

The Many Themes of Beethoven's Op. 2, No. 3, and Their Stylistic Context

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Abstract

Musicians have long disagreed about how to parse the exposition of Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Sonata in C, Op. 2/3/I, particularly as regards determining the formal function of the G minor theme of mm. 27–46. Many of these disagreements result from viewing the form of this exposition primarily through concepts that developed during the nineteenth century and formal models that are particularly well suited for Beethoven's later works. However, especially considering the relatively early date of its composition, it might be more fruitful to consider the form of the exposition of Op. 2/3/I in relation to layouts discussed by eighteenth-century theorists, layouts that may be witnessed in many works composed during this era. When viewed in relation to these earlier frameworks, the form of the exposition of Op. 2/3/I may be understood to be quite conventional. Furthermore, such a historically based vantage point can significantly impact the understanding of this exposition's voice-leading structure.

Where do the standard theme sections begin and end in the exposition from Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Sonata in C, Op. 2, No. 3? This question has long been a source of contention among music analysts. Owing to disagreements regarding its parsing, some have proposed that Op. 2/3/I's exposition evinces a type of expressive ambiguity, one that derives from a collision of formal functions.¹

Yet it may instead be that the difficulties in dealing with this exposition's layout result not so much from ambiguity in the work itself, but from its incompatibility with the formal models that are commonly used in modern analytic approaches to sonata form. These models are largely based on theoretic concepts that stem from the mid-nineteenth century and beyond. To a great extent, they have been influenced by the practices witnessed in Beethoven's compositions, including a number that were penned long after the publication of his Op. 2 sonatas. Naturally, when he composed his Op. 2 sonatas, neither Beethoven nor his audiences would have known of his later works or their conventions. As such, when compared to Beethoven's oeuvre as a whole, the procedures witnessed in these early sonatas understandably might seem somewhat unusual.

On the other hand, when matched with practices found in other compositions composed around the same time or before, as discussed in writings from the era, many of the seemingly odd formal features from Op. 2/3/I may be seen as quite typical of their style. This helps set in relief those stylistic features of the movement that are indeed truly special. And in a larger sense, examining this movement's exposition within its eighteenth-century stylistic context helps shed light on how one might approach form in Beethoven's early practice in general.

Basic layout of exposition

As depicted in Ex. 1, the exposition of Op. 2/3/I may be understood as governed by four, clearly articulated sections, each firmly marked by a cadential break (that is, by a cadence followed by a conspicuous, brief pause in the melody, accompaniment, or both). Each of these sections begins with a soft theme that is variously hesitant, restless, or lyrical and that eventually gives way to a passage that drives toward a cadence in a loud, active manner.²

The succession of these sections appears to convey a type of narrative, one whose tonal and cadential framework is quite clear and

¹ See, for instance, comments in Hunt 2014: 250; see also Dahlhaus 1987, Drabkin 2004, Kirillina 2009, and Caplin 2010, which are discussed below.

² A layout along these lines has been explicitly offered by Keym (2021).

Example 1. Ludwig van Beethoven, Sonata for Piano in C, Op. 2/3/I (1795–96): chart depicting basic design of the exposition, mm. 1–90 (HC = half cadence; PAC = perfect authentic cadence).

home key half-cadential caesura		half-cadential caesura in key of V	
segment 1 (C major, ends with HC) <i>soft theme</i> , hesitant: mm. 1–13 (ends w/ elided PAC) <i>loud, active passage</i> : 13–26	segment 2 (G minor, ends with HC) <i>soft theme</i> , restless: 27–39 <i>loud, active passage</i> : 39–45/46	segment 3 (G major, ends with PAC) <i>soft theme</i> , cantabile: 47–61 <i>loud, active passage</i> : 61–77 (cf. 13–26)	segment 4 (G major, ends with PAC) <i>soft theme</i> , hesitant: 77 ³ –85 <i>loud, active passage</i> : 85–90

Example 2. Comparison of possible parsing of the exposition from Beethoven, Sonata for Piano in C, Op. 2/3/I, modeled after published analyses:

- (a) after Kamien and Wagner (1997), Cutler (2009), and Weiß et al. (2020);
(b) after Lebert and Faisst (1876), Wiens (2010), and Sanguinetti (2020);
(c) after Marx (1857), Harding (1901), and Heine (2014); and
(d) after Tovey (1931), Dahlhaus (1987), and Caplin (2010).

mm. 1–13	13–26	27–46	47–77	77 ³ –90
(a) first theme		transition	second theme	closing theme
(b) first theme	transition, pt. 1	transition, pt. 2	second theme	closing theme
(c) first theme	transition	second theme, pt. 1	second theme, pt. 2	closing theme
(d) first theme	transition	transition/second theme	second theme	closing theme

logical. What is not so obvious, however, is how the sections should be labeled using the standard terminology that is common in modern discussions of musical form. Specifically, where should the beginning and ending of the transition be located? And which of the two half-cadential breaks should be understood as the medial caesura – that is, as the cadential break that divides the end of the transition from the start of the second theme group?

Ex. 2 offers some possible parsings for this exposition. All of these readings are plausible and conform to standard modern labeling practices. Furthermore, each of these is in line with one that

has been proposed in multiple published analyses over the course of more than a century and a half.³

G minor theme as the transition

For instance, consider the reading of Ex. 2a, which labels the G minor theme of mm. 27–46 as the transition. Among those who have suggested such a labeling are Roger Kamien and Naphtali Wagner (1997: 4, n. 7) and Timothy Cutler (2009: 207), who each refer to this passage a “bridge theme,” and Christof Weiß et al. (2020: 203), who similarly declare that it is to be understood as a “transition.” In support of these readings, this passage does share much in common with what is usually labeled as a transition. After all, it is

³ Following the most widely adopted modern convention, the passage of mm. 77–90 is labeled throughout Ex. 2 as the closing theme, as are analogous passages in subsequent examples that follow the perfect authentic cadence in the secondary key. However, for reasons articulated in Caplin 1998: 122, some people may prefer to label such sections as either an additional second theme, a codetta, or something similar.

Example 3. Chart of Joseph Haydn, Symphony No. 56 in C/I (1774), mm. 1–99.

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V	
mm. 1–14, 15–28	29–42	53–83	83–99
first theme	transition	secondary theme	closing theme
Fanfare-like passage, repeated; begins and ends in key of C major, ends with HC in C.	Active energy gain, begins and ends in key of G, ends with HC in G.	Starts with lyrical contrasting theme; begins and ends in key of G, ends with PAC in G.	Begins and ends in key of G, ends with PAC in G.

- Despite beginning in key of V (G), the passage of mm. 29–42 clearly should be understood to function as a transition, and has consistently been labeled as such in published analyses of this movement.

relatively unstable, and it leads to a half-cadential break that paves the way for the entrance of a *dolce* theme in the secondary key.

To be sure, that this passage begins in a dominant key does tend to weaken the case for regarding mm. 27–46 as a transition. On the other hand, it is certainly possible for a passage that tentatively begins in the dominant key to nonetheless modulate to and thus “transition” to the dominant key in a deeper sense. Although not often explicitly discussed, the possibility for a transition to begin in the secondary key has been implicitly acknowledged in numerous published analyses, and rightly so.⁴ For instance, consider the passage of mm. 29–52 from Joseph Haydn’s Symphony No. 56/I (Ex. 3). Despite its literally starting in the key of G, surely this passage should be regarded as a transition that leads more assuredly to the key of G in a deeper sense as the passage unfolds, much as has been proposed in various published analyses of this movement.⁵ Using the same logic, one could well maintain that its opening in the minor form of the secondary key notwithstanding, the passage that begins in m. 27 of Beethoven’s Op. 2/3/I likewise could be fairly regarded as a transition.

G minor theme as second part of two-part transition

Ex. 2b above offers another possible parsing of Beethoven’s exposition. According to this reading, the transition begins a bit earlier than what is proposed in Ex. 2a, thereby forming a “two-part transition” that spans mm. 13–46. With this interpretation, the half-cadential break in m. 26 is understood as a rhetorical pause that appears in the middle of the transition. Such a reading is implied in the parsing published by Sigmund Lebert and Immanuel Faisst, who label mm. 13–26 and 27–46 as “modulation I” and “modulation II,” respectively (Lebert and Faisst 1876: 2–4). More recently, Carl Wiens likewise notes the plausibility of interpreting a two-part transition here (Wiens 2009: 49–57),⁶ as does Giorgio Sanguinetti (2020: 163), who argues that the passage of mm. 13–46 is ultimately best understood as forming a transition in two parts (“transizione in due parti”).

According to this reading presented in Ex. 2b, the first part of the transition leads to a half cadence in the home key, followed by a second part that leads to a stronger half cadence in the key of V. Such a layout for a two-part transition

⁴ In addition to Kamien and Wagner (1997), Cutler (2009), and Weiß et al. (2020), among the many others who analyze passages that tentatively start in the secondary key as transitions include Webster (1991: 57–59) re: Joseph Haydn’s Symphony No. 45; Caplin (1998: 133–134) re: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s K. 502; Hepokoski and Darcy (2006: 111) re: Mozart’s K. 183; Sanguinetti (2012: 290–291) re: a partimento by Giacomo Tritto; van Boer (2012: 724) re: Ignacio Jerusalem’s Overture in G; Suurpää (2014) re: Joseph Haydn’s Hob. XV:26/i; and Yust (2018: 74–75) re: Franz Xaver Richter’s Symphony 45. See also Martin (2015), who – contradicting an argument he put forth earlier when analyzing mm. 30–37 of “Zeffi retti lusinghieri” – reads mm. 20–32 of Mozart’s “Taurigkeit” as a transition (and appropriately so), despite this passage’s relatively close-knit sentential layout and its starting immediately in the secondary key. I discuss this issue at greater length in Burstein 2020: 113–115.

⁵ See, for instance, Webster 1997, Brown 2002: 156–157, and Diergarten 2012: 224; see also Burstein 2016a: 10–11 and Burstein 2020: 114.

⁶ On the basis of what happens in the recapitulation, Wiens in the end favors analyzing this exposition as involving a two-part subordinate theme (in the manner depicted in Ex. 2c), though he nonetheless insists that reading mm. 13–46 as a two-part transition remains a distinct possibility.

Example 4. Joseph Haydn, Symphony No. 43 in E-flat/I (1771), mm. 1–98.

		half-cadential caesura in home key	half-cadential caesura in key of V		
mm. 1–31	31–41	42–58	60–79	80–98	
Main theme presented in home key of C major; ends with elided PAC.	Active theme starts in home key, ends with HC followed by break in the melody.	New active theme starts in key of V, ends with HC followed by far stronger break.	Following filled-in caesura in mm. 58–59, lyrical theme (var. of main theme) in the key of V enters in m. 60.	Following PAC in m. 79, another passage in the key of V wraps up exposition.	
first theme	transition		second theme	closing theme	

- In another context, the theme that enters in m. 42 could have been understood as a second theme that follows a medial caesura.
- Here, however, it becomes clear – at least in retrospect – that mm. 42–58 form part of the transition, with the second theme entering in m. 60, following a medial caesura in mm. 58–59.

Example 5. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Quartet for Strings in E-flat, K. 171/IV (1773), mm. 1–71.

		half-cadential caesura in home key	half-cadential caesura in key of V		
mm. 1–8	9–12	13–27/28	29–71		
Main theme presented in home key of E-flat major; ends with PAC.	Flourish leads to HC in E-flat; either an appendix to the main theme or start of transition.	Active passage in key of V (B-flat), leads to HC in this key: clearly part of the transition.	Lyrical theme in the key of V, ends with a PAC in this key (64–71 = codetta).		
first theme	end of first theme, or start of transition	transition	second theme		

- Although it begins in the key of V and follows a sharp half-cadential caesura, the theme of mm. 13–28 is clearly best labeled as part of the transition, not as a second theme.

is by no means unusual. For instance, in the exposition from Joseph Haydn's Symphony No. 43/I, a transitional passage in mm. 31–41 leads to a sturdy half-cadential break in the home key, followed by a theme in the dominant key (Ex. 4). In another context, the break in m. 41 could have been heard as marking the medial caesura that precedes the second theme. As the movement continues, however, it becomes clear in retrospect that the stronger half-cadential break in mm. 58–59 serves as the medial caesura, and thus

that the new-key theme that enters in m. 42 is to be understood as the second half of a two-part transition.⁷

A similar layout may be witnessed in the finale of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Quartet for Strings in E-flat, K. 171 (Ex. 5). The half-cadential break following the home-key V (in m. 12) is much sharper here than the one in m. 41 of the Haydn movement charted in Ex. 4. Nevertheless, in the Mozart quartet, too, the first of the passages in the key of V (mm. 13–28) surely is best understood

⁷ Incidentally, the notion that the second part of a two-part transition may begin "in" the secondary key has been widely accepted within the scholarly literature. In addition to those cited in reference to Ex. 2b above, see discussion in Caplin 1998: 134–137, whose primary example of a two-part transition (from W. A. Mozart's K. 502/III) involves such a layout, as does Caplin's reading of L. Beethoven's Op. 36/IV (Caplin 1998: 275 n. 38).

Example 6. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Quartet for Strings in B-flat, K. 172/IV (1773), mm. 1–80.

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V	
mm. 1–16	17–23/26	27–41	42–57 (58–80= closing th.)
Main theme in home key of B-flat major; ends with PAC.	Active passage leads to HC in B-flat.	Lyrical theme in key of V (F), leads to HC in this key.	Active drive to PAC in m. 49 (and 57); clearly the end part of second theme.
first theme	transition	second theme, p. 1	second theme, p. 2

to form part of the transition, with the medial caesura coinciding with the second half-cadential break (in m. 28).⁸

Might the G minor passage from the exposition of Beethoven's Op. 2/3/I likewise be analyzed as the second half of a two-part transition, as suggested in Ex. 2b above? After all, like the passages labeled in these manners in Exx. 4–5, the G minor theme in Beethoven's movement involves an energetic, new-key theme that follows a half-cadential break on V and that concludes with a stronger half-cadential break on V of V. Also as in these other movements, the theme that follows the half-cadential break on V of V in Op. 2/3/I is lyrical, in a manner characteristic of what is more stereotypical for a second theme.

G minor theme as first part of two-part second theme

On the other hand, in Beethoven's exposition, the first new-key theme – that is, the passage in G minor – is more melodious and “theme-like” than what is usually labeled as either a transition or part of a transition. Owing to its tune-like character, one might be more tempted to label this G minor passage as the start of the second theme group. Such parsing would result in a two-part second theme, articulated by a rhetorical half-cadential break at its midpoint, as depicted in Ex. 2c. An analysis along these lines has been proposed by Adolf Bernhard Marx, who labels the G minor theme as the first *Seitensatz* and the G major theme as the second *Seitensatz* (Marx 1857: 291). Similar readings have likewise been offered by Henry Alfred Harding (1901: 6), who labels mm. 27–77 as the “2nd subject in G minor and G major,”

as well as by Erik Heine (2014: 10–13), who refers to this passage as a “two-part subordinate theme.”

A two-part second theme group that features a sharp half-cadential caesura in its middle is common in music of the late eighteenth century. A clear example of such a layout may be found in the exposition of W. A. Mozart's Quartet for Strings in B-flat, K. 172/IV (Ex. 6). In this Mozart movement, a lyrical, new-key passage that ends with a half cadence (mm. 27–41) is followed by a more active passage that ends with a perfect authentic cadence (mm. 42–57). This promotes the impression of a type of expanded antecedent-plus-continuation that spans mm. 27–57. The sense of the presence of a two-part second theme is admittedly somewhat weaker in Beethoven's Op. 2/3/I, where an active new-key theme precedes the more lyrical one, and where the two new-key themes are too expansive to readily be understood as embraced by a single thematic unit such as an antecedent-plus-continuation. Even so, the G minor theme in Op. 2/3/I is arguably stable enough to mark what could be fairly understood as the onset of a large, multi-section second theme group, especially considering that second themes often do begin in a somewhat volatile manner (cf. first movements of Beethoven's Op. 2/1 and Op. 2/2).

G minor theme as the both transition and second theme

A fourth possibility for parsing the exposition of Beethoven's Op. 2/3/I is depicted in the chart of Ex. 1d, which resists placing the G minor theme into just one theme group or the other. Among those who seem to adopt this reading

⁸ It is also possible to read mm. 9–12 here as the appendix to the main theme group. In such a case, mm. 13–28 would be understood as the start of the transition, in the manner of the exposition charted in Ex. 3.

is Donald Francis Tovey. In his celebrated book on Beethoven's piano sonatas, Tovey (1931: 24–25) hedges in his analysis of this movement's exposition by labeling mm. 27–76 as the "Second Group (or Transition and Second Group)."⁹ That Tovey should seem to waffle on his labeling of the passage of mm. 27–46 makes much sense, since this passage does share many features with what is often labeled as a transition, as well many features with what is often labeled as a second theme.

Along similar lines, Carl Dahlhaus suggests that the passage of mm. 27–46 evinces a type of formal ambiguity (Dahlhaus 1987: 140 [1991: 104]). Dahlhaus labels this passage as a modulatory "lyrical episode" ("kantable Episode") that appears between a transition (*Überleitung*, mm. 13–26) and a subordinate theme (*Seitensatz*). Dahlhaus does wonder aloud whether the lyrical episode of mm. 27–46 could be grouped either as part of the transition or as part of the subordinate theme group. Although he admits to finding the former classification slightly more appealing, however, ultimately he decides against determining the matter one way or the other and instead argues that the "paradox of the structure [...] represents its aesthetically decisive attribute."¹⁰

G minor theme as part of "trimodular block"

Another approach for dealing with this exposition is to revel in the expressive implications of its conflicting formal signals. Such a tactic is reflected in a series of analyses of this exposition offered by James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy (see Hepokoski and Darcy 1997: 148–149, Hepokoski and Darcy 2006: 172, and Darcy 2008: 103–105). Although their proposed parsing for this exposition is similar to what is seen in Ex. 2c above, Hepokoski and Darcy resist labeling mm. 27–77 simply as a second theme group, nor are they content (in the manner of Ex. 2d) merely to acknowledge the apparent ambiguity and then move on. Rather, they propose that this

exposition's apparent formal ambiguities give rise to a series of partly derailed expectations that have substantial hermeneutic ramifications. The scenario that results gives rise to what they portray as a type of three-staged drama, which they call the "trimodular block" (abbreviated as "TMB").¹¹ Citing the exposition of Op. 2/3/I as a classic example of the trimodular block (Ex. 7), Hepokoski and Darcy describe the unfolding of its three "modules" ("TM¹," "TM²," and "TM³," respectively) in this manner:

TM¹: The half-cadential break of m. 26 establishes a medial caesura that marks the end of "TR" (that is, the Transition Zone) and thereby opens up "S-space" (that is, "Secondary-Theme-Zone-space"). Despite its surprising appearance in the minor mode, the G minor theme that enters in m. 27 is expected to function as a standard second theme that leads directly to the "EEC" (that is, the perfect authentic cadence that demarcates the end of the "essential" part of the exposition). In an apparent reaction to its unusual minor mode, however, the unfolding of this theme is thrown off course. As Hepokoski and Darcy explain (2006: 172),

TM¹, or the first S-idea, begins in m. 27 in an expressively "flawed" G minor [...] This "flaw," it seems, will have to be expunged through the TMB strategy. Beginning in the dominant minor, the troubled TM¹ either cannot or chooses not to sustain its G minor, the mark of its imperfection.

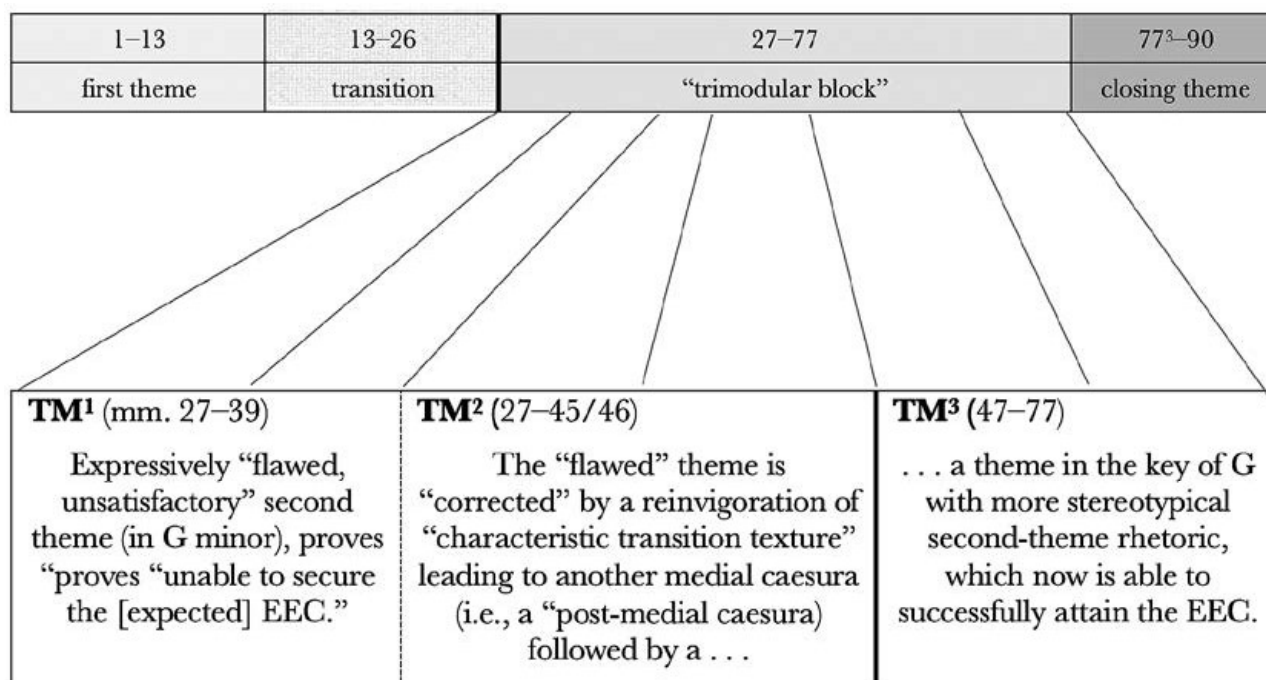
TM²: As though under the sway of the oddness of its mode, the purported second theme – the TM¹ – proves "unable to secure the EEC" as expected. Instead, it dissolves into a renewed transitional texture that leads to a second half-cadential break (mm. 45–46). Since the music has already entered into S-space, this additional caesura is to be understood as a "post-medial caesura."

⁹ For similarly "hedged" parsing of this exposition, see Drabkin 2004: 422 n. 14.

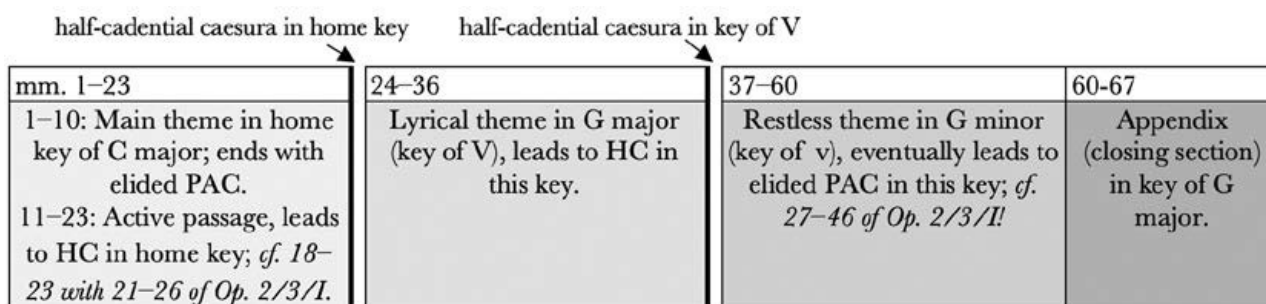
¹⁰ See also discussions by Larissa Kirillina (2009: 27–28) and by William Caplin (2010: 73–74), the latter of whom – regarding the G minor passage – comments that "we must sometimes be content to live with some formal ambiguities without necessarily insisting upon a final-state resolution of them."

¹¹ Their explanation of the trimodular block – from which the following paragraphs quote liberally – may be found in Hepokoski and Darcy 2006: 170–177; see also Hepokoski and Darcy 1997: 145–150. See also discussion in Long 2018: 68–78.

Example 7. Chart of exposition of Beethoven, Op. 2/3/I, mm. 1–90, in which mm. 27–77 are interpreted as a “trimodular block.”



Example 8. Chart of Beethoven, Quartet for Piano and Strings in C, WoO 36/3/I (1785), mm. 1–67.



TM³: The post-medial caesura is then followed by another second theme, one that bears the rhetoric more characteristic of a standard second theme and that “represents a ‘second chance’” for a successful motion to the EEC. This “more successful” second theme takes the guise of the G major passage that enters in m. 47 and drives without further interruption to the EEC in m. 77.

In recent years, this layout proposed by Hepokoski and Darcy has proven quite popular among music theorists. The narrative suggested by the concept of the trimodular block is certainly a thrilling one, which no doubt contributes to

its appeal. Yet this narrative depends largely on assumptions regarding sonata-form norms that developed during the nineteenth century, assumptions that do not necessarily match those that would have been in place at the time Beethoven composed his Op. 2 piano sonatas.

Consider the notion that the G minor passage is to be regarded as a somehow “flawed” second theme that seems unable to successfully lead directly to the EEC. It so happens that this theme matches nearly verbatim a G minor theme found in an earlier composition by Beethoven. The exposition of this earlier movement, from Beethoven’s Quartet for Piano and Strings in

C, WoO 36/3/I, is charted in Ex. 8. Significantly, in this piano quartet movement, the G minor theme leads directly to the formal cadence in the secondary key – and thus in this context it presumably is not to be understood as “flawed” or unable to achieve the EEC.

The G minor theme in the exposition of Beethoven's Op. 2/3/I – much as in this piano quartet – likewise could have moved directly to a perfect authentic cadence without a break. However, this is just one of the possibilities, and it certainly is not the only outcome that could have been reasonably expected within this style. As seen above in Exx. 3–6, and as is discussed in more detail below, it was by no means uncommon or unexpected at the time for an exposition to feature two half-cadential breaks, each followed by a passage in the secondary key. With this in mind, instead of viewing the G minor theme as being unsuccessful in securing an EEC, it could be understood to *successfully* secure a half cadence in the key of V – something that could have well been expected as one of the standard, generic options in place at the time. As is discussed in the next section of this essay, the resulting layout is not only extremely normal for the style, but it was recognized as such in commentaries that appeared during the late 1700s.¹²

Eighteenth-century concepts

Punctuation form

Music theoretic writings published during the eighteenth-century tended to discuss musical form as governed primarily not by thematic groups or key areas, but by what is now known as “punctuation form,” which involves a series of motions toward “resting points.” Although a number of theorists from the second half of the eighteenth century discussed this concept,

punctuation form was explored most extensively in the third volume of Heinrich Christoph Koch's *Versuch einer Anleitung zur Komposition*, published in 1793. As Koch explains, a typical movement opens with a *Hauptperiode* (“main section”) that consists of a series of phrases that ultimately lead to a formal cadence (*förmliche Cadenz*) in the secondary key. The *Hauptperiode* in turn may be followed by an *Anhang* (appendix). A movement's opening *Hauptperiode*, plus an optional *Anhang*, matches what modern terminology calls the exposition.

In Koch's conception of the form, the progress along the path toward the formal cadence is articulated by a series of *Hauptruhepunkte* (“main resting points”). The *Hauptruhepunkte* that appear in the middle of the *Hauptperiode*, along with the passages that lead to these resting points, are each defined by the harmony that supports its final melodic note (Ex. 9a). Significantly, whether a passage modulates midstream or remains in the same key area throughout has no bearing on how it would be labeled by Koch or other eighteenth-century theorists. Thus, for instance, any passage that leads to a *Hauptruhepunkte* on V of V is labeled as a *Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte*, whether it begins in the home key and modulates to the dominant in mid-passage, or whether it begins in the dominant key and then remains there throughout.

Ex. 9a depicts one of the most common arrangements of *Hauptruhepunkte* for a major key exposition. Any of the resting points might be elided and lightly touched upon, or strongly demarcated, or even emphasized by an ensuing caesura. In many expositions, only one of the resting points is delineated by a cadential break, thereby forming what modern terminology would label as a medial caesura.

¹² In an email communication from 6 October 2021, James Hepokoski offered a clarification (or a reframing?) of the trimodular block concept, noting that “because of the dissolution of the TM¹ style into transition-like TM² textures, one might imagine that this fact alone is capable of tempting us to ‘group’ TM¹-TM² with the preceding TR (as if TM² wants to insist, in reverting back to TR-action [zone?] processes, that TR is not yet over). Thus any TM¹-TM² complex will always harbor this (latent) ambiguity, which, when relevant, can be explicated in analytical commentary.” My own views are much more in line with this reframed explanation, though I would add: (1) I see the grouping of the first new-key theme with the transition usually not as merely a “latent” possibility, but as a strongly distinct possibility (as do other scholars in regard to Op. 2/3/I; see Ex. 2a, b, and d above). (2) Both types of grouping – not just the grouping with the transition that precedes, but also the grouping with the new-key theme that follows – should rightly be explicated in analytic commentary. In other words, one should not automatically assume that the presence of two half-cadential breaks, each followed by a new-key theme, indicates that the new-key themes must be understood to group together as a block.

Example 9. Depictions of standard punctuation form, as described by Heinrich Christoph Koch (1793).

(a) Basic layout of standard punctuation form and its *Hauptruhepunkte*.

Grundabsatz	Quintabsatz	Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte	Schlußsatz	Anhang
Resting point on I and passage that leads to it.	Resting point on V and passage that leads to it.	Resting point on V/V and passage that leads to it.	Passage that leads to formal cadence (PAC in key of V).	Appendix (optional)

- N. B. *Quintabsatz in de Tonart der Quinte* can begin either in the home key or in the key of V.

(b) One of the standard possible variants of the layout shown in Ex. 9a, with measure numbers indicating the corresponding sections in Beethoven Op. 2/3/I: note the presence of the two half-cadential caesuras, each followed by a theme in the key of V.

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V		
mm. 1–13	13–26	27–46	47–77	77 ³ –90
Grundabsatz	Quintabsatz	Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte	Schlußsatz	Anhang (appendix, optional)
Starts and ends in home key.	Starts and ends in home key	Starts and ends in key of V.	Starts and ends in key of V.	Starts and ends in key of V.

Within the late eighteenth-century style it is also quite possible, however, for two or three of the *Hauptruhepunkte* to be followed by cadential breaks. Furthermore, it was quite common within such a scenario for the *Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte* to begin directly in the secondary key. The resulting layout is depicted in Ex. 9b. Far from being considered unusual, expositions demarcated by two half-cadential breaks, each followed a theme in the secondary key, were repeatedly presented in eighteenth-century treatises as exemplars of the form. This is true not only in Koch's treatise, but also by other writers from the latter part of the eighteenth century, such as Joseph Riepel, Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg, Georg Joseph Vogler, Franz Christoph Neubauer, and Augustus Frederic Christopher Kollmann.¹³

That the layout depicted in Ex. 9b was normal for the era is reflected not only in the writings from the late 1700s, but also in the repertoire. Ex. 10 charts a small sampling of the vast number of eighteenth-century expositions that are framed in this manner. Just like the exposition from

Beethoven's Op. 2/3/I, these expositions each involve two half-cadential caesuras – the first marked by V and the next by V of V – that are each followed by a theme in the dominant key. Also much like Op. 2/3/I, in many of these expositions the first passage in the key of V appears in the dominant minor, is modulatory, and/or is somehow more restless and less lyrical than the second of the new-key passages.

The pieces cited in Ex. 10 are by no means anomalies: again, they represent but a small selection of the many expositions from around the second half of the eighteenth century that share such a layout.¹⁴ Some people may react to such a list by thinking, "well, I guess a lot of composers creatively played with the generic conventions and expectations associated with the transition and second theme group within an exposition." Yet most of these works were composed long before there was any published indication that musicians recognized the presence – much less the importance – of transitions and second themes within sonata-form expositions. On the

¹³ See discussion in Burstein 2020: 64–104.

¹⁴ For another list of such pieces, see Burstein 2020: 187–188.

Example 10. Charts of a selection of the many expositions from the late eighteenth century that conform to layout of Ex. 9b.

(a) Joseph Bologne, Sonata Op. 1/2 for Keyboard with Violin obbligato in A/I (c. 1770).

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V	
mm. 1–10	10–12	13–28	29–56/58
Grundabsatz	Quintabsatz	Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte Starts and ends in key of V.	Schlußsatz Another theme in key of V (no appendix).

(b) Christian Gottlob Neeffe, Sonata for Keyboard No. 7 in B-flat/III (1773).

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V	
mm. 1–15	15–33/34	35–49/50	51–77/78
Grundabsatz Hesitant yet bold theme in home key ...	Quintabsatz ... elides with active passage, which leads to huge HC.	Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte Restless, modulatory passage, starts and ends in key of V, ends with huge HC.	Schlußsatz Another theme in key of V (no appendix).

(c) Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Sonata for Keyboard in E-flat, K. 282/III (1774).

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V	
mm. 1–4	5–8	9–15	16–35/39
Grundabsatz Main theme.	Quintabsatz Main theme, slightly more active.	Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte Restless theme, starts and ends in key of V.	Schlußsatz Another theme in key of V; starts gently, ends with big flourish.

(d) Carolina von Brandenstein, Sonata for Clavier with Violin accompaniment in D/I (c. 1780).

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V	
mm. 1–6	6–10	11–18/22	23–37 | 37–41
Grundabsatz	Quintabsatz	Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte In key of V, starts lyrically and ends with energetic drive to HC.	Schlußsatz | Anhang Another theme in key of , starts lyrically, ends with a big flourish. | Short appendix.

(e) Muzio Clementi, Sonata in E-flat, Op. 7/1/I (1781).

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V	
mm. 1–4	5–12	13–16/20	21–32 | 32–42
Grundabsatz	Quintabsatz	Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte Restless, modulatory passage, starts and ends in key of V, ends with huge HC.	Schlußsatz | Anhang Another theme in key of V; starts gently, ends with a big flourish. | Appendix.

(f) Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in C, K. 467/I (1785), piano exposition.

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V	
mm. 80–91	91–103/107	109–122/127	128–178
Grundabsatz	Quintabsatz	Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte	Schlußsatz
Main theme, ending elides with ...	... active passage, leading to huge HC (followed by “filled-in” caesura).	Restless theme in G minor (key of v), leads to a HC in V.	A lyrical theme in key of the dominant (major), starts gently, ends with a huge flourish.

(g) Antonio Rosetti, Symphony in C (A9/K121)/I (<1786).

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V		
mm. 1–8	8–16/18	19–33/38	39–63	63–73
Grundabsatz	Quintabsatz	Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte	Schlußsatz	Anhang
Main theme, ending elides with . . .	. . . active passage that leads to huge HC.	Variant of main theme in key of V, with active countermelody, leads to bigger HC.	A new, gentle theme in key of V; ending flourish evokes main theme.	Appendix.

(h) Joseph Haydn, Trio for Piano and Strings in D/I, Hob. XV:16/I (1790).

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V		
mm. 1–18	19–27/30	31–44/45	46–57	57 ³ –61
Grundabsatz	Quintabsatz	Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte	Schlußsatz	Anhang
Main theme.	Appendix to main theme; energy increases.	Variant of main theme in key of minor v, ends with active flourish leading to big HC.	A new, playful theme in key of V.	Short appendix.

(i) Ludwig van Beethoven, Trio for Two Oboes and English Horn in C, Op. 87/I (1794).

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V		
mm. 1–17	17–28/31	32–42	43–70	70–102
<i>Grundabsatz</i>	<i>Quintabsatz</i>	<i>Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte</i>	<i>Schlußsatz</i>	<i>Anhang</i>
Main theme, elides with . . .	. . . active passage that leads to big HC.	Restless passage; hints at key of \flat III then quickly moves to V, ending with big HC.	Another theme in key of V; starts gently, ends with big drive to PAC.	Long appendix.

(j) Ludwig van Beethoven, Quartet for Strings in G, Op. 18/2/IV (1801).

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V		
mm. 1–28	28–36/37	38–50/55	56–112	112–139
Grundabsatz	Quintabsatz	Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte	Schlußsatz	Anhang
Main theme, elides with . . .	. . . active passage that leads to big HC.	Variant of main theme in key of minor V, ends with active flourish leading to bigger HC.	A new theme in key of V, starts gently, ends dramatically.	Long appendix.

contrary, the writings of the time suggest that the layout depicted in Exx. 9b and 10 was understood as standard, and thus it need not be understood as an expressive deviation from an expositional model that includes just one half-cadential break.

As may be seen in Ex. 10, the many composers who wrote expositions with this layout include some who are very famous as well as those who are less so. Two of these composers, Christian Gottlob Neefe and Joseph Haydn, were among Beethoven's teachers. Furthermore, Beethoven singled out the piano sonatas of another of these composers, Muzio Clementi, as ones that he greatly admired for their crisply handled and accessible treatment of form (Schindler 1860: II/182). In all, at the time Beethoven composed Op. 2/3/I, it is quite likely that both he and his audiences would have recognized a two-caesuraed, two-new-key-themed exposition as a standard option.

Recognizing the *Satz* layout of these expositions does not prevent one from also noticing how the *Sätze* may combine together to form larger groups. With many of the expositions charted in Exx. 9 and 10, for instance, in certain ways the *Quintabsatz* and the *Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte* could be fairly characterized as forming a transitional group that leads to a half cadence in the key of V, and other ways the *Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte* and the *Schlussatz* could be fairly characterized as forming a group in the key of V that leads to the formal cadence. Since they are based on different criteria, neither of these possible groupings precludes the other. By avoiding pigeonholing the *Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte* into just one of these groupings, the *Satz* model shown in Exx. 9 and 10 allows for an appropriate flexibility for dealing with the form of these expositions, a flexibility that is not so readily achieved with the more restricted palette offered by modern sonata-form terminology.

Galeazzi's description of a possible expositional form

The commonplace nature of this layout is further suggested by the discussion of form found in Francesco Galeazzi's celebrated treatise volume that appeared in 1796, the same year as the first publication of Beethoven's Op. 2. In one of the scenarios proposed by Galeazzi, an exposition

could be understood to divide into three sections, each of which concludes with a cadence, followed by an optional appendix (Ex. 11). The first of these sections comprises what Galeazzi labels as the *Motivo principale* ("first subject"), which starts in the home key and establishes a type of thematic launching pad for the ensuing music. The second section opens with what Galeazzi calls the *secondo Motivo* ("second subject"). As Galeazzi points out, the *secondo Motivo* contrasts with the preceding *Motivo principale* in the manner of a *controsoggetto* ("countersubject"), and it is linked to an *Uscita a' Toni più analoghi* ("departure to nearby key") that leads to a sharp half-cadential break. The third section begins in the secondary key with a *Passo caratteristico* ("characteristic passage") that is "sweet, expressive, and tender." The *Passo caratteristico* is connected to a *Periodo di cadenza* ("cadential passage") that drives with a virtuosic flourish to the final cadence, perhaps followed by a coda.

Galeazzi mentions that if the *Motivo principale* concludes with an authentic cadence in the home key, the *secondo Motivo* will start in the home key as well. But he notes that it is also possible for the *Motivo principale* to end with a half cadence, in which case the *secondo Motivo* enters in the key of the dominant, followed by the *Uscita a' Toni più analoghi* that itself leads to the key of V. The chart of Ex. 11 depicts this possibility, with the last two rows applying the resulting layout to the exposition of Beethoven's Op. 2/3/I.

Some people may find it strange that Galeazzi suggests that a passage that begins in the key of V can nonetheless be followed by a departure toward this same key. After all, how can a passage modulate to the key that it is already in? Yet as was noted above, this notion is very much in line with those expressed by other eighteenth-century writers, who discuss keys primarily in relation to motions toward goals, not in terms of key "areas." Thus, much in the manner described by Galeazzi (and as discussed above in relation to Ex. 3), a passage that starts in the key of V may nonetheless modulate toward a firmer sense of this key.

The second section of Galeazzi's layout depicted in Ex. 11 in certain ways matches what modern terminology calls a "second theme," inasmuch as it presents a contrasting theme in the secondary key. In other ways, however, it matches

Example 11. Chart depicting Francesco Galeazzi's description (1796) of a possible layout for an exposition (i.e., first part of movement, minus the optional slow introduction) in which the main theme (*Motivo principale*) ends with a half cadence (HC), as applied to the exposition of Beethoven's Op. 2/3/I.

half-cadential caesura in home key		half-cadential caesura in key of V	
Motivo Principale Establishes home key, ends with HC.	Secondo Motivo Starts in key of V with "countersubject" . . . + Uscita a' Toni più analoghi . . . links to (deeper-level) departure to V, ends with "conspicuously detached" HC in this key.	Passo caratteristico "Gentle and expressive" theme in V . . . + Periodo di cadenza . . . links to "brio and bravura" motion to PAC.	Coda Appendix: "prolongation" of the cadence.
mm. 1–26	27–46	47–77	77 ³ –90
C major theme, leads to HC in key of C.	G minor theme (countersubject in dominant key) followed by deeper level motion to a conspicuously detached HC in G.	Gentle G major theme (47–61) links to "brio and bravura" passage that drives toward PAC.	G major passages reinforced formal cadence.

what modern terminology calls a "transition," since it is attached to a deep-level motion to the secondary key, and it leads to a half-cadential break that precedes a contrasting, lyrical theme in the new key. In every way, however, this second section unambiguously conforms to the standard formal structure that Galeazzi refers to as a *secondo Motivo + Uscita a' Toni più analoghi*.

The same may be said of the G minor theme in the exposition of Beethoven's Op. 2/3/I. Note how neatly the framework of this G minor theme lines up Galeazzi's description for a possible layout for the *secondo Motivo + Uscita a' Toni più analoghi*: (1) it follows a half cadence; (2) it begins in the dominant key with a type of countersubject that connects to a (firmer) modulation to the dominant key; and (3) this passage ends with a "conspicuous" half cadence followed by a lyrical theme in the key of V. When viewed in this light, the design of the exposition of Beethoven's sonata does not entail conflicting formal functions. On the contrary, its layout may be understood to be very much by the book – providing that the book used is one published around the time Beethoven composed his Op. 2 sonatas. This is not to deny that the sudden turn to minor in m. 17 comes as an unsettling surprise, or that the subsequent move

to G major in m. 47 could be fairly regarded as a type of modal "corrective" within the narrative of this exposition.¹⁵ Yet ultimately the various twists and turns in the exposition of Op. 2/3/I could well be understood as governed by what at the time was recognized as a fully conventional layout.

Voice-leading structure

Schenker's reading

The difficulties in applying post-1800 sonata-form concepts to the exposition of this sonata can color the understanding of its voice-leading structure. This arguably is what happened with Heinrich Schenker's analysis of this exposition from *Der freie Satz* (1935: 114, Fig. 154²), which contains a curious contradiction.¹⁶ Ex. 12a cites Schenker's voice-leading sketch; Exx. 12b and c compare two alternate readings, which are discussed below.

Notice how the dotted slur in the bass of Schenker's voice-leading sketch suggests that the prolongation of the dominant *Stufe* begins in mm. 27, coinciding with the arrival of the G minor theme. Yet this prolongation seems counteracted by other indications in the sketch that imply that this V is subordinated to the II_♯ (=V of V) *Stufe* that arrives in m. 43: namely, the placement of the Roman numerals below the staff, along with

¹⁵ As Marx (1857: 291) describes the entrance of this theme in m. 47, "only now, as if it were the truly proper one, does a new, calm and secure *Seitensatz* appear in G major (*nun erst erscheint, gleichsam als wär' er erst der rechte, ein neuer, ruhig und sicher in G Dur ausgeführter zweiter Seitensatz*)."

¹⁶ This contradiction was first pointed out to me a number of years ago by Carl Schachter.

Example 12. Voice-leading sketches of exposition from Beethoven, Op. 10/3/I:

(a) from Schenker (1935: appendix, 114: Fig. 154²);

(b) another possible analysis, which interprets deep-level V as prolonged from start of G minor theme;

(c) my preferred analysis, which interprets deep-level V as coinciding with arrival of G major theme.

(a)

1 5 15 25 27 39 41 42 43

1 A 3 A 3 A 2 A 2

(Übergang)

5 - 6, 6 6 5, 5 - 6, 6 6 5)

I (43 (Ti) b8 II# V (= G dur: V I

(b)

not this: ...

m. 1 21 27 43 47

C:I V
(G: I V I)

(c)

... but this:

m. 1 21 27 43 47

$\hat{3}$ $\hat{2}$ $\hat{2}$

C B B \flat A

C: I (V) div. II \sharp V

Example 13. Voice-leading sketch of exposition from Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Sonata for Piano in C, K. 279/I (1774), from Schenker (1935: appendix, 113: Fig. 154¹).

T 16 17 21 25 29 30 31

Λ_3 Λ_2

(5 = Zug)

(Breh)

I (Ti) - () V
(= G dur: VI \sharp^3 II - V - I \sharp^5 II V - I)

the appearance of the first scale-degree $\hat{2}$ that is attached to the top-voice beam (in m. 43). This contradiction might result from a careless oversight by Schenker, or from a misprint by the publisher. It is also possible, however, that this incongruity results from Schenker's difficulties in deciding whether the G minor is to be understood to function either as a transition or as a second theme.

To best understand it, Schenker's reading of this exposition should be considered in relation to the surrounding discussion within *Der freie Satz*. Schenker's analysis of Op. 2/3/I comes immediately after his examination of W. A. Mozart's Sonata for Piano in C, K. 279/I (Schenker 1935: 216–217). Schenker strongly suggests that the second theme of Mozart's sonata enters in m. 17 (Ex. 13). This second theme composes-out a deep-level V *Stufe* (whose bass is slightly delayed by an auxiliary cadence in mm. 17–20), which supports $\hat{2}$ in the upper voice. This $\hat{2}$ is anticipated on a lower level in m. 16, where it is supported by a divider (*Teiler*, abbreviated as *TI*).

Comparison with his discussion of the Mozart exposition suggests that Schenker does not read the G minor theme of Op. 2/3/I to serve simply as a transition. On the other hand, he also seems reluctant to regard the G minor theme merely as a second theme, noting that the analysis of this passage is more difficult (*schwieriger*) than the one that begins in m. 17 of the Mozart sonata. Thus, whereas in his reading of the Mozart sonata, Schenker reads the deep-level, upper-voice $\hat{2}$ as coinciding with the entrance of the second theme, in Beethoven's Op. 2/3/I he does *not* read a deep-level $\hat{2}$ as arriving in with the entrance of the G minor theme in m. 27. In other words, Schenker explicitly avoids a reading along the lines of what is shown in Ex. 12b above.¹⁷ Rather, he specifies that the $\hat{2}$ of m. 27 is to be understood as anticipating, in a lower register, the deep-level $\hat{2}$ that arrives over the II \sharp *Stufe* of m. 43.

Below I quote from Schenker's discussion of this passage, along with two translations. The first translation is a rather literal one of my own,

the next is a more embellished translation from Ernst Oster's celebrated English edition of *Der freie Satz*. Oster arguably departs slightly from Schenker's text, seeming to insert a subtle twist on Schenker's discussion.¹⁸ Even so, since he is a distinguished musical scholar in his own right, Oster's ideas here deserve serious consideration:

[Schenker's text:] Hier darf, was sich in den T. 27–43 begibt, keineswegs schon für eine Fortsetzung von d^2 , das über dem Teiler in T. 25 eingetroffen ist; der Inhalt besteht nur in der Höherlegung d^2-d^3 , der obligaten Lage wegen [...] (Schenker 1935: 217).

[My translation:] Here, what happens in m. 27–43 may by no means already be taken for a continuation of d^2 , which arrived above the divider in m. 25; the content consists only in the ascending register transfer d^2-d^3 , on the account of the obligatory register [...]

[Oster's translation:] The events shown in measures 27–43 may under no circumstances be taken for a prolongation of the $\hat{2}$, but must be regarded as merely an extension of the d^2 which appeared over the dividing dominant in measure 25. The contents of these measures serve only to effect the ascending register transfer d^2-d^3 for the sake of the obligatory register [...] (Schenker 1979: 134)

I feel that one could stay true to the basic vision expressed by Schenker and Oster, while avoiding the contradiction between the Roman numerals and the bass prolongation, by applying a few small adjustments to Schenker's voice-leading sketch cited in Ex. 12a. Most notable of these adjustments involves removing the dotted slur between the bass G's, as shown in my proposed alternative sketch of Ex. 12c. Regarding this proposed reading of Ex. 12c, notice the following:

(1) In accordance with Schenker's Roman numeral labeling, this exposition is framed by a large I–II \sharp –V, with the arrival of the deep-level V *Stufe* delayed until m. 47.

¹⁷ A reading that proposes a deep-level structure similar to Ex. 12b may be found in Song 2002: 163.

¹⁸ For instance, notice how Oster mentions the prolongation of $\hat{2}$, something that Schenker does not explicate. To be sure, the differences between Oster's translation and Schenker's original are slight and perhaps even trivial; nevertheless, to err on the side of caution, I provide a more straightforward translation of Schenker's text in addition to Oster's more evocative version.

(2) The V of m. 21, which arrives at the conclusion of the *Quintabsatz*, is interpreted as a divider (div.), and V is then prolonged during the subsequent passage. It does not mark the arrival of V on the deepest levels, however, but instead articulates the middle of a large ascending fifths motion (I to V, then V to II \sharp).

(3) In the manner described by Schenker and Oster, the divider (and the prolongation of V that directly follows) supports a D in the upper voice that anticipates the deep-level $\hat{2}$. The arrival of $\hat{2}$ on the *deepest* levels coincides with appearance of II \sharp , at which point the $\hat{2}$ appears in its "obligatory register." Before then, the top-voice D within the G minor section is to be understood as "merely an extension of the d^2 which appeared over the dividing dominant."

(4) The sketch of Ex. 12c also underscores an inner-voice motion that is not highlighted in Schenker's reading of Ex. 12a: namely, the C–B–B-flat–A third progression (*Terzzug*) that spans mm. 1–43. The V divider that arrives in m. 21 thus is understood to serve as a "leaping passing tone" (*springender Durchgang*) that supports the passing motion within this third progression. The inner-voice passing motion helps underscore the deep connection between the I and the II \sharp . This passing motion also promotes the sense in which the V divider – along with its extension within the G minor passage – is to be understood as relatively transient, reflecting the relatively unstable nature of the G minor theme and the more dramatic arrival on the half-cadential break of mm. 43–46.

(5) The reading of Ex. 12c also helps underline the crucial junctures recognized by eighteenth concepts of punctuation form, as well as the formal features discussed by Galeazzi, such as the onset of the *secondo Motivo*. In doing so, however, this reading nonetheless acknowledges that the passage of mm. 27–42 can be understood as lying in the middle of a larger motion toward a deeper-level harmony that arrives in mm. 43–46.

The four bass notes that support the deep-level *Stufen* highlighted in Ex. 12c – C, (G,) D, and G – are each prolonged for several measures. Furthermore, the prolongation of each begins almost immediately after the prolongation of the previous *Stufe* concludes. For instance, the middleground G that is prolonged until the downbeat of m. 42 is followed on the very next downbeat by the deep-level II \sharp *Stufe*, separated by only a quickly inserted augmented sixth chord (Ex. 14). This metrically weak augmented sixth chord provides chromatic support for the embellishing tone C-sharp in the upper voice (as depicted in Exx. 12a and c above), thus helping to forcefully link the V that is prolonged until m. 42 to the ensuing II \sharp .

Laufer's reading

Most published Schenkerian discussions of this exposition in recent years agree that the arrival of the dominant *Stufe* on the deepest levels is delayed until m. 47, much as is proposed in the reading of Ex. 12c. However, unlike what is shown in Ex. 12c, the interpretation of this exposition that is most popularly cited couches the dominant of mm. 21–42 within a large voice-exchange.

Such a reading was initially proposed by Edward Laufer (1981: 181), whose voice-leading sketch for the exposition of Beethoven's Op. 2/3/I is cited in Ex. 15. Since its initial publication, Laufer's analysis has been echoed by so many others that it has been described as the "standard Schenkerian reading" for the exposition – despite its departure from Schenker's own analysis of this passage.¹⁹ Because of its high reputation among music theorists, as well as its implications for understanding this exposition's form, this standard Schenkerian reading bears close examination.

In justifying his analysis, Laufer explains that "the G chords (mm. 21ff. and 47ff.) belong to different prolongations and are not to be connected" (Laufer 1981: 181). Again, the notion that these G chords belong to different prolongations conforms to what was argued above in support of the reading shown in Ex. 12c.

¹⁹ See, for instance, Hunt 2014: 250; see also Kamien and Wagner 1997: 4–5 n.7; Cutler 2009: 206; and Cadwallader 2008: 87–89.

Example 14. Quotation of Beethoven, Op. 2/3/I, mm. 41–43.

+6
(brief, metrically weak)

Example 15. Voice-leading sketches of Op. 2/3/I, exposition, from Laufer 1981: 181.

mm. 21 42 43 47 21 39 41 42 43 47

N. B.: bass G of mm. 21–41 is subordinated to +6 of m. 42.

21 31 33 37 38 39 41 42 43

N. B.: alto E from m. 39 connects directly to E-flat of m. 42; thus the structurally implied harmony in m. 41 is a first-inversion E diminished triad.

27 33 37 39 42 43

Yet notice that Laufer reads V chord of mm. 21ff. as subordinated not only to the II \sharp of mm. 43–46, but also as subordinated to the augmented sixth chord that appears in the middle of m. 42.

Despite its popularity among music theorists, there are features of Laufer's analysis that at very least should raise some eyebrows. For instance, notice how it downplays the presence of the G minor harmony in m. 41 (see especially the sketch in the middle system of Ex. 15). This harmony is highlighted by a V–i motion in G minor (mm. 40–41), as well as by its appearance at the end of a *fonte* (mm. 39–41). Yet Laufer's dotted line between E-natural and E-flat in mm. 39–42 suggests a direct motion between these two notes, part of a large, inner-voice, stepwise fourth-descent from G (m. 21) to D (m. 43). His reading thereby suggests that the inner-voice D of mm. 41–42 is only apparent, subservient to a deeper-level, implied inner-voice E-natural that is not supplanted until the second half of m. 41 (and in turn implying an underlying G–B-flat–E-natural harmony on the downbeat of m. 41, rather than a G minor triad).

Another problematic feature of Laufer's reading is its proposing a direct voice-leading connection between the opening tonic harmony of mm. 1(–19) and the augmented sixth chord of m. 42.²⁰ Not only do these harmonies share only one pitch class in common, but the augmented sixth chord of m. 42 is but weakly demarcated, appearing for only two beats in the middle of a measure (see Ex. 14 above). Particularly questionable is this way that this reading subordinates the strongly emphasized *V Stufe* of mm. 21ff. to this relatively weakly stated augmented sixth chord. After all, the bass G that enters in m. 21 is very sturdily pronounced, metrically emphasized, and prolonged for 21 bars (mm. 21–42) – forty-two times the length of the midphrase, mid-measure augmented sixth chord of m. 42.

That a voice-leading analysis should privilege a brief, metrically underplayed event that arrives midphrase does not necessarily prevent the

analysis from being accepted as a rewarding interpretation. Put differently, it is certainly possible for an analysis to reasonably propose a conflict between structure and design, so that a harmony which in certain ways is underemphasized on the surface of the music may nonetheless be fairly regarded to play a crucial role within the larger tonal structure. However, unless there is no other harmonically tenable reading within the given style, such a conflict always should ultimately be understood to result from a clash between two different elements of the design. For instance, a strongly asserted harmony that appears in midphrase might be reasonably analyzed as marking a crucial moment within the tonal structure, as might a weakly asserted harmony that appears at a significant juncture within the form. On the other hand, it will not do to simply proclaim the presence of a strong conflict between design and structure without further evidence or justification, as though there is some mysterious substance that somehow distinguishes the importance of a weakly emphasized event over a much more forcefully emphasized one.

What is curious regarding this reading proposed by Laufer, and accepted by so many others, is the extent to which it is so often presented as self-evident. Again, the brevity and relative weakness of the augmented sixth chord of m. 41 does not necessarily prevent it from being regarded as bearing greater structural weight than the far more strongly asserted G harmony that precedes it and that demarcates such a pivotal moment of the form. However, one at very least should expect some rationale to be given for the extremely drastic clash between structure and design that results from such a reading. Instead, this reading is almost always presented as a type of a "just-so story," in which the large-scale voice-exchange is offered as its own justification.

It must be emphasized that the issue here is not to question the notion that the *V Stufe* that enters in m. 21 functions on a different level than

²⁰ Incidentally, in some (later) editions, the augmented sixth chord of m. 42 is emphasized by a *szforzando* – but so are the G minor chords that appear on the downbeats of both mm. 41 and 42. In any event, these *szforzando* indications result from later editorial additions; they are not found in the first edition or any of the other of the earliest editions (the manuscript is lost).

the *V Stufe* that enters in m. 47, or to challenge the notion that the *V Stufe* m. 21–42 is subordinate to the $\text{II}\sharp$ of m. 43–46. Again, such notions – which are mentioned by Laufer and others who adopt readings similar to his – are also in line with the reading proposed in Ex. 12c above. However, that the *V Stufe* of mm. 21–42 should be understood as subordinate to the $\text{II}\sharp$ of m. 43–46, or that it functions on a different level than the *V Stufe* that enters in m. 47, does not necessarily indicate that it is also subordinate to the augmented sixth chord of m. 42.

Perhaps the reading suggested by Laufer was influenced by an understanding of the exposition's design in which the passage of mm. 27–46 is interpreted as a transition. Following this reasoning, one could argue that the function of this passage is to *transition* toward the half-cadential $\text{II}\sharp$ of m. 43–46 that sets the stage for the ensuing second theme. Accordingly, it might seem natural for the entire passage to be represented as embodied by the harmony that leads most forcefully to this half cadence – namely, the augmented sixth chord.

From the standpoint of punctuation form articulated by Koch and other eighteenth-century theorists, however, the resting point on *V* in mm. 21–26, which marks the end of the *Quintabsatz*, is not so easily set aside. The *V* that arrives at the end of *Quintabsatz* forms a crucial, generic juncture within the form, one whose significance was repeatedly emphasized by theorists who flourished at the time. Ironically, it has been commonplace in Schenkerian practice to subordinate the resting point on *V* marked by a *Quintabsatz* to a larger voice exchange, often without further comment.²¹ Although there need not be a direct correspondence between design and voice-leading structure, that such subordination in voice-leading analyses arises so often – and without further explanation – suggests

a modern lack of sensitivity to the punctuation form that served as such a crucial framework for theorists of the eighteenth century. The situation is particularly extreme in Op. 2/3/I, where the resting point at the end of the *Quintabsatz* is so powerfully delineated by dynamics, texture, gesture, and length.

Interaction with Beethoven's larger style

Although the basic layout of the Op. 2/3/I's exposition is quite conventional, the manner in which its form unfolds does bear the special imprint of Beethoven's personality. In particular, within the punctuation form of this exposition, the segments leading to each *Hauptruhepunkt* tend to be far more expansive than was typical in works by other composers of the time, and the *Hauptruhepunkte* are far more strongly pronounced. The resulting presence of multiple, powerful cadential breaks in mid-exposition does carry the risk of stultifying the music's momentum. Perhaps for this reason, expositions that include two half-cadential caesuras, each followed by a new-key theme, are relatively uncommon in Beethoven's works. In addition to the one from Op. 2/3/I, instances of this strategy elsewhere in Beethoven's oeuvre may be found in the first movement of his Piano Quartet in C, WoO 36/3 (1785; see Ex. 8 above), his Trio for Two Oboes and English Horn in C, Op. 87/I (1794; see Ex. 10i above); and the finale of his Quartet for Strings in G, Op. 18/2 (1801; see Ex. 10j above).

More commonly, Beethoven's expositions feature just a single half-cadential caesura, one that follows the *Hauptruhepunkt* on the dominant of the secondary key. In such expositions, the resting point on the dominant of the home key, if present at all, usually unambiguously appears within the middle of the transition. And in expositions of the more mature works by Beethoven, even the sole half-cadential break

²¹ See discussion in Burstein 2016b and Burstein 2020: 170–175. For an example of my own that proposes a reading along these lines – but for which I do attempt to provide justification – see the analysis of W. A. Mozart's K. 238/ii in Burstein 2016: 57–58. This analysis interprets the strongly demarcated *V Stufe* that marks the end of a *Quintabsatz* as lying within a prolongation of C in the bass, a prolongation that extends until the penultimate harmony of the transition. In this case, however, the C is given extra emphasis by being pronounced at the onset of two *Sätze* in a row (in mm. 5 and 7), with these pitches further linked by a conspicuous stepwise descent in the bass leading from C⁴ to C³. Whether one agrees with this reading or not, my rationale for it has been laid bare in the accompanying discussion, and thus the proposed conflict between structure and design was not simply presented as self-evident.

following the new-key V tends to be somewhat muted or obscured.²² As a result, in contrast to the exposition of Op. 2/3/I, with its many caesuras, the form of Beethoven's later expositions tend to be more fluid, and the resting points more subtly asserted.

When judged according to the standards of these later works, the form of Op. 2/3/I – with its multiple breaks and multiple themes – might indeed seem rather puzzling. But again, it should

be remembered that neither Beethoven nor his audiences in 1795–96 would have yet been familiar with the works from his entire output. In coming to grips with the form of Op. 2/3, as well other works that he composed around the same time, much can be gained by trying to momentarily set aside our knowledge of Beethoven's style as a whole, thereby allowing us to more readily view these earlier works more firmly within their own stylistic context.

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²² See discussion in Richards 2013.

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Beethoveni klaverisonaadi op. 2, nr. 3 I osa teemade paljususe ja vormiline kontekst

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Ludwig van Beethoveni klaverisonaadi C-duur, op. 2/3 I osa ekspositsiooni teemagruppide jagunemise suhtes valitseb üllatav erimeelsus. Põhiline probleem seisneb g-moll teema (taktid 27–46) vormilises määratlemises. Teatavas mõttes funktsioneerib see lõik sidepartiina (või kaheosalise sidepartii teise osana), sest see on harmooniliselt ebapüsiv ja lõpeb poolkadentsiga, millele omakorda järgneb lüüriline teema kõrvalhelistikus. Teiselt poolt funktsioneerib see ka kõrvalteemana, sest sellele eelneb tugeva tsesuuriga artikuleeritud poolkadents ning teema ise algab kõrvalhelistikus. (Valides kahe eespool mainitud võimaluse vahel, tuleb mainida, et sidepartiina sildistatav lõik võib alata ka kõrvalhelistikus. Tegemist on võimalusega, mille olemasolu on möönnud sonaadivormi juhtivad asjatundjad.) Veel ühe võimaliku tõlgenduse selle ekspositsiooni jaotamiseks on välja pakkunud Hepokoski ja Darcy (2006), kes vaatlevad takte 27–77 üksusena (*trimodular block*), mille tulemusena moodustub n.-ö. kolmeosaline ekspositsioon. Sellise arusaama põhjal „avab” tugeva tsesuuriga artikuleeritud poolkadents taktis 26 „ruumi”, milles kõrvalteema võiks manifesteeruda. Kuid selle asemel, et ootuspäraselt otsejoones liikuda G-duuri kui normatiivse kõrvalhelistiku tugeva artikuleerimise ehk ekspositsiooni olemusliku sulgemise (EEC = *essential expository closure*) suunas, peatub taktist 27 alguse saav g-moll teema uue tugevalt artikuleeritud poolkadentsiga, millele omakorda järgneb konventsionaalsemat tüüpi G-duur teema, sulgedes lõpuks edukalt ka ekspositsiooni (EEC).

Mõlema lahenduse problemaatilisus seisneb 19. sajandil välja kujunenud sonaadivormi normide pealesurumises muusikale, mis on kirjutatud enne seda. Vastavalt neile normidele peaks ekspositsioon sisaldama ainult ühte poolkadentsiga artikuleeritud tsesuuri, mistõttu kahte poolkadentsiga artikuleeritud tsesuuri ja neile järgnevaid uues helistikus teemasid tuleks vaadelda vormilise deformatsioonina. Kui aga meenutada, et varase teosena komponeeris Beethoven sonaadi op. 2/3 juba 18. sajandi lõpus, võiks sonaat olla dialoogis hoopis teiste 18. sajandil sonaadivormis komponeeritud teoste ja mitte niivõrd Beethoveni enda hilisema loominguga.

18. sajandil olid ekspositsioonid, mis sisaldasid kahte vahetsesuuri (*medial caesura*) ja millele järgnesid teemad uues helistikus, ülimalt tavalised. Sellist vormilist ülesehitust vaadeldi standardsena paljudes selle aja traktaatides. Näiteks vastab mainitud g-moll teema kenasti vormi sellele osale, mida Heinrich Christoph Koch (1793) vaatleb kui „kvinthelistiku kvindiga [s.t. poolkadentsiga] lõppevat lõiku” (*Quintabsatz in der Tonart der Quinte*) ja millele Francesco Galeazzi (1796) viitab kui „teisele teemale” (*secondo Motivo*). Sellest vaatepunktist ei ole op. 2/3 I vormiline ülesehitus anomaalne või ambivalentne, vaid järgib ajastu standardseid vormilisi konventsioone. Veelgi enam, vastavalt mainitud konventsioonidele võib sonaadi g-moll lõiku vaadelda nii sellele eelneva kui ka sellele järgneva vormilõigu alaosana, mis tähendab, et analüüsis ei pea eelistama ühte vormilist jaotust teisele.

Op. 2/3 I ekspositsiooni ajalooliselt informeeritud vormiline tõlgendus võib omakorda valgust heita teose häältejuhtimisstruktuurile. Raskused selle interpreteerimisel on täheldatavad Heinrich Schenkeri (1935) tehtud analüüsis. Schenkeri tõlgendus sisaldab veidrat vastuolu: tema häältejuhtimisskeemi põhjal saabub süvatasandi V taktis 27, kuid analüüsile lisatud Rooma numbrid lasevad mainitud V-d vaadelda osana laiemast liikumisest, mille lõppharmooniaks on hoopis II \sharp . Ka Edward Laufer (1981) ja paljud teised mõistavad V-d allutatuna mitte ainult harmooniale II \sharp , vaid ka nõrgalt toetatud suurendatud sekstiga akordile taktis 42, jättes käsitlemata sellega kaasneva struktuuralse vastuolu nn. sisemise ja välise vormi vahel. Ma väidan, et ajalootundlikum tõlgendus võiks vähemalt arvestada võimalusega, et selle ekspositsiooni häältejuhtimisstruktuuri artikuleerib sügavamal tasandil liikumine I-V-II \sharp .