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### Haydn and the Analysis Wars: A View from the Sidelines

by Mary Sue Morrow

### Abstract

Anyone who has spent any serious analytical time with eighteenth-century music knows that standard formal models often do not seem to fit, let alone explain, the music and formal structures of the eighteenth century. Nowhere is this disconnect between theory and practice more evident than in the music of Joseph Haydn, especially his instrumental music. This article examines and compares two analytical systems of particular applicability to eighteenth-century music: Jan LaRue's *Guidelines for style Analysis*, and James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy's *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth-Century*. If we combine elements of both systems, rather than insisting on the superiority of one or the other, we can enhance our understanding and appreciation of the delightful ambiguities and formal quirks of Haydn's music.

## I. Introduction: The "textbook" sonata model and its challengers.

In a graduate course on Haydn's string quartets that I was teaching last year, we were discussing a particularly thorny passage in one exposition (in other words, a typical Haydn moment), with students in the class offering different interpretations. One heard a medial caesura followed by a long secondary theme, another a blocked medial caesura leading to a continuous exposition, another the faint outlines of a tri-modular block (all terminology from Hepokoski and Darcy's *Elements of Sonata Theory*, see below).<sup>1</sup> Finally, one of the students turned to me and asked, "Which one is it?" Like students since time immemorial, she wanted to know the "correct" answer.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Adolf Bernhard Marx, Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition, praktisch-theoretisch (Leipzig,

Analysis of sonata-form movements always seems to produce disagreement across the analytical ranks, as Jens Peter Larsen observes in his "Sonatenformprobleme," the article reproduced and honored in this volume, in Gerald Graue's English translation. And, as Larsen notes in the first paragraph, the problems stem from the tacit adoption of the "textbook form" based on the early nineteenth-century writings of Adolph Bernhard Marx,<sup>2</sup> a procrustean bed for many works, but particularly those from the eighteenth century. Despite early twentieth-century scholarship (mostly in German) questioning one or another of the characteristics that Larsen discussed in his 1961 essay, most music theory students in that decade and the next would have learned it as definitive, if not gospel: its bold, masculine, primary theme led to a contrasting lyrical, feminine, subordinate theme in the dominant key; after a development section full of modulation and motivic development, both themes return in the tonic, the lyrical, feminine subordinate theme succumbing to the virile power of the primary theme's tonic key. That was certainly what I learned in my undergraduate form-and-analysis class in 1973. But when I dig through the many analytical strata of the scores I owned then, they suggest that at some level, like Larsen, I seem to have recognized that the "textbook" model rarely fit well.

Larsen's challenge to the model's premises, particularly its (problematically gendered) thematic focus, appeared within a steady stream of such criticism (mostly Anglo-American) beginning about mid-century. One of the first of those challenges came in 1949 from Leonard Ratner, who pointed out that the eighteenth-century's view of the procedure was largely harmonically based, citing theorists such as Heinrich Christoph Koch and August Kollman.<sup>3</sup> While the periodic structure so common to the late eighteenth century allowed the construction of larger sections in a single key area, Ratner argued that it was not the themes but rather the harmonic concerns that drove the form. However, Bathia Churgin's translation of the section on melody in Francesco

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Adolf Bernhard Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition, praktisch-theoretisch* (Leipzig, 1837–1847).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Leonard Ratner, "Harmonic Aspects of Classic Form," JAMS 2 (Autumn 1949): 159–68.

Galeazzi's Elementi teorico-practici di musica's (1796) made it clear that Galeazzi's idea of composition revolved around melody (perhaps not surprising from an Italian!).4 According to Galeazzi, in the composition's first part, the principal motive was followed by a second motive and a departure to closely related keys, which led to the characteristic (or middle) passage, cadential period, and coda, while the second part comprises motive, modulation, reprise, and the repetition of the characteristic passage, cadential period, and coda.<sup>5</sup> This description bears a close resemblance to Marx's, though without its gendered language. The "counter-attack" by the melodists continued with Mark Evan Bonds's Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Metaphor of the Oration, which details the emphasis placed on themes and motives as the structural building blocks for composition by a number of eighteenth-century theorists, including Johann Mattheson, Johann Kirnberger, Salvatore Bertezen, Johann Christoph Koch, and Alexander Choron.<sup>6</sup> While not advocating a return to the textbook melodically driven model, Bonds believes that our preoccupation with harmonic functions has obscured the clear importance of melody. By the end of the twentieth century the competing claims of harmony and melody appeared to have found a balance, but the arguments about how analytical questions should be resolved have not ceased.

Other controversies have swirled around the recapitulation: what label to use when the return to the tonic did not coincide with the appearance of the primary theme; what to do when the tonic arrived "prematurely" in the middle (or even at the beginning of the development section; what to call it when the primary theme returned in the tonic only at the end. Of course, all of these became issues precisely because they seemed to violate the principles of the textbook model and therefore needed to be explained away. Often, though certainly not always, the discussions have identified these "anomalies" as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Bathia Churgin, "Francesco Galeazzi's Description (1796) of Sonata Form." *JAMS* 21 (1968): 181–99. The complete second volume of his treatise has just appeared in an English translation. See Deborah Burton and Gregory W. Harwood, *Francesco Galeazzi: Theoretical-Practical Elements of Music, Parts III and IV* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2012).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Burton and Harwood, *Galeazzi*, 324.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Mark Evan Bonds, *Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Metaphor of the Oration* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991). See the section on "Melody and the Thematic Basis of Form," 90–118.

more primitive stages in the evolution of true sonata form. A return to the tonic in the development undermined the dramatic trajectory of the dominant's progress to the triumphant return of the primary theme. A return to the tonic with the secondary theme was interpreted as an early approach to the form, which meant that any works using that procedure at the end of the century were seen as backwards looking. (And by extension, writers eagerly sought to point out their composers' "early" use of the full recapitulation.<sup>7</sup>) One often gets the sense from these discussions that early- and midcentury composers were flailing about in the compositional wilderness, painstakingly working toward Marx's model, but never quite achieving it. Of course the inconvenient truth is that many perfectly delightful movements, particularly during the eighteenth century, do not fit the textbook pattern, so a different analytical approach seems essential. The question is: which one?

# II. Analytical approaches after Larsen's "Sonatenformprobleme."

The fact that we need to ask this question is a sign of the healthy state of research and writing about eighteenth century topics. Four of the post-Larsen approaches have particular relevance for eighteenth-century music: those of Jan LaRue, James Webster, William Caplin, and the team of James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy. Jan LaRue's *Guidelines for Style Analysis*, first published in 1970, with a revised second edition appearing in 1992,<sup>8</sup> spread rapidly as LaRue's students and followers began their own teaching careers equipped with his methodology (I studied with two of them, Judith K. Schwartz and the late A. Peter Brown).<sup>9</sup> Though James Webster never published a book specifically on analysis or sonata form, his multivalent analysis has been adopted by many of the large flock of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> I have discussed this issue elsewhere and present only a summary here. See Mary Sue Morrow and Bathia Churgin, *The Eighteenth-Century Symphony* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 29–32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Throughout this article, I have used the second edition, published by Harmonie Park Press in Warren, Michigan.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Bathia Churgin notes in her very positive review of the second edition that the first edition had been translated into Spanish, Italian, and Japanese. See *Notes* 50 (June 1994): 1429–30. However, a WorldCat search turned up no evidence that the Italian edition ever appeared.

PhDs in eighteenth-century studies that Cornell University has produced over the last several decades. The LaRue and Webster methods share enough approaches and techniques (e.g., their reliance on timelines and their insistence that each element of the piece should be discussed before finding the convergences that help to delineate form) that they have co-existed relatively peacefully.<sup>10</sup> That has not proved to be the case with the latest two methods, one by a theorist and the other by a duo of musicologist and theorist. The theorist William E. Caplin published his Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven in 1998.<sup>11</sup> Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth-Century Sonata, by musicologist James Hepokoski and theorist Warren Darcy, did not appear until 2006, but the authors had presented many of its salient points in a flurry of articles and conference papers in the 1990s,<sup>12</sup> so that their approach was being discussed and debated alongside Caplin's. Each side has defended its territory fiercely, but while Caplin seems inclined to acknowledge the possibility of merging his theory with theirs in some limited cases, Hepokoski and Darcy are less charitable to his ideas, though they occasionally will adopt one or another of them.13

This territorial defense emerges most clearly in *Musical Form, Forms, Formenlehre: Three Methodological Reflections*, a collection spun off from a session on *Formenlehre* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Webster says that "Insofar as practicable, and despite the inevitable occasional feeling of artificiality, a multivalent analysis should proceed one domain at a time, with little attention to what happens in other domains, and without preconceptions as to the overall form." See his "Formenlehre in Theory and Practice," in Pieter Bergé, ed. *Musical Form, Forms, Formenlehre: Three Methodological Reflections* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010), 129.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> William E. Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). The volume won the 1999 Wallace Berry Book Award from the Society for Music Theory. The textbook version of the material, *Analyzing Classical Form*, is due to appear in September 2013.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>See, for example, "The Medial Caesura and Its Role in the Eighteenth-Century Sonata Exposition," *Music Theory Spectrum* 19 (Autumn, 1997): 115–154.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Bergé, *Musical Form*. For example, Caplin argues (p. 61) that combining aspects of both theories "will give a richer view of classical form than by employing either theory alone."

featuring talks by Caplin, Hepokoski, and Webster at the 6th European Music Analysis Conference in Germany in 2007. At the urging of the session's chair, Pieter Bergé, the three participants reworked their original lectures into essays for the volume; each essay is followed by responses from the other two, then the author's riposte to the two responses.<sup>14</sup> As their spirited debate illustrates, proponents of a particular analytical system can be rabidly partisan, believing that only their system can unlock a work's true meaning, as supported by demonstrations of the myriad errors found in the other systems. In other words, theirs provides the "correct" answers to our analytical questions.

My own viewpoint is a bit more pragmatic: I tend to regard analytical systems not as keys to the analytical universe, but as convenient tools for understanding and explaining musical style. Most importantly, they provide us with a *common vocabulary* for discussing and comparing works in ways that can enhance our understanding and appreciation of individual pieces and help us to see connections or make distinctions among groups of works. Moreover, different analytical systems offer different perspectives and can help us notice different things about the music. Though I certainly find some to be more helpful than others, I see no point in arguing that one is more "correct" than another. Or, to put it more diplomatically, I wholly endorse Pieter Bergé's epilog to the debate among Caplin, Webster, and Hepokoski:

Moreover, the attitude of claiming theoretical supremacy is not just unfounded, it is paradoxical too. For it fails to consider that the intrinsic value of any theory surely depends on the relevance of its *restrictions*. Theories have the capacity of breaking new ground and delivering innovative insights *only* if they succeed in creating a framework that enables the exhaustive elaboration of their chosen premises. The onesidedness of a theory, therefore, is not a defect, but a necessity, a *condition sine qua non*. By recognizing this limitation, we acknowledge the appropriateness of embracing differing theories in the effort to grasp the

<sup>14</sup> Bergé, Musical Form, 15-16.

complexity of a given phenomenon, *however incompatible these theories may be*. [italics original]<sup>15</sup>

In this spirit, I would like to examine the two systems that I know the best because I have used them extensively in my own teaching and writing: LaRue's *Guidelines* and Hepokoski and Darcy's *Elements of Sonata Theory*. For each I will give an overview of their main points and summarize the main critiques found in reviews then will offer my own take on the systems and criticism. Finally, I will provide an analysis of the exposition of Haydn's String Quartet in C Minor, Op. 17, no. 4 using both systems.

### III. LaRue's and Hepokoski and Darcy's systems.

The LaRue and Hepokoski and Darcy approaches have some fundamental differences, which stem in part from their differing purposes and audiences. Hepokoski and Darcy focus—as the book's title says—on sonata form movements and two related formal types: the sonata rondo (their Type 4) and the concerto first movement (Type 5). Though they do not indicate their expected audience, the volume's length and complexity would make it an unwieldy textbook. LaRue, on the other hand, intended his volume to be used for classes in musical analysis, as he says in the Preface to the 1970 edition.<sup>16</sup> The second edition's preface spells out his aims more precisely: "[The] *Guidelines* should not be mainly regarded as a specialized theoretical study, but rather as a general approach to music, *particularly helpful to non-major-music* [sic] *students in survey courses*," [italics in original] though LaRue also says they can also be used profitably at advanced levels of study for term papers and dissertations.<sup>17</sup> Thus, he addresses more general analytical challenges than Hepokoski and Darcy, as well as other types of forms. In addition, although both systems make a point of considering the role that *all* elements of music—not just harmony and melody—play in the creation

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Ibid., 166.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Jan LaRue, *Guidelines for Style Analysis*, 2nd ed. (Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 1992), ix.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> LaRue, *Guidelines*, xiv.

of formal structures, they do so from opposite perspectives: LaRue begins by analyzing and diagramming the individual elements before presenting them simultaneously to see which convergences create formal articulations; Hepokoski and Darcy identify the articulations, then describe the individual element's contribution.

The two systems do have some common elements. Both proceed from an analysis of a substantial body of works, using their analytical findings to construct their formal models; both are interested in audible structures (not deep structure as in Schenker); and both share an insistence that they are providing frameworks for understanding and not advocating rigid models. LaRue insists that his guidelines are intended to provide "suggestions rather than prescriptions" and that they provide only the point of departure "from which the researcher can proceed to the limits of his knowledge and imagination."<sup>18</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, in a much more philosophical post-modern manner, declare that "all analysis should be directed toward the larger goal of a hermeneutic understanding of music as a communicative system, a cultural discourse implicated in issues of humanness, worldview, and ideology, widely construed—the second stage of the process."<sup>19</sup> They continually emphasize that the goal of analysis should not be to explain away anomalies and difficulties but should "call forth a work's problems, tensions, and larger implications."<sup>20</sup> With these broader comparisons in mind, I will now turn to discussion of each theory and its critics.

## IV. LaRue's Guidelines for Style Analysis

After an introductory chapter outlining his approach, LaRue devotes the next five chapters (just over 50% of the book) to a discussion of the elements of sound (e.g., dynamics, timbre, and texture), harmony, melody, rhythm, and growth (designated by the acronym SHMRG). For the first four, he looks at their contribution to movement

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, Sonata Theory, 603.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Ibid, 610.

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and shape for the large, middle, and small dimensions of the movement. The sixth chapter covers what he terms the "growth process," a locution intended to indicate a move away from the static connotations of the term "form" to something that better reflects the interaction of sound, harmony, melody, and rhythm. He uses the term "concinnity" to "describe the highest degree of interconnection and correlation between elements."<sup>21</sup> In chapter seven, "Symbols for Analysis and Stereotypes of Shape," he advocates the use of analytical diagrams that would include timelines for each element so that their interaction, and particularly concinnity, could be easily observed and explained. For him, "the timeline system, with its detailed hierarchy of thematic functions displayed on a consistent time scale, provides an ideal reference structure to which all other analysis and comment can be related," something that would facilitate the use of data processing in analysis.<sup>22</sup>

In his review of the first edition of the book, Roland Jackson took issue with the very concept of a data-driven approach, believing that it "seems to encourage a kind of analysis that simply compiles or catalogues information instead of one that proceeds from genuine insights."<sup>23</sup> Jackson also saw the very detailed system of analytical symbols, which were designed to account for the smallest details of the music as unnecessarily pedantic: "2Kcyml"would stand for the first motive [m] of the second sub-phrase [y] of the third phrase [c] of the second theme of the closing theme group [2K]."<sup>24</sup> LaRue does say that such elaborate symbols are needed only for very detailed study—here of phrase structure—and would not be necessary in ordinary timelines, a point that Jackson missed.<sup>25</sup> However, Eric Sams and Graham George also considered this micro-detailed approach a flaw, and were even more acerbic in their criticism than Johnson, dwelling at length on what they see as merciless shredding of the music for no

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> LaRue, *Guidelines*, 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Ibid., 172.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Roland Jackson, review in JAMS 24 (Autumn 1971): 491.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Ibid. Actually, m<sup>1</sup> would have indicated the first significant variant of the first motive.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> LaRue, *Guidelines*, 170.

discernible purpose.<sup>26</sup> George concluded with a withering observation: "This book should prove very valuable to the highly talented student with a filing-system type of mind. With all its merits, it is likely to prove dangerously inhibitive to highly talented students whose hard work is more characteristically based on a series of intuitive leaps."<sup>27</sup>

Jackson also believed that LaRue's symbols were too closely tied to the classical-period style to be of use for the wide range of repertories for which he claimed they could be used.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, LaRue's symbols "for the main functions of growth"—P for "primary materials," T for "transitional or other episodic, unstable functions," S for "secondary or contrasting functions," and K for "closing, articulative functions,"<sup>29</sup> —do seem designed for classical-period sonata-form movements, and as such tend to suggest a preference for that style. Jackson also found evidence of this preference in some of LaRue's comments about musical styles of earlier and later periods, citing instances such as, "in early works one must frequently endure neutral or deficient harmonic and rhythmic treatment," or that the nineteenth-century's "growing interest in harmonic color weakens the structural emphasis," or that the Pilgrim's March from Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* contains "shocking juxtapositions that jar without any apparent purpose."<sup>30</sup>

None of these complaints surface in the reviews of the second edition, perhaps because they were written by two scholars who had made good use of his system: Bathia Churgin and Floyd Grave, the latter one of LaRue's many PhD students.<sup>31</sup> Both note the wide

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Graham George, review in *Notes* 28 (June 1972): 680–81; Eric Sams, review in *The Musical Times* 122 (April 1981): 243–44. Sams reviewed a 1980 reissue by Norton.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> George, review in Notes, 681.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Jackson, review in *JAMS*, 490–91.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> LaRue, *Guidelines*, 154. LaRue's use of "K" instead of "C" for closing material was intended to avoid any confusion with the key of C.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Jackson, review in JAMS, 491.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Churgin, review in *Notes*, 1429–30; Floyd K. Grave, review in *The Journal of Musicology* 11 (Spring 1993): 269–76.

adoption of the first edition, discuss the additions and changes to the second, and stress how its accessibility has helped "demystify the task of saying something meaningful about a piece of music."32 Grave's review also touches on some of the issues of the earlier criticism, though from a different perspective. Putting LaRue's system into a wider musicological-theoretical context, he observes that it was an "early response to a now well-recognized shift of emphasis in musicology, from editing and archival research toward historical and analytical criticism,"33 and that it "goes a long way toward resolving a long-standing dilemma to which Joseph Kerman has called attention: the accumulation of 'more and more facts, and less and less confidence in interpreting them."<sup>34</sup> He also finds that "the flexibility of its procedures can help bestow order on the expanding fields of inquiry that have fallen within musicologists' purview,"35 which in the early 1990s would have meant twentieth-century and popular music, neither of which (particularly the latter) would have been observable on the musicological radar earlier. And, in fact, fully half of the forty articles and dissertations I found in the RILM database by searching for LaRue in the abstract relied on LaRue's system of analysis in one way or another were on twentieth-century topics. Nearly all of the rest were spread out over earlier and nineteenth-century music, as well as popular music topics.<sup>36</sup>

In 2011 LaRue's widow, Marian Green LaRue edited an expanded second edition of the *Guidelines* that included a CD-ROM of "Models for Style Analysis," something that LaRue had intended as a companion to the *Guidelines* but never brought to completion.<sup>37</sup> Here LaRue presents detailed analyses of nineteen pieces with a

<sup>37</sup> Jan LaRue, *Guidelines for Style Analysis*, 2nd expanded ed. by Marian Green LaRue, with *Models for Style Analysis, a Companion Text* (Sterling Heights, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 2011).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Grave, review in *The Journal of Musicology*, 275.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Ibid,, 270.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Ibid., 275.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Ibid., 270.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> His system appears to have been the first-level default for eighteenth-century musicology dissertations during the last quarter of the twentieth century, so the writers probably felt no need to mention his name in the abstract.

chronological span from Gregorian chant to Edgar Varese, with only two (both Haydn sonatas) dating from the late eighteenth century. Though it is a bit unnerving to see the annotations 1P and 1K under a line of Gregorian chant (p. 7 of the "Models"), the elements of SHMRG can certainly be applied to most any type of music, and make particular sense for modern styles.<sup>38</sup> Green-LaRue's preface to the volume tells us that LaRue developed his system while teaching at Wellesley College, where his courses included the music history survey along with "specialized period courses, running the gamut from medieval to contemporary. He needed to devise an analytic framework that would help organize his thoughts about the varied music he was discussing. Thus the five-component structure SHMRG... was born."<sup>39</sup>

# V. Hepokoski & Darcy's Elements of Sonata Theory

The preface to *Elements of Sonata Theory* also alludes to the authors' use of earlier incarnations of the book in their classes and seminars, and modestly says that it might be viewed as "a research report, the product of our analyses of hundreds of individual movements by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and many surrounding composers of the time (as well as later composers)."<sup>40</sup> But Hepokoski and Darcy's substantial volume (at 661 pages it is more than twice as long as LaRue's second edition) has different aspirations, offering a new, "improved" approach to sonata-form movements. Before launching their own endeavor, they briefly summarize the post-Marx approaches to sonata form, in which they see musicology and music theory taking divergent paths, each having two main approaches. Musicology divides into the "eclectic analytical writing" of Donald Francis Tovey, Joseph Kerman, and Charles Rosen, and "historicalevidentiary-empirical" approach of William S. Newman, Jan LaRue, Eugene K. Wolf, Leonard G. Ratner, and their successors. They divide the theorists into

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> In fact, they closely resemble David Cope's vectoral analysis process found in his *New Directions in Music*—first published in 1971—which I had used in teaching a class on twentieth-century music. See David Cope, *New Directions in Music* (Dubuque, IA: W. C. Brown, 1971). The latest (seventh) edition was published in 2001 by Waveland Press of Prospect Heights, Illinois.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> LaRue and Green, *Guidelines*, ix.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Hepokosky and Darcy, Sonata Theory, v.

Schenkerians/post-Schenkerians (naming no names) and those who emphasize "motivic growth from small musical cells, as well as the identification of phrase-shapes and the patterns of larger sectional blocks," naming analysts ranging from Arnold Schoenberg to William E. Caplin.<sup>41</sup> They view LaRue and his "historical-evidentiary-empirical" colleagues as engaging in "data-gathering and recovery" and point, rather more approvingly, to their insistence on paying attention to the eighteenth-century's concept of the form.<sup>42</sup> For the most part their treatment of LaRue's method is relatively gentle, but not entirely without barbs. One telling moment occurs in their discussion of the Type 1 sonata, which A.B. Marx had called sonatina form, arguing that it was an early stage of the sonata. LaRue had objected to both Marx's term and to Rosen's use of "slow-movement" form instead, pointing out all the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century fast-tempo overtures that make use of it and proposing his own term: exposition-recap form. At this point Hepokoski and Darcy step in:

Hence LaRue's initial objection to Rosen: "Exposition-recap form,"... though admittedly multipedalian, at least has the virtue of descriptive accuracy. All the other terms that have been suggested are partly misleading: "slow-movement" form occurs in many fast movements and by no means all slow movements." So far as it goes, this makes sense. But the term "exposition-recapitulation form" is not widely recognized, particularly among music theorists, and it is identified with a specific and outdated methodology with which we are in little sympathy. Our term, the "Type 1 Sonata," is more connotationally neutral.<sup>43</sup>

They do not go into the details that explain their lack of sympathy for this outdated methodology, but it presumably has to do with their assessment of it as "data-gathering and recovery," which puts them in line with the reviews of the *Guideline*'s first edition.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 347.

The observation that it "not widely recognized, particularly among music theorists," is politely euphemistic, for the *Guidelines* have more than once been mocked by music theorists as mere "theory for musicologists."<sup>44</sup>

At the foundation of Hepokoski and Darcy's theory lies the concept of rotation, the term they use to mean the ordered recurrence of the material from the exposition in the post-exposition parts of the movement. The number of rotations involved depends upon the sonata type: Type 1s have two rotations, both beginning in the tonic, with only a brief retransition separating them; Type 2s also have two rotations, but the second begins with P in the secondary key area and only arrives at the tonic with post-P materials; Type 3s have three rotations, with the second beginning in the secondary tonality, and the third with the simultaneous arrival of the primary material and the tonic. These three types should be familiar to analysts by different names: 1 = sonatina or exposition-recap form; 2 = binary sonata form; 3 = full sonata form. Their rotational scheme is extended—with accommodations—to the sonata rondo (Type 4) and the concerto (Type 5). The discussion of the sonata types occupies most of the second half of the of the book with 260 pages, with the discussion of Type 5 grabbing 170 of those, of which 140 are devoted entirely to Mozart's piano concertos.

The first part of the book (c. 300 pages) presents the details of Sonata Theory, which we must understand as acting against a "backdrop of normative procedures within the different zones or action-spaces of the late eighteenth-century sonata."<sup>45</sup> They describe the composition process as a succession of composer choices within this set of stylistic norms, and through an examination of a substantial body of eighteenth-century sonata movements, identify the most common choices (or levels of default) for critical structural moments. They emphasize that the various default levels could and did change over time, so that a low-level default in the 1760s might become the first level default later in the century. When composers chose—for whatever reason—to reject the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Although I have not seen that comment in print, I have heard more than one music theorist call it that.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Hepokosky and Darcy, *Sonata Theory*, 9.

available choices at a particular juncture, they create a "deformation." Because in common usage, this word has negative connotations, they hasten to say that, "within Sonata Theory, 'deformation' carries no negative charge, no negative assessment. On the contrary, such deformations are typically engaging, aesthetically positive that contribute to the appeal and interest of a piece."46 Their prose often tends to the anthropomorphic, especially as they describe the progress of the music; they believe that each "action-space" or zone has a job to do, particularly in the exposition, in which they identify two variants: two-part versus continual expositions. In a two-part exposition, the transition material (T) drives to a medial caesura (MC) that announces the arrival of the secondary theme (S), whose job is to reach what they call the essential expositional closure (EEC). They define the EEC as the first satisfactory perfect authentic cadence (PAC) in the new key that is followed by different material. In other words, if S is repeated, the first PAC it reaches is not the EEC. The material after the EEC is labeled as C for closing. A continuous exposition, on the other hand, "is identified by its lack of a clearly articulated medial caesura followed by a successfully launched secondary theme..... If there is no medial caesura, there is no secondary theme" (italics original).<sup>47</sup> They then describe how such expositions may unfold: in some, the transition material simply continues well past the point where a secondary theme might have been expected, to finally reach the EEC itself; in others, an MC may be proposed and then rejected (by continuing to sound transitional, by appearing in the wrong key, etc.). Some even have two MCs, forming what Hepokoski and Darcy call a tri-modular block, which they see as a precursor to the three-key expositions found in some nineteenth-century sonatas.

The development and recapitulations (or developmental space, recapitulatory rotation or recapitulatory space in their preferred terminology) each have a chapter detailing the norms and possibilities. From the outset, they observe that the term "development" is misleading, because not infrequently they include new material as well as development

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 51–52.

of expositional material,48 and conclude with a useful summary of the typical path (in four zones) that developments take. For recapitulations, they address various approaches, including recomposition and non-resolving recapitulations, and critique Edward T. Cone's "sonata principle," etc. They devote all of chapter 12 to "Non-Normative Openings of the Recapitulatory Rotation: Alternatives and Deformations, and the following chapter discusses what they term "Parageneric spaces," i.e., the introduction and the coda.<sup>49</sup> It is indeed an exhaustive (and sometimes exhausting) treatment of the subject, and the interpretive possibilities that their theory can enable are vast.

Given their constant engagement with and (frequently) scathing critique of other theorists' approaches, one would expect equally forceful reactions from those whose earth they have scorched, an expectation that the reviews have certainly met. Interestingly, two of the complaints about LaRue's methodology also turn up in the reviews of *Elements of Sonata Theory*. William Drabkin, Matthew Riley, Arnold Whitall, and Paul Wingfield all criticize the excessive numbers of symbols and abbreviations,<sup>50</sup> with Wingfield giving an example: "For example, the 'recapitulatory rotation' of the evidently deceptively approachable Finale of Mozart's Piano Sonata in C major, K. 309 (1777), merits the following near-impenetrable sequence: Prf [1.4–(') Episode S<sup>1.2</sup>] (') S<sup>1.1</sup> S<sup>1.3</sup> S<sup>1.4</sup> RT! è (') [Prf!! S<sup>1.2</sup>!!] (') C [S<sup>1.4</sup>!!] (p. 412)."<sup>51</sup> Lurking under the disdain seems to be the assumption that Hepokoski and Darcy are failing to move beyond the mere placing of labels. And, just as Jackson had questioned how useful LaRue's system would be for all the repertories he claimed, so several reviewers charge

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 195.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> The final two chapters of the first part offer observations on "Sonata form in Minor Keys" and "The Three- and Four-Movement Sonata Cycle."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> William Drabkin, "Mostly Mozart," *The Musical Times* 148 (Winter 2007): 89–100. The relevant pages are 92-93. Matthew Riley, "Sonata Principles," Music & Letters 89 (2008): 590-98. The relevant page is 591. Arnold Whitall, "Representing Sonatas," Journal of the Royal Music Association 133 (2008): 318-333. The relevant page is 323. Paul Wingfield, "Beyond 'Norms and Deformations": Towards a Theory of Sonata Form as Reception History,"Music Analysis 27 (March 2008): 137-77. The relevant pages are 140 and 146-47.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Wingfield, "Beyond Norms," 140.

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that Sonata Theory could not possibly hold for earlier or later sonata movements. Markus Neuwith finds it not useful for, or even applicable to, works from the middle of the eighteenth century,<sup>52</sup> and Paul Wingfield observes that, "the post Beethovenian repertoire very rapidly becomes resistant to analysis in terms of Sonata Theory's 'generic norms'. As Julian Horton and I have argued elsewhere, there is scarcely a single Mendelssohn sonata-form movement written after 1824 that does not contravene Sonata Theory's 'generic layout."<sup>53</sup>

Nearly all the reviewers have something to say about Hepokoski and Darcy's proposed model for the exposition, particularly the MC (medial caesura), the EEC (essential expositional closure), and their location and function. On the positive end of the spectrum, Michael Spitzer finds that "the analysis of the second half of the sonata-form, from MC to EEC, constitutes the book's richest and most rewarding contribution to music theory," and Graham G. Hunt's largely positive review gives it a thumbs-up as well.<sup>54</sup> By way of contrast, Mark Richards believes that the usefulness of the MC concept "begins to diminish with many of Beethoven's sonata-form movements" and strenuously objects to the idea that the EEC closes the work of the exposition, thus rendering the closing section "formally inessential."<sup>55</sup> Both Neuwirth and Wingfield raise various objections to the MC's validity and usefulness. Similar splits of opinion can be found on most of the salient elements of the book. Some reviewers like the description of the Type 2 sonata, some do not; some embrace the term "deformation" while others seem to find it almost offensive; <sup>56</sup> some see no problem with the concept of rotation, others

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Markus Neuwirth, "Joseph Haydn's "Witty" Play on Hepokoski and Darcy's *Elements of Sonata Theory*," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie* 8 (2011): 199–220. The relevant pages are 206–08.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Wingfield, "Beyond Norms," 154.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Michael Spitzer, "Sonata Dialogues," *Beethoven Forum* 14 (Fall 2007): 150–78. The relevant page is 160. Graham G. Hunt, review in *Theory and Practice* 32 (2007): 213–238.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup>Mark Richards, review in *Gamut: Online Journal of the Music Theory Society of the Mid-Atlantic* 3/1 (2010): 245–62. The title page gives this publication information, but all subsequent pages list 2/1 (2009). The relevant pages are 248 and 251.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> See, for example Alexander Ludwig's article, "Hepokoski and Darcy's Haydn," in this journal, Volume 2.2 (2012).

criticize it from every angle. Some of the reviews are as long as articles: Paul Wingfield's mostly negative evaluation wins the length prize at forty-two pages, perhaps an indication of the significance of the volume in the world of academic music.

## VI. Personalizing LaRue's and Hepokoski and Darcy's analytic tools

I read these reviews of the two volumes with a growing sense of bemusement and began to feel like a simple peasant in a room full of philosophers discussing the proper arrangement of angels on the head of a pin. Things so important to them made little difference to me and will not prevent me from making good use of both approaches, and though I could often understand the criticism made, at times it seemed extreme and lacking perspective. For example, LaRue's method certainly produced articles and dissertations full of detailed timelines, lots of description, and little insight, but it also produced excellent scholarship. After all, it is possible to have insights that are drawn from and facilitated by the collection and analysis of data. And timelines are very useful; they provide a snapshot of a movement that can be compared to other snapshots, and give you a good idea of the conventions governing a certain composer or group of composers, for example.<sup>57</sup> As for SHMRG, I have found it to be a very effective pedagogical tool that gets students to think about music in different ways.<sup>58</sup> Because I have taught in a music school and a conservatory, most of my students are not musicologists or theorists, but performers, and a number of them are allergic to both music theory and music history. Left to their own devices when listening, they tend either to follow whatever part they might play (horn players listen to the horn part, for example) and/or to notice aspects that often pertain mostly to performance choices (e.g. dynamics, tempos). Thus, I might divide the class into sections, and instruct each section to concentrate on only a single element of the music. When they had all reported what they had heard, we would reassemble things and talk about coordination

 $<sup>^{57}</sup>$  One of the criticisms of H & D was that they never presented a timeline of a complete work and never annotated their examples.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> It's not surprising that the only positive review of the first edition that I found was written by a music educator. See Carolyn Raney, *Music Educators Journal* 58 (1971): 73–75.

and concinnity. When teaching lecture-based survey courses, I generally begin a discussion of a piece or a style period with a description of a typical melodic structure (periodic, motivic with Fortspinnung, shaped by text, etc.), harmony (loosely construed to mean the types of vertical sonorities and any perceivable rules for progression), rhythm, texture or sonority, and ways to create forward motion (i.e., growth). Though I never used the P-T-S-K schema for anything except late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century music, like LaRue I found that following a consistent pattern in all my discussions of the various styles and composers made it easier for my students to articulate what made Machaut sound different from Josquin, for example.<sup>59</sup> His basic strategy has been, and still is, a fundamental tool in my pedagogical toolbox, but it has ceased to serve me well when it came to discussing sonata form for a number of reasons.

In the first place, LaRue never gives a description of the individual thematic sections other than the one described above (Section IIIb, p. 12). His guidelines do not discuss how we might distinguish where S begins and ends, or what distinguishes S and K, nor do they give any indication of what the transition might be doing besides modulating (no doubt because he did wish these symbols to be useful across a variety of styles). Though he does discuss the possibility of having an SK that combines the functions of both the secondary and closing sections, he associates it with "the ambivalent nature of many themes on the borderline between secondary and closing sections that have not yet developed a consistently differentiated character. These ambiguities arise as a symptom of primitive technique, but later composers exploit indeterminate functions for continuity."<sup>60</sup> His underlying assumption of the evolution of style from primitive to fully-realized is spelled out more precisely in his series of timelines designed to illustrate the evolution of sonata form. His descriptions of each phase are as follows:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> About one third of all the doctoral dissertations using LaRue that I located in RILM were performanceoriented DMAs or DAs, indicating its continued usefulness for analytical writing by non-theorists.

- 1. Primitive binary form with dominant modulation but largely motivic material.
- 2. Developed binary form, with a more evolved thematic phrase (x and y), but mainly homogenous material (no S or K ideas) and only slight motivic variation ( $x^1$ ,  $x^2$ ).
- 3. Polythematic binary, with the differentiation of the closing section (*K*), and some harmonic development (modulation to vi)
- 4. Large binary with full thematic differentiation (*P*, *T*, *S*, *K*).
- 5. Early sonata form with unevolved development section: brief but specialized thematic functions in the exposition and full recapitulation, but minimal development, often a mere restatement of *P* in the dominant....
- 6. Early sonata form with incomplete recapitulation after a strongly differentiated exposition and fairly evolved development . . .
- 7. Full sonata form in its most evolved state often adds an introductory section before *1P* and a coda emphasizing the subdominant after the normal end of the recapitulation.<sup>61</sup>

Though it would be unfair to criticize LaRue for being in and of his own time in his evolutionary conceptualization of sonata form, this (admittedly small) part of his methodology no longer corresponds to my own understanding of the stylistic unfolding of the eighteenth century, and its analytical symbols no longer provide a satisfactory vocabulary for my teaching and writing.

I first encountered Sonata Theory when Warren Darcy came to speak at the University of Cincinnati in 2001. As he was describing his and Hepokoski's concept of the continuous exposition, particularly as used by Haydn, I had a "Eureka" moment: here was the vocabulary and the methodology I had been struggling to find. I quickly acquired and read their published articles and later had access to a preliminary version

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Ibid., 188–89.

of the book that one of our music theorists was already using in his classes. When the book finally came out, I ordered a copy and immersed myself. I simply skipped over the barbed criticism that so many of the reviewers noticed, though with occasional rolled eyeballs (there go those philosophers again). I was not disturbed by the predominance of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven in their discussion (something that bothered many of the reviewers), in large part because I had already discovered that their theory was applicable or adaptable to their contemporaries and even predecessors. I liked their lively and evocative language-not the barbed bits but the "lights out" for a sudden minor turn or the "We're not going back!"-to describe a tonal diversion that derails a return to the tonic. I particularly liked the non-judgmental labels of the sonata types, especially the Type 2, which LaRue had consigned to one of the lower rungs of the evolutionary ladder. And I liked their acceptance of ambiguity and have taken them at their word that, "savoring the analytical problem is more to the point than solving it,"62 and that ambiguous situations may admit of more than one interpretation. As a number of the reviewers noted, the book is not easy to use, and I will never be able to remember all of their possible MC and S complications (it took a while before I could securely remember which was which in the first three sonata types). But I can easily consult the pertinent sections when I encounter a thorny patch and find that I can generally apply one of their possibilities in a way that makes musical and rhetorical sense to me. Not that I find every aspect of their theory equally convincing. For example their the sleightof-hand maneuver of using the term "writing over" to describe what happens to parts of the developmental rotation in which the expositional ideas do *not* return in the original order seems to me a bit like having your cake and eating it too. However, I found that once I had completely inhabited Sonata Theory's space, I felt comfortable making tweaks and adaptations when the music at hand seem to call for them, and I could-as a simple analytical peasant-cheerfully ignore what I didn't need. Or to use a completely inappropriate metaphor: I bought the dress—and it's a great dress—but I accessorize it, or even alter it, as suits my taste and needs. Though I continue to use LaRue's SHMRG pedagogically, have taken bits and pieces from Caplin, and have begun to explore Robert

<sup>62</sup> Hepokosky and Darcy, Sonata Theory, 159.

Gjerdingen's schemata theory,<sup>63</sup> my main analytical allegiance is now claimed by Hepokoski and Darcy.

VII. Using the tools: Haydn's String Quartet in C minor, Op. 17, no. 4

[To aid with the following discussion, an analyzed score of the exposition is provided as Example 1, at the end of the article.]

Actually, LaRue and Hepokoski and Darcy complement each other quite well, particularly for understanding and teaching pieces like Haydn's String Quartet in C Minor, Op. 17, no. 4, whose first movement teems with formal anomalies. Here I will discuss only the exposition (See Example 1 for the score of the exposition), beginning from the analytical viewpoint of Sonata Theory, but using SHMRG to explicate the many ambiguities Haydn has created. P and T are relatively easy to identify, though both contain the seeds of the "ongoing game of tonal uncertainty and ambivalence" that Floyd and Margaret find throughout the movement.<sup>64</sup> P begins as if in E-flat major, but deceptively arrives on the tonic of C minor in the second measure, and weakens the i:PAC in bar 9 by the melodic drop from C to G. The dissolving restatement/typical minor mode T beginning in bar 9 with an unexpected arrival on V/IV in E-flat in the next measure leads to a clear iii:HC MC in bar 19. When the material in bar 20 enters, all parameters are working together to contribute to the clarity: In terms of Sound, the texture changes from unison to melody and accompaniment (albeit with the head motive in the lower voices); in terms of Harmony, it enters firmly in the new key (III); in terms of Melody, it begins an apparent antecedent-consequent phrase (Caplin's period); and in terms of Rhythm, it relaxes the previous sixteenth and repeated eighth-note patterns to half notes in the lower three voices, with eighth note punctuation in the first violin. Although tonal stability and melodic regularity are normative for post-MC material in Sonata Theory, taking a moment to think through methodically all the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> Robert Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Floyd and Margaret Grave, *The String Quartets of Joseph Haydn* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 171–72.

contributing factors to the clear articulation (and concinnity) helps with the rest of the exposition, where such clear signals disappear.

After its stable beginnings, the apparent S fails to close the period at the expected moment, continuing until it reaches another III:HC in bar 33. Could this half cadence be an attempt at a second MC (albeit with hefty caesura fill), perhaps signaling the appearance of the second module of a tri-modular block (which typically functions as a return to transition-like material), with TMB 3 arriving in bar 45? Or has the music simply rejected the MC in bar 19 and turned itself into a continuous exposition? Or do we have a long, multi-modular S with the closing material arriving in bar 45 (an interpretation possible under LaRue's analytical system)? Here is the point that my student stepped in to ask, "Which one is it?" (for this is the quartet discussion I described in my opening paragraph). Everyone seemed a bit taken aback when I replied that there might not be a single "correct" answer, so that as analysts and admirers of Haydn's music, what we needed to do was to recognize and explore the ambiguities of the situation.

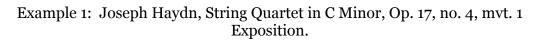
Here's where LaRue's SHMRG can help to analyze how Haydn creates the ambiguity. Each of the four "problematic" junctures in the exposition (bars 32-33, 40–41, 44-45, and 50–51: bracketed in the score) unfolds differently. The half-cadence to V/III at the beginning of bar 33 *could* have been a second MC, but the instability of the Harmony, the continuation of the cello's eighth-note Rhythm without pause, and the general lack of melodic shape prolong the tension (i.e., enabling Growth instead of creating resolution). These three measures set up what then appears to be a buildup to a dramatic cadence beginning in bar 36, with the first violin rising to the high B-flat before descending to a cadential trill on V/III in bar 40. The disruption of the expected cadence in bar 41 is largely due to Harmony, which moves deceptively to V7/V/III, effectively negating the signals of closure created by the cadential trill and the contraction of range from four and a half octaves on the first beat of m. 38 to just over three octaves in bar 41. The Rhythmic reiteration in eighth and sixteenth notes of the dissonant "resolution" also contributes to the musical confusion. After the music reorients itself with the V7/III in bar 42, it starts a two-voice run down to what we now truly expect to be a strong landing on a stable E-flat chord. Once again, the resolution is frustrated, this time by the arrival on an F-minor (ii) chord in first inversion in bar 45. In this measure Sound and Melody are at odds with Harmony because they signal what *could be* the start of a period with a melody-accompaniment texture. However, when the *sforzando* on the second eighth note of m. 46 (the first dynamic indication in the movement) arrives, Sound becomes a destabilizing factor, and the subsequent alternation of *forte* and *piano*, with another destabilizing *sforzando* on beat 2 of bar 50 continues the uncertainty until the final problematic juncture. There, Haydn almost achieves a clear articulation by reaching an E-flat in the bass of bar 51, switching to a completely different texture, and using a balanced, albeit motivic melody. But the cadence in bar 51 is a III:IAC, not a PAC, which arrives only in the last bar of the exposition and elides with the return of the opening motive, thus making the arrival of the EEC as ambiguous as the material that prepared it.<sup>65</sup>

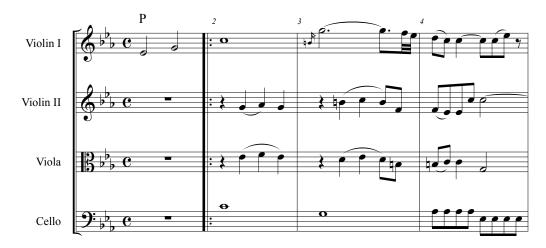
Needless to say, the ambiguities and tonal uncertainty continue to play out through the developmental and recapitulatory rotations and into the coda. Focusing on the techniques that Haydn uses to create these ambiguities not only lets us "savor the analytical problem," but also provides additional possibilities for exploring Haydn's style. For example, how do sonority and texture function as articulators as well as agents of musical Growth?<sup>66</sup> Does Haydn tend to use Rhythm as a disruptive element in particular situations, and does he do so throughout his career? Thus, I find that LaRue's SHMRG concept helps to open up additional analytical windows within the context of Hepokoski and Darcy's Sonata Theory by mitigating our obsession with formal labels and gently pushing us to a consideration of the composer's manipulation of the musical elements. Though I can certainly envision the profitable combination of Sonata Theory

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> For H & D, the securing of the EEC—the first satisfactory PAC in the new key that goes on to different material—is the exposition's most important task. Here, one might reasonably argue that the III:IAC in bar 51 functions as the EEC, falling under H & D's provision that if the new melody of C opens on the third (as here) or the fifth of the new key, that does not override the implied cadential motion and so can fulfill the EEC function. See Hepokoski and Darcy, *Sonata Theory*, 169.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Recent scholarship has begun to address the roles of texture and sonority in Haydn's instrumental works. See, for example, Nancy November, "Register in Haydn's String Quartets: Four Case Studies," *Music Analysis* 26 (2007): 289–322.

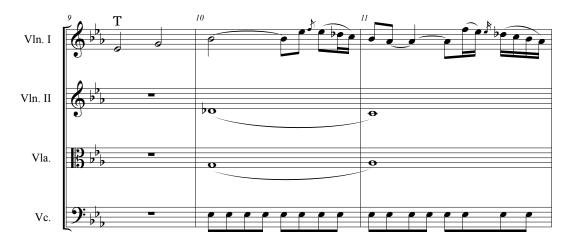
with other analytical systems, for me, this particular combination has proved to be the most effective approach for enhancing our understanding and appreciation of Haydn's never-ceasing originality.











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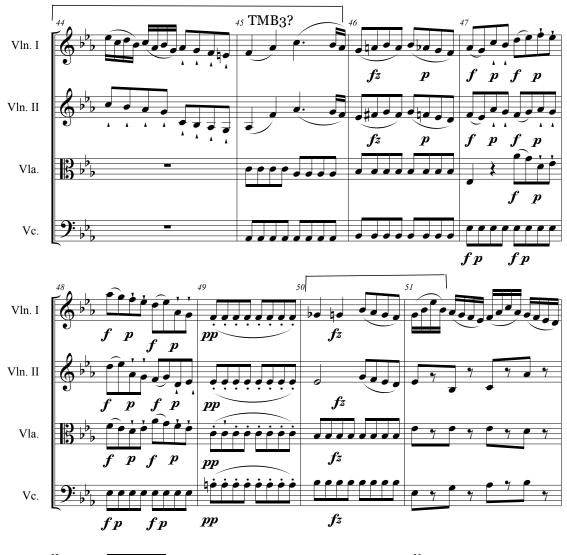


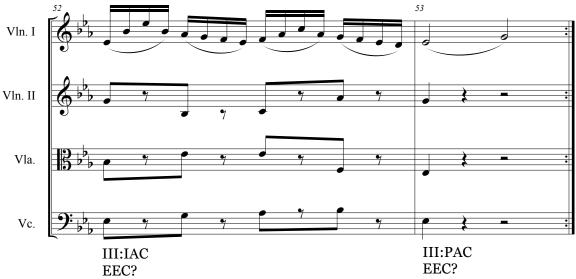
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