

Answers to questions and comments on analysis from Quiz #2 and the Beethoven Assignment:

Clementi:

1. What is the form of the following example? Sonata
2. At what point does the piece markedly increase in tonal motion? During the Development section the piece moves from the established D-major tonal area through A-minor then ultimately back to G-major by way of a dominant pedal (mm. 32-36). The overall tonal motion here is ii - V7 - I.
3. Compare the D-major harmonies in bars 3, 8, 35-36, and 43. Do they all “feel” the same? In measure 3, the D-major harmony is employed by neighbor motion and is not tonally significant; in m. 8, the sonority is part of a fully prepared cadence beginning in m. 6... ii – V64 - V7 – I, establishing the Second Tonal Area; in mm. 35-36 the sonority is dominant and retransitional to the First Tonal Area, G-major; in m. 43, D-major is dominant and is part of a Perfect Authentic Cadence which introduces the recap of the exposition’s second theme, this time in the First Tonal Area, G-major.

General Comments:

It is not necessary when analyzing larger forms to indicate period structure. It cannot be assumed in these larger forms that “textbook periods” even exist. Simply label each theme as it appears **respective to its key**. 1a for first key, first theme.... 2a for second key (tonal area) first theme.

My greatest concern in reviewing some of the weaker analyses is an apparent disregard for key area. Observing the key areas that are established in the piece are critical to correctly identifying the form. If one analyzes this piece in G-major throughout, then entire sections of the piece wander around with no tonic. If local key areas are observed, then one can see that the thematic materials are quite flexible and it is the importance of the large tonal motion between key areas [Tonic (FTA) – Dominant (STA) – Tonic] that controls the form.

If we look exclusively at the Exposition (mm. 1-22), it should be clear that two key areas exist. Most people recognized the presence of a first theme in the First Tonal Area of G-major, but some were confused as to how to deal with the material from mm. 8-22. This section of music is in a clearly established Second Tonal Area of the dominant (D-major). First, it should not be analyzed as an “extension,” “closing,” or “continuation” of the first theme as it is in an entirely different key area. Any of these distinctions should be used to describe material that retains the original key area and simply extends, closes the section. The presence of a new key area signals me to look for full cadences and new thematic material, otherwise why would the composer employ a new key? Most importantly, this material returns later in the work preceding the first theme in the recapitulation. This material, albeit scalar and less-singable as the first theme, should qualify it as the first theme of the Second Tonal Area.

It is okay to recognize mm. 20-22 as “closing” material and not part of the STA theme 1 as a full cadence in the STA has already been reached (mm. 19-20) and mm. 20-22 is merely cadencing. However, if you took this approach, you should consistently label this section where it appears in the recapitulation. As these few bars appear in both sections of the work, it is fair to simply include them as part of the theme.

If in your formal diagram you indicate that the piece consists of an Exposition, Development and Recapitulation, do not conclude that the overall form is any kind of binary. If these sections exist, Sonata form is the most likely form. Some students concluded that the Clementi *Sonatina* was in continuous rounded-binary form. This is an easy mistake to make as sonata and R.C.B. are very similar. The most significant difference between the two is that the return of the expositional material in sonata form **alters the key** of that material in its entirety to conform the STA (second tonal area) theme 1 to the *home key*. In rounded-continuous binary, there is a slight alteration of returning material, but transposing this material in its entirety into a different key is not a slight alteration. It is a fundamental re-purposing of this material to fit closing nature of the RECAPITULATION in that this section must ALL BE IN THE FIRST TONAL AREA of the piece in order to finish convincingly.

Furthermore, the difference between a development section and a “B-section” is that a B section must consist of a unique theme and tonal area. A development is often ambiguous tonally and fragments thematic material already presented. For these reasons, anything identified as a development should not suffice as the “B-section” of a rounded-continuous binary.

Beethoven:

I suspect that because in piece, for the first time, Beethoven elects to drop one movement from his usual 4-movement sonata form, he also chooses to shorten the adagio movement so that it would not be disproportionately long compared to the other two movements. I suspect this is why it was necessary to eliminate the development section, given that movement two was already very slow. Interestingly, the remaining sections were elaborately expanded with lots of weak cadencing and elaborate transitions, helping to maintain interest in a piece that was devoid of a development section.

1. What is the relationship of bars 24-27 and 28-31? Antecedent/Consequent in nature. They both share the same chord progression, so they have a kind of echoing effect. The consequent phrase is used to elaborate and ornament the first phrase. What the author is fishing for here is that he wants the student to recognize that this moment of the piece is significant in that it has clearly defined thematic material that is strongly oriented in its own key area. This area is the Second Tonal Area of the exposition, the dominant (Eb) and has thematic material that returns later in the piece in a different key, the First Tonal Area (Ab). This is the very essence of sonata form!
2. After bar 31, where is the first full cadence? The first “full cadence,” meaning that it possesses a predominant – Dominant – tonic progression, occurs at measure 44. The author believes this point is significant in the piece because the full cadence should serve to demarcate the conclusion of the Exposition, finishing up the Second Tonal Area.
3. What is the significance of bar 45? Measure 45 is an Eb-dominant seventh chord, and it is the only musical material that exists between the Exposition and the Recapitulation. Being dominant to the First Tonal Area of Ab, this chord must function as the Retransition, and the piece must have NO DEVELOPMENT.

Comments:

Mm. 17-23 are better identified as a transition because while the section is quite different in character from the first theme, it meanders through various chords and does not begin and end in a single key. It serves the purpose of getting us from Ab-major to the dominant STA of Bb-major.

It is tempting to identify the thematically ambiguous material in mm. 36-44 as a retransition, but this material fails the most important test for a retransition: it does nothing to modulate the piece back to the FTA (Ab-major). In fact, this section consists of a tiresome number of incomplete weak cadences to Eb (STA). Finally, in mm. 43-44 the composer provides the first convincing cadence in Eb. This is the last cadence for the Second Tonal Area of the Exposition. It would be **from here** that one should begin to search for a development or a Recapitulation.

Here there is no development. A single Eb-dom7th chord in m. 45 serves as a simple retransition to the recapitulation in measure 46.

In m. 62, the transition from the Exposition returns, but it does not attempt to move us away from the FTA (Ab-major), alternatively its transitional efforts are defeated as it bridges 1a-material with the “2a (STA-Theme 1)” material from the exposition. This material is **TRANSPOSED TO Ab-Major**. Here the themes are flexible, not the key area: a characteristic of Sonata form. This transposition of 2a in the recapitulation makes a rounded-binary interpretation not likely.

The next full cadence (PAC) occurs at 91. At this moment in the piece, the 1a theme appears incompletely. This would rule out a possible 5-part rondo interpretation. This section of the piece is simply a coda, emphasizing the final tonal area, Ab-major.