed by Testament UK.

Figure 2.1o Arturo Toscanini

1947 photo of Arturo Toscanini. Blogpost by Peter Khoury, "On West 69th Street, a Toscanini Connection," 25 Nov. 2012. Source: http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/11/25/toscanini-me-the-west-69th-street-connection/. Web: 28 March 2016.